

The Community of Interests and the Responsible Leadership in Hans J. Morgenthau's Political Thought and Their Inspirations for the Contemporary European Integration Process

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Abstract

This article refers to the concepts of the community of interests and the responsible leadership present in Hans J. Morgenthau's political thought. The author analyses both ideas in a broader context of Morgenthau's understanding of power and politics and the need to master the destructive potential of politics. The second aim of the article, however, is to indicate the community of interest and the responsible leadership as two interesting points of reference while analyzing the process of European integration and its current problems. The article concludes that both concepts remain the useful tools in this analysis and without the reference to the community of interests it would be difficult to talk about the effectiveness of the mechanisms aimed at limiting the presence of power in Europe. The case of the responsible leadership is a bit more problematic in this regard yet the responsible leadership remains the indispensable element of the regional strategy to master the destructive potential of politics in Europe. Finally the author refers to possible consequences following the collapse of the mechanisms that Europe has so far developed to tame and limit the struggle for power on the continent.

Keywords: morgenthau, power, politics, community of interests, responsible leadership, European integration

1. Introduction

The recent renditions of Hans J. Morgenthau's political thought indicate that his understanding of power and politics is much more sophisticated than it has been presented before. Indeed the lecture of Morgenthau's works confirms that he was aware of the key role of power in politics yet he was at the same time conscious of the need to tame and limit the struggle for power. The Morgenthau political thought has never been a naïve vision of the perfect harmony of interests but it is much more nuanced than the brutal real politics and accepts different mechanism able to limit the presence of power in politics.

Thus the concepts of the community of interests and the responsible leadership become two important ideas in Morgenthau's strategy to master the destructive potential of politics. The community of interests could be a basis for the culture of moderation and acceptance of the interests others than ours while the responsible leadership is indispensable in controlling the lust for power and the struggle for power in politics. The leadership requires prudence, self-limitation as well as a perfect knowledge of the nature of politics.

Yet this article points that both the community of interests and the responsible leadership could be an interesting point of reference in a broader analysis of the regional integration processes and the European integration is a good example in this regard. The case of Europe illustrates that without the community of values it would be difficult to develop the mechanisms accommodating the national interests on the continent. It would also be difficult without the effective leadership and the reference to the community and the leadership becomes even more important in the context of the current crisis of the European Union's identity.

As a result the aim of the article is twofold. First it is going to present the role that the community of interests and the responsible leadership play in the Morgenthau's strategy to master the destructive potential of politics. Both ideas are presented against the background of Morgenthau's specific understanding of power and politics and his emphasis on the need to tame the struggle for power in politics. The second aim is to consider the community of interests and the responsible leadership as two important points of reference in the context of the European integration – its achievements and its current problems.

The article refers to the works of Hans J. Morgenthau, especially *Politics Among Nations. The Struggle for Power and Peace* and *Scientific Man vs. Power Politics*, as well as to the recent works on Morgenthau's political theory, to include the books of Oliver Jütersonke, Seán Molloy, Richard Ned Lebow, Miheala Neacsu, William E. Scheuerman, and Michael C. Williams.

The author shares the thesis about the nuanced character of Morgenthau's understanding of power and politics present in the recent renditions of his political thought. The article concludes at the same time that Morgenthau's concepts of the community of interests and the responsible leadership remain the interesting point of reference helping to analyse the process of European integration and its contemporary problems. The sense of the community of interests remains the crucial element in the regional mechanisms to limit the struggle for power in Europe. The problem of the leadership is much more complex and must reflect the changes in the power relations in Europe. Yet the responsible leadership is indispensable in any effective strategy to keep the integration process alive. Finally Morgenthau is quite convincing while warning the Europeans about the consequences following the collapse of the mechanisms that Europe has so far developed to master the struggle for power on the continent.

2. The Need of Mastering the Struggle for Power in Hans J. Morgenthau's Political Thought

Considering the intellectual roots of Hans J. Morgenthau's political thought M. Koskenniemi (2004), William E. Scheuerman (2008), and Oliver Jütersonke (2010) indicate the legal origins of Morgenthau's political theory and his focus on the social aspects accompanying the law-making process, including the inequalities of power existing on the international scene (Koskenniemi, 2004: 440-441; Scheuerman, 2008: 43-45; Jütersonke, 2010: 43-44).

Indeed the considerations about the nature of international law helped Morgenthau to define the category of political disputes that refer to the fundamental interests of states and thus could not be solved by legal means (Scheuerman, 2009: 18). Analysing the dynamics of the political conflicts Morgenthau indicated that they reflected the lust for power (*animus dominandi*) rooted in psychology and human nature. Furthermore, contrary to our biological needs, the lust for power is potentially limitless and the man's desire for power would be satisfied only "if the last man became an object of his domination, there being nobody above or beside him, that is, if he became God". (Morgenthau, 1946: 193; Molloy, 2006: 90-91; Scheuerman, 2009: 37-38). At the same time the psychologically rooted lust for power becomes a basis for the struggle for power that is a universal feature of politics and manifests itself at both domestic and foreign policy of any state. Thus driven by the lust for power political actors strive to increase their power, to maintain it or to demonstrate it and the concept of the struggle for power remains the essence of Morgenthau's understanding of politics. (Morgenthau, 1985: 52-53; Schuett, 2007: 54-55, 58-60; Scheuerman, 2009: 31-32; Jütersonke, 2010: 60, 63, 68-69).

Considering the struggle for power as the driving force of any political activity Morgenthau had to accept the antagonistic vision of politics that is potentially brutal and violent. Nevertheless he has never been an advocate of Realpolitik based on untamed power politics deprived of any normative references. The struggle for power is the universal feature of any political activity and each political decision potentially brings about a possibility of conflict yet the presence of power in politics may and should be limited and mitigated. (Morgenthau, 1952: 978; Scheuerman, 2008: 55-56; Scheuerman, 2009: 36-38).

In fact, domestic politics has so far developed some effective mechanisms to transform the struggle for power into the relatively peaceful forms of competition – to mention the competition over the social or material status (Scheuerman, 2009: 67, 124). International politics is less successful in this regard as there is no world government able to impose its norms on all political actors (the so called state of international anarchy). Nevertheless, in *Politics Among Nations* Morgenthau indicated some mechanism able to limit the presence of power in politics, including the balance of power, the international morality and the world public opinion, even if the effectiveness of those mechanisms has usually been limited (Morgenthau, 1985, Part Four and Part Five).

One of the most important elements in Morgenthau's strategy to master the struggle for power in politics is his flexible understanding of power itself. Indeed power in the Morgenthau's political thought has for a long time been wrongly interpreted as the focus on material capabilities. Both the military and material aspects of power are important in the foreign policy of any state but power is certainly not limited to the military force and seen from the Morgenthau's point of view it is more a "psychological relation between those who exercise it and those over whom it is exercised" (Morgenthau, 1985: 12, 32; Scheuerman, 2009: 103-104, 110-111). As Morgenthau underlined in the third of his famous six principles of political realism "The same observations apply to the concept of power. Its content and the manner of its use are determined by the political and cultural environment. Power may comprise anything that establishes and maintains the control of man over man. Thus

power covers all social relationships which serve that end, from physical violence to the most subtle psychological ties by which one mind controls another” (Morgenthau, 1952: 972).

Thus power in Hans J. Morgenthau’s political thought remains a flexible phenomenon that accepts the role of force in politics yet at the same time notes the significance of less tangible components of national power such as cultural identity, national character, the quality of government or the quality of diplomacy (Morgenthau, 1948: 96-108; Scheuerman, 2009: 82-83). Furthermore recent renditions of Morgenthau’s political thought indicate that in contemporary international relations power becomes a rivalry over the information, international image or, as Mihaela Neacsu (2009) points out, the imposition of meaning. In this context it becomes the dynamic struggle for the imposition of a certain interpretation of political reality among other competing interpretations and the successful state is able to persuade others to follow its vision of “truth” and political reality (Neacsu, 2009: 2-3, 178-179).

Another crucial element in Morgenthau’s strategy of mastering the struggle for power in politics is ethics and his considerations about the consequences of human action. Indeed the presence of power in Morgenthau’s concept of politics does not mean that politics is free of any moral concerns and ethical considerations. Morgenthau clearly opposed the arguments pointing to the “immorality of politics” and from his point of view political activity had always been a subject of moral restraints. (Neacsu, 2009: 155-156; Jütersonke, 2010: 157-159).

Morgenthau was aware of a specific dialectic existing between the harsh realities of power and the ethical standards derived from the Western culture and facing these contradictory dictates of power and morality, he had been looking for a transcendent ethical point of reference for any political actions. Morgenthau warned, as Oliver Jütersonke (2010) notes, that power could corrupt political actors if they did not have a kind of the “transcendent standard of ethics” helping them to understand politics in forms different than the amoral struggle for materialist power. The politics without the transcendent standard of ethics would at the same time encourage the most powerful players to equate their ideological and moral concepts with the universal moral code and to expect others to accept these claims. (Jütersonke, 2010: 165, 170-171, 174-175).

As a result Morgenthau’s political thought refers to the concept of ethics of responsibility urging that all actions affecting others, including the political ones, must be the subject of responsibility and all political actors deciding in politics must concentrate on the consequences of their decisions. Besides, as Seán Molloy (2008) indicates, Morgenthau shared the principle of the lesser evil. It means that the best man acting in politics can do is to minimize the immorality of his/her actions and to choose the activity that would cause the least violence to the principles of Christian ethics. (Molloy, 2008: 92-95; Scheuerman, 2009: 59-60).

Morgenthau was aware that the role of ethics in reducing the presence of power in politics was limited and moral considerations alone would not be effective enough to successfully tame the struggle for power in politics. Nevertheless moral considerations were important in his political thought and politics without the transcendent ethical point of reference would be a pure power politics that Morgenthau strove to avoid. Besides, the ethics of responsibility and the principle of the lesser evil are necessary not only to limit the destructive potential of politics. They serve as a guideline helping to immunize political actors from abstract moral principles and naïve simplistic answers to the complex questions of social and political reality. Indeed Morgenthau remained a critic of scientism and liberal rationalism for his entire intellectual career pointing out that scientists missed the nature of man and politics looking for the final and definite answers to the questions that were not a subject of definite answers (Morgenthau, 1947: 12).

Thus the struggle for power in Morgenthau’s concept of politics is potentially brutal, violent, and destructive. Yet Morgenthau’s flexible understanding of power, the institutional limits of the role of power in politics as well as his normative considerations help to master the destructive potential of politics and to channel it into socially acceptable forms. (Williams, 2005: 8-9, 83-84, 116-117; Gismondi, 2008: 151-153). This, however, is impossible without a responsible political leader who could combine all these efforts together as well as would be able to reconcile the contradictory demands of power and morality (Scheuerman, 2009: 53-54, 101).

3. The Role of the Responsible Leadership

Searching for the strategy to master the struggle for power Morgenthau was aware that politics was not a depersonalized action but it referred to the concrete world and the concrete people deciding in the sphere of political activity (Turner, 2008: 79). For this reason he pointed to a crucial role that the responsible and prudent leadership could play in mastering the destructive potential of politics. Yet he was aware of the specific knowledge and features of character that the leader should have to meet this challenge.

Indeed, as Michaela Neacsu (2009) indicates, successful and responsible statesman must possess a good knowledge of the essence of human nature. He/she must understand the nature of politics, its structure and mechanisms as well as interests present on the international arena (Morgenthau, 1947: 186; Lebow, 2003: 232). It means that the responsible leader must feel and understand the relations of power existing on the international scene as well as be able to anticipate new international developments and evaluate them correctly. He/she must be aware of the sense of limits in his/her political activity as well as be able to look at oneself from a distance – without emotions and immoderate aspirations (Neacsu, 2009: 138-144, 166-167; Molloy, 2008: 95).

Furthermore, responsible leader must be aware of the dialectic existing between ethics and politics as well as moral dilemmas that accompany political activity. He/she must be aware of the destructive potential of politics and thus be conscious of the consequences of his/her decisions, anticipating their possible results. (Neacsu, 2009: 61, 140). Facing the competing dictates of power and morality the responsible leadership must, therefore, be neither Realpolitiker celebrating the lust for power nor the moralist ignoring the power relations in politics. This dualism is difficult to overcome yet the prudent and responsible political leaders are able to reconcile both imperatives successfully (Morgenthau, 1947: 203; Scheuerman, 2009: 54-55, 88-89).

The responsible leadership must at the same time be able to reconcile the competing tendencies to disregard the popular demands and to surrender to them. In fact, Morgenthau's political thought indicates that the dictates of the effective foreign policy do not necessarily reflect the demands of the masses as the masses often expect short term and spectacular effects and prefer uncomplicated politicians (Neacsu, 2009: 133-135, 144). Thus, referring to the effectiveness of the leadership, Morgenthau underlined that the responsible statesman must reach beyond the next elections and should not capitulate to short term popular expectations. Acting in the democratic environment he/she must reconcile the need of a legitimate democratic support for his/her political program and the effectiveness of his/her foreign and domestic policy goals. This requires the balance of social power as well as the ability to distinguish between the interests that compromise with the popular demands and the interests fundamental for his/her political program that sometimes must be pursued despite the less favourable opinion pools (Morgenthau, 1985: 164-170).

As a result the responsible leadership in Hans J. Morgenthau's political thought becomes an artisanship. The responsible statesman must be aware of unpredictability and uncertainty of politics and must reject the simplistic solutions to complex political problems. As Morgenthau pointed in *Scientific Man vs. Power Politics* "No formula will give the statesman certainty, no calculation eliminate the risk, no accumulation of facts open the future". (Morgenthau, 1947: 188; Gismondi, 2008: 153). Consequently the responsible leadership must be conscious that political activity remains the area of ethical dilemmas and the answers to the social problems remain provisional and must be given "everyday anew" (Morgenthau, 1947: 10-12, 183-186; Neacsu, 2009: 61, 141-142; Scheuerman, 2009: 41-42). Thus the concept of the responsible leadership is crucial in Morgenthau's strategy of limiting the presence of power in politics. Yet Morgenthau had been aware that the prudence, moderation and specific political wisdom accompanying the responsible statesman were not the features of all political actors. They refer to selected individuals able to understand the essence of politics and follow the ethical guidelines. For this reason, as Oliver Jütersonke (2010) points, politics is an art of the statesman able to link the practical political activity with ethical considerations (Jütersonke, 2010: 1).

4. The Role of the Community of Interests in the State's Political Activity

The struggle for power in Morgenthau's political thought remains potentially destructive yet *Politics Among Nations* indicates that the national interests may assume different shapes. They always reflect the logic of power in politics yet in certain regions of the world interests of the states may agree and converge more often than in the others. Morgenthau indicates in this regard that "(...) the kind of interest determining political action in a particular period of history depends upon the political and cultural context within which foreign policy is formulated. The goals that might be pursued by nations in their foreign policy can run the whole gamut of objectives any nation has ever pursued or might possibly pursue" (Morgenthau, 1945: 15; Morgenthau, 1985: 11).

Thus when the cultural and political context is favourable and the interests of the states in the region are quite similar nothing stands against the attempts to develop some effective mechanisms of their peaceful accommodation. As a result, despite the responsible leadership that is crucial for Morgenthau's strategy of reducing the presence of power in politics, recent renditions of Morgenthau's thought point out to the community and its role in formulating responsible foreign policy by the states acting in regional (local) communities.

Indeed considering the "realist" tradition present in the works of the ancient Greeks (Aeschylus, Sophocles, Thucydides and Plato) Richard Ned Lebow (2008) indicates that their understanding of power emphasizes the

role of persuasion in social relations as well as the links between the state's foreign policy and the aims of the community in which the political actors function. The ancient Greeks focused more on emotional appeals able to create the shared identities and practice of cooperation than on purely materialistic understanding of power (Lebow, 2008: 26-27).

Lebow indicates in this regard the persuasion based on deceit and coercion, which the ancient Greeks called *dolos*, as well as the persuasion based on common identities and mutually respected norms that they called *peithō*. The persuasion of the *dolos* type is associated with demagoguery, misleading arguments and egoistic ends. It is usually based on the threat of violence and inequality of political actors. The persuasion associated with *peithō* remains quite different. It is based on an honest dialogue between the equal subjects and helps to formulate common interests. *Peithō* contributes to the mutual respect and the sense of community and is the persuasion that all actors understand and accept (Lebow, 2008: 28-29, 31).

Besides, the ancient Greeks considered *peithō* as the strategy that is much more effective than *dolos*. It helps to peacefully accommodate different interests and strengthens the sense of community. It is the form of persuasion that does not force other political actors to lose their own identities and encourages cooperation. Furthermore *peithō* used as a part of the broader political strategy often refers to the common interest and identities as well as the recognition of actors' membership in the broader community. It consumes much less cost and encourages self-restraint in political activity (Lebow, 2008: 29).

Indeed the persuasion based on *peithō* corresponds to Morgenthau's concept of the responsible leadership and his strategy of limiting the presence of power in politics even if, as Lebow notes, Morgenthau used different terms to describe similar tendencies (Lebow, 2008: 36-38). Many elements of the concept of *peithō* remind Morgenthau's ideas of prudence, responsibility and self-limitation necessary to tame the destructive potential of politics. Thus that the lack of a perspective of community may bring about serious difficulties in the formulation of responsible foreign policy aims of the states in the region (Lebow, 2008: 38-39; Williams, 2005: 192-193). Besides, the great powers willing to act unilaterally usually risk to become blind to the need of self-limitation and moderation necessary to maintain the stability of regional relations. As a result, the successful reconciliation of the interests of the individual state and the broader community is another crucial task for the responsible leadership and Lebow underlines that "(...) a well-functioning community is essential to the intelligent formation and pursuit of individual interest" (Lebow, 2003: 257).

In the same vein Michael C. Williams (2005) points out in his concept of the "willful realism" that the concentration on the ethic of responsibility means not only the prudence of political action but should encourage political actors to critical self-reflection about their interests as well as a dialogue about their identities. Political responsibility in this regard is not only a question of ideas and postulates but first of all the issue of political practice (Williams, 2005: 169-172; Morgenthau, 1952: 978).

Thus responsibility, prudence and moderation should be the elements of the broader culture of self-limitation in the political activity that is recognized by the political actors in the region and implemented in their political practice. This understanding of limits would help to recognize the need of plurality and to accept the existence of interests different than ours. It would encourage the reflection about the identity of the political actor and the group within which he/she functions (Williams, 2005: 175-178, 186-189). Nevertheless Williams is aware that developing the culture of political responsibility and self-limitation is difficult as it requires responsible actors and structures able to support this idea (Williams, 2005: 175-181). In fact it is limited to some selected regions in the world, to mention Europe and the Americas as the examples. Yet Williams' idea of the culture of responsibility clearly refers to Morgenthau's understanding of the need to limit the presence of power in politics and outlines possible regional mechanisms to accommodate national interests that may contribute to the stability of the region.

5. The Community of Interests and the Responsible Leadership – the Case of the European Integration

Morgenthau's political thought has not been the leading theoretical background to analyse the integration processes in Europe yet contemporary interpretations of his theory, including that of Williams, do indicate some important considerations present in Morgenthau's thought that reflect the problems of today's Europe and the challenges of disintegration it faces. Indeed Morgenthau's theory is certainly not the point of view emphasizing the harmony of interests and Morgenthau himself was a fierce opponent of any naïve models of global or regional reforms masking the "hidden" game of interests of the countries involved. (Morgenthau, 1948: 255-258, 266). Nevertheless Morgenthau's vision of power is flexible and "Nothing in the realist position militates against the assumption that the present division of the political world into nation states will be replaced by larger units of a quite different character, more in keeping with the technical potentialities and the moral requirements of the

contemporary world” (Morgenthau, 1985: 12). In fact Morgenthau was aware of the destructiveness of the current Westphalian system of nation states and underlined that, although in the long perspective, only the new system transferring the national sovereignty from the level of states to the level of supranational authorities would guarantee the preservation of the human race. Besides, he highlighted in his intellectual career that without cultural and moral similarities among the states in the region effectiveness of regional mechanisms aimed at limiting the struggle for power could be considerably weakened. (Morgenthau, 1948: 150-160, 164-165; Lebow, 2003: 245). Thus the presence of regional community is certainly not the phenomenon that contradicts Morgenthau’s understanding of power and politics.

Morgenthau was initially cautious, as Richard Ned Lebow (2003) indicates, towards the idea of the European integration pointing that the key to the security and development of Europe was the US presence on the continent (Lebow, 2003: 245). Nevertheless he soon noted the novelty of the European experiment. Morgenthau was generally skeptical towards the “top-down” international projects attempting to solve the regional problems and the “top-down” creation of new international institutions that usually missed the dynamics of social and economic processes (Scheuerman, 2009: 129-130). Instead, he favoured the approach of David Mitrany advocating gradual reforms on the “bottom-up” basis. Morgenthau praised the Europeans for avoiding the “top down” approach and for their focus on strengthening the common work in certain, particular areas of cooperation. The practice of this cooperation could, at a further stage, contribute to a community of interests in the region helping to mitigate the struggle for power on the continent (Scheuerman, 2009: 129-132).

This community of interests has in fact been a political reality in Europe for the last decades and the European integration has been the long process of accommodation of national interests in the region and building the practice of regional cooperation. Thus the essence of the integration in Europe, if seen from the point of view of Morgenthau’s political thought, has been to limit the presence of power in the regional relations through more and more effective mechanisms providing for the reconciliation of different national interests. Even if the process has taken place after the World War II in a relatively favourable political environment (to mention the European response to the Soviet threat and the US military protection during the cold war) the progress of the European integration has been considerable.

Besides, relatively similar and convergent interests have helped the states in the region to work out not only the mechanisms to limit the presence of power in their national politics but at the same time to establish the basis of the culture of moderation, self-limitation, prudence and dialogue as it is described by Michael C. Williams. Thus echoing the ancient Greek concept of *peithō* the countries in Europe have been trying to recognize, in a more or less effective way, the role of the community in the process of formulation of their foreign policy aims.

It seems that, despite the current crisis of the European identity, the community of regional interests has been the considerable achievement of the European integration. It is not only the ethical and philosophical question of common democratic values but also the practice of politics that accepts the plurality of interests and promote the need of their accommodation. Morgenthau was quite clear while pointing out that the effective community and the effective balance of social powers required that “(...) the elements to be balanced are necessary for society or have a right to exist, (...)” (Morgenthau, 1948: 126). It is certainly no coincidence that the new East-Central European members of the European Union have been strongly emphasizing the idea of common European values while negotiating their membership in the EU, underlying their “return to Europe” and the European community of culture, history, and tradition. (O’Brennan, 2006: 14). Thus one of the tasks for European leaders facing the current problems of the European integration is not to miss the sense of this community and to keep it alive.

Nevertheless the Morgenthau’s concept of the community of interests is by no means the idealistic vision of the perfect harmony of interests – neither in Europe nor in other regions of the world. It is the vision of power existing in politics, even if the regional mechanisms aimed at accommodation of national interests have so far been successfully limiting the role of power in the international relations in Europe. On the contrary, the balance of interests among the members of the EU should be seen as a fragile construction that must be renewed every day anew, especially facing the disintegration trends following the collapse of the bipolar order, the crisis of the European identity, and the recent financial crisis undermining the foundation of the European monetary union.

Thus, contrary to some liberal positions, Morgenthau’s political thought would have no problems with outlining possible consequences following the collapse of the mechanism that Europe has so far developed to limit the struggle for power on the continent. Morgenthau’s theory has no illusions in this regard. The gradual disintegration of the mechanisms that have been accommodating the regional interests would result in a more obvious and more tangible presence of power in the European politics. It would be accompanied by the growing abrasiveness of the relations in the region and the actors in the European politics, especially those more

powerful, would be encouraged to reach for the instruments of politics echoing the ancient Greek *dolos*, including its chicanery, threat, and arrogance.

The dissolution of the regional mechanisms limiting the struggle for power in Europe would certainly be accompanied by the tendency among the most powerful actors in the European Union to ignore the interests of the smaller ones. The politics of the strongest would at the same time be gradually losing its community context. Thus discussing the Morgenthau's warnings about the unilateral foreign policy created without any reference to the broader community Lebow points that "(...) that great powers are often their own worst enemies because success and the hubris it engenders encourage actors to see themselves outside of and above their community, and this in turn blinds them to the need for self-restraint." (Lebow, 2003: 258). Lebow refers in this regard to some tendencies present in the foreign policy of the United States, underlying that the unilateral US policy has "opened a gulf between itself and the community of democratic nations that has previously allowed it to translate its power into influence in efficient ways" (Lebow, 2008: 39). Yet it seems that these remarks would also be right in the case of the Europeans – to mention the French criticism towards the "letter of the eight" supporting the US intervention in Iraq and East-Central European criticism towards the French and German "special" relations with Russia (Timmins, 2007: 169-171).

It is obvious that after the collapse of the bipolar order Europe has hardly been a community of foreign policy interests with some different areas of concerns and preferences among the EU members. Yet it is equally evident that any reference to the sense of the regional community would be difficult without the mechanisms of accommodating their foreign policy interests. This in fact has been the intentions behind the Maastricht Treaty establishing the Common Foreign and Security Policy (Treaty on European Union: Title V) and even if these mechanisms have so far been weak European Union should not risk their final collapse. The EU should be aware that their dissolution would certainly mean a radical decline of the community background in the foreign policy of the European countries accompanied by the growing focus on the national aims. Again, this is not the question of the perfect harmony of interest that is impossible in Morgenthau's political thought but the need of the mechanisms able to limit the presence of power in the politics of the European states and to keep at least a minimum European perspective for their foreign policy goals.

The European political community, however, should be accompanied by the effective leadership. In the history of the European Union the question of the leadership has always been complicated and the problems with the leadership have usually weakened the practical significance of the community of interests and values. This has been both the question of different levels and methods in the decision-making (intergovernmental vs. supranational) as well as shared and sometimes competing responsibility of the European institutions (to mention the previous competing competences of the High Representative for the Foreign Affairs and Security Policy and the European Commissioner for External Relations) combined with the game of national interests among the European states. Thus the issue of the leadership in the EU has always been unclear and blurred. Yet taking into account Morgenthau reluctance towards the institutional and legal bodies masking the real disposition of power on the international arena (Morgenthau, 1948: 343, 346) it is more important to ask a question about the countries able to influence the European integration to the greatest extent and to give the direction to this process. The history of the European integration is clear in this regard pointing to the leading role of France and Germany.

Indeed, Paul Taylor (2008) indicates the periods of "waxings" and "wanings" in the European integration but underlines that there has always been the favourable disposition of power on the European scene with the French-German tandem able to push the integration ahead – proposing a next step or restarting the process with a new dynamism. Besides it has been a personal engagement of the leaders investing in the success of the integration as the common European project (Taylor, 2008: 8-12). Today the disposition of power in the European Union is more complex together with the next waves of the enlargement and the growing position of Germany. The shift in the previous balance of power in the EU is obvious and Taylor is right while pointing to the French fears that the European agenda may no longer reflect French interests as well growing self-confidence of Germany aware of its more powerful position in Europe. (Taylor, 2008: 62-68).

Yet facing the threat of its disintegration the European Union certainly needs new proposals and new inspirations and it is still the tandem of Germany and France that could be the source of these inspirations playing the role of the European leadership. The Polish foreign minister, Radosław Sikorski, speech in Berlin on November 28, 2011, given in the context of the possible role Germany could play in solving the current crisis of the European monetary union, seems to illustrate these expectations. Having in mind difficult historical background of the Polish-German relations Sikorski's words: "(...) I will probably be first Polish foreign minister in history to say so, but here it is: *I fear German power less than I am beginning to fear German inactivity.* You have become

Europe's indispensable nation. You may not fail to lead. Not dominate, but to lead in reform. Provided you include us in decision-making, Poland will support you" are quite symptomatic in this regard (Sikorski: 2011).

Irrespective of the shift in the power relations in the European Union Morgenthau's remarks about the need for prudence and moderation that should accompany the responsible leadership remain vital in contemporary Europe. The responsibility is especially important in the case of Germany the growing political and economic position of which is obvious. Morgenthau appreciated the Germans for practical abilities to build the power of their state yet warned about the lack of moderation in the German national character that sometimes brought about serious problems for the whole continent (Morgenthau, 1985: 146-152). This is of course the historical experience and the European integration has in fact been the process aimed at preventing the logic of domination yet the fears about the German hegemony in Europe are still alive in some parts of the continent (Baun, 2005: 372-374).

Furthermore, despite the prudence and moderation, it is crucial for the European leadership to understand the difficult moment the process of the regional integration has entered and the challenges the EU is facing together with the recent economic and social crisis in Europe. The responsible leadership in the European Union must be aware what would be the political price for the collapse of the community and what is going to happen once the mechanisms limiting the presence of power in the regional politics fall. Thus the most fundamental task of the European leadership is to protect the undertakings that Europe has so far developed to reduce the struggle for power in the region and, where possible, to try to look beyond today's problems.

Morgenthau was quite convincing while warning that the lack of the effective means able to reduce the presence of power in politics would immediately lead to brutal and violent power politics with all its consequences. Thus the European Union that is losing the sense of the community and its practical achievements that have so far served to master the struggle for power among the states on the continent would certainly go this way. Yet there is still some time to act and to prevent this scenario.

6. Conclusions

The recent renditions of Hans J. Morgenthau's political thought underline that his understanding of international relations is much more sophisticated than the pure power politics based on military force. The lecture of the Morgenthau's works confirms at least two leading motives present in his theory – the first is the presence of power in politics that is inescapable yet the second is the assertion about the need to tame and master the struggle for power in any political activity. Both the concept of the community of interests and the idea of the responsible leadership have been important components in the Morgenthau strategy to master the destructive potential of politics. The responsible leadership refers to moderation, prudence and ethical considerations while the community of interests helps to develop the culture of plurality accepting interests other than ours. Both ideas have so far been difficult to achieve yet both are indispensable if the mechanisms aimed at mastering the struggle for power are to be effective.

The Morgenthau's emphasis on the need to limit the struggle for power in politics finds its reflection in the case of the European Union and the process of the European integration in general. Morgenthau approach to the regional integration rejects the naïve models of perfect harmony of interests but accepts the mechanisms developed to master the destructive character of politics at the regional level.

Indeed Europe has so far been able to work out some effective mechanisms to tame and limit the presence of power in the regional politics. The sense of the community of fate, interests, and values has been important in this regard, although the role of the community has usually been weakened by the problems with the effective leadership – shared between the member states and the supranational institutions and accompanied by the game of national interests. Nevertheless the idea of the community is still crucial for the existence of the European Union, especially in the context of the recent European crisis threatening the very sense of the integration projects. Morgenthau's political thought is quite convincing in this regard pointing out that the collapse of the mechanisms that have so far been limiting the struggle for power in Europe would inevitably lead to the more tangible presence of power in the foreign policy of the states in the region. It is a simple way to growing tensions, rivalry, arrogance and brutality that Europe has not witnessed for the last decades.

Thus the leadership in Europe is indispensable and the main task of the European leadership is to save the culture of self-limitation that has been functioning on the continent. The role of France and Germany has so far been crucial in this regard. Today the tasks of Germany are much more obvious yet despite the shifts in the relations of power between the two countries it seems that the German-French tandem could still be a source of inspirations. Morgenthau's political thought has never beet the idea of the perfect harmony of interests. It is the story about the power present in politics that must be tamed and mastered. Europe has so far achieved a lot to

this end and the fundamental task of the European Union is not to lose these achievements. Both the concept of the community of interests as well as the idea of the responsible leadership could still play a crucial role in this regard.

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