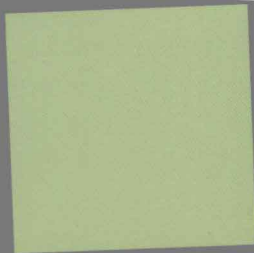


PRINCIPLES OF INTERNATIONAL POLITICS

People's Power,
Preferences, and
Perceptions

Bruce Bueno de Mesquita



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AND PERCEPTIONS

Bruce Bueno de Mesquita

Hoover Institution at Stanford University



A Division of Congressional Quarterly Inc.
Washington, D.C.

*To the memory of my teachers. They showed me what life lived
with dignity is, and they taught me to reflect on how our
world works. Though I can no longer turn to them for counsel,
still I listen for their whispers on the wind.*

Abraham Bueno de Mesquita, 1910–1982

Clara Bueno de Mesquita, 1916–1997

Abramo Fimo Kenneth Organski, 1923–1998

William Harrison Riker, 1920–1993

CQ Press

A Division of Congressional Quarterly Inc.

1414 22nd Street, N.W.

Washington, D.C. 20037

(202) 822-1475; (800) 638-1710

www.cqpress.com

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Book design, cover, charts, maps: Gerry Quinn

Map of the world: Joyce Kachergis

Photo credits: 3, Senate Historical Office; 11, Filip Horvat, SABA; 18, 53, 69, 78, 100, 136 (top), 164, 175, 178, 190, 209, 288, 300, 331, 359, 376, 383 (top, bottom), 431, 451, Reuters; 23, Library of Congress; 89, 107, 240, 292, 368, 404, National Archives; 136 (bottom), 228, 324, AP/Wide World; 148 (left) Photo Researchers; 148 (right), 256, 328, 424, 463, 484, 524, Corbis/Bettmann; 172, Kirk Anderson; 214, 480, Tribune Media Services; 336, George Bush Library.

Printed in the United States of America

03 02 01 00 99 5 4 3 2 1

Library of Congress Cataloging-in-Publication Data

in process



PREFACE

A textbook is the first exposure most students have to the study of international affairs. It is not only an opportunity to shape how students think about international events for the rest of their lives but a chance to organize the thinking of those who will go on to business, government, or academic careers that involve intimate concern with foreign policy and international politics. Today's students are our future and so must be better informed, not only about the facts of history but, equally importantly, about ideas that will guide their thinking. I have tried here to present students with a view of international relations grounded in the scientific method and focused on a unified theoretical theme.

Often, international relations is studied as a subject divorced from daily politics or as a scattershot sampling of competing ideas and conjectures. Often, it is presented as a mysterious subject that depends on wisdom without the assistance of science, rather than as a subject amenable to the scientific method. And, all too often, it is treated as if events are unique and unpredictable when they can be predicted and explained through the judicious application of analytic tools, logic, and empirical rigor. I have endeavored to make even the most demanding concepts readily accessible and interesting to beginning students by offering numerous illustrative applications in each chapter and by trying to write in an easily understood style. At the same time, I have tried to make the book meaty enough so that students will want to return to it long after they have completed the introductory course.

THE APPROACH

Central among my convictions is that international politics is a product of the normal pulls and tugs of domestic affairs; that leaders (not nations) make policy decisions and do so to maximize their prospects of staying in office; and therefore that decisions are strategic, taking into account expected responses by adversaries and supporters, and designed to maximize the leader's (not the state's) welfare. I call this view the strategic perspective. The quest for personal political power guides policy choices, and the cumulative effect of policy choices

gives rise to what we call the international system. Therefore, domestic politics, foreign policy, and international politics are inextricably linked. We cannot make sense of international relations without considering all three.

As the theoretical backbone, the strategic perspective is always at the core of each explanation and comparison within the book, whether I discuss the end of the Cold War in 1990 or the emergence of the modern sovereign state during the high Middle Ages. I offer an explanation as to why terrible leaders who bankrupt their country and oppress their citizens persist in office for a long time, while leaders who provide peace and prosperity are frequently ousted. Democratic peace is explained, as is the role of power in the initiation and escalation of disputes. Trade sanctions and their links to domestic political considerations are explored at length, as are issues of alliance formation and reliability. I suggest why Saddam Hussein could sensibly believe that the United States would back down during the Persian Gulf War and why his conclusion proved wrong. Students are introduced to an explanation of why and how unwanted trade wars can occur and to the conditions in which economic sanctions are likely to be effective or ineffective. Paths to war and peace are explored, as well as questions about the functions of international organizations and international law. Innumerable other topics are also addressed and are always related to the volume's theoretical framework.

The book lays out competing arguments and evaluates both their logical coherence and empirical reliability, frequently combining historical examples with nontechnical summaries of statistical evidence. It sets out a detailed investigation of realist and liberal theories and bureaucratic and interest group approaches, all the while employing the strategic perspective to compare and contrast, lending coherence to a topic that is often overwhelming. I believe this book is unique in its theoretical focus; its historical sweep; and its attention to logical, empirical, and analytic rigor. Although I have not shirked from introducing sophisticated concepts, I have endeavored to make them readily understood by students.

Theoretical ideas are unlikely to help students or keep their interest without historical and current examples. This volume is full of such examples, from the opening paragraph to the very end. The examples are intentionally chosen from across thousands of years of human history, though naturally with an emphasis on current events. The broad historical sweep is designed to serve two purposes. First, it is a way to introduce students to important events that have shaped the modern world, from the battle of Marathon 2,500 years ago to the Treaty of Westphalia to the 1999 war in Kosovo. Second, it is a way to demonstrate the universal applicability of the strategic perspective and the analytic tools that accompany the scientific investigation of competing hypotheses.

METHODOLOGY

The book introduces methods for investigating foreign policy decisions from the strategic perspective, beginning with concepts in their simplest form and gradually building on that knowledge, keeping undergraduates' capabilities foremost in mind. Although the ideas are sophisticated, they require only skills possessed by beginning college students to be understood. I have worked from the perspective that readers have had no prior exposure to international relations, statistics, or model building. Additionally, to ensure that the methods are easy to understand and apply, the book has been classroom tested in several different institutions. Feedback from students has been incorporated into every aspect of the presentation.

Students are exposed to tools that include decision theory, social choice theory, and game theory. They are taught how to calculate expected utilities, how to solve complete information games and simple incomplete information games, and how to evaluate one-dimensional and two-dimensional spatial models. They learn the median voter theorem and the manipulability that arises when foreign policy issues are linked together. They are exposed to problems of collective action and the difficulties of monitoring and sanctioning international misconduct, as well the problems that arise in trying to coordinate international interactions and deal with the distribution of valuable, scarce resources.

ORGANIZATION AND PEDAGOGY

The book is organized so that ideas and techniques are cumulative. The seventeen chapters follow a natural sequence for use in a semester or quarter system. Because historical examples, concepts, and techniques are interspersed throughout, always in mutual support of each other, the book can readily be taught from any of these perspectives. The instructor can emphasize events, ideas, hypotheses, historical analysis, formal analysis, or statistical analysis as suits his or her style, needs, and preferences. There is ample support for any of these approaches in the body of the text and in the ancillary materials, like the instructor's manual, that accompany the text. Students are walked through the technical material one step at a time, starting with simple problems and graduating to more difficult ones. To facilitate learning, chapters begin with outlines listing major topics and end with summaries that highlight the major points made in the chapter. The theoretical arguments and the historical and contemporary examples are accompanied by an impressive array of maps, figures, charts, tables, and photographs. Each of these includes a substantial and contextual caption that allows the illustration or figure to stand alone as a summary state-

ment of an important idea. Additionally, there are many critical thinking boxes that pose puzzles that students can solve by applying concepts that have been introduced in the book. Because there are many new concepts, there is also a glossary of key terms and ideas so that students can spend their time learning ideas, rather than memorizing terms. The book also has an extensive bibliography and index (both subject and author), as well as in-text citations and footnotes. These all serve as valuable guides for students who want to explore the field further or to begin to do bibliographic or original research. Everything has been designed to stimulate students' interest and understanding and to encourage students to continue their investigation of international relations.

A UNIQUE TEACHING AND LEARNING PACKAGE

D. Scott Bennett's superb instructor's manual—*The Strategic Perspective in the Classroom*—and student workbook—*Applying the Strategic Perspective*—are extraordinarily rich and valuable accompaniments to the text. Each of these supplements includes nearly 100 original figures and tables that have been specially created to help instructors teach the technical material and to help students master it. The instructor's manual provides “at a glance” lists of topics and methods, explores key topics and arguments in depth, identifies important points to raise in class, and suggests discussion questions and links to relevant topics in the book. Naturally, learning is best reinforced when students actually practice what they have learned. When analytic tools and concepts are applied, they become second nature. To promote this integration of learning with doing, the supplemental materials include extensive student exercises—additional problems and models—beyond those proposed in the body of the text. Also, the reasonably priced student workbook is a wonderful and inexpensive supplement that students can use to hone their skills.

Principles of International Politics is unique in other ways as well. The theoretical material introduced is used to illuminate some of the most difficult questions about contemporary international relations. I identify essential links between theory and real-world decisionmaking. The Web site that accompanies the volume—<http://bdm.cqpress.com>—includes a software package similar to that used by the U.S. government in making major foreign policy decisions and by large corporations in dealing with significant policy choices. The software (*The Policy Forecaster*), simplified for easy use and interpretation, can now be employed by students to explain and predict current international problems, whether the problems involve issues of international political economy, security studies, or anything else.

The Policy Forecaster is referred to frequently throughout the text. It is readily integrated into teaching the course. Students can use it early on to calculate

the location of the median voter or the center of power on any issue. They can compare predicted outcomes on issues to the predictions one might make by just examining the distribution of power without regard to policy preferences. Here students will see dramatic differences between structural viewpoints and the strategic perspective. Students can “replay” the diplomacy leading up to World War I, look for alternative solutions to the Kosovo War, or pursue ways in which President Bill Clinton might have put together a legislative victory on NAFTA other than the way he did. Students can build data sets of their own or modify data sets (following the instructions laid out in Chapter 17) provided with *The Policy Forecaster* to see how changes in position or in level of effort (salience) might have altered one or another decision maker’s influence over foreign policy choices. Different students can assume the role of different decision makers and use their strategic insights to compete with one another as participants in the Cuban Missile Crisis, World War II, or some other event for which the class or instructor constructs a simple data set. The applications are endless. Learning is always reinforced by doing. With *The Policy Forecaster*, “doing” has never been made easier or more realistic for students. They can play out the roles taken by real decision makers using a tool that decision makers use in making foreign policy choices.

Additionally, many of the book’s figures are available on the Web site and can be downloaded into Power Point™ or made into transparencies, thereby minimizing the amount of fuss instructors go through in putting classroom presentations together. Bennett and I have chosen the figures we believe will be most applicable for classroom use. Each is designed to convey important ideas and to make clear the logic behind fundamental conclusions. This rich package of additional materials will facilitate teaching the ideas in *Principles of International Politics*.

ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

Principles of International Politics is my effort to explain a way of looking at international relations and to reshape how the subject is taught. If it succeeds in doing so, the credit belongs to those who have helped me along the way. A textbook provides a unique opportunity to express thanks, not only to those who helped with the book at hand but to those whose teaching, inspiration, and guidance have shaped the way I think. It is my pleasure to take this opportunity to thank them here.

This book was inspired by Kenneth Organski, my teacher, mentor, and friend. Without his urging, it surely would not have been written. To be fair, Ken tricked me into writing the book, but that is another story. This was to have been a joint effort by Ken and me, but the tragic terminal illness of his daughter

and then his own untimely death precluded that collaboration. He had begun to work on the discussion of power, and I have borrowed liberally from the draft text he left behind. How I wish I had his wisdom, insight, and elegant turn of phrase to share with you throughout this book. He is missed by all who loved him and all who knew him.

William Riker's shadow will be found on every page of this book. The principles of international politics are every bit as much an expression of his understanding of politics as they are of mine. Never have I known a more profound thinker. His was truly the intellect of a once-in-a-century man. I hope my effort does some small justice to his memory.

My parents, Abraham and Clara Bueno de Mesquita, survived Hitler, fled their homelands, and spent fruitful and rewarding lives in demanding times. They ensured that my sisters, Mireille Bany and Judy Berton, and I had every opportunity for fulfillment. Their lessons and their aspirations inspire me still.

Teachers leave indelible marks on our lives. I wish to express my gratitude to my most important classroom teachers, too many of whom are no longer with us: Henry Morton (Queens College), Richard Park (University of Michigan), Solomon Resnik (Queens College), Donald Stokes (University of Michigan), Phyllis Taylor (third grade), Lionel M. Yard (Stuyvesant High School), and many others inspired me to want to teach. To touch the lives of students as they have done is one of life's remarkable accomplishments.

I have benefited from the counsel of many colleagues who, of course, cannot be held accountable for my failure to heed all of their advice. Certainly the advice I did take has greatly improved my effort. D. Scott Bennett, Larry Cohen, Daniel Faiver, Andrew Farkas, Robert E. Harkavy, David Hayes, Jacek Kugler, Alan Lamborn, Joseph Lepgold, James Morrow, Kenneth Rodman, Alexander Rosenberg, Randolph Siverson, Kiron Skinner, Alastair Smith, Allan Stam, Herbert Tillema, Douglas Van Belle, and Suzanne Werner provided me with much valued guidance. Although they are too numerous to name, I also thank my students, who, over the years, have suffered through my efforts to identify and explain the principles of international politics as I see them.

CQ Press has been an author's dream publisher. Randolph Siverson first suggested this project to Brenda Carter, director of CQ's college group. I thank him for doing so. Brenda persuaded me that CQ was the right way to go and I have never regretted the decision. I told her at the outset that I hoped to write a text with a point of view and that I was more interested in making my viewpoint clear than in writing a "garden variety" text to maximize sales. She and the rest of the CQ team never wavered from their commitment to that vision. My editor, Charisse Kiino, did everything right to provide me with the support I needed to make this book turn out as well as possible. She gave me unflinching support

and brought great good humor to the whole project. Ann Davies, managing editor of textbooks and reference, recruited a superb team to edit and produce the book. Tracy Villano copyedited the entire manuscript and significantly improved its clarity. Talia Greenberg took responsibility for overseeing production and did so with incredible efficiency. Talia also spent countless hours researching photographs that would help communicate ideas; I think you will agree she did a fabulous job. Gerry Quinn designed the book, including the cover, figures, and maps. Early in the production process I received drafts of figures much altered from the copy I provided the press. With trepidation I was asked whether Gerry should go ahead and alter my original designs. The answer was an unequivocal “yes.” Gerry has a masterful sense of how to convey information through figures; the book is vastly better because of his efforts. Julianne Rovesti, the marketing manager for this project, was wonderful at synthesizing the book and drawing out its unique features and character. Wow, what a team. Thank you all.

The Hoover Institution at Stanford University provides me with all the support one could hope for when researching and writing a book. I thank the institution for its continued support (and for its fine and civilized, not to mention tasty, daily cookie hour).

My final and greatest debt belongs to my family, who has been a constant source of support and patience. I am most grateful to Arlene, Erin, Jason, Ethan, and Gwen for making life fulfilling.



BRIEF CONTENTS

World Map precedes title page

1. FOUNDATIONS OF INTERNATIONAL POLITICS 1
2. CHRISTOPHER COLUMBUS AND INTERNATIONAL RELATIONS 22
3. INTERNATIONAL POLITICS FROM A STRUCTURAL PERSPECTIVE 56
4. INTERNATIONAL POLITICS FROM GROUP AND DECISION-MAKING PERSPECTIVES 95
5. EVALUATING ARGUMENTS ABOUT INTERNATIONAL POLITICS 133
6. WHAT IS POWER? 167
7. LIMITS TO POWER 196
8. PREFERENCES IN INTERNATIONAL POLITICS 236
9. PREFERENCES AND THE COLD WAR'S END 267
10. PERCEPTIONS IN INTERNATIONAL AFFAIRS 290
11. PERCEPTIONS, DETERRENCE, AND TERRORISM 320
12. DOMESTIC POLITICS AND INTERNATIONAL INTERACTIONS:
THE CENTRAL UNITS OF ANALYSIS 346
13. DOMESTIC INSTITUTIONS AND NATIONAL PERFORMANCE 372
14. ALLIANCES 401
15. THE CAUSES OF WAR: STRUCTURAL ACCOUNTS 434
16. STRATEGIC THEORIES OF WAR 469
17. A PREDICTIVE MODEL OF INTERNATIONAL AFFAIRS 501

GLOSSARY OF KEY TERMS 536

BIBLIOGRAPHY 548

SUBJECT INDEX 573

CITATIONS OF AUTHORS 585



CONTENTS

Tables, Figures, and Maps ix

Preface xii

1. Foundations of International Politics 1

Governing Principles 2

Organizational Features of This Book 6

The Core Concerns of International Relations 8

The Link Between Domestic Politics and International Politics 8

Is the State the Central Actor? 11

Solving International Relations Puzzles 12

Power, Preferences, and Perceptions: The Three Pillars
of International Relations 14

Self-Interest: The Decisive Motivation for Action 16

Summary 20

2. Christopher Columbus and International Relations 22

Columbus's Proposal, or Ferdinand and Isabella's Ambition 23

Factors That Shape Foreign Policy Choices 24

Probability of Success or Failure 24

Policy Costs and Political Costs 25

Expected Utility of a Policy Compared to Alternative Policies 26

Discovering America: An Evaluation of Political Economy
and National Security 27

The Offer to Portugal 28

The Offers to England and France 30

The Offer to Spain 30

Lessons Suggested by Columbus's Experience 33

The Right Policy for One Leader May Be Wrong for Another 34

The Importance of Context 35

Tools and Solutions: An Illustration of the Use of Decision Theory
in the Study of International Relations 38

Spain's Expected Utility 39

Portugal's Expected Utility 44

Game Theory, or Why People Sometimes Choose What They Do Not Like Best	46
Summary	54

3. International Politics from a Structural Perspective 56

Evaluating Alternative Principles	56
Defining the Puzzles of Cooperation and Conflict	58
Examples of International Cooperation	58
Examples of Conflict and Competition	61
Structural Perspectives	63
Neorealism	64
Some Limitations of Neorealism	70
Liberal Theories	73
Liberal Theories and the Promotion of Cooperation	79
Marxism	90
Summary	92

4. International Politics from Group and Decision-Making Perspectives 95

The Bureaucratic, or Interest Group, Perspective	95
Organizational Roles in Foreign Policy	97
Principal-Agent Problems	100
Standard Operating Procedures	107
Strategic Perspective	110
Comparing the Core Perspectives	113
Hierarchy Versus Anarchy	115
Core Assumptions About Policy and Security Risks	117
The Three Perspectives Illustratively Applied to Columbus	127
The Columbian Voyages of Discovery: A Neorealist Explanation	127
The Columbian Voyages of Discovery: An Interest Group Explanation	128
The Columbian Voyages of Discovery: A Strategic Explanation	129
Summary	131

5. Evaluating Arguments About International Politics 133

Theories As Simplifications of Reality	135
What Is a Theory?	136
Constructing Theories	138
Judging Theories	140
The Importance of Logical Consistency	140
Truth and Falsity in Assumptions	143
The First Principle of Wing-Walking	146
The Case Study Method and Testing Theories	152
A Standard for Comparing Theories	156

Why Do We Need Theories? 157

Guidelines for Evaluating Arguments and Evidence:

The Scientific Method 161

When a Theory Is Wrong 163

Scientific Theories Must Be Falsifiable 165

Summary 166

6. What Is Power? 167

Defining Power 168

Methods of Exercising Power 170

Persuasion 171

Rewards 173

Punishments 176

Force 181

Measuring Power 183

The Fungibility of Power 188

Projecting Power over Large Distances 193

Summary 195

7. Limits to Power 196

Power and Military Victory 197

Power Can Be Cyclical 199

Coordination and Power 202

Distribution Problems, Coordination Problems, and Power 204

Pure Strategy Equilibria 206

Mixed Strategy Equilibrium 208

International Organizations: An Alternative to or Reflection of Power? 211

Power and Motivation 217

Asymmetric Motivation and Costs 225

The Exercise of Power 230

Summary 234

8. Preferences in International Politics 236

Preferred Values and American Foreign Policy: An Illustration 237

What Are Preferences? 241

Rationality and Preferences 242

Preferences and Constrained Choices 243

Vending Machines, Preferences, and Decisions 246

Ordering Preferences 246

Vending Machines and Information Constraints 247

Buying Soda As an Expected Utility Problem 248

Constrained Choice in International Relations: Some Examples 249

Cold War Perceptions As Constraints 251

Preferences at Marathon: An Ancient Greek Example	253
Social Choice Problems: Is There a National Interest?	257
Social Choice and the Cuban Missile Crisis	257
Preference Cycles and Structural Realism	263
Interest Groups and the Social Choice Problem	264
Summary	265
 9. Preferences and the Cold War's End	267
Social Choice and Spatial Views of Policy	268
Predicting Policy Choices: The Median Voter Theorem	271
Multidimensional Issues	274
Preferences and the End of the Cold War: Win Sets As a Tool for Understanding Policy	276
Domestic Soviet Preferences and the End of the Cold War	278
Winning Preferences Inside the Soviet Union	282
External Pressures to the End of the Cold War	285
Summary	289
 10. Perceptions in International Affairs	290
Perceptions and Reality	291
People Form Perceptions All the Time	295
What Are Beliefs or Perceptions?	296
Perceptions and Information	298
Perceptions and Trade Sanctions: An Illustration	299
The Trade Sanctioning Game	301
The Sanctioning Game and Domestic Politics	310
Perception, Repetition, and Reputation	315
Summary	317
 11. Perceptions, Deterrence, and Terrorism	320
Perceptions and Deterrence	321
General Deterrence	322
Extended Deterrence and Extended Immediate Deterrence	326
North Korea's Artful Use of Misconduct	330
Perceptions and Deterrence: The Gulf War	333
Beliefs About Terrorism	339
Summary	345
 12. Domestic Politics and International Interactions:	
The Central Units of Analysis	346
The Origins of the State	347
International Relations Without the State	353

Domestic Politics As an Alternative to the State	354
Can Domestic Politics Affect the Definition of the National Interest?	357
The 1992 Presidential Election	358
Policy Objectives in the 1992 Presidential Election	360
Voter Preferences, Voting Blocs, and Electoral Rule	363
Alternative Interpretations of the Domestic Politics Example	369
Summary	370
13. Domestic Institutions and National Performance	372
Universal Political Institutions	374
Tools to Remain in Power	377
Allocation of Resources and Political Institutions	378
Leadership Incentives and Political Institutions	382
Winning Coalition Size and Trade Policy	384
The Neorealist, Alternative View of Trade Policy	387
The Interest Group View of Trade Policy	390
Evidence: Winning Coalition Size and Economic Performance	391
Winning Coalition Size and National Survival	393
Summary	399
14. Alliances	401
What Is a Military Alliance?	402
The Purpose of Alliances	404
When Are Alliances Reliable?	408
Predicting the Reliability of Alliances	413
Measuring Shared Interests	414
Testing the Predictive Model	418
Alliances, Coordination, and Competition	420
Conflict Among Allies	426
Summary	432
15. The Causes of War: Structural Accounts	434
Realist Theories of War	435
How Well Does Neorealism Do in Explaining War and Instability?	437
Bipolarity and Stability	437
Bipolarity and Stability: A Second Look	445
History and Neorealist Empirical Claims	448
Other Neorealist Hypotheses and the Historical Record	452
The Survival of Essential and Inessential States	452
Uncertainty and War	453
Acquiescence and Neorealism	455
Balance of Power and Neorealism	456

The Power Transition: A Structural Alternative to Neorealism	458
Examples of International Rules and Norms	460
Dissatisfaction, the Status Quo, and War	462
Summary	468
16. Strategic Theories of War	469
The International Interaction Game and War	470
War and Uncertainty: The IIG and Structural Theories	476
Weakness and War: Resurrection and Pacific Doves	478
Violent Pacific Doves: A Case History	483
Arms Races, Deterrence, and War	488
Other Hypotheses About War	495
The Scapegoat Hypothesis	495
Status Inconsistency	497
War in Cycles	499
Summary	500
17. A Predictive Model of International Affairs	501
Logical Foundation of the Model	503
Perceptual Analysis	507
Estimating the Model	512
Why Does This Model Help?	515
Intuition Behind the Model's Dynamics	516
Developing the Data	518
Model Output	522
Prediction and International Relations	529
Using the Model	534
Glossary of Key Terms	536
Bibliography	548
Subject Index	573
Citations of Authors	585