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An Introduction: Factions and the Dialectic

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Richard F. Salisbury and Marilyn Silverman

"A house divided against itself cannot stand." This is the conventional wisdom of St. Mark on the subject of factions. But is it true? The question mark in our title indicates our doubt. It is also intended to draw attention to our skepticism of other conventional wisdoms found in the literature on factions. Are factions the first indications of falling 'houses,' or conversely, the mark of stable but stagnant societies? Are they simply a 'game' played by elites to divert attention from the solution of important social issues? This book, in presenting the view that factions are best seen as evanescent structural forms which occur in predictable patterns within a dynamic political process of factionalism, shows that these wisdoms are at best only partial truths; at worst they are simply wrong.

The key element is the emphasis on *factionalism rather than on factions.* An approach which considers only individual factions or particular aggregates of people tends either to become static and classificatory or to look for the equilibrium states, as groups within which there is conflict, resolve disputes, maintain a balanced opposition, or split into new units. In contra-distinction, analysing factionalism as a total ongoing political process involves looking at the conditions in which it occurs, at the way in which multiple aggregates emerge within a collectivity, at how they oppose one another in particular situations, and at how the interactions of opposition produce decisions, social restructuring, or social rigidification. It is, in short, a particularly fluid process that may produce a variety of outcomes, some of which have been delineated by conventional wisdom: fission in the wider group, or increased power and formalization for a conservative winning faction. Alternatively, however, factionalism can result in the formulation of a new ideology, the emergence and differentiation of new political interest groups, or the crystallization into consciousness of a new social structure. This book tries to relate 'outcomes' to the *sequences* that precede them in the process of factionalism.

More succinctly, divided houses do not fall. Rather, every house, or moral community, has informal subdivisions based on differential interests. There is perpetual change in those interests and, as long as the subdivisions remain informal, perpetual reorganization of space in the house. Each reorganization, whether it is of invisible personal space, or involves the building or destruction of walls, conditions what happens in the next reorganization. Change of the house exterior may or may not be

apparent. Anthropological orthodoxy has ignored this dialectical process of successional remodelling. This book shows, in a series of case studies from seven different societies, how patterns of *network manipulation*, of *transactional strategies* of factional leaders, and of *class and ideological concerns* of participants recur in regular enough combinations to be characterized as 'sequences' within a wider dialectical process of factionalism.

Factions and the Authors

The book did not emerge as a single person's revelation, but from a long period of comparison and discussion. In the period 1967–74, four of the present authors independently wrote historical studies of local politics in societies in South Asia, Latin America and the Caribbean. Each focussed primarily on a different aspect that was topically in vogue – the composition of factions, leader-follower relationships, the game of politicking, or the changing class structure. Each hesitated to generalize about factions on the basis of a single study; yet there were many convergences in their thinking, arrived at independently since individual fieldwork and writing-up schedules had prevented discussion. Salisbury, who had read all the studies as they developed, suggested at the Canadian Sociology and Anthropology Association meetings in Toronto in 1974, that a conference be organized to explore the commonalities and divergences in the several studies. Silverman organized such a meeting at Lake Couchiching, Ontario in April 1975, inviting as well, five other scholars who had also studied factional politics. In her description of the aims of the conference, she pointed out that critical issues had been raised in the literature on factions which had not been fully explored, while other issues seemed to have been lost in indifference over time and left without discussion or resolution. She suggested that all papers discuss one or all of the foci delineated by Bujra (1973:133–134): the structure of factions, the process of political conflict and the relations between factions and the wider socio-political context. Nine papers resulted, and all were concerned with long-term histories, though this was not a topic that was solicited in the letter of invitation.

We shut ourselves away for three days in the April snows of Ontario. At the first session the issue was raised, particularly by Bailey, as to whether the study of *factions* was not a 'dead horse' and whether the conference was not a post-mortem. Those whose research had indicated new aspects of factional politics beyond those delineated in the literature argued the contrary, sometimes going to the extreme of saying that because factions had been an integral part of cumulative social change in the societies they studied, this was a universal phenomenon. One common ground, presaged by Bailey's explicitly definitional paper, was a concern not with the factions, but with the wider phenomenon of factionalism as a process. A second common ground was the concern for longer-term history, in which the specific factions appeared as transient epiphenomena of more basic underlying processes. As we sought to clarify this process of factionalism, placing it in contexts of local resource use, or wider political frameworks, we found we could argue on common ground about the similarities and differences of our case studies. By concentrating on a limited range of aspects, each participant gained new insights into his/her own material, even if the idiosyncratic aspects of each study indicated how immense were the potential avenues for future comparisons.

After the conference we revised our papers in the light of the discussions and Salisbury and Silverman wrote drafts of this introduction. In December of 1975 at Mont St. Hilaire, Quebec, we again locked ourselves away, with the exception of Bailey and Boissevain. This time, we discussed mainly how well the draft introductions reflected the common ground shared by the contributors. Absolute consensus, it was felt, was neither possible nor desirable. No contributor felt that harm had been done to his/her position, though each felt that his/her emphasis went beyond the introduction in particular directions. Contributors felt an introduction should not be a bland statement of common elements but should present also some synthesis of its authors; this we attempt in the following pages. Each paper in the book illustrates some of the commonalities, but each also has its idiosyncratic viewpoint and indicates a new direction for future research, beyond the present synthesis. We hope that this introduction will summarize firm findings for readers and that the case studies will be read for both documentation of findings and for their own creative ideas.

The Dialectic of Ideas

What we, as individuals, experienced in gestating this book in many ways reflects the pattern of the emergence of new scientific concepts that Kuhn (1962) has talked about as "scientific revolutions". As he formulates the dialectic of ideas, an orthodox paradigm or explanatory framework is adhered to long after individuals have described data for which the paradigm provides an inadequate explanation. Only when a dramatically different paradigm is proposed, which accounts for the observed deviations from orthodox theory, is notice taken of the deviations. New theory emerges in jumps, each seemingly a revolution of new displacing old, though in the longer view there is progress and cumulation. In the same way we felt our individual dissatisfactions with the theory of factions were crystallized by our discussions of the new concept *factionalism*.

A review of the dialectical process out of which the theory of factions emerged will reveal the intellectual roots of this book. It will also conve-

niently lead us into the central topic of the book: the role of factionalism in the historical transformation of societies and institutions, or what we call, the dialectical process of factionalism.

For the generation of anthropologists reared on *African Political Systems* (Fortes and Evans-Pritchard, 1940), politics was defined as the process of maintaining social order, balance and the *status quo*. The mechanisms discussed were those of the organized use of force (or the threat of its use) by centralized state structures, or by egalitarian and acephalous corporate groupings, which alternately opposed and supported each other. The term "faction" did not appear in the vocabulary of the time except as a pejorative term for sub-groupings which threatened group unity.

The succeeding generation, in a typical dialectical process, focussed on polar opposites in its definition of politics. It stressed conflict over stability; it was concerned with non-corporate groupings rather than with corporate groups; it rejected the emphasis on structures, and looked for processes or for the use of structures through organization. Factions, the epitome of conflict, of the lack of corporateness and of the pragmatic use of relationships to attain goals, became the archetype of political units studied.

If one wished to date this shift of paradigm it can be seen as starting in the early 1950's. Gluckman's (1953) *Rituals of Rebellion* and Coser's (1956) *Functions of Social Conflict* did treat conflict, but as something to be explained within a structural-functional paradigm – a mechanism to re-stress basic values and to return the system to equilibrium – rather than as a new paradigm in its own right. So too, Firth's (1957) symposium on factions treated them as informal counterparts of formal political groupings – how people really organized themselves for political action, utilizing the formal political structure.

The shift of paradigm became clearer as Frankenberg (1957) and Barnes (1959) emphasized a focal concern with politicking as a process, rather than politics as structure, and as Siegel and Beals (1960a and b) discussed factions as products of endemic conflict. With the appearance of Banton's (1965) *Political Systems and the Distribution of Power*, Swartz, Tuden and Turner's (1966) *Political Anthropology* and Swartz' (1968) *Local-level Politics*, the shift of paradigm was completed, and a new orthodoxy focusing on conflict established. As far as factions were concerned, the orthodoxy was best expressed in Nicholas' (1965) definition of them as non-corporate groupings, involved in conflicts and recruited by leaders on the basis of diverse principles.

But as with all dialectic processes, what appears on the surface to be a substitution of antithesis for thesis was, in fact, not so. There was an oblique movement of theory since the two paradigms were not really mutual opposites. On one level what occurred was a broadening of interest from a

focus on pre-colonial, pre-industrial politics in Africa to a concern with village societies on every continent, particularly colonial or post-colonial villages or small towns having relations with surrounding nation states. The analysis of traditional states or of lineage politics was not discarded as invalid but treated as being relatively unproblematic, and not at the cutting edge of theoretical concern. The critical object for study was the endemic conflict observed in local-level politics, and how factions articulated with traditional groupings and with state super-structures.

On another level we would argue that the conflict paradigm, in fact, contained many elements of the earlier paradigm, and was really a dynamic-equilibrium paradigm. It often treated conflict as having emerged from colonial change, with factions as a major symptom of the disorganization following change. It looked forward to smooth dispute resolution without factions when a new moral community had been established. It considered that factions could become endemic, as in the case studies of Siegel and Beals (1966), if a community remained disorganized and anomic and could in extreme cases lead to community fission. Factions were viewed as undesirable social forms, in much the way that Madison viewed them (see Bailey, this volume), in contrast with the desirable forms of structured political parties, and (can we breathe the words?) dynamic equilibrium.

Yet the definitions that emerged (for example, that of Nicholas) did contrast factions radically with the political units discussed by the previous generation on the dimensions of corporateness/non-corporateness, permanence/*ad-hoc*ness, role structure/leader-focus. A dialectic had occurred.

Since 1968 a dialectical process has been less easy to perceive. No one has been ready to argue that the definition of factions is inappropriate, needing radical change. Some further work was done within the conflict paradigm (Bujra, 1973; and Alavi, 1973) and is extensively noted by the authors of the present volume. Both Alavi and Bujra do express some disquiet at the tendency for factions to be seen in relation to equilibrium states, but otherwise accept the paradigm and propose no opposing one. Interest in factions and political anthropology – under those rubrics – so declined, that by 1973 there were no sessions devoted to these topics at the meetings of the American Anthropological Association. It was as if the definitions of 1968 were too good; they created a synthesis and so halted the dialectical process. Factions, as such, seemed a dead and unproblematic topic, as researchers in the period 1968–1975 adopted unrelated approaches in their work, ignoring the faction approach instead of attempting to change it by substituting an opposing concept. Data which did not fit the concept of "faction" were not systematically reviewed in the light of a more productive paradigm.

The contributors to this volume all worked in empirical situations in which factions and factionalism were identifiable, but they chose instead to relate their work to other currents of anthropological thought – approaches that we label "networks," "transactions," and "class structure" (although others could be added) – even if they had been stimulated by the literature on factions in their field work. None felt called upon to be explicit about why they felt that the faction paradigm was an inadequate one. We suggest that there are various reasons, but the central one is that a new model of social change has become current in anthropological thinking, one that makes the concept of "faction" appear static and lifeless.

Briefly the model is one of societies continually adapting themselves to an environment of other societies and of changing resources and technology; the adaptations cumulate historically, each one being a product of the previous adaptation and the new reality; the mechanisms of adaptation involve individual choices and decisions, but also are constrained by major social forces, such as relations of production, to follow long-term evolutionary directions. A concept of *factionalism*, we argue, is an appropriate one for use in such a model of social change. By dialectically opposing the seeming orthodoxy of *factions* with a new approach – that of *factionalism* – we attempt to see how far an advance in understanding can occur.

The Definition of Factionalism

A minimal definition of factionalism states that it is that part of the political process within a community which is characterized by the interaction and confrontation of multiple non-corporate sub-groupings – groupings that generally satisfy the criteria for being defined as factions (Nicholas 1965). The definition focuses attention, not on the individual faction, its structure, goals, or tactics, but on the process by which a *number* of groupings *compete* to *mobilize resources*, of which human resources are one major element. Intra-factional behaviour, the relation of a leader to his followers, for example, is important but is seen in a context of what is occurring at the same time in other factions, between the factions, and in society at large. The definition also recognizes the limits of an analysis of factionalism; when either the community ceases to be a community, or the sub-groupings become clearly conscious of their common unity and organize a corporate structure, a different analytical concept may be needed.

The emphasis on political process, on the other hand, stems from the recognition, which evolved as case studies were presented at our conference, that factionalism has an inherent dynamism. Factional confrontations are rarely balanced; one side gains and the other loses ground on every occasion. Each confrontation changes the terms on which the next confrontation will take place. In any confrontation the strategy of one side, or a particular combination of individuals in one faction, does not produce

an exact or mirror-image strategy or collection of individuals on the other side. Reactions are, in fact, systematically oblique and groupings are systematically unlike. Factionalism, in short, produces actions and reactions that do not simply balance out, but by opposing groups obliquely, it gives a net movement to the whole society, even if this is in a direction no faction intended it to go.

Within this global political process the disparate aspects of networks, transactions and class structure, which have been the starting points for individual contributors, constitute analytical elements. The papers in this book are grouped as much as possible according to discussions of the same elements, though every paper discusses all of them and other elements besides. The remainder of this introduction spells out the interrelations between the three approaches, and shows how they combine in a series of factional sequences.

A. *Network Theory*

The use of the concept "network" to analyse the organization of non-corporate groupings antedated the emergence of the study of factions and may conveniently be seen as started by Barnes' (1954) seminal study of interpersonal relationships in a Norwegian parish. Corporate group, class, and network principles were each seen as being used for organizing different domains of activity.

But it was notably in the subsequent studies of political conflict that a non-mathematical vocabulary of network concepts emerged. The recruitment of particular individuals for a particular conflict from an individual's network to form an *action-set*, and the potential transformation of that action-set into a *cluster*, or even a *quasi-group* (if they come together often enough), has been noted by many workers (for example, Mayer, 1966; Boissevain, 1971; Gulliver, 1971). Such a quasi-group may be surrounded by a varying number of individuals, each linked to one or more members of the quasi-group, which then appears as the *core-group* of a wider politically-active unit, including a wide *periphery* of members (Nicholas, 1965; Bailey, 1971).

The persistent grouping together of roughly similar assemblages whenever conflicts emerge is characteristic of factionalism, and the network concepts listed above thus crudely suggest a temporal growth cycle for factions. Starting with an assumed total field in which all interpersonal links are of equal strength, the emergence of conflict first groups individuals around two or more focal "big men" (we use the term advisedly, utilizing its connotations in the Melanesian literature; cf. Oliver, 1955; Salisbury, 1962; and others). Recurrence of conflict crystallizes these action-sets and may eventually polarize the entire community into two or more factions, each following a different leader. If a faction develops a coherent ideology,

and from this a formal corporate identity, it may become a *party* (Boissevain, 1966: Bujra, 1973), a term which can be generalized beyond its customary usage in political science.

This non-dialectic growth cycle is amplified in this volume by many writers, notably by Gulliver. Gulliver describes how Ndendeuli settlements characteristically come into existence as the small kin-related following of a single big man who starts farming in a new area. While the settlement is in a stage of rapid growth, factions are unlikely to occur (a fact Silverman has also reported). But the accretion of new individuals who are loyal to sponsors other than to the original leader provides the potential for such sponsors to become foci for factions. Death of the leader may well precipitate conflicts among sponsors and so also a dual polarization.

What happens once conflicts emerge, however, and once there are enough individuals present who are not so equally allied to both disputants that they must intervene to mute the conflict, is not merely a question of natural growth, but of a dialectic also. The role of the undistributed middle becomes important and is a prerequisite for the dialectic process in which change results from the interaction of structurally different groupings.

Boissevain and Silverman both suggest that it is usual for one faction to emerge as the strongest (at least in any one arena) and to take over the distribution of the rewards which a dominant faction has at its disposal. This faction becomes an in-group or *establishment*, and against it other factions coalesce as an out-group or *opposition*. The two factions are not symmetrical. The establishment faction characteristically has a core group that is connected by multiple links, with a periphery of supporters all allied to an individual member of the core by more specific and single-stranded ties. Gulliver uses the term "dense cluster" for this type of network. The opposition, by contrast, has a much looser structure with little distinction between core and periphery. It may, indeed, have a single focal individual with single-stranded ties to a number of opposition members, but the other members have few interconnecting links with each other. They connect through the leader or through specific interconnecting individuals in what Gulliver terms a "star pattern". These links may be of different kinds. The loose web is held together either by the focal big man, or almost as commonly by the hostility of each opposition member to specific individuals who are members of the establishment. Opposition is the theme of faction unity, although the issues about which opposition is felt may be different for each opposition member. It is as though the establishment were held together by the wide distribution of tangible benefits within it; the opposition is held together by the conviction that only unity will enable them ever to be in a position to distribute benefits; in other words, the opposition is held together by the promise of eventual benefits.

The opposition deliberately tries to organize itself, using more formal

patterns than are found in an establishment. These extend to the deliberate attempt to recruit new supporters from the establishment faction by raising new issues and by co-ordinating action around those issues. By contrast the establishment tends to focus on increasing the density of links within its core group, assuming that each member of the core group will retain the allegiance of his own peripheral followers. By this very strategy the establishment lays itself open to two weaknesses: the defection of a member of the core group with his following and the apathetic non-involvement of the periphery. The opposition is open to the draining away of individuals who are attracted by members of the establishment. Silverman clearly describes these two strategies of factional competition – the subversion or collusion of leaders and the seduction of supporters on particular issues – although she does not analyse the differential use of the strategies by different factions.

What happens when such an opposition, linked loosely by simplex ties, becomes a majority faction on a specific issue is a critical step in such a dialectical process. The present volume contains no clear illustrations of this step, although hints of what may occur are provided in Silverman's (1973) description of events in Rajgahr in the 1930's, and in Paine's analysis of C. P. Snow's *The Masters* (this volume). The latter study, admittedly based on fiction and perhaps more stimulating for that reason, suggests that the new master of a Cambridge College, whose election by an *ad hoc* coalition of opposition forms the body of the book, may provide, by the exercise of legitimized power, a focal core group for the former opposition and so relegate some previous members to the periphery. Rapidly the opposition begins to look like an establishment, and in the book's sequel (and Paine's epilogue) twenty years later, the full cycle has been turned.

Even more dramatically, the build-up of an opposition and the new strategies used for acquiring support and for achieving factional unity alter the entire nature of the factional game. Silverman, Nagata, Schryer and Attwood all describe these dramatic alterations, ascribing them, in part, to changes in the surrounding social environment. Both Salisbury and Gulliver, however, point out what may occur when a relatively large number of individuals with some access to resources are not directly involved in every conflict. The presence of neutrals means that an establishment cannot behave as absolutely as it can when it is a majority; oppositions do not need to recruit individuals if small dense clusters occur in the society outside the establishment. Any of the smaller dense clusters may, with the right leadership, recruit majority support on a particular issue and gain its case, without at the same time becoming an establishment. *Multiple clusters*, with weak links between the clusters, would characterize such a total social network.

By contrast, a situation is hypothetically conceivable in which no dense

clusters exist, but where every individual has a number of links to other individuals, without those linkages being so closely meshed that they provide social pressures on the individual to conform. No case of such *open* networks is analysed in this volume, but Islam indicates that such a situation may have existed when dense clusters were disrupted in the Bangladesh war and its aftermath.

We present these alternative network possibilities, however, to indicate how networks may vary, and how the asymmetrical factional composition in an establishment-opposition structure is not the only kind of variability. That this asymmetry provides an inherent dialectic, and that other structures also contain the seeds for change will recur as themes, as we discuss factionalism from the perspectives of transactions and class-structures.

B. *Transactional Analysis*

Under this rubric we group the many social anthropological studies since 1965 that analyse behaviour as the outcome of the negotiation of two or more parties, each trying to obtain some benefit from the interaction in return for benefits they are prepared to provide for others. In economic anthropology attention has focused on the nature and value of the benefits exchanged and the availability of resources; political anthropologists have stressed the tactics of negotiation, coalition formation, and the relative powers of negotiating parties; in the anthropology of communication, attention has focused on the transmission of information and on the perception of other parties. Bailey's *Strategems and Spoils* (1969) clearly analyses how the aspiring political leader may plan his negotiating tactics with potential followers, his utilization of resources available to him, and his exploitation of emergent situations in order to maximize the likelihood of his obtaining the spoils of office. Barth's earlier work on Swat Pathans (1959) focused more directly on the game-like aspects of coalition formation and the means open to Pathan chieftains of retaining their subjects' loyalties.

In their most sanguine moments transactionalists – including on occasion one of the present authors – have foreseen the development of "generative models" in which a knowledge of the cultural rules adhered to by all participants could enable the analyst to deduce the alternative strategy statements (Salisbury, 1968) which formulate individual pragmatic behaviours (Bailey, 1969). This knowledge could thus help predict the behaviour which would occur under particular environmental or parametric conditions. Transactionalists have tended to see the strategies adopted by individuals and the decisions they made as the critical objects for study, assuming that it is from individual choice and volition that behaviour flows.

The excessive optimism of this position of the mid-1960's is simply demonstrated: at any given moment individual choices are never fully

open, but are always constrained by the real availability of resources and by the historical reality of pre-emptive choices already made by others. They are constrained to such an extent that much behaviour appears as compulsion and not as individual choice. In any long term perspective the situation to which the individual reacts in making his decisions, and the cultural rules which he accepts are themselves the product of a historic past; the individual's actions in the present can be interpreted as a statistically probable reflex of a social reality such as a mode of production, a class structure, or a party system that has an independent existence.

In this volume the above points are re-stressed, particularly in the essays of Bailey and Paine on the "moral" framework within which factionalism occurs, of Silverman on stratification, of Boissevain and Schryer on class-structure, and of Gulliver on the historical continuity and complex intertwining of relationships in small-scale society. Nonetheless, the analysis of how individuals negotiate for political support and plan strategies of confrontation, within constraints that are taken as given at any one moment, has shown itself to be a productive approach, at least in explaining the statistical variation. Choices do exist and merit analysis, and the fixity of social reality is questionable. Salisbury's paper attempts to formalize several empirical studies of factionalism, to indicate how observed variations in factionalism are logically derivable from constraints imposed externally by larger political groupings or by variations in resources available.

As he shows, studies of factions have provided excellent information on the way leaders and followers calculate advantages and disadvantages. They have revealed, in particular, how short-term immediate exchange transactions are poor bases for effective political alliances, although these are what early students assumed were characteristic of factions. In fact, there are constant efforts by leaders to convert such transactional support into relations of generalized loyalty and clientship, or even into official status relationships, and so reduce the costs to them of constant renegotiation of support. In transactional terms one sees a range of variation from opportunistic to long-term continuous transaction, barely distinguishable from corporate structure. Such transactional analyses in this way clearly complement the network analyses we have already discussed. They place in an individual perspective the deliberate attempts to transform loose networks into dense ones in order to get political action. The analyses also complement those of Paine and Bailey, which contrast transactions involving self-interest with those involving elements of moral consciousness or "generalized exchange" (Sahlins, 1967).

Once again it would be easy to examine the strategies of individual faction leaders and to conclude that factionalism is a game with a range of strategies from which participants are free to choose, where success is a

chance matter. In the long run, it does not matter which side wins or loses, for no change occurs. However, this would be another erroneous conclusion based on false premises.

Transactional analysis immediately suggests why this is necessarily the case: it is that a relationship exists between the availability of resources and the nature of the transactions. In this volume the most dramatic empirical demonstration of changes occurring in factional transactions, when resources abruptly decline into almost complete non-availability, is provided by Islam. He returned to the area of Bangladesh, where he had previously studied factions, shortly after the 1971 war with Pakistan. In a climate of extreme poverty, suspicion, and the likelihood that armed men, who claimed to be Freedom Fighters (Bengalis who had fought independently of the Indian army for Bangla independence), would use force to get their wishes, all alliances seemed at an end. Public recognition of pre-existing ties within the village was minimal, since any such linkage might be a starting point for accusations and violence; political ties of individual Freedom Fighters to politicians in the capital of Dacca provided them with resources, principally access to foreign relief shipments. The well-organized factional structure within the village of elite/patron establishment and loose opposition, which Islam describes elsewhere (1974), had disappeared; the leader of the old establishment was in exile, accused of collaboration with Pakistan, whereas the leaders of the opposition cautiously remained in the city as successful private individuals.

The situation described by Islam, of an apparent war of all against all, may even be taken as a close approach to an idealized *opportunistic* transactional condition – one where each individual is seeking short-term personal advantage and negotiating dyadically to obtain it through alliances.

Ironically Nagata, in his analysis of a stable and even affluent Hopi group at Moenkopi in Arizona, shows that the same pattern of shifting and impermanent coalitions, with much individual calculation of pragmatically advantageous strategies, occurs under other conditions of resources. Another common denominator between the Bangladesh and Hopi situation is, however, the lack of an agreed unit of political community at the local level (Easton, 1959), or what Salisbury terms a "circumscribing corporate grouping". In Bailey's terms such an absence means that there is no moral consensus. In a transactionalist analysis, the absence of a wider political unit means that no added rewards appear to accrue to transactors in achieving a wider group agreement: there is no positive-sum game present, no reward for winning a conflict and no incentive for weaker parties to settle. In fact, as Nagata phrases it, there is a positive gain for all parties in having conflicts continue unresolved. Many earlier analysts of factions (notably, Firth, 1957) have pointed to this phenomenon in a negative way, saying that factions exist where institutional means do not exist to resolve conflicts. In the present context this should be re-phrased: endemic opportunistic strategies occur in the absence of a political community fostering combined action and so producing additional rewards for the winner to distribute.

Attwood in an earlier paper (1974), Silverman in the present volume, together with Paine, Boissevain, and Islam in indirect descriptions point to the importance of the resource of group support, which can be utilized by group mobilizers. They point out that treating factions or interest groups as though they were recruited only by elite leaders offering their resources in exchange for the individual support of followers is sometimes inaccurate. A non-elite mobilizer may often find himself in possession of committed supporters for various reasons – the Freedom Fighters in Bangladesh suggest themselves as an example – and may then use his control of that support to bargain with elite leaders for the resources they control in order to obtain them for distribution among his followers. This strategy produces a factional structure different from the establishment-opposition structure previously described by such terms as "elite-council" (Bailey, 1965) and considered as typically involving strategies of patronage.

From the transactional approach, then, we identify at least three patterns of factional strategies: the prevailing *patronage* pattern, linked with establishments and oppositions; the *group mobilization* pattern, and the *opportunistic*, unstructured pattern. Each pattern can be related in a synchronic transactional analysis to a different pattern of resource availability in the society concerned.

Any transactionalist would readily agree that should resource availability change over time, the pattern of factional strategies would likely change also. What the dialectic analyst asks is whether there is a necessary temporal connection between these three patterns and the accompanying patterns of resource availability that would constitute a dialectic. Attwood, in the present volume, answers with a resounding yes. Although exogenous changes in resource availability are those most commonly talked about, the factional strategies used at one moment in time do, in and of themselves, affect the volume and type of resources available for the future and the distribution of those resources within the society. Each pattern contains within itself the seeds for the patterns that potentially succeed it, so that cycles may occur dialectically. To take only one example, group mobilizers can, by organizing their supporters, both obtain major resources from the wealthy and create new productive forces. Their role as intermediaries with the wealthy may then lose its importance, and a new strategy may become appropriate for those concerned with the exchange of resources

for political support in the new environment. But since Attwood's argument also bears on the class-structure approach we shall not present his whole argument here.

c. *Class Structure Analysis*

The classic position of class structure analysts is that factions are groupings, recruited across class lines, which are separated from one another by vertical cleavages; the class lines themselves represent horizontal cleavages (cf. Brass, 1965; Nicholas and Bailey, 1968). Followers from less privileged groups attach themselves to leaders who are members of elites. But the conflicts giving rise to factions really concern only the interests of the elite leaders. The involvement of the supporters in these conflicts merely diverts their attention away from the significant conflict in society – the conflict between social classes. Only when the populace ignores factions will it acquire class-consciousness and an awareness of the issues of class conflict. Factions are a device of the elite to prevent the masses from acquiring class-consciousness. This is indicated by their lack of ideology and exclusive reliance on self-interest and personalism (Alavi, 1973; Bujra, 1973).

The analysis of variations in factional structures and factional strategies that has already been presented indicates that this may sometimes be the case, expecially when establishment factions use patronage stragegies; but even there opposition factions typically extend their recruitment of followers outside the elite. In other factional structures the cross-cutting recruitment of factions presents opportunities for the interests of lower social classes to assert themselves, in particular in the form of group-mobilization strategies.

In this volume Schryer analyses the structure of establishments and oppositions in a backward area of Mexico. Elsewhere (Schryer, 1975), he has related the existence of this elite pattern to the relatively small size of haciendas and the multiplicity of small-holders or tenant farmers in such an area. This has the dual effect of providing a class of middle peasants with vested interests and of making patronage from the state the most significant resource for local elites. In the 1920's only large landowners competed for benefits deriving from the national government. In the 1930's merchants in the small towns entered the competition, and sought local support (and official PRI approval) by espousing agrarian reform, though not putting it into effect. By the mid-1940's a new group of middle peasants joined the opposition, which again sought peasant support by espousing land reform. In 1957 a large landowner finally achieved the break-up of one opponent's estate by encouraging peasant occupation of the property.

Schryer argues that a continuing pattern of elite factionalism has persisted throughout this era, involving few landless labourers: the call for agrarian reform was a hollow one in practice. The detail of his study permits an equally feasible analysis in terms of (1) a steadily increasing involvement of new class groupings in the politicking, as opposition factions sought to involve new supporters outside the elite; (2) ideologies being used both to recruit followers and to persuade national politicians to grant benefits (a group mobilization strategy, in fact); and (3) slow percolation of benefits to disadvantaged groups who become politically conscious during periods of factional competition.

That the early 1960's subsequently proved to be a period of group-mobilization politics fits this analysis. Issues emerged such as clericalism/anti-clericalism, middle-peasants/day-labourers, cooperatives/merchants, as well as land reform (though allegiances differed on different issues). Factionalism brought the issues out into the open, increasing public awareness. A little more land was distributed as a result. The process of change may have been a slow one, but factionalism contributed to it.

This argument builds on the network and transactional analyses of this paper, which show that even within elite factionalism, the opposition faction is not the mirror-image of the establishment. The opposition faction seeks to circumvent the establishment's resources and network ties by attracting outside supporters, by appealing to ideology, and by formalizing its organization. Boissevain's paper (this volume) presents this argument at length.

Attwood's and Islam's papers indicate the possibilities for other patterns of class participation in factional activities. Attwood (and to some extent Schryer) shows how the opposition between factions is over issues of class conflict in a situation where the formal structure of monolithic political parties provides no avenues for the conflict to be overtly expressed. The group mobilizers who articulate this conflict may well be of the same class as the interest they represent, and in such a case each individual faction may be of a single class group. The evidence is, however, insufficient, and on other grounds it may be suggested that it is group mobilizers who can identify with the class of their faction, while having the ability, training or background to communicate with the classes of other factions who are the most successful. If such people exist, the conflict may find expression in factionalism; if they do not, then the conflict may either remain unexpressed, or be expressed more violently. If the usually reported pattern is one of *elite participation* in factional conflict, with minimal participation by members of other classes, then what Attwood indicates is an alternative to *class participation* in factions, with minimal membership in each faction of members of other classes.

Islam suggests a third type of participation, for which we propose the label "bourgeois participation". Involvement in factional activities is

widespread in all classes, but the issues are not ones of continuing class interest. The composition of factions fluctuates rapidly, and the leaders are not clearly defined elite figures or populist orators, but rather shadowy influence brokers. Participation seems principally to be on the basis of momentary, situational self-interest as individuals perceive it. Bourgeois participation would appear to demand an environment where individuals are potentially able to achieve social mobility by dissociating themselves from the interests of a class group – elite or popular – and to do so through opportunistic factional alliances.

D. *Factionalism and Factional Sequences*

The argument to date has identified inductively three polar types of network structures, of transactional strategies and of class participation in factionalism. It would be simple to combine the three distinct analyses into a single typology in which each 'pure' type combined one form of network with one transactional strategy and one basis of class participation. To do so would do harm both to the complexity of the case studies and to our theoretical argument that every factional situation contains within itself elements of all 'pure' types and is thus dynamic. Yet it may help the reader to remember the separate typologies by linking them together. Thus, we could classify factionalism as *conservative* if it is marked by establishment-opposition networks, by patronage transactions and by élite participation; as *revolutionary* if it combines group mobilization transactions, participation by class and multiple clustering of networks; and as *progressive* where strategies are opportunistic, participation bourgeois and networks open.

But the over-generalization of such a typology is evident the moment one tries to apply it to any particular situation. Only conservative factionalism has been described by earlier writers, as though it were a stable state, and then, as the case studies of the present volume suggest, this has been possible only because the ethnographers have omitted to analyse non-conservative elements in the factionalism. Class participation in persistent opposition is such an element, and is probably common. If one accepts the fact that conservative factionalism is a steady state, then one would argue, along the lines suggested by Paine's fictional case study, that even class-based opposition factions lose their revolutionary potential when they gain power. After twenty years the establishment and the opposition may change places and labels, but the factionalism remains conservative. The analyst can ignore class-based oppositions as being momentary deviations from a stable condition to which a system returns in repetitive cycles.

Yet we do not know whether such cycles are repetitive. It may be that in real life the dialectic of change is more common. If an opposition gains power, the informal understandings that govern decisions in a densely

linked establishment no longer hold. The more explicit and specific bases for common action by an opposition will differ. They may crystallize into an ideology as Boissevain's paper suggests; they may gradually modify themselves into the informal understandings of a new establishment – but the new understandings will be different from those of the old establishment. Even if the cycle were repetitive, the dialectic would produce some change, at some level of analysis. More research is clearly needed to test empirically the satisfying intellectual model of cyclical recurrence provided by the fictional case.

By contrast, Attwood's paper suggests that no factionalist state is a stable or even cyclical one, but that all contain a dynamic for long-term change. Within a condition of elite conservative factionalism the incentive for the opposition to recruit outside the elite class is great. If it does so, the potential exists of a move towards group mobilization by elite individuals and of an expansion of political awareness or even class-consciousness among non-elite classes. Emergence of non-elite group mobilizers, of multiple dense clusters as nuclei for non-establishment factions, and of the wide distribution of resources within a community appear as further steps in a sequence that moves from conservative factionalism to revolutionary factionalism.

But revolutionary factionalism itself is no steady state. Even if it starts as merely associations of individuals, it is likely to lead further. The associations may formalize themselves into parties or into political movements, and so cease to be factional. Or if they remain factional within a wider community and effectively carry out a redistribution of resources through group mobilization, they can radically alter the pattern of resource availability on which revolutionary factionalism is based. Attwood's case suggests that when multiple sources of benefits are available, and multiple interest groups have already been mobilized in an earlier phase of revolutionary factionalism, then the networks activated become more open, and the strategies used more opportunistic. In short, bourgeois factionalism can succeed revolutionary factionalism.

Yet Islam's case study describes bourgeois factionalism immediately succeeding conservative factionalism after the war had altered the state of resource availability. And Schryer describes how revolutionary factionalism can change to conservative factionalism if leaders become co-opted into an elite. Clearly, bourgeois factionalism itself can potentially change into either conservative or revolutionary factionalism, if it produces innovative politicians who can competitively gain mass support for elite or for socialist productive activities.

Do particular types of factionalism tend to follow other types more frequently than randomly? Does the internal dialectic of factionalism that we have described for establishment-opposition, patronage and elite fac-

tionalism predispose a system to move through particular sequences? What are the necessary conditions for a particular sequential change to occur, rather than another? These, and a host of other questions for future long-term historical studies are suggested by this book.

To be more provocative, even if the patterns of factionalism change, how much are whole societies changed thereby? Are the patterns of factionalism repetitive? Have we succeeded in merely amplifying Pareto's analysis of the circulation of elites as 'lions' of patronage politics temporarily are replaced by 'foxes' of opportunistic politics? At what point in a situation of factional politics do different classes achieve self-consciousness, do different cultural rules governing politics become established, different interest groups become incorporated as parties, or different productive processes become instituted, so that politics cease to follow a factionalist logic? Does the locus of a factionalist analysis then merely switch to studying political behaviour, within the newly formalized moral communities, which is acted out according to pragmatic strategies not normatively accepted, as Bailey suggests?

E. *Other Analyses*

We have gone far enough to suggest that the pardigm of factionalism, dialectically opposed to a paradigm of factions as groupings, is clearly compatible with alternative anthropological approaches such as those of networks, transactions and social class. More importantly, the use of the paradigm enables us to combine these approaches and to gain a fuller understanding of the relationship between local conflicts and long-term political change. The paradigm forces us to look more closely at the way variations in factionalism can correlate with variations in resources, class structures, institutions and cultural rules.

But the three approaches listed do not exhaust the approaches which the contributors to this volume use in their work. Bailey's insistence, following Madison, on the illegitimacy of factionalism suggests that a study of 'illegitimate politics' might provide a wider paradigm. Many contributors suggest that a relationship may exist between the type of factionalism surrounding an issue and the nature of the issue itself; generalizations on this question remain to be made. Nagata's study of Hopi factionalism – a factionalism in which each faction denies that the other faction exists and thereby makes a confrontation or resolution impossible – recalls Nicholas' earlier analysis (1965) of Iroquois factionalism of the 1920's. Is there a distinctive pattern of American Indian factionalism? Or, as Paine would phrase it, should there not be a cultural analysis of factionalism? Are the cultural rules, within which the factional process takes place, not worthy of study? Do the rules change with the factional process? Is academic (or novelistic) factionalism different from other kinds of factionalism? How

would C. P. Snow's novel have ended if it had been set in North American academe?

We hope that this study provides a dialectical step along the path of research into factionalism. We hope our advance may provoke the next step in dialectic with us.

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