

VIII.—A NOTE ON THE TEXT OF THE *TRACTATUS*

BY C. LEWY

SOME time ago I had the opportunity of seeing F. P. Ramsey's copy of the *Tractatus* (which is now in the possession of Mrs. Lettice Ramsey). I noticed that the copy contains a number of corrections in Wittgenstein's handwriting, and I have obtained Mrs. Ramsey's permission to describe the copy in the present note.

A. *Date of Wittgenstein's corrections.* Ramsey's copy is, of course, of the first printing, published in 1922. The corrections are in ink, written very clearly, and there is not the slightest doubt that they are in Wittgenstein's handwriting. There is no indication, in the copy, of their date. And at first all I was able to suggest was that they must have been written at some time between 1922 and Ramsey's death at the beginning of 1930. A few months ago, however, Mr. B. F. McGuinness showed me a copy of an extract from a letter which Ramsey wrote to Wittgenstein in 1924.¹

The extract is as follows.

15.9.24 . . . Ogden . . . asked me to get from you, if possible, while I was here any corrections in case there should be a second edition of your book. (This is not really likely.) I have got marked in my copy a lot of corrections we made to the translation, and four extra propositions you wrote in in English. Obviously, I think, the corrections to the translation should be made in a new edition, and the only doubt is about the extra propositions; and also you might have something else you would like altered. But it isn't worth while taking much trouble about it yet as a second edition is unlikely. It is merely, I think, that Ogden thought that it might save possible future correspondence for us to talk about it now.

There is no doubt that the copy to which Ramsey is here referring is the same as the one now in Mrs. Ramsey's possession. Moreover, as the letter must have been written during Ramsey's *second* visit to Austria (*cf.* "while I am here"), it would seem likely that Wittgenstein's corrections were made during Ramsey's *first* visit, that is, in 1923. Ramsey, in the letter just quoted, talks of a lot of corrections "we made" to the translation;

¹ I am also grateful to Mr. McGuinness for drawing my attention to some mistakes in an earlier draft of this note.

but in fact, save for the few exceptions which I shall explicitly mention, the corrections are in Wittgenstein's handwriting. Ramsey's statement, however, suggests that they were made in the course of (or as a result of) the discussions which Wittgenstein and he must have had on the subject, presumably in 1923.

B. *Wittgenstein's corrections to the German text.* There are only two such corrections. In 4.023 (first sentence), the 1922 printing had "Der Wirklichkeit" instead of "Die Wirklichkeit", which appeared in the text as originally published in Ostwald's *Annalen der Naturphilosophie* (Band XIV, Leipzig, 1921). This mistake W. corrected, and the right article appears in the 1933 reprint. Secondly, there is a more substantial correction. In 5.152, the first sentence, both in the *Annalen* text and in the 1922 printing, read as follows. "Von einander unabhängige Sätze (z. B. irgend zwei Elementarsätze) geben einander die Wahrscheinlichkeit $\frac{1}{2}$." This W. altered to "Zwei Elementarsätze geben einander die Wahrscheinlichkeit $\frac{1}{2}$ ". (He also made the corresponding alteration in the English translation.)

C. *Wittgenstein's corrections to the English translation.* For the sake of clarity I will tabulate them as follows.

(1) *Corrections reproduced exactly in the 1933 reprint.*

4.122 (last sentence) "facts" substituted for "atomic facts".

This correction requires a further comment. W. did not actually just cross out the word "atomic": he crossed out the words "the atomic", and wrote immediately above a word of which the first three letters are "the", but which also had another letter, or more probably letters, which he then crossed out. What these were I find it impossible to tell; but my guess is that they were "se", so that his original idea (I think) was to put "these facts" for "the atomic facts"; but he crossed out the end-part of the word quite heavily so that the part is now undecipherable.

4.1241 "but" crossed out; comma after "property" inserted.

5.551 "off-hand" substituted for "without further trouble".

(Here W. didn't cross out the words "without further trouble", but put a wavy line underneath them and wrote "off-hand" in the free space to the right.)

5.5541 "How could we" substituted for "It should be possible to".

5.5542 (second sentence) “there” inserted between “must” and “be”; “anything” substituted for “something”.

5.5562 “the” crossed out.

5.5563 “model” substituted for “simile”; “the” inserted between “of” and “truth”.

5.557 (second sentence) “its” substituted for “the”.

(The second occurrence of “anticipate” in this sentence in the 1933 reprint is, of course, a misprint.)

5.557 (third sentence) “conflict” substituted for “collide”.

6.1222 “confirmed” substituted for “established” (in both places).

6.124 “something” substituted for “much” (in both places).

6.126 “calculated” substituted for “determined”; “calculating” for “determining”.

6.2341 “evident” substituted for “intelligible” (in “self-intelligible”).

6.342 “as a matter of fact” inserted between “which” and “it”; “as is indeed the case” deleted.

6.3431 “logical” inserted between “whole” and “apparatus”; “of logic” deleted; “their” substituted for “the”.

6.423 “subject” substituted for “bearer”.

6.4312 “human” inserted between “the” and “soul”; “of man” deleted; “also” deleted.

W. also corrected the misprint in 4.1252 (“*a R y*” instead of “*x R y*”), and in 5.461 (“v” in the wrong type).

(2) *Corrections reproduced in the 1933 reprint in an altered form.*

3.313 (second sentence) W. changed “variables” to “variable”, “become” to “becomes”, and “constants” to “constant”; but he also put the article “a” in front of “constant”.

3.331 Here W. merely wrote “what they mean” above “the meaning of” without crossing out the latter words (or underlining them) and without crossing out the words “the signs” in the next line. Clearly, this suggestion could not have been carried out exactly as it stood, and Ogden substituted the words “about the things his signs mean” for the words “of the meaning of the signs”. (It seems to me that it would have

accorded more closely with W.'s suggestion to have put "of what the signs mean".)

4.1251 W. substituted "This settles" for "Here" and crossed out "disappears".

5.513 (last paragraph) Here W. substituted "So" for "Thus", underlined (with a wavy line) "even if", and substituted "becomes" for "is".

5.5351 (first paragraph). W. underlines (with a wavy line) "of that kind"; but made no other corrections.

5.62 This is probably the most important of W.'s corrections, and I shall go into the matter fully.

The final sentence of 5.62 reads in German :

Dass die Welt meine Welt ist, das zeigt sich darin, dass die Grenzen der Sprache (der Sprache, die allein ich verstehe) die Grenzen meiner Welt bedeuten.

This was translated in the 1922 edition as follows.

That the world is *my* world, shows itself in the fact that the limits of the language (the language which only I understand) mean the limits of *my* world.

In the 1933 reprint this was altered to read :

That the world is *my* world, shows itself in the fact that the limits of the language (*the* language which I understand) mean the limits of *my* world.

How did the change come to be made? Ramsey's copy provides an answer to this: W. crossed out the word "only" where it occurred in the 1922 edition and inserted it between "the" and "language" (at the second occurrence of these words). That is, he wanted the sentence to read :

That the world is *my* world, shows itself in the fact that the limits of the language (the only language which I understand) mean the limits of *my* world.

Incidentally, Wittgenstein appears to have considered another possibility of correcting the translation at this place: the word "only" (where it is crossed out) has at each side a faint very short stroke which *looks* like a lightly written comma (but it is impossible to be certain about it). My guess (but it is no more than that) is that at first W. thought of putting the word "only" between commas: this, he must have thought, would both give a translation of "allein" and yet show that it referred to "Sprache" and not to "ich"; but he must have seen (I think) that this would hardly be good English, and must then have

decided to alter the translation in the way I have already described.

In any case, there can now be no doubt as to how the passage is to be understood.

6.125 W. substituted "with" for "in" and inserted "conception of" between "old" and "logic"; but he didn't alter "even" to "also".

(3) *Corrections not incorporated in the 1933 reprint.*

3.33 W. put the words "the object meant by" above the words "the *meaning* of a sign", without however crossing out (or underlining) any of the latter.

5.557 (first sentence) W. crossed out the words "The application of" and put "Applied".

6.23 W. crossed out "show itself in" and put "appear from".

6.522 W. crossed out "*shows* itself" and put "appears".

D. *Ramsey's corrections.* In addition to W.'s corrections (which, as I have already pointed out, are made in ink) there are also a few corrections in Ramsey's handwriting. These (with two exceptions which I will mention presently) are in pencil. All but one of R.'s corrections were incorporated in the 1933 reprint. They are as follows.

4.023 (second sentence) Ramsey (?) underlined (in pencil) the word "It": in the 1933 reprint the word "Reality" is substituted for "It".

4.4611 "nonsensical" (in pencil) substituted for "senseless".

5.4541 "neat" substituted for "simple", and "neatness" for "simplicity". These two words are in ink; but the handwriting seems to be Ramsey's; it is certainly not Wittgenstein's.

R. also corrected the misprint in 4.2211 ("atomic" instead of "atomic").

The only correction by Ramsey not incorporated in the 1933 reprint occurs in 3.323 where, in the last line, "meanings" is altered to "meaning". (The "s" is crossed out in pencil; and it seems clear that whilst W. was correcting in ink, R.—with the two exceptions just mentioned—was correcting in pencil.)

E. *Changes in the 1933 reprint which are not marked in Ramsey's copy.* Apart from new paragraphing in 4.014, 4.1272 and 4.464 (to agree with the German text), and the insertion of the second

dash in 5.461, there are, so far as I can see, only four changes which occur in the 1933 reprint but are not marked in Ramsey's copy. They are as follows.

4.126 The substitution of the sentence "But it is shown in the symbol for the object itself" for the sentence "But it shows itself in the sign of this object itself".

5.5563 The substitution of "simple" for "most simple".

6.35 The substitution of "describes" for "described".

6.372 The substitution of the words "one clear terminus, whereas the modern system makes it appear as though *everything* were explained" for the words "one clear conclusion, whereas in the modern system it should appear as though *everything* were explained".

F. *Translation of "Anschauung"*. I think this is an appropriate place to mention that there is a question-mark in ink, of a shape generally used in handwriting on the Continent but not in England, opposite the word "intuition" in the first line of 6.233 (the word "intuition" is underlined with a wavy line). Assuming (which I think must be the case) that the question-mark was put by W., this would seem to indicate that he was unhappy about translating "Anschauung" by "intuition". (But the other two places in which the word "intuition" occurs, both lower down on the same page, are not marked.)

G. *The four additional sentences*. The first of these occurs on p. 85. In the bottom margin W. wrote :

The prop. "there are n things such that . . ." presupposes for its *significance*, what we try to assert by saying "there are n things".

He also put a cross at the beginning of this sentence, and a similar cross in the right-hand side margin between the fifth and the sixth paragraph of 4.1272. It seems clear, therefore, that his idea was that the new sentence should be inserted in that place.

The other three new sentences all occur on p. 155. One is written in the bottom margin and has a cross in front of it. It runs as follows.

The fundamental idea of math. is the idea of *calculus* represented here by the idea of *operation* [there is no full stop.]

The other two sentences are written in the left-hand side margin and the right-hand side margin respectively. The former reads :

The beginning of logic presupposes *calculation* and so number. The latter reads :

Number is *the* fundamental idea of calculus and must be introduced as such.

W. also put a cross just above the first line of 6.02 ; but not above the beginning of the line, but in the space immediately above that between the colon following the word "numbers" and the words "I define". But there is no further indication as to how the new sentences were to be introduced, nor any explicit indication of the order of the two sentences written in the side margins.

H. There is a further feature of Ramsey's copy which deserves mention. In the margins of the German text there are a number of vertical strokes (mostly single but sometimes double) opposite some of the paragraphs. I think these were put in by Wittgenstein. They are in ink of the same colour as his corrections (including the deletion in the German text at 5.152 already described); and in two places there is an English word next to the stroke, which is clearly in W.'s handwriting. I will therefore list the strokes. A single stroke occurs opposite the following numbers¹ : 2.203 ; 2.224 ; 3.02-3.03 ; 3.24 ; 3.262 ; 3.33-3.331 ; 3.343-3.344 ; 4.025 ; 4.03 ; 4.1212 ; 4.1241 ; 4.126 (a double stroke opposite the last paragraph) ; 4.1272-4.1273 ; 5.473 ; 5.4733 ; 5.514-5.515 ; 5.551 (a double stroke opposite the first paragraph) ; 5.5562 ; 6.21 ; 6.231 (opposite the last paragraph only). A double stroke occurs opposite the following numbers : 5.512 ; 5.534 ; 5.554 ; 6.031.

Opposite 3.24, to the left of the stroke, W. wrote the word "rule" ; opposite 6.031, to the right of the stroke, he wrote the word "identity" and underlined it.

Finally, there are also a number of crosses written (in ink) in the margins. These occur opposite the following numbers (in the English text, except when the contrary is stated) : 3.13 (German text, opposite third paragraph) ; 3.24 (German text, opposite last paragraph) ; 3.3442 (German text) ; 4.52 (opposite first paragraph) ; 5.156 (opposite second paragraph) ; 6.1223 ; 6.2 (opposite second paragraph) ; 6.361.

I. I now come to a different matter. Inside Ramsey's copy there is a loose sheet of paper containing (in pencil) a list of

¹ By "opposite a number" I mean "opposite the whole text under that number".

page-references. This appears to be in Ramsey's handwriting, and is as follows: 31; 33; 35; 37; 39; 41; 43; 47; 63; 67; 69; 71; 77; 79; 91. Moreover, on each of these pages, there is a vertical stroke in pencil against one or more numbers (or single paragraphs). I think that these must have been the numbers (or paragraphs) which Ramsey was particularly anxious to discuss with Wittgenstein when he saw him in Austria. The numbers opposite which these strokes occur are as follows: 1.1 (with an arrow pointing towards the stroke opposite 2.01); 2.01 (with an arrow pointing towards the stroke opposite 1.1); 2.0123; 2.0211-2.0212; 2.06; 2.062; 2.1 (double stroke); 2.18; 2.222; 2.223 (stroke and question-mark); 3.1431 (opposite last paragraph only); 4.01; 4.023 (opposite last three lines only); 4.024 (opposite first line only); 4.0312 (opposite first paragraph only); 4.06; 4.112 (opposite first paragraph only); 4.12 (opposite first paragraph only); 4.28. All these strokes are on the pages containing the English text.

There are also, however, a few strokes in pencil on the pages containing the German text. They are opposite the following numbers: 2.012; 2.0211; 2.1511; 2.1513. These strokes are much heavier than the others, and they do not occur after p. 38; and I am inclined to think that they were put in by Wittgenstein.

Finally, there is one cross in pencil, opposite 4.466 (first paragraph, English translation). I do not know whether this was put by Wittgenstein or by Ramsey.

J. I will conclude with the following remark. Whilst I should agree that Ogden's translation contains many errors, and that the 1961 translation by Pears and McGuinness is greatly preferable to it in respect of both accuracy and naturalness, I should like to express my opinion that at the time it was published Ogden's translation was a considerable achievement.

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