

6 January 1983

Dear Raya.

Here is part of the letter I promised you a while back. It is made possible by a two-day lull in which, owing to God knows not what miracle, my power of speech has totally abandoned me. There is one very good thing to be said for Marxism - it places no particular premium on Christmas, which, in America par excellence, but in other Western countries as well, is a period where the bourgeoisie of conscience literally destroy their own health in gratifying others, rushing here and there, doing good works, trying to celebrate the proletarian simplicity of the origins of the feast with opulence and false charity. My loss of my vocal chords is, I think, relatively innocent compared to most of what I see transpiring around me - but it is a fair omen from God that his weeps are not well served by the present ways of the world.

I received your Rosa Luxemburg book, for which I thank you. I had to make two trips, one to Washington and one to Pitt's bump, in the midst of reading it. I did not have it along; thus the thread has been somewhat broken - but the half that I have read is very good indeed, and it moves the reader right along. I enjoyed both your praises and your carcats, and found your argument coherent, although I think you were a bit diffident and harsh on the contribution by the lamented J. P. Nettl, who, after all, was not exactly a bourgeois lackey. But I thought that you captured the message and character and "insides" of this awesome woman with critical and sympathetic understanding. By the way, why was she wrong to "update" Marx? Can it be that you are a fundamentalist? I often compare Marxism to Protestantism - and, as you will know, there are very good historical reasons for so doing.

Shortly after your book arrived your publisher wrote to ask if I would do my small bit in calling attention to it. I surely will do so as best I can. My colleague at Hopkins Nancy Hartsock, who is a Marxist and feminist, will surely

17122

be one of these vehicles, and I shall loan Nancy the book as soon as I get back to teaching in January.

My own next course, called Politics and The Religious Consciousness in America ought to be out in 8-12 months time (Transaction Books: New Brunswick, N.J.). I shall see that one of them comes to you, although you will surely find it superstitious, bourgeois, and counter-revolutionary!

Let's this time not waste the occasion to get really acquainted. I would love to claim a portion of your time on your next trip through NYC. We can arrange this, I hope, as the time approaches. For now I must stop, because I don't feel just great. A good bourgeois is not necessarily a dead one, as I'm sure the great Trotsky would concede.

Yours in faith.

George

Jan. 8, 1983

Dear GAK:

Unless you consider "miracles" as omen for possible worst disaster that could have happened--and though you do have the patience of Job, I cannot believe you meant that--I not only totally disagree with your attitude to having experienced the abandonment for power of speech. Instead, be a Marxist-Humanist for a little while and "reject totally" any belief in illness. Please fight, even violently if need be, any disabilities befalling you. I simply will not forgive God for any intrusion into your eloquent domain.

While it is true that there is some resemblance between Protestantism and Humanism--Marxism is always ready to hail protests--and a certain admiration for Luther's brave stand, I'm sure you also know that Marx, at the same time, attributed the betrayal of the peasant revolutions by Luther as the reason for Germany's backwardness. I surely shocked the HSA when I offered to talk on Hegel's Philosophy of Religion on the ground that I considered his attack on Catholicism as the attack on the elitist monolithic party, and also considered St. Paul as the Stalin of the church who needed a Party so that the driving of the money-changers from the temple, far from being Jesus-like, showed that, whereas Jesus as first "Communist" was always ready to talk to all and anywhere, St. Paul insisted on temples. Ah, well, we'll never agree on religion, so let's make sure that is not the topic of our conversation when we finally get to meet in March.

Thank you very much for trying to see that my Luxemburg book is reviewed by your colleague Nancy Hardstock, but you needn't part with your copy, or rather give her your copy and I will send you a cloth copy, duly inscribed by a non-believer, and at the same time include a pamphlet by me on 1974-~~5~~ economic crisis so you can see why I so violently disagree with Luxemburg, not for updating Marx, but for failing to inwardize Marx's Hegelian dialectic of absolute negativity as "revolution in permanence" so that it was insufficient, (remained only a "1/2-way dialectic") merely to be eloquent and oppose suffering, instead of also recognizing the new force of revolution as Reason.

If you have reached the last two chapters of Rosa Luxemburg, Women's Liberation and Marx's Philosophy of Revolution AND WHAT I call Marx's new moments in the last decade of his life as most creative, you will see that, far from considering the climax of his greatest theoretical work, "The Accumulation of Capital" a universal, he held it only as characteristic of the West whereas the "East" could find other paths to revolution and Russia could have its ahead of the West --and that in 1882! No, I'm not a "fundamentalist"; most of my friends have "slandered" me--and that includes Trotsky--as a "little anarchist" which I never was.

Finally, re Nettl, not only did I not consider him a bourgeois lackey and did credit him with the most scholarly, comprehensive work on Luxemburg, but I marvelled how so unconscious of being a male chauvinist and so "in love" with Luxemburg, could entitle one of his chapters "The Lost Years" just because she broke with Jogiches when in fact he proves how very creative and original were his works after the break. So ingrained is that in the thousands if not millions of years males dominated our world that even one so independent

17124

an individual as Nettl can think that her life ended with the break with Jogiches and that he ~~might~~ can think of nothing more original than a possible triangle on which topic Rosa would have just been a mid-Victorian--after all that most unique life she led. Wouldn't it have been more productive to try to probe into that fact that, though she was practically "male" in opposing a totally autonomous Women's Liberation Movement and not herself confronting herself, she suddenly--and that in the midst of anti-war New Year's "love letter" to Mathilde suddenly plunging into mythologia and calling upon Pentheselia?

(Incidentally, in trying to trace down which edition of that myth of Pentheselia Luxemburg used--and whether it was as I heard the Greek story of Achilles defeating her, the ~~myth~~ rewritten story by a German playwright in the 19th century (or was it on eve of W W I?) ~~HE~~ Pentheselia won and, though she loved him totally, ate him! Gory enough, what? Everyone who had known Luxemburg in person told me that, being a quite erudite woman, she would have known both versions--or had her own interpretations as she announced that the betraying Social Democrats didn't deserve either the name of Achilles or Pentheselia.)

I hope to see you before your next work, Politics and the Religious Consciousness in America, appears in print, so we'll have one less item to fight about.

DO TAKE CARE OF YOURSELF.

Yours,

Answer
5/2/83

23 April 1983

Dear Raya -

I had put off writing, not knowing whether to send mail to Detroit while you were on your barn-storming (heaven-storming?) Marx tour, which, according to your description, was to last interminably, at least until Le Grand Jour. But since you have expressed worry about the review, I shall take a shot at the mail.

I cannot promise you the review 100%, but, as I told you earlier, I am very certain that I will be able to get it into the pages of POLITICAL THEORY. Most importantly, I would like it to be there. How soon is another question. You experience many of the same frustrations that I do. The "Establishment" that thwarts us is not exactly the same, but they are both felt as thoroughly disagreeable obstacles.

I still have a tiny bit of hesitation about doing the review myself - for want of knowledge in Marxism and especially the history of the Marxist movement. Would it be more appropriate if your friend Bert Ollman did it? Or do you still demand the Hegel-Christian touch? Do let me know. If it's to be me, I'll try my hardest to meet the situation, but I don't want to make myself look like a fool - even for friendship's sake.

Yours in faith -
George

17126

6 May 1983

O.K. Raya - I will write the best review of your work that I am able to do. I promise you that it will appear in Political Theory - I can't promise when. You will probably not like some parts of the review, it is likely that you will like others. I will do you justice, as I see justice. It goes without saying that the review (at least except entre les lignes) will be impersonal. I do not want it to become the occasion for an exchange of polemics intended to enhance your visibility. My own visibility is only a few feet in fog and rain, and I was not put on this earth to create heroes. I have never myself sought added radiance via intellectual contests after my work was done. So I hope you will play by my rules. If I misrepresent you, of course you may gripe.

Anyway, I just wanted you to know that I will fulfil my promise.

Affectionately -

GPK

P.S.

I hope that your tournee de Marx was a great success. I haven't such great faith in him or in the human race. Just call me Jonathan Swift.

17127

18 November 1983

Dear Raya.

My. I do owe you all sorts of apologies for not staying in touch. Especially after you sent me that exquisite and fragile note paper, for which I send belated and pithy thanks. And now another missive arrives, with your strong, eloquent, touching tribute to Denby, which I found deeply affecting. I have just been teaching and reading a lot of Rousseau, and I hope that Charles Denby is receiving the kind of happiness and consolation that J.-J. demanded for the sake of the human race. At least he has had some in your eulogy, on earth. All of this reminds me of Eluard's poem "Ceux qui croient au ciel, et ceux qui n'y croient pas..." How far we are, even from those times.

As promised, my review of your book appears in the next Political Theory. You surely won't like it all, but you may like some, and it will tell people who you are and what you stand for.

Affectionate wishes -
George

17128

Jan. 24, 1984

Dear GAK:

Frankfurt Chronicle

You have to, I hope, admit that I cannot possibly be called a "nationalist", least of all on the question of languages, that my use of the Russian language, as against the pale Anglo-Saxon is preferable to articulate my appreciation of a non-believer's review of what I would call call "a trilogy of revolution" and he would designate as "Acts of the Apostles." Perhaps my confession on when, how long it took me before "falling in love" and working out an approach which resulted in such a review, so here goes:

The year was 1969, the year of publication of your Idealism, Politics and History. The thing that kept nagging at me was: why, in such profoundly thought out and beautifully styled work on the sources of Hegelian thought, did the author devote more time to Rousseau than to Hegel? I proceed to try to find in others what I couldn't see in my comprehension of who is George Armstrong Kelly. I found it in Prof. White's review of your work where he discerned existentialist style. I then proceeded to find out how Prof. White came to his conclusion that a non-existential work was so existential in style. He then turned out to be at UCLA and in my next lecture tour we talked of more than either Hegel or Kelly and I considered me a Left sympathizer, except soon thereafter academia meant all to him.

Whereupon I decided on still another direction to find out how our mutual love for Hegel could keep us so far apart as I guessed was true in your section on "Reconciliation" which, to me, also had its contradiction, esp. on p. 279, where it singled my very favorite paragraph in Hegel--par. 577--and referred in a footnote to an analysis of all 3 final syllogisms in Reinhart Klemens Maurer. Since it then happened that a friend of mine was going to Germany, I asked him to look up Prof. Maurer and tell him I was then working out those for Philosophy and Revolution, going to press. Prof. Maurer was most surprised that I sought him out since in his work he had sharply critiqued Marcuse's Reason and Revolution. (Believe it or not, we are equally hostile to my interpretation of Hegel's Absolutes and closer to each other, but in any case I never care whether an author praises or attacks an idea, but only whether he/she is as serious in his grappling with that idea as with his critique of it; Marcuse very nearly came to blows each time we met and he decided nevertheless to Preface my Marxism and Freedom only because it was the height of McCarthyism which, when added to academia's non-recognition of me and Russia making an unperson of me, made it "obligatory" for him to.)

Think of my "luck" when on the scene, historic and not just academic one, out came your Retreat from Eleusis and its critique, & of/for as open as serious!

But may I add one final thought since you so persistently keep attributing Hegel's Absolute Method to me?

*(Final Paraded on card
re Phil. of Rel. & the Abs.
attack on Catholic Church =) attack on Sy. & Party to lead.*

Jan. 24, 1984

Dear GAK:

Franklin G. Coates

You have to, I hope, admit that I cannot possibly be called a "nationalist", least of all on the question of languages, that my use of the ^{Russian} ~~English~~ ^{thanks} ~~language~~ against the pale Anglo-Saxon is preferable to articulate my appreciation of a non-believer's review of what I would call call "a trilogy of revolution" and he would designate as "Acts of the Apostles." Perhaps my confession on when, how long it took me before "falling in love" and working out an approach which resulted in such a review, so here goes:

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299?

Whereupon I decided on still another direction to find out how our mutual love for Hegel could keep us so far apart as I guessed was true in your section on "Reconciliation" which, to me, also had its contradiction, esp. on p. (222) where it singled my very favorite paragraph in Hegel--par. 577--and referred in a footnote to an analysis of all 3 final syllogisms in Reinhart Klemens Maurer. Since it then happened that a friend of mine was going to Germany, I asked him to look up Prof. Maurer and tell him I was then working out those for Philosophy and Revolution, going to press. Prof. Maurer was most surprised that I sought him out since in his work he had sharply critiqued Marcuse's Reason and Revolution. (Believe, you ~~are~~ are equally hostile to my interpretation of Hegel's Absolutes and closer to each other, but in any case I never care whether an author praises or attacks an Idea, but only when he/she is as serious in his grappling with that Idea as with his critique of it; Marcuse very nearly came to blows each time we met and he decided nevertheless to Preface my Marxism and Freedom only because it was the height of McCarthyism which, when added to academia's non-recognition of me and Russia making an unperson of me, made it "obligatory" for ~~me~~ etc.)

Think of my "luck" when on the scene, historic and not just academic one, out came your Retreat from Eleusis and its critique, d of, was as open as serious!

But may I add one final thought since you so persistently keep attributing Hegel's Absolute Method to me?

17130

2 February 1984

Dear Raya -

W Here is a book that I think will please you, far more than my books could. It's *gynais, mo* *emo* *Ban* *noipaburoo!* It was written by a very dear friend of mine, with the assistance of his wife, about the adventurous life of his great-uncle, a pure product of New England Calvinist stock, turned wildly Arminian, and then Communist. One doesn't have to pass through Hell and Mary, one can get there through Jonathan Edwards, Emerson, and the Social Gospel! Amazing, isn't it?

Fraternal kisses,

George

17131

To G. Keely

Feb. 17, 1984

but I did appreciate the thought that led you to send me "Right In Her Soul"; it would have pleased me if Mind, not "soul", had oozed out of Anna Louise Strong whom I had fought long before 1937 when I was with Trotsky, and she had added her name to the slanderous attacks on the brave John Dewey Commission of Inquiry. No, you cannot "get there" through the "Social Gospel"; you cannot "get there" if you really aim for new human relations short of the Hegelian-Marxian Dialectics of Liberation as inseparable from activism.

The author of the book, your friend Tracy B. Strong I do consider my friend but he is a very different person than the "heroine" of his work, but before we ever became "friends" it took very nearly two decades and after a quite long--I mean deep--contradictory beginnings. Here is that story: In the 1960s I was adviser to the student magazine at Oberlin College, The Activist. From some of my addresses from the one on John Brown to the many conflicting tendencies in the 1960s I thought we had an affinity of views both on spontaneity and "the Self-Thinking Idea" as against state-capitalism and Leader Maximus when, to my surprise, I read a most uncritical laudatory article on Mao's China. I rushed off a very sharp critique, the essence of which was that the innocent youth might as well have torn out a page from that Mao apologist, Anna Louise Strong. The Activist then informed me that of course my article is appearing, but did I know that the author, Tracy B. Strong, was his great nephew. I was very mad that they had not informed me because, though the objectivity of the critique, would have been as sharp, I definitely would have skipped some of the adjectives if I had known the family relationship. It had already been done, so that was that.

Skip 20 years. It is the Marx centenary and I am covering the land with lectures wherever I could get in. Think of my surprise when I receive a most warm invitation from Tracy Strong who is now a professor at UC San Diego to lecture there on the topic. It was one of the best meetings he had organized; some 200 came out not just to hear me but to engage in such lively and multi-faceted discussion. We both laughed at our previous in-communication encounter; if I remember right, he even referred to it in his introduction. He told me that I was correct on the Chinese reality, but he is finishing his study of his great-aunt. No greater love has.....

You are wrong to think that I would prefer such descriptive narrative instead of dialectical deep thought-diving. I love your works because I learn a lot from them and where they differ totally from my views they stimulate, challenge me to "seriousness, suffering, patience and labor of the negative," so if you ever get to send me another book, send me yours!

17132

(1) ^{gork} Hey, nice the notebook
 but I did appreciate ~~the~~ thought
 that led you ~~to~~ ~~write~~ ~~in~~ the
 book; it would have ~~been~~ ~~pleased~~ ~~if~~
 I had "not" "Soul" what seized at
 Anna Jones Story whom I fought long
 before 1931 what I was with ~~my~~ ~~whole~~
 vicious attack on ~~my~~ ~~own~~ ~~idea~~ ~~of~~
 Commission ^{for} ~~the~~ ~~study~~ ~~of~~ ~~the~~
 "Social Gospel". No you can't "get there" thru
 Hegelian - ~~the~~ ~~dialectic~~ ~~of~~ ~~liberation~~ ~~text~~
 as inseparable from activism would get you there.

Shey
 and
 how
 to

(2) You are wrong about that I will
 prefer such descriptions ~~more~~ ~~rather~~ ~~than~~ ~~some~~
~~of~~ ~~the~~ ~~things~~ ~~you~~ ~~are~~ ~~doing~~ ~~there~~ ~~I~~ ~~love~~
 your notes because I learn a lot from them
~~where~~ ~~I~~ ~~totally~~ ~~disagree~~
 from my views stimulate me to "to dream
 just ~~about~~ ~~the~~ ~~possibility~~ ~~of~~ ~~the~~ ~~future~~
 how ~~can~~ ~~you~~ ~~not~~ ~~spend~~ ~~more~~ ~~time~~ ~~on~~ ~~it~~
 an opportunity ~~to~~ ~~discuss~~ ~~the~~ ~~idea~~ ~~of~~ ~~the~~ ~~future~~
 I do like your ~~idea~~ ~~of~~ ~~the~~ ~~future~~ ~~and~~ ~~the~~ ~~idea~~ ~~of~~ ~~the~~ ~~future~~
 but this came through at long ~~to~~ ~~the~~ ~~idea~~ ~~of~~ ~~the~~ ~~future~~
 come to tell you that ~~my~~ ~~story~~. In 1960 I was advised
~~from~~ ~~some~~ ~~actual~~ ~~address~~ ~~of~~ ~~John~~ ~~Brown~~
 as well as the ~~many~~ ~~conflicting~~ ~~tendencies~~ ~~in~~ ~~this~~ ~~I~~
 thought ~~that~~ ~~as~~ ~~a~~ ~~prelude~~ ~~to~~ ~~the~~ ~~idea~~ ~~of~~ ~~the~~ ~~future~~ ~~and~~ ~~the~~ ~~idea~~ ~~of~~ ~~the~~ ~~future~~
 When, one day to my surprise, I read a most
 wonderful ~~laudatory~~ ~~article~~ ~~in~~ ~~the~~ ~~issue~~ ~~of~~ ~~the~~ ~~future~~
 a very short ~~on~~ ~~the~~ ~~idea~~ ~~of~~ ~~the~~ ~~future~~

This I wanted to see ^{her} as well ~~as~~
page from that had a picture Ann →
~~the~~ ~~about~~ ~~to~~ ~~the~~ ~~Archives~~ That, of course,
my own, but I'd seen ~~the~~ ~~team~~ ~~13~~ ~~sky~~
was her great nephew. I was very much so
they had to tell me ^{information} ~~that~~ ~~the~~ ~~the~~
my critique but some of the adjectives would have
been left out if I knew his youth.

Skip 20 years to It is the Clark Center
I got an very warm invitation to
give at UC, San Diego for Part 1
It was one of the ~~best~~ ~~of~~ ~~my~~ ~~life~~
of ~~one~~ ~~of~~ ~~my~~ ~~life~~ In 200 →
we both laughed at our common encounter
when he was He informs that ^{he was wrong} I was right
Chinese really he was ~~frank~~ of his great and
and so great love etc

Part 2

~~Send~~ ~~the~~ ~~type~~ ~~of~~ ~~article~~ ~~that~~ ~~is~~ ~~an~~ ~~adviser~~ ~~I~~ ~~can~~ ~~do~~
Action ~~on~~ ~~I~~ ~~can~~ ~~do~~ ~~Future~~ ~~Tense~~
from ~~when~~ ~~I~~ ~~kept~~ ~~far~~ ~~away~~ ~~as~~ ~~a~~ ~~'bourgeois~~ ~~the~~
until I ~~came~~ ~~my~~ ~~CRISIS~~ ~~of~~ ~~my~~ ~~life~~
I ~~was~~ ~~of~~ ~~found~~ ~~not~~ ~~even~~ ~~it~~

Answered
5/1/84 read Pexys article

12 April 1984

Milaya i otlichnaya Raya D.,

Thank you so much for your note of 17 February, which for some peculiar reason (contradictions of capitalist postal service?) reached me only last week. Under communism, it seems, they read your mail; here they simply don't deliver it.

Your stories about the Stronges are amusing. I can imagine what that secularized Puritan radicalism at Oberlin must have been like--and rather incestuous, *et* too. The Social Gospel repels me, personally, not so much because of what it does or did to its votaries, but because of what it has lost. No Hegelian Erinnerung there. But I have always been exceedingly fond of Tracy. So many of us went out from Harvard to teach political theory at that time that we feel rather like a fraternity (I must insist on the word ashamedly; the only woman of stature, Judith Shklar, preceded us).

Your enclosures have very few specks of dust on them, considering when they were written: I found them very keen and contemporary. Of course you are right: whatever classic stature Sartre achieves (and I think he will) will not be as a Marxist, but as a peculiar (rather un-French) kind of teleological moralist. And that is as it should be: if only his style hadn't been ruined by social science!!

You are more than kind to say you prefer my non-apocalyptic Christian-Stoic dialectics to pallid linear radicalism. Perhaps by the time this arrives, so will have a copy of my book POLITICS AND RELIGIOUS CONSCIOUSNESS IN AMERICA, which I asked the publisher to send you (by the way, Luther and Zwingli are having important anniversaries, as well as Marx--how would you like to do something for a Zwinglifest?). The enclosed brochure shows you what one of my projects has been for the past few months: despite an unbelievable storm the meeting went well. I am now paying the bills, and looking forward to Easter in my nook on Cape Cod. Be good.

George

17135

Dec 1954

had part for future
to
of

Christmas Greetings
and a joyous New Year

Thank you, dear friend, for your latest mailing. I have not, despite your suggestion, shown it to my wife, for it would perplex her: she prefers her feminism in more polite clothes (Ms. Magazine and Geraldine Ferraro). The time is not yet. May God bless you. Our affectionate wishes -

Jeanne and George
17136