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| Schapiro, Meyer (1904-1996) |
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| [Enter an **abstract** for your article] |
| Art historian Meyer Schapiro was born in Šiauliai (Shavley), Lithuania, on September 23, 1904, but soon emigrated to the United States with his family in 1907. Schapiro grew up in the working-class, left wing, Jewish immigrant neighbourhood of Brownsville, Brooklyn. He graduated from Columbia University with a Ph.D. in fine arts and archaeology in 1935 (having completed his dissertation in 1929). He spent his career at Columbia, though he also taught regularly at the New School for Social Research from 1936 until 1952. While trained as a medievalist, Schapiro was an early proponent of modern art, and over the course of his career he taught courses, lectured, and published on both fields. Through his lectures and publications, Schapiro’s ideas shaped several generations of artists and art historians. Though he published several books including those on post-Impressionist artists Paul Cézanne (1950) and Vincent van Gogh (1952), his most respected ideas on both medieval and modern topics were published in articles. Schapiro is known for his innovative and interdisciplinary approaches to art history; he explored new art historical methodologies through the use of Marxism, psychoanalysis, and semiotics. He is also known for his essay ‘Style’ (1953), a systematic consideration of past and current theories of style.  Schapiro consistently sought to understand art through the relationship between its formal characteristics and its historical meaning without resorting to racial or national characterisations of style, as his German-speaking predecessors had. Schapiro’s influences shifted over the decades. His career began in the 1930s when his essays and reviews appeared in leftist journals including The Marxist Quarterly, New Masses, and Partisan Review. In the late 1930s and early 1940s, he had increasing contact with European exiles, including art historian Erwin Panofsky (1892-1968) and surrealist André Breton (1896-1966). In the 1950s, Schapiro’s interests extended to the social sciences. In the late 1960s, he played an active role in establishing the field of semiotics in the United States.  [File: Meyer.jpg]  1947 Meyer Schapiro, Oil on Canvas, 24 x 20 inches / 61 x 50.8 cm, Private Collection  <http://www.aliceneel.com/gallery/?mode=display&category=2&painting=27> |
| Further reading:  (Meyer Schapiro)  (Persinger)  (L. M. Schapiro)  (M. Schapiro, Late Antique, Early Christian and Mediaeval Art)  (M. Schapiro, Modern Art, 19th & 20th Centuries)  (M. Schapiro, Paul Cézanne)  (M. Schapiro, Romanesque Art)  (M. Schapiro, Style)  (M. Schapiro, Theory and Philosopher of Art: Style, Artist, and Society)  (M. Schapiro, Vincent van Gogh) |