Short cv of Ludwig von Mises 1881-1973

Von Mises, born in Lemberg (Lviv nowadays) was first an adherent of the Historische Schule, but after reading Carl Menger's Grundsätze der Volkswirtschaftslehre (Foundations of Economics) and attending seminars of the former finance minister Eugen von Böhm-Bawerk his views changed considerably. In 1906 he obtained a doctorate in law and economics.

In 1909 he started working for the Austrian Chamber of Commerce, which at that time was able to exert a great influence on the government. He would eventually continue to work there until 1938. During the First World War, Von Mises was an officer in the Habsburg artillery and also an economic adviser to the war department. His experiences at the front contributed to his later aversion to state socialism. In the interwar period he was one of the few German-speaking intellectuals who advocated classical liberalism.

Von Mises took up a chair (international economic relations) in 1934 at the Institut Universitaire des Hautes Études Internationales in Geneva, Switzerland. There he married Margit Serény Herzfeld, mother of author Gitta Serény, in 1938. Because of the Nazi’s von Mises emigrated to New York in the United States in 1940, to accept American citizenship in 1946. He was never able to hold a paid academic position: he was also only a visiting professor at New York University. He has had a lot of work as a consultant, including with the National Bureau of Economic Research and the Foundation for Economic Education.

See also *Legacy of Hayek* by Peter Boettke.

His legacy is enormous. See his bibliography.

Short Explanation of the Austrian School

To begin with, it is useful to briefly summarize von Mises' methodological views. According to Von Mises, mainstream economists are mistaken in modeling economics as a natural science. According to von Mises, economics is not an empirical science but the study of the logical implications of human action ('praxeology'). Von Mises argues against the quantitative models of the neo-classicals the primacy of a priori knowledge and logic: economics starts with a number of (indisputable) principles about human action and from this a whole collection of economic doctrines can be derived.