

Abstract

The paper is concerned with the decade and a half spent by the development economist, Arthur Lewis, at the London School of Economics between 1933 and 1948. It discusses the intellectual traditions of the institution that Lewis joined, and the various influences on the young economist. His research and teaching roles in London and Cambridge are covered, together with his work for the Fabian Society, and his links with the anti-imperialist movements centred in London in the 1930s and 1940s. The aim of the paper is to shed light on this highly significant but little known period in the career of the foremost development economist.

Keywords: W.A. Lewis; LSE; colonial economics; development economics

Barbara Ingham is Research Associate, Department of Economics, School of Oriental and African Studies, University of London, UK.

Paul Mosley is Professor of Economics, Department of Economics, University of Sheffield, UK.

Acknowledgements: Research for the paper was funded by the Nuffield Foundation, with a grant awarded to Professor Paul Mosley of the University of Sheffield, UK, and Dr Barbara Ingham of the University of Salford, UK, in support of a project to produce an intellectual biography of Arthur Lewis. Acknowledgement is extended to the following for their interpretation of the Lewis legacy: Professor Mark Figueroa and Professor Andrew Downes of the University of the West Indies, and Professor Robert Tignor of Princeton University. Thanks are also due to Professor Phyllis Deane, Professor Kari Polanyi Levitt and Dr Gisela Eisner for their personal insights and recollections of Arthur Lewis as teacher and researcher.