

# The Image as Survival:

*Georges Didi-Huberman's reading of Aby Warburg  
and its implications in the study of Bilderatlas*

*Mnemosyne (2020) panel 79*

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Thesis offered for the degree of Master in History of Art  
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UNIVERSITETET I OSLO

December 2021

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# Abstract

This thesis gives an account of Georges Didi-Huberman's reading of Aby Warburg's image theories and his *Bilderatlas Mnemosyne*, an atlas of images of artworks and cultural objects spanning from antiquity to the second part of the 1920s. The last panel of this atlas, the number 79, thematizes –amongst other things– the sacrament of the Eucharist and the doctrine of *transubstantiation*, the chair of St. Peter, and the ecclesiastical-political procession following the Lateran treaty of 1929 between Italy and the Holy See. Panel 79 and its images have been then analyzed and reinterpreted in the view of Didi-Huberman's theories, casting a new light on the Warburgian concept of surviving images.



# Acknowledgements

First of all I would like to thank my supervisor Bente Larsen for stepping in at a crucial point of my project. Thank you for seeing me through. To the University of Oslo and the Faculty; I am first of all grateful for the opportunity to learn and to have received several chances to explore my diverse interests. Thank you to the Norwegian Institute in Rome, professor Kristin Blikrud Aavitsland, Anne Nicolaysen and Mona Johansen, for the scholarship that allowed for my thesis to be presented and completed in the most inspiring environs, overlooking Rome. A sincere thank you to librarian Manuela Michelloni for her help. Thank you, associate professor Per Sigurd Tveitevåg Styve, for encouragement at an early stage and for your Warburgian insights. My deepest gratitude to professor Einar Petterson, who initiated me into the Roman terrain and who inspired my research. Helena Neumann at IAKH must be thanked in particular for facilitating my stay at the Sorbonne. Linn Anette Thorsen and Andrine Roland Spets at IFIKK also helped me on several occasions with administrative issues; thank you!

Lastly, a heartfelt thank you to friends and family.

Rome, December 2021.

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# 1. Introduction

## 1.1 Thesis Presentation: Question and Scope

Standing before any work of art, we are involved, implicated in something that is not exactly a thing, but rather —and here Warburg sounds like Nietzsche— a vital force that we are unable to reduce to its objective element.  
—Didi-Huberman, *The Surviving Image* (2017)

The first part of the thesis introduces *Bilderatlas Mnemosyne*, briefly presenting Aby Warburg theories and summarizing Georges Didi-Huberman's reading of the latter in the book *The Surviving Image* (2017).<sup>1</sup> Didi-Huberman, a French philosopher and art-historian, has devoted thirty years of his scholarship regarding Warburg, and is considered one of the most prominent scholars in the field. A theoretical apparatus of Georges Didi-Huberman is presented in *Confronting Images* (2005), where his epistemology and ideas about what art history should be, take shape. The question this thesis is posed to answer is how Didi-Huberman's insights can contribute to a more comprehensive understanding of *Bilderatlas Mnemosyne* scope and Warburg's theories, and of panel 79 in particular.

The current landscape in the studies of Warburg appears to be polarized between a rationalistic approach (e.g., E. Gombrich) and a more enthusiastic and impassioned one (e.g., Didi-Huberman). The thesis will thus make an effort to understand a piece of art historiography, and of recent art-theoretical positions, with the motivation to better understand the discipline as such. This thesis aims at exploring the new avenues opened by Didi-Huberman's art-theoretical approach to Warburg's *Bilderatlas Mnemosyne*, in particular by striving to achieve a new reading of panel 79 in the light thereof. We shall then see how Georges Didi-Huberman's insights represent a significant contribution to enjoy a different understanding of *Bilderatlas Mnemosyne*, and its panel 79, in my opinion, the most interesting amongst all the panels of *Bilderatlas Mnemosyne* as it includes photographs from Warburg's days spent in Rome.

This thesis will be divided in two parts. The first part opens with a general introduction to Aby Warburg's life and theory and then presents Didi-Huberman's theoretical apparatus and phenomenological approach to the history of art. This is achieved in particular

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<sup>1</sup> Didi-Huberman then continues to expand his research on *Bilderatlas Mnemosyne* in *Atlas, or, the Anxious Gay Science* (2018).

by accessing his work on Warburg and *Bilderatlas Mnemosyne*, *The Surviving Image*. This first part of the thesis ends with critical remarks and insights on Didi-Huberman readings.

The second part analyzes the last panel of *Bilderatlas Mnemosyne*, the number 79, where Warburg utilizes mainly contemporary visual material, in an attempt to validate the universality of his *Nachleben* theory, i.e. the afterlife of images. Warburg specifically casts a light on the Lateran treaty (between the Holy See and the Italian Kingdom) events of 1929, the Eucharist and the Catholic Church's teaching of the *transubstantiation* and other ritual occurrences.

## 1.2 Presentation of the Research Object: *Bilderatlas Mnemosyne* and the 2020 edition

When cultural historian Aby Moritz Warburg (1866 - 1929) died at the age of 63 on the 26th of October 1929, he left a personal and collective academic work in a large picture atlas named *Bilderatlas Mnemosyne*.<sup>2, 3</sup> Compiled during the last years of his life, starting barely in 1924, it was not a finished piece, but rather an ever evolving practice performed by Warburg and his close collaborators (Gertrud Bing and Fritz Saxl, amongst others) at the Kulturwissenschaftliche Bibliothek Warburg (KBW) in Hamburg. In its last documented version of October 1929, the *Mnemosyne* consisted of 63 plates and 971 images, with numbers ranging from 1-79, including introductory plates of A to C.<sup>4</sup>

Warburg's idea was to demonstrate the correspondences and continuities between images of cultural objects from different times; to map how images are, in fact, epicenters of cultural movement. As a Renaissance scholar, he was first interested in how the afterlife of antiquity (*Nachleben der antike*) reappeared in the Florentine Renaissance, revealing pagan influence at the depth of Christian practices. Emotionally charged figures (*pathosformeln*) and gestural forms (positions) in images are, in Warburg's theoretical apparatus, repetitions and expressions of symbolic cognitive capacities and a necessity of man. Warburg sees

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<sup>2</sup> See obituary in the New York times, "Prof. Aby Warburg dies in Hamburg at the age of 63," published Oct. 29th 1929. Warburg's official cause of death was apoplexy.

<sup>3</sup> There are several versions of *Bilderatlas Mnemosyne* and all previous versions will be included under this title, and also be referred to as the "Atlas." Please note that the version of the Atlas that I will consider during my reading thereof is the most recent edition, "*Bilderatlas Mnemosyne* – the Original."

<sup>4</sup> The last mounting, called series A-79 in Warburg literature, was his ongoing endeavor whilst staying in Rome during 1929.

figures as deep mental (fundamental) vestiges and expressions of inherited movement, rooted in ritual practice, behaviors and gesture. The image carries the vital forces of culture, enduring polar opposites and dynamic exchanges.

In the last panels 77, 78 and 79 these forces become evident in contemporary society. Warburg spent large part of his last years alive in Italy and Rome, where during the summer of 1929 he witnessed the procession following the signing of the Lateran treaty between the Holy See and the Kingdom of Italy. Thereafter, he acquired press-photographs of this event, mounting them onto the last panel of his *Bilderatlas Mnemosyne* (so named after the goddess of memory); panel 79. [Fig. 1].

Scholars have made *Bilderatlas Mnemosyne* the object par excellence for modern art-theory, due to its wide-reaching visual and historical scope. The Atlas is indeed commonly described as *an icon* and some sort of art-historical *miracle*, a cornucopia of potential wisdom. As a consequence, the overall contemporary view of Warburg has become more and more favorable. In the media, he is described as a genius, a pioneer, and his Atlas, quoting an article in the New York Times from 2020, is “a Wonder of the Modern World.”<sup>5</sup> The sudden death of Warburg in 1929 certainly left a tension of unresolved work, and this tension has spurred a sense of academic and private mystery. The Warburg *myth*, by and large, has transformed him into a kind of a prophetic and visionary oracle.<sup>6</sup>

The primary visual object of this thesis will be *Bilderatlas Mnemosyne*. Several versions, editions, publications and exhibitions has been produced since the first boards were put up in the Kulturwissenschaftliche Bibliothek Warburg (KBW) in 1925-26.<sup>7</sup> Warburg’s first biographer Ernst Gombrich describes the materiality of the original set-up: “Large but light wooden frames over which black hessian was stretched served as a background to photographs suspended on the cloth by light clips.”<sup>8</sup> The different editions will not be

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<sup>5</sup> Martha Schwendener, “This Atlas of Art and Memory Is a Wonder of the Modern World,” The New York Times, May 14, 2020.  
<https://www.nytimes.com/2020/05/14/arts/design/aby-warburg-memory-atlas.html?searchResultPosition=1>.

<sup>6</sup> Joacim Sprung, “Aby Warburg. Mnemosyne Bilderatlas. Colloquium,” ZKM | Center for Art and Media in Karlsruhe. 13 October, 2016.  
<https://zkm.de/en/person/joacim-sprung>.

<sup>7</sup> The first time a *Bilderatlas* is explicitly mentioned in the 1920s is in relation to Warburg’s teaching of a class at the University of Hamburg in 1925-26, ‘Artistic Culture of the Early Florentine Renaissance’ (Übungen über die künstlerische Kultur der Florentinischen Frührenaissance’ WIA, III.95.2.6.2-3. Quoted in Claudia Wedepohl, “The Making of Warburg’s *Bilderatlas Mnemosyne*” in *Bilderatlas Mnemosyne – the Original*, (Hatje Cantz Verlag, 2020): 16.

<sup>8</sup> Gombrich, *Aby Warburg: An Intellectual Biography*, 261.

emphasized in the thesis as I do not ask questions of edition history or deal with comparative analysis between different versions.<sup>9</sup> Nor is Warburg's shifting series and the KBWs various attempts at mounting the Atlas an aspect that fits within the scope of this thesis.

This thesis is enabled by the material presence of the folio edition of the *Bilderatlas Mnemosyne* from 2020, named 'The Original.' [Fig. 2 - 4]. This version is a large folio edition with extensive material, completely reconstructed with digitized images, where the curators, Roberto Ohrt and Axel Geil, searched through the 400,000 individual pictures in the photographic collection at the Warburg Institute in London to find the original clippings for the Atlas.<sup>10</sup> As Kathryn Murphy writes in *Apollo* magazine, it is a facsimile that "makes itself felt as a tool for thought that involves the reader physically, not least because the book is huge, measuring 60 x 44 cm and weighing almost six kilograms."<sup>11</sup> The new 2020 folio edition offers novel, detailed access with newly digitized, high-resolution color images, thus opening up the scope of detailed analysis to a wider audience. [Fig. 4]. Director of the Warburg institute, Bill Sherman, called it a 'game changer.'<sup>12</sup> *Bilderatlas Mnemosyne* has earlier been published as part of a serial edition of Aby Warburg's collected works, *Gesammelte Schriften*. These were published by Akademie Verlag in 2000, with a second edition published in 2003.<sup>13</sup> Besides the folio edition by Hatje Cantz Verlag, the new project endeavor into Warburg's photothek also resulted in an exhibition at Haus der Kulturen der Welt in Berlin between the 9th of September and the 30th of November 2020. The G amaldegallerie in Berlin supplemented the experience by exhibiting original works depicted in the *Mnemosyne*. Both exhibitions suffered early closure due to the lock-down of the Covid-19 pandemic. The folio-edition won the *Apollo* Magazines 2020 'Book of The Year'

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<sup>9</sup> Peter van Huisstedes PhD-thesis was the first to thoroughly structure and contextualize *Bilderatlas Mnemosyne* and its different versions. I will not access this thesis, nor Katia Mazzuccos PhD, but rather turn to Joacim Sprungs dissertation from 2011.

<sup>10</sup> As stated on the website of Hatje Cantz verlag. <https://www.hatjecantz.de/aby-warburg-bilderatlas-mnemosyne-7701-1.html>.

<sup>11</sup> Kathryn Murphy, "With his Cryptic Clusters of Images, Aby Warburg Remapped the Art of the Past," *Apollo Magazine*, February 13, 2021. <https://www.apollo-magazine.com/aby-warburg-bilderatlas-mnemosyne-review/>.

<sup>12</sup> Bill Sherman, "The Game-Changing Reconstruction of Aby Warburg's 'Image Atlas,'" *Frieze magazine*, June 19, 2020. <https://frieze.com/article/game-changing-reconstruction-aby-warburgs-image-atlas>. Commentators have already made suggestions as to what this could mean. See also Frank Z ollner in the *Burlington Magazine*, Dec. 2020. Z ollner, Frank (2020) *Aby Warburg's Bilderatlas Mnemosyne: systems of knowledge and iconography* in *The Burlington Magazine*. Dec. 2020.

<sup>13</sup> Rampley, Matthew. "Einleitung," written in German c. 1926-9. First published in *Bilderatlas Mnemosyne*, Berlin: Akademie Verlag, 2000. Second edition: 2003.

award, another testament to the attention, praise, validation and standing this work has in modern media culture.

Reviews, feature-articles and commentary of both book and exhibition are extensive and interesting to point to, in order to ground the current standing of the atlas in visual culture and popular opinion. Every major art outlet such as Frieze, Apollo and the Burlington Magazine, published an article on the Atlas during 2020 and 2021. These quotes offers a condensed impression of the status of the Atlas as a cultic object and an art-historiographical icon. “Icon or Oracle?” asks writer Daniel Becker. It is indeed, Kathryn Murphy states, a “cryptic clusters of images.”<sup>14</sup> A cryptic piece, *remapping* — that is, doing something radically different from before, but with time’s rewarding integrity and distance of making us believe that it can do so with prophetic abilities. “(...) a Wonder of the Modern World,” the New York times states, also coining it enigmatic and “a project of art history lore.”<sup>15</sup>

Warburg’s mysterious panels, Sherman writes, “make the connections between research and display visible and even vital.”<sup>16</sup> In the London Review of Books it is said “(...) inherently melancholic, incantatory and unresolved (...) by reconstructing the atlas, the curators have revived it as a site of contemplation.”<sup>17</sup>

### 1.3 Existing Scholarship and Research Literature

Warburg studies are performed within different humanistic disciplines and as interdisciplinary research. The last twenty to thirty years has seen a vast expansion of the field, and it seems permeated in image theory from different research perspectives. As a whole, it offers too vast a scholarly material to be comprehended or summed up here. The Atlas, as stated by Georges Didi-Huberman<sup>18</sup> is mainly a theoretical object and I also treat it as such. It presents itself as a theoretical *mise-en-abyme*; a story within a story (within a story). The multi-faceted layers of history and theory employed in the Atlas make it impossible or even irrelevant to identify homogenous research perspectives. As this thesis

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<sup>14</sup> Kathryn Murphy, “With his Cryptic Clusters of Images, Aby Warburg Remapped the Art of the Past,” *Apollo Magazine*, February 13, 2021.

<https://www.apollo-magazine.com/aby-warburg-bilderatlas-mnemosyne-review/>.

<sup>15</sup> Schwendener, “A Wonder of the Modern World.”

<sup>16</sup> Sherman, “Game-Changing Reconstruction.”

<sup>17</sup> Chloe Aridjis, “At the HKW,” *London Review Of Books*, November 5, 2020.

<sup>18</sup> Georges Didi-Huberman, *Atlas, or, the Anxious Gay Science*, trans. Shane B. Lillis (Chicago: The University of Chicago Press, 2018).

explores both theoretical and contextual implications of the last panel, my research will start on a biographical, as well as, on a theoretical note.

Warburg's first biographer Ernst Gombrich, offered the first and extensive writing on Warburg's intellectual body and has to be mentioned as a highly valuable point of departure, still. *Aby Warburg; An Intellectual Biography* (1970) systematically works through the ideas of Warburg, and has been the most influential introduction since its publication, albeit Gombrich is criticized for downplaying Warburg's mental instabilities, moving him in a 'purer and reasonable' direction. Seminal in understanding Warburg's theories is also Kurt W. Forster's introductory essay to Warburg's collected works published in *The Renewal of Pagan Antiquity*.<sup>19</sup>

*Bilderatlas Mnemosyne* was first published as a book under the directorship of Martin Warnke,<sup>20</sup> Michael Steinberg, Horst Bredekamp, Michael Diers and Kurt W. Forster, who are all central Warburg scholars. Michael Steinberg and Kurt W. Forster are German scholars were since the 1980s, driving forces in establishing a scholarly Warburg community and has impressive national dedication to Warburg. Sigrid Weigel, Charlotte Schoell-Glass, Cornelia Zumbusch,<sup>21</sup> Claudia Wedepohl and Dorothee Bauerle, amongst many, have all been central in that undertaking. Charlotte Shoell-Glass' 1999 article on panel 79 has become a point of departure for the second part of this thesis, as she tries to unravel the panel's meaning.

Paramount in the thesis is, however, is french art-historian Georges Didi-Huberman, who is perhaps, the most prominent thinker on Warburg in the last decades and one of the most active image-theoreticians in the contemporary landscape.<sup>22 / 23</sup>

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<sup>19</sup> Kurt W. Forster, "Introduction," in *The Renewal of Pagan Antiquity: Contributions to the Cultural History of the European Renaissance*, trans. by David Britt (Los Angeles: Getty, 1999), 1-76.

<sup>20</sup> Martin Warnke published seminal studies in the 1980s. See Werner Hofman, Georg Syamken and Martin Warnke (1980). *Die Menschenrechte des Luges. Über Aby Warburg*. Europäische Verlagsanstalt, Frankfurt a.M.

<sup>21</sup> Zumbusch is the one who addresses the symbol theories most clearly. Her two publications in german, however, lie beyond the linguistic limits and physical/digital availability for this thesis. Zumbusch, Cornelia. "Der Mnemosyne -Atlas: Aby Warburgs symbolische Wissenschaft." In *Aktualität des Symbols*, ed. Frauke Berndt and Christoph Brecht, 77-98. Freiburg im Breisgau: Rombach, 2005. — *Wissenschaft in Bildern: Symbol und dialektisches Bild in Aby Warburgs Mnemosyne-Atlas und Walter Benjamins Passagen-Werk*. Berlin: Akademie Verlag, 2004.

<sup>22</sup> As will be presented, central to this thesis is *Confronting Images* (2005) and *The Surviving Image* (2017). Essential articles include: Georges Didi-Huberman, "Sampling Chaos," *Études photographiques* [Online], (2011). <http://journals.openedition.org/etudesphotographiques/3463> and "Dialektik des Monstrums: Aby Warburg and the Symptom Paradigm," *Art History*, Vol. 24, No. 5, (2001), 621-645.

<sup>23</sup> Georges Didi-Huberman, *Encyclopædia Universalis* [en ligne]. Accessed on 31 October, 2018, <http://www.universalis-edu.com.ezproxy.uio.no/encyclopedie/georges-didi-huberman/>.



However, in order to understand and contextualize Didi-Huberman, the thesis also leans on scholars who have commented on his work. Chari Larsson's<sup>24</sup> insightful essays on Didi-Huberman's art-theory and writing style helps in the discussion in chapter 5. Spyros Papapetros, Emmanuel Alloa and Joacim Sprung has all made critical reviews of his work and widened the perspective on art-historical discourse in relation to this thesis.

Christopher Johnsons *Memory, Metaphor, and Aby Warburg's Atlas of Images* is as another thick description of both thematic, theoretical and contextual details of the Mnemosyne with its literary, philosophical, and intellectual-historical implications. Johnson is important in looking into the concept of metaphor, the function of the Warburgian concept of *Denkraum* and readings of panel 79.

Joacim Sprung's doctoral thesis *Bildatlas, åskådning och reproduktion: Aby Warburgs Mnemosyne-atlas och visualiseringen av konsthistoria kring 1800/1900* (2011) is the only broad research published on Warburg in a Scandinavian language until 2011, and is particularly valuable in placing the Atlas in art-historiographical context. Sprung is also an advocate for 'non-convoluted' and rational approaches, something that is commented upon in the thesis. The last chapter of his PhD has been highly informative in seeing the images as scientific and pedagogical tools.<sup>25</sup> Sprung activates the physical aspects of *Bilderatlas Mnemosyne* and sees it as a result of the contemporary scientific interest in application of modern technology (photographs, reproductions) and in certain scientific paradigms.

Last, but not least, the last version, reconstituted by Axel Heil and Roberto Ohrt, in co-operation with Claudia Wedepohl and other staff at the Warburg Institute archives, provides an entirely new and detailed access to my primary research material and this edition is the empirical object in this thesis. These editors also have insightful comments on Warburg's theories.<sup>26</sup> As my primary research object, I will elaborate further on this edition.

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<sup>24</sup> Chari Larsson, "And The Word Becomes Flesh: Didi-Huberman's Symptom in the Image," *Emaj art journal* 8 (April 2015): 12.

[https://emajartjournal.files.wordpress.com/2015/04/larsson\\_and-the-word-becomes-flesh-didi-hubermans-symptom-in-the-image.pdf](https://emajartjournal.files.wordpress.com/2015/04/larsson_and-the-word-becomes-flesh-didi-hubermans-symptom-in-the-image.pdf).

<sup>25</sup> Joacim Sprung, *Bildatlas, åskådning och reproduktion. Aby Warburgs Mnemosyne-atlas och visualiseringen av konsthistoria kring 1800/1900*. Ph.d. -afhandling. Københavns universitet, (2011), 111-157. This doctoral dissertation is the first significant contribution into Warburg studies in a Scandinavian language. Its translated title reads "Picture atlas, Visual education and Reproduction. Aby Warburg's Mnemosyne-atlas and the visualization of Art History around 1800/1900."

<sup>26</sup> Aby Warburg, *Der Bilderatlas Mnemosyne —The Original*. Ed. by Haus der Kulturen der Welt, Berlin and The Warburg Institute; Roberto Ohrt, Axel Heil. (Berlin: Hatje Cantz Verlag, 2020).

This study is done by relying on works available in English. The thesis is not an archival study, nor does it access original, preliminary sources. Many manuscripts and *Zettelkasten* at the Warburg Institute Archive in London would ideally be investigated in order to give a fuller interpretation and description in part two of the thesis, so would a translated version of the *Tagebuch*.<sup>27</sup>

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<sup>27</sup> On the note of the *Tagebuch*, the Warburg institute states: “From August 1926 until October 1929, Aby Warburg, Gertrud Bing and Fritz Saxl kept an institutional *Tagebuch* or journal. Its nine volumes document the first years of the Bibliothek Warburg in its new building, Heilwigstraße 116, and Warburg’s last journey to Italy. The records span from details in the daily life of the new institution to research plans for the distant future.” URL: <https://warburg.sas.ac.uk/publications/tagebuch-der-kulturwissenschaftlichen-bibliothek-warburg>. See also Wedepohl, Claudia, 2020:16 in Claudia Wedepohl. *The Making of Aby Warburg’s Bilderatlas Mnemosyne*. In *Bilderatlas Mnemosyne - the Original*, Hatje Canz Verlag, 2020.

## 2. Aby Warburg: an orientation map

### 2.1 Aby Warburg - in context

Aby Warburg is widely considered as a prominent figure in the intellectual milieu of interwar Germany, identified alongside Walter Benjamin, Siegfried Kracauer, Ernst Cassirer and Martin Heidegger as notable intellectual.<sup>28</sup> On the local note, he is positioned within Hamburg academia with Ernst Cassirer and Erwin Panofsky.<sup>29</sup> Common sentiment in Germany, at the time, was touched by contrasting notions of loss and optimism. Worth mentioning in brief is also the revival within ‘the European mind’ towards Italian culture. But as Kurt Forster writes: “Ever since Goethe and the Nazarenes, works of Italian art had been defined more in terms of their reflection in the German mind than of their historical meaning in their place of origin.”<sup>30</sup>

Warburg’s position in the contemporary crowd was largely established by his library of cultural sciences, the *Kulturwissenschaftliche Bibliothek Warburg* (K.B.W.), which housed his expansive book and image collection. Warburg, coming from a wealthy, Jewish banking family had the liberty and means throughout his life to collect and maintain his collection.<sup>31</sup>

In the Warburgian map of the world we investigate not art, but cultural objects. His *Kulturwissenschaft* implies a total study of culture, drawing upon anthropological, sociological, psychological as well as biological sources. In Warburg’s view, images and art belongs to a ‘cultural anthropology.’ Nothing should escape the investigations of the researcher, including astrology and alchemy, Mesopotamian sources as well as the Greek. His aim was to show how antiquity’s legacy continued to manifest itself in Western cultural memory and how images are subjects to *Wanderungen*, or ‘image migration.’

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<sup>28</sup> Peter Gay’s 1968 seminal work on Weimar culture does so (see, Peter Gay, *Weimar culture: the outsider as insider*. (New York, W.W. Norton, 2001) and Matthew Rampley, “Aby Warburg: Kulturwissenschaft, Judaism and the Politics of Identity,” *Oxford Art Journal*, Vol. 33, no. 3 (2010): 319-335, where Rampley further contextualize Warburg’s thought. <https://www.jstor.org/stable/40983290>.

<sup>29</sup> Emily Levine, *Dreamland of Humanists: Warburg, Cassirer, Panofsky, and the Hamburg School*. (Chicago: The University of Chicago Press, 2013).

<sup>30</sup> Forster, “Introduction,” 4.

<sup>31</sup> As often referred to, Aby Warburg was heir to the family company as the oldest of five brothers, but forfeited his position and came to terms with his brother Max so that he could remain a private scholar throughout his life. Supported financially, he was never obliged to take up a university position and was able to ever-expand on his book- and image collection. See, Forster, “Introduction,” 4.

His ‘student years’ (1886-1891) coincided with crucial changes in the areas of study that were of great interest to him.<sup>32</sup> By the time of his dissertation on Botticelli, Warburg was inspired by the work of earlier scholars who had proposed for a widening of the field of history to include the study of art and culture.<sup>33</sup> Ernst Gombrich makes an informative recollection of them in his ‘Intellectual Biography.’ These scholars had already set the focus on paganism, astrology and religious cults as notions of a ‘darker’ side to the epoch, in contrast to a Winckelmannian notion of the classics as the high point of rational civilization.<sup>34</sup> Warburg’s teacher Karl Lamprecht and the anthropologist Jacob Burckhardt both promoted the Renaissance as the main epoch for these examinations.<sup>35</sup> In Karl Lamprecht’s lectures, Warburg encountered several of the basic elements of his future methodology, in conceiving history as a ‘psychological science.’<sup>36</sup> Lamprecht argued that social bodies, being society, also become bearers of memory; expression and *gesture* of the body come into play. The common memories are the collective repository in which certain people (artists and historians were exceptional in their sensitive qualities) tap into or perception.

Gombrich also accounts for the influence of the ‘traditional’ Renaissance scholars such as Riehl and Thode, but mainly as foils, that is, they contrast to how Warburg came to see the Renaissance.<sup>37</sup> Studies in classical philology, including the texts by Winckelmann, had been introduced to Warburg by Carl Justi, during his early years as a student in 1886-1888. Hermann Usener offered another philological influence with texts on anthropology. Notwithstanding, Friedrich Theodor Vischer also propelled Warburg’s interest in psychology and culture.

Leaving early influence aside, the last effort Warburg made was *Bilderatlas Mnemosyne*; his attempt to amalgamate what he had learned and what he still tried to come to grips with; to visualize his expansive theories of culture. The theories at the core of this encompass energy, force and vitality. These are in themselves, words evoking notions of movement. *Nachleben* (‘afterlife’), *Pathosformeln* (‘emotive formulas’) are driven by the

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<sup>32</sup> Forster, “Introduction,” 3.

<sup>33</sup> Warburg’s doctoral thesis on Sandro Botticelli was submitted at the University of Strasbourg in 1893, after studies at the university of Bonn.

<sup>34</sup> Levine, *Dreamland of Humanists*, 7.

<sup>35</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>36</sup> Gombrich, *Aby Warburg: An Intellectual Biography*, 37-38 and 55-56 and Didi-Huberman, *The Surviving Image*, 17.

<sup>37</sup> *Ibid.*, 27, 38-40 and *ibid.*

force of life. The following chapter sums up Warburg's key theoretical concepts and presents certain biographical detail, preparing both the assessment of Didi-Huberman's reading of Warburg in chapters 3-5 and the interpretation of panel 79 in chapters 6-7.

## 2.2 Key concepts

### 2.2.1 *Der Nachleben der Antike and Bilderfahrzeuge*

Warburg's aim was to demonstrate how antiquity's legacy continued to manifest itself, through images, in Western cultural memory. On the basis of its images, *Bilderatlas Mnemosyne* is intended, in Warburg's words, to be first of all an inventory of pre-coined classical forms that impacted upon the stylistic development of the representation of life in motion in the age of the Renaissance.<sup>38</sup> His main goal was that of 'revival' of ancient expressive formulae in the Renaissance, but his ambition also reached further.<sup>39</sup>

Warburg's famous expression *Wanderstraßen der Kultur* lent metaphor to the lines of transmissions of images and ideas across time and centuries. On their journeys through time, images has the function of 'vessels' or vehicles; *Bilderfahrzeuge*. In his famous essay on the fresco cycle at the Palazzo Schifanoia in Ferrara from 1912, he discovered that the palazzo frescoes depicted an astrological cycle using a plan derived from the ancient Roman astrologer Manilius, in which the twelve main gods from antiquity were associated with the twelve months.<sup>40</sup> He also mapped how these Greek mythological figures travelled from the Mediterranean to the East, to Egypt and India, then back to Europe, through Persia.<sup>41</sup> The cycle proved to Warburg that Olympian gods were well and alive, in a place of adobe in the

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<sup>38</sup> Aby Warburg, "The Absorption of the Expressive Values of the Past," intro. and trans. by Matthew Rampley. *Art in Translation*, Volume 1, Issue 2 (2015): 273–283. 10.2752/175613109X462708.

<sup>39</sup> Warburg never exposed a theory as such in an ordered form and his writings contains many title suggestions for his efforts. See, Gombrich, *Aby Warburg: An Intellectual Biography*, 239.

<sup>40</sup> Aby Warburg, "Italian Art and International Astrology in the Palazzo Schifanoia, Ferrara (1912)." in *The Renewal of Pagan Antiquity: Contributions to the Cultural History of the European Renaissance*, trans. by David Britt, (Los Angeles: Getty, 1999), 563-593.

<sup>41</sup> Warburg mapped relevant places of learning and trade and drew personal maps to see where ideas met. In the Schifanoia essay the places would be *Baghdad* where in the 9th century the Arab astrologer Abu Masar compiled astrological knowledge from Ancient Greece, *Toledo* where in the 12th century the Jewish scholar Ibn Ezra translated the text into Hebrew, then, *Padua* where the text was translated to Latin in 1293 (in *De Introductorio Maius*) and *Ferrara* where the transformed decans are depicted in the fresco cycle in Palazzo Schifanoia in 1470, by artist Francesco del Cossa (who received 'De Introductorio Maius').

midst of the Italian Renaissance. In this, Warburg saw rationality emerging out of magic fear.<sup>42</sup>

### 2.2.2 *Pathosformeln and Dynamogram*

Warburg's first use of the word *Pathosformeln* is from his essay on Albrecht Dürer, published in 1905.<sup>43</sup> In the image “*Death of Orpheus*” (1494) by Dürer, Orpheus is seen fighting off violent maenads with expressive force and the despair [Fig. 6]. He is, as Didi-Huberman states; “(...) a human being torn apart, a passionate and violent scene, frozen at a moment of extreme physical intensity.”<sup>44</sup> As Cornelia Zumbusch observes, “anger, aggressiveness, defense, powerlessness and power, can be seen.”<sup>45</sup> The ‘surviving forms of antiquity’ are seen through active gestures, as emotional intense expressions. Warburg’s analysis of Orpheus “gives him the concept of the *Pathosformula* (emotive formula) that accounts for the borrowing of artistic forms in terms of an affinity of expressive need.”<sup>46</sup> These forces, surviving over time, are constitutional of *Pathosformeln*. The Dürer essay, writes Gertrud Bing, “(...) marks the beginning of Warburg concern with the process of expressive formulation: a concern that treats every image — the specific object of the cultural historian’s interest—as the product of a dialectic between an individual expressive impulse and an inherited repertoire of ‘predefined’ forms.”<sup>47</sup> The essay on Sassetti touches similar notions and describes that psychological polarity is typical for the Renaissance individual.<sup>48</sup> Warburg was convinced that, the psyche leaves traces of its presence in history, leaving its mark on visual forms. This is what *dynamogram* and ‘emotive formulas’ (*Pathosformeln*) are meant to capture.<sup>49</sup> Warburg suggested that images from the Renaissance internalized contradictory

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<sup>42</sup> Franz Boll’s work “Sphaera” from 1903, who studied reception of astronomy in the Middle East, was impactful in relation to this essay. See, Franz Boll, “Sphaera: neue griechische Texte und Untersuchungen zur Geschichte der Sternbilder,” (Leipzig: 1903). <https://doi.org/10.11588/diglit.19748#0093>.

<sup>43</sup> Warburg writes: “(...) this archaeologically authentic emotive formula (*Pathosformel*) (...) had taken root in Renaissance artistic circles.” Quoted from Aby Warburg: The Renewal of Pagan Antiquity, Vol. 2, p. 555. The original text reads: “...wie lebenskräftige sich dieselbe archäologisch getreue Pathosformel (...) in Künstlerkreisen eingebürgert hatte.” See, Aby Warburg: Gesammelte Schriften, Bd. 2, 5. 446.

<sup>44</sup> Didi-Huberman, *The Surviving Image*, 12.

<sup>45</sup> Cornelia Zumbusch (2016). 'Physik des Symbols'. Aby Warburg and the Energy of Art. Warburg Institute Symposium. 7. Nov. 2016.

<sup>46</sup> Quoted from Gertrud Bing, “Editorial foreword,” in *The Renewal of Pagan Antiquity: Contributions to the Cultural History of the European Renaissance*, trans. David Britt (Los Angeles, Getty:1999), 85.

<sup>47</sup> Gertrud Bing, “Editorial foreword,” 84.

<sup>48</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>49</sup> Didi-Huberman, *The Surviving Image*, 136.

inheritance of antiquity, polarities of dynamic exchangeable force, *dynamograms*: “the Dionysian strands of culture, the presence of the barbaric and the beautiful, the wild in the rational.” The dynamism between ‘magic-religious’ and ‘mathematically-rational world views was, in Warburg’s view, at the heart of the Renaissance culture, despite former attempts to ‘purify’ it as enlightened and Apollonian. In his view, the *Pathosformula* carries within them pagan associations that the Catholic Church had tried to suppress. These ‘ancient impulses’ is defined in his introductory remark of the Mnemosyne, as the true subject of the Atlas work.<sup>50</sup> ‘Undemonizing’ what fear had once established, that is to say in Warburg’s words; orgiastic seizures such as fighting, walking, running, dancing, grasping; the unrestrained passions. The figure of the *Nymph* is the classic example of the emotive formula, characterized by paradoxical states. Rampley points out the crucial role of mimesis in Warburg’s work, “in that the Atlas maps out the visual signs of transformation in human experience, from magical-mimetic identification to the logical-dissociative objectivism of the modern scientific world view.”<sup>51</sup> We travel from the ancient impulses to a disconnected world where we have lost the original links and source of association.

To explain how impressions shape the mind, Warburg uses the term *Engram* or *Ausdrucksprägungen*. The theories of memory that became Warburg’s thought on engrammatic function of images were, according to Gombrich, inspired by Richard Semon, a student of Hering, who proposed that the energy of all living things have potentiality to leave an energy trace (in the non-physical world) in response to an event in the physical world.<sup>52</sup> This trace, called engram, can be picked up by sensitivities in another realm of time. This was what fascinated Warburg in his early thinking about symbols, symbolic function and the social organism.<sup>53</sup>

### **2.2.3 Denkraum**

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<sup>50</sup> Gombrich, *Aby Warburg: An Intellectual Biography*, 291 and Aby Warburg, “The Absorption of the Expressive Values of the Past”, intro. and trans. by Matthew Rampley. *Art in Translation*, Volume 1, Issue 2 (2015): 273–283. [10.2752/175613109X462708](https://doi.org/10.2752/175613109X462708).

<sup>51</sup> Rampley, *The Remembrance of Things Past: On Aby M. Warburg and Walter Benjamin*, 19.

<sup>52</sup> Semon’s book “Die Mneme als erhaltendes Princip im Wechsel des organischen Geschehens,” from 1908, was owned by Warburg according to Gombrich. See, Gombrich, *Aby Warburg: An Intellectual Biography*, 242.

<sup>53</sup> Gombrich, *Aby Warburg: An Intellectual Biography*, 242.

To Warburg, *Denkraum* ('space for thought') is the crucial, metaphorical distance needed in order for man to keep a civilized manner. In "A Lecture on a Serpent Ritual" from 1923, notions of *Denkraum* are presented in relation to the fears of losing it (by modern technology and society):

The modern Prometheus and the modern Icarus, Franklin and the Wright Brothers who invented the dirigible aircraft, are those fateful destroyers of our sense of distance who threaten to lead the world back into chaos. Telegram and telephone are destroying the cosmos. But myths and symbols, in attempting to establish spiritual bonds between man and the outside world, create space for devotion and scope for reason which are destroyed by the instantaneous electrical contact – unless a disciplined humanity re-introduce the impediment of conscience.<sup>54</sup>

Technology and modern means of communication, threatens to extinguish the much needed space in which man can connect to devotion and true reason. In this quote, Warburg emphasizes the spiritual bonds created by myths and symbols and points to the potential crises as followed by the lack thereof.

## 2.3 Ritual Imagination and Mental Instabilities

With his focus on rituals, it is important to give an account of the journey undertaken by Warburg in the 1890s where he faces a profound fascination for symbol and living ritual. Didi-Huberman points out that it is somewhat unanswered 'exactly what he was looking for and what he found.'<sup>55</sup> Notwithstanding, Warburg's first-hand experience of a 'primitive' ritual act as a young man, could foreshadow his intensified experience of 1929 when he directed his attentions to the rituals enacted in Rome.

In September 1895 Aby Warburg journeyed to Arizona to do cultural-anthropological studies on tribes of the Pueblo Indians in several remote villages.<sup>56</sup> The impressions of the rituals performed by the tribes (amongst others the Snake Ritual) and their visual, symbolic representations of natural forces (as their reality), made a major impact on Warburg and ignited his scholarly obsession with man's symbolic imagination and theory of image and symbol, pagan cosmology and modern man/civilization. "The Indian stands midway between logic and magic, and his instrument of orientation is the symbol."<sup>57</sup>

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<sup>54</sup> Aby Warburg, "A Lecture on Serpent Ritual."

<sup>55</sup> Didi-Huberman, *The Surviving Image*, 22.

<sup>56</sup> See transcriptions of Warburg's texts and around 200 of his photographs in Aby Warburg, ed. Uwe Fleckner, "Aby Warburg - Bilder aus dem Gebiet der Pueblo-Indianer in Nord-Amerika : Vorträge und Fotografien," in *Gesammelte Schriften* 3. Abteilung, Band 3.2. (Walter de Gruyter, Berlin/Boston, MA, 2018.)

<sup>57</sup> Warburg, "A Lecture on Serpent Ritual," 282.



The religious question relates to man as symbolic creature. The anthropological question relates to the natural primitiveness of ritual and to the question of inherited and unconscious gesture.<sup>58</sup> Man's primordial relationship with the (tragic) forces of life which are later repressed, displaced and a-temporally resurfaced in figures of movement. Ritual enthusiasm gives rise to the orgiastic dance, involving 'strangely violent movements.'<sup>59</sup> Warburg expresses his fascination for the dualism of the Pueblos; the rational aspects (the architecture of their houses, the geography of the land, water scarcity) versus the irrational ('the enigmatic and awe-inspiring' demon/snake).<sup>60</sup> Both are present in the complexity of culture. Societies are the platform from which man develops his symbolic imagination. In the Humiskachina dance ritual in the Indian village of Oraibi, Warburg saw how children were initiated and involved in the tribe ritual for the first time. From his experiences from the 28th of April to May 1st 1896, he wrote on the 'turning point' for child in tribal community: (...) the moment when the child receives instructions as to the true nature of the kachinas and is itself admitted to the company of the dancers is the great turning-point in its life.'<sup>61</sup> Here Warburg, both the anthropologist, sociologist and art-historian, sees with great empathy, complexities of human experience, development and interaction.

He did lectures on the topic of the Snake Rituals in 1897, but then left it for many years. The topic resurfaced during in 1923 when he was a patient at the sanatorium in Kreuzlingen.<sup>62</sup> "The years of the First World War were deeply agonizing for Warburg," Michael Steinberg writes. "They brought out profound conflicts and recurring demons and, according to most observers-including Gombrich-played a role in the mental aggravation that preceded the post-1918 breakdown."<sup>63</sup> Between 1918 and 1924, was admitted to Jena and later to Ludwig Binswangers clinic in Kreuzlingen. After the tumultuous times of World War I that became both an outer and inner period of dismantling, Warburg suffered a psychological breakdown. Didi-Huberman describes:

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<sup>58</sup> Didi-Huberman, *The Surviving Image*, 140.

<sup>59</sup> Maurice Emmanuel, *La danse grecque antique d'après les monuments figures*, (Paris: Hachette. 1896), 28-37, 41-44; *ibid.*, 168.

<sup>60</sup> Warburg, "A Lecture on Serpent Ritual," 277.

<sup>61</sup> *Ibid.*, 284.

<sup>62</sup> Its original title was "Reminiscences from a Journey to the Pueblo Indians," and was given in form of a lecture on the 25th April, 1923 at the sanatorium in Kreuzlingen. See, Warburg, "A Lecture on Serpent Ritual," 277. Warburg performed his lecture to a non-professional audience, presumably staff and patients at the sanatorium.

<sup>63</sup> Michael Steinberg, "Aby Warburg's Kreuzlingen Lecture: A Reading," in *Images from the Region of the Pueblo Indians of North America* (Cornell University Press: 1995), 81.

Because he tried to understand images, not just interpret them, Warburg was a man who, in a sense, tempted the devil and ended up falling mad amid his books before raving for five long years within the walls of the celebrated clinic in Kreuzlingen directed by Ludwig Binswanger. (...) The poet or prophet of the *Grundbegriffe*, those unpublishable manuscripts of ‘gushing’ thoughts, obsessions, and ‘idea leakages’ mixed together into an exaltation of theoretical reflection itself.<sup>64</sup>

To this account, here is what Warburg writes in his *Tagebuch*:

Sometimes it seems that, as a psycho-historian (ich als Psychohistoriker), I have tried to diagnose the schizophrenia of Western culture (die Schizophrenie des Abendlandes) through its images, as an autobiographical reflex. The ecstatic (manic) nymph on the one side, and on the other, the (depressive) river god in mourning (die ekstatische Nympha [manisch] einerseits und der trauernde Flussgott [depressiv] andererseits).<sup>65</sup>

As a patient at Kreuzlingen, he underwent his psychoanalytic treatment in the years 1921-1924.<sup>66</sup> Didi-Huberman elevates Ludwig Binswanger (1881-1966) as a significant influence on Warburg’s ideas. Like Freud, Binswanger was preoccupied with the symptomatic understanding of images.<sup>67</sup> He was looking for the ‘essential characteristics’ of civilization, something he thought to have found in so-called ‘primitive paganism.’<sup>68</sup> Michael Steinberg also points out, that, his insights of ‘recurrent primitivism’ became perhaps more apparent to him by his studies on the Florentine Renaissance and the German Reformation during his career leading up to psychosis, that is *after* the trip to the Hopis.<sup>69</sup> Steinberg specifically points to the essays on the art patron Francesco Sassetti written in 1902 and 1907 and to the essay on paganism in the Age of Martin Luther from 1920.<sup>70</sup>

On the note of Warburg’s mental landscape as leaning into ritualistic aspects, Joseph Leo Koerner has picked up an interesting note draft from Warburg, where a sense of dismantling into overwhelming ideas can indisputably and intensely be sensed. At 4:45 in the

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<sup>64</sup> Didi-Huberman, *Confronting Images*, 21.

<sup>65</sup> Warburg, *Tagebuch*, 3 April 1929 quoted from Gombrich, “Aby Warburg”, 303.

<sup>66</sup> Didi-Huberman, *The Surviving Image*, 113.

<sup>67</sup> Helmut Farber, Review of *L’image Survivante. Histoire de l’art et temps des fantômes selon Aby Warburg*, by Georges Didi-Huberman. Trans by Sheila J. Rabin. *Renaissance Quarterly* 57, no. 2 (2004): 604-6. <http://www.jstor.org/stable/1261753>.

<sup>68</sup> Warburg, “A Lecture on Serpent Ritual,” 277.

<sup>69</sup> Steinberg, “Aby Warburg’s Kreuzlingen Lecture: A Reading,” 88.

<sup>70</sup> The full titles of these essays are, “The Art of Portraiture in the Florentine Bourgeoisie (1902)” and “Francesco Sassetti’s Last Injunctions to His Sons (1907).” Both are found in *The Renewal of Pagan Antiquity: Contributions to the Cultural History of the European Renaissance*, trans. David Britt, (Los Angeles: Getty, 1999), 185-223. The essay on paganism is: Aby Warburg, “Pagan-Antique Prophecy in Words and Images in the Age of Luther.” See, Warburg, “Pagan-Antique Prophecy,” *The Renewal of Pagan Antiquity*, 597-699.

very early morning, Warburg has scribbled down this title suggestion/description for Mnemosyne:

Unity of Imaginative Finding of Causes (Orientation) Traced on (through) the between (through) (from) iconic and (to) sign-like (cyclically) back-and-forth commenting polar (symbolic form of the) function of antiquizing expressions in the form-world of the European Renaissance... 2 September 1928, Heilwigstrasse 119, on the edge of the bed at 4:45 am... imagistically pregnant descriptive form and symbolic futuristic determination / relation.... Where is Bing? Want to speak to Einstein.

This array of penciled-over comments and suspended sentences, is described by Koerner as “[t]hat huge, sick-making uncertainty (...)” of living with a scholarship you perhaps don’t see the ending of.<sup>71</sup> Koerner makes an observation an argument on a ritualistic aspect of Warburg’s life; The writing rituals of a scholar obsessed with his work.<sup>72</sup>

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<sup>71</sup> Joseph L. Koerner, “Writing Rituals: The Case of Aby Warburg,” *Common Knowledge* 18, no. 1 (2012): 87.

<sup>72</sup> In calling out for Einstein, Warburg contours, perhaps, the need to base his thoughts in space-time concepts. Einstein would perhaps assert and comfort Warburg with his confinement and restrictions of space and time. The recognition of the interdependency of space and time were for the first time scientifically formulated in Einstein’s theories of relativity (1916), that is that all space and time measurements are relative and depend on the observer, and that gravity makes space–time curved. See, Alessandro Scafi, “Mapping time” in *Maps of Paradise*, (Chicago, University of Chicago Press: 2013), 58.

# 3. Theory: Georges Didi-Huberman's History of Art

— *La vie est à nous. Hériter, espérer, sortir de soi.*  
Georges Didi-Huberman.

This thesis takes into consideration Aby Warburg and *Bilderatlas Mnemosyne* from the epistemological and phenomenological perspective of Georges Didi-Huberman. It aims at analyzing some of the concepts leading Didi-Huberman's reading of Aby Warburg's work and, more generally, principles governing art-historical theory. It combines insights from both *Confronting Images* (2005) and *The Surviving Image* (2017).

Idiosyncratic concepts to Didi Huberman are *knowledge and not-knowledge, the visible and the visual, event, symptom, rupture and rend*. In reading Aby Warburg, Didi-Huberman's conceptual vocabulary expands to *phantoms* (survivals), *pathos* (formulas) and elaborately on *symptoms* (fossils). The following is an attempt to access Didi-Huberman's art historical theories and account for Didi-Huberman's reading of *Bilderatlas Mnemosyne*. A careful examination of *Bilderatlas* panel 79 in the light of these insights will then complete my analysis in part II of the thesis.

## 3.1. Art-History with Warburg and Didi-Huberman

Georges Didi-Huberman (1953) is a French art historian and philosopher whose dedication to Warburg has proved strong over the last thirty years. His book *L'image Survivante* from 2002 (published in English in 2017 as *The Surviving Image. Phantoms of Time and Time of Phantoms. Aby Warburg's History of Art*) is the most notable work of Didi-Huberman on *Bilderatlas Mnemosyne*. According to Didi-Huberman, his study of Warburg began in 1990, parallel to writing *Confronting Images: Questioning the Ends of a Certain History of Art* (2005) (originally published as '*Devant l'image: Question posée aux fin d'une histoire de l'art*' (1990)). A sequel (not translated) '*Devant le temps: Histoire de l'art et anachronisme des images*' was published in 2000, extending some of the important aspects of *Devant l'image* (*time, memory, anachronism, symptom*). His scholarly influences and references are wide-

reaching, but a steady, intellectual framework for Didi-Huberman is the psychoanalytic paradigm authored by Sigmund Freud and, later, Jaques Lacan (in his '*Ecrits*'). Other influential thinkers to Didi-Huberman are Walter Benjamin, Georges Bataille (the *not-knowledge*), Gilles Deleuze (the concept of *rhizome*), Michel Foucault (*The Archaeology of Knowledge*), and Jacques Derrida. Didi-Huberman is a scholar emerging from the post-structuralist intellectual paradigm and 'the new art history' who represents, to many, a particular french *parlance* that is characterized by associative thinking, metaphors and unexpected juxtapositions, where the deconstructionist take on history in the field of art theory, points to destabilize previous understandings of what art mean.

Didi-Huberman, like Warburg, sees the psychological forces at play in the individual and in culture as essential in understanding how images operate and mean. This approach is not new or exclusive to them, but is rooted in humanistic notions from earlier centuries, as it becomes apparent in studying Warburg's masters and influences. Jacob Burckhard, for instance, intuitively surmised as early as the 1860s, that works of art should be regarded less within the philosophical categories of aesthetics than as a 'part of psychology.'<sup>73</sup> Art history, being the apparent field for the study of images, should, to both Didi-Huberman and Warburg, be an expansive field open to multi-diciplinary sciences. To expand and develop art history and visual culture and the notions of what constitutes 'research' can and should be collected from interdisciplinary study. Aby Warburg was a pioneer in this sense, with 'no fear of boarder guards,' refusing to align with any pre-defined categories of research as they were traditionally practiced at universities in the late 19th - and early 20th century.

To Didi-Huberman, the expansion of art history should be based on psychoanalysis, in the Freudian field. *The Surviving Image* brings an increased psychoanalytical perspective into *Bilderatlas Mnemosyne*, building on Sigmund Freud's ground-breaking insights from the early 20th century. Like Friedrich Nietzsche, Freud battled with tensions between civilization and the individual and how the personal psyche should relate to a collective society.

They (Warburg, Nietzsche, Freud, Didi-Huberman) also share the same notion of *suffering* in culture, or rather, of the *tragic*. The individual 'psycho-machinery' hinges revolts, anxieties and chaos and the tensions and dynamic exchanges happening within these lie at the core of both personal and cultural battle. The oppositional values of potential and hope, chaos

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<sup>73</sup> Forster, "Introduction," 6, 11.

and suffering, are seen as driving forces in time, and the *eternal recurrence* of them. To Warburg, these ideas become profoundly personal and critical to personal health when he in 1918 is admitted to the Kreuzlingen sanatorium following a psychological breakdown. In Didi-Huberman's narrative of Warburg, the perspective of his suffering is profoundly important to illustrate the entirety of his endeavor. As opposed to Warburg's first biographer Ernst Gombrich (1909-2001), this mental instability is consistently present in Didi-Huberman's investigation.

### **3.2. History as Knowledge - the Image as Event**

To better understand Didi-Huberman's reading of Warburg, we must first take into consideration his fundamental question; *How should we approach images?* (And epistemologically, *how* can we know anything about images?)

In *Confronting Images*, Didi-Huberman presents his epistemology of *knowledge* and *not-knowledge* evidencing the dynamic that is established between the viewer and the image. This would be a phenomenological approach wherein images are primarily seen as experiences and acts, rather than objects. Didi-Huberman describes the encounter with art images as an intense happening, where we are initially oblivious and then, gradually step into an increasingly didactical experience where knowledge melts into the frame. The complex interplay between the senses and our intellectual ability to decipher the image is rapid and seamless, indistinguishable from orderly time. It happens instantly and presupposes the beholder's willingness and openness.

Traditional iconography, in contrast, immediately wants to reduce the visual object to linguistic signs. It forces us to distinguish what is there on the visible surface and thereby make sense of it. Didi-Huberman criticizes this positivist 'attitude of certainty' and of iconology as an 'objective science.' He observes, that if we rationalize too fast, we lose that invaluable ambiguity and achieve nothing but a blending of the visible into the readable, to wit translating "(...) all concepts into images, all images into concepts."<sup>74</sup> Translations, according to Didi-Huberman, should thus be generously free to *destabilize* us.

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<sup>74</sup> Georges Didi-Huberman, *Confronting Images. Questioning The Ends of A Certain History of Art*, trans. John Goodman. (Pennsylvania: Pennsylvania State University Press, 2005), 3.

Didi-Huberman's particular interest in Warburg's work and *Bilderatlas Mnemosyne* arises from these ideas: that traditional art-historical inquiry (following Vasari and Panofsky) is a defective way in which to look at, and interpret images. Mnemosyne, argues Didi-Huberman, represents a departure from what he calls 'a land of malaise.'<sup>75</sup> The malaise would be damning conclusions and certainties about the image. In this, *Bilderatlas Mnemosyne* is a quintessential example of a visual object that challenges the traditional art historical inquiry's epistemic assumptions.<sup>76</sup> As we shall see, in Didi-Huberman's view the epistemic assumptions need to be challenged by a temporal instability, and by psychological ambiguous expressions and exhalations, to make the image convey *more*.

### 3.3 The Visible and the Visual — a Critique of Representation

To 'see' should thus be an active encounter with visual phenomena and a creative effort. This is a notion Didi-Huberman shares with the art critic Carl Einstein, whom he also quotes as influential to his thinking. The relationship between 'seeing and knowing,' the moment of encounter with the image, *knowing* and *not-knowing*, is a dialectic tale where there are paradoxes between what we know and what we do not know.

Such are the stakes: to know, but also to think not-knowledge when it unravels the nets of knowledge. To proceed dialectically. Beyond knowledge itself, to commit ourselves to the paradoxical ordeal not to *know* (which amounts precisely to deny it), but to *think* the element of not-knowledge that dazzles us whenever we pose our gaze to an art image.<sup>77</sup>

To 'see' leads us to *the visible* and *the visual*. To Didi-Huberman these different notions refer to what is evident and straightforward, what is simply presented (visible) and what is not (visual). The visual exceeds the visible in the sense that it entails underlying 'forces:'

With the visible, we are, of course, in the realm of what manifests itself. The visual, by contrast, would designate that irregular net of event symptoms that reaches the visible as so many gleams or radiances, 'traces of articulation,' and so many indices... Indices of what? Of something—a work, a memory in process—that has nowhere been fully described.<sup>78</sup>

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<sup>75</sup> Didi-Huberman, *Confronting Images*, 8.

<sup>76</sup> Matthew Rampley, "Aby Warburg, Images and Exhibitions," review of *Aby Warburg, Bilderreihen und Ausstellungen*, edited by Uwe Fleckner and Isabelle Woldt, in *the Journal of Art Historiography*, number 7 (2012), 2.  
<https://arthistoriography.files.wordpress.com/2012/12/rampley-review.pdf>

<sup>77</sup> Didi-Huberman, *Confronting Images*, 7.

<sup>78</sup> *Ibid.*, 31.

Traditional ways of presentation, relating to the figurative, mimetic and visible, are deemed inadequate. Representation is rather a question of presentation. It is also a question of trying to look past the things we thought we knew, to ‘un-learn.’ Emmanuel Alloa has pointed to Didi-Huberman’s method of ‘phasmid thinking;’ the thought of disparateness, the essential differences between being biased and unlearned: [p]hasmid thinking is the thought of disparateness, i.e., of dis-paring.”<sup>79</sup>

### 3.4 Symptom, Rupture, Rend and Time

*Symptom*, derived from Freudian terminology, is a *rupture* in the net of knowledge, destabilizing our set expectations or learning about the work of art.

The symptom that ruptures knowledge also ruptures time; it is an inconsistency of time, Didi-Huberman argues. In *Confronting Images*, the symptom is connected to the notion of *rend*:

Why, finally, call this power of the rend symptom? Just what are we to understand by this? Symptom speaks to us of the infernal scansion, the anadyomene movement of the visual in the visible and of presence in representation. It speaks to us of the insistence and return of the singular in the regular, it speaks to us of the fabric that rends itself, of the rupture of equilibrium that soon will break itself again. And what it tells us is untranslatable but interpretable, and interprets itself endlessly. It places us before its usual power as before the emergence of the very process of figurability. It teaches us in this sense—in the brief space of a symptom, then—what figuring is, bearing within itself its own theoretical force. But this is a theory that is active, made flesh, so to speak, a theory whose power happens, paradoxically, when the unity of forms, their ideal synthesis, breaks apart, and this breaking apart gushes a material’s strangeness.<sup>80</sup>

Time, pictured by Didi-Huberman, is not a continuous, unrestricted flow, but rather something disturbed and agitated by vortexes and eddies. These notions are steeped in Bergsonian philosophy, where experienced time is different from measured time (conscious-time vs. clock-time). Warburg’s *Bilderatlas Mnemosyne* is the anachronistic object par excellence, as images in the Atlas are essentially montages of heterogeneous meanings and temporalities.<sup>81</sup> Didi-Huberman writes:

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<sup>79</sup> Emmanuel Alloa, “Phasmid Thinking,” trans. Christopher Woodall. *Angelaki* 23, 4 (2018): 104. 10.1080/0969725X.2018.1497283.

‘Disparates’ is a term from Didi-Huberman, where a point of reference is Francisco Goya’s (1746-1828) *Los Disparates*, or *the Follies* (1815 and 1823), a series of prints in etching and aquatint (also known as *Proverbios* (*Proverbs*) or *Sueños* (*Dreams*)).

<sup>80</sup> Didi-Huberman, *Confronting Images*, 162.

<sup>81</sup> Didi-Huberman, *The Surviving Image*, 318.



The history of images is a history of objects that are temporally impure, complex, overdetermined. It is therefore a history of polychronistic, heterochronistic, or anachronistic objects. It is not to say, already, that the history of art is itself an anachronistic discipline, for better and for worse?<sup>82</sup>

Anachronistic time, what does that mean? Anachronism, in historical thinking, implies a deconstruction of a historical time, dissolving what comes before and what comes after. It also brings into question the subjective feelings about time and how time is perceived. It implies connecting several notions at the same time, a temporal multitasking. The landscape is therefore created by the explorer of it. These are abstract constructions, owing much to the French post-structuralist traditions, Deleuzian ‘eddy’ morphing into time-vortexes, disorientating us and the ones who come after, withholding us from reaching any clarity of reading. Reading is, albeit, nothing that Didi-Huberman aims at, as it reduces the experience and the meaning of the image / work of art.

### **3.5 The Singular and the Universal — a Bridge to Imagination**

Didi-Huberman observes how in the Mnemosyne there is a paradox, as the ‘image-event’ takes place. On the one hand, he continues, our senses accept an immediacy of the image; on the other, or mind wants to make sense of the object through structures, language, and words. The immediacy does not know; it only senses. When we are in front of an image, we find ourselves in a situation of both simplicity and complexity, singularity and universality. This echoes a quote from Goethe, also cited by Didi-Huberman in the preface of *Atlas, or the Anxious, Gay Science* (2018): “What is the Universal? The single case. What is the Particular? Millions of cases.”<sup>83</sup> What mediates between the simplicity/complexity and singularity/universality is imagination. As Didi-Huberman writes, the imagination is first of all—anthropologically—what makes us capable of casting a bridge between the most distant and the most heterogenous orders of reality.<sup>84</sup> The imagination, again, beacons Freud who valued fantasy as a key vital force. William W. Meissner, a Jesuit and Freudian psychoanalyst, writes of the dynamic relation and seesaw movements within the psyche:

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<sup>82</sup> Didi-Huberman, *Confronting Images*, 42.

<sup>83</sup> Georges Didi-Huberman, *Atlas, or, the Anxious Gay Science*, trans. Shane B. Lillis (Chicago: The University of Chicago Press, 2018), x.

<sup>84</sup> Didi-Huberman, *Atlas, or, the Anxious Gay Science*, 13.

Man need to create, to shape and transform his environment, find vehicles for expressing his inner life, or rather the constant commerce between the ongoing worlds of his external experience and his inner psychic reality... It is through illusion, then, that the human spirit is nourished... The man without imagination, without the capacity for play or for creative illusion, is condemned to a sterile world of harsh facts without color or variety, without the continual enrichment of man's creative capacities.<sup>85</sup>

Again apropos of 'imagination,' Didi-Huberman points out how Warburg's Atlas is "a tool, not a logical exhaustion of possibilities given, but the inexhaustible opening to possibilities that are not yet given. It's principle, it's motor, it's none other than imagination." Then Didi-Huberman continues, quoting Charles Baudelaire, that 'imagination' is not a personal fantasy, but ... a quasi-divine faculty which perceives first of all, outside of philosophical methods, the intimate and secret relations of things, the correspondences and analogies.<sup>86</sup>

### 3.6 Art History, Now

To sum up Didi-Huberman's core view about his epistemology of images and what the study of art history should take into consideration, we can affirm that 'visual' always encompasses more than what is simply presented to the spectator. In his theoretical apparatus the 'rend' (*l'image déchirure*) is the *symptom* that appears as a rupture, an incoherence, an unexpected shift – as it would happen in a dream. The task of historians should therefore be to investigate how ruptures are expressed in 'different modes of time;' that is... the 'then' and 'now'; the 'historical contemporary' and the 'present contemporary'. "The historian is, in every sense of the word, only the *fictor*, which is to say the modeler, the artisan, the author, the inventor of whatever past he offers us."<sup>87</sup> Besides, Didi-Huberman encourages associative thinking and creativity, thus providing some comfort to a new generation of historians, calling on open-mindedness, empathy and variation. His impact lies in the notion that there is no grand solution and thus, no grand solution to miss. We live both 'veiledly' (behind fabric, believing we know the truth) and in a 'rift' (anxiously opening up to uncertain states). Warburg's *Bilderatlas*, in Didi-Huberman's reading, carries this creative force; it carries

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<sup>85</sup> William W. Meissner quoted in Cottingham, 2005: pp 69-70. William W. Meissner *Psychoanalysis and Religious Experience* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1984), p. 177. Cottingham writes it is also quoted in Palmer, *Freud and Jung on Religion*, p 73.) Cottingham, John (2005). *The Spiritual Dimension. Religion, Philosophy and Human Value*. Cambridge University Press, Cambridge.

<sup>86</sup> C. Baudelaire, (1857a) 1976, 329) "Notes nouvelles sur Edgar Poe. In (*Oeuvre complètes*, vol. 2, ed. C. Pichois (Paris: Gallimard, 1976) , 319-37. Quoted in Didi-Huberman, *Atlas, or, the Anxious Gay Science*, 5.

<sup>87</sup> Didi-Huberman, *Confronting Images*, 9.

images with active, emotional, and vital power who have the ability to fracture us and open us up to new propositions. In Didi-Huberman's own words:

J'essaie de pratiquer ce que Walter Benjamin, citant Goethe, appelait un 'empirisme tendre.' Cela signifie que chaque nouvelle image est un nouveau trésor d'idées encore jamais formulées : elle devrait, si elle est bien regardée, faire bifurquer l'idée préalable, donner cent nouvelles idées...<sup>88</sup>

The image, if well-studied, should disclose 'a hundred new ideas.' In Didi-Huberman's 'tender empiricism' lies the notion of what is not there yet and the sensitivity which enables it. Again, mimesis, wanting to imitate 'to look like,' to represent only what is there, is left behind as unwanted idealism connected to the image.

Warburg's main interest was how the antique *pathosformeln* impacted Renaissance art. The force of his formula, however, is not limited to figures depicted and bound to the surface of specific images from antiquity or the Renaissance. It is an expansive force that transmutes time and is translated into the 'gestalt' (the whole) of the visual. In Didi-Huberman, forcefulness, energy and spark overcome fixed boundaries between epochs, styles or genres. His philosophy, inspired by Freud, values lucid dreams and unconscious response on even terms with the tangible, visible and rational. The subtle and intangible experience which occur as confusing or unresolved in meeting with the image. The sensation of surplus, is there, through language and unexpected connections, expanding the discourse connected to studies of the visual field.

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<sup>88</sup> Nicolas Truong, "Georges Didi-Huberman: Certaines images ouvrent grande leur gueule," Le Monde, October 27, 2016. [https://www.lemonde.fr/arts/article/2016/10/27/georges-didi-huberman-certaines-images-ouvrent-grande-leur-gueule\\_5021024\\_1655012.html](https://www.lemonde.fr/arts/article/2016/10/27/georges-didi-huberman-certaines-images-ouvrent-grande-leur-gueule_5021024_1655012.html).

## 4. Didi-Huberman reads Warburg: *The Surviving Image* (2017)

(...) a surviving image is an image that, having lost its original use value and meaning, nonetheless comes back, like a ghost, at a particular historical moment. (Didi-Huberman, *Confronting Images*, xxii)

In the book *The Surviving Image*, *survivals* (*survivantes*) is Didi-Huberman's most resonating term, pointing to the *Nachleben* (i.e., the afterlife) and how images of a certain emotional and expressive character *survives* and re-appears throughout history. He devises the concept of *survivals* as the main 'problem' of Warburg and traces it as a phenomenon as analyzed by or with other thinkers.

His book is divided in three parts: 'The Image as Phantom: Survival of Forms and Impurities of time' (*I'image fantôme*). The second chapter, 'The Image as Pathos: Lines of Fracture and Formulas of Intensity' (*I'image pathos*). Third chapter 'The Image as Symptom: Fossils in Motion and Montages of Memory' (*I'image symptôme*). All three chapter titles illustrate that in this undertaking, Didi-Huberman wants to emphasize what is not visible to us; phantoms and ghosts, pathos energies and symptoms. These metaphors are the 'rend' in the veil, seamlessly binding Didi-Huberman's theory of the visible and the visual, of knowledge and not-knowledge into Warburg's oeuvre. His first task concerns time and, and the *Nachleben der Antike* (i.e., afterlife of the antiquity).

To explain pathos formulas, Didi-Huberman sets different paradigms that Warburg operates within. He explores a *Darwinian* paradigm and a *choreographic* paradigm which will be explained in the next paragraph.

### 4.1 Agencies of Image and Time: *Nachleben*

In the *Image as Phantom: Survival of Forms and Impurities of time*, Didi-Huberman presents the agencies behind the image and time, as he sees them in the context of English anthropologist Edward B. Tylor (1832-1917) and 'the great historian from Basel,' Jacob Burckhardt (1818-1897). Both of these scholars were preoccupied with the notion of afterlife in culture, that is the continuation, *survivals* and re-appearances of cultural forms. Warburg's afterlife of antiquity, *Nachleben*, is thus "the persistent, unconscious recurrence of forms

within the image that gives it ‘life.’”<sup>89</sup> The word intimately and logically linked to *afterlife* is *survival* (the logic being that in order for there to be an afterlife of form, the form needs to survive). In Didi-Huberman’s approach *survivals* reveal themselves anachronistically in *symptoms* and *phantoms* (or ghosts), rupturing what is on the surface of the image. These are forces that reappears time after time, ‘ghosts’ becoming *survivals* in history becoming the substrate of *Nachleben*. Following Warburg Didi-Huberman states, “temporal periods (...) are expressed, rather, by huntings ‘survivals’, residues and the persistent return of forms—that is to say, by notions that do not constitute knowledge, that are unthought and by unconscious aspects of time.”<sup>90</sup> Opposing Panofsky, Didi-Huberman elucidates Warburg’s approach to image as force: “Panofsky, it is clear, sought to understand only the ‘meaning’ of images, whereas Warburg also sought to understand their ‘life’, that impersonal ‘force’ or ‘power’ (*Kraft, Macht*) that he occasionally speaks of but regularly declines to define.”<sup>91</sup>

## 4.2 Confronting Winckelmann

Further analyzing the historical conceptions of time in *The Image as Phantom*, Didi-Huberman turns to the earlier influences in cultural history. He initially visits the Winckelmannian paradigm, unwinding what kind of art history Warburg was confronting. Didi-Huberman reminds us that any historical study challenges us with complex notions of time, memory and ideas of progress or decline. These contradicting notions are implicit in the modern approach to history, but in his opinion they are governed by Warburg’s *Kulturwissenschaft*, which implies an ‘opening up’ of both time and the objects researched.<sup>92</sup>

The German archeologist and art historian Johann Joachim Winckelmann (1717-1768) represents an early position on historical thinking. Winckelmann idealized ancient art and saw imitation (*mimesis*) as the only way in which art can achieve greatness, along with the ideal of quiet beauty and nobility of stillness. Conversely, Warburg’s and Didi-Huberman’s intellectual projects represent a radical departure from a neoplatonic establishment where a

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<sup>89</sup> Richard Baxstrom, Review of *The Surviving Image: Phantoms of Time and Time of Phantoms: Aby Warburg’s History of Art*, by Georges Didi Huberman. *Visual Culture in Britain*, 18, 2, (2017): 312-314. 10.1080/14714787.2017.1334385.

<sup>90</sup> Didi-Huberman, *The Surviving Image*, 12.

<sup>91</sup> *Ibid.*, 59.

<sup>92</sup> *Ibid.*, 26.

purity of 'ideas' is necessarily postulated. By the same token, they are not interested in the rebirth of art as something triumphant, processual or 'Vasarian.' Reacting to the Winckelmannian models of 'greatness and decline,' 'good imitations' and 'serene beauties,' they put an emphasis on what creates meaning in culture, which Didi-Huberman labels 'symptomatic,' the unthought or anachronistic aspect.<sup>93</sup> These concepts adhere to art, to Didi-Huberman and the contemporary onlooker, as 'ghosts' — those 'psychic adhesions' of the primitive in the historical presence.<sup>94</sup> This position has similarities with the one adopted by Jacob Burckhardt (1818-1897) in his investigations on the Italian Renaissance civilization.

### 4.3 Survivals: Tylor and Burckhardt

Survivals, Warburg's main notion, is a concept that Didi-Huberman traces back to Anglo-Saxon anthropology and the 19th century anthropologist Edward B. Tylor (1832-1917). Tylor's book *Primitive cultures* was published in 1871, followed by the publication of *Anthropology* in 1881. In this regard, Didi-Huberman remarks that, "[w]hen Warburg suddenly left Europe for New Mexico in 1895, he was not undertaking a 'journey to the archetype,' as Fritz Saxl (1890-1948) believed, but rather '[a] trip to the survivals;'" and this theoretical reference point was not James G. Frazer (1854-1941), as Saxl wrote, but Edward B. Tylor.<sup>95</sup>

Didi-Huberman further makes the point that commentators on Warburg have not paid much attention to this anthropological source.<sup>96</sup> He notes that Warburg scholar Kurt Forster, in his introductory essay to *The Renewal of Pagan Antiquity*, does not mention Tylor and only mentions the influence of August Springer, claiming that the term 'survival' was something Warburg got from Springer.<sup>97</sup> In this, as Richard Baxstrom has noted, Didi-Huberman invites us to reconsider Tylor as part of Warburg's anthropological culture.<sup>98</sup>

So what is the essence of Tylor's anthropology to Warburg? The wider context is of course the interdisciplinary climate that Warburg came to identify himself with. Tylor adhered to the *permanence of culture* and the notion of the survival of both material and

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<sup>93</sup> Didi-Huberman, *The Surviving Image*, 28.

<sup>94</sup> Didi-Huberman, *Confronting Images*, 23.

<sup>95</sup> Didi-Huberman, *The Surviving Image*, 27.

<sup>96</sup> *Ibid.* See also, Gombrich, *Aby Warburg: An Intellectual Biography*, 16,

<sup>97</sup> Forster, "Introduction," 6.

<sup>98</sup> Baxstrom, "Review of *The Surviving Image*," 313.

immaterial things. The essence of culture, to Tylor, is the permanence and sustainability of certain things. According to Didi-Huberman, this permanence of culture touches the position of Warburg, in that permanence reveals itself through *symptoms*. As an early anthropologist, Tylor had observed how forms and habits were inherited from minuscule things. That tenacity of survivals comes to light in the seemingly superfluous, derisory or abnormal — insubstantial things.<sup>99</sup> Tylor studied children’s games (bones, rattles, playing cards) and characteristics of language (adages, proverbs, and ways of greeting) as well as dedicating work on astrology and magic.<sup>100</sup> Didi-Huberman sees parallels to this in Warburg’s own preoccupation with the study of games and astrological activities (such as tarots and horoscopes), and that both Tylor and Warburg, implicitly looked for ‘rifts/breaches in the veil’ - symptoms that could reveal hitherto undervalued currents of civilized or cultured life of the time. The survival of astrological forms and practices was especially thematized by Warburg in his essay on the Schifanoia frescoes and in his essay on Martin Luther. Well before Warburg, Tylor in *Primitive Cultures*, made a case for a theory of the imitative and emotional outpourings in culture, expressed in *symptoms*.

This account for the concept of survival calls for some conclusions. Survivals appear as phantasmal or symptomatic manifestations, and phantoms and symptoms are vestiges of both immaterial and material things. They reveal themselves through traces, hints. They also belong to the imperceptible realities and can also seen as ‘intruders.’

Symptoms, according to Didi-Huberman, with their capacity as “absurdity, a lapsus, illness, or madness — to act as guide to the vertiginous temporal dimensions of the survivals existing within a given culture.”<sup>101</sup> Both Burckhardt and Tylor see the work of the historian as something directed to unveil (echoing Nietzsche) “what remains precisely uncultured, uncivilized, unconscious, reflexive and animal-like.”<sup>102</sup>

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<sup>99</sup> Didi-Huberman, *The Surviving Image*, 30.

<sup>100</sup> *Ibid.*, 31.

<sup>101</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>102</sup> Spyros Papapetros, “The Eternal Seesaw: Oscillations in Warburg’s Revival,” review of *L’image Survivante. Histoire de l’art et temps des fantômes selon Aby Warburg*, by Georges Didi-Huberman. *Oxford Art Journal*, Vol. 26, no. 2 (2003), 170.  
<https://www.jstor.org/stable/3600395>

## 4.4 Anachronistic conceptions of time — historical method

### 4.4.1 Vital Remnants: Jacob Burckhardt

Didi-Huberman also traces Warburg's attitude of symptomatic reappearance back to Jacob Burckhardt, who used the term of 'vital residues' to describe these remnants or survivals. In another departure from Winckelmann, Jacob Burckhardt presents this historical concept of rebirth as an impurity of time. "[a]ntiquity is not the pure object of time which return as such when called. It is a great movement of large domains, a silent vibration, a harmonic wave which traverses all the historical layers and all the levels of culture," writes Didi-Huberman. And, in Jacob Burckhardt's own words; "the history of the ancient world, i.e., of all those peoples whose lives have flowed into ours, is like a fundamental cord that keeps sounding through the fields of human knowledge."<sup>103</sup> The Renaissance is an impure, something that Warburg explored in his concepts of *Nachleben* and *Pathosformeln*. This, Didi-Huberman states, is also the source of its vitality.<sup>104</sup>

Burckhardt had already surmised in the 1860s that works of art should be approached less within the philosophical categories of aesthetics than as 'a part of psychology.'<sup>105</sup> This turn towards psychology thus happened in several humanistic disciplines.

Burckhardt says: "art constantly pose contextual problems that lead us beyond the uniqueness of their own genesis to the suffering, aspiring, and active human being,"<sup>106</sup> meaning that he was drawn towards the so-called undercurrents and variations of psychological excitation that goes on within culture and cultural objects.

Didi-Huberman sees Burckhardt as someone who anticipates ideas about time and its dynamic forces. Time and image are united in movements and these movements are presented in *dynamogrammes*. Warburg's concept of *dynamogram* is, as previously explained, a conceptual apparatus 'visualizing historical turmoil.'<sup>107</sup> Dynamic forces at work throughout time are, as presented by Burckhardt, thrown back and forth between ages. In relation to Burckhardt's 'vital remnants' (*lebensfähige Reste*) and Tylor's primitive cultural survivals, Didi-Huberman amplifies how Warburg uses graphic illustrations and drawings to

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<sup>103</sup> Didi-Huberman, *The Surviving Image*, 45.

<sup>104</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>105</sup> Forster, "Introduction," 11.

<sup>106</sup> *Ibid.*, 10-11.

<sup>107</sup> As formulated in Papapetros, "The Eternal Seesaw."



highlight his thinking. These are also visual metaphors of Warburg's theoretical thinking: seismographic drawings, myograms and chronophotography represent the invisible forces which animates movement. They exemplify how the image is "a sign of a certain interaction of forces, a chaotic and often arbitrary interaction that nevertheless expresses an underlying 'diagram' or aesthetics of force," as Gustavo Chirolla specifies.<sup>108</sup>

The tenacity of the survival of forms is common to them. Burckhardt, a 'dialectical clairvoyant' to Didi-Huberman, introduces a way of thinking that is centered on these tensions and the polarities implied in them.<sup>109</sup>

#### 4.4.2 Tragic Forces: Nietzsche

As Didi-Huberman points out, Warburg was a reader of Nietzsche and was inspired by the Nietzschean polarities of the 'Apollonian ethos' and 'Dionysian pathos.' Warburg's energetic metaphors of a 'human seismograph' is thus to be found in Nietzsche.<sup>110</sup> In Warburg's critique of Winckelmann's noble idea of what antiquity meant, (the "edle Einfalt und stille Größe"), he turned to the Nietzschean ideas, contrary to the 'virtuos and Vasarian' claim on antiquity, that antiquity was also 'the tragic and the terrible.'

In *The Surviving Image*, Didi-Huberman addresses the direct link between Warburg and Nietzsche. He also reminds us that the root of 'vital force' comes from Burckhardt and his 'vital remnants.'<sup>111</sup>

Warburg's main thesis in his exploration of *pathosformeln* was rooted in the polarity of moving forces; in Warburg the world is in fact understood essentially as a polarity — an attitude that echoes Nietzsche. His obsession with the Laokoon sculptural group had its focus in the sculptures' emotional expressions. Warburg saw that classical art was not limited to Apollonian virtue alone but was marked by tragic forces as well.<sup>112</sup> Tragedy is, in Warburg's and Nietzschean understanding, a vital force in our lives. In Didi-Huberman's own words, a

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<sup>108</sup> Gustavo Chirolla and Juan Fernando Mejía Mosquera, "Deleuze and Didi-Huberman on Art History," in *Art History after Deleuze and Guattari*, edited by Sjoerd van Tuinen and Stephen Zepke (Leuven: Leuven University Press, 2017), 91.

<https://doi.org/10.2307/j.ctt21c4s51.8>

<sup>109</sup> Didi-Huberman, *The Surviving Image*, 44.

<sup>110</sup> *Ibid.*, 83.

<sup>111</sup> *Ibid.*, 85.

<sup>112</sup> Lasse Hodne, "The Afterlife of Greece. Warburg's Nietzschean Critique of Winckelmann," in *IKON Journal of Iconographic Studies*, vol. 13 / 2020, 213-226. Accessed on 17 November, 2021. <https://doi.org/10.1484/J.IKON.5.121575>.

“tragic childhood survives within us and this survival gives birth to us at every moment, inventing our present and our future.”<sup>113</sup> Warburg’s tools derived from Nietzsche are the theoretical models of *survival* and *rebirth*, the *eternal recurrence*, the *return of the oppressed*. Focusing our attention on the *survival*, for Nietzsche the ‘will to power’ is an instinctual force that drives man into excessive and also destructive, acts. To be overly forceful, exuberant, orgastic and frightening are the source of the tragic. As previously mentioned, there is a capacity in images of intensification, both beautiful and horror-inducing. Images do not only rely on vision, but they call upon the knowledge, memory and desire of the one who looks at them.<sup>114</sup> Tragedy, is seen as the driving force of culture, because what survives in culture is above all the tragic. That is the claim of Nietzsche.

Warburg’s research extends the polarity of Apollo and Dionysus. However, as Didi-Huberman remarks, he did so with wider attention and scope than Nietzsche. In his quest, Warburg puts equal attention to image and *intermezzi* - festivals and festive actions, anthropological and social observations.<sup>115</sup> Whilst Nietzsche would oppose that and separate the art of the image.<sup>116</sup>

If we consider that Renaissance had the integrated elements of the ‘darker’ forces, and the qualities of opposites, it won’t be a surprise to realize how Renaissance art, to Aby Warburg, was vital.<sup>117</sup> Warburg, writes:

(...). One can understand the grace of Ghirlandaio’s figures only against the background of the votive, genealogical, and funerary practices of the merchant Sassetti: suffering mixed with beauty, death agonies mixed with belief in resurrection, modern ‘realism’ mixed with ‘Etrusco-pagan’ inelegance. All of that constitutes the very moment of *Lebensenergie*, a flux and reflux from which the pictorial beauties of Santa Trinità emerge, surviving before our eyes like solidified foam.<sup>118</sup>

It should also be noted that Didi-Huberman makes a point upon the fact that earlier scholars made an effort to minimize the relationship between Warburg and Nietzsche.<sup>119</sup> Indeed, Gombrich mentions the influence of the *Birth of Tragedy*, but decides to downplay the role of this ‘communal abyss’ that Warburg admittedly shares with Nietzsche, following a Hegelian

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<sup>113</sup> Didi-Huberman, *The Surviving Image*, 86.

<sup>114</sup> *Ibid.*, 89.

<sup>115</sup> *Ibid.*, 88.

<sup>116</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>117</sup> *Ibid.*, 85.

<sup>118</sup> Didi-Huberman, *The Surviving Image*, 84. See, Aby Warburg, “The Art of Portraiture in the Florentine Bourgeoisie (1902),” in *The Renewal of Pagan Antiquity: Contributions to the Cultural History of the European Renaissance*, trans. by David Britt, (Los Angeles: Getty, 1999), 185-223.

<sup>119</sup> *Ibid.*

version of Jacob Burckhardt and with greater attention to Kant and Ernst Cassirer. These counterparts; Kant, Cassirer and Panofsky are accused of objectifying the work of art, reducing it into something explicable.

## 4.5 *Pathosformeln*: Tracing Darwin

The second chapter of *The Surviving Image*, called *The Image as Pathos: Lines of Fracture and Formulas of Intensity*, further explores the polarities, movements, contradictions and connections at play in Warburg's concept of *pathosformeln*.

A theory much emphasized in Didi-Huberman is the fundamental impact of Charles Darwin's (1809-1882) theories of expressions in man and animals on Warburg's theories of survivals. Darwin allowed for a biological foundation to the vitalistic metaphors, which Warburg borrowed from Nietzsche and Burckhardt.<sup>120</sup> This influence has been recognized by most Warburg commentators, albeit differently interpreted. Gombrich argues, for instance, that Warburg simply adopted this as a system of names or terms, a nomenclature, and was somewhat detached from what he really wanted to say. Didi-Huberman dismisses this notion as reductionistic. How to interpret the legacy from Darwin is a question that Didi-Huberman addresses as still open, that implicitly becomes a departure point for his research.<sup>121</sup>

As a factual note, Warburg, during a visit to the National Library in Florence in 1888, came across Charles Darwin's book *The Expressions of the Emotions in Man and Animals*. "At last a book which helps me," Warburg famously wrote in his diary.<sup>122</sup> Darwin's general hypothesis was that expressive movements in man can be traced back in the evolutionary chain to purposive movements in animals. Evolution means a differentiation and a detachment of actions from their immediate impulse. Our facial expressions are the symbolic residue of what was once a biologically useful act. The frown at one time serve to protect the eyes of the fighting animal.<sup>123</sup> This work would help Warburg to think about the figurative logic in the emotion-laden gestures of the Renaissance.<sup>124</sup>

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<sup>120</sup> Didi-Huberman, *The Surviving Image*, 145.

<sup>121</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>122</sup> Gombrich, *Aby Warburg: An Intellectual Biography*, 72.

<sup>123</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>124</sup> Didi-Huberman, *The Surviving Image*, 145.

‘The Darwinian paradigm’ is a paradigm of expression, of *pathos*, of energy. Didi-Huberman attacks the problem by summarizing the Darwinian paradigm in three principles: *impression*, *displacement* and *antithesis*. In this, Didi-Huberman shows how these Darwinian principles of expression become elements of *Pathosformeln* and in doing so, he compliments the theoretical elements presented by Warburg.<sup>125</sup>

The first principle of *impression* is like the *engram* in Warburgian terms; an original *Ausdrucksprägungen* - expressive impressions on the mind that happens free of will. It is formed by the unconscious and out of immediate sensory impression; it becomes the reason for a habit, seen as an array of gestures and actions formed by an unconscious mind. As a consequence, this attitude triggers an unconscious memory in culture, and further, how gesture is seen as bearing traces of primitiveness.<sup>126</sup> Warburg’s visit to the Indian tribes in New Mexico and the *Snake Ritual* essay, provide the philological examples of these strains of thoughts, as previously described in the chapter on Warburg.

After the principle of *impression*, the second principle is *displacement* and it denotes a movement. This *displacement* leads to a shift of the ‘original’ expressive value/idea. Warburg looked for this *displacement* in the theory of ‘accessories in motion,’ in the fluttering garments and airy motions of hair in Botticelli’s paintings. In *Primavera* (1470-80), per example, he studies *the nymph* in the figures of *The Three Graces*. There, he observes a paradox in the *pathosformeln*. Botticelli’s figures are so strangely impassive and ‘indifferent,’ and there he finds that the ‘passionate agitation of the soul’ occurs in the external animated accessory, being that the animation of the garment is both internally and externally animated.<sup>127</sup> So there is a displacement happening at the crossroad of these effects. “For it is not a thing that is displaced, but its very ability to move.”<sup>128</sup> The wind, the atmosphere makes the external animation; whereas the internal animator of the garment is the bodily motion. On the other hand, inner emotion is ‘fundamentally desire,’ says Didi-Huberman.<sup>129</sup> Further, there is *intensity* generated by this *displacement* and at the same time it is *indifference*. These modes are *antithetical*, meaning that they are opposing forces bound together:

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<sup>125</sup> Didi-Huberman, *The Surviving Image*, 151.

<sup>126</sup> *Ibid.*, 148.

<sup>127</sup> *Ibid.*, 152.

<sup>128</sup> *Ibid.*, 154.

<sup>129</sup> *Ibid.*, 164.

In short, the emotive formula is characterized by this paradox: its role of intensifying the affect displayed in forms goes hand in hand with a kind of indifference to contradiction; it is always allowed to drop one meaning to take on the antithetical meaning. Thus, the pagan maenad can become an announcing angel, as in Agostino di Duccio. This, an agonizing wound can become the subject of a miraculous cure, as in Donatello's altar at the Santo.<sup>130</sup>

The third and last principle of *antithesis* is a principle of opposites or inversion/reversion of the figural meaning and the meaning of the figure's energetic outpouring. It appears in the two processes that Warburg calls 'inversion of meaning' (Bedeutungsinversion) and 'energetic inversion' (energetische inversion).<sup>131</sup> This is how Warburg sees shifts in *pathosformeln*, how gestural positions and expressions can remain similar throughout the ages, but bearing contrary, different meanings and be unhinged from its original energy. Unconscious forces, habits, are thus what remains, and continues to form through *association*. "In short, unconscious memory, which both preserves the primitiveness of expressive movements—via the processes of association and antithesis—from their immediate necessity. In Warburg's terms, it transforms them into formulas that may be put to use in all the domains of culture."<sup>132</sup>

In Warburg's work, the figure of *the nymph* embodies these tensions. *Ninfa* is incarnated as the wind-woman. "In Aura, in the goddess Fortuna (...) she is as much woman as goddess: terrestrial Venus and celestial Venus, servant and victory, dancer and Diane, castrating Judith and feminine angel (...)." <sup>133</sup> These examples can be seen in plates 46 to 48 in *Bilderatlas Mnemosyne*, and as we shall see, in the last plates 77 to 79.

This is the magic of the draped figure. Botticelli's Graces, like the ancient maenads, join together these two antithetical modes of the figurable: air and flesh, volatile fabric and organic texture. On the one hand, the cloth shoots forth on its own, creating its own morphology in the form of volutes; on the other hand, it reveals the intimate aspects of the corporeal mass (which are both physically and emotionally moving). Could we not say that all of choreography lies between these two extremes?<sup>134</sup>

To sum up: These theories suggest that gestures bear traces of primitiveness. Most expressive gestures are biologically useless but continue to form through habit and association. Gesture is older than the person and is preserved by unconscious memories. Within them are antithetical modes of energetic expression, displaced by time.

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<sup>130</sup> Didi-Huberman, *The Surviving Image*, 154.

<sup>131</sup> *Ibid.*, 152.

<sup>132</sup> *Ibid.*, 149.

<sup>133</sup> *Ibid.*, 164.

<sup>134</sup> *Ibid.*

A second paradigm that Didi-Huberman sets next to the Darwinian, can be called the *paradigm of choreography*, where the intensified language of gesture is the crucial aspect of Warburg's research. Forces intensifying, most acutely exemplified through the *Ninfa* in Botticelli's paintings. Warburg famously found a link between the poet Politian's *Stanze* and the motif in Botticelli's painting.<sup>135</sup> A *linguistic paradigm* must also be mentioned here, as Warburg uses the particular language of energy, of force (*Kraft, Macht*) to explain *pathosformula*.<sup>136</sup> However Didi-Huberman does not linger on the linguistic analogies per se, but directs his attention to the intensifications thereof.<sup>137</sup> We, instead, shift our focus onto the bodily expressions, i.e., in "Botticelli's eroticism—think of the mythological figures of Spring, whose roundness is so light and yet conveyed with such nuance—does not correspond solely to its literary 'sources', for example, what one can read in Politian. It is also haunted corporeally by the 'original rhythms' which already play across the surfaces of ancient sarcophagi."<sup>138</sup> *Pathosformula*, indeed, has an animated and intensified expression. As we have seen, the movements are displaced because they are unhinged from the original content of meaning.

## 4.6 Symptom: Freud

In the third and last chapter of *The Surviving Image, The Image as Symptom: Fossils in Motion and Montages of Memory*, Didi-Huberman employs the Freudian 'symptom formation' as an interpretative device, that is, the return of something repressed, untimely, and unthought. Freud's symptom theory revolves around the concept of the repressed, returning and resurfacing forces of psyche. It denotes a symptomatology of the image as non-knowledge, unbound by aestheticism or 'taste' and epistemologically displaced. It is a disruption to the mimetic understanding of representation and offered, in Didi-Huberman's earlier writings, 'an alternative to mimetic representation.'<sup>139</sup> The symptom is, in fact, a split between an original 'trauma' and what it ends up to be.

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<sup>135</sup> See Aby Warburg, "Sandro Botticelli's *Birth of Venus and Spring* (1893)." In *The Renewal of Pagan Antiquity: Contributions to the Cultural History of the European Renaissance*, trans. David Britt, (Los Angeles: Getty, 1999), 89-157.

<sup>136</sup> Didi-Huberman, *The Surviving Image*, 160.

<sup>137</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>138</sup> *Ibid.*, 161.

<sup>139</sup> Larsson, "And The Word Becomes Flesh: Didi-Huberman's Symptom in the Image," 15.

In his studies on hysteria, Freud observed opposing forces competing in ‘gestural chaos.’ From Freud’s observations Didi-Huberman then traces a line to Warburg, pointing out the antithetical nature of the *symptom*. This reminds us of the Darwinian *impression*, again, for it is also evident in Freud’s understanding of the *symptom*; the *symptom* carries both a principle of the repressed and of the dissociative, the dissociative being the displacement of thematically and chronologically.<sup>140</sup>

[The] (...) historical *symptoms* described by Freud are a display of behavior that, according to him, is not that of fossils in trivial sense, but rather that of *fossils in motion*, and are thus similar to the *Pathosformelen* as Warburg conceived them. This movement joints the presence energy of the gesture with the ancient energy of its memory, or, expressed in other terms, it joints the *occurrence* [*survenance*] of a crisis with the *survival* [*survivance*] of the eternal return.<sup>141</sup>

The figure of *Ninfa* an ever-changing incarnation of the forces of time, a *pathosformula*, and *leitmotif* that will reoccur in *Bilderatlas Mnemosyne* countless times.<sup>142</sup>

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<sup>140</sup> Didi-Huberman, *The Surviving Image*, 218.

<sup>141</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>142</sup> *Ibid.*, 221.

# 5. Discussions of Didi-Huberman's reading of Warburg

## 5.1 Ambiguity Without the Hope of Synthesis

Didi-Huberman's method entails "ambiguity without the hope of synthesis," as Chari Larsson writes. This aim denotes an uncertainty in any reading or encounter with the image. Still, he insists us to inhabit the ambiguity, to "proceed dialectically, then, and without hope of synthesis."<sup>143</sup>

With Didi-Huberman's 'help,' Warburg's impactful take on history is just as valid, standing before the *Bilderatlas Mnemosyne* —The Original in its 2020 grand scale folio edition. This is the position of this thesis; It does not want to 'lock down' everything about this complex object, its 'rhizomatic' function or as a theoretical octopus, but rather to use the opportunity to explore certain aspects.

In this thesis, Didi-Huberman's theoretical apparatus becomes applicable to notions of time, ritual, and the imagination that intervene in *Bilderatlas Mnemosyne*. Seeing time as an anachronistic experience intersects with, I would argue, the time of ritual. Ritual, the main theme of panel 79, is as a time-pervasive act. The imagination becomes the faculty, the bridge, that enables this sort of leap. In panel 79, ritual and ritual acts becomes particularly clear as enabling forces of culture.

First, I would like to discuss Didi-Huberman's particularities as an art-theoretical writer. These aspects are also present in *The Surviving Image*, and are central to the understanding the convoluted uncertainty that meets the reader in this work.

## 5.2 Emphasizing Instability and Didi-Huberman's 'enargia'

Didi-Huberman's reading of Warburg appears to be revolving around the latter's mental 'instability.' Perhaps it could be expressed by the metaphor of the *Seelentierchen* — the little

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<sup>143</sup> Larsson, "And The Word Becomes Flesh: Didi-Huberman's Symptom in the Image," 12.



creatures of the soul.<sup>144</sup> By choosing certain unstable metaphors, Didi-Huberman suits up Aby Warburg to the 21st century. Didi-Huberman marries Aby Warburg in using a neologism (*Seelentierchen*) to explain a fleeting, censorious moment that communicates movement and energetic exchanges between the visual object and ‘the deep corners of the soul.’ Didi-Huberman activates his own language as *enargia*, the rhetorical device of ‘sensory vividness’ (*enargeia* in ancient Greek). It is a vivid rendition, visual and descriptive.<sup>145</sup> It further illustrates, poetically and practically, how images are born from movement.<sup>146</sup> An example of this can be read in the following quotation: “The image is indeed like a firefly, a little glimmer, the *luciola* (emphasis added) of transient sporadic events. Somewhere Dante’s Beatrice and Beaudelaire’s fleeting beauty: the paradigmatic passer-by.”<sup>147</sup>

Reading Aby Warburg, Didi-Huberman describes this memory articulation through the theories of the *Nachleben* and the *pathosformulas*. These forms exist in the space, pointed to by Didi-Huberman, of undetermined things. They are not constants, but fleeting, in time and movement.

Didi-Huberman’s writing style cannot be understood without mentioning his philosophical influences. He proceeds in the tradition after poststructuralist thinkers, such as Deleuze and Guattari. In the anthology *Art History after Deleuze and Guattari* (2017), Sascha Freyberg explains what their phenomenological approach mean to works of art, stating that, forces do not obey ideas; instead, they emerge through the materials that actualize them.<sup>148</sup>

Art history is thereby deterritorialized, disconnected from its usual methods and representational assumptions (both as an iconography and as ‘history’), before being reterritorialized on a selection of its aspects (its stylistic formalism and focus on ‘the new’), now transformed and energised by passing through Deleuze and Guattari’s vitalist sieve. Consequently, the way Deleuze and Guattari treat art history is no different from the way they treat art, or indeed any object at all; they seek to find the

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<sup>144</sup> For visual metaphors such as the butterfly used by Warburg and Didi-Huberman, see, Barbara Baert, “He or She Who Glimpses, Desires, is Wounded. A Dialogue in the Interspace (zwischenraum) between Aby Warburg and Georges Didi-Huberman,” *Angelaki*, 23:4, 2018. 47-79.

<sup>145</sup> “Silva Rhetoricae” ([rhetoric.byu.edu](http://rhetoric.byu.edu)), s.v. “enargia,” accessed November 12, 2021, <http://rhetoric.byu.edu/Figures/E/enargia.htm>.

<sup>146</sup> Thoughts on enargia in the context of the Renaissance can be found in Paolo Alei, “As If We Were Present at the Event Itself: The Representation of Violence in Raphael and Titian’s Heroic Painting.” *Artibus et Historiae* 32, no. 64 (2011): 221–42. <http://www.jstor.org/stable/41479762>.

<sup>147</sup> Didi-Huberman, “Glimpses,” 112.

<sup>148</sup> Sascha Freyberg, “Colliding Chaoïds in Iconology,” in *Art History after Deleuze and Guattari*, edited by Sjoerd van Tuinen and Stephen Zepke, (Leuven: Leuven University Press, 2017). <https://doi.org/10.2307/j.ctt21c4s51.9>.

potentials within it that will allow it to mutate into something else, and in this metamorphosis (an 'event') express in singular terms the more abstract rhythms that compose the universe. <sup>149</sup>

This, of course, touches on the very basis of phenomenology and provides an opening to experience and interpret the work in optional ways. The danger of always seeing or searching for new potential could lie in the distraction of the novelty itself. Another danger pointed to by Joacim Sprung, in his lecture from the 2016 Symposium, is 'stating the obvious' about images in general. Not in direct critique to Didi-Huberman, but rather towards what he calls "the more speculative interests" from scholars, he points to a common sensical and general idea much repeated, that images are "filled with information, heterogenous meanings, polychromic qualities, impossible to circumscribe without order or organization."<sup>150</sup> He seems to be warning against these obvious interpretations, which in fact, reveal nothing new. In moving sensuously from one thing to another, we risk losing ourselves to the sensuous impression prompted by the object in question. Images can seduce us and rather than stepping further onto a knowledgeable level, we risk getting lost in unfocused oblivion, or face the slow death of nostalgia.<sup>151</sup> Spyros Papapetros reaches similar conclusions regarding Warburgian scholarly field, but goes a step further in setting apart 'enlightened' scholarships and the speculative, more 'enthusiastic' ones, "[t]here seem to be two conflicting sides among Warburg's numerous commentators today appearing as polar opposites: on the one side, the earnest supporters of enlightenment, and on the opposite side, the impassioned enthusiasts of Dionysian flights. Didi-Huberman is polemically in the latter camp."<sup>152</sup>

With an experimental and 'impassioned' writing style characterizing Didi-Huberman, however, the point of *amicability* comes up in Chari Larsson's analysis of Didi-Huberman. "Amicability is an ideal form for complicating the authority of the subject," she writes, pointing to that the author in this "no longer claims authority over the image as the traditional hierarchical relationship begins to break down." Still, with a tone of *amicability*, the author returns. "What emerges is a lack of resolution or mastery in a distinct shift in the subject-

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<sup>149</sup> Sjoerd van Tuinen and Stephen Zepke, "Introduction: Art History After Deleuze and Guattari." *Art History after Deleuze and Guattari*, Leuven University Press (2017): 7. <https://doi.org/10.2307/j.ctt21c4s51.3>.

<sup>150</sup> Joacim Sprung, "Aby Warburg. Mnemosyne Bilderatlas. Colloquium." ZKM | Center for Art and Media in Karlsruhe. 13 October, 2016. <https://zkm.de/en/person/joacim-sprung>.

<sup>151</sup> Sprung, "Aby Warburg. Mnemosyne Bilderatlas. Colloquium," 2016.

<sup>152</sup> Papapetros, "The Eternal Seesaw," 170-171.

object relationship.”<sup>153</sup> Nevertheless, this lack of resolution or mastery might thus feel unsatisfying and confusing, pointing to frustration, leaving the beholder or reader in a confusing ‘double-bind.’<sup>154</sup>

In this thesis, I am answering the question of Didi-Huberman’s approach could aid any alternative access to the *Bilderatlas Mnemosyne* — The Original, and panel 79 in particular, notwithstanding the question of what is his approach in the field of art history and the study of images in general. What characterizes Didi-Huberman is doubtlessly his ambition and incitement to remain open to the experience of the image-object or, that is, open to the image object and open to the world of both impressions and knowledge.

At the same time, he points to an instability in the image-object and the continuous negotiation between what one sees and what one knows, what one does not know and knowledge. These notions are, as it seems, mirrored in Didi-Huberman’s emphasis on Aby Warburg’s psychological instabilities, uncertainties and shifts, perhaps what Papapetros would call an ‘enthusiasm of Dionysian flights.’ Through language and his intellectual convergences, Didi-Huberman carries these notions to the contemporary beholder of images.

In Didi-Huberman’s reading, Warburg’s character is both under scrutiny and at stake. He applies the role of the genius-historian, near-to resembling a ‘prophet’ from a religious world. The biographical details on Warburg thus enter Warburg’s oeuvre as a whole. His illness, doubts and suffering become mirror images of his ideas on culture. His life and work become inseparable. Barbara Baert reaches the same conclusions as Didi-Huberman’s: “[i]n short, Aby Warburg’s hermeneutics cannot be separated from his own personal *psychomania*.”<sup>155</sup>

With Warburg, it is theoretically challenging or even impossible to make causal relations between his psychosis and his ideas. Despite this, Didi-Huberman attempts ‘a retrospective projection’ of the psychic state of Warburg. Looking at ancient drama, the

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<sup>153</sup> Chari Larsson, “Didi-Huberman and art history’s amicable incursions,” <https://arthistoriography.files.wordpress.com/2020/05/larsson.pdf>.

<sup>154</sup> Further on art-historical discourse, art writing and the tension between subjective and objective art writing see, Chari Larsson “Didi-Huberman and art history’s amicable incursions,” *Journal of Art Historiography*, no. 22, June 2020): 1-15. <https://arthistoriography.files.wordpress.com/2020/05/larsson.pdf>.

A most interesting book in the study of the contemporary practices of art history and visual studies, focusing on European countries is also: “Art History and Visual Studies in Europe: Transnational Discourses and National Frameworks” Ed. by Matthew Rampley, Thierry Lenain, Hubert Locher, Andrea Pinotti, Charlotte Schoell-Glass and Kitty Zijlmans. Leiden, Boston: Brill, 2012.

<sup>155</sup> Barbara Baert, “He or She Who Desires,” 57.

aspect of suffering in Warburg's undertaking points to 'archetypical' moments of trial-by-fire or catharsis, where one must suffer in order to rise again and acquire true insight, Didi-Huberman brings to light both Warburg's psychopathology, and thus, enabling his effect on current states.

Freud seems to be latent in Warburg, and Didi-Huberman amplifies this connection. It is the methodology of Warburg to care for details and their assembly, the activity and 'the search for memories' that evokes Freudian notions of symptoms. This becomes part of the narrative of Warburg, a dramatization so to speak, that embodies the aspect of drama. In the Greek world, 'drama' would speak of the fundamental truths of life. In the Atlas, symptoms are also revealed in what Warburg called "accessories in motion," details of the fluttering garments of the *Nymph*. In these attributes, Spyros Papapetros makes a comment on the affinity between Warburg and Didi-Huberman, noting how their style of thinking is similar and wants, the same. "Always hypothetical and never doctrinaire," how Didi-Huberman describes the style of Warburg, could be said of himself.<sup>156</sup>

"Warburg's iconography of accessories and other objects in movement is also motivated by certain invisible wind-gods, ranging from the 'cosmic pneumas' of Renaissance philosophy to the 'endless waves' of early twentieth-century technology. Perhaps the threads of affinity between Warburg and Didi-Huberman consist precisely in these agencies behind the image and behind time - 'imaginary breezes' surrounding the art historical fossils that both writers strive to reanimate."<sup>157</sup>

Indeed, one has the impression that Didi-Huberman's book is written as much for Warburg as against the approach of Ernst Gombrich. As mentioned, Gombrich downplayed the importance of Warburg's mental instabilities. Gombrich also presents Warburg's work in chronological arrangement, Didi-Huberman presents a theoretical re-arrangement structured around anachronisms. Gombrich also tries to undermine the influence of Nietzsche in Warburg's work. Didi-Huberman tends to overestimate it. Gombrich and Didi-Huberman embody the 'reaction forces' that keep the seesaw of Warburg's legacy in movement: on the one side, Viennese logical positivism of the 1950s, and on the other side, French poststructuralism of the 1970s; on the one side, statements presenting Warburg as 'an old-fashioned idealist' assisting 'the struggle for Enlightenment,'<sup>25</sup> and on the other (nocturnal) side, Warburg as a tumultuous anti-Enlightenment buccaneer. It seems that there can never be a Warburg revival without a rivalry between the forces of darkness and light.<sup>158</sup>

He points the finger at another challenging problem: that this kind of thinking complicates our relationship with historical time. It can be confusing, notwithstanding, inefficient of

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<sup>156</sup> Didi-Huberman, *The Surviving Image*, 145.

<sup>157</sup> Papapetros, "The Eternal Seesaw," 170.

<sup>158</sup> *Ibid.*, 173.

actually producing valid knowledge that keeps validity outside of the theoretical context as such.

Still, thinking about time in complex manners is nothing new. In his lecture *The Point of Intersection of the timeless with time*, Roger Scruton points out an ancient distinction that the Greeks made between *khronos*, “the sequence of moments in which we move from one moment to the next, and *kairos*: being the particular moment of application, that is; your consciousness of being in time and in some way receiving a sensation of your temporality, through which you grasp the time. (...) Kairos. The look that seizes you.”<sup>159</sup>

Didi-Huberman, however, combines these notions “developing the crux of his argument,” as Eliot Reichert suggests, by joining Warburg’s symptomatology of the *Pathosformeln*, with the metaphor of the philosopher–historian, as the ultimate receptor of historical traumas.<sup>160</sup> Warburg, the man, could then be seen as becoming the embodiment of suffering. He fulfills the schizophrenic ‘strata’ that he ardently wanted to characterize in culture.<sup>161</sup>

Another instance that could point to Warburg’s impulses and acute, determined acts, is what happened in Rome in 1929, where he witnessed the procession following the Lateran treaty at St. Peter’s Square. Warburg spent much time in Rome during 1928-1929. The images he acquired from the events that took place then, bear witness that he was trying to make his theories of the *Nachleben* effective in his present.<sup>162</sup> He acquired press-imagery depicting the signing, the ratification and the procession of the treaty, that he mounted on, what would be, the last plates in the last version of the Atlas, before his death in October 1929.

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<sup>159</sup> Roger Scruton, “The Point of Intersection of the timeless with time,” The Alpine Fellowship- Venice 2016, Venice, 30 October, 2016, 19’:50.”

<sup>160</sup> Eliott Reichert, “Book Review: Georges Didi-Huberman, *The Surviving Image: Phantoms of Time and Time of Phantoms: Aby Warburg’s History of Art*,” *Journal of Visual Culture*, Vol. 16, no. 2, (Aug. 2017): 279-282. 10.1177/1470412917720443.

<sup>161</sup> Didi-Huberman, *The Surviving Image*, 281.

<sup>162</sup> This claim is also made by Charlotte Schoell-Glass in, “Aby Warburg’s Late Comments on Symbol and Ritual,” *Science in Context* 12, 4 (1999): 621-642.

## 6. Part 2: panel 79 of the *Bilderatlas Mnemosyne* 2020

### 6.1 Entering Knowledge and the ‘visual’

Then the knowing comes: I can open  
to another life that’s wide and timeless...

— From *The Dark Hours of My Being*,

Rainer Maria Rilke

There were in Rome tremendous popular demonstrations... Mussolini became overnight ‘the man of providence,’ and in such an inconvenient position he remained for many years. Circulation in the streets of Rome was not very easy on that day, and it so happened that Warburg disappeared from the sight of his companions.

— Gertrud Bing, paraphrased by Arnaldo Momigliano

In the second part of this thesis, I am accessing the last panel of the *Bilderatlas Mnemosyne* – The Original: number 79. Panel 79 is chosen due to its use of contemporary photography, seen by commentators as Warburg’s attempt to validate the theory of the *Nachleben* (i.e., the afterlife of antiquity).

What is the function of the contemporary visual material at the end of the predominantly historical Atlas? Charlotte Shoell-Glass asks.<sup>163</sup> She suggests that they have the function of representing the trust in the power of idealism and in the peaceful future for postwar Europe.<sup>164</sup> This thesis argues, however, to expand this conclusion as they are touchstones for wider meanings. By offering the approach to both iconology and Didi-Hubermannian epistemology, the thesis asks: How can iconographical readings and Didi-Huberman’s insights contribute to an understanding of the panel 79 and of the *Bilderatlas Mnemosyne* — The Original as an art-historical object? It remains, as Joacim Sprung puts it, an *opus imperfectum*.<sup>165</sup>

As we have learned, *survivals* in time does not rely solely on rational, iconological information, but the complex and changeable connections and continuities of certain, fleeting

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<sup>163</sup> Schoell-Glass, “Aby Warburg’s Late Comments on Symbol and Ritual,” 622.

<sup>164</sup> *Ibid.*, 631.

<sup>165</sup> Sprung, “*Bildatlas, åskådning och reproduktion*,” 16.

details. It points to the importance of things that convey truths that are not strictly rational. These, encourages Didi-Huberman, are to be seen and emphasized in any *experience* of the image. In the following I argue, that *survivals can* be exemplified through the specific theme of the Eucharist and its inherent doctrine of *transubstantiation*. My research starts by taking into account the historical context and meaning of the Lateran treaty and invocations of the papal Church.

As part of the same montage in panel 79, these themes contribute, I argue, not only to transfer meaning between one image to another, becoming intimately connected and thus quintessential examples of “unresolved and open-ended objects.” In *Bilderatlas Mnemosyne*, they also push additional translation (movement) of the image object (*Bilderatlas Mnemosyne — The Original*), into what in Didi-Hubermanian terms would be called (following phenomenology) ‘an event:’ the images ‘enfold in the landscape of knowledge.’ Notwithstanding it can be seen as a quintessential example of what Aby Warburg means by the *Nachleben*, the dynamic exchanges happening in *pathosformeln and dynamograms*, through image vessels (*bilderfahrzeuge*).

In tracing the history of the Eucharist, both its material and abstract body, I enhance that the Eucharist is a fleeting object, demonstrating the dynamics between faith and secularism, fixed and fluid states, sanity and anxiousness. The translation happening in the Eucharist will thus be understood in parallel to Didi-Huberman’s meanderings on survivals, phantoms or fossils, or rather; Didi-Huberman opens up certain possibilities for these associations to happen.

The particular situation of the Lateran treaty proceedings in Rome during Warburg’s long-term research stay in 1929 also enhance an accent much emphasized by Didi-Huberman: Warburg’s deep, visceral engagements with the world, his own instabilities and constant, human ‘seismographic’ activity. Another transferral of value and meaning happens in juxtaposition of objects. Following Didi-Huberman, I emphasize that the method of montage gives new meaning to images and are epistemological structures that challenge the ‘readability.’ In Didi-Huberman’s terms; images challenge our ‘quasi-divine’ imagination (as Beaudelaire calls it). It accepts images as inhabiting this force and value of complexity: “[t]he Imagination accepts the multiple (and even revels in it).”<sup>166</sup>

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<sup>166</sup> Didi-Huberman, “Atlas, or, the Anxious Gay Science,” 5.

Bearing in mind Warburg's insights from his earlier studies of ritual acts and dances of the Pueblo Indian Tribes in New Mexico; that rituals are indeed social acts in which the symbol function and that ancient gesture can carry repressed *symptoms*. In this plate, Warburg thematizes rituals - as connected to symbols, namely symbolic acts. It refers to the fact that ritual is a social act and that symbols relies on these acts. Historian of religion, William E. Paden says that, "Ritual is not just archaic, prescientific language, but a form of language in its own right, a form of expressive action. (...) It focuses, displays, enacts, creates, remembers, transforms."<sup>167</sup> In ritualistic time, forms melt and the ancient becomes reactivated and the world is constituted anew. In religious language, rite is a repetitive act that renews, amplifies and frames time, and further "It governs (...) whenever needed —the critical points of a world's concerns. It intersects ordinary time with enduring symbols and with alternating moments of purification and celebration, quietude and vigor."<sup>168</sup>

In the following, I am engaging in an iconographical account of four themes of panel 79: The Lateran Treaty, the Eucharist and its inherent doctrine of *transubstantiation*, the *Cathedra Petri* and the Jewish question. It is my intention that these specific historical, socio-political and intellectual contexts will contribute to the understanding of the panel. Still, it must be pointed out an accordance with Didi-Huberman, who opposes 'locking down' any given meaning and hence reduce the current meaning of the object. Didi-Huberman would say, that there is danger in describing all the influences that surrounds the object; a danger of falling into a tradition, of getting 'too organized.' However, he does not downplay the value of context, what he says is "that it [context] is very important, but it is not all."<sup>169</sup> The image as phenomenon encompasses more. Following Warburg's hypothesis of *survival*: through them we are surrounded by unconscious phenomena; things disappearing and reappearing in a non-linear or not explicable way. Shedding light on the complexities of panel 79, the following will explore in depth, the contexts of the Lateran treaty, the Eucharist, the doctrine of *transubstantiation* and the question of Jews desecrating the Host. These events could perhaps be the seen as the 'fruitful singularities' as described by Didi-Huberman and Goethe,

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<sup>167</sup> William Paden, *Religious Worlds. The Comparative Study of Religion*, (Boston: Beacon Press, 2nd ed., 1994): 120.

<sup>168</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>169</sup> Didi-Huberman, "Qui êtes-vous Georges Didi-Huberman?" ABC Penser, 2020. YouTube video:<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=h629a3ItbQI>.



drawing together ‘threads of affinity.’<sup>170</sup> The *Tagebuch* of 1929 (volumes 7, 8 and 9) indicated that the Lateran treaty was particularly suggested as a valid point of departure.<sup>171</sup> The press-photographs actualize, again, its presence in our current reading.

## 6.2. A Sense of Place: Warburg in Rome 1929

On the 25th of July 1929 a large procession was passing over St. Peter’s Square. Warburg was in Rome from September 1928 to March 1929, where he held a now famous lecture at the Hertziana Library on the 19th of January 1929.<sup>172</sup> He was, in fact, tremendously active during his last living year, and held five lectures in Rome during 1928-1929.<sup>173</sup> During his stay at the Palace Hotel, he was photographed in his suite with his colleagues Gertrud Bing and Franz Alber [Fig. 7]. On the day of the Lateran treaty procession, however, it is documented that Warburg witnessed this spectacle in person. As told by Gertrud Bing, Warburg was lost to his friends:<sup>174</sup>

There were in Rome tremendous popular demonstrations (...). Mussolini became overnight ‘the man of providence,’ and in such an inconvenient position he remained for many years. Circulation in the streets of Rome was not very easy on that day, and it so happened that Warburg disappeared from the sight of his companions. They anxiously waited for him back in the Hotel Eden, but there was no sign of him for dinner. Bing and others even telephoned the police. But Warburg reappeared in the hotel before midnight, and when he was reproached he soberly replied something like this in his picturesque German: “You know that throughout my life I have been interested in the revival of paganism and pagan festivals. Today I had the chance of my life to be present in the re-paganization of Rome, and you complain that I remained to watch it.

This was the procession following the Lateran treaty of February 1929, where the Italian State and the Holy See signed a treaty of mutual peace. The signing happened on the 11th of February, followed by a high Mass on the 12th. It was later followed by the ratification on the 27 of May and celebratory procession on the 25 of July. Photographs from each occasion are present on panel 79 in *Bilderatlas Mnemosyne*. According to Schoell-Glass, Ernst Gombrich found it hard to understand why Warburg would have felt that the signing of the Lateran treaty between the Pope and the Italian Prime Minister Benito Mussolini (1883-1945)

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<sup>170</sup> Didi-Huberman, *The Surviving Image*, 129.

<sup>171</sup> Schoell-Glass, “Aby Warburg’s Late Comments on Symbol and Ritual,” 639.

<sup>172</sup> Sprung, “Bildatlas, åskådning och reproduktion,” 184. The lecture was described by Kenneth Clark in Kenneth Clark, “A lecture that changed my life,” in Dieter Wuttke: *Mnemosyne: Beiträge zum 50. Todestag von Aby M. Warburg*, Göttingen: Gratia-Verlag, 1979, 47-48.

<sup>173</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>174</sup> A story often told by Gertrud Bing, paraphrased by Arnaldo Momigliano. Quoted by, Christopher D. Johnson, *Memory, Metaphor, and Aby Warburg's Atlas of Images*, (New York: Cornell University Press, 2012): 186.

where of such importance.<sup>175</sup> It is the aim of this part of the thesis to elaborate on that. Not only the political act of the treaty signing, but on fundamental tropes of the Catholic Church and religious expressions that were all combined in these events. The themes of panel 79 are interconnected through both immediate experience and researched history. Echoing Warburg's deep-rooted fascination of what he saw as psychological and dynamic undercurrents resurfacing in ritual and culture, the activities taking place on this day in February 1929, becomes acutely valid for Warburg, as he is drawn to St. Peter's to witness the procession.

### **6.3 Accessing Panel 79 - How to Read a Montage?**

Unfolding the *Bilderatlas Mnemosyne* — The Original on page 148, panel 79 presents itself as a riddle of pictorial clues. The sensation of visual surplus is viable, where the eye wanders in radical shifts between photographs of ecclesiastical and militant procession, a grand Renaissance fresco, bodies contained in rituals and images of people performing leisurely sport. All figures are represented by photographs, newspaper-clippings, reproductions of paintings and other printed material. The initial and mysterious encounter evokes and challenge the beholder with the 'Didi-Hubermanian paradox' to rest in the visual information without jumping to conclusions. To proceed dialectically. Beyond knowledge itself, to commit ourselves to the paradoxical ordeal not to know, but to think "the element of not-knowledge that dazzles us whenever we pose our gaze to an art image."<sup>176</sup> Where to start the search for meaning in this panel? Charlotte Schoell-Glass offers quite a different approach than Didi-Huberman; a recipe to "read the plate like a page of a medieval text, surrounded by other reproductions that constitute the multiple commentary." She suggests that the other images are commentaries to the fresco by Raphael. She is compelled by size and so 'starts' at the Mass of Bolsena. Following Didi-Huberman, however, the choice of which image to choose is at best irrelevant. A montage offers complexity and challenge but at the same time, a flourishing of meaning.<sup>177</sup> In *Atlas, or the Anxious Gay Science*, Didi-Huberman refers to the montage (the tableaux) as the 'operating table' on which we should perform our

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<sup>175</sup> Schoell-Glass, "Aby Warburg's Late Comments on Symbol and Ritual," 631.

<sup>176</sup> Didi-Huberman, *Confronting Images*, 11.

<sup>177</sup> *Ibid.*, 19.

experiments. Warburg offers us this ‘operating table’ in *Bilderatlas Mnemosyne*. “Spaces and heterogenous times do not cease to meet there (in the tableaux), to confront each other, to cross each other, and to amalgamate. (...) the table serves first of all as an operating field of the disparate and the mobile, of the heterogenous and the open.”<sup>178</sup>

In approaching the panel, the intention is to keep this sense of wonder. Still, in the following, I chose to engage in iconological readings, in order to contribute to the complexity the panel, as an object of appeal to both sense and mind.

As readable clues, the panel’s captions give initial instruction to the reading, and has done so ever since Gertrud Bing added them after Warburg’s death. Bing provided these captions to Ernst Gombrich as guidance. They are found in all publications of the Atlas.<sup>179</sup> In the *Bilderatlas Mnemosyne* — The Original, the authors have made additional efforts to clarify and add to individual captions, as visible, e.g. in the caption of *Cathedra Petri* and the Harakiri-ritual.<sup>180</sup> [Fig. 4]. The panel 79 is thematically defined as: “*Mass. Devouring god. Bolsena, Botticelli. Paganism in the Church. Miracle of the Host. Transubstantiation. Italian criminal before the last rites.*”<sup>181</sup> The preceding panel 78 is in its entirety compiled of photographs from the Lateran treaty proceedings and this caption guides our understanding further of how they were read by Bing and Gombrich.<sup>182</sup> It reads: “*Church and State. Spiritual power without the wielding of earthly power.*”<sup>183</sup>

The Lateran treaty is given much emphasis due to its contemporary value and numerous photographs. Large attention is also given to the Eucharistic sacrament, not as a mere objective element, as Didi-Huberman would say, in order to reduce meaning, but rather, to see how its translation, its fleeting and transitional character, can expand our vision of this particular panel of the Atlas.<sup>184</sup>

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<sup>178</sup> Didi-Huberman, *Confronting Images*, 47.

<sup>179</sup> Aby Warburg, *Bilderatlas Mnemosyne* —The Original, 22.

<sup>180</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>181</sup> *Ibid.*, 148. In the original German: “*Messe. Verzehren des Gottes. Bolsena, Botticelli. Heidentum in d. Kirche. Bluthostienwunder. Transsubstantiation. Italienischer Verbrecher vor der letzten Ölung.*” Quoted from Johnson, *Memory, Metaphor, and Aby Warburg's Atlas of Images*, 186.

<sup>182</sup> Photographers named in panel 78 are Eugenio Risi, G. Felici and D’Amico, alongside the famous Italian agency Alinari.

<sup>183</sup> Aby Warburg, *Bilderatlas Mnemosyne* —The Original, 146.

<sup>184</sup> Didi-Huberman, *The Surviving Image*, 85.

## 6.4 Panel 79 - an Iconographical Account

Like a ‘nave,’ six equally sized photographs from the Lateran treaty proceedings are vertically placed at the center of panel 79. Starting from the very center: a photograph of Pope Pius XI (Achille Ratti, 1857-1939) as he is carried over St. Peter’s Square on a *sedia gestatoria* (a gestatorial seat), amongst the masses [Fig. 8]. He is flanked by two *flabellas*, fans made from feathers and placed on either side of the papal chair in solemn procession.<sup>185</sup> The Pope is carrying a *monstrance*; the vessel containing the Eucharist to present to the faithful during processions, Mass, and adoration. A processional *baldacchino (it.)* (canopy) is held above for the purpose of protecting the ‘most holy sacrament’ that is; the Host in the monstrance as it is carried in processions.<sup>186</sup>

Above the photograph of Pope Pius XI is an aerial view of the large ecclesiastical procession emerging from St. Peter’s [Fig. 9] and beneath, a march performed by the Swiss guard [Fig. 10] and a parade with soldiers [Fig. 11]. These militant motives are joined by a card depicting papal armed forces with a horse-drawn ammunition wagon where the text is reading “l’esercito pontificio in alta uniforme negli ultimi anni,” complimented in the caption with “prima del 1870 - the papal army in full uniform in recent years before 1870.” [Fig. 12]<sup>187</sup> 1870 marks the final year of the first Vatican council (*Concilium Vaticanum Primum*), the twentieth ecumenical council of the Catholic Church, calling thousand of bishops and Church officials to Rome.<sup>188</sup> Between the 8 of December 1869 and its adjournment on October 20, 1870, the Council discussed issues of modern influence, such as rising rationalism, liberalism, and materialism.<sup>189</sup>

### 6.4.1 The Lateran Treaty and its Significance

(...) Among the hundred lights of the candles, among the reflections of gold, among the scarlet and the purple, his figure, wrapped in a white silk cope embroidered with gold palms, proceeds suspended like an apparition...

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<sup>185</sup> Britannica, T. Editors of Encyclopaedia. “flabellum” in “Protective devices and markers of sacredness.” *Encyclopedia Britannica*, January 15, 2018. <https://www.britannica.com/topic/flabellum>

<sup>186</sup> See, “baldacchino.” *Oxford Reference*. Accessed on 14 Nov. 2021. <https://www.oxfordreference.com/view/10.1093/oi/authority.20110803095442524>.

<sup>187</sup> This translation would be clearer, in my understanding, if *recent* was replaced by *last* the translation of *ultimo*.

<sup>188</sup> The 19th Vatican Council was that of Trent in the years 1545 – 1563.

<sup>189</sup> Britannica, T. Editors of Encyclopaedia. "First Vatican Council." *Encyclopedia Britannica*, December 1, 2021. <https://www.britannica.com/event/First-Vatican-Council>.

The Pope walked the entire colonnade with his gestatorial chair. Then, with the golden monstrance in his hand, he blessed the crowd and the deployed military units. The rite is complete – continues Vergani – and with it a historical event.

—Orio Vergani, *Il Corriere della Sera*.

On 25 July 1929, Pope Pius XI (Achille Ratti, 1857-1939), depicted in the middle photograph of panel 79, was the first Pope to leave St. Peter's basilica since 1870. After celebrating Mass, he emerged from the basilica and was carried across St. Peter's Square and along Bernini's colonnade. This was, in fact, the first time that the Pope left his self-imposed imprisonment since the *Bersaglieri* (the Italian army's special forces unit) broke through the gate in the Aurelian Walls at Porta Pia and captured Rome, putting an end to the temporal power of the Popes and creating the so called 'Roman Question.'<sup>190</sup> The Roman question, as will be explained in the following, related to the temporal power of the Pope; that is, the status of Rome as both holy and secular seat of power.<sup>191</sup>

This 'stroll' depicted in the photograph by the agency L.U.C.E. and adopted in Warburg's Atlas on panel 79, was indeed the most visible result of what had happened on 11 February 1929, when the Lateran treaty was signed. The treaty was an agreement between the Kingdom of Italy and the Holy See, marking the birth of the Vatican City State as an autonomous and independent State, and thus definitively resolved the 'Roman Question.'

In panel 79, The Papal army is depicted in an illustration between the photographs of the treaty. It was, at the time, a mere symbolic presence of military power, as the army was disbanded on 21 September, 1870, when the papal States ceased to exist. This is why the additional caption from Warburg reads 'before 1870,' for as to refer back to a time when the army was an active force of power, or rather, to introduce the complex history of military power within the Church as comment to the current state of 1929. 1870 is in fact the year Rome is captured by the Italian army. The Papal States, until then protected by French troops, was left to a defense of only 13,000 Papal soldiers, whilst the Italian army with roughly 50,000 men approached the city.<sup>192</sup> In reply, the Pope (Pius IX 1792 – 1881) instructed his

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<sup>190</sup> Marvin R. O'Connell, "Ultramontanism and Dupanloup: The Compromise of 1865," *Church History* 53, no. 2, (Cambridge, Cambridge University Press: 1984) 200–217. <https://doi.org/10.2307/3165356>.

<sup>191</sup> Britannica, T. Editors of Encyclopaedia. "Roman question." *Encyclopedia Britannica*, November 17, 2016. <https://www.britannica.com/topic/Roman-question>. Accessed on 19 October, 2021.

<sup>192</sup> Raffaele De Cesare, Helen Zimmern, and George Macaulay Trevelyan, *The Last Days of Papal Rome, 1850-1870*, (London: A. Constable and Co, 1909) 443.

army to give only a token resistance to show the world that Rome was taken by force, and on 20 September, 1870, when the old Porta Pia was bombarded, the Papal army surrendered showing a white flag.

The Italian State's army capture of Rome determined the de facto end of Pontiffs' temporal power in Italy and it lacerated the relations between the Italian Kingdom and the Church, which the Italian government tried to 'mend' for a long time without any success (until the Lateran treaty was signed). The tension between the Church and the Kingdom of Italy was so deep that, in 1874, Pope Pius IX (Giovanni Maria Mastai Ferretti, 1792-1878) prohibited the participation of Catholics in politics through the 'non expedit provision,' repealed only after the First World War in 1919. Until the treaty of 1929, the Italian Kingdom unilaterally regulated its relations with the Church, through the Law of Guarantees of May 13, 1871. The Law of Guarantees recognized the Pope as sovereign prerogatives and ensured him the exercise of his functions as head of the Church – but was, in fact, never accepted by the Church.<sup>193</sup>

The signing of the Lateran treaty was a direct consequence of the socio-political context of the time and the complexities of State and Church relations are central to understand why Warburg would put such emphasis on it in the Atlas. It was in Warburg's understanding also, as Gombrich writes, the Pope who renounced his "temporal power over Rome in return for the recognition of his spiritual power."<sup>194</sup> These historical and ideological shifts, to which Warburg, the 'seismograph' historian, was indeed sensitive to.

The papacy epitomizes power and authority in Catholic culture and what became Italian culture at large, as religious systems and ritual practices had done for hundreds of years. The socio-political opinion of the papacy shifted according to current issues, something Warburg would register as he observed Pius XI emerging from his enclosure, after almost sixty years of confinement. It was, indeed, a dramatization of events that would have made an impact on any person present in the crowd and on Italian society at large.

In 1929 the Italian Kingdom and the Holy See were actors in conflict, apparently incapable of establishing a dialogue, one in a position of total primacy over the other, but with a shared vision of the Italian society, hierarchically organized in authoritarian and

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<sup>193</sup> Gordon Ireland, "The State of the City of the Vatican," *The American Journal of International Law* 27, no. 2 (1933): 271–89. <https://doi.org/10.2307/2189550>.

<sup>194</sup> Gombrich, *Aby Warburg: An Intellectual Biography*, 279.

corporate terms. In a widened socio-political and general context, it could be noted that general sentiments from government and ruling classes were ‘forgetting’ old anti-papal mistrust and bellicose anticlerical mood when they united against a common enemy after the Russian Revolution of 1917. The rising fear of ‘the Reds’ (the communists) prompted a détente in the relationship between Church and State. Another interesting continuity is that the secretary of State Cardinal Gasparri, seen in the photographs with the Pope and Mussolini, also held this position with the previous Pope, Benedict XV. Pius XI is said, to ‘reap the fruit’ of the skillful political action that took place during the pontificate of Benedict XV.<sup>195</sup> However, Pius XI makes his most significant gesture towards Italy at the very moment of his election when as the first Pope in fifty years he revived the tradition of looking out over St. Peter’s Square to impart *the Urbi et Orbi* (to the city and to the world) blessing.

Precisely in this context an unexpected confluence between interests hitherto opposed and apparently irreconcilable, took place: the newborn Fascist party looked, in fact, to the Church as an ‘instrument’ of cohesion and political consensus, while the ecclesiastical hierarchies saw in the regime a solid ally against the liberalism and the socialist thrusts in place.

The result of this commonality of interests was thus the signing of the Lateran treaty, regulating future reciprocal relations. On 11 February 1929 the signing took place. Warburg, who had completed his Herziana-lecture in on 19 of January, was ardently compiling and mounting images on the plates of his *Bilderatlas Mnemosyne*. 11 February, 1929, was the seventy-first anniversary of the first apparition of ‘Our Lady of Lourdes,’ a holy date in the Church calendar.<sup>196</sup> Thus confirming the Holy See’s appreciation for the conclusion of the agreement with Mussolini.

With all these assumptions, it is not surprising that Pius XI’s ‘stroll’ of 25 July, 1929, was quite solemn and scenographic. This is how the journalist and photographer Orio Vergani (1898 – 1960) working at *Il Corriere della Sera*, described it:

And then finally, at 19:30, preceded by the Swiss with unsheathed broadswords, surrounded by the high dignitaries of the Pontifical Court, carried on the shoulders of twelve chairs in amaranth livery,

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<sup>195</sup> Concordats are stipulated between the Holy See and the new nations of Eastern Europe - Latvia (1922), Poland (1925), Lithuania (1927), Czechoslovakia (1928); with the Germanic States of Bavaria (1925), Prussia (1929), of Baden (1932); and of course with Italy (1929).

<sup>196</sup> Our Lady of Lourdes is a Marian devotion and refers to an apparition of Mary taking place in Lourdes (France) on the 11th day of February, 1858.

protected by a silky canopy supported with long golden rods, here is the ‘thalamus,’ on which the Pontiff appears kneeling (...) Among the hundred lights of the candles, between the reflections of gold, between scarlet and purple, his figure, wrapped in the white silk cope embroidered with gold palms, proceeds suspended like an apparition.” The Pope walked the entire colonnade with the gestatorial chair. Then, with the gold monstrance in his hand, he blessed the crowd and the deployed military units. “The rite is complete - writes Vergani again - and with it a historical event. From the five thousand voices of the seminarians, the song of the *Te Deum*, eternal praise to the Lord, is intoned. The square resonates like an immense nave. The crowd pushes and presses against the cordons to see more, to see more. But now, having put down the monstrance, the Holy Father has returned to the Basilica and the procession is over.<sup>197</sup>

This visually powerful description brings drama and force to the event of the day. An instance of ‘energia,’ so to speak, and a heightened sense of detail in facing the photographs of panel 79. Notwithstanding the crucial introduction the journalist Vergani does on propagandistic issues, The Lateran treaty was signed by Mussolini and Cardinal Pietro Gasparri, representing Pope Pius XI, with signatures were affixed in Palazzo San Giovanni in Laterano, from which the treaty took its name.<sup>198</sup> It was a formidable propaganda operation for the image of Mussolini, who carefully managed to separate his propaganda stunt in two days after the signing when, on 13 February 1929, during an audience granted to professors and students of the Catholic University, the Pope had defined him as “a man whom Providence has brought to us.” In addition to that, after the ratification of the Lateran treaty the Church was endowed with a large sum of money paid by Italy, as compensation for the end of its temporal power: 750 million lire for the spoliation of ecclesiastical bodies and one billion and 750 million lire, and further consolidated 5 per cent bearer government bonds for a nominal value of one billion lire, for other “financial damages.”<sup>199</sup> The Holy See in turn recognized the Kingdom of Italy, with Rome as its capital.<sup>200</sup>

#### **6.4.2 The *Cathedra Petri*: Pagan Symbols in the Catholic Church**

On the top left corner of panel 79 there are three images of the *Cathedra Petri* (the ‘seat of St. Peter’) in St. Peter’s basilica in Rome [Fig. 19]. *Cathedra* is an archaic form of ‘see,’ that is, a seat of the power, which epitomizes the authority or jurisdiction of a bishop over a

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<sup>197</sup> Silvia Morosi and Paolo Rastelli, “25 July 1929: Pio XI esce dal Vaticano, è pace tra Chiesa e Stato Italiano,” *Corriere della Sera*, 25 July 2019. <https://pochestorie.corriere.it/2019/07/25/25-luglio-1929-pio-xi-esce-dal-vaticano-e-pace-tra-chiesa-e-stato-italiano/>.

<sup>198</sup> The Lateran treaty is divided into three distinct documents; the treaty, the financial convention, and the concordat. The documents are included by Warburg in panel 78, which in its entirety is compiled of photographs from the Lateran treaty proceedings.

<sup>199</sup> Silvia Morosi and Paolo Rastelli, “25 July 1929.”

<sup>200</sup> For more on the Lateran treaty and the relationship between the Church and Italy, see, John F. Pollard, *The Vatican and Italian Fascism, 1929–32: A Study in Conflict*. (Cambridge; Cambridge University Press, 1985).



Diocese.<sup>201</sup> Needless to say, the Pope is the Bishop of Rome; the most important Diocese in the Catholic world. The *Cathedra* is, materially, a wooden throne-relic. It is housed inside the sculptural bronze monument made by Gian Lorenzo Bernini (1598-1680) between 1658 and 1666, upon a commission by Pope Alexander VII Chigi (1655-1667).

This ‘seat’ appears to be linked to the Warburgian panel 79’s context once we consider the second historical event that took place in 1870, i.e. when the First Vatican council proclaims papal infallibility as official doctrine of the Church. Papal infallibility is seen as an extension of the divine power granted to the head of the Catholic Church. In short, according to the new doctrine, each statement pronounced by the Pope *ex-cathedra* (from ‘the seat’) upon Church doctrinal matters, is to be considered infallible.

As observed by Charlotte Schoell-Glass, the *Cathedra Petri* harbors “a hidden presence of ancient myth and pagan imagery at the very centre of the Church’s symbolism.”<sup>202</sup> The caption text to the panel 79 in the *Bilderatlas Mnemosyne - The Original*, reproduces these ‘pagan images’ as details. It also includes the verso text, reading “*Schlagwort: Astrol. Sternbilder. Herkules*” (Subject word: Astrological star images. Hercules). [Fig. 20]<sup>203</sup> The wooden throne is, in fact, covered by ivory panels showing the labors of Hercules. His figure is shown battling with fantastical creatures; to the left he holds a weapon high, ready to strike towards the multi-headed monster, twisting around the headless battling body, echoing the Laokoon’s frightful battle with the snakes. The decorations placed on the front of the seat are inlaid ivory tablets with engraved ornamentation. The manner in which they are presented resembles adornments of books and reliquaries of the period, where ivory panels or carved stones (often) represented mythological scenes.<sup>204</sup> Hercules was a recurring figure in late antiquity and paleo-Christian art, was a figure used by Roman emperors themselves, and thereafter by early Christians.<sup>205</sup> As Lawrence Nees argues, the wooden throne could be a Carolingian throne built around 867

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<sup>201</sup> *Merriam-Webster.com Dictionary*, s.v. “see,” accessed on 16 November, 2021. <https://www.merriam-webster.com/dictionary/see>.

<sup>202</sup> Schoell-Glass, “Aby Warburg’s Late Comments on Symbol and Ritual,” 632.

<sup>203</sup> Translation by the author.

<sup>204</sup> Lawrence Nees “*Tainted Mantle. Hercules and the Classical Tradition at the Carolingian Court*” by Land the article Nees, Lawrence. “Unknown Carolingian Drawings of Hercules from the Scriptorium of Reims, and the ‘Cathedra Petri’ Ivories.” *The Journal of the Walters Art Gallery* 46 (1988): 37–54. <http://www.jstor.org/stable/20169040>.

<sup>205</sup> Eppinger, Alexandra, “The Early Christian Heracles,” in *The Oxford Handbook of Heracles*. Edited by Daniel Ogden, (2021).

for Charles the Bald (823-877), and the tablets, once thought to be late antique ivories, are demonstrably Carolingian as well. The caption in Warburg's Atlas rightly reads: "Throne for the coronation of Charles the Bald, given thereafter to the Church, since 1666 inside the Bernini-Cattedra / 875 c."<sup>206</sup>

After the execution of Bernini's large bronze cast design, the original wooden throne relic was not exhibited for over two hundred years. In 1867, however, it was exposed to the public to celebrate the eighteenth centenary of the martyrdom of the apostles Peter and Paul - patron saints of the city of Rome. In such occasion the brothers Alessandri (photographers working in Rome at that time) took the picture that was subsequently collected by Warburg and cast in panel 79.<sup>207</sup>

### 6.4.3 The Eucharist and the Doctrine of *Transubstantiation*

It seems white and is red  
It is living and seems dead  
It is flesh and seems bread  
It is one and seems two  
It is God's body and no more<sup>208</sup>.  
—Traditional verse from England, 15th C.

The Eucharist is a sacrament in the Catholic Church, manifesting the flesh and blood of Christ. It is materially a wheaten disc of bread, a circular wafer that is consecrated and given at Mass by the priest to the congregation.<sup>209</sup> Thereby called 'the Host' by Catholics, it becomes the flesh of Christ, the body of God through *transubstantiation*.

Two painting's from the Italian Renaissance illustrates this theme in panel 79, that is Sandro Botticelli's *The Last Communion of St. Jerome* from early 1490, showing St. Jerome kneeling before the sacrament [Fig. 18]. St. Jerome (c. 347–420) who was the doctor of the

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<sup>206</sup> Aby Warburg, *Bilderatlas Mnemosyne* —The Original, 147.

<sup>207</sup> The Alessandri brothers ran a photographic studio based in Rome in the 19th century. Antonio (1818-1893) d'Alessandri, who was a Catholic priest, and Paolo Francesco (1824-1889) d'Alessandri. <https://www.britishmuseum.org/collection/term/BIOG243675>

<sup>208</sup> cited in E. Duffy, *The Stripping of the Altars: Traditional Religion in England, c.1400–c.1580* (New Haven; London: Yale University Press, 1992), p. 102. Translations are quoted from Aden Kumler, "The multiplication of the species: Eucharistic morphology in the Middle Ages," in *RES: Anthropology and Aesthetics*, Vol. 59/60 (2011), 179.

<sup>209</sup> It is, according to the Catholic faith, only supposed to be made solely from wheat in order to be valid. The Hosts are kept in the Tabernacle on the altar. The Eucharistic wine is wine made from grapes, poured into the sacred vessel called 'chalice' before being consecrated and served.

Church that first translated the Bible from Hebrew to Latin (the so-called, ‘Vulgate’), making it accessible to new groups of Christian worshippers.<sup>210</sup> Most prominent in size however, is a black and white reproduction of *The Mass at Bolsena* by Raffaello Sanzio (1483-1520) from 1511, which protrudes from the left part of the panel [Fig. 16]. The original painting is a fresco in the *Stanza d’Eliodoro* in the Vatican.<sup>211</sup> Pope Julius II (Giuliano della Rovere, 1443-1513) is seen kneeling in on the right side of the painting, portrayed with his recognizable white beard as a priest is performing the sacrament of the Eucharist.

*The Mass at Bolsena* memorialize a miracle that occurred in 1253 at Bolsena, into the 16th century setting. In 1253, in the Church of Santa Cristina in Bolsena, a priest who doubted the doctrine of *transubstantiation* witnessed during Mass drops of blood ‘miraculously’ appeared on the Host as he was consecrating it at the altar.<sup>212</sup> This ‘miracle’ was picked up by the Church, and, as Schoell-Glass also mentions, reports about bleeding hosts multiplied after the Lateran Council of 1215 that definitely affirmed the *transubstantiation*.<sup>213</sup>

Portraying the papacy as the savior force of Christendom, the painting is located in the same stanza as *The Expulsion of Heliodorus from the Temple*. Seeing it in a Counter-reformatory setting, the inclusion of the miracle helps to show the power of the Catholic Church.

*Transubstantiation* (from the medieval Latin *transubstantiatio*) indicates the change of the whole substance of the bread and wine into the body and blood of Jesus Christ during the Eucharistic celebration at Mass<sup>214</sup>. Miri Rubin writes on the function of this sacrament in the context of late medieval culture, but a function that could still be seen as valid perspective on today: “The Eucharist placed Christians within a symbolic system operating within a history of salvation, and it was lived as a drama re-enacted at every altar during every mass (sic).”<sup>215</sup>

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<sup>210</sup> Britannica, T. Editors of Encyclopaedia. “Vulgate.” Encyclopedia Britannica, December 17, 2021. <https://www.britannica.com/topic/Vulgate>.

<sup>211</sup> The room of Heliodoros is the only room in the Vatican portraying historical scenes, and derives its name from Heliodorus; a non-Christian (pagan) that is chased out of the temple of Jerusalem.

<sup>212</sup> “Bolsena.” *Britannica Academic*, Encyclopædia Britannica, 14 July, 2008. [academic-eb-com.ezproxy.uio.no/levels/collegiate/article/Bolsena/80505](http://academic-eb-com.ezproxy.uio.no/levels/collegiate/article/Bolsena/80505). Accessed on 5 April, 2020.

<sup>213</sup> Schoell-Glass, “Aby Warburg’s Late Comments on Symbol and Ritual,” 6.

<sup>214</sup> *The Catechism of the Catholic Church*, Part II, Section II, Chapter I, 1376, Libreria Editrice Vaticana, 347.

<sup>215</sup> Miri Rubin, *Corpus Christi. The Eucharist in Late Medieval Culture*. (Cambridge University Press, Cambridge, 1991), 14.

The concept expresses very clearly the dogma of the Catholic Church regarding the *real presence* of Jesus Christ in the Eucharist. The term is formed from the Latin words *trans*, ‘beyond,’ and *substantia*, ‘substance,’ and therefore, etymologically, indicates the passage of one substance into another. During Catholic Mass it happens that, while the external determinations of the species of bread and wine (color, flavor, etc., called ‘accidents’ in philosophical terms) remain unchanged, the ‘substance,’ that is to say the essential element for which such objects are those and not others, would be nonetheless transformed. After the consecration it happens that, despite the appearances of the bread and wine, these have essentially become the body and blood of Jesus Christ.<sup>216</sup> The *Magisterium of the Catholic Church* (to wit the Church’s authority to give authentic interpretation of the word of God), teaches that the doctrine of *transubstantiation* is implicit in Jesus’ words at the Last Supper: “This is my body,”<sup>217</sup> “This is my blood.”<sup>218</sup>

However, the word *transubstantiation* was coined only in medieval period. Furthermore, the wheaten wafer belongs to a western European tradition of production and distribution, as Aden Kumler points out in her essay “The multiplication of the species: Eucharistic morphology in the Middle Ages.”<sup>219</sup> The medieval Eucharist was an early example of a multiple, also refashioned in the image of coins.<sup>220</sup>

Debates on the ‘real presence of Christ’ in the Eucharist is a centuries-long story of theological discourse. The first to study this was Paschasius Radbertus (785–865) in the treatise *De Corpore et Sanguine Domini* from ca. 831.<sup>221</sup> In it, Paschasius affirms that the Eucharist contains the true, historical body of Jesus Christ, and thus, *transubstantiation* of the bread and wine offered in the Eucharist really occurs.<sup>222</sup> In the middle ages, Paschasius’ position on *transubstantiation* was called into question by Berengar of Tours (999-1088),

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<sup>216</sup> Thomas Aquinas, *Summa Theologica*, trans. Fathers of the English Dominican Province, III, question 77. [http://www.documentacatholicaomnia.eu/03d/1225-1274,\\_Thomas\\_Aquinas,\\_Summa\\_Theologiae\\_%5B1%5D,\\_EN.pdf](http://www.documentacatholicaomnia.eu/03d/1225-1274,_Thomas_Aquinas,_Summa_Theologiae_%5B1%5D,_EN.pdf).

<sup>217</sup> As read in the Bible. To be found in the gospels of Matthew, Mark and Luke: Mt 26:26; Mk 14:22; Lk 22:19. Also in letters to the Corinthians (from St.Paul): Cor 11:24.

<sup>218</sup> Ibid. Mt 26,28; Mk 14,24.

<sup>219</sup> In her essay, Kumler describes the multiplication of the wafer, or “a multiplication of ‘some sort’ happening in the circulation and production of the wafer of the blessed sacrament of the Eucharist. See Aden Kumler, “The multiplication of the species: Eucharistic morphology in the Middle Ages,” 179-191.

<sup>220</sup> Aden Kumler, “The multiplication of the species,” 191.

<sup>221</sup> Originally written as an instructional manual for the monks under his care at the monastery of Corbie, it is the first lengthy treatise on the sacrament of the Eucharist.

<sup>222</sup> Patricia McCormick Zirkel, *The Ninth Century Eucharistic Controversy: a Context for the Beginnings of the Eucharistic Doctrine in the West*, *Worship* 68 (January 1994), 2-23.

theologian and archdeacon of Angers, who eventually came into conflict with Church authorities over the doctrine of *transubstantiation*. Berengar of Tours denied the doctrine of Paschasius, supporting a conception that the presence of Christ in the Eucharist was only ‘symbolic’. He therefore also denied the concept of *transubstantiation*, deeming it impossible to perceive ‘accidents’ separately from ‘substance.’<sup>223</sup>

In 1215, the Fourth Council of the Lateran, called by Pope Innocent III (1160 or 1161-1216), infallibly defined the teaching of the Catholic Church on that bread and wine *transubstantiated* into the body and blood of Christ, stating that, “His body and blood are truly contained in the sacrament of the altar under the forms of bread and wine, the bread and wine having been *transubstantiated*, by God’s power, into his body and blood.”<sup>224</sup>

Incidentally, it must be noted that the same Fourth Council of the Lateran in Canons 67-70 also brought up fundamental changes in the situation of the Jews throughout Christian Europe, both legal and theological. This is an interesting note to Warburg’s inclusion of anti-Jewish propaganda images in panel 79, as explained below. Because the Jews were ‘servants of sin,’ it was concluded that they should now be the servants of Christians and, for the first time with this Council, a special form of dress was directly prescribed for them. They were also disqualified to hold public offices.<sup>225</sup> In panel 79 these signs of particular clothing can be seen on the Jews as small circular patches and headwear [see Fig. 27]. Further, as Kumler points out, the figure of “the Jew was made and test and prove the Eucharist’s value, to confirm its invaluable corporeal substance under the accidents of a mere wafer.”<sup>226</sup>

Notwithstanding the steps taken at the Fourth Council of the Lateran, it was however not until later in the 13th century that, after Aristotelian metaphysics was incorporated into Christian theology, a more complete philosophical elaboration of the *transubstantiation* was developed by the theologian, philosopher, and him too ‘doctor of the Church,’ Thomas Aquinas (1225-1274).<sup>227</sup>

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<sup>223</sup> Oxford Dictionary of the Christian Church (Oxford University Press, 2005), article *Berengar of Tours*.

<sup>224</sup> Jaroslav Pelikan, *The Growth of Medieval Theology, (600-1300)*, Vol. 3. The Christian Tradition: A History of the Development of Doctrine, (Chicago: The University of Chicago Press, 1978), 268. The teaching is stated in ‘Canon 1 *On the catholic faith*’ (*De fide catholica*).

<sup>225</sup> James Carroll, *Constantine’s Sword: The Church and the Jews*. (Houghton Mifflin Harcourt, 2002), 283.

<sup>226</sup> Aden Kumler, “The multiplication of the species,” 191.

<sup>227</sup> Patrick Toner, “Transubstantiation, Essentialism, and Substance,” *Religious Studies*, 47, no. 2 (2011): 217-231. 10.1017/S0034412510000272.

A few centuries later, Martin Luther (1483-1546) deemed the presence of Christ in the Eucharist with the *transubstantiation* as ‘not compatible.’ The Protestant conception of the Eucharist unilaterally lost the character of representation and the sacrifice of Jesus Christ.<sup>228</sup> /  
<sup>229</sup> In response to the Lutheran reformers, the Council of Trent (1545-1563) canonized the *transubstantiation* in a decree on the Eucharist (1551) as a dogma of faith, against the symbolic interpretations of the Protestant reformer.<sup>230</sup>

In the first half of the twentieth century some theologians tried to review the real content of the term *transubstantiation* by resorting to the concept of a total transformation not in a substantial sense, but in the pure sphere of significations (symbolic *transubstantiation*).<sup>231</sup>.

#### **6.4.4 The Question of the Jews: Desecration and Antisemitic Propaganda**

The two images on the lower part of panel 79 have been mentioned as instances of anti-jewish propaganda [Fig. 26 and 27]. They are reproductions of woodcuts depicting desecration acts, that is; the stabbing of the eucharistic wafer with long knives or dabbers. These are examples of Christian propaganda, meant to enhance anti-jewish sentiments in medieval times.

In the twelfth and thirteenth centuries, Christian anti-Judaism in the medieval West received an acceleration, after harsh anti-Jewish measures agreed at the Lateran Council called in 1215 by Pope Innocent III. As we have seen, Canons 67-70 of this Council fundamentally changed the situation of the Jews throughout Christian Europe, both legally

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<sup>228</sup> Of the Sacrament of the Altar, Luther states: “As regards to *transubstantiation*, we care nothing about the sophisticated subtlety by which they teach that bread and wine leave or lose their own natural substance, and that there remain only the appearance and color of bread, and not true bread. For it is in perfect agreement with Holy Scriptures that there is, and remains, bread . . . : Let him so eat of that bread.” In Luther, Martin (1537) Smalcald Articles, Part III, Article VI: Of the Sacrament of the Altar. <https://bookofconcord.org/smalcald-articles/part-iii/article-vi/>.

<sup>229</sup> In a Lutheran mass, the key moment would thus not be the sharing of the bread and wine, but the Bible readings to the congregation and the priest interprets the text.

<sup>230</sup> The Council of Trent, Session 13, *Decretum de Sanctissima Eucharistia*, Canons I-VIII, where in relevant part is said, “If any one denieth, that, in the sacrament of the most holy Eucharist, are contained truly, really, and substantially, the body and blood together with the soul and divinity of our Lord Jesus Christ, and consequently the whole Christ; but saith that He is only therein as in a sign, or in figure, or virtue; let him be anathema.”

<sup>231</sup> Piolanti Antonio, “Transustanziazione,” in Pio Paschini (curated by), *Enciclopedia Cattolica*, Ente per l’Enciclopedia Cattolica e per il Libro Cattolico, (Città del Vaticano, vol. 12, 1948-1954, vol. XII, 1954, c.) 432-433.

and theologically. Jews had to dress in a way that made them identifiable and were disqualified to hold public offices.<sup>232</sup>

During the following centuries the dispositions of the Fourth Council at the Lateran against the Jews were alternatively suspended and then reinstated depending on the Pope elected. Then in 1555, Pope Paul IV (1476-1559) with the bull *Cum nimis absurdum*,<sup>233</sup> established the Roman Ghetto and from that point on the Jews had to live segregated, could not own real estate property, had to wear a yellow cloth and were forbidden to engage in specific professions or activities.<sup>234</sup> They also suffered other limitations, such as practicing medicine among Christians.<sup>235</sup>

Along with limitations on Jewish activity, expulsions, massacres and anti-Jewish propaganda was flourishing in the European Middle Ages.<sup>236</sup> By including these images in the panel, Warburg adds a dimension of hostility and aggression into the Eucharistic tradition and dogma of *transubstantiation*: In the early decades of the twelfth century, the Jews living in Christian Europe start to be seen not only as enemies of Christ, but also as enemies of the body of Christ as ‘*transubstantiated*’ in the Eucharist. This happens alongside the affirmation of the dogma of *transubstantiation* in the Fourth Council at the Lateran in 1215.<sup>237</sup>

As a consequence, if theretofore the anti-Jewish propaganda had been revolving around the false accusations of Jews engaging in ‘ritual crucifixion’ or ‘ritual cannibalism’ (at the expense of innocent Christian boys who would be either crucified to commemorate the killing of the innocent Christ, or killed to practice rituals with their blood), following the inclusion of *transubstantiation* in the body of rules of the Church, a new ‘Jewish crime’

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<sup>232</sup> James Carroll, *Constantine's Sword: The Church and the Jews*. (Houghton Mifflin Harcourt, 2002), 283.

<sup>233</sup> These words are taken from the latin original meaning; “Since it is absurd and utterly inconvenient that the Jews, who through their own fault were condemned by God to eternal slavery...” [English Translation of *Cum nimis absurdum* at <https://www.ccjr.us/dialogika-resources/primary-texts-from-the-history-of-the-relationship/paul-iv>] in Italia Judaica, Gli Ebrei nello Stato pontificio fino al Ghetto (1555). Atti del VI Convegno internazionale, Tel Aviv, 18-22 June 1995, 115 and 201. See also: Berger, David (1979). *Cum Nimis Absurdum and the Conversion of the Jews*. *The Jewish Quarterly Review*, 70(1), 41–49. <https://doi.org/10.2307/1454606>.

<sup>234</sup> Jewish women had to wear a yellow veil – the same color worn by prostitutes.

<sup>235</sup> The persecution of Jews in Christian Europe increased in the High Middle Ages and culminated with the expulsion of them from England (1290), France (1182, 1306 and 1384), Austria (1421), and Spain (1492) where, before being expelled, Jews were massacred (1321, 1348 and 1391).

<sup>236</sup> Berenbaum, Michael. “anti-Semitism.” *Encyclopedia Britannica*, 21 Apr. 2020, <https://www.britannica.com/topic/anti-Semitism>. Accessed on 24 August, 2021. See also, Langmuir, Gavin I., *History, Religion and Antisemitism*, (Berkeley University of California Press, 1990) and R. Chazan, *Medieval Stereotypes and Modern Antisemitism*, (Berkeley University of California Press, 1997)

<sup>237</sup> Anna Sapir Abulafia, “Bodies in the Jewish-Christian Debate,” in Sarah Kay and Miri Rubin (eds.), *Framing Medieval Bodies* (Manchester, 1994), 131-2.

comes into being: Host desecration. Host desecration is therefore the new 'libel' the Jews are subject to in Christian Europe, as Robert Stacey observes, especially in the Middle Ages Continental Europe.<sup>238</sup> It translates in the stabbing of the Host by one or more perpetrators who, by their act of stabbing, reproduce the killing of Jesus Christ on the cross.

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<sup>238</sup> Robert C. Stacey, "From Ritual Crucifixion to Host Desecration: Jews and the Body of Christ," *Jewish History*, Vol. 12, no. I, Spring 1998, 14.



# 7. Readings of panel 79 and new contributions

## 7.1 General Lines of Interpretation

What is common to most readings of the panel seem to be the concomitance of religious and pagan forces in culture, ‘magic and reason,’ and the relation between political and theological power. It is seen as Warburg’s effort to comment on his own time. As Brian Dillon observes, Warburg was “freeze-framing European culture in a paradoxical pose of frenzied immobility, just before the continent was plunged into the terrible mass-mobilization that sent his colleagues into exile in 1933.”<sup>239</sup> As mentioned, Warburg expressed wider concerns about political developments in Germany, fearing how anti-semitic sentiments arose.<sup>240</sup> The images of desecration acts are thus seen in relation to the increased antisemitism that was gripping Europe at that time.<sup>241</sup>

The panel 79’s main question seems to revolve around the Eucharist and in this how contemporary practices are often informed by ancient rituals. Warburg expresses his views of ritual and rituality as having important, collective, societal and temporal functions, and that “[t]he experience of religious ritual serving as the primal mint for the expressive systems of tragic passions.”<sup>242</sup> Reading of the panels has thus been focused on the function of rituality in culture, seeing their enactment as more or less ‘primitive.’

The panel does, as Sara Angels also point out in her essay, brings up Warburg’s 1914-1918 work “Pagan prophecy in the Age of Luther,” as it reveals the irrational undercurrents of magic and superstition in a so-called enlightened society.<sup>243</sup> “Seen in this light, an interpretation of panel 79 comes into focus: As the world sits on the brink of transformation, whether through 16th-century religious change or 20th-century peace

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<sup>239</sup> Brian Dillon, “Collected works. Aby Warburg’s Bilderatlas Mnemosyne,” in *Frieze magazine*, 4. Jan. 2004.

<sup>240</sup> How Aby Warburg might see antisemitism as the ultimate cultural danger for Germany is addressed by Michael Steinberg, who draws a line between Warburg’s essay “Serpent Ritual” and anti-semitic moods. Antisemitism itself representing as a “creeping form:” a reference to the serpent, if also to the dangers of the cultural and social applications of form (i.e., aestheticism) itself. For more on this issue and on identity politics in Germany in the 1920s. See, Matthew Rampley, “Aby Warburg: Kulturwissenschaft, Judaism and the Politics of Identity.” *Oxford Art Journal*, Vol. 33, No. 3 (2010): 319-335.

<sup>241</sup> Steinberg, Michael, “Aby Warburg’s Kreuzlingen Lecture: A Reading,” 87.

<sup>242</sup> Gombrich, *Aby Warburg: An Intellectual Biography*, 244, quoting “Briefmarke, Notebook, 1927, p. 9.”

<sup>243</sup> Angel, “The Mnemosyne Atlas and the Meaning of Panel 79, 267.

negotiations — it does so in the shadow of pagan rites, standing in a place somewhere between magic and reason.”

As it appears, in Warburg’s view, Christianity and paganism coexist in one powerful visual and material object: the *Cathedra Petri*. In his own words, noted in the *Tagebuch*, he makes the following reflection:

I notice the opposition between Larsson’s service to the moloch with the flesh of the king and Rembrandt’s Last Supper which has come into its own truth. And then, how in Bernini’s throne at St. Peter’s all the pagan monsters are inscribed in the old Byzantine throne which is inside (Heracles and the signs of the Zodiac)<sup>244</sup>

In this, Warburg firstly refers to the Swedish artist Carl Larsson’s large scale painting ‘Midvinterblot’ and Rembrandt Van Rijn’s version of the Last Supper: *The Oath of Claudius Civilis* (1661).<sup>245</sup> Suggestively, these are both images thematizing pagan sacrifice. The juxtaposition of the different versions of the throne in panel 79 hints to a possible dialectic between a visible and an invisible symbol.

Focusing our attention on the Eucharist, Christopher Johnson describes it as “an abiding fascination” for Warburg.<sup>246</sup> Schoell-Glass has pointed to how Warburg’s inclusion of this theme as an area of study was important for his view on culture.<sup>247</sup> In his work, Johnson draws attention to the essential role of ‘metaphors’ as mediators in European culture.<sup>248</sup> Metaphors (as in rituals and *pathosformeln*) are always present and they can either “obscure or clarify our relationship with the past and the physical world.”<sup>249</sup> Johnson concurs with that all the images in panel 79 deal with paganism in the Church.<sup>250</sup>

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<sup>244</sup> Aby Warburg in his *Tagebuch* 8, 1929, 233). Quoted in Schoell-Glass, “Aby Warburg’s Late Comments on Symbol and Ritual,” 632, and in original German by Sprung, Sprung, “*Bildatlas, åskådning och reproduktion*,” 170.

<sup>245</sup> Joacim Sprung is the first to fully identify in title and detail the painting ‘Midvinterblot’ in the panel 71 of the Atlas. See Joacim Sprung, “*Bildatlas, åskådning och reproduktion*,” 165-175.140. Joacim Sprung states that, “Rembrandt’s painting is a subjective interpretation of Leonardo’s Last Supper, the evening meal representing the Eucharist with the Apostles, combined with Batavian elements derived from Tacitus and Rembrandt’s own studies of antiquity.” Sprung, reads into Warburg’s reception of Rembrandt: and enhances Rembrandt’s ‘Last Supper’ as model value of moderation and ‘sophrosyne’ in the *Mnemosyne*.” Joacim Sprung, “*Bildatlas, åskådning och reproduktion*,” 166.

<sup>246</sup> Johnson, *Memory, Metaphor, and Aby Warburg's Atlas of Images*, 186.

<sup>247</sup> Schoell-Glass, “Aby Warburg's Late Comments on Symbol and Ritual,” 639.

<sup>248</sup> Johnson, *Memory, Metaphor, and Aby Warburg's Atlas of Images*, 185.

<sup>249</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>250</sup> *Ibid.*, 187.

On the other hand, in valuing the *Denkraum*, the metaphorical distances set within consciousness, the metaphor offered by rituality contends a necessary space for man in which to engage with the tragedies of life. This is also validated by Schoell-Glass who writes:

For Warburg, the rites of the Eucharist also came to stand for, symbolically, what is needed to hold at bay social and individual disintegration: The *Tagebuch* abounds with hints of the worry with which Warburg saw the political developments of his time, and there is reason to believe that he took anti-Semitism to be one of the most serious symptoms of what he called the ‘spiritual crisis’ of Germany and Europe as a whole.<sup>251</sup>

In this, Schoell-Glass points to a function of the Eucharist as a protecting force. In providing metaphorical distance, or rather, the exercise of metaphorical distance is needed to maintain, in this view; civilization.

Life, as the biographical detail and mental psychologies analyzed by Didi-Huberman, entails such curious drives and contradictory behaviors. Religion and rituality, could be seen as offering a steady system through which life becomes manageable. Devotion and spirituality become touchstones for sanity. Thus, to disregard rites as ‘primitive magic,’ would be unsatisfactory.

Schoell-Glass stresses that there is a sort of double aspect in the Eucharist “(...) as sacrificial killing and redemptive death: the double function of symbolizing / distancing and realizing / re-enacting that sacrifice. In the twofold nature of the Eucharist as the retelling of a myth and the re-enactment of a ritual, the tension of polarity is present in every Mass.”<sup>252</sup> In the wake of this, Christopher Johnson also puts an emphasis on how panel 79 conveys the importance of symbolic practices and their mediating function; he writes, “this ‘*Transubstantiation*’ (emphasis added) suggests that, despite the lethal chaos produced by distance-destroying technology, the possibility remains that humanity might master its fear of death through symbolic practices.”<sup>253</sup>

The presence of images concerning the Lateran treaty is also taken into account by several commentators. Ernst Gombrich, for one, puts an accent on Warburg’s interest in the development of the Church; he says that, “[t]he contrast between the crude symbols of power displayed by the Fascists and the withdrawal of the Pope to the confines of a merely symbolic domain became for him another link in the long chain of mankind’s road towards

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<sup>251</sup> Schoell-Glass, “Aby Warburg’s Late Comments on Symbol and Ritual,” 639.

<sup>252</sup> *Ibid.*, 637.

<sup>253</sup> Johnson, *Memory, Metaphor, and Aby Warburg's Atlas of Images*, 189.

enlightenment.”<sup>254</sup> As mentioned by Schoell-Glass, the *Tagebuch* of 1929 then indicated that the Lateran treaty was particularly suggested as a valid point of departure in understanding the meaning of the panel.<sup>255</sup> As we have learned, the Lateran treaty consolidated the power relation between the Catholic Church and the Italian State. Christopher Johnson, however, calls off any sympathy that Warburg might have had for this intermingling between the parties, seeing secular forces in the midst of religious life (and vice versa). Whether or not Warburg ‘feared’ this coalition, remains unclear, but he certainly saw these incidences as exemplary or even epitome of his cultural theories and his ambition to make sense of ‘everything,’ that is, I would say, even a prophetic ambition to make the Mnemosyne an oracle of thought. A prophetic ambition is also suggested by Schoell-Glass:

On the level of iconology the message of the two plates may be paraphrased in this way: as the Church, ecclesia militans, renounces power and violence, there is hope (*speranza*) for an end to the shedding of blood for religious causes. A new order of international peace, already underway, could replace the old order centered around sacrifice. To be sure, such achievements cannot be had and could be thought of as settled, as the picture of the return of sacrifice in Japanese society remind the viewer. The struggle for this kind of progress is never won for good.<sup>256</sup>

The third main element we can take into consideration on the level of iconological reading, are the images concerning the Eucharist desecration – by Jews. Didi-Huberman points out Warburg’s inclusion of this imagery and comments on them as propaganda tools used by Christians to demonize the Jews as the killers of Jesus Christ:

But it is also a question, in this cultural symptomatology, of political prophecy: the last plate in Mnemosyne displays all of the signs of a long – and recent – history of anti-Semitism, of political propaganda, and of the upheavals that were to be seen in the year 1929, when Hitler’s *Mein Kampf* reached record sales in Hamburg and elsewhere in Germany.<sup>257</sup>

In his reading, Didi-Huberman also turns attention to the Roman crowds gathering to celebrate the Lateran treaty and to images of social and political struggles. In this, Didi-Huberman sees the historical images as a field of conflict, unresolved issues or chaotic instances.

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<sup>254</sup> Gombrich, *Aby Warburg: An Intellectual Biography*, 279.

<sup>255</sup> Schoell-Glass, “Aby Warburg's Late Comments on Symbol and Ritual,” 639.

<sup>256</sup> *Ibid.*, 636.

<sup>257</sup> Didi-Huberman, “Sampling Chaos,” 3.

### 7.3 Reading Golfers, Executioners and *Nymphs* in Panel 79

Adding to the reading of panel 79, the emotive figures and presence of *pathosformula* should be addressed. Moving to the right part of the panel, to the upper right corner which presents a photograph of another violent incident, a preparation for a Japanese harakiri suicidal ritual appears. [Fig. 5, 20 and 23]. A figure is seen raising his arms in a striking pose, gesturing to a final outcome of the seated man. Schoell-Glass refers to a newspaper clipping in the archive by the German historian Ludwig Riess who explained that, “[i]mperial Japan’s use of earlier religious rituals around the turn of the century that had already been superseded by the Buddhist — ‘more spiritual’ — religion for the purpose of forming a modern nation state.”<sup>258</sup> It follows, that a modern, nation state tries to rid itself of strict religious ritual. Following the brief conclusion by this author, Japan makes up another cultural incidence of ancient rituality present in modern society.

These figures illustrate Warburg’s concept of *pathosformeln*, echoing the motion of the maenad/nymph. Beneath the image from ritual Japan is a large clipping from the ‘illustrated supplement of the evening edition of the Hamburger Fremdenblatt’ and we notice a male golfer; Takeuchi from Japan, swinging his club.<sup>259</sup> A female golfer, Erika Sellschopp is also depicted on panel 79, as part of a larger crowd at a Golf-Club in Flottbek near Hamburg.<sup>260</sup> The golfers active gestures was suggested by Warburg to exemplify the inversion of *pathosformeln*, an ‘energetisches inversion,’ or as Didi-Huberman has shown in *The Surviving Image*; a displacement or antithesis, where the content of the gesture has shifted its meaning. In this case, from a brutal and violent execution gesture to a gesture performed within sport and leisure. This is something Warburg has made note of in his *Tagebuch* as a ‘depoisoning of the gesture of the executioner.’<sup>261</sup> They can also be seen as personifications of the choreographic *pathosformeln*, as described by Didi-Huberman, as contradicting temporal dimensions, echoing Freudian elements of repressed energies.<sup>262</sup>

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<sup>258</sup> Schoell-Glass, “Aby Warburg’s Late Comments on Symbol and Ritual,” 634.

<sup>259</sup> Takeuchi is named in the caption as “Des Gewinner des Senats-Prises” as part of he tournament “Sommer Wettspiele des Hamburger Golf-Clubs in Flottbek.”

<sup>260</sup> Pictured in the evening edition of *Hamburger Fremdenblatt* on the 30th of July 1929 with the caption: “Wettspiele des Hamburger Golf-Clubs in Flottbek.”

<sup>261</sup> Aby Warburg in *Tagebuch* 8, 211, quoted in Schoell-Glass, “Aby Warburg’s Late Comments on Symbol and Ritual,” 621-642.

<sup>262</sup> Didi-Huberman, *The Surviving Image*, 163-165.

The clippings from Hamburger Fremdenblatt date within a week of the Lateran procession of 25 July, 1929, pointing to Warburg's keen awareness to current events and image circulation of the day. It is perhaps reasonable to assume that the image of Pope Pius XI carried on his *sedes gestatoria* was of key-importance when Warburg acquired this clipping for the Atlas. The scene of St. Peter's Square is again reproduced in the newspaper-montage, amplifying its presence. [Fig. 24]. Warburg admittedly expressed a bemoaning of *insensitive* juxtapositions in this clipping; an image of a posing athlete, a male swimmer, overlaps the image of the Eucharistic procession. Another image in the clippings depicts a monstrously tall man, portrayed as an oddity. [Fig. 28].

Here, Warburg points to the mediation of images and the insensitive world of newspaper media, which twirls concepts of sacrificial bodies (*Hoc Meum Corpus Est*) with self-obsessed bodies. I would add to this, the objectified and displayed body of so-called 'freaks'. This expresses, in Schoell-Glass' suggestion, Warburg's "anxieties over intellectual and political developments."<sup>263</sup> Warburg was, according to his *Tagebuch*, deeply suspicious of what he called 'redemption through muscles' and was anxious of this as the 'worship of the body' brought connotations of racism and the idea of a 'Herrenrasse.'<sup>264</sup> From this, clear values of moderation and *sophrosyne* emerges in Warburg's persona. Joakim Sprung points out that he has disdain for 'pure political and public propaganda (muscular rhetoric),'<sup>265</sup> something that comes to show in the inclusion of woodcut's of the de-secration. Warburg observed how German patriotism grew and 'realized that the argument for German cultural superiority possessed an inherent antisemitism that would now, inevitably, intensify,' as Michael Steinberg writes.<sup>266</sup>

Lastly, on the lower left of panel 79, a figure resembling the *pathosformula* of the *nymph*, strides forward, reaching towards the photographs from St. Peter's Square. It is the figure of 'Hope' (*Spes*) from Giotto's cycle in the Arena Chapel [Fig. 25]. Schoell-Glass neglects her, in my opinion, with simply saying that she is the *nympha* "purified into spiritual fervor," pointing to the interpretation by Gombrich where she is seen as a figure to carry expression of passion into early Renaissance art.<sup>267</sup> Didi-Huberman however, sees this figure,

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<sup>263</sup> Schoell-Glass, "Aby Warburg's Late Comments on Symbol and Ritual," 634.

<sup>264</sup> Aby Warburg in *Tagebuch* 8, 273, quoted in *ibid*.

<sup>265</sup> Sprung, "*Bildatlas, åskådning och reproduktion*," 171.

<sup>266</sup> Steinberg, "Aby Warburg's Kreuzlingen Lecture: A Reading," 81.

<sup>267</sup> Gombrich, *Aby Warburg: An Intellectual Biography*, 105-107.

of flowing and apparently elegant, innocent presence (the famous ‘Ninfa Fiorentina’) is simply a carrier of potentialities, a future we cannot know the outcome of. With her forward reaching gesture and posture, she also leads us back to the image of the Mass of Bolsena, where the choreographed movement of figure is shown sliding in from the lower left corner of Raphael’s composition. The choreographic paradigm, a ‘disruption,’ a reminder of what Freud and Nietzsche had said about repressed values and ‘unsettling presences;’ the light figures of the Renaissance re-appear in modern society, through the photographs where they are part of other configurations. Embodying Dionysian undercurrents, the *Nymph* expresses tensions in culture itself as part of different paradigms as described by Didi-Huberman. She is, in fact, an instability, ahistorical presence. Her ‘displacement,’ following Didi-Huberman, supports Warburg’s notion of unresolved issues and tensions in contemporary society.

In addition to the figure of *Spes*, another historical event is seen by Charlotte Schoell-Glass as a sign of hope: The signing of the Locarno treaty, depicted on the right in panel 79 [Fig. 29], which made Warburg hope for European peace. The image of a newspaper clipping, depicting Aristide Briand of France, Hugh Chamberlain of Great Britain and Gustav Stresemann of Germany signing the treaty of Locarno on December 1st 1925 in London, appears. It was the first European treaty after Versailles and as international agreements often do, they carry a hope for cooperation and peace. After these efforts, the two were awarded the Nobel peace prize, whereby Warburg commissioned an air-mail stamp design. It showed, as Schoell-Glass describes: “a plane thrusting upward and bearing the inscription ‘idea vincit.’ (...) symbolizing the victorious idea of Europe which Warburg hoped would emerge as a new reality from the horrors of the Great War in a new era of peace.”<sup>268</sup> The Locarno treaty of 1925 marks the other political event of the decade depicted in panel 79, but further details are left on this mark in favor of the Lateran, where Warburg was an active presence in Rome. The Locarno is in this sense, regarded as a comment on which I have just mentioned: of hope. The overwhelming amount of material from the Lateran treaty proceedings in contrast to Locarno, underlines this grade of importance, to Warburg, not at least on the note of his deep connection to Italian history as a Renaissance scholar.

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<sup>268</sup> Schoell-Glass, “Aby Warburg’s Late Comments on Symbol and Ritual,” 631.

## 7.2 A Didi-Hubermanian Approach

As the historical assessment in chapter 6 has shown, panel 79 lists several upheavals of time: the assimilation of the *Cathedra Petri* to the political context of the 9th century and the to the Fourth Lateran Council of 1215 where both the doctrine of *transubstantiation* and the Jewish question were formulated. It has shown to some degree, how antisemitism evolved throughout the Middle Ages by Christian intolerance. It illustrates the theme of the Eucharist (in Bolsena in 1263 and its re-enactment in 1511 through Raphael's painting, in the last Communion of St. Jerome and also the last rites administered to a dying man). Bernini's grand monument from 1611 adorns and hides the decorated relic of *Cathedra Petri*. The history of Italian unification tells the stories of negotiations between theocracy and the Italian national interest with the self-seclusion of the Pope in 1870 after the capture of Rome, continuing until the signing of the Lateran treaty. It tells the story of the crowds at St. Peter's Square and of Pope Pius XI carrying the monstrance with the Eucharist in 1929. Didi-Huberman concurs in that the particular event of 1929 was an epitome for Warburg. As central subject of panel 79, we should pay a particular attention to this in the following analysis.

The Eucharist is a peculiar 'object.' On the one hand, taking into account the Didi-Hubermanian concept of 'the visible,' the Eucharist is what is 'simply presented.' However, the phenomena of the 'visual' wants and offers *more* from / to us. The 'visual' is, by contrast, a re-presentation of 'what is not seen.' These characteristics of both the 'visible' and the 'visual' seem to be present in the twofold nature of the Eucharist. The division lies in the status of the Eucharistic Host/non-Host (wafer), in the actual presence of the body of Christ (the Host) or in its absence. In the latter, the Host can be regarded as 'just' a wafer, a material object with a surface on which to project or produce images. Warburg, of Jewish descent, who observes the spectacle of the parading monstrance through the eyes of a cultural image-anthropologist, would mark this differentiation. This is where the concept of *Denkraum* is a valuable concept to relate to. The transposition of the Sacrament (an invisible force, religiously charged) into the object (the visible wheaten disk or material object itself) beacons a parallel to what Didi-Huberman calls "the invisible force" of the image, the visual experience. There is indeed a mystery to the image. In religious faith this has the purpose of representing the divine. However, in philosophical phenomenology, such as in Didi-



Huberman's parlance, there is an unclear spiritual movement, which opens up 'thought-spaces.' The *Denkraum*, or space for thought, as coined by Warburg, was intended to hold irrational forces at bay. In religious faith and theology, 'knowledge' and 'non-knowledge,' becomes hard to differentiate, because the experience of mystery is what constitutes faith. For the faithful, the things one can't see are as real as those that one can see. This is something Didi-Huberman brings up in *Confronting Images*, where the mystery of non-knowledge is, he says, apparent in certain events linked to non-mimetic elements.<sup>269</sup> In *Bilderatlas Mnemosyne*, one can argue, this leap happens in-between spaces, in *what is not there*; in the invisible links between images.

## 7.4 The Impact of Contemporary Photographs: Pope Pius XI Amongst the Crowds

Warburg is present at the events of the Lateran procession. To that account, Didi-Huberman's emphasis of Warburg's personal battles and inseparability of life and work, the photographs could perhaps be read as amplified moments of personal presence, collected and mounted by him shortly after the events. They portray forces of 'magic and reason,' historical and contemporary time, the fight over power and the imagination of the people. In his journalistic reporting, Vignoli describes, "[f]rom the five thousand voices of the seminarians, the song of the *Te Deum*, eternal praise to the Lord, is intoned. The square resonates like an immense nave. The crowd pushes and presses against the cordons to see more, to see more." we see these movements of upheaval in the processions and gathering of crowds in St. Peter's Square. Didi-Huberman's metaphorical use of language in *The Surviving Image*, further creates the imaginative space for thought and is, in itself a facilitator of complex meaning.

The thesis thus argues for increased attention to the photographs of Pope Pius XI carried on his *sedes gestatoria*. In this, he also holds the Eucharist as it is carried within its monstrance to bless the crowds. This pictorial subject seems to be a *survival*, an eternal return.

The photographs also functions as Warburgian *Bilderfahrzeuge*; image vehicles which carry complex meaning. Furthermore, it combines temporal levels, 'vibrating' between the

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<sup>269</sup> Didi-Huberman, *Confronting Images*, 51.

past and the present time. It holds several layers of historical incidences and unfolds as part of the present. Its call on symbolic imagination makes the subject of the Eucharist a mise-abymic presence in panel 79. There is ‘a story within a story’ grasping the symbolic imagination of both contemporary beholder and the figures partaking in the ritual acts depicted therein.

Didi-Huberman, as Christopher Johnson, regards *Bilderatlas Mnemosyne* as an epistemological structure, largely divorced from any other art-historical image-interpretative practice.<sup>270</sup> In Didi-Huberman’s reading, the Atlas embodies the chaotic undercurrents of culture, imperceptible to ‘rational readings’ but nevertheless, an expression of deep psychological movement.

We finally discover that the *Mnemosyne Atlas* works like a collection of *Desastres*: the play of the *astra* and the *monstra* takes account of the cruelest and most violent aspects of human history. The samples of spatial – or figural – chaos bear witness to a psychic chaos that is itself an integral part of its historical or political incarnations. For knowledge – through re-montage – always engages a reflection on the *de-montage of time* in the tragic history of society. And this can be seen directly in the last plates of *Mnemosyne* where Warburg arranged the contemporary photographic documents of the Lateran Accords, passed between the dictator Mussolini and Pope Pius XI. Of course, in these montages, it is a question of *cultural survivals*: they operate like transversal sections in the long duration of the relations between power and image (for example, the throne of Saint Peter visible in plate 79 subtly refers to the effigy of the sovereign already visible in plate 1), but also in the long duration of the theologic-political paradigm (the Eucharist, which is the principle theme of plate 79, refers also, in its own way, to the divinatory livers in plate 1: the mysterious and mystical supports of belief and of power.<sup>271</sup>

Concluding solutions are indeed tempting, a ‘solution to the riddle,’ so to speak. However, it remains and will always remain, as Joacim Sprung beautifully puts it an “opus imperfectum.”

Still, given the character of these images, it is not foreign that Warburg intended to say something about the state of civilization. Therein lies a prophetic scope. In the Renaissance, Warburg chosen field of study, intellectual leaders, patrons and artists were influenced by ancient values and adopted them in order to improve themselves and their own societies. The rediscovery of antiquity was not, as in Winckelmann, a historical quest of ‘filling in the gaps of how the past used to be’. Warburg seems increasingly interested in creating ‘road maps’ for the future, to help ways of thinking through images in order to understanding contemporary day.

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<sup>270</sup> See Johnson, *Memory, Metaphor, and Aby Warburg's Atlas of Images*, 110

<sup>271</sup> Didi-Huberman, “Sampling Chaos,” 2-3.

The function of the images is, rather, is suggestively to see them as *survivals*, holding as much tragedy as there is hope, transmitting force between past and present. As we have learned from Nietzsche, tragedy is seen as the driving force of culture, because what survives in culture is above all the tragic, that is the claim of Nietzsche, not at least due to man's thirst for power. Survivals, then could be seen enacted in this image, not as resolved power relation, but as fluid form.

Whilst Schoell-Glass position is that "[t]he relationship of the atlas to its contents and function, *Mnemosyne*, could be said to be one of the transformation from a fluid to a fixed state," in accordance with Didi-Huberman it invites a "return to fluidity."<sup>272</sup>

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<sup>272</sup> Schoell-Glass, "Aby Warburg's Late Comments on Symbol and Ritual," 624.

## 8. Concluding remarks

[A] surviving image is an image that, having lost its original use value and meaning, nonetheless comes back, like a ghost, at a particular historical moment.  
– Didi-Huberman, *Confronting Images*.

Georges Didi-Huberman invites to a different reading mode, as opposed to the one employed by the ‘traditional iconographs,’ exemplified by Panofsky. Following Didi-Huberman, *Bilderatlas Mnemosyne*’s fleeting character and mythic aura can be better grasped when we consider both the iconographical knowledge of the historical context of the images and their invisible vital force; this vital force being something that lies within their ability to carry emotional expressive traces and dynamic polarities, and hence acting as *survivals* in the present.

Also, Didi-Huberman enhances mental instabilities as tensions within Warburg’s persona, with a basis in Freud and Nietzsche. I’ve suggested how Georges Didi-Huberman’s style of writing evokes the notion of *energia*, and conveys new intimacy of aesthetic experience, soliciting a deep and visceral exchange between artist, viewer, and image. In discussing this, I have also pointed to critical voices and problematic aspects of his style.

Didi-Huberman’s insights become useful in the access of the last panel of the *Bilderatlas Mnemosyne* — The Original, number 79, in order to see how it can be read. In the wake of Didi-Huberman’s theoretical approach I have put an emphasis on the subject of the Eucharist and the photographs of the Lateran treaty. This is also in relation to Warburg’s own ideas of image *vessels* (*bilderfahrzeuge*), dynamic exchanges (*dynamograms*) and exhalations (*pathosformeln*). Warburg’s thematization of rite and ritual are particularly interesting in this endeavor, more accurately in relation to the concept of *Denkraum*.

*Bilderatlas Mnemosyne* — The Original from 2020 re-actualizes and enhances its own impact and status in the light of Didi-Huberman’s reflections. Coincidences of this intricate and open-ended experience as parallel to spiritual and religious thinking are therefore made possible. More specifically, this parallel results in the phenomenons of *visibility* and *visuality*, *presentation* and *re-presentation*, actualized by the subject of the Eucharist.

Furthermore, by including contemporary press-imagery and newspaper-clippings from the Lateran treaty events, Warburg introduces a new level of optic as well as embodying

‘symbolic practices’ into the modern, technological form of photography and reproduction as present in the Atlas. Doubtlessly, Didi-Huberman’s insights invite and nurture an increased attention to the photographs of Pope Pius XI carried on his *sedia gestatoria* as object of *survival*.

Finally, by the power of montage, these values and translations become interconnected, making panel 79 an intricate and open-ended phenomenon and image-event unfolding in the *Bilderatlas Mnemosyne – The Original* (2020). The grand edition with new, original scans of color reproductions has certainly added vitality and force. Today, it vibrates in the material juxtaposition between reproductions and photographs and the temporal leaps between antiquity and 1929.

In conclusion, Didi-Huberman provides the liberty to think freely on the enigmatic and layered character of *Bilderatlas Mnemosyne*. It is not difficult to sympathize with his profound connection to Warburg: “It is something or someone that one cannot forget, and yet is impossible to recognize clearly.”<sup>273</sup> Endeavoring into complicated landscapes, this thesis cannot but end on the note of a ‘ghostly gush’ in an unresolved liaison with Didi-Huberman. It rests on the attempt “to read what was never written.”<sup>274</sup>

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<sup>273</sup> Didi-Huberman, *The Surviving Image*, 13.

<sup>274</sup> Quote by Hofmannsthal in Walter Benjamin, quoted in Didi-Huberman, *Atlas, or, the Anxious Gay Science*, 13.

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# Illustrations



Figure 1: Panel 79 of “Bilderatlas Mnemosyne — the Original,” Hatje Cantz Verlag, 2020



Figure 2: *Bilderatlas Mnemosyne* — The Original (2020), unfolded on a desk at the Norwegian Institute in Rome, October 2021. [My photo]

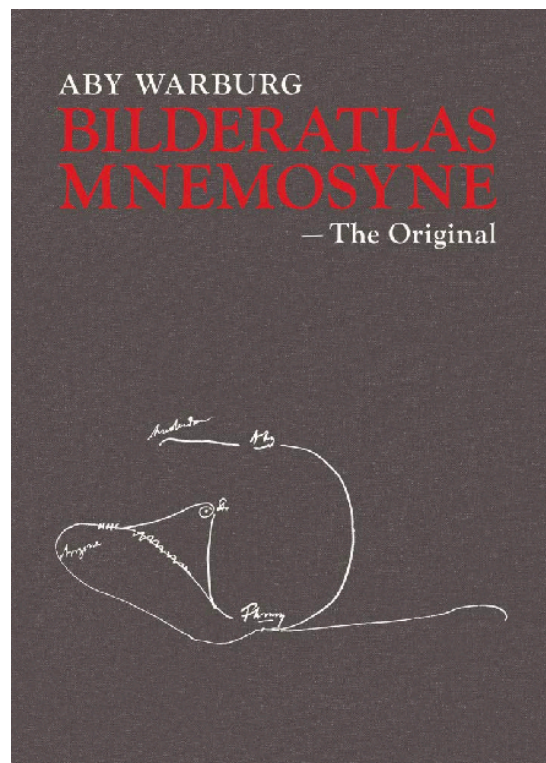


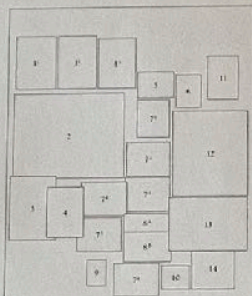
Figure 3: Front cover of *Bilderatlas Mnemosyne* — The Original (2020)



Figure 4: Panel 79 in the black and white reproduction from "Gesammelte Schriften" (left) and the re-assembled color reproduction from 2020 the folio edition (right)

## Panel 79

Mass. Devouring God. Bolsena, Botticelli. Paganism in the Church. Miracle of the Host. Transsubstantiation. Italian criminal before the last rites.



- 1 A/ **Cattedrale di San Pietro | Chair of St. Peter**  
Throne for the coronation of Charles the Bald given throughout to the church since 1000 inside the Basilica. Carved 875. Wood and ivory relief. Vatican City, Basilica di San Pietro in Vaticano  
□ FR — ITB I BR

VERGIL "Schlagwort. Astral-Schemata. Heekala"



- 1 A/ **Cattedrale di San Pietro | Chair of St. Peter**  
Schematic drawing of the Chair. 1875 c. | Vatican City, Basilica di San Pietro in Vaticano  
□ FR — ITB I BR
- 1 **GIAN LORENZO BERNINI**  
**Cattedrale di San Pietro | Chair of St. Peter**  
1656-1666. Gilt bronze sculpture. Vatican City, Basilica di San Pietro in Vaticano  
□ FR — ITB I BR
- 2 **RAPHAEL**  
**Messa di Bolsena | The Mass at Bolsena**  
1512 | Fresco 1500x600cm | Vatican City, Palazzo Apostolico, Stanza di Eliodoro  
□ FR — ITB I BR
- 3 **GIOTTO DI BONDONE**  
**Speil | Hope**  
1296 c. | Fresco 1120x55cm | Padua, Cappella degli Scrovegni  
□ FR — ITB I BR
- 4 **SANDRO BOTTICELLI**  
**The Last Communion of St. Jerome**  
Early 1480 | Tempera and gold on wood 134.3 x 25.4cm | New York, Metropolitan Museum of Art  
□ FR — ITB I BR
- 5 A/ **Sappho/Harakiri | Ritual Suicide**  
From: Arnette Ross, *Maquis de La Marelle, Essai sur l'histoire du Japon* (1603-1665), Paris 1899, p. 247 | Printed photograph  
□ FR — ITB I BR

- 6 A/ **Masfen und Hirtchen etc. | Paganism and Exorcism**  
From: Philipp Franz von Siebold, *Siebolds Acker und Beschreibung vom Japan und James Nelson und Schatzkammer-Jour mit den Südbayris Kurlern, Krieger und den Laska-Basis*, 2<sup>nd</sup> ed., 2 vols., Würzburg and Leipzig 1891, p. 1423 | Illustration  
□ FR — ITB I BR



- 7 A/ **Enthüllung Prozession zu Celebrate the Lateran Treaty**  
Vatican City, Piazza San Pietro and Basilica | 25.7.1929 | Press photograph | Photo agency L.U.C.E.  
□ FR — ITB I BR
- 7 A/ **Pope Pius XI Emerges from Vatican to Celebrate the Lateran Treaty**  
Vatican City, Piazza San Pietro and Basilica | 25.7.1929 | Press photograph  
□ FR — ITB I BR

- 7 A/ **Swiss Guards March During the Eucharistic Procession**  
Vatican City, Piazza San Pietro and Basilica | 25.7.1929 | Press photograph  
□ FR — ITB I BR

- 7 A/ **O. TELLECI**  
**Crowds Celebrate the Lateran Treaty**  
Vatican City, Piazza San Pietro and Basilica | 25.7.1929 | Press photograph  
□ FR — ITB I BR

- 7 A/ **Papal Mass in St. Peter's Basilica**  
Vatican City, Piazza San Pietro and Basilica | 25.7.1929 | Press photograph | Photo agency L.U.C.E.  
□ FR — ITB I BR

- 7 A/ **Parade in St. Peter's Basilica**  
Vatican City, Piazza San Pietro and Basilica | 25.7.1929 | Press photograph | Photo agency L.U.C.E.  
□ FR — ITB I BR

- 8 A/ **CAMILLO MIVIANI**  
**Eleonora Ponzichieri in un uniforme agli arresti suoi prima del 1870 [...]** | The Papal army in full dress during the last years before 1870 [...]  
Title page drawing probably 1897 | Book cover, printed matter | 19x28 cm | Bergamo 1910-1918 (?)  
□ FR — ITB I BR

- 8 B/ **CAMILLO MIVIANI**  
**Ammonition Women**  
From: Ibid. | Illustration  
□ FR — ITB I BR

- 9 **MATTHIAS BRANDIS**  
**Dissection of the Host in Sternberg, Mecklenburg-Vorpommern**  
From: Georg Hertz, Bruno Kirschner, *Jüdisches Lexikon. Ein einziges jüdisches Handbuch des jüdischen Wissens in vier Bänden*, ed. 1, Berlin 1928, p. 1681 f. 1492 | Woodcut  
□ FR — ITB I BR



- 10 A/ **CENTRAL ITALIAN (FLORENCE)**  
**Dissection of the Host**  
From: Clement Daleri, *La rappresentazione d'uno straccolo del corpo di Cristo*, Florence, 1473-1498 c. 1 | Woodcut | 24x30.5cm  
□ FR — ITB I BR

VERGIL "Das P. Kretzler Early Florentine Woodcut, London 1897"



- 11 A/ **Tempo 1929**  
**On the left: Guido Stresemann, German Foreign Minister of the Weimar Republic, signing of the final protocol of the Lateran Treaty. Detail of cover page of the morning edition of Tempo, 2<sup>nd</sup> year, no. 204, 9.7.1929 | Newspaper clipping**  
□ FR — ITB I BR

- 12 A/ **Cover page of the illustrated supplement of the evening edition of the Hamburger Fremdenblatt, no. 208, 29.7.1929, p.9 | Newspaper clipping**  
□ FR — ITB I BR

- 13 A/ **Cover page of the illustrated supplement of the evening edition of the Hamburger Fremdenblatt, no. 209, 30.7.1929, p.9 | Newspaper clipping**  
□ FR — ITB I BR

- 14 A/ **The Express-Twin Catastrophe at Dürren**  
Aiding from receives the last rites (Vaticano). Detail from [Hamburger] Fremdenblatt, 3<sup>rd</sup> year, no. 199, 27.8.1929, p.11 | Newspaper clipping  
□ FR — ITB I BR



Figure 5: Panel 79 caption page. The caption reads: "Mass. Devouring god. Bolsena, Botticelli. Paganism in the Church. Miracle of the Host. Transsubstantiation. Italian criminal before the last rites." In Warburg, *Bilderatlas Mnemosyne* — The Original, 148)





Figure 6: *Death of Orpheus*, (1494). Pen drawing, 289 x 225 mm.  
Kunsthalle, Hamburg. Source: Web Gallery of Art.



Figure 7: Aby Warburg, Gertrud Bing and Franz Alber at the Palace Hotel in Rome, 1929.



Figure 8: *Pope Pius XI Emerges from Vatican to Celebrate the Lateran treaty.* Vatican City, Piazza San Pietro and Basilica, 25.7.1929. (Press photograph.). From *Mnemosyne Bilderatlas — The Original*, p. 148



Figure 9: *Eucharistic Procession to Celebrate the Lateran treaty*. Vatican City, Piazza San Pietro and Basilica, 25.7.1929. Press photograph. Press agency L.U.C.E.



Figure 10: *Swiss Guards March During the Eucharistic Procession.* Vatican City, Piazza San Pietro and Basilica, 25.7.1929. Press photograph.

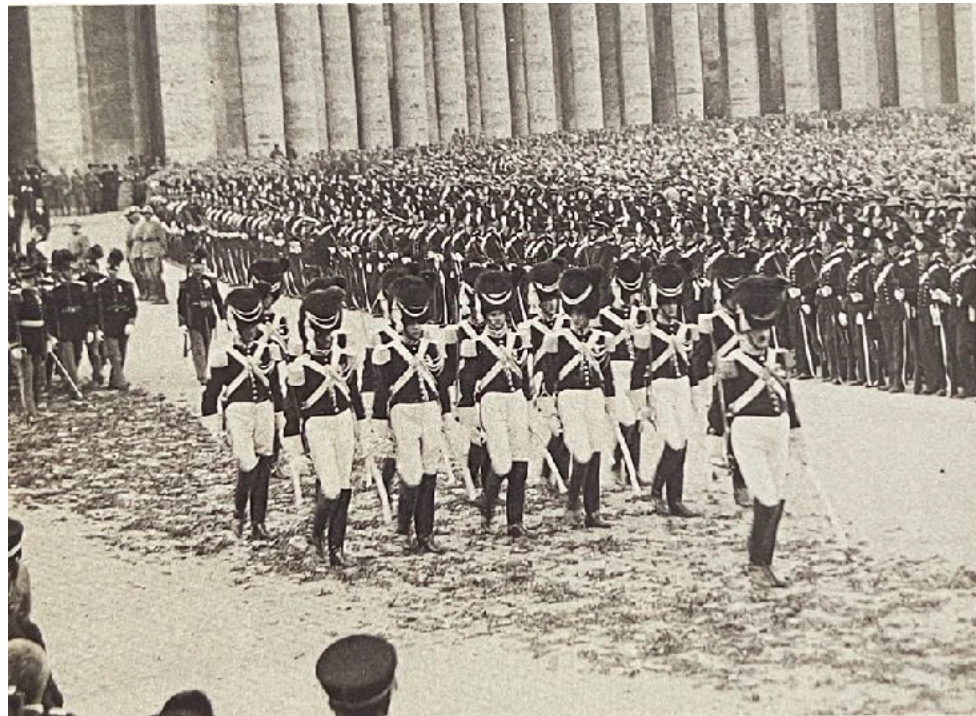


Figure 11: *Parade in St.Peter's Basilica.* Vatican City, Piazza San Pietro and Basilica, 25.7.1929. Press photograph. Press agency L.U.C.E.

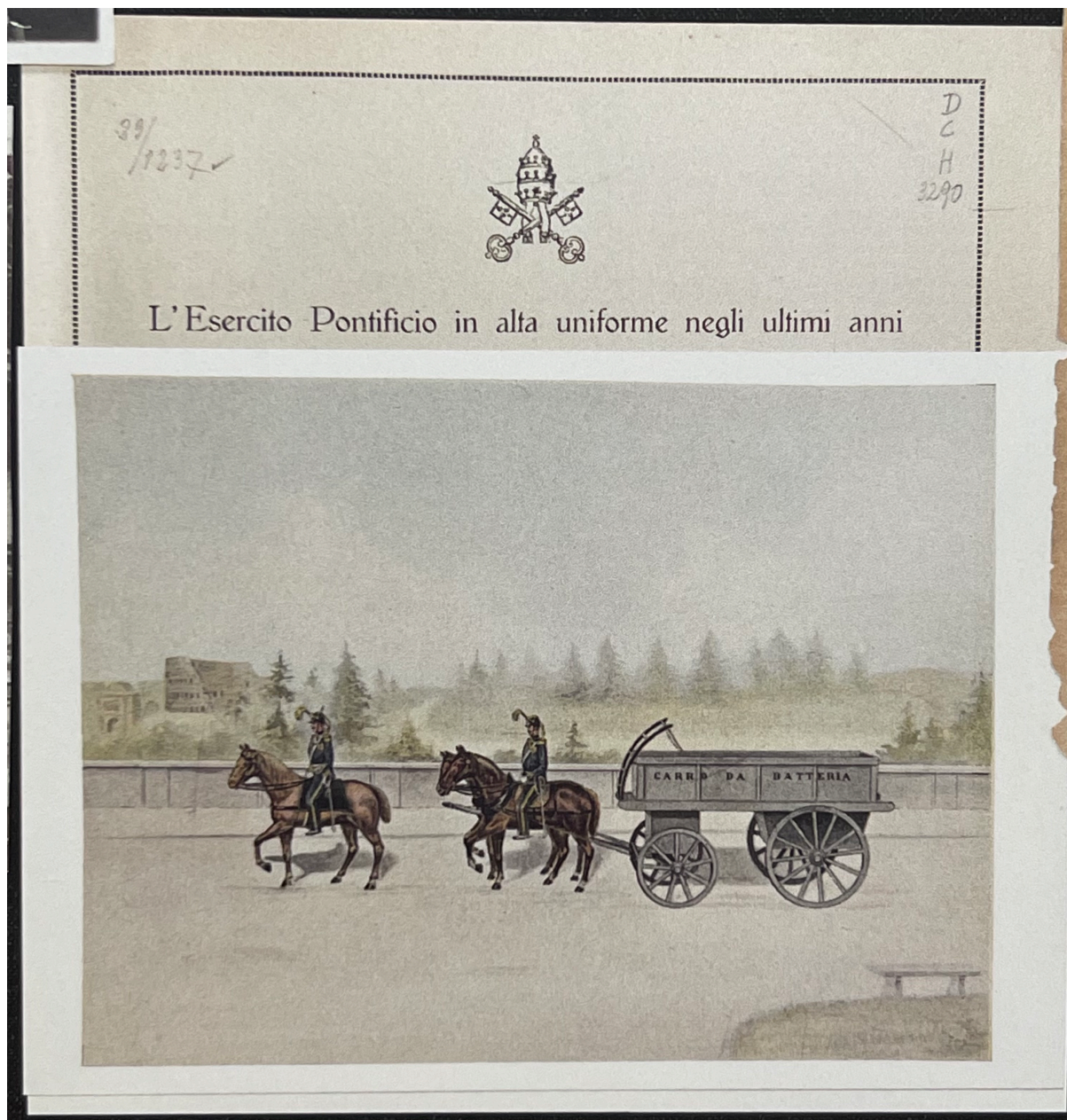


Figure 12: Over: *L'Esercito Pontificio*. Title page from: Camillo Viviani, *L'Esercito Pontificio in alta uniforme negli ultimi anni prima del 1870* (...), Bergamo n.d. (1918) Under: *Ammunition Wagon*.



Figure 13: G.Felice. *Crowds Celebrate the Lateran treaty*.  
Vatican City, Piazza San Pietro and Basilica, 25.7.1929. Press photograph.

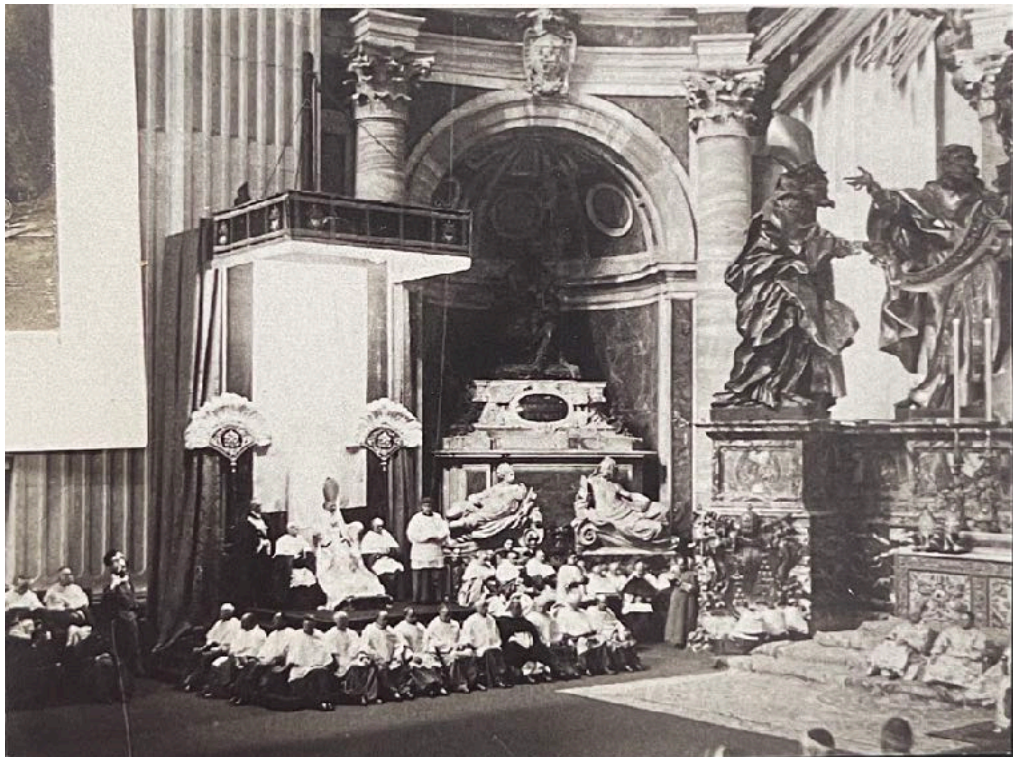


Figure 14: *Papal Mass in St.Peter's Basilica*.  
Vatican City, Piazza San Pietro and Basilica, 25.7.1929. Press photograph. Press agency L.U.C.E.

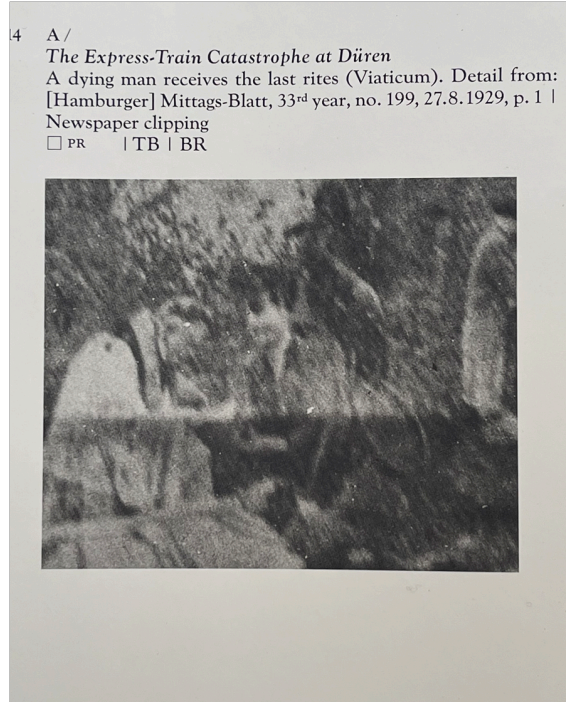


Figure 15: *The Express-Train Catastrophe at Düren.*  
 A dying man receives the last rites (Viaticum). Detail from [Hamburger] Mittags-Blatt, 33rd year, no. 199,  
 27.8.1929, p.1. Newspaper clipping.

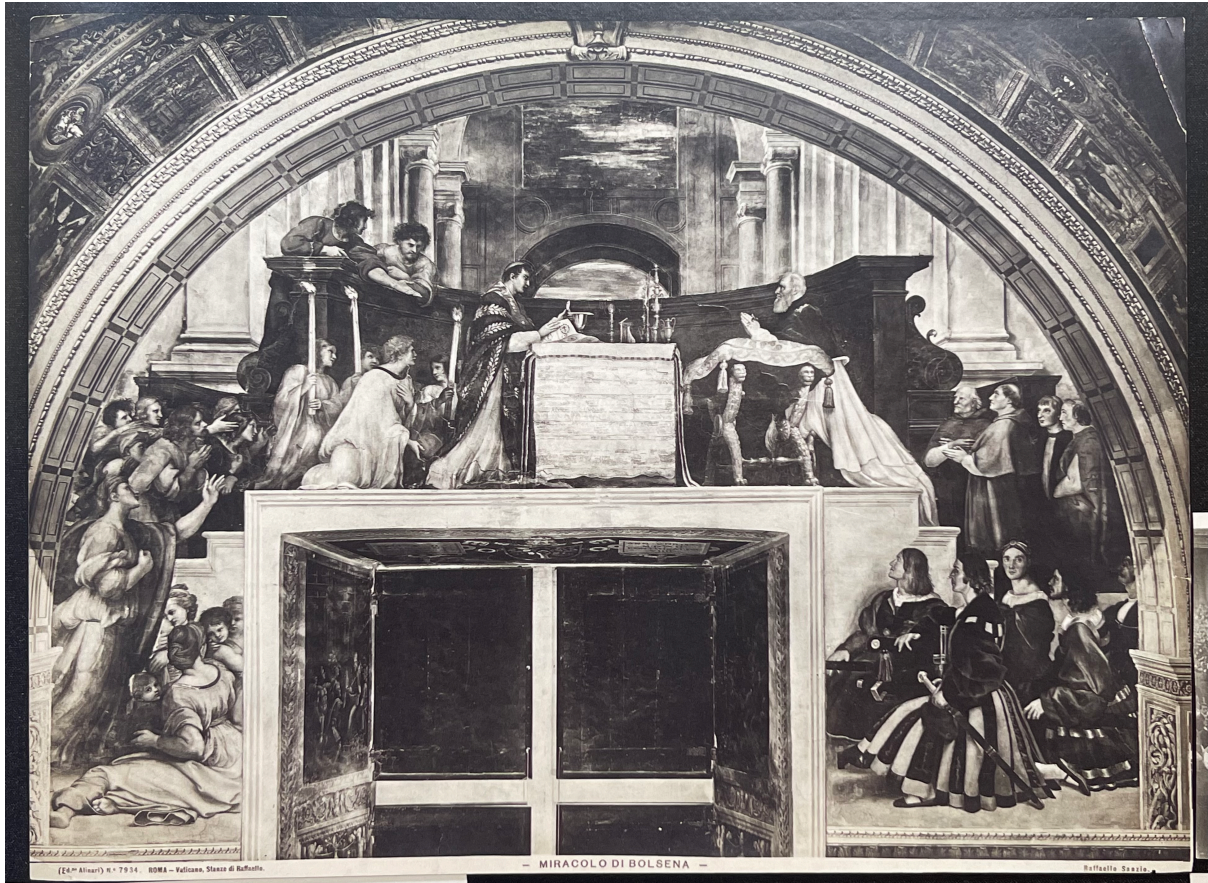


Figure 16: Raphael. *Messa di Bolsena. The Mass at Bolsena*. 1512. Fresco, 500 x 600 cm. Vatican city, Palazzo Apostolico, Stanza di Eliodoro. Photograph.

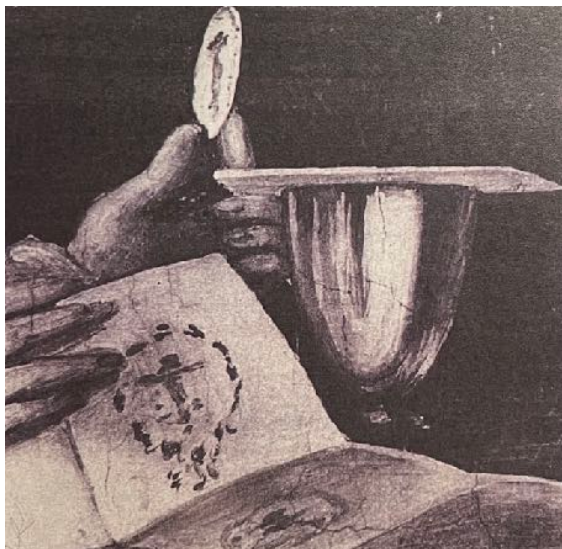


Figure 17: Detail of the Mass at Bolsena showing the Eucharistic Host. Source: Charlotte Schoell-Glass, "Aby Warburg on Symbol and Ritual".

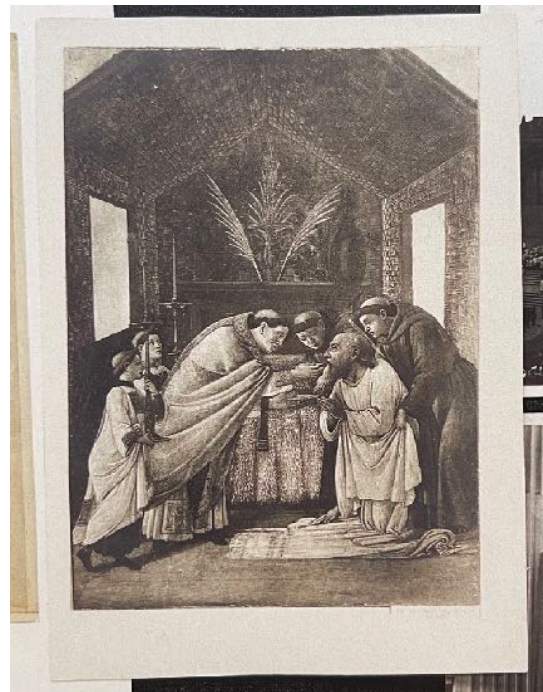


Figure 18: Sandro Botticelli, *The Last Communion of St. Jerome*. Early 1490. Tempera and gold on wood. 34,3 x 25,4 cm, New York, Metropolitan Museum of Art. Photograph.



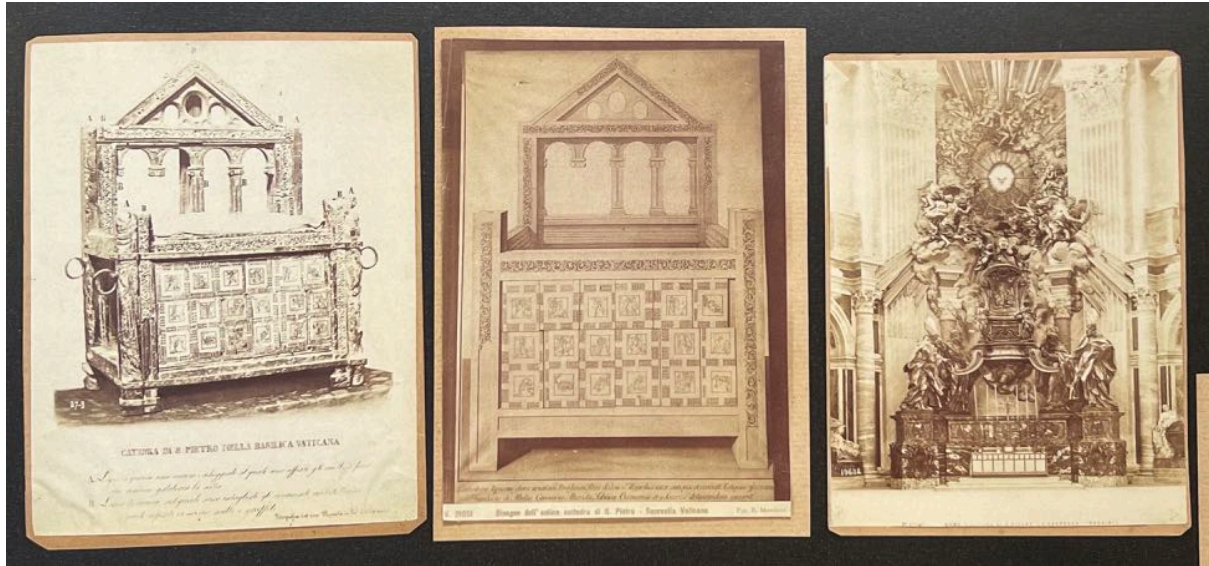


Figure 19: *Cattedra di San Pietro* (Chair of St. Peter) Middle: Schematic drawing of the Chair, c. 875. Vatican City, Basilica di San Pietro in Vaticano. Right: Gian Lorenzo Bernini, *Cattedra di San Pietro*, Gilt bronze sculpture, 1656-66.

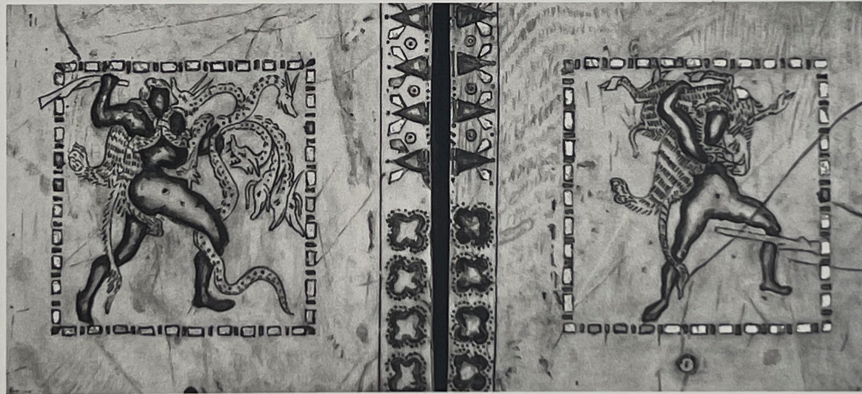
1<sup>1</sup> A/*Cattedra di San Pietro | Chair of St. Peter*

Throne for the coronation of Charles the Bald, given thereafter to the church, since 1666 inside the Bellini-Cattedra | 875 c. | Wood and ebony relief | Vatican City, Basilica di San Pietro in Vaticano

☐ PH | TB 392, 506 | BR

74

VERSO “Schlagwort: Astrol. Sternbilder. Herkules”



75

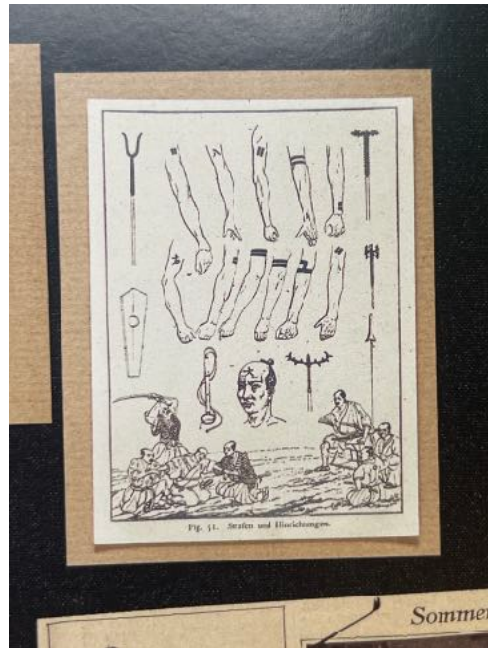
76

1<sup>2</sup> A/

Figure 20: Detail of the caption of *Cathedra Petri* showing two of the ivory tablets on the throne depicting Hercules.



Figure 21: ‘Printed photograph’ Seppuru/Harakiri. Ritual Suicide. From: Antoine Rous, Marquis de La Mazelière, *Essais sur l’histoire du Japon (1603-1868)*, Paris 1899, p. 247. Printed photograph.



6 A /  
*Strafen und Hinrichtungen | Punishments and Executions*  
 From: Philipp Franz von Siebold, *Nippon: Archiv zur Beschreibung von Japan und dessen Neben- und Schutzländern: Jezo mit den Südlichen Kurilen, Krafu, Koorai und den Liukiu-Inseln*, 2<sup>nd</sup> ed., 2 vols., Würzburg and Leipzig 1897, p. 1,420 | Illustration  
 BK |  TB |  BR



7<sup>1</sup> A /  
*Eucharistic Procession to Celebrate the Lateran Treaty*  
 Vatican City, Piazza San Pietro and Basilica | 25.7.1929 |  
 Press photograph | Photo agency L.U.C.E.  
 PH |  TB |  BR

7<sup>2</sup> A /

Figures 22 and 23: *Seppuku/Harakiri. Ritual Suicide*. From Anoine Rous *Strafen und Hinrichtungen. Punishment and Executions*. From: 1868), Paris 1899, p. 247, and Philipp Franz von Siebold, *Nippon: Archiv zur Beschreibung von Japan und dessen Neben- und Schutzländern: Jezo mit den Südlichen Kurilen, Krafu, Koorai und den Liukiu-Inseln*, 2<sup>nd</sup> ed., 2 vols., Würzburg und Leipzig 1897, p. 1,420 and the enlargement of the image on p. 147.

### Sommer-Wettspiele des Hamburger Golf-Clubs in Flottbek

T-Schnee  
Jeden Abend 8 Uhr noch.

\*  
Eines der schönsten Zerstreuungsmittel von 1929 ist das Sommerfest des Hamburger Golf-Clubs, von dem untenstehende Bilder berichten.

\*  
Am Freitag, dem 27. Juli, wurde die Sommerfeier im Golf-Club in Flottbek abgehalten.

\*  
Das Sommerfest des Hamburger Golf-Clubs in Flottbek. Oben links: Ein Golfspieler im Akt. Oben Mitte: Die Mitglieder des Clubs in Uniform. Oben rechts: Die Mitglieder des Clubs in Zivil. Unten links: Die Mitglieder des Clubs auf dem Golfplatz. Unten Mitte: Die Mitglieder des Clubs in Zivil. Unten rechts: Die Mitglieder des Clubs in Uniform.

\*  
Die Flotten-Hafen-Regatta der Hamburger Yacht-Club. Oben links: Die Regatta in Flottbek. Oben Mitte: Die Regatta in Flottbek. Oben rechts: Die Regatta in Flottbek. Unten links: Die Regatta in Flottbek. Unten Mitte: Die Regatta in Flottbek. Unten rechts: Die Regatta in Flottbek.

\*  
Kommers des Marine-Fortschritts im Casino der Hamburger Yacht-Club. Oben links: Der Kommers. Oben Mitte: Der Kommers. Oben rechts: Der Kommers. Unten links: Der Kommers. Unten Mitte: Der Kommers. Unten rechts: Der Kommers.

\*  
Zum ersten Male seit 1820 wurde das Pferd des 18. Jahrhunderts im Großen und Kleinen ausgestellt. Oben links: Das Pferd. Oben Mitte: Das Pferd. Oben rechts: Das Pferd. Unten links: Das Pferd. Unten Mitte: Das Pferd. Unten rechts: Das Pferd.

\*  
1929. Hans-John-Sportmann. Oben links: Hans-John-Sportmann. Oben Mitte: Hans-John-Sportmann. Oben rechts: Hans-John-Sportmann. Unten links: Hans-John-Sportmann. Unten Mitte: Hans-John-Sportmann. Unten rechts: Hans-John-Sportmann.

\*  
Rückblick auf das vergangene Jahr. Oben links: Rückblick. Oben Mitte: Rückblick. Oben rechts: Rückblick. Unten links: Rückblick. Unten Mitte: Rückblick. Unten rechts: Rückblick.

Figure 24: Cover page of the illustrated supplement of the evening edition of the Hamburger Fremdenblatt, no. 208, 29.7.1929, p. 9.



Figure 25: Giotto Di Bondone. Spes (Hope).  
1306. Fresco. 120 x 55 cm. Padua, Cappella degli Scrovegni.

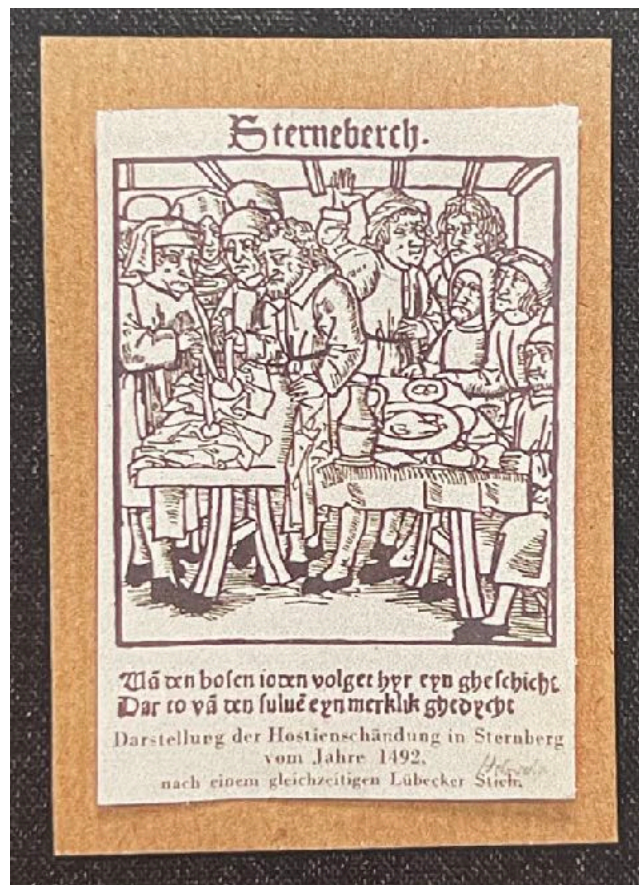


Figure 26: Matthäus Brandis. Desecration of the Host in Sternberg, Mecklenburg-Vorpommern. From: Georg Herlitz, Bruno Kirschner, Jüdisches Lexikon. Ein enzyklopädisches Handbuch des jüdischen Wissens in vier Bänden, vol. 2, Berlin 1928, p. 1681. 1492. Woodcut.

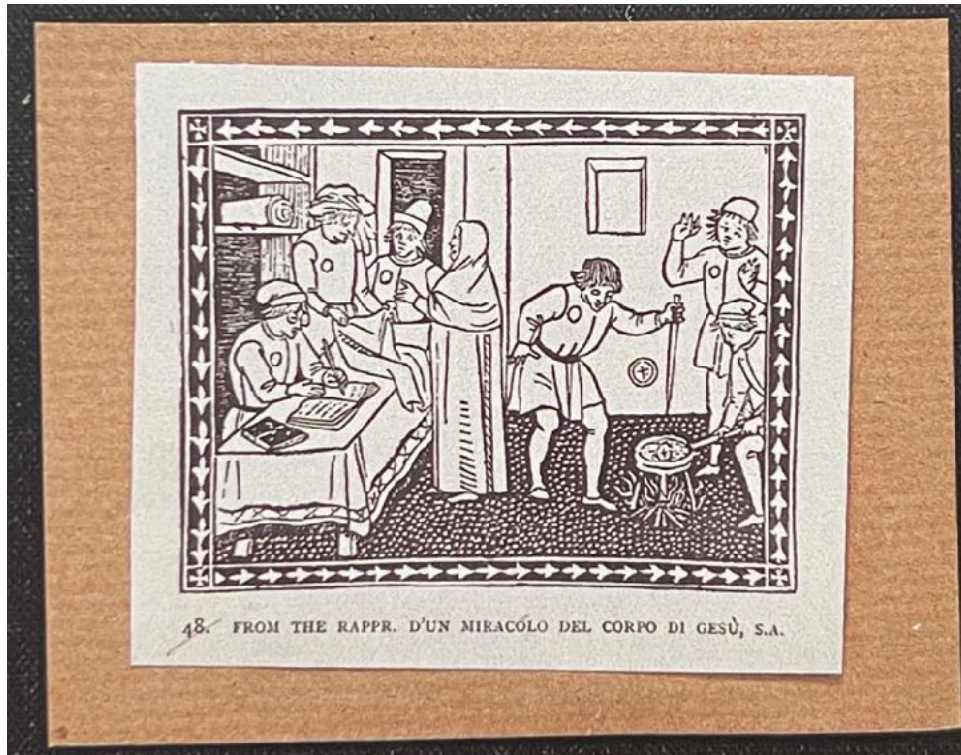


Figure 27: An unknown central Italian (Florence). Desecration of the Host. From Giovanni Baleni, *La rappresentazione d'uno miracole del corps di Christo*, Florence, 1473-1498 c. Woodcut. 24 x 30,5 cm. Verso text: "See P. Kristeller, *Early Florentine Woodcuts*, London 1897".



Figure 28: Cover page of the illustrated supplement of the evening edition of the *Hamburger Fremdenblatt*, no. 209, 30.7.1929, p. 9.



Figure 29: Tempo 1929, depicting (from the left) Gustav Stresemann, German Foreign Minister of the Weimar Republic, signing of the final protocol of the Locarno treaty. Detail of cover page of the morning edition of Tempo, 2nd year, no. 204, 9.3. 1929.