

Philip Mirowski and Dieter Plehwe, eds., *The Road from Mont Pèlerin: The Making of the Neoliberal Thought Collective* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 2009), pp. vi, 469, \$55.00. ISBN 978-0-674-03318-4.

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Mirowski and Plehwe's collection of eleven essays on the activities of members of the Mont Pèlerin Society (MPS) in Europe, North America, and South America provides further evidence of the tectonic shift in the history of economics brought about by the application of the methods of science studies. The essays in this volume push aside any temptation to treat social science as something akin to a scientific research program; indeed, scientific pursuits here are no different from policy advocacy, fundraising, constituency building, or other such activities. In other words, *The Road from Mont Pèlerin* situates MPS social science as simply part of the activities of a social movement. The title signals the book's orientation: when the leadership came down from the mountain in April 1947, they went on to create a movement that aimed to reframe every aspect of economic, political, and social life in the modern world.

While they may have been the inheritors of the disparate, and sometimes even oppositional, elements of Europe's liberal tradition, the members of MPS became a "thought collective" that would forge a new liberalism for the new world they inhabited—neoliberalism. In its three sections, the collection provides a wealth of material on the relation of neoliberalism to the varied European liberal traditions that preceded it (Part I); the changes that occurred within MPS over the best strategies to pursue with regard to central issues in the postwar world—unions, monopolies, economic development, and business conservatism (Part II); and the MPS's action plan (Part III), which has used Latin America in particular as its testing ground.

I cannot possibly provide commentary on all the avenues of research the volume contributes to in the space of this review, but I can encourage those interested in topics such as the following to examine it: the transmission of classical liberalism into the latter part of the twentieth century; ordoliberalism in the aftermath of MPS; the role of the MPS in pushing apart the strands of French liberalism that had been held together uneasily; differences among the European liberal traditions; the (sometimes abrupt) change in accounts of European economic and political history; changes (sometimes dramatic) in the perceptions of unions and monopolies (hint: the perception of one improved while the other deteriorated); changing liberal perspectives on the role of the state; the role of neoliberal social scientists in public policy making; the warming of the business community to neoliberal thinking and of neoliberals to the business community; the funding sources of MPS activities; connections among social science, "popular" writing in media outlets, and social activism; the role of MPS members in the evolution of economic development thinking and programs; Chile and Peru as neoliberal social experiments; and the MPS role in reinventing the international economic order. While the role of key individuals associated with the MPS is often emphasized—F.A. Hayek and Milton Friedman, for instance—*The Road from Mont Pèlerin* reminds us that social movements succeed by drawing in many others who undertake the work that actually drives the movement forward. The book is full of stories of those individuals and related organizations that formed strategies, carried out the logistics and legwork, and brought legislators and others into contact with MPS ideas. In other words, if you work on post-war history of economics, there is almost no reason not to read this book.

There are three topics arising from Mirowski and Plehwe's volume that I will comment on briefly. The first is methodological. The term "thought collective" is actively used here because the history told is not that of individuals but of a movement. The early literature on thought collectives has emphasized the rules that bound the group tightly together—they had a common purpose under which all other motives, ideas, and activities were subsumed. The literature assumes rigid controls that prevent other motives and ideas from intruding on the movement's purpose, and treats the collective as a unified entity. The history of MPS is full of debate and tension, despite general agreement with its stated aims. Mirowski and Plehwe, therefore, in their introduction and selection of essays, provide a more nuanced understanding: while acting collectively toward a set of common aims (one might say that Lionel Robbins gave the meeting on Mont Pelerin six aims rather than ten commandments), multiple motives and differing ideas have always occurred. But while they acknowledge the tensions and differing strands within neoliberalism (especially in Part I, examining the background of those strands of liberalism), the volume still tends to shy away from the richly textured history that would emerge from further focus on these tensions after about 1950. The choice to tell the history of the MPS as the history of a social movement, then, was methodological, but with historiographic implications: we are asked to watch the functioning of a movement, rather than the interaction among people. In many places in the book, individuals become role players: the author tells us that a particular person—doesn't really matter who—stepped forward to work out the implications of the "thought collective" on a particular topic, or to undertake a particular problem. Ironically, then, the history of MPS as a social movement in this volume has stripped away people almost as much as the history of neoclassicism as a progressive scientific research program did thirty years ago. I found myself asking: would telling stories about the individuals undermine the story of the unified "collective"?

A good example of where my question led me is my second topic. *The Road from Mont Pelerin* contains almost nothing about the relation between some members of the MPS and the various strands of European Christianity that were friendly to liberalism. Not only at its founding, but throughout its history, there has been a constant dialogue between MPS and religious groups in Europe, North America, and South America. Many economists and theologians tend to think of economics and religion as practically antithetical, and in the early post-war period they became increasingly opposed. I have been told of a small conference in the 1970s that brought together some MPS members, including Karl Brunner, and a number of liberation theologians from Latin America. Needless to say, the meeting did not go well, perhaps reinforcing the notion that the spread of the liberal order would simultaneously mean the spread of secularism (an argument Frank Knight made at the first MPS meeting). But that is not how the history actually went. The MPS initially included members of strands of European liberalism that recognized strong connections with Europe's Christian traditions (Part I does include some discussion of this), these connections remained, and the movement came to see religion (especially Christianity) as a potential partner in the opposition to the totalitarian threat. As MPS expanded, it also brought in more members with strong religious ties, especially in the Americas. Thus, it is perhaps not an accident that the Catholic University of Chile became the intellectual home of the Chicago Boys, the spread of neoliberalism in South America goes hand-in-hand with the revitalization of conservative Catholicism and the spread of evangelical Protestantism (for example, see

Sherman 1997), and the warming of relations between North American evangelicalism and MPS can be linked with the movement's warming toward business conservatism since the 1970s. I searched the volume for any treatment beyond mere mention of names or branches of Christianity that might provide insight into these connections, but found practically nothing (vague comments regarding Alexander Rüstow's connections are about as far as it goes). One would be hard pressed to tell the history of many social movements without mention of their spiritual and institutional relations with religious movements. The absence of such a story here ironically makes the volume as historically sterile as a history of classical economics without reference to its surrounding spiritual and theological milieu (for example, see Waterman 1991).

My final question regards the standard by which one is to evaluate the argument of this volume. As historians of economics, our immediate response to that question is: the argument should be measured against the evidence of history. And many of the book's historical claims will be so measured as we continue to work on the history of post-war social science. But the book itself appears to seek a different kind of evaluation; the history told is that of a movement whose influence can be measured in terms of improvements and deteriorations of human welfare, political participation, and conflict. Are all aspects of the movement's history to be judged by the outcomes of the movement as a whole (remember their use of the term "thought collective")? The question becomes especially important given Mirowski's postface, which uses the historical analysis for critical purposes, and implies that the movement is a threat to democratic movements, human welfare, and perhaps even to freedom itself.

But is an historical accounting of the MPS's aims, theories, and strategies sufficient for such a charge? And does the historical investigation stand or fall on our evaluation of the social movements' ability to change the economic and political conditions of the world? After all, shortly before the publication of this volume, Andrei Shleifer published his scathing review of Joseph Stiglitz's *Stability with Growth* (2006)—itself a condemnation of neoliberalism. Shleifer argued that the period in which the MPS had significant influence on economic policy around the world (1980 to 2005) also saw real declines in absolute poverty, increases in the standard of living almost everywhere, and improvements in key components of human welfare, as well as greater democracy (Shleifer 2009). If I agree with Shleifer, must I discard everything in Mirowski and Plehwe? Of course not, but at least our historical work on the role of the MPS in post-war social science will have to disentangle what Mirowski and Plehwe strive to weave together: ideas, individuals, organizations, and events. Then the story of a "thought collective" can become a story of real people thinking and acting in history.

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Simon J. Cook, *The Intellectual Foundations of Alfred Marshall's Economic Science. A Rounded Globe of Knowledge* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2009), pp. xviii, 331, £52.25. ISBN 978-0-76008-9.

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This volume on the intellectual foundations of Marshall's economics evaluates the philosophical and historical studies undertaken by Marshall during the decade and a half following his completion of the Mathematical Tripos in 1865. It almost totally neglects Marshall's early economic studies. This signals a lack of economic knowledge on Cook's part, implied in the "acknowledgements" (pp. xiii–xiv) of previous teachers, and no formal education in the history of economics. Cook's background informs the quality of this book, which, on his own account (p. 3), is deficient as a history of economic thought study. When, a quarter of a century ago, I commenced my serious Marshall studies with a biography in mind, I trod most of the territory covered by Cook, but paid far greater attention to Marshall's early economic studies in chapters 5 and 6 of my Marshall biography.

Cook's study is divided into three parts, prefaced by an introduction and ending with an epilogue. Part I provides the context of Marshall's "apprenticeship," consisting of two chapters respectively entitled "Continuity and Consensus; the State of Long-term Memories" and "A Liberal Education." Part II, "Dualist Moral Science (1867–1871)" has three chapters: "Mental Crisis" (chapter 3), "The Way of All Flesh" (chapter 4) and "Political Economy" (chapter 5). Chapter 5 very appropriately concentrates on J.S. Mill's political economy, "the wages [fund] question," and "advanced political economy," and evaluates Marshall's early essays on value and wages. Its section on advanced political economy (pp. 159–176) introduces economists other than Mill who were influential on the young Marshall, but does so in a very incomplete way. There is no mention of Cournot and Von Thünen, let alone of Roscher, Mangoldt, and Rau (the last two significant in the context of 'curves' in economic analysis). Part III, "Neo-Hegelian Political Economy 1872–1873," contains two chapters: "A Philosophical History" (chapter 6) and "Missing Links: The Education of the Working Class" (chapter 7). The epilogue and conclusion highlights "the rounded globe of knowledge" Marshall had become by the early 1870s, with its implications for "social philosophy and economic science." It also portrays "the genesis of 'organisation'" as a particularly useful and novel concept developed by Marshall for explaining aspects of contemporary production and distribution theory.

Two conclusions are drawn from this study. The first, and more controversial one, is that Marshall retained a strong belief in idealist philosophy, particularly that of Hegel, for the whole of his life, and that this influenced his economics sufficiently to describe Marshall as a "neo-Hegelian." Secondly, Cook suggests that Marshall's