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## In Memory of Rudolf Haller (1929–2014)

With Rudolf Haller's death,<sup>1</sup> after several years of serious illness, on February 14th, 2014, in Graz, Austria, the world of philosophy has lost a highly distinguished scholar, and Austria has lost one of the most internationally renowned philosophers of the post-war period.

Born in 1929 in St. Gallen, Styria, Austria, Haller studied philosophy, sociology, history and art history at the University of Graz. He wrote a PhD thesis examining the work of the Russian existentialist philosopher Leo Shestov. After his graduation from Graz, Haller spent one year in Oxford (1958–59), where he began to turn to analytical philosophy. Based on this new orientation, his habilitation thesis, submitted at the University of Graz in 1961, discusses the problem of meaning. In later years, theory of knowledge became one of his main fields of interest, where Haller specifically focused on the issue of 'fictional objects'.

From 1967 through 1997 Rudolf Haller held the chair for 'Philosophische Grundlagenforschung' at the University of Graz, while serving as visiting professor at numerous leading universities, for instance in Beijing, Munich, Rome, Sao Paulo and Stanford. His research work comprises more than 400 publications, covering a diversity of areas, from logics and philosophy of science through the Vienna Circle, Wittgenstein, and aesthetics. To highlight but a few titles: *Urteile und Ereignisse. Studien zur philosophischen Logik und Erkenntnistheorie* (1982); *Fragen zu Wittgenstein und Aufsätze zur österreichischen Philosophie* (1986); *Facta und ficta. Studien zu ästhetischen Grundlagenfragen* (1986); *Neopositivismus. Eine historische Einführung in die Philosophie des Wiener Kreises* (1993); *Nach Kakanien – Annäherung an die Moderne* (1996); *Skizzen zur österreichischen Philosophie* (2000). His work was translated into Chinese, English, Italian, Japanese and Portuguese.

One core concern of Rudolf Haller's academic commitment was to generate a new beginning of philosophy in Austria – not only by introducing analytic philosophy but also by claiming that a specific Austrian history of philosophy has developed since the 19th century. This history "is strictly to be distinguished from the course of philosophy in other German speaking countries",

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1 This obituary was presented at the Institut International de Philosophie (IIP), Entretiens de Rome, Assemblée générale, 27 September 2014.

as Haller emphasized, for instance in a lecture in Beijing, China. In explaining this research project, he referred specifically to Bernard Bolzano and Ludwig Wittgenstein. Haller gained a high reputation in this field as an editor and co-editor, specifically with the 7 volumes of the *Alexis Meinong Gesamtausgabe* (co-edited with Rudolf Kindinger and Roderick M. Chisholm, 1968–1978), the 5 volumes of *Otto Neurath, Gesammelte Schriften* (1981–1998), and the book *Ernst Mach – Werk und Wirkung* (co-edited with Friedrich Stadler, 1988). Pursuing this line of interest, Haller also edited the *Studien zur Österreichischen Philosophie*, beginning in 1979. Additionally, he founded and edited for more than a quarter century (1975–2001) the Journal *Grazer Philosophische Studien. International Journal for Analytic Philosophy*; remarkable 61 volumes of the *Grazer Philosophische Studien* were published under his auspices.

Haller's persistent commitment to innovation also manifested itself in the foundation of, and support for, several extra-mural institutions. In 1982, Haller founded the 'Forschungsstelle und Dokumentationszentrum für Österreichische Philosophie'. As this documentation center covers philosophical work from all parts of Austria, including current research from different 'schools' of thought, it is of invaluable and lasting importance. Furthermore, Haller has served for many years as chairman of the advisory board of the Vienna-based 'Vienna Circle Institute: Society for the Advancement of the Scientific World Conception', and was among the founding members of the Austrian Ludwig Wittgenstein Society that has organized the annual International Wittgenstein Congresses in Kirchberg am Wechsel, Austria, from 1976 to the present.

One element of these manifold activities was Rudolf Haller's participation in a number of international institutions. Most notably, he was elected membre titulaire of the I.I.P. at the assemblée générale in Oslo, September 4th, 1979, and he also served in the Steering Committee of FISP (Fédération Internationale des Sociétés de Philosophie). The author of this homage had the privilege of frequently meeting with Rudolf Haller in the context of both these institutions, for instance, at a FISP conference hosted by the Chinese Academy of Social Sciences, Beijing, 2002, where Haller read a paper on "Wittgenstein – Poetry and Literature", at the World Congress of Philosophy in Istanbul, 2003, and at the I.I.P. meeting in Naples. Also, she vividly remembers Rudolf Haller's contributions at the international workshop "Wittgenstein dans la perception d'une philosophie post-analytique", held at the Austrian Cultural Centre, Paris, in the year 1990, where he participated in discussions with Hilary Putnam and younger Austrian philosophers focusing on current post-analytic approaches. It was impressive to experience how Haller, while defending a classical analytic

position, was willing to bridge school differences, not least by means of his unique – sharp-sighted as well as charming – sense of humor, which will certainly be remembered by all who had the privilege of getting to know him personally.

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