

Rubel

May 6, 1985

Dear Kevin:

As usual, I have no time to write you a letter, but want to give you some ideas, even if they are expressed roughly, and no doubt ungrammatically, for your response to Rubel:

1. You're glad that the condition he has put for a paper on Raya is that because Cahiers de Marxologie is interested in action as much as in theory; Raya has never been one for academia, and most of her life and her writings have been for the movement. You think he saw me ~~XXXXXXIXXX~~ in 1959 when I was in Paris and argued with him at his group.

2. The 1950s have been central in her development of the original study of Russia as state-capitalist society, which she worked out in 1941, and which was never separated from her theoretical work, not as mere theory but as the philosophy of revolution as well as the actual revolution. This was quite clear in her first major theoretical work, M&F, which had as Appendix the first English translation both of the Humanist Essays and Lenin's PN AND included the great Miners' General Strike in 1950 in West Virginia, where she was most active at the time. The fact that simultaneously with it there was an ongoing correspondence between her and James and Grace Lee was ~~XXXXXXXXXXXX~~ the reason for deciding, in 1985, to issue the pamphlet on the 1950 strike, which includes those letters, ~~XXX~~ but the truth is that in 1949-50 RD was involved in a strike of 100,000 miners and that though she wasn't a miner nor pretended to be, she was permitted to work with the "auxiliary" women pickets, getting their stories and getting them published while it was happening. Indeed, it was precisely the fact that a theoretical work which included Hegel was the very work which had that description of the miners' strike, which got somebody like Alisdair MacIntyre to review it in the Universities and Left Review and to sponsor an invitation for ~~XXXXXXXX~~ a speech at a forum in England of some 500 in London as well as the talk at the University of Leeds Philosophy Department.

3. It is for this reason that you wish to call to his attention, the final para, p. 23 of RD's Introduction to M&F where she writes: "No theoretician ... can write out of his own head... what the workers themselves are doing and thinking." It is ~~XXXX~~ in fact in London where she met the Africans who invited her to the Gambia and all of West Africa in 1962-63.

4. The trip to Africa was hardly an academic trip, and the activity continued there as if she were an African, for which the British imperialists wanted to deport her. It led at the end of the '60s decade, both to mass activities in the U.S. with the Black revolution, in Africa, and East Europe, who are the ones who contributed a good part of the chapter on EE in P&R.. as well as the ongoing Spring be it in Czechoslovakia, where the M-Hists had to build a bonfire of M&F as Russian tanks moved in. I don't want to say much on your specialty, France, but it is precisely because of that aborted 1968 that RD made what is mystical to you in the AI as a new beginning for revolutionaries preparing for a different revolution, on a world scale.

16622

5. The type of half-way dialectic which produced all those aborted revolutions in the 1960s carried into the feminist movement who ~~MLX~~ turned away from revolution altogether, not only Marxism. It is this which led RD to be so furious over the fact that the great revolutionary, RL, in no way figured in the feminist movement because she supposedly wrote nothing on strictly feminist issues, that led to her work ~~RLWLKM~~, which, ~~XXXXXXXXXX~~ it is true, had to return to Marx's philosophy of revolution at the third Part, but also contained a sharp critique of all post-Marx Marxists who tried to separate Marx's materialism from his philosophy of a "new Humanism" .

I don't know, Kevin, which part of this ~~MLX~~ you will just keep in the back of your mind, and which you wish to have interlaced in your analysis of any or all of my work, and I do think it is important for you to mention that the Archives of RD, celebrated by WSU, actually got her for the first time to say a few things about her personal life, which she has always refused to deal with, and which covered not just the 30 years of the existence of ~~N&L~~, but also that showed from the very years of her being in the U.S. during the Palmer Raids to the present that she was a revolutionary activist and, as she puts it, was suddenly forced into some intellectual work and the break with Trotskyism when it became clear that the horrifying Hitler-Stalin Pact would ~~XXXXXXXXXX~~ give the green light to WWII, which revealed ~~XXXXXXXXXX~~ Russia as bad as Western world to bring about WWII. And it was only the unfinished revolutions and the post WWII period -- extended to China and Japan as well as to the other parts of the globe I've mentioned -- that in each case became an imperative for clearing heads precisely to make the world revolution.

You decide.

I'm enclosing my scribbles on Rubel's letter. Maybe you can make some sense out of them.

Yours,

16623

M. RUBEL
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Paris, 24 April 1955

To: Kevin Anderson
Loyola University of Chicago
Department of Sociology
6525 N. Sheridan Road
Chicago, Illinois 60626 USA

[Raya: This copy is
for you, to either keep
or discard. K.]

Dear Kevin Anderson,

In response to your letter of 6 April, I regret noting that you pass over almost all my critical remarks to your two papers without a serious effort to understand them.

From my letter dated 22 February you have only taken up minor points, especially to take me to task for having shown indifference towards your 'maître à penser' Raya Dunayevskaya who, in your words, has revealed to you "Marx's Marxism". Rubel on Marx, ch. "Plan and Method" (pp. 200-229) acknowledges the Hegelian contribution to Marx's theory, and I feel that we should content ourselves with the Marxian letter of explanation which elucidates his debt to Hegel's dialectic method. Neither Raya nor Kevin takes into account my arguments concerning the mystifying aspects of that dialectic as denounced by Marx. Nor do you or she consider what Marx intended in speaking of the "rational kernel" of the method "mystified" by Hegel. No "Marxist" has found it possible or necessary to explain what Marx himself had no intention of doing, holding such a quarrel to be ridiculous.

To what extent do people like yourself and Raya contribute to the process of developing wage-

16624

their propaganda to a demonstration of how knowledge of the Hegelian philosophy helps in understanding Marx? In fact, Lenin is their true model and master: was it not he who affirmed that without knowledge of Hegel's Logic it was impossible to understand Capital?

As salaried intellectuals we are privileged members of society and we betray our vocation, in my opinion, when we argue about academic questions while the USA

represents a barbarian society and both its barbarism and that of the USSR are abjectly tolerated by the "academic" immense majority of which mention was made in the 1848 Manifesto. Why is it so difficult to admit the obvious fact, admitted by Marx himself, that the

"Economy" is not a finished work but that even in its unfinished state it contains sufficient proof of the alienating nature of the capitalist system?

And that it provides us with enough means to aid our thought and action in view of abolishing the inhuman relations codified and consecrated by bourgeois laws and morality?

How is it possible that the so-called "revolutionary" groups are incapable of forming a powerful and unified movement instead of tearing one another to pieces in scholastic controversies? What has happened to the labour movement in the USA? Isn't there reason enough to reconsider the Marxian theory itself in its quality of "scientific"? Georges Sorel was the first to ask this question and to advance a reply in form of the ethics of revolutionary trade unionism, a response that ultimately revealed itself as "utopian", i. e. a normative language intended for

translates who prefer in fact wage-slavery and

bourgeois
about
"academic"
majority
1848
Manifesto
Why
is
it
so
difficult
to
admit
the
obvious
fact,
admitted
by
Marx
himself,
that
the
"Economy"
is
not
a
finished
work
but
that
even
in
its
unfinished
state
it
contains
sufficient
proof
of
the
alienating
nature
of
the
capitalist
system?
And
that
it
provides
us
with
enough
means
to
aid
our
thought
and
action
in
view
of
abolishing
the
inhuman
relations
codified
and
consecrated
by
bourgeois
laws
and
morality?
How
is
it
possible
that
the
so-called
"revolutionary"
groups
are
incapable
of
forming
a
powerful
and
unified
movement
instead
of
tearing
one
another
to
pieces
in
scholastic
controversies?
What
has
happened
to
the
labour
movement
in
the
USA?
Isn't
there
reason
enough
to
reconsider
the
Marxian
theory
itself
in
its
quality
of
"scientific"?
Georges
Sorel
was
the
first
to
ask
this
question
and
to
advance
a
reply
in
form
of
the
ethics
of
revolutionary
trade
unionism,
a
response
that
ultimately
revealed
itself
as
"utopian",
i. e.
a
normative
language
intended
for
translates
who
prefer
in
fact
wage-slavery
and

3/...

even the miserable guarantees of unemployment to the risk of a radical overthrow which would end the reign of money and the State.

A paper on Raya? Under one condition: it must show the result of her action (as a writer and a militant) in helping develop a grass-roots revolutionary movement, thus independent of her Leninist-Hegelian fetishism. The Cahiers de marxologie have the ambition of being a means of education, and consequently the contrary of an academic organ of mystification and intellectual degradation.

Further
gave
more
dialectics
as Hegel
in essence
Marx, let

your sincerely

Rubel

1950 is the century

1st / 2nd / 3rd post WWII where she
was not ~~useful~~ but active
There she started it as an anarchist
joined into a wildcat when they reject
Mines once Judge

It was her notion - she
was no miner but permitted to work with both
articles capacity

1950 is militant
1980 is militant
1980 is militant
1980 is militant
1980 is militant

March 7, 1985

Dear Raya,

Enclosed is an English summary of Rubel's letter, which I could not get ready in time for you before you left town. I want to send him as well your critique of his book in N&L, plus send him and demand that he review it, that while we certainly criticize him, we do discuss and make public to U.S. readers his work, while he has never done so in France for your important work on Marx, with which which he no doubt also disagrees, but by ignoring, isn't that same type of "conspiracy of silence" as the Stalinists?

I also am getting very interested in writing perhaps an essay-length article on New Caledonia, using some French language materials from our exchanges, plus Michel's book Le Gommone, plus a new book just issued in Paris with documents and history of the 1878 uprising. Here are some other points to include: (1) more details on Louise Michel's role, including how hundreds, if not 20,000 Kanakas lined the shore weeping when she leaves in 1881; (2) how the head of Atai, the chief of the 1878 uprising, is to this day in display preserved in formaldehyde at the Museum des Sciences de l'Homme in Paris; (3) how all this connects to Marx's last writings, esp. on aborigines; (4) on the struggle today, including the existence of an independent WL group among the Kanakas which is a separate organization within the independence coalition, and which criticizes the male leaders publicly, and had to break with them to form a separate organization; (5) to the strategic location of New Caledonia both to French atomic testing and to U.S. imperialism; possibly a whole mention of the region-- from Indonesia to Philippines to Australia-NZ and its place in world imperialism. I have just written to Paris for the book on 1878 and have notes from our exchanges from France plus Le Monde. What do you think?

Yours,

Kern

16628

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ADRESSE TÉLÉGRAPHIQUE : INSTCAP-PARIS

Cher Kevin Anderson,

vos article "The 'Unknown' Marx's Capital..." m'a beaucoup plu, bien que vous ayez complètement négligé les aspects particuliers de mon édition à laquelle vous consacrez une note "critique" qui ne veut pas dire grand-chose. J'estime que vous auriez rendu service à vos lecteurs en renvoyant à "Rubel on Karl Marx" où ils peuvent trouver, dans plusieurs chapitres, les arguments que je développe sur les questions traitées par vous. Ce que vous dites à propos de l'édition française est tout à fait exacte, mais vous savez bien que, dans mon édition française, j'ai signalé les passages essentiels introduits ou remaniés par Marx par rapport à l'édition allemande. Vous voyez, ayant un parti pris "marxiste" ("léniniste"?) à l'égard de ma conception de Marx et de sa postérité, vous adoptez une méthode qui me paraît peu digne d'un éducateur professionnel, responsable de la maturation intellectuelle de jeunes esprits que les masse-media influencent pour en faire des citoyens soumis et conformistes. Il aurait mieux valu ne pas me mentionner du tout, ^{car} puisque vous avez cru bon de me nommer, pourquoi n'avez pas relevé ne fut-ce qu'un de mes "péchés" critiqués dans votre papier cité dans la même note, - mais que vos lecteurs ont peu de chance de connaître, s'agissant d'un texte inédit? "For my critique of Rubel, see Anderson..." Croyez-vous vraiment que des lecteurs iraient se procurer ce "Paper"?

Bertell Ollman m'avait envoyé ce texte en janvier 1983, et j'avais commencé à prendre des notes pour rédiger une réponse. Mais en vous lisant, j'ai constaté tant de critiques erronées et tant de vues contraires à ma manière de concevoir l'enseignement marxien, que je me suis dit: il est inutile de me répéter, K.A. connaît mes thèses sur Marx et le marxisme, et si il les rejette, c'est pour mieux s'enfermer dans son marxisme hégélien. Je maintiens, par exemple, que parler du "marxisme de Marx" (p.1) équivaut à une auto-condamnation intellectuelle (p.6, ^{et} vous récidivez !). J'avais espéré qu'en lisant le tome "Philosophie" comme vous vous proposiez en décembre 1982 (p.1), vous jugerez utile, vu le climat de barbarie politique aux USA et ailleurs (=partout !), de publier un article pouvant servir de base à un débat général sur le mythe de Marx - dont vous êtes vous-même, hélas, une victime: votre mérite - rare parmi les marxologues américains - est de vous être intéressé aux problèmes que j'ai soulevés à propos du destin posthume, mais vous êtes resté à mi-chemin de votre réflexion critique: l'Introduction au volume "Philosophie" ne mériterait-elle pas une discussion, ne serait-ce qu'en raison des pages réservées à Hegel démasqué comme mystificateur barbare? A quoi sert une "dialectique" qui culmine dans l'idolâtrie la plus primitive de l'ÉTAT et de la GUERRE?

Je dois m'arrêter, mais vous pouvez trouver quelques compléments de cette réponse dans le dernier cahier de marxologie (S.23-24, 1984) que je vous envoie séparément. Et aussi dans ma petite lettre au Monde, reprise par The Socialist Standard. J'aimerais connaître votre réaction - et celle de vos collègues? - à ma "double question".

Yours for revolution (in word and reality)

Rubel

16629

Summary of Rubel's Letter to Kevin, 2/22/85

"Your ~~xxxxxxx~~ article 'The Unknown Marx's Capital' pleased me very much, he writes, but then he objects to my failure to give him a bigger reference, and especially to my not referring to Rubel on KM. "What you say ~~is~~ about the French edition is completely correct, but you know well that in my French edition, I noted the essential passages newly added or changed by Marx from the German edition." (But not all the ones I discussed - Kevin) Then he gets mad that in my footnote to him I also mention "For my critique of Rubel, see my 1982 paper delivered to URPE". He now acknowledges that he had ~~xxx~~ received it from Bertell Ollman in 1983, and that "I had begun to take notes to write a ~~xmpo~~ response." But ~~xxxxx~~ despite my many "erroneous critiques" and many disagreements, he decided in the end: "It is useless to repeat myself, K.A. knows my theses on Marx and Marxism well, and if he rejects them, it is in order to enclose himself all the more in his Hegelian Marxism." He says that I should instead publish a general article on "the myth of Marx", of which K.A. is also "alas, a victim". But "my merit, ~~xxx~~ rare among American marxologists - is to be interested in the problems he raised on the posthumous destiny" of Marx's writings, but unfortunately, "you stopped halfway". Then he ~~xxxxxx~~ objects to my critique of his accusations against Hegel and then repeats: "What is the use of a 'dialectic' which culminates in the most primitive worship of the state and of war?" He is sending me N. 23-24 of the Cahiers du Marxologie and also has sent his letter on war and peace (in English and French). Finally, "I would like to know your reaction - and that of your colleagues?# - to my couple question." (on Hegel, and on war and peace today).

16630