

FLECK LECTURE

THE EPIGENETIC TURN: 20TH-CENTURY DEVELOPMENTAL APPROACHES TO HEREDITY AND EVOLUTION

Prof. **Eva Jablonka** (Cohn Institute for the History and Philosophy of Science and Ideas at Tel Aviv University) and Dr. **Marion Lamb** (Birkbeck, University of London)

Donnerstag, 22. Oktober 2009, 19 Uhr
Semper-Sternwarte, Schmelzbergstr. 25, 8006 Zürich

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For most of the 20th century, soft inheritance, which includes the inheritance of acquired characters, was written out of theories of heredity and evolution. Heredity was identified with genetics, and hereditary variations were seen in terms of combinations of randomly generated gene mutations. However, since the 1990s, biologists have been reappraising the role of developmentally acquired variations, and it is now recognised that some variations – epigenetic variations – which arise in response to the environmental conditions, can be inherited.

We will discuss how and why concepts of heredity have changed, and the repercussions this has for evolutionary thinking. We will also consider whether some of Fleck's ideas can help us to understand the factors that contributed to biologists' reluctance to accept that soft inheritance has played a role in evolution.

Moderator: Prof. **Johannes Fehr** (Leiter Ludwik Fleck Zentrum)

In Verbindung mit der Fleck Lecture findet unter dem Titel «**The day after seminar**» am **Freitag, 23. Oktober 2009, 10.15 bis 12 Uhr**, mit den Referentinnen ein öffentliches Kolloquium statt. Ort: **Collegium Helveticum, Schmelzbergstr. 25, 8006 Zürich**. Um Anmeldung wird gebeten: (info@ludwikfleck.ethz.ch oder Ludwik Fleck Zentrum, Schmelzbergstr. 25, 8092 Zürich).

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