

## PREFACE

This volume brings together some of Friedrich Waismann's writings on the philosophy of mathematics which were presented as lectures in Oxford during the 1950's. Waismann served as Reader in the Philosophy of Mathematics until 1956 and subsequently as Reader in the Philosophy of Science until his death in 1959. The papers were taken from Waismann's *Nachlass* which is now kept in the Department of Western Manuscripts of the Bodleian Library.

All of the manuscripts were at least partly written in Gabelsberger shorthand, a system of stenography which was in use in Austria until the 1920's. Waismann adapted this system for the purpose of writing in English and introduced new grammalogues for abbreviating those words most frequently used in the English language. The transcribed text of the manuscripts has, in general, been left unaltered. Thus the style of the papers often betrays their origin in notes prepared for lectures. In a few cases obvious factual errors and stylistic inadequacies have, however, been amended so as to provide for a more easily readable, if not always thoroughly idiomatic, text.

In a short introductory essay, I have attempted to outline some of the ideas most central to Waismann's conception of mathematics and to answer the question of the relation of these ideas to Wittgenstein's philosophy. A note on the texts gives indications of the origin of the papers and, where these could be ascertained, their date of composition.

The publication of the present volume was made possible by the permission of Waismann's literary executors, Sir Isaiah Berlin and Sir Stuart Hampshire. I owe deep thanks also to Professor Rudolf Haller and Mr Brian McGuinness for their continual support. Valuable help has come from Dr Daniel Isaacson and Dr Barry Smith. Last but not least I should like to express my appreciation to The Queen's College for providing ideal working conditions and to my Oxford friends for making my stay in this city a happy one.