From Ottawa to Colombo: On Canada's International Role at the hour of Eastphalia

Chaminda K. Weerawardhana

Electronic version

URL: <http://journals.openedition.org/eccs/275>

DOI: 10.4000/eccs.275

ISSN: 2429-4667

Publisher

Association française des études canadiennes (AFEC)

Printed version

Date of publication: 1 December 2013

Number of pages: 97-127

ISSN: 0153-1700

Electronic reference

Chaminda K. Weerawardhana, « From Ottawa to Colombo: On Canada's International Role at the hour of Eastphalia », *Études canadiennes / Canadian Studies* [Online], 75 | 2013, Online since 01 December 2015, connection on 04 May 2019. URL : <http://journals.openedition.org/eccs/275> ; DOI : 10.4000/eccs.275

FROM OTTAWA TO COLOMBO: ON CANADA'S INTERNATIONAL ROLE AT THE HOUR OF EASTPHALIA

Chaminda K. WEERAWARDHANA
Queen's University Belfast

This article reflects upon the gradual emergence of an Easterly shift of global power and its impact on Canada's role in the international system. These transformative dynamics have resulted in new challenges for the Canadian government, which has been reviewing the orientation of its foreign policy agenda over the last two years. Burgeoning economic concerns have prompted Ottawa to mingle foreign policy with international trade. How can Canada's role in an Eastphalian world be conceptualised? Through an initial review of the development of a distinctly Canadian approach to foreign policy and Canada's reactions to pressing contemporary geopolitical challenges, this article seeks to conceptualise Canada's place in an emergent Eastphalian world, through an appraisal of the strengths, weaknesses and lacunae of the Harper government's on-going foreign policy approach.

La géopolitique internationale reste profondément transformée par l'émergence des grandes superpuissances non-occidentales. Ce développement apporte de nouveaux défis au gouvernement fédéral canadien qui tente depuis la fin des années 2000 de restructurer les priorités de sa politique étrangère. Les questions relevant de l'économie nationale ont amené Ottawa à placer le commerce international au cœur de sa politique étrangère. Comment conceptualiser le rôle potentiel du Canada au sein d'un système international « estphalien » ? Après un bref rappel des traits marquants de la politique étrangère canadienne ainsi que des politiques d'Ottawa envers quelques enjeux-clés contemporains, le présent article vise à mettre en lumière le rôle potentiel du Canada au sein d'un système international en transition, en évaluant les forces, les limites et les lacunes de la politique étrangère actuelle du gouvernement Harper.

Canada's Commonwealth stronghold?

The Commonwealth Heads of Government Meeting took place in Colombo, Sri Lanka from 10 to 17 November 2013. The choice of Colombo as a venue has been a heatedly debated issue, due to widespread allegations over war crimes and crimes against humanity, as well as the prevalent situation of repression and violations of fundamental rights in Sri Lanka. Critics maintain that holding a CHOGM – the biannual summit of an international organisation prized for its discourse on human rights, the rule of law and accountability – in Colombo is synonymous with a tacit endorsement of a regime with little regard for the Commonwealth's core values. Whereas the Conservative government in London approved the summit and confirmed its participation (*Colombo Telegraph* 2013), the Harper government in Ottawa upheld a resolute stance in opposing the choice of Colombo as a CHOGM venue, and consistent with its earlier Sri Lanka policy, maintained that its attendance shall depend upon Colombo's progress in the area of Human Rights, minority rights and

accountability (CBC News, Apr. 25, 2013). On the same grounds, Ottawa finally decided to boycott the 2013 CHOGM. Similar opposition also came from New Delhi, but although Prime Minister Dr Manmohan Singh decided not to attend, a relatively high-profile delegation was sent to Colombo. The Harper government's position on the Colombo CHOGM has been the subject of much debate (*The Star*, 13 August 2013, BRADY 2013), and it runs against the approaches pursued by key New Commonwealth member states including the UK and Australia, as well as the Commonwealth Secretary General's endorsement of Sri Lanka as the 2013 CHOGM host.

The Canadian government's position on the Colombo CHOGM can be explained in two ways. Firstly, Canada is home to the world's largest ethnic Tamil community outside South and Southeast Asia (BRADY 2013, see also AMARASINGAM 2013). The Canadian Tamil lobby has developed into an upwardly mobile, influential, politically active segment of Canadian society. Secondly, and perhaps more importantly, the debate surrounding Canada's decision to boycott the Colombo CHOGM points at a much more complex contemporary dilemma in Canadian foreign policy. The Canadian government, especially through the Canadian International Development Agency (CIDA), has long been a leading advocate of international development in many Commonwealth member states in the global South. As opposed to highly influential and "politically charged" world powers, Canada enjoys a reputation of exercising soft power and diplomatic leverage on the world stage, especially through her international development cooperation mechanisms.

In a transforming international system marked by the rise of China and India, the dynamics of Canada's role and capabilities as a leverage-wielding soft power have been put into question. This article attempts at conceptualising Canada's position in an international system in which Western-led liberal peace-building initiatives (MACMILLAN 1998), benign intervention in conflict resolution, discourses on human rights and Responsibility to Protect (R2P) collide steadfastly with the principles that guide the foreign policies of emerging superpowers. A discussion of this nature imperatively revolves around Canada's past and present position within the Commonwealth of Nations. Over the past few years, a substantial debate in the academic and policymaking circles as well as in think-tanks has sought to develop a revisionist and evaluative critique of Canadian foreign policy. A cursory glance at contributions made by practitioners and academics to *Open Canada*, the online platform of the Canadian International Council, suffices to take stock of the intensity of such debates. In a somewhat similar vein, the Commonwealth has taken steps to question its functional dynamics, and redefine its priorities. This trend is apparent in policy documents such as the Secretary General's

reports, the output of the Eminent Persons' Group, and in the Commonwealth strategic plan for 2013-2016 (see Commonwealth Secretary General 2011, BADAWI 2011, The Commonwealth 2013). Discussions on the role and relevance of the Commonwealth have also been developed by governmental bodies of member states (see notably House of Commons, UK, 2012). Focusing on Canada and her ties with the Commonwealth of Nations, it is to such debates that this article proposes to contribute, through an exploration of Canada's evolving foreign policy priorities on a par with dominant trends in international affairs.

The rise of « Eastphalia » and the emergence of a new international order

In conceptualising the easterly shift in global strategic and economic influence, I shall use the typology of "Eastphalia", *i.e.* the gradual emergence of a new world order in which the centre-point of world power witnesses an eastwardly shift.¹ GINSBURG (2010) visualises Eastphalia as "the perfection of Westphalia", that an emerging Eastphalian world order – with its emphasis on national sovereignty, territorial integrity of states and discouragement of external involvement in the internal affairs of fellow states – would in fact imply a return to the basics of the original Westphalian discourse of a community of states. Eastphalian priorities thus collide with Western liberal internationalist priorities of R2P and related discourses on human rights and accountability. How, and to what extent, have the aforementioned world developments affected Canada's foreign policy orientation? How could one define Canada's potential role in an international system that criss-crosses between Western liberal democratic normativity and supra-nationalism versus Eastphalian foreign and international development policies? Where does the Commonwealth stand in Canada's present-day foreign policy priorities? Reflecting upon these lines, this article is structured in three main parts.

Part one recapitulates the evolution of a distinctly Canadian foreign policy agenda. This section is intended to mirror the historical evolution of Canada's foreign policy priorities, in the backdrop of which Ottawa's present-day foreign policy agenda is best ascertained. Part two focuses on the development of Canada's partnerships with the global South, which initially began through the Commonwealth framework, and the subsequent emergence of Canada as a key partner in international development. Part three focuses on pressing contemporary foreign policy dilemmas, and seeks to outline strategies pursued by Ottawa in managing them. This discussion terminates with an

¹ See KIM (2009), FIDLER AND GANGULY (2010), LO (2010) and FIDLER (2010)

appraisal of the utility of the Commonwealth to contemporary Canadian foreign policy. This article highlights the reality that the role of Canada as a leading world power at the hour of Eastphalia is closely linked to her overall foreign policy legacy, as a government that strived for its own independent foreign policy and an equal footing on the world stage. It concludes that in asserting her due place in an Eastphalian world order, it is vital for Canada to develop an international agenda of her own, inverting tendencies to follow the scripts laid out by more influential superpowers.

I: The development of a distinctly Canadian foreign policy: from side lines to the centre ground

Until the 1940s, Canada had very tenuous relations with the non-western world, and Canada's international perceptions were considerably conditioned by British policy. The British Empire and the Commonwealth constituted Canada's principle channel of communication to the rest of the world (THOMSON AND SWANSON 1971: 77). The first territory to gain Dominion status in 1867, and consequently, near-complete control of her domestic affairs, Canada occupies a unique place in Commonwealth constitutional history (*Ibid.* 79, BUCKNER 2008 : 66-86). As it will be evoked later in this article, Canada's legacy as the first territory to acquire Dominion status subsequently prompted Ottawa to develop closer affinities with New Commonwealth countries, especially in the post-WWII era. This view of Canada as a precedent for self-government has also been reciprocally affirmed in many a New Commonwealth polity. Despite its apparent salience, this perception is wanting in historical accuracy. As historian Ronald Hyam has highlighted, British Imperial policy was primarily based on geopolitical priorities. The granting of Dominion status to Canada, for instance, was largely motivated by geopolitical, economic and strategic concerns, as Canadian shipbuilding timber, the Halifax naval base, and a sizable merchant marine were strategic assets which the United States had to be denied. In some ways the new Canada represented a revamped imperial defence posture on the North American continent (HYAM 1999: 33). In common with other early (Caucasian) Dominions (*i.e.* Australia in 1901, New Zealand in 1907 and South Africa in 1910), the decision to grant self-government in internal affairs was, by and large, intended to sate the burgeoning nationalism of the white colonies while keeping them within an unaltered conception of empire (KRELING 2009 : 54-55).

Whereas the Canadian government in Ottawa held power over domestic matters, article nine of the Constitution Act of 1867 reserved all executive

powers², including foreign policy-related powers, to the British Crown (Government of Canada, 2012). This meant that Canada's role in and interactions with the wider world were limited to matters of domestic concern such as trade, tariffs, fisheries and immigration. Foreign affairs and the powers related to war and peace continued to remain London's exclusive preserve. Canada's contacts with the world were channelled through London. The Colonial Conferences³ that began in 1887 facilitated interactions between Canadian legislators and policymakers in Britain and in other self-governing entities in the British Empire. From the 1880s, a Canadian High Commissioner was stationed in London and a Commissioner General's office had been opened in Paris. These posts were devoid of diplomatic credentials, but served to interact with the British and French governments and with private citizens in matters such as immigration and trade. The concentration of executive powers in London meant that although the views of Dominions were not sought in making crucial decisions, the Dominions had no choice but to abide by London's decisions (MACKENZIE 1999: 85). In 1914, for instance, Canada automatically entered WWI when Britain declared war on Germany (VEATCH 1975: 3-5), a reality that – despite growing Canadian reluctance to follow the British lead on international affairs – was repeated in 1939 (*Ibid*: 82-83).

The two World Wars had strongly transformative effects on the aforementioned mode of governance, facilitating Canada's emergence as a leading world power. In the aftermath of WWI, Canada reinforced her position on the international scene as a member of the League of Nations, which, in theory, provided all its member states with the opportunity to take part in interactions on the full range of international problems of the day (VEATCH 1975: 184, CHAPNICK 2005: 52-53). However, the League's policies were largely dictated by the interests of the more influential world powers, and Canada's mission to the Palais des Nations was involved in the task of promoting a fully independent status for herself internationally, a desire to minimize Canada's commitments under the collective security system, and a Westphalian insistence that the League did not become involved in questions such as tariff and immigration policy, which the Canadian government viewed as purely domestic, internal matters (*Ibid*: 181). When Canada's progresses

² The term "Constitution Act" has been used in Canadian government records since the Pierre Trudeau government's patriation of the Canadian Constitution in 1982. The Act's original name – the British North America Act – continues to appear on British government documentation (HART 2008: 58).

³ The Colonial Conferences were subsequently termed « Imperial Conferences » (for an extensive discussion on the role and impact of Imperial Conferences on governance in the British Empire, see, for example, KENDLE 1967).

during the League years are taken at face value, one could concur that Canada fared well in achieving the aforementioned goals.

Over the first few decades of the 20th century, Canada was faced with the primary challenge of asserting herself as a government independent from British Imperial power. Efforts in this direction were constrained by Canada's position as a Dominion state within the Commonwealth, and London's strong influence within the Commonwealth as well as at the helm of world affairs. The terms of the Statute of Westminster of 1931, which was specifically intended to ensure the policymaking freedom of the dominions, did not include provisions for the repeal, amendment or alteration of the British North America Acts, 1766-1930. Canada's foremost priority in foreign policy, to borrow from Allan Gotlieb (1991: 2), was that of emancipating herself from her subordinate imperial status. The course of Canada's foreign policy from the 1920s to 1945 was largely manoeuvred by one man, Prime Minister William Lyon Mackenzie King. King and a number of his senior officials including, most notably, Dr Oscar D. Skelton, the Prime Minister's closest advisor and Under-Secretary General of External Affairs, who is widely credited as the architect of Canadian foreign policy, were categorically opposed to Canadian participation in World War II. However, and despite this strong inclination to carve out a distinctly Canadian foreign policy agenda, Canada was bound by her own position as a Dominion within the Commonwealth, and by her special relationship with the United Kingdom, prompting Prime Minister King to approve Canada's participation in WWII (VEATCH 1975: 184, GOTLIEB 1991: 2-3). The Commonwealth connection was multi-faceted. On the one hand, it represented the umbilical chord that linked Ottawa to London, a living reminder of the overarching power and influence of the British establishment on the first British territory to be granted Dominion status. The foremost challenge for the emergence of a distinctly Canadian foreign policy agenda was Ottawa's tendency to align itself, in theory and in practice, with British policy (GRANATSTEIN 1970: 2).

On the other hand, it was through Commonwealth-related legislative mechanisms and diplomatic ties that Canada found her path to develop as an independent power with her own distinct domestic and international agenda. As it will be outlined in Part two of this article, it was the Commonwealth that served as Ottawa's primary channel to develop strong ties with the wider world. The core elements of a distinctly Canadian foreign policy, with its emphasis on development cooperation, peacekeeping assistance and most importantly, as a middle power with no colonial baggage that could interact with newly independent states in the non-Western world on an equal footing, were initially developed within the Commonwealth framework. Developing a distinctly

“Canadian” foreign policy agenda implied a search for common ground with fellow states in the Commonwealth community.

Post-WWII: Canada's pursuits on the supra-national platform

To be Canadian in 1945 meant to be engaged in world affairs and actively concerned about the socio-economic state of less fortunate communities. Canadians wanted to help, to make a difference. But they also wanted these feelings to be noticed (...) they needed external affirmation that they were unique and exceptional (...) One might affirm that this desire for approval was just as Pearsonian as the idealism that accompanied it (...) however (...) the passion, and the national enthusiasm, the Canada that helped to create the United Nations were not Lester Pearson's. It belonged to Mackenzie King (CHAPNICK 2005 152).

It was WWII that provided Canada with a tremendous opportunity to assert her position internationally, and gain fuller control of the executive powers, including the management of foreign policy. Canada's wartime foreign policy was largely characterised by the overlapping of two conflicting approaches. The first was marked by caution and an inclination for non-intervention, and the second called for a more forthright, interventionist and engaged international agenda. As early as 1943, Prime Minister King affirmed Canada's potential of emerging as a “middle power”. His approach to foreign policy was marked by caution, and a preference for quiet diplomacy, which was strongly endorsed by his advisor Dr Oscar D. Skelton. As Chapnick (2005: 9-10) notes, Skelton was highly influential in shaping Ottawa's foreign policy until his sudden demise on 28 January 1941, paving the way for the prominence of advocates of a more internationalist and interventionist foreign policy, such as Lester Pearson, who was appointed as Assistant Under-Secretary General of External Affairs in the aftermath of Skelton's demise. However, throughout Prime Minister King's tenure, the priority was on the breaking up of Canada's older tradition of following British policy, and developing a foreign policy agenda with a distinctly Canadian face.

In early 1944, observing that the USA and the Soviet Union were bound to emerge as the foremost post-WWII world powers, the British sought to resurrect the old doctrine of British Imperial unity, with the objective of creating a stronger Commonwealth alliance. This view was most poignantly expressed – much to the outrage of Prime Minister King – in a speech delivered in Toronto by Lord Halifax, a politician with strong Imperialist credentials, ex-Vice Roy in India, close confidante of Winston Churchill, and British ambassador in Washington DC, on 24 January 1944. In this speech, made on Canadian soil without any prior approval or clearance from Canadian

authorities, Halifax called for the creation of a centralised empire so that Britain could compete in a post-war world with what he termed the “titans”, i.e. Russia, China and the United States (MANSERGH 1953 : 576-9, MCKENZIE 2006 : 555). The political tide in Ottawa at the time, however, was all but favourable to a vision of that nature. By 1945, Canada under Prime Minister King was gradually moving on the path towards a foreign policy agenda of its own. The King government reinforced wartime defence cooperation with the United States, especially through the Ogdensburg Agreement of 17 August 1940 between Prime Minister King and President Roosevelt.

Canada and the United Nations: a conflicting narrative?

The prioritisation of an Ottawa-based foreign policy agenda was further strengthened by Canada’s membership of the United Nations (UN). Opinion on the Canadian contribution to the founding of the UN is marked by two conflicting narratives. Whereas one takes pride in Canada’s growing position as a significant player on the international scene, the other is more sceptical of such successes, and calls for an appraisal of Canada’s limits in international diplomacy. The former opinion came to be known as “Pearsonian internationalism”. In the post-WWII years, Canada’s role in the international scene was considerably characterised by the role of Lester Pearson, who had emerged to higher government office, first as Secretary of State for External Affairs in 1948 and subsequently as Prime Minister in 1963. Pearson’s internationalism was strongly demonstrated in Canada’s contributions to create a system of UN-mandated peacekeeping operations (see Carroll 2009). The first significant test of Canada’s facilitative role in developing peacekeeping operations was the Suez crisis of 1956. On 2 November 1956, Pearson abstained from voting a UN resolution on the Suez issue, citing the absence of provisions for what he described as:

A United Nations force large enough to keep these borders [of Egypt and Israel] at peace while a political settlement is being worked out (...) My own government would be glad to recommend Canadian participation in such a United Nations force, a truly international police and peace force. (PEARSON 1957: 8-11, reproduced in GRANATSTEIN 1970: 84).

Pearson’s contribution to UN peacekeeping in the Suez won him the Nobel Peace Prize in 1957, providing Canada a highly publicised international standing as a promoter of world peace. In one of the most comprehensive analyses of Canada’s role *vis-à-vis* the UN’s genesis, Chapnick (2005) challenges the received wisdom of Canada’s pioneering role in establishing the UN. At the San Francisco conference of the United Nations on International Organisation in June 1945, Canada did make a significant contribution to the

founding of the Economic and Social Council (ECOSOC), whereas its efforts to find its due place in the Security Council through the functional principle proved to be a failure. Security happened to be the great powers' reserved realm (*ibid* :126). In the course of the San Francisco deliberations of 1945, Canada under Prime Minister King chose prudence over popularity, concluding that a stable, economically and socially integrated world order was more valuable than international recognition as the leader of the so-called middle powers (*ibid* : 138).

However, mediatisation of Canada's international role during this period was such that a somewhat contrasting memory was left with the Canadian public psyche, which led to the notion that Canada had become the international community's helpful fixer. Despite Canada's failure in emerging as a "middle power" at the inception of the modern UN in 1945, it is vital to highlight that the notion of a "middle power", i.e. a Western state that shares neither a superpower status nor a historical legacy of colonisation, is of vital relevance to Canada's present-day international role. Canada's present-day international reputation considerably rests on the "helpful fixer" and "middle power" typologies, and as it will be highlighted later in this article, exploiting this reputation to the benefit of the country can be seen as Canada's foremost contemporary foreign policy challenge.

Canada as a non-decisive power: A Commonwealth consequence?

In Ottawa's efforts to develop a distinctly Canadian foreign policy, its historical legacy of British rule and position as a Dominion within the Commonwealth formed a barrier on the path to gain due acceptance outside the Commonwealth as a full-fledged, independent government. This was particularly the case with Canada's interactions with the United States. Concerning North Atlantic political cooperation in the early years of WWII, for instance, the U.S. government preferred direct interactions with London, thereby effectively relegating Canada to a position of secondary importance. When President Roosevelt met Prime Minister Churchill for secret talks on post-war cooperation on 9 August 1941 (on board a battleship off Argentia harbour in Newfoundland) Prime Minister King was kept uninformed, due to the U.S. assertion that Canada had no place in bilateral discussions between two world powers (CHAPNICK 2005: 16). Whereas Canada's contribution to WWII was substantial, Canada continued to face challenges in emerging as a key player in international security. In her quest to be part of the key global decision-makers in this domain, Canada sought to reinforce her role on the

security front by actively engaging in the North-Atlantic Treaty Organisation (NATO) and, as highlighted above, in UN peacekeeping missions.

NATO: exit strategy from subordinate status on the world stage?

The break-up of the wartime alliance between the Soviet Union and the Western allies, and the resulting tension between the Western and Soviet blocks posed major problems for the UN to function independently. The emergence of the Cold War required an emphasis on regional collective security, leading the way to NATO, in the founding of which Canada played a significant role (LAWLESS 2006). Lester Pearson, together with like-minded counterparts in the United States such as Dean Acheson, the Truman administration's Secretary of State, actively prioritised NATO. The importance Canada accorded to NATO prompted Pierre Trudeau to observe on his election as Prime Minister in 1968 that in the preceding years, Canada had no significant defence or foreign policy apart from NATO (ENGLER 2012). Whereas some analysts perceive Canada's contributions to NATO and NATO's impact on Canada in a positive light (SAIDEMAN 2012), others, such as Granatstein (2013) call for a reassessment of NATO's contemporary relevance to Canada, calling for a shift of focus from NATO to exclusive defence partnerships with the United States. It is scarcely acknowledged that for Ottawa, engagement with NATO (as well as with UN peacekeeping measures) provided an opportunity of inverting its above-mentioned position of subordination in the international community. NATO provided the Commonwealth Dominion with a unique opportunity of interacting with the U.S. and UK governments on a relatively equal footing. Contrary to Prime Minister King's absence in the Roosevelt-Churchill secret meeting of 1941, Secretary of State for External Affairs Lester Pearson was present in secret talks held between the UK and USA in March 1948, on the possibility of creating a North Atlantic alliance (ENGLER 2012).

Governance and realpolitik: Canada's early experiences of national security dilemmas

Canada's dominant politico-historical narrative is marked by a general picture of gaining full control over the hitherto "reserved" prerogatives and moving on to propagate fundamental rights and peacekeeping across the world. This reading, however, lacks in critical insights into aspects of Canadian policy orientation during the post-WWII period. Contrary to popular belief, Canada's encounters with counterterrorism can be traced back decades before 9/11 and the infamous Maher Arar case (ABU-LABAN and NATH 2007, WHITAKER 2010: 57), to the turbulent immediate aftermath of WWII. The discovery of a

Russian-run spy-ring on Canadian soil in 1946 – better known as the Gouzenko Affair – prompted Ottawa to adopt a highly repressive process of control, infringing fundamental rights and civil liberties (WHITAKER 2010: 37-44, CLÉMENT 2012: 756-757). Ottawa's approach to this issue was at the heart of the Canadian government's initial reluctance to extend its support to the Universal Declaration of Human Rights (UDHR) in 1948. Canada's subsequent vote in favour of UDHR was largely the result of pressure on Ottawa from within and without, as well as her unwillingness to side with the likes of the Soviet Union, Saudi Arabia and South Africa, the UDHR's most fervent opponents (CLÉMENT 2012: 755-757). The Canadian government explained its anti-UDHR stance on the basis of the principle of parliamentary supremacy, deeply entrenched in Canada's political and legal culture. The courts of justice never challenged, for example, the federal cabinet's prerogative to suspend due process and indefinitely detain and interrogate suspected Russian spies in 1946 (*ibid.* :757-758). It is a significant irony of world affairs that Canada, a Western state to adapt an incongruous and questionable stance on the UDHR back in 1948, subsequently emerged – as her opposition to the 2013 Colombo CHOGM implies – an ardent advocate of human rights and civil liberties.⁴ The crucial underlying reality is that at different junctures of history, important policy decisions have been taken on the basis of quintessential realpolitik and the political interests of the governments in power. Hans Morgenthau's infamous observation that political policy seeks either to keep power, to increase power, or to demonstrate power is of special relevance to the entirety of Canada's foreign policy trajectory (MORGENTHAU 1948: 21-22). By no means is this a feature unique to the Canadian establishment alone. It is deemed worthy of reiteration in the present reflection due to its significance to a discussion on the present-day challenges facing Canadian foreign policy, including Canada's position within the Commonwealth of Nations.

II: Canada and the developing world: a foreign policy focal point?

Canada in the Commonwealth: early interactions and reputation-building

Over the post-WWII years, the Canadian government strove to develop an international image as a nation that identified itself with the political aspirations of fellow Commonwealth member states beyond the Western hemisphere (THOMSON AND SWANSON 1971: 80-81). The Commonwealth framework was crucial in facilitating Canada's links with emerging New

⁴ Canada plays a vital role in human rights advocacy at transnational level, especially through the Canadian Human Rights Council's efforts to support human rights commissions in other countries, both multilaterally and bilaterally (see most notably, CARDENAS 2003: 783).

Commonwealth nations including India, Pakistan, Ceylon, Ghana and Nigeria (*ibid.*: 77).

Canada's lobbying was instrumental in facilitating the integration of the Republic of India into the Commonwealth of Nations, which set in place a trend that Pakistan and Ceylon also followed. As the independence of India, Pakistan and Ceylon was being negotiated in the mid/late 1940s, the "Canadian view", i.e. the original admixture of unfettered sovereignty and close cooperation within the Commonwealth, had acquired a position of crucial importance. The Canadian contribution to the 1949 London Conference of Commonwealth Prime Ministers, which ensured the inclusion of the Republic of India in the Commonwealth and turned a new page in the organisation's evolution, is well-documented (MACKENZIE 1999). Prime Ministers Mackenzie King and St Laurent were particularly keen to seek a formula that would reconcile Prime Minister Jawaharlal Nehru's firm commitment to making India a republic, while remaining within the Commonwealth. This objective was ultimately achieved by incorporating the words "Head of the Commonwealth" to the British sovereign's title, enabling some member states to recognise the British monarch only in that non-binding capacity (THOMSON AND SWANSON 1971: 79-80).

Canada's own experience as a nation that saw the world through "British eyes" and subsequently emerged as an independent power had a strong appeal on leaders of New Commonwealth countries. Yet, Canada's efforts to develop the profile of a Western partner that acutely shared the politico-historical challenges of New Commonwealth states were oftentimes marred by practical hurdles. Such constraints were considerably apparent, for example, in Canada's relations with India. The Canadian government was keen to develop an Indo-Canadian entente, a partnership that both parties cherished. However, Ottawa found it challenging to maintain a smooth relationship with Nehru and the Indian government during the 1950s and 60s, especially under the premiership of John Diefenbaker. Delhi's subsequent adherence to a foreign policy based on non-alignment caused further concern in Ottawa. Senior government officials found Indian leaders (especially Nehru) rather unfathomable, mainly due to their inclination to juxtapose highly anglophile lifestyles and (in many cases) Oxbridge backgrounds with strong discourses of Indian nationalism, anti-colonialism and a foreign policy emphasis on non-alignment. Under the Diefenbaker premiership, such rifts with Indian leaders resulted in a rapprochement of Canadian leaders with their Pakistani counterparts (TOUHEY 2011 : 430-431).

As a Commonwealth Dominion, Canada's position on the world stage was not favourable to adopt a robust foreign policy agenda. In 1950, for

example, Prime Minister Nehru made a persuasive speech at the first summit of the Colombo Plan for Cooperative Economic Development in South and Southeast Asia, held in Colombo, Ceylon, in January 1950, calling for the early recognition of the newly-formed Communist government of mainland China, highlighting the potential dangers of isolating China from the world community. Secretary of State for External Affairs Lester Pearson expressed full agreement with Nehru's views, and so did Prime Minister Louis St Laurent. Yet, Ottawa was not in a position to take action due to pressure from Washington DC and Québec-related concerns. The outbreak of the Korean War further tied Canada's hands in this regard (THOMSON AND SWANSON 1971: 80-81). Geopolitical hurdles took some twenty more years for Canada to establish diplomatic relations with China in 1970, as China began to reach out for greater international contact and support in the face of growing power and pressure of the Soviet Union at the time (STUTTER 2012 336).

Development assistance: key component in Canada's international agenda

Canada has long enjoyed a strong reputation as a leading provider of Official Development Assistance (ODA), which, at the outset, was focused on the Commonwealth of Nations. After the election of Prime Minister John Diefenbaker in 1957, it was staunchly maintained that development assistance was crucial to stave off economic offensives launched from Moscow and Peking (TOUHEY 2011: 431-432).⁵ The dissemination of Canadian aid in South and Southeast Asia was largely carried out within the Commonwealth framework, through the Colombo Plan (*ibid.*). The significance of this role dates back to the early 1950s, when the Canadian government agreed to contribute some 25 million CAD per annum to the Colombo Plan at the latter's first international conference (THOMSON AND SWANSON 1971: 80). Within the Colombo Plan, Canada contributed a staggering billion dollars in assistance from 1950 to 1969, more than two-thirds of which went to India, and the rest to Pakistan and Ceylon (*ibid.* : 81). The role of a generous donor for international development began to characterise Canadian foreign policy and international presence in the developing world. Over the 1950s and 1960s, Canada contributed some two billion CAD for international development. This, however, does not imply that prioritising international aid did not trigger controversy. A Gallup poll conducted in 1968 revealed, for example, that two-

⁵ There is a broad literature on the motives of Canadian aid policy, which has been traditionally ascribed to a mixture of three motivations, philanthropic, economic and political. For an early discussion of these motives and the predominance of political interests in development policy, see Triantis 1971. For a revisionist reading of these three motives, see NOSSAL 1988).

thirds of Canadians expressed opposition to increases in income taxes to help developing countries. Canada's success in managing such challenges lay in the ability of a small number of influential politicians such as Lester Pearson to appeal to the "idealism of a nation making its first steps on the international stage" (THOMSON AND SWANSON 1971: 93-94, TRIANTIS 1971).

Domestic political contentions emanating from Québécois nationalism and language politics had a strong impact on the expansion of Canadian development assistance to the French-speaking world. As more and more French colonies in the African continent gained independence, Québec's nationalist lobbies were increasingly conscious of extending support to their francophone counterparts in Africa. In 1961 such pressures prompted Prime Minister John Diefenbaker to allocate some 300,000 CAD as development aid to francophone African countries (*ibid* : 84). Québec expressed a willingness to extend its highly politicised claim to deal directly with France without passing through Ottawa to the rest of the French-speaking world, prompting the federal government to take further action. In 1967-68, for instance, Ottawa sent a high-level mission to Africa, which identified a range of projects that would receive Canadian support, and by 1973, development aid to Africa rose to some 100 million CAD. This made the division of development aid between English and French-speaking countries roughly proportionate to the size of the two linguistic groups within Canada's national borders (*ibid* : 85).

In the early years of Canada's role as an international donor, aid distribution was relatively straightforward, with the emphasis on countries in need. This was subsequently replaced by a focus on capacity building, in which the CIDA provided financial assistance to government departments in recipient countries, which would enable local officials to develop experience in administering their own development and poverty alleviation initiatives. Concerns over the misappropriation of funds and corrupt practices put an end to aid for capacity building, paving the path to a juxtaposition of trade and aid, with aid poured into countries with trade potential for Canada (YORK 2013). Canadian aid largely flows to countries of focus (*The National Post*, 11 Jan. 2013), which alter in accordance with Canada's foreign policy and multilateral priorities. The Harper government has particularly prioritised drastic cuts in foreign aid, a policy that has earned it much criticism. It has considerably reduced aid allocations to Africa, and a recently updated list of priorities contains twenty countries and regions, but excludes countries such as Rwanda, still rising from the tragedy of genocide, Niger, where government struggles against Islamist militants who kidnapped two Canadian diplomats in December 2008, and Burkina Faso, whose leaders assisted in the negotiations to release the diplomats in late April 2009 (YORK 2009).

At the heart of this gradual policy transformation is the Harper government's resolve to firmly incorporate foreign aid with international trade. Whereas aid to the poorest nations has witnessed cuts, aid allocations have been increased for middle-income countries where Canada has business and geopolitical interests. In a somewhat intriguing development, the Harper government has been altering its Africa policy since 2011, in an effort to interact with emerging African markets (HORNSBY 2013). The present-day emphasis is on applying the aforementioned trade/aid binary focus to selected African destinations. As a short press release on a meeting between Prime Minister Harper and his Senegalese counterpart Macky Sall during the 2013 UN General Assembly outlines, Canada's relations with Senegal largely revolve around trade interests, which notably involve Canadian investments in Senegal's mining industry (Office of the Prime Minister, 2013, HORNSBY 2013). This policy orientation was further cemented by the March 2013 merger of CIDA with the Department of External Affairs and International Trade, a decision that has been questioned for its inability to resolve fundamental questions of policy consistency, and to develop a long-term, sustainable strategy for international development (PARIS 2013). The present-day priorities of Canada's international aid policy are succinctly summed up in a May 2013 research report produced by the North South Institute, which avers that:

An overarching policy framework for Canada's engagement with the developing world is needed. The key components needed in this framework are the rationale and vision for Canada's aid and engagement with the developing world, clarification on the role of different policies and partners, and guidance for the Canadian government as a whole. Such a framework could provide an effective way for Canada to demonstrate its commitment to global development and provide a basis for its relationships with developing countries (BÜLLES AND KINDORNAY 2013: 35).

III: Commonwealth side-lined? Neoliberal priorities and contemporary Canadian foreign policy

In examining Canada's international role in an Eastphalian world, the following discussion lays emphasis on two vital aspects, Canada's relationship with the United States and the growing partnership with China. An exploration of key aspects of U.S.-Canada and China-Canada relations is complemented by a discussion of the Harper government's foreign policy priorities, which have caused much debate. Parts One and Two of this article served to highlight the significant role of the Commonwealth framework in the development of Canadian foreign and international development aid policies. In comparison,

the Commonwealth occupies a subordinate position in the following discussion, which is considerably suggestive of Canada's contemporary foreign policy preoccupations. Whereas the Commonwealth of Nations no longer plays a decisive role in shaping Canadian foreign policy, it is highlighted that the organisation's salience to Canadian governance in general and foreign policy in particular continues to remain a reality that could be exploited to Ottawa's advantage.

Canada and the United States: a vital partnership of imbalance?

It would be a mistake to indulge the fantasy that Canada will ever preoccupy the U.S. to the same degree that the U.S. preoccupies Canada. We need to move beyond such conceits, stop the misdirected blame game, and get on with business. (PARIS, 29 June 2012)

An effort to explore Canada's international role in the context of emergent Eastphalian power dynamics would be incomplete in the absence of an appraisal of decisive contemporary challenges to Canadian foreign policy, and Canada's track record of addressing them. Ottawa's close partnership with Washington DC has been interpreted as the "bedrock" of Canadian foreign policy (PARIS 2012). This relationship has been constrained by the power imbalance between Ottawa and Washington DC, and it has often appeared, to the dismay of many Canadians, that Washington DC was instrumental in defining the orientation of Canadian foreign policy. The view that Canadian economic policy orientation is near-exclusively directed by the United States has long dominated international attitudes towards Canada. In 1975, for instance, President Valéry Giscard d'Estaing of France opposed Canada's entry into the Group of Seven industrialised countries (G7), on the grounds that Canada was an economic appendage of the United States and that, consequently, a separate representation was unwarranted (NOSSAL 1997: 197, MASSIE 2008: 87).

Debates on the U.S predominance of Canadian affairs have continued to characterise Canada-USA relations in the post-9/11 era. The effects of 9/11 on Canada's foreign policy orientation have received much academic attention (ROACH 2003, 2011, WHITAKER 2010). Canada's reaction to the 9/11 attacks was two-fold. Firstly, Ottawa immediately responded to UN Security Council Resolution 1373 with the Anti-Terrorism Act of 2001 that contained a broad definition of terrorism, tougher immigration and asylum controls and reinforced security on the US border. These measures were complemented by the deployment of a military contingent in southern Afghanistan, in direct confrontation with Taliban and Al-Qaida guerrillas. Canadian military presence

in Afghanistan has been stepped up under the Harper government (WHITAKER 2010: 48).

The second tier of Canadian action involved a comparatively less publicized venture that revolved around the maintenance of security on the open land border with the USA. The position of the USA as Canada's powerful immediate neighbour as well as key partner on the international scene is complemented by the USA's significance to Canada in terms of external trade. The USA is the primary trading partner for most Canadian provinces (KUKUCHA 2008 19). In this backdrop, border security constituted the centre point of Canadian security policy in the immediate aftermath of 9/11 (WHITAKER 2010: 50, ROACH 2011: 424). The Canadian trade establishment unequivocally called for the reopening of the U.S. border for unimpeded commerce at whatever political cost. This was a crucial priority for Canadian businesses. The economic costs of a protected U.S. border were unacceptable to Canada, which sends more than 85 per cent of its exports to the United States. Consequently, Ottawa was faced with a double-edged sword. If it were to ensure an open U.S. border, it had to comply by the U.S.-led dictates of a North American security perimeter in which Canadian sovereignty would be seriously threatened by pressures to "harmonize" Canadian laws and practices along U.S. standards. Ottawa was faced with the challenge of reassuring the United States sufficiently on border security so that commercial traffic can be maintained, while not surrendering a critical degree of Canadian sovereignty in the process (WHITAKER 2010: 50).

Canada's cooperation with the USA on the diplomatic front witnessed a setback when Ottawa refused to partake in the Bush administration's war in Iraq. The Iraq war cut a wedge between the two countries rather than deepening the closeness that has historically characterized the continent with the "world's longest undefended border" (*ibid* : 49). Although Canadians sympathized with Americans in the immediate aftermath of 9/11, the Bush administration's subsequent tendency to pursue an aggressive "America First" course of action put severe strains on a Western alliance that had remained relatively cohesive throughout the Cold War (*ibid*). Similar to Washington DC's post-Iraq aversion of the Jacques Chirac administration in Paris, the Liberal governments of Jean Chrétien and Paul Martin were perceived in Washington DC as "anti-American", and the Conservatives under Stephen Harper as more favourably inclined to the Bush administration. In the Obama era, the Harper government has undertaken painstaking efforts to be seen as following the lead of President Obama's popular Democratic administration. Despite this political strategy, the Harper government is ideologically not on the same page as its American counterpart (*ibid*).

Between a “big” neighbour, new horizons and the reputation of a “middle power”: Canada at crossroads

In announcing his Cabinet on 6 February 2006, and following a long-standing tradition, Prime Minister Harper also established a Cabinet committee on foreign affairs. This was accompanied by the reintegration of the portfolios of external affairs, trade and development into a single unit (HART 2008 : 66). This decision mirrored the Harper government’s subsequent orientation on foreign policy priorities. It launched an internal foreign policy overhaul in 2011, which was accelerated after the appointment of Foreign Minister John Baird in May 2011. This initiative, named Foreign Policy Plan (FPP), was intended at redefining Canada’s foreign policy priorities, especially with regards to emerging markets in Asia, and in addressing concerns related to trade cooperation with state-owned Chinese firms, which risks enabling China’s strategic and national interests play a role in international business (CTV News, 17 Nov. 2011). The overall orientation of this foreign policy agenda could be glimpsed in the draft of a classified new “Canadian Foreign Policy Plan” dated September 6, 2012, and leaked to the press in November 2012 (CBC News, 19 Nov. 2012). This document unambiguously maintained that:

The situation is stark: Canada's trade and investment relations with new economies, leading with Asia, must deepen, and as a country we must become more relevant to our new partners (...) To succeed we will need to pursue political relationships in tandem with economic interests even where political interests or values may not align (*Ibid.*).

This line of thinking was further entrenched into the Harper government’s foreign policy through the Global Markets Action Plan of 2013, which outlined Ottawa’s priorities in international trade (Government of Canada, 2013). An underlying aspect of this document is its firm juxtaposition of international trade policy with foreign policy. As Paris (2013) outlines, Ottawa’s primary strategy of promoting Canadian commercial interests in foreign markets risks looming over the rest of Canada’s foreign policy. In an era of international trade marked by Western states near-unanimously adopting “look East” policies, Canada’s shift to Asia, as well as Africa and South America does not come as a surprise. However, the reason that prompted the Canadian government to keep the key document detailing its new foreign policy agenda classified, was the slowness with which Canada has been making her “look-East” transition, and a potential public backlash against Ottawa’s objective of seeking close trade-related cooperation with ideologically opposed countries. Trade relations with China, for instance, have been particularly strengthened in the late 2000s, with the signing of the Foreign Investment

Protection and Promotion Agreement (FIPPA) with China, which Duc (2012) describes as the punctuation mark at the end of a declaration, which denotes that Canada is ready and willing to do business with China.

On Canada's new international priorities at the hour of Eastphalia?

China's rapid economic development required more foreign trade, involving increasing imports of energy, foods, and other resources, which Canada willingly provided. Chinese exports of manufactured goods to Canada grew enormously, leading to a large trade deficit for Canada, estimated at over half the value of total trade (STUTTER 2012, 336). Over the 2000s, China's role in Canada's economic life has gained unprecedented relevance and influence. China has heavily invested in Canada's natural resources. Some critics of the Harper government's decision to boycott the 2013 Colombo CHOGM cited the case of China's human rights record and especially the Chinese government's approach to Tibet, on which the Canadian government adopts a much more diplomatic posture. This critique maintained that Sri Lanka's comparative lack of diplomatic and economic leverage on the international scene enabled the Harper government to adopt a stern policy on not-so-influential Sri Lanka and turn a blind eye to identical concerns in decisively influential China. Despite the salience of this argument, Canada's relations with China have not always been devoted to economic cooperation and a disregard for China's human rights situation. In the early years of the Harper government, Ottawa did take a stern stance on China's human rights issues (STUTTER 2012: 336).

In the present-day context, Canada's foremost priority in terms of her relations with China and the rest of Southeast Asia involves extensive economic cooperation that builds upon existing partnerships, which Prime Minister Harper describes as moving Canada-China relations to the "next level" (CBC News, 10 Feb. 2012). This notably involves new accords on energy-related cooperation and an overall effort to diversify the Canadian export market, which has been largely focused on the U.S. market (Government of Canada, 14 Mar. 2013).⁶ China already plays an active role in the Canadian oil industry; in October 2011, Sinopec acquired Canadian oil and gas producer Daylight Energy Ltd. for CAD 2.2 billion, a year after it invested CAD 4.65 billion in an Alberta oil-sands project, China's largest-ever investment in North America (*Huffington Post*, 16 Nov. 2011). A not insignificant juncture of this

⁶ In terms of petroleum, to quote Minister of International Trade Ed Fast, Canada is the "largest oil supplier to the United States". In 2011, Canada delivered 2.8 million barrels a day of crude oil and refined products—more than Saudi Arabia and Venezuela combined (Government of Canada, 14 Mar. 2013).

partnership was Ottawa's increased emphasis on trade partnerships with China, notably in relation to oil, in the aftermath of the U.S. federal government's decision to postpone the construction of the Keystone XL pipeline, in the face of large-scale protests in front of the White House on 6 November 2011. The pipeline was meant to transport some 700,000 barrels of Albertan oil to refineries in the U.S. Gulf Coast, generating thousands of jobs (BURNEY AND HAMPSON 2012). Soon after the U.S. decision to postpone the project, the Canadian government emphasised its prioritisation of trade with East Asia and especially, China. Prime Minister Harper directly clarified this stance to President Obama, and days after the U.S. postponement, Canadian Finance Minister Jim Flaherty visited China, reiterating Canada's commitment to trade ties and seeking opportunities to strengthen cooperation with regards to oil exportations (CTV News, 14 Nov. 2011). Despite these forward steps, the U.S. market continues to remain Canada's foremost destination for oil exports. Whereas the Keystone issue -- due to the opposition not only from environmental activists but also rail transportation firms -- has been highly mediatised with some observers, also noting that the Keystone project risks being hampered by the latent surge of U.S. oil output (CBC News, 28 Nov. 2013), the US market is set to be open for Canadian oil exports for the foreseeable future. Alberta is not the only Canadian state to export oil to the USA and Newfoundland, for instance, has been continuing its exports to the USA while maintaining a low media profile.

“We know where our interests lie”: on Canada's international role at the hour of Eastphalia

Challenges of Eastphalia and problems of consistency

Commenting in 2011 on the Harper government's defeat (to Portugal) in the contest to gain a temporary seat at the UN Security Council, one observer attributes Canada's defeat to what she describes as “the Harper government's enduring lack of sophistication in international affairs” (GAGNON, 2011). The Harper foreign policy orientation since 2006 has witnessed a rather abrupt series of fluctuations, such as curtly halting aid programmes and diplomatic representations and the tendency to redirect Canadian focus from Commonwealth-linked efforts in Africa towards projects in Latin America in the late 2000s (KRELING 2009 : 52, SIDDIQUI 2012). As highlighted above, this inconsistency is also apparent in the Harper government's critical stance on China's human rights situation at the beginning of its first term of office, and the subsequent “un-doing” of all such critiques, adapting a discourse of

reinforced trade cooperation with China.⁷ Canada's overall present-day foreign policy, as highlighted in the previous section, is closely linked to international trade, and the promotion of Canadian businesses abroad. This approach, in the context of global economic woes, low growth in Canada's traditional exports in the West and the rapid rise of non-Western (especially Southeast Asian) markets, is an advisable policy. However, it also raises concerns over its impact on Canada's overall foreign policy. It is deeply entrenched in the neoliberal drift in contemporary world politics. Concerning Africa, for instance, the Canadian government is focused on its trade interests at the expense of longer-term sustainable development goals, a policy that has been criticised as short-sighted and strategically unsustainable (PEARSON 2011, GOLDFARB 2013). While analysts call for a more consistent, involved and nuanced Africa policy (HORNSBY 2013), African diplomats have reiterated the necessity of increased political and diplomatic partnerships with Canada (CLARK 2012).

A foreign policy agenda with a distinctly "Canadian" emphasis on multilateralism, peacekeeping, the promotion of liberal democratic values and most importantly, as a middle power constitutes, by and large, Canada's foremost contribution to the international system. In the contemporary political zeitgeist, Canada possesses substantive potential in playing a vital role as a middle power. In the context of post-9/11 emphasis on counterterrorism, the increased leverage of emerging Eastphalian superpowers, as well as the neoliberal drift in world politics, Canadian foreign policy faces new challenges, especially vis-à-vis the global South. Rapidly increasing Chinese influence in Asia and Africa is largely facilitated by the China's "Eastphalian" foreign policy priority of non-involvement in the internal affairs of fellow states. In this context, many governments in the global South with dubious human rights records and reputations for repression have been developing closer ties with Peking, and are less inclined to abide by Western liberal internationalist dictates. The leverage wielded by Western development assistance and financial support has thus witnessed a considerable Eastphalian challenge throughout the global South.

Canada and today's Commonwealth: a new international agenda for Ottawa?

The corollary to the aforementioned prospects is the fact that Canada, despite her long struggle to wield autonomy in managing her international affairs, has often tended to follow the scripts laid down by Western

⁷At the inception of the Harper government (and to China's outrage), it conferred honorary Canadian citizenship on the Dalai Lama in September 2006 (CBC News, March 8, 2012).

superpowers. The latest foreign policy focus on trade and investments in Asia and Africa, and a lesser emphasis on human rights and accountability, leaves one somewhat bemused concerning Canada's foreign policy priorities. The realist rationale that guides Ottawa maintains that strong emphasis on fundamental rights and accountability in political contexts where Canada has substantive trade dividends is all but counterproductive. Despite the dominance of this discourse, recent developments such as Ottawa's boycott of the Colombo CHOGM demonstrate that the Harper government is not completely oblivious to the cons of this new foreign policy emphasis. As reiterated earlier in this article, the Harper government's foreign policy emphasis (of lack thereof) on issues of governance and accountability is determined by the constraints of trade dividends. It is within this narrow framework of *realpolitik* that Ottawa is disposed to uphold the Commonwealth's core values of respect for human rights, the rule of law and accountability. Canada's role within the Commonwealth of Nations is thus shaped by more pressing priorities including, most importantly, decisive trade partnerships. Despite this reality, the Commonwealth continues to play a non-negligible role in Canadian governance. Ottawa has taken steps towards reinforcing Canada's presence in the Commonwealth through generous financial allocations as well as gestures of commitment including the appointment of a special envoy to the Commonwealth (Government of Canada, Oct. 23, 2013), not to mention CAD 7.5 million spent on the Queen's golden jubilee celebrations in 2012 (Ibid). However, such commitments no longer imply a central role to the Commonwealth of Nations in Canadian foreign policy. Changing priorities have relegated the Commonwealth to a ceremonial, omnipresent yet near-unarguably insignificant position in Canadian foreign policy.

A vital factor that requires reiteration is that in order to exploit Canada's potential within the Commonwealth, it is necessary for Ottawa to emerge as a power with an international agenda of its own, with little trace of an inclination to follow the scripts laid down by more influential world powers. Canada's tremendous human resource potential and image of a middle power on the international scene are of vital importance in reaping the best out of its position as a leading member of the Commonwealth. As an international body based on voluntary association, the Commonwealth has entered a new era of enhanced supra-national interaction across linguistic and politico-historical boundaries. This trend was clearly demonstrated, for example, in the invitation extended to President Nicolas Sarkozy of France to deliver the keynote address at the 2009

CHOGM held in Port-of-Spain, Trinidad and Tobago.⁸ In this context of such new trends in international cooperation, Canada enjoys an especially advantageous position, which is reinforced by her simultaneous membership of the Commonwealth, the Organisation Internationale de la Francophonie, the G8 and NATO. In strengthening bilateral cooperation across supra-national bodies and their priorities in a new era of international cooperation, Canada possesses much potential to play a constructive role, which the Harper government has been relatively slow to exploit. In sum, Canada's capabilities within the Commonwealth have been side-lined, partly due to the emphasis on the "voluntary" nature of the organisation, and partly due to Ottawa's near-exclusive emphasis on international trade and influential bilateral partnerships.

Conclusions: Canada and the Commonwealth in an Eastphalian world?

This article sought to reflect upon Canada's international role in a changing world order, characterised by an easterly shift in world power and influence. In an effort to briefly reconstruct the key tenets of Canadian foreign policy, its contemporary priorities and options, this article took a diachronic approach that evoked the development of a distinctly Canadian foreign policy in the post-WWII era, and the evolution of priorities in Ottawa's international agenda. Canada's domestic and international politics represent a complex web of structures, agendas, strategic priorities and historical trajectories, and by no means is this article a comprehensive account of present-day Canadian foreign policy. Instead, its primary objective involved a glimpse, through the benefit of insights into key aspects of the politico-historical evolution of Canadian foreign policy, of the challenging prospects for Canada in an emergent Eastphalian world order. The Harper government's neoliberal foreign policy is largely characterised by substantive efforts to increase trade partnerships with emerging markets. In terms of the Canadian economy, this policy approach may indeed be promising, but Canada's contemporary international standing is not limited to economic strength alone. Canada's legacy of international interaction, from the Commonwealth to the UN, NATO and ODA, provides her with tremendous potential in international diplomacy, especially with regards to the manoeuvring of complex international disputes. In 2012, the British and Canadian governments decided to operate a number of foreign diplomatic missions in partnership, partly as a cost-cutting initiative (DAVIES 2012). In Canada, this measure earned much domestic criticism. This decision followed a persuasive speech delivered by British Prime Minister David Cameron at the

⁸ In his speech, Sarkozy strongly highlighted the importance of cooperation between the Commonwealth and the Organisation Internationale de la Francophonie (see SARKOZY 2009).

Canadian House of Commons on 22 September 2011, calling for increased UK-Canada cooperation (CAMERON 2011). While such partnerships may certainly have a beneficial dimension, Canada today requires a more nuanced appraisal of her strengths on the international arena, as an influential member of the community of states with a “middle path” international agenda of her own. This imperatively involves thinking beyond the ‘foreign policy as international trade’ paradigm. It also involves thinking beyond much valued bilateral partnerships, including UK-Canada and U.S.-Canada cooperation. Such an agenda would enable Canada to reinforce her position on the contemporary international scene as an influential middle power. If a lesson were to be gleaned from the past, a balanced mixture of the cautious foreign policy approach that Prime Minister Mackenzie King envisioned for Canada in the mid-decades of the last century, and the energy of Pearsonian internationalism, would be of tremendous relevance to Canada’s efforts to consolidate her *pleine place* in an emerging Eastphalian world order.

Bibliography

Official sources

Commonwealth Secretary General, (2011), “Secretary General’s Biennial Report, 2011-2013”, London: The Commonwealth Secretariat: <http://thecommonwealth.org/sites/default/files/page/documents/SG%20Biennial%20Report.pdf> (accessed 3 January 2014).

Government of Canada, (2011), “Baird Appoints Senator Segal as Special Envoy for Commonwealth Renewal”: <http://www.international.gc.ca/media/aff/news-communicues/2011/386.aspx?lang=eng> (accessed 29 November 2013).

Government of Canada, (2012), “A Consolidation of The Constitution Acts, 1867-1982”, Ottawa: Department of Justice: http://laws.justice.gc.ca/PDF/CONST_E.pdf (accessed 22 November 2013).

Government of Canada, (2013), “Address by Minister Fast at the Peterson Institute for International Economics”, Washington D.C. on 14 March: http://www.international.gc.ca/media_commerce/comm/speeches-discours/2013/03/14a.aspx?lang=eng (Accessed 28 November 2013).

Government of Canada, (2013), “Canada and the Commonwealth”, last updated on October 23, 2013 (accessed 30 November 2013) <http://www.international.gc.ca/commonwealth/index.aspx>

Government of Canada, (2013), “Global Markets Action Plan: The Blueprint for Creating Jobs and Opportunities for Canadians Through Trade”:

<http://international.gc.ca/global-markets-marches-mondiaux/assets/pdfs/plan-eng.pdf> (accessed 29 November 2013).

House of Commons UK, (2012), "The Role and Future of the Commonwealth", Fourth report of session 2012-13, Foreign Affairs Committee of the British House of Commons (accessed 3 January 2014)

<http://www.publications.parliament.uk/pa/cm201213/cmselect/cmfaff/114/114.pdf>

Office of the Prime Minister, (2013), "Prime Minister Stephen Harper meets with President Macky Sall of Senegal", official website of the Prime Minister of Canada: <http://www.pm.gc.ca/eng/news/2013/09/25/prime-minister-stephen-harper-meets-president-macky-sall-senegal> (accessed November 29, 2013).

Sarkozy, Nicolas, (2009), "Full text of speech delivered at the 2009 CHOGM", London: The Commonwealth Secretariat: http://secretariat.thecommonwealth.org/speech/33247/240789/233699/216706/216724/nicolas_sarkozy.htm (accessed 4 January 2014).

The Commonwealth, (2013), "Commonwealth Strategic Plan 2013/14-2016/17", London: The Commonwealth Secretariat: http://secretariat.thecommonwealth.org/document/177370/256196/commonwealth_secretariat_strategic_plan_2013_2017.htm (accessed 3 January 2014).

Books and articles

ABU-LABAN, Yasmeen and NATH, Nisha, (2007), "From Deportation to Apology: The Case of Maher Arar and the Canadian State", *Canadian Ethnic Studies*, 39: 3, 2007, 71-98.

AMARASINGAM, Amarnath, (2013), "A History of Tamil Diaspora Politics in Canada: Organisational Dynamics and Negotiated Order, 1978-2013", International Centre for Ethnic Studies, Research Paper No. 11: https://www.colombotelegraph.com/wp-content/uploads/2013/12/A-History-of-Tamil-Diaspora-Politics-in-Canada_-Organisational-Dynamics-and-Negotiated-Order-1978-2013-Amarnath-Amarasingam.pdf (accessed 04 January 2014).

BUCKNER, Philip, (2008), "The Creation of the Dominion of Canada-1860-1901", in Philip Buckner (ed.) *Canada and the British Empire*. Oxford: OUP. 66-86.

_____ (ed.) *Canada and the British Empire*. Oxford: OUP.

- BÜLLES, Anni-Claudine and KINDORNAY, Shannon, 2013, *Beyond Aid: A Plan for Canada's International Cooperation*. May 2013, Ottawa: North South Institute.
- BURNEY, Derek H. and HAMPSON, Fen Olser, (2012), "How Obama Lost Canada: Botching relations with the United States' biggest trade partner". *Foreign Affairs*, June 21, 2012: <http://www.foreignaffairs.com/articles/137744/derek-h-burney-and-fen-olser-hampson/how-obama-lost-canada> (accessed 29 November 2013).
- CARDENAS, Sonia, (2003), "Transgovernmental Activism: Canada's Role in Promoting National Human Rights Commissions", *Human Rights Quarterly*, Volume 25: 3, 775-790.
- CARROLL, Michael K. (2009), *Pearson's Peacekeepers: Canada and the United Nations Emergency Force, 1956-67*. Vancouver: University of British Columbia Press.
- CHAPNICK, Adam, (2005), *The Middle Power Project: Canada and the Founding of the United Nations*. Vancouver: UBC Press.
- CLÉMENT, Dominique, (2012), 'Human Rights in Canadian Domestic and Foreign Politics: From "Niggardly Acceptance" to Enthusiastic Embrace', *Human Rights Quarterly*, 34: 3, 751-778.
- DUC, Khanh Vu, (2012), "Canadian Foreign Policy Leaked". *The Asia Sentinel*, Wednesday 21 November: <http://www.asiasentinel.com/politics/canadian-foreign-policy-leaked/> (accessed 26 November 2013).
- ENGLER, Yves, (2012), "Canada and the North Atlantic Treaty Organisation", *Global Research*, August 15, 2012: <http://www.globalresearch.ca/canada-and-the-north-atlantic-treaty-organization-nato/32370> (accessed 3 January 2014).
- FIDLER, D.P. (2010), "Introduction: Eastphalia emerging? Asia, international law and global governance", *Indiana Journal of Global Legal Studies*, vol. 17, no. 1, pp. 1-12.
- _____ & GANGULY, S. (2010), "India and Eastphalia", *Indiana Journal of Global Legal Studies*, vol. 17, no. 1, pp. 147-164.
- GINSBURG, Thomas, (2010), "Eastphalia as the perfection of Westphalia", *Indiana Journal of Global Legal Studies*, vol. 17, no. 1, pp. 27-45.
- GRANATSTEIN, J. L. (1970), *Canadian Foreign Policy since 1945: Middle Power or Satellite?* Toronto: Copp Clark.
- _____. (2013), "Is NATO still necessary for Canada?" Canadian Defence and Foreign Affairs Institute, Policy Paper, March 2013:

- <http://www.cdfai.org/PDF/Is%20NATO%20Still%20Necessary%20for%20Canada.pdf> (Accessed 4 January 2014).
- HART, S. (2008), *From Pride to Influence: Towards a New Canadian Foreign Policy*. Vancouver: UBC Press.
- HYAM, Ronald, (1999), "The primacy of geopolitics: The dynamics of British imperial policy, 1763–1963", *The Journal of Imperial and Commonwealth History*, 27:2, 27-52.
- KENDLE, John Edward, (1967), *The Colonial and Imperial Conferences. 1887-1911. A Study in Imperial Organization*. London: Longman.
- KIM, S.W., Fidler, D.P. & Ganguly, S. (2009), "Eastphalia rising? Asian influence and the fate of human security", *World Policy Journal*, pp. 53-64.
- KRELING, Beth, (2009), "India and the Commonwealth: A Symbiotic Relationship?", *The Round Table: The Commonwealth Journal of International Affairs*, 98:400, 49-66.
- KUKUCHA, Christopher J., (2008), *The Provinces and Canadian Foreign Trade Policy*. Vancouver: University of British Columbia Press.
- LAWLESS, Michael, J. (2006), "Canada and NATO: A starving fish in an expanding pond", *Canadian Military Journal*, summer 2006, 6-14: <http://www.journal.forces.gc.ca/vo7/no2/lawless-anarchiq-eng.asp> (Accessed 2 January 2014).
- LO, C. (2010), "Values to be added to an "Eastphalian Order" by the emerging China", *Indiana Journal of Global Legal Studies*, vol. 17, no. 1, pp. 13-26.
- MACKENZIE, Hector, (1999), "An old dominion and the new commonwealth: Canadian policy on the question of India's membership, 1947–49", *The Journal of Imperial and Commonwealth History*, 27:3, 82-112.
- MACMILLAN, John (1998), *On Liberal Peace: Democracy, War and the International Order*. London and New York: I.B. Tauris.
- MANSERGH, Nicholas, (1953), *Documents and Speeches on British Commonwealth Affairs, 1931-1952*, Vol. I. Oxford: OUP.
- MASSIE, Justin, (2008), "North-Atlantic Quadrangle: Mackenzie King's Lasting Imprint on Canada's International Security Policy", *British Journal of Canadian Studies*, 24 (2008/9), 85-105.
- MCKENZIE, Francine, (2006), "In the National Interest: Dominions' Support for Britain and the Commonwealth after the Second World War", *The Journal of Imperial and Commonwealth History*, 34:4, 553-576.
- MORGENTHAU, Hans J. (1948), *Politics among Nations: The Struggle for Power and Peace*. 1st edition, New York: Knopf.

- NOSSAL, Kim Richard, (1988), "Mixed Motives Revisited: Canada's Interest in Development Assistance. *Canadian Journal of Political Science/ Revue Canadienne de Science Politique*, 21: 1, 35-56.
- _____. (1997), *The Politics of Canadian Foreign Policy*. 3rd edn. Scarborough: Prentice Hall.
- ROACH, Kent, (2011), *The 9/11 Effect: Comparative Counter-Terrorism*. Cambridge: CUP.
- STUTTER, Robert G. (2012), *Chinese Foreign Relations: Power and policy since the Cold War* (third edition). New York: Rowman and Littlefield.
- THOMSON, Dale C., Swanson, Roger, F. (1971), *Canadian Foreign Policy: Options and Perspectives*. Toronto: McGraw-Hill Ryerson.
- TOUHEY, Ryan M. (2011), "Dealing in Black and White: The Diefenbaker Government and the Cold War in South Asia 1957-1963". *The Canadian Historical Review*, 92: 3, September 2011, 429-454.
- TRIANSTIS, S. G. (1971), "Canada's Interest in Foreign Aid", *World Politics*, Vol. 24, No. 1 (Oct., 1971), 1-18
- VEATCH, Richard, (1975), *Canadian Foreign Policy and the League of Nations, 1919-1939*. Université de Genève, Institut Universitaire de Hautes Etudes Internationales, thèse no. 257. Toronto and Buffalo: University of Toronto Press.
- WHITAKER, Reg, (2010), "How Canada Confronts Terrorism: Canadian Responses to 9/11 in Historical and Comparative Context", in Kassam, Karim-Aly (Ed). *Understanding Terror: Perspectives for Canadians*. Calgary: University of Calgary Press, 37-66.

Media sources

- BADAWI, T.A.A. (2011), "A Commonwealth of the People: Time for Urgent Reform", Document produced by the Eminent Persons' Group of the Commonwealth of Nations.
- http://www.commonwealthministers.com/images/uploads/documents/EPG_9.pdf (accessed 2 January 2014).
- BRADY, Brendan, (2013), "The Empty Chair: Harper boycotts the Commonwealth Summit", *The Walrus Magazine*, December 2013: <http://thewalrus.ca/the-empty-chair/> (accessed January 04, 2014).
- CAMERON, David, (2011), "Full transcript of speech delivered at the Canadian Parliament on 22 September 2011", Reproduced by *The New Statesman*, 23 September 2011: <http://www.newstatesman.com/international-politics/2011/09/canada-world-canadian-britain> (accessed 4 September 2014).

- CBC News, (2012), "Canada-China partnership ready for the 'next level'. Full text of Prime Minister Stephen Harper's speech delivered in Guangzhou, China, 10 February: <http://www.cbc.ca/news/politics/canada-china-partnership-ready-for-the-next-level-1.1201854> (accessed 28 November 2013).
- CBC News, (2012), "Secret document details new Canadian foreign policy". CBC News, 19 November: <http://www.cbc.ca/news/politics/secret-document-details-new-canadian-foreign-policy-1.1152385> (Accessed 24 November 2013).
- CBC News, (2012), "Who are honorary Canadian citizens?" *CBC News*, 8 March 2012: <http://www.cbc.ca/news/canada/who-are-the-honorary-canadians-1.1155903> (Accessed 1 January 2014).
- CBC News, (2013), "Harper suggests relocating Sri Lanka Commonwealth talks", 25 April: <http://www.cbc.ca/news/politics/story/2013/04/25/pol-cp-sri-lanka-chogm-relocation.html> (accessed 19 August 2013).
- CBC News, (2013), "Keystone XL pipeline threatened by U.S. oil boom", CBC News, November 28: <http://www.cbc.ca/news/business/keystone-xl-pipeline-threatened-by-u-s-oil-boom-1.2443923> (Accessed 29 November 2013).
- Clark, Campbell, (2012), "Diplomat warns of Canada's fading chance in Africa", *The Globe and Mail*, 29, February 2012: <http://www.theglobeandmail.com/news/politics/diplomat-warns-of-canadas-fading-chance-in-africa/article536171/> (Accessed 2 January 2014).
- Colombo Telegraph, (2013), "UK Listed Sri Lanka as a 'Country of Concern' but attending the CHOGM is the right thing to do – Cameron", 12 July: <http://www.colombotelegraph.com/index.php/uk-listed-sri-lanka-as-a-country-of-concern-but-attending-the-chogm-is-the-right-thing-to-do-david-cameron/> (accessed 19 August 2013).
- CTV News, (2011), "Canada looks 'East' as Flaherty visits China", CTV News, Monday 14 November: <http://www.ctvnews.ca/canada-looks-to-asia-as-flaherty-visits-china-1.725561> (accessed 29 November 2013).
- CTV News, (2011), "Tory foreign policy review looks east to China", Thursday 17 November: <http://www.ctvnews.ca/tory-foreign-policy-review-looks-east-to-china-1.727572> (accessed 29 November 2013).
- DAVIES, Lizzy, (2012), "UK to share embassy premises with 'first cousins' Canada", *The Guardian*, 24 September 2012: <http://www.theguardian.com/global/2012/sep/24/diplomacy-embassy-buildings-uk-canada> (Accessed 4 January 2014).
- GAGNON, Lysiane, (2011), "Foreign affairs? Stephen Harper's smart, but cosmopolitan he's not", *The Globe and Mail*, Monday June 20, 2011:

- <http://www.theglobeandmail.com/news/politics/lysiane-gagnon/foreign-affairs-stephen-harpers-smart-but-cosmopolitan-hes-not/article2065603/> (accessed 29 November, 2013).
- GOLDFARB, Danielle, (2013), "Global Intentions: Canada's new Global Markets Action Plan sounds the right notes, mostly". *Open Canada*, November 27, 2013: <http://opencanada.org/features/blogs/roundtable/global-intentions/> (accessed 29 November 2013).
- GOTLIEB, Allan, (1991). "The United States in Canadian Foreign Policy". Text of the O. D. Skelton Memorial Lecture, Toronto: December 10, 1991: http://www.international.gc.ca/departement/skelton_clf1/PDF/skelton-gottlieb-en.pdf (Accessed 2 January 2013).
- Hornsby, David. (2013), "Turning Perception into Reality: Canada in Africa", *Open Canada*, November 7, 2013: <http://opencanada.org/features/the-think-tank/essays/turning-perception-into-reality-canada-in-africa/> (Accessed 2 January 2014).
- Huffington Post, (2011), "Canadian Trade: Tories look East to China in Foreign Policy review". *Huffington Post Canada*, November 16: http://www.huffingtonpost.ca/2011/11/16/canadian-trade-harper-government_n_1098159.html (accessed 29 November, 2013).
- PARIS, Roland, (2012), "Whither Canada-US relations?" Canadian International Council, 29 June: <http://opencanada.org/features/blogs/roundtable/whither-canada-u-s-relations/> (accessed 24 November 2013).
- _____, (2013), "CIDA merger is fine, but fundamental questions of policy remain unresolved", *The Globe and Mail*, March 22: <http://www.theglobeandmail.com/globe-debate/cida-merger-is-fine-but-fundamental-questions-of-policy-remain-unresolved/article10164789/> (accessed 30 November 2013).
- PEARSON, Glen, (2011), "The Scramble for Africa... Again". *Huffington Post* (Canada edition), June 22, 2011: http://www.huffingtonpost.ca/glen-pearson/stephen-harper-africa_b_882680.html.
- SAIDEMAN, Steve, (2012), "Canada and NATO, NATO and Canada", Canadian International Council (Open Canada), 20 May 2012: <http://opencanada.org/features/blogs/roundtable/canada-and-nato-nato-and-canada/> (accessed 3 January 2014).
- SIDDIQUI, Haroon, (2012), "Prime Minister Harper's Foreign Policy Hobbled by Ideology", *The Toronto Star*, October 13, 2012: http://www.thestar.com/opinion/editorialopinion/2012/10/13/prime_minister_harpers_foreign_policy_hobbled_by_ideology.html (accessed 2 January 2014).

CANADA'S INTERNATIONAL ROLE AT THE HOUR OF EASTPHALIA

The National Post, (2013), "Graphic: Follow the aid money to Canada's 'countries of focus'", 11 January: <http://news.nationalpost.com/2013/01/11/graphic-follow-the-aid-money-to-canadas-countries-of-focus/> (Accessed 29 November 2013).

The Star, (2013), "Canada should attend Commonwealth meeting in Sri Lanka: Chapnick", 13 August: http://www.thestar.com/opinion/commentary/2013/08/13/canada_should_attend_commonwealth_meeting_in_sri_lanka_chapnick.html (accessed 19 August 2013).

YORK, Geoffrey, (2013), "Canada's African aid marred by organizational turmoil, changing priorities". *The Globe and Mail*, March 22, 2013: <http://www.theglobeandmail.com/news/national/canadas-african-aid-marred-by-organizational-turmoil-changing-priorities/article10254420/> (accessed 29 November 2013).

_____, (2009), "Focus: Banned Aid", *The Globe and Mail*, Friday, May 29: <http://www.theglobeandmail.com/globe-debate/munk-debates/banned-aid/article4261160/> (Accessed 29 November 2013).