

Nov. 21, 1963

Dr. Erich Fromm  
Gonzales Cosio No.15  
Mexico 12, D. F.

Dear Dr. Fromm:

There has been such a long lapse since we last corresponded that I am not sure the above is still your address, and I'm therefore sending this via registered mail.

Two matters of unequal importance prompt this letter. One is purely informational. A paperback edition of my MARXISM AND FREEDOM will be out early next year with a new chapter ("The Challenge of Mao Tse-tung") and a new introduction which makes reference to your "Marx's Concept of Man." In order to make room for the new chapter the publisher has made me sacrifice my translation of Marx's Early Essays. I therefore refer them to your book and its translations, calling attention to the fact that the Moscow translation is marred by footnotes which "interpret" Marx to say the exact opposite of what he is saying, whereas in your work they have both an authentic translation and valuable commentary.

The second, and central, reason for this correspondence is a sort of an appeal to you for a dialogue on Hegel between us. I believe I once told you that I had for a long time carried on such a written discussion with Herbert Marcuse, especially relating to the "Absolute Idea." With his publication of Soviet Marxism, this became impossible because, whereas we had never seen eye to eye, until his rationale for Communism, the difference in viewpoints only helped the development of ideas, but the gulf widened too much afterward. There are so few--in fact, to be perfectly frank, I know none--Hegelians in this country that are also interested in Marxism that I'm presently very nearly compelled "to talk to myself." Would a Hegelian dialogue interest you?

I should confess at once that I do not have your sympathy for Existentialism, but until Sartre's declaration that he was now a Marxist, our worlds were very far apart. With his Critique de la Raison Dialectique (the Introduction of which has just been published here under the title, Search For A Method) I felt I had to take issue. I enclose my review of it, which is mimeographed for the time being, but I hope to publish it both in English and French. In any case, it was in the process of my work on this that I reread the section of Hegel's PHENOMENOLOGY OF MIND which deals with "Spirit in Self-Estrangement--the Discipline of Culture." Not only did I find this a great deal more illuminating than the contemporary works on Sartre, but I suddenly also saw a parallel between this and Marx's "Fetishism of Commodities." With your indulgence, I would like to develop this here, and hope it elicits comments from you. (On p.6 of my review you'll find Sartre's critique of Marx's theory of fetishisms.)

\*In 1961 I first analyzed "Mao Tse-Tung: From the Beginning of Power to the Sino-Soviet Conflict." It is this which I brought up to date as the new chapter in my book. I do not have a copy of this, but I do have a copy of the original article and will be glad to send it to you, should you be interested.

9982

Hegelian

The amazing/critique of culture relates both to the unusual sight of an intellectual criticizing culture, the culture of the Enlightenment at that; and to the historic period criticized since this form of alienation follows the victory of Reason over self-consciousness. Politically speaking, such a period I would call "What Happens After?", that is to say, what happens after a revolution has succeeded and we still get, not so much a new society, as a new bureaucracy? Now let's follow the dialectic of Hegel's argument:

First of all he establishes (p.510) that "Spirit in this case, therefore, constructs not merely one world, but a twofold world, divided and self-opposed."

Secondly, it is not only those who aligned with state power ("the haughty vassal" (p.528)--from Louis XIV's "L'eta c'est moi" to the Maos of today-- who, now that they identify state power and wealth with themselves, of necessity enter a new stage: "in place of revolt appears arrogance." (p.539) who feel the potency of his dialectic. It is his own chosen field: knowledge, ranging all the way from a criticism of Bacon's "Knowledge is power." (p.515) to Kant's "Pure ego is the absolute unity of apperception." (p.552. Here is why he is so critical of thought:(p.541)

"This type of spiritual life is the absolute and universal inversion of reality and thought, their entire estrangement the one from the other; it is pure culture. What is found out in this sphere is that neither the concrete realities, state power and wealth, nor their determinate conceptions, good and bad, nor the consciousness of good and bad (the consciousness that is noble and the consciousness that is base) possess real truth; it is found that all these moments are inverted and transmuted the one into the other, and each is the opposite of itself."

Now this inversion of thought to reality is exactly what Marx deals with in "The Fetishism of Commodities", and it is the reason for his confidence in the proletariat as Reason as against the bourgeois "False consciousness", or the fall of philosophy to ideology. Marx insists that a commodity, far from being something as simple as it appears, is a "fetish" which makes the conditions of capitalist production appear as self-evident truths of social production. All who look at the appearance, therefore, the duality of the commodity, of the labor incorporated in it, of the whole society based on commodity "culture." It is true that the greater part of his famous section is concerned with showing that the fantastic form of appearance of the relations between men as if it were an exchange of things is the truth of relations in the factory itself where the worker has been transformed into an appendage to a machine. But the very crucial footnotes all relate to the fact that even the discoverers of labor as the source of value, Smith and Ricardo, could not escape becoming prisoners of this fetishism because therein they met their historic barrier.

Whether you think of it as "fetishism of commodities" or "the discipline of culture", the "absolute inversion" of thought to reality has a dialectic all its own when it comes to the rootless intellectual. Take Enlightenment. Despite its great fight against superstition, despite its great achievement -- "Enlightenment upsets the household arrangements, which spirit carries out in the house of faith, by bringing in the goods and furnishings belonging to the world of the Here and Now..." (p.512) -- it remains "an alienated type of mind"; Enlightenment itself, however, which reminds belief of the opposite of its various separate moments, is just as little enlightened regarding its own nature. It takes up a purely negative attitude to belief..." (p.582)

In a word, because no new universal -- Marx too speaks that only true negativity can produce the "quest for universal" and hence a new society-- was born to counterpose to superstition or the unhappy consciousness, we remain within the narrow confines of "the discipline of culture" --and this even when Enlightenment has found its truth in Materialism, or Agnosticism, or Utilitarianism. For unless it has found it in freedom, there is no movement forward either of humanity or "the spirit". And what is freedom in this inverted world where the individual will is still struggling with the universal will? Well, it is nothing but --terror. The forms of alienation in "Absolute Freedom and Terror" are so bound up with "pure personality" that I could hardly keep myself, when reading, from "asking" Hegel: how did you meet Sartre? "It is conscious of its pure personality and with that of all spiritual reality; and all reality is solely spirituality; the world is for it absolutely its own will." (p.600) And further: (p.508:

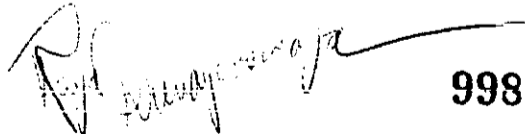
"With that freedom contained was the world absolutely in the form of consciousness, as a universal will....The form of culture, which it attains in interaction with that essential nature, is, therefore, the grandest and the last, is that of seeing its pure and simple reality immediately disappear and pass away into empty nothingness....All these determinate elements disappear with the disaster and ruin that overtake the self in the state of disaster and ruin that overtake the self in the state of absolute freedom; its negation is meaningless death, sheer horror of the negative which has nothing positive in it, nothing that gives a filling."

This was the result of getting itself ("the pure personality") in "the rage and fury of destruction" --only to find "isolated singleness": "Now that it is done with destroying the organization of the actual world, and subsists in isolated singleness, this is its sole object, an object that has no other content left, no other possession, existence and external extension, but is merely this knowledge of itself as absolutely pure and free individual self." (p.605)

I wish also that all the believers in the "vanguard party to lead" studied hard --and not as an "idealist", but as the most far-seeing realist --the manner in which Hegel arrives at his conclusions through a study of the state, far from representing the "universal will", represents not even a party, but only a "faction." (p.605, Hegel's emphasis) But then it really wouldn't be "the self-alienated type of mind" Hegel is tracing through through development of the various stages of alienation in consciousness, and Marx does it in production and the intellectual spheres that correspond to these relations.

It happens that I take seriously Marx's statement that "all elements of criticism lie hidden in it (THE PHENOMENOLOGY) and are often already prepared and worked out in a manner extending far beyond the Hegelian standpoint. The sections on 'Unhappy Consciousness', the 'Honorable Consciousness,' the fight of the noble and downtrodden consciousness, etc.etc. contain the critical elements--although still in an alienated form--of whole spheres like Religion, the State, Civil Life, etc." Furthermore, I believe that the unfinished state of Marx's Humanist Essays makes imperative that we delve into Hegel, not for any scholastic reasons, but because it is of the essence for the understanding of today. Well, I will not go until I hear from you.

Yours sincerely,



9984

ERICH FROMM

TELEPHONES:

MEXICO CITY: 48-54-20  
CUERNAVACA: 2-30-49

MAILING ADDRESS:

PATRICIO SANZ 748-6  
MEXICO 12, D. F.

14th February, 1964

Miss Raya Dunayevskaya  
4482 - 28th Street  
Detroit 10, Mich.

Dear Raya Dunayevskaya,

First of all I want to apologize for not having answered your letter in such a long time. I hoped I could write you at some length every week, and then I was so overwhelmed with practical things that I had to postpone my letter weekly. Even now my situation is not any better, because I am far behind in meeting the deadline for a book manuscript, which I ought to have finished in January. At any rate, I wanted at least not to wait any longer, and to thank you for your letters, and as soon as I have a little time I shall try to write you in the way which would do justice to them.

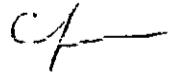
Aside from that I have two questions today: I am editing a symposium on humanist socialism which is to be published by Doubleday. I enclose a list of contributors. Could you see your way to writing a paper, (not longer than 15 double-spaced typewritten pages) on a topic of humanist socialism - freedom and Marxism, for instance - and could it possibly be ready in not later than 4 weeks? I also want to ask you whether you could possibly translate two German pieces for the same book, one by Ernst Bloch, from his Naturrecht, and another paper by Fetscher in Tübingen, into English? Both these papers would be about 15 pages long.

For the translations I could pay the customary rate. For your paper you would get a share of the royalty advance, divided by the number of contributors, which would be at the moment about \$100, and in a month or two about \$50 or \$60 more. When the royalty advance of \$5000 has been recovered, the subsequent royalty payments will be divided in the same way: the total payments by the total number of contributors.

I would appreciate if you would answer me as soon as possible.

With all good wishes,

Sincerely yours,




Erich Fromm

9985

LIST OF CONTRIBUTORS TO VOLUME ON SOCIALIST HUMANISM

- |   |                              |                                  |
|---|------------------------------|----------------------------------|
| ① | Wolfgang ARENDROTH           | University of Marburg, Germany   |
|   | <del>Agostino BALLETTO</del> | Rome, Italy                      |
| ② | ERNST BLOCH                  | Tübingen, Germany                |
| ③ | Nirmal Kumar BOSE            | Calcutta, India                  |
| ④ | T.B. BOTTOMORE               | London School of Economics       |
| ⑤ | Dacilo DOLCI                 | Sicilia, Italia                  |
| ⑥ | Ering FETSCHER               | Tübingen, Germany                |
| ⑦ | Marek FRITZHARD              | Warsaw, Poland                   |
| ⑧ | Erich FROMM                  |                                  |
| ⑨ | Lucien GOLDMANN              | Paris, France                    |
| ⑩ | Eugene KAMENKA               | Australian National University   |
| ⑪ | Veljko KORAC                 | Belgrade, Yugoslavia             |
| ⑫ | Karl KOSIC                   | Prague, Czechoslovakia           |
|   | <del>Veljko KORAC</del>      | Belgrade, Yugoslavia             |
| ⑬ | Herbert MARCUSE              | Brandeis University, U.S.A.      |
| ⑭ | Mihailo MARKOVIC             | Belgrade, Yugoslavia             |
| ⑮ | Paul H. MEDOW                | Rutgers University, U.S.A.       |
| ⑯ | A.J. MUSTE                   | New York, U.S.A.                 |
| ⑰ | Mathilde NIEL                | Paris, France                    |
| ⑱ | Danilo PEJOVIC               | University of Zagreb, Yugoslavia |
| ⑲ | Gajo PETROVIC                | Zagreb, Yugoslavia               |
| ⑳ | Karl POLANYI                 | Pickering, Canada                |
| ㉑ | Milan PRUCHA                 | Prague, Czechoslovakia           |
| ㉒ | Maximilien RUBELE            | Paris, France                    |
| ㉓ | Adam SCHAFF                  | Warsaw, Poland                   |

- 14 Bogdan SUCHODOLSKI
- 20 Rudi SUPEK Zagreb, Yugoslavia
- 26 Ivan SVITAK Prague, Czechoslovakia
- 27 Norman THOMAS New York, U.S.A.
- 28 Richard TITMUSS London School of Economics, England
- 29 Galvano della VOLPE Italy
- 30 P. VRANITZKI University of Zagreb, Yugoslavia
- 31 Ernst F. WINTERL Salzburg, Austria
- 32 

March 18, 1964

Dear Erich Fromm:

Enclosed is my article, "The Todayness of Marx's Humanism". As you see, the title differs from the one originally suggested by you and accepted by me before the dialectic of writing prompted the new title. It never fails: my passion for the concrete demands that freedom too be real instead of merely theoretic or abstract.

The Fetscher translation is being typed and will go forward to you within a day or two.

Now as to the letters and material that has suddenly arrived from you. First your letter dated the 9th, postdated by Mexican postal authorities the 12th, and in Detroit the 17th, and which I just this minute (1 p.m. of the 18th) received, (I had no check enclosed as your secretary noted indeed she wasn't enclosing). It surprised me since yesterday's mail brought a very lengthy and extra article by Abendroth and I therefore assumed that, at least, I'd be freed from Bloch.

It happens it also comes at a very poor time indeed since I am about (April 1) to leave on my lecture tour, and in general am overwhelmed with work. Nevertheless I will do my best to do both translations since I know exactly what you mean by your plight. But you will have to give me extra time. How about promising you the Abendroth around April 4-5?

Hurriedly, yours,

9988

ERICH FROMM

TELEPHONES:  
MEXICO CITY: 48-54-20  
CUERNAVACA: 2-30-49

MAILING ADDRESS:  
PATRICIO SANZ 748-5  
MEXICO 12, D. F.

15th April, 1964

Miss Raya Dunayevskaya  
2190 Talmadge St.,  
Los Angeles 27, Calif.

Dear Raya,

Thank you very much for the translations of Bloch and Fetscher, and for your own work.

As far as the former two are concerned, I made a few corrections where I felt something could be better expressed. There is nothing of importance in these corrections. I shall try to send you a copy of the papers as corrected - otherwise I will try to send you the galleys.

I have read with great interest and great pleasure your own paper, and I think it is excellent and really an important contribution to the volume. I have only a few suggestions where I feel something ought to be changed. Let me first of all say something in general:

This volume is of a peculiar type. It includes Czechoslovak, Polish and Yugoslav authors, most of whom are members of their respective parties. It is quite clear that together with the Western anti-Communist Marxists, the volume will be felt as a rather strong attack by the Soviet Union, since here is a group of about 35 people who in one way or another say that Soviet socialism is not socialism. Considering the political situation in all the smaller socialist countries, it took quite a bit of courage on their part to write something for this volume, and I do not want to make any greater difficulties for them than is necessary. For this reason I have asked the various authors (I am afraid I forgot to mention it to you) to avoid in their terminology all words or expressions which are aggressive and could possibly smack of cold war language. Everything can be said, I believe, in sober, intellectual language, and be just as cutting as more inflammable words would be, yet in this way we can avoid making trouble for the writers from the Eastern bloc. I had this problem with several writers from the West, and so far everyone has agreed to leave out any violent language. This is what I am asking you to do too. I will give you a few examples where this applies.

Related to this is another question: you write many times of "communism" and "communists", denoting, apparently, Soviet ~~way~~ practice and ideology. For the people of the small socialist states, the situation is that if you single out communism as the

9989



enemy and the bad thing, they find themselves in a very difficult position, because they use the word communism too. Besides that, so did Marx. I think from the standpoint of the volume it would be very useful to direct criticism to Soviet ideology, or ideologists, or theory, instead of "communism". Of course you may not agree with me, and consider all satellite states in the same light as the Soviet Union. In that case I am afraid you would not agree with my suggestion. But I hope that we do not disagree in this point. I realize, of course, that in Poland, Czechoslovakia and Yugoslavia there is a good deal of state capitalistic practice, and spirit, mixed with communist bureaucracy and so on, yet there is also a strong movement to transcend this, and to arrive at a genuine humanist concept of socialism. If we single out as the enemy "communism" we make it exceedingly difficult for the people of these countries to be present in our volume.

Now come a few smaller changes which I propose:  
On page 5 the last sentence of the second paragraph beginning "It is important" is not quite clear to me. Aside from a small change to say "not to lose sight of" instead of "to hold tight to" the meaning of that part of the sentence which begins "into the whole question of the form of value" to the end, I think, I know more or less what you mean, and that is that the commune was a stimulus for Marx to re-think the whole question of value as it is historically determined, and which had been intellectually imprisoned in an alienated world leading to false consequences about value. At any rate, even if I am right, the whole sentence is very difficult to understand and I wonder if you could reformulate it, perhaps by dividing it into one or two parts and enlarging it where necessary.

Also the next sentence, second line from the bottom of page 5, is not clear to me. "The fetishism of commodities", you write, "is the opiate which passes itself off as the very nature of the mind". I am sure this is too short to be understood by most readers. You then write that this is not only because the exchange of commodities hides the relations between men. It is not clear, then, as the paragraph goes on, what is the opposite to the "not only". Who is meant by the "authors of the epoch-making discovery that labor was a source of all value"? Again the last sentence of that paragraph, "obviously communism is determined that none shall" is not too fortunate in my way of thinking; partly because of the word "communism" and partly because the word "determined" sounds as if there were an intentional determination in the strip of fetishism from commodities. I would suggest that you try to write the whole paragraph more clearly, and maybe leave out or reformulate the last sentence.

Also with the following paragraph on page 6 I have trouble. The holy of holies and the exploitation of the laborer are, in my feeling, a little bit too dramatic in style, but that is not the main point. You say this ideology changed its essence when it changed its form from private to state capitalism. But you do not describe how it changed. What is meant by "this mainspring" of

capitalism? I think if we left out from "this holy of holies" to "this capitalism" the paragraph would be better.

I also think the last sentence of this paragraph would rather be left out, especially because you speak here of the societies in the communist orbit, making no difference between the Soviet development and the rest.

In the last 2 lines on page 6 I also find a difficulty. You write it should be obvious that Marx's primary economic theory .... is a theory he first called alienated labor, in which indeed he creates special categories to stress his ailing character", etc. I do not think that is very clear in English, and I wish you would reformulate it. (Can one really say that he called a theory "alienated" labor? There is a theory concerning alienated labor, but the theory itself is not called alienated labor. But that is only one of the points of lack of clarity in this sentence.)

In the 6th line on page 7 I do not quite know what you mean by "economic tool"; would you please expand. The beginning of the second paragraph ("no one watching in which humanist philosophy" also I do not find clear. I would be in favor of leaving it out, unless you could suggest a clearer formulation.

I think personally that it would be better to put in a sentence before the one after "footnote 18", namely "this study no doubt reinforced his humanist philosophy" then followed by your text "in the processes" etc.

On page 8 I suggest leaving out the last 3 lines of the first paragraph, for reasons which deal mainly with what I said in the beginning. To compare the labor processes in the Russian factories with those in England in the middle of the century may give the impression just of political attack against the Soviet Union. In the second paragraph, line 4 "under any nomenclature" until "capitalistic system" the sentence does not seem clear to me. I suggest leaving it out.

On page 9, second line of the first paragraph, I would leave out the word "actual perverters" for reasons mentioned above, and say instead "representatives" of Marxian theory", which does the same.

On page 10, first line I would think it would be better to say "the liberation from Western imperialism" instead of "revolution from".

The first sentence of the second paragraph on page 10 does not seem to me very good English, "let us not now debase freedom of thought too" and so on, does not seem very good. How about at least taking out the "now", or saying "freedom of thought can also be debased, to the point where it is not free" and then I do not think "other side of coin oppositeness" is very appealing. What about "is not more than the other side of the coin of thought control".

The next sentence "one can .... to control" is not very good, and I would suggest leaving it out.

The paragraph beginning two lines from the bottom of page 10 is not quite clear, and I would prefer to leave it out. Can one really say "that the dynamism of society stops or retrogresses"? I know what you mean, but I think it should be more subtly expressed and at the same time more understandably.

I also am very doubtful about the second paragraph on page 11. I don't understand why dialectic is not only political or historical but cognitive. How is that related to the following sentence? And then you end the paragraph with an invective which does not explain things any better.

These are my main proposals for changes, aside from very minor changes in the wording, and the replacing of "communism" by "Soviet ideology" etc., at most places. I hope very much that you do not feel that my suggestions are in any way an attempt to interfere with the substance of your thought. They are, after two thorough readings, meant to clarify your thought, with which I essentially agree.

Please send me your response to this at your earliest opportunity, since I have to send off the manuscript very soon to the publisher. I would be very happy if you would permit me to revise your manuscript in the way I have indicated. I think it would gain a great deal and since this is meant first of all to impress readers who are not specialists in Marxism, in the United States, with the vitality of humanist socialism, it is very important that it appears in a form which has an optimum of clarity and does not discourage the reader by obstruseness which makes him feel this is not for him.

I have sent you a cable asking you where to send you a check for the translation, and how much it is. As soon as I get your answer I shall send you the check.

Yours sincerely,

for

Erich Fromm

Dictated by Dr. Fromm  
but not seen

B. J. H. H. H.

In the meantime I have your letter of April 8. I cannot tell you how much I appreciate your doing these translations and thereby really saving the deadline for the manuscript. I hope when you read the whole ~~manuscript~~ volume you will feel that you have not wasted your time. In the next 2 or 3 days I shall send you a check for \$125 for the Fetscher and the Bloch translations, and I will send you another check as soon as

9992

- 5 -

you write me how much the Abendroth translation is. I know, incidentally, the tremendous difficulty in translating. I have spent many hours trying to understand some of the "English" manuscripts I got from Poland, Czechoslovakia, etc., corresponded back and forth, and have still had the greatest trouble in understanding even the meaning, and my difficulty was increased by the same consideration you have - that I was always extremely anxious that I might change something in the authors' intention by not understanding him right.

With many cordial regards,

9993

April 23, 1964

Dear EF:

Your letter of the 15th at hand. I am glad to hear you say that your suggestions for changes in my manuscript are in no way "an attempt to interfere with the substance of your thought. They are, after two thorough readings, meant to clarify your thought..." Let me say at once that insofar as your suggestion for modifying the manner in which I use the word, "communism", in order "to avoid making trouble for the writers of the Eastern bloc", is concerned, I have done so. Where I could--and that is most places--I have substituted the word, "theoretician"; where I couldn't do so, I specified the Communist as Russian (and, in one case, Chinese). In all cases I left out the word, "orbit."

I appreciate the care with which you have read my manuscript. I needn't tell you that a writer, particularly one whose subject is as complicated and urgent as ours, always appreciates suggestions in wording and style which can help clarify the complexities in content. I have carefully studied all your suggestions, and decided to edit fully and retype the article in toto. The two copies of the revised version are herewith enclosed, clearly marked on p. 1 in red, and on all other pages as "Revised" so that there be no confusion between the copy you have of the previous version. (It happens also that the type is different since I didn't have the elite and had to use the large type. Please use this revised version, and I do very much appreciate your promise of sending me the galley proofs.

Naturally I was glad to hear that you consider my paper an important contribution to your symposium, and was especially happy to read that you "essentially agree" with my thought. Just as naturally you are, of course, in no way responsible for my views. Both as a socialist humanist and as an editor of a symposium by a varied group of writers, I am sure you do not wish all contributions to be of a single mold, and that you do understand my preference for editing my own work.

You will also forgive me, I trust, if I give you some background about myself. The press always plays up my having been Trotsky's secretary as if that experience is what put me on the GPU black list. (50 per cent of the Trotsky secretariat from the time of his exile were murdered, and I naturally did not care to increase the percentage, and therefore went around armed.) The truth is that the outright interference with my writings began after my break with Trotsky, and, for a time, as in 1944, had the collaboration of our State Department (that has its own reason for keeping me "listed"). Thus, when the American Economic Review submitted to the Soviet Embassy my translation of the Russian article on the law of value, not only did the Embassy refuse "to collaborate" (check the translation) with who who did not, they wrote, have "a correct position on Russia", but our State Department also put pressure on the periodical not to publish any violent language against "an ally". I am glad to report that Dr. Paul T. Homan, editor of that scholarly review, refused to be intimidated by either view of what was "a correct position or thought" and published both my translation and commentary. I am sorry to report that, with McCarthyism however, not only the two poles of world capital, but also the left, has helped create a conspiracy of silence around my writings. I am truly pleased to know that my working with you on the translations helped, as you so generously say, really to save the deadline.

Sincerely yours,

9994

ERICH FROMM

TELEPHONES:  
MEXICO CITY: 48-54-20  
CUERNAVACA: 2-30-49

MAILING ADDRESS:  
PATRICIO SANZ 748-5  
MEXICO 12, D. F.

15th July, 1964

Miss Raya Dunayevskaya  
4482 - 28th St.,  
Detroit, Mich. 48210

Dear Raya,

This is just a short note to acknowledge your letter.

I am sorry that you seem to feel dissatisfied with my following the Doubleday editor's advice, but I do believe that language, as such, is not a matter of convictions, and even though my own English is not bad, I often accept corrections. Aside from that, it is one thing whether the English translation is understandable to one who is very familiar with the subject matter, and another whether the average, educated reader can understand it well. I think "native English" is not such a bad thing.

I hope I will get around soon to answering you re your correspondence with Marcuse. Have you read his latest book? I began, but am somewhat puzzled.

Until soon, warm regards,

Yours,

*Er. F.*

Erich Fromm

9995

July 21, 1964

Dear EF:

On second thought, and with heat wave having come down a few points, I decided I missed "a golden opportunity" yesterday to commit you to a discussion on Hegelian philosophy the minute you made any comment on Marcuse's One Dimensional Man, so I'm coming back for a second try.

As I stated, all too briefly yesterday, Marcuse seems preoccupied with the idea that an advanced industrial society has replaced ontology with technology and very nearly transformed us all into one dimension men. We have lost the power of "negative thinking" (dialectic), become so much a part of the status quo that "technicity" easily swallows up what minor modes of protest we are capable of like "Zen, existentialism and beat ways of life...But such modes of protest are no longer contradictory to the status quo and no longer negative. They are rather a ceremonial part of practical behaviorism, its harmless negation, and are quickly digested by the status quo as part of its healthy diet." (p.14) This likewise affects our literature and all one has to do is to compare Anna Karenina to "A Cat on a Hot Tin Roof", not to mention, as character, the former to the "suburbia housewife...This infinitely more realistic, daring, uninhibited. It is part and parcel of society in which it happens but nowhere its negation. What happens is surely wild—obscene, virile and tasty, quite immoral—and, precisely because of that, perfectly harmless." (p. 11)

You may disagree on the question of Zen, and an existentialist may disagree that his field has been so affected—as a matter of fact, HM himself, in his introduction to my book, seemed to him that the modern French philosophers had added something to philosophy, with which, as you know, I happened to disagree—but, on the whole, HM is absolutely right when he points to the deterioration of thought, (which later (p.170) he further defines as "the therapeutic empiricism of sociology") of behavior, of going along with the mainstream. However, while he attacks the status quo, he himself has very nearly given in to technology by attributing to it truly phenomenal powers. Feeling that this may be true, he tries for a way out, to find "absolute negativity", but since he has turned his back on the proletariat as the revolutionary force, he looks elsewhere; very nearly on the last page he find the third underdeveloped world to modify his overwhelming pessimism.

Now, in his previous discussion on Hegel's Absolute Idea, which he rejected, he stated that it was no more than the proof of the separation of mental and manual labor in the pre-technological stage of history. If this is so, if Hegel, after all his valiant striving to extricate philosophy from theology, retreated from concrete history to abstract absolutes not because he was, as a person, an opportunist; or, as a visionary, lacked the belief that the human embodiment of that keystone of his dialectic—"absolute negativity"—could possibly be that "one-dimensional man" working a single operation in a factory; but that Hegel's historic barrier was the pre-technological state of society, then how can HM maintain that this is our fate? If the pre-technology and the forcible leisure needed for intellectual thought sends you back to abstractions, then how could it also have achieved the highest stage of human thought for HM does believe that Hegelian dialectics and Marxian revolutionary philosophy are the very modes of thought we now lack, and were achieved at a less than advanced industrial pace?

My contention had been that, irrespective of what retreat Hegel consciously bankered for, when confronted with the contradictions in his society making havoc of his beloved field of philosophy and philosophic chairs, the object of compulsion to thought came from the French Revolution, not from pre-technology or post-technology, and the logic of this, just this, revealed the pull of the future, the new society which Hegel named "Absolute Idea" but which we first can understand in its material and most profound implications and therefore our age must work out that absolute.

9996

I was glad to see that in his latest book EM is neither  
nor as tainted with a tendency toward "Soviet Marxism" and  
most profound insights are when he discusses thought, not the  
objective world. "Philosophy originates in dialectic..." (p. 125,  
the section on "One Dimensional Thought")

From another point of view I thought you might also be interested  
in the way in which I try to apply dialectics to politics, not in general, but in  
specific horror "philosophy" of Goldwater, so I enclose also a talk I addressed  
to Marxist-Humanists, "The Turning Point."

On a very different level, I wondered whether you could be of help  
either with foundations or individuals who are sufficiently interested in ideas  
to want to help "finance them." What I mean is that I've been working on my  
new book so haphazardly because I cannot afford the time off—a full six months  
it would take to complete my work—nor can I afford a trip to Japan which I  
consider essential to that completion. When I first began working on the  
relationship of world ideologies to underdeveloped countries—in 1958, just as  
soon as Marxism and Freedom was completed—I felt I must go to Africa. A few  
intellectuals I know helped finance that trip, but when I tried some foundations—  
all the way from Ford to Rabinowitz—I found doors more than shut tight. Meanwhile  
I continued both with the actual writing and ~~research~~ research and this, in turn,  
brought me into contact with a Japanese group who, after reading my book, broke  
with the Communist Party—they were in the Zengakuren but were dissatisfied with  
its non-comprehensive philosophy and, on their own, found their way to the  
Humanist Essays of Marx. They did succeed in getting a small bourgeois publisher  
to undertake the publication of MEF (which, incidentally, is due off the press  
next month; they are busy proofreading now) but, while he sees that it would  
help the sales of the book, if I were in Japan lecturing on it, will not  
finance the trip. I'm not sure I ever sent you a copy of the introduction I  
wrote for the Japanese edition, so I enclose that too now, so that you could  
see why I consider that country, or rather its youth, so essential to the development  
of Marxist-Humanism, especially the Hegelian philosophy aspects. In any case,  
whether it is for the purposes of just allowing me some time to do the actual  
writing, or whether any see the importance of a Japanese trip and wish to help  
finance that, I'm in need of aid. I need hardly belabor the point that those who  
have the money hardly feel the necessity to spend it for such purposes, but still  
I felt you may know some, or may have other ideas on the subject, and be willing  
to pass them on to me. In any case, I trust you do not consider this "low level"  
an imposition for I feel sure you have encountered it in your own life more than once

Yours,

9997



November 6, 1964

Dear EF:

Have you received a manuscript, A DOCTOR'S NOTEBOOK, that I sent you on October 16th? I enclose a copy of the letter that went with it which will both remind you of the request I made—for a possible introduction by you if you thought its content as important as I did—and yet first tell you about it if you haven't yet received it.

Here is my problem: I sent it air mail-registered (Receipt No. 227809) on October 16th. Although I know you travel widely and are very busy I was surprised I had had no acknowledgment from you. Therefore I called the Post Office to check about the return receipt, whereupon they began to tell me a tale they did not tell me when I mailed it and paid \$2.70 for postage. It was all to the effect that they cannot, by law, trace it since it is in another government's hands, and, since it was so bulky, it might very well have landed in the Custom Office, although it was manuscript, not goods. It seems therefore that the only way to trace its whereabouts, if you did not receive it, is from your end. Please! Thank you very much.

Did I tell you that I "made up" with Herbert Marcuse? There are so few Hegelian-Marxists and I need his views, philosophically, though I disagree with his political conclusions, hence I wrote him. Obviously he "missed me" as much since I received, by return mail, a letter, which, judging by our correspondence over the years which was always formal and "cold", was quite "personal." That is to say, he said, although some of my writings cause him "great irritation" others cause him such "great joy" that he is very happy to resume the dialogue on the Absolute Idea. Whereupon I straightaway send off a new 5-page letter on the Doctrine of the Notion, part of my <sup>new</sup> book which I'm tentatively entitling now "Philosophy and Revolution", and today got this letter: "Good for you that your physical and mental energies seem to be so much greater than mine. I did not yet have the time to direct your fourth chapter... And now comes your long letter on the Absolute Idea and your strange application of it. I read it once, I read it twice... I would, however, appreciate it if you would give me a little more time to answer it."

So all is well that ends well —or begins well.

Yours,

9998

November 14, 1964

Dear EF:

Finally I received the card from the post office that the manuscript had been received by you. Naturally I am waiting anxious to see whether you would consent to introduce "A Doctor's Notebook", which, incidentally, we now call "To Be A Whole Man." I need not belabor the point of the anxiety since you are surely aware of the fact that your Introduction would make the difference to the publisher. Doubleday is now reading it (Eugene Foyang) and I am to let them know your decision.

Meanwhile I thought you may still be interested in my review of Herbert Marcuse's book which will appear in the journal on Oberlin campus, and so I made a copy for you; here it is. I'm always concerned, even when I disagree, that the youth, in particular, be exposed to radically different views that would break in both on their conformism and on any beat ways of protest that do nothing really to undermine the status quo. Hence, I was more enthusiastic, perhaps, in this review than in my personal letter to you, but, fundamentally, it is the same. And I dare say that the dualism in our relationship will continue so long as HM is HM and RD is RD. He asked to discuss with me in person my ideas on the Absolute Idea, and so I may try to get down to Boston before this year is out.

Did you know that Dell Books is trying to rush through an anthology on Humanism, Marxism, and Existentialism before Doubleday gets your book out? When is its present probable date of publication?

Yours,

*Ray*

9999

( December 6, 1964

Dear EF:

You will allow me, I trust, to summarize briefly, A Doctor's Notebook, which I have tentatively subtitled, "To Be A Whole Man." I am confident that you understand that, although Louis Gogol meant a great deal to me, I am interested in the publication of these notes, covering a period of 10 years, only because they have great significance, and can impart a humanist view to many more thousands of readers, than can the involved works of philosophers, economists, "specialists."

The 4 parts into which the manuscript is divided—Our Age of Anxiety, Who Will Educate the Educators?, The Individual Doctor and the AMA, Freedom and the Truly Human Society—comprise a synoptic and yet very individualized view of the strains and stresses, alienations and frustrations, drives and goals of our industrial civilization, as seen both from the intimacy of a doctor-patient relationship, and the philosophical, comprehensive totality.

Beginning, simply, with "The Air We Breathe", "Night and day, awake and asleep, almost 20 thousand times every 24 hours," the author proceeds to analyze the lungs of modern city dwellers, coal miners, factory workers, and finally all of us, including infants who, with birth, must contend with atomic fallout: "This new poison in our atmosphere seems to be the one to end all poisons" so that death is present "before he has become alive."

This is no propaganda book, however. Dr. Gogol goes into descriptions of the good radio activity, which has been used in medicine, for a half century, has achieved the great advances made in medicine with its help. But, since this manuscript is also no textbook, the evil to which the splitting of the atom has led, cannot be dismissed: "The Nazis, in their attempt to do away with races of people they considered inferior, directed heavy doses of X-rays from a concealed source to the region of the sex glands of their victims, while they were being questioned. Unknown to them, these victims of the sadistic Nazis, were sterilized and thus prevented from having children." (Louis came to Heidelberg with the American army to head the hospitals there and the sight of these victims never left him.)

It is not evil, as evil, that preoccupies the author, but the need to put "an end to the separation of science from humanity." For this reason he moves from the analysis of atomic radiation and atomic fallout to the one-dimensional work that most of us, especially those who labor manually, do, and the relationship of this to disease. Whether he deals with high blood pressure, heart disease, cancer - or loss of sexual power, it is never separated from the internal stresses that pile up: "We cannot exist in chronic contradiction. We cannot live a lie." How closely cancer resembles totalitarianism; each can grow only through devouring the innocent." And here he also deals with the effects of segregation of Negroes, isolation of Indians on reservation, too many borders all around us: "Today we hear a lot of talk about an Iron Curtain and the misery behind it. Any border that fences in a human being does the same thing. I cannot get enthused about boundaries between people. Isolation never created anything. What is the result of Indian isolation on reservations of our own Southwest? The Bureau of Indian affairs reports the following. The average life span of the Navajo Indian is less than 20 years. Death from tuberculosis is 10 times that of the whites, from dysentery 13 times, from measles 29 times, from gastroenteritis 25 times."

A unique feature of the book as a whole, and of this Part I—Our Age of Anxiety, in particular, is that a dialogue has been established with rank and file workers on automated production. Thus, he quotes one letter he received: "Just how much fresh air does a man require in his body every day? In an auto plant we don't get very much. We get dust and exhaust—just how much exhaust is a man's

10000

10001

body supposed to withstand?..One young guy, just about thirty, works on the heavy frame job, lifting the frames unto the machine. He came out of the wash room one day and told me he was feeling so bad and that when he urinated he felt a sharp pain and his urine ran red like blood. These are everyday occurrences in automated factories today. I would like to know what does all this do to a man, if he can stand it?"

Part II—Who Will Educate the Educators?—also starts out simply and elementally, this time talking of food, and not without humour, as the author asks, "What Do You Put In Your Stomach?", and describes "a rupture of the lower end of esophagus (the tube carrying food from the mouth to the stomach). The rupture was due to the pressure induced by the sudden release of a large quantity of soda gas (carbon dioxide). In the chest was found particles of a Pastrami-Dip sandwich that the patient had eaten a short while earlier."

Here, however, the author moves from discussing illness, such as, hepatitis, piecework and ulcers, dope addiction in youth and fear in the middle aged woman reaching menopause, to linking decay of age with decay of society and the "Intellectual Assembly Line?" This may be part of the reason why there is a shortage of good students of science in our colleges today...Perhaps there is a connection between this and the controversy around Einstein, who, some months before his death and during the discussion of the H-bomb, appealed publicly, with a few other scholars, that more freedom—in determining the direction and purpose of his work—be given the scientist. Actually, this was an attempt to abolish the separation between science and the people as a whole. In reply, newspaper columnists and government officials ridiculed these scientists as impractical dreamers not to be trusted with 'politics.'

Dr. Gogol then takes up the politics of education in "Admiral Rickover's Straightjacket." (Incidentally, Admiral Rickover and Dr. Gogol came from the same Chicago alum. He had some funny stories to tell me how the Congressman from that district came to choose the two best students in the class—Rickover and Gogol. Unfortunately, Louis never wrote these up, and this piece on Rickover's stupidities on education is all the reference I find.)

Interestingly enough, the final section of this part which deals with the elderly and retirement, various medical plans, he suddenly sounds a personal note in "A Feeling of Alienation," which is the transition point to Part III: "Like others, I am in competition to sell my ability to work. Looking on from the sidelines (as he lay ill), temporarily free from pressure this activity to use up labor time can be seen from what it truly is—self-destruction...The monstrosity of living only when away from work, instead of in and through the kind of activity which, in itself, can make work and living a one-ness, a wholeness and a unity, is the most serious disease of our life and times."

Part III—The Individual Doctor and the AMA—begins with a beautiful piece of a doctor who was also a revolutionist—Benjamin Rush, who was a signatory to the Declaration of Independence, feuded with George Washington and wrote to Thomas Jefferson: "I have sworn upon the altar of God eternal hostility against every form of tyranny over the mind of men." So opposed to war was Dr. Rush that he proposed the following inscriptions be placed on the door of the office of the Secretary of War: "An office for butchering the human species;" "A Widow and Orphan Making Office;" "A Wooden Leg Making Office;" "An Office for Creating Public and Private Vices;"..."An office for creating poverty, and destruction of liberty and national happiness." Dr. Gogol then adds: "Because of this, Alexander Hamilton blocked his appointment to the medical faculty of Columbia University..."

His criticism of the AMA and its fight against "socialized medicine" is tempered by what the individual doctor and medical student thought medicine would

be as they ideally embarked on it. At the same time he not only exposes Big Business's relation to the AMA but also indifference of the doctors as a whole to the hospital workers who "get the short end of the stick", who have therefore gone on strike because "they will no longer wait for help from the medical profession to organize their own."

"The Need For More Self-Awareness" serves as the transition to the final part of the manuscript: "The abnormal system of production we have created separates the activity of man—his labor—from living man, and thus makes true human growth impossible. Millions of men today lead incomplete and impotent lives, unable to use their heritage...."

Part IV—Freedom and the Truly Human Society—is so beautiful that one is tempted to quote all 39 pages. The theme everywhere is freedom and the all-dimensional man, the individual and the creative act, the biological meaning of freedom inseparable from the philosophical: "The newer knowledge emerging from studies of the individual cell and the nature of the cell's relations with other cells, tissues and organs of our body, reveals an almost unbelievable complexity of structure and function of amazing sensitivity and adaptability. This is creativity in the fullest sense and we all possess it."

And yet freedom is not made into an abstraction, not torn from history: "It was the ancient Greek philosopher Plato who introduced to civilized man the distinction between the brain and the hand. Thinking, he said, was man's highest activity; and perhaps he wanted to justify a slave society. For work in Greece was left largely to slaves; and manual labor was looked upon as servile....The way of life Marxist-Humanism tries to spell out is rooted in the quality of freedom—being free, not as something we have, but as something we are....The growth of the objective world, science, has become ~~the~~ the creation of more capital; it is not the self-realization of man, the merging of the objective world in his own subjective being. Both the U.S. and the U.S.S.R. now seek to grow into giants through automation and atomic energy power, but one basis for life and another basis for science can lead, not to growth, but to death."

In dealing with the fragmentation of man, which the worker feels daily on the production line, but the scientist and intellectual think it does not apply to them, Dr. Gogol says: "For a nation whose foundations were laid by outcasts, misfits, the dissatisfied and, above all, the non-conformists, some of us have become too smug." He then takes up "Homeostasis and Marx's Humanism", contrasting organic wholeness to the collective whole: "The collective whole means the entire sum of the parts composing a substance. The ~~organism~~ wholeness means to the organic unity of function. A man can be organically whole even after he has lost a leg. Organic wholeness is a behavior pattern that is complete, physiological and homeostatic. It is the essential ingredient of the humanism that is the axis of the life of Karl Marx. He knew that being a member of a collectivist society does not automatically lead to living in wholeness. He would have been repelled by today's Communists...The only weapon Marxist-Humanists have is the truth that is the whole, and we must continue to uncover it in its fulness."

I do not know whether this summary can be a help to you in cutting down the time you need to write an introduction. I hope so. As I wrote to you last week, there is no deadline for you. But what I do need, <sup>you know</sup> is whether I can use your name, that is to say, that the publisher that you will wrface it. Please let me know.

Yours, gratefully,

*John*  
10002

ERICH FROMM

TELEPHONE S:  
MEXICO CITY: 48-54-20  
CUERNAVACA: 2-30-49

MAILING ADDRESS  
PATRICIO SANZ 748-5  
MEXICO 12. D. F.

16th January, 1965

Miss Raya Dunayevskaya  
4482 - 28th St.,  
Detroit, Mich. 48210

Dear Raya,

Thank you for your letter of January 11 and for your previous letter with the greetings to the Brandts, who left here a few days ago. They were very happy with your greetings.

In the meantime I have read most of the manuscript. I will tell you quite frankly my response. I do not think the manuscript is terribly good, because it sounds like a great number of columns dealing with relevant questions in a somewhat superficial way, kind of aphoristic, and at the same time it says many things which are more or less known. On the other hand, of course I appreciate the humanist spirit of the author, and not only that, but also his application of magical problems to a position of a radical socialism with an anarchistic trend. You yourself probably, being more or less of a layman in psychosomatic medicine, perhaps over-estimate the originality of much that is said in the book. In addition, as I guess I wrote you, I have to consider that I practically never write forewords to a book, with very few exceptions, because I get so many requests that if I began doing it I would be swamped, and would not have the excuse that I have now, and which defends me - that I practically never do it. If you had not sent me the manuscript with the urgent request that I write a foreword, I would not have hesitated to follow my general practice of saying "no". But here comes the other side:

I am impressed by your strong wish to have this manuscript published, and naturally by the fact that here is a man who thinks very much according to our principles (that there is a disagreement with me in the fact that following Marcuse he mentions me - even though not by my name - as one who castrates Freud, and so on, does not change the basic agreement.) It is for this latter reason that I cannot really say "no" to your request, and hence I have to say "yes", provided one thing: that my introduction would be exceedingly short, with only emphasis on the humanist and international viewpoint of the author, saying that for this very reason he has something to offer which the reader rarely

10003

- 2 -

nears from other sources. The most such an introduction would be, would be one page. I say this not only because of the limitations of my time, but also because this is really all I can say in favor of the book. If I would have to go further, I could not recommend it that much, for the reasons mentioned above.

I want to send this letter off without any further delay; that is why I am stopping here. I just want to mention that the manuscript of Socialist Humanism has eventually gone into production, and I hope that the publisher will publish it in June as he had more or less promised (by "more or less" I mean publishers never promise any such thing very definitely.)

Your trip to Japan sounds very interesting, and that you will try to find out about the political thoughts about the left wing ~~and~~ anti-communist Japanese socialists; all I heard was that there is not much original thought, but they look very much to the Yugoslavs for theoretical inspiration. Needless to say that I am exceedingly interested to hear what your impressions are on that score. Naturally I quite agree with you that the Maoist tendencies in Japan are quite a serious business, and whatever you do in Japan will be very important.

I plan to stay in Mexico until the latter part of April, and then to go to New York from the end of April to the middle of May. Then I plan to go to Europe to give some lectures in Norway to students, to participate in a symposium between Marxists and liberal Jesuits in Salzburg, to go to a Yugoslav meeting near Dubrovnik, perhaps to Prague to give some lectures, and eventually to a psychoanalytic congress in Zürich. I expect to be back by the end of July.

With all good wishes and greetings,

Yours,

*Er. Fr.*

Erich Fromm

10004