A Vocabulary of Political Analysis: Conceptual and Methodological Context of F. G. Bailey's Study of Politics

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This paper, in continuity with my overall project of re-appraising the works of the British social and political anthropologist F. G. Bailey, seeks to locate the intellectual tradition from which Bailey drew his conceptual and methodological foundations for an analysis of politics in complex societies. Through detailed ethnographies of politics in the state of Orissa from the late 1950s to the late 1960s, Bailey generated a vocabulary of political analysis. The conceptual framework for the analyses of politics thus generated followed closely from the methodological innovations of the intellectual tradition to which Bailey firmly belonged.[1] In tracing his intellectual genealogy, I thereby intend to revisit the work of a generation of scholars with whom Bailey shared a paradigm, but more importantly, foreground the continuing contemporary significance of the paradigm that had almost been obliterated from anthropological discourse.[2]

At the outset, a clarification is in order. Although my attempt here is to look for the workings of a methodology in Bailey's anthropological analysis of politics, reflections on the method in its mature form develops much later among contemporary writers on the Manchester tradition of ethnography. When Bailey had conducted his studies, the method

[1] As outlined in my presentation last year, Bailey was among the first generation of anthropologists of what has come to be known as the Manchester 'school' or Manchester 'circle' in social anthropology, under the stewardship of Max Gluckman, that had evolved around the Department of Social Anthropology and Sociology of the Victoria University of Manchester. Many of the prominent members of the 'School' hold divergent opinions regarding the appellation, but few dispute the pivotal role that Gluckman had in fashioning a distinct identity for Manchester ethnography. Clyde Mitchell, one of "the most prominent members of the school" had declared thus: "seen from the outside, the Manchester School *was* a school. But seen from the inside, it was a seething contradiction. And perhaps the only thing we had in common was that Max [Gluckman] was our teacher, and that we wrote ethnography rich in actual cases" (Kempny, 2005, p.145; emphasis in original). Along with Bailey, amongst the first generation Manchester anthropologists were T. Scarlett Epstein (also doing her research in India), Abner Cohen, Emrys L. Peters and Ronald Frankenberg.

[2] Evens and Handelman argue that while "the Manchester school had profound influence on British social anthropology and elsewhere, yet by the 1970s the approach had lost ground to vulgar claims that it was merely a remnant of structural-functionalism and its colonial roots. By the 1980s, the impact on anthropology of approaches keyed to representation and reliance on text and media served to erode and blunt the significance of intensive and lengthy fieldwork in open social fields, helping further to eclipse Manchester school anthropology" (Evens & Handelman, 2006, p.)

was only in its nascent form. Hence, what I have been able to attempt here is to locate the broad contours of that method in his work, which found fuller expression in the work of later generation of anthropologists[3].

This essay is divided into three sections: section one outlines the methodological bases of Bailey's analyses of politics; section two delineates the conceptual tool-kit that Bailey generated by closely following the methodological tenets of his intellectual tradition; and section three discusses his conception of politics as borne out by his initial Orissa ethnographies and more recent methodological works.

I

I begin with a discussion of the two central methodological innovations that were distinctive in the Manchester tradition of ethnography, namely, the extended-case method and situational analysis, which radically refashioned the way that society was imagined in the theoretical formulations of structural-functionalism, the reigning paradigm of both British and American anthropology and sociology in the 1950s and '60s. Structural-functionalism pictured society in terms of stability and equilibrium, wherein the explanation of a social phenomenon was based on determining its function in reproducing the social structure in its current form. The constitutive problem of structural-functionalism was thus its inability to explain those phenomena which failed to contribute to the status quo but also contravened or disrupted it.

The extended-case method developed from this constitutional incapacity of structural-functionalism to address the issue of social process, by ethnographically isolating and identifying the social mechanisms that constituted process as such. By emphasizing on empirically ascertaining the actual mechanisms of social process, Max Gluckman envisaged the extended case method as "shifting the ethnographic focus from the normative to actual practice. Instead of trying to understand social life as a function of its ideal principles and formal rules, and so its theoretical self-presentation, Gluckman moved to understand social life in terms of its lived, concrete reality" (Evens & Handelman, 2005, p.3). Gluckman thus anticipated what later came to be known as

[3] See, eg., Sally Falk Moore & Barbara G. Myerhoff (eds), Symbol and Politics in Communal Ideology, Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 1975.

practice theory in sociology and social anthropology, associated most notably, with the French philosopher and anthropologist, Pierre Bourdieu. Unlike the imagination of society as a regulated set of rules and norms, a theory of practice view society where people are seen to act according to the particulars of the situation in which they find themselves. These particulars are essentially exigent and contingent on historical, experiential, socio-cultural, natural, and instrumental factors. While normative principles have a bearing on people's behavior, in practice these principles are deconstructed and reconstructed according to the momentary and the improvisatory flow of circumstance.

The extended-case method was more than an ethnographic tool, it was also a theory for bringing "the social structure analytically to life" (Evens, 2005, p.47). By emphasizing the practice of social actors (although the term 'practice' was not used in anthropological discourse in its current meaning during the 1950s and '60s), Gluckman was open to whatever happened in the social situation, open to surprise, and this effected his understanding of how a social situation refracted the social structure. This, as one of the contemporary adherents of the method attests, was one of the hallmarks of the Manchester school of social anthropology, which, "instead of collecting data from informants about what 'natives' ought to do, they began to fill their diaries with accounts of what 'natives' actually were doing, with accounts of real events, struggles and dramas that took place over space and time" (Burawoy, 1998, p.5).

Along with the innovative method of the extended case, Bailey and his Manchester cohort also based their ethnographic studies on what is known as situational analysis. As has been generally defined in social anthropology, a social situation is a temporally and spatially bounded series of events abstracted by the ethnographer from the on-going flow of social life. The social situation as a unit of analysis, therefore, is defined by the observer, and circumscribed or delimited according to the problem to be analysed. This fundamental methodological principle has been outlined by Max Gluckman and Ely Devons as a dictum: "to carry out his analysis the investigator must close his system, but he must at the same time keep his mind open to the possibility that in doing so he has excluded significant events and relations between events…But, since this is only an analytical device,…when circumscribing, the anthropologist must be sure that he has

demarcated a field of events which are *significantly interconnected*" (Gluckman, 1964, p.185; emphasis added).

Situational analysis subsequently developed an idea of a 'social field' to incorporate the fact that series of events must be located in a social space. From this perspective, a situation is viewed as occurring within a field setting whose circumference expands and contracts according to the changing interests and values of the actors in the situation. Explicitly this orientation is directed towards the analysis of processes occurring within a field of interaction which may cross institutional and organizational boundaries and which may persist when groups, organizations and institutions disappear or are modified. This in effect means that situational analysis of a social field can be applied not only to the analysis of processes which have traditionally concerned anthropologists but also to the analysis of processes occurring within rapidly changing fields. Bailey, writing about two village disputes in Orissa in 1958, argued as much: "…our techniques, even as they exist now, do not rule us out of the more complex field" (Bailey, in Gluckman, 1964, p.82).

Situational analysis prioritized the individual actor in describing the institutional, organizational, and structural processes of which the actor is a part. Actor-oriented approach was seen to be useful to understand the flux and change of day-to-day life, as against grand social changes, and the central importance given to the individual as manipulator and innovator was a means to show how the actor "creates, in varying degrees, the social world around him" (Garbett, 1970, p.215).[4] Bailey addressed this issue in his analysis of caste dispute in an Orissa village between the clean castes and the untouchable caste, the Pans, by arguing that the 'case' was a "tea-cup affair. As history, it is nothing: but it has its value as a microcosm in which can be seen some of the political processes which occur in arenas from the tea-cup to the ocean" (Bailey, 1969, p.166). Situational analysis thus had implications for the presentation of data since it required that a series of connected situations be set out extensively with the same set of actors

[4] Recent commentators on the history of the Manchester school have argued that while Gluckman was influenced by Durkheim and Evans-Pritchard in fashioning the extended case method, the orientation was essentially Marxist in character devised for "empirically ascertaining the actual mechanisms of social process…[Gluckman] was shifting the ethnographic focus from the normative to actual practice…The very idea of situation, considered existentially, presumes not only a predicament but also an agential capacity on the part of the situated (with their different subjectivities) to negotiate the predicament by praxis (Evens & Handelman, 2006, p.3-5).

appearing from one situation to another. This in turn meant that ethnography had to lead to abstractions where the behavior and associated meanings in one situation had to be interpreted to differentiate the separate normative contents or strands of multiplex relationships.[5]

Overall, in the extended case method and situational analysis, the attempt was to generate analytical or theoretical positions from the analysis of events and practices, so that the procedures underlying the descriptions were, as far as possible, revealed in the process of analysis. Situational analysis by essentially viewing reality in processual terms, as becoming rather than being, "aimed to connect dialectically ethnographic description with analysis so that they were in continual and mutually reflexive, critical, problematizing, and questioning relation to each other" (Kapferer, 2005, p.275). Although situational analysis was first employed to understand process or change, it was devised mainly as a means to conduct intensive fieldwork in locations where the social world was not neatly delimited, where the boundaries of tribe, community and village have been breached, and the small scale, the large scale, the local and the global were interlinked. The Australian anthropologist and a second generation member of the Manchester 'school' underlines the significance of the method "to expand the relevance of anthropology in a world that was no longer-if it ever had been-the closed-off, isolated sets of realities of the anthropological imagination at the heart of the discipline's beginnings" (ibid, p.279).

The extended-case method and situational analysis have been consistently utilized in Bailey's diverse body of work, beginning with the Orissa ethnographies, and later in his mature methodological writings on the anthropological enterprise, the nature of truth in the social sciences, and in comparative analyses of political behavior.[6] In the following section, I delineate a vocabulary of political analyses that Bailey conceived for a universal understanding of political processes and practices. The urge to develop a universal vocabulary for analyzing politics bore directly from Bailey's imagination of the

[5] Bailey is categorical in his understanding of multiplex relationships as the subject matter of social anthropology. Unlike disciplines such as political science and economics, for which specialized, "single interest" relationships such as economic man and political man are the norm, "…we are interested in social systems in so far as actual relations between persons tend to carry more than one interest- in so far as they are multiplex" (Bailey, in Gluckman, 1964, p.73), that is the ways in which different relationships-economic, political, ritual- are linked to one another.

[6] See, The Saving Lie (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 2003); Debate and Compromise: The Politics of Innovation (Oxford: Basil Blackwell, 1973)

discipline of social anthropology. Certainly, he says, anthropologists discuss "specific communities (even specific people in them) at a specific period. But to do this and nothing else is to fail. Our interest is primarily in problems. We want to raise problems which far transcend…[particular localized communities] in the middle of the twentieth century, because they are questions which can be asked about change and development in many parts of the world, at all periods of history" (Bailey, 1971, p.27). Thus, as will be discussed in the following section, Bailey's political analysis hinged on looking for "processual universals" (Salzman, 1970, p.176) behind contextual specificities.

II

The first task of a sociological analysis of politics which deploys the extended case method is to circumscribe both empirically and analytically events that can be called political. Circumscription is determined by the problems each anthropologist sets for himself, and "in practice this is a decision for which no rules can be established. Only experience and judgment can help the research worker in specific circumstances" (Devons & Gluckman in Gluckman, 1964, p.188). Bailey's ethnographic field was Orissa, where political disputes in two villages were the specific 'cases' selected to understand multiplex relationships. Hence, he circumscribed his field so that he could locate individuals within contexts which involve several different kinds of interests- domestic, political, economic, ritual etc. To do this, he studied the social hinterland of each village, the relation between politics and descent in the "small region, the dispersal of castes through the region and the institution of caste councils, and possibly even the system of extinct, small Orissa kingdoms" (Bailey in Gluckman, 1964).

Delimiting a ***political structure*** is the beginning of political analysis. Analytically a political structure is "a set of rules for regulating competition" (Bailey, 1969, p.1), the rules being of two distinctive kinds- normative and pragmatic rules. The former "are very general guides to conduct; they are used to judge particular actions ethically right or wrong; and within a particular political structure they can be used to justify *publicly* a course of conduct" (ibid, p.5); the latter consist of "tactics and manoeuvres as likely to be the most efficient"; and therefore they are "normatively neutral" (ibid). The normative rules are the "public face" of politics; the pragmatic rules are its "private wisdom"-

ranging from "rules of 'gamesmanship' (how to win without actually cheating) to rules which advise on how to win by cheating without being disqualified" (ibid, p.5-6). These are rules internal to a political structure.

Crucial in understanding political structures is the environment in which a political structure is situated. In Bailey's terminology, these are the ***encapsulating structures*** of politics, and "one way to understand a political structure is to analyse the process through which the continuing adjustment between it and its environment takes place" (ibid, p.145). In his study of two village disputes in Orissa in 1958, where the outcomes of the disputes varied even though the circumstances of the dispute were identical, Bailey's analysis shows that it was in the differential relationships of the villages with its environment or encapsulating structures that the solution to the puzzle laid. The two disputes were identical as both were between the clean caste and the Pans (or Panos) in the two villages of Bisipara and Baderi respectively, the internal social structures being almost identical in the two cases[7]. However, the Bisipara Pans wanted a revolution and the Baderi Pans did not. In order to explain this, Bailey took into account the relationships the villagers had with persons and groups outside the village, and which are not part of the village structure; as well as the institutions which do not belong within the village system, such as the police, political parties and the district administration, in short, the encapsulating structures.

Any political structure in order to be understood processually will have to take into account not only encapsulating structures, but also other political structures such as those which exist for other purposes but which also have an internal system of political activity such as trade unions, religious groups etc. Bailey calls these "parapolitical" to signify their existence and varying degrees of autonomy within the structure of national government. Almost without exception today, every small scale community such as a village or tribal structure exist within larger encapsulating political structures, and the

[7] In Bisipara, the dispute arose when the Pans demanded to enter the village temple as their legal right. Upon being prevented by the clean castes, the Pans called the police to ensure that their legal right be enforced. In Baderi, "half an hour's walk from Bisipara" (Bailey in Gluckman, 1964, p.55), the dispute between the pans and the Konds (who held an analogous position to that of the clean castes in Bisipara) broke out when the pans were humiliated during a wedding feast by a Kond. This resulted in the Konds' resolving to impose an "economic 'lock-out' of the Pans where their services were sought to be boycotted, but in actuality, the resolution had come to nothing and the Pans never went out of job. (See, Bailey, 'Two Villages in Orissa', in Gluckman (ed), Closed Systems and Open Minds, London: Oliver & Boyd, 1964)

task of a political anthropologist is to ask how similar or dissimilar are the two structures (the enclosed and the encapsulating) and how they interact with one another.

Situational analysis as demonstrated in Bailey's ethnographies of politics abstracts specific situations from reality to understand the contingency of rules and practices within political communities[8]. This can be understood through the ways in which two political structures interact in varying circumstances in terms of political resources and political roles that each of the structures have at their command. ***Political resources***, Bailey's term is ***prizes***, are determined by the internal rules of a political structure as well as the external environment. In a village political structure, normative rules of who can compete for which prize is determined by village criteria of honour and purity, as we've seen in the case of the temple entry dispute between the clean castes and the Pans. However, because political structure of the village was not an isolated entity, the Pans in turn employed what is a normative rule in the encapsulating structure to subvert the village normative rule. "All that [the Pans] could see was a resource in the environment, available to them but not the clean castes" (ibid, p.162) at the beginning of the dispute, without intending to withdraw from participating in the village political structure. Thus, what was seen as a pragmatic rule within the village political structure- breaking a quite explicit rule of not making use of political resources outside the village- was a perfectly justifiable normative rule outside it, and by resorting to resources in the environment, the Pans succeeded in effecting a breach.

There are not only new prizes, but new ways of winning them, and it is only through a processual analysis of cases extended through time that the relations of encapsulation and the changes within political structures are visible. It also brings into relief that through time encapsulated structures may disappear and merge with the encapsulating structures but this can happen "if one watches long enough [then] out of the many different ways in which the players are changing their tactics or resisting change a few general patterns emerge: patterns of resistance; patterns of change that come about from seized opportunities; and over all a slow drift towards uniformity, as the minor arenas lose their

[8] For Bailey, a political community is the widest group in which competition for valued ends is controlled. Beyond this point the rules do not apply and politics is not so much a competition as a fight, in which the objective is not to defeat the opposition in an orderly contest (where there is agreement about how to play and what to play for), "but to destroy one 'game' and establish a different set of rules" (Bailey, 1969, p.1)

distinctiveness and become the same as, or one with the main arena" (ibid, p.154). It is significant to note here that uniformity also signals that the relations of encapsulation demand that the rules of politics flow both ways, and one is not morally superior to the other. Thus Bailey's enterprise is to find out the rules which regulate political combats, both in particular cultures and cross-culturally; but he is categorical about imputing moral judgments to individual action, arguing instead that "our business is not to sort out the good men from the bad men but to distinguish between effective and ineffective tactics and to say why they are so" (ibid, p.xii).

Every political structure has rules for recruiting personnel, based on compatibility between political roles and roles which exist in other structures, or between two sets of political roles (women were excluded from public affairs in many cultures because of their domestic role which was seen to be incompatible with a political role). Processual analysis necessitates that political activity be situated in different spheres of activity. Here, the notion of arenas and political fields become important analytical tools to understand the diverse groups involved in political activity in a series of interactions. ***Arenas*** are frameworks-institutionalized or not- which manifestly function as settings for antagonistic interaction aimed at arriving at publicly recognized decision with respect to prizes and values; a ***political field*** is "the totality of relationships between actors oriented to the same prizes or values" and is constituted by "purposive goal-directed group action, and though it contains both conflict and coalition, collaborative action is very often made to serve the purposes of contentious action" (Turner, 1974, p.128). Political arena is where competition takes place within generally agreed upon "rules of the game"; political field, where conflict takes place over what the rules should be.[9] In Orissa, when the Pans aspired for political roles outside the village political structure, they were in effect entering another arena where political goods were defined in quite a different way from

[9] Here, it may be noticed that there are considerable overlaps in Bailey's terminological and thereby conceptual framework- political structure, political community, and political field are cases in point. However, in later developments of the paradigm of action theory, the empirical contexts associated with the different analytical categories helped clarify levels of analysis. Victor Turner has noted that when characterizing a political field, "relations of likeness such as classes, categories, similar roles, and structural positions" are of prior sociological importance. When successive arenas are to be characterized, systematic interdependencies in local systems of social relations, going from demography, to residential distribution, religious affiliation and genealogical and class structure become significant" (quoted in Vincent, 1978, p.183)

the honour-purity symbols of the village structure. Subsequently in the process, the access to new kinds of resource- getting elected to office- was seen to be advantageous by the clean caste men too, and they turned their ambitions outward and found allies in the Pans who in the village were their enemies. Thus a pragmatic move by the Pans acquires a normative status where seeking political office outside the village arena changes the rules of the game. A pragmatic bargaining posture is achieved which entails some recognition "that what is usually done…[is] the normal thing to do, and in time the normal thing becomes the right thing. Continued pragmatic interactions,…, begin to achieve normative status" (Bailey, 1969, p.174).

Political fields overlap and interpenetrate: some are organized and purposive; others contain much that is arbitrary and accidental. This important notion allows for the manipulation of the ambiguous so important for successful political action. Political structures are thus not seen in a state of assumed equilibrium where an entire society is functionally integrated in terms of prescribed roles and norms, but the emphasis is to point to differences in political action, political goals, political resources and political collectivities and the constitution of the political in the interdependencies of different arenas and political fields.

We now turn to a discussion of ***political roles*** where Bailey outlines the relationship between prizes, values, mobilization of personnel, moralities as central in understanding the gradations of political roles within a political structure. Keeping with his realist analysis of politics, political roles are defined as those having responsibility, power and honour. In any political structure, competition for power, honour or responsibility is based on the scarcity of these resources: "a prize which everyone wins is not a prize. Honour has meaning only when some people are without honour; power and wealth are got at the expense of other people" (Bailey, ibid, p.21). Leaders in a political structure manipulate resources, both material and symbolic, in order to acquire political teams. Teams comprise of leaders, a core and a following- a core is a 'moral team' united around an ideal or morally committed to a leader, a following is a 'contract team' where the follower makes a contract to support the leader in return for some favor or service. Bailey underlines that these are analytical distinctions, and "*when actual political teams*

are examined one asks to what extent are teams of one kind or the other" (ibid, p.28; emphasis in original).

The significance of political teams is manifest in political competition, and situational analysis of political roles and teams suggests that different contests may give rise to different sets of political roles. Two roles of great significance in political contests are that of the referee and the middleman, roles based on the function of mediator or adjudicator between contestants. The political referee is an ambiguous role, they "are merely face-saving devices for communication between the contestants and may mediate (i.e. *suggest* compromises) but cannot authoritatively arbitrate (i.e. *impose* settlements)" (ibid, p.32). Moreover, the role of the referee itself can sometimes be one of the prizes in a political competition, where one man's claim to be a referee may be disputed by another.

Middleman is a role that emerges in encapsulated arenas to regulate the flow of external political resources into the smaller encapsulated arenas. Middlemen emerge to facilitate communication between the larger and the smaller structures, and might be normatively brought about to plug any deficiencies in the larger structure, or they might be pragmatic additions to a normative role. The middleman's success depends on sustaining an imperfect communication so that by 'muddling through' or by bargains and compromises, the communication in encapsulated arenas never result in outright victories for one of the sides. The political role of the middlemen also takes politics from the study of the manipulative strategies of a narrow range of political actors at the local level to a wider arena to the analytical unit made up not just of the interaction of localized individuals but also of men in movement and of actions and enterprises which are dependent for their success on operations across space and over considerable periods of time. The referee and the middlemen as interpreters of rules across situations and as mediators across incommensurable worlds are thus, not seen as immoral men in Bailey's scheme of things, although in real situations, their normative status always attracts moral opprobrium. Unlike role theory in functionalist analysis, processual analysis understands that roles emerge in specific interactions between arenas or competing political structures. Thus the empirical category of 'broker', 'middleman', 'referee' are also analytical categories emerging out of situational analysis of social action.

This brings us to the question of political morality and the constitution of political selves. For Bailey, morality is at the cusp of public morality and private wisdom. Further, different political groups constitute morality in tandem with the nature of group that they are. As 'ideal types', a leader-follower group is moral insofar as the group serves the same moral cause and there is some equivalence between them-"if the leader lives extravagantly, he must also be seen to be extravagantly generous" (ibid, p.43); if the followers are merely "hirelings", the group is unlikely to possess a moral core, it is merely a transactional group. In actual relationships, however, the relationship between a leaders and followers is likely to have both the moral and the transactional element, and a processual analysis of politics is more interested in charting "the rise and fall of these two elements, balanced against one another: and there have been several anthropological studies which show how rituals which symbolize and re-inforce common religious values are performed when men are beginning to show too much concern for their own personal interests and to quarrel with one another over the distribution of material benefits" (ibid, p.44).

Moral leadership in political groups is a matter of manipulating symbols. A successful leader is one who can monopolize symbols, either by denying their "use to subordinates and rivals", or by pronouncing "the symbol worthless" (ibid, p.83). Bailey gives the instance of Indian caste system, where there are elaborate ways of ritual disqualification, thereby marking "more and more degraded positions in the hierarchy"; on the other hand, when a lower caste person makes a claim to a higher caste symbol, they pronounce the symbol as inauthentic and therefore unworthy of bestowing a higher status. Morality is therefore not a matter of reason, and a political leader who appeals to morality is merely taking recourse to rhetoric. Bailey argues rhetoric is "deliberately constructed to persuade and often to mislead. The prime purpose is […] to create attitudes… The politician who claims to speak for the people and to have their interests at heart, and who talks of his humble home and his honest and industrious parents, is using rhetoric" (Bailey, 1993, p.58-59). In Bailey's pragmatic view of politics with a clear emphasis on practice, "the ultimate truths of morality cannot be defended by reason; the appropriate weapons are persuasion, assertion, or force. In short, the 'truth' of moral questions is not discovered but negotiated or enforced" (Bailey, 2003, p.196).

The obverse of morality is expediency- utility or self-interest, as against what is right and just. In *The Civility of Indifference*, Bailey analyzes the contradiction between expediency and morality, among other things, through the idea of *Swaraj* and the Harijan movement. Swaraj was upto and beyond 1947 an idea marked with moral fervor symbolizing freedom, and conjuring an "imagined world, a one-dimensional world with everything clearly marked as good or evil" (Bailey, 1996, p.132); post 1947, and in the 1950s during his fieldwork, Bailey found a transformed world where swaraj had lost its earlier moral meaning because "once freedom had been attained, people had to unwrap the bundle labeled 'freedom' and decide what, of the many things it contained, they really wanted…, because members of what once had been a united team fighting against the imperialists now found themselves in an arena where former comrades fought against each other" (ibid, p.133). What was once a matter of morality, then, had transformed itself into practical concerns of political competition and political expediency, signaling the contingent and indeterminate nature of moral truths.

In a similar fashion, the Harijan movement demonstrated the contradictions between the force of a moral nomenclature (as the 'Children of God') and a pragmatic piece of legislation used for political ends. The Harijan inspector in Bisipara was "concerned at best with due process", and Gandhi's vision of how the world ought to work had to rely on "external force… pushed by politicians and government" (ibid, 128-134). Thus, Bailey's argument shows while individual moral visions have their own place, often morality is differentially interpreted, and in most cases, there "is the mingling of a moral self with a tactical self" (Bailey, 1983, p.223). The heart of the matter, as he argues, is to understand the relationship between the two. At the level of their basic meaning, an action cannot be characterized as both tactical and moral; but, as Bailey argues, the two selves might co-exist as "'percentages', so to speak, of a relationship between people, as in the case of ambivalence" (ibid). What a person chooses to project is what a person gets identified with- a tactical self could only be effective under the cover of a moral self, and because the latter is a cover, those who are persuaded to accept the cover also accept "*apparently* only one single uncomplicated self" (ibid). This is, once again, a remarkable display of Bailey's ability to processually understand not only how morality is manifested

in individual action, but also how moralities change and that the effectiveness of morality is a function of strategizing and manipulating.

In concluding this section, I draw attention to one of the vexed questions in Bailey's paradigm- if politics is all about competition, contests, and encounters, how can one analyze radical or revolutionary ***change***. It will be useful to recall here that the extended-case method was initially deployed to understand social and political change in newly independent nations, where it was easy to identify and locate changes in institutional change. Bailey's paradigm with its emphasis on rules of the game and processual universals, classifies change into three types- repetitive change, adaptive change and radical change. The first type lacks any cumulative element: "so far as the rules and roles are concerned there is a complete return to the status quo" (Bailey, 1969, p.197); the second, where normative rules being definitive are preserved (where there is agreement on the rules- for lower castes in Bisipara, norms of caste-climbing is a normative rule), but pragmatic adjustments are made to the rules as a change in the environment of the political structure; in the third, a new set of normative rules replace an older set of rules, and there is no return to the status quo. In identifying radical change, Bailey foregrounds the processual element of analysis by arguing what might appear to be dramatic or revolutionary from a distance (the attaining of independence; the abolition of zamindari or untouchability), appears less so when looked at from close quarters- "a new rule would slide into place without any formal and open abolition of the old rule" (although formally untouchability has been abolished, it continues to be practiced in India both overtly and covertly) (ibid, p.205-6). Bailey, anticipating practice theory, argues that "action and the normative approval of action are not directly related with one another…a new rule is not proved, accepted or rejected by people's statements of intention, but by where they line up when an encounter takes place, and by the agreed outcome of that encounter" (ibid, p.209-11)[10]. I will return to this question in the final section of the paper, when discussing how Bailey resolves his conception of politics with that of revolutionary and/ or ideological politics.

[10] A pertinent situation that comes to mind here is the question of reservations; one might formally profess to be a pro-reservationist, but in practice might manipulate the situation to the extent that the formal rule is either subverted or the rule itself made to seem worthless.

III

In a review of political anthropology in 1978, Joan Vincent wrote, "at such a point this review [of action theory] in political anthropology… most honestly rests in the lap of Marx, Bailey, and the dialectic" (Vincent, 1978, p.190). This is a curious statement as Bailey's paradigm has been usually associated with "gentlemanly politics", where competition, rather than the game (which connotes only orderliness), or the fight (where no holds are barred) is seen to be the quintessential political domain. However, from the preceding account of Bailey's ouvre, we begin to make better sense of what Vincent might have meant in making that statement.

What I'm attempting here in this final section is an understanding of Bailey's conception of politics in the light of his methodological and conceptual framework. These are tentative in nature, albeit befitting the intellectual attitude that Bailey seems to have professed in his rich and varied body of work.

For Bailey, politics is constituted in the discontinuities of social life. By observing disputes, whether in a village panchayat, or a university committee, or the British parliament, Bailey underlines that encounters are "occasions when structures may be shaken loose… something unexpected [takes place], something not self-evident". Such an event constitutes a discontinuity, a problem that needs to be solved. A processual analysis of politics therefore is also a dialectical analysis where in order to understand the discontinuity- the antithesis, one need to go back to the thesis, to move to an understanding of the synthesis. For Bailey, different rules characterize different stages of the dialectic, and the nature of the synthesis depends on individual practices in different contexts. In his ethnographic analysis of politics in Orissa, he repeatedly found that in Bisipara, politics always followed a pervasive and resolute pragmatism: "they were calculators, pragmatists, quotidian thinkers, in the habit of working out consequences when they made decisions" (Bailey, 1996, p.xii). In contrasting pragmatic politics with true belief or ideology, Bailey settles the conundrum by arguing that every true belief also has a pragmatic element: "when people compromise over matters of principle they have re-examined a true belief (an ideology) and factored it into a set of preferences. Once that is done, the guiding light is no longer *only* the true belief (socialism, Indian independence, Oriya nationalism, nonviolence, social and economic justice, and so forth)

but also pragmatism itself, the principle that requires one to monitor an ideal to see how far (or in what alternative forms) it can be realized, and to find out what will be the costs of doing so" (Bailey, 1998, p.205; emphasis in original). Thus, pragmatism itself contains the kernel of a true belief- being reasonable, when "pragmatism can become itself a moral absolute, a design for living that is intrinsically valued" (ibid, p.206).

The pragmatic notion of politics also points to another aspect of Bailey's idea of the 'political' and consequently of human nature. The pragmatist is seen as an opportunist, an unprincipled person, an amoral, self-concerned man, who by compromising and strategizing lacks the "need for enemies", the basis of any true belief or ideology. In Orissa, the Pans and the clean castes avoided prolonged conflict "long enough to let it interfere with the serious business of getting the fields cultivated" (Bailey, 1969, p.162). For Bailey, "the human habit (what we call second nature) lies somewhere between indifference ("not my business") and moderation…" (Bailey, 1998, p.211), and here we see Bailey engaging with the Hobbesian question: how is society possible, in a context of uncertainty and a struggle for power. Bailey's answer would be by manipulating, by strategizing, by compromising, in other words, through practice. As an anthropologist who believes in being true to the discipline, Bailey as one of the oldest surviving members of the first generation Manchester cohorts, sums up what was originally intended by Gluckman, the master, to develop not only how ethnography has to be done but also a practice of ethnographic practice; in other words, how do we arrive at the truth? "Truth is whatever is the case, whatever is reality" (Bailey, 2003, p.199), to which must be added the question of power, both in understanding politics just as in understanding the truth claims of a science: the question of "who benefits"?

I would like to end this essay by anticipating in a way what I propose to address in my next spell at the Institute: in Bailey's realist analysis of politics, politics is robbed of its mystique. If real politicians are to keep their job and do it well, how can we understand, through a realist analysis, how the mystique of politics is created and sustained? How can we understand communalism, state policies, inter- and intra-class politics, social movements- the grand narratives of politics?

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