

Augustinian Realism

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Corrections, additions, and open challenges to the premise of Realism in International Relations (IR) are not novel. The textbooks used in the course, *Theory & International Systems*, give extensive space to theories that in some way modify Realism, or jettison it altogether.

Susan Strange, in *The Retreat of the State*, stated that one of the key shortcomings of IR theory (particularly Realism) was the “failure of interconnection between bodies of theory relating to political and economic change customarily treated by social scientists in isolation from each other...” (*The Retreat of the State*, 12) Her contention is that IR Theory cannot exist in a vacuum, and be viable and workable. She stated her hope was to “stimulate younger scholars to more innovative work, theoretical and empirical... into a mysterious forest of the unknown.” (*The Retreat of the State*, xvi)

In fairness to Strange, her musings and invitation were to develop an integrated theory between economics and realism – “the new realism” – as she calls it (*The Retreat of the State*, xv). In this, she chose (arbitrarily) to take this “adventurous path” manacled to “international political economy,” without any other theories or schools of thought. I have chosen to accept her invitation on this mysterious path, but without her manacles.

My intention is to unearth the sub-foundation which exists beneath and predates realism in international relations: *Augustinian ethics*. In that, I begin with halting steps to develop the theory I now call: *Augustinian Realism*.

The Treaty of Westphalia – and the Trinity

Most international relations scholars – at least from a European/American perspective – believe that the peace of Westphalia “...established the legal basis of modern statehood and by implication the fundamental rules or constitution of modern

world politics.” (Baylis, 23) This system has two main characteristics: sovereignty and non-intervention. (Baylis, 38)

The Treaty of Westphalia begins: “In the name of the most holy and individual Trinity...” Thus begins; the treaty that Realist International Relations scholars declare gave birth to the current system of anarchy. It is given as an axiom that the Peace of Westphalia was the severing point between the Christian past the *Respublica Christiana*, and the notion that the state was an authority, answerable only to itself:

...national **sovereignty** emerged as the most basic value of politics among states. It was the essential qualification for membership in the international society of sovereigns which came to replace the last vestiges of the *Respublica Christiana*... With the breakdown of this medieval synthesis, *the state came to be seen as subject to no higher authority than itself.* (Norwich Lecture I, week 1, emphasis added.)

While national sovereignty is the *current* fruit of Westphalia, it would have been inconceivable and unconscionable as a final objective to the parties involved.

The treaty of Westphalia begins: “In the name of the most holy and individual Trinity...” In ancient treaties and covenants – including those of the middle ages - the invocation of the Deity was done so that He might be a witness, as well as an intervening Judge should one of the parties break faith with the other. For example, when the Jewish patriarch Jacob and his father-in-Law Laban – filled with mistrust and enmity – made a covenant of non-violence, they invoked the Deity:

The Lord watch between you and me, when we are absent one from the other... God is witness between you and me... This heap is a witness and the pillar is a witness [their “documents”], that I will not pass over this heap, and you will not pass over this heap and this pillar to me, for harm. The God of Abraham and the God of Nabor, the God of their father, judge between us. (*Genesis*, 31)

The Westphalia Treaty states: “That there shall be a Christian and Universal Peace... That there shall be on the one side and the other a perpetual Oblivion, Amnesty, or Pardon of all that has been committed since the beginning of these Troubles.” (I, II)

A “Christian Peace” in this context has its historical meaning in an Augustinian (and to a lesser degree Aquinian) framework; Augustine being the preeminent Christian Philosopher, who spoke at length about just war, keeping faith with enemies, the final acquisition of peace, and the *mercy due to the vanquished*. These were not empty words; they carried clear meaning and centuries of substance. Augustine said:

For, when faith is pledged, it is to be kept even with the enemy against whom the war is waged...Peace should be the object of your desire; war should be waged only as a necessity, and waged only that God may by it deliver men from the necessity and preserve them in peace. For peace is not sought in order to the kindling of war, but war is waged in order that peace may be obtained. Therefore, even in waging war, cherish the spirit of a peacemaker, that, by conquering those whom you attack, you may lead them back to the advantages of peace; for our Lord says: “Blessed are the peacemakers; for they shall be called the children of God.”... [A]s violence is used towards him who rebels and resists, so mercy is due to the vanquished or the captive, especially in the case in which future troubling of the peace is not to be feared. [i.e., women, children, and disarmed combatants.] (Letter to Boniface, CLXXXIX, 6)

Every man of learning present at Westphalia must have known these principles, and known what they meant when they declared a “Christian Peace” in the name of the “Trinity:” i.e. they were agreeing to a peace that had obligations to and from the Deity.

It is clear that the Treaty of Westphalia shattered the temporal authority of the Holy Roman Emperor, and likewise codified the self-proclaimed right of Protestant kings to ignore the directives of the Roman Pontiff, (Baylis, 23) yet it is inconceivable that the Kings and Princes who signed the Treaty (in person or through plenipotentiary ambassadors) would view themselves as being an *unanswerable authority* unto themselves; it is even further unthinkable that they would have believed – as Thomas Hobbes said: “To this war of every man against every man, this also is consequent; that nothing can be unjust. The notions of right and wrong, justice and injustice, have there no place.” (*Leviathan*, Book 1, Of Man, XIII)

When they returned to their nation of origin – and the religious wars of intervention overall ceased – they accepted as an axiom that a transcendental moral order to which they were accountable should (at least in theory) govern their behavior between each other, and that it was perfectly reasonable, intelligent, and philosophically sound to invoke the Deity and His Laws in an international dispute.

An example close to home is the *Declaration of Independence* – arguably crafted, debated, and signed by some of the most educated, intelligent, and forward thinking men in North America. The Declaration had four distinct references to the Deity, all of them having roots in Augustinian Revealed Law or Aquinas’ Natural Law. It was God the “Creator” that gave them unalienable rights; it was “The Laws of Nature and Nature’s God” that gave them the right to be a free and independent Nation; they appealed – much like Jacob, to the “Supreme Judge of the World to uphold the rectitude” of their actions; they committed themselves to “Divine Providence” – a rich notion with distinctly Hebrew and Christian roots – to guide them, provide for them, and bring them to final victory in their struggle for independence. The signers held these truths as “self evident;” i.e., they needed no debate; they were (still) universally accepted. Whether or not the Declaration is a perfectly Trinitarian document, suffice it to say: men could argue with impunity on political theory and international relations from a deistic premise.

But two hundred years after Westphalia, and less than one hundred years after America’s Declaration, the line could not be held. Unitarianism, Darwinism, nihilism, Marxism, higher criticism (Biblical “Scholars” denying the Divine Revelation and accuracy of the Old and New Testaments) compounded with the emergence of so-called “Social Sciences” crashed in one cannon ball after another on the Augustinian citadel. In

the nascent field of International Relations, scholars emerged in the twentieth century who held the premises of Augustine in open contempt – or worse – they simply ignored them. Augustine’s hold was lost.

If nature abhors a vacuum, philosophers and theorists are determined to fill it. If a state was “subject to no higher authority than itself” - neither to a Deity or transcendental law - then what “rules” or “norms” existed for nations dealing with nations?

The modern “realist” tradition was slowly born – or one might say reborn – to be more precise. In *Understanding International Relations*, edited by Daniel Kauffman, the editor states: “This text focuses on authors whose writings form the roots of the realist tradition.” (*Understanding International Relations*, 125) Those authors are Thucydides, Machiavelli, Hobbes, and Morgenthau.

Thucydides

The Example of the gods

I said “reborn” above, because theorists leapt back through time, self-consciously rejecting the norms, logic, and duties of Augustinian theory, and rushed to the tent of a Grecian general: Thucydides. In his *History of the Peloponnesian Wars*, Thucydides (in the voice of Athenian ambassadors) states bluntly: “...the standard of justice depends on the equality of power to compel and that in fact the strong do what they have the power to do and the weak accept what they have to accept.” (*Understanding International Relations*, 132) The Athenians go on to describe a “law,” originating in pagan deities, that is foundational to modern day Realism:

Our aims and our actions are perfectly consistent with the beliefs men hold about the gods and with the principles which govern their own conduct. Our opinion of the gods and our knowledge of them lead us to conclude that it is a general and necessary law of nature to rule whatever one can. This is not a law that we made ourselves, nor were we to first to act upon it when it was made. We found it already in existence, and we shall leave

it to exist forever among those who come after us. We are merely acting in accordance with it, and we know that you or anybody else with the same power as ours would be acting in precisely the same way. And therefore, so far as the gods are concerned, we say no good reason why we should fear to be at a disadvantage. (*Understanding International Relations*, 133)

It is perhaps a distasteful reality to realist theorists – or perhaps it is irrelevant – but it is critical to examine the philosophical starting point for their “school of thought.” Namely, that the brute desire to “rule whatever one can” is rooted in part in the capricious, violent, and unjust behaviors of pagan deities - or as Thucydides said - “the principles which govern their own [the gods] conduct.” Space does not permit a detailed examination of the patricidal, fratricidal, cannibalistic, incestuous, rapacious, capricious behavior of the Greek gods, but much of the gods “own conduct” is repulsive to the average person, fraught with injustice, and deservedly rejected.

Moreover, the behaviors of these pagan deities – and the philosophical and behavioral norms they engender – encourage certain actions in the lives of mere mortals. Behold the fruit of this foundation: when the Athenians took the city of Melia, they gave the combatants the “justice” learned from the “gods”:

Siege operations were now carried on vigorously and, as there was also some treachery from inside, the Melians surrendered unconditionally to the Athenians, who put to death all the men of military age whom they took, and sold the women and children as slaves. (*Understanding International Relations*, 136)

Baylis and Smith say of this Athenian slaughter of Melian men, and the enslavement of the women and children: “This, of course, represents one of the most cold-blooded assertions of an ultra-realist view of international relations: only power counts, rules and morality play no part.” (Baylis, 41)

Compare this massacre to the above quoted instructions of Augustine to Boniface concerning how to treat those who have been defeated in battle. Ideas have consequences

in behavior; the wholesale slaughter of the Melian men was the fruit of the ideological root of Grecian – and now Realist – thought.

Augustine, as he compares the justice and mercy of Christian vs. pagan rules of war, quotes a Caesar's description of the customs of battle and the hideous behavior of the victors:

... “[V]irgins and boys are violated, children torn from the embrace of their parents, matrons subjected to whatever should be the pleasure of the conquerors, temples and houses plundered, slaughter and burning rife; in fine, all things filled with arms, corpses, blood, and wailing.” (*City of God*, Book I, Chapter 5.)

Kauffman introduces Thucydides and the Melian dialogue saying that it “contrasts the individual’s desire to see righteousness rule in international relations with the wicked reality that justice is defined by the powerful.” (*Understanding International Relations*, 125) This “wicked reality” about “justice...defined by the powerful” is one of the main tributaries of the River Realism.

It is also noteworthy – and ironic – that Kaufman juxtaposes the fact that individuals want “righteousness” – a word full of ethical and transcendental meaning – with the “wicked” (another ethical and oftentimes transcendental word) reality of tyranny, oppression, and force, masquerading as “justice.” The idea that “justice” is not transcendental and stable, but simply a forcible extension of the whim of the powerful and their swords, is not only an antithesis to Augustinian theory, but would have been repugnant to the signers at Westphalia.

A realist theorist might be tempted to say, “So what? The point is power, and its use to keep the state alive. Morals and ethics are irrelevant.” In response, I again invoke Susan Strange:

This book is written in the firm belief that the perceptions of ordinary citizens are more to be trusted than the pretensions of national leaders and of the bureaucracies who serve

them; that the common sense of common people is a better guide to understanding than most of the academic theories being taught in universities. (*The Retreat of the State*, 3)

The average “common person” is repulsed by the *injustice* of the Melian outcome. And since democratic nations are led by men and women elected by “common people” who are not predominantly IR Theorists, *the notions of justice and injustice matter a great deal*, if for no other reason than those “common people” decide who governs a nation, and therefore *which theory is used to make international policy*. The history of President Reagan’s election in 1980 – with the rhetoric and images he employed that were transcendental (the City on the Hill) – and his subsequent legacy in shaping U.S. international policy based at least in part on Augustinian justice (The Soviet Union was an “Evil” Empire), is a case in point. When enough individuals with a “desire to see righteousness rule in international relations” elect a government that shares the view that justice should play a decisive role in international politics, the rules – or norms – change.

Thomas Hobbes

Leviathan: The Brute World vs. The Christian Commonwealth

Hobbes wrote *Leviathan* while living in exile in Paris with the royal court of England, awaiting the end of the Cromwell’s Revolution, and the restoration of the Monarchy. (For a season, he was a tutor to Charles II.) When *Leviathan* was published in 1651, he fell out of favor with the English Court, as well as the French Catholics, and fled back to England awaiting the end of the Cromwellian Commonwealth. (R.J. Kilcullen, lecture, Marquette University) His treatise has four books. In order they are: *Of Man*; *Of Commonwealth*; *Of A Christian Commonwealth*; and *Of The Kingdom of Darkness*.

Of Man has caught the eye of Realist theorists, in part because of its dramatic definitions of the plight of man in a “state of nature” without the security of a strong

government that “puts men in awe,” and subsequently in part because he gave the theoretical underpinnings for a strong central state to bring order and peace out of the chaos that Hobbes believed would exist without strong government.

In perhaps what is perhaps Hobbes most famous prose, he states:

Whatsoever therefore is consequent to a time of war, where every man is enemy to every man, the same is consequent to the time wherein men live without other security than what their own strength and their own invention shall furnish them...and the life of man, solitary, poor, nasty, brutish, and short. (Book 1, Of Man, XIII)

He follows with the logic that it is the absence of a “common power” i.e., a strong central government – that defines justice and injustice, and leaves men to take and hold whatever they can get. Realists quote the following passage from Hobbes (Kauffman, 125) to show that his theory is free of ethics and morals:

To this war of every man against every man, this also is consequent; that nothing can be unjust. The notions of right and wrong, justice and injustice, have there no place. Where there is no common power, there is no law; where no law, no injustice. Force and fraud are in war the two cardinal virtues. Justice and injustice are none of the faculties neither of the body nor mind...but only that to be every man's that he can get, and for so long as he can keep it. And thus much for the ill condition which man by mere nature is actually placed in; though with a possibility to come out of it, consisting partly in the passions, partly in his reason. (Book 1, Of Man, chapter XIII)

While this theory of man’s ordeal seems primal and visceral – and thereby plays to the brute elements of realism – some realists conveniently overlook that these statements come from Book 1 in a four-part series. More specifically, this theory of man’s existence predates (in a human history timeline) the era and ethics of Christianity.

Realists regularly quote Book 1 of Leviathan as a fountain head for their theories, while books three and four are ignored. But it is books three and four – *Of a Christian Commonwealth*, and *Of the Kingdom of Darkness* that reveal not only what governmental theories he embraced, but what were to be the ethical and transcendental foundations of those governments. In short, he was distinctly Augustinian in many of his theories.

For example, Hobbes stated: “It is true that God is the sovereign of all sovereigns; and therefore, when he speaks to any subject, he ought to be obeyed, whatsoever any earthly potentate commands to the contrary.” (*Leviathan*, Book 3, Chapter XXXIII) His words echo and resemble the phrases of Augustine. Augustine spoke of “the just retribution of the sovereign God” (*City of God*, Book XIV, chapter 15); Augustine asked: “Whether we are to believe that God, as he has always been sovereign Lord, has always had creatures over whom he exercised his authority...” He frequently stated: “God, who has ever been Sovereign...” (*City of God*, Book XII, Chapter 15)

In Books 3 and 4 of *Leviathan*, Hobbes outlines a theory in defense of the ecclesial, theological, and political authority of the King of England; however, his theory tended toward tyranny. However, it was still in part – though clearly marred -

Augustinian. Hobbes stated:

... that the kingdom of God is a civil commonwealth, where God himself is sovereign, by virtue first of the Old, and since of the New, Covenant, where he reigns by his vicar or lieutenant; the same places do therefore also prove that after the coming again of our Savior in his majesty and glory to reign actually and eternally, the kingdom of God is to be on earth. (Book 3, Chapter XXXVIII)

Note the theological similarities between Hobbes’ words and Augustine’s:

And even enemies must certainly confess that out of Sion has been sent the law of Christ which we call the gospel, and acknowledge as the rod of His strength. But that He rules in the midst of His enemies, these same enemies among whom He rules themselves bear witness, gnashing their teeth and consuming away, and having power to do nothing against Him. (*Christian Doctrine*, Chapter 17)

The above Hobbes passage seems to speak to domestic polity. What about international relations with other nations? Here he is again Augustinian:

It is therefore manifest enough by this one place [1 Peter, 2:9] that by the Kingdom of God is properly meant a commonwealth, instituted (by the consent of those which were to be subject thereto) for their civil government and the regulation of their behavior, not only towards God their king, but also towards one another in point of justice, *and towards other nations both in peace and war...* (*Leviathan*, book 3, Chapter XXXV, emphasis added)

The rules of “war and peace” were not reconfigured by Hobbes; they did not refer to Thucydides or Machiavelli; they are in book 3 and in book 4; they are distinctly Hebrew and Christian in their premises, and again echo Augustine’s words, who wrote:

As a rule just wars are defined as those which avenge injuries, if some nation or state against whom one is waging war has neglected to punish a wrong committed by its citizens, or to return something that was wrongfully taken. (*St. Augustine and the Theory of Just War*, 86)

Hobbes could never have imagined a time when international relations philosophers trampled and discarded Augustinian principles, and threw out a “Christian” definition of peace, justice, and duty domestically and internationally.

Hobbes begins in book 3, and then uses most of book 4 to answer the question (and make the argument) that once we acknowledge that “God is the sovereign of all sovereigns,” this naturally begs the question: who is God’s earthly “viceroys” or “vice regent”? Is it the Pope? Is it an over arching “Emperor”? Or is it the local sovereign? With great zeal, Hobbes lays the axe to the root of papal authority. *Leviathan*, Book 4, *Of the Kingdom of Darkness* is a fierce polemic against certain Roman dogmas, and against the Pope himself. He opens:

...the kingdom of darkness is nothing else but a confederacy of deceivers that, to obtain dominion over men in this present world, endeavor, by dark and erroneous doctrines, to extinguish in them the light, both of nature and of the Gospel... by mixing with the Scripture diverse relics of the religion, and much of the vain and erroneous philosophy of the Greeks, especially of Aristotle. (*Leviathan*, Chapter XLIV)

He proceeds to bitterly abuse papal authority; to deny transubstantiation; he mocks relics, processions, and the canonization of Saints; he thereby made himself odious to Catholics, which the French predominantly were. He thereafter fled back to England, having made himself hated in Catholic France, as well as having offended members of the English Court. (*Encyclopedia Britannica*)

Books three and four of Leviathan are a theological justification for the Treaty of Westphalia. The King of England was to be the earthly sovereign of his realm. He was to have the final word – free of intervention from foreign powers – on domestic policy, unless he committed some grave crime. For Hobbes admitted, when God “...speaks to any subject, he ought to be obeyed, whatsoever any earthly potentate commands to the contrary.” (*Leviathan*, Book 3) Though weak in his argument – perhaps for political expediency while he was a royalist in exile – Hobbes knew that he could not create an autocrat entirely, lest he create another pope, who he so fiercely rejected.

In that, he left open the door for earthly potentates to be corrected, challenged – or even overthrown – as was the case less than a generation later in 1688 with the “Glorious Revolution” of England. James II was deposed, and William of Orange and Mary (James II’s daughter) were brought to rule in James’ stead.

Realist theorists do a great disservice to the study of international relations and the rights of men and nations when they focus on Hobbes view of man *outside of a* Christian commonwealth, and ignore his theories on man, government, and the “sovereignty of God” over the sovereigns of the earth that are strongly Augustinian.

Niccolo Machiavelli

The Man, The Beast, and the Hypocrite

Kauffman introduces Machiavelli thus: “He is probably the author most often linked to realism. His name has become synonymous with politics that emphasize underhanded, amoral, self-serving, calculating actions.” (*Understanding International Relations*, 126) It must be noted that *The Prince* is not based on the twin pillars of sovereignty and nonintervention. On the contrary, the recurring theme of the book is that

the prince may overrun the sovereignty of another nation, and that the prince – if properly armed – can intervene at will in other nations, and even seize those nations for his own possession. Machiavelli stated:

A prince ought to have no other aim or thought, nor select anything else for his study, than war and its rules and discipline; for this is the sole art that belongs to him rules, and it is of such force that it not only upholds those who are born princes, but *it often enables men to rise from a private station to that rank*. And, on the contrary, it is seen that when princes have thought more of ease than of arms they have lost their states. In the first cause of your losing it is to neglect this art; and *what enables you to acquire a state is to be master of the art*. (*The Prince*, Chapter XIV, emphasis added)

“Sovereignty” and “nonintervention” in the modern sense are strangers to Machiavelli’s world. In Machiavelli’s “Realist” world, the prince may behave like a man or brute beast; either is equally acceptable, as long as he maintains his state. He wrote:

You must know there are two ways of contesting, the one by the law, the other by force; the first method is proper to men, the second to beast; but because the first is frequently not sufficient, it is necessary to have recourse to the second. Therefore it is necessary for a prince to understand how to avail himself of the beast and the man. This has been figuratively taught to princes by ancient writers, who described how Achilles and many other princes of old were given to the Centaur Chiron to nurse... as they had for a teacher one who was half beast and half man, with also it is necessary for a prince to know how to make use of both natures, and that *one without the other is not durable*. (*The Prince*, Chapter XVIII, emphasis added)

And yet we see an aspect of Machiavelli that is frequently ignored: namely, Machiavelli’s *fear of injustice* – and conversely *respect for justice* – in the establishment and maintenance of the state. I will show that Machiavelli proves the point that Power - i.e., Realism – without Augustinian ethics, cannot survive.

On one hand, we see Machiavelli in the light which made him famous – the prince should use “good qualities” and the appearance of uprightness to seduce the masses, and maintain his state:

Therefore it is unnecessary for a prince to have all the good qualities I have enumerated, but it is very necessary to appear to have them. And I shall dare to say this also, that to have them and always to observe them is injurious, and the two appear to have them as useful; to appear merciful, faithful, humane, religious, upright... And you have to understand this, that a prince, especially a new one, cannot observe all those things for which men are esteemed, being often forced, *in order to maintain the state*, to act

contrary to faith, friendship, humanity, and religion. (*The Prince*, Chapter XVIII, emphasis added)

This is classic Machiavellianism – maintaining power by whatever means necessary – with little thought of true justice. But laced throughout *The Prince* Machiavelli exposes his bothersome worry that true justice – not feigned – will arise to consume the tyrant. For example, in Chapter VIII, he relates the story of Agathocles the Sicilian, who seized Syracuse by killing all the Senators and the wealthy. Machiavelli praises this murderer, saying: “Therefore, he who considers the actions and the genius of this man will see nothing, or little, which can be attributed to fortune, in as much as he attained preeminence, as is shown above, not by the favor of anyone, but step-by-step in the military profession...” (VIII)

But then, Machiavelli mutes his praise, and falls into direct contradiction of the “underhanded, amoral, self-serving” ethics that are his hallmark:

Yet it cannot be called talent to slay fellow citizens, to deceive friends, to be without faith, without mercy, without religion; such methods may gain empire, but not glory. Still, if the courage of Agathocles in entering into an extricating himself from the dangers be considered, together with his greatness of mind in an enduring and overcoming hardships, it cannot be seen why he should not be esteemed less than the most notable captain. (*The Prince*, Chapter VIII)

Machiavelli cannot bear consistency with his own ethic. Here he uses religion, there he abuses or ignores it; here he praises treachery and cruelty, there he deprecates them. He frequently warns the prince to not be rapacious, nor to take men’s properties. Why? Because the abused – seeking justice - will rise against him and destroy him. The thirst for justice can overcome power.

Hence it is to be remarked that, in seizing the state, the usurper ought to examine closely into all those injuries which it is necessary for him to inflict, and to do them all at one stroke so as not to have to repeat them daily; and thus by not unsettling men he will be able to reassure them, and win them to himself by benefits. (*The Prince*, Chapter VIII)

If the Prince fails to take this advice, and continues down a path of injustice, he will be destroyed by those he seeks to rule unjustly.

Augustine wrote: “He, then, who prefers what is right to what is wrong, and what is well ordered to what is perverted, sees that the peace of unjust men is not worthy to be called peace in comparison with the peace of the just. (*City of God*, Book XIX, Chapter 12) And that peace, that “accord” between men, is based on justice.

To have realism that is not founded on justice, is to merely hold power for a moment. The inherent proof of this comes from Machiavelli’s own words. He says:

“...it is necessary to know well how to disguise this characteristic [faithlessness], and to be a great pretender and dissembler... For this reason a prince ought to take care that he never lets anything slip from his lips that is not replete with the above named five qualities, but he may appear to him who sees and hears him altogether merciful, faithful, humane, operate, and religious. There is nothing more necessary to appear to have than this last quality... (*The Prince*, XVIII)

Why is it so important to appear “religious” to maintain the state? Because he cannot maintain the state without some level of loyalty and legitimacy being granted to him from the people. The underlying fear is that the people of his realm - besides being “vulgar” and “dupes” - are *just*. Why does this hypocrite leader need to disguise his “faithlessness” if morals and ethics do not matter in the realist worldview for the preservation of the state? *Because they do matter for the preservation of the state, for history shows that justice will ultimately trump power.* Machiavelli knows that if the prince’s faithlessness and cruelty and irreligious spirit stir up the people, he will lose the power he is trying so desperately to hold.

This proves in part that there is something inherently valuable and inescapable in transcendental truth and justice. For a leader to be without them, or to flaunt them, means he is runs the risk of losing his hold on power.

Augustine relates a story from Cicero that proves this point. Two prominent Romans debated this maxim: “The Republic cannot be governed without injustice.” (*City of God*, Book II, Chapter 21) The opposite was shown to be true, “... that the truth is, that it cannot be governed without the most absolute justice.” The victor of the debate went on to say words that expose the self-destructive nature of Machiavelli’s “power by any means argument” argument:

...a republic, or “weal of the people,” then exists only when it is well and justly governed, whether by a monarch, or aristocracy, or by the whole people. When the monarch is unjust, or, as the Greeks say a tyrant; or the aristocrats are unjust, and former faction; or the people themselves are unjust, and become, as Scipio for want of a better name calls them, themselves the tyrant, then the Republic is not only blemished... it altogether ceases to be. (*City of God*, Book II, Chapter 21)

Maintaining power is not enough; power without ethics and justice, power “protected” by men of vile character, insures the nations demise, or at least those rulers losing power, and the possible loss of her national security. Space does not permit a lengthy discussion here, but Augustine proves the point in *City of God* that the corrupt ethics and violence of the ancient pagan world insured the demise of many nations, because they could not maintain the power while riddled with injustice.. In modern times, the Soviet Union had power, but could not hold it, because it was run by men who were tyrants following an oppressive ideology, and therefore they could not command the love and loyalty of there people. The Bolsheviks, rejecting Augustine just war and embracing Thucydides war ethic, committed every crime they saw fit in order to seize power, but that very ethic insured they could not long keep it.

Hans J. Morgenthau

Morgenthau is introduced by Baylis as the “high priest of realism (Baylis, 95); Kaufman introduces Morgenthau by showing his ideological connection to Thucydides,

Machiavelli, and Hobbes, saying: “His writings are partly a continuation of each of the previous writers.” (*Understanding International Relations*[UIR], 126)

Like the above authors, Morgenthau insists that state action in International Politics be free of ethical constraints: “Realism maintains that universal moral principles cannot be applied to the actions of states in their abstract universal formulation, but that they must be filtered through these concrete circumstances of time and place.” (*UIR*, 154)

He continues: “Realism, then, considers prudence – the weighing of the consequences of alternative political actions – to be the supreme virtue in politics. Ethics in the abstract judges action by its conformity with the moral law; political ethics judges action by its political consequences.” (*UIR*, 154) This clearly echoes the words of Machiavelli: “A Prince then should look mainly to the successful maintenance of his state. The means which he employs for this will always be accounted honorable...” (*UIR*, 139)

On one hand, Morgenthau states: “Intellectually, *the political realist maintains the autonomy of the political sphere...*” (*UIR* 155) Continuing this line of thought, he demands that moral standards bow the knee to political standards:

The political realist is not unaware of the existence and relevance of standards of thought other than political ones. As a political realist, he cannot but subordinate these other standards to those of politics. And he parts company with other schools when they impose standards of thought appropriate to other spheres upon the political sphere.” (*UIR*, 155)

But like Machiavelli and Hobbes before him, he appears either to be unable to bear total consistency with this moral free vacuum, or he knows that many of his readers cannot bear it. For he states: “Political realism does not require, nor does it condone, indifference to political ideals and moral principles, but it requires indeed a sharp distinction between the desirable and the possible...” (*UIR* 149)

Continuing to equivocate on ethics, he states: “Political realism is aware of the moral significance of political action. It is also aware of the ineluctable tension between the moral command and the requirements of successful political action.” (*UIR* 154) To the point of being self-contradicting, he states: “Both individual and state must judge political action by universal moral principles, such as that of liberty.” (*UIR* 154)

And of course, like with Machiavelli, the “vulgar” masses and their views on play a key role. Morgenthau opines that foreign policies do not always take an “objective, unemotional,” rational course, “...especially where foreign policy is conducted under the conditions of Democratic control, the need to marshal popular emotions to the support of foreign policy cannot fail to impair the rationality of foreign policy itself.” (*UIR* 149)

This statement leads to one other criticism of Realism: it is elitist, arrogant, presumptive, and arbitrary. Like all good theories, it has merit and attraction, because it has elements that are true. I.e., power is critical to the survival of the state.

However, the anarchy that followed from Westphalia is not merely political in nature, but ethical as well. The growth of what I call “ethical anarchy” is part and parcel of Realist theory. Yet most realists clearly cannot bear consistency with this repudiation of transcendental ethics, perhaps because they know that tyranny will be avenged and overthrown; perhaps because they know intuitively that such a world would be hideous to live in; perhaps for some other reason. But whatever the reason, Realism does not have the ability – try as it might – to separate power from justice; a justice rooted in transcendental morals, and I argue, the Augustinian ethics that dominated relations between nations field for over a millennium.

Augustine, Sovereignty, and Non-intervention

The “common people” referred to by Susan Strange insist that justice matters, that it is overarching, even in those nations guided by realism. The United Nations Universal Declaration of Human Rights, the guidelines of the Geneva Convention, the outcry against torture, all of these and more point to the demand for “justice,” whether related to sovereignty, behavior in war, or honoring or ignoring the ideal of non-intervention.

Great numbers of people – perhaps the majority – intuitively reject the notion that every nation is sovereign (with no authority above it), and that the physical borders of nations are inviolate – even when the political masters of that nation commit unspeakable crimes against their citizens. Augustinian theory admits to no inalienable right of nations to have their borders honored while tyrants decimate innocent people.

If the perverted modern fallout of Westphalia is honored – i.e., no nation may intervene in the internal affairs of another sovereign nation – then we are forced to stand by and do nothing while Hutu’s slaughter Tutsi’s in Rwanda. Adolf Hitler could have slaughtered every Jew in Germany, then Austria, then the Sudentland, as long as he did not invade Poland. Such a view of international politics is repugnant to Augustine’s just war theory:

As a rule just wars are defined as those which avenge injuries, if some nation or state against whom one is waging war has neglected to punish a wrong committed by its citizens, or to return something that was wrongfully taken. (*St. Augustine and the Theory of Just War*, John Mattox)

Thus, a “just war” would have included military intervention in Rwanda.

Furthermore, Augustinian ethics permit for the punitive nature of war in some circumstances:

Augustine’s definition, like Cicero’s, justifies an aggrieved nation in seeking redress and compensation via war when no other means will suffice. However, it also serves, not only as a means for restoring the status quo ante bellum, but also as an international sort of

‘penal sanction analogous to the awarding of punitive damages in private law’. Thus, Augustine’s definition allows for compensation beyond that which would result merely from a return to the status quo ante bellum. (*St. Augustine, and the Theory of Just War*, pg 46)

The above slaughters recorded by the “pagan” Thucydides and the “pagan” Caesar - and many other examples of how militants and noncombatants were treated during and after conflict in the pre-Christian era must be juxtaposed with the fruit of Augustinian theory that lasted for over 1000 years. Where would women and children want to be if their nation was overrun? In a nation that had fallen to Thucydides, or to a Christian general seeking to follow the dictates of Augustine?

The sheer weight and glory of Augustinian theory demands that it be allowed a place on the stage, and in the debate. If Morgenthau can deliberately – and arbitrarily – fly to Thucydides and Machiavelli for his undergirding philosophy, we can fly to the time tested harbor of Augustinian ethics and rules of war to undergird a theory based on justice first, then power. I offer this observation from Augustinian scholar, John Mattox, who states why all thinking men should give Augustine another look:

However, because of the nature of the ethical tensions that Augustine seeks to resolve through his theory, its synthetic character is important, not merely for adherents to Christianity, but also for others seeking a strictly rational account of the problem. For example, if one were to take a de-theologized view of Augustine’s theory and focus simply upon the general theoretical problem of the morality of war, one could still find in Augustine an attempt, fully deserving of serious philosophical consideration, to understand how a morally upright citizen of a relatively just state could be justified in pursuing the profession of arms, in the prosecution of war, and ultimately, although unhappily, in the taking of human lives. In any case, Augustine’s just-war theory arises from his most deeply rooted philosophical assumptions... (*St. Augustine, and the Theory of Just War*, pg 85)

It is those assumptions that are missing from Realism. And just as Machiavelli knew that a prince could not survive without justice, neither can Realism survive without the sub-foundation of Augustinian ethics and justice. It is those ethics that will give “moral legitimacy” to power, and thereby help to sustain it.

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