

LUDWIG WITTGENSTEIN & FRIEDRICH WAISMANN, *The Voices of Wittgenstein: The Vienna Circle*. G. Baker (ed.). Foreward by B. McGuinness. Translation from the German by G. Baker, M. Mackert, J. Connolly & V. Politis. London & New York: Routledge, 2003. xlix + 558pp. 100.00 US\$. ISBN 0-415-05644-6.

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This volume contains roughly 115 out of the 150 typescripts found in the Friedrich Waismann papers that arose from the peculiar collaboration between Waismann and Wittgenstein from late 1929 through 1934. At Schlick's urging, Waismann met with Wittgenstein, recorded his thoughts, and attempted to fashion the material into a book. The early results of this project have already been published,¹ but the material in this book presents the products of their later meetings for the first time. After Wittgenstein withdrew from the project, Waismann continued to work on the planned book, but it appeared only after Waismann's death in 1959.²

Gordon Baker's substantial introduction presents this background information, as well as the argument for the claim that "[t]his material has a very good claim to being treated as authoritative in the exposition and critical analysis of Wittgenstein's philosophy in the period 1928-1936" (xxxiii). The case for the first two chapters, "Dictation for Schlick" and "Notebook I" (amounting to about half of the volume), is quite conclusive as other surviving notes allowed Baker to determine exactly what changes Waismann had made. As these changes were minor, he concludes that the remaining typescripts probably also incorporate only minor changes. These typescripts

are arranged by Baker by subject matter under the headings “Our method”, “Phenomenal language”, “The causal conception of meaning”, “Hypotheses”, “Logic”, “Psychological concepts”, “Metalogical concepts” and “Mathematics”.

Perhaps of greatest interest for the philosophy of logic is Wittgenstein’s criticism of the approach to inference presented in his earlier *Tractatus*. He claims he had been misled by the success of the T-F notation into thinking that if proposition q follows from p , then q must be somehow contained in p or that $(x)\phi x$ must be some kind of logical product of its instances. Now Wittgenstein argues that the T-F notation is merely a perspicuous representation [übersichtliche Darstellung] of all inferences and that grammatical rules such as “a is green and a is not red = a is green” (129) are really doing the work. Exactly how such rules function and how they are understood is a major topic here, as it is throughout Wittgenstein’s later writings.

Also of note is the extended discussion of Frege’s criticism of formalism about mathematics. Wittgenstein maintains that we should not recoil from Frege’s objective realm and identify numbers with numerals. Still, he claims that Frege is wrong to think that there is an objective realm which requires that we construct our numerical calculus in a certain way. On the contrary, we set up the calculus we do with particular applications in mind. How arithmetic is learned is taken to show that Frege’s third realm is superfluous: “If, in addition to the formulae, I teach a child the translations of these formulae into word-language and different examples of their application as well – does he then still miss out on their real sense?” (147). No, according to Wittgenstein.

Baker and his collaborators are to be commended for presenting this material in a fully bilingual edition. The reader with a modicum of German

is advised to track how terms are being translated, though, as sometimes the same German word is translated differently, even on the same page. Still, this volume fills an important gap in our understanding of Wittgenstein and his relations with the Vienna Circle and is recommended to anyone interested in that period.

Notes

¹F. Waismann, *Wittgenstein und der Wiener Kreis*, B. McGuinness (ed.) (Oxford: Blackwell, 1967).

²F. Waismann, *Logik, Sprache, Philosophie*, G. Baker & B. McGuinness (eds.) (Reclam, 1976) and F. Waismann, *The Principles of Linguistic Philosophy*, R. Harré (ed.) (Macmillan, 1965).