

UNIVERSITY OF CALIFORNIA, BERKELEY

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SANTA BARBARA • SANTA CRUZ

DEPARTMENT OF PHILOSOPHY

BERKELEY, CALIFORNIA 94720

16. March

Dear Joske,

am I right in feeling that there is a little melancholy in your last letter? And could this melancholy not be dispelled, at least in part, by your writing less? Are you not going to Europe next year? And should you not perhaps use the time just for travelling? I have considered very often taking off a year in which I shall not look at a single book and not write a single line and it was only through lack of discipline that I have not done it yet. Yet this miserable bug which makes me write, namely, the idea that I might change somebody's mind is driving me on and I do not see to what purpose. One thing I want to do before I depart from this universe and it is exactly the thing you told me you wanted to do long ago: to write a charming book which people can read with ~~pleasure~~ pleasure and which will make them take a different look at all the experts, be they now in the Pentagon, in ~~ERN~~ CERN, or in the President's Economic Advisory Committee. Or, to be a little more correct, it will not be altogether charming, but heavily sarcastic in places. At any rate, reading it should flow along like a river. I can write two or three pages of this kind, and it takes me three weeks. But a whole book? well, we shall see. I hardly see now anyone, I am sitting here at my desk, and am writing, and writing, and writing, and when I get tired I go into the kitchen and prepare some complicated dish, to relax me, or I watch TV. I have rewritten my Praise of Bohr, it is now 82 pages instead of the 40 which you have read, and I have presumably ruined it, but that can't be helped. I have also just finished 95 pages criticism of ~~the~~ method of Conjectures and Refutations and I shall send it to you as soon as it is typed. Plea for a no-method-methodology (to which Karl always briefly refers at the beginning of his lectures: "I am teaching scientific method - but there is no such thing" Yes, there is no such thing, not even Conjectures and Refutations. If I understand you correctly you go in the other direction, implying that Karl grants too much freedom. I say, he grants too little, or else grants the right amount in too roundabout a manner). There is a long appendix on Galileo and the telescope which may be absolutely mad. Thesis: at Galileo's time there existed various refuted theories: Copernicus' view of the world; the idea that the telescope shows the world as it really is; the first parts of the new theory of motion that was completed, in a manner of speaking, by Newton. What Galileo did was to show that these refuted theories support each other and to explain away the ~~xxx~~ refuting instances of each single theory. I also think that this is the way in which progress is usually achieved so that we need a method that teaches us how to choose among refuted theories and not, how to choose among theories on the basis of refutation, or content. But, at any rate, whatever "methodological rule" one may imagine, even the tritest one such as "don't use ad hoc hypotheses", one can find circumstances when it would be desirable to break the rule. Hence, anything goes.

Last week I was rather ill (inflammation of kidneys) and in the middle of the illness I was visited by the chairman of Yale who made me a quite fantastic offer. My only problem is: if the air in Yale easier

to breathe than the air in California (this is a meteorological question which I shall solve by consulting the Connecticut Meteorological Center, or whatever the name).

By the way - why don't you stop wasting your time on my tape? I really believe you have imagined all the things you said were in my talk. You have quite a good imagination, you know, and you may have dreamt all these things up yourself, on the occasion of hearing my noisy delivery. So, why don't you sit down and write it up as a paper of your own - but, I have forgotten, that I started the paper by advising you not to write any papers any more.

So, and that it all for today. My neighbors who are hippies are taking me to All Star Wrestling tonight. Just last week she came crying into my place (they just had had a row) and I poured all my grandfatherly benevolence over her until she was strong enough to return to the fight (and, possibly, to win it). Well, such is life (and such are women)

All the best

Law

Professor Paul Feyerabend

March 22, 1968

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I hope you are out of your depression by now and that you are well again. I was pleased to hear about your enormous success with Yale, and I shall be very glad if you accept their offer. I think this will do for now.

March 22, 1968

Professor Paul Feyerabend
Department of Philosophy
University of California, Berkeley
Berkeley, California 94720

Dear *TT & U AXEY*

Thanks for yours of the 16th. First, please give me your itinerary, and allow me to remind you that you are welcome for a stopover of any duration and at any time.

Secondly, allow me to correct you on my view of Popper. It's not that he grants too much freedom, but that he grants more freedom than originally intended by adding epicycles of freedom on the cycle of freedom. It is not the freedom which I dislike but the epicycle. I think that Karl is much worse than Ptolemy because Ptolemy knows what he is doing and introduces those epicycles he has to, whereas Karl throws epicycles along the path indiscriminately and picks the one he needs to answer a critique with--and only for the moment--thus being doubly adhoc: once with respect to a criticism and once with respect to the time of answering the criticism. I think the more Karl argues, the more messy his philosophy, or his ideas, or his writings, become. I just say that Lakatos-Musgrave volume and I shuttered. So did Marx.

I don't like your idea as formulated in your letter ("anything goes") because it sounds irrational. But, I like your idea. I think this idea of yours, exemplified by your case study of Galileo, ~~is~~ is new and interesting.

Forgetting your historical insights for a moment, I was always skeptical of your philosophy considered as more than a good restatement; now that I claim originality for your Boston lecture--indeed, I think it's a breakthrough--all of a sudden you revert and play humble. You are very ridiculous. I enclose now a copy of your Boston talk as edited by my assistant, Mike Chiarello, who I think, is excellent, with only two paragraphs added by me and much omitted (by Mike). It was a tough job, especially for my secretary, but I think it's worth it. Marx has his reservations: he thinks it needs more editing. Also, much as I sincerely appreciate Marx's philosophical judgment (on this point,) I think he underestimates your idea. Usually, his opinion of you is much higher than mine.

Now the journal will not come out until September. That's a new resolution by the committee, so we have ample time to edit your paper and make it a classic. I wonder if you would consider viewing it as a joint venture, say of you and Chiarello or even of you, he, and me--just in case you have too many compunctions about it. Otherwise, we will simply make a footnote explaining how the paper came to be.

Professor Paul Feyerabend

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