

Organizers

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- Admission is free
- Everybody is welcome
- Conference Languages are German and English
- Registration is mandatory
- Please register before September 30 (2021) at hiw.kuleuven.be/cassirerworkshop
- Zoom credentials will be sent individually and shortly before the event

Speakers

Elio Antonucci (Universität zu Köln)

Francesca Biagioli (Università di Torino)

Massimiliano D'Acconti (Università di Bologna)

Luigi Filieri (Johannes Gutenberg-Universität Mainz)

Jacob Hesse (Ruhr-Universität Bochum)

Isabel Jacobs (Queen Mary University of London)

Katherina Kinzel (Universiteit Utrecht)

Luigi Laino (Università degli studi di Napoli Federico II)

Andrea Reichenberger (Universität Siegen & FernUniversität in Hagen)

Domenico Schneider (Technische Universität Braunschweig)

Alex Seuthe (Technische Universität Dortmund)

Benedetta Spigola (Università degli studi Roma Tre)

Philippe Stamenkovic (Aix-Marseille Université)

Noah Stemeroff (Rheinische Friedrich-Wilhelms-Universität Bonn)

Katherine Ward (Bucknell University)

Elisabeth Theresia Widmer (Universität Wien)

Keynotes

Sebastian Luft (Marquette University)

Samantha Matherne (Harvard University)

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International Conference
October 7–8, 2021 (online)

**Objectivity and Truth in
Cassirer's Philosophy of
Culture and Philosophy
of Science**

„Is there really something like an objective theoretical truth [...]? In a time in which such questions can be raised, philosophy cannot stand aside, mute and idle.“

— Ernst Cassirer: *Symbol, Myth, and Culture*, p. 61

There is no doubt that this question, which Cassirer found indicative of the European Zeitgeist of the first decades of the twentieth century, also pervades Western culture today. In times of fake news, conspiracy theories, alternative facts, and science denial, as well as the rise of political myth and the erosion of expertise and democratic institutions, doubt about the possibility of objectivity and truth is a defining characteristic of contemporary culture. Hence, if we follow Cassirer, philosophy has once again a crucial societal duty to fulfill: the duty to safeguard some notion of objectivity and of truth against epistemic and cultural relativism, skepticism, and indifference.

This conference aims to reconsider the enduring relevance of Cassirer's own philosophy in view of this challenge. The Philosophy of Symbolic Forms was after all an ambitious attempt to radically widen and diversify the meaning of objectivity without forfeiting its claims to universality or its firm footing in human reason. By ascribing to mythical, religious, and linguistic perceptions and expressions an objective status that most of Western philosophy had preserved for scientific thought, Cassirer's philosophy can however be taken as either enriching or weakening the ideas of objectivity, truth, and rationality. In view of the current crisis of truth, we thus ask what Cassirer's theory of culture and of science can teach us about the plurality, relativity, or universality of human understanding.

The Program Schedule is in CET Time Zone

Thursday, October 7

11:00-11:05 *Welcome Address* **Nicole C. Karafyllis**
(Braunschweig, Institute Chair)

11:05-11:15 *Opening Address* **Simon Truwant** (Leuven) &
Tobias Endres (Braunschweig)

11:15-12:00 *Object and Symbol in Cassirer's Philosophy of Physics* **Benedetta Spigola** (Rome)

12:00-12:45 „Bauliche Veränderungen im Gange!“ – Cassirers
transzendente Wissenschaftstheorie als Vermittlerin zwischen physikalischen Theorien? **Alex Seuthe** (Dortmund)

12:45-13:00 *Coffee break*

13:00-13:45 *The Influence of Relativity Theory on the Philosophy of Symbolic Forms* **Luigi Laino** (Naples)

13:45-14:30 *Objectivity Relativized: A Comparative Study between Cassirer and Philipp Frank* **Philippe Stamenkovic**
(Marseille)

14:30-15:30 *Mid-day break*

15:30-16:15 *Art's vs Language's Objectivity: Cassirer on Symbolic-Poietic Mimesis* **Luigi Filieri** (Mainz)

16:15-17:00 *Language and Objectivity - A Critical Assessment of Several Aspects of Cassirer's Philosophy of Language*
Jacob Hesse (Bochum)

17:00-17:30 *Coffee break*

17:30-18:15 “Function Concepts” and “Formal Concepts”:
Cassirer on Objectivity in the “Cultural Sciences”
Katherina Kinzel (Utrecht)

18:15-19:00 *Normativity and Objectivity in Cassirer's An Essay on Man* **Elisabeth Theresia Widmer** (Vienna)

19:00-19:15 *Coffee break*

19:15-20:30 *Wahrheit, Objektivität, Redescriptions: eine Meditation über Cassirer aus pragmatischer Sicht*
Sebastian Luft (Milwaukee)

20:30-21:00 *Drinks & Roundtable*

Friday, October 8

11:00-11:15 *Welcome* **Tobias Endres** & **Simon Truwant**

11:15-12:00 *Die Objektivität der Mathematik in Cassirers symboltheoretischem Ansatz*
Domenico Schneider (Braunschweig)

12:00-12:45 *Cassirer, Field Theory, and the Methodology of Mathematical Physics* **Noah Stemeroff** (Bonn)

12:45-13:00 *Coffee break*

13:00-13:45 *From the Arithmetization of Mathematics to the Development of Numerical Analysis: A Fresh look at Cassirer's and Felix Klein's Structuralist Approach*
Andrea Reichenberger (Paderborn)

13:45-14:30 *Between Relativization and Functionalization: Cassirer's Account of Objectivity and its Developments in Contemporary Philosophy of Science*
Francesca Biagioli (Turin)

14:30-15:30 *Mid-day break*

15:30-16:15 *Between Myth and Truth: Cassirer and Kojève on Determinism* **Isabel Jacobs** (London)

16:15-17:00 *The Structures of Meaning in the Evaluation of the Role of Science. Cassirer's Symbolic Idealism against Cultural Relativism* **Massimiliano D'Acconti** (Bologna)

17:00-17:30 *Coffee break*

17:30-18:15 *Being Responsible to and for Culture*
Katherine Ward (Lewisburg)

18:15-19:00 *The Correlation between Objectivity and Subjectivity in Science and the Problem of Human Self-Understanding* **Elio Antonucci** (Cologne)

19:00-19:15 *Coffee break*

19:15-20:30 *Cassirer on Art, Objectivity, and Self-Knowledge*
Samantha Matherne (Cambridge, Massachusetts)

20:30-21:30 *Concluding remarks - Drinks & Roundtable*