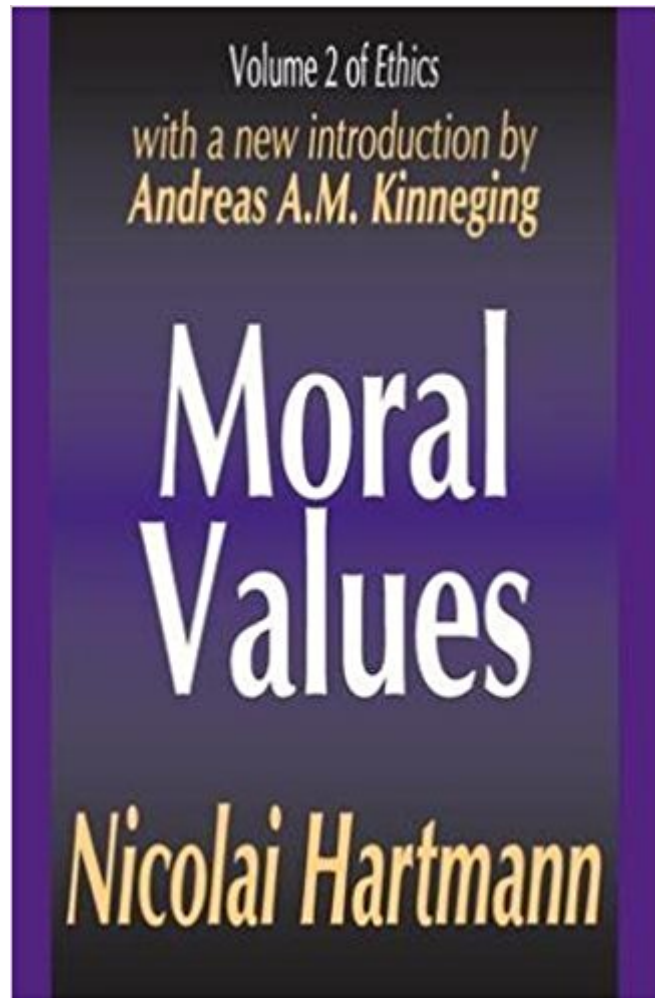




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Moral Values (Ethics, Vol. 2)



Synopsis

Nicolai Hartmann (1882-1950), along with Henri Bergson and Martin Heidegger, was instrumental in restoring metaphysics to the study of philosophy. Unlike his contemporaries, however, Hartmann was clearly influenced by Plato. His tour-de-force, *Ethik*, published in English in 1932 as *Ethics*, may be the most outstanding work on moral philosophy produced in the twentieth century. In the first part of *Ethics* (Moral Phenomena), Hartmann was concerned with the structure of ethical phenomena, and criticized utilitarianism, Kantianism, and relativism as misleading approaches. In the second part, *Moral Values*, the author describes all values as forming a complex and as yet imperfectly known system. The actualization of the non-moral and elementary moral values is a necessary condition for the actualization of the higher values. It is on this account that rudimentary values have a prior claim. Hartmann outlines the main features of the chief virtues, and shows that the moral disposition required in any exigency is always a specific synthesis of various and often conflicting values. Specifically describing fundamental moral values-such as goodness, nobility, and vitality-and special moral values-such as justice, wisdom, courage, self-control, trustworthiness, and modesty-Hartmann takes theoretical philosophy and brings it very much into the realm of the practical. A compelling and insightful volume, *Moral Values* remains an essential contribution to the moral and ethical literature of the twentieth century. Hartmann offers a self-contained system of ethics that yet offers a conservative outlook on social life.

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