

2026 Edition

UPSC-CSE MAINS

PSIR

Optional

Model Answers

To Previous Year Questions

Since New Pattern (2013-2025)

Also Useful for State PSC Exams



Written by

Abhijeet Pimparkar

(B. Tech COEP, M.A. Political Science)

-- page intentionally left blank --

PSIR Optional - Model Answers Book 2026 Edition

Written by:

Abhijeet Pimparkar (B. Tech COEP, M.A. Political Science)

Aditi Mishra (B.A. Economics, M.A. South Asian Studies)

MAKING BEST OF THIS BOOK

The biggest problem you'll face in your UPSC preparation is ensuring that your study sources remain comprehensive. This book addresses this most important concern. The book covers all the previous year questions since new pattern (2013 onwards). So, for any area, after doing your primary sources/notes, this book will ensure that whatever gaps remained in your study, are covered.

To be able to make most out of previous year model answers, we've arranged the questions in topic-wise manner. This will help you access all the question-answers for a particular topic in one place and will be highly useful while studying.

This will be very important book in your PSIR preparation. Use it thoroughly. You will definitely get good marks. Best wishes!

COPYRIGHT INFORMATION

Published by,
Politics for India
29th October 2025.
Copyright © 2025, Politics for India^R, Abhijeet Pimparkar

All rights reserved. No part of this publication may be reproduced, distributed, or transmitted in any form or by any means, including photocopying, recording, or other electronic or mechanical methods, without the prior written permission of the publisher, except in the case of brief quotations embodied in critical reviews and certain other non-commercial uses permitted by copyright law.

Note: Due care and diligence have been taken while editing this book. Neither the author nor the publisher of the book holds any responsibility for any mistakes that may have inadvertently crept in. Publisher shall not be liable for any direct, consequential, or incidental damages arising out of the use of the book.

MRP: 519/- (Rupees Five Hundred and Nineteen Only)

TABLE OF CONTENTS

SECTION 1A: POLITICAL THEORY

1] POLITICAL THEORY.....	7
2] THEORIES OF STATE.....	13
3] JUSTICE.....	18
4] EQUALITY.....	25
5] RIGHTS.....	29
6] DEMOCRACY.....	35
7] CONCEPT OF POWER.....	41
8] POLITICAL IDEOLOGIES.....	46
9] INDIAN POLITICAL THOUGHT.....	56
10] WESTERN POLITICAL THOUGHT.....	70

SECTION 1B: INDIAN GOVERNMENT AND POLITICS

1] INDIAN NATIONALISM.....	89
2] MAKING OF THE INDIAN CONSTITUTION.....	96
3] SALIENT FEATURES OF INDIAN CONSTITUTION.....	99
4] PRINCIPAL ORGANS OF GOVERNMENT.....	112
5] GRASSROOT DEMOCRACY.....	122
6] STATUTORY INSTITUTIONS / COMMISSIONS.....	129
7] FEDERALISM.....	136
8] PLANNING AND ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT.....	143
9] CASTE, RELIGION AND ETHNICITY IN INDIAN POLITICS.....	151
10] PARTY SYSTEM.....	157
11] SOCIAL MOVEMENT.....	167

SECTION 2A: COMPARATIVE POLITICS AND INTERNATIONAL RELATIONS

1] COMPARATIVE POLITICS.....	174
2] STATE IN COMPARATIVE PERSPECTIVE.....	179
3] POLITICS OF REPRESENTATION AND PARTICIPATION.....	182
4] GLOBALISATION.....	193
5] APPROACHES TO STUDY INTERNATIONAL RELATIONS.....	198
6] KEY CONCEPTS IN INTERNATIONAL RELATIONS.....	210
7] CHANGING INTERNATIONAL POLITICAL ORDER.....	220
8] EVOLUTION OF INTERNATIONAL ECONOMIC SYSTEM.....	231
9] UNITED NATIONS.....	236
10] REGIONALISATION OF WORLD POLITICS.....	244
11] CONTEMPORARY GLOBAL CONCERNS.....	253

SECTION 2B: INDIA AND THE WORLD

1] INDIAN FOREIGN POLICY	267
2] INDIA AND THE NON-ALIGNMENT MOVEMENT	279
3] INDIA AND SOUTH ASIA.....	282
4] INDIA AND THE GLOBAL SOUTH	296
5] INDIA AND THE GLOBAL CENTRES OF POWER	306
6] INDIA AND THE UN SYSTEM	323
7] INDIA AND THE NUCLEAR QUESTION	329
8] RECENT DEVELOPMENTS IN INDIAN FOREIGN POLICY	336

SECTION 1A: POLITICAL THEORY

1] POLITICAL THEORY

1. Explain the Philosophical approach to the study of Political theory. [2025/10m/150w/1a]

The philosophical approach, aka normative approach engages with conceptual and moral questions in political theory. It is not content with describing how politics works, but tries to evaluate its working on norms and make suggestions to improve it.

Plato & Aristotle can be said to be the earliest political philosophers. While Plato pursues an ideal state, Aristotle tries to make it more practical, but still employing normative approach.

In modern theorists, Rawls can be said to be the proponent of philosophical approach. Rawls uses imaginary 'veil of ignorance', thought experiment etc. and tries to arrive at theory of justice which will have universal applicability.

We can contrast philosophical approach with empiricism. While empirical analysis can tell us how institutions operate, it is silent on whether they are just, or desirable. Philosophical approach enables normative critique—even at times when empirical data will say otherwise.

Unfortunately, since philosophical methods rely on speculation, sometimes it is also criticized as "armchair philosophy". Further, the value judgments can be biased (e.g. Eurocentrism), and there is always a difficulty applying normative principles in real world politics.

However, despite limitations, the philosophical approach is indispensable. It has ability to raise the questions, challenge the status quo and in process better our political lives. [208 words]

2. Provide a comparative analysis of behavioural and institutional approach to the study of political theory. [2025/20m/3a]

The behavioural approach emerged in the mid-20th century as a reaction against purely normative and legal-institutional approaches to politics. Its central idea is that politics consists of observable human behaviour and it seeks to explain patterns and regularities in these behaviours.

Behaviouralists argue that focusing on humans and their psychological determinants gives us more predictive insights. This makes political science a more "scientific" discipline.

In contrast, the institutional approach centers on rules, organizations and structures. It sees political behaviour as heavily constrained these institutional frameworks. For them, institutions are central to explaining stability, change, and outcomes.

Since behaviouralism focuses on human behaviour, it studies why individuals act as they do, how attitudes form, and how social or psychological factors influence decisions. Institutionalism, by contrast, focuses on macro-level factors i.e. institutional designs, laws and rules, governance structure etc.

David Easton is a pioneer of behavioural political science. He developed the "political system" model, defining politics as the "authoritative allocation of values". Easton places emphasis on inputs, process, outputs, and feedback in political behaviour, trying to develop scientific model of behaviour.

Institutionalists scholars on the other hand, contend that individual behaviour must be understood in the context of institutions and statutes. For them, same individuals in different institutional settings behave differently.

It is important to note that these approaches are not completely rivals. In fact, a hybrid model can be developed. While institutional analysis help explain variations across geographies because of laws and structures, behavioural insights help explain variation within these institutional settings i.e. why two individuals under the same institution behave differently.

This synthesis gives political theory both empirical robustness and structural sensitivity—a balanced method to understanding politics in all its complexity. [282 words]

3. Comment on Behavioural approach to Political Science [2024/10m/150w/1a]

The behavioural approach in political science marks a shift towards scientific methods, seeking to transform political science. This approach arose due to the perceived irrelevance of political science in addressing social issues and its over-emphasis on traditional approaches.

Thus, scholars like Charles Merriam advocated for a systematic, evidence-based study of political processes. Further, David Easton's eight features of behavioralism outlined principles aimed at making political science, 'scientific'.

Easton advocated making political theory verifiable, measurable, and as close to "pure science" as possible. Behaviorists believed these methods would revive the discipline, make it relevant to policy, and allow for practical applications, like understanding electoral behaviour.

However, behaviouralism was seen as overly focused on techniques, often sidelining the normative aspects—justice, rights, and liberty—central to political thought. This led to post-behavioralism, which suggested that research should be relevant and action-oriented. David Easton called for a "Credo of Relevance" and there was a reintroduction of values and purpose into political studies.

Seen from a longer perspective, more than an approach, behaviouralism was a movement in political science. It gained prominence for a brief period, reformed the original discipline, and then subsided. [189 words]

4. Elucidate the meanings inherent in the term 'political' with appropriate illustrations. [2024/20m/2a]

The term 'political' is omnipresent in the discipline of political science. Although widely used, it can assume different meanings in different contexts.

British political scientist Andrew Heywood suggests three conceptions of politics. First, he suggests politics to be dealing with formal institutions of government and the activities which take place therein. This includes the constitutions, written or unwritten laws, the different wings of governments, established processes like elections etc.

His second interpretation is linked to public life and public activities, in contrast to what is thought of as private or personal. We find a commonality of this conception in Aristotle as well, who treated family as a sphere of altruism and separated it from politics. While the feminists have given a call to include personal in political, it has not gained much momentum.

Thirdly, Heywood suggests politics to denote the distribution of power, wealth and resources, something that takes place within all institutions and at every level of social existence. This conception can be further expanded to include the fundamental theories and thoughts, which seek to explain the power and resource distribution in society.

It is interesting to note that while we've almost perfected the craft of physical sciences, our political life remains elusive. We've been trying to come up with universal political principles and systems for millennia, and still, it continues to baffle us. While we've undeniably made progress, current political systems are far from perfect.

Thus, there is no universal definition that can explain the term political. It is suggested that 'language is not simply a means of communication, it is a political weapon; it is shaped and honed to convey political intent.' This could, perhaps explain the popular meaning of the term 'political', which often means 'cunning' or 'untruthful'. [292 words]

5. Normative approach in political science. Comment. [2023/10m/150w/1a]

In the words of Harold Lasswell and Abraham Kaplan, there are "two distinct components in political theory - the empirical propositions of political science and the value judgments of political doctrine."

Normative political theory guides us in assessing political actions, policies, and institutions based on their moral implications, often addressing questions of justice, rights, and ethics. It is prescriptive in nature, offering recommendations for more desirable political outcomes. This approach often employs idealized models, such as the "just society" or the "ideal democracy," as benchmarks for evaluating real-world politics. Drawing from philosophical traditions like liberalism, utilitarianism, and deontology, normative political theory informs public policy by addressing ethical dilemmas and guiding the creation of more morally sound institutions and laws.

While Plato and Aristotle sought to identify the characteristics of a good polity, it was a normative endeavour. Today, most modern political scientists seek to identify the characteristics of politics, their causes and effects, leaving aside moral judgments about their goodness and badness.

The empirical approach enables us to strengthen our means but we will have to resort to the normativity of political philosophy to determine our ends. Means and ends are interdependent; hence political science and political philosophy play complementary roles in our social life. [205 words]

6. Comment on Decline of political theory [2023/10m/150w/1e]

In the mid-twentieth century, the exponents of new political science began to question the continued relevance of traditional political theory.

Alfred Cobban in his paper on 'The Decline of Political Theory', argued that political theory had lost its significance in capitalist as well as communist systems as political theory has no practical role in sustaining them. One was characterized by the overwhelming role of bureaucracy and the other by the vanguard and oligarchy. Similarly, SM Lipset in his Political Man: The Social Bases of Politics argued that the values of contemporary society had already been decided, a thought similar to Fukuyama's 'The End of History'. Thus Lipset, too, questioned the continued relevance of political theory in those days.

However, Dante Germino in his Beyond Ideology: The Revival of Political Theory writes that political theory was again in ascendancy, particularly in the political thought of Michael Oakeshott, Hannah Arendt, Bertrand de Jouvenal, Leo Strauss and Eric Voegelin.

Although there was a decline of political theory and philosophical methods, it regained popularity within a short time. Thus, we can say that for a substantial political theory, we need to have a normative anchor for our empirical methods. [195 words]

7. 'Credo of Relevance' in post-behavioralism advocates the importance of action science. Analyze. [2023/15m/2c]

The discipline of political science has undergone many revolutions. Amongst these, post-behaviouralism was a reaction against rising behaviouralist orthodoxy and in the words of David Easton, its battle cries were 'relevance and action'.

The tenets of post-behaviouralism are called the 'Credo of Relevance'. The first credo reads that 'substance must precede technique'. For the aphorism of science that it is better to be wrong than vague, post-behavioralism would substitute a new dictum, that it is better to be vague than non-relevantly precise.

Post-behavioralists complain that behavioural inquiry is dominated by abstractions that conceal the reality of politics. So, they propose that political science reach out to the real needs of mankind in a time of crisis. The post-behaviouralists believe that science cannot be neutral hence it needs to be aware of the value premises it stands on.

The credo also says that the intellectuals' historical role has been and must be to protect the human values of civilization. This is their unique task and obligation. Moreover, to know is to bear the responsibility for acting and to act is to engage in reshaping society. It is the duty of the intellectual, as a scientist bears the special obligation to put his knowledge to work.

The post-behavioural revolution is future-oriented. It does not especially seek to return to some golden age of political research or to conserve or even destroy a particular methodological approach. It seeks rather to propel political science in new directions. [243 words]

8. Write on the Systems Approach. [2022/10m/150w/1a]

The systems approach is a theoretical framework used to study the political system as a whole rather than focusing on individual components. This approach is based on the belief that the political system is a complex network of interrelated parts that work together to achieve a common goal.

In this methodology, a system is defined as a bounded region in space-time, involving energy interchange among their parts, which are associated in functional relationships, and with their environments, similar to the concept of 'ecosystem' in biological sciences.

The purpose of general systems theory, as it is known, is to reduce the multiplication of efforts by integrating all knowledge and treating all systems as interrelated. It suggests that even parts of a system, called sub-systems, should be treated not as separate and isolated units but organic parts of the whole.

With the period, two more approaches have emerged as derivatives of the systems approach. While the 'structural-functional approach' lays emphasis on every part and sub-part of a system and its functional aspect, the 'input-output approach' emphasizes inputs that come from the 'environment' and play their part in the decision-making process, while decisions taken are called 'outputs'.

Brought into political science by scholars like David Easton and Gabriel Almond, the system approach is criticized for being too mechanical as humans are not lifeless machines. [221 words]

9. Examine the importance of behavioural approach in political theory. What led to its decline? [2021/15m/2b]

The behavioural approach to political science emerged in a nascent form in the 1920s under Charles Merriam and became a dominant approach to studying political science by the 1940s.

Political scientists started behavioural approach to propagate the interdisciplinary character of political science in order to make full use of the advances in human intelligence that the social and natural sciences had introduced to the world.

David Easton provides a list which contains the features of behaviouralism. To him, they are the intellectual foundation stones. The approach is important as it makes Political Science more scientific and brings it closer to the daily life of people. It introduces human behaviour in Political Science and has helped bring predictability to discipline.

Despite its merits, the behavioural approach has been criticised for its fascination for scientism. The supporters of this approach were wrong when they said that human beings behave in similar ways in similar circumstances. Most of the political phenomena are indeterminate. Therefore, it is always difficult to use scientific methods in the study of Political Science. It was also felt that the behavioural approach was too reductionist, reducing complex political systems to simple mathematical models.

Finally, the rise of postmodernism in the latter half of the 20th century led many political scientists to reject the idea that objective truth could be discovered through scientific methods, leading to the ultimate decline of the behaviouralist approach.

Despite its decline in popularity, the behavioural approach remains an important part of political theory. Today, many political scientists use a combination of behavioural and other approaches to study political systems and behaviour. [266 words]

10. Discuss the significance of a normative approach to Political theory. [2020/15m/4b]

The normative approach aims at making a normative statement that is concerned with what 'ought to be' or 'should be'. It seeks to determine and prescribe value and is related to concepts such as justice, fairness, equality, and rights.

Whereas an empirical statement is concerned with a situation that can be observed by our sense-experience, which can be verified by repeated observation and whose accuracy can be tested, a normative statement tends to express a preference for a particular type of order as dictated by a sense of duty or universal need or by the commitment to a moral principle or ideal.

The normative approach helps to identify and address issues of justice and fairness in political systems. By examining political systems through a normative lens, political theorists can evaluate whether these systems are fair and just for all members of society.

The approach also helps to identify potential areas for reform in political systems. By evaluating political systems based on ethical and moral principles, it suggests where policies or institutions may be failing to meet the needs of citizens.

Since the normative approach seeks to create a perfect or ideal system, it ensures the continuous improvement of the political system and brings discussions, debate and dynamism to the field of political theory. It is the oldest approach to political science, and still stands tall while many other approaches have come and gone. [233 words]

11. Comment on resurgence of political theory. [2019/10m/150w/1a]

There were two major causes of the decline of political theory; firstly, the rise of positivism which led to the craze for science; and the prevalence of political ideologies culminating in Marxism. But now it is again in the ascendancy, particularly in the political thought of Michael Oakeshott, Hannah Arendt, Leo Strauss and the likes.

The works of these writers have revived the grand tradition of political philosophy. Germino suggested that in order to understand the new role of political theory it was imperative to identify it with political philosophy.

Political philosophy is neither reductionist behavioural science, nor opinionated ideology which accepts some principles to be true without inquiring into their validity. It comprehends both the knowledge of facts and the insight with which that knowledge is understood.

The resurgence of political theory represents a revival of its normative and analytical dimensions in response to the dominance of behavioralism. It also underscores the enduring relevance of normative approach in political science. [161 words]

12. Comment on the decline of Political Theory. [2018/10m/150w/1b]

Political theory indicates the philosophical approach in political science. We witness its decline, specifically, after the 1st and 2nd WW, when along with power, the centre of political science also shifted from Europe to USA.

In the post-war period, rather than providing solutions to erstwhile problems, political thinkers were busy with philosophical speculations and studying political history. While other disciplines like sociology, and psychology had long adopted the methods of modern science, political science was still dominated by traditional methods. Further, the erstwhile model of comparative politics (legal institutional approach) was incapable of providing a sound explanation of 3rd world countries' political practices.

All of this combined, led to the decline in political theory and was further fuelled by scholars like David Easton who tried reviving the discipline by converting political science into 'pure science' (behaviouralism) and abandoning 'age-old' methods (normative theories).

However, we witness the revival of political theory once again in post-behaviouralism. Today political theory has regained its original dominant position and has emerged as a dynamic and vibrant democratic discipline by accommodating various streams of knowledge (emergence of feminism, post-colonialism, post-modernism etc). Scholars like Dante Germino, Isaiah Berlin, and Leo Strauss believe that the philosophical approach is the 'most suitable' for political science. [206 words]

13. Comment on the post-behavioural approach. [2016/10m/150w/1b]

Post behaviouralism is comparatively a recent phenomenon in the long history of political science. Post-behaviouralism emerged out of the lecture of David Easton titled 'Credo of Relevance' which highlighted the crisis in political science as a discipline and the dissatisfaction with behaviouralism, which in turn was proposed to reform political science.

Behaviouralism had led to the compromise on the scope as well as relevance of the subject. David Easton gave a call for 'creative theory' (action and relevance) to revive the discipline, christening it 'post-behaviouralism'. He suggested that our theories should be relevant to times and should also lead to action. The technique is important but can be compromised for the purpose it serves. It is better to be vague than non-relevant.

Values are not rejected but rather welcome in post-behaviouralism, given that they contribute to the flourishing of human civilization. Rather than 'pure science, political science is 'applied science'. Thus, theory should be such that it has the capacity to solve the crisis. The responsibility of social scientists is bigger than that of natural scientists.

We can call political theory a thesis, behaviouralism as anti-thesis and post-behaviouralism as synthesis. It has kept political science relevant and has arrested its decline. [201 words]

14. Comment: '...Political theory is not an escape mechanism but an arduous calling'. (John Plamanetz). [2014/10m/150w/1a]

In mid 20th century, we witness a distinct criticism of traditional approach to political science. Behaviouralists and logical positivists accused political theory of being an escape mechanism—a retreat into abstract concepts disconnected from real-world politics.

These political 'scientists' preferred empirical, value-neutral approaches, seeing theory as outdated.

In defence of political theory, John Plamenatz suggested that that political theory is not escapism rather an "arduous calling", a duty that is extremely demanding and requiring intense effort and rigor. Political theory involves grappling with fundamental concepts of justice, liberty, authority, and governance—not simply observing facts.

Theory involves interrogating the purposes and values behind political institutions. Without this discipline, societies risk moral blindness, weak democratic foundations and policy framed only by technical efficiency. Political theory equips us to expose power abuses, propose ethical reforms, and defend democratic norms.

While the debate was in progress, the recognition came from behaviouralist themselves when David Easton, called for re-embracing normative concerns under a "credo of relevance and action".

Leo Strauss has warned that without political theory, political science becomes just social science, stripping away moral purpose. In his view, political theory—far from escapist—is the soul of political science, essential for functioning of a healthy democracy. [203 words]

2] THEORIES OF STATE

1. What is the Marxist and liberal approach towards the state? On what grounds the theoretical differences between them are premised? Explain. [2025/20m/2a]

On the spectrum of ideologies, while liberalism is regarded as centre, Marxism tends to be classified as far left, with fascism forming the far right.

In the liberal tradition, the state is conceived as a necessary institution that safeguards individual rights and ensures order. Marxists, on the other hand, view the state as fundamentally tied to class relations and economic structure.

For Marxists, state is part of the superstructure: it reflects and serves the interests of the class that controls the economic base. As Marx puts it, in capitalist societies, the state is the “executive committee of the ruling class.” Consequently, the laws, institutions, and policies of the state are shaped exclusively by the by capitalist interests.

For Marxists, since state cannot be reformed to serve the working class; it must be overthrown. Stateless society is ideal for Marxists.

In stark contrast to Marxism, liberals view the state as a neutral body. State is allowed to intervene only to enforce laws, to protect liberties, and ensure fair competition.

For liberals, government powers should be constrained to prevent tyranny and infringement on individual freedom. Under state protection, individuals enjoy rights. Right to life, liberty, property, expression etc.

Liberals trace origin of state to the tradition of consent. A contract in a state of nature, as premised in the ideas of Hobbes and Locke. Unlike Marxists, liberals believe the state and society can be reformed progressively through constitutional and institutional changes rather than revolution.

On a fundamental level, we can trace the origin of liberalism to the emerging middle class, who wanted to create a space for itself in a medieval society. Marxism, on the other hand, originated as an ideology of marginalized, depressed, labour class. While middle class is hopeful of their progression and have a positive view of the world, Marxist don't see any hope, thus suggesting extreme measure of violent revolution.

At extreme, both the ideas are harmful. While extreme liberalism (classical liberalism) neglects social welfare, adopting full-fledged Marxist model can lead to regression and removal of incentives from society, killing innovation and progress. Thus, a balance in the form of social-liberal state sought in the ideas of Rawls is desirable. [363 words]

2. Comment on Pluralist theory of State [2024/10m/150w/1b]

The state is best thought of as one that establishes sovereign jurisdiction within defined territorial borders. Further, state is often accompanied by an institutional apparatus that gives expression to its authority. While sovereignty is the main feature of the state, the nature and centre of sovereignty remains contested.

In this context, the pluralist theory of state suggests that political power is dispersed amongst a wide variety of social groups rather than an elite or ruling class. Robert Dahl uses the word ‘polyarchy’ – rule by the many – to explain this phenomenon.

Pluralist scholars explain that in modern liberal states, electoral choice ensures that government must respond to public opinion. Thus, a rough equality exists among organized groups and interests in that each enjoys some measure of access to government, and the government is prepared to listen impartially to all.

Developing on this, neo-pluralist theory, developed by Galbraith and Lindblom, argues that the modern industrialized state is both more complex and less responsive to popular pressures. They

suggest the use of the term 'deformed polyarchy' to denote the phenomenon, suggesting a pre-eminent influence of the capitalist class in modern states. [188 words]

3. Eurocentrism is both the target and the motive force of the post-colonial political theory. Discuss. [2023/15m/3c]

Eurocentrism is a key concept in post-colonial political theory and was coined in the 1970s by the Egyptian Marxian economist Samir Amin.

We can see Eurocentrism as a target when Post-colonial theory critiques the historical actions of European powers. This colonization often involved the imposition of European norms, values, and institutions on colonized peoples, erasing or subjugating local cultures and identities.

On the other hand, Eurocentrism has also been a driving force behind post-colonial political activism, seeking to redress the legacies of colonialism. This includes advocating the restoration of indigenous rights, recognition of cultural diversity, and challenging economic and political structures that perpetuate global inequality.

According to world system theorist Immanuel Wallerstein; social science is a product of the modern world-system, and Eurocentrism is constitutive of the geoculture of the modern world. Social science emerged in response to European problems, at a point in history when Europe dominated the whole world-system. It was virtually inevitable that its choice of subject matter, its theorizing, its methodology, and its epistemology should reflect the constraints of the crucible within which it was born.

Thus, if social science is to make any progress in the 21st century, it must overcome the Eurocentric heritage which has distorted its analyses and its capacity to deal with the problems of the contemporary world. Post-colonial theory seeks to challenge and transcend the Eurocentric worldview, ultimately striving for a more equitable and inclusive global society. [236 words]

4. Examine the liberal theory of State in contemporary politics. [2022/20m/3a]

The liberal theory of the state is a political theory that emphasizes the role of the state in protecting individual rights and liberties. It is based on the idea that individuals have natural rights that are inherent to their humanity and that the state has a responsibility to protect and defend these.

The liberal theory of the state is based on the principles of classical liberalism, which emerged in the Enlightenment period as a response to the absolutist monarchies of the time. It advocates limited government intervention in the economy and the protection of individual freedoms such as freedom of speech, religion, and the right to private property.

Even in contemporary politics, the liberal theory of the State continues to be a dominant force, influencing the political discourse of many countries around the world. The key features of modern politics i.e. individualism, limited government, protection of individual rights, rule of law, free markets etc. trace their origin to the liberal theory of state.

It is also argued that the emphasis on individualism and free markets can lead to inequality and social injustice and that the state should have a greater role in regulating the economy and promoting social welfare. And that the liberal theory of the State is overly focused on individual rights, and that attention should be paid to the collective well-being of society as a whole.

However, while the old era of state sovereignty and nationalism paves the way for the age of globalization and interconnectedness, the liberal theory of state appears to be the only way capable of accommodating global diversity and providing some form of global governance, albeit by amending itself, the way it has done historically. [281 words]

5. Comment on feminist critique of the State [2021/10m/150w/1a]

The patriarchal nature of the state is the central theme of feminist critique. It was epochal largely in the second wave of feminism, i.e. during the 1970s and continues to be so.

For feminists, state is power-centric, and the power is often defined, used and operationalized by the male or his representative structures. Accordingly, the norms, structures, values, etc. of the state are all constructions of power. There is a manipulation of male-dominated leadership to hold on to power and take advantage of them.

Feminism is critical and resistant to this form of power that legitimizes the hegemony against women. In the words of Catherine Mackinnon, "When I look at the state, it appears male to me."

The radical feminists maintain that the state's role is to form patriarchy and to ensure its continuity. In 'Toward a Feminist Theory of State', Catharine MacKinnon critically maintains that liberal legalism is a medium for making male dominance.

We also witness liberal feminists accepting the intervention of the state in the key areas of concern, like abortion, anti-rape legislation, pornography and other such issues that concern women.

To summarize, feminists of all levels often criticize the unitary role of the state, which seems to be male-biased, objectivist and instrumental. While some argue to reject the state, some feminists are not against utilizing the state to advance their cause. [225 words]

6. Comment on post-colonial theory of the state. [2020/10m/150w/1a]

The post-colonial theory does not propose any new theories of the state. Instead, it analyses the problems of newly independent nations, particularly in relation to colonial and neo-colonial powers.

There are several perspectives explaining the nature of post-colonial states. The modernization view, supported by the World Bank, holds that Third-World countries will prosper if they are integrated with the international economy.

On the contrary, Marxist scholars such as AG Frank, Sameer Amin, and Immanuel Wallerstein accuse that the 'international economy' has kept third-world countries in a state of dependence. The developed countries (core) prosper while there is a development of underdevelopment (poverty) in the periphery.

Hamza Alavi has given the concept of 'overdeveloped states.' According to him, states in South Asia are imported institutions. Although the states are as equally developed as in Western countries, the social and economic systems of post-colonial societies remain basic. These states are, thus overdeveloped.

The post-colonial theory of state covers aspects untouched by conventional theories and offers theoretical tools to tackle the problems faced by these countries. [173 words]

7. Write a short note on pluralist theory of the State. [2019/10m/150w/1b]

The state can be defined as a legal, political entity that exercises sovereignty over a group of people. Though the state is a universal phenomenon, the nature of sovereignty remains contested.

Pluralists suggest that the state is not the only sovereign entity. There are other institutions like international organizations and laws, church, society etc. as well, which exercise sovereignty over man's life.

Man has multiple needs which necessitate multiple associations and each one enjoys man's obligation to the degree it satisfies his needs. In the words of Laski, 'it has become an impossible misadventure, to locate the sovereign in a modern state'.

Pluralism can be contrasted against the monistic theory of sovereignty proposed by Hobbes and Austin, which suggests that two sovereigns cannot coexist.

Though Laski and MacIver both are pluralists, there is a difference in the degree of pluralism they propose. Laski (moderate pluralist) regards the state as a keystone, while MacIver (extreme pluralist) calls it, a child of law, not above the people who created it.

In a contemporary world, marked by globalization and regionalization, we can certainly agree that pluralism is a more realistic and better approach in explaining the nature of the state. [197 words]

8. Critically examine the neoliberal theory of State. [2018/20m/2a]

During the second half of the twentieth century, some thinkers in the liberal tradition founded the theory of the 'welfare state' that sought to revive the original concern of this tradition with laissez-faire philosophy. It is described as neo-liberalism. The chief exponents of this theory include Hayek, Milton Friedman and Nozick.

The neoliberal theory is based on the idea that although markets are vulnerable to their own failures, such as a propensity towards monopoly/oligopoly and profits, minimising the government will foster "perfect competition."

Neoliberal theory defends the right to acquire and hold property and freedom of contract. These rights are by no means the product of the state itself; hence the state cannot be allowed to intervene in any artificial balancing of rights. It even condemns the taxation of the rich for the benefit of the poor. It argues that taxation for the welfare of certain sections of society involves forced transfer of the fruit of one man's labour to another, which serves as a disincentive to an individual.

In neoliberalism, there is no scope for an ideal competition because there is already a class system in society that prevents equal access to knowledge and expertise. Even in an environment where there is competition, the market may not offer the incentives needed to undertake critical expenditures in infrastructure, social overhead capital (such as the health and education systems), and technology.

Thus, neoliberalism has a propensity to emphasise economic growth and efficiency while minimising the social and environmental costs of economic activity. Negative effects include environmental deterioration and the disregard for marginalised populations that may result from this.

Although, libertarianism upholds full autonomy and freedom of the individual; it sustains and exacerbates the inequality in the society and also on a global level. [292 words]

9. Comment on neoliberal perspective of the State. [2017/10m/150w/1b]

Liberalism is the most flexible ideology and neoliberalism can be regarded as its latest variant. It shares a philosophy with classical liberalism and essentially stands for market fundamentalism.

Historically, when the role of the state increased too much and modern liberalism became unsustainable the philosophy of neoliberalism emerged (Thatcherism and Reaganism). In neoliberalism, a function of the state is capacity building rather than employment generation. It advocates a reduction in fiscal deficit and pro-industry reforms, and there is a disinvestment of PSUs.

Neoliberalism advocates that government should function only in the domains where the private sector will not enter i.e. education, health etc. and it supports integration with the world economy, FDI, trade liberalization, de-regulation etc.

It acknowledges the right to property and suggests trickle-down effect to achieve social justice. When overall economic growth happens, the state has more resources to implement welfare policies.

Neoliberalism is often identified with the idiom of "maximum governance minimum government". Most of the contemporary governments, including that of India can be said to be functioning on the logic of neoliberalism. [176 words]