

Marxism and Freedom (1958) and Philosophy and Revolution (1973), her ideas have not received widespread exposure in social science and, consequently, she has not yet been acknowledged as an important social theorist. Nevertheless, her theoretical contributions to social science since 1941 have included the creation and elaboration of the theory of state capitalism, a competent interpretation of the Hegelian moorings of Marx's humanist thought, and the search for revolutionary forces in advanced capitalist society including, but going beyond, the industrial proletariat. Her most recent book continues the themes of Marxism - Humanism even as it further develops the theoretical perspective by identifying women as a historically crucial revolutionary force.

Women's Liberation and the Dialectics of Revolution is a thirty-five year collection of essays, letters and lectures which uniquely combine issues of women's liberation with those of class and racial emancipation. In essence, Dunayevskaya's position is that the theory and practice of Marxist political parties historically has acknowledged the manifold forms of the exploitation of women under capitalism but has maintained, in contrast to Marx's revolutionary view, the ameliorating women's oppression had to take a back seat to the emancipation of labor (it was assumed that women's liberation would follow automatically from the socialist seizure of state power). Dunayevskaya argues that Marxism is fundamentally a humanist philosophy of liberation, a project for "revolution in permanence," and, as such, it cannot accept as legitimate revolutionary theory and practice any call for the deference of one or another form of human liberation. Black women workers, as an example, are not exploited as women on Saturday and Sunday, as blacks on Monday and Tuesday, and as workers on Wednesday through Friday. Instead, they face all forms of oppression everyday of the week and an authentic Marxist revolutionary theory and practice is one which addresses these forms of oppression simultaneously, as a

totality.

However, the book is not an idle condemnation of alienated Communist practice, nor does it lack a theoretical or historical ground for its argument. Continuously and, again, uniquely, Dunayevskaya integrates Marxist - Humanist thought with a discussion of the historical facts of women as revolutionary thinkers and activists in various struggle in the United States, Africa, Iran, Portugal, Japan, China, Poland and Latin America. The effect of this is the expansion of our knowledge of the Marxist theory of revolutionary process by placing the woman/man question at its center. Additionally, Dunayevskaya's stature as one of the most intelligent Marxist writers today is exemplified in her ability to retain the theoretical position of Marxism as a philosophy of liberation as she discusses specific historical events and political practice. She proves the superiority of her position on the centrality of the woman/man question to that of Engels and every other post-Marx Marxist through an application to Marx's theoretical discoveries in his *Ethnological Notebooks* (1972) to the contemporary manifestations of women's oppression.

Women's Liberation and the Dialectics of Liberation is certain to be a disturbing and rewarding book not only for post-Marx Marxists, but for bourgeois feminists and academic social scientists. It will be disturbing because it will challenge the theoretical assumptions of all on women's liberation and social revolution. It will be rewarding because it will awaken all from their dogmatic slumbers. The book will be controversial certainly, but it remains to be seen if it will succeed in giving the Marxism - Humanism of Raya Dunayevskaya the critical attention it deserves both in the sphere of political practice and in academic social science. For those who are unfamiliar with Dunayevskaya's work, *Women's Liberation and the Dialectics of Revolution* serves as an excellent introduction to Marxism - Humanism, and it is guaranteed to wet one's appetite.

Flora Crater

SEP 22 1967

1/18/67

Dear Ray,

In case you didn't see this.
Also enclosing a paragraph I had to
cut because of lack of space. And
because I want you to know how
much I enjoyed your book and
learned much.

Best wishes to you on thanks
for the interesting things you said to
me inside the book. I didn't know
anyone was paying attention.

Sincerely,

Flora Crater.

Will no. read your other books when I
get a chance.

11350

2310 Barbour Road, Falls Church, Virginia 22043

The book, Women's Liberation and the Dialectics of Revolution, is a stretching book and one that you read with pen in hand, underlining facts and ideas that are new and drawing question marks for what you do not understand.

11351

BOOK REVIEW

Women's Liberation and the Dialectics of Revolution

Raya Dunayevskaya has provided for feminists of whatever stripe an account of women who have been totally engaged in the political offices of their countries, especially at times of movement and change. This 35-year historical, philosophical and global view of revolutionary feminism necessarily is moving and affecting change for those who need and study it.

JAN 22 1987

The women leaders of thought and action explored in this study are, as put by Dunayevskaya, "exemplars of reason and revolutionary force." In striking detail and depth, Dunayevskaya proves Karl Marx to be a feminist with an intellectual underpinning of feminist theory relating to change unknown to many women.

Along with women who are historically familiar, she gives us new heroines of the past and present, the Iroquois women in America, Rosa Luxemburg and today's Anna Walentynowicz in Poland, the miners' wives in West Virginia, the Women's Rights Conventions and the abolitionist Rosa Parks, Amy Jacques Garvey, the women in Iran against Ayatollah Khomeini, Vera Zasulich, one of the three founders of the Russian Marxist movement in 1917, Harriet Tubman and Sojourner Truth. Then there were the milk maids at the Paris Commune and the French Revolution. Dunayevskaya gives this account in her book Marxism and Freedom:

On March 18th, the soldiers were ordered by M. Thiers, the head of the reactionary government, to transport the cannon of Paris to Versailles. The milkmaids, who were on the streets before dawn, saw what was afoot and thwarted the treacherous plans of the reactionary government. They surrounded the soldiers and prevented them from carrying out Thiers' orders. Although the men had not yet come into the streets on this early morning and although the women were not armed, they held their own. As in every real peoples' revolution, new strata of the population were awakened. This time it was the women who were to act first. When reveille was sounded, all of Paris was in the streets. Thiers' spies barely escaped with the information that it was impossible to inform on who the leaders of the uprising were, since the entire population was involved.

Women's Liberation and the Dialectics of Revolution is stimulating reading and should be required reading as women feel their way into national and international power struggles where more and more the need exists for a feminist world view, especially vis a vis Reagan and Gorbachev.

Raya Dunayevskaya is the founder of Marxist-Humanism in the United States and has been publishing since 1941. Her writings, "The Raya Dunayevskaya Collection," are housed at Wayne State University. She chairs the News and Letters Committee which "stands for the abolition of capitalism whether in its private form as in the U.S., or its state property form as in Russia or China." Women's Liberation and the Dialectics of Revolution: Reaching for the Future can be ordered from News and Letters, 59 East Van Buren, Box 707, Chicago, Illinois 60605. The cost is \$15.95 (\$8.50 hardcover) plus .75 postage.

11352

Flora Crater

Handwritten
(Note from Raya to Flora Crater)

2.3.87

Dear Flora,

So many unheard voices from the first maid's petition for the second Tuesday biweekly to you and post-WWII generation becoming a Movement! When, finally, will we also dig into "revolution in permanence" and experience the shock of recognition that it can not be until it is underwritten by philosophy, its Dialectics being the single, continuous, unstoppable development of thought as well as act?

Marxist-Humanist path of liberation will surely bring us together, no? War#greeting and as Russian put it Big Thanks.

-- Raya

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