11   Beyond Hierarchy

Jack Donnelly

The preceding chapters have demonstrated, in a great variety of ways, the substantive importance and analytical value of focusing on hierarchy in International Relations (IR). This chapter steps back, situates IR's emerging "turn to hierarchy" within the historical evolution of the discipline, and takes a mildly critical approach to that turn. I fully endorse studying inequality, authority, and rule, which have been perversely marginalized in mainstream anarchy-centric IR. I question "hierarchy," though, as a frame for such work.

   This chapter is divided into two parts. The first three sections critically examine the Waltzian anarchy-hierarchy binary and the associated idea of structural ordering principles, explicate the idea of hierarchy as a structure of stratification and differentiation, and argue against extending the concept to a broader range of authorities and inequalities. I conclude that the most promising path forward is to focus on the variety of forms of hierarchies (and other inequalities). The last three sections then offer brief excursions into that variety.

Beyond Anarchy and Ordering Principles

Hierarchy is usually understood in contemporary IR as opposed to anarchy, which itself is understood as the "fundamental"[1] feature of international relations. As Zarakol puts it, "even as IR's anarchy-centred view of world politics [has] receded from view, it nonetheless remain[s] largely undisturbed as a starting assumption."[2] I argue for not merely disturbing but displacing anarchy-centrism – but not with hierarchy-centrism.

Waltz's Anarchy-Hierarchy Binary

It is commonly held that IR has "from its earliest years, been structured by a discourse about anarchy."[3] I have shown elsewhere,[4] however, that

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[1] Milner 1991, 67; Schmidt 1997, 1; Miller 2002, 10; Holmes 2011, 291. Cf. Lake 2009a, 2: "Virtually all scholars agree that relations between states are anarchic and that this is one of the most unique, important, and enduring features of world politics."
[2] See the Introduction.   [3] Schmidt 1997, 41.   [4] Donnelly 2015a.

prior to the publication of Waltz's *Theory of International Politics* (in 1979), anarchy was rarely employed as a central analytical concept or under-stood as the defining feature of international relations. For example, in a selection of 145 books published between 1895 and 1978, the median use of the terms "anarchy" and "anarchic" is two (and the mean is 6.9). In a similar set of sixty-two books published between 1979 and 2013, the median is twenty-four (and the mean is 35.5).[5] Before Waltz, even realists did not conceptualize the absence of an international government as "anarchy."[6] The absence of an international government was seen as a background condition rather than an ordering principle or a master explanatory variable.[7] The idea of substantive "effects of anarchy" was unknown.[8]

Even if we agree that absence of an international government is a "fact" that IR *must* comprehend, "anarchy" is only one of many ways to do that. And (Waltzian) "anarchy" is not only a recent discursive construction, but it also entered contemporary IR, especially in the United States, in a particular way: as the unique ordering principle of international systems opposed to hierarchy. If anarchy and hierarchy are mutually exclusive and inclusive ordering principles, and if all international systems are anarchic, then international systems cannot be structurally hierarchic – as Waltz argues at some length.[9]

The preceding chapters, building on two decades of growing discom-fort with this conclusion,[10] have shown, in many ways and contexts, that hierarchy is a regular feature of international relations. As even Waltz acknowledges, "inequality is what much of politics is about," and "inter-nationally, inequality is more nearly the whole of the political story."[11]

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[5] Donnelly 2015a, 395, table 1.

[6] For example, the term is used only twice, in passing, in E. H. Carr's *The Twenty Years, Crisis* (1939 [2001], 28, 162), in George Kennan's *American Diplomacy* (1951, 33, 149), and in Henry Kissinger's *A World Restored* (1957, 17, 25). None of the seven editions of Morgenthau's *Politics among Nations* contains an index entry for anarchy. *Scientific Man versus Power Politics* (Morgenthau 1946, 117) uses "anarchy" only once – referring to "the international anarchy of our age" (not of international relations in general).

[7] As Waltz (1990, 36) puts it, for classical realists "anarchy is a general condition rather than a distinct structure. Anarchy sets the problem that states have to cope with."

[8] A Google Scholar search for "effects of anarchy" or "effects of international anarchy" and "international relations" yields only three insignificant results from 1900 to 1974. There is one result for 1975–9: Jervis' influential 1978 article "Cooperation Under the Security Dilemma" (Jervis 1978, 173). In the 1980s, "effects of (international) anarchy" appears in seven works, including major articles by John Ruggie (1983, 284), Harrison Wagner (1983, 385), Michael Doyle (1983, 232), and Joseph Grieco (1988, 502). In the 1990s, however, there are almost 100 results, almost 250 in the 2000s, and nearly 300 for 2010–16.

[9] Waltz 1975, 114–16.   [10] See Introduction, n. 3, for illustrative works.

[11] Waltz 1979, 142, 143.

"The inequality of nations is ... the dominant political fact of international life."[12]

David Lake in effect attempts to rescue the Waltzian account by arguing that *relational hierarchy* regularly coexists with *structural anarchy*.[13] Lake, however, continues to define hierarchy "as the antonym of anarchy,"[14] accepts Waltz's notion of ordering principles, and thus denies structural hierarchy.[15] In fact, however, nearly all international systems are *structurally* hierarchic; that is, ordered around systematic relations of super- and subordination and differentiation. Later I show this for the hard case of state systems.[16]

The pervasive presence of international hierarchy, however, does not mean that hierarchy is, as Hobson claims, "the core concept of IR."[17] "Hierarchy" is no less "the ordering principle" of national political systems and "the core concept" of comparative politics. It thus tells us nothing distinctive about international relations. Furthermore, much international authority and inequality, as I argue below, is not hierarchical. To understand the place of hierarchy – and of inequality and rule more broadly – we need to escape the Waltzian anarchy-hierarchy binary.

Abandoning Ordering Principles

Part of the problem is that neither anarchy nor hierarchy is a structural ordering principle. Absence of a government simply indicates one way in which a system is *not* ordered. It may demarcate international from domestic politics. It does not, however, even begin to tell us how an international system is structured/ordered. Similarly, hierarchy simply tells us *that* a system is stratified, not *how* (let alone how it is structured).

The fundamental problem, though, is not that international and national systems have some other ordering principles. Rather, it is Waltz's conception of structural ordering principles. In other fields, structure is not seen to involve "ordering principles."[18] Examining the works that Waltz identifies as having been especially useful in his

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[12] Waltz 1979, 144. Distinguishing hierarchy and inequality (see the section "Centralization (Center-Periphery Differentiation)" below) makes these quotes somewhat less apposite than they first seem but does not undermine my basic point.
[13] Lake 2009a, 17; cf. x, 62, 133, 136, 174, 177, 179.   [14] *Ibid.*, 62.
[15] *Ibid.*, 61, 62. See also the section "Hierarchy" below.
[16] See the section "Stratification and Functional Differentiation in States Systems."
[17] Hobson 2014.
[18] In the first 300 results of a Google Scholar search in September 2013 for "ordering principle" and "structure," "ordering principle" is presented as a defining component of structure only in works by or citing Waltz. The same is true of the first 100 results of a search for "ordering principle" and "social structure."

thinking about systems theory and cybernetics,[19] from which he developed his conceptions of system and structure, I was unable to find the term "ordering principle" or anything close to the Waltzian concept. Structural ordering principles really do seem to be Waltz's original contribution.

That social and political systems have a singular ordering principle, however, is an aesthetic prejudice that flies in the face of the historical record. (For example, there was no ordering principle in early modern Europe, in the Mediterranean world of the third and second centuries BCE, or in China during the Spring and Autumn period [770–476 BCE].) Many international systems can be fruitfully understood in terms of multiple "ordering principles." (For example, the post-Napoleonic system was a system of sovereign states, a great power system, a concert system, and an antirevolutionary [pro-monarchical] system.) And claims that all international systems have the same basic structure (ordering principle) – "two, and only two, types of structures are needed to cover societies of all sorts"[20] – become obviously ludicrous once we stop pretending that anarchy orders (rather than demarcates[21]) international systems. International systems share little, if anything, else – let alone one thing that defines or determines the arrangement of their parts.

Hierarchy and IR

The fact of hierarchy, like the fact of the absence of a government, is of little positive analytical interest. The structures of most, if not all, international systems are both anarchic (lacking a government) and hierarchic (systematically stratified and differentiated). And which (if either) is more important in any particular system is an empirical, not a theoretical or conceptual, question. IR's Waltzian legacy may have given momentary remedial importance to insisting on the pervasive reality of hierarchies in international relations. Real analytical progress, however, requires getting past that moment as quickly as possible. Our attention should be focused

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[19] Angyal 1939; Ashby 1964 [1956]; Bertalanffy 1968; Buckley 1968; Nadel 1957; Smith 1956, 1966; Watzlawick, Beavin, and Jackson 1967; Wiener 1961, cited in Waltz 1975, 78, n. 40; 1979, 40 n. ⋆.

[20] Waltz 1979, 116.

[21] This basic analytical distinction is regularly ignored. That A differs structurally from B by c does not make c the structure of A. For example, mammals can be demarcated from other vertebrates as milk-producing animals with hair, three bones in their middle ear, a neocortex, and a lower jaw made of a single bone. These features, however, do not define the structure of mammals. In fact, demarcation criteria often have little analytical utility. For example, the two principal groups of dinosaurs, *Saurischia* and *Ornithischia*, are distinguished by their hipbones. This, however, provides little, if any, insight into their structure or functioning.

instead on the *multiple forms and sources* of hierarchy and on *how hierarchies matter* – on, as the title of this book puts it, *hierarchies* (not hierarchy) in world politics.

In the spirit of friendly constructive criticism, however, I want to suggest that hierarchy, although certainly deserving a place in the analytic arsenal of IR, is too narrow a frame (and thus [to change metaphors again] too blunt a tool) to comprehend adequately the phenomena addressed in this book, which I think are better described as authority, (in)equality, and rule.

The Language of Hierarchy in IR

Hierarchy, like anarchy, only became a central focus of IR after the publication of *Theory of International Politics*. Table 11.1 summarizes uses of "hierarchy" and "hierarchical" in a broadly representative selection of seventy-nine books published between 1895 and 1978 and sixty-two books published between 1980 and 2015.[22] Before 1979, the median is 1 and the mean is 3.5. After 1979, the median jumps to 13 and the mean to 18.0. Waltz's impact is underscored by the fact that post-1979 works that use "anarchy" or "anarchic" ten or more times employ "hierarchy" or "hierarchical" three times more often than those that refer to anarchy less frequently.

Substantively, the most common pre-1979 uses, in addition to "social hierarchy," refer to medieval, feudal, or ecclesiastical hierarchies,[23] a hierarchy of values or national interests,[24] hierarchies in bureaucracies or of offices or officeholders,[25] and the diplomatic hierarchy.[26] I could not find a single passage that contrasts hierarchy with anarchy, uses hierarchy to define domestic politics,[27] or treats hierarchy as a structural ordering principle. Even Waltz in *Man, the State and War* (1959) uses "hierarchy"

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[22] The 1895–1978 sample includes a bit more than half the set used in Donnelly (2015a, appendices 1 and 2), which list all the books. The 1980–2015 selection includes the books listed in Donnelly (2015a, appendix 3) plus one more recent addition, Buzan and Lawson 2015.

[23] Hill 1911, 16; Potter 1922, 38, 47; Walsh 1922, 64; Barnes 1930, 15, 16; Mitrany 1933, 22; Sharp and Kirk 1940, 17, 100; Spykman 1942, 240; Wright 1964 [1942], 26; Herz 1959, 43; Wallerstein 2011 [1976], 58, 90, 156, 161, 214.

[24] Woolf 1916, 305; Hobson 1922, 54; Niebuhr 1932, 265; Lasswell 1935, 36; Sharp and Kirk 1940, 105; Wright 1964 [1942], 214, 245; Morgenthau 1951, 118; Aron 2003 [1966], 104, 236, 288, 323; Brodie 1973, 481; Gilpin 1975, 224; Bull 1977, 21, 74; Krasner 1978, 286, 341.

[25] Reinsch 1900, 53; Leacock 1906, 196, 197, 378; Wright 1964 [1942], 357; Organski 1958, 167; Haas 1964, 88, 105, 109, 110, 112, 534.

[26] Lawrence 1898 [1895], 263; Potter 1922, 73; Hodges 1931, 256, 533; Schuman 1933, 181, 182; Zimmern 1936, 481.

[27] Although Harold Laski does observe (1921, 80, 217, 240, 241) that contemporary governments are hierarchical, he does not see this as a defining feature of domestic

Table 11.1 *Uses of "Hierarchy" or "Hierarchical" in Selected Books*

	1895–1978 (*n* = 79)	1980–2015 (*n* = 62)	1895–1945 (*n* = 51)	1946–78 (*n* = 28)	Use of "anarchy" ≥ ten times (*n* = 48)	Use of "anarchy" < ten times (*n* = 14)
Median	1.0	13.0	1.0	2.0	16.0	5.0
Mean	3.5	18.0	1.5	7.2/3.7[a]	21.3	6.9

[a] The second figure (3.7) excludes one book (Kaplan 1957) that uses the terms more than 100 times (which amounts to almost half the total uses in the twenty-eight books).

only twice, in reference to the "hierarchy of human motivations" and the "hierarchy of the Chinese Communist Party."[28]

Furthermore, far from denying that hierarchy is characteristic of international relations, many prominent scholars note that international relations often is hierarchically stratified.[29] And they understand hierarchy as structural but not an ordering principle – an understanding to which, I suggest, IR ought to return.

Hierarchy: Structures of Stratification and Differentiation

The most relevant definition of "hierarchy" in the *Oxford English Dictionary* is "a body of persons or things ranked in grades, orders, or classes, one above another." Similarly, the *Merriam-Webster Dictionary* defines "hierarchy" as "a system in which people or things are placed in a series of levels with different importance or status." Zarakol, following this ordinary language sense, defines "hierarchies" as "structures of stratification and the differentiation of units."[30] Similarly, Waltz argues that in hierarchies "actors are formally differentiated according to the degrees of their authority, and their distinct functions are specified."[31]

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politics in general. Quite the contrary, he argues (1921, 241) for the possibility and desirability of "coordinate" national politics.

[28] Waltz 1959, 22, 112.

[29] Organski 1958, 90, 213, 349; Aron 2003 [1966], 69, 441, 652; Osgood and Tucker 1967, 48; Gilpin 1975, 24; Bull 1977, 31, 36. In addition, Kaplan 1957, 55–7, develops an ideal-type model of "the hierarchical international system."

[30] See Introduction. This formulation, in addition to being precise and firmly rooted in ordinary language, requires only a modest modification of the familiar Waltzian framework. "Ordering principle" effectively means stratification; the presence or absence of relations of super- and subordination. We simply call stratification "stratification" (rather than "hierarchy") – and then address not its presence or absence but the forms it takes; hierarchies (not hierarchy).

[31] Waltz 1979, 81, cf. 97, 114.

Hierarchy thus understood includes an important but limited range of authorities, (in)equalities, and forms of rule. Hierarchies are *systems* of stratification and differentiation (not ad hoc, isolated, or purely interactional relations). They involve a rank or level *structure* that creates a *body* of ranked persons or things. Hierarchies involve differentiated social positions; difference in *roles and practices* (not just capabilities, control, or outcomes). Ranking people or groups in grades one above another is closely associated with the differential allocation of functions, benefits, burdens, and behaviors among those so ranked. Only when we have a structured system of ranks, levels, or grades that differentiate actors as parts of a complex whole – rather than simply array them along a scale of comparison – do we have a hierarchy.

Stratification and Functional Differentiation in States Systems

All international systems are structurally hierarchical. This is obvious – although in contemporary IR typically elided – in imperial and hegemonic international systems. And it is equally true of states systems.

Contemporary IR typically takes systems of separate autonomous polities ("sovereign states") as its working model of anarchic (and not hierarchic) international orders. States systems, however, are *defined* largely by the formal hierarchical superiority of states over nonstate actors. Great power states systems have a third level of stratification, with great powers placed above lesser states. In Georg Schwarzenberger's memorable formulation, states are the aristocrats of states systems and great powers the oligarchs among those aristocrats.[32]

This pattern of stratification is associated with a particular differentiation of functions. It simply is not true that "the states that are the units of international-political systems are not formally differentiated by the functions they perform."[33] States are formally differentiated from nonstate actors, with particular (contingent) legal rights and responsibilities. Great powers, as Waltz puts it, "take on special responsibilities," exercise "managerial functions," and perform "managerial tasks."[34] And the international political system, which Waltz explicitly addresses, is a functional subsystem of a broader international system.

There may be good reasons, for particular analytical purposes, to bracket or ignore these elements of hierarchy. But IR's dominant account of structure – and for all the criticism of structural realism, it must be stressed that Waltz's account of structure remains widely adopted across

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[32] Schwarzenberger 1951, Chapters 6 and 7.   [33] Waltz 1979, 93.
[34] Waltz 1979, 198, 196; Chapter 9 is titled "The Management of International Affairs."

much of the discipline – instead denies the reality of hierarchy. It is therefore essential, for both analytic and normative reasons, that we emphasize that virtually all international systems, including systems of sovereign territorial states, are structurally hierarchical.

Extended Conceptions of Hierarchy

Despite the agreement of ordinary language, Waltz, and the explicit definition of this book, more expansive conceptions of hierarchy are regularly encountered both in the preceding chapters and in the broader IR literature on hierarchy.

Bilateral "Hierarchy"   For example, Alexander Cooley presents bilateral basing agreements as hierarchies (Chapter 7). Cooley does not, however, argue that these agreements either arise from or give rise to structures of stratification and differentiation – which are largely absent from his discussion. This understanding of hierarchy as a matter of asymmetric quasi-contractual bilateral relations draws on Lake's path-breaking and influential work over more than a decade that culminated in *Hierarchy in International Relations*.[35] Lake argues that "hierarchy is a dyadic relationship"[36] that is fruitfully conceptualized as a matter of quasi-voluntary (although rarely, if ever, entirely "free") choice and consent.

Vincent Pouliot's chapter (Chapter 5) effectively challenges the idea that hierarchies are intentional contractual constructs. Here I simply note that bilateral relations of super- and subordination are not, in themselves, necessarily hierarchical (except in Lake's stipulative sense of the term). (Hierarchies, as we have seen, are ranked *structures* that operate within a *body* of actors.) Furthermore, most structures of stratification and differentiation are not bilateral (and thus are perversely redefined by Lake's definition as *not* hierarchies). Given that Lake's stated aim is to "explicate"[37] hierarchy (not stipulate a new sense) and to provide a "general statement about the nature and implications of international hierarchy for international relations,"[38] this account is simply erroneous.

Lake's work also nicely illustrates the unfortunate tyranny of the Waltzian anarchy-hierarchy frame. The empirical chapters of *Hierarchy in International Relations* offer a rich account of practices of bilaterally divided sovereignty. But international hierarchy is not, as Lake would

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[35] The bookends of this body of work are Lake (1996) and Lake (2009), which collectively have about a thousand Google Scholar citations.
[36] Lake 2009, 45, 61, cf. xi, xii, 96, 179.   [37] Lake 2009, x, 16.   [38] *Ibid.*, x, cf. xi, 67.

have it, "simply the counterpart to variable sovereignty."[39] Both international hierarchy and practices of divided sovereignty are obscured rather than clarified when they are equated.

What, though, about *extending* the notion of hierarchy to include bilateral relations of super- and subordination? I can see no analytical benefit to such an extension.

For example, the story that Rebecca Adler-Nissen (Chapter 9) tells of Greco-German relations over Greek debt is much more one of competing equalities and inequalities and conflicting authorities than of a ranked structure of status or power. The frame of hierarchy seems to me not only forced and uninformative but misleading. Greek claims to equality, sovereign authority, and self-rule are central parts of the story. They have nothing to do, though, with a Greco-German hierarchy (and would be elided from the story were the frame of hierarchy to be consistently applied).

Or consider Michael Barnett's discussion of paternalism (Chapter 3), a particular type of (often bilateral) authority relation. It seems to me forced (at best) to impose the idea of a ranked structure of social positions on the competing claims to authority and the competing equalities and inequalities involved. Paternalism involves very particular types of authority, (in)equality, and rule that, it seems to me, are obscured rather than illuminated by the frame of hierarchy. At best, "hierarchy" adds nothing to our understanding of paternalism.

Hierarchy and Inequality   Adler-Nissen's and Barnett's chapters (Chapters 3 and 9) also seem to suggest that hierarchy refers to pretty much any type of authority, inequality, or rule. Cooley's argument (Chapter 7) that "the term 'military base' has itself become associated as a marker of differential status between the host and center, even as a site of actual foreign influence and bilateral hegemony,"[40] seems to squeeze even influence into "hierarchy." Similarly, Pouliot (Chapter 5) writes, "When it comes to definition, I cannot improve on Towns … 'Social hierarchy, which I use synonymously with social rank, concerns the ordering of actors as superior or inferior to one another in socially important respects.'"[41] Even more strikingly, Towns elsewhere notes that she uses "social hierarchy … synonymously with social inequality, stratification, or rank."[42] As we saw earlier, though, this is inconsistent with both ordinary language and the sense adopted in this book.

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[39] *Ibid.*, 51, cf. 7, 62.   [40] See Chapter 7.   [41] See Chapter 5, quoting Towns 2012, 188.
[42] Towns 2010, 44.

What, though, about stipulatively extending "hierarchy" to cover all inequalities? This, at best, abandons a perfectly good and useful term with a precise definition. At worst, it impedes our understanding. "Hierarchy" becomes a residual – whatever is not egalitarian – thus obscuring (and implicitly denigrating) the great variety of different types of authority, inequality, and rule in international relations (and social life more broadly).

What is analytically central is not *whether* practices or relations are egalitarian or inegalitarian, but *how* they are. Structures of stratification and differentiation are a distinctive and important type of authority that deserves to be studied separately from other types of inequality and authority – which are also obfuscated by lumping them under "hierarchy." For example, Sarah Stroup and Wendy Wong (Chapter 8) present an interesting and insightful account of the social position of "leading authority." This original formulation highlights the fact that the influence of international nongovernmental organizations (INGOs) rests heavily on moral authority, access to information, and their ability to mobilize capabilities and resources outside the control of states. But reframing "Leading Authority as Hierarchy," as the title of their chapter puts it, eliminates the precision of the notion and strips out all the interesting detail without enhancing our understanding of leading authorities.

To be fair, Adler-Nissen, Barnett, and Stroup and Wong, in order to further the collective enterprise of this book, have taken bodies of work conceived in different terms and "rethought" them in terms of hierarchy. This makes sense, though, only if we assume that all forms of authority and inequality are hierarchical – which is inconsistent with ordinary usage, the framing of this book, and analytical clarity and precision.

Types of Order

This section offers three largely separate mini-essays on hierarchy, authority, (in)equality, and rule in international relations, focusing on different ordering principles. Having established that hierarchies are pervasive in international relations, an obvious next step is to differentiate types of hierarchies. Zarakol in the Introduction focuses on the analytical distinction between agentic and structural approaches. Other typologies, though, are not only possible but necessary.

Hierarchy

In "simple" hierarchies, one axis of stratification operates over a single issue or domain. The formal hierarchy of offices in a bureaucracy is a good example.

Table 11.2 *A Typology of Hierarchical Stratification*

	Single axis	Multiple axes
Single issue	Simple	Contested
Multiple issues	Convergent	Tangled/Divergent

"Contested" hierarchies have multiple axes of stratification operating within a single issue or domain. Consider the often substantial divergence between an institution's formal hierarchy of authority and its informal hierarchy of influence.

In "convergent" hierarchies something like a single axis of stratification runs through a multifunctional group or organization. Separate hierarchies converge or coalesce to create *a* (singular) hierarchy that pervades the system. Modern states are a familiar political example.

"Tangled"[43] or "divergent" hierarchies have multiple patterns of stratification. For example, the American Congress, president, and federal courts comprise a structured body of authorities in which different branches are "on top" in different substantive domains.

Table 11.2 presents a simple typology of forms of hierarchical stratification, distinguishing first between hierarchies restricted to one issue, function, or domain and those that span multiple issues and then between hierarchies with one axis of stratification from those with multiple axes. The distinction between convergent and divergent hierarchies merits special note. There is nothing "natural" or even "normal" about multiple hierarchies converging, as in the case of nineteenth- and twentieth-century states operating in the modern states system. For example, medieval Europe was structured around crosscutting religious and secular hierarchies (as well as often tangled hierarchies within each domain). Early modern Europe moved only very slowly and irregularly toward a convergent hierarchy. And globalization is producing hierarchies that are increasingly tangled. *Divergent* hierarchy thus has been the norm in the Eurocentric world over most of the past millennium. It has, however, received almost no attention, under any name, in contemporary IR.

Centralization (Center-Periphery Differentiation)

"Hierarchy" typically draws attention to *higher* authority. Center-periphery differentiation, a fundamental structural dimension of both national and

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[43] I take the term from Hofstadter 1979, Chapter 20.

international social systems, draws our attention instead to *central* authority and rule – not as an alternative but in addition to stratification, further illustrating the diversity of forms of authority, (in)equality, and rule in international relations.

Centers and Peripheries   Social systems have centers, specially valued "places" around which social life is integrated, and peripheries, which are in varying ways and degrees removed from the center. As Edward Shils put it in his seminal 1961 essay, "Centre and Periphery,"

Society has a centre. There is a central zone in the structure of society . . . Membership in the society, in more than the ecological sense of being located in a bounded territory and of adapting to an environment affected or made up by other persons located in the same territory, is constituted by relationship to this central zone.[44]

A society may have more than one center. Centrality may be rooted in normative, institutional, coercive, or productive resources.[45] Relations between centers and peripheries may take many forms, with very different balances between center and periphery. The creation of centers and peripheries, however, is a characteristic structural feature of social systems – and, I will argue, creates distinctive types of international systems.

A Typology of Center-Periphery Differentiation   A simple typology of center-periphery differentiation begins by distinguishing systems with one center from those with more than one. Single-center systems can be further divided into those that more or less uniformly integrate their peripheries and those that differentially integrate peripheries. Polycentric systems can be divided into those in which the centers are fundamentally territorial and those with fundamentally functional centers.

I call single-center polities that integrate their peripheries relatively uniformly "states." "Empires" are single centers that integrate their peripheries differentially. As Maurice Duverger puts it, empires "unite several ethnicities, several communities, several cultures, previously separate, still distinct."[46] This corresponds to the ordinary language definition of "an extensive territory under the control of a supreme

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[44] Shils 1961, 117 = Shils 1975, 3. IR is much more familiar with the core-periphery frame of Immanuel Wallerstein (1974, 2011 [1976]), which I view as a particular perspective on center-periphery differentiation in the world economic system.

[45] Typically, though, there is a crucial normative element. Shils (1961, 117) goes so far as to argue that centrality is "a phenomenon of the realm of values and beliefs . . . [that] partakes of the nature of the sacred."

[46] Duverger 1980, 10 (my translation).

ruler ... often consisting of an aggregate of many separate states or territories."[47]

"States systems" are composed of multiple multifunctional territorial centers. IR's standard depiction of states systems as anarchic takes the perspective of the unit (there is no higher authority) and defines structure negatively (absence of a government). This may not be inaccurate. It is not, however, particularly insightful. Viewed from the perspective of the system, in terms of centers and peripheries, and stated positively, a states system is structured around multiple peer polities.[48] States systems have several centers (not none). Authority *in the international system* is not absent, *pace* Waltz,[49] but disaggregated spatially and concentrated in privileged peer polities ("states"). The hierarchies in states systems converge on multiple territorial centers that provide nearly all the governance (authoritative rule) in the system, both nationally and internationally.

"Heterarchies" are composed of multiple functionally differentiated centers. "Heterarchy"[50] combines the root *arkhē* ("rule") or *arkhon* ("ruler") with the prefix "hetero-," indicating difference, variety, or the other. Heterarchy involves "differential rule" or "multiple rule" – in contrast to the "higher" rule of hierarchy and the "no rule(r)" of anarchy. Hegemony, understood as a system in which hegemons control the foreign policy of lesser powers that remain formally independent and substantially in control of their domestic policy,[51] is a relatively simple type of hybrid heterarchic states system. Medieval Europe is a classic historical example.

States, empires, and heterarchies may, in principle, be either polities in a larger "international" system or "international systems" (or regional subsystems). Because there has never been a world state, three types of international systems defined by centralization are of special interest: states systems, imperial international systems, and heterarchic international systems.

In imperial systems, authority is concentrated in a single imperial center. In states systems, authority is spatially dispersed (and concentrated) in

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[47] *Oxford English Dictionary.*
[48] I take the notion of peer polities from Renfrew and Cherry 1986.
[49] "Nationally, relations of authority are established. Internationally, only relations of strength result." Waltz 1979, 112.
[50] The term was coined in neuroscience. See McCulloch 1945. It has been widely employed in cybernetics and computer science. "A program which has a structure in which there is no single, highest level, or monitor, is called a heterarchy." Hofstadter 1979, 134. In the social sciences, the concept has been employed fairly widely in Archaeology. Crumley (1987) and Ehrenreich, Crumley, and Levy (1995) are the seminal works – and in the study of business organization (e.g., Hedlund 1986, Stark 1999, Wall and van der Knaap 2012).
[51] E.g., Doyle 1986, 12, 40, 55–60; Watson 1992, 15–16, 27–8, 122–8.

separate centers. Authority in heterarchies – rather than being concentrated, relatively coherent, and monopolized by a single type of actor – is dispersed among functional centers that are often located in different places and operate at different scales, is often crosscutting, and usually is held by actors of different types. For example, in the early modern Holy Roman Empire, the emperor, electors, lesser princes (both secular and clerical), free cities, and imperial knights exercised different forms of authority at widely varying scales, resulting in most places being subject to multiple (often competing) authorities.[52]

Heterarchies underscore the fact that social functions and institutions are readily separable from one another and may operate at radically different scales. A multifunctional organization ruling more or less exclusively over a territory is only one possibility. Social or political units and territorial units can stand in very different kinds of relations – as globalization increasingly reminds us.

It is important to note that "centralization," as I understand it here, is *not* a matter of concentrating authority in a single place. That is indeed a standard ordinary language sense. By "centralization," however, I mean a social process that mutually co-constitutes centers and peripheries. Systems in which the center integrates peripheries uniformly are not "more centralized" than those in which the center integrates peripheries differentially. They are *differently* centralized. The same is true of systems with one center and with many. We are concerned here with the diverse ways in which centers and peripheries are constructed, defined, and related – because these differences generate different types of cooperation and conflict. Consider, for example, the differences between a rebellious province in an empire, a rival peer polity in a states system, and an encroaching or overreaching authority in a heterarchy or between self-help balancing in a states system, claims of authority in a heterarchy, and appeals to justice or privilege in an empire.

Stratification and Centralization Stratification differentiates social positions and actors as higher and lower. Centralization differentiates them as central and peripheral. Centrality and stratification do tend not only to overlap but to reinforce one another. Rarely, however, do they map perfectly onto one another. Although we can often translate center and periphery into top and bottom, something usually is lost in the translation. And the reverse translation regularly fails. (Many tops are not centers.)

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[52] For an overview of the political structure of the early modern Empire, see Wilson 2011, Chapter 3.

Not all authority is best understood as higher authority. Not all rule is best understood as rule from above. The "central government" may be a higher authority, a central authority, or (most often) some combination of both. For example, complaints about "Washington" in the United States can be understood as expressing a belief that the federal government has become more a higher power than a central authority.

Centers center (and are central). They are cores, places, values, institutions, and practices around which societies are organized. Creating centers and peripheries in many ways constitutes a society or polity.

Centers attract (and are attractive), exerting a "gravitational" pull on their peripheries. Centers also radiate influence. This mix of attractive and radiating power exercised by central authorities differs fundamentally from the penetrating power of a higher authority reaching down into lower levels.

Networks provide a striking example. Nodes with a very high relative number of connections – centers – have special influence, sometimes even dominance. Central nodes, though, need not be, and often are not, "higher than" other nodes. They are central.

Or consider the standard representation of an empire as a rimless wheel (or a hub and spokes system).[53] The focus here is on centrality (rather than stratification).

Consider also Shmuel Eisenstadt's distinction between conquest empires (e.g., the empires of Alexander the Great, Charlemagne, and Genghis Khan) and bureaucratic empires (e.g., China, Rome, Sassanid Persia, Moghul South Asia, and the Ottoman Caliphate).[54] The peripheries of conquest empires remain more members of a collection than parts of a whole; more an aggregation of occupied territories and protectorates than parts of an integrated polity. We might thus say that in conquest empires the dominant polity or elite has not established itself as a true center. The conquerors sit, more or less heavily, on top of the conquered. The ruled remain conquered (by a higher power) rather than peripheralized (by a central power). Thus understood, the transformation of superiority to centrality marks the change from conquest to bureaucratic empire. (This framing, I think, could be usefully employed to extend Andrew Phillips's account (Chapter 2) of British and Mongol rule.)

Layering and Ranking

A similar set of distinctions arises from modeling international systems in terms of geographically more encompassing layers. In a very simple

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[53] This representation goes back at least to Galtung 1971.   [54] Eisenstadt 1993 [1963].

representation, imagine three layers: the system, "regions," and localities. Relations among these layers may vary considerably.

States systems are focused on "regions" (in the form of states). In the modern international system, for example, states were the principal providers of both national governance (largely monopolizing jurisdiction and control over "their" localities) and international governance (through self-help and bilateral and multilateral agreements and institutions). But this pattern of strong intermediate-level "units" (states) dominating their localities and operating within a thin system is not universal or even normal.

Imperial international systems, for example, are focused on the system level. For example, "regions" in the Mediterranean world at the height of the *Pax Romana* were more subordinate provinces than autonomous polities ("states"). And most localities had little contact with the imperial center. The structure of Europe at the turn of the first millennium CE, after the collapse of the Carolingian Empire and the shocks of the Magyar and Viking invasions, was still different. Politics came to be focused on localities (small lordships or seigneuries dominated by castellans and small bands of armed men). "Regional" authorities (kings, dukes, and counts) had considerable status but little power. And there was only a thin culturally integrating religious overlay at the system level.

More complicated level structures are also possible. For example, globalization might be thought of has having created a five-level structure, with additional subnational and supranational levels, in which the levels stand in varying relations depending on place and issue area. And certain scenarios of globalization imagine a radically heterarchic system in which distinctions between levels are obscure and of little analytical interest.

The key point, again, is the variety of forms of structured (in)equality, authority, and rule in international relations. We should not assume that what is most important can always be found "on top" or can be adequately appreciated through the lens of higher authority.

Hierarchy (and Equality) as Ontology

My final excursus begins by returning to the original sense of "hierarchy." Although this will initially take us far beyond IR, it will lead us, I believe, to a deeper appreciation of the structures of status and power that order hierarchies.

Ontological Hierarchy in the West

Hierarchy was initially a religious notion, as its etymology suggests: *arkhē*, "rule or power," of a *hierarkhēs* (*hieros* ["sacred"] *arkhēs* ["ruler"]),

a "hierarch"; "one who has rule or authority in holy things; an ecclesiastical ruler or potentate; a chief priest."[55] Consider the first two definitions in the *Oxford English Dictionary* (which, as the title of earlier editions put it, is organized "on historical principles"). "1. a. Each of the three divisions of angels, every one comprising three orders, in the system of Dionysius the Areopagite … Also, the collective body of angels, the angelic host. b. *transf.* of other beings … 2. a. Rule or dominion in holy things; priestly rule or government; a system of ecclesiastical rule."

The term was coined by (psuedo-)Dionysius (Denys the Areopagite),[56] a late fifth- or early sixth-century Syriac Greek neo-Platonist author who presented himself as the Athenian convert of St. Paul. For roughly a millennium, Dionysius provided the authoritative account of hierarchy in the Western Christian world.[57] Not coincidentally, two of Dionysius' major treatises, *On the Heavenly Hierarchy* and *On the Ecclesiastical Hierarchy*,[58] correspond to the two initial definitions of hierarchy.

According to Dionysius, God, "having fixed all the essences of things being, brought them into being."[59] And he arrayed them hierarchically, hierarchy being "a sacred order and science and operation, assimilated, as far as attainable, to the likeness of God."[60] "Each rank of the Hierarchical Order is led, in its own degree, to the Divine co-operation, by performing, through grace and God-given power, those things" appropriate to its nature.[61] Just as angels are above men, so on this Earth men, as rational beings, are placed at the top, closer to God than irrational sentient beings (who are in turn higher than "things which merely exist").[62]

The political implications of this ontology are clear. "The inferior Ranks cannot cross to the superior functions."[63] As St. Boniface (ca. 675–754) put it, there are "several dignities, each having its own function: there is an order of commanders and an order of subjects, an order of the wealthy and an order of the poor, an order of the old and an order of the

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[55] *Oxford English Dictionary*.
[56] "By creating the abstract noun *hierarchy* from the cultic title *hierarch*, Dionysius invented a word for a structure or system for 'sourcing' or channeling the sacred, and linked it all inextricably to the single leader." Rorem 1993, 19, 21. The term then was directly transliterated into Latin by Johns Scotus Eriugena in his influential ninth-century translation and commentary (in contrast to Dionysius' first Latin translator, Abbot Hilduin of Saint Denis, who rendered it as *sacros principatus*, sacred rule, principle, or origin). Rorem 2005, 59.
[57] Rorem (1993) provides a commentary on Dionysius' texts and their influence – which was immense. For example, Giovanni Pico della Mirandola (1463–1494), one of the leading humanist philosophers of the Italian Renaissance, cites Dionysius more than thirty times in the three essays collected in Pico della Mirandola 1998.
[58] These works are available online at www.ccel.org/ccel/dionysius/works.html.
[59] *On the Heavenly Hierarchy* (cited here as HH), 4.1.   [60] HH 3.1.   [61] HH 3.3.
[62] HH 4.2.   [63] *On the Ecclesiastical Hierarchy*, 5.7, cf. HH 3.2.

young . . . each with its own path to follow, as in the body each part has its own function."[64] This vision came to be expressed in the idea of a society composed of three orders – those who prayed, those who fought, and those who worked the land – ruled by the priests and princes. As Georges Duby puts it in his classic study, *The Three Orders*:

One part of society was worthy to rule over the remainder. Because they were morally of lesser value, "those behind" were subordinated to "those in front" (*prelati*) "who speak" (*predicators*), "who govern" (*rectores*), who are "powerful" (*potentes*) . . . All hierarchy originated in the unequal distribution of good and evil, of flesh and spirit, of the heavenly and the terrestrial. As men were by nature differently inclined to sin, it was proper for the least culpable to assume responsibility, with care, affection, and firmness, for the leadership of the flock.[65]

All of reality is arranged in an elaborate level structure based on closeness to God. Proper social and political order is a matter of correspondence to the divinely ordained order of creation. In slightly broader terms, all of creation is ordered in a great chain of being – a hierarchical ontological vision that dominated Western philosophy into the eighteenth century.[66]

Ontological Hierarchy in India

Louis Dumont develops a strikingly similar account of the traditional Indian caste system – a system of ranked hereditary groups characterized by separation in marriage and contact and an interdependent division of labor[67] – which he presents as a model of hierarchical thinking. For Dumont, hierarchy is defined by a (typically religious) "principle by which the elements of a whole are ranked in relation to the whole."[68] In traditional India, this principle was "the opposition of the pure and the impure,"[69] which produced a linear order of castes based on distance from *Brahman* (reality/truth/godhead, the universal principle, and cause of all that is).

The resulting religious "status" hierarchy was classically sketched in the Vedic literature in the theory of the *varnas* (colors, classes, characters, or natures); orders or estates ranked according to function.[70] At the top were *Brahmins*, priests, who were most pure and who alone could perform sacrifices. *Kshatriyas*, kings and lesser rulers, provided public order. *Vaishyas* worked the land. *Shudras* performed servile tasks for the

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[64] Quoted in Duby 1980 [1978], 74–5.   [65] *Ibid.*, 67.
[66] The classic account is Lovejoy 1936.
[67] Dumont 1980, 21, 30, 43, and, at much greater length, Chapters 3–6, building on the classic definition of Bouglé 1971 [1908].
[68] Dumont 1980, 66.   [69] *Ibid.*, 33, 43, 59 and, more generally, Chapter 2.
[70] *Ibid.*, Chapter 3.

three higher orders. And outside of (and below) this structure were "untouchables."

Traditional Indian society, however, also had a *power* "hierarchy."[71] As Dumont puts it, "Status ranking is not everything. It leaves out power and its distribution"[72]

Dumont insists, however, that in traditional India, at least in principle, "Status and power, and consequently spiritual authority and temporal authority, [we]re absolutely distinguished,"[73] and power was "absolutely inferior to status."[74] Unlike in the West (and most other places), "in India there has never been spiritual *power*, i.e., a supreme spiritual authority, which was at the same time a temporal power. The supremacy of the spiritual was never expressed politically."[75]

For our purposes here, the question of whether Dumont's account is overdrawn and overly intellectual is of largely academic interest. He does, however, explicitly raise three issues of broad relevance that are also implicitly raised by Dionysius and the theory of the three orders: the systemic totality of hierarchies, the place of status and power, and the contrast between hierarchical and egalitarian ontologies and social theories.

Hierarchies as Structured Systems

Dumont sees hierarchies as complex relational wholes that are characterized by both an encompassing unity and the differentiation of levels (distinguished by their relation to the organizing principle).[76] "The 'elements'" of the system are "the product of the network of relations" – so much so that the network of relations *is* the system; "a system of relations, in short, not a system of elements."[77]

To take an IR example, consider the modern system of sovereign states. Preexisting states did not confront each other in anything even vaguely resembling a state of nature and then, in order to overcome the incommodities of their situation, mutually recognize one another's sovereign authority. Rather, over several centuries, a great variety of material, institutional, and normative forces interacted to produce states, nonstate actors, diplomacy, international law, sovereign rights and prerogatives,

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[71] Dumont reserves the term "hierarchy" for structures of religious/status ranking. "Hierarchy, in the sense that we are using the word here, and in accord with its etymology, never attaches itself to power as such, but always to religious functions." Dumont 1980, 260. I use "hierarchy" in the ordinary-language English sense to refer also to systems of political/power ranking.
[72] *Ibid.*, 77, cf. 66.   [73] *Ibid.*, 72, cf. 71.   [74] *Ibid.*, 74.   [75] *Ibid.*, 72.   [76] *Ibid.*, 239.
[77] *Ibid.*, 40.

a new kind of *respublica christiana*, the idea and practice of a European balance of power, and a variety of other institutions and practices that, taken together, at some point "made" (in the sense of resulted in) the modern states system. And these internal generative relations and logics continued to evolve in response to internal forces and external shocks, continuously reshaping states and the states system.

This appreciation of hierarchies as real relational structures adds a philosophical argument to the semantic and pragmatic arguments advanced above against extending "hierarchy" to encompass forms of authority, (in)equality, and rule not associated with structures of stratification and differentiation. It also suggests a certain skepticism toward using "hierarchy" to refer to "structures" that are largely constructs of external observers (rather than immanent in the practices of social actors).

For example, Lake claims that "by defining appropriate behavior, social norms create hierarchies of 'good' actors that substantially comply . . . and 'bad' actors that routinely violate or even deny the existence of the community standard."[78] In fact, though, there is nothing inevitable or even normal about using compliance to construct a ranked ordering of those subject to a norm. External analysts are, for their own purposes, free to make up or imagine such "hierarchies." Positive and negative sanctions, however, need not (and usually do not) create a structure of social positions ranked in grades one above another. Even when good compliance systematically generates high esteem or status and poor compliance produces low status or esteem, the resulting hierarchy is a contingent empirical result, not an inevitable consequence of the existence of a norm.

Consider Stroup and Wong's identification of leading authorities among INGOs (Chapter 8). They do this driven by a combination of substantive insights and data constraints. It seems to me, though, not only fair but necessary to ask whether the "hierarchy" of INGOs that they have identified is internal to the practice of these organizations or an external construct (a sort of rationalist "as if" model).

The ontology of hierarchies matters – even if we no longer see social hierarchies as instantiations of the hierarchical structure of reality. For example, Laura Sjoberg argues (Chapter 4) that gender hierarchies, gendered hierarchies, and gendered hierarchy *are* part of the structure of our social world. "The central contention of this chapter is that gender is implicated in and implicates all hierarchies in global politics"[79] – to which I would add "really," in the sense that all these types of hierarchies

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[78] See Chapter 1. Towns similarly argues that "norms rank and set up relations of inequality" and has a subsection titled "Norms/Hierarchies." Towns 2010, 1, 44.
[79] See Chapter 4.

are part of the practices and meanings of real social actors. This also, it seems to me, underlies Pouliot's depiction of hierarchies as "heavy" (Chapter 5).

Status and Force

The distinctions between *Brahmins* and *Kshatriyas*, the first and second estates, and the lords spiritual and temporal – between spiritual and secular authority – raise the fundamental issue of the relation between "status" and "power" (or "authority" and "force") in the creation, maintenance, reproduction, and operation of hierarchies (and other forms of authority, (in) equality, and rule). Status (authority) is central to the effective operation of hierarchies. The initial cause of any particular hierarchy may (and often does) lie in force. But rule by force, which is extremely clumsy and expensive, is unlikely to persist unless it becomes institutionalized. (Conversely, the growing use of force by an autocratic ruler is the clearest sign that she is losing her grip on power; her status as a ruler.)

Hierarchies – as opposed to, for example, mere domination – arise from the transformation of superior strength (force, material capabilities) into superior status. Hierarchical authority or rule need not be legitimate in a substantive or even merely procedural sense of that term. It does, however, rest *in part* on a certain kind of legitimation, rooted in the "acknowledgment" by the subordinated of their inferior status.

Lake's language of consent and contract (Chapter 1) goes too far – or, rather, mistakes one source or type of hierarchy for the general form.[80] But so does Pouliot's suggestion (Chapter 5) that hierarchies are "heavy." It oddly suggests the individualist perspective of an abstract actor who is considered, or imagines herself, somehow outside the practice of hierarchy. And it ignores the fact that many hierarchies are experienced as "appropriate" or even "legitimate" rather than (or in addition to) "heavy." In fact, in many hierarchies of elected office, merit, or achievement, complaints of "heaviness" tend to be disparaged – "rightly" (when judged from within the practice).

Those enmeshed in hierarchal practices – especially those who have been made who they are *through* hierarchical practices – typically "play the game" from the positions they have. They practice their status. And these status-based practices make up – in an important sense *are* – hierarchies.

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[80] Even within the social contract tradition, consent is understood primarily as tacit (Locke is the clearest example) or hypothetical (as in Kant's and Rawls' accounts of what a rational being properly situated would consent to). For a classic discussion of the problematic nature of the relationship between obligation and consent, see Pitkin 1965, 1966.

None of this is to deny that force is *also* part of the practice of hierarchies. Nor is it to deny that the relative mix of force and status is important to how particular hierarchies function. Hierarchies, however, are usually – I am inclined to say inescapably – matters of superior and inferior status. And status inequalities are an extremely important type of inequality, with a very particular character. We thus have one more reason to keep to the ordinary-language sense of hierarchy (rather than conflate hierarchy and inequality).

Hierarchy in an Egalitarian World

Nonetheless, to most modern readers there *is* something inherently suspect – "heavy" – about hierarchy. "We" live in an ontologically egalitarian world. Even if we are increasingly skeptical of "universal reason," we remain deeply committed to "universal human rights" and the equal and inherent worth and dignity of the human person. What jumps out at us about most social hierarchies is their inequality. And hierarchical inequalities, because they are systematic and structural, strike us as particularly problematic.

The moral core of modernity is egalitarianism. (In this reading, Burke is the last great political theorist of a hierarchical universe.) Since the French Revolution, hierarchy has been not merely on the defensive but on the retreat. Hierarchies based on religion, birth, wealth, and even race and gender have, at least in theory and in polite company, been banished. Others (e.g., disability, age, and gender identity or orientation) are under assault. I think that it is even fair to say that the fundamental justification for modernity – which, for its innumerable sins and shortcomings, is much in need of justification – is its success in suppressing ascriptive hierarchies. (Much of the implicit normative force of Sjoberg's chapter [Chapter 4] derives from her argument that these very basic ascriptive hierarchies have *not* in fact been eliminated.)

The contrast to hierarchical ontologies, in other words, helps us to see ourselves better; to appreciate as a distinctive historical achievement the egalitarianism that has become part of our nature. Even the idea of human nature as an attribute of all members of *Homo sapiens*, as opposed to an elite of "truly human" beings, is a modern idea.[81]

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[81] See Donnelly (2015b), where I distinguish between taxonomic and normative humanity, which I argue have, at best, only been seen as largely overlapping sets since around 1960, when a widespread normative commitment to decolonization became solidified. As Dumont (1980, 16) puts it, summarizing Tocqueville, "where inequality reigns, there are as many distinct humanities as there are social categories" – as classical India illustrates in a particularly striking form.

It also, though, highlights the way our deep discomfort with inequality makes it difficult for us to understand or appreciate hierarchy. Dumont argues that "our contemporaries, who value equality, find scarcely anything to contrast it with except inequality."[82] The fact of inequality overwhelms an appreciation of its different forms. As Dumont puts it, "make distinction illegitimate, and you get discrimination."[83] Hierarchy thus becomes reduced to an imposition of force – or, conversely, we want to model "acceptable" (or at least tolerable) hierarchies as a matter of consent.

Traditional hierarchies, in sharp contrast, were rooted in differences of being. I certainly do not want to defend such hierarchies. They do, however, underline the vital point that in many (most?) hierarchies power is subordinated to status. And even today, the relative mix of power and status *and the grounds for the attribution of status* are vital considerations in both characterizing and evaluating hierarchies.

Beyond Hierarchies in World Politics

We thus return to the central theme of this chapter and, I think, of this book as a whole, namely, the need, for both analytic and evaluative purposes, to investigate, directly and systematically, the varied forms of authority, (in)equality, and rule that are central to international relations, anywhere and in any era. IR's Waltzian legacy makes hierarchy, for us today, an "obvious" entry point. I have argued, though, that authority, (in)equality, and rule cannot be adequately encompassed within the frame of hierarchy or even hierarchies. I thus read *Hierarchies in World Politics* as a call for IR to give central and sustained attention to practices and systems of international rule arising from complex interactions of differences in capabilities and authority that both are rooted in and give rise to a great variety of equalities and inequalities among international actors.

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[82] Dumont 1980, 19.   [83] *Ibid.*, 262.