

NEWS & LETTERS

THEORY / PRACTICE

"Human power is its own end" —Karl Marx

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\$1

WORKSHOPTALKS

Making teachers redundant

Over a billion dollars has been spent in the last decade to comprehensively computerize the workplace at the nation's largest HMO, where I work. For the executives, it's as if the line between the virtual and the real has finally been eliminated. Not so for us rank-and-file workers, trying to provide real healthcare.

The contrast in the way we and management see reality has never been more stark. This opposition has made our work day more miserable, not more convenient. We have become less respected and more indignant. Our jobs are made more and more meaningless, as doctors, nurses, and technicians alike have to constantly enter vast amounts of data. This accumulation of data was sold as a way to enhance healthcare, but the data is used to cut costs, imperiling our ability to improve healthcare delivery.

CAPITALIST TECHNOLOGY WORSENS WORK

Now teachers like Ann Rosenbaum, in Post Falls, Idaho, are fighting a similar battle. Last year, the Idaho state legislature overwhelmingly passed a new law that requires all high school students to take some online classes to graduate, and requires students and their teachers be given laptops or tablets, after heavy lobbying from Apple and Intel. How will this program be paid for? By cutting tens of millions of dollars from the teachers' budget.

As the governor bragged, the beauty of the plan is, "the teacher doesn't have to be in the classroom." They

continued on p. 3

EDITORIAL Occupy defies attacks

As 2012 opened, governments from federal to local grabbed more powers of repression, reflecting the failure of their attempts to crush the Occupy Movement with brute force, despite their success in clearing many occupations. The National Defense Authorization Act, signed on New Year's Eve by President Obama, allows indefinite military detention of citizens and non-citizens without trial. The epitome of local moves is Chicago Mayor Rahm Emanuel's proposed ordinance to make it much easier for police to harass, fine and jail demonstrators.

Police have repeatedly raided occupations across the U.S. A new level of violence was achieved in mid-November, as raids from Portland, Oregon, and Salt Lake City to Oakland and Eureka, California, culminated in the Nov. 15 rampage of New York City police in and around the camp at Liberty Plaza.

POLICE ATTACK OCCUPY MOVEMENTS

Their rage, their unprovoked attacks on nonviolent protesters from coast to coast, their casual pepper-spraying of seated students and octogenarians, recalled the attack that left Oakland occupier Scott Olsen, an Iraq War veteran, in critical condition.

The enforcers' rampant lawlessness made clear how seriously the rulers take the threat posed by the Occupy movement to the status quo, however much their media ridicule it. They are fully aware that 2012 promises to continue 2011's year of revolution—a year when the Arab Spring's mass revolts and occupations overthrew three dictators, when revolts and occupations erupted across Europe, when discontent in the U.S. moved from the Georgia prisoners' strike through

continued on p. 11

ON THE INSIDE

p. 4 Writings of Raya Dunayevskaya: Afro-Asian Revolutions

p. 2 Fanon, feminism, street harassment

p. 5 Occupy and the Situationists

p. 11 Haiti's disaster two years later

ONLINE: www.newsandletters.org

Widening labor and peasant revolts threaten Chinese rulers

by Bob McGuire

Open rebellion in the village of Wukan in December revealed the forced land seizures that have underpinned China's industrial expansion as it has risen to serve as the world's workshop. What rulers in Europe and the U.S. want to see is only uninterrupted production from China, in a desperate hope of putting the brakes on fears of global depression.

But the global recession which slowed demand for exports from China pulled China's GNP growth below double digits and flattened industrial production. It has forced China's workers living below subsistence into renewed challenges to the state-capitalist regime.

Protests had begun in September in Wukan, a village of 20,000 people in Guangdong province on the South China Sea, against seizure of more than 100 acres of Wukan's common land to be sold to those with insider ties to the village Communist Party leadership. Village authorities escalated the conflict by identifying protest leaders and hauling them to jail, where one of the protest leaders, Xue Jinbo, was killed in custody.

Even as police blamed Xue's death on his supposedly poor health, refusing to explain the extensive bruising covering his body, on Dec. 11 villagers physically evicted all the Party hacks and their security forces who had controlled Wukan for decades, and then barricaded roads into the village. For a week Wukan was a free village, with no authority beyond the newly-elected village council—but with the police and the armed might of the Chinese state gathered outside the boundaries.

GOVERNMENT AGREEMENT A SHAM

Police did not repeat their initial forceful intervention in Wukan of beating demonstrators and jailing identified strike leaders. Instead, the villagers only took down barricades on Dec. 22 after high-level negotiations with Zhu Mingguo, the deputy Party chief of Guangdong.

Zhu called the land seizure illegal, and deemed



Xue Jinbo addressing a meeting in Wukan, China, before his murder by the state.

the villagers' demands reasonable. As in every demonstration, the protesters had to pay lip service to the authority of the Party, but Zhu's conciliatory words were reinforced at the highest national levels as Prime Minister Wen Jiabao proclaimed: "China can no longer sacrifice farmers' land rights for the sake of reducing the cost of urbanization and industrialization."

Nearly a month later, it appeared that the agreement with the authorities was just another police club. The villagers in Wukan had demanded the return of Xue Jinbo's body—police are still holding it for further "investigation." They demanded all protest leaders be

released—police released the other three, but only on bail, still facing charges. They demanded that the old village bosses leave, and the last election early in 2011 that had kept them in power was officially canceled—but now pressure is being brought to bear for Wukan to re-elect the same hacks.

Most importantly, despite a promise to buy back the land from developers, there is no sign that the land sale will be reversed, even though it was officially declared il-

legal. Either the official concessions to end the blockade of Wukan were empty from the start, or higher-up Party officials overturned that settlement. The question of how forcefully to quash dissent will play into winners and losers in the leadership succession of 2012.

PEASANT AND WORKER REVOLTS ESCALATE

For peasants, what the government called illegal land seizures did not define the problem. Last year the government called 1,485 land grabs officially illegal, but peasants barricaded themselves in and otherwise protested 75 times that many. The incentive for land grabs has only increased since 2006, as land sales have represented 40% of the budget. The casualties of land grabs, now-landless peasants, each year join the work force in internal migration to the export factories.

Peasants and workers have continually escalated resistance to the "so-called primitive accumulation of capital," as Karl Marx called it, while China had two decades of double-digit GNP growth by making labor power, forced labor power, available to the world's

continued on p. 10

Durban climate summit: sellout, revolt

"2020 is too late to wait!" rang out the words of Abigail Borah, a 21-year-old college student/activist from Vermont. She was interrupting U.S. climate negotiator Todd Stern's speech at the latest yearly UN climate summit, held this time in Durban, South Africa, Nov. 28 to Dec. 11. Her passionate intervention, drawing applause from many delegates, cut through the happy face Stern tried to paint over three decades of U.S. sabotage of any effective international action since the 1992 Earth Summit.

The Durban summit was as devoid of real accomplishments as the previous ones. On paper, targets for reducing greenhouse gas emissions are totally inadequate. In real life, the emissions keep growing at a faster rate. After a temporary recession-caused dip in 2009, emissions rose by a half billion tons of carbon in 2010. Scientists pointed out that even the non-binding pledges that nations have made are not enough to prevent a rise of 2°C, which in itself is considered dangerously high by leading climatologists like James Hansen.

KYOTO A COMPLETE FAILURE

One day after Durban ended, Canada announced its withdrawal from the Kyoto Protocol, which had once been hailed as a milestone. The U.S. never ratified it, and Japan, Russia, Australia and New Zealand declined to make any commitments for a proposed exten-

sion after Kyoto expires this year.

While doing nothing to protect humanity's future, the industrialized countries did, as always, carefully protect the markets for emissions permits, and promote land grabs, dispossession of inhabitants, and capitalist industrialization of forests and farmland in the name

continued on p. 11

Just off the press
Russian
Language
**Marxism
&
Freedom**

by
Raya
Dunayevskaya

More
information
on page 11

Рая ДУНАЕВСКАЯ

МАРКСИЗМ И
СВОБОДА

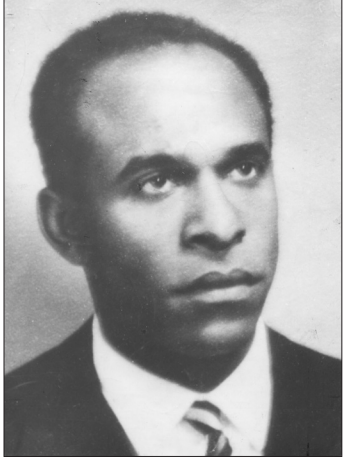
ИИЦ «Практик»



Frantz Fanon and women's liberation

by Terry Moon

Blogger L Boogie has written part one of "Fanon, Alienation and Sexual Harassment," exploring Frantz Fanon's 1952 *Black Skin White Masks* in an exciting way for feminism, by relating his thought to street harassment. (See <http://nothingbuta-human.wordpress.com/2011/12/04/fanon-alienation-and-sexual-harassment/>)



Frantz Fanon

She begins by relating several incidents of harassment, noting that recollecting them reminded her of "how violent street harassment of female-bodied people can be. It also reminded me," she writes, "of the contours and relationship of gender, patriarchy and alienation which comes out in harassment."

She relates four incidents and notes that "the toll of years of harassment is stunning" and that it shapes her activity. It is the fact that she is "made to not feel safe in my own body," and that she is "alienated from my own physical self" that made her turn to Fanon.

THE THINGIFICATION OF WOMEN

She goes on to quote several paragraphs from his chapter "The Fact of Blackness," including the expression that what we find imposed upon us is a "crushing objecthood." She concludes, in part, "There is much more complexity to the ideas that Fanon is presenting in this text, but I want to pick up on this point about the bodily experience of alienation. Fanon at one point describes it as one's body being given back to them sprawled out, distorted, re-colored, clad in mourning.

"Street harassment has the same effect. Every time I'm harassed, I'm reminded that my body is not my own..."

Boogie is expressing anew what it is about Fanon that has spoken to the oppressed since his works appeared in the 1950s and 1960s. His articulation of alienation is profound, perhaps because it is grounded in his lived experience as a Black revolutionary thinker, activist and writer from Martinique, and in the philosophical thought of Marx and Hegel.

I was not alone discovering, at the beginnings of the Women's Liberation Movement, that Fanon expressed women's alienation in a profound way. Women

Deadly breast implants

The 40,000 British women who received defective breast implants at private clinics are being betrayed by their government, which refuses to require the clinics to provide free consultation, removal and replacement. Only about 3,000 women who received the implants under the National Health Service can receive free removal and replacement of the Poly Implant Prothèse (PIP) implants, manufactured by a now-defunct French company that deliberately deceived quality-control inspectors. Doctors and patients have reported leaks, ruptures and diseases since 2005 but not until 2010 did Britain ban PIP implants because the silicone was industrial non-medical grade—not for use in humans.

Globally, 300,000 women in 65 countries received the implants in the past 12 years. France will pay for removal but not replacement. In January 2012, Germany and the Czech Republic also recommended removal, but are not offering to pay for it.

These events are just the latest chapter in a complex saga of conflicting interests: women's health, influence of the profitable cosmetic industry, and inadequate regulatory agencies. Although silicone implants have been used since the 1960s and regulated since 1992 in the U.S., in 2006 the U.S. based National Women's Health Network reported that the Food and Drug Administration had "caved" on approval of new silicone breast implants, despite a lack of adequate studies on the long-term safety risks of these products. (<http://nwhn.org/silicone-gel-breast-implants>) In 2011 the French government reported that 5.5 % of the implants had ruptured in the first two to three years, five times the "industry standard." Ruptures increase over the expected 15 year "lifetime" of an average implant.

There can be no question that women and all who care about them worldwide must demand thorough individual medical counseling, removal and replacement, free of charge, for all who received PIP implants. The whole situation makes one wonder: are women really free when choosing breast implantation? What if women were free to redefine what "beauty" and "attractiveness" mean in a truly new human society? Wouldn't we then redefine "medical necessity"?

—Susan Van Gelder

were working out that the oppression we were experiencing was because we were *women*, not because there was something wrong with us as individuals, but that we did not meet the expectations of our society, or we railed against those expectations, because society considered and treated us as less than human, as an object. This is what Boogie was describing with street harassment. Those who consider you a person don't think you're there to meet their needs, and if you dare to refuse, scream in your face that "you're a f___ing bitch." The violence that meets women when they refuse to play games on the street is because we have asserted our humanness. How dare we upset the status quo!

NEEDED DEEPENING OF HEGEL'S DIALECTIC

The founder of Marxist-Humanism, Raya Dunayevskaya, though she never met Fanon, considered him a co-thinker, not only because he too was a revolutionary humanist, but because he was part of the fantastic milieu of the 1950s when revolutionary thought and activity changed the world with the beginnings of the Civil Rights Movement in the U.S., the East European revolts and the start of new African revolutions. She saw Fanon challenging Sartre, who considered labor—the worker—the focus of change, and the Negro only a particular in that greater struggle, a minor term. Dunayevskaya turns also to "The Fact of Blackness," to show "the difference of the dialectic when it comes not from knowledge but from anguish..."

In Hegel's master/slave dialectic, the slave, the laborer, gains a mind of his own through his labor—through transforming reality. To Hegel, Dunayevskaya says, paraphrasing Fanon, "you would be able to force some recognition of yourself, as man, as woman, and not just as slave, from the master. But says Fanon, Hegel didn't consider the Black, and it isn't the least bit true that the master is interested in the Black at all. The really Absolute, where there is no reciprocity, is this slave who in addition to being a slave, in addition to being the exploited labor, is Black, and is not at all recognized by the Other." Then Dunayevskaya makes her own development of the discussion: "Therefore, the dialectic would have to be much sharper, and see a certain transformation of reality which was deeper, than that of Hegel."*

How deep does the dialectic need to become when the subject is woman, is Black woman?

Women's interest in Fanon is part of that passion for philosophy that Dunayevskaya recognizes as a "passion for freedom." I'm looking forward to seeing how the discussion that L Boogie has begun again continues.

* Raya Dunayevskaya, *The Power of Negativity: Selected Writings on the Dialectic in Hegel and Marx* (Lexington Books, 2002), pp. 192-194.

WOMEN WORLDWIDE

by Artemis

In December, Ina May Gaskin was awarded the Right Livelihood Award for pioneering the modern midwifery and home birthing movements and for calling attention to the U.S. maternal death rate—one of the highest in the industrialized world, especially for Black and Hispanic women. The award sparked fierce controversy within the feminist community between those for home births and those like Dr. Amy Tuteur, a retired obstetrician, who stated that homebirth has killed more women and babies than hospital birth.

* * *

On Nov. 7, the UN Committee on the Elimination of Discrimination Against Women ruled that Peru amend its laws to allow abortion in cases of rape and guarantee access to abortion when it is already legal—when a woman's life or health is endangered. Women's groups sued on behalf of a 13-year-old-girl, raped by neighborhood men for four years. Upon becoming pregnant, she attempted suicide by jumping off a roof. She survived with a broken spine, but doctors refused to operate as it might harm her pregnancy. She miscarried, but the delay in her care decreased the success of the surgery, and she is now a quadriplegic.

* * *

On Nov. 17, Congresswoman Jackie Speier (D-Calif.) announced the STOP (Sexual Assault Training Oversight and Prevention) act to create a military Sexual Oversight and Response Office to remove the handling of sexual assaults from the chain of command. Now, women must report sexual assault to their immediate supervisors, who must then go up the chain of command. But most assailants are of higher rank than their victims, who in some cases must report to the rapists. Also, victims have often been punished by commanders trying to protect their reputations from scandal. Military rape is rampant, with nearly one in three women sexually assaulted, under 20% of assaults reported, and a mere 8% of assailants prosecuted.

'A Survivor's Story'

Reform at Victory: a Survivor's Story by Michele Ulriksen (Pizan Media, 2008, 300 pages)

Reform at Victory is the memoir that sparked the creation of Survivors of Institutional Abuse (SIA), an organization of adult survivors of abuse at facilities that purport to help troubled teens. The organization's main focus is fundamentalist Christian "treatment" programs. Its mission is both personal healing and activism. Jodi Hobbs, the president of SIA, states that it "would not be here without Michele" because she "inspired others to speak out and share their own testimony of what happened to them."

Michele Ulriksen (aka. Tresler-Ulriksen) wrote about her horrific incarceration at age 16 at Victory Christian Academy, a residential program for girls. She spent her adult life as a public speaker and activist to change the laws that allow these institutions to get away with severe, unconstitutional and illegal abuse by being unlicensed and unregulated by the state. She also spoke out against the faith-based initiative started by the Bush administration that continues to funnel money to them. Ulriksen tirelessly pursued Michael Palmer, who ran Victory, and she was instrumental in shutting down institutions that he continued to open. Like the other survivors of these places, she was left with PTSD, depression, and alcohol and drug addiction. Just when she seemed to have overcome them, she committed suicide from a drug overdose at the age of 41 in March of 2011.

'CHRISTIANS' USE CULT-LIKE TACTICS

Although Ulriksen's experiences took place in the 1980s, the same tactics continue to be used by fundamentalists in programs for teens. They are the same tactics used by cults to break people down and make them accept control and abuse. Ulriksen's parents told her they were taking her on a family outing. When they arrived at Victory, the staff dragged her from the car and locked her in a small, dark room, where she was forced to listen to Christian music and sermons

at full volume. When she was finally let out, it was explained that she would stay there for a year and would not see her family for four months.

For two weeks, she was not allowed to speak to or look at the other residents except for her "buddy" Kathy, who was one of the Helpers. These were a few, select girls who were trusted to explain the rules to the new inmates. The staff pressured the Helpers to police the behavior of the girls, and all were expected to report on each other. Intercoms allowed the staff to overhear conversations. A long list of forbidden words included not only swear words but slang. Everything in the secular world was considered sinful, and forbidden topics of conversation included pants (considered sinful for women), boys, rock music, and celebrities.

The residents were told what to do every minute of the day, much of which was Bible study. Their three hours per day of "school" consisted of Bible stories and creationism. The educational certificates they issued were not recognized by the outside world. The daily "chapel services" consisted of Palmer ranting about un-submissive women and their sexuality as well as homosexuality. The girls were also subjected to "rap sessions" in which one girl was singled out and the others encouraged to criticize her misdeeds and mannerisms such as how she laughed, ate, or smelled. The staff frequently called the girls names such as "whoremonger" and "slut" and inflicted physically abusive punishments. Girls were in such a state of anxiety that they got "saved" over and over and felt guilty if they didn't really believe in fundamentalist Christianity.

LAWS SHOULD PROTECT NOT HARM TEENS

Like many teens incarcerated in these programs, Ulriksen's only "problem" was typical teenage misbehavior. Girls with mental illnesses or eating disorders, and even those who attempted suicide were not given therapy but simply punished. Psychiatric medications were treated the same as illegal drugs, and there were no doctor visits because physical illness was considered the result of sin.

In spite of the fact that over a hundred deaths as well as sexual assaults and constant physical and emotional abuse have occurred at these facilities, each reported case is treated as an individual incident by the courts and media. Republicans have been successful in stopping regulation of these places. A few activist groups have attempted to change the laws and raise public awareness, but SIA has had the most success because, using the internet and other media, it has brought survivors together to tell their stories.

—Adele



Dockers, Occupy close Western ports

Oakland, Calif.—Following a shutdown of the Oakland Port on Nov. 2, whose success took the port and city authorities by surprise, Occupy Oakland called another shutdown for Dec. 12.

This time, Occupy Oakland linked the shutdown to demands for which port workers have been fighting: in support of the Los Angeles non-unionized truck drivers who were fired for wearing union T-shirts and the Longview, Washington, longshoremen in their struggle against EGT. EGT has built its own terminal, and insists on hiring only non-union longshoremen, attempting to break ILWU.

The call for a port shutdown in solidarity with port workers was answered so widely that it became a West Coast shutdown. On Dec. 12 in Oakland, at least 1,000 people came out at 5:30 AM to picket the entrance to the port, preventing the workers and truck drivers from entering for the day shift. Thousands more came in the afternoon, shutting down the evening shift. People stayed most of the night, continuing the shutdown. Seattle, Portland and Long Beach all participated in the West Coast port shutdown, which stretched from Anchorage to San Diego.

We heard rumors that Houston port protesters had a tent dropped on them and gas fired into the tent before they were arrested. New York City and Denver held protests in solidarity with port workers.

The port and the government did all they could to prevent the shutdown. The media interviewed truckers who complained that even a one-day shutdown cut into their wages. Oakland Mayor Jean Quan decried the hit the city's empty coffers would take from a one-day break in port traffic, and California Governor Jerry Brown wanted to use the police to keep the port open.

Governments' coordinated attacks on many Occupy Movements' encampments meant that the movement has grown in other ways. It includes expressing solidarity with workers. Occupy Oakland actively supported striking American Licorice factory workers in Union City. All 178 employees walked out on Dec. 5 over unfair take-aways in medical benefits. On Jan. 9 about 100 Occupy Oakland protesters picketed the factory between 5:00 and 6:00 AM, forcing management and security to sneak in through the back door. One strike supporter said, "We see any situation in



Occupy protesters on Nov. 2, on their way to shut down the port of Oakland.

our area where people are being scared by the 1%, and if we have time for it, we're going to help." A worker at the factory said, "We're happy. We want more Occupy people to come."

Another form solidarity takes is defending those whose houses have been stolen by banks through foreclosures. Victims of police violence are offered trauma support services. Occupy Oakland's feminist/Queer bloc is organizing to occupy/decolonize a building and establish a collective space in Oakland. (To get up-to-date information see occupyoakland.org)

And while solidarity with prisoners has been a theme all along, Occupy Oakland General Assembly voted on Jan. 9 to participate in a National Occupy Day in Support of Prisoners by co-sponsoring a demonstration in front of San Quentin on Feb. 20 (see <http://occupyoakland.org/2012/01/7-at-18-ga-national-occupy-day-in-support-of-prisoners/>).

—Shutdown supporter

Miners' lives bought at discount rates

Detroit—A \$209 million settlement, and a record \$10.8 million in fines: that's what newspaper headlines, TV and radio news reports throughout the nation proclaimed on Dec. 7 for the mine safety violations that killed 29 coal miners on April 5, 2010, at the Upper Big Branch mine in West Virginia. It was then owned by Massey Energy and headed by the notorious safety violator Don Blankenship, known widely also for breaking unions and environmental pollution laws.

Massey Energy has been bought by Alpha Natural Resources, which paid the fines under the condition that it would not be prosecuted. This ruse is a common corporate practice: to change the name of the company involved in a national scandal to remove public remembrance of the name of the scandal originator.

The final reports of the Justice Department and the Mine Health and Safety Agency confirmed what the coal miners in that mine had known for years: that Blankenship placed coal profits far above the safety and lives of the miners. The reports revealed 369 safety violations, with nine of those being so lethal and obvious that they contributed directly to the deadly explosion.

The reports also concluded that the cause of the explosion was "unlawful policies and practices" that included worker intimidation, ignoring safety equipment failures, unlawful coal dust accumulations, inadequate air circulation and the use of two sets of safety records to hide violations, one set for safety investigators and the other with real information for the company.

That \$209 million covers \$35 million to pay for previous administrative penalties, \$80 million for safety and infrastructure at Massey mines, \$48 million for a mine health and safety trust fund and \$46.5 million for families of victims of the explosion. But that \$46.5 million includes \$16.5 million in payment for individual lawsuits already filed. This leaves \$30 million for the remaining victims, which establishes a limit on how much each individual can get.

What is more startling is the Justice Department's announcement that Massey will not be criminally charged and will not have to admit to any wrongdoing. Clearly, the existing mine safety laws leave many loopholes for mine companies to wiggle through. Republicans in Congress and coal lobbyists have blocked all efforts to legislate stronger mine safety laws that were introduced following the Upper Big Branch explosion.

All mine safety violations are misdemeanors under present laws. Proposed mine safety reform laws would make some safety violations a felony. New laws would also make intimidation of miners, a common practice at Massey for reporting safety violations, illegal. But there is agreement from all observers that no mine safety laws will even be allowed to come up in an election year. So miners and their families remain victims of a political system that puts politics before the lives of people.

Despite the many loopholes that coal mine operators use to escape penalties for unsafe practices, there is one criminal provision that exists to bring criminal charges against Blankenship and other Massey policy-making executives, and that is for falsifying records.

This clearly happened at the Big Branch mine. The individuals responsible for the deaths of the 29 miners and the remaining horrors the survivors must endure should all be charged with criminal offenses and prosecuted to the full extent of the law.

—Andy Phillips

WORKSHOPTALKS

continued from p. 1

will merely "assist" by remote in delivering to students lessons predetermined by the computer. As there are no lectures, curriculum is seen strictly as information delivery to be regurgitated by students to earn credits.

Like healthcare workers, Rosenbaum insists teachers are not against this technology but want to have a say in how it is used. While politicians and pundits keep saying that youth need to be educated for the technology jobs of the future, teachers keep getting handed pink slips and technology promises even more pink slips. Replacing teachers as a cost-saving device is the real motivation for introducing computers in Idaho. Those teachers and healthcare providers who remain working complain that rampant computerization severely diminishes critical thinking, which is only possible through dialog and human interaction.

THE DEHUMANIZATION OF EDUCATION

I learned more about the shocking dehumanization of education when I asked my 15-year-old niece in North Carolina why she hadn't come outside her house for weeks on end and she told me it was "unnecessary." She said she is being "home schooled" by a commercial internet-schooling website approved by the state department of education. When I asked, "Who keeps track of your progress?" she replied, "The computer." There are no lectures, no adult supervision. The computer has become the sole teacher, mentor, and companion. There is no physical education, no field trips, no art or music.

I saw an indication of what the future holds for the teachers missing from my niece's life when Donna, a retired Oakland teacher, had to be admitted to the hospital because she recently developed a disabling condition since becoming homeless after a foreclosure. She told me, "I used to think that working all my life teaching kids was all I needed to do to feel I was contributing something valuable to society, and society would take care of me in return. I thought it was a profession everyone respected. I don't feel that respect anymore."

BRAVE NEW WORLD OF WAGE LABORERS

Karl Marx in his *Communist Manifesto* anticipated our brave new world when he saw that, through constantly revolutionizing instruments of production, the capitalists keep adding to the proletariat class. "The bourgeoisie," he wrote, "has stripped of its halo every occupation hitherto honored and looked up to with reverent awe. It has converted the physician, the lawyer, the priest, the poet, the man of science, into its paid wage laborers."

The Occupy movement is demonstrating what Marx wrote over 160 years ago in the *Manifesto*. "We are the 99%" highlights that nearly everyone now has been drawn into the vortex of proletarianization, that is, dehumanization by capital.

Blaming P.O. workers

Battle Creek, Mich.—For nearly 200 years the U.S. Post Office Department functioned as a public service agency. The delivery of the mail relied almost exclusively on manual labor, with management in the hands of politically appointed individuals. More recently, however, it looks as though the renamed United States Postal Service may go the way of the horse and buggy.

The post office lost the parcel post business to United Parcel Service 50 years ago. Over 20 years ago it lost out again to Federal Express, which created a new "overnight" class of mail.

Angered over unsafe working conditions and low wages, postal workers took matters into their own hands in 1970 with a nationwide strike—the only government workers to strike during the Vietnam War. Afterwards the government treated them like "the enemy." The government's response to the strike was the passage of the Postal Reorganization Act of 1971.

The replacement of human labor by machines and "scientific" management of the workplace became the order of the day. The centers of the 1970 wildcat strike had been in the major postal facilities in large cities. In Detroit, Pittsburgh, Philadelphia, and New York City, some 50-75% of the workers—and strikers—had been Black. Moving the postal facilities to the suburbs altered the racial composition of the workforce.

Beginning with the 1986 massacre at the Edmund, Okla., Post Office by postal worker/army reservist Patrick Henry Sherrill, a ten-year series of shootings and mass murders occurred at post offices across the country. The PO became the definition of a toxic work environment. Postal workers were depicted in the mass media as objects of derision.

One of these mass killings happened near where I worked on Valentine's Day 1998. Gary Hicks, model postal worker who was getting divorced, doused his house in Vicksburg, Mich., with gasoline and lit the incendiary, killing himself and his three young daughters. They are all buried in the Fort Custer National Cemetery near Battle Creek. Today, perhaps the operative phrase is "e-mail is the new snail mail."

The PO's business model is obsolete. The main aim of the 1971 reorganization was to weaken the unions and destroy the social networks that existed in the old downtown post offices and the surrounding neighborhoods so that a 1970-style strike could not happen again. In this they have succeeded, but in the process they destroyed the post office. It reminds me of that gem of wisdom from the Vietnam War—"We had to destroy the village in order to save it!"

If the politicians manage to finally kill (privatize) the postal service, it will certainly prove to be a gold mine for whatever vulture venture capitalist firm takes it over. It will mean the end of universal service—the glue that bound this country together.

It will also mean another spark for the bellows.

—Retired Postal Worker

For Black History Month—

A classic of labor history: *Indignant Heart: a Black Workers Journal*

"When the Black community in Watts, California, exploded in 1965, it was clearly Blacks against 'whitey'...but when it hit Detroit in August 1967... the revolt was primarily against the police and shop owners—large and small—who were known or believed to be gouging Blacks and poor people."

—Charles Denby

To order, see page 7



FROM THE WRITINGS OF RAYADUNAYEVSKAYA

*Editor's note: The upsurge of freedom struggles from Arab Spring to Occupy Wall Street makes it imperative to learn from the revolutions of a half-century ago in Africa, Asia and Latin America, not alone as the excitement of masses in motion but as illuminating the role of theory and organization, and the dangers of a void in the philosophy of revolution. The piece excerpted here, written in 1984 as the introduction to a new edition of **Nationalism, Communism, Marxist-Humanism, and the Afro-Asian Revolutions**, was a new essay in the philosophical comprehension of history and in the dialectics of organization and philosophy. The full introduction can be found in the **Raya Dunayevskaya Collection #8102**. All footnotes are the author's.*

"Our epoch is a birth-time and a period of transition."
—G.W.F. Hegel, *Phenomenology of Mind*

"When the narrow bourgeois form has been peeled away, what is wealth, if not universality of needs...the evolution of all human powers as such...the absolute movement of becoming."
—Karl Marx, *Grundrisse*

The emergence in our age of a new Third World, not only Afro-Asian but Latin American and Middle Eastern, was no mere geographic designation, as massive and substantive as that was. Rather, Third World became synonymous both with new forces of revolution and with those new forces as Reason. These new revolutionary forces—peasants as well as proletarians, Women's Liberationists as well as youth anti-war activists—saw in that most exciting color, Black, so deep a revolutionary dimension and so intense an internationalism imbedded in their national liberation struggles that, far from being a "Third" World, it encompassed the whole world....

JUST AS THE AFRICAN DIASPORA meant not only South Africa but South USA, and Black meant not only Africa—South, West, East and North—but also Latin America, including the Caribbean, so **Black Consciousness**, plunging into the struggle for freedom from Western imperialism, did not stop at the economic level anymore than did the East European freedom fighters struggling against Russian totalitarianism calling itself Communism. By no means did this signify a forgetting of the economic impoverishment of the masses; while man does not live by bread alone, he must have bread to live.

Once in power, however, the division between the leaders and the masses, whose revolutionary spontaneity had achieved power for them, widened. What increased the distance between leaders and ranks was the problem of how to industrialize non-capitalistically, private or state; of how, at the same time, to expand political liberties and maintain worker control of production and the state. What was disclosed was a void in the philosophy of revolution. The banner of Marx's theory of liberation, which had been so great a pole of attraction, so powerful a force of mobilization and solidarity, was now narrowed to staying in power. Indeed, all sorts of shortcuts and substitutions, religion included, were indulged in. The revolutions were aborted.

As I put it in this pamphlet in 1959¹: "So powerful and polarizing a force is the Marxist theory of liberation that throughout the Middle East, the Orient and Africa, there are attempts by various religions, Buddhism, Christianity and Mohammedanism, to find a bridge to it, even as there is a similar attempt on the part of Communist China and Russia." I warned that because the petty-bourgeois leaders had not faced the realities of the new stage of capitalism—state-capitalism—and had not grasped the meaning of what the masses were doing in opposition to that new tyranny, they would inevitably fall into the old trap of thinking the workers backward and mislead them.

IT WASN'T ONLY AYATOLLAH KHOMEINI who transformed the 1979 massive Iranian revolution into its total opposite—a **counter-revolution**.² It was the Left itself in Iran who aided in that usurping of their revolution by bowing to the religious substitute for philosophy, whether that affected the workers, the

1. First published by *News & Letters* in Detroit in August 1959, this pamphlet was republished in England in May 1961 by the Left Group, Cambridge University Labour Club with a new Introduction and added material.

2. See the collection of my eight *Political-Philosophic Letters* on "Iran: Revolution and Counter-Revolution," written between Nov. 13, 1978, and Sept. 25, 1981, and translated into Farsi by Iranian revolutionaries. See also English translation of the Introduction to the Farsi edition of this pamphlet on the Afro-Asian Revolutions by Raha, which was printed in *News & Letters*, August-September 1983. Of the many crises in the Middle East, the most horrifying is the disintegration and destruction of Lebanon, which began even before Israel's genocidal 1982 invasion. I am referring to the 1975-76 Civil War. See my *Political-Philosophic Letters* of 1976, especially Letter Number 6, "Lebanon: The Test Not Only of the PLO but the Whole Left." (*News & Letters*, Detroit, Mich.)

Dialectics of revolution in Africa, Asia

peasants, the Women's Liberationists, or the question of education. For that matter, the same attitude of capitulation characterized the national liberation leaders in power who hung onto the state-capitalist Communist orbit of nuclear power.

The Communist world, parading its state-capitalism as "Marxism-Leninism," still serves as a pole of attraction for some revolutionaries in the Third World. And while Ronald Reagan's description of Russia as the "evil empire" convinces none outside of Reagan's capitalist-imperialistic co-rulers, because U.S. imperialism is today's reigning world Behemoth, even an Ayatollah Khomeini has succeeded in presenting himself as "anti-imperialist" and the U.S. as the "Great Satan." None have faced world crises and realities from the vantage point of the freedom of the masses. It has resulted in the degradation of the national liberation movement itself.

TAKE GRENADA, which won power on its own and maintained it for more than three years, and yet tailed one of the world superpower orbits, which meant silence on the crucial question of dialectics of revolution. The result was both that philosophy of revolution was degraded to the question of "leadership methods" and that they were so dominated by the view of the "backwardness of the masses" that all discussions were kept a secret from them. Can the Left possibly not face the fact that the first shot of **counter-revolution** came **from within** the new Party, which thus opened the road for U.S. imperialism's invasion?³ Nothing can erase the stark fact that the shot that murdered Maurice Bishop came from his co-leaders in the Party, led by Bernard Coard and Hudson Austin. Nor can anyone skip over the infantilism of making the point of debate a question of Maximum Leader *vs.* collective leadership and "leadership method," instead of the dialectics of revolution and the question of which road to take out of the crisis in their country, a crisis determined by the myriad world crises.

As the analysis of the battle of ideas in *Nationalism, Communism, Marxist-Humanism and the Afro-Asian Revolutions* shows, from the very first emergence of the Third World, I held that to assure the forward movement of this new world it is as important to work out the new stage of cognition as the new stage of economic realities. It now becomes imperative for the Left to face itself; to take a deeper look at what was truly new in the last two decades since the first publication of this pamphlet when a new world had arisen. None of the mass revolts have suffered either from lack of daring or of initiative. Nor, for that matter, have they suffered from lack of sacrifice by both masses and leaders. Nevertheless, what the past two decades have revealed is a failure to meet the challenge from the masses. What was demanded was a totally new relationship of theory to practice which was grounded in the new movement from practice that was itself a form of theory.

...[T]he theoretician's task is to work out a new point of departure in theory, a philosophy of revolution.

THE TASK IS NOT SIMPLY to go in for ever more activism as if that alone could achieve a full, successful social revolution. Theory is a rigorous as well as creative activity that cannot be picked up "en route." It gives action its direction. Each age must work out for itself the principles of Marx's Humanism.

The new generation of revolutionaries cannot avoid responsibility for that by indulging in shortcuts and weightless abstractions. When, in the last decade of Marx's life, he witnessed the unprincipled, empty rhetoric for unification of two socialist organizations, he insisted, in his sharp critique, that only an internationalism unseparated from principles of revolution-in-permanence could become the ground for organization.⁴ Otherwise, Marx cautioned, the unity should be limited to unity of action against what is, while one continued to work out theory as ground for principled unification. First of all, it was necessary to clear one's head.

To meet the theoretic challenge of a new stage of cognition, one has to have full confidence in the masses, not only as force but as Reason—that is to say, confidence that their movement from practice as a form of theory does, indeed, signify that they can participate in the working out of a new theory. That is exactly what was lacking in the leadership in Grenada as they debated so-called "leadership methods" instead of the dialectical methodology which flows from a philosophy of revolution. Without that, leaders inevitably fell into the trap of hanging onto one or another state power.

There are signs of a new direction in the attempts, East and West, North and South, to restate Marx's Humanism for our age. Thus, in Nigeria, among other African countries, the Marx centenary brought out no less than a thousand scholars, trade unionists, and rev-

3. See my *Political-Philosophic Letter* of Nov. 28, 1983: "Counter-Revolution and Revolution: Grenada, the Caribbean Today, and the Challenge from Thirty Years of Movements from Practice That Were Themselves Forms of Theory," available from *News & Letters*.

4. See Marx's *Critique of the Gotha Program* and my analysis of this profound document in Chapter XI of *Rosa Luxemburg, Women's Liberation, and Marx's Philosophy of Revolution*: "The Philosopher of Permanent Revolution Creates New Ground for Organization."

olutionary activists, to discuss the "body of theories, founded by Karl Marx," a discussion which was broad enough to also focus "on the way in which patriarchal and sexist prejudices are being increasingly propagated in Africa."⁵ This recognition of a new revolutionary force is a beginning but a beginning only.

THAT THIS PAMPHLET can aid in grappling with the task today of articulating, rethinking, how to develop the unification of theory/practice **with** these new forces of revolution has been proved by what we have learned from Marx's last writings—his *Ethnological Notebooks*.⁶ That is to say, the presentation of Marx's Marxism as a **totality**, as a new continent of thought and of revolution, has been verified by the publication of those writings which touch on the problematic of our day—the Third World. They round out Marx's break with capitalist society and his first discovery of



Dec. 23 "women's march" in Alexandria, Egypt, protesting military rule and condemning recent attacks on women activists.

a whole new continent of thought as Marx articulated it in the 1844 Humanist Essays, which did not limit his revolutionary challenge to capitalism only to what he was against and meant to overthrow. Rather, in unfurling the banner of revolution, Marx's magnificent vision disclosed the new human relations he was **for**, from a new relationship of Man/Woman to the end of the division between mental and manual labor. In the 1850s that vision pointed to the need for a "revolution in permanence"; and by 1857 his *Grundrisse* projected humanity's as well as the individual's development as an "absolute movement of becoming."...

This trail to the 1980s is not any blueprint, nor was it fully worked out for his age. It is there for us to work out for our age. This pamphlet has laid the ground for that task. When the capitalistic (private and state), exploitative, crisis-ridden imperialistic world of 1984 threatens to unloose a nuclear holocaust that would put an end to humanity as we have known it, it is clear that it is the urgency of the times which demands that this generation of revolutionaries turn to revolutionary **praxis**, to philosophy as action and action as philosophy.

Let us put an end to substitutionism and return to Marx's philosophy of "revolution in permanence" to create nonexploitative, non-sexist, non-racist, totally new human relations.

—Raya Dunayevskaya, Feb. 15, 1984

5. See report by Saidu Adamu, Conference Coordinator for the Steering Committee, in *Journal of African Marxists*, Issue 4, September 1983. The Conference was held March 14 to 19, 1983.

6. See Chapter XII of my work, *Rosa Luxemburg, Women's Liberation, and Marx's Philosophy of Revolution*: "The Last Writings of Marx Point a Trail to the 1980s," especially Section 2, on "The Unknown *Ethnological Notebooks*, the Unread Drafts of the Letter to Zasulich, as Well as the Undigested 1882 Preface to the Russian Edition of the *Communist Manifesto*."

How to contact NEWS & LETTERS COMMITTEES	
CHICAGO 228 South Wabash, #230 Chicago, IL 60604 Phone 312-431-8242 Fax 312-431-8252 MEETINGS Call for Information	NEW YORK NYNewsandLetters@gmail.com Phone 914-462-3691
DETROIT P.O. Box 27205 Detroit, MI 48227 MEETINGS Sundays, 2:00 PM Write for information	LOS ANGELES MEETINGS Sundays 6:00 PM Echo Park United Methodist Church 1226 N. Alvarado (North of Sunset, side door)
FLINT, MI P.O. Box 3384, Flint, MI 48502 MEETINGS Write for Information	OAKLAND P.O. Box 3345 Oakland, CA 94609 Phone 510-658-1448 banandl@yahoo.com MEETINGS Contact for information
INTERNET	
Email arise@newsandletters.org	WORLD WIDE WEB www.newsandletters.org

ESSAY

Absolute Negativity, Occupy and Situationists

by Ron Kelch

[Absolute negativity] is the simple point of the negative relation to self, the innermost source of all activity, of all animate and spiritual self-movement, the dialectical soul that everything true possesses and through which alone it is true; for on this subjectivity alone rests the sublation of the opposition between concept and reality.

—Hegel on second negation in the Absolute Idea

You cannot abolish [Hegel's] philosophy without realizing it.

—Karl Marx

The Occupy Wall Street (OWS) movement that swept the country created, as Bay Area activist Ken Knabb put it, a "radical situation" that is "just a beginning." Further, no single demand captures the movement's sense that "every aspect of the system is problematic." This movement, Knabb suggests, drew its inspiration not only from the Arab Spring and the demands for "real democracy" in the public squares of Europe, but also "situationist theories and tactics" ("The awakening in America," *Slingshot*, 2011).

The Situationist International (SI) existed from 1957 to 1972. SI's central theoretical work, Guy Debord's 1967 *Society of the Spectacle* (Black and Red, 1983, further ref. as SP), attracted many who participated in the May 1968 revolt in France. Knabb edited and translated *Situationist International Anthology* (Bureau of Public Secrets, Berkeley, Ca., 1981, further ref. as SIA), theoretical exchanges and SI publications, which young participants raised in discussions I had at Occupy Oakland.

Anarchist youth helped orient the occupy movement toward SI's anti-statist, non-elitist Marxism, rejecting prevailing politics and economics in favor of asserting their own democratic relations and everyday practice. This total rejection is the *idea* the forces of "order" wanted to evict when they brutally crushed the peaceful "Oakland Commune" and other encampments in public squares. The occupiers created their own "situation" and self-organization opposed to the prevailing mode of being spectators of reality as images and representations.

It awoke a new generation to the possibility of overcoming decrepit capitalism. If this bold self-assertion, which has just begun, can't be evicted, how can it complete itself? How can it go beyond France 1968, which saw 10 million workers join occupying students, creating a moment when suddenly "All things are possible," but which nevertheless saw Charles de Gaulle, who had been frightened enough to leave the country, even more securely in power with an overwhelming election victory on June 23, 1968? France 1968 underscored the problem: how to sustain a new beginning which comes out of activity as total opposition to what is? What is totality, not just as an opposition to the old, but positively in relation to the new, including organization?

PRACTICE, THEORY AND ORGANIZATION

How did SI respond to this challenge from practice in their revolutionary theory and organization? In 1969, then Situationist Rene Riesel discussed how SI saw its own role even as it singled out spontaneous workers' councils (soviets) as "the sole power...where people learn how to become conscious of their own action, where they 'realize philosophy'" (SIA, p.360). Should councilists, as they called themselves, dissolve their "organizations the very instant the councils first appear"? For Riesel, the answer "will be found only in practice" (SIA, p. 361) which means 3/4 of the participants have to be workers, not workers in general but those "who have 'become dialecticians,' as they will have to become en masse in the exercise of the power of the councils" (SIA, p. 362).

Here the council alone is the "necessary mediation between theory and practice": "Everything ultimately depends on how the new revolutionary movement resolves the organization question; on whether its organizational forms are consistent with its essential project: the international realization of the absolute power of workers councils as prefigured in the proletarian revolutions in this century" (SIA, p. 426).

In other words, one becomes a dialectician through practice alone as in the emergence of soviets in the Russian Revolution. Once masses from below create councils, the universal, the goal, is "generalized self-management" (SIA, p. 363). How does a vision of "generalized self-management" assure "becoming dialecticians" and "realizing philosophy"?

For councilists, this vision was the opposite of the "Leninist theory of organization," the vanguard party to lead, which became the locus of a new state-capitalist class and a counterrevolutionary repression of workers' struggle for self-determination. However, the same Lenin, as a minority opinion in the party, proclaimed in 1917 "All power to the soviets!" and saw soviets as the way to bring each one, "to a man, woman, and child," into running the whole society.

A dramatic moment leading to Lenin's vision of universal self-management through soviets, came

when he studied Hegel and broke with vulgar materialist Marxism, including his own. He saw in Hegel's depiction of the practical Idea—"the self-certainty which the subject has...is a certainty of its own actuality and the non-actuality of the world"—a "pure materialism" that could achieve a "union of cognition and practice" (Lenin *Collected Works*, vol. 38, 212-14).

This self-certainty resonates with the SI-oriented youth's irreverent rejection of the actuality of the prevailing world in favor of their own self-organization. What Lenin didn't heed, and perhaps needs underscoring for today, is Hegel's warning that the practical Idea's fixation on the "intrinsically worthless" external world gets in the way of realizing its own power of cognition as it creates a new world, including organization.

LENIN'S ORGANIZATIONAL DUALITY

While SI ascribes "ulterior motives" (SIA, p. 427) to Lenin, his vision of universal self-management existed transparently along side his holding to a vanguard party-state organization. Lenin's new appreciation of Hegel was as well a new appreciation of spontaneous practice and organization. Lenin didn't give up on his idea of universal self-management. In the 1920-21 dispute over trade unions after the civil war ended, Trotsky and Bukharin wanted to keep

workers militarized and have the state control their unions because now they lived in a "workers' state." Lenin countered that no such "workers' state" had been achieved in reality and said the dialectic, in opposition to Bukharin's eclecticism, could only emerge in workers' own organizations where they could learn to self-manage the whole economy.

Against Trotsky and Bukharin, Lenin saw the revolution as an alliance of workers with another distinct class of toilers, Russia's predominantly peasant population, whose struggle to determine their everyday working lives was also integral to universal self-management.

Lenin didn't make it easy to recognize the philosophic context for his appreciation of spontaneous organization. Debord reduces the *April Theses*, with its electrifying exclamation "All power to the soviets!" to Lenin adopting Trotsky's theory of permanent revolution (SP, para. 103). Not only philosophy but the open point of contention between Lenin and Trotsky, the peasantry as a distinct subject, simply vanishes.

In his 1922-23 *Testament*, Lenin questioned whether the revolution had a future if differences within the party reflected objective differences between the workers and the peasants. Of Lenin's devastating critiques of his co-leaders, the most provocative but least comprehended was that Bukharin, the party's favorite and most prolific theorist, did not comprehend the dialectic. Again, what exactly is "dialectic" once revolutionary practice demonstrates its total power over the actuality of the old?

THEORY BEYOND THE PRACTICAL IDEA

Post-1968 exchanges within SI reveal a similarly undefined need to get beyond the limits of pure practice with a total dialectical perspective. In a self-critical evaluation of SI in 1970, Paolo Salvadori says the newness of the post-1968 situation demands "beginning over again" to "deepen theory in a decisive manner" by which he meant the need for "our *1844 Manuscripts*" and "our *Critique of the Gotha Program*." Salvadori asks, what is a new beginning that totally breaks with the old, but asks that in relation to past revolutions whose possibilities only "correspond[ed] to the level attained by the productive forces" (SIA, p. 467-8)?

Debord answers that "it is necessary to dialecticize...the question of the relation of Bolshevism to the backwardness of productive forces in Russia" claiming that Lenin's Bolshevism retarded the "central part of the productive forces: the revolutionary class's consciousness." Apart from this assessment of Lenin, is the force of "class consciousness," which is still bound up with opposition to the old, sufficient when a new actuality emerges with popular and revolutionary self-organization?

When Marx analyzed the emergence of the "productive power of social labour" under capitalism, he singled out not "class consciousness" but a universal of the kind he first introduced in 1844. With "co-operation," says Marx, the worker "strips off the fetters of his individuality, and develops the capabilities of

his species" (*Capital*, p. 447, Fowkes trans.). The total lie of isolated individuality perpetuated by capitalism is a fetter that can only be fully, consciously, broken when workers' co-operation becomes freely associated, as in the Paris Commune (PC), the 1871 revolutionary "workers' council" singled out by Marx.

Far from making the PC the sole "mediation between theory and practice" **Marx returns in his 1875 *Critique of the Gotha Program* to his 1844 *Manuscripts* to lay out the principles of a Marxist organization which are inseparable from principles of a post-capitalist society.** The post-capitalist concerns singled out by Marx, like the need for labor to go from "mere means to prime necessity of life," echo themes in his recreation of Hegel's dialectic in the *1844 Manuscripts*.

SI didn't deepen theory with their own *1844 Manuscripts*. Further, they took no hints from how the content of those manuscripts spoke to the 1956 Hungarian revolutionaries whose workers' councils fought official Communism. Answering Salvadori on how to begin anew in a new reality, Debord brings in Magritte's painting of a pipe with its notation "This is not a pipe," returning to the Situationists' theme that the old reality is the self-alienation of human beings from one another through images or representations. Debord then criticizes SI's "underuse of theory," their failure to unite theory and practice. By 1971, Debord felt SI should no longer exist because it "has not applied its own theory in the very activity of the formulation of that theory..." (SIA, p. 478) Debord never looks to the *1844 Manuscripts*' new dialectical sense of reality that could speak to a mass awakening created in practice.

A central idea of Marx's *1844 Manuscripts* is that humans are species beings whose innate capacities are constantly externalized and expanded, continuously transforming their own nature as well as external nature. Key is not only the negation of the given, whether external nature or human nature, but a second negation, an ongoing negative return to self as confirmation of those innate human capacities. What distinguishes humans from other species is that their labor or engagement with nature is "free conscious activity." This species character is violated when labor becomes a mere means to make a living as under capitalism which creates a class of people who have no way to survive except by selling their ability to labor.

Marx's positive concept of labor encompasses all the ways humans materially and spiritually recreate their humanity, including working the fields. In this context Marx reasserts Hegel's absolute "negation of the negation", absolute negativity, as an internally generated movement that finally overcomes being defined by what one is against. Communism, for example, cannot be the goal of human development because as the opposite of private property, it is still another form of property. Negation of the negation in a universal sense of negative return to self is "positive humanism beginning from itself."

After the collapse of the highpoint of 1960s' pure activism, Raya Dunayevskaya turned to Hegel straight as the only one who, in his critique of the practical Idea, sees negation of the negation explicitly shaping a new unity of theory and practice. (See "From The Archives" column, opposite page.)

HEGEL'S ABSOLUTE DIALECTIC

An awakening like OWS that radically shifts the prevailing discourse, reveals what Hegel meant when he insisted absolute method **is not** esoteric, it **is** the most objective and real of sciences. "Becoming dialecticians" and "realizing philosophy," however, cannot be taken for granted when all the old ways of thinking keep attaching a truncated meaning onto the new moment. **Now is the time** not just for more activity but **to seriously engage Hegel's absolute method** that recognizes the power of thought in every new moment of externalization, including organization.

Beginning from the immanence of the idea in reality, Hegel says theory that reaches absolute method can never be something that is **used**. Using theory implies it is applied externally in the manner of a tool. No, the negation of the negation in the absolute is a negative **self**-relation shaping a totally **new** unity of theory and practice. Far from shutting down, a revolutionary organization's responsibility to engage the idea immanent in practice becomes most urgent when the idea reveals its power in new organizational forms. Stopping at the practical Idea or actuality as the subject's self-certainty against the old, which both SI and Lenin did, cannot reveal reality as the idea immanent in practice, that is, the power not only of consciousness but cognition. In both cases, a failure to spell out the dialectic in-and-for-itself makes organization an enclave separate from realizing the Hegelian-Marxian philosophy of freedom.



Magritte's painting with a notation "This is not a pipe" challenges representational reality. How does the Hegelian-Marxian dialectic of freedom, aiming to go beyond "picture thinking," answer that challenge?

THE STATE OF THE WORLD AS WE BEGIN 2012

I'm deeply enamored of the contents of every issue of *N&L*. This is because the articulation of the various issues addressing the multitude of socioeconomic crises, brought on by economic contraction affecting capital relations, points to how deep the revolution must go. In addition, one is given a very clear and concrete perspective that all those issues combining to make our lives so miserable are related to one direct source: capitalism. But the most crucial element of *N&L* has to do with its advocacy for the unity of theory and practice, and its evolving into a philosophy of liberation.



**Faruq
Pelican Bay, Calif.**

Here are some plain facts. We live in a carnival of mirrors. The images that we, the 99%, take to be representations of ourselves are, in unreality, images of beasts of burden, or conforming puppets. We shake off the nightmare, exit the circus carnival and claim ourselves: Spontaneous combustion: the igniting of substances through the body of our own Subjectivity.

**Paul
New York City**

The National Defense Authorization Act (NDAA) which President Obama signed into law on New Year's Eve gives an alarming warning about what 2012 holds in store for us. It contains a sweeping worldwide indefinite detention provision. It has no time or geographic limits. It can be used by our current and future presidents to militarily detain people captured far from any battlefield. Obama signed this despite having earlier declared that he would veto this outrageous bill. Now he will become known in history as the president who signed into law indefinite detention without charge or trial. Happy new year.

**Alarmed
Midwest**

After the ejection of the disastrous Socialist government of Zapatero from the government, the rightist Partida Popular (PP) of Rajoy won a majority. Its remedy for Spain's failing economy is an attack on the workers by freezing the minimum wages at 641 Euros/month (\$932), which is almost nothing to live on with the high cost of food, energy and rent; and increasing local taxes. Rent has increased 66% over the last ten years. Many youth are going to other countries for work, and 77% of the remaining population believe that the economic crisis will get even worse.

The only glimpse of hope for the country is the voice of the *Indignados* who raised the banner of "No Home, No Job, No Pension, No Fear." They are questioning the root cause of the chaos

brought by free market thinkers and leaders who only pay lip service to the masses and follow the rules of the rich and corporations' demands. It depends on the masses to tear up these horrific conditions of free enterprise for the haves over the enslaved workers.

**Manel
Spain**

I want to tell my Egyptian brothers: Do not give up your revolution! The same thing happened in my country. The military generals claimed they were here only as a "caretaker" government, until elections. They haven't left for more than 50 years! We are still under a military dictatorship. Field Marshall Tantawi is Mubarak's dog, just like President Thein Sein is General Than Shwe's pet dog. He is our Burmese Tantawi. President Obama, call off your dogs in Egypt and Burma!

**Burmese Exile
West Coast**

In a recent visit to Iran, it was evident in the faces of people of Tehran that the bad economy, the political repression, unemployment and the Western embargo against Iran are taking their toll. Many people are dispirited trying to make a living under a regime that in the name of religion has taken happiness out of the spirit of the nation. There is hardly anyone who reads the newspapers since they are so insulting to the intelligence of the average man that in protest no one wants to read the lies of the government of Iran, such as comparing their jail to best-rated hotels!

**Iranian Exile
USA**

Resistance is growing among students, educators, and AARP members against an extreme effort to cut access to community colleges in California. The "California Community College Student Success Task Force," financed by private interests with deep links to big business, propose to scrap non-credit courses, adding restrictive placement tests, incapacitating local college boards, and sharply raising fees for students seeking second degrees and those not transferring to four-year colleges.

An estimated 200,000 California students will be excluded from higher education if the recommended legislation passes. To sign a petition against the Task Force, go to: <http://tinyurl.com/c3aj4kc> and email both Governor Jerry Brown and California Community College Chancellor Jack Scott. Save higher education for those who aren't rich! Keep posted!

**D. Chêneville
Oakland, Calif.**

An elderly friend of mine was talking about how much difference there is now in how people look at the police compared to when he was a kid. Back then, he said, police were looked at as

READERS' VIEWS

good people trying to help you out if you got into a bad situation. He referred to friendly advice a police officer gave him when he had gotten into trouble as a youngster. That is completely different now, he noted, referring specifically to the extreme police power in the Patriot Act that can throw people in jail for going on strike if that strike is declared to be a national emergency, and also noted the increasing amount of surveillance and invasion of privacy that permeates the whole of society.

**Old Radical
Detroit, Mich.**

I hope nobody misses the importance of the graphic printed in the last issue with the Readers' Views on "Voices from the Inside." While hard to read, its words, printed with a picture of the Statue of Liberty, are a powerful indictment of U.S. reality today: "Welcome to America, home to 5% of the world's people & 25% of the world's prisoners."

**Kei
Los Angeles**

OCCUPY EVERYTHING

Through the *N&L* class series I've attended ("Dialectics of organization and philosophy in today's freedom struggles, Karl Marx, and Marxist-Humanism"), I am beginning to get a better understanding of the misinterpretations of Marx and Hegel that abound and that I think may be deliberate. How the classes related to Occupy Wall Street (OWS) helped me begin to understand some of the terms we use.

The occupy movements are one locale to work out the dialectic. It is only one locale and a lot of people will try to hijack it. Occupy Oakland is attracting a lot of people who don't go to demonstrations. It is proof that people can get together and make things happen. It will have consequences in a lot of lives.

**Black woman
Oakland, Calif.**

The "archives column" in the Nov.-Dec. 2012 issue on "Spontaneity and new beginnings," written by Dunayevksya in 1977, illuminates what is going on in the world right now, giving crucial meaning to the front-page article on the Occupy movement by Gerry Emmett and Susan Van Gelder.

**Woman revolutionary
Los Angeles**

On Nov. 15 we witnessed a 21st century capitalist counter-revolution in New York. The weapon of choice for mayors from here to Oakland is "concern for public health and safety." Yet visit any neighborhood of working people and people of color and you'll have to look hard for this concern. Although OWS up to now has self-organized on the basis of its principles, it will surely face internal pulls to disregard philosophy in favor of practical matters as it defends itself against external threats. This is the kind of discussion to which those in News and Letters Committees can contribute a Marxist-Humanist concept.

**Teacher
New York City**

How have all the world's developments come to the historic stage we have reached today? OWS has had a huge effect on the entire country. It has affected everyone's thinking. I can't remember when tension was this high, including during the 1960s. Today's intensity seems to be a new kind.

**Activist
California**

In following a chat room, I see revulsion at the whole system, but every conceivable idea is floating around from Rand Paul to left liberalism. There is a critique of capitalism but no consistent philosophy. Many OWS participants are unemployed but the real power resides in the working people. They have tremendous power which is held in check by "false consciousness." This country would shut down if every worker stopped working.

**Laid off
New York**

There are many approaches to OWS, not all helpful. I see my old Trotskyist friends out there trying to take over OWS. I see SEIU out there offering fried chicken, as they did when we had an independent strike. My friends from ILWU and others are out there trying to spread the general strikes.

**Healthcare worker
East Bay, Calif.**

The strengths of OWS—its diversity, participatory direct democracy, connection to all social justice issues and movements, and the support of thousands outside the camp in marches, teach-ins, donations, and discussions—will not allow the movement to knuckle under to the class interests represented by the "1%." But we should entertain no illusions that the capitalist system will give up easily. Despite its power, we, too, have power: numbers, experience, principles and ideas about what kind of world we want to create. Let the discussions continue!

**OWS participant
Northern New Jersey**

WOMEN CONFRONT REPRESSION

"It is not acceptable that little girls must pass through a gauntlet of angry men who are armed with bags of excrement..." But until an Israeli TV broadcast the story of an eight-year-old girl afraid to attend her Modern Orthodox girls' school, near-total silence prevailed.

In a Dec. 30 editorial titled "Shame on us all," the Teaneck, N.J., newspaper *Jewish Standard* reported that it had received NO responses to its Oct. 13 editorial denouncing the violence. After the broadcast, leaders of Israel and "those who claim leadership of American Jewry" proclaimed their horror, demanding an end to Haredi violence. In late December, 2,000 secular and Modern Orthodox defenders of the girls rallied at the school against attempts to exclude women from public spaces. Signs read: "Free Israel from religious conversion," "Stop Israel from becoming Iran." In Israel, ultra-orthodox men have shunted women onto separate sidewalks and created gender-segregated buses and health clinics.

U.S. support for the Israeli fight-back against ultra-right repression of women is an important development. Hopefully all involved will also see the need to support the human rights of non-Jewish Israelis, thus strengthening both freedom movements.

**Susan Van Gelder
New York**

I really liked the article "To Yemenis 'rape is worse than death'" (Nov.-Dec. 2011 *N&L*). Coming from the Mexican culture, I feel that it needs to be widely read. It was not so long ago that this sort of sentiment would have been common in "Western" countries as well. And such attitudes are similar to the "well, she really wanted it" justification for rape, or that AIDS is a punishment from God, and so on. Such articles expose how truly reactionary some "Western" attitudes towards sex remain.

**A. Cabrera
Louisiana**

NEW DEVELOPMENTS IN RUSSIA: IN REVOLT, IN THEORY

I heard the news of the largest protests in Russia since the dissolution of the USSR twenty years ago at just about the same time I heard about a new Russian edition of *Marxism and Freedom* by Raya Dunayevskaya getting off the press in Moscow.

Whether or not that can be considered merely a coincidence, it raises the question of how successful this historic work will be in showing students and workers there that Marx's Marxism was the very opposite of the Stalinism they had suffered after the Russia Revolution was turned into its opposite.

The protests there today are one more proof of the impact of the worldwide wave of revolt that began with Arab Spring last year and now faces how to continue to the deep uprooting needed.

**Octogenarian
Illinois**

I'm so excited about the new Rus-

sian edition of Dunayevskaya's *Marxism and Freedom*. In his letter about the beautiful cover of the new edition, Richard Greeman wrote:

"I think Raya would have loved the cover, which was specially designed by Julia Guseva, an ardent feminist, the Russian translator of Victor Serge and librarian of the Victor Serge Library in Moscow. The sans-culotte woman ties Marx in with the French Revolution."

It really is wonderful and I too think that Dunayevskaya would have been thrilled by it. Can you tell me and other readers how to order a copy?

**Feminist
Bremerton, Wash.**

Editor's note: The new Russian edition of *Marxism and Freedom* can be ordered directly from the publisher, Praxis Research and Educational Center, at http://www.praxiscenter.ru/about_us/publikatsii/. See page 11 for more information on the book.

FROM FUKUSHIMA TO NEW YORK



Shut Down Indian Point Now! is calling a press conference immediately prior to a New York State Assembly hearing to determine energy alternatives to the Indian Point plant in January. As the Fukushima, Japan, meltdown shows, nuclear power can never be made safe.

People are becoming increasingly aware of the madness of maintaining Indian Point, a potential Fukushima-on-the-Hudson, located just 24 miles north of New York City. More than 20 million people live within 50 miles of the plant, and a meltdown would create an unimaginably horrific health, environmental, social and economic catastrophe for the region, the country and the planet.

A new Synapse Energy Economics report states, "Even if Indian Point is retired, there is no need for new capacity until 2020 for meeting reliability needs, either in New York State or the City." *We don't need Indian Point!*

The New York State Assembly is holding a public hearing to determine if the energy generated by Indian Point can be provided through other sources. We must not allow this hearing to degenerate into a forum for those who wish to maintain the status quo. We must be allowed to make our case: *replace Indian Point with safe, renewable energy sources.*

Tom S. for Shut Down Indian Point Now!
New York

The myth of a "safe nuclear power plant" was broken completely by the Great Disaster of March 11 last year.

Narihiko Ito
Japan

LABOR ISSUES 2012

In a recent article you printed on the auto contract negotiations, there was a reference to local union contracts that might result in strikes.

I noticed in a recent newspaper article that a GM local union near Lansing,

representing 3,430 workers, had authorized a strike if the local's unresolved grievances were not settled.

This doesn't mean there will be a strike, but it also means that there could very well be one.

Auto labor observer
Detroit, Mich.

On Dec. 15, over 1,000 of us activists gathered at La Placita (the historical center of Mexican history in Los Angeles) to protest ICE's (Immigration and Customs Enforcement) raids, detentions and deportations of Mexican and Latina/o immigrant workers. Union workers and leaders joined Immigrant Rights and Occupy L.A. protesters against ICE's criminalizing and separating families of immigrants.

Workers were from CLEAN Carwash, Justice for Janitors, the grocery and healthcare industries, Airport Workers Unidos, United Service Workers West, the U.S. Postal Service, Good Jobs L.A. and others.

In high spirits Occupy LA youths chanted, "We are the 99%," as immigrant workers answered with, "El Pueblo Unido, Jamás Será Vencido." The spirited noontime rally ended with a walk back to La Placita.

Basho
Los Angeles

The solidarity statement sent to the unions in Iraq by "U.S. Labor Against the War" recognized that the end to formal U.S. military occupation of Iraq does not automatically end "continuing U.S. interference in the internal affairs of Iraq."

It would be important to hear from workers here what thoughts they might have on such a solidarity statement. I hope that kind of dialogue can appear in Readers' Views in future issues.

Long-time reader
Philadelphia

I always enjoy reading *N&L* as it refrains from the usual crude-vanguard style of telling everyone how mean and nasty capitalism is and how we should now all join them for "revolution."

The fact that it's open to the work-

ers themselves reflects its continuity to the positive *Iskra* tradition, something which I pay a lot of attention to.

Dan
England

LIVING FANON

A new special issue of *Pambazuka*, dated Dec. 6, 2011, has as its theme "50 years on: Frantz Fanon lives." The 18 articles include activist and scholar Nigel Gibson's reflection on Frantz Fanon's interpretations of postcolonial politics within the context of current revolutions in North Africa. Gibson's article begins:

"What better way to celebrate, commemorate and critically reflect on the fiftieth year of Fanon's *The Wretched of the Earth* than with a new North African syndrome: revolution—or at least a series of revolts and resistance across the region."

More can be found about this important publication and event at <http://www.pambazuka.org/en/issue/561>. Comments are requested online.

Fanon fan
Chicago

HAVE-NOTS FIGHT BACK

Somebody asked what I think of the American Economic Association. Well, I don't think very much of them. That's why we're here protesting. These are people, who themselves are privileged, who want to crush the have-nots. Protesting this economic injustice is continuing what we began in the Civil Rights Movement.

Black Senior
Chicago

It is disgusting that some on the Left are willing to ally with Ron Paul's supporters, especially now that his racist and anti-Gay history is better known. It shows what they will be willing to settle for when they give up on the idea of revolution.

Bolshevik Youth
Chicago

I think that Mayor Emanuel is stepping far across the line in trying to curb the Constitutional rights to assemble and protest at the NATO/G-8 Summits. To me, he seems to be inviting confrontation in a way that will distract attention from his own cuts of funding for schools, libraries and mental health clinics, which would certainly be a notable part of the protest. These are the same type of cutbacks that others from around the world will be here opposing. But I think the Mayor might prefer a simpler, law-and-order narrative even if he has to provoke it into existence.

Fred M.
Chicago



PRISONERS SPEAK

I enjoy the articles from all the towns and cities. I don't have a TV so you are the only news I get. Please keep up the good work!

Prisoner
Bridgeton, N.J.

Fortunately, the prison administration allows this most important publication, which allows me to stay in tune with the free world's resistance—which is just as much a concern of the prisoner as the prisoner should be a concern of the free world.

Prisoner
Huntingdon, Penn.

The "Arab Spring" really helped me begin to understand the principles of perpetual revolution, with the revolutionaries creating the theory as they proceed. Thanks for all your lucid articles and to the donor who paid for my sub.

Prisoner
Huntsville, Texas

TO OUR READERS: Can you donate the price of a sub (\$5) for a prisoner who cannot pay for one? It will be shared with many others.

SELECTED PUBLICATIONS FROM NEWS & LETTERS

Books

by RAYA DUNAYEVSKAYA

- Philosophy and Revolution: From Hegel to Sartre and from Marx to Mao** 30th Anniversary edition, 2003.....\$24.95
- Marxism and Freedom: from 1776 until Today** 2000 edition. Foreword by Joel Kovel.....\$24.95
- Rosa Luxemburg, Women's Liberation, and Marx's Philosophy of Revolution** 1991 edition. Author's new introduction. Foreword by Adrienne Rich.....\$24.95
- Women's Liberation and the Dialectics of Revolution: Reaching for the Future**\$14.95
- The Power of Negativity: Selected Writings on the Dialectic in Hegel and Marx**\$24.95
- The Marxist-Humanist Theory of State-Capitalism: Selected Writings by Raya Dunayevskaya**.....\$8.50
- The Philosophic Moment of Marxist-Humanism: Two Historic-Philosophic Writings by Raya Dunayevskaya** Contains "Presentation on Dialectics of Organization and Philosophy of June 1, 1987" and 1953 "Letters on Hegel's Absolutes"\$3 paperback, \$10 hardcover

by CHARLES DENBY

- Indignant Heart: A Black Worker's Journal** Includes Afterword by Raya Dunayevskaya.....\$14.95

En Español

por RAYA DUNAYEVSKAYA

- Marxismo y libertad**.....\$10
- Filosofía y revolución: De Hegel a Sartre y de Marx a Mao**...\$10
- Rosa Luxemburgo, la liberación femenina, y la filosofía marxista de revolución**.....\$10
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- El Poder de la negatividad: Escritos sobre la dialéctica en Hegel y Marx**\$10
- Dos ensayos por Raya Dunayevskaya**\$2

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- Bosnia-Herzegovina: Achilles Heel of Western 'Civilization'** (Expanded edition).....\$5
- Kosova: Writings from News & Letters, 1998-1999**.....\$3.50
- American Civilization on Trial: Black Masses as Vanguard.** by Raya Dunayevskaya, 40th anniversary edition
- Dialectics of Black Freedom Struggles: Race, Philosophy & the Needed American Revolution** by John Alan Each \$8, Special: Both for \$15, including postage.
- Explorations in Dialectical and Critical Theory** From Hegel to Derrida and from Marx to Meszaros.....\$5
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- Myriad Global Crises of the 1980s and the Nuclear World since World War II** by Raya Dunayevskaya.....\$4
- Nationalism, Communism, Marxist-Humanism and the Afro-Asian Revolutions** by Raya Dunayevskaya.....\$4
- Voices from within the Prison Walls** by D. A. Sheldon. Prisoners' views of (in)justice system and organizing from within.\$8 For pamphlet plus donor copy for a prisoner.....\$16
- Working Women for Freedom** by Angela Terrano, Marie Dignan, and Mary Holmes.....\$5
- The Coal Miners' General Strike of 1949-50 and the Birth of Marxist-Humanism In the U.S.** by Andy Phillips and Raya Dunayevskaya.....\$5
- On the 100th Anniversary of the First General Strike in the U.S.** by Terry Moon and Ron Brokmeyer.....\$5

- News and Letters Committees Constitution**.....44 ¢ postage
- Marxist-Humanist Literature Catalog** A full list of publications (includes many not listed here) available from News and Letters Committees.....61 ¢ postage

Archives

- Guides to Collection and Supplement to the Raya Dunayevskaya Collection: Marxist-Humanism: A Half Century of Its World Development** Full description of 17,000-page microfilm collection.....\$4.50
- The Raya Dunayevskaya Collection—Marxist-Humanism: A Half Century of Its World Development** A 17,000-page microfilm collection on 9 reels available from Wayne State University, Detroit, MI 48202.....\$165

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Rights for immigrants!

Los Angeles—On Dec. 10, International Human Rights Day, 250 to 300 people, mostly youth, demonstrated against "Secure Communities" (SC), Sheriff Baca and President Obama's attack on Mexican and Latino/a immigrants. SC forces local police to act as federal Immigration and Customs Enforcement (ICE) agents, supposedly against undocumented immigrants



who have committed serious crimes here. Besides working with ICE, the sheriffs have been setting up traffic checkpoints on the pretext of looking for driving violations and then impounding immigrants' cars.

Signs read "Stop Breaking Up Families," "Baca, Alto a la Poli/Migra," and "Stop the Repression, Sheriff Baca, Stop the ICE/Police Attack." A young Asian woman's sign read, "No borders, No nations, Freedom for all, with or without papers."

We marched to the nearby Federal Detention Building and held a brief rally. A solidarity speech was given by a Filipina from Bayan USA (New Patriotic Alliance). We then marched and rallied outside the central jail. The sheriffs retaliated with a lockdown of all inmates announcing that visitors would not see their families and friends that day.

Speakers at the rally included:

- A woman who told of her unarmed son, Jonathan Cuevas, who was shot in the back and killed by a Lynwood sheriff on Oct. 10, 2010.

- A Black man who said "Immigrant rights are human rights, one country, one humanity, with rights for everyone. We stand with you."

- A woman from the Center for Constitutional Rights who said they have filed a lawsuit to get documents on SC. She said Obama is carrying out the worst of the right-wing agenda by shifting the immigration issue into the criminal justice system.

—Basho

Reverse convictions by tortured confessions

Chicago—Twenty-four Black men are still in jail almost 40 years after the first allegations of torture were brought against the Chicago Police Department. In every case, their confessions were obtained illegally through torture.

On Nov. 5, 30 people, including the mother of Javan Deloney and family members of four or five other torture victims, met at the Chicago Alliance Against Racist and Political Repression (CAARPR) and developed strategies for bringing these cases up.

KEEPING INNOCENTS IN JAIL

Mark C. Clements, an activist who was himself tortured as a 16-year-old and released only two years ago after spending 28 years in jail, spoke about Javan Deloney, whose request for a hearing was continued over and over in the court of Judge Paul P. Biebel, Jr.

Joey Mogul, an attorney, said tortured confessions are illegal by Illinois, U.S., and international law. They must be suppressed even if the confessor is guilty. But for these 24 Black men, their confessions were not suppressed, though many told the court they had been tortured.

Attorney Standish Willis pointed out that the NAACP brought U.S. mass incarceration and the death penalty as **human** rights violations before an international body. Two months after the UN instructed the U.S. to end torture at Abu Ghraib, Guantanamo and Chicago, the FBI arrested Jon Burge, a Chicago police detective who oversaw the torture of scores.

Mr. Willis made many suggestions regarding local organizing. He also said a legal proceeding can force the judge to bring cases forward. We should prosecute the Police Brotherhood for their staunch denial and "code of silence" regarding criminal activity. Messages about Burge torture can be sent out over social media.

PROSECUTE THE TORTURERS

A major concern was torturers who have not been brought to justice: John Byrne, Peter Dignan, John Yucaitis, and others. The Goldston and Sanders reports stated that police torture in Chicago was planned, not spontaneous, and was designed to elicit confessions regardless of guilt and reserved for Blacks only.

The National Coalition of Black Lawyers states:

No less than seven independent investigations and numerous courts have concluded

VOICES FROM THE INSIDE OUT

by Robert Taliaferro

In 2011 we witnessed one of the most revolutionary years in our times. Like dominoes, from Yemen to Syria, Libya to Egypt, to the U.S. and elsewhere, men and women rose up in solidarity against the status quo in their respective countries, demanding justice, equality, economic parity and an end to both political and capital-driven regimes.

The "Occupy Wall Street" movement and its various branches around the world were a serendipitous spontaneity potentially creating a new beginning. The question "What next?" prevails and needs a response in those countries. The Arab Spring and Summer of 2011 and the Occupy Wall Street Movement now must figure out ways to sustain themselves. Acts of civil disobedience are one thing; an active and continuous movement that promulgates sustained revolutionary change is quite another.

Despite all the changes and support of growth that this country involves itself in around the world, 46.2 million U.S. citizens are at or below the poverty level and 40% of Black children live below the poverty level. Additionally, nearly one in six Americans has to rely on some form of non-cash benefit from the government or private entities to sustain even a minimal standard of life. Meanwhile, 46 million are out of work, and about 11 million are underemployed. Most U.S. families, even those with some form of healthcare, can't afford to get sick, especially in households close to the poverty line.

A single parent who cannot afford childcare and who has to maintain employment at all costs due to draconian requirements in their state's welfare system, is under monumental stress, which is often a factor in more severe problems like homelessness, and even prison.

As for prisons, corporations have found a new cash cow in the present-day slavery of the Prison Industrial Complex. Their political allies pad the bottom line. Take Wisconsin: various companies overcharge prisoners and their families and kick back money to the state to keep their monopoly intact; U.S. banks maintain a perpetual prison tax charged to prisoners, families and friends under the farcically designated "release fund."

Ironically, many states have budget shortfalls in part because of the heavy investment they made in the Prison Industrial Complex in the 1990s. Currently over two million U.S. citizens are incarcerated, and nearly 10 million are under some type of extrajudicial sanction. Eventually, the fear-mongered prison building boom was realized for the farce that it was.

that the detectives under Burge's command committed acts of torture, which included electrically shocking men's genitals, ears and lips with a cattle prod or an electric shock box, referred to as 'the n--- box,' suffocating individuals with plastic bags, mock executions, and beatings with telephone books and rubber hoses to extract confessions.

Yet not a single officer has ever been prosecuted for these acts, which violate criminal laws, the victims' Constitutional rights, and international treaties banning the use of torture.

Willis continued, we want to get rid of the statute of limitations on torture. By the time Burge was brought to trial, his crimes were more than 20 years old and he could not be tried for them. He was convicted of obstruction of justice and lying to the FBI (the federal prosecutor had to prove he had tortured in order to prove he lied about it). His sentence of four years means he could be free before the 24 men.

At the meeting we resolved to demand reparations for the men and their families. Besides the 24, many more have served long sentences and suffer lasting effects of torture, including post-traumatic stress disorder. Torture cases involved more than 110 Black men and women; 11 ended up on death row. They and their families deserve compensation, counseling and education for their children.

Finally, there is Richard M. Daley. From his tenure as Cook County States Attorney in 1981 to his retirement as Mayor of Chicago in 2010, Daley gave a wink and a nod to the police department, said Willis. His successor in the chief prosecutor's office, Richard Devine, turned a blind eye to the complaints. The current States Attorney, Anita Alvarez, is dragging her heels when it comes to pursuing evidentiary hearings for the 24 men.

Chicago will continue to suffer if officials refuse to bite the bullet on past crimes that have been ignored. Standing up to Richard M. Daley would not be easy, but it must be done.

Willis ended his talk by saying, "If we continue to come together and organize, victory is certain."

For a history of 35 years of Chicago police torture accusations, go to <http://humanrights.uchicago.edu/chicagotorture/timeline.shtml>

—January

What next in 2012?

Meanwhile, schools and state and national infrastructure suffer. Despite efforts to the contrary, today, with the collapsed economy, aspects of our society may never recover.

The Occupy movement must take a uniquely un-American approach to change, one that radicalizes every aspect of the culture. The idea for change embraced by Arab Spring is the same idea that sparked the Occupy Movement here and around the world.

Ideas are always the instigators of change and the foundations of revolutionary thought. The one constant in all the monumental movements that permeated 2011 were youth of all colors, genders and creeds. If there is to be a revolution in permanence, then it must be imbued within the psyche of our youth, for it is their future that is in question.

Hirabayashi proved ancestry is no crime

On Jan. 2, Gordon Hirabayashi died at age 93. He was the last of three Nisei men who defied the 1942 War Relocation Authority's (WRA) edict ordering all persons of Japanese ancestry on the West Coast to assembly centers. He was convicted of both curfew and evacuation violations. In mid-1943 the U.S. Supreme Court reaffirmed Hirabayashi's convictions as well as those of fellow resisters Fred Korematsu and Minoru Yasui.

Forty years later the three filed petitions for a writ of error *coram nobis* in federal court. In 1987 a three-judge panel of the Ninth Circuit Court ruled in Hirabayashi's favor. Because the government did not appeal, Hirabayashi was exonerated without a Supreme Court ruling.

The Supreme Court dodged a bullet, since they would have had to concede what Gordon Hirabayashi knew all along and stated on the day of his exoneration: "Ancestry is not a crime." A finding of error *coram nobis* would mean that the Supreme Court erred in upholding the racist rationale for the curfew, evacuation and the internment itself.

All of the WRA actions, even the executive order 9066 authorizing them, would have been found unconstitutional and hence illegal. To this day, despite the 1988 Civil Liberties Act, which provided a formal apology and monetary reparations to former internees, those actions remain legal and eminently repeatable.

Hirabayashi's long struggle with the Justice Department's Alien Enemy Control Unit (AECU) paid off because he found attorneys who believed in social justice and because there were laws on the books that adhered to the principle "innocent until proven guilty."

The recently enacted National Defense Authorization Act (NDAA) bodes ill for future Gordon Hirabayashis and for all of us. What has been authorized is indefinite military detention of terrorism suspects. The key word is "suspect": even U.S. citizens can be detained on mere suspicion. Legal impediments like *habeas corpus*, probable cause and timely trials will no longer burden those eager to get on with punishment. The NDAA is a very thin cloak for a more insidious version of the AECU.

—David M'oto

Read the Marxist-Humanist Classic:

Nationalism, Communism, Marxist Humanism and the Afro-Asian Revolutions

by Raya Dunayevskaya

Contents:

Author's 1984 Introduction [see page 4 this issue]

Foreword by Peter Cadogan

1961 Introduction: African Realities and World Politics

The Afro Asian Revolutions

Pan-Africanism

At the Opposite End of the World?

The New Stage of World Capitalism: State Capitalism

The Intellectual Bureaucrats and the Labor Bureaucrats

"Socialism Cannot Be Introduced by a Minority, A Party"

A New Point of Departure in Theory:

Colonial Revolts Under Imperialism

Trotsky's Theory of Permanent Revolution

in the Light of Present Day China

Marxist Humanism

Appendix I: The New Humanism: African Socialism

Appendix II: The Stream Beneath the Straws

To order your copy, see p. 7

Martina Noel Davis-Correia, 1967-2011

I want people to know that we didn't fail. As long as we keep hammering away at this thing, as long as we refuse to give up, we haven't failed. We'll be doing what Troy Davis wanted us to do. Our efforts made an impact and will continue to make an impact. —Martina Correia

A woman who symbolizes all that is meant by "protester," Martina Noel Davis-Correia died of chemotherapy complications Dec. 2, 2011. She battled the inhuman system that is the U.S. in its darkest manifestation: state murder of a defenseless man. People the world over, from former prosecutors/judges to coerced eyewitnesses, believed Ms. Correia's brother, Troy Davis, to be innocent. Nevertheless, the state of Georgia killed him on Sept. 21, 2011.

During the 18 years of her brother's incarceration, Correia's powerful voice catapulted her into the boards and upper echelons of major human rights organizations. She served as chair of the steering committee for Amnesty International's USA program to abolish the death penalty. In 2010 AI's Irish Section awarded her the Sean McBride Award for Outstanding Contributions to Human Rights. And in 2009 the ACLU presented her the Georgia Civil Liberties Award while The Southern Center for Human Rights granted her the Frederick Douglass award.

Homeless Queer Youth

Chicago—About 30% of homeless youth in the U.S. are Queer. Many become homeless after being thrown out of their homes by families who reject them. And Queer youth are outing themselves at younger ages.

As homeless Queer youth Jeremiah Beaverly, who grew up in Wisconsin and Illinois, told NPR: "The day after my 18th birthday this year, my adopted parent kicked me out. I was really infatuated with this guy, and she was listening to my phone calls. She started telling my family, 'He is this, he is that, he is gay,' and talking about me as if I wasn't part of the family."

There is so much homophobia and transphobia that there is little assistance for Queer youth. They often are locked into a cycle of instability and poverty. They are not safe in group homes. Many federally-run homes have long-established discrimination.

Zero, a homeless Gay youth in Utah, described street life to a *Q Salt Lake* reporter as dangerous and painful but homeless youth treat one another like family: "We had been on the streets in one city for less than a week. I was hungry and hadn't slept for days. I found another homeless youth who had some crackers. We found another who had half a gallon of milk. In no time, we had a small group of strangers gathered on a street corner, each offering what they had in their pockets."

Queer homeless youth are more likely to be sexually assaulted, abuse alcohol and other drugs, suffer from depression, have unprotected sex and attempt suicide.

There are those taking actions to help:

- Writer and photographer Samantha Box has been documenting homeless Queer youth for seven years. Most recently she wrote of the Metropolitan Community Church's Sylvia's Place in New York City. Named for the Stonewall Rebellion's heroine Sylvia Rivera, it is the only emergency shelter specifically for homeless Queer youth.

- The Atlantan Sisters of Perpetual Indulgence, in Atlanta, Ga., run a six-bedroom shelter, the Saint Lost & Found hotline, and a fund for homeless youth to get HIV/STD testing and counseling and to find safe haven.

- Singer Cyndi Lauper, together with West End Intergenerational Residence in New York City, opened the city's first permanent residence specifically for Queer youth ages 8 to 24.

- Chicago's Howard Brown Health Center runs the Broadway Youth Center. Counseling, GED and mentor programs, youth-led workshops, and medical services are among the programs offered for all young people aged 12 to 24, including the homeless.

Those doing day-to-day work with homeless Queer youth help show the kind of world that is possible: a world where all are regarded as truly human and treated as such, including getting the help they need.

—Elise Barclay



Martina Correia being interviewed on prison grounds hours before a last-minute stay saved Troy Davis from execution in 2008.

Correia was also honored for work to raise awareness in the prevention of breast cancer: President of the National Black Leadership Initiative on Cancer and member of the National Breast Cancer Coalition.

Martina's day job as lab manager at OB/GYN Associates Savannah, continued up to her own diagnosis in March 2001. She was a student, a nurse, and a veteran of the first Gulf War and followed the demanding profession of Army Flight Nurse. She singly raised her sons Antoné Dejaun Davis-Correia and Ricardo Chambers.

Virginia Davis, mother of 10 of whom Martina was the eldest, was also an activist who protested until her death at 65. Virginia's death was shocking because, in good health, she

took a nap and didn't wake up. This occurred after the U.S. Supreme Court refused to hear Troy's case, paving the way for his execution.

Martina never gave up her battle against injustice, the death penalty, poverty and lack of opportunity. "She was prepared to go every round and never back down." "Wherever people are demanding justice and freedom, her echo will be nearby."

To hear her passionate voice as she struggled to save Troy's life, go to <http://atlanta.indymedia.org/local/georgia-america-and-world-loses-martina-correia>

When philosophers and political theorists interpret current events or the movement from below, people like Martina Correia will be guiding their thoughts as they restructure their ideas on human possibilities.

—Jan

Pariah and Brother to Brother fire up Queer film

Wherever the bird with no feet flew she found trees with no limbs.
—Audre Lorde

It is audacious for Dee Rees to begin *Pariah* with an image of Black women that today's film is all too comfortable with, a scantily-clad pole dancer, and then cut to her film's protagonist, Alike, a character that has little precedent in commercial film—a thoughtful, searching Black Lesbian teenager who feels out of place among the strongly defined gender roles of the Lesbian club she is at with her best friend from the neighborhood, Laura. It is part of *Pariah's* success that writer-director Rees builds these questions about race and gender representation into the film naturally, as a reflection of Alike's own exploration of her identity and desire.

The funniest such scene involves a "white" strap-on dildo that leads to a disastrous attempt at romance. And if it is impossible to discuss that without sounding kind of nasty, in fact it is an incredibly touching, innocent moment. That strap-on represents desire displaced and twisted, much as the switchblades and hot rods in Nicholas Ray's *Rebel Without a Cause* (1955) did, before those images became teen movie clichés.

Pariah actually has a lot in common with *Rebel Without a Cause*, including the pained family dynamics—with the super-uptight mother as the weakest characterization in either film, although Kim Wayans does a good job in an unsympathetic part. Adepero Oduye is as much a revelation as James Dean. She portrays Alike with all the luminosity required for a new type of character. When she smiles, shyly and knowingly, you might be watching the first-ever filmed smile, or some classic moment of Lillian Gish or Nina Mae McKinney. Her performance is about as far from cliché as one can go.

Pariah also touches upon class differences, even as between A-student Alike's ability to impress teachers with her poetry and go on to college contrasted with Laura's struggle to stay off the streets by working low-paying jobs and to get her GED. This is the world as most of us experience it—with relatively few real "bad guys," but lots of hurt and precious little warmth to go around.

Leaving home for college won't be the end of Alike's story. The tangle of pathologies—capitalism, racism, sexism, homophobia—that make up so much of American life today will continue to surround her as they do all of us. But we see the beginning of her voice, as she struggles to speak for herself—a true daughter of Audre Lorde, and all who fought to create the space for Black Lesbians' voices to be heard. With any justice, the revelations in *Pariah* should become a beginning of a generation's story. If not then the worse for us all, as usual. But see it, you'll be blown away.

—Tim Finnigan

QUEER NOTES

by Suzanne Rose

After six days of 24-hour-a-day activism, LGBT occupiers, activists, and human rights groups in Seoul, South Korea, won the Seoul Student Rights Ordinance, with all clauses in the original draft included. The draft that calls for non-discrimination against LGBT students as well as their active protection passed the council with a vote of 54 in favor, 28 against and four abstentions. The Educational Committee of the Seoul Metropolitan Council had tried to delete the clauses on LGBT students. This is a significant event in the LGBT history of Seoul because the activists fought face to face against homophobic individuals and groups.

More than 1,000 members of the LGBT community marched in Manila, Philippines, to demand equal rights and an end to discrimination as well as more support for an AIDS program. Progressive Organization of Gays in the Philippines spokesperson Goya Candelario said that the organization is pushing for a law against the discrimination that denies LGBT people jobs and social services.

Eighty thousand people in over 124 countries have joined a campaign on Change.org calling on Ecuador's Minister of Health to investigate and close more than 200 Lesbian "ex-Gay clinics" that allegedly use torture techniques to turn homosexuals straight. A coalition of leading Ecuadoran women's rights activists is leading the campaign.

In England, a petition was started to ask the government to formally pardon the late Gay mathematician/World War II code-breaker Alan Turing. Turing was prosecuted for his sexual orientation in 1952 and forced to undergo chemical castration. He committed suicide two years later at the age of 41.

I recently watched *Brother to Brother*, a partly fictional/partly true story about a radical Queer artist circle within the Harlem Renaissance that called themselves the Niggerati. It was a surprisingly good film that attempts to introduce an important tendency from the 1920s to a younger audience today....

Well-known artists like Langston Hughes and Zora Neal Hurston were in this milieu, as well as lesser known artists like Wallace Thurman and Richard Bruce Nugent....

[I]t represents (as far as I know) one of the first openly Queer tendencies within the Harlem Renaissance and it had an explicit class critique of the Black middle class (what the artists called the Black bourgeoisie). This tendency should be contextualized in important historical developments of their period that were shaping a new generation of Black folks, a "new negro"....

The film *Brother to Brother* portrays their critique as total. The Niggerati were frustrated by the self-censorship as well as white-imposed censorship on Black artists, which they felt reflected efforts by the Black middle class to present an acceptable Black art that fit the image of Black folks that the white establishment wanted to see. The Niggerati desired instead an open exploration of issues in the Black community, from Queer sexualities to interracial relationships to the lived class experience of Black proletarians.

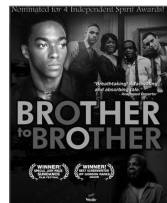
What I especially like is the ethos among the Niggerati artists....They were bold, undaunted by the condemnations from Black "leaders" and middle class artists. This is an important reminder for us today, in a climate where militant ideas and actions are frowned upon by the right and much of the left, that it takes passion, conviction and confidence to advance and expand the struggle for, and expression of, liberation....

So that's the partly true story within the film. The partly fictional story is about the developing relationship between an elderly Richard Bruce Nugent and a younger Queer Black artist who is going to school in New York City. The younger character, Perry...gets kicked out of his family's home for being Gay. He gets ridiculed by his Black classmates for bringing up questions of homophobia and sexual oppression rather than focusing solely on racial oppression. (Perry questions, are the two mutually exclusive?) He gets physically attacked for being Queer. He is objectified by white lovers and friends who either knowingly or unknowingly fetishize his skin color, his supposedly racial features, etc.

The film is a little mechanical at certain points but overall presents a compelling historical and fictional account of the complex relationships between race, gender, sexuality and class. So go peep it!

—From *Nothing but a Human*, by L Boogie

To see the entire post on L Boogie's blog, visit: <http://nothingbutahuman.wordpress.com/2011/10/02/brother-to-brother-queer-voices-from-the-harlem-renaissance/>



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WORKSHOPTALKS
Afghan lives and freedom
sucked into U.S. quagmire

Widening labor/peasant revolts threaten Chinese rulers

continued from p. 1

capitalists. The government acknowledged 8,150 "mass incidents," a substantial number, back in 1992. By 2004 they tallied more than 70,000, and fully 180,000 in 2010. Actions by peasants resisting land grabs even outnumber factory strikes.

As the shaky global economy has slowed down or at least flattened China's manufacturing for export, workers have accumulated fresh grievances that they have been able to settle only by going on strike. Strikers face not only factory management, but the police forces defending the state-capitalist regime against local strikes that might resonate elsewhere, as did the auto parts strikes in 2010 that shut down all Honda auto production. (See "Strikers in China demand own unions, defy capitalism," Sept.-Oct. 2010 *N&L*.)

In December, companies slashing year-end bonuses—not Wall Street-style, but part of annual wages paid before migrant workers' return to their homes for New Year's—forced workers to strike at, among others, Guangzhou Aries Auto Parts in Guangzhou and LG Display in Nanjing. The more than 2,000 workers at LG Display went on strike not only because their bonuses were slashed, even as they worked overtime and inflation increased, but because the Korean-owned company issued bonuses more than five times larger for its Korean-national employees. Strikers returned to work after the company restored and doubled their bonuses.

Workers at state-owned Chengdu Steel in Sichuan province went on strike on Jan. 4. They were demanding not only higher wages, but also full disclosure of the salaries of the factory managers. According to *China Labour Watch*, the picketing steelworkers marched thousands strong and blocked traffic at an expressway for several hours until police dispersed them with pepper spray—as if they were part of Occupy UC-Davis.

OCCUPY MOVEMENT INSPIRES WORKERS

Strikers too adopted lessons learned from the Occupy movement, and returned to establish a tent camp at the steel plant. Police attacked them again, with pepper spray and billy clubs, but strikers held out three days before they were forced back to work. They did not get the 30% wage increase they had demanded, but were promised around 15%, a success that only partially covers raging inflation.

The spark for workers to strike at a Hitachi factory in Shenzhen on Dec. 4 was the plant's impending sale to U.S. company Western Digital. With no guarantee that their seniority would carry over—which threatened their right to severance pay—workers at Hitachi's Hailiang Storage Products went on strike, while more than 2,000 workers began a sit-in to prevent the already-produced disk drives from leaving the factory.

When 100 police in riot gear forced their way into the plant, 1,000 workers, primarily women, surrounded the police and stopped them. Workers from other factories had joined in against the police attack, cursed them for intervening for a foreign capitalist, and bore witness to the blood shed by the police.

Hitachi, after the police attack failed, tried dividing the production workers from the office workers the sit-ins were blocking. Hitachi leaned not only on "the rule of law" (the rioting police) but on the union, since every strike in China has to be a wildcat strike. On Dec. 24 an official of the Shenzhen branch of the workers' official union, the All China Federation of Trade Unions, sharply warned striking workers of their illegal occupation. The sit-in continued.

Little wonder that China's authorities live in fear that Wukan, or Chengdu Steel, or Hailiang Storage, or the next demonstration against an ecological disaster, if not quashed, might be the one that could not be stopped from spreading. Provinces and cities have had to raise the minimum wage as much as 27% (the minimum wage is often the maximum wage) as the standard of living has continued to crash and factories face a shortage of young workers. Yet the province at the center of production, Guangdong, has postponed implementing its 20% increase, as a sop to foreign capitalists, no matter the consequences.

CHINESE LEADERS FEAR ARAB SPRING

In the year that the revolutions of Arab Spring have toppled or threatened regimes throughout North Africa and the Middle East and beyond, Chairman Hu Jintao's regime has been spooked by the mere threat of Arab Spring spreading East. The regime even blocked all references on search engines to "Jasmine Revolution" after activists from abroad called for demonstrations under that name.

But they know the threats to their control remain from within, and from below. The National People's Congress is working to change the law to allow police to secretly detain suspects accused of corruption or of threats to state security for six months, which would include opposing Party leadership, or terrorism, the kind of charge we are becoming familiar with in the U.S.

The reason for their fear is doubled because exactly 25 years ago month-long demonstrations beginning in Hefei, in Anhui province, by young students and workers under slogans like "No democracy, no moderniza-

tion," shook the regime. By the time demonstrations spread to the factories of Shanghai (and even Shenzhen, the new city created to join foreign capital to the labor power of China's proletariat) and then to Beijing, the Communist Party of China was still in power, but the Party succession for Deng Xiaoping was shaken up as Chairman Hu Yaobang was purged.

Two years later in 1989, marches that began as memorials for Hu Yaobang took hold across China and led to thousands occupying Beijing's Tiananmen Square. Popular support stopped a military attack in May, but the army on June 4 massacred thousands in Tiananmen Square and Chengdu. The Party leadership, again in shambles, settled on the boss of Shanghai, Jiang Zemin, as Chairman and successor. The one use the Communist Party makes of Marxism, from Mao Zedong till today, is to be able to identify movements of liberation and co-opt or crush them.

STATE-CAPITALIST DRIVE FOR PRODUCTION

The demands of production are what drive the state-capitalist regime. The demand for resources, especially for coal, oil and gas, has driven domestic and foreign policy. At home it means aggressively pushing back Uyghur land rights in Xinjiang to maximize extraction of oil and gas, and pushing aside the December environmental protest against building another coal-fired power plant in Heiyuan.

Palestinian solidarity



In Chicago on Dec. 31, well over 100 demonstrators came to show solidarity with Palestinians by releasing 300 black balloons in downtown Grant Park—one balloon for each child killed during Israel's 22-day assault on the Gaza Strip three years ago.

On the International Day of Solidarity with Palestinian people, Nov. 29, we reflected on the current situation and what needs to be done to achieve peace in the Middle East. While the world commemorates this day and shows support for the Palestinian people with special events, meetings and vigils, Israel continues to defy the international community by granting new approvals for expanding settlements in the occupied territory.

The so-called "peace process" has once again reached a cul-de-sac after the recent construction of hundreds of housing units, which seriously damages the credibility of the negotiations, and increases mass despair in the region.

To commemorate this day, the Secretary-General of the UN Ban Ki-moon stated: "An overwhelming international consensus exists on the need to end the occupation that began in 1967, address the fundamental security concerns of both parties, find a solution to the refugee issue and see Jerusalem emerge from negotiation as the capital of two States."

With respect to Ban Ki-moon's statement, the Palestinian Working Woman Society for Development (PWWS) believes that resolving the roots of the conflict relies on resolving the issue of the Palestinian refugees, by applying UN Security Council Resolutions 194 and 181. Mr. Ban Ki-moon has to take the necessary measures to force the Israeli government to abide by International Law, and to be held accountable for its regional and international responsibilities.

The Palestinian president Mr. Abbas addressed the UN Security Council in September to apply for full membership of Palestine in the UN. However, the proposal was rejected in the Security Council due to pressure from the U.S.-Israeli lobby.

Palestinians continue to struggle against the Israeli Occupation. PWWS persists to cross all physical and mental borders enforced upon us by the occupation, in order to obtain self-determination and build independent sovereignty. As an essential player of the national social and political arena, PWWS aims to build a free democratic Palestinian society based on social justice and gender equality. In order to facilitate a broad civil development, PWWS is committed to spreading awareness among men and women on issues relating to human rights and gender issues.

PWWS would like to express our deepest gratitude to our international friends and partners, and encourage you all to participate in public observances for justice and peace in the Middle East and the entire world.

—PWWS

Even as the need for world capitalists' access to China's factories for outsourcing jobs blunted attempts at international sanctions over the last 25 years, China has been a prime destination for resources from outlaw military juntas like Burma and theocratic Iran. China has used its veto in the Security Council to limit sanctions on Iran's ally Bashar al-Assad in Syria. For that reason an anti-Assad demonstration in Chicago in December was held in front of the Chinese Consulate.

Supporting North Korea under Kim Jong-il, and presumably now under his son Kim Jong-un, has left the tail sometimes wagging the dog. U.S.-China frictions or not, President Obama's decision to reorient U.S. defenses against China, including stationing fresh troops in Australia, has created remarkably little debate.

Obama has now made "insourcing"—reversing outsourcing and returning jobs to U.S. workers—a goal of his administration. Capitalists have voiced such a goal for a year or two as labor costs in China, both in wages and in the increasing rebelliousness of Chinese workers, have risen. But they want insourcing only on their own terms: first of all a race to the bottom in the right-to-work mostly Southern states, then the push last year to strip union rights and benefits from workers in Rust Belt states like Wisconsin, Indiana and Ohio. All the more reason for workers in the U.S. and China to be in solidarity. We have a common enemy to overcome.

Flint's emergency manager targets labor

Flint, Mich.—In November, Flint was placed under the control of an emergency manager for the second time. This time is different, because under a law passed in March of last year the financial manager can end collective bargaining agreements (with state approval), run up debt, increase property taxes and sell property. The first time around Flint was put under the control of an emergency **financial** manager. The word "financial" is dropped from the new law because the powers of the manager are much broader than finances. (See "Vetoing city elections," May-June 2011 *N&L*.) The emergency manager has a contract that requires the City of Flint to pay him \$170,000 per year.

It is too early to tell if the manager will break collective bargaining agreements. The experience of Pontiac, a smaller city 35 miles south, may be instructive. The manager there received state approval to end the collective bargaining agreement for 11 police dispatchers last June. Last month, the Pontiac manager listed city property for sale, including five fire stations, two cemeteries, two landfills, 11 water pumping stations, the public library and the police station. The police department has been abolished and the city has contracted with the Oakland County Sheriff for police protection. The manager plans to increase property taxes by 5.4 mills to fund police and fire pension and healthcare funds, and possibly to raise taxes more this year to compensate General Motors for "overpaying" its taxes. The Pontiac manager's contract requires the City of Pontiac to pay him \$150,000 per year.

Detroit, which the state is reviewing for possible appointment of an emergency manager, is trying to cut \$330 million from a \$1.2 billion budget. The Detroit public schools system already has an emergency manager.

The small cities of Benton Harbor and Ecorse also have emergency managers who are each paid \$132,000 per year from what is left of their city's money. Except for Ecorse, all of the cities in question, Detroit, Flint, Pontiac, and Benton Harbor, have majority African-American populations.

There has been plenty of protest, from public employee unions and others. A lawsuit was filed on behalf of 28 residents and there is an active effort to overturn the emergency manager law. The real problem is not, for the most part, that the local governments have been mismanaged, it is that they are poverty stricken. The state has cut business taxes by 86%, which has had an impact on school financing. Racing to the bottom is not an answer. There was a time when "reform" meant improving the lives of people. The inability of capitalism to reform itself is clearer every time a new crisis emerges.

—Dan B.

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Haiti two years after the earthquake

Two years after the devastating earthquake, Haiti's disaster continues:

More than half a million Haitians live in displacement camps, primarily in tents and plastic tarps. Vast numbers, particularly women, live in great insecurity. Only a little over 10,000 new homes have been constructed; barely several thousand old homes restored.

Cholera has infected 500,000, killing close to 7,000. Though access to clean water has improved, decent sanitation is lacking for hundreds of thousands.

With no prospect of work, thousands upon thousands are fleeing their country, often in unsafe boats. Recently dozens died as their boat sank near Cuban waters. Thousands of others have crossed into the Dominican Republic and migrated to South America. An estimated 4,000 have arrived in Brazil.

At the same time, within the misery of the last two years, Haitian activists and masses have once again sought to determine their own lives:

Housing: A housing rights movement has developed. Among its demands is that the government needs to create public housing on the claimed land; not alone building houses, but insuring access to water, electricity and sewage. In many areas activist groups have local initiatives to repair old housing and construct new homes.

Agriculture and Food Subsistence: Today there is a new movement to return to the countryside. Peasant organizations, including many women activists, are calling for restoration of small-farm sustainable agriculture. "Restoration" because after the slave rebellion and Haitian revolution (1791-1804), the Haitian masses resisted any continuation of slavery-era large plantations. Foreign ownership of land was prohibited. The Haitian masses wanted no return of a slave economy. A rural economy of small subsistence farms and decentralization was the Haitian reality in the 19th century. With the 20th century U.S. occupation of Haiti, servitude was restored in a new way and continues to this day. (See the newly published *Haiti: The Aftershocks of History*, by Laurent Dubois.) Twenty-plus years of neoliberal economic policies devastated the countryside,

Speakout for the 99%

Chicago—Dozens of activists from Occupy Chicago, Jobs with Justice, the Jane Addams Senior Caucus, Iraq Veterans Against the War, News and Letters Committees and other groups rallied outside the American Economic Association (AEA) conference here on Jan. 6. The establishment economists were invited to share a sidewalk meal of Rahm-en noodles (named in honor of anti-labor Mayor Rahm Emanuel). A banner was hung across from the Hyatt Hotel showing "Trickle Down Economics" as Mr. Moneybags pissing on the poor.

Spokespeople of the 99% delivered stories of how their lives have been harmed by the economic policies promoted by the AEA as apologists for the 1%:

Ruth Long: "I'll be 86 years of age in March. I am a leader of the Jane Addams Senior Caucus here in Chicago. I depend upon SSI, Medicaid and public housing to meet my basic needs. Last week I got an increase of \$24 in my monthly SSI allotment—but that is more than offset by the cost of living, which is going up higher and faster than funds are being allocated.

SHAME ON THE ONE PERCENTERS

"I know lots of vulnerable and defenseless Americans who depend on these safety net programs, and who are suffering because of the greed and selfishness of the 1%. There are 34 million children dependent on Medicaid. There are seniors—indeed whole families—living in abandoned vehicles and under viaducts, with no insurance if they fall ill.

"Shame on the one percenters for standing atop and perpetuating this economic gulag. Shame on the one percenters whose hearts are so closed that they don't recognize the needs of ordinary people struggling to survive. And shame on those economists whose work renders such people and their suffering invisible."

Fred M., News and Letters Committees: "Having been homeless, you learn that too many people are willing to step right past your body on the street. To the extent that the Occupy movement has given the homeless a place to be heard, it is a revolutionary development.

WHAT KIND OF WORLD TO LIVE IN?

"Homelessness is a world condition, and includes Mohamed Bouazizi with his vendor cart being brutalized by police, the landless movement of Brazil, the shackdwellers' movement in South Africa, and the prison strikes in Georgia and Pelican Bay—the movement of those most dispossessed by the capitalist economy in its deep and bottomless crisis. We are rising up to demand our rights and dignity, not charity, which is a joke."

Vince Emanuele: "I am a member of Iraq Veterans Against War. We support improved benefits for vets, and we also see the need for reparations being paid to the people of Iraq and Afghanistan for the damage we have done to those countries.

"There's a very real human consequence to our government's actions. This is not simply a financial issue. It's a question of what kind of world do we want to live in."
—Marxist-Humanist Participant

compelled migration into Port-au-Prince for survival, and left Haiti more and more dependent on imported food. Where farming was 40% of the economy a decade ago, it is only 25% today. More than 50% of Haitian food comes from abroad, whereas several decades ago only 20% was imported.

Jobs and Port-au-Prince: Today the national government barely functions, while hundreds of non-governmental organizations (NGOs), a mixed bag of good and bad intentions and effort, continue their dominant role. Now private investment has entered with a host of projects from schools to promises of manufacturing and assembly factories. There is no doubt that Haiti needs jobs. Hundreds of thousands in Port-au-Prince barely survive.

But who decides? Who decides what kind of jobs, what kind of housing and development in the city, what kind of farming and shelter in the countryside? "Good-hearted" businessmen? "Well-intentioned" NGOs? Haitian elites and governmental bureaucrats? U.S. economic-political, and if need be, military intervention? Or will the Haitian masses once again, as they did in their early 19th century revolution, be able to take matters into their own hands, and strive to determine their own future?
—Eugene Walker

EDITORIAL Occupy persists despite raids

continued from p. 1

the partly Tahrir Square-inspired Wisconsin actions and the California prisoners' hunger strikes to the fully national and international Occupy Movement. After the successful Nov. 2 general strike in Oakland and its shutdown of one of the country's biggest ports, the threat to the rulers loomed even larger.

The coast-to-coast pattern of brutality against peaceful occupiers, supporters and observers left no room for illusions that the police, as part of "the 99%," will disobey the rulers' orders to smash the movement. The ongoing attacks on the movement are the visible edge of counter-revolution.

NATIONALLY COORDINATED STATE TERROR

Local authorities did not act alone. Reporters uncovered evidence of national coordination of the attacks on occupations. Like the political system, the economic system, and the mass media, the legal system functions to perpetuate the dominance of what is rhetorically called the 1% over the 99%—that is, the rule of the capitalist class over all society and the subjection of the working class, employed or unemployed. This is unseparated from its disproportionate impact on people of color, women, transgendered people, homeless people, and other groups.

Far from killing the movement, these attacks fueled the already planned international Nov. 17 Day of Action marking the two-month anniversary of Occupy Wall Street. Over 10,000 rallied in New York City alone, with thousands more in dozens of cities across the country and around the world. Student strikes took place in nearly 100 campuses nationwide. Labor unions converged with Occupy protesters to take bridges in several cities.

Protests, general assemblies and many occupations are still ongoing. Major actions include the Dec. 12 West Coast port shutdown called by Occupy Oakland. (See p. 3.) In December Occupiers in 25 cities helped occupy homes to block evictions and reclaim vacant houses for the homeless.

WHAT NEXT FOR THE OCCUPY MOVEMENT?

Many liberals and leftists advised the Occupy movement to give up occupations altogether and settle into the timeworn patterns of political organizing. The form of organization worked out in city after city—drawing inspiration from Arab Spring and the Spanish M15 or *indignados* movement—cannot be dismissed as "camping." Even the apparently simple act of occupying public space involves a challenge to the way the state of the "1%" controls "public" spaces and "public" resources, and, as Karl Marx pointed out, is willing to share only one thing with the "99%": the public debt. The general assemblies that are part of the occupations are a move toward direct democracy, as against capitalism's fake democracy with its corporate-financed campaigns, corporate media, national security state, burgeoning prisons, and disenfranchisement of so many people of color. This kind of self-organization is a necessary part of the process of masses transforming themselves and transforming society from the bottom up, without which no social revolution can succeed.

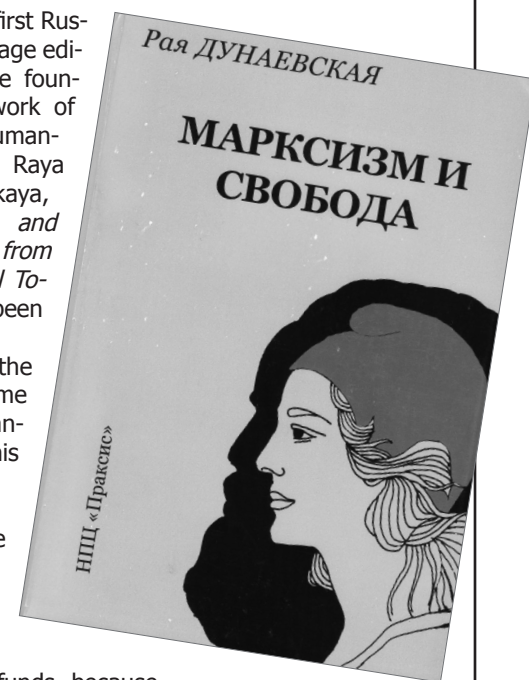
The form of organization is not a be-all and end-all, but without listening to the movement from practice it would be impossible to grasp the meaning of the occupations. Other forms may be worked out—or occupations may proliferate even more, into neighborhoods, schools, and workplaces. This is no time to cut short the self-development of this vital movement. It is rather a time to deepen its reach in both thought and activity.

New Russian edition Marxism and Freedom

The first Russian language edition of the foundational work of Marxist-Humanism by Raya Dunayevskaya, *Marxism and Freedom: from 1776 Until Today*, has been published.

At the same time as we announce this historic publication, the publisher, Praxis Center,

must appeal for funds because most of the books are being held by the printshop which is awaiting payment, money that Praxis does not have. They have turned to News and Letters Committees and our friends and supporters for help in raising the needed \$3,000. Exciting events are taking place in Russia including new revolts against the leadership. Getting *Marxism and Freedom* in the hands of the Russian people could not be more urgent. Please help in this effort in taking responsibility for the idea of freedom.



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Durban climate chaos

continued from p. 1

of saving the climate. Especially pernicious is REDD+ (Reducing Emissions from Deforestation and Forest Degradation), which allows multinational corporations to claim tradable credits for "preserving" forests so that they can continue to pump carbon into the air.

WOMEN, FARMERS, OTHERS FIGHT BACK

Against this, a Global Alliance of Indigenous Peoples and Local Communities against REDD+ was formed. Indigenous peoples and small farmers have long been fighting land grabs made in the name of bio-fuels and environmental protection. As Berenice Sanchez of the Mesoamerica Indigenous Women's Biodiversity Network pointed out, "The UN climate negotiation is not about saving the climate, it is about privatization of forests, agriculture and the air."

Similarly, small farmers organized in Via Campesina denounced Durban's "opening of the doors for agriculture to be included in the carbon markets," and the continuing industrialization of agriculture as opposed to peasant-based agro-ecological agriculture.

In the summit's host country, the National Union of Metalworkers of South Africa issued a statement rejecting market-based solutions to climate change, and pointing out the "need to link our struggles around climate change with global anti-capitalist struggles."

OCCUPY MOVEMENT JOINS IN

The summit preparations themselves illustrated this linkage. The shackdwellers' movement Abahlali baseMjondolo started Occupy KwaMashu to claim housing for 31 families illegally evicted by the municipality of KwaMashu (having previously been evicted due to the 2007 World Cup) so they would not make the town "look bad" for the summit. They also started Occupy Hillary and Occupy Pinetown for people forced out of homes in other areas near Durban. Solidarity came from Occupy COP17, which held protests and daily general assemblies during the summit.

A number of other protests took place, including a march of 5,000 on Dec. 3 calling for climate justice. Over 150 people were thrown out of the conference hall after various actions, including Occupy-style people's mic communications.

What this latest summit made clear yet again is that, while the rulers and their political representatives only push us toward climate catastrophe, a human solution can only come from below.

—Franklin Dmitryev

WORLD IN VIEW

by Gerry Emmett

Nothing has posed the old truth that "the opposite of revolution is war" more starkly than the ongoing struggle for freedom by the people of Syria. In bringing the mass mobilizations that have become known as the Arab Spring, or *al-Thawra* (the Revolution), up against the imperialist maneuverings of all major state powers, an unprecedented situation has been created.

The U.S. naval maneuvers in the Persian Gulf, Iranian threats to block the Strait of Hormuz, and Israeli threats to attack Iran's nuclear program (which they are already doing clandestinely through assassinations and cyber warfare) are now being driven by the rulers' need to respond to the ongoing Syrian Revolution. All imperial powers would have preferred the Revolution burn itself out, so that the status quo—a relatively stable regional Cold War—could be preserved. Having accepted that this may not be possible, the U.S., Israel and Saudi Arabia are trying to make sure it is Iran that ends up the biggest loser by the overthrow of Syria's Assad. At the same time, they are trying to fit this effort into the overall strategic response they've crafted to the Arab Spring.

IMPERIALIST SABERS RATTLE

It is a delicate balancing act and could easily spin off into a regional war—or worse. The regional Cold War has occasionally become a brutally hot war with Israeli attacks on Lebanon and Gaza. The U.S. has already fought two devastating wars in the Gulf.

After a year of revolutionary upheaval, the failure by much of the Left to think through this situation is abysmal, as some have fallen into a hopeless, retrogressive defense of the Syrian Ba'athist regime simply because the U.S. or European powers have paid lip service to its removal. As the farce of the Arab League observers demonstrated, very little help of any material kind has come to the heroic Syrian people who have continued to demonstrate despite over 6,000 killed. No state power on earth has welcomed the revolutionary passions unleashed in the Middle East.

A revolution in Syria would be a huge blow to all these reactionary powers. For them, the Arab Spring is a life and death challenge.

ISRAEL, IRAN AND SAUDIS THREATENED

Assad's billionaire cousin Rami Makhlouf was silenced last year when he said the overthrow of the Ba'athist regime would threaten Israel. But he was correct in the sense that Assad has always been more ready to massacre Palestinians than help them. The cynical Assad regime has also served as an excuse for Israel's own imperialism, sometimes in co-ordination with the Assads. The panic among Israel's rulers as the Arab Spring has reached the West Bank shows the reality: Palestinian resistance is Palestinian existence, imported from nowhere else and ultimately dependent upon no outside state actors.

To recognize this, as the democratizing Arab Spring uprisings demand, would force a rethinking of the entire history of Israel. This is dawning upon more and more Israelis. The way their state has developed—be-

Syria and revolution

coming ever more reactionary, and at times even genocidal—was not their only possible historic development.

The challenge to the Islamic Republic of Iran if the current Syrian regime falls is no less profound. All pretenses of genuine revolution having been cast away, the Iranian rulers have staked all on the ability to project their legitimacy through military means. This has been whittled down to their Lebanese clients, Hezbollah, and the go-between Assad regime. If Assad falls, it strips away even this facade. The restive people of Iran—workers, women, national minorities, those who made the Revolution of 1979—will have more ability to defy the rulers.

Finally, the reactionary Wahhabi royals of Saudi Arabia are aware that any spread of democratic ideas in the region is a challenge to their truly archaic, religious fundamentalist state.

RULERS' STRATEGY VS. AL-THAWRA

The strategy that is being pursued by the world's rulers in relation to the Arab Spring is the promotion of a "moderate Islamist" politics modeled after Turkey's Justice and Development Party, as seen in Tunisia's Ennahda Party. Funds have been provided by the Saudis, which may help explain why the Salafists, who are more reactionary than the Muslim Brotherhood, did so well in the Egyptian elections. It can only succeed by limiting the movement to an electoral one, with electoral demands—not the desire for a whole new way of living seen in Tahrir Square.

This is the field that a newly energized regional Left will be fighting on. The battle of ideas is being defined in Tunisia, Egypt, and beyond, a year after Mohamed Bouazizi's and Hussein Nagi Felhi's actions declared the necessity of a new world.

Kim dynasty drags on

The body of late North Korean dictator Kim Jong-il will be placed on display in Pyongyang, beside that of his father Kim Il-sung. The official news agency reported "natural wonders" following Kim's death, including that "...a Manchurian crane was seen flying around [Kim's] statue three times before alighting on a tree. The crane stayed there for quite a while with its head bowed and flew in the direction of Pyongyang."

His son Kim Jong-un has been named new head of state and will be surrounded by advisers, like uncle-in-law Chang Song-taek. They will make sure that the system stays intact, including the doctrine of "military first" when it comes to appropriating food and other necessities. For them there is too much at stake to allow divisions to show, which might encourage rebellion.

The North Korean state has managed to reduce its "materialism" to that one idea, military first. It is what ties the alleged miraculous deeds of the Kims to the tacit non-existence of the people, who are left to starve when the leaders deem it necessary. A brutal example of the failure of Stalinist state-capitalism that continues to exist largely because no other capitalist state wants to pick up the expenses of its collapse.



Protest in Baniyas, Syria, May 19, 2011.

Breivik whitewash?

Norway may not try Anders Behring Breivik for murdering 69 young people on Utoya Island last July 22. He was first declared psychotic and unfit to stand trial. After wide public outrage, the government has agreed to seek a second opinion. A no-trial decision would deny a reckoning with Breivik's motives and the ideology that inspired his massacre.

Norwegian police have confirmed that Breivik was in Liberia, Africa, in 2002 at the time he claimed to be meeting there with his true role models, Serb war criminals. He wrote in his book: "I had the privilege of meeting one of the greatest living war heroes of Europe at the time, a Serbian crusader and war hero who had killed many Muslims in battle."

At the time Serbs were supplying weapons to the regime of Charles Taylor, warlord-president and protégé of Muammar Qaddafi, and ally of U.S. televangelist Pat Robertson, who diverted Christian "relief" money from Rwanda to finance Taylor's blood diamond mines. Taylor was removed from office under pressure from various insurgents and today resides in the Hague where he is being tried for crimes against humanity.

A Breivik whitewash would show how far some in Europe are from coming to terms with its own war criminals. He dreamed of continuing the work of monsters like Radovan Karadzic and Ratko Mladic in the mass murder of Muslims and their "sympathizers." He envisioned millions dead. He was not any more insane than those war criminals, or current hate-mongers like Robert Spencer.

2012 is the 10th anniversary of the start of the Bosnian genocide. We have not forgotten.

Free Angye Gaona!

*I collect the rootlets of thought.
I carry them on my eroded back
next to the wild oblivion falling from me.*

—Angye Gaona

The U.S.-allied Colombian government has falsely charged Surrealist poet and activist Angye Gaona with "drug trafficking" and "rebellion." She is being held under house arrest, her trial scheduled to begin Jan. 23.

Gaona is an accomplished poet, and her voice is taken seriously by a wide public. The state wishes to silence her for her eloquent support of the rights of Indigenous people and workers. She has charged that Colombia has an essentially genocidal policy toward the Indigenous, who are commonly driven off their land through violence so corporations can exploit the mineral or agricultural resources.

This phony prosecution is in itself an act of terrorism. The Colombian government held Gaona for six months last year without formal charges. She was released then due to international pressure.

The absurdity of the drugs charge shows the desperation of the authorities. Thousands of political prisoners are currently held in Colombia, trade unionists continue to be killed on a regular basis, and violence continues toward Indigenous people and Afro-Colombians.

Protests can be sent to:
Al Sr. Juez de Conocimiento,
Centro de Servicios Juzgado Único Penal
del Circuito Especializado De Cartagena Adjunto
Centro Barrio San Diego,
Calle De La Cruz No 9-42,
Antiguo Colegio Panamericano 2º Piso,
Cartagena de Indias,
Colombia, South America

NEWS AND LETTERS COMMITTEES

Who We Are And What We Stand For

News and Letters Committees is an organization of Marxist-Humanists that since its birth has stood for the abolition of capitalism, both in its private property form as in the U.S., and its state property form, as it has historically appeared in state-capitalist regimes calling themselves Communist as in Russia and China. We stand for the development of new human relations, what Marx first called a new Humanism.

News & Letters was founded in 1955, the year of the Detroit wildcat strikes against Automation and the Montgomery Bus Boycott against segregation—activities which signaled a new movement from practice that was itself a form of theory. *News & Letters* was created so that the voices of revolt from below could be heard unseparated from the articulation of a philosophy of liberation.

Raya Dunayevskaya (1910–1987), founder of the body of ideas of Marxist-Humanism, became Chairwoman of the

National Editorial Board and National Chairwoman of the Committees from its founding to 1987. Charles Denby (1907–83), a Black production worker, author of *Indignant Heart: A Black Worker's Journal*, became editor of the paper from 1955 to 1983. Dunayevskaya's works, *Marxism and Freedom, from 1776 until Today* (1958), *Philosophy and Revolution: From Hegel to Sartre and from Marx to Mao* (1973), and *Rosa Luxemburg, Women's Liberation, and Marx's Philosophy of Revolution* (1982) spell out the philosophic ground of Marx's Humanism internationally, as *American Civilization on Trial* concretizes it on the American scene and shows the two-way road between the U.S. and Africa.

This body of ideas challenges all those desiring freedom to transcend the limitations of post-Marx Marxism, beginning with Engels. In light of the crises of our nuclearly armed world, it becomes imperative not only to reject what is, but

to reveal and further develop the revolutionary Humanist future inherent in the present. The new visions of the future which Dunayevskaya left us in her work from the 1940s to the 1980s are rooted in her discovery of Marx's Marxism in its original form as a new Humanism and in her re-creation of that philosophy for our age as Marxist-Humanism. This is recorded in the documents on microfilm and open to all under the title *The Raya Dunayevskaya Collection—Marxist-Humanism: A Half-Century of Its World Development*.

Dunayevskaya's philosophic comprehension of her creation and development of Marxist-Humanism, especially as expressed in her 1980s writings, presents the vantage point for re-creating her ideas anew. Seeking to grasp that vantage point for ourselves and make it available to all who struggle for freedom, we have published Dunayevskaya's original 1953 philosophic breakthrough

and her final 1987 Presentation on the Dialectics of Organization and Philosophy in *The Philosophic Moment of Marxist-Humanism* (1989), and donated new supplementary volumes to the *Raya Dunayevskaya Collection*. News and Letters Committees aims at developing and concretizing this body of ideas for our time.

In opposing this capitalistic, racist, sexist, heterosexist, class-ridden society, we have organized ourselves into a committee form of organization rather than any elitist party "to lead." We participate in all class and freedom struggles, nationally and internationally. As our *Constitution* states: "It is our aim...to promote the firmest unity among workers, Blacks and other minorities, women, youth and those intellectuals who have broken with the ruling bureaucracy of both capital and labor." We do not separate mass activities from the activity of thinking. Send for a copy of the *Constitution of News and Letters Committees*.