Justifying the State

Protection and Power
Review: Justifying the state: What are the ultimate goals?

• How can our loss of freedom can be justified! OK here are some justifications
  – Consent: The social contract
  – Power is its own justification
  – Enlightened leadership perfects order and justice
  – The General Will
  – Happiness
Review: Political Economy in the State of Nature: Good reasons to justify the state?

• Aristotle: we get what we deserve by nature. No problem—do we really need a state for this? We shall see....

• Rousseau. Self-sufficiency and sustainability —GREAT! until innovation: Then consumerism that brought on jealousy, envy, competition, and thirst for more: economy destroyed

• Locke: GREAT because of abundance....we all have a right to property but abundance turns to scarcity and money turns us against each other: Economy destroyed

• Hobbes: scarcity, no industry, trade, commerce.

• At the very least, a state could be justified on political economy grounds!
Hobbes’ Social Contract: Bring on Leviathan!

• The contradiction of Hobbes’ Natural Law
• Collective vs. individual rationality
• Hobbes’ way out  Consent to an all-powerful sovereign who can punish those who break the law of nature.
• Hobbes’ political economy: Leviathan will destroy your political freedom but not your economic freedom to become prosperous.
But will the social contract to create a Leviathan end violence?

- No! Why?
- International politics is the state of nature. Why?
- Birth of Leviathan moved the problem of violence to a higher level!
- Reasoning: Lack of a central government → insecurity → self help for survival → amassing power → military force → others watch and feel insecure → build up their own power and force → security dilemma → war (get your enemy before he gets you)
- Not because of human nature!
- What about Justice
What about Justice: The Melian Dialogue

- **Athens**: Justice is only possible among equals (5.89)
- **Melos**: justice is the “common protection” of all (5.90)
- **Athens**: we are content to take the risk (5.91)
The Melian dialogue

- **Athens**: It’s in the interest of the weak to yield to the strong
- **Melos**: it’s not in our interest to be slaves – we could remain neutral
- **Athens**: the other option is death; anyway, your neutrality won’t serve our interests
The Melian Dialogue

• Melos: Athenian policy will create more enemies among neutrals (5.98)
• Athens: our cost-benefit calculations suggest that is the less important risk
The Melian Dialogue

- Melos: it would be **dishonorable** of us not to try to resist, especially since your empire seems so risky, and since our allies or the gods may find it in the interest to help us

- Athens: **hope is not a strategy**, and the almost certain outcome of resistance is death; anyway, everyone else (including the gods) would do as we do
The Outcome

• In the end, the Melians prefer to defend themselves and attempt to preserve their liberty, and after some initially successful resistance, are ultimately crushed.

• Did the Melians do the right thing?
The Melian Dialogue

• What does the Melian debate show?
Political Economy takeaway: When there is no state, what is the rule by which we get what we deserve?

- POWER! The lesson of the Melian Dialogue
- “We both alike know that into the discussion of human affairs the question of justice only enters where there is equal power to enforce it, and that the powerful take what they can, and the weak give what they must.”* (5.89)
Political Economy when power is the decision rule (no global “government”)

Map 24 Gross National Product Per Capita

Map legend:
- **$695 or less**
- **$696 – $2,785**
- **$2,786 – $8,625**
- **Above $8,625**
- **No data**

The values for the class intervals above are taken from the World Bank’s cutoff figures for high-income, upper-middle-income, lower-middle-income, and low-income economies.
In reality, does justice matter when there is no sovereign?

– Crude realist (the Athenian envoys at Melos): no, it doesn’t matter

– Idealists: there are limits to the pursuit of mere interest—it will be our downfall. We need global government!

– Enlightened realist (Machiavelli): the pursuit of interest depends on not alienating allies and not making enemies needlessly
Machiavelli: The Enlightened Realist?

- What he thinks of human nature
  - Criticism of Aristotle
  - Is human nature “evil” at its core?
  - Do people want freedom?
  - How are the “natures” of princes and subjects different?
Everyone says you should be nice but no one really is, so if you do what you should and be nice all the time, you’re probably gonna get screwed.

Don’t keep your promises if there’s no reason to anymore — nobody else does.
Machiavelli’s use of instrumental rationality: the basis of neo-classical economics

• He advises the prince to define his goal and calculate the preferable means to meet the goal. To use cost-benefit analysis for everything—to be cunning.

• If you want to be a good person, stay out of politics. If you want to be successful in politics, says Machiavelli, “learn how not to be good.”

• What would Aristotle say?
What is the purpose of the state?

- NOT an institution for the benefit of individuals
- Society exists to serve the state—not the other way around
- The purpose of the state is to perpetuate itself—to survive*
What is the purpose of the state?

• To amass power that assures the survival and perpetuation of the state
  • Outward destruction, expansion, occupation, and keeping foreign puppets in power**
  • Something strange about this: “destroying cities is the only certain way of holding them.” Huh?

• Domestically, amass power by creating social stability
  – A “republic” is the best form of government (depending.....)*
Foreign Policy

- To amass power that assures the survival and perpetuation of the state
  - Outward destruction, expansion, occupation, and keeping foreign puppets in power**
  - Something strange about this: “destroying cities is the only certain way of holding them.” Huh?

If you wanna take over some place where the people could decide for themselves, you have to destroy everything.

’specially anyone who remembers, ‘cos no one’s ever gonna listen to you as long as they can.
If you want to take over some place, don’t forget to kill not just the boss, but also all his kids!

Either be really nice to people or kill ‘em. If you don’t kill ‘em and you’re not so nice, then they’re gonna come after you.
Domestic policy

• Domestically, amass power by creating social stability
  – A “republic” is the best form of government (depending.....)*
Six ways to create domestic stability

• 1. Force

• 2. Fear
  – It is better to be feared than loved
  – The Three Bears Rule of Cruelty
  – Deterrence = public punishments

• 3. Favors to create dependence
  – Reward loyalty

• 4. Freedom: Rulers will amass power when there is prosperity
  – Enable everyone to pursue their calling
  – Protect citizens’ property*
  – Don’t tax too much and reward those who contribute to prosperity
FORCE

1. Force
   - A good army and an economic application of violence

Never be afraid to beat someone up if you have to. First, try to talk 'em into listening, but just in case, you know what to do!
Fear

• 2. Fear
  – It is better to be feared than loved
But Avoid the hatred of your subjects
Especially the hatred of the most powerful

If people’re scared of you at first, you can boss ‘em around easier later. But if you’re nice at first, they’ll try to get away with stuff and you’re gonna have to punish ‘em all the time. Then bad feelings about you will stay in the air.

Now, it’s okay if people are scared of you. Just make sure they don’t hate you.
3. Favors

Try to make everyone you know totally dependent on you, then you don’t have to worry so much that they’re gonna try to get rid of you.

Support the arts and anything else that improves the neighborhood.
Be generous. But remember Three Bears theory of Generosity

Even if people think you're cheap, don't throw your money around. 'Cos if you lose your money and start borrowing off them all the time, then they're really gonna hate you.

If you're not a Boss but you wanna be one, make sure you trick everyone into thinking you're a really generous guy.
Just don’t be too generous…..

Don’t give too many presents to people, ’cos you’re gonna end up making yourself poor.

Then anyone who liked you ’cos of the presents is not gonna like you anymore.
4. Freedom

- And Don’t take anyone’s property!!!!
- Give them freedom to pursue their chosen jobs!
- Don’t tax too much and reward those who contribute to prosperity
5. Use any means necessary to expand your power
Break Promises if you Must

Delegate unpopular policies to others

Don't keep your promises if there's no reason to anymore – nobody else does.

Give the guys underneath you all the dirty work to do.
6. Hype and Hoopla

• Become a good propagandist
• Invent or use a state religion to promote loyalty
• Ceremony and celebrations
• Project an image!
Only give things away when people are watching.

Make sure you only let people see you doing stuff where you come off looking really good.
Every once in a while, throw a big party and invite all the Little People.
The logical consequence of Machiavelli's thought

- Machiavelli represented a breakthrough in thought: “evil” is legitimimized
- Effects seen on the battlefields of 20\textsuperscript{th} century Europe
- The Doctrine of no regard for justice ultimately led to the politics of Lebensraum, two world wars, the Holocaust, nuclear weapons