

# Toward a Critical Edition of the *Philosophical Investigations*

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My intention was that *some* day  
all this should be one book.  
to make a book (out) of the  
My intention was one day  
to make a book out of all this ~~these thoughts~~  
to make a book out of them all  
to make out of all of them a book<sup>2</sup>

The copy-edited typescripts that were used in the publication of the *Philosophical Investigations* are not to be found in the surviving Wittgenstein papers. In the case of Part II, no copy of the typescript that was used to print it has survived. However, the catalogue of the Wittgenstein papers does include a typescript of Part I, under the name of typescript 227. A second copy of typescript 227 came to light in 1993, and was given to the Wren Library, in Cambridge, where most of the Wittgenstein papers are kept. In the summer of 1993 I compared the two typescripts with each other and the published text of Part I. Both typescripts are carbon copies of the same typed text; both typescripts contain extensive manuscript additions, variants, and deletions in several different hands; neither had been copy-edited. There are significant differences between all three texts.

This paper aims to clarify the relationship between the two copies of typescript 227 and the published text of the *Investigations*, to explain how the second typescript casts light on Wittgenstein's role in the production of the published book, and to consider the prospects for a critical edition and new translation of the *Investigations*. However, before we can appreciate the significance of the rediscovery of the second copy of typescript of 227, we must first consider what was already known about the relationship between Part I and typescript 227. To the best of my knowledge, there has been very

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<sup>1</sup> An earlier version of the first part of this paper, on the relationship between the two copies of typescript 227 and the text of the *Investigations*, was read at the 1995 Kirchberg Wittgenstein Symposium, and published as Stern 1995a. At the conference, I added a brief impromptu coda on some of the outstanding problems with the English translation of the *Investigations*, and the editors of this volume invited me to incorporate that coda into a revised version of the earlier paper, for publication in these proceedings. Part of the discussion of the translation is based on remarks in Stern, 1996.

<sup>2</sup> Wittgenstein *Nachlaß*, MS 160, final page.



little published discussion of the question of the relationship between typescript 227 and the published text of Part I. The principal sources of information on this topic are to be found in the work of von Wright. However, within von Wright's publications on the Wittgenstein papers, one can discern two very different answers to this question. His catalogue of the Wittgenstein papers and his paper on the origin and composition of the *Investigations* suggest that typescript 227 is the text of Part I, or that any differences are negligible. While the catalogue does not explicitly discuss the relationship between typescript 227 and the published text of Part I, the entries it contains for the typescripts of each part of the *Investigations* imply that only Part II has been lost:

227. Typescript of Part I of the final version of the *Investigations*. (1944)-45-(46). 324 pp.  
 234. Typescript of Part II of the final version of the *Investigations*. Probably dictated in 1949. (Missing.)<sup>3</sup>

Similarly, in von Wright's invaluable paper on "The Origin and Composition of the *Investigations*," typescript 227 is summarily described as "essentially the final version of Part I of the printed work" and the paper does not further discuss the relationship between typescript 227 and the published text.<sup>4</sup>

However, von Wright's research on the sources of the *Investigations*, much of it unpublished, has led him to very different conclusions. In a footnote that was added to the most recent version of his catalogue, he briefly describes his editorial work with Heikki Nyman on "a rather more critical edition of the *Investigations*"; the reader seeking further information is referred to the introduction to his *Wittgenstein for further information*.<sup>5</sup> The meticulously edited "Helsinki edition" of the principal sources of the *Philosophical Investigations* reconstructs five successive stages in the construction of the *Philosophical Investigations*. Although the Helsinki edition, completed fourteen years ago, offers an invaluable overview of some of the principal stages in the composition of the *Investigations*, it remains unpublished. However, it has been deposited in research libraries in Bergen, Cambridge, Cornell, Helsinki, and Oxford, and has thus been made available to a number of researchers working on the Wittgenstein papers.

The texts Wittgenstein's literary executors have published do not usually show variant readings, changes in wording, deletions and the like. By contrast, the Helsinki edition aimed to show every significant difference

<sup>3</sup> von Wright 1982, p. 48.

<sup>4</sup> von Wright 1982, p. 115.

<sup>5</sup> von Wright 1993, p. 504, n. 19. The footnote refers the reader to von Wright 1982, pp. 7-10 and pp. 111-136 (the introduction and the essay on the origin and composition of the *Investigations*).

is part of the microfilm of the Wittgenstein papers, and so is available to interested researchers; much of the most interesting information can also be found in Baker and Hacker 1985; subsequent volumes of their *Investigations* commentary also contain valuable observations about specific deficiencies in the translation. Some of Wittgenstein's corrections of Rhees suggest better translations of the published text; others amplify or expand Wittgenstein's intentions in ways that go beyond the letter of what one would consider a translation; many of these deserve a place in a new translation, either as part of the text, or in an editorial apparatus. For instance, Rhees, like Anscombe, translated the beginning of the last sentence of § 1 as "No such thing was in question here"; Wittgenstein changed this to "There was no question of such an entity "meaning" here." Similarly, in § 95, Wittgenstein replaced "Thought can be of what is *not* the case" by "It is possible to *think* what is not the case."

While the publication of the Bergen electronic edition of the Wittgenstein papers on CD-ROM in 1997 will make the text of the source typescripts and manuscripts of the *Investigations* accessible to the next generation of Wittgenstein scholars, the availability of this material will not make the case for a critical edition and a new translation of the *Investigations* any less compelling. The present edition, rushed into print shortly after Wittgenstein's death, has become a philosophical classic, and deserves to be updated in the light of our current knowledge of the state of the text.

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