

March 7, 1983

Dear Kevin:

Considering how bad the mail is, I may very well see you before you read this, since I'm leaving Saturday morning (American #320, arrives New York at 1:20 PM), but I wanted to let you know the following on the question of the Italian translation.

First, Rosanna Giammanco did very well indeed (how could you possibly give her as little as \$10?) and I have just written an acknowledgement, which praised her and said that we might wish to publish excerpts and would like to know which name she would wish us to use. I also mentioned that I hope I see her during my visit to N.Y. As for Taccinardi, so far as I know, his book has not yet been published. But I was so impressed with the introduction and the material Olga found in our files that dates back to 1978 that I'm now asking Eugene and Bess to start a correspondence in hopes of meeting with him this summer in Italy.

I was amazed at getting a check for \$30, forwarded by you from your friend at CUNY. I would prefer that you would hold any other checks like that and give them to me all at once, rather than in bits and pieces. What does sound great is that there is a possibility for getting on Caspar Citron's program on WQXR. We tried very hard at the time of P&R but didn't succeed. But a personal intervention plus women's liberation may do the trick.

I would definitely try to have a few hours with you on your trip and, of course, with Anne on hers, but right now I have no time for anything.

Hurriedly,

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from:

USSR AND THE THEORY OF STATE CAPITALISM, by Riccardo Tacchinardi & Arturo Peregalli

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RAYA DUNAVEVSKAYA

While Worrall's approach was essentially a first theoretical-political approach (not incidentally the economic-political aspect of it was open to criticism) to defining a theory of state capitalism as applicable to Russia within the realm of an internationalist Leninist dissidence that was still deeply tied to the Bolshevik experience and was partly Trotskyist (cfr. introductory note), Raya Dunavevskaya's essays on Russian economy (1) ^{present} /not only/ a further development of the problem, mostly on the basis of a more detailed and concrete economic analysis of the various Gosplans, but also a more explicit and progressive break with Trotsky's analysis together with an attempt to recover Lenin's lesson towards a new and different redefinition of the relationship between theory and praxis which has as point of departure the Marx of the Economic-Philosophical Manuscripts and the Lenin of the Philosophical Note-books. There is a singular break with the experience of the Third International and its Fourth International follow-up, with the conception of an avant-garde party closely based originally on the operatism of "Socialism or Barbarism". At the same time, unlike the French group and its results, it maintains a strong Marxist foundation.

As with Worrall, her point of departure is a Trotskyist analysis which of its very nature, because of the unresolved theoretical and practical knots, was however(line missing).....of the means of production ~~xxx~~ with respect to those of ~~xxx~~ consumption, the high organic composition of capital with its human and social consequences. The first part (articles which came out at the end of 1942 to the beginning of 1943) contains an extremely detailed analysis of official statistics * on industry production (art. of Dec. 1942 and part of art. of Jan. 1943), on agriculture (art. of Jan. 1943) and finally and especially, an analysis of "Russia's social classes" (art. of Febr. 1943). In the course of this analysis of data there is a conscious refraining from a specific definition of the economic system (the concept of state capitalism and general political-theoretical conclusions are in the art. of Dec. 1946, which is here translated), although in her painstaking evaluation of official sources where with an economist's expertise she reads between the

"manipulated" lines, one can delineate a clear thread, the intrinsic law of motion of an economy imposed upon and borne by world capitalism. Her analysis is less reticent in the last article on social classes, so much so that the editorial board of "The New International" (already an organ of Schachtman's Workers' Party, essentially anti-Trotskyist but with a collectivist-bureaucratic analysis of the USSR) affixed to the articles an introductory note whereby "no responsibility is assumed for the articles; they are presented as discussion material on the topic of Russian economy"(3).

In beginning with an analysis of the worsening of the proletariat's conditions during the various five-year plans, Dunayevskaya individuates the new exploitative dominant class in what the official speeches indicated as a "classless intelligentsia" which, it is true, is not a class in the "old meaning of the word" (Stalin) but which nevertheless "functions as dominating over production and the state" (4).

~~The~~ Her synthesis on The Nature of Russian Economy ("The New International", Dec.

1946) which is presented in this anthology is written at the point in which the internal fraction within the Workers' Party has reached a mature stage. The article uncovers ~~XXXXXXXXXX~~ with determination "and in an explicit manner, the implicit conclusions of the statistical analysis" (5). There is at the center of this analysis the individuation of the law of value as the fundamental mechanism, the intrinsic law of motion of Soviet economy; also, the different ~~mode~~ ^{mode} fashion of appropriating ^{on} which the state capitalism engages in. / this competitive phase of appropriation of surplus value. Stalin's efforts in the 1940's to credit as socialist the presence of the law of value in Soviet political economy, which resulted in the symptomatic final "revision" of the Economic Problems of Socialism (1953), was uncovered first By Dunayevskaya in a polemic with economists who were both sympathetic and non-sympathetic to Stalin.(6). In her 1946 essay she will definitively make clear that "the law of value, that is the law of motion of Russian economy, has resulted in a polarization of wealth, a high ~~xxx~~ organic composition of capital, an accumulation of extreme poverty on one end, and of capital on the other end. This is one particular capitalist

society, an economy governed by the laws of world capitalism, and it originates in the separation of the worker from control of the means of production". Marx had already made this clear: the ^{mode} means of appropriation change, but not the ^{mode} means of production (7). After clarifying this important reality-concept Dun. in her essay gives a history of capital and of labor under Stalinism in the Soviet Union, from the 1932 crisis to Stakhanovism, from the 1933 purges to the Fifth Five-Year Plan, and it is a history of the most thorough and dramatic ^{divestment} ~~impoverishment~~ of workers on the part of capital and its Stalinist agents which is translated into the most authoritarian and savage subjection of labor to capital. This theory of state capitalism will be further developed, and we will briefly point to it (8). Dunayev. after 1951 will make a complete break with the S.W.P. (she had re-entered it in 1948) in the wake of a long ~~internal~~ fractional struggle within the reconstituted Fourth International. In 1955 after breaking with James and after a brief experience with the review "Correspondance" she will [?] found together with workers and other intellectuals "News and Letters." This group arose in close conjunction with the struggles in the mines and factories against automation, racial segregation and the struggles by workers in Eastern Germany and Russia against state capitalism. It is in this new context that her final break with Trotskyism and Trotskyi will materialize along with a ^{new} conception of the theory/praxis relationship and against an economicist reduction of the relationship between capital and labor; especially, against a reduction of labor to object rather than subject, of a revolutionary action analysis, ~~such~~ as evidenced both in theory and praxis by the Bolshevick party. As Dunay. will make clear, "our theory of state capitalism differs from Bukharin's not only insofar as concrete problems are different in different times, but also because a vision must differ from an abstract revolutionarism such as Bukharin's and must instead be grounded upon the actions and thoughts of workers; it is they who must first decide their destiny, and subsequently must decide the revolution" (9). From now on, in her subsequent works there is the recovery - even against Trotskyi - of a Lenin that gives new value the Hegelian dialectic, as in the Philosophical

Notebooks, where ~~it~~ by dialectic is meant a re-reading of all of Marxism through Marx's "humanism", against any anti-humanist and economicist degeneration with its corollary, the Stalinist party.

NOTES

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1. The most important articles/ An Analysis of Russian Economy (publ. in "The New International", Dec.1942 and Feb.1943) and The Nature of the Russian Economy which is here partially translated (publ. in "The New International", Dec.1946).
~~XXXXX~~ The first article is a descriptive-economic analysis of Russian industrialization 1928-1941, that is during the first and second five-year plans, and the massive industrialization of the third five-years plan which preceded the Second World War. The second article presents theoretical-political conclusions; we did not translate the second part of this article which contains a history of the debate on state capitalism within Bolshevism and Trotskyism. Both works are published in The Original Historical Analysis: Russia as State-Capitalist Society, by R.Dun., News & Letters, Detroit, Mich. 1973, pg.3-19 and 20-27.
 2. This theoretical-political militant group within the Workers' Party is briefly covered by R.D. in the second part of The Nature, op.cit. See also Trotskyism in the U.S.A., 1940-1947, Balance Sheet, The Workers' Party and the Johnson-Forest Tendency, Aug.1947. On the break from the S.W.P. see: I. Deutscher, the Prophet in Exile, Milano, Longanesi, 1965, pg.581 foll.; S. Di Giulio Maria, Preface to L. Trotskyi, In Difesa del Marxismo, Roma, Samona' e Savelli, 1969, pg.11 foll.; Bruno Bongiovanni, L'Antistalinismo di Sinistra e la Natura Sociale dell'URSS, Milano, Feltrinelli, 1975, pg. 259 foll. Recently Bongiovanni wrote a perceptive historical survey of Trotskyist position on USSR (Il Destino della Burocrazia e la Dissoluzione del Trotskyismo, in "An.Archos", no.3, Fall 1979, pg.221 foll.) which however we think is unfair with respect to Dun's pioneer analysis on Russian economy.
 3. R. Dun, The Original Historical Analysis, p.14.

4. Ibid., p.18.
5. R. Dun, The Nature of Russian Economy,
6. Dun. translated Teaching of Economics in the Soviet Union (in "The American Economic Review", vol.XXXIV, no.3, Sept.1944, pg.501-530), which originally ~~appeared~~ appeared in Russian as "Pod Znamenem marxizma", no.7-8, 1943 and announced the important "revision" . R. Dun. stressed the significance of this article in her "A New Revision of Marxist Economics", in "The American Economic Review", cit., pp.531-537. In subsequent issues the same review presented an interesting debate by the major pro-Soviet economists of the time (O. Lange, L. Rogin, P.A. Baran) which was wrapped up in a final ~~xxxxxxx~~ rejoinder by R. Dun. ("Revision or Reaffirmation of Marxism? A rejoinder", in "The American Economic Review", vol.XXXV, sEpt.1945, pg.660-664).
7. R. Dun, The Nature of Russian Economy, op. cit., p.11. Marx's excerpt is from Vol.I of Capital, quoted by R. Dun on p.39.
8. In a brief correspondence with R. Dun. concerning our work (her letter of Dec.13, 1979) she asked us to integrate her 1946 vision of the USSR with her ~~final~~ subsequent positions. We do so, although of necessity very briefly, given the explicit "historical" perspective of our work. We refer to her pamphlet State Capitalism and Marx's Humanism or Philosophy and Revolution (News and Letters: Detroit, 1967) which she indicates as being representative of her new position. We realize it is difficult to summarize in a few lines her complex theoretical elaboration and "rediscovery" of the Hegelian dialectic on the basis of Marx's Manuscripts and Lenin's 1914 Notebooks. We hope to return to her later work on another occasion, although our approach will be a critical one. We refer to our note #9 for an initial bibliography of her subsequent works which have as center Hegel's "revolutionary" original proposal.
9. R. Dun, State Capitalism and Marx's Humanism or Philosophy and Revolution, op. cit. p.38. As mentioned in her above-quoted letter, R. Dun. developed her "replies to state capitalism and humanism" coherently with militant interventions in American

reality and international reality together with the group of "News and Letters"
(For the birth of this group in 1955, following her break with James, and before
her brief experience with "Correspondence" of 1953, see R. Dun, 25 Years of Marxist-
Humanism in the U.S., Detroit, News & Lett., 1980, which covers the history of the
group up to 1960. The most recent position of the Johnson-Forest tendency on the
topic under consideration is State Capitalism and World Revolution, Detroit 1950,
Facing Reality, 1963, written by C.L.R. James. The debate within "Correspondence"
and the activities of "News and Letters" are covered beginning with 1953 in "Prometeo"
and "Battaglia Comunista", organs of the Italian Communist left, and as a philosophical
essayist especially in Marxismo e Liberta, 1776-to today/ (Firenze, La Nuova Italia, ⁽¹⁹⁵⁸⁾
191962) and Filosofia e Rivoluzione - Hegel to Sartre and Marx to Mao (1973), Milano,
Feltrinelli, 1977. Both works deal, with different emphases, with the history and
development of that "dialectical philosophy", that new "continent of thought" discovered
by Marx, rediscovered by Lenin, and forgotten by Trotsky (on the absence of dialectic
in Trotsky, see her Political-Philosophical Letter, The Two Russian REvolutions,
and Once Again, on the Theory of Permanent REvolution, Oct. 1979, ~~xxxxxxxxxxxx~~ She
also covers the "new passions and strenghts" of the black and youth struggle, of the
mass-workers and women in the years 1960-1970. For an opportune reproposal of the
central chapters of Marxismo e Liberta' on Marx's Capital and an efficacious polemic
with E. Mandel, see R. Dun, Marx's Capital and Today's Global Crisis, Detroit, News
and Letters, (1978).