

Q. Discuss the Morgenthau's view on Realism.

Ans. Realism is the most popular theory in international politics. Realist theory is closely attached to the political theorists who emphasize on the negative part of human behavior. According to the Realist theorists individuals are rational but self-centered beings and their prime objective is to protect and maximise their self interest.

The roots of the realist theory can be traced back to the evolution of ancient political thought. Hans Morgenthau was the chief exponent of realist theory. Although there have been many others who have contributed to realism, it was Morgenthau who gave theoretical orientation to realism. The realist approach was transformed by him in a distinctive school of thought.

It is not surprising, therefore that "realism" and "Morgenthauism" are treated as synonymous by some scholars. According to him, the master key is the concept of interest defined in terms of power. This approach focuses attention on the units which remain the principal actors in international politics; the states. Morgenthau defines power as men's control over minds and actions of other men.

The essence of Morgenthau's theory is contained in the six principle of political realism enumerated by Morgenthau himself. His six principles are widely accepted as the principles of the theory of International Relations. These principles are:

1. Politics is governed by objective laws that have their roots in human nature. The laws by which man moves in the social world are eternal.

2. The main element of political realism is the concept of national interest which Morgenthau defines in terms of power. A foreign policy, therefore, should concern itself more with the political requirement of success rather than anything else.

3. Political Realism does not take a fixed or determined meaning of interest. Interest defined as power is an objective category which is universally valid, but whose meaning can change.

4. Political Realism thought not indifferent to morality, implies that universal moral principles cannot be applied to the actions of states in their abstract universal formulations, but that they must be modified in accordance with requirements of concrete circumstances of time and place.

5. Political realism refuses to accept any identification between the moral aspirations of a particular nation and the moral laws which govern the universe. That means the moral laws that govern the universe are distinct for the morals of any one nation.

6. And finally, political realism maintains the autonomy of the political sphere. The difference between political realism and other school is real and profound.

The realist approach is based upon three basic assumptions. One is that statesman desire to pursue their nation's interests. The second is that the interest of every nation lies in the expansion of its influence, territorial, economic, political and cultural. And the third is that states use their power, which is also defined as influence, in the protection and furtherance of their interests.

The political realist facilitates and maintains the autonomy of the political sphere by asking, 'How does this policy affect the power of the nation?' Political realism is based on a pluralistic concept of human nature. A man who is nothing but a 'political man' would be a beast, for he would be completely lacking in moral restraints. But in order to develop an autonomous theory of political behaviors, a political man must be abstracted from other aspects of human nature. Morgenthau maintains that the dynamic force which moulds international relations is to be found in the states drive for power. Indeed, the realist approach adopted by Morgenthau has some validity in the study of International Politics.