

## MAKING WITTGENSTEIN AN EXPRESSIVIST: A CONTEMPORARY INTERPRETATION OF LATER WITTGENSTEIN AND SOME OF ITS CONSEQUENCES <sup>a</sup>

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### Abstract

The paper argues in favour of a novel interpretation of Wittgenstein's rule-following considerations by making its consequences explicit. The aforementioned novel interpretation offers us a new way of understanding Wittgenstein as an expressivist, and as claiming that a particular form of rationality is central to philosophy. The expressivist interpretation of later Wittgenstein's rule-following considerations provides us with tools to, in a way, unite all of the most plausible parts of the strongest disparate contemporary interpretations of the said primary text: the newest and, it seems, the currently most fashionable resolute reading and the realism/antirealism debate stemming from Kripke's famous Kripkenstein reading. The expressivist reading, thus, offers a way of explaining the therapeutic aspect of Wittgenstein, maintaining the continuity between earlier and later Wittgenstein, while also explaining what was so wrong about the project of *Tractatus Logico-Philosophicus*.

**Key words:** Wittgenstein, rules, expressivism, meaning, pragmatism.

## ЧИЊЕЊЕ ВИТГЕНШТАЈНА ЕКСПРЕСИВИСТОМ: САВРЕМЕНА ИНТЕРПРЕТАЦИЈА ПОЗНОГ ВИТГЕНШТАЈНА И НЕКЕ ЊЕНЕ ПОСЛЕДИЦЕ

### Апстракт

Рад аргументује у прилог нове интерпретације Витгенштајнове расправе о слеђењу правила чинећи њене последице експлицитним. Наведена нова интерпретација нуди нов начин за разумевање Витгенштајна као експресивисте и као да тврди да је један нарочит облик рационалности централан за филозофију. Експресивистичка интерпретација расправе о слеђењу правила позног Витгенштајна даје нам алате да, на својствен начин, ујединимо све најплаузибилније делове најјачих сукобљених савремених интерпретација наведеног примарног

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текста: најновије и, чини се тренутно најактуелнијег резолутног читања и расправе између реализма и антиреализма која произлази из Крипкеовог познатог Крипкештајн читања. Експресивистичко читање, стога, нуди начин да објаснимо терапеутски аспект Витгенштајна, који одржава континуитет између раног и позног Витгенштајна, те да такође објаснимо шта је то било тако погрешно у пројекту *Логичко-филозофског Трактата*.

**Кључне речи:** Витгенштајн, правила, експресивизам, значење, прагматизам.

### INTRODUCTION

The aim of this paper is to extract the consequences of a novel interpretation of Wittgenstein's rule-following considerations, and in that way argue in its favour. It will be claimed that such an interpretation offers us a way of understanding Wittgenstein more complete than any other currently on offer. This will be proved to be so by showing that the mentioned interpretation offers a strikingly holistic understanding of the various different or disparate strands of Wittgenstein's thinking – whereas other more common interpretations tend to favour and make central one or the other of such strands. Here, however, I will approach the issue from the side of Kripke's Kripkenstein – mainly because I believe it provides a correct view of the problem that Wittgenstein presents us with – and from there move on to discuss the so called resolute reading. The extremes my reading aims to reconcile are the said resolute reading on one side, and the positions grouped around the realism/antirealism debate introduced as various responses to Kripke's understanding of the problem Wittgenstein's discussion presents on the other (Kripke, 1982).

It will be argued that the said novel interpretation provides us with a way of understanding the later Wittgenstein as an expressivist – a characterization that fits surprisingly well with the author's opus, as we will see.

### THE PROBLEM: NORMATIVITY OF MEANING

Kripke is first among the philosophers of the analytic tradition to realize that one of the central themes of Wittgenstein's *Philosophical Investigations* is the problem of normativity of meaning, contained in his discussions on rule-following: the so called rule-following considerations. Kripke reports on his findings in the now famed *Wittgenstein on Rules and Private Language: An Elementary Exposition* (1982), which proves an opening of a fruitful discussion that still has not reached a conclusion. Due to difficulty in explaining the normativity of meaning that Kripke interprets rule-following considerations as demonstrating, some philosophers like Anandi Hattiangadi are ready to question whether meaning is factually normative (Hattiangadi, 2007).

Kripke claims that the most important sections of *Philosophical Investigations* aim at showing that there is no fact to the matter regarding the meaning of a person's utterance (Kripke, 1982, p. 13). Put otherwise, they aim at showing that there is nothing in the world that could fulfil the role of a truth-maker for a semantic sentence. This is so because such facts are, as J. L. Mackie would put it, "objective and intrinsically prescriptive" – and there are no such facts in the world (Mackie, 1990, p. 37)<sup>1</sup>.

The key for Kripke is in the following paragraph: "no course of action could be determined by a rule, because every course of action can be brought into accord with the rule" (Wittgenstein, 2009, §201). Whatever we are told the meaning of an expression is, we can go on to use the expression in one of the infinitely many ways – whatever the meaning of an expression is, it cannot be what determines the proper use because it allows many different interpretations in regards to how it determines the use of the expression – and every expression can be used in a multitude of very different ways. In other words, whatever the meaning of an expression is, there is no way to uniquely and non-trivially determine the proper use of the expression from it. The meaning of an expression should be that which determines all instances of the proper use of an expression, but there seems to be no way to determine such normative relation between a particular meaning and a particular expression. Whatever the meaning is, it is finite – there is a particular moment in time in which we do grasp the meaning of an expression – whereas the many different uses of an expression are basically infinite: "The rule, once stamped with a particular meaning, traces the lines along which it is to be followed through the whole of space" (*ibid.* §219).

Wittgenstein throughout the book offers many examples to prove the use of an expression is subdetermined by its meaning. Kripke ingeniously generalizes them all in a single example, the famous *quaddition* example (Kripke, 1982, pp. 7-11). Quaddition is a function defined via the mathematical function of addition. The quaddition symbol is quus ("⊕"), with the following meaning:

$$\begin{aligned}\oplus &= x + y, \text{ if } x, y < 57 \\ &= 5 \text{ otherwise}\end{aligned}$$

If such a function is plausible, how can we tell the difference between addition and quaddition on ordinary cases? If a child never added a number bigger than 57, what would be the right answer to the question of what the sum of 57 and 68 is? Is it 5 or, rather, is it 125? Is the child using 'plus' to mean addition or quaddition? Given the evidence, we simply cannot tell what the right answer is. There is no fact to the matter whether

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<sup>1</sup> Hence Mackie's error theory in metaethics.

the child in using ‘plus’ before having been faced with the most current question meant addition or quaddition: whether it be entities, all the previous instances of use, dispositions, etc.

The example threads on the fact of the finitude of the proposed meaning: whatever it is, it is supposed to be something finite determining an infinite number of future instances of use. Even if we evoke all the previous examples of use or even dispositions, there is no way to uniquely determine the next case – there are many different coherent hypotheses available. Dispositions only tell us how to subject will act, now how a subject should act, given the circumstances. The contrast between finite and infinite is supposed to demonstrate that the demand for normative relation between meaning and use cannot be fulfilled: meaning cannot be normative in a required manner since whatever it is, it always allows for radically different, equally plausible interpretations.

This is the part of Wittgenstein I am convinced Kripke managed to get right. However, Kripke goes on to argue that Wittgenstein offers a skeptical solution to such a skeptical problem. I think he is in the wrong with regards to the solution, and in calling the problem ‘skeptical’ but will not here explicitly argue against Kripke’s claims, especially about the skepticism part. Rather, I will call upon the already mentioned novel interpretation of rule-following considerations which shows exactly why Kripke cannot be right, and what really is Wittgenstein’s solution of the presented problem.

Regardless of Kripke’s views on Wittgenstein, the rule-following considerations seem to leave us with two options to solve to problem of normativity of meaning. Either meaning is to be postulated as a sort of a platonic entity, existing in its own special realm, given that nothing in the world can be ‘objective and intrinsically normative.’ Or, there are no objective normative meanings really – the claim that our utterances actually mean something is nothing but a seeming – as are the necessary connections of natural laws, and we seem to communicate by a sheer chance. Neither option is really plausible. The first is not because it makes the epistemic access to meanings impossible, requiring of us some further cognitive or epistemic capacities over the ordinary ones. The second is not because we all are pretty much sure that what we say makes all the world of difference: if I was to say to someone that it is raining outside, the person hearing that utterance would surely prepare an umbrella when she was ready to leave. That would not be the case if I said that the new Christopher Nolan movie was not worth watching. The utterances mean something, and we use them exactly because of their meanings in order to communicate something particular to our fellow humans. Therefore, we cannot just accept the skeptical problem of the rule-following considerations and leave things as is. Wittgenstein was well aware of that.

### THE SOLUTION

The key to understanding Wittgenstein's solution is in appreciating that 'meaning' functions differently from the best part of our language. Already in *The Blue and Brown Books* Wittgenstein realizes that the conception of meaning central to the *Tractatus* will not suffice

'Meaning' is one of the words of which one may say that they have odd jobs in our language. It is these words which cause most philosophical troubles. Imagine some institution: most of its members have certain regular functions, functions which can easily be described, say, in the statutes of the institution. There are, on the other hand, some members who are employed for odd jobs, which nevertheless may be extremely important. —What causes most trouble in philosophy is that we are tempted to describe the use of important 'odd-job' words as though they were words with regular functions.

(Wittgenstein, 1969, p. 44)

These positive remarks are to be contrasted to the negative remarks of the rule-following considerations, since they are first and foremost aimed at the conception of meaning that is according to certain interpretations central to the *Tractatus*. The said conception of meaning is known as the *pictorial theory of meaning* which claims that meaningful sentences are only those that picture states of affairs and their functions. This theory is a version of *semantic representationalism* which is the broader target of the later Wittgenstein's negative remarks. Semantic representationalism claims that all the meaningful expressions are in the job of representing reality. The central question of rule-following considerations thus becomes: "What does 'meaning' represent?" Alternatively, the central question becomes: "What does 'meaning' stand for?" As we have seen, given its inherent normative nature, whatever 'meaning' of a particular expression stands for, it cannot be what determines how that expression is to be correctly used. Therefore, we can conclude that at least in the case of semantic sentences semantic representationalism cannot be true. This is why Wittgenstein claims that 'meaning' has to be doing a different job than most other words of our language, why its role cannot be that of representing reality. However, only claiming that meaning is doing a peculiar job is not in itself enough to help us actually understand it. In other words, it does not suffice in giving us a positive account of meaning.

In *Investigations* Wittgenstein makes two types of claims regarding meaning. First, in many different places, he claims that meaning is nothing but the explanation of meaning a competent speaker can offer: "...Isn't my knowledge, my concept of a game, completely expressed in the explanations that I could give?" (Wittgenstein, 2009, §75).

One of the examples of explanation is practical:

I'll teach him to use the words by means of examples and by exercises. And when I do this, I do not communicate less to him than I know myself...

...I do it, he does it after me; and I influence him by expressions of agreement, rejection, expectation, encouragement. I let him go his way, or hold him back; and so on.

(*ibid.* §208)

The learning happens in practice. The pupil needs teacher's affirming behaviour in order to 'keep going in the right way'. It amounts to a sort of learning by example. Wittgenstein is here implying that whatever meaning it has to be completely public, in order for it to be learnable. So, whatever I can explain to someone as meaning of the expression, if he can understand it and 'go on in the same way' to use the said expression, than he has learned all there is to learn about the meaning of the expression, and nothing mysterious is left: "Once I have exhausted the justifications, I have reached bedrock, and my spade is turned. Then I am inclined to say: 'This is simply what I do'" (*ibid.* §217).

This ties in perfectly with the other typical explanation of meaning to be found in the *Investigations*, the one focused on use, rather than explanation. Some examples of such paragraphs are as following:

... the meaning of a word is its use in the language.

(*ibid.* §43)

One cannot guess how a word functions. One has to look at its application and learn from that.

(*ibid.* §340)

So, what Wittgenstein urges us to do in order to understand the meanings of our expressions is to look at the ways we use our words, and from that extract the explanation of their meaning. Many philosophers like Kripke seem to oversimplify this side of *Investigations* in claiming that Wittgenstein there proclaims his antirealist, assertability theory of meaning or even that he just does away with any sort of explanation and basically claims that 'anything goes' if a particular local linguistic community allows it, since there is nothing more to meaning than that.

In his "Realistička i antirealistička interpretacija Vitgenštajnovе rasprave o sleđenju pravila" (Jandrić, 2021) Andrej Jandrić demonstrates all the faults of the Dummettian distinction between realist and antirealist theories of meaning. By the same token, he offers the novel reading of Wittgenstein's solution to the problems of rule-following considerations. We have already seen that in *Investigations* Wittgenstein characterizes the meaning of an expression as that which is given in explanation of its

meaning, and which can be found in its use. However, as Jandrić shows, already in *The Blue and Brown Books* Wittgenstein offers us way of understanding what are the later remarks supposed to mean:

Let us introduce two antithetical terms in order to avoid certain elementary confusions: To the question “How do you know that so-and-so is the case?”, we sometimes answer by giving ‘criteria’ and sometimes by giving ‘symptoms’. If medical science calls angina an inflammation caused by a particular bacillus, and we ask in a particular case “why do you say this man has got angina?” then the answer “I have found the bacillus so-and-so in his blood” gives us the criterion, or what we may call the defining criterion of angina. If on the other hand the answer was, “His throat is inflamed”, this might give us a symptom of angina. I call “symptom” a phenomenon of which experience has taught us that it coincided, in some way or other, with the phenomenon which is our defining criterion. Then to say “A man has angina if this bacillus is found in him” is a tautology or it is a loose way of stating the definition of “angina”. But to say, “A man has angina whenever he has an inflamed throat” is to make a hypothesis.

(Wittgenstein, 1969, pp. 24-25)

The distinction between the criteria and symptoms provides us a way of claiming that meaning is objective and normative, and not something bound to whatever goes within a given linguistic community. We can use an expression in many a way – but not every single use is central to the meaning of the expression. The criteria tell us when we should necessarily use an expression – they determine its meaning. The symptoms are contingent empirical occurrences concurrent with various utterances of the expression. The criteria are what we cite when we aim to teach someone to use an expression and they are necessary. Symptoms, thus, are not parts of the meaning of a sentence, only criteria are.

Therefore, a competent speaker is the one who is capable of explaining the meaning, that is, who can discern the criteria of an expression from its symptoms and cite them in order to in that way teach someone the meaning of the expression. Those who can use the expression, but cannot discern the criteria from the symptoms, thus, cannot be labelled competent speakers, since they cannot recognise the difference between proper or right use and use *simpliciter*. The use of an expression needs to be norm governed by its meaning, and meaning is provided by the criteria of an expression, filtered from all of its previous uses.

### THE EXPRESSIVISM

The normative nature of meaning thus comes from the normative nature or rulishness of the ways in which human subjects act in using or uttering the expressions. Everything we needed to know about meaning was already there – in our use, it is just that we need to appreciate the rulishness of such practice when philosophically inspecting the nature of meaning. Thus, our semantics are to be derived from our pragmatics – the theory of use of expressions. The function of ‘meaning’ is to talk about certain aspects of our practices, and not about the world – there is no such entity as meaning, only norm governed practices of using the expressions. In that sense we can talk about Wittgenstein’s solution to the problem of rule-following considerations as a sort of *via media*: neither meanings are a sort of platonic ‘objective and intrinsically prescriptive’ entities nor are we in the wrong when we claim that there are meanings (Jandrić, 2022, pp. 22-27). There are meanings and they are both objective and prescriptive, but they are not entities of any sort. Meaning is both use and what is explained by a competent speaker: if we claimed that meaning is use than there would be no way to discern between proper use and any use of the word.

The criteria that competent speaker cites when attempting to teach someone are supposed to make explicit the rules implicit in the practices of using the expressions, or, put another way, the criteria represent our putting in the words of our practical mastery of using a particular expression. The claims about meaning are, thus, *expressive* – they make explicit what was implicit in practice (*ibid.*, 25). Also, they are metalinguistic in a sense that they are about language itself, about its use to be more specific. Semantic sentences do not represent the reality, but make our practices of claiming explicit to ourselves.

The practices of using expressions come before our thinking about meanings. Thus, Wittgenstein is claiming the irreducibility of meaning – we cannot get meaning from something that is devoid of it, something we could argue is in some way more fundamental than meaning. This is why “If we say, ‘Every word in the language signifies something’, we have so far said nothing whatever; unless we explain exactly what distinction we wish to make” (Wittgenstein, 2009, §13). Talking about objects of reference but not talking about rules that govern the use of the expression gets us nowhere. Hence, “One cannot guess how a word functions. One has to look at its application and learn from that” (*ibid.* §340). Asserting a semantic sentence then proceeds to help us assert the rule that was always already implicit in the said use.

Therefore, the ability to use expressions or vocabularies with expressive meaning is dependent of ability to use expression or vocabularies with ordinary descriptive meaning. If I cannot even use an expression, then I cannot talk about its meaning. Thus, I first need to be able to describe to world around me, and that is all that is required of me in order to



be able to talk about meanings of my utterances. In other words, having the ability or knowing how to talk about the world around me is all the ability or knowledge I need in order to be able to talk about or know about the meanings of my utterances. There is no further ability or knowledge required in order to talk about or know about meanings of the utterances. Thus, there is a pragmatic dependence relation between the practices of using ordinary empirical descriptive vocabulary and using the expressive semantic vocabulary (Brandom, 2014, p. 39). The knowledge of meanings of our utterances turns out to be trivial: by being able to use our words, we already know all there is to know about their meanings (Jandrić, 2022, p. 26).

There is another side to this pragmatic dependence relation that can be summarized by claiming that the semantic vocabulary is a *pragmatic metavocabulary* for our ordinary empirical descriptive vocabulary. A pragmatic vocabulary is a vocabulary in which we specify the practices necessary for using a particular vocabulary. This is a way of explicating the claim that semantics are to be conducted in terms of pragmatics. Thus, the role of semantic sentences is to codify the rules implicit in our everyday use of expressions. Put another way, the role of semantic sentences is to transform *knowing how* into *knowing that* (*ibid.* 25). One part of Wittgenstein's *Investigations* is focused on showing that we cannot even begin to comprehend expressions that are not in any way being used (Wittgenstein, 2009, §§310-421). Thus, the representationalist semantic paradigm turns out to be a "quasi-Platonic idea that we are capable of a direct and unmediated intuition of laws or principles that are then applied in behaviour" (Redding, 2007, p. 73).

We can, therefore, see in which way Wittgenstein influenced the current pragmatist debate between Brandom's (Robert B. Brandom) inferential, Price's (Huw Price) subject naturalist and Blackburn's (Simon Blackburn) rolling pragmatism. Their debate, among other more minor issues, centres on the question about which pragmatic metavocabulary should we use in our analysis of meaning. Wittgenstein, I claim, is the progenitor of the metalinguistic pragmatist or expressivist tradition. Many claim that Richard Rorty deserves such a title, but I believe that in claiming that Wittgenstein actually deserves it, we manage to explain why Rorty was so fascinated by the work of the later Wittgenstein, and why and how exactly did he understand the Austrian philosopher. Furthermore, as we have already seen, this helps us understand the relation between pragmatism, broadly understood on one side and expressivism on the other.

### THE CONSEQUENCES

The expressivist reading of Wittgenstein's rule-following considerations offers a novel way of reconciling what were previously thought to be conflicting interpretative strands in understanding the late work of the Austrian philosopher. I want to claim that the most striking parts of the resolute reading of Wittgenstein can be shown to be in agreement with the here presented expressivist reading. There, I want to claim lays the main strength of the expressivist reading: it offers us a way of providing a unified understanding of what until now seemed disparate strands in Wittgenstein's thinking. Also, this reading is in some degree of agreement with dispositional readings of Wittgenstein's positive answers to the problems of rule-following considerations present in the work of aforementioned Simon Blackburn and Huw Price (Blackburn, 2010). It agrees with the expressivist reading in the sense that it also claims that later Wittgenstein is a *functional pluralist*.

The thesis of functional pluralism claims that different parts of language can play various different roles, like representing, describing, expressing the rules of use or expressing attitudes, etc. Put differently, there is no single model for determining the meaning of an expression, and that is exactly why Wittgenstein introduces the notion of *family resemblances* (Wittgenstein, 2009, §67). He also claims that

Our language can be regarded as an ancient city: a maze of little streets and squares, of old and new houses, of houses with extensions from various periods, and all this surrounded by a multitude of new suburbs with straight and regular streets and uniform houses.

(*ibid.* §18)

But, "We don't notice the enormous variety of all the everyday language-games, because the clothing of our language makes them all alike" (*ibid.* §335). The plurality of function lies beneath the surface area, on which everything linguistic seems alike, and because of what we seem to err when we attempt to explain the meanings. We tend to assume that because everything linguistic seems like its job is to represent or describe, semantic sentences have to be doing the same job. But in reality, there are many functions an expression can perform, as we have seen.

The resolute readers' main focus is on *Tractatus*, for example Cora Diamond's "Throwing Away the Ladder: How to Read the *Tractatus*" (Diamond, 1988). The term 'resolute reading' is supposed to refer to a way of reading the penultimate section of the book, stating:

My propositions are elucidatory in this way: he who understands me finally recognizes them as nonsensical, when he has climbed out through them, on them, over them. (He must so to speak throw away the ladder, after he has climbed up on it.)

(Wittgenstein, 2001, 6.54)

A resolute reading of the given section maintains that the sentences comprising the body of the book must be recognized as *simply nonsensical*, without any content whatsoever (Bronzo, 2012, p. 47). In other words, the resolute reading does not admit of the standard view that claims the existence of two kinds of nonsense in *Tractatus*. In any case, they agree with aforementioned authors in embracing the non-theoretical aspect of Wittgenstein. However, they disagree regarding Wittgenstein's metaphilosophy. The resoluteness of resolute reading lies in the claim that Wittgenstein resolves the questions, not by answering them, but by showing them to be senseless, and hence not worth stating. The central claim of the resolute readers is the claim of continuity between earlier and later Wittgenstein. For both early and later Wittgenstein, according to resolute readers, philosophy is something to be *practiced*, not something to be *learned* – it is a sort of therapy we conduct in order to live and act differently (Contant, 2019; Diamond, 1988). As Wittgenstein himself puts it: “To show the fly the way out of the fly-bottle” (Wittgenstein, 2009, §309). It seems as though Kripke would not agree with these claims, given the skepticism he ascribes to Wittgenstein.

The non-resolute readers of Wittgenstein attempt to capture this aspect of his philosophy by claiming that he subscribes to *philosophical quietism* (Blackburn, 2019, p. 125). The thesis of philosophical quietism claims that there should not be any theorizing in philosophy, any postulation of entities in order to explain the phenomena. Wittgenstein is very often quite clear about this:

All *explanation* must disappear, and description alone must take its place. And this description gets its light, that is to say, its purpose from the philosophical problems. These are, of course, not empirical problems; but they are solved through an insight into the workings of our language, and that in such a way that these workings are recognized despite an urge to misunderstand them. The problems are solved, not by coming up with new discoveries, but by assembling what we have long been familiar with. Philosophy is a struggle against the bewitchment of our understanding by the resources of our language.

(Wittgenstein, 2009, §109)

Also talking about philosophy, he claims: “It leaves everything as it is”

(*ibid.* §124).

Therefore, only describing what is already there is allowed when doing philosophy. Wittgenstein here assumes that explanation implies postulating entities that would explain the given facts, whilst description should leave everything as is, only put the given facts in their proper places.

This, however, can seem to be in conflict with the expressivist reading here offered. If there is a positive answer to the question of meaning in Wittgenstein, then how could we claim that he was a philosophical quietist? I want to claim that asserting that Wittgenstein was a philosophical quietist is an oversimplification, and that the expressivist reading offers us a way to understand his position in a much clearer light.

This is the sense in which Conant's claim about there being some *Socratic aspects* of Wittgenstein's thought is on the right track, or rather, a sense in which it offers us a platform on which the expressivist reading can expand on, by further explicating the nature of such Socratic aspects (Conant, 2019). The Socratic aspects are the metaphilosophical claims about philosophy being a practice to be conducted, not a theory to be learned. The origins of this view are to be found in Stanley Cavell's 'therapeutic reading' of the later Wittgenstein. Its goal is the betterment of our lives, the changing of the ways in which we act and 'be' in the world. It is philosophy in the sense of in which philosophers of the Hellenistic period understood it (and perhaps even Spinoza): the activity of *curing the suffering of the soul* in teaching us about ourselves, and not something to be learned by reading certain books (Conant, 2019, p. 244). It is a sense of philosophy that cannot be understood as merely professional, or as Rorty would put it, tied to a *fach* and formal institutions – it is philosophy understood as entwined to one's life and its contingencies – a philosophy understood as a *way of life* (*ibid.*, 245). And it is Socratic in the sense that knowing ourselves is the highest (and only) form of this ethical, practical knowledge. In the words of Epicurus:

Empty are the words of that philosopher who offers no therapy for human suffering. For just as there is no use in medical expertise if it does not provide therapy for bodily diseases, so too there is no use in philosophy if it does not expel the suffering of the soul.

(Epicurus; quoted in Porphyry, 1987, p. 155, quoted in Conant, 2019, p. 245)

Socrates, as Cicero puts it, "calls philosophy down from the heavens and sets it in the cities of men" asking the questions about life and morality (Cicero, 1927, *Tusculan Disputations* V, IV, 10, quoted in Conant, 2019, p. 248). Wittgenstein, according to Conant, aims to do the same, and not talk about semantic, intensional or intentional entities, but about ourselves and our practices. My expressivist reading helps us further elaborate the Socratic aspects of Wittgenstein, by providing ways to understand what exactly does this knowledge of ourselves amount to, in the case of meaning at the very least.

The expressivist reading claims that the semantic sentences talk about our practices of use that come before we can even talk about the meaning. Thus, semantic sentences do not talk about any sort of new enti-

ty – they do not *explain* by postulating. Semantic sentences talk about our practices – they *describe* what was already there, and by doing that they make explicit the rules always already implicit in our practices. We thus achieve a sort of *semantic self-knowledge* or *semantic self-consciousness*. By putting the rules of our conduct into words, we can then proceed to be critical of, and change the way we act, since only then can we offer reasons for and against the practical rules we follow in acting in the world. The goal of philosophy in this sense can then be claimed to be a special kind of rationality – the Socratic expressive rationality.

This still allows us to label Wittgenstein a philosophical quietist, in one sense. That sense here being the one in which Wittgenstein overcomes the modernistic representational conception of rationality or knowledge, or rather returns back to a Socratic expressive conception of rationality. Wittgenstein is a quietist in a sense in which he doesn't postulate a special kind of objects in order to explain phenomena that science has trouble explaining, such as meaning, mathematical and logical objects, intentionality, etc. Rather, he turns to us and our practices, and finds there as implicit everything he needs in order to make it explicit, or, as he says, to describe it in order to achieve a 'perspicuous representation.' The criteria the expressivist reading argues about is one example of such a description, of implicit becoming explicit, of us achieving self-consciousness, of Socratic expressive rationality. This is why Wittgenstein claims that his books should be dismissed after we've read them: they cannot help us themselves in any way.

Thus, I think it would be more adequate to label Wittgenstein a metaphysical rather than philosophical quietist, since he does offer a particular way of understanding and solving philosophical problems, and does not merely dismiss them. Hence, labelling Wittgenstein a philosophical quietist is an oversimplification: he does not offer a particular theory, but a whole new (or rather, old) understanding of philosophy and its problems. The expressivist reading with the help of Conant's resolute reading approach to the Socratic aspects of Wittgenstein help us demonstrate this. Wittgenstein is not an anti-philosopher, nor is his aim to end all philosophy once and for all (Conant, 2019, p. 249)<sup>2</sup>. He rather seems to wish to take it back to its Socratic glory days, and its focus back onto ourselves. "To show the fly the way out of the fly-bottle" tells of the self-conducted activity of the fly, or rather, of the philosopher (Wittgenstein, 2009, §309).

I will have to end my discussion here. I hope to have offered, at least a sketch of a novel reading of the later Wittgenstein and some of its consequences. I can here only promise to return to the subject and work out its consequences in more detail and with careful attention to all of its peculiarities.

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<sup>2</sup> This is where Rorty's understanding of Wittgenstein goes horribly wrong.

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## ЧИЊЕЊЕ ВИТГЕНШТАЈНА ЕКСПРЕСИВИСТОМ: САВРЕМЕНА ИНТЕРПРЕТАЦИЈА ПОЗНОГ ВИТГЕНШТАЈНА И НЕКЕ ЊЕНЕ ПОСЛЕДИЦЕ

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### Резиме

Рад аргументује у прилог нове, експресивистичке интерпретације позног Витгенштајна. Тврди се да оваква интерпретација омогућује да објединимо интерпретативне увиде о овом аутору који су се до сада сматрали опречним, тј. чије се наглашавање до сада сматрало истовремено неодрживим. Један од ових интерпретативних увида представља Крипкеово читање негативних поенти расправе о слеђењу правила, које тврди да расправа о слеђењу правила намерава да покаже проблем нормативности значења при сваком тврђењу неке семантичке реченице или реченице о значењу. Други од ових интерпретативних увида је увид такозваних „резолутних“ интерпретатора Витгенштајна, који тврди да је Витгенштајнова филозофија, и позна и ранија, терапеутска, „сократовска“ и радикално антитеоријска. Другим речима, резолутни интерпретатори Витгенштајна читају као филозофа посвећеног животу појединца и самоспознаји, насупротив највећег броја историјских филозофа који теже да октрију делове стварности постављајући теорије и хипотетичући о доступном сведочанству. Експресивистичка интерпретација помоћу позивања на Витгенштајнову дистинкцију између појмова критеријума и симптома обједињује увиде оба ова читања тако што тврди да је Витгенштајнов одговор на проблем слеђења правила, тј. проблем нормативности значења управо у томе што оно представља један облик знања и рационалности радикално различит од оног присутног у природним и другим наукама. Знање значења захтева један облик самоспознаје, знања о сопственим праксама употребе речи, о којима заправо говоре наше тврдње значења. Стога, о значењу не треба да говоримо у семантичком метавокабулару који претпоставља да се значења исцрпљују у терминима релација референције и истине, већ у прагматичком метавокабулару који о значењу говори у терминима говорећих субјеката и њиховим праксама употребе вокабулара. Тврди се да стога Витгенштајн у једном значајном смислу јесте антитеоријски филозоф: он, како то сам каже, не допушта објашњења у смислу постулатије ентитета – што би представљало метод анализе значења у семантичком метавокабулару; већ искључиво описе или дескрипције онога већ доступног – што представљала управо метод анализе значења у прагматичком метавокабулару. Кроз текст се у прилог експресивистичког читања цитира значајна примарна текстуална евиденција из различитих Витгенштајнових дела. Коначно, тврди се да оваква експресивистичка интерпретација помаже да ближе одредимо тврђење једног од резолутних интерпретатора Витгенштајна, Џејмса Конанта, о постојању сократовског аспекта у Витгенштајновој филозофији. Наведени сократовски аспект експресивистичког читања интерпретира управо као тврђење о стављају сопствених имплицитних практичних способности или знања како употребе термина у експлицитан облик тврђења или знања да, које тиме постаје подложно критичкој евалуацији и потенцијалној промени. Утолико можемо да тврдимо да Витгенштајн, као и сам Сократ, сматра да је поента филозофије управо у томе да освестимо и променимо своје начине поступања, услед њиховог првобитног јасног разумевања.