Russell's American Lecture Courses

In the above article Harry Ruja has covered Russell's single lectures in the United States and Canada, including those given at universities and colleges. However, during some extended trips to America Russell gave full courses at the universities. So far very little is known about those courses, except for two at Harvard in 1914. Russell had agreed, in 1912, to give the 1914 Lowell Lectures, and also to offer courses on Theory of Knowledge and Advanced Logic for the Department of Philosophy. We even know a good deal about the content of these courses. Ralph Barton Perry, who was in charge of arrangements for Russell, asked him for 'brief descriptions' of the courses for the Department's course bulletin. On 4 March 1913 Russell sent off the descriptions, and the following appeared in the 20 May 1913 issue of the Official Register of Harvard University:

Theory of Knowledge

Criticism of current theories: idealism, the pragmatist theory of truth, Bergson's "intuition" and "intellect". Logical apparatus: simples and complexes, relations, particulars and universals, truth and falsehood. Psychological apparatus: acquaintance, belief, analysis, self-evidence. The data of knowledge: (a) sensible, (b) logical. The nature of consciousness and the varieties of realism. Our knowledge of space, time, and matter. Induction. Causality.

Advanced Logic

Outline of recent developments: Peano; Frege, Cantor and the

influence of mathematics. Definition of logic: generalization and logical form. Logic not concerned with thought or with any special subject-matter. Classification of complexes; particulars, predicates, and relations of various orders. Premises and inference; distinction between premises and hypotheses. The meaning of "existence"; descriptions, classes. Identity of logic and mathematics. Relation of logic to the natural sciences, to metaphysics, and to theory of knowledge. Unsolved problems of logic.

There was some doubt, among Russell's bibliographers, that these descriptions were the ones Russell sent. Happily his authorship has now been confirmed. The other day in the Archives I was able to match up the printed descriptions with two pages of Ms which had always been associated with the unpublished Theory of Knowledge Ms, but which I had considered merely notes for that work. There are slight changes from the Ms version, but none of substance. It is expected that the Theory of Knowledge description will prove useful when it is compared with Victor F. Lenzen's notes on the lectures themselves. Changes in the topics discussed may very well show up, since it was between April 1913 and Spring 1914 that Russell was hit by the "first wave" of Wittgenstein's impact (My Philosophical Development, Ch. X). In this connection, it is a pity no copy of the "detailed syllabus" of the Theory of Knowledge lectures, which Russell sent Perry on 9 November 1913 and which Perry acknowledged, has come to light.

For an account of the course on Advanced Logic, readers are referred to Harry T. Costello's "Logic in 1914 and Now", in *The Journal of Philosophy*, 54: 25 April 1957, 243-64. Costello was Russell's assistant

in Logic at Harvard.

Almost nothing is known of the other courses Russell gave at American universities. Perhaps students of Russell at the universities which appear on the following list would check their university calenders for those years. There may be other brief course descriptions which can be ascribed to Russell. I don't, however, expect any more syllabi to turn up. Russell usually prepared them for non-institutional courses, such as those on "Principles of Social Reconstruction" (1916), and Mathematical Logic and "The Philosophy of Logical Atomism" (1917-18). Incidentally, although John Slater has managed to acquire a copy of the first, no copies are known of the other two syllabi. Also very useful would be student newspaper reports of Russell's lectures. The Archives recently obtained copies of such reports of Russell's five lectures on "Postulates of the Scientific Method", which appeared in the Bryn Mawr College News, 7 October - 3 November 1943.

What I know about Russell's other courses follows:

1896, fall	Bryn Mawr Johns Hopkins	non-Euclidean geometry
1938-9	University of Chicago	general course on ? seminar on "Words and Facts"
1939-40	UCLA	introductory philosophy seminar on "Words and Facts"
1940, fall	Harvard	seminar (in addition to the William James Lectures)
1941-2	Barnes Foundation	history of philosophy
1944	Rand School, New York	"Philosophies in Practice". [A copy of the brief syllabus for this course has been obtained from Paul Schilpp.]

Russell's lecture courses in Britain, and in other parts of the world, are another matter entirely and must be left to another article.

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