



世界政治与国际关系原版影印丛书

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# 国家间政治：寻求权力与和平的斗争 (简明版)

POLITICS AMONG NATIONS:

THE STRUGGLE FOR POWER AND PEACE, BRIEF EDITION

Hans J. Morgenthau

Revised by Kenneth W. Thompson



北京大学出版社  
PEKING UNIVERSITY PRESS

# 国家间政治： 寻求权力与和平的斗争

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# *Preface to the Brief Edition*

For over four decades, *Politics Among Nations* has been considered by many the premiere text in international politics. Now in its sixth edition its main themes, including national interest and power, are commonplace among practitioners of foreign policy. At the same time its value for a wider public is beginning to be felt.

The publication of *Politics* in paperback is inspired by at least four considerations. First, its use in the 1990s has been rendered more difficult by the mounting costs of higher education. While books constitute a relatively small part of educational expenses, the tripling of prices for hardback texts sometimes pushes student budgets to oppressive limits. Second, today's students have grown accustomed to paperbacks in every field from agronomy to zoology. It seems appropriate, therefore, that *Politics* in paperback should be available to citizens and students alike. Third, discussion of Professor Morgenthau's work has, if anything, intensified in the past twenty years. Derivative schools of thought such as neorealism have made their appearance. Making his *magnum opus* accessible to a broad spectrum of the American public has unquestioned merit. In this way, critics and sympathizers will be able to read his work first-hand, not as filtered through other minds. Fourth, faculties at respected institutions who have large and diverse classes in international relations have called for an edited edition available in an inexpensive format. The past twenty years have witnessed publication programs through which the majority of popular texts in the social sciences have become available in paperback form.

I have followed three working principles in preparing this edition. First, I have preserved intact the first ten chapters of the sixth edition. Professor Morgenthau considered these chapters as containing many of the basic principles of his philosophy of international relations: a realist theory, politics as a struggle for power, foreign policies, nationalism, and national power. Second,

I have included substantial segments of those chapters that make application of the aforementioned principles. These chapters include the balance of power, morality, and international law. Taken together, they provide a discussion, rich in historical examples, of the limitations of national power. From this section and those that follow I have eliminated some of the more technical and complex material whenever it was discussed later in the text or was dealt with in a manner more appropriate for advanced graduate and professional seminars. Third, I have made selections from those chapters that are concentrated on contemporary problems and the three fundamental approaches to peace: limitation of national power as with disarmament, collective security, and international government; transformation with the world state and world community; and accommodation through diplomacy. With the majority of chapters in this section, I have felt justified in eliminating historical details not essential to the analysis and deleting chapters, such as judicial settlement, considered in earlier sections on international law. I would urge students willing and able to examine these issues in depth to have recourse to the full sixth edition.

For most students of international relations, *Politics* requires no introduction. It has become a staple intellectual diet for faculty and graduate students and for thousands of undergraduate students. The present edition should serve to broaden its audience even further. In a word, we would expect that *Politics* in paperback would reach new readers. The new format is designed to serve the needs of a new era in higher education and public affairs.

Two explanatory notes are indicated. Throughout the manuscript the male pronoun predominates, as was customary at the time the book was first published. As is true on such matters throughout the text, we have chosen not to change the original. We would hope that we might be understood as referring to men and women wherever appropriate in our use of the male pronoun. Second, we have actively undertaken to correct temporal usage as with such references as "fifty years ago," referring to the turn of the century. If we should overlook such items at any point in the text, we ask the reader to remember that the author was writing at the midpoint of the twentieth century.

Kenneth W. Thompson

# Preface to the Sixth Edition

As a graduate student at the University of Chicago following World War II, I had the privilege of serving as Professor Morgenthau's research assistant. Later we joined in the preparation of a book of text and readings entitled *Principles and Problems of International Politics*. He was primarily responsible for my returning to the university in the early 1950s as a member of the Department of Political Science. When it was agreed I should edit a *festschrift* in his honor, we worked together in identifying former students, colleagues, and friends especially familiar with his writings. In later years when our professional responsibilities brought us together in New York, we had frequent contacts and long discussions. As a member of several advisory committees, he contributed significantly to the programs of the Rockefeller Foundation for which I worked. A few weeks before he died he presented a paper on the presidency and foreign policy at a Miller Center conference at the University of Virginia. On a personal as well as a professional level, our friendship and intellectual collaboration continued until his last days.

Our close association has made the preparation of a sixth edition of his classic work, *Politics Among Nations*, both simpler and more difficult. On the one hand, I have kept myself reasonably familiar with the evolution of his thought from the publication of *Scientific Man vs. Power Politics* to the review after his death of certain unpublished essays. When Bertrand W. Lummus, Senior Editor of the College Department of Random House, invited me to prepare a new edition of *Politics*, I felt confident that I possessed the necessary knowledge for the task. On the other hand, upon undertaking the revision and reviewing Professor Morgenthau's last writings, I discovered important new developments in the final stages of his work of which I had not known. It would have been surprising if this had not been true, for he took as his guiding principle not the defense of an intellectual position but "the quest for truth."

In keeping with my discovery of the continuous unfolding of his thought, I have attempted in this edition to let Morgenthau speak for himself whenever possible. Thanks to the cooperation of his children, Susanna and Matthew, my assistant and I have had access to his papers on deposit at Alderman Library at the University of Virginia. Mr. Peter Gellman has been tireless in joining me in the search for further writings, whether published or unpublished, that touched on the most urgent problems confronting mankind in the late 1970s and 1980s. In his preface to the fifth edition, revised, Morgenthau wrote of that edition's continuing "in an organic and almost inevitable fashion the work of the preceding editions." Ever mindful of the fact that his great work has had an integrity throughout successive editions, I have undertaken to preserve it in ways that would have been impossible without the use of his own writings. I have also consulted his draft manuscripts, letters to editors, and professional correspondence.

At the same time, the fifth edition has had to be updated and revised to reflect changes that have occurred since Professor Morgenthau's death. Mr. Gellman and I have sought to substitute factual information and data wherever required while recognizing that even as we worked, the tides of history were making obsolete some of our evidence on topics like population, industrial production, decisions of the International Court of Justice, and actions by the United Nations. On subjects such as human rights, détente, and the nuclear problem, I have made substantial revisions—introducing wherever possible fragments of Morgenthau's own writings. Because his mind was so creative and subtle, no would-be literary executor can declare with certainty that Morgenthau would have formulated his views and presented them in precisely the context in which they are put forward here. I can only affirm that I have tried to be faithful to his philosophy and to his views on problems and policies as I understood them.

Kenneth W. Thompson

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# PART ONE

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*Theory and  
Practice of  
International  
Politics*



# 1

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## *A Realist Theory of International Politics*

This book purports to present a theory of international politics. The test by which such a theory must be judged is not *a priori* and abstract but empirical and pragmatic. The theory, in other words, must be judged not by some preconceived abstract principle or concept unrelated to reality, but by its purpose: to bring order and meaning to a mass of phenomena which without it would remain disconnected and unintelligible. It must meet a dual test, an empirical and a logical one: Do the facts as they actually are lend themselves to the interpretation the theory has put upon them, and do the conclusions at which the theory arrives follow with logical necessity from its premises? In short, is the theory consistent with the facts and within itself?

The issue this theory raises concerns the nature of all politics. The history of modern political thought is the story of a contest between two schools that differ fundamentally in their conceptions of the nature of man, society, and politics. One believes that a rational and moral political order, derived from universally valid abstract principles, can be achieved here and now. It assumes the essential goodness and infinite malleability of human nature, and blames the failure of the social order to measure up to the rational standards on lack of knowledge and understanding, obsolescent social institutions, or the depravity of certain isolated individuals or groups. It trusts in education, reform, and the sporadic use of force to remedy these defects.

The other school believes that the world, imperfect as it is from the rational point of view, is the result of forces inherent in human nature. To improve the world one must work with those forces, not against them. This being inherently a world of opposing interests and of conflict among them, moral principles can never be fully realized, but must at best be approximated through the ever temporary balancing of interests and the ever precarious settlement of conflicts. This school, then, sees in a system of checks and balances a universal principle for all pluralist societies. It appeals to historic precedent rather than to abstract

principles, and aims at the realization of the lesser evil rather than of the absolute good.

This theoretical concern with human nature as it actually is, and with the historic processes as they actually take place, has earned for the theory presented here the name of realism. What are the tenets of political realism? No systematic exposition of the philosophy of political realism can be attempted here; it will suffice to single out six fundamental principles, which have frequently been misunderstood.

## **SIX PRINCIPLES OF POLITICAL REALISM**

1. Political realism believes that politics, like society in general, is governed by objective laws that have their roots in human nature. In order to improve society it is first necessary to understand the laws by which society lives. The operation of these laws being impervious to our preferences, men will challenge them only at the risk of failure.

Realism, believing as it does in the objectivity of the laws of politics, must also believe in the possibility of developing a rational theory that reflects, however imperfectly and one-sidedly, these objective laws. It believes also, then, in the possibility of distinguishing in politics between truth and opinion—between what is true objectively and rationally, supported by evidence and illuminated by reason, and what is only a subjective judgment, divorced from the facts as they are and informed by prejudice and wishful thinking.

Human nature, in which the laws of politics have their roots, has not changed since the classical philosophies of China, India, and Greece endeavored to discover these laws. Hence, novelty is not necessarily a virtue in political theory, nor is old age a defect. The fact that a theory of politics, if there be such a theory, has never been heard of before tends to create a presumption against, rather than in favor of, its soundness. Conversely, the fact that a theory of politics was developed hundreds or even thousands of years ago—as was the theory of the balance of power—does not create a presumption that it must be outmoded and obsolete. A theory of politics must be subjected to the dual test of reason and experience. To dismiss such a theory because it had its flowering in centuries past is to present not a rational argument but a modernistic prejudice that takes for granted the superiority of the present over the past. To dispose of the revival of such a theory as a “fashion” or “fad” is tantamount to assuming that in matters political we can have opinions but no truths.

For realism, theory consists in ascertaining facts and giving them meaning through reason. It assumes that the character of a foreign policy can be ascertained only through the examination of the political acts performed and of the foreseeable consequences of these acts. Thus we can find out what statesmen have actually done, and from the foreseeable consequences of their acts we can surmise what their objectives might have been.

Yet examination of the facts is not enough. To give meaning to the factual raw material of foreign policy, we must approach political reality with a kind



of rational outline, a map that suggests to us the possible meanings of foreign policy. In other words, we put ourselves in the position of a statesman who must meet a certain problem of foreign policy under certain circumstances, and we ask ourselves what the rational alternatives are from which a statesman may choose who must meet this problem under these circumstances (presuming always that he acts in a rational manner), and which of these rational alternatives this particular statesman, acting under these circumstances, is likely to choose. It is the testing of this rational hypothesis against the actual facts and their consequences that gives theoretical meaning to the facts of international politics.

2. The main signpost that helps political realism to find its way through the landscape of international politics is the concept of interest defined in terms of power. This concept provides the link between reason trying to understand international politics and the facts to be understood. It sets politics as an autonomous sphere of action and understanding apart from other spheres, such as economics (understood in terms of interest defined as wealth), ethics, aesthetics, or religion. Without such a concept a theory of politics, international or domestic, would be altogether impossible, for without it we could not distinguish between political and nonpolitical facts, nor could we bring at least a measure of systemic order to the political sphere.

We assume that statesmen think and act in terms of interest defined as power, and the evidence of history bears that assumption out. That assumption allows us to retrace and anticipate, as it were, the steps a statesman—past, present, or future—has taken or will take on the political scene. We look over his shoulder when he writes his dispatches; we listen in on his conversation with other statesmen; we read and anticipate his very thoughts. Thinking in terms of interest defined as power, we think as he does, and as disinterested observers we understand his thoughts and actions perhaps better than he, the actor on the political scene, does himself.

The concept of interest defined as power imposes intellectual discipline upon the observer, infuses rational order into the subject matter of politics, and thus makes the theoretical understanding of politics possible. On the side of the actor, it provides for rational discipline in action and creates that astounding continuity in foreign policy which makes American, British, or Russian foreign policy appear as an intelligible, rational continuum, by and large consistent within itself, regardless of the different motives, preferences, and intellectual and moral qualities of successive statesmen. A realist theory of international politics, then, will guard against two popular fallacies: the concern with motives and the concern with ideological preferences.

To search for the clue to foreign policy exclusively in the motives of statesmen is both futile and deceptive. It is futile because motives are the most illusive of psychological data, distorted as they are, frequently beyond recognition, by the interests and emotions of actor and observer alike. Do we really know what our own motives are? And what do we know of the motives of others?

Yet even if we had access to the real motives of statesmen, that knowledge