

On the political use of images. Some reflections on the last panels of Aby Warburg's Mnemosyne Atlas

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Abstract

This paper investigates Aby Warburg's (1866-1929) understanding of political imagery. Specifically, it is focused on the last two plates of the Mnemosyne Atlas, Warburg's unfinished last project. This analysis is used in order to understand Warburg's implicit anthropological take on imagery. I will argue that imagery for Warburg taps into our embodied condition and is a result of the perennial movement between said embodiment and our rational faculties. I will try to show how this transcendental understanding of our condition is the compass that Warburg utilizes in his historical investigations, thus situating them on two levels, one properly historical and one more anthropological-philosophical. In this specific case this latter level of investigation will be understood through the analysis of the notion of Sacrifice and its relations to the concept of Symbol, as the oscillations between the two characterizes the philosophy of history that informs the otherwise obscure associations that permeate Warburg's plates.

The paper will first offer a comparison with other interpretations of Warburg's political thought, and then move, following plates 78 and 79 of the Atlas, to unearth the various level of analysis that Warburg embedded in the cryptic collage. In order to offer a systematic take on these hints and unrefined notes, the works will be confronted with more systematic works. More specifically, Cassirer's various works on Myth and Jacques Maritain's 1935 conference on Signs and Symbols will have a privileged position as theoretical tools in this investigation.

This paper will be in conclusion an attempt to read Warburg as part of that "genealogy of Western Anthropology" that Giorgio Agamben sketched in his famous article on Warburg's "Nameless Science".

Keywords: Aby Warburg, Mnemosyne Atlas, Myth, Political imagery, Fascist imagery, Sacrifice, Symbol, Ernst Cassirer, Jacques Maritain, Friedrich Vischer

State of affairs and methodology

Aby Warburg's relevance in the development of modern reflection on images is undeniable. Horst Bredekamp's analyses of the development of contemporary *Bildwissenschaft* clearly shows how Warburg's wider approach to art history (as a *science of images*) played a vital role in its inception and later development. Especially in regard to political imagery Bredekamp is perfectly clear: Warburg's *Pagan-antique Prophecy in Words and Images in the Age of Luther* "became the founding text not only for political iconography but also for the history of visual media"¹. The same Warburg, however, dealt with the political imagery of his time, mostly in works unfinished and unpublished at

his time. Those reflections have been examined in works by: Charlotte Schoell-Glass², Jost Philipp Klenner³, Georges Didi-Huberman⁴ and Mark Russell⁵, for example.

In this paper I will focus mainly on the element that, either thematically or factually, connects all these works, namely the last plates of the Mnemosyne atlas, as the ones in which Warburg investigates political imagery more thoroughly. I will do so from the perspective of Warburg's implied philosophical anthropology

² Schoell-Glass, Charlotte. "Serious issues": *The Last Plates of Warburg's Picture Atlas Mnemosyne*, and Schoell-Glass, Charlotte. *Aby Warburg and Anti-semitism: Political Perspectives on Images and Culture*.

³ Klenner, Jost Phillip, *Mussolini e il leone. Aby Warburg ideatore dell'"iconologia politica"* [Mussolini and the Lion. Aby Warburg as the creator of "political iconology"].

⁴ Among others: Didi-Huberman, Georges. *Survivance Des Lucioles* [Survival of the Fireflies].

⁵ Russell, Mark A. *Between Tradition and Modernity: Aby Warburg and the Public Purposes of Art in Hamburg, 1896-1918*.

¹ Bredekamp, Horst. *A Neglected Tradition? Art History as Bildwissenschaft*, p. 423

implied by his references to thinkers such as Nietzsche, Kant and Thomas Carlyle. This perspective complements those that can be called “neuroaesthetic” (such as Freedberg’s⁶), that emphasize the “scientific” side of Warburg’s investigation (exemplified by notions such as *mneme* and *engram*) offering a contemporary understanding of Warburg’s concept of *pathos* and *empathy*. In a sense I will be following Spyros Papapetros’ indications⁷ regarding Warburg’s constitutively polar approach to imagery (and similarly suggested as an approach to Warburg’s scholarship as whole⁸).

Such a polar approach is the one that allows the understanding of images beyond a progressive chronology, unearthing how, even in a modern, post-mythical world, they maintain a connection with the mythico-magical worldview, and the pathos-laden experience that structures it, whilst maintaining focus on enlightenment as a process that is both theoretical and political, rather than purely historical, as Kant’s intuitions on the matter indicate.

In accordance with Warburg’s analysis in Mnemosyne, fascist imagery will be understood both as a catalyst and instrument of the fascist world-orientation. This process will bring to light the dialectic between mythical “closeness” and rational “distancing” that underlies these images. The theoretical foundation of this analysis stems from Cassirer’s elaboration of myth, for which Warburg expressed admiration and appreciation, since the *The form of Concept in mythical thinking*⁹, and Jacques Maritain’s elaborations on the concepts of signs from the 1935 conference *Sign and Symbol* held at the Warburg Institute and published in 1937¹⁰. Emphasis will be placed on the a-historical nature of mythical thinking as a form of experience and world orientation, in which mythical symbolism and ritualism serve, as a form of investigation and understanding of the world at once.

Given these premises, this work will be an attempt to place Warburg in a genealogy of “western anthropology” that Agamben only sketched: “His [Warburg’s] works allow his name to be inscribed alongside those of Mauss, Sapir,

Spitzer, Kerenyi, Usener, Dumezil, Benveniste, and many- but not very many -others”¹¹.

Examining Warburg’s implied theoretical understanding of political imagery, I will try to propose such understanding as also viable for contemporary imagery, in accordance with said western anthropology. This will be achieved through an examination of the last plates of the Mnemosyne Atlas, which investigate the later imagery available to Warburg, thus exhibiting the a-historical reflection behind Warburg’s surprising connections, revealing his implicit anthropology.

I will first confront the plates 78 and 79 of the atlas, then compare Warburg’s thought with that of: Vischer, Cassirer and Maritain over the notion of symbol. The result will be a sketch of a Warburgian theory of political imagery derived from said plates in comparison with anthropological thought. However, prior to such an endeavour, a brief sketch of the political interpretations of Warburg’s thought will be given, situating this paper in relation to other interpretations of the same issue.

0. Political interpretations of Warburg

As stated, Warburg’s essay on Luther is widely considered the foundation of visual studies in regard to political imagery. Similarly, Warburg’s interest in imagery outside the established remit of art history (at the time), such as: astrological sources, stamps and newspapers’ clippings, advertising logos, and propaganda set a standard for visual studies that still proves valid and object of discussion nowadays.

We can trace a different number of interpretations of Warburg’s thoughts on political imagery. These depend on the focus given by the interpreter toward Warburg’s biography, actual political projects, heritage, and spurious materials, organizing them under varying hermeneutical principles. Similarly, the unique status of Warburg’s then Library (now the Warburg institute) play a role in determining Warburg’s involvement with the realm of the political. Several questions arise: is the library just a collection of sources? It is a political project? It is part of a radically different theoretical approach to imagery than the norm?

The text that established the identification of Warburg’s life with his thought is Gombrich’s

⁶ Cfr. for example Freedberg, David. *Empathy, motion and Emotion*,

⁷ Papapetros, Spyros *The Eternal seesaw: Oscillations in Warburg’s revival*

⁸ . “In order to approach Warburg, one should be able to switch positions continuously on the seesaw by inhabiting empathetically two different mentalities.”, *ibid.*, p.173

⁹ Cassirer, Ernst, *The form of Concept in Mythical thinking*

¹⁰ Maritain, Jacques, *Sign and Symbol*

¹¹ Agamben, Giorgio *Aby Warburg and the Nameless science*

biography. Following the materials which point toward Warburg's self-identification with the Florentine mercantile elite, and Renaissance Florence with late-nineteenth century Hamburg¹², the idea of a Warburg without fractures (in his own sickness¹³) became in a sense the standard approach to the thinker, not without its interpretative merit. In a sense, Warburg himself self-identified with a "seismograph" allowing for his life to be interpreted as the visible expression of the object of his studies. The echo of Gombrich's reading of Warburg can be traced in a number of works. Didi-Huberman¹⁴, maintained the connection between life and thought, but his Dionysian approach was in a sense the opposite of Gombrich's. Mark Russell¹⁵ and Charlotte Schoell-Glass¹⁶ instead focused on specific issues in Warburg life and thought Schoell-Glass in particular reads Warburg's work as an attempt to come to terms with anti-Semitism and his own Jewish heritage¹⁷. For our analysis, this interpretation has the value of highlighting how (under the specific prism of the Jewish question in this case) Warburg's work on imagery could bring to light the hidden forces at play in the society of their origin, although a more nuanced interpretation seems more likely.

Freedberg's *Pathos at Oraibi*¹⁸ possesses a somewhat similar approach examining Warburg's work under the lens of a psychological (yet self-aware) *rejection* of his Hebrew heritage, in reaction to the prejudice Warburg encountered in his youth¹⁹. Freedberg's interpretation, which may be considered too bold, has the merit of exposing the limits of Warburg's reading of the Hopi culture, which can

be described as Eurocentric, exposing the way in which, following a critical analysis of the interpreter's idiosyncrasies²⁰, the political side of imagery can be properly understood, using Warburg's thought.

Russell's approach is more balanced, focusing on Warburg's actual involvement with the political administration of Hamburg, comparing this with Warburg's thought on art and on culture. In contrast to the aforementioned more speculative approaches, this work has the merit of comparing Warburg's thought not with a more or less hypothetical "inner life" but with the documented course of his subject's actions. Although not exhaustive of the theoretical dimension of Warburg's works, such an approach offers a more solid foothold attempting to interpret said "inner life". For example, Warburg's hypothetic solution the unrest of Hamburg at the beginning of the twentieth century²¹, or his own use of images as form of "Community building"²². All these offer the best depiction possible of what Warburg practically envisioned in his, at times, cryptic judgements on imagery. The resultant image from Russell's book, from a philosophical perspective, is that of a scholar whose practical interests were at least on par with the theoretical, one that attempted to *reconcile* pathos and reason, at times even with nationalistic undertones. Expressing these elements in general terms, we can say that Warburg tried to theoretically capture (and practically solve) the tension between a postulate realm of "pure reason" and the given, embodied, condition of human beings. The result is a form of "nationalistic cosmopolitanism" in which the bodily enthusiasm, the localism, is oriented toward a universal rationalism, whose oscillations are captured by the images.

This analysis leads us to the author who philosophically speaking, is arguably most significant in regard to the political dimension of imagery in Warburg's scholarship; Didi-Huberman.

¹² Cfr Gombrich, Ernst *Aby Warburg. An intellectual biography*, pp. 151-159

¹³ Although Gombrich decided not to investigate Warburg's mental health and its implications on his scholarship. He has been vocally criticized on this by Wind (Wind, Edgar, *Appendix: on a recent Biography of Aby Warburg*) and Didi-Huberman (Didi-Huberman, Georges. *L'image Survivante: Histoire De L'art Et Temps Des Fantômes Selon Aby Warburg*. [forthcoming English translation *The Surviving Image: Phantoms of Time and Time of Phantoms: Aby Warburg's History of Art*])

¹⁴ Didi-Huberman, Georges. *L'image Survivante*

¹⁵ Russell, Mark, *Between tradition and modernity*

¹⁶ Schoell-Glass, *Aby Warburg and Anti-semitism*,

¹⁷ Ibid, p. 164: "I can now see Warburg's research on European culture with new eyes, having (re-)constructed his art history and cultural science as a strategy of defence against what he once called the "clipped tones of the noble pale-face"

¹⁸ Freedberg, David *Pathos a Oraibi. Ciò che Warburg non vide [Pathos at Oraibi. What Warburg did not see]*.

¹⁹ Ibid. p. 606: "Rejection of his own Judaism – note the childish glee in eating sausages – went hand in hand with the fantasy of his engagement with the culture of the Red Indians. He saw his own heritage as depressing, shameful, even cruel; and he looked to the Indians as a means of withdrawing from it, of going downstairs. "

²⁰ Ibid, p 597 "Sometimes it seems that as far as he got was to perch a Kachina mask, insultingly, on top of his head, in one of the most embarrassing of all the photographs he brought back with him. If he had pulled the mask over his head, as he should have done, and as was required by the dance, he would have seen through different eyes"

²¹ Mark Russell, *Between Tradition and modernity*, p. 97: "And so Warburg called for a suffrage based on profession in which half the citizens' assembly would be elected on the basis of general suffrage, the other on the basis of professional education"

²² Cfr. Ibid. pp. 45-47: the 1905 Exhibition on Dürer was part of a project aimed at creating "an educated, cultured, moral and patriotic public". And, as Warburg wrote, he could tolerate the masses only in "a well-ordered state"

His *L'image survivante* investigates Warburg's scholarship more thoroughly, detailing notions such as symptom and survival. However, it is his *Survivance Des Lucioles* that offers his most significant contribution to the subject of political imagery through the prism of Warburg's scholarship.

Didi-Huberman progresses from an article by Pier Paolo Pasolini, describing a "politics of survival", through his interpretation of Warburg's take on imagery, in response to Agamben's notions of community and history. Didi-Huberman describes how images, in their encounter with the "historian", in Walter Benjamin's sense, offer "redemption", a survival of the oppressed, acting as counter-subjects to the history of the ruling class. Didi-Huberman makes Benjamin's idea of history as a single progressive movement of catastrophe his own (identifying with Warburg's as well), in which the task is to "organize pessimism". In this, for Didi-Huberman, Warburg's notion of *Nachleben* (Survival) is a radical political notion that allows a reading of history "against the grain", characterizing images as *dialectical*, in order to catch a glimpse of the history of the "defeated". An example of such encounter would be that described by Didi-Huberman in *Images in spite of all*²³.

Didi-huberman's text is as dense as it is problematic. For example, his notion of survival is equated to Freud's notion of symptom and linked unequivocally to a Dionysian vitality. The image cannot avoid carrying a symptom, as the life underneath strives to make itself visible²⁴. This leads to a form of "universalization" of Warburg that ignores the latter's focus on place as a means of positive affirmation rather than a mere counteraction to dominance. Warburg's focus on Greece as a place of origin, as a paragon of balance, and not solely of Dionysism, cannot be ignored. As Spyros Papapetros writes reviewing Didi-Huberman's *L'image survivante*:

Warburg did not unconditionally embrace the nymphs, the Maenads and the daemons of the pagan survivals he contemplated throughout his life. He always fought to keep a distance from them and sometimes

²³ Didi-Huberman, Georges. *Images in Spite of All: Four Photographs from Auschwitz*.

²⁴ Didi-Huberman, Georges, *Survivance des lucioles*, p. 54 "Comment peut-on déclarer la mort des survivances?" [how can we declare the death of survivals?]

he would use his work to exorcise or anathematize them²⁵

In the lexicon of Didi-Huberman's text, the "populaces" and "traditions" that are to be "rediscovered", as fireflies being extinguished by fascist oppression, don't hold an *intrinsic* political value for Warburg. If, philologically, the interest is tracing the oscillations between traditions as expressions of different forces, politically there are traditions that for Warburg *should* be lost, whereas Pasolini regrets *forcing* himself to lose them ("io, purtroppo, questa gente italiana, l'avevo amata..." ["sadly, I have loved these Italian people..."]) and Didi-Huberman grants them a spectral eternity of resistance. Arguably if Warburg was politically naive in his attempt to reconcile his idea of enlightenment and regressive values, Didi-Huberman's reading forces an excess of romantic idealism upon him. We can conclude then that Didi-huberman captured how images have a political significance in Warburg, yet ignored which symptoms Warburg actually *sought*. Since it is known that Warburg didn't visit the Pueblo Indians as an historian caring for a tradition in decline, rather as a way to correct the decadence of his *own* western tradition.

1. Mnemosyne

It has been somewhat romantically stated that the most significant project of Aby Warburg was his last, the Mnemosyne Atlas. As with most of Warburg's projects, this one was unfinished, unpublished and unclear regarding the details of its scope and principles.

The completed Atlas would have consisted of a number of image plates and a text of two volumes, summarizing in a single work Warburg's lifetime of research. The most preeminent element, the plates, were conceived as collages of images on a number of themes and *topoi* such as specific mythological figures (Perseus, Medea, etc.), general types (such as the Nymph), and themes (such as sacrifice, promise, etc.). Of the planned plates (which vary from 79 to ca. 200) only 63 could be reconstructed from a series of black and white 18cm x 24cm photographs held in the Archives of the Warburg Institute, a total of 971 images organized under principles now partially lost.

²⁵ Papapetros, Spyros, *The eternal Seesaw*, p. 171

At completion, the Atlas would have been extremely complex material. For contemporary viewers its unfinished nature increases this complexity. The most pressing, and perhaps most obvious question the Atlas begs is: what is it? What is it actually depicting? The unfinished introduction that remains from Warburg's materials, states the following:

Through its images the *Mnemosyne Atlas* intends to illustrate this process, which one could define as the attempt to absorb pre-coined expressive values by means of the representation of life in motion.

On the basis of its images it [the *Mnemosyne*] is intended 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.²⁶

A similar definition seems initially understandable: the Atlas traces the influence of classical antiquity on Renaissance visual culture through the representation of moving bodies. The complexities of Warburg's definitions may be due to his own tastes and preferences or to the crudity of a work in progress. Nonetheless, as a purely historical undertaking, one may wonder: what is the purpose of the "alphabetic plates" that open the Atlas dealing with the general topic of "orientation"?

In this case, we have a first question whether the uniqueness of the Atlas that cannot be ruled out as an "idiosyncrasy" of its author, instead deserving investigation as a conscious theoretical choice. Claude Imbert writes:

the alphabetical plates made visible, like a set of axioms or vector-decompositions, the axes according to which the atlas was constructed.²⁷

In fact, posing the question of the underlying methodology to the Atlas that can be abstracted and applied beyond its self-imposed scope. Significantly, if the focus of the Atlas was solely Renaissance imagery, why do its last two plates almost exclusively feature contemporary pictures and objects such as newspapers' clippings and even images from Japanese culture? These facts indicate *another* reason why

the Atlas remains unfinished: apart from the variations between the author's particular ideas, exemplified by the numerous changes in the panels' distribution, the subject-matter of the Atlas is *intrinsically* endless. In the same introduction, the Atlas is defined as an investigation of the "iconology of the interval" a definition that points toward an investigation carried out under transcendental terms and thus necessarily a-historical, referring to the condition of our use of imagery more than imagery *per se*. In this case, Mnemosyne would be an unending project because of its internal subject matter. Consequently, the historical focus indicated in the Introduction becomes problematic. The Atlas wouldn't be an investigation over the classical pre-coined forms and their resurgence in early modernity, rather, it would be research into our experience of images overall. Yet these epochs (Antiquity and Renaissance) play a foundational role in the Atlas' intrinsic structure. In the economy of the "visual argument" made by the Atlas they are vital gateways toward a transcendental consideration of images, as the historical investigation of the connection between classical heritage and its early modern iterations is pivotal in the investigation of imagery posterior to Mnemosyne's self-imposed frame, actually transcending the limits of its historiography. In order to show this, I will examine the plates that appear *prima facie* the more distant from these ages, namely plate 78 and 79. From this, I will then detail how its results prove significant for our scope: the exposition of Warburg's analysis of the political dimension of imagery and its assessment in the "genealogy of Western Anthropology".

2. Plate 78

The photographic nature 78th plate (fig. 1) of the Atlas is unique among the others, formed entirely of images related to the signing of the Lateran Treaty between Mussolini and Pope Pius XI of February 1929. Between the various images we have a number of photographs of meetings between Mussolini's fascist government and members of Catholic Church hierarchy, photographs of the signing of the treaty, pictures of the treaty itself, the first telegraphs from the Pope to the then Italian King Vittorio Emanuele III and a picture of a cardinal visiting a FIAT automotive factory. From Gertrud Bing's notes we know that a provisional title for the plate

²⁶ Warburg, Aby, *The absorption of expressive values of the past*, pp. 277-278

²⁷ Imbert, Claude. *Aby Warburg between Kant and Boas* pp 2-3

was: “Church and State. Spiritual power renouncing to secular power”²⁸, an apt summation of the treaty itself. The treaty “solved” the so-called “Roman Question” resolving the tension between the Italian state and the papacy post the violent annexation of church territories by the nascent Italian state in the nineteenth century. The treaty gave the pope political power over the Vatican City as an independent state, acknowledging financial compensation from the Italian government and settling issues over tax regulation of the church’s possessions. Most importantly, the treaty secured the Church’s non-intervention in Italian political matters in exchange for its acknowledged position as state religion. What does a documentary collage of such a historical event have to do with an art historical project? Warburg’s interest in Fascism, apart from its obvious historical and personal dimension, was recollected by a number of witnesses. Arnaldo Momigliano reports an account of the celebrations of the treaty given by Gertrud Bing:

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 at the re-paganization of Rome, and you complain that I remained to watch it’²⁹

The conquest of Rome by paganism echoes a famous saying in that concludes Warburg’s 1920 study: *Pagan-antique Prophecy in Words and Images in the Age of Luther*:

²⁸ Kirche u. Staat. Geistliche Macht unter Verzicht auf weltliche.

²⁹ Momigliano, Arnaldo, *On Pagans, Jews and Christians*, p. 92.

Athens has constantly to be won back again from Alexandria³⁰

This short sentence refers to the migration of classical figures that Warburg traced in his studies; the examination of the frescoes in the Schifanoja palace in Ferrara is a case in point. These frescoes present the remains of 12 “plates” divided in three horizontal sections, or tiers. Of these tiers, the upper presents a series of allegories of Olympian deities in the form of triumphs, whereas the lower presents the depiction of historical events of the Ferrara court remaining under the domain of such concepts. Central (and not only for geometrical reasons) in Warburg examinations was the middle tier, that presented itself with a number mysterious figures, three for each preserved “plate”. Without following Warburg’s examination in all its complexity, we can surmise that he had found the key to a group of frescoes that until that time had remained mysterious. This ‘key’ emerged from the evolution and wanderings of classical imagery in Eurasian culture. In his conference, Warburg focused on a “middle tier” figure, that revealed himself as the classical hero Perseus albeit completely transfigured from classical depictions. Still, more than the transfiguration of the classical motif, what is really significant for Warburg is the “travel” that such figure underwent, and how *this* influenced its evolution. In Ferrara, Perseus arrived as a *Decan* (it. *Decano*), an astrological daemon that ruled over a third of each month, under the dominance of one of the twelve major astrological signs. Warburg summarized Perseus’ travels as follows:

The entire astral system of the middle register can now be analyzed with certainty. The firmament as described by the Greeks was the base stratum on which the Egyptian cult system of decans was established; this, in turn, was overlaid by a layer of Indian mythological adaptation before finding its way, probably by way of Persia, into Arab culture. Clouded still further by translation into Hebrew and thence into French, the Grecian firmament found its way into Pietro d’ Abano’s Latin version of Abu Ma’sar and, ultimately, into the monumental cosmology of the Italian early Renaissance, in the form

³⁰ Warburg, Aby, *Pagan-antique prophecy in Words and Images in the age of Luther*, p 650

of those thirty-six mysterious figures in the middle register of the frescoes in Ferrara.³¹

Above we rediscover the Alexandria from which we departed. Alexandria, in Warburg's dense lexicon, represents a mythological perversion of the rational structures the Greeks constructed. Warburg notes a few pages earlier:

The map of the fixed stars devised by Aratus (around 300 B.C.) remains the primary aid to astronomy [in the ancient world]. In it, a rigorous Greek science has intellectualized the animate creations of the religious imagination and reduced them to functioning mathematical points. However, not even this teeming throng of human figures, animals, and fabulous monsters could supply enough hieroglyphs of fate for the daily predictive needs of Hellenistic astrology; and there arose a retrogressive tendency to produce new, polytheistic creations.³²

This detour clarifies the complex matter of the connection between fascism and paganism. One of the main elements of fascist official rhetoric and aesthetics was its constant reference to a certain classicism, one of detachment and grandeur, mediated by the concept of *Romanità* [lit. *Romeness*], a stark contrast to the frenzy and vitality that Warburg witnessed in Rome. In Warburg's terms, this could be explained by the role played by Christianity in the nature of Fascism. As Warburg wrote more than once, Christianity was a force that historically *counterbalanced* pagan pathos pushing toward said dominance of frenzy to a "less savage" stance. The Atlas introduction is clear:

Even the Church had managed to lend the self-glorification of the Trajan relief Christian sentiment, by means of a legend that was still alive in Dante. The famous story of the pietà of the Emperor towards a widow who was pleading for justice is probably the subtlest attempt at transforming imperial pathos into Christian piety, through the energetic inversion of its meaning; the Emperor, bursting out of the inner relief, becomes an advocate of justice, and bids his followers halt, because the

widow's child has fallen under the hoofs of a Roman rider.³³

The "Piety of Trajan", is a brilliant example of what Warburg called "energetic inversions" in figurative art: with slight changes, the meaning of certain figures becomes polarised. In this case a pagan, Dionysian figure, is transfigured into an exemplar of Christian piety. The emperor stops and administers justice for a mother that has lost her son. Similarly, Mussolini presented himself (and was so defined by the pope) as the "man sent by the Divine Providence". Presenting himself as a Roman Dux, the *Duce* (leader) presented himself as the enlightened roman emperor.

The reactivation of Paganism achieved by fascism was not so much the *factuality* of its imagery as much as what said imagery managed to reactivate in its viewers. For Warburg, this is not merely a psychological observation as much as it is an insight into the intrinsic characteristic of images *qua* images. The classical heritage which fascism only more explicitly recalls, is a perennial term of comparison for western culture because of its privileged relation with the anthropological Apollonian-Dionysian polarity that characterizes mankind for Warburg³⁴. In a more contemporary lexicon, antiquity appeals to us because it somehow acts as a term of comparison in the struggle between the emotional and the rational (or between *pathos* and *ethos*³⁵). The anthropological valence of this opposition, and the pivotal role of imagery, especially antique, was clearly stated by Warburg in the same paragraph in which he concluded the eternal struggle between Athens and Alexandria:

and so, as we have seen, the spirit world of antiquity was brought back to life by a kind of polar functioning of the empathetic pictorial memory. This was the age of Faust [The Age of Luther], in which the modern scientist – caught between magic practice and cosmic mathematics – was trying to insert the *conceptual space* of rationality between himself and the object. Athens has

³¹ Warburg, Aby, *Italian Art and International Astrology in the Palazzo Schifanoia, Ferrara*, p 572

³² *Ibid.*, pp. 565-566

³³ Warburg, Aby, *The absorption of expressive values of the past*, p. 279

³⁴ Cfr the letter to Carl Neumann dating January 1927: "To confront the classical heritage is thus to see the symptom of a *necessitas* that exists apart from the individual, and that intervenes in our every attempt consciously to orient our intellect". Quoted in C. Schoell-Glass *Aby Warburg and Anti-semitism*, p.138

³⁵ Cfr. Settis, Salvatore, *Pathos ed Ethos. Morfologia e Funzione*

constantly to be won back again from Alexandria³⁶

In our case, the fascist paganization of Rome in 1929, Warburg saw that Alexandria victorious, although the self-professed image of Fascism seemed to point elsewhere. To understand how this process was even possible, we must return to one of the most significant influences on Warburg's theories before progressing to the last plate of the atlas

3. Friedrich Vischer and Plate 79

Friedrich Theodor Vischer (1807-1887), father of Robert Vischer (1847 -1933) a now almost forgotten Hegelian philosopher, well-renowned in his day, exerted a significant influence over thinkers such as Ernst Cassirer. His short essay "Das Symbol" has been considered probably the most important theoretical piece in the development of Warburg's ideas³⁷. Vischer's theory of symbol distinguishes between three forms of symbolism. On one side he described magical or religious symbols, in which images are one and the same with their meaning. Vischer exemplifies such symbolism with the image of the bull for certain primitive cultures, in which it doesn't *mean* strength and virility, but actually *embodies* said qualities and is ritually consumed as such. Opposed to this he placed allegoric and conventional signs in which meaning and image stand in a purely arbitrary connection, anticipating scientific symbolism. The middle term between the two is the symbolism of poetry and art, in which image and meaning are felt in an ambiguous connection, related yet not really identical: as Vischer exemplifies for the poet the sunset is *felt* as ominous, although not consciously identified as such.

The Christian Eucharist is a key example of the dynamic between these forms of symbolism. For Vischer, the Eucharist was a perfect example of the ambiguity between magical and rational symbolism. The Host could either be magically "transformed" into the Flesh of Christ and then eaten in a sacrificial ritual, or simply be a conventional symbol to *remember* the Last Supper, i.e. the original sacrifice. This was of primary importance for Warburg, both due to the historical significance of the theological debate

over transubstantiation and as a perfect example of the overall nature of imagery as the "product between religion and art". In fact, in the centre of Atlas plate 79 (fig. 02) we see the sixteenth century fresco by Raphael, the *Mass of Bolsena*, depicting the miracle in which the Eucharist is said to have begun bleeding before a sceptic priest, eliminating his doubts about the sacrament. The issue of the presence of the Christ in the Host is the key difference between Protestantism and Catholicism. Catholicism holds true the doctrine of *Transubstantiation*, the literal transformation of the *substance* of bread and wine during the performance of the Eucharistic sacrament in actual flesh and blood that maintains the *accidents* of bread and wine. In the more variegated cosmos of the reform, there are positions such as *Consubstantiation* (the presence of *both* the substances after the ritual) or variations of the sacrament seen as a "commemoration" of the Last Supper and nothing more. In his personal diary, in the August of 1929 Warburg reported a conversation, saying:

I am neither anti Catholic nor Protestant but I could imagine (and wish for) a Christian religion of the future which is Aware of the function of the metaphoric "as" as a problem to struggle with. What with all the active "hoc meum corpus est" the North fails to notice how the Catholic Church since the time of the Mass of Bolsena is about to rid itself of primitive magic³⁸

The formulation "hoc meum corpus est", "this is my body", is hinted in a page from a Hamburg newspaper included in the plate (fig.03). The page featured images of events ranging from portraits of athletes to a portrait of Pope Pius XI exhibiting a Monstrance. Warburg defined it as a: "salad of images" and examined it both jokingly and seriously in a celebration for the assignments of three doctorates in 1929. He stated:

I ask myself: does this swimmer know what a monstrance is? Does this brawniest – I do not refer to his person but to his type – need to know the meaning of that symbolism which is rooted in the paganism and which provoked such strong resistance in the North that Europe was split in half? [...] The brutal juxtaposition shows that the

³⁶ Aby Warburg, *Pagan-antique prophecy in Words and Images in the age of Luther*, p. 650

³⁷ Cfr. Wind, Edgar, *Warburg's Concept of Kulturwissenschaft and its Meaning for Aesthetics*

³⁸ Quoted in: Schoell-Glass, Charlotte, *The Last Plates of Warburg's Picture Atlas Mnemosyne*, p. 197

cheerful *hoc meum corpus est* can be set beside the tragic *hoc est corpus meum* without this discrepancy leading to an outcry against such barbarous breach of decorum³⁹

The relationship between the cheerful *hoc meum corpus est* and the tragic *hoc est corpus meum* is not simply one of opposition. Both signify “this is my body”, whereas the latter, the tragic, is the formula utilized during the Catholic Mass as part of the transubstantiation ritual, that in which the Monstrance is actually exposed. The former expression has the same literal meaning, but its tone exhibits a *celebration* of the shown body. The *tragedy* of the Monstrance is its being part of a ritual sacrifice: that of Christ being consumed by his believers.

Similarly, the athletes are somehow also connected to these forms of mythical thinking as well, as for Warburg, they are descendants of antique monsters and prodigies. The (possible) mythical dimension behind even the modern resurgence of monsters is indicated in a letter to Mary Hertz dated 13 February 1924, in which Warburg writes of pictures of Mussolini carrying a lioness as a pet:

Behind this there is something eminently [mimic] pagan: the tamed monster (in a [domesticated] miniature) as an extension and increase of the personality; an imperial Triumph⁴⁰

Returning to the newspaper page, we can conclude that *both* the Catholic Mass and the athletes refer to a mythical origin. The athlete is simply a more modernized (although amnesiac) element of said primitive ritualism compared to the Monstrance of Catholicism (which is in turn a modernized, yet still ambiguous, take on primitive sacrifices). As a matter of fact, the common etymological root of Monstrance [Ger. *Monstranz*] and monster betrays this shared mythical ancestry.

The figures in this page are all in a sense “Monstrances”, although more or less aware of their mythical and sacrificial origin (hence the bad taste of the mixture). Consequently, in their *pictorial* nature, they express the pure *form* of

mythical orientation (i.e. the pure factuality of mythical symbolism) that, as such, can be “reactivated” in its pathos without proper awareness of its original nature.

Warburg witnessed this mythical undercurrent in the fascist re-enactment of classical antiquity: in the triumphs of the Duce. In the fascist *hoc meum corpus est*, he saw the primordial sacrifice resurfacing, the Dionysian frenzy reappearing *through* its taming via classical, grandiose, forms. It is not the case that in plate 79, close to the mass of Bolsena and the “salad of images”, Warburg showed images of Japanese ritual self-sacrifices. We can say in fact that the Lateran Treaty “sanctioned” the exchange between the immanent and the transcendent, the bodily and the spiritual. However, in doing so, it split them respectively between State and Church, with Mussolini acting as the living, embodied connection between the two. In this sense, Fascist power via its exhibition of physicality, made a “Monstrance” of the body *qua* body, i.e. incorporated in its political power the structures of religious sacrifices, *without themselves being religious sacrifices*. Japanese self-sacrifices carry these premises to the extreme, as the practice of actual sacrifice is explicitly prescribed as a social norm.

4. Symbol and Allegory

One can ask then, if this connection of sacrifice and society is not merely a speculative connection, and even so, how it relates with our problem, namely that of political imagery. We anticipated that the notion of embodiment connects these terms is, but we haven’t detailed *how* this connection works or its significance. An instrument to undertake such an investigation was offered by the schematizations offered by Jacques Maritain in his *Sign and Symbol (Signe et Symbole)* conference at the Warburg Institute in 1935⁴¹. Following Warburg Maritain also refers to Vischer’s essay on symbols, in part expanding it, moving from the notion of *Eucharist* toward the general one of *Sacrament*, while criticizing its understanding of the Eucharist. Furthermore, Maritain anticipates the “symptomatic” understanding of Warburg (inspired by Freud) that later commentators such as Didi-Huberman identified Edgar Wind’s statement, that Warburg’s scholarship can be summarized as

³⁹ Quoted in: Ibid. p. 196

⁴⁰ Quoted in J. P. Klenner, p. 75. German: „Dahinter steckt etwas eminent [mimisch] heidnisches: das gebändigte Monstrum (in [gezähmter] Miniaturausgabe) als Erweiterung und Erhöhung der Persönlichkeit; ein imperatorischer Triumph“

⁴¹ Maritain, Jacques, *Sign and symbol*

*Vischer applied historically*⁴² offers a first approximation of the matters at stake in this paper; namely, an understanding of history akin to Vic o's sense and an attempt to sketch a theory of signs based on transcendental conditions of experience. In general terms, Maritain's account of our use of signs is an attempt to answer the question of how transcendentalism accounts for evolution, describing in fact the theoretical field of Warburg's historical investigations. Maritain's definition of signs is that of classical Scholastic thought: *Signum est id quod repræsentat aliud a se potentiæ cognoscenti*⁴³: A sign is that which presents something different from itself to cognition. Although the scholastic understanding of signs has been already critically assessed in its claims⁴⁴, Maritain presents this definition as the framework for a dialectic understanding of signification, in which the nature of *reference* is understood not solely as a form of connection between two objects (sign and referent) through signification, but as an ontological relation as well. In other words, the signification involves a problematic ontological status *per se* not solely under certain conditions (e.g. primitive name-magic): a typical example of this ambiguity is what is usually named an *Index*, something Maritain also utilizes, namely that of smoke signifying fire. He implicitly asks: how does the relation between these two objects interest, if it does, the signification process? It is from this perspective that Maritain's analysis of the different possibilities of signification proves fruitful, as an attempt to systematize these relations from an ontological point of view, through the understanding of their relations with the cognitive faculties of human beings. The "historicization" of these faculties, hinted by Wind through his note on Vischer, is the prospective which allows us to properly understand how mankind expresses (consciously or otherwise) in its signs its own self-understanding and that of its position in the cosmos. Maritain's theoretical position allows us to better understand the connection between embodiment and myth. With to the latter, understood as a state of civilization, he wrote:

⁴² Wind, Edgar, *Warburg's Concept of Kulturwissenschaft and its Meaning for Aesthetics*, p. 27

⁴³ Maritain, Jacques, *Sign and symbol*, p. 1

⁴⁴ As for example in Ludwig Wittgenstein's *Philosophical Investigations*

This is an inferior state but is in no way despicable. It is a human state, but belongs to the infancy of humanity, a fertile state through which we have had to pass. Under this regime humanity has enriched itself with many vital truths, a number of which were perhaps lost when it passed to man's estate. These truths were known by way of dream or instinct and by actual participation in the thing known-as if the light of intelligence, before it had become condensed into stars and solar systems separating daylight from darkness, were existing in a diffused form in the knowledge which the bee has of the world of flowers.⁴⁵

As a matter of fact, from a genetic point of view, only a number of the truths found in our "inferior state" are lost, and what changes in general is the way in which these are known, not the facticity of their existence. Our embodiment *relies* on these truths, which, as we will see, Maritain finds on a transcendental imaginative condition. From this premise we can move to the "one or two sketchy suggestions" that Maritain offered in regard to "a philosophical theory of signs" and the nature of "magical signs". Maritain lays out a number of distinctions (at the same time historical and a-temporal) derived from Scholastic philosophy under which signs can be classified. He indicates these following polarities:

- Natural signs and Conventional signs
- Practical signs and Speculative signs
- Instrumental signs and Formal signs
- Logical and Magical signs
- Direct and inverted signs

These are not simply traits that can be applied to an object considered as a sign and then classified in a clear-cut fashion. More properly these oppositions define the fragmented borders which a sign transgresses under different forms of consideration, both in the sense of its role in communication and its ontological status. The first pair of terms deals with this duplicity: Natural signs are signs which are *better known* as signs for something (such as the typical example of smoke for fire, and the concept of something for such thing). This relation (being better known and thus making the thing known in return), says Maritain, is an ontological one expressed by the metaphysical

⁴⁵ Maritain, Jacques, *Sign and Symbol*, p. 5

tenet of consubstantiality between intelligibility and being (*verum et ens conventur [sic]*)⁴⁶. Consequently, conventional signs are those whose relation with their object is not based on ontological proximity.

This distinction also serves Maritain as a means of identifying a fundamental distinction in our problematic, that is between *Efficient causation* and *objective (or formal) one*. As a sign, even if it is a natural sign, *qua sign*, is never an *efficient* cause of signification. A sign:

Makes known only in so far as it takes the place of the thing signified; it makes known only in so far as it takes the place of the object in the cognitive faculty and so render it present to that faculty, and therefore in so far as it occurs in the same line of causality as the object (formal causality)⁴⁷

The confusion between this notion of formal causality as opposed with the efficient one is at the origin of magical thought, to which I return later. Prior to this we must examine another distinction significant to our topic; the one between *speculative* and *practical* signs. Maritain writes:

The ancients divided signs into speculative signs and practical signs because of the fundamental division of the functions of the intellect into speculative and practical functions. The good for the speculative intellect is the truth pure and simple ; the good for the practical intellect is the truth as leading to right action; in one way or another practical intellect presupposes will; its object in so far as it is known is something to be brought into existence and made concrete in action.⁴⁸

If the distinction between natural and conventional signs deals with the relationship between the signified (understood as an object) and the sign, this one deals with the interaction between sign and subject under the distinction of the practical behaviour. Again, the sign is not an efficient cause of action; the intellect is not transformed into "a nervous motor influx" by the signs, neither is the sign itself, but:

It [the sign] is active, not as a thing which itself causes or operates something, but as a thing which leads or directs the

operation which produces or causes the thing signified. At the top of the class of practical signs, as a unique case of great eminence, we find the *sacrament*.⁴⁹

Although Maritain's practical sign par excellence is the sacrament, simpler practical signs are, among others: those that express intention such as gestures or facial expressions (which are natural signs) and traffic signs, rites and formalized oaths (that are conventional). The practical dimension of these signs is their relation with the *will* of the subject through his/her intellect. For example, if I see someone frightened in another room, as a practical sign that might cause caution while entering the room, or express call for help. There is no direct causation, but a connection between one thing (the expression) and another (the course of action).

Now, how does this relates to sacraments, and why sacraments are practical signs "of great eminence"?

For Maritain, sacraments are practical signs connected with the action of "inner sanctification" of the subject. He distinguishes between Hebrew sacraments: ("sacraments of the Ancient Law") circumcision, Passover, expiations and Aaron's priestly unction among others, and Christian ("new law"), the supreme example being the Eucharist. The difference between the two, writes Maritain, is that in the latter, through the priest's ritual words, the Eucharist nature as sign becomes joined by that of causality⁵⁰. For Maritain, Vischer misunderstood the nature of the Eucharist, as no process of identification is takes place, since it is instead an instrument in God's process of sanctification.

This position, however, is questionable in the sense that it relies on Maritain's Faith. In this sense, a more balanced position can be produced by generalizing the terms Maritain expresses for the "old law" sacraments: "they are practical signs which signify sanctification but do not themselves effect it"⁵¹.

We can then understand sacraments as being the contact between the immanence of transcendence (which, we will later see, means that they are the point of contact between

⁴⁶ Ibid. p. 1

⁴⁷ Ibid. p. 2

⁴⁸ *ivi*

⁴⁹ Ibid. p. 3

⁵⁰ "The sacramental sign is no longer merely a *practical sign*, it then becomes an *instrumental cause* of which the Cause of being Himself makes use" *ibid.* p. 4

⁵¹ Ibid p. 4

subjects and their community as a whole). From a purely theoretical point of view, we can, consequentially, sketch a distinction between practical signs and mythico-magical ones; practical signs as understood only as such and practical signs understood as sacraments from a believer's point of view. It should be noted though, that this detachment from myth, from efficient transcendent causality, simultaneously expresses, a shift in paradigm (between antiquity and modernity) and in style (from Classical – either Renaissance one- to Baroque):

It [the Renaissance] was also eventually eclipsed by the processes central to its emergence: allegorisation, rationalisation, mathematisation.⁵²

Early on in his essay, Maritain offers a curious definition of symbol that allows a deeper investigation of the pivotal nature of sacraments in this process:

Every image is not a sign, and every sign is not an image. For the image (which "proceeds from another as from its principle and in the likeness of that other") may be of the same nature and of the same ontological status as the other (the Son is the image, not the sign, of his Father). And many signs are not images (smoke is not the image of fire, nor is a cry the image of pain). We might define a symbol as a sign-image (at the same time both "Bild" and "Bedeutung"), a sensible thing⁵³

We should bear in mind then that images *can* be signs in the natural sense. The sacrament as well is defined as a symbol:

Since it [the sacrament] is something external and sensible which signifies an effect of inner sanctification to be produced, it is a conventional sign based in fact on a certain analogy (a practical symbol)⁵⁴

What compensates for the image aspect of the sacrament in Maritain's account? Given our previous generalization of his take on sacraments, that excludes the appeal to an actual deity, the solution for us cannot be anything other than that of understanding images through the prism of mythical-magical

symbolism. To explain this, Maritain introduces the fundamental notion of *state*. For him, there are two states, or functional rules, in which signs, and the ontological relation with the signified, are experienced, namely: *intellect* and *imagination*, which refer to *logical* and *magical* signs respectively. From the perspective undertaken here, we should already know that "magical" doesn't refer to the practices typically indicated by the term. It refers in fact to the embodied dimension of experience, a dimension that is more akin to biology than anything else, to the point that it can be used to describe the life of non-human animals:

They [animals] live in a kind of magical world ; biologically united to nature, they use signs which belong to a psychic regime which is entirely imaginative.⁵⁵

What distinguishes us from animal is that they don't perceive the relation of signification, which Maritain defines as having an *idea*. A similar condition is at work for human beings in which primitive mind is under the *nocturnal* domain of imagination, as opposed to the *solar* one of intellect, thus causing the use of signs proper of actual mythical-magical belief. What for Maritain distinguishes them from sacraments is that for him:

The sacramental sign is concerned with religion in the logical state.⁵⁶

Following Maritain's work, this means the logical experience of a transcendent event and consequently, following our derived scheme, means understanding the ambiguity between the mythical understanding of signs under the realm of effective causes, and its rational one, under the realm of *as if*:

He [the primitive man] adheres *en bloc* to symbol and thing symbolized; he finds in them in an indivisible way an image or likeness of truth, an equivalent, an *als ob* of truth, without his having separated off for itself the notion of truth. In the same way a child believes a story, believes in Alice's adventures in Wonderland; if you wake him up and drag him out of the world of imagination he knows very well that little girls do not go down rabbit-holes. But primitive man does not wake up. He has not yet been dragged away from the world of

⁵² Rampley, Matthew, *The Remembrance of things past*, p. 65

⁵³ Maritain, Jacques *Sign and Symbol*. p. 2

⁵⁴ *Ibid.* p. 4

⁵⁵ *Ibid.* p. 5

⁵⁶ *Ibid.* p. 9

imagination in which he was nurtured, which made him familiar with the whole of nature and without which he could not face the relentless severity of his existence as a cave-dweller at war with the beasts. He lives in the world of *make-believe*.⁵⁷

Here then, even the strong ontological notion of natural sign is rendered dialectic: given this *make-believe* based on embodiment, without a strongly established metaphysical reality, what constitutes the being that can be known is hard to pin down, if not, in the end, impossible. The possible narratives with which mankind faces the Dionysian multiply and overlap, but never reach conclusion or final definition. As a matter of fact, one example of pure sign given by Maritain is that of the recollection of memory:

The Scholastic philosophers call these kinds of sign *formal* signs, and we might equally well call them *intentional*: they are things whose *whole essence* is to signify; [...] -in other words, in order to exercise their function as signs they are known not in "appearing" as objects, but in "disappearing" before the object. Recollection, the mental form preserved in the memory, is not that which is known when we remember, it is the mere means by which we directly know the past event. [...] Signs of this kind are mere projections ("intentions") of the mind towards the object. In this irreducibly original universe which is the universe of knowledge they realize in a unique manner the ideal of the perfect sign and the perfect image; they are natural signs and natural images, and they are *pure* signs and *pure* images.⁵⁸

Yet, as we have anticipated with the notion of the Eucharist, memory's revival is not a direct process, proceeding through polarizations and recombination, whose only constant is the dynamic between the imaginative obscurity and intellectual clarification. Consequently, we can better understand what is at stake in symbolic knowledge. Symbols, especially religious ones, have a privileged relation with the cosmos, due to their *empathic* connection created via the rule of imagination, connections that can either be spiritualized into higher forms of religiosity or

debased into superstition and fear. As a process, this is at work in every form of signification: the gift of the loved one can be either a beloved memento to refer *as if* the loved one, or a fetish of him/her, in case such connection is not brought under the "solar domain of the intellect". In the words of Matthew Rampley:

What I mean by this is that the image, as a symbol of the empathic projection onto the other, itself becomes the empathized other. The symbolic representation loses its symbolic quality, the distinction between the image and its symbolized object is collapsed, and the image is subject to the same empathic identification as its represented object.⁵⁹

What distinguishes religious symbols, sacraments, from other signs is their ability to touch the deepest nature of human beings connecting them to the whole of the cosmos, as we will see in the next section. First however, a clarification of an argument we briefly anticipated, namely the shift in paradigm toward modernity, both theoretically and stylistically is required. As Rampley wrote:

I argued that the study of the emergence of allegory from the symbol during the Renaissance is central to Warburg, for whom this process denotes the emergence of a distinctly "modern" cultural sensibility predicated on a logical- dissociative order of representation.⁶⁰

Allegory in this framework is the negation of the symbolic unity which the religious sacrament offers. The symbol connects to a transcendent realm, the allegory is the expressive means of mankind when it has lost such connection. In Benjamin's terms, the opposition between allegory and symbol is expressed via a well known metaphor:

Whereas in the symbol destruction is idealized and the transfiguring face of nature is fleetingly revealed in the light of redemption, in allegory the observer is confronted with the *facies hippocratica* of history as a petrified, primordial landscape⁶¹

⁵⁷ Ibid. p. 6

⁵⁸ Ibid. p. 4

⁵⁹ Rampley, Matthew, *Aby Warburg's theory of art*, p. 48

⁶⁰ Ibid. p. 53

⁶¹ Benjamin, Walter, *The Origin of German Tragic Drama*, p. 166

The symbol connects with the transcendent dimension as we saw with Maritain. In general terms, it works as the connection between the microcosm and macrocosm, assuming the latter as ordered and perfected, derived from a transcendent reality. Vice versa, with the notion of the *facies hippocratica* Benjamin is describing such order as broken. The *facies hippocratica* (a notion, as the name betrays, described by Hippocrates at first) is the visage of death that is glimpsed through an unhealthy body, which the physician can (and must) catch in order to cure the patient, or certify his/her hopeless condition. This decay is described more explicitly in the famous thesis on history number IX, in which the figure of the "Angel of history" is introduced:

A Klee painting named "Angelus Novus" shows an angel looking as though he is about to move away from something he is fixedly contemplating. His eyes are staring, his mouth is open, his wings are spread. This is how one pictures the angel of history. His face is turned toward the past. Where we perceive a chain of events, he sees one single catastrophe which keeps piling wreckage upon wreckage and hurls it in front of his feet. The angel would like to stay, awaken the dead, and make whole what has been smashed. But a storm is blowing from Paradise; it has got caught in his wings with such violence that the Angel can no longer close them. This storm irresistibly propels him into the future to which his back is turned, while the pile of debris before him grows skyward. This storm is what we call progress."⁶²

The sight that sees allegories is a sight that occurs *after* the catastrophe, when its aversion is already impossible. Thus it is a sight that sees only the fragments and from such a position acts towards redemption. In general terms, the condition of the modern man is better captured by the allegory, because it reflects mankind's quest for signification and displacement. However, Warburg's judgement on the baroque allegory is, at least partially negative. Whereas Benjamin saw the return to symbols as impossible (again, we must primarily "organize pessimism"), Warburg, although familiar with the depths at which humanity could steep, still

considered the catastrophe *yet to come*, or at least that could be effaced. His Stamp design of 1926 was entitled *Idea Vincit*. Similarly, the cosmos envisioned in his Lecture on the Images of the Pueblo Indians, citing it as becoming lost, yet still something to look to, was a cosmos of *symbolic* distance, not solely *logical*. Again, in *The Theatrical Costumes for the Intermedi of 1589* the allegory is explicitly stylistically refused in favour of a style that appeals more to the viewers emotions than their knowledge⁶³. In this he followed Goethe's the classical understanding of Allegory that Benjamin attempted to criticize: that of allegory as an artificial, disembodied and partial sign, the opposite of symbol.

The better comparison between Warburg's and Benjamin take on Allegory is given by their opposing interpretation of the work that embodies the spirit that engenders the "allegoric impulse", namely Dürer's *Melancholia I*. Benjamin described this engraving representing:

The utensils of active life are lying around unused on the floor, as objects of contemplation⁶⁴

Proper of a mournful spirit, unable to work, victim of *acedia*. For Warburg:

The malignant, child-devouring planetary god [Saturn], whose cosmic contest with another planetary ruler seals the subject's fate, is humanized and metamorphosed by Dürer into the image of the thinking, working human being.⁶⁵

In Warburg, the notion of allegory is connected with fragmentation and modernity, through baroque, but this is dismissed as a dead end both practically and stylistically⁶⁶, because of its stylistic limits (it is disconnected from the vital embodiment, as the body as an allegoric fragment is a *corpse*, as Benjamin rightfully notes⁶⁷). It is significant that his opposition to the mournful spirit of the allegorist is presented through the image of a *working* human being. As a matter of fact, it is this notion that allows us to move toward this concept and then conclude our *tour de force*: as we will see, the practical reason

⁶³ Warburg, Aby *The Theatrical Costumes for the Intermedi of 1589*, p. 368 ff.

⁶⁴ Benjamin, Walter, *The Origin of German Tragic Drama*, p. 140

⁶⁵ Warburg, Aby *Pagan-antique prophecy in Words and Images in the age of Luther*, p. 644

⁶⁶ Cfr. Johnson, Christopher D., *Memory, metaphor and Aby Warburg's Atlas of images*, pp. 86-7

⁶⁷ Benjamin, Walter, *The Origin of German Tragic Drama*, p. 216-7

⁶² Benjamin, Walter, *Theses on the philosophy of History –Thesis IX*, pp. 257-8

Warburg envisioned, was one that transformed *sacrifice* into *work*.

5. Sacrifice, Distance

This will not be an examination of the more psychological elements of sacrifice as much as a brief understanding of its theoretical role in Warburg's thought. In a diary he stated:

"The Eucharist as 'dance' in primitive culture (Cassirer)"⁶⁸

The *Lecture on the images from the Region of the Pueblo Indians of North America* contains Warburg's most famous example of Warburg's reflection on the role of primitive dance. Referring to the ritual dances of the Mesoamerican populations he visited, he wrote:

The elementary form of emotional release through Indian magical practice may strike the layman as a characteristic unique to the primitive wildness, of which Europe knows nothing. And yet, two thousand years ago, in the very cradle of our own European culture, in Greece, cultic habits were in vogue which in crudity and perversity far surpass what we have seen among the Indians. In the orgiastic cult of Dionysus, for example, the Maenads danced with snakes in one hand and wore live serpents as diadems in their hair, holding in their other the animal that was to be ripped to pieces in the ascetical sacrificial dance in honour of the god. In contrast with the dance of the Moki Indians of today, blood sacrifice in the state of frenzy is the

culmination and fundamental significance of the religious dance⁶⁹

The serpent, present wherever mankind "searches for redemption", is an "image and explanation for causation". We saw already how symbols interact with our imagination. In the Greek cult of Dionysus, this connection is brought to the extreme with the Sacrifice of the snake, the *Sparagmos*, in the culmination of the dance. In this, as Nietzsche illustrated, the god made himself present to the crowd. In other words, the cult is a way to dominate the impulses that compose our more animalistic, Dionysian, nature, through a form of taming or appeasing towards and through it. This is distinguished from mere animality as:

The sacrifice is the point not only at which the profane and the sacred touch, but at which they permeate one another indissolubly.⁷⁰

At once structuring our cosmos and our inhabiting it:

In the eating of the flesh of the totem animal the unity of the clan, its relationship with its totemic ancestor, is restored as a sensuous and corporeal unity; we may say that in this feast it is restored forever anew.⁷¹

In this sense, one can argue that if the Greek cults, at the origin of western civilization didn't managed to tame these impulses completely, thus condemning us to constantly facing the risk of the fall into madness (and even bloodshed), testified by the endless symbolic travel that the snake has made up to our days, and that Warburg briefly sketched in his conference, what the Pueblo and Hopi Indians achieved, was extraordinary, as the snake *neither died, nor hurts its handlers*. If we assume the a-historical point of view that originally spurred Warburg to visit the Pueblo Indians, what kind of civilization could have engendered such a refined take on symbolic matters?

Before getting lost in fantasies, we should return to the western tradition under examination here. Warburg sketched this history of the West dealing with the Greek sacrifice. In

⁶⁸ Quoted in: Schoell-Glass, Charlotte, *The Last Plates of Warburg's Picture Atlas Mnemosyne*, p. 201 – I'm not sure here if Warburg, referring to Cassirer, is referring to the latter's *Language and Myth*, in which wrote (pp. 165-6): "Accordingly, certain Indian tribes are said to use one and the same word for "dancing" and "working"—not, obviously, because the intuitive difference between both activities does not immediately impose itself upon them, but because dance and field work essentially serve for them the same *purpose* of caring for life. For the growth and prosperity of the crops depends, for them, even more than on the prompt and proper cultivation of the fields, on the correct execution of their dances, of their magic and religious ceremonies. The fusion of names, of linguistic concepts, results from such weaving together of activities. When the Christian sacrament of the Eucharist was made known to them, the natives of the Swan River in Australia even named it a dance; what becomes apparent, again, is to what extent a unity may be posed by language in spite of radical differences or even complete disparity between intuitive contents, so long as the contents are seen as corresponding, as being in accordance with one another in their teleological "sense"—here, according to their signification as *cult*"

⁶⁹ Warburg, Aby, *Images from the Region of the Pueblo Indians in North America*, p. 38

⁷⁰ Cassirer, Ernst, *The Philosophy of symbolic forms, vol II: Mythical thought*, p. 227

⁷¹ *ivi*

an early fragment quoted by Gombrich he gave us a very peculiar scheme, that, in a sense anticipates Max Weber and is even more surprising given the overlap between anthropology and transcendental thought that we have examined and that is highlighted here:

Personal gods whose power makes itself felt in an arbitrary and inarticulate way - sacrifices for particular ends

(A) One personal god, ruling steadily, angry but can be reconciled - clearly prescribed and regular sacrifices

(B) Christ, God is love. Rejection of St. Paul: the crudely sensuous aspect of sacrifice: sacrifice and ceremony (the law) eliminated from daily life, what remains is prayer and a few ceremonies, baptism, Eucharist

(C) God is within us: daily work the same as divine service⁷²

As the sacrifice, being a symbol and sacrament, reconnects the subject with the totality, what distinguishes the degrees of this evolution is the degree of "abbreviation"⁷³ from the original, pathos-laden religiosity to a form of internalized religiosity that is expressed in a neutral space (working).

Yet again, abbreviation still points to mimetic experiencing: we fear death even in a jungle or in New York. Consequently, the solutions that deviate from this process of enlightenment can always attach themselves to our embodied imagination. Writing in regard to the superstitious use of images and astrological presages in the fight between Luther and the Catholic Church, Warburg noted that:

It has long been established that the Roman arts of divination bore a direct connection, by way of Etruria, with the divinatory techniques of Babylon. That this connection remained so much alive as to span the interval between Asarhaddon and the Emperor Maximilian, over two thousand years, was due partly to the efforts of scholarly antiquaries but overwhelmingly to the inner, primeval compulsive human need to establish a mythical causation⁷⁴

The role of mythical causation is the creation of connections, the construction of a horizon of sense, proceeding from the

concreteness of experience. From this condition reason "spiritualizes" such connections, transforming them into scientific and impersonal ones that can be described as "autonomous" and yet not detached completely, from said pathos. We saw an example of this "eternal seesaw" with the movement from astrology to astronomy and back. The enlightenment phase of this process is brilliantly summarized by Cassirer in: *The form of concept in mythical thinking*:

The transition to this way of thinking was only possible after number itself had been transformed from signifying the mere *number of things* into the *functional number* of the analysis of the infinite. Astrology was not yet familiar with number in this new and crucial signification. It used number not to express the laws of change but to express and hold fast to the similarities and analogies between the structures of things, between the various regions of being. The constant numerical relationships that pervade all being and events thus become the means to sublimate all apparent divisions and particularities of being into a single basic form of the universe.⁷⁵

Yet this process is not one way. As embodied perception is a necessary element in our orientation, we constantly have to deal with the pathos that gives rise to mythical thinking, as it interacts with our rational thought. As Warburg quotes Goethe: "Superstition is simply the use of false means to a true end"⁷⁶, and the forms of possible superstition are as numerous as the connections our imagination can make, as well as the possible spiritualizations of those connections. The different expressions of British and Fascist Propaganda are exemplary in this, particularly in tapping into the classical visual antiquity. As Warburg noted, the King of England could present himself as the god Neptune in a nineteenth century stamp (fig. 04) because such self-depiction resonated with the a-historical pathos behind it. However, differently from Fascism, this example had a peculiar character of detachment-yet-closeness that fascist iconography lacked. Gombrich described Warburg's reflections on this:

⁷² Gombrich, Ernst, *Aby Warburg, an intellectual Biography*, pp. 71-2

⁷³ Russell, Mark, *Between Tradition and modernity*, p. 56 ff.

⁷⁴ Aby Warburg, *Pagan-antique prophecy in Words and Images in the age of Luther*, p. 641

⁷⁵ Cassirer, Ernst, *The form of Concept in Mythical thinking* 49

⁷⁶ Warburg, Aby, *Pagan-antique prophecy in Words and Images in the age of Luther*, p. 651

Warburg was delighted to find a ruler of his own day still tapping the inherent force of this ancient symbol on a postage stamp. The stamp of Barbados showed the King of England riding on a chariot drawn by sea-monsters, in imitation of a similar image on the seal of Charles II. Here was another chain leading back across the centuries and showing the continued vitality of classical coinages. Moreover, in Warburg's interpretation, this stamp obeyed the true laws of symbolism, that of keeping its metaphorical distance. It does not pretend to reality: it is shown in *grisaille*, the equivalent in visual terms of the quotation mark in language. The king never pretends to be Neptune. He only compares his power with that of the old god. This, in Warburg's cryptic terms, may be regarded as a "dynamic symbol with metaphoric distance achieved through archaeologizing mnemonic catharsis"⁷⁷

This use of the stamp is a perfect example of what we described as a *practical sign*, commanding a form of respect from its viewers through an "as if" understood as such. Here the heritage of antiquity acted as a "black box" in which a community's expressive needs and self-understanding achieved a symbolic realization, because of the reactivated connection to our a-historical embodiment, still under the realm of fiction understood as fiction. The same could not be said for Fascism's retrograde re-enactment of antiquity. Both England and Italy tapped into the same mnemonic "figurative archive", but where the English ruler saw himself *as if* Neptune, Mussolini saw himself *being* the "man of divine providence" (and the crowds that Warburg witnessed clearly accepted this vision). As Warburg tersely wrote in 1927 it is "Neptune's chariot versus Axe"⁷⁸ referring to the Fascist's party logo. Warburg couldn't have been clearer when he wrote of the axe of Fascism in 1927:

Metaphoric distance [is] destroyed through the immediacy of the violence in the symbol of the symbol, through Mussolini's axe.⁷⁹

Again, with its cryptic writing, Warburg is offering us at once an historical, factual evaluation and a theoretical one. The notion of

distance here is fundamental, as it is the one that spiritualizes "myth" and allows to go from the subject of the "malignant, child-devouring planetary god" to the "working human being", the human beings that doesn't fall for fascism's sacrificial frenzy. The same introduction to Mnemosyne opens with the following line:

The conscious creation of distance between oneself and the external world can probably be designated as the founding act of human civilization.⁸⁰

To the "closeness" that characterizes pathos and mythical thought, Warburg opposes another concept derived from classical wisdom, i.e. the concept of *Sophrosyne*, of temperance, prudence.

As we saw already with the astronomy-astrology opposition, for Warburg the scientist is the one trying to "insert the *conceptual space* of rationality between himself and the object". This conceptual space of rationality is a translation of "Denkraum der Besonnenheit", which would be literally the "thought-space of *Sophrosyne*". The term *Besonnenheit* translates the Greek philosophical concept of *Sophrosyne* and, as Gombrich wrote, also means "Restraint, detachment, poise."⁸¹ Warburg's primary investigation of *Besonnenheit* was his work on Francesco Sasseti, a Renaissance merchant and friend of Lorenzo de'Medici, for whom said prudence acted as a guide in his mercantile endeavours. In this text, examining Sasseti's *ex libris* from his copy of Aristotle's *Nicomachean Ethics*, Warburg wrote:

In these pages lay the resurrected philosophy of antiquity, brought to Florence by Argyropoulos himself, a Greek exile, who succeeded in arousing great enthusiasm for the precious treasures of authentic Greek learning. [...] Aristotle's ethical teaching, with its equation of ethical happiness with virtuous energy, fortified the individual courage of early Renaissance man; at the same time, however, to those more conservative temperaments who shrank from the pretensions of individualism, Argyropoulos's words offered an opportunity to pursue in the name of Aristotle – as Rucellai and Ficino pursued in that of Plato – a middle Way, *pace e tregua*

⁷⁷ Gombrich, Ernst, *Aby Warburg. An intellectual biography*, p. 264

⁷⁸ Quoted in: Ibid. p. 286

⁷⁹ Quoted in: Johnson, Christopher D., *Memory, metaphor and Aby Warburg's atlas of images*, p. 186

⁸⁰ Warburg, Aby, *The absorption of expressive values of the past*, p. 276

⁸¹ Gombrich, Ernst, *Aby Warburg. An intellectual biography*, p. 105

(peace and truce), between antique and Christian ethics.⁸²

In Aristotelian terms then we could say that the Denkraum of Sophrosyne is the space in which the right mean⁸³ between excesses is achieved for the conservation of “practical wisdom”⁸⁴. Thus, the opposition of Neptune against the axe should not be read as an opposition between reason and pathos, but as an opposition between the *balance* of pathos and form against an imbalance toward the former. As we have seen, between pathos and ethos, whose imbalance would disrupt (as it did) the community, bringing back an unchecked need for sacrifice, and overall, a pathos-laden state of experience.

The axe doesn't allow for a balancing of the forces in the subject and consequently for a controlled release of pathos. It furthermore prevents reflection and reason and making space for the return of sacrifices. As Schoell-Glass interprets it⁸⁵, the presence of anti-Jewish propaganda (the representation of Jews desecrating the Holy Host) in plate 79 is a reminder of the pathological need for sacrifice. They acted as justifications (due to the Jews' sin) for the frenzied unreason that ran underneath the classic-esque forms of fascist symbolism, and that was close to finding a dramatic realization in the upcoming years in Europe.

6. Conclusions

One of the major difficulties in Warburg's scholarship is to extract more general principles from his unique researches, especially those outside of art history. It is no surprise that as the “founder” of a method, art historians look to Panofsky more than Warburg. And the differences are massive: if for the former a “*pathos formula*”, as Agamben summarized, designates an “indissoluble intertwining of an emotional charge and an iconographic formula in which it is impossible to distinguish between form and content”⁸⁶, the latter is the father of the “principle of disjunction”, which explicitly states that:

whenever in the high and later Middle Ages a work of art borrows its form from a classical model, this form is almost invariably invested with a non-classical, normally Christian, significance; whenever, in the high and later Middle Ages borrows its theme from classical poetry, legend, history or mythology, this theme is quite invariably presented in a non-classical, normal, contemporary form⁸⁷

In other words, for Panofsky, the study of early modern art history is based systematically on the separation of form and content. It is clear that, from a systematic perspective, Panofsky's principle proves infinitely more productive than Warburg's way of proceeding. As a matter of fact, Warburg himself posed some arbitrary borders to his own investigation, i.e. the heritage of classical antiquity on Renaissance art, in order to impose some order on his intuitions. And yet, those borders were broken more than once, as this paper shown. In a sense, however, these breaches show that Warburg's scholarship can be productive for understanding various aspects of human life *intertwined* with our artistic production rather than simply understanding art as a recipient for said aspects as a content⁸⁸, being instead an encounter of practical behaviour and symbolic expression.

With this paper I've tried to highlight how Warburg's personal take on the Dionysian-Apollonian polarity could prove significant in the analysis of imagery, beyond the historical limits of Warburg's research. An example of these breaches “looking backward” is perfectly summarized by Matthew Rampley, as he noticed that, given “late medieval realism” and “classicizing language of Dionysian pathos” “functional isomorphism”, a similar framework could be used to investigate pre-renaissance art in the way Hans Belting did through its connections with magical-representative thought⁸⁹.

A last example of political imagery will clarify this point, especially in regard to its use in later imagery instead. In his essay on Luther and the process of spiritualization, carried out from catholic mythical-magical thinking, Warburg reports the different sides of the debate interpreting monstrous births and astronomical

⁸² Warburg, *Aby Francesco Sassetti's last injunctions to his sons*, pp. 244-5

⁸³ Aristotle, *Nicomachean Ethics*, book II, chapter 7, 1107b

⁸⁴ *Ibid.*, book VI, chapter 5, 1140b 11-16

⁸⁵ Schoell-Glass, Charlotte, *The Last Plates of Warburg's Picture Atlas Mnemosyne*, pp. 196-197

⁸⁶ Agamben, Giorgio, *Aby Warburg and the Nameless science*, p. 90

⁸⁷ Panofsky, Erwin, *Renaissance and Resuscitations in Western art*, p. 84

⁸⁸ Even if that content is expressed as a *symbolic form* such as Panofsky argues for perspective and concepts of space

⁸⁹ Rampley, Matthew, *Aby Warburg's theory of Art*, p. 51

phenomena as signs of the impending catastrophe brought forth by the opposing party. He wrote:

This is really a "Natural Horror Sensation Late Extra", written to serve immediate political ends. Brandt had every right to point to even more ancient and venerable antecedents: for this up-to-the-minute sensation of his was already there, in cuneiform script, on the clay tablets of Assyria. We know that in the mid-seventh century B.C. the augur Nergal-etur informed Prince Asarhaddon of the birth of a pig with eight legs and two tails; on the strength of this, he prophesied that the prince would accede to the throne, and added that the butcher Uddanu had salted the creature away, evidently to preserve it for the dynastic archive⁹⁰

This kind of imagery can evoke powerful energies, to use Warburg's emphatic lexicon. In the case of its use by Sasseti, as a self-revitalization, these drove the merchant to a powerful yet controlled drive toward his economic goals: Fortune has been tamed and transformed into a positive element in the merchant's life, guided by his prudence. In the case in exam, by contrast, the use of said mythical energies, even for basically "enlightened scopes", the lack of said prudence prompted Warburg to clearly express his fears and embarrass. As he wrote:

In this area, Luther and his friends were working with quite different images, and employing a partisan virulence in controversy that can be excused only by the need for a literary counteroffensive⁹¹

This is because Warburg was well aware of the risks of an unchecked "reduction of distance", especially in political thought. And if the figures of the "pope donkey" and the "monk calf" could help Luther to defend himself from a vicious controversy and to overthrow the ritual dominance of the Catholic Church in one single

stroke, Warburg realized all too well the limits of such a use of imagery. As a matter of fact, it's not the *existence* of such imagery that is problematic, rather the anti-progressive and judge-clouding pathos that is evoked by a certain *use* of them. In the end, if the pathos-laden image of a pig can serve the greater scheme of enlightenment once, the same emotional energy, with a polar inversion can be the undoing of such progress.

In this regard, I believe I have proved that Warburg *has* a place in Agamben's project of an anthropology of western culture. Warburg's peculiar take on the concepts of Dionysian and Apollonian, twisting them at once toward philological investigation and transcendental understanding, created a paradigm for a series of practices that inform our culture and need to be investigated and understood. These can only be accessed via this peculiar nameless science, in regard to which I have offered here only a personal interpretation and a minuscule sample derived from Warburg's extensive researches. A number of questions that crave investigation but couldn't accommodated here include:

- 1) How does the notion of ritual and sacrifice in Warburg interact with Agamben's notion of Bare life?
- 2) Is the Pagan sacrifice *antecedent* to the sovereign ban in western genealogy, and how do they interact?
- 3) Given that Warburg investigated a number of specific expressions of Pathos, how do these relate among them and in regard to our culture? Didi-huberman tried to answer this in respect of the *Nymph*, but what of the pathos of the *winner* [Sieger] and the *loser* [Unterwerfung], for example?
- 4) Given Warburg's trust in the redeeming power of work, and activity overall, how does his thought relate to our globalized word and its challenges?

In other words, if this attempt to position Warburg as an "anthropology of the west" proved successful, it has but broken ground on an extensive project of untold scope.

⁹⁰ Warburg, Aby, *Pagan-antique prophecy in Words and Images in the age of Luther*, 637-641

⁹¹ *ibid* p. 632

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04. Stamp of Barbados, 1925 © The Warburg Institute



Fig. 2. Mnemosyne Atlas plate 79.

Hamburges, letzte Dramenmeldungen
liche Hauptblatt

Hamburger Fremdenblatt

Kupferdruck-Beilage
des Hamburger Fremdenblattes

Rundschau im Bilde

Nr. 208 Montag, 29. Juli 1929 101. Jahrgang • 3. Vierteljahr 2. Beilage

Die hervorragendsten Leistungen in Kupfer-Druck unter dem Namen seit 1811, Best. 1911.

Sommer-Wettspiele des Hamburger Golf-Clubs in Flottbek.



Der Gewinner des Senats-Purses: Takasugi, Japan.



Zuschauer sehen einen Ball nach.



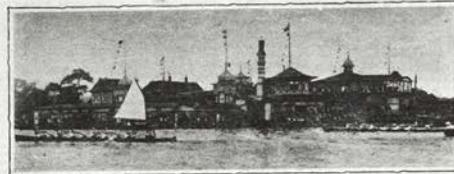
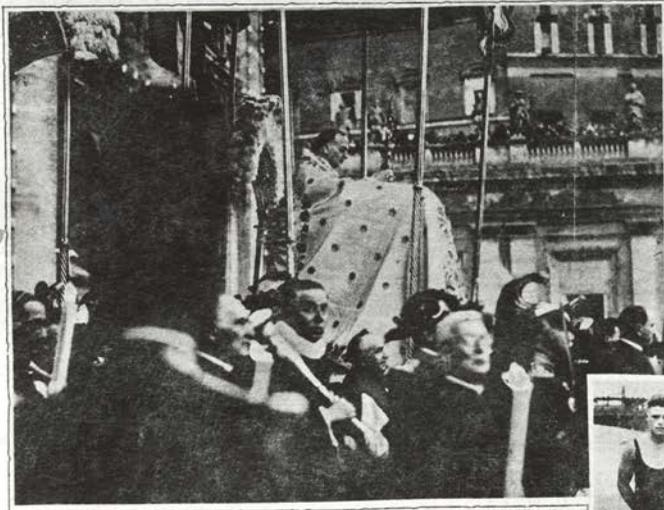
Senats-Matrosen Engländerin die Siegerin des Senats-Purses: Frau Seligson, West. Island.



Der Ehrenbürger und ehemalige Bürgermeister der Stadt Holtenau, Geh. Hofrat Dr. jur. Hermann Bismarck, seit dem 29. Juli das 80. Lebensjahr. West. Island.



Die Fremden für Studenten... am 20. Juli... am 20. Juli... am 20. Juli...



11. Bundes-Ruber-Nagata des Hochseesport-Klubes... Seefahrer-Werra für Seemann. Sieger (links): K. C. Benda v. 1921. West. Island.



Kommers des Corps Franconia (im Carlshaus) zur Feier des 60-jährigen Bestehens. West. Island.



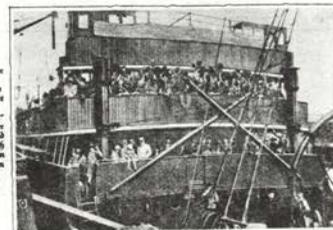
Konkurrenz... auf dem... Siegerin:...



Zum ersten Male seit 1870... Sieger:...



4000 Meter-Eisen-Schwimmer... Sieger:...



Bühnen... 25 Jahre... Sieger:...

Fig. 3. Illustrated Supplement from the Hamburger Fremdenblatt, no 208, evening edition, 7/29/1929, p.9.



Fig. 4. Stamp of Barbados, 1925.

Biographical note

Gino Querini is a NUIG (National University of Ireland, Galway) Ph.D. Candidate in Philosophy of Art and Culture. His research focuses on Aby Warburg and Immanuel Kant.

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