

‘The confessions of an unrepentant model builder’: Rummaging in Goodwin’s Archive[☆]

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Abstract

The article briefly describes the structure and contents of Goodwin’s Archive, recently established in the Library of the Faculty of Economics “Richard M. Goodwin” of the University of Siena. This may be of interest for the whole research community given that the Catalogue of the Archive will be soon available on the *Archivio Storico degli Economisti* (ASE) web site – at <http://www.cribecu.sns.it/ase> – which is organised and maintained by the *Società Italiana degli Economisti*. To give evidence of the richness of its contents, we reproduce the transcription of “The confessions of an unrepentant model builder”—a handwritten manuscript we found in the Archive, and upon which we comment from the point of view of modern economic analysis. © 2006 Elsevier B.V. All rights reserved.

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1. Introduction

After his retirement from the chair in *Economia Politica* (Political Economy) he had held at the University of Siena since 1980, Richard Goodwin was kind enough to donate to the library of the Faculty of Economics the whole set of his writings and papers. Over the years, this material has been organised in a provisional catalogue, which has now been updated and revised in a consistent way. The catalogue will soon be available through the Internet on the Web site

[☆] One of the referees suggested that Goodwin should be listed as one of the authors of the present paper given that it also reproduces a piece by him. Though we have chosen not to follow this particular piece of advice, we have adopted a title that reflects Goodwin’s contribution unmistakably.

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of the *Archivio Storico degli Economisti* (ASE), at <http://www.cribecu.sns.it/ase>. The site is organised and maintained by the *Società Italiana degli Economisti*, with the aim of collecting and cataloguing information on all major Italian economists (and foreign scholars who have taught and researched in Italy).¹

In this paper, we briefly describe the Archive, with the specific purpose of stressing its richness and potential usefulness for future research. To give tangible evidence of this, we also reproduce the transcription of a manuscript by Goodwin we found during the preparation of the Archive, which, we believe, may be of interest to researchers working on model building.

The paper is organised as follows. In Section 2, we describe the structure and contents of the Archive. Section 3 contains the transcription of the manuscript “The confessions of an unrepentant model builder,” by Richard Goodwin. Then in Section 4, we briefly comment on this piece from the point of view of modern economic analysis.

2. Description of the archive

The Archive includes five main sections and is organised in the following way:²

- I. Manuscripts, typescripts, and working material
 - I.1 *Writings and incomplete texts*
 - I.2 *Lecture notes*
 - I.3 *Notes*
 - I.4 *B.A. and Ph.D. theses*
 - I.5 *Manuscripts, typescripts and drafts of published works*
- II. Correspondence
 - Letters 1950–1996*
- III. Miscellanea
- IV. Published works
- V. Works on Richard Goodwin

Even without going into detail concerning the contents of the various sections of the Archive, its richness and potential importance for future research can be appreciated on the basis of the following information, which we summarise in eight points. We do this only with the purpose of briefly describing those items in the Archive that, at this stage, we think are the most interesting. When a code in bold roman number appears in the text, it is meant to indicate the Section or Subsection of the Archive where the item is kept.

2.1. Student's pieces

Let us start by mentioning a series of 39 articles Goodwin (often under the pseudonym *Tertius*) wrote for various students' magazines at Harvard between December 1932 and May 1934 [**IV.c**].

¹ Since the path-breaking experience initiated by Goodwin in Siena in 1980, the latter have been increasing in number.

² The final version of the catalogue, now available in print, was prepared by Valeria Di Piazza (Coordinator, Archives Section of the Library of the Faculty of Economics “Richard M. Goodwin,” University of Siena) thanks to a grant (2004) from the Italian Ministry of Education, Universities and Research (MIUR) under the national project “Teoria e politica economica nelle carte degli economisti in Italia,” coordinated by Prof. Lilia Costabile, Università Federico II, Naples. Within this project, Massimo Di Matteo coordinated the work of the Siena group on “Teoria e politica economica nelle carte di Richard Goodwin e Giulio La Volpe.”

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