

TWO THEOLOGIANs AND “WHY I AM NOT A CHRISTIAN”

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Bertrand Russell’s speech “Why I Am Not a Christian” (1927) triggered many theologians to defend Christian beliefs. Aside from his rational criticism of the so-called “proofs” of God’s existence, it is his humorous irony as a rhetorical weapon that made many abandon their faith in Christianity and become atheists or at least agnostics. In this article I examine two British theologians’ unsuccessful attempts to counterattack Russell’s devastating analysis of some central Christian dogmas.

I. INTRODUCTION

Russell delivered his famous speech at the Battersea Town Hall on Sunday, 6 March 1927, under the auspices of the South London Branch of National Secular Society.¹ This was only the second time he had publicly spoken about religion. The first time was in 1916, when he gave a series of lectures on “Principles of Social Reconstruction”, where he makes a distinction between “possessive” and “creative” impulses. The seventh lecture was “Religion and the Churches”, where he talks quite positively about religion. In the preface to the book of the lectures he writes, “[E]ducation, marriage, and religion ought to embody the creative impulses, though at present they do so very inadequately” (*PSR*, p. 6).

To understand Russell’s criticism of religion in general, one must

¹ The National Secular Society was formed in 1866 with Charles Bradlaugh as its first president. Its principle still is to “promote human happiness, to fight religion as an obstruction, to attack the legal barriers to Freethought: and its objects are Freethought propaganda, parliamentary action to remove disabilities, secular schools and instruction classes, mutual help and a fund for the distressed.” See <http://www.secularism.org.uk/uploads/achronologyofbritishsecularism.pdf>, p. 5. TAYLOR, *A Chronology of British Secularism* (1957) summarizes the movement from 1840 to 1957.

have in mind what he says in his “Reply to Criticisms” in *The Philosophy of Bertrand Russell* (1944). There he states that his general attitude to religion is “somewhat complex”. Religion has three main aspects, he writes. Firstly, there are a man’s serious personal beliefs concerning the nature of the world and the conduct of life. Secondly, there is theology. Finally, there is institutionalized religion. He admits that the first aspect is somewhat vague, but adds that the word “religion” is coming more and more to be used in this sense. What makes his attitude towards religion complex is this: “[A]lthough I consider some form of personal religion highly desirable, and feel many people unsatisfactory through the lack of it, I cannot accept the theology of any well known religion, and I incline to think that most Churches at most times have done more harm than good.”²

His criticism of organized, traditional or dogmatic religion is already present in “The Free Man’s Worship” (1903), “The Essence of Religion” (1912), “The Ordination Service” (1913–14)—all in Russell’s *Collected Papers* 12—and *Principles of Social Reconstruction* (1916), so we don’t need speculation as to Dora Russell’s influence to explain his criticism of religion in *What I Believe* (1925) and “Why I Am Not a Christian”, although one can note the arrival of a new tone in his discourse on religion.³ The tone dominates his writings on the topic for the next thirty years in, e.g., “Has Religion Made Useful Contributions to Civilization?” (1929), *Religion and Science* (1935), “An Outline of Intellectual Rubbish” (1943), “The Value of Free Thought” (1944), “The Faith of a Rationalist” (1947) and two articles that were written for *Dagens Nyheter*, “Religion and the Demand for Truth” (1954) and “Can Religion Cure our Troubles?” (1955).

Russell starts his famous (or infamous) speech by saying that the word “Christian” in the days of St. Augustine and St. Thomas Aquinas used to have a very definite meaning, but that it today is used “in a very loose sense by a great many people. Some people mean no more by it than a person who attempts to live a good life.”⁴

² “Reply to Criticisms” (1944), p. 726; **2a** in *Papers* 11, p. 52.

³ In *A History of Atheism in Britain: from Hobbes to Russell* (1988), BERMAN talks about “... Russell’s militantly irreligious phase, which began somewhat abruptly in 1925” and gives different explanations for this (pp. 231–2). JAGER also notices a break in the late 1920s that he refers to as “quite sudden and unexplained” (*The Development of Bertrand Russell’s Philosophy* [1972], p. 485).

⁴ *RdR*, p. 77. For more annotation and textual notes, see **26** in *Papers* 10.

This is the first example of Russell's use of humour-irony-ridicule as a rhetorical figure in the speech. It is not the last as he maintained the audience's attention.⁵

He embarks on a rather sophisticated line of argumentation concerning the question whether something is good regardless of God's will. This is an important question that Socrates raises in the dialogue *Euthyphro*.⁶ Then he goes on to the moral problem of hell.⁷ You do not find this attitude in Socrates, Russell points out.⁸ This is an elaboration of what he said two years earlier in *What I Believe*: "The good life is one inspired by love and guided by knowledge", which is also the motto of the Bertrand Russell Society. It might not sound very profound to cynically minded people, but its simplicity should be seen in the light of Russell's life's work for the advancement of compassion, knowledge, peace and justice.

2. IMMEDIATE REACTIONS TO RUSSELL'S SPEECH

Although Russell's speech was only published as a pamphlet, it drew a lot of attention. It was first publicized for sale on 2 May 1927.⁹ In due course several sermons on the speech were then advertised. The first to discuss it was Rev. S. Skelhorn at the Oakfield Road Church, Clifton, Bristol, on 19 June.¹⁰ Rev. A. F. Simpson, M.A., D.D., devoted two sermons to it on 26 June at the Castle Street Chapel, Dundee. The titles are of interest: "Bertrand Russell and the Reasons Why He Is Not a Christian" and "Bertrand Russell and the Faults of Christ".¹¹ Dr. Walter Walsh spoke on it to the Free Religious Movement at

⁵ These three concepts are, needless to say, hard to define and the relationship between them is obscure. I see them on a sliding scale from humour to irony to ridicule. The crucial point is the degree to which a speaker intends to embarrass the person or group that the humour-irony-ridicule is about.

⁶ *Plato's Euthyphro, Apology of Socrates and Crito*, ed. Burnet.

⁷ Regarding the Victorians and hell, see ROWELL, *Hell and the Victorians* (1974), and WHEELER, *Heaven, Hell, and the Victorians* (1994).

⁸ In his latest book, *That All Shall Be Saved: Heaven, Hell, and Universal Salvation* (2019), HART argues that Jesus did not teach the doctrine of everlasting punishment. He argues that the Greek words for "eternity" and "eternal" have been misunderstood. He also says that some of the early Church Fathers believed in *universalism*, i.e. that all eventually will be saved. His argumentation is not very convincing.

⁹ *Sheffield Daily Telegraph*, 2 May 1927, p. 8.

¹⁰ *Western Daily Press*, Bristol, 18 June 1927, p. 14.

¹¹ *Dundee Courier*, 25 June 1927, p. 10.

Notting Hill Gate, London, on 3 July.¹² Rev. S. M. Watts replied to the pamphlet at the Warwick Road Brotherhood, Coventry, on 10 July. Next year Rev. Dr. T. H. Mitchell sermonized on "Bertrand Russell's Book—'Why I Am Not a Christian'" at the Robertson United Church, Edmonton. Apparently none of the sermons was published.¹³

The pamphlet prompted two other Christians to respond extensively in print. One was Kenneth Ingram,¹⁴ who was not a member of the Catholic Church himself but presumably belonged to the "Anglo" part of the Catholic Literature Association of the Anglo-Catholic Congress Committee that published his pamphlet. The other one was H. G. Wood,¹⁵ lecturer on the New Testament at the Selley Oak College in Birmingham and a late fellow of Jesus College, Cambridge. He was a prominent member of the Society of Friends and thus took an unorthodox position on many dogmatic questions. Russell responded to Wood's book. I will discuss his response after I have dealt with Ingram's work. Among other reviews, T. S. Eliot's was notable.¹⁶

For the purpose of my assessments, I will consider only Russell's definition of what a Christian ought to believe and the three arguments for God's existence: the First Cause argument (also known as the cosmological argument), the Natural Law argument and the argument from Design.

Ingram has nothing to say about Russell's three criteria of what a Christian ought to believe. He does, however, expend some energy on Russell's claim that a Christian no longer needs to believe in hell:

I have taken the trouble to read through the report of the judgment, and, so far as I am aware, I am omitting no sentence which could directly or

¹² *West London Observer*, 1 July 1927, p. 10. I'm grateful to the Editor for looking these.

¹³ *Coventry Evening Telegraph*, 11 July 1927, p. 4. A "very good attendance of both men and women" were "greatly interested". Dr. Walsh returned to the subject of Russell and Christianity on 2 September 1928 in Hilltown, Dundee. Dr. Mitchell's sermon was advertised in the *Edmonton Journal*, 20 Oct. 1928, p. 25.

¹⁴ In *The Unreasonableness of Anti-Christianity* (1928).

¹⁵ In *Why Mr. Bertrand Russell Is Not a Christian* (1928).

¹⁶ ELIOT's review has irritated me ever since I read it, especially the last two sentences: "Just as Mr. Russell's Radicalism in politics is merely a variety of Whiggery, so his Non-Christianity is merely a variety of Low Church sentiment. That is why his pamphlet is a curious, and a pathetic, document" (ELIOT, p. 162). But Eliot has a point; there is something "religious" about Russell's atheism. Eliot had just converted to Catholicism, and he sounds like a newly saved and happy convert. His review reeks of spiritual superiority, and that's why *it* is "a curious, and pathetic, document".

indirectly support Mr. Russell's contention. Mr. Russell has said that the Court made belief in eternal hell fire to cease to be an essential doctrine. But the Court claimed only to decide that belief in the possibility of ultimate pardon for those consigned to hell was not contrary to the existing doctrine. (P. 3)

Ingram's arguments might seem convincing, and he ends by saying that he has dealt with Russell's statement "... not because of its importance, but because it is an illustration of the methods Mr. Russell has adopted. He has made four assertions, and not one of them is accurate" (p. 4).

It is, however, not true that it illustrates Russell's methods. John Slater, editor of *Collected Papers* 10, which reprints Russell's address, writes that Ingram seems deliberately to be ignoring facts he must have known and suggests that Russell was referring to a widely held opinion concerning the case based on Andrew D. White's account of the trials in his *A History of the Warfare of Science with Theology in Christendom* (1896). White reports that the prevailing contemporary opinion of the Court's decision was that it had "dismissed hell with costs". Slater also refers to another source that directly supports Russell's claim, including the dissent of two Archbishops (*Papers* 10: 178–9).

Before Russell scrutinized the first cause argument, he said that the Catholic Church had laid it down as a dogma that the existence of God can be proved by the unaided reason. He thought that it was a curious dogma. According to Russell, they had to introduce it because at one time the freethinkers adopted the habit of saying that there were such and such arguments which mere reason might urge against the existence of God, but of course the Catholic believer knew as a matter of faith that God did exist.

Ingram rightly points out that Russell did not say why it is curious and goes on to say that he is surprised that Russell as a Rationalist "... of all people, should regard such an admission as to the powers of reason as 'a curious dogma'" (Ingram, pp. 4–5). It looks as though Ingram is not going to let Russell get away with anything, although his own point is hard to understand, unless you believe in "necessary beings" and Catholic logic in general.

Then Ingram puts his teeth into what Russell has to say about the first cause argument and takes a bite at "The idea that things must have a beginning is really due to the poverty of our imagination".

Russell does not use this as an argument but rather as a reflection of his previous argumentation. Ingram's response is that he always thought the theory of a first cause consisted in the idea that the first cause had no beginning, which would make the criticism irrelevant.

There are different versions of the first cause argument, and Russell is addressing that of Aquinas. Aquinas's conception of "first cause" is the idea that the universe must have been caused by something that was itself uncaused, which he asserted was God. Russell's response to that is "If there can be anything without a cause, it may just as well be the world as God." He could have added that if we do accept that an uncaused superhuman intelligence created the universe, why would we identify that being with the Judeo-Christian idea of God as he is portrayed in the Bible, rather than with an unspecified creator as so many people have done and still do?

The natural law argument consists in the claim that because the universe works on a system of law, there must be a lawgiver. Ingram accepts Russell's criticism of it and goes on to deal with the argument from design. He starts by bringing up Russell's statement: "It is not that their [the living creatures'] environment was made to be suitable to them but that they grew to be suitable to it, and that is the basis of adaptation. There is no evidence of design about it" (Ingram, p. 81).

Ingram is not satisfied with this; it does not account for the creation of the environment itself. He has never been convinced that adaptation (the survival of the fittest) satisfactorily explains the differentiation of species. "The more we examine the adaptation theory the more", he suggests, "we shall be forced to conclude that it only accounts for certain physical properties of living creatures. Only in a very limited field does it combat the design-argument" (p. 7).

Ingram's style and tone are rather polite and respectful. Wood, however, confesses in the preface to *Why Mr. Bertrand Russell Is Not a Christian* that he became so stimulated by reading Russell's pamphlet that he had to write about it. "In this tract Mr. Russell appears to be trailing his coat, and it seems a pity that he should miss a fight if he wants one" (p. 7). His introduction is full of derogative descriptions like "slender pamphlet", "a trifle thrown off in the midst of more serious intellectual labours", "this little sally" (p. 13), and that it

might have been written by a man who knows nothing or next to nothing of the present position of historical inquiry into the origin and

development of Christianity.... comparative study of religion ... recent work in the psychology or philosophy of religion.... From the beginning to end there is not a suggestion of an idea in this pamphlet that is of the least use to the genuinely modern mind. (P. 15)

After comparing Russell to Ernst Haeckel, who both “suffer their reputation as scientists to be exploited in the interest of ignorance and prejudice on the subject of religion” (p. 16), Wood comes to the conclusion that “Nevertheless, this failure of scientific conscience in scientific men is very lamentable, and since *Why I Am Not a Christian* is a conspicuous example, it seems worthwhile to expose it, and expose it at length” (p. 17). He proceeds to devote more than 100 pages to refuting Russell’s pamphlet.

Wood starts with addressing the question: What is religion? He does not want to quarrel seriously over Russell’s proposed definition, but he adds something, to which I will return to in my concluding remarks: “[It] ought indeed to be remembered, that the philosophic doctrine of natural immortality of the soul is not essentially a Christian position, though probably most Christians accept it” (p. 20).

Wood does not follow the order in which Russell presents his case but starts with addressing Russell’s psychological explanations of why people believe in God, and saving the discussion of “The So-called ‘Intellectual’ Arguments for Deity” for the sixth chapter. I will limit myself to what he has to say about the three proofs of God’s existence. However, I cannot resist quoting the last preposterous sentence of Wood’s diatribe: “The main reason why he is not a Christian is that he simply does not know what religion is” (p. 32).

Wood accepts Russell’s criticism of the first cause argument, but adds that “this is the form in which the argument is not worth discussing” (p. 91). There are three basic variants of this argument, according to Wood, each with subtle but important distinctions: the argument from causation *in esse* (in actual existence), the argument from causation *in fieri* (in becoming), and the argument from contingency. The third version of the argument does not attempt to prove anything about the first cause or about God, except to argue that such a cause must exist. This cause is known in Latin as “*causa sui*”. It is the version that Wood considers to be valid. “At least”, he adds, “it cannot be refuted by the teaching which James Mill gave to his son” (p. 91). He even admits that there is a real weakness in its valid form, because it

points in the direction of Spinoza's pantheism. The problem with the so-called proofs, according to Wood, is that they say nothing about God's nature and attributes (p. 92).

Then Wood takes on Russell's assault on the natural law argument, which he holds contains matters of greater importance. Wood is not out to defend theists who base their faith on a confusion between natural and human laws (*ibid.*). He agrees with Russell that natural law is not what it used to be, but turns this to his own advantage: "If the changed conception of natural law beats the Theist with whips, it chastises the Rationalists with scorpions" (p. 93). According to Wood this changed conception has deprived the secularists of their main grounds for rejecting religion. Rationalists, it seems, can no longer proclaim the impossibility of miracles and the irrationality of prayer (*ibid.*).

Wood's initial criticism of Russell's treatment of the argument from design is that Russell put it in its "silliest form, a form in which no one would now defend it" (p. 96). "The real argument from Design", Wood maintains, is based on "the broad fact of order in the universe, on the adjustment of organ to function in living creatures, on the purposeful activities of living organisms, and on the fact of progress discernible in biology and in human history" (p. 97). According to Wood, Darwinism is not a complete account of evolution: "it does not and cannot eliminate design from the world, or make it irrational to seek for design in the universe, though our previous ideas of the actual design have to be revised" (p. 99). Unfortunately, he does not supply his conclusions with convincing arguments.

Then Wood takes a swing at Russell's astonishment that people can believe that this world, with all its defects, should be the best that omnipotence and omniscience have been able to produce in millions of years. As examples of defects he mentions the Ku Klux Klan and the Fascists.¹⁷ Wood's response is: "How can you judge a dynamic system by a static standard? ... As a Christian, I pray the Lord's Prayer, which implies that the world needs a good deal of improving. It is no part of the Christian faith that the world, as it stands, is perfect" (p. 101).

As a Quaker Wood was well aware of Russell's attitude towards the Great War, when he worked together with many Quakers and supported the pacifists and the conscientious objectors and even was

¹⁷ In 1927 Russell included Winston Churchill in the list, but in 1957 he removed him (*Papers* 10: 177), presumably because he esteemed Churchill's wartime leadership.

dismissed from Trinity College and imprisoned for his convictions. After all his debunking of Russell he has to confess on the last page: "I cannot but be grateful to one who helped fight our battle and more or less shared our testimony. How much he has done! And how much more he might do—I won't say, if only he were a Christian! But if only he would try to understand Christianity!" (p. 157).

3. RUSSELL'S RESPONSE

Although there is no surviving correspondence to back the claim, it seems likely that the editor of *The Literary Guide* invited Russell to write a reply to Wood's book. Russell also mentioned the book in a talk he gave at a meeting of the Rationalist Press Association in 1928.¹⁸ Wood had said: "The main reason why he is not a Christian is that he simply does not know what religion is." Russell's response was: "One might retort that the main reason why Mr. Wood is not a freethinker is that he does not know what thinking freely is."¹⁹

Wood's argument is a poor one for two reasons. First of all Russell was brought up by his very pious grandmother and aunt and religion played a major part of his early education, as he himself testified in his many autobiographical writings. Lady Russell even nourished the hope that her grandson would become a Unitarian minister someday. His books, essays and articles on religion show that he knew a lot about religion and different forms of Christianity. He was particularly well acquainted with the Quakers since his first wife belonged to the Society of Friends and they were married in accordance with Quaker ritual.²⁰ Secondly, it would be more true to say that he knew too much about religion, and Christianity in particular, to feel tempted to join even such dogmatically liberal branches as the Unitarians or Quakers:

His wording implies, evidently unconsciously, that Christianity is the only religion in the world, but for this unconscious implication, the argument might equally be used by a Mohammedan, a Buddhist, a Zoroastrian, or a Mormon, to explain why I am not a Mohammedan, a

¹⁸ RUSSELL, "Why I Am a Rationalist" (1928).

¹⁹ "Why Mr. Wood Is Not a Freethinker" (1929); 29 in *Papers* 10, p. 209.

²⁰ See TURCON, "A Quaker Wedding: the Marriage of Bertrand Russell and Alys Pearsall Smith" (1983).

Buddhist, a Zoroastrian, or a Mormon. It would certainly be much more plausible to maintain that Mr. Wood is not an Agnostic because he knows nothing of Agnosticism, for after all, I had all the benefits of a Christian education, have lived all my life in a Christian community, have studied theology and Church history with some care, and have spent a number of years in investigating the claims of Christianity to truth. It would seem probable therefore that I should know more of Christianity than he would know of Agnosticism. Certainly I know more of it than he does of Mormonism. I am willing to lay long odds that he has not considered carefully the claims of the Book of Mormon to divine inspiration.

(Papers 10: 209)

In his introduction Wood said of Russell's pamphlet that "It is enlivened by that vein of ironic humour which this distinguished philosopher works to such delightful purpose" (p. 13). Russell's reply is also enlivened by his ironic humour. But he becomes more serious and says that there is not a single argument in Wood's pamphlet to show that Christianity is true. Wood had claimed that Russell did not know the arguments, but he took no steps to enlighten him, states Russell. "He merely gives it to be understood that they are not the stock arguments to be found in the writings of the theologians and philosophers of the past; they are brand new arguments invented apparently, during the last few years by liberal theologians" (*Papers 10: 209*).

4. REMARKS ON IMMORTALITY

One of the conditions that Russell included in his definition of "Christian" was belief in immortality, but he didn't expand on the topic. We don't know exactly what he had in mind, but we can assume that he was thinking about immortality of the soul.²¹ But Wood has a point

²¹ For different models and forms that religion have used to frame their ideas of immortality, see KALB's article on "immortality" in *Religion Past & Present* (2009). RUSSELL had raised the topic of immortality in *What I Believe* (1925): "We also cannot suppose that an individual's thinking survives bodily death, since that destroys the organization of the brain, and dissipates the energy which utilized the brain-tracks" (p. 12), but he doesn't totally reject the possibility, saying "... evidence either way is possible.... All the evidence goes to show that what we regard as our mental life is bound up with brain structure and organized bodily energy. Therefore it is rational to suppose that mental life ceases when bodily life ceases. The argument is only one of probability, but it is as strong as those upon which most scientific conclusions are based" (pp. 14-16). He returned to the topic in "Has Religion Made Useful

when he says: "... [the] doctrine of natural immortality of the soul is not essentially a Christian position, though probably most Christians accept it." However, it's only the Catholic Church that officially teaches the immortality of the soul and that the soul spends the time between the death of the body and the final judgment in Purgatory.²² The Jews were surrounded by cultures that believed in an "Afterlife", and the first Christians mixed Jewish beliefs with Greek philosophy. The Church Fathers seem to have taken the idea of the immortality of the soul from Plato.²³ There is no explicit talk about the immortality of the soul in the New Testament.²⁴ The Apostolic Creed talks about the resurrection of "the flesh", and the other early creeds—the two from Nicea (325 and 381), the Caledonian Creed (451) and the Athanasian Creed (500)—talk about "the resurrection of the dead."

5. CONCLUSION

In "Religion and the Churches", Russell wrote that "If a religious view of life and the world is ever to reconquer the thoughts and feelings of free-minded men and women, much that we are accustomed to associate with religion will have to be discarded" (*PSR*, p. 203). In the last chapter, "What We Can Do", he says:

The world has need of a philosophy, or a religion, which will promote life. ... If life is to be fully human it must serve some end which seems, in some sense, outside human life, some end which is impersonal and

Contributions to Civilization?" (1929). In 1936 he wrote a short piece "Do We Survive Death?", where he says: "It is not rational arguments, but emotions, that cause belief in a future life" (41 in *Papers* 21, p. 208). See also the newspaper article "Do Human Beings Survive Death?" (1957) and a radio discussion called "The Immortality of the Soul" from the same year (15 and 43 in *Papers* 29), the chapter "Plato's Theory of Immortality" in *History of Western Philosophy*, and MRÓZ, "Letters of Bertrand Russell and Wincenty Lutosławski on Immortality, Matter and Plato" (2020).

²² See *Catechism of the Catholic Church* (1994), pp. 366 and 1,030–2. Immortality of the soul became an official doctrine at the fifth Lateran Council (1512–17).

²³ In "Plato's Theory of Immortality" (*HWP*) Russell writes: "[T]he imperturbability of Socrates in his last hour is bound up with his belief in immortality, and the *Phaedo* is important as setting forth, not only the death of a martyr, but also many doctrines which were afterwards Christian. The theology of St. Paul and of the Fathers was largely derived from it, directly or indirectly, and can hardly be understood if Plato is ignored" (p. 132). This is true for many of the Fathers, but Paul never talks about the immortality of the soul.

²⁴ See CULLMANN's "Immortality of the Soul or Resurrection of the Dead?" (1965).

above mankind, such as God or truth or beauty. Those who best promote life do not have life for their purpose. They aim rather at what seems like a gradual incarnation, a bringing into our human existence of something eternal, something that appears to imagination to live in a heaven remote from strife and failure and the devouring jaws of Time. Contact with this eternal world—even if it be only a world of our imagining—brings a strength and a fundamental peace which cannot be wholly destroyed by the struggles and apparent failures of our temporal life. It is this happy contemplation of what is eternal that Spinoza calls the intellectual love of God. To those who have once known it, it is the key of wisdom.²⁵
(PSR, pp. 168–9)

This was the essence of Russell's philosophy of life. It motivated him to protest against oppression, war, and the development of nuclear weapons. Even if Russell in 1944 accepted that he had a "personal religion",²⁶ I prefer to talk about his "philosophy of life" and reserve the adjective "religious" for a different attitude that we find among people who submit their judgment to the will of an unreasonable and unethical deity, whether he is called Jahve, the Trinity or Allah.²⁷

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²⁵ For Spinoza's influence on Russell, see BLACKWELL, *The Spinozistic Ethics of Bertrand Russell* (1985).

²⁶ See "Reply to Criticisms", 2a in *Papers* II, p. 52.

²⁷ I would like to thank a generous friend and the Erik and Gurli Hultengren Foundation for Philosophy for financial support, which has made it possible for me to visit the Bertrand Russell Archives for a couple of months almost every year since 1976 and Docent Bo Hanson, Richard Falk, Anders Mortensen and Roy Wiklander for having read the manuscript and given me valuable comments and suggestions of improvement. I would also like to thank Anders Runesson for answering questions regarding the realm of the dead among Jews, Christians and Pagans and their ideas about resurrection, immortality and heaven and hell, and John Lenz for recommending reading CORLISS LAMONT's *The Illusion of Immortality* (1950).

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