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THE NATIONAL QUESTION: Selected Writings by Rosa Luxemburg,  
Edited and with an Introduction by Horace B. Davis  
(Monthly Review Press, 1978)

This quite new and rather comprehensive selection of RL's writings on the National Question makes it impossible to see how it is that the editor, Horace B. Davis, can possibly conclude that this all will prove that RL was right and VII was wrong, especially when he uses such ridiculous generalizations that her major work, The National Question and Autonomy, which is not only the first English translation but evidently has never been translated into any other language (1908-09), is something that ~~XXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXX~~ "was never refuted", and that "despite Lenin's attacks on her, the philosophical position..." I have no idea what philosophy he is talking about. But what I'm talking about in addition to the criticism is the carelessness regarding all facts, and complete ignorance of what polemics are conducted when. These were written right after the height of the relationship of RL and VII when they collaborated most closely in the 2 1907 Congresses, when RL, who had walked out of the 2nd Congress because of the National Question, rejoined the Bolsheviks in 1906, and remained with them throughout the Russian Revolution, without even raising the question of the National Question, though the Bolsheviks had never removed the question from their program. In a word, once a revolution was involved, the NQ was so subordinate that neither cared to raise it, one because they had won (the Bolsheviks), the other because obviously revolution was more important. *the overwhelming of all revs*

On the other hand when the imperialist war came and RL continued with her stupidities and stubbornness, then there

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she develops the class struggle and the proletariats' independent class interests. The 3rd is called "Federation, Centralization and Particularism." The 4th, "Centralization and Autonomy". And in that one she does at least show that she is for autonomy. She quotes Marx's 18th Brumaire, and then tries to show that the 1905 Revolution "solved this historical collision, violently moving the Russian nobility to the side of reaction and depriving the parody of territorial self-government of any mystifying resemblance to liberalism."

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of with p 153

(P. 243) It's heavily directed against Kautsky who was then the orthodox Marxist position. I would say that the only part that has any value is the 5th section, called "The National Question and Autonomy":

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(1) Though I would call it nothing but vulgar materialism, the point is that she begins in a serious manner with the objective situation of seeing "entirely new economic phenomena: Big industry, machine production, proletarianization... labor of women and children, and so forth". (p. 251)

(2) She then develops an even more vulgar interpretation of super-structure: "in a word, the vulgar material process of capitalism creates a whole new ideological 'super-structure', with an existence and development which are to some extent autonomous." And proceeds to develop "any ideology is basically only a super-structure of the material and class conditions of a given epoch." (p. 253), with the conclusion, evidently, that the bourgeoisie has de-

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18th Brumaire  
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which is  
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Stalinist  
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veloped this for their own interests, making it no less than

"the monolithic quality of a national culture."

(3) But since she ~~uses~~ is for autonomy, she uses a different form of explanation why this type of independence, though also bourgeois, can nevertheless be used: "If, however, we transfer the concept of autonomy from this utopian ideological area to the historical field and examine as a specific historical result of the capitalist economy in a certain environment..." (p. 265)

(4) In another way of vulgar materialism is how much more valuable are large units of production than small units, and she asks, "What is the result of this sole and exclusively ethnographic method of the political dismemberment of Russia?" (p. 285)

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He then shows that it became even more, supposedly urgent under imperialism to oppose nationalism, for he quotes from the Junius pamphlet that, "there can be no self-determination under capitalism."

Then there is the part from the Russian Revolution pamphlet in 1918, where she opposed the Bolshevik "so-called right of self-determination of people's, or -- something that was really implicit in the slogan -- the slogan of the disintegration of Russia." (p. 292)