

Special workshop at the IVR world Congress in Washington DC July 27<sup>th</sup> to 31<sup>st</sup> 2015:

## **Cassirer: State, Reason and Emotion**

The special workshop shall concentrate mainly on two aspects of Cassirer's immeasurably rich work.

### **I**

On the one hand on those aspects, that are close to the general theme of the IVR-meeting: Especially Cassirer's reactions in his concepts of culture and state to the primitive emotional tribalism of Hitler and his party. Here Cassirer's most important book is "The Myth of the State", finished in New York a few days before his death in April 1945. It explains how modern political technique could lead to an unprecedented ordeal.

### **II**

The second aim of the workshop is to learn from Cassirer's insights for current debates about the identities of states (or state-like units like the EU), especially if different cultures are living together: Are political myths necessary? For emotional reasons? They seem to be in use all over the world, even in most democracies. And even in the German-speaking countries (that could, for some decades seem to be cured from all political mythology by the horrors of Nazism) **there is a debate about bringing back emotions to politics**, e.g. in Ulrich Haltern's book on "Obama's political body".— The opposite would be a sober "patriotism of constitution" (Habermas), a republicanism of enlightened reason, independent of fairytales and of any ethnic or religious homogeneity. For this position we can learn from the younger man Cassirer of 1916 in the First World War. When nationalistic hysteria erupted, in and outside of Germany, he gave lectures on state and nation and published "Freedom and Form", a cosmopolitan book on democracy.

The workshop shall investigate **whether a democratic "nation of will" is possible without any other myths than only the clear ideas of freedom, fairness and equal justice under law.**

For this aim we can learn from Cassirer's general philosophy of culture, the texts mentioned above and other papers of his emigration years like "Judaism and the Modern Political Myths" (Contemporary Jewish Record 7, [1944], now in: Works, Vol. 24 [2007], 197-208).

### **III**

The *discussions* of the workshop, chaired by Prof Dr Martin Hochhuth, Freiburg, will be in English. The *talks* can be held in English, French, Spanish, Italian, Dutch (Flemish) and German. But if you want to deliver your talk in any other language than English you are requested to deliver a written English translation too. — Why this? — The third aim of the workshop is *to bring back Cassirer into the philosophical discussions worldwide* and therefore the workshop must be really open.—

Everybody is invited.

## **CONGRESS TOPIC**

The overall topic for this Congress is “Law, Reason, and Emotion,” subjects which will raise fundamental questions about the nature and purpose of law. While all legal systems claim to serve reason and justice, they must also recognize and respect the emotional basis of human society. This relationship between law, reason, and emotion can be seen as conflict, harmony, or otherwise, but it will always be present in legal discourse. The theme of this World Congress should reach all aspects of the philosophy of law and social philosophy and we are eager to hear your insights.

# **LAW, REASON, AND EMOTION**

The theme of the XXVII World Congress of the International Association for the Philosophy of Law and Social Philosophy will be “Law, Reason, and Emotion.”

This topic raises fundamental questions about the nature and purpose of law. While all legal systems claim to serve reason and justice, they must also recognize and respect the emotional basis of human society. This relationship between law, reason and emotion can be presented as a conflict, harmony, or otherwise, but will always be present in legal discourse. Papers addressing this theme will reach all aspects of the philosophy of law and social philosophy.

Among the topics of particularly salient in any such discussion: the nature and purpose of law; the concept and practice of reason; the origins and value of emotion; the source or construction of justice; the legitimacy and validity of legal authority; and the effectiveness of legal norms. Many other questions arise in thinking about law, reason and emotion. In fact, almost all legal questions invite some reference to these three themes.

We very much hope that you will give some thought to law, reason, and emotion in the papers that you submit to the working groups and special workshops and we urge you to submit your papers as soon as possible. We would like to group your presentations together in the most constructive possible way, to encourage dialogue and publication. Early submissions will make this task much easier.

We look forward very much to reading and hearing your insights on law, reason, and emotion!

## **About Special Workshop**

Special workshops are collections of papers prepared in advance at the instigation of a workshop chair. These are forums for discussion, rather than merely for the reading of papers. It is thus advisable that the chairs of special workshops should establish early deadlines for the submission of papers to be discussed, so that all participants may have an opportunity to familiarize

themselves with each others papers before the workshop begins. The papers will be distributed by the workshop's chair among those wishing to participate. At the workshop, each presenter will briefly introduce his or her paper, as a basis for discussion. The final decision on details of the meeting belongs to the chair.

Workshops should as much as possible relate to the conference theme of "Law, Reason, and Emotion".