

Letter from Raya to Harry on the relationship of theory to philosophy

June 30, 1978

Dear Harry,

I would like to have a little theoretical discussion with you on the difference between theory and philosophy, and on the difference between a "leader" and a founder that may, at first sight, appear to be both abstract and, "geographically," far apart, but in fact is so crucial for our day when splits and sects are endless and yet no Great Divide anywhere near Lenin's Great Divide occurred so that the masses could sense a direction. Indeed, I wish to go much deeper and further than "just" a Great Divide. (I do believe we Marxist-Humanists achieved that for our age by extending state-capitalist theory to Marx's Humanism, thus catching also directly where Marx had started.) I wish also to go as far back as THE founder of all of us, ENGELS and Lenin included. Note, I include Engels of Marx's own time and place him alongside Lenin or anyone post-Marx, because it is most decisive to realize MARXISM IS MARX'S CONTINENT OF THOUGHT AND ONLY OF MARX, AND NOT OF MARX AND ENGELS.

Because there has been so much nonsense written by intellectuals against Engels as if he had "betrayed" Marx, and, the opposite side of the same coin, so much of Marx and Engels, as if it were a hyphenated name, Marx-Engels, i.e., as if it were the same, that I have early decided to keep out and stick to fundamentals: Marx. But, in fact, though none but Engels could have brought out Marx's works; and though when Marx was alive, Engels was not just some kind of secretary, but true collaborator, and always a revolutionary, it is not true that he was anywhere near Marx in original thought. Indeed, all one has to do is read the kind of letters Engels addressed to Marx when he, for the first time, was reading Vol.I of CAPITAL in galley proofs, to see how much Engels did not know. But even that is not the real point, much less the need to know that it was Marx alone, and not Marx and Engels, who is responsible for that new continent of thought Marx first called "a new Humanism."

It is there, at its point of origin, which, in methodology never changed though always was developing and becoming more profound and more concrete, at one and the same time. OK, let's begin at the beginning, at his very break with bourgeois society, at his 1844 Economic-Philosophic Essays, and even that made most specific with Man/Woman relationship telling all. Now, generally, at least since the 1960s when both the Women's Liberation Movement was born anew and so was a new generation of revolutionaries, male and female, so was the rediscovery of Marx's Essays. And yet what was not stressed in the same way was what Marx stressed, not just to expose the alienations and frustrations and exploitation of capitalist society, but in order to show HOW TOTAL A REVOLUTION WAS NEEDED. So, the key words are REVOLUTION, and TOTALITY OF THE UP-ROOTING, not only of capitalism which, so to speak, was "his" task, BUT ALL OF HUMANITY'S DEVELOPMENT MARX DESIGNATED AS "PRE-HISTORY."

Now, this brings me to how much lesser an original was Engels, and not only at the point of origin, but both in maturation and at the very climactic point of writing after Marx's death, and the very book socialist feminists surely have accepted as the best of all for that era: Origin of the Family, Private Property, and the State. Now, compare what Engels developed so fully and the mere abstracts of Marx's notations on Morgan's Ancient Society. Where, in Engels, the discovery of primitive communism--and it was among American Indians (the Iriquois especially) that all socialists were first touting to the skies as showing how great women "were," and how, before private property, you didn't degrade women either to just an appendage of a machine if in the factory, or a

breeder of children and thus the next generation of workers, but "equals"--Marx, on the other hand, while saying all this, never made that total, as if all we needed is to "modernize" and primitive communism becomes the communism of the future society. Quite the contrary. He showed that even in communal society, there was "slavery"--slavery of women--and it was there because we already had DIVISION OF LABOR.

Now, whether one says division of labor was agricultural and men's moving to cattle breeding while women remained in agriculture--or whatever other "facts" are adduced coming to division of labor in industry--Marx's profound insight has nothing to do with anthropology or technology. No, the point was that somewhere in the "pre-history" of humanity, the division between mental and manual labor, necessary or otherwise, produced the break-up of the total being, and its "reunification" would first end Man/Woman in pre-history and start a new humanity.

So, both revolution and totality as new beginnings would start, not just a new continent of thought, but a new kind of person. Now, let us get down to our age and see how difficult it is to grasp that "Absolute Idea as New Beginning."

First, it appears as the unity of theory and practice. Reread MARXISM AND FREEDOM, where I certainly had already grasped the break-up of Absolute as the movement from practice as well as from theory, for them to unite as revolutionary practice for our age. In there, the central part which will lay the ground for our age as the age of absolute contradiction, of transformation of the first workers' state into state-capitalism, does take up all of Marx's works: philosophic, economic, historic and political. And what do I call it? "Unity of Theory and Practice." Not only that. I, in a footnote, thank Marcuse for his seminal work, REASON AND REVOLUTION, by saying I agree with him that Marxism went neither with Left Hegelians, nor what became of Hegelianism as that was transformed into opposite by the Right. Now it is true we meant entirely different things. I meant what I was later to call a "new continent of thought," whereas Marcuse meant that since neither Left Hegelians nor Right Hegelians are true inheritors of the dialectic, "therefore" Marx went to "sociology"--Marxist, it is true, and not bourgeois, but "sociology" nevertheless.

Why, however, could I not have made myself so clear to myself as to see that, much as I learned from Marcuse, we were not only on different planets "politically" but philosophically? The answer is in fact that until PHILOSOPHY AND REVOLUTION, until my own return to Hegel, straight, AND THE NEW ERA OF THE 1960s INCOMPLETED IN 1968, AND NEW FORCES OF LIBERATION AS REASON--Labor, Black Dimension, Women's Liberation, Youth--NO NEW STAGE OF COGNITION COULD BECOME CONCRETE AND PROFOUND. And it is when I also began, with that new phrase, "new continent of thought," to see that not only was it unity of theory and practice, but new beginning--new continent, new world view, and that not only as internationalism--worker has no country; the world is his country--but Human-ism. And it is only now, in reworking for the 10th time Man/Woman simultaneous with revolutionary that the work on Rosa is likewise becoming: ROSA LUXEMBURG, TODAY'S WOMEN'S LIBERATION MOVEMENT AND MARX'S THEORY OF REVOLUTION.

So, if being a "philosopher"--Marx--was not just "the theoretician" Engels was in "following" BY REINTERPRETING MARX AS HE UNDERSTOOD HIM, then just think how absolutely stupid (if not idiotic) Joan Smith is in trying to correct your "very serious lack" on women, whereupon she retrogressed to the point that women must just tailend "THE PARTY." In her case, not only is philosophy completely lacking, but theory too is reduced to "strategy," "combined strategies." Ah, well, as Hamlet's father (or his ghost) advised Hamlet not to seek revenge on his mother: "Leave her to heaven."

Yours,  
Raya

October 15, 1978

To WL-N&L (also to be read to the locals)

Dear Sisters:

Two seemingly opposite universals -- "one, not two"; a total uprobbing -- have become especially alive for me, as I am at the very first stages of the work on Rosa Luxemburg and Marx's Philosophy of Revolution. One is Engels' Origin of the Family upon which not only the Stalinist-Trotskyist-"Left" still rely very heavily, but the latest pretentious six-volume work-to-be of Hal Draper's Marx's Theory of Revolution never departs from. On the contrary. Draper is so busy not separating in any respect whatever Engels from Marx, that he writes of them as one. Nowhere is this more striking than in his "chapter" entitled "Marx and Engels on Women's Liberation".

(According to his projection of the work in the only two books so far available to the public, that chapter is supposed to be in Part III of Volume II, which deals with "Mixed-Class Elements and Movements"...and includes the "Women's Rights Movements". So anxious was Draper to intervene in the Women's Liberation Movement that he singles out that chapter, called "Marx and Engels on Women's Liberation," and had it published in International Socialism in 1970. It is this which I will write a critique of for my Two Worlds column in December, whether or not he finally makes available the volume which he gave months back to the NYRB for review.)

I want to limit myself here to just one reference. Footnote 29 states: "Marx, 'Abstract of Morgan's Ancient Society', quoted by Engels' Origin of the Family. Since I knew that Engels quoted only a few paragraphs of Marx's "Abstract", I became curious and sure enough I found that Engels did no such thing, though Engels himself gave the impression that he was giving the essence of Marx's Notes.

What Marx's Notes turn out to be are no less than 254 pages. Moreover, although he thought that Morgan's work was quite important and asked Engels to read it, he by no means agreed with Engels that it was "epochal." Secondly, the Notes are not only on Morgan's work, but also on the latest works in anthropology by John Budd Phear (The Aryan Village), Henry Sumner Maine (Letters on the Early History of Institutions), and John Lubbock (The Origin of Civilization). And as if all that were not enough, he had chacked on all of Morgan's references to Greek literature as well as comparing what Morgan had done that was new and how it related to other works by anthropologists. (The bibliography itself is five pages of bibliographic notes by Marx.)

Above all, these Notes that Marx never got to develop in full and on which he worked in the last years of his life, can under no circumstances be separated either from the new works on the Orient that Marx included in his 1857-58 Grundrisse, nor from the very last writings from his pen, the

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four different drafts of the letter in answer to Vera Zasulich on the prospects of revolution in Russia, and its relationship to "the village commune." In a word, what we have here, if anything at all was needed on the question, is the oceans that separate the genius Marx from "the second-in-command," Engels. No one should read Engels' Origin of the Family without also studying Marx's Notebooks, which are now available in a magnificently edited work entitled The Ethnological Notebooks of Karl Marx, edited by Lawrence Krader. By editing I do not mean that Krader took any liberties with Marx's notes, but that he has a very profound and comprehensive Introduction of some 85 pages, as well as notes to both his own Introduction and to Marx's Notebooks of 67 pages, as well as a bibliography. The book as a whole totals 454 pages and is issued by a Holland publisher, Van Gorcum, Assen, 1972. Most of these Notebooks are in English. Of course, you need to know half a dozen other languages since a sentence may start in English, continue in German, French, Greek, or Latin before he returns back to finish the sentence in English. The point is that Krader did not "translate" -- he transcribed from the original handwritten notebooks, available at the International Institute of Social History in the Netherlands.

Now then, the total uprooting that Marx's, and only Marx's, philosophy of revolution projected at the very start of his new continent of thought -- the 1844 Manuscripts which first raised the question of Man/Woman as the most fundamental relationship -- was never let go of but constantly deepened until the very last year of his life, 1883. It is this which Draper is trying to so pervert as to call Marx's expression "rhetorical." Even this transformation into opposite was done not only for the purposes of reducing Marx and Engels to his own narrow vision, but in order to hit at today's Women's Liberation Movement, with its daring to point a finger at male chauvinism.

I thought you might want to be with me in the process of working out the new book rather than be confronted with its worked-out views, even if as presently expressed they are not all too clear.

Yours,

HAYA

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November 10, 1978

Dear Friends:

The amazing aspect of the draft chapter of the Rosa Luxemburg book that I have just written is that this is not what I set out to write. Originally, I meant it hardly more than a perfunctory note to clear the air of today's women's movement's still depending on Engels' The Origin of the Family, and got especially angry at Sheila Rowbotham, who is definitely the most independent of the socialist women, and the most learned, for accepting Hal Draper's article in International Socialism as if that were truly a "summation" of "Marx and Engels on Women's Liberation." It is true it is heavily footnoted -- 75 footnotes, no less -- but at the moment I thought it was only the interpretation that was in question. It was at the point of checking on that relationship that I realized that he was talking only about Engels' The Origin of the Family, Private Property and the State, as if that were, indeed, a book by both Marx and Engels. Once I delved into Marx's Notes on anthropology, my writing on Draper turned out to be nothing short of a very sharp differentiation between Marx and Engels and an outright attack on somebody a great deal more important than Draper. I'm referring to Engels, himself.

You will not be able to see the chapter itself until it appears in the special Jan-Feb issue, because it has turned out to be over 30 pages long. I'm anxious, however, for you to know something about it, and not just for "knowledge", but the manner in which you carry on dialogues with women's liberationists, as well as male Marxist "specialists" on the so-called "woman question." -- it ought to bring in a lot of new subs, besides. Here is the way it will look, as a title page:

Marx's and Engels Studies Contrasted

RELATIONSHIP OF PHILOSOPHY AND REVOLUTION  
TO WOMEN'S LIBERATION

I. Why a Century to Publish Marx?

"It took nothing short of a series of revolutions to bring out the unpublished writings of Marx."

II. Hal Draper Misconstrues

"Engels' 'world historic defeat of the female sex' is no expression of Marx's."

III. Marx's Notebooks: Then and Now

"No greater empiricist ever lived than the great dialectician, Karl Marx."

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The quotations after each section heading are taken from that particular section and will be boxed on the actual page in N&L -- not just for technical graphic reasons, but to single out the dialectic flow of that theme. For example, regarding the first one, we are calling attention not only to the Russian Revolution, which brought out the 1844 Manuscripts; and not just to the Chinese Revolution, which focused on the Grundrisse; but the fact that the Women's Liberation Movement of today, though they did inspire the digging-out of the Ethnological Notebooks from the Archives of Marx, were not the ones to analyze those profound Notes, is what has presented us with that challenge for today.

The word, "misconstrues" in Section II -- Hal Draper Misconstrues -- is not limited to an attack on Draper, but calls into question Engels' own writings. The fact that Engels thought he was carrying out a bequest of Marx, and that he certainly was not disloyal to Marx can neither transform Marx and Engels into a single person, nor bind us to falsely identify the comradely relationship of the two with Marx's (only Marx's) unique, original, new continent of thought. Nowhere is this more clear than on the question of sexual relations, family, monogamy, individual/universal, human relations, when Marx got a final look at them, after four full decades of study, revolutions, thought, and the concept of what is a totally, truly human society. What the second section does, then, is show how Engels develops these ideas in The Origin of the Family; 2-how Hal Draper, following all Marxists, misconstrues and roots himself in those misconceptions, to once again delay until the day after the revolution any total uprooting. As against this, you will see in Marx's Notebooks, though they are very unfinished, the ground for our age by the very fact that he centers around the dialectic of contradiction, dualities, negation of the negation, whether that be in present society or in primitive communism.

The third Section -- Marx's Notebooks: Then and Now -- has no blueprint. While it lays new ground and shows a certain direction, it all remains to be worked out. Which is why I end with: "But Marx's philosophy of revolution is so total a concept that it cannot be just heritage. Rather, it is the type of past that is proof of the continuity of Marx's philosophy for our age. We will continue to grapple with it throughout this projected work, Rosa Luxemburg, Today's Women's Liberation Movement and Marx's Philosophy of Revolution."

May I suggest that the WL-N&L, before the Jan-Feb issue comes off the press, prepare for a very special meeting in relationship to News & Letters, in order to see how the WL page that issue will measure up to what this special issue will signify, not just in relationship to the book-to-be, but in relationship to the daily activity of WL and dialogues to be held with Women's Liberationists, as to perspectives and tasks, both among working class and projected theoretical studies. As for the N&L Committees as a whole, a very special meeting should be held at the end of January, when both the N&L is off the press and our expanded REB has likewise met.

Yours,  
RAYA

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P.S. LAST MINUTE FOOTNOTE FROM RAYA

You wouldn't think that the Conference of the Association of Social Anthropologists of the Commonwealth on "New Directions in Social Anthropology", meeting at St. John's College, Oxford, would be the occasion for Raya to be mentioned. But at that conference, Sir Raymond Firth delivered an address on "The Skeptical Anthropologist? Social Anthropology and Marxist Views on Society" in which he says: "I have used 'transcendence' in the ordinary, secular sense of surmounting a particular in favor of a more general aim. Raya Dunayevskaya (1958:319) discusses transcendence more technically in relation to alienation."

The essay may be found in Marxist Analyses and Social Anthropology London: Malaby Press, 1975.

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*Wolfe*

November 24, 1973

Dear letters:

We are trying to get some galley proofs of the new chapter considerably in advance of time in order to make it possible for New York to prepare themselves for a possible participation in a special meeting that is being held for Eleanor Leacock and Evelyn Reed. The letter I sent on the galleys is no substitute for actually reading the chapter, especially since it is really in a very new field for us. For one thing, I'm quite amazed that as serious an anthropologist as Leacock (not to mention that she is a Communist) should consent to debate or whatever Evelyn Reed, whose book Morgan's Evolution is so retrogressive a venture that Bachofen's Mother Right appears "mod". I intended to disregard that very opportunistic "analysis" which is hardly more than an attempt to be "in the forefront" of the feminists. Even Charnie Cuettel's Marcusa and Feminism isn't that vulgar in making the transition from Marxism "to" Feminism. But I've been told that Reed's book is popular among feminists, all of which goes to show how anxious we are to live in a mythology rather than history-in-the-making. In any case, I struggled through it yesterday and decided to add a footnote directly after I saw that it isn't only male chauvinists like rapar who swear by Engels, but also women socialists. At that point, here is what you will read:

As for Evelyn Reed's Morgan's Evolution -- the pretentious "product of over 20 years of research," glorifying a "patriarchal age" "comprising more than 99 percent of human existence" -- its captiveness of any revolutionary socialism is seen in the studied ETHNIC elimination of any and all reference to Marx. This is further emphasized by the fact that none of Marx's works are listed in the bibliography. Consider the fact that Evelyn Reed's subject is "woman's evolution," and both Morgan's and Engels' studies do play an acknowledged, important part in her analysis, but there is not one word about the Ethnological Notebooks of Karl Marx. Whether that is out of sheer ignorance or out of studied omission, one must question that is her purpose. A little bit of dialectics, of course, would have gone a long way to soften her complaint that the wealth of data on the question of anthropology and archeology has not been matched by an equivalent expansion in theoretical insight" (p. xvi). Evelyn Reed explains her methodology to be "evolutionary and materialist." All one can say about that is that it certainly isn't revolutionary or historical.

The point is: do we really need the patriarchy to show that, "as females", we had made history once in savagery period? Aren't we, beginning with Engels, acting as if "a world historic defeat" occurred with the move from patriarchy to patriarchy and we now have to wait another million years to, first, get freedom (or only abortion rights?) before we can once again be makers of history? You mean, all this history that has been made since class society was established has been without women as creators, as reason? What happened to all those revolutions where we were supposed to be such "ferment"? And are we going to continue to "excavate" everything from savagery to Evelyn Reed without ever finding Rosa Luxemburg, not to mention the women incendiaries? Isn't it about time that women as well as men should concern themselves with the total uprooting of this society and not consider that a question of being on Aloud Mine, but know that this is the only way we will upset the pre-history of Man/Morgan and finally release the true history of humanity.

Yours,  
Wolfe



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October 5, 1979

Dear Friends:

The last two weeks with Olga, "being away", has meant working 12 hours rather than 8 hours a day, and quite a productive 12 hours a day. I have drafted two full chapters, and have outlines of three others. However, that's not the point of this letter. Rather, it is to tell you that the work on Rosa Luxemburg is forever uncovering new fields for re-study, from the Ethnological Notebooks for the chapter NSL printed last year, to the 1907 London Congress on the 1905-06 Revolution, the Minutes of which have never to this day been translated. Leon Trotsky's role there kept cropping up at all hours of the day and night, although great portions had nothing to do with the chapter I was directly working on. So--

Since this happens to be the month of October-- and as you know the old calendar considered the November Revolutions of 1905 and 1917 as having occurred in October; and since this also happens to be the 100th anniversary of Trotsky's birth, but I did not wish to write just a "commemorative" article, I decided to write a Political-Philosophical Letter to all of you, entitled "ON THE TWO RUSSIAN REVOLUTIONS, AND ONCE AGAIN ON THE THEORY OF PERMANENT REVOLUTION".

We are returning tomorrow, and as if Olga didn't work hard enough here, she will start stenciling this on our return, and you should have it in two weeks. EXCERPTS of it will also go into the November issue Two Worlds, and we will leave the review of Marcuse's One-Dimensional Man intended for that issue go into the December issue instead.

I will be sure to meet the deadline of the January issue, which will be a 12-pager, with the new chapter entitled: "TWO TURNING POINTS IN ROSA LUXEMBURG'S LIFE: 1898-99 AND 1905-07". As you know, theoretically, that takes in the struggle against reformism and the writing of Reform or Revolution, and the participation in the 1905 Revolution. But you may not know that the first period coincided with her moving to Germany and a new stage in her relationship with Jogiches; while the 1905-07 Revolution, although the very highest point of development in fact, in theory, in personal relationships, also becomes the end of her relationship with Jogiches on a personal level. Actually, the development of the latter point will not be analyzed until the following chapter on Women's Liberation and Rosa Luxemburg, but there are sufficient indications of it in the chapter as written that it will be sure to create controversy. So what else is new with my writing?

Yours,  
RAYA

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October 17, 1979

TO THE REB-NEB (To be read also to all locals)  
Dear Colleagues:

As I am editing the Draft Chapter 1 it keeps getting bigger so that I fear the Jan-Feb. N&L will be so special it will take up more than the full 4 inside pages. On the other hand, it's turning out to be more of a review of the whole rather than a single chapter. First, look at the title: BEFORE AND AFTER THE 1905 REVOLUTION: Two turning Points in Rosa Luxemburg's Life-- 1898-9 and 1905-07.

It now has three subheads: I. Entrance on the German Scene-- now deals not only with Reform or Revolution, but with RL as personality who is truly "a land of boundless possibilities" as she deals with the burning question of that day-- the first appearance of revisionism-- and "touches all bases"-- on "Woman Question", global politics, and the beginnings of a separation from Jogiches.

II. The Flash of Genius and the First Russian Revolution has you become witness not only to revolution, but to "organization", that is to say, how a small underground party of no more than a couple of hundred becomes literally overnight a mass party of 30,000, all in Poland which is but part of the Tsarist Empire. Something happens to RL as participant in an ongoing revolution, though she is not yet aware of it: the bacillus of separation from her colleague and lover and co-leader is nevertheless laid there.

III. The Pivotal Year, 1907. You have heard enough of that 5th Russian Congress in London where all tendencies were present and arguing of a still ongoing revolution (so they thought). But what you haven't heard of that pivotal year-- though part you know as Political-Philosophic Letter which will become an Appendix to the chapter-- is: relationship of spontaneity to organization as RL viewed it; what you have also not heard is that it is the year of the Stuttgart Second International Congress and the Women's Socialist Conference (these were held simultaneously with the Second International congresses). In this case, one of the many things that have never come out about RL is that she addresses that <sup>women's</sup> Conference as representative of the International Socialist Bureau (the top leadership of the 2nd Int'l). Pete found this for me.

And while I am on that subject, I better tell you about a "new find"; I don't know where Dave of Chicago kept his talents so well hidden that we didn't know he was a superb translator from German (and that he even types beautifully!) and is so erudite in his knowledge that he can do everything from smooth political writing to finding a quotation from "Matthew" in the Bible. (Don't ask me why Rosa chose to suddenly come up with a saying from that source as she battled Plekhanov; she caught me off guard as it isn't even the Old Testament!) Dave translated a whole 40 pp. article on Theory and Practice. With him, added to Pete on German, Urszula on Polish and myself on Russian-- and we all even know English-- we ought finally to catch the whole of Luxemburg.

Now then, NEWS & LETTERS for Jan-Feb. will really have to have some special and creative attention from you and the PTC-- and, above all, start thinking of next year where N&L will be the centerpoint of the Convention.

Yours, Raya

P.S. All this also gave me an idea how to modify the title of the lecture on RL in January as Revolution and Counter-Revolution: The Life and Death of Rosa Luxemburg. This will show it is not just personal death but counter-revolution, and tomorrow as well as today.

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October 17, 1979

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October 25, 1979

To the REB-NEB (to be read to all locals)  
Dear Colleagues:

Let me involve you in a little theoretical discussion on method which has just now ( I mean as I am working on the 1907 Congress, from which I'm learning a lot) shed new light on a section of Marxism and Freedom which I called "Organizational Interlude", which, as you will remember, is headed by a quotation from Hegel on the fact that "intellectual sloth" results when someone starts only with the results of a philosophy rather than participating in the process.

You will also recall that that section on the Second International held that 1907 was actually the beginning of the end of the International. Now the point is: Why did I say that, when in fact I did not know at that time about the 1907 Russian Congress, that the 1907 International Congress in Stuttgart, which had always been considered the highpoint of the Second International, I chose to disregard so vehemently as to claim one need not wait for 1914 and the collapse of the International to have sensed that that's exactly where it was headed? I made my point by saying that a Congress that was being held after the 1905-06 Revolution, which had not taken up that Revolution, was bound for the historical dustbin. In a word, the very absence of that point on the International's agenda I judged to have signaled its downfall. It is a fact that "absence" also has a dialectic of its own, since it isn't only nature that does not like a vacuum, but revolutionary politics, refuses to believe in the "Void".

There is also one other interesting background element to that Chapter 9 in M&F. The original outline of M&F that was submitted to Marcuse when he tried to get Beacon Press to publish my book, had no such section. What I considered a void was the period from Marx's death until Lenin's encounter with Hegel in 1914. When Marcuse said I couldn't do that; there was the great Second International and it organized masses and masses of people, my answer was: for history's sake, I'll write that section, but I will not even honor it by either giving it a separate part, or calling it "The Party"; instead, it will be treated as just an Interlude. And whereas he might have told me to go to ---, in any case he would not interfere with my analysis, I kept stressing that the Second International died in 1907.

Now that I have all these magnificent speeches at the Fifth Russian Congress in 1907, and that, in fact, it becomes clear that not 1903, which everyone considers the breakup of Bolshevism and Menshevism, but 1907 was the real Great Divide, and that it was not the "Organizational Question" but the revolution which created the divide, I cannot but marvel at the greatness of methodology, which lead to the writing of the Organizational Interlude and the singling out of 1907 as the birth of two irreconcilable tendencies in Marxism.

Yours,

RAYA

6 4 4 4  
November 26, 1979

To the NEB-NEB (copies to be sent to the locals)  
Dear Colleagues:

Offhand, it may appear that Chapter II of the RL book -- "The Break with Kautsky, 1910-1911: From Mass Strike Theory to Crisis over Morocco -- and Hushed-Up 'Woman Question' " -- would have nothing to do with the crisis in Iran, especially the so-called Left's tail-ending of Khomeini. But, in fact, as you, yourselves will be able to work out, when you have a chance to read it, you will gain quite an illumination of the present crisis. Let me first tell you its content:

- 1) Spontaneity and Organization.
- 2) Single revolutionary practice vs. "Two Strategies"
- 3) Imperialism raises its Ugly Head
- 4) Prescience about Kautsky's Opportunism, but Tone-Deafness about Leadership's Attitude to "Woman Question"

The first section is, in a fundamental sense, known to you since it deals with the most popular part of Luxemburg's heritage -- The Mass Strike. But, in fact, in the context of 1910, when she restates the question of the Mass Strike, 1905-07, what comes out most clearly is that, because she considers the essence of revolution to be that Mass Strike, what she is talking about when she relates the Mass Strike to the revival of strikes in Germany, is what she considers to be a pre-revolutionary situation in Germany. From that point of view, the whole question of spontaneity and organization is not just a question of strikes and trade unions, nor even the question of when a strike becomes both political and economic, but the whole role of leadership, Marxist leadership.

That concept of leadership is the nub of the dispute with Kautsky, the reason for her prescience about opportunism within the movement, and the feeling that revolution is being made into an abstraction, while all sorts of deviations raise their ugly heads. The proof is that no sooner was the dispute on General Strike in 1910 concluded than the pusillanimity of the German Social-Democracy on the question of Germany's imperialist attack on Morocco came to the fore in 1911. What is missing in all this is that no political or "factional", i.e. actually organizational, conclusions are drawn from this, so that the break with Kautsky appears very nearly just "personal."

Not only that. The most fantastic letters against Luxemburg are being exchanged within the leadership. They reveal the most disgusting male chauvinism. No male opponent of the "line", not even the founder of Revisionism, was ever referred to in such scurrilous terms as "poisonous bitch." Surely, she knew about these letters and felt the acid tongues, even when they found political designations for her dissent. And yet, with very great deliberation on her part, she continued to be tone-deaf on the question. This is not the chapter where this question is dealt with in great detail, and most important of all, fully philosophically, but it does serve as the transition point to Chapter III.

The point, as I was working on this chapter, that gave me the most trouble, was also double-edged. On the one hand, I was very disappointed because, originally, I had definitely thought 1910 would be the focal point of the book since it would have shown that she had broken with Kautsky four years ahead of Lenin, that she had been a genuine vanguard in sensing the opportunism in that "Pope of Marxism", and thus ...

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In the actual confrontation with that year -- and not so incidentally, I found that very nearly nothing is available in English, and everything had to be translated for the very first time -- I found that when one is prescient, instead of having worked it out philosophically; if one is "ahead of the time", but has not drawn organizational conclusions, i.e. seen what is the historic significance of a tendency, a tendency for which she is willing to take total responsibility; and if one therefore goes to the next point on the agenda -- in Luxemburg's case, Accumulation of Capital, then theory, too, fails. That is why I had to end the preceding paragraph with three dots; that is to say, I couldn't possibly conclude that she was "in advance" of Lenin.

On the other hand, when it came to the question of her hatred of imperialism, of great feeling for all the peoples of all the world whom capitalism was oppressing, of the truly human warmth for the cries of the Hottentot women and children that she kept hearing from the Kalahari Desert as if they were just around the corner from her home, then you wished to lash out against the so-called "New Left", which seems to feel nothing but its own narrow sloganeering, and its all-too-willing tailendism of state powers. It is for this reason that I felt it necessary to take a day off and talk to you about Iran. I'll be sending you a letter tomorrow.

Yours,

Raya

December 2, 1979

TO THE REB-NEB (copies for all locals):

Dear Colleagues:

In jumping the gun on myself by disclosing to you a very difficult philosophic problem that I, myself, have not yet worked out -- and I don't know whether, in these 10 days I'm "disappearing", I can work it out for Chapter Three -- I do so only because the concreteness of the political crisis and counter-revolutionary move with theocratic constitution that the Iranian masses will now be pushed to adopt, makes philosophy more practically urgent than any "political line."

Here is what has come up in RL book (which should be more precisely called MARX'S PHILOSOPHY OF REVOLUTION -- except that it is always the concrete, in the Hegelian sense of total, which must take priority and it is the subject of RL that is the compulsion to take a 25th look at the problem we have raised directly after PHILOSOPHY AND REVOLUTION appeared):

Here is the 1905-07 Revolution in Russia, reaching into Iran, Afghanistan and China, that becomes the Great Divide between reform and revolution on the Russian scene where supposedly there are no reformists but only Mensheviks within "revolutionary" Marxism. Surely, Lenin, Luxemburg and also Trotsky not only "side with" but most actively act out revolution. And, surely, they base themselves on Marx in the 1848 Revolution, to the point that RL even projects the concept that it is not the end of the 19th century revolutions but the beginning of a whole new series of 20th century revolutions, with the Russian Revolution in the vanguard internationally (and, of course, LT proclaims, even if not at the London Congress, the concept of permanent revolution).

AND YET, AND YET, AND YET not a single one mentioned (and they didn't mention it because it was not concrete to them, though they surely had read Marx's 1850 Address) Marx's declaration that from now on -- that is to say, since the 1848-49 Revolution with the bourgeoisie had proved a failure and disclosed the bourgeoisie's betrayal -- revolutionary socialists must proclaim "revolution in permanence."

Not only that. Though they were all Russians, and though the 1882 Preface to Marx's Communist Manifesto articulated a possible revolution in that backward country in advance of "the West", none saw this as anything relating to them at the precise moment of 1907.

And not only that. So far as Luxemburg was concerned, in 1910 she had all the revolutionary positions not only on General Strike, but on descending imperialism, which the Morocco Incident made clear in 1911 -- AND YET AND YET AND YET when she broke with Kautsky it was very nearly made "personal", not only because she did not build a faction around herself as tendency, but because when she was off to theory -- ACCUMULATION OF CAPITAL -- she deviated not so much from Kautsky,

BUT FROM MARX!

All this brings me back to the point that we, and we alone, called Marx's philosophy of revolution not just economic theory or political theory or even theory of revolution except as manifestation of a NEW CONTINENT OF THOUGHT. Think of it. Internalize it. Don't let go of it for a single second

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-2-

just because the urgency of the moment is Iran -- or whatever! How can anyone think that if I have finally, after all the years I withheld from allowing anyone to use my Outline of Capital, said, Yes, go ahead and use it for classes since, though I then knew little of dialectics, now that we have P&R, M&F as well as Today's Global Crisis and "Those Who Wish to Truncate Marx's CAPITAL", it can be studied as a whole -- I repeat, how can anyone think that this is the time not to study CAPITAL so much as to start competing with Trotskyists and that type of Left on the small coin of concrete questions? (And not in the Hegelian sense of concrete, but in the ordinary, penny-a-liner sense?) No. For heaven's sake, start paying attention to Marx -- ALL OF MARX -- and the only thing to be added to that is how Marxist-Humanists dig deep into that new continent of thought.

Even more urgent than that -- how can anyone think, after all we have contributed for the past 25 years, if not actually 40 years, that the way to understand Khomeini's rise in counter-revolution is to read the descriptions of the "in-person" reports, INSTEAD OF HAVING, IN THE VERY ORGANISM OF HIMSELF/HERSELF, THE KNOWLEDGE THAT THE IMMEDIATE IS FIRST UNDERSTOOD BECAUSE YOU ARE GROUNDED IN MARX'S PHILOSOPHY OF REVOLUTION AS SPELLED OUT FOR US IN MARXIST-HUMANIST POLITICAL-PHILOSOPHIC LETTERS FOR TODAY?

Something is very wrong, indeed, if we so underestimate ourselves, our philosophic-political-economic contributions in THEORY, WHICH ALONE CAN BRING ORGANIZATIONAL GROWTH, and think, instead, that one more distribution will bring in new members!

Now then, to return to Chapter 3, which I am finding so difficult. If I am to bring in the 1850 Address that was not seen by those whom I praised, when discussing 1905, as great Marxist leaders who were "making" revolution on the immediate theory; if I am to bring out from the "hushed up" so-called "Woman Question" not just what they didn't see but what they even failed to look for, so that we learned of the Ethnological Notebooks only a full century later; if both permanent revolution and Women's Liberation come in this early -- that is, directly after 1911 is discussed in Chapter 2 -- then how does it flow from the historic period in question? Of course, that, again, will be our contribution, and should make people realize what NEW CONTINENT OF THOUGHT MARX DISCOVERED, and question why all those Marxists who swear by Marx have nevertheless wanted to carve his philosophy into so many academic or empiric fields that you never did see the WHOLE AS NEW BEGINNING.

It isn't that these questions must be answered now. It is that the dialectics of revolution, dialectics of thought, dialectics of organization, dialectics of Then and dialectics of Now had better get us back to the Perspectives we adopted in September. It is those Perspectives which have to be carried out, and which by September 1980 had better compel us to turn to building this organization -- News and Letters Committees -- on the basis of what is distinctively, uniquely Marxist-Humanism, with philosophy as central and not abstract, and with organization not as small-mass-partyism. And before you all begin to deny that any one of us is small-mass-partyist, just remember that the whole question of "infantile sickness of Leftism in Communism" that Lenin criticized was not that of opportunists, or reformists, but of genuine revolutionaries who were so broken up over the defeat of the 1919 German Revolution and the beheading of their Party, that they hungered for short-cuts, as if anything else meant procrastination.

Yours, RAYA

P.S. I assume that my last letter on Iran is widely distributed and becomes the basis, the ground for discussion with contacts and ourselves and in classes even before N&L gets off the press this Thursday.

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January 14, 1980

Dear Friends:

Chapter 3, which I have just completed, is at first glance so totally different from anything else I have written or spoken about Luxemburg, that I consider it important to call it to your attention. First is the question of the title: "Luxemburg's Interregnum on the Way to New Theory; and Excursus on Why a Century to Publish Marx's Works?" Both the fact that it is an interregnum, and that it comes, not in 1910-11, but after that period, as she is beginning to work out her greatest theoretical work\*, Accumulation of Capital, mark a new stage in comprehension of the dialectic. Perhaps I should have said, instead of "comprehension", a great inadequacy in the comprehension of dialectic. It was comparatively easy for Rosa Luxemburg to defend Marx against a revisionist's demand for the "removal of the dialectic scaffolding". It is a very different thing when, in facing a new reality -- imperialism --, you feel no compulsion to dig into the "dialectic". The task is one of your reworking of the whole of Marx's deep-rootedness in the Hegelian dialectic and Marxian creativity of transforming dialectical methodology into dialectics of liberation.

Therefore, whereas previously I had only hinted it, in this Chapter I have developed the fact that Luxemburg always disagreed with Marx's concept of self-determination of nations, in general, and of Poland, in particular. I want you to get a whiff of that from a magnificent letter Engels wrote to Kautsky about two weeks after he had co-authored with Marx that fantastically prophetic new Preface to the Russian edition of the Communist Manifesto, which had projected the possibility of Russia having a revolution in advance of the industrially developed nations. Here it is, dated Feb. 7, 1882:

"Polish socialists who do not place the liberation of their country at the head of their program, appear to me as would German socialists who do not demand first and foremost repeal of the socialist law, freedom of the press, association and assembly.... It is unimportant whether a reconstitution of Poland is possible before the next revolution. We have in no case the task to deter the Poles from their efforts to fight for the vital conditions of their future development, or to persuade them that national independence is a very secondary matter from the international point of view. On the contrary, independence is the basis of any common international action.... We, in particular, have no reason whatever to block their irrefutable striving for independence. In the first place, they have invented and applied in 1863 the method of fighting...; and secondly they were the only reliable and capable lieutenants in the Paris Commune."

I am using very little of the chapter on the Ethnological Notebooks, that we printed in News & Letters last year, except for the first section, and even in that, the paragraphs are considerably transposed. What I am now calling Excursus into why it took a century to publish all of Marx's works is not tied in Chapter 3 to the Man/Woman relationship, but to what resulted from Marx's delving into primitive societies insofar as it related to the Russian conditions. To put it differently, what has to be the pivotal point for this excursus is tied to the concreteness of the book and the specific subject of Rosa Luxemburg in the 1905 Revolution. No doubt I will later in the book return again to the rest of what I had written last year on the Ethnological Notebooks, except that I will definitely reduce Draper to a long footnote -- but it is really more relevant to our age than to the manner in which male-chauvinism appeared in Luxemburg's period. Here, what we have to learn method-

\*Her greatest work, not the greatest theoretical work; indeed, it would be a deviation from Marx's theory of accumulation of capital.

ologically is that, no matter how comprehensively you think you have dealt with a subject, the aspect that makes it concrete in an historic period is the only proof.

Let me cite one other section of Chapter 3, which relates to the question of dialectics in another new way. In 1903, Luxemburg had written an essay on "The Progress and Stagnation of Marxism." At first reading, that looks like the highest compliment to Marx's Marxism, since the essence of it is that not only has Marxism not stagnated, but we, the Marxists, haven't yet reached the totality of historical materialism. On second reading, you suddenly begin to realize what a very big gap there was in the thought of Marxists once Marx died; because far from regarding Marx's thought as a whole new continent, they regarded Marx as a revolutionary economist who taught them all about the class struggle. Just as Engels thought that he was following out a bequest of Marx when he wrote Origin of the Family, so Luxemburg thought she was on the way to "extending" Marx's theory of Accumulation of Capital by concentrating on the new reality, and sloughing off the dialectic as "rococco."

But that will be for Chapter 4. Here what is crucial -- whether you consider it as an entirely new idea or as a further development of Chapters 1 and 2 -- is that a transition period can be either a great leap forward or a fall backward -- not, however, as retrogression, but as an illumination of what happens when the dialectic is kept only in the back of your mind. The very nearly subordinate point I am trying to make is that Luxemburg's "Progress and Stagnation of Marxism" is used as a transition point between her very wrong position on the National Question, dialectically as well as factually, and the move towards a new theory which deviates not from Kautsky but from Marx.

I will try to work out some new way of getting chapters to you long before the Convention. Perhaps I will have something more concrete to say at the Feb. 3 special REB meeting, which will be both a summation of what has happened since the convention and a further concretization of our Perspectives from now until the new Perspectives we reach at the 1980 Convention.

Now what is important is to study Chapter 1 in such a way that those questions that are not developed but only hinted at (like the National Question) are grasped, not by writing the conclusion with hindsight, but by following the process, both when it moves forward and when it doesn't.

Have you drawn your own balance sheet for these four months? Have you thought about the seriously heightened objective crises as Carter is heating up the Cold War? And have you worked out a methodological relationship between what is happening in the world and the book? I consider that both the talks on Luxemburg and, in a very different sense, the talk on the 75th anniversary of 1905, are more illuminating of the situation than the general relationship of revolution and counter-revolution that has always brought us back to 1917 as the reference point. I would like to hear from you before the Feb. 3 meeting.

Yours,

RAYA

6 4 5 0  
March 5, 1980

One More "Footnote" On the Concept of  
Permanent Revolution--and another on  
the Neue Rheinische Zeitung

Dear Friends: (Youth especially)

The reason for the quotation marks around the word, "footnote," is that, naturally, Marx's concept of permanent revolution, not Trotsky's should have been the subject of all the voluminous books on the subject still coming off the press. However, I am referring not only to that most profound 1850 Address to the Communist League, but this time focusing just on "tactics," on "little things" surrounding the "publication" of the Address. Since the 1848-49 revolution had already been defeated, it had to be done clandestinely. It was therefore issued as a "leaflet." (ALL YOU LEAFLET WRITERS JUST THINK OF PRODUCING ONE BUILT ON THAT MODEL!) In 1851, when the worker revolutionaries and leaders, Marx included, were arrested, the leaflet or circular was found on some of the arrested members. Whereupon a bourgeois newspaper decided to publish it. AND IN BOOK FORM IT WAS ISSUED BY THE POLICE OFFICIALS NAMED WERWUTH AND STIEBER!

I came upon this fact and others in the process of translating Luxemburg's speech at the 1907 Congress, which we have always praised and rightly so as she stressed there that 1905, far from being just a continuation of 1848, had initiated a whole series of totally new proletarian revolutions in the 20th century. Today, however, I became dissatisfied with one aspect which related to the Neue Rheinische Zeitung. Where both Luxemburg and we had always stressed what conclusions Marx drew from the 1848 defeat, Luxemburg here was putting too much emphasis, I felt, on the subtitle of Marx's paper, "Organ of the Democracy," as if "extreme left wing of The Democracy" as Marx used it, hadn't meant the proletarian class struggle. In any case, I decided to footnote the first mention Luxemburg makes to the Neue Rheinische Zeitung.

And here comes the exciting "discovery" of something we all know so well--Marx's WAGE LABOR AND CAPITAL. But, in getting reacquainted with the pamphlet the "new" fact that jumped out at me was that its first publication was as a series of articles in that "Organ of Democracy." Reading it this time as I was searching for some of the articles in Neue Rheinische Zeitung and feeling how very internationalist that "organ of the democracy" was--there was not a single revolution anywhere in Europe, be it France or Hungary, Germany or Belgium, that wasn't there subjected to an analysis as well as a lesson drawn for action; and then reading about its last, 301st number which came out in red coloring, which declared that its "final word will always and everywhere be the emancipation of the working class," I turned to Marx's introductory words to Wage Labor and Capital which declared since the paper addresses itself directly to the proletariat, "We wish to be understood by workers...and shall not presuppose even the most elementary notions of political economy." Whereupon it turns out that what he meant by "most elementary notions of political economy" meant he would not use academic jargon. Moreover, where we, even now, regard the pamphlet as an "economic work," Marx in that introduction was stressing that it is the political issues of the day that made him embark on this series since, first, what must be considered are "the colossal political forms in 1848," and, with it, the counter-revolution since "Europe, with the defeat of the revolutionary workers, had relapsed into its old double slavery, the Anglo-Russian slavery."

Now, please tell me, where, no matter how hard I looked at today, could I have found so relevant to the convention's projection of a new N&L combining

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theory and practice as the publication of Wage Labor and Capital in the popular daily, Neue Rheinische Zeitung on April 4, 1849. There is hardly a day that the work on the RL book doesn't throw some new illumination on the problematic of our day, be it on Iran or WL, be it on Theory/Practice or Youth, be it on Black dimension or N&L projection of a 12-pager. Naturally, this doesn't mean that the subjects, topics of the book, as such "call forth" such a relationship. Rather it is the way Marxist-Humanism recreates it. But, since truth is concrete, it is no accident whatever that it is these subjects and that historic period and this stage of our organization's growth and the way we prepare for the convention and the new tasks it will set that coalesced. Just listen, for example, to what those 1905 revolutionaries, this time Lenin, had to say in their impatience about the course of the revolution and its old guard: "Go to the youth, gentlemen! That is the only remedy! Otherwise--I give you my word--you will be too late (everything tells me that) and will be left with 'learned' memoranda, plans, charts, schemes, and magnificent recipes, but without an organization, without a living cause. Go to the youth!"

Yours, RAYA

I will have a great deal more to say on this and that at the convention and so, I hope, will you.

6 4 5 12

March 11, 1980

To Women's Liberation - News & Letters Committees:  
Dear Sisters:

The date of publication of Women as Reason as Well as Force of Revolution in Farsi, with its introduction by Neda, "Women in the Iranian Revolution: In Fact and In Theory", this March 8, 1980 will have both philosophic and actual ramifications, sufficient, hopes Neda, to "help bring about Chapter III of the revolution." It surely helped the WL-N&L here in Detroit (as well as in other locals, I'm sure) to create a new ground for the Convention itself.

You no doubt remember that for the last two years I did not favor a separate national meeting for the WL-N&L that would precede either the Convention or the Plenum. Everything, however, has changed this year. By "everything has changed" I mean that it wasn't only "spontaneity" nor only "practice" with proletarians that we are extolling. By "everything has changed" I mean everything from the chapters of the Rosa Luxemburg book that have appeared, to the Iranian pamphlet that was just issued, to the fact that the date of publication coincided-- by coincided I mean planned to coincide -- with our own celebration of International Women's Day in the very period when we also reached a new international relationship with the French WL movement that likewise is very interested in the RL book. Hence I am very anxious that WL-N&L meets the Friday before the opening of the Convention.

Let me make this even more concrete by being totally philosophical. This is the first time anywhere, at any time from the day Luxemburg was murdered to today -- and this time by "today" I mean since the birth of the WL movement as concretization of an Idea whose time has come -- that there has been such a book conceived, which, at one and the same time, presented Luxemburg as revolutionary personality and original theoretician. Though she departs quite seriously from Marx's philosophy (the emphasis is on philosophy, not on actual revolution) the book nevertheless can make philosophy of revolution and revolution inseparable because there is no way to separate the subject of revolution -- masses in motion -- from philosophy of revolution. The need for such a book is not due to any lack of books on Luxemburg this decade -- everybody from the Stalinists to the anarcho-syndicalists and from the Trotskyists to so-called "independent thinkers" like Hannah Arendt has tried to appropriate Luxemburg. That holds true whether the people trying to appropriate her did so with flags flying high and shouting "the Fourth International are born under the banner of Lenin-Luxemburg-Leibknecht" or <sup>whether</sup> right-wing Social-Democrats were the ones who attempted to pin on their anti-revolutionary, anti-Leninism, to her critique, revolutionary critique of Lenin and merger with Lenin's Bolsheviks in revolution. Indeed, included also are various tendencies within the WIM -- and this includes both those who rejected her, because she hadn't written on the "Woman Question", and those who "accepted" her by attributing to her their interpretation -- that is to say, Leninists-Stalinists-Independent Marxists-Trotskyists' view that "only after the conquest of power will the WL question be resolved."

Put differently, Rosa Luxemburg, Women's Liberation and Marx's Philosophy of Revolution will be the only book on ROSA LUXEMBURG which, at one and the same time, measures up to her revolutionary stature and transcends it.

Let me concretize this, on the basis of the three chapters you've already seen: 1) What the "Two Turning Points" of Chapter I established was that the Revolution of 1905 was the focal point in the life of Luxemburg to such an intense degree that, though she had already disagreed with the reigning Social-Democracy, they could not keep her from at once occupying the center-stage.

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2) As you will see from the April issue of N&L, Chapter II shows critically why even so pivotal a break as the one with Kautsky could send a serious revolutionary like Luxemburg into what would become an inter-regnum for her, because she wasn't deeply grounded in Marx's philosophy. Yet you see her at her greatest both in the question of theory/practice on the economic scene in Germany, 1910, and in the question of sniffing out opportunism with the very first whiff of Imperialism.

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(Do not forget that David Lefly's translation, which is likewise to appear in April will make it possible for all of us to hear Luxemburg in her own words.)

Finally, you will, for the first time, confront the tone-deafness on male-chauvinism, which whether it was "unavoidable" for the period, is surely totally wrong for ours. That doesn't mean that we cannot learn from her political descriptions both of Imperialism and of the relationship of theory to practice in the concrete transition years 1910-1911.

3) Beginning with next month you will also have Chapter III on that inter-regnum, but this time only in xerox form, only one per local, and absolutely not for distribution. Just as Chapter III will, for the first time, take very sharp issue on the National Question, and brings up a very different aspect of her relationship to the dialectic, so Chapter IV (which you will get at the end of May) on Accumulation of Capital will show how very wrong on theory a revolutionary can be in the preparation for revolution. Do not forget that you also have had the Ethnological Notebooks chapter, even if I have not decided which chapter that will be.

In addition to all the materials I have written, you will also have by June Olga's piece on Women's Liberation; as well as Anne's "Marxism and Feminism" (whether that will be for the outside press or for N&L you will certainly get to read it.) And this brings us to June at which time your attention will be totally devoted to the Perspectives.

No matter which way one approaches or relates to Perspectives, the Rosa Luxemburg book itself has laid such a solid foundation for discussions that a genuine key transition point will have been reached by the WL-N&L. Before this, I didn't see such serious creativity in integrating WL's contribution to our very unique Marxist-Humanism. Frankly, I sometimes felt that the Marxist-Humanist philosophy was simply kept in the back of our heads, without concretizing it in such a way that we were oppressively aware of the fact that even the movement from practice which we certainly were the ones to make a category for the entire decade, had nevertheless been anticipated by our breakthrough on the Absolute Idea as New Beginning.

Let me say in conclusion that no matter what the activity that each local will wish to report, nothing can take precedence either over the philosophy of revolution or even over the manner in which you will approach both a mailing list, initiating correspondence as well as follow-up, and actually looking for a publisher. There is no other way to achieve either the transformation of the paper into a 12 pager or the new stage we will have reached in 1981 with the publication of the book.

Yours,

RAYA

April 8, 1980

Dear Friends:

Instead of a letter on the process of writing Chapter IV, "Marx's and Luxemburg's Theories of Accumulation", (Olga in any case gave you an indication in the REB minutes of April 3) I wish this time to write on the special May 4 meeting on Marx's birth, not as a day but as what Hegel called "a birthtime of history," and what we call a new continent of thought and of revolution. It will be a projection of some of the fundamental points of the final chapter of the Rosa Luxemburg book. That may be, and is, a contradiction to the dialectical principle: that you cannot know before you know. In the specific instance of the book when I have finished only about half of it, this means I cannot possibly relate to it directly. Yet, as a review of the 40 years of Marx's creativity, from the moment of his break with bourgeois society in 1843 and the early writings to a brief 4 months before his death and the Ethnological Notebooks, the talk cannot but relate all Marxists (including Rosa Luxemburg) since Marx's death to the new continent of thought Marx discovered.

Our age has one advantage, that of knowing more of Marx's writing than did Luxemburg's age. We, as Marxist-Humanists, again by drawing no distinction between "the young" and "the mature" Marx, made philosophy, economics and politics into a totality. The objective situation helped us, since it was the period of a new type of revolution (Hungary 1956) against Communism's transformation into opposite, state-capitalism, thus creating a movement from practice to theory and compelling revolutionary theoreticians to constantly create anew. Nevertheless, we must never forget Hegel's warning about knowing something so well as to take it for granted: "In general, what is well known, precisely because it is well known, <sup>is not known.</sup> The most common mode of self-delusion and of creating illusions for others is, in knowledge, to presuppose something as being well-known, and to accept it as such. Such knowledge, without being aware that this is happening, refuses to budge despite all discussion." (Phenomenology, Preface)

Take, for example, the fact that all of Marx's works have the word "critique" in them, and we certainly know that from the time he was working with Ruge and trying to start a new magazine, Marx wrote him in September 1843 that the purpose of the journal must be "the relentless critique of everything that exists." But has "critique" been made the equivalent of "revolutionary" and "practical" as totally as it was with Marx, beginning with the Economic-Philosophic Manuscripts which he completed the next year?

These manuscripts didn't, after all, come to light for some 84 years, needed nothing short of the November 1917 Revolution to bring them out of the Second International's vaults, and another 28 years before a new generation of revolutionaries, rebelling against the new monstrosity of Russian state-capitalism, brought them onto this period's historic stage, and thereby also to the English-speaking world. Nearly a quarter of a century has passed since then and while we have produced more of that whole new continent of thought Marx had discovered in 1844 than either the Old Left or the so-called New Left, it is first now that we are scheduling, at one and the same time, a new book and projecting the transformation of News & Letters into a theoretical as well as an activist organ. So again I say the fact that "we know", and indeed "live by" the fact that Marx was a revolutionary does not yet mean grasping in full Marxism as a whole new continent of thought.

Luxemburg certainly was a revolutionary, and so was Lenin, and so was Trotsky, and even some Social-Democrats who later turned out to be counter-revolutionaries were revolutionaries when they first established the new (Second) Marxist International. None of them saw it as a new continent of thought (except Lenin, who had to break with his philosophic past and have the world fall about him in the First

World War, before, by returning to Marx's deep-rootedness in Hegel, <sup>he</sup> recognized that not a single Marxist, himself included, had understood Marx's Capital, especially its first chapter.)

What I'm driving at is that if you recognize Marx only as founder of a socialism and not as the founder of a new continent of thought, your attitude is such that of necessity you recognize also Lassalle as a founder. As for Engels, who was also not only a founder but the only one capable of issuing Volumes II and III of Capital, didn't he also, nevertheless, first rush to issue his own Origin of the Family as a "bequest" by Marx? And here was a man, a founder who knew that Marx was "one" and he was only "two"!

Let me try to stress that point from a different direction. That point is crucial not just for the book, not just for the May 4 talk, but for the whole march of history to that point of unity of philosophy and revolution. For, otherwise, we would always have a duality -- philosophy and revolution -- instead of philosophy of revolution. Let me state first, on the question of Lassalle as a founder, that that type of attitude is exactly what led inexorably to the revolutionary, super-erudite scholar and author of the first (and still, unfortunately, one of the best) biographers of Marx -- Franz Mehring -- shutting all doors to any conception of what a new continent of thought Marxism was. Class struggle, yes; brilliant, yes; a founder, yes; but that shouldn't keep "the new generation" (I'm referring to Bebel) writing rather angrily about the "two old men in London" not really understanding "the new." The "new" Bebel was referring to was the need for a "unified Party" predominating over theoretical quibbling. Reconsider this:

1) In 1875 the Lassalleans and the Eisenachists (supposedly full Marxists) are uniting to form a new party at Gotha. Lassalle is dead, but the Program is fully Lassallean. 2) Marx and Engels hit the ceiling, want to disassociate themselves from that Party, but instead feel that the movement is so important that they should limit themselves to criticising it in lengthy letters to the Eisenachists. 3) Marx writes "marginal notes" on that program; the Critique of the Gotha Program is one of the greatest of the shorter historical political writings ever, but it doesn't get published. 4) 16 years pass, a new, mass, "genuinely Marxist Party" headed by Kautsky, Bebel, Bernstein -- and they write a new Program, the Erfurt Program. Engels is still alive, and when he sees that Program he writes a critical letter and insists that Marx's Critique of the Gotha Program now be published. When they finally can resist no longer, they publish it with an editorial note which says that it is "a contribution to the discussion."

And that, dear youth and others, is what the whole International lived on until its total collapse in 1914. How much clearer would the road have been for all of us, had we known Marx's analysis not only of the Lassalleans, but of his 1st meeting with Kautsky: "A small-minded mediocrity, too clever by half (he is only 26), industrious in a certain way, busies himself with statistics but does not derive anything intelligent from them, belonging by nature to the tribe of Philistines." (From a letter of Marx to Jenny, cf. Marx-Engels Werke, Vol. 35, p. 178.)

The question, the serious question, is the attitude of the serious revolutionaries, serious in the sense of their acknowledging "orthodox Marxism" -- could they also be just egotistic and "correctly" non-cultist regarding Marx when they acted that "independently"? No, it's a great deal worse, for it was not only those who deviated but those who were "orthodox", "sincere", and revolutionary. No wonder Lenin said there is no such thing as a sincerometer! What made them believe otherwise is that they were not potty-bourgeois individualists. They "sincerely" believed they were reducing their own individuality to the Universal of socialism, as was "proven" by the fact that the most important thing for them was to "popularize Marx", and "apply" it to the concrete situation as they saw it.



So it wasn't just that they didn't know the 1844 Manuscripts, or that their understanding of the 1850s and the Critique of Political Economy was inadequate because they didn't have the Grundrisse, but that when theory was spelled out in organizational form, they felt free to disagree on "little" organizational questions. Let's take another look at those 1844 Manuscripts and deal this time with still a newer generation of intellectuals that discovered them. One of the finest analyses of the 1844 Manuscripts was one of the first -- Herbert Marcuse's-- when it was finally published in Germany in 1932. The very title of his review essay, "The Foundation of Historical Materialism," shows that the young Marcuse, far from separating the early philosophical Marx from the mature economist, actually made the early work the foundation for Marxism and for all aspects summarized in historical materialism. He certainly was also the one who saw revolution as inherent in the very first writings of Marx. This 45-page essay is quite comprehensive in the economic, political and philosophic aspects. And yet there is not one single word of Marx's profundities on the Man/Woman relationship, though it's in the very same paragraph that Marx speaks against vulgar communism which is what Marcuse did recognize as central. Nor is it only a question that there was no movement from practice as a WLM. Marx first had the vision and the philosophy and the "new humanism" which he declared was both a compelling need and had a revolutionary force.

Clearly, it isn't only the last few years of Marx's life when he was working on the Ethnological Notebooks that need to be brought back to life, to theory, and made into a challenge for our generation. For that matter, the very year, 1871, which supposedly every Marxist understood and certainly always celebrated -- the Paris Commune -- remained nothing but a celebration. It wasn't until Lenin, on the eve of revolution, "rewrote" \*the Civil War in France as State and Revolution that the Paris Commune was studied seriously as both theory and practice, as well as foundation for new revolutions. Let's not forget that to this day, the anarchists keep saying that Lenin wrote State and Revolution as pure demagoguery whereas they followed the true intellectual forebearers of the Paris Commune -- Proudhonists and Bakunists. In a word, it is not only Lenin they oppose but Marx they slander as an alleged "statist," though the whole of the Civil War in France, as the whole of State and Revolution, is directed to the destruction of the bourgeois state; to establishing a "no state" but the commune form of existence, since, said Marx, the greatest achievement of the Paris Commune was "its own working existence."

May 4, which brings Marx's May 5 birthday a day ahead of time, follows by three days May 1. The two give that new continent of thought its American roots as well as its Black dimension. I hope we never consider as a cliché Marx's statement that "Labor in a white skin cannot be free so long as labor in the Black skin is branded." It was, after all, not only as an oppressed race that Marx embraced the Black dimension, but as that creative revolutionary force which opened a new epoch for the whole world. It is in this sense that this year's "May celebration" opens up a new stage for us both as the year of Rosa Luxemburg, Women's Liberation and Marx's Philosophy of Revolution and as the period of the transformation of News & Letters into a 12 page theoretical as well as activist organ. I'm confident that this also means that you will not keep the date of the meeting as your secret, but bring part of the "outside" world with you to it.

Yours, RAYA

\* The so-called independent, erudite Marxists who think State and Revolution is no more than a "rewrite" of Marx's analysis of the Paris Commune should study, study very carefully, how Lukacs and Korsch, the very Marxists who did reintroduce dialectic as the indispensable revolutionary element in Marxism, nevertheless stopped short, far short, of identifying dialectics of the Idea with the dialectic of liberation; whereas Lenin went directly from Hegel's Science of Logic and its principle, that "man's cognition not only reflects the world but creates it", to the National Question as the dialectic of history that would help transform the imperialist war into a civil war and his very last Testament where he characterized Bukharin as not fully a Marxist because he did not understand the dialectic.

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May 5, 1980

Dear Friends:

The talk yesterday on "A BIRTHTIME OF HISTORY" which stressed May 5 as the historic birth of Marx's new continent of thought in 1843; May 1 as the symbol of the American roots and Black dimension of Marx's Humanism; as well as May 4 as the 10th anniversary of the end of an epoch of youth revolt which was put down in bloody counter-revolution at Kent, Ohio and Jackson, Mississippi, but which lives on, in fact, in the new youth anti-draft movement -- was also related to May 4, 1919, which opened an entirely new geographic continent of revolt. The significance of that original Cultural Revolution in China was by no means limited to the fact that the Orient now was likewise becoming a continent of revolution. Rather, it was a manifestation of the extension of the 1918 German Revolution, and the announcement to world capitalism that their beheading of the German Revolution, with the murders of Rosa Luxemburg and Karl Liebknecht in January, 1919, did not end but only set a new stage for world revolution.

The reason I am writing this letter and expressing in detail the very first paragraph of my talk is because I wish to single out some of the very new points -- and, indeed, include some I may not have expressed -- and also to tell you about what you will not be able to "see" when you hear the tape; all the books I had brought to display on the table that represented works by Marx which had been unpublished in his own lifetime. They comprise thousands of pages, from the 1844 Essays to the Grundrisse, and from the Theories of Surplus Value to the Ethnological Notebooks.

When you listen to the talk, please note especially that Marx's critique of the Hegelian philosophy as something that comes only after the event (as witness his expression that the Owl of Minerva spreads its wings at dusk) included giving thought its wings -- so that the Marxian dialectic was both an anticipation of revolution (whether we are referring to 1843-44 or to 1847 when he completed the Communist Manifesto), as well as a participation in revolution when it finally did break out spontaneously, as well as a summation of what had occurred in such a way that even in defeat he could project future revolutions. Specifically, I am speaking of his theory of permanent revolution. In a word, the first seven years of Marx's Humanism (1843/44 through 1850) show us the totality of his whole philosophy and actuality of revolution. That was never changed in any fundamental way. All that he is famous for as an economist -- the theory of value, surplus value, concentration and centralization of capital, i.e. the discerning of the general law of capitalist accumulation to its collapse -- far from being the result of his "becoming mature", represents only the concretization of materialism as inseparable from the philosophy he had elaborated.

The 1860s -- extended to 1871 and the Paris Commune -- are the most familiar to us both because of Capital and the history of the Civil War in the U.S. as well as the Paris Commune. However, there, too, I included not only the history as events, but historic narrative as Reason, so that I could draw the generalization that just as the 1848 revolutions set the political-philosophic ground for the 1905 Russian Revolution, and the Paris Commune set that ground for the 1917 Revolution -- except that in the latter case, it was necessary for Lenin to return to Hegel to see all that was involved in Marx's writings and the "restatement" of that for one's own age -- so, for us, it becomes imperative to recognize what that means for today. It is necessary in our age, when Women's Liberation has become an Idea whose time has come, to make that inseparable from Marx's total philosophy as he expressed it both in 1844 and in 1882, in order to restate what is new for our day.

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It is in that context that we approached the last period of Marx's life, 1875-1882, when we could first see not just philosophy, not just politics, not just economics, and not even all as a totality -- but organization and tendencies, organization and tendencies, organization and tendencies, from the Communist League to the First International, and from the Critique of the Gotha Program to the last years of his life. It was within that context, also, that I felt it necessary to present an outline of the book on Rosa Luxemburg as I now see it in its totality. Thus:

ROSA LUXEMBURG, WOMEN'S LIBERATION AND MARX'S PHILOSOPHY OF REVOLUTION  
by Raya Dunayevskaya

Chapter 1 -- Two Turning Points in Luxemburg's Life: Before and After the 1905 Revolution.

Appendix: Leon Trotsky and the Theory of Permanent Revolution

Chapter 2 -- The Break with Karl Kautsky, 1910-1911: From Mass Strike Theory to Crisis over Morocco

Chapter 3 -- Luxemburg's Inter-regnum and Excursus into Marx's New Continent of Thought

Appendix: Marx's Unknown Ethnological Notebooks

Chapter 4 -- Marx's and Luxemburg's Theories of ACCUMULATION OF CAPITAL

Chapter 5 -- Attitudes to Objectivity -- Spontaneity, Organization, Philosophy

Chapter 6 -- War and Revolutions, 1914, 1917, 1919: World, Russian, German

Chapter 7 -- Women's Liberation: Before and After World War II, with Focus on Today

Chapter 8 -- Philosophy of Revolution

APPENDIX: First English Translation of Luxemburg's Speech at 1907 RSDRP Congress (and perhaps a section from "Attrition or Collision")

\* \* \*

It is important to keep in mind not only the inseparability of philosophy and organization, but to recognize that the question of tendencies within Marxism is a question every bit as critical as the concept of Marxism as a new continent of thought. In a word, from the moment Marx broke with bourgeois society and called for "a relentless critique of everything", revolutionary-practical and self-criticism all got merged into theory, the philosophy of revolution, a totally new mold that "God" couldn't throw away because that's not how it was made. It was the creation of men, women, youth, the human being. And in order to become a new form of life, it first had to have a new form of organization for the expression of the four forces and Reason of revolution. And that will show where Lenin, too, was wrong, since the concept of "party to lead" -- even with all the qualifications that Lenin did make, and that Stalinists, Trotskyists and Maoists don't recognize -- is incorrect for our age. Working out a new relation of theory to practice, organization to spontaneity, philosophy to tendency is our task. And for this convention, when we are turning to the transformation of N&L into a 12 pager, the discussion on organization will be seen as integral to the new book.

Yours,  
RAYA

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October 6, 1980

EXT  
Dear Friends (WL-W&L):

Ever since Anne worked with me on the book in September, I decided upon one modification to the promise that I will not only be really, really away, but that you, will not see any other part of my book until it is finished. The modification is that I've singled out a chapter -- Women's Liberation, Then and Now -- which I've just now finished, and it will be sent to you next week. Remember, please, that this is to go to absolutely no one except W&L members, that only two copies will be sent to each local, and strict accounting is expected. It is important for me to get your reaction and comments individually. I do not want you ~~not~~ to discuss "collectively" either at the local or at the WL meetings. At this late stage in the writing, it does not help me at all to have a collective judgement. Instead, it must be a direct relationship to me. And anyone who wishes to write to me on the chapter must do so no later than the end of October. I will not even read it if it misses the deadline.

The discipline I exercise over myself must be the self-discipline each of you exercises over yourself. Otherwise it is not a serious Marxist-Humanist writing because, since we make no separation between the philosophy of revolution and the revolution itself as a daily task, there can be no procrastination when it comes to a book which involves ~~six~~ years instead of a day, but every day does count.

Let me give you also the new sequence of the chapters, since there has been a change since the contents you received at the convention. The first four chapters stand as is except that I definitely will rework the article on the Ethnological Notebooks, not as an Appendix or Afterword to Chapter 3, but as an integral part of the final chapter. The fifth chapter now is: "Prison, War and Revolution"; chapter 6 is the one you will get as soon as I return to Detroit, and is entitled "Women's Liberation -- Then and Now"; chapter 7 is on "Spontaneity, Organization and Philosophy." The final chapter is ~~Philosophy of Revolution: The Development of Marx from a Critic of Hegel to the Author of Capital and Theorist of Permanent Revolution.~~ "Philosophy of Revolution: The Development of Marx from a Critic of Hegel to the Author of Capital and Theorist of Permanent Revolution."

This week, when I finished the Notes for Chapter 5, I suddenly remembered that awful first sentence of Mary-Alice Waters Introduction to her Rosa Luxemburg Speaks, which stressed that she was born in the year of the Paris Commune and died "a little more than a year after the Bolsheviks came to power in the October Revolution." And, I said to myself, wasn't that the year of the German revolution? Wasn't Luxemburg a leader of that revolution? Isn't that ~~her~~ her greatest legacy? Where is the German revolution?

I went to check, and by golly, it isn't. Not only does Mary-Alice Waters as she first introduces her, but when we finally come to the climax and we have ~~the~~ Luxemburg's speech at the Congress held two weeks before her murder, it is: 1) the Party, "the founding convention of the German Communist Party"; 2) the only speech Luxemburg is permitted to make in Waters' collection during the two and half months of her liberation from prison; 3) oh pardon me, there is a brief minor article, "Against Capital Punishment", which does creep in, but that only stresses the fact that if you want to know something about the German revolution -- the German, not the Russian -- you have to depend on that miserable Trotskyist introduction -- and, believe it or not, the German revolution doesn't enter her introduction until after Luxemburg is killed, and then only to stress, when the spontaneous revolution occurred, in November, "the Spartakus leaders decided to remain within the USPD as long as possible." That, however, is not the Spartakus uprising; that is the

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overthrow of the Kaiser. In fact, I believe she never mentions the Spartakus uprising. We hear her, Mary-Alice Waters, not Rosa Luxemburg, and Mary-Alice Waters talks about "demonstrations", "hundreds of thousands of workers poured into the streets", "revolutionary ferment", but oh my dear there is no revolution, unless you take as a compliment that "it was much like the early months of 1917 in Russia following the February revolution."

Don't be finished with your disgust yet. When I asked myself: where is the German revolution? it was because I suddenly realized that I was writing my chapter with no references to Waters book at all, which is supposed to be the best because it has a few more pieces represented. The few more pieces just don't happen to be about the German revolution. What the Spartakusband Wants I was quoting from a 1919 pamphlet I ~~had~~ have had from way back when; "The Beginning" I quoted from the first issue of Die Rote Fahne that Robert Looker includes in his book; and the ending -- one single day before she was murdered -- is what ~~she~~ she called "Order Reigns in Berlin", also included in Looker. Please listen to that great revolutionary's final words:  
" 'Order reigns in Berlin!' You stupid lackeys! Your 'order' is built on sand. Tomorrow the revolution will rear its head once again and, to your horror, will proclaim, with trumpets blazing:  
I was, I am, I will be!!"

Yours,

Raya

P.S. Do you think I forgot Women's Liberation? No, not I. Mary-Alice Waters forgot it. Here's all she has to say, every word of which is false: "Unfortunately, she rarely, if ever, wrote about the special problems of the struggle for women's liberation... and she dismissed the insults directed against her because she was a woman as simply part of the overhead political battles." So wonder so many women shy away if malechauvinism is dismissed as "overhead political battles." The truth, of course, is -- and you will soon read it for yourself -- that Luxemburg wrote from 1902 on on the "Women Question", and back in 1898 when she first met Plekhanov she wrote Joghiches that he was the kind of a great man whose pomposity makes you want to thumb your nose at.

There is no limit to Mary-Alice Waters pomposity, as she warns up to the conclusion by calixing on the one hand that the selections from Rosa Luxemburg: "tell more about her than any biography could" and on the other hand, regarding the early selections: "They seem stiffer and more self-conscious. Throughout her style seems somewhat long-winded, at least to the modern ear, and one often wishes she could have found some more concise way to make her point and get on with it. But ... she made her living as a journalism -- sometimes simply turning out copy -- and such training hardly provided great incentive to brevity."

Had enough? Well, there's one paper called News & Letters, that would be very happy to receive any revolutionary journalism of the stature of Rosa Luxemburg's.

November 3, 1980

To the REB (copies to NEB)

Dear Colleagues:

The individualism manifested by the correspondents in the letters written directly to me on Chapter 6 ("Women's Liberation, Then and Now") has resulted in a sort of new category. That is to say, as against what I get from a "collective" discussion, this time I felt that, whatever contribution the letters will make to the final draft, there is a great deal that each one can learn from the others, which in turn would give the organization a new view. Therefore, I would like to propose that a special bulletin be issued. It is true that I will need to abbreviate the collection of letters, but I will not otherwise edit. On the contrary, rather than expressing any view on them individually or collectively, I will actually not work on them further at this point, because I am no longer on that chapter at all. Here is what happened to me while "waiting" for your letters:

The so-called last chapter, the one on Karl Marx's philosophy of revolution, just wouldn't get written. It refused to be confined into a single chapter. The subject demanded more, and not alone because it has always been central to everything we do, but because specifically in relationship to Rosa Luxemburg, precisely because she was such a great revolutionary, the lacuna of philosophy in her concepts came to a very sharp near-breaking point on the question of the 1917 Russian Revolution and 1919 German Revolution. It extended to our period in this sense: Could it ~~possibly~~ possibly have had an impact on 1919? It was not a matter of trying to have hindsight see what foresight could not have seen, and thereby pat itself on the back. No, the gnawing point is the working out of what it means to us, no matter what it meant to her age.

Thus the last chapter has become Part II -- "From a Critic of Hegel to Author of Capital and Theorist of Permanent Revolution"; and it will have three chapters:

Ch.1 -- Marx Discovers a New Continent of Thought and Revolution, 1841-1851

Ch.2 -- From the Grundrisse to Capital and the Critique of the Gotha Program

Ch.3 -- Marx's Unknown Ethnological Notebooks, Unread Drafts of Letter to Zasulich, and Undigested 1882 Preface to the Russian Edition of the Communist Manifesto.

Naturally I cannot tell you what these three chapters will contain when they have only been conceived and not yet realized. However, I think that the surprise in the fact that the new continent of thought now seems to me to start in 1841, when Marx had still not broken with the bourgeoisie, can be answered -- and this, indeed, touches on the whole question of originality, genuine originality in an revolutionary way -- by showing you the subheadings of Chapter 1 of Part II.

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The chapter is introduced by "A Preliminary Note on the Dialectic in Marx of the Early 1840s; in Luxemburg, 1902; and in Lenin, 1914." And it is in this context, i.e. the 20th century, which makes one see (for the first time, I might add) that even before Marx had broken with the bourgeoisie, but when he was already working on his doctoral dissertation, (thoroughly dissatisfied with academia, with the Prussian state, with himself) that the dialectic of an ancient period -- Ancient Greece -- when you look at it with eyes of "today" (i.e. 1839-1841, when he was a young Hegelian) showed Marx the significance of a crisis in thought. Or perhaps this should be turned around. It was the crisis in the thought and in the life of Marx, a graduate student striving for a new world, that illuminated the ancient period he had to write about. In any case, there is a terrific drive and direction seen in that doctoral dissertation which was followed by the philosopher becoming a revolutionary journalist, and fighting, at one and the same time with Prussian censorship, with the young Hegelians, and being drawn, instead, to the Moselle peasantry and the peasants charged with wood theft, deciding also to take on none less than Hegel.

The first subsection, therefore, is called "Prometheus Bound, ~~1841-1843~~ 1841-1843." There will be two other sections-- one dealing with 1844 to 1847, and the other dealing with 1847-1851.

You understand, I'm sure, that I will now have to disappear again, since I'm determined not to disobey my deadline for completing the draft by the end of the year "just because" I've decided to extend the final chapter into a whole new part.

Yours,

RAYA

December 16, 1989

Dear Friends:

Believe it or not, the draft of the book is actually finished -- well, almost. The little "almost" is really little, since it refers to the third section of the final chapter which will be a reworking of the very first chapter you had -- on the Ethnological Notebooks of Marx. So what is now being sent, one copy to each local, is actually the final chapter of the entire book: PHILOSOPHER OF PERMANENT REVOLUTION AND ORGANIZATION MAN.

Section I of that chapter, "Critique of the Gotha Program (of a United Workers' Party of Germany)", begins with: "The fetish of a vanguard party to lead is very nearly beyond comprehension when it affects as great a revolutionary as Rosa Luxemburg who had such overpowering confidence in the spontaneous action of workers that she was considered as simply a spontaneist."

The fact that such a great contradiction could pervade her thought -- and that the passion of conviction of spontaneity, on the one hand, and the never-ending adherence to "the party", on the other hand, were just lying there side by side without ever being jammed up so they could be transcended -- could never be resolved because there was a lack of philosophy.

In a certain sense, it also explains why I felt that the chapter on organization in Part I of the book, was insufficient. What I mean is that the relationship of spontaneity and organization, when it is within the framework of her debates with Lenin, would not really answer the burning question of our day. That could only be worked out if we returned to Marx and especially if we returned on the ground that has never been considered an "organization" document -- the Critique of the Gotha Program. Not only has that never been comprehensively worked out, but the one person, Lenin, who did use the Critique of the Gotha Program as the ground for his greatest work, State and Revolution, did not apply it to the question of the party, even as he did not reorganize himself on that question with his philosophic reorganization.

I dare say that referring to News & Letters Committees as "party in the eminent historical sense" (Marx's statement about his "party" in a period when no party existed) may not help us grow, but I do believe this is a year of growth; and that need to grow organizationally can never be separated from the philosophy of permanent revolution.

Please note that Section 2 on the question of Permanent Revolution has as part of its title "1843 to 1883"; in a word, its development throughout the whole mature life of Marx from the moment when he broke with bourgeois society until his death. To put it another way, whereas, at most, others use the 1850 Address to show that Marx wrote "something" on the Permanent Revolution, we show that it was integral to his philosophy whether it was one of his early essays on religion and the Jewish Question, or the very last work on Ethnological Notebooks when, far from leaving it as a matter of "primitive society", he at once concretized it to show that the revolution -- in 1882, mind you! -- could come first in backward Russia.

I know that we are all so concrete that what we are now thinking about is Poland, but all you Irish revolutionaries please note that the quote that comes directly after the title of Section 2 is from a workshop talk by James Connolly: "Revolution is never practical until the hour of revolution strikes. Then it alone is practical, and all the efforts of the conservatives and compromisers become the most futile and visionary of human language."

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Now you have to admit that it is a lovely way to begin the new year, but, again, being concrete, you will not want to spend too long celebrating. All this rush to get the draft finished was motivated by the fact that we are having an Expanded REB on January 3. It is then when every local will, in one fundamental respect, do exactly what the Expanded REB will do: sum up what has happened this quarter since the Convention; since we initiated the 12 pager; as we approach the deadline for the Sustaining Fund; and as we map out still newer perspectives for 1981 -- that is, as, in theory and in practice, we strive for growth both in organization and in the paper.

Toward that end, I am attaching the Contents Page of the now completed draft. I believe it can be used for talking with everyone from publishers to the latest contact you just made in your own activities. Be your most creative self in articulating the uniqueness of Marxist-Humanism in the new form of this work.

Yours,

Raya

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January 30, 1981

To RCB-MEB (copy to all locals, and to WL)

Dear Colleagues:

One more new moment has arisen in relationship to the "RL book". Where, previously, I had insisted that WL was not a separate part, but only a chapter (and I did so in order to stress that the book is a totality, rather than three different parts), I have now decided that the totality is best seen when there is a separate part. Here is what I mean: What was Chapter 6, "Women's Liberation, Then and Now", is not only a matter of "Then and Now"-- i.e. different historic periods -- but also and above all, so totally different a concept that it transforms the whole question of "timing." Naturally, the different historic periods are important; but that can easily be seen by expanding the section, "Yesterday, Today and Tomorrow." Indeed, that historic section will also be expanded, insofar as the Black dimension is concerned, to include Africa as well as the U.S. But we cannot limit the concept of Women's Liberation to a contrast of different historic periods, important as that subject is. Rather, Marx's concept of the Man/Woman relationship, which we quote so often, instead of being "taken for granted" must first be worked out for all periods.

We must roll the historic clock back, not just to questions of the women's movement, but back to the post-Marx Marxists, beginning with Engels himself. I now see that Engels' "philosophy", when it comes to Women's Liberation, is only a form of "biologism". Otherwise, he couldn't possibly have come up with that fantastic phrase about "the world historic defeat of the female sex", with which to explain the change from matrilineal to patrilineal society. Contrast that to Marx's concept of a totally new human being, man and woman, and so total an uprooting of capitalist relations that the dialectic itself totally changes from an Hegelian self-development of thought to a revolutionary (Marxist) self-development of humanity.

Clearly, the new Part II that I am now proposing will not be just a critique of modern women's liberationist theorists but a critique of all post-Marx Marxists, beginning with Engels' Origin of the Family. It may be an exaggeration to say that Engels had moved away from Marx's philosophy of revolution, but it is a fact that if you do not have as profound a concept of it as did Marx, it affects your whole interpretation of humanity's development, and you have thereby already narrowed the battle for the uprooting of the old, the creation of a totally new society. If just the change from matrilineal to patrilineal society was the great determinant in humanity's development, what happened to the whole history of womankind since that time? Have we or have we not been in all revolutions and created the subject of women's liberation? Isn't it a fact that instead of digging into history, actual developing history, and tracing all the new developments, Engels concentrated so totally on "primitive communism" that it began to look as if all one needed to achieve liberation was modern technology? In any case, the residue of this view, accepted by the socialist women, even including the Marxists, Clara Zetkin and Rosa Luxemburg, remains in the movement to this day.

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Now let's go to our time. In this case, I mean the period since the Humanist Essays of Marx were published, first in the late 1920s in German and in post-WWII in French. We have two such absolutely opposite personalities and philosophies as Herbert Marcuse, a Marxist scholar, and Simone de Beauvoir, the Existentialist; No one has written more profoundly than Marx on the "Critique of the Hegelian Dialectic", and, indeed, the other essays. And yet he did not at all see what Marx was saying on the Man/Woman relationship. Simone de Beauvoir, on the other hand, singled out that section, exalted it, but ended by twisting it to mean hardly more than the Existential "Other". What united these two opposites was that in each case it was left as man's task.

Now go over to Sheila Rowbotham, who extolls the primacy of woman and certainly doesn't want to leave it as man's task. Yet she designates Women's Liberation "as an organizing idea" as if all WLM's task today consists of is to write its own What Is To Be Done?; as if the total opposition to elitism consists just of decentralization. What then happens to the new human relation? Doesn't that become a mere construct of a new Superwoman in place of a Superman? And with it, endowing that force with a Supertheory?

The new Part II I'm proposing will probably be entitled: THE WOMEN'S LIBERATION MOVEMENT AS REVOLUTIONARY FORCE AND AS REASON. Having two chapters instead of one for this Part II will affect also the section I called "Luxemburg's Activity in the Women's Movement". That is to say, the chapter will begin, not with Luxemburg's birth as a revolutionary, but with an historic, "geographic" background of where she was born, Poland, which is now in the headlines again.

Luxemburg's birthplace was where women were responsible for one of the first mass strikes, long before she was born. It was directed against the horrible, male-chauvinistic edict that women who worked in the factory must undergo the same sexual examination as prostitutes. No wonder that that type of patriarchal attitude caused Luxemburg, during her teens, to join the revolutionary movement and by 16 to read Morgan's Ancient Society.

Finally, when it comes to the modern period, I do not know how much of the latest news I will include. For example, before the Convention, I was excited enough about the new women dissidents in Russia to want to include them in Perspectives; whereupon I found out, before the actual opening of the Convention, about what Mamonova called, correctly, the "Christianization" of that movement. Presently, I have noted that Mamonova, in her call for an International Feminist Union, did not include socialism and concentrated on opposition to "totalitarian" male chauvinism as if "democracy" was not as guilty.

The more I think of the disregard of Luxemburg by the whole movement, including Socialist Feminists, the more I realize that, once you leave out revolution as the only way to uproot the old society, you are not only reducing Women's Liberation to "a new sensibility" but leaving the whole of humanity right within the capitalist framework.

Yours, RAYA

P.S. Please change the titles of what will now be Chapter 5 to "Spontaneity, Organization and Dialectics of Revolution", and what will now be Chapter 6 to "War, Prison, Revolutions." What was Part II on Marx now becomes Part III. And I am now calling the last chapter in that Part III "The Philosopher of Permanent Revolution Relates Theory to Organization."