

1421 Euclid Avenue
Berkeley 8, California
January 4, 1951

Handwritten signature/initials

Dear Professor Oppenheimer:

I would hardly know how to express adequately my thanks to you and my feelings of gratitude to the Faculty and the Board of Trustees of the Institute for Advanced Study for asking me to join your most distinguished community as a Professor in the School of Historical Studies. Your letter of December 29th has certainly lit up the otherwise so gloomy outlook for 1951, at least within the purely personal sphere, and after the low of the paralyzing "Year of the Oath" this invitation fills my spirits again with new buoyancy and gives my desire to work a new impetus.

In fact, I am looking forward impatiently to settling down peacefully in Princeton. The terms you have outlined to me open up a new perspective of my life as a scholar, and it seems almost unbelievable to me that in future no classwork or semester routine shall compel me to break off my own work in the midst of a sentence and that instead I shall be able to finish all my unfinished studies and sail, once more, freely and like a young adventurer on that vast ocean of historical problems. I am most grateful to you and the Faculty for giving me that unique chance, and I sincerely hope that I shall not disappoint you and my future colleagues. I may assure you that I shall gladly invest my energies not only to live up to all justified expectations but also to fulfil all the duties which life in an academic family naturally demands of its members.

Although this letter may imply very distinctly my intention to accept the position intended for me, not to mention the great honor bestowed upon me, it is yet for some technical reasons (which, no doubt, you will understand and appreciate) that I shall have to postpone formal acceptance for a few weeks, that is, until the court has decided the, at present very hopeful, cause of our small group of non-signers. My formal acceptance at the present moment would entail my withdrawal from that important lawsuit, since we are asking for reinstatement; it would weaken the small group of "Tolman et al." and perhaps influence unfavorably the whole cause. I shall therefore

mention to my chairman and others merely the fact that I have received your generous offer, but I shall refrain for the time being from any comment as to whether or not I intend to accept it. The same information, I think, should be given to the press, since publicity is in this case rather important. The news of your offer will be a hard blow to Mr. Neylan and his group of regents - another happy aspect of your invitation for which not only our little fighting group will be most grateful, but probably also the academic world at large.

Your letter has covered, I believe, all practical questions that might arise at this time. However, on my way to Dumbarton Oaks, where I shall stay during the Spring Semester, I may stop in Princeton to thank you personally once more and to renew on that occasion the very casual acquaintance we once made, at the beginning of the oath controversy, in the house of our unforgettable friend Max Radin.

Yours very sincerely

Ernst H. Kantorowicz

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Professor Robert Oppenheimer
The Institute for Advanced Study
Princeton, N.J.