

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

Q1(c)

"Marxist approach to the study of international relations has lost its relevance in the post-cold war era." Comment.

UPSC Civil Services Mains 2021 · PSIR GS 2 · 10 marks · Approaches to the Study of International Relations

Approaches to the Study of International Relations: Idealist, Realist, Marxist, Functionalist and Systems theory.

Core demand of the question

- "Marxist approach to the study of international relations has lost its relevance in the post-cold war era." Comment
- Keep the answer within a 10-mark length

Revision summary

The USSR's fall discredited State socialism, not every Marxist question.

Waltzian polarity does not explain core-periphery production.

Wallerstein and Cox remain usable after 1991.

WTO, finance, and a capitalist China keep class and hierarchy on the agenda.

Relevance is critique of order, not a second Soviet Union.

Introduction

The Soviet collapse removed a Marxist-Leninist superpower. It did not remove class, capital, or hierarchy from world politics. The Marxist approach lost a State. It did not lose its questions.

Body**Why the obituaries were written**

- Francis Fukuyama's end-of-history mood treated liberal capitalism as the only remaining script.
- Realists such as Kenneth Waltz had never needed class. Bipolarity's end seemed to vindicate States and polarity, not Lenin.
- Official Marxism-as-bloc failed in 1989-91. That failure is real.

Why the approach still travels

- Immanuel Wallerstein's world-system did not depend on the USSR remaining a pole. Core-periphery trade and finance continued.
- Robert Cox asked whose order institutions serve. WTO, IMF, and TRIPS still look like that question, not like a classless market.
- V. I. Lenin's imperialism thesis is crude as a 1916 map. Monopoly, uneven development, and military projection of capital remain research problems.

- 2008, global value chains, and a capitalist China inside the WTO are puzzles Marxism can pose. Liberal IR often treats them as technical.

Judgment

- Relevance is not prediction of a world revolution. It is a critical map of hierarchy that post-Cold War IR still needs.

Flow diagram

Cold War end -> Loss of Soviet Marxism
Marx Wallerstein Cox -> Capital and hierarchy
Capital and hierarchy -> Still relevant Still relevant IR
Loss of Soviet Marxism -.does not erase. -> Capital and hierarchy

Conclusion

Marxist IR lost a geopolitical sponsor after the Cold War. It did not lose relevance as a theory of capital, class, and world hierarchy. **Waltz** explains poles. **Wallerstein** and **Cox** still explain who works for whom.

Facts & figures

Wallerstein

World-system theory survived the Cold War because it was a theory of capitalism, not of MOSCOW's bloc.

Cox

Critical theory: institutions and "common sense" serve a historic bloc of social forces.

Lenin

Imperialism as monopoly capitalism and partition of the world; a classical Marxist IR text.

Waltz

Neo-realism treats anarchy and polarity, not class, as the structure of IR - the main rival after 1991.