

WRAP Exams · wrapexams.com

Prelims PYQ, Mains model answers, and copy evaluation. Write to the desk for this paper, a doubt, or the AI waitlist.

ask@wrapexams.com · +91 85951 84903 · wrapexams.com

Q2(b)

Marxism is a political theory of action demanding strict compliance with its core principles. Comment.

UPSC Civil Services Mains 2024 · PSIR GS 1 · 15 marks · Equality

Equality: Social, political and economic; relationship between equality and freedom; Affirmative action.

Core demand of the question

- State Marxism as a theory that explains the world in order to change it (15 marks)
- Show what core principles are and why 'strict compliance' is claimed
- **Comment:** distinguish analysis, programme, and later humanistic readings including **M. N. Roy**
- Do not reduce **Marx** to a party catechism only

Revision summary

Marx's eleventh thesis makes Marxism a theory that must issue in action, not only in interpretation.

Core principles include historical materialism, class struggle, and the critique of bourgeois property and state.

Lenin added organised seizure of power; that is the strictest political form of compliance.

Popper, Stalinism's record, and later critics show the danger when strictness silences fallible inquiry.

Gramsci and **M. N. Roy** keep Marxism as action while restoring hegemony, ethics, and the human person to the centre.

Introduction

Marxism is not only a description of class society. The eleventh thesis on **Feuerbach** says that philosophers have interpreted the world, and that the point is to change it. That is a political theory of action. The further claim that action must comply strictly with core principles is both a strength of discipline and a source of dogma. A comment must hold both sides.

Body

Theory of action

Karl Marx and **Engels** analysed capitalism as a historical mode of production: commodity, surplus value, class antagonism between bourgeoisie and proletariat. The analysis is meant to issue in praxis. The proletariat is not only an economic category. It is the agent that can abolish class by abolishing the conditions of its own existence. **Lenin** added organisation: a party, a seizure of the state, a dictatorship of the proletariat that is to wither. Action is therefore not optional commentary. It is the test of the theory.

Core principles, in this register, include historical materialism, class struggle, the critique of bourgeois right, and internationalism. Strict compliance means that reform which leaves exploitation intact is not the goal, and that theory is not a menu of private opinions.

The problem of strictness

If compliance becomes a closed catechism, criticism dies. **Popper** attacked historicism on this ground. Stalinism showed how a science of history can silence action that was supposed to emancipate. **Gramsci already complicated the picture: in the West, war of position in civil society matters as much as a single insurrection.** **M. N. Roy** later insisted on the humanistic and ethical content of Marxism against mechanical materialism and against Comintern tutelage. The New Left recovered **Marx's** early writings on alienation and species-being.

So Marxism demands action guided by principles. It does not, in its best readings, demand that every later fact be forced into a 1848 sentence. Indian Marxists who entered peasant and worker struggles, and those who faced the Emergency, lived this tension between programme and circumstance.

Comment

- **The statement is largely true of classical Marxism:** it is a theory of action, and it names principles that are not merely advisory. The comment must add that those principles include critique, including critique of the party that claims to incarnate them. Humanistic Marxism, Roy, and Gramsci keep action without treating strictness as the end of thought.

Flow diagram

Marxism -> Praxis / change the world
 Marxism -> Core principles
 Core principles -> Class and historical materialism
 Strict compliance -> Discipline
 Strict compliance -> Risk of dogma
 Roy Gramsci -> Humanistic and positional action

Conclusion

Marxism is a political theory of action because it binds explanation to praxis and names class emancipation as the end. Core principles give that action its direction. Strict compliance becomes a vice when it forbids criticism. Roy and Gramsci show how the same tradition can keep humanistic and strategic openness without dropping the demand to act.

Facts & figures

Theses on Feuerbach

Thesis eleven states that the point is to change the world, which is the charter of Marxism as a theory of action.

Lenin

The State and Revolution and What Is to Be Done? turn analysis into a programme of organisation and state power.

M. N. Roy

Roy's later radical humanism criticised mechanical Marxism and party tutelage while remaining inside a materialist and emancipatory project.

WRAP Exams · Write. Read. Analyse. Practice. · <https://wrapexams.com/upsc/mains-answers/psir-gs-1/2024/marxism-i-s-a-political-theory-of-action-demanding-strict-compliance-with-its-core-principles-comment/> · ask@wrapexams.com · wrapexams.com

WRAP Exams