

la rivista di **en**gramma
aprile **2024**

211

**Under the Volcano.
Warburg's Legacy**

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211

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Under the Volcano. Warburg's Legacy

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La Rivista di Engramma

a peer-reviewed journal

211 aprile 2024

www.egramma.it

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edizioni**egramma**

ISBN carta 979-12-55650-36-2

ISBN digitale 979-12-55650-37-9

ISSN 2974-5535

finito di stampare luglio 2024

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Under the Volcano. Warburg's Legacy

Editorial of Engramma no. 211

Ada Naval and Giulia Zanon



Slide of the 1906 eruption of Vesuvius, photographed and hand-coloured by Elias Burton Holmes. The Burton Holmes Collection (UCLA).

The Twentieth century's largest eruption of Vesuvius began in the early hours of April 4, 1906, when a flow of lava started to emerge from one of the vents on the south flank. On that April

morning, American traveller and photographer Burton Holmes and a friend were at the foot of Vesuvius. Against all warnings, the pair decided to approach the slopes to photograph and film the lava, whose fiery red colour contrasted with the still dark early morning sky. Neither the palpable danger nor the ominous tremors of that spring in Naples could deter Holmes from being drawn to the spectacle. Only a few months earlier, on 21 January 1906, Aby Warburg was writing to his friend Gustav Leithäuser:

In Brüssel sah ich in den Privatzimmern des Herzogs von Arenberg einen Laokoonkopf, den mir der Castellán als den eigentlichen verriet; mir blieb's zweifelhaft; er ist ungemein pathetisch gehalten, gleichsam mit sich selbst im Pathos multipliziert [...]. Mit Recht verweisen Sie auf die Weiterführung der antiken Figuren in d. modernen Malerei, das sind eben die Pathosformeln, wie sie sich auch schon bei Dürer einnisteten; der sterbende Orpheus ist schließlich doch auch ein richtiger (älterer) Vetter des Alkyoneus. Man sieht eben, daß schon die Griechen selbst ihre alten Prägstöcke für Pathoswerte immer wieder benutzten, weil sie den unvergänglichen Wert dieser Schöpfungen fühlten.

[In Brussels, in the private rooms of the Duke of Arenberg, I saw a head of Laocoön, which the guardian revealed to me as the real one; I remained sceptical; it is held in an extraordinarily pathetic manner, as if multiplied within itself in pathos [...]. You are right to speak of the continuation of ancient figures in modern painting; these are just the *Pathosformeln*, as they were also established by Dürer; the dying Orpheus is also a real (older) cousin of Alcyoneus. It is obvious that the Greeks themselves continually reused their old pathos moulds because they felt the immortal value of these creations].

In the same months that Aby Warburg was pondering the “immortal value” of Greek pathos and its formulations, or *Pathosformeln* (and around the time of the publication of the important study on *Dürer und die italienische Antike*), in Italy, under a completely different sky – yet one so close to the heart, and mind of the “Florentine at soul” scholar – the volcano Vesuvius was erupting and completely changing its shape, ready to be crystallised again in the metamorphosis of its glorious destruction.

In those first months of 1906 there was another ongoing volcanic activity: “Aby Warburg was a volcano”, as his son Max Adolph, one of the protagonists and the voice behind the title of this issue, *Engramma* 211, wrote:

Aby Warburg was a volcano. Volcanoes can be conditioned, but never fully explained by their environment – by the surrounding geological strata, which they have to crack to get on top of them, to liberate their explosive power and to attain their pre-ordained form, height, and majesty. Every volcano is an uncanny (*unheimlicher*) stranger to its nearest surroundings, however many scraps and fragments of their top formation the lava may contain.

Burton Holmes, who had been adding colour to his photographs for years, decided to apply this technique to one of the photos he took during the eruption. Holmes wanted to emphasise the contrast, lost in the black and white photograph, between the bright red of the lava, and the dark background framing the volcano. In this new issue of *Engramma* we decided to restore the colour photograph of Vesuvius to pay homage to Max Adolph Warburg's metaphor.

We also wanted to emulate Holmes' approach of introducing colour, returning to red, from the explosive black and white gesture. By adopting this approach, we wanted to contextualise the cover photograph within an issue that specifically addresses the need to re-read, to continue exploring Aby Warburg's legacy: returning to red. We must return to the red, as Holmes did when he photographed the eruption of April 1906, as Max Adolph did with his words, and with a metaphor that reminds us of what it meant to be 'under' Warburg's powerful mind. This issue of Engramma has been placed "under the volcano", not only to perceive from it the primordial power of the *monstrum*, but also to draw nourishment from it, illustrating that:

Volcanoes are not only destructive but often also fruitful – in due course. The immediate impact of a volcanic outbreak on the neighbouring vegetation is, naturally, not favourable; but in the long run it can be extremely fertilising.

Giorgio Pasquali, in his *Tribute to Aby Warburg*, also spoke of the fertility of the volcano Warburg's legacy:

Art historians and cultural scientists have a duty to make the work of Warburg fruitful, allowing it to operate on them, thereby transforming it (Giorgio Pasquali, *A Tribute to Aby Warburg [Ricordo di Aby Warburg, "Pegaso" II, 4 (1930), 484-495]*, in *Aby Warburg and Living Thought*, edited by Monica Centanni, Dueville 2022, 55).

Who were the "cultural scientists" who were able to respond to Pasquali's call to arms? How did these two figures deal with the *corpus* of material left by Warburg at his death, which was as rich and valuable as it was complex in terms of publishing history? What is their intellectual production in relation to the figure of Aby Warburg, as well as their relations with other intellectuals who were their contemporaries? What was their role in the Warburg Institute, which moved to London during the rise of National Socialism? This issue of Engramma aims to answer these questions. Engramma 211 presents a map of a volcanic land where lava flows have created new islands of knowledge. The issue invites readers to follow the lava flow, and – even during the tremors – to look at the volcano from above. Aby Warburg, the volcano to whose crater we must continue to turn our gaze, represents the active volcano that holds the secret of a magma chamber that is always alive and strong. The volcano that can erupt at any moment, creating new fissures and lava flows that ignite, and nourish thought. The "Warburg volcano *continuatus*".

Structured around the metaphorical fissures and lava flows, the issue is divided into four sections: *Unpublished, Rediscovery, Readings, Presentation*.

Unpublished

As said, the author of the metaphor we are borrowing for this issue is Max Adolph, Aby's son: an absolute protagonist, hitherto overlooked in Warburgian studies. Encouraged by his father to study classical philology (he wrote a thesis in 1929 under the title *Zwei Fragen zum Kratylos*), he played an important role in the crucial years of his father's life, for example, in Kreuzlingen. Davide Stimilli presents the first English edition of the lecture given by Max Adol-

ph Warburg on the occasion of the centenary of his father's birth in 1966. "Aby Warburg was a volcano". Max Adolph Warburg, for the Centenary of Aby Warburg's Birth (1966). The text has so far only appeared in Stimilli's Italian translation entitled *Per il centenario della nascita di Aby Warburg* in the monographic issue of the magazine "aut aut" ("aut aut" 321-322, maggio-agosto 2004, *Aby Warburg, La dialettica dell'immagine*, 173-183), but is still unpublished in the original language. This text, written and never spoken, paints a portrait of Aby Warburg's explosive intellect, and influence, which Max Adolph poetically associates with disruptive volcanic activity. This issue of Engramma includes both the original English, and an updated Italian translation. Stimilli's introduction to the text outlines the essential steps, and the necessary reconstruction required to recover an "extraordinary missing link in the history of the Warburg legacy". The elaboration of this reconstruction, as Stimilli points out, requires a comprehensive study of the Max Adolph Warburg documents, which offer a "unique perspective of extraordinary importance for our understanding of his father's work, and personality, but also an essential introduction to his contributions in the fields of philology and art history".

Next, Gertrud Bing: one of the most important volcanologists under the volcano. This issue serves to confirm Gertrud Bing as a figure of unquestionable central importance in the interpretation of Warburg's legacy. Bing was aware of the value of this knowledge, which had to be preserved, and passed on, and of the fact that the volcano, although dormant, remained active, and continued to cause earth tremors. Gertrud Bing was not only the intellectual heir of Aby Warburg and the far-sighted editor of the collection and publication of his writings, the *Gesammelte Schriften* – published in 1932 together with the Italianist Fritz Rougemont – and *La Rinascita del paganesimo antico* – edited with Emma and Delio Cantimori, the volume that consecrated Italy as the nerve centre of Warburg studies. Director of the Warburg Institute from 1955 to 1959, Bing was the first holder of the Chair of Classical Tradition at the University of London. This issue aims to continue a season of research on Gertrud Bing (in particular the Engramma 177, *Gertrud Bing erede di Warburg*), and to shed light on a fundamental figure in European culture who has for too long remained in the background.

In Towards an edition of the Atlas. Gertrud Bing's Unpublished Notes on Mnemosyne Panels Giulia Zanon presents a first edition of Gertrud Bing's unpublished notes on the *Bilderatlas*, in the original German, with an English and an Italian translation. The notes, which were written in two notebooks that are preserved in the Warburg Institute Archive, provide a synopsis of each panel of the Mnemosyne Atlas. They include indications for the completion, editing, and publication of the Atlas. The lava floor of Warburg-volcano: a true extension of Warburg's thought. In her Introduction, Zanon attempts to put this invaluable testimony into its context by including the letters and documents dating from the last months of 1929, the most intense and lucid period of work on the Atlas for Warburg, Bing and the scholars around them. She also considers the period following Warburg's death, and the subsequent abrupt interruption of the atlas project. The aim of this publication is to highlight the considerable importance of this document for the hermeneutics of Mnemosyne, and its publishing history.

It serves as evidence of the unwavering commitment to the publication of the *Bilderatlas* as part of the larger project of an edition of Warburg's *corpus*.

In *Classical Tradition as a Method and a Way of Approach*. Note on a Letter from Gertrud Bing to Raymond Klibansky, Martin Trembl presents a letter sent from Bing to Raymond Klibansky – who together with Fritz Saxl and Erwin Panofsky edited the influential work *Saturn and Melancholy* (published in 1964) – that sheds light on lesser-known aspects of Raymond Klibansky's involvement with the Warburg Institute. In "One talked all European languages". Note on a Letter from Gertrud Bing to Luigi Meneghello (1957), Chiara Velicogna publishes a letter from Gertrud Bing to Luigi Meneghello dated January 1957, a few months after Bing's lecture on the Warburg Institute at the Humanist Studies Conference in La Mendola. The letter describes the "European" climate of the conference, and is an important testimony to the new historical and intellectual context after the tragic years of the Second World War, and the diaspora of German intellectuals. The text also provides details to the state of work on the Italian edition of Warburg's writings for *La Nuova Italia*, *La Rinascita del paganesimo antico*, which Bing was editing (and which would not be published until after her death in 1966).

Rediscovered

Two "rediscoveries", an essay by Fritz Rougemont and a letter by André Jolles, by two colleagues who, like the Warburg-Kreis, felt the tremors of the volcano very well.

The name of Fritz Rougemont (1904-1941) is well-known to Warburg scholars because he appears, together with Gertrud Bing, as co-editor of Aby Warburg's *Gesammelte Schriften*, published by Teubner in Leipzig in 1932. Rougemont had actively collaborated with the Kulturwissenschaft Bibliothek Warburg since 1926, but later his biographical events, and in particular his joining the Nazis, led to a definitive *damnatio memoriae* of his name, also erasing, almost completely, the traces of his scholarly activity. Monica Centanni and Giacomo Calandra di Roccolino present *A forgotten essay by Fritz Rougemont on Warburg and "bibliophily" as a scientific tool (1930)*, an important contribution of his published in 1930 in the first volume of "Imprimatur", the yearbook of the "Gesellschaft der Bücherfreunde zu Hamburg". The essay, hitherto neglected in the vast literature of Warburgian studies, is presented in a new edition of the original 1930 German, in the first English translation and in the first Italian translation. Rougemont's essay is a primary testimony to the specificity of Warburg's "bibliophilia" in a scientific sense, illuminating in an original way and with important hermeneutic insights his unprecedented method of study, the analysis of the mechanisms of the Classical tradition, and the innovative trajectory of his research with respect to the dominant disciplinary dictates. The essay is accompanied by an Introduction by Monica Centanni, who explains in detail the fall into oblivion of Rougemont as a scholar and of his work.

In *A Fictional Letter, a Florentine Friendship. On André Jolles and Aby Warburg*, Wannes Wets examines the relationship between Dutch art historian and linguist André Jolles and Aby Warburg. Analysing their shared interests in morphology and art history, Wets trace their collaboration in Florence between 1894 and 1900 and its impact on the "Florentine at heart"

scholar. The lens through which the analysis is conducted is a letter from André Jolles, which has been rediscovered and translated into English for the first time. The letter is a fictional biography in which Jolles pretends to be a fictitious nephew of Jolles, but also a great-grandson of Aby Warburg, to whom Jolles tells the story “of the famous [...] Aby Warburg, the founder of the new scientific system after which our century will probably take its name”. The letter is accompanied by an introduction by Wannes Wets on the Florentine friendship between Jolles and Warburg.

Readings

The first rereading takes up, in a sense, some of the themes of the previous essays. In particular, the necessary attention to Max Adolph Warburg, which is the basis of the article proposed by Dorothee Gelhard, focuses on the analysis of his doctoral thesis. The role of Max Adolph Warburg in the context of philology and philosophy is subject to an in-depth analysis in Dorothee Gelhard's article *Max Adolph Warburg's Doctoral Thesis and the Warburg Circle*. Gelhard offers a comprehensive reconstruction of Max Adolph Warburg's dissertation, *Zwei Fragen zum Kratylus (Two Questions on Cratylus)*, and his time as a student in Heidelberg, which reveals the methodology of the Warburg circle, the influence of Boll and the importance of Ernst Cassirer, especially his *Symbolic Forms*. In his dissertation, Max Adolph adheres to two fundamental tenets of the cultural studies of the Warburg circle: first, the conviction that mythical and rational thought coexisted throughout cultural history; and second, the notion that astrology, from antiquity to the Renaissance, served as a mediator between these two poles. The influence of Max Adolph's mentor Franz Boll is evident in his work. Although he is not explicitly named in the dissertation, his presence is pervasive, and must be considered.

Mnemosyne, its living hermeneutics, like an ever-growing ball of lava, appears in the contribution by Giovanni Careri, who takes up Pasquali's lesson “to make the work of Warburg fruitful, allowing it to operate on them, thereby transforming it”. In *Giocare con il Bilderatlas. Due casi e una questione teorica. Tavole 56 e 53*, Careri raises some of these questions with regard to Panels 56 and 53 of the *Mnemosyne Bilderatlas* – in which Michelangelo becomes a guiding element for reading the heuristic operation of the montage – but also raises a more general methodological question about the use to which the Panels lend themselves, insofar as their associative structure calls for two different and not mutually exclusive modes: the first, historical-philological, consists in the attempt to anchor the images in the documentation left by Warburg and his circle, in order to determine the reasons and the meaning that each montage had for the art historian and his collaborators. The second, on the other hand, takes as its starting point the constitutive indeterminacy of the work of association between two or more images, and then functions in a way similar to the association at work in Freudian analysis, where it reveals the subterranean workings of the dream and the unconscious.

Presentations

In the fourth section of *Engramma 211*, we present a selection of the most important publications in the field of Warburgian studies for the year 2024. Ianick Takaes presents an

important book on one of Warburg's most important heirs, Edgar Wind. *Edgar Wind. Art and Embodiment*, Peter Lang, London 2024, edited by Jaynie Anderson, Bernardino Branca and Fabio Tononi. The volume brings together a collection of studies on the pioneering art historian and philosopher Edgar Wind "who is also remembered as the first Professor of Art history at the University of Oxford". The article also considers the pivotal edition of *The Eloquence of Symbols* by Jaynie Anderson, and the significant contribution made by the Act and Embodiment research group (led by Horst Bredekamp and John Michael Krois) in 2009, as well as the definitive opening to the public of Wind's Archive in Oxford in 2017.

The volume *Gertrud Bing im Warburg-Cassirer-Kreis*, Wallstein, Göttingen 2024, edited by Dorothee Gelhard and Thomas Roide, recalls Bing's importance in the Warburg-Cassirer circle (and publishes for the first time the doctoral thesis written by Gertrud Bing, one of the first women to obtain a doctorate at the University of Hamburg, where Ernst Cassirer was her professor). The aim of the volume is to justify the scientific role of Bing, whose:

Wissenschaftliche Leistung wird bis heute unterschätzt. Es spielt dabei keine Rolle, dass ihr Werk so schmal ist. Die Dissertationsschrift zeigt, dass sie nicht nur selbstständig und philosophisch denken konnte, [...], sondern dass ihre Arbeit weit mehr als eine brave Schülerinnenarbeit hatte. [Scientific achievements are still underestimated today. It does not matter that her work is so small. The dissertation shows that she was not only able to think independently and philosophically [...], also that her work was far more than a good student's thesis].

In the introductory essay to the volume, which we are publishing here, Gelhard traces Gertrud Bing's steps, from her early years at the university to her arrival in the Hamburg circle, and her crucial role in the transmission and continuation of Warburg's ideas after the Institute's exile in London. Some elements of his research stand in a dialectical relationship with Engramma's research on Bing, in the happy and fertile field of the plurality of voices that the Journal has always sought to offer.

The significance of the friendship between Aby Warburg and the German philologist Franz Boll (to whose death Warburg dedicated the seminal lecture *Per monstra ad sphaeram* in 1925) is explored in the volume *Sternenfreundschaft. Die Korrespondenz Aby Warburg und Franz Boll*, Wallstein, Göttingen 2024, a crucial edition of the correspondence between the two scholars. A friendship reminiscent of Nietzsche's *Sternenfreundschaft*. By citing the words of Dorothee Gelhard:

The correspondence between Warburg and Boll documents the extent to which both scholars strove to reveal this tense relationship in their subjects, which they considered fundamental to European culture. In this sense, they also contributed to the rediscovery of the Eastern Plato. Warburg and Boll had recognised that ancient astrology, in Garin's words, was "situated at the intersection of different, sometimes quite contradictory ideas".

As the Vesuvius on our cover shows, the eruption of volcano-Warburg's thought invites us to look up and perceive the ashfall transformed into stars, and also to feel the tremors of the fis-

sures that will let the lava come out, and, then, to continue investigating the bright red lava. As Max Adolph's lecture reads:

The volcano should, at the same time, be a seismograph – or, to come from the earthly to the heavenly fire: that he should be at the same time lightning and lightning conductor.

Abstract

Under the Volcano. Warburg's Legacy, explores the enduring influence of Aby Warburg's ideas, likening his intellectual legacy to volcanic activity – continually shaping the landscape of cultural history. If Warburg "was a volcano", this issue is structured around the metaphorical fissures and lava flows, and is divided into four sections: Unpublished, Rediscovery, Readings, Presentation. In the section *Unpublished*, Davide Stimilli presents the first English edition of the lecture given by Max Adolph Warburg on the occasion of the centenary of his father's birth in 1966. "Aby Warburg was a volcano". Max Adolph Warburg, for the Centenary of Aby Warburg's Birth (1966). This text, written and never spoken, paints a portrait of Aby Warburg's explosive intellect and influence, which Max Adolph poetically associates with disruptive volcanic activity. The text has so far only appeared in Stimilli's Italian translation in 2004 but is still unpublished in the original language, this issue of Engramma includes both the original English and an updated Italian translation. In *Towards an edition of the Atlas*. Gertrud Bing's Unpublished Notes on Mnemosyne Panels Giulia Zanon presents a first edition of Gertrud Bing's unpublished notes on the *Bilderatlas*, both in the original German, with an English and an Italian translation. The notes, which were written in two notebooks that are preserved in the Warburg Institute Archive, provide a synopsis of each panel of the Mnemosyne Atlas. They include indications for the completion, editing, and publication of the Atlas as part of the larger project of an edition of Warburg's *corpus*. The section includes two unpublished letters: In *Classical Tradition as a Method and a Way of Approach*. Note on a Letter from Gertrud Bing to Raymond Klibansky, Martin Tremel presents a letter sent from Bing to Raymond Klibansky that shed light on lesser-known aspects of Raymond Klibansky's involvement with the Warburg Institute; in "One talked all European languages". Note on a Letter from Gertrud Bing to Luigi Meneghello (1957), Chiara Velicogna publishes a letter from Gertrud Bing to Luigi Meneghello dated January 1957 (a few months after Bing's lecture on the Warburg Institute at the Humanist Studies Conference in La Mendola). The section *Rediscovered* presents two important researches on two forgotten intellectuals that had been close to Warburg: Monica Centanni and Giacomo Calandra di Roccolino present *A forgotten essay by Fritz Rougemont on Warburg and "bibliophily" as a scientific tool (1930)*, an important contribution of his published in 1930. The essay, hitherto neglected in the vast literature of Warburgian studies, is presented in a new edition of the original 1930 German, in the first English translation and in the first Italian translation. Rougemont's essay is a primary testimony to the specificity of Warburg's "bibliophilia" in a scientific sense. In *A Fictional Letter, a Florentine Friendship. On André Jolles and Aby Warburg*, Wannes Wets examines the relationship between Dutch art historian and linguist André Jolles and Aby Warburg. The lens through which the analysis is conducted is a fictional biography of Warburg by André Jolles, which has been rediscovered and translated into English for the first time. The section *Readings* delves into the matter of Warburgian thought. Dorothee Gelhard's article *Max Adolph Warburg's Doctoral Thesis and the Warburg Circle* offers a comprehensive reconstruction of Max Adolph Warburg's dissertation, *Zwei Fragen zum Kratylos (Two Questions on Cratylus)*, and his time as a student in Heidelberg, which reveals the methodology of the Warburg circle, the influence of Boll and the importance of Ernst Cassirer. In *Giocare con il Bilderatlas. Due casi e una questione teorica. Tavole 56 e 53*, Careri raises some of these questions with regard to Panels 56 and 53 of the Mnemosyne *Bilderatlas* – in which Michelangelo becomes a guiding element for reading the heuristic operation of the montage – but also raises a more general methodological question about the use to which the Panels lend themselves. The section *Presentations* welcomes the most important publications in the field of Warburgian studies for the year 2024. Ianick Takacs presents an important book on one of Warburg's most important heirs, Edgar Wind. *Edgar Wind. Art and Embodiment*, Peter Lang, London 2024, edited by Jaynie Anderson, Bernardino Branca and Fabio Togni. The volume brings together a collection of studies on the pioneering art historian and philosopher

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keywords | Aby Warburg; Max Adolph Warburg; Gertrud Bing; Raymond Klibansky; Luigi Meneghello; Fritz Rougemont; André Jolles; Edgar Wind; Ernst Cassirer; Franz Boll.



la rivista di **engramma**

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211 • Under the Volcano. Warburg's Legacy

Editorial

Ada Naval and Giulia Zanon

Unpublished

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Gertrud Bing

Verso un'edizione dell'Atlante

Gertrud Bing

"Aby Warburg was a volcano"

Max Adolph Warburg

"Aby Warburg era un vulcano"

Max Adolph Warburg

Classical Tradition as a Method and a Way of Approach

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Ein vergessener Aufsatz von Fritz Rougemont über Warburgs Bibliophilie als wissenschaftliches Instrument (1930)

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Un saggio dimenticato di Fritz Rougemont su Warburg e la "bibliofilia" come strumento scientifico (1930)

Fritz Rougemont

A Fictional Letter, a Florentine Friendship

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