

Do expectations have time span?

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ABSTRACT

If it is possible to think that human life is temporal as a whole, and Wittgenstein's claim that the psychological phenomena called 'dispositions' do not have a genuine temporal duration is correct, we need an account of how time applies to dispositions. I undertake this here by studying the concept of expectation, a disposition with a clear nexus to a temporal point, namely, the point at which the expectation is satisfied. However, it seems that we cannot identify the beginning of an expectation, and in some cases, the end. If so, the reduction of expectations to neural events or accompanying feelings is impossible, because all these are processes with a definite temporal course. Only at a higher level, as part of human life, expectation can be said to be temporal.

There is widespread dissent among philosophers about the nature of propositional attitudes and their best theoretical characterisation. In the pursue of a theory which may harness some consensus, D. Papineau decides to draw on elements of propositional attitudes or the otherwise called—although somewhat confusingly—'mental states' of which we already know to arrive at a new and more coherent understanding of such attitudes. So he writes:

Conscious states are material states at the ontological level (...) As well as thinking of them *as* material states, we can also think of them *as* feelings by using special 'phenomenal concepts' (2002, 4-5).

Papineau offers a dual account of mental states; on the one hand, they can be seen as material or physical states; on the other, they are perceived as singular conscious experiences. I take it that this intends to be an explanation for a root problem at the

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ontological and the phenomenical level, a twofold solution which attends both to what the constituents of mental states are and how they visibly operate. An additional advantage of this view is that if sound, nothing prevents us from making a straightforward association between phenomenal concepts and some kind of physical properties such as, for the belief that p , the fact that this proposition is conceived within a limited and determinable time slice. Thus, if certain conditions can be satisfied to its advantage, some of the properties involved in being in the belief that p may be fully describable in the language of physics.

I will address the validity of this intuition by examining the temporality of psychological phenomena, and particularly that of the concept of expectation. Turning on Wittgenstein's analysis of this psychological verb, I will take a different and open-ended perspective according to which Papineau's account is ultimately misguided. The main reason for this is that, while a subject conceives the psychological verbs in time, a careful consideration shows that these verbs lack a visible time span. Hence, an adequate account of what is specific about them must take into consideration that the grammar and use of these verbs is not entirely consistent with the deployment of concepts which are central to physics.

1. The Characterisation of Psychological Phenomena

Wittgenstein expresses that 'psychology deals with certain aspects of human life' (RPP II §35). Our life is arguably made up of too many aspects, but one of these is certainly time. Yet time is usually considered a complex and fine-grained concept, largely for its ability to operate in a wide set of contexts while keeping its central meaning. Consider its application in mind and body. While the effects of time on our body is patent and irreversible, time affects our mind in different and often less predictable ways: subjects can change their mind because they can always amend or refine their beliefs to the benefit of truth. Changes in our mind take place within us and usually take some time; possibly seconds, minutes or days.

The disanalogies between both do not stop there. Whereas some of our most common actions can unproblematically be called 'activities', Wittgenstein observes that psychological verbs offset this characterisation (BB, p. 6). In other words, our

propositional attitudes are not enterprises which develop and spread over time. If that is correct, in most cases it does not make sense to affirm that we exercise or deploy such phenomena in stages or without them. The use of the verb ‘to think’ in present continuous fails to articulate that, despite all appearances, thinking does not belong in the category of processes made up of steps such as cooking, playing chess or delivering a speech, and also, that this is not a distinction of degrees. Certainly, our language contains expressions which make good counterexamples to this, such as: ‘I’ll think about it tomorrow’ or ‘let me alone; I’m thinking’, but it is disputable whether they refer to aspects of thinking rather than to thinking itself. The portrayal of thinking as a staged process which runs for a few seconds, can be interrupted and resumed, for Wittgenstein pays a dismal tribute to its grammar, since this verb lacks what he calls ‘genuine duration’ (Z §71-85, 472) (Hacker 1996, 129).

To exploit Wittgenstein’s intuitions about time I will defend that thinking is not a ‘basic activity’—transient, with sharp edges and clockable—and that the present continuous of this verb is delusive in at least one relevant sense. In doing any mental calculation such as $8 + 6 = 14$ it is a mistake to think that we *spend* a fraction of a second *thinking*, for that is not something which we do. While we do spend a fraction of a second concentrated and steadily focusing our attention on the sum, *thinking* does not take any time. There is a notable difference between our concentration and attention and our making the sum. The former is a time-limited state which may be ontologically necessary for us to be able to sum, but which merely accompanies it, whereas the latter is our making the sum. I imagine that this suggestion may lack a straightforward appeal. We may even be tempted to disarm it by branding as an undesirable a quirk of the psychological. But quirky as this seems, it serves to explain why thinking staunchly resists to be branded an ‘activity’. To illustrate the point, Wittgenstein asserts that saying of a person that ‘she thinks’ is meaningful when this reflects a detached truth of ‘natural history’ (RPP II §18), namely, of the fact that human beings are cut up by their ability to think, while it becomes more delusive when the expression is construed as conveying something which the subject *does* in a time-segmented time span such as it is described in the language of physics.

What justifies Wittgenstein in thinking this? His grounds, while implicit in the PI, emerge more clearly in RPP, where he recommends a distinction between raw states of

consciousness and dispositions. He writes: '[p]ain is a state of consciousness, understanding is not' (RPP II §48). States of consciousness, such as pain, moods, raw emotions or states of concentration are characterised as steady process with 'genuine duration' (RPP II §63). A patient feels her headache as a lasting state which has a start and an end. Someone can concentrate for a few minutes, be interrupted several times, as a result get exasperated, and be still able to tell the precise time at which each thing occurred. On the other hand, dispositions, such as thoughts, beliefs, hopes, wills, intentions or desires cannot be 'interrupted by a break in consciousness or a shift of attention' (RPP II §45) and lack in genuine duration. For example, it makes no sense to talk about interrupting a hypothetical process of belief unless this means that the belief in question is shown to be false. To believe that 'Mars does not contain a drop of water' and to wish someone 'happy Christmas' may be instantly conceived propositions, but if they manifest persistent and time-limited mental states, it is far from clear what their interruption can mean.

I will exploit the preceding arguments to set up the discussion about the concept of expectation, a phenomenon which may do the job for Papineau's purposes inasmuch as its grammar is notably tied up to events which occur in time. If Papineau's cause is a good one, it should prove its ability to handle the strong relation of expectation with time to develop a convincing argument to the effect that, far from being a 'disposition' (RPP II §45) expectation is a mental state which involves the exercise of a basic activity in the sense specified above, being ultimately reducible to a physical or material state.

A few caveats will be introduced before that. The concept of expectation which I shall analyse here is not a specialised concept; it is rather an 'everyday concept' (RPP II §62) whose grammar is accessible to everyone who is language-competent and not only to specialists, whether linguists, philosophers or neuroscientists. Similarly, for any promising understanding of its grammar, the concept must refer to happenings lying ahead of us in the near or distant future, a fact that of course excludes the expectation of a past event. As a result, what is relevantly expected cannot be the case in the present and must be perceived by the subject as unrealised until the expect event occurs. Thus we can say that 'expectation is unsatisfied, because it is the expectation of something' (PI §438) which, as with beliefs, thoughts other dispositions will conventionally be called its intentional 'object'.

2. The Time Measurement Factor

Just as belief is traditionally described by saying what the belief is a belief of, an expectation is traditionally described by saying what the expectation is an expectation of, that is, by indicating its intentional object. A wide range of epistemological accounts on offer rely on a description of this kind to define propositional attitudes, mainly because such description is simple and does not require the dual analysis espoused by Papineau, that is, one which presents expectation as a genuine or singular experience of a subject comparable, for example to smelling a particular kind of flower, and a brain state.

Phenomenical accounts of expectation are thought to be entitled to this form of reduction for different reasons. One of those is that conscious experiences seem to provide a criterion of identity in its own right. With it, we can dismiss the object of expectation and switch our attention to the underlying ontology of the conscious experience, one of its features is time. For determining the temporal coordinates of a mental state a reductive theorist needs to envision a workable method capable of narrowing all the features involved in it, whether psychological or not, in order to capture its physical attributes. Yet this step, the first one to be taken, is already beset by difficulties, since any reliable method of retrieving the time span of a physical process is contingent on a number of factors which any expectation must set aside to limit the number of variables at play. Here, however, I shall not consider such difficulties and presume that such a method, although limited, is viable.

The quest for the time span of expectation counts on certain presuppositions. First of all, it assumes that psychological verbs are mental states in the sense specified above. Thus we can give a thoroughgoing description of the psychological verbs in ontological vocabulary, that is, in terms apt for the description of natural properties in the language of science. With such ontological apparatus, and once a fitting method for timing mental states has been provided, the claim goes, we can seriously consider the claim that processes or states of expectation have a time span which, as any physical process, exhibits a start and an end.

This strategy purports thus to replace the object of expectation by a mental state which is ontologically more effective than a disposition. Among the reasons to endorse it is that it eludes some difficulties arising from the traditional description of expectation by its object such as the problem of intentionality. But whether this strategy can deliver, it cannot be denied that expectation does not involve just an occurrence. Every expectation forcibly requires an object X which is bound up with states of affairs not happened yet. Such an object stands for a forthcoming state of affairs whose satisfaction we wish. Of course, we cannot side-step such a link if any expectation is to have meaning. Similarly, awareness of the satisfaction or fulfilment of expectation is crucial to know whether a subject actually expects an event. If a person does not know that she expects X to happen or that X is the event which will satisfy her expectation, then she cannot be said to expect it. We can say therefore that knowledge of the object that satisfies one's expectation is fundamental and constitutive of it in a strong sense. Accordingly, so far there stand out two central properties of expectation: (i) its intentional object and (ii) the subject's awareness of the object. I will defend that these two properties are essential constituents of the phenomenon and that the lack of any of the two is sufficient to disprove the claim that someone is really expecting X. Of course (i) and (ii) are not features exclusive of expectation, but I do not need to specify more so far.

Is time constitutive of expectation in the same sense? This question is up to the reductive strategy to prove. Its answer will largely depend on the method chosen by the theorist for measuring the time span credited to it, because as I will try to show, such a method is not straightforward. Whereas the end or satisfaction of an expectation seems determinable in time, it seems that we cannot determine the exact time at which someone started to expect a particular event. Consider to that effect the following case. Most people may expect the Prime Minister to lose the next elections. If these elections were to be scheduled any time soon and the Prime Minister were indeed to lose them, there would be a strong presumption that most people's expectation would be satisfied by the result. On such a basis, one could ask when exactly those who expected the Prime Minister to lose persuaded themselves of the truth of some proposition to that effect. The question is non-trivial and in fact highly complex. Some people may say that they became convinced that the Prime Minister would lose the elections on a particular day in which it emerged that he would not deliver his most important pre-electoral

promise. Thus, although it is far from clear that most cases can be accommodated into this one, that point in time may serve to establish a rough temporal start for the beginning of their expectation. The theorist also faces the problem that the time which we are trying to determine (call it 'deception-time') is not equal to the time in which the Prime Minister's alleged failure to deliver left those individuals in a painfully distinctive low mood. Here there is a risk that individuals misidentify this time with the deception-time for being somewhat close to it. Additionally, we must admit that subjects occasionally forget about the content of their expectation in different degrees, a suggestion that, while able to upset the requirement of awareness for any valid expectation, can nonetheless be disarmed by stipulating that expectation is truly genuine, no matter how much the subject forgets, as long as the subject can recognise the content of her expectation at the relevant time, namely, once her expectation is satisfied. This and the previous objection do not preclude a subject from genuinely expecting something, but once again they succeed in making the beginning of an expectation subjectively hard to specify. Therefore, at face value the end of expectation or the time at which an expectation is satisfied is uncontroversially more recognisable and better defined than its beginning.

Perhaps the most salient objection to this conclusion may be that, despite the fact the beginning of an expectation may be subjectively hard to identify, such a beginning may nonetheless be objective and real (but unknown to the subject). Yet as part of the commitments of the analysis of an 'everyday concept' we cannot accept claims directed to overturn the awareness requirement. One of these claims, like the present one, may arise from a strong agnosticism about the object of expectation. But it cannot be the case that someone can be said to be *expecting* without specifying an object, or simply, that the object of expectation is fully detachable from the phenomenon. This qualification grounds in the fact that a subject is fully authoritative to her own propositional attitudes in normal cases, and that nothing should militate against it out of those cases, lending thus wide credibility to the claim that expectation cannot really be such if a subject lacks awareness of it.

The chosen method for measuring the time span of psychological phenomena has ontological implications. One of these is that expectation can be measured in a customary way. All that is required is a temporal measurement with a limited or tolerable

margin of error. For all we know, measurement in physics requires specifying two temporal points to mark the start and the end of a process. Let T1 be the start of a process N finishing at T2; if N's start is specified, T2 can be of some use, but if T1 cannot be unspecified (as I have suggested so far) the duration of the entire process remains unspecifiable too, since we cannot establish the time span of a process whose start we do not know or cannot find out. This is not a small handicap, for the lack of ensuing criteria for the beginning of an expectation is congruent with the Wittgensteinian idea that dispositions, of which expectation is an instance (RPP II §45) do not resemble physical processes in that they do not have genuine duration. Of course, granted that the difficulties to pin down T1 hamper the description of expectation as a process N, someone might claim that such a description needs not be at odds with what actual dispositions show to be. In other words, the objection can be levelled that the reductive method can coexist with Wittgensteinian dispositions. His intuitions about the lack of duration of psychological verbs, the claim would go, would simply disclose the conceptual pitfall of understanding expectation in the wrong way, but it would have nothing to say as to whether expectation is a physical process or not.

I will address this question below. Presently, the impasse generated by the vagaries of T1 is so manifest as to make us carefully consider any further move in this direction. For Wittgenstein, a sound analysis of dispositions near to expectation is eloquent about it. Consider belief. Wittgenstein holds that apart from uses of 'I believe' such as 'for the whole time, I believed I could hear a whisper', that a subject believes that *p* is not indicative of duration (RPP I §597). Most uses of this verb suggest that the person who believes that *p* is not *doing* anything describable in terms of what goes on in the mind as the belief is, as it were, mentally processed. Someone who starts to expect X does not keep her belief regularly in check for as long as she believes it unless such a belief has a dubious epistemological pedigree. One can speak of 'carrying out' or 'trying' tasks and activities which develop in time, but does it make sense to speak of 'carrying out' or 'trying' a belief?¹ Wittgenstein asks: 'what does it mean to *believe* Goldbach's theorem? What does this belief consist in?' (PI §578). We can adopt different strategies to confront this unpalatable question. The resort to 'underlying occurrences' such as

¹ In a similar spirit, Wittgenstein notes that the concept of intention is hostage to similar puzzles when someone claims that one can intend something for a few seconds or otherwise she says: 'what I am at, is intending' or 'I am engaged in intending' (RPP I §598). In claiming this a subject is certainly not intending, since yet again intending is not an endurable activity.

congenial feelings of conviction and satisfaction while believing, or at another level, the appeal to neurology are possible moves. Pointing to feelings or brain states succeeds in identifying targets of conceptual analysis, that is, phenomena to be taken into account to get a complete picture of all the elements of belief. But if the grammar of this concept tells us anything about what believing a proposition is, feelings and neural states cannot yield anything significant for someone to understand (and believe) what Goldbach's theorem stipulates. While feelings and neural states bring to light aspects which stand close relation with the understanding of the theorem, they fail to be constitutive of it. Wittgenstein discounts feelings in particular as possible criteria for assessing the correct understanding of a rule. He specifically warns about the captivating idea that following the right rule, which is often seen as a standard case of understanding, elicits a familiar and recognisable feeling of self-intimation which unmistakably tells the individual how to proceed in obeying the rule (PI §222, 232-4).

Of course, the two essential features of the concept of expectation presented so far—its intentional concept and its awareness requirement—are not exclusive of this phenomenon. The two which we are now considering—feelings and neural states—which derive from the strategy which looks for the time span of expectation, are not specific of expectation either; they will surely surface in other psychological phenomena. In Papineau's view, however, although both features may be common to all mental states, they will be neurologically given in such a way that they can be seen from the outside. In the case of phenomenal concepts, they are cut up by a distinctive and irreducible perception [insert quote] which lets subjects know intuitively and non-inferentially about phenomenon which they are experiencing, as is the case feelings and sensations. In this way, while such concepts may seem to be sufficiently well-defined, the difficulties involved in treating expectation as a feeling remain unmovable. For one thing we could conceive a belief as a feeling of conviction and go on to describe a subject's belief on Goldbach's theorem as the conviction with which the subject understands it. But in fact, this move is question-begging, for everyone would agree that giving the definition of feeling by pointing to another feeling, whether more basic than this or not, does not actually make a good definition of it.

There may be thus a first problem about the definition of phenomenal concepts. And it is not the only one; for the use of neural events to back up such concepts raises further

questions. What comes now is inspired in Kripke's argument for the irreducibility of the concepts of mind and body (Kripke 1980, 147-155). Schematically, it spells out what I take to be an insurmountable difficulty for the reductive account. While it is logically possible to conceive of feelings or neural states similar to those of expectation without expecting anything at all, that is, by having the external symptoms of expectation without experiencing it, no expectation is conceivable without its object. Since there cannot be such a thing as an empty expectation, this disposition inherently builds on an intentional object which is authoritatively and consciously known. Consequently, to say that some type or token of brain state forcibly involves a given experience is not sufficient to tell us what is specific about it; for that, we need an object of expectation rather than a neural state.

The preceding argument, like that of Kripke's, does not seek to force a dualism of psychological and physical properties any more than to shed some light on the conditions under which the fundamental distinction between states of consciousness and dispositions is tenable. At the basic level, the concept of expectation joins the concept of intention and belief in resisting reductive characterisation, particularly from the sort of reductivism which surrenders the intentional object of dispositions to unspecific neural states. Yet this move opens up questions about scientific viability of its method, for neural states of a subject who expects X may perhaps turn out to be symptomatic of my expectation, but they might as well be the effect of my growing disquiet at the expectation of X or of any other cause. By Papineau's standards, the latter, namely, my present disquiet at such a fearful expectation is somewhat distinctive in character. Whether the expectation is itself detachable from this feeling or not—already a problem on its own—, difficulties in the search for the putative brain state persist in that the competing neural events potentially identifiable with it are not, as it could be initially expected, instrumental or conducive to expectation. This simply means that we do not use our brains as means to expect in the way in which we use a pen to write or a car to travel; our mind does not know how brain functions are involved in it. Therefore, the link between mind and brain, if necessary to know about the brain, is not comparable to that between expectation and its object.

In that way, the neurological side of Papineau's argument loses its teeth. The other side of his argument—partly examined already—concerns the analysis of expectation with

phenomenical concepts, concepts which are keyed to irreducible experiences the most uncontroversial of which has traditionally been the concept of pain. It is widely accepted that pain is an experience wholly identifiable by a phenomenical concept; the only way in which one can capture the meaning of pain is to feel it. Is expectation a genuine experience as is the sensation of pain? This question admits at least two answers. Let us recall, to answer the first one, a Davidson's claim. For him, certain dispositions can credibly be described in terms of belief without losing the meaning of the sentence in question (2001, 156-7). Expectation may be one of those dispositions. We obtain a cogent description of someone's expectation that the Prime Minister will lose the next elections with a belief to the same effect: the belief that the Prime Minister will lose the next elections. While we can redescribe other propositional attitudes likewise, it is unclear that the irreducible character of pain permits an analysis of this kind. In effect, no headache is reducible to a belief that I have a headache, since such a belief cannot convey the original sensation of pain. The second is that despite the opinion of some philosophers, there is not any distinctive phenomenology of expectation other than the experience of those feelings which are parasitic on this and other dispositions like the feelings of joy and anxiety. But of course, such feelings cannot make creditable expectation by themselves. Maintaining that they are constitutive of expectation is confusing, since we can clearly distinguish between them and the content of expectation. An important visit to my house can be hopeful or anxious, but whether it is one or the other, such a thing does not entail that I expect different things. It seems hence that phenomenal experiences and dispositions are not the same thing.

3. Towards a Suitable Context of Predication

At this point it should be clear that the attempt of narrowing expectation to its alleged occurrence to capture its time span fails to live up to expectations, whereas the fact remains, however, that expectation is grammatically tied up to temporal states of affairs whose occurrence entails its satisfaction if the subject is aware of it. The time at which this satisfaction occurs (T_2) marks out the end of the expectation, whereas other points in time are more or less distant from T_2 and do not cause its end. We should conclude from it that expectation is connected with time in a way in which no other disposition seems to be. This feature makes our concept singularly fit for the claim that T_2 , or the

time when expectation is satisfied, may look as a necessary element of the grammar of the psychological verb, thereby drawing a sharp contrast with T1, whose difficulties to be fixed advise us to leave that time unspecified. Thus the following question can be straightforwardly raised: is T2 then a necessary element of expectation comparable to the two already identified?

We would do well in sorting this point out before addressing the more complex issue of how expectation is temporal at all. Our initial inclination may be to regard T2 as a singular and inexorable point in time without which an expectation cannot get started, whereas T1 and indeed any other point on the time line may be seen as widely differing in character and treatment from T2. Let us note that T1 is not only the furthest point from T2 but also subjectively hard to identify, which turns out to be a non-trivial if, as I stressed, awareness of the object of expectation is one of its constitutive features. While such awareness highlights a factual difference between T1 and T2, the extent of this difference should not be stretched too far beyond reasonable limits, because on closer scrutiny we see cases in which T2 drops its grip on time in a similar way to T1, in some cases remaining fatally indeterminate to its subject. The following example illustrates it. Suppose that, having promised to do so in advance, a person whose call I was expecting never phones. In such a circumstance, when could I assert that my expectation dies effectively out? A reasonable assumption to make is that it dies out soon after the time at which I was expecting the other person to call. In attempting to specify this time (T2), two considerations need to arise. First, the end of the expectation cannot be identified with the time at which a distinctive sensation directly attributable to my expectation subsided. At best, this time can be identified with the time at which I realised that I would never get such a call. At worst, we may have to admit that T2 may remain indeterminable, since a frustrated expectation can generally be said to be time-bound only on contingencies. In favourable we will have a defensible criterion to help us with T2 such as, for the phone call which I would never get, the moment in which I realised that I would never get such a call. But of course, it is hard to argue consistently that the choice of this time is not somewhat arbitrary, for the previously called 'deception-time' does not seem connected to the end of an expectation as a matter of necessity. In fact, nothing can guarantee that we will always be able to advance T2 without knowing first whether the case is good or a bad by seeing how the expectation ends.

A compromised solution to this problem may be the claim that T2 is only specifiable in some cases, and not strictly specifiable in the case of a frustrated expectation. Upon that premise, I will introduce the second consideration on T2. I have suggested that expectation validly accommodates redescription of what it entails in terms of belief. And we can say the same of frustrated expectations; we can consider them as a form of belief or simply redescribe them as such. In this way, my frustrated expectation presented before is a belief involving that I will never get the call I was expecting. If this move is legitimate, nothing seems to preclude the other cases of expectation—the expectation which get satisfied—from abiding to this principle too, so that our verb they can be seen as a mundane case of beliefs, more straightforwardly as a subset of belief.

Yet this conclusion would require more discussion. Much of its validity depends on how firmly the object of expectation latches on to time. So far my reasoning supports it, since T2 is not an irreplaceable element of expectation, as a consequence of which our concept may fulfil all the requirements to be considered a case of belief. This is obviously of little help to determine T2 in the reductive sense, but it supports a blunt rejection of the claim that expectation is a basic activity—transient, with sharp ends, clockable—, or that contrary to Wittgenstein’s intuition, it amounts to a psychological state which has genuine physical duration. With this we cut off one of the inroads of reductivism into an extreme form of eliminativism for which psychological verbs amount to common worldly states of affairs, while other inroads will have to consistently explain how lesser degrees of eliminativism can overturn the thrust of these considerations.

Despite all, it could be objected that by discounting the temporal links of T1, and now of T2 too, we have fatally damaged the internal relation with time that I set myself to illuminate. The preceding argument, however, does not support this conclusion. Consider that T1 and T2 are temporal points originated in an account of expectation which treats the phenomenon as a mere physical process and that we have now evidence to reject. Wittgenstein’s analysis, in particular, does not deny that time, in a non-physical sense, can be predicated of dispositions in a coherent and context-sensitive way, that is, inasmuch as any self-attribution provides knowledge of someone’s disposition for a third person.

With those cues, his thesis is that the temporality of expectation resides on the temporal nexus of its object which is apparent in any sound grammatical analysis. He asserts that the temporality of a proposition (as well as its truth-function) is manifested 'solely and completely in grammar' (TS 213, 92). Time is like 'the background against which the individual sentence gains meaning (TS 213, 116). We would arrive at a better context of predication if we would shift our focus to the understanding of our propositions against the background of time, for this concept provides an understanding of temporal events non committed to the production of a time span. We predicate anything significant of a subject who is in a disposition such as thinking in this way, that is, by advancing the rough temporal context which sets its background, i.e. by saying that Einstein discovered his theory of relativity in 1905. In the same way, a subject may have held a particular expectation for minutes, months or years and legitimately assert it without implying that such a disposition has genuine duration. It is rather in the larger conceptual frame of expectation where time is articulated into propositions in a way which yields meaning to the supposition that our verb links grammatically with time not from the outside, as a physical event, but rather from the inside. The common Wittgensteinian approach will suggest that such a grasp grounds in and clarifies the concept of time, whereas this concept maps on the reality of time following certain cognitive and public rules, but the study of such rules is an epistemological problem which lies beyond the reductive scope.

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