Paolo Mancosu (editor)
From Brouwer to Hilbert: The Debate on the Foundations of Mathematics in the 1920s
New York: Oxford University Press, 1998
x + 637 pp. ISBN 0195096312

Dirk van Dalen
Mystic, Geometer, and Intuitionist: The Life of L. E. J. Brouwer
Vol. 1: *The Dawning Revolution*
Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1999
464 pp. ISBN 0198502974

REVIEW

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The first two decades of the 20th century saw the emergence of several kinds of nonclassical logic: modal logic by C. I. Lewis in 1918, three-valued and many-valued logic by Jan Łukasiewicz and Emil Post independently of each other in 1920, and intuitionistic logic, which made its first inchoate appearance in L. E. J. Brouwer's doctoral dissertation of 1907 and then was elaborated during the 1920s and 1930s. Both of the books under review are concerned with intuitionistic logic, but in neither of them is it the primary concern. We begin with van Dalen's book.

Mystic, Geometer, and Intuitionist, the first volume of what will eventually be a two-volume biography of Brouwer, examines his life and work up to 1925. Intuitionistic logic appears in the chapter on Brouwer's dissertation and in the last chapter on intuitionism in the early 1920s. Van Dalen intimates that "Brouwer was, for reasons that will become clear in Volume 2, considered both a great man and an embarrassment in Holland ... [like] a noble family hiding the eccentric old baron in an isolated wing: a man to be praised but not to be seen" (p. vi–vii). This biography, very rich in previously unpublished material (particularly correspondence), is first rate, and is quite likely