

A Hundred Years of *The Philosophy of Symbolic Forms*

Le Centre universitaire de Norvège à Paris,
October 16th to the 17th 2023.

Call for papers – deadline for submissions is August 7. 2023

To celebrate the centenary of the publication of Ernst Cassirer's seminal work, volume one of *The Philosophy of Symbolic Forms, Language*, a conference is to be held at the Norwegian Research Center in Paris (*Le Centre universitaire de Norvège à Paris*) on October 16th and 17th 2023. We are reaching out to all the researchers engaged in Cassirer studies in general and specifically in his philosophy of language to contribute at the conference.

In their much-acclaimed book, *Wittgenstein's Vienna*, Alan Janik and Stephen Toulmin suggest that we are today in the position to “pursue, further than Wittgenstein himself [in *Philosophical investigation*] ..., the functional considerations underlying the *historical* development of our methods and modes of thought, in different fields of life or inquiry. If we do this, indeed, we may well find ourselves seeing in, say, a man like Ernst Cassirer [...] a kind of Mahler of philosophy – that is to say, a writer whose more conservative-looking arguments can perhaps provide as many clues to the way ahead in philosophy as the writings and teachings of Wittgenstein himself” (*Wittgenstein's Vienna*, p. 261-62). Since the first edition of *Wittgenstein's Vienna* came out in 1973, the interest in Cassirer's philosophy has been rekindled and revived. Though no one since has seen in Cassirer “a kind of Mahler of Philosophy”, new generations of scholars have taken to Cassirer's perspective in *The Philosophy of Symbolic Forms*, and efforts to employ his philosophical perspective and reintegrate it into contemporary philosophical discourse are increasing.

The first volume of *The Philosophy of Symbolic Forms* focuses on language, and for that reason, we want to start the conference with a session on the topicality of Cassirer's philosophy of language, i.e., on what he saw as principal clues “towards a phenomenology of the linguistic form”. Next, we want to follow up on the remarks of Janik and Toulmin and invite Cassirer scholars who address aspects of Cassirer's philosophy from the perspective of the history of ideas or the history of philosophy to “the functional considerations underlying the *historical* development of our methods and modes of thought, in different fields of life or inquiry”. Lastly, we want to round off the conference with some clues to the way ahead in philosophy, i.e., contributions pertaining to the question of how Cassirer's philosophy can provide clues to the way ahead in philosophy.

- Before and After the Linguistic Turn – Ernst Cassirer's Philosophy of Language Today.
- Perspectives on the *historical* development of our methods and modes of thought
- Clues to the way ahead in philosophy

To join the conference, please, send in an abstract to either Ingmar Meland (ingmar.meland@ntnu.no) or Esther Oluffa Pedersen (estherop@ruc.dk) no later than August 7. 2023 stating which of the three topics of the conference you wish to contribute to.

All abstracts will be reviewed before September 1. 2023, thus a full conference program will be ready in early September 2023. The plan is to have presentation slots of appr. 40 minutes.

NOTE: Participation in the conference with a presentation includes lunch, coffee/tea/snacks, and conference dinner. There is no funding for travel and accommodation reimbursements.