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Author(s): John Michael Krois

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Cassirer's Unpublished Critique of Heidegger

John Michael Krois

Ernst Cassirer (1874–1945) and Martin Heidegger (1889–1976) met for a public debate in April, 1929 at Davos, Switzerland. This debate, which was the conclusion of the courses on philosophy that they had given at the “Davoser Hochschulkurse,” attracted great public interest at the time and continues to be the subject of scholarly discussion.¹ Popular interest was generated by the view that the two men, in addition to being philosophers of repute, were opposites, with contrasting personalities, antithetical philosophical points of view and even, as an observer for the *Frankfurter Zeitung* put it, represented: “two different eras.”² Cassirer was widely recognized to be both one of Germany's foremost Kant scholars—his edition of Kant was then the most comprehensive ever published—and one of its most well-known philosophers. The first two volumes of his chief work, *The Philosophy of Symbolic Forms* (*Language*, 1923 and *Mythic Thought*, 1925), had already appeared (the third volume, *The Phenomenology of Knowledge*, appeared later that year).³ Cassirer was at the height of his career as professor of philosophy at the University of Hamburg; he was elected rector of the university later that year, the first person of Jewish descent to hold such a post in Germany. Heidegger's main work, *Being and Time*, had appeared in 1927 and was an instant, sensational success. In 1928 he was offered and accepted the chair of philosophy at Freiburg as Husserl's successor.

Among the topics discussed in the debate were Neo-Kantianism, the extent of man's finitude and his relationship to the infinite, the significance of anxiety and death, and the task of philosophy. The primary record of the debate is a protocol prepared by O. F. Bollnow and Joachim Ritter.⁴ The protocol depicts the meeting as an exchange of clarifications, not as the kind of direct confrontation that many had expected, even though each singles out concrete theses for criticism.

More detailed criticisms can be found in Heidegger's review

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of the second volume of Cassirer's *Philosophy of Symbolic Forms* and Cassirer's review of Heidegger's *Kant and the Problem of Metaphysics*.⁵ Yet these only touch upon the differences between their basic philosophical outlooks. Cassirer's review treats Heidegger's Kant interpretation, not Heidegger's philosophy as such; Heidegger's review deals with Cassirer's second volume on *Mythical Thought*. A criticism of the foundations of the philosophy of symbolic forms, as Heidegger states in his review, requires having that work available as a whole: "A position can be taken toward this matter not only when all 'symbolic forms' are presented but also and especially when the basic concepts of this system are worked out and brought to their ultimate foundations."⁶

The basic concepts of Cassirer's philosophy, sketched in his lecture on "The Problem of the Symbol and its Place in the System of Philosophy" (to which Heidegger refers in his review) were elaborated and brought to their final foundations in the third volume of the *Philosophy of Symbolic Forms*.⁷ This work, as in the case of Heidegger's *Being and Time*, is the key to Cassirer's philosophy and its development. Heidegger began a review of it, but it was never published. After their Davos meeting, on the occasion of a lecture that Cassirer held in Freiburg, he met with Heidegger, and following their discussions wrote in a letter to Frau Cassirer: "He admitted to me that for some time he has been struggling with a review of my third volume, but for the moment does not know how to go about getting a grip on it."⁸ It is now possible only to conjecture why Heidegger found it difficult to find an approach for his review; later, I will offer such a conjecture.

Until now, there was also no direct criticism available from Cassirer on Heidegger's theoretical approach in *Being and Time*. The following unpublished piece from 1928 provides Cassirer's assessment of Heidegger's major work.

This Manuscript and Cassirer's Previously Unpublished Writings

The text by Cassirer published here along with an English translation reproduces a complete handwritten manuscript of eight pages included in a larger manuscript (no. 184) in the collection of Cassirer papers housed in Yale University's Beinecke

Rare Book and Manuscript Library. A number of the unpublished papers from the last decade of Cassirer's life, edited by Donald Phillip Verene, has recently been published under the title *Symbol, Myth, and Culture*.⁹ The reader should consult Professor Verene's preface, introduction, and appendix to the papers for details about them and their place in Cassirer's work as a whole.

Manuscript 184 is dated June 16, 1928, and the title, "Philosophy of Symbolic Forms, vol. IV," raises questions about the intent of the larger manuscript. In the preface to the third and last published volume of *The Philosophy of Symbolic Forms*, Cassirer indicated that he completed that work in 1927, but had wanted for some time to add a critical conclusion, "a final chapter defining and justifying the basic attitude of the Philosophy of Symbolic Forms toward present-day philosophy as a whole."¹⁰ He adds, however, that he decided to publish his discussion separately and the paper "'Spirit' and 'Life' in the Philosophy of the Present" seemed to state his views on this matter.¹¹ Manuscript 184 shows that the paper was but a fragmentary statement. The first seventy-nine pages of the manuscript deal with the topic "Geist und Leben" and thus continues the topic of the published critical paper. Cassirer examines the ideas of Nietzsche, Bergson, Dilthey, Simmel, Scheler, and others associated with "Life-philosophy." The criticism of Heidegger is not part of this discussion, but, judging by the first sentence of Cassirer's comments, he evidently planned to include it and understood it to be part of his general criticism of contemporary philosophy, for which he used the term "life-philosophy" (*Lebens-philosophie*) in a broader than usual sense. But no matter how the larger manuscript is to be understood, the criticism of Heidegger can stand as a self-contained text.

The manuscript pages are not numbered and are indicated by the introduction of a virgula into the text. Cassirer makes frequent use of abbreviations in this text, and employs an open punctuation, making dashes in many places instead of periods. The piece as a whole is concentrated, appearing to be the condensation of an argument. All of this suggests that it was prepared for later expansion and inclusion in the larger work. Judging by the date on the manuscript it might also be Cassirer's first written reactions to *Being and Time*, which had appeared only the year before. Since Manuscript 184 is a continuous text and

not mere notes, I have made full stops in the translation and have written out Cassirer's abbreviations for the sake of the reader. For the terminology and quotations from *Being and Time* I have followed the Macquarrie and Robinson translation. The German word *Geist* plays an important role in Cassirer's writings; Manheim translates it as "spirit" in *The Philosophy of Symbolic Forms*. This word, which rarely occurs in English as a designation for the intellect, in my view only confuses what Cassirer wants to say. Even when the word *Geist* is intended to mean intellect in a speculative sense, that meaning is more readily understood, in this particular manuscript, when it is rendered as "mind," and I have done so in the translation.

Cassirer and Heidegger: Before and After Davos

In a footnote to *Being and Time* Heidegger writes that on the occasion of a lecture he gave in Hamburg in 1923 he met with Cassirer and that "we agreed in demanding an existential analytic such as was sketched in that lecture."¹² Cassirer expressed his agreement with the analyses of *Dasein* in *Being and Time* in the third volume of his *Philosophy of Symbolic Forms*. Since the manuscript of that book was already finished in 1927 when Heidegger's work appeared, Cassirer could not incorporate a discussion of it into the text, so then added substantive footnotes indicating his agreement with Heidegger's analyses of space and time and the meaning of Being for *Dasein*.¹³ At the same time he indicated what he perceived to be the difference between Heidegger's undertaking and his own: without challenging the results of *Being and Time*, to go beyond it to an analysis of the "metabasis from the meaning of Being for *Dasein* to the 'objective' meaning of Logos." "¹⁴ For Cassirer "Logos" means reason in the sense of language and the other symbolic forms of meaning by which man has a world: myth, art, science, religion. Of course, Heidegger also regarded *Being and Time* as only his starting point. His aim, to raise the question, "What is the meaning of Being?" required him, he explained, to give an analysis of the kind of being that can raise this question. *Being and Time* is an analysis of the questioner, human existence as "being-there" (*Dasein*).

Before I say anything about how Cassirer and Heidegger disagree, I should make clear that the two thinkers have some

ground in common, and a good deal more than is widely realized. At their meeting in Davos, Heidegger referred to the differences he saw between his own thinking and Neo-Kantianism. Cassirer has often been thought to be primarily a Neo-Kantian, but he came to oppose this label, just as Heidegger repudiated the designation of Existentialism for his philosophy.¹⁵ This is significant even if the fact that a philosopher dislikes being labeled does not suffice to show that the designation is wrong. At the Davos meeting Heidegger referred to Neo-Kantianism as a philosophy that sees its chief task in constructing a "theory of knowledge" and which construes knowledge primarily in terms of natural science.¹⁶ Moreover, it is a position that conceives man as "consciousness" or "mind" and overlooks the fact that man is bound to his body.¹⁷ The point in question is not whether this can be said about Neo-Kantianism or about the thinkers considered to represent that movement—Cohen, Windelband, Rickert, Erdmann, Riehl—but whether it holds for Cassirer.

Cassirer himself once reflected about his own philosophical position, in an essay published in 1927 summarizing recent trends in contemporary philosophy. His statement provides an answer to the question whether his thought can be summarized as a theory of knowledge: "More and more we have been forced to recognize that that sphere of theoretical meaning that we designate with the names 'knowledge' and 'truth' represent only *one*, however, significant and fundamental, layer of meaning. In order to understand it, in order to be able to see through its structure, we must compare and confront this layer with other dimensions of meaning. We must, in other words, grasp the problem of knowledge and the problem of truth as particular cases of the more general problem of meaning (*Bedeutung*)."¹⁸

Cassirer did not "expand" the theory of knowledge with his *Philosophy of Symbolic Forms*, he subsumed the theory of knowledge under a phenomenological study of meaning. He differentiated between three levels of meaning, the dimensions of expressive meaning (*Ausdruck*), representation (*Darstellung*), and pure significance (*reine Bedeutung*).¹⁹ Scientific and other forms of knowledge depend upon representation and non-intuitive forms of symbolism, but these have their application only on the basis of a more fundamental relationship to the world, to living actually "in the world" as an embodied person in a situation. Cassirer examined these world relationships

under the heading of expressive meaning. His studies of myth offer detailed analyses of examples of such phenomena. In the first part of the third volume of the *Philosophy of Symbolic Forms*, which is about the "World of Expression," Cassirer concludes with a chapter on the body and the lived unity of the body with the world of the "soul" and the perception of meaning in the world.²⁰ The world of expression is the world that is lived in, not reflected upon; it is the world we experience through "moods" or states of mind: "It is in itself gloomy or joyful, agitating or soothing, pacifying or terrifying."²¹

Cassirer's analysis of expressive meaning is his access to the central and most fundamental concept of his philosophy: "symbolic pregnance" (*symbolische Prägnanz*), the primordial phenomenon of meaning that recurs in every instance of meaning, in expression, representation, or pure significance.²² Such meaning is not the result of any act of thought, for it is the condition for all thought. It is the understanding of meaning that is always already present in any kind of understanding.²³ I cannot enter here into an explication of Cassirer's philosophy, but I believe that even a glance at his basic ideas suffices to show that with his third volume Cassirer has gone so far from the sort of position that Heidegger identifies as Neo-Kantian that it can no longer be regarded in those terms. I would also suggest that the reason Heidegger found it so difficult to review Cassirer's third volume is that he could no longer cast a review in terms of a criticism of Neo-Kantianism.

If Cassirer's philosophy really fit the description Heidegger gave of Neo-Kantianism, then it would be difficult to understand how Cassirer could believe that he was in such agreement with Heidegger's analyses in *Being and Time* or how they could be subsumed under the world of expressive meaning. It would also be difficult to understand how Cassirer himself could write his interesting and, for his own philosophy, important study of technology, "Form and Technik" (1930).²⁴ There Cassirer developed an interventionist theory of the origin of the concept of causality based on the view that the origin of the idea of causality depends upon human subjectivity's embodiment and interaction with the world through the use of tools.²⁵ In the early 1930s Cassirer even employed Heidegger's distinction between the *Vorhanden* and the *Zuhanden*, in a discussion of what he terms the "Pathology of the Symbolic Conscious-

ness.”²⁶ This is significant because it also shows where Cassirer perceived limits to Heidegger’s analysis of *Dasein*. The third volume of the *Philosophy of Symbolic Forms* retraces the steps from the physical, manual grasping of the world to conceptual grasping, from living in the world to having a world by objectifying it through symbolic representation. One of the chapters, “Toward a Pathology of the Symbolic Consciousness,” offers what Cassirer considers to be a kind of negative proof of his contention that symbolic interpretation is the key to having a world. This chapter shows how the limitation of symbolic interpretation brings a limitation to the world: “The process of the world’s ‘symbolization,’ discloses its value and meaning where it no longer operates free and unhindered, but must struggle and makes its way against obstacles.”²⁷ Cassirer’s oblique reference to Heidegger’s analysis of *Dasein* in a discussion of the pathology of symbolic thought shows that for him to concentrate attention on man as *Dasein* entails forgetting what Cassirer considers to be constitutive of man’s humanity, forgetting that man is “animal symbolicum.”²⁸

As I mentioned earlier, Heidegger regarded *Being and Time* not as a theory of man per se, but as a way of raising the question of the meaning of Being. Cassirer begins the *Philosophy of Symbolic Forms* with a discussion of the problem of Being in the history of philosophy, arriving at the same conclusion he draws in his other studies of Greek thought: the discovery of the “Logos” and the establishment of Idealism with Plato marked the direction for all future philosophy.²⁹ Cassirer regards himself as an interpreter of the idealistic tradition and the philosophy of symbolic forms as an effort to rethink this tradition in a new form. Heidegger, however, distinguishes his whole undertaking from the course of philosophy since the Greeks; he proposes to follow a radically new course in his thought.³⁰ An exposition of these blanket statements requires a complete analysis of both thinkers’ writings. Here I can only comment on what is relevant to points in Cassirer’s manuscript.

In this manuscript Cassirer indicates that he believes Heidegger in fact belonged to a tradition of religious thinking going back to Kierkegaard and Luther. These figures are mentioned only briefly in Heidegger’s text. Cassirer’s point is systematic; whenever he refers in his writings to Luther, it was with reference to the controversy between Luther and Erasmus about the

freedom of the will.³¹ Their dispute was not about whether man was free or not to make choices and act on them; that they both conceded. The issue was rather whether man was helpless or not to aid in his own salvation, whether he depended solely upon the grace of God or could, by the aid of his reason, come to recognize how God would have him act. For Luther, God's will is inscrutable; man cannot hope to help save himself with his own initiative. For Erasmus man can and so must strive to be worthy of salvation. This conflict is theological and concerns the salvation of the soul. In their later writings Heidegger and Cassirer express views of history and human action that come close to repeating the dispute between Luther and Erasmus, but without the theological framework.

In their later work Heidegger and Cassirer both face the question whether the term "Humanism" can be given a new meaning. Heidegger's "Letter on Humanism" contains his decisive statement on this question: "The *nomos* is not only law, but more originally the assigning concealed in the destiny of Being. Only this is capable of ordering man in Being. Only such ordering is capable of bearing up and binding. Otherwise, all law remains but the handiwork of human reason."³² Heidegger's appeal to the "destiny of Being" (*Schickung des Seins*) contrasts sharply with Cassirer's call for the individual to trust in his own reason.³³ Cassirer reinterprets the natural law tradition of human rights in terms of his theory of symbolic forms and conception of man as *animal symbolicum* with the object of showing that there are "general binding supra-individual, supra-state, supra-national ethical claims."³⁴ Are these to be regarded as the "destiny of Being?" For Cassirer they are claims that man is bound to, thanks to the power of language to found society by enabling a person to make promises and to have a "future" by this action.³⁵ Cassirer hereby gives a new foundation to the humanistic theory that speech is the basis of society.³⁶ It is therefore not surprising that Cassirer's philosophy has interested rhetoricians. For Heidegger, the historical dimension of his conception of action is paramount; the "destiny of Being" cannot be equated with a "natural law theory."

Cassirer and Heidegger seem to pursue two irreconcilable paths of thought, but it is interesting to note that in his later writings Heidegger takes up the problem of language, which had been Cassirer's concern before Davos.³⁷ Heidegger's later inter-

est in poetry goes hand in hand with his interest in language as the medium of history.³⁸ Ernesto Grassi, who was Heidegger's student and colleague (and who, in fact, was the first to publish Heidegger's *Letter on Humanism*) has argued that here Heidegger can be understood in terms of the humanistic theory of rhetoric.³⁹ It might seem that the problem of language and their relationship to German poetry could be a way to confront Cassirer and Heidegger. In his late work Heidegger was so drawn to the poetry of Hölderlin that he seemed closer to him than to any philosopher. The same could be said of Cassirer's life-long *Wahlverwandschaft* with Goethe.⁴⁰ Cassirer not only wrote extensively about Goethe, not only adopted many of his basic ideas—the *Urphänomen*, his cosmopolitanism, his emphasis on the individual as the focus of humanity—but he shared Goethe's way of feeling about life, for him "the true celebration is the act," the *Tat*.⁴¹ By this, Cassirer says, Goethe does not mean the "external, banal praxis of mere activity," but the "po-etic."⁴² This recalls Heidegger's emphasis on the poetic in Hölderlin, *das Dichterische*. But this apparent agreement shows in reality how greatly the two thinkers diverge. In Heidegger's explication the poetic in the sense of *dichterisch* is to receive a gift, not a *Tat* or act; this view recurs in his notion of history as destiny (*Geschichte* as *Geschick*).⁴³ Cassirer's world and Heidegger's differ in the basic feelings they have for the presence or remoteness of what is ultimately real.

Cassirer's basic criticism of Heidegger stems from this basic difference; he regards Heidegger's philosophy to lead from an emphasis on destiny to an ethical impasse: "a philosophy whose whole attention is focused on the *Geworfenheit*, the Being-thrown of man, can no longer do its duty."⁴⁴ This duty is to show how man can help himself by acting as a guardian of the values of human culture in the sense of ideals or standards of natural law and, most of all, to foster ethical self-responsibility as it is expressed in independent ethical decisions;⁴⁵ in its extreme form such decisions can lead to what Cassirer referred to as the "heroism of renunciation," relinquishing personal gain on grounds of conscience. Such self-responsible actions depend upon unchanging moral standards such as those expressed in the natural law tradition. These standards are objective for Cassirer because they are based upon language, the "abode of the Idea" as he calls it here.⁴⁶

Cassirer's philosophy of religion is comparable to his ethical view. Heidegger, Cassirer says, begins with a viewpoint from the philosophy of religion, as expressed by Luther and Kierkegaard. This can be seen in his desire to "turn man around" to direct him toward the "hard severity of his destiny."⁴⁷ For Heidegger, the evasion of personal finitude typical of "everydayness" and the thoughtless life of the "they" (*das Man*) is the place where he would "turn man around." By only living in terms of what "they" say or do, by avoiding personal finitude, man avoids himself.⁴⁸ Cassirer points in another direction: "The tragedy of existence does not prove its irrationality. . . . Contemplation of the order governing things gives rise to that religious feeling which elevates us far above all mere desire for happiness. It teaches us to desire the whole rather than the part, and to affirm the whole for its own sake, not for ours."⁴⁹ He claims in this text that his conception of man does not fall into the kind of false objectivism that Heidegger objects to and which Herder once accused Kant of upholding, the view that man is basically a "species."⁵⁰ Cassirer follows Goethe, the individual is unique, but he possesses his uniqueness through participation in the ethical-social world which he in turn helps to shape.⁵¹ This does not eliminate man's finitude for Cassirer, but liberates him from it. In his essay on "Hölderlin und der deutsche Idealismus" Cassirer concludes with a discussion of Hegel's attempt to dissolve individuality into the general. Hegel, he says, engages us so that we marvel at his struggle to reconcile the particular and the general, the finite and the infinite, "but Hölderlin's basic sensitivity effects us more strongly and personally, it does not pretend to solve this primordial conflict, but strives only to show it and poetically realize its depth."⁵² Yet the poet can also show this tragedy to be part of the rhythm of death and life, and unlike any argument, make both acceptable to us.⁵³

The reader must judge Cassirer's and Heidegger's thought for himself, but the following text makes clearer than before the differences between them and the philosophical choices that these differences involve.

*Philosophy Faculty
University of Trier
West Germany*

NOTES

1. For an account of the courses see *Davoser Revue. Zeitschrift für Literatur, Wissenschaft, Kunst und Sport*, IV Jahrgang, Nummer 7, 15 April 1929, 193–98.
2. *Frankfurter Zeitung, Abendblatt*, 22 April 1929.
3. Ernst Cassirer, *The Philosophy of Symbolic Forms*, 3 vols., trans. Ralph Manheim (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1953–57). Hereinafter cited as *PSF*.
4. A translation with commentary of this protocol is available; see Carl H. Hamburg, "A Cassirer-Heidegger Seminar," *Philosophy and Phenomenological Research*, 25 (1964), pp. 32–22. Heidegger included the original text of the protocol in 1973 in the last edition of his Kant book. See Martin Heidegger, *Kant und das Problem der Metaphysik*, 4th ed. (Frankfurt: Vittorio Klostermann, 1973), pp. 246–68.
5. Martin Heidegger, review of *The Philosophy of Symbolic Forms*, Vol. II, *Mythical Thought*, in *Deutsche Literaturzeitung*, 21 (1928), 1000–12. A translation with notes is included in *The Piety of Thinking: Essays by Martin Heidegger*, trans. James G. Hart and John C. Maraldo (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 1976), pp. 32–45; Ernst Cassirer, Review of *Kant and the Problem of Metaphysics*, in *Kantstudien*, 36 (1931), 1–26. An English translation is included in Molte S. Gram, ed., *Kant: Disputed Questions* (Chicago: Quadrangle Books, 1967), pp. 131–57.
6. *The Piety of Thinking*, p. 45.
7. Ernst Cassirer, "Das Symbolproblem und seine Stellung im System der Philosophie," *Zeitschrift für Aesthetik und allgemeine Kunstwissenschaft*, 21 (1927), 295–312; For an English translation see John Michael Krois, "The Problem of the Symbol and Its Place in the System of Philosophy," *Man and World*, 11 (1978), 411–28.
8. The original reads: "Er gestand mir, daß er sich seit langem mit einer Rezension meines dritten Bandes abquält, einstweilen aber noch nicht wisse, wie er die Sache anpacken solle." Toni Cassirer, *Mein Leben mit Ernst Cassirer* (Hildesheim: Gerstenberg Verlag, 1981), p. 184.
9. Donald Phillip Verene, ed., *Symbol, Myth, and Culture: Essays and Lectures of Ernst Cassirer 1935–1945* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1979).
10. *PSF*, III, xvi.
11. An English translation of this essay is included as Part III in Paul Arthur Schilpp, ed., *The Philosophy of Ernst Cassirer* (Evanston, Illinois: The Library of Living Philosophers, Inc., 1949), pp. 855–80. The original appeared as " 'Geist' und 'Leben' in der Philosophie der Gegenwart," *Die Neue Rundschau*, 41 (1930), 244–64.
12. Martin Heidegger, *Being and Time*, trans. John Macquarrie and Edward Robinson (New York: Harper & Row, 1962), 490.
13. *PSF*, III, 163 n. 2, 149 n. 4. Cf. 188–89 n. 34, 149 n. 4.
14. *PSF*, III, 163 n. 2. Manheim's translation passes over Heidegger's expression, "meaning of Being for Dasein," which I have added.
15. Heidegger's rejection of the designation for his thought is found in his *Humanismusbrief*. See Martin Heidegger, "Letter on Humanism," trans. Edgar Lohner, in Nino Langiulli, ed., *The Existentialist Tradition* (New York: Doubleday, Anchor Books, 1971), esp. pp. 216–18. Cassirer's attitude toward the label of "Neo-Kantianism" is recorded by John Herman Randall, Jr. in *The Philosophy of Ernst Cassirer*, p. 711. For Cassirer's discussions of this label for his thinking see "Was ist 'Subjektivismus'?" *Theoria*, 5 (1939), 113–14.
16. Hamburg, "Cassirer-Heidegger Seminar," p. 214.
17. *Ibid.*, p. 219.
18. Ernst Cassirer, "Erkenntnistheorie nebst den Grenzfragen der Logik und Denkpsychologie," *Jahrbücher der Philosophie*, 3 (1927), 34.
19. These layers of meaning are sketched in the lecture "The Problem of the

Symbol and its Place in the System of Philosophy" and founded in the third volume of the *Philosophy of Symbolic Forms* upon "symbolic pregnancy."

20. *PSF*, III, 92–103.

21. *PSF*, III, 72.

22. *PSF*, III, 191–204.

23. Cassirer's conception of "symbolic pregnancy" bears interesting similarities to Heidegger's discussion of "Understanding and Interpretation" in *Being and Time*, §32, pp. 188–95.

24. Ernst Cassirer, "Form und Technik," in Leo Kestenberg, ed., *Kunst und Technik* (Berlin: Wegweiser Verlag, 1930), pp. 15–61.

25. *Ibid.*, pp. 36–38.

26. Ernst Cassirer, "Die Sprache und der Aufbau der Gegenstandswelt," *Bericht über den XII. Kongress der deutschen Gesellschaft für Psychologie* (Jena: G. Fischer, 1932), esp. pp. 143–45.

27. *PSF*, III, 277.

28. Cassirer's definition of man is given in his late work, but it informs all of his thinking, even before he stated it explicitly. See Ernst Cassirer, *An Essay on Man: An Introduction to a Philosophy of Human Culture* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1944), p. 26.

29. *PSF*, I, 73–74; "Die Philosophie der Griechen von den Anfängen bis Platon" in Max Dessoir, ed., *Lehrbuch der Philosophie*, vol. 1 (Berlin: Ullstein, 1925), pp. 7–139; "Logos, Dike, Kosmos in der Entwicklung der Griechischen Philosophie," *Göteborgs Högskolas Arsskrift*, 47 (1941), 1–31.

30. Heidegger does not think that this is a matter of arbitrary choice, but called for by the state of philosophy. See Heidegger, "The End of Philosophy and the Task of Thinking" in *On Time and Being*, trans. Joan Stambaugh (New York: Harper & Row, 1972), pp. 55–73.

31. See Ernst Cassirer, *Freiheit und Form: Studien zur Deutschen Geistesgeschichte* (1916; Darmstadt: Wissenschaftliche Buchgesellschaft, 1975), pp. 6–7; *The Platonic Renaissance in England*, trans. James P. Pettegrove (1932; trans., Austin: University of Texas Press, 1953), pp. 82–85, 107–08; *The Philosophy of the Enlightenment*, trans. Fritz C. A. Koelln and James P. Pettegrove (1932; trans., 1951, rpt. Boston: Beacon Press, 1965), pp. 140–141, 239; *Descartes: Lehre-Persönlichkeit-Wirkung* (Stockholm: Bermann-Fischer Verlag, 1939), p. 232. For Cassirer's view of Kierkegaard's philosophy of religion see *Symbol, Myth, and Culture*, p. 176.

32. Heidegger, "Letter on Humanism," p. 242; Cf. Heidegger, "Brief über den Humanismus" in *Wegmarken* (Frankfurt: Vittorio Klostermann, 1967), p. 191.

33. *Symbol, Myth, and Culture*, pp. 257–67.

34. *Ibid.*, p. 61; cf. p. 58 where Cassirer speaks of "eternal, immutable, and inalienable rights of man."

35. See esp. Ernst Cassirer, "Axel Hägerström: Eine Studie zur Schwedischen Philosophie der Gegenwart," *Göteborgs Högskolas Arsskrift*, 45 (1939), 104–6.

36. Cassirer refers not to Italian humanism but to the tradition of Roman law. Cf. the discussion of Dante's placement of the *curiale* aspect of language, language spoken at the *curia* or meeting place where laws are made, in Ernesto Grassi, "Can Rhetoric Provide a New Basis for Philosophizing? The Humanist Tradition," *Philosophy and Rhetoric*, 11 (1978), esp. 9–17.

37. In Cassirer's last reply to Heidegger in the protocol he says that the question of how understanding through language is possible must be raised before it is possible to get to Heidegger's question, i.e., of the meaning of Being. See Hamburg, "Cassirer-Heidegger Seminar," pp. 220–21; cf. Heidegger, *Kant und das Problem der Metaphysik*, Anhang, pp. 264–67. See also Heidegger, *On the Way to Language*, trans. Peter D. Hertz (New York: Harper & Row, 1972).

38. Language is the "house of Being." Heidegger, *On the Way to Language*, p. 63.

39. Ernesto Grassi, "Italian Humanism and Heidegger's Thesis of the End of Philosophy," *Philosophy and Rhetoric* 13 (1980), 79–98. A book by Grassi on this topic has appeared (1983), entitled *Heidegger and the Question of Renaissance Humanism: Four Studies*. The Center for Medieval and Early Renaissance Studies (Binghamton: State University of New York Press). See Martin Heidegger, *Platons Lehre der Wahrheit, mit einem Brief über den Humanismus*, ed. Ernesto Grassi. Erste Auflage (Bern: Verlag A. Francke, 1947).

40. For Cassirer's writings on Goethe see the bibliography in *The Philosophy of Ernst Cassirer*, pp. 885–907. For examples of Cassirer's own placement of the *Urphänomen* in his own philosophy see *PSF*, III, 99–103 and *Language and Myth*, trans. Susanne K. Langer (New York: Harper & Bros., 1946), pp. 11–12. Here *Urphänomen* is rendered "archetypal phenomena." See also Ernst Cassirer, *The Logic of the Humanities*, trans. Clarence Smith Howe (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1960), 176–81.

41. Ernst Cassirer, "Goethes Pandora" in *Idee und Gestalt*, 2d ed. (1924, rpt. Darmstadt: Wissenschaftliche Buchgesellschaft, 1971), p. 22.

42. Ernst Cassirer, "Goethe und Platon" in *Goethe und die Geschichtliche Welt* (Berlin: Bruno Cassirer Verlag, 1932), p. 121.

43. On Heidegger's view of *das Dichterische* see esp. "Hölderlin und das Wesen der Dichtung" in *Erläuterungen zu Hölderlins Dichtung* (Frankfurt: Vittorio Klostermann, 1971), p. 42. Cf. also his description of *das Dichterische* as a gift (*Geschenk*) with the notion of *Dichtung* as *Maßnahme*, receiving a measure, in Heidegger, "... dichterisch wohnet der Mensch ..." in *Vorträge und Aufsätze* (Pfullingen: Günther Neske Verlag, 1978), pp. 190–91. See the discussion of *Geschick* and *Geschichte* in "Heimkunft/An die Verwandten" in *Erläuterungen zu Hölderlins Dichtung*, esp. p. 14.

44. Cassirer, *Symbol, Myth, and Culture*, p. 230.

45. Cassirer derives his view of the "duty of philosophy" from Schweitzer. See *Symbol, Myth, and Culture*, pp. 230–32 and pp. 59–63. On the "heroism of renunciation" see *Descartes: Lehre-Persönlichkeit-Wirkung*, p. 275.

46. See esp. Ernst Cassirer, "Vom Wesen und Werden des Naturrechts," *Zeitschrift für Rechtsphilosophie*, 6 (1932), 1–27.

47. Hamburg, "Cassirer-Heidegger Seminar," p. 220.

48. Heidegger, *Being and Time*, §51, pp. 296–99.

49. Cassirer, *The Platonic Renaissance in England*, p. 186.

50. In the second part of *Ideas on the Philosophy of the History of Mankind* Herder attacked theses that Kant had presented in his "Idea for a Universal History from a Cosmopolitan Point of View." Reacting to Kant's review of the first part of his work, Herder, without mentioning Kant by name, called his thesis that man's education can occur fully only in the species "a kind of Averroism." Cassirer rejects the view that such a thesis entails upholding the numerical identity of the intellect in all men. See Johann Gottfried Herder, *Sämtliche Werke*, ed. Bernhard Suphan, 33 vols. (1887, rpt. Hildesheim: Georg Olms, 1967), 13: 345–47.

51. Ernst Cassirer, "Goethes Idee der Bildung und Erziehung," *Pädagogisches Zentralblatt*, 7 (1932), esp. 358.

52. Ernst Cassirer, "Hölderlin und der deutsche Idealismus" in *Idee und Gestalt*, p. 155.

53. *Ibid.*, pp. 150–51. Cf. Ernst Cassirer, "Thomas Manns Goethe-Bild: Eine Studie über *Lotte in Weimar*," *Germanic Review*, 20 (1945), esp. 189–94.