

February 9, 1970

Professor J. N. Findlay
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Dear Professor Findlay:

Thank you very much for your kind note of January 31st. You are absolutely right when you say that "the contradictions in communism are much more deep-set than those of our confused mixed society." Indeed, to me, those "deep-set" contradictions have transformed communism into its opposite, state-capitalism. Which is why the philosopher of absolute negativity is a contemporary of ours, made so, not only by the intellectuals but by an actual movement from practice by the new Subject. Since I also agree with Hegel that the totality of "accidents" turn out to be the course of history, I did not consider it accidental that the mid-1950's, when this movement from practice assumed the form of revolutions in Eastern Europe, happened also to be the year in which my work on Marxism and yours on Hegel were published.

I have an especially warm spot for the Philosophy Department at Yale because way back in 1947, when I could get no educational institution to be interested in Marx's Critique of the Hegelian Dialectic and Lenin's Abstract of the Science of Logic (and therefore just mimeograph them, the Chairman of the Department of Yale offered quite a few of them, plus sending me a note of congratulations for doing that work. Somewhere, yellowed, you will find that miserable mimeographed copy of those early essays (under a slightly different name for the translator but not for the author). In mid-April I have some lecture commitments in New York and would very much like to meet you, if you happen to have a free hour. May I ask you for your phone or how best it is to reach you when I get to New York?

Your work on Hegel, as I wrote to you before, has been widely used by me in classes for students. What I didn't write is that I also used it to worker audiences and that since then I have developed the whole question of philosophy and revolution in much more strictly philosophic and less political terms than I did in Marxism and Freedom. The central section, concerning Why Hegel? Why Now?, contains three chapters, the first of which is called Hegel's Absolutes as New Beginnings, has the following sub-subjects: the Phenomenology of Mind, or "Experiences of Consciousness"; the Science of Logic, or Attitudes to Objectivity; and the Philosophy of Mind: a Movement from Practice? I, then, go through the development of Marx, also through three periods -- from the Critique of the Hegelian Dialectic to the Communist Manifesto and the 1848 Revolutions; the return to Hegel and the Grundrisse during the quiescent 1850's; and the Fetishism of Commodities or Capital as History and as Notion. The part is concluded with Lenin's "Shock of Recognition", part of which is in my previous work. I have been an unperson for a couple of decades to the communists, and I'm doubtful that academia will greet, with joy, my "subversion" of Hegel. Yet, believe that you might be interested. In any case, if I do get to Connecticut, I hope we will be able to meet.

Yours,

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