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Godel, Positivism, and Incompletenes. Preliminary report.

It is well-known that in the years leading up to his monumental incompleteness result for arithmetic, Kurt Godel attended meetings of the famous Vienna Circle of Logical Positivists and wrote his dissertation under Hans Hahn, a founding member of the circle. It also is well-known that Godel's own view on the nature of mathematical truth radically differed from that of the Logical Positivists. In recent books by Yourgrau and Goldstein, Godel is portrayed as an enemy spy infiltrating the positivists in order to ultimately undermine their formalist approach to mathematics. Goldstein and Yourgrau assert, in essence, that Godel's Platonism, ipso facto, put him at odds with the entire project of the Logical Positivists. Yet, there is much more to be said on the topic. When Godel's writings on the other foundational pillars of the Positivist project are examined, a broader account of the meaning of the incompleteness theorem arises giving a more nuanced picture of Godel's relation to the Vienna Circle. (Received August 02, 2005)