

199 Rue de Grenelle  
Paris 7

Dear Professor Ferrater Mora,

Many thanks for your support; I was pleased to hear the other day from the APS in Philadelphia that I had been awarded \$500 to continue my work in Italy. I am extremely grateful to you for coming to my aid and am sure that your letter was decisive. The Rockefeller situation will not be resolved until February, I believe. I get the impression that Mr. Thompson is favorably disposed to my candidacy, but someone raised a question concerning the relation between my project and political philosophy. Thompson asked me if I cared to clarify this, which I did in a five page supplementary statement. I don't know whether this is a serious obstacle, or whether he was very kindly trying to forestall any possible future objections to my project.

Another possibility on the horizon concerns Johns Hopkins, where I am presumably being considered for a post. But this is so far very vague indeed. I was there this summer and talked with Edelstein and Lowe -- Mandelbaum, however, was not there.

I am working very hard so far, reading Hegel, Lucretius, the pre-Socratics, Lukacs, and studying a bit of calculus. I have been meeting with Alexandre Kojève, who is a good friend of Leo Strauss', to discuss the Hegelian reading of Greek thought, and to read Kojève's own mss. on the pre-socratics. He is a most extraordinary man, both in the theoretical and practical sense. It is too bad that he is not better known in the States, since in Europe, and especially in Paris, his reputation is as high as it deserves to be. I found his lectures on Hegel the best possible introduction to the Phenomenology.

The theoretical situation in Paris, as you know better than I, seems inseparable these days from the political situation, and consequently Hegel is everywhere. In ultimate terms, I think this is bad, but it is most useful for me just now. The kind of political "commitment" which characterizes Parisian intellectuals expresses well their taking for granted, as an unexamined first truth, man's radical historicity, and this vitiates their philosophical understanding, in my own opinion. They never take seriously classical thought because the greeks for them are dead, out of date, a transcended stage in the process of history. On this view, however, Hegel, Nietzsche and Heidegger (not to mention Marx) are unintelligible. Consequently, much of the local discussion is too much an expression of the zeitgeist, rather than a serious attempt to justify theoretically the premisses of the zeitgeist. Hegel's progeny lack his own uncommitted vision. Parenthetically, the way in which they accept historicity makes it, I think, impossible for them to resist Marx, and so constitutes a possibly insuperable obstacle to the development of a democratic version of historicism and progress to combat that of the communists. The anti-communists seem consumed by their (often unconscious) commitment to the first principles of the communists.

I met the other day two charming students of yours, Judith Polsky and Renata Adler. Since Miss Adler is settled here in Paris (Miss Polsky is not), I hope to see more of her.

18-XII-60

Please write when you can of your own work, in which I continue to take the strongest interest: I look forward to reading Being and Death.

With best wishes, Stanley Rosen