RIGOUR AND PLURALISM IN ECONOMICS

A science is normally defined as the study of a particular aspect of objective reality: physics is about the nature and properties of matter and energy, biology about living things, psychology about the psyche, and so on. But amongst economists the prevailing practice for many years has been to regard this subject as being defined not as a study of a real object – the economy – but by a method or type of analysis: equilibrium theorising with fixed tastes and technology.

This provides a convenient means for dealing with dissenters. Anyone who does not accept the core assumptions, methods and theories is then regarded as simply not being an economist. It is not a question whether they are right or wrong; those that disagree are simply sent into an intellectual exile. Consequently, the problem of advancing our discipline is not simply the massive intellectual task of constructing an alternative paradigm, or showing that orthodox methods imply a rather uninteresting special case. Unfortunately, we face the initial problem of finding academic space and resources for the development of any kind of alternative economics at all. Furthermore, this mis-definition of economics rebuts criticism and potential change at the hard core. If the subject is defined by its basic methods and theories it thereby becomes inert. If the other sciences had followed such an example, it would still be taught that the earth was at the centre of the universe and that the material world consisted simply of the four elements of earth, water, air and fire.

Apart from being a recipe for intolerance, the current definition of economics elevates formalism and axiomatics to unwarranted heights. At the outset, core assumptions are taken as unquestionable and given. Agents must maximise because economists assume they do, and so on. Positive economics reconstructs reality to fit theoretical perspectives. For the orthodox economist the game becomes one of simply drawing logical conclusions from a combination of pre-ordained and more malleable, secondary assumptions. Attempts to address the real world, or to evaluate basic assumptions on the basis of the conceptualizations of such reality, are thus downgraded.

Economics should not be constituted by fixed methods or assumptions. It should be the study of the nature, processes and social relations governing resource allocation – the production, distribution and exchange of the requisites of human life. Economics is thus an attempt to address aspects of the real world. This is not a rigid definition and is not intended to be. Economic reality is necessarily embedded within broader social relations, culture and institutions, and the real boundaries between the ‘economy’, and ‘society’ and ‘polity’ are fuzzy and unclear. The shifting of the definition away from a method to a subject matter is at least in one respect an advantage. There is a need for a more tolerant and permissive atmosphere, and for genuine, scientific competition between several rival paradigms in our discipline. In our view, economics should retain its standards of rigour but be more open and pluralistic.

Intellectual monopoly poses a threat to science. Economists will advocate free competition, but will not practise it in the arena of ideas. A new spirit of pluralism in economics is required, involving critical conversation and tolerant communication between different approaches. Such pluralism should not undermine the standards of rigour; an economics that requires itself to face all the arguments will be a more, not a less, rigorous science.
EAEPE 1991 CONFERENCE
The Evolution of Mixed Economies: East and West
7th-9th November 1991, Vienna, Austria

Since the last Newsletter, a Scientific Committee – a subcommittee of the EAEPE Steering Committee – has been set up to select abstracts and deal with the conference programme. Details of the conference programme are placed elsewhere in this Newsletter.

The conference will be located at the BAWAG bank (Bank fur Arbeit und Wirtschaft A.G., Tuchlauben 5), in the centre of Vienna, with the kind hospitality of that organisation. Conference registration will commence on the afternoon of 7th November and the conference will finish in the evening of 9th November. The conference fee is £50, plus an addition of £20 for those who are not yet 1991 members of EAEPE, plus an addition of £20 for bookings received on or after July 1st.

All conference fees should be sent to the EAEPE Conference Organiser at the Department of Economics and Government, Newcastle upon Tyne NE1 8ST, United Kingdom; telephone 091 232 6002 extension 3939, fax 091 235 8017 or 091 235 8558. Payments may be made over the telephone by credit card.

Please note that there is a limited capacity for this conference. We had to turn many people away in 1990, so please book early for 1991 to avoid disappointment.

The conference fee does not include accommodation or meals. These are the responsibility of delegates themselves. However, the EAEPE Conference Organiser, Wolfgang Blas, will be pleased to supply information on hotel accommodation. He may be contacted at the Technical University of Vienna, Karlsgasse 11/267, A-1040 Vienna, Austria; telephone 222 58801 extension 4314, fax 587 7972 or 505 4800.

The following hotels are given priority recommendation for convenience and value for money, and should be contacted by the end of July to guarantee reserved places:

Hotel Kaiserhof, A-1040 Vienna, Frankenbergasse 10. Tel (222) 505 17 01. Fax (222) 505 88 75.
Hotel Anatol, A-1060 Vienna, Weggasse 26. Tel (222) 599 96/0. Fax (222) 599 96 55.

The Foundation for European Economic Development (FEED) has agreed to sponsor the conference. It will set aside and administer a Conference Assistance Fund for EAEPE conference delegates who are unable to obtain adequate support from their own institution. Applications for financial assistance should be sent to the Secretary of FEED, Dr Andrew Tylecote, School of Management and Economic Studies, University of Sheffield, Conduit Road, Sheffield S10 1FL, United Kingdom; telephone 0742 768 555.

In addition to BAWAG, the conference is organised with the assistance of Newcastle upon Tyne Polytechnic and Vienna Technical University. Applications for further financial support are in progress.

Members’ Meeting
An EAEPE Members’ Meeting has been called at BAWAG in Vienna on the late afternoon of Friday 8th November 1991.
1992 Conference Plans

1991 Steering Committee
General Election
The Steering Committee have called General Election of the entire Steering Committee and Secretariat for 1991. All 1991 members of EAEPE are welcome to stand for any position on the Steering Committee. The following timetable and conditions will apply:
Nominations must be in writing and signed by the nominee, and by four nominating current (1991) members of the Association. They must be accompanied by information on country of residence, institutional affiliation, and position(s) for which election is being sought. In addition, the candidate is requested to submit an election statement of no more than 100 words.

Fri 13th Sep 1991: Circulation of Ballot Papers to Members.
Mon 21st Oct 1991: Due Date for the Return of Ballots.
Sun 1st Dec 1991: Inauguration of New Steering Committee.

EAEPE Prizes
The Steering Committee are pleased to announce regular competitions for the following two prizes:

K. William Kapp Prize
Amount: £1000 (half funded by the William Kapp foundation)
Awarded annually for the best article unpublished at the time of the award on a theme broadly in accord with the Theoretical Perspectives of the Association (minimum 5,000, maximum 12,000 words).

Gunnar Myrdal Prize
Amount: £1000 (all funded by EAEPE)
Awarded every two years, starting 1992, for the best published or unpublished monograph on a theme broadly in accord with the Theoretical Perspectives of the Association.
The deadline for receipt of each prize is 1st February 1992. Three non-returnable copies of each entry must be submitted. Awards of the prizes will be made at the November 1992 Conference in Paris.
All candidates shall be paid-up 1992 members of EAEPE. The Steering Committee will judge both prizes in February-March 1992. Any member of the Steering Committee serving at any time from February 1991 to February 1992 inclusive shall be ineligible to submit an entry.

Proposed Constitutional Amendment
A constitutional amendment changing the name of the Association to the 'European Political Economy Association' was put to the February 1991 Steering Committee to be adopted and proposed at a subsequent Members' Meeting. However, Steering Committee members Jerzy Hausner and Eva Maskova explained that 'Political Economy' (without any qualifier) was identified with moribund, Oscar Lange-type economics in Eastern Europe. Consequently, it was unanimously agreed by the Steering Committee that the amendment be not put.

Future Steering Committee Meetings
The next Steering Committee meeting will be in Vienna on 7th November 1991 at 15.00hrs. This will be open to members of both the 'old' and the 'new' Steering Committee. The subsequent Steering Committee will be held on 6th-7th March 1992, in Paris. On the 6th March 1992 the Steering Committee proposes to hold a seminar in Paris on a topic to be announced. All EAEPE members are welcome to attend this seminar.

You can now pay by credit card!
Transactions across national currency boundaries are inconvenient, uncertain and costly. For the convenience of EAEPE members, payments may now be made by Access/MasterCard/Visa/Eurocard. Simply telephone 091 232 6002 extension 3939 in the UK, with your card number and expiry date. Alternatively, you can notify the EAEPE Newcastle office by post with the same information.

How not to get the Nobel Prize for economics
This item is taken and translated from the gossip column of the Swedish newspaper Gagens Nyheter (Daily News) of 14 April 1991:
Professor Assar Lindbeck has decided to clean out the unauthorized deviations from orthodoxy. In connection with the review of the curriculum at Stockholm University, Lindbeck has now moved rapidly to ban Marxism, welfare theory (=social engineering), neo-Schumpeterism (speciality of the otherwise respectable Industrial Institute for Economic and Social Research), Institutionalism (non-formalized economics) and Islam (does not believe in interest). Also development theory is threatened.
The gossip columnist recalls a speech given by Professor Lindbeck to American students 15 years ago, with the title: "Can Pluralism Survive?".
Amongst his many respected and influential positions, Professor Lindbeck is Chair of the Nobel Prize Committee.
For sale to EAEPE members
Thorstein Veblen,
The Place of Science in Modern Civilization,
Reprinted with a new introduction by Warren J. Samuels
Published by Transaction Books, 1990, at £10 each.

By agreement with Transaction Books, EAEPE is pleased to offer discount copies of this classic volume. The offer is open to currently paid-up EAEPE members only. The price includes postage and packing. The full pre-payment of £10 is required, either in Sterling cash, or with a Sterling cheque drawn on an UK bank, or by credit card (Mastercard/Access/Visa/Eurocard). Credit card orders may be made by telephone (091 232 6002 ext 3939). Please allow up to 6 weeks, depending on local postage services, for delivery.

In addition, a number of copies are available free of charge for accredited university libraries in Albania, Bulgaria, Czechoslovakia, Hungary, Poland, Romania, the USSR and Yugoslavia. This offer is limited and subject to our resources and discretion.

Thorstein Veblen’s The Place of Science in Modern Civilization is a major institutionalist classic and has long been unavailable, especially in Europe. Although it is a collection of essays rather than an integrated volume, it is probably Veblen’s greatest and most important book, surpassing even The Theory of the Leisure Class (1899) and The Theory of Business Enterprise (1904).

In its 509 pages he engages with a number of important thinkers, including John Bates Clark, John Neville Keynes, Alfred Marshall, Karl Marx, Carl Menger, Gustav Schmoller and many others. Many, but not all, of the essays appeared in the Quarterly Journal of Economics. The volume is generally polemical in tone, with highly perceptive and often brilliant comments.

The essays in the volume include:
- ‘The Place of Science in Modern Civilization’ (1906)
- ‘The Evolution of the Scientific Point of View’ (1908)
- ‘Why is Economics Not an Evolutionary Science?’ (1898)
- ‘The Preconceptions of Economic Science’ (1899-1900)
- ‘Professor Clark’s Economics’ (1908)
- ‘The Limitations of Marginal Utility’ (1909)
- ‘Gustav Schmoller’s Economics’ (1901)
- ‘On the Nature of Capital’ (1908)
- ‘Some Neglected Points in the Theory of Socialism’ (1892)
- ‘The Socialist Economics of Karl Marx’ (1906-1907)

A Welcome Convert

As part of its celebrations for its centenary, The Economic Journal, has included the prognostications of several leading economists on the subject of ‘The Next Hundred Years’ in its January 1991 issue. Most of the contributions are of very limited merit but a striking exception is the piece by the University of Cambridge general equilibrium theorist Frank Hahn.

Hahn opens with the prediction that: ‘theorising of the “pure” sort will become both less enjoyable and less and less possible’. He goes on to remark that ‘rather radical changes in questions and methods are required.

What sort of changes has he in mind? He suggests that the subject will return to its Marshallian affinities to biology, noting that evolutionary theories are already beginning to flourish. His successors, he concludes, will not be so preoccupied with ‘grand unifying theory’ or so immersed in the pleasures of theorems and proof’.

Membership

EAEPE membership is currently 362. This is an increase of 48 over the last year. By country our membership is now as follows, last year’s figures in parentheses:

- Austria 11 (7)
- Belgium 6 (8)
- Czechoslovakia 8 (5)
- Denmark 12 (12)
- Finland 7 (6)
- France 20 (18)
- Germany 19 (13)
- Greece 3 (1)
- Hungary 1 (1)
- Ireland 2 (2)
- Italy 52 (35)
- Netherlands 25 (22)
- Norway 4 (6)
- Poland 3 (1)
- Portugal 1 (0)
- Romania 1 (1)
- Spain 9 (6)
- Sweden 18 (15)
- Switzerland 9 (9)
- Turkey 3 (2)
- USSR 1 (1)
- United Kingdom 90 (96)
- Yugoslavia 2 (2)

Europe:

- Australia 7 (4)
- Brazil 1 (0)
- Canada 6 (2)
- Israel 1 (1)
- Jamaica 1 (0)
- Japan 3 (2)
- South Africa 1 (0)
- United States 36 (34)

Non-Europe:

- Non-European 56 (44)

Total:

- Total: 362 (314)
Books, a major part of which are authored or edited by EAEPE members, may be reviewed in this section of the Newsletter; contact the Newsletter editor for details.


Reviewed by Philip Arestis, North East London Polytechnic, UK.

This is a topical book in many ways but most importantly from the point of view of recent political events. There are nine chapters in all and a bibliography with extra references in footnotes. The 'Introduction', chapter 1, sets the scene and also attempts to explain why the UK and US were chosen as the focus of analysis. I was not entirely happy with this chapter since it left me with more questions than answers.

Chapter 2, 'Changing Fashions in Macroeconomic Thought', offers an excursion into three macroeconomic schemes of thought: pre-Keynesian economics, Keynesian economics, and 'new Classical' economics. These are the three main intellectual 'waves' that have influenced macroeconomic policy-making in this century. They correspond roughly to the pre-1930s period, the post-World War II era up to the demise of the Bretton Woods fixed exchange rate system (1971-73), and the period since then, which can be thought of as representing a swing back to the pre-Keynesian epoch.

'The Monetarist Experiment' is discussed in chapter 3. This experiment was attempted during the last fifteen to sixteen months of the Carter Administration, the first eighteen months of the Reagan Administration and the first three years of Thatcherism in the UK. It was successful in that inflation was reduced as result but at the heavy cost of huge unemployment rates and loss of output. The proposition that the reduction in inflation was the result of the collapse in commodity prices is not given any credence, although it is acknowledged. This is surprising given that the evidence is supportive of this thesis.

'Fiscal Policy and the Recovery', chapter 4, suggests that whilst the recovery of the mid-1980s in the US was quick, in the UK it was very protracted. The explanation can be found in old-fashioned Keynesianism: the US pursued expansionary fiscal policy whilst the British did not. Proponents of Reaganomics, of course, saw that as the success of 'supply-side' economics; the evidence, however, is against 'supply-siders'. In the UK, by contrast, expansion was belated. Despite the British government's insistence that it was their 'supply-side' policies that 'did it', the author's view is that it was the 'loose fiscal - loose money' mix that caused expansion (with inflation).

Chapter 5, 'Macroeconomic Policy, Exchange Rates and Trade Flows', takes the argument to the level of open economies. It was the 'tight money - loose fiscal' mix pursued in the US that appreciated the dollar and produced the deficit in the balance of payments. The US economy has emerged as a debtor country and the real question is whether she would follow the post-World War I fate of the UK. But after 1985 the Dollar depreciated as a result of co-ordinated action by a number of countries. This analysis leads to the discussion of proposals to reform the International Monetary System along with Britain's position in the European Monetary System.
the importance of this latter aspect, a fuller discussion would have been extremely helpful.

Macroeconomics and the Stock Market', chapter 6, compares the 1987 stock market crash with that of 1929. This comparison enables the author to argue that the 1987 experience was very different from the 1929 crash. So much so that it may even have helped to dampen demand, which was badly needed to restrain inflation. A number of explanations are offered for the 1987 incident to conclude that it was, in fact, the role of monetary policy and the speculation of a return to the 1979-82 'bitter' experience which caused the crash. In the long-run, however, the main determinants are profitability and thus prosperity of the economy.

The issue of 'rolling back the frontiers of the state' so popular with Thatcher and Reagan, and others, is the topic of chapter 7, under the title 'Macroeconomics versus Microeconomics'. The attempt to introduce market forces in economic life took a multitude of routes in the UK: privatisation, deregulation, trade union regulation and dismantling of the 'welfare state'. In the US things were different. For whilst the rhetoric of free markets was the same, the microeconomic issue there was deregulation. The chapter concludes that these types of policies highlight the important economic policy issue that the rehabilitation of market forces at the microeconomic level during this era was not accompanied by 'successful' macroeconomic policies. A re-appraisal of the relationship between microeconomic and macroeconomic policies is, therefore, necessary.

Chapter 8, 'The Costs of Inflation', poses the very interesting question of why inflation is viewed to be such a problem to justify 'severe corrective action'. The author observes, much to his credit, that the arguments put forward to justify the costs of inflation are not persuasive at all. This is a severe challenge to the view that puts so much emphasis on inflation and on the policies to cure it, which are accompanied by such horrendous costs as unemployment and loss of output. The open economy dimension would have improved the discussion had it been considered. Even so, the argument of this chapter is very sound and one that is rarely asked in relevant discussions.

Finally, chapter 9 offers 'Some Conclusions'. The experiment in economic policy of the 1980s failed. As the 1990s approach, 'pragmatism' in policy-making prevailed. Clear support for the view that governments can provoke downturns and upturns in the business cycle. In the author's view a strategy of moderate 'real' interest rates along with fiscal and other measures designed to achieve a high and stable rate of investment stands a better chance of success. The danger of inflation is always there, but the targeting of the real as opposed to the nominal rate of interest reduces substantially, if not entirely eliminates, this danger.

I find the title rather puzzling in view of the content of the book. I also thought that had a lot more effort been devoted to linking the various chapters, it would have produced a more coherent book. Similarly, more space should have been made available to the problems facing both the UK and US as open economies. It is very surprising that post-Keynesian economics does not receive the attention it deserves in a book of this type. But the point remains that this is a well written and topical book with a lot of good and interesting ideas.


Reviewed by Angelo Reati, Commission of the European Communities.

The thesis of this thorough and interesting book is well summarised by its title: the Eastern countries never had a true socialist system, but rather a grotesque image of it, and now they run the risk of falling into an 'uncivilised' form of capitalism. However, notes J Nagel, at the beginning the new society was built on rational and coherent foundations relying on the values of 'ethical socialism': equity, solidarity, equality. Moreover, the people responsible for organising these values were those who fought against the previous dictatorships and often paid a heavy personal tribute to the triumph of democracy. How is it, then, that after a few years socialism lost its ethical dimension and the Eastern countries were ruled by a group of men without 'any faith and law', whose conduct was in striking contrast to the great principles which, verbally, they continued to refer to?

J Nagels (a 'radical' economist, who in the 1970s gave important contributions to the study of the Marxian schemes of reproduction and the question of productive labour) provides an 'inside' reply to this question. Having had long experience of militancy in the Belgian Communist Party, 'nothing of which ... refers to socialism, be it perverted, leaves [him] indifferent' (p.5). His Marxist approach combined with scientific rigour makes the analysis even more appealing.

The argument is developed in four steps, corresponding to the four parts of the book. First, the author investigates why socialism turned into its opposite. It appears that the fundamental (and tragic) mistake was to build what he calls the three monopolies: political, economic and ideological, all controlled by the Communist Party. This lack of democracy at any level of society transformed the party into a sect and had the well-known effects in terms of repression and economic inefficiency.

J Nagels patienty dismantles the mechanisms that have led to this perversion. His analysis of political, economic and ideological matters is not entirely new. For instance, at the political level, Gilas (curiously omitted by JN) spoke of the 'new class' in the 1950s; however, JN places the previous contributions in a comprehensive and coherent framework. It involves, not only the intimate intertwining of the 'three Ms', but also suggests that this system is fundamentally unrefomrable.

The second and third parts of the book are a case study in which the theoretical analysis of part 1 is applied to Poland. This country was selected because 'since the second world war it has been an extraordinary social laboratory... In Poland, everything is extreme' (p101) and predicted what is likely to occur elsewhere in the East.

The final part describes the general crises of 'perverted' socialism and presents the features of 'savage' capitalism: a capitalism in its purest form, with an extremely limited role for the State, minimal protection for workers and an overwhelmimg role assigned to 'free' market processes. Even if in theory the adoption of such an 'uncivilised' version of capitalism is not inevitable, the author explains why it is likely. The gloomy
Chapter 3, written by Mohammad Yamin, shifts attention to Hymer's seminal contribution to the TN firm. It is argued that Hymer's highly original input is misunderstood in that the role of conflict removal in leading to TN operations is disregarded in favour of an emphasis on the possession of firms' advantages. Highlighting the importance of monopoly power, Yamin argues that this must be fused with an internalization approach—efficiency and power factors inevitably coexist. This useful conclusion compares markedly with the discussion in chapter 4 by Jean-Francois Hennart. This is a comprehensive, readable outline of transaction cost perspectives on TN firms. The major problem, here, would appear to be that, although the distinction between pecuniary and non-pecuniary economies is recognised, it is still claimed that transaction cost economising perspectives provide a universally applicable approach. Nevertheless, this chapter is a useful survey of the area.

Chapter 5 shifts attention to the work of John Dunning. This personal commentary on his own eclectic paradigm is interesting in that it charts the evolution and shifting emphases of this writer's work. Particularly important is his discussion of internalization. The latter is a persuasive approach when the objective is to explain why a firm extends its territorial boundaries. On the other hand, his main concern has been the study of the level and pattern of foreign investment activities by groups of firms. Echoing the views of Cantwell in chapter 2, the importance of firms' strategic response and dynamic effects are stressed.

Neil Kay, in chapter 6, while stressing the significance of contracting problems, distances himself from the Williamsonian tradition. The chapter is structured around four strategies: specialisation, diversification, transnationalism, and joint venture. He argues that firms will pass through these strategies only in response to blockages inhibiting current possibilities. The application of this idea to differing experiences of joint venture activity is particularly interesting.

Somewhat different approaches to TN development are provided in chapters 7 and 8. In the first of these Edward Graham introduces a formal analysis of strategic behaviour. Besides providing useful insights into the subject matter of the book that complement and reinforce other contributions, the chapter is also a useful introduction to the strategic behaviour framework becoming increasingly common in the industrial organisation field. Chapter 8, by Roger Sugden, emphasises the importance of distributional considerations. In particular Stephen Marglin's 'divide and rule' analysis of the rise of the factory is applied to TN development. This is a thought provoking discussion that is a useful counterweight to much 'efficiency' theorising.

In the final chapter Christos Pitsilis attempts a synthesis of the various contributions, and more importantly integrates demand-side issues into the analysis. Use is made of early 2oth century Marxist writers and the modern monopoly capitalism literature to account for TN development. Perhaps inevitably, this analysis is more suggestive than conclusive, which does not detract from its usefulness.

I would recommend this book to anyone who wishes to get a critical overall picture of the theory of the TN firm. Particularly useful is the structure and introduction that facilitate a selective reading. On the aim of cross-fertilisation with the industrial organisation literature I wish the book well, the critical stance projected in a number of the contributions is like a breath of fresh air compared to the stultifying intolerance evident in many areas of our discipline.


Reviewed by Michael Dietrich, Newcastle Polytechnic, UK.

The various contributions in this volume reflect the burgeoning literature on the transnational (TN) firm, and its theoretical insights. Christos Pitsilis and Roger Sugden, in chapter 1, set out its overall agenda in terms of three objectives. The first concerns the dominant internalization approach to the study of TN firms. This has developed independently of parallel transaction cost approaches in the industrial organisation field, inspired by OE Williamson. Industrial organization theorists can learn much from this TN research programme. At the same time, however, much work on the TN firm is based on the importance of market power considerations, rather than just technical or contracting efficiency gains. Emphasising such concerns is the second aim of the volume. Finally, the book aims to represent the diverse theories on TNs rather than just the dominant internalization approach.

To achieve these objectives each of the remaining eight chapters discusses a particular aspect of the theory of TN firms. These different approaches are critically surveyed by John Cantwell in chapter 2. He identifies five different groups of theories: market power; internalization; analysis of competitive international industries; macroeconomic developmental approaches; and the eclectic paradigm. These different approaches are complementary in that they discuss different questions, hence no one theory can claim universality. An important theme running through this chapter is the stress placed on the importance of ownership advantages and resultant dynamic issues.
EAPE Reviews


Reviewed by Jerzy Hausner, Cracow Academy of Economics, Poland.

The very fact that the author of this work is a major British socialist thinker is enough to give this book importance and respect. In spite of the title, Tom Bottomore concentrates his analysis on the development of socialist ideas rather than reality. From current perspectives, a historical survey of the different socialist concepts presented in this book is a very exciting and inspiring course in illusions. They have been shared by generations of socialists because the very idea of a socialist economy was unclear.

The key concept of 'the social ownership of the means of production' served as a rationale for varied and contradictory solutions. It was used by Otto Neurath in his model of the socialist natural economy; it was declared as a constitutional principle for the command economy; and it was introduced in the Yugoslavian workers' self-management system. The vagueness of crucial socialist ideas allowed a practice which was, as Bottomore precisely describes, the antithesis of individualism, even though the inventors of these ideas had deeply held beliefs that socialism would bring liberation and emancipation. The whole socialist experience shows clearly the importance of the warning expressed by Austro-Marxists, especially by Otto Bauer. Summing them up one can conclude that the only possible socialism is one which could guarantee workers' participation in decision making.

An essential part of Bottomore's analysis refers to socialist planning. The author recalls the historical debate between socialists and liberals, and also presents his remarks about the practical experience in this area. Bottomore's key thesis is that initially socialist planning was economically and socially effective but later it lost its efficiency because of external factors. In my opinion this view is not correct. Socialist planning has always been in the hands of communist rulers and was an instrument of their dictatorship. Hence its failures gradually arose from its very essence. Social progress, in the course of socialist development, was checked because of the central features of the real-world existing system. To say that social policy and planning achievements might not always match the aims due to economic constraints is only "part of the truth", since these constraints inevitably derive from the mechanisms of socialist planning. In retrospect, it is of course easy to state that the prominent critics of the idea of economic planning - Ludwig von Mises and Friedrich A Hayek - were right in the debate with debate with Oskar Lange. However, this does not mean that we should reject the idea completely. A further dispute should not focus on whether to plan or not, but on what kind of planning system is feasible and effective in social and economic terms. Certainly, real-world socialism was not such a system.

In this book Bottomore gives a coherent and concise description of the historical origins and roots of the socialist economy. He offers a good account of the way the socialist system was established and what kind of consequences followed. Readers can learn much less, however, about further development of the system and its dynamics. Therefore, important questions - why real-world socialism appeared to be unformable, how it had been eroding in the course of its development - were left unanswered. Perhaps this is because while writing the book the author still believed the reforms undertaken in the socialist countries could be successful. Hence he opposes the views of conservative British and US politicians whose ideas of 'burying socialism' he regarded as fantasy. But a fantasy that came true. So history wrote an epilogue to Bottomore's book. In this sense, to some extent, this book is evidence that Tom Bottomore is the next on a long list of socialist thinkers who shared illusions.

But the sharing of illusions is unavoidable if we are to direct our thoughts into the future to build a better life. Only those who share such illusions can liberate human activity and creativity. Therefore, I will follow Tom Bottomore by repeating his confession: 'No one can predict with any accuracy exactly what kind of world human beings will inhabit a hundred years from now, if they still have a world to inhabit; but we can at least be confident, I think, that the nineteenth-century vision of socialism has become an enduring part of the furniture of the human mind, and that the socialist idea and socialist practice, however greatly modified by new experience, will remain powerfully effective for a long time to come'.

Post-Kenesian Study Group

Anyone interested in finding out details of the 1991-2 programme for the Post-Keynesian Study Group should write to either Professor Philip Arestis, Department of Applied Economics, The Polytechnic of East London, Longbridge Road, Dagenham, Essex RM8 2AS, or Dr Victoria Chick, Department of Political Economy, University College London, London WC1.

Association for Evolutionary Economics

EAPE has close ties with the US-based Association for Evolutionary Economics (AFEE), sponsors of the long-standing Journal of Economic Issues. Individual membership of AFEE, including a subscription to the journal costs $25.00 annually (students $12.50, institutions $30.00). Members outside North America add $5.00. Remittances to: F Gregory Hayden, Department of Economics, University of Nebraska, Lincoln, Nebraska 68588, USA.
Recent Publications by EAEPE Members

The following publications are authored, in whole or in part, by members of EAEPE. This regular feature of the Newsletter is intended to disseminate information throughout the Association. Please send details of recent publications to the Newsletter Editor. EAEPE members are shown in bold type.

George Blazyca, Thames Polytechnic, UK

Tom Bottomore, University of Sussex, UK

Augusto Cusinato, Instituto Universitario di Architettura di Venezia, Italy


Michael Dietrich, Newcastle upon Tyne Polytechnic, UK

Kurt Dofper, University of St Gallen, Switzerland


Hartmut Eichenhaus, Universität Konstanz, Germany


Andre Gunder Frank, Universität van Amsterdam, Netherlands


*A Theoretical Introduction to 5,000 Years of World System History*, Review (Binghamton), 13(2), Spring 1990.


Blocking the Black Debt Hole in the 1990s* and debate, *Futures Research Quarterly*, special issue, 6(1), Spring 1990.


John Groenewegen, Erasmus University, Rotterdam, The Netherlands

with B Dankbaar & H Schenk: *Recent economic developments and the prospects of industrial organization*, in Dankbaar, Groenewegen & Schenk, op cit.


*Hervormingen in de Sovjet Unie*, *Economische Statistische Berichten*, 75(3741), 1990.

Geo Hodgson, Newcastle upon Tyne Polytechnic, UK


M Peter van der Hoek, Erasmus University, Netherlands

*Openbare financiën en (de)centralisatie*, *Economisch en Statistisch Bulletin*, 75(3778), 1990.

*Fineties van de overheid*, *Finnancieel Overheidsmanagement*, 3(1), 1990.


Werner Pascha, University of Freiburg, Germany
*Dritte Welt im Aufbruch – Ostasiatische Schwellenländer als neue wirtschaftliche Entwicklungspole?*, in D Cassel (ed),
Review of Political Economy

EAPE has close but informal links with the Review of Political Economy, including a reduced price for EAPE members. Forthcoming issues will include the following:

**Volume 3, number 3, July 1991**
- Stefano Zamagni, ‘Hicks on capital and growth’
- Fabio Petri, ‘Hick’s recantation of the temporary equilibrium method’
- Warren Young, ‘The early reactions to Value and Capital: critics, critiques and correspondence in comparative perspective’
- Victoria Chick, ‘Hicks and Keynes on liquidity preference: a methodological approach’
- Jim Ford, ‘Uncertainty, liquidity preference and portfolio choice: aspects of the Hicklian approach’
- Gerard Meier, ‘Pareto, Edgeworth, and Hicks: the education of an economist’

Obituary for Ludwig Lachman by Stephen Bohn

**Volume 3, number 4, October 1991**
- Amitai Etzioni, ‘A socio-economic view of re-development’
- Donald & Grazia Gillies, ‘Intersubjective probability and economics’
- Michael Dietrich, ‘European integration and industrial policy’
- Vivienne Brown, ‘On Keynes’s inverse relationship between real wages and employment: a debate over excess capacity’
- Michael Perelman, ‘Liquidity demand and investment’

Conversation with Israel Kirzner

Book reviews and newsletter.

ROPE will feature a special issue on GLS Shackle in 1992 along with a conversation with Kenneth Boulding, plus plenty of interesting material.

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Andrea Salanti, Università degli Studi di Bergamo, Bergamo, Italy.


Günther Schmid, Wissenschaftszentrum Berlin für Sozialforschung, Germany


Peter Süderbaum, Swedish University of Agricultural Sciences, Uppsala


‘Economics in relation to environment, agriculture and rural development: a non-traditional approach to project evaluation’, *Report 31, Swedish University of Agricultural Sciences, Department of Economics*. 
Association for Evolutionary Economics
ESSAY COMPETITION on
Theoretical or Applied Institutional Economics

AFEE will award up to two $1,000 prizes for the best essays on any aspect of theoretical or applied institutional economics. The winning paper(s) will be submitted to the editorial review process for possible publication in the *Journal of Economic Issues*.

All submissions should be sent in quadruplicate, by October 1, 1991, to:
Association for Evolutionary Economics
Department of Economics, University of Nebraska-Lincoln, Lincoln, Nebraska 68588-0479.

The awards will be announced at the annual AFEE meetings. These awards are available to graduate students and to those who have received a graduate degree within the last three years. Essays should be no longer than 30 double-spaced typed pages, and consistent with the *Journal of Economic Issues* house style.

Sixth International Conference on
Workers’ Self Management

Cornell University, Ithaca, New York, August 8-11, 1991

Topics: economic democracy; transitions: East & West; theory & empirical studies; workers’ cooperatives.

For information: Prof. Jan Svejnar, IAFESM Coordinator, Economics Dept., University of Pittsburgh, Pittsburgh, PA 15260, USA

Revue du M.A.U.S.S.

This review is committed to anti-utilitarianism in the social sciences. For details contact:
Alain Callié, 3 Avenue du Maine, 75017 Paris, France (note the change of address).

Thames Papers in Political Economy

A new series of papers produced by the Schools of Social Sciences and Humanities at Thames Polytechnic, UK aimed at stimulating public discussion of practical issues in a radical and broadly interpreted Political Economy.

Now available:

D Rosati, ‘The Polish to Capitalism: a critical appraisal of the “Balcrowicz plan”’;

R Martin, ‘Inter-ethnic conflict in Soviet Azerbaijan’;

K Williams, J Williams & T Cutler, ‘Building Europe? Jacques Delors and his plan for EMU’.

Contributions are welcome and should be sent to the editors at the address below. Papers are available (£2 each or £5 per annum, three issues) from:

Mrs Pam Warricker, School of Social Sciences, Thames Polytechnic, Churchill House, Wellington Street, Woolwich, London SE18 6PF, UK. Tel: 081 316 8915.

THE ASSOCIATION FOR
INSTITUTIONAL THOUGHT

AFIT is a US-based Association with close ties to the Association for Evolutionary Economics. It encourages and fosters the development of institutional thought within the tradition of Thorstein Veblen, John Dewey, Clarence Ayres, John Commons, Wesley Mitchell and others. Its 1991 conference will be held in Reno, Nevada. For further information about AFIT contact Professor James Swaney, Department of Economics, Wright State University, Dayton, Ohio 45435, USA.

Institutionalism in Question


The aim of this conference is to evaluate the methodological contributions of the Institutionalist approach to economic thought in its multiple manifestations.

The following themes are planned: institutionalism and the historical criticism of economic theory; various national forms of institutionalism; institutionalism and evolutionist approaches; the institutionalist analysis of money in the French tradition; institutionalism and the origins of quantitative economics; institutionalism and the economic theory of institutions.

Papers will be in either French or English. Further details: Colloque Charles Gide, Secrétariat du Conseil Scientifique, Faculté des Sciences Economique, 14 Avenue Jules-Ferry, 13621 AIX-EN-PROVENCE CEDEX, France.

Society for the Advancement of Socio-Economics

4th Annual Conference March 27-29, 1992

CALL FOR PAPERS

SASE is a non-partisan organization seeking to advance an encompassing understanding of economic behaviour, and more generally choice behaviour. The fourth annual conference is being held at the University of California at Irvine. Those wishing to prepare a session, write to us with your proposal. Others interested in participating must contact session chairpersons directly (contact SASE for a list). For more information on the conference or SASE in general contact:

SASE, 714H Gelman Library, 2130 H Street, NW, Washington DC 20052, USA. Tel: (202) 994-8167.

European Association for Bioeconomic Studies

The EABS was set up on May 5, 1990. Its aims and objectives are:

1. To promote the study and application of bioeconomics, with particular reference to the work of Nicholas Georgescu-Roegen.

2. To safeguard the environment, and to be concerned with the accelerated "entropization" of the limited resources of our planet.

3. To promote the exchange and diffusion of information on bioeconomics and related topics.

EABS's first conference, "Entropy and Bioeconomics" is being held in Rome, 28-30 November 1991.

For details of any matters to do with EABS contact: Korina Muller, Secretary General EABS, 11 Via Larga, 1-20122 Milan, Italy.
EAEPE 1991 CONFERENCE
The Evolution of Mixed Economies: East and West. 7-9 November, BAWAG Vienna.

SITURDAY 9 NOVEMBER
09.00-10.30
1. C Pitelis 'Theory of capitalist institutional crisis'
   W Kwasnicki 'Longrun development, equilibrium state
   and supernormal profit'
2. A Sinkovics 'The role of the state in the transition process'
   A Wojtyna 'In search of a new economic role of the state in
   the post-socialist countries'
3. K Cowling 'Industrial integration, East and West'
   G Harte & R Sugden 'Cooperation in the European Com-
   munity to regulate transnational corporations'
4. V Walsh 'Technological change and economic growth in
   the chemical industry'
   C Driver 'Structural change and technical change under
   corporatism and Thatcherism'
11.00-12.30
1. B Nooteboom 'A postmodern philosophy of markets'
   M Jacobacci 'A critical review of institutionalist approach
   to labour market segmentation'
2. K Val'Tukh 'Information theory of value and some prob-
   lems of economic reforms in the USSR'
   I Peaucelle 'Price and money'
3. A Tylecote 'Core-periphery inequalities in European inte-
   gration, east and west'
   J Bauer 'European integration and the changing mix of
   the mixed economy'
4. W Cole & J Mogab 'The continuous improvement firm'
   WB Seal 'Corporate governance and the UK electronics
   industry'
13.45-15.15
1. J Foster 'Time and process in economics'
   J O'Brien 'Darwinism and evolutionary economics'
2. H Brezinski 'The concept of hysteresis and the change of
   economic systems'
   K Nielsen 'The visible handshake'
3. T Szirma 'Hungary's transition'
   S Singer-Kosanovic 'Chaos in economic thought and eco-
   nomic pluralism in practice'
4. P Guerrieri 'Technological capability and international
   trade performance'
   B Verspagen 'Technological change, specialisation and
   growth rate differentials'
15.45-17.15
1. L Doyal & I Gough 'Human needs in theory and practice'
   L Houmanidis 'Methodology and principles of individuali-
   zation and sociality in the evolution of economic thought'
2. J Hausner 'In systemic vacuum'
   J Gorniak 'Out of corporatism'
3. K Hagedorn 'Transformation of socialist agricultural sys-
   tems'
   A Chilosi 'The impact on employment of institutional
   transformation in E Europe and the tasks of social policy'
4. A Reati 'Are we at the beginning of a new long term
   expansion induced by technological change?'
   L Magnusson & G Marklund 'Institutions and technical
   change in the 20th century'
17.45-19.00 EAEPE members meeting
20.00 Conference Dinner and speech by T Kowalik 'The great
   transformation in Poland'

THURSDAY 7 NOVEMBER
14.00-18.00 Registration
15.00-17.00 EAEPE Steering Committee Meeting

FRIDAY 8 NOVEMBER
09.00-09.15 Opening remarks: EAEPE General secretary
09.15-10.30 Guest speaker: Kazimierz Laski 'The Transition
   from Command to Planned Economies'
11.00-12.30
1. G Hodgson 'Commodity variation and the evolution of
   money'
   S Parsons 'Evolution, the economy and the environment'
2. J Angresano 'How useful is the notion of a mixed economy?
   S Crepantti 'The advent of the capitalist utopia'
3. T Balabanov 'The impact of the sweeping changes in E
   Europe on their energy sector'
   F Dietz & J van der Straaten 'The polluter-pays-principle
   and sustainable development'
4. K Bayer 'Public ownership and control'
   R J Pederson 'The preconditions for a successful develop-
   ment and application of high tech during the next decade'
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