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Proceedings of the 18th International Wittgenstein-Symposium

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PHILOSOPHY

Eds. Kjell S. Johannessen, Tore Nordenstam

O F C U L T U R E

**Wittgenstein
and the
Philosophy of Culture**

Proceedings of
the 18th International Wittgenstein Symposium

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Editors

KJELL S. JOHANNESSEN/TORE NORDENSTAM

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Introduction

The aim of the present volume is to further the development of two rather neglected areas: the philosophy of culture, in general, and, in particular, the philosophy of the humanities. The fascination with the natural sciences and technology, which is so typical of the century which is now approaching its end, has cast its spell also on its philosophers. This is certainly true of Ludwig Wittgenstein, the civil engineer who turned to philosophy in the hope of reaching a clear survey of those aspects of human culture which he found most troublesome. It is our conviction that the philosophical potential of Wittgenstein's *Nachlaß* has by no means been exhausted yet. Indeed, we are only in the beginning of drawing a map of culture where the fine arts and the humanities as well as say computer technology and advanced scientific research are shown in their complex relationships and mutual dependencies.

The conviction that the exploration of culture with philosophical means is an urgent task has guided our own work at the University of Bergen for the last twenty years. From this basis in the North of Europe, connections have been established in many directions. An important part of the work was the series of courses on "Wittgenstein and the Philosophy of Culture" which we arranged together with our Yugoslav colleague, Gajo Petrović, under the auspices of the university centre in Dubrovnik from 1987 to 1991, when the impending civil war put an end to those efforts. A good many of the participants in the present volume took part in those sessions, thus helping to create something resembling a common perspective or at least a family of closely related perspectives. Against this background, the opportunity to organise an international conference on "Culture and Value. Philosophy and the Cultural Sciences" was indeed a welcome one. The 18th International Wittgenstein Symposium took place in Kirchberg am Wechsel in August 1995 with precisely that title. The response to our call for papers was rather overwhelming. In the end, we found it possible to accommodate more than 150 contributions in that hectic Summer week. More than one hundred shorter contributions have already been printed in the bilingual volume *Culture and Value. Philosophy and the Cultural Sciences* (cf. the Appendix *infra*). In the volume which is being published now, we have collected a selection of the specially invited longer contributions together with expanded versions of two of the already published contributions. Some of those whom we were particularly interested in recruiting to the symposium and the present volume couldn't make it, for various reasons, but we are very pleased that it has proved possible to assemble in one volume so many relevant contributions to the philosophy of culture from precisely those philosophers whom we had in mind when this book was planned.

Kjell S. Johannessen
Tore Nordenstam

Bergen, March 1996

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