

Abstract

The objective of the dissertation is to analyze the late philosophy of Ludwig Wittgenstein in order to show its possible application in the methodology of anthropology and social sciences. The thesis deals with the analysis of several key concepts of the late Wittgenstein, among which are language game, form of life, family resemblance, criteria of meaningfulness and the notion of skepticism. The research is based on Wittgenstein's antifundamentalist notion of meaning as use and recapitulates the debate over the consequences that follow from his theory. My analysis suggests that features of Wittgenstein-inspired methodology may include the following characteristics: preference for practice over theory, emphasis on a variety of examples, and research into the ordinary language. The last tool for examining criteria of understanding is the emphasis on the flip side of the certainty of the form of life, that is skepticism, which makes it possible to make visible the dynamic meanings contained in linguistic and social practice. The mentioned requirements are met by the ethnographic work of Veena Das, which I address in the final chapter.