

Dear S [REDACTED]

Thank you for both letters. The one about coughing really makes me think about the contrast between my mother and my father. When I was hitching round Europe at the age of 18 my Dad would lie abed at night and say things like: " Ma chissa dove sta dormendo, questo povero Mario ? Forse dorme in quache fossa. " My mother was quite quite different from him in feeling and attitude- she felt I had chosen to roam around Europe and if I was sleeping in a ditch then it was a ditch I had selected and she could sleep well in her bed, while G [REDACTED] tossed and turned thinking about me. They both really loved me, but quite differently. Though I know he did not mean to blackmail me emotionally, I did feel his huge concern was a burden on my back. She gave me more space to breathe. If you have an Italian parent on the one hand and a German-British one on the other, you learn that diametrically opposed ways of feeling and doing can both make sense. My relativism is not a virtue- it is a direct product of a life situation, as is your clear evolutionism in your feeling about their mother-daughter situation.

The image of P [REDACTED] opening too many doors for you is a very strong one for me. Was this because of his content or because of his charisma? You seem very independent, yet perhaps you like being led?

I must to bed- it is late,

Mario