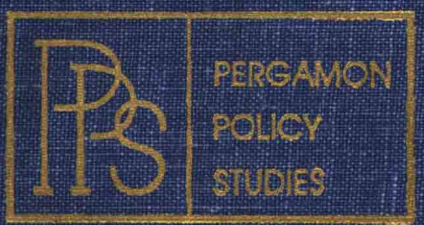
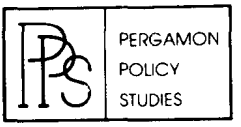
Comparative Regional Systems

West and East Europe, North America, The Middle East, and Developing Countries

Edited by
Werner J. Feld
Gavin Boyd





ON INTERNATIONAL POLITICS

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Preface and Acknowledgments

This volume has been designed to assist students, professionals, and the interested public in their efforts to comprehend the patterned and unpatterned forms of international activity through which states relate to the most important entities in world politics – their neighbors. Much of the cooperative and conflictual behavior in international politics occurs within regional contexts, hence the importance of understanding the sources and forms of this behavior, and the issues which contribute to it as well as those which it produces.

For comprehensive examination of the various regional systems it has been necessary to invite contributions from numerous distinguished area specialists and generalists. All have written with much sensitivity, insight, and dedication, seeking to build on vast accumulations of knowledge in order to provide full and integrated learning experiences. We are grateful to these authors, and we trust that contact with their minds through this volume will encourage readers to follow the development of their more specialized studies.

The preparation of this work was given much encouragement by Richard C. Rowson, President of Pergamon Press, who saw a need for comparative studies of politics above the national level and below the global level. Richard's encouragement gave confidence and was a stimulus to achievement.

Each of us is indebted to many colleagues who have aided the development of our thinking on regional systems, and Gavin Boyd is grateful to members of the Political Science Department at the University of New Orleans, whose hospitality he enjoyed while working on the volume during the summers of 1978 and 1979.

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I

Perspectives

1 The Comparative Study of International Regions

Werner J. Feld
Gavin Boyd

References to international regions are common in the everyday language of politics. Such references identify geographic clusters of states, such as those in "Western Europe" or the "Middle East." Persons who use these terms normally imply that the states in the group are in several respects interdependent, mainly because of their geographic relatedness; that this relatedness is a source of cultural and other affinities between those states; that consciousness of area identity can motivate some or all of those states to deal collectively with "outside" powers; and that policies toward any state in the group should take account of the likely reactions of its neighbors.

This volume is intended to be a comparative analysis of international regions. As in the comparative study of nation states, we confront the problem of identifying the variables with the highest degrees of explanatory power that will help us to understand differences and similarities between the various international regions. At this level of analysis the problem is very difficult because there is less agreement among scholars regarding the essential attributes of a region. Regional organizations may cover only part of what is clearly recognizable as the regional territory. Moreover, with the regions, however defined, nonstate actors play important roles, although nation states are the dominant actors, and the complex interactions between the nation states, as well as between these and the nonstate actors, may not be institutionalized.

To cope with the basic problems of regional analysis we have listed clusters of variables that form linked patterns within each international region, and at the end of the list we have focused on the developmental issues that appear to be posed in the various regions of world politics. At the beginning of these lines of inquiry we list the configuration of the region, which is built up by mapping the basic attributes of the states in the area and their major patterns of relations. This configuration is then expanded at several levels of analysis:

1. Political sociology, including national patterns of societal beliefs and values, and of cohesion and cleavages, as well as socialization processes;
2. Political cultures, in their cognitive, affective, behavioral, and evaluative aspects;
3. Political psychology, including especially elite beliefs, values, operational codes, and political skills;
4. Authority structures and influence patterns, covering in particular relationships between governments, political parties, and interest groups;
5. Interdependencies, within and outside the region, affecting policies across the issue areas;
6. Regional institutions, including their evolution, legitimacy, levels of development, and their outputs;
7. Regional foreign policy behavior, with special attention to inputs, processes, operating styles, and outputs;
8. Regional cooperation and conflict, resulting from the interaction of foreign policy behaviors; and
9. Developmental issues, including order, growth, and institutional expansion.

These areas of inquiry have been taken up by the contributors to this volume, although with differing degrees of emphasis. Each of the regional studies is comparative, across the nine analytical approaches.

REGIONAL CONFIGURATIONS

One of the difficult problems in determining the configuration of a region is the delineation of its boundaries. Bruce Russett, in a seminal study, has addressed this question, using a vast amount of empirical data and elaborate quantitative techniques.(1) His criteria for the identification of regions are social and cultural homogeneity, political attitudes on external issues as manifested in the voting of governments in the United Nations, political interdependence as indicated by participation in intergovernmental networks, economic interdependence as evidenced by intraregional trade in relation to national income, and geographic proximity. All these variables are significant, but differences in the weights attached to them can lead to widely diverging results. There are problems of perception and judgment in the use of aggregate data, and one of Russett's critics has suggested that his regions have as little substance as "the emperor's new clothes."(2)

In this volume we identify regions with emphasis on geography, utilizing the insights of area specialists who are sensitive to factors such as consciousness of regional identity, felt cultural and other affinities, and perceived interdependencies. The regions are Western Europe, Eastern Europe and the USSR, North America, East Asia, South Asia, the Middle East, Latin America, and Africa. The first three are globally central regions, whose members, collectively, and in some

cases individually, dominate the processes of global and transregional politics.

All the factors that make up the configuration of a region determine its prospects for development as an international system and for the evolution of collective decision-making mechanisms through which common interests can be managed. The most important features of a regional configuration are its relative degrees of balance and complementarity, and the extent to which its states are oriented toward integrative behavior. A relatively balanced distribution of economic capabilities makes for genuine equality in relationships, beyond what might be guaranteed in formal commitments, while extreme inequalities cause weaker states to fear that they will be disadvantaged in any schemes for regional cooperation. The economic power of states, of course, includes the capabilities of transnational enterprises based in their territories, whose apolitical pursuit of gain can cause apprehensions in weaker political economies. In virtually every regional system, there are considerable imbalances in the distribution of economic power, and there is little prospect of these being moderated; indeed, if some form of market integration has begun, the imbalances will tend to increase. Complementarity in economic capabilities tends to develop between industrialized democracies on the basis of multiple market-oriented specializations, depending on whether government policies are relatively liberal or neomercantilist. Levels of economic complementarity between developing countries tend to be low; and, although they can be raised advantageously by planning for regional growth and diversification, the necessary collective will is usually lacking.

In terms of balance and other characteristics of developmental significance, the regional configurations studied in this volume can be ranked in rough order, although with some difficulties. Relatively high degrees of balance and complementarity are evident in Western Europe, where there are several core members and a gradation of economic power levels, and where firm unanimity rules protect the interests of small members. To a considerable extent, the differences in economic power levels can be offset by issue-based coalitions, especially because there is no compact between the three major members – West Germany, France, and Britain – for joint domination of the system. Regional policy orientations in the West European system are constructive, but integrative only with qualifications.

Africa can be ranked next in terms of balance, but not complementarity. Several states – including Nigeria, Egypt, and Algeria – have capabilities for central roles in this system, but there are greater disparities in economic power between them and the numerous small African states than there are in the European Community, and levels of interdependence in this Third World system are low. There is more complementarity, although with much greater economic disparities, in East Asia where there are two large core members, one an economic superpower. Orientations towards regional cooperation in this grouping are relatively weak; but, in the Japan-ASEAN cluster, in which the

main regional economic exchanges occur, they are stronger than any in any subregion of the African grouping.

Marked contrasts in economic power levels, degrees of complementarity, and the extent of constructive orientation are evident in North America, Latin America, and South Asia. In each of these regions, there is a very strong core member, but in Latin America and South Asia, this member's orientation towards regional cooperation has been low and it has preferred to deal bilaterally with small neighbors. Brazil, the core member of the Latin American system, however, has been somewhat more positive than India in its attitude toward regional development. In the North American case, the great disparity between the political economies of Canada and the United States imposes limits, from the Canadian point of view, on the possibilities for close collaboration.

Finally, there is the Middle East configuration, distinguished by autarkic and antagonistic policy orientations that severely limit the prospects for cooperation. Here there are less marked disparities in economic power, but there is little complementarity, and attitudes towards neighbors tend to be more distrustful and conflictual than in other Third World regions. Strains in relations between members of this region, moreover, tend to be severe because of the presence of Israel, a state that lacks acceptance in the area, and also because of the competitive involvement of the two superpowers.

Superpower involvement is prominent in the East Asian, South Asian, African, and Latin American systems. Only in Latin America, however, has the United States striven to promote regional cooperation, and its efforts in this regard during the 1960s were continued only halfheartedly during the 1970s. Soviet penetration of the Third World regions, which is political and military rather than economic, aims at the cultivation of potentially affinitive and dependent states in order to gain advantages over the United States in what is seen as a contest for global domination. East Asia is the most critical area of superpower competition outside Europe, and its affairs are dominated by interactions between its two core members – Japan and China – with the United States and the Soviet Union.

Within its own regional system, comprising the Northern East European states and Mongolia, the USSR imposes a strongly hierarchical pattern of relations. This tends to exert increasing pressures on the subordinate states, as their leaderships seek to cope with Soviet integrative policies, under the auspices of the Council for Mutual Economic Assistance (CMEA), while endeavoring to strengthen their legitimacy and improve their performance through cautious liberalization measures.

Thus, the various regions have configurations with diverse prospects for evolution as subglobal international systems. In Western Europe, the relative levels of political development attained by the member states and their significant, although uneven, advances in collective decision making are enabling them to move towards more and more comprehensive management of their interdependencies and their relations with

the outside world. Of the regions in the Third World, Latin America has a significant mix of capabilities for integrative ventures, but is affected by a lack of political will. In other Third World groupings, regional cooperation, although urgently needed for accelerated modernization, is difficult to achieve, not only because of the lack of a common political will but also because of the weak capabilities of the political economies in these areas. The situations in these regions and in Latin America raise questions about the possibilities for external leadership and support in schemes for regional cooperation. The support of the United States was a major factor in the initial stages of the integrative endeavor in Western Europe after World War II, and during the 1960s the United States was eager to promote regional cooperation in Latin America; although there were no enduring results in that Third World involvement, a significant capability for constructive participation in regional collaboration was demonstrated.

POLITICAL SOCIOLOGY AND POLITICAL CULTURES

The characteristics of national polities are shaped in multiple patterns of causation by societal factors, political cultures, authority and influence patterns, policy processes, and performance levels. Societal groups may operate with much spontaneity and vigor, expressing diverse forms of rationality, under weak or strong authority structures, at high or low levels of institutional development. Elites may provide leadership, exercise power with threats of coercion, or represent interests and bargain on their behalf. The authority structure may be functional, eliciting societal cooperation, aggregating demands, and managing the political economy; or it may lack legitimacy, be prone to pluralistic stagnation, and fail to provide coherent administration. Several basic types of states can thus be identified, using criteria of significance for their actual or potential involvement in regional systems.

A national society may be relatively advanced, homogeneous, and open, or backward, fragmented, and relatively closed. Most of the national societies in the Third World are deeply divided, vertically and laterally, by linguistic, ethnic, cultural, religious, and class or caste cleavages. A common result is pervasive minority consciousness, with alienation from and distrust of the national polity. Cooperation within and between national elites may thus be difficult, while ruling groups, which themselves may be divided by social cleavages, may be absorbed in the intractable problems of enlisting support from the diverse segments of society and, thus, exposed to highly parochial forms of socialization. Most societies in the advanced states, however, tend to have relatively homogeneous cultures, and are open to interchanges and cooperation with foreign societies. These advanced open social systems have significant capacities for spontaneous self-organization, and for the development and support of political institutions on a national scale. In each, however, there are critical relationships between the various forms and degrees of nationalism, and the kinds and levels of

individualism, which in turn are related to the relative mix of consummatory and instrumental values.

Political cultures, based in or imposed on national societies, give orientation to political behavior and, through policy processes, to the shaping of statecraft. Relatively advanced political cultures are necessary for the support of wide-ranging regional cooperation. The development of such cooperation tends to be hindered by the divisions and parochialism of Third World political cultures, but many advanced political cultures tend to set upper limits to integrative policy behavior in regional contexts, as has been evidenced in the European Community. Relatively strong nationalist qualities persist in the political cultures of industrialized democracies, despite the growth of their interdependencies with each other and, in part, because some are more effective than others in managing such interdependencies. In addition to their nationalist qualities, moreover, the political cultures of industrialized democracies are oriented towards policymaking on a basis of interest group pluralism which, because of deficiencies in the aggregating structures, can cause stagnation, disjointedness, and sectoral bias in the political process, while excluding holistic national and regional considerations.

Political cultures are embedded in general cultures and reflect interplays between their value orientations and elite political behavior. Geography and social distances influence the evolution of general cultures, political cultures, and elite behavior, thereby affecting senses of national and regional identity. Most of the literature and art forms which shape general cultures are directed at national audiences, the symbolic uses of politics to build consensus are distinctly national and subnational, and elites in power exhibit senses of responsibility to their own nations and to friendly neighbors. With long social distances, societal interaction becomes infrequent, and evolving general cultures, having little influence on each other, become quite dissimilar. Advanced cultures do tend to interpenetrate, but on the whole tend to remain geographically bounded.

Affinities between national political cultures to a large extent determine possibilities for understanding, trust, and cooperation between neighboring countries. Such affinities result from interpenetration, particularly of the general cultures, and its degrees tend to be greater if these cultures are relatively advanced. Incentives to undertake regional cooperation, of course, tend to be greater for groups of advanced states, but responsiveness to these incentives is strongly influenced by cultural affinities and social distances, as is illustrated in the European Community's relations with Japan.

General cultures differ basically in their value orientations, which are reflected in the political cultures, subject to the effects of elite behavior. Most Third World general cultures have intense affective dimensions which give strongly personal qualities to political relationships, thus making for high degrees of parochialism while hindering institutional development. Political relationships based on felt obligations to broad community and national values tend to be made more

feasible within the general cultures of industrialized democracies because their affective qualities are less intense, while their cognitive and motivational aspects give rise to more active concerns with general community and national interests. These concerns, however, derive mainly from consummatory values which are tending to be displaced by instrumental values in the advanced open states, and the principal effect is sectoral bias in their policies, at the expense of general and national as well as regional interests, as high decision makers choose between public policy options on a basis of comparative political advantage.

POLITICAL PSYCHOLOGY AND AUTHORITY PATTERNS

Elite political psychologies tend to be highly potent determinants of regional policy behavior. In general, such elites may be conceptually complex or simplistic, trustful or suspicious, and collaborative or authoritarian. In most developing states, primary elites are authoritarian, inclined to cognitive simplicity, little disposed to self-critical rationality, and strongly affected by primordial and personal attachments. In the exercise of power they tend to be arbitrary, ideosyncratic, inconstant, and intensely preoccupied with problems of support mobilization through unstable clientelist networks. The parochial and short-range perspectives of individuals in these networks tend to preclude leadership recognition of and concern with holistic national and regional issues. The secondary elites, subjected to inhibiting forms of political discipline in weakly institutionalized structures, contribute little to the development of regional policies. Leadership attitudes toward the common dependency relationships with industrialized democracies frequently entail disinterest in regional questions, especially because economic and military resources acquired from those democracies can help the consolidation of domestic political power and assist modernization. In industrialized democracies, however, primary elite psychologies are strongly conditioned by relatively high levels of formal and informal accountability and the critical judgment of independent opinion leaders, as well as by the generally constructive but competitive and often questioning attitudes of leaderships in neighboring states. The representative, consultative, and administrative structures through which these leaderships function, however, leave open many opportunities for political rather than comprehensively rational decision making. Chapter 2, written by Daniel Druckman, examines the problems of political psychology in a regional context.

National authority structures and influence relationships differ in ways which enable primary elites to achieve varying levels of performance in the management of their political economies, and of relations with neighboring states. Differing levels of effectiveness in public policy cause some states to benefit more than others in regional schemes for trade liberalization, and, of course, are associated with contrasts in bargaining capabilities that affect regional interaction. Of

the industrialized democracies, some are highly coherent and vigorous national actors because of the degrees of hierarchy in their government structures and the strength of supporting influence patterns, while in others political power is fragmented with dysfunctional results. The highly coherent international actors benefit substantially from trade liberalization schemes and market integration arrangements, but do not have incentives to undertake extensive policy integration with neighbors, as this may entail losses of autonomy. The more polyarchic and less coherent industrialized democracies tend to be ambivalent towards trade liberalization schemes, especially because of domestic protectionist pressures, and have difficulties in responding to the challenges of the more integrated and more purposeful advanced political economies. In Western Europe, the major contrasts between West Germany, France, and Britain, in terms executive strength and achievements in public policy, are associated with diverging attitudes towards market integration, policy coordination, and the possibilities for structural integration within the European Community. Among the developing states there are greater diversities in authority structures and domestic influence relationships, with varying consequences for levels of performance; and all these contrasts are associated with highly unstable institutions and patronage networks. Regional cooperation is, thus, more difficult for developing states and is affected by greater uncertainties.

REGIONAL FOREIGN POLICY BEHAVIOR

Foreign policy behavior in regional contexts is influenced by short and medium social distances and, often, by affinities and interdependencies with neighbors, as well as by the size and relative economic and military power of those neighbors. Perceptions of social distances, of course, are affected by felt regional identities and by cultural and other similarities that facilitate communication, understanding, and cooperation. Rivalries, antipathies, and antagonisms can be felt across short social distances, and, thus, may motivate quests for links with distant states, but growing interdependencies associated with economic development can gradually moderate hostile feelings between neighbors. Such a process can be aided, of course, if there are some advances in political development that facilitate the growth of more constructive foreign policy orientations. The main forms of regional foreign policy activity are the projection of national power, bargaining in relation to converging or conflicting interests, cooperation and conflict, and the use of communications to provide information and define the meanings of regional and extraregional situations. The various mixtures of behavior increase or decrease understanding and trust while affecting the orientation of receiving states and their neighbors. In the West European system the general effect is to raise levels of interdependence while tightening the linkages between each state's domestic and regional policies.

Projections of military power by relatively large states influence patterns of relations in Third World regions, depending on the policy orientations of those states, the strength of regional organizations, and the degrees of solidarity between the smaller states. In East Asia, the projection of Chinese power influences the behavior of the small Southeast Asian states, and is not significantly offset by their mutual ties, which are weak, or by any major regional organizations, but the effects of this power projection are moderated by the restraints on Chinese policy that derive from the Sino-United States relationship. In Latin American politics the projection of Brazilian power is strong, but its effects are moderated by the conditioning of several decades of efforts to promote regional cooperation, by various ties between the smaller states, by the leadership efforts of medium sized states, and by the influence of the United States as a basically constructive intrusive power.

In Western Europe projections of military power are directed at the Soviet military complex and have little influence in the regional pattern of relations. Much of the interactions in this pattern comprise forms of integrative and competitive bargaining, in which all members of the European Community participate, and which are conducted under significant normative restraints, based on widely accepted notions of equity. The competitive element, however, is strong and causes extensive use of linkages as states seek to maximize the utility of their leverage by tying cooperative moves on one issue with demands for concessions on another. The manipulation of linkages is a prominent feature of the protracted bargaining over matters of policy coordination within the European Community. There are many discontinuities in this pattern, and these are due basically to numerous crossnational differences between decision makers with reference to perceptions of functional requirements, political interests and bias, and capabilities, as well as for the will to engage in cooperative measures in the general community interest.

Bargaining in Third World regions is more restricted, less frequent, and deals with less substantive issues. Incentives to cooperate are weak. Broadly inclusive participation in the interaction is made difficult by suspicions and antagonisms, and the immediate gains to be expected from cooperation are small. High levels of political motivation, thus, are necessary for vigorous and sustained regional collaboration, but such motivation is often precluded by the narrow value orientations of Third World leaderships. The influence of regional institutions on the behavior of states in these groupings is generally weak and so, also, are the restraints of shared norms and values. Finally, the attitudes of each administration towards the others tends to be strongly influenced by uncertainties about their stability, as well as by deeply rooted fears, suspicions, and antipathies deriving from past rivalries and conflicts.

Regional foreign policy behavior stimulates and is also affected by the emergence of transregional relations and systems. Such systems are interactive patterns extending across the boundaries of regional systems, and are usually based on lower levels of cohesion than is evident