Kevin Anderson

Rubel's Marxology: A Critique

PART I. Rubel's Contribution

Due to a lack of translated material the work of Maximilien Rubel is little known in the English speaking world. In the following article Kevin Anderson analyses Rubel's achievements as a 'Marx editor' and interpreter of Marx's 'economics' overall. Anderson then explores possibly Rubel's greatest flaw—his anti-Hegelianism.

In 1992 Maximilien Rubel will turn 87. For over four decades this internationally known Marx editor and scholar has been involved in debates over Marxism and humanism, on the differences between Marx and Engels, on Marx's concept of democracy, and on the relationship of the writings of the young Marx to *Capital*. Rubel is best known, however, for having created perhaps the most extensive non-Communist edition of Marx's work, in three volumes in French comprising over 6,000 pages, and issued as part of the Paris publishing house Gallimard's prestigious La Pléiade series (Marx 1963, 1968, 1982). An additional volume, one on Marx's political writings, is soon to appear, and another, on his correspondence, is planned.

Despite their serious flaws, some of which will be discussed below, these editions are an important supplement to the more 'official' Marx editions, which. until recently, emanated from Moscow and East Berlin. Perhaps his greatest merit is his thorough, painstaking and detailed knowledge of the whole

body of Marx's work, his editions of Marx, and his Marx biographies. Since many of Marx's vast writings remain unpublished in any language almost a hundred years after his death, Rubel's attempt over many years to expose the limits of and to supplement the one-sided and incomplete editions of Marx as issued from Moscow and East Berlin have allowed independent scholars some access to other material.

Thus, he has produced a splendid well-annotated French edition of Volume I of *Capital* (Marx 1963), on the whole quite faithful to Marx's 1872-5 *Le Capital* and which also contains passages which to this day are not in the standard English or German editions of *Capital* (Anderson 1983). He does, however, unfortunately tamper with the order of Marx's original presentation a bit when he takes some material he regards as too 'technical' and puts it in an appendix rather than leaving it as the author had done. Rubel (1956, 1957) has also produced several scholarly bibliographical and biographical studies of Marx.

However, his French edition for the La Pléiade series of Volumes II and III of *Capital* (Marx 1968) is far more problematic, since here Rubel feels free to take other manuscripts than those Engels selected from those Marx left unfinished at his death in 1883. While this procedure has many shortcomings, as will be discussed later, it has given those without direct access either to Amsterdam's or Moscow's archives a taste of some new materials never before published in any language. For example, Rubel's edition of Volume II of *Capital* gives us one of the most explicit and previously unknown tributes to Hegel in the entire work of the mature Marx, from an 1870 manuscript for Volume II left unpublished by Engels:

> My relationship with Hegel is quite simple. I am a disciple of Hegel, and the presumptuous prattling of those epigones who believe they have buried this great thinker appear frankly ridiculous to me. Nevertheless, I took the liberty of adopting a critical attitude toward my master, to rid his dialectic of its mysticism, and in this way to make it undergo a transformation, etc. (Marx 1968, p.528)

This important passage has evoked some (Abensour 1970; Lantz 1977; Dunayevskaya 1982), but not enough, discussion.

Not only does Rubel publish such new material as that quoted above, but he does so even when it would appear to weaken greatly his own interpretation of Marx. Thus, he gives us the above-cited remark on Hegel even though Rubel is himself one of the most anti-Hegelian of Marx scholars, and one who gives Hegel's ideas very little importance for the mature Marx.

A second example of the precision and critical scholarly character of Rubel's work as editor is seen in his discussion of several key differences in Marx's 1845 'Theses on Feuerbach' between the original text and the first published version, as edited by Engels. The most important of these differences is that, as edited by Engels, the famous eleventh thesis reads: 'The philosophers have only interpreted the world in various ways; the point, *however*, is to change it' (Marx and Engels 1975f, hereafter MECW 5, p.8, emphasis added). Rubel notes that in a highly questionable editorial decision, Engels took it upon himself to add the word 'however' [*aber*] in the second clause, something which, however unintentionally, gives the whole thesis a more activist, anti-philosophical tone than Marx seems to have intended. Marx's original version was not published until 1924. In his edition, Rubel supplies these textual variants, and, in his notes to the eleventh thesis, writes:

> In adding to the phrase *es kommt darauf an* (the point is) the conjunction *aber* (but, or however), Engels lends to this last thesis a sense of opposition which it does not imply at all: the interpretation of the world by philosophers was and is one of the ways of being in the world. (Rubel in Marx 1982, p.1717).

In German, Engels version reads: 'Die Philosophen haben die Welt nur verschieden interpretiert, *aber* es *kommt darauf an*, sie zu verändern' (Marx, 1982, p.1033, 1717, emphasis added).

Volume 5 of the Moscow-based *Collected Works* of Marx and Engels supplies both versions, but does not call the reader's attention to where the two texts differ, let alone comment on those differences.

Rubel has also reviewed the correspondence between Marx and Engels around *Capital* to reveal that, while Marx seemed to prefer the French edition of 1872-5 to all others, Engels had a different view (Rubel in Marx 1963). In any case, the French edition was the last one which Marx personally prepared for the printer. Later Engels created a standard edition, the Fourth German edition (1890), after combining materials from all previous editions, but taking the German

ones as his basic text. This edition became the principal basis for most translations of *Capital*, including the various English editions.

In an unfortunate but revealing act of following Engels rather than Marx, in 1983, for the Marx centennial, the French Communist Party publisher issued a translation of Engels' fourth German edition back into French (Marx 1983). In contrast to Rubel's edition, this new edition fails to indicate textual variants between the original 1872-5 French edition prepared by Marx, and Engels fourth German edition. One key example will suffice to illustrate the importance of this problem. In the Engels-based editions (Marx 1976, p.876; 1983, p.806; 1988, p.744), the concluding sentences of chapter 26, 'The Secret of Primitive Accumulation,' read:

> The history of this expropriation assumes different aspects in different countries, and runs through its various phases in different orders of succession, and at different historical epochs. Only in England, which we therefore take as our example, has it the classic form.

In Rubel's edition, based on Marx's original French edition, this same passage reads differently:

> It has not yet been accomplished in a radical manner except in England: this country therefore necessarily will play the leading role in our discussion [*esquisse*]. But all of the countries *of Western Europe* are going through the same process [*mouvement*] even though it changes colours depending on the local milieu, here squeezing itself into a small space, there exhibiting a less strongly pronounced character, and elsewhere following a different order of succession. (Marx 1963 pp.1170-1, emphasis added)

In French, this passage reads: 'Elle ne s'est encore accomplie d'une manière radicale qu'en Angleterre: ce pays jouera donc nécessairement le premier rôle dans notre esquisse. Mais tous les autres pays de l'Europe occidentale parcourent le même mouvement, bien que selon le milieu il change de couleur locale, ou se reserre dans un cercle plus étroit, ou présente un caractère moins fortement prononcé, ou suivre un ordre de succession différent' (Marx 1963, pp.1770-1).

In his well-known letter to Vera Zasulitch, who asked if capitalism was Russia's inevitable future, Marx quotes some of the above from his French edition, and writes: 'The "historical inevitability" of this course is therefore *expressly* limited to *the countries of Western Europe*' (Marx in Shanin 1983, p.124, emphasis in original).

In his note to the above passage from *Le Capital*, Rubel calls attention to these textual variants:

> The last sentence, which is not included in the German edition, is one of the important additions to this chapter. Marx refers to this passage in his letter to Vera Zasulitch (March 8, 1881), who was anxious to find out from the author of *Capital* if the peasant commune had a chance to survive in Russia... (Rubel in Marx 1963 p.1701)

The existing English and German editions of *Capital* have never included, or even referred to, this major textual variant between Engels' edition and Marx's original French edition. Engels left out some of these new aspects which Marx had introduced in the French edition, the last one he worked on and prepared for the printer (and paid for) himself (Anderson 1983). Because Marx scholarship has tended so often to view Marx and Engels as virtually one person, these writings by Marx have been obscured. Also crucial here is the question of the impact of the Paris Commune on Marx's reworking of the original 1867 German edition for the French edition, a re-working which included expanding the section on commodity fetishism (Dunayevskaya 1958).

Rubel (1881a, p.178) also criticises the way in which Engels' editions of *Capital* make Volumes II and III seem to be 'finished books.' Rubel argues that the state of these manuscripts was far more unfinished than Engels makes it appear, and this gives Rubel a reason to edit even more sharply (or even disfigure) Volumes II and III. What Rubel in his turn has 'made of' Volumes II and III is even more problematic, as I will discuss later on. His approach does, however, at least have the merit of opening up the question of the needed publication of all of Marx's notebooks for *Capital*, whether or not Engels thought that they warranted publication.

Rubel (1981a, p.196) argues that Marx's work is essentially unfinished and that it was Engels who 'finished' it when he 'moulded into the rigid form of a system what was actually an incomplete theory open to extensions and fertile deductions.' He shows in great detail that Marx's plan for his main mature work included not only what he did publish or at least leave behind notes on, i.e., *Capital* Volumes I to III and *Theories of Surplus Value,* but that there were also whole areas planned but not worked on, on the state, landed property, wage labour, and the world market. On the other hand, Rubel's estimate (1981a, p.199) that Marx completed only 'a sixth' of what he

intended, and his idiosyncratic claim that Engels 'invented' Marxism, both need to be questioned.

Over the years, Rubel has also established the biennial scholarly journal, *Études de marxologie*, which is affiliated with the Paris-based Institut de sciences mathématiques et économiques appliqués. He has been unsuccessful, however, in convincing a Western publisher to undertake his proposed 33-volume edition of Marx's work (Rubel 1985). He has instead apparently continued to work on his far smaller French edition for Gallimard's La Pléiade, and to write scholarly articles on Marx (Janover and Rubel 1984, 1985; Rubel 1987a, 1987b, 1989).

The most extensive collection of Rubel's writings in English is *Rubel on Karl Marx* (Rubel 1981a), a volume edited and introduced by two American philosophers, Joseph O'Malley and Keith Algozin. His co-authored chronicle of Marx's life and work also appeared in English (Rubel and Manale 1976), as has a volume of Marx's writings which Rubel co-edited with the British sociologist Tom Bottomore (Marx 1964). He has also published a number of articles in English (Rubel 1962, 1965, 1967, 1968, 1969, 1983b, 1987). While he has been fairly widely published in English, Rubel's work has evoked surprisingly little discussion in the English-speaking world. The last flurry of discussion surrounded the 1981 publication of the essay collection. Both O'Malley's introduction to that collection and an article by Bongiovanni (1981) were quite laudatory in tone, while Goldfield (1986) and especially Dunayevskaya (1981) offered more critical assessments.

Beginning with his 1956 Marx bibliography and his 1957 book on Marx's life and work, the latter of which stressed the humanist dimension of the young Marx, Rubel took the position that ethics was a key concern for Marx (Rubel 1965). This questionable position resulted in sharp attacks, including an incisive one by the French sociologist Lucien Goldmann (1957).

To some extent, Rubel's work is a defence of Marx against charges of authoritarianism, as seen most recently in the theme 'Marx: Critic of Totalitarianism,' which Rubel gave to the 1987 number of *Études de marxologie*. Additionally, Rubel (1981a, p.241) shows Marx to have devoted his entire political career to 'proletarian self-emancipation' rather than elitist

parties (Lassalle) or revolutionary conspiracies (Bakunin and Nechayev). He argues that this separates Marx's political ideas totally from elitist and bureaucratic concepts operating in his name today.

Marx's concept of the 'party' is shown to have been one of a party only in the sense of a part of humanity which strives consciously for proletarian self-emancipation, not a particular organisation or set of rules for 'organising,' but a party 'in the eminently historical sense,' as Rubel (1981a, p.72) notes that Marx had written in 1860. Here is how Rubel (1981a, p.241) sees Marx's political vision:

> In his battle against the charismatic antiliberal party politics of Lassalle and his heirs, on the one hand, and against the romantic-histrionic conspiratorial activity of Bakunin and the Western European and Russian versions of that activity on the other, Marx fought two tendencies within the labour movement that were diametrically opposed to the creative principle of proletarian self-emancipation.

Instead, Marx's vantage point is seen to be the great mass upheavals of 1848 and 1871. Furthermore, Rubel (1981a, p.80) marshals a wealth of evidence to support his contention that:

> Marx never conceived of the proletarian dictatorship as meaning that the proletariat would ever abandon the fundamental liberties won by the bourgeois revolution.

But even here the argument becomes problematic in the extreme when Rubel (1962, p.79) argues that 'Marx was a revolutionary communist only in theory, while he was a bourgeois democrat in practice,' or jumps to the conclusion that Marx was not a Marxist but was in fact an anarchist (Rubel 1981a, 1983a).

Rubel separates Marx not only from totalitarians like Stalin, or contemporaries like Bakunin and Lassalle with whom he differed, but also, as illustrated above, from figures almost generally associated with Marx, such as Engels. Rubel discusses, sometimes very astutely, the limits of the Marx-Engels affinity, as in Engels' famous speech at Marx's graveside

in 1883 where Engels said that Marx 'before all else' had been a 'revolutionary' (MECW 24, p.473). Rubel (1981a, pp.43-4) asks:

> Was Marx, then, not a revolutionary theorist? ...Had he not contributed more as the author of *Capital* to the emancipation of the modern proletariat than as editor-in-chief of the *Rheinische Zeitung* or as correspondent to the *New York Daily Tribune* or even as the inspirer of the International Working Men's Association?

Here Rubel avoids Engels' error of appearing to make politics more important than theory. But already we can see another problem in Rubel which we will discuss later, his apparent separation of Marx into two separate compartments: revolutionary and theorist. So concerned is he with this that he misses the most serious shortcoming in Engels' graveside speech, scientism and positivism, as in where Engels said: 'Just as Darwin discovered the law of development of organic nature, so Marx discovered the law of development of human history' (MECW 24, p.473).

PART II. The Limits of Rubel, Editor and Interpreter of Marx's 'Economics'

Rubel devotes considerable space in *Rubel on Karl Marx* and much more elsewhere over many years to his view, in which he is surely an 'original,' that Marx never changed his basic ideas or even his plan for *Capital* from the 1840s on. Since Rubel's work is written in a country where, for over a decade, Marx scholarship was preoccupied with a debate over the Althusserian notion of an 'epistemological break' in Marx's thought, perhaps one should have a bit of sympathy for his adamant over-simplification on this point. However, Rubel cannot make an adequate answer to Althusser, in large part because he fails to engage the debate at a really theoretical level.

Rubel's argument hinges around a series of statements Marx made, chiefly in an 1858 letter, on a plan for 'six books' of his 'Economics.' He writes that, besides *Capital* itself, the five additional 'books' were to take up 'landed property, wage

labour, the state, foreign trade, and the world market' (Rubel 1981a, p.193). Rubel insists that this is the plan Marx stayed with for the rest of his life—and indeed had arrived at already in the 1840s—on the basis of Rubel's close reading of Marx's notes and correspondence. Despite the numerous citations Rubel marshals in favour of this argument, he can hardly be said to have proven his case. Not only has he not proven it, but he uses an argument on the number and the topic of the various books Marx was writing as his life's work, his 'Economics,' to smuggle in his own interpretation of what Marx actually did publish. This seemingly technical type of argument over references in letters to 'six books' versus the 'four volumes' of *Capital* finally referred to in the 1867 Preface to Volume I of that work—the four volumes comprising *Capital* Vols. I to III and *Theories of Surplus Value* (Volume IV) as we know them today—allows Rubel to slip in his own interpretation that Marx kept to the same plan for his 'Economics' from the 1840s on, and that therefore earlier writings such as *Grundrisse* or the *Critique of Political Economy* are virtually inter-changeable with *Capital*. And Rubel as 'editor' of *Capital*, Vols. Il and III, follows this interpretation by mixing in 1850s and even earlier Marx texts with texts from the 1860s and 1870s which Engels originally edited into *Capital*, Vols. II and III.

Rubel (1981a, p.130) claims nothing less than that as early as 1847 'all of the great theses of *Capital* were originally postulates or hypotheses.' The 1848 revolutions caused the revolutionary activist, Marx, momentarily to abandon the 'Economics,' and then political disputes and poverty delayed Marx's project by many years. All this leads to Rubel's claim that Marx never really changed much in his conception, but just kept gathering data far *Capital*, delaying publication due to a mania for data collection and to personal hardships. This is a major theoretic claim that Marx did not alter anything fundamental from the 1840s through *Grundrisse* to *Capital*, to his last writings. Such a claim cannot be proven by quoting correspondence or prefaces on Marx's intentions, but by theoretical and comparative analysis of important texts.

Since Rubel does not do this, we end up not only with a disservice to Marx's theoretical depth, but a failure to grasp the truly original, laborious thinking of Marx's response, at one and the same time, to objective political or economic

developments, and the self-development of Marx's ideas into a whole new continent of thought and of revolution. Rubel acts as if all the ceaseless drafts and reworkings, from 1847, to the *Grundrisse* and the *Critique of Political Economy* in the 1850s, to the 1863-5 Notebooks, to *Capital*, Vol. I, and beyond, were simply changed drafts of the same series of books. As a result of this merging together without reference to theoretical or historical developments in the different periods in which Marx was writing, whole themes such as 'pre-capitalist economic formations' in the *Grundrisse*, or 'fetishism of the commodity' in *Capital*, Vol. I, are either left out or marginalised in Rubel's theoretical schema.

While, as against Althusser, it is important to stress the continuity in Marx's work from the 1840s on, it is equally great a distortion to cover over the very profound development from 1847 to 1867. Rubel's claim that *Capital*, Vol. I, was merely a 'sequel' (1981a, p.130) to the *Critique of Political Economy* is beyond comprehension when one considers the many drafts and changes in the surviving notebooks for the period 1859 to 1867. Here Rubel seems once again to be relying on a preface, the 1867 preface to Volume I, which does modestly use the word 'sequel,' rather than a theoretical analysis of texts. Instead of viewing the 1860s as a period of creative theoretical development for Marx, Rubel (1981a, p.163) argues that Marx's delay in finishing *Capital* was because 'journalistic and political quarrels devoured his time.'

What such an approach cannot answer is how and why *Capital*, Volume I took shape in such a different form than the earlier manuscripts. First and foremost, as Dunayevskaya (1958, see also Dunayevskaya 1973) has shown, there was no section on commodity fetishism until *Capital*, Volume I, and even this section was not fully developed and set off separately until the French edition of 1872-5. Nor was there a section on the 'Working Day' until the finished Volume I of *Capital* in 1867—in fact the fight over a shorter working day had lain low in the quiescent 1850s, and when it burst forth again in the 1860s in Britain, that labour movement, plus the Polish insurrection of 1863 and the American Civil War, became the basis of new political activity by Marx with the International Working Men's Association, founded in 1864. As against Rubel's suggestion that all of this distracted Marx, his new

political activity in the 1860s coincided with the finishing for publication of Volume I of *Capital*. As Dunayevskaya (1958, p.81) argues:

> No one is more blind to the greatness of Marx's contributions than those who praise him to the skies for his genius as if that genius matured outside of the actual struggles of the historic period in which he lived. As if he gained impulses from the sheer development of his own thoughts instead of from living workers changing living reality by their actions.

Secondly, to act as if such changes—on the working day or on commodity fetishism, among many, many others, from the *Grundrisse* to *Capital* were only superficial is to deny the seriousness of Marx's theoretical undertaking over several decades. Rubel manages to get so lost in the pedantry of six books versus four volumes that he loses the point of what type of book it was that Marx was writing.

In fact, despite his frequent tributes to Marx as a political activist, Rubel ends up treating all of Marx's political involvements more as distractions from his theoretical work, than as events around which and for which he reworked and developed his theory. Rubel (1981a, p.141) sums up his argument as follows:

> Must we therefore conclude that he was continually modifying his schema of values? Were this true, Marx would have been nothing more than a man of purely theoretical learning, whereas in fact—and herein lies his glory—he was concerned with contemporary realities as much as, and more than, any writings; and the face of poverty and oppression did not change in the space of ten, or even twenty years.

This argument leaves out a consideration of the relationship of practice to theory, and vice versa.

This type of argument leads Rubel totally to merge published and unpublished writings in his editing of *Capital*, giving us for example the unpublished 'sixth chapter' (Marx 1968, p.404f) which, interesting as it is, was discarded by Marx as the ending for *Capital* Volume 1, as if Marx had not

changed anything fundamental since 1863-5 when the 'sixth chapter' was written. Not only did Marx change his position by 1867 with Volume I, but he also included much, much material from what were to be later books of *Capital* in Volume I, so it would stand better by itself. This is especially true of the long chapters in the 'Accumulation of Capital.' The later editions of Volume I, especially the French edition, saw Marx add still more material. In many respects Volume I contains the whole of Marx's Marxism, especially in its chapter on the commodity fetish and the one on accumulation. As Lukacs (1971, p.170) argues forcefully: 'the chapter dealing with the fetish character of the commodity contains within itself the whole of historical materialism.'

Rubel is very stubborn over the question of Marx's supposedly never changing any fundamental concepts after 1847. This is curious given Rubel's anti-Hegelianism, since the Marx of 1847 was far more explicitly 'Hegelian.' As we shall see when we discuss Rubel on the Hegel-Marx relationship, anti-Hegelianism is the one thing that does allow Rubel to admit to certain changes in Marx's outlook after 1847. He gladly admits to changes when he is trying to show Marx becoming less and less 'Hegelian.'

His general failure to recognise changes in Marx's 'Economics' creates problems for Rubel when he analyses an 1877 letter where Marx stated that he wrote *Capital* 'confidentially... in inverse order,' with the historical part on *Theories of Surplus Value* written first, while Volume I was the last to be written and the rest 'remained in that primitive state characteristic of all research at the outset' (MECW 34, p.307). Rather than viewing the above statement as an example of the rigorous and substantial changes Marx invariably made between rough drafts and finished volumes, Rubel (1981a, p.176) tells the reader that 'from 1874 until his death' Marx 'wrote little.' It does not seem to occur to Rubel that this 1877 letter shows that Volume I of *Capital* was the latest, most polished and most developed part of Marx's 'Economics,' even though other rough drafts on the market and economic theory had been completed much earlier than 1867. Far from showing that Marx had ceased working in the 1870s, the letter cited above is interesting for an entirely different reason: it calls into question the notion that Volumes II and III of *Capital* were where Marx really got to his key and important

material. If so, then why did not Marx prepare this material for publication ahead of what became *Capital*, Volume I?

If Rubel as interpreter of Marx smuggles in theoretic issues by quoting correspondence on Marx's intentions at one point to write 'six books', Rubel as editor of 'materials for' *Capital*, Volumes II and III (Marx 1968) prejudges the issue of changes between early and late writings for what became *Capital*. Rubel claims that he is giving us a better text than Engels did for Volumes II and III of *Capital*, and his American editors, O'Malley and Algozin, call Rubel's editorial decisions

> the kind of daring moves that can be taken with success only by an editor who is profoundly in touch with his author's thought and intentions and also thoroughly familiar with the mass of relevant manuscripts (Rubel 1981a, p.11).

But what Rubel has really done is to give us his own interpretation that Marx never changed his 'Economics' after 1847 all over again in the role of Rubel, editor of *Capital*.

He appears to see himself in competition with Engels as editor of *Capital*. Rather than publishing alternate texts from the mass of manuscripts left behind by Marx and not used by Engels, Rubel gives us his own edition of *Capital*, and for Volumes II and III, which he calls 'materials for Volumes II and III,' Rubel freely uses material from 1847 on. He dares to substitute not just for Engels' selections from the texts from 1861 on for Volumes II and III, texts which go back much earlier, but substitutes them for Marx's later texts, texts Marx himself wrote, edited and sharply revised in many respects from the 1840s when he had just begun to study for his 'Economics.' Rubel substitutes texts if he regards earlier texts as 'clearer,' and sometimes simply if they are 'shorter'.

We are at the point of denying Marx's dialectical methodology, similar to those who would have us read the 1859 *Critique of Political Economy* rather than *Capital* because it is simpler, clearer, and shorter. In the essays in *Rubel on Karl Marx*, he characteristically refrains from discussing the theoretical issues involved in Volumes II and III, even in the essay 'History of Marx's "Economics"' which originally was Rubel's long introduction to the volume of the *Œuvres* which contains Volumes II and III of *Capital*.

In that same essay, Rubel spends only one page on Marx's last decade, when, according to Rubel (1981a, p.176) Marx 'wrote little' during the period 'from 1874 until his death.' Therefore Rubel's gives us but one page of analysis of these last ten years when Marx attempted to revise and finish what he conceived as Volumes II, III and IV of *Capital*, and did write a major statement on organisation, *Critique of the Gotha Program*, plus the newly discovered *Ethnological Notebooks* (1880-2), as well as the famous 1881 letter to the Russian revolutionary, Vera Zasulitch, which suggested different paths to emancipation in non-industrialised lands (see Dunayevskaya 1982; Shanin 1983). This last decade was also a period when he introduced fundamental changes into Volume I of *Capital*, stating in his 1875 afterward that 'it possesses a scientific value independent of the original and should be consulted even by readers familiar with German' (Marx 1976, p.105).

Rubel's critique entitled 'Engels as Editor of *Capital*' (1981a, p.177-82) takes Engels to task for attempting to make Volumes II and III appear as finished books when they were not, and for his failure to use earlier manuscripts:

> Logically, this respect for the preparatory material should have led Engels to concern himself with Marx's pre-1861 manuscripts, such as the writings of 1844-5 or the *Grundrisse* of 1857-8. Their originality in both style and contents makes these works often superior to the unpublished material of the later period. (Rubel 1981a, p.180)

This is nothing short of astounding, for it prejudges the 'edition' entirely in favour of Rubel's position on Marx's development as a thinker. This is exactly what Rubel has done in the French edition of 'materials for' Volumes II and III of *Capital* for La Pléiade. Many of these 'materials' were written before 1861, Engels' cut-off date for *Capital*. What is more, the Rubel text, rather than adding new material alongside the standard Engels edition, mixes it all together plus cuts drastically from what Engels had given in his editions, using only part of what Engels had already published. In terms of length, as compared with the *New Left Review* editions of *Capital*, Rubel gives us a mere 360 pages (versus 490 from Engels in the *NLR* edition) for Volume II, and a mere 615

pages (versus 909) for Volume III. Nor does Rubel tell us as clearly as Engels where he is getting his material from.

Had Rubel confined himself to reproducing unpublished texts for Capital or adding new texts alongside the standard Engels editions for Volumes II and III, no one would dispute that this would have added a great deal to Marx scholarship. But his attempt to 'redo' and compete with Engels discredits Rubel's whole painstaking labour over Volumes II and III of Capital, especially when he gives us even less of Marx than the earlier Engels editions did.

In France, Rubel's editions of Vols. II and III of Capital have been controversial. Louis Janover (1969, p.177) termed Rubel's edition 'a more rigorous choice' of material than that made by Engels. Gilbert Badia's more hostile review argued that Rubel's text 'does not differ from that of Engels except in that it is less complete' and that 'Rubel has not added a single line to Engels' texts' (1970, p.323). While Rubel's texts for Vols. II and III are indeed shorter than those of Engels, Badia's claim that not a single line has been added is false.

PART III. Rubel's Anti-Hegelianism

If, as I argued above, Rubel's knowledge of details of manuscripts from 1847 to 1883 obscured his vision of the method and the uniqueness of Volume I of *Capital*, and led him to a distorted edition of Volumes II and III, then Rubel's anti-Hegelian prejudice, to the point of irrationality, leads him to miss much of the underlying foundation of Marx's work as a whole. As with the discussion of the emergence of *Capital*, Rubel tries to answer a theoretic question by a pedantic recourse to the dates of various statements on Hegel.

Here is one subject on which Rubel is suddenly more than ready to admit that Marx went through fundamental changes rather than mere polishing from earlier drafts on the 'Economics'. He is happy to see major changes in Marx's method, such as when he claims less Hegelian influence in *Capital* than in the *Grundrisse*: 'The evident recourse to the virtues of Hegel's dialectic, often perceptible in the pages of the *Grundrisse*, becomes in *Capital* a procedure resembling parody' (1981a, p.221-2). Rubel's reference is to the penultimate chapter of *Capital* on the 'Historical Tendency of

Capitalist Accumulation' where, as both Rubel and Althusser have noted, Marx suddenly 'reverts' to Hegelian terminology, specifically the 'negation of the negation,' in his description of the impending social revolution. Where Rubel calls this a 'parody' of Hegel, trying to downplay its actual debt to Hegel, Althusser becomes very annoyed with Marx at this point, in keeping with his desire to 'drive this spectre' of Hegel 'back into the night' (Althusser 1969, p.116).

Here, once again, the crux of Rubel's argument turns more often on dates and isolated quotes than on theoretical analysis of texts. The early 1843 *Critique of Hegel's Philosophy of Right*, the most scathingly critical of Marx's various writings on Hegel, and necessarily so, given Hegel's discussion there of the Prussian state, becomes for Rubel the most serious and even final word on Hegel. In a lengthy essay in *Rubel on Karl Marx* entitled 'A History of Marx's "Economics"', an essay which also served as his introduction to the second volume of the La Pléiade edition of Marx's *Œuvres* (Marx 1968), he spends ten pages on the 1843 *Critique* without mentioning the many important positive assessments of Hegel to be found in this unpublished work. Then he skips over with barely a mention Marx's profound, better known, and strictly philosophical 1844 'Critique of the Hegelian Dialectic' from the *1844 Manuscripts*. In fact, the entire *1844 Manuscripts* are barely mentioned in Rubel's introductory essay, even though they are included in this volume of the La Pléiade Marx *Oeuvres* (1968), in an entirely new French translation by the left-wing novelist Jean Malaquais.

Marx's 1844 Hegel critique was based on a major work, *The Phenomenology of Mind*, rather than on Hegel's political writings. There, Marx ([1844] 1958, p.309) writes:

> The greatness of Hegel's *Phenomenology* and of its final result—the dialectic of negativity as the moving and creating principle—lies in this, that Hegel comprehends the self-development of the human being [Mensch] as a process… that he therefore grasps the essence of *labour* and comprehends the objective human being, authentic because actual, as the result of *his/her own labour*.

Rubel is hardly inclined to discuss such Hegelian-derived dialectical categories in the *1844 Manuscripts*, except in a single

off-hand footnote where he writes: 'Nowhere has Marx so clearly expressed at the same time what he owed to Hegel and what separated him from him' (Rubel in Marx 1968, p.1621). On the *Manuscripts* as a whole, he reaches the bizarre conclusion that the they are the place where 'Marx ousted Hegel once and for all' (Rubel 1981a, p.122). That the 1844 critiques involved Hegel's more fundamental writings on dialectic, rather than only the book on the state, would seem to indicate that, rather than rejecting him outright, Marx is using Hegel to bring to birth his own dialectic (see Dunayevskaya 1973). In addition, as mentioned earlier, Rubel's own edition of 'materials for' Volume II shows that Marx as late as the 1870s had called Hegel his 'master,' and this in a manuscript Rubel had found for *Capital* from the 1870s.

Rubel (1981a, p.46) writes that Hegel was an 'idolator of the established order' without even acknowledging all the work by Hegel scholars in recent years, including that of one of his own American editors, O'Malley, to shatter that type of slander against Hegel (see also Marcuse 1941). Rubel (1981b, p1093) also argues that Hegel was a militarist whose writings Hitler might have been 'well-advised to use in the frontispiece of Mein Kampf.' On the other hand, O'Malley (1976, p.54), who does not refer explicitly to his differences with Rubel, sees a strong affinity between Marx and Hegel, writing that Marx's '"demystification" of Hegel was a correction of the "master" by the pupil; and that is something quite different from a "break"'.

In his attack on Hegel, Rubel (1981a, p.104) also argues that Marx was not a philosopher and had in fact 'renounced what he held to be the sterile glory of founding a new philosophy.' Instead, he describes Marx as seeing himself in the role of 'a social reformer and educator' (Rubel 1981a, p.105), again a rather strange assessment of Marx, the revolutionary dialectician. Rubel (1981a, p.29) very nearly dismisses the term 'alienation' and its obvious Hegelian origin by calling it 'a term borrowed from Hegel,' as if the term only and not Hegel's dialectic was what Marx 'borrowed.' On the other hand, when he cites Engels, who, arguably in the spirit of Marx, declared that 'the German working class movement is the heir of classical German philosophy,' Rubel (198la, p.21) writes condescendingly that 'Engels thus consummated the mésalliance between metaphysics and proletariat.'

But Rubel (1981a, p.149) has to admit that Marx did make at least 'sporadic use of Hegelian formulas' in the *Grundrisse* and that Marx had reread Hegel's *Logic* again in 1857 (see also O'Malley 1977). He quotes a letter to Engels revealing this renewed interest in Hegel and Marx's desire, as he put it, 'to write two or three printer's sheets which would enable the ordinary mind to understand the rational element in the method discovered but at the same time mystified by Hegel,' but Rubel (1981a, p.149) quickly notes that 'Marx never got to this project.' According to Rubel's own estimate 'five or six printer's sheets' would be 'nearly 100 pages' (Rubel 1981a, p.155). Thus Marx's intended exposition of Hegel's dialectic would have been presumably almost 50 pages, hardly a brief dismissal, but rather a major essay on the subject of Hegel, longer than anything he wrote on Hegel, with the exception of the rough notes and excerpts which form the *Critique of Hegel's Philosophy of Right* (1843). Rubel also reveals that at this time (1858), Marx estimated that the entire three volumes of *Capital*, or what was to become that, would be less than 1,000 pages. Thus, it is probable that the projected essay on Hegel was a fairly extensive one.

This business of the printers' sheets is also an example of one of the merits of Rubel. Throughout his work, Rubel frequently reveals sources and data which have been covered over for years, data which sometimes appear to undermine some of Rubel's own interpretations. This is to his great credit as a scholar, and it is in contrast to the 'cover-up' method so often employed in Stalinist editions. For example, he includes Marx's 1861 notes on Hegel's *Logic* in his volume on philosophy (Marx 1982, p.1490f).

Rubel's volume of Marx on philosophy appeared in 1982 as Volume III of the La Pléiade Marx *Œuvres*. It covers mainly the years 1837-47, after which, according to Rubel, Marx gave up interest in philosophy. For Rubel, its 'two fundamental texts' (Rubel in Marx 1982, xi) are the 1843 *Critique of Hegel's Philosophy of Right* and *The German Ideology* (1845-6). Other major texts included in this edition are *The Holy Family* and Marx's 1841 Doctoral Thesis on Epicurus and Democritus.

Rubel 120-page introduction makes clear his own disdain for 'philosophy' when he writes that even for these early philosophical writings by Marx, 'it is the critique of philosophical reason which speaks here' (Rubel in Marx 1982, x). The

introduction proper begins with one of the most vicious attacks on Hegel ever written. As with many other anti-Hegelians, Rubel claims that Hegel's *Philosophy of Right* contains the key to his philosophy. Then he proceeds to quote some passages which allow him to accuse Hegel of militarism, misogyny and general authoritarianism. His description of the Young Hegelians, out of which Marx emerged, is so one-sided as to make them instead almost anti-Hegelians:

> Their concern was not how to investigate the mysteries of the Hegelian dialectic …but to free themselves from the paralysing cult of hallowed celebrities and to place themselves in the concrete situation of the present. (Rubel in Marx 1982, xxviii).

This type of procedure ends with a denial of any significant Hegelian influence on Marx.

To Rubel, Hegel influences Marx only negatively, as did the Prussian state, giving him a target to oppose. This leads him to an apparent misreading of the 1841 anonymous satirical pamphlet *Trumpet of the Last Judgement on Hegel the Atheist and the Anti-Christ*, which, according to Rubel, was probably co-authored by Marx and Bruno Bauer. The pamphlet states: 'We must shout to the rooftops: Hegel was a greater revolutionary than all of his disciples put together. It is he who should be attacked; it is he who should be destroyed' (cited in Rubel in Marx 1982, lxxix). Rubel quotes the above passage and then shows that he regards the very concept of Hegelian philosophy as revolutionary as part of the satire.

Rubel ends his lengthy introduction to his volume of Marx on philosophy with another swipe at Hegel. He calls Hegel more 'our contemporary' (Rubel in Marx 1982, cxxx) in the twentieth century than Marx, since Hegel was a philosopher of authoritarianism and obsequiousness toward the state. In addition, Hegel, like Nietzsche, idolised war and Napoleon. Established Marxism in power as in Stalinist Russia was thus 'Hegelian'.

Once again, here in the volume on philosophy (Marx 1982), Rubel's interpretation also leads him into some major problems as an editor of Marx. The very process of chopping Marx up into those categories which academia (but not Marx) has put into separate compartments—economics, philosophy,

politics—has led him to include the more political 1843 *Critique of Hegel's Philosophy of Right*, but not the *1844 Manuscripts*, in his volume of Marx on philosophy. Instead, as we have seen, they were placed in the second volume on economics (Marx 1968). This selection of materials in the volume on philosophy (Marx 1982) may be an attempt to bolster Rubel's argument that Marx broke with Hegel in 1843.

Neither here nor in the second volume on economics (Marx 1968), where it is included, does Rubel discuss seriously the 1844 'Critique of the Hegelian Dialectic.' While Rubel is correct to call attention to Marx's 1843 *Critique of Hegel's Philosophy of Right*, an essay many post-Marx Marxists feel uncomfortable with because of its stress on freedom and democracy, he continues to act as if that essay marked some type of final reckoning with Hegel's philosophy as a whole, rather than with Hegel's political capitulation to the Prussian state. Rubel leaves us with an interpretation of Marx which is, if possible, even more anti-Hegelian than that of Althusser. And that is quite a feat.

Rubel's avoidance of dialectics and economics, and his preference for chronological and political categories leads him to place Proudhon or even Spinoza (Rubel 1981a, see also Rubel 1962, 1984) on the same level as Hegel in their influence on Marx. Rubel is seeking to correct the picture of a rigidly 'scientific' Marxian socialism versus 'utopian' socialism, as created not by Marx but by Engels, the Second International and Stalinism. But Rubel vastly overstates his case when he writes that 'Marx never broke the spiritual tie that bound him to utopian socialism' (Rubel 1981a, p.27). This argument becomes even more distorted when he writes of 'J. P. Proudhon, who might be said to represent for Marx in political economy what Hegel represented in philosophy' (Rubel 1981a, p.119). Even the most cursory analysis of Marx's *The Poverty of Philosophy*, shows a totally opposite attitude toward Proudhon than that toward Hegel, whom Marx always treated respectfully as a very profound thinker, even when critiquing him. To be sure, Marx took Smith and Ricardo seriously as political economists, but that was hardly the case with Proudhon, whom Marx ridiculed both on economics and dialectics.

Even as he exaggerates the influence of the utopians on Marx in order to downplay the influence of Hegel, Rubel neglects to mention that many of these utopians, such as

Pierre Leroux, were themselves Hegelian. As the French Hegel scholar Jacques d'Hondt has shown, Leroux. who invented the word socialism, studied Hegel in the 1820s and 1830s, and wrote in 1842: 'Today what has become of the royal and aristocratic Hegelian philosophy? It has become revolutionary' (cited in d'Hondt 1972, p.173). Elsewhere, Rubel exaggerates the influence of classical political economy on Marx, calling Marx 'an economist in the tradition of Smith and Ricardo' (Rubel 1981a, p.227), but he never develops the link to Smith and Ricardo very much, seeming to be interested in them only as a counter-weight to Hegel.

Rubel is of course well aware that there is something to Marx beyond either classical political economy or the utopian socialism of Proudhon, and beyond scientific rationalism as well. He also knows that Marx's unique style and form of presentation cannot be explained only because Marx was a revolutionary and not an academic. So he does after all give a bit of philosophy, in a section of one essay entitled 'Kierkegaard, Nietzsche, and Marx' where he writes that all of these 'rebels' had a similar relationship to Hegel. They all 'needed Hegel in order to recognise how not to think and how not to live' (Rubel 1981a, p.35). Rubel simply places these three very different philosophers in the same category because they rejected Hegel, a very questionable procedure (see for example Löwith 1967).

Rubel (1981a, p.44) writes that 'Engels lacked that particular gift of intuition' which made Marx a 'poetic genius of social science.' Since there is obviously something besides scientific rationalism in Marx, and Rubel does not want to admit to Hegel's influence, he is forced over into calling this part of Marx 'intuitive' and 'poetic.' Many years ago the Hegelian Marxist Lukács critiqued this type of attitude in *The Young Hegel.* Below Lukács describes Hegel's critique of Schelling, but perhaps the critique also tells us something about Rubel's assessment of Marx as a 'poetic genius' rather than a revolutionary dialectician. As Lukács (1975, p.430) argues:

> 'Intellectual intuition' goes hand in hand with an aristocratic theory of knowledge. Schelling repeatedly argues that authentic philosophical truth, knowledge of the absolute, is attainable only by a few chosen people, by geniuses. One part of philosophy, the most important part, simply could not be acquired by learning.

Rubel is hardly an intellectual elitist, as Lukács has in the above passage argued Schelling to have been. He has been involved with and written for movement as well as academic journals (see Rubel 1983a). Nonetheless, his failure to engage seriously the concept of dialectics in Marx leaves him in a great quandary when he attempts to describe what is unique in Marx's method. Schumpeter (1950, p.44), who was hardly a Marxist, gave a more accurate characterisation of Marx's method when he wrote that the key contribution of Marx the economist was to have turned historical narrative into historical reason:

> He was the first economist of top rank to see and to teach systematically how economic theory may be turned into historical analysis and how the historical narrative may be turned into *histoire raisonnée.*

Following Marcuse (1941), one might add to the above the notion of dialectical reason as a key category which Marx appropriated from Hegel.

PART IV. Conclusion

It appears that Rubel seeks to separate Marx from Engels and from post-Marx Marxism not in order to show Marx's revolutionary dialectic. but to reduce that dialectic to something else, 'poetic genius,' plus a preoccupation with economic data collection and the self-emancipation of labour. To help fill out the picture of Marx as he sees him, anti-Hegelian and yet humanist, Rubel has over many years written on Marx's supposed preoccupation with 'ethics,' a position for which virtually no support can be found in Marx's own writings. With his talk of 'ethics,' and of Marx as a 'social reformer and educator,' but not a revolutionary or a dialectician, Rubel reveals that his agenda of making Marx independent of Stalinism is in order to make his work more acceptable as a 'classic' for French academia, suitable for the La Pléiade collection of eminent but dead authors.

On the one hand, Rubel views the revolutions and the workers' movements of Marx's day as the key to Marx's life—to why his work was unfinished, and to why his work took the

direction that it did. But on the other hand, these living movements and revolutions become for Rubel something entirely separate from Marx's work as a theorist, as an 'economist.' To Rubel (1981a, p.193-4), Marx's theoretical work ultimately had little connection with these living movements: '*Capital* was conceived of as the book in economics by a sociologist that would analyse the role of the capitalist class in the process of material production.'

In sum, while learning from many specific points in Rubel's vast scholarship over many years, his work can contribute the most if many of his key theoretic ideas are put aside: his insistence that Marx's 'economics' underwent no fundamental changes after 1847, his editing of Vols. II and III of *Capital* on the basis of the latter, his refusal to see the importance of Hegelian dialectics to Marx's Marxism, his outright rejection, rather than a balanced critique, of Engels and post-Marx Marxism, and his preoccupation with Marxian 'ethics.' After putting those points to the side, one can begin to appreciate some of the important and pioneering scholarly work Rubel has done to unearth unknown writings of Marx, and to show omissions or flaws in the editing of known ones.

References

Abensour, M. (1970) 'Pour lire Marx' in *Revue française de science politique* 20 No.4.

Althusser, L. (1969) *For Marx.* Penguin, London.

Anderson, K. (1983) 'The "Unknown" Marx's *Capital*: The French Edition of 1872-5, 100 Years Later' in *Review of Radical Political Economics* 15 No.4.

Badia, G. (1970) 'Brèves Remarques sur le tome II des œuvres de Marx' in *L'Homme et la société* 17.

Bongiovanni, B. (1981) 'Maximilien Rubel' in *Telos* 47.

Dunayevskaya, R. (1958) *Marxism and Freedom: From 1776 until Today.* Bookman, New York.

_____ (1973) *Philosophy and Revolution: From Hegel to Sartre and from Marx to Mao.* Delacorte, New York.

_____ (1981) 'Hobsbawm and Rubel on the Marx Centenary, But Where Is Marx?' in *News & Letters* Aug.-Sept.

_____ (1982) *Rosa Luxemburg. Women's Liberation and Marx's Philosophy of Revolution.* Harvester, Sussex.

Goldfield, M. (1986) 'Review of *Rubel on Karl Marx*' in *Insurgent Sociologist* 13 No.3.

Goldmann, L. (1957) 'Y à t'il une sociologie marxiste?' in *Les Temps Modernes* 140.

d'Hondt, J. (1972) *De Hegel à Marx.* Presses Universitaires de France, Paris.

Janover, L. (1969) 'Critique de Marx *Œuvres. Economie II*' in *Cahiers internationaux de sociologie* Vol.47.

Janover, L. and M. Rubel. (1984) 'Matériaux pour un lexique de Marx I.' in *Études de marxologie* 23-24.

_____ (1985) 'Matériaux pour un lexique de Marx II.' in *Études de marxologie* 25.

Lantz, P. (1977) *Valeur et richesse.* Éditions Anthropos, Paris.

Löwith, K. (1967) *From Hegel to Nietzsche.* Doubleday, New York.

Lukács, G. (1971) *History and Class Consciousness.* MIT Press, Cambridge.

_____ (1975) *The Young Hegel.* Merlin, London.

Marcuse, H. (1941) *Reason and Revolution: Hegel and the Rise of Social Theory.* Oxford University Press, New York.

Marx, K. [1844] (1958) 'Critique of the Hegelian Dialectic.' trans. by R. Dunayevskaya, in Dunayevskaya, *Marxism and Freedom.* Bookman, New York.

_____ (1963) *Œuvres. Economie* Vol.I, ed. by M. Rubel. Gallimard, Paris.

_____ (1964) *Selected Writings in Sociology and Social Philosophy*, ed. by T. Bottomore and M. Rubel. McGraw-Hill, New York.

_____ (1968) *Œuvres. Economie,* Vol.II, ed. by M. Rubel. Gallimard, Paris.

_____ (1976) *Capital,* Vol.I. Vintage, New York.

_____ (1982) *Œuvres. Philosophie,* Vol.III, ed. by M. Rubel. Gallimard, Paris.

Marx, K. (1983) *Le Capital,* Livre I. Traduction de la 4e édition allemande. Éditions sociales, Paris.
_____ (1988) *Das Kapital,* Erster Band. Dietz Verlag, Berlin.
Marx, K. and F. Engels (1975f) *Collected Works* [MECW]. International Publishers, New York.
MECW (see preceding reference)
O'Malley, J. (1976) 'Marx's "Economics" and Hegel's *Philosophy of Right*: An Essay on Marx's Hegelianism' in *Political Studies* 24 No.1.
_____ (1977) 'Marx's Précis of Hegel's Doctrine of Being in the Minor Logic' in *International Review of Social History* 22 No.2.
Rubel, M. (1956) *Bibliographie des œuvres de Karl Marx.* Marcel Rivière, Paris.
_____ (1957) *Karl Marx: Essaie de biographie intellectuelle.* Marcel Rivière, Paris.
_____ (1962) 'Notes on Marx's Conception of Democracy' in *New Politics* 1 No.2.
_____ (1965) 'Reflections on Utopia and Revolution' in E. Fromm [ed.] *Socialist Humanism.* Doubleday, New York.
_____ (1967) 'Did the Proletariat Need Marx and Did Marxism Help the Proleteriat?' in N. Lobkowicz [ed.] *Marx and the Western World.* University of Notre Dame Press, Indiana.
_____ (1968) 'Karl Marx' in *International Encyclopedia of the Social Sciences* Vol.10. MacMillan, New York.
_____ (1969) 'The Relationship of Bolshevism to Marxism' in R. Pipes [ed.] *Revolutionary Russia: A Symposium.* Doubleday, New York.
_____ (1981a) *Rubel on Karl Marx: Five Essays* ed. J. O'Malley and K. Algozin. Cambridge University Press, New York.
_____ (1981b) 'Hegel actuel?' in *Études de marxologie* 21-22.
_____ (1983a) *Marx théoricien de l'anarchisme.* Cahiers du vent du chemin, Saint-Denis.
_____ (1983b) 'Marx's Concept of Democracy.' in *Democracy* 3.
_____ (1984) 'Pour une étiologie de l'alienation politique. Marx à 1'école de Spinoza' in *Études de marxologie* 23-24
_____ (1985) 'Pour une Édition du Jubilé. 1883-1983' in *Études de marxologie* 25.
_____ (1987a) 'Marx penseur du politique' in *Études de marxologie* 26
_____ (1987b) 'À propos des publications et des expositions du Karl-Marx-Haus, Trèves' in *Études de marxologie* 26.
_____ (1989) 'La Révolution française dans la formation du jeune Marx' in *Diogène* 148.
Rubel, M. and M. Manale (1976) *Marx without Myth: A Chronological Study of His Life and Work.* Harper and Row, New York.
Schumpeter, J. (1942) *Capitalism, Socialism and Democracy.* Harper and Row, New York.
Shanin, T., [ed.] (1983) *Marx and the Russian Road.* Monthly Review Press, New York.