

FREIE UNIVERSITÄT BERLIN  
INSTITUT FOR ETHNOLOGIE

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December 31 1978

Dear Comrade Raya,

Thank you for the extract from your book on Rosa Luxemburg, and for your card. I have read the chapter on the Notebooks, in its relation to the women's question, and can say that you are indeed on the right track, for you handle the question critically and both with feeling and accuracy. You argue with an inner conviction that has my support, and you must continue on the same line, with courage, striking out against the Philistines, the reactionaries, who seek to invade the world-wide revolutionary movement and to take it over. This movement is loosely organized at present, and is divided by nationalist, feminist, male-ist, sexist, and all sorts of other false consciousness, but it will certainly tighten up and link up internationally. This I was able to ascertain during my recent trip to India, where I delivered a series of lectures on the Theory of Value, on the State, and on the Asiatic Mode of Production. The people were eager to learn, came from all parts of India, even from Sri Lanka and Bangla Desh, and the reception was friendly to the point of enthusiasm. I have invitations to go back and stay longer, which I respond to positively. The revolution will certainly take place in South Asia, Southwest Asia, Southeast Asia. It is only just in its beginnings. The youth everywhere is full of courage.

In March I will go to Barcelona and to Torino and Milano for more speeches, discussions, lectures, at the request of the radical youth, both young women and young men there. In November I spoke in different parts of England.

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The principal thesis on Woman's Liberation is the following: You have taken the first step to speak out in a radical way to radical women. Most of the women's liberation are, however, bourgeois, middle class, who know nothing of exploitation as a class phenomenon. They think they are exploited by men, but this is a misperision of the law of value and of class conflict. The revolutionary movement has always had specialists on the women's question - Rosa Luxemburg, before that, August Babel and Vera Zasulich. They were all revolutionaries first, however. The danger in the women's movement when led by bourgeois women is that it will destroy international solidarity of the working class, and split it up into factions more at war within themselves than with the class enemy. Remember the first principle of revolutionary Marxism is to identify the enemy by means of class analysis. The bourgeois roots of a major part of women's liberation are painfully evident and must be torn out. Then the revolution can march forward, men and women together. Splitters are not welcome. I am not thinking of Stalin's Splitter's Trial, which was a counter-revolutionary slogan, but of midday working class unity.

You mention Leacock, who is a typical, mindless bourgeois thinker, a splitter who with false slogans seeks to throw dust and flimflam in the eyes of radicals everywhere. She has, moreover, not the vaguest notion of the contents of Marx's Ethnological Notebooks, has no idea of the substance of revolutionary Marxism, and simply acts as a spoiler and splitter. A false radical! A comfort to the reaction.

As to my coming to the United States, I must think about this. For years I tried to gain the floor in America, together with my teacher and Kampfgenosse, Karl Korsch, without success. America is the stanchion of capital and the pillar of bourgeois success. In the past six months I have been

in Mexico, Sweden, England and India. In the coming months I am going to Spain, Italy, Mexico, also Poland. Aways to talk about Marx and Marxism. The radical movement was once great in America, going back to Weydemeyer. But the intellectuals and publicists today, excepting yourself, and one or two others, what are they? Most of them are complete opportunists in America, who sense that the capitalists as a class have fallen on sorry days. Like an old man that class is soon to die, supported only by a new trade with the so-called socialist bloc of nations. Without any comprehension, and without inner conviction, without commitment to the working class movement, they make appropriate noises, barking at the sick old man, but make sure that they do nothing else. Thus they attract attention to themselves as people of "progressive" views, having appraised the prospects of capitalism. They gain favorable notice, and when the day of overturn comes, which they have not raised even the joint of one finger to advance, not even a finger nail, they will present themselves in the ranks of those who are worthy of comfortable positions in the elite of the new society, as they enjoyed the same privilege in the elite of the old. The parallel with the "engineers of the soul", now transformed miraculously into the *Coro Cobé, Kuxi Tucateñé*, is too well-known for further comment.

Finally, a word about the relation between Marx and Engels. To be sure, they were one in practice. But the farther away the theory went from the practice, the farther away they moved from one another. Engels is a man of the past century, of historical interest. He has little to

say to the present day. Marx is another person, and the matter  
his depths are still to be plumbed, and his greatness also  
consists in that his errors are fruitful. His fundamental laws  
of value, exchange value, surplus value are still valid. Yet  
they are to be reformulated, for important corrections are to  
be made in them. His theory of socialism is the best there is,  
yet it is marred by Robinsonade. These matters, in all their  
profundity in fact, are taken up in my book, *Treatise  
of Social Labor*, which I am now seeing through the press. You  
will have news of its publication.

I am reluctant to take on more travels now for yet another  
reason. I am now in the midst of a most complicated  
problem, that of consciousness and class consciousness.  
The formulations by Lenin, Plekhanov and Bukharaev were all  
wholly incorrect, in this regard, and the revolutionary  
movement has been left without a theory of these matters.  
This is to be said likewise of Panckoff and Korsch,  
who did little to clarify the matter. They cast doubts on  
Lenin's theory, but added little substance of their own.

Write me of your doings.

With best greetings,  
Yours,  
Lawrence Kradt

January 9, 1979

Dear Lawrence Krader,

Are you back? Your last letter mentioned going to India, and since at the same time I received another letter from a friend of mine who is an anthropologist and who was likewise going to India for a conference, I wondered whether you two met. His name is Mikhail Vitkin, a Russian emigre, whose article on the Asiatic mode of production (quite poorly translated) appeared in Asian Thought and Society, April 1978, and attracted my attention, and I've since had a quite interesting correspondence with him.

I don't think that it's only because I'm a woman revolutionary that I am such a sharper in my criticism of Engels than you. It is true that I have been annoyed for years with Engels' statement "world historic defeat of the female sex," but then I've even been angrier at the women who hang onto that statement, as if we had done nothing at all since the defeat of a nonexistent patriarchy. No, I believe that the emphasis has to be placed not on the word "woman" but on the word "revolutionary," and that "defined" not only as force but as Reason. It is true that Rosa Luxemburg paid little attention (though not as little as she thinks she did) to "feminism". And I will definitely use her statement, "The revolution is magnificent, all else is bilge," as the red thread that runs throughout my book. But, but, but...

Not only am I not against "feminism" (whatever that means), but the whole essence of the question which applies to Engels (not to mention all the so-called orthodox Marxists who write of Marx and Engels as if they were one) is that he did not grasp the totality of Marx's philosophy of revolution, the total uprooting needed of this exploitative, racist, sexist, alienating, class society, and therefore carried out "Marx's" bequest in so narrow and unilateral a work as Origin of the Family, Private Property and the State and made so mechanical a structure out of the dialectic in his book on Feuerbach. I may be wrong to think that you want to limit yourself to the critique of Marx in the anthropological field, but somehow I feel that that is your point of concentration. And yet it's exactly that field in which I want most help from you. For example, Marx's stress on rank and class and economy and property is not only to show that the elements of class were present even in gens, but trying to see how totally different would be a communist society than was a communal society. Take the question, in the 1844 Essays, where he stresses the fundamental nature of the Man/Woman relationship. Compare it to the fact that in 1880 he, at one and the same time, stresses how much more equal were men and women than in capitalist society, what total "blockheads" were the British who abolished some of the rights the Irish women had, and that he also mentions that the pre-capitalist society was "barbaric". His interest in both the Iroquois women and the Pacific Northwest tribes -- and his criticism of it -- was again on the level of seeing something "more equal" than capitalism, but not the totally new person his vision perceived. In a word, I felt that what he was doing in 1844 when he first hit upon his new continent of thought and what he was doing in the anthropological field after the Paris Commune and those magnificent women incendiaries -- and don't forget that Dmitrieva, the young woman he had sent to Paris before the Commune, was the one with whom he was corresponding on Russian agriculture, a subject to which he returned in a correspondence with Vera Zasulich at the time he was working on the Ethnological Notebooks -- had a relationship. Don't you?

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I'm no stranger to the concept and reality of organization, and I certainly do not underestimate the fact that my rejection of the vanguard party has helped put me in the class of un-person. For that matter, even before the Hitler-Stalin pact, at which point I broke with Trotsky since Secretary I had been in Mexico, my being an un-person did not exactly keep the GPU or the FBI from shadowing me. But I never have separated my studies from my activities. (The chapter from my work-in-progress is being published by *Open Letters*, a paper I started with American workers, Black especially, and I'll ask them to send you a copy so that you can judge it for yourself.) Nothing so annoying as a sloppy, scholarly work, and there is altogether too much of that in academic, Russian most of all. I would very much appreciate if you could send me that 20-page review of your work in a Moscow publication.

Apropos of nothing directly relevant, don't I look nice in Persian? I am very proud of the fact that an Iranian translated an article I had written relating the ramifications of the 1917 Russian Revolution to Iran in the early '20s as background for the present upheaval.

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Dear Raya,

Thank you for your good letter. Apparently the last letter mine did not reach you, & perhaps went astray. In it I wrote of the warm reception of my ideas on the origin of the state & on the labor & mode of production that I gave in a series of lectures in India. Regarding your work, you can count on my full support, as I know I can count on yours. You are certainly on the right track on the issues of feminism, the working class radical movement, on such as that Draper, whom I notice of but what you write, on the relations of Marx & Engels, and above all Rosa Luxemburg. Your remarks on Leacock are well-taken, but she is wholly on the sidelines, a bourgeois splitter. It is not my intent to break into time consuming & fruitless controversy. The Ethnological Notebook was not intended to thrust Engels into the shade.

About matriarchy: first it is historically a nothing category, usually a misnomer, applied by those who mean to say matriarchy. So it was misused by Bachofen, Engels & Brief, both who was a fake as a socialist. Cunow (another false spirit) already suspected something was wrong, but did not put his finger on it. Now the women's movement, so-called, has taken it up, with the usual falsifications & misdirections. Matriarchy belongs to the past, not of primitive society, but of modern bourgeois society which thrusts back as a projection, Rückverlagerung, onto the cloudy past the rulership (arkhai: Greek, to rule). Somebody has to rule these ignoramuses, so let it become the mother. But the laws of the family are not those of society. (See Ethnological Notebook, p. 281). The rule of mother or father is not rulership over society, over social classes by other social classes.

For us the matters of history are determined by the basis of society: labor, production, opposition between social classes. An example: Engels drew from Marx on the category of history, so-called, "military democracy." The figure of military democracy is the king, Greek *basileus* (not exactly). This is entirely unmitigated nonsense. Military and democracy, together or apart, belong to the superstructure of society.

in no way can these constitute a motive force of history, or a historic category. This kind of superficial thinking of Engels is not found in Marx, who had doubts about this, but did not make them explicit. Further: his expressions concerning the origin of the state by pure greed (platte Hatzgier) and his "lust for booty and beauty" are mere psychologizing, and idle psychology at that, as though the mental state of the ruling class, in its early manifestations, were of any importance whatsoever. Even such stories of chorus girls to the tabloid newspapers, they have no place in the materialist interpretation of history. Yet this nonsense is supposed to show the superiority of scientific over utopian socialism, and of socialism over anarchism. How could we face the utopians or anarchists with a straight face and quote this stuff at them?

It is necessary to read Marx critically as well, and I have had to do so not only philologically, purging his expressions on the theory of socialism of their Robinsonade, showing <sup>the theory's</sup> relation to Aristotle, etc., but also have critically rephrased the theory of value. Marx was to an extent the product of his century, and could not get Ricardo entirely out of his head, although he laughed at Ricardo!

But it is not enough merely to set the record straight. In order to account for the Soviet Union as a historical phenomenon it is necessary to expand the category of bourgeois society, and make it civil society, the society of wage labor, production of capital, and of the state, all of which presupposes social classes. These are the motive forces of history, producing further antagonisms, between town and countryside, between hand and head labor, between productive forces and means of production. To the history of civil society I devoted my book, Asiatic Mode of Production, and to the history of the theory of the same, my book Dialectic of Civil Society. The system of civil society, and its meaning to class opposition, both ancient and modern, I have written Treaties of Social Labor (now in the press). All but the last have gotten good, long, sober, critical reviews in Moscow (by Tar Atkopian) and in Dresden (by Juhn). Apparently as an editor of Marx I belong to the "Official", i.e. learned, scholarly opposition.



Now I am working hard on the theory of consciousness, not only Plekhanov, Lenin, Lukács, Panckoff and Korsch, but on scientific research into the consciousness in Aristotle, Spinoza, Locke, Leibniz, Hegel, the modern Soviet school which has used the old categories of Plotinus and Galen in a remarkable way - critically and at once uncritically. This is a push and pull that is quite common everywhere, among linguists, psychologists, etc.

I am forced to make hard choices, and can speak only to those with whom some spark of resonance exists. I know your relation to Trotsky, whom I think highly of, but who was at one and the same time both misled and a misleader. His theory of the permanent revolution was false, and his practical work in the "vanguard" was also false, in a different way, and also in a related way. His work on long history perspectives was good.

Yes, I also get letters from Vitkin, from George Fischer, both in North America.

With comradely greetings,  
Lawrence

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Coide 2/6/79

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19 January

Dear Raya,

Thank you for the documentation, for the Persian, for the book, Marxism and Freedom, and for your letter. This gives me a splendid overview of your activities, and makes you out for what you really are, IT PA B A N O H A T 20 20 PA T O T O 4 U U, a true daughter of the revolution. I fully agree with your break with Trotsky, whom as you know, I admire for his deep historical grasp, while thoroughly opposing him on the immediate issues of socialism in the USSR, the revolutionary role of the Red Army, that exports socialism as a capitalist export to beep. I myself have opposed Trotsky, Korsch, Panichesk, Gothen. There is no socialism in the USSR. Moreover, the theory of the "revolutionary vanguard" is anti-revolutionary, anti-socialist, anti-democratic, anti-human. It is a sad theory, which Lenin lived to regret, and said so. Trotsky never did say so, to my knowledge.

I think we are in agreement in principle on the question of the USSR, also China, and the parrots of the USSR in Prague, East Berlin, Sofia, etc. "State capitalism" is a formulation in the right direction, but it wants some adjustment: The USSR is the society in which the laws of exchange value and surplus value continue to be applicable, as they are under capitalism, while a new slogan is introduced from above down. This slogan, called socialism, merely incorporates the law of wage labor and therewith wage slavery into the successive Constitutions of 1936 and 1977: From each according to his ability, to each according to his work. Notice the repetition "each" — Robinsonade! Also notice this Robinsonade in Marx (Kritik des Gothen Programms) But there has been a change from "Bedürfnisse", which is socialist, to "work", which is the sale of labor power, in Moscow as in Detroit, by living

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labor. The objectified form of living labor in commodity form is the result, under both conditions; Capital is produced under both conditions; Both the USSR and the capitalist countries are societies in which wage labor is the predominant production relation and the predominant determinant of the production relation, and capital is its objectified product.

Both systems are systems determined predominantly by wage labor and capital. But it is not capitalism in the USSR, because the means of production are not in private hands. It is not the state, <sup>that determines the system of production</sup> because the state belongs to the superstructure of society, an organ of the ruling class. The state can't determine the relations of the basis of society, immediately, as is implied in the slogan, state capitalism. The state is an abstraction that must first be concretized in the public sphere of the society, by particular organs of the state, agencies of the state, acting in the interest of the ruling class. The state is not, however, the only organ of the ruling class, for there are many instances in history of an exploitation by a dominant class in society without the state. State-like forms are developed in history without the historical substance thereof, which are the class antagonisms. In the case of the USSR, the ruling class through the public sphere of society exploits the working class. By exploitation through the public sphere the society stops being capitalist society. The production of capital by wage labor continues, but you can't speak of bourgeois or capitalist society any longer. Further on this point see my Dialectic of Civil Society (Van Nostrand 1976). I am now seeing the second volume of this through the press, with the title, Treatise of Social Labor.

J. M.

With comradely greetings,  
Lawrence Krader

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January 25, 1979

~~Jan 25 1979~~

Dear Comrade Lawrence,

We keep crossing in the mail. Yours dated Dec. 31 came Jan. 18, and whereas that can definitely be blamed on the inefficient state of the post office, I keep thinking that our paths must have crossed somewhere. At first I thought it may have been in Waterloo, Ontario, on the 100th anniversary of Lenin's birth and 200th anniversary of Hegel's, when I spoke on the philosophic ambivalence of Lenin to the Telos conference; I thought you were teaching there then. But the present letter made me think of something far, far back: 1947. Was it then that you were referring to you and Korsch trying to get an audience? Unfortunately I have a very sour memory of one event. It is true that I "loved" some German refugees, and indeed ever since my 1944 article on the Stalinists' perversion of Marx's law of value, which I both analyzed and sharply criticized in the American Economic Review, Sept. 1944, the Frankfurt School made overtures to me. Then Ruth Fischer invited me to address her group on state capitalism. Five or six men with her that evening, but none took the floor while we got into a heated argument over Luxemburg. I couldn't stand her attitude at all and her slanders, much less how she could have thought that I would act that way just because I disagreed with Luxemburg's Accumulation of Capital. In any case, please tell me Karl Korsch wasn't one of them. I will leave the whole question of Korsch, the Frankfurt School, and Adorno's type of negative dialectics, and Marcuse's constant changes of line for another time.

What does connect with what we are talking about now is that I simply cannot understand how such serious scholars can be so unserious and at the same time extremely arrogant toward Lenin's Abstract of Hegel's Science of Logic. Instead of seeing what a tremendous break there was in Lenin between the vulgar Materialism and Empirio-Criticism and the study of Hegel after the outbreak of WWI, they continue to attack Lenin as the author of Materialism and Empirio-Criticism. Farnswock always was the scientist rather than the philosopher. But that isn't true of Korsch and he definitely knew the letter to the editors of Under the Banner of Marxism, where he asked them to consider themselves "the materialist friends of the Hegelian dialectic." It is also true that Lenin's Notebooks had not been published when the so-called "Western Marxism" -- Lukacs and Korsch -- had written their important works on philosophy. And it is finally also true that Deborin attacked Korsch and Lukacs "in the name of Lenin" using bits and pieces of the Notebooks without publishing the whole until the early 1930s. They were finally published, and as late as 1947, when I first translated them into English, I was offering them for nothing both to the Trotskyists and to Columbia University, getting refusals on the basis that people were interested only in Lenin's politics and not his philosophy, and that anyway they were just "scribbles." But again, how can possibly someone as serious as Korsch in philosophy keep disregarding them at the same time as acting as if Materialism and Empirio-Criticism were the last word.5

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So far as I'm concerned, it came to be not only the Great Divide in one Lenin, but in the whole Marxist movement, and moreover it is impossible to disregard it if one seriously faces the dialectics for our age. For a Lukacs to act as if the only difference between his work and Lenin's Notebooks is the question of date (and on which, incidentally, he's also wrong, since, while they weren't known, Lenin had done his work in 1914 and Lukacs in 1919-22) means that we're still, not just opportunists like he, but thoroughly and openly intellectualistic in the worst sense of the word. From the other end -- the conservative Hegel Society of America -- we see an interest purely academic but 1970, with those two anniversaries coinciding, and with the fact that Women's liberation became the Idea whose time had come, they evidently thought they could kill three birds with one stone by having us come and talk on Hegel's Absolute Idea. Naturally I had to "follow the text" most meticulously, paragraph by paragraph. And since it still will not be published until sometime late this year, I give you my copy. Let's discuss it.

So you're going everywhere but USA? The intellectuals may be good for nothing, but I sure have found some magnificent workers and, in fact, I've been working with them for over a quarter of a century. So let me at least say one more thing about some Kampfgenosse and some workers, and in this case include one complimentary thing about the Trotskyists. When WWII broke out, the German comrades were giving me reasons for collaborating "in their own way" with the State Department and with that became the CIA, to "fight fascism;" the Trotskyists went to jail for opposing US imperialism; the American workers were doing everything from wildcatting in the mines to slow-downs in the auto shops, and directly after the war, had a general strike. Who were the backward ones?

We will really have to find some "neutral ground" to get together one somewhere in the not-too-distant future, when each of us has progressed more in the work at hand, and I'm always as slow as molasses in January.



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Jan. 31 1979,

Dear Raya,

Thank you for the copy of News + letters, containing your essay, on Marx + Engels, Ethnology, which you had sent before in draft. Your writings on the subject are first rate, and deserve the widest circulation, for which I shall do my small best. You have a strong grasp of the immediate issues, and a historical sense of what lies behind them. Now as to your concern with H. von Wroerden, there is little to do, still less that I can do, for I do not know the man. When I was working on Marx's Notebooks, the Deputy Director of I.I.S.G. was Charles Timer, an excellent man, who did everything to help in bringing out the Notebooks, the Asiatic Mode of Production, and a series of articles in the International Review of Social History, in 1973 and 1975. However, I understand that he is now retired. I myself have no contact with that Institute personally, although two of my students are working there on Marx's technology studies, and one on Marx/Mexico (he is a Mexican). I rather think that they could not help in this matter. I may try to put out other lines of inquiry, but do not expect too much. My old student and comrade, Cecil Levitt, had similar experiences with Talos and with New Left Review (in England). These are all inconsiderable people. We will talk only about those circles in the radical movement everywhere, in which we have a resonance.

Now as to my coming to America, of course you are right. Your appreciation of the working-class movement there is sound, and none knows it better than you. It is just that I had a <sup>subjectively</sup> negative experience on the East Coast, and can only turn <sup>inward</sup> band my energies. You must keep on working as you have been, without faltering. I myself have good experiences, particularly in the countries

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to the south, Mexico and India, and the Mediterranean world. One can't be everywhere, and so one concentrates on places where there is a response. Mexico, India, Italy, Spain have invited me and repeatedly so, and there I go gladly, later this year, although in which order, I can't now determine. All these groups are excellent, young, energetic, and this is most heartening. My publishers in Holland, Frankfurt, Torino, Japan are all loyal, bringing out my work, although I can't think they make a great profit out of them, for they are far from best sellers. About my coming to America, of course I will do so, and I thank you for thinking along about this. But perhaps after my trips this year, because they will be terribly demanding - not the flight, but the discussions, which are always intense, both intellectually and emotionally. Also, I am just now under a terrible burden, seeing my Treatise of Social Labor through the proofs. It is a long and demanding job - 600 pages of print.

Your work on Hegel's logic and Lenin is interesting, indeed most important. But you did not provide bibliographic data with it. I have just completed a first draft of my theory of consciousness, class consciousness and social consciousness, and should like to be able to refer to your work in my manuscript, but as it is now, I can't do so, even though it will prove to be both relevant and helpful, well-timed. - Adorno's work, the Frankfurt school, Marcuse should in contempt. It is a sell out. Habermas likewise. I have had nothing to do with these people either in America or here. The cases of Panitch, Gorter and Korsch are different, for they moved the discussion of Lenin, the Russian Revolution, Stalin and Stalinism forward, even when it was impolitic to do so. - Lebka's is another matter. Although gifted, he acted only as a drag, holding back. His scientific work held back his political work, and conversely. It is the same with

Ruth Fischer. I know nothing of your meeting in 1944, but I suspect that Korsch was not there. He, Fischer and I had a meeting in 1952, and it was remarked that they met for the first time, then, after twenty or more years. Lukács and Fischer have added nothing, they were Stalinists in the worst time and although either broke away in a different way, I think little either <sup>the product of</sup> their minds, or of their courage, or want of it.

As chance has it, I have three close Kampf- and Sinnesgenossen in the Great Lakes Area, yourself and two others, in Brockport, New York and in Hamilton, Ontario. Perhaps I can arrange some talks that will bring me to your part of the world, but not before the year is out. This is all Zukunfts musik, however. Until then, with comradely greetings,

Yours,

Lawrence Krader

6 March 1979

Dear Raya,

It is good to have the news of your comings and goings. I am reading the proofs of my last book, Treatise of Social Labor; and I am finishing up the draft of my book on Consciousness. At the end of the week I am off to Barcelona and Milano for a series of lectures and conferences (on the Italian translation of my books). The Spanish translation is being done by J. M. Ripalda and will appear at Nueva Imagen (Mexico and Madrid). The Italian will be at Einaudi, Torino, by various hands. Ripalda has just written a long and very good review of Dialectic of Civil Society for Revista de Estudios Políticos, which has a Eurocommunist leaning (Carrillo). Nueva Imagen is run by Argentinian exiles. There is a long review (Zusammenfassung) by Günter Guber, of Dresden, 31 pages, very insightful, and by N. B. Ter-Akopian in Советская этнография (January 1978). Both very good. Cyril Levitt

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has written also in the last number of *Catalyst* (Toronto), a long and thorough review. This is all very heartening. I prize your insights most of all, for I find them most fine. I have asked Lewitt to look you up. He is at Hamilton, and if his schedule permits, he may do so. Ter-Akopian translated the Ethnological Notebooks into Russian as Tom 45 of the *Собрание Материалов ИРЭА*.

I hope to catch up with you soon. Also, I should like a substantive response to some of the points I raised in my last letters, when you get a chance. With comradely greetings,  
Lawrence

The Barcelona people are PSOE, and also unattached-left. L.



March 29, 1979

Dear LK:

Thank you for yours of the 6th, but I am not sure I understand one of your criticisms of my not answering substantively. I do not write anywhere as rapidly as you do--and books at that!-- and so please do not expect thought inter-communication. However, if the reference is to your remarks about state-capitalism, then I plead not guilty as I sent you my major works. I spent 3 full years studying the Five Year Plans, and that was after years of debating "just politically" the question of the nature of the Russian economy with every one from Trotsky down. "Russia As a State-Capitalist Society not only "it" in the 1940s but tightly related to the revolts against it ever since June 17, 1953 East Germany, thence the whole of Part V, "State Capitalism vs. Freedom, The Problems of Our Age" in MARXISM AND FREEDOM, 1957. By 1973, in PHILOSOPHY & REVOLUTION, it was further developed both as Chapter 7 "The African Revolutions and the World Economy", and Ch. 8, "State Capitalism and East European Revolts". Naturally when you write February 6th that the theory of state capitalism needs modifications because Russian means of production are not "in private hands", I decided that you must not have read my books, and that I certainly couldn't convince you in a letter what my detailed study had not.

I am sorry I do not have your Dialectic of Civil Society or Treatise on Social Labor, and book on Consciousness. I suspect we may not see eye to eye, but I certainly would love to have a discussion with you and others you mention when by end of year or whenever you think you'll reach these shores. As you know, I am not a "professional" writer, but an activist who writes when she can steal time except on current events which I very nearly have to write "in flight". Did you see that one of my pieces on Portugal was translated into French? Here is the one just finished that I also hope would be translated; there are a few, very few, Marxist-Humanists there.

Yes, I read Cyril Levitt's serious review-essay of your work, and was sorry I had not known about it when I was meeting some friends on the Catalyst who were both in Women's Liberation, and in Hungarian Revolution; indeed I was invited by one who is planning an anniversary--the 25th--in honor of the 1956 Revolution as in those years I was considered a sort of honorary member because of both what I had written in 1956-7 and have worked with some emigres ever since, though I must admit most have either been absorbed into "Western culture" or kept to academia alone, as witness Szaron.

Are you in Barcelona, or Milano still? I am not sure I understand what you mean when you say I did not provide "bibliographic data" on Lenin's grappling with Hegel's Science of Logic. After getting neither Columbia University nor the Trotskyists to accept free my translation of Lenin's Abstract, I, in 1957, appended to my M&F, and Ch. x, both section on "Lenin and the Dialectic: A Mind in Action", and the one on "The Irish Revolution and the Dialectic of History." By the time I myself had worked through--nearly a decade later--all of Hegel's major works, I then wrote the chapter to which I assume you refer to, "The Shock of Recognition and the Philosophic Ambivalence of Lenin". That chapter in P&R has 50 footnotes, incl. the very latest from the Russian academic Kedrov who tries to give the very opposite interpretation. Or are you referring to the address I gave to the Hegel Society of America on Hegel's The Absolute Idea, where I go, paragraph by paragraph, through that last chapter in Science of Logic, and also include Lenin and Adorno. That 1974 lecture, believe it or not, will finally be brought out this fall by Humanities Press as part of the Proceedings of the Hegel Society of America, or so they wrote me. I get so disgusted as to how very separate from life these academics relate to their thought that I have paid no attention, but you can definitely give them credit. Looking forward to hear about your adventures in Spain & Italy.

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