

I can hardly start the associated experimental research in a penniless and disrupted laboratory.^[7] But all that will be straightened out.

In assuring you of my admiration, both intellectual and moral, I am, in friendship,

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I am sending you these two publications. Please excuse the scribblings found on the second; I did not have any others left.

97. To Hedwig Born

[Berlin,] Sunday. [31 August 1919]

Dear Mrs. Born,

I have a completely miserable conscience toward both of you, quite particularly you, because I so rarely get down to writing. So that I don't forget, first of all, I shall be glad to try to wangle funds from the K. W. Institute for your husband, if it's possible—when we have something to give out again.—^[1] I will certainly look you up one day soon in your cozy nest,^[2] if you aren't already putting up some other unwelcome guest, just wait and see! The guess about Oppenheim is wrong; my Academy pay is connected not with his purse but with Mr. Koppel's. I didn't know at all that your husband's chair is endowed by O., I only know about the observatory over there.^[3] The relations between Oppenheim (junior) (I saw senior only one time) and us is of a purely private nature and is connected with the junior Mr. O.'s philosophical hobby-horse.^[4]— There is just one problem, in that I promised to stay not only with you but also with Mr. O., Junior, when I do come to Frankfurt; the solution to that is beyond my competence—it will solve itself somehow. That's not nearly as malicious as Althoff's retort to someone to whom he had promised a professorship but appointed someone else. He cheerfully and brashly said: "Well, do you really think you were the only one I had promised the professorship to?!"^[5]— Yesterday Stern was visiting me. He's enthusiastic about Frankfurt and the institute.^[6]— I rather liked "Crime and Crime," although Strindberg's "A Dream Play" was incomparably better.^[7]

Mr. Bieberbach's love and esteem for himself and his muse was priceless.^[8] May God preserve him, for there's no better way to live. In the old days, when people lived their lives in greater isolation, such originals among the univ. professors were virtually the rule, because they never dealt personally with anyone who was

their equal in their specialty, and anything beyond their specialty did not exist for them. In politics I side more with your husband than with you. I believe in the League of Nations' ability to develop and also believe that the hardships connected with its creation will wear off with time. The conflicts of interest within the Entente are already so great now that much has become more moderate—constitutional incident regarding Austria;^[9] the Entente's intervention in Silesia.^[10] The greatest danger for future developments is, in my opinion, the potential withdrawal of the Americans; it is to be hoped that Wilson can prevent it.^[11] I don't believe that humanity as such can change in essence, but I do believe that it is possible and even *necessary* to put an end to anarchy in international relations, even though the sacrifice of autonomy will be significant for individual states.

Now to philosophy: What you call "Max's materialism" is simply the causal way of interpreting things.^[12] This way of interpretation always merely answers the question: "Why?" but never the question "What for?" No utilitarianism and no selective breeding can transcend that. If, however, someone asks: "Why should we support one another, facilitate life for one another, make beautiful music, and try to create noble ideas?" then one will have to reply: "If you don't feel it, no one can explain it to you." Without these fundamental things we are nothing and ought best not live at all. If someone wanted to make an attempt at justification by trying to prove that these things help maintain and promote the survival of humankind, then the question "What for?" just becomes all the more appropriate, and the answer to "scientific" grounds would be even more pathetic. Thus, if one wants to go about it scientifically at all costs, one could try to trace our goals to as few as possible whence subsequently to derive the others. But this will probably leave you cold.

I don't agree with the pessimistic evaluation of knowledge. The finest things in life include having a clear grasp of correlations; only in a very dismal, nihilistic mood could you deny this, surely. You must not take the Bible as a witness here, though. In Luther's translation it is stated in many places: "And he *knew* her; she, though, bore him a son."^[13] He was called . . ." This surely refers to the "Tree of Knowledge." So that thing does not have much to do with the Theory of Knowledge in our sense; or are our forefathers supposed to have chosen this double sense? Not likely from those lovers of brooding and debate!—

Thank you very much for the nice photographs. The one of your husband is wonderful—he isn't a bad subject either! He hasn't yet been here; I'm very much looking forward to seeing him. I spent the currently glorious days sailing, but unfortunately while on seaman's duty something snapped in me again (stomach), so I have to stay in bed again for a few days. Therefore the messy handwriting.

Affectionate regards to both of you, yours,

Einstein.