

Special Bulletin on Marxist-Humanism as a Body of Ideas

DIALECTICS OF REVOLUTION

American Roots and World Humanist Concepts



- Raya Dunayevskaya, "Dialectics of Revolution and of Women's Liberation"
- Charles Denby, "In Memoriam" from *News & Letters*, by Raya Dunayevskaya
- Eugene Walker, "*News & Letters* as Theory/Practice"
- Michael Connolly, "When Archives are not Past, but are Living"
- Olga Domanski, "Women's Liberation in Search of a Theory"

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Dialectics of Revolution and of Women's Liberation*

by Raya Dunayevskaya

Introduction and Part I: Marx's Marxism; Lenin's Marxism

Let's go adventuring to some Historic Turning Points that have unchained the dialectic: in Marx's age, in Lenin's, and in our post-World War II age.

Let's begin with 1843-44 when Marx broke with capitalism, having discovered a whole new continent of thought and of revolution that he called "a new Humanism."

Hegel's dialectic methodology had created a revolution in philosophy. Marx criticized it precisely because the structure of Hegel's *Phenomenology of Mind* was everywhere interpreted as a revolution in Thought only. Marx's "Critique of the Hegelian Dialectic" took issue with Hegel also for holding that a philosopher can know the dialectic of revolution: (the French Revolution in Hegel's case) only after the revolution has taken place. Marx re-created it as a dialectic of Reality in need of transformation. He named the Subject—the revolutionary force who could achieve this—as the Proletariat.

Put briefly, Marx transformed Hegel's revolution in philosophy into a philosophy of revolution. This will be further developed throughout this talk. For the moment, our focus must develop Marx's first "new moment"—i.e., discovery—the birth of what he called "a new Humanism."

It is that which characterized Marx's whole life from his break with capitalism until the day of his death, 1843-1883. It included two actual revolutions—1848 and 1871. The defeat of the 1848 revolutions produced a new need for a continuing revolution, a "Revolution in Permanence"; and Marx concluded from 1871, which created the Paris Commune, that the bourgeois state needs to be totally destroyed, and he called for a non-state form of workers' rule like the Paris Commune.

A 31-year lapse followed before a single post-Marx Marxist—Lenin—felt compelled to have a revolutionary encounter with the Hegelian dialectic. That Historic Turning Point followed when, in the objective world, the Second International collapsed at the outbreak of World War I. The shocking betrayal by the Second International served as the compulsion to Lenin to return to Marx's origin in the Hegelian dialectic with his own study of Hegel's *Science of Logic*. This marked the Great Divide in post-Marx Marxism. Lenin's grappling with the Hegelian-Marxian dialectic continued through the final decade of his life, from 1914 to 1924.

What resulted from this revolutionary encounter was a reunification of philosophy with revolution. We must see what Lenin specifically singled out to help him answer the Historic task facing him, and how he reconnected with Marx's Marxism. The dialectical principle he singled out from Hegel was transformation into opposite. Everything he worked out from then on—from *Imperialism to State and Revolution*—demonstrates that.

The main focus here is on the significance of what a revolutionary concretizes to answer the challenge of a new age. In the case of Lenin it was the dialectic principle of transformation into opposite that he held to characterize both capitalism's development into imperialism

* A lecture delivered in Chicago, January 27/February 3, 1985

and a section of the proletariat being transformed into "the aristocracy of labor."

Nearly two decades elapsed after Lenin died—during which would come the actual outbreak of World War II, which caused Trotskyism to split into several different tendencies—before there was the first serious grappling with the new reality that characterized the objective world. It was the outbreak of World War II which compelled me to study Russia's three Five Year Plans and to come to the conclusion that Russia was a state-capitalist society. The shocker to Trotsky, to which he never reconciled himself, was that outright counter-revolution came, not from the outside, from imperialism, but from the Russian Revolution itself. With the transformation of the first workers' state into a state-capitalist society it became clear that Stalin represented not just the bureaucrat, Stalin, but Stalinism, a Russian form of the new world stage in production.

Before, however, the dialectics of revolution could be fully unchained philosophically for our age, we had to experience both the new phenomenon in the Miners General Strike of 1949-50, living masses in motion posing new questions, and a serious grappling, philosophically, with the Hegelian-Marxian dialectic. This resulted in the philosophy of Marxist-Humanism. It was this philosophy which characterized those masses in motion as a movement from practice that is itself a form of theory. Since we are Marxist-Humanists, what we will examine today is that whole body of ideas—taking up both what we call the "trilogy of revolution" and the new fourth book we will soon have off the press: *Women's Liberation and the Dialectics of Revolution: Reaching for the Future*.

Marx's Marxism

Let's first examine Marx himself, from 1843 to 1883, in both his relationship to, and the break from, Hegel. So far as I am concerned, the "new moments" in Marx mark not merely the last decade of his life—which became, for us, the trail to the 1980s—but begin with the very first moment in Marx, the moment of his break with capitalism, its production, its culture, its immediate contenders from Lassalle on. From that encounter there came the birth of a new continent of thought and of revolution.

There was no time for popularization; that had to be left to his closest collaborator, Engels—who was no Marx—so that the founder of this new continent of thought and of revolution could give his whole time to the concretization of that new Universal—Marx's "new Humanism."

Note how painstakingly and in what interrelationships Marx's 1844 "Critique of the Hegelian Dialectic" shows all the new elements. Though he had already designated the proletariat as the revolutionary force, it was at that moment that he also singled out the Man/Woman relationship and pointed to the fact that it is that which discloses how alienating is the nature of this capitalist society. And though he had already separated himself from petty-bourgeois idealism, the power of negativity separated him also from Feuerbachian materialism.

The "new Humanism," in a word, was not just a matter of counterposing materialism to idealism; it was the unity of the two. By introducing practice as the very source of philosophy, Marx completely transformed the Hegelian dialectic as related only to thought and made it the dialectics of revolution. It was not only capitalism and its idealism Marx rejected, but what he called "vulgar communism"—which he stressed was not the goal of the overthrow of capitalism. What concretized his "new Humanism" was that the revolution must be continuous after the overthrow of capitalism.

When the real revolutions came in 1848—and he, himself, participated in them—he called, after their defeat, for a "Revolution in Permanence," in his 1850 *Address to the Communist League*. And after the 1875 French edition of *Capital*, after 40 hard years of labor in economics, he projected the possibility that a revolution could occur first in a technologically backward country (what we now see as the Third World)—ahead, that is, of the so-called advanced countries—though that was the opposite of what it seemed he had predicted in the

"Accumulation of Capital." In a word, there was nothing that was concretely spelled out in Marx's very last decade that was not first seen in the Promethean vision which he had unfolded at the very beginning, in the breaking up of the capitalist world.

Take even the one question—Organization—which the so-called orthodox claim was never touched seriously by anyone, not even a Marx, until Lenin worked it out in *What is to be Done?* in 1902-03. The truth is that Marx was always an "organization man." He no sooner got to Paris and finished his 1844 *Essays* (which never were published in his lifetime) than he searched out workers' meetings, created his own International Communist Correspondence Committees, and then joined the League of the Just, which became the Communist League. He tried to get everyone from Feuerbach to Proudhon to join, calling on them to be as enthusiastic about the workers' voices as he was.

What was true was that only with the 1875 "Marginal Notes" we know as the *Critique of the Gotha Program* did he express his views directly on the "program" of a workers' party. Those "Marginal Notes" stressed the impossibility for serious revolutionaries ever to separate philosophy of revolution from the actual organization; when a principle of philosophy and revolution is not in the "program," one should never join that organization, though one could participate in individual joint action against capitalism.

Did this *Critique* mean anything to any of those who called themselves Marxists? Clearly, not to the whole leadership of the Second International. That Historic Turning Point had not meant anything to any of the German leaders—and not only not to the Lassalleans but also not to the Eisenachists, who considered themselves Marxists.

And what of the Internationalists? It took nothing short of the outbreak of World War I to have anyone turn to the *Critique*. The single one who did—Lenin—learned a great deal on the necessary destruction of the capitalist state, as *State and Revolution* shows, but he left the whole question of Organization completely alone.

It took our age, specifically Marxist-Humanists, before there was a serious grappling with the type of organization Marx was calling for, and a reconnection of organization with his philosophy of "revolution in permanence." We did it publically only when the transcription of Marx's *Ethnological Notebooks* became available in the 1970s, and were analyzed philosophically for our age in *Rosa Luxemburg, Women's Liberation, and Marx's Philosophy of Revolution*. It was there that we challenged all post-Marx Marxists on this question.

Lenin's Marxism

The difference of the ideal from the material is also not unconditional, not excessive...

At the end of Book II of the Logic, before the transition to the Notion, a definition is given: "the Notion, the realm of Subjectivity or of Freedom":

NB Freedom = subjectivity
("or")
goal, consciousness, striving NB

—Lenin, Abstract of Hegel's Science of Logic

Lenin did not know the 1844 *Humanist Essays*. What predominated in the mind of the first generation of post-Marx Marxists was Organization, and that without grappling with Marx's *Critique of the Gotha Program*: that was totally ignored. What was not only not ignored but actually became the Great Divide in Marxism was the dialectic, the relationship between materialism and idealism, the dialectic methodology. The only Divide acknowledged by Marxists was that between reform and revolution. Put differently, though the inseparability of revolution from organization's goal was acknowledged, philosophy remained the missing link. That was not just in general. Specifically, it meant reducing methodology as if it were a mere "tool." It is this which shows what the true Great Divide was: the Dialectic which Lenin alone understood, although he kept his *What is to be Done?* where it was in

1902-03.

The very fact that the Great Divide continued within the Bolshevik movement—in great revolutionaries like Bukharin and Rosa Luxemburg—speaks volumes about the unacknowledged missing link of philosophy. Thus, the one who was accepted as the greatest theoretician—Bukharin—sharply disagreed with Lenin on his relationship to the national liberation movements, specifically the Irish Revolution. It led Lenin to use as divisive a class designation of Bukharin's position as "imperialist economism"! Lenin did not sum up his attitude to Bukharin, directly relating it to dialectics, until his *Will*. There Lenin (who by then had Bukharin's *Economics of the Transition Period*) wrote that Bukharin's views could "only with the very greatest doubt be regarded as fully Marxian, for...he never fully understood the dialectic."

The principle Lenin singled out in the dialectic, as we noted, was the transformation into opposite, which he related both to capitalism and to a section of the proletariat, but not to his concept of the "Party-to-lead." But while he failed to submit "the Party" to the Absolute Method of the dialectic of second negativity—that remained his untouchable "private enclave," the one that remains the noose around us all—Lenin did unstintingly hold to the dialectic principle that the imperative to re-transform the opposite into the positive cannot be done without the creativity of a new revolutionary force. The fact that you could prove betrayal would amount to nothing unless you could point to a new force like the Irish Revolution.

It was this which led him to attack what he called Luxemburg's "half-way dialectic." Here was a revolutionary who, before anyone else, including Lenin, had called attention to the opportunism of the Second International and had pinpointed, before the actual outbreak of World War I, the International's opportunistic attitude to German capitalism's plunge into imperialism, and to the suffering of the colonial masses. Unfortunately, however, she saw the "root cause" not in the Second International alone, but in the defects of Marx's theory of Accumulation of Capital. This resulted in her developing one more form of underconsumptionism. Her failure to recognize the colonial mass opposition as what Lenin called "the bacillus of proletarian revolution" led her to continue her opposition to Lenin's position on the "National Question." That is what Lenin called the "half-way dialectic."

He, on the contrary, related the dialectic to everything he wrote from then on—from *Imperialism* and *State and Revolution* to his Letter to the Editors of *Under the Banner of Marxism* about the need to study the Hegelian dialectic in Hegel's own words. His death created a philosophic void none of his co-leaders, Trotsky included, could fill. That remained the task for a new age.

Part II: Re-establishing the Link of Continuity with Marx's Marxism and the Development of the Body of Ideas of Marxist-Humanism

After a decade of world Depression and the rise of facism came the greatest shocker, the Hitler-Stalin Pact, that signalled the timing of World War II. It was high time to recognize the startling fact that, though November 1917 was the greatest revolution, the counter-revolution came, not from an outside imperialism, but from within. Trotsky could not, did not, face that reality, much less work out the new dialectic.

It took a whole decade of digging into what happened after the revolution had conquered power to discover how it was transformed into its opposite—a workers' state into a state-capitalist society—through the Five Year Plans as well as the objective situation in the private capitalist world. Let's look into the two stages of that decade: first, straight state-capitalist theory; and finally, the birth of Marxist-Humanism.

A. Vicissitudes of State-Capitalism, the Black Dimension, and the Birth of Marxist-Humanism:
Marxism and Freedom: From 1776 until Today; The Voices from Below of the 1960s

Marxism and Freedom: From 1776 until Today is the first of the three books which Marxist-Humanism refers to as our "trilogy of revolution." The first edition contained two Appendices. One is the first published English translation of Marx's "Private Property and Communism" and "Critique of the Hegelian Dialectic" from what has come to be called Marx's 1844 *Humanist Essays*. The second is the first English translation of Lenin's "Abstract of Hegel's *Science of Logic*."

Some elements of Humanism were present in our development as early as 1941 in the essay on "Labor and Society," which was the very first section of my analysis of "The Nature of the Russian Economy." That essay was rejected for publication by the Trotskyists (the Workers Party) when they accepted the strictly economic analysis of the Five Year Plans from Russian sources.

The vicissitudes of state-capitalism would show that only when the philosophic structure is fully developed can one present the theory of state-capitalism in a way that would answer the quest for universality and what Marxist-Humanism called "the movement from practice." Which is why I prefer the way my 1941 study of the nature of the Russian economy was presented in *Marxism and Freedom: From 1776 until Today* in 1957, in Part V, "The Problem of our Age: State-Capitalism vs. Freedom."

Marxists and non-Marxists alike have always rejected even the attempt to give a philosophic structure to concrete events. Take the question of the Black Dimension. No one could deny what new stage had been reached in the 1960s, and whether you called it a revolution or just a new stage of the struggle for civil rights, there was no denying the stormy nature of the 1960s. But the truth is that this could be seen not only in the '60s, but beginning with the Montgomery Bus Boycott—and not only as a new beginning but in terms of the whole philosophic structure for the following decade. Here is what I singled out from that event in *Marxism and Freedom*: 1) the daily meetings; 2) the way in which the Black rank-and-file organized their own transportation (indeed, Rev. King admitted that the whole movement started without him); 3) the fact that, whether it was the meetings or the transportation that the masses took into their own hands, the Boycott's greatest achievement was "its own working existence"—the very phrase *Marxism and Freedom* had also pointed to in another section, as the way Marx had written of the Paris Commune.

We could take the same 35 years we have taken in our new, fourth book where we show the development of the dialectics of revolution on Women's Liberation, and show that development on the Black Dimension. The same is true for Youth, as when we take the three new pages of freedom in *Marxism and Freedom* on the Hungarian Revolution, where I point to the revolutionary Youth getting ever younger, as witness the 12-year-old Hungarian Freedom Fighter. And of course the same would be true of Labor. That, indeed, begins in the French Revolution of 1789-93, when there was no industrial proletariat and the enragés, the sans culottes, the artisans, were the great revolutionaries who spelled out the same masses in motion.

Masses in motion have marked every Historic Turning Point. This is articulated by going beyond every national boundary. In our age it can be seen whether we are looking at the Afro-Asian Revolutions or the Latin American Revolutions, and it is reflected both in our activity and in our publications. It was seen in the very early years of News and Letters Committees in the way in which the revolution in Cuba brought about our very first *Weekly Political Letter*. More recently, it is seen in the bi-lingual pamphlet on *Latin America's Revolutions, in Reality and in Thought*. And you will soon see it in the new book in the way the early correspondence with Silvio Frondizi attains a new significance.

The three-fold goal of *Marxism and Freedom* was: 1) to establish the American roots of Marxism, not where the orthodox cite it (if they cite it at all) in the General Congress of Labor at Baltimore (1866), but in the Abolitionist Movement and the slave revolts which led

to the Civil War: 2) to establish the world Humanist concept which Marx had, in his very first new moment, called "a new Humanism," and which became so alive in our age and led to Marxist-Humanism; and 3) to re-establish the revolutionary nature of the Hegelian dialectic as Marx re-created it and as it became compulsive for Lenin at the outbreak of the First World War, gaining a still newer life in our post-World War II age.

The contemporaneity as well as specificity of the deep-rootedness of the Hegelian dialectic permeates the whole of *Marxism and Freedom*. Please note the book's dialectical structure and see that from the very first chapter ("The Age of Revolutions: Industrial, Social-Political, Intellectual") it discloses no division between the objectivity of the period and the subjectivity of revolutionary Marxism. And note as well its todayness as it ends the chapter with the section entitled "Hegel's Absolutes and Our Age of Absolutes." Let me read you the last paragraph of that chapter:

To declare, in our day and age, that Hegel's Absolute means nothing but the "knowing" of the whole past of human culture is to make a mockery of the dialectical development of the world and of thought, and absolutely to bar a rational approach to Hegel. What is far worse, such sophistry is a self-paralyzing barrier against a sober theoretical approach to the world itself.

It is necessary to divest Hegelian philosophy of the dead-weight of academic tradition as well as of radical intellectual snobbery and cynicism or we will lay ourselves wide open to the putrescent smog of Communism.

—*Marxism and Freedom*, p. 43

From the very start of News and Letters Committees in 1955 we made two decisions simultaneously. At our Convention in 1956, our Constitution established our newspaper, *News & Letters*, as a unique combination of workers and intellectuals, with a Black production worker, Charles Denby, as our editor and with Raya Dunayevskaya as Chairwoman of the National Editorial Board; and we assigned the National Chairwoman to set forth our own interpretation of Marxism in what became *Marxism and Freedom: From 1776 until Today*. All of the new pamphlets we produced through the turbulent 1960s flowed out of the structure of *Marxism and Freedom: Workers Battle Automation, The Free Speech Movement and the Negro Revolution, Notes on Women's Liberation*—all written by the new voices from below; as well as my pamphlet on *Nationalism, Communism, Marxist-Humanism and the Afro-Asian Revolutions* and the whole history of the United States, *American Civilization on Trial*, signed by the entire National Editorial Board of *News & Letters*. These and all the others we produced you must read for yourselves.

The whole question of the unity of Theory/Practice is seen especially clearly in the difference between Part I of Charles Denby's *Indignant Heart*, written when the Johnson-Forest Tendency was still a single State-Capitalist Tendency, and Part II, written after Marxist-Humanism had been openly practiced for more than two decades and brought all those developments in Charles Denby.

In 1969 Marxist-Humanism called a Black/Red Conference, and Marxist-Humanist women also held their conference and decided to establish an autonomous organization. Not only did both conferences have many non-Marxist-Humanists present, but in the Black/Red Conference, they were the majority present. That year, 1969, was also the year we donated our Archives to Wayne State University. The unfinished 1968 Paris Revolt had finally made us realize that Marxist-Humanism, projected in the 1950s and spelled out comprehensively in 1957 in our first major theoretical work, cried out for concretizing Marxism as philosophy. Not only was 1969 not 1968; 1969 was high time to realize that theory, including state-capitalist theory, is not—is not—yet philosophy.

B. Return to Hegel and Our Dialectical Discoveries: *Philosophy and Revolution: From Hegel to Sartre and from Marx to Mao*

By the end of the 1960s, when the climax of all the activity had resulted only in an aborted revolution, we could no longer avoid the strictly philosophic new digging into Hegel to see what concretely related to our age. The return to all of Hegel's major works—especially the final syllogism Hegel had added to the *Philosophy of Mind*—finally resulted in our second major philosophic-theoretical work, *Philosophy and Revolution*. That new return and concentration on those final syllogisms was comprehensive in the way it re-examined not only Hegel and Marx and Lenin (which constituted Part I, "Why Hegel? Why Now?"), but the Alternatives that considered themselves revolutionary—Trotsky, Mao, and one "outsider looking in," Sartre (which constituted Part II). This time the vicissitudes of state-capitalism were not restricted to those who called themselves Communists, but included altogether new lands, new struggles, as well as a new African, Asian, Third World socialism. (Part III dealt with East Europe, Africa, and the New Passions and Forces.)

But it doesn't stop there. What finally summed up the new challenges, new passions, new forces—all those new relations against the objective situation—was the return to Hegel "in and for himself," by which I mean his major philosophic works: *Phenomenology of Mind*, *Science of Logic*, and *Philosophy of Mind* from the *Encyclopedia of the Philosophical Sciences*.

Let's begin at the end of Chapter I of *Philosophy and Revolution*, "Absolute Negativity as New Beginning: The Ceaseless Movement of Ideas and of History," where I concentrate on the three final syllogisms of Hegel's *Philosophy of Mind*, Para. 575, 576, 577. The very listing of the books of the *Encyclopedia*—Logic, Nature, Mind (Para. 575)—discloses a new reality, and that is that Logic is not as important as Nature, since Nature is the middle, which is the mediation, which is of the essence. The second syllogism (Para. 576) discloses that the mediation comes from Mind itself and Logic becomes less crucial. What is Absolute is Absolute Negativity, and it is that which replaces Logic altogether. What Hegel is saying is that the movement is ceaseless and therefore he can no longer limit himself to a syllogism. The "Self-Thinking Idea" has replaced the syllogistic presentation in Para. 577.

When I jammed up this conclusion of Hegel's from my first chapter of *Philosophy and Revolution* with what I worked out when I summed up the final Chapter 9 on what flowed from the movement from practice (what I called "New Passions and New Forces"), here is how I expressed it:

The reality is stifling. The transformation of reality has a dialectic all its own. It demands a unity of the struggles for freedom with a philosophy of liberation. Only then does the elemental revolt release new sensibilities, new passions, and new forces—a whole new human dimension.

Ours is the age that can meet the challenge of the times when we work out so new a relationship of theory to practice that the proof of the unity is in the Subject's own self-development. Philosophy and revolution will first then liberate the innate talents of men and women who will become whole. Whether or not we recognize that this is the task history has "assigned" to our epoch, it is a task that remains to be done.

—*Philosophy and Revolution*, p. 292

C. The Marx Centenary: *Rosa Luxemburg, Women's Liberation, and Marx's Philosophy of Revolution*

The Marx Centenary created the opportunity for us, when we also had a third major philosophic work, *Rosa Luxemburg, Women's Liberation, and Marx's Philosophy of Revolution* (which completed what we call the "trilogy of revolution"), to stress how total the uprooting of the system must be. It is not only that there can be no "private enclaves" that are free from the dialectics of revolution—that which Hegel called "second negativity" and what we consider the Absolute Method, the road to the Absolute Idea. It is that the crucial

thing for us, now that we had Marx's *Ethnological Notebooks*, was more than just singling out the Man/Woman relationship, because we could see that the critique of all post-Marx Marxists begins with Frederick Engels. This last work of Marx disclosed Marx's multilinear view of all of human history vs. Engels' unilateral view.

It is that which prompted us to create the category of "post-Marx Marxism" and it was precisely when we dealt with other revolutionaries like Rosa Luxemburg that it became necessary to focus on Marx's concept of "revolution in permanence."

All these new points of departure led to the new study where I re-examined Marx's Marxism as a totality. I cannot here go into that, which was central to the third book. I will have to limit myself simply to quoting the last paragraph of the work:

What is needed is a new unifying principle, on Marx's ground of humanism, that truly alters both human thought and human experience. Marx's *Ethnological Notebooks* are a historic happening that proves, one hundred years after he wrote them, that Marx's legacy is no mere heirloom, but a live body of ideas and perspectives that is in need of concretization. Every moment of Marx's development, as well as the totality of his works, spells out the need for "revolution in permanence." This is the absolute challenge to our age.

—Rosa Luxemburg, *Women's Liberation, and Marx's Philosophy of Revolution*, p. 195

D. Unchaining the Dialectic Through 35 Years of Marxist-Humanist Writings Which Trace the Dialectics of Revolution in a New Work on Women's Liberation

The title for my lecture today has reversed the title of our new fourth book into "Dialectics of Revolution and of Women's Liberation," not just as something needed for this lecture, but as what is the actual focus of the whole "trilogy of revolution" as well as this latest philosophic work. Indeed, the Introduction to it—and an Introduction is really always also the Conclusion—is called "Introduction and Overview." It is that which I will try to summarize here as the unchaining of the dialectic for the post-World War II period, whether that is expressed in activities or books, in pamphlets or *News & Letters*, or as it is implicit throughout the Archives, as well.

It is this which reveals that, no matter what specific revolutionary force turns out to be the main one in any ongoing revolution, no one can know before time who it will be. Nothing proves this more sharply than *Women's Liberation*, because it has been an unrecognized and degraded force, rather than seen as a force that is simultaneously Reason. It is this which has made women question: "What happens after?"

In the main, Women's Liberationists refuse to accept anything which shows that "a man" decides. In actuality, what they are thereby rejecting is the dialectics of revolution. It is this burning question of our age which led me to subtitle this final section of my lecture: *Unchaining the Dialectic*.

First, let us look at the unchaining of the dialectic for our age by Marxist-Humanists. Our original contributions to Marx's Marxism can be seen in our first book, *Marxism and Freedom*, as the structure of the whole—the Movement from Practice. It is seen in our second work, *Philosophy and Revolution*, as the working out of the Absolute Idea for our age—Absolute Idea as New Beginning. In the third work, *Rosa Luxemburg, Women's Liberation, and Marx's Philosophy of Revolution*, it is seen as the challenge to all post-Marx Marxists.

Secondly, let's see how Marx explained his return to the Hegelian dialectic in his very last decade: "My relationship with Hegel is very simple. I am a disciple of Hegel, and the presumptuous chatter of the epigones who think they have buried this great thinker appear frankly ridiculous to me. Nevertheless, I have taken the liberty of adopting...a critical attitude, disencumbering his dialectic of its mysticism and thus putting it through a profound change..." This is from the manuscripts for Volume II of *Capital* that Marx left, and that

Engels left out.

Now let's look at the structure of our fourth book, still on the press, *Women's Liberation and the Dialectics of Revolution: Reaching for the Future*. What became obvious to me was that the four parts of this book turned out to be actual moments of revolution. Thus Part I, "Women, Labor and the Black Dimension," actually also includes Youth, as the four forces of revolution. I insisted in my Introduction that I was not presenting my writings chronologically because I wanted each topic to reflect, even if only implicitly, the totality of my views. Even that aspect does not tell the whole story about the relationship of the forces of revolution to the Reason of any revolution—i.e. how each one of the forces "reaches for the future." This was most clearly shown not only by the forces that actually made the revolution in Russia; but by those in Persia where the women in the revolution of 1906-11 had gone beyond even what they did in Russia, itself, by establishing a new form of organization, the women's *anjumen* (soviet). Today we spell this out as committee-form in place of "party-to-lead."

Part II, "Revolutionaries All," again shows the activists, the actual participants in revolutions. Whether or not they were conscious of actually being the history-makers, they were exactly that. And that section has the footnote which returns us to *Marxism and Freedom*, choosing the section that describes the milkmaids initiating the Paris Commune of 1871.

Part III, "Sexism, Politics and Revolution—Japan, Portugal, Poland, China, Latin America, the United States—Is there an Organizational Answer?" clearly illustrates both the positive internationalism and the very negative sexism in each country, whether East or West. Yet what the Introduction and Overview made clear was that the forces of revolution had to show their actual presence before the concretization of the dialectics of revolution would manifest itself.

Put differently, what the very first sentence of the first paragraph of the first page of the Introduction establishes is that first there must be a definition that is a concretization of the specific nature of your epoch. We had designated that as the movement from practice that is itself a form of theory, and we had arrived at that conclusion from the encounter with the Absolute Idea as being not just a unity of practice and theory, but a very new relationship of practice to theory. It is this which determined the whole structure of our very first major theoretical work, *Marxism and Freedom*. Only after this specific epoch and its historic content was grasped do we speak, in the second paragraph of the Introduction and Overview, about the uniqueness of one of the forces of revolution, Women's Liberation.

We now come to Part IV on "The Trail to the 1980s"—which is naturally the one that is key to any concretization of the present period. Our task is two-fold: we have to catch the link of continuity with Marx's Marxism; and then make our own original contributions, which only the epoch in question can work out for itself. Marx opened the gates for us. Look at the way he treated his relationship to Hegel after he discovered his own New Continent of Thought and yet felt it important to return to the Hegelian dialectic. That was not to deny anything new. On the contrary—and contrary especially to all those who try to use the final decade of Marx's life to turn him into no more than a populist—the full 40 years of Marx's work, which saw the critic of the Hegelian dialectic become the philosopher of revolution and the author of *Capital*, prove that he continued his own very original development throughout his life, including the final decade, and that the new moments were no break with his very first new discovery.

Follow the dialectics of the development of Women as the new revolutionary force and Reason. Concretization, when it expresses a Universal that becomes Concrete, shows what Absolute Idea is as New Beginning. All the emphasis on "New Beginnings" pinpoints the task of an age. Absolute Idea is total, but it cannot be total as a quantitative measure. That is where the new in any epoch requires the living presence of that revolutionary force and not just a Promethean vision. That is not because Promethean vision and Reaching for the Future doesn't help the next generation to see its task. Quite the contrary. That is when

discontinuity is not a revision of, but a continuation with, the original New Moment when there are all sorts of new voices and listening to them is quintessential.

It is only after the new world stage of practice is recognized that we get to that new revolutionary force of Women's Liberation, which has named the culprit—male chauvinism—as characterizing the revolutionary movement itself. That is to say, it is not only characteristic of capitalism, and not only of this epoch, but has existed throughout history. The point is not to stop there. But in order not to stop there, you have to recognize Women's Liberation as a force that is Reason and not just force—and that means a total uprooting of this society, and the creation of totally new human relations. Which is why Marx was not exclusively a feminist but a "new Humanist." The fact that feminism is part of Humanism and not the other way around does not mean that Women's Liberation becomes subordinate. It means only that philosophy will not again be separated from revolution, or Reason separated from force. Even Absolute Method becomes only the "road to" Absolute Idea, Absolute Mind.

Let me end, then, with the final paragraph from the Introduction and Overview of our new, fourth book:

The Absolute Method allows for no "private enclaves"—i.e., exceptions to the principle of Marx's Dialectics, whether on the theoretical or the organizational questions. As Marx insisted from the very beginning, nothing can be a private enclave: neither any part of life, nor organization, nor even science. In his *Economic-Philosophic Manuscripts*, he proclaimed that: "To have one basis for life and another for science is *a priori* a lie."

And now that we have both the *Ethnological Notebooks* and the *Mathematical Manuscripts* from Marx's last years, where he singled out the expression "negation of the negation," we can see that that is the very same expression he used in 1844 to explain why Feuerbach was a vulgar materialist in rejecting it, and Hegel was the creative philosopher. As we concluded in the Introduction and Overview to *Women's Liberation and the Dialectics of Revolution*, on Marx's 1844 declaration on science and life:

The truth of this statement has never been more immediate and urgent than in our nuclear world, over which hangs nothing short of the threat to the very survival of civilization as we have known it.

Charles Denby, Worker-Editor
In Memoriam*

by Raya Dunayevskaya

The 75 years of Charles Denby's life are so full of class struggles, Black revolts, freedom movements that they illuminate not only the present but cast a light even on the future. At the same time, because his autobiography—*Indignant Heart: A Black Worker's Journal*—reaches back into the far past when, as a child during World War I, he asked questions of his grandmother as she told tales of her slavery days, readers suddenly feel they are witness to the birth of a revolutionary.

I first met Denby in 1948 when he had already become a leader of wildcats, a "politico," but the talk I heard him give of tenant farming in the South and factory work in the North was far from being a "political speech." Listening to him, you felt you were witnessing an individual's life that was somehow universal, and that touched you personally. You feel that when you hear him tell of his first strike:¹

I remember the first strike I ever led. It was over discrimination against Black women workers in our shop. It was during World War II when I was at Briggs and I was so new in the shop I didn't even know what a strike was. I was working in the dope room where you put glue on the airplane wing. The fumes and the odor were so bad we had no appetite left by lunchtime.... The women had been talking about their husbands who were in the service in Germany—and here they couldn't even get a job in the sewing room next door. That was for white women only. These things just burned us up.... On the day that we walked out, they locked the gates on us. By that time other workers inside the factory were out with us.... It wasn't until the company sent for me as the "strike leader" that I had realized what we had actually done.

Recently—not for any reasons of nostalgia but because we were discussing the question of robotics and what forms of organization were needed to fight the labor bureaucracy that has been helping management wring concessions from the workers—Denby began talking about what had happened when Automation was first introduced. He was talking about the Miners' General Strike of 1949-50 when the continuous miner had first been introduced into the mines.

It was when the government threw the Taft-Hartley law at the miners and John L. Lewis ordered the miners back to work that the miners refused, organized their own rank-and-file Relief Committees, and appealed to other workers throughout the country for help. Denby recalled the miners who had come up from West Virginia to his local:

I remember that the bureaucrats were not too hot about the idea. They didn't dare come right out and oppose it, but you could tell they weren't enthusiastic, like the rank-and-file were. But our enthusiasm was so strong that by the time the meeting ended the bureaucrats had to triple the amount they had intended to give. After that, the miners knew they had to talk directly to the rank-and-file. At Local 600 the workers not only gave several thousand dollars outright, but pledged \$500 a

* Published in *News & Letters*, November, 1983

¹ See "Black Caucuses in the Unions," Appendix to *American Civilization on Trial* (third edition, *News & Letters*, 1970).

week for as long as the strike lasted, and sent a whole caravan—five truckloads—of food and clothing. The strike didn't last too long after that show of solidarity.

Denby's point was not that workers today must "copy" what the labor militants did then, but that it is the informal rank-and-file committees that show how "workers talk and think about everything on the job—things about everyday life but also about world affairs." *News & Letters*, he said, "must continue to elicit from the workers thinking their own thoughts. Actions are sure to follow."

A Turning Point in Denby's Life

The year after the historic miners' strike, Denby began dictating the story of his life. It became a turning point in his life because in telling his life story he gained confidence that he could express himself in a way that carried meaning for other workers as well. Part I of his autobiography was published in 1952. I moved to Detroit in 1953 and it was then I first broached the question of having a worker as editor of a new type of paper we were planning, instead of forever bestowing that prerogative on an intellectual who would speak "for" the workers. Denby was at first non-committal. At the same time he knew I had been working on a book on Marxism and the new stage of capitalism I called state-capitalism, and began asking me how trade union questions were handled in Russia before it became state-capitalism and was still a workers' state. When I told him about the famous trade union debate of 1920-21, I asked him whether he thought it would be of interest to American workers.

A few months later, both questions I had posed to Denby reappeared in a most unusual way. It was March 5, 1953 when Stalin died. Denby called me the minute he got out of the shop. He said he imagined I was writing some political analysis of what that meant and he wanted me to know what the workers in his shop were talking about all that day: "Every worker was saying, 'I have just the man to fill Stalin's shoes—my foreman.'"

It impressed me so much that I said not only that I would write the political analysis of the death of that totalitarian, but that the workers' remarks would become the jumping off point for my article on the trade unions. I asked whether he could distribute those articles in his shop and record the workers' comments. He agreed enthusiastically.

March and April were very busy months for me. By March 19, I had completed the political analysis of Stalin's death. It was inconceivable to me that now that the incubus was lifted from the Russian workers' heads there would not be some form of workers' revolt to follow, and the article enumerated the many unrecorded forms of the Russian workers' hidden revolt at the point of production. By April 16, I had prepared the lengthy article on the trade union debate, called "Then and Now; 1920 and 1953." This was followed by still one more article on April 30 on the ramifications of Stalin's death.² By then, I was not fully satisfied with the economic and political analysis, but wanted to work out the philosophic ground. All these happenings couldn't be accidental; nothing that historic can be without reason: I felt I had to get away and took two weeks to work this out.

Whereas I kept more or less to myself the two philosophic letters written in that period—in which I thought I had broken through on Hegel's "Absolute Idea" as something that contained a movement from practice as well as from theory, so that the "absolute" (that is to say, the unity of theory and practice) signified a totally new relationship of practice to theory—I did discuss with Denby the relationship of workers to philosophy.

Several years earlier I had translated Lenin's *Philosophic Notebooks* on Hegel and I now read certain sections to Denby. He said that Hegel's language meant absolutely nothing to him, but that he certainly understood Lenin: "Couldn't you leave out Hegel and just publish

² See these three articles, dated March 19, April 16 and April 30, in "The Raya Dunayevskaya Collection" on deposit at Wayne State University Archives of Labor History and Urban Affairs (pp. 2180-2199). The article "Then and Now" became part of Chapter XII, "What Happens After," in *Marxism and Freedom*.

what Lenin said? If intellectuals want to read Hegel can't you just tell them the section that Lenin was talking about? I like, for example, Lenin's sentence that 'the idea of the transformation of the ideal into the real is profound.' I think workers would like to know how to do that."

The following month, on June 17, 1953, the East German workers revolted in East Berlin against raising the work norms in their factories and, as they marched out of the factories, they smashed the statue of Stalin. This was so great a world historic turning point, and the fact that it broke out against speed-up meant so much to Denby, that our discussions on philosophy became discussions about concrete actions of workers.

Denby Becomes Editor

1954 was a year filled with wildcats as Automation came to Detroit. The East German revolt had stirred everyone with new ideas of spontaneous action, against totalitarianism as well as against conditions of labor. There was also a stirring from below in Africa. At the same time, the rulers became more and more reactionary, as McCarthyism pervaded the land and shackled the workers with the Taft-Hartley law passed during the upsurge of strikes that had followed the ending of World War II.

Denby felt strongly that there was an imperative need for a new kind of workers' paper, and in 1955 accepted editorship of *News & Letters*. What pleased me especially was that the first issue should appear in honor of the second anniversary of the East German revolt, not only so that none would forget that first revolt from under totalitarianism, but also to show a new phase of international solidarity.

Along with the birth of *News & Letters* came our very first pamphlet. We published, in mimeographed form, Lenin's *Philosophic Notebooks* in the form Denby had recommended.³ It turned out to be our first "best-seller."

1955 was also the year the Montgomery Bus Boycott began. Whereas no others recognized the Black Revolution until the 1960s, we immediately became active participants in that struggle and considered it on as high a level for opening new pages of world freedom as the East European revolts. Alabama was, after all, Denby's home state, and he headed South to meet with both Rosa Parks and Rev. Martin Luther King. Here is how his Christmas, 1956 visit was reported by Denby in *News & Letters*:

I have recently come back from a trip to Alabama, where I was born and raised. Montgomery is my hometown. From what I've seen and feel, there is a social revolution going on in the South that has it in a turmoil of a kind that hasn't been seen since the days of Reconstruction.

The 1960s, of course, signified a birthtime of history objectively and subjectively, with the Black dimension both in America and in Africa marking the birth of a whole new Third World and a new generation of revolutionaries.

The Relationship of Reality to Philosophy

In becoming both a columnist—his "Worker's Journal" always appeared on page one—and an editor, he no longer limited himself to stories from auto factories, but also gathered stories from the mines, steel mills, and from office workers, too. Here is how he expressed it, in *Workers Battle Automation*:

The intellectual—be he scientist, engineer or writer—may think Automation means the elimination of heavy labor. The production worker sees it as elimination of the laborer.

And just as he had opened two chapters of his autobiography so that his wife, Christine, could tell her story back in 1952, long before the birth of the Women's Liberation Movement,

³ This pamphlet also had, as Appendix, my Letters on the Absolute Idea.

so now he saw to it that some of the stories of women freedom fighters were reflected in *News & Letters*, as witness the special story on the sit-in movement he obtained from a State Teachers College student from his hometown, Montgomery, Ala., which appeared in the April, 1960 *News & Letters* under the title: "No One Moved."

One of the most important developments of the turbulent 1960s, of course, was the anti-Vietnam War movement whose voices were heard regularly in the paper. In general *News & Letters* not only became the publisher for all freedom fighters speaking for themselves—from the Black and white Freedom Riders, to the youth of the Free Speech Movement, to Women's Liberationists speaking in many voices—but called together conferences of activists in all these movements.

Thus, when the highest point in those 1960s came to a climax which, however, was spelled out as aborted revolution both in the U.S. and in France, Denby, far from ringing down the curtain, was instrumental in calling together a Black/Red Conference in Detroit on Jan. 12, 1969. Here is his Welcome:

This is the first time that such a conference of Black youth, Black workers, Black women and Black intellectuals will have a chance to discuss with each other as well as with Marxist-Humanists, who lend the red coloration not only for the sake of color, but for the sake of philosophy, a philosophy of liberation.

"Philosophy of liberation" was not mere rhetoric, much less an empty intellectual task. To Denby, philosophy became a clearing of the head for action. From the minute he became the editor of *News & Letters*, which manifested so unique a combination of worker and intellectual, Denby's interest in philosophy was never separated from action. It was, in fact, at that Black/Red Conference that he chose to single out a quotation directly from Hegel's *Phenomenology of Mind* as his favorite because it applied to the relationship of reality to philosophy: "Enlightenment upsets the household arrangements, which spirit carries out in the house of faith, by bringing in the goods and furnishings belonging to the world of the Here and Now..."

Three direct results flowed from both the Black/Red Conference and from the Women's Liberation Conference that followed it: 1) the establishment of a new "Black-Red" column to be written by John Alan; 2) the creation of a "Woman as Reason" column for the Women's Liberation page; and 3) the involvement of the participants from both Conferences in discussions around my new book-in-progress, *Philosophy and Revolution*. Their contribution can be seen in what became Chapter 9 of that work, "New Passions and New Forces—The Black Dimension, the Anti-Vietnam War Youth, Rank-and-File Labor, Women's Liberation."

The Final Decade: The Path to the Future

At the same time, Denby was becoming deeply involved in international relations, especially Africa. Thus, when John Alan and a new young Black Marxist-Humanist, Lou Turner, wanted to work out the relationship of Frantz Fanon's new Humanism to American Black thought and our own Marxist-Humanism, they were not only encouraged to develop their ideas in pamphlet form, but Denby and I co-authored an Introduction to that pamphlet, which we published in 1978 under the title *Frantz Fanon, Soweto and American Black Thought*.

We felt that Frantz Fanon had, indeed, been the precursor of a whole new generation of revolutionaries so that his *Wretched of the Earth* was not only a Third World Manifesto, but a global declaration for Marx's Humanism. Here is how Denby and I expressed it in our Introduction:

Revolutionary Black thought, whether it comes from Azania, the Caribbean, or the United States, is not end, but prologue to action. We invite all readers to join our authors in working out the imperative task they set for themselves to prepare theoretically for the American revolution-to-be.

1978 was also the year Denby decided to write a Part II to his unique biography, first published in 1952. As he put it in the new Foreword, this was no mere updating: "It isn't only that 25 years separate Part I and Part II. More importantly, the great events of the 1960s that gave birth to a new generation of revolutionaries could but give a new direction to my thoughts and actions as a Black production worker who became the editor of a very new type of newspaper—*News & Letters*."

IN HIS LONG three-year battle with cancer, which ended on Oct. 10, 1983, Denby continued with his "Worker's Journal" column, frequently inviting both our co-editor, Felix Martin, and Lou Turner to write guest columns, the first on labor questions, the second on the Black world. In the last months of his life he was anxious to attend the Aug. 27 March on Washington, but was too sick to do so. He turned his column that month over to Lou Turner to report on it as a participant.

His last letter to me—which he printed in his June 1983 column—spoke of how crucial it is to show the American roots of Marxism, as we had developed it in *American Civilization on Trial*. He had been very impressed, he said, with the paragraph I had added on Marx and the Black world to my latest work, *Rosa Luxemburg, Women's Liberation, and Marx's Philosophy of Revolution*:

Raya, whatever else we decide to write for the 20th anniversary of our pamphlet, I strongly feel that your new paragraph should be the focus. We need to put, right in the beginning, the world context of our struggle and the way our view of it is rooted in Marx. I would like to let all our readers see that paragraph for themselves.

Indeed, that paragraph did become the focus for the new Introduction we wrote for the expanded edition of *American Civilization on Trial* that came off the press just in time to take it with us to the March on Washington.

The inseparability of philosophy and revolution motivated Denby from the moment he became editor in 1955 to the very last days of his life, and he always had some sentence he would single out from various theoretical works that became his favorites. Thus, from *Marxism and Freedom* he was always quoting: "There is nothing in thought—not even in the thought of a genius—that has not previously been in the activity of the common man."

While Denby was too modest a man to think that this had any relationship to him as a person, he had full confidence that that expression did mean masses in motion. Yet the truth is that the genius of Charles Denby lies in the fact that the story of his life—*Indignant Heart: A Black Worker's Journal*—is the history of workers' struggles for freedom, his and all others the world over.

—Detroit, Michigan, Oct. 24, 1983

News & Letters as Theory/Practice*

by Eugene Walker

The 45 minutes for this report will not allow us to trace the 30 year path of this Marxist-Humanist newspaper, nor even to explore fully the past year. We choose to concentrate on several questions which will indicate how this newspaper has developed both over three decades, and in this year of 1983-84, to thus help us with finding the needed pathways to more fully reach *News & Letters* as theory/practice.

We need to reach a new stage of cognition with regard to our newspaper so that theory/practice is not alone the name of Raya Dunayevskaya's column and the masthead logo, but fully becomes the universal of the paper's articles, make-up and projection, the notion of its distribution and sales, the absolute of its projection in discussions and educationals. Only in this manner can the newspaper help us manifest a new stage of organizational praxis.

Part I: How has the Unique Combination of Worker and Intellectual, upon which *News & Letters* was founded, become deepened and expanded so that its fullest expression is Theory/Practice?

"When I first met Denby in 1948," begins Raya's "In Memoriam" to Charles Denby, was "when he had already become a leader of wildcats, a 'politico,' but the talk I heard him give of tenant farming in the South and factory work in the North was far from being a 'political speech.' Listening to him, you felt you were witnessing an individual's life that was somehow universal and that touched you personally." Thus began Raya's and Denby's 35-year-long association. Within it was the germ of what we would later characterize when *News & Letters* newspaper was born as a unique combination of worker and intellectual and a manifestation of what today we call theory/practice. That "In Memoriam" piece traces the intertwining strands of Denby's life, the creation of Marxist-Humanism in the 1950s, the birth and development of News and Letters Committees and its newspaper. Within that unfolding story are moments which tell us of our own development as a tendency in the 1950s to the 1970s, and tell us something of our direction in the 1980s.

Take this expression—"a unique combination of worker/intellectual." It is no simple relationship. What makes a worker overcome the shyness, the modesty, so that he becomes a worker-editor? I do not mean it as a psychological question, but rather a question that is rooted in the struggle to overcome the division between mental and manual labor, between thinking and doing, that has been the hallmark of all class-divided societies. Raya writes of this in the two sections of her "In Memoriam" piece called "A Turning Point in Denby's Life" and "Denby Becomes Editor." Here we see what happened in those 1950s when this Marxist-Humanist philosopher, Raya Dunayevskaya, and this co-worker, Charles Denby, strove to find a form for the presentation of their ideas. Remember Denby had written Part I of his autobiography *Indignant Heart*. And Raya had been writing on state-capitalism, on Marx and Lenin, for a full decade. But it was those political events of the 1950s—Stalin's death, the East German revolt, the continuing wildcats against Automation—which, when discussed by this combination of worker/intellectual, provided both for the concrete presentation of developing Marxist-Humanist ideas so that workers in the U.S. could follow a discussion of the form of workers' control after the revolution in Russia; and at the same time this became a pathway whereby Denby undertook the creative labor of writing "Worker's Journal" and began editorship of *News & Letters*. I want to stress that there is nothing automatic about this combination of worker/intellectual. It is truly a Marxist-Humanist contribution. It meant a column—"Two Worlds"—in which an intellectual disciplined herself to write in the forum of a workers' newspaper, a form demanded by the breakthrough on the Absolute Idea. It meant that Denby as "Worker's Journal" columnist and editor

* Report to the Convention of News and Letters Committees, July 1984

would have in his view not alone workers as force of revolution, but a responsibility to see that other forces were represented in the paper and that freedom ideas were discussed on its pages.

"I did discuss with Denby the relationship of workers to philosophy," writes Raya, and then describes how the form of presentation of Lenin's *Philosophic Notebooks* in *Marxism and Freedom* came out of discussions with Denby. "Our discussions on philosophy became discussions about concrete actions of workers," she adds, in describing how philosophy and the fact of the East German workers Revolt that broke out against speed-up meant a great deal to Denby. The point here is that this world historic turning point of the revolt against Stalinism, coming at the same time as the world philosophic turning point of the breakthrough on the Absolute Idea, became as well a turning point in Denby's life, because of that unique combination of Marxist-Humanist philosopher and Black worker activist, becoming worker-editor, Marxist-Humanist.

The proof that this combination of worker/intellectual that was born in the period of the early and mid-1950s was not just an isolated act, but a personification of what we mean by theory/practice over 30 years, is found in the years 1982-84. For it is here that we can see that the sickness and loss of our editor did not mean the ending of the relationship of worker/intellectual, but rather a new manifestation of it became expressed in *News & Letters*. Page one of our paper was dramatically changed this year with the addition of "Workshop Talks" and "Black World." The reason I am looking at the years 1982-84 in seeing this change is to show you that it too was not automatic, but meant a great deal of Marxist-Humanist thought. Denby himself helped bring this forth by inviting Felix Martin and Lou Turner to write front page guest columns in "Worker's Journal" in the last period. It was Raya who, in the year before "Workshop Talks" and "Black World" were created, searched for possible forms that would be a manifestation of worker/intellectual, of theory/practice on page one of our paper. It was not automatic. There were a number of possible ideas which were discussed. The point becomes one of seeing the Marxist-Humanist labor, patience and suffering of the negative which has characterized us whether at our inception with worker/intellectual or in our practice in the 1980s with theory/practice.

As we move our Center to Chicago, with this very different kind of front page to our paper, can we as well have such new manifestations of theory/practice created by each of us in our work—in writing for this newspaper, and in particular projecting these Marxist-Humanist ideas—that in this labor our paper will become a pathway for organizational growth?

Projection, which is a manifestation of the movement from theory to meet the movement from practice, is key. If we look at our paper today we see that the movement from practice is present in a greater richness than ever. That richness has come because there is a fuller presentation within our pages of the movement from theory. It is what allows us to recognize, seek out, and make explicit that movement from practice. Theory/practice is not a movement away from "voices from below"; rather it allows for the most intensive presentation of the voices from below, because it puts them within the theoretical/philosophic framework of a Marxist-Humanist body of ideas. Let's see how that has occurred within the context of what Marxist-Humanism has singled out as the four forces of revolution in the United States.

Part II: The Four Forces of Revolution and Marxist-Humanism's Philosophic Contribution—How the Movement from Theory Joins the Movement from Practice

The Constitution of News and Letters Committees specifies the forces of revolution which we see as crucial to the American revolution. They are put forth because historically, objectively these forces have represented a revolutionary dimension. At the same time each of these forces has as part of its dimension the specific stamp of Marxist-Humanism. Specific in the sense that Marxist-Humanism over three decades has labored to bring forth the full revolutionary dimension of each force.

EVER SINCE the 1840s, when the working class discovered itself as a class, Marx and then Marxists have recognized the central role of the proletariat in the overthrow of capitalism. But what Marxist-Humanism has done is take Marx's concept of ending the division between mental and manual labor, between thinking and doing, and practice that concept concretely within our organization and newspaper by insisting that workers are not alone sources of information, but are thinkers who need to become writers and editors of our paper. That is what Denby meant in practice, and the unique combination of Denby and Marxist-Humanist ideas which he was a part of and a contributor to, shows what it means to put a Marxist-Humanist stamp upon a force of revolution.

John Marcotte and Felix Martin, of course, have been writing on workers' struggles for several years in our paper. However, we have reached a new level in their contributions with their front page column, "Workshop Talks." It can be a powerful column because of what a revolutionary force the working class has been historically and can be today. But of equal importance is what these two writers bring to the column as Marxist-Humanists which allows the reader to see that revolutionary force of the working class—including contradictions within it—at a particular moment. They as Marxist-Humanists are not an external dimension to the proletariat, not only because they are proletarians themselves but as well because they bring to their writing the Marxist-Humanist methodology whereby a full dimension of labor can be seen: unemployed and employed, immigrant as well as U.S. born, small shop as well as mass production, women as well as men, and most crucially, working people as creativity and mind of revolution.

The writings of other Marxist-Humanist labor activists have been important contributions to the paper this year. We have also had *News & Letters* writers' and labor friends' participant reports on activities ranging from copper miners on strike in Arizona and picket lines in the Bay Area to in-person reports on the coal miners on strike throughout England.

WHILE MARX and the Black World is a crucial part of revolutionary continuity for America, it has not been American Marxists and socialists before our day who have caught it. From the self-styled Marxists of Marx's day who refused to take a side in the Civil War in the U.S., to Eugene V. Debs' refusal to recognize an independent "Negro Question," the division of Black and Red was perpetrated in America. American Communists at the time of World War I, the Russian Revolution and the race riots in the U.S. were miles away from Lenin who did recognize the Black question in America as a national question. The opposite side of this same coin was the Stalinized American Communist Party which a decade later isolated the Negro Question from a relation to the class question by its "Black Belt" thesis.

After the birth of the Civil Rights Movement, there was a recognition of the Black question as a revolutionary one by part of the Left. But what I want to show here is not the failure or partial recognition by the Left of Black as a revolutionary force. Rather, I want to show how Marxist-Humanism from its birth in the 1940s not only recognized Black as a revolutionary force, but has developed a specificity as to what that revolutionary dimension has meant from the 1940s all the way to the 1980s.

Our concepts include: Black masses as vanguard of the American Revolution and not a vanguard party; the two-way road of revolutionary ideas and activities between Africa and America—indeed the triangular trade of revolutionary ideas and action between America, the Caribbean and Africa; the Black question as the touchstone of American civilization, its very Achilles heel; the crucial relationship between class and race in America spelled out in our pamphlet *American Civilization on Trial*, (which, not accidently, was first published in *News & Letters*); the demonstration of the American roots of Marxism within Marx's *Capital*, written under the impact of the American Civil War, which we have now extended to a view of Marx and the Black world. All these concepts were worked out as part of a Marxist-Humanist body of ideas.

Thus, when we say Black as a revolutionary force, it most certainly is grounded in the great revolutionary history of the Black dimension worldwide. But its revolutionary

specificity is brought forth at the same time within what Marxist-Humanism has done with its "labor, patience and suffering of the negative" on the Black question. And we have done so much within the pages of *News & Letters* in our columns, not only Denby but Ethel Dunbar and John Allison, and then John Alan and now also Lou Turner, "Black-Red" and "Black World."

"Black-Red" and "Black World" are Marxist-Humanist expressions of the internationalism of the national question. Look this past year at John Alan's "Language, Consciousness and Freedom in Azania" and Lou Turner's "Miami and Black America" and ask yourself how this Marxist-Humanist body of ideas helps to create ground for a leap within the Black movement. Look at Alan's article on Black anti-imperialism at the end of the 19th century, and at Lou Turner's review of the Garvey Papers which set the ground for his mini-tour to several cities, and see how these Marxist-Humanist Black writers put a stamp on the Black struggles of history not as past, but as prologue for a revolutionary future. Other writers, including Gene in Los Angeles and Diane in Chicago, have contributed to a Marxist-Humanist Black view in the paper this year. Gwen from Alabama, while not a Marxist-Humanist, has given us a look at the Black South. We need the continued contributions from all these as well as the renewed contributions of those who have contributed much in the past such as Tommie, Ray and Karl.

THOUGH TODAY'S Women's Liberation Movement only emerged in the late 1960s to early 1970s, it cannot be an accident that within the pages of *News & Letters* we had women columnists, such as Angela Terrano and Ethel Dunbar, from very early on, and that they were columnists who brought to their writing the dimensions of labor and of Black as well as of women. We will not here take the time to discuss the fact that Raya Dunayevskaya, the founder of the Marxist-Humanist tendency and the Chairwoman of the National Editorial Board, is a woman. But think of just a few of her contributions specifically on the Women's Movement in the last decade, ones such as the six lectures on "Women as Thinkers and as Revolutionaries" in 1975, the collection of a few of her writings put out as *Woman as Reason and as Force of Revolution*, the last of the trilogy of revolution, *Rosa Luxemburg, Women's Liberation, and Marx's Philosophy of Revolution*, followed by the *Praxis* article on "Marx's 'New Humanism' and the Dialectics of Women's Liberation in Primitive and Modern Societies." All of these give us points of departure for Marxist-Humanism's specific philosophic contribution to women as a revolutionary force. The reviews of our Women's Liberation archival material by Olga last year and by Susan this year give us an indication of some of our contributions.

The specificity of that Marxist-Humanist contribution comes to the fore not alone in the Black and proletarian dimensions that we insist be part of today's movement, but in that these in turn are unseparated from the concept we have of women as thinkers and as revolutionaries which we bring forth in our very original view of Rosa Luxemburg as feminist, as revolutionary, and with how we pose Women's Liberation's interconnectedness with Marx, and most decidedly not with Engels.

If we have all these specifically Marxist-Humanist contributions as to how we spell out woman as one of four forces of revolution, why then have we not been able to articulate this in a consistent manner on the Women's Liberation page? I do not mean to say that it is absent: we have had important columns this past year which do show our view, such as Terry Moon's essay article on Eleanor Marx, and the welcome re-appearance on our pages of the Native American woman Shainape Shcapwe.

But what if I told you that I think that Eleanor Marx is speaking most of all to ourselves? Look at how she came to America and spoke "American"—more than many of the revolutionaries who lived there—on labor, on women, on the necessity of breaking divisions between immigrant America and native born Americans, on the necessity for non-sectarian support for the anarchists after Haymarket. Why could she do so? Because her language was Marx's philosophy of revolution. She as individual was able to be the universal in the particular of her tour of America. That kind of concept of individual/Universal is

precisely what we need on the Women's Liberation page, beginning with assuming the responsibility for the "Woman as Reason" column. Eleanor Marx accepted the challenge of coming to America to project that philosophy of Marxism. Seeing our work as that kind of challenge in projection is what we need to have foremost in our minds in the period ahead.

RAYA HAS written an eight-page letter to the youth which brings forth the emergence and development of Marxist-Humanism's contributions to youth as a revolutionary category over three decades. How source becomes Subject, and idealism as a revolutionary category when it means youth putting themselves alongside the proletariat, were concepts of youth which became the foundation for our work in the period of *Marxism and Freedom*. What struck me about the other two quotes Raya used in the Dear Youth Letter, for the periods of *Philosophy and Revolution* and *Rosa Luxemburg, Women's Liberation, and Marx's Philosophy of Revolution*, was how each of them illuminated how she chose to enter into the battle of ideas, to project, to challenge others, even non-Marxists, and did so in such a profound manner that they would be forced to enter the dialogue on the revolutionary ground she laid out, even if they chose to reject it. It is that question of challenge, of projection, that she is addressing not only to the youth, but to all of us.

I would like to take up briefly that challenge as it manifests itself on our youth page monthly in addressing such movements as anti-nuke, anti-intervention, solidarity. In the 1950s and 1960s, Robert Ellery and Eugene Walker wrote columns for the youth page, at a time when we did not have a youth committee on a national level. While we may not have always written with the comprehensiveness that writing under the impact of a full trilogy of revolution can give us today, what one does feel in reading through the period is the rootedness in Marxist-Humanism of the writers and their willingness to issue a concrete challenge in the battle of ideas.

Today we have an internationalist youth committee and are in a period after three Marxist-Humanist works are out, and yet that youth page doesn't capture the interpenetration of concreteness and comprehensiveness, that concrete totality which is needed as projection, as challenge. I don't mean this at all as a call for a "return to the good old days," and I am aware that writing about youth in the 1960s when activity was at a very different level—even when we were pointing out the dualities of activism, activism, activism—is very different from the 1980s. Today much of that duality has become manifest in pragmatism taking such hold that it has meant an opting out of a revolutionary challenge for many youth. That is all the more reason for us to pose a revolutionary alternative that is truly a pole of attraction. It has to begin with the youth column which must be a kind of Marxist-Humanist anchor, challenging the movement, but in a way which shows the openness of our page, our ideas, our committees.

WHETHER WE choose as I have done to concentrate on the forces of revolution, or whether we have as our focal point the international dimension as discussed within the pages of *News & Letters* in "Our Life and Times" or the Latino page, or whether we take up the "Readers' Views" section of the paper, the point becomes how objective and subjective are inter-connected, not as mathematical quantitative additions but in a manner in which theory and practice both illuminate and deepen each other once theory/practice becomes a reality.

Thus the strength of the "Our Life and Times" column is that its columnists Kevin A. Barry and Mary Holmes have labored very arduously to cover many parts of the world, so much so that "Our Life and Times" material has often been found in other parts of the paper. This, combined with the in-person reports from other countries and the writings of those who have special expertise on an area of the world or a movement, has meant an international presence in our paper far beyond the confines of "class angling" the *New York Times*. The coverage from the New York local of both Black and Latin America—from the Dominican Republic to Chile—shows the power of those in-person reports. What will be new this year is that both Mary and Kevin will be in new locations. Mary's presence in New York will mean some very new sources for her writing. Kevin's presence in the Center in Chicago will mean his closer working both with the Resident Editorial Board and the Philosophic-Technical

Committee in terms of projecting a Marxist-Humanist analysis of international questions that often have to be written at the last minute, and can greatly benefit from in-person discussions at the Center.

Outside of the "Theory/Practice" column itself, there is perhaps no place where one can see so clearly what Marxist-Humanism's specific contribution as theory/practice is in our newspaper as in "Readers' Views." It is truly a theory/practice creation: "Readers' Views" is a section which encompasses all the forces of revolution I have spoken of, the voices from below speaking for themselves—and believe me it isn't because they write us a "Dear Editor" letter. It is because we cull the daily correspondence coming into the office—of those who still write to Denby of his *Indignant Heart* and "Worker's Journal" column, of those who order a specific piece of literature or are responding to a letter from Jim asking them about their order and what they are doing. "Readers' Views" are selected from the local committees' minutes—when they are sent in in a timely manner, and when the local secretaries have an ear to catch the new that someone expressed at a meeting—and in perhaps a number of other hidden and creative ways which only Mike and Olga before him could speak to. But that is where the labor first begins. Because it is then when the movement from theory, our Marxist-Humanist contribution, is put together by the National Co-organizer with all these voices from below to create the categories under which "Readers' Views" are grouped. The work to create categories that capture forces of revolution, that are national and international, that bring to the fore our Marxist-Humanist contribution as a force of revolution: all that work is a most serious theoretical labor. And yet it is this theoretical labor that allows the voices from below to really be expressed within the full revolutionary context, to be jammed next to theoretical commentary.

Think about how rare a creation *News & Letters* is. Only once in Marx's revolutionary journalism was the fire of revolution, Europe of 1848-49, joined with Marx's pen in his own paper. Almost all of Marx's other journalism had to be written for other papers, papers over which he did not have editorial control. And look at what the post-Marx Marxists made of the press they did control. Yes, with Lenin and Luxemburg it did reach highpoints in the midst of revolution. But much of the post-Marx Marxist journalism wallowed in the reformism of those such as the German Social Democracy. Later it became the empty-headed vanguardism we can see in so much of the Left press today.

Within America we did have the Abolitionist press, beginning with William Lloyd Garrison's *The Liberator* whose masthead read "The World is My Country," and including Frederick Douglass' *North Star*. This Abolitionist press did by force of circumstances weld together thought and action in the three decades prior to the Civil War.

From Latin America I have recently been studying the most original Peruvian Marxist, José Carlos Mariátegui, who was a journalist for all his short adult life, and who in the last half of the 1920s founded a monthly journal, *Amauta*, which strove to present the indigenous revolutionary Subject, the Indian, within the context of a Marxist journal. It was aesthetically a beautiful journal, including Indian art as well as European art, and had first translations from Marx in Spanish as well as contemporary European thinkers. It had a special section on the fight of the Indian versus the feudal landlord. At its highest Mariátegui's journal *Amauta* was a fusion of Indian revolutionary Subjects and culture.

But we in the United States in *News & Letters* in the 1980s, though we can trace strands back to the writing idea of the Correspondence Committees before the American revolution, as well as to the Abolitionists who insisted that Blacks in America can speak and write for themselves, and can in addition trace ourselves to Marx's own journalism, especially in the heat of revolution—though we have all these kinds of roots, I want to say that we in *News and Letters* Committees have produced a category of revolutionary journalism that none were able to before. If Lenin put forth politics and revolutionary Subjects—"All power to the Soviets"; if Mariátegui put forth culture and the revolutionary Subject of the Peruvian Indian; then we in *News & Letters* have been traveling along a historic pathbreaking trail for three decades: a trail to fuse Subjects of revolution and philosophy of revolution within our very

being, our organization, our newspaper. And this not the day of revolution, or the day after revolution, but as the very process, the very pathway that would allow us to move to the day of revolution. This is what we have to defend with our very heart and soul, what we have to internalize, project, battle everyone with. That is what the revolutionary journalism of *News & Letters* is. This is what the expression theory/practice spells out.

We are doing something not even Marx was able fully to do in an organizational form. We have joined two revolutionary subjectivities in confronting the oppressive capitalist objectivity. We are fusing the revolutionary subjectivity of the masses in motion, labor, women, Black, youth, Latino, national and international, with the revolutionary subjectivity of a philosophy of revolution. These two interpenetrating revolutionary subjectivities can truly create a new revolutionary objectivity. Because we are determined to have theory/practice as absolute negativity, the absolute becoming, of our organization and its newspaper we can extend a hand to Marx who was not able to find the full co-thinkers and continuators in his lifetime who would practice these two revolutionary subjectivities as one. We who are living one hundred years plus after Marx can fully become his co-thinkers and take that projection forward. Let's see how we can be doing this concretely in the year ahead in our newspaper.

Part III: How can we ensure that Editing will no longer be separated from discussion of Theory/Practice and the Newspaper as a whole in a Local's Editing Session? That is, how elicitation and theoretical labor aren't in two different worlds, though they are by no means the same thing

Let's begin a way of projecting *News & Letters* by refusing to separate theory/practice in how we conduct educational on the current issue of *News & Letters*, and let's further extend that refusal to separate theory/practice to our working out of the next issue of the paper. I want to suggest that the locals experiment with a type of educational which is a combination of a discussion of the issue off the press with an editing session for the next issue. Let's be concrete. The deadline for the August-September issue is August 16. Can we create a meeting for this deadline where a member undertakes the responsibility for a discussion of the June issue unseparated from the participation of members and non-members in an editing session for the coming August-September issue? The presenter has to be conscious not alone of his or her presentation, but how to integrate the participation of others, especially non-members, in an editing session. We want to hear and have written up that movement from below, but the context of where it is said would be the educational-editing session, so that the writer-speaker doesn't even have to wait until the next issue comes out in order to see how he or she is presented within the totality of a Marxist-Humanist body of ideas.

The key here is the kind of educational you present. Take this very beautiful June issue. Yes, the labor dimension is quite exciting, from the lead on the 4,000 who took to the streets in Toledo, to the British mine strike, to the nurses stories on the Women's Liberation page, to the beautiful picture of Guatemalan workers in occupation-strike at a Coca-Cola bottling plant. Just look at that labor dimension which is national and international, with the dimensions of women and Third World. That discussion of how multidimensional we view labor is important. But discussion of this June issue of the paper which fails to jam together that labor dimension with the "Theory/Practice" column of a review of a work on Marx and Russia, and the Editorial on the Iraq/Iran War, and the "Black World" on "Literature and Liberation in Azania" would be an educational which did not capture what we mean by theory/practice. I don't mean at all a quantitative adding, I mean taking that "Theory/Practice" column as a way of putting forth our original work on the new moments of Marx's last decade and how they help us hew out a pathway to today's revolutions. I mean taking even the way we refer to the Gulf War as the Iraq/Iran War, not the Iran/Iraq War, as a way of being able to put forth not just who started this war, but the fact that Iran did have a revolution, and seeing our own Marxist-Humanist analysis of that revolution. I mean that discussing "Black World" on "Literature and Liberation in Azania" can open up what we

mean by the relation of philosophy to revolution and not alone in South Africa.

Naturally, neither Marx's view of Russia, nor the Iranian Revolution, nor our view of Black Liberation in Africa can be covered except as the barest points of departure in such an educational-editing session. But if a reporter is able to open the door for members and non-members alike on how the body of Marxist-Humanist ideas is reflected in this June issue of *News & Letters*, wouldn't it put a whole different stamp upon the discussion from the floor, whether it was someone telling of activities in their shop, the latest demonstrations, or trying to work out a Reader's View? This is *News & Letters* as a totality which we want to convey in a meeting, so that no matter how magnificent the discussion of a given shop incident or demonstration, the audience always has a chance to see on how much a higher level that story will be when it will be in the context of all the other revolutionary expressions of activity and thought which are present in an issue of this Marxist-Humanist paper. Why don't we try this kind of educational for the August-September issue?

In addition I would like to suggest that if your local has not been taking advantage of its express mail package of *News & Letters* arriving the day after the paper is off the press, then let's begin to do so. Here is what I mean. I would like to suggest that for each issue one person be assigned to make sure they get one of those express mail copies before the meeting and prepare, not a full educational, but a short presentation on what is in the issue, to be given in perhaps 10 minutes at the very next meeting when many of the members and friends will first be getting the paper. A presentation which relates specific articles to what activities the local is engaged in, what demonstrations will be coming up in the next couple of weeks, what individual people they are working with and can have a discussion with, and thus help the members in thinking about the fact that the new issue is right in their hands that evening, and what perspectives would each one of them be thinking about for working with it.

This leads me to the very specific perspectives which I will mention here briefly, but which I am sure Mike will develop more fully in his organizational report tomorrow. And that is subscriptions, and sales of bound volumes. We need not-yet-Marxist-Humanists to be coming to News and Letters meetings, participating in educational-editing sessions and participating in the life of the local. There are many pathways for this. As part of the newspaper report I want to single out subscriptions. Subscriptions are not a quantitative question, although anyone who has looked at some of the subscription drawers for various locals knows that that too is not a question to be dismissed, but rather I am speaking about subscriptions as a way of projecting a Marxist-Humanist body of ideas which each member of News and Letters Committees can engage in. The kind of conversation you would have to have to sell a subscription would be a way of testing yourself on projecting this body of ideas, and thus, far from being a relationship which would end with a sale, would instead be a relationship which would begin with a sale, one where a quantitative measure, ten, as in ten issues of *News & Letters* a year, would be qualitative in the sense that your relationship with that person would continue by them having a chance to read this paper each month as the ongoing expression of our body of ideas, and hopefully your projection to this reader would make them want to come to an educational-editing session to learn about and be part of the creation of this paper.

That ongoing nature of a *News & Letters* subscription and forging a relation is found in a different way when it comes to the bound volume of *News & Letters*. Here it is a question of taking a freedom journey of ideas and activities over the past seven years via the pages of *News & Letters*. And it is a tremendous way for the person you are selling it to, to both test himself or herself and to test Marxist-Humanism as to what his/her view and what our view of these past seven years has been. How did we view objectivity and subjectivity? How did that correspond with their own participation or observation of the freedom movement? Incidentally, I think that this can be as well linked to the new classes we will be having in all the local committees, which will be covering some of these same years. I don't mean that the bound volume will be the basis or supplement for the Perspectives Theses we will be studying, for we have plenty of methodology to grapple with in the Theses themselves. But would not

that bound volume be a magnificent addition to the library of those friends of ours in each local who will be participating in the classes on Perspectives, and who would want to know more of the events in the years that the Perspectives are covering? I am not saying bound volumes are for everyone in the way subscriptions are, but I am thinking about different ways Marxist-Humanism's body of ideas becomes living to specific individuals, and the bound volume is one way. The value of both subscriptions and bound volumes will also be a challenge to those of us who work directly on the Philosophic-Technical Committee, to be able to create ads in the coming period which are both educational on our paper and do result in actual sales.

This pre-Convention period has had another manifestation of theory/practice in our newspaper, and that is the bulletin of the Philosophic-Technical Committee (PTC) initiated by Mary Joan's presentation of three decades of the Black dimension as seen through our paper. It was the first time that the PTC as a body wrote presentations for the membership. The test for whether this can mean a fuller relationship between the PTC and the organization as a whole will naturally be measured in the period ahead when the Center and its paper moves to Chicago. With the move the PTC will have the addition of two Chicago members. Dave and Beth are going to be joining our committee while Mary Joan who is remaining in Detroit will step down. Both for the organization as a whole and for Chicago in particular, this new PTC will face the challenge of putting into practice theory/practice in its elicitation of articles, its editing and presentation of copy. Much of that will be happening through our own active participation in the educational-editing sessions in Chicago.

Finally, theory/practice, either as it is expressed in the newspaper or in our work in other aspects of the organization, cannot be just slogan, or logo, or abstraction. It is the *praxis* of theory/practice, the *praxis* of the self-development of the ideas by ourselves as individuals so tightly tied to this Marxist-Humanist body of ideas that it literally makes of us new personalities, not as isolated individuals, but as full self-developing projectors of Marxist-Humanism. This will be tested in the period ahead in manifold ways, including in this Marxist-Humanist organization's newspaper, *News & Letters*.

When Archives are not Past, but are Living

The Direct Relationship of Marxist-Humanist Archives to Marx's Humanism,
which Created "Revolution in Permanence" as Ground for Organization*

by Michael Connolly

Introductory Note

We have one title for these final two classes in the Marxist-Humanist Body of Ideas: "Marx's 'Revolution in Permanence' as ground for organization and self-development of each individual as universal freedom." The readings for the classes include the culminations of all three works in the Marxist-Humanist trilogy of revolution—the last chapters of *Marxism and Freedom* and *Philosophy and Revolution*, and the crucial penultimate chapter of *Rosa Luxemburg, Women's Liberation, and Marx's Philosophy of Revolution*. But please keep in mind that for Hegel, for Marx and for Marxist-Humanism, every genuine culmination is both summation of all that has gone before and point of departure for new beginnings.

We will be tracing the self-determination of an idea—the idea of "revolution in permanence"—from its birth and development by Marx, through its long night of neglect, to its re-creation and development by Marxist-Humanism in our own age. And precisely because we cannot be satisfied with conclusions alone, and now want to practice methodology for today's freedom struggles, we want to take that journey with the aid of the Marxist-Humanist Archives, *The Raya Dunayevskaya Collection*,** housed here at Wayne State University in Detroit.

Listen to Marx in 1844, at the moment of birth of his "new continent of thought":

The whole movement of history is, on the one hand, the *actual act of creation*—the act by which its empirical being was born; on the other hand, for its thinking consciousness, it is the *realized and recognized process of development*.

—*Private Property and Communism*—

It is no accident that Marx returns to this precise point in his greatest theoretical work, *Capital*, in the chapter on "Machinery and Large-Scale Industry," as he critiques both those who fail to see the material basis for life in production, and those who fail to see the weak points in "abstract materialism" as it excludes what he calls "history and its process." Nor is it any accident that in each of the three works of Marxist-Humanism we have studied in these classes, Raya returns to this same passage in *Capital*, yet each return uncovers a fuller view of Marx's Marxism. In the chapter in *Marxism and Freedom* on "Automation and the New Humanism," it is concerned with "Different Attitudes to Automation," as the autoworkers and miners wildcatted, while union leaders and radical intellectuals viewed the new technology as "progress." In *Philosophy and Revolution*, it illuminates Marx's early and sharp critique of Darwin, and underlines the great distance between their perspectives on human development. In *Rosa Luxemburg, Women's Liberation, and Marx's Philosophy of Revolution* "history and its process" opens the section on Marx's *Ethnological Notebooks*, in which we see how Marx's determination to hold fast to the "ever-developing Subject," the human forces of revolution, disclosed not only his differences with bourgeois anthropologists, but how his philosophy of revolution diverged from that of his closest collaborator, Engels.

Marx's magnificent 1844 description of the movement of history as the *act of creation* and the *process of development*, is thus not alone something for Marx's day. It points as well to Marxist-Humanism's act of creation, its process of development, from the 1941 birth of

* A talk delivered at Wayne State University, Detroit, March 22, 1984

** *The Raya Dunayevskaya Collection: Marxist-Humanism, Its Origin and Development in the U.S. from 1941 to Today* is available on microfilm from the Wayne State University Archives of Labor History and Urban Affairs, Detroit, MI 48202, for \$60.00. The *Guide* to the Collection is available from News & Letters.

the theory of state-capitalism to *Rosa Luxemburg, Women's Liberation, and Marx's Philosophy of Revolution* and beyond. It is that methodology that I hope to illuminate here.

Part I: Marx's Philosophy of "Revolution in Permanence" and its Disappearance in Post-Marx Marxism

"From Critic of Hegel to Author of *Capital* and Theorist of 'Revolution in Permanence'" is how Raya titles Part III of *Rosa Luxemburg, Women's Liberation, and Marx's Philosophy of Revolution*, and in beginning with the nearly unknown Marx of 1841 we are given the opportunity to see how Marx's earliest critique of Hegel is sharpest when he discovers a division between Reality and Reason. "Totality" in Hegel, he says, consists of two hostile worlds, "each side utterly opposed to the other." In turning against this alienated world, Marx comes to argue that not only the product of labor has been alienated, but the activity of the human being. By the time we reach Marx's 1844 *Humanist Essays*, Marx is not only involved with actual workers' struggles, but subjecting the whole basis of all human relations, including those of Man/Woman, to ruthless criticism. Marx's break from Hegel becomes as well a return to the Hegelian dialectic—"the dialectic of negativity as the moving and creative principle." Marx sought, and discovered, human Subjects to transform reality, bearers of that dialectic.

Thus, the path to permanent revolution for Marx meant both singling out "negation of the negation" as key to all dialectic, and a singling out of human Subjects of revolution. This is the context in which Marx's first reference to "permanent revolution" appears—in his 1843 article "On the Jewish Question." Far from simply endorsing "civil rights" Marx there demonstrates how total an uprooting is needed to establish human relations for all. Throughout this whole period of the birth of Marx's "new continent of thought," the critique of the old is never separated from the projection of the new society as the "self-development of each individual as universal freedom." Thus the 1848 *Communist Manifesto* is not only a history of class struggle, but the projection of "an association in which the free development of each is the precondition for the free development of all."

As Marx summed up the 1848 revolutions he wrote his 1850 *Address to the Communist League* which ends with the appeal to the proletariat: "Their battle cry must be: The Revolution in Permanence!" He was posing that: 1) the struggle would never again be fought with the bourgeoisie; independent proletarian organization was demanded; 2) the workers needed to seek new allies, beginning with the peasantry. Above all, what stood out was the method—that the next stage of revolution takes as its point of departure the highest point reached in the last, and that was true in thought as well as in activity.

Yet to many in the Communist League, permanent revolution seemed to mean only a short-hand way of justifying precisely the endless insurrection conspiracies Marx opposed. By 1852, the Communist League disbanded at Marx's insistence, and eight years later, when Marx writes to a friend, "I had in mind the party in the eminent historical sense," he actually belongs to no party at all. By the time Marx writes the *Critique of the Gotha Program* in 1875, he is even willing to put his own great International Workingmen's Association behind him when he says it was "no longer realizable in its first historical form after the fall of the Paris Commune."

The key is that whether it was the Communist League after 1848-50, or the International Workingmen's Association after the 1871 Paris Commune, Marx's relation was to revolution as the determinant, and to a form of organization that would now have to arise with the full expression of the highest stage reached. The organization had to encompass all the new Subjects of revolution and act as the bearer of philosophy of revolution, or it would become both fetish and obstacle to further development. Marx's own agenda after 1848 led from the Taiping Revolution to the *Grundrisse's* "absolute movement of becoming." His agenda after 1871, from an examination of Man/Woman relations to a new view of the peasantry, and from the French edition of *Capital* to the *Critique of the Gotha Program's* projection of the inseparability of philosophy and organization, is what we call today "the

trail to the 1980s."

As Raya puts it in Chapter 11 of *Rosa Luxemburg, Women's Liberation, and Marx's Philosophy of Revolution*, "It wasn't the phrase 'permanent revolution' that was the proof of the concept, but the fact that in the constant search for revolutionary allies the vision of revolutions to come was in no way changed." Thus, even though Marx did not use the phrase in his last decade, Raya concludes that: "The greatest concretization of the philosophy of revolution and its re-connection with the deep roots of the concept of permanent revolution first developed in the 1850 *Address*, came in the last years of Marx's life and the study of the pre-history, as well as the history, of humanity." (pp. 161-62)

Unfortunately, the phrase "permanent revolution" did mean something in the case of Leon Trotsky, even though originally he did not even call his 1905 theory of Russia's path to socialism that. In the Afterword to Chapter 11, we see that not only was Trotsky's theory of permanent revolution bereft of any self-developing Subject, but his implacable hostility to the peasantry meant there was no theoretic preparation for the 1925-27 Chinese Revolution or today's Third World revolutions. Neither, we see, was there any connection to either Marx's concept of "revolution in permanence," or to organization questions, to which Trotsky applied, not "permanent revolution," but his theory of conciliationism, which he even extended to the non-development of his own original insights.

Neither was "revolution in permanence" seen as ground for organization by Rosa Luxemburg, even when she raised the question of spontaneity and the party, only to fall victim to the fetish of organization when she denounced the Second International as a "stinking corpse," yet hesitated to leave it in 1918. And Lenin, who alone did seriously return to the *Critique of the Gotha Program*, did so as preparation for smashing the bourgeois state, never viewing that document as a projection of the inseparability of philosophy and organization, and allowing his vanguard party concept to remain in a separate compartment from his philosophic re-organization.

One could certainly call Trotsky's or Luxemburg's insights in the period of the 1905 revolution a "flash of genius." But unless "revolution in permanence" is spelled out as going on to develop those insights, and not alone to differentiate oneself from others and then "stop dead" (as Hegel said of Kant), it becomes debris associated with Marx's theory only in name. And it was to clear away that debris that Raya had to first write the "Afterword" on Trotsky, before even one word of Chapter 1 of *Rosa Luxemburg, Women's Liberation, and Marx's Philosophy of Revolution* could be put to paper.

Part II: How Marxist-Humanism Developed "Revolution in Permanence," as ground for organization and self-development of each individual as universal freedom, in our age

A. Marxism and Freedom

The post-World War II world has been filled with revolutions, including very centrally revolutions in the Third World. Yet insofar as the theory of permanent revolution was known, it was as Trotsky's theory, tied to the rejection of the peasantry, and unconnected to any grounding in Marx's Marxism, his "new Humanism." How, then, did Marxist-Humanism uncover and re-create that theory as ground for organization in our age?

It begins with what Raya has called "a paean of praise to breakups and splits," when the Hitler-Stalin Pact was signed and Raya insisted that Russia could not possibly be considered a workers' state, while Trotsky continued to base his analysis on the property-form of nationalization. In working out her analysis of "Russia as a State-Capitalist Society," there was as well what the pamphlet, *25 Years of Marxist-Humanism in the U.S.*, calls the "germ" of Marx's Humanism in her study of one of Marx's 1844 *Essays* on the role of labor. (See p. 87*)

* Reference to works in the Marxist-Humanist Archives in the pages that follow are indicated by microfilm page numbers, as shown in the *Guide to the Raya Dunayevskaya Collection*.

But it is the period 1949-53 that is singled out in both the *25 Years of Marxist-Humanism in the U.S.* and the *Guide to the Archives* as the "Historic Re-emergence of Marx's Humanism." In that period we can see how Raya, at one and the same time, was listening to the thoughts of rank-and-file miners on strike against Automation, translating and studying Lenin's *Philosophic Notebooks*, and engaging in her own direct encounter with the Hegelian dialectic. In our forthcoming pamphlet on that 1949-50 miners' general strike, it is clear that philosophy—the Hegelian-Marxian dialectic—both anticipated and emerged out of the actual events.

The point I wish to stress here, however, is that in order to fully re-connect with Marx's legacy, the breakthrough had to be not on his ground alone, but on completely new ground for our age as well. Thus, the 1953 *Letters on the Absolute Idea*, which Raya wrote in the weeks after Stalin's death and before the East German workers' uprising, had to encounter Hegel's dialectic at a point where neither Marx nor Lenin had gone. Marx's 1844 "Critique of the Hegelian Dialectic" broke off before it reached Hegel's Absolutes and Lenin's *Philosophic Notebooks* disregard the last paragraph of the Absolute Idea in *Science of Logic*. Further, no one, not Marx nor Lenin nor even modern Hegel scholars, had examined the three final syllogisms of *Philosophy of Mind*, which Hegel added to his work only in the last months of his life. It is here that Raya both discovers a movement from practice that is itself a form of theory and focuses on the final paragraph 577 as the *Self-thinking Idea*, the single dialectic that emerges from actuality and from thought.

Reread Chapter 1 of *Philosophy and Revolution* and see why Raya calls these 1953 Letters "a new divide in Marxism." In a sense one could call them our *Address on Permanent Revolution*, for they opened up a process in thought that led to such a view of new Subjects of revolution, and such a perspective of a new kind of organization that the supposedly "quiescent" 1950s really became "a decade of historic transformation." The new kind of organization—News and Letters Committees—born in 1953, established at once its uniqueness in both newspaper and organization, as Charles Denby, a Black production worker, became editor, and each issue included a "Two Worlds" column by Raya. The stories directly from the shops and picket lines, the new questioning by workers, were what dictated that our very first pamphlet (p. 2431) be the publication for all to study of Raya's translation of Lenin's *Philosophic Notebooks* and her 1953 *Letters on the Absolute Idea*.

Far from objective events being used to "prove" what the breakthrough in thought had already shown, the period that followed was one of constant deepening and development of the fledgling tendency, Marxist-Humanism. The very next month after that first pamphlet was published, the Montgomery Bus Boycott broke out. Denby's *Indignant Heart: A Black Worker's Journal* re-tells its story focusing both on the critique of union and Black leaders and radicals who failed to support it, and on the relationship between spontaneity and organization which the boycott illuminated. (Everyone is struck by Denby's favorite expression from that chapter: "Few can look out upon a calm sea and tell when a storm will rise and sweep all filth to the shore.")

When we reach the description of the Montgomery Bus Boycott in *Marxism and Freedom*, Raya states that "The greatest thing of all in this Montgomery, Alabama spontaneous organization was its own working existence." Not only that, but she concludes that the Montgomery Bus Boycott and the Hungarian Revolution's workers' councils have together established the movement from practice that is itself a form of theory as a new world epoch. *Marxism and Freedom* was the work that, together with the Hungarian Revolution, brought Marx's "new Humanism" out of the archives and onto the historic stage. The two are not separable, just as the writing of *Marxism and Freedom* was not divided from the discussions on the draft of it with miners, autoworkers and students. If you want to see the single dialectic emerging from actuality and from thought in that period, read Olga's 1956 letter to Raya on West Virginia miners discussing the draft of *Marxism and Freedom* (p. 2523). But nowhere is that world-historic moment of the mid-1950s better posed as a new beginning for yet deeper digging than in the concluding paragraphs of *Marxism and Freedom*:

The worker is right when he demands that work be "completely different, and not separated from life itself," and that "thinking and doing be united." Once the theoretician has caught this, *just this*, impulse from the workers, his work does not end. It first then begins. A new unity of theory and practice can evolve only when the movement from theory to practice meets the movement from practice to theory.

—*Marxism and Freedom*, p. 287

B. Philosophy and Revolution

By the beginning of the 1960s, freedom movements were not only bursting out in East Europe and Africa, but a new generation of revolutionaries was being born right in the U.S.A. News & Letters began to publish a stream of pamphlets, flowing out of the work of *Marxism and Freedom*, to concretize its perspective for those struggles: *Nationalism, Communism, Marxist-Humanism and the Afro-Asian Revolutions; Workers Battle Automation; Freedom Riders Speak for Themselves; The Free Speech Movement and the Negro Revolution*; and the path-breaking work on the American revolution, *American Civilization on Trial*. In the fall of 1960 and winter of 1961, when *Workers Battle Automation* had just come off the press and linked workers' revolt to the new questioning and activism by youth, and when the Civil Rights Movement's sit-ins were sweeping the South and speaking for themselves in *News & Letters*, at that moment Raya decided to write summaries of Hegel's works (p. 2806) and sketch the very earliest outline of what would be *Philosophy and Revolution*. She calls it "Subjectivity of Self-liberation" and exchanges letters with Herbert Marcuse on its direction (p. 4316). The author of *Reason and Revolution*, one of the leading scholars on the dialectic, had written: "I cannot see why you need the Absolute Idea..." He was to go on the very next year to publish his *One-Dimensional Man*, with its assertion that technology has absorbed all workers' revolutionary subjectivity, and thereby ironically to show how necessary is the Absolute Idea for discerning concrete human forces of revolution in our age. Raya's six-page answer is, to my mind, among the most illuminating expositions of the concreteness of philosophy for today's political analyses that I have ever read. It demands further study.

For Marxist-Humanism, the new posing of philosophy's crucial nature came immediately, as Kennedy launched the Bay of Pigs invasion and Raya began her *Weekly Political Letters*. They take up some 250 pages in the Archives, and whether they are on Cuba or Africa, the U.S. Civil Rights Movement or the anti-nuke protests, their deep grounding in the study of the dialectic is evident.

Indeed, by the time the struggles of the 1960s had shown the insufficiency of the revolutionary act alone, and France 1968 had ended with an "arrested" revolution, Raya re-organized the form of *Philosophy and Revolution* to make "Why Hegel? Why Now?" Part I of the book. You can follow this development yourself, since all the draft chapters and letters on the book, which were circulated for discussion, are included in the Archives. But once the decision to "turn the form of the book around" had been reached, what it meant was the launching of a dialogue with precisely those "New Passions and New Forces" she was later to single out in Chapter 9. Thus, 1969 saw our sponsorship of the Black/Red Conference in the midst of the Black caucuses in the unions activity (p. 4338) and 1971 saw the founding Conference of Women's Liberation—News and Letters (p. 4355). In each, the subject for discussion was not alone the state of the movement, but how "Why Hegel? Why Now?" illuminates the path from activity and revolt to full social revolution and a human society.

Philosophy and Revolution, 1973, stands as the turning point in the development of Marxist-Humanism and, I would argue, was central to the re-creation of Marx's philosophy of permanent revolution. Nothing helped me see that more than the very first letter Raya wrote as she began her work on *Rosa Luxemburg, Women's Liberation, and Marx's Philosophy of Revolution*, June 30, 1978:

Now, let us get down to our age and see how difficult it is to grasp that "Absolute Idea as New Beginning."

First, it appears as the unity of theory and practice. Re-read *Marxism and Freedom*, where I certainly had already grasped the break-up of Absolute as the movement from practice as well as from theory, for them to unite as revolutionary practice for our age. In there the central part which will lay the ground for our age as the age of absolute contradiction, of transformation of the first workers' state into state-capitalism, does take up all of Marx's works: philosophic, economic, historic and political. And what do I call it? "Unity of Theory and Practice." Not only that. I, in a footnote, thank Marcuse for his seminal work, *Reason and Revolution*, by saying I agree with him that Marxism went neither with the Left Hegelians, nor what became Hegelianism as that was transformed into opposite by the Right....

Why, however, could I not have made myself so clear to myself as to see that, much as I learned from Marcuse, we were not only on different planets "politically" but philosophically? The answer is in the fact that until *Philosophy and Revolution*, until my own return to Hegel, straight, and the new era of the 1960s incompleting in 1968, and new forces of liberation AS REASON—Labor, Black Dimension, Women's Liberation, Youth—no new stage of cognition could become concrete and profound. And it is when I also began, with that new phrase, "new continent of thought," to see that not only was it unity of theory and practice, but new beginning—new continent, new world view, and that not only as internationalism—worker has no country; the world is his country—but Human-ism. (p. 6432)

The point I want to make here is that no one from Marx's death to today has posed Marx as "philosopher of revolution in permanence," let alone moved to re-create that philosophy for our age and tasks, especially the task of working out form of organization. Even we, in *Marxism and Freedom*, did not do so explicitly. But *Philosophy and Revolution* so deepened Absolute Negativity, Marx's point of departure, by posing it as new beginning, that now Marx's concept of "revolution in permanence" did find its concrete, explicit expression with *Rosa Luxemburg, Women's Liberation, and Marx's Philosophy of Revolution*.

Listen to what Raya singles out in Hegel as he sums up *Philosophy of Mind* the first time, that is, before he adds the three final syllogisms:

It is precisely in this last section on philosophy that he attacks the very concept of system: "They are most accurately called systems which apprehend the Absolute only as substance...they represent the Absolute as the utterly universal genus which dwells in the species or existences, but dwells so potently that these existences have no actual reality. The fault of all these modes of thought and systems is that they stop short of defining substance as subject and as mind."

—*Philosophy and Revolution*, p. 35

Can't you just hear, in that quote from Hegel, echoes of Marx striking out against Mikhailovsky for system-building, for ignoring the actual movement of "history and its process" in constructing a "historico-philosophical theory, the supreme virtue of which consists in being *supra*-historical"? Whether as property-form or as form of organization, the system as fetish, as obstacle to human freedom, is what the Hegelian-Marxian dialectic refuses to bow down to. Yet even this is still posed negatively, as what we are against. It is only with Raya's analysis of Hegel's three final syllogisms in the context of *Philosophy and Revolution* that we are able to begin to work out the positive expression of "Self-thinking Idea," of "revolution in permanence." Again it is inseparable from the new age opened with the revolutions of the 1950s:

The new frontiers opened with the end of illusions, with the start of revolutions within the successful revolutions, with the permanence of self-development so that there should end, once and for all, the difference between the Individual and the Universal.

—*Philosophy and Revolution*, p. 285

It is that "permanence of self-development" within each one of us in the freedom movement that alone can end the aborted revolutions of our age and open the path to "universal freedom."

C. Rosa Luxemburg, Women's Liberation, and Marx's Philosophy of Revolution

Almost as soon as *Philosophy and Revolution* was off the press, the new revolutions of the 1970s began to appear world-wide, stretching from Portugal/Angola/Mozambique through Lebanon, South Africa and Iran to Nicaragua and Grenada. The "hunger for philosophy" depicted in *Philosophy and Revolution* was met by new forms of truncated Marxism, whether "foco-ist" or even "mergers" of religion and socialism, while the new global Women's Liberation Movement challenged the incompleteness of every revolution, whether in Portugal or Iran. Our activity involved not only support of, and participation in those revolutions, but the publication of such pamphlets as *Franz Fanon, Soweto and American Black Thought, Working Women for Freedom* and *Latin America's Unfinished Revolutions*, each of which had its origins in *Philosophy and Revolution*.

At the same time "Why Hegel? Why Now?" continued to unfold and deepen. Two documents from the Archives in this period demonstrate, I think, the way *Philosophy and Revolution* itself was re-concretized as preparation for the explicit development of Marx's "revolution in permanence." These are "Absolute Negativity as New Beginning," a lecture given to the Hegel Society of America in 1974 (p. 5631) and "Our Original Contribution to the Dialectic of Absolute Idea as New Beginning" (p. 5622), presented in April 1976. I want to mention the dates because the Hegel Society presentation, with its stress on the "consequential" final syllogism, "Self-thinking Idea," summed up *Philosophy and Revolution*, Chapter 1, in one way, while the presentation in April, 1976 was given as we had asked "Will the revolution in Portugal advance?" and singled out the dimensions of Africa, of Women's Liberation, and of philosophy as the human powers that alone could drive the revolution forward.

As with the revolutions of the 1960s, Raya now launched a new series of analyses of world events, beginning with the Portuguese Revolution. Only now, instead of being called "Political Letters," they were explicitly *Political-Philosophic Letters*—and the change in name was another way of showing that we did not alone single out "Forces as Reason," we also viewed "philosophy as force" of revolution. Far from viewing philosophy as an internal matter, we now began publishing our Draft Perspectives Theses in *News & Letters* for all our readers to join in the discussion. Finally, that was extended even to the publication of draft chapters of *Rosa Luxemburg, Women's Liberation, and Marx's Philosophy of Revolution* in the paper.

The same decade of the 1970s that was filled with revolutions, especially in the Third World, saw as well the publication of Marx's works as a totality for the first time. The transcription of Marx's Notebooks on Ethnology and on Russian and Indian peasant society focused attention on Marx's last decade. The convergence of new global crises, the rise of new freedom movements, especially the Women's Liberation Movement, and the availability for the first time of Marx's work as a totality, provided the impetus for *Rosa Luxemburg, Women's Liberation, and Marx's Philosophy of Revolution*. The freedom movements were posing new questions on forms of organization and on the relationship of technologically backward lands to advanced ones. Yet when we come to Chapter 8 in *Rosa Luxemburg, Women's Liberation, and Marx's Philosophy of Revolution*, we see that it is titled "The Task That Remains to Be Done: The Unique and Unfinished Contributions of Today's Women's Liberation Movement." After the tragedy of Grenada, we would have to place an emphasis on the "unfinished" contributions, not only of the Women's Liberation Movement, but of the "30 years of movements from practice that were themselves forms of theory"—all of them.

In Chapter 8 Raya points out the two most serious errors of today's Women's Liberation Movement as: 1) failure to see Rosa Luxemburg as feminist and revolutionary; and 2) the

attempt to reduce Marx to a single "discipline" (anthropologist, economist, etc.). And it is Engelsian Marxism, whether in *The Origin of the Family, Private Property and the State* as covering up Marx's concept of Man/Woman, or in *Anti-Dühring* as reducing the Marxian dialectic to a form of positivism, that is seen as crippling all movements.

Precisely because the revolutions of the 1970s raised such new questions on forms of organization and on the relationship of theory to practice which that stunted Marxism could not answer, Raya concludes:

We must return to Marx—the whole of Marx. Without his philosophy of revolution, neither Women's Liberationists nor the whole of humanity will have discovered the ground that will assure the success of the revolution.

—Rosa Luxemburg, *Women's Liberation, and Marx's Philosophy of Revolution*, p. 109

Crucial to that return has been the re-examination of the *Critique of the Gotha Program* as described in the beginning of this talk. We had seen the *Critique in Marxism and Freedom*, right within the concluding chapter. There it is posed as the basis of the new society in which labor is liberated from the twin tyrannies of Automation and the Plan and becomes "itself the first necessity of living." In Rosa Luxemburg, *Women's Liberation, and Marx's Philosophy of Revolution, Critique of the Gotha Program* is seen as Marx's projection of the need to never divide philosophy from the question of form of organization, beginning with "ending the antithesis between mental and manual labor." One might argue that this is exactly what News and Letters Committees has strived to do from its birth, with our form of organization, our form of newspaper. Yet in grounding ourselves explicitly in Marx's "revolution in permanence" as form of organization, we are now saying something much deeper about the "self-development of the individual" and the relation of each of us to the Marxist-Humanist Archives.

D. Living Archives

With apologies to *Philosophy and Revolution*, "Why Archives? Why Now?" In part, I think the answer has come from our experience with the archives of Marx, with what it means to have the totality of his work. We have seen how it took the Russian Revolution to get the 1844 *Humanist Essays*, the Chinese Revolution to get the *Grundrisse*, and our own age of Women's Liberation and Third World revolutions to finally see a transcription of Marx's *Ethnologica: Notebooks*. But it isn't a question of quantity. Rather it is one of "embryo and process," of what it means to "hear Marx thinking," when you, in a very different age, have to work out new problems he could only see in outline as they first appeared. The movement suffered from not having Marx's archives.

In 1969, when *Philosophy and Revolution* was in draft form, and the revolutions of 1968 had proved the insufficiency of the act alone, Raya didn't confine herself to circulating the chapters and to holding the magnificent Black/Red and Women's Liberation-News and Letters Conferences. She also began the *Raya Dunayevskaya Collection*—our Archives—and insisted that it be made available far and wide. Raya's collection remains to this day the only one with a requirement that it be made available to all who wish to study it, with no restrictions or "proof of scholarly intentions" required. It is now available on microfilm in over 30 libraries across the country, and several overseas. We have added to the Archives three times since, bringing it up to 1981, on the eve of Rosa Luxemburg, *Women's Liberation, and Marx's Philosophy of Revolution*.

Since then, we have had not only the finished work, but all the additions to it made after it was published. We have the new Introductions to *Nationalism, Communism, Marxist-Humanism and the Afro-Asian Revolutions and American Civilization on Trial, Marx and the Third World* and the Political-Philosophic Letter on Grenada. We have Perspectives Theses from 1981-84 and the new Constitution of News and Letters Committees we adopted last year. And by this spring we will have in our hands the pamphlet on the *The Coal Miners' General Strike of 1949-50 and the Birth of Marxist-Humanism in the U.S.* This year we will

add again to the Archives, and as preview to that I want to very briefly speak about two of those additions: the article in *Praxis*, and the paragraph added to p. 180 of *Rosa Luxemburg, Women's Liberation, and Marx's Philosophy of Revolution*.

The *Praxis* article, "Marx's 'New Humanism' and the Dialectics of Women's Liberation in Primitive and Modern Societies," is not entitled "Marx's Concept of Man/Woman." Or more precisely, Marx's concept of Man/Woman, his view of the revolutionary power of the "feminine ferment," can not be understood outside the development of the "whole of Marx," his new continent of thought. Here you see the way each Subject of revolution emerges as a new category when the objective situation and the subjective response of Marx's Marxism correspond, and only then. Or, to put it another way, no single force of revolution—not workers, Blacks, women, youth, peasantry—can claim to be decisive when separated from Reason. "The whole of Marx"—his totality—is the determinant here. We can see it when Raya looks at her own sketch of Marx on Women's Liberation (pp. 106-07 of *Rosa Luxemburg, Women's Liberation, and Marx's Philosophy of Revolution*) and asks what Marx did in the 1850s (the one decade not described there)—and finds both his activity with the women workers on strike at Preston, and his support of Lady Bulwer-Lytton, who was thrown in prison for daring to oppose her aristocratic-politician husband. And we can see it when Raya lashes out against those like Mikhail Vitkin, who now praise Marx's last decade, only to deride his first 30 years of work as "Euro-centered."

In the addition to p. 180 of *Rosa Luxemburg, Women's Liberation, and Marx's Philosophy of Revolution*, the argument is not with Vitkin, but with Engels. Raya was dissatisfied with simply saying "it was no accident" that Engels skipped over the Asiatic Mode of Production in his *The Origin of the Family, Private Property and the State*. What becomes clear is that Engels skipped over the Asiatic Mode of Production because he could neither see the communal form under despotic rule, nor the origin of divisions between chief and ranks in the primitive commune. Both stemmed from a unilinear view of human history, an abstract materialism which never fully grasped "history and its process." One might almost say that Engels' view is not so far removed from the unilinear concepts of Mikhailovsky; or at the least that Engelsianism laid the ground for property-form—rather than production relations with their revolutionary duality—to become equivalent to "socialism" for post-Marx Marxists. Doesn't Trotsky's insistence that nationalized property made Russia a workers' state "despite all," stem from this, just this, Engelsian divergence from Marx's Marxism?

But let's return to the addition to p. 180 to see the positive expression of Marx's Marxism as we are re-creating it today. Frankly, it is this sentence that—for better or worse—motivated the form of this presentation, because it speaks so explicitly of the whole of Marxist-Humanism's view of Marx:

Marx transformed what, to Hegel, was the synthesis of the "Self-Thinking Idea" and the "Self-Bringing Forth of Liberty" as the emergence of a new society. The many paths to get there were left open.

It is our task—each one of us—to travel those many paths so concretely that the "self-development of each individual" becomes inseparable from the realization of "universal freedom." If we do that, we will not only grasp the meaning of "history and its process," we will live it.

Women's Liberation in Search of a Theory

by Olga Domanski

Part I: The Summary of a Decade*

August 26, 1980 will mark a full decade of Women's Liberation as a new mass freedom movement. It was August 26, 1970 that 50,000 women marched down Fifth Avenue in New York to celebrate the 50th anniversary of suffrage in the U.S. and stunned the world by transforming the first "Women's Strike for Equality" into the largest women's march in U.S. history. In the ten years since then, the movement has moved across every continent and touched every facet of life, forcing even the UN to declare in 1975 an International Women's Year—and then to rename it International Women's Decade.

We have seen massive marches for the right to abortion not only in West Germany but in Catholic Italy; speak-outs on rape everywhere from the U.S. to India; feminist publications appearing everywhere from Africa and Peru to the underground in Russia.

In the U.S. from the very beginning of the decade, minority women organized their own groups. Chicana feminists and North American Indian women in 1970; Puerto Rican women in 1972; the National Black Feminists in 1973. A new dimension in class struggles burst forth all over the land: from textile workers to telephone operators and from office workers to welfare mothers, the unorganized began organizing themselves and the organized began forming women's caucuses within their unions. The questions they demanded be answered were not only equal wages but sexual harassment by company or union officials or fellow workers alike. There was nothing—from attitude to the family to sexual preference; from art to health care; from affirmative action to language—that the Women's Liberation Movement did not raise.

But what most distinguished the Women's Liberation Movement of the '70s from the New Left of the 1960s—out of which it was born, and which it was challenging to end the separation of "thinkers" and "doers"—was that none had to be convinced that activity alone will not do it, that theory is needed. The search can be seen in the veritable explosion of both activist papers and academic studies, in theoretical journals like *Quest* and *Signs*, and in the more than 15,000 courses in Women's Studies established by 1978. Nowhere was the thirst for ideas more evident than in the outpourings to all the varied conferences that continuously astounded the "organizers"—whether that be the Coalition of Labor Union Women in 1974 or the Socialist-Feminists in 1975, the International Women's Year Conference in Houston in 1977 or the Second Sex Conference in New York this past year.

Yet, at the end of so magnificent a decade, the Women's Liberation Movement faces a counter-revolution—from within and from without—so strong that in the U.S. not only does the 1973 Supreme Court victory on abortion stand in danger, but we cannot even guarantee ratification of the Equal Rights Amendment in a northern industrial state like Illinois—while in Portugal and Iran, where women's demonstrations challenged the incompleteness of those revolutions, the whole revolution now stands in mortal danger.

Never was there a more urgent need to finally find a theory that can match all the new beginnings in practice. Never was it more clear that the question which demands to be answered at this point is not even so much what theory as what is theory. It demands a second look at today's Women's Liberation theorists with those eyes.

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The Second Sex, Thirty Years Later

The three day conference last September at New York University, called to discuss the significance of Simone de Beauvoir's *The Second Sex*, 30 years later, was organized around 22 papers, 30 workshops and five general sessions. The 1,000 women who participated were all seriously trying to work out a feminist theory. Yet none questioned why a conference on the threshold of the 1980s should be "inspired" by Simone de Beauvoir's Existentialist philosophy which in 1949 was but a transition point from the old to the new, as she opened wide a heretofore undared discussion of sexuality. It was that topic that inspired today's Women's Liberation Movement, not de Beauvoir's conception of woman as "Other." And it is that topic, sexuality, that is still in need of a relation to revolution. We will surely never find it in the Sartrean Existentialism that de Beauvoir followed so faithfully.

In the 314 pages of *The Second Sex*, never once do we see woman as active, thinking subject. Woman is always the object that terrible things are done to—and primarily because she supposedly allows it to be that way. Indeed, she tells us that the slaves were always conscious of their oppression, the proletariat has always been in revolt, but woman? "No desire for revolution dwells within her."

Because "creativity" means to her only works of art or of literature, not new human relations, she can insist that "as long as woman has to struggle to become a human being, she cannot become a creator," when the truth is the exact opposite. There is such a total absence of appreciation for any mass movement that it extends even to the leaders of those movements. Thus, Rosa Luxemburg, the great leader of the 1919 German Revolution, merely battled "beside Liebknecht" and supposedly demonstrates "that it is not the inferiority of women that has caused their historical insignificance; it is rather their historical insignificance that has doomed them to inferiority." None of the revolutions count for anything.

All the great women of history whose names are sprinkled on page after page are, we are told, "isolated individuals" as we are asked: "for one Flora Tristan or Louise Michel, how many timid housewives begged their husbands not to take chances?" But it is not only the true history of the great Paris Commune of 1871¹ that de Beauvoir ignores—the 3,000 women of the Committee for the Defence of Paris, working women for the most part, who not only took their places on the barricades but who organized their office to remain open around the clock during even the most critical days of the battle. More important, it is the true history of her own age she does not see.

The first edition of *The Second Sex* came out in 1949 just when, in industrial America, the miners in their great Automation strikes were challenging nothing less than what sort of work human beings should do; a whole new Third World was being born; and on the level of the Women's Liberation Movement itself, the women who had been drawn into the factories in World War II were challenging the attempts to shove them back to the kitchens again. Everywhere the movement from practice was raising the most highly philosophic questions—but none of this penetrated de Beauvoir's thinking, despite the fact that of all the women theorists the Women's Liberation Movement has embraced, she is the only one who is a philosopher.

Nothing better proves that it is not any philosophy that is needed but one that will enable you to catch in theory what masses in motion have been doing and thinking in practice, create new categories and thus help move the revolution forward. Nothing better demonstrates that it is not the historic epoch you are born into, but your relationship to that movement from practice as well as to the movement from theory that determines what voices you hear, what facts you find, and even what words mean.

¹ In *The Women Incendiaries* (Braziller, 1966; Gallimard, 1963), Edith Thomas has documented the magnificent history of the women of the Commune in such moving detail that one feels exactly what Marx described in *The Civil War in France* as: "Working, thinking, fighting, bleeding Paris...radiant in the enthusiasm of its historic initiative!"

How else can you explain that de Beauvoir could conclude her voluminous epic with the magnificent statement of discovery Marx had made in his *Economic-Philosophic Manuscripts* of 1844: "The direct, natural, necessary relationship of man to man is the relationship of man to woman..." and so twist its meaning that she "restates" it to be an affirmation of her philosophy that "it is for man to establish the reign of liberty"!

From beginning to end for the Existentialist de Beauvoir, woman remains Other, the Second Sex.² How, then, could none of this come out for examination, let alone critique, even "Thirty Years Later," at a conference of women theorists?

And what of the historians at that conference? Have they done any better than the philosophers?

Gerda Lerner, Academic Historian

Gerda Lerner has written no less than four books specifically on the history of American women and is considered a "pioneer" in the field. How could she be allowed to get away with the vulgar anti-intellectualism she displayed there, continuing to fight Freud and Marx alike, not on the ground of their ideas, much less their historic period and relation to objectivity, but merely on the grounds that they are men?

It is her latest book, *The Majority Finds its Past: Placing Women in History*, a collection of 12 essays written over the past decade, that most clearly reveals her false thesis of "history," in the very manner in which she changed the title of her 1977 documentary from "Women in the Making of a Nation" to "The Female Experience." In a "flash of insight," she tells us, she rearranged all her material according to "female life stages (Childhood, Youth, Marriage and the Single State, etc.) and to stages of the growth of feminist consciousness."

"What is needed," she insists, "in order to correct the distorted picture presented by traditional history is women-centered analysis. What would the past be like if man were regarded as woman's 'Other'? [my emphasis] Even to pose such a question...shifts one's angle of vision." What we wind up with is a vision not only shifted, but so twisted that the dialectic of history—the history of mass struggles of women and men for freedom—becomes a history of the "tensions" between the separate cultures, "male and female." The result is that, far from "Placing Women in History," Gerda Lerner wrenches women out of it. While she correctly exposes that "the rich history of the abolition movement has been told as though women played a marginal, auxiliary, and at times mainly disruptive role in it," nowhere do we get a whiff of the dialectical, historical, and continuing relationship between the freedom struggles of Blacks and of women. Nowhere are the Sojourner Truths and Harriet Tubmans seen as the speakers, the "generals," the leaders, who inspired the white women to be more than "auxiliary." The Women's Rights Movement arose out of the Abolitionist Movement. There is no such thing as Black history that is not also white history. There is no such thing as woman's history that is not the actual history of humanity's struggle toward freedom.

Both *Black Women in White America* and *The Female Experience: An American Documentary*, as documentary histories, are collections of magnificent scope. But because this academic historian sees them only as that—voices, and not the Reason in all the great struggles that are history—she can actually call the work she did on *Black Women* nothing more than a "detour" on her way to her original "theory" of women's history.

No wonder she can write that "The speech by the former slave, Sojourner Truth, belongs here not so much because of its content, but because of its tone." And this is the speech where Sojourner is criticizing no one less than Frederick Douglass after the Civil War for

² And how do we explain that women theorists like Margery Collins and Christine Pierce can write so devastating a critique of the male chauvinism of Jean-Paul Sartre as their "Holes and Slime: Sexism in Sartre's Psychoanalysis" (included in *Women and Philosophy*, Putnam, 1976) without a single word of criticism of de Beauvoir, who shared the same philosophy?

being "short-minded" because he asked women to wait for their enfranchisement, while Sojourner was insisting that women, too, must have their rights!

Lerner's disdain for Marx is not just because he is a man. It is because for Marx theory flowed out of the actual thoughts and action of women and men shaping history, whereas for Lerner she, not the women who speak in her books, is going to be the original. The sad truth is that it is not only the white Women's Liberation Movement theorists who have not caught the creativity of the mass movement. We have yet to produce the Black woman theorist who has been able to develop what Toni Cade attempted to show in *The Black Woman*, her 1970 anthology of voices that were demanding to be heard; to catch in theory what the Rosa Parks, Fannie Lou Hamers, Daisy Bates, Gloria Richardsons, and countless others were acting out in life in our own age.

What enabled Marx to "transform historic narrative into historic Reason"—his total philosophy of revolution—is what still eludes nearly all the new women theorists. And not only those who reject Marxism as a theory for Women's Liberation, but even those who are seeking to join Socialism and Feminism.

Sheila Rowbotham, Marxist Historian

Sheila Rowbotham's *Women, Resistance and Revolution* remains the most serious work of all the women theorists, not only because she is a Marxist, and the one best representative of the generation that gave birth to today's Women's Liberation Movement out of the New Left, but because she has traced, through 300 years of history, not merely the oppression but women's resistance to that oppression. Indeed, so organic does Rowbotham see the resistance that she states categorically: "there is no 'beginning' of feminism in the sense that there is no beginning to defiance in women."

She is especially attuned to recognize the importance of the working-class dimension. But all the events are told as if each happened apart from the other: There is no movement.

Thus, though we learn about Flora Tristan's proposal for a Workers' International in 1843 on one page and of American Abolitionism on still another—there is no sense of what the 1840s represented as a momentous historic age that produced not only the Seneca Falls Convention, the 1848 Revolutions in Europe and the anti-slavery movement in America—but Karl Marx's break from bourgeois society in 1844 and his world-shaking discovery of what Raya Dunayevskaya has called a whole "new continent of thought."

It is Rowbotham's failure to see Marx as that founder of a total philosophy of revolution for our age that is her fatal error. It is not that she has not studied Marx's work. She writes of everything from the 1844 *Economic-Philosophic Manuscripts* to the *Communist Manifesto*, *German Ideology* and the powerful pages in *Capital* where Marx describes the working conditions "of sewing girls, silk workers, bleachers, straw-plaiters, and other women." She acknowledges his support for a women's section of the International, his praise for the women of the Commune, his encouragement for the intellectual development and activism of his own daughters.

Yet she insists on viewing Marx as nothing more than a "bourgeois man in the 19th century"! Because she equates Marx's profound view of the Man/Woman relationship in his 1844 *Humanist Essays* as no more than the development of a "theme generally discussed in utopian socialist writing on women's liberation"—rather than seeing it as a breakthrough to the conception of just how total must be the uprooting of this exploitative society if we are ever to achieve a new human society—she limits Marx to being nothing more than a theoretician of "class struggle" rather than philosopher of a whole "new continent of thought." That is precisely why, though she passionately wants to "connect" what she feels are the two dimensions of her own being—feminism and Marxism³—she winds up concluding in the final

³ In her paper, "The Feminist Challenge to Socialist Thought and Practice," Joan Landes has contributed a serious discussion of what she pinpoints as "the most marked difference between the present and the past...the rise of an autonomous socialist feminist tendency within the women's liberation movement." Yet,

four pages of her book:

This is a book in which feminism and Marxism come home to roost. They cohabit in the same space somewhat uneasily...the connection between the oppression of women and the central discovery of Marxism, the class exploitation of the worker in capitalism, is still forced. It is still coming out of the heads of women like me as an idea.

But it is not an outside mediator that brings Marxism and feminism together. It is life. To insist that "women have come to revolutionary consciousness by means of ideas, actions and organizations which have been made predominantly by men" is to wrench women out of the real history of humanity's struggle toward freedom every bit as much as does Simone de Beauvoir or Gerda Lerner. To see only that women have been "Hidden from History" and not that they have been hidden from philosophy means that you have not grasped what it means that throughout history women have been not only force but Reason, revolutionaries in action and in thought. What is urgent for today's revolutionaries to grasp is that only when a whole new category has been made of that cognition, Woman as Reason and as Revolutionary Force—as only one woman philosopher, Raya Dunayevskaya, has done⁴—have women finally become part, a vital part, of the philosophy of freedom.

Without that philosophy, "resistance" never moves to "creativity"—the creation of the new. Without it, the "challenge to the Left" to practice new relations NOW, not "after the revolution," out of which today's Women's Liberation Movement was born, retrogresses to as empty a thesis as the pamphlet *Beyond the Fragments* which Rowbotham produced in 1979, seven years after her serious work on *Women, Resistance and Revolution*. It is not that the question of "form of organization" that she raises there is unimportant. It is that the question is what form of organization will elicit the new voices and ground its theory in that Reason rather than attempt to "harness" the new passions of Women's Liberation—and youth, and Blacks, and labor—to its "leadership."

Only that kind of theory and organization can help move the Women's Liberation Movement forward. What the decade of the Women's Liberation Movement as a mass movement proves, more than anything else, is that without such a philosophy along with activity for liberation, we will not stand still, but go backward. With it, we can help create a new, truly human world.

she too, labors unsuccessfully at making a "synthesis" of socialist and feminist thought, primarily because, like most of the Women's Liberation Movement, she considers Marx and Engels as one. What is needed is not synthesis but divide—between Marx's own philosophy and all others. (For a full development of this, see Raya Dunayevskaya's "Marx's and Engels' Studies Contrasted" in *News & Letters*, Jan.-Feb., 1979.)

⁴ For her development of this philosophy, see Chapter 9, "New Passions and New Forces," in *Philosophy and Revolution* (Dell, 1973); "The Women's Liberation Movement as Reason and as Revolutionary Force" in *Notes on Women's Liberation* (News & Letters, 1970); "Women as Thinkers and as Revolutionaries" in *Working Women For Freedom* (News & Letters, 1976); and three draft chapters from her new work-in-progress on *Rosa Luxemburg, Women's Liberation, and Marx's Philosophy of Revolution* (published in *News & Letters*, Jan.-Feb., 1979; Jan.-Feb., 1980; and April, 1980).

Part II: On the Development of our Writings on Women's Liberation*

Although we have long wanted to have a "listing" of Marxist-Humanist writings on Women's Liberation, what gives that kind of "summary" a new illumination, I believe, is the special emphasis we have experienced this Marx Centenary year in seeing how all kinds of different summaries have been worked out—whether that be the many paragraphs through which Raya has summarized key categories in *Rosa Luxemburg, Women's Liberation, and Marx's Philosophy of Revolution*, or whether it be the look back at the summarizing amendments we have added to our Constitution with each new book.

Take the paragraph in which Raya "summed up" Marx and the Black world.** It began at the Expanded meeting of the Resident Editorial Board on January 1, when the new *Rosa Luxemburg, Women's Liberation, and Marx's Philosophy of Revolution* book was finally in everyone's hands, and our focus, at one and the same time, was on Raya's Marx Centenary National Lecture Tour, the new edition of *American Civilization on Trial* we wanted to issue, and all the concrete activities we would be engaged in from then to the Constitutional Convention being proposed there. It was during her summation of the discussion on "new moments," when Lou Turner asked what that meant specifically in relation to the Black dimension, that Raya looked back at the whole 40 years of Marx's Marxism and showed the concrete way he had worked it out in his praxis. On the tour itself, at the first lecture on "Marx and the Black World," it became an actual new paragraph to be added to the last chapter of the book. And it is now the pivot of the new Introduction to *American Civilization on Trial*.

There is not a single "fact" in that new paragraph that wasn't already "in" the book. But there is something new that has been said when one looks at the totality, something that even Marx didn't see that way. There is a new consciousness both of what Marx was doing over those 40 years and of what Marxist-Humanism has seen in those 40 years with eyes of today. I believe that it is that jamming up of the totality Marx created against the philosophic categories Marxist-Humanism has created that gets you to those summations and makes them "summations that are new beginnings."

Moreover, it struck everyone especially forcefully when summed up that way because not many had looked at the new book as one specifically on Marx's relation to the Black dimension—whereas the way in which Marx and Women's Liberation was summed up in Chapter 12 was, more or less, "taken for granted." Yet, when Raya got down to working out her paper for a discussion with anthropologists (which she has called "Marx's 'New Humanism' and the Dialectics of Women's Liberation in Primitive and Modern Societies"), she found that—while she had traced the Man/Woman concept in the manuscripts of the 1840s; the First International's Mme. Law and *Capital's* "Working Day" in the 1860s; Dmitrieva and the Paris Commune in the 1870s; and Marx's commentaries on the Iroquois and Irish women in the *Ethnological Notebooks* during the very last years of his life—she would need to dig more into the 1850s, not to find if but to find specifically what would bring

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** This is the paragraph Raya asked us to add on p.194 of *Rosa Luxemburg, Women's Liberation, and Marx's Philosophy of Revolution*, at the end of the first paragraph:

With this dialectical circle of circles, Marx's reference in the *Ethnological Notebooks* to the Australian aborigine as "the intelligent black" brought to a conclusion the dialectic he had unchained when he first broke from bourgeois society in the 1840s and objected to the use of the word, "Negro," as if it were synonymous with the word, "slave." By the 1850s, in the *Grundrisse*, he extended that sensitivity to the whole pre-capitalist world. By the 1860s, the Black dimension became, at one and the same time, not only pivotal to the abolition of slavery and victory of the North in the Civil War, but also to the restructuring of *Capital*, itself. In a word, the often-quoted sentence, "Labor cannot emancipate itself in the white skin where in the black skin it is branded," far from being rhetoric, was the actual reality and the perspective for overcoming that reality. Marx reached, at every historic turning point, for a concluding point, not as an end but as a new jumping off point, a new beginning, a new vision.

out his praxis on the all-important revolutionary force of women in that decade. Of all that was there, in that decade, she chose the two that demonstrate his relationship, first, with the working women during a strike in 1853-54; and then with a woman writer, whose aristocratic and reactionary husband and son had her committed to an insane asylum for daring to oppose them during an election campaign in 1858.

The point of the story is not only to show that when you know what you are looking for, you can find it. It is to see the new conception that arises when Marx's deep relationship with all the forces of revolution—a philosophy that made him keep his eyes glued on every opening and every event so that he not only allied with those forces but made them part of his very theory—is looked back on after new philosophic categories have been created in our age by Marxist-Humanism.

It is for the same reason, I believe, that the so-called listing of all of our works on Women's Liberation, far from being a laundry list or even a matter of "digging them out" of the Archives, can become a real journey through the dialectic of our own 40 years. Looking at it today, with the eyes of 1983, both connects us to Marx, and, at the point where a new category was created, becomes the totally new contribution to history and philosophy that Marxist-Humanism has created. What I want to present here is very far from either a summary paragraph, on the one hand, or any exhaustive journey through our Archives, on the other hand, but it will, hopefully, show how recollection is not "remembrance of things past" but becomes "new beginning."

The New Stage That Began in the 1940s

Let's start with Raya's defense of Reva Crane in the Workers Party when, at the end of World War II, the men came home to re-assume the organizerships and other posts women had taken over when they had left. In the Archives you will find (p. 467)* Raya's December 18, 1945 critique of the Workers Party and their "Need for a Political Perspective." You will not find a word there on the so-called "Woman Question." But what that debate revolved about was the attempt of the Workers Party to blame their failure to grow during the war, not on their concept of the backwardness of the American masses, but on the people who had to carry out their line—who happened to have been women.

The Johnson-Forest Tendency defended the women of the majority—by insisting it was not those individuals who had to be attacked but the political line they had so faithfully carried out. But it was only in 1953, in the document called "Our Organization" (p. 2042)—after the break with both the Workers Party and the Socialist Workers Party—that Raya placed that whole event within the analysis of the new objective stage we had by then recognized—that is, the revolt of the women which had begun during the war, when women by the millions left their kitchens, and that had intensified after the war when they refused to quietly return. Moreover, it was at another whole new stage that we included that excerpt in 1970 in *Notes on Women's Liberation*, in the section we called "The Historic Past, Present, and Future...and the Need for Philosophy." It did not mean that that section had fully worked out that philosophy, but working it out involves the dialectic from past, through present, to future.

Look at that period between the end of the war and our break from the Socialist Workers Party. Two things just leap out of the Archives. One is a letter (p. 1324) to a woman comrade of the Johnson-Forest Tendency who had written an essay on "Woman and Socialism." Raya's letter turns out to be a critique which advises: "What you need to do is to give form to your content which has as logical and dialectical a development as the content itself. Marx is pretty substantial, and I like to follow his form of beginning with phenomenon...and from there lead to essence.... The end then returns to the beginning, only

* Reference to works in the Marxist-Humanist Archives are indicated by microfilm page numbers, as shown in the *Guide to the Raya Dunayevskaya Collection*.

the phenomena have now been enriched by the essence and hence the conclusions are not mere appearance but law of motion, etc. Thus, don't you think it would be better if you began with: 'The steadily increasing divorce rate...' " (You will have to read the letter for yourselves for the concreteness that follows.)

That letter is dated May 14, 1949. It is just a month before the miners strike in West Virginia during which, in the articles sent to the *Militant*, which included those specifically on the miners wives (p. 1477), she certainly followed her own advice. Listen to a brief excerpt:

A trip to northern West Virginia, seat of some of the most militant mass picketing of the just-concluded mine strike, reveals that the miners' wives played an important role. The most that could be gleaned from the big dailies was that the wives were 'taking' the long fight and empty food baskets because they had no other choice. In truth, however, the role they played was not merely a passive but an active one. Here are but a few incidents of the most recent strike...

And here follows the different attitude of the women than the union and how they took matters into their own hands, whether via hatpins or going door-to-door in surrounding communities for help, or forming their own organization to decide what to do should their husbands decide to go back to work without a contract. (I believe we can include some of this exciting material right in our new pamphlet on that 1949-50 miners strike and the birth of Marxist-Humanism.) No wonder the editor of the *Militant* grudgingly had to admit the articles were a breath of fresh air for that journal.

But now consider what it means that when (during the 1951 strike when I had moved to Pittsburgh) Raya asked me to take the tape recorder to West Virginia to get those stories for ourselves, she felt compelled to warn me not to allow the pervasive male chauvinism in the mining regions to limit me only to talking with the women, important as that was, but to remember that I was a full politico with ideas to contribute on all questions. One grasps what a difference there is between that full consciousness of what political-philosophic work is and Rosa Luxemburg's refusal to be "pigeon-holed"—which, no matter how valid, was not linked at one and the same time, as Raya's was, to development of woman as a new Subject of revolution.

From the Critical Year, 1953; Through the 1960s; To Today's Women's Liberation Movement

Let's turn to that critical year of our own history, 1953, when Raya made the historic breakthrough on the Absolute Idea and identified the dual movement therein, the movement from practice to theory as well as the movement from theory to practice—but it did not become the ground for Correspondence Committees. Where Grace Lee, on Stalin's death, degraded the concept of Woman (and worker) to the insistence that the "new" could be shown in a cartoon of women in a factory exchanging hamburger recipes while they ignored the radio blaring the news of Stalin's death, Raya turned to the workers in Charles Denby's plant, who were proposing their own foreman as Stalin's replacement. That is one sign of the vast gulf between conceptions of where we were going. Another, specifically on the question of the dimension of women, was the simple fact that women workers like Jerry Kegg and Angela Terrano felt so alienated from that page as it appeared that they refused to have their columns in that section. But the revolutionary dimension of women kept being revealed everywhere—from the chapters by Christine in *Indignant Heart* to the magnificent story of the women in *People of Kenya Speak for Themselves*.

When finally we were truly on our own, with the founding of News and Letters Committees, it was no accident that we had already singled out women as one of the four forces of revolution. Keeping one's eyes glued on the movement from practice almost "automatically" reveals the revolutionary dimension of women throughout all of history—from the milkmaids described in *Marxism and Freedom* right through every event of your own day. Consider how powerfully it was recorded through the whole explosion of pamphlets that came out of the 1960s, so that *Workers Battle Automation* includes not only the exchange between Charles Denby and Angela Terrano, a young working woman, but the

voice of the young woman who spoke as a "rebel with a cause"; and our two women *Freedom Riders*, one white and one Black, found something as magnificent as "Woman Power Unlimited" in Mississippi. We were "writing on women" everywhere—whether that was the "Two Worlds" column in April 1960 on "Revolution and Counter-Revolution in South Africa" which described the 1952 revolt of the South African women against the passes; or whether it was the *Weekly Political Letter* on July 6, 1962 from the Gambia which described the "high level of discussion of that allegedly most backward African, a Mandinka woman, who was not only a natural orator but, illiteracy notwithstanding, the most intelligent 'citizen of the world,' as one young woman phrased it"; or whether it was the interview with a Hong Kong refugee; or the women of the *Maryland Freedom Union*. And just consider the title of Raya's "In Memoriam" to Natalia Trotsky in 1962 that transformed it into the whole question of the "Role of Women in Revolution."

Yet it was not until Women's Liberation had moved from Idea to actual Movement that we could initiate a very different kind of Marxist-Humanist Women's Liberation page in our paper in November 1969, publish *Notes on Women's Liberation: We Speak in Many Voices* in January 1970—and identify Women's Liberation as the critical newest of the new passions and new forces in *Philosophy and Revolution* while amending our Constitution in 1973 to catch that new stage objectively and subjectively. That did not mean only that the movement from practice illuminated for us what we had been doing all through those years; or even that we first saw all the new questions it raised. It is true that we saw, with new eyes, that the struggles we had recognized as both race and class were, as well, a vital part of the true Women's Liberation Movement. It is true that the interview with Jade took on even deeper meaning when it became part of a new pamphlet we called *Sexism, Politics and Revolution in Mao's China*. There was nothing we published during the 1970s that was not deepened by the new category of woman as force and Reason, whether that was *America's First Unfinished Revolution* or the *First General Strike* or *Frantz Fanon, Soweto and American Black Thought*. But from the beginning we spelled out what WE had to contribute as labor, Black, AND PHILOSOPHY, because without them there can be no total uprooting. What is key to grasp in the new pamphlet we published directly on women, and what distinguishes *Working Women for Freedom* from *Notes on Women's Liberation* is that the *Appendix*, Raya's essay on "Women as Thinkers and as Revolutionaries," established its whole form—and was grounded in *Philosophy and Revolution*, Chapter 1, without which there could not have been a Chapter 9.

The truth is that the 1975 series of lectures by Raya at the University Center for Adult Education on "Women as Thinkers AND AS REVOLUTIONARIES" proved to be the very first expression of the new dialectic that had begun with *Philosophy and Revolution* and—after seven long, hard years of further digging and following where it led—brought us to the whole new stage of cognition represented by our new book, *Rosa Luxemburg, Women's Liberation, and Marx's Philosophy of Revolution*.

Philosophy as Action and as Anticipation: Our Trilogy and Our History

When the dialectic of history has been unchained—and it was unchained for our age by Marxist-Humanism—all kinds of new insights into philosophy as action and philosophy as anticipation are possible. It was when a whole new category had been made of "Woman as Reason and as Revolutionary Force"—as only one woman philosopher, Raya Dunayevskaya, had succeeded in doing—that women finally became a vital part of the philosophy of freedom. That is what made it possible for us to "summarize" the whole decade of the Women's Liberation Movement's search for a theory in one short page (*News & Letters*, June, 1980) as a critique of three representative alternatives to that philosophy. It is what made possible such new kinds of essays as Urszula Wislanka's on women in Poland, and Neda Azad's on women in the Middle East, and Eugene Walker's on "Marx's Concept of Woman," and *Revolutionary Feminism*.

The most direct, immediate expansions of the new book directly on Women's Liberation are, of course, the lecture Raya presented at the Third World Women's Conference in Urbana, Ill., which will be included in their publication of the papers given there, and the paper for the anthropology conference I referred to at the very beginning of this discussion article. But can anyone think that the new Introduction to *American Civilization on Trial* is not "on women" when they read that full section on "Historic Turning Points: Slave Revolts, Women's Liberation, Anti-Imperialism"?

Or can any of us miss seeing that our *25 Years of Marxist-Humanism in the U.S.* is both the first of our pamphlets to flow out of the new, third book, and one of the best summaries of our writings on Women's Liberation we could possibly compile? Just take a look at the footnotes alone! Look at footnotes 15 and 16 on p. 8; at footnote 18 on p. 11; at footnote 26 on p. 14 (which records what the Black women in the factories said of *The Second Sex* in the mid-1940s!); at the whole of p. 15 with all four of those critical footnotes; at footnotes 37 to 39 on p. 18; footnotes 45 and 46, 48 and 50, and the whole final section from p. 23 to the end—indeed, scarcely a page of the entire history is not actively on the revolutionary dimension of woman.

Most of all, can anyone read the Marxist-Humanist trilogy of revolution with eyes of today and think we can "pick" the pages or sections that are "on woman" without projecting that it is that entire trilogy that addresses Women's Liberation? Just as grappling with study classes in the new book at the beginning of the year made us see that even a class that was to be strictly on Part II on "The Women's Liberation Movement as Revolutionary Force and Reason" would soon enough reveal that, in fact, Part II projects all three parts—and propels one back to Part I on Rosa Luxemburg and forward to Part III on the totality of Marx—will Rosa Luxemburg, *Women's Liberation*, and *Marx's Philosophy of Revolution* not send us back to *Philosophy and Revolution*, and help us to understand that work in a very new way? That is what I believe the journeys through our own 40 years we have been making will help us do.

Added note, March 1985:

By now, March 1985, Humanities Press has on its presses a fourth major philosophic work by Raya Dunayevskaya, *Women's Liberation and the Dialectics of Revolution: Reaching for the Future*, which concretizes still further the dialectics of revolution and the dialectic of "our own 40 years." It is not only that this new work covers a full 35 years of Marxist-Humanist writings on Women's Liberation, but that in covering that sweep, it places the development of today's Women's Liberation Movement firmly within the specific nature of our epoch—the movement from practice that is a form of theory. It was that category which Marxist-Humanism created at its birth and by which it found the link of continuity with Marx's Marxism and unchained the dialectic for our age. This new, fourth book becomes our first major theoretical work to present Marxist-Humanism as it itself developed dialectically. At the same time, in tracing the dialectics of revolution through one specific force as Reason—Women's Liberation—it illuminates the dialectic for any and for all the forces of revolution.