

This is problematic, and not simply because Hume's critique of induction remains unanswered. Sympathy for inductivism might imply devaluing the role of theory in economic analysis. That this is, of course, not the authors' view is brought out in the quite brilliant third chapter, which seeks to demonstrate that there is not "necessarily a trade-off between theory and history" (47) by exploring the different treatments of the social and historical in Smith, Ricardo, and Marx. This culminates in an outstanding short treatment of Marxian value theory. Yet what would seem to follow from this discussion — that Marxist political economy offers a means of transcending the impoverished polarities of theory and history, deduction and induction — is not pursued in the subsequent narrative. A brief concluding note suggests Milonakis and Fine may have wanted not to foreclose debate about "the rich mixture of options" available to those who reject economic orthodoxy (308). But a more robust articulation of their own preferences might have given the reader a clearer guide through the tangled paths along which neoclassical economics has taken refuge from the world.

ALEX CALLINICOS

European Studies
King's College London
Strand
London WC2R 2LS
alex.callinicos@kcl.ac.uk

The Political Economy of Work, by David A. Spencer. London/New York: Routledge, 2009. \$130.00. Pp. xix, 170.

Work is one of the central activities of human life. It should not take a recession and mass unemployment to put it on the agenda of theoretical debate in economics, but it does. Even in good times, it is remarkable how little discussion there is in the field of economics about the place of work in human life. This book fills a real gap in the literature. It gives an account of the history of economic theories of work from the beginnings of the subject in the 18th century up to the present. Surprisingly, it has no recent competitors.

Throughout its history, as Spencer convincingly shows, mainstream economics has been dominated by a simple orthodoxy. Work is a painful and unpleasant activity; it is a "cost," a "disutility" for the worker. People have a purely instrumental attitude to work. They work only as a means to the end of earning an income and satisfying their material needs. What they want is to consume, preferably without the effort and toil of producing.

These ideas have dominated mainstream economics ever since the birth of the subject. In the pre-classical period, when mercantilist views prevailed, it was a commonplace that workers had to be coerced to work. Low wages and the threat of starvation were believed to be the only effective means of forcing people to work. In the middle and late 18th century, however, classical economists such as Adam Smith and David Hume came to recognise that the positive incentives of high wages can also be effective in motivating people to work. This is a significant change. Nevertheless, the idea that work is a purely instrumental activity remains as a common theme. And this theme is maintained into the neoclassical and marginalist theories that supersede classical economics towards the end of the 19th century.

Some consideration has been given to the specific character of work, the human impact of industrial work, and the division of labor. Smith famously says of the division of labor, of which he was such a strong advocate, that it makes the laborer “as stupid and ignorant as it is possible for a human creature to become” (quoted 19). Similar concern is also expressed by some more humane economists who witnessed and in many respects celebrated the economic effects of the industrial revolution, such as John Stuart Mill and Alfred Marshall.

With the rising influence of the marginalist school from the end of the 19th century, however, the specific character of work gets dropped from the picture altogether. Work is treated simply as an “opportunity cost” for the worker, a sacrifice of time which could otherwise have been devoted to leisure and consumption. Work is regarded simply as lost time; its specific content no longer figures in economic calculation.

These ideas were opposed throughout by powerful voices of social and moral criticism, which condemned these theories and the economic system they served. These criticisms can be traced back at least to Rousseau in the 18th century, though unfortunately he is not covered in this book. Spencer takes up the story with Godwin, an important though often neglected late 18th-century radical political philosopher. He then describes how writers throughout the 19th century held views about work that were radically opposed to those that prevailed in economics. Some early utopian socialists were important critics of the human impact of capitalism and industry. Spencer gives a useful brief summary of the ideas of Fourier, who had a considerable influence on the young Marx. He also describes how Carlyle, coming from a conservative direction, thundered against the “cash nexus” which had come to rule every aspect of life under capitalism. For Carlyle work is a noble and spiritual activity. Ruskin followed him in preaching the “gospel of work” according to which work — all work — is humanly valuable in itself. These writers criticized the degradation brought about

by the advent of modern industry and the division of labor it involves. As Ruskin memorably puts it, in the great industrial cities we “produce everything but men” (quoted 41).

Carlyle and Ruskin were essentially conservative in their outlook. They looked back in a romantic fashion to earlier precapitalist times. But they were important inspirations for William Morris who developed these ideas in a socialist fashion. Marx, of course, is by far the most important critic of classical economics and of capitalism. As Spencer describes, in a brief but reliable summary of his ideas, the concept of alienation is central to the way in which Marx criticizes mainstream economic thinking. Work — productive and creative activity — can and should be a source of fulfilment and self-realization. In capitalist conditions, however, it is made into an alien and hateful activity. In a future society, work can and will be a fulfilling activity, an end in itself.

Spencer also gives a useful survey of other critical accounts of work in capitalist conditions that have been developed within economics. Veblen stressed what he regarded as the “instinct of workmanship.” Other institutional labor economists developed critical ideas about work that had some impact for a while. But their influence in economics declined towards the middle of the last century, as did that of Marxism, leaving marginalism once more pre-eminent.

Spencer ends by describing some recent developments of mainstream economic theory that seem at first to take more notice of the importance of worker satisfaction. In particular, a lot of fanfare has greeted the “economics of happiness,” developed by writers like Layard. Although this approach rejects the view that work should be seen as a mere opportunity cost and grants some place to work satisfaction in economic thought, Spencer convincingly argues that underlying it is the same instrumental and subjective view of the human value of work that has dominated mainstream economics all along.

As Spencer notes, this view of work is not confirmed by studies in other fields. There is abundant evidence from psychology, sociology, anthropology, history, literature and philosophy to question it. Nevertheless, throughout its history, as Spencer observes, mainstream economic theory has been remarkably impervious to ideas from other fields as well as from non-mainstream economics. Why this has been so, however is beyond his scope, which is to describe ideas about work in the writings of mainstream economists and their critics. In the course of doing so he provides a powerful and effective critique of the limitations and inadequacies of mainstream ideas about work. Even more important, he has resurrected and shown the importance of a whole line of critics of mainstream economics and of capitalism — not just Marx,

but many others too — whose work is little known and unjustly ignored, and which will be of increasing relevance in times ahead.

SEAN SAYERS

*School of European Culture and Languages
Cornwallis Building
University of Kent
Canterbury CT2 7NF
United Kingdom
s.p.sayers@kent.ac.uk*

Juden im Zeugenstand: Die Spur des Hans Globke im Gedächtnis von Überlebenden der Schoa, by Erika Schwarz. Schriftenreihe des Centrum Judaicum, ed. Hermann Simon, Volume 8. Berlin/Teetz, Germany: Heinrich & Hentrich, 2009. €32.00. Pp. 260.

The title of this book translates as “Jews in the Witness Stand: Tracking Hans Globke in the Memory of Survivors of the Shoa.” The Nuremberg trials of November 1945 to October 1946 are well known, as is the trial of Adolf Eichmann in Jerusalem in April 1961. Less well known is the trial in absentia of Hans Josef Maria Globke in East Berlin in July 1963 under the auspices of the German Democratic Republic (GDR). Unlike the war criminals who were hanged, Globke at the time of his trial was an undersecretary of state and security advisor to West Germany’s Chancellor Konrad Adenauer and was regarded as the Chancellor’s right hand. Uniquely among the other former Nazis in the government of the Federal Republic of Germany (FRG), Globke had been directly responsible for aspects of the infamous race laws, including the genealogical degrees of Jewishness that would later determine extermination, *e.g.*, “half-breed, quarter-breed, five-eighths Jew,” etc.

Globke had remained relatively free of public taint because, although he had served in the Nazi Ministry of Interior, he had not been a member of the Nazi Party. Apparently his Catholicism and pre-Nazi membership in the Catholic Center Party shielded him. However, Eichmann, who had escaped to Argentina like other fugitives in the “rat line” assisted by the Vatican, could have divulged more damaging information about Globke. Both the CIA, which knew of Eichmann’s whereabouts since at least 1958, and the West German government chose not to pursue Eichmann for this reason. Even after he was found, journalists were pressured to be silent about