

June 9, 1964

Dear Eugene:

however
First, Congratulations! Do not/forget that, besides the exhilaration of the experience in both fighting for freedom and seeing it creatively as the philosophy of freedom which must be extended far beyond Mississippi, there will be the hardness and narrowness of both the law and some of its opponents, so always be a good Hegelian and "hold fast to the positive in the negative" and the vision will carry you through to the point where you experience self-liberation and therefore are immune to the little pains and great deafness.

Now on to Marcuse's Preface to the 1960 paperback edition of R & R. The year is important because it is his transition point from total pessimism and apologia through the mid-point of the "Great Refusal" (1960) to the present almost-optimism of "One Dimensional Man" perhaps working his way out. Now the philosophic lie is that the Great Refusal is the answer--it is the merest beginning, just as contradiction is recognition of what is, and, while it is the necessary step to overcoming, it is not the transience. Only negation of negation is that transcendence, is the new society, is the Humanism "beginning from itself" and is the positive, i.e., the Absolute Idea. In a word, Hegel does not stop at Contradiction. He begins there and after suffering through many unity of opposites, alienations, dialectical developments, leaps ahead, some rearward steps but then two steps ahead, he finally ~~reaches~~ reaches the resolution of contradiction. Since HM has no "true negativity" (like the proletariat) in which (whom) he has confidence he must resort to what I call "the philosophic lie", what HM called "the lie of his principle" when he attacked Hegel for de-humanizing the idea. In a word, KM was saying, it is not your dialectic that is wrong, or even your abstractions when necessary, and certainly the recognition of contradiction (even when it is not yet called class struggle) exposes the truth, the alien character of this society, but it is impossible to deal with ideas only as if they could be removed from the brain of the person who is thinking them, and unless Man himself is the subject, the truly negating and creative subject, then your great philosophy had nowhere to go, had to contain this ~~is~~ lie, and was your downfall, or at least makes it necessary for us to continue on a human basis and save you from yourself.

I will now take up the points you raise, point by point, instead of grouping them. The reference to p.vii where he says science "purges itself" is correct, however, in the sense that it accumulates only those facts necessary to it, disregards all the rest of the contradictions in society as a whole, and thus is at peace with himself though A-bomb comes out of the split of the atom instead of the greatest force and energy of creation. He is here using fact in the statistical sense, an accumulation of data, incidents, outside of the whole. HM is confusing only because in other places he uses fact in the Hegelian sense of actuality, that is all the facts and their relationships to other facts, to history, to the whole live conflict in the world of the status quo. If he had only based himself more explicitly on HM's statement that "to have one basis for lie and another for science is a priori a lie", you would have had no difficulty in understanding him at that point. Also, HM either does not know much of science or is so "opposed" to its complacency about other fields than its own that he does not even wish to grant it a place within the dialectic which it certainly has both in its own field and in itself likewise ~~being~~ historical, that is to say relating to nature and men in their development. It also dates back to his resentment of Engels' "Dialectic of Nature" which, while not on the level of KM's own work, is certainly true. Instead of confronting the Communist misuse of it head-on, he prefers to make his digs at science itself. Of course, there is a

13884

and dialectic to the development of science, and, in fact, it could be helped in its own field if it did understand the dialectical philosophy. It is no accident that the theory of relativity came in the historic period of the RR, nor that of the unified field theory at the time of Automation and Humanism. I became so excited when the formula was first published, though I did not and do not understand a single part about it, that I raised heaven and earth to try to meet Einstein. By the time I met his assistant, Boris Kaufman, and convinced her she should introduce me, he died. I have always wanted a science chapter in my new book. The division of the "two cultures" cripples each of them.

p.viii. Knower and doer are used in the sense of trying to see the totality or unity. It can be the very same person who knows and does. If there is a separation between activity and knowing, if knowledge is used as if it too had no observer, analyzer and participant it is defective. Other with a capital O is one of the most difficult and important concepts in Hegel and here HM is correct in the way he tries to use it with a little "of" so to speak. What he is saying is that nothing is alone, it is always related to other. Even when it is not a person but a thing it is so. For example, the doctor analyzes the sick person not only in terms of himself and his disease but in terms of "other"--the state of health. That all would be fairly easy to understand. The difficulty comes in the fact that at the end of the dialectic process other turns out to be "yourself." That is to say, it is one more phase of your own self-development, and it inheres in you, and not out of some external contact. Mankind certainly is struggling more than to maintain itself; it is struggling to put down its own pre-history, and first begin its true history, the human dimension, which needs not only to be freed from subjugation, but to begin to develop the "is", not the "have".

You are absolutely right unless you pinpoint "progress in the consciousness of freedom" as KM had done, you can get nowhere, and with all his knowledge of Hegel, this is what often happens to HM--his concept of the backwardness of the manner, their alleged failure to be that subject of transformation of reality just has him deafened.

pp.ix-x. You have caught the point on positive and negative, and HM precisely there shows how far he must recede from Reason when he suddenly accuses it of being the villain. There is no substitute for Humanism, and KM pinpointed the fundamental error "the lie of the principle" in Hegel when he said it was due to his de-humanization of ideas. It still is that. It is not Reason which is at fault, it is the men who reason so poorly.

I meant to tell you that not HM but Hegel himself, especially the Encyclopaedia or "Small" Logic you should really always have with you, first because it is kosher, and secondly because now that you are getting into it, I believe you will really soon be swimming easily --which is when your self-liberation, in thought, will gain that new dimension which will make it a collaborator in the new book.

Good luck!

Love,

Kaufman

13885