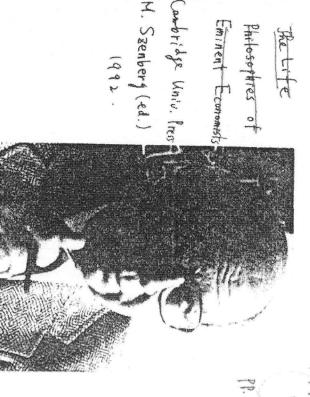
NICHOLAS GEORGESCU-ROEGEN

Nicholas Georgescu-Roegen about Himself

Eminant Economists & Their Life this sophi'es



Two things fill one's conscience with increasing wonder and awe, the stars in heaven and the moral law in oneself.

Immanuel Kant

PROEM

It would be superfluous to tell the reader how high my spirits were lifted by Michael Szenberg's invitation to write an account of my life philosophy. But as I started to think about the task, a fear came to me, the fear that my acceptance would be taken as an implicit presumption that I am a philosopher like Plato or John Dewey, for example. Even though I have not been a professional philosopher, I certainly "have done philosophy." One does philosophy, I think, not when one reasons about the

practical problems of a community or the mathematical structure of quantum mechanics, but only if one treats in a thoroughly free inquiry issues that cannot be tested at a workbench. It is in this sense that I claim to have done philosophy, probably more often than I have exercised any other intellectual expertise. However, although like all who have done philosophy I have asked questions about things, their nature, and their relations among themselves and with the human mind, I have gone further: I have also asked questions about questions.

vicability deollescu-Noegen about lithiset

graphed the philosophy initiated by Ernest Mach and embraced by Wilat explaining phenomena, but at saving them, as Pierre Duhem calliplete certitude, since nothing is controllable. Our laws of nature aim not abstractions about which a metaphysician may say anything with comconsists of just what we can perceive. Beyond, there are only hypothesized given the human cosmological condition, I construed that for us nature not just haphazardness, is an essential ingredient of phenomena. Second, of natural laws. By implication I came to hold further that randomness, chastic form is not the peripheral but our only possible representation philosophical tenets. First, contrary to the old epistemology, the stoand from my listening to him for more than one year, I reached two philosophy sprouted from two great teachers of mine: Karl Pearson and not be a guide for it. I thus acquired a special eye for issues ignored by economics could not represent an agrarian economy, and hence could discipline that it was a representative guide not only for capitalism but dominated culture and economy. And as I came to learn the economics mania, I lived under four dictatorships and three wars, all in my backyard which I was born and spent the most informative part of my life, Roservation has been especially true to my shattered life. In the country in logical system of thought [that] can only be arrived at by free inventions." largely Machian: in 1936 he explicitly stated that "physics consists of a hem Ostwald and Karl Pearson. Even Albert Einstein's philosophy was Joseph A. Schumpeter. From Karl Pearson's splendid Grammar of Science learned "philosophy" from many consecrated philosophers, but my own the standard economic persuasion or by ordinary economic analysis. I for absolutely all economic conditions. It was evident to me that standard professed in the capitalist world, I was struck by the claims of that Romania was at that time a struggling, overpopulated, peasant-Not one word about "reality." My philosophy is in spirit Machian: it is That history instilled me with a kind of Paretoan view of human societies. things. Not ignoring the considerable difference of proportions, the ob-Patent Office that developed his interest in how to test our ideas about life. As some have maintained, it was Linstein's experience at the Berne Everyone's way of thinking is influenced by the events of his or her

1