

Excerpts from draft of letter by Raya to Neda Azad, written
May 5, 1986, in response to a letter from Neda Azad,
sent to Raya on May 2, 1986.

Typed copy of handwritten draft

... The preoccupation no doubt is the completion of your original work on Sultanzadeh which I'm sure historically is important, but its political-philosophic relationship to Khomeini's counter-revolution which caught the whole Left including Women's Liberation off balance because they didn't have a Marxist-Humanist philosophic ground will need working out after you have completed your thesis.

That's why "Introduction" is really "conclusions" and cannot be fully known, no matter how solid the ground is when one starts. That is true of the great as well as of the "small". It's hard for intellectuals to admit that to this day academia still refers to Phenomenology of Mind as "chaotic", "brilliant and profound" in spots, but etc. etc., he really didn't have it worked out till Science of Logic, as if the Absolute was first discovered then. Yes, he didn't have his categories smoothly running, but in the Larger Logic, where they were "logically" running, the Absolute as Mind wasn't till the end of the Encyclopedia, and even then only ¶ 575, 576, 577, the year before he died. The whole truth is that between 1807 (Phenomenology), and 1831 (death), the drive, the vision was there and that means life is development and his "participation" and "organizational responsibility" which is what is organization of his thought...

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May 5, 1986

Dear Neda:

I am glad you are getting the grant extended to Spring 1987-- we will have plenty of time to talk about it, and I intend to do so-- after the Convention. It is clear, however, that the book is your preoccupation now. I'm sure that historically-- and this time I mean historically not in the sense of "history in the making", but as a "long view" of the past, it has a relevance for this age. The reason I say age, rather than the immediate period between pre-Convention discussion and the actual Convention, is that the political-philosophic relationship to Khomeini's Counter-revolution, which caught the whole Left, including Women's Liberation, off balance, was missed precisely because they didn't have a Marxist-Humanist philosophic ground.

That this cannot be worked out until/you have completed your thesis will be clear to you when I tell you some of the past from a faraway age-- and I'm not even talking about Marx, much less Marxist-Humanism, but about Hegel. Why do you suppose academics to this day refer to Phenomenology of Mind as "chaotic", "very brilliant and profound in spots", but definitely "Hegel didn't know where he was headed"; he didn't even have subheads once he came to "Spirit"?

It was because he didn't have the categories worked out systematically as they were in Science of Logic, where it was nice and smooth and they took for granted they understood it; they certainly could repeat the categories; indeed, though it took them all the way until 1929 (having rejected the translation that was done in America by the Hegelians in St. Louis) before they published an English translation, they then appended a long and precise list of categories-- 128 to be exact-- so that anyone can repeat them if they can memorize 128 names.

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Neda, darling, we have yet to get any serious, full explanation of why there has been no reference to the fact that the year before he died Hegel felt that he should first add the three final syllogisms to the Absolute Mind. Do you know why that is? I'll tell you why. It is because we haven't understood that Phenomenology of Mind (1807, not 1830) projected ground for the Absolutes, and they haven't understood that ground because it was the French Revolution. And Hegel was saying very passionately: look at what happened in France, and we haven't even developed a single dialectical category, and we are talking philosophy time and again. So the whole philosophy of 2,500 years has to find a new language, and here it is. They had no vision then and they have no vision now. The whole truth is that between 1807 and 1831 (death) it was a matter of developing that movement, historic movement, and that vision

Marx alone saw. And he saw it because he was in a new age and needed a new language to express the forces and the Reason of Revolution as both continuity and discontinuity of the dialectic. That is why a serious Introduction is really always written at the end and is at the same time an Overview, which is what Marx was doing from 1843 to 1883.

Yours,

Taya

Now, if you are not impatient you will achieve something truly original in a critical study of Sultanzadeh with what you have learned from the philosophy and activity of Marxist-Humanism in the United States.

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