

THE POLITICAL-PHILOSOPHIC LETTERS OF RAYA DUNAYEVSKAYA

NOTE NEW ADDRESS:
NEWS & LETTERS
59 E. Van Buren Rm. 707
Chicago, ILL. 60605

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ON THE BATTLE OF IDEAS:

Philosophic-Theoretic Points of Departure as Political
Tendencies Respond to the Objective Situation

Dear Colleagues:

This welcome to the new NEB includes, of course, all its members and not only those who have become NEB members for the first time. It is being written on the centenary of Marx's discovery of still newer moments of development in life and in thought, as he 1) read Morgan's Ancient Society; 2) visited Algeria and became aware of what we now call the Third World; and 3) projected the idea that "The Historical Tendency of Capitalist Accumulation" -- so characteristic of technologically developed Western capitalism -- need not be the only path for the so-called backward countries. On the contrary, concluded Marx, a backward country like Russia could achieve a revolution ahead of the West and thereby hew out still another path to "revolution in permanence."

I wish to develop this in the context of Hegel's Absolutes on the one hand, and, on the other hand, new forces of revolution and Reason for our age. Here are the three subheadings: I. The Syllogism in the Doctrine of Notion and its Impact on Lenin in 1914, and on the Johnson-Forest Tendency in 1950-53; II. Dialectic Mediation and Absolute Negativity; III. Hegel's Absolute Mind (paras. #575, 576, 577 of Philosophy of Mind); the Forces of Revolution as Reason, as they are analyzed in Rosa Luxemburg, Women's Liberation and Marx's Philosophy of Revolution.

I am taking advantage of the fact that we do not yet have the new book in hand, which will plunge us into so many activities that we're bound to forget "abstract" philosophic points of departure. Ironic or otherwise, the truth is that I have suddenly become enmeshed in these points of departure, not because I was reading Hegel, but because I felt the inadequacy of the section on the Youth in the Perspectives Thesis. Because I felt that I had "shortchanged" them, I suddenly thought that if the three central categories of the Syllo-

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