

ABSTRACTS



The manuscript by Aby Warburg *The migration of the world of the ancient gods and their entry into the high Italian Renaissance*, and still unpublished even in German, is the text of a conference held in Göttingen in November 1913.

The attempt to retrace, from the historical-artistic point of view, the migration of the ancient world of the gods until their entry into the upper Italian Renaissance, presupposes for Warburg that we consider the more general question of the role of the influence of the Ancient on the civilization of the Italian Renaissance based on an enlargement of the geographical and chronological assumption.

Only if we consider the restoration of classical antiquity in Italy as a comparison within a wider community that, including East and West, had never ceased to cultivate in its own way and seriously the memory of the ancient

world of the gods, then understands why the stylistic change created by Italian art in conceiving the ancient figures of the gods must be considered and studied as a cultural event of European importance.

In order to conceive the character of this confrontation within this cultural community, Warburg traces the area and lines of migration of the ancient world of gods from West to East and from South to North. The East and the West equally shared the administration of this pagan heritage, although they guaranteed a shelter under the form of pagan idols to their bitter enemies of the new religiosity, enemies never completely vanquished.

The Warburg thesis is that the pagan gods never died and that they survived, despite the barbarized and Christianized iconography, in other forms and then resurrected in their identity in the Italian high-Renaissance figurative art. The pagan gods had survived, in short, as "incarnations of ideas" that would be impressed in Renaissance art where they would resume their distant appearance. On the walls and vaults of the palaces, or in the domes of the chapels, the still alive contents were rejoined to the previous forms: irreducible to the pure decorative function, a whole "universe of planetary gods, heroes and allegories" claimed their ancestry.

PIERRE KELLER, *Kant's "Proud Name of Ontology" Between Cassirer's Philosophy of Symbolic Forms and Heidegger's Being and Time*

Cassirer anticipates Heidegger's question of being in its unity and in its diversity. The connection between the unity and diversity of being is crucial to the pluralism that both Cassirer and Heidegger inherit from Kant. Cassirer anticipates Heidegger's conception of dwelling as being-in-the-world and can effectively rebut Heidegger's charge that he and Kant work with a worldless epistemic subject. Dwelling is key to the natural concept of the world, but not for Cassirer key to understanding being itself. Pure being is manifest in the being of the copula as an expression of what Kant calls pure apperception. Heidegger takes event to be that through which everything comes into its own proper significance in our dwelling as being-in-the-world. The process by which Cassirer's seemingly much more abstract pure being as functional-sequential unity institutes significance betrays their common origin in Kant's apperception of our world from within the world.

Keywords: Cassirer – Heidegger – ontology – temporality – Ereignis

SEBASTIAN LUFT, *Cohen's Idea of a Philosophy of Culture and the Question of the Human Subject*

The paper treats the human subject in the context of Cohen's philosophy of culture. In addition to his *Logic of Pure Cognition*, *Ethics of Pure Willing* and *Aesthetics of Pure Feeling*, Cohen's planned System of Philosophy was to be completed by a fourth volume, intended to be a Psychology and to deal with the "unity of cultural consciousness" (*Einheit of Kulturbewusstsein*). His *Ethics* – in the *Introduction* and the final chapter 16 "Humanity" – contain some interesting remarks and passages on the nature of the human subject, testifying to Cohen's peculiar treatment of the individual. The key term for his consideration of the human being is thus the "unity of cultural consciousness", the unity of human being and culture, the alleged unity of theory of consciousness and theory of culture. Ethics itself «as the doctrine of the human being» is the «doctrine of the concept of the human being».

Keywords: Hermann Cohen – neo-kantianism – ethics – philosophical anthropology

LYDIA PATTON, *Cassirer and Steinthal on Expression and the Science of Language*

Ernst Cassirer distinguished between the expressive and representative forms of thought and language, one reason Cassirer is read as a mediator between Heidegger and Carnap. This essay finds a source of Cassirer's expressive function in Heymann Steinthal's 1871 work *Abriss der Sprachwissenschaft*, one thesis of which is that language, «independently of logic, establishes its forms in complete autonomy». While the thesis appears to be in conflict with Carnap's later views on the «language of science», I urge that we should not draw that conclusion too hastily. Cassirer's and Steinthal's positions are consistent with the claim that once linguistic forms are established they can be represented in an inferential system. Instead, Cassirer and Steinthal wanted to emphasize, against Humboldt and Mill, that the expressive form of any one natural language shouldn't be identified with the capacity for rational thought.

Keywords: Cassirer – Carnap – Steinthal – language – logic

SIMON TRUWANT, *Cassirer's Enlightened View on the Hierarchy of the Symbolic Forms and the Task of Philosophy*

This paper aims to clarify an apparent inconsistency in Cassirer's view on the relation between the different domains of human culture. On the one hand, Cassirer insists that there is no shared criterion by means of which we could establish a hierarchy among these domains. Yet, on the other hand he also holds that mythical thought needs to be overcome, while calling language the most important, and science the highest attainment of culture. In order to reconcile these claims, I first demonstrate that Cassirer's relativistic and hierarchical accounts of the symbolic forms originate in his respective transcendental and critical views of human culture. While the former perspective explains our generically distinct *worldviews*, the latter discerns a progressive *self-understanding* of symbolic consciousness. Next, I argue that these perspectives complement each other in so far as they both promote an Enlightened conception of human culture and an ethical view on the task of philosophy.

Keywords: hierarchy of cultural domains – critical-transcendental philosophy – self-understanding – enlightenment