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THE TODAYNESS OF MARX'S HUMANISM ON THE CENTENARY OF HIS DEATH

A Brief Abstract:

I. The historic journey we are embarking on today into Marx's philosophy, which he called "a new Humanism," shows its relevance for today in the very definition of that new Humanism as opposition to both exploitative capitalism and vulgar communism without in any way separating that from the fundamental Man/Woman relationship. Because his world view was so total, Marx felt no division between philosophy and revolution. It was that inseparability of philosophy and revolution that led Marx to unify idealism and materialism, and to call the establishment of truly human relations the "Human revolution."

II. The two revolutions in Marx's time -- the 1848 European revolutions and the 1871 Paris Commune -- came to life in the 20th century when all tendencies in revolutionary Marxism came together in the 1907 Russian Congress to discuss the 1905-06 Russian Revolution as rooted in and yet different from the 19th century revolutions. Rosa Luxemburg especially made her mark there by demonstrating that "the Russian Revolution is not just the last act in a series of bourgeois revolutions of the 19th century, but rather the forerunner of a new series of future proletarian revolutions..." (This speech was first translated and published as an Appendix to Rosa Luxemburg, Women's Liberation and Marx's Philosophy of Revolution.) The impact of that first Russian Revolution on Persia showed itself, amazingly, in what we today consider the Women's Liberation Movement, i.e. in the establishment of the 1907 women's anjumen.

III. Today's global crises, from which Iran no more than the U.S. sees an easy way out, have us in a vise precisely because we approach the matter so empirically, keeping philosophy and revolution in two different compartments. But Marx, as he worked on his greatest theoretical oeuvre -- Capital -- both historically and as an economist, dialectically traced the law of motion of capitalist society to the point where "masses in motion" will bring about its collapse. At the same time, instead of making a Universal out of the

"Historical Tendency of Capitalist Accumulation", Marx held that while it was true for Western capitalism, there could be other paths to revolution.

IV. In many respects, the ramifications of Marx's Civil War in France have not been fully worked out to this day. As early as 1857 in the Grundrisse Marx had analyzed pre-capitalist societies, concluding that there were more than the three fundamental modes of production he had heretofore pointed to -- slavery, feudalism; capitalism. The fourth fundamental form of human development was "the Asiatic mode of production." In the Ethnological Notebooks, his very last writings, Marx delved deeply and critically into the latest anthropological studies and what we today call the Third World.

Marx is wrongly considered to be totally Euro-centered. In truth, in the last decade of his life -- which post-Marx Marxists as well as capitalist ideologues have considered "a slow death" -- Marx was discovering such startling "new moments" of human development that he predicted that revolution could come first in a technologically backward land like Russia before the so-called advanced West. These "new moments" are the challenge to all post-Marx Marxists, the challenge that must be faced as we probe into Marx's Marxism from his first break from capitalist society to literally his last breath. It is when we look at his works as a totality that we see he has been a theorist of the "revolution-in-permanence."

MIDDLE EAST -- CIRA -- IRAN

From Ivar Spector's inclusion of M. Pavlovich's "The Revolution of 1905 and the East" in The First RR, Its Impact on Asia.

p. 125-6: " Germany 'establishing her sphere of influence' in West and East Africa and participating in the rape of China, vigorously pushed ahead in Asia Minor its Baghdad Railway... At the same time Tsarist Russia continued its drive into Persia from the North, England from the South, and from the Turkish boundary came Germany, which created a plan for the construction of branch lines from the BAGHDAD MAIN LINE (Baghdad- Haneken-Kermanshah-Hamadani) in order to subject PERSIA to its economic and political influence. ... "

"Of all the countries of the East, PERSIA was especially closely connected with Tsarist Russia economically ... "

p. 129: "On June 11 (24) 1908, the head of the Persian Cossack Brigade, Col. Lyakhov ... "

p. 131: "The transCaucasian revolutionaries, including Com. Narimanov, arrived at a quite correct conclusion, that it did not matter where one made a revolution AS LONG AS ONE MADE A REVOLUTION. And thus we see how a handful of Caucasian 'fedayeens' under the leadership of the Armenian Yefrem, overthrew Shah Memed-Ali..."

rd- The point is that he goes into the extension of the national revolution in India, in Turkey, in China, until p. 139, when he reaches the section entitled "World Imperialism" in the Struggle with the Awakening East." At that point he moves away from 1905 to 1917.

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