How to do things with Wittgenstein
The applicability of his ideas within philosophy and beyond

International conference (online)
10-11 September 2020

Conference Programme

Thursday (September 10th)

10:00	**Invitation and opening remarks**
10:15	**Ilse Somavilla**: The Significance of Ethics and Aesthetics in Wittgenstein's Philosophizing and Way of Life
11:00	**Lilli Förster**: Encountering a Life-Changing Artwork
11:45	**Marco Marchesin**: The Twilight of the Grand Style: Wittgenstein in the Light of Nietzsche
12:30	**90-minutes lunch break**
14:00	**Eran Guter**: Aesthetic Puzzlements and the End-User Conversation: Wittgenstein's Aesthetics in the Age of Digital Technology
14:45	**Mélissa Fox-Muraton**: Aphantasia and the Language Games of Imagination
15:30	**30-minutes break**
16:00	**Zoheir Bagheri Noaparast**: Wittgenstein and the Problem of Evil
16:45	**Jordi Fairhurst**: Truth, Belief and Ethics in Wittgenstein's Later Work: Rethinking the Debate Between Moral Cognitivism and Moral Non-Cognitivism
17:15	**Geraldine Ng**: Equality Without Foundations

Friday (September 11th)

10:00	**Edward Guetti**: Realism, Skepticism, and the Politics of the Ordinary
10:45	**Samuel Pedziwiatr**: Getting Language to Work: Wittgenstein and Plato on the Tools of Language
11:30	**Martha Alicia Treviño Tarango**: Forms of Life and the Sex-Gender System
12:15	**90-minutes lunch break**
13:45	**Gunnar Schumann**: A Late-Wittgensteinian Approach to Historical Explanation
14:30	**Krystian Bogucki**: Grammar, Rules and Use in *Tractatus Logico-Philosophicus*
15:15	30-minutes break
15:45	**Guillaume Lambey**: By Proposing Grammatical Remarks on the Opening of Marx's Capital
16:30	**George Tyulyaev**: Validity and Efficacy of Legal Norms in Framework of Legal Positivism and the Rule-Following Paradox: Proposals and Premises
17:15	**Closing remarks**

(These are CET times)

Abstracts

Ilse Somavilla: The Significance of Ethics and Aesthetics in Wittgenstein's Philosophizing and Way of Life

Even though there have been various interpretations of Wittgenstein's approach toward ethics and aesthetics and despite the fact that Wittgenstein himself did not attempt at establishing any theories about, I will try to discuss these topics – albeit in the spirit of Wittgenstein, which means not only in the form of a scientific and theoretical discussion, but in the light of its practical use viz. way of life.

The connection between ethics and aesthetics as expressed in Wittgenstein's well-known and often quoted remark "Ethics and Aesthetics are One" (TLP, 6.421) will be in the centre of my talk. Needless to say that this remark does not mean that ethics and aesthetics are the same, but that it suggests their interdependence, i.e. the significance of an ethical component in aesthetics and vice versa. This interdependence can be observed throughout Wittenstein's way of writing philosophy.

Even before publishing the *Tractatus*, he emphasized in a letter to Ludwig von Ficker the ethical dimension of his work as the deeper meaning of it.[1]

Further, Wittgenstein hinted at the important aspect of silence which, to my mind, is inseparably linked with ethics – to say it more precisely, with an ethical way of doing philosophy, which means a distanced approach toward the higher sphere viz. ethics (and religion). This higher sphere lies outside the world of facts and thus beyond the realm of language and of science.

Insofar Wittgenstein set a limit to what was actually in the centre of his work – the philosophy of language. His way of treating the possibilities of language while strictly defining its limits is an ethical way of being aware of the realm of the so-called "ineffable" which eludes our verbal means. Wittgenstein's way of treating language in the light of the higher sphere, serves like a protective shield against any careless and superficial treatment of language, against any attempt at establishing speculations about this sphere – speculations lacking any scientific foundation. Careless treatment of language has its negative effects not only on philosophizing, but also on one's actions, on one's way of life. Already in 1846, Kierkegaard, hinted at the dangers of "talkativeness" and its consequences on our actions.[2]

The dimension of action plays an important role in Wittgenstein's philosophy. Already as early as in the Tractatus he defined philosophy as action, not as theory and this is particularly relevant for his notion of ethics which he saw only in one's actions, in one's way of life, whereas any theory about ethics would be bound to fail.

An ethical way of acting is connected with silence due to the awareness of one's limits, of the limits of language, the limits of science – the limits of one's world.

In the following I will first discuss the dimension of *silence* and secondly the significance of *action* in Wittgenstein's philosophizing in connection with the role of ethics and aesthetics.

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1 Cf. Wittgenstein 1969, p. 35: "[…] denn der Sinn des Buches ist ein Ethischer."….

2 Cf. Sören Kierkegaard, *The Present Age*, translated by Alexander Dru (London and Glasgow, Collins, The Fontana Library, 1962), p. 78.

Lilli Förster: Encountering a Life-Changing Artwork

What troubles every human being no matter their gender, age or cultural background is the question of the meaning of life and how to find it. Ludwig Wittgenstein offers an enlightening approach to this problem in his *Tractatus* that shall be examined in this essay. One of his main claims in this work is that thinking and language are identical, the only difference being that whereas language can be perceived by the senses (3.1), thoughts are not. In other words, in a proposition we express a thought, a logical picture of facts. This leads Wittgenstein to the conclusion that everything that can be said at all can be said in a clear manner. As one might expect, the meaning of life does not belong in the world of facts. In Wittgenstein's words: "We feel that even if all possible scientific questions be answered, the problems of life have still not been touched at all." (6.52) In science we speak clearly about what is a matter of fact. Everything outside those facts cannot be articulated through language, including the questions troubling humans regarding their existence. Those simply stand outside "my world". If we try to speak about them, to put them into words, we are running against the boundaries of our language and our world and therefore need to keep silent. As Wittgenstein put it: "There are things we should not say; they show themselves." (6.522)

An important way to shed light upon the meaning of life are pieces of "good art" (*Notebooks*, p. 83). They can force us to see a new and significant perspective of an object and can enable us to perceive it *sub specie aeternitatis*. In this way a good piece of art "insinuates itself into my life" (*Culture and Value*, p. 73) and influences it this way. To be more explicit, an artwork can change our style of living by improving our understanding of the world around us and of ourselves. Moreover, due to an encounter with a life-changing artwork we can be able to see, just like Wittgenstein did, that the problem is not the meaning of life, but how to live so that you do not need to feel the necessity to answer that question. (Wittgenstein adopted this idea from L. Tolstoy.) In short, the life-changing power of a good work of art lets questions like those for a meaning of life transform and eventually disappear.

Marco Marchesin: The Twilight of the Grand Style: Wittgenstein in the Light of Nietzsche

This discussion aims to explore the possibility to interpret Wittgenstein's later thought and style as a consequence of the downfall of what Nietzsche calls the Grand Style. Read by Heidegger as the apex of Nietzsche's conception of art and aesthetics, quickly sketched in *The Case of Wagner* and in an important fragment dated 1888, with *Grand Style* is to be meant the capacity of poetry and art in general to capture the multiplicity of human experience and reduce it to a coherent and harmonious whole. The perspective of the Grand Style is mainly shaped by the predominance of totality, identity, and the assumption of a single unifying principle able to capture and chain chaos to its own order. Nietzsche's attitude towards the Grand Style is ambivalent. His writings tend towards a conception of the Grand Style as an expression of a victorious and affirmative will to power and, at the same time, they implicitly reveal the intrinsic *violence* of a style and a thought that subdue the pure multiplicity – 'the anarchy of atoms' modern life is reduced to with the rise of nihilism, as Nietzsche says – to the constraints of a single encompassing principle of identity. If this is so, the Grand Style is to be read as a cultural category belonging to an era that is not ours anymore. Beyond

the Grand Style, there is unordered plurality and a totality that is fractured and unreducible to a single unifying principle.

The main attributes of the Grand style – with its emphasis on totality, essence, and identity – represents at the same time the main features of a certain conception of thought Wittgenstein fought against in his later period. Wittgenstein's thought and style of writing can thus be seen as a response to the twilight of the Grand Style: in this sense, a *Minor Style* that aims to unbind the singularity and the particular from the violence of a subsuming unifying totality. I aim to substantiate this point, first, by focusing on the way Wittgenstein himself describes his own philosophy and method in the notorious unpublished preface to the *Philosophical Remarks*, where the Nietzschean theme of the Grand Style fading away is implicit but transfigured in the distinction between *Kultur* and *Zivilisation*. Second, I will contextualize Wittgenstein's (late) philosophy within the cultural *milieu* of *fine de siècle* Austria by developing a comparison with Hugo Von Hofmannsthal and Robert Musil, whose work can be read – along the lines of Claudio Magris suggestive interpretation – as a literary response to the downfall of the Grand Style. Third, I will interpret the most important features of Wittgenstein's later thought – the struggle against *dogmatism* and the rejection of essences in favour of *family resemblance* – as an implicit conceptual response to Nietzsche's need to free the multiplicity from the tyranny of an encompassing conceptual unity.

Eran Guter: Aesthetic Puzzlements and the End-User Conversation: Wittgenstein's Aesthetics in the Age of Digital Technology

In this paper I propose to consider the possible role that aesthetic inquiry and theorizing can play in our attempt to understand, and make sense of the human condition in the age of information and communication technology. According to Luciano Floridi, such technology has been displacing us from our privileged and unique position in the realm of logical reasoning, information processing and smart behavior, in effect changing and ever-expanding our 'eco-system'. Thus, the idea of an aesthetics of everyday life within what Floridi dubs "the infosphere" suggests itself: a nuanced explication of the aesthetic significance of the changes and effects that digital technology brings about, considering the whole environmental transaction pertaining to such technology, including what it can or do offer and what users do or can do with such offerings, and how this whole package is integrated into our living spaces and activities. I propose to connect this project with Wittgenstein's aesthetics and with Allan Turing's foundational idea that the search for new techniques requires "a cultural search" which is carried out by the human community as a whole. As we increasingly offload tasks to calculative routines, a residue of what is not offloaded always remains. As Juliet Floyd points out, Turing took this residue of everyday "common sense" to be evolving under the pressure of human culture, intellectual development, integration of technology and biology. I conclude that in the age of digital technology, new aesthetic puzzlements await us in the dynamics of this end-user conversation, where the significance and aspects of everyday life may be contested, redesigned, and re-interpreted.

Mélissa Fox-Muraton: Aphantasia and the Language Games of Imagination

In one of his imagined thought experiments, Ludwig Wittgenstein invites us to consider the case of people who claim to have no mind's eye, no visual representations in the mind. As he writes:

> People might exist who never use the expression "seeing something with the inner eye" or anything like it, and these people might be able to draw and model "out of imagination" or from memory, to mimic others etc. Such a person might also shut his eyes or stare into vacancy as if blind before drawing something from memory. And yet he might deny that he then sees before him what he goes on to draw. But what value need I set on this utterance? Should I judge by it whether he has a visual image? (*Zettel* §624)

What Wittgenstein set out as a mere fictitious thought-experiment has recently however come to take on new meaning with the discovery of a condition that Zeman, Dewar and Della Sala coined in 2015 "congential aphantasia"[1]—an absence of visual imagery (sometimes combined with the absence other forms of mental sensory representation), both voluntary and spontaneous, in conscious states. Although the condition had been described as early as 1880 by Francis Galton,[2] it had generally gone unnoticed until 2010 publication in Discover magazine,[3] which incited individuals with the condition to contact researchers and launched serious exploration of the topic. Today, it is estimated that 2-3% of the population may have aphantasia, and yet very little is known about the condition and the ways in which it affects individuals.

One of the major difficulties associated with the study of aphantasia is, of course, the simple fact that it is a mental phenomenon, and one which impacts the subject's experience of the world. It is therefore not surprising that the scientific community has proven sceptical about the reality of the phenomenon—suggesting that there may be a problem with metacognition rather than the actual absence of visual imagery, or that subjective claims about what goes on (or does not go on) inside the mind may not correspond to reality. Just as Wittgenstein responded to his question as to whether we ought to believe the utterances that individuals claiming to have no inner representations that we could not rely on their claims alone, so too the scientific community has demanded other forms of proof.

The scepticism that arises, however, is not merely an empirical problem. It is also a major difficulty concerning our language games, and the ways in which expressions such as "imagination," the "mind's eye," the "inner," and images are used by different individuals. In philosophical literature it is often assumed that these notions correspond to some shared reality. Yet what the case of aphantasia brings out, is that there are individuals who may very well use these terms and associate them with completely different experiences, or use these terms without associating them with experiences. The fact that the condition went so long unnoticed is proof that the absence of mental imagery does not seem to affect the lives or linguistic patterns of individuals in troubling ways. Many of the people who give testimony about their condition claim that they only learned there was

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1 Adam Zeman, Michaela Dewar, and Sergio Della Sala, "Reflections on Aphantasia," Cortex 74 (2018): 336-37.
2 Francis Galton, "Statistics of mental imagery," Mind, 5, 1880, pp. 301-318.
3 Carl Zimmer, "The Brain: Look Deep into the Mind's Eye," 22 March 2010.
http://discovermagazine.com/2010/mar/23-the-brain-look-deep-into-minds-eye

something different about them when they read about the discovery of aphantasia, or that they had noticed something different in response to the ways in which others use expressions like mental image, seeing in the mind, etc.

Indeed, one of the astounding facts about the discovery of this condition is that adult individuals who learn about it may come to realize that their whole lives, they have been hearing, reading, and often themselves using expressions such as imagination, while having a completely different conception and experience of the concept from others. In this paper, we will examine the language games of imagination from a Wittgensteinian perspective, in order to come to a better understanding of how aphantasia affects individuals.

Zoheir Bagheri Noaparast: Wittgenstein and the Problem of Evil

The existence of pain and suffering in the world seems to be incompatible with the existence of an omnipotent, omniscient, and all loving God. Many debates in philosophy and theology have been dedicated to this philosophical quandary. For the theists, there are ways in which the existence of God can be reconciled with the existing evils. Some theists who advocate the libertarian conception of free will argue that moral evil is a necessary outcome of granting such a freedom to human beings. Some other theists argue that without the existence of evil, the good things in our life would have not been appreciated. Yet other theists argue that pain and suffering are necessary for soul-making. On the other side, some philosophers argue against the very possibility of libertarian free will. Some other argue that although the existence of some evil would have been necessary to appreciate the goods or to make them possible, the amount of horrendous evil in our world is not of the same type. Yet others have argued that the existing evil in our world has not led to soul-making but to soul-breaking.

All these highly interesting debates center around a metaphysical conception of God with specific traits. Wittgenstein, in his later phase, was critical of the religious language which would resort to a metaphysical conception of God. Theology for him was not concerned with metaphysics but it was a grammatical enterprise and determined how the religious language can and should be used. Wittgenstein's view on God has interesting ramifications for the problem of evil. In this presentation I aim to explore the problem of evil from a Wittgensteinian point of view. In doing so, I will engage with Wittgenstein's writing on religion and also one of his followers, D.Z. Phillips.

Jordi Fairhurst: Truth, Belief and Ethics in Wittgenstein's Later Work: Rethinking the Debate Between Moral Cognitivism and Moral Non-Cognitivism

Wittgenstein's later work has had a remarkable role in the meta-ethical debate surrounding moral cognitivism and moral non-cognitivism (hereafter, cognitivism and non-cognitivism). Philosophers

(e.g. Harman 2000; Lovibond 1983; McDowell 1998; Loobuyck 2005; Brandhorst 2015; 2017) have argued that he is committed to both the semantic thesis (i.e. moral sentences are truth-apt) and the psychological thesis (i.e. moral sentences express beliefs) that constitute cognitivism. Moreover, they have resorted to his work in order to provide arguments in favor of cognitivism. For instance, they have employed Wittgenstein's notion of 'form of life' to emphasize how different areas of human life have distinct models of rationality and distinct understandings of truth, falsity, reality and so on, eliminating the need of introducing a univocal understanding of truth, falsity or rationality that resorts to one unique standard (e.g. a scientific one). Thus, "every specific moral language-game and form of live provides a paradigm that can be employed to determine which moral statements are true and which are false" (Loobuyck 2005:389).

My aim in this paper is twofold. First, I argue against the claim that Wittgenstein is a cognitivist. On the one hand, Wittgenstein (Rhees 1965:24; Wittgenstein 1979:§31, §34) claims that attempting to establish which is the true or right ethical system is a meaningless task. Saying that an ethical system is 'the right one' simple means that I am adopting said ethical system (Wittgenstein, Rhees & Citron 2015:29). Moreover, Wittgenstein (Rhees 1965:24) states that it would have no meaning to state that ethical claims or judgments are true from their own standpoint. On the other hand, for Wittgenstein our ethical vocabulary expresses certain attitudes towards life, which replace and extend our natural reactions of approval and disapproval (Glock 2015:121- 123). Consequently, and against cognitivism, ethics is concerned with attitudes and not beliefs. It provides evaluative responses of approval and disapproval with some way the world is, not a cognition of how the world is. It follows from the above that Wittgenstein has a dismissive attitude towards the notions of truth and belief in ethics, suggesting that he is not committed to the semantic and psychological theses that constitute cognitivism.

Second, I am going to suggest that Wittgenstein's later work does not provide an adequate basis to sustain cognitivism, but rather it gives us a better way of understanding how we should conceive this debate altogether. Specifically, I argue that Wittgenstein's remarks suggest that we should understand the cognitivist/non- cognitivist divide in functional terms –borrowing O'Leary-Hawthorne and Price's (1996) terminology. Namely, rather than taking the debate as focusing on the semantic and psychological theses outlined, it should focus on the common points shared by both theses (O'Leary-Hawthorne & Price 1996:276-278). In consequence, cognitivism and non-cognitivism should be understood as meta-ethical positions regarding the functions of our ethical discourse, where cognitivists claim that the notions of truth and belief play a primordial role in moral discourse (as is the case in scientific discourse), whilst non-cognitivists claim the contrary (albeit they may still allow for truth and beliefs in ethics).

Geraldine Ng: Equality Without Foundations

This paper discusses the principle of basic equality with the purpose of explaining equality without reference to foundations. It is widely recognised that the principle of basic equality, the moral claim of persons to "equal concern and respect", is the fundamental assumption of any reasonable

conception of justice. It is also widely observed that the principle of equality does not rest on solid philosophical foundations. I will explain how Ludwig Wittgenstein's later method of the use of philosophical clarificatory models can help resolve problems that arise in connection with more traditional foundational approaches to moral justification.

Foundationalism about moral concepts in general concerns their necessary and universal characteristics without which our moral concepts cannot be recognised as justified. This gives rise to a dilemma: in claiming basic equality we risk implausibility on the one hand, and vacuity on the other. We encounter the horn of implausibility if the claim of equality fails to do justice to the manifold partial concerns that make up a meaningful rich and human life. Understood weakly, however, we encounter the horn of vacuity.

Alternatively, following Wittgenstein, we can understand a philosophical account of equality as a model. A model is useful as a "mode of representing the object of philosophical investigation". (Kuusela 2019: 30) A Wittgensteinian interpretation of the role or function of a philosophical account of equality promises a way out of the dilemma that arises from attempting to defend a claim about what all cases of equality must be.

Where foundationalism aims to justify the principle of equality, a Wittgensteinian approach focuses on clarifying it. Understanding equality as a key part of the so-called language-game of justice enables us to order practical instances of equality or inequality, and clarify their nature and relations to one another. The ideal of equality is what constitutes a clarificatory model of equality, not something we expect to instantiate in our practice of justice.

A model will draw from the distinctive ethical experience of its local practices. A model will be informed by customary and conventional uses of the term in our practice of critically reflecting on justice. The problem, however, with drawing the concept of equality from our uses of it is that it appears that we are already in tacit agreement.

We can reach understanding, following Wittgenstein, from the inside, of the language-game of justice in which all our moral concepts are integrally related to ways of explaining and describing our local practice and ethical life. I propose that, at the same time, we learn the lesson from Bernard Williams' historicist methodology. A distinctive feature of modernity, Williams emphasises, is the fact that we are conscious that there are alternatives to our conception or model of justice, and that there are a huge variety of ethical viewpoints.

I will put the Wittgensteinian model together with a more realistic view of modern, historically situated political actors. I will deny that drawing the concept of equality from customary and conventional local use necessarily limits the resources for genuine criticism of models. I will argue that, on the contrary, in light of modernity, our resources for criticism are not so much restricted as enriched.

Wittgenstein's method of perspicuous representation encourages a broad contextual and historical approach to political philosophy. It can free us from traditional ways of conceptualizing the problem and its solutions that are often deeply sedimented and assumed to be necessary and universal. Wittgenstein's philosophy can change our conventional way of looking at the problems in which we are entangled and enable us to think differently about them. The question of the foundations of equality is one such entanglement.

Krystian Bogucki: Grammar, Rules and Use in Tractatus Logico-Philosophicus

The nature of rules, their relation to grammar of language games and the idea of use are ones of main topics of Wittgenstein's *Philosophical Investigations*. However, the notion of use in the theory of *Tractatus*, its connection to the idea of logical grammar (syntax) and of being a symbol was already important for Elisabeth Ansombe' and Max Black' reading of the early work of Wittgenstein. In my talk, I propose an overview of accounts concerning the role of use and its connection to meaning and logical syntax from the first readers of *Tractatus* such as (aforementioned) Black and Anscombe to present-day supporters of the 'resolute' approach.

I distinguish three positions towards meaning and use in *Tractatus*: i) **Minimal View** (E. Anscombe, M. Black, D. Pears); ii) **Moderate View** (G. Ryle, C. Diamond); iii) **Radical View** (J. Conant, P. Livingston, G. Bar-Elli). The supporters of Minimal View discerns some elements of use theory in *Tractatus* (in contrast to e.g. Glock [2004], Stern [1995]), but they think that there is a tension between these elements and 'the official atomism' (Pears 1990). They claim that Wittgenstein in *Tractatus* by use meant only logico-syntactical application, 'i.e. that kind of difference between the syntactical roles of words which concerns a logician' (Anscombe 1965). Furthermore, they accept the traditional view that the meaning of simple names consists of an object. On the other hand, the proponents of Radical View claim that the fundamental notion of meaning in *Tractatus* is functioning in language; meaning as use. They understand use not as logico-syntactical use, but as role in life and, therefore, they are clearly opposed to the traditional view expounded by Black and others. Furthermore, they claim that Tractatarian simple names do not stand for objects at all. Talk of objects is 'ironic'. In other words, talk of objects is ultimately talk about the functioning of names (Kremer 1997). Given Wittgenstein's remarks on logical space, he arrives at a conception of sense as inferential role, and of meaning of an expression as a contribution to inferential role. A name is a name of complex, in virtue of which logical relations hold between propositions involving it and propositions involving other names (Conant 2000, Kremer 1997). The third position – the Moderate View – acknowledges the importance of the conception of use for being a symbol, but it construes use as a logico-syntactical notion. This view supports resolute reading of ontological parts of *Tractatus*, i.e. talk of objects is dialectical, temporary and it has to be discarded at the end. The talk of objects is ironic, but it does not implicate inferential role semantics.

In the course of the talk I will present textual evidence and arguments in favour of and against each position. I will conclude by brief methodological remarks.

Samuel Pedziwiatr: Getting Language to Work: Wittgenstein and Plato on the Tools of Language

In recent years, there has been a renaissance of Wittgensteinian approaches in philosophy of technology. Wittgenstein has provided philosophers with inspiration for thinking about the relation between language and technology, for conceptualizing artifacts in terms of "grammars of things" and "technology games", for assessing the potential and limitations of Artificial Intelligence, and for analyzing the embeddedness of technology in social practices and forms of life. But despite the influence of Wittgensteinian methods, ideas, and arguments in philosophy of technology and in

related fields such as history of technology and science and technology studies, many of Wittgenstein's own technological themes from the Nachlass have been unduly neglected.

My talk will critically examine Wittgenstein's notion of the "tools of language" as it features in the *Brown Book* and the *Philosophical Investigations*, and will provide a perspective on this concept's practical applicability and relevance for open problems in contemporary philosophy of technology and language. Based on an analysis of the Nachlass and supporting evidence from the lecture notes of G.E. Moore, I will argue that Wittgenstein's introduction of the term can be seen as the result of continuous philosophical engagement with Plato's *Cratylus*. Wittgenstein reevaluates the *Cratylus'* underlying assumptions about the nature of language and adopts Plato's characterization of words as "tools of teaching and of separating reality" (388c), extending the analogy to include non-verbal *tools of language* such as gestures, color samples, and patterns. Plato's inquiry into the connections between words and things thus provides Wittgenstein with a starting point for studying how linguistic understanding is established by explanations, definitions, and linguistic instruction in various contexts. As the talk will highlight, the notion of the tools of language plays a central argumentative role for Wittgenstein's refutation of direct reference and causal theories of meaning and for his justification of the principle of the autonomy of language. Using examples from the *Nachlass* and from Moore's lecture notes, the talk will retrace Wittgenstein's characterization of the co-constitutive relationship between technical languages and specific tools, measuring instruments, and other artifacts. After this reconstruction of Wittgenstein's ideas, I will attempt to apply his insights to current examples and cases from modern technology and engineering.

At the end of the talk, I will provide an outlook on the implications of Wittgenstein's views for contemporary debates in philosophy of language. Several of the predominant theories on proper names, for example, such as causal accounts, descriptivist accounts, and metalinguistic theories, seem prone to basic defects that Wittgenstein identifies in his refutation of reductive explanations of language. The notion of the tools of language could provide philosophers of language with a helpful lens for reinvestigating the inner workings of language and for reconceptualizing the basic connections between names and things.

Martha Alicia Treviño Tarango: Forms of Life and the Sex-Gender System

This paper uses Wittgenstein's concepts of 'language-games', 'bedrock', 'forms of life' and 'certainty' to support a defence of Judith Butler's critique of the sex-gender system. It will introduce how both Wittgenstein and Butler argue for a non-foundationalist, normative approach to questions on 'necessary truths', like mathematical propositions and the nature of sex and gender. Following Wittgenstein's methodology, it will then define that the sex-gender system is a language-game, which has its own rules and correction criteria, but that is not part of the undoubtable bedrock of our understanding, particularly because, I will argue, it invalidly imports a concept of hierarchy between the sexes. Following Moyal-Sharrock's (2015) reading of Wittgenstein, we will see that what we have to accept as certain and as that without which we could not even form concepts, are not isolated facts but 'forms of life' inserted both in nature and in human action within the physical world. From this, we can work our way to conclude that the facticity of biological sex and of

cultural gender are to be understood rather as inseparable, belonging to a common language-game, and only making sense within it. It is not the biological component of sex what makes it necessary, but the fact that is conceived within a language-game that articulates much of our basic understanding of humanity and binary thought. Yet this language-game or system works only through an artificial opposition between the natural and the discursive, the pre-political and the political (Butler, 1992). I contend that this critique of the sex-gender binary can at least open some useful questions on personhood and political agency.

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Gunnar Schumann: A Late-Wittgensteinian Approach to Historical Explanation

Causalism is widespread in the theory of historical explanations and explanations of human actions in general. The scientifistic *Zeitgeist*, attempting to transfer the methods of explanation of physics to historiography and the social sciences, finds its expression in the view that human actions are to be explained by causes. It is even assumed that in order for historiography and the humanities to be scientific at all, those disciplines have to take over the explanation methods of the sciences, i.e. their causal mode of explanation.

Against this, I want to argue that historiography and the socials sciences deal with human actions and, following late-Wittgenstein, that these call for a *teleological* or *intentional* explanation. Human actions (be they past, present or even future) must be explained by reasons, i.e. by reference to the goals and purposes, i.e. intentions (and beliefs), that *rationalize* the actions of the agents and make them *understandable*. I shall argue that the true form of explanation of human actions takes the agent's intentions and means-end-beliefs as premises of a practical syllogism, from which the explanandum, the action, follows logically, not causally. To show this, I will, among others, make

use of the anti-causalist argument, that human actions are the *manifestation, not the effect* of the agent's intention and that there is a conceptual connection between action and intention. It belongs to the conceptual criteria for intention ascriptions that agents perform (or attempt) the respective action when they have the opportunity. As a result, the explanation of a human action requires an investigation of the action's context to determine the elements of the explanans. It follows that reasons cannot be reduced to causes, as Davidson and his followers held.

This is applied to explanations of past human actions: The task of the Historian is to comb through the bequeathed source data, to get a picture as precise as possible concerning the context of past actions and to reconstruct from it the intentions, goals, purposes and beliefs of the historical agents in order to make their bequeathed actions intelligible to us. It can be said (with some small qualifications), that historical explanations work like everyday explanations of contemporary's actions: As the crossing of a street by a contemporary agent under certain contextual conditions is the *expression* of his intention to go to work, so Caesar's crossing of the Rubicon is the *expression* of his intention to seize power in Rome under the historically transmitted circumstances of his action. (Not: Cesar's intention to seize power *caused* him to cross the Rubicon.) The data material which has come down to us contemporaries is the interpretandum from which the historian derives goals and intentions of historical agents and with which further actions of the historical agents can be interpreted. So, to explain an action by reasons is not to refer to other events which are causes of them, but to embed the action in a context such that it can be understood, what the agent went after and thereby it will be understood, what the action was.

Edward Guetti: Realism, Skepticism, and the Politics of the Ordinary

The work of the anthropologist Veena Das represents one prominent and contemporary example for thinking about the applicability of Wittgenstein's ideas beyond philosophy. Although the subtitle of her most recent work asserts its goal as shaping the field of anthropology after Wittgenstein, the philosophical points she draws out of her reading of Wittgenstein (and, here, Wittgenstein is meant to be read by the lights of Stanley Cavell) are equally useful beyond anthropology. My primary goal in this paper is to explain how her interpretation of issues in Wittgenstein helps her reader to better understand prevailing crises of what I take to be our social present. Her interpretation generates insights on many of the issues that are laced across several of the social tapestries that constitute the global present, but I will focus on the issues that stem from three related philosophical topics in Wittgenstein: what could be called 'realism' ("contact between language and reality"), 'skepticism' (the "unknowability of the world and others"), and considerations of 'truth' or agreement in forms of life. My paper hazards to advance interpretations of Das's use of Wittgenstein on these three topics that at least sketch directions for thinking about Black Lives Matter, the return to ordinary life after the Coronavirus pandemic (violence and the everyday), as well as Fake News (skepticism and truth).

At first glance, it will be difficult to understand the relation between 'realism' and 'violence and the everyday.' Following the Wittgensteinian trope of language 'on holiday' or as (in Cavell's redescription) exiled from our use of it, Das draws out accounts of ways that this holiday or exile

contribute to the demand for a "politics of the ordinary." Against recent social critics or theorists who hold the everyday as a kind of neutral or placid space that finds itself hazarded from without by riotous or systemic forms of violence, Das (here and in earlier work) follows a Cavellian reading of Wittgenstein in situating a double-faced notion of the 'everyday' as a sphere that both bears "trancelike" habitual routine while, at the same time, generating conceptual distances in one's relations with others. Das's work tracks the lives of people that have become exiled from a meaningful voice in the reality sustained by the (violent or at times 'pathological') normativity of the everyday. There is, as I offer, a corresponding double entendre in the push for a return to the everyday in the suspensions from the ordinary that the Coronavirus has installed. This theme draws from an understanding of the 'conceptual distances' as a mode of skepticism. The elaboration of this topic with an eye to contemporary issues must intersect with the notion of "Fake News" and, so, I conclude by describing how the Wittgensteinian trope of an "agreement in forms of life" in order to raise questions about Das's work, most poignantly with regard to the matter of diagnosing norms as 'pathological' and her discussion of rumor. The viability of a relativist counterposition to objective ethical evaluations has been an ongoing matter in readings of Wittgenstein (e.g., in Cora Diamond 2019 and in earlier papers), but I argue that Das's political position represents an improvement (both pragmatically and also with respect to consistency with Wittgenstein's texts) on that outlined by Diamond in response to similar pressures.

Guillaume Lambey: By Proposing Grammatical Remarks on the Opening of Marx's Capital

"My father was a businessman and I am a businessman: I want my philosophy to get something done, to get something settled" Wittgenstein once told his friend Drury. Differences is one of the things his philosophy teaches. Reading his work, I learnt how to tell philosophy from science, scientific models from reality, chronicles from history, and so on.

Grammatical analyses are a way of making these differences. To show how science works, Wittgenstein stressed the importance of the distinction between scientific and common hypotheses. I may suppose that every plant along the alley of that park is an acacia. As I can go down the alley and leave the park, I can convert my supposition into a knowledge. What if the alley never ends? In opposition to what do I use the word «suppose»? Scientific hypotheses are something particular that cannot be directly confronted to reality or verified.

Reading Wittgenstein, I try to show that many philosophers do not clearly differentiate philosophy, science and litterature. Is Marx *Capital* a philosophical essay, a scientific thesis or a political manifesto? It is often said to be all of that. But commentating on the first pages, I make clear that it is a phenomenology exploring the different ways commodities appear. As the first lines say: "The wealth of those societies in which the capitalist mode of production prevails, presents itself (*erscheint als*) as 'an immense accumulation of commodities', its unit being a single commodity".

Such a phenomenology rely on a very odd use of the word "phenomenon (*Erscheinung*)". The Hegelian concept of phenomenon is a raw material that Marx transforms. Both Hegel and Marx uses of that word differ from the common use of the word in our ordinary language. Both are

nonsensical, as a grammatical analysis make clear. That kind of analysis prevents us from believing philosophers who try and say what cannot be said. Marx, among others, cannot demonstrate who should own properties and how men should organize.

George Tyulyaev: Validity and Efficacy of Legal Norms in Framework of Legal Positivism and the Rule-Following Paradox: Proposals and Premises

A legal norm can be taken as the unit of legal language, which embraces its properties – obligatoriness, normativity, and universality that is described as an ultimate number of legal subjects, who shall follow the norm. However, when one takes an attempt to define "legal system" or "law" as the bundle of legal norms, we can hardly find a description of what is "legal". Definitions that describe the law as the pure set of norms might evoke tautology in the logical and linguistic sense. For instance, when legal system is defined as the body of elements, which share one specific property of "being legal", one can hardly find out, what does this "legal" notion mean. Hence, the key question about the nature of "legal" lacks answers. From that point, the paradox of positivism (and the rule-following paradox) must be observed as far as an ideal concept of legal norms is deemed to cause tangible consequences in real life, i.e. influence one's behavior.

From my point of view, the theoretical attitude towards law reveals a strong need for an ontological perspective on law and its ontological core. Doctrinal views on legal norm, its efficacy and validity, may establish an extensive applied framework in order to re-assess values of "legal" and adapt the law to real social relationships. Primarily, these issues are to be found in the domain of analytical research.

If a legal norm is not real, the following question is to be answered. How could one find correlations between norms and reality, if enforcement of the "ideal" norm affects human lives and inflicts "real" tangible consequences? To put it in other words, does the validity of a legal norm depend on its successful enforcement, i.e. efficacy of legal provisions? At that rate, validity of a legal norm requires successful verification and proof of enforceability – efficacy of a legal rule applied to social relationships.

Legal effects as the matter of fact (or behavior), hardly deliver any reliable information in favor of validity and efficacy of the norm. From our point of view, this challenge shall be addressed in order to maintain research regarding: 1) validity and efficacy of legal norms; 2) correlation between factual real norms and ideal norms, which are the units of language.

Willingness to communicate as the form of rule recognition might imply certain language to be shared and used. Otherwise, the norm as thought-object would be hardly equal to the shared linguistic statement. Then shared communication does not appear, which means lack of consideration as the core of the legal obligation. Content of the message is irrelevant for the prospective relationships of the parties to communication. Therefore, no legal rule appears that is deemed to be binding – as it lacks any underlying "ought" experience. There is no intersubjective transmission, which might indicate that the social rule is efficient.