In recent years, a growing number of anthropologists have tried to disencumber themselves of what they felt as the strains of some essential functionalist assumptions. They have accordingly shifted their attention from the mere description of social forms to the study of processes that generate social forms. In the functionalist tradition, societies are seen as morphological entities equipped with moral characteristics which are in stable equilibrium and have distinct requirements. They are explained by uncovering their dovetailed composition and by assessing their requisites. The emphasis is on institutions rather than on institutionalization.

The approach here under discussion concentrates on process and change. The agents of social change are particular persons. It is only up to a point that the individual is constrained by moral forces and moulded by his environment. For the rest he has room for manoeuvre and may react on society: that is how structures and systems change. In this view, the individual stands out as an actor or entrepreneur able to modify his environment in attaining particular goals. Social forms are considered as overall patterns of statistical behaviour and their explanation consists of discovering and describing the processes that are their underlying determinants. Environmental constraints and opportunities govern the choices of men in creating social forms and institutions.

This perspective, for which we owe much to Barth (1963, 1966, and 1967), avoids the pitfalls into which the functionalists have dug themselves. First, it explains social forms without assuming a purpose for them — only individuals have purposes. Second, it disposes with the equilibrium concept as heuristically misleading. Third, and finally, it offers useful tools to describe the events of change. The origin of this (generative) approach was set out as early as 1954 by Leach in his book *Political Systems of Highland Burma*. After observing that the notions of functional integration, social solidarity, cultural uniformity, and structural equilibrium inhibit rather than advance our understanding of what goes on in actual situations and, more particularly, of social change, he formulates his own position as follows. Individuals fulfil roles in several different social systems at one and the same time. Since such systems present themselves as alternatives or even inconsistencies, individuals are continually faced by choices for action. Leach argues that the manipulation of these alternatives as a means of social advancement brings about the overall process of structural change:

— Every individual of a society, each in his own interest, endeavours to exploit the situation as he perceives it and in so doing the collectivity of individuals alters the structure of the society itself — (1964, p. 8)

Leach exemplifies this point in his description of cyclical change in the Kachin Hills Area. Egalitarian communities develop a feudal structure and communities with feudal characteristics tend to break up in sub-groups organized on egalitarian principles. Though the breakdown of either is influenced by outside factors, actual changes are triggered off by particular persons: autocratic leaders or revolutionaries who are ambitious seekers after power. In *Pul Eliya* (1961), in which he analyzes the relations between land use and kinship, Leach advocates a similar approach. He repudiates the notion that individuals are constrained by moral forces and moulded by their environment and seeks, instead, to demonstrate that constraints imposed on the individual are limited and allow for manoeuvre.1

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1 The distinction which Firth has drawn between structure and organization might
The assumption of Leach is clear: the basis of social choice is man's pursuit of power. I cannot decide whether all cultures have a Machiavellian orientation or whether this tenor is restricted to the Kachins, late 15th century Italy, and a few other societies. (Anyway, psychiatrists acknowledge the *libido dominandi.*) However this may be, other 'action theorists', as they have been called in a recent article have influenced Leach who received part of his training from Firth. 'Analysis of the organizational aspect of social action', says Firth, 'is the necessary complement to analysis of the structural aspect... Social organization involves the exercise of choice, the making of decisions. As such, this rests on personal evaluations, which are the translation of general ends or values of group range into terms which are significant for the individual' (1951, pp. 35-36). A few years later, Firth wrote: 'Social action can be looked at in a number of different ways. One way is to examine it for its structure — to look for those major patterns of relationship in it which form a systematic arrangement and which as such serve to regulate further action along the same lines... Another way to look at social action is in terms of its organization. The structure provides a framework for action. But circumstances provide always new combinations of factors. Fresh choices open, fresh decisions have to be made, and the results affect the social action of other people in a ripple movement which may go far before it is spent. Usually this takes place within the structural framework, but it may carry action right outside it. If such departure from the structure tends to be permanent, we have one form of social change... The concept of social organization has (thus) a complementary emphasis. It recognizes adaptation of behaviour in respect of given ends, control of means in varying circumstances, which are set by changes in the external environment or by the necessity to resolve conflict between structural principles. If structure implies order, organization implies a working towards order — though not necessarily the same order' ((1954 and 1955) 1964, pp. 3, 35, and 61).

The individual-centred approach to social action, as explored in this review article, does not necessarily coincide with the conceptualization of man as a *Homo clausus* in which the individual is perceived as a more or less closed system upon which the 'environment' or 'society' acts and *vice versa*. The fact that we are primarily interested in the social relations and social roles in which particular individuals are involved and which they maintain or try to build up, keeps us from accepting this conventional yet misleading conceptual polarity. This model, in which the individual and environment are dichotomized and referred to as two separate things, has received strong criticism from Elias (1969). He notes that 'there is some need for a terminology that indicates more clearly the specific character of the relationship between the two aspects of men to which we refer as society and individual, between the configurations formed by human beings with each other and the human beings in these configurations seen singly. The uniqueness of this relationship demands unique theoretical models and concepts' (p. 141). I feel that an approach concentrated on social organization, transactions, and ego-centred coalitions may provide a better understanding of the genesis and development of such configurations (i.e., social forms) and may lead, consequently, to a more adequate perception of social change. Cf. Elias and Scotson 1965, pp. 169-171.
by Abner Cohen (1969, p. 223), pursued the lead provided by Leach and consequently concentrated their descriptive analyses of complex societies on ego-centred entities (coalitions, networks), in which the individual is prominent as an entrepreneur: able to take a profit from his environment by manipulating social relationships, mobilizing resources, and by finding accommodation to constraints or by changing these constraints. In this view, integration is not axiomatic but is seen, just like disintegration, as an end product of entrepreneurial activity. In Tribe, Caste, and Nation (1960), for example, Bailey shows how individuals are far from being 'passive creatures exhibiting for the anthropologist's benefit regularities in behaviour'. Against the background of three different political alignments, individuals are actors who may choose between these different systems and thus modify them to their advantage. Competition underlies Bailey's whole analysis, 'for my whole conception of an actor is as a person (or group) trying to gain his ends against other people who would prevent him or would gain the same end for themselves' (1960, p. 251). Thus by considering the individual as a locus of several roles which he has in different systems and on which he can play in order to achieve his ends, Bailey is able to describe how far a society moves from one structure to another. In Tribe, Caste, and Nation he does so by analyzing well over thirty cases of conflicts and disputes.

The idea of political man is elaborated in Stratagem and Spoils, the book here under review. Bailey asks the reader to think of politics as a competitive game. Like games, political contests are orderly as they proceed according to rules. These rules are of two kinds: normative and pragmatic (the distinction being fundamental). The former refer to publicly accepted values and are very general guides to conduct in setting broad limits to possible action. The latter are morally neutral and recommend tactics and manoeuvres which are efficient. As the title of the book suggests, Bailey is particularly interested in pragmatic rules; in the private wisdom of politics rather than in its public face; that is, 'not so much in the ideals and ends and standards which people set themselves in public affairs, but rather how they set about winning' (p. 5).

Analogous to a game, a political structure is defined as a set of rules which regulate a competition for valued ends and keep it orderly. These rules (both normative and pragmatic) concern prizes, recruitment of personnel, composition of teams, mode of competition, and control. An arena marks situations in which conflict groups agree on the rules; a political field is a fight rather than a game: the contestants do not agree on the rules so that we are concerned with two different political structures:

— An opposition party, hoping to take control after the next election, is not a rival political structure; one would-be dictator, waiting his chance to murder the incumbent dictator, is not a revolutionary but a contestant operating with the rules of that particular structure (within the same arena). But an army leader who replaces a parliamentary democracy with his own brand of guided democracy does change the rules of the game, and while he was waiting and planning his coup and organizing support for it, he did constitute a rival political structure within the environment of the parliamentary democracy — (p. 15)

The processes of political conflict involve *confrontation, encounter,* and *subversion.* Confrontations are messages about one's own strength and serve to intimidate the opponent. Encounters are show-downs in which the claims of one contestant are publicly accepted (or not accepted). Subversions refer to situations in which people change sides.

Following Easton, the author's foremost concern is with the analysis of the continuous process of adaptation and adjustment between a particular political structure and its environment. The term *environment* is defined as everything which is not part of that political structure. It embraces all other systems of human activity (kinship, economics, religion, and so forth), rival political structures, and nonsocial systems such as the natural environment and demography. The interaction between the political structure and its environment (which together constitute a *political system*) is seen in terms of social roles. An individual is likely to have many roles: he has a family, he makes a living, he goes to church, he participates in various associations, and so on. All these roles may directly influence his political behaviour and *vice versa.* The environment thus provides both resources and restraints which regulate political behaviour. In analyzing this process of adjustment, Bailey treats the political structure as the dependent variable and the environment as the independent variable or parameter: he is primarily interested in the effect which changes at the environmental level may have for the political structure selected for study. More specifically, he wants to know about the implications of change at the State level (i.e., rival political structure) for the village political structure.

Bailey’s concern is thus with what Easton has called ‘parapolitical systems’ (cf. Easton 1965, pp. 50-56; Bailey 1968).

This is, very briefly, the essence of the conceptual framework which the author employs to reveal the patterns underlying political contests, both in particular cultures and cross-culturally. Bailey's main purpose is to show how similar patterns of competition can be found among Indian villagers (on which he is an expert), violent Swat Pathans in western Pakistan, American gangsters, university committee-men, and contemporary European politicians.

In a sense, *Stratagems* is difficult to classify, because it is a unique book in several respects. To my knowledge, it is the first comprehensive theoretical account in the field of political anthropology, with the exception, perhaps, of two recent studies edited by Marc Swartz (1966 and 1968). Furthermore, it is a fortunate and stimulating *démarche* from structural functionalism so far as it offers the tools to describe the processes that give rise to and lead to the dissolution of particular social forms. These processes are described, for example, in the three chapters on leaders and teams (pp. 35-85) in which the author demonstrates that leadership can be understood as an enterprise. Successful leadership involves the capacity to locate new resources, both human and natural, and to convert them pragmatically into political credit or power. The focus on the individual as a manipulator of social relationships and, hence, on ego-centred coalitions has direct implications for the understanding of change:

— One of the great gaps in anthropology is that we have been too much interested in the 'system' and although we know that people live half their lives finding ways to 'beat the system' we tend to take serious notice of them only when they are caught out, brought to trial and punished. In fact of course sometimes people do 'beat the system' without being punished; that is how systems change. The pressures of competition in politics drive them to find ways to win
without actually cheating, or to cheat without being caught out, or, in the
extremity, to fight to sweep that system away altogether and find one that suits
them better. — (p. 87)

This theme is further elaborated in the chapters on encapsulation and change (pp.
144-226). The practical and theoretical importance of this subject in future
research should not be underestimated. At issue is what Fredrik Barth has marked
out as the present _impasse_ in anthropology:

— I feel that if we want to understand social change, we need concepts that allow
us to observe and describe the events of change. Our contribution as social
anthropologists must lie in providing such primary materials for understanding
the processes... (Given) the basic characteristics of the descriptive concepts
we habitually use... there is no way to observe and describe an event of
change... In social anthropology, the specification of continuity is highly
problematical. To formulate hypotheses about change, we must be able to
specify the connection, that is, the processes that maintain a social form, an
institution, or an organization. An item of behaviour does not breed an item
of behaviour. What then is it that creates continuity of society from one day to
the next? — (1967, pp. 661-665)

It does credit to _Stratagems_ that its author attempts to answer questions like these.
And he does so in a style of writing which is both elegant and clear, and in a tone
which is simple and expressive. Moreover, his argument is convincingly linked
throughout most of the book. All these qualities are rare in our discipline, for
which reason alone they deserve to be mentioned. Yet the author is remarkably
modest about his aims. He notes that

— This book is not a handbook for politicians in particular cultures. Behind the
cultural diversity there lies a common structure. We attempt to discover some
of the general principles in political manoeuvre which transcend cultures and
which provide questions which could be the tools of research in a variety of
different cultures. This is not a systematized repository of the accepted wisdom
of any part of anthropology or political science: it is not, in other words, a
textbook. Its purpose is to stimulate ideas and provoke questions and, perhaps,
to foster certain attitudes. But in the end, it is a bag of tools; not an artifact —
(pp. xiii-xiv)

In several respects, Bailey draws on Easton and other political scientists. But unlike
Easton and most of his colleagues, he advocates a rather broad definition of
politics. According to Easton, politics has to do with the authoritative allocations
of values for a society: ‘Political research would seek to understand that system
of interactions in any society through which binding or authoritative allocations
are made and implemented’ (1965, pp. 50). In Bailey’s view, politics is not only
a matter of government and the concept of ‘authorities’ should preferably not be
built into the definition. Since there are sources of orderliness other than authori-
tative referees (e.g. _tribes without rulers, ordered anarchy_), it is his contention
that political structures can be recognized at all levels and in all kinds of activities.
To restrict the study of political behaviour to only one level, ’is to be ethnocentric
and, more importantly, to waste opportunities for comparative insight’ (p. 182).
Politics should be regarded as an aspect of interaction at _all_ levels.

— The anthropologist must do this. Research has uncovered and made sense of
societies which have no authorities and are not states yet enable their people
to live orderly lives. Furthermore, given the anthropologist’s strong interest in
small communities encapsulated within larger societies — in villages, tribes within nations or colonial dependencies, sections of urban populations, and so forth — who seem to operate political structures in spite of the fact that the State authorities are only occasionally involved, he has no choice but to consider these as political structures, which are partly dependent on, and partly regulated by, larger encapsulating political structures — (p. 12; cf. Bailley, 1968, 281-284)

This is not so much a definition of politics as a solid programme for doing research. In the last two chapters, Bailey sets forth how this can be carried out. This most important part of the book deals with the analysis of the relations between the big arena (the State, for convenience sake called Structure B) and the smaller arena (the peasant village structure, called Structure A). The author thus isolates two political structures and asks how they interact with one another. Two main variables govern this pattern of interaction: the cultural incongruity between both structures, on the one hand, and the resources to make interferences possible, on the other. There are various modes of encapsulation. First, encapsulation can be merely nominal: Structure A has complete autonomy when the leaders of Structure B are indifferent to what goes on in those peripheral structures. Such situations existed in the early phase of former colonial empires which allowed independent tribal or peasant enclaves to function within them. The second variety involves some degree of interaction: Structure B pacifies and collects revenues from the various Structures A. In this case, the interference is predatory and does not imply change, at least the leaders of Structure B have no preconceived intention to bring about change. A third version amounts to what has been called indirect rule which does involve some reorganization of the Structure A. Finally, encapsulation can be equivalent to integration. Virtually all new nations seek this end: that is, radical change of those small-scale political structures the rules of which are at odds with the values the central power propagates. Yet on account of either cultural incongruity or lack of sufficient resources on the part of the central ruler, the latter's achievements may fall short of his intentions. In such circumstances there is room for brokers or middlemen who are able to bridge the gap in communication since they operate on both levels, say arenas. Bailey discusses the conditions under which these brokers may evolve into leaders and when local leaders may enhance their position when assuming the role of brokers. In both cases these people manage to cut in on the resources of the larger encapsulating structure. Here we are back again in the domain of the entrepreneurs who, in a pragmatic way, seek to further their ends and in doing so bring about change.

Like other theoretical points embarked on by the author, this is amply documented with case material. Bailey's accounts of caste-climbing and caste-conflict in Orissa villages (subjects on which he has written more extensively in earlier volumes) are as fascinating as they are instructive. They are not so because of the mere facts, but because of the general principles behind the facts which are skilfully revealed. It is for this reason that Stratagems is an important book. It meets the requirements of a sophisticated anthropology as set out by Leach in his earlier mentioned monograph on the Kachins:

—I suppose that the main difficulty that every anthropologist has to face is what to do with the facts. When I read a book by one of my anthropological colleagues, I am, I must confess, frequently bored by the facts. I see no prospect of visiting either Polynesia or the Northern Territories of the Gold Coast and
I cannot arouse in myself any real interest in the cultural peculiarities of either the Tikopia or the Tallensi. I read the works of Professors Firth and Fortes not from an interest in the facts but so as to learn something about the principles behind the facts. I take it for granted that the vast majority of those who read this book will be in a similar position with regard to the Kachins. — (1964, p. 227)

Although I would thus highly recommend Stratagems to the reader, I have, nonetheless, a few questions. First, Bailey's concern with the notions of rules, orderliness, structure, system, adjustment, and maintenance and his contention that most political conflicts are orderly because they are based on an agreed upon set of rules (in most conflicts, even atrocious wars, some holds are barred), seems to draw him back into the structural-functional quarters of normative consensus and equilibrium analysis, from the rigid versions of which he wants to free himself (see p. 18, note 10). Order, says Bailey, is possible because there are rules on which people agree. So far as this is meant as an assumption it is rather close to the postulates of equilibrium analysis. As an idea it is far from new or original: the very notion of society presupposes order. Wright Mills once set forth how, when asked to do so, he would summarize in a few words the 555 pages of Parsons' The Social System: 'We are asked: How is social order possible? The answer we are given seems to be: Commonly accepted values' (1968, p. 31). In so far as Bailey meant it as an explanation, it is close to a tautology: the field worker observes certain regularities in political behaviour and brings them together under certain headings which he calls rules or themes. Then he turns around and uses these rules to explain the behaviour he has observed. The tautology is pertinent in the following passage:

— The orderliness of a competition depends upon both sides knowing the rules; both normative and pragmatic. Victory in the game depends upon creating uncertainty in the opposing team and so disorganizing it. But the game can only remain orderly so long as this uncertainty remains slight... The orderliness of a game depends upon effective communication between the competitors, which means that both must understand the language being used. — (pp. 115-116)

Bailey seems to have foreseen this objection and counters it: 'It is not a tautology to claim that competitors in politics restrain themselves because they respect the normative rules, because they can also restrain themselves out of self-interest: for pragmatic reasons' (p. 130). I feel that the remark on self-interest is begging the question. And to what do pragmatic reasons here refer? To something inside or outside the arena (i.e., set of rules, political structure)? In this respect, I also have some doubts about the question Bailey asks himself: 'But how are the competitors brought to respect the normative rules?' (p. 130). The author then introduces the factor authorities, a notion which he has emphatically excluded in the beginning of his analysis (see his critique on Easton): 'There are roles specialized in handling situations in which normative rules, for one reason or another, have come into question. These are authorities: men whose job it is to keep the rules of a structure in good order' (p. 132, italics supplied). It seems contradictory to me to infer, first, order from rules and in the second instance, from authorities and referees. One could ask here whether the actions of these authorities are also bound to rules and, if so, what these rules are and how they are related to the political structure involved. What, after all, keeps the rules of the political structure in good order?
When you assume politics to be a sort of game or set of rules, you need not see it as your task to explain this assumption. This falls definitely outside the normative rules of research.

These excursions make the chapter on control (pp. 111-143) less convincing. The mechanisms of social control which Bailey here discusses are well-known (cross-cutting ties, fission and fusion, authorities, umpires, and so forth), but I find them difficult to link up with his main argument.

A second point which I want to raise can hardly be called an objection because it has to do with the application of some notions of Stratagems to new anthropological data. When in the field in Sicily, Bailey kindly sent at my request a copy of an earlier draft of this book, which he was writing at the time (1966). This manuscript was, in several senses, illuminating for me since it helped me to understand the quality of the relations between the State and the village I had selected for study. In the early 19th century, this peasant community was still largely feudal in its main features. When the village became increasingly encapsulated within the framework of the modern State, the village structure gradually changed. The interaction between these different political structures (which, in Bailey's terminology, found adjustment to one another) resulted in a modus vivendi—a new structure—which can be largely identified as mafia: a political structure the rules of which involved the use of violence and intimidation in collusion with formal authority. The difficulty which presents itself in the analysis is to determine how many political structures were actually involved in this situation of encapsulation. To say that there were three (the State, the village, and mafia) seems not consistent with the fact that, in the course of time, the State and the village found adjustment through the operation of mafiosi as middlemen. On the other hand, mafia can be understood in terms of the pragmatic dimension of Structure B, that is the State. I have the impression that Bailey is able to get away with his own cases because these concern situations of incipient encapsulation: cases in which it is still possible to differentiate between Structure A and Structure B. But how can this scheme be applied when the interaction between the two political structures has gone so far that a new structure is beginning to emerge?

This brings up the following question. To what extent may we still speak of a particular political structure when this structure is increasingly subject to change? Bailey recognizes the fact that social systems never change in toto and that change is in most of the cases uneven and partial (cf. Percy Cohen 1969, p. 176). He illustrates this with his data on India (Harijan affair). But where encapsulation comes close to integration, it might well be that both Structure A and Structure B cannot be easily identified.

Third, and finally, there are some minor points which bear on references. On re-reading Easton's *A Framework for Political Analysis*, one must conclude that this book has been more important for Bailey than his three references to it would suggest (see pp. 18, 145, and 200). Easton's ideas on environment, response of political systems, stability, and change are cases in point. It might well be, however, that Easton's insights have gradually become a sort of stock-in-trade among (British) political scientists to one of whom Bailey refers (p. xiv). A similar point concerns Bailey's use of the term themes for normative rules (p. 101 ff.). In a foot-

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note, he refers to Graham who suggested the term normative themes: 'these are what I have earlier called 'values'. The word theme is attractive because it suggests that politicians keep harping on them' (p. 110, note 15). In this respect, similar ideas were worked out by Morris Edward Opler (e.g. 1945, 1968, and 1969). Opler defines themes as postulates or affirmations, declared or implied, usually controlling behaviour or stimulating activity, which are tacitly approved or openly promoted in a society. Incidentally, both Bailey and Opler have recently published data on India in terms of cultural themes (Bailey 1966; Opler 1968). But these are indeed minor points just as the lack of a glossary at the end of the book which might be of use for any reader wishing to know to what extent Bailey's definitions differ from those of others. For example, what Easton calls a political system, Bailey sees as a political structure. For Bailey a political system involves both structure and environment. Precisely because Bailey adopts much of Easton's framework, such unexplained differences may lead to confusion.

In conclusion, I hardly need to say how much Stratagems has influenced my conception of the area covered by anthropology and political anthropology. It has provided me with a series of new insights and useful tools to understand the processes of change in tribal and peasant communities. In this respect, Bailey's book is a long step forward in a field in which Leach, Barth, and others have done important spade-work.

References


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—, The mafia of a Sicilian village. A study of political middlemen. (Forthcoming).


4 In writing this review, I have been aided by discussions on the subject, namely this book, in the Mediterranean Seminar of the Department of Anthropology at the University of Amsterdam during November 1969.