

## ROSE RAND: A WOMAN IN LOGIC

Whoever talks in Vienna about the Jew Rose Rand, born in the Austrian crown land of Galicia on 14<sup>th</sup> June 1903, brings back certain memories to the audience of the woman in the Vienna Circle who took the official minutes of the meetings in Boltzmannngasse. The minutes, the only record of discussions in the Schlick Circle between 1930 and 1933, as well as more of her written works (e.g. *Entwicklung der Thesen des Wiener Kreises*, edited by Rose Rand, November 1932 to March 1933), have been published since then.

The importance of Rose Rand as a woman in the Vienna Circle is frequently documented in the relevant literature of both the past and the present. In this way, a detailed examination of her work can be found not only in Stadler's book, *The Vienna Circle. Studies in the Origins, Development, and Influence of Logical Empiricism*<sup>1</sup>, published in 2001, but also in John W. Dawson Jr.'s *Logical Dilemmas. The Life and Work of Kurt Gödel*<sup>2</sup>. Due to her affiliation with the Vienna Circle, her name is very well-known in academic circles.

Nonetheless, a comprehensive biography of Rose Rand is still lacking. Only recently has it become possible to write one since her unpublished papers in Pittsburgh have become accessible. A description of her life would, however, be incomplete if one were to confine her scientific importance merely to her role in the Vienna Circle. Though this, too, is doubtless of importance, her future biographer would only really do her justice if he or she were to examine her self-assumed role as a logician as well. Even this aspect of her life is currently only partially evincible and still doesn't give a complete picture of her life and works when examined.

Nevertheless, the following work intends to contribute some new pieces to the mosaic of a potential future biography. Explorations into the overall theme "Women in Logic" will be examined. These aim at making a further contribution to the already-existing work about the historical-contextual history of the discipline of formal logic which has already been successfully carried out in Erlangen by Christian Thiel and Volker Peckhaus for many years now.

The new historiography of logic as conceived in Erlangen establishes itself "aus der Einsicht in die Defizienz der traditionellen, nahezu ausschließlich problem- und ideengeschichtlich orientierten Logikgeschichtsschreibung".<sup>3</sup> In this way, it achieves a shift in emphasis when compared to the classical accounts of the history of logic.

To be specific, this more recent approach primarily takes a number of social factors into account, including the internal history of the development of the science in its wider historical context. This particular understanding of the historiography of a discipline combines problem-oriented history with social history and thus an internal and external approach to the subject. In this way, historical documentation is seen as an indispensable way of researching.

At the heart of the investigations is the scientist whose contributions have influenced the discussion or the development of the discipline as regards content. Following from this, everyone who has made a contribution to the discipline is potentially someone who has influenced its development or the course of its discussion. In this way, the process of examining the biographies of individual scientists appears to be a decisive focus of the work.

One can understand this biographic approach not only in a perfectly classical sense because it envisages “möglichst umfassend alle eventuellen Einflußfaktoren auf die Entwicklung der wissenschaftlichen Ansichten des *einzelnen* Wissenschaftlers” while bringing out the aspects relevant to the particular question posed in a second step. Nevertheless, this doesn’t imply that a biography of so-called “Heroes of Science” should be undertaken, because it places “die Leistungen des einzelnen Wissenschaftlers in den Gesamtprozeß der Theorie- oder Disziplinentwicklung”.<sup>4</sup>

The historico-contextual history of the discipline of formal logic also sees the topic “Women in Logic” as part of its research.

This is a result of its self-reflexive perspective – it seeks to connect writings about problem-oriented and social history, i.e., to combine an internal with an external approach to the topic and to see all contributions to its discipline as potentially relevant to its development. In addition, it is ready to embrace the results and methods of related disciplines.

This theme can also be understood as one of the areas belonging to the now widely-practised historical research on women, especially the scientific history of women. On first appearances, this is influenced by the fact that women are hardly represented in institutional science, if at all. When, however, as previously mentioned, historical writing about women in formal logic claims to be comprehensive, it lays down the same demands and methods which also apply to other areas of the history of the discipline. The specific conditions surrounding the emergence of women’s contributions should then be regarded and appraised as historical influences. A content-related appraisal can, however, only orientate itself after the prevalent criteria of scientific theory, when the actual contribution of women to the development of the discipline is to be evaluated.<sup>5</sup>

Though we can claim that some female logicians in the English-speaking world<sup>6</sup>, or a number of female mathematicians<sup>7</sup>, for example, have achieved a certain “level of research”, we cannot say the same for German-speaking female logicians. In the standard works of the history of logic their contributions are only mentioned in passing, when at all, or only appear in the bibliographies of these works.<sup>8</sup>