

## Kierkegaard in Wittgenstein's *Tractatus*

Yusuke SUZUKI

### 1. Introduction

It was only recently (in 1993) that scholars confirmed the existence of Wittgenstein's manuscript MS183.\*<sup>1</sup> The manuscript is a diary that Wittgenstein kept from 1930 to 1937, and reveals that he was an ardent reader of Kierkegaard's work during the early stages of writing his *Philosophical Investigations*. MS183's publication in several languages since 1997\*<sup>2</sup> has caused a considerable increase in studies examining Wittgenstein's indebtedness to Kierkegaard.\*<sup>3</sup>

Many, though not all, of these studies seems to have been conducted in accordance with the guiding principle advocated by Genia Schönbaumsfeld, who is considered a leading researcher on the subject. Schönbaumsfeld says, 'these [Wittgenstein's] reflections [about religious belief] themselves show such remarkable affinities with those of Kierkegaard that it is nigh on impossible not to speak of a direct influence—especially now that we know exactly how much Kierkegaard Wittgenstein actually read' (Schönbaumsfeld 2007, 36). That is to say, considering Wittgenstein's eager reading of Kierkegaard, which is particularly evident in MS183, we can now assert Kierkegaard's influence wherever Kierkegaardian elements are evident in Wittgenstein's thoughts. Consequently, in my view, scholars have perceived too much 'influence'.

\*<sup>1</sup> I refer to Wittgenstein's Nachlass using von Wright's catalogue number. 'MS183' stands for Wittgenstein's manuscript no. 183.

\*<sup>2</sup> See Wittgenstein (1997, 2003 and 2005).

\*<sup>3</sup> For example, Roe Fremstedal's study is one of the earliest (Fremstedal 2006). Perhaps the most influential study on this subject is that by Genia Schönbaumsfeld (Schönbaumsfeld 2007). Common views on the Wittgenstein's relationship to Kierkegaard are sketched out by Anthony Rudd (Rudd 2013).

For example, regarding the *Tractatus Logico-Philosophicus*, Thomas Miles claims that,

Kierkegaard's influence is evident in Wittgenstein's holistic, existential conception of ethics that he develops here [i.e. MS103, one of his manuscripts for *Tractatus*] and repeats in the *Tractatus*. Like Kierkegaard, Wittgenstein believed that ethical success or failure, goodness or badness, was most importantly a matter of one's overall existential attitude towards life [. . .]. One's fundamental existential attitude or 'ethical will' establishes the structure of one's life-world as a whole. [. . .] this holistic approach to ethics and the idea of different life-worlds both seem to be influenced by Kierkegaard's notion of different existential 'spheres' or ways of life, each established by one's fundamental existential orientation. (Miles 2012, 219)

He also points out that,

Wittgenstein's ethics of philosophy, even more than his ethics, seems to be greatly influenced by Kierkegaard. The central idea of an inability clearly to express the profound, and of a silence that is the proper response to this inability, is a main theme in several of Kierkegaard's works, including works Wittgenstein had likely read like *Concluding Unscientific Postscript*, "The Present Age," and *Fear and Trembling*. (Miles 2012, 221)

Miles further claims that aspects of Wittgenstein's idea of 'language-game' in *Philosophical Investigations* can be traced back to Kierkegaard (Miles 2012, 232-234).

Amidst this excessive insistence on Kierkegaard's seemingly profound influence on Wittgenstein, I propose that we pause and objectively reconsider this assertion. In this paper, I wish to focus on Wittgenstein's main early work,

*Tractatus Logico-Philosophicus*, and consider how much of Kierkegaard's influence, if any, is discernible therein.

According to Heiko Schulz, a 'quite remarkable number of translated works [of Kierkegaard were] already circulating and available in Germany around 1915' (Schulz 2009, 331). In fact, Kierkegaard's major works had already been translated into German from an early period: *Practice into Christianity* was translated in 1878, *The Sickness unto Death* in 1881, *Fear and Trembling* in 1882, *Either-or* in 1885, *Philosophical Fragments* in 1889, and *Postscript* in 1910 (Schulz 2009, 388ff.). In the following, I make the assumption that all of Kierkegaard's major works had already been translated into German and were available to Wittgenstein by the time he completed *Tractatus* in 1918.

## 2. Kierkegaard's Influence on Wittgenstein during the Pre-*Tractatus* Period

First, I wish to consider whether or not Wittgenstein was influenced by Kierkegaard before he began writing *Tractatus* around May 1912.\*4

It is widely recognized that Kierkegaard only became known to Austrian intellectuals after 1914.\*5 However, the Wittgensteins were 'at the centre of Viennese cultural life' (Monk 1990, 9) and their house engendered 'the all-pervading atmosphere of humanity and culture' during the early 1900s (Monk 1990, 8). Therefore, although Kierkegaard's writings did not enjoy wide circulation in Austria during the pre-*Tractatus* period, the Wittgensteins may already have owned some on the bookshelves in their salon.

According to Genia Schönbaumsfeld, 'Wittgenstein was introduced into the writings of Kierkegaard from a very early age' under the guidance of his elder

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\*4 In this paper, I accept Akio Kikai's opinion that the *Tractatus* period is 'the six and a half years from 1912, when Wittgenstein started his philosophical study on logic at Cambridge, to August 1918, when he completed the final draft of *Tractatus*' (Kikai 2003, 39).

\*5 See below in this paper.

sister Margaret, the young Ludwig's philosophical mentor and an avid reader of Kierkegaard (Monk 1990, 14).

We cannot, therefore, deny the possibility that Wittgenstein read the writings of Kierkegaard having been introduced to them by Margaret. However, it is also undeniable that no materials attest Wittgenstein's actual contact with the writings of Kierkegaard during the pre-*Tractatus* period. Furthermore, we should consider that Wittgenstein himself expressed contempt for religion while he was a schoolboy at Linz from 1903 to 1906 (Monk 1990, 18),\*<sup>6</sup> when Margaret was his mentor (Monk 1990, 16), and it was only after 1910 or 1911 that he changed his attitude upon seeing the play *Die Kreuzelscheiber* (Monk 1990, 51), and not as a consequence of having read Kierkegaard.

We may, therefore, reasonably conclude that it is possible but very difficult to insist on Kierkegaard's influence on Wittgenstein during the pre-*Tractatus* period.

### 3. Kierkegaard's Influence on Wittgenstein during the *Tractatus* Period

Now, I wish to consider whether Kierkegaard influenced Wittgenstein and how he did so, if at all, when Wittgenstein was working on *Tractatus*.

#### 3.1. Wittgenstein's Contact with Kierkegaard

Yet again, Wittgenstein does not mention Kierkegaard anywhere in his manuscripts or typescripts for *Tractatus*. However, the following circumstances attest Wittgenstein's actually having encountered Kierkegaard's writings during the *Tractatus* period.

In 1914, Wittgenstein contributed considerable amounts of money to Austrian artists through Ludwig von Ficker (1885-1919) (Monk 1990, 106), an Austrian journalist editing *Der Brenner*. Around the same time, some of Kierkegaard's writings, translated into German by Theodor Haecker (1879-1945), were published

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\*<sup>6</sup> Wittgenstein had been baptized into the Catholic faith (Monk 1990, 8).

in the journal, which stimulated Austrian intellectuals' interest in the Danish philosopher, and his name became well known in Austria before the beginning of the First World War (Monk 1990, 109). It is likely that Wittgenstein continued to receive *Der Brenner* from Ficker until 1921,<sup>\*7</sup> so he may have encountered some of Kierkegaard's writings in the journal. In any case, the following pieces from Kierkegaard's writings were translated into German by Haecker and published in *Der Brenner* by the end of Wittgenstein's *Tractatus* period: 'Prefaces' (1914), 'The Thorn in the Flesh' (1914), 'Present Age' in (1914), and 'At a Graveside' (1915), from *Three Discourses on Imagined Occasions* (1845) (Schreiber 2015, 128).

Hermine, one of Wittgenstein's elder sisters, wrote the following to her youngest brother Ludwig, who was then serving in the war, in a letter dated 20 November 1917:

Thank you very much for your lovely card from the 13<sup>th</sup> of November. You were perfectly right in your supposition that I didn't receive the earlier card with your order for the books, but I have just gone out for them and some of Kierkegaard's writings are already on the way. Hopefully they meet your wishes, for I know nothing about him and his writings. I took a few volumes at random. 'The Seducer's Diary', which I bought in another bookstore, will follow. (Wittgenstein 1996, 48)

Thus, it would appear that Wittgenstein had access to at least a small number of Kierkegaard's writings, including 'The Seducer's Diary', as sent by Hermine. To add to this, this letter seems to imply that at this point (just before the completion of *Tractatus* in the summer of 1918) Wittgenstein was not especially familiar with

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<sup>\*7</sup> In a letter to Engelmann dated 5 August 1921, Wittgenstein writes: 'Ficker keeps on sending me *Der Brenner*, and I keep on wanting to write to him to stop it, as I believe, *Der Brenner* is nonsense (a Christian journal is intellectual make-believe)— but I never get down to sending the notice of cancellation to Ficker, as I cannot find sufficient peace and quiet to write a lengthy explanation' (Engelmann 1968, 43).

Kierkegaard, for he may have asked her to buy and send him not specific works but any writings of Kierkegaard.

In the fall of 1916, Wittgenstein met the Viennese architect Paul Engelmann (1891-1965) (Monk 1990, 147). They conversed together about such things as religion. In their correspondence, Kierkegaard is mentioned.

A side note to *Stages on Life's Way* reads '[. . .] if I had had faith, then I would have stayed with her. [. . .]' [. . .] It seems to me as if you—unlike the time in Olmütz, where I didn't think so—had no faith. (Somavilla 2006, 32) (From Engelmann to Wittgenstein, the 8 January 1917)

When you say that I don't have faith, you are perfectly right, only I didn't have it previously either. (Somavilla 2006, 33) (From Wittgenstein to Engelmann, the 16 January 1918)

Thus, Wittgenstein may have read with Engelmann, or may at least have been introduced by him to Kierkegaard's *Stages on Life's Way* by the beginning of the year 1918.

To sum up, Wittgenstein probably had infrequent but surely some contact with Kierkegaard's work during the *Tractatus* period, but when and what he read cannot be specified. I wish to proceed my consideration based on this assumption.

### 3.2. Kierkegaard's Influence on Wittgenstein

At this point, I wish to turn to Wittgenstein's manuscripts and typescripts for *Tractatus*, in search of Kierkegaard's presence there.

The formation history of *Tractatus* is shown in Table 1.

Table1: The Formation History of *Tractatus*\*<sup>8</sup>

Script ID* <sup>9</sup>	Period of Writing	Title (Commonly known as)	Remarks
TS201a D301	6. 1912 – 10. 1913 10. 1913 – 4. 1914	'Notes on Logic' 'Notes Dictated to G. E. Moore in Norway'	Wittgenstein stayed at Skjolden in Norway.
MS101	9. 8. 1914 – 30. 10. 1914	Notebooks 1914-1916 (pp. 2-21) and <i>Geheime Tagebücher (Secret Diaries)</i> (s. 13-36)	Soon after the outbreak of the First World War, Wittgenstein volunteered for the Austrian Army. In August 1914, he went to the frontline aboard the patrol ship Goplana.
MS102	30. 10. 1914 – 22. 6. 1915	Notebooks 1914-1916 (pp. 21-71) and <i>Geheime Tagebücher</i> (s. 37-66)	From around 10 December 1914, Wittgenstein served at the rear (Wittgenstein 1991, 50).
MS103	28(?). 3. 1916 – 10. 1. 1917	Notebooks 1914-1916 (pp. 71-91) and <i>Geheime Tagebücher</i> (s. 67-76)	Around June 1916, Wittgenstein went to the eastern frontline. 'Under this circumstance, "life" came up as the subject of his philosophical thinking' (Kikai 2003, 42). After September 1916, he went to the Officers' Training School in Olmütz. 'At this period, the deficiencies of the thoughts on life and language were covered, and the thoughts to be organized as <i>Tractatus</i> was almost completed' (Kikai 2003, 42).
MS104	7(?). 1918* <sup>10</sup>	<i>Prototractatus</i>	<i>Tractatus</i> was formed by re-arranging the remarks in <i>Prototractatus</i> (Kikai 2003, 21 and von Wright 1971, 8), and thus the differences seem to be insignificant (Wittgenstein 1971, 221-253).
TS202	8. 1918	<i>Tractatus Logico-Philosophices</i>	Wittgenstein was taken a prisoner by the Italian army in November 1911 (von Wright 1971, 7).

In *Tractatus*, the sections from 6.4 onward may be expected to reflect Kierkegaard's influence, in which Wittgenstein argues that the life in agreement with the will of

\*<sup>8</sup> In compiling the table, I consulted Kikai (2003, 39-42).

\*<sup>9</sup> Namely, von Wright's catalogue number.

\*<sup>10</sup> When *Prototractatus* was brought to completion is unclear. Here, I adopt von Wright's view that it was completed around July 1918, because there is a dedication in *Prototractatus* to David Pinsent, who was killed in the war on 8 May 1918, and *Tractatus* was finished in August 1918. See G. H. von Wright (1971, 9).

God is good and happy, and ethics (i.e., that which pertains to sense and value) is transcendental and cannot be expressed.

I wish to clarify how the ethical thought in *Tractatus* evolved and was framed, through a close reading of Wittgenstein's scripts, with the aim of considering whether or not Kierkegaard had any role in the process and, if so, to what extent.

### 3.2.1. TS201a and D301 (6. 1912 - 4. 1914)

In his first two scripts for *Tractatus*, Wittgenstein gives his consideration exclusively to logic. So, although such ideas as the transcendentalism of logic (cf. *Tractatus* 6.13) are present,<sup>\*11</sup> no ethical thoughts immediately relevant to those in *Tractatus* are to be found.

Moreover, Wittgenstein does not mention Kierkegaard (i.e., his name, writings, thoughts, etc.) at all in either of these scripts; therefore, we cannot affirm Kierkegaard's having played some role at this stage.

### 3.2.2. MS101 (9. 8. 1914 - 30. 10. 1914)

Three manuscripts considered crucial in the formation of *Tractatus* are MS101, 102, and 103. The right-hand-side pages of each notebook consist mainly of philosophical considerations, which are published under the title of 'Notebook 1914-1916', while on the left-hand-side, the pages primarily contain Wittgenstein's considerations of his own life, written in code, which, as of 2019, have not yet been published in English, though they have been published in German under the title of *Geheime Tagebücher* (Secret Diaries).

From the first of the three manuscripts, it is known that Wittgenstein, who

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<sup>\*11</sup> 'Logical so-called propositions *show* [the] logical properties of language and therefore of [the] Universe, but say nothing. This means that by merely looking at them you can *see* these properties; whereas, in a proposition proper, you cannot see what is true by looking at it. It is impossible to *say* what these properties are, because in order to do so, you would need a language, which hadn't got the properties in question, and it is impossible that this should be a *proper* language. Impossible to construct [an] illogical language' (Wittgenstein 1979, 108 ['Notes Dictated to G. E. Moore in Norway']).



had volunteered for the Austrian Army since August 1914, found Tolstoy's *The Gospel in Brief* by chance at a bookstore around September of that year (Kikai 2003, 131). Thereafter he 'carries the explanation of Gospel [i.e. *The Gospel in Brief*] as talisman always with' (Wittgenstein 1991, 29) him on the battlefield, probably throughout the entire period covered by MS101 to MS103.

*The Gospel in Brief* is Tolstoy's reconstruction of the Gospels based on the principle that,

the reader should remember that not only is there no harm in throwing out the unnecessary parts of the Gospels and illuminating some passages with others but that, on the contrary, it is reprehensible and godless not to do that, and continue considering some fixed number of verses and letters to be holy. (Tolstoy 2011, xx-xxi)

In other words, Tolstoy 'do[es] not look at *Christianity* as a strictly divine revelation, nor as a historical phenomenon, but [. . .] look[s] at *Christianity* as a teaching that gives meaning to life' (Tolstoy 2011, xxi). According to Tolstoy, the heart of Christianity is Jesus' teachings such as 'that life is not given to each person for their individual use, but to fulfill the father's will and that only the fulfilling of the father's will can save from death and give life' (Tolstoy 2011, 54) and that 'man is a spirit in the flesh, and only the spirit gives life, the flesh does not give life. [. . .] The spirit is life' (Tolstoy 2011, 21).

The book's influence on Wittgenstein is evident, for example, when he says on the battlefield, 'I always tell myself in my heart repeatedly Tolstoy's words that "man is *faint* in the flesh but *free* through spirit"' (Wittgenstein 1991, 21). The theme of the first chapter of *The Gospel in Brief* is 'Man, the son of God, is powerless in the flesh and free in the spirit' (Tolstoy 2011, 5). Therefore, it seems probable that it was under the influence of Tolstoy's *The Gospel in Brief* that Wittgenstein thereafter held the idea that life in agreement with the will of God is good and that

it is bad when it goes in accordance with his own will.\*<sup>12</sup>

Considering the close parallel between the Tolstoyan thought seen above and part of the ethical thought in *Tractatus* (i.e., the thought that life in agreement with the will of God is good and happy), we may naturally suppose that Tolstoy's *The Gospel in Brief* was one of the key sources of the ethical thought in *Tractatus*.

By contrast, Wittgenstein doesn't mention Kierkegaard at all in MS101. As such, it is difficult to insist on Kierkegaard's influence on the formation of the thought at that stage.

### 3.2.3. MS102 (30. 10. 1914 – 22. 6. 1915)

It is noteworthy that, along with the idea that logic is transcendental\*<sup>13</sup> (cf. *Tractatus* 6.13), the thought that questions about the mystical are on a different level to those that are scientific is found in the second manuscript of the three.

The urge toward the mystical comes of the non-satisfaction of our wishes by science. We *feel* that even if all *possible* scientific questions are answered *our problem is still not touched at all*. Of course in that case there are no questions any more; and that is the answer. (Wittgenstein 1979, 51e)

This would later be rephrased in *Tractatus*: section 6.52 reads, 'we feel that even if *all possible* scientific questions be answered, the problems of life have still not been touched at all. Of course there is then no question left, and just this is the answer' (Wittgenstein 1981, 187). So we may say that part of the ethical thought of *Tractatus*—that ethics (i.e., that which pertains sense and value) is transcendental

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\*<sup>12</sup> For example, Wittgenstein says 'thy will be done' (30. 9. 1914 (Wittgenstein 1991, 26)), 'I must become resigned to my fate. [. . .] I live in the hand of fate' (25. 1. 1915 (Wittgenstein 1991, 55)) and 'not my, but thy will be done!' (30. 3. 1916 (Wittgenstein 1991, 68))

\*<sup>13</sup> 'What is mirrored in language I cannot use language to express' (Wittgenstein 1979, 42e).

and cannot be expressed—is being awoken in MS102.

Although the question of whether somebody or something influenced Wittgenstein in developing this thought remains unknown, it is undeniable that Wittgenstein does not mention Kierkegaard at all in MS102. We can at least say, therefore, that it is again difficult to insist on Kierkegaard's influence here.

### 3.2.4. MS103 (28. 3. 1916 – 10. 1. 1917)

In the last of the three crucial manuscripts for *Tractatus*, Wittgenstein at the frontline ('the Brusilov Offensive') gives earnest consideration to life. On 11 June 1916, he writes as follows:

What do I know about God and the purpose of life?

I know that this world exists.

That I am places in it like my eye in its visual field.

That something about it is problematic, which we call its meaning.

That this meaning does not lie in it but outside it.

That life is the world.

That my will penetrates the world.

That my will is good or evil.

Therefore that good and evil are somehow connected with the meaning of the world.

The meaning of life, i.e. the meaning of the world, we can call God.

And connect with this the comparison of God to a father.

To pray is to think about the meaning of life.

I cannot bend the happenings of the world to my will: I am completely powerless.

I can only make myself independent of the world—and so in a certain sense master it—by renouncing any influence on happenings. (Wittgenstein 1979, 72e-73e)

It is worth considering his speculations that follow:

in order to live happily I must be in agreement with the world. And that is what 'being happy' *means*. I am then, so to speak, in agreement with that alien will on which I appear dependent. That is to say: 'I am doing the will of God.' [. . .] Live happy! (Wittgenstein 1979, 75e)

I keep on coming back to this. Simply the happy life is good, the unhappy bad. (Wittgenstein 1979, 78e)

Ethics does not treat of the world. Ethics must be a condition of the world, like logic. (Wittgenstein 1979, 77e)

*It is clear* that ethics *cannot* be expressed! [. . .] Ethics is transcendental. (Wittgenstein 1979, 78e-79e) \*<sup>14</sup>

It is highly plausible that the whole of Wittgenstein's ethical thought in *Tractatus*, from 6.4 onward (i.e., life in agreement with the will of God is good and happy, and that ethics (i.e., that which pertains to sense and value) is transcendental and cannot be expressed) was formed by/during the period of MS103.

I wish now to consider what caused Wittgenstein to frame these thoughts and what role Kierkegaard played in the process.

First, it was mainly his morbid experience at the frontline of the war, where he pursued the purpose and meaning of life by venturing to face the possibility of his own death. As a result, he came to find that what he had been pursuing was nothing but 'God', and that it was when he was in agreement with the will of God, and, as such, felt happy, that he was living a purposeful and meaningful life.

Second, we should pay attention to his thought, already formed by the time MS101 and 102 were written, that logic is transcendental. Combined with the

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\*<sup>14</sup> In the original German text, it reads 'die Ethik ist transcendent', not 'transzendental' (Wittgenstein 1979, 79). In *Tractatus*, Wittgenstein rephrases the sentence with 'die Ethik ist transzendental' (Wittgenstein 1981, 182).

above-mentioned awareness of God as the purpose and meaning of life as well as the only source of happiness, he came to realize that he had in fact been living with God as a fundamental but inexpressible condition of life: ethics (i.e., that which pertains to sense and value) is transcendental.

Third, we can discern once again the influence of Tolstoy's *The Gospel in Brief*. It is clear that Wittgenstein tried to free himself from his own will and align himself with the will of God.

Finally, the unignorable, considerable influence of Dostoevsky is also evident. Wittgenstein says, during the same period in MS103, that

and in this sense Dostoevsky is right when he says that the man who is happy is fulfilling the purpose of existence. Or again we could say that the man is fulfilling the purpose of existence who no longer needs to have any purpose except to live. That is to say, who is content. (Wittgenstein 1979, 73e)

Around two months prior to this, Wittgenstein appears to have referenced Dostoevsky's *The Brothers Karamazov*. Presumably citing the words of Father Zosima, he wrote 'the rightly-believing heart understands all' (Wittgenstein 1991, 71).<sup>\*15</sup> So when Wittgenstein expresses the view that 'Dostoevsky is right when he says that the man who is happy is fulfilling the purpose of existence,' which overlaps completely with the ethical thought in *Tractatus*, it is probably *The Brothers Karamazov* that he had in mind.

It is important to clarify that Wittgenstein does not mention Kierkegaard at all in MS103. Moreover, it is entirely plausible that Tolstoy and Dostoevsky, among others, were the greatest influences on Wittgenstein's ethical thought in *Tractatus*. Thus, it is again possible but clearly difficult to insist on Kierkegaard's influence here.

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<sup>\*15</sup> This may be a citation from *Karamazov*: 'the orthodox heart will understand all' (Dostoevsky 2011, 253).

### 3.2.5. MS104 (7(?). 1918) and TS202 (8. 1918)

Around one and a half years after his intense thoughts on life in MS103, Wittgenstein came closer to completing *Tractatus* by synthesizing his work up to that point. Here, another manuscript takes shape: MS104, called *Prototractatus*. Wittgenstein re-structured the ideas in *Prototractatus*, and finally completed typescript TS202, which would be published as *Tractatus Logico-Philosophicus*.

The writings contained in these two scripts are from MS101–103, so no considerations appear to have been newly added to in MS104 and TS202.<sup>\*16</sup>

Again, Wittgenstein makes no mention of Kierkegaard at all.

### 3.2.6. Missing (?) MSs

Scholars speculate that some other manuscripts for *Tractatus* existed but are now missing (von Wright 1971, 3-6). According to G. H. von Wright, it is certain that one MS akin to MS101–103, which are constructing manuscripts, was written before MS101, and that another akin to MS104, which is a summarizing manuscript, was written between MS102 and MS103. Furthermore, it is possible that other several MSs akin to MS101–103 existed between MS102 and MS103 and between MS103 and MS104.

This is to say that the possibility that Wittgenstein referenced Kierkegaard in these missing MSs is undeniable. However, evidence for this is difficult to discern in the remarks in MS104 (*Prototractatus*), which represents every MS for *Tractatus*, something beyond those in the existing MSs (i.e. MS101-103), and all the consideration from section 6.4 onward in TS202 (i.e., *Tractatus*) appears to be traceable back to the existing MSs. Therefore, it would be unreasonable to presume the existence of the missing MSs, and moreover, Wittgenstein's references to Kierkegaard therein.

<sup>\*16</sup> By the way, the remarks that don't exist in MS104 but exist in TS202 are the sections 6.423 and 6.4321 of *Tractatus*. On the contrary, the remark that exists in MS104 but doesn't exist in TS202 is 'thus the outward aspect of ordinary language makes every kind of illusion and confusion possible' (Wittgenstein 1971, 83).

## 4. Conclusion

I wish to summarize what this paper has clarified, and to draw a conclusion.

Although we cannot wholly deny the possibility that Wittgenstein read some of Kierkegaard's writings under Margaret's guidance during the pre-*Tractatus* period, considering the absence of materials that attest Wittgenstein's actual contact with Kierkegaard's work, including his contemptuous attitude toward religion, it is difficult to assert Kierkegaard's influence on Wittgenstein during this period.

During the *Tractatus* period, there is a slim but certain possibility of Wittgenstein's actually having encountered some of Kierkegaard's writings. However, Wittgenstein makes no mention of Kierkegaard (i.e., his name, writings, thoughts, etc.) anywhere in his scripts from this period. It is quite reasonable, therefore, to argue that Wittgenstein formed the ethical thought he expressed in *Tractatus* under the influence of Tolstoy and Dostoevsky, through his serious consideration of the purpose and meaning of life on the battlefield, led occasionally by his investigation of logic and language.

Therefore, it is not reasonable to insist on Kierkegaard's incontestable influence on Wittgenstein's *Tractatus*, in accordance with the principle of Occam's razor: 'entities should not be multiplied unnecessarily.'<sup>\*17</sup>

We may add that the spirit of Tolstoy's *The Gospel in Brief*, whose influence is evident in *Tractatus*, is remarkably un-Kierkegaardian: 'I do not look at *Christianity*

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<sup>\*17</sup> If we don't obey the principle of Occam's razor, there seem to be many other thinkers that could be proposed as the sources of Wittgenstein's ethical thought in *Tractatus*; for example, young Wittgenstein earnestly read Otto Weininger (Monk 1990, 20), who says 'logic and ethics are fundamentally one and the same thing—duty to oneself. They celebrate their union in the supreme value of truth, which is confronted on one side by error and the other side by the lie; truth itself, however, is only one. Any ethics is only possible in accordance with the laws of logic, and any logic is at the same time an ethical law. *Man's duty and task is not solely virtue, but also insight, not solely holiness, but also wisdom: only two together provide the foundation for perfection*' (Weininger 2005, 139). As we saw, Wittgenstein considers not only logic but also ethics to be transcendental in *Tractatus*. Should we attribute this similarity to Weininger's influence on Wittgenstein?

as a strictly divine revelation, nor as a historical phenomenon, but [. . .] look at *Christianity* as a teaching that gives meaning to life' (Tolstoy 2011, xxi). Therefore, it seems possible but extremely unlikely that Wittgenstein would have adhered to Tolstoy and Kierkegaard simultaneously.

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