

Summary

Art, seen under the perspective of literature as an independent mode of human articulation, provides decisive motives for Cassirer's Philosophy of Symbolic Forms. The concept of art as a symbolic form opens up two fields of inquiry. On the one hand Cassirer did not actually carry out his intended systematic presentation of art as a symbolic form. On the other hand Cassirer develops his concept of art's autonomy as an independent form of grasping the world by conceptually linking (poetic) art with philosophy.

The concepts of transformation, reflexion and heterogeneity denote characteristics of the method – not made explicit by Cassirer himself – through the cultural process becomes evident and can be interpreted as a process of becoming as movement toward Being. With the help of Cassirer's line-example it can be shown how this perspective, which manifests itself in the sense-generating force of regarding the world, is already materially given in the mere process of human perception. Language, myth and science, but also art, are different symbolic forms, which in regard to the essential function of perception turn out to be unfailing elements of the whole cultural process. Owing to the ability of the style-function of art to make transparent the performance of the symbol and with that the dynamics of culture, Cassirer in citing Rükert and Kleist can delimit the critical claim from sceptical and dogmatical positions.