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Westphalian and Classical Readings

The classical readings of international relations were established by authors like Hume, Thucydides, Hobbes, Rousseau, Kissinger, Kegley and Raymond, Lamy and Masker. These authors provided a structure for managing the issues of political power and the condition of nature. By suggesting solutions based on social contracts, sovereign powers, and leaders. But we also have to mention the Westphalian international order, characterized by state sovereignty and the balance of power, which made attempts to fix and help these issues. However, as the contemporary global dynamics change and evolve into greater international challenges, becoming more dependent on one another, and ethical considerations. There is a dire need to change and adapt to these classical and Westphalian structures, to deal with the changing complex issues of modern international politics and problems. But with all of these authors during this time, they varied in opinions on how they should handle issues and who was responsible.

The classical authors of this time period voiced many different opinions about how to deal with the problems of things like power politics, the state of nature, and they also debated who should be in charge of maintaining international stability and responsibilities. These views varied from Rousseau's proposal of a social contract, but Thucydides' focused on being unable to avoid the nature of conflict, and Hobbes' opinion on the chaotic condition of nature just as a few examples. Following the development and creation of the Westphalian international system, which expressed the theories of the sovereignty of states and the balance of power. These different points of view maintained in shaping the developing conversations on international relations, helping to create an in-depth and complex understanding of how to handle complicated international politics.

Before going into each author, I think it's important to talk about Westphalian and why it's so important. Two wars were happening, one is called the Thirty Years' War, which was a war in the Roman Empire between Catholics and Protestants. Then the other war was known as the Eighty Years' War, and this was the Dutch wanting to gain independence from Spain. But was primarily for the war in the Roman Empire. The Peace Westphalian was multiple treaties in 1648. The Peace Westphalian is arguably known for being the stepping stones of international relations and a turning point of the modern state system. State sovereignty, territorial integrity, and the idea that other nations should not interfere in a sovereign state's internal affairs are among the fundamental tenets of the Westphalian system. These systems recognized each of the states' sovereignty, including their ability to manage their affairs independently without external powers' interference. Even with all of the changes that were made and all of the difficult challenges, this is still very important to how the dynamics were made in the international political context and setting.

Like how politics are today, it is viewed in many different ways and outcomes, Westphalian sovereignty was no less the same. It was talked about differently by different classical authors. For example, Hume denied Thucydides saying that no one in the world was cursed to war because of the choices of leadership. "Above all, let us not conclude, with Hobbes, that because man has no idea of goodness, he must be naturally wicked; that he is vicious

because he does not know virtue; that he always refuses to do his fellow creatures services which he does not think they have a right to demand; or that by virtue of the right he truly claims to everything he needs, he foolishly imagines himself the sole proprietor of the whole universe” (Rousseau 5). But Rousseau agrees with Hobbes about rights and security. Yet Rousseau doesn’t agree with Hobbes about “seeing no solution” and that we have to choose between freedom or security. But Rousseau believes there could be both, he asks “Why aren’t we more evil, why is human restraint so common?” (Module 1.4.2).

In Rousseau's reading “*Discourse on the Origin and Basis of Inequality Among Men*” in 1754, he goes in-depth on social inequality and questions natural law's reasons for it. Based on Rousseau, society at the time resulted in inequality instead of being a natural and normal condition. He presents the concept of the "State of Nature," meaning that people lived in a more equal and peaceful way in the early times of mankind. He talks about how inequality grew as people began to create society and claim private property. He believes that human nature is typically very peaceful and that conflict can be avoidable but is also very possible to happen.

In Rousseau’s readings, the significant problems he shared were equality and having a structural problem. He believes that human nature is typically very peaceful and that conflict can be avoidable but is also possible. In a few of the classical readings, private properties became a big issue and were mentioned a lot. In his reading, he says that private property is one of the significant causes of inequality. Along with that it is also a cause of conflict. This is because the property needs security and protection. He talks about how the State should be made responsible for managing equality. But I think one of the ways he would limit the states' power is to have a social contract. His work talks about and in a way that promotes the reconsideration of social structures and systems, along with a more equal understanding of human nature and challenges regarding inequality and how it is almost, if not unavoidable. Rousseau believes that as much as the State will help, it is also a big problem and needs no interference.

On the contrary, David Hume in his reading “*On the Balance of Power*” in 1752 talks about almost exactly what the title says. He talked about the balance of powers in international relations and talked about how one state shouldn’t become more dominant than another. Unlike many, Hume said that human nature and structural forces didn’t dominate international relations. “The arms of the state must therefore be trusted to mercenary strangers, without zeal, without attachment, without honour, ready on every occasion to turn them against the prince, and join each desperate malcontent who offers pay and plunder. This is the necessary progress of human affairs; thus human nature checks itself in its airy elevations, thus ambition blindly labours for the destruction of the conqueror, of his family, and of everything near and dear to him” (Hume 4). He believes the biggest thing for the countries/nations is for them to stay stable. People, mainly the leaders, have to make choices and he thinks it's best to try and have no war because war is getting out of control. Instead, try to work and do more together than argue with each other. He would encourage us to try to work more towards becoming friends than enemies and not let one nation dominate more than others.

Like most classical authors, Kissinger talks about the balance of power in his reading “. This is entirely understandable because how can you work together if someone has more say than you do on a subject? So obviously, he talks about world order which makes rules, organizes, and of course helps balance power. It helps ensure everything stays stable and calm as much as possible, trying to prevent conflicts with stuff like treaties. I think this is very important because it helps to make sure things are equal, fair, peaceful, and tries to have all countries working together.

A way that the Treaties of Westphalia tried to solve these problems was the sovereign state and the balance of power. I think that state sovereignty and the balance of power in the treaties respond the most to Rousseau's issues with the state. On how they need their power and responsibilities reworked and changed. One of the current remaining issues mentioned by Rousseau is social inequality. For Hume, I think it would be what they did was more than most of the time a lot of countries are allied and help each other out.

A big example is The North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO) made years later in 1949. NATO has 31 countries allied with each other, all have a collective agreement to help each other out, military, and that one gets attacked all get attacked as a few examples. As stated in the famous Article 5, when Poland got hit during the Ukrainian war in November 2022 right off the border of Ukraine. So they all had a meeting to investigate what happened and if they would all be involved. Also, Hume says, that all countries that have a seat, they all have balanced power and say.

As I mentioned, Rousseau disagreed with Hobbes about "seeing no solution" and that we must choose between freedom or security. But he did agree with him about security and rights. "*Leviathan*" by Hobbes from 1651 talks about the social contract theory. A social contract is an agreement to follow basic rules and to make everything safe in exchange, along with making sure everything is organized and kept safe. This is to try and make sure there are no conflicts and try and make things peaceful as much as possible. But to do so, the leaders would have to come together and figure out the rules to be set in place and how to organize them. But Hobbes also did think Monarchy was the choice, and that going to be an "absolute ruler" and to trust the ruler. "That men see not the reason to be alike in a Monarchy, and in a Popular Government, proceedeth from the ambition of some, that are Linder so the government of an Assembly, whereof they may hope so patriciate, than of Monarchy, which they despair to enjoy" (Hobbes 123). Though Hobbes may think Monarchy is the answer, he still recognizes that people have different opinions and may prefer a popular government where they get to choose.

One way Westphalian helped solve Hobbes' problems was by trying to maintain and prevent as much conflict as possible. And very similar to Hume, Hobbes thought there needed to be a balance of power. With Westphalian, they made it so no nation had more power or authority than the other, as I mentioned earlier. But to try and prevent as much conflict as possible, the states agreed to respect each other's borders and lands. Which, for the most part, helped Europe stay more peaceful and organized.

Thucydides had two readings, "*The State of Greece*" and "*The Melian Dialogue*". The state of Greece goes over exactly what it sounds like, the state of Greece's political situation. Along with the Peloponnesian War and its military problems. Greece at the time had a few problems with power, and balancing the power within the country. The Melian dialogue was Athenians and Melians talking back and forth during the war. Thucydides said the big problem is that everything is so out of control, and a systemic structure like Rousseau. A systemic structure is a way for things to be organized in a system of how things are going to be run and operate. "His answer is the logic of the situation made it impossible for Athens to do otherwise. In contemporary language, these were *structural forces*, beyond the control of any state" (Module 1.7.2). The Treaties of Westphalia tried to help Thucydides' problems through diplomatic relations and equals. This was talks between other states, for example, addressing problems and not having to rely on fighting.

Kegley and Raymond wrote "*Building World Order in the New Millennium*", talking about the changing of the world and its dynamics changing into a new era. Talking about human

nature in a way about how it was trying to make the world for others to live in. Along with how big of an impact it was for the world to drastically change. Of course, trying to balance power, and its effects. For example, “All states were encouraged to unite against any aggressor state and France was empowered with the capability to perform the role of “balancer” –to intervene unilaterally or with allies to prevent the domination of Europe by a single power” (Kegley and Raymond 133). Since the Peace Treaties of Westphalia, international relations have gone through very big and significant changes and transformations. It continues to evolve today while also taking many of the classical authors into consideration. Since this treaty and throughout the years, empires have fallen and now we have independent countries. Also known as states.

Lamy and Masker are very similar to Kegley and Raymond for the sheer fact of it being written years in the future from when Westphalia and classical writing took place. But in my opinion, it seems that they think that our leaders now are one of the main problems. Saying how no one wants to step forward and be the leader to help in the world's more recent global issues. Saying that the US has taken a step back for the last few years of this being written. Since this treaty was made to hopefully help end the Thirty Years' War, Westphalian helped a lot with resolving a lot of conflict happening in Europe. But they do think that the leaders during the contemporary time knew fighting didn't solve any of their problems, but also acknowledged that the treaty ended a lot of things, for example cutting out a lot of conflict. They said how one of the solutions is that things are fixed through policies. “The fact that these meanings are fixed through politics, and that once these meanings are fixed they have consequences for the ability of people to determine their fates, suggests an alternative way of thinking about power. Most international relations theorists treat power as the ability of one state to compel another state to do what it otherwise would not and tend to focus on the material technologies, such as military firepower and economic statecraft, that have this persuasive effect. Constructivists have offered two important additions to this view of power” (Lamy and Masker 129). They mentioned how Realists say how global police are a nonstop struggle to get on top and have power, and that the state is constantly at a state of almost going into war.

Westphalia has been a huge part of the foundation and groundwork of what we use as the international system today, but as the times change so do some of the rules and regulations. Innovations brought by the Westphalian international system are state sovereignty and international law. State sovereignty is like a country is their own boss, and they have the highest authority over what happens in their own country. For example what laws/rules they enforce there and them talking to other countries. International law on the other hand is guidelines and norms that control how governments and other nations act when interacting with one another. It consists of treaties/agreements, conventions, diplomacy, the settlement of disputes, and regulation of trade.

In conclusion, you can't analyze Westphalian peace treaties without looking and picking through the different classical political authors. But you can't just look at one, you have to look and analyze all of their readings. This is because they may agree with each other on some things, but they don't agree on most of the things in the system. They may have similar opinions but would like to go about it in different ways than others. Because of this treaty, leaders and authors are trying to understand and make the foundation of politics, which was affected and evolved up until modern-day politics and systems. You'll still see some of these practices and systems being enforced and taken into consideration still hundreds of thousands of years later. The impact of these treaties and classical authors will forever be used, because it was the groundwork of the political systems we use today.