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Ethics in International Relations

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ABSTRACT

Power and ethics are two inseparable factors in international relations, where the purpose of ethics is to limit the destructive effects of power. However, today we witness a dichotomy between these two factors in the world. Governments and those who wield power often claim to make their decisions based on ethics, but in practice, the articulation of these claims is often lacking justification, and issues other than upholding ethics and human values take precedence. Consequently, in order to establish and exert ethical influence in international relations, there is a need for modeling and mainstreaming ethics. In this regard, having a progressive model that encompasses ethical foundations and introducing and utilizing it as a paradigm can be influential.

Keywords: ethics; international relations; model; idealism; realism

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ОРИГИНАЛЬНАЯ СТАТЬЯ

Этика в международных отношениях

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АННОТАЦИЯ

Власть и этика — два неразрывных фактора в международных отношениях. При этом целью этики является ограничение разрушительного воздействия власти. Однако сегодня мы наблюдаем следующую картину: правительства и власть имущие утверждают, что принимают решения на основе этических принципов, но на деле такие заявления зачастую не имеют под собой оснований, а этические нормы и общечеловеческие ценности всячески попираются. Следовательно, надо «внедрять этику» в международные отношения. В этой связи необходимо создать прогрессивную модель, включающую этические основы, которую можно было бы использовать в качестве парадигмы.

Ключевые слова: этика; международные отношения; модель; идеализм; реализм

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INTRODUCTION

Morality is considered as one of the constituent elements of power as well as limitation and a brake on power. In this sense, whether individual and social morality originates from customs and habits or has a contractual and legal basis, it can affect how power is used.

In many societies, moral standards depend on people's religion. The moral teachings that exist in religious scriptures or expressed by religious leaders, whether its origin is divine or human, have always been effective in shaping moral and social institutions. If piety has the meaning of obedience to the Divine will, political piety is also constrained between power and morality [1, p. 54].

Bertrand Russell separates two aspects of ethics: ethics as a social institution such as law, and ethics as something related to individual conscience. According to him, the first type of morality is a part of the power apparatus. Of course, he considers this view of ethics from the perspective of creating a sense of obedience. However, what we mean is the set of inherent or acquired characteristics that place the use of power in the direction of morality. In this case, morality is introduced against the abuse of power [2, p. 144].

If we pay attention to the subject of ethics as a social institution, such as law, that is, something not necessarily related to individual conscience, the understanding of Bertrand Russell's justification for it, as a tool at the disposal of the power apparatus, can be simpler. But in the implementation of the role that we have in mind and is expected from ethics, the degree of success of ethics in playing its deterrent role against the exercise of the power of rulers and tyrants has directly depended on the amount and type of its relationship with the institutions of power. Sometimes, morality is separated from the religion and is expressed in terms of non-religious concepts. Other times, ethics is associated with the concept of reason and sometimes with the concepts of benefit and material utility. The difference between these two realms of power and ethics is related to the means rather than goals.

Morality has both religious and intellectual foundations and its purpose is to limit the destructive effects of power. Often in the world, governments, statesmen and those who hold the tools of power claim that they make their decisions based on ethics, but indeed, in practice, in most cases, these statements are nothing more than justifications. It cannot be claimed that all the time, internal and

international political relations are based on ethics; because in the realm of government administration, most thinkers believe in separating individual ethics from political ethics. This means that a politician is more concerned with issues other than observing human ethics [3, p. 225].

ETHICS AND INTERNATIONAL RELATIONS

Power and morality are two inseparable factors in international relations, but the question as to what extent these two phenomena have mutual influence and, under what conditions, one prevails over the other is a matter that deserves further discussions.

In the course of history and by studying the past, we come across different points of view. There are theoreticians like Machiavelli, who in his book advises those in power to use any method that is accompanied by trickery, betrayal, and bloodshed, and any kind of unethical action. Based on his experience, he does not consider the game of power and politics to be free from trickery, deception and betrayal, and considers the good and bad of a political movement to be manifested only in its result. Machiavelli, who has many obvious and hidden fans in today's world, explains all ways and techniques of gaining power and maintaining it, without mentioning the correct and ethical use of power in society. Of course, his book is not a treatise on morals and political virtues, but it is handbook for those in power to maintain their position. It is rare that a statesman with any level of lofty human ideas can deny the truth of power in international relations, and to the same extent, a politician, no matter how much Machiavellian, can absolutely deny the role of ethics in this realm [4, p. 121].

Often, the public interest or the high interest of the society are the justification for resorting to immoral actions of the Institutionalized power holders in society. For this reason, in today's world, it is difficult to allocate and separate the border of ethics and politics. The criterion of whether or not a political act or decision is ethical can be the extent of using power tools for the common good of the society. Is resorting to lies and concealment to avoid a war, bloodshed and violence permissible and moral? Should ethics be observed at any expenses? These are among questions that are discussed in this field. [5, p. 96].

Based on this, we see two views of realists and idealists in the field of international relations. Unlike idealists, who consider personal and political ethics to be two manifestations of the same trait,

realists believe that international behavior is affected by its own set of restrictions, necessities, and laws, the ultimate goal of which is to gain power and not to limit it.

Realists regard issues like war and peace as important as idealists do, but they also believe that the nature and quality of international relations creates limitations for human moral needs and necessities. This group believe that international behavior is affected by its own set of restrictions, necessities, rules and laws, whose ultimate goal is to gain power. Therefore, we are witnessing the failure of idealists who tried to use the weapon of morality to regulate and restore relations among countries.

In fact, on one side of the spectrum in international relations theories, there are idealists who believe in the necessity of ethics in this field, and on the other side are realists who believe that international relations have nothing to do with ethics, in principle, and in other words, international relations are neither moral nor immoral. In fact, realists who consider power to be the center and the driving force of international relations, believe that ethics is irrelevant in this field [6, p. 54].

Right now, we see that in the world, large and powerful countries naturally try to maintain their position in international relations, while weak and small countries, which are afraid of their neighbors, try to defend their national interests, by sticking to the slogan of moral foundations. On the other hand, governments that feel their interests have been unjustifiably limited under the shadow of such slogans, by resorting to other slogans or doctrines such as the self-determination right, the right to protect human civilization, the inalienable right to life and the necessity and legitimacy of defending one's honor and prestige against foreign aggressions, justify their actions in the arena of international politics and diplomacy. If we pay attention to the essence of these moral slogans, we will easily realize that they have always been a cover to achieve the interests of a country, government and politicians [7, p. 87].

In fact, in their statements and speeches, statesmen do not narrate their wishes and goals, but primarily provide the basis for achieving the goals by adhering to the accepted values and slogan. Thus, they take their desired action under the protection of this justification. We have witnessed this process many times throughout history and particularly the present era. In fact, what seems to be the dominant pattern in relations between governments is the realist view that can be seen in today's world.

CONCLUSION

It is clear from the above discussions that power and morality as two basic components in international relations and diplomacy are inseparable factors that cannot be denied, and a politician should consider both of them. Of course, we can see that there is a dichotomy between idealism and realism, and morality is overshadowed by power.

If morality is introduced as a set of practical values in the thought and actions of diplomatic and foreign policy agents of a country, then undoubtedly, in the long run, the credibility, interests and expedients of that state will be improved. On the contrary, as it has been observed throughout history, turning a blind eye to the sublime and spiritual human values causes discredit, loss and failure. In such an environment, maintaining the prestige of the country, gaining more respect and credit, and creating a favorable atmosphere for understanding and friendship with other countries are intended to promote national interests.

Therefore, by adopting ethical and reasonable methods in diplomacy, it is possible to achieve the goal of governance of ethics in international relations and creating an environment of friendship and understanding with other countries. For this purpose and in order to achieve the desired goals, introducing a model is the best method. On this basis, what is needed in order for ethics to rule and influence international relations, is creating and implementing paradigm. In this regard, having a model for progress that includes ethical principles, and introducing and using it as a paradigm can be effective.

Of course, the important point in following this path and implementing this task is the difference between various cultures and values. In the realm of international relations, local and traditional ethical standards are not important, and it is not possible to guide or advise others to the right path without having a suitable model. However, due to the existence of some common values and interests, we can only encourage others to follow our own method and tradition by showing the practical superiority of our religious, moral, social and cultural system. In such a way, they themselves will be inclined and attracted to our values. Therefore, having an excellent model of scientific progress and authority based on ethics is the key and the right way to govern ethics in international relations. It is such a model that makes it possible to achieve social justice and fraternity of human societies in relations among governments.

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