

**The Papers of Oskar Morgenstern in the
Manuscript Department,
William R. Perkins Library, Duke University**

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[In 1985 the Duke University Manuscript Department, in conjunction with the Department of Economics, began an *Economists' Papers Project* aimed at preserving the correspondence, writings, and related papers of a select number of distinguished economists, including: Carl Menger, Oskar Morgenstern, Sidney Weintraub, Gregg Lewis, Earl J. Hamilton, Lloyd Metzler, J.J. Spengler, Martin Brofenbrenner, Lawrence Klein, Ken Arrow, Robert Lucas and Lionel McKenzie.

A report by Mason Barnett on the Carl Menger Papers at Duke University was published in the *HETSA Bulletin*, No.13, Winter 1990, pp. 18-24. - Ed.]

The Oskar Morgenstern Papers provide comprehensive documentation of the depth and breadth of Morgenstern's career as a theoretical economist of international fame. The collection spans nearly his entire life, starting as a young scholar in Vienna and continuing to just days before his death. The quantity of original writings in this collection contains a wealth of information on Morgenstern's extensive scientific contributions by documenting his professional associations, the development, acceptance, and application of his theories, and the diversity of his research projects. However, the materials are not exclusively focused on his career alone. The collection also presents evidence of his family life and the close personal friendships he enjoyed with many of his colleagues—which serves to provide a near complete portrait of Morgenstern.

The collection consists of correspondence, diaries and notebooks, subject files, publications, and non-print materials which are described in detail below.

Correspondence, 1918-1939, 1939-1975, 1975-1977

Morgenstern's correspondence documents the development of his professional career and tracks the evolution of his economic theories. The correspondence is both professional and personal, official and routine, as it contains letters to and from relatives, close friends, colleagues, business associates and acquaintances. Correspondence for 1918-1939 and 1975-1977 is arranged in chronological and alphabetical files, while the correspondence from 1939-1975 is currently interfiled with the subject files. From 1918 to the late 1920s the correspondence is almost exclusively incoming and contains more personal letters from friends and relatives than do later files. Around 1925 typed, unsigned carbons of Morgenstern's responses begin to appear. By 1930 the responses are routinely interfiled with the incoming letters and continue this way throughout the remainder of the correspondence. Later correspondence files also contain photo-copies of signed original responses from Morgenstern.

The bulk of the correspondence is with Morgenstern's colleagues. It concerns the exchange of manuscripts for examination; discussion of various economic theories; letters of introduction for students, associates, friends; and comments on academic, political, and economic conditions. Correspondents include J.M. Keynes, Carl Iversen, Erich Heller, Dr. Anton Apold, Karl Menger, Dr. Leonard Bauer, Dr. Dieter Bös, Dr. Victor Kiemböck, Dr. Ernst John, J.M. Clark, Ernst Epstein, Dr. Luigi Einaudi, David Watson, Royal Institute of International Affairs, Laura Spelman Rockefeller Foundation, Statistical Institute for Economic Research and numerous other prominent individuals and organizations.

Major correspondents, for which there is a considerable amount of substantive letters, include the following:

Frank H. Knight, University of Chicago/*Journal of Political Economy*. Includes refereeing of each other's articles, comments on recent publications and research of contemporaries (Menger, Ellis, Keynes, Weber, Viner), discussion of Hayek and Haberler as teachers, comments on international economic conditions. During the 30s Knight tries to help Morgenstern get an appointment at an American University. They are often very critical of each other's work, picking at details and false turns of logic, but at the same time are very encouraging.

Henry M. Andrews, Schroder and Co., London. Includes letters of introduction, exchange of books, discussion of the philosophy of metaphysics and symbolic logic, and Menger. Also included are inquiries of personal, more delicate matters such as marriage, racism (Jews) in Vienna, and faculty/university politics.

Dr. F. A. Hayek, London School of Economics and Political Science, and Dr. Gottfried Haberler, Harvard, Department of Economics. Correspondence with both Hayek and Haberler concerns the exchange of papers and manuscripts, the possibility of working on projects and publications together, references to conditions in Europe and colleagues who have remained, ideas on possible lecture topics.

Evelyn Burns, Columbia University, Faculty of Political Science. Concerns more the details of university and personal life, what they are teaching, reading, and lecturing about, whom they have seen lately and where they go on vacation. Burns' letters are lively, personal and contain considerable discussion and encouragement of Morgenstern's development of economic theories.

Howard S. Ellis, University of Michigan and University of California. Correspondence is both professionally and personally intense. They exchange thought and ideas on their research, describe teaching and class loads, and comment in detail on personal and family life. Morgenstern is quite frank about conditions left behind in Vienna.

Otto Lange, Julius Springer Publishers, Vienna. Concerns the publication of Morgenstern's books and articles, but also the editing of an economics serial publication. Morgenstern continuously makes explicit recommendations to Lange and other Springer officials about specific authors, types of publicity and marketing, appropriate translations for economics publications. In 1933 he advises them to consider buying into English bookstores in order to expand publication in both Europe and the U.S.

Most of the correspondence is in German, especially the earlier writings. There is a considerable amount in French and some Italian.

Major correspondents present in the subject files include, Henry Kissinger, Clive Granger, Ronald Shephard, and William F. Lucas. Those for which there is substantial exchange include the following:

John von Neumann, mathematics professor, Princeton. Concerns the technical aspects of their joint publication, *Theory of Games and Economic Behaviour*, discussion of theories and work of colleagues and details of personal lives.

Gerald Thompson, Carnegie Mellon University. Contains discussions on the two-country model, MT-2, contemporary theories and works of colleagues, and details of book they co-authored, *Mathematical Theory of Expanding and Contracting Economics*.

Carl Morgenstern (Oskar's son), graduate student/teaching assistant in mathematics at the University of Colorado, Boulder. Much personal and professional advice.

E. Marchi, Mathematics Department, University of S. Luis, Argentina. Concerns generalizations of the von Neumann model and assistance with naturalization and employment in the U.S.

N.N. Vorob'ev, Institute of Social Economic Problems of the Academy of Sciences, USSR. Contains person inquiries, information on visits to Soviet Union, Vilnius Conference (1971), and discussion of Russian mathematicians.

Mitsuo Suzuki, Tokyo Institute of Technology. Concerns translation of Morgenstern's work and Japanese contributions to game theory.

Diaries and notebooks, 1908-1977

This group consists of:

Diaries	1917, 1920-1933, 1935, 1938-1977	50 vols
Lesson notebooks	1919-1921	16 vols
Grade sheets	1908-1921	20 items
Calendar	1950	1 vol.
Notebook	1975-1976	1 vol.
Notebook (poems)	n.d.	1 vol.

The diaries form a comprehensive account of Morgenstern's adult life. There are gaps in the earlier years (esp. 1918-1924); however, it is not clear whether these are breaks in his writing or missing volumes. The span from 1938-1977 is complete and includes entries up to the week before his death.

Typical entries include routine accounts of the day's activities, outlines of work plans, current readings, letters received and sent, lectures attended and

given, evaluations of other economists and their work, observations on current political climate and economic situations, and digressions on his own philosophical and economic theories.

The tone of the diaries is personal and expressive. For example, he reveals his feelings towards his wife on their honeymoon, grief at the death of colleague and friend Frank Fetter, impatience at waiting for a response from a publisher, conversations with good friends such as Godel and Haberler.

In this manner he documents his travels throughout Europe, Asia, and the United States. His reflections describe Europe under Hitler's influence and after WWII, America during the depression and WWII, South East Asia and the arms race during the 70s. He often describes the implications of these conditions on international political and economic systems. All but one volume is written in German: the earlier volumes are written in a combination of old and new German script. All are clear and legible.

Lesson books consist of notes taken from lectures and essays written for assignments. These are also written in a combination of old and new German script, but the handwriting is clear and legible.

Grade sheets and report cards give a complete account of subjects studied and comments by Morgenstern's teachers. The notebook 1975-1976 consists of rough notes, possibly from lectures or research. The calendar is merely a type of appointment book which lists lectures, travel arrangements, deadlines, etc. All of these are in German.

The notebook of wedding poems is written by Morgenstern's mother, Margarete Teichler. The volume is legible, but written completely in old German script. It appears (from scraps of paper laid in the volume) that Morgenstern was using this book to practise his own penmanship at an early age.

Subject files, ca. 1936-1977

These files document the development of Morgenstern's political and economic theories. Over half of the contents of these files are handwritten manuscripts reflecting original thought. The files are well-organized; the writings are clear and legible. The bulk of these writings are in German.

Materials contained in the subject files include lecture notes for classes taught at Princeton and NYU; research data and statistics; working papers and articles written by Morgenstern and others; papers presented, addresses, and memorials; notes on economic and political philosophy and theory; reactions to theories of colleagues; some printed materials (newspaper articles, books, periodicals); testimony before congressional subcommittees; research reports by Morgenstern, von Neumann, and others; bibliographies; research proposals; student theses; and correspondence. (Correspondence contained in these files is described under the Correspondence section in this paper.)

Subjects covered by these materials include (but are not limited to) game theory history; deterrence strategy; Dartmouth Mathematics Project (1955); MT:2; models of exchange; prediction of economic, political, and military power; Sawhill proposal; European expansion of Mathematica; university business (departmental matters such as finances, contracts, proposals); U.S. Strategic Bombing Survey; international cycles; foreign banking systems; indifference curves; demand curves; gold in Europe; computation of economic progress; history of economic doctrines; and Plowshares.

These files contain reference materials, notes, and manuscript versions of numerous publications or speeches including the following: Critical Points in Economic Theory; Business Cycles; Game Theory; Demand Curves; Demand Theory; Inflation in a Controlled Economy; Studies in Game Theory; Principles of Economic Liberation; Descriptive and Predictive Theory;

Contemporary Economic Theory; Mathematical Theories of Expanding and Contracting Economics; and Maxims of Behavior.

Also reflected in these files is Morgenstern's relationship with the following institutions, organizations, and publishers: Mathematica; Institute for International Economics Study; Sandia Corporation; *Kyklos*; Chase Econometric Assoc., Inc.; Tokyo Institute of Technology; U.S. Atomic Energy Commission; Institute for Advanced Studies in Vienna; National Bureau of Economic Research; Analysis Support Center; U.S. Arms Control and Disarmament Agency; Office of Naval Research; National Space Institute (Werner von Braun); Prognos; *American Economic Review*; *Journal of Political Economy*; and the RAND Corporation.

Printed Materials/Publications, 1923-1977

Coupled with miscellaneous printed materials scattered throughout the subject files, this series provides a comprehensive, if not complete, set of Morgenstern's publications. Included are articles, books, book chapters, book reviews, biographies, obituaries, addresses and research reports authored by Morgenstern. These may be found in the following formats: annotated copies, galleys, translations (English, German, Italian, French, Japanese), reprints, entire publication in which article was printed, handwritten drafts. Related correspondence is also present in some of these files.

Non-print materials, ca. 1960s-1970s

These are six 16mm movie films and one reel of audio tape. Although materials have not been individually viewed or heard, they appear to be recordings featuring Morgenstern. Three film reels are simply titled "Oskar Morgenstern" and are distributed by a German company. One film reel is

identified as a Today show titled "Question of National Defense", another "Le Futur Sans Erreur". One film reel is unidentified. The audio tape is labeled as "T.C. Merkle Memorial Lecture, Lawrence Radiation Laboratory, Ca. (1968)".