

Office

July 13, 1976

Dear BP:

Thank you very much for sending me the Foreword to P&F, and inviting my commentary. Because Dr. Reif informed me that there is an interest on the part of the publisher also to bring out a German edition of Marxism and Freedom (which Marcuse introduced), and because I am working on a new study of Rosa Luxemburg and Today's Women's Liberation Movement, I wondered whether you would be willing to write two brief additions to what you say about me. Could the reference you make to the fact that P&F concerns itself with the Women's Liberation Movement be extended to call attention to the fact of the relationship between Rosa Luxemburg and the Women's Liberation Movement? If I may explain, here is what concerns me:

For years I have carried on polemics with* Rosa Luxemburg on Marx's theory of the accumulation of capital. Nothing has maddened me so much, however, as the complete disregard that today's so-called theoreticians of the women's movement display towards Rosa, as if only that woman who writes on Women (with a capital W) "as such" merits attention. I have also been feeling very strongly on the reason why there has been a lack of camaraderie between Luxemburg, Lenin, Trotsky in the period of the 1905 Revolution in which they were all participants, and after which they did collaborate on an amendment to the Revolution on war at the 1907 International Congress. Could there have been, if not outright male chauvinism, at least some looking down on her theoretical work, because she was woman? In any case, between the Stalinist slanderous misinterpretation of her position, and the new breed of theoreticians among women, who disregard her, I am very anxious to find some way before my study of her is completed to call attention to the interrelationship between great revolutionary theoreticians like Rosa Luxemburg and the present Women's Liberation Movement. I would therefore greatly appreciate it if you could invent some way to single out her name for commentary, either at the point where you speak of Women's Liberation, or wherever you choose. (I enclose what I wrote about her critically in M&F, and excerpts from my recent lecture where I anticipate my next work on Rosa.)

The other question I wondered about was that of Hegel himself in regard to what I consider the overly-praised Frankfurt School Hegelians like Adorno. Last year, when I was asked to speak at the Hegel Society of America, I developed some points that brought about a quite heated discussion. Where you mention that it is impossible to understand Marx without understanding Hegelian philosophy, I wondered whether you couldn't call attention to my contribution to Hegelian dialectics -- that Chapter One on Absolute Negativity as New Beginnings -- as being cogent for a German-speaking public, well-versed in Hegelian dialectics. (Enclosed is that part of the lecture that deals with Adorno.) Thank you warmly for anything you do on either or both of these suggestions.

* Yours,

* I'm forever carrying on dialogues "with" revolutionaries who are no longer alive, since I do not consider anyone dead whose thought remains our heritage to pursue and develop.

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