

# Cambridge Elements

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## WITTGENSTEIN ON ASPECT PERCEPTION

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**Abstract:** The perception of what he calls ‘aspects’ preoccupied Wittgenstein and gave him considerable trouble in his final years. The Wittgensteinian aspect defies any number of traditional philosophical dichotomies: the aspect is neither subjective (inner, metaphysically private) nor objective; it presents perceivable unity and sense that are (arguably) not (yet) conceptual; it is ‘subject to the will’, but at the same time is normally taken to be genuinely revelatory of the object perceived under it. This Element begins with a grammatical and phenomenological characterization of Wittgensteinian aspects. It then challenges two widespread ideas: that aspects are to be identified with concepts, and that aspect perception has a continuous version that is characteristic of (normal) human perception. It concludes by proposing that aspect perception brings to light the distinction between the world *as perceived* and the world *as objectively construed*, and the role we play in the constitution of the *former*.

**Keywords:** Wittgenstein; Perception; Aspect Perception; Phenomenology; Philosophical Method

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