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ROSA LUXEMBURG'S ARGUMENTS ON THE SOCIALIST MOVEMENTS

By Nobuhiro TAKEMOTO*

I Presentation of the Problem: From Rosa of Poland to Rosa of Germany

Some time ago I made an attempt to search for an originating point of Rosa Luxemburg's thought, trying to find it "in the thoughts and acts of her young days in Poland" during the period 1895–98, and I explored therein very distinctive features of Marxist revolutionary thought which she had in mind¹⁾.

As a dedicated revolutionary, Rosa was found in her youth to have been seeking a key to liberate Poland in international proletarian cooperation, and fighting for total human emancipation through such international solidarity as a springboard of such a movement, thus living her life in pursuit of a socialist revolution. In other words, her firmly held principle of revolution was envisaged in such terms as the independence of the Polish proletariat, international solidarity with other independent proletarians, outrunning all kinds of barriers such as national boundaries, racial prejudices, language limitations, and so on, and above all international cooperation between the proletariat in those countries which annexed Poland (Russia, Germany and Austria) and the proletariat in those territories which were annexed (Russian territory, German territory, Austrian territory). She supported this conviction by an objective analysis of the capitalist economy, which in her mind would inevitably develop in such a way that "capitalism — or rather more correctly the commodities market—will spread throughout the entire world by overrunning racial differences and the barriers of national boundaries, making a uniform expansion, swallowing therein every bit of all conventional out-of-date relationships and culminating in producing a homogeneous society composed of the capitalistic class of people". The keystone which combined the two things together—namely the principle of unity and the objective analysis of capitalism—was her insight into the reality of an imminent revolution²⁾, and a passion for reformation supported by such insight. Moreover, the significance of this proletarian internationalism which was developed by Rosa's remark and of her initial strategy for Polish liberation by

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1) Cf. my "Polish Socialist Movements and Their Thoughts", *Keizai Ronso*, Vol. 98, No. 1; "Polish Revolution by Rosa Luxemburg", *Keizai Ronso*, Vol. 98, No. 2; *Readings in Arguments by Rosa Luxemburg*, 1971, Chapter 1.

her historical insight into the reality of an imminent revolution was further widened qualitatively, and this image of proletarian internationalism manifested itself in the form of “a combination of the West and the East” = “a combination of the achievements of bourgeois culture in western Europe and the future of a socialism which was just beginning to expedite its progress in the East”³⁾. This situation stimulated Rosa’s remark about “an attractive interchange of the German influences and the Russian influences”³⁾. The background to this in my opinion was the fact that in those days the contributions to political civilisation of the German people were of overwhelming prominence. Therefore the task of combining the West and the East meant that the unity of the German people and their selfdiscipline had to be emphasised in relation to the Russian people who had just made a start and were not yet organised³⁾.

In this way Rosa constantly sought to link the West and the East together, starting with a strategy to liberate Poland and living her life in anticipation of “the reality of a revolution”. In the course of those efforts she began to form a more and more convinced idea of proletarian internationalism which became so firm that she held it as a basic axiomatic principle. This is in my opinion a sufficient explanation of the way in which young Polish revolutionist, Rosa Luxemburg, was led to turn her mind toward the German Social Democratic Party, or SPD.

Nevertheless, it is not true to say that she never experienced any mental reservations while she was thus moving from “Rosa of Poland” to “Rosa of Germany”. It was reported that she had been strongly prejudiced against the German people by nature⁴⁾ and it was also said that her life in those days had been a long series of hard struggles with an aching heart as she was passionately in love with Jogiches, yet was at the same time obliged to seek political independence from him⁵⁾. Further the manner in which the SPD received Rosa who stepped on the foreign soil for the first time with her mind filled with “complicated feelings mixed with despair and determination” was of a kind which made her say in retrospect that it was “a queer kind of welcome”. She was alienated from the organisation from the very beginning of

2) P. Fröhlich, *Rosa Luxemburg. Gedanke und Tat*, 2. Aufl., Hamburg, 1949, S. 95. “Rosa Luxemburg was standing on the footing of ‘the situation immediately prior to the March’ as a revolutionist of the Russian territory, Poland. The revolution was coming close by. The imminent revolution was beginning to prescribe the actual political administration and a great problems were arising which were completely beyond settlement through formal procedures.” G. Lukacs, also made the following statement in describing the characteristics of Lenin’s revolutionary thought: “Lenin had an understanding of all phenomena, be it something concerned with Russia or other countries, through his prospect of the actuality of a revolution and he explained everything in that manner. The realisability of a revolution was Lenin’s basic thought and at the same time it was what combined him with Marx decisively,” in *Lenin*, transl. by Watanabe, p. 10.

3) J. P. Nettl, *Rosa Luxemburg*, Oxford U. P., 1966, p. 31.

4) *Ibid.*, p. 19.

5) *Ibid.*, pp. 131–143.

her joining the SPD, thus suffering from what has been called "Germanic timidity"⁶⁾.

Despite such inner complications and her estrangement from the organisation, Rosa persisted in her efforts to make a closer and closer approach toward the central authority of the SPD through her personal contact with leading figures of the Party⁷⁾, by her self-sacrificing struggles at Silesia Posen⁸⁾, and above all by intervening conspicuously in bitter disputes concerning revisionism, against which the defence of the Marxism was staked. The reason was that the central power of the SPD was a strategic point for realising her vision of proletarian internationalism and was also a lever for Polish liberation.

In this way "Rosa of Germany" appeared on the scene in those days at the turn of the century, 1898–1903. The Marxist revolutionary ideal in the mind of "Rosa of Germany" began to develop in an extremely intricate manner, being affected by the prescriptions of the SPD as well as the International II on the one hand and the revolutions which broke out in Russia on two occasions on the other. In order to have a clear idea of the development of Rosa's revolutionary thought, not to mention its special features and the problems involved therein, and to reproduce here the whole structure of Rosarian Marxism, it is in my opinion essential to begin an inquiry into the specific features of her thought by taking up the origins of "Rosa of Germany". In other words, what must be clarified first of all is the question, "How was it that a real problem came to press on her mind?" and "How was it possible that she could develop her thoughts so profoundly?"

Therefore, the purpose of this brief paper is to elucidate the Marxist revolutionary ideas held by "Rosa of Germany" by limiting the subject of discussion to the controversies over revisionism which arose at the turn of the century (1898–1903), and more particularly to those disputes about "Social Reform or Revolution?" which might well be regarded as yielding the greatest theoretical interest among those controversies. Consideration will be restricted to arguments concerned with the socialist movement from the point of view of theoretical doctrine.

II Status of the Problem, "Social Reform or Revolution?"

The ideas about Marxism advanced within leading circles of the German Social Democratic Party during the period at the turn of the century were vividly

6) P. Fröhlich, *a.a.O.*, S. 59.

7) J. P. Nettl, *op. cit.*, pp. 170–171.

8) *Ibid.*, pp. 133–136, pp. 172–184. The elucidation of Rosa in her relationships with Poland was one of the greatest achievements of Nettl's "Biography of Rosa". Rosa's struggles in attempting to unite the organised activities of Polish workers with SPD were evaluated in the following two points by Nettl: In the first place it secured her a reputation as an expert leader among orthodox Marxists concerned with Polish affairs and in the second place through all these efforts she could join the hierarchy of the SPD which was "the Party composed of practical organisers whose finger tips were all stiffened by hard work".

manifested in the twofold danger inherent in such lines of thinking, namely dogmatism and popularity. On the one hand Kautsky and some other leaders of the Party interpreted Marxism in such a way that they would rather stick to their dialectical interpretation of things in existence in the light of ex post facto consciousness. They tended to play down original thinking and to neglect realities by stressing the necessity for dogmatism, thus finding their own way of degeneration. On the other hand Bernstein and some other revisionists were moving toward the seeking of bourgeois popularity in their efforts to achieve a more immediate practical advantage. They opposed what they regarded as a neglect of the realities and were forced to act within a pragmatic, readymade and spontaneous bourgeois society, seeking the road of popularity. Thought could not be combined with the realities in a true sense: thought, action and reality were all separated from each other and fixed as such, and in this way the undisturbed development of bourgeois society was permitted to take its own course. In these circumstances Rosa Luxemburg ventured to raise the question, "What should be done to prevent the philosophy of Marxism from being absorbed in to the level of bourgeois thinking in such a manner, and to restore and reinforce the original principles of Marxist thought?" and furthermore she sought to answer this question by digging down into the depths of Marxist methodology.

However, for Marxism the crisis of theory was also a crisis of action, when viewed more objectively. Thus we shall at the outset try to analyse the crisis of the movement through the way the German Social Democratic Party existed and operated in those days, i.e. the status of the problem "Social Reform or Revolution?"¹⁰ In this connection it may be seen that Kautsky's standpoint and Bernstein's position were basically similar in spite of their superficial differences.

First, it is clear, according to the latest elaborate work of J. P. Nettl, that the substantial features of the arguments on the concept of organisations and their activities advanced by Kautsky as well as by some of the Party's other leaders had the following structure¹¹. Their first step was to begin with the presumption of a

9) It may be assumed that "Social Reformation or Revolution?" was on the one hand intended to find answers to many theoretical problems concerning the socialist movements from the Marxist standpoint as suggested by the title, but on the other it contained a subtitle, "How can Marxism be made Possible?" In other words, the Marxist methodology was being taken up as a problem to be unlocked. Concerning this point in "Social Reformation or Revolution?", see the essay in the *Kyoto University Economic Review*.

10) About the controversies on revisionism carried on within the Party further discussion must be undertaken on another occasion, but above all reference should be made to the following three essays: Kazuo Yamaguchi, "Agricultural Arguments by the German Socialist Democratic Party", *Shiso*, Vol. 490; and the same author, "Revolutionary Thoughts of Radicalists of German Socialist Democratic Party", *Shiso*, Vol. 487; and Masao Nishikawa, "Social Democratic Party in the German Imperial Dynasty II", *Annual Report-Political Science: Western World and Socialism*, 1966th ed.

11) J. P. Nettl, *op. cit.*; and "The German Social Democratic Party 1890-1914, as a Political Model", *Past and Present*, No. 30, 1965.

revolution as prescribed in Part I of the Erfurt Basic Principles. What was meant by the presupposition of a revolution was the maintenance of the purity of class-morale, the achievement of inner solidarity thereby, and the securing of a status as an isolated organisation set apart from bourgeois society, and ultimately reliance on such isolated organisational growth. However, just because such "organisational growth" believed to be of paramount urgency was only attainable through experimental and pragmatic daily struggles, what came to be more strongly stressed was in fact Part II of their Basic Principles, and as a result Part I was neglected by being set on a pedestal merely as "Party policies". It was held that it would suffice for the time being to hold themselves in readiness for ultimate developments, because Part I would come about naturally through the confusion of hostile camps and their inevitable collapse which was expected to take place in the near future. Their adoption of this kind of wait-and-see policy, which was discernible in their arguments about their organisation and activities, was as a matter of fact supported by the so-called optimistic progressive theories which were markedly inclined towards a historical interpretation of the class-consciousness and class-principles which composed the core of Marxism. However, it was overwhelmed by this progressive ideology, or was paradoxically drawn closer to the standpoint of the progressive ideology, thus being inevitably harmonised and weakened.

On the other hand against such arguments advanced by Kautsky and some of the Party's leaders concerning their organisation and activities, Bernstein staged a direct confrontation in demanding their fundamental modification. The structural points of Bernstein's argument asserted against their concept of an organisation and its activities were characterised by the following salient features¹²⁾.

His starting point was based on his realistic concept of the adaptability of capitalism which was structurally provided in the capitalistic system in itself and the resulting huge scale of productivity. He saw it in such various phenomena as (1) economically speaking, the elimination or mitigation of causes of industrial panic arising both from the increased elasticity of the modern trust system and from the increased power of production control by the cartel-trust, and measures to prevent the dissolution of social strata not through the concentration of ownership or management but through tendencies towards their diversification, (2) socially speaking, the creation of more stabilized social strata through a tendency to maintain or increase the number of minor intermediary social layers without bringing about an increased

12) My understanding of Bernstein owes much to Shun'ichi Hisamatsu, "Formation of Bernstein's Economic Social Thoughts", *Keizai Ronso*, Vol. 99, No. 5; and the same author, "Bernstein's Social Thoughts", *Keizai Ronso*, Vol. 100, No. 1. Basing his work on a detailed survey on the fruits of studies of Bernstein in the past and particularly on P. Gay, *The Dilemma of Democratic Socialism, Eduard Bernstein's Challenge to Marx*, New York, 1952, the author has made an analysis of the problem and the history of the formation of Bernstein's revisionist thought by digging down into Bernstein's writings during the period 1896-98.

difference between the rich and the poor, and (3) finally, speaking politically, the development of the democratic system and its activities as results of all the foregoing. There could be no grounds whatsoever to expect that the most shattering explosion of the contradictions between the production power and productive relations, i.e. a revolution as a sublimation of such an explosion by the workers would take place in the near future. This was because, according to their understanding of capitalistic production, capital could adopt itself to its production power without coming into confrontation with its own production power; this adoptability of capitalism in itself was a production power; in other words it was a power to pacify and sublimate all contradictions in productive relations. Consequently, it appeared to Bernstein that to look forward to this great catastrophe and to lie low to fulfil the long-awaited ultimate aim were nothing more than a deception or mere doctrinairism having nothing to do with the facts. To quote him on this point, he says "I can plainly confess that I have neither interests in, nor comprehension of things or affairs ordinarily understood by words like 'ultimate aim of socialism'. This target, whatever it may be, means nothing to me and actions in themselves are all that I am concerned with"¹³.

Now, doing away with actions based on what he regarded as a meaningless ultimate aim, the vision of the practice of socialism proposed by him instead was a series of direct struggles engaged in at each level of existing organisations by varied social layers and individuals under one and the same banner of concrete, direct and individual aims, namely improvement demands. Consequently the practical fulfilment of his socialism was to be carried out not through the form of one single movement but through a plurality of many separate struggles. This plurality of struggles was fundamentally composed of a variety of activities by Consumers' Cooperative Unions, Labour Unions and many other pressure groups such as the Social Democratic Party as an elected political party by the people, etc. But since no political party could be anything more than one of many pressure groups, even the Social Democratic Party couldn't help degenerating into one more pressure or profit organisation in pursuit of complete attainment of claimable demands. On the contrary, such a state of affairs has to be natured both in name and reality. It was held that, "since we are accomplishing a kind of reformation through the instrumentality of voting papers, demonstrative movements or other similar means by using pressure, which might have necessitated a bloody revolution, had it been a hundred years ago"¹⁴, it followed that "if the Social Democratic Party were brave enough to liberate itself from its virtually out-of-date slogans and could manage to assume the posture of a Revisionist Party of a democratic socialistic nature both in

13) E. Bernstein, „Zusammenbruchstheorie und Kolonialpolitik“, in *Zur Theorie und Geschichte des Sozialismus*, Teil 2, *Probleme des Sozialismus*, Berlin, 1904, S. 95.

14) E. Bernstein, "Explanations in Stuttgart Party Convention", *Criticism on Marx and its Counter-criticism*, comp. by Mikożaka, p. 250.

name and reality, then its influence in future would become far stronger than it is at the present moment"¹⁵⁾.

Nevertheless, the ring has not yet been closed. In other words, it would not be permissible to leave the socialist movement to take its own course in such circumstances that it might be broken up into many separate factions, depending on each aim or each demand of various social strata or separate independent individuals. Reintegration as one struggling entity was vital, because unless some authentic ground for such integration could be provided, there would be no reasons to justify the very existence of the Social Democratic Party in a position to represent the interests of the working class. However, at that time the party lacked such features as historical and objective inevitability, an ultimate aim, or well-grounded solidarity. "To tell the truth, I have no least thought to stake the victory of socialism upon 'the economic inevitability inherent in socialism' and I am of opinion, of course, that it is impossible to conceive a socialism purely in terms of the theory of the materialistic interpretation of history and that there is no need to do so, either"¹⁶⁾. In this way Bernstein endeavoured to stress the ethical content of his socialism in trying to integrate various kinds of struggles in a socialistic way to accomplish various aims and demands claimed by various social strata as well as by particular individuals. This is, I should say, the reason why the type of socialism maintained by Bernstein was criticised as 'an ethical socialism'.

At any rate, as roughly reviewed in above, by revealing the inconsistent self-deception in the central circles of the Party, or more fundamentally, of the Erfurt Basic Principles¹⁷⁾, Bernstein contended that Part I of their Basic Principles should be given up in favour of a thoroughgoing pursuit of Part II. In other words he argued for the revision of democratic socialism on the basis of political realism and the use of pressure for that purpose under the slogan "No more abstract Lecturing! Get our Immediate Advantage!" Thus, in sharp contrast to Kautsky and some of the principal leaders of the Party who regarded Part I of their Basic Principles as an ideology to be held in the highest esteem and who maintained that the planned development of their organisation based on Part I was their supreme task, Bernstein, holding that such an ideology should be discarded, contended that their daily struggles should be liberated from such an erroneous ideology and that other practical political aims should be pursued pragmatically. It is true that the main points of their assertions were in complete opposition, but be that as it may, the two different standpoints were of homogeneous nature in that both of them dealt with Part I of their Basic Principles as a mere concept and in that they regarded Part II as a basic

15) E. Bernstein, *Die Voraussetzungen des Sozialismus und die Aufgaben der Sozialdemokratie*, Stuttgart, 1899, S. 230, Transl. by Matsushita, *Reconstruction of Marxism*, p. 259.

16) *Ibid.*, S. 246, *op. cit.*, p. 278.

17) Okio Murase, *Contemporary German History*, 1962, p. 134; Transl. Anny Cligee, Nozawa & Akizawa, *History of International*, 1965, p. 64.

policy for the activities of the Party; and furthermore in that for that reason they regarded the struggles of the worker as a permanent feature of the existing bourgeois-made political scene and in that they left the bourgeois political world to carry on its own successful development. The “actuality of a revolution” which had a direct concern with Marxist principles had nothing to do with the arguments of the SPD about their organisation and activities. What they saw and experienced was only the world of daily routine affairs. This was the real crisis of the Marxist movement and was also a crisis of the entity of movements as such. This crisis was of such a nature that it could not be solved unless the unique characteristics inherent in the Marxist movements as clearly distinguished from those of bourgeois movements were fundamentally questioned. There is no need to point out that this was the very point of Rosa’s question “Social Reformation or Revolution!” The reason why Rosa attempted in those days to provide an answer to that question particularly by way of a critical examination of Bernstein’s arguments concerning their organisation and activities will be understood without difficulty, I believe, if it is born in mind that Bernstein’s arguments was of such a nature that the way he grasped the problem in advancing his own arguments could theoretically involve the principles held by Kautsky and certain other leaders of the Party, as suggested earlier.

III The Concept of the Proletarian Political World

It is justifiable to seek the starting point of Rosa’s criticism of Bernstein’s arguments concerning the concept of an organisation and its activities in the following comment: “Above all what characterises the external appearance of opportunism of a wait-and-see policy?” It is opposition to theoretical reasoning. Whether it is an aim which we are attempting to accomplish or a means of struggle to be adopted or the methods of struggles in themselves, because all practical activities connected with such affairs are in all events clearly defined and limited by our theoretical reasoning, i.e. the basic principles of scientific socialism, the characteristics of opportunism are quite self-explanatory. Therefore, when anybody is trying to bring about a practical effect only, it is quite natural that a kind of effort to make free use of one’s limbs, in other words the effort to extricate one’s practice from any theoretical reasoning, i.e. the effort to stand alone without being limited, should spontaneously be generated”¹⁸⁾. In other words, according to Rosa, the political characteristics of Bernstein’s revisionism which propagated the “glad tidings of practical political affairs” in the pragmatic world of daily happenings were in the first place simply a lack of a theorising tendency and want of basic principle. Putting it in other way, they totally denied not only any theory relating to practical activities but also any prerequisite prescription to be determined by basic principles, and embarked

18) R. Luxemburg, “Social Reform or Revolution?”, *Collected Works of Rosa Luxemburg*, 1963, p. 240.

on practical activities, as defined by Bernstein. By doing so, they broke up the continuous and consistent development of the proletarian political world into pieces, and turned the proletariat into something stationary or immovable within the framework of a bourgeois society, within a system of capitalism or on the level of bourgeois politics, i.e. in the visible world. Under such circumstances, the burning problem for Rosa was to try to establish a political world where the proletariat could engage in their own struggles in opposition to the social democratic movements which were inclining to be pursued more or less in harmony with bourgeois politics.

Now, at this point it is necessary for us to throw light upon the main features of the political world where the unique struggles peculiar to the proletariat were being waged and the theoretical approach in analysing this world. The proletarian struggles, as already mentioned, had first of all to be beyond the level of the bourgeoisie where these struggles were interpreted as something fixed within the framework of an established society with its existing system, and something taking place as an individual and separate movement of its own accord. In this sense it had to be a political world where the unique struggles peculiar to the proletariat were being waged. Furthermore it could not be a mere aggregate of the whole complex of daily routine affairs, but should be composed of orderly realities which were organically established as a totality and as tendencies. Consequently it had to be something beyond the visible world, and the workers therefore had to construct an invisible world through something visible to our eyes in the existing realities as a living whole. In order to construct the realities in this way as a living whole and as a political world peculiar to the proletariat it was an absolute necessity that a some theory should be involved as a prerequisite and prescription. Moreover, the theory required could not in the least be of a general nature, nor a theory of pragmatism advanced from an *ex post facto* consciousness of a passive and wait-and-see attitude. On the contrary, it had to be of a teleological nature advanced from an active and inquisitive consciousness which could stand against the type of theory mentioned above. If the prime need of theoretical prescription is taken into consideration in relation to the problem of the arguments concerning activities, then it leads to a conclusion that what Rosa was seeking after was the crucial importance of theoretical prescription for the ultimate target in her mind.

However, in spite of all that has been said, the ultimate aim in those days used to be understood and talked about at rather commonplace level of thinking to the effect that 'such an ultimate aim is a very attractive vision, but it is after all a mere idea having practically no relevance to daily struggles, and such matters can well be taken care of by the scholars' or 'it is after all nothing but an image of the future of a state'. However, the real problem of the prevailing circumstances was awakened in the mind of Rosa in this way—if what is stated above is true, then "Where should we try to find the very element, or what could be the very element that could distinguish the activities of the Social Democratic Party from bourgeois democratism or

bourgeois radicalism, and that could transform the whole labour movement from a meaningless patchwork for the mitigation of the effects of capitalism into specific class-struggles in opposition to this capitalist system?"¹⁹ This and nothing else could be the ultimate aim. When the proletariat could manage to secure the control by which it could exercise free command over the actualities in the form of a living whole by rising above the world of daily routine happenings which were visible to our eyes, and if this were our ultimate aim, then nothing else could serve so well to produce a much-needed social democratism in a more adequate manner. Consequently, it was held that this was by no means an image of the future ideal but that it was most realistic strategy of paramount importance. In this way Rosa totally transformed the common image of the SPD in those days which had been symbolized in Bernstein's thesis as outlined by the following quotation. "The ultimate aim is the core of our struggles. The working class can no longer take such a degenerate viewpoint as described by that speculative philosopher who said 'we have nothing to do with such a thing as an ultimate aim: all that we are concerned with is activities alone'. Nay, the class of all labouring people adopts an exactly opposite standpoint, having no concern with the kind of activity which has nothing to do with the ultimate aim, nor with activity for its own sake, nor with the kind of activity which is self-protection. To us the ultimate aim is all that concerns us."²⁰

Furthermore, that was not all. It was not until the ultimate aim could be made a core of the struggles that many improvement struggles in a form of direct action and revolutionary practice could be inseparably combined together and only by this process that the realities could be provided with their own core and could be produced as such in the form of one organic totality. For these reasons the ultimate aim provided concurrently a theoretical foundation-stone, on which basis the answers to Part I and II of the Erfurt Basic Principles were to be found. Nevertheless, even if it is conceded that the theoretical foundation-stone of the combination between Part I and Part II, i.e. between revolutionary practice and many improvement struggles, were the ultimate aim, it would naturally lead to the following questions. "With what specific features of proletarian movements could this particular combination be conditioned?" and again, "How could such a combination be made possible?" Now, to give clear answers to such questionings as "what kind of ...?" and "in what manner..." was in truth a theoretical problem for all arguments relating to the Marxist movement, but this was also a burning problem for the SPD in the old days. Consequently, such was the case with Rosa, too.

19) R. Luxemburg, "Social Reform or Revolution?", p. 155. About this point, see R. Luxemburg, „Reden zur Taktik auf den Parteitag in Stuttgart 1898“, *Gesammelte Werke*, SS. 126–127; *op. cit.*, pp. 25–26.

20) *Ibid.*, S. 131; *op. cit.*, p. 30.

IV Arguments on the Essential Nature of Socialist Movements

Gaining some clues to Engels in "Introduction—'Class Struggles in France' " (1895) in "Critique 'Draft of Erfurt Basic Principles,'" (1891)²¹. Rosa devoted her efforts for the time being to a critical study, succeeding in grasping in principle what was meant there; and proceeded to analyse the problem at issue. This was because it was only in Engels that she could find the following debating points of noteworthy significance: (1) referring to the problem of Part I and II of the Basic Principles, he pointed out the omission of a consideration of the attainment of the power, which should have constituted a concrete and immediate problem, and its resulting transitional principles, and he sharply criticised the lack of a relationship between Part I and II: (2) he proposed this concrete problem by himself as a strategy on behalf of a single and inseparable democratic republic to oppose the tendency to create small split up countries and Prussianism, i.e. as "a strategy of the bourgeois democratic revolution": and (3) he had been developing successfully his argument on how to apply this strategy in the form, as it were, of an argument about the changed form of socialist movements.

In this connection the main points of Engels' "argument on the changed form of socialist movements" may be summarised here as follows in its bare essentials: (1) History is making its progress and the prerequisite conditions for the class struggle have undergone changes. The surprise attacks and mobile operations employing barricades which were the methods used in 1848-revolution, i.e. the days of the minority revolution or single and discontinuous revolution, have passed away. At present we are living in a new era where a new type of majority revolution based on the absolutely necessary conditions of the awakened masses, or a tactic of advancing gradually from one position to another should be accepted: in short a new age of a long-lasting revolution which can withstand "an ever-lasting patient task" has come: (2) Consequently, what should carry the most significant meaning for the Party is the political enlightenment of the masses and the task of organising them. The weapons with which we can accomplish this task should, fundamentally speaking, be lawful activities rather than illegal activities, i.e. parliament and elections

21) My "Image of Engels in his later years" is something very close to what Bernstein or Kautsky, and in particular Kautsky had in their minds; his standpoint is very far from that originally held by revolutionary Marxists. In particular with regard to that struck-out portion in the "Introduction to the Class Struggles in France", two opposing interpretations, rightist and leftist, have historically been made. (About this my opinion is very close to that on page 134 of the above-mentioned book by O. Murase.) It is traditional that those holding the standpoint of revolutionary Marxism would attempt to stand in favour of Engels, but I am of different opinion. In this train of thought the painstaking work of Kiyooki Hirata, "Engels in his Later Years", *Kei-Ho-Kagaku*, Vol. IX, No. 3, is recommended for reference. I shall undertake a more detailed discussion of the complete image of Engels in his later years on another occasion in the near future.

instead of barricaded mobile operations: (3) A gigantic organisation attaining its full growth in the course of such lawful activities should ultimately assure a promising future for socialism.

Nevertheless, the problem has been left still to be tackled. Can it not lead to the conclusion that Engels' argument about tactics would make the proletarian struggles static or fixed in the framework of the established bourgeois political world because of his consideration of the problems relating to the political enlightenment of the masses and their organisation by way of lawful activities? Again, didn't he suggest in the context that he regarded the kind of barricaded struggles of the old days as a thing of the past and at the same time further try to suggest an armed uprising only as one theoretical possibility and rather gave it up as genuine option? If another question may be added here, didn't his contention have a negative influence on the "actuality of a revolution", or rather serve to bolster the lawful parliamentarism held by Kautsky and others in the central circles of the Party and to provide their optimism about organisational growth based on a wait-and-see policy with a theoretical and authentic foundation? Shouldn't Engels himself be held responsible in an important if partial way for all these circumstances? And wasn't the reason why he left the problem carrying such nuances partly because he developed his arguments about the Marxist movement from an exceptionally objective view-point, as indicated earlier based on historical events, in the form of a new concept of the changed form of movements? Or rather, wasn't the problem primarily concerned not with argument about historical changes in the form of movements but with the way to grasp the essential nature of the Marxist movement including the problem of the changed form of the movement? From a view-point which might well be called an "argument about the essential nature of socialist movements", Rosa attempted to re-grasp the problem which was left behind by Engels, thus seeking to dig down to its core.

I am confident that so far I have succeeded in clarifying to some extent, if not completely, the real meaning of the problem compared with the way it used to be grasped, by referring to Engels. However, at this point we must turn our attention to a problem of our own. That is, we must now ask, "With what qualitative conditions of the proletarian struggles, can the combination of the improvement struggles and revolutionary practice be characterised?" and going further "How can such a combination be achieved?"

Rosa's clear answer to the first question runs as follows. "The forward march of proletariat on a world-history-making-scale toward victory is in reality not at all an easy task. All of the specific characteristics of such movements should be of such nature that every one of the masses is required to carry through his own intention by opposing every representative of the ruling class for the first time at this historical moment; that this intention must be realised in the perfection of existing society, or somewhere beyond existing society, and that the masses, in spite of all that, have no

chance to reinforce such intentions of their own unless they engage themselves in continual struggles against the existing conventional system, or unless they have a footing within the framework of such struggles²²⁾. As long as they keep standing within the framework of the existing conventional social system, the proletarian masses have no chance to overturn the existing system. That is the reason why the masses must ride over the actually existing social system. But, for that purpose it must be done through the instrumentality of struggles engaged in with the actual system in existence. This is a vicious circle. This vicious circle is in contradiction to the subjective entity. It is an inevitable vicious circle as well as a contradiction inherent in Marxist movements. Yet this contradictory difficulty is in itself a substantial feature of Marxist movements. If so, then the combination of revolutionary practice and miscellaneous improvement struggles is a contradictory combination. Even admitting that it is a contradictory combination of such a difficult nature, it is after all an inevitable combination which must be accepted as such. This was her answer to the way Marxist movements ought essentially to be, i.e. consequently her answer to the first question.

This very difficulty of such a contradictory combination is part of the essential nature of Marxist movements, though this is a repeated statement²³⁾. The proletarian struggle is always, subjectively speaking, passive struggle in the sense that it is a forced struggle with an enemy and at the same time it is an external and direct struggle in the sense that it is prescribed by some external conditions of the world which are visible directly to our eyes. The proletariat are forced to engage in struggles in the form of passive, external and direct struggles in the sense just described in above. This is what was meant by the miscellaneous improvement struggles referred to above. Consequently, the essential features of miscellaneous improvement struggles can only be found in the passiveness, externality and directness of those struggles. Nevertheless, these struggles never culminate in this form of struggle because the proletariat, initially engaging in a direct struggle, at the same time makes every effort to break up the prescribed forms such as the passiveness, externality and directness of their struggles, to break out vigorously from such a framework, and finally to seek individual fulfilment, each seeking to make himself

22) R. Luxemburg, "Social Reform or Revolution?", *Collected Works of Rosa Luxemburg*, 1963, pp. 242–243.

23) The fundamental problems like "What is the Marxist Movement?" or "What is Marxist Thought?" are the most essential questions having a bearing throughout this paper, but about this I have to confess, taking this occasion, that I owe much of my enlightenment and knowledge to the persistent and dignified theoretical development of Mr. Shinji Fujimoto, i.e. to his theoretical reasoning consistently advanced by demonstrating how the innate contradictions of proletariat developed which have much to do with all problems of Marxist thought and the Marxist movement. The concept of the proletarian struggles in terms of duplicated difficulty is that of Mr. Fujimoto. Concerning his study, see *Epistemology*, 1957; *Philosophy of Revolution*, 1965; and *Marxism and the Present Days*, 1967.

something more than he used to be. Without externalisation the effort is made to develop one's own self by making use of oneself as an instrumentality. Indeed, there is no alternative to doing this. The fulfilment, deepening and developing of one's own self is nothing but the pursuit, deepening and development of one's own inner contradiction, and consequently it is a struggle against one's own self. It is in this way that the proletarian struggle can be a struggle of a really revolutionary nature in the sense that it is a struggle which can return back to one's own self and can sublimate oneself, and it is inevitable that it should be of such a nature. This is the essential nature of the Marxist movement, and this essential nature is at the same time its principle. Thus, such a view of the essential nature of the Marxist movement was precisely the principle which led Rosa to develop her own Marxist arguments.

Primarily because it was held that the essential nature of the proletarian struggle was characterised by a contradictory difficulty as pointed out in above, these struggles were obliged to develop by taking a zigzag road involving retrenchment, self-criticism and re-departure. Rosa herself confirmed this idea in a precise manner, as did Marx, by quoting famous passages from the "18th day of Brumaire of Louis Napolen", which contains the following description of the nature of proletarian revolutionary movements. "The bourgeois revolutions such as those in the 18th century would charge rapidly from one success to another, and their dramatic effects would compete with each other, their minds being in a state as if men and things were caught by a ball of fire and being thrown into ecstasies. However, this kind of revolution would not last for long; it would arrive at its peak before long and the drunken state of their minds would hang over society for a long time before they could have the fruits of those stormy and pressing days under their deliberate control. While on the other hand *the proletarian revolution such as those in the 19th century would always undertake self-criticism and be frequently discontinued while in progress. What might seemingly appear to have been completed would be commenced all over again. The way things were done halfway by oneself, weak-spiritedness and/or the absurdity of one's own actions would be mercilessly and thoroughgoingly ridiculed*"²⁴.

Because Rosa had a grasp, in a similar way to Marx, of the essential nature of the Marxist movement as a contradictory difficulty and the nature of proletarian revolution as involving a zigzag course, it was a logical necessity for her to raise the following question. "Then, how can this contradictory difficulty be solved by the power of the contradiction itself?" and "How can the revolutionary process by a zigzag course, which is no easy task, be accomplished?" In other words, she had now to give her clear answer to the second question, "How can the miscellaneous improvement struggles be combined with revolutionary practice?" However, it is impossible for us to find that she answered this convincingly. The reason is that, by

24) *Collected Works of Marx-Engels*, Vol. 5, p. 287.

turning her point of argument or rather by giving up her effort to dig down toward the core of the problem, she made the following statement immediately after quoting that famous passage from Marx: "The proletarian movements could never have been turned into social democratic movements by a single effort even in Germany. The former took a long time to turn into the latter by going through a day by day process. The former could in any case become the latter only by overcoming an extreme deviation toward something like anarchism or toward something like opportunism—these two couldn't be anything more than a mere moment for such movements if social democratism is understood as a process."²⁵

Rather, may we not assume that Rosa—if she wanted to insist that the contradiction is to be sublimated by the power of the contradiction itself, because this was her methodological standpoint—should have dug farther down into the depth of the contradictory difficulty itself from her idea of the contradictory difficulty of struggles and of the zigzag process of struggles, and should have sought a key to make struggles worthy of the struggling? Shouldn't she have kept her footing within the ring of the logic of the contradictory difficulty of struggles and attempted to show how the combination of miscellaneous improvement struggles and revolutionary practice could be realised therefrom? Putting it in another way, while the contradictorily duplicated struggles were developing as such by pushing the direct improvement struggles forward, such duplicated struggles could be so developed and divided that those direct improvement struggles could overcome passiveness, externality and directness: and from such an idea the process of the combination of contradictory struggles could have been clarified.

Nevertheless, though holding a correct idea of the essential nature of movements, Rosa Luxemburg turned her mind toward the problem of the process of activity, by giving up the problem of the combination which should have been the manifestation of the intrinsic nature of the idea. Hence it must be concluded that one does not merely acquiesce in Rosa's argument on the socialist movement but must point out that it was at the same time an arguable problem bearing upon the whole of her arguments.

V The Logic of the Bourgeois Political World

Rosa Luxemburg gave up for the time being the problem of combination, i.e. how to combine direct improvement struggles and revolutionary practice together as discussed above, and she left this problem behind unsolved. But she by no means completely abandoned it. She attempted to approach the problem for a second time by changing her angle of view, so to speak, or by taking a detour. In short, the immediate problem for her at this moment was in the first place to re-examine the

25) R. Luxemburg, "Social Reform or Revolution?", *Collected Works of Rosa Luxemburg*, 1963, p. 244.

basic characteristics of bourgeois rule and in the second place to clarify the essential nature of the bourgeois nation and of bourgeoisie democratism as political and external forms of such a basic regime, especially in its historical development, and in the third place to orient the bourgeois political world in the circumstances in which proletarian struggles were going on. Now, in this connection if it is born in mind that any effort intended to solve a problem, fundamentally speaking, requires above all a clear explanation of all factors showing how the problem came into existence, why it came to constitute a problem, and how it was developing, then her effort to elucidate the structure of bourgeois dominance in the political world as a direct factor in prescribing the proletarian struggle was unquestionably a detour, but it was also a detour which she had in any event to make.

The contradictory difficulty inherent in Marxist movements was as a matter of fact thoroughly prescribed by the following basic features of the bourgeois regime. That is, "What is the thing that distinguishes the bourgeois society from the preceding societies of bygone days—from ancient as well as medieval societies? It is to be distinguished by the fact that the ruling class has been grounded not on various rights acquired up to now in a successful manner but on various existing economic relations and also by the fact that the financial system has been based not on legal relations but purely on economic relations. It is impossible to find any formal legal basis of the contemporary ruling class in any current legal system. ...Consequently, if the ruling class has nothing to do with the wage slavery system at all, then how can this wage slavery system be gradually demolished through "legal methods?"²⁶⁾ At this point Rosa's attention was directed to the form of class rule inherent in a bourgeoisie. The rule of the bourgeoisie had nothing to do with religion, political power, or conventional practice. That is to say, it was non-economic ruling which had been in practice in bygone days, but practically speaking, it first of all had an element of ruling by an "invisible hand" or by "invisible realities". In short, it was a kind of rule based on "an economic reality which was characterised by such convenient specific features that the power of labour could produce some value as commercial products and in particular more value than the amount which each worker required for his own living expenses"²⁷⁾. It was, fundamentally speaking, a kind of invisible, incorporeal and absolute rule by an invisible hand without remaining as a kind of partial rule, which practice become visible in this or that fixed form. If so, that proletariat had to carry out their struggles against the realities of invisible, intangible and absolute rule, that is the authoritative power of the bourgeoisie without being content to carry out their partial struggles against something visible to the eye bearing on their immediate interests in expectation of some material fruits. In this way Rosa proved the truth of the inevitability of "acquisition of authoritative

26) *Op. cit.*, pp. 225–226.

27) *Op. cit.*, p. 227.

power'' by throwing light upon the basic foundation of the bourgeois ruling class on the one hand and at the same time she shaved on the basis of the above-mentioned demonstration, that the bourgeois administration, i.e. bourgeoisie democratism or their state, was after all nothing in fact but an external and non-political form of a kind of economic ruling class. In other words, in essentials a bourgeois nation could be nothing but a state purely based on class-consciousness, and bourgeois democratism was really nothing but a castle in the air.

However, Rosa, could not think that the bourgeois state was genuinely a nation based on class consciousness from the very beginning of its birth or that bourgeois democratism was a castle in the air from its earliest days. She attempted to elucidate the essential nature of the way they came into existence and the way they developed by referring to historical facts, particularly to the historical development of capitalism and more specifically by taking such historical development as a measure of her judgement. Such a method of approach was very typical of Rosa. This approach was of the same quality as that she took when she brought out her arguments for proletarian international solidarity in making her stand against the racial principles then maintained by the Polish Social Party, P.P.S. in the old days when the Polish liberation strategy was a red hot issue. In other words, the theoretical keystone which furnished the foundation of the international Polish liberation strategy was also her view of the situation that the current stage of capitalistic development no longer required the formation of a state based on racial principles a necessary condition, and it was a method of critically considering any matter only in the light of the historical development of capitalism²⁸). However, the postures of the bourgeois state and bourgeois democratism unveiled through this method of hers—that of using the history of capitalistic development as a measure for all arguments—were an element in the original problems deeply prescribed in the background of her argument in direct opposition to Bernstein's argument in support of his conception of the state and democratism.

That is to say, according to her opponent, Bernstein, the actual circumstances, under which an imperialistic country at the turn of the century was entrusted with a variety of functions relating to the general interest for the purpose of social development, were grasped as "a kind of union or fusion of a state and a society" or as "a reversion of various functions of a state to a society". In short, Bernstein attempted to develop a harmonized concept of a state from the view-point of society. Consequently, the mere reversion to class authority on account of the principles of a state based on class authority was decisively inadequate. That is, it was self-explanatory that the existing state was a kind of a state based on class authority, but this principle should be understood, in our view, not as an absolute and permanently fixed measure but through its dynamic development in a similar manner as in all

28) See my above-mentioned book.

cases of any other affairs concerned with capitalistic society"²⁹). Consequently, as far as Bernstein had an acute grasp, though erroneous, of the socialised phenomena of national functions in the imperialistic stage as a promising but of the future society, the very core of his position was to solve the problem of the relationships between capital, state and society by grasping the bourgeois state through its historical development and making it clear that "all of those elements which were developing in the capitalistic system would not tend at first to be formed in the way of making closer approach toward socialism but would be formed in the way of drifting away from it"³⁰.

After a historical consideration of the state, Rosa made the following statement. "Even if it is admitted that the state is entrusted with a variety of functions relating to the general interest for the purpose of the better development of society, it is only because these interests and social development happen to be identical with the interests of the ruling class, and is possible exclusively on such condition only. But this harmony won't last beyond a certain period of capitalistic development. When its development reaches a certain advanced level, the interests of the bourgeois class as such and the benefits of economic progress begin to become mutually estranged widely from each other even in the sense of capitalism. We are of the opinion that a stage like this has already commenced to come into existence. This is well manifested in the two most important phenomena of current social policies, i.e. the customs tariff policy and militarism."³¹ Putting it in other words, the national policy of capital, be it tariff policy or militarism, was used as a means to encourage national productivity and the development of international markets up to a certain period of capitalistic progress. In this way those policies were in harmony not only with bourgeois interests but also with the general economic interests of society. Hence, when viewed from the point of view of the progress of capitalistic production, a harmonious combination of a state and society, if vaguely conceived, could have been realised more or less up to this period of time, and although such a state was certainly a state based on class authority, it was a kind of "social" state in the sense of its contribution to social interests in general and at the same time a kind of "progressive" state in the sense of its contribution to the advance of history. However, those conditions were only found in the states of bygone days. In other words, the mission of a state in a limited sense to pave the way for capitalistic reproduction, which furthered the national productivity and the development of international markets, had already been terminated. "The policies of the state could no longer be a driving force for capitalistic progress and they came to be a disease of capitalism"³², as could be illustrated in the case of tariff policy or militarism. The process

29) R. Luxemburg, "Social Reform or Revolution?", *Collected Works of Rosa Luxemburg*, 1963, p. 183.

30) *Op. cit.*, pp. 227-228.

31) *Op. cit.*, p. 184.

32) *Op. cit.*, p. 186.

through which national policies could no longer be in harmony with and assist the economic progress of a society in this way and the process through which a state was obliged to estrange herself from the society which was its essential foundation were prescribed in the process through which the interests of the bourgeoisie began to be estranged from the general interests of society and the process through which the bourgeoisie began to lose its prime characteristic as an entity to carry out social and historical development. As the estrangement of the bourgeoisie from society and the alienation of the state from society came to be more and more fundamental tendencies, the state began to be transformed completely into an instrument of the rule by the bourgeoisie as a specific class.

In this way according to the philosophy of Rosa Luxemburg, even the general as well as social functions of all capitalistic countries in Europe during the turning period of the century were to be branded with class rule, thus resulting in, as it were, a unified class without any social functions. In other words, it may well be concluded that it was Rosa Luxemburg herself who understood the estrangement of the state from society or the combination of the state and social classes as the historical characteristics of European capitalistic countries at the turn of the century, i.e. the imperialistic countries. In this way she could maintain the above-mentioned concept of the bourgeois state without falling into a kind of simple and static argument because of her correct understanding of the essential features of bourgeois government and her effort to understand the bourgeois state through its activities³³.

However, an important problem was involved in her idea of the bourgeois state. Despite her contention that the bourgeois state could be something external and abstract in relation to its own material foundations as already pointed out before, she was led, conversely, to lose sight of the external and abstract nature of bourgeois rule because of the unilateral emphasis she placed on a point, by going beyond her own contention, that the state was after all a meaningless existence estranged from its own material foundations: such was characteristic of Rosa's view of the state. It is impossible to produce, from such a concept, an image of the state as an indispensable ring serving to organise and aggregate the bourgeois social relations externally and abstractly, and consequently to serve to carry through the rule of the bourgeois class. In short it is impossible to derive an answer to the following question

33) At this point I would like to refer to the controversies advanced in the monthly magazine "*Shiso*". Arguments were conducted there under the following titles: "Rosa as a peaceful revolutionist" from a standpoint of Anti-Stalinism by Takayoshi Shibata, "Historical Genealogy of Arguments on Peaceful Revolutions", *Shiso*, Vol. 494; "Dialectic of Revolutions", *Shiso*, Vol. 516; "For the Correct Image of Rosa", *Shiso*, Vol. 502, by Naruhiko Ito in protest against such a wrong image of Rosa. I inclined to support Mr. Ito's standpoint, but the controversies were generally futile. It was, in my opinion, an excessively naive response to the anti-Stalinism of Mr. Shibata. As to my criticism of him, see my paper in the *Kansai University News*, Vol. 200. Be that as it may, it is evident that the problem had no concern with "whether Rosa had an idea of two sides of a state as innate contradictions or not."

from her idea of the state. "Why is it that the bourgeois class requires the existence of a state to exercise its influence?" Might it not be reasonable to assume that such a way of thinking placed her ironically enough in a similar position to that of Bernstein, by dissolving the problem of the state into a problem of society and the masses as carriers of the society in a straightforward manner? Finally, again, may it not be assumed that from all that is mentioned above she also failed in the end to elucidate the contradictory structure of the bourgeois state? In other words, isn't it true that Rosa's thesis was lacking in the following point—just because the state tends to be separated from society, and the farther the separation goes, the more need there is for the state to be fused together; or if expressed in a manner fitting our description, that it becomes absolutely essential that "separation of the state from society" and "the fusion of the state with society" must be realised at the same time?

Next we must turn to the development of Rosa's argument about bourgeois democratism. However, this problem appears in my thought to admit of a relatively simple solution because we have undertaken a complete discussion of her argument on the state, and particularly because the way she dealt with bourgeois democratism is exactly identical with her approach in the case of her argument about the state. If her logic is to be applied, it runs as follows.

Bernstein and other revisionists had the idea that the democratic forms of political life, or if put in a more concrete way, bourgeois democratism manifested in the form of universal suffrage and the parliamentary system is a most prominent political manifestation of the "fusion of the state with society" and they saw a bud of future socialistic elements in such political life. Thus they conceived of democratism as if it were a basic principle penetrating throughout history. On the other hand, in sharp contrast, Rosa bitterly criticised their naive reasoning and made the following points clear, basing them on her insight into the essential features of the bourgeois regime as already discussed: that bourgeois democratism cannot contend by itself the essential content inherent in the entity and consequently such form of political life can only be the instrument of the ruling class if viewed from its content, however democratic its form may appear to be: and furthermore that the mission of bourgeois democratism which should be historically and socially progressive has already been terminated and as a result such form of democratism as now exists is only an enhancement of class consciousness and for that reason it is nothing but a castle in the air. She considered the parliamentary system and made the following statement. "The parliamentary system cannot be by any means an absolute existence produced by many beautiful dreams such as the development of democratism, the progress of humankind, etc. Rather, it is 'a specific and historical form of class rule by bourgeoisie' and although it is only one side-view of such rule it is 'a form of struggle by the bourgeoisie against the feudal system'. Parliamentarism by the bourgeoisie can continue to last only as long as some kinds of discord are continually being bread

between the bourgeoisie and the feudal powers. When the lively fire of this struggle is put out, parliamentarism based on the standpoint of the bourgeoisie will lose its historical significance. Moreover, for the last quarter of a century the political development of all capitalistic countries has been universally characterised by a compromise between the bourgeoisie and the feudal powers"³⁴.

In this way all that democratism could mean to Rosa was that it was nothing but a formality, its real content being the rule by the bourgeoisie. Consequently this formality was of such a nature that it could be overthrown at any time by the penetration of the principle of class rule, depending upon a change in political conditions, thus being destined to disclose its character as a castle in the air. If so,—and we must note that this way of thinking is to form one of the most important characteristics of Rosa's argument concerning democratism, which influences Rosa to a great extent in her later days—a 'new entity' to revoke the class rule which used to be regarded as a manifestation of this fossilized bourgeois democratism had then to be created in the form, so to speak, of a real democratism to counteract the former ruling class—this new democratism was to come into existence later forming its own fixed shape self-consciously. This was to be accomplished by a reverse use of that meaningless formality of bourgeois democratism. It was solely because she gained such deep insight into the historical destiny of bourgeois democratism that Rosa could point out the declining fate of bourgeois democratism from her view-point with emphasis on the problem of the entity and could correctly perceive the confrontation of newly rising labour movements against the world policies of the bourgeoisie in the form of an imminent class struggle, i.e. as a phenomenon to improve the then existing state of affairs. As a conclusion, she confirmed that a labour movement of a socialistic nature was only one available prop and stay of the current democratism and could well be such and that socialism was not destined to be tied to the bourgeoisie, but on the contrary that democratism was destined to be tied to the socialist movements³⁵, and thus she found her way back to her original starting-point, i.e. the struggles to secure affective power in the hands of proletariat.

In this way Rosa developed a strong charge of fossilization and formalization in bourgeois democratism. However, is it not true that the essential features of bourgeois rule were to be found in their externality as well as in abstractness because of separation from their material foundation as was made clear by Rosa herself, and consequently that such rule was of necessity of a formalised nature? Again, is it not true that bourgeois democratism was not formalized but was primarily of such nature and that to the bourgeoisie it was an entity as such? Is it not unquestionably held that the phenomenon of bourgeois rule is nothing but rule by formality? Nevertheless, Rosa had a different approach. That is, she formed her idea of the phenomenon

34) R. Luxemburg, Sozialdemokratie und Parlamentarismus, in *Gesammelte Werke*, 1904, SS. 390–391; R. Luxemburg, "Social Reform or Revolution?", *Collected Works of Rosa Luxemburg*, 1963, p. 144.

35) R. Luxemburg, "Social Reform or Revolution?", *Collected Works of Rosa Luxemburg*, 1963, p. 221.

of proletarian democratism by seeing it as the reverse of bourgeois democratism. This is a very unique and original way of thinking on her part. At this point it should be noted that her argument on the political relations is characterised by the way such an idea came to her mind by making a reverse use of an opposing idea. It was held that "democratism is indispensable, not because democratism makes it unnecessary for the proletariat to acquire the political power in its own hands, but conversely because it makes the acquisition of that power unavoidable and above all possible³⁶⁾. If it is taken into consideration that democratism itself which has turned into something meaningless for the bourgeoisie is seized by the proletariat to make it one of the most powerful and indispensable means of pursuing the class struggle, then the extent and nature of the struggles to succeed and reinforce democratism against the will of bourgeoisie should not be diminished by becoming a type of struggle to protect democratism within the framework of the political world of the bourgeoisie, but those struggles should be carried out with the aim of penetrating through that framework and should be turned into the struggles of revolutionary practice to put effective power into the hands of the proletariat. In this way Rosa, by regarding the democratic struggles as an instrument, attempted to tackle the difficult problem of a combination of direct improvement struggles and revolutionary practice.

By considering the essential features of bourgeois rule and by studying the character of the bourgeois state and bourgeois democratism, undoubtedly she succeeded in prescribing the political world of the bourgeois in the proletarian struggles instead of prescribing the proletarian struggles in the political world of the bourgeois. That is, she conceived the democratic struggles as something directly related to revolutionary practice, of which the aim was to seize power. But, how could the democratic struggles take the place of revolutionary practice, of which the primary aim was the seizure of power? To such a question raised from a deeper view-point she only pointed out a *transitional continuity* from bourgeois democratism to proletarian democratism and merely anticipated a *transitional homogeneity* of democratic struggles and revolutionary practice. May we not assume that such a way of thinking was caused on the one hand by an excessively simple concept of bourgeois democratism that it had an innate tendency to weaken the class confrontation and to seek after formal compromise, and on the other by the lack of recognition of proletarian democratism, of which the innate aim was to radicalize and sharpen the class confrontation?³⁷⁾ Again, she could not explain this problem of "how to" clearly enough. It must be concluded, when the conclusion of Section IV is taken into

36) *Op. cit.*, p. 229.

37) As to the understanding of democratism, it is necessary to learn from Lenin's painstaking works in those days of the 1917 Russian Revolution when the so-called proletarian democratism was looked on as a burning problem. For an instance, *Collected Works of Lenin*, Vol. 25, p. 134.

consideration, that this was the second giving-up in Rosa's argument concerning the socialist movement.

VI Argument Concerning the Entity of Socialist Movements

As already pointed out many times before, the proletariat engage themselves in struggles against the all-inclusive power of bourgeoisie which is invisible and incorporeal through their struggles against something visible, and prepare themselves to provide the total fighting power by themselves. Now, in this connection the present writer must invite readers' attention to the following point. That is, the proletarian struggles as described above—consequently all of my discussions about Rosa's arguments for the socialist movements—had contained a presupposition such as “How to establish the entity of the struggling class as a totality?” or so to speak, something of an “argument on the entity of movements”. And this problem of “how to” constitutes one independent field of problems to be untangled because it has much to do with our question. “How to combine the direct improvement struggles with revolutionary practice?”, which was brought out in the preceding Sections IV and V, and which was left behind unsolved, and another question, “How to develop the democratic struggles in the bourgeois political world into revolutionary practice?”, of which the prime aim is the immediate acquisition of power. Furthermore, logically speaking, the problem of “how” raised in this section with respect to the establishment of an entity of movements is of such nature that, should satisfactory answers be arrived at, they could provide the real and substantial meanings of the two questions raised in Sections IV and V, and as its result the giving-up in above could be overturned. Lastly I shall now take up this problem in the hope of clarifying the basic characteristics of Rosa's argument concerning the socialist movement.

Needless to say the starting point for Rosa, consequently for us, was the two “how to” questions raised in Sections IV and V, and the respective giving up. That is, the sublimation of the contradictory difficulty inherent in Marxist movement to her, couldn't be achieved except in the process of movements. But what was it that she was looking into in the process of movements? Wasn't it the process through which the political maturation of the masses was developing? In other words, the proletariat, being influenced by the contradictory difficulty of the movements, were forced to engage themselves in “long-range persistent struggles”, but the proletariat would never attain the high degree of political maturation required to possess themselves of the capability to accomplish their ultimate great reformation unless they should go through such process of movements, or unless they should experience enough of the blazing fire of struggles³⁸⁾. It was on this very point that unwavering

38) R. Luxemburg, “Social Reform or Revolution?”, *Collected Works of Rosa Luxemburg*, 1963, p. 233.

confidence in support of Rosa's arguments on the process of movements was placed. Moreover, she strengthened her conviction placed on such idea of the process of political maturation in opposing the tendency to stick to the idea of supporting the organisational growth in a lawful and wait-and-see attitude originally involved in Engels' exhortation to achieve political education and to make efforts to organise the masses. The image of political maturation conceived in her mind was a kind of maturation which was exactly opposite to the nuance carried by the aforementioned idea of organisational growth. It meant rather immaterial and allinclusive political maturation in the sense that even the Party should not be allowed to remain in a fixed form limited by an existing organisation. This was, needless to say, not by any means directly identical with the maturation of organisation and before everything else the maturation of the masses was essential.

In this way Rosa's approach to attain immaterial and all-inclusive political maturation was motivated by the influence of the SPD and the way SPD exited in those days. In the first place such approach was made as results of the following prescription: the strict insistence on class purity as prescribed in Part I of the Party's Basic Principles and the absolute need of "unification and cooperation" by the Party: replacement of political maturation by the growth of organisation: and resulting overwhelming condition of permanency of the class and the class struggle. For instance, the following utterance of Kautsky gives us a vivid description of the then existing circumstances. His narration has it in the following way. "The Party is an army engaged in a fight and it is in no sense a club to enjoy all kinds of dispute-making. Therefore, even if there arises any confrontation or discord within the Party, it should not be allowed to intervene to such an extent that might cause backsliding in carrying out effectively any joint activities. Indeed, it should never be allowed to take its own course where it might cause any friction. The detestable nuisance called friction always results in waste of time and energy and paralyzes the fighting spirit. The expansion of the Party should in no event be made at the sacrifice of unification and cooperation on the part of the Party. The essential characteristic of our strategy can be nothing but unification"³⁹⁾. At the same time the approach by Rosa was also motivated on the other hand by a critical consciousness of the self-contending phenomena arising out of individual interest as results of vivid reflections of certain social phenomena during the period at the turn of the century such as the splitting of the classes, class-stratification, atomizing of the class, etc.,—in short by the critically forced situation of class. Rosa made her own confession of this critical consciousness in the following manner. "Bernstein after all refuses to acknowledge the very existence of a class in current society. In other words, to him the labouring class is nothing more than an aggregate of split up individuals not only

39) K. Kautsky, *Bernstein und das Sozialdemokratische Programm*, Berlin 1899, Trans. by Yamakawa, *Refutation of Revised Marxism*, 1928, p. 12.

in the political and spiritual sense of the words but also in the economic sense, too.”⁴⁰ And in this way such tendencies as to demolish the concept of the class theoretically and to accelerate the disorganisation of the class in practice were arising, taking the guise of revisionism or lecture-socialism, or in the relationship of the concerted activities of the two. In opposing the contradictory tendencies of the same level such as the absolute permanency of the class and the dismembering of the class as described above, there was a basic need for Rosa to make it popularly known that “it would never happen that such tendencies might give even the slightest tremor to the ramparts of Marxism”⁴¹. Such way of grasping the situation came to constitute the problem to tackle in her argument on the maturation of class consciousness.

Here, again, she made her start, by raising the following question. What is the significance of the miscellaneous direct improvement struggles, i.e. struggles of the parliament and labour unions, when viewed from the point of view of the establishment of the totality of the struggling entity? She gives her answer in the following way as a “traditional view”⁴² of revolutionary Marxism after a critical survey of the revisionists’ view. “That is, according to the customary view of revolutionary Marxism, the significance in both cases of the struggles by labour unions and political struggles depended on the idea that the proletariat which should be the essential element of the socialist revolution would make preparations for the accomplishment of the proletarian revolution. It depended on the point that those struggles would socialize the cognition and the consciousness of the proletariat and would organise the proletariat as a class”⁴³. As is seen typically here, the process of the socialisation of proletarian class consciousness as held by Rosa—was the process of the political maturation of the masses, but this process was above all a process of self-training through the activities of the masses of the proletarian class, and because of being a process of self-training through the activities of the masses, it was held that this process

40) R. Luxemburg, “Social Reform or Revolution?”, *Collected Works of Rosa Luxemburg*, 1963, p. 235.

41) R. Luxemburg, “Hohle Nüsse”, *Gesammelte Werke*, 1899, S. 215; R. Luxemburg, “Social Reform or Revolution?”, *Collected Works of Rosa Luxemburg*, 1963, p. 67.

42) Rosa made frequent use of such expressions as “dear and old strategy”, “brilliant traditions” and the like in addition to “customary view”. It was an indication of her posture in approaching the central authorities of the SPD and it indicated that she attempted to fulfil it by defending Marxist orthodoxy, but it must be noted that she had no intention of defending the orthodox power or central powers. This must be proved by tracing the developments of disputes within the Party or by screening letters and communications. For the present use, as to the former, see P. Nettl, *op. cit.*, pp. 149–162. Among the latter materials, very suggestive is a letter addressed to Henriett Roland Holst (dtd. 17th December 1904: transl. by Ito, *Collected Works of World Nonfiction*, Vol. 21, *Letters to Friends*, pp. 221, which contains interesting narrations about summarised conclusions by Rosa relating to the revisionism controversies within the Party, Rosa’s activities in her later years, and her own relative position in the Party.

43) R. Luxemburg, “Social Reform or Revolution?”, *Collected Works of Rosa Luxemburg*, 1963, pp. 189–190.

became pregnant with movements as if it were an organic living being and growing dynamically.

Consequently, to her to establish a struggling entity as a living whole was to expand and deepen this process of self-training through the activities of proletarian masses to the utmost extent and to achieve therefrom the political maturation of class consciousness. She had a correct insight into the truth of the fact that the process basic of the socialist movements was the actions of the proletariat themselves instead of the Party. Consequently, all that the Social Democratic Party could do to constitute an entity of the struggling class as a living whole was the encouragement to expand and deepen the said process of self-training as a basic process and to give assistance for the maturation of the class consciousness of the proletarian masses. For that purpose the Social Democratic Party above all had to learn something from the proletarian masses and had to wipe away all those political involvements such as the gulf between “the guide” and “the guided”. It should not be allowed for the Party to make audacious use of some authoritative title or name for its own advantage or for the Party to degrade itself to become some pressure group to act for a specific advantage. The Party’s duty was to provide the masses with effective power only through propagation and enlightenment⁴⁴⁾ and to see that the maturation of the class consciousness could be promoted and assisted. She made the following statement, referring to this point. “In contrast with the customary situation under which the ignorance on the part of the masses used to be considered as a prerequisite condition for any act of the ruling class, now in these days the self-consciousness of one’s own problem and the direction of the future course to be taken on the part of the masses must be regarded as historical and indispensable conditions for any act of social democratism. This, however, sublimated the confrontation between “the ruling class” and the overwhelming majority “with tottering steps”, and the relationships between the masses and the leading class were completely reversed. The role to be played by the so-called leaders of the Social Democratic Party was none other than enlightenment of the masses. ...If put in a simple manner, essential points were as follows: to transfer the leadership by the leaders themselves: to look upon the masses as real leaders: to make the former leaders an instrument for the interests of the self-conscious masses: to make of themselves an enforcing organ”⁴⁵⁾.

44) Ways of thinking like “the party of propagation and enlightenment” are frequently seen throughout the rest of Roas’s life. For example, *Collected Works of Rosa Luxemburg*, p. 238. As far as this view is concerned, three views held respectively by Rosa, Bernstein and Kautsky are all on the same level. It may well be said that the new problem of the Social Democratic Party of International II type is being uprisen therefrom. P. Nettl, *op. cit.* has made acute appraisal of this point as “administration with influential powers” and “participating democratism”, regarding them as merits of revolutionary movements in more advanced capitalistic countries in West Europe. This is the main tone which penetrates throughout the whole of his great work, about which further discussion will be undertaken on another occasion.

45) R. Luxemburg, *Geknechte Hoffungen Werke*, S. 201; *Collected Works of Rosa Luxemburg*, 1963, p. 128.

Undoubtedly the very core of this problem was to liberate not only the struggles of the masses but also the process of self-training through the acts of the masses. Consequently, if this point were to be neglected, then everything concerned with the Rosa's arguments on the socialist movements—in particular, the establishment of the political world where the struggles inherent to proletariat were to be engaged: the combination of miscellaneous direct improvement struggles and the revolutionary practice together: the struggles to seize power in possession planned through the direct struggles of democratism—would be brought to naught.

Such comprehensive development of Rosa's arguments on the entity of movements contains the argument on the maturation of the class consciousness but lacks an argument on the formation of the class. The problem of establishing the wholeness of the struggling entity has been entrusted to self-training owing to the acts of the masses and the Party is supposed to intervene in this process only through propagation and enlightenment. The leadership of the Party have been completely ignored without being questioned. It is impossible to draw any theory of the Party from her argument on the entity of movements. And the lack of an argument on the class formation and the theory of the Party in her argument on the entity of movements—consequently, so to speak, argument on the transitional growth of organisation—was an inevitable conclusion obtainable from the argument on the transitional movements, too. In this way we can find the pitfall of Rosa's argument on the socialist movements in her tendency towards arguments based on her way of thinking about the process⁴⁷⁾.

Originally speaking, although the substantial features of the proletariat are characterised by the concept of organisability, this organisability cannot develop itself without some organised guidance. Where there is no development of this organisability, there can be no formation of an organised entity. Again, so long as the formation of class is not brought about, the entity as one totality can not come into existence. Nevertheless, Rosa never thought that organisation or organisability should be conceived as such. She had an idea of an organisation, in the first place, as something ready-made. By straightforwardly opposing such an idea, or rather just because of such an idea, she was led on the contrary to tolerate the ready-made existing organisation of the Party. Any criticism, when it is a direct criticism, is

46) In order to make a critical study of Rosa and to overcome her difficulties, what should be done is to grasp its whole logical structure to find its core, because the core is attractive as well as defective, i.e. consequently it is a foundation of the problem. It is F. Oelssner, *Rosa Luxemburg—Eine kritische, biographische Skizze*, Berlin, 1952, transl. by Sugiyama who makes a critical study about a misinterpreted system—Luxemburgism—even without grasping any core. On the other hand P. Fröhlich, *a. a. O.* contains “Rosa's Biography” which is written by making closer approach toward the core. This book has been translated and published lately by Naruhiko Ito, and reference should be made to it.

47) I incline to seek one of the most important sources of the so-called “too late separation” in her concept and inclined to stick to her argument on the problem of process.

generally inclined to tolerate the continued existence of the object of the criticism in question as its result. In the second place she thought that an organisation was something concrete or something material and something structural and systematic. Hence, visualising an organisation as something rigid and motionless, she made an exclusive attempt to resort to something non-material and of direct capacity. Hence, her contention was to explain all ready-made and corporeal organisations including the Social Democratic Party and other labour unions, by means of her idea of non-materialisation, elasticity and process by reason of non-material and overwhelming capacity, on the basis of her concept of the masses and their behaviour as a weapon⁴⁸⁾.

Needless to say, the elastic and overwhelming capacity of the proletarian masses that was non-materialised in such way was a presupposition for the purpose of constructing the proletarian political world as was envisaged in her mind. But this was not, of course, all that was required for the completion of this construction. Furthermore, there was not much possibility of its development, i.e. the sublimation of the contradictory difficulty referred to. In order to complete the construction, to make the development possible and to achieve the sublimation, the direct capacity had to express itself in a definite form. It was concerning this point that there arose the problem of the non-materialisation of something material and the re-materialisation of something non-material. This had to be the assigned duties of the leadership of the Party. The mere fact of the immediate combination of the Party with the direct capacity of the masses was definitely insufficient. It was true that the organised leadership of the Party undoubtedly had to be surmounted, but it was partly for that purpose that the Party had to intervene in the formation of the entity of the class as a living whole by consciously engaging in the struggle.

I shall now make a complete survey of all problematical points in Rosa's arguments on the socialist movement, basing it on my discussion above and would like to offer it by way of conclusion. What characterised the difficulty of her thoughts is in my opinion ultimately the way an organisation was understood. To her, the concept of an organisation was a minus symbol and a weak point in every sense of the word. She couldn't grasp the meaning of an organisation as something to supply a certain forced pattern of behaviour or a certain forced pattern of combination to men. In particular the view-points lacking in Rosa's arguments on the socialist movement may be pointed out as such that an organisation is after all an act of social human beings and their combination, and that the bourgeois state and bourgeois democratism are the kinds of organisations specifically peculiar to and inherent in the bourgeoisie so far as the bourgeoisie combines the people together in

48) It was some days after the defeat in the Party Convention at Dresden in 1903 and the Russian experience in 1905 that the concept of "the masses" and "actions" came to be brought out in a conscious manner, but theoretically speaking, it can well be said that the concept began to invite general attention as something intrinsic in Rosa's revolutionary thought from those days on.

the form of the bourgeois state and bourgeois democratism.

It is, partly because the bourgeoisie enjoy human social combination in a privileged manner having such a concept of organisability in their minds, and partly because they are existing for themselves in social, organised and dominant capacities, that it is expected and required that the proletariat, who are charged with a historical mission to overthrow these restrictive conditions, should nurture just so much social, organised and all-inclusive capacities as to enable them to pass through qualitatively beyond these restrictive conditions. It is in order to cope with such combination and acts on the part of the bourgeoisie and to dissolve them that a new method of combination and acts specifically unique and peculiar to the proletariat must be brought forth to oppose the conventional realities. That which composed the unavoidable, burning and theoretical problems for the socialists may be briefly summarised in the following outline: (1) construction of a political world specifically unique and inherent in the proletariat (Section III): (2) pursuit of the process of movements to sublimate contradictory difficulties of their own (Section IV and V): (3) establishment of an entity of the struggling class as a living whole (Section VI): (4) lastly, reinforcement of the Social Democratic Party in an attempt to meet all of the requirements listed above to the fullest extent (Section VI).

The reasons are first because of the theoretical circumstance that the proletariat had to start this work of dissolving the totality of the bourgeoisie in the realities which were presented to the proletariat by the bourgeoisie and yet these struggles between the two classes were of such nature that there was no other way for its settlement except the victorious development of the proletarian totality, and secondly because of the historical circumstance that the actual posture of the German bourgeois political world at the turn of the century manifested itself as dashing waves of the self-conscious and intended moves of the proletariat to consolidate their totality which were developing on a country-wide scale as a national and concentrated policy.

A young revolutionist born in Poland, Rosa Luxemburg, with an intent to develop "the factuality of a revolution", made every effort to unlock this theoretical problem, and the result was "Social Reformation or Revolution?", which I have been discussing here. It must be concluded that her arguments therein relating to the socialist movements was one of the greatest fruits collected from the controversies concerning revisionism, although these arguments by Rosa remained largely in conclusive owing to the lack of a view on the concept of an organisation as shown above.