

RAYA DUNAYEVSKAYA
MARXISME ET LIBERTE
PREFACE
D'HERBERT MARCUSE



EDITIONS CHAMPLIBRE

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raya dunayevskaya
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« La liberté est l'essence de l'homme, à un point tel que même ses adversaires la réalisent. (...) Nul ne combat la liberté; il combat tout au plus la liberté des autres. Toute espèce de liberté a donc toujours existé, seulement tantôt comme privilège particulier, tantôt comme droit universel. »

Karl Marx.

« Rien d'autre, quand individus et peuples ont une fois appréhendé la notion abstraite de la liberté, qui est pour soi, dans leur représentation, ne possède cette force indomptable, précisément parce que c'est l'essence propre de l'esprit et en vérité sa réalité même. (...) Quand le savoir de l'Idée, c'est-à-dire du savoir que les hommes ont pour essence, fin et objet, la liberté est d'ordre spéculatif, cette idée même comme telle est la réalité humaine, les hommes ne possèdent pas pour cela cette idée, ils sont cette idée. »

G. W. F. Hegel.

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méricain par Mara Oliva

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préface de herbert marcuse

Le réexamen de la théorie de Marx s'impose comme l'une des tâches les plus urgentes pour saisir la situation contemporaine. Aucune autre théorie n'a, peut-être, anticipé avec autant de justesse les tendances fondamentales que revêtirait la société industrielle, tout en tirant, manifestement, des conclusions aussi incorrectes de son analyse. Le développement économique et politique du capitalisme au XX^e siècle présente, il est vrai, un grand nombre des caractéristiques que Marx avait déduites des contradictions inhérentes au système, mais ces contradictions n'éclatèrent pas dans la crise finale; l'« ère de l'impérialisme » a été témoin d'un regroupement et simultanément d'une stabilisation intercontinentale des pays de l'Ouest — et ceci, malgré ou à cause d'une « économie de guerre permanente ». D'autre part, bien que la révolution sociale fût préparée et commençât sous la direction des conceptions marxistes orthodoxes, la construction ultérieure du socialisme dans le camp communiste contient bien peu de la substance originelle. Mais notre tâche ne doit pas se limiter à souligner l'écart existant entre la réalité et les « prévisions » de Marx; en effet, dans la mesure où les thèses de Marx et d'Engels sur le développement du capitalisme avancé et la transition vers le socialisme furent élaborées à un stade où leur « vérification » ne pouvait être envisagée, il nous est permis de parler de prévisions dans la théorie marxiste. Or celle-ci, de par son essence même, refuse un tel terme: interprétation de l'histoire, elle définit, en fonction de cette interprétation, l'action politique qui, utilisant les possibilités historiques du moment, est susceptible d'établir une société d'où exploitation, misère et injustice seront absentes. La théorie de Marx, aussi bien dans sa structure conceptuelle que dans sa pratique politique se doit de

(Reprinted here is the special Introduction to the French edition)

"Contemporary China is the focus of world contradictions... Since the past few months, the class struggle has entered a higher stage... It is to overthrow the new born bourgeoisie and establish the People's Commune of China—a new society free from bureaucrats like the Paris Commune!—Whither China? (Sheng-wu-lien of Human Manifesto), 1965.

"The revolutionary movement which began in 1789 in Circle Social, which, in the middle of its course, had as its chief representatives Leclerc and Roux, and which was temporarily defeated with Babeuf's Conspiracy of the Equals, brought forth the communist idea which Babeuf's friend, Buonarrotti, reintroduced into France after the Revolution of 1830. This idea, consistently developed, is the idea of the new world system." —Karl Marx, 1844.

The revolutionary traditions in France are of such depth and magnitude that each succeeding social revolution as well as every philosophic revolution following the great French Revolution were, throughout Europe, grounded in the foundation laid in France. Because every great step forward in philosophic cognition flows from the discovery of a new way to make the plunge to freedom in actuality, the philosophic revolutions in Germany were directly related to the historic developments in France.

Thus, the Hegelian dialectic developed under the impact of the French Revolution. Or, more precisely put, it was the dialectic of the actions of men reshaping history that was transformed into philosophic method by the genius of G.W.F. Hegel.

Thus, the Marxian dialectic developed out of the creativity of the French masses in the 1848 revolution, and reached a new historic dimension as the Paris Communards in 1871 "stormed the heavens." In completing the French edition of his greatest theoretical work, Capital, in 1872-75, Marx urged all to read it because "it possesses a scientific value independent of the original and should be consulted even by readers familiar with the German language."

Thus, Lenin, to lay the theoretic foundations for November, 1917, "rewrote" Marx's Civil War in France as State and Revolution. Indeed, what better way could there have been to express his new universal, "to a man" than to describe a new social order with "No police, no army, no officialdom. Every worker, every peasant, every toiler, every one who is exploited, the whole population to a man!"

THUS, EVEN WHEN REVOLUTIONARY events are not carried to a definitive conclusion, as was true in May, 1968, the near-revolution showed anew the power of the self-activity of the masses, who, at one and the same time undermined DeGaulle and the thought of all those who held that such things could not happen in a technologically advanced country. This near-revolution in industrialized France put an end to the self-paralyzing myth of "technological rationality" which had transformed the proletariat into one-dimensional creatures whose flesh and bones became, allegedly, part and parcel of the capitalistic system.

This revolution that had not come to full fruition had created a new form of relationship between young intellectuals and workers—Worker-Student Action Committees. Nor did these students who built the barricades and were the catalyst for the upgushing revolutionary situation have any illusions as to where power resided when a million workers downed tools and took to the streets, in all, involving 10 million in a general strike.

This Spring awakening in workers' self-activity created ways of keeping the Communist Party and its CGT at bay. The workers' occupation of the factories upset the bureaucrats' calculations and negotiations with the State on its capitalist grounds. They cooperated

with the students in creating new international relations as the movement in France broke through all bounds, going far in advance of all "real" vanguard parties.

NO ONE IN FRANCE in May, 1968, needs to be told about the counter-revolutionary work of the Communist Party which helped stifle the revolution-to-be. What does need re-evaluation is the attitude of the Independent revolutionaries. Although they wished to go all the way to the overthrow of capitalism, and supported the workers in all their actions, they nevertheless felt that the unfolding of a new philosophic banner which would give these actions a direction was something they could pick up "enroute." Being, thus, theoretically unprepared to win the mids away from the opiate of Communism's ambiguity, clothed in Marxian language, they must first now rise to the challenge of the times and develop a theory based on the movement from practice and capable of uniting with it. Each, by itself, remains one-sided and, therefore, incapable of fruition.

On the other hand, cynics who claim that Gaullism without DeGaulle only "proves" that May, 1968, was "nothing," must explain why then is the frame of reference for anything and everything (and not only in France!) May, 1968, not DeGaulle, 1958-1968. This is not to say that there was a social revolution. Nor is it meant to cover up the unfinished character of revolutionary action. Rather, it is said in order to stress that new beginnings always start from the highest development of the last revolutionary situation. And not only on native grounds.

SPRING, 1968 WITNESSED explosion, not only in France, but also in Czechoslovakia. On the surface, it may have appeared that by Spring, 1968, "democratization" in Czechoslovakia could not compare with the near-revolution in France, and it certainly wasn't as startling as the new outburst in a Western land. But the tendencies of some West European revolutionaries to look only at the surface appearance as if Dubcek could forever keep confined within his reformism masses in motion, the free flow of ideas, the philosophers searching for new ways of approach to, and relations with, workers, only proves that the gulf which divides East from West exists not only among the ruling classes but also among revolutionaries.

The truth is that not only did the workers and student youth go far beyond the confines, but also the Communist Parties themselves were shaken up and produced new tendencies. On the one side were massed no less than 650,000 Russian soldiers (some thousands more than imperialist USA has in South Vietnam). On the other side, on that fateful August 20th when Russian tanks invaded Czechoslovakia, stood the unarmed Czech people resisting, to a man, the armed invaders. All this calls for more than a mere expression of international solidarity. (The French CP pretended that much.)... what is demanded of us is the realization that international solidarity is not something we do "for" the Czechoslovak masses. Rather it is a way of learning something vital from them. As I wrote at the time:

A spectre is haunting Communism as it has haunted private capitalism—the spectre of Marxist Humanism. It is this which has crossed over the boundaries between nationalities within a country and the borders between countries. It is this which transcended the boundaries that separate the generations and keeps workers and intellectuals apart; transcended, not as something super-human or supra-historical, but as the very stuff of which revolutions are made and remade. Its unifying vision of spontaneity and organization as a single force cannot be encapsulated in an elite party, but releases itself as a forward movement of the masses.

Clair

January 1971

rediscovery of Marx's Humanism in 1968, that they had re-discovered that authentic core of Marxism back in the immediate post-World War II world, this only proves that workers and intellectuals inhabit two different worlds in every country. In the mid-1940's, the three-cornered debate between existentialists, communists, and capitalists as to who were the true inheritors of the humanism of Marxism was discussed on an intellectual level only. None of them fought Communism as the State Capitalism it represents. No one questioned its role in World War II, either during the Hitler-Stalin Pact or after, much less raised the question of any collusion in the nuclear holocaust that American imperialism rained on Japan.

History will never absolve American imperialism for this wanton, inhuman, nuclear holocaust. Neither will it forget the de-humanization of international Communism as the bombs fell on Hiroshima and Nagasaki, August 6th and August 9th, 1945. Listen to what dares call itself L'Humanite, on August 8, the day between the atomic explosions:

"The atomic bomb dropped on Hiroshima seems to have caused considerable destruction. American reports suggest nothing less than the disappearance from the face of the earth of a town of 300,000 inhabitants. The effect of the discovery is considerable. Nevertheless, the Vatican has been pleased to disapprove of it! May we be permitted to express our surprise, because when the Nazis had the privilege of waging total war with a total cruelty the Holy See was not equally indignant."

The Italian Communist paper, L'Unita on August 10, 1945:

"The news that an atomic bomb was dropped by the American Air force has made an enormous impression throughout the whole world and has been received on all sides with a sense of panic and words of condemnation. This shows, it seems to us, a curious psychological perversion and a doctrinaire obedience to a form of abstract humanitarianism . . . We do not share the sense of terror which has been expressed in certain press comments because we bear in mind the concrete use which was made of the fearful engine of destruction."

And, finally The Daily Worker of Great Britain on August 14, the day before Japan surrendered unconditionally:

"There was no official hint of the length of delay that the Japanese are to be allowed before the full force of Allied power—including the atom bomb—is loosed against them in a blow intended to be final."

EVER SINCE THE DEATH of Stalin, followed, first, by the workers' revolt in East Germany on June 17, 1953 and within a few weeks, by an uprising in the Vorkuta forced labor camps in Russia itself, the movement from practice has been the challenge the movement from theory did not meet, certainly not in the "West." In East Europe where the confrontation with totalitarian Communism reached open revolution in Hungary, 1956, workers practiced Marx's Humanism by the formation of Workers' Councils, by defining freedom as freedom from Communism, by trying to establish workers' power on totally new human foundations, where the freedom of each is the basis of the freedom of all.

It was shortly after the Russian tanks, with Mao's encouragement, destroyed the proletarian revolution and dared call the re-birth of Marx's Humanism "revisionism," that I completed the writing of Marxism and Freedom. As against the best American intellectuals who had declared the 1950s to be "the end of ideology," I had shown that the American workers, in their battles against Automation, first by a general strike in the mines, and then by wildcats throughout the auto indus-

try had raised the most profound philosophic problems when they asked: "What kind of labor should man do? Why is there such a gulf between thinking and doing?" (See Chapter XVI, "Automation and the New Humanism.")

The first edition of Marxism and Freedom (published in the United States and Italy) begins with the age of revolutions—industrial, political, social, and intellectual—that initiated the machine age, and ends with two new pages for freedom, the one in East Europe against Communism and the one in the United States against racism. I was criticized for placing the Montgomery, Alabama Bus Boycott of 1955-1956, on the same level as the Hungarian Revolution. With the birth of a new Third World, initiated by the African Revolutions, the color black, became a new force of revolution globally. It, too, however, has now reached an impasse—must one choose between existing world state power before one can achieve full freedom? For a while, it looked as if Mao's China was pointing to an independent road, different from the two contenders for world power—U.S. imperialism and Russian State Capitalism, calling itself Communism. But as the Vietnam War has proved all over again, the Sino-Soviet conflict subordinates freedom struggles to its respective power struggle.

IN PROVIDING AN EMPTY a shelter for mind, as the fall-out shelter is for the body, Communist State-Capitalism is giving full proof of the schelisse Marx had long ago predicted for the decomposition of the capitalistic system. This has never been truer than since the 1960's when Mao's China, at one and the same time, joined the exclusive nuclear club and unleashed its own barrage against the Humanism of Marxism. By the time of the so-called Proletarian Cultural Revolution, a new revolutionary opposition within China opposed to the re-establishment of the new monolithism has arisen. Calling themselves the Sheng-wu-lien of Hunan (Hunan Provincial Proletarian Revolutionaries Great Alliance), here is what it wrote in its Manifesto, "Whither China?":

"Intoxicated by his victory of February-March, Chou En-lai—at present the general representative of China's Red Capitalist class—hurriedly tried to set up revolutionary committees in all parts of the country. If this bourgeois plan had been fulfilled, the proletariat would have retreated to his grave . . . The form of political power is superficially changed. The old provincial party committees and old military district command have become 'the revolutionary committee' or 'preparatory group for revolutionary committee.' However, old bureaucrats continue to play the leading role in the 'new political power' . . . as the masses have said, 'everything remains the same after so much ado.'"

"Victory of the Chinese proletariat and the broad masses of revolutionary people and the extinction of the new bureaucratic bourgeoisie are likewise inevitable. The world-shaking great festival of the revolutionary people—the overthrow of the revolutionary committee and birth of the 'People's Commune of China'—will surely survive."

This, too, was published in that remarkable year, 1968, Spring 1968.

Thus, as we see, new revolutionary forces have arisen everywhere to blow sky-high the gory myth that revolutions are made for the purpose of establishing a party machine; party-monolithism is there to throttle the revolution, not to release the creativity as well as the energies of millions. Marxism is either a theory of liberation or it is nothing. In thought and in life, it lays the basis for achieving a new human dimension without which no new society has viability.

IN OUR AGE OF ABSOLUTES when revolution and counter-revolution are so interlocked, it is not only the intellectual "in general" who must leave his ivory towers; so must the Marxist theoretician. The ceaseless repetition for the need of a vanguard party "to lead" has blinded him to the fact to which the mass of people are not blind—that everyone is ready to lead them; nobody to listen to them. Yet the movement from practice during the past two decades has been ceaseless while the movement from theory has been at a near standstill.

To rise to the challenge of the times requires altogether new banners. Marx was the first to see this in its breadth and depth—as both a birth-time of history and the realization of philosophy. Because he had put the human being in the center of all his thoughts, he could unite theory and practice, idealism and materialism, and, unarmed, throw the gauntlet down to the armed bourgeoisie. When asked why he, a bourgeois intellectual had broken with his class and become a "radical," he replied that "To be a radical means to grasp something at its root. And the root of mankind, the highest being for man, is man himself." It still is.

The second edition of Marxism and Freedom, published simultaneously in the United States and Japan in 1964, included a new chapter, "The Challenge of Mao Tse-tung" which traced the development of "Mao's Thought" from 1927 to the Sino-Soviet conflict in the early 1960's. For this special French edition, I am adding an Appendix on Mao's "Cultural Revolution."

I wish to dedicate this edition to the French workers and students, who made Spring, 1968 happen, thereby heralding the coming rebirth of a social revolution that would not separate itself from Marx's philosophy of liberation, thus making freedom a reality.

—Raya Dunayevskaya

Detroit, Michigan
February, 1970.