

LECTURE / DISCUSSION / DEBATE
REALISM

Terms and concepts to know:

<i>The Prince</i>	Balance of power
<i>The Twenty Years' Crisis</i>	Rational Actor
Neo-Realism	Anarchy
Self-help system	Security dilemma
Melian dialogue	Morgenthau's 6 Principles

Study and discussion questions:

1. What is the United States' *national interest*?
2. Can a nation be viewed monolithically? Or, in other words, can the state make coherent decisions based strictly on considerations of the national interest?
3. What are some of the main points the Melians make to the Athenians in the dialogue?
4. Do you agree with the maxim that, in international politics, the "strong do what they have the power to do and the weak accept what they have to accept"?
5. For Machiavelli, is it better for the Prince to be generous or parsimonious? Feared or loved? Do you agree or disagree with his analysis of leadership?
6. What does Morgenthau mean by the phrase "international relations is the concept of interest defined in terms of power"?
7. Can the views in the "X" article be considered realist? Why or why not?
8. Is Robert Gilpin's theory of hegemonic rise and decline useful in explaining the end of the Cold War?
9. Do you think Waltz's structural realism provides an adequate explanation for the end of the Cold War and for the current state of international politics?
10. In what ways does Dr. Kissinger's assessment of U.S. policy in the war against terrorism reflect general realist principles? In what ways does it differ?

Readings:

Genest. *Conflict and Cooperation*, Chapter 2, pp. 39-122.

Video:

The Prince. The story of Machiavelli. Produced by Discovery Books.