

FROM MYTH TO RELIGION - AND BACK AGAIN?
CASSIRER, PHILOSOPHY OF RELIGION, AND THEOLOGY

The Fourth Ernst Cassirer Summer School

Helsinki 25–27 August, 2008

The return of mythical consciousness remains a challenge for cultural theory and for any attempt to understand the ‘human condition.’ It also implies important questions for philosophy and systematic theology. In Cassirer’s view, religion fosters man’s self-liberation from the mythical. Nonetheless, it still uses the images, signs and symbols which originally belonged to mythical consciousness, but which now are transformed and changed in a significant way. Thus, the step from myth to religion and back again is significant for the entire process of symbolic formation.

The Ernst Cassirer Summer School forms part of the Ernst Cassirer professorship, funded by the Volkswagen Foundation and located at Swedish Collegium for Advanced Study (SCAS) in Uppsala. The current holder of the chair, Professor Michael Moxter, SCAS and the Helsinki Collegium for Advanced Studies together organize the Summer School on August 25–27 in Helsinki.

One of the main reasons for the institutionalization of the Ernst Cassirer professorship is the intention to intensify the scientific cooperation between Germany and the Scandinavian Countries. The Summer School will bring together outstanding young scholars (doctoral and postdoctoral) from Scandinavia and Germany.

Welcome to Helsinki and the 2008 Summer School.

Barbro Klein, Michael Moxter, Juha Sihvola and Björn Wittrock

PROGRAM

Please note: Lectures consist of 45 minutes lecture and 45 minutes discussion. Paper sessions consist of 15–20 minutes of presentation by the author and 40–45 minutes discussion based on the paper.

August 25

Venue: Helsinki Collegium for Advanced Studies
Chair: Michael Moxter

- 13.00 Welcome and introduction
Barbro Klein
Juha Sihvola
- 14.00 – 15.30 1st Lecture:
Language and Myth
Gerald Hartung
- 15.30 – 16.00 Coffee break
- 16.00 – 17.00 1st Paper Session:
Religion and Space According to Cassirer
Mathias Benckert
- 17.15 – 18.15 2nd Paper Session:
Myth and Religion: "Religion" as Myth
Jon Wittrock
- 18.15 Summer School reception

August 26

Venue: Helsinki Collegium for Advanced Studies
Chairs: Barbro Klein and Thomas Wabel

- 09.00 – 10.30 2nd Lecture:
Liberalism, Religion and the Public Square
Juha Sihvola
- 10.30 – 11.00 Coffee break

- 11.00 – 12.00 Back to the Sources I:
Reading Cassirer, *The Philosophy of Symbolic Forms*, Vol. 2, pp. 155–158 and 215–218.
- 12.00– 14.15 Lunch
- 14.15 – 15.15 3rd Paper Session:
Idealization, Idolization, and Iconicity
Rebekka A. Klein
- 15.30 – 16.30 4th Paper Session:
Cassirer's Critique of Culture: How to justify expressive perception
Sirkku Ikonen
- 16.30 – 17.00 Coffee break
- 17.00 – 18.00 5th Paper Session:
Faith with Personal Settings: The Rational Self and Re-Islamisation in South Yemen
Susanne Dahlgren
- 19.00 Dinner

August 27

Venue: Helsinki Collegium for Advanced Studies
Chairs: Michael Moxter and Juha Sivhola

- 09.00 – 10.30 3rd Lecture:
Religion in the Post-secularized Society
Thomas Schmidt
- 10.30 – 11.00 Coffee break
- 11.00 – 12.00 Back to the Sources II:
Reading Cassirer, *The Philosophy of Symbolic Forms*, Vol. 3, pp. 77–79 and 88–91.
- 12.00 – 13.30 Lunch
- 13.30 – 14.30 6th Paper Session:
Charles Taylor on Secularization and the Enchanted World
Arto Laitinen
- 14.30 – 15.30 7th Paper Session:
Language and Consciousness: Liebruck and Cassirer
Simone Liedtke
- 15.30 – 16.00 Coffee break

- 16.00 – 17.00 8th Paper Session:
*Different Approaches Towards Symbolism: Cassirer and Tillich on the
Structure of Religious and Mythical Consciousness*
Lars Heinemann
- 17.00 – 18.00 Concluding session
- 19.00 Dinner

PARTICIPANTS

- Mathias Benckert*, Protestant Church, Nordelbien, Schleswig
Dr. Susanne Dahlgren, Helsinki Collegium for Advanced Studies
Dr. Sara Grut, Swedish Collegium for Advanced Study
PD Dr. Gerald Hartung, Protestant Institute for Interdisciplinary Research , Heidelberg
Lars Heinemann, Faculty of Theology, University of Halle-Wittenberg
Sirkku Ikonen, Department of Philosophy, University of Helsinki
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Rebekka Klein, Theological Faculty, Zürich University
Dr. Arto Laitinen, Helsinki Collegium for Advanced Studies
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Prof. Dr. Michael Moxter, Department of Protestant Theology, Hamburg University
Prof. Dr. Thomas M. Schmidt, Fachbereich Katholische Theologie, University of Frankfurt am Main
Prof. Dr. Juha Sihvola, Helsinki Collegium for Advanced Studies
Dr. Thomas Wabel, Faculty of Theology, Humboldt-Universität zu Berlin
Dr. Jon Wittrock, European University Institute