

CAMBRIDGE AND VIENNA
FRANK P. RAMSEY AND THE VIENNA CIRCLE

VIENNA CIRCLE INSTITUTE YEARBOOK [2004]

12

VIENNA CIRCLE INSTITUTE YEARBOOK [2004]

12

Institut 'Wiener Kreis'

Society for the Advancement of the Scientific World Conception

Series-Editor:

Friedrich Stadler

*Director, Institut 'Wiener Kreis'
and University of Vienna, Austria*

Advisory Editorial Board:

Rudolf Haller, *University of Graz, Austria, Coordinator*
Nancy Cartwright, *London School of Economics, UK*
Robert S. Cohen, *Boston University, USA*
Wilhelm K. Essler, *University of Frankfurt/M., Germany*
Kurt Rudolf Fischer, *University of Vienna, Austria*
Michael Friedman, *University of Indiana, Bloomington, USA*
Peter Galison, *Harvard University, USA*
Adolf Grünbaum, *University of Pittsburgh, USA*
Rainer Hegselmann, *University of Bayreuth, Germany*
Michael Heidelberger, *University of Tübingen, Germany*
Jaakko Hintikka, *Boston University, USA*
Gerald Holton, *Harvard University, USA*
Don Howard, *University of Notre Dame, USA*
Allan S. Janik, *University of Innsbruck, Austria*
Richard Jeffrey, *Princeton University, USA*
Andreas Kamlah, *University of Osnabrück, Germany*
Eckehart Köhler, *University of Vienna, Austria*
Anne J. Kox, *University of Amsterdam, The Netherlands*
Saul A. Kripke, *Princeton University, USA*
Elisabeth Leinfellner, *University of Vienna, Austria*
Werner Leinfellner, *Technical University of Vienna, Austria*
James G. Lennox, *University of Pittsburgh, USA*
Brian McGuinness, *University of Siena, Italy*
Kevin Mulligan, *Université de Genève, Switzerland*
Elisabeth Nemeth, *University of Vienna, Austria*
Julian Nida-Rümelin, *University of Göttingen, Germany*
Helga Nowotny, *ETH Zürich, Switzerland*
Erhard Oeser, *University of Vienna, Austria*
Joëlle Proust, *École Polytechnique CREA Paris, France*
Alan Richardson, *University of British Columbia, CDN*
Peter Schuster, *University of Vienna, Austria*
Jan Šebestik, *CNRS Paris, France*
Karl Sigmund, *University of Vienna, Austria*
Hans Sluga, *University of California at Berkeley, USA*
Elliott Sober, *University of Wisconsin, USA*
Antonia Soulez, *Université de Paris 8, France*
Wolfgang Spohn, *University of Konstanz, Germany*
Christian Thiel, *University of Erlangen, Germany*
Walter Thirring, *University of Vienna, Austria*
Thomas E. Uebel, *University of Manchester, UK*
Georg Winckler, *University of Vienna, Austria*
Ruth Wodak, *University of Vienna, Austria*
Jan, Woleński, *Jagiellonian University, Cracow, Poland*
Anton Zeilinger, *University of Vienna, Austria*

Honorary Consulting Editors:

Kurt E. Baier
Francesco Barone
C.G. Hempel †
Stephan Körner †
Henk Mulder †
Arne Naess
Paul Neurath †
Willard Van Orman Quine †
Marx W. Wartofsky †

Review Editor:

Michael Stöltzner

Editorial Work/Layout/Production:

Hartwig Jobst
Camilla R. Nielsen
Erich Papp

Editorial Address:

Institut 'Wiener Kreis'
Universitätscampus, Hof 1
Spitalgasse 2-4, A-1090 Wien, Austria
Tel.: +431/4277 41231 (international)
or 01/4277 41231 (national)
Fax.: +431/4277 41297 (international)
or 01/4277 41297 (national)
email: ivc.zuef@univie.ac.at
homepage: <http://univie.ac.at/ivc/>

The titles published in this series are listed at the end of this volume.

CAMBRIDGE AND VIENNA

FRANK P. RAMSEY AND THE VIENNA CIRCLE

Edited by

MARIA CARLA GALAVOTTI

Università di Bologna, Italy

 Springer

A C.I.P. Catalogue record for this book is available from the Library of Congress.

ISBN-10 1-4020-4100-4 (HB)
ISBN-13 978-1-4020-4100-6 (HB)
ISBN-10 1-4020-4101-2 (e-book)
ISBN-13 978-1-4020-4101-3 (e-book)

Published by Springer,
P.O. Box 17, 3300 AA Dordrecht, The Netherlands.

www.springer.com

Printed on acid-free paper

All Rights Reserved

© 2006 Springer

No part of this work may be reproduced, stored in a retrieval system, or transmitted in any form or by any means, electronic, mechanical, photocopying, microfilming, recording or otherwise, without written permission from the Publisher, with the exception of any material supplied specifically for the purpose of being entered and executed on a computer system, for exclusive use by the purchaser of the work.

Printed in the Netherlands.

EDITORIAL

Frank Plumpton Ramsey, who was born on February 22, 1903 in Cambridge, England, and died in London on the 19th of January 1930, was certainly one of the most important and promising philosophers of the 20th century. Only his early and unexpected death at the age of 26 probably prevented him from becoming one of the leading figures in the philosophy of science and analytic philosophy – perhaps at a par with Ludwig Wittgenstein, his lifelong close friend but also intellectual adversary.

It is well known that in his short life Ramsey immensely enriched philosophy and science with his profound and highly topical contributions on the foundation of mathematics, logic, and economics. As a gifted student at Trinity College, Fellow at King's College and Lecturer at Cambridge University he influenced Wittgenstein, Russell and Keynes as well as the Vienna Circle with his contributions on the foundations of mathematics, logic, and economics. Especially his significance for philosophy with his focus on notions of truth, decision making, belief and probability is worth mentioning. The intellectual context of Ramsey's thinking can also be illustrated with the famous Bloomsbury Group.¹

My perspective of Frank Ramsey's life and work was shaped by my personal acquaintance with Ramsey's sister Margaret Paul (whom I met in 1992 when she shared biographical information and research literature on her brother.) Especially the period he spent in Vienna in 1924 and his contacts with the mathematician Hans Hahn, the physicist Felix Ehrenhaft, among others, spurred me to focus on Ramsey's connection with the early Vienna Circle. I also repeatedly noticed Ramsey's significance while writing my book on the Vienna Circle.²

Already in 1929, Ramsey was listed in the manifesto of the Vienna Circle and given credit for attempting to further develop Russell's logicism and cited as an author related to the Vienna Circle. There are references to his articles on "Universals" (1925), "Foundations of Mathematics" (1926), and "Facts and Propositions" (1927).

The proceedings of the "First Meeting on the Epistemology of the Exact Sciences in Prague" (September 15-17, 1929) mention Ramsey as one of the "authors closely associated with the speakers and discussions", together with Albert Einstein, Kurt Gödel, Eino Kaila, Viktor Kraft, Karl Menger, Kurt Reidemeister, Bertrand Russell, Moritz Schlick and Ludwig Wittgenstein.³

¹ Cf. *The British Tradition in 20th Century Philosophy*. Ed. by Jaakko Hintikka and Klaus Puhl. Vienna: Hölder-Pichler-Tempsky 1995.

² Friedrich Stadler, *The Vienna Circle. Studies in the Origins, Development, and Influence of Logical Empiricism*. Vienna-New York: Springer 2001.

³ *Erkenntnis* 1, 1930/31, pp. 311 and 329.

But looking at the earlier communication of Ramsey with Wittgenstein and the Vienna Circle these references are not really surprising: whereas it is rather well known that Ramsey visited Wittgenstein in 1923 and 1924, his communication with Schlick and his probable participation in the Schlick Circle have not been fully appreciated.

Carnap's notes on the discussion in the Schlick Circle include Ramsey's definition of identity, the foundations of mathematics and probability:

July 7, 1927: "Discussion by Carnap and Hahn about Carnap's arithmetic and Wittgenstein's objection to Ramsey's definition of identity".⁴ Accordingly, Carnap reported on an earlier discussion (June 20, 1927) in the Wittgenstein group with Schlick and Waismann, in which the great "genius" also objected to Ramsey's notion of identity. Precisely this issue was on the agenda again 4 years later when Wittgenstein met Schlick and Waismann alone (December 9, 1931).⁵

His lifelong dealings with Ramsey is documented later on in Carnap's *Philosophical Foundation of Physics* (1966) with its special focus on the Ramsey sentence.

Another reference is worth mentioning here. Commenting retrospectively on his article "The Role of Uncertainty in Economics" (1934), the mathematician Karl Menger, a member of the Vienna Circle and the founder of the famous "Mathematical Kolloquium", recognised the relevance of Ramsey's paper "Truth and Probability" (1931) – unknown to him at the time – for his own research, while distancing his own contribution from this study.⁶

But the von Neumann-Morgenstern axioms as well as Ramsey's were based on the traditional concept of mathematical expectation and on the assumption that a chance which offers a higher mathematical expectation is always preferred to one for which the mathematical expectation is smaller. My study was not.

In connection with his stay in Vienna, there is another fact of Ramsey's life that merits attention: he underwent a (supposedly successful) psychoanalytic therapy with the lay psychoanalyst and historian of literature Theodor Reik (1888-1969), who, by the way, also gave him a book by the theoretical physicist Hans Thirring.

After studying the influence of Logical Empiricism in the Anglo-Saxon world, I turned to the investigation of the mutual relations and influences between Austrian and British philosophy of Science since 1900 by writing a completion of Herbert Feigl's famous account "The *Wiener Kreis* in America". It complements "The *Wiener Kreis* in Great Britain"⁷ and can be seen as a reconstruction of the

⁴ Stadler, *The Vienna Circle*, p. 238f.

⁵ *Ibid.*, p. 441.

⁶ Karl Menger, *Selected Papers* 1979, p. 260.

⁷ Friedrich Stadler, "The *Wiener Kreis* in Great Britain: Emigration and Interaction in the Philosophy of Science", in: Edward Timms/Jon Hughes (eds.), *Intellectual Migration and Cultural Transformation. Refugees from National Socialism in the English-speaking World*. Vienna-New York: Springer 2003, pp. 155-180.

“Austro-British Connection”, with Ramsey as one of the intermediaries and innovators.

Here, we can write yet another history with regard to the transfer and transition “from *Wiener Kreis* to Vienna Circle in Great Britain”: it was, above all, the founder and head of the Vienna Circle, Moritz Schlick, who fostered early intellectual contacts with Britain. Schlick visited England at least twice in the late 1920s as his still unpublished correspondence with Ramsey (1927/28) reveals.⁸

Ramsey, who invited Schlick to the “Moral Sciences Club” in Cambridge, discussed his personal controversy with Wittgenstein which was triggered by his article “The Foundations of Mathematics” (1925):

I had a letter the other day from Mr Wittgenstein criticising my paper ‘The Foundations of Mathematics’ and suggesting that I should answer not to him but to you. I should perhaps explain what you have gathered from him, that last time we didn’t part on very friendly terms, at least I thought he was very annoyed with me (for reasons not connected to logic), so that I did not even venture to send him a copy of my paper. I now hope very much that I have exaggerated this, and that he may perhaps be willing to discuss various questions about which I should like to consult him. But from the tone of his letter and the fact that he gave no address I am inclined to doubt it.⁹

This description is also confirmed by Wittgenstein’s critical and ambivalent comments on Ramsey in his *Diaries* (April 26, 1930).¹⁰

These contacts continued, and in one of his last letters before his death, Ramsey reported to Schlick on Wittgenstein’s impact on his own philosophy (namely in the sense that it “quite destroyed my notions on the Foundations of Mathematics”) as well as on Cambridge philosophy in general.¹¹

After Ramsey’s premature death Schlick, whose book on Einstein’s relativity theory was immediately translated into English already in 1920, delivered a programmatic paper on “The Future of Philosophy” at the “Seventh International Congress of Philosophy” in Oxford 1930, announcing the linguistic turn in philosophy.¹² Here he advocated the dissolution of the classical philosophical canon by drawing a functional distinction between scientific philosophy on the one hand, and related scientific theorizing on the other.

Carnap, too, played an important role in this interaction: on the invitation of Susan Stebbing he delivered three lectures at the University of London in October 1934, where he came into contact with Russell, Woodger and Richard

⁸ Cf. Schlick papers at the Vienna Circle Archives located in Haarlem, The Netherlands. The correspondence will be published as part of the Schlick edition project: <http://www.univie.ac.at/ivc/Schlick-Projekt/>

⁹ Ramsey to Schlick, July 22, 1927. *Ibid.*

¹⁰ Ludwig Wittgenstein, *Denkbewegungen. Tagebücher 1930-1932, 1936-1937*. Hrsg. von Ilse Somavilla. Frankfurt/M.: Fischer 1999, p. 20f.

¹¹ Ramsey to Schlick, Dec. 10, year not dated, *op.cit.*

¹² Cf. Moritz Schlick, “The Future in Philosophy”, in: Schlick, *Philosophical Papers*, Vol II, ed. by Henk L. Mulder and Barbara van de Velde-Schlick. Dordrecht: Reidel, pp. 210-224.

Braithwaite, the friend of Ramsey and editor of his collected papers in 1931. Here he also met the young Max Black, who wrote his Ph.D. thesis on “The Theories of Logical Positivism” and published on *The Nature of Mathematics* (1933) under the influence of Moore and Ramsey. He also translated Carnap’s books *The Unity of Science* (1934) as well as *Philosophy and Logical Syntax* (1935). Later on he described the “Relations between Logical Positivism and the Cambridge School of Analysis” (1938/39) concluding that “there should be room for further fruitful exchange of opinions between the two movements”.¹³ Therefore, it is no coincidence that Black many years later described Ramsey in the *Encyclopedia of Philosophy* (ed. by Paul Edwards) as

one of the most brilliant men of his generation; his highly original papers on the foundation of mathematics, the nature of scientific theory, probability, and epistemology are still widely studied. He also wrote two studies in economics, the second of which was described by J.M. Keynes as ‘one of the most remarkable contributions to mathematical economics ever made’. Ramsey’s earlier work led to radical criticisms of A.N. Whitehead and Bertrand Russell’s *Principia Mathematica*, some of which were incorporated in the second edition of the *Principia*. Ramsey was one of the first to expound the early teachings of Wittgenstein, by whom he was greatly influenced. In his last papers he was moving toward a modified and sophisticated pragmatism.¹⁴

This was only one aspect of the flourishing bilateral exchange of ideas also on the level of institutions and periodicals, e.g., the journal *Analysis* and the “Analysis Society” (from 1936), of course, with A.J. Ayer as the most important intermediary with his extremely influential book *Language, Truth and Logic* (1936).

In summary, we can say that in Britain there was a lively scholarly dialogue between Central European and English philosophers – with the focus being mainly analysis, as compared to the turn from Carnap’s “Wissenschaftslogik” (logic of science) to “Philosophy of Science” in the U.S.A. But there had also been mutual contacts since around 1900 which cannot be separated from what has been referred to as the Anglo-Saxon ‘Sea Change’ (H.St. Hughes).¹⁵

What we have here is a dynamic network at work on different levels with distinct convergences and divergences of ideas and theories. Moreover, it is a network that reflected an intellectual preoccupation with several philosophical and methodological debates conducted between thinkers from different countries: from the Austro-German *Methodenstreit* and the Positivism disputes (Lenin vs. Mach, Horkheimer vs. Neurath) to the foundational debates in mathematics and logic since the 1920s. But the style and form of theorizing changed under different social conditions in the countries of immigration triggering off self-organizing processes of innovation and scholarly exchange. This can be

¹³ In: *Erkenntnis/Journal of Unified Science*, Vol. VIII, p. 34.

¹⁴ Black, “Frank P. Ramsey”, in: P. Edwards (ed.), *The Encyclopedia of Philosophy*. Vlm. 7/8, p. 65.

¹⁵ H.St. Hughes, *The Sea Change. The Migration of Social Thought, 1930-1965*. New York: McGraw-Hill Book Company 1975.

exemplified by the Bloomsbury Group, Wittgenstein's Cambridge, Neurath's Oxford and last but not least Hayek's and Popper's London.¹⁶

In 2003 we already witnessed two centenary conferences dedicated to Frank P. Ramsey in Cambridge, UK (June 30 to July 2, 2003) and Paris (October 24-25, 2003).

The last one in Vienna (November 28-29, 2003), organized by the Institut Wiener Kreis / Institute Vienna Circle together with the University of Vienna, was deliberately entitled "Cambridge and Vienna" to indicate the focus on the exchange and influence of ideas, as exemplified by Ramsey and the Vienna Circle. This appeared necessary to us because we still lack a profound understanding of Ramsey's life and work in the German-speaking scientific community. This cannot be compensated by the fact that there is a German translation of Ramsey's *Foundations: Essays in Philosophy, Logic, Mathematics and Economics* (ed. by D.H. Mellor in 1978) by the publisher Frommann-Holzboog (Stuttgart-Bad Cannstatt 1980). We are still waiting for the intellectual biography on Ramsey which was already planned by his sister Margaret, who in the meantime has also passed away. Maybe our proceedings will offer another incentive for such a valuable and necessary book in English and German.

The organizers and speakers mourned the passing of two friends and extraordinary scholars:

Dick Jeffrey had already agreed to come before he died.¹⁷ Unfortunately, we also had to commemorate the unexpected death of Donald Davidson (1917-2003), who had readily accepted our invitation to participate in our Ramsey conference with a paper on "Ramsey and Russell on Subject and Predicate". This paper was also planned as our distinguished 11th Vienna Circle Lecture 2003. I personally had the privilege and pleasure to meet Donald Davidson once several years ago on the occasion of a dinner with his wife Marcia Cavell and Kurt Fischer here in Vienna and I was very much impressed by his sober and intellectual personality. We then invited him to our conference which he was looking forward to as he expressed in one of his e-mails to me.

When we contacted his widow Marcia Cavell to ask her for Donald's finished manuscript of this conference, we agreed to organise a memorial session for Donald Davidson which friends and colleagues were to attend. And it was a great honor that Patrick Suppes and Michael Dummett agreed to contribute to the memory of their common friend. Although Michael Dummett was not able to

¹⁶ Cf. D.J. Edmonds and J.A. Eidinow, *Wittgenstein's Poker. The Story of a Ten Minute Argument between two Great Philosophers*. London: Faber and Faber 2001.

Hans Veigl, *Wittgenstein in Cambridge. Eine Spurensuche in Sachen Lebensform* Wien: Holzhausen 2004.

¹⁷ Cf. Maria Carla Galavotti, "Remembering Dick Jeffrey (1926-2002)", in: *Induction and Deduction in the Sciences*. Ed. by Friedrich Stadler. Dordrecht-Boston-London: Kluwer, p. 353f.

attend our conference for health reasons, we were happy that he sent us his paper together with his memories and an obituary of Donald Davidson, so that all these commemorative pieces by Dummett and Suppes are now included in this volume.

Let me express my sincere thanks to all of our speakers for having participated in the conference and contributed to the proceedings. Special thanks go to my colleagues on the program committee: especially to Maria Carla Galavotti, who initiated and chaired the conference and served as editor of its proceedings, and to Eckehart (Kay) Köhler for his help.

Vienna, October 2004

Friedrich Stadler
(University of Vienna,
and Vienna Circle Institute)

TABLE OF CONTENTS

A. CAMBRIDGE AND VIENNA. FRANK P. RAMSEY AND THE VIENNA CIRCLE

GABRIELE TAYLOR: Frank Ramsey – A Biographical Sketch	1
BRIAN MCGUINNESS: Wittgenstein and Ramsey	19
MICHAEL DUMMETT: The Vicious Circle Principle	29
PATRICK SUPPES: Ramsey’s Psychological Theory of Belief	35
BRIAN SKYRMS: Discovering “Weight, or the Value of Knowledge”	55
STATHIS PSILLOS: Ramsey’s <i>Ramsey-sentences</i>	67
ECKEHART KÖHLER: Ramsey and the Vienna Circle on Logicism	91
J. W. DEGEN: Logical Problems Suggested by Logicism	123
WERNER LEINFELLNER: The Foundation of Human Evaluation in Democracies from Ramsey to Damasio	139
MARIA CARLA GALAVOTTI: Ramsey’s “Note On Time”	155

B. GENERAL PART

REPORT – DOCUMENTATION

HELEN E. LONGINO: Philosophy of Science after the Social Turn	167
ALLAN JANIK: Notes on the Origins of Fleck’s Concept of “Denkstil”	179
YAMAN ÖRS: Hans Reichenbach and Logical Empiricism in Turkey	189

REVIEWS

- Steve Awodey & Carsten Klein (eds.), *Carnap Brought Home: The View from Jena*. Full Circle: Publications of the Archive of Scientific Philosophy. Volume 2. Chicago: Open Court, 2004.
(Christopher Pincock) 213
- Bergmann, Gustav, *Collected Works Vol. I: Selected Papers I*, edited by E. Tegtmeier, Frankfurt/Lancaster: Ontos-Verlag, 2003.
(Daniel von Wachter) 219
- Ferrari, Massimo, *Ernst Cassirer – Stationen einer philosophischen Biographie. Von der Marburger Schule zur Kulturphilosophie*, Meiner: Hamburg, 2003 (German translation of *Cassirer. Dalla Scuola di Marburgo alla filosofia della cultura*, Florence: Olschki, 1996)
(Gabriele Mras) 223
- Richard C. Jeffrey, *Subjective Probability: The Real Thing*, Cambridge University Press, 2004.
- Richard C. Jeffrey, *After Logical Empiricism/Depois do Empirismo Lógico*, English edition with Portuguese translation by António Zilão, Lisbon: Colibri, 2002.
(Matthias Hild) 228
- Patrick Suppes, *Representation and Invariance of Scientific Structures*, CSLI publications, Stanford, California (distributed by Chicago University Press).
(Claudia Arrighi / Viola Schiaffonati) 231

ACTIVITIES OF THE INSTITUTE VIENNA CIRCLE

- Activities 2004 237
- Preview 2005 241

OBITUARIES

Donald Davidson: A Brief Memoir (Michael Dummett)	243
Obituary of Professor Donald Davidson (1917–2003) (Michael Dummett).....	245
Memories of Donald Davidson (Patrick Suppes)	251
Index of Names	253