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IIIrd Phase of International Politics

Started after WWII
a.k.a. Cold War Phase, Bipolar world order

IVth phase

Post Cold War world order

Present world order & the challenges which have emerged seriously challenged the status of realism as the core theory of international politics. Today neither relations betⁿ 2 nations can be understood only from the perspective of realism nor realism alone can guide foreign policies today. The present world order needs to be understood through the paradigm of "Complex Interdependence" (frame of reference).

Realist Theory of International Politics

imp criticism

Ideological influences on realist scholars

- Kautilya's 'Mandal Theory' & 'Shadgunya Siddhant' (six fold foreign policy prescription) are one of the initial contributions to realism.

- Thucydides

Book: History of Peloponnesian War (among Greek city states).

He has given one of the earliest accounts of wars

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According to him, wars will remain permanent feature in human life. The origin of war is inherent in human nature. Man is inherently self-centred. self interest always wins over our morality. According to him, considerations of right & wrong are never strong enough to turn people away from the benefits of power.

- Machiavelli

Machiavelli gives the concept of dual morality. Morality of Prince is different from the morality of common man. Neither religion nor ethics should create a dilemma for Prince w.r.t. the preservation & promotion of national interest. Pragmatism is the ethics of politics.

- Hobbes

Hobbes also gives pessimistic account of human nature. Man can't live in a state of peace in the absence of state. In a situation where common authority is absent, power is the only means to safeguard one's interest. With the creation of state, we have tacked anarchy in domestic sphere but shifted anarchy to international sphere. Before contract it was struggle among individuals. After contract it became struggle among states.

Schools of Realism

Classical Realism [Hans Morgenthau]

cause
differ

- Contemporary Realism [Kenneth Waltz]
- Neoclassical Realism [Fareed Zakaria]

Classical Realism

- Classical Realists propound their argument on the analysis of human nature whereas contemporary realists shift explanation to the structure of international politics rather than human nature. Morgenthau is known as 'Father of Realism' in international theory. He has given 6 essential principles of realism. Book: Politics among nations : late 40's

Context of Morgenthau's theory

- Morgenthau was writing at a time when lot of thinking was going on w.r.t. the world order that is to be created after the experience of 2 World Wars. There was a strong demand for saving the succeeding generations from the scourge of war. In this context scholars were exploring the options, how wars can be avoided & cooperation among nations can be promoted.

- Morgenthau cautions American policymakers to stay away from Idealism. If America has to achieve the pre-eminent position, has to create a world order favourable to its rise. It has to be based on the strong foundations of power rather than principles of ethics. He has given 6 principles of realism, projects these principles as universal principles & a foreign policy makers

should never lose sight of these principles. He claimed his understanding as the scientific understanding of International Politics.

6 Principles.

— Basis of deriving the laws of International Politics.

The laws of politics are extension of human nature. Human beings by nature are power seeking. State is also an extension of human beings. State actions are also guided by power.

Essence of argument is understanding of politics has to be based on understanding of human psychology rather than philosophy, ethics or religion.

— National Interest

Just like all human actions are guided by self interest, actions of the state are also guided by national interest.

— On nature of national interest

National interest is a dynamic concept. It keeps on changing with the changing times. However the essence, i.e., national interest remains the same. Hence Morgenthau wants to suggest that there is no permanent enemy & no permanent friend, what is permanent is national interest.

— His Views on Universal moral principles

Universal moral principles do not apply in the conduct of states. States can't give primacy to moral principles over national interest.

Ideology masks real intentions.
↓
for domestic consumption

- Role of Ideology & principles in international politics.

Ideology & moral aspirations have limited significance. On the basis of these principles alone, a nation can't protect & promote its national interest. Ideology should not be an obstacle in forming alliances with those who may have similar interests.

It implies that political ideologies are more to do with domestic consumption rather than a determining factor in interstate relations.

- Autonomous nature of the discipline

Like Machiavelli, Morgenthau also held that Politics is neither ethics nor law or economics. It has its own autonomy. It has its own set of principles. International politics is nothing but struggle for power.

Thus for Morgenthau, whatever maybe the ultimate aim, power is always the immediate aim, and international politics is nothing but struggle for power.

The above statement is a core principle of realism. For realists, international politics is the struggle for power. Realists belonging to the different schools of realism give different explanations, but all of them agree that int. politics is struggle for power. Morgenthau has established above principle as a universal principle on the basis of

analysis of human nature. According to him, politics is extension of human nature. Just like human beings seek power to fulfil their self interest, nations also seek power to fulfil their national interest.

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Kenneth Waltz, a neorealist scholar shifts explanation from human nature to the structure of int. politics. Since common authority is absent, int. politics is in the state of anarchy. Nations have to depend on self help for their survival. In this context, they can't depend on others. They can only depend on power. C. Rajamohan has also mentioned that the world understands argument of power rather than power of argument.

Realists continue to believe that international politics is struggle for power & search for any alternative to power politics is a fruitless search. Nations or policy makers who are tempted to believe that cooperations among nations & pursuit of common good is possible are idealists & they are bound to bring destruction to their national interest.

There are other schools of thought, which believe that realists overlooked the growth of cooperation among nations that have emerged in our times. Their approach is static. For social constructivists, int'l politics

is not struggle for power alone. It is not the universal law of politics but we are made to believe this.

Morgenthau has classified states on the basis of search for power into 3 types

- Status quoist states US
- Revisionist states / power China
- Imperialist states / power Ger under Hitler

Morgenthau on peace

It is not that realists do not talk about peace but they believe that war, rather than peace is a permanent feature of int'l politics.

Realist prescription for maintenance of peace is either through diplomacy or through balance of power. They do not have faith in peace through collective security or international org & ~~int'l~~ int'l law.

Criticisms of Morgenthau

- According to the behavioural political scholars, Morgenthau's understanding of int'l politics is based on non scientific understanding of human nature. His understanding of human nature is partial & hence his theory is biased.
- According to Kenneth Waltz, Morgenthau could not provide scientific explanations to realism. He has based his analysis on human nature rather than structure.

- According to liberals, Morgenthau overlooks the collective action & cooperation that is taking place among the states in contemporary times.
- For Post-modernists, there can't be any scientific explanation of reality. Realism is also "regime of truth" rather than truth.

Contemporary Realism / NeoRealism / Scientific Realism

Kenneth Waltz

Book: Theory of International Politics (1979)

Context of K. Waltz's theory

There has been growth in intⁿ cooperation, intⁿ law since 1962. In this context, realist prescriptions came under challenge from alternative schools of thoughts. Purpose of K. Waltz's was to reestablish that principles of realism represent the timeless wisdom & we do not have liberty to overlook them.

Objective of K. Waltz

- To reestablish the relevance of realism in foreign policy making.
- To modify the method of Morgenthau & to give scientific explanation to realism.

Scientific theories can't be built on the analysis of human nature, as human nature remains highly unpredictable. Hence he based

- his theory on understanding the conditions prevailing in intⁿ politics which forced nations to acquire power.

• Keys Principles of structural realism

• - Nature of international system

- Intⁿ system is made up of states. States are sovereign. Intⁿ system lacks common authority or world govt parallel to what exists in domestic situation.

• - Structure of international system

- Structure of intⁿ system is anarchical, whereas that of domestic system is hierarchical. Here anarchy doesn't mean lawlessness or state of war, but anarchy means absence of supreme authority over states. In the absence of a common policeman, states have to make arrangement for their survival by themselves. In this scenario only power is dependable. Nations can't depend on law or morality for their security / survival.

• - Capabilities

- Though all nation states are sovereign, but all nation states do not possess equal capabilities. Intⁿ politics is great power politics.

- K. Waltz has given an explanation as to why nations seek power.

- According to him, nations seek power because

balance of power - nervous state of peace

policy maker is to have a similar approach.

Neoclassical realists suggest to adopt both structure level analysis as well as actor level analysis. We can't overlook personality factor, domestic factors in foreign policy making.

Liberal School of thought Liberal theories of Intⁿ Politics.

Purpose of Realists:

Purpose is security & survival. For realists wars remain an inevitable fact of the relations among nations. They can't escape from war.

Realists will depend on hard power & primarily the military power. The only way peace is ensured is balance of power. Realists don't see the possibility of nations working for common interest. In

Intellectual influences on Realism are

Thucydides, Hobbes, Machiavelli.

Realists are known as children of darkness.

Liberals:

Main concerns of Liberal.

Liberals talk about peace & prosperity.

Liberals have optimistic views of human nature.

Liberals believe that nations are capable of working in cooperation. For liberals, what is needed is "Power of Ideas". If we have such ideas which promote peace we can transform the status quo.