INTRODUCTION

Hans J. Morgenthau was from Germany. Knowing the condition of Germany during the time of Hitler, he concluded that – the governing can do what they wish.


MORGENTHAU’S SIX PRINCIPLES OF POLITICAL REALISM


He identifies a different class of realism. He called it ‘Political Realism’.

FIRST PRINCIPLE

POLITICS IS GOVERNED BY OBJECTIVE LAWS, INHERITED IN HUMAN NATURE.

Politics is governed by objective laws that are inherited in human nature. So, realism must develop a rational theory that reflects these objective laws. Then, realism should try to differentiate (in politics) between - “what is true objectively and rationally, supported by evidence and illuminated by reason” and “what is only a subjective judgement, divorced from the facts as they are and informed by prejudice and wishful thinking.”

He also says that laws of politics are permanent and unchanging as these are inherited in human nature. Hence, the theory of politics developed hundreds of thousands of years ago must not be discarded and outmoded. However, each and every theories of politics must be subjected to dual test of: reason and experience. For realism, a theory of politics is meaningful if it consists ascertaining facts and convey meaning through reason.

SECOND PRINCIPLE

POLITICS IS ALL ABOUT POWER, i.e., CENTRALITY OF POWER

Second principles views that realists believe that power is the main articulation of political interest, a philosophy which can be tested observing the actions of Statesmen throughout history. This means that ‘the concept of interest defined in terms of power’ plays autonomous role in politics rather than other spheres such as economics (concept of interest defined in terms of wealth), ethics, aesthetic, or religion.

Realists assume that statesmen think and act in terms of interest defined in terms of power. Through this assumption, a realist retraces the actions taken in past, or taking in present, or will take in future.

Hence, he says that realism will have to guard against two popular fallacies (तर्कदोष):

a) The concerns with motives
b) The concerns with ideological preferences.

The concerns with motives
To understand the actions (foreign policies) of the statesmen on the basis of his motives only is both futile (व्यर्क) and deceptive (भ्रामर्). Even if anyone had access to the real motives of statesmen, this would not help much in understanding their actions (foreign policies). It is true that the knowledge of the statesmen’s motives may give him one among many clues to retrace the direction of their actions (foreign policies). But, it is not possible to predict their actions with the help of one clue. History shows no exact and necessary correlation between the ‘quality of motives’ and the ‘quality of foreign policy’. This is true in both cases: moral and political.

One cannot conclude from the good intentions of a statesmen that his foreign policies will be either morally praiseworthy or politically successful.

For example:-

- **Neville Chamberlain, prime minister of UK, from May 1937 to May 1940.**
  
  He is best known for his *appeasement foreign policies*. He was inspired by good motives, sought to preserve peace and to assure the happiness of all. Yet his policies helped to make the second World War inevitable, and to bring untold miseries to millions of men.

- **Sir Winston Churchill, prime minister of UK from 1940 to 1945 and again from 1951 to 1955.**
  
  His motives were much less universal in scope and much more narrowly directed toward personal and national power, yet the foreign policies that sprang from these inferior motives were certainly superior in moral and political quality to those pursued by his predecessor.

- **Maximilien Robespierre, a French lawyer, politician and best known and influential figure of ‘French Revolution’.**
  
  Judged by his motives, he was one of the most virtuous (चरित्रवान) men who ever lived. Yet due to being follower of the utopian radicalism, he killed those who were less virtuous than himself, brought him to the scaffold (फााँसी र्ी तख्ता), and destroyed the revolution of which he was a leader.

So, Hans J. Morgenthau writes, good motives gives assurance against deliberately bad policies, but they do not guarantee the moral goodness and political success of the policies they inspire. Hence, in order to understand foreign policy of the statesmen, it is not important to know his motives, important is - a) his intellectual ability to comprehend the essentials of foreign policies, b) political stability to translate what he has comprehended into successful political action.

**The concerns for ideological preferences**

Morgenthau observes that the statesmen may present their foreign policies reflecting some influence of their ideological preference. Yet they will distinguish between their ‘official duty’ and ‘personal duty’. Official duty, which is to think and act in terms of the national interest, whereas, personal wish, which is to see their own moral values and political principles realized throughout the world.

**THIRD PRINCIPLE**

**CONCEPT OF INTEREST DEFINED AS POWER IS UNIVERSALLY VALID CONCEPT.**

Political realism assume that its key concept of interest defined as power is universally valid concept, but the meaning is neither permanent nor fixed once and for all. Looking onto human nature, Morgenthau observes that for the humankind, interest is governing principle, which influences almost each and every man either more or less.
Yet the kind of interest determining political action in a particular period in history depends upon the political and cultural context within which foreign policy is formulated. The same observations apply to the concept of Interest defined in terms of power. Its content and the manner of its use are determined by the political and cultural environment.

Morgenthau also observes that power may comprise anything that establishes and maintains the control of man over man. Thus power covers all social relationships which serve that end, from physical violence to the most subtle psychological ties by which one mind controls another. Power covers the domination of man by man, both - when it is disciplined by moral ends and controlled by constitutional safeguards, and when it is done by barbaric force which finds its laws in nothing but its own strength and its sole justification in its aggrandizement (शक्ति अर्वा पदवी बढ़ाना).

Morgenthau writes that realism does not assume that the contemporary conditions under which foreign policy operate, with their extreme instability and the threat of large-scale violence, cannot change. He suggests “balance of power” as an example and an instrument which is capable of operating in contemporary conditions.

**FOURTH PRINCIPLE**

**POLITICAL REALISM IS AWARE OF THE MORAL SIGNIFICANCE OF POLITICAL ACTION.**

Morgenthau’s forth principle says, “Political realism is aware of the moral significance of political action.” However, the universal moral principles cannot be applied to the actions of states in their abstract universal formulation, but, the realist must filter the moral principles relevant to a particular policy through the circumstances of time and place.

The individual may say for himself: “*Fiat justia, pereat mundus* (Let justice be done, even if the world perish)”, but the state has no right to say so in the name of those who are in its care. Both individual and state must judge political action by universal moral principles, such as principles of liberty, equality and justice etc. Yet while the individual has a moral right to sacrifice himself in defence of such a moral principle, the state can’t do so because it is inspired by the moral of national survival. Nehru also views the same by quoting, “*who will live, if India dies*” when he was being criticized for urging support from USSR as India was one of the important member of NAM (Non-Alignment Movement) countries.

In conclusion, a statesman has far heavier responsibility than an individual because he is responsible to the people of his country who depends on him for their survival. Political ethics judges statesmen’s action by its political consequences while ethics judges action by its conformity with the moral principles. So did Lincoln when he said:

“*I do the very best I know how, the very best I can, and I mean to keep doing so until the end. If the ends brings me out all right, what is said against me won’t amount to anything. If the end brings me out wrong, ten angles swearing I was right would make no difference.*”

**FIFTH PRINCIPLE**

**POLITICAL REALISM REFUSES TO IDENTIFY THE MORAL ASPIRATIONS OF A PARTICULAR NATION WITH THE MORAL PRINCIPLES THAT GOVERN THE UNIVERSE.**
Fifth principle of Morgenthau holds that, “Political realism reuses to identify the moral aspirations of a particular nation with the moral laws that govern the universe.”

Morgenthau views that it is dangerous to impose a particular ideology on a nation because it threatens international peace and security.

On the other hand, he argues to look at all nations through the concept of interest defined in terms of power because if one looks at all nations, including his own, as political entities pursuing their respective interests defined in terms of power, he will be able to do justice to all of them, and also in a dual sense:

A) He will be able to judge other nations as he judges his own nation.
B) And having judged them in this fashion, he will be capable of pursuing policies that respect the interests of other nations, while protecting and promoting the interests of his own nation.

SIXTH PRINCIPLES

POLICY MUST COME OUT OF POLITICAL ANALYSIS: AN ANALYSIS OF POWER.

Lastly, sixth principle of Morgenthau’s political realism advocates that policies must arise out of political analysis: an analysis of power. It may sound obvious, but he warns that policy has been repeatedly guided by legal and moral guidelines instead of strictly political considerations. As a result, the power of a country and the welfare of its citizens have been routinely endangered.

He says that the policy of France and Great Britain was a classic example of legalism in that they allowed the answer to the legal question, legitimate within its sphere, to determine their political actions. Instead they must ask both questions, that of law and that of power.

Finally, it must be noted that, political realist maintains the autonomy of the political sphere, as the economist, the lawyer, the moralist maintain theirs, as Morgenthau’s sixth principle advocates that policies must arise out of political analysis: an analysis of power. He thinks in terms of interest defined as power, as the economist thinks in terms of interest defined as wealth; the lawyers, of the conformity of action with legal rules; the moralist, of the conformity of action with moral principles. The economist asks: “How does this policy affect the wealth of society, or a segment of it?” The lawyer asks: “Is this policy accord with the rules of law?” The moralist asks: “Is this policy in accord with moral principles?” And the political realist asks: “How does this policy affect the power of the nation?”

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