

September 28, 1986

Dear Raya,

I really found interesting Lowith's discussion of Marx's break with Hegel and its rootedness in the doctoral thesis and the need for philosophy to found a new Athens, on the sea if necessary. Hegel has been on my mind lately since I did a section on that in a sociology class I am teaching on law, where they read chap. 1 of M&F and then Findlay on the Philosophy of Right and a brief passage from Hegel's P.R. I was struck by Findlay's statement that "The transition from Conscientiousness to Wickedness is quite scandalous, since the problem of Conscience is surely one of applying the Rule of Right, or of giving content to the vague notion of Welfare, whereas the principle of Wickedness is . . . that of rejecting these notions root and branch" (322). Findlay then rather chides Hegel for finding no "better instance of perverters of Morality than the poor Jesuits". This took me to p. 257 of the Knox trans. of the P.R., where Hegel writes that the problem arises not from explicit hypocrisy, but from a situation where the moral and the good are determined by authority, with the result that there are as many reasons as there are authorities for supposing that evil is good. Casuist theologians, Jesuits especially, have worked up these cases of conscience and multiplied them ad infinitum." Does this type of critique of the established Church, which you of course have referred to especially in P&R as having a relationship to the needed critique today of the Party, have any relationship to the new book?...

Findlay

What a horror  
the problem  
rather stupidly

VA

Loewy  
H

\* To which especially two Black students had a very positive reaction, touching off a serious discussion on subjectivity and free will which the whole class applauded.

Best,  
Kevin

P.S. I hope by week's end to have xeroxes of the articles you wanted.

P.P.S. Reading Schumpeter on CM, we are reminded (re your recent discussion) that "the birth of the economic interpretation of history dates from 1844." He also critiques F&E's graveide speech (This was also for my class)

11267

OCTOBER 2, 1960

Dear Kevin:

...Now then, back to philosophy. Findlay has become my "main enemy". Philosophically, I was so impressed in the 1950s with his Re-examination of Hegel, which made Hegel very alive, very nearly contemporary. When I met him at the HSA Conference where I spoke I was quite disappointed because he is a South African and was trying to be for the Blacks but "understanding" of the whites, and what I consider daring (I really mean having the gall) to say I should understand those characters since they are like the Russians who lost their Cherry Orchards, and then mentioning everyone from Chekhov to Turgenev, etc. etc. But I did not ~~make~~ make of it a category, and doubt I even mentioned it to any other comrade. Now that I am deeply back into philosophy, I have reread all his stupid, arrogant, perverse "Prefaces" to all of Hegel's works, and realize why I have kept preferring the old translations to the new Miller translations. Here is why. It is not just language. It is not just the arrogance of a F.B.A. professor. It is actually attempting in a very tortuous but serious and scholarly and erudite way to totally reverse Hegel and made his Absolutes the equivalent of God, God, God, whether it is the Phenomenology, Science of Logic, Encyclopedia (his favorite)-- anything that is a system or a hierarchy is his favorite), and of course, Philosophy of Right.

I just love what you caught him in by looking up what Hegel actually said on p. 257 of Philosophy of Right, which is the most profound, beautiful description of Jesuit casuistry, as against Findlay's crying for those poor theologians where he chides Hegel, "for finding no better instance of perverters of Morality than the poor Jesuits." We'll discuss this further when I see you...

Let me say just one more word on the question of the sociology of religion. Or whatever it was called way back in 1947. When I worked with the worker-priests in France at that time and the Christian Humanists were so famous and actually competing with the Existentialists about whether God was dead, CIRJ and Grace immediately used that nonsense to fail to act upon Marxist-Humanism. On the other hand, when it came to 1959 and I was supposed to have a discussion with Alistair MacIntyre and the Absolute Idea, he told me he had no time for such nonsense because he had to be up at 5AM to distribute leaflets for the Trotskyists. All this sudden embrace of Trotskyism after the sudden break with Catholicism, happened in the ~~few~~ weeks that it took me to get to England after ~~he~~ he had reviewed so enthusiastically my M&F for the University and Left Review, calling attention to the great range of being both for the miners' struggles and for Hegel and the Absolute. Skip a few more decades and we have, on the one hand, Dupres who, I am sure, must have been in the Belgian Resistance, and no doubt a priest; the meeting with many from Latin America on Liberation theology and Miranda actually inviting me to attend the counter-conference of the near-Marxist priests. If you can make sense out of all of this in order to be in Chicago at Loyola it will be great.

See you Tuesday.

Yours,

11268

Sent to Kevin 10/2/86

Hegel, when he was first asked to be an instructor in theology. Briefe, 1 - pp. 138 and p. 172 :

"To write a logic and to be theological instructor is as bad as to be whitewasher and chimney sweep at once."

"Shall he, who for many long years built his eyrie on the wild rock beside the eagle and learned to breathe the fresh air of the mountains, now learn to feed on the carcasses of dead thoughts or still-born thoughts of the moderns and vegetate in the leaden air of mere babble?"

11269