

Small States and IR Theory

Steve L. Monroe

YSS4274

How do small states behave in the international arena? What makes their behaviour distinct from larger states?

Seminar Objectives: To Discuss

- IR Theory and Small States
- Performance: The Melian Dialogue

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- IR Theory and Small States (**Eyal; Jesse and Dreyer; Prof. Monroe**)
- Performance: The Melian Dialogue (**Thucydides**)

Outline of Seminar

- 1 Announcements
- 2 Small States and IR Theory
- 3 Performance: The Melian Dialogue
- 4 Next Seminar: To Dos

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Will try to get to them to you by Thursday.

Mid-Semester Feedback: Writing Feedback

- Students can send me **one** rough draft of their research paper by Tuesday, April 23rd

Syllabus Update: (Version 4)

- Chapter 3, Long: Moved to March 4th

Research Paper: Due April 30th

- Independent academic research about one (or many) small states
- Can use secondary sources
- Word Count: 6000
- Students are encouraged to discuss their paper with Prof. Monroe
- We will discuss more on Thursday

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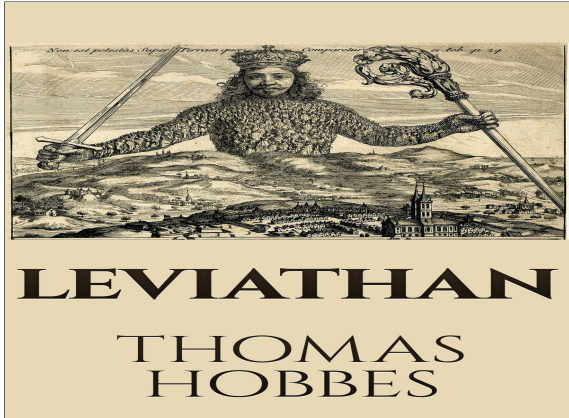
IR Theory (Jesse and Dreyer)

- Realism
- Liberalism / Domestic
- Social Constructivist

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- **Realism**
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Realism (Jesse and Dreyer, Chapter 2)



Source: Kobo

How Realists View IR

Life is “solitary, poor, nasty, brutish, and short.” - Hobbes

How Realists View IR

- We live in an anarchic, “self-help” international system (you’re on your own, kid)
- State survival and security are central
- Power → Security
- State is central and unitary
- Security is zero-sum (Security Dilemma)

What does this mean for small states?

How Realists View IR

“because of their inferior set of capabilities to produce security solely through internal measures, small states are stuck in a dilemma by which they cannot reasonably hope to increase their security solely through their own actions (Jesse and Dreyer, pg. 21).”

How do small states respond?

Bandwagon



Source: Spellquiz

Balance



Source: MiRXES

What drives small states' behaviour?

How Realists View IR

- What drives small states' behavior? International Structure (Jesse and Dreyer, pg.50)
 - ▶ Unipolar
 - ▶ Bipolar
 - ▶ Multipolar

What are some limitations to realism?

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IR Theory (Jesse and Dreyer)

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- **Liberalism / Domestic**
- Social Constructivist

How Liberals View IR (Jesse and Dreyer, Chapter 3)

- Security is not zero sum
- International cooperation can solve the security dilemma
- International organisations and laws matter for small states
- State is not central or unitary
- Domestic politics matter

What drives small states' behaviour?

How Liberals View IR

- Domestic politics
 - ▶ Regime type, ruling coalitions, special interest groups, civil society
- International Organizations
 - ▶ Can amplify small states' voice
 - ▶ Small states have resource constraints

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How Social Constructivists View IR (Jesse and Dreyer, Chapter 3)

- Norms and identity shape and are shaped by international interactions
- Process > Power
- Norms, precedents, historical practices matter

Tuvalu at COP 27



Tuvalu Foreign Minister, Simon Kofe

▶ Link

Source: Reuters

(Week 8, Sem 1)

Appendix

What drives small states' behaviour?

How Social Constructivists View IR (Jesse and Dreyer, Chapter 3)

- Norms, precedents, historical practices, identity
 - ▶ Switzerland's insistence on neutrality
 - ▶ Iceland's struggle for independence shapes relations with Norway and Denmark

IR Theory (Jesse and Dreyer)

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IR Theory: Check In

Global Affairs

Lithuania v China - a David and Goliath battle over weaponisation of trade

The sheer force of China's response against the tiny European country raises the stakes for the EU as it contemplates a proposed 'sanctions hammer' measure against economic coercion



Jonathan Eyal
Global Affairs Correspondent

IR Theory: Check In

- Skim Eyal Article
- Does Lithuania's feud with China support 1) realism, 2) liberalism / domestic, 3) social constructivist IR Theory?

IR Theory: Check In

- Self-Reflection (3 minutes)
- Class discussion (3 minutes)

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The Melian Dialogue



Source: Dhaka Courier

(Week 8, Sem 1)

Appendix

- Athens: Brian, Regine, Oshea, Yetz Sin, Mpiwa
- Melias: Yara, Ryan, Dominic, Jireh, Celine,

Task

- Get in your teams
- 1) Read assigned text (in yellow, in canvas)
- 2) Re-read assigned text in understandable English
- 3) Interpret text. How does it speak to IR theory?

Task

- Rehearsal (10 minutes)
- Performance (15 minutes)

The Melian Dialogue



Source: Dhaka Courier

(Week 8, Sem 1)

Appendix

“Don’t quote laws to those of us who use swords.” - Roman General Pompey

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Next Seminar (Mar. 14)

- Small States in International Relations (Part 2)
 - ▶ Reading Presentation: Thucydides or Kissinger?
- Long, Chapter 4
- We will go over the research paper

To Think About

How do small states gain influence in an international order dominated by larger states?

Have a great week!