



NINA - Norms in Nature: Rethinking the Natural Side of Normativity. Towards a New Hegelian Paradigm

Classical German philosophy (CGP) is considered a source of modern thinking regarding norms. However, ideas arranged on a dichotomy of norms and nature are indefensible today. The EU-funded NINA project will develop a new pattern as regards standards of thinking – far from the firm dualism by bringing back Hegel's forgotten and unexplored theory of normativity. The goal is to recover Kant's tradition that places norms in nature. Opening a new narrative in the newly emerging field of the history of metanormativity, the NINA project will implement a cross-and-inter-disciplinary programme uniting most advanced European and American researchers in CGP. The project aims to reconstruct Hegel's views on natural normativity through a dialogue. European researchers will profit from exceptional training and future collaborations with US institutions.

"What are norms? Where do they come from? NINA aims to develop a new paradigm for thinking norms, moving beyond the prevailing but rigid dualism between norms and nature. It does so by excavating (and updating) a largely neglected tradition within Classical German Philosophy (CGP) with great potential for current scholarship. CGP is recognized as the origin of modern reflections on norms (the so-called "normative turn"). However, prominent philosophers have imported ideas from CGP into current debates to defend "non-naturalist", "constructivist" theories of norms. Aside from being historically inaccurate, these theories setup a problematic dichotomy between norms and nature, increasingly recognized as untenable. Yet there exists within CGP an alternative, forgotten line of thought – started by Kant and pursued by Hegel – that locates norms in nature. Rather than "leaving nature behind," Hegel analyzed key natural-scientific notions ("organism", "function" etc.) to reveal forms of normativity in nature. NINA aims to recover this unexplored tradition. Bringing together the most up-to-date EU and US research in CGP with the best work on "normativity" and "naturalism", it will: (1) Open a new narrative in the growing field of the "history of metanormativity", by disclosing the post-Kantian tradition of normativity in nature (2) Provide the first comprehensive reconstruction of Hegel's views on natural normativity through direct dialogue with today's debates on norms (3) Develop key Hegelian insights for current debates.

NINA implements a unique cross- and inter-disciplinary program that uncovers promising ideas from the past and mobilises them to impact current debates. Offering outstanding, focused training to the ER, NINA will facilitate unique transfer-of-knowledge and develop pathways for future cooperation with prestigious US institution (i.e. the largest Consortium for German Philosophy in the US), thus greatly improving the study of classical philosophy in Europe."

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