

# Wittgenstein in Alethea Graham's diary (1929–1930), and new data on the audience of his Lecture on Ethics and LT 1930 class

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## **Abstract:**

Amongst the attendees at Wittgenstein's lecture to the Heretics Society in November 1929, there was also Alethea Graham, a student in her fourth year at Girton College who attended also his lectures in Lent Term 1930. Excerpts from her diary mentioning the philosopher are here transcribed and commented upon. A sharper focus on the audience of Wittgenstein's Lecture on Ethics and his first academic class is then added.

## **1. Alethea Graham, and her diaries from 1929–1930**

Elisabeth Mary Alethea Graham was born in 1908 to the diplomat Constantine Graham and the author of poetry, novels, and religious essays Aelfrida Tillyard. The latter belonged to a well-known family in Cambridge, being daughter of a former mayor of Cambridge and editor of *The Cambridge Independent Press*, and sister of a Fellow – later Master – of Jesus College.

Alethea spent her childhood in Russia, Germany, the United States, and France, then settled in Cambridge with her mother, who divorced in 1921. After attending the Perse High School for Girls, in 1926 she entered Girton College to read Modern and Medieval Languages, with Economics as a second subject at her mother's wish. She sat two sets of composite exams (a Section) drawn from Parts I & II of the MML Tripos (as was allowed in the regulations of the time). In 1928 she was awarded First Class marks in French; and in 1929

an Upper Second in Italian.<sup>1</sup> During those years, she wrote poems, made translations, attended the University Liberal Club meetings, and entered the student drama society the Mummings, Cambridge's first theatre group open to both sexes; in 1928 she also heard Virginia Woolf reading the draft of *A Room of One's Own*.

Towards the end of her senior year, Alethea met the new Professor of Italian and Fellow of Magdalene College Raffaello Piccoli, and they fell in love, a relationship doomed to remain platonic, Piccoli being married and a father of three in Naples, and given Alethea's profound Anglo-Catholic spirituality. After being awarded the title of BA Hons, Alethea stayed on at Girton for a fourth year, because her mother wished her to be beside her sister, who was about to enter the college and was suffering from depression. In addition, despite her deep dislike for the subject, Alethea was obliged to take Economics as the first subject, and Italian only as the second; her fainting on the eve of the admission exam moved her mother only to request an exemption for health reasons. The study of economics plunged Alethea into a gloom that became apparent to her tutor, who finally suggested she take the Economics Qualifying exams rather than Tripos. In contrast, her mood was brightened by the publication of some of her poems in academic and undergraduate magazines, by her working closely with Piccoli for the Italian Society (she was also a translator for the volume *Great Italian Short Stories*, 1930), and finally by her friendship with Julian Bell and Julian Trevelyan (see §2.1). With regard to the subject of this essay, in 1929–1930 Graham attended several meetings of the Heretics Society, Wittgenstein's lecture on ethics included, and his lectures in the Lent Term. In addition, she was witness to the growing friendship between him and Piccoli.

In June 1930 Alethea took the qualifying examination in the Economics Tripos, earning a Lower Second, and then started working in Paris for the review *La Semaine*, glad that economics was behind her once and for all; however, deeply missing Piccoli, and more and more inclined towards Catholicism, she went through a depression which was to intensify when in February 1931, in Cambridge for the publication of the volume *Cambridge*

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<sup>1</sup> Source of all data on the students' grades mentioned in the essay is mainly *The Historical Register of the University of Cambridge. Supplement, 1921-30*, Cambridge at the University Press, London, 1932. Further data were kindly provided by the archivists of Girton College, Trinity College Library, Harvard University Archives, Houghton Library, Yale University Library, Princeton Library, and Toronto Library, whom I thank for their invaluable help.

*Women's Verse* containing four of her poems, she discovered Piccoli was sick – he was to die two years later. A month later, she left her job in Paris and returned to Cambridge, and after that she retired from social life; in 1932 she started working for the Katherine Low Settlement in Battersea, whose aim was fighting the consequences of poverty and exclusion, and finally became an Anglican Benedictine nun in 1933. After her sister's suicide in 1935, she was a missionary in South West Africa, and came back to England only in 1953, to be next to her mother, now living with the All Saints Sisters of the Poor in Oxford. In the following years, Graham was general secretary of the Cowley, Wantage and All Saints Missionary Association, worked as a translator and as a private teacher of French and Italian, and published a diary of the Bible Lands Mission. She died in 1980.<sup>2</sup>

Graham used to keep a diary, also while in Girton.<sup>3</sup> It is a memoir of her social and emotional life, so it contains scattered references to Wittgenstein and tells nothing about the content of his lectures; still, it offers vivid pictures of both the speaker and the human environment surrounding him. References to the philosopher are here transcribed, put in context, and enriched by a sharper focus on information now available about the audience of both the Lecture on Ethics and Wittgenstein's first university class.

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<sup>2</sup> For further information about Graham's life, see Mann (2013), and Kaschl (2022: 92–94).

<sup>3</sup> Graham's diaries are in Girton College Archive (GBR/0271/GCPP Graham A1). I thank the Mistress and Fellows, Girton College, Cambridge, who granted me permission to access them; although I made considerable efforts to trace copyright owners and obtained permission to quote and publish from all the relatives known to me, I apologise for any inadvertent infringements. I learned about the diaries from Brian McGuinness while researching Piccoli's friendship with Wittgenstein. McGuinness had found them mentioned in Aelfrida Tillyard's biography (Mann 2013), which tells of Alethea's closeness to Piccoli; confident that the diaries might mention the philosopher, he was eager to read them, but his fragile condition stopped him visiting the Archive in person, so I visited it on his behalf as well as my own. As usual, he was right; Graham's notebooks mention Wittgenstein's first lectures, and his friendship with Piccoli. In fact, they give us details which are significantly informative when compared to the memories of Arthur MacIver, whose diary McGuinness had already edited; we were considering the idea of editing them together in 2019, but this was a project McGuinness had not the time to accomplish. I dedicate the essay to him, sure that the research would have greatly profited from his expertise, but also that he wished Graham's diaries to be made available to the scholarly community.

## **2. Wittgenstein's Lecture on Ethics**

### **2.1 The attendees spotted by Graham**

Possibly prompted by Piccoli's recent election to the Presidency of the Heretics Society, in Michaelmas Term 1929 Graham proved a most regular attendee of the meetings the Society organized on Sunday evenings. References in her diary report the schedule of lectures that term,<sup>4</sup> and although she made minimal hints, or none, at their content, sometimes she described the social atmosphere of the events. This is the case with Wittgenstein's lecture on November 17:

In the evening I heard Dr Wittgenstein, a passionate little Austrian, poor & undernourished looking, but with a noble and fine face that lights up & burns with emotion & intellect, talk to Heretics on Ethics. I didn't think his paper was very convincing tho it interested me: and much of the "intellectual set" of Cambridge was there – the young married intellectuals, the Blacketts & Dobbs & Robinsons and Haldanes; & the young unmarried intellectuals, Bronowski & Julian Bell, Michael Redgrave & Julian Trevelyan, Hugh Sykes Davies and Max Black. All so clever. But they hadn't got very far with their cleverness when I came away. (GBR/0271/GCPP Graham A1 1/1/17: November 18, 1929)

Beyond offering a sketch of the speaker well contrasted by the sequence on the young British listeners, the excerpt reveals part of the audience Wittgenstein addressed that night, an audience of which we had until now only a glimpse. In fact, and despite the report of "an enormous crowd" (McGuinness 2016: 220, November 17), the names of very few attendees were known, mostly students in Moral Sciences lying outside the Heretics circle. It was known that, by then, the Heretics Society was mainly used as a forum for "a cluster of bohemians at Cambridge who were engaged in avant-garde aesthetics and radical politics" (Franke 2008: 97), and counted seventy members (many fewer than in the early Twenties); but there was a lack of evidence about which of them were there and, besides, lectures were open to non-members. Now Graham's diary gives us a wider view of the crowd which gathered that Sunday at 8.30 p.m. at Falcon Yard, Petty Cury, in the room of

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<sup>4</sup> Heretics' schedule for Fall 1929 from Graham's diary: 20/10 G.W. Rossetti, "Christina Rossetti"; 27/10 A. F. Clutton-Brock, "Anticipations of the 19th Century art among the primitives" (cf. King's/PP/JVR/7/105); 3/11 J. C. Flügel, "Men, Women & Clothes"; 10/11 R. Piccoli, "Platonism and Epicureanism"; 17/11 L. Wittgenstein, "Ethics"; 24/11 G. T. Garratt, "The Last Chapter of the Hodgiad"; 1/12 (subst. A. Waley) D. Pettoello, "Fascism".

the Conservative Association “with a terracotta bust of Disraeli on the mantelpiece” (McGuinness 2016: 220, November 17).

The series of “young married intellectuals” listed as present is opened by a couple that I. A. Richards defined as the “handsomest, gayest, happiest pair in Cambridge” (quoted in Nye 2004: 26), namely the experimental physicist and future Nobel Prize-winner Patrick M. S. Blackett, a Fellow of King’s, and his wife, the free-spirited Costanza Bayon. By then aged 32, Blackett was of great social charm and beauty – in Richards’ words again, “a young Oedipus. Tall, slim, beautifully balanced and looking better dressed than anyone” (ibid: 25). No less charming and beautiful was the dark-eyed Costanza (“Pat” to her friends), brilliant in her own right: aged 30, fluent in Italian and French, she had read Modern and Medieval Languages at Newnham College and was to publish an unconventional guide to Italian (ibid.: 27). Witty, amusing and good company, the Blacketts used to hold once a week “an open house for their ‘semi-bohemian and left-wing’ friends and colleagues” (Budiansky 2013: 57). They often attended the Heretics events, but evidence of their membership is lacking, as documents about the Society are incomplete after 1925.<sup>5</sup>

Graham then mentions the Neo-Marxian economist Maurice Dobb (her coach during the summer), aged 29, and his wife Phyllis Carleton Grant, three years his senior and an actress in the Cambridge Festival Theatre.<sup>6</sup> Wittgenstein had taken up residence at their cottage in February.<sup>7</sup> The Dobbs could hardly be

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<sup>5</sup> Patrick Maynard Stuart Blackett (1897–1974) served in the war before entering Magdalene College, graduated in physics in 1921, and was made a Fellow of King’s in 1923. After researching cloud chambers in Göttingen with James Franck (Nobel prize in 1925), he focussed on cosmic rays. In 1924 he married Eva Costanza Bernardino Bayon (1899–1986), of English mother and Italian father, who had concluded the Tripos with a 2<sup>nd</sup> in 1921; in 1934, she published *Brighter Italian, colloquial, idiomatic, and (mildly) technical for bright young people*.

<sup>6</sup> Dobb (1900–1976) entered Pembroke College to read history in 1919, then switched to economics, and graduated in 1922 with a 1<sup>st</sup>, spotted as a rising star by John Maynard Keynes. While at the London School of Economics, he married Phyllis Carleton Grant (1896–1948), then returned to Cambridge as a lecturer in the Faculty of Economics and Politics and Director of Studies at Pembroke, soon taking up a similar post at Trinity, of which he was made Fellow in 1948, his career slowed down by his devotion to Marxian economics, his being under the eyes of the intelligence services (he was suspected to be a recruiter of the Cambridge Spy Ring, Costello 1988: 165), and finally his divorce in 1931.

<sup>7</sup> Wittgenstein lodged at Frostlake Cottage from mid-February 1929 (JMK/PP/45/190/4/122) until mid-July, and possibly he also stayed there in the academic year 1929–1930 (Morra, Pichler forthcoming.) The Dobbs were struggling to save their marriage, and Phyllis developed some resentment towards her guest – in early March 1929, to a friend wondering about what the philosopher was doing in Cambridge, “as he did not appear to be a member of the university in any capacity”, she answered: “What he actually *does* [...] is to bang the lavatory door at night” (Kapp 2003: 144). In 2000, *The Guardian* claimed his stays at

defined as a happy pair at that time; for a year, he had been having an affair with a student in English who was also a colleague of Phyllis',<sup>8</sup> and the latter had recently become close to a journalist;<sup>9</sup> Pembroke College had disciplined Dobb for his marital infidelity by dropping him as a Director of Studies and revoking his dining rights, and also his militancy in the Communist Party of Great Britain had become distressing to him (in May, on pain of expulsion from the CPGB, Dobb had to retract an article outlining divisions in the Russian party over agricultural policy). Speaker for the Heretics as an undergraduate (Misak 2020: 94) and also recently (he had read *Russia to-day and to-morrow* in May), Dobb was probably still involved in the economics section the Society had inaugurated while he was a student.<sup>10</sup>

The head of this section at that time, in charge of recruiting politicians and economists for the Heretics' schedule, was Joan Robinson (née Maurice),<sup>11</sup> wife in the third pair listed by Graham. Aged 26 and a former Girtonian, in the last couple of years Joan had lived in India, where her husband had served as a tutor in economics to the young Maharajah of Gwalior. The happy mother of two, she was now supervising students; although she was later to prove a central figure in post-Keynesian economics, at that time she was still identified in the Cambridge faculty merely by her conjugal status – Keynes used to refer to her as “the marital appendage of Austin [Robinson]”

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Frostlake Cottage “led MI5 to suspect that he was a Communist fellow traveller” (Shenk 2013: 244, n. 51).

<sup>8</sup> The Newnhamite Barbara M. Nixon (1907–1983) was close to the aesthetes' group (cf. GBR/0271/GCPP Graham A1 1/1/18: 9.6.1930). After marrying Dobb in 1931, she was active in the Labour Party and held a seat on London County Council while pursuing a career in acting (Shenk 2013: 67).

<sup>9</sup> Phyllis married Trevor Eaton Blewitt (1900–1949) in 1934; together they translated several novels, notably Stefan Zweig's *Ungeduld des Herzens* in 1939.

<sup>10</sup> The Economic Section of the Heretics, prompted by Keynes' criticisms of the Treaty of Versailles, was a forum critical of any theory based entirely on the assumption of a rational economic man (Franke 2008: 92–93).

<sup>11</sup> Joan Violet Maurice (1903–1983) graduated in Economics in 1925 with an upper 2<sup>nd</sup> in both Parts. In 1930 she was to coach also Graham (GBR/0271/GCPP Graham A1 1/1/18: 26.5.1930). Appointed Junior Assistant Lecturer in 1931, two years later she authored *The Economics of Imperfect Competition*, which set a new course for the theory of price determination. Her involvement with the Heretics dates back to her undergraduate years – their economic section was the only forum she could attend, as Keynes did not invite women to his Political Economy Club (Misak 2020: 95). In a few months she was to start the most important personal and professional relationship of her life with Richard Ferdinand Khan (1905–1989), Keynes's favourite pupil (Aslanbeigui, Oakes 2009: 52). Khan, who submitted his fellowship dissertation (ibid.: 38) in December, was elected a Fellow of King's the next year; there is evidence from the late Thirties that he was a friend of Wittgenstein's (Morra 2017: 111).

(GBR/0272/JMK/PP/45/190/5, quoted in Aslanbeigui, Oakes 2009: 22). The latter, aged 32 and former lecturer in economics at Corpus Christi, was soon to become a close associate of Keynes and a Fellow of Sydney Sussex; but in mid-November 1929 he held no academic role, the Faculty Board having decided not to offer him the lectureship he sought – a week after Wittgenstein’s lecture, he obtained permission to lecture in “an ex officio fashion”, but was offered the fellowship only the following June (ibid.: 34).<sup>12</sup>

A couple in their mid-thirties closes the series of the “young married intellectuals” spotted by Graham. John Burdon Sanderson Haldane, aged 37, was a scientist who professed to be Marxist and humanist. After taking up mathematics and then Greats at New College, Oxford, he had served in the war and then in his old college, researching physiology and genetics despite his lack of formal education in the field. Since 1923, he had been a reader in biochemistry at Cambridge – he worked on enzymes and the mathematical side of genetics. He was also a science populariser; in a recent paper, addressed to a large public, he had sketched out the ‘primordial soup theory’ which was to prove a milestone in the history of ideas on the origin of life (Haldane 1929).<sup>13</sup> His wife was Charlotte Franken, two years his junior, and a well-known feminist writer, an advocate of divorce reform, married women’s employment, and easier access to contraception. Author of a dystopian novel set in a world ruled by a male scientific elite who restrict the number of women born (*Man’s World*, 1926), and of the controversial *Motherhood and Its Enemies* (1928), she was

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<sup>12</sup> Edward Austin Gossage Robinson (1897–1993) entered Corpus Christi to read Classics, but after a 1<sup>st</sup> in Part I, he went “with relief to economics” (Harcourt 1997: 708), graduating with a 1<sup>st</sup> in 1922. He became a Fellow of Corpus Christi in 1923. Concerning the lectureship which he hoped to be offered in Fall 1929, the Faculty Board “met on November 6, but no offer was forthcoming. On November 26, it decided to permit Austin to lecture during the academic year 1929–30 in an ex officio fashion, without holding a lectureship” (Aslanbeigui, Oakes 2009: 34). Robinson was offered the lectureship in May 1930, to begin in October. The next year, he published a much-reprinted book on Industry and became a Fellow of Sidney Sussex.

<sup>13</sup> Haldane (1892-1964), who was also Assistant Director at the John Innes Horticultural Institution at Merton Park, became Fullerian Professor of Physiology at the Royal Institution in 1930. Visiting professor at the University of California in 1932, he was then elected to the chair of Genetics at University College London. The paper he read to the Heretics in 1923 (*Daedalus, or Science and the Future*) was criticized for presenting a too idealistic view of scientific progress – Bertrand Russell’s review *Icarus or the Future of Science* was corrosive. Wittgenstein too held Haldane’s humanistic work in low esteem: in 1932, he told a friend to buy “a collection of broadcastings from the B.B.C. containing the philosophy of Lowes Dickinson, J. B. S. Haldane, Dean Inge, Oliver Lodge and one or two others [Points of View, 1930]”, adding “You can’t get more concentrated stupidity, muddle-headedness and humbug” (WiC: 147).

to publish the novel *Brother to Bert* in 1930.<sup>14</sup> Both the Haldanes had been lecturers for the Heretics, and, in addition, he was an Honorary Member (Franke 2008: 92), whereas Charlotte had been defined by the former President as “a great help in getting people [...] if treated with slight caution” (Empson to Trevelyan, 1929, TREJ/25/5).

Graham next listed a few “young unmarried intellectuals”, namely the young male core of the outpost of Bloomsbury by the Cam.

Jacob Bronowski, from Jesus College, was of Polish-Jewish origin; aged 22, and known by his friends as ‘Bruno’, he was “a short, strong and black-bearded man [...] who could not pronounce his Rs” (Robert Graves’ description, quoted in Orrick 1996). Besides being a brilliant mathematician (after a First in Part I in 1928, he was to graduate as Senior Wrangler in 1930), he was a climber good enough to be considered as a possible participant in a Mount Everest expedition, and a strong chess player who contributed problems for the British Chess Magazine. He was also interested in poetry and a poet himself, and in fact, he pursued a dual activity in both the mathematical and literary worlds throughout his life.<sup>15</sup> Together with the poet William Empson<sup>16</sup>

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<sup>14</sup> Franken (1894–1969) met Haldane while interviewing him for the *Daily Express*. As she was married and had a son, she had to file a divorce suit involving Haldane as co-respondent, and the latter was readmitted to Cambridge University only after his case was defended by some dons, Russell included. Her first book describes a world in which women are either made into ‘vocational mothers’ or sterilized by the government and become ‘neuters’; the second drew some criticism for its attacks on spinsters and suffragettes for devaluing motherhood and causing male-female sex antagonism respectively. Heavily involved in left-wing politics, and particularly concerned about the emergence of fascism in Germany and Italy, Franken travelled to Spain in 1933 to give her support to both the PSOE and PCE.

<sup>15</sup> After graduation, Bronowski (1908–1974) prepared a dissertation in algebraic geometry which gained him a Ph.D. in 1933 (King remembered his attending Wittgenstein’s lectures a couple of times in 1930–31, Klagge 2019: 30). He then taught mathematics at the University College of Hull. Listed by Graham amongst the bachelors, at the time of Wittgenstein’s lecture he was becoming close to Eirlys Rhiwen Cadwaladr Roberts (1911–2008), a Girtonian in her junior year in Classics, and later classics adviser to Robert Graves while he was writing *I, Claudius*.

<sup>16</sup> Empson (1906–1984), who gave his friends an “impression of perpetual self-consuming mental intensity” (Raine, quoted in Field 2022: 16), entered Magdalene College to read mathematics in 1925. After a 1<sup>st</sup> in Part I and an upper 2<sup>nd</sup> in Part II, and already the author of poems, he decided to take a second degree in English and was elected President of the Heretics. In May 1929, he gained a 1<sup>st</sup> in Part I, and his thesis *Seven Types of Ambiguity* (written under Richards’ tutelage) gained him a Bye-Fellowship at Magdalene; two months later, though, he was banished from the university because condoms were found in his room. He now lived in Bloomsbury, supporting himself as a freelance journalist, but was often in Cambridge and close to the Heretics. Dobb’s lecture at the Heretics on May 19 might have been the occasion on which Wittgenstein had promised him a lecture in the Fall (Empson to Trevelyan, 1929,

he was editor of the undergraduate magazine *The Granta*, at that time broadly covering culture and the arts, and founder of the avant-garde literary and left-wing periodical *Experiment*; in addition, he was part of the theatre group the Mummerys in which Graham too was involved (§1). There is no evidence he was a member of the Heretics Society although he used to attend its meetings.

Graham then mentioned a young man who in a few months was to become a close friend of hers, namely Julian Bell. Aged 21, and described as “fat and rather plain” by the irreverent Lytton Strachey (Costello 1988: 151), he was son to Clive and Vanessa Bell, and nephew to Virginia Woolf. In King’s College to study both English and History since 1927, he had gained an upper Second in Part I of the Historical tripos, and his first book of poems was to appear in a few months.<sup>17</sup> Treasurer of the Heretics, he was also an Apostle, so had already met Wittgenstein in early 1929, at the dinner set up by Keynes to honour the philosopher’s return to Cambridge. In a subsequent meeting of the secret society, however, they had argued, and Wittgenstein had made some disagreeable remarks about Bell’s “fiercely socialist morality” (ibid.: 153).<sup>18</sup> The Marxist and Apostle Anthony Blunt,<sup>19</sup> Bell’s secret lover at that time, had sided

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TREJ/25/3); around that time, Wittgenstein asked the literary critic Frank R. Leavis (a friend of his) whether he knew “a man called Empson” and then asked him for an introduction to his poems. Leavis, a reviewer of the anthology *Cambridge Poetry 1929*, read “Legal Fiction” to him and, at his request, explained it; Wittgenstein claimed Leavis had not understood the poem “in the least” and went through it himself, finally giving a personal explanation of its analogical structure (Leavis 1981: 80). No meetings with Empson appear in WCPD 1929–1930; in 1930, Empson was to sign a three-year contract to teach in Japan.

<sup>17</sup> In 1930, Julian Heward Bell (1908-1937) gained an upper 2<sup>nd</sup> in English Part I and published *Winter Movement and other poems*, whose reception was not enthusiastic. Then he prepared two dissertations, one on Pope’s poetry, the other on applications of ethics to aesthetics and politics (he had considered submitting to the English Board “a topic on Wittgenstein. But George Rylands had dissuaded him, pointing out that to offer such a topic to the English Faculty would be much the same as sending Swinburne’s *Dolores* to Queen Victoria as a birthday ode”, Stansky and Abrahams 2012: 123). As neither of the dissertations gained him the Fellowship he sought, in 1935 he went to Wuhan as a Professor of English at the National University. In 1937 he joined the Republican army in Spain, where he was killed while driving an ambulance. On his role in the Heretics Society, Franke (2008: 97, 100).

<sup>18</sup> “Under the influence of his uncle Leonard Woolf, Bell had become a socialist at the age of fifteen, and at Cambridge he distinguished himself with his passionate anti-government speeches in the Union, culminating in a condemnation of the Conservative government’s budget of April 1929” (Costello 1988: 153).

<sup>19</sup> Anthony F. Blunt (1907-1983) entered Trinity College to read mathematics in 1926, obtained a 2<sup>nd</sup> in Part I in 1927, then switched to Modern and Medieval Languages to study French, gaining a 1<sup>st</sup> in Part I in 1928 (the year of his election as an Apostle), and a 1<sup>st</sup> with distinction in Part II in 1930. He completed graduate studies with research in French art history and became a Fellow of Trinity in 1932. He was later to lead the Cambridge Spy Ring (Costello 1988).

with the young poet, and a harsh verbal dispute had erupted. Despite Keynes' efforts, Blunt had not reconciled himself to Wittgenstein: rather he had "made Cambridge's adopted philosophical genius one of his 'bêtes noires'", a dislike fated to deepen when the latter was assigned a suite on his staircase in Bishop's Hostel (ibid.: 154).<sup>20</sup> As regards Bell, the claim that he did not reconcile with Wittgenstein either (ibid.) is challenged by evidence of a tea together a few weeks before the Lecture on Ethics (WCPD 1929–1930, October 28), of their meeting again in December (ibid., December 5), and again in 1930 (WCPD 1930–1931, December 2 and 4).

Michael Redgrave, the third "young unmarried intellectual" in the list, was co-founder with Blunt of the left-wing literary magazine *The Venture* and was seeing Graham often at that time. Aged 21, the future actor and director (and father to the actress Vanessa) had entered Magdalene College in 1927 to read French, but after an upper Second in Part I in 1928, he had switched to English, of which he was to conclude Part I the following May.<sup>21</sup> Considered by Bronowski as "a rival poet" (Bronowski 1973), he had recently contributed to *The Granta* "a pastiche of Virginia Woolf's *Orlando* [...] illustrated with a photograph of Blunt in drag" (Read 2003: 247), and the next anthology of Cambridge undergraduates' poetry was to include some of his poems. Redgrave was also praised as a member of the Marlowe Society, the theatre club for students staging Jacobean repertoire; in Graham's words, "his fair beauty and grace" made him a perfect interpreter of the lyricism of youth (GBR/0271/GCPP Graham A1 1/1/17–18: October 21, 1929; February 16, 1930). Apparently, he was not a Heretic (Franke 2008: 97).

Graham then mentions the artist and poet Julian Otto Trevelyan, with whom, as with Bell, she was to meet often a few months later. Grandson of the politician Sir George Trevelyan, and nephew to the historian and Honorary

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<sup>20</sup> "Keynes sent a sharp 'My dear Blunt' note to Blunt on March 19 [1929], taking him to task for being 'upset by what you think happened when Wittgenstein returned to the Society'. Keynes curtly told Blunt, 'The facts are not at all as you suppose'. Both he and Julian were summoned to lunch 'early next term to talk about it'" Costello (1988: 154).

<sup>21</sup> After a lower 2<sup>nd</sup> in Part I in 1930, Michael Scudamore Redgrave (1908–1985) spent a further year reading for the Le Bas prize. Having in mind his poems in *Cambridge Poetry 1930*, Graham defined Redgrave as the most talented and musical among the young poets (GBR/0271/GCPP Graham A1 1/1/18: 24.4.1930). She also appreciated his being "most attentive" to her, and yet found him charming in a "rather elusive way" (ibid. 17: 11.10.1929): "grateful, and pleasing to look at. I enjoyed having him here; but he leaves behind him a faint lingering fragrance, an impression of grace and beauty of line that a woman ought to give. He does not stir, he pleases gently. Odd youth – sensitive & talented and artistic ... Still, I hope I shall see more of him" (ibid.: 31.10).

member of the Heretics George M. Trevelyan, Julian was aged 19. “Lean, tall, brown-skinned [...] with a shock of light brown hair” and “always dressed in greenish-grey” (GBR/0271/GCPP Graham A1 1/1/18: February 17, 1930), he read English in Trinity and concluded Part I the following May with a lower Second. He had taken over the secretarial duties for the Heretics in the summer; and being charged with setting up the schedule of the meetings, had met twice with Wittgenstein to fix the date of his lecture.<sup>22</sup> Trevelyan’s recollections suggest that after the drink with the Heretics Committee following the lecture, Wittgenstein asked him to walk with him towards the house where he lodged; Trevelyan remembered his being “flattered” by the request, and also how along the Backs, under the street lamps, Wittgenstein whistled Schubert’s songs to him (Trevelyan 1957: 18–19).<sup>23</sup>

The sequence goes on with another Heretic, the poet and novelist Hugh Sykes-Davies. By then 20, and already a Marxist, Sykes-Davies had entered St John’s College to study Classics in 1928 and completed Part I in 1930.<sup>24</sup> He

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<sup>22</sup> Wittgenstein met with Trevelyan on October 15 (WCPD 1929-1930); three days later, the *Cambridge Review* advertised the upcoming events for the Heretics including the philosopher amongst the speakers (1929 issue, v. 51, no. 1244, October 18, 1929: 27). Initially scheduled for November 24 (WCPD 1929–1930), Wittgenstein’s lecture had to be brought forward, because Flügel proposed to lecture on November 3, and Garratt, scheduled for that day, had already given the 24<sup>th</sup> as the only alternative (Garratt to Robinson 11.10.1929, GBR/0272/JVR/7/154/1). Wittgenstein was possibly asked to reschedule his lecture when he met again with Trevelyan on October 22 (WCPD 1929-1930); the Calendar section of the *Cambridge Review* announced his lecture for the 17<sup>th</sup> on November 15 (vol. 51, no. 1248: viii).

<sup>23</sup> In the Spring of 1931 Trevelyan (1910-1988) left Cambridge to live in Paris, where he enrolled in the ‘Atelier Dix-Sept’, working alongside Giacometti, Kokoschka, Miró, and Picasso. His wife remembered him saying that he “used to sometimes go for walks with Wittgenstein” (Fedden 1991: 10), thus suggesting a habit lasting until he left Cambridge. But WCPDs show meetings with him only in Fall 1929 – the two in October mentioned above, and a further one on November 17 right before the lecture. The latter was then cancelled, but Trevelyan seemingly accompanied Wittgenstein home that same night; in his memoir, he wrote “I remember [Wittgenstein] lecturing to the Heretics [...] Later I was *once* flattered to be asked to take a moonlight walk with him”, but he linked the date of the walk to the lecture in telling the anecdote to his nephew, as the latter wrote: “*After the Lecture on Ethics* [...] Wittgenstein [...] asked Julian to accompany him back to his rooms” (respectively, Trevelyan 1957: 18; P. Trevelyan, 2013: 47, italics mine). Incidentally, Trevelyan’s wife tells us about Wittgenstein’s friendship with the poet Richard Eberhart, who was at St. John’s to take a second BA in English: “Eberhart was not a friend of Julian’s. He was a friend of Wittgenstein. He revered Wittgenstein very much” (Fedden 1991: 10). Eberhart left for the United States in early October 1929.

<sup>24</sup> Sykes Davies (1909–1984) gained a 1<sup>st</sup> in Part I of the Classical Tripos in May 1930, then changed subject, and obtained a 1st with Distinction in English Part II in 1931. He became an Apostle in 1932, was elected the first-ever fellow of English at St John’s in 1933, and then University Lecturer in the subject in 1936. Author of the prose poem *Petron* (1935), in 1936 he was co-curator of Surrealist Exhibition in London and co-author of *Surrealism*.

would also engage with the Girtonian Kathleen Raine,<sup>25</sup> a graduate in Moral Sciences deeply involved in the Heretics activities, and one of two women student poets published in the *Experiment* which Sykes-Davies co-edited. Reportedly talented in friendship, Sykes-Davies was later to become a friend of Wittgenstein's, "not as a philosopher but as a whistler" (Watson 2001: 576).<sup>26</sup>

Graham finally mentioned another of her acquaintances, namely Max Black, who himself remembered the Heretics event in an interview he gave several years later (Black 2014: 57). Born in Baku and brought up in London, Black was by then 20, and a 2<sup>nd</sup> Year in mathematics at Queens' College; following a First in Part I, he graduated in 1930 amongst the Senior Optimes. He had met Wittgenstein at Moore's discussion classes and at the Moral Sciences Club (hereinafter MSC), and they also had a few appointments, the last one a couple of weeks before the Lecture on Ethics (WCPD 1929–1930: October 14, 21; November 5). He was a student of Wittgenstein's in both Lent Term and Easter Term 1930, then left Cambridge to study with Hilbert in Göttingen.<sup>27</sup>

## **2.2 Other attendees of Wittgenstein's lecture**

So the above-mentioned attendees can be added to those of whom we already had notice, in the first place those reported by Arthur MacIver, a visiting student from Oxford, who mentions six students who, like him, were

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<sup>25</sup> Kathleen J. Raine (1908–2003) entered Girton in 1926 to read Natural Sciences; after a 2<sup>nd</sup> in Part I, she switched to Moral Sciences, specialising in Psychology and gaining a 3<sup>rd</sup> in Part II in 1929. By then, she had already contributed to establishing an enduring tradition of poetry at Girton, where she was to return as a Research Fellow in 1955 (Kaschl 2022: 265–276). On her involvement in the Heretics, Franke (2008: 97).

<sup>26</sup> "Ludwig, as [Hugh] called him, could whistle an entire movement of a Beethoven symphony — not just the melodic line but the harmonies beneath. But Hugh never read his philosophy and only once went to a class. Wittgenstein, when they met in the street the next day, was not pleased. 'I saw you at my class yesterday, Hugh,' he said, 'and I hope you won't come again. My stomach-ache is not your stomach-ache'" (Watson 2001: 576). Moore's notes from Wittgenstein's lectures suggest the episode occurred either in the fall of 1932 or the spring of 1933 (cf. MWL: 230–231; 347, 354, 365). In telling the anecdote, Beer (2007: 25) claims that Sykes-Davies attended "some of [Wittgenstein's] seminars" for a couple of weeks, but presents no evidence of it. The first appointment with Sykes-Davies was recorded in WCPDs on March 7, 1930.

<sup>27</sup> Black (1909–1988) was a mathematics master at the Royal Grammar School, Newcastle, in 1931–36; elected Professor of philosophy at the University of Illinois in 1940, he moved to Cornell in 1946, and saw Wittgenstein again in 1949, when the latter came to stay there with Norman Malcolm.

acquainted with the philosopher as they attended both the MSC and the informal ‘Wittgenstein Society’ which used to meet on Wednesday evenings (McGuinness 2016: 220, November 17).

Most of them, like MacIver, definitely attended Wittgenstein’s lectures in the following term, so they will be focused on, with MacIver, in § 3.2; they are Desmond Lee (worthy of mention here is his close friendship with Empson), Maurice Cornforth, the “Canadian” John Allan Irving, and finally an “American” – either John C. Cooley or John Prizer. There is, on the other hand, no evidence that the two Girtonians mentioned by MacIver were Wittgenstein’s students in Lent Term 1930 (§3.2), so they are introduced here; Margaret Ellen Thomas, who had recently switched from Classics to Moral Sciences,<sup>28</sup> and Karoline Kitty Klugmann, a brilliant graduate in Moral Sciences now reading Economics.<sup>29</sup> MacIver also reports “some nondescripts” and “a physicist” (ibid.: 220, 221),<sup>30</sup> and finally tells us that after the lecture Wittgenstein went for a drink with the Heretics Committee, of which we can then include the five members beyond the Treasurer and the Secretary (Bell and Trevelyan respectively), namely the President (Piccoli) and four students. There is no evidence of who those last four were, but as they often came from Newnham and Girton, we may guess amongst them, in virtue of their high involvement in the Heretics activities at that time, the abovementioned Raine, and the Newnhamite Betty Wiskemann, a historian and also Empson’s

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<sup>28</sup> ‘Tom’ to her friends, Thomas (1907-2009) was a writer, a poet, and an artist (Kaschl 2022: 391). In Cambridge since 1926, she had earned a 2<sup>nd</sup> in Part I of Classics in 1928, and the same year she had been one of those responsible for inviting Virginia Woolf to speak at Girton. She gained a lower 2<sup>nd</sup> in Part I of Moral Sciences in 1930, and in 1931 she edited and contributed to *An Anthology of Cambridge Women’s Verse* (Hogarth Press), which also includes a few of Graham’s poems (§1). “It was the custom at Girton to put students into small mutually supportive ‘families’ of four or five which would remain together throughout their time at college” (Andrews 2015: 29); Thomas, Raine (n. 25), and Klugmann (n. 29) were in the same ‘family’, whereas Graham was part of another one. In 1931 Thomas married the geophysicist Edward Crisp Bullard. She mentioned Wittgenstein a few times in her novel set in Cambridge, *A Perch in Paradise* (London: Hamish Hamilton, 1952). MacIver misspelt her surname at first (cf. McGuinness 2016: 220, 243).

<sup>29</sup> Klugmann (1908-1965), a Marxist who in 1929-30 was leading the Girton College Labour Club, entered Girton in 1926, was a close friend of both Thomas and Raine, and with the latter was involved in the Girton and Newnham Joint Debating Society, being respectively President and Secretary (Andrews 2015: 29–30). An outstanding student, by 1929 Klugmann had already gained a 1<sup>st</sup> in both Parts of the Moral Sciences Tripos and was reading economics; still, “it was philosophy which continued to drive her imagination” (ibid.: 30). See also §3.2, n.85.

<sup>30</sup> Klagge (2021: 175) suggests W. H. Watson (§3.2, and n. 83) as “the physicist”; MacIver, however, tells us the latter was attending the MSC in the Fall of 1929, whereas he first saw Watson in March 1930 (McGuinness 2016: 250, 11.3).

girlfriend, who had lunched with Wittgenstein three days before the lecture (WCPD 1929–1930, November 14).<sup>31</sup>

Adding two further probable attendees, namely the economist Piero Sraffa (who only occasionally attended the Heretics events, but planned to attend the lecture of his friend, Morra 2017: 103), and Raymond Townsend, whose presence is suggested by a letter of his to McGuinness (RT to BM 1.3.1972, in Marjanović 2005: 62),<sup>32</sup> we have nearly thirty names. However, as Wittgenstein’s lecture was amongst those with a greater appeal in the Heretics schedule (the other being Piccoli’s lecture, attended in fact by an even bigger crowd, GBR/0271/GCPP Graham A1 1/1/17, November 10), we may guess several further members of the Society were there, in the first place those who were also Wittgenstein’s friends, namely Keynes,<sup>33</sup> George Moore,<sup>34</sup> and the

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<sup>31</sup> Elizabeth Meta Wiskemann (1899–1971) brilliantly concluded the History Tripos in 1921. In 1928, though, her doctoral thesis gained her only a MA (the result, she believed, of her supervisor’s gender prejudice), and her hopes for an academic career were further thwarted by the scandal following Empson’s expulsion from Cambridge, even though he tried to screen her from exposure (Field 2022: 17–18). Her lunch with Wittgenstein might have been consequent to her activity for the Heretics at that time (for instance, she was sending out with Trevelyan “a flurry of solicitous letters in a struggle for the survival of the Society”, Franke 2008: 48–9; 98). Wiskemann had “a vivacious and even flamboyant personality, coupled with a devouring interest in European culture. An authentic intellectual and exuberant conversationalist, she knew how to charm and had a flair for cultivating [...] She could be abrasive and unkind to the less favoured. Sometimes be prickly and quick to take offence” (Haffenden 2005: 240–1). Graham, who found her “extremely obnoxious” (GBR/0271/GCPP Graham A1 1/1/18: 25.2.1930), mentions her only twice, the last in early June 1930; shortly after, Wiskemann went to Berlin, occasionally returning to teach at Cambridge.

<sup>32</sup> A New Zealander, Raymond Townsend (1902–1986) was a student of Wittgenstein’s in the next academic year. He gained a First in Moral Sciences in 1931, then remained in Cambridge for a further year to obtain a qualification in French (WC: 203), however spending abroad the first two terms (Morra 2020: 25). He made his notes available to Lee and King for the publication of LWL. Later a schoolmaster, he remained a friend of Wittgenstein’s. See also Hayes (2017b: 430).

<sup>33</sup> On November 7, Keynes wrote in his agenda “5.0 Ludwig Moral Lecture” (Kings/JMK/PP/41/27/46). Date and hour do not match, and Wittgenstein noted down no meetings with Keynes on that date; Keynes made no entry at all for Sunday 17, but his diary suggests he spent the whole weekend in Cambridge, so it is possible his annotation was misplaced.

<sup>34</sup> A month earlier, Wittgenstein had conversed with Moore about ethics (WCPD 1929–30, October 8; Ms-107, 156).

Ramseys.<sup>35</sup> Then, amongst the young members, we may think of Empson,<sup>36</sup> Alistair Cooke,<sup>37</sup> George Reavey,<sup>38</sup> Humphrey Jennings,<sup>39</sup> and Robin Fedden.<sup>40</sup> Other probable attendees were the mathematician Alister Watson, one of the few Apostles with whom Wittgenstein had interacted since his return to Cambridge, who had recently started to attend the Heretics meetings (Costello 1988: 193),<sup>41</sup> and two further members of the MSC who were to attend Wittgenstein's lectures in Lent Term 1930, namely Maurice Drury<sup>42</sup> and Richard Braithwaite (§3.2).

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<sup>35</sup> Lettice Cautley Baker (1898–1985) had been Treasurer of the Heretics while reading Moral Sciences in Newnham. After getting a 1<sup>st</sup> in Part I of Moral Sciences in 1921, she worked for three years in vocational guidance in London, then returned to Cambridge to work in the University Psychology Library. She married Ramsey in 1925, and after his death worked as a photographer, remaining a good friend of Wittgenstein's. While an undergraduate at Trinity College, Frank Plumpton Ramsey (1903-1930) had been Secretary and also lecturer for the Heretics, to whom he had read in 1921 “a revised version of ‘Mr. Cole’s Social Theory’, in which he argued for Guild Socialism” (Misak 2020: 95). The Ramseys had hosted the philosopher for a couple of weeks in February.

<sup>36</sup> A fortnight before Wittgenstein's lecture, at an extra meeting of the Heretics Empson read *Sphinx, or the future of exegesis*, a paper foreshadowing his work on Milton's God (Franke 2008: 98; cf. GBR/0271/GCPP Graham A1 1/1/17: 28.10.1929).

<sup>37</sup> The future journalist, television personality, and radio broadcaster Cooke (1908-2004), from Jesus College, had gained a 1<sup>st</sup> in English Part I and was to graduate with an upper 2<sup>nd</sup> the next May. He regularly contributed to *The Granta* with “amazingly good caricatures” of cultural luminaries (GBR/0271/GCPP Graham A1 1/1/17: 6.11.1929) and was amongst the founders of the Mummies, from which he notably rejected James Mason, telling him to stick to architecture. Still named Alfred at the time of Wittgenstein's lecture (he changed it to Alistair the next year), he was one of Graham's admirers.

<sup>38</sup> Co-editor of the *Experiment*, the surrealist poet, publisher, translator, and art collector Reavey (1907–1976), from Caius, had taken Part I of the Historical tripos in 1928 and Part II of the English tripos in 1929. He moved to Paris shortly after Wittgenstein's lecture.

<sup>39</sup> The future director and documentary filmmaker F. H. S. Jennings (1907-1950), another editor of *Experiment*, had graduated at Pembroke with a starred 1<sup>st</sup> in English and was undertaking post-graduate research on Thomas Gray. He was also a painter; with his wife Cicely Cooper and Trevelyan, he was to open an art gallery in Cambridge in the Spring.

<sup>40</sup> Henry Robin Romilly Fedden (1908–1977), from Magdalene, had obtained a lower 2<sup>nd</sup> in Part I of the Historical tripos and was to take a 3<sup>rd</sup> in Part I of the English tripos in 1930. He was the third editor of *The Venture* and became a writer, diplomat, and mountaineer.

<sup>41</sup> Alister G. D. Watson (1908–1982), recently graduated amongst the Wranglers, was elected a Fellow of King's in 1933. Graham described him as a “quiet, whimsical young man” (GBR/0271/GCPP Graham A1 1/1/18: 13.6.1930).

<sup>42</sup> Drury, who quoted from the printed version of the lecture in his recollections (Drury 1981a: 97–8), did not mention his attending it: however, it is more than probable that he did, given his closeness to Wittgenstein.

### **2.3 Reactions to the lecture**

Graham's remark "all so clever. But they hadn't got very far with their cleverness when I came away" (GBR/0271/GCPP/GRAHAM A1 1/1/17: November 18), suggests reactions to the lecture were more nuanced than they appeared from previous evidence.

That very evening MacIver wrote that Wittgenstein's "magnificent" speech "was wasted on the Heretics, who cannot appreciate religious feeling or argue except sophisticatedly" (McGuinness 2016: 220, November 17), and in fact Trevelyan later claimed that Wittgenstein considered ethics "a huge nonsense" (Trevelyan 1957: 18–19), which in addition he "distrusted" (P. Trevelyan 2013: 47). For his part, Black recalled that during the question time an undergraduate asked, "Dr. Wittgenstein, in the *Tractatus* you say that the world is everything that is the case. What would it be like if it were not?" (Black 2014: 57). It was not a challenge to the *Tractatus*, but a mockery, because "at that time there was a lot of interest among Cambridge philosophers in verifiability...and there was a little local slogan or jargon — 'What would it be like if it were not?' So that if something came up and it was thought to be violating the principle of verifiability, a flippant question would be 'What would it be like if it were not?'" (ibid.). Laughter came from the audience, and "Wittgenstein was absolutely furious. He was striding off the stage, and he had to be forcibly held back and be persuaded that the man in question would apologize and there was no malice behind it" (ibid.; cf. Klagge 2021: 26–27). The 'persuaders' were surely the members of the Heretics committee, who finally took the philosopher for a drink at the Corner House (McGuinness 2016: 220, November 17); later, as was said earlier, Wittgenstein seemingly asked Trevelyan to accompany him back home (§ 2.1, n.27).

Graham's diary reveals that not all the attendees reacted with sarcasm to the lecture, and rather suggests an audience more puzzled than amused; Wittgenstein's speech, at any rate, interested those who in a couple of months were to attend his lectures, Graham included.

### **2.4 After the Lecture: Bell's Epistle on the Subject of the Ethical and Aesthetic Beliefs of Herr Ludwig Wittgenstein**

Graham's diary gives us evidence that Bell attended the Lecture on Ethics, which, in the light of MacIver's diary, implies that he was with Wittgenstein at

the Corner House after the lecture as a member of the Heretics Committee. Such evidence confirms that Bell composed the satirical *Epistle on the Subject of the Ethical and Aesthetic Beliefs of Herr Ludwig Wittgenstein (Doctor of Philosophy) to Richard Braithwaite, Esq., M.A. (Fellow of King's College)* after that evening. The attack on both Wittgenstein's style of discussion and self-righteousness, in which Bell was encouraged by Blunt ("never one to abandon a vendetta", Costello 1988: 154), was published in *The Venture* in late February,<sup>43</sup> and later Bell claimed it was intended as "a criticism of certain views on art and morals" advocated by Wittgenstein in 1929 (Klagge 2021: 175).<sup>44</sup> Surely Wittgenstein advanced his view on art at the Corner House after the lecture, the party being mostly made up of aesthetes, but he had already expressed it at the Apostle meetings following his arrival in Cambridge;<sup>45</sup> Bell, however, heard the philosopher advocating his view "on morals" only at the Lecture on Ethics – he had already expressed the kernel of it as a rejoinder to H. A. Pritchard's talk on "Ethics" (Drury 2019: 114), but Bell did not attend the MSC.<sup>46</sup>

## **2.5 Before the Lecture: Wittgenstein at Prunières' lecture on the Ballet de Cour**

At the end of her recollection of Wittgenstein's lecture, Graham recalls her having already seen the philosopher a week earlier:

Wittgenstein is the man who was at Prunières' lecture with Piccoli – another of these amazingly active-minded men, who never cease thinking & speculating philosophically. (GBR/0271/GCPP Graham A1 1/1/17: November 18)

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<sup>43</sup> Keynes announced the publication of the *Epistle* to his wife on February 23 (Morra 2020: 12, n. 19). Graham mentioned it too (see §3.1), and later mentioned also the publication of a "little epilogue to [Bell's] 'Epistle on Wittgenstein'" in a new issue of the *Venture* (GBR/0271/GCPP Graham A1 1/1/18: 15.3.1930, see §4).

<sup>44</sup> The epistle, which attacked Wittgenstein's approach to the Apostles' discussions, was originally addressed to Ramsey, whose sudden death however forced "the last-minute change to Braithwaite" (Klagge 2021: 197), possibly chosen because of the rumours induced by Wittgenstein's heated reaction to his talk to the MSC on February 7 (ibid: 73).

<sup>45</sup> Costello (1988: 154) wrote that "politics, rather than aesthetics" was the source of the rift between Wittgenstein, Bell, and Blunt, thus suggesting that Wittgenstein advanced his point of view on art at the Apostle dinner in March 1929.

<sup>46</sup> Drury (1981a: 114) reports Prichard's talk as occurring in 1929; MacIver does not mention it, so it must have occurred in the first half of 1929.

The lecture Graham refers to had been organized on November 11 by the Italian Society of which she was Secretary and Piccoli President. The speaker was the French musicologist Henry Prunières, the editor of the first edition of Jean-Baptiste Lully's complete works. He devoted the lecture to the *ballet de cour* in France before Lully, an issue linked to the topic of the reception of Italian music in France at that time, on which he was also an expert. Graham described the event with these words:

I went – in the rain – to hear M. Prunière talk on French “Ballets de cour” – a charming medley of talk, illustration & song, & well appreciated. Ena Mitchell, Mrs. Prior & Humphrey Trevelyan were singing:<sup>47</sup> the lantern lectures were gay and quaint, old prints of dancing scenes. (GBR/0271/GCPP Graham A1 1/1/17: November 11)

A week later, then, Graham recalled Wittgenstein amongst the attendees of Prunières' lecture, and in fact, the philosopher had had tea with Piccoli on November 11 (WCPD 1929–1930), so they probably went together to hear the musicologist (Morra 2020: 7). Unfortunately, Graham mentioned nothing about the philosopher on that occasion, as she did not know him at that time. We may wonder whether he was already acquainted with Prunières, or if Piccoli introduced them; their lives were, at any rate, to cross again in January 1933, when Prunières, the founder and editor of the periodical *La Revue musicale*, enthusiastically reviewed Paul Wittgenstein's first public performance of Maurice Ravel's Concerto for the Left Hand in D major in Paris.

### **3. Wittgenstein's first university class**

#### **3.1 An attendee at Wittgenstein's first university class**

Graham mentioned her attending Wittgenstein's lectures for the first time in early February, in a quick update of the last, busy days:

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<sup>47</sup> Ena Mitchell (?–1979), a Girtonian student who was part of Graham's 'family', became a distinguished soprano; Mrs. Prior was the wife of the Slade Professor of Fine Art Edward Schroeder Prior (1852–1932), instrumental in establishing the arts and crafts movement, and, at Cambridge University, the School of Architectural Studies. Humphrey Trevelyan (1905–1985), a second cousin of G.M. Trevelyan, was reading Classics in Jesus and was later a diplomat.

Monday – coaching, tea in the town, & then Wittgenstein’s lecture. He has an ardent & original personality that makes even logic full of life and wonder. (GBR/0271/GCPP Graham A1 1/1/18: February 5)

Wittgenstein’s lectures had begun two weeks earlier, but the lack of previous mentions is not conclusive of Graham having missed them. References in her diary to the lectures she attended are rare (§1), and this is especially true for Lent Term 1930, during which she occasionally mentioned those of Wittgenstein and Piccoli, and only once those of Gerald Shove, despite Economics being her first subject. Nor does she announce – even less explain – her decision to attend Wittgenstein’s lectures, a decision probably consequent to her attending the lecture on ethics, and/or prompted by Piccoli, by then a friend of the philosopher but seemingly not an attendee of his lectures (Morra 2020).

In short, we cannot exclude the possibility that on January 17 Graham was in the “crowd” who gathered in Braithwaite’s rooms to decide the times of the lectures and discussion classes – Mondays from 5 to 6, Thursdays from 5 to 7 (McGuinness 2016: 229, January 17). And her focus on the contemporary deaths of a close relative and a much younger person (Ramsey, whose loss was a shock for the entire academic community) on the day of Wittgenstein’s first lecture,<sup>48</sup> is not enough to exclude her from the crowd which filled the room, and in which MacIver noticed several people not usually attending the circle of the Moral Sciences faculty (ibid.: 229–230, January 20). Wittgenstein’s first discussion class was on the 23<sup>rd</sup>, the day in which Graham attended, as did “a multitude of dons”, the first Clark Lecture, with Herbert Read talking about Wordsworth (GBR/0271/GCPP Graham A1 1/1/18: January 24) – and yet, as MacIver remarked, several people that day left Wittgenstein’s class at 6 pm (McGuinness 2016: 231, January 23), we may guess to attend Read’s lecture. On January 27<sup>th</sup>, when Wittgenstein’s second lecture took place, Graham devoted the diary entry to her relationship with Piccoli, but between the lines, it appears that in the afternoon she had been at the Arts School, where the lectures were held (GBR/0271/GCPP Graham A1 1/1/18: January 28). However, that week she possibly missed the discussion class, which had now

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<sup>48</sup> “A death I cannot understand, that makes me wonder, is Frank Ramsey’s. Young, wonderfully strong, brilliant intellectually, married & with two small children – & now he has just died, leaving them, his mathematics & logic & work unfinished. It seems unjust. And the Ramseys have been such an unfortunate family” (GBR/0271/GCPP Graham A1 1/1/18: 20.1.1930).

moved to Raymond Priestley's rooms in Clare,<sup>49</sup> and was attended by "a smaller company than usual, at which Wittgenstein was inclined to complain, saying that the discussions were quite as important as the lectures and that it was useless if people did not come regularly" (McGuinness 2016: 233, January 30).

Graham, at any rate, definitely attended Wittgenstein's third lecture; and her remark about his making "even logic full of life and wonder" nicely fits with MacIver's finding Wittgenstein "very much better than he has been in the past – very much more sure of himself and of the thread of his argument" (ibid.: 235, February 3). No hints of her attending the following discussion class, which was better attended than the week before (ibid.: 236, February 6).

The following Monday, those who arrived at the Arts School "found a notice pinned to the blackboard" saying Wittgenstein would lecture "on Thursday in Mr. Priestley's rooms" (ibid.: 238, February 10). MacIver waited with "Cornforth and Black and Lee in the courtyard [...] warning people as they came along", and the company increased until they were told "that Wittgenstein was ill" (ibid.). Graham was apparently amongst those who wondered how "to spend [that] hour" (ibid.); and she decided to have tea with the "Catalan Professor" MacIver reported as an attendee of Wittgenstein's lectures (e.g., ibid.: 241), namely Joaquin Xirau Palau:<sup>50</sup>

Today, tea with the Spanish lecturer Xirau. His wife, the "perfecta casada" is fat & pale & dark, but very pleasant. Irvine Bullock – also copper-coloured & moustachioed, was there and brought me back in his car. The other visitor was a silent, big-eyed Spanish girl, an old friend of the Xiraus in Catalonia. Spanish was spoken. They are nice people. (GBR/0271/GCPP Graham A1 1/1/18: February 10, 1930)

Xirau, aged 34, had arrived in Cambridge in October to be a visiting professor for a couple of terms, thanks to an exchange program promoted by

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<sup>49</sup> Graham wrote about the new location of the discussion class only a fortnight later (ibid.: 15.2.1930).

<sup>50</sup> Xirau (1895-1946) graduated both in philosophy and Law in Barcelona, then in Madrid gained a Ph.D. in Philosophy under Ortega y Gasset and also a Ph.D. in Law and Social Sciences. In 1923 he was amongst the founders of the *Unió Socialista de Catalunya*. Appointed Professor of Logic in Salamanca in 1926, two years later he moved to Barcelona, where he was the founder of the Seminar of Pedagogy, from which a specific course followed later, and Director of the Faculty of Philosophy in 1933-37. The advance of Franco's army into Catalonia forced him to take shelter in France. He held some conferences in England in 1936 but was in Cambridge again only in 1937 for a lecture ('Luis de León, poeta y filósofo'), and spent a few months there again in 1939 before leaving for Mexico, where he was Professor of Philosophy at the *Universidad Nacional Autónoma*. Cf. De Puig (1982-1983).

the Spanish-English Committee, and having chosen to lecture on the evolution of Spanish culture. Graham had met him shortly after his arrival:

Juan Mascarò & his friend Señor Joaquin Xirau, ex-professor of philosophy at Barcelona & now lector in Spanish here, came to tea. I sat on the sofa by Xirau, resolved to get to know him beneath his fat little dago exterior because Piccoli had told me he was interesting. And he is. I wonder whether I should have found it out by myself. He and one or two other professors of philosophy in Spain are trying to create it anew – for there has been no philosophical tradition in Spain for three hundred years, and Xirau feels he has a mission to fulfil. His enthusiasm, when he spoke of his ambition and his will to arrive & to make something great & fine & living, was touching. I was glad to know him and to sympathise with him because I think he is lonely here, speaking no English (though he reads it easily) & with only M. Mascarò as guide. We spoke French; and again I felt that knowing languages is a great gift, as the gift of speech & the gift of sympathy & understanding. (GBR/0271/GCPP Graham A1 1/1/17: November 4, 1929)

MacIver had noticed “the Catalan Professor” at Moore’s lecture three days later, and again the next day at the MSC (McGuinness 2016: 214–215, November 7–8) – and Graham’s diary suggests the Spanish expert in Oriental languages Juan Mascarò as “the compatriot” he was with on that occasion (*ibid.*).<sup>51</sup> Since then, Xirau had been a regular attendee of both the MSC and Moore’s lectures (e.g., *ibid.*: 236, February 6), and plausibly attended Wittgenstein’s Lecture on Ethics too.

Wittgenstein gave the postponed lecture three days later, in combination with the discussion class. The room was crowded, and the philosopher, who still “looked ill”, “lectured for more than an hour and a half, and better than usual too, before he began to get confused and stopped to let people ask him questions” (McGuinness 2016: 239, February 13). MacIver’s words were confirmed by Graham two days later, after a remark revealing the importance of Wittgenstein’s course in her schedule despite her mentioning it only now and then:

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<sup>51</sup> Mascarò (1897-1987), from Downing College, read Modern and Medieval Languages, Part I in 1927; Oriental Languages, Part I in 1928; English, Part I in 1929. He was then Lecturer on the Spanish Mystics for Cambridge University for some years, and later produced one of the most popular English translations of the Hindu text Bhagavad Gita, and of some of the major Upanishads.

The same people occupy me – here, Helen Megaw, Agatha<sup>52</sup> – principally: in Cambridge, Piccoli, Wittgenstein – Hugh Stewart<sup>53</sup> ... the same occupations – writing a little, reading Shakespeare when I ought to be reading Marshall or not reading at all: the same preoccupations, Mrs. Hollond,<sup>54</sup> essays on the theory of money, & work. [...] On Thursday Agatha & I went to see the lovely Greta Garbo in “The mysterious Lady” – then I went onto Wittgenstein’s discussion in the new buildings of Clare which are spacious, measured calm within. Wittgenstein’s passion gives life to the propositions of logic that had seemed dry and dead. (GBR/0271/GCPP Graham A1 1/1/18: February 15)

She then caught the flu responsible for the postponement of Wittgenstein’s lecture:

The usual Sunday is ... irreligious: late breakfast, washing ... stockings, reading the Observer ... walking into Cambridge. Lunch at home & endless conversation, perhaps a walk, people to tea, more talking. Getting supper ready, finally Heretics & walking back again. But this Sunday I lie in bed & think, listen to steps along the corridor & wonder if anyone will come & see me. [...] And I enjoy the quiet, the rest, the relaxation. The feeling that I needn’t do anything but get better quickly so that I can go to the Mummers, to Mother’s, Piccoli’s, Wittgenstein’s lectures [...]. (ibid.: February 16)

The next morning, she was well enough to go and see “Julian Trevelyan’s little exhibitions of drawings by Troin, du Plessis, Sévier, Bissill, & Louis le Breton & himself” (ibid.: February 17), so in the afternoon she probably went also to Wittgenstein’s lecture, the one in which he came “in conflict with the mathematicians over transfinite numbers”, the mathematicians being “Braithwaite and Du Val and Guest and Black” (McGuinness 2016: 241, February 17).

It is certain that she attended the lecture in which, in MacIver’s words, Wittgenstein “was very confused [...] and things were made worse when he came again onto the octahedron of colours and people began to interrupt from the body of the room” (ibid.: 243, February 24). The next day Graham wrote:

I heard Wittgenstein (rather inconsequent) yesterday & came back to read Julian Bell’s cruel but animated “Epistle on the subject of the Ethical and Aesthetic Beliefs

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<sup>52</sup> The Irishwoman Helen D. Megaw (1907-2002), a pioneer in X-ray crystallography in Girton to study Natural Sciences, was in the same family as Graham. “Agatha” was Graham’s sister (§1).

<sup>53</sup> Stewart, a student from St. John’s, and at that time one of Graham’s admirers.

<sup>54</sup> Marjorie Tappan-Hollond, the first woman appointed to a Lectureship in the Cambridge Faculty of Economics, and Graham’s tutor at that time.

of HERR LUDWIG WITTGENSTEIN (Doctor of Philosophy) to RICHARD BRAITHWAITE ESQ. M.A. (Fellow of King's College)". But even Julian admits Wittgenstein's poetic fire: "but I'd rather have common sense", he says to himself. Then

"The issue's simple, so [sic] it seems to me

"Between good sense, sainted insanity;

"To alter facts till they our passions fit,

"Or face the truth, and make the best of it." (GBR/0271/GCPP Graham A1 1/1/18: February 25, quoting the last verse of Bell's poem)

The issue of the *Venture* including Bell's poem, had been released over the weekend (n.46), and this may partly explain Wittgenstein's bewilderment during the lecture; even though his only reported response to the publication was to lump Cambridge aesthetes together as "these Julian Bells!" (Partridge 1981: 160), the public attack on his style of discussion could not but shake his self-confidence in lecturing, at least temporarily.

In the afternoon of February 27, Graham attended a lecture "on Greek Play & Handel" and then a concert, this suggesting she missed Wittgenstein's discussion class: in the evening, by the way, she attended a further concert in Trinity which "was all Mendelssohn, for me rather a colourless & insincere composer without enough sense of form to compensate for his lack of colour" (GBR/0271/GCPP Graham A1 1/1/18: 2 March), a remark in tune with Wittgenstein's perspective on the composer. She made no further references to his lectures; and mentioned him again only as a friend of Piccoli (§4).

### **3.2 New data about Wittgenstein's first university class**

Despite a lack of reference to the content of Wittgenstein's first course in Graham's diary, it offers a few portraits of the lecturer, includes Graham amongst his students, and finally reveals Xirau as "the Catalan Professor" listed by MacIver amongst the attendees.

Clearing up the picture of Wittgenstein's first university class is interesting, as the audience he addressed contributed to forging his approach to lectures. In addition, knowing who the attendees were and their expertise at that time may help us to understand the perspectives from which the students posed their questions to Wittgenstein (cf. Klagge 2021: 16).

MacIver writes of a large class (although with a seesawing attendance), and now the names of 18 attendees are known.<sup>55</sup> A snapshot of each of them at that time is given in the following pages – an essential recap for people introduced in the previous sections or who require no introduction, and more lines on those whose identity is here unveiled.

Max Black, who turned 21 at the end of February, was a 2<sup>nd</sup> Year in mathematics (§2.1).

Sudhir Kumar Bose, aged 28 and an M.A. in philosophy at St Stephen's College, University of Delhi, had entered Magdalene to read Moral Sciences in 1927. In the last Tripos, he had been awarded a First in Part I and was to gain a Second in Part II the following June. A chain-smoker, since his arrival in Cambridge he missed none of the Annual Cigar Smoking Competitions at Harrods of Knightsbridge, finishing each time in the top five.<sup>56</sup>

Richard Bevan Braithwaite, an Apostle and a Fellow of King's, had recently turned 30. He had been one of the Wranglers in 1922, then a brilliant graduate in Moral Sciences, and had been University Lecturer in the subject since 1928.<sup>57</sup>

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<sup>55</sup> Names/descriptions of the attendees mostly come from MacIver's diary (neither Moore nor Lee detailed the audience in their notes). A few people previously thought present were not: IA Richards was in China, there is no evidence about Julian Bell, John King (1981: 83) dated his "first sight of Wittgenstein" in October 1930, and MacIver's diary gives evidence that William H. Watson, a graduate in physics from the University of Edinburgh and winner of a scholarship for three years at Caius, attended Wittgenstein's lectures only from the next term; MacIver, in fact, first saw him at a meeting of the 'Wittgenstein Society' at the end of Lent Term (McGuinness 2016: 250, 11.3).

<sup>56</sup> Bose (1902-1983), a member of the informal undergraduate 'Wittgenstein Society' meeting on Wednesday evenings, arranged two appointments with Wittgenstein in the following months (WCPD 1929-1930: 12.3; 24.5). He attended his lectures also in 1930-1931 (Klagge 2019: 30), when he spent a fourth year in Cambridge to gain a second M.A. From 1937 until 1963, he was Lecturer and later Professor Emeritus in Philosophy at St Stephen's College, Delhi, where he founded the Philosophical Society. President of the Old Stephanians' Bachelor's Association, he was a co-founder of the Board of Control for Cricket in India and associated with the Delhi District Cricket Association. In his memory the Sudhir Bose Lectures were established in 1985, and Imperial Avenue in front of the College was renamed Sudhir Bose Marg in 1986.

<sup>57</sup> Braithwaite (1900-1990), admitted to King's in 1919, became an Apostle two years later. Elected a Fellow of King's in 1924, he was then holder of the Knightbridge Chair of Moral Philosophy. Together with Dobb, he proved a "cornerstone of Cambridge's socialist community" (Shenk 2013: 24). WCPD 1929-1930 shows three appointments with him (30.11; 1.12; 6.6). He was later to marry Margaret Masterman, at that time reading French, with whom Graham dined in February: "dinner with Mrs. Trevelyan (Mrs. Masterman & Margie who's at Newnham, both witty talkers)" (GBR/0271/GCPP Graham A1 1/1/18: 21.2). 'Margie', who took Part I of Modern and Medieval Languages in 1930, returned to Cambridge to read Moral Sciences in 1931, and was a student of both Braithwaite and Wittgenstein.

John Cleveland Cooley, aged 27, held a Ph.B. from Yale, the bachelor of philosophy being a third kind of undergraduate degree Yale granted at that time after a four-year course of study in the Sheffield Scientific School, the precursor of Yale's School of Engineering. Conceived for those studying 'professional science' and 'engineering', the course included various subjects in addition to mathematics, physics, and modern languages. Although Cooley had planned to enter the Yale School of Architecture after graduation, the lectures on philosophy held by F. S. C. Northrop had aroused his interest in the subject and finally moved him to enter Graduate School, where he had studied mainly logic and philosophy of science. Possibly prompted by Northrop, who had been in Trinity College in the a. y. 1922–1923, Cooley had then decided to spend there the a. y. 1929–1930 as a visiting student. Positive evidence of his being a student of Wittgenstein's is limited to Lent Term 1930, but he plausibly was his student also in the following term.<sup>58</sup>

Maurice Campbell Cornforth, a graduate in philosophy from University College London despite his young age – he had turned 20 at the end of October

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<sup>58</sup> "Johnny" Cooley (1903-1987), from Hartford, Connecticut, entered the Sheffield Scientific School in 1922 but re-entered in 1923 "because of ill health" and graduated in 1927 (<https://yalealumnimagazine.org/articles/4911-select-course>). In 1927-8, he studied Introductory Logic, Foundations of Logic, and Philosophy of Science with Northrop; the following year, while Northrop was in Europe, he attended the lectures of F.P. Hoskyn. Concerning his stay in Cambridge in 1929-30, it is interesting to remark that Henry Margenau, a recent gainer of a Ph.D. in Physics from Yale, moved to Europe with a Sterling Fellowship at that very time. Cooley, who before or after his stay in Cambridge spent two months in Germany (not implausibly in Berlin, where Margenau was studying quantum theory), was back in Yale in 1930-31 to study Advanced Logical Theory with Hoskyn and Philosophy of Science with Northrop. He then entered the Harvard Graduate School of Arts & Sciences as a visiting student in philosophy, and attended Whitehead's and Sheffer's lectures (Harvard University Archives: UAV 161.201.12 Box 12; UAV 161.272.5 File III Box 3). There he befriended W.V.O. Quine, to whom in August 1932 he suggested the reading of Carnap's *Aufbau*, also giving him a detailed account of it (Quine, Carnap 1990: 464; cf. Verhaegh 2023: 20). In 1932-3 Cooley took research with Whitehead, got his Ph.D. (from Yale) in 1934 (title of the dissertation: *Mind and the New Positivism*), and was then Assistant in Philosophy at Harvard for four years. In recommending him to Carnap for an assistantship at Chicago University in 1937, Quine wrote: "Thesis on you (mainly Aufbau). Has developed a good background in logic, and some in fdtns. of math. Primary interest is scientific philosophy" (Quine, Carnap 1990: 233–4). Cooley did not obtain the position in Chicago; in 1938, he authored the *Outline of Symbolic Logic* that Carnap was to use for his courses (ibid.: 407), then worked for the Harvard Business School for a few years – as Assistant in Human Relations, then as Instructor in Industrial Research. In 1942-46, he served in World War II as an Instructor in Navigation, then became Instructor in Philosophy at Columbia University, where he was later appointed Professor of Philosophy and authored several introductions to logic. In 1934, Wittgenstein sent him his greetings through Charles Leslie Stevenson (WC: 179), who, like Cooley, had been just named assistant in Philosophy at Harvard. Stevenson arrived in Cambridge in 1930 with a Yale B.A. in English and was attracted to philosophy also by his friendship with Wittgenstein; he graduated in Moral Sciences in 1933, then entered Harvard as a graduate student in Philosophy.

– was in Trinity to read a two-year specialized course in logic which was set up that academic year for the first time.<sup>59</sup> He was a Marxist, and by then already a close friend of Klugmann (§2.2), whom he married in 1931.

Maurice O'Connor Drury, aged 22, was in his third year at Trinity to read Moral Sciences and already a friend of Wittgenstein.<sup>60</sup>

Austin Ernest Duncan-Jones, aged 22, was in Caius since 1927; he had got a first in Part I of Classics and was now reading Moral Sciences, prompted by a deep interest in logic and perhaps by Moore, who held him in high esteem.<sup>61</sup>

Patrick du Val, nearly 27, was in his final year at Trinity as a postgraduate student researching algebraic geometry. A former student of Ramsey's, he wrote a poetic tribute to him published in the *Cambridge Review* on February 14. He had a few appointments with Wittgenstein in the following months (WCPD 1929–1930, February 19; March 5; May 7, 10, and 31).<sup>62</sup>

Alethea Graham, aged 22, had graduated in Modern and Medieval Languages and was now reading Economics and Italian.

David G. Haden-Guest was the youngest of the class, having just turned 19. A Trinity man, he was in his junior year of mathematics. The following May, he was to get a Second in Part I, and then he spent, as Black, most of the following academic year in Göttingen to study Mathematical Philosophy under Hilbert (Andrews 2015: 31–32). By Lent Term 1930, Haden-Guest was already

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<sup>59</sup> Andrews (2015: 30) claims that Cornforth (1909–1980) came up to Cambridge “to study Analytic Philosophy under G.E. Moore and Wittgenstein” but provides no further references. Cornforth graduated in 1931 and was then awarded a three-year research scholarship at Trinity; in 1931, he also joined the CPGB, and set up the party's first organization at Cambridge with Klugmann. He was a member of the ‘Wittgenstein Society’, and WCPD 1929–30 records a few appointments with him (25.1; 6.3; 4.5; 10.5). He was a student of Wittgenstein's also in 1930–32, whereas from 1933 he worked full-time for the CPGB in East Anglia and became later a prominent theoretician of British Marxism.

<sup>60</sup> Drury (1907-1976) himself described his lasting friendship with Wittgenstein and their conversations (Drury 1981a; 1981b; cf. Hayes 2017a). He had achieved an upper 2<sup>nd</sup> in Part I of the 1928 Moral Sciences Tripos and was to gain a starred 1<sup>st</sup> in Part II in 1930.

<sup>61</sup> Duncan-Jones (1908-1967) graduated in 1931. The University of Birmingham appointed him Assistant Lecturer in Philosophy in 1934 and later Professor of Philosophy. Best known as a philosopher of meta-ethics, some of his papers from the early Thirties, when he was already editor of *Analysis*, are on logic (*Universals and Particulars*, 1934; *Is Strict Implication the Same as Entailment?* 1935). He was a student of Wittgenstein's also in 1931-32 (Klagge 2019: 31).

<sup>62</sup> Before entering Trinity in 1927, du Val (1903-1987) had been awarded a first-class honours degree from the University of London External Programme, which he took by correspondence course. His tribute to Ramsey was untitled *On a Philosopher Dying (F. P. R.)*. In June 1930, he gained his Ph.D. and was elected a fellow of Trinity for four years. WCPDs 1929-34 record a few appointments with him.

a close friend of Cornforth, with whom he shared the same political commitment.<sup>63</sup>

The “Polish woman” referred to by MacIver (e.g., McGuinness 2016: 236, February 6) was the philosopher of induction and probability Janina Hosiasson (later wife to Adolf Lindenbaum), a member of the Lvov-Warsaw School, who held a visiting fellowship in Cambridge for that academic year. Aged 30, after graduation in both mathematics and philosophy, she had prepared a doctoral thesis on inductive reasoning under the tutelage of Kotarbiński and with Łukasiewicz as a second reader.<sup>64</sup> MacIver had first noticed the “mathematical logician” in November, at Moore’s lecture (McGuinness 2016: 217, November 12). She had then proved a proactive attendee of Moore’s lectures and discussion classes, of MSC meetings, and now of Wittgenstein’s lectures (evidence of her attending them is limited to the Lent Term, but plausibly she

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<sup>63</sup> Haden-Guest (1911-1938) was the son of a Labour politician. In Göttingen, where he spent two terms of the a.y. 1930-31 (Andrews 2015: 31–32), he was imprisoned for taking part in demonstrations against the Nazi party (Costello 1988: 203). Back in Cambridge, like Cornforth, he joined the CPGB and was one of the leaders of the communist students (Andrews 2015: 31–32). He left Cambridge in 1933 to work for the Young Communist League in Battersea, later going to Moscow to teach and returning to lecture at University College in Southampton. In 1938, he joined the International Brigade in Spain and was killed at the battle of Ebro. He was a student of Wittgenstein’s also in Easter Term 1930.

<sup>64</sup> Ph.D. in 1926, Hosiasson (1899–1942) worked as a schoolteacher while keeping on research until she obtained a scholarship from the Polish Ministry of Religious Affairs and Public Education to study philosophy in Cambridge in 1929–30 (Zygmunt, Purdy 2014: 298). Interested in developing logical methods suitable for scientific research, she researched the foundations and the interpretation of probability, explored an axiomatic approach to confirmation and conducted empirical investigations into the psychology of inductive reasoning. In 1935, she was the first woman whose work appeared in *Erkenntnis*. A usual attendee of the Unity of Science congresses in the 1930s, she was one of the invited speakers at Harvard in 1939 but was denied the visa. After Poland’s invasion, she travelled to Vilnius with her husband, and when Lithuania too was invaded, she was arrested and finally shot by the Gestapo in 1942. In 1940, she had published in the *Journal of Symbolic Logic* a solution to Hempel’s raven paradox proposing a probabilistic approach to confirmation according to which confirmation comes in degrees (*On Confirmation*); in 1941, in *Mind*, a formulation of an axiomatic system of inductive logic anticipating Carnap’s later work (*Induction et analogie: Comparaison de leur fondement*). Upon her arrival in Cambridge in 1929, she was the author of a paper on the logical form of common inductive reasoning (*Definitions of Inductive Reasoning*, 1928, in Polish), in which the focus on the established understanding of the term was in line with the method of the Lvov-Warsaw School, prescribing that any philosophical analysis should start with a clarification of the meaning of the terms involved; in late September she had delivered a paper at the First Congress of Mathematicians from Slavic Countries. A careful reader of Keynes’s work on probability, she considered analogical and inductive reasoning to be closely related; in a paper on the subject prepared in Cambridge, she wrote: “I am greatly indebted for clearness on this question to an unpublished paper by Mr. F. P. Ramsey on Truth and Probability which the kindness of Mr. Braithwaite has enabled me to read. I had, however, previously thought independently on similar lines” (Hosiasson 1931: 30, n.15). In March 1930, Lindenbaum was in Vienna to meet Carnap, Feigl, Hempel, Fraenkel (Purdy, Zygmunt 2018: 508), so Hosiasson might have been there too in the Easter vacation.

was a student of his in the Easter Term too). Unfortunately, her “slight [...] knowledge of English” made the gist of her questions/remarks obscure to most attendees (ibid.: 219, 240); Wittgenstein, however, was interested in them, and they occasionally gave him a chance to clarify how his perspective was moving away from the *Tractatus* (e.g., ibid.: 231–232, 240). He made an appointment with her on February 28 (WCPD 1929–1930), a week after she had raised at Moore’s lecture, Wittgenstein being present, “the question of the reference to the body involved in statements about the self” (McGuinness 2016: 243, February 22).

John Allan Irving, aged 26, MA in Philosophy from the University of Toronto and then a brilliant graduate student from Princeton, was a ‘Dominion Exhibitioner’. He had been accepted as an advanced student in Oxford and “allotted to Collingwood” to do “philosophico-literary research”, but he had finally “decided to come to Cambridge and read psychology for the second part of the Tripos” (ibid.: 221). Now aged 26 and in his second year at Trinity, MacIver described him as “very much of a psychologist and interested in the theory of language”; he attended the MSC and also the informal ‘Wittgenstein Society’, declared himself “not a disciple of Wittgenstein” (ibid.), and used to attack “philosophers for using language improperly” (ibid.: 225). His attendance at Wittgenstein’s lectures and discussion classes in Lent Term 1930 was intermittent, because they had been scheduled, despite “a little protest from Cornforth” on Irving’s behalf, on the same days and hours as F. C. Bartlett’s lectures and psychological seminar (ibid.: 229, 231). On February 16, Irving privately met with the philosopher (WCPD 1929–1930), and although he was later to criticize the ‘logical positivism’ of the latter, in 1935 he grounded his paper *Toward Radical Empiricism in Ethics* on the perspective of the *Tractatus*.<sup>65</sup>

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<sup>65</sup> Irving (1903–1965) received a BA from Victoria College in 1926 (Honour Course in Philosophy, English, and History) and a MA in 1927. His brilliant results moved Princeton University to grant him the Charlotte Elizabeth Procter Graduate Fellowship in Philosophy for 1927–28 and then the Parking fellowship to study in England. He spent both the academic years 1928–29 and 1929–30 at Trinity College, and was probably a student of Wittgenstein’s also in Easter Term 1930. He did not sit his exams due to sickness, and was awarded a BA in Moral Sciences on the basis of previous performance. By the Fall of 1930, he was back in Princeton, which had promised him the position of Instructor in Philosophy upon his return; in 1935, he was appointed as Assistant Professor, a position he held until 1937, with several stays in Europe in between (Cambridge University awarded him a MA in 1934; given the previous *aegrotat*, there would be no requirement for him to study in Cambridge, but he must have been there to receive it). In 1938, he was appointed Professor of Philosophy at the University of British Columbia and Head of the Department of Philosophy and Psychology, and then from 1946 until his death, he was

David Gwilym James, aged 24 and holder of a Fellowship from the University College of Wales, Aberystwyth, had been in Trinity since October to pursue his work on “the nature and status of secondary qualities” for the Ph.D. degree in Philosophy (*UCW Reports submitted to the Court of Governors, Report 1928–1929*: 64). He had obtained first class honours both in Philosophy I in 1925 and English I in 1926, and then a MA with distinction in Philosophy with a dissertation “on secondary qualities” in 1928, having spent the previous academic year in University College, London (*ibid.*, *Report 1927–1928*: 65). With Drury, Cornforth, and Lee, James had been part of the ‘Wittgenstein Society’ since Fall 1929 (e.g., McGuinness 2016: 221).<sup>66</sup>

Henry Desmond Pritchard Lee, from Corpus Christi and gainer of a First in Part I of the Classical Tripos in 1928, was reading Part II of the ancient philosophy section. Aged 21, he used to attend the Moral Sciences lectures and meetings and the ‘Wittgenstein Society’. He had met Wittgenstein in early 1929 and they were now good friends (Lee 1979: 211; Hayes 2017b: 419–420).<sup>67</sup>

Arthur MacIver, aged 21, was a visiting student from Oxford who had taken Greats and was now in his first post-graduate year (McGuinness 2016: 201–203; Hayes 2017b: 420).

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Professor of Ethics and Social Philosophy at Victoria College. He mentioned his stay at Trinity in a paper he published in 1935, where he recalled his studying “Philosophy and Psychology under Professors G.E. Moore, C.D. Broad, F.C. Bartlett, the late Mr. W.E. Johnson, and Dr. Ludwig Wittgenstein” (Irving 1935: 226). The paper grounds on statements of the *Tractatus* the claim that speculative ethical systems having no epistemological validity, ethical relativity should be admitted, and on that basis, scientific ethics should be established. Irving, who had devoted to Wittgenstein’s work a few unpublished essays already in 1931–32 meant to clarify both Wittgenstein’s conception of philosophical method and the essence of Logical Positivism, had taken a more critical stance in a paper prepared for the 1934 APA Annual Meeting and comparing Leibniz’ “phenomenal” perspective on matter to the approach of “the Causal Theorists of current epistemology”: “in the name of absolute clarity, Wittgenstein and his disciples have ‘poured out the baby with the bath’ by denying that the great historical systems of philosophy can give us meaningful knowledge. But even the Logical Positivists must recognize that fossils have a value” (Irving 1936: 211; 214).

<sup>66</sup> James (1905–1968) was in Cambridge until 1931, then became Warden of the recently established Welsh University Settlement at Merthyr Tydfil. In 1934–37 he was a tutor in Worcester for the University of Birmingham, then a lecturer in English at the University College, Cardiff, until 1941, and in 1942–52 Winterstoke Professor of English at the University of Bristol. In the Fall of 1929, he met twice with Wittgenstein (WCPD 1929–1930: 31.10, 26.11). A member of the ‘Wittgenstein Society’, he was also a student of Wittgenstein’s in 1930–31 (Klagge 2019: 30).

<sup>67</sup> Lee (1908–1993) concluded the ancient philosophy section Part 2 with a 1st and gained a Charles Oldham scholarship in 1930. He left Cambridge in 1931 to come back in 1933 as a Fellow of Corpus Christi; he did not try to see Wittgenstein again, afraid of the reaction to his having taken a course of which Lee “knew he would disapprove” (Lee 1979: 220). He was later College tutor and university lecturer. A member of the ‘Wittgenstein Society’, he was also a student of Wittgenstein’s in 1930–31.

The “Middleton” mentioned as a later attendee of the lectures and as a friend of Cornforth (McGuinness 2016: 243, February 24) remains unidentified at the present state of our knowledge.<sup>68</sup>

George E. Moore, at that time 56 and a long-time friend of Wittgenstein’s, was Professor of Mental Philosophy and Logic.

The Spanish Professor Joaquin Xirau, aged 34, had lectured on logic and philosophy respectively in Gerona and Barcelona (§ 3.1).

Beyond the people of whom MacIver gave evidence, we may presume the lectures were attended by the American John Butler Prizer, in November admitted to Trinity to study for the Moral Sciences Tripos as an Affiliated Student from Amherst College, where he had graduated *Summa Cum Laude*: he was an attendee of both the MSC and the ‘Wittgenstein’s Society’ (ibid.: 222, 232, 235, 240, 244, 250), and he also had a few appointments with Wittgenstein.<sup>69</sup> Further attendees were probably other students in Moral Sciences, including A. T. Shillinglaw,<sup>70</sup> A. A. Wynne Willson,<sup>71</sup> A. H. D.

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<sup>68</sup> He might have been L.R. Middleton, a recent graduate in physics from Downing College.

<sup>69</sup> Prizer (1909–1976) had graduated BA in Amherst in 1929 with highest honours in Greek, and honours in philosophy, German, and Latin. The Trinity Admissions Book tells us that, on admission, his personal tutor was the historian Denys Winstanley. In his first year in Cambridge, Prizer lived in a college house (19 Chesterton Road), whereas in the second year in Whewell’s Court, staircase D. WCPD 1929-1930 shows a few meetings with him (14.2; 28.2; 10.5; 3.6), WCPD 1930-1931 a few others (12.11; 16.2; 5.3; 5.6). After being awarded a 2<sup>nd</sup> class pass in the examinations for Part II of the Moral Sciences tripos in Easter Term 1931, Prizer went to Harvard, where he obtained a Bachelor of Laws in 1934. He was awarded a MA in philosophy at Cambridge by proxy in 1936. In 1941 he joined the legal department of the Pennsylvania Railroad, for which he was vice president and general counsel from 1952 to 1968.

<sup>70</sup> Arthur Thomson Shillinglaw (1907–unknown), a graduate in English from the University of St. Andrews, had been in Trinity since October. A member of the ‘Wittgenstein Society’ (McGuinness 2016: 221), he gained a 1<sup>st</sup> in Part I in 1930, and there is evidence of his attending Wittgenstein’s lectures in 1930–31 and 1931–32 (Klagge 2019: 30–31). While Senior Lecturer in Moral Sciences at the University of Liverpool in 1935-36, he prepared a catalogue of the Hobbes Papers at Chatsworth.

<sup>71</sup> A. A. Wynne Willson (1908–1938), at St. John’s since 1927, obtained a 2<sup>nd</sup> in Part I in 1930. Secretary of the MSC in 1929–30, on the eve of the Lecture on Ethics he had “complained to Broad about Wittgenstein’s presence at the ‘supplementary meeting’ a fortnight ago and Broad has passed this on to Moore and Moore to Wittgenstein, with the result that Wittgenstein is now holding little meetings of protest with everyone he meets” (McGuinness 2016: 219). Broad dedicated to him the first volume of his *Examination of McTaggart’s Philosophy* (1933), and thanked him also for the proofreading in the Preface. In 1933 he was ordained priest at Durham Cathedral.

Tozer,<sup>72</sup> G. H. Clayton,<sup>73</sup> B. A. Lewis,<sup>74</sup> J. H. Lewis,<sup>75</sup> B. Moran,<sup>76</sup> Thomas (§2.2), and F. G. Warner.<sup>77</sup> As regards Klugmann, already a graduate and spending her third year in Girton reading Economics (§ 2.2), her being amongst Wittgenstein's first students is more than plausible despite lack of evidence, given her passion and talent for philosophy and also the subjects she tackled at that time.<sup>78</sup> A further (occasional) attendee might have been the philosopher of politics A. R. M. Murray, in Trinity to prepare "his dissertation for a Fellowship" (McGuinness 2016: 218).<sup>79</sup>

The names of which we have evidence return a picture of Wittgenstein's first university class in which the heterogeneity of the attendees is apparent as regards age, academic status, and interests, and matches the multiple nature of the class, standing at the crossroads between philosophy, logic, mathematics,

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<sup>72</sup> Arthur Humphrey Denny Tozer, from Selwyn College, got a 1<sup>st</sup> in Part II of Moral Sciences in 1930, and later a M.A. He was a lecturer in educational psychology for the University of Liverpool, Department of Education.

<sup>73</sup> G.H. Clayton, lower 2<sup>nd</sup> in Part I of English in 1929, was also in Selwyn, graduated with a 2<sup>nd</sup> in Part II of Moral Science in 1930, then entered the clergy.

<sup>74</sup> B.A. Lewis, from Jesus, had got an upper 2<sup>nd</sup> in Part II of MML Sections in 1928 and graduated with a 2<sup>nd</sup> in Part II of Moral Sciences in 1930. He later collaborated with P. P. Howell, an anthropologist expert on Nuer law.

<sup>75</sup> J. H. Lewis, non-Coll, gained a 2<sup>nd</sup> in Part II of Moral Sciences in 1930 and left Cambridge soon after to live in Hereford.

<sup>76</sup> In November, the American B. Moran, in Clare, had read at the MSC the paper "Evidence for the Existence of Other Minds according to Berkeley" (McGuinness 2016: 215). Detached from the historical frame, the topic interested Wittgenstein, who tackled it on January 31, in his first contribution to the MSC since his return (Klagge 2019: 15). Moran graduated with a 2<sup>nd</sup> in 1930.

<sup>77</sup> F. G. Warner, from Caius, who had got a 3<sup>rd</sup> in Part I of the Historical Tripos in 1929, graduated with a 3<sup>rd</sup> in Part II of Moral Sciences in 1930. In 1926 he had edited the political poem dating back to 1436, *The Libelle of Englyshe Polycye*.

<sup>78</sup> On February 21, Klugmann read at the MSC "The Analysis of Propositions", a "very good" paper the substance of which, however, was not grasped by Wittgenstein, who arrived late and monopolized the discussion, finally focusing it on mathematics (McGuinness 2016: 242–3). In May, she gained a lower 2<sup>nd</sup> in Part II of Economics despite her devotion to philosophy, and spent the next year with a Rose Sidgwick Studentship at Columbia University to study under Montague (Andrews 2015: 30). She came back determined to "look for a post or a scholarship" in philosophy (ibid.: 31), a career that, like Cornforth whom she married a few months later, she was, however, to sacrifice in deference to her political commitment (cf. n.29). King listed her amongst the occasional students of Wittgenstein's in 1930–31 (Klagge 2019: 30); as she was back from New York in late May 1931, she must have attended the lectures right at the end of the Easter Term. She was plausibly an (occasional) attendee of Wittgenstein's lectures also in 1931–32.

<sup>79</sup> Alexander Rainy Maclean Murray (1907–1985), later Extension Lecturer in Social Philosophy at the University of London, was the author of *An Introduction to Political Philosophy* in 1953. Karl Britton also gave his name to von Hayek while suggesting people for him to contact for reminiscences on Wittgenstein (BRI 2/5/10, undated).

and language. Several attendees were already graduates in philosophy or had a good background in it (logic and philosophy of science in particular). And those with mathematical competencies were not few in number; du Val was preparing his Ph.D. in algebraic geometry, Braithwaite and Hosiasson had also graduated in maths, Black and Guest were studying it, Cooley and Irving had maths included in their courses of study, and Prizer (whether or not he was amongst Wittgenstein's students) had devoted to maths a whole year while an undergraduate in Amherst.

An interesting datum is the presence in Wittgenstein's class of two scholars close to the perspective of logical empiricism, namely the Lvov-Warsaw member Hosiasson and Cooley, a student of Northrop's. Both of them presumably also attended Wittgenstein's lectures in the following term (cf. above), thus suggesting that Wittgenstein's interface with neo-empiricist thought was not limited to his conversations with the Wiener Kreis during the academic holidays, at least during the first half of 1930.

Finally, remarkable for the history of the dissemination of ideas is the presence in Wittgenstein's first class of two students who were to continue their studies at Harvard, namely Cooley (probably a student of Wittgenstein's also in Easter Term 1930) and Prizer (evidence of his being a student of Wittgenstein's is lacking, but their meetings make it more than probable, cf. above; and he was possibly a student of his until May 1931, cf. n. 66). This implies that four former students of Wittgenstein's were in Harvard in 1933–1934: three as students of the Graduate School – Cooley, in his final year, Karl Britton, in his second year and a student of Wittgenstein's in 1930–1932, and Stevenson, in his first year and a student of Wittgenstein's in 1930–1933; and Prizer, in his third year of Law but still interested in philosophy. In addition, Cooley and Stevenson were appointed Assistants in Philosophy in 1934. So an echo of Wittgenstein's movement of thought in his very first years in Cambridge, i.e., before the turning point of the *Blue Book*, reached Harvard in the first half of the Thirties – in fact, also Princeton, where Irving was Instructor in Philosophy by the Fall of 1930 (cf. n. 65).

#### ***4. A witness of Piccoli's intellectual friendship with Wittgenstein***

Wittgenstein's name occurs two further times in Graham's diary, and they witness the philosopher's intellectual friendship with Piccoli, the Professor of

Italian. Here follows the transcription of both occurrences; they were put in context in a paper devoted to the friendship and intellectual relationship between Wittgenstein and Piccoli (Morra 2020), so this context will be only briefly sketched out here.

As was anticipated (§3.1), Graham mentioned Wittgenstein again once Lent Term was over, namely in mid-March, when, with her sister Agatha, she a paid visit to Piccoli, who was ill. Remembering the visit, she wrote:

I see him in the corner of his sofa, a little pathetic in his weakened strength; & reading out pieces of Racine that seem funny to him [...] & then quoting beauties of Racine [...] & I wondered. And lots of little incidents – I pouring out tea; the books he had with him – The Poet Laureate’s Testament of Beauty<sup>80</sup> & something of Yeats on the chair – the Venture (he read us Julian Bell’s little epilogue to his “Epistle on Wittgenstein”, about Chloe, when we talked about the original Helen Soutar’s “Escape from sudden death”)<sup>81</sup> – my trying to make him take eucalyptus in a lump of sugar instead of smoking so much – his remedies, Mrs. Prior’s gift of “oleum basileum” & Wittgenstein’s of cinnamon pastilles (Agatha’s attempt at eating one) – his flowers: anemones between two red lamps & plants on the floor – books. (GBR/0271/GCPP Graham A1 1/1/18: March 15, 1930)

The excerpt confirms what was already suggested by WCPD 1929–1930, namely that by then Wittgenstein and Piccoli were good friends. A rough contemporary of Wittgenstein, Piccoli was a philosopher, poet, literary critic, and translator who had been a Teacher of Italian in Cambridge before the war, and Professor of English Literature in Naples until his election to the Chair of Italian in 1929 (Morra, 2021). Introduced by Sraffa, he had met with Wittgenstein a few times in Michaelmas Term, then, in Lent Term 1930 – in fact until March 1931 –, they met nearly once a week, a frequency of meetings that Wittgenstein was later to adopt with Sraffa, one of his main interlocutors in Cambridge. Then, Piccoli was forced to leave Cambridge due to health problems – he was back only for short periods until his death in January 1933

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<sup>80</sup> For the philosophical poem *The Testament of Beauty* Robert Bridges had been recently appointed to the Order of Merit.

<sup>81</sup> As further evidence of the “little epilogue” is missing, what Graham means here is not clear. Helen Soutar, a Girtonian undergraduate in English, had been Bell’s girlfriend since September, and ‘Chloe’ was her pseudonym in his first poems – e.g., in the *Epistle*: “If Ludwig ever had fair Chloe seen / My case were won, nor had there question been. / If ever he had loved, and watched, and known / The air, smile, laughter, that are all her own . . . / He’d own that here all Good, all Beauty lies, / Nor seek a world transcending Chloe’s eyes”. Bell still dedicated to ‘Chloe’ *Escape from Sudden Death*, a poem of his in *Cambridge Poets 1930*, whereas his first collection, published later that year, was openly dedicated (also) to Soutar.

(for hypotheses about their conversations, Morra 2020). Against the background of WCPD, Graham's diary suggests also that in February 1930 the philosopher attended, together with Piccoli, the Heretic meeting in which Adrian Stephen read "A description of Freudian analysis" (ibid.: 12).<sup>82</sup>

Graham mentioned Wittgenstein again once she was in Paris, after a visit from Piccoli, on his way to spend the Long Vacation in Italy. Remembering their day together, she wrote telling words on the relationship that had developed between Wittgenstein and the Professor of Italian:

I'm not sure how it started – but we got to talking about Piccoli's being the fashion at Cambridge, and how it was people ran after him and why he was popular (other dons bore people) and how he was flattered at being loved (he was the only older man asked to the Venture Party) but he wanted people to listen to what he had to say as well. And we talked about intimacies and loving people – and how two real friends or two real lovers each feel honoured that the other loves them – even though they have no common interest – he & Wittgenstein, he & I – personal love not dependent on anything but just ourselves. (GBR/0271/GCPP Graham A1 1/1/19: June 24, 1930)

What Piccoli told Graham suggests that his frequent appointments with Wittgenstein during the last terms had been motivated by the reciprocal intention "to listen to what" the other "had to say"; and in fact, they might have felt it was difficult to express to a generation spared from the experience of war their shared distrust of scientism and the transformation of values affecting Western civilization (see Morra 2020: 13–14, 18). In addition, Piccoli defined them as "two real friends", each feeling "honoured that the other loves them even though they have no common interest", the last remark possibly alluding not only to the different approaches and goals moving their respective researches, but also to the stances with which they faced Cambridge life – Wittgenstein conducting an ascetic life, Piccoli attending parties, college feasts, and exhibitions, and a good friend of both Trevelyan and Bell, with whom he discussed "poetic inspiration, poetic & moral judgement" (GBR/0271/GCPP Graham A1 1/1/18: May 13).

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<sup>82</sup> In Winter 1930, Graham mentioned only two of the Heretics lectures, namely Webb's "The Gothic Revival" (GBR/0271/GCPP Graham A1 1/1/18: 19.1), and Stephen's "A description of Freudian analysis" (ibid.: 23.2).

## 5. Conclusion

Graham's diaries from 1929–1930 enrich biographical information on both Wittgenstein and intellectual life in Cambridge at that time. As a usual attendee of the Heretics meetings, she heard Wittgenstein's lecture on ethics too, and later she attended his lectures in Lent Term 1930. She was also witness to his friendship with Piccoli, the Professor of Italian. Putting her recollections in context then prompted a sharper focus on both the audience Wittgenstein addressed at the Heretics and his Lent Term class of 1930.

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