THE DIPLOMACIES OF SMALL STATES : BETWEEN VULNERABILITY AND RESILIENCE PDF, EPUB, EBOOK



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The Diplomacies of Small States: Between Vulnerability and Resilience by Andrew F. Cooper

Relative power indices? Quantitative definitions start with the criterion of absolute size — based on demographic, geographical, or economic factors — singly or in different combinations. Qualitative definitions start with relationships and with the assumption that the majority of

relationships are among unequals. These approaches provide separate, but complementary, perspectives on the conduct of small state diplomacy. Size is an important factor affecting how states deal with constraints on, and threats to, their sovereignty. Quantitative definitions look at absolute size in terms of demographic, geophysical, or economic conditions. As an example, the Commonwealth definition focuses on demographic size: Small states are sovereign countries with a population of 1. Using this definition, there are just over 30 small states in the Commonwealth. Yet within the Commonwealth, this list includes larger member countries such as Botswana, Jamaica, Lesotho, Namibia, and Papua New Guinea, as they share many of the same characteristics of small states Commonwealth website.

With limited resources, these states face unique development challenges, including limited economic diversification, remoteness, and isolation with accompanying high transportation costs, limited human and institutional capacity, susceptibility to natural disasters and environmental change, openness, and income volatility. Categorisation based on quantitative definitions is often used in the context of development cooperation. It focuses the diplomatic exercise on the identification of the weaknesses and vulnerabilities of small states and on those measures and programmes that can help them cushion or avoid them.

This approach is useful in directing attention to very small and vulnerable states. It can also highlight the concerns of small states with serious exposure to the effects of natural disasters e. The qualitative approach concentrates on the perceptions that result from unequal relationships. It considers a much larger number of states as small, states whose sense of smallness is essentially circumstantial and subjective. It conceptualises the whole community of states ranging from the extremely small and weak microstate to the massive and most powerful superpower. Approached within this framework, the study of the diplomacy of small states includes a broader variety of foreign policy options and diplomatic methods, for example how small states deal with development and security, and how they seek to overcome their initial handicaps in specific circumstances.

This approach allows a wider appreciation of the value and uses of the multilateral processes in small state diplomacy, beyond the value and use of these processes in development cooperation. World Bank website. Openness, insularity, resilience, weakness, and dependence are important factors influencing small state engagement in the international system, according to the Commonwealth Advisory Group report, A future for small states: overcoming vulnerability.

Small states are exposed to a high degree of economic openness often with a dependence on strategic imports particularly food, energy, and industrial supplies ; a dependence on a narrow range of exports or services; and susceptibility to external economic shocks. Consequently, vulnerability is often seen to be a key element in defining them. A class-constructed definition DiploFoundation small states course, encapsulates the ideas of qualitative and quantitative elements, characteristics, and the issue of vulnerability: A small state is one whose geographical, economic, or demographic conditions contribute to a perceived weakness and vulnerability in the international setting. A small state may be robust internally but is vulnerable externally. These characteristics and vulnerabilities are often reflected in how small states conduct their diplomacy.

Cohesion often accompanies smallness. This assists in creating common purpose and consistency in the foreign policy and diplomacy of small states. It can reduce complications in governance arising from the competing or conflicting interests and perspectives of a complex and diverse society. Yet resource constraints mean that small states often have fewer resources necessary for effective interaction with other states. Resources required for gathering and analysing relevant information, for elaborating and projecting positions and points of view, and for marshalling and deploying alignments and circumstances in support of their positions may be in short supply. Although their limited resources can put smaller states in a weaker bargaining position in their interactions with larger states, this initial disadvantage can be reduced. This may require a reliance on collective solidarity and the rule of law, a strict focus on limited objectives, and the adoption of creative solutions.

The role of small states in various multilateral negotiations confirms that small and cohesive groups can have an important effect. Although the many complex structures and processes of multilateral diplomacy can strain the resources of small states, they see the value of the multilateral approach in levelling the playing field.

Small states can also exploit how their positions at the multilateral level can feed into bilateral relations. However we define them, small states are represented on either side of the divide that exists in the international system between developed and developing countries. The binding elements arising from the constraints of smallness are a relevant factor in several important aspects, most notably those related to the environment, to trade and investment, and to security for small states in general. Read more in the following sections on small states and the specific issues of economic development, security, and environment and climate change.

In economic diplomacy, the resilience that small states have to economic vulnerability and the way these vulnerabilities affect their bilateral and multilateral economic diplomacy is important to consider. Resilience may be inherent or nurtured. Published by Palgrave Macmillan, Used Condition: Near Fine Hardcover. Save for Later. View all copies of this book. About this Item pages including Index. Internation Political Economy Series. A fine clean copy with head and tail of spine slightly bumped. Seller Inventory Ask Seller a Question. About this title Synopsis: This is an in-depth analysis of the various methods used by small states to overcome their vulnerabilities in the international arena. Store Description We are an online internet bookstore based in Canada.

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Briguglio, in the paper Economic Vulnerability, and Resilience: Concepts and Measurements , identifies four variables on an index of nurtured resiliency: good governance, macroeconomic stability, market reform, and social development. Regional arrangements provide small states with the opportunity to insert their economies into larger economic frameworks. Regional economic integration provides a common platform through which members can better promote their collective interests with the rest of the international community and in multilateral arrangements, often advocating for a recognition of their specific challenges. An important dilemma for many small states is how best to maintain a distinction between their demands for a preservation of preferences, based on the argument of special vulnerability, and the demands of other developing countries for retention of these preferences as an indispensable development tool.

Small states have a more limited range of human and material resources to devote to security. They often lack the option of using force, either as a defensive or as a pre-emptive measure. Therefore, the diplomatic process becomes a more vital aspect of their approach to security than it may be for larger states. In common with all other states, the small state also has an interest in broad aspects of international peace, security, cooperation, prosperity building, and the protection of human rights. An international system based on respect for, and compliance with, the rule of law is a fundamental security safeguard for all states, but especially smaller and weaker ones. Small states have a strong record of active and enthusiastic promotion and support of these processes.

Singapore is not a claimant state in the South China Sea. We take no position on the merits of the specific territorial claims. But as a small state, we do have a vital interest in and we have to strongly support the maintenance of a rules-based international order and to support the peaceful resolution of disputes, with full respect for legal and diplomatic processes.

This is of vital importance for us that the integrity of international law and international agreements, such as the UN Convention on the Law of the Sea or UNCLOS for short, we must make sure that these agreements, these arrangements are not in any way undermined. As a small state, Singapore cannot accept that might is right. Read more at Speech press release. In environmental concerns, size is a major element of vulnerability. Environmental risks and natural disasters affect large and small states indiscriminately, and their effects on specific locations are the same, irrespective of location in a large or a small state.

Yet the capacity of a state to cope with the effects of environmental risks and natural disasters is highly related to size. The necessity of mitigation and adaptation for small states is sumarised in the following statement in by the St Lucia Minister for Sustainable Development. The adaptation needs of our islands are many and they certainly transcend water and coastal zone issues as climate change will affect other critical sectors and systems such as food production, human settlements, critical infrastructure, financial services, human health, and terrestrial bio-diversity. Read the full statement here. In , the vulnerability of small states to external shocks was brought sharply into focus during the hurricane season in the Western Hemisphere and the devastating impact wrought on Antigua and Barbuda, Dominica, Puerto Rico, and the Florida Keys, among others.

Diplo addresses the diplomacy of small states thorugh research, courses online and face-to-face , policy discussions, and publications. We invite you to join us:. Tracy Hackshaw. We need to ensure we digitalise all of our business processes as to enable the effective digital transformation of our governments, businesses, and educational institutions so that the disruptive solutions brought by Rawl Prescott.

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Review of International Political Economy December — The political economy of small states: Enduring vulnerability? Briguglio, G. Cordina, S. Vella and C. Cooper and T. Beyer eds C. Ingebritsen, I. Neumann, S. The appeal of studying small states, though, is nothing new. Of late, a nascent research agenda has also emerged in critical IPE. These three broad approaches each represent a distinctive way of think- ing about the small-state problematic, and this is something which is in turn illustrated by the three edited collections that comprise the core focus of this article.

These works provide essential reading for those who share an interest in what is a proliferating area of study, and they help us to flesh out the different positions that exist within the field of small-state studies by providing a snapshot of the debate in IR, devel- opment studies and IPE, respectively. At the same time, all of these lit- eratures are problematic in some way. By contrast, newer directions in critical IPE which have commendably argued for greater recognition of small-state agency also tend to neglect — at least implicitly — the structural constraints on action.

My agenda in this article is to clarify and crystallize these three different approaches by situating each of the books within their wider intellec- tual and historical context. Then, the paper moves on to a specific focus on developments within critical IPE. It discusses how greater conceptual awareness and precision can help to overcome the problem of excessive voluntarism that I identify, and which is illustrated empirically by draw- ing briefly on four pertinent examples. The paper concludes by delineating the broader conceptual implications, suggesting some ways forward for re-calibrating the focus of small-state analysis within IPE.

It is divided into three parts which move chronolog- ically through defining contributions to the literature, refining the debate, and then small-state capacity. It ends with a lovely annotated bibliogra- phy which also succinctly outlines many other key analyses which did not make it into the book. What is striking about the book is that it provides an explicit account of the strengths of the IR approach, as well as an implicit admission of a number of weaknesses. First, it is clear that, although interesting in terms of explaining new developments in the discipline in the s, s and s, the irredeemably state-centric nature of mainstream IR remained, and continues to remain, problematic. Conditioned by Cold War politics, moreover, the assumption on the part of many authors was simply that small states were only truly relevant in terms of their depen- dent relations with either the USA or the USSR.

For many early IR theorists, the category of small states was a catch-all term for every state which was not a Great Power. Third, few scholars have taken up the challenge laid down by the au- thors of the book to rethink small states through the lenses of the major traditions of IR theory, and particularly so beyond these supposedly small states of Western Europe. This is, of course, both welcome and interesting. A final point is that the relative paucity of analyses within IR is actually symptomatic of a longer-term trend, characterized by a waning of inter- est in small-state issues. It is actually quite telling that in the Ingebritsen et al. This can be explained to a degree by general indifference on the part of most IR scholars.

Indeed, as the already limited interest of IR faded in conjunction with the rapid changes in the interna- tional system of the s, these very same processes — decolonization, the end of the Cold War, globalization — actually piqued the interest of devel- opment theorists and led to them taking up the baton in the s and s. Consequently, the concern was now very much on geographically smaller states with far fewer people as little as 12,—13, in the cases of Tuvalu and Nauru , markedly less wealth and considerably more uneven development. Empirically, this body of litera- ture began with a focus on the Pacific Island States Bertram, ; ; ; Bertram and Watters, , before moving on to, in particular, the Caribbean Clarke and Payne, ; Payne and Sutton, With its focus on a largely different set of cases to IR, this literature has had much greater success in defining smallness and ascertaining that there is a distinctive category of small states.

By the s, the Commonwealth Secretariat set the bar at a population of fewer than one million peo- ple before this was revised upwards in a subsequent report to 1. It is rather the case that small states are distinguished by their overriding existential condition: vulnerability. These publications represent the continued evolution of a distinctive theoretical approach within development economics which has sought to conceptualize and quantify notions of smallness — along with the related concepts of vulnerability and resilience — in order to address the specific difficulties that face small states. The latest book consists of a number of chapters which are synthesized by the editors from the many contributions which have been made to the body of work since the s.

It is recognition of the specific vulnerabilities of small states that has been the major achievement of this burgeoning literature. These can come in a variety of forms: nat- ural disasters; currency crises; dramatic environmental degradation; high transaction costs; price fluctuations in commodity markets, especially oil; weak administration; high levels of out-migration; and volatile growth of GDP, amongst numerous others. Relatedly, small states suffer from a range of constraints linked to their smallness, including a narrow resource base, tiny domestic market and an often historically-constituted dependence on primary products for export Briguglio, Given that most small states thus have little choice but to operate high trade-to-GDP ratios, they are usually rendered extremely open economically and also often politically. They are consequently highly dependent on the

international system, pre- Downloaded by [Matthew Louis Bishop] at 07 December cluding many of the developmental and diplomatic strategies employed by larger states.

Yet a crucial point to note is that, for the most part, small states have actu- ally had, historically, a degree of influence in certain diplomatic domains, as well as significant economic success. By now, it should be clear that vulnerability is an altogether differ- ent concept from those pertaining to growth, development and progress. Vulnerability does not necessarily imply weakness, underdevelopment or privation. As Briguglio 2 himself has put it:. There are a number of Small Island Developing States SIDS — Singapore, Cyprus and Malta are prime examples — that are very economically vulnerable, but have managed to generate high income per capita in spite of this condition.

Fundamentally, the idea of vulnerability suggests that development is markedly more fragile, ephemeral and potentially threat- ened than in larger societies. The central insight of the development literature, then, is that such proneness to harm derives directly from the material fact of smallness. It can also be seen to be what distinguishes small states as such.

It is crit- ical to stress this point, because it is not often sufficiently clear in much Downloaded by [Matthew Louis Bishop] at 07 December theorizing on the subject. Although it is certainly true that many small states are developing coun- tries, the above contention misreads the case made by development the- orists and other small state analysts. The argument is manifestly not that smallness is inherently a barrier to development or a constraint on eco- nomic success. This is widely recognized by most thinkers. Rather the point is that they remain vulnerable to dramatic changes in the nature of that development in ways that larger states — however rich or poor they may be — do not. Towards resilience This is not to say, of course, that small states are passive and helpless, and it is the building of resilience which is the second part of the equation that exercises the minds of development economists Briguglio, In Profiling Vulnerability and Resilience Briguglio et al.

Even though the indices which are utilized are kept relatively simple in terms of data in order to render them useful in a policy sense Briguglio, 1 , the methodological rigor employed is a major strength of the approach. Yet despite these successes, there are three main problems. These go beyond the reflexive methodological critique that Briguglio ibid. First, it is questionable whether it is actually possible to quantify to any satisfactory extent what are, in reality, largely unquantifiable phenomena. There is little doubt that, as Briguglio et al. But, beyond this, what can quantification tell us substantively? Third, this debate lacks the kind of broad qualitative, historical and institutional insights that are characteristic of a political economy approach. Vulnerabil- ity and resilience are viewed to some extent in rather static terms, without the kind of contextualization required to give them real explanatory and analytical power.

It is to this issue that we now turn. Many scholars working in the broad field of critical IPE have lately begun to focus empirically on the relative constraints and opportunities that small states derive from the complex web of asymmetrical power relations that shape their engagement with international regimes and institutions. This has in turn built — in spirit, at least — on the development studies approach and, in particular, its focus on small-state agency. Such work has even — whether implicitly or explicitly — tended to push forward the notion that, not only can small states build resilience, but they can actually go well beyond resilience and be influential actors in their own right.

The chapters within the book focus upon, as the title suggests, The Diploma- cies of Small States and the varied examples of their seizing the initiative to effectively carve out niches in the Global Political Economy GPE. It is worth quoting them at length: The privileging of resilience and resourcefulness takes us in a very different, nuanced, and innovative direction [to vulnerability]. Security postures or military strength? Interaction with other states? Relative power indices? Quantitative definitions start with the criterion of absolute size — based on demographic, geographical, or economic factors — singly or in different combinations.

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