

Nov. 9, 1971

Dear Hayden White:

Thank you for your kind* letter of the 5th. I'm presently doing the final editing, and will try my best to have an extra copy of the chapter on Sartre for you. I would greatly appreciate your comments on it because I believe that, as historian, you would be especially sensitive to the vendetta he has carried on with history. Even more than death, the reader has the impression that history has stalked Existentialism--or so Jean-Paul Sartre feels. Perhaps I should not speak thusly since I've carried on my own "campaign" against Sartre ever since 1947 when I was in Paris when the Renault workers braved the Communist class-collaborationism (actual deGaulism then) and burst out into spontaneous strikes. Instead of showing any independence then, Sartre was busy pontificating that "since" the CP was "the only revolutionary party", everybody (except JPS!) must belong to it, follow its dictates. Ever since then I have felt strongly that the lack in existentialism, far from being a Heideggerian forgetfulness of Being, represented a void in time itself. The chapter on Sartre in Philosophy and Revolution will not deal either with those concrete events, or with him as literary artist, but be dialectical-historical. Still, I thought you may be interested in reading my review of his autobiographical The Words. (Please be sure to return the copy to me as I have no other copy.)

Did I tell you that John O'Neill of York University is introducing my work in the hope that his "tribe" (that is his expression for academia) will stop treating me as an unperson? In any case, he has entitled his Preface "For Marx and Hegel", casting it very openly as a critique of Althusser. I will be off to New York by end of year to argue with publishers.

I do hope I will see you in April when my lecture tour will bring me to LA. There are many points I should like to discuss with you in person.

Yours,

^{one year}
*And kinder still remarks about my ~~Heideggerian~~ Hegelian syntax, not to mention my high strung Russian temper when I discovered the secretary's rendering immanent as imminent, though, I imagine, it was my accent that made "a" sound like an "i"; I never seemed to have learned the fine distinction between "a" and "e" in pronunciation and she took it one step further, what?

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