

JULY 12, 1989

Dear Gabrielle,

Pilar had sent me your review of my RELATION which impressed me considerably by its digging deep into the dialectic of the "Party" that would be unseparated from the dialectics of revolution, and I should add, from the dialectics of thought. I have been preoccupied with that question ever since my break from Trotskyism which showed that it wasn't only Lenin's elitist party but those who had fought Lenin's concept way back when and were revolutionaries of the first order like Rosa Luxemburg and Leon Trotsky ended up with loyalty to the party. Did you know that when I originally planned the book on Luxemburg I had thought that 1910 would be the climax since that is when I could prove that Luxemburg was ahead of Lenin in sensing the deep opportunism of Kautsky and dealing as if the Second International were already a "stinking corpse" as she described that magnificent feel for the Namibians trying to escape the German military invasion. That was the first genocide. I even got more excited when I read her personal letters and Kautsky and Habel's correspondence to see how ~~disgusting~~ disgusting was the sexism in the International. But in fact the more I related the very deep division ~~between~~ between herself as a revolution feeling for the oppressed and herself as a party woman telling Roland-Helst that she has no right to leave the party, no revolutionary has, the more I concluded that without the total dialectic in Marx's philosophy of revolution and concept of a new humanism, the more you will fall in some trap of how the "only imperative" is ~~action~~ rather than thought. And of all things I had to see that Lenin indeed despite the party concept was closer to Marx and the Hegelian dialectics as Marx transformed it.

Coming to our age it wasn't only the East German workers who lifted an incubus from all our heads with the tearing down of Stalin's statue. Everything opened for me six weeks before the actual event as I ~~break~~ broke through on the Absolute Idea/~~that~~ that East German Revolt appeared to me that it would make everything real for everybody. There was so to speak literally nothing in the whole wide world that could possibly still exist in the old forms and surely not among revolutionaries. Well I am sure I don't have to detail you how many aborted revolutions we have lived through since then. And all the so-called "Alternatives" have been a retreat to pre-Marxism, if not a capitulation to the West. What I am trying to say is that there absolutely is not substitute for working out for our age what it was that Marx was doing in his last decade and what we must do in relating Marx's concept of the Permanent Revolution in 1843-44, in 1850, in the Critique of the Gotha Program 1875, and for us to have the whole new Third World.

Presently what I am engaged in when I speak of the dialectics of the party is to review what has been written whether by bourgeois social-democrats, anarchists and what has happened since my RELATION, on the one hand, especially its last chapter, and on the other hand the new book I am waiting for which takes up that here the Women's Liberationists, like Sheila Rowbotham, who thought that all that is ~~needed~~ is to ~~abandon~~ abandon the "male chauvinists" (and all in

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organize

to her includes Marx) and/~~with~~ independently. That "organizing idea" would answer all questions. And all questions didn't include anything of philosophy or ideas in the Hegelian-Marxian sense.

Some of the books I am trying to cover from the old period includes one by Michele who was the first to focus on bureaucracy only in order to have no other problem on the question of bureaucracy in organization, Molyneux from the International Socialists in Great Britain. For a very short period I thought that the El Manifesto group in Italy would bring out something new. Sometime I will have to find out what the intellectuals do with all their eridition. Rossana Rossanda, the leader of this group, I remember ~~xxxxxx~~ so impressing Jean Paul Sartre that he claimed that if there was an El Manifesto group in France he would have joined it. And I don't know how many others felt it was something really new on class and party. Well read the involved, convoluted article that is included in Socialist Register 1970 and see whether you can find anything except one more book on the need for the "vanguard party" with but one difference from the CP, and that is "I" am the real vanguard.

What is it you have been reading? You are very good when you come down to discussing my final chapter and see that I am definitely not only abandoning the "monocausal approach." And say "It is essential to understand that it is basically an absence of creative dialectics which prevent the Left today to perceive the revolutionary forces where they emerge. At the same time, there is lack of theory and creative dialectics ~~in these~~ in these mass movements as well." I was sorry however that you then brought it to the Indian scene only. I would rather carry on a discussion with you on what I call the dialectics of the party which is a great deal more than just being monocausal, or what concerns only one country. What is at stake is the whole question of philosophy is not only that it is the missing link in theory but that it ~~is~~ has never even been attempted since Marx himself did so in the Critique of the Gotha Program. Marx and only Marx, Marx and not Engels, and what is of the essence there is that far from ~~being~~ the only difference between Marx and Engels being on the man/woman relationship, and it supposedly couldn't have been on the organization question, and certainly not on the Gotha Program were Engels did most of the writing, accepting in full Marx's Critique on the concrete union between Lassalleans and Eisenachists. Not only that, he was so loyal/on that question that he threatened the Social Democracy if they dared not published the Critique as they were organizing the new party fifteen years after that other union. So what am I saying? I am saying ~~either~~ neither the question of workers' form of organization, as important as that is, nor loyalty to "conclusions" is the answer to philosophy. Of course organization is needed. Giving up the concept of the vanguard party to lead does not mean you would not organize to project the dialectics of revolution, much less new human relations. What it does mean is the way you project philosophy and organization as inseparable if you really want new human relations. And you know you can't speak for the next generation; you do have to leave that question open. What the heck did the Social Democracy do when they finally published Marx? Outside of getting Engeles to remove quite a bit that was "too sharply stated" they published it as "contribution to the discussion" and of course there were many other "contributions". They made God damn sure that no one discussed Marx. And I am sorry to say nobody did. Do you wish to collaborate on this?

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Zasulich, and with one of the crucial questions raised by Luxemburg again and again: What is the relationship of spontaneity to both consciousness and "the Party"? In Dunayevskaya's words: "The total disregard of the feminist dimension of Rosa Luxemburg by Marxists and non-Marxists alike calls for the record to be straightened on that dimension in Luxemburg. Moreover, there is a need for today's Women's Liberation Movement to absorb Luxemburg's revolutionary dimension, not for history's sake but for the demands of the day, including that of autonomy". (p. IX) The women's movement cannot work without developing a comprehensive revolutionary theory.

In the first part of the book, Dunayevskaya depicts Luxemburg as Theoretician, as Activist, as Internationalist. Luxemburg entered the German arena in 1898 after underground party work in Poland. After only one year, she published *Reform or Revolution* (1899) which became the classic answer to revisionism and gave her a very strong position in the German party. It is characteristic to Luxemburg's approach that she did not allow herself to be pigeonholed and confined by the "woman question" or by anti-semitism for that matter or by any other single issue: "it was the totality of the revolutionary goal that characterised the totality that was Rosa Luxemburg" (p. 3)

In her personal life, she related deeply to her Polish comrade Leo Jogiches with whom she had shared party work in Poland but after entering the German scene she became much more independent of him also in questions of organisation in which she had relied on him earlier. Her final break with him came in 1907, but their political co-operation continued. He was murdered within six weeks of her violent death on January 15, 1918 through the hand of government troops. Jogiches paid for the attempt to uncover the true background of Luxemburg's and Liebknecht's murder, with his own life.

Dunayevskaya's book is difficult to read and more difficult to review since it is very densely written and presupposes a very detailed knowledge of Marx's and Luxemburg's writings.

Yet, what comes across even to the lay reader is the dialectics of Luxemburg being discriminated against as a woman in the party, supporting Clara Zetkin in her gigantic task of organising working class women and asserting herself as one of the leading theoreticians of the time.

Luxemburg sneaked back into Poland during the 1905 revolution despite being dissuaded by friends pointing out to her the dangers which she as a woman would face. The experiences there inspired her to write one of her most important pamphlets *Mass Strike, the Party and the Trade Unions* which became path breaking for the whole discussion on spontaneity. She wrote it in exile in Finland after a period in a Polish jail. The perspective expressed in this pamphlet was also forcefully brought out in her crucial contribution to the Congress of all the tendencies of the Russian Marxist movement held in April 1907 in London. The Congress in fact focused on the nature of revolution. It deepened the great divide between Mensheviks and Bolsheviks, but up to this day the minutes of this Congress have not been translated into English. Luxemburg, whose speech at the Congress is translated in the appendix, made a crucial impact in expressing the class character of the Russian revolution: "The Russian proletariat, in its actions, must show that between 1848 and 1907, in the more than half century of capitalist development, and from the point of this development taken as a whole, we are not at the beginning but at the end of this development. It must show that the Russian Revolution is not just the last act in a series of bourgeois revolutions of the nineteenth century, but rather the forerunner of a new series of future proletarian revolutions in which the conscious proletariat and its vanguard, the Social Democracy, are destined for the historic role of leader." (p. 9).

Comments Dunayevskaya: "So sharply did Luxemburg express the class nature of the revolution, that what emerged was the relationship not only of the proletariat to the peasantry, but of the Russian Revolution to the international revolution. One could see, as well, the germ of future revolution within the present revolution. What had been clear

'finally' dissolved itself into wages. He also argued against the underconsumptionist understanding that conflated capital accumulation was impossible because of the impossibility of 'realizing' surplus value, i.e. of selling.

Marx divides social production into two departments: production of means of production and production of means of consumption. Surplus value is embodied in both. The underconsumptionist theory does not hold water because in capitalist society means of production forms the larger department. Summarised in Dunayevskaya's words: "Marx establishes that the total social product cannot be 'either' the means of production 'or' the means of consumption; there is a preponderance of means of production *over* means of consumption (symbolically expressed as mp/mc). Not only is this so but *must* be so. It is not 'people' who realise the greater part of surplus value; it is realised through the constant expansion of constant capital. The promise of simple reproduction—a society composed solely of workers and capitalists—remains the premise of expanded reproduction." (p. 36)

Luxemburg's main line of argument went against Marx's assumption of a closed capitalist society meaning 1) a society composed solely of workers and capitalists and 2) 'the rule of capitalism in the entire world'. She held against this that expanded reproduction had never taken place in a closed society, but rather through distribution to, and expropriation of, 'non-capitalist strata and non-capitalist societies.'

Luxemburg maintains that these "non-capitalist surroundings" are essential for the realisation of capital. E. g., she states: "The most important thing is that value can be realized neither by workers nor by capitalists *but only* by social strata who themselves *do not produce capitalistically*". She neglects the class character expressed in Marx's department of means of production and department of means of consumption. She says: "Accumulation is not only an inner relation between two branches of production. It is *first of all* a relation

between capitalist and non-capitalist surroundings". (both quotations on p. 38). Marx had emphasised how decisive it was to determine the use-value of commodities in order to understand the economic order because iron is not consumed by people but by steel while sugar is not consumed by machines but by people. Luxemburg leaves this determination of the use-value out of consideration.

Dunayevskaya criticises Luxemburg by pointing out that she eliminates the fundamental Marxian distinction of means of production and means of consumption as being indicative of a class relationship and thus drifts from the production process to circulation, exchange and consumption.

This criticism of Dunayevskaya is somewhat questionable. Luxemburg's theory does not only pertain to the sphere of consumption, it is valid also for the sphere of production: Firstly, non-capitalist strata are essential in the process of original accumulation of capital through violence and plunder. Secondly, non-capitalist strata are also essential through their involvement in subsistence production which goes a long way in making capitalist exploitation possible. This is true for subsistence producers in the First World and also for women in the First World as well as in the Third World. Andre Gunder Frank has therefore used Luxemburg's argument to illuminate the relationship between centre and periphery and Claudia von Werlhof has used Luxemburg's argument to highlight the role of woman as subsistence producers. The argument goes that capitalism *reproduces* these strata which are essential for what has been called "ongoing original accumulation". I myself think it is more accurate to talk of "continuous formal subsumption" of non-capitalist labour under capital (i. e., the "real" subsumption need not take place at all).

Dunayevskaya is right when she points out that capitalism was developing much more capitalistically (i. e. through expansion of manufacture) and *between* capitalist countries (e. g. U. S. and Britain) than through "third groups" or between capitalist and non-capitalist countries. But she does

not explore the validity of Luxemburg's thesis for the explanation of the crippled form of capitalism prevailing in the countries of the periphery and also for the continued existence of women as a reserve army of capital.

There is also an incisive difference between Luxemburg and Marx in characterising the general contradiction of capitalism. Luxemburg sees it in the contradiction between production and consumption and between production and the market, while Marx sees the innermost source of crisis in the process of production itself. He characterises as the general contradiction of capitalism "(1) the degradation of the worker to an appendage of a machine, (2) the constant growth of the unemployed army, (3) capitalism's own downfall because of its inability to give greater employment to labour. Since labour power is the supreme commodity of capitalist production, the only source of its value and surplus value, capitalism's inability to reproduce it dooms capitalism itself." (p. 45) While Marx sees three major facts of capitalist production which lead to its collapse, namely: 1) decline in the rate of profit, 2) deepening crisis and 3) growing unemployed army, Luxemburg holds that accumulation is impossible without an extra capitalist force. However, she did not see this extra-capitalist force as a revolutionary mass but postulated, in contradiction with her own theory that the proletariat alone would overthrow capitalism. While I agree with Dunayevskaya that Luxemburg's emphasis on an outside force is carried to an untenable extreme, the question all the same remains: What is the relationship between the proletariat as a revolutionary subject on the one hand and on the other hand, the marginalised masses in the countries of the periphery, women and other subsistence producers in the counties of periphery and centre on the other. As far as the marginal mass is concerned, the problem is today even discussed in *Voprosy filosofi*. (*Problems of Philosophy*)

V. Khoros in his book *Population Its Past, Present and Future* (Progress Publishers Moscow 1984, p. 46,) refers to

to V V Krylov's article "Characteristic Features of Socio-Economic Processes in Developing Societies, *Voprosy filosofi*, No. 9, 1976, p. 105 while pointing out that "bourgeois development in the world's periphery (is) accompanied not by curtailment but by expansion of traditional sectors, that are becoming 'sediment reservoirs' of capitalism, for late capitalism can no longer function without recreating, supporting and conserving traditional structures that grow into gigantic hotbeds of backwardness and destitution." It seems that Luxemburg's thesis is up to a point vindicated by recent developments.

One of the reasons why Luxemburg could not see the colonial masses as revolutionary subjects was her extreme stand on the nationality question. She deemed national self-determination to be "bourgeois". This stand was sharpened by her profound despair at the betrayal of the German Social Democratic Party at the outbreak of World War I. In her pamphlet *The Crisis of the Social Democracy* published under the pseudonym Junius, she argues: "So long as capitalist states exist, i. e., so long as imperialistic world policies determine and regulate the inner and the outer life of a nation, there can be no 'national self-determination' either in war or in peace." (quoted p. 55).

While Luxemburg found herself in sharp contradiction with Lenin on the nationality question, her position on spontaneity of the masses was in some ways closer to Lenin's position on party and mass organisation than it is often held to be. Luxemburg did acknowledge the need for centralism and conspiratorial work under an autocratic regime. What she decidedly rejected was the need for "factory discipline" which Lenin extolled as an educational remedy for the proletariat as well as for the intelligentsia. However, Dunayevskaya points out that Luxemburg's pamphlet on the 1905 revolution, *The Mass Strike, the Party, and the Trade Unions* was directed not against Lenin but against the German Social Democracy. Nevertheless, she did not agree with the vanguard theory. Her effort to spell out an entirely new concept of democracy has remained an unfinished task.

Dunayevskaya emphasises against both, Lenin and Luxemburg, the need to root spontaneity in a consistent philosophy of human liberation. She says: "Clearly, there was too much organisational Lassalleism in Luxemburg as there was in Lenin." Neither her critique of Lenin's position, nor the development of her concept of spontaneity in *Mass Strike*, in 1906, had prepared her for the break with Karl Kautsky in 1910-11. What was missing in both at that time was a philosophy of revolution that was as one with their concept of organisation." (p. 61). Even when she broke with Kautsky she did not leave the party. She joined the USPD of the centrists when they broke with the SPD in 1917 since that was a "mass movement". Even when Spartakus, the former Gruppe Internationale, became a fully organised tendency, she broke with the USPD only at the actual outbreak of the German Revolution.

She emphasised that real life creates organisation as an outgrowth of ongoing struggle. What she did not anticipate despite sensing Kautsky's opportunism, was counter-revolution from within. Luxemburg was shattered when the war broke out and the Second International collapsed. Lenin reacted by issuing the slogan: "Turn the imperialist war into civil war"; and by re-examining his old philosophic ground by turning to Marx's origins in Hegel, Lenin criticised Luxemburg for her mechanistic anti-nationalism and called it "half way dialectic". Yet, the task of relating dialectics to the organisational question has remained unfinished as Dunayevskaya points out: "Ironically enough, although Rosa Luxemburg and Lenin were opposites in attitude to philosophy, they were alike in failing to relate organisation to philosophy. Whereas Luxemburg paid very little attention to philosophy in general, Lenin's profound attention to philosophy, in 1914 became an attitude that would, when it affected politics and theory, last until his dying day. But it was never worked out by him in relationship to the party." Even though it were the women who had initiated the toppling of the tsarist regime by insisting on celebrating International Women's Day by a mass strike, this did not lead to a rethinking of the women's

question. Lenin, despite, his conflict with the party in 1917, never rewrote *What Is To Be Done.*

The Second International collapsed with the vote of the German Social Democrats in the Reichstag (parliament) to support war credits to the Kaiser on 4th August 1914. A statement of opposition was signed by Karl Liebknecht, Franz Mehring, Rosa Luxemburg and Clara Zetkin. Rosa Luxemburg was legally prosecuted for her anti-war efforts since 1913, was again sentenced in February 1914 and arrested in February 1915 when she was about to leave with Zetkin for a planning meeting to organise the first international anti-war conference. The magazine of the women's wing, *Gleichheit*, had become the major publication of the radical Left and the most important anti-war journal. In August 1915, Zetkin, too was arrested. It was from prison that Luxemburg wrote her great anti-war pamphlet under the pen-name Junius. This was not only an ardent anti-war pamphlet but it opened up a new path to revolution. Though Luxemburg lost sight here of the national anti-imperialist wars, she drove home the point that the age of revolution had arrived.

During the whole process of the revolution, Luxemburg held on to her concept of democracy. She wrote in her pamphlet on the Russian Revolution: "Yes, dictatorship! But this dictatorship consists in the manner of applying democracy, not in its elimination" (quoted p. 72).

At the end of October 1918, the mutiny in the naval base of Kiel in the North of Germany on the coast of the Baltic Sea precipitated the collapse of the imperial regime. The Kaiser fled after repeated strike waves merged into a general strike. Rosa Luxemburg was freed by the revolutionary masses from the prison in Breslau. On 11th November, *Rote Fahne* (Red Flag), the publication of the Spartakus, issued a special supplement with a 14 point programme demanding immediate peace and all power to the councils of workers and soldiers.

Rote Fahne untiringly criticised the petty bourgeois illusion of the social democrats expressed in their call for a national assembly. Among the demands of the Spartakus spelled out in a later pamphlet was the elimination of parliament and election of workers councils, abolition of class discrimination and complete equality of sexes, expropriation of property, takeover of public transport and maximum 6-hour workday. Luxemburg was all the time involved in organisational activity, strikes, demonstrations, writing and publishing. There were only two and a half months left before she was murdered. The only alternatives she saw were either barbarism or socialism. In December 1918 the Founding Conference of the Communist Party of Germany was held which stressed especially the 1872 edition of the *Communist Manifesto*, "in which Marx had called attention to the fact that what the Paris Commune showed was that the 'working class cannot simply lay hold of the ready-made state machinery and wield it for its own purposes but must smash it!" (quoted p. 74).

The Spartakists with their workers' and soldiers' councils surrounded the Reich's chancellory and held the government captive until 5th January, but the counter revolution, armed to the teeth, finally prevailed. [Luxemburg's testament, on the day before her murder, rings out through history: 'Order reigns in Berlin! You stupid lackeys! Your 'order' is built on sand. Tomorrow the revolution will rear its head once again, and to your horror, will proclaim, with trumpets blazing: *I was, I am, I will be!*' (quoted p. 75)].

In the second part of the book Dunayevskaya develops the perspective of "The Women's Liberation Movement as Revolutionary Force and Reason" and tries to see Luxemburg's life in the light of this perspective. She draws the lines out from the Women's Rights Convention at Seneca Falls, N. Y. in 1848, via the contribution of revolutionary European women like Flora Tristan to the November Revolution of 1917. She sharply works out the Black dimension out of which the women's movement in the U. S. first emerged, the contribution of the freed slave women like Sojourner Truth

whose very name expressed her programme. She also draws out the line to the struggles of African women, the Igbo women who waged the "Women's War" in Nigeria against the British and their own collaborationist chiefs. Yes, these indeed were Luxemburg's sisters. Despite her systematic deafness to male chauvinism, she spontaneously expressed herself in very feminist terms in her personal correspondence. In a letter to Mathilde Wurm, commenting on the compromise with the war-effort, written from prison in 1916, she sees herself as the Amazon queen Penthesilea of the Greek myth who, in the drama version of Hienrich von Kleist, kills Achilles. Not only that, her whole vision of life is captured in those few lines: "I'm telling you that as soon as I can stick my nose out again I will hunt and harry your society of frogs with trumpet blasts, whip crackings, and blood hounds—like Penthesilea I wanted to say; but by God, you people are no Achilles. Have you had enough of a New Year's greeting now? Then see to it that you stay *human*... Being human means joyfully throwing your whole life on the scales of destiny' when need be, but all the way rejoicing in every sunny day and every beautiful cloud. Ach, I know of no formula to write you of being human..." (quoted p. 83).

Though Luxemburg did not take up the women's question in her theoretical work, she collaborated in the autonomous socialist women's movement which Zetkin headed and frequently wrote for *Gleichheit* (Equality), the journal of the movement. Dunayevskaya also convincingly shows how in Luxemburg's personal life, the break with Jogiches in 1907 led her towards great theoretical and organisational independence and depth of insight. One of the highlights of the women's movement was the first celebration of International Women's Day in March 1911 which Zethin had proposed to the Second International. The same year, the first International Women's Suffrage Conference took place and tens of thousands of women demonstrated throughout Germany.

Luxemburg wrote to Luise Kautsky: "Are you coming to the women's conference? Just imagine, I have become a

feminist! I received a credential for this conference and must therefore go to Jena" (quoted p. 95). She saw the struggle for women's suffrage as an integral part of the revolutionary struggle of the proletariat. Women's activities in the Social Democratic Party was drastically curtailed when the war broke out and *Gleichheit* became the mouthpiece of anti-war resistance. Even after Luxemburg's and Zetkin's arrest in 1915 the opposition went on throughout until the November 1918-January 1919 Revolution which opened the gates of prison for Luxemburg.

The defeat of the revolution set an end to the women's movement as well. In the Soviet Union, the women's movement, which had among other things triggered off the February revolution, was suffocated by Stalinism.

Dunayevskaya shows clearly how the new women's movement in the mid-60s emerged from *within the left*, how the women within the Left started rebelling against male chauvinism among Leftist men. "Where, therefore, racism and sexism had both been laid totally at the feet of the exploitative class regime, this time accusations of sexism were pointed at the Black males—indeed, at its most left wing, the Student Non-Violent Co-ordinating Committee (SNCC), during its organising of southern Blacks." (p. 99). Further radical feminist voices came out of the SDS (Students for a Democratic Society). Without Dunayevskaya's going into it, we can recall that the women's movement in Europe likewise emerged from the left students' revolt in the sixties, where the women's movement erred was when it moved away from the vanguard organizations and from the Black Movement and class analysis. Dunayevskaya's main critique of the Women's Movement is the narrowing down of revolutionary perspective. In her own words: "To this writer, despite all the new depth and scope and global dimension of the new Women's Liberation Movement today, the most serious errors of not only bourgeois but of socialist feminists are that they, at one and the same time, have disregarded Rosa Luxemburg as a revolutionary and as a feminist, and above all, have helped

those men who have tried to reduce Marx to a single discipline, be that as economist, philosopher, anthropologist, or 'political strategist'. The truth is, however, that Marx, at all times—in theory as in practice, and in practice as in theory—was a revolutionary" (p. 104).

Dunayevskaya uses the third part of her book in order to work out the dialectical principle in Marx and the unity of thought on the women's question from the 1844 manuscripts up to his last writings' *Ethnological Note-Books*. She hereby tries to integrate subjectivity in objectivity, freedom in necessity and the revolutionary perspective of women's movement and other mass movements in revolutionary perspective of the class struggle.

The 1844 manuscripts were not published in Lenin's time and only came to light eight years after Luxemburg's death. Lenin had made his own discovery of Hegelian dialectics under the impact of the outbreak of the first world war and insisted that *Capital*, vol. I could not be understood without Hegel's *Science of Logic*. Dunayevskaya tries to show that, starting from Engels, all post-Marx Marxists had an insufficient grasp of dialectics, seeing it merely as a method of thought and not as a dialectic of liberation. Dunayevskaya insists on the profound integrative force of historical dialectics "There is but one dialectical conceptual framework, an indivisible whole which does not divide economics and politics from Subject: masses in motion—a living, feeling, thinking, acting whole. Therefore, in Marx's new continent of thought, history was not just 'economic periods' but masses *making* history. Because a single dialectical course determines the objective and subjective forces, the dialectic of Marx's philosophy of revolution allowed Marx's theory of history to transform historic narrative into historic Reason" (p. 119).

Dunayevskaya insists that while Marx's work has to be seen as one from the 1844 manuscripts to the *Ethnological Notebooks*, it is important to understand the profound differences in outlook between Marx and Engels. She drawn

the connection between the early writings and the last manuscripts as follows: "The first decade after his break with bourgeois society saw not only the concretization of Marx's Promethean vision in the *Critique of the Hegelian Dialectic* and the *Communist Manifesto* but the projection of 'the revolution in permanence'.

The last seven years of Marx's life saw not only most profound articulation of the organisation question in the *Critique of the Gotha Programme* and the French edition of *Capital*, which had foreseen our state capitalist age and deepened the significance of the fetishism of commodities, but the *Ethnological Notebooks*. Only recently transcribed, these *Notebooks* reveal, at one and the same time, the actual ground that led to the first projection of the possibility of revolution coming first in underdeveloped countries like Russia, a reconnection and deepening of what was projected in the *Grundrisse* on the Asiatic mode of production, a return to that most fundamental relationship of Man/Woman which had first been projected in the 1844 Essays." (p. 121)

As in her earlier writings, Dunayevskaya quotes Marx's famous statement on freedom from the 'Debates on Freedom of the Press' in *Rheinische Zeitung*, 12 May 1842: "Freedom is so much the essence of man that even its opponents realise it. No man fights freedom, he fights at most the freedom of others. Every kind of freedom has therefore always existed, only at one time as a special privilege, at another time as a universal right" (p. 124).

It was shortly after this debate that Marx had to leave *Rheinische Zeitung*, but not to join what he considered vulgar communism, nor to remain part of the Left Hegelians. He spelled out the direction in the *Introduction to the Critique of Hegel's Philosophy of Right*: "As philosophy finds its material weapon in the proletariat, so the proletariat finds its spiritual weapons in philosophy and once the lightening of thought has struck deeply into this naive soil of the people, the emancipation of Germans into men (sic) will be accomplished" (quoted p. 125)². The decisive contribution in Marx's

analysis is that his analysis of alienated labour goes much further than the economic structure and class relations but comprises human relations as a whole. One of the crystallising events for Marx's thinking was the uprising of the Silesian weavers. Even if the *social* revolution were to occur only in one factory district, Marx recognised that "it represents man's protest against a dehumanised life, because it starts out from the *point of view of a separate real individual*, because the *community*, against the separation of which from himself the individual reacts, is man's *true community, human nature*" (quoted p. 128).

In his tenth Thesis on Feuerbach Marx made clear that "The standpoint of the old materialism is 'civil' society; the standpoint of the new is *human society, or society, or socialised humanity*" (quoted p. 129).

In the 1844 manuscript Marx had worked out that human alienation is first of all expressed in the man/woman relationship: "The infinite degradation in which human being exists for himself is expressed in this relation to the *woman* as the spoils and handmaiden of communal lust. For the secret relationship of human being to human being finds its *unambiguous, definitive, open* obvious expression in the *direct natural* relationship between the sexes. The direct, natural necessary relationship of human being to human being is the *relationship of man to woman*....From the character of this relation it follows to what degree *human being* as a species has become *human*."³ Marx's ruthless critique of all that exists found its first comprehensive systematic expression in *Communist Manifesto* written for the Communist League in 1847. Soon after it was published the revolutionary ferment burst into action in 1848 all over Europe.

It is not possible to reproduce here Dunayevskaya's whole analysis of Marx's work. She works out a number of aspects of special relevance for the analysis of the problematic of the Third World and the modern mass movements like, e. g., the chapter on pre-capitalist formations in *Grundrisse*. Dunayevskaya sees in *Capital* the Great Divide from Hegel because

"the Subject—not subject matter, but Subject—was neither economics nor philosophy but the human being, the masses. Because dead labour (capital) dominates over living labour, and the labourer is the 'grave digger of capitalism', all human existence is involved" (p. 143).

It is obvious that we are still miles apart from what Marx really envisaged. No socialist society has as yet been able to really strive to overcome commodity production and thus a system which produces, as Marx expresses it in his chapter 'the Fetish Character of Commodities', "material relations between persons and social relation between things". The man/woman question in present day society expresses itself precisely in these terms. The struggle for women's liberation cannot be carried on in isolation from the anti-capitalist struggle".

The one throughgoing question in Dunayevskaya's book which is crucial for the integration of women's struggle and class struggle, but which arises first of all from the analysis of the 1905 and 1917 revolutions, is the question of the relationship of party and mass spontaneity which it expressed in the overriding concept of permanent revolution. It would be reductionist to ascribe this pre-occupation with permanent revolution only to her Trotskyite background. Her contribution on the contrary consists of establishing permanent revolution as a general Marxist concept by developing it from the writings of Marx, Lenin, Luxemburg and making the specificity and limitation of Trotsky's contribution discernible. For Dunayevskaya the organisational question is inextricably intertwined with the philosophy of revolution. She shows convincingly the contradiction in Luxemburg herself: her emphasis on mass spontaneity but her inability to leave the party even at the point of total disagreement, her close work with Jogiches politically but the break-up of their intimacy under the impact of the mass upsurge of the 1905 revolution, in a situation in which Jogiches continued to represent principles of secrecy and avantgardism while Luxemburg started to understand masses in motion as histori-

cal Reason. She wrote to Emmanuel and Mathilde Wurm on 18 July 1906: "The revolution is magnificent. All else is bilge" (quoted p. 7), Dunayevskaya criticises sharply Lasalle's influence on the organisational question and the whole tendency in the Social Democratic Party to make the organisational question a fetish. She emphasises against this the importance of Marx's 1875 *Critique of the Gotha Program* as a critique of Lasalle's principles and also Marx's *The Civil War in France* as a crucial analysis of masses in motion during the Paris Commune. Both, the *Critique* and *Civil War in France* were of decisive influence for Lenin's *State and Revolution* in 1917. The problem is that all these analyses have never sufficed to really live down *What Is To Be Done*.

The overriding question is how to incorporate within the ad hoc needs of organisation, the overriding goals of the classless society and to spell out the concrete steps of how to get there, how to overcome the enslaving subordination of the individual to division of labour and also the antithesis between mental and physical labour.

The crucial contribution of Marx's *Critique of the Gotha Program* is that it deals with the inseparable relationship of philosophy to organisation itself, Dunayevskaya traces the development of the concept of permanent revolution in Marx from 1843 onwards, developing further during the events of 1848/49 and being made fully explicit first in the Address to the Communist League, 1850. *The Critique of the Gotha Program* can be read in the light of the full philosophical implications of this concept. It was the historical events in between which helped to develop the concept of permanent revolution and the philosophy of total human liberation to the full. "The establishment of the First International, on the one hand, and the final structuring of *Capital* on the other hand, in the 1860s revealed, at one and the same time, not only the break with the concept of theory as a debate with theoreticians, and the development of the concept of theory as a history of class struggles, but a concept also of a new revolutionary force—Black.* The culmination of all these theories and activities was, of course, the historical appearance of the Paris

* Dunayevskaya here refers to the emancipation struggle of the black population in the US.

Commune of 1871, and there, too, we saw—along with the great discovery of a historic form for working out the economic emancipation of the proletariat—a new force of revolution, women" (p. 161).

In an afterword to the chapter on Marx's theory of permanent revolution, Dunayevskaya works out a critique of Trotsky's theory of permanent revolution, the shortcomings of which she sees in the fact that though Trotsky in 1905 had clearly anticipated that backward Russia, involved in a bourgeois revolution, would reach for socialism in an "unbroken chain", he did nothing in those twelve years between 1905 and 1917 to develop this point. He saw the peasantry as conservative, the proletariat as backward and, as Lenin criticised, reduced his own "philosophy of history" to "the struggle for influence over the politically immature proletariat" (p. 169). Trotsky failed to understand Lenin's position on the peasantry as introduced in his "Theses on the National and Colonial Question," presented at the Second Congress of the Communist International. In Dunayevskaya's words: Trotsky's reference to that thesis is limited to his fight with Stalin—internationalism vs. nationalism—and not the pivotal point of the revolutionary live force of the peasantry, of the national question, and of the perspective that, since world revolutions have not come by way of Berlin, 'then perhaps' it can come by way of Peking. That new point of departure was not grasped, much less developed by Trotsky" (p. 171).

In the final chapter, Dunayevskaya draws out the lines from Marx's late writings to the 1980s. She points out once again our historic advantage of having access to Marx's writings in entirety and thus of being able to grasp the totality of his revolutionary theory. She severely criticises the way Marx's posthumous works have been published. Among other problems, she perceives sharp differences between Engel's *The Origin of the Family* and Marx's notes on "whether these relate to primitive communism, the Man/Woman relationship, or, for that matter, the attitude to

Darwin" (p. 179). Dunayevskaya sees a decisive methodological difference between Marx and Engels in the way how they deal with periods of transition in the historical process: Marx was showing that it is *during* the transition period that you see the duality emerging to reveal the beginnings of antagonisms, whereas Engels always seems to have antagonisms only at the end, as if class society came in very nearly full blown *after* the communal form was destroyed and private property was established. *Moreover for Marx the dialectical development from one stage to another is related to new revolutionary upsurges, whereas Engels sees it as a unilateral progression*" (p. 180).

Marx showed that the elements of oppression, including oppression of woman, arose from *within* primitive communism—with the establishment of ranks—relationship of chief to mass—and the economic interests which went with it. In Dunayevskaya's words: Marx demonstrated that long before the dissolution of the primitive commune, there emerged the question of ranks *within* the egalitarian commune. It was the beginning of a transformation into opposite—gens into caste. That is to say, within the egalitarian communal form arose the elements of its opposite—caste, aristocracy, and different material interests. Moreover, these were not successive stages, but *co-existence* with the communal form" (p. 181). While it is unclear what Marx intended to do with his extensive anthropological notes, one thing is clear, namely that "the decline of the primitive commune was not due just to external factors nor due only to 'the world historic defeat of the female sex.' That was Engels' phrase, not Marx's" (p. 183). In other words, Dunayevskaya abandons the monocausal approach of linking the women's question primarily to the property-concept and raises the question of how society even during primitive communism was *organised*. This way of approaching the problem needs to be developed further. It finds support also in what Marx wrote in the beginning of *German Ideology* on sexual division of labour and division of labour between head and hand. Recent anthropological data support the attempt for such a multi-causal analysis of the women's question and by analysing it that way, it links up with the overall organisa-

tional question and underlying philosophy of the working class movement in a much more creative way, because it does raise the question of division of labour and relationship between head and hand, vanguard and masses, styles of functioning, direct democracy, flow of information, relationship of rationality and intuition, reason and spontaneity in an overall way.

The point, in other words, is not just to overcome mono-causal explanations like "property" or "the world historic defeat of the female sex", "patriarchy" overthrowing "matriarchy" but to establish a dialectical method which does not take counter-revolution as its starting point but new stages of revolution emerging in ever new historical forms. The uncritical reception of Engels has often led to an idealisation of the past ("matriarchy" under primitive communism) linked up with the promise of an idealised future ("equality" after the revolution) while at the same time the women's movement could be denounced as a bourgeois deviation abstracting people's minds from the priorities of the class struggle, "dividing the working class"; etc. It is essential to understand that it is basically an absence of creative dialectics which prevent the Left today to perceive the revolutionary forces where they emerge. At the same time, there is lack of theory and creative dialectics in these mass movements as well. Dunayevskaya characterises the situation as follows: "Marx was not hurrying to make easy generalisations, such as Engels' characterization of the future being just a 'higher stage' of primitive communism. No. Marx envisioned a totally new man, a totally new woman, a totally new life form (and by no means only for marriage)—in a word, a totally new society. That is why it is so relevant to today's Women's Liberation Movement and why we still have so much to learn from Marx's concept of Man/Woman, not only in the abstract 1844 articulation, but in the empiric 1880 formulation when it was integrated with the need for total uprooting of capitalism and creation of a classless society" (p. 186).

Dunayevskaya illustrates Marx's unrelenting creativity by his draft letter to Vera Zasulich (1881) and his introduction to

the Russian edition of the *Communist Manifesto* (1882) in both of which he anticipated that Russia could be the first to have a proletarian revolution ahead of the West. This links up with today's problem of Third World revolutions.

These are the threads we have to pick up if we want to face our own task, practically as well as theoretically. In Dunayevskaya's words: "The point is that—whether it was because Engels' name, after the death of Marx, had become sacrosanct, or because Engels' views reflected their own later views—not a single one of the post-Marx Marxists, beginning with Engels and continuing with Luxemburg, Zetkin, Lenin and Trotsky, all the way into our age with Mao, worked on the ground Marx had laid out, either on pre-capitalist societies or on the question of Women's Liberation. That is the ground that our age has dug out, especially since the mid-1970s. That isn't because we are 'smarter' than any of these great revolutionaries. It is because, we who have been struggling under the whip of the many counter-revolutions, do have one advantage—the maturity of our age" (p. 190).

Dunayevskaya quotes the myriads of crises in our age "from Russia to China, from Cuba to Iran, from Africa to Pot's Cambodia, that without a philosophy of revolution, activism spends itself in mere anti-imperialism and anti-capitalism, without ever revealing what it is for" (p. 194).

Indeed, the tasks are outlined, the threads are there to be picked up. The difficulty consists in the fact that the philosophy of revolution and the New Humanism cannot be spelled out in the abstract, but have to be developed in correspondence to day-to-day actions, without our quest for Notion being bogged down and swallowed up by blind activism. In the Indian situation, there are three areas in which a lot of work needs to be done:

I. The organisational question (party-mass organisation, vanguardism-spontaneity, bureaucratism-mass action) has to be raised in the light of the quest for an underlying philosophy of revolution and with a critical analysis of the lack of dialectics in today's Left.

2. There is an urgent need to deepen the Marxist analysis of the Women's question in order to get away from mono-causal explanations and to incorporate the women's question organisationally and theoretically in the class movement and the class struggle in the women's movement. Such a deepening analysis will also help to integrate other mass movements (ecology, peace) in the working-class movements and carry the necessary anti-capitalist perspective into these mass movements.

3. More debate and analysis is also needed on the question of the character of present day Third World revolutions. The question of socialist revolution gets easily deferred by pointing to the need for "completion" of bourgeois democratic revolution, in possibility to nationalise all industries etc. while the movement itself gets stuck in parliamentarism and unimaginative ad-hoc activism. The question what a socialist perspective means—apart from change of property relations—in terms of reorganisation of production processes, priorities of what is produced, direct democracy in decision making, etc. has to be worked out in the light of an overall analysis of the existing and the vision of a new, radically new society.

NOTES

1. See my summary of the argument in my article: 'The Unfinished Task of a Marxist Conceptualisation of the Women's Question', *The Marxist Review*, Vol. XVI, Nos 9 & 10, April 1983.

2. It has to be noted that the translation used here by Dunayevskaya is misleading since Marx in the German original does not talk of the emancipation of Germans into "men" but into *humans* (Menschen).

3. Quoted by Dunayevskaya p.40f. in her own translation. I have altered her translation by using human being where Marx uses the word 'Mensch' because this term is not adequately rendered by the term "man" since it very clearly and without discrimination comprises men and women and does not, as the English, state "man" as the norm and "woman" as the deviation.