

THE SHIPLEY SCHOOL  
BRYN MAWR, PENNSYLVANIA

Music Department  
PAGE BAILEY, *Chairman*  
LA 5-4300

Nov. 5, 1966

Mr. José Ferrater-Mora  
Professor of Philosophy  
Department of Philosophy  
Bryn Mawr College  
Bryn Mawr, Pa.

Dear Mr. Ferrater:

I want to take a few moments this afternoon to express to you my deep thanks for the many kindnesses that you have shown to me since I have arrived at Bryn Mawr. Under the rubric of 'many kindnesses' I am thinking of a number of things that you could not possibly be aware of and that I will share with you in the course of this note, but one of which you are aware was your interest in my Kierkegaard paper and so I will begin with that kindness and then move to those that are somewhat obscure.

There is before me the natural tendency to say, "you cannot realize how much your interest has meant to me... encouraged me, etc." but this is, I think, untrue. Somehow I think you 'sense', 'feel', 'know' (the exact word just isn't around) just how much I do appreciate your interest and so this note is not at all necessary...except that it is necessary for me. I have the need to express the thankfulness that you know I feel.

There were really two sources of 'drive' for that paper and both were centered in you. First you were the person who made the decision to admit me and I wanted to justify your decision both to myself and to you. Second, there was before me the model of your lectures. I was, am, and always will be in absolute awe of your lectures. When you think they are bad ("you should not be here today for I am not feeling well and will be very bad!) I find them absolutely fantastic! The combination of depth, mastery, wit, eloquence and organization is not

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something that I expect to encounter again anyplace in the world and it is certainly something that I have never encountered in the past. The thought of writing for you was a fearful one indeed; particularly so because I wanted so much to be worthy of your example, as seen in your lectures, articles and books, and your confidence in me as reflected in your decision to admit me.

Your call which informed me of your interest in the paper was really the high point of my philosophical work thus far. For you to have taken the trouble to distribute the paper and get comments from the other members of the department was just fantastic of you and words cannot express my gratitude. (Miss Stearns told me personally how much she had enjoyed it and that she thought it was a really excellent work).

Then under 'many kindnesses' I think of the wonderful attitude that you have developed with and among all the students. This 'attitude' is in no way particular to myself, but is just a benefit that I enjoy as one of your students and that I deeply appreciate. Although I readily confess a certain 'awe' or 'wonder' (again the exact word can't be found...perhaps because the feeling itself is elusive) in response to you and your lectures, at the same time I feel 'at ease' with you in that I feel free to ask any question at any time, to comment, or to ask for further explanation. This is a most unusual combination of 'attitudes' and I really don't understand how it is possible, but I am deeply appreciative of the benefits I enjoy because it exists.

In closing I would like to share with you something that happened this week that is, to me, very exciting. I was appointed Assistant Professor of Philosophy at Eastern Baptist College for the year 1967-8. I will resign my post at Shipley at the end of this year to devote my full time to work in philosophy. This is what I have wanted

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to do since I began my philosophical studies and I am delighted that it is at last possible. The appointment came about because of what the President described to me as, "the greatest student and faculty interest we have seen in an appointment in the history of the school." I have been teaching American Philosophy and Logic and I have given several lectures to the student body that were very well received. These activities combined somehow to create massive student interest in the philosophy department and the administration moved to make the appointment. Both my wife and myself are really happy.

With many thanks for your interest, I am,

Cordially,  
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