

Nicolai Hartmann International Conference

La Sapienza University, Rome, Italy, July 19-21, 2010

The Nicolai Hartmann Society (NHS) was created in March 2009. From the time of its creation up to July 2010, the society grew to almost seventy members. The time was ripe for a first meeting of the society's members. The conference was organized by NHS board members R. Poli, C. Scognamiglio, and F. Tremblay. Scognamiglio took charge of the local organization. The conference brought together twelve Hartmann scholars interested in such topics as Hartmann's ontology, ethics and theory of values, his psychology and theory of emotions, his relationship with Plato, and his influence on twentieth century philosophical anthropology and biology. Nearly all presentations were innovative; they examined portions or aspects of Hartmann's *corpus* that were never studied before, in either the English- or German-speaking literature. This conference was the first in an open-ended series of biennial meetings of the NHS, the purpose of which is the promotion of Hartmann-studies, with the subsequent meeting scheduled to be held in the USA in 2012. In what follows I summarize each talk in chronological order and editorialize on occasion.

The first speaker was J. Fischer, Associate Professor of Sociological Theory at the University of Dresden. Fischer explained how Hartmann's influence contributed to shaping twentieth century German philosophical anthropology, a philosophical movement emerging in the twenties in Cologne around M. Scheler, H. Plessner, A. Gehlen, and E. Rothacker. Fischer, a long-time specialist in German philosophical anthropology, claimed that Hartmann had an important influence on this movement in two main respects. First, through his presence in Cologne from 1925, which allowed direct interaction with Scheler, Plessner, Gehlen, and Rothacker. Second, through his work, which contributed to shape Scheler and Plessner's conceptions. Concerning the first respect, Fischer recalls that during the twenties Hartmann got acquainted with Scheler, who estimated him as one of the most important philosophers of the younger generation, and with Plessner, who, fascinated with Hartmann, took him on the editorial board of his journal *Philosophischer Anzeiger*. In the forties Hartmann introduced the public to Gehlen's work on philosophical anthropology with his review of *Der Mensch, seine Stellung in der Welt* and arbitrated a rivalry between Plessner and Gehlen. From such interactions Fischer concluded that Hartmann played a key role in the development of the movement. As to his philosophical influence, according to Fischer, of most importance were his metaphysics of knowledge and his theory of levels of reality. Fischer

argued that *Metaphysik der Erkenntnis* allowed Scheler and Plessner to dispense with the neo-Kantian conception of the relation between subject and object and to put the subject back into the world of objects from which it emerged. And Hartmann's theory of levels allowed them to establish a link between the philosophy of biology, philosophical anthropology, and the philosophy of culture. According to Fischer, the reason Hartmann did not develop a philosophical anthropology of his own is because he considered this had been successfully achieved by Scheler, Plessner, and Gehlen. Fischer provided sufficient support for his claim that Hartmann had a significant influence on German philosophical anthropology and showed what aspects of his philosophy helped shape the movement.

After Fischer, R. Poli, Research Professor at the Department of Sociology and Social Research at the University of Trento, gave a talk entitled "Levels of Reality: An Alternative Architecture". What Hartmann calls "levels" (*Schichten*) are groups of categories related by relations either of superposition (*Überbauung*) or superformation (*Überformung*). Level x is *superposed* on level y iff level x builds over level y without being constituted by categories belonging to level y . In contrast, level x is *superformed* on level y iff level x builds over level y and is partially constituted by categories belonging to level y . According to Hartmann, the spiritual level (*geistige Schicht*) is superposed on the psychological level, the psychological superposed on the biological, and the biological superformed on the inorganic or, as Poli prefers to say, "physical". Poli then proceeded to a critical evaluation of the Hartmannian structure. According to him, this structure is problematic in at least two respects. First, it does not appear that the existence of the psychological level is independent of the spiritual level, for Poli places the personal spirit within the psychological level, and the existence of the personal spirit and objective spirit seem to be co-dependent. In fact, he said, even Hartmann admits this co-dependence when he says that «Personal and objective spirit bear one another»¹. If the objective spirit and the personal spirit bear each other, and if the psychological contains the personal spirit, then at least a portion of the psychological is co-dependent with the objective spirit. So Poli proposes to conceive them on a par and as both superposed on each other. Second, because the relation of superformation is "weaker" than that of superposition, Poli drops the former and conflates the biological and inorganic levels into a "material level". Poli thus obtains a triangular structure, in which the only remaining relation is that of superposition, which obtains between the material and the psychological levels, between the material and spiritual (or social, as he prefers to call it) levels, and between the psychological and social levels. We may ask whether the proposal is consistent with the definition of "superposition". Superposition, according to Hartmann, is a non-symmetric relation: «this relation obviously cannot be reversed»². This means that x cannot be superposed on y and y on x , at the same time. By implication, it seems that if the relation between the

1 N. Hartmann, *Das Problem des geistigen Seins*, de Gruyter, Berlin 1949, p. 200.

2 N. Hartmann, *New Ways of Ontology*, trans. by R.C. Kuhn, Greenwood Press, Westport 1952, p. 49.

psychological and the social groups of categories is symmetrical, then it cannot be a relation of superposition, at least not as Hartmann defines the latter.

Poli was followed by J. Dziadkowiec, PhD student in philosophy at the John Paul II Catholic University of Lublin, who gave a talk entitled “The Layered Structure of the World in N. Hartmann’s Ontology and a Processual View”. The presentation revolved around a comparison between Hartmann and Whitehead’s organismic cosmology. Dziadkowiec began by presenting a set of Hartmannian theses, distinctions, and definitions that pertains to the theory of categories and the theory of levels. He then turned to a presentation of some basic ideas of Whitehead’s process philosophy concerning the categories of creativity, one, many, actual entity, nexus, and society. This being done, he singled out three points of comparison among the previously presented notions: (i) Whitehead’s category of actual entity and its relation to Hartmannian categories; (ii) Whitehead’s category of society and its relation to Hartmann’s levels; and (iii) “linear-” and “tangled hierarchies” in relation to both Whitehead and Hartmann’s philosophies. The goal of this comparative study was to show that the further development of the theory of levels would benefit from tools and perspectives provided by Whiteheadian process philosophy. Regardless of whether this goal was achieved, the relevance of comparing or combining Hartmann’s ontology with Whitehead’s cosmology is dubious. True, there is a precedent to the comparison of Hartmann and Whitehead, namely J.N. Mohanty, *Nicolai Hartmann and Alfred North Whitehead: A Study in Recent Platonism*³. But whether Mohanty’s comparative study was a legitimate intellectual undertaking may also be questioned. Suspicions about the endeavor of comparing the two philosophers were already expressed by H. Wein – a personal acquaintance of Hartmann –, who said that «Hartmann’s *Realontologie* is [...] obviously incompatible with Whitehead’s ‘Philosophy of Organism’. The latter contains a considerable amount of teleological thinking. Furthermore, it shows again a fusion of philosophical and religious thinking»⁴. It is obvious indeed that Hartmann’s atheistic, irreductive-materialistic, realistic pluralism and Whitehead’s theistic, panpsychistic, pseudo-idealistic processual monism form mutually exclusive groups of theses.

One of the great *lacunae* in Hartmann’s works is a theory of “psychic activity” or “psyche.” In his talk, C. Scognamiglio, Adjunct Professor at La Sapienza University, Rome, attempted to reconstruct and to provide a glimpse into what might have been Hartmann’s theory of psychic activity. Assuming a systematic rather than developmental approach to the study of Hartmann’s philosophy, Scognamiglio examined passages from the whole *corpus* of Hartmann’s works in search of elements of a theory of psychic activity. He first looked at some of Hartmann’s claims about “psyche” in *Zur Grundlegung der Ontologie*, where we find, for instance, the the-

3 J.N. Mohanty, *Nicolai Hartmann and Alfred North Whitehead: A Study in Recent Platonism*, Progressive Publishers, Calcutta 1957.

4 H. Wein, “Foreword”, in J.N. Mohanty, *Nicolai Hartmann and Alfred North Whitehead: A Study in Recent Platonism*, Progressive Publishers, Calcutta 1957, p. xi.

sis that «psychic life [...] is not identical with consciousness»⁵. Scognamiglio then turned to passages of *Ethik* and *Das Problem des geistigen Seins*, where we learn that the reason Hartmann says that psychic life is not identical with consciousness is that, like Freud, he recognizes that the level of psychic activity contains both a conscious and an unconscious level. Hartmann's concept of "unconscious" is different from that of Freud, however. It denotes all psychic processes such as instinctual reactions, impulses, and volitional phenomena. Scognamiglio points out that in *Philosophie der Natur* Hartmann explains that this difference between the conscious and unconscious levels consists in the presence or absence of free determination. This is what distinguishes man from animal. Indeed, as Hartmann says in *Ethik*: «The unconsciousness of the animal is a dull, obscure life, a blind happening. Above this dark background in man rises the 'light' of consciousness, the seeing, the knowing life»⁶. But this is not to say that animals have no psychic life at all. As Hartmann writes in *Neue Wege der Ontologie*: «Psychic life is hardly found in man alone, but only in him do we find it at such a high level of development»⁷. Some animals do exhibit relatively advanced degrees of development, but their «resourcefulness remains limited, and their driving forces never exceed the environmental-instinctual solicitations. [...] Spiritual consciousness begins with the relief of the tension that frees one from impulses; with keeping a distance from one's object»⁸. Given that Hartmann left only fragments of his philosophy of psychic activity, the prospect of undertaking its reconstruction is promising for the future of Hartmann-studies.

Still related to the topic of psychological activity, R. Zaborowski, Professor of Greek Philosophy at the University of Warmia, gave an interesting talk on "Nicolai Hartmann's Approach to Affectivity and Its Relevance for the Current Debate over Emotions". Although Hartmann wrote no book on the problem of affectivity, he expressed views on that subject in various passages. Zaborowski, who is well acquainted with the debate on affectivity in the English-, French-, and Polish-speaking literature, paid attention to two main aspects of Hartmann's philosophy that, he claimed, would enrich the debate. The first aspect is Hartmann's theory of levels. In the debate, one of the main disagreements concerns the nature of affectivity. Some scholars reduce affective phenomena to biological dispositions, processes, and functions, some reduce them to mental and spiritual (i.e., socio-cultural) entities. Both are guilty of reductionism. Bringing Hartmann's theory of levels in the debate over affectivity, according to Zaborowski, would be a way of avoiding reductionism and would contribute to putting an end to the strict dichotomy of exclusive approaches that saturate the actual debate. The second issue considered was that of the duality of passive and active emotions. On this issue, again, the

5 N. Hartmann, *Zur Grundlegung der Ontologie*, de Gruyter, Berlin 1935, p. 10.

6 N. Hartmann, *Ethics*, vol. 2, trans. by S. Coit, Transaction Publishers, New Brunswick 2003, p. 134.

7 N. Hartmann, "Neue Wege der Ontologie", in N. Hartmann (ed.), *Systematische Philosophie*, W. Kohlhammer, Stuttgart 1942, p. 233.

8 N. Hartmann, *Das Problem des geistigen Seins*, de Gruyter, Berlin 1949, p. 109.

contemporary attitude is often exclusive and reductive. Some say that emotions are exclusively passive, some that they are exclusively active. A more nuanced perspective allowing for a dual passive/active nature of emotions is rarer. Despite its rarity, it is nevertheless more promising, according to Zaborowski, for it would account for what he claims to be the fact that some emotions are passive and others active. This conception comes from Hartmann, who identified three groups of emotional acts, two of which are passive and one of which is active. Once again, Hartmann's approach provides a more detailed phenomenology than the actual approaches. According to Zaborowski, an approach to affectivity grounded on these two aspects of Hartmann's philosophy would be preferable to the actual approaches, because the former makes possible complete explanations, whereas the latter offer only reductive and, therefore, incomplete explanations.

A. Pietras, Adjunct Professor at the Pomeranian University in Slupsk, gave an interpretation of "Nicolai Hartmann as a Post-Neo-Kantian". The aim of the speaker was to show how Hartmann's "correct" reading of Kant overcomes the neo-Kantian reading, leading to what she calls "post-neo-Kantianism", an expression coined by the Polish philosopher A.J. Noras to name a group of contemporary thinkers that includes N. Hartmann, M. Heidegger, K. Jaspers, H. Heimsoeth, and R. Hönlwald, all of whom had an interpretation of Kant's philosophy diverging from that of the neo-Kantians. As is well known, neo-Kantianism rejected as inessential the notion of a thing-in-itself. According to the neo-Kantian theory of knowledge, the object is created by the subject and the Kantian duality of appearances and things-in-themselves is no longer valid. Hartmann disagreed with this interpretation of Kant. He maintained that the notion of a thing-in-itself is essential to Kant's critical philosophy and that knowing is grasping something existing prior to and independently of our knowledge of it. For Hartmann, Pietras said, appearances are nothing else but manifestations of things-in-themselves. According to him, the origin of the neo-Kantian interpretation lies in the ambiguity of the notion of a thing-in-itself, which means at once "being" (*Ansichsein*) and "irrationality" (*Irrationalität*). The false idea that there need not be a relation between appearances and things-in-themselves is a result of the ambiguity of the notion of "thing-in-itself". And if appearances are indeed the manifestations of things-in-themselves, then there is no theory of knowledge without ontology. Any philosophical theory that overlooks this fact, such as the transcendental idealism of the Marburgian school, necessarily fails to grasp the problem of knowledge, for it excludes from its scope a range of essential questions, such as the limits of knowledge and the relation between the categories of cognition and the categories of being. This was a well structured, edifying talk.

The second day began with a block of three interrelated talks on Hartmann's ethics and theory of values by A. Kinneging, E. Kelly, and C. Matheus. Kinneging's opening talk was concerned with "Hartmann's Platonic Ethics". Kinneging, Professor of Legal Philosophy at the University of Leiden and, it should be mentioned, re-editor of Coit's translation of Hartmann's *Ethics*, claimed that Hartmann is «perhaps the purest Platonist philosopher of the twentieth century». Kinneging documented salient similarities between the two great moral realists.

First, according to Kinneging, Hartmann's theory of ideal being is identical to Plato's theory of intelligible forms. Generalizing from the eternity of mathematical principles, Plato concludes that intelligible forms exist outside of space and time. But, according to Kinneging, *this is no evidence for thinking that Plato located the intelligible forms in a realm separate from the realm of becoming*. He emphasizes that Plato *never suggests that they belong to a separate realm*. Intelligible forms simply have a different *way* of being. On this interpretation, Plato's theory of intelligible forms indeed closely resembles Hartmann's theory of ideal being. Hartmann makes a basic distinction between two *ways* of being: real being and ideal being. Real beings exist in time, come-to-be and pass-away. Ideal beings, in contrast, exist eternally. But they do not for that matter exist in a separate realm. They exist "through" the realm of becoming. This distinction, Kinneging claimed, is identical to Plato's distinction between the realm of becoming and the realm of intelligible forms. According to him, Plato's influence on this issue is obvious. Second, the ethics of both Plato and Hartmann is inseparably grounded in their ontologies, for values "exist" insofar as they have a *way* of being similar to mathematical entities. Plato and Hartmann's motivations for this interlocking of ontology and ethics are different, however, as Kinneging acknowledges. Plato's main interest is the question of the good life, whereas Hartmann is for the most part interested in ontology. Plato is interested in such intelligible moral forms as wisdom, temperance, courage, and justice. These four virtues occupy only a small place in Hartmann's much richer "catalogue of values". In this respect, Kinneging said, Hartmann can be considered to be furthering the moral philosophy of Plato. Kinneging's main claim, however, – that Hartmann is perhaps the purest Platonist of the twentieth century – may appear a little contentious if we consider what H. Wein said about Hartmann, that he «could equally well be called a 'Platonist' as an 'Anti-Platonist'».⁹

Hartmann's "catalogue of values," as Kinneging called it, was explored further by E. Kelly, Professor of Philosophy at the Department of Social Science at the New York Institute of Technology, in a compelling talk entitled "Hartmann on the Unity of Moral Value". Kelly reminded us that Hartmann complained that the two most important sections of his *Ethics*, namely the section on the lawful character of the table of values and that on the second antinomy of freedom, have been neither disputed nor developed by his contemporaries. So Kelly decided to do what Hartmann once wished his contemporaries would do: examine Hartmann's "catalogue of values" and demonstrate a few other synthetic virtues using Hartmann's method. To achieve this goal, Kelly examined Hartmann's methods for discovering values and synthesizing discovered values. According to Hartmann, moral consciousness is directed to the phenomena of values as such. They can thus be known by phenomenological analysis. Scheler's *Formalism in Ethics* was an influence in regard to this aspect of Hartmann's method. Scheler claimed before Hartmann that values

⁹ H. Wein, *Foreword* to J.N. Mohanty, *Nicolai Hartmann and Alfred North Whitehead: A Study in Recent Platonism*, Progressive Publishers, Calcutta 1957, p. xi.

exist in an ideal realm, containing vertically arranged discrete strata of different kinds of values, where each stratum contains values of a worth higher or lower to the adjacent strata. To Scheler's vertical structure Hartmann added an horizontal dimension containing the values present on the same vertical axis. Hartmann also divided the virtues in three groups, each ranking the virtues according to their relative value with respect to each other and to Scheler's ladder of the kinds of values. Besides the phenomenological approach to discovering and synthesizing values, Hartmann proposed two further methods: (i) the use of analogies between ontological and axiological categories, and (ii) the use of the Aristotelian notion of virtue as a mean between two vices. Concerning the latter, Hartmann supplements the Aristotelian mean using a technique developed by M.L. von Kohoutek. Extending this technique, Hartmann sought to exhibit what he calls oppositional complementary relations among values. Here he claims to have discovered not only that virtue is a mean between vices of excess and deficiency, but also that there can be a synthesis of the content of the virtue and the positive values opposed to the disvalues carried by the two related vices. The unity Hartmann sought requires a synthesis of oppositions arising from the diverse moral burdens, responsibilities and injunctions that values place on us. According to Kelly, however, Hartmann was not only proposing an axiology that synthesizes values via the Aristotelian mean, but also proposing a moral life in which one is constantly watchful of conflicting positive values and always tries to balance them.

C. Matheus, Professor of Ethics and Political Philosophy at the Pontifical Catholic University of São Paulo, delivered a paper on "The Ethical Building of the World" in which he explored a convergence in the ethical works of Hartmann and Scheler. Matheus reminded us of the different ways in which ethics has been conceived throughout the history of philosophy. Plato and Aristotle understood it as the development of personal dispositions by means of the search for the Good. With Spinoza it became a search for a sort of wisdom laid down by Nature. For Kant it was the rational determination of right and wrong. According to Matheus, Scheler and Hartmann, who reject all these conceptions, opened a new path. This path is characterized by the discovery of the realm of objective values. According to Hartmann, as Kinneging explained earlier, values exist in an ideal realm different from reality but immanent to it. Ideal entities, such as the principles of mathematics, are eternal. Thus, values qua ideal beings are eternal, too. But they also have a temporal manifestation in reality. This manifestation on the side of reality requires them to be perceived. This perception is a sort of emotional intuition that only mankind possesses. So the presence of mankind is required for the realization of values. And this realization of values is what Matheus called "the ethical building of the world". But this act of "building" is not a sort of constructivism, for values exist objectively. It is rather an act of "discovering". And, as Hartmann said, the realm of values has not yet been totally discovered and it is mankind's task to keep discovering them. The perception of values always changes but the values themselves, as ideal essences, never change. Ethics understood in this new sense is not a separate discipline, for it requires what Hartmann calls a "metaphysics of values", i.e., it requires that we map out the objective values in order to determine

the moral actions to undertake. The convergence of ethical principles and objective principles, Matheus claimed, implies a convergence of ethics and ontology.

The conference changed direction as it left behind ethical issues to turn to the influence Hartmann had on twentieth century biology. S. Vasta, Professor of Philosophy at the University of Catania, talked about “The Place of Nicolai Hartmann’s Ontology in Konrad Lorenz’s Epistemology”. Vasta claimed that an important portion of Lorenz’s work was influenced by German philosophers, especially Kant, Goethe, Hartmann and Gehlen. The aim of his talk was to focus on Hartmann’s influence. According to Vasta, Lorenz borrowed three main theses from Hartmann: (i) the rejection of Kantian a priorism; (ii) the reversal of the neo-Kantian world-view; (iii) the partial correspondence of the categories of cognition and the categories of reality. Concerning the first thesis, the issue is whether our representation of the external world is due to our own a priori activity alone or whether, as a result of natural selection, our categorial scheme adequately corresponds to the external world. In *Kant’s Lehre vom Apriorischen im Lichte gegenwärtiger Biologie*, Lorenz proposed a biological reading of Kant’s notion of *a priori*¹⁰. But, according to Vasta, he later realized under the influence of Hartmann that knowledge is a part of being. This realization led him to reject the Kantian notion of *a priori* and to adopt a naturalistic conception of knowledge. Regarding the second thesis, Vasta claimed that Hartmann influenced Lorenz’s world-view in *Behind the Mirror* (1973), where he quotes *Der Aufbau der realen Welt* (1949) at considerable length. It is clear, said Vasta, that in *The Natural Science of the Human Species* (1944-1948), Lorenz adhered to a model of reality that contained only a physical, a chemical, and a biological level. But, due to the influence of Hartmann, Lorenz later came to acknowledge the existence of a “spiritual” (i.e., socio-cultural) level in *Behind the Mirror*. As to the third thesis, Lorenz entertains an evolutionary epistemology grounded on hypothetical realism, the basic assumption of which is that human cognition, which has evolved in interaction with the external world, has adapted itself to the task of representing the world more or less accurately. According to Vasta, Lorenz’ evolutionary epistemology was influenced by Hartmann’s theory of knowledge, according to which the categories of human cognition partially correspond to the categories of reality. Vasta provided satisfactory textual evidence in support to his main claim and his work should be of equal interest to historians of science and Hartmann scholars.

F. Tremblay, PhD Student at the University at Buffalo and Adjunct Professor at Niagara University, presented a paper on Hartmann’s influence on the development of W. Hennig’s phylogenetic systematics. Even though the biological aspect of Hartmann’s philosophy of nature has been neglected in both the German and English speaking literature, it played a non-negligible developmental role in biology. Tremblay presented some of Hartmann’s theses about biological organisms and species and showed how Hennig borrowed and used these theses to provide

10 K. Lorenz, “Kant’s Lehre vom Apriorischen im Lichte gegenwärtiger Biologie”, *Blätter für Deutsche Philosophie*, vol. 15, 1941, pp. 94-125.

a metaphysical foundation to phylogenetic systematics. According to Hartmann, an organism is a system (*Gefüge*) of processes, forms, and functions. *Qua* system it can be an element in a higher-order system. It is also an individual in virtue of having temporal boundaries, namely the completion of its form and death. In contrast, species are also systems, but they are systems of *processes only*, and because processes exist only in time, species exist only in the temporal dimension. They stand in element-system relations to the life processes of organisms. So species are no longer universals, as in the Aristotelian-Linnaean tradition; they are now individual wholes composed of life processes of individual organisms. And they are individuals, too, in virtue of having speciation events as boundaries. Having presented Hartmann's conception of organisms and species, Tremblay turned to Hennig. Since Darwin the species-concept cannot denote a universal anymore, for it has been demonstrated that species change, and universals cannot change. As a result, biologists have sought a method to classify species in a way that reflects evolution, and it is only in the twentieth century, with Hennig, that such a system was fully developed. Phylogenetic systematics is the methodology designed by Hennig to classify organisms, species, and higher-order biological categories according to genealogical relations on a tree-like diagram. So Hennig needed a metaphysics in which species are at once individuals and processes between speciation events. According to Tremblay, in his search for a metaphysical foundation for his new methodology, Hennig found support in the aforementioned Hartmannian definition of species. Through a collection of textual evidences Tremblay showed that Hennig relied on at least four basic Hartmannian theses, namely (i) that what is real is what is temporal; (ii) that species are supra-individuals; (iii) that species are processes; and (iv) that species are individuals in virtue of having more or less definite temporal boundaries.

The closing talk entitled "Nicolai Hartmann's Plato. A Tribute to the Power of Dialectics (*Parmenides*, 135c 2)" was given by C. Luchetti, Scuola Normale Superiore di Pisa and Adjunct Professor at the University of Tübingen. Luchetti discussed Hartmann's interpretation of Plato as he presents it in *Platos Logik des Seins*. She paid attention to three aspects of Hartmann's interpretation: (i) his characteristically metaphysical reading of the theory of Ideas; (ii) his interpretation of Plato's dialectics; and (iii) his interpretation of Plato's view of the relation between time and eternity. (i) In her exploration of Hartmann's metaphysical interpretation of the theory of Ideas, Luchetti reached two conclusions. Hartmann reads Plato as identifying Ideas with principles of unity organized in a genus-species hierarchy subordinated by the Good. According to this interpretation, the highest genera of being of the *Sophist* (Being-Nonbeing, Same-Other, Motion-Rest) are subordinated to the Good. Hartmann also gives an Idealist reading of Plato, who, according to him, identifies Thought and Being in the *Phaedrus*. (ii) Luchetti claimed that Hartmann has a peculiar interpretation of Plato's dialectics. He interprets the separation of the intelligible realm and of the realm of becoming as an absolute otherness of the intelligible realm. The most important consequence of his interpretation is that negativity has now to be understood as essential to the intelligible realm. This absolute otherness, or the genus of "the Other" from the

Sophist, allows the soul to rise to the intelligible realm, to acquire knowledge of the Beautiful, and to reveal the dialectical meaning of difference qua negation. (iii) As to Hartmann's interpretation of Plato's view of the relationship between time and eternity, in the notion of "instant" (*exaifnès*) Hartmann sees the activity of *noûs* as aiming at combining conceptual differences and contradictions in a higher level unity. The theory of instant explains why every ideal unity has to include Motion and Rest. It also explains the possibility of the passage between the highest genera of Motion and Rest. The acknowledgment of this possibility in Plato's text confirms in turn the interpretation that for Plato the intelligible realm is essentially living and thinking – an interpretation that is, in the most recent literature, rarely accepted and understood according to Luchetti. During the discussion period the question was asked as to why Hartmann is not given his fair share of credibility as an ancient Greek philosophy scholar. Luchetti answered that, in fact, in her circle Hartmann's interpretation of the Greeks is not only taken into account but also held in high esteem.

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