POWER AND PRINCIPLE IN INTERNATIONAL AFFAIRS

GORDON C. SCHLOMING

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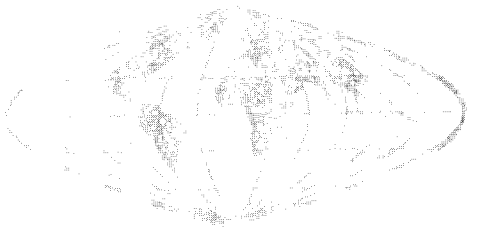

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PREFACE

It is always with great humility that an author approaches the acknowledgment of his intellectual debts. Having taught international relations for twenty years, I must credit my students at Amherst College, the University of Portland, Pomona College, and Lewis & Clark College with the main stimulus to my thinking. Many ideas first took form in the enthusiasm of the classroom or surfaced from the deep spring of dialogue with students. I am also indebted to the many scholars who have dedicated their lives to mastery of a specialized subject and have set down their ideas in countless books and articles. My own inclinations are those of a generalist nourished over the years by eclectic reading and writing across the boundaries of disciplines and specialties. However, generalists are a rare breed these days, and few scholars apply themselves to the task of writing a textbook for undergraduates that presents a clear, comprehensive, and sophisticated rendering of international affairs. I leave it to students and instructors to judge whether I have succeeded in my aim: to communicate in an attractive style, without obscure jargon or simplifications that insult the intelligence.

Although the realist–idealist approach I have adopted is fairly traditional and the coverage of topics is standard, I have included features that the instructor will find useful to recent trends in the field. The pro-and-con discussion section that concludes each chapter should act as a stimulus to critical thinking, so students will not accept the point of view of the author as settled wisdom. I have tried hard to make both sides of the argument convincing, which may confuse some students (in a creative way) and press them to examine the focus of the argument, the controlling assumptions, and the selection of facts. Many of the discussion questions address issues in American foreign policy because they were most likely to be familiar and interesting to students. It is my hope that these sections will serve as springboards for papers or class discussions. Extensive bibliographies, presented by topic, are included to support subjects that the book touched only lightly. Special attention has been given to recent changes in the Communist world, to international political economy, to problems of the global commons, and to North–South relations, particularly issues of dependency and development in the Third World. Methodological, historical, and ethical concerns also receive greater emphasis than in most textbooks. A variety of maps help to acquaint the student more fully with world geography.

One of my greatest professional pleasures has been the opportunity to teach in a number of small liberal arts colleges where I have had the freedom to offer courses on dozens of subjects in international relations. One of my regrets is that these modest departments rarely provided the wide professional

contacts that foster lively and extensive discussion within specialized subfields. Conferences and professional meetings have helped, but when the writing begins, the circle of contacts necessarily closes to a few intimates. If the writing of this book has been more lonely than I anticipated or wished — partly by the advent of a sabbatical leave and a Fulbright Fellowship in Peru — I have still enjoyed the benefit of specific comments and criticisms from several colleagues. Bob Mandel and Rich Peck, fellow faculty members at Lewis & Clark College, read major portions of the manuscript, with invariably helpful insights. Tsuneo Akaha discussed with me its analytic organization and shared generously his classroom experience regarding student response to different approaches. Miroslav Nincic provided helpful comments on Chapter 3. I received fine institutional support from the international affairs and political science departments of Lewis & Clark College, and intellectual inspiration from its Faculty Seminar on International Development. I also wish to thank my colleagues who reviewed the book proposal for the publisher: Richard Foster, Idaho State University; Benjamin Most, University of Iowa; and James Peterson, Valdosta State College.

I am grateful to Robbie Roy, Karen Jenner, Karen Nairn, and Susan Kirschner for assistance in preparation of the manuscript. Herman Asarnow generously agreed to read the galley proofs, lending his graceful sense of style. Above all, I have been steadfastly and creatively supported by my editors at Harcourt Brace Jovanovich. Drake Bush, who proposed this project in the first place and shared fully his confidence, patience, experience, friendly manner, and competence, kept me going in the years-long effort of producing such a work. Cathy Fauver managed to streamline a very long manuscript with remarkable skill, commenting helpfully on matters of substance as well as style. Her meticulous work improved the book immensely. The rest of the book team also contributed a superb effort. These include Tracey Engel and Mary Allen, production editors; Linda Wooton Miller, designer; Louise Sandy, art editor; and Mary Kay Yearin, production manager.

I extend very special thanks to my family. My son Galen offered daily diversions that lifted my spirits and reminded me, always, that being a father was my most important job. My wife, Jennifer, gave the kind of endless support — far beyond any reasonable limit — that only a loving spouse can. A good book could not have been written without the coauthorship of such a sterling and steadfast partner.

Many unnamed individuals must be credited as well, though their contributions have occurred in such an indirect manner that I cannot trace the lineage of their ideas or distinguish them clearly from my own. Because the field of international affairs is so vast, and because so much of the actual writing took place in relative isolation, there are sure to be mistakes of fact and interpretation. I trust that students and scholars in the field will be generous enough to correct my errors or challenge my ideas, just as I have freely shared my own opinions regarding the various issues treated in this book. By such means, it will become a better book, and a model for the truth-telling dialogue that keeps us from being prisoners of our own perspective.

Gordon C. Schloming

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INTRODUCTION: THINKING ANALYTICALLY ABOUT INTERNATIONAL RELATIONS

Events on the international stage are often complex and difficult to understand, with motive forces easily hidden from the public eye. Diplomatic relations are conducted in private, and even the occasional well-publicized event is likely to occur far from our shores, in a political or cultural setting quite different from our own. Sensational newspaper headlines frequently obscure important details of events, and nightly news broadcasts rarely give any in-depth analysis or sense of continuity from one event to another. We are left largely to our own devices when it comes to interpreting world affairs.

One important purpose of this book is to set out some organizing concepts that can help us understand otherwise disconnected facts and events in terms of the wider forces at work in the world. Careful readers will be able to trace the roots of current problems in the historical development of the international system. They will become familiar with the many players on the field of international politics, and with the forces that shape their perspectives and control their actions. Readers will gain a better understanding of why a particular crisis occurred, what is likely to be its long-term outcome, and which factors represent enduring influences in international affairs.

But simply to understand what is happening is not enough. We also need to be able to think critically about international issues, so that we can make intelligent choices in those arenas in which we actually participate. World trade, terrorism, satellite transmissions, foreign travel, the constant threat of nuclear destruction, and a thousand other international influences on our daily lives have brought the era of national isolation to an end. All parents want to know what they can do to reduce the risk of war, so that their children will inherit a planet at peace. Business people cannot make intelligent decisions if

they are ignorant about the international economy and the political forces that shape international financial flows, technology transfers, and the global exchange of goods and services. Even international travelers can enrich their experiences tenfold if they understand the political and cultural differences they will encounter. On the national level, in an era when a revolution or regional war can cut off our access to vital raw materials or threaten our basic security, we must be attentive to those factors that are constantly transforming our relations with the rest of the world. And, as citizens of a country that is a leading influence in world politics, we have a responsibility to participate meaningfully in the public debate and political decisions of foreign policy.

In-depth understanding and informed participation are the twin goals of this book. It is designed to encourage the capacity for independent thought and to help the careful reader become aware of the analytic approaches, underlying values, and basic assumptions that shape the information presented in, say, a presidential address, a news commentary, or a textbook such as this one. Pro-and-con discussion questions are provided in every chapter as a particular stimulus to this kind of critical thought. But let us begin with a brief overview of the concepts around which the book is organized and then go on to a consideration of the kinds of analytic distinctions that will inform our discussions throughout the book.

ORGANIZING CONCEPTS

Looking at a rapidly moving, complex series of events, we usually can focus on only one or two factors at a time. So it is with the study of international relations. We must start with a "slice" of reality, a "freeze-frame" view of a single aspect at one moment in time. As we go on, we will learn to take several of these slices and edit them together to create a more sophisticated picture of reality. The four slices, or concepts, on which this book focuses are the values, the structures, the actors, and the instruments of international affairs—the subject matter of the book's major divisions.

The most fundamental of these concepts, for both the actor and the analyst, is *values*. Though intangible and sometimes difficult to discern, values shape the goals and outlooks of each individual, organization, and nation-state. The ideological conflicts between East and West, communism and capitalism, dictatorship and democracy are rooted in basic value differences that define the characters of the competing societies. National interests deemed vital to the preservation of a country's way of life can be understood only in terms of the core values of its people and their leadership. Core values determine the organizing principles of a political community and the distinct perspective through which a nation views international affairs. Important value differences within each state result in controversies over basic issues of foreign policy as well as domestic affairs. Even scholars of international relations, who

share a common commitment to the truth, can fall into serious controversies that reflect their differing values and approaches.

The *structures* of international relations consist of the patterns of interaction and the institutions that provide an organized context within which individuals and states pursue their goals. In the political arena, relations among states are structured by a balance of power, whose form changes over time in response to historical trends and to the efforts of individual actors to shape the international order to their own advantage. In economics, exchanges take place through various market mechanisms that reflect different principles of organization and different degrees of competitiveness or interdependence. Cultural relations of greater or lesser intensity are another element of community within the international system. To the degree that relations become habitual and fixed, they comprise the structures that define the nature of the international system at a given time. These structures express the historic conflicts of the moment and provide the opportunities and restraints that influence the behavior of states, political leaders, and other international actors.

The principal *actors* on the world stage are individual leaders, states, transnational corporations, intergovernmental organizations, like the United Nations, and a variety of groups and organizations with international interests. Each actor operates as a coherent unit and has a distinctive character, interests, and activities. Since there always will be individuals carrying out particular actions, it is important to distinguish when someone is acting as a private individual and when as a representative of a larger organization or entity. Diplomats and soldiers are typically agents of the state, their actions shaped by an official role and a public agenda. Nonetheless, at times political leaders will have a personal or private agenda as well as a public responsibility and may be playing several roles at once. State bureaucracies empowered to act on behalf of the national interest often become independent actors as well, seeking to further their own organizational fortunes while also acting for the state. Much of the drama of international relations is contained in its individual actors — in powerful personalities and conflicts between private and public interests, for example, or in the force with which some leaders can drive the larger organizations to which they are attached symbolically and emotionally.

But actions in the international arena most often coalesce around the decisions of nation-states on key issues. The most fateful of these, with the largest and most obvious impact on international relations, is the decision for war, which we will explore shortly. The nation-state is thus the most prominent international actor, not only because it holds most of the instruments of power and makes the decisions for war and peace, but also because it has established elaborate internal decision-making mechanisms for conducting foreign relations. Other prominent actors are certain intergovernmental institutions (the European Economic Community is one) and nongovernmental organizations (multinational corporations, for example) whose permanent officials and bureaucratic apparatus allow them to exercise influence on the international scene.

Power, diplomacy, and law are the *instruments* international actors employ to accomplish their aims. In the highly competitive arena of world politics,

power is the main instrument, and the state has become the dominant actor because of its capacity to control a vast panoply of power resources and mobilize them on an enduring basis. Restraints on power are achieved through diplomacy and international law, which seek to adjust competing interests by such means as arbitration, negotiation, or participation in international organizations. Diplomacy and law are alternatives to power as instruments for resolving conflicts between states, individuals, or such nongovernmental actors as multinational corporations.

Of course, each of these conceptual "slices" will reveal only one aspect of international relations; no single focus can do justice to the complexity of actual events. Like a surgeon, we cut into reality, at the risk of killing live tissue, because it is the only way we can reveal the inner forces at work. We employ the analytic knife in order to simplify, but a time will come when we must stitch our concepts back together so that they will acquire a larger coherence. The pro-and-con discussions provide this kind of holistic integration as it applies to a particular problem or policy arena. Thus, we dissect international relations to see more clearly the character of each aspect, while always keeping in mind that the factors interact. To put it another way, actors in international affairs hold certain values, operate within given structures of conflict and cooperation, employ instruments of power, diplomacy, organization, and law to reshape those structures to their benefit, and make policy decisions that reflect their goals, values, and capabilities.

These concepts are only some of the tools to understanding, however. Readers may want to invent concepts of their own or reorganize the material they are studying along lines that suit them better. One risk of an analytic approach such as this book takes is that reality gets broken down into its constituent elements but is never reassembled. Another is that it may focus too narrowly on the given categories and slight the integrative process of continually relating analysis in one section to discussion in another. Robert Pirsig's *Zen and the Art of Motorcycle Maintenance: An Inquiry into Values* contains a warning about analytic descriptions: they suffer from the classical problem of focusing on underlying form at the expense of reality. By appearing to be detached and "objective," such descriptions hide the point of view of the observer or author and tend to wash out value judgments or bury them beneath a mountain of facts. Pirsig cautions us always to keep an eye on the author's choice of organizing concepts, for

> There is a knife moving here. A very deadly one; an intellectual scalpel so swift and so sharp you sometimes don't see it moving. You get the illusion that all those parts are just there and are being named as they exist. But they can be named quite differently and organized quite differently depending on how the knife moves. . . .
>
> When analytic thought, the knife, is applied to experience, something is always killed in the process. But what is less noticed . . . something is always created too. And instead of just dwelling on what is killed it's important to see what's created and to see the process as a kind of death-birth continuity that is neither good nor bad, but just *is*. (pp. 72, 77)

So we must be self-conscious about our analytic categories and modest about the degree to which our schematic description captures the flesh and blood of world affairs. We will hope to avoid assassination by the analytic knife and will try always to wield it with the careful skill of the surgeon.

MAPS AND MENTAL IMAGES

Maps provide a concrete illustration of the way analytic perspective controls our picture of the world. Maps depict a supposedly objective reality — the land masses, oceans, and physical contours of the earth — and we take their accuracy for granted. But in fact they reflect many hidden assumptions. First, there is the not-so-simple choice of projection, the means by which the three-dimensional globe is tranposed onto a flat, two-dimensional surface. Cartographers have a striking variety of projections to choose from, and those choices strongly reflect (and affect) our perceptions about which areas are most important. The traditional choice for world maps is the Mercator projection, which is centered on the United States and enlarges the Northern Hemisphere by placing the equator almost two-thirds of the way down the page; Antarctica, largely because it is uninhabited (except for a few hundred visiting scientists), is considered so unimportant that it often does not even appear on the map. As international events have shifted power and attention away from Europe and the West, however, our world maps have been modified to reflect a more balanced view, literally enlarging the presence of Third World nations and the Southern Hemisphere. Figure 1-1 compares a Mercator map with a map drawn in one of the newer projections, the Peters Equal Area Projection. Another of the equal-area projections, the Robinson, is used for the maps inside the front and back covers of this book.

A second dimension of maps relates to the political, economic, social, or cultural features the mapmaker chooses to emphasize. Most maps define the world in terms of its political divisions, enshrining the nation-state by those ever-present lines that mark territorial boundaries. But one could just as easily see the world in terms of its major religions or its population distribution and climatic zones, as in Figures 1-2 and 1-3. And now the age of rocketry and extraterrestrial travel is giving us new maps of the earth as an interdependent ecology. Satellite photos like Figure 1-4, which shows the ozone hole over Antarctica, are making us increasingly aware of planet Earth's unity, finiteness, and fragility.

Geopolitical perspective is a third dimension reflected in maps of the world. The dominance of the North and the Eurocentric focus on the Atlantic Ocean that we find in almost all our maps are products of the age of navigation, when European explorers "discovered" the world. The New World took its meaning by reference to the Old, just as Portuguese and Spanish sailors took their bearings from the north magnetic pole. European mapmakers naturally put the features that were most important to them at the top of the page,

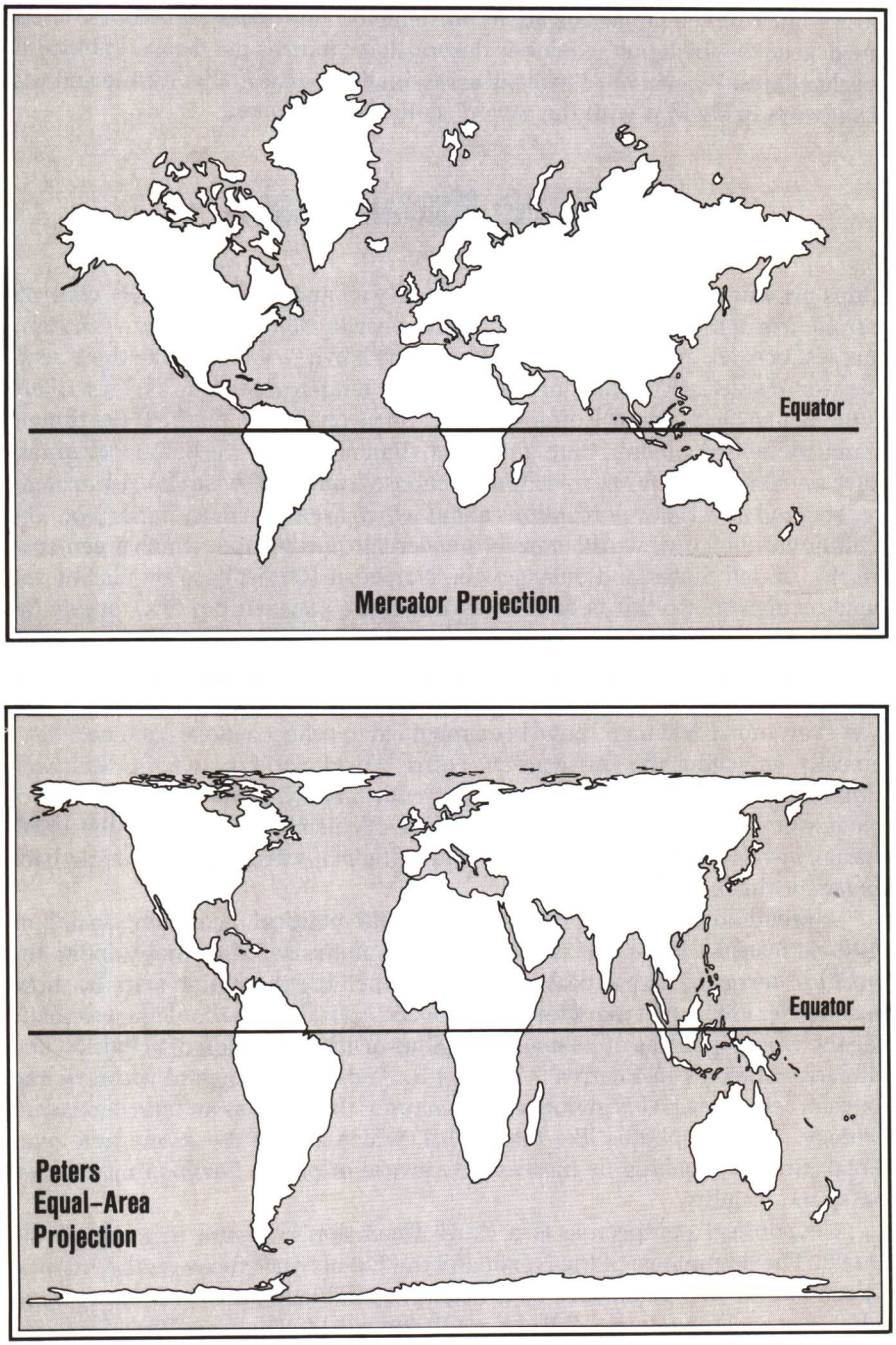

FIGURE 1-1
COMPARISON OF MERCATOR AND EQUAL-AREA PROJECTIONS

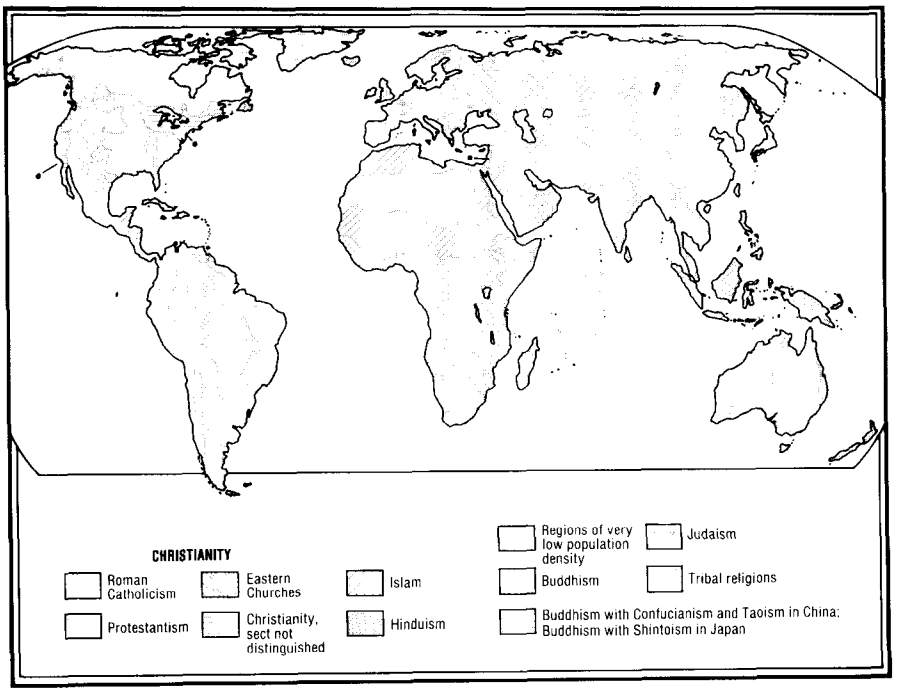

FIGURE 1-2
THE WORLD AS DIVIDED BY RELIGION

reflecting the cultural practice of reading from the top down. But it might be just as valid today to view the world "upside down" or from the point of view of individual nation-states. Compare, for example, the maps inside the front and back covers of this book to imagine a world with a Southern orientation and a Pacific focus. Every state views its security, its external relations, and its interests in terms of its physical location on the globe, and these views can have a striking impact on foreign policy, as we will chronicle in Chapter 7, in the discussion of nation-states. For the moment, it is helpful simply to compare the several views shown in Figure 1-5, which depicts the world from the geopolitical perspective of the United States, the Soviet Union, China, and Argentina. This important dimension of geopolitical perspective is highlighted by the variety of maps used throughout the book.

The example of maps represents only one of many kinds of mental images that influence our perceptions of international affairs. Each of us has an interior landscape of hidden categories and unconscious and untested assumptions. To guard against having these control our analysis, and to enrich our perspective, we must adopt self-conscious conceptual tools that will force us to look at our reality in new terms. Levels of analysis is one such tool that is particularly applicable to the problems of international affairs.