

Thursday–Friday, December 13–14, 2007

A Workshop on

Nicolai Hartmann, Biology, and Forms of Life

Organized by the

[Institute for Formal Ontology and Medical Information Science](#)

Saarland University (Building 6, Seminar room 1.32)

Funded by the Volkswagen Foundation – “Forms of Life” Project

Theme:

Philosophy of biology has its peculiar ontological problems such as reductionism, teleology, and the status of species. The German metaphysician Nicolai Hartmann (1882-1950) addresses these questions. Hartmann received a formation in medicine prior to entering philosophy, and he is especially interested in making his ontology conform to his knowledge of biology. One of the central theses of this ontology is that the world contains four distinct irreducible ontological strata, the organic (biological) realm being one of them. Combined with his general theory of categories, this thesis entails that there is a different set of categories for every stratum. In *Philosophische Grundfragen der Biologie* (1912) and *Philosophie der Natur* (1950), Hartmann gives an account of the set of categories belonging to the organic realm — the “organological categories”. We think his views on these matters are well worth to be reconsidered and contrasted with the reductionism and nominalism that dominates contemporary analytic metaphysics.

Program:

Thursday

- 14:00 Words of welcome
- 14:15 Rafael Hüntelmann (Frankfurt), “Nicolai Hartmann’s General Ontology”
- 15:30 Coffee
- 15:50 Erwin Tegtmeier (Mannheim), “A General Ontologist Looks at Hartmann's Organological Categories”
- 17:05 Coffee
- 17:15 Ingvar Johansson (Saarbrücken), “The Relevance of Hartmann’s Distinction between Superimposition and Superinformation”
- 18:30 End of the day
- 19:30 Dinner

Friday

- 9:30 Frédéric Tremblay (Buffalo), “The Ontological Status of Species in Nicolai Hartmann’s Organological Categories”
- 10:45 Coffee
- 11:05 Helmut Trützscher (Darmstadt), “Über die modale Struktur des Lebensprozesses bei Nicolai Hartmann”
- 12:20 End of the workshop

Program Committee:

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