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## **At Home and Abroad**



*Patrick Lennox*

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**At Home and Abroad**  
The Canada-US Relationship and  
Canada's Place in the World



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# Introduction

All too often we hear the Canada-US relationship described as “special.” It is a partnership between friends, allies, neighbours, even family members. There is, obviously, a grain of truth to these platitudinous assessments that often spill from the mouths of politicians and the pens of pundits. Two more culturally similar states have rarely, if ever, coexisted side by side on this planet. More often than not, however, as most serious observers would be quick to point out, Canada and the United States find themselves at odds on the international stage. The chapters that follow demonstrate consistently and in the most critical of cases the discrepancy between the rhetoric that has traditionally described the “special relationship” and its practice. Canada itself has *also* been endowed with something of an exceptional status in the international community. Deemed a peacekeeper, a helpful fixer, an honest broker, and now even a “model citizen,”<sup>1</sup> Canada has an international reputation – however homegrown, contrived, and mythological – that suggests that it is somehow above the dark, incendiary fray of power politics. This book does not seek to entirely dismantle these two related notions. It does, however, take aim at the fact that they have, for far too long, been allowed to stand in for a proper theory of the connection between the Canada-US relationship and Canada’s place in the world. Accordingly, it sets its sights on the development and testing of such a theory.

Traditional explanations of Canada’s specialized international roles or of its place in the world tend to draw on variables rooted at the analytical levels of either the state or the individual decision-maker, or some loosely contrived combination of the two.<sup>2</sup> Conventionally, for example, the argument is routinely made that Canada’s ability to be a peacekeeper or a helpful multilateralist in the international system stems from its tolerant and pacific political culture, its lack of an imperial past, or its democratic values, which are so highly regarded by the world.<sup>3</sup> Arguments are also consistently made that refer to particularly gifted or energetic Canadians, such as Lester B. Pearson<sup>4</sup> or Lloyd Axworthy,<sup>5</sup> as explanations for the country’s performance

of problem-solving (Suez crisis, 1956) or advocacy (the ongoing International Campaign to Ban Landmines) roles. Such arguments, like their unit-level counterparts, fail to consider Canada's position in the hierarchical continental subsystem that permits and creates the necessity for such activity in the broader international system.

To understand such an underlying causal connection requires the aid of a theory. The theory I introduce and develop in the first chapter of this work is of a general or system-level variety. In other words, what I call *structural specialization theory* (SST) has the potential to be used in explaining not just Canada-US high political relations and Canada's specialized place in the world but also analogous hierarchical inter-state relations and the patterns of behaviour followed by other subordinate states in the international system. It is thus an international relations (IR) theory with the potential to aid in explaining a specified array of hierarchical inter-state relationships and the performance of subordinate states in the international system. I make this assertion because such a mode of studying Canada-US relations and Canadian foreign policy is remarkably absent from the current body of scholarship on these separate though deeply related aspects of international affairs. There are, of course, some notable exceptions to this, but the general tendency has been to study these two subjects in a traditionalist manner, with an emphasis on providing rich detail of particular cases within the broader history.<sup>6</sup> As a result, to the extent that particular variables are emphasized in the explanation of these cases, they tend to be located at the analytical level of the individual or the state.

The systemic form of theorizing that I introduce here enables us to see beyond particular political outcomes to the patterns and trends they form in succession. Such a mode of explanation emphasizes variables that transcend individual political leaders or configurations of a state's regime to find the ultimate causes of a state's behaviour in the structural contexts within which it exists. While this type of theoretical explanation is common to IR scholars, it is far less common to scholars of Canada-US relations and Canadian foreign policy who have tended to pursue their craft in isolation from the theoretical and methodological trends of IR scholarship.<sup>7</sup>

Yet when the cases selected here for testing and analysis of SST are compared, it becomes strikingly evident that the predominant patterns in Canada-US relations and Canada's international behaviour repeat themselves despite significant variation in the individual- and state-level factors that heretofore have been credited with producing them. Looking at these cases in isolation and from the inside out, as has been the tradition, has thus provided us with interesting and rich but ultimately incomplete and proximate explanations of their outcomes. Comparing these cases through the system-level lens of SST allows for an outside-in perspective, which provides an explanation of the underlying causes of these patterns.

Beyond providing for the first time a system-level explanation of these important cases, SST provides insight into the so-called special Canada-US relationship that goes beyond its seeming uniqueness to uncover the roots of its paradoxical past. Finally, for instance, we can arrive at an explanation of Canada's partisan peacekeeper role in Vietnam, which lasted for twenty years and accomplished nothing but negatives in terms of its reputation abroad and its relations with Washington – to say nothing of the tragic results for the people of Vietnam and the stability of that region within the international system. We come to understand why Canada and the United States struggled in such an astoundingly awkward fashion to coordinate their mutual response to the Soviet installation of offensive nuclear weapons in Cuba in the Cuban Missile Crisis of October 1962. We grasp what was behind Canada's dalliances with American nuclear weapons early in the Cold War even as it fervently advocated against nuclear proliferation on the international stage and produced materials at home for the nuclear programs of other nations. We can understand why for twenty years Canada dabbled with the idea of formally participating in America's efforts to build a shield capable of defending the continent from incoming ballistic missiles, and why, despite its best efforts at persuasion for twenty years, the United States has been forced to tolerate this indecision.

The importance of this work going forward is that SST helps us understand the situation that Canada faces with its current participation in the US-led War on Terror. What ultimately caused the Chrétien government to formally denounce the invasion of Iraq while it informally contributed more to the Coalition of the Willing and its efforts than any country besides the US, Britain, and Australia is, for the first time, understood through the lens of SST. Furthermore, why it is that Canadian soldiers find themselves fighting a vicious counterinsurgency war with one hand in the south of Afghanistan, while with the other they try to play a development and diplomacy role more familiar to Canadians at home, is also explained with reference to the contrasting structural pressures illuminated by our theory.

Understanding at this theoretical level what has ultimately compelled such paradoxical behaviour in the past could help to prevent Canada's involvement in such situations in the future. It could aid in the coordination of Canadian and American efforts abroad, and it could provide insight into both the nature of America's position at the top of the international hierarchy and the relations that it must manage with the states that have become its subordinate allies. This subject is taken up in greater detail in the final chapter of this book.



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## **At Home and Abroad**



# 1

## The Special Relationship and Canada as a Specialized Power

International systems theory provides a mentally formed image of the realm in which states operate. It should offer, to the extent that it is useful, suggestions regarding how states are likely to behave, and how they are likely to relate to one another based on assumptions about how the major driving forces in the international realm are organized at the level of structure.

Although it was heavily criticized from a variety of angles,<sup>1</sup> Kenneth Waltz's *Theory of International Politics* (1979)<sup>2</sup> formed the first mental image of the realm from which testable hypotheses about the broad patterns of state behaviour could be drawn.<sup>3</sup> With his work, Waltz laid the essential foundations for the social scientific discipline of International Relations. To use E.H. Carr's terms, Waltz took the discipline out of its "infancy" and set down the "beginnings of a science."<sup>4</sup>

Waltz constructed his *Theory of International Politics* by first conceiving the international system as being composed of a structure and interacting units. The structure of the system he defined as separate from the units themselves. Consisting of an ordering principle and a distribution of material capabilities, the structure of the system was deemed to have independent effects on the behaviour and interactions of the units. Though cognizant of the importance of nonstate actors and transnational activities, Waltz sensibly took the primary units of the international system to be states themselves.

Referring to the absence of an overarching power capable of enforcing a common body of international law, Waltz deemed "anarchy" to be the ordering principle of the international political realm. To the uninitiated, this might sound like pure contradiction, for anarchy implies chaos, not order. In this context, however, anarchy is not synonymous with a complete absence of order, nor should it be taken as suggestive of apocalypse. In the context of international relations theory, anarchy simply means that authority in the international system ultimately begins and ends with the sovereign state. There exists no higher power to preside over the states themselves.

The international system is thus ordered by the fact that each sovereign unit is ultimately responsible for its own survival.

This makes the realm of international politics – and any anarchic realm, for that matter – one of self-help or self-reliance. The self-help principle precludes what would otherwise be a third component in the structure of any political system: the functional differentiation of the units.<sup>5</sup> Because anarchic realms impose such high risks on cooperative behaviour leading to interdependence, units in any anarchic system, if they aspire to survive, must maintain functional similarity with their rivals. The maintenance of this functional similarity ensures that each unit retains all of the essential means to its own survival. In this way, states in the anarchic international system remain “like units.”<sup>6</sup>

The distribution of economic and military capability structures the system in one of three possible ways: (1) if the distribution is balanced across three or more of the units, the system is multipolar; (2) if it is balanced across two of the units, it is bipolar; and (3) if one unit alone holds the monopoly of power, then the system is unipolar. Shifts from one form of distribution to another constitute a change of system. The shift from the multipolar system after the Second World War to the bipolar system of the Cold War is an example of such a structural change.

Such a state-centric view of the system ignores swaths of reality to arrive at what is basically a positional picture of the realm. While completely obscuring from view nongovernmental organizations, terrorist networks, and even international organizations, Waltz’s world also intentionally ignores the unit-level attributes of states themselves. Whether a state is authoritarian or democratic, old or young, religious or secular, radical, rogue, or even fundamentalist does not matter aside from its material capabilities if we want to form expectations about the general patterns of its behaviour. Seeing the structure of the international system in this positional way provides insight into the nature and predominant pattern of international politics. It shows that states that “do not help themselves, or who do so less effectively than others, will fail to prosper, will lay themselves open to dangers, will suffer. Fear of such unwanted consequences stimulates states to behave in ways that tend toward the creation of balances of power.”<sup>7</sup> It suggests further that the interdependence of states will be limited by the self-help nature of the system, and that states will be forced through the competitive nature of the realm to emulate those among them who have had the greatest success in accumulating the material power resources that are essential to survival.

What is useful about this theory is that it explains “the results produced by the uncoordinated actions of states.”<sup>8</sup> In other words, by exposing at this level of abstraction the constraints and compulsions that bear down on units operating in a self-help system, the theory arrives at expectations about the

predominant patterns of state behaviour that will likely obtain despite substantial variation at the unit and individual levels of analysis. In other words, regardless of a state's regime configuration or its individual leader, there are certain systemic conditions that will shape its behaviour. The development of a picture of these conditions is the purpose of systems theory. Having such a theoretical picture of these systemic conditions, however, does not constitute a *complete* explanation for a state's reactions to them. As Waltz wrote, international systems "theory explains why a certain similarity of behaviour is expected from similarly situated states."<sup>9</sup> It cannot fully explain any particular political outcome; for this, a theory of the state as well as a theory of the system is required. But without this knowledge of the situation within which states interact, attempts to explain their behaviour will always be incomplete. The underlying causes of state behaviour will be confused and conflated with the more proximate causes, thereby leading analysts, decision-makers, and conscientious observers astray in their attempts to explain and understand particular international political outcomes.

Waltz's 1979 work gave rise to a major research program in the field of international relations, known as structural or neorealism. Structural realists expect the underlying anarchic condition of the international system to lead to a perpetual condition of competition and conflict between sovereign states engaged in a constant struggle for survival at the very least and for total systemic domination at the very most.<sup>10</sup> This might be seen as a rather wide range of motivation, but survival is assumed to be the prerequisite for the attainment of a state's potential objectives, whatever they may be "other than," as Waltz points out, "the goal of promoting their own disappearance as political entities."<sup>11</sup> The lack of a common authority – the defining feature of an anarchic system – is thus the underlying cause of the security dilemmas that lead to the arms races,<sup>12</sup> alliance formations,<sup>13</sup> balances of power,<sup>14</sup> and wars<sup>15</sup> that form the empirical core of the structural realist research agenda.

The insight that anarchy could have such a determining effect on the play of international politics inspired other research agendas. Liberal internationalist scholars, or neoliberals, in contrast to their neorealist counterparts, took up a more optimistic position on the implications of anarchy. International regimes such as the World Trade Organization, the Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development, and the Group of Eight are seen by adherents of this school of thinking as being capable of mitigating anarchy's effects on state behaviour (assumed to be rational and egoistic as well as competitive)<sup>16</sup> by creating mechanisms that allow for transparency, trust, and information sharing and iteration. Such regimes can create a more cooperative context wherein states can find ways to combine for mutual gains as opposed to being locked in constant competition for relative gain. For these scholars, anarchy remains a perpetual but potentially less pressing

reality of international life, depending on the effectiveness of the institutions that states create to govern their relations and the underlying balance of power.<sup>17</sup>

A third perspective on the implications of anarchy has also developed largely in response to the work of structural realism. Interested in applying social theory to their understanding of world politics, social constructivists have attempted to make the case that “anarchy is what states make of it.”<sup>18</sup> Following Alexander Wendt, they argue that the logic of “self-help” that neorealists maintain is the dominant reality of international life is, in fact, a product of social process and practice. The rules of the game of power politics are socially constructed by states through their mutual interactions, and are not actually inherent to anarchic systems at all. Under anarchy, therefore, patterns of international relations can be cooperative just as they can be conflictual, depending on the repetitive behaviours of states themselves and on the intersubjective cultures of anarchy that build up through these social encounters.<sup>19</sup>

Regardless of these three differing perspectives on the implications of anarchy, the case can be easily made that the recognition of anarchy as the ordering principle of the international system is the foundational insight from which modern international systems theory has derived. Indeed, this recognition amounts to the understanding that politics among nations take place within a different structural realm than politics within nations. Marking off the realm of international politics from domestic politics was a crucial early step in the establishment of the scientific discipline of International Relations.<sup>20</sup> Anarchy, in this way, is the touchstone of the discipline.<sup>21</sup> Without this basic observation, it would appear that no theoretical and thus scientific study of international politics could go forward.

Yet such important aspects of international life remain outside the explanatory scope of international systems theories, whether of a neorealist, neo-liberal, or social constructivist variety, leading one to question whether the anarchy insight might require revision.<sup>22</sup> Chief among these aspects are the relations between great powers and the smaller states that depend on them for their economic and physical survival, and the behaviour and function of such small states in the international system. The reason these aspects of international politics have remained outside the scope of systems theory is the anarchy insight itself. This is because it implies that the structure of the system is uniformly ordered. It does not allow for the development of sub-systems within the broader international anarchy that are ordered according to a different principle: hierarchy.

The recent outpouring of literature on the topic of American primacy, however, has been forced to confront the reality of hierarchy in the international system.<sup>23</sup> America’s unipolar moment has made plain a reality that has always existed in the international political realm. Commonwealths,

concerts, spheres of influence, dependencies, protectorates, hegemonies, informal empires, empires, and now unions of the European sort have been a near-constant reality of international politics since the time of the Akkadian Empire. Structural specialization theory (SST) proposes that hierarchical structures can and do form within the broader international anarchy, and that these structures have independent effects on the patterns of state behaviour. We will turn our attention to discerning hypotheses about these effects after considering the Canada-US relationship as a hierarchy within the broader international anarchy.

### **The Continental Hierarchy**

Clearly, both Canada and the United States enjoy the status of fully independent sovereign states. Both are members of the United Nations, the Group of Eight, the Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development, the World Trade Organization, the International Monetary Fund, the North Atlantic Treaty Organization, and many other global governance forums, organizations, treaties, and agreements. Both, in other words, have high levels of international activity across a diverse range of issue areas. Yet despite their comparable levels of participation in the international system, there exists between the two a significant asymmetry in material capabilities.

Consider, for example, that while Canada and the United States share the continent of North America more or less equally in geographical (square kilometres) terms,<sup>24</sup> Canada's population since the 1950s has been on average about a tenth of that of the US.<sup>25</sup> Likewise, the American economy rendered in terms of gross domestic product (constant 2000 US\$) was in 1960 fifteen times the size of the Canadian economy. The most recent statistics suggest that the American economy is over thirteen times the size of the Canadian economy.<sup>26</sup> With such a large economy to trade with so close to home, the degree of asymmetrical economic interdependence that has built up between Canada and the United States is significant. The over \$500 billion worth of trade that flows across the Canada-US border each year represents approximately 80 percent of Canada's exports and two-thirds of its imports. In terms of personnel in the armed forces, the American military was twenty-five times the size of the Canadian military in 1990, and this basic asymmetry has varied only minimally since then. Further evidence of this asymmetry in military capability can be seen in terms of military expenditure. Typically, the United States spends anywhere from twenty-five to thirty times what Canada spends on personnel, operations and maintenance, research and development, military construction, and military aid in any given year.<sup>27</sup> This asymmetry in material capability, which has been more or less constant throughout the last fifty years, has placed Canada in a position of dependency on the United States for its physical and economic security at home in North America.

Historically, this dependency was first articulated during the August 1938 Sudetenland crisis, as Europe braced for the possibility of another cataclysmic war. President Franklin D. Roosevelt, speaking at Queen's University in Kingston, Ontario, offered Canada America's protection, vowing that "the people of the United States will not stand idly by if domination of Canadian soil is threatened by any other empire."<sup>28</sup> Two days later, Prime Minister Mackenzie King accepted the offer and promised to do as much as could be expected of a country with limited resources of population and military equipment to keep foreign troops from launching an attack on the United States from the vast Canadian territory.<sup>29</sup> The exchange was an acknowledgment of the underlying imbalance in material capabilities between the two North American sovereign states. And it amounted to an exchange of confidence: in Canada, that the US would act as its protector; in the US, that Canada would do its part to keep threats to the United States from materializing north of the border. A breach of that confidence would have serious implications for Canadian sovereignty: either the United States would actively intervene on Canadian soil to "help"<sup>30</sup> bring Canadian defences up to American standards or, in the most extreme hypothetical situation, it would annex Canadian territory in the name of American security.

The diplomatic exchange was institutionalized exactly two years after Roosevelt's speech, in the form of the Permanent Joint Board on Defence (PJBD), which was established for the discussion of "mutual problems of defence in relation to the safety of Canada and the United States."<sup>31</sup> In 1946, the Military Cooperation Committee was formed to manage cooperation at the military planning level. An agreement on North American Air Defence followed in 1957-58, which integrated the Air Forces of both countries and established the North American Air Defence Command (NORAD; now known as the North American Aerospace Defence Command). NORAD headquarters were built into an American part of the Rocky Mountain range. It was agreed that the Commander-in-Chief of NORAD (CINCNORAD) would always be an American, and that the Deputy Commander-in-Chief, a Canadian, would assume decisionmaking power only when the CINCNORAD was absent.

In the 1950s, Canada collaborated with the United States in constructing the Distant Early Warning (DEW) Line across the sixty-sixth parallel to detect long-range Soviet bomber attacks. It stretched from Alaska to Baffin Island, and of the sixty-three DEW Line sites, forty-two were built on Canadian soil with predominantly American funds. By 1958, the Mid-Canada Line, also known as the McGill Fence, became operational as a second line of detection. The Mid-Canada Line ran along the fifty-fifth parallel from Alaska to the Atlantic Ocean. Below the McGill Fence, the Pinetree Line ran along the fifty-third parallel in the west and dropped down to the fiftieth parallel in the east. A second part of the Pinetree Line jutted north around Nova Scotia

to Baffin Island. The Pinetree Line stations in Canada were the result of a 1951 agreement between Canada and the United States. They became fully operational in 1955.<sup>32</sup>

The extent of Canada-US security and defence cooperation has broadened and deepened considerably over the last fifty years, and this has been especially the case since the 9/11 terrorist attacks. Today, over 94 percent of NORAD's personnel are American, and over 84 percent of NORAD's budget is paid for with American funds. And while Canada supplies the remainder of the staff and the budget, the practical imbalance in the symbolic institution remains an obvious reflection of the hierarchy in the continental relationship. Participation in these formally equal but practically hierarchical institutions helped Canada defend itself against being formally "helped" by the Americans in protecting its territory.

Beyond being institutionalized in the combined defensive organization, the material asymmetry in the Canada-US relationship is also at the base of the construction of the identities of the two states insofar as they relate to each other. The effect this has had on the formation of the intersubjective identities of the two states can be discerned from popular characterizations of the relationship as being between partners, but nevertheless between partners of unequal size and capacity. The jacket of a book on Canadian-American relations entitled *Partners Nevertheless* shows a bold American elephant standing on its hind legs, tightening a belt with its trunk. Lashed between the belt and the elephant's massive waist is a petrified Canadian beaver.<sup>33</sup> Canada has been similarly characterized in the literature on its relationship to the US as *Partner to Behemoth*<sup>34</sup> and as an American *Powder Monkey*.<sup>35</sup> Perhaps the most famous ideational construction of the relationship comes from Prime Minister Pierre Elliott Trudeau, who told the Press Club in Washington during a 1969 visit that "living next to you is in some ways like sleeping with an elephant. No matter how friendly and even-tempered is the beast, if I can call it that, one is affected by every twitch and grunt."<sup>36</sup> William Henry Pope played on Trudeau's metaphor in the title of a book he published in 1971 on how to regain control of Canada's economy: *The Elephant and the Mouse*.<sup>37</sup> As further evidence of the lasting impact of Trudeau's trope on the identity formation of the two North American partners, former President George W. Bush invoked this image of the relationship in a speech he gave in Halifax, Nova Scotia, in December 2004, saying, "I realize, and many Americans realize, that it's not always easy to sleep next to the elephant."<sup>38</sup> Like Trudeau before him, Bush refrained from making metaphorical reference to Canada's size. Only Pope put the Canadian mouse in bed beside the American elephant to complete the mental image. Thus, materially, institutionally, and ideationally, the Canadian-US relationship appears to be structured hierarchically at home and anarchically abroad.

### **Implications of Hierarchy in Anarchy**

The implications of hierarchical relationships forming within international anarchy in such a manner can be expected to manifest themselves primarily in six ways: (1) in relations between the subordinate and dominant states (intra-hierarchical relations); (2) in the broader foreign policy of the subordinate state; (3) in the domestic stability and bureaucratic organization of the subordinate state; (4) in the effect of the subordinate state on the dominant state's domestic stability; (5) in the foreign policy of the dominant state itself; and (6) in the stability and smooth functioning of the international system. This book focuses primarily on the first two of these implications insofar as they pertain to the Canada-US hierarchy, leaving the remainder for future inquiry.

In inquiring into the implications of specialized structures forming within the international anarchy, two related aspects of Waltz's conception of the structure of international politics become problematic. The first involves his conception of the ordering principle of the system. The second involves his elimination of functional differentiation as a component of the structure of the system. The second follows from the first. As John Ruggie explains:

Waltz strives for a "generative" formulation of structure. He means for the three (or, internationally, two) components of structure to be thought of as successive causal depth levels. Ordering principles constitute the "deep structure" of a system, shaping its fundamental social quality. They are not visible directly, only through their hypothesized effects.<sup>39</sup>

For Waltz, there is one ordering principle of international politics – anarchy, and the self-reliance of states that it engenders. It is because their relations are organized in this way that states cannot become functionally differentiated, or so posits the theory. But if it is possible that alternative ordering principles might constitute the deep structure of subsystems within the international anarchy, then functional differentiation among the units becomes a possibility. How would we know if this were the case? As Ruggie describes above, such an alternative ordering principle would be discernible only through empirical evidence of its hypothesized effects on the patterns of affected state behaviour. In other words, structure is not something that can be measured directly. Its effects can be ascertained only through the logical deduction of the patterns of behaviour it can be expected to produce across space and time.

The formation of hierarchical structures in more restricted domains or subsystems within the international system does not necessarily eliminate the structural effects of anarchy on the states involved. Rather, there will be specific situations where both structural contexts – hierarchy and anarchy – overlap to bear down simultaneously on the affected states. There will also

be instances where hierarchical pressures are primary and anarchic pressures more or less drop out of the equation. The specification of these situations hinges on the distinction between *high* and *low* politics. High politics always unfold in the international anarchic context. This is a result of their far-reaching, or system-wide, implications. Accordingly, in high political situations in which both superordinate and subordinate states find themselves, the pressures of their hierarchical relationship and the broader international anarchy will simultaneously affect their interactions. Low politics, on the other hand, can be defined as interactions between states that have implications that are circumscribed within the dyadic relationship. In these situations, the structural pressures of hierarchy predominate, while anarchic pressures are minimized.

### **The Pattern of Paradox**

To arrive at our first hypothesis about the patterns of behaviour likely to be produced by the contrasting structural pressures of hierarchy and anarchy requires us to first develop separate expectations about their effects in isolation. Under anarchy alone, states can be expected to guard their sovereign independence jealously as a means of preserving their survival. Accordingly, they can be expected to refrain from intruding on the independence of others for fear of retribution or retaliation from that state or others fearing for their own independence.<sup>40</sup> Decisionmaking processes and policy outcomes should follow a logical trajectory, tending towards the pursuit of self-interest. Under hierarchy alone, the superordinate state can be expected to exert its will over its subordinate, and expect that will to be followed. Likewise, the subordinate state should be expected to follow that will. Decisionmaking processes and policy outcomes should follow a logical pattern of leadership and followership, tending towards the pursuit of mutual self-interest.

Under the dual structural influence of hierarchy and anarchy, we cannot expect the pattern of interaction between the superordinate and the subordinate state to be either logical or linear, since each actor is pushed and pulled simultaneously in opposing directions towards opposing objectives or obligations.<sup>41</sup> For example, the pressures of hierarchy incline the subordinate state towards succumbing to the will of the superordinate state, while the pressures of anarchy incline it towards the opposite assertion of its sovereign autonomy. These contrasting pressures push and pull the subordinate state in opposing directions within a bounded range. The unwanted implication of this is that subordinate states will follow an oscillatory pattern of behaviour, countering moves of subordination with moves of self-assertion. Similarly, in the case of the superordinate state, moves of domination conditioned by the hierarchy will be countered by moves of respect for the subordinate state's sovereignty conditioned by the international anarchy.

Such oscillations can be expected to leave a contradictory imprint on the policy outcomes of both states.

Subordinate states can be expected to assert their autonomy when (1) their *survival* (defined in terms of sovereign legitimacy at home) is threatened by *internal* forces of irredentism or illegitimacy, and (2) when the leadership of the superordinate state conflicts with the subordinate state's perceived place in the international system (defined in terms of its array of specialized roles therein) and therefore threatens to undermine the basis of its *external* survival (defined in terms of sovereign legitimacy abroad). Under such circumstances, subordinate states can be expected to act autonomously from the superordinate state, and indeed must do so in order to ensure their survival. Such insubordination, however, will provoke a response from the superordinate state. Attempts to compensate for the insubordination will also be recognizable in the actions or policy decisions of the subordinate state.

Similarly, the superordinate state, influenced by its own position in the hierarchy, will be inclined to assert its will over the subordinate state by privately commanding the latter's compliance or publicly interfering in its domestic politics to gain that compliance. This temptation to forcefully exert its will over the subordinate state will be countered by the strictures of the international anarchy, which compel respect for state sovereignty. Without such restraint, the superordinate state's position in the hierarchy will shift in one of two predictable directions. The superordinate state could forcefully establish an imperial relationship in which the subordinate state ceases to be formally sovereign and becomes the superordinate state's vassal. Alternatively, the subordinate state could potentially revert to a warfare state model in a desire to throw off the yoke of the superordinate state. More frequent and more volatile moves of self-assertion without corresponding moves of subordination would be observable in response to moves of unchecked domination by the superordinate state. Subordinate states could also, or in combination with reversion to a warfare state model, seek to balance against the power of the superordinate state in their geographical region by forming alliances with powers outside the region.

Formal empire is, however, a costly and revolutionary grand strategy to pursue in a universal system of sovereign states. Acting in their own self-interest, then, superordinate states in the modern international system are unlikely to formalize their position in their hierarchical inter-state relations. Instead, superordinate states will demonstrate a tendency towards what leading international relations theorist Stephen Walt has described as "self-restraint"<sup>42</sup> in an effort to keep in abeyance the tendency of the rest of the world to balance against its power. Superordinate states do not have an interest in inciting competitive and conflictual behaviour among their subordinates. On the contrary, they are better off focusing their competitive and conflictual energies on real power rivals. In their dealings with their

subordinates, therefore, superordinate states will also follow a nonlinear policy course leading to contradictory policy outcomes, as moves of domination are countered by moves of respect for subordinate state sovereignty. This pattern, as with that of the subordinate state, will be observable in reverse also, with moves of respect for subordinate state sovereignty being countered by moves of domination should it be perceived that the subordinate state is getting a "free ride," or is not complying or "pulling its weight."

The time leads and lags on such sequences of interaction are unpredictable within any meaningful degree of certainty. But whether such paradoxical patterns unfold in rapid succession, within hours, or over a more drawn-out period of a day or a week or a month, is of minimal importance to the verification of the theoretical insight in question here. What is important is whether the pattern is discernible at all. Each specific situation will have its own constraints and pressures, but if the predicted pattern is observable across specific situations, it can be recognized as being general and thus ultimately produced by deep structural causes as opposed to unit-level or individual-level causes. This predicted paradoxical interaction pattern leading to contradictory policy outcomes for both states is the first hypothesized implication of structural specialization.

### **The Pattern of Specialization**

The second implication of hierarchy in anarchy is that the subordinate state must take on a new mantra. In anarchic settings, the mantra of those who wish to survive is, as Waltz says, "Take care of yourself!" In hierarchical subsystems, however, the self-help imperative does not obtain for the subordinate state in the dyad. In choosing to partner with a state of significantly greater material capabilities in this fashion, the subordinate state must take on a new mantra if it wishes to maintain its sovereignty and survive. "Specialize" becomes the mantra of subordinate states operating within the broader international system. The function of such states becomes to perform the system-ameliorating tasks unsuited to great powers.

Hierarchy is the permissive or generative cause of specialization. Just as the individual in domestic society must specialize in some trade or vocation in order to make himself or herself necessary to that society and thereby ensure his or her survival and well-being, so a subordinate state in the international system must find a way to make itself necessary to the superordinate state and to the broader international society in order to ensure its survival and well-being. This necessity provides the impulse for the subordinate state to specialize, playing particular roles in the international system that are different from those most suited to great powers.

Interestingly, the Canadian delegates to the San Francisco Conference articulated this tendency towards specialization in the spring of 1945. Tasked with the monumental responsibility of drafting a charter for the United

Nations from the proposals generated by the great power authors of the Dumbarton Oaks proposals, and struggling to find a role for Canada in the emergent world order, Prime Minister Mackenzie King and key members of the Department of External Affairs maintained that responsibility for the establishment and preservation of stability in the system should not be left entirely to the great powers themselves. An emergent class of middle powers (to which Canada belonged) should be involved in aspects of systemic maintenance in which they could be expected to make important contributions. Moreover, they should be represented in the decisions leading to such involvement. The charter and the organization to which it would give birth must create this space for non-great power involvement in the major movements of international affairs, or risk isolating the middle powers entirely. Isolation of the middle powers would create a top-heavy and unstable postwar order, prone to toppling back into systemic chaos.

What came to be known as the principle of functional representation was eventually embedded in the United Nations charter in number of ways.<sup>43</sup> The principle was not solely a way of creating space for the involvement of non-great powers in the play of international politics, however. Contained within the logic of the principle was a clear sense of what aspects of international politics were outside the ambit of middle powers. In particular, the Canadian delegation had no objection to the permanent place of the great powers on the Security Council, or their individual wielding of veto power over the decisions of the Security Council. Matters of high security were predominantly the domain of the great powers.<sup>44</sup> It was in the other, more specialized aspects of international affairs that middle powers could have an influence.

The principle of functional representation, in other words, contained within its logic a strategy for Canada's future involvement international politics. To separate at a conceptual level the strategy from the principle, we might label the strategy dimension "specialization." The driving forces behind the strategy are not altogether separate from the realities that inspired the invention of the principle, but they do require separate analysis, as they can be recognized only from a deeper level of abstraction.

Specialization in the international system is related to the internal functional differentiation allowed to the subordinate state by virtue of its position within the hierarchy in the international anarchy. To clarify: when, by virtue of its dependency on another sovereign state for its physical and economic security, a state is enabled to become less of a typical Westphalian warfare state (and to channel more of its resources into education or health care or infrastructure) – in other words, when a subordinate state becomes *internally* functionally differentiated – it takes on the characteristics that enable it to become *externally* functionally differentiated.

A direct and immediate connection might exist between a subordinate state's internal functional differentiation and its external functional differentiation; for example, state emphasis on health care might provide the domestic background expertise and material capability for structural specialization in preventing and combating the transnational spread of infectious disease. Canadian expertise and interest in food, aviation, and population in the early postwar era, for example, were used to justify its involvement in the UN's Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO), the International Civil Aviation Organization (ICAO), and the UN Relief and Rehabilitation Administration (UNRRA).<sup>45</sup> More generally, however, it is the movement away from warfare that both allows and compels the movement towards structural specialization. A state's movement away from maintaining an independent warfare capability negates the threat it poses to other states, thus creating the internal preconditions for that state to take on a benign, as opposed to potentially malignant, external posture. This gives the subordinate state a comparative advantage in the performance of roles unsuited to great powers that maintain an independent war-fighting capacity and thus the power to impose their will on other states through coercive force.

The internal functional differentiation of subordinate states recommends structural specialization as a means of survival in the anarchic international system. Compelled to work towards ensuring their survival through means other than the accumulation of material power and power balancing – the strategies recommended by the otherwise anarchic structure of the international system – subordinate states can be expected to exploit their comparative advantage in the performance of roles in the international system not suited to their superordinate partners. The performance of these roles will contribute to the preservation of their external and internal sovereignty through the construction of a distinct international identity. The development of a distinct identity (reinforced and reimagined through the continued performance of these roles) in the world will help preserve the state's legitimacy and its authority over its society.

A subordinate state's performance of a given specialized role is determined by three constraints imposed by the dual structural pressures of hierarchy and anarchy.

First, since the subordinate state comes to derive a portion of its internal cohesion from its external functions, internal constraints arising from its domestic society will play a role in determining its specialized behaviour in the international system. The dominant ideas about the state's place in world politics formed within its society as a result of its pre-existing patterns of behaviour in the international system will set the parameters of possible (legitimate) state action in this realm. These parameters of legitimate behaviour act as both constraining and compelling internal or domestic structural

pressures on the state. On the one hand, they limit what the state can and cannot do in the external sphere with the broad-based support of its population. On the other hand, they suggest what the state ought to do when presented with certain opportunities – and perceived obligations – to engage in world affairs.

Second, since the ability of the subordinate state to specialize in the international system is a result of its position in the inter-state hierarchy, the requirements and needs of the superordinate state will be a factor determining the specialized behaviour of the subordinate state in the international system. In the performance of roles in which it has a comparative advantage over its superordinate partner, the subordinate state will be expected to carry its share of the burden of system management. The interests of the superordinate state will always, therefore, be a structuring influence on the particular modes of behaviour pursued by the subordinate state in the international system.

Finally, the specialized behaviour of the subordinate state must be of some utility to the functioning of the status quo international system. Subordinate state specialization is thus generated in part by the demand for non-great power intervention in a complex international system that requires more to remain functional and stable than great power leadership and direction alone. States with specialized capabilities carry out functions unsuited to great powers in an effort to ameliorate potential systemic ruptures and to serve as a buffer between those states that benefit and those states that struggle under the status quo world political and economic system.

Subordinate states can be expected to fill one of these functions, or what in the literature on Canadian foreign policy has been described as “niches,”<sup>46</sup> when at least two of the structural imperatives to do so coincide with an opportunity. If only one of the structural pressures is present, the subordinate state can be expected to reject the opportunity to pursue a specialized role in the international system. The following roles conform to the triad of structural pressures that influence subordinate state specialization in the international system:

- In the aftermath of inter-state warfare or civil war, states with neither the capacity for nor the inclination towards imperialism are necessary to separate combatants and prisoners of war, establish stability, help implement peace treaties, and withdraw. The term often associated with this mode of behaviour is peacekeeping. We will label it *mediation/supervision*. Great powers, of course, have the military and diplomatic capability to carry out mediation and supervision. Their subordinate partners have a comparative advantage in this regard, however, due to their internal functional differentiation, which gives them an unthreatening external posture particularly suited to mediation/supervision roles.

- In situations where communication breaks down between states in conflict or where conflict is imminent, it becomes necessary for a third party to play an interlocutor or intermediary role. Great powers, either because they are often on one side or the other of these situations, or because they have a perceived myopic self-interest in the outcome, are especially unsuited to the performance of such a *messenger* role. Subordinate states, due again to their internal functional differentiation and their broader inherent interest in peace and stability in the international system, have a comparative advantage in carrying out this intermediary function.
- Raising awareness of a collective action problem, generating inter-state cooperation for its resolution, and/or defending a particular position (e.g., West versus East) on an issue are *advocacy* roles that often fall to subordinate states. The conventional political term used to describe this type of behaviour is *multilateralism*. Because of their superior material capabilities, great powers are strongly inclined towards unilateralism. This inclination can be countered by the work of profound political leaders and statesmen; nevertheless, it is a tendency associated with great power. Yet there remains the need for collective action to resolve otherwise intractable international problems. A comparative advantage in performing such an advocacy role thus exists for subordinate states that, without the ability to “go it alone,” have a genuine interest in generating multilateral action towards collective measures in order to resolve problems in an interdependent, anarchic system of sovereign states.
- International crises create opportunities for a state to display ingenuity and initiative in working towards their resolution. Such “helpful fixing” is particularly suited to subordinate states because they are, for the most part, “outside the box” of great power politics. They are thus more able to see the modes of conflict resolution, methods of crisis prevention, and courses of action towards the resolution of problems that have eluded the great powers themselves. We will label this mode of specialization *problem-solving*.
- Uncertainty and misperception are constant and potentially deadly factors in international politics. Occasions repeatedly arise when nonprincipal powers will be granted access to crucial information that the principals are not privy to. The accurate gathering and communication of such information is thus a specialization suited to subordinate states.

### **Case Selection and Method**

The method used to test this theory will be structured, focused comparative case study.<sup>47</sup> The first three cases will focus on the Cold War era, while the next three will focus on the post-Cold War era. The *Vietnam War* and *War on Terror* cases represent the war and armed conflict subclass of the broader phenomenon of high political interactions. The *Nuclear Weapons* and *Missile*

*Defence* cases represent the security subclass of high political interactions. The *Cuban Missile Crisis* case represents both the war and armed conflict subclass and the security subclass, with the added element of a crisis situation.<sup>48</sup>

The sixth case, *Continental Security after 9/11*, has been selected to control for the international anarchy variable. Instead of following a paradoxical pattern, these interactions and outcomes between the superordinate state and the subordinate state on matters of transnational security will predictably follow a pattern wherein the superordinate state exerts its will on the subordinate state, and the subordinate state conforms to that will with little resistance. Neither state should be influenced by the logic of the international anarchy enough to produce the paradoxical patterns and outcomes hypothesized above, because transnational security relations between two states immediately involve just the two states – they are, in other words, purely bilateral relations. While they might raise some interest or draw attention in the broader international community, the primary structural determining force will remain the continental system.