

## **"The actual sons of God"**

**- Russell and Wittgenstein**

This has been an exciting year for new writings on Wittgenstein. As usual there has been a great deal of exegesis and neo-Wittgensteinian philosophizing, but there has also been much new light on Wittgenstein's life, personality and texts. Students of Russell and of his own most illustrious student have always found the philosophical and personal relationship of the two puzzling, but until recently little has been published on which judgement could replace conjecture. We now know a very great deal about the publication of the *Tractatus Logico-Philosophicus* (including Russell's part in it) and about the genesis of its text. After the *Prototractatus* (1971), with its historical introduction by Professor von Wright, has come Wittgenstein's *Letters to C.K. Ogden* (London: Blackwell and Routledge, 1973), which includes a facsimile of a questionnaire about the translation of the *Tractatus* which Wittgenstein filled out. *Letters to C.K. Ogden* also includes letters from Russell and Ramsey, with interesting comments by Ramsey as he helped Russell in preparing the second edition of *Principia Mathematica*. More personal, we have had a reminiscence by Wittgenstein's tutor in Russian, Fania Pascal, herself

a Ph.D. in philosophy, in the August *Encounter*. From it we learn of an improbable article called "Wittgenstein and Russia", by John Moran, in *New Left Review*, no. 73: May-June 1972. Moran sets out all the information he has gathered about Wittgenstein's political opinions and his visit to Russia. William Warren Bartley III in his *Wittgenstein* (Philadelphia: Lippincott, 1973) digs out much information on Wittgenstein the schoolteacher, and claims he has found evidence of his rumoured homosexuality (a trait which Pascal denies). Bartley's book, along with Janik and Toulmin's revolutionary *Wittgenstein's Vienna*, is reviewed informatively and at length in the *Times Literary Supplement*, 17 August 1973. Not last and not least, a book has appear on *The Architecture of Ludwig Wittgenstein*, by Bernhard Leitner (Studio International; Press of the Nova Scotia College of Art and Design). This book is incomplete, however - it neglects the hut Wittgenstein built in Norway! A remarkable similarity between the architectural study and the works on the *Tractatus* emerges in the shape of Wittgenstein's intense perfectionism regardless of what occupied him. In philosophy itself, Anthony Kenny's *Wittgenstein* (London: Allen Lane, 1973) has excellent chapters on the logic Wittgenstein learned from Russell and Frege, and then attacked. We have also had B.F. McGuinness's discovery, in his "Bertrand Russell and Ludwig Wittgenstein's 'Notes on Logic'" (*Revue Internationale de Philosophie*, no. 102, 1973), that the original text of the "Notes on Logic" is very different from Russell's extensive reworking of it, although only the latter was published in the *Notebooks 1914-1916*. Next year there is von Wright's edition of the correspondence of Wittgenstein with Russell, Moore and Keynes to look forward to, under the title of *Wittgenstein and His Cambridge Friends*.

As for unpublished material, the Russell Archives has a typescript of extracts concerning Wittgenstein which I took from Russell's letters to Lady Ottoline Morrell at the University of Texas. The full extraordinary story of Russell's pre-1914 relationship with Wittgenstein is told in these extracts, which are great fun to read. Also available here are the Cornell microfilms of Wittgenstein's manuscripts; the "Notes on Logic" in the form prior to Russell's re-working of it; a copy of the "Blue Book"; the originals of Wittgenstein's 57 letters to Russell; and the sole known-to-be-extant reply from Russell. As for Russell's other letters to Wittgenstein, all that can be said is that von Wright has not given up hope that they still exist.

Russell wrote of the early Wittgenstein in the 1931 draft of his autobiography that he was "about the most impressive human being I have ever known". (He softened this judgement for publication 36 years later.) The extracts show Russell, after an initial scepticism, hoping Wittgenstein will follow him in spreading the doctrines and methods of mathematical philosophy, and take over entirely the development of logic. The

young Wittgenstein's regard for Russell was perhaps less reverential, but apparently not less immense. Yet there are few studies of how Russell influenced Wittgenstein, and none (to my knowledge) of how Wittgenstein influenced Russell. Owing to their later personal and philosophical antipathies, it seems, not many people make a sympathetic study of both men. Students of Russell sometimes need to be shown that Wittgenstein is worth learning about on his own account. All of the above-mentioned works are useful either for that reason, or for studying the interaction of these two "actual sons of God" - as Wittgenstein called Mozart and Beethoven in a letter to Russell.

- K.B.