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# REGIONS IN INTERNATIONAL POLITICS: A FRAMEWORK FOR INTEGRATING SYSTEMIC, REGIONAL, DYADIC, AND MONADIC APPROACHES

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The article proposes the framework of further analysis of regional political processes. The authors believe that the significant amount of activities is occurring on the regional level. Thus, the moderate aim of the article is to link different levels of analysis and to present measurable variable to explore regional political developments in this context. The basic assumption of the article is that there are more hierarchical relationships on the regional level than on the global one. Regional powers objective try to create security and stability in their regional areas which increases the overall stability. However, some regions are lacking conditions for durable hierarchy, which is a structural reason for instability and conflicts. The problem the latter regions face is their limited chance of creating durable structures of cooperation, because hierarchy implies some structural violence that helps to realize interests and understand policy limitations.

The article presents comparative framework that assesses features of regional powers such as strength or weakness, absence of rivals or their presence. The framework also includes state's policies that may disregard the regional context in order to seek more promising opportunities. The "hierarchy and interest"- based analysis demonstrates that some regions have strong spatial appearance while the others are only in search of their spatial identity. This allows elaborating on the dependent variables such as territorial disputes, cooperation of rivals, political regime performance.

The authors conclude that the presented framework can be useful for further analysis and enriches potential for testing hypotheses of regional political behavior of state actors.

**Key words:** framework, region, regional power, geographical distance

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Despite the millions of words that have been written about globalization, despite the ease with which money travels across borders, despite new global communication technologies, and despite the apparent reach of determined and dedicated dark networks of terrorist organizations and criminal syndicates, the reality of international politics is that most countries exist in their own neighborhoods and do most of their work in their own regions. Most conflicts occur between contiguous states over natural resources, the migration of their citizens, or border disputes, although they often may cause critical ripple effects across the neighborhoods and regions in which they are nested. Most cooperative architectural arrangements that have been created by states are basically regional or sub-regional in nature [26]. Even in an era of a global liberal economic order, most trade relations are conducted between contiguous states, or at best, regional partners.

This preeminence of the regional context of international politics in an era of "globalization" is not the case for all states. Some, such as Singapore, have specialized in policies (at least economic) that aim at the global market. And clearly, regional and global powers, almost by definition, pursue policies and objectives that aim beyond their neighborhoods and regions and are vitally interested in effectuating the nature of global orders. Yet, such states are few and far between. At present, the actual *global* military reach of major powers is perhaps restricted to one (the U.S.); the extra-regional military reach of major powers that include France, the UK and the Russian Federation barely reach across one or two other regions beyond their own. China's "blue water" navy struggles to cover critical spots in its neighborhood and has been heavily dependent on Russian technology despite its status as a global power. Germany, emerging as a very powerful state after unification following the end of the Cold War, flirted with global policies, but has reduced its military capabilities substantially since the end of the Cold War and ultimately appears to have accepted its role as the leading, major regional power in Europe [25]. Japan's global power status has suffered greatly from its internal, domestic economic problems and finds itself at odds with its own regional actors. Regional powers such as India and Brazil (along with aspirants such as Turkey) have been trying to play a more assertive role on the global diplomatic stage, yet their forays into other regions, especially into Africa, has exposed the weaknesses of their relatively small diplomatic infrastructures and limited capabilities outside of their regions.

Even those states we consider to be major global powers, and regional powers that aspire to be major global powers, have historically been focused on their regions first and foremost before enlarging their foreign policy orientations. Brazilian aspirations for a role beyond South America did not arise until its major challenger (Argentina) no longer appeared to be a significant threat. India's willingness to play on a stage larger than South Asia was an exception during the Cold War but appeared to be functioning sporadically until Pakistan had been sufficiently weakened and their rivalry became less of a security threat. Japan consolidated its regional influence more than a century ago before it sought to create a larger global role for itself immediately before

and after its war with Russia. Likewise, continued, unsettled conflicts within regions (South Asia, East Asia, Central Asia, and even the growing animosities between the powers inside the EU and with their Eastern European counterparts) severely limit the abilities of major European states to play in global as opposed to regional and neighborhood politics.

Despite the persistent evidence of the salience of global trade as part of the global economy, even trade patterns continue to reflect the primacy of regional partnerships. The principle trade relationships for the U.S. reside with its immediate neighbors of Canada and Mexico, and not the Chinese market. Germany's primary trade partners rest within the EU. China trades more with its Asian neighbors than with the rest of the world. Only a handful of states, specializing in global services and natural resource extraction, have primary trade partners outside their own regions[1].

Thus, explanations of international politics that focus on the global system, while highly useful and setting a highly salient context for theorizing, need to be embedded in another set of theories that focus on the dynamics of regions and particularly in a comparative analysis of regional politics and regional dynamics [1]. Ultimately, a comprehensive theory of international politics needs to integrate three levels of analysis: theories of foreign policy, theories of regional politics, and theories of global politics. Of the three, there has been strong theoretical development in two of these fields. However, a comprehensive, comparative theory of regional politics has lagged far behind, obstructed by conceptual and theoretical fights in the field and insufficient systematic empirical testing of critical propositions[2].

Our objective in this effort is quite modest. We do not offer a major theoretical breakthrough, or build the definitive highway down which scholars can travel and create the integration that is necessary across the three perspectives. Our more limited aim is to offer a theoretical framework that hopefully will elicit constructive debate over what should be the appropriate contours of a theory of comparative regionalist analysis that will also provide systematically testable propositions regarding which regional considerations appear to be consistently more salient than others and to provide a framework that allows the beginning of useful linkages between the three levels of analysis.

Finally we offer two caveats before we continue: first, we do not mean to imply that global processes do not exist. In fact they do, involving economics, politics, technology, communications, environmental concerns, and even migration patterns. We are keenly aware as well that major powers, especially the strongest ones, seek to order global politics, that globalization dynamics have important consequences for the well-being of many states, that there exist numerous global norms of appropriate conduct for states that are followed voluntarily by many states, and that global governance,

[1] Even among the most heavily trading states (the US, Germany, China, and Japan), exports and imports to their immediate region overwhelm their trade relations with the rest of the world.

[2] This appears to be the case even though most large-N systematic analyses of international political conflicts, for instance, when controlling for meta-regions in their models typically find that region adds a significant control variable in the analysis. Clearly, the regional context in which states and dyads are embedded appears to matter in such studies.

however difficult and often piecemeal, is also a reality. The critical theoretical and empirical questions for us, however, are the extent to which such global dynamics clash with regional realities, and the circumstances under which one or the other may dominate regional politics.

Second, we will not review here the voluminous literature on regions. There is a plethora of work on the subject, ranging from the work of area studies scholars, regional specialists, realists, constructivists, liberal theorists, post-modernists, cultural theorists, economists, legal scholars, political scientists, linguists, geographers, sociologists and international relations scholars [23]. An adequate review of that literature requires at least a book-length manuscript and we are indebted to most of those who have labored in these vineyards. Here, we cite only a small handful of research efforts that have direct bearing on our theoretical framework.

## What we mean by region

It is a sad commentary on the state of the literature that Thompson's [24] seminal article (and critique) is still cited to underscore the shortcomings in the literature on regions: to wit, he found dozens of major and often contradictory definitions of the concept. Depending on one's theoretical orientation, little agreement still exists in the literature about an appropriate definition. The conceptual range is quite large, including those who simply assume that one should know the contours of regions [22], to others who specify meta-regions [14], to others who define regions in terms of the existence of formal, cooperative architecture that delineates its boundaries [6; 8; 9; 13; 23] or classify geopolitical spaces by cultural or religious considerations [10; 11; 27]. Amongst all of these studies, few have attempted to create a conceptual approach that is matched by empirical criteria for what constitutes a region and the states that form its population.

In our work, we adopt the Rhamey [21] conception of region originally applied to the identification of regional powers in Cline et al., one that appears to have overcome some of these shortcomings: "clusters of politically relevant states with mutual recognition of relevance through their foreign policy actions" [7, p. 122]. Consistent with most conceptualizations, the definition requires minimal geographic proximate component for membership of either direct territorial contiguity or at most separation by 400 miles of water. Therefore, Egypt may be part of the Middle East or the Maghreb, but certainly not part of Asia, regardless of its patterns of interactions. Yet, proximity is insufficient for delineating regional boundaries. We require as well that members within a region exhibit similar patterns of and political interactions as observed in events data. Such a multidimensional requirement suggests that a state may be in geographical proximity to its neighbors and exhibit cultural similarity to them, but would not be classified as part of the region if it fails to exhibit patterns of political interaction similar to the other states around it.

This definition may not be suitable for all research projects, and definitional value is a function both of theoretical perspective and the type of research puzzles that oc-

cupy the researcher's attention. Our definition seeks to avoid conceptualizations that offer definitional answers to crucial substantive questions, such as the extent to which regions are formally organized[3]. In turn, it allows us to ask four salient questions about the nature of regions: the extent to which they differ from each other by the degree to which members are able to develop cooperative relations with each other; why there is variation in the level of structural conflicts within regions; what ability do potential regional members have to stay in or leave their region; and finally, can we detect the reasons why some regions remain fairly stable over time while others change substantially with regard to their size and type of membership?

We expect a number of consequences as a result of this definition, especially from the consistent interaction criterion. It is plausible then that some regions change or disappear altogether (Western versus Eastern Europe), some come into and out of existence (Central Asia), while some states migrate from one region to another (Israel from the Middle East to Europe; Turkey from Europe to the Middle East or even Central Asia), and other states that may belong to no explicit region, regardless of geographical proximity and cultural/linguistic similarity. Some geopolitical spaces, regardless of the proximity of their members, and despite consistent attempts by states to forge a region, may never become one (e.g. the Mediterranean).

In order to operationalize the definition, we follow once more Rhamey by using an "opportunity and willingness" framework to identify patterns of political and economic interactions [20; 21]. First, we determine which states are capable of reaching each other given their capabilities, constituting the opportunity to be part of the region. Among those that qualify (and meet the geographical proximity criterion), we identify states that also engage in actual interactions with each other (willingness). States are considered to have the opportunity and willingness to interact if they clear minimal thresholds on these dimensions, with capabilities measured by a state's GDP modified by their relative political capacity[4].

The ability of a state to act is not only constrained by its capability, but also limited by geography; therefore we employ Boulding's [4] loss of power gradient, as refined by Bueno de Mesquita [5], and applied to each state's proportional share of political capacity modified GDP. Thus, we are able to create "bubbles" of capabilities for each state, with such capabilities decreasing the further the distance from a state's capital. We can then identify each pair of states in a potential region as having sufficient capabilities to reach each other.

In order to measure willingness to interact, we generate a dichotomous variable if a pair of states have an above average amount of political interactions with one another compared to all states globally.[5] We then integrate the opportunity and willingness dimensions: if two states exhibit both opportunity and willingness to interact, then they

[3] If some formal organization is required by definition, then we cannot pursue puzzles focused on conditions under which such organizations are more likely to take place in some regions than in others.

[4] Political capacity is measured by relative political extraction, which scales the value of GDP by the state's ability to extract resources for policy use. See Kugler and Tammen for further explanation and data [15].

[5] We use the Interstate Data for Events Analysis [3] to accomplish this analysis.

meet our criteria for being potential regional members, assuming they are also linked by geography.

Our next step is to apply clique analysis, a network analysis that identifies actors that choose each other, to our preliminary results in order to determine whether or not states with the opportunity to interact and the willingness to do so actually cluster together in a unique patter apart from the broader international system. Clique analysis produces a cluster diagram[6] grouping similar states. Our regions are constructed from that diagram, with the stipulation that they must cluster together in a group of more than two and also be contiguous or separated by no more than 400 miles of water.

The final product of these manipulations is shown in Figure 1. We identify what we consider to be appropriate regions for the time period under analysis and indicate membership in the regions.

| Northern America | Central America | South America | Europe | | West Africa | Southern Africa | Horn of Africa | Maghreb | Middle East | Central Asia | East Asia | South Asia |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| United States* | Haiti | Ecuador | United Kingdom* | Bulgaria | Ivory Coast | Congo (Brazzaville) | Somalia | Algeria | Sudan | Afghanistan | China* | India* |
| Canada | Jamaica | Peru | Ireland | Moldova | Guinea | Congo (Kinshasa) | Djibouti | Tunisia | Iran | Tajikistan | Mongolia | Pakistan |
| Cuba | Belize | Brazil* | Netherlands | Romania | Liberia | Uganda | Ethiopia | Libya | Iraq | Uzbekistan | Taiwan | Bangladesh |
| Mexico | Honduras | Bolivia | Belgium | Russia* | Sierra Leone | Kenya | Eritrea | | Egypt | | North Korea | Sri Lanka |
| | El Salvador | Paraguay | Luxembourg | Estonia | Ghana | Tanzania | Yemen | | Syria | | South Korea | Maldives |
| | Nicaragua | Chile | France* | Latvia | Togo | Burundi | | | Lebanon | | Japan* | |
| | Costa Rica | Argentina | Monaco | Lithuania | Nigeria* | Rwanda | | | Saudi Arabia | | Bhutan, Myanmar | |
| | Panama | Uruguay | Liechtenstein | Ukraine | | Angola | | | Kuwait | | Marshall Islands | |
| | Venezuela* | | Switzerland | Belarus | | Mozambique | | | Bahrain | | Nepal, Laos | |
| | | | Spain, Andorra | Armenia | | Zambia | | | Qatar | | Thailand | |
| | | | Greece, Cyprus | Georgia | | Zimbabwe | | | U. A. E. | | Cambodia | |
| | | | Portugal | Azerbaijan | | Malawi | | | | | Singapore | |
| | | | Germany* | Finland | | South Africa* | | | | | Vietnam | |
| | | | Poland | Sweden | | Namibia | | | | | Malaysia, Brunei | |
| | | | Austria | Norway | | Lesotho | | | | | Papua New Guinea | |
| | | | Hungary | Denmark | | Botswana | | | | | Micronesia | |
| | | | Czech Republic | Iceland | | Swaziland | | | | | Philippines | |
| | | | Slovakia | Turkey | | Madagascar | | | | | Indonesia | |
| | | | Italy, San Marino | Israel | | Comoros | | | | | East Timor | |
| | | | Malta | | | Mauritius | | | | | Australia | |
| | | | Slovenia | | | Seychelles | | | | | New Zealand | |
| | | | Albania, Kosovo | | | | | | | | Nauusta, Samoa | |
| | | | Montenegro | | | | | | | | Solomon Islands | |
| | | | Macedonia | | | | | | | | Kiribati, Tuvalu | |
| | | | Croatia, Bosnia | | | | | | | | Nauru, Palau | |
| | | | Serbia | | | | | | | | Fiji, Togo | |

***Figure 1. A Delineation of Regions in International Politics, 2001-2010***

*Note: States not listed are "border states" that, due to strong commonalities with two or more proximate regional clusterings cannot be placed in a single region by the method discussed.*

**Denotes a regional power by the process outlined originally in Cline et al. (2011).*

[6] Clustering takes the form of a dendrogram, wherein subsets of the dendrogram represent similar states determined by the correlation of their opportunity and willingness indicators with other actors in the system.

## A Theoretical Framework for Comparative Regional Analysis

We are interested in two sets of puzzles concerning interstate relations within regions. First, what accounts for variation across regions in terms of cooperation? It is clear that some regions have patterns of interstate relations that are highly cooperative while in other regions cooperation is sporadic at best. From a longitudinal perspective, it is also the case that regions go through cycles of more or less cooperation over time. What would explain such changes?

The second issue is about patterns of conflict between states in regions: some regions are dominated by intense competition and conflict while other regions are characterized by only sporadic conflicts. It is also the case that patterns of conflicts within regions change over time in some regions, but remain consistently high in others. Solingen notes for example the continuity of conflict in the Middle East versus the reduction of major conflicts in East Asia during the period between 1965 and 2006 [22].

| CONCEPT | INDEPENDENT VARIABLES VARIATION | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| **Regional Power** | None | Exists but in rivalry | Exists but is weak | Strong and creates order |
| **Major regional challenger** | None | Exists but weak | | Exists in strong challenge |
| **Major power intrusion** | Seldom | Intermittent | Relatively constant | Relatively constant and challenged by other major powers |
| **Hierarchical space** | Dominance vacuum | | | Hierarchical space |
| **Organizational architecture** | Weak and mostly informal | | | Complex with some IGO autonomy |
| **Region's aggregate global status** | Low | | | High |
| **Region's level of globalization** | Low | | | High |
| **Political competence of states in the region** | Mostly weak states | | | Mostly strong states |
| **Extent of societal heterogeneity within and between states in region** | Low | | | High on both |

| DEPENDENT VARIABLES | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| **Intra-regional inter-state conflict** | Low | | | High |
| **Region's level of intra-state conflict** | Low | | | High |
| **Extent of cooperation between states in the region** | Low | | | High |

***Figure 2. Key Concepts to assess variation conflict and cooperation in regions.***

There are a number of attributes on which regions can be compared, and we suggest that those attributes provide critical clues about both patterns of conflict and cooperation within regions. These considerations are illustrated in Figure 2. The attributes seek to integrate external involvement in regions, with intra-regional power dynamics, the ability and willingness of states to create cooperative architecture, and the range of intra-state and interstate societal heterogeneity that may create obstacles to cooperation and stimulate further interstate conflicts.

The framework is based on three central assumptions regarding international politics, whether or not the focus is on global or regional relationships between states. The first is that in the absence of a centralized, legitimate authority to govern political affairs between states, much of international (or regional) politics unfolds in the context of hierarchical relationships when states have the capability to exercise such relationships and are willing to do so [16-19]. Second, we assume that when such hierarchies are not sustainable (either because a state lacks the power to create the hierarchy or the willingness to do so), the region (or the global system in question) will experience huge uncertainties in the relationships between states, leading to sporadic but unsustainable patterns of cooperation, and conversely, substantial levels of conflicts.

The third assumption is that if they are capable of doing so, regional powers will seek to create economic and security order in their region. This is not assumed to be so for altruistic purposes. Instead, the motivations are diverse, including both domestic political ones and others related to myriad foreign policy objectives. Clearly, when the region is ordered in terms of security and economic relationship (and consistent with the interests of the regional power), it creates environmental conditions allowing for more stability and less uncertainty in conducting the affairs of the state. While global orders also exist (and may impinge on regional orders), they seldom structure regional relations sufficiently by themselves. Note that we do not assume what mechanisms will be attempted by the regional power in seeking to create such order. It may be done coercively or through a combination of positive and negative inducements (see Ikenberry's [12]) discussion of the trade-offs involved in buying into the American blueprint for order after the end of World War II).

These assumptions guide our framework, which then seeks to map out some of the key ingredients that may have to be managed within regions, depending on the extent to which order and predictability can be created by the strongest of states. Of course, looming over the regional dynamic are extra-regional major powers that may pursue their own interests in the region, all factors being equal.

Given the hierarchical assumption, the first regional attribute of concern is whether or not a regional power exists in the region. As Figure 1 illustrates, not all regions contain regional powers. By regional power we are referring to a state that has dominant military and economic capabilities in the region, is willing to consistently exercise those capabilities in its interactions with other regional members, and is recognized by other members of the region as being a regional power, following the identification procedure outlined in detail by Cline [7]. Regions that lack a regional power a) are

not likely to realize the creation of substantial, viable cooperative architecture; and b) in a dominant power vacuum, will likely experience high levels of conflict, all factors being equal.

Clearly, not all regions have a major regional power. Most obvious is perhaps the Middle East. At present, Saudi Arabia has the capacity to act as a regional power, but its willingness to do so is belied by the frequency of its political and economic interactions that are aimed at least as much at states outside of the region than within [7][7]. When it does act within the region (such as its involvement within the Syrian uprising or its activities around the Arab Spring) it is sporadic and far from a sustained attempt to create regional security order. Inversely, the Iranians exhibit willingness to interact within the region, but lack the same degree of capabilities exhibited by the Saudis. Unsurprisingly, the cooperative architecture in the Middle East is thin, and it is the most conflict-prone region in international politics [21, p. 158].

While some regions may contain no regional powers, others may contain more than one. Clearly two come to mind, with dramatically different consequences. The European region offers a case of four regional powers (Germany, France, Russia, and the UK) with three of them also carrying the status and perceived obligations of being also major global powers. Despite the exclusion of Russia, the end results in the EU has been the creation of a highly stable economic order and highly structured cooperative relationships, especially compared to the history of great competition and conflict prior to World War II.

East Asia provides another regional example with more than one global power nested in the region (China and Japan). While China has been recognized as a regional power and now carries with it the status as a global power as well, its relationship with Japan has remained contentious and the two powers have not been able to either cooperate sufficiently to create a stable regional order similar to the EU[8], nor to even resolve deep-seated security issues without the interference of external powers. Yet, the very existence of both major players in the region has brought about substantial positive developments in economic relationships in the region, and their security issues, while remaining contentious, have not flared into the types of conflicts witnessed in the Middle East.

The emerging region of Central Asia illustrates that the presence of more than one regional/global power need not exacerbate conflicts within the region. A surprising amount of cooperation has developed between China and the Russian Federation in seeking to order security and economic relationships despite the presence of ethnic tensions and conflicts, and the occasional intrusion of outside actors (the U.S., and Turkey). Cooperative architecture, sometimes jointly sponsored (Shanghai Coopera-

[13] The latest example of its reluctance to act as either a regional or extra-regional power was demonstrated by its unwillingness to even accept a seat at the United Nations Security Council. See "Saudi Arabia Rejects UN Security Council Seat," *New York Times* (October 18, 2013).

[8] In fact East Asia has the fewest formal intergovernmental organizations with substantial autonomy of any major region in international politics [25]. Yet, the informal mechanisms developed in Asia appear to work better than the formal IGO's developed in the Middle East without the coordination of a regional power.

tion Organization (SCO) by the two powers, and sometimes with the participation of only one (The Eurasian Economic Community) has been minimally successful given the short history of the region. Nevertheless, given the potential for territorial and ethnic conflicts, there has been some success in regional order creation.

Six regions exemplify geopolitical spaces with one regional power, albeit reflecting substantial differences in the capacity and willingness of the regional leader to create economic and security orders. In Northern America, the United States dominates the space with dissent only from Cuba, promoting regional and economic integration as exemplified by the North American Free Trade Agreement. The Americans are not without challenges in the region, however, as demonstrated by the illicit drug violence along its border with Mexico. In South America, Brazil has had the economic and military capacity, and the willingness to order routinized economic relationships with its neighbors, while border disputes and other security issues have been kept to a minimum compared to earlier eras. In Central America, a very recent addition as a politically relevant region apart from North America, Venezuelan activism under Hugo Chavez, and the status which Venezuela then received, has propelled the nation to the level of regional power within the small cluster. However, with Chavez's death and subsequent domestic political turmoil, its position of leadership in the region, as well as the region's continued existence apart from North America, may be short-lived. In South Asia, India as a regional power has dwarfed the capabilities of its neighbors, yet it has not created either the economic or the security conditions for a stable regional order. In Southern Africa, the Republic of South Africa is clearly the regional power in the region, yet is weak relative to many of the above in both military and economic capabilities, and preoccupied with a broad range of domestic economic, social, and political problems, making the creation of a stable and prosperous order in the region highly problematic. Likewise, while Nigeria predominates a geopolitical space of weak, war torn nations, it is perhaps the weakest of all the identified regional powers, facing dramatic domestic challenges that prevent the possibility of providing stability to the broader regional system.

These varied examples suggest a number of propositions. First, the existence of a regional power in a region is probably a necessary, albeit clearly insufficient condition for the creation of structured cooperative relationships between states and for the development of a stable regional security regime. Second, in order to accomplish such order, the regional power must have not only sufficient capabilities to create such order and to entice or coerce others to participate in it, but also the willingness to do so. Willingness to order the region is probably a function of both external threat perceptions (should it fail to do so), but as well, domestic political and economic motivations for doing so.

Our third proposition suggests that the presence of two major powers in a region will have two outcomes: no common security regimes, or ones that are built mostly to minimize outside intervention by other powers without surrendering the sovereignty of the two major powers, and economic and political structures that are minimal in nature, without sacrificing the sovereignty of the regional powers.

Finally, the European experience suggests another proposition: it may take more than two major powers in a region to secure economic regional orders that surrender some degree of sovereignty by even major powers. Of course the caution we raise here is obvious: given the history of enormous conflict between these powers prior to World War II, it may take dramatic conditions both in the region and globally for more than two regional powers to collaborate on such arrangements[9].

While we consider the existence and nature of the regional power operating in the region to be a highly salient consideration for determining patterns of cooperation or conflict, as Figure 2 suggests, it is by far the only salient consideration. Highly important are a variety of obstacles to regional order emanating both from within and without the region.

Regarding conditions within regions, we suggest the following testable propositions that would facilitate regional powers creating stable regional orders:

1) Where territorial disputes have been substantially resolved. This is clearly the case in Western Europe and more recently in South and North America. It is clearly not the case in the Middle East, large swathes of Sub-Saharan Africa, and in East Asia.

2) Where historic rivalries between major states in the region have been minimized. Interstate rivalries between Germany and France in Europe, Brazil and Argentina in South America, and between the U.S. and Mexico in North America reflect these changes. Conversely, continued rivalry between the two Koreas, China and Japan, Israel and Iran, Rwanda and the Congo—to name a few examples—continue unabated, with consequences that threaten to diffuse these conflicts to other parts of the region.

3) Where major challengers to the dominant regional power are lacking. We propose that the extent to which substantial challengers arise in the region to contest the status of the dominant regional actor, virtually all aspects of order in the region will be contested and the challenge will likely to defuse across the region.

4) Where either there are relatively homogeneous groupings or where heterogeneous populations have reached political accommodation and political integration, either within the states constituting the region or across state boundaries. Ethnic and social conflicts constitute critical obstacles to the creation and management of regional order, and even when they are contained within states, they often spill over across sovereign boundaries.

5) Where the level of state regime competence is high. Political systems vary greatly in terms of their competence to manage their internal politics, and especially in terms of the efficient extraction of societal resources for political purposes. In regions dominated by states with weak and inefficient governments, the ability to create economic and security orders should be especially problematic. Regions are likely to vary substantially in the composition of member states on this domestic political dimension.

[9] Yet, such dramatic events may not be enough to create structured cooperative arrangements between major powers in a region: the case is point is East Asia after World War II.

Finally, the framework is suggestive of three global concerns that are likely to effectuate the creation of regional order and to impact on the extent of conflict and cooperation in a region:

The first is the extent of intrusion into the region by major, global powers. We propose that such intrusions may exacerbate conflict or facilitate cooperation depending on the issues reviewed above, but is less likely to occur when a) a regional power has created substantial and relatively uncontested security and economic order; and b) such regional order is not substantially at variance with attempts to create global orders.

Second, regions vary substantially in terms of the degree to which they are enmeshed or relatively isolated from globalization processes. We propose that the more central a region is to either global economic or security processes, the more difficulty the extant regional power will have in fashioning security and economic orders distinct from global processes.

Third, we suggest that regions vary substantially in the level of status its members enjoy in the global community of states [2]. To the extent that status conveys a form of soft power, we propose that the higher the aggregate status of a region, the more likely it will be able to insulate itself from intrusive states outside of the region, and to be able to conduct more cooperative relations with members of other regions.

The theoretical framework we propose seeks to integrate three different levels of analysis in the study of international politics while highlighting the salience of interstate politics in regions. The framework should allow for a comparative analysis of regions in the international system and offers some testable propositions for systematic analysis. We hope that it constitutes a significant, albeit first set of steps in pursuing inquiry regarding the wide range of variation across regions regarding the extent to which some exhibit patterns of cooperation while others yield consistently long-term patterns of conflict among their members. We, and we hope others as well, will proceed to the next stages of refining the framework, and testing its key propositions.

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# РЕГИОНЫ В МЕЖДУНАРОДНОЙ ПОЛИТИКЕ: АНАЛИТИЧЕСКАЯ РАМКА ДЛЯ ИНТЕГРАЦИИ СИСТЕМНЫХ, РЕГИОНАЛЬНЫХ, МОНИСТИЧЕСКИХ И ДУАЛЬНЫХ ПОДХОДОВ

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В статье предлагается аналитическая рамка для дальнейшего исследований региональных политических процессов. Авторы считают, что значительный объём политической деятельности происходит на региональном уровне. Таким образом, цель статьи – увязать различные уровни анализа и представить измеримые переменные для изучения региональных политических событий в этом контексте.
Основное предположение статьи состоит в том, что на региональном уровне существуют более иерархические отношения, чем на глобальном. Цель региональных держав – укрепить безопасность и стабильность в своих регионах, что повышает общую стабильность. Однако в некоторых регионах отсутствуют условия для длительного сохранения иерархии, что является структурной причиной нестабильности и конфликтов. Проблема, с которой сталкиваются данные регионы, – это ограниченная вероятность создания прочных структур сотрудничества, поскольку иерархия подразумевает какое-то структурное насилие, которое помогает реализовать интересы и понять размеры собственного потенциала.
В статье представлена сравнительная аналитическая рамка, в которой оцениваются особенности региональных держав, такие как сила или слабость, отсутствие соперников или их наличие. Эта структура также включает такие государства, которые могут игнорировать региональный контекст, чтобы искать более масштабные возможности. Анализ, основанный на учете факторов иерархии и интереса, показывает, что некоторые регионы пространственно сформировались, а другие – ещё находятся в поисках своей пространственной идентичности. Такой подход позволяет сформулировать ряд зависимых переменных: такие как «территориальные споры», «сотрудничество соперников», эффективность «политического режима».
Авторы приходят к выводу, что представленные рамки анализа могут быть полезны для дальнейших исследований и могут обогатить потенциал для проверки гипотез о политическом поведении государственных субъектов на региональном уровне.

**Ключевые слова:** структура, регион, региональная держава, географическая дистанция

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