

February 1, 1972

To the ~~REB~~ REB

Dear Bess, Eugene, Allen; Richard, Otis: (copy to organizers)

IT is finished! IT has been mailed off to the publishers! IT is time for us to become fully aware, now that the work is finished, of the uniqueness, originality, and difficulty of Philosophy and Revolution. It can under no circumstances be treated as if this was the week that was. It must under no circumstances be considered as the waiting period for it to be published. It must under all circumstances be recognized as not only this is the decade that is, but that this period between submission and publication is not a period of waiting, but a period of projection as well as internalization.

Let's begin with internalization. The reason I am addressing you three is that you must listen to the tape, not together with locals as a whole, but separately. There are times when leadership must act like leaders, and especially so when this is not a question of giving a line, but internalizing a historic transition point. By historic, as you will see from the tape of the REB presentation, we mean not only -- and that would be a very, very great leap if even it were only a "not only" -- an attempt to fill the theoretic void since Lenin's death. It is something that is built on the heritage they left, but it is also "an assignment" that they gave us that they themselves did not carry out. With this, we feel we have carried out their assignment; history will be the final judge; or more precisely, if we make the history in our lifetime, that will be the realization of that philosophy which the young Marx defined as the idea of freedom becoming a reality on the basis that the needs have already been fulfilled, and the human power first then begins to be the end in itself.

Perhaps I should specify even more concretely the assignment; 1- in 1844, Marx stopped at a paragraph in the Philosophy of Mind. Hegel had just finished defining the Absolute, and Marx intended to "expose him". Since historical materialism that he had then discovered was something altogether too great to turn into an appendage of the arguments he was carrying on with Hegel, he cut off and proceeded with all the works we know. However, it constantly bothered him, and he kept repeating in the letters to Engels that if sometime he found time, he would like to put "in rational form" Hegel's contribution. As so much else that his heirs never understood, always violated and forever disregarded, the German Social Democracy, at best, interpreted that to mean "popularization". And they didn't even do that. But if they had done it, we would have had something else to live down, so it's as well, perhaps, that they hadn't. I've surely always been happy that Lenin did not know the 1844 Essays, or at least did not know the section that would have inhibited him, and that is that Hegel's indication that the next book would be on Nature was the proof that Hegel was an idealist, had first to go to the "outside" (Hegel always defined Nature as exteriority.) after he had already supposedly reached the height of the Absolute -- Absolute Knowledge in the Phenomenology and the Absolute Idea in the Science of Logic. In a word, Marx took Hegel's word at face value, and of course argued against the idea of not starting with reality, with what is, but instead making World Spirit and the Absolute Idea "manifest itself" in reality. And Marx was talking down to Hegel, telling him that any child would know that first there is Nature, first there is life, first there is mama and papa and world, and then comes the Idea.

Lenin, on the other hand, since he wasn't breaking with Hegel, but first getting to know him, and since the people that he was breaking with were the "Marxist" leaders who had just betrayed, welcomed Hegel's "going to Nature" after he had finished the Absolute Idea, interpreting that to mean that Hegel was stretching out his hand to materialism. It isn't that Lenin didn't know that Hegel said the Idea comes first and then manifests itself, etc., etc., etc. It is

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that he simply paid no attention to it. To him, what was important was that the movement from the idea included practice, "ended" with practice, and that therefore regardless of what Hegel meant consciously to do, the objectivity of what he did, actually showed that the elements of historical materialism were in Hegel, Jr, as he put it, "a guess of a genius."

Therefore, to him, what was important was to go from there somewhere else. And the "somewhere else" was that ~~THE~~ the dialectic should be carried through, or rather into science, technique, and history of thought. It's the history of thought we carried through.

So, by analyzing all of Hegel's works (it is all, because the others that I do not consider are lectures, which carry out and concretize the ideas of the Phenomenology, the Science of Logic and Philosophy of Mind.) following that through with the alternative, we have actually reached our own period by "knowing" everything in thought that Hegel ~~passed up~~ that preceded him; Hegel's great revelation in thought; Marx's, Lenin's; and then Living Existentialism as Marxist-Socialists of the epoch in which the masses from below with their new passions and force had begun a new movement ~~IN~~ to theory.

Not only have no Marxists ever considered the three final syllogisms of Hegel in the Philosophy of Mind, but neither have many of the academicians until most recently. There are very, very few in English; none of them are good; there is one in German that is far superior to anyone else, but it remains a theodicy. Which is exactly what Hegel did not do.

The three syllogisms that you must study by heart, over and over and over again will be explained in detail on the tape, and I will here merely list them:

First Syllogism: LOGIC -- NATURE -- MIND

Second Syllogism: NATURE -- MIND -- LOGIC

Third Syllogism: SELF-THINKING IDEA in above two manifestations

(Philosophical MEDIATION is, at one and the same time, OBJECTIVE AND SUBJECTIVE METHOD )

The first syllogism seems merely to list the order in which the books were written by Hegel, but in fact this is the very case ~~INDEED~~ which, way back in 1953, I had stated meant that there was a movement from practice to theory, as well as vice versa. Outside of the maturity of the age, and that we were on the eve of the June 17 revolt in East Germany, the reason I drew that conclusion was due to the fact that the middle term is always the crucial one in Hegel; it is the middle out of which the whole is formed; it's the mediation; it is the method; it is the process; it is at one and the same time objective and subjective. Therefore, I concluded that if nature = practice can turn either back to Logic or forward to Mind it means that we have reached the age that where, instead of being burdened down with the void in the movement since Lenin's death, we should look forward to something arising from practice.

The second syllogism, the mediating force, is Mind ~~INDEED~~ itself, and that means not only theory, but philosophy, and means a great deal more than just the movement from theory to practice that would aim to unite with the movement from practice, because it's an actual philosophy of history and history of philosophy. And I question whether that didn't actually also take in the Phenomenology of Mind, which Marx had always considered the birth of the dialectic and Hegel's greatest

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work. Clearly it was not just phenomena, but the science, the philosophy of phenomena. So that the "essence" of consciousness, through all its stages of alienation, ended with an absolute that was so absolute that it even killed off God! "the Golgotha of the Spirit" (That's how G.W.F. Hegel managed to put philosophy ahead of religion.)

The third syllogism is what materialists have always distrusted, and what theologians were very happy to meet, because Hegel thereby supposedly returned to the Absolute Spirit. But if that had been so, how explain the self-thinking of the Idea, which ever since the Science of Logic, he had defined as self-determination, self-development, the Subject?

Well, I presume you can now listen to the tapes, and know why you must listen, think, have a dialogue with your overlords (it includes organic) before you throw it on the rack-and-file. It isn't that the rack-and-file may not by themselves likewise listen to it before the local discussion, but the provision must be that if they do so, they cannot, and I mean not, discuss it. This is nothing you talk about off the top of your heads. This is something that requires ten-fold "seriousness, patience, suffering, labor of the negative", the practice of the second negativity.

At the same time, even at the time we are ready to discuss it, this isn't anything we "vote" for. It is something which makes us realize the great advantage we have to have three months (year?) before publication, when we have to face the masses with it. It is something that makes us see how much more there is than there appears to be to that last part, especially the last chapter, of Philosophy and Revolution, where we would all be swimming so steadily with all other new passions and new forces that we never knew before, from whom we have elicited no effect, and who will recognize themselves in us.

The tape has been sent to L.A., to share with S.F. Another tape will first be heard in Detroit, and then sent to Connecticut and New York. By that time it will be Spring and I will be there. Indeed, I will be in New York very soon to start start having sleepless nights about publication. I will probably be there the last week in February and first week in March. Have a great time with the tapes,

Yours,

RAYA

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