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How to Investigate the Grammar of Aspect-Perception: A Question in Wittgensteinian Method

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Abstract

I argue that the typical Wittgensteinian method of philosophical investigation cannot help elucidate the grammar of aspect-seeing. In the typical Wittgensteinian method, we examine meaning in use: We practice language, and note the logical ramifications. I argue that the effectiveness of this method is hindered in the case of aspect-seeing by the fact that aspect-seeing involves an aberrant activity of seeing: Whereas it is normally nonsense to say that we choose what to see (decide to see the White House red, for instance), it is possible to see aspects at will—e.g. to decide to see Jastrow's duck-rabbit as a duck. I suggest an alternative method of investigation, one that reflects on language from a disengaged standpoint: a method that allows us to entertain a form of conceptualization of an object but does not commit us to adopting that way—namely, that does not involve us in a use of the object according to the norms that govern that conceptualization. This method, I argue, fits the subject matter of aspect-perception, since aspect-perception itself involves such a disengaged form of reflection.

And the method has to be somewhat different there. One cannot do so much with language games.

– Rush Rhees

Introduction

How ought we to investigate the phenomena of aspect-perception? There are many of them: a face that suddenly strikes us as familiar but on which we cannot quite put a name, an ordinary action that suddenly appears suspicious, Robert Jastrow's famous duck-rabbit, , which may appear at first to be a simple rabbit-picture, when it then dawns on us that it is also a duck-picture, things—objects, words, texts, people—of which we suddenly realize that we have become blind by the routine, a word that suddenly strikes us as encapsulating great depths of meaning, a color that strikes us as particularly

significant in a Mondrian painting, a musical phrase that strikes us as tragic, a portrait that seems as if looking down at us from the wall, and more. Such aspect-experiences are typically perceptual experiences, in which an object typically assumes an unexpected appearance right before one's eyes without changing perceptually. When this happens, the object is seen—not merely interpreted but literally experienced, perceived—afew.

I shall argue that a special philosophical method is required in order to account for such aspect-phenomena. Wittgenstein investigates the phenomena of aspect in §xi of the second part of *Philosophical Investigations*.¹ His investigation seems to be an application of a familiar Wittgensteinian methodology, which elucidates meaning by examining language in use: by operating with the language of aspects and noting how it works in practice—the logical and grammatical consequences of conceptualizing things in certain ways, when the relevant language is put to use. Although this actually describes a family of methods, for expediency, I shall here refer to this method as ‘the typical Wittgensteinian method’: the method by which we “bring words back from their metaphysical to their everyday use” (PI, §116). I explain in outline how this typical method works in §1. This will allow me later to show that this method is unsuitable for the task of grammatically clarifying the phenomena of aspects. Although I believe Wittgenstein was quite aware of that, I shall not try to show this here. Alternatively, my argument will serve to question the assumption that a unified philosophical methodology can help with all philosophical problems.²

Here is an outline of the rest of my argument. In §2, I show how the typical method fails to elucidate the logical relations between aspect- and ordinary seeing. In §3, I focus on one logical characteristic of seeing-aspects—the fact that we can typically see aspects at will. I argue that although appreciating this seems, at first, to promise a genuine insight into the grammar of ‘seeing-as,’ ultimately it does not really make things clearer: it appeals to an aberrant idea of being ‘subject to the will,’ and its usefulness as a clarifying tool is thus in question. In §4, I suggest a general characterization of seeing aspects: To perceive an aspect, I claim, is to let oneself feel what it would be like to conceptualize something without committing oneself to this conceptualization in use. This, I claim, involves separation of meaning and use: it involves contemplating the meaning of a certain object without using the object in a way that assumes that meaning. Or again, it involves applying a concept without at the same time making use of the object conceptualized therewith. This separation of meaning and use is the reason why the typical Wittgensteinian investigation, which elucidates meaning by investigating language in use, fails in the case of aspect-perception. In §5, I conclude by suggesting a philosophical method, distinct from the typical Wittgensteinian method, with which we can elucidate the grammar of aspect-perception. I argue that the method fit for the job itself involves aspect-perception.

The discussion of aspects stands at the crossroad of several issues, including: the involvement of concepts in perception, their function in moral and aesthetical thought, the nature of psychological concepts, of metaphor, of imagery, and the character and uses of the imagination in perception and elsewhere. It bears on questions in ethics, the philosophy of art, the philosophy of religion, and even in the philosophy of mathematics.³ Clarity about the philosophical method for investigating the phenomena of aspect will contribute to clarity in these areas of philosophy as well.

1. The typical Wittgensteinian method

The task of the typical Wittgensteinian grammatical investigation is to remind us of, recall us to, our everyday ways of using language and making sense—our ways of owning our world in thought and language, so to speak. To demonstrate, take Plato's *Parmenides*: Socrates is doing something similar there at one point. Early in the dialogue, there is a discussion about multitude and unity, and Socrates distinguishes between “visible things” and “things that are grasped by reasoning.”⁴ A person, for instance—a visible thing—can be said to be a multitude and a unity at the same time: a person has sides but is a single person. With regard to the concept *person* however, graspable only by reasoning, it would be nonsense to talk about its sides. It cannot therefore be said to be a multitude, but only a unity—so, according to Socrates. A general point emerges: we may not really need to be able to talk about, make sense of, different kinds of things using the very same linguistic machinery—the same concepts, names, methods of description and so on. This, although we may think we need that—which probably happens more to philosophers who become attached to philosophical dogmas, and children who do not master linguistic subtleties. Socrates is here making use of a method that Wittgenstein later developed: explaining a piece of language in use; using language, letting the *logos* of things thereby disclose, and thus learning about their essence.⁵ The typical Wittgensteinian investigation, then, is performed with a view to helping someone (perhaps oneself) regain linguistic balance—re-establish contact with what one really needs to be able to do with language: with the ways in which one talks and thinks—about visible things, about concepts—and in general makes sense of things.

Let me emphasize that in the typical Wittgensteinian investigation, the elucidation of bits of language—concepts, propositions, names, methods of description, and so on—is normally performed by unfolding the logical and grammatical functionality of those bits of language. The investigation recalls us to our ordinary ways of making sense by urging us to employ them, and thus test their internal logical or grammatical structure. Thus, for example, in discussing the language of sensation, Wittgenstein points out that to say that my hand hurts is not to say that it is my hand that feels the pain, but me in my hand.⁶ To heed Wittgenstein's call here is to try and say it: say that your hand, not you, feels the pain, and witness how weird it is. The investigation, thus, calls upon us to operate with

language—not just reflect on it from a disengaged standpoint, but practice it. And to get a clear view of the grammar of sensation, we need to test in a similar fashion many bits of sensation-language; for we cannot be sure in advance with regard to any particular piece of sensation language that it actually functions in a certain way in a particular case until we actually try it and see.

It may seem that an exercise of this method is what is going on in Wittgenstein's discussion of aspects. Avner Baz argues explicitly for this understanding of Wittgenstein's text: "[W]hy" he asks, "should such a work of reminding ourselves of *something we already know* require hundreds of remarks?"⁷ "How hard" he inquires "can accepting the everyday *language-game* be?"⁸ It seems reasonable to expect that Wittgenstein's hundreds of painstakingly detailed remarks about every grammatical inch in the phenomena of aspect have the same purpose that Wittgensteinian investigations typically have: to unfold the grammar of aspect-perception by engaging, participating, in the language of aspect-perception—test the grammar of all those aspect-experiences by operating with the relevant bits of language: by playing the language-game. The investigation, according to this understanding of Wittgenstein's discussion, reminds us, as Baz says, of what is "more or less familiar,"⁹ what we "already know"¹⁰—"what we couldn't have failed to know"¹¹—and yet have got ourselves confused about, like the philosopher and the child, under the pressure of some naïve assumption or philosophical dogma.

Baz—to my mind one of the best commentators on Wittgenstein on aspects—takes aspect-seeing to be part of the everyday language-game with 'seeing.' This is telling. Rush Rhees seems to have had the opposite inclination. The motto for the present paper is the concluding remark Rhees makes in his introduction to Wittgenstein's *Blue and Brown Books*. Rhees warns against the kind of thing Baz is doing: he warns against assimilating Wittgenstein's discussion of aspect into the pool of typical Wittgensteinian discussions. My own view is closer to Rhees': Baz's approach to Wittgenstein's discussion may be reasonable, but nevertheless, I shall claim, we have a strong reason to reject it. In the next two sections, I will argue that using the typical Wittgensteinian method does not at all clarify the grammar of aspect-perception, since these phenomena, by their very nature, defy this form of investigation.

2. Seeing and seeing-as

Wittgenstein begins §xi with the presentation of a distinction between ordinary seeing and seeing-aspects. These are, he says:

Two uses of the word "see."

The one: “What do you see there?”—“I see *this*” (and then a description, a drawing, a copy). The other: “I see a likeness between these two faces”—let the man I tell this to be seeing the faces as clearly as I do myself.

Wittgenstein has in mind here the way in which we may examine a face, when suddenly its likeness to another dawns on us and alters our experience and our regard to the face—possibly even to the person. We have here, Wittgenstein thinks, a distinct kind of seeing—a distinct meaning of the word ‘see.’

Like many other words—for instance, ‘bat,’ ‘brown,’ ‘march,’ ‘is’—‘seeing’ is used in different ways—logically different ways. But that doesn’t indicate anything problematic. To clarify the meaning of ‘seeing’ in the two cases, applying the typical Wittgensteinian method, we only need to clarify the relation between the two uses—the two meanings of ‘see.’ Clarifying this is part of clarifying the grammar of ‘seeing-aspects.’ We could thus test the propriety of the typical Wittgensteinian method by trying it out in our case. So, let us ask: What is the relation between ordinary- and aspect-seeing? Unlike some of the other cases I mentioned, I shall argue, it is by no means clear how to answer this question: how to characterize the relations between the two senses of ‘see.’

Let us try: It seems obvious that ordinary- and aspect-seeing are not two completely unrelated phenomena, and that ‘seeing’ and ‘aspect-seeing’ are not mere homonyms: The case is unlike that of ‘aluminum-bat’ and ‘bat-man,’ for instance, for the two kinds of seeing are internally related; they are kinds of the same thing: seeing. In order to characterize the grammar of aspect-seeing, we need to characterize its *internal* relations to ordinary seeing. The idea that ‘seeing’ and ‘seeing-aspects’ are mere homonyms is thus rejected.

There are many types of internal relations between concepts, but two in particular suggest themselves in our case. First, it may be that the relation between ordinary- and aspect-seeing is that between two applications of the same concept in different contexts—like ‘feed the meter’ and ‘feed the monkey,’¹² or ‘cut the grass’ and ‘cut the cake.’ Another possibility is that ordinary- and aspect-seeing relate to each other as genus to species, where aspect-seeing is a species of the genus seeing. Our question, then, is: Does any of these suggestions, however intuitive, actually adequately capture the relationship between ordinary- and aspect-seeing? I think not.

The relation between ordinary- and aspect-seeing is unlike other cases of applying the same concept in different contexts, for unlike those other cases, the relation between ordinary- and aspect-seeing is asymmetrical: the meaning of ‘seeing’ when applied to aspects *depends* on, cannot be understood independently of, the meaning of ordinary seeing, but not vice versa. Such asymmetrical dependency does not exist in the cases of ‘feed’ and ‘cut’: the notions of cutting grass and of cutting cakes are both equally useful,

for instance, in teaching a child the meaning of ‘cut.’ But when we teach a child the meaning of ‘see,’ we cannot use aspect-seeing as our example. The child will only be able to understand talk of seeing aspects if she has already mastered the concept(s) of ordinary-seeing. We can understand what someone is getting at when they talk of seeing the duck-aspect in Jastrow’s duck-rabbit only if we already know what it means for people to see ducks, whereas we do not need to first master the concept of cutting grass in order to then be in a position to master the concept of cutting cakes or vice versa.¹³ The cases, therefore, are really very different. Although we may talk of the relation between ordinary- and aspect-seeing as a relation between different applications of the same concept, it is not yet very helpful, for it fails to capture the particular shape the internal relation takes in this case: it fails to capture the peculiarity of the dependency here.¹⁴

Since, as we just saw, what constitutes the internal relation between aspect-seeing and seeing is an asymmetrical dependence of aspect- on ordinary-seeing, we might opt for the suggestion that what we really have here is a relation between genus and species. But that will not do either. For saying that aspect-seeing is a species of ordinary-seeing implies that seeing a duck-aspect, for instance, is a species of seeing a duck—which is obviously false. Seeing an aspect, although related, is a different experience than simply seeing a familiar object; the former is not a species of the latter. And saying that both are species of a common genus—*seeing*—just sends us back to the same kind of problem discussed in the paragraph above—of explaining how it is possible for there to be an asymmetrical logical dependence between two species of the same genus: how is it possible that we can understand what it is to see an aspect only if we already understand what it is to see ordinary objects.¹⁵ We still haven’t got a grasp on the kind of dependence we find between aspect- and ordinary-seeing.

What we need is to answer the following question: How can there be dependence between two different kinds of application of the same word in the way aspect-seeing depends on ordinary-seeing? One thing is clear: we need *this* term—‘see’—*here*.¹⁶ The only word that can properly describe, say, our experience of the duck-aspect of Jastrow’s duck-rabbit is ‘seeing.’ But since the logical relation of aspect-seeing and ordinary-seeing does not take any ordinary shape, one may begin to suspect that what leads us to use the word ‘seeing’ in characterizing experiences of aspects is not something in the logic of aspect-experiences, but rather some psychological inclination: e.g. the psychological associations to the idea of seeing that such experiences tend to elicit in us. There seem to be nothing in the logic, the grammar, of the experience that really justifies calling it a case of seeing; or if there is, we have not got it clear to ourselves yet. So far, the dependence between aspect- and ordinary seeing seems to be psychological, not logical.

Now, I haven’t yet shown that this is indeed the case. But if it turns out that it is, it has important implications: Primarily, it would render the typical Wittgensteinian method helpless; for it is a method that looks for meaning in significant use—in practice. It is a

method faithful to the Fregean principle: “always to separate sharply the psychological from the logical, the subjective from the objective.”¹⁷ If the meaning of ‘see’ when applied to aspects is indeed not something we can discern in how the word is used, then we must look for it elsewhere; perhaps we should somehow read it off of our psychological associations between the experience of aspects and the ordinary cases of seeing. The typical Wittgensteinian method, which looks for meaning in use, and not in the psychological associations elicited by the term, seems ill equipped for this job.

3. Seeing at will

Perhaps, one may argue, my approach so far has been too direct. Perhaps, instead of attempting to clarify the grammar of ‘seeing-aspects’ as a whole, we should study the language game by studying its logical components—its logical makeup. Let us then examine some of the logical characteristics of the concept. Maybe we can build up from there.

The typical Wittgensteinian investigation proceeds by highlighting grammatical differences between uses of a term—in our case, ‘see.’ So let me highlight two logical differences between seeing and seeing an aspect. First, in the language game with ordinary seeing there is normally no room for saying that we see the same thing, and at the same time that we see something different. Typically, for instance, we can exchange ‘I see the same zebra’ for ‘I do not see a different zebra.’ When seeing an aspect, however, we want to say both “that *nothing*, and yet *everything*, has changed” (RPP2, §474). Take, for instance, Wittgenstein’s example of the similar faces. What we see before and after the similarity between the two faces has dawned on us is the same. But at the same time, we also see something different. Since this has been the subject of some controversy, let me emphasize that I do not take this to constitute a paradox. My only claim here is that there is a logical-grammatical difference between ordinary- and aspect-seeing.¹⁸ The second logical difference I would like to mention—and on which I further elaborate below—is that normally we do not take it to be possible to see at will. For instance, we cannot at will see the White House red (nor white, for that matter). In the case of aspect-seeing, we can see things at will. We can see, for instance,  either as a duck or as a rabbit, and once we learn how, this depends on us (see RPPI, §976).¹⁹

It would seem that we are making progress—that we are elucidating, making clear, at least parts of the grammar of ‘seeing-aspects.’ But take this idea that the perception of aspects is subject to the will. Compare this to other cases where we say that something is subject to the will, say, that what I am going to have for dinner today is subject to my will. Seeing aspects does not seem to be subject to the will in the same way—the same sense—as what I have for dinner is; and this is why: Typically, there is a contrast between something being forced on us and something being subject to our will. This is,

anyway, typically the case with what I have for dinner. If what I have for dinner is subject to my will, then it is not forced on me, and vice versa. This does not mean that it is always easy to say whether I am forced or not, or whether my choice has or has not been subject to my will. But the contrast is there in the grammar of the action; it makes sense to ask: “Did you have raw cabbage for dinner because this is what you wanted, or were you forced to have it?” When it comes to seeing aspects, however, the grammatical room for the same kind of contrast is gone. When an aspect dawns on us—when the similarity between two faces suddenly strikes us, for example—something is forced on us, hits us; and yet, what is forced on us is an actualization of a capacity whose exercise is typically willful: the capacity to make sense, to contemplate, to engage our cognitive and imaginative abilities in the capturing of something in thought. When an aspect dawns on us, we are forced to participate—participate willingly. We find ourselves acting, but unlike the typical case, that we find ourselves doing something does not indicate that we do not act intentionally.²⁰ In fact, the only way to describe what happens is to say that we find ourselves acting intentionally, forced to act willfully. And it can—and sometimes does—seem like an invasion.²¹ This, in somewhat like the way I can force you to imagine the Eiffel Tower. If you have been paying attention, I have just forced it on you—I have, as it were, forced you to do something willingly: to think, to imagine.²² Similarly, when you suddenly see the duck in , or when you suddenly see the resemblance between two faces, it is at the same time something that you undergo and something that you do. It would be natural for you to exclaim: “I didn’t know I could do that!” This is part of the surprise: that it is *we* who have “brought a concept to [what we see]” (RPPI, §961).²³ When seeing becomes subject to the will, then, the distinction between subject to will and compulsory is blurred; the grammar of ‘subject to the will’ changes.

If I am right, then it is not at all clear that by continuing to apply the typical method, and saying that aspect-seeing is, and ordinary-seeing is not, subject to the will, we are moving towards greater clarity of what aspect seeing is, and of the grammar of ‘seeing-aspects.’ For it is not clear yet that we have a good grasp of the idea that seeing can be subject to the will. We can attempt to clarify that by characterizing the relations between ‘subject to the will’ in ordinary cases, and ‘subject to the will’ when applied to seeing. But if you do that, you will discover that it is not any easier to describe than the relation between the two uses of ‘see’ (see §2 above): the two are not mere homonyms, but it will also not do to characterize the relations between them as that between two applications of the same concept in different contexts, or as between genus and species. The sense of ‘subject to the will’ when applied to seeing depends on, derives from, its sense in ordinary cases, but not vice versa—just as the meaning of ‘seeing aspects’ depends on the meaning of ‘seeing’ in ordinary cases. But it is not as if we should (or could) speak otherwise: We need *these* terms *here*—‘see,’ and ‘subject to the will.’ It seems that we need the same logical entity to function in logically different ways. And if that is the case, then, once more, the relationship—the logical dependence—cannot be captured with the typical Wittgensteinian method that looks for meaning in use and not, for instance, in the

psychological associations of a term. The problem of elucidating the grammar of ‘aspect-seeing’ seems to have spread out: It has infected other areas of the language game. The game seems to be losing its rules; it is not clearly a game anymore. It does not seem we are moving in a useful direction after all.

4. Watching the language game from the sidelines

We need a fresh start. My considerations so far raise worries about the aptness of the typical Wittgensteinian method of investigation in the case of the phenomena of aspect. I am not saying that this method is never useful; very often it is. It is just not useful when trying to clarify the grammar of aspect-perception. And if this is right, then we can learn here a general lesson about philosophical methods: it is misguided to look for a single philosophical method that could solve *all* philosophical questions. More specifically, what I called ‘the typical Wittgensteinian method’ (itself, recall, a multitude of methods) is not what will help us clarify philosophical questions that involve aspect phenomena. And since such questions can arguably be found in the philosophy of religion, ethics, aesthetics, and even in the philosophy of mathematics, then possibly, in these areas, we may sometimes need to apply other philosophical methods.

Now, the reason why the typical Wittgensteinian method is not useful for the clarification of aspect-perception, is, I believe, that these phenomena involve—essentially—a separation of meaning and use: To describe these phenomena, as we have seen, we are drawn to say that we need the *same* logical entities to function in logically *different* ways. And I now want to argue that this is not confusion on our part; we do not have a better way of putting it. But if this is true, then it undermines—undercuts really—the usefulness of investigating the language of aspects by examining functionality. To employ the typical Wittgensteinian method is, once more, to investigate language *in use*; to examine grammar by applying language, operating with it, and thereby discovering how it works in practice—how it allows us to think, capture reality in thought, and make sense of things. The typical method is useful and very much effective when there is (and very often there is) an established use, established logical-grammatical norms for the application of terms. It is useful for unveiling these usages and norms. But when meaning is detached from use, as in the case of aspect-perception, then use cannot any longer be a safe guide.

Interestingly, according to Wittgenstein, this separation of meaning and use is typical to aspect-perception:

I take it as the typical game of “seeing something as something”, when someone says “Now I see it as this, now as that” [...] and that *independently* of his making any application of what he sees. (RPP1 §411)

However confused that separation of meaning and use might seem, this is what happens in those cases. The “grammar” of this “language-game” is not just different: it is of a different *kind*, and we need a different method for clarifying it. But before describing that different method, which I will take up in §5, I would like now to offer a characterization of the phenomena of aspect which is of a different sort than the characterizations I have so far examined: a characterization not of the details of their grammar, but of their point as a whole. When an aspect dawns, I shall argue, we see something *anew*. In this sense, to see an aspect is to see something we did *not* already know we could see: to contemplate (albeit in palpable, possibly perceptual, experience) a new way of thinking about something. I thus put aside for the moment the question of philosophical method, and shall get back to it in §5, once we have a clearer understanding of the phenomena of aspect-perception.

Think of the moment in which an aspect dawns. It is typically as if the object we are observing is being filled with a new life, or as if we come into new life with it. It is animated, or reanimated, and I suggest that this animation is essentially animation by language: A concept (or notion, or idea) “spreads an ordering veil over the object” (RPP1 §961). So, for example, when the duck aspect of  dawns on us, it is as if the concept *duck* entered the ink-marks, and made them into a duck-picture. Or when a portrait on the wall suddenly seems as if it is watching us, it is as if the idea that it has a mind has awakened a person in the canvas, and now the portrait has a mind. In both cases, the object is being imbued with a body of meaning that was not there before.

Now, even though a body of meaning has made contact with it, the object in aspect-perception is not thereby put to use. The dawning of the aspect is a preamble to such use. When an aspect dawns, one is letting oneself feel how it would be to conceptualize an object—how it would be to use it accordingly—but is not yet committed to its conceptualization. One is not operating with the object in a way that assumes this conceptualization.

To clarify this, compare the use of concepts in aspect seeing to the use of concepts in other activities: for instance, in drawing a logical conclusion, or in identifying your coat on the hanger, or in using your toothbrush to brush your teeth. In all of those cases, the concept functions in regulating an activity—the activity of drawing a logical conclusion, or of identifying a coat, or of brushing teeth.²⁴ Or again, in those cases, the application of the concept *is* an engagement in a practice that is regulated by it. We may, for instance, describe a person who is using a hammer to drive a nail into the wall as thereby using the concept *hammer*. This concept regulates her activity: she hammers. Her use of the hammer is at the same time an application of that concept. Or from the other direction, the application of a concept takes the form of using an object in a way that assumes that conceptualization of it.

In this sense, to have a concept is to have the ability to do something: to capture something in thought and to act in a way that is norm-regulated.²⁵ Having a concept is manifested—typically—in the engagement in a relevant sort of activity: e.g. hammering nails in the case of the concept *hammer*, but also, for instance, in the ability to identify hammers, recommend the use of a hammer in the right circumstances, and explain how to be careful when using a hammer.

As opposed to that, the application of a concept in the case of aspect-seeing does not take the form of operating with the object. Rather, we can say that a concept is used merely to entertain its meaning, without putting it to work. This involves bringing the concept to the object, letting oneself feel what it would be like to conceptualize the object with this concept, but without committing oneself: without thereby making use of the object in the relevant way.²⁶ It is in this sense that we can say that in aspect-perception meaning is separated from use. Or better: to perceive an aspect is to entertain meaning independently of use. To see an aspect in an object, then, is not to operate with the object accordingly. Seeing the similarity between two faces, for instance, is not using a picture of the one to identify the other, and seeing the duck aspect in  is not using it as a duck-picture in a children's book. Similarly, being struck by how familiar a face looks is not recognizing it, and hearing a musical phrase as tragic is not having a reason to feel sorrow.

I am suggesting, then, a distinction between seeing an aspect in something and using it in the relevant way: a difference between seeing an aspect in something on the one hand, and on the other hand judging that it falls under a concept, or using it in a way that assumes such judgment. Seeing an aspect, I suggest, is bringing a concept to the object without using the object in a way that demonstrates an endorsement of the judgment that it falls under that concept.²⁷ Aspect-seeing is therefore different from recognizing, identifying, or realizing something. This is not to say that these are not phenomenologically similar to aspect-perception. They are: like the experience of an aspect, recognizing, identifying, and realizing may all involve “A-ha!” moments. Unlike aspect-perception, however, they involve making conceptual judgments. To recognize the symptoms of Malaria, for instance, is to judge that one is examining a person sick with Malaria. Aspect-perception, on the other hand, only involves entertaining the possibility of conceptualizing the object in a certain way, but without committing to it in using the object accordingly.²⁸

Metaphorically, to perceive an aspect is to stand on the sidelines of language: not quite outside, but not inside either; it is to entertain the language game without participating in it. There is, then, a connection between seeing an aspect in something and using it accordingly—a connection despite the distinction I am urging. For seeing an aspect—e.g. seeing  as a mountain, or hearing one musical phrase as a question answered by another phrase—is related to the relevant linguistic capacities: mastery of the concepts of

mountain and of asking and answering a question. In fact, it logically depends on mastery of those capacities: It is logically impossible to be struck by those aspects, if one does not have the relevant concepts. Or again, it is impossible to see the duck aspect of , if you do not have the concept *duck*: if you cannot, for instance, already identify certain things you see as ducks.

In general, then, we may describe the relationship between the application of concepts in aspect-seeing and in operating with objects by saying the following: In both cases, one is contemplating the meaning of the same thing: the object, the word, the picture, or whatever. One is also contemplating the same concept. The difference is that in the two cases this is done from two different standpoints: When looking at something in the course of using it, we are looking at it “from within”: that is, we are using it, applying it, according to some norms, treating it as a certain kind of object, and are thus engaged with the norms for its usage. The cogwheels of our mind, as it were, are engaged with those norms—turned by them. When seeing an aspect, on the other hand, we are looking at something “from sideways-on”:²⁹ we are disengaged from, and uncommitted to, the norms of its usage. When seeing an aspect in something—in that short moment—a way of capturing it in thought is in view, and still we are not (at least not yet) practicing it. We may talk here of looking at something *sub specie aeternitatis*: from the point of view of eternity.³⁰

To sum up, to perceive an aspect is essentially to reflect upon language from a disengaged standpoint. It is to let oneself feel the good of having a piece of linguistic machinery—a concept—without committing oneself to it in practice. It is to view the language game without participating in it. This gives aspect-perception peculiar characteristics, as we have seen, some of which may seem to violate or at least challenge our conception of the very nature of linguistic activity. In particular, aspect-perception frustrates the Wittgensteinian philosophical instinct, namely to expect that use will be a safe guide to meaning, and it strips the typical Wittgensteinian method of its powers. To clarify the grammar of aspect-perception we therefore need a different method, which is what I turn to now.

5. Aspect seeing as a philosophical method

Elucidation of meanings, in the typical Wittgensteinian investigation, is the elucidation of them as logical entities, performed by practicing them and thus unfolding their logical and grammatical functionality. But if that is so, what are we to do when the same logical entity starts behaving in logically different ways? What should we do when the activity of seeing, for instance, about which it used to be nonsensical to say that it could be done at will, starts behaving as if it can be done at will? What should we do when a concept *see*, which used to be the kind of thing that was essentially embedded in certain functionality,

starts behaving as an independent body of meaning? How can we recall ourselves to our ordinary ways of making sense of things in those cases, when operating with them is no longer a safe guide to their meaning? A metaphilosophical discussion, a discussion about philosophical method, is forced on us by the phenomena of aspect. Hopefully, as Stephen Mulhall promised, these phenomena will cast “a new light on what is involved in understanding the grammar of words.”³¹

When we are perceiving aspects, I have been suggesting, we are reflecting on language from a disengaged standpoint. Meaning is contemplated, but in an uncommitted manner. What we are investigating, we may say, is that part of our linguistic practical life in which we transcend it to a reflective and disengaged standpoint. And my claim in what follows is that in order to investigate this transcendence, we need to engage in a form of investigation, a method, that itself involves a similar transcendence. The method for the investigation of the phenomena of aspect requires the form of its subject matter: it itself requires searching for aspects.

When I described in §§2-3 parts of the grammar of aspect-perception, I came across difficulties and anomalies. I argued, for instance, that we need a way to express the idea that aspect-perception is subject to the will—that we can see  as a duck at will, for example—and yet, I claimed, when we try to describe what ‘subject to the will’ means in this case, we find that it does not quite mean what it meant in ordinary cases. The meaning of ‘aspect-seeing’ is then elucidated by appeal to a logically rogue idea of being subject to the will; and one possible reaction to this is to say that, after all, by saying that aspect-seeing is subject to the will, we have not really elucidated the meaning of ‘aspects-seeing,’ but only made things murkier. This is a possible reaction. But perhaps it is not necessary to adopt it. Perhaps it is even mistaken. That is, perhaps we may miss something important if we adopt it: for we really need the idea of ‘subject to the will’ here. The activity, aspect-seeing, has that aspect. Rogue as it might be, it did not come to us on a whim. “And if this sounds crazy, you need to reflect that the concept of seeing is modified here” (PI, 209).

Another possible reaction—the one I am recommending—is to say that *this* is what elucidation comes to in this case: this is the proper philosophical method. It is not a coincidence that in clarifying the grammar of aspect-seeing, we need to use an aberant idea of being subject to the will. But we are not thereby identifying an normative element of the application of that concept—we are not characterizing a part of its routine grammar. Rather, we identify an aspect. And we really do see a “subject-to-the-will” aspect in the activity of aspect-seeing. Using Stanley Cavell’s words, we are here “exploring a state of mind whose balance is threatened by the [...] perception that rationality has come to express irrationality.”³² The whole investigation reeks of paradoxality.³³ Things really do sound crazy. Merely in order to describe the phenomena of aspect and the grammar of ‘seeing-as,’ just to characterize a particular aspect-

experience, one is constantly called upon to use pieces of language—terms and expressions borrowed from ordinary language—but only call upon them insofar as they have the right feel. That is, in characterizing an experience of aspect by saying, for instance, that it is subject to the will, we do not mean to bring all the normative baggage of the concept *subject to will*. We only appeal to it in a way that allows us to feel what it would require to properly conceptualize this experience.

Although we recognize that ‘subject to the will’ means something different when applied to this experience, we still have to use this term. We need *this* term *here*. And this, I suggest, in exactly the same way that, when describing the portrait on the wall looking at us, we need the idea that it has a mind. In general, when applied to such phenomena, the concepts with which we describe the phenomena do not function in the way they do ordinarily. They allow us to characterize the phenomena, but do not commit us to a full blown application of the norms related to those concepts. This uncommittedness naturally creates anomalies. But this, I suggest, characterizes the investigation of aspect-perception; it characterizes, that is, what is necessary for a proper investigation of these phenomena. Metaphorically, we can say that in order to investigate what is on the sidelines of the language game, we need to stand there ourselves. In order to examine what happens when the connection between meaning and use is suspended, we must ourselves remain suspended in our mode of investigation. The seeing of aspects, in other words, is an essential part of the proper philosophical method for the investigation of aspects.

If what I have been claiming is right, the investigation of aspects does not need to be very different from what we have been doing after all—what I did in §§2-3, for instance. Only that we do not need to be surprised or dismayed when we find that the language we are using in the investigation is logically slanted, or aberrant. We should search for such shifts in application, and expect that the clarification of these shifts will themselves necessitate further such shifts. We should trace these shifts wherever they lead us. And my point now is that this very activity of tracing grammatical shifts characterizes the required philosophical activity, the necessary mode of investigation in the case of aspect-perception. This is the proper philosophical method here. Tracing such shifts of application is standing on the sidelines of language. To trace these shifts when clarifying the phenomena of aspect is to occupy a disengaged suspended standpoint, and contemplate meanings without being committed to them in practice: It is to allow oneself to call upon terms that one needs in the characterization of the language of aspects, but independently of the routine usage of those terms. It is to allow oneself, for instance, to call upon the expression ‘subject to the will,’ even though its application is not even meant to be a typical one; call upon it just because it—and it only—has the right feel.

Now, if this requires that we bite logical bullets, then so be it, for biting logical bullets is of the essence of investigating the grammar of aspect phenomena. Call it biting a logical

bullet, or exploring a different kind of logical structure—it does not much matter. What matters—and this is what I would like to emphasize about the point of the language of aspects—is that moving away from the kind of logic in which meaning is tied to use is what we *intend* to do anyhow when experiencing and describing aspect experiences. The whole point of the investigation, its interest, is reflecting on meanings independently of, and uncommitted to, the ordinary employment of conceptual norms. This is especially clear in cases such as experiencing an object—a car, say—as having a personality. One does not thereby make a conceptual judgment. One does not even intend to. One does not, for instance, think that such experience justifies psychological research of cars. The point is rather to bring a concept to the object and let oneself feel what it would be like to conceptualize the object with this concept. The “language game” of aspects, its point, is to go beyond the guidance of grammar.

The point of the language of aspects, then, is the contemplation of meaning independently of use. In investigating these phenomena, we must therefore already be using our imagination in a particular—peculiar—way.³⁴ And if I am right about that, then in investigating the phenomena of aspect, one needs to use language in ways one did *not* already know it can be used. I am here taking a position contrary to that of Avner Baz (see §1). Baz argues that the Wittgensteinian investigation of the language of aspects reminds us of what we “already know.” If I am right, however, when investigating the language of aspects, one is constantly called upon to use language in ways one did not know it can be used. And that one did not know that language can be so used is essential: for one is called upon to contemplate the meaning of terms in abstraction from their use. The language of aspect calls upon us to investigate imaginatively.

In objection to what I have been claiming, one may insist that talk of seeing aspects cannot be as logically aberrant as I am suggesting. Even granting that we sometimes express ourselves in strange ways when we give expression to aspect-experiences—for instance, that the skies looks sad, or that the portrait is looking down on us from the wall—even granting that, nothing can be less weird than calling seeing aspect a case of seeing, and less strange than saying that it is subject to the will. The sad skies and the portrait examples may indeed seem to be obviously, and purposefully categorically mistaken, and in general baffling (although, if you “get” the intention, they may at the same time seem oddly proper), but not so calling aspect-seeing “seeing,” or saying that it is subject to the will. It does not seem to be our intention to say something categorically mistaken when we say these things.

I agree: it is usually not our intention to say something logically weird when we talk of “seeing” aspects and of it being “subject to the will.” Nevertheless, I maintain we come up in those cases with logically slanted expressions, even when we do not want to or even notice. Such things sometimes happen to us. It does not always seem to us to be essential—and we do not always want it to be essential to our intention—that what we

experience is logically odd (can only be expressed using logically skewed language). Indeed, this is often the case with seeing aspects. Thus, one may not intend to say something weird when one says that they can see at will, or that nothing and yet everything has changed—it *is* the most natural thing to say; the *only* thing to say. But the aberrant logical intention is nevertheless forced on one in this case. And this characterizes what we will inevitably find ourselves doing—if we are properly reflective—when we investigate aspect-perception. Frustrated at our inability to capture the idea in a logically “clean” way, we may wish to resist and deny it. But there is no other way to express ourselves. The intention to say something that is grammatically “off” is, as it were, forced on us.

My point is also metaphilosophical: to clarify the phenomena and language of aspects requires willingness to be implicated in the logical oddness of these phenomena. “Like Freud’s therapy,” writes Stanley Cavell, “[Wittgenstein’s writing] wishes to prevent understanding which is unaccompanied by inner change.”³⁵ What I hope to have achieved in this last section is also a better appreciation of what it takes to let the forces of change in Wittgenstein’s writing run deep enough.³⁶

¹ The texts of Wittgenstein’s I shall refer to are:

TLP – *Tractatus Logico-Philosophicus*, Ogden, C. K. (trans.), London: Routledge, 1922.

PI – *Philosophical Investigations*, 3rd edition, Rhees, R. and Anscombe, G. E. M. (eds.), Anscombe G. E. M. (trans.), Oxford: Blackwell, 1958.

BB – *The Blue and Brown Books*, 2nd edition, Oxford: Blackwell, 1969.

RPP1 – *Remarks on the Philosophy of Psychology*, Vol. 1, Anscombe G. E. M. and von Wright G. H. (eds.), Anscombe G. E. M. (trans.), Oxford: Blackwell, 1980.

RPP2 – *Remarks on the Philosophy of Psychology*, Vol. 2, von Wright G. H. and Nyman H. (eds.), Luckhardt C. G. and Aue M. A. E. (trans.), Oxford: Blackwell, 1980.

CV – *Culture and Value*, von Wright G. H., Nyman H. and Pichler A. (eds.), Winch P. (trans.), Oxford: Blackwell, 1998.

² In the same vein, Wittgenstein claims: “There is not a philosophical method, though there are indeed methods, like different therapies” (PI, §133). This, placed alongside other things he says about philosophical methodology, may still leave the impression that those different methods are yet unified by some shared principle or character or point. My argument, if successful, would allow us to see how deep the differences might be between those methods.

³ For discussions of the phenomena of aspect in connection with the philosophy of mathematics see Cora Diamond, “The Face of Necessity,” *The Realistic Spirit*, Cambridge, Mass.: MIT, 1991, 243-66; Juliet Floyd, “On Being Surprised: Wittgenstein on Aspect-Perception, Logic, and Mathematics,” in: *Seeing Wittgenstein Anew*, Day W. and Krebs V. J. (eds.), Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2010, 314-337.

⁴ 129e-130a.

⁵ “*Essence* is expressed by grammar” (PI, §371).

⁶ See PI, §286.

⁷ “On Learning from Wittgenstein, or What Does it Take to See the Grammar of Seeing Aspects?” *Seeing Wittgenstein Anew*, Day W. and Krebs V. J. (eds.), Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2010, 227-48—hereafter LFW—235; my italics.

⁸ Ibid; my italic.

⁹ LFW, 234

¹⁰ LFW, 235

¹¹ LFW, 237

¹² It is possible that we will not understand the reason for calling feeding meters ‘feeding’ in the first place, if we don’t think of it in the light of feeding monkeys or babies or cows. For someone who does not see the point of talking of ‘feeding’ in the case of meters, the two words are mere homonyms.

¹³ I am not denying that there might be dependence between the different uses of ‘cut’ and ‘feed’. But to the extent that there is, it is unlike the dependence of aspect-seeing on ordinary-seeing.

¹⁴ There is an additional caveat. My claim in general is that when we have two applications of same concept in different contexts, we don’t have to learn one first in order to learn the other. It may be argued, however, that not all applications of a concept in different contexts are, as it were, on the same level. My general claim, it may be said, may be plausible for cases like the application of ‘feed’ to horses, babies, and cows—applications that are on the same level. But when it comes to feeding meters, for instance, the story is different: We first need to learn the application of ‘feed’ to cows and horses, and only then we will be able to learn the application of ‘feed’ to meters. This may apply to other figurative applications of concepts. The objection then may be that something like this may very well characterize the relations between ordinary- and aspect-seeing. However—and this is my response—this suggestion is false: It may indeed be that we will not see the point of calling feeding meters ‘feeding’; but we can see the point of feeding meters even if we don’t see the point of calling it that. We can identify the activity of feeding meters independently of that of feeding cows, and we can describe it in terms that are independent. It is in this sense that we can learn to apply ‘feeding’ to meters without first learning its application to cows. If there is a dependence of ‘feeding-meters’ on ‘feeding-cows’—and I do not mean to deny that in some sense there is—it is not of the same sort that exists between ‘aspect-seeing’ and ‘ordinary-seeing.’ In the latter case, we will not only be unable to see the point of applying ‘seeing’ to aspects, we cannot describe or identify the activity of aspect-seeing independently of that of ordinary seeing—without appeal to the concept *seeing*.

¹⁵ Anton Ford makes a distinction between three forms of generality, three forms that the relationship between genus and species might take: accidental, categorial, and essential. (“Action and Generality,” in *Essays on Anscombe’s Intention*, A. Ford, J. Hornsby, F. Stoutland (eds.), Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard

University Press, 2011, 76-104.) I submit that the relationship between ordinary- and aspect-seeing does not take any of those forms. It may be tempting to think that their relationship is one that involves what Ford calls essential generality, which is characterized by a kind of asymmetry: aspect-seeing relates to ordinary-seeing as unessential to essential species—like impure to pure gold—where the essential species is logically prior to other species of the same genus in that those other species involve a privation. However, although ordinary-seeing is indeed the more basic concept, aspect-seeing is not a privation of seeing: It is not seeing that falls short of some standard.

¹⁶ Compare what Wittgenstein says about “Wednesday is fat” in PI, 216. Though I will not defend this claim here, I take ‘aspect-seeing’ to be a secondary use of ‘seeing’—use of ‘seeing’ in a secondary sense.

¹⁷ Gottlob Frege, *The Foundations of Arithmetic*, Evanston: Northwestern University Press, 1950, x.

¹⁸ It is however true that the logical differences between ordinary- and aspect-seeing, together with the peculiar logical relationship between the two, give this discussion an air of paradoxality. I discuss this further below. For the different sides in the controversy see the exchange between Stephen Mulhall and Avner Baz. By Mulhall: *Inheritance and Originality*, Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2001 (hereafter IO), and “The Work of Wittgenstein’s Words: A Reply to Baz, *Seeing Wittgenstein Anew*, Day W. and Krebs V. J. (eds.), Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2010, 249-67. By Baz: “What’s the Point of Seeing Aspects?” *Philosophical Investigations*, vol. 23(2), 2000, 97-121 (hereafter PSA); and LFW. My understanding of the phenomena of aspect is much indebted to Mulhall’s and Baz’s, and this paper is fueled by their disagreements.

¹⁹ There is a sense in which seeing likeness is also subject to the will: that in which it makes sense to say that one is trying to see the similarity. I discuss this issue further below.

The difference between ordinary seeing and seeing aspects can also be seen in a third element: In many cases of aspect-perception, “the expression of the seeing of an aspect,” as Baz says, “is an Äusserung” (PSA, 106)—an expression. Wittgenstein makes a distinction between expression and description, where to describe something in a certain way is the manifestation of interpreting it accordingly, whereas to give expression to a sense impression, for instance, is not. Usually, that is, we can make a distinction between two functions that an utterance might have: an Äusserung and a description. In the case of aspect-experiences, however, the grammatical-logical line between expression and description becomes blurred: it is not so much that the same utterance has both functions; rather, the functions themselves are somehow intermingled: One can express oneself, as it were, only via a description. For instance, “The two faces have the same look!” is an Äusserung; but it has the outward grammar of description, and there is no way of making it take the grammatical form of an expression. As Wittgenstein puts this point: “an interpretation becomes an expression of experience. And the interpretation is not an indirect description; no, it is the primary expression of the experience” (RPP1 §20).

²⁰ See BB, 152-3.

²¹ This, especially when one wants to resist a way of seeing something. The point may also be useful in the discussion of revelations—religious and otherwise. Revelation does not only bring something new to your attention; it rather makes you participate in the experience, it activates you and forces you to take part in your own transformation.

²² Wittgenstein connects having mental images to seeing aspects in several places. My sense is that the connection is far reaching, and requires a lengthy separate discussion.

²³ Similarly, Avner Baz says: “It [the aspect] appears over there, in the object, and yet we know we must have had something to do with that appearance. We know that, not so much because we have made a conscious effort to bring it about, typically we make no such effort, but because we know that nothing other than ourselves could have been the cause of that appearance” (PSA, 110). “It is this peculiarity of the aspect—its being something that fits the object, and at the same time something that we bring to the object; its being a way of seeing something anew while remaining faithful to it—that gives expressing it its point in ordinary contexts” (PSA, 111).

²⁴ in TLP §3.326, Wittgenstein calls such an activity “the significant use.” It is the practical-logical context in which a sign gets to function and thereby becomes a symbol.

²⁵ There are things which having a concept allows us to do, which are *external* to having the concept. In such cases, concepts are available independently of what we can do with them, and we choose certain concepts and not others because the former fulfill some needs that the latter do not. However, having a concept is primarily tied to the things it allows us to do that are *internal* to having it. To have a concept, in this sense, just *is* to master some technique: to be able to do certain things. With regard to those internal things, therefore, it makes no sense to talk of having a concept without being able to do those things. In this sense, concepts and what we do with them are not given independently.

²⁶ I should note that not all cases in which we see something and are not using it in the relevant way are cases of aspect-perception. When, for instance, we look at someone familiar without recognizing her, or when we look at ☞ and see nothing but a line and a dot (try looking at it upside down), we are obviously also seeing a familiar face or a picture-duck, but not engaging them as such. In such cases what we see is not alive for us. But we also don’t see the point of it becoming alive; it is just, at least on some level, “a bundle of perceptions.” As opposed to that, when an aspect dawns—when one looks in the mirror and suddenly sees one’s father, for instance, or when one has milk and cookies and it suddenly tastes like childhood—in such cases something comes to life, or at least comes to have new life, even though it is not put to use accordingly. In fact, it is sometimes not even clear what the relevant application would be like. We have a pretty good idea what it would mean to apply ☞ as a duck-picture. It is not at all clear what it would be to apply the milk and cookies as encapsulating the taste of childhood. I suggest that this indicates a distinction between two kinds of aspect-perception: preparatory, and non-preparatory. I discuss this in “Reflecting on Language from ‘Sideways-on’: Preparatory and Non-Preparatory Aspects-Seeing,” *Journal for the History of Analytical Philosophy*, forthcoming.

²⁷ A similar distinction is made, albeit implicitly, by Avner Baz: “what exactly is meant by ‘his sudden realization that the picture-object is both a picture-meek-man and a picture-complacent-businessman’[?] Does it mean that he suddenly realizes—it all of a sudden occurs to him—that it could serve as either of them, be taken or interpreted to be either of them? Or does it mean that he found he could see it as one or the other?” (LFW, 242). Unlike me, Baz does not connect the phenomena of aspects to a reflective attitude towards language, or to the idea that meaning in aspect-perception is detached from use.

²⁸ A note of warning: When we suddenly notice an aspect, we may sometimes express this by saying “I’ve just realized it is a duck!” That is, we may use the terms ‘realize’—and likewise ‘identify,’ and

‘recognize’—to express aspect experiences. What is important, however, is not what term we use, but our intention in using it: whether by using the term we intend to say that we are making a conceptual judgment, in which case we are not expressing an aspect-experience, or we intend that we have brought a concept to the object but have not thereby committed ourselves to treating the object as if it decisively fell under that concept, in which case we are expressing an aspect-experience.

²⁹ I’m borrowing this expression from John McDowell’s “Non-Cognitivism and Rule-Following,” in *Wittgenstein: To Follow A Rule*, S. Holtzman & Christopher M. Leich (eds.), Routledge & Kegan Paul, 141-62. I’m using it in a different way, however. McDowell uses it to refer to a standpoint independent of all human interests, activities, and reactions. Examining something in aspect-perception from a disengaged standpoint does not mean that we are detached from what Stanley Cavell called our “whirl of organism” (“The availability of Wittgenstein’s later philosophy,” *Must We Mean What We Say?* Cambridge: Cambridge University Press; 1969, 44-72, 52). In aspect-perception we are not disengaged from our humanity and interests. On the contrary, occupying the disengaged standpoint when experiencing an aspect can only happen out of interest in making sense. Although aspect-perception does indeed induce a kind of transcendence of our practical linguistic life to a reflective and disengaged standpoint, and although this transcendence may be performed as a gesture of an attempted transcendence of humanity, it is never actually that. The very point of allowing ourselves to occupy that external standpoint is to give expression to our need to make sense of things: to own in thought the reality in which we live. The very point of allowing oneself to adopt that reflective external standpoint is out of concern for the norms one is disengaged from, and may express, for example, the wish to re-engage them, or to express frustration about them. It is itself an expression of humanity.

³⁰ Compare CV, 7.

³¹ IO, 180.

³² “The Touch of Words,” *Seeing Wittgenstein Anew*, Day W. and Krebs V. J. (eds.), Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2010, 81-98, 82. Cavell discusses a case in which this perception (that rationality has come to express irrationality) is “tortured,” and words are “cursed.” Some but not all relevant cases are such. In Tractarian terms (TLP, §6.43), the realization that no words will capture our intention as a matter of course can be a mark of unhappiness, as well as of happiness. This means, for example, that the ability to see aspects allows for intimacy with others and with the world; but it also reveals the possibility of failure to achieve such intimacy—failure to make the world ours, and to share it with others.

³³ Stephen Mulhall argues that “[T]he fullness of our inheritance of the rules of grammar is a capacity to find the possibilities of meaning in the words they govern which are not themselves governable by (not simply projections, however unexpected, of) rules” (IO, 180). Compare Avner Baz’s claim that: “to see an aspect is to step beyond the guidance of grammar” (PSA, 120).

³⁴ Cora Diamond demonstrates a logical peculiarity inherent in a closely related issue: “the linguistic activity of talking about a secondary activity [...] will involve the use of expressions in a secondary sense, or of expressions which can only be explained in terms of them” (“Secondary Sense,” *The Realistic Spirit*, Cambridge, Mass.: MIT, 1991, 225-41, 231-2). Similarly, for Stephen Mulhall, I take it, the “unprecedented number of newly minted terms that Wittgenstein introduces in the course of his reflections on aspect-dawning” (IO, 157) is meant to lead the reader to the recognition that the very description of the

phenomenon forces a shift of linguistic practices. Compare also Cora Diamond's remarks on the kind of imaginative effort needed for the expression of "the Ethical" in the TLP, in "Ethics, Imagination and the Method of Wittgenstein's Tractatus," in: *The New Wittgenstein*, Crary, A. and Read R. (eds.) London: Routledge, 2000, pp. 149-173.

³⁵ "The Availability of Wittgenstein's Later Philosophy," *Must We Mean What We Say?* Updated Edition, Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 44-72, 1969, 72. Avner Baz uses this quotation as a motto for one of his papers on aspects.

³⁶ For their comments and suggestions, I thank Avner Baz, Mandel Cabrera, Alice Crary, Kelly Jolley, Oskari Kuusela, and Dafi Agam-Segal.