

And why have we not had a major biography of Joan Robinson? Virginia Woolf is a biographical industry unto herself, with new studies emerging every year or two. Robinson is a similarly fascinating figure, and as the editors have demonstrated, there really is a lot of information “out there.” The editors, who have at this point a fine sense of Cambridge and sources concerning its development, and its complex social communities, are well placed to undertake a project like that. We certainly have, for Cambridge, Groenewegen’s biography of Marshall to foster some belief that this kind of project can be completed with verve and scholarly acumen.

Failing to employ these wonderful treasures in the production of historically meaningful studies, but rather continuing to employ them as weapons in a fight that can never be won against mainstream economics, is a recipe in my view for sub-disciplinary suicide. Or at least sub-disciplinary shunning by the mainstream which already halfway believes that any historian is, at heart, a heterodox critic of mainstream economics, and therefore not “one of us.”

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CAMBRIDGE BEFORE E-MAIL

There are at least 2,855 extant letters written to or received from among John Maynard Keynes, Richard Kahn, Joan Robinson, Roy Harrod, Dennis Robertson, Piero Sraffa, A. C. Pigou, Nicholas Kaldor, Gerald Shove, and Friedrich Hayek between Pigou’s first surviving letter to Keynes in 1905 and Keynes’s death in 1946. Of these, only 800 have been published in *The Collected Writings of John Maynard Keynes* (1971-89) or *The Collected Interwar Papers and Correspondence of Roy Harrod* (2003). The individuals chosen are to some extent obvious if one is interested in the evolution of ideas among members of a group, although the choice of some of the non-Cambridge outsiders, particularly Nicholas Kaldor (who is even listed as one of Pigou’s “younger colleagues” in the title to chapter 13) and F. A. Hayek need more justification than the editors provide, when they exclude, for example, James Meade. It just can’t be the availability of interesting letters. As well, the inclusion of Hayek among the “older” generation is forced: he was born two years after Austin Robinson, a year after Sraffa, in the same year as Kalecki and a year before Maurice Dobb, all of whom are regarded as “younger” generation by the editors.

The existence of the letters reflects in part the structure of academic life in Cambridge, where throughout the period under consideration, economists were isolated in their respective colleges or at home without access to a central faculty building. Except for King’s, no college had more than one economist fellow and many colleges had none. The college structure, the varied demands of college teaching and administration, and the emphasis on the privacy of one’s college rooms made casual, dropping-in contact almost impossible, while the existence of a good internal university and inter-collegiate mail system made written communication easy in a world where telephones were often not available or regarded as novel. External to the university, the Royal Mail with its multiple daily collections and deliveries performed

a similar facilitating function to the internal university postal system. Only the recent arrival of e-mail has made frequent written communication easier than it was in the period covered by this volume, although the contents are probably less eloquent in a generation less used to writing, and the documents less likely to be saved and filed.

The organization of the volume is straightforward. After an introduction by the editors, the correspondence between pairs of correspondents is examined by the editors and/or one of their eight collaborators: Daniele Besomi, Pascal Bridel, Anna Carabelli, Bruna Ingrao, Nerio Naldi, Fabio Ranchetti, Eleonora Sanfilippo, and Claudio Sardonì. The correspondence between each of the individuals and Keynes has a chapter. There follow three chapters dealing with the Kahn-Robinson correspondence and then their separate correspondence with Harrod, Kaldor, and Sraffa. One then gets chapters on the correspondence of the younger Cambridge generation, which for some reason includes Kaldor, with Pigou, Shove, Robertson, and Hayek. In each chapter, after an introduction, the discussion is basically chronological, emphasizing the nature of the relationships involved and the intellectual highlights, although in the case of Pigou and Keynes there is also a discussion of their “managing” Cambridge economics. Each chapter concludes with a complete list of the correspondence, its location, and its previous publication history.

The discussions are naturally well-informed and make good use of the secondary literature to which the authors have already made significant contributions. Moreover, unlike most collective volumes, the papers are integrated and cross-referenced. The volume is illuminating on a number of points. Daniele Besomi brings out clearly Harrod’s peripheral role in the development of *The General Theory* and argues convincingly that there is a marked difference between Harrod’s discussion of Keynes’s system at the Oxford meeting of the Econometric Society in September 1936 and the IS-LM papers by Hicks and Meade, thus casting doubt on the existing literature. The papers inevitably provide useful sidelights on relationships, such as that of Bruna Ingrao’s article on Keynes’s with Hayek, which have been ignored by biographers of both men. Similarly Eleonora Sanfilippo’s nuanced discussion of the Keynes-Robertson relationship as revealed in their correspondence makes a substantial addition to the literature. Finally, the ever-shadowy figure of Gerald Shove is filled-in to a greater degree by both Anna Carabelli and Annalisa Rosselli.

Overall, the volume highlights the insularity of Cambridge economics during this period. Its central figures were particularly resistant to ideas coming from the outside, even if they were, as in the case of Sraffa, put forward by an insider. If, as in the criticisms of the *Treatise on Money*, outside criticisms were echoed by insiders, they carried some weight. Moreover, if anything, the central figures in this volume became even more insular as time passed: Cambridge became divided and former insiders became outsiders. Dennis Robertson, who eventually removed himself from the fray in 1938, was in part an exception, as was evidenced by his cordial relations, both social and intellectual, with Lionel Robbins. Of course there were occasional forays to instruct or convert outsiders—Kahn with Harrod and Joan Robinson with Kaldor are the best examples here.

The editors emphasize the lack of correspondence regarding economic policy, except during World War II. In part, this reflects, as they remark, political differences. However, it also reflects that fact that the younger generation, other than Roy Harrod, was not that publicly involved in policy debates before 1939. Even after 1939, when,

with the exception of Sraffa, they all became more involved, civil service boundaries, official secrecy and, in the case of Kaldor who was involved in the creation of Beveridge's *Full Employment in a Free Society* (1944), outright bans on contact, prevented much discussion of such issues. The picture would have appeared different with other possible players such as James Meade.

Unfortunately, there are a several slips: among them the idea that ninety percent of British consumption in 1939 was imported (p. 30); the suggestion that Keynes and Pigou somehow (we are given no evidence) "engineered" Robertson's appointment as the latter's successor in Cambridge (p. 151); the extent of Keynes's testimony before the Chamberlin-Bradbury Committee on the amalgamation of the currency and Bank of England note issues (p. 162); the idea that Robertson had some role, either as editor or referee, in the acceptance by the *Economic Journal* of Pigou's 1937 paper on "Real and Money Wages" (pp. 158, 177, 378); the organization of the anti-conscription movement in Britain during World War I (pp. 201–202); the underlying logical structure of Keynes's 1939 proposals for "Paying for the War" (p. 224); the muddling of the Beveridge proposals for social insurance and those for full employment in the discussion of the wartime Keynes-Kaldor correspondence (p. 227); the idea that Keynes's "National Self-sufficiency" (1933) was originally published in German rather than English (p. 240); the idea that Hayek attended the joint Cambridge-Oxford-London seminar in the 1930s or that the seminar was always held in London (p. 338).

Nevertheless, the resulting volume is a monument to the fruitfulness of collaborative scholarship. It is unlikely that a single scholar could have managed the task. It also re-emphasizes the very large potential returns to archival research, as I have noted above, for there are substantial possibilities for additional insights even in what many might have thought to be a well-worked-over field subject to diminishing returns.

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THE TWILIGHT OF THE MARSHALLIAN GUILD: THE CULTURE OF CAMBRIDGE ECONOMICS CIRCA 1930

Faust was tormented by the conviction that two forces struggled for possession of his soul. The book under review is the site of a similar struggle. One book—*Economists in Cambridge*—comprises sixteen essays that explore theoretical exchanges and personal relations documented in correspondence of Cambridge economists, much of it unpublished and most of it drawn from the 1930s. Another book—call this "Economists in Cambridge"—begins with more challenging objectives and pursues a less conventional historiography. But it remains unpublished.

Economists in Cambridge: A Study Through Their Correspondence, 1907-1946 leads the reader to expect an account of Cambridge economics from the introduction of the Tripos through the Marshallian ascendancy and the professionalization of the discipline to the death of Keynes. In fact, its scope is much more narrow. The economists in Cambridge are Pigou, Keynes, Shove, Robertson, Sraffa, Kahn, Joan