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Q1(c)

"Revolution in Permanence".

UPSC Civil Services Mains 2022 · PSIR GS 1 · 10 marks · Political Theory

Political Theory: meaning and approaches.

Core demand of the question

- **Comment on the following in about 150 words: "Revolution in Permanence".** (10 marks)

Revision summary

Trotsky's revolution in permanence refuses a long bourgeois stage in late societies.

Democratic and socialist tasks are chained; the process is international.

The formula opposes Stalin's **socialism in one country**.

Marx's 1850 phrase is the ancestor; 1905 and 1917 are the cases.

The limit is neglect of peasantry, nation, and post-revolutionary law.

Introduction

"Revolution in permanence" is **Leon Trotsky's** formula that a bourgeois-democratic opening in a late, uneven society must pass without pause into socialist transformation, and that socialism cannot rest as a finished national regime.

Body**Trotsky's meaning**

- In a country of **combined and uneven development**, the weak bourgeoisie cannot complete land reform and democracy. The working class must lead those tasks and then keep going.
- National revolution is therefore not a long separate stage. It is chained to international revolution, because a single workers' state is encircled by capital.
- The phrase answers **Stalin's socialism in one country**. For **Trotsky**, Thermidor and bureaucracy begin when the process is declared finished inside one border.
- **Marx** had used "revolution in permanence" in 1850 for continuous class struggle after 1848. **Trotsky** made it a strategy for 1905 and 1917.

Contrast and limit

- **Lenin's** April Theses also skipped a long bourgeois pause; the later dispute was internationalism versus **socialism in one country**.
- **Mao's** continuous revolution and the Cultural Revolution used a different enemy: restoration inside the party, not **Trotsky's** world market.
- Critics say the formula underestimates peasantry, national question, and the need for legal institutions after seizure of power.
- In political theory it remains a claim about unfinished transformation, against both reformist pause and nationalist closure.

Flow diagram

Trotsky -> Uneven development
Uneven development -> Revolution in permanence
Revolution in permanence -> International socialism
Stalin -> Socialism in one country

Conclusion

Revolution in permanence, in **Trotsky**, joins democratic tasks to socialist ones and national victory to world process. It is a strategy against stageism and against socialism as a completed one-country order.

Facts & figures

Trotsky

Results and Prospects and The Permanent Revolution stated the strategy against stageism.

Combined and uneven development

Trotsky's description of Tsarist Russia as archaic and modern at once.

Socialism in one country

Stalin's 1920s line that the USSR could complete socialism without waiting for Europe.

Marx, 1850

Address of the **Central Committee** to the Communist League used 'revolution in permanence' after 1848.

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