



DEPARTMENT OF PHILOSOPHY

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Dear Joske -

you have a unique gift to make difficult things appear easy. This you did, long ago, before my first lecture in Bristol, and this you did last time we talked about my future lectures in London, on the theory of relativity. It all shows that you have much more imagination than I and that you are much less bound to the concrete case than I am. The same is shown by your review of Schlegel which I cannot stop praising. Reviews may be a minor thing, but this is all due to the way in which they are usually written. Yours is a delightful little jewel, all in one piece, a single word replacing a whole paragraph of comments, and enough in it to chuckle for hours afterwards. It even conforms to a certain theory, viz. Brecht's for whom theatre is supposed to be entertaining instruction. I shall never be able to write such a thing as I seem to lack the lightness which you exhibit in this review (when my criticism gets harsh it always gets nasty which is not the case with you). I am a little puzzled also, for the Joske who appears on these pages is somewhat different from the Joske I know. The Joske I know very often ~~gives~~ makes a point of giving a performance in lightness and fails to achieve it for this very reason. But this review is not a performance (in the sense that a serious concern gives rise to lightness, or that there is a heavyhanded attempt at achieving it) - this is the real thing and so you have already achieved what you want to achieve while I am still brooding over my constipated papers. Maybe I shall never achieve it - but I have achieved some other thing. Remember how I told you how difficult it was for me to live with Barbara who always noticed, and described in detail the sordid sides of the world and remember that I said I wished I did not know and that I preferred to be ignorant. This matter has completely changed, I notice now many more things and it is as if I had opened the door to a dark room and was able to see the light without being blinded by it. The amount of freedom is considerably larger and the new movements one learns are delightful. My lectures also get better and better - but I always talked quite well, only this blasted writing business remains stuck where it was years ago. Well, we shall see. (Science in Flux will be read at the weekend). Imre considers editing a collection of writings of Popperians, including your sensationalism for Karl's 70th birthday and after years of criticism he now praises your sensationalism (in his lectures, letters, privately) and your Australasian paper. One of these days I have ~~to~~ to become clear about my attitude towards Karl. This is not an intrinsic problem, but a problem that arises whenever I am in London with Imre and John.



in addition to

There are many things to be considered here. First, that I dislike the idea of schools. Bunge's article "The Turn of the Tide" in "Quantum Theory of Reality" almost made me puke - I have hardly ever had such a strong reaction towards a piece of writing. I immediately started talking for over an hour into the tape recorder (the only time I did this) the point being that it is better to be wrong on one's own than to be right with a crowd. Truth it not worth so much to me that I should try to pursue it collectively. To discuss matters with a friend is one thing. To participate in a movement is quite a different affair. To rejoice in the success of the movement is again a different affair. Nor do I mind a movement in politics (do you know, by the way, that Grover is going to run for congress and that he now travelling up and down the country on behalf of McCarthy?). But otherwise I want to keep my philosophy private. So, that is the first hindrance to calling myself a Popperian. Then comes Karl himself. Two questions. (i) What has he done (apart from the Presocratics, that is) All I need ~~it~~ is Xenophanes: 189: No man knows, or ever will know, the truth about the gods and about everything I speak of: for even if one chanced to say the complete truth, yet oneself knows it not; but seeming is wrought over all things. 190: Let these things be opined as resembling the truth; 191: by seeking out men find out better in time. When staying with Hans Albert I said that Popper is the foremost propagandist for Presocratism in our ~~time~~ times - and nothing else (this, of course, excludes the technicalities which don't interest me too much). Right? Wrong? Or irrelevant? I am really puzzled. (ii) what has he done for me - now that, of course, I ~~can~~ can answer only by an autobiography. Finally, remember what I said about acknowledgement: in the arts no acknowledgement is made in the work itself (only Mihault, as my conductor friend tells me, once facetiously made a footnote to a chord and said he owed it to Mozart), it is the critic who talks about this matter, and the author talks about it in his autobiography, if at all. Is this not much more civilised? Anyway -

this letter was only to praise you once more for your review. Be well, have thanks, and give my regards to Lynn.

*Done*