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Symbol, Myth, and Culture: Essays and Lectures of Ernst Cassirer, 1935-1945

Donald Phillip Verene (ed.)

Yale University Press (1981)



Abstract

The papers in this volume of Ernst Cassirer's unpublished works give insight into the major issues that engaged Cassirer's interest between 1935 and 1945. The book begins with his inaugural address at the University of Göteborg, Sweden, in the first years of his exile from Hitler's Germany, and ends with a talk to the Columbia Philosophy Club. The note that introduces this piece was written on the day of his death. In his long and productive career, Ernst Cassirer always tried to integrate his works of original philosophy and studies in intellectual history into a general understanding of the nature of myth, culture, and symbol. These essays show that his interest persisted to the end. His piece on Judaism and political myths is perhaps the most dramatic in this collection, as it blends philosophical coolness with his deeply felt outrage at fascism. Best known in this country for *The Myth of the State*, *The Philosophy of Symbolic Forms*, and *An Essay on Man*, Ernst Cassirer has been read and studied by generations of students. In this book they will find illuminations, in a more informal voice, of the major themes in Cassirer's work. New readers will be introduced to the great issues that occupied the interest of one of the twentieth century's most widely read philosophers. "A genuine contribution to the history of modern philosophy – and of special value to the informed general reader, since it includes a number of valid attempts by Cassirer to translate his radical, sometimes difficult, concepts of culture into non-technical terms." -- *The Booklist*

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