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Geography and Federalism

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Source: *Annals of the Association of American Geographers*, Vol. 61, No. 1 (Mar., 1971), pp. 97-115

Published by: Taylor & Francis, Ltd. on behalf of the Association of American Geographers

Stable URL: <http://www.jstor.org/stable/2569320>

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GEOGRAPHY AND FEDERALISM¹

RAMESH D. DIKSHIT

ABSTRACT. Geographers have paid little attention to the study of federalism, despite the fact that it is the most geographically expressive of all forms of government, and spatial interactions in the functioning of federal States are most easily recognized. Though a particularly complicated form of government based on Western-style democracy, federalism is a dynamic process and not a static phenomenon. Although specially relevant to political geographical study, federalism seems of interest also to social, economic, and historical geographers. Here is a research frontier which provides great scope both for students of regional political geography and for theory-minded political geographers who want to think in terms of concepts. **KEY WORDS:** *Federalism, Political geography.*

ALTHOUGH the relevance of geographical inquiry to the federal form of government is now recognized by most scholars in political geography, there has been singularly little discussion of the concept of modern federalism. A close study of the existing geographical literature on the subject would show the prevailing confusion among geographers regarding its nature. Many geographers still cling to the old concept of federalism as a "three layer cake." Very little has so far been done to explain the geographical basis of this polity. As is true of political geography in general, generic study of federalism has suffered from the fact that political geographers, more than workers in other branches of the subject, because of their overinvolvement with the specific and the unique, have failed to evolve a valid method of approach for generic studies.² This paper makes an attempt to fill these gaps.

Accepted for publication December 12, 1969.

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¹ Acknowledgement is made to Professors O. H. K. Spate and A. T. A. Learmonth for their generosity and help during the research leading to this paper, and to Professor J. E. Schwartzberg for his useful comments. I am also thankful to the authorities of the University of Gorakhpur for having allowed me a long-term study leave which enabled me to accept a Commonwealth award for fulltime research.

² Though there are several articles on aspects of federations, O. H. K. Spate, "Geography and Federalism," *Indian Geographical Journal*, Vol. 14 (1944), pp. 24-36, is the only attempt by a geographer at a nomothetic approach. This study was, however, pre-

After explaining the nature of modern federalism and its geographical basis, a few possibilities of geographical research on federalism are indicated. Existing geographical literature on the subject is briefly reviewed, and an attempt is made to lay down a method of approach for the study of the role of spatial interactions in the rise and survival of federal States.

It seems desirable to emphasize at the outset that federalism is a set of institutions erected to serve a particular type of social, political, and economic situation. The phenomenon so created is not static but dynamic. It goes through a process of evolution and change because the complex of psychological, social, political, and economic factors which necessitate federalism may require one type of instrumentality at one time and another type at some other time. In fact, "as the nature of the society changes, demands for new instrumentalities are created and these demands are met by changing or abolishing old instrumentalities and establishing new ones in their place."³ "Devised as a form of constitutional government to express imperfect unity or multi-nationalism, federalism is a particularly complicated form of western democracy [i.e., a government based on west-

sent at a time when the so-called classical federations were virtually the only examples of true federations. For this reason, and because of its particular method of approach, the conclusions are out of tune with the present expanded span of ideas about federalism.

³ W. S. Livingston, "A Note on the Nature of Federalism," *Political Science Quarterly*, Vol. 67 (1952), p. 93.

ern-style democracy].”⁴ Federalism has, in fact, meant different things to different people in the past. For this reason it appears necessary to explain the nature of federalism as it is understood today before proceeding with a discussion of the geography of federalism.

THE NATURE OF FEDERALISM

Although federalism is so much in currency and the federal form of government by no means uncommon, federalism is not easy to define. The term federal government is used very loosely in political discussions, and it is seldom given a meaning that is at once clear and distinct.⁵ The main features of the system are, however, well known. A federation is born when a number of usually separate or autonomous political units (or units with some pretensions to autonomy) mutually agree to merge to create a State with a single sovereign central government, but retain for themselves some degree of regional autonomy.⁶ The merger of the regional units in a federation is not absolute but partial, and its degree may vary with the circumstances of the particular groups of political communities involved. The legislative and executive powers in a federation are divided between the federal (i.e., central) and the unit governments, each of which acts directly on the people—the central government has jurisdiction over all matters that bear on the development and security of the nation as a whole, and the unit governments have the right to regulate matters of local and more immediate importance to their respective peoples.

Federalism is essentially a compact. Like other compacts, it has a written constitution that cannot be unilaterally altered. The terms of the compact and the division of “powers” or “functions” therein are made by the federating units as coordinate constitutional bodies, and not by a dictatorial third party or an overbearing unit within the group. To

⁴ F. G. Carnell, “Political Implications of Federalism in New States,” in U. K. Hicks, ed., *Federalism and Economic Growth in Underdeveloped Countries* (London: George Allen & Unwin Ltd., 1961), p. 16.

⁵ K. C. Wheare, *Federal Government* (London: Oxford University Press, fourth edition, 1963), p. 1.

⁶ Throughout this paper State stands for a sovereign nation State, and state means a constituent unit of a federation.

ensure that no undue and unauthorized inroads are made by one level of government into the sphere of the other, there is usually a judicial review by a supreme court acting as “the ark of the federal covenant.”⁷ Moreover, as “money is . . . the vital principle of the body politic . . . which sustains its life and motion and enables it to perform its most essential functions,” in order that the federal government and the units are truly coordinate in authority, it is necessary that each has a good measure of control over its finances and, usually, taxing powers.⁸

Federation, Confederation, and Unitary States

Federalism differs from certain other forms of government. The two words “federation” and “confederation” have often been used as synonyms even by serious students of constitutions in the past; the authors of *The Federalist* itself did not distinguish between the two terms; and even a jurist of Dicey’s standing used the two words loosely when he wrote “the physical continuity . . . of countries which are to form a confederated State is certainly a favourable . . . condition for the success of federal government.”⁹ Etymologically there is little to distinguish between “federal” and “confederal,” for each of the two terms implies a covenant, compact, or treaty among independent States. The oldest meaning of the expression “federal government” appears to refer to loose linking together by treaty of sovereign States for specific military or economic purposes. “Examples of federation in this form can be found as far back in history as confederacies of ancient Greece.”¹⁰

Modern scholarship has, however, insisted on drawing a clearcut distinction between the

⁷ M. Ruthnaswamy, “The Ark of the Federal Covenant,” *New Review*, December 1946.

⁸ The quotation is from *Federalist* Essay No. 30, whose authorship is attributed to Hamilton. See A. Hamilton, J. Madison, J. Jay, *The Federalist Papers*, with an introduction, table of contents, and index of ideas by C. Rossiter (New York: The New American Library, 1961), p. 188.

⁹ A. V. Dicey, *Introduction to the Study of the Law of the Constitution* (London: Macmillan Co., ninth edition, 1939), p. 603.

¹⁰ R. L. Watts, *New Federations: Experiments in the Commonwealth* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1966), pp. 9–10.

two terms, despite the fact that such federal States as Canada and Switzerland describe themselves as "Confederation." As Wheare wrote, a confederation is now described as "that form of association between states in which the general government is dependent upon the regional governments." It is represented by countries whose constitutions "embody the principle of subordination by the general government to regional governments."¹¹ Thus a federation differs from a confederation in that in the latter the central government is subordinate to the unit governments in the sense that it runs at the mercy of regional governments. But in a federation neither level of government is at the mercy of the other.

In a confederation there is no direct contact between the peoples of the several constituent units and the central authority. The central authority in a confederation reaches the people only through the respective regional governments, which may or may not allow this contact. In a federation, by contrast, there is a direct relationship between the central government and the people, who not only share in the task of constituting it but also submit to its rule in its spheres of competence without the interposition of the regional governments as intermediaries.¹²

In a confederation the member states retain their sovereignties, and therefore, the central authority cannot compel its decisions on any of the constituents; a single province, however small, can compel the central authority to change or modify its decision, or even render it ineffective, for the central authority in a confederation can act only when the constituents are unanimous.¹³ But in a federation there is no division of sovereignty; the constituent units are only autonomous in certain limited spheres. Once a federation is created the states have to abide by the decisions of the properly con-

stituted central government in matters where the constitutional compact empowers it to act. As MacMahon said:¹⁴

The logical difficulty of divided sovereignty can be avoided . . . by regarding a confederation as merely comprehensive and cohesive form of international administrative union, whereas a federal system is regarded as a multiple government in a single state.

A federation differs from a unitary government in that in a unitary polity "states," if any, exist at the mercy of the central government; in a federation each level of government is, in theory, autonomous within its allocated sphere of competence, and is free from any non-agreed intervention from the other except in emergency, if the constitution so provides. Thus what distinguishes federalism from a unitary government is the constitutional autonomy, not the formal division of powers.

Confederations, Leagues, and Alliances

Although modern usage has drawn a clear distinction between federation and confederation, no such distinctions are recognized between alliance, league, and confederation. The terms have often been used interchangeably to refer to the loose linking together by treaty of sovereign States for specific military or economic purposes. In the past the terms have often been used to describe such associations as the confederacies of ancient Greece or the Swiss Confederation before 1848. The Swiss Confederation originally described itself as an Everlasting Alliance. As Watts wrote:¹⁵

this usage is still current in contemporary Europe, where the various European supranational agencies designed to secure co-operation between nations have sometimes been referred to as "federal."

A functional continuum from the loosest kind of alliance to the fully federal State may be recognized; for alliance fades into league, league into confederation, and confederation into fully federal State, which may itself be transformed from coordinate to cooperative, and finally to an integrated or organic federation.

Terms such as alliance and league often carry the connotation of looser levels of

¹¹ K. C. Wheare, *op. cit.*, footnote 5, p. 32.

¹² Hughes argued that a confederacy is a form of union in which the federal link is more strongly political than legal, C. J. Hughes, *Confederacies* (Leicester University Press, 1963).

¹³ This is at its own peril; when the point of nullification is reached, the situation may not be amenable to compromise, and the result may be either the breakup of the confederation or coercion leading to a more unified State.

¹⁴ A. W. MacMahon, "Federation," in *Encyclopaedia of the Social Sciences* (New York: Macmillan Co., 1931), Vol. 6, p. 173.

¹⁵ Watts, *op. cit.*, footnote 10, p. 10.

organization than confederations such as the United Provinces of Netherlands, the United States before 1787, the Austro-Hungarian Empire, and the German Empire from 1871–1918. The consciousness among scholars of the obvious import of these terms is apparent in statements such as, “it would appear that where ‘league’ or ‘alliance’ is not sufficient to describe an association, ‘confederation’ is the only suitable term left.”¹⁶ Technically the line of distinction between the looser associations and the more meaningful confederations is very difficult to draw, for among these more meaningful confederations themselves there has been great variety.

The Austro-Hungarian Empire, for instance, was “at once a league and a unitary state,” because although “the general government of Austria-Hungary was subordinate to the Austrian and Hungarian Parliaments . . . in so far as the Emperor-king held and exercised the supreme executive power, the general and regional governments . . . were not independent governments.”¹⁷ In contrast to Austria-Hungary, the meaningfulness of the German Empire confederation resulted from the dominating strength of one of the units, Prussia, which by virtue of its strength and prestige was able to command the support of the other units. The central government was, in many respects, identical with the regional government of Prussia, for the Federal Council of the Empire was “dependent . . . in particular upon one [state]—that of Prussia,” which held seventeen of fifty-eight votes in the Council, possessed an absolute veto on the decisions of the Council, had its king as the German Emperor and Supreme Warlord, its Prime Minister as the Federal Chancellor and the President of the Council of the Confederation.¹⁸

In contrast, the United Netherlands, whose associating provinces declared in 1579 that they were “allied, confederated, and united together for ever to remain in every way and manner as if all were but one single province,” was what Edmundson calls “a gathering of

deputations from seven sovereign provinces.” The general government (the States-General) “possessed only a derived, not an inherent authority” for “a single province, however small, could, by obstinate opposition, block the way to the acceptance of any given proposal.”¹⁹ The same was the case with the United States from 1777–1787. As *The Federalist* records:²⁰

In our case the concurrence of thirteen distinct sovereign wills is requisite, under the Confederation, to the complete execution of every important measure that proceeds from the union.

The meaningfulness of these two republican confederations, as against the two imperial ones, resulted from external forces that tended to squeeze them into unity, rather than from any political or legal factors in their inherent structure.

Though no clearcut distinction between a confederation and other looser forms of union seems possible, a functional continuum can easily be recognized. An alliance is a temporary political association that is highly restricted in its objective. It lacks common instruments of administration, and is easily broken as its objective is achieved or begins to look beyond achievement. A league is an intermediate stage between an alliance and a confederation, at times leaning to one side and at times to the other, depending upon the nature of the objectives that initially brought the units together. It may possess a central consultative body, though not common instruments of administration. A confederation is permanent in intention, because the purposes that bring the constituents together seem to be lasting in nature, though they may not remain so. It differs from an alliance and a league in that it intends to create some lasting common organs of government, however restricted the sphere of these common organs may be. As in the other two looser associations, the union essentially remains an association of States rather than a single State with a sovereign center as a federation is.

We can illustrate this functional gradation with present-day examples. We are concerned with what is properly called the alli-

¹⁶ Wheare, op. cit., footnote 5, p. 32.

¹⁷ Wheare, op. cit., footnote 5, p. 6.

¹⁸ The quotation is from Wheare, op. cit., footnote 5, p. 6. For details about the German Empire see R. Schlesinger, *Federalism in Central and Eastern Europe* (London: Kegan Paul, Trench, Trubner & Co. Ltd., 1945).

¹⁹ G. Edmundson, *History of Holland* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1922), p. 112.

²⁰ *The Federalist Papers*, op. cit., footnote 8, No. 15, p. 112.

ance-to-confederation spectrum as against Livingston's federal spectrum. Such primarily military pacts as N.A.T.O., S.E.A.T.O., A.N.Z.U.S., and bilateral or multilateral alliances, or understandings having practically the force of alliances, such as the United States-Australia-South Vietnam relationship, and relationships between the United States and South Korea or Taiwan, are forms of alliances. They are subject to fluctuations, and mean different things to different partners, as is shown by French and Pakistani attitudes to S.E.A.T.O. The British Commonwealth, the Arab League, the former League of Nations, and the present-day United Nations Organization, all are leagues, though no doubt the United Nations has a far more institutional structure than the former League of Nations, which many would regard as a mere alliance. But, as Sawyer wrote:²¹

the systems contemplated by Common Market Treaties are a good deal more 'confederate' . . . , and one of them, the European Economic Community (herein the E.E.C.), is right at the point of joining the federal spectrum with the confederal.

This is because, as Sawyer has explained at some length, the treaty sets up institutions which have a supranational character, since they have autonomous powers of legislation and decision, creating laws and obligations directly binding on component States. Among the institutions is a Court which can make decisions as to the validity of E.E.C. norms, and as to the compatibility of national laws with the Treaty and the norms under it. The formal weakness of the system, considered as a federation, Sawyer points out, is that its supreme legislative and policy organ, the Council, directly represents the member governments and has to act unanimously on many critical questions. The ultimate authority resides in the national legislatures, not in the community institutions, and a unilateral departure from the system by a member State would be regarded as a mere breach of treaty, not as a kind of treason, which would be the case in a federation. Thus, it remains, like a

²¹ G. Sawyer, *Modern Federalism* (London: C. A. Watts & Co., 1969), p. 61, and G. Sawyer, *The Constitutional System of the European Common Market* (Canberra: Royal Institute of Public Administration, 1963).

typical confederation, essentially an association of States, and not a State created by the merger of units that become the constituent states of a single sovereign State.

Federalism as a Constitutional Compromise

As Dicey has pointed out, federalism rests on the psychology of the peoples of the political units involved desiring union without desiring unity.²² A federation is born when the political units in a region possess strong individual identities which create in them a genuine desire to maintain their separate existence, and at the same time they share certain factors of vital import and desire a strongly coordinated and united existence. When they can neither separate without losing the advantages of union, nor amalgamate without foregoing individual identities which they greatly value, the political units create a halfway house between complete unity and complete separation, and a federation results.

Federalism is thus essentially a compromise between centripetal and centrifugal forces that are operative at the same time. It is born only when a balance between these forces is reached, but because federation is essentially a bargain, the units merge only when the centripetal forces overwhelm the separatist ones, and the units see greater advantages in union than in separation.²³ The basic problem of a federation has traditionally been "to keep the centrifugal and centripetal forces in equilibrium so that neither the planet States shall fly off into space nor the sun of the central government draw them into its consuming fire."²⁴ Erected essentially as a halfway house between unity and separation, federalism clearly has a wide spectrum.²⁵

Stages of Federalism

During its pre-twentieth century phase federalism was more or less a dualistic polity

²² Dicey, *op. cit.* footnote 9, p. 602.

²³ The concept of federalism as a bargain has been refined by W. H. Riker, *Federalism: Origin, Operation, Significance* (Boston: Little, Brown & Co., 1964).

²⁴ J. Bryce, *American Commonwealth* (New York: Macmillan Co., 1888), Vol. 1, p. 348.

²⁵ W. S. Livingston, *Federalism and Constitutional Change* (London: Oxford University Press, 1956), p. 4, and Livingston, *op. cit.*, footnote 3.

“in which the federal and the State governments pursued virtually independent courses of action during a period when government activity was in any case minimal.”²⁶ It consisted of “two separate federal and State streams flowing in distinct but closely parallel channels.”²⁷ Describing American federalism in 1858, Chief Justice Roger B. Taney observed that:²⁸

The powers of the general government and the State, although both exist and are exercised within the same territorial limits, are yet separate and distinct sovereignties, acting separately and independently of each other, within their respective spheres.

This traditional dualistic approach to federalism has since been expounded by such scholars as Freeman, Dicey, and Garran, and in recent years has been refined and justified by Wheare.²⁹

This legal theory of divided sovereignty and the two distinct and separate spheres fitted the facts of the time well enough, for till long after the Civil War in the United States the few activities of the national government could go along with the limited state activities without either impinging seriously on the other. It was, William Anderson said, almost, if not quite, a “functionless federalism” when compared with present conditions.³⁰ The economic philosophy on which this dualistic federalism was based has today become quite outmoded. No modern State, whatever its economic and political philosophy, can avoid extensive State intervention. This is the era of the active, public-service State, not of the passive *laissez-faire* State. The performance of functions and services is the keynote of modern government, and in

that performance cooperation, interdependence, and interpenetration of national and state agencies are inevitable.³¹ Older constitutions have been adapted to fit the needs of the present by the development of extra-constitutional devices such as administrative cooperation between governments, coordination of state policies by conditional grants from the federal government, and federal monopoly or near-monopoly of taxation of incomes and profits. Many scholars, therefore, think that federalism has become obsolete in the twentieth century for, as Loewenstein said, economic planning is the DDT of federalism.³² But federalism has only entered a new phase. Whereas the guiding principle of eighteenth- and nineteenth-century federalism was the independence of state and federal authorities, the guiding principle of mid-twentieth-century federalism is their need of cooperation.³³ It is only the pest of dualism that the DDT of economic planning has killed. The dualistic phase of federalism has become a relic of the “horse and buggy days.”³⁴ This new phase of federalism has rightly been called cooperative federalism, which is a system whereby state and national governments supplement each other and jointly perform a variety of functions. The national government, with its greatly enlarged powers and functions, has “supplemented rather than supplanted the performance of functions by the States.”³⁵ The philosophy of the earlier federalism was, Governor Cleveland is reported to have said, that it is the duty of the people to support the government and not that of the government to support the people. Now the philosophy has greatly changed. “There is no

²⁶ D. J. Elazar, “Federal-State Collaboration in the Nineteenth Century United States,” *Political Science Quarterly*, Vol. 79 (1964), pp. 248–81.

²⁷ J. P. Clark, quoted in Elazar, op. cit., footnote 26, p. 191.

²⁸ R. B. Taney, quoted in Elazar, op. cit., footnote 26.

²⁹ A. E. Freeman, *History of Federal Government in Greece and Italy* (London: Macmillan Co., second edition, 1893); Dicey, op. cit., footnote 9; J. Quick and R. R. Garran, *Annotated Constitution of the Commonwealth of Australia* (Sydney: Angus and Robertson, 1901); and Wheare, op. cit., footnote 5.

³⁰ W. Anderson, *Federalism and Intergovernmental Relations: A Budget of Suggestions* (Chicago: Public Administration Service, 1946), p. 13.

³¹ Anderson, op. cit., footnote 30, p. 14.

³² K. Loewenstein, “Reflections on the Value of Constitutions in Our Revolutionary Age,” in A. Zacher, ed., *Constitutions and Constitutional Trends since World War II* (New York: New York University Press, 1951), p. 212.

³³ A. H. Birch, *Federalism, Finance, and Social Legislation in Canada, Australia, the United States* (London: Oxford University Press, 1955), p. 305.

³⁴ Carnell, op. cit., footnote 4, p. 18.

³⁵ W. S. Livingston, “Canada, Australia, and the United States: Variations on a Theme,” in V. Earle, ed., *Federalism: Infinite Variety in Theory and Practice* (Itasca, Illinois: F. E. Peacock Publishers Inc., 1968), p. 132.

longer any question about the national government's power to act, but only about the appropriate means and amounts and the proper timing of the actions to be taken."³⁶

The traditional picture of nineteenth century American federalism is unreal, and federalism in the United States, in practice if not in theory, has traditionally been cooperative.³⁷ In fact, no two governments operating in the same area could possibly be so inactive as to remain unaware of each other. The theory of dual federalism was not viable when applied to concrete problems in specific situations even in the early days of the American Republic, said Elazar, who added that federalism when interpreted to mean demarcation of responsibilities and functions has never worked in practice. Although the amount of governmental activity in relation to the total activity of American society has increased, governmental activity in the nineteenth century was shared in much the same manner as governmental activity in the twentieth. Indeed, the roots of cooperative federalism are entwined with the roots of federalism itself.³⁸

In view of the changed emphasis on state and federal cooperation, Wheare's insistence that each of the two levels should be limited to its own sphere, and within that sphere should be independent of the other, appears excessive.³⁹ Birch, therefore, proposed to delete these clauses in Wheare's definition of federalism. As Birch put it:⁴⁰

a federal system of government is one in which there is a division of powers between one general and several regional authorities, each of which, in its own sphere, is coordinate with the others, and each of which acts directly on the people through its own administrative agencies.

This avoided confusion regarding federalism and quasi-federalism. Approached thus, federalism did not appear obsolete or a relic of

³⁶ W. Anderson, *Intergovernmental Relations in Review* (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 1960), p. 12.

³⁷ M. J. C. Vile, *The Structure of American Federalism* (London: Oxford University Press, 1961); and D. J. Elazar, *The American Partnership in the Nineteenth Century United States* (Chicago: Chicago University Press, 1962).

³⁸ Elazar, op. cit., footnote 26, p. 192.

³⁹ Wheare, op. cit., footnote 5, p. 14.

⁴⁰ Birch, op. cit., footnote 33, p. 306.

the horse and buggy days.⁴¹ Wherever the problem of securing political unity in face of regional diversity is to be reconciled in future, federalism would prove adaptable enough to continue to serve a fruitful purpose.⁴²

Wheare found Birch's modification of his definition "constructive and fruitful," and most students would agree that this modified definition provides "the most serviceable definition of modern federalism."⁴³ In fact, "under the heat and pressure generated by social and economic change in the twentieth-century, the distinct strata of the older federalism have begun to melt and flow into one another."⁴⁴

The following excerpts further clarify the concept of modern federalism. Grodzins wrote:⁴⁵

The American form of government is often, but erroneously, symbolized by a three-layer cake. A far more correct image is the rainbow or marble cake, characterized by an inseparable mingling of differently coloured ingredients, the colours appearing in vertical and diagonal strands and unexpected whirls. As colours are mixed in a marble cake, so functions are mixed in the American federal system.

The nineteenth-century, primarily legalistic and dualistic, phase of federalism is now over. Federalism is no longer:⁴⁶

like a great factory wherein two sets of machinery are at work, their evolving wheels apparently intermixed, their bands crossing one another, yet each doing its own work without touching or hampering the other.

⁴¹ H. J. Laski, "The Obsolescence of Federalism," *The New Republic*, Vol. 98 (1939), p. 367.

⁴² The earlier views on the new phase of modern federalism were expressed by Clark, op. cit., footnote 27; G. C. S. Benson, *The New Centralization: A Study of Intergovernmental Relationships in the United States* (Toronto: Oxford University Press, 1941); and A. N. Holcombe, *Our More Perfect Union* (Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard University Press, 1950).

⁴³ Wheare, op. cit., footnote 5, p. 14; the second quotation is from Carnell, op. cit., footnote 4, p. 20.

⁴⁴ J. A. Corry, "Federalism and Constitutional Change" in A. R. M. Lower, et al., *Evolving Canadian Federalism* (London: Cambridge University Press, 1958), p. 122.

⁴⁵ M. Grodzins, "The Federal System," in *Goals for Americans*, The Report of the President's Commission on National Goals (New York: Prentice-Hall Inc., 1960), p. 265.

⁴⁶ Bryce, op. cit., footnote 24, p. 432.

Anderson said:⁴⁷

the entire network or structure of American [so also other federal] governmental units—national, state, and local—has become so close-meshed in recent decades that a strain or change at any point has repercussions in other parts of the fabric. One part cannot be understood if separated from others.

Regional and central governments in a federation should be coordinate as well as cooperative. Modern federalism is, therefore, a federalism of functions rather than of powers, more of politics than of laws.⁴⁸ The difference between the two versions of the federal concept, however, is chiefly one of emphasis; “dual federalism” views the two sets of government primarily as equal rivals, whereas “cooperative federalism” views them as equal partners. (The central government tends to become more equal than the others.) At the root of both views is the premise that in a federation neither level of government is subordinate to the other.⁴⁹

Although states-rights sentiment exists in some form in almost every federal State, the nature and degree of the rivalry between the states and the central government that was supposed to exist in the dualistic phase of federalism has undergone a great change. Through a long process of adjustment the main areas of state and central functions are largely agreed (though disputes are by no means uncommon), and now the main rivalry is between the states themselves, where the “centralized regulator [the federal government] plays the fundamental role as in any living organism,” because “different regions [or states in a federation] tend to regard themselves as rivals just as much as small nations are within a common market.”⁵⁰ The states are also rivals in their recourse to central government finance as a help to their development.

This role of the federal government as the centralized regulator brings us to a possible new phase in the development of federalism. (This new phase has been termed organic federalism; in view of the discredit of the word “organic” in political geography, it may

be called integrated federalism.) This is still a recent and ill-defined concept. In organic federalism the center has such extensive powers, and gives such a strong lead to the state governments in some of their most important areas of individual and cooperative activity, said Sawyer, that the political taxonomist may hesitate to call it federal at all. Sawyer regarded Austria as the most obvious candidate for the organic category, because although the “Centre dominates every aspect of policy,” “Region autonomy within the limits of the Region competence is no sham, and the values inherent in such autonomy are protected both by the constitutional structure and by the pattern of politics.”⁵¹ Sawyer thought that among the older federations the United States is the only one where a surge towards organic federalism could take place in the near future similar to the surge towards cooperative federalism in the late 1930s.

Now the question arises: what is the line of demarcation between an organic federalism and an organic decentralized unitary State? The answer is not very difficult. The essence of federalism is that each level of government should have a guaranteed autonomy. Thus “so long as the amending procedure, the operation of the judicial review and the pattern of politics or a combination of any *two* of them restrict the ability of the Centre to abolish a Region structure . . . the position of a Region is sufficiently secured,” and the polity should be called federal.⁵²

Federalism and Democracy

In the introduction I observed that federalism, as it is understood today, is essentially a form of government based on Western-style democracy. The point may require some amplification. Most students of federalism, from Freeman to the present, have regarded democracy as a necessary adjunct to a genuinely federal government. It was clear to Greaves “that federalism is essentially a democratic phenomenon, or at least that it is incompatible with dictatorial forms of government.”⁵³ Maddox thought that “there can be

⁴⁷ Anderson, *op. cit.*, footnote 30, p. 3.

⁴⁸ Livingston, *op. cit.*, footnote 35, p. 141.

⁴⁹ Watts, *op. cit.*, footnote 10, p. 13.

⁵⁰ J.-R. Boudeville, *Problems of Regional Planning* (Edinburgh: Edinburgh University Press, 1966), p. 57.

⁵¹ Sawyer, *op. cit.*, footnote 21, p. 125.

⁵² Sawyer, *op. cit.*, footnote 21, pp. 127–28.

⁵³ H. R. G. Greaves, *Federalism in Practice* (London: Allen & Unwin Ltd., 1940), p. 121.

no such thing as a federation which includes totalitarian regions denying free political action."⁵⁴

Wheare saw clearly that it may be possible, in theory, to conceive a federal government in which general and regional governments are dictatorships, each strictly within its own sphere, but it is difficult to imagine such a government in the realm of practical politics for any length of time. Dictatorship, with its autocratic government and denial of free elections, is incompatible with federalism, because a government which denies free expression cannot permit the articulation of regional opinions which is the very essence of federalism, as against a unitary polity. Modern federalism is essentially a compact between the peoples of the various constituent units, whereas a union under a dictatorial regime can, at best, be a compact between the central and the regional dictators and, hence is confederal rather than federal:⁵⁵

Federalism demands forms of government which have the characteristics usually associated with democracy or free government. There is wide variety in forms which such government may take, but the main essentials are free election and a party [i.e. multi-party] system, with its guarantee of a responsible opposition.

The Communist federations of the Soviet Union and Yugoslavia are not functionally federal, for there is a genuine "suspicion that the federal form of their written constitutions is not merely a 'form' but a 'sham', the 'real' government being vested in the highly centralized Communist Party hierarchy."⁵⁶ The role of the Communist Party is explicitly stated in their constitutions. In the Soviet Union there is no judicial review or other check on the validity of central laws, and there would need be a remarkable dilution of the authority of the Communist Party and increase in the independent authority of the central and the regional legislatures before this system could be regarded as federal. Yugoslavia's position under the constitution of 1963 is more arguable, because the character of the Communist Party has changed

and may continue to change, and the possibility of the official legislative organs becoming autonomous centers of authority is greater. Although the six constituent regions of the State have no separate effective legislatures, the constitution provides a substantial region-based check on political actions of the center if they are prejudicial to regional autonomy. Institutionally, therefore, Yugoslavia may seem to possess what Sawyer called "the makings of a federal arrangement," but as it exists today, it is not federal.

However, both these Communist countries, by virtue of their regionally grouped diversities and their historic regional particularisms, possess the essential geographical base for federalism. The main difficulty is their one-party government, which in effect becomes a dictatorship, not of an individual but of a large group, and dictatorship, of whatever sort, is incompatible with federalism. But hardly anything in human affairs is fixed.⁵⁷

The formal federal structure in both these countries might become real not only through the loosening up of the social structure generally, and the emergence of some legal or at least tolerated [?] opposition to the Communist Party, but also through the federalization of the Communist Party itself *within* the relevant countries.

If that happens, these States may form genuine examples of federalism, but today they do not. Elazar said:⁵⁸

The federal structures occasionally adopted by non-democratic systems must generally be considered 'window dressing' except in so far as injection of the principle may serve as a democratizing force in itself.

⁵⁷ Sawyer, op. cit., footnote 21, p. 60.

⁵⁸ D. J. Elazar, "Federalism" in *International Encyclopedia of the Social Sciences* (New York: Macmillan Co. and The Free Press, 1968), Vol. 5, p. 361. Drawing a distinction between "federal systems" and "empires allowing cultural home rule," Elazar wrote, perhaps a little harshly, "such empires have often been termed federal—in some cases because they claim to be. The Roman Empire was the classic example of this kind of political system in the ancient world, and the Soviet Union may well be its classic modern counterpart. In both cases, highly centralized political authorities possessing a virtual monopoly of power decide, for reasons of policy, to allow local population with different ethnic cultural backgrounds to maintain a degree of home rule, provided that they remain politically subservient to the imperial rule," p. 355.

⁵⁴ W. P. Maddox, "The Political Basis of Federation," *American Political Science Review*, Vol. 35 (1941), p. 1125.

⁵⁵ Wheare, op. cit., footnote 5, p. 47.

⁵⁶ Sawyer, op. cit., footnote 21, p. 58.

THE GEOGRAPHY OF FEDERALISM

Although most political geographers seem to agree that federalism is "the most geographically expressive of all political systems," little attention has been given by geographers, or by any one else, to the geographical basis of the federal polity.⁵⁹ Livingston, who revived the concept of federalism as a polity based essentially on regionally grouped diversities, and to whose writings much of the recent interest in federalism by geographers is due, described the concept as sociological rather than geographical.⁶⁰ The result has been that students of federalism have wondered whether Livingston has, indeed, provided "a useful tool for analysis" for the study of federalism.⁶¹

There are two reasons why federalism is considered the most geographically expressive of all forms of government. First, it is based on the existence of regional differences, or a sense of locality, "the belief that the area in which one lives is different from other areas, even though contiguity with them may pro-

⁵⁹ The quotation is from K. W. Robinson, "Sixty Years of Federation in Australia," *Geographical Review*, Vol. 51 (1961), p. 1.

⁶⁰ Although the concept of federalism as a polity based on regionally grouped diversities has been attributed almost invariably to Livingston, op. cit., footnote 3, in the recent literature, the concept of territorially based diversities as the basic premise of federalism is quite old and, I think, was first formulated by the German jurist Hugo Preuss in his book *Gemeinde, Staat, Reich* published in 1889. English-speaking writers in general have ignored this fact, but even among scholars writing on federalism in English before Livingston, the concept is quite implicit in the works of writers of German origin such as M. H. Boehm *Encyclopaedia of the Social Sciences* (New York: Macmillan Co., 1931), Vol. 5, pp. 169-72, and R. Schlesinger, op. cit., footnote 18. Preuss was the first eminent jurist who recognized territorial identities as the basic fact in federalism, and he called the states in a federation "territorial corporations." Preuss' ideas about states as territorial corporations are briefly noted in S. Mogi, *The Problem of Federalism: A Study in the History of Political Theory* (London: George Allen & Unwin Ltd., 1931), Vol. 2, pp. 735-52, which Brecht says is a guide to and not through the literature in German, A. Brecht, *Federalism and Regionalism in Germany: The Division of Prussia* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1945).

⁶¹ A. H. Birch, "Approaches to the Study of Federalism," *Political Studies*, Vol. 14 (1966), p. 17.

vide many interests in common."⁶² Federalism has been described as "the process by which a widening sense of social solidarity is reconciled with the attachment for local identity, through the provision of dual political organization."⁶³ Secondly, because of a "dual" political organization and substantial regional autonomy, the regions in a federal State remain highly articulate, and spatial interactions in a federal State, unlike other forms of government, are clearly and easily recognized. Because federalism starts with a tacit recognition of regional personalities, and because spatial interactions in the political life of federal States are clearly recognized, federalism becomes a suitable subject for geographical inquiry if geography is properly described as a science of spatial interactions.⁶⁴

The basic geographical premise of federalism is the existence of regionally grouped diversities. No government has ever been called federal that has been organized on any but a regional basis. "Federalism becomes nothing if it is held to embrace diversities that are not territorially grouped."⁶⁵ Regional differences, or a strong sense of locality, may exist in States that are not organized on a federal basis, but only when the region is powerful enough to demand and receive social accounts does federalism become inevitable. Regional differences in France have not been strong enough in this respect, and the country remains organized on a unitary basis. Similarly, diverse regions with strong regional identities may be joined together under a single unitary State, even though regional identities persist, if the sociological unit of the region has ceased to demand accounts. This can happen when regions are brought together by imperial conquest and are not able to demand recognition of their special position. Federalism is a democratic and voluntary union of essentially equal partners, not a union dictated by some outside agency or by an overbearing unit within the union.

⁶² J. D. B. Miller, *Australian Government and Politics* (London: Duckworths, 1959), p. 138.

⁶³ D. G. Karve, *Federations: A Study in Comparative Politics* (London: Oxford University Press, 1932), p. 8.

⁶⁴ E. L. Ullman, "Human Geography and Area Research," *Annals*, Association of American Geographers, Vol. 43 (1953), p. 56.

⁶⁵ Livingston, op. cit., footnote 25, p. 3.

Clearly identifiable regions in a unitary State are not able to demand social accounts in the same manner as the regions in a federal State, where the regional identity of each component unit is guaranteed by the constitution; in a unitary system these differences and diversities are largely suppressed or ignored. Federalism, however, does not mean the perpetuation of sovereignties, if there be any. The basis of federal union is recognition of the limitations of the individual units as self-sufficient and completely functioning entities.

Federalism, unlike a unitary system, does not force unity out of diversity, but allows the two to coexist. But in its progress towards maturity, contrary to what is sometimes stated, it does create unity through the greatly enlarged functions of the federal government, national planning, and the erosion of the once rigid physical, psychological, and economic barriers between the component units of the State.⁶⁶ Confusion will be avoided if we remember that federalism is not a static phenomenon, but a dynamic process, and is constantly in flux. Federalism is, in some senses, halfway to unity and integration, but not to a unitary State, for a federation, once established, tends to rigidify regional identities by giving them continued articulation. Even though the central and regional governments become largely cooperative, the regional governments remain rivals. Boehm said that the antithesis of federalism is not unitarism, but the extreme kind of particularism and separatism.⁶⁷

Although regionally grouped diversities are the fundamental fact of federalism, the distribution of diversities within a federation need not follow the boundary lines of the component units. As federalism often embraces diversities on a number of issues, it can hardly be expected that the state boundary lines will coincide with all different interests and opinions on all questions. The essential fact is that the units should possess a total complex of diversities strong enough to distinguish them from their fellow members, and thereby make them desire and demand recognition of their individual identities.

⁶⁶ Robinson, *op. cit.*, footnote 59, p. 2 says "federation does not create unity out of diversity."

⁶⁷ Boehm, *op. cit.*, footnote 60, p. 170.

Regionalism of this kind, in which diversities spill over state boundaries, is considered a valid manifestation of the federal principle. The Swiss and other federations show that it is also a beneficial manifestation.

Diversities within a federal society or political community may turn on all sorts of questions—economic, religious, historical, linguistic, and cultural. Any of these, or any combination, may produce a group demand for self-expression. These major diversities in a nation's life may, however, have two different patterns of geographical distribution: they may be territorially grouped, or they may be mixed like the strands of different colors in a marble cake. If the major identifying diversities within a State are arranged territorially, then it is potentially federal, but if the distribution of diversities follows a marble cake pattern, then the society is plural and nonfederal. The need for federalism genuinely arises only when a society contains territorial groups so markedly different that they require some instrumentality to protect and express their peculiar qualities. "One such circumstance . . . does not make the society or constitution federal. But two or six or twenty may produce a result that may properly be so called."⁶⁸

Lest this statement create confusion, we are talking of the distribution of diversities and not of functions. The distribution of functions in modern federations may resemble the marble cake pattern, but the major diversities on which the federation is based must be territorially arranged or the society cannot be federal. This does not contradict the pattern exemplified by Switzerland, where the two major diversities in the nation's life are territorially arranged, though one cuts across the other and thereby creates a unifying factor.

Federalism long remained a subject for purely legal discussion, but legal answers are of value only in solution to purely legal problems. Federalism is concerned with many problems other than legal ones, and a purely legal approach to federalism has not sufficed. The essential nature of federalism should not be sought in the shadings of legal or constitutional terminology, but in the forces—eco-

⁶⁸ Livingston, *op. cit.*, footnote 25, pp. 2-3.

conomic, social, political, and cultural—that have made it necessary. Like most other institutions of man, federalism is an attempt to solve the problem of human organization. The particular problem of federalism is to find solutions to governmental questions in a complex interaction of spatial differences and similarities. Federalism is, therefore, essentially a product of geography, and the essence of federalism lies not in its constitutional structure but in the geography of the society itself.

This geographical view of the nature of federalism, I believe, does away with the confusion that overemphasis on the sociological view of federalism has created. Sawyer objects to Livingston's statement that federalism is "a function not of constitutions but of societies," for such statements, he said:⁶⁹

can be misleading, because they suggest that there is a sort of general social attitude, or type of social structure, which corresponds uniquely with the constitutional form known as federalism. . . . I do not believe that these attitudes or structures are specific to federalism. . . . The favourable social attitude is an attitude towards government, administration and law in general, not towards federalism as such.

Unlike social structures or attitudes, the geography of the society is to a very large extent unique and specific to federalism, though this geography does not determine the federal or nonfederal form of government that ultimately evolves in any State. Sometimes federations that are created under or enforced over largely nonfederal situations may survive, as the post-World War II federalism in West Germany does. But such federations survive largely because, during the period that the federation is enforced, the society of the country adjusts to the political situation that it cannot undo, and develops regional identities and vested interests. These change the effective political geography of the State and make it, in turn, suitable to federalism. But federalism created under a nonfederal situation, unless enforced by external forces, can hardly develop into anything but a federalized unitary State such as Austria, which the political taxonomist may hesitate to call federal at all. On the other hand, if a unitary structure is imposed upon

a region that is essentially federal in its politico-geographic structure, the government can be run only by military dictatorships, as in Burma or Pakistan, or by one-party rule (group dictatorship), as in the Soviet Union or Yugoslavia.

As a particularly dynamic and complex phenomenon, federalism is⁷⁰

of interest not only to the constitutional lawyer concerned with the nature of legal frameworks, and the students of political institutions occupied with the operation of the particular types of political institutions; but also to the sociologist, . . . the economist, . . . the geographer, . . . the historian, . . . and the political theorist.

Although of special relevance to political geography, federalism may also be of interest to the social geographer interested in social integration and diversity, to the economic geographer studying the role of political institutions in economic growth, and to the historical geographer evaluating spatial interactions in the genesis and evolution of some of the "new" nations.

GEOGRAPHERS AND FEDERALISM

Although some geographers now agree that federalism is the most geographically expressive of all governmental systems, their published work, despite Prescott's assertion to the contrary, does not show a keen awareness of this fact.⁷¹ Apart from his own article on Nigeria, only the article by Robinson among the works that Prescott refers shows this awareness.⁷² Prescott fails to cite Spate's article of 1944, nor does he mention Dale's article on the West Indies which, although it shows little of this awareness, is nevertheless a not very successful attempt to study an important aspect of a federation that failed.⁷³ Fisher's book and articles on Southeast Asia present, no doubt, an incisive treatment of the political geography of the area they deal with, and because there are or have been

⁷⁰ Watts, *op. cit.*, footnote 10, p. 16.

⁷¹ J. R. V. Prescott, *Geography of State Policies* (London: Hutchinson University Library, 1968), p. 120.

⁷² J. R. V. Prescott, "The Geographical Basis of Nigerian Federation," *Nigerian Geographical Journal*, Vol. 2 (1958), pp. 1-13.

⁷³ E. H. Dale, "The State-idea: Missing Prop in the West Indies Federation," *Scottish Geographical Magazine*, Vol. 78 (1962), pp. 166-76.

⁶⁹ Sawyer, *op. cit.*, footnote 21, p. 136.

some federations in that region, he made some important observations on some of the federal problems of these States.⁷⁴ But these can hardly be said to show this awareness.⁷⁵

Whittlesey drew attention to the need for studying the impress of effective authority on the landscape in 1935.⁷⁶ Soon after, Ullman studied the effect of an interstate boundary in a federal State on its surrounding landscape.⁷⁷ Among other important works are those by Rose and Logan.⁷⁸ Two new attempts on other aspects of federalism are the study of federal grants-in-aid in the United States by Brunn and Hoffman, and a case study of the geography of political affiliation in a federal-state system by Solomon.⁷⁹

⁷⁴ C. A. Fisher, *South-East Asia, A Social, Economic and Political Geography* (London: Methuen & Co., 1964); "The Malaysian Federation, Indonesia and the Philippines: A Study in Political Geography," *Geographical Journal*, Vol. 129 (1963), pp. 311-28; "The Problem of Malayan Unity in its Geographical Setting" in C. A. Fisher and R. W. Steel, eds., *Geographical Essays on British Tropical Lands* (London: George Philip & Son, 1956), pp. 271-344; "Geographical Setting of the Proposed Malaysian Federation," *Journal of Tropical Geography*, Vol. 17 (1963), pp. 99-115; and "Malaysia: A Study in Political Geography of Decolonization" in C. A. Fisher, ed., *Essays in Political Geography* (London: Methuen & Co., 1968), pp. 75-145.

⁷⁵ R. D. Dikshit, "The River-State of Gambia," *Africa Quarterly*, Vol. 4 (1965), pp. 229-39, which attempts an analysis of the problems and prospects of a federation between Senegal and Gambia, was prompted largely by the need of a political geographical appraisal of a "new" nation rather than by this awareness.

⁷⁶ D. Whittlesey, "Impress of Effective Authority on the Landscape," *Annals, Association of American Geographers*, Vol. 25 (1935), pp. 85-97.

⁷⁷ E. L. Ullman, "The Eastern Rhode Island-Massachusetts Boundary Zone," *Geographical Review*, Vol. 29 (1939), pp. 291-302.

⁷⁸ A. J. Rose, "The Border Between Queensland and New South Wales: A Study of Political Geography in a Federal Union," *Australian Geographer*, Vol. 6 (1955), pp. 3-18; A. J. Rose, "Some Boundaries and Building Materials in Southeastern Australia" in M. McCaskill, ed., *Land and Livelihood, Geographical Essays in Honour of George Jobberns* (Christchurch: New Zealand Geographical Society, 1962), pp. 255-76; and W. S. Logan, "The Changing Landscape Significance of the Victoria-South Australia Boundary," *Annals, Association of American Geographers*, Vol. 58 (1968), pp. 128-54.

⁷⁹ S. D. Brunn and W. L. Hoffman, "The Geography of Federal Grants-in-aid to States," *Economic Geography*, Vol. 45 (1969), pp. 226-38; and R. J. Solomon, "The Geography of Political Affili-

Van Valkenburg was the first political geography textbook writer to recognize the forms of government as relevant to the study of political geography.⁸⁰ Since then other textbook writers have included such a discussion, and have discussed the political geography of federal States, but seldom the geography of federalism in those States. Pounds has considered the politico-administrative systems of States in greater detail than others, and has given better coverage to federalism.⁸¹ Pounds said that geographers should study federalism because it is the most geographically expressive of all governmental systems, enumerated the federal States of the world in characteristic textbook manner, and made some oft-repeated observations on the communist and Latin American federations rather than giving a geographical approach to the problem or a discussion of the federal concept.⁸²

Jackson included two readings on federalism (from political scientists, of course) in his reader on political geography.⁸³ It may be taken as a proof of his awareness of the special relevance of federalism to politico-geographic study that, although he included two readings on federalism, he made no reference to the unitary form of government. *Systematic Political Geography*, edited by de Blij, followed Jackson's readings closely in time; besides including Robinson's paper on "Sixty Years of Federation in Australia," it contains an introduction on federalism by de Blij himself.⁸⁴ This introduction justifies political geographic study of federalism by

ation in a Federal-State System: Tasmania 1913-1966," *Australian Geographical Studies*, Vol. 7 (1969), pp. 28-40.

⁸⁰ S. van Valkenburg, *Elements of Political Geography* (London: Isaac Pitman & Sons, 1939), pp. 302-10.

⁸¹ N. J. G. Pounds, *Political Geography* (New York: McGraw Hill Book Co., 1963).

⁸² Pounds did, however, provide a constructive approach to the study of "politically organized areas" which may with profit be adapted to the study of individual federations; Pounds, *op. cit.*, footnote 81, p. 193.

⁸³ W. A. D. Jackson, ed., *Politics and Geographical Relationships* (Englewood Cliffs, N. J.: Prentice Hall, 1964).

⁸⁴ H. J. de Blij, ed., *Systematic Political Geography* (New York: John Wiley, 1967).

quoting Robinson, and presents a very arbitrary classification of federations.

In my opinion Robinson is the only geographer who has shown an awareness of modern trends in federalism, perhaps because he has been the only geographer to study center-state relations in a federal State in historical perspective, and therefore drew upon the works of Livingston and Birch. Dale was satisfied with Wheare's definition of federalism, and Prescott in 1962 was still talking of "quasi-federalism," but none has shown an awareness that federalism is a dynamic process and not a static phenomenon.⁸⁵ In discussion of a paper by Wheare in 1952, Spate urged the need to "recognise that there are in fact different types of federation in existence today."⁸⁶ He said nothing further, perhaps because the concept of cooperative federalism was then only taking root. To say this is, however, not to discredit these geographers. An awareness and a deeper understanding of federalism could come only with a concentrated study of the problem, which none of them had set out to do.

It seems to me that Hartshorne, although he never studied federalism as such, nevertheless showed an awareness of the geographical basis of federalism and of its cooperative nature. The very fact that he recommends a functional approach to the study of federal States shows that, unlike many others, he did not think that the state and central governments in a federation are independent of each other.⁸⁷ Hartshorne wrote that if regional differences in the intensity of the state-idea⁸⁸

are relatively minor, as in most of France, . . . the regions may accept a unitary government. . . . If the differences are great, the attempt to impose such a uniform system may provoke opposition endangering the national unity.

⁸⁵ Dale, *op. cit.*, footnote 73, p. 173, said "federalism is really a division of power between central and regional governments, each independent within its sphere." See also J. R. V. Prescott, "Geographical Basis of Kenya's Political Problems," *Australian Outlook*, Vol. 16 (1962), pp. 270-82.

⁸⁶ Discussion in G. Sawyer, ed., *Federalism: An Australian Jubilee Study* (Melbourne: F. W. Cheshire, 1952), pp. 131-32.

⁸⁷ R. Hartshorne, "The Functional Approach in Political Geography," *Annals, Association of American Geographers*, Vol. 40 (1950), pp. 95-130.

⁸⁸ Hartshorne, *op. cit.*, footnote 87, p. 118. See also R. Hartshorne, "Political Geography," in P. E.

From this review, it appears that Spate's 1944 article, which he himself said was only "a very cursory and preliminary view of a subject which merits closer study," is the only attempt at a generic approach to the problem of federalism and its geographical relationships, but Spate's cursory, or impressionistic, view did not lead to conclusions that are valid today.

From his study of the federations then existent, Spate noted the following points regarding the relationship between geographical factors and the federal form of government:

Nearly all the largest States in point of area are federations. . . . In point of population the situation is quite different, and when we come to consider density the position is almost completely reversed. . . . In nearly all cases federations of the normal type have a very marked peripheral or eccentric distribution of population. . . . Often . . . the federation contains within itself complementary climatic and economic regions—this of course being largely a function of great area.

On the basis of these observations, Spate concluded that "our survey suggests that modern federalism . . . is essentially a form appropriate to 'new' lands of vast distances and thin population," and he was sceptical whether it would work well in "regions of deep-rooted historical loyalties and conflicts" in the Old World. He said:⁸⁹

We may conclude that in any such groupings the principle of complementary economic regions and of neutral capitals would be desirable, . . . and initially at any rate advance would perhaps be surer by way of the *Staatenbund* or League of States rather than of *Bundesstaat* or fully federal state.

Although Spate's observation that most federal States are large in area and small in population is still largely true, this does not validate any causal relationship between size and the federal form of government. Some large States are not federal and some small States have carried the federal form success-

James and C. F. Jones, eds., *American Geography: Inventory and Prospect* (Syracuse: Syracuse University Press, 1954), pp. 207-08.

⁸⁹ The terms *Bundesstaat* and *Staatenbund* are transposed in the original article. As one of Spate's own earlier writings would show (O. H. K. Spate, "Geographical Aspects of the Pakistan Scheme," *Geographical Journal*, Vol. 102 (1943), p. 128), this was a case of an undetected slip.

fully. There is, similarly, no causal relationship between federalism and population density. Not only Switzerland, which then appeared an atypical federation, but new federations such as India have a high density of population. Spate's next point, that modern federalism is essentially a form of government appropriate to new lands with vast area and thin population, is valid in the sense that every new political and administrative experiment has a better chance of success in new and relatively empty lands where people do not have a long history, and where strong and conflicting cultural identities in the component regions have not developed. But there is no cause and effect relationship between vast spaces and thin population on the one hand, and federalism on the other. Contrary to the author's doubts, countries such as India, with deep-rooted historical loyalties and with one of the oldest histories in human civilization, have adopted the federal form of government. India has generally been regarded as one of the most successful federations outside the classical group.

As regards the concluding lines, as long as the ideal is not possible we should seize upon the areas of agreement and exploit them fully. It may, therefore, under certain conditions be reasonable to begin with a League of States, but it would be wrong to believe that "initially at any rate advance would perhaps be surer by way of the *Staatenbund*." With its inevitably weak center, a *Staatenbund* is doomed to failure, as the experience of the West Indies federation amply proves. The days of a League of States or a limited purpose confederation as a substitute for a federation are largely over, for mere advisory councils (as confederations are) are likely to prove only ineffective and "glorified debating societ[ies]."⁹⁰

A League was acceptable in ancient and medieval times, when governments did not so much enter the day-to-day life of their peoples, and when the most important purpose of such unions was collective security. Now the primary *raison d'être* of federal unions is not defence, but economic progress and

the advancement of the peoples of the units involved. This can be achieved only when the federal government is endowed with powers wide enough to enable it to confer these expected benefits and thereby win over the loyalties of all sections, or regions, of the federal society. In modern federalism the emphasis is no longer so much on the constitutional division of powers as on the functions that the two levels of government jointly and separately perform. Modern federalism is not so much coordinate as cooperative. For any federal government to perform effectively the essential functions of a modern government, the center and the states must be closely linked as in a fully federal State; otherwise the result will be a failure, as shown by the West Indian example.

Modern federalism, unlike the ancient or medieval Leagues, is not a compact between kings and generals, but between peoples. And peoples' loyalties are won more by bread and butter than by the bayonet. Judged in the context of the times, Spate's opinion does little discredit to its author, for till then the concept of dual federalism reigned supreme; the federal and unit governments were supposed to be independent of each other, and the sphere of the central (federal) government was considered to be highly restricted.

The task that Spate set out to do a quarter of a century ago, "to examine the geographical layout of the existing federal states in an endeavour to establish those conditions which are common to most of them and which . . . favour the establishment and maintenance of this type of political organisation," remains largely unaccomplished and still awaits investigation.

Area, Population and the Federal Form of Government

It appears necessary to take stock of the ideas of geographers in particular, and students of federalism in general, on the relationship of the size of States and their population density to the federal form of government, in order to place Spate's observations in perspective. Robinson thought that:⁹¹

Countries of large areas and small population, or even rather large population concentrated in

⁹⁰ Conference on Closer Association of the British West Indian Colonies, *Proceedings* (London: United Kingdom Command Papers and Colonial Office Papers, Col. no. 218/1948), p. 35.

⁹¹ Robinson, *op. cit.*, footnote 59, p. 2.

widely scattered areas, are obviously suitable for this [i.e. federal] form of government.

de Blij styled what he calls "our rule" that:⁹²

Theoretically, the federal framework is essentially suitable in a large or very large size category. . . . When we view a list of federal states of the world, we should expect to find that they are large, comparatively sparsely populated, multicore, and possess several large cities.

Turning to political scientists, in 1949 Parker wrote that:⁹³

All modern federations were, at their inception, political unions covering unprecedentedly huge areas with scattered centres of population and comparatively underdeveloped communications . . . and federalism seemed the necessary form of government primarily for this reason.

Parker was speaking of all modern federations, and not of Australia alone. As Carnell wrote, many political scientists think that "federalism may well have been suited to a particular phase of unification of large continental states with small populations and poor communications."⁹⁴ "Even today," wrote Sawyer, "the size of a country and the efficiency of its communications are regarded as factors contributing to a choice between unification and federalism."⁹⁵

What seems to have eluded these scholars is that the important fact about federalism is not the type or size of population and territories, but the fact that federalism is based on regional loyalties or a sense of locality. In "new" lands with vast open spaces, and a few cores of population widely set apart, this sense of locality may well be born because of physical distance. In older and densely populated countries a sense of locality or regional identity may be, and often is, based on historical traditions, linguistic, religious, and other ethnic diversities, or economic disparities and differences that are regionally grouped. The fallacy in establishing a causal relationship between the sheer area of States and the federal form of government is re-

vealed if we remember that the Thirteen Colonies in 1787, or the four provinces of British North America in 1867, constituted only a very small portion of the areas now covered by these States. However it should be remembered that "over centralization in [a large country] . . . leads to anaemia at the extremities and apoplexy at the centre."⁹⁶ Large size in itself does, to a certain degree, favor the rise of federalism even though size and federalism do not have a cause and effect relationship.

FEDERALISM: A GENETIC-FUNCTIONAL APPROACH

How should the study of spatial interactions in the rise and survival of federal States be approached? The traditional method would be the environmentalistic approach pioneered by philosophers and students of politics like Bodin, Montesquieu, and others, who tried to explain every activity of man, including his choice of form of government, as essentially a response to the physical forces of the environment. Under this approach one would be required to study the physical environment of each of the existing federal States and, through a process of elimination, try to establish the relationship between such features as area, shape, relief, latitudinal location, and climate, and the choice of the federal form of government. A sophisticated variant of this approach is "to examine the geographical layout of existing federal states" with a view to isolating those conditions which appear to favor the establishment and maintenance of this type of political organization.⁹⁷ Though there may be little to say against this pioneering attempt, surprisingly enough it was still being pursued even in the late sixties. de Blij's introduction on federalism is the case in point; such an approach is bound to be superficial and can lead only to faulty conclusions. The external visible features are only the leaves of the federal tree, and what we really need to look for are the roots, which alone will lead us to valid conclusions.

A more sophisticated variant of this approach was a comparative study of "The

⁹² de Blij, op. cit., footnote 84, pp. 446-48.

⁹³ R. S. Parker, "Australian Federation: The Influence of Economic Interests in Political Pressures," *Historical Studies (Australia and New Zealand), Selected Articles*, first series, (Melbourne: Melbourne University Press, 1964), p. 152. The article was originally published in the journal in 1949.

⁹⁴ Carnell, op. cit., footnote 4, p. 18.

⁹⁵ Sawyer, op. cit., footnote 21, p. 57.

⁹⁶ Constituent Assembly of India, *Debates* (New Delhi: Government of India, 1946-1949), Vol. 5, p. 81.

⁹⁷ Spate, op. cit., footnote 2, p. 24.

Geography of Federalism in Australia and Canada" made in 1953 by a historian, MacKirdy.⁹⁸ His study was saved many of the environmentalistic pitfalls to which the lack of a proper historical perspective might lead. His approach is clear from his opening lines:⁹⁹

Take two large areas, the third and the sixth largest in the world's political entities . . . Sprinkle them unevenly with relatively small populations. Provide them with types of federal political organisations. Call them 'Canada' and 'Australia.' The result should provide some interesting examples of the influence of geography on politics.

This study takes a broad view of the "geographical layout," and considers factors such as urbanization and regional specialization of economic activities. As the study limits itself to the two individual federations, without making any attempt at broad generalizations, it has been saved some obvious errors and is, on the whole, fruitful. The limitations of the approach are nonetheless clear. What is going to be achieved if we compare Switzerland and the United States, or India and Australia?

Our search for a solution in the methods of political geography is not very helpful. Hartshorne's "Functional Approach in Political Geography" and Jones' "Unified Field Theory of Political Geography" are classic statements in political geographical methodology, and the consensus among political geographers seems to be that these two approaches cover all the problems in methodology in political geographic studies.¹⁰⁰ But, although these statements are competent and comprehensive, they are of value only in respect of specific problems and individual cases. The functional approach, as its author rightly said, offers a systematic method of establishing "the basic factors and relationships involved in the primary problem of political geography—the analysis of the degree to which the diverse regions of the state constitute a unity."¹⁰¹ The

functional approach is of value only in the study of political geographic entities that function as units, specially a state, and it offers little help in generic studies.

Jones' "Unified Field Theory" approach, with its emphasis on the Idea-Decision-Movement-Field-Political Area chain, completes "the tie between morphology and function, . . . between 'grand-ideas' and the earth's surface."¹⁰² But it also is of value only in the study of specific political geographic problems, both national and international, such as the birth of new States such as Israel or Pakistan, or of boundaries and capitals, and it is of little help in the study of generic problems.

The difficulty with these approaches may well be that they are products of a phase when geography was obsessed with the study of the specific and the unique, a phase in which it was generally believed that as political geographers (more than our other colleagues) "we are handicapped in developing scientific principles, and are restricted to the consideration of the unique cases."¹⁰³ It was thought that the "idea and purpose of the generic state—the purposes that is that are common to all states" were the sole concern of political scientists, and that this concern ignores "the very thing that is of direct concern to the geographer—namely the idea that is distinct for the particular state in contrast with that of other states."¹⁰⁴

We find that a genetic approach may be more useful for this study. We may examine the historical evolution of the units involved in a federation, reconstruct their economic, political, and social geography of the period immediately preceding and since the federation, and thus try to isolate the spatial interactional factors that were in each case largely responsible for the rise of that particular psychology of desiring union but not unity among the political units concerned, as also the reasons for their ultimate choice of erecting this halfway house between complete unity and complete separation, as a federation is called. A genetic approach would give a truer picture of the differences and similarities in the rise and maintenance of federal

⁹⁸ K. A. MacKirdy, "Geography and Federalism in Australia and Canada," *Australian Geographer*, Vol. 6 (1953), pp. 38–47.

⁹⁹ MacKirdy, op. cit., footnote 98, p. 38.

¹⁰⁰ Hartshorne, op. cit., footnote 87, and S. B. Jones, "A Unified Field Theory of Political Geography," *Annals, Association of American Geographers*, Vol. 44 (1954), pp. 111–23.

¹⁰¹ Hartshorne, op. cit., footnote 87, p. 117.

¹⁰² Jones, op. cit., footnote 100, p. 122.

¹⁰³ Hartshorne, op. cit., footnote 87, p. 102.

¹⁰⁴ Hartshorne, op. cit., footnote 87, p. 112.

States in the world. Generalizations from such a study would be free from the superficialities of the environmentalistic or the "geographical layout" approach.

Although the functional approach is of little help in a generic study of federalism as such, with the changed emphasis of modern federalism, it is of great value in the study of individual federations. And because a generic study of federalism may also be interested in the factors that help to maintain this type of political system, the use of the functional approach in a limited sense would be inevitable.

The marriage of a genetic approach to a functional one may give rise to what might be called structural-functional analysis, which was first formulated by Woodger in biology, and later adapted by Merton to the social sciences.¹⁰⁵ The approach has been developed and refined by many scholars, including Levy, who has presented an excellent synthesis.¹⁰⁶ A "function" is defined as "any condition, any state of affairs, resultant from the operation (including in the term 'operation' mere persistence) of a unit of the type under consideration in terms of a structure(s)." A "structure" is defined as "a pattern, i.e., an observable uniformity in terms of which action (or operation) takes place."¹⁰⁷

In a federal system the "structure" consists of the underlying geographical pattern of regional diversities, and the constitutional instrumentalities created to preserve them. The "function" consists of the process or the dynamics of federalism, i.e., federal-state relations and the overall progress of the system towards maturity.

As federalism is born out of the peculiar political psychology of desiring union but not unity, in a genetic study of federalism our primary concern in reviewing each individual federation would be, first, to outline the salient historical facts about the political

communities involved in the federation and, then, to delineate the political geographical factors that were largely responsible for creating among those units strong regional identities and a desire for separate existence on the one hand, and the factors that in the end overwhelmed these feelings for separatism and compelled the units to unite into a federal State, on the other. One may infer the geographical relationships that helped the rise of federalism in each case. From the working and dynamics of the federations since their inauguration one would try to derive the patterns of spatial interactions in the success of each experiment. The sum total of these conclusions on the rise and survival of all federal States would give us, I believe, certain fruitful hypotheses on the role of spatial relations in their rise and stability.

Such a study would inevitably be concerned with State-ideas and the *raison d'être* of States.¹⁰⁸ General historical works would inevitably provide the raw materials for research of this type, because¹⁰⁹

The state-idea is a complex of traditions, experiences, and objectives. It is made up of written history, folklore, stories of national heroes, religious beliefs, and the language and the art forms in which these things are communicated . . . And it is the characteristic economic social and political institutions. The State is created to defend and develop the state-idea.

As the State-idea is not always easy to identify, the task may be difficult.¹¹⁰ But as

¹⁰⁸ The concept of State-idea and *raison d'être* of States was first introduced in political geography by F. Ratzel. The recent revival of interest in this concept is due mainly to Hartshorne, 1950, op. cit., footnote 87, and 1954, op. cit., footnote 88, pp. 167-225.

¹⁰⁹ P. E. James, "Some Fundamental Elements in Analysis of the Viability of States" in C. A. Fisher, ed., 1968, op. cit., footnote 74, p. 33.

¹¹⁰ L. K. D. Kristof objected that "the state-idea does not quite coincide with the national idea. The former is pre-eminently political, goal-oriented and the brain-child of a more or less sophisticated intellectual elite. The latter is less political and more historical and tradition-bound, and pertains rather to the broad masses than to any select group. Still, not even national idea can be equated with national culture. . . . Some geographers define state-idea so broadly as to make it identical with national culture," which reduces the usefulness of the concept and "tends to blur the issues. . . . The relation of state-

¹⁰⁵ J. H. Woodger, *Biological Principles: A Critical Study* (London: Routledge, 1924); and R. K. Merton, *Social Theory and Social Structure: Toward a Codification of Theory and Research* (Glencole, Ill.: Free Press, 1949).

¹⁰⁶ M. J. Levy, Jr., "Structural Functional Analysis" in *International Encyclopaedia of the Social Sciences* (New York: Macmillan Co. and The Free Press, 1968), Vol. 6, pp. 21-29.

¹⁰⁷ Levy, op. cit., footnote 106, p. 22.

some excellent historical studies of the relevant periods in the history of most of these States exist, it may be possible to do so for the limited purposes of such a study. Political scientists also have studied individual States in detail, although most of what has interested political scientists and students of constitutions may not be of much interest to the geographer.

CONCLUSIONS

Federalism is the most geographically expressive of all forms of government. We need more concentrated study of this phenomenon, both to understand the structure and functioning of individual federal States, and to explore spatial-interactional factors involved in their origin and maintenance. Here, it seems, is a frontier of research in political geography which might provide scope both for students of regional political geography interested in detailed studies of individual States, and for theory-minded political geographers who want to think in terms of concepts.

Federalism has remained the domain exclusively of political scientists and students of government and law. The nature of federalism as a form of government based essentially on regionally grouped diversities has gone largely unheeded by students of geography. And because the interface between geography and political science has remained neglected, this concept of federalism, which would have provided a useful tool for analysis

idea to national culture is that of a child to its mother. One mother can give birth to several children who, though related to each other, may exhibit fundamentally different characteristics and vigorously compete with each other." L. K. D. Kristof, "The Russian Image of Russia" in C. A. Fisher, ed., 1968, op. cit., footnote 74, p. 347.

The distinction drawn by Kristof may not always be true. India is a case in point; the national culture and the state-idea embrace almost the same area that is covered by the Indian Union. His distinctions may not be of much significance in the study of the circumstances that lead to unity of separate political units at the time of a federation. I believe it is of importance that all units in a federation realize they had the same mother, perhaps the same father, and that the same blood runs through them all. For the purposes of such a study one may not need to bother about this distinction even though it may often be "incorrect" to equate the state-idea with the national culture.

of federal systems, has remained largely ignored. Livingston, who revived the concept, called it sociological rather than geographical, as it actually is. The confusion is apparent in the criticism of Livingston made by Birch in 1966, which now appears to have received tacit acceptance by many political scientists. Birch said:¹¹¹

It is not at all easy to see what help we can derive from this approach to the subject. It is, of course, true that federal institutions are frequently, though not always, a reflection of social diversity, and virtually all writers on the subject (including Wheare) have said as much. The point is not whether this is true but whether it is useful as a tool of analysis.

This appears to me to deny Livingston the credit for his greatest contribution to the understanding of federalism.

This concept of federalism has failed to yield valuable results in political science because the basic nature of federalism, as a polity based on regionally grouped diversities in a national society, provides a tool of research which is not sociological, as it is erroneously thought to be, but spatial-interactional. And because geography deals with spatial interactions, this tool can be used with the best results only if we accept it as a geographic technique.

Ackerman has emphasized the relevance of a systems approach to geography in general, and pointed out the relevance of this approach to the study of political geography in particular.¹¹² Federalism will appear to be most eminently suited to this type of analysis, for a "federal political system" has been defined as:¹¹³

that form of political system (of a nation-state) in which the institutions, values, attitudes, and patterns of political action operate to give autonomous expression to both the national political system and political culture and to regional political subsystems and subcultures. The autonomy of each of these systems and subsystems is counterbalanced by a mutual interdependence. This balance maintains the overall union.

¹¹¹ Birch, op. cit., footnote 61, p. 17.

¹¹² E. A. Ackerman, "Where is a Research Frontier," *Annals*, Association of American Geographers, Vol. 53 (1963), pp. 429-40.

¹¹³ M. Stein, "Federal Political Systems and Federal Societies," *World Politics*, Vol. 20 (1968), p. 731.