"Wittgenstein's heirs: R. Rhees, G. H. von Wright and G.E.M. Anscombe as students, colleagues and friends of Ludwig Wittgenstein."

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DATE: Thursday 25th April,

PLACE: Sydnesplassen 12/13, room 130,

TIME: 10:30 a.m. to 12:30 p.m.

Abstract:

Scholars approach Wittgenstein's Nachlass from several angles such as

philosophy, philology, text-encoding or digital humanities. Largely

unexplored remains the fascinating human story in the editorial history of

the Wittgenstein papers. The three philosophers Rush Rhees, Georg Henrik

von Wright and Elizabeth Anscombe devoted a significant part of their

lifetime to fulfil Wittgenstein's wish to publish from his writings what

they thought fit. Their reasons and motives for deciding what and how to

edit and the significance they attached to their editions show what

philosophical inheritance may mean in a full sense of the word.

As a prelude to such an intellectual biography of Wittgenstein's

Nachlass, I want to sketch the relationships between Wittgenstein and his

later literary executors, beginning with the time when they had been

students of Wittgenstein until they became colleagues and friends. It is

important to study these personal relationships since they put us in touch

with the soil from which the editions grew: we may understand better why

Wittgenstein bequeathed Rhees, Wright and Anscombe with the task of

publishing his writings and we may understand better why they, as heirs,

acted as they did in fulfilling their given duty.

The paper presents work in progress.