

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)

The expansionist tendencies of the current Russian regime indicate its intentions for the realization of a Greater Russia on the lines of the Soviet era. Comment.

UPSC Civil Services Mains 2024 · PSIR GS 2 · 10 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

- **State the claim:** Russian expansion as a project of Greater Russia on Soviet lines
- **Separate Soviet-era empire** (ideology, Warsaw Pact, planned economy) from Putin-era nationalism and near-abroad
- Use Ukraine, Georgia, Belarus and nuclear signalling as evidence
- **Comment:** expansionist intent is real; identity with the USSR is only partial

Revision summary

Russia's wars in Georgia and Ukraine, plus pressure on Belarus and nuclear signalling, show expansionist intent in the post-Soviet space.

The Greater Russia story denies full independence of neighbours, especially Ukraine.

- **The Soviet analogy fits geography of control more than ideology:** today's regime is nationalist and oligarchic, not a communist world-system.

Morgenthau and Waltz explain power and structure; they do not make the war merely defensive.

- **Comment:** accept expansionism; reject a simple USSR restoration.

Introduction

The current Russian regime has used force, frozen conflicts and energy pressure in the post-Soviet space. The statement that this shows an intention to realise a **Greater Russia on Soviet-era lines** is therefore a serious claim. It should be **partly accepted**. The expansionist pattern is visible. The Soviet analogy is incomplete.

Body

What is visible

Georgia 2008, the seizure of **Crimea in 2014**, the war in the Donbas, and the **full-scale invasion of Ukraine in 2022** are not defensive border incidents. They are attempts to rewrite another state's territory and to deny its independent foreign-policy choice, especially a path toward the European Union and **NATO**. Official language about 'one people', historical Russia, and the denial of Ukrainian nationhood is a **Greater Russia** script. **Belarus** is bound by Union-State structures and military basing. The **CSTO** and energy leverage over neighbours show a sphere of privileged interest. Nuclear signalling and the suspension of **New**

START-era restraints show that the regime will raise the cost of Western help to Ukraine.

Hans Morgenthau would read this as a classic interest defined as power, dressed in national history. **Kenneth Waltz** would add structure: a former superpower in a unipolar-then-contested system, facing NATO's eastward enlargement, choosing revision rather than adjustment. Those theories explain aggression. They do not excuse it.

Why 'Soviet era' is only a partial match

The Union of Soviet Socialist Republics was a **party-state** with a planned economy, a Marxist-Leninist claim, and a Warsaw Pact of communist regimes. The present regime is **nationalist, oligarchic and capitalist** in property form, even when the state directs energy and war industry. It does not export a communist international. It exports influence, mercenaries, and a civilisational story of Orthodoxy and empire. Restoration of 1991 borders of Soviet control is a **maximum nationalist horizon**, not a return of Gosplan and the Comintern.

The Soviet Union also contained Ukraine as a Union republic with a seat at the United Nations. Putin's war treats Ukrainian statehood as a mistake. That is imperial nationalism, closer to Tsarist and Eurasianist themes than to Lenin's formal federalism.

Comment

Expansionist **intention** toward a Greater Russia in the near abroad should be accepted as a working description of the 2010s-2020s. Equating that project with a **Soviet restoration** overstates ideology and understates the new mix of kleptocracy, television nationalism and conventional war. NATO's role is part of Moscow's justification and part of the security dilemma. It does not turn the invasion into a purely defensive act. The honest comment is: **sphere rebuilding, yes; USSR 2.0, no.**

Flow diagram

Russian regime -> Force in near abroad
Force in near abroad -> Ukraine Georgia
Russian regime -> Greater Russia nationalism
Soviet era -.geography not system. -> Greater Russia nationalism

Conclusion

The Russian regime has shown expansionist conduct aimed at a privileged sphere and at denying Ukrainian independence. That is a Greater Russia project. It is not a recreation of the Soviet system. The Soviet analogy helps as a map of geography. It misleads as a map of ideology.

Facts & figures

Crimea and 2022

Annexation in 2014 and full-scale invasion in 2022 are the clearest territorial revision since the Cold War in Europe.

Georgia 2008

Use of force and frozen recognition of breakaway regions set the pattern of privileged interest in the near abroad.

New START

Erosion of strategic arms restraint accompanies conventional revision, linking regional war to the disarmament file in 1(e).

WRAP Exams · Write. Read. Analyse. Practice. · <https://wrapexams.com/upsc/mains-answers/psir-gs-2/2024/the-expansionist-tendencies-of-the-current-russian-regime-indicate-its-intentions-for-the-realization-of-a-greater-russia-on-the-lines-of-the-soviet-era-comment/> · ask@wrapexams.com · wrapexams.com