

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

Q4(b)

What is the realist prescription to the States to ensure their survival in an anarchical world?

UPSC Civil Services Mains 2022 · PSIR GS 2 · 15 marks · Comparative Politics

Comparative Politics: Nature and major approaches; political economy and political sociology perspectives; limitations of the comparative method.

Core demand of the question

- What is the realist prescription to the States to ensure their survival in an anarchical world?
- Write at 15-mark length

Revision summary

Anarchy means no higher protector, so States must help themselves.

Morgenthau defines interest as power; **Carr** rejects utopian reliance on opinion.

Balance internally by arms and externally by alliances such as NATO.

Defensive realists stop at security; offensive realists push toward hegemony.

Regimes may help, but realists refuse to treat them as a substitute for capability.

Introduction

- **Realists start from anarchy:** no world government sits above the State. Survival is the first interest. The prescription is self-help, power, and careful alignment, not trust in law alone.

Body

Anarchy and survival

- **Kenneth Waltz's structural realism:** the organising principle is anarchy, so States must provide their own security.
- **Hans Morgenthau's classical line:** interest defined as power, prudence, and a balance that checks any would-be master.
- E. H. **Carr** warned against relying on liberal harmony while others arm.

The operational prescription

- **Self-help:** maintain armed forces, intelligence, and economic capacity that can be mobilised.
- **Balance of power:** internally by arms, externally by alliances. NATO is a realist instrument even when dressed as a community.
- **Relative gains:** watch partners who may convert cooperation into tomorrow's threat, a reply to Robert Keohane's more optimistic institutionalism.
- Nuclear deterrence for those who can, as **Waltz** also argued that nuclear bipolarity can stabilise.
- Defensive realists (**Waltz**) say seek enough security, not maximum empire. Offensive realists (John **Mearsheimer**) say regional hegemony is the safer peak. Both still prescribe power, not

disarmament by example.

What realists tell States not to do

- Do not outsource survival to the UN Charter's collective security when the veto can freeze it.
- Do not assume trade or a regime will bind a rising peer. China policy debates inside Asia follow this caution.

Limits inside the school

- The prescription can feed security dilemmas. One State's survival kit is another's threat.
- It under-describes domestic choice and the pull of institutions that Keohane maps in After Hegemony.

Flow diagram

Anarchy Waltz -> Self-help
Self-help -> Balance of power
Balance of power -> Survival
Morgenthau interest as power -> Survival
Keohane regimes -.qualifies. -> Survival

Conclusion

The realist prescription in anarchy is self-help, a balance of power, attention to relative gains, and distrust of paper guarantees. Survival is ensured by capability and alignment, not by the harmony of interests. How much power is 'enough' divides **Waltz** from **Mearsheimer**.

Facts & figures

Waltz

Theory of International Politics: self-help under anarchy; bipolar balancing as a structural prescription.

Morgenthau

Six principles of political realism; prudence and the national interest as power.

Mearsheimer

The Tragedy of Great Power Politics: great powers seek regional hegemony because survival is never assured.

Carr

Power and morality mix in IR; a State that trusts harmony while others arm risks its survival.