

Janeliūnas, T. (2021). *Foreign policy analysis of a Baltic state: Lithuania and 'Grybauskaitė Doctrine'*. New York: Routledge. 242pp. ISBN: 978-0-3678-6318-0 (hbk). ISBN: 978-1-0030-1835-3 (e-book).

Foreign policy analysis of a Baltic state. Lithuania and 'Grybauskaitė Doctrine' by Tomas Janeliūnas takes the reader on an academic-historic journey through a diverse selection of possible lenses, including “small state”, “Baltic state(s)”, “Lithuanian foreign policy” and “Grybauskaitė as an actor”. These not necessarily overlapping paths coalesce around eleven chapters that seek to familiarize the reader with the foreign policy doctrine of Dalia Grybauskaitė, who served as president of Lithuania between 2009 and 2019.

In the introductory chapter of the book, the author does not reveal or introduce the reader to the core essence of Grybauskaitė's doctrine. Instead, the author only introduces the sources of studying the doctrine; namely, the speeches of Grybauskaitė and interviews conducted while undertaking the research.

The eight thematic chapters on Lithuanian foreign policy in this book form an interesting and original study, replete with rich interviews with Grybauskaitė herself, as well as her close advisors and foreign policy-making officials throughout her tenure. In addition, Janeliūnas offers valuable insight into illuminating sources, such as the memos of the US Embassy in Lithuania that incorporate an external assessment of Grybauskaitė's policies.

Although the choice of chapters is relevant and closely related to the foreign policy development of Lithuania, they vary in their essence. Some, such as the chapters on Lithuanian policies towards the EU, US, Russia and the Baltic states, reflect Lithuanian self-esteem as an actor that can find their own way, if necessary. Meanwhile, the chapters on Lithuanian foreign policy towards Poland and Israel offer more of a historic picture that contextualize and confront the modern foreign policy dilemmas of Lithuania. The chapter on Ukraine is one of the most thorough of the book; yet, it seems somewhat incongruous with the other case studies as it focuses predominantly on developments in Ukraine and offers less insight into the foreign and security policy calculations from a Lithuanian perspective. The resulting implication is that the developments in Ukraine appeared to be out of Lithuania's, or Grybauskaitė's, reach.

The strongest contribution of this book on the decade-long Lithuanian foreign policy under Grybauskaitė to small state studies is in showcasing how this geographically small state did not pursue a foreign policy characteristic of the Baltic small states under her leadership. This assessment is based on four principal aspects.

First: Grybauskaitė's approach did not prioritise bilateral relations with its neighbours Poland, Latvia and Estonia, as has been prototypical of Lithuanian foreign policy. The Baltic small state perspective typically gives primacy to strong bilateral relations based on regional cooperation to compensate for individual limitations as small states. Instead, Grybauskaitė shifted from the emphasis on regional foreign policy by her predecessor, Valdas Adamkus, to build partnerships with Nordic countries, meant to reduce Lithuanian energy dependency on Russia.

Second, Lithuanian selective foreign policy under Grybauskaitė towards the US, as a key security guarantor of Lithuania through NATO membership, demonstrates further variance from prototypical Baltic states' small state behaviour. Instead of trying to find a pragmatic way to adopt the policy lines of the Obama-led US administration, Grybauskaitė's foreign policy aimed to establish her own principles and agenda for Lithuanian relations with the US, despite Lithuania not reaching the 2% of GDP NATO defence spending benchmark at the time. This stance contradicts the small state approach, characteristic of other Baltic states, that aims for

maximum security guarantees with key allies, regardless of the adopted foreign policy line of the US.

Third, an observation of Grybauskaitė as a policy actor reveals that she pursued a foreign policy for Lithuania based predominantly on her own personal, political preferences. This resulted in Lithuania reaching a political low point in its relations with Poland between 2010 and 2015. Whilst sensitive relations are a feature of their bilateral history, modern administrations have sought to prevent Lithuania from treating problems with Poland as bipartisan ones so as to maintain good relations with this neighboring state as a regional security actor and a geographic land-connection for NATO to enter Lithuania in case of a crisis. Thus, Grybauskaitė's approach signified a troubling souring in international relations based on political tensions.

Finally, Lithuanian foreign policy under Grybauskaitė may be assessed as having been unpredictable, emotionally driven, and personal assessment-based. Reactive foreign policy has clearly dominated over proactive foreign policy. Here the most obvious example is Grybauskaitė's last-minute personal decision to change Lithuanian policy over the UN-Jerusalem vote in 2017 from abstaining, to voting in accordance with the EU position. While her intuitive approach might have been the right option, and mostly a useful one for Lithuania, it begs the question: what if she had not been right, and who could have told the President that her decision was not the most appropriate one for Lithuania at the time? Grybauskaitė's foreign policy privileged interests, and by doing her utmost to accommodate these interests together with values into Lithuanian foreign policy, resulted in short-sighted unpredictable choices.

Altogether, this book shows how small state foreign policy is not simply a linear story about compensating for smallness, but presents a multidimensional understanding as to how a small state can accommodate many additional interests and values into one foreign policy. Foreign policy under Grybauskaitė was active, vocal, hands-on, and sometimes questionable, yet proved rather successful overall from the domestic Lithuanian point of view. Her main success was borne out in her encouragement of the German leadership to become the framework nation in NATO's enhanced forward presence on Lithuanian soil. Moreover, she was one of the few international leaders who found a way to engage with US President Donald Trump, a feat that was particularly challenging for small state leaders during his incumbency.

In the final chapter of the book, the author ultimately reveals his assessment of Grybauskaitė's foreign policy principles based on six propositions. These principles reflect Lithuania as an actor who should not shy away from pursuing a foreign policy that includes interests, and that strives to secure maximum gains from the surrounding environment. Thus, Janeliūnas' book tells a story of a small state that offers a foreign policy making narrative that is distinct from the traditional Baltic or 'small state' type.

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