

October 20, 1956

Dear Bessie:

Because I spoke to you after I sent out the letter on the translation of Marx's Early Essays I had a chance to tell you what I failed to ~~write~~ include in it which makes mental telepathy between Marxists, even when dead, appear actual because the force of the objective movement is so powerful that when an age's task is set it nearly automatically works out that it begins where the previous age's task ended. Right now I feel as if Marx in person gave me the assignment to begin in the Philosophy of Mind exactly where I began, and here is why:

1) As you know, when I finished the letter of May 12, 1953 in which I took issue with Lenin for ending Science of Logic, (that is his analysis of the book) a paragraph ahead of the actual ending, and then I pointed out that that remained as our task for we alone can see the Absolute Idea as concrete and as applicable not alone to thought but to life for the unity of theory and practice is a task for society itself. I then ended by asking G please to send me the Philosophy of Mind to which ~~Marx~~ Hegel made the transition after the Absolute Idea and the Philosophy of Nature.

2) By May 20th of that same year G had not sent me the Philosophy of Mind but I got hold of it and could not rest until I wrote that letter about the movement not alone from theory to practice but from practice to theory. Now I got to that conclusion by going through the Philosophy of Mind and seeing that when Hegel begins making Absolute Mind concrete he went to history and had that remarkable passage of not only having freedom but being free. That was the philosophic background to which my actual background, of course, was a combination of the events of the age and Marxism itself.

3) However, I had no conception that Marx had begun on that book also and where he had stopped at that moment (1844) since G, in her translation, had given the last reference to the Philosophy of Nature and that is where I thought Marx had stopped. In, however, checking through everything all over again in the new translation, I found that Marx had begun already making the transition to ~~the~~ the Philosophy of Mind. At the point where, toward the end of his essay on the Critique of the Hegelian dialectic he says he will take it up in a moment but never got to taking it up, ~~the~~ it is, to be precise, Paragraph No. 384 in the Philosophy of Mind.

Now in 1953, when I got around to taking up that work, I said I will limit myself to certain paragraphs which I consider are most pertinent, in fact urgent, for our day. It now turns out that where I began is the very next paragraph to where Marx ended, for I began with Paragraph No. 385.

SO NOW I HAVE INSERTED IN MY COPY, next to #384, this is where Marx ended, 1844; and next to #385, this is where I began, 1953. Do you wonder why I feel gay as a lark and as if I had been in communication with Karl. I swear there is such a thing as communication between the ages, not only in general as each generation inherits the civilization up to it, but in particular as a class and its thought, develops its problems.

Yours,  
Rae

12136

C  
O  
P  
Y