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THE THEORY OF INTERNATIONAL RELATIONS: HANS J. MORGENTHAU AND HIS CRITICS

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The study of international relations has experienced in the last decade a burst of activity "which is unambiguously labelled 'theoretical'" (Fox, 1959, p. 33). This concern with theory is one aspect of the soul-searching process in which scholars in the field have been engaged for the last twenty years. It is a sign that the field is acquiring a new sophistication. It is a clear reflection of the mood of international relationists who feel the crying need "for more theory, more model-building, more quantification, more integrated study drawing on the resources of all the sciences of life, man, and society" (Boulding, 1958, p. 329).

It seems that this concern with theory is here to stay. Indeed, if the present trends are to be taken as an indication of future developments, theory-oriented writings will increase and grow in importance.

It is a logical task for students in the field to examine past theoretical efforts in the light of the insights that recent theorizing about theory has provided.

We have been theorizing all the time. The need is for us to gain greater theoretical self-awareness so that we can subject our theories to a more sustained and penetrating critical analysis (Fox, 1959, p. xii).

Morgenthau's Concept of International Relations Theory

Hans J. Morgenthau is among the most influential of American scholars in the field of international relations. His theory "has occupied the center of the scene in this country during the last ten years . . ." (Hoffman, 1961, p. 423). One writer goes so far as to assert that "in recent years much of the literature of international politics is a dialogue, explicit or not, between 'Morgenthau and his critics' . . ." (Thompson, 1959a, p. 222). Few efforts have been

made to bring together Morgenthau and his critics in one place, however. The present study is conceived as an effort to fill this gap.

The paper does not concern itself with all of Morgenthau's writings, but is focused only upon his theory of international relations. Three limitations follow. First, Morgenthau's commentaries on world affairs and his critiques of American foreign policy are not considered. Second, Morgenthau's specific arguments—such as those concerning foreign aid, alliances, and the balance of power—remain outside the scope. Third, Morgenthau's theoretical discussions of matters beyond the field of international relations—for example, his theory of ethics and his views of science—are treated only insofar as they bear upon his theory of international relations.

Of Morgenthau's books only two, *Scientific Man vs. Power Politics* and *Politics Among Nations*, have proved to be of vital importance to the study. The second book, which first appeared in 1948, has been published in three editions. However, its theoretical positions remained almost the same. To facilitate references for the reader, the third edition, the latest, was the one employed in the study.

With respect to Morgenthau's essays and articles, the same purpose of facilitating reference caused the writer to employ Morgenthau's collections of articles, previously published in periodicals. Of these collections, *The Decline of Democratic Politics* is the most valuable.

Morgenthau's concept of international relations theory is based upon two general assumptions:

. . . first, that for theoretical purposes international relations is identical with international politics; second, that a theory of international politics is but a specific instance of a general theory of politics (Morgenthau, 1959, p. 15).

A theory of international relations, according to Morgenthau, is a theory of international politics. As a totality of social phenomena, international relations, like domestic relations, requires no less than a general sociological system to explain it. Any theoretical effort, short of a general system, is bound to focus upon a specific element of international relations. Theories of international relations could be as numerous as the intellectual interests of theoreticians. Morgenthau adds, however, that in a particular period of history, one perspective is likely to assume primary importance.

Today most institutions and students have turned to the study of international relations because of their interest in world politics. The primacy of politics over all other interests, in fact as well as in thought, in so far as the relations among nations and areas are concerned, needs only to be mentioned to be recognized (Morgenthau, 1962c, p. 125).

Consequently, international politics takes precedence over other perspectives and becomes the focus of any theoretical approach to international relations.

The second assumption stems from Morgenthau's belief that politics, being a struggle for power, is the same in both international and domestic spheres. The issues that confront a general political theory also confront a theory of international politics:

. . . the nature of a theory of international relations and the intellectual and political functions a theory of international relations performs and ought to perform are not in essence different from the nature of general political theory and the functions which such theories have performed since the beginning of history (Morgenthau, 1962d, p. 77).

However, the environment within which international politics takes place is different from the environment of domestic politics.

What sets international society apart from other societies is the fact that its strength—political, moral, social—is concentrated in its members, its own weakness being the reflection of that strength (Morgenthau, 1959, p. 23).

A theory of international relations, then, must account for the peculiarities of its subject matter. In applying the general principles of politics to the international scene, it must modify them to fit the distinctive quality of international politics.

Morgenthau suggests that a theory of politics, domestic or international, needs a central concept.

For a general theory of politics, the concept of interest defined as power serves as the central focus, while a theory of international politics must be focused on the concept of the national interest (Morgenthau, 1962f, p. 79).

However, Morgenthau makes it clear that introducing power as a central concept does not mean that only power relations control political action. Power serves as a criterion that distinguishes politics

from other spheres. Furthermore, it "provides a kind of rational outline of politics, a map of the political scene" (Morgenthau, 1959, p. 17).

Theory, according to Morgenthau, must serve as a tool of understanding. It must ". . . bring order and meaning into a mass of unconnected material . . ." (Morgenthau, 1962d, p. 72). Its primary task is "to reduce the facts of experiences to mere specific instances of general propositions . . ." (Morgenthau, 1959, p. 20).

While serving as a guide to understanding, theory can also be an "ideal for action." It presents a map of the political scene that can show the shortest and safest road to a given objective (Morgenthau, 1959, p. 18). Theory, as an "ideal for action," operates in the following way:

. . . we can say that the situations in Laos, Cuba, and Berlin provide American foreign policy with a limited number of rational choices. . . . What a theory of international relations can state is the likely consequences of choosing one alternative as over against another and the conditions under which one alternative is more likely to occur and be successful than the other (Morgenthau, 1962d, pp. 69-70).

In addition, Morgenthau discusses four different practical functions that a theory of international relations can perform. First, theory can provide a theoretical justification for the decisions of the policy-makers. Second, theory can develop a coherent system of thought by whose standards the actual conduct of foreign policy may be judged. Third, theory can perform the function of intellectual conscience which reminds the policy-makers of the sound principles of foreign policy and points out their failure to comply with them.¹ Fourth, theory can "prepare the ground for a new international order . . ." (Morgenthau, 1962d, p. 75).

Morgenthau warns against employing political theory as a "blueprint for political action" (Morgenthau, 1962h, p. 1). Theory is limited by the very nature of politics whose contingent elements obviate the possibility of theoretical understanding.

The most formidable difficulty facing a theoretical inquiry into the

¹To illustrate these three functions, Morgenthau (1962d, pp. 73-75) refers to his personal experience as a theoretician of international relations with the administrations of Presidents Truman, Eisenhower, and Kennedy.

nature and ways of international politics is the ambiguity of the material with which the observer has to deal. The events he must try to understand are on the one hand, unique occurrences. . . . On the other hand, they are similar, for they are the manifestations of social forces. . . . But where is the line to be drawn between the similar and the unique? (Morgenthau, 1960a, p. 18).

Morgenthau answers that here "we can only play by ear and must be satisfied with a series of hunches which may or may not turn out to be correct" (Morgenthau, 1959, p. 20).

Following this line of thought, Morgenthau attacks theoretical endeavors "to reduce international relations to a system of abstract propositions with a predictive function" (Morgenthau, 1962d, p. 65). Theory cannot lead to reliable predictions; "world affairs have surprises in store for whoever tries to read the future from his knowledge of the past and from the signs of the present" (Morgenthau, 1960a, p. 21).

Morgenthau's concept of international relations theory is modeled entirely after his own theory. In all his theoretical discussions, Morgenthau never loses sight of his theory. Thus, he states that international politics should be the theoretical focus for the study of international relations and that national interest should be the central concept of international relations theory. Morgenthau's theory, in other words, provides the standard against which any theoretical inquiry should be judged. Thus, theoretical approaches different from Morgenthau's approach, which he calls "the presently fashionable theorizing about international relations," (Morgenthau, 1962d, p. 65) are doomed to "fail both as guides for theoretical understanding and as precepts for action" (Morgenthau, 1962d, p. 66).

Prediction plays an insignificant part in Morgenthau's concept. Furthermore, Morgenthau's stand on prediction seems inconsistent. While he warns against reading the future, he does not hesitate in offering predictions. Two examples, taken at random, clarify the point. He says that war under contemporary conditions "may end in world domination or in world destruction or in both" (Morgenthau, 1960a, p. 363). At another point, he predicts that "the development of the world balance of power in the immediate future will largely depend upon the course . . . uncommitted nations will take" (Morgenthau, 1960a, p. 352). Are such statements reliable predictions stemming from theory or are they intuitions? Morgenthau's assertion that theory will not support predictions lends to the latter

conclusion—that such statements are “series of hunches.” If they are, there is, indeed, not much difference between judgments arising from a theory of international relations and judgments derived from simple, common sense. In short, Morgenthau’s stand on prediction, evaluated by practice *and* precept appears to be a weak point in his characterization of international relations theory.

Morgenthau’s Theory of International Relations

“A political science inclosed in nothing but an empirical framework,” writes Morgenthau (1962g, p. 31), “is a contradiction in terms and a monstrosity.” Indeed, every observer approaches the political scene with certain preconceived ideas, a certain philosophy through which facts are viewed and interpreted. To understand Morgenthau’s theory, then, one must understand the philosophical framework from which the theory springs. It is very difficult to differentiate between Morgenthau’s political philosophy and his theory. However, a clue may be found in Brecht’s definitions of the words “theory” and “philosophy.” “Every theory . . . tries to explain something. Philosophy tries to explain, not *something*, but *everything* . . .” (Brecht, 1959, p. 15).

Morgenthau claims that realism is his political philosophy. Realism, however, is not a self-explanatory word. No thinker would conceive of his philosophy or theories as being unrealistic. Wright (1952, p. 120) goes so far as to say,

. . . “realism” and “idealism” have functioned as propaganda terms . . . The terms do not, in other words, throw light on the policies, institutions, personalities, or theories which they are used to qualify. . . .

Undoubtedly aware of the ambiguity of realism, Morgenthau has tried to clarify what he means by the term. In the first chapter of *Politics Among Nations*, he writes that his theory has earned the name of realism by virtue of its “concern with human nature as it actually is, and with the historic processes as they actually take place” (Morgenthau, 1960a, p. 4). He goes further to discuss six fundamental principles of realism. Since these principles are the essence of Morgenthau’s political philosophy, they will be presented in the following discussion.

(1) Realism maintains that politics is governed by objective laws

that stem from human nature. The laws "by which man moves in the social world" (Morgenthau, 1946, p. 220) are eternal; "there are, aside from the laws of mathematics, no other eternal laws besides these" (Morgenthau, 1946, p. 220). The existence of objective laws of politics leads to two conclusions. First, a theory of politics is possible. Second, "novelty is not necessarily a virtue in political theory, nor is old age a defect" (Morgenthau, 1960a, p. 4).

(2) Realism finds its main guide in the concept of interest defined in terms of power (Morgenthau, 1960a, p. 5). It assumes that political actors act and think in terms of interest defined as power. This concern with interest and power leads realism to eschew the preoccupation with both the motives and ideological preferences of political actors.

(3) Realism does not claim an absolute and permanent meaning for its concept of power (Morgenthau, 1960a, p. 8). Environment plays an important role in shaping the interests that determine political action. The emphasis upon power must be adapted to the changing circumstances. Thus,

When the times tend to depreciate the element of power, it [political science] must stress its importance. When the times incline toward a monistic conception of power in the general scheme of things, it must show its limitations. When the times conceive of power primarily in military terms, it must call attention to the variety of factors which go into the power equation. . . . (Morgenthau, 1962a, p. 47).

(4) The realist is not indifferent to morality. He believes, however, that universal moral principles cannot be realized, but at best approximated. He is aware of the ever-present tension between the requirements of morality and the requirements of successful political action.

(5) Realism "refuses to identify the moral aspirations of a particular nation with the moral laws that govern the universe" (Morgenthau, 1962c, p. 11). It conceives of all nations as political actors pursuing their interests, defined in terms of power.

(6) Realism constitutes a distinctive intellectual approach. The approach is in sharp contrast with the legalistic and moralistic approaches. Realism advocates the autonomy of politics *vis-a-vis* other spheres of human action. While it recognizes that the "political man" is a myth, it holds that in order to understand politics it is

necessary to free the study of politics from standards of thought appropriate to other spheres.

Morgenthau's belief that political laws originate in human nature and that this nature is susceptible to theoretical inquiry constitutes the central theme of his political philosophy. The social world, according to Morgenthau (1962c, p. 7) is "but a projection of human nature onto the collective plane . . ." This world is one of

unceasing struggle between good and evil, reason and passion, life and death, health and sickness, peace and war—a struggle which so often ends with the victory of the forces hostile to man (Morgenthau, 1946, p. 206).

It is "a world of opposing interests and of conflict among them" (Morgenthau, 1960a, p. 4). In short, it is an evil world. In such a world, "whenever we act with reference to our fellow men, we must sin . . ." (Morgenthau, 1946, p. 201). Guilt is so ubiquitous that it covers " . . . the actor and the bystander, the oppressor and the oppressed, the murderer and his victim . . ." (Morgenthau, 1946, p. 202).

Conflict and evil can be traced to human nature, and particularly to two human traits: selfishness and the lust for power. Selfishness leads to competition and struggle because "what the one wants for himself, the other already possesses or wants, too" (Morgenthau, 1946, p. 192). Selfishness, however, is not completely irrational:

. . . the typical goals of selfishness, such as food, shelter, security, and the means by which they are obtained, such as money, jobs, marriage, and the like, have an objective relation to the vital needs of the individual; their attainment offers the best chances for survival under the particular natural and social conditions under which the individual lives (Morgenthau, 1946, p. 193).

Selfishness, in other words, is not without limits. Its demands can be satisfied. It cannot, therefore, alone explain the war of every man against every man.

This explanation is to be found in the other, and more important, root of conflict and evil: man's desire for power. The lust for power is an "all-permeating fact which is of the very essence of human existence" (Morgenthau, 1962b, p. 312). Unlike selfishness, it has no limits and cannot be appeased by concessions. It is present "whenever man intends to act with regard to other

men" (Morgenthau, 1946, p. 194). The desire for power "besides and beyond any particular selfishness or other evilness of purpose, constitutes the ubiquity of evil in human action" (Morgenthau, 1946, p. 194).

In *Scientific Man vs. Power Politics*, Morgenthau discusses the desire for power as an irrational human impulse. In a later work, however, Morgenthau says that it is man's effort to escape his loneliness "which gives the impetus to both the lust for power and the longing for love . . ." (Morgenthau, 1962j, p. 8). Yet Morgenthau does not label love as evil. Neither does he explain why the desire for power with its "innocent" and "rational" objective of overcoming man's loneliness, should be regarded as completely irrational and evil.

In his belief in the desire for power as an all-important human impulse, Morgenthau is a true follower of Hobbes who stated: "I put for a generall inclination of all mankind a perpetuall and restless desire of Power after power, that ceaseth only in Death" (Hobbes, 1947, p. 49). Even in his distinction between selfishness and the lust for power, Morgenthau reflects Hobbes' ideas. Striving for power, according to Hobbes, may be rational as well as irrational (Strauss, 1952, p. 10). Hobbes believed, however, that "only the irrational striving after power, which is found more frequently than the rational striving, is to be taken as natural human appetite . . ." (Strauss, 1952, p. 10). Morgenthau's description of the irrational drive for power is identical with that of Hobbes. His statement that the individual's lust for power "would be satisfied only if the last man became an object of his domination . . ." (Morgenthau, 1946, p. 193) recalls Hobbes' statement that men would "have all the world, if they could, to fear and obey them" (Strauss, 1952, p. 10).

In politics, the desire for power "is not merely blended with dominant aims of a different kind but is the very essence of the intention, the very life-blood of the action . . ." (Morgenthau, 1946, p. 195). It follows, then, that "politics is a struggle for power over men, and whatever its ultimate aim may be, power is its immediate goal . . ." (Morgenthau, 1946, p. 195).

"Power," writes Morgenthau (1960a, p. 9), "may comprise anything that establishes and maintains the control of man over man." According to this definition, power "covers all social relationships which serve that end, from physical violence to the most subtle

psychological ties . . .” (Morgenthau, 1960a, p. 9). Political power, however, is more narrowly defined.

Political power is a psychological relation between those who exercise it and those over whom it is exercised. It gives the former control over certain actions of the latter through the influence which the former exert over the latter's mind (Morgenthau, 1960a, p. 29).

Political power, then, must be distinguished from the actual exercise of violence. “When violence becomes an actuality, it signifies the abdication of political power in favor of military or pseudo-military power” (Morgenthau, 1960a, pp. 28-29).

Since power is the immediate aim of political action, it is always an end in itself. Nonetheless, power can be a means to other ends. As Morgenthau puts it,

the end-means relation is ambiguous and relative . . . in that whatever we call “means” in view of the end of a chain of actions is itself an end if we consider it as the final point of a chain of actions. . . . Actually . . . the totality of human actions presents itself as a hierarchy of actions each of which is the end of the preceding and a means for the following (Morgenthau, 1946, p. 184).

The difference between domestic politics and international politics is derived from the difference in the context of each. National societies show a great degree of social cohesion.

Cultural uniformity, technological unification, external pressure, and, above all, a hierarchic political organization combine to make the national society an integrated whole set apart from other national societies. In consequence, the domestic political order is, for instance, more stable and less subject to violent change than is the international order (Morgenthau, 1960a, p. 38).

The factor that accounts for instability in international relations and for stability within states is the state itself. Without the existence of the state, the struggle for power will be on the loose. The state, however, in itself cannot assure the preservation of peace and order. As the compulsory organization of the society, the state is dependent on the society by which it was created. Thus, the reason for internal stability is ultimately to be found in the existence of a society whose intergroup conflicts are neutralized by overriding loyalties, whose processes of social change provide the expectation of justice, and

whose unorganized forces of compulsion are able to impose conformity on different groups.

Thus, on the domestic plane, the state, with the aid of society, can keep the struggle for power within peaceful bounds:

Society has established a network of rules of conduct and institutional devices for controlling individual power drives. These rules and devices either divert individual power drives into channels where they cannot endanger society, or else they weaken them or suppress them altogether (Morgenthau, 1960a, p. 102).

On the other hand, there is no centralized authority above the state on the international scene; the drive for power is given a free rein. The state which delimits manifestations of individual power drives within its borders projects these manifestations onto the international scene. People participate in the projection process because it compensates for the frustration of their power drives within the state. Thus, power drives are not suppressed but extended to the international scene where the individual's lust for power has "not only in imagination but in actuality the world as its object" (Morgenthau, 1946, p. 198).

According to Morgenthau, every political action seeks to keep power, to increase power, or to demonstrate power. To these three patterns, correspond three policies on the international plane: status quo, imperialism, and prestige. The policy of status quo tends toward keeping power rather than changing the distribution of power in its favor. The policy of imperialism seeks to acquire more power by reversing existing power relations. The policy of prestige seeks to demonstrate power, for the purpose of maintaining or increasing it.

Morgenthau maintains that the dynamic force which molds international relations is to be found in the states' drive for power which manifests itself in one of the three basic policies.

The clash of these policies—A trying to maintain the status quo, B trying to change it at the expense of A—leads to an unending struggle for power which characterizes all international relations (Morgenthau, 1962i, p. 168).

Morgenthau believes that interest is the essence of all politics. On the international scene it is therefore only natural that each state should follow its national interest. Defined in terms of power,

national interest should be the sole guide to foreign policy. A foreign policy based on any other standard will inevitably encounter failure.

Morgenthau argues that the concept of national interest has two elements: "one that is logically required and in that sense necessary, and one that is variable and determined by circumstances" (Morgenthau, 1952, p. 972). The survival and security of a nation constitute the irreducible minimum of the necessary element. The necessary element of the national interest can be determined in a concrete situation, for it "encompasses the integrity of the nation's territory, of its political institutions, and of its culture" (Morgenthau, 1952, p. 973). The variable element of the national interest is much less susceptible to precise determination because "all the cross currents of personalities, public opinion, sectional interests, partisan politics, and political and moral folkways" (Morgenthau, 1952, p. 973) are brought to bear upon its determination.

Morgenthau holds that the concept of national interest is not devoid of "moral dignity." To understand this position, one must examine Morgenthau's ideas on ethics. Morgenthau believes that there is no escape from evil and sin. The best that man can do, since evil cannot be escaped, is to choose "among several possible actions the one that is the least evil" (Morgenthau, 1946, p. 202).

On the international scene, a nation's moral duty to choose the lesser evil compels it to follow its national interest. There is no integrated international society which can preserve order and realize moral values. In this situation, self-preservation becomes a moral duty.

In the absence of an integrated international society, the attainment of a modicum of order and the realization of a minimum of moral values are predicated upon the existence of national communities capable of preserving order and realizing moral values within the limits of their power (Morgenthau, 1951, p. 38).

Thus,

What appears in the abstract to be a principle contrary to morality, Morgenthau designates as moral, and he assigns it a higher value than such universal principles as liberty or economic well-being for all nations (Magill, 1962, p. 7).

In a world of unending struggle and clashing policies followed by states pursuing their own interests, what is the fate of peace?

Morgenthau maintains that peace can be preserved by two devices. One is the balance of power. The other is the normative limitation of international law, international morality, and world public opinion (Morgenthau, 1960a, p. 23).

The struggle for power, as carried out in the clashing policies of imperialism and the status quo, leads to the balance of power through which nations try to defend themselves against each other. However, the balance of power is not an adequate device to preserve peace. Its uncertainty, aggravated by the disappearance of a restraining moral consensus, leaves the balance of power open to question as a peace-maintaining device.

International morality has declined until it has reached a point where it cannot exert any substantial pressure to preserve peace. The destruction of the international aristocratic society was concomitant with the triumph of nationalism over internationalism.

Nations no longer oppose each other . . . within a framework of shared beliefs and common values. . . . They oppose each other now as the standard-bearers of ethical systems, each of them of national origin and each of them claiming and aspiring to provide a supranational framework of moral standards which all the other nations ought to accept . . . (Morgenthau, 1960a, p. 256).

World public opinion, in the sense of a force transcending national boundaries and asserting itself in spontaneous reactions through the world, does not exist. "Modern history has not recorded an instance of a government having been deterred from some foreign policy by the spontaneous reaction of a supranational public opinion." (Morgenthau, 1960a, p. 261). An effective world public opinion "presupposes a society and a common morality . . ." (Morgenthau, 1960a, p. 270) neither of which exists today.

International law is beset by decentralization in its legislative and judicial functions as well as in its enforcement. In other words, there is no central authority on the international plane, comparable to the state on the domestic plane, that can create, or interpret, or impose the law. Consequently, international law can impose but a negligible restraint upon the struggle for power.

With both normative and nonnormative devices inadequate to the maintenance of peace, what is the value of other attempts, actual and proposed, at keeping peace? Morgenthau classifies these

attempts in three categories: peace through limitation, peace through transformation, and peace through accommodation.

The first category includes disarmament, collective security, judicial settlement, peaceful change, and international government. Morgenthau's position on disarmament stems from the belief that "men do not fight because they have arms. They have arms because they deem it necessary to fight" (Morgenthau, 1960a, p. 408). He concludes, therefore, that a "mutually satisfactory settlement of the power contest is a precondition for disarmament" (Morgenthau, 1960a, p. 411).

Collective security cannot be made to work without the existence of three factors: an overwhelming strength against potential aggressors, a single concept of security shared by the participants in the collective system, and a desire on the part of the participants to subordinate their interest to the common good. That is to say,

Only on the assumption that the struggle for power as the moving force of international politics might subside or be superseded by a higher principle can collective security have a chance for success (Morgenthau, 1960a, p. 414).

Morgenthau says that nothing in the reality of international relations warrants this assumption (Morgenthau, 1960a, p. 414).

Judicial settlement cannot end war, because "the disputes which are most likely to lead to war cannot be settled by judicial methods" (Morgenthau, 1960a, p. 434). Those disputes are not legal; they are political. Their issue is "the maintenance of the status quo vs. its overthrow" (Morgenthau, 1960a, p. 434). This issue cannot be settled by any court because courts are committed to the defense of the status quo.

Attempts at forestalling war by devising schemes of peaceful change cannot aspire to go very far. Peaceful change is possible within the state because of the existence of three factors:

(1) the ability of public opinion to express itself freely, (2) the ability of social and political institutions to absorb the pressure of public opinion, and (3) the ability of the state to protect the new status quo against violent change (Morgenthau, 1960a, p. 435).

With those factors absent from the international scene, schemes of peaceful change are not likely to succeed.

International government does not provide the answer to the problem of peace. For international government to be operative, harmony should characterize the relations among the great powers which are responsible for directing it. Yet historical experiences show that this harmony is hard to achieve. All attempts at international government have failed in maintaining peace. The present United Nations cannot be expected to do what its forerunners could not.

Like the conflict between Great Britain and Russia within the Holy Alliance, like the conflict between Great Britain and France within the League of Nations, so the conflict between the United States and the Soviet Union within the United Nations resolves itself into diametrically opposed standards of judgment and action, which virtually incapacitate the international organization to act at all in political matters (Morgenthau, 1960a, pp. 497-498).

Peace through transformation includes schemes of a world state and attempts at creating a world community. Necessary and desirable as it may be, a world state is unattainable.

There is no shirking the conclusion that international peace cannot be permanent without a world state, and that a world state cannot be established under the present moral, social, and political conditions of the world (Morgenthau, 1960a, p. 513).

A world state must be based on a world community which at present does not exist. The cultural approach, as embodied in UNESCO, does not contribute to the establishment of a world community; "the problem of world community is a moral and political and not an intellectual and esthetic one" (Morgenthau, 1960a, p. 520). The functional approach—i.e., economic and technical assistance to people throughout the world—cannot help in establishing world community either. Economic and technical assistance "... is likely at best to leave the problem of international peace where it found it ..." (Morgenthau, 1960a, p. 536).

With all these schemes rejected as inadequate or impracticable, the only hope rests with peace through accommodation; i.e., diplomacy. Diplomacy "can make peace more secure than it is today ..." (Morgenthau, 1960a, p. 569). Furthermore, diplomacy, by mitigating and minimizing conflicts, contributes to the growth of a world community upon whose foundations a world state which would ensure permanent peace could be erected (Morgenthau, 1960a, p. 569).

Diplomacy, however, cannot perform its vital role without abiding by nine rules, the first four of which are fundamental, while the remaining five are prerequisites of compromise:

1. Diplomacy should be divested of the crusading spirit.
2. Foreign policy objectives must be defined in terms of national interest and must be defended with adequate power.
3. Diplomacy should look at the political scene from the point of view of other nations.
4. Nations should be willing to compromise on all issues that are not vital to them.
5. A nation should give up the shadow of worthless rights in favor of the substance of real advantage.
6. A nation should never put itself in a position from which it cannot retreat without losing face and cannot advance without great risks.
7. A nation should not allow a weak ally to make decisions for it.
8. The armed forces must be the instruments of foreign policy and not its master.
9. The government should be the leader of public opinion and not its servant.²

Yet these rules are meaningless without the existence of rare human beings: statesmen. Morgenthau has a somewhat mystical belief in the intuition of great statesmen who possess knowledge of "the eternal laws by which man moves in the social world" (Morgenthau, 1946, p. 220). Unfortunately, scientific knowledge is not enough; there must be "insights of a different and higher kind" (Morgenthau, 1946, p. 212). The fate of peace and humanity is dependent, in the last analysis, upon "the insight and the wisdom by which more-than-scientific man elevates his experiences into the universal laws of human nature" (Morgenthau, 1946, p. 220).

It is hard to escape the conclusion that, according to the Morgenthauian analysis, permanent peace can never be achieved on

²For a detailed discussion of the nine rules see Morgenthau, 1960a, pp. 561-67.

this earth, or it can be achieved only through divine grace which, alone, can bless the world with wise, intuitive, and great statesmen.

Critique of Morgenthau's Theory

This section attempts a critique of Morgenthau's theory. While criticizing the theory, the section discusses the various points raised by Morgenthau's critics.

Morgenthau makes it clear that his theory is based on his conception of human nature. This conception is beset by many difficulties. Besides the obvious objection that, since human nature is responsible for all human actions, it really explains nothing, Morgenthau's concept of human nature is unscientific. Science "consists of theories or hypotheses whose truth or reality has to be established by critical experiment or testing" (Wasserman, 1959, p. 67). Morgenthau's theory is based not on such hypotheses but on absolute and unverifiable essentialist laws (Wasserman, 1959, p. 67).

The purpose of a theory is the deduction of meaningful generalizations. Such generalizations result from the careful investigation of the facts. Morgenthau reverses the order; he starts with certain generalizations which he holds to be timeless and immune to change. His theory seems to fall in the awkward position of fulfilling its purpose merely with its promise.

One could indeed, have little objection if Morgenthau stated that his theory is the conclusion that all men, and states, seek power. It is a different matter, however, when the proposition is offered not as a conclusion but as a statement to be demonstrated. Morgenthau is the prisoner of his assumptions. These assumptions force the analysis and conclusions to be in line with his advance judgments. For if one starts with the conviction that all men seek power, one will see international relations as battlefields of unending clashes of power. Periods of peace will be accounted for as deviations from the rule.

Morgenthau states (1960a, p. 38) that "nations active in international politics are continuously preparing for, actively involved in, or recovering from organized violence in the form of war." This statement is in direct agreement with Morgenthau's assumptions. It is too general to be rejected as incorrect. Yet it is hardly more meaningful than the statement that "Every person has been sick in

the past, is presently sick, or will be sick at one time in the future." The point is that it becomes very difficult at times to know whether Morgenthau is trying to describe reality or is simply looking in reality for an illustration of his preconceived ideas.

The validity Morgenthau's assumptions can have is their claim to be "insights" of "more-than-scientific" men. To support his assumptions, Morgenthau resorts to quotations, mainly from philosophers. The trouble is that the philosophers he quotes cannot have an exclusive claim to insights. One can easily, then, oppose Morgenthau's position by offering quotations from thinkers who assert that the desire for power is an occasional phenomenon created by circumstances rather than an essential human trait. Morgenthau discusses the lust for power, however, as if it were a self-evident fact, beyond questioning. He admits, for example, that "anthropologists have shown that certain primitive peoples seem to be free from the desire for power . . ." (Morgenthau, 1960a, p. 33). Yet he proceeds as if this fact were in support of, rather than contrary to, his assumptions.

Morgenthau's concept of human nature leads to further difficulties. If human nature does not change, the laws derived from it are beyond change, as well. They are offered as truths applicable at all times under all circumstances. Yet events do not always conform to these laws. Waltz remarks (1959b, p. 531) that there is an uneasy juxtaposition of determinism and indeterminism in Morgenthau's theory. Determinism is the natural outgrowth of the human nature concept since man, of course, cannot act contrary to his nature. Indeterminism, however, is introduced to account for events which the determinist laws cannot explain. Thus,

Professor Morgenthau's determinist theory of power does not lead to continuous war only because indeterminist elements are incorporated into it in order to make the formation of a balance of power possible (Wasserman, 1959, p. 60).

Morgenthau's power concept is derived from, and closely connected with, his concept of human nature. Indeed, the service that the human nature concept renders to the theory is that it introduces the concept of power. Morgenthau, by virtue of his human nature concept, is enabled to take power for granted.

Once the struggle, urge, or drive for power is postulated as the basic motive for state action, it remains only to illustrate it, to discuss its forms and sources, and to inject it as the crucial variable in all relationships (Snyder, 1961, p. 40).

This is the first difficulty with the concept of power. Power is moved from the realm of assumptions about human nature and is postulated as the moving force of international relations. Thus, the central concept upon which the whole theoretical framework is constructed is one which is not to be subjected to testing or verification.

Derived from the human nature concept, power becomes a timeless concept, beyond change. No distinction is made between "inherent or instinctive aspects of the 'power drive,' and the situational or accidental ones . . ." (Hoffmann, 1961, p. 423). The result is a static concept which treats international relations as "a frozen universe of separate essences" (Hoffmann, 1961, p. 423).

There are difficulties with the definition of power. Power is defined *so* broadly that it fails to distinguish politics from other types of action. Given Morgenthau's definition of power, it is difficult to imagine any relationship whatever that does not involve power. "Power can be exercised in families and businesses, too, for example." Yet, "there must be some reason why family affairs are not regarded as political" (Kaplan, 1957, p. 13). Morgenthau's power concept would not take notice of when an activity involving power becomes political and, therefore, does not provide a criterion of the political in the direction indicated by Kaplan.

The relation of the concept of power to those of control and influence remains unclear.

We do not know whether power refers to a symmetrical or asymmetrical relationship or both, whether control implies no freedom of choice for the party who is controlled, and whether control is limited just to some property or characteristic or behavior of the controller, or whether influence covers *any* change in the behavior of the influenced regardless of the source of change or the psychological mechanisms involved (Snyder, 1961, p. 40).

The result of the imprecision in the definition is that power is used to mean different things at different times. Morgenthau defines power as a psychological relation. Yet when he says that "power, however limited and qualified, is the value which international politics recognizes as supreme" (Morgenthau, 1946, p. 101), the reference is to power as a capacity. When he discusses national power he refers to power as a quantity, a total sum of different elements. Thus, power loses its strength as a precise analytical tool and becomes an ambiguous term which is accommodated to many evidences.

Furthermore, power "is a most complex product of other variables which should be allowed to see the light of theory instead of remaining hidden in the shadow of power" (Hoffmann, 1961, p. 423). Morgenthau does not discuss these variables. In *Scientific Man vs. Power Politics*, he describes power as an inherited irrational human drive. In another work, he says that power, like love, is the product of man's loneliness.³ Yet both of these explanations are oversimplifications; the question about the different complex elements that go into power remains unanswered.

Morgenthau admits that power relations are not the only elements involved in a political action. Yet he is concerned only with power relations. He goes so far as to eschew concern with the motives and the ideological preferences of statesmen. The result is what Hoffmann (1961, p. 423) calls a "power monism." Morgenthau's theory, by virtue of its excessive emphasis on power, becomes a single-factor theory. Like all single-cause theories, it is challenged by the fact that no single cause can account for all the phenomena under investigation.

Morgenthau's theory proceeds to define national interest in terms of power and to designate it as the sole guide for foreign policy. This writer finds it still impossible, after many efforts, to comprehend what really is signified in "defining interest in terms of power." Perhaps the intent has been only to provide "a broad intellectual category or a way of approaching foreign policy" (Thompson, 1960, p. 37). Anyone who expects to find many answers regarding the determination and realization of the national interest in Morgenthau's discussion is bound to be disappointed. Indeed, "the focal point in the debate over Morgenthau's theory has centered on his concept of the national interest" (Thompson, 1960, p. 37).

The most repeated criticism is that Morgenthau's concept of the national interest is ambiguous. National interests may be quite unstable and subject to change. Philosophers and psychologists who have analyzed the concept, "interest" have agreed that it is an ambiguous one; interest does not become clear, certain, and obvious simply because one deals with collectivities rather than individuals (Aron, 1960, p. 86). The national interest concept can be of little help in an unstable period when survival is always at stake and the

³See above p. 229.

most divergent courses of action can be suggested as choices for survival (Hoffman, 1961, p. 423). Finally, rather than asserting the supremacy of the national interest, the important question is "the evaluative one of deciding which interests are legitimate and the pragmatic one of deciding what policies will best serve them" (Waltz, 1959a, p. 38).

These criticisms are not without validity, but they may miss the point. Morgenthau has never claimed that his concept cleared away all the ambiguities and difficulties involved in defining the national interest. He acknowledges the limitation of his concept.

The concept of the national interest is similar in two respects to the "great generalities" of the Constitution, such as the general welfare and due process. It contains a residual meaning which is inherent in the concept itself, but beyond these minimum requirements its content can run the whole gamut of meanings which are logically compatible with it (Morgenthau, 1952, p. 972).

One may be inclined to agree with Whitaker's statement (1961, p. 447); but wish, at the same time, for a clearer expression:

If he (Morgenthau) has posed, rather than solved, the problem of defining the national interest, it is more appropriate for the academician to work on the solution than to complain of the legitimate question.

Beside the charge of ambiguity, there is a moral argument against Morgenthau's concept. The essence of the argument is that Morgenthau's position, particularly his assertion of the "moral dignity" of the national interest, is immoral. Tucker (1952, p. 221) may be cited as a representative spokesman on the moral argument:

. . . Professor Morgenthau's concept of moral obligation amounts to the statement that men ought (i.e., are morally obliged) to behave as they actually do behave. Hence there is no possibility of conflict between man's interest, or his actual behavior, and his moral obligation. (So considered, the whole idea of moral obligation becomes meaningless . . .)

Tucker (1952, p. 223) further states:

It must be understood that once we deny the binding character of international moral obligations and assert the moral supremacy of the national interest, no action on the part of the state can be considered—from the viewpoint, of course, of the particular state's national interest—to be immoral. Thus the logical consequence of asserting the moral supremacy of the national interest is to assert the moral inferiority of all other national interests.

This argument is based on a misunderstanding of Morgenthau's views on both ethics and the moral dignity of the national interest. Some writers have argued the point that, despite its apparent amorality, Morgenthau's position is based on moral foundations (Thompson, 1960, p. 146; Fox, 1949b, p. 215). Two writers, Magill (1962, p. 7) and Good (1960, p. 640), have studied in some detail Morgenthau's concept of morality and its application to the national interest and have concluded that Morgenthau's position is anything but immoral.

Morgenthau has often been described as indifferent to moral values. This, indeed, is an unjustified charge. It is true that Morgenthau's pessimistic views of man color his concept of morality. Thus he states that "man cannot hope to be good but must be content with being not too evil" (Morgenthau, 1946, p. 192). But to disagree with Morgenthau's concept of morality is one thing, to charge that his position is immoral is another. Morgenthau (1946, p. 169) believes that "he [man] is a moralist because he is a man." The unavoidable tension between the requirements of political success and the requirements of morality is a theme that is repeated again and again throughout Morgenthau's writings. One may go so far as to assert that no other writer on international relations, with the exception of Niebuhr, has devoted so much attention to the moral problem.

Morgenthau's idea of the "moral dignity" of the national interest is neither immoral nor ambiguous. The ultimate good, as represented by universal moral principles, cannot be realized in this world. Nations are faced with two alternatives: either to try, in vain, to follow abstract moral principles, an endeavor which could lead to war and endanger their very existence, or to limit themselves to the defense of themselves. Morgenthau holds that the second alternative is to be preferred, morally and politically.

The only relevant question is, however, what the practical alternative is to . . . imperfections of an international society that is based upon the national interests of its component parts. The attainable alternative is not a higher morality realized through the application of universal moral principles, but moral deterioration through either political failure or the fanaticism of political crusades (Morgenthau, 1951, p. 30).

Furthermore, "Morgenthau's 'national interest' incorporates in its design a notion of responsibility that by its nature must transcend pure self-interest" (Good, 1960, p. 640). Morgenthau takes pain to

invest the national interest concept with moral content. He argues that a nation should look at the political scene from the point of view of other nations. Implicit in his concept, is a live-and-let-live philosophy. Contrary to Tucker's charge, the supremacy of the national interest implies that a nation should consider and try to respect other nations' interests.⁴

It might be illuminating at this point to digress briefly to look at an alternative concept of the national interest offered by two of Morgenthau's critics. Cook and Moos (1954, p. 129) assert that Morgenthau's concept of the national interest is dangerous:

If we desire to avoid statism at home and to seek and ensue our purposes both there and abroad, we must reject the concept of national interest as the national power of an organismic . . . state engaged in a struggle for success through triumph by means of power politics.

Cook and Moos offer another version of the national interest. While discussing the policy of the United States, they say that the United States' interest is to pursue and further the principles upon which this country rests.

The proposition that the principles on which the United States, or for that matter any country, rests are of universal applicability is both puzzling and irritating. Even were these principles of universal applicability, there is no reason why other countries should be willing to adhere to them. To make things worse, Cook and Moos pursue their idea to its inevitable outcome:

That commitment [to freedom] compels us to *combat* all types of totalitarian tyranny, by ideological warfare when possible, by *force* when necessary. It requires a refusal to ally ourselves with such regimes . . . and, under certain conditions, even an *intervention in their own lands* to prevent oppression by them and to aid in their overthrow . . .⁵

There is no doubt, in this student's mind, that the crusading version of the national interest is not only less expedient than, but also morally inferior to, Morgenthau's concept of the national interest.

Among the criticisms that have been advanced against Morgenthau's theory is that it leaves out important variables and, therefore,

⁴In our opinion, Tucker's clear objections have not been met here or elsewhere. After many years, the problem still maintains its importance. Ed.

⁵Italics added; Cook and Moos, 1954, p. 130.

does not offer an adequate explanation of the international scene. Sprout (1949, p. 407) criticizes Morgenthau for failing to discuss the objectives of national policy. Wright (1952, p. 123) notes the absence of values and their effect on policy in Morgenthau's theory. McDougal (1955, p. 378)⁶, representing an international lawyer's point of view, objects to Morgenthau's concept of law as "a static body of rigid rules." Furthermore, the theory neglects the relation between ideologies and policies (Aron, 1960, p. 88). It also fails to examine the effects of a state's political and social structure on its foreign policy (Sprout, 1949, p. 409).

The list of things that should have been included in the theory could go on. Every critic can point out one omission or another. This is a type of criticism that appears in almost all the reviews of Morgenthau's works. The factors that should have been included vary with every critic according to his own predilection and theoretical orientation. To tell a theoretician how to do his work is one of the less challenging and less fruitful aspects of theorizing about theory. It is manifestly unfair to chide authors "for not doing things they had no intention of doing" (Snyder, 1961, p. 38). In the case of Morgenthau, there is a valid explanation for the omissions in his theory:

Morgenthau is more concerned with interstate relationships and with the mechanisms, tried and proposed, for regulating such relationships, than he is with the basic conditions and forces out of which interstate relationships and consequent regulatory problems arise (Sprout, 1949, p. 406).

A more relevant point has been raised with regard to the "reality" of Morgenthau's theory. How can a theory be labeled "realist" if it is inconsistent both with itself and with reality? Tucker (1952, p. 216) remarks:

On the one hand, we are given laws which supposedly determine the *actual* behavior of states. On the other hand, there is a most persistent . . . exhortation by the author that American foreign policy *ought* to follow these laws, apparently for the reason that it has not always done so in the past.

Waltz (1959b, p. 531) makes a similar remark:

At times Professor Morgenthau's writing is purely descriptive, intended to make comprehensible what does happen. At other times

⁶For a detailed criticism of Morgenthau's concept of law, see McDougal's article "Law and Power," *The American Journal of International Law*, 49 (January 1952), pp. 102-114.

his writing becomes persuasive, intended to convince the leaders of states that they ought to act in certain ways and not in others.

Wasserman (1959, p. 57), whose critique of Morgenthau concentrates on the theme of inconsistency, makes the same point:

Professor Morgenthau claims that his theory is based upon what actually happens yet he complains that what actually happens does not conform to his theory. While he maintains that all international politics are of necessity power politics his reason for writing is to combat the prevalence of misguided "legalism" and "moralism" not only in the theory, but also in the practice of international politics.

Morgenthau's inconsistency can be traced to two main sources. First, there is a juxtaposition of empirical and normative elements in the theory. Second, there is a conflict between Morgenthau's pessimistic deterministic views and his implication that man can, indeed, influence his own fate.

The realist theory proves, under close examination, to be as normative and value-oriented as theories which do not claim "realism." Indeed, Morgenthau's assumptions *are* norms. Thus, when he says that "we assume that statesmen think and act in terms of interest defined as power . . ." (Morgenthau, 1960a, p. 5), he is presenting not only an observable fact but also a norm to be attained. It could not be otherwise for experience is that not all statesmen have thought in these terms. Morgenthau's concept of a completely rational foreign policy is another norm. His schemes of the balance of power are other examples of norms.

Morgenthau, however, is aware of the gap which separates his theory from reality. He argues that, in view of the rationality of the theory, this is inevitable:

Hence, it is no argument against the theory here presented that actual foreign policy does not or cannot live up to it. . . . Far from being invalidated by the fact that, for instance, a perfect balance of power policy will scarcely be found in reality, it assumes that reality, being deficient in this respect, must be understood and evaluated as an approximation to an ideal system of balance of power (Morgenthau, 1960a, p. 8).

Actually, Morgenthau does not only presume to describe reality, but also to alter it. The laws to which Tucker refers, then, are offered not only as rules to which realities do conform to some approximate extent, but, in addition, as norms to which realities

should conform. Once one discovers the normative basis of the theory, many of Morgenthau's inconsistencies become understandable.

The other source of inconsistency is to be found in Morgenthau's inability to stick to his pessimistic deterministic views. Indeed, if Morgenthau were true to his lack of faith in man, he would treat his own theory as an exercise in futility.

In Morgenthau's scheme "man finds himself pinioned to the rock not so much because he has willed evil, but because this seems to be his fate" (Good, 1960, p. 88). The element of human will is conspicuously absent. Man is destined to live with "unresolvable discord, contradictions, and conflicts which are inherent in the nature of things and which human reason is powerless to solve" (Morgenthau, 1946, p. 206).

The age of science, according to Morgenthau, is mistaken in its belief that humanity is progressing toward a better future. The age of science forgets the tragic sense of history and life.

There is no progress toward the good, noticeable from year to year, but undecided conflict which sees today good, tomorrow evil, prevail; and only at the end of time, immeasurably removed from the here and now of our earthly life, the ultimate triumph of the forces of goodness and light will be assured (Morgenthau, 1946, pp. 205-206).

Man's efforts to apply scientific knowledge to social problems are doomed to failure; past and contemporary history "offer abundant proof of the irrelevance, for success or failure of social action, of the kind of knowledge the social sciences offer" (Morgenthau, 1946, p. 211). On the contrary, the reliance upon factual knowledge "has actually contributed to the decadence of the art of politics" (Morgenthau, 1946, p. 213).

However, Morgenthau, in *Politics Among Nations* tries to escape from the prospect of doom he put forward in *Scientific Man vs. Power Politics*. He realizes that on the domestic plane "organized violence as an instrument of political action on an extensive scale has become a rare exception" (Morgenthau, 1960a, p. 38). On the international plane, he says that "when nations have used diplomacy for the purpose of preventing war, they have often succeeded" (Morgenthau, 1960a, p. 568). Furthermore, Morgenthau's introduction of the category of status quo nations which seek just

to maintain their power constitutes an important qualification to, if not a departure from, the original assumption that all states seek power.

Morgenthau's inconsistency reveals itself most clearly in two of his most vital concepts: diplomacy and statesmanship, thus rendering these concepts the most vulnerable points in his theory. Diplomacy is, in the words of Morgenthau (1960a, p. 569), "the best means of preserving peace which a society of sovereign nations has to offer." However, Morgenthau's hopes for the revival of diplomacy are highly unrealistic; here perhaps is the one point in the theory when the normative element becomes completely blind to the empirical one.

As many writers have noted, Morgenthau's own analysis of contemporary international realities makes his discussion of a revived diplomacy an exercise in wishful thinking (Wasserman, 1959, pp. 57-58; Waltz, 1959b, p. 531; Pettee, 1949, p. 1025). None of Morgenthau's rules for diplomacy can be applied in a world characterized by inflexible bipolarity and inspired by the moral force of nationalistic universalism, a world that Morgenthau himself has described in the following words:

The moral code of one nation flings the challenge of its universal claim into the face of another, which reciprocates in kind. Compromise, the virtue of the old diplomacy, becomes the treason of the new. . . . Thus the stage is set for a contest among nations whose stakes are no longer their relative positions within a political and moral system accepted by all, but the ability to impose upon the other contestants a new universal political and moral system recreated in the image of the victorious nation's political and moral convictions (Morgenthau, 1960a, p. 256).

Statesmanship is another vital, and equally vulnerable, concept. One is confronted with a circle. The struggle for power will continue to characterize relations among nations, often exploding in the form of war. Diplomacy is the only hope for mitigating conflicts, making peace more secure, and building the foundations of a world state which could ensure permanent peace. Yet diplomacy cannot be made to work without statesmen. Here is the greatest weakness of the theory. What is a statesman? To say that he is a person possessing "extraordinary moral and intellectual qualities" (Morgenthau, 1960a, p. 569) does not solve the problem. How can one tell the difference between a statesman and a Hitler? There is a more important question. How can humanity produce states-

men? Morgenthau rules out education and does not suggest any alternative. Preserving the peace, then, remains a haphazard process. Whenever there are enough statesmen there will be peace. Humanity cannot do more than wait, and perhaps pray, for statesmen.

The foregoing analysis leads to the conclusion that Morgenthau's theory has two elements: empirical, and mystical or religious. The empirical element is evident in Morgenthau's analysis of contemporary international relations. Thus, his discussion of world politics in the mid-twentieth century (Morgenthau, 1960a, pp. 335-386) is marred neither by any unconvincing human nature explanations nor by a vague trust in statesmen. The mystical element usually reveals itself, however, in Morgenthau's references to the concept of statesmanship. If humanity cannot, through education, produce statesmen, there remains but God's will to do the job. Although Morgenthau does not admit it, this position is not dissimilar to the religious position that man cannot save himself without the help of God. Morgenthau is undoubtedly aware of the two elements in his theory. Thus, in more than one place, he asserts that religion, philosophy, and even art, no less than science, can prove reliable sources of knowledge (Morgenthau, 1960b, p. 8; 1946, p. 123).

How a theory can be so weak in both its assumptions and conclusions yet be so convincing in its empirical discussions is a puzzling question. This is perhaps what led one of Morgenthau's critics to say that "we are offered not so much a theory as the materials for one" and that "a careful statement of the complex interrelations of important variables is still wanting" (Waltz, 1959b, p. 529, 530). Another writer says, with an authoritative tone, that Morgenthau's theory is in process of unfolding and that his most decisive work remains before him (Thompson, 1959b, p. 133).

It is the opinion of this student that there is a clear difference between *Scientific Man vs. Power Politics* and *Politics Among Nations*. In the first of the two books, heavy emphasis is placed on human nature and the role of statesmen. Although reference is still made to human nature and statesmanship in *Politics Among Nations*, it is sporadic and with much less emphasis. If this observation has any significance, it means that Morgenthau tried to shift gradually from his previous mystical and philosophical stand. If, indeed, the most important work of Morgenthau is to follow in the future, it could well be predominantly empirical and, consequently, less pretentious and less vulnerable than his present works.

Morgenthau's Contribution

To try to assess Morgenthau's contribution to the study of international relations is a task which most of his critics have avoided. Rather, these critics resort to statements either praising or criticizing Morgenthau. Thus, on the one hand, one is told that Morgenthau is "the greatest of our contemporary writers on world politics" (Thompson, 1959b, p. 134) and that he is "our most prominent theoretician" (Singer, 1961, p. 81); on the other hand, one is warned that so long as Morgenthau's theory remains influential "there is unlikely to be progress in the scientific study of international relations" (Wasserman, 1959, p. 70).

The assessment is difficult for more than one reason. The mere fact that Morgenthau is a contemporary writer over whose works a great deal of controversy has raged cannot help but introduce an emotional tone to the discussion of his contribution. Furthermore, the study of international relations has been growing so rapidly that it becomes exceedingly difficult to measure the impact of any one individual. With so few adequate appraisals of the worth of all the present theoretical works in international relations, the assessment of, and comparison between, different theories is bound to be uncertain and tentative.

Yet, difficult and uncertain as the task of evaluation is, a study of Morgenthau could not be considered complete without at least some effort to measure his impact on the field. Morgenthau's contribution cannot be made clear unless one looks at his theory in view of the theoretical efforts which preceded it, and those which followed it. To suggest a perspective, the study of international relations will be divided into three schools of thought, each representing roughly an historical period: (1) the idealist school which dominated the field from the beginning of the twentieth century to the early 1940's, (2) the realist school which emerged in the 1940's and remained dominant until the mid-1960's, and (3) the systemic school which seeks to prevail in the field today.

International relations as a separate field of study was created with the visionary hope of eliminating war and initiating an era of law and order in the relations among nations. It seemed quite possible that the exertion of some intellectual effort coupled with a missionary zeal could abolish the evil of war. Not even the great disillusionment of the First World War shattered the utopian hopes. On the contrary, the experience of war gave impetus to the reform-

ing spirit. "To the prewar trinity of democracy, international understanding, and arbitration were added national self-determination, disarmament, and collective security" (Fox, 1949a, p. 70). This reforming spirit did not limit itself to research but extended to the teaching of international relations.

In the universities, a number of student generations were taught international relations as moral principles of world peace, the potential splendors of the League, the wickedness of departure from Wilsonian doctrines, the evils of imperialism and dollar diplomacy, and the efficacy of popular demands for a better world and for a change of heart (Cook and Moos, 1954, p. 95).

The idealist stage in the study of international relations has so often been analyzed that a detailed discussion here would be superfluous. Attention, therefore, will be directed to one aspect only: theory in the idealist scheme. It is, indeed, difficult to detect a clear theoretical framework in the works of the idealist period. One cannot speak of an idealist model. The idealist era was characterized by a striking poverty in theory. This period even failed to emphasize the fact that international relations deals with a system characterized by the absence of central authority. Thus, the real world was described in terms of its deviation from an ideal world commonwealth characterized by permanent peace (Fox, 1949a, p. 77). In short, the idealist school "has been anything but theory-minded" (Wolfers, 1951, p. 44).

Realism is "the impact of thinking upon wishing which, in the development of a science, follows the breakdown of its first visionary projects, and marks the end of specifically utopian period" (Carr, 1961, p. 239). The emergence of the realist school was a gradual process which started in the 1930's and culminated in the late 1940's. Following the Second World War,

. . . the study of international politics replaced the study of international organization as the central point of reference in international relations. An approach was made to recurrent world problems not with a view to praise or condemn but to understand them (Thompson, 1959a, p. 213).

To give Morgenthau all the credit for the introduction of realism would be unfair to the many authors who contributed to the process. Yet, without Morgenthau, realism might have been as lacking in theoretical orientation as was idealism. It is the contention of this paper that Morgenthau's first contribution has been to give form and direction to realism. The realist reaction was transformed

by Morgenthau into a distinctive school of thought. It is no wonder, then, that whenever there is a discussion of realism in international relations, reference is made inevitably to Morgenthau. Obviously, Morgenthau is not the only realist author. Yet it seems that he was the first to develop a realist model. It is a testimony to Morgenthau's outstanding contribution that in the study of international relations "realism" and "Morgenthauism" can be treated almost as synonyms.

Debate still goes on today whether a macro-theory of international relations is possible. Of course the final answer depends on one's definition of theory and of what one requires in terms of description, explanation, and prediction. Yet, for all its shortcomings, Morgenthau's theory represents a general or macro-theory of international relations. It is not to be forgotten that Morgenthau wrote a book which had a clear theoretical focus. He demonstrated that the study of international relations could be systematic. Morgenthau's second contribution, then, lies in the fact that he provided the necessary transition from idealism to the systemic study of international relations.

Realism, today, is no longer the dominant school in the field of international relations. The weaknesses of Morgenthau's theory have already been considered. It is sufficient to say here that the study of international relations simply outgrew Morgenthau's theory. The systemic school is its successor. The use of the word "school" is very misleading, however, because it implies an agreement on fundamentals which hardly exists. The present stage in the study of international relations has three general characteristics. First, there is a growing dissatisfaction among international relationists with the state of the field. Second, there is a rising conviction that the conceptual equipment of other disciplines must be exploited. Third, and most important, there is a clear trend to make the study of international relations as scientific as possible.

Today, workers in the field talk of quantifying data, of building models, of testing hypotheses, of verifying constructs, of comparing abstract and empirical formulations; they have, in short, acquired a new language, the language of the scientific method (Rosenau, 1961, p. 7).

Beyond these broad trends, there is hardly anything to justify the use of the word school in describing the present stage. This stage has not yet found its Morgenthau. Thus, there are almost as many

theoretical focuses as there are theorists. The systemic movement has not yet even managed to agree on a definition of theory.

If we could say what theory is, we could probably give definition to the conditions and trends of a science or study of international relations, but we cannot. If we had one or several general theories of international relations, we would know what we meant by special and middle-range theorizing, but we do not (McClelland, 1960, p. 304).

It is no wonder, then, that international relationists are still divided over the nature of their discipline.

F. S. C. Northrop believes that international relations is now a science. Quincy Wright believes it can become a science. Kenneth Thompson is convinced that it is not a science, and Stanley Hoffmann thinks it never can be (Whitaker, 1961, p. 439).

However, if scholars in international relations are divided over the definition of theory, they are united in their dissatisfaction with the state of their study. Lacking in the present trend is Morgenthau's belief in the simple discovery of the eternal laws of politics.

Presumably no social scientist is ever fully satisfied with the progress of his discipline. Yet, few seem to be more self-conscious about the state of their studies, to be searching more keenly for newer and better foci, concepts, data, and methods than those who specialize in the area of international relations. It is painfully obvious to most of them that there is need for a clearer sense of purpose, for greater clarity of concepts, and for progress toward the development of more specific propositions, hypotheses, and theories which will unify a field of inquiry whose boundaries are vague and whose content is diffuse (Sondermann, 1961, p. 8).

The result of this growing dissatisfaction can, with reasonable justification, be termed intellectual chaos. There is no dominant figure in the center with admirers and critics on each side. Rather there are different approaches—Snyder's decision-making, Kaplan's system-analysis, McClelland's General System approach, and Liska's equilibrium, to mention some notable examples. Each of these approaches is presented as the single most useful focus for the study of international relations.

It should be clear from what has been said so far that Morgenthau is a stranger in the present stage of the study of international relations. His language is a far cry from the language of the systemic ferment. He has no reason to be dissatisfied since his theory

purports to present all that is worthwhile knowing about international relations. The inter-disciplinary approach is unlikely to have an appeal to Morgenthau.

At this point a very important question presents itself: Has Morgenthau's contribution to the study of international relations been limited to his formulation of an advanced realist theory which provided the necessary transition between an idealist period and a systemic one? In other words, does Morgenthau's theory already belong to the past? This question is very difficult to answer. However, it seems that there are three possibilities. First, the present trend could succeed in producing scientific theories, thus pushing Morgenthau's nonscientific theory to the background. Second, attempts at synthesis, which so far have been vague outlines, could materialize, thus providing the possibility of incorporating a revised version of Morgenthau's power approach as a part of a general theory. Third, the present trend toward the systemic focus could prove incapable of producing impressive results. In that eventuality, there is a possibility of the emergence of a neo-Morgenthauism which would "rediscover" and, perhaps, revitalize Morgenthau's theory.

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