Fachbereich Philosophie

Fachbereichskolloquium
Sommersemester 2019

18:15 bis 19:45, G 307

Im Rahmen des PHILOSOPHISCHEN KOLLOQUIUMS findet am
Donnerstag, 11. Juli, folgender Vortrag statt:

James Tappenden
University of Michigan, Ann Arbor

Frege, Carl Snell and Romanticism
Fruitful Concepts and the ‘Organic/Mechanical’ Distinction

A surprisingly neglected figure in Frege scholarship is the man Frege describes (with praise
that is very rare for Frege) as his “revered teacher”, the Jena physics and mathematics profes­
sor Carl Snell. There is more of interest to say about Snell than can fit into one talk, so I’ll re­
strict attention here to just this aspect of his thought: the role of the concept of “organic”,
and a contrast with “mechanical”. Snell was a philosophical Romantic, influenced by Schelling
and Goethe, and Kant’s Critique of Judgement. In Frege’s environment, the “organic/mechan­i­
cal” contrast, understood Romantically, was a recognized cliché. More generally, Frege’s en­
vironment was more saturated with what we now call “Continental philosophy” than we might
expect.

This context-setting pays off for our reading of Frege’s texts: many turns of phrase that have
been regarded as vague, throwaway metaphors turn out to be literal nods to familiar ideas in
Frege’s environment. In particular, this is true of Frege’s account of “extending knowledge”
via “fruitful concepts”, his appeal to “organic connections”, and his rejection of a “mechani­
cal” conception of arithmetic.

Alle Interessierten, insbesondere auch Studierende, sind herzlich eingeladen.

nächster Vortrag: 18. Juli
Wilson Mendonça, Federal University of Rio de Janeiro
Supervenience Arguments against Robust Moral Realism

Organisation: Prof. Dr. Thomas Müller
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