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John R. Shook

WERKMEISTER, William Henry (1901–93)

William Henry Werkmeister was born on 10 August 1901 in Asendorf, Germany. After studying at the University of Münster from 1920 to 1923, he emigrated to the United States in 1923. He received his PhD in philosophy from the University of Nebraska in 1927, writing a dissertation titled "Driesch's Philosophy: An Exposition and a Critical Analysis." He became a naturalized US citizen in 1929. While still a graduate student, Werkmeister joined the University of Nebraska faculty in 1926 and remained there until 1953. He began as an assistant instructor in philosophy from 1926 to 1928, then instructor from 1928 to 1931. He was promoted to assistant professor in 1931 and associate professor in 1940. He served as department chair from 1945 to 1953, and was

promoted to full professor in 1947. In 1954 he joined the faculty of the University of Southern California as professor of philosophy and Director of the School of Philosophy, and taught there until 1966, after which he was professor of philosophy at Florida State University until retiring in 1972. He remained active at Florida State until the year of his death. He died on 24 November 1993 in Tallahassee, Florida.

Werkmeister was President of three professional societies: the Pacific Division of the American Philosophical Association in 1964–5, the Florida Philosophical Association in 1973, and the American Society for Value Inquiry in 1974–5. In addition to contributing over 100 scholarly articles and over 400 book reviews to academic journals, he was editor of *The Personalist* from 1959 to 1966.

Werkmeister's philosophical interests included the issues and theories raised by Kant, Martin Heidegger, Edmund Husserl, and Nicolai Hartmann. In his posthumously published work (1996), he explored the tortuous riddle of the order of Heidegger's works, posing a bold interpretation of their chronological order but also a defense of Heidegger's attraction to National Socialism. But the deeper theme here and elsewhere in his work was the inadequacy of post-Kantian German philosophies in ignoring space, and in its extraordinary preoccupation with time and its relation to human being and human death. Werkmeister believed firmly that Kant's problematic set the full theme for subsequent philosophical work, and he found much of it incomplete in grappling with Kant's challenges.

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Richard T. Hull