

12/21

Dear Mr. Ferrater Mora,

I should have answered your letter long ago, but never felt relaxed enough to sit down and do it. Why, in the most frenzied season of the year I should suddenly feel this peace of mind, I don't know, but Christmas does cast its charm in spite of all commercialization, and I hope that you and your family have a merry Christmas (whatever that is).

California isn't bad at all, and I'll probably stay there next year. The philosophy department is much too logically oriented. I think the logicians intimidate the rest of the department to such an extent that they throw up their hands in defeat, I have one professor, an Austrian, who teaches Nietzsche and Hegel; he gave up the first day of class, and says that we shouldn't bother to study those two fools because we'll all get B's anyway. I haven't yet blocked all that statement in logical form, but do wonder whether or not it follows.

I gather that scholars of you used to have a sense of humor about Hegel. Are Columbia professor of aesthetics advised his class to look for a copy of a turn – of the – century periodical which boasted an illustration, in pink tissue paper, of the absolute regarding itself. Oh to be at Columbia now that I'm forced to read the Phenomenology of mind!

And I'm happy to hear from you that philosophy has not died in the East. I hope that the University of California does publish your book, and that if you come to Berkeley on its account you will come to our house for dinner; one of my three room mates is a very good cook, but then I suppose you settle all publishing details by mail.

Are you translating your philosophical (I know one shouldn't divide words in that manner) dictionary into English? I hope so; it's a fantastic work, and I, for one, would awe to be able to understand it all. I have used it, just scraping through with minimal understanding on my knowledge of Italian.

Being home for the holidays makes me realize what a marvelous thing it is to be three thousand miles away for the rest of the year, the main advantage being that I have a chance to become an individual and do some growing up. It's painful and exciting this getting to know one's self but exciting most of all.

Reading Hobbes, of all things, got me terribly excited about government, international or world government in particular, so I ran out and joined the United World Federalists, also decided that I might be able to use some of my [*cinsaching?*] spirit in the field of international law, but then every generation feels that they ought to get out and save the world, and people who have deep enough convictions to make a valuable contribution are rare; I hope I have the strength and patience and intelligence to be one of them, but I clam [...il-legible], and the diverging paths that open out so diffuse.

Berkeley's main charm is its wild political groups. The communists are cut in the open along with the young people's socialist alliance, and the young Republicans. Peace organizations are all over, and the activity during the Cuban crisis was unbelievable, even my room mates went into San Francisco to picket Kennedy's blockade. There were speakers pro and con all over the campus. But really this sort of activity never loses, and there's always something in the air.

I've got to stop and get back to writing my French term paper on Jean Genet – he must be quite a character, fascinating and terribly difficult to write on – Oh, but I forgot one

thing, a young man in my Hegel course, a grad student, went to the University of Kansas and heard a lecture you gave there; he has, since then, read some of your books and thinks most highly of you. We discussed all this over tea one day, and I just thought you might be interested. You may even turn up in his thesis, at least he is seriously considering you as a topic. At any rate, I hope he does you justice.

Sincerely,

[Signatura]