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Fig. 1. Photograph of the author's studio wall featuring an image configuration composed from printed digital scans and internet screenshots; images in the configuration are mentioned over the course of the essay. Photo by author.

On *Irons, Bones*, and *Stones*, or an Experiment in California-Italian Thinking on the 'Plastic' between Aby Warburg's *Plastic Art*, Gelett Burgess' *Goops*, and Piet Mondrian's *Plasticism*

Emily Verla Bovino

The Plastic as a Foundational Fragment in the History of Art

It has been thought necessary in recent years that art history more explicitly define the fragment as a "category of form," though one of an undeniably "inherent ambivalence." In this context, the fragment has been described as *informe*, or "a sort of undoing which remains even when something takes or is given form": a formless form in-between the inertia of the inanimate remnant and the tremors of a shard violently fractured from a once integral whole. The fragment is a synecdoche—an indexical "part" of an ephemeral "totality"—a symptom forever trembling with the microseisms of a past "spectacular act of creation and destruction": the pulse of a byproduct forever carrying in itself a shattering "movement" that once revolutionized the source from whence it fractured.

It may be that it would be best to introduce—as a foundational "fragment" for the history of art—a different newly recovered category, not a category of form like the fragment, but what might be more precisely called a category of "formula": the plastic. The word "plastic" sets off a variety of associations, from the petrochemical-derived polymers in "synthetic material that can take on different shapes," to the "explosive materials of nitroglycerine and nitrocellulose base that can set off violent detonations"; from cosmetic surgery and "the ability of tissue to reform itself," to brain science and the capacity for change in neural networks. These variations on the plastic have been presented as examples of the metamorphic energetics of the term itself: the plastic is a "speculative word," an intelligent conceptually agile word that occupies the interstices among a variety of properties and processes. The plastic is between liquidity and viscosity; solidity and effervescence; the one-dimensional, the two-dimensional, the three-dimensional, and the hyper-dimensional. This condition of being in-between, however, is not the result of a teetering balance or delicate equilibrium. It is, instead, a formula for a negative unsteadiness, for the instability of the in-between in interstices of production and destruction,

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William Tronzo, "Introduction," in *The Fragment: An Incomplete History*, ed. William Tronzo (Los Angeles:

² This definition of the *informe* comes from discussion of Georges Bataille's use of the term in his article "Informe" in *Documents 7*, December 1929, in Patrick Crowley and Paul Hegarty, "Formless 1. Groundless Interpretations: Thought and Formless," in *Formless: Ways in and out of Form*, ed. Patrick Crowley and Paul Hegarty (Bern: Peter Lang Publishers, 2005), 12. For more on the *informe*, see Georges Didi-Huberman's *La Ressemblance informe*, ou le gai savoir visuel selon Georges Bataille (Paris: Editions Macula, 1995), and Yve-Alain Bois and Rosalind Krauss, *L'Informe: Mode d'emploi* (Paris: Centre Georges Pompidou, 1996).

³ Tronzo, "Introduction," 2.

⁴ For more on the distinction between form and formula, see Andrea Pinotti, "Symbolic Form and Symbolic Formula: Cassirer and Warburg on Morphology (Between Goethe and Vischer)," *Cassirer Studies* (2008): 119.

⁵ Catherine Malabou, *The Future of Hegel: Plasticity, Temporality and Dialectic*, trans. Lisabeth During (New York: Routledge, 2005), 9.

⁶ Ibid., XVI.

⁷ Ibid., 9.

creation and annihilation, in the tensile energy that immediately precedes the kind of fall from which there is no return.

And yet, the term "plastic" in art history is still often taken for granted as an uncomplicated designation for sculpture, or in perception for a single sense principally concerned with the haptic (or touch); meanwhile, the property "plasticity," as popularized by developmental and evolutionary neurobiology, is usually treated as interchangeable with elasticity, an ultra-pliant adaptability that evades fixity and rigidity for a full spectrum of flexibility and malleability.

And so, the plastic—commonly associated with certain materials, a medium in art or a category of sense perception, but less commonly with its speculative meanings as a distinct energetics of form-as-corporeality, or formula—has been revisited in recent years by new materialist philosophers with a focus on it as a negative, rather than regenerative, "capacity to receive form and [...] to produce form."8 This revisitation has, however, lacked significant engagement with the history of the plastic in artist writings and art history. despite the fact that the plastic has long been fundamental to the way art is experienced and written about. As the Austrian art historian Alois Riegl (1858–1905) asserted, the "plastic" is a "notion" that when "not generally agreed upon" in art history, creates divergences in the most "basic conceptions." 10 Meanwhile, in artist writings, the plastic has figured most prominently as that problem of energy that artist-writer Piet Mondrian (1872-1944) most famously referred to in his essays as "plasticism." The word 'plasticism' forms the base of the name Mondrian gave to his way of approaching the plastic in art, "Neo-plasticism."

Productive and Plastic Energy before Mondrian, between Warburg and Burgess

Mondrian's "plasticism" engaged with mathematical¹² and neo-Hegelian explorations¹³ of the plastic as both the creative potential of handling and manipulating that is active in sculpture (German, Plastik; French, plastique) and the potential for the ultimate suppression annihilation—dormant in a yet-to-be-detonated bomb. German philosopher G. W. F. Hegel's lectures on art (1818–1831) made the claim that it is the "freedom" of "productive and plastic

⁸ Ibid., 9.

⁹ In Ontology of the Accident, Malabou writes: "In science, medicine, art and education, the connotations of the term 'plasticity' are always positive. Plasticity refers to an equilibrium between the receiving and giving of form [...] It would not occur to anyone to associate the expression 'cerebral plasticity' with the negative work of destruction" (Catherine Malabou, Ontology of the Accident: An Essay on Destructive Plasticity, trans. Carolyn Shread [Cambridge: Polity Press, 2012], 3). My dissertation research—of which this article is a part—set out to explore if the same is in fact the case with the 'plastic' as it is used in art history and artist writings.

¹⁰ Alois Riegl, *The Origins of Baroque Art in Rome*, ed. and trans. Andrei Hopkins and Arnold Witte (Los Angeles Getty Research Institute, 2010), 102.

¹¹ Piet Mondrian, "Neo-Plasticism: The General Principle of Plastic Equivalence" in *The New Art—The New Life*. The Collected Writings of Piet Mondrian, ed. and trans. Harry Holtzman and Martin S. James (Boston: G.K. Hall & Co., 1986).

¹² It is generally agreed that the mathematician M.H.J. Schoenmakers "introduced Mondrian to the term plastic through his book *Principles of Plastic Mathematics* [...]. The term plastic means extension-creation, image making, volume structuring, or simply construction" (Jennifer Dyer, Serial Images: The Modern Art of Iteration [Zurich: LIT Verlag, 2011], 45). See also Carel Blotkamp, Mondrian: The Art of Destruction (New York; H.N. Abrams, 1995) and Michael White, De Stijl and Dutch Modernism (Manchester, UK: Manchester University Press, 2003).

¹³ For more on Mondrian and Hegel, see Marek Wieczorek, "Mondrian's First Diamond Composition: Spatial Totality and the Plane of the Starry Sky," in Meanings of Abstract Art: Between Nature and Theory, ed. Paul Crowther and Isabel Wünsche (New York: Routledge, 2012). For more on the etymology of plastic, see Malabou, The Future of Hegel, 8 and 10.

energy" that is "what we enjoy" in the experience of "art." Hegelian idealism produced one of the most generative fragmentations in philosophy: a fracturing that resulted in a philosophy of history and a philosophy of art. Thus art, history, and philosophy can be thought of as tied together in a plastic event of accident, their own version of a dawn after the disaster: a monumental splintering that occurred from thinking about plastic energy in the artistic act as generating foundational philosophies of art and history.

In his early-19th-century lectures on art, Hegel did not explicitly define what he meant by the "plastic," but rather demonstrated the term's effect by using it as an adjective to modify the character of a series of objects. In the case of "energy"—what Hegel called "productive and plastic energy"—his use of the qualifier "productive" alongside the adjective "plastic" makes "plastic" something other than "productive": it is something both more and less than "productive," and yet not interchangeable with the kind of "destructive" typically understood as the binary opposite of "productive."

Indeed, Hegel's "productive and plastic energy" could be said to be a kind of non-redemptive reformulating deformation, or what one 21st-century new materialist philosopher who has written extensively about both the plastic and Hegel calls "destructive plasticity." For Hegel, a destructive plasticity—an "energy" at once both "productive *and* plastic"—arising from an "escape" into both "repose and animation," is found in "the origination, as [well as] in the contemplation" of art. The plastic, in this context, is the formula for an energetics of interstices, for the energy of a tension ready to break between polarities like the "ossified" and the "polymorphous," fixity and flexibility. Is

It is all too common for the practices of artists to be traced back to philosophical trends; rarely, on the other hand, are trends in artistic practice and terms from artist writings used to situate the work of scholars. The present essay takes this latter approach. It focuses its exploration of experiments with the plastic at the turn of the 20th-century on the work of two contemporaries—both of whom were acquainted with the other's work: Hamburg-born scholar Aby Warburg (1866–1929) and California-based artist-humorist Gelett Burgess (1866–1951) (figs. 1 and 2). Warburg and Burgess have been chosen as the focus of the present essay because both can be seen as central yet marginal figures in contemporary art history in different ways. ¹⁹

From Warburg's early theoretical manuscripts and his correspondence, it appears that he first met the Boston-born California transplant, Burgess, in California between two sojourns in Italy. Warburg traveled to Italy in 1888, before he wrote his now often-cited dissertation on what he called "bewegtes Beiwerk" ["accessories-in-motion"]. In the specific case of his dissertation,

¹⁴ Georg Wilhelm Friedrich Hegel, On Art, Religion, Philosophy: Introductory Lectures to the Realm of Absolute Spirit, ed. J. Glenn Gray (New York: Harper Torchbooks, 1970), 27. Hegel associated this enjoyment of "productive and plastic energy" in his early 19th-century writings with "beauty." It is important to note that 18th-century German authors of Kunstwissenschaft (Aesthetics) like Johann Gottfried Herder did not share Hegel's idealist interest in beauty.

¹⁵ The most prevalent among these objects are *plastisch Kunst* ["art"], *plastischen individuellen* ["individuals"], *plastischer Vortrag* ["discourse"], and *plastischen Sinn* ["sense"]. See Malabou, *The Future of Hegel*, 10, 11, 116, 118, 180, 188, 201, and 227.

¹⁶ Hegel, On Art, Religion, Philosophy, 27, and Catherine Malabou, The New Wounded: From Neurosis to Brain Damage, trans. Stephen Miller (New York: Fordham University Press, 2012), XV, XIX, 17, and, as a formula that "endows the death drive with its own (autonomous) form," 209.

¹⁷ Hegel, On Art, Religion, Philosophy, 27.

¹⁸ Malabou, *The Future of Hegel*, 8.

¹⁹ Neither Warburg nor Burgess could have known of Mondrian at this point since he was at the time six years their junior and still, for all intents and purposes, a student in 1896.

"accessories-in-motion" was the name Warburg gave to the function of loose tendrils of hair and flowing garments in the paintings of Sandro Botticelli (1445–1510). The second Italian sojourn occurred from 1897 to 1905 after publication of his dissertation (1893), and after his travels in the American west, including trips between northern and southern California (1896). Since the movement of bodies that brought Warburg and Burgess together in California played a critical role in generating new thinking on the plastic, the present essay is subtitled "an experiment in California-Italian thinking on the plastic."



Fig. 2. Images pinned to the author's studio wall: (left) Aby Warburg from the frontispiece of his *Grundlegende Bruchstücke* (*Foundational Fragments*), Florence (1898), as published in *Fragmente zur Ausdruckskunde*, 2. Photo: Warburg Institute, London; (right) Gelett Burgess, c. 1910.

In the public domain. Photo by author.

One of the aims of the present essay is to suggest that the word "plasticism" (from the French *néo-plasticisme* and the Dutch *Nieuwe Beeldung*)²¹—which first appeared in Mondrian's writings between 1917 and 1920—be used in general discussions on the concept of the plastic, instead of "plasticity"—a term too immediately associated with neural plasticity and the organ of

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For more on Warburg's intellectual biography, see Ernst Gombrich, Aby Warburg: An Intellectual Biography (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1986). For a comprehensive chronology of Warburg's life written by Warburg scholar Christopher Johnson, see Christopher Johnson, "Aby Warburg," in Mnemosyne: Meanderings through Aby Warburg's Atlas, last modified 2015, http://warburg.library.cornell.edu/about/aby-warburg (accessed April 30, 2015).
The essay "Le Néo-Plasticisme: Principe général de l'équivalence plastique" ("Neo-Plasticism: The General

Principle of Plastic Equivalence") was written during the first half of 1920 and "marked the first appearance of Mondrian's essential ideas in French and of the term *Néo-Plasticisme*, which transposed the Dutch *Nieuwe Beelding*" (Harry Holtzman and Martin S. James, "Editorial Comment on Neo-Plasticism (1920)" in Piet Mondrian, *The New Art-The New Life. The Collected Writings of Piet Mondrian*, 132). The English "Neo-plasticism" is a translation from the French, and as a transposition of the Dutch, becomes a different concept from the "new plastic" (*Nieuwe Beelding*). Piet Mondrian, "The New Plastic in Painting (1917)," in *The New Art—The New Life. The Collected Writings of Piet Mondrian*, 27–74.

the brain. This would encourage a move towards a different conceptualization of the plastic, one that emerged from the artistic act rather than from developmental neurobiology.

Mondrian's use of "Neo-plasticism" to name an artistic practice that engaged with the energetics of complementary oppositions—in particular, the qualities of horizontality and verticality—calls attention to a subtle, but important distinction between the suffixes -itv and ism. Etymological dictionaries published in the 1920s, when Mondrian's first essays on the "Nieuwe Beeldung" ["new plastic"] (1917) and "Néo-Plasticisme" ["Neo-plasticism"] (1920) were current, describe the different meanings evoked by the two suffixes, as follows: "the word [ending] in -ity usually means the quality of being what the adjective describes, or concretely an instance of the quality, or collectively all the instances; [...] the word [ending] in -ism means the disposition, or collectively all those who feel it."²² In the context of Mondran's "Neoplasticism," the suffix -ism is, of course, used to name a system or set of constraints agreed to by a group of artist practitioners. However, in Mondrian's writings, it is also true that the decision to translate Beeldung as "plasticism" using the suffix -ism rather than -ity, can be considered of particular significance for other reasons. In the word "plasticism," early 21st-century objections to the positively connoted "capacity for change" that is associated with plasticity-as-flexibility, find a term capable of shifting attention onto plasticity-as-explosivity, the negative capacity for change said to be ignored in most uses of the term "plasticity." In this context, the word "plasticism" invokes the fixity of "disposition," qualities of character that are considered inherent, or a certain permanence in the way something comes to be arranged in relation to something else. This kind of fixity is negatively connoted as a kind of stubborn refusal to change or a withdrawal from change, but it is also paradoxically a necessary aspect of the particular capacity for change engendered by the "plastic": in order to experience change, the object must know moments in which it does not change, or at least, it must know moments in which change occurs at faster or slower rates. Put in the terms of the etymology of -ism and -ity previously cited, the plastic, though indeed a "quality of being" (-ity), is also formula "disposed": its expression is constrained by the forms, bodies, nervous systems, landscapes, ecosystems and/or art that, as the 1920s etymology explained, "feel it."

Early 21st-century post-conceptual art practice influenced by the popularity of the neurosciences has associated the "true emancipating power of art [...] in its neuromodulating capacity": as California lecture-performance artist Warren Neidich writes, art is "cognitive labor—both affective and symbolic—[that] produces real changes as modifications in the neurosynaptologies of the brain."²³ This emphasis on an "emancipating power" and "real change" between the brain and art falls into the trap outlined by recent writing against the "neuro-turn,"²⁴ that is, that the problem with plasticity is that it is now "always already" unavoidably "neuro-plasticity," therefore, not only is it always understood as a positive equilibrating, emancipating force that denies its own negative, destructive tensility—its own capacity to be stretched out to a snapping point—but no amount of focus on redefining it in more destructive terms will help to deconstruct the "neurologization" it incurs when employed. Ironically, what Neidich's critical theory and neurobiology-focused genealogy of "cognitive capitalism" is missing in its important exploration of the way the "brain is analogously changed

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²² H.W. Fowler, A Dictionary of Modern English Usage (Oxford, UK: Oxford University Press, 1926).

Warren Neidich, "Neuropower: Art in the Age of Cognitive Capitalism," in *The Psychopathologies of Cognitive Capitalism*, ed. Arne de Boever and Warren Neidich (Berlin: Archive Books, 2012) 1:232.

²⁴ Jan de Vos, *The Metamorphoses of the Brain: Neurologisation and its Discontents* (London: Palgrave Macmillan, 2016), 5–7.

by the same [...] relations that modify [...] the plastic arts"²⁵ is a complimentary genealogy of the plastic in art history and artist writings that does not "neurologize." The present essay is an introduction to this genealogy, and deliberately privileges the specific kind of knowledge about the plastic that has been generated by art practice, in writings by artists, and in art historical writings on art, in order to propose a way into what another California-based artist, humorist-conceptualist Bas Jan Ader, performed with nimble irreverence as a "new neo-plasticism."²⁶

A Kreis or Milieu of Experiments with the Plastic: Warburg, Burgess, and Mondrian

Self-proclaimed cultural scientist and psychohistorian Aby Warburg wrote his fragment on the concept of the plastic for an early collection of notes he authored, selected, ordered, and edited between 1888 and 1905, and which he titled *Grundlegende Bruchstücke* (*Foundational Fragments*) (fig. 3).²⁷ Gelett Burgess—artist, art critic, poet, author and humorist—created the "verse and cartoon" *Remarkable is Art* (1895)²⁸ for the San Francisco "ephemeral bibelot," *The Lark* (fig. 3), which he edited from 1895 to 1897.²⁹ The verse-and-cartoon is part of a collection of humorous inhuman humanoids that Burgess called "goops"³⁰ and was deliberately drawn and designed for the mechanical commercial printing process of photoengraving.³¹ In 1897, Warburg

²⁶ See Bas Jan Ader's series of staged gestures photographed and captioned: *On the Road to a New Neo-Plasticisim. Westkapelle, Holland* (1971), and *Pitfall on the Way to a New Neo-Plasticism. Westkapelle, Holland* (1971). For an image of the latter, see http://www.moma.org/collection/works/192775?locale=en (accessed December 1, 2015).

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²⁵ Neidich, "Neuropower," 232.

The two subtitles Warburg used for his early theoretical manuscripts, the *Grundlegende Bruchstücke*, are zu einer monistischen Kunstpsychologie (On a Monistic Psychology of Art) (1888–1895) and zu einer pragmatischen Ausdruckskunde (On a Pragmatic Theory of Expression) (1901); the manuscripts are usually referred to as the Grundlegende Bruchstücke or the Bruchstücke, and the present essay follows this approach (Aby Warburg, Fragmente zur Ausdruckskunde, ed. Ulrich Pfisterer [Berlin: De Gruyter, 2015]). Research for this article was based on close readings of the earlier bilingual Italian-German edition, Aby Warburg, Frammenti sull'Espressione. Grundlegende Bruchstücke zu einer pragmatischen Ausdruckskunde, ed. Susanne Müller, trans. Maurizio Ghelardi and Giovanna Targia (Pisa: Edizioni della Normale, 2011) but was adjusted upon the publication of the De Gruyter edition in 2015. For more on Warburg's reference to himself playing the "role" of "psycho-historian," see Philippe-Alain Michaud, Aby Warburg and the Image in Motion, trans. Sophie Hawkes (New York: Zone Books, 2004), 238. For the distinction between the conventional translation of Kulturwissenschaft as "cultural studies" and the insistence of Warburg scholars on translating the German term literally as "science of culture," see Christopher Johnson, Memory, Metaphor, and Aby Warburg's Atlas of Images (New York: Cornell University Press, 2012), 12 note 27.

²⁸ Burgess classifies *Remarkable is Art* "verse and cartoon" in a table of contents he created for the first volume of a two-volume collected edition of *The Lark*. This collection is in the holdings of the Warburg Institute Library. For the first publication of the print, see "Remarkable is Art," *The Lark*, no. 8 (December 1895).

The term "ephemeral bibelot" comes from *The Oxford Critical and Cultural History of Modernist Magazines* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2009–2013). For more on this term in relation to American magazines, see Andrew Thacker. "General Introduction: 'Magazines, Magazines, Magazines!'" in ibid., 1:22.

³⁰ The first reference to the name "goop" is in the word "goup," and appears in a story written by Burgess for *The Lark* titled "Reflections on Recent Disruptions in Goupville," *The Lark*, no. 7 (November 1895). This assessment is shared by Timothy G. Young, *Drawn to Enchant: Original Children's Book Art in the Betsy Beinecke Shirley Collection* (New Haven, CT: Yale University Press, 2007), 152. Burgess would later gather all of the goops from *The Lark* and reprint them in a collection as *The Burgess Nonsense Book: Being a Complete Collection of the Humorous Masterpieces of Gelett Burgess* (New York: Frederick A. Stokes, 1901).

³¹ In the 1880s and 1890s, photoengraving could involve "the engraving of photographs printed on wood-blocks"

³¹ In the 1880s and 1890s, photoengraving could involve "the engraving of photographs printed on wood-blocks" and the engraving of photographs "printed on copper plates" or zinc plates. The photoengraving process has been described by scholars as: "the negative of an object [in the case of Burgess, an ink drawing] photographed for reproduction [was placed] over a light-sensitized metal plate, which was then exposed to light. This caused the

reprinted Burgess' goop, *Remarkable is Art*, for German circulation, captioning it with a new title, "Elliptical Wheels." Though Burgess called his photoengravings "verse-and-cartoons," Warburg's article refers to *Remarkable is Art* as "*Karikatur*" ["caricature"]. The German publication, *Pan*, for which Warburg wrote his review on American modernist magazines— "Amerikanische Chapbooks" ["American Chapbooks"] (1897)—was of a very different temperament from the San Francisco-based *Lark*: the Berlin-based magazine was produced for discriminating print connoisseurs who, at the time of Warburg's "American Chapbooks" article, were deeply embroiled in debates over the increased mechanization and commercialization of print-making. 33

When Warburg reprinted Burgess' photoengraving of *Remarkable is Art* in *Pan*, he was still in the midst of collecting and ordering notes for his *Foundational Fragments*, the early theoretical manuscripts for which he composed his note on "plastic art" in San Francisco. Though these manuscripts are typically dated to the period between 1888 and 1905, Warburg was writing about their critical importance to the development of his various projects as late as 1929, two months before his death. Similarly, though Burgess' *The Lark* (classified an "ephemeral bibelot" for its deliberately planned short life) ceased publication in 1897, there is evidence in Warburg's correspondence that he continued to think about it in his later years. As late as August 1925, while Warburg was in the midst of working on the project for which he is now most well-known—the "Atlas" he would eventually title *Mnemosyne Bilderreihen* (*Mnemosyne picture-series* or *picture-strings*, 1924–1929) (fig. 4)³⁷—he was still sending issues of *The Lark* to friends he believed shared his sense of humor.

solution on the plate to wear away the transparent areas of the negative. The dark areas of the negative were thus protected on the plate while the light ones were etched away in an acid bath. The result was a relief engraving on a metal plate to be inked and printed" (Angela E. Davis, *Art and Work: A Social History of Labour in the Canadian Graphic Arts Industry to the 1940s* [Montreal: McGill-Queens University Press, 1996], 71. In the case of Burgess' Goops this process was used for the reproduction of black-and-white ink drawings. It is said that an "entrepreneurial spirit was a common trait among successful founders of engraving, lithography, and photoengraving firms [...] They [...] 'seized the main chance' in recognizing the opportunities and options available to them [...] and [...] were able to gauge the needs of the time. [They] were able to recognize what was needed by [...] cities in the way of illustrative material" (ibid., 68). At photoengraving companies, there were designers who produced drawings and there were technicians for engraving equipment and photographic equipment. Sometimes one person worked through all of the processes, as may have been the case with Burgess. See the numerous advertisements in *The Lark* for The Union Photoengraving Company on Market Street in San Francisco (*The Lark*, no. 14, June 1, 1896 and *The Lark*, no. 16, August 1, 1896).

³² Remarkable is Art was reprinted for German circulation in Aby Warburg, "Amerikanische Chapbooks," Pan 2, no. 4 (April 1897). See also id., "Amerikanische Chapbooks (1897)" in Die Erneuerung der Heidnischen Antike: kulturwissenschaftliche Beiträge zur Geschichte der europäischen Renaissance, ed. Horst Bredekamp and Michael Diers (Berlin: Akademie Verlag, 1998). For an English translation, see id., "American Chapbooks (1897)," in The Renewal of Pagan Antiquity: Contributions of the Cultural History of the European Renaissance, trans. David Britt (Los Angeles: The Getty Research Institute, 1999).

³³ Andreas Kramer, "Between Art and Activism: *Pan* (1895–1900, 1910–15); *Die Weissen Blätter* (1913–21); *Das neue Pathos* (1913–19); and *Marsyas* (1917–19)," in *The Oxford Critical and Cultural History of Modernist Magazines, III: Europe 1880–1940*, ed. Peter Brooker, et. al. (Oxford, UK: Oxford University Press, 2013), *Part II*, 751. See also Catherine Krahmer, "PAN and Lautrec," *Print Quarterly* 10, no. 4 (December 1993).

³⁴ Warburg, "306. 25.III. 96. S Frico Public Libr," in *Fragmente zur Ausdruckskunde*, 150.

³⁵ Maurizio Ghelardi, Aby Warburg: La Lotta per lo Stile (Turin: Nino Aragno Editore, 2012), 47.

³⁶ For an explanation of the term "ephemeral bibelot," see note 29.

³⁷ Warburg gave what he had called his "Atlas" the title *Mnemosyne Bilderreihen zu einer kulturwissenschaftlichen Betrachtung antikisierender Ausdrucksprägung* on March 14, 1928 (Aby Warburg, with contributions from Gertrud Bing and Fritz Saxl, *Tagebuch der Kulturwissenschaftlichen Bibliothek Warburg*, ed. Karen Michels and Charlotte



Fig. 3. Images pinned to the author's studio wall: (left) Warburg's spiral-line-plane drawing as it appears on the page across from his note on the plastic in the *Foundational Fragments*, as reprinted in *Fragmente zur Ausdruckskunde*, 149. Photo: Warburg Institute, London; (right) Burgess' *Remarkable is Art* (1895) as reprinted in Warburg's *Pan* article "American Chapbooks" (1897).

Photo: University of Heidelberg Digital Collections.

Photo by author.

Schoell-Glass [Berlin: Akademie Verlag, 2001], 223). See also Katia Mazzucco, "Mnemosyne, Il Nome della Memoria. Bilderdemonstration, Bilderreihen, Bilderatlas: Una Cronologia Documentaria del Progetto Warburghiano," *Quaderni Warburg Italia* 4–6 (2006–2008 [2011]). For more on late 20th- and early 21st-century interest in the *Mnemosyne Atlas*, see Emily Verla Bovino, "The Nachleben of Mnemosyne: The Afterlife of the Bilderatlas." *La Rivista di Engramma*. Last updated 2014.

http://www.engramma.it/eOS2/atlante/index.php?id articolo=1618 (accessed September 20, 2015).

³⁸ Warburg to Gladys Bronwyn Stern, August 31, 1925, Warburg Institute Archive, General Correspondence (hereafter WIA GC) 16808.

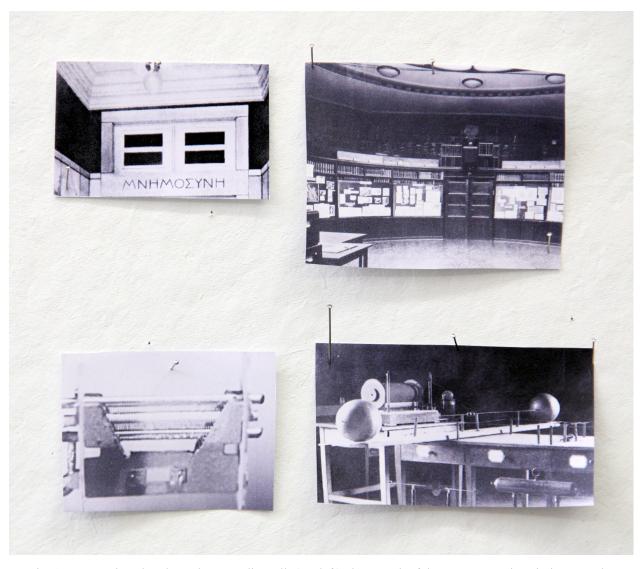


Fig. 4. Images pinned to the author's studio wall: (top left) photograph of the *Mnemosyne* inscription over the doorway to the elliptical reading room in Warburg's library in Hamburg. Photo: Warburg Institute, London; (top right) photograph of a *Mnemosyne Bilderreihen*-like configuration installed on panels in the elliptical reading room for one of Warburg's performative lectures. Photo: Warburg Institute, London. Warburg referred to *Mnemosyne* as part of what he called his "experiment equal to the Hertz experiment." (bottom left and right) photographic images from Hertz experiment instruments. O Photo: Internet Archive. Photo by author.

³⁹ Aby Warburg to Paul Warburg, July 27, 1924, WIA GC 34041. The Warburg Institute Archive database provides the following English abstract of the letter: "The Bibliothek Warburg is a station from which to observe the oscillations of human values, between virtue and contemplation or brutal action and calm observation; he has started to research the opposites, polarity, by the help of images and actions [Atlas project]; it is his experiment, equal to the [Heinrich] Hertz experiment to prove the link between light and electricity; his experiment is to show the way from the most brutal action to the most sublime emotion, its phases are the stations of the suffering of humanity."

⁴⁰ Fig. 4 (bottom left) Apparatus with spiral coils for the Heinrich Hertz (Hamburg) experiment in 1888. Photo: PhotoDeutsche Museum; (botttom right) Cylindirical cathode with spiral of wire "control grid"; the surrounding cylindrical wire screen "accelerating grid" (momentarily removed) was used in a 1961 demonstration of the Franck-Hertz experiment of 1918 (Education Development Center, 1961). Photo: Internet Archive.

Warburg's early theoretical manuscripts, the *Foundational Fragments*, were supposed to be published as the fourth part of a posthumous edition of his *Gesammelte Schriften* [Collected Writings] (1932). The outline for the planned volumes was published in 1932, the year before the German-Jewish Warburg's library (the idiosyncratic organization of which was a critical part of Warburg's scholarship) was shipped from Hamburg to London to evade National Socialist expropriations in 1933. Written by Warburg's mentee and collaborator Fritz Saxl, the outline was published in an editorial introduction written by another Warburg mentee and collaborator Gertrud Bing, to preface the release of the first volume of the Collected Writings, the collection of writings that Warburg published in his lifetime. This first part of the Collected Writings project featured "American Chapbooks," Warburg's Pan review of The Lark and included his Elliptical Wheels reprint of Burgess' Remarkable is Art. Release of the fourth volume of the Collected Writings was delayed, so the young Warburg's Foundational Fragments was only published for the first time as an integral collection in 2011, then again in 2015 in a more expansive version.

Over the course of this delay in publication of the early theoretical manuscripts, Warburg's "American Chapbooks" article in *Pan* became one of the most consistently overlooked articles he published in his lifetime: this despite fascination with the idea of Warburg's possible exposure to practices of image-pairing and image-series in modernist magazines such as *Der Blaue Reiter* (*The Blue Rider*), practices that share a certain affinity with Warburg's *Mnemosyne Bilderreihen* (fig. 4). ⁴⁶ This is perhaps due to the fact that because of its late 19th-century American origins and its distinctly humorist bent, *The Lark* occupies an awkward position among modernist magazines. ⁴⁷

In art historical writings, Burgess' name can be found associated with the Dadaists, the Cubists, and other figures from the historical avant-garde, in particular Francis Picabia, Pablo Picasso, and Alfred Stieglitz. In a monograph on Picabia, Burgess' work is reviewed in newspaper reports on mock-armory exhibitions he participated in with French expatriate New York Dadaists in 1913.⁴⁸ The photograph of the young Picasso in his studio that Burgess arranged be taken by a photographer for his famous humorist article, "The Wild Men of Paris," continues to circulate as an iconic image of Picasso in 21st-century art history textbooks (fig.

⁴¹ Fritz Saxl, "Plan of the Collected Edition," in Aby Warburg, *The Renewal of Pagan Antiquity: Contributions of the Cultural History of the European Renaissance*, trans. David Britt (Los Angeles: The Getty Research Institute, 1999) 80

⁴² Emily J. Levine, *Dreamland of Humanists: Warburg, Cassirer, Panofsky and the Hamburg School* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2013), 245, 257.

⁴³ Aby Warburg, Die Erneuerung der heidnischen Antike: kulturwissenschaftliche Beiträge zur Geschichte der europäischen Renaissance, ed. Gertrud Bing in association with Fritz Rougemont (Leipzig: B. G. Teubner Verlag, 1932).

⁴⁴ Levine, *Dreamland of Humanists*, 245, 257.

⁴⁵ Frammenti sull'Espressione (2011) and Fragmente zur Ausdruckskunde (2015) (see note 27).

⁴⁶ Salvatore Settis, "Aby Warburg, il demone della forma: Antropologia, storia, memoria," *La Rivista di Engramma* 100 (September–October 2012); for dialogue between the Warburg Institute and the avant-garde, see Spyros Papapetros, "Between the Academy and the Avant-Garde: Carl Einstein and Fritz Saxl Correspond," *October* 139 (Winter 2012).

⁴⁷ This space could be identified as somewhere in-between the famous issues of *Le Chat Noir* edited by Alphonse Allais (c.1886), the well-known issues of *291* worked on by Francis Picabia (c.1915), and Marcel Duchamp's oftcited *Blind Man* (1917). Burgess can, in fact, be connected by various degrees with all of these magazines.

⁴⁸ William Camfield, *Francis Picabia: His Art, Life and Times* (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 1979), 44.

⁴⁹ Gelett Burgess, "The Wild Men of Paris," *The Architectural Record* (May 1910).

5);⁵⁰ in fact, Burgess' "The Wild Men of Paris" is credited with having featured the first reproduction of Picasso's *Les Demoiselles d'Avignon* (1907) captioned in Burgess' article as "Study by Picasso." An article in Alfred Stieglitz's *Camera Work* also reports on an exhibition of "water-colors" by Burgess in the 1911/1912 season of Stieglitz's New York gallery, 291. ⁵²

And yet, as a humorist and, in particular it seems, as an American humorist with a characteristic neo-Bohemian California 'bite,' Burgess occupies an awkward non-art art position with respect to the art historical canon. This position is what seems to have made it difficult for art historians interested in Warburg's work to take his writings on Burgess seriously.⁵³

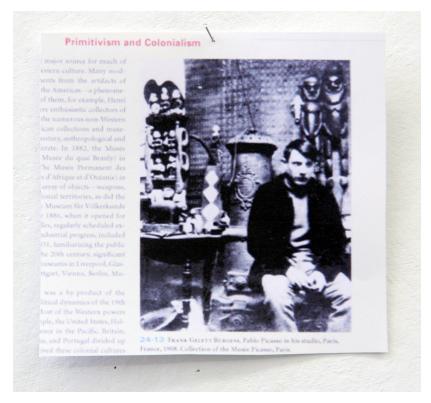


Fig. 5. Image pinned to the author's studio wall: Burgess' photograph of Picasso in his Paris studio from Burgess' "The Wild Men of Paris" as reprinted in *Gardener's Art Through the Ages*, 696, Fig. 24-13.

Photo by author.

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⁵⁰ Fred Kleiner, Gardener's Art Through the Ages. Vol. 2: The Western Perspective, 13th ed. (Boston: Wadsworth, 2010), 696.

⁵¹ Burgess, "The Wild Men of Paris," 407–08. For art historical credit given to Burgess for the first reproduction of Picasso's *Demoiselles*, see William Stanley Rubin, *Les Demoiselles d'Avignon* (New York: Museum of Modern Art, 1995), 230.

⁵² "Notes on the Exhibitions at "291": The Burgess Water-colors" in Alfred Stieglitz, ed. and pub. *Camera Work, A Photographic Quarterly.* 50 Issues. 1903 – 1917. Reprint. Liechtenstein: Kraus Reprints, 1969. 291.

The exception to this is the work of architectural historian Spyros Papapetros in whose book *On the Animation of the Inorganic*, another Burgess print—the "railroad vignette" or "snake-locomotive"—also featured in Warburg's article "American Chapbooks" is discussed and reprinted as one of the book's figures (Fig. 2.12) Papapetros, *On the Animation of the Inorganic*, 95. Ernst Gombrich has a short section on "American Chapbooks" in his intellectual biography of Warburg; however, some of his claims about Warburg's interest in *The Lark* are rather superficial. See Gombrich, *Aby Warburg*, 92–93.

Like Burgess, Warburg also hovers in the interstices of new art histories. His work is suspended between the center and margins of 21st-century thinking that has extended the study of modernism into plural art historical modernisms. In addition, despite the importance that both Warburg and his early biographer, art historian Ernst Gombrich, gave to the *Foundational Fragments*—and despite a number of recent publications that have been written about them⁵⁴—Warburg's early theoretical manuscripts continue to remain on the periphery of most mainstream discussions about his work. Invocations of Warburg in current scholarship are typically of four types. First, there are references to his concept "accessories-in-motion," i.e., dynamic details that are peripheral to central figures and/or on the margins of compositions, but that are of fundamental importance to the psychological function of an image.⁵⁵ Second there are references to his concept of "Pathosformel" ["pathos-formula"].⁵⁶ These "expressive formulas" are corporeal abstractions of emotion in figural gestures that are devised by an artist through both empathetic response and intellectual device.⁵⁷ Third there are references to a posthumously published lecture on processes of symbolization in late 19th-century Hopi animal dances indigenous to the American Far West.⁵⁸ Lastly, but most prominently, there are references to

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⁵⁴ Georges Didi-Huberman, L'Image survivante: Histoire de l'art et temps des fantômes selon Aby Warburg (Paris: Minuti, 2002) and Ghelardi, Aby Warburg: La Lotta per lo Stile.

Aby Warburg, Sandro Botticellis "Geburt der Venus" und "Frühling," in Die Erneuerung der Heidnischen Antike: kulturwissenschaftliche Beiträge zur Geschichte der europäischen Renaissance, ed. Horst Bredekamp and Michael Diers (Berlin: Akademie Verlag, 1998). For English translations, see corresponding sections in Aby Warburg, "Sandro Botticelli's Birth of Venus.and Spring. An Examination of the Concepts of Antiquity in the Italian Early Renaisance (1893)," in id., The Renewal of Pagan Antiquity: Contributions of the Cultural History of the European Renaissance, trans. David Britt (Los Angeles: The Getty Research Institute, 1999). For extended discussion of the concept of "accessories-in-motion," see also Gombrich, Aby Warburg. For recent examples, see Philippe-Alain Michaud, Image in Motion; Chris Murray, Key Writers on Art. The Twentieth Century (London: Routledge, 2003); Papapetros, Animation of the Inorganic; Martin Ruehl, The Italian Renaissance in the German Historical Imagination, 1860–1930 (Cambridge, UK: Cambridge University Press, 2015); and Adrian W. B. Randolph, Engaging Symbols: Gender, Politics and Public Art in Fifteenth-Century Florence (New Haven, CT: Yale University Press, 2002).

Folzer with Mark Franco (New York: Oxford University Press, 2015); Kathleen M. Gough, "Between the Image and Anthropology: Theatrical Lessons from Aby Warburg's 'Nympha'," *TDR: The Drama Review* 56, no. 3 (Fall 2012); Richard Brilliant, *My Laocoön: Alternative Claims in the Interpretation of Artworks* (Berkeley, CA: University of California Press, 2000); W. Eugene Kleinbauer, ed., *Modern Perspectives in Western Art History. An Anthology. Bildakt at the Warburg Institute* (New York: Holt, Rinehart and Winston, 1971); Gail Kern Paster, Katherine Rowe, and Mary Floyd-Wilson, eds., *Reading the Early Modern Passions: Essays in the Cultural History of Emotion* (Philadelphia, PA: University of Pennsylvania Press, 2004).

Albrecht Dürer's Death of Orpheus (Aby Warburg, "Dürer und die italienische Antike," in Verhandlungen der achtundvierzigsten Versammlung deutscher Philologen und Schulmänner in Hamburg vom 3. bis 6. Oktober 1905 [Leipzig: Teubner, 1906]; id., "Dürer und die italienische Antike (1905)," in Die Erneuerung der Heidnischen Antike: kulturwissenschaftliche Beiträge zur Geschichte der europäischen Renaissance, ed. Horst Bredekamp and Michael Diers [Berlin: Akademie Verlag, 1998]). Pathosformeln has been translated as both "pathos formulas" and "emotive formulas." For the latter, see Aby Warburg, "Dürer and Italian Antiquity (1905)," in id., The Renewal of Pagan Antiquity: Contributions of the Cultural History of the European Renaissance, trans. David Britt (Los Angeles: The Getty Research Institute, 1999). The literature on the Pathosformeln is too extensive to cite comprehensively here; however, see note 56 for a selection of examples. See also Emily Verla Bovino, "Wanting to See Duse, or, on Goshka Macuga's Preparatory Notes for a Chicago Comedy, inspired by Aby Warburg-as-Amateur-Playwright," di 130 (October/November, La Rivista Engramma 2015): http://www.engramma.it/eOS2/index.php?id articolo=2663 (accessed November 15, 2014).

⁵⁸ Aby Warburg, "A Lecture on Serpent Ritual," ed. Gertrud Bing and Fritz Saxl, trans. W. F. Mainland, *Journal of the Warburg Institute* 2, no. 4 (April 1939). Warburg prepared and presented the slide lecture (1923) at the Bellevue

Warburg's *Mnemosyne Bilderreihen*.⁵⁹ The 'Atlas' comprises glass slides of photographs, prints, and clippings that Warburg configured on mobile display panels at his research institute in Hamburg after his return from sanatorium retreat (c.1918–1924; part of this time was spent at Ludwig Binswanger's renowned Sanatorium Bellevue in Kreuzlingen, Switzerland). Though intended as part of a book project, *Mnemosyne Bilderreihen* images were not published in Warburg's lifetime; the mobile panels were allegedly lost when Warburg's library was moved from Hamburg to London.⁶⁰

The principle aim of the present essay is not to argue for a place for Warburg's Foundational Fragments—or for Burgess' Remarkable is Art—in what is typically thought of as the art historical canon, but rather, to suggest how it might be possible to experiment with writing what could be called—with a certain sense of irony and humor empathetic with the temperaments of Warburg and Burgess—a non-art art history. This non-art art history would be theoretically grounded in the marginalization of figures like Warburg and Burgess, and would therefore be uniquely positioned to discuss their experiments in relation to the artistic act. At the same time, it would allow them to maintain their respective peripheral positions of inbetweenness among art worlds and among art histories, not forcing them into any canon.

Retrospective self-editing was a critical component of Warburg's scholarly practice and is well represented by two of his recorded alterations to the title of the *Foundational Fragments*: "On a Monistic Psychology of Art" and "On a Pragmatic Theory of Expression." It is, therefore, perhaps important to consider these two early subtitles as themselves a characterization of the in-betweenness of the early theoretical manuscripts: that is, how the manuscripts can be thought of as "foundational fragments" in-between a "monistic psychology of art" and a "pragmatic theory of expression."

sanatorium in the Swiss-German border town of Kreuzlingen as part of the *Daseinanalyse* ("being-in-the-world analysis") designed for him by existential psychiatrist Ludwig Binswanger, as treatment for the manic-depressive condition Warburg was diagnosed with in 1921. Warburg expressly asked that it be filed away, shown to no one but "his wife, his brother Max and two colleagues, of whom one was Ernst Cassirer" with whom he also shared his *Foundational Fragments*. See Aby Warburg, *Images from the Region of the Pueblo Indians of North America*, ed. and trans. Michael P. Steinberg (Ithaca, NY: Cornell University Press, 1995), VII–VIII. It appears to have been published because it was considered to be among Warburg's more accessible writings and was circulated in the hopes of generating interest in the newly established Warburg Institute in London (1933). There is extensive discussion of this throughout the available literature on Warburg. For more on Warburg's diagnosis, see Davide Stimilli's introduction to Ludwig Binswanger and Aby Warburg, *La Guarigione Infinita* (Vicenza: Neri Pozza, 2005).

⁵⁹ See Johnson, *Memory, Metaphor, and Aby Warburg's Atlas of Images* for a definitive study from a German literary studies perspective. See also Anthony Downey, ed., *Dissonant Archives: Contemporary Visual Culture and Contemporary and Contested Narratives in the Middle East* (London: I.B. Tauris, 2015); Lyndell Brown and Charles Green, "Robert Smithson's Ghost in 1920s Hamburg: Reading Aby Warburg's *Mnemosyne Atlas* as a non-site," *Visual Resources* 18, no. 2 (2002); and Dan Adler, *Hanne Darboven: Cultural History, 1880–1983* (London: Afterall Books, 2009).

⁶⁰ Levine, Dreamland of Humanists, 245, 257.

⁶¹ For the original German and the source of these subtitles, see note 27.

⁶² Susanne Müller, "Das Wasserzeichen des Gedankens," in Aby Warburg, *Frammenti sull'Espressione*. Grundlegende Bruchstücke zu einer pragmatischen Ausdruckskunde, ed. Susanne Müller, trans. Maurizio Ghelardi and Giovanna Targia (Pisa: Edizioni della Normale, 2011), 9–10. See also, Warburg, *Fragmente zur Ausdruckskunde*, 3.

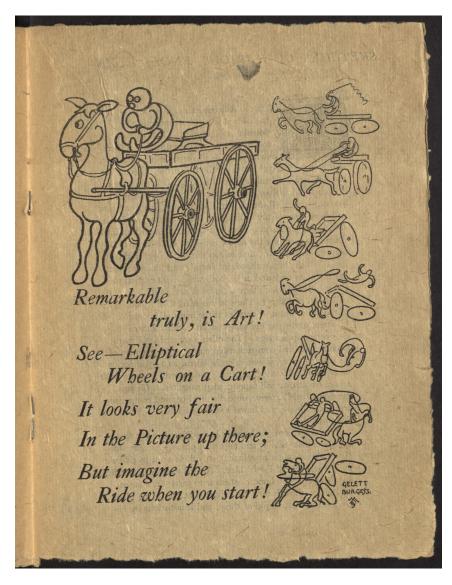


Fig. 6. Burgess' *Remarkable is Art* (1895) as it first appeared in *The Lark* (December 1895), printed on yellow bamboo paper Burgess claimed he found in San Francisco's Chinatown. Photo: Geisel Library Special Collections, University of California, San Diego.

Written by a historian who characterized himself for his in-betweeness— an "ebreo di sangue, Amburghese di cuore, d'anima Fiorentino" ["Jewish by blood, Hamburger at heart, of Florentine soul"]⁶³—Warburg's note on "plastische Kunst" ["plastic art"] in the *Foundational Fragments* was composed while its author was geographically in-between: it was written in California during American travels between Warburg's two sojourns in Italy (1888; 1897–1904). To be more precise, the note was composed at the San Francisco Public Library on March 25, 1896, the day Warburg received a lunch invitation from Burgess, three months after Burgess first printed his photoengraving *Remarkable is Art* in *The Lark* (fig. 6), and approximately a year

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⁶³ See Charlotte Schoell-Glass, *Aby Warburg and Anti-Semitism: Political Perspectives on Images and Culture* (Detroit, MI: Wayne State University Press, 2008), 13 note 7.

before Warburg would eventually reprint *Remarkable is Art* as *Elliptical Wheels* in his 1897 *Pan* article "American Chapbooks" (fig. 7). 64

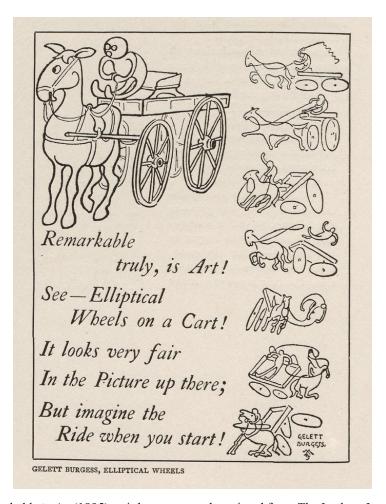


Fig. 7. Burgess' *Remarkable is Art* (1895) as it later appeared reprinted from *The Lark* on Japanese paper in *Pan*. In Warburg's *Pan* article "American Chapbooks" (1897), the photoengraving was re-titled *Elliptical Wheels* (the new title is under the bottom border of the image). Photo: University of Heidelberg Digital Library.

Burgess took every occasion to proudly remind readers that *The Lark* was printed on inexpensive paper he had discovered in San Francisco's Chinatown. ⁶⁵ In 1897, Warburg reprinted Burgess' goop, *Remarkable is Art* in the German *Pan*, ; ⁶⁶ in 1932, Warburg's article

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⁶⁴ Warburg, *Frammenti sull'Espressione*, 109; Warburg, *Fragmente zur Ausdruckskunde*, 150. For the lunch invitation from Burgess, see Burgess to Warburg, Lunch Invitation, March 25, 1896, WIA GC 9632.

^{65 &}quot;Aiming for total originality, Burgess and [Bruce] Porter [Burgess' collaborator] 'ransacked' Chinatown in search of paper and chose a cheap bamboo stock yellowed by mildew" (Janet Gray, "Popular Poetry," in *Encyclopedia of American Poetry: The Nineteenth Century*, ed. Eric L. Haralson [Chicago: Fitzroy Dearborn Publishers, 1998], 352). For repetition of this history of *The Lark*'s paper, see Roy Kotynek and John Cohassey, *American Cultural Rebels: Avant-Garde and Bohemien Artists, Writers and Musicians from the 1850s through the 1960s.* (Jefferson: McFarland & Company, Inc, Publishers, 2008), 45.

⁶⁶ Remarkable is Art was reprinted for German circulation in Aby Warburg, "Amerikanische Chapbooks." See also id., "Amerikanische Chapbooks (1897)," and id., "American Chapbooks (1897)."

"American Chapbooks" and its reprint of *Remarkable is Art* were in the first part of the *Collected Writings* project of Warburg's published essays, then again in its English translation in 1999.⁶⁷ In these reprints, wrinkled and knobby disruptions of line created by the long-grain yellow bamboo paper under the original photo-engraving (fig. 6) were 'fixed' with printing on refined Japanese (*Pan*) (fig. 7) and commercial bleached papers (Warburg's *Collected Writings*); superimpositions with underlying text and images in the original were eliminated with the opaque ground of thicker paper sheets in the reprints.



Fig. 8. Images pinned to the author's studio wall: (left) Mondrian's print from D.P. Roussow's *Joint Heirs of Christ* (1896–1897). Source: *Mondrian: The Art of Destruction*, 23; (right) Burgess' *Remarkable is Art* (1895). Source: University of Heidelberg Digital Library. Photo by author.

As evidenced by the complete collection of *The Lark* goops published in 1901 (*The Burgess Nonsense Book*), the goop became a recurring character in Burgess' illustrations: a tube of an inhuman humanoid body deflated and inflated in nervous exhaustion with a capacity for extreme empathy with objects as varied as emblems, ornamental borders and flourishes, lectures, window sills, melons, street paving, dreams and—in the case of *Remarkable is Art*—even the elliptical wheels on a horse-drawn cart. ⁶⁸ The goop in *Remarkable is Art* hangs onto a set of reins to swing in an elliptical coil around the neck of a horse and the elliptical wheels of a cart. In a commissioned engraving—*Medeërfgenamen van Christus* (*Joint Heirs of Christ*, 1896–1897)—produced by Mondrian during the same period (around twenty years before his writings on "Neoplasticism"), the tortured body of a defiant Protestant is bound in a tight ball and swings from a

67 Saxl, "Plan of the Collected Edition," 80.

⁶⁸ Burgess, *The Burgess Nonsense Book*, 9, 27 and 59, 33, 35, 37, 51 and 32.

scaffold—a vertical stand and a horizontal lever—with a single leg left to dangle as an accessory to the bound body: an "accessory-in-motion" that follows its own pendular movement (fig. 8).

Using Warburg's theorization of the "accessory-in-motion," a humorist describing Mondrian's engraving might focus interpretation of its composition on the swinging right leg in its center. The bound body of the Protestant "heir of Christ" hanging from the scaffold is enduring punishment by the Catholic Spanish Empire. Loyalists of the Catholic Spanish Empire are shown attempting to destroy the Protestant body politic of the Dutch Republic, making ironic use of the Protestant repression of the body against Protestants themselves. However, a defiant "accessory-in-motion"—the leg of the tortured Protestant—escapes in a pendular dangle. The "plastic" potential for pendular movement in the otherwise peripheral leg is a marginal detail that is not only the center of the composition, but the fulcrum upon which the psychology of the image hinges. The potential in the leg's dangle is 'plastic' because the leg could destroy the scene of torture and set the Protestant free, just as it could weigh the body down with its dynamic swing and be the scourge of further agony. In Remarkable is Art, the neurasthenic American goop submits itself to its own torture: it literally drives itself into being a humanoid pendant—an anthropomorphized "accessory-in-motion"—flung to ornament the neck of a work-horse and a pair of wheels. It is, indeed, its own autonomous comic iteration on both Mondrian's "tragic plastic" (what Mondrian would later write about in his essay on "Neo-plasticism" as "disequilibrium [...] expressed as tragic plastic" and Warburg's "accessory-in-motion" theorized in his 1893 dissertation. 70 It is the comic plastic at work in what Burgess would define in The Burgess Nonsense Book's description of Remarkable is Art as "A Lesson / Objective / In Animal Motion and Rules of / Perspective."⁷¹

A look back at Mondrian's *Joint Heirs of Christ* reveals that—among all of his early works before *Woman*, 1913 (a work famous for the praise it earned from poet Guillaume Apollinaire) (fig. 9, top right)—it is the most strikingly prescient precursor to his first published essay on the "new plastic" (1917–1918). Mondrian worked on his essay on "Neo-plasticism" between 1914 and 1917: the scaffolded, bound body in *Joint Heirs of Christ* is prescient of that now famous period of "destruction"— destroying naturalism—that Mondrian described as his "searching earnestly." The convention in art history defines this period in formal terms as Mondrian's "adaptation of Cubism" to "his goal of uniting art and philosophy." In Mondrian's essay on the "new plastic," he outlines the negating processes of "interiorization" necessary "to achieve the determination and the expression of intensification" in art. He writes of "form" as synonymous with what he calls "corporeality" (or "form(corporeality)") and describes "pure plastic vision" as the vision that "leads to a conception of the structure that underlies existence [...] enabl[ing] us to see pure relationships." He describes the "plastic artist" as the figure in which "man will

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⁶⁹ Mondrian, "Neo-Plasticism," 136.

⁷⁰ This is not to imply that Burgess knew of Mondrian's *Joint Heirs of Christ* prints, or that Mondrian ever saw Burgess' *The Lark*. Mondrian was not well-known at the time of his commission and there is no evidence that either Burgess or Mondrian saw each others' images at the turn of the century. What is significant in the juxtaposition of their two objects is the fact that both images were in print circulation during the same period (1895–1897). See the discussion of synchronicity and pseudomorphism to come.

⁷¹ Burgess, The Burgess Nonsense Book, 30.

⁷² Blotkamp, *Mondrian*, 60. Appropriately, the subtitle of Blotkamp's authoritative monograph on Mondrian is "The Art of Destruction."

⁷³ The quote from Mondrian is from letters he wrote in 1914 (ibid., 60).

⁷⁴ Mondrian. "The New Plastic in Painting." 56, 64.

⁷⁵ Ibid., 49.

⁷⁶ Ibid., 60–61.

become himself" in order to "be [...] completely human both in his own duality and in relation to the life around him." When studied alongside his print from the *Joint Heirs of Christ*, Mondrian's first essay reads like an account of what he had learned twenty years earlier in the process of etching while contemplating the relationship between torture and art for one of his earliest commissions: the destruction of "form (corporeality)" for the ideal of "pure plastic vision."

Meanwhile, Burgess' writings on "comatose animation"—writings published four years after his invention of the goop—is the theorization of plastic-energy-in-objects he discovered while drawing and photoengraving *Remarkable is Art*. Burgess calls the study of this plastic energy a playful "unnatural science" that observes "comatose or degenerate animation in objects" (fig. 9). This humorist, but nonetheless serious, "theory" of "evolution" in objects was written for parents as the preface to a children's book: it recognizes "objects do or did actually possess more or less highly developed characeristics, manners and customs" and cites as evidence the autonomous "shutting of doors, [...] the ease with which small articles get lost, [...] [the fact that] all objects grow old," and, "in architecture," the observation that "there is scarcely any doubt but that, in the original Animate objects, the door was [...] the mouth of the house." As Burgess explains,

the unnatural scientist [...] see[s] a host of corroborative details. The most striking [...] in what might be called the "expression" of houses, irrespective of any marked similarity to human beings. This is what some architects call 'Design.' It is enough to say that certain houses have an anxious; some an uneasy and others a generous, reposeful aspect. Our poets are fond of describing church steeples as "fingers pointing Heavenwards." [...] [T]he whole misconceived personification is ill-described, but it exemplifies a state of things well understood by the imaginative. ⁸⁰

In *Remarkable is Art*, Burgess shows the human, the object, and the animal animated as what he would later come to call "equi-dominant races or species" captured in their momentary return to "a stage in the progress of [evolution], when animals and objects existed contemporaneously, and were equipped with approximately equal powers."

Burgess' plastic energy of "comatose animation" in objects—and Mondrian's "New plastic artist" in whom the human becomes "completely human both in his own duality and in relation to the life around him" come together in acausal coincidence (synchronicity) and accident

⁷⁸ Gelett Burgess, "Preface for Skeptic Parents: The Cidivation of Inanimate Things," in *The Lively City O' Ligg* (New York: Frederick A. Stokes Co., 1899).

Mondrian, "Natural Reality and Abstract Reality: A Trialogue (While Strolling from the Country to the City) (1919-1920)" in *The New Art – The New Life: The Collected Writings of Piet Mondrian*, ed. and trans. By Harry Holtzman and Martin S. James, Boston: G-K. Hall & Co., 1986. 114 and 115, and Mondrian, "The New Plastic in Painting (1917)," 57.

⁷⁷ Ibid., 57.

⁷⁹ Burgess, "Preface for Skeptic Parents," 22–23

⁸⁰ Ibid., 26

⁸² Analytical psychology emphasizes the difference between -ity and -ism suffixes and synchrony by stressing the distinction between "synchronicity" and "synchronism." This is in some sense similar to the way the present essay approaches the distinction between "plasticism" and "plasticity." "Synchronism" is said to mean "the simultaneous occurrence of two events" whereas "synchronicity" is the simultaneous occurrence of two meaningfully but not

of resemblance (pseudomorphism)⁸³ between Burgess' photoengraving *Remarkable is Art* and Mondrian's etching *Joint Heirs of Christ* (fig. 8).



Fig. 9. Detail of images pinned to the author's studio wall: (left) Burgess' "comatose animation" in action between the "terrible train" and the "train tamer" from a short story in *The Lively City O' Ligg* (New York: Frederick A. Stokes Co., 1899), 30–1. Photo: Internet Archive; (top right) Piet Mondrian, *Woman* (1913), oil on canvas, 76 x 57.5 cm, Otterlo. Photo: *Mondrian: The Art of Destruction*, 62; (bottom right) Piet Mondrian, *Nude* (1912), oil on canvas, 140 x 98 cm, The Hague. Photo: *Mondrian: The Art of Destruction*, 65.

Photo by author.

causally connected events. See Carl Jung, *Synchronicity: An Acausal Connecting Principle*, trans. R.F.C. Hull, foreword by Sonu Shamdasani (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 2011), 41.

Hal Foster calls "pseudomorphism" a "rookie mistake" in art history and defines it as "the relating of different works that merely look alike." He writes, "it comes as a surprise [...] that some scholars now aim to redeem [this] error" (Hal Foster, "Preposterous Timing," London Review of Books 34, no. 21 [November 8, 2012]: 12). Special thanks to Professor William Tronzo for suggesting I look at this article. Art historian and Warburg Institute scholar Erwin Panofsky is usually attributed with first using the term "pseudomorphosis" (citing Oswald Spengler, but without crediting him) as what occurred when "certain Renaissance figures became invested with a meaning which, for all their classicizing appearance, had not been present in their classical prototypes, though it had frequently been foreshadowed in classical literature" (Erwin Panofsky, Studies in Iconology: Humanistic Themes in the Art of the Renaissance [New York: Harper & Row, 1972], 70–71). To put this in more general terms, Panofsky explained, pseudomorphosis as "the emergence of form A, morphologically analagous to, or even identical with form B, yet entirely unrelated to it from a genetic point of view." The latter passage is quoted in Charles A. Cramer, Abstraction and the Classical Ideal, 1760–1920 (Delaware, MD: University of Delaware Press, 2006), 136. For more on pseudomorphosis, see Alexander Nagel and Christopher S. Wood, Anachronic Renaissance (New York: Zone Books, 2010), 48, 50, 136.

Writing through the synchronicity and pseudomorphism produced by pairing the two prints serves to make visible a shared impulse toward experimentation with the plastic that can also be found in Warburg's early theoretical manuscripts. In the *Foundational Fragments*, Warburg also formulates ideas about the symbolic through destruction, corporeality, and the plastic; indeed, he does this at the same time that he is contemplating his amusement with Burgess' *Lark*. Bringing these three contemporaries together into what Warburg called a *Kreis* (German for "circle") or *milieu* (French for "middle place" or "medium")⁸⁴ generates a new plastic vision of plasticism: staging accident and coincidence in encounters among images reveals a series of relationships among turn-of-the-20th-century experiments with the plastic, across the artistic act, humorism, and the psycho-history of art.

Corporal Introjection and Plastic Art: A Tragedy and Comedy of Corporalization

In-between his two sojourns in Florence, and in the midst of the three-month period of fragmentary notes that span his 1896 re-entry to Europe from California through northern Europe, a series of questions arising from his San Francisco note on the plastic⁸⁵ led Warburg to rethink his earlier student readings of Hegel on the symbolic in art.⁸⁶ This is significant for the *Kreis in* which Warburg, Mondrian, and Burgess were unknowingly co-operating as late 19th-century investigators of experimenters with the plastic. A new Hegelianism similar to Warburg's was also emerging across the North Sea in the Netherlands where Mondrian was preparing his engravings for the *Joint Heirs of Christ*. In fact, Mondrian took the *Joint Heirs of Christ* commission in the mid-1890s just as what has been called an "intellectual milieu of 'Dutch Hegelianism'" was beginning to take form.⁸⁷

Study of this Hegelian intellectual milieu has been used in the past five years to remedy "misunderstandings" about "the plane as a reference to flatness" in Mondrian's later 1917 and 1920 essays on the "new plastic" and "new plasticism." This has involved clarifying the relationship between what Mondrian calls "the plane" and "expansion" (*uitbreiding* in Dutch) and the "operative dimensions of the Hegelian dialectic for [...] Mondrian's neoplastic project": 'the plane' was the culmination of a logical, expansive development from point to line, equivalent to what Hegel called 'the spatial totality' [...] originating from the dialectical nature of force, from 'expansion' [...] a term ubiquitous in Mondrian's writings and presented as 'the

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Artist and scholar Gavin Keeney's "Else-where": Essays in Art, Architecture and Cultural Production, 2000–2011 (Newcastle upon Tyne: Cambridge Scholars Publishing, 2011) includes an appendix titled "Notes on Milieu & Anti-Milieu" with a survey of quotes from philosopher Georges Canguilhem to dissident surrealist Roger Caillois. Among these is Blaise Pascal's (1623–1662) "milieu" defined as "a median situation, a fluid of suspension, a life environment": "Pascal knew that the cosmos had shattered into pieces [with Newtonian physics] but the eternal silence of infinite spaces frightened him. Man was no longer at the center (au milieu) of the world, but he is a milieu (a milieu between two infinites, a milieu between nothing and everything, a milieu between two extremes)" (ibid., 309–315). Warburg uses both the words milieu and Kreis in his writings: for the particular use of Kreis cited here, see the last line in his description of his dissertation, Sandro Botticellis "Geburt der Venus." For his use of milieu, see his discussion of Leonardo in ibid., 51, and roman numeral II in his final outline of the main thesis of the dissertation, ibid., 58. For English translations, see corresponding sections in id., Warburg, Sandro Botticellis "Geburt der Venus" und "Frühling." 5.

⁸⁵ Warburg, "306. 25.III.96. S Frico Public Libr.," 150.

⁸⁶ Warburg, Frammenti sull'Espressione, 109–10; see also the same notes as transcribed in id., Fragmente zur Ausdruckskunde, 145–50.

⁸⁷ Wieczorek, "Mondrian's First Diamond Composition," 34.

⁸⁸ Ibid.

cause of the appearance of space." The importance of "plane" and "expansion" to Mondrian's thinking about the "appearance of space," and the alleged impact the "operative dimensions of the Hegelian dialectic" had on his conceptualization of the plastic, can help to make certain aspects of Warburg's note on what he calls "plastic art" less cryptic:⁹⁰ first, his association of "plastic art" with what he calls "der Umfang" ["extension"];⁹¹ second, his inclusion of the note about "plastic art" in the midst of notes on corporeality and the symbolic, in particular, a note on the "phyologisches Gesetz" ["psychological law"]⁹² that he called "die 'Verleibung' des sinnlichen Eindrucks" ["the 'corporalization' of sensorial impression"]⁹³ and another note on Hegel's "symbol."⁹⁴

The shared *Kreis* of the plastic between Mondrian and Warburg through Hegel is not of concern here for what it has to say about the impact of Hegel on experiments with the psychophysiology of the artistic act. It is, instead, important in its operative dimension: attending to the way Mondrian and Warburg thought they were operationalizing Hegel's ideas about the symbolic reveals certain otherwise unnoticed subtleties about symbolization in corporeality through the plastic. Neither Warburg nor Mondrian were interested in illustrating or merely reiterating Hegel's philosophy; in fact, it is very possible that their references to Hegel may come more from conversations about his lectures among colleagues and friends (and from what was remembered from early school lessons) than from actual readings. Nonetheless, whether or not Warburg and Mondrian were close readers of Hegel, it is evident that their experiments with the plastic are invested in the idea that they are reworking Hegel's dialectics of productive and plastic energy in art, de-forming and re-forming it with a plastic energy of their own.

Mondrian's thinking about the plastic in relation to "expansion" and "plane" resonates with the central concerns of Warburg's San Francisco note on the plastic in the *Foundational Fragments*: the latter associates "plastic art" with "extension" or "scope" in a dialectic of complementary opposition with "der zeichnenden Kunst" ["graphic art"] which is associated with "die Linie" ["line"]. And, in fact, a year before his death -- in the period when he was working on the *Mnemosyne Bilderreihen* -- Warburg defined himself in correspondence with his wife as "a spin-off of Hegel." Perhaps as a young scholar Warburg had been struck by a passage in Hegel's *Philosophical Propedeutics* (1808–1811) where Hegel differentiated between "memory" and "creative memory," a form of memory Hegel called "*Mnemosyne*" and which he defined as "produc[ing] the association between intuition and representation."

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⁸⁹ Ibid., 31.

⁹⁰ For transcription of the note herein, see page 28.

⁹¹ Warburg, "306. 25.III 96. S Frico Public Libr.," 150.

⁹² Warburg's German *phyologisches* has usually been corrected in transcriptions as *psychologisches*, and that is probably correct; however the word is also close to *physiologisches* ("physiological"). For the full transciption, see Warburg, "299. Santa Fé, N M," in *Fragmente zur Ausdruckskunde*, 145

⁹³ The English translation of *Verleibung* as "corporalization" is Gombrich's, *Aby Warburg*, 91. The remaining parts of the phrase are a literal translation of my own that I prefer to Gombrich's "sense impression."

⁹⁴ Warburg, "310. Hegel—Urspr d. Sprache," in *Fragmente zur Ausdruckskunde*, 152.

⁹⁵ In fact, in a November 2, 1928 letter to his wife, Warburg defined himself as "a spin-off of Hegel, from when at fourteen-fifteen years old, I was discussing Hegel [...] with Paul Ruben, who's a real scholar of Hegel" (Stimilli, "Introduction," 158 note 4).

⁹⁶ Warburg, "306. 25.III 96. S Frico Public Libr.," 150.

⁹⁷ Aby Warburg to Mary Warburg, November 2 1928, as cited by Warburg, "Secondo frammento autobiografico," 158.

⁹⁸ G.W.F. Hegel, *Philosophische Propädeutik*, in *Sämtliche Werke*, vol. 3 (Stuttgart: Frommans Verlag), 209–210 as quoted in Jacques Derrida, *Margins of Philosophy*, trans. Alan Bass (Chicago: University of Chicago, 1982), 87.

It may, of course, have been that in Warburg's own associations of intuition and representation in 1928 (his own "creative memory" of Hegel's invocation of *Mnemosyne* while working on the "Atlas" he titled *Mnemosyne Bilderreien* that March), he deceived himself into overemphasizing the importance of Hegel to his early thinking; it is equally possible, however, that Warburg's late remembrances of the impact that momentarily rethinking Hegel's symbolic in 1896 had on his thinking about the symbolic, corporeality, and the plastic in his Foundational Fragments, could also have been among the impetuses that made him unconsciously privilege the plastic in his work with the "Atlas." In November 1928, when Warburg called himself "a spin-off of Hegel," he was in the midst of working with the large mobile panels of image configurations that required he travel between Rome and Naples to make and collect photographs for the arrangements he had rephotographed. Photographing, arranging, and rephotographing was done with the aim of making the productive and plastic energy among images, in their relations of metonymy and synecdoche, more perceptible: first, in the gesture of traveling, photographing, arranging, photographing, and rephotographing, then in the performative displays that were installed to be walked through and lectured in front of, and finally, in the photographic plates of configurations that Warburg had imagined would eventually be flipped through by a reader in a future book. Though he did not realize the book project in his lifetime, his work on it was fundamental to his continued study of what, as a young scholar, he had called "bew. mit Objetvst" ["movement with object exchange"]99: the energetics of psychological aesthetics that was at the center of the projects he would call his "experiment, equal to the Hertz experiment¹⁰⁰ (fig. 4).

It was, in fact, the productive and plastic energy of "[c]reative memory, or mnemosyne" (productive of interstices of in-betweenness that Hegel called "association") that was for Hegel "the source of language," and that was, for Warburg, the source of the visuo-haptic language of plastic formulas he was working with in his *Mnemosyne Bilderreihen*. Hegel defined "language" as a plastic "disappearance": "the disappearance of the sensuous world in its immediate presence, the suppression of this world, henceforth transformed into a presence, which is a call apt to awaken an echo in every essence capable of representation." This definition of language as "disappearance" is, in fact, as scholars have asserted, akin to the way Mondrian wrote about plane as a presence produced through the disappearance of line, or line as a presence produced through the disappearance of interest in the same

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⁹⁹ "307," in *Fragmente zur Ausdruckskunde*, 150. In the *Frammenti sull'Espressione* edition of the *Foundational Fragments*, the abbreviation "bew. Mit Objetvst" in German is extended by the editors to "bewegung mit Objektvstauschung" (109).

Aby Warburg to Paul Warburg, July 27 1924, WIA GC 34041. According to the Warburg Institute Archive database, Warburg described his library and research institute to his brother Paul as "a station from which to observe the oscillations of human values, between virtue and contemplation or brutal action and calm observation; [...] research[ing] the opposites, polarity, by the help of images and actions [Atlas project]; [...] it is his experiment, equal to the [Heinrich] Hertz experiment to prove the link between light and electricity; his experiment is to show the way from the most brutal action to the most sublime emotion, its phases are the stations of the suffering of humanity."

¹⁰¹ Hegel, *Philosophische Propädeutik*, as quoted in Derrida, *Margins of Philosophy*, 87.

¹⁰² Inspired by Warburg mentee and collaborator Gertrud Bing's reference to Warburg's "language of images," the present paper attempts to expand this description and make it more specific, using Warburg's own terms. For Bing's quote, see Katia Mazzucco, "The Work of Ernst H. Gombrich on the Aby M. Warburg Fragments," *Journal of Art Historiograpy* 5 (December 2001): 24.

¹⁰⁴ Wieczorek, "Mondrian's First Diamond Composition," 34.

quality of presence produced from suppression appears four notes after Warburg's note on the plastic, in the phrase "Hegel—Urspr<rung> d. Sprache" ["Hegel—source of language"] which Warburg used as the header of a note on Hegel's "symbolic" written between June and July upon his return to Europe from his American travels. 105

The phenomenon of appearance through disappearance, or presence produced from suppression, is fundamental both to the plastic and to Warburg's thinking in several notes before his note on the plastic, about the "psychological law" he calls "the 'corporalization' of sensorial impression." It is of particular importance to the second process of four he outlines as part of the law: "Hineinumverleibung" ["corporal introjection"]. 106 In Warburg's notes, "corporal introjection" is the process by which the body makes a potential threat disappear by incorporating the threat into itself and thus transforming it into an unthreatening reappearance. Warburg associates this process with what he writes down in his notes as "Nachahmung" ["imitation"], framed in quotation marks as if to indicate that imitation and corporal introjection are two processes that can be associated with each other but are not synonymous. 107

In 1917—eleven years after Warburg wrote the above-cited notes during his American travels—Mondrian wrote about what he called the "new plastic" in opposition to a phenomenon he called the "tragic plastic": the "tragic," for Mondrian, was "disequilibrated mutual relationships" that occurred through "premature union of opposites" because "unity [...] must await the equivalence of opposites [...] Only after this equivalence develops are the opposites resolved into each other." As was the case in Warburg's "corporal introjection," for Mondrian the "tragic in nature is manifested as corporeality" and "the artist sees the tragic to such a degree that he is compelled to express the non tragic. In this way [the artist] finally found a resolution in the plastic expression of pure relationships" through a kind of imitation for the purpose of destruction, or coming to an "expression of form" through the "annihilat[ion of] the inherently tragic."109

When the older Warburg (1923) looked back at the notes and photographs he made during his American travels, he would also choose to focus on the tragic, or what he called the "Tragödie der Verleibung" ["tragedy of corporalization"] and the "tragic (die Tragik) aspect of man."110 He defined this "tragedy" as a process by way of which "in handling and manipulating things, [the human] steps beyond its organic bounds" and into the realm of things, "los[ing] his organic ego-feeling [sein Ich-Organgefühl]" and "extend[ing] his ego inorganically [die sein Ich unorganisch erwitern]."111 The tragic in the human is that "man as an animal that handles and

¹⁰⁵ Warburg, "310. Hegel—Urspr d. Sprache," 152.

¹⁰⁶ Warburg, "299. Santa Fé, N M," 145. The translation of *Hineinumverleibung* as "corporal introjection" comes from Gomrich, Aby Warburg, 91. In the Frammenti sull'Espressione, the term "Hineinumverleibung" is transcribed as "Hinein|Um|Verleibung" in order to emphasize the fact that "Um" is written over the rest of the word. For more on this term and Gombrich's psychoanalytic translation of it, see Bovino, "Wanting to See Duse," in particular, note

¹⁰⁷ Warburg, "299. Santa Fé, N M," 145.

¹⁰⁸ Mondrian, "The New Plastic in Painting," 53.

¹⁰⁹ Ibid.

¹¹⁰ Aby Warburg, "Unpublished Notes for the Kreuzlingen Lecture on the Serpent Ritual (1923)," as quoted in Michaud, Aby Warburg and the Image in Motion, 312, and in German from Georges Didi-Huberman, L'Immagine Insepolta: Aby Warburg, la memoria dei fantasmi e la storia dell'arte, trad. Alessandro Serra (Turin: Bollati Boringhieri, 2006), 361. For more on the "Tragödie der Verleibung," See Sabine Mainberger, "Tragödie der Verleibung. Zu Aby Warburgs Variante der Einfühlungstheorie," in Gefühl und Genauigkeit: empirische Ästhetik *um 1900*, ed. Tobias Wilke, Jutta Müller-Tamm, and Henning Schmidgen (Munich: Wilhelm Fink, 2014). ¹¹¹ Warburg, "Unpublished Notes for the Kreuzlingen Lecture," 312.

manipulates" comes to be, in turn, "handled and manipulated" by the things into which the ego is extended inorganically. 112

This aspect of Warburg's tragic plastic will be discussed at length in later sections; for the sake of the present discussion, however, it is important to note because it underscores what Burgess' print *Remarkable is Art* adds to the late 19th- and early 20th-century *Kreis* of experimentation with the plastic in-between art history (Warburg) and artist writings (Mondrian): Burgess opens this *Kreis* to a dialectical pendulum between the tragic plastic and the comic plastic. In 1897, Burgess' photoengraving, *Remarkable is Art*—a playfully understated verse with a visually intense cartoon—set a raucous comedy of corporalization in motion when it was reprinted in Warburg's "American Chapbooks". It intensified the sense of pervasive humorlessness that seemed to be alimenting tragic political tensions between German nationalists and internationalists, and which, further amplified by a series of coinciding actions and events, would eventually result in two World Wars.

Despite the older Warburg's inclination to focus on the "tragedy of corporalization" when looking back at his 1896 American travels, the young Warburg's California-Italian (1896) notes in his Foundational Fragments—in particular his note on "plastic art"—should be understood in polarity with the comedy of corporalization Warburg appreciated in Burgess' *Remarkable is Art*. In 1923, the older Warburg's rethinking of the Foundational Fragments of his youth unfortunately abandons Burgess' neurasthenic comedy of corporalization in goops, leaving it out of his observations on what he came to call the "tragedy of corporalization" in animal dances among the North American Pueblo in Arizona and New Mexico (1895-1896). In fact, the older Warburg even finds occasion in his Remembrances to explicitly admonish his younger self for laughter during this early period of research: "When I first saw the antelope-dance in San Ildefonso it struck me as very harmless and almost comical. For the student of folklore, however, who sets out to study biologically the roots of cultural expression, there is no moment more dangerous than when popular and apparently comical practices move him to laughter. A man who laughs at comic features in folklore is wrong, for he at once obstructs the insight into the tragic element." ¹¹³ Unfortunately, it would be the older Warburg's rejection of laughter and absorption with the tragic that would "obstruct insight" into the important "comic element" of corporalization he had previously been committed to studying.

In a diary entry written the same day as Warburg's note on the plastic (March 25, 1896)—the same day as the lunch invitation he received from Burgess—Warburg himself suggested that it was in the association between what he called *Moki* practices, and the practices of San Francisco Bohemia he was following in Burgess' *The Lark*, that he might find responses to his *Foundational Fragments* inquiries into the symbolic. The day after Warburg wrote a letter to one of his brothers about having met "a number of artists" he considered representative of the "development of modern American intellectual life" (a group that probably included Burgess), he wrote the following passage in his personal diary: 114

Three irons in the fire, three bones to gnaw, three stones to roll.

- 1) Symbolism, what are you?
- 2) What is the standing of *Lark* among American journals?

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¹¹² Ibid.

¹¹³ Warburg, "A Lecture on Serpent Ritual," 282.

¹¹⁴ Aby Warburg to Felix Warburg, March 24, 1896, WIA GC 26198.

3) Art and superstition among the Mokis in Arizona. 115

By cross-referencing Warburg's correspondence, his diaries, his *Foundational Fragments*, and his publications, it is possible to resituate Warburg's note on "plastic art" between the tragedy and the comedy of corporalization: the human is the animal that handles and manipulates, and that in turn, is handled and manipulated by its objects; its objects are what could be called—using Burgess' humorist terms—"comatose animates" or "animals" that have, through the civilization of man, become "inanimate," but that by way of the "civilizing" suppression of their animation, have become more present, more capable in their "handling and manipulating" of man.

The present essay develops academic analysis through the careful and deliberate use of what, in the art historical discipline, are typically referred to as errors, accidents and/or mistakes of juxtaposition: pseudomorphism (accidental resemblance) and synchronicity (acausal coincidence). Through the humorist technique of caricature—the exaggeration of a striking characteristic to generate a grotesque effect—the essay uses "grotesque effect" to transform art history's "striking" accidents into 'plastic' tools for art historical scholarship. ¹¹⁶ To be 'plastic,' a tool of inquiry must necessarily engage with processes perceived as destructive, whether to the tool's own integrity or to its surroundings. As what some have called "rookie mistakes" in art history, pseudomorphism (accidental resemblance) and synchronicity (acausal coincidence) are generally accepted as formulas for the production of non-scholarship deleterious to the discipline. If used judiciously, they are therefore the perfect "plastic" tools for scholarly humor capable of producing art historical insight.

The word "pseudomorphism" is used to refer to the accident or "error in art historical scholarship of "relating (...) different works that merely look alike." As used by Warburg institute scholar Erwin Panofsky, "pseudomorphosis," refers more specifically to what occurred when "certain Renaissance figures became invested with a meaning which, for all their classicizing appearance, had not been present in their classical prototypes, though it had frequently been foreshadowed in classical literature." The term, therefore, also carries within it the connotation of attributing false historical importance to what might be considered "sheerly coincidental (...) convergence[s]," or what in analytical psychology is called

and Benedetta Cestelli Guidi (London: Merrell Holberton and the Warburg Institute, 1998), 154.

¹¹⁵ The original German of this passage is not available in publication. For Warburg's original words, a visit to the Warburg Institute Archives in London was necessary. For the English translation, see "March 25, 1896," in Aby Warburg, "Excerpts from Aby Warburg's Diary: Translations of Selected Passages from the Diary (Ricordi), December 1894–1897," in *Photographs at the Frontier: Aby Warburg in America, 1895–1896*, ed. Nicholas Mann

¹¹⁶ For more on caricature, modernism, and the grotesque, see Michele Hannoosh, *Baudelaire and Caricature: From the Comic to an Art of Modernity* (University Park, PA: Pennsylvania State University Press, 1992). For Warburg's *Pathosformeln* and comic expression in early modern prints, see José Emilio Burucúa, *La Imagen y la Risa: Las Pathosformeln de lo Comico en el Grabado Europeo de la Modernidad Temprana* (Cáceres: Periférica, 2007). For caricature in art history and psychoanalysis, see Ernst Gombrich and Ernst Kriss, *Caricature* (Harmondsworth:

Penguin, 1940).

117 Foster, "Preposterous Timing," 12.

¹¹⁸ Ibid

¹¹⁹ Panofsky, *Studies in Iconology*, 70–71. To put this in more general terms, Panofsky explained, pseudomorphosis as "the emergence of form A, morphologically analagous to, or even identical with form B, yet entirely unrelated to it from a genetic point of view." The latter passage is quoted in Cramer, *Abstraction and the Classical Ideal*, 1760–1920, 136. For more on pseudomorphosis, see Nagel and Wood, *Anachronic Renaissance*, 48, 50 and 136.

¹²⁰ The quoted phrase on "coincidental convergence" is from an article in the edited volume *Race-ing Art History: Critical Readings in Race and Art History*, 261–88. An important indication that accusations of 'coincidental

"synchronicity." In *Synchronicity: An Acausal Connecting Principle*, analytical psychologist Carl Jung (an early mentor of Warburg's sanatorium doctor, existential psychologist Ludwig Binswanger¹²²) differentiates between "synchronicity" and "synchronism." Whereas the latter means "the simultaneous occurrence of (...) events," the former, "synchronicity," is the simultaneous occurrence of two meaningfully but not causally connected events." The fact that the two important coinciding events are not "causally connected" is considered to be of utmost significance to their meaningfulness in analytical study of the unconscious. 124

In a combination of synchronicity and pseudomorphosis, Warburg observed what he would later call the "tragedy of corporalization" in Arizona in *Moki* animal dances, while composing notes on the plastic in Southern California. In ethnographic accounts, the term "Moki," said to mean "dead Hopi" in the Hopi language, became a term anthropologists used to refer to particular groups of Hopi at the turn of the century. Imagine Warburg, composing notes on the plastic in Southern California after observing both the "tragedy of corporalization" in "dead Hopi" dances in Arizona, and the "comedy of corporalization" in Burgess' neurasthenic goop *Remarkable is Art* in San Francisco. Meanwhile, across the Atlantic, the young Piet Mondrian is preparing a commissioned etching for a publication of the *Joint Heirs of Christ*, a contemplation of the tragic plastic in a bound body with a defiant leg—a body between torture and art. At the same time, *Remarkable is Art* circulates an image of the comic plastic in an inhuman humanoid in "comatose animation": Burgess' goop.

Just as Mondrian's writings on the plastic developed in relation to his thinking about what he called "interiorization," and the tragic dynamics of "form" as "corporeality," Warburg wrote his note on "plastic art" while attempting to work through the tragic and comic dynamics of "corporal introjection" between objects, animals, and humans, and between "dead Hopi" (*Moki*) dances and Burgess' neurasthenic goops: he did so after contemplating what, in later years, he would call the "tragedy of corporalization" when he looked back at his youthful enthusiasm for a "psychological law" (*psychologisches Gesetz*)¹²⁶ of the symbolic and corporeality he was

convergence' are symptomatic of areas in scholarship that need to be problematized is the fact that they are often racialized, i.e., as Anna C. Chave writes in her essay, "it is now a commonplace of art-historical literature (..) that 'primitive' artefacts were invested with value at the same time as – or even *after* – similar technical innovations appeared within Western art practices" in a phenomenon of sheerly coincidental cultural convergence. Comments Michelle Wallace sharply, "Black artists and intellectuals widely assume that a white world is simply unable to admit that art from Africa and elsewhere (...) had a direct influence on Western art because of an absolutely uncontrollable racism, xenophobia and ethnocentrism." Anna C. Chave. "New Encounters with Les Desmoiselles d'Avignon: Gender, Race and the Origins of Cubism." *Race-ing Art History: Critical Readings in Race and Art History*. ed. Kimberley Pinder. (New York: Routledge, 2002).

See Carl Jung, Synchronicity: An Acausal Connecting Principle. (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2011).
 Eugene Taylor, The Mystery of Personality: A History of Psychodynamic Theories. (Dordrecht: Springer, 2009),

¹²³ Jung, Synchronicity, 41.

¹²⁴ Ibid

¹²⁵ Herman Ten Kate, *Travels and Researches in Native North America, 1882–1883*, trans. and ed. Pieter Hovens, et al. (Albuquerque, NM: University of New Mexico Press, 2004), 268 note 45: "The English name for the Hopi is their name for themselves: hopi [...] It appears, however, that another form of self-designation has been *mokwi*, as this is how the Hopi are referred to in the languages of several groups in the area: the Paiutes, Zunis and Kerresans. In addition, Spanish accounts from the sixteenth century use a variety of forms of Moqui. As the word became Anglicized, it came to be pronounced 'moki,' which resembled the Hopi word *moki*, 'dies, is dead' or *mokpu*, '[one who is] dead.' 'Moqui' was so offensive to the Hopi that [anthropologist] Jesse Walter Fewkes [with whom Warburg corresponded in 1896 and 1897] recommended the change to Hopi."

introduced to in conversations with American ethnographer Frank Hamilton Cushing. ¹²⁷ It is to these conversations on "the meaning and function of ornamentation" with Cushing—whose participant-observation ethnography with a *Moki* group, the Pueblo-Zuni, Warburg admired—that Warburg attributed his enthusiastic discovery of what he names in the *Foundational Fragments* his "psychological law," "die 'Verleibung' des sinnlichen Ausdrucks" ["the 'corporalization' of sensorial impression"]. ¹²⁸

The specific problem of energy between symbolism and corporeality that Warburg called "Hineinumverleibugn (Thier) 'Nachahmung'" ["corporal introjection (animal) 'imitation'"] is listed in his notes amidst four other processes. "Corporal introjection," the complex dynamic of psycho-physiological distancing is the second process in "corporalization;" the first is listed as "Einverleibung" ["incorporation"], the third is "An-verleibung" ["corporal annexation"] and the fourth is "Zu-verleibung" ["corporal addition"]. Leg Warburg's 1896 observations of the Hemis Kachina dance at Oraibi, Arizona and what he called the "antelope dance" at San Ildefonso, New Mexico occurred ten years into what historians characterize as "the most frenzied period" of the "railroad land boom" in the western states, particularly in southern California, which saw "a period of land speculation touched off by the arrival of the Santa Fe Railroad in 1887." Indeed, the nervous exhaustion caused by dramatic shifts in late 19th-century transportation technologies were at the time thought to have been among the causes of a general "American nervousness," the condition that came to be called "neurasthenia."

The notes Warburg wrote during his American travels and included in his *Foundational Fragments* can be read in the context of this railroad development. Of particular interest are notes that were composed in one of the most heavily advertised new planned towns of southern California: Coronado Beach near San Diego. The developers of Coronado Beach had promised land purchasers free water for a year on two conditions, "if they spent \$1,000 on improving their lot, as well as 130 tickets per month" on area railways and ferry: it is as if regular use of the railways and ferries was perceived as training settlers in the new corporeality of neurasthenic life.

In the older Warburg's oft-cited posthumously published lecture *Remembrances of a Journey through the Pueblo Region*, 135 sections on Pueblo dances in *Moki* country that Warburg directly observed—and dances in other regions that he did not have the occasion to see personally but heard about from Cushing—make a negative connection between the "penetrat[ion]" of "railway tracks to the [Pueblo] settlements" and *Moki* "practices [...] adopted

¹²⁷ Ibid. Warburg associates *Hineinumverleibung* or "corporal introjection" with *Thier* or "animal" and "*Nachahmung*" or "imitation" in note 299. Warburg credits his conversation with Cushing for this discovery in Warburg, "Unpublished Notes for the Kreuzlingen Lecture," 319.

¹²⁸ Warburg, "299. Santa Fé, N M," 145.

¹²⁹ Ibid.

¹³⁰ John W. Reps, *The Making of Urban America: A History of City Planning in the United States* (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 1965), 382, 404.

George M. Beard, "Railway Travelling and Nervousness," in *American Nervousness: Its Causes and Consequences, A Supplement to Nervous Exhaustion (Neurasthenia)* (New York: G. P. Putnam's Sons, 1881), 12–13.

¹³² Ibid

¹³³ See Warburg, "300. 18. II. 96," in Fragmente zur Ausdruckskunde, 145.

¹³⁴ Reps, *The Making of Urban America*, 382, 404.

¹³⁵ Translated and published in English in 1939 as *A Lecture on Serpent Ritual* (see note 38), referred to herein as *Remembrances*.

[...] to coerce the hostile forces of nature."¹³⁶ According to Warburg, as railway tracks penetrated settlements, these practices began to disappear. Though the older Warburg, looking back at his *Foundational Fragments*, would identify "the broom" in Pueblo houses as "the symbol of intruding American culture,"¹³⁷ hung on household walls as if to serve as talismanic protection against this intrusion, he never applied his own understanding of "corporal introjection," as laid out in his *Foundational Fragments*, to the dances performed for the late 19th-century ethnographic tourism in which he participated as a young scholar. Had he done so, he might have seen them as manifestations among Pueblo groups of a "struggle for existence"¹³⁸ with new railroad towns—a last attempt to ward off the sense of death or impending doom brought by locomotives, and the developments planned around them. A similar attempt at distancing the sense of death posed by new technologies through incorporating them, is seen in Burgess' *Remarkable is Art* where a comedy of corporalization is made manifest by a vehicular neurasthenia engendering the body of the goop, an inhuman humanoid that incorporates the new technology.

Railway lines cut through lands with dangerous crossings, and partitioned areas into plots and properties in a manner harmful not only to the livelihood of human inhabitants in so-called "dead Hopi" (*Moki*) country, but to the prey and predators among the animals the *Moki* lived with, from the antelope to the serpent mentioned in Warburg's writings. Through the process of "corporal introjection" that Warburg associates with "animal" dances in the *Foundational Fragments*¹³⁹ empathetic identification in costume and masks invoked the force in the animals threatened by these developments, incorporating this force into *Moki* bodies not only through the rhythmic movements of dance but, in some cases, through the handling of animals themselves. In this, the impending threat would become manifest in the presence to the so-called "dead Hopi" (*Moki*) themselves, while at the same time this deliberately conjured presence allowed for "handling" the threat, or incorporating it to distance it and prepare for it. It could be said that as a result of separating the comedy of corporalization in Burgess' goop from what Warburg would later called the "tragedy of corporalization" among the *Moki*, the older Warburg missed, or deliberately laid aside, such connections that his early *Foundational Fragments* had instead acknowledged.

The older Warburg would abandon the comedy of corporalization upon which he had centered his 1896 diary entry about the "irons, bones and stones" of his research concerns—i.e., "What is the standing of *Lark* among American journals"—forgetting that his interest in *The Lark* had been the central node around which he had strung his earliest theoretical questions. Almost despite himself, the older Warburg nonetheless confirmed this connection between the younger Warburg's discovery of the process of "corporal introjection" and his early thinking about the plastic, when in his notes for *Remembrances* he wrote of a "principle of harmonical plastic or graphic artistic ability" among the *Moki* concluding that "between mimicry and technique there is plastic art." ¹⁴⁰

Through interconnections among notes in the *Foundational Fragments*, Warburg defines corporal introjection as a paradox of psycological distancing in which, through the artistic act of

¹³⁶ Warburg, "A Lecture on Serpent Ritual," 278. For the quote, see Warburg, *Images from the Region of the Pueblo Indian*, 20.

¹³⁷ Ibid, 7.

¹³⁸ Ibid, 2.

¹³⁹ Warburg, "299. Santa Fé, N M," 145.

¹⁴⁰ Ibid.

exchange in body-image-object, the human body becomes one with a dynamic, hostile force moving towards it. Warburg's "American Chapbooks" is his attempt to understand what happens to "corporal introjection" when hostility is perceived in a benign object like the "Schnorkel" ["flourish"] defined in Warburg's *Foundational Fragments* as a form that exists to emphasize harmlessness. What does psychological distancing look like when the threat to survival comes from "joy in harmless movement"? The image of a similar "comedy of corporalization"—a comic "plastic" between symbolization and corporeality provoked by the desire to distance a "flourish"—is Burgess' goop in *Remarkable is Art*.

In the *Foundational Fragments*, Warburg's note on "corporalization" and its process of "corporal introjection" is followed by his note on the "plastic," which reads:

306

San Francisco Public Library 25.III.96. Subjekt als Träger

Objekt der zeichnenden Kunst

die Linie

Objekt als getragenes

die plastische Kunst

der Umfang

[306

San Francisco Public Library 25.III.96.

Subject as vehicle [or vector]

Object of graphic art

line

Object as being-carried

plastic art extension]¹⁴¹

In order to read the note properly, it is necessary to link the words and phrases it contains to surrounding notes. Warburg's constant editing of the *Foundational Fragments*, his re-titling of the entire collection, his ordering and re-ordering of collection notes, his repetition of key phrases and terms, his removal of notes for inclusion in other collections, and his insertion of new notes out of chronological order, are all practices that indicate interconnections among notes are crucial to following the ideas outlined.

Warburg's reprint of Burgess' humorist photoengraving is just as critical to reading the 1896 *Foundational Fragments* notes as the practice of cross-referencing interconnections among them. With the reprint, Warburg infiltrated an expensive magazine of German connoisseurship that had just undergone a provincial, nationalist turn in its editorial board¹⁴² and in his infiltration, "introjected" an irreverent California verse-and-cartoon of turn-of-the-century nervous exhaustion and post-Gold Rush neurasthenia, in-between German melancholic fin-de-siècle decadence and reactionary realism (Fig. 16). Reprinted with the title "Elliptical Wheels," Burgess' *Remarkable is Art* appears to snicker at the stark realism and decadent flourishes that

142 Kramer, "Between Art and Activism," 751; Krahmer, "PAN and Lautrec," 392–7.

¹⁴¹ Warburg, "306. 25.III 96 S Frico Public Libr.," 150.

¹⁴³ Warburg, "Amerikanische Chapbooks." See also id., "Amerikanische Chapbooks (1897)" and id., "American Chapbooks (1897)."

surround it in Pan: in its new context, it transforms into Warburg's caricature of conservative reactions against internationalism and against experimentation (Fig. 12). Before theorizing the "pathos formula," 144 Warburg was observing and contemplating "plastic art," "corporalization" and "corporal introjection" in a humorist abstraction of "plastic" emotion in figural gesture: Burgess' goop in Remarkable is Art.

Reconstituting what Warburg referred to as the "irons," "bones" and "stones" 146 of his California-Italian thinking resituates Warburg's inquiries into the symbolic and corporeality between the tragic plastic of tactical responses to locomotive technologies in *Moki* animal dances and the comic plastic in neurasthenic incorporations of perception-altering transportation (or vehicular anxiety) in Burgess' goop from *The Lark*. This expands perspectives on experiments with the plastic, from Mondrian's tragedy of "plasticism" or the "tragic plastic," to the comedy that Warburg and Burgess experimented with respectively in "plastic art" and the goop, between the tragedy and the comedy of corporalization.

Two Polarities in the Plastic: Between the Artistic Temperament and the Artistic Act

Between Warburg's published writings on "accessories-in-motion"—written between Florence (1893) and San Francisco (1896)—and his Foundational Fragments manuscripts on "corporal introjection," the "symbolic" and "plastic art" (composed, ordered, and reordered between San Francisco [1896] and Florence [1900]), the young Warburg asked himself a series of questions that led him to establish two polarities in his thinking about the plastic. The first polarity is that of plastic energy in the "künstlerisches Temperament" ["artistic temperament"] 147 between the "allzu biegsam" ["all too pliable"] and the "pointierten" ["trenchant"] and "zugespitzt" ["labored"]. 148 The second polarity is that of the plastic in the "künstlerische Act" ["artistic" act"] 149 between "plastic art" and "der zeichnenden Kunst" ["graphic art"], between "extension" and "line," between the "Subj. als Träger" ["subject as carrier"] and the "Obj. als getragenes" ["object as being carried"]. 150

The "all too pliable" artist is a figure Warburg critiques in the conclusion of his dissertation on Botticelli. The "labored" humor of "pointierten Spötters und Karikaturisten" ["trenchant mockers and caricaturists"] is a temperament instead praised by Warburg in "American Chapbooks."¹⁵¹ In both the Italian instance of the "all too pliable" artist, and the California instance of the "labored" and "trenchant" humorist, Warburg's assessments of "artistic temperament" are based on his observations of the way artists worked with what, in 1905, he would come to call "pathos-formulas," i.e., corporeal abstractions of emotion in figural gestures devised by an artist through both empathetic response and intellectual device. 152

This polarity in "artistic temperament" between the "all too pliable" and the "trenchant" and "labored" in Warburg's published writings can be used to show how the notes Warburg wrote for

¹⁴⁴ See Warburg, "Dürer und die italienische Antike (1905)" and id., "Dürer and Italian Antiquity (1905)."

¹⁴⁵ Warburg, "299. Santa Fé, N M," 145.

^{146 &}quot;March 25 1896," in Warburg, "Excerpts from Aby Warburg's Diary," 154.

¹⁴⁷ Warburg, Sandro Botticellis "Geburt der Venus," 54, and id., "Sandro Botticelli's Birth of Venus," 140.

The "trenchant" and the "labored" are English translations from Warburg, "American Chapbooks (1897)," 704, 710. For the original German, see id., "Amerikanische Chapbooks (1897)," 573, 577.

¹⁴⁹ Warburg, "305. 23.III 96," in Fragmente zur Ausdruckskunde, 150.

Warburg, "306. 25.III 96. S Frico Public Libr.," 150.
 Warburg, "American Chapbooks (1897)," 704, 710, and id., "Amerikanische Chapbooks (1897)," 573, 577.

¹⁵² For more on "pathos-formula," see notes 57 and 58 and discussion below.

his Foundational Fragments in the same period—notes he ordered to surround his note on "plastic art"—orient his ideas about the plastic in relation to "artistic temperament," or rather, "plastic art" as it regards the artist's interrelations with objects.

This first polarity leads into a second polarity of the plastic in which the adjective "plastic" is explicitly employed by Warburg: this is the polarity between "plastic art" and "graphic art." 153 This second more explicit polarity of the plastic can be thought of as the problem of the plastic as it regards object relations or what Warburg calls "movements with object exchange" the note shows that in Warburg's youth, his thinking about what he would later (1923) call the "tragedy of corporalization," or the tragedy of interrelations between artist and objects, also included ideas about what—turning the older Warburg's definition of this tragedy around on itself—is called herein the comedy of corporalization: dynamic networks of interrelations among objects in which objects exchange subject and object positions. In the Foundational Fragments of Warburg's youth, these dynamic networks among objects are described by Warburg as manifesting in particular kinds of "movement with object exchange" such as "forward movement" or "carrying" and "being carried" in which objects among themselves, like artists and objects among each other, assume varying subject and object positions in their interrelations ¹⁵⁸

The First Polarity of the Plastic: The All-too-Pliant and the Trenchant-and-Labored

In his 1901 preface to Der Städte-Bau nach seinen künstlerischen Grundsätzen (City Planning According to Artistic Principles), Austrian painter, architect, and city planner Camillo Sitte (1843-1901) wrote passionately that the plans of ancient townscapes "must" be made to "remain alive [...] in some other way than through slavish copying; only if we can determine in what the essentials of these creations consist, and if we can apply these meaningfully to modern conditions, will it be possible to harvest a new and flourishing crop from the apparently sterile soil." When read alongside the young Warburg's conclusion to his dissertation, both his later theorization of the "pathos-formula" and his related work on the *Mnemosyne Bilderreihen* appear as attempts to respond to the same ideas informing Sitte's claim that "only if we can determine in what the essentials of these creations consist [...] will it be possible to harvest a new and flourishing crop from the apparently sterile soil." This affinity offers insight on Warburg's research because just as Sitte thought of himself as developing an approach to city planning "according to artistic principles," the young Warburg was determining how to think about history, psychology, and the artistic act according to artistic principles.

¹⁵³ Warburg, "306. 25.III. 96. S Frico Public Libr.," 150.

Warburg, "[301.] 11.III. 96," in *Fragmente zur Ausdruckskunde*, 147 (to avoid confusion, I have retained the numbering from the Frammenti sull'Espressione edition, which is also cited in footnotes in Fragmente zur Ausdruckskunde. The note is numbered 301 in the Frammenti sull'Espressione edition); "305. 23.III 96," 150; "306. 25.III 96, S Frico Public Libr.," 150; "307," 150. For the latter, see also id., Frammenti sull'Espressione, 109.

¹⁵⁵ Warburg, "307," 150, and id., *Frammenti sull'Espressione*, 109. 156 Warburg, "307," 150, and id., *Frammenti sull'Espressione*, 109.

¹⁵⁷ Warburg, "[301.] 11.III 96," 147; "305. 23.III 96," 150; "306. 25. III 96, S Frico Public Libr.," 150; "307," 150. See also, id., *Frammenti sull'Espressione*, 109.

158 Warburg, "[301.] 11.III 96," 147, and id., *Frammenti sull'Espressione*, 108.

¹⁵⁹ George R. Collina and Christiane Crasemann Collina, Camillo Sitte: The Birth of Modern City Planning with a Translation of the 1889 Austrian Edition of His City Planning According to Artistic Principles (New York: Dover Publications, 1986), 124.

As Warburg's collaborator and assistant Gertrud Bing wrote in a letter to art historian and Warburg biographer Ernst Gombrich after Warburg's death, "[Warburg] looked at the Pathosformel in the same way as the copyists of ancient marbles in the Quattrocento [...]: he concentrates more and more on the smallest units of language of images [...] the single posture or gesture." Like the copyist in artistic training. Warburg's attention was on the "grammar" the syntax, morphology, semantics, and pragmatics, or structural rules—embodied in that singular "sharply outlined image," which had, by the very force of its grammar, its pathosformula, managed to find its way into the future as fragments in afterlife.

Warburg concludes his dissertation project with a critical assessment of Botticelli's "temperament" as an artist "all the more willing to illustrate the ideas of others because this offers the most perfect scope for [...] his feeling for detailed description." For Warburg, Botticelli's "loving exactitude" made him a "willing hand" for any "easily manipulated external sign that could be added wherever he needed to create the semblance of intensified life." ¹⁶³ In his dissertation, Warburg made a distinction between trends in 15th-century and 16th-century art to explain what he called Botticelli's "psychologische Ästhetik" ["psychological aesthetics"]: 164 in the 15th-century, interest in the "antique" did not necessarily require that artists follow the kind of historicizing "faithful imitation" or "slavish copying" that Sitte denounced in 1901; in the 16th-century, a fashion for the antique, however, demanded that "wherever antique themes [were] treated in the antique manner" artists were required to "abandon expressive forms derived from their own observation." ¹⁶⁵

According to Warburg, in the quattrocento, artists "firmly persuaded of their own equality with the ancients" had "made vigorous efforts to extract from the life around them analogous forms that they could work into art in their own way." 166 Artists like Leonardo da Vinci (1452– 1519) who was, according to Warburg, "totally self-reliant [...] undoubtedly accepted the authority of ancient writers only where [they] saw it as a precedent that demanded respect, a living force both to him and to his contemporaries." Thus, following this logic, the fault of any "unthinking repetition of superficially agitated motifs of motion," was not the fault of antiquity per se, rather, for Warburg, "the fault lay in the artists, and in their lack of mature artistic discretion." Warburg concludes his dissertation with the following assessment of Botticelli's overly malleable "artistic temperament": "Botticelli was one of those who were all too pliable "169

Botticelli's love for detail and the "sharply demarcated, static object [...] [to be] observed and reproduced" made him susceptible to abusing forms as "expedients." Being "all too pliable" meant abandoning the responsibility of the artist to explore the "living force" that gave rise to the motifs, or the "formulas," that Warburg later named "pathos-formula," but which in

¹⁶⁰ Quoted in Mazzucco, "The Work of Ernst H. Gombrich," 24.

¹⁶² Warburg, "Sandro Botticelli's Birth of Venus," 140–41, and id., Sandro Botticellis "Geburt der Venus," 54–55.

Warburg, "Sandro Botticelli's Birth of Venus," 140–41, and id., Sandro Botticellis "Geburt der Venus," 54–55.

¹⁶⁴ Warburg, "Sandro Botticelli's *Birth of Venus*," 89 and id., "Sandro Boticellis "Geburt der Venus," 5.
165 Warburg, "Sandro Botticelli's *Birth of Venus*," 140–41, and id., *Sandro Botticellis "Geburt der Venus*," 54–55.

¹⁶⁶ Warburg, "Sandro Botticelli's Birth of Venus," 140–41, and id., Sandro Botticellis "Geburt der Venus," 54–55.

¹⁶⁷ Warburg, "Sandro Botticelli's Birth of Venus," 140, and id., Sandro Botticellis "Geburt der Venus," 54. My emphasis.

Warburg, "Sandro Botticelli's Birth of Venus," 141, and id., Sandro Botticellis "Geburt der Venus," 55.

¹⁶⁹ Warburg, "Sandro Botticelli's *Birth of Venus*," 141, and id., *Sandro Botticellis "Geburt der Venus*," 55. Warburg, "Sandro Botticelli's *Birth of Venus*," 141, and id., *Sandro Botticellis "Geburt der Venus*," 55.

his dissertation he calls "expressive forms derived from their [the artists'] own observation." ¹⁷¹ Only "self-reliant" artists like Leonardo "who combined an unexcelled grasp of the particular and the unique with an equally powerful capacity to see general truths and laws" were able to experience the "living force" in ancient sources. 172

The example Warburg offers is a drawing in red chalk of a satyr and lion attributed to Leonardo and in which a steady confident outline around the configuration of lion and satyr is said to show Leonardo had learned to appropriate formulas for movement by copying "neo-Attic reliefs." The pathos-formulas employed in these sculptures were about withdrawal, about communicating a certain containment of movement, and expressing a tension between not only fixity and flexibility in figures, but between the two-dimensionality and the three-dimensionality of the object itself. In the case of the Leonardo drawing, this tension of restraint was between the sanguine drawing on paper, the idea of a marble sculptural relief that had been copied, and the idea of flesh bodies in the round. Warburg supports this example with a quote from Leonardo's instructions to artists about how to treat "revealing limbs when the wind presses garments against figures": "imita quanto puoi" or "imitate, as far as you can." 175

This instruction "imitate, as far as you can" requires "mature artistic discretion" because it necessitates that the artist understand both what it is appropriate to imitate and at what point it is no longer possible to imitate. The artist must be, as Warburg explains, "firmly persuaded" of a commitment to "capturing images of life in motion" rather than simply manipulating motifs of movement as an "expedient." [M] ature artistic discretion" is, in Warburg's conclusion, a kind of destructive production: the mature artist is "firm" and "self-reliant" enough to be able to extract forms from life that could be considered analogous to those that, while studying these forms as a copyist, the artist had the necessary flexibility to imitate and learn from; being "firmly persuaded" and "self-reliant" also means, however, being willing to evade motifs altogether and destroy forms in order to discover their "living force" or plastic expressive formulas, their "pathos-formulas."

When the works Warburg published during his lifetime are ordered chronologically, his 1897 Pan article "American Chapbooks" immediately precedes an 1898 article in the periodical Das Museum (The Museum) for which Warburg revisited themes explored in his dissertation. 178 In his Das Museum article, titled "Sandro Botticelli," Warburg simplified the objective he laid

¹⁷¹ Warburg, "Sandro Botticelli's Birth of Venus," 141, and id., Sandro Botticellis "Geburt der Venus," 55.

Warburg, "Sandro Botticelli's Birth of Venus," 140, and id., Sandro Botticellis "Geburt der Venus," 54.

Warburg, "Sandro Botticelli's Birth of Venus," 140, and id., Sandro Botticellis "Geburt der Venus," 54. Neo-Attic reliefs are Hellenistic reliefs that historicized a restrained archaicizing style in Ancient Greek sculpture, and were mainly produced to satisfy the ideal of Classical Greek form held by Roman connoisseurs. Lori-Ann Touchette, "Archaism and Eclecticism," in The Oxford Handbook of Roman Sculpture, ed. Elise A. Friedland, Melanie Grunow Sobocinski, and Elaine K. Gazda (New York: Oxford University Press, 2015), 292.

¹⁷⁴ For more on this idea in relation to Warburg's *Pathosformeln*, see Brilliant, *My Laocoön*.

¹⁷⁵ Warburg, "Sandro Botticelli's Birth of Venus," 141, and id., Sandro Botticellis "Geburt der Venus," 55.

Warburg, "Sandro Botticelli's Birth of Venus," 141, and id., Sandro Botticellis "Geburt der Venus," 55. My emphasis. ¹⁷⁷ Warburg, "Sandro Botticelli's *Birth of Venus*," 140, and id., *Sandro Botticellis "Geburt der Venus*," 54.

Aby Warburg, "Sandro Botticelli," Das Museum 3 (1898), reproduced as id., "Sandro Botticelli (1898)," in Die Erneuerung der heidnischen Antike: kulturwissenschaftliche Beiträge zur Geschichte der europäischen Renaissance, ed. Horst Bredekamp and Michael Diers (Berlin: Akademie Verlag, 1998) (hereafter "Sandro Botticelli (1898)-D"). For the English translation, see id., "Sandro Botticelli (1898)," in The Renewal of Pagan Antiquity: Contributions to the Cultural History of the European Renaissance, trans. David Britt (Los Angeles; Getty Research Institute, 1999) (hereafter "Sandro Botticelli (1898)-E").

out for himself in his dissertation—to "observe within a circle [Kreis] of working artists, an emerging sense of the aesthetic act of 'empathy' as a determinant of style" —and looked to present his ideas to a more general audience of "art lovers":

eye and hand are the equipment of an early Renaissance Florentine artist, in all their freshness and keen precision, but in Sandro the sense of reality that distinguishes his contemporary mentors [...] becomes no more than a means to an end, that of expressing the whole cycle of human emotional life, from melancholy stillness to vehement agitation. To linger with heartfelt understanding in the twilight of that delightful melancholy is the fashionable thing among today's lovers of art. However, anyone who is not content to bask in Sandro's artistic temperament, but wants a psychological understanding of him as an artist, must also follow him into the broad daylight of his work as a recorder of an intense and vigorous physical and mental life, and trace the intricate convolutions of the paths he followed as a willing illustrator to cultivated Florentine society. 180

This passage provides further indications as to why Warburg thought it important to conclude his dissertation with an assessment of Botticelli's "artistic temperament." Rather than "bask[ing] in" this temperament, as was "fashionable" among "lovers of art" in the late 19th- century fashion for Botticelli, ¹⁸¹ Warburg's purpose was not connoisseurship, but a "psychological understanding" of Botticelli as an artist. ¹⁸² This "psychological understanding" was not an individual psychology, but a social psychology in which Botticelli's work was treated as "a recorder" of the "intense and vigorous physical and mental life," as "a willing illustrator to [...] society." ¹⁸³ Warburg was interested in "artistic temperament" as a synecdoche of "society": a plastic fragment of sense fractured from society that had been both formed by and forming of it, with the paradoxical potential in its very status as fragment to fracture the very social fabric it had been formed by and contributed to forming.

The year prior, in 1897, Warburg's decision to promote the work of San Francisco-humorist Gelett Burgess among the German print connoisseurs who read *Pan* meant producing an ideal image of a "fremdartig" ["bizarre"] and "zugespitzt" ["labored"] artistic temperament, a "starker Humor" ["powerful sense of humor"] of "gesucht einfach" ["deliberately sought after simplicity"]. What Warburg called Burgess' "Idealismus" ["idealism"] was a "very American sense of humor," "truly laying something over on life," "engaged in joyous strife with the world weary self-indulgent pose (*Pose selbstgefalliger*) of the turn-of-the-century." Burgess, the "echte Humorist" ["true humorist"] had learned how to wear the "mask of the trenchant (*Maske der pointierten*) mocker and caricaturist" while maintaining a "naturliche Empfänglichkeit"

¹⁷⁹ Warburg, "Sandro Botticelli's Birth of Venus," 89, and id., Sandro Botticellis "Geburt der Venus," 5.

¹⁸⁰ Warburg, "Sandro Botticelli (1898)-E," 157, and id., "Sandro Botticelli (1898)-D," 61. My emphasis.

¹⁸¹ For more on this *moda* or fashion, refer to the recent exhibition *The Botticelli Renaissance*, Gemäldegalerie, Kulturforum in Berlin, September 24, 2015–January 24, 2016, and *Botticelli Reimagined*, Victoria and Albert Museum in London, March 5, 2016–July 3, 2016.

Warburg, "Sandro Botticelli (1898)-D," 61, and id., "Sandro Botticelli (1898)-E," 157.

Warburg, "Sandro Botticelli (1898)-E," 157, and id., "Sandro Botticelli (1898)-D," 61.

Warburg, "American Chapbooks (1897)," 704–05, 709–10. Some of the English translations are mine. All German passages from Warburg's "American Chapbooks (1897)" come from the original "Amerikanische Chapbooks." For the original German, see also id., "Amerikanische Chapbooks (1897)," 573, 577.

Warburg, "American Chapbooks (1897)," 704–05, 709–10, and id., "Amerikanische Chap-Books," 577.

["natural spontaneity"]: his was an artistic temperament that "plots artistic exploits" but still finds time for "tender (zärtlichen) poetic expression." It is to this "true humorist" of the "Far West"— between the "trenchant" and "labored," the "bizarre" and the "simple," the "tender" and the "spontaneous"—that Warburg suggests the humorless Germany, represented by Pan's conservative connoisseurs, "owe[s...] a friendly salute." ¹⁸⁷ German artists owed a moral debt to The Lark's "ethisch Aufgabe" ["ethical mission"] to "contest the humorless haste and bustle of everyday existence with the spontaneity of the artist's approach to life." ¹⁸⁸

The "mask of the trenchant mocker and humorist" in Warburg's 1897 article closely resembles Warburg's 1893 portrait of Leonardo as the "self-reliant" artist who "accepted [...] authority [...] only where he saw it as a precedent that demanded respect, a living force. "189 Unlike the "all too pliable" artistic temperament that Warburg identified with Botticelli—the temperament that indulged its love for "every sharply demarcated, static object"—the "selfreliant" artistic temperament combined "an unexcelled grasp of the particular and the unique with an equally powerful capacity to see general truths and laws" and was "firmly persuaded of [...] [its] own way." 190

The same polarity of "stillness" and "agitation" that Warburg evoked in his Das Museum is also present in Warburg's praise for Burgess' work in his "American Chapbooks" article. ¹⁹¹ The vacillation between "agitation" and the "tranquil" that Warburg described in Botticelli's temperament was not an end aimed at "capturing images" and identifying the "living force" within them; rather, it was an end in itself, a means to simply indulge in the "loving exactitude with which every detail is observed and reproduced." ¹⁹² In other words, it was attention to detail for the sake of "lucid detail" itself. 193 For Botticelli, "[e]xpressing the whole cycle of human emotional life, from melancholy stillness to vehement agitation" was a means to revel in the love of detail, not a means for the exploration of that "sense of reality" that Warburg identified with Leonardo, ¹⁹⁵ a sense that expressed itself in corporeal forms outlined in contoured imprints by the force of pathos-formulas.

In the instance of Warburg's 1897 praise for Burgess, the "true humorist" of "artistic exploits" (whose sense of humor Warburg calls "idealism") maintains the flexibility of what Warburg calls "natural spontaneity"—"the spontaneity of the artist's approach to life"—under the fixity of a "mask of the trenchant," "powerful," and "bizarre": it could therefore be said that the "plastic" artist as described by Warburg is snail-like, a polymorphous body in an ossified shell, a deliberating body capable of restraint and quick withdrawal. This same "stillness" and "agitation" polarity Warburg cited in his Das Museum article also plays out in the exchange between the "humorist" and the "humorless" in his "American Chapbooks," in which humorlessness is portrayed as a kind of inertia or paralysis, and humor is aligned with the dynamism of the spontaneous. In images, this dialectic is made visually explicit in the juxtaposition of the Elliptical Wheels reprint of Burgess' photoengraving, Remarkable is Art,

¹⁸⁶ Warburg, "American Chapbooks (1897)," 704–05, 709–10, and id., "Amerikanische Chap-Books," 573, 577.

¹⁸⁷ Warburg, "American Chapbooks (1897)," 704–05, 709–10, and id., "Amerikanische Chap-Books," 573, 577. ¹⁸⁸ Warburg, "American Chapbooks (1897)," 704–05, 709–10, and id., "Amerikanische Chap-Books," 573, 577.

Warburg, Sandro Botticellis "Geburt der Venus," 55, and id., "Sandro Botticelli's Birth of Venus," 140.

¹⁹⁰ Warburg, Sandro Botticellis "Geburt der Venus," 55, and id., "Sandro Botticelli's Birth of Venus," 140.

¹⁹¹ Warburg, "Sandro Botticelli (1898)-D," 61, and id., "Sandro Botticelli (1898)-E," 157.

¹⁹² Warburg, "Sandro Botticelli's Birth of Venus," 140–41 and id., Sandro Botticellis "Geburt der Venus," 55.

¹⁹³ Warburg, "Sandro Botticelli's *Birth of Venus*," 140–41 and id., *Sandro Botticellis "Geburt der Venus*," 55.
¹⁹⁴ Warburg, "Sandro Botticelli's *Birth of Venus*," 140–41 and id., *Sandro Botticellis "Geburt der Venus*," 55.
¹⁹⁵ Warburg, "Sandro Botticelli's *Birth of Venus*," 140–41 and id., *Sandro Botticellis "Geburt der Venus*," 55.

alongside another Burgess print—what looks to be another photoengraving, this one drawn to resemble a woodcut: Burgess' cover from the first issue of *The Lark* (fig. 10). Here the fixity of a photoengraving resembling a woodcut is contrasted with the flexibility of a photoengraving emphasizing the potential fluidity of its medium.



Fig. 10. Images pinned to the author's studio wall: the "stillness" and "agitation" polarity in a page from Warburg's *Pan* review of American chapbooks. (top right and left) Details from both prints; (bottom right) Burgess' *Remarkable is Art* (1895) reprinted in Warburg's "American Chapbooks" (1897) as *Elliptical Wheels*; (bottom left) another Burgess print, the cover of the first issue of *The Lark* (1895) also reprinted in Warburg's "American Chapbooks." Source: University of Heidelberg Digital Collections. Photo by author.

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 $^{^{196}}$ The cover is captioned "Titelblatt." The original print was published as the cover for *The Lark* no. 1 (May 1, 1895).

The Second Polarity of the Plastic: Plastic Art and Graphic Art, Extension and Line

Warburg's second polarity of the plastic is between "plastic art" and "graphic art," between "extension" and "line," and between "subject as carrier" and "object as being-carried." This polarity of the plastic between "plastic art" and "graphic art," between "subject" positions and "object" positions in object-exchange, complements Warburg's understanding of the plastic in "artistic temperament" (between the "all too pliable" and the "trenchant," "labored") with thinking about the plastic in the "artistic act," and in dynamic interrelations among objects.

As previously mentioned, Warburg wrote his note on "plastic art" for his Foundational Fragments on March 25 1896, the day of a lunch invitation from the humorist Burgess; however, there is more to the relationship between Warburg's note on "plastic art" and Burgess' Remarkable is Art, than just the synchronicity (or acausal coincidence) between Warburg writing his note on the plastic and possibly meeting Burgess on the same day. 199 In Warburg's Foundational Fragments, there is also a drawing—what will be referred to herein as the spiralline-plane drawing²⁰⁰—made in San Francisco in the same period as the note on the plastic. The drawing can be directly linked to the note on the plastic by a series of key words and concepts. It shares both formal and formulaic affinities with Burgess' Remarkable is Art (fig. 11): thus, juxtaposing Warburg's drawing and Burgess' verse-and-cartoon reveals an instance of what appears to be an accident of resemblance (pseudomorphosis). Attention to this combination of pseudomorphosis and synchronicity produces a number of particularly generative insights about experiments with the plastic by Warburg and Burgess at the turn of the 20th century.

As previously explained, "synchronicity" is defined in analytical psychology as an "acausal connecting principle" or a "meaningful coincidence" that derives its meaningfulness from the very fact that it is a "connection of events" not produced by "causality." Pseudomorphism can be thought of as the visual equivalent of what in synchronicity is a spatio-temporal phenomenon. The combination of synchronicity and pseudomorphism has a doubling effect. In this specific case, elliptical animation in an ironic-ornamental-ribbon-strip-that-becomes-a-comic-strip in Burgess' Remarkable is Art resembles elliptical animation in Warburg's spiral-line-plane drawing, 202 a sequence of notations made between his notes on the "corporalization of sensorial impression" and "corporal introjection," ²⁰³ and his notes on "movement with object exchange" in the "artistic act," "plastic art" and the symbolic. 204

As was the case with the combined incidence of pseudomorphosis and synchronicity previously discussed in the pairing of Burgess' Remarkable is Art with Mondrian's Joint Heirs of Christ, the aim of working with pseudomorphism between Warburg's drawing and Burgess' verse-and-cartoon (a pseudomorphism that can be considered more "direct" because, in this case, Warburg and Burgess were actually acquainted with each others' work and the drawing and print in question share a stronger resemblance) is not to assert that, in this case, the seemingly more

¹⁹⁷ Warburg, "306. 25.III 96. S Frico Public Libr.," 150.

¹⁹⁹ Burgess to Warburg, "Lunch Invitation," March 23, 1896, WIA GC 9362.

²⁰⁰ Warburg, "[301.] 11.III 96. S. Fr," 147.

²⁰¹ Jung, *Synchronicity*, 25–26, 41.

²⁰² Warburg, "[301.] 11.III 96. S. Fr," 147. See also, id., Frammenti sull'Espressione, 108.

²⁰³ Warburg, "299. Santa Fé, N M," 145. ²⁰⁴ Warburg, "305. 32.III 96," 150; "306. 25.III 96. S Frico Public Libr.," 150; "307," 150. See also id., "310. Hegel—Urspr d. Sprache," 152.

causal coincidence of Warburg writing his note on the plastic on the day of a lunch invitation from Burgess is proof that Burgess' print influenced Warburg's drawing.

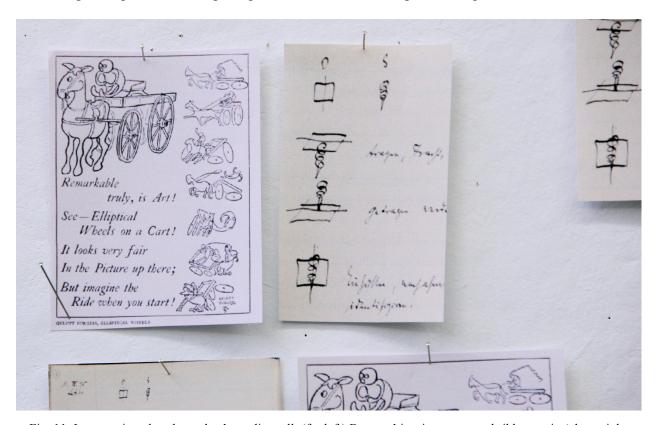


Fig. 11. Images pinned to the author's studio wall: (far left) Burgess' ironic ornamental ribbon-strip (along right edge of print) from *Remarkable is Art* (1895) as reprinted in *Pan* (1897). Source: University of Heidelberg Digital Collection. (right) A detail of Warburg's spiral-line-plane drawing (note [301.] 11.III 96), five notes before his note on "plastic art." Source: Warburg Institute, London. Photo by author.

Warburg's drawing could just as easily have been responsible for his amused appreciation of Burgess' print. Thus, pseudomorphism and synchronicity employed as tactical tools are still not being used to assert causal connections, but are rather an occasion to put Burgess and Warburg in playful conversation in a way that helps to establish a better understanding of their experimentation with the plastic. It will be shown that this playful conversation produces a new perspective on experiments with "plasticism" before Mondrian's essays on the "new plastic," the "tragic plastic," and "neo-plasticism." This new perspective puts Mondrian's "tragic plastic" (1920) and what the older Warburg called the "tragedy of corporalization" (1923) back into a dialectical pendulum with the comedy of corporalization as it manifests in Burgess' *Remarkable is Art*.

In the present essay, the expansion of the intellectual history of the plastic to include the work of artists and humorists by using pseudomorphism and synchronicity is scholarly comedy: the essay employs the humorist technique of caricature to transform formulas for the "rookie mistake" in the study of art history—synchronicity and pseudomorphism—into "plastic" tools for rigorous historical scholarship. ²⁰⁵ In this case of caricature, the grotesque effect of

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²⁰⁵ For more on "pseudomorphism" as a "rookie mistake," see note 83. For more on caricature, see note 117.

exaggerating pseudomorphism and synchronicity produces comedy that offers actual scholarly insight. Thinking about a photoengraving as an object of intellectual impact on the history of the plastic using accidents of resemblance (pseudomorphism) and acausal connections (synchronicity) that are usually set aside by conventional approaches to historical writing, complements the Warburg-as-empathetic-reader model that has been developed by contemporary scholars to work through complex fragmentary ideas in Warburg's work. It complements this model with a new variant: that of Warburg-as-empathetic-artist and caricaturist.²⁰⁶

Working with pseudomorphism to write a humorist non-art art history also restores something of the original mineralogical meaning of the term "pseudomorphosis" as first employed by philosopher Oswald Spengler (1880–1936) to describe the morphology of the basilica.²⁰⁷ It is not within the confines of the present essay to analyze this description at great length; however, it is important to note that the term "historical pseudomorphosis" (1922) has always had a negative connotation, even in Spengler's employ, where it was used to describe intercultural dynamics in tragic terms that racialized transmogrifications that occurred from exchange: in Spengler's definition of "historical pseudomorphosis," the "Arabian culture" that emerged from "the ambit of ancient Babylonian Civilization" is likened to "distorted forms [in mineralogy], crystals whose inner structure contradicts their external shape."²⁰⁸

Thinking in terms of pseudomorphisms (accidents of resemblance) and pseudomorphoses (historical change through cultural exchange of forms) while reading Warburg's "American Chapbooks" counterposes Spengler's later tragic mineralogical meaning with a complementary opposite, a playful mycological metaphor that Warburg used to praise the humor of *The Lark* in his 1897 article. From within this pairing, a way of working with pseudomorphosis is reproposed to art history as a manner in which pseudomorphisms can be taken seriously as "plastic" tools for writing histories of the artistic act, especially in instances of non-art art or more-than-and-less-than-art, such as Burgess' *Remarkable is Art*, Mondrian's *Joint Heirs of Christ*, and Warburg's various projects, from his *Foundational Fragments* to his *Mnemosyne Bilderreihen*.

Synchronicity and Pseudomorphosis: Burgess' Goop and Warburg's Spiral-Line-Plane

Burgess' goop *Remarkable is Art*—retitled *Elliptical Wheels* in Warburg's "American Chapbooks"—is positioned as the fourth of six prints republished from American "kleinen Zeitschriften" ["little magazines"] in *Pan.*²⁰⁹ In the article, Warburg uses a variety of terms to refer to little magazines including "inexpensive monthly formats," "pocket magazines," the English "*periodicals of protest*," and "Kobold-Literatur" ["goblin literature"] or "gadfly

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²⁰⁶ The model I am referring to here is that established by Papapetros in *On the Animation of the Inorganic* and in id., "Aby Warburg as Reader of Gottfried Semper: Reflections on the Cosmic Character of Ornament," in *Elective Affinities: Testing Word and Image Relationships*, ed. Catriona MacLeod, Véronique Plesch, and Charlotte Schoell-Glass (Amsterdam: Rodopi, 2009). I have also explored the model of Warburg-as-empathetic-amateur-playwright to discuss Warburg's ideas about the plastic in gesture as it relates to his interest in Eleonora Duse's performance aesthetics as an approach to comment on contemporary artist Goshka Macuga's irreverent comedy based on Warburg's amateur playlets (Bovino, "Wanting to See Duse").

²⁰⁷ "The architectural type of the Pseudomorphosis, both for Jew and Gentile, is the Basilica. It employs the means of the Classical to express the opposite thereof, and is unable to free itself from these means—that is the essence and the tragedy of 'Pseudomorphosis'" (Oswald Spengler, *The Decline of the West. Vol. 1 Form and Actuality* (1918), trans. by Charles Francis Atkinson. 15th edition. New York: Alfred A. Knopf. 1950: 209.).

²⁰⁹ Warburg, "Amerikanische Chapbooks," 345; id., "Amerikanische Chapbooks (1897)," 569; id., "American Chapbooks (1897)," 703.

publications."²¹⁰ In combination, these names create an image of American chapbooks as tricksters: goblins hiding in pockets, planted to generate new forms by destroying the costly expense and petty-bourgeois permanence of most magazines. And, in fact, four of the six prints republished in Warburg's article are photoengravings from *The Lark*, that San Francisco goblin of all goblins, whose high-standing among the American literary tricksters was said to have been achieved by its editor conceiving it as born to die. The ephemeral bibelot *The Lark* was judged by fellow little magazines like the Chicago-based *The Chap-Book* to be "so good that it ought to die": *The Lark* had taken ascent for the pure fun of planning the plunge to its ultimate end, and this would "make its life perfect."²¹¹

The two prints that flank the title of Warburg's article on its first page are cover graphics from *The Chap-Book* (fig. 12).²¹² Warburg's article "American Chapbooks" uses culinary (*Küchen; Volksernährung*) and natural history (*Naturgeschichte*) metaphors to differentiate *The Lark* from *The Chap-Book*: for Warburg, *The Chap-Book* is the Chicago "caviar" that started the American literary phenomenon of little magazines; the San Francisco-based *Lark* is instead among the "Pilze" ["mushrooms"] that "sprouted [...] once *The Chap-Book* had become fashionable."²¹³

This polarity between caviar and mushrooms that Warburg creates is one of a delicacy split in two parts: first, there is the part of the delicacy that retains its refinement (caviar)—i.e., *The Chap-Book* "avoids the danger of becoming a sentimental pocket journal of literary fashion by occasionally affording the moderns a platform for trenchant self-criticism;" then there is the part of the delicacy that decays amidst "frivolous mannerisms" and rots to a ferment that spores both edible and "ungenießbar" ["inedible"] mushrooms. ²¹⁴ *The Lark* is an example of one such edible spore generated from decay.

Considering the elite readership of *Pan*, it would have been logical for Warburg's intervention in *Pan* on American little magazines to focus on the "caviar" among these "inexpensive semimonthlies," the most expensive of which, Warburg notes, cost "10 cents per issue." The "common edition" of *Pan* sold for 75 marks, an exorbitant 18 dollars at the turn of the century. Its expensive luxury editions included original copper-plate etchings, wood-block prints, and artisanal color lithographs. Warburg's "American Chapbooks," however, only mentions the boutique delicacies peddled by East Coast descendents of British "fahrende Kaufmann" ["itinerant pamphleteers"] as an incipit to prompt foraging through Far West "modern" fungal spores. Not only are four of the six prints reprinted in Warburg's article from *The Lark* (three by Burgess, at least one of which is undoubtedly a much-scorned-by-

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Warburg, "Amerikanische Chapbooks," 345; id., "Amerikanische Chapbooks (1897)," 569; id., "American Chapbooks (1897)," 703. "[P]eriodicals of protest" is in English in the original "Amerikanische Chapbooks."

Herbert Stuart Stone, "Notes," *The Chap-Book* (July 15, 1896), 236.

Warburg, "Amerikanische Chapbooks," 345–46; id., "Amerikanische Chapbooks (1897)," 571–72; id., "American Chapbooks (1897)," 703–04.

Warburg, "Amerikanische Chapbooks," 345–46; id., "Amerikanische Chapbooks (1897)," 571–72; id., "American Chapbooks (1897)," 703–04.

Warburg, "Amerikanische Chapbooks," 345–46; id., "Amerikanische Chapbooks (1897)," 571–72; id., "American Chapbooks (1897)," 703–04.

Warburg, "Amerikanische Chapbooks," 345–46; id., "Amerikanische Chapbooks (1897)," 571–72; id., "American Chapbooks (1897)," 703–04.

²¹⁶ "Pan-digitized," *Heidelberg University Library*, last updated September 5, 2016, http://www.ub.uni-heidelberg.de/Englisch/helios/fachinfo/www/kunst/digilit/artjournals/pan.html (accessed March 13, 2014).

Warburg, "Amerikanische Chapbooks," 345; id., "Amerikanische Chapbooks (1897)," 569; id., "American Chapbooks (1897)," 703.

connoisseurs photoengraving), but, all of the poems and short stories excerpted for publication in *Pan* are exclusively from *The Lark*, all the authorship of Burgess.²¹⁸



Fig. 12. Images pinned to the author's studio wall: easing German print connoisseurs and readers of *Pan* into the Californian "labored"-"trenchant" artistic temperament of *The Lark*, the first page of Warburg's article "Amerikanische Chapbooks" in *Pan* shows the article title flanked by two prints from the Chicago-based *The Chap-Book*. Source: University of Heidelberg Digital Collection. Photo by author.

The positioning of the two prints from the Chicago-based *The Chap-Book* around the title of Warburg's article (fig. 12) appears to have been planned for the effect of making all the other American prints published for German circulation in the review more palatable to the elite *Pan* readership. Visually, these two prints ease the reader from more digestible "caviar" for connoisseurs to the edgier "mushrooms" that the editors appear to have strategically chosen to relegate to the issue's end.

²¹⁸ Warburg, "Amerikanische Chapbooks;" id., "Amerikanische Chapbooks (1897);" id., "American Chapbooks (1897)." For the "railroad humoresque," see Burgess "*The Pitfalls of Mysticism*," in Warburg, "Amerikanische Chapbooks," 346. Reprinted from *The Lark* no. 17 (September 1896).

The article directly preceding Warburg's is an essay on contemporary English novelists by Scottish theologian Archibald Charteris (fig. 13): its accompanying prints include a cover from the New York-based little magazine *The Philistine* and the cover of a British novel, *Fringilla*, created by American artist Will Bradley for a Cleveland publishing house. The Philistine is the only other little magazine aside from *The Lark* that Warburg classifies as an edible "mushroom" in his article. He makes it a point, however, to assert that though New York's *Philistine* is indeed readable, it is more similar to Chicago's *Chap-Book* "caviar" than to San Francisco *Lark*'s "protest" spores of "powerful humor." Not incidentally, the latter offers what Warburg wrote of as the only acceptable American "artistic contributions" to *The Chap-Book*: Warburg writes about Bradley's "advertising posters" as the exception to what he otherwise calls the *The Chap-Book*'s "schwächste Teil" ["weakest part"], its "künstlerische Beiträge" ["artistic contributions"].



Fig. 13. Images pinned to the author's studio wall: (center) Burgess' *Remarkable is Art* (captioned *Elliptical Wheels* in Warburg's article) was reprinted in *Pan* between (left) the reprint of a book cover by Will Bradley and (right) an edition of an etching by Scottish realist William Strang. Image credit: University of Heidelberg Digital Library.

Photo by author.

In *Pan*'s layout, Warburg's "American Chapbooks" is situated in the middle of the same polarity of decadentism and realism that Warburg writes about in the review: Warburg's discussion of what he calls Burgess' "idealism" and his reprint of *Remarkable is Art* is positioned between the almost-decadentism of Bradley—whose "profuse ornamentation" led to the nickname "American Beardsley," after famous exponent of British decadentism, Aubrey Bearsley—and the realism of Scottish printmaker William Strang, whose original edition copper-etched self portrait

²¹⁹ See entire issue, *Pan* 2 (April 1897).

Warburg, "Amerikanische Chapbooks," 345 and 348; Warburg, "American Chapbooks," 704 and 710.

²²¹ Warburg, "Amerikanische Chapbooks (1897)," 345.

²²² Frederick William Hamilton, "Will Bradley," A Brief History of Printing in America: Containing a Brief Sketch of the Development of the Newspaper and Some Notes on Publishers who have Especially Contributed to Printing. Chicago: United Typothetae of America, 1918. 55.

immediately follows Warburg's article to close the *Pan* issue.²²³ Burgess' *Remarkable is Art* is the plastic energy of idealism, in-between decadentism and realism.

In a prescient spin on what the younger Spengler would eventually come to call "historical pseudomorphoses," Warburg's humorous model of the plastic at work in historical-change-through-cultural-exchange-of-form opposes Spengler's tragic mineralogical model with a mycological iteration that caricatures the *Kreis* that inspired Spengler's take. The principal theme in Warburg's late 19th-century history of American "periodicals of protest" is the regressive evolution of American Bohemia, a tale of the creation of fresh comic formulas from weak artistic contributions through socio-economic shifts, domestic migrations across the United States, and international exchange with France and England: it is Warburg's play with unconscious foresight on Spengler's later theorization of the clash of "race-ideals" and "prototype-peoples." In Warburg's mycological historical pseudomorphosis of "impish," or "goblin literature" decline is the degenerative rotting of a generative fermentation that plants humorist spores, rather than erupting in doomed degenerate crystallization.

In the humorless logic of Spengler's *The Decline of the West*, "historical pseudomorphoses" are described as "those cases in which an older alien Culture lies so massively over the land that a young Culture, born in this land, cannot get its breath and fails not only to achieve pure and specific expression-forms, but even to develop fully its own self-consciousness. All that wells up from the depths of the young soul is cast in old moulds, young feelings stiffen in senile works, and instead of rearing up itself in its own creative power, it can only hate the distant power with a hate that grows to be monstrous."²²⁵ And, in fact, the dramatic dynamics of this Spenglerian "historical pseudomorphosis" resound with the history of *The Lark* as Burgess himself mythologized it in his editorials. According to Burgess, The Lark had "aimed to overthrow the staid respectability of the larger magazines and to open to younger writers opportunities to be heard before they had obtained recognition from the autocratic editors."²²⁶ In Burgess' editorials for The Lark, what Warburg refers to as a kind of mushrooming or fermenting is instead characterized as "riot" with ornament, or a "little riot of Decadence." Burgess describes The Lark as "a craze of odd sizes and shapes, freak illustrations, wide margins, uncut pages, Jenson types, scurrilous abuse and petty jealousies, impossible prose and doggerel rhyme."228 What Warburg describes as sporing, Burgess outlines as riot-by-design through "outbreak." 229 Burgess' history of *The Lark*—published in the last issue of *The Lark* (*Epi-Lark*) in May 1897, a month after Warburg's "American Chapbooks" (April 1897)—describes The Lark as "a revolt against the commonplace,"²³⁰ with Burgess asserting that *The Lark* "aimed to overthrow [...] staid respectability": "When the history of the Nineteenth Century is written, these tiny eruptions of revolt, these pamphleteering amateurs cannot remain unnoticed, for their outbreak was a symptom of the discontent of the times."²³¹ The "historical pseudomorphoses" described in Spengler's mythology of "Western" decline are the crystallizing infiltration of molten masses

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²²³ Wilhelm Strang, Selbstporträt, Originalradierung (1895), Pan 2 (April 1897): 349.

²²⁴ Spengler, *The Decline of the West*, 2:111-156..

²²⁵ Ibid., 2:189. My emphasis.

Burgess as quoted in David Weir, Decadent Culture in the United States: Art and Literature against the American Grain, 1890–1926 (Albany: State University of New York, 2008), 131.

²²⁷ Ibid.

²²⁸ Ibid.

²²⁹ Ibid.

²³⁰ Ibid.

²³¹ Joanna Levin, *Bohemia in America*, 1858–1920 (Stanford, CA: Stanford University Press, 2010), 270.

defined in mineralogical terms as "fill[ing] up the spaces that they find available [...] [to] arise [in] distorted forms." Burgess' May 1897 mythologization of the "little eruptions" he asserts led to his founding of *The Lark* reads like a Spenglerian crystallizing infiltration that fills up "clefts and cracks" with "volcanic outbursts," or what Burgess calls "outbreaks."

Warburg's April 1897 mycological pseudomorphosis intervenes in Burgess' tragic cosmogony of *The Lark* with its images of volcanic lava jets and magma crystallization, and transforms this tale of willfully dark and degenerate "revolt," "eruptions," and "outbreak" into a lighter comic plastic of fermented sporing. The result for those who read Warburg's account is the substitution of a comic subterranean presence fermenting to sprout into fleshy spores, in place of Burgess' tragic humorist burning bubbling to the surface. Neither narrative is ultimately any less destructive than the other: the difference is in the "plastic" formulas for destruction that the respective dispositions of mushrooms, crystals, and magma emphasize, the first, a revolutionary "break-through," the latter a comic bursting or melting but nevertheless apocalyptic doom.

In his diary entry on the day of his lunch invitation from Burgess, the same day he wrote his *Foundational Fragments* note on "plastic art," the question in the middle of what Warburg called his "three irons to fire, three bones to gnaw, three stones to roll" was "[w]hat is the standing of *Lark* [...]?"²³⁵ This question can be slightly rephrased for use in thinking about Warburg's experimentation with the plastic: what happened to the "standing" of *The Lark* when Warburg reprinted Burgess' *Remarkable is Art* in *Pan*, and what impact did this gesture have on Warburg's understanding of the plastic? What might the pseudomorphism (accident of resemblance) between the verse-and-cartoon by Burgess (which Warburg's "American Chapbooks" article categorizes as "Karikatur" ["caricature"]), and Warburg's own spiral-line-plane diagram of plastic energy in "movement-with-object-exchange," have to contribute to experimentation with the plastic preceding Spengler's tragic "historical pseudomorphoses" (historical change through cultural exchange) and Mondrian's theorization of the "tragic plastic," the "new plastic," and "neo-plasticism"?

In Warburg's *Elliptical Wheels* reprint of Burgess' *Remarkable is Art*, Warburg indicts humorless connoisseurship by praising what he refers to as a "bizarre" and "labored" American "caricature"—an image between "powerful humor" and "deliberately sought after simplicity." Reprinted in the expensive and precious *Pan*, the anything-but-precious comic photoengraving by the humorist Burgess appears as though it were intended by Warburg as his own caricature of self-indulgent fine art prints that take their late-19th-century ornamental "flourishes" all too seriously (fig. 14).

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²³² Spengler, *Decline of the West*, 2:189.

²³³ Ibid.

²³⁴ Weir, *Decadent Culture*, 131.

²³⁵ Warburg, "Excerpts from Aby Warburg's Diary," 154.

Warburg, "Amerikanische Chapbooks," 348; id., "Amerikanische Chapbooks (1897)," 577; id., "American Chapbooks (1897)," 710.

²³⁷ Warburg, "15.XII.90 Bf. N M H (Wbg)," in *Fragmente zur Ausdruckskunde*, 60. Warburg put his exchange with artist and friend Mary Hertz (his future wife) on "the flourish" in the *Foundational Fragments*. This exchange also features prominently in Pinotti's section on "spazio e angoscia" ["space and anxiety"] in *Il Corpo dello Stile* [*The Body of Style*] on what he calls the "history of art as the history of aesthetics." See Andrea Pinotti, *Il Corpo dello Stile: Storia dell'arte come Storia dell'estetica a partire da Semper, Riegl, Wölfflin* (Milan: Centro Internazionale Studi di Estetica, 2008), 184. In the exchange Warburg had asked Hertz, "Why does the flourish please us? Why do we speak of decline when art becomes 'decorative'?" This question then led him to a series of hypotheses about how to define the artistic act: "Is this perhaps rooted in the way in which we come to terms with the external world by

With his reprint of Burgess' humorist photoengraving, Warburg infiltrated Pan. In his infiltration, he planted an unrefined California verse-and-cartoon of turn-of-the-century nervous exhaustion and post-Gold Rush neurasthenia in-between fin-de-siècle decadence and realism. Warburg's correspondence archive contains evidence of other similar attempts at inserting cryptic but potentially eruptive images into publications. The "French Arrow" incident (1926) is one such example. 238 The "French Arrow" was a drawing Warburg created to be accompanied by a quote from French writer Honoré de Balzac. He pitched the "French Arrow" ploy to an acquaintance, Olga Herschel, in the attempt to persuade her to help him plant the drawing in the header of the Hamburgische Correspondent (Hamburg Correspondent): "[t]he time has come to shoot off an arrow, either from a newspaper on the very right or the very left of the political spectrum."²³⁹ The quote to be used for this "shoot off" was taken from Balzac's story *La Cousine* Bette (Cousine Bette) and was to read, "Mais Lisbeth, c'est-à-dire résolue à tromper..." ["But Lisbeth, that means to be resolved to err..."] with the caption "What Balzac would write in Mr. [Raymond] Poincaré's autograph book." At the time of the ploy, Poincaré was serving one of his three terms as Prime Minister of France (1926–1929) and Warburg asked Herschel to have the "French Arrow" printed "without mentioning [his] name to any member of the editorial staff" so that it would not be seen as a gesture coming from "a paper which is in the immediate service of the honest but as yet unrecognized broker G[ustav] Stresemann."241 Stresemann, who had served as the German Chancellor for a brief period in 1923, and then became Foreign Minister (1923-1929), is generally remembered for his attempts at diplomacy with France.

The "French Arrow" was intended as a statement of protest against the hard-line of Prime Minister Poincaré, generally characterized as "an inflexible advocate of the enforcement of [the Treaty of] Versailles" and a proponent of punishing Germany forcefully for its World War I aggressions. As head of the Warburg family banking dynasty, Aby's brother Max Warburg had participated in the Versailles negotiations which, it has been said, hindered German economic recovery from World War I with the "war guilt clause" that would eventually come to be identified by many as a "gift to [German] nationalism" and an underlying cause of World War II. Warburg's files do not indicate that he received a response from Herschel about the "French Arrow;" however, correspondence in 1927 with *Hamburgische Correspondent* editors show Warburg railing against the "supplier[s] of opinions" on its editorial board for not publishing his "French arrow." It thus appears that this attempted infiltration was not successful.

positing reasons and causes, a process in which the creation of art is only one special stage in our attempt to bring order into the phenomena of the outside world? This would mean that anyone who is more reflective, more prudent and hesitant than those who immediately point to a definite person as an originator and are satisfied with this explanation, has something of the artist in him? Thus: surely, it belongs to the artist to be a little less ready to point at something definite as a cause and, secondly, yet to feel the desire of becoming one with the object of perception?" English translation from Gombrich, *Aby Warburg*, 81.

Documentation of the "French Arrow" incident can be found in Warburg's correspondence: Warburg to Olga Herschel, October 30, 1926, WIA GC 17951; Warburg to Felix von Eckhardt, June 23, 1927, WIA GC 18547; Warburg to Rudolf Michel, June 23, 1927, WIA GC 18942.

²³⁹ Warburg to Herschel, October 30, 1926, WIA GC 17951.

²⁴⁰ Ibid.

²⁴¹ Ibid.

²⁴² Peter Gay, Weimar Culture: The Outsider as Insider (1968; repr. New York: W.W. Norton, 2001), 153.

²⁴³ See historian Eric Hobsbawm as cited in Levine, *Dreamland of Humanists*, 12.

²⁴⁴ Warburg to Von Eckhardt, June 23, 1927, WIA GC 18547; Warburg to Michel, June 23, 1927, WIA GC 18942.

Just as the "French Arrow" had attempted to use a French sense of humor against a French political hard-liner, the comic move by Warburg in Pan took a neurasthenic "very American sense of humor" seen as "der dem Leben wirklich überlegen ist" ["truly laying something over on Life"]²⁴⁵—a humor "kampft einen schriften, frohlichen Kampf gegen die fin-de-siecle Pose selbstgefalliger Mudigkeit" ["engaged in joyous strife with the self-indulgent, world weary pose of the turn-of-the-century" ²⁴⁶—and incorporated it into the German magazine with the intention of bringing attention to a greater threat that Warburg perceived behind German humorlessness. Burgess' Remarkable is Art was the mycological idealism Warburg hoped would break infertile ground in-between the overly elastic manner of the flourish in the all-too-pliable line fetishized by decadentism, and an ossifying faith in the staunch fixity of realism against intoxicating flourishes.



Fig. 14. Images pinned to the author's studio wall: examples of *The Lark*'s humorist take on graphic trends in late 19th-century literary magazines, (top and bottom left) details of "Schnorkel" ["flourishes"] from the January 1896 cover of the American little magazine, *The Philistine*, as reprinted in *Pan* in the article that precedes Warburg's. Photo: University of Heidelberg Digital Library; (bottom center) the full cover of *The Philistine* as reprinted in *Pan*; (far right) Detail of ironic ribbon ornament from Remarkable is Art as reprinted in Warburg's "American Chapbooks" (1897); (top, slight right) detail of anthropomorphized "flourish" in an ornamental corner tile from Burgess' verse-and-cartoon The Goop, 1897, as reprinted in The Burgess Nonsense Book, 1901. Photo: Internet Archive. Photo by author.

Warburg, "Amerikanische Chapbooks," 348; id., "Amerikanische Chap-books (1897)," 577; id., "American Chapbooks (1897)," 710. ²⁴⁶ Ibid.

In 1890, in a note for the Foundational Fragments that Warburg composed while working on his dissertation, he wrote, "assumption that the work of art is something hostile moving towards the beholder," followed by the imperative, "search for a starting-point and goal."²⁴⁷ It was "the flourish" that he would define as this "definite starting-point." Described as a particular kind of movement and movement-affect, an "aimless or turning in on oneself—joy in harmless movement" the "flourish" was the "starting-point" for discussions in the Foundational Fragments that concluded with Warburg's theorizing the role of the artist in relation to "our attempt to bring order into the phenomena of the outside world": "surely it belongs to the artist," Warburg conjectured in his notes, "to be a little less ready to point at something definite as a cause and [...] yet to feel the desire of becoming one with the object of perception."²⁵⁰ Warburg's "American Chapbooks" review in *Pan* is the continuation of this 1890 interest in the "flourish"—this "joy in harmless movement"—as it relates to "corporal introjection"²⁵¹ (fig. 15)—the paradox of distancing by way of "becoming one" with "something hostile moving towards the beholder." It is his attempt to define "artistic temperament" further by observing what happens to the tactic of "corporal introjection" when the threat being perceived comes paradoxically from an object that exists to emphasize its harmlessness, a "joy in harmless movement," or the flourish.

Amidst the ever-proliferating varieties of American literary fungi that Warburg discusses in "American Chapbooks," only *The Lark* "has any claim to independent significance": all the other "little magazines" discussed are "bunt" ["colorful"] but "inedible." The so-called inedible mushrooms submit to what Warburg calls in his article the "die Gefahr, ein weichlich anempfindendes" ["danger of weak emotionalism"]²⁵³ and therefore, they afford no "Wort zu scharfer Selbstkritik" ["word for trenchant self-criticism"]²⁵⁴: like Botticelli in Warburg's assessment of artistic temperament, they are "all too pliable" examples of over-malleable elasticity, while The Lark contributors and Burgess are the "trenchant" plastic artists of "independent significance." ²⁵⁵ Like Leonardo in Warburg's dissertation, they are "self-reliant" actors making "vigorous efforts to extract from life around them [...] forms that could work into art in their own way," or formulas of a "living force." ²⁵⁶

Emblematic of this "independent" image-breaking impulse that Warburg praised and empathetically imitated in his "American Chapbooks" review is an incident that, as legend has it, Burgess was involved in two years before Warburg's American travels. This incident of San Francisco outcry, which Burgess would eventually play to his advantage, was reported in the San Francisco Call in January 1894 (fig. 16). Under the accusatory headline "IMAGE BREAKERS," a drawing printed in the Call shows a group of men looking down at a toppled statue of a local

²⁴⁷ Ibid.

²⁴⁸ Ibid.

²⁴⁹ Warburg, "15.XII.90 Bf. N M H (Wbg)," 60. English from Gombrich, *Aby Warburg*, 80.

^{250 &}quot;15.XII.90. Br<ie>f an M<ary> H<ertz> (Wbg)," in Fragmente zur Ausdruckskunde, 60. English from Gombrich, Aby Warburg, 81.

²⁵¹ Warburg, "299. Santa Fé, N M," 145.

²⁵³ Warburg, "Amerikanische Chapbooks," 348; id., "Amerikanische Chap-books (1897)," 577; id., "American Chapbooks (1897)," 710.

Warburg, "Amerikanische Chapbooks," 348; id., "Amerikanische Chapbooks (1897)," 577; id., "American Chapbooks (1897)," 710.

Warburg, "Amerikanische Chapbooks," 348; id., "Amerikanische Chapbooks (1897)," 577; id., "American Chapbooks (1897)," 710.

256 Warburg, "Sandro Botticelli's *Birth of Venus*," 141, and id., *Sandro Botticellis "Geburt der Venus*," 54.

dentist. The statue had been donated to the city as a temperance fountain, and as a monument to the dentist himself and his morals.²⁵⁷



Fig. 15. Images pinned to the author's studio wall: (center) Detail from Burgess' verse-and-cartoon *Remarkable is Art* playing the part of "caricature" that Warburg assigns it in his article "American Chapbooks." Photo: University of Heidelberg Digital Library; (far left) Detail from Warburg's own spiral-line-plane drawing (note [301.] 11.III 96). Photo: Warburg Institute, London; (far right) Details from other prints published in *Pan* to accompany articles in the same issue as Warburg's; these two particular ribbon-strip ornaments are featured in *Pan*'s layout in the immediate vicinity of Burgess' *Remarkable is Art. Remarkable is Art* caricatures *Pan*'s conventional selection of prints by anthropomorphizing flourishes and transforming the ribbon strip into a comic strip. Photo: University of Heidelberg Digital Library. Photo by author.

According to the *Call*, some onlookers justified the destruction of the statue—which had been pulled down by a rope coiled around its neck—with the assertion that it had not managed to achieve the status of "ornament": "With the greatest deliberation apparently a rope was *coiled* around the mock presentment of Dr. Cogswell and with a strong pull, and all together, he was toppled from his fountain pedestal [...]. 'Well, but the old doctor's a crank, they say and the potmetal figure wasn't an ornament.""

Burgess was among those blamed for the incident, and in some accounts is even said to have been dismissed from his teaching post as instructor of topographical drawing at the University of California as a result of the stunt.²⁵⁹ It was after this image-breaking encounter with a

²⁵⁷ Gelett Burgess, "Image Breakers," *The Morning Call* (January 3, 1894).

²⁵⁹ Johanna Drucker, *The Century of Artist's Books* (New York: Granary Books, 1995), 30. The story of the dismissal is also reported in James David Hart, *A Companion to California* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1978), 103. It also appears in Burgess' narrative biography in a 1969 reprint of his 1906 book *Are You a Bromide?*,

temperance fountain of an upstanding dentist destroyed for not being an "ornament," that Burgess began *The Lark*.

Advertisements in *The Lark* show how Burgess used the reputation of "image breaker," and the idea that destruction produces its own form of ornament, to his advantage (fig. 17): among the working milieu of late-19th-century graphic designers employed in photoengraving, Burgess created an immediately identifiable style of irreverent advertising he used to simultaneously sell cameras and furniture while disseminating the impulse to iconoclastic disobedience. This same impulse to iconoclastic disobedience was also acknowledged as an effect of Burgess' goops on the upbringing of none other than the famously mischievous photographer Lee Miller (1907–1977) who kept Burgess' *The Goop Directory*, among her childhood favorites, on the shelves of her library as an adult (see fig. 19).²⁶⁰

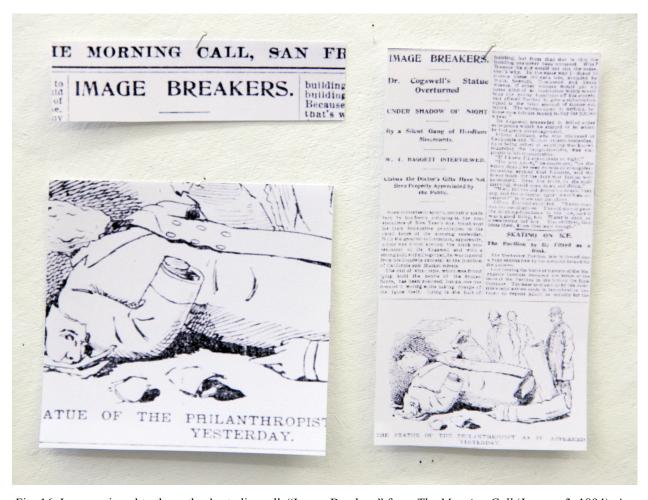


Fig. 16. Images pinned to the author's studio wall: "Image Breakers" from *The Morning Call* (January 3, 1894). An incident of "artistic exploit" alleged to have been plotted by Gelett Burgess and other *Les Jeunes* involved in *The Lark* (1895–1897). Source: *San Francisco Call*. Photo by author.

F.C.S. "Editor's Note," in Gelett Burgess, *Are You a Bromide? or The Sulphitic Theory* (1913). 1969. Upper Saddle River, N.J.: Literature House Reprint, 1969, and in an article titled "The Pioneer Prohibitionist"; Idwall Jones, "The Pioneer Prohibitionist," *San Francisco Water* 5, no. 3, (July 1926): 13. in the journal *San Francisco Water* (July 1926): 13.

²⁶⁰ Carolyn Burke, *Lee Miller: A Life* (London: Bloomsbury, 2005), 12



Fig. 17. Images pinned to the author's studio wall: (bottom left) black and white scanned page of advertisements from *The Lark* in *The Lark*, *Book Second*, 1896–1897. *Book First*, 1895–1896, did not have advertisements; (top right and top) Details from the advertisements page that exemplify Burgess' "image-breaking" graphic style for commercial photoengraving. Source: Internet Archive. Photo by author.



Fig. 18. Original page of advertisements from *The Lark* in *The Lark*, *Book Second*, 1896–1897 as originally printed on yellow bamboo paper Burgess claimed he found in San Francisco's Chinatown. *The Lark, Book First*, 1895–1896, did not have advertisements. The advertisements page is an example of Burgess' 'image-breaking' graphic style for commercial photoengraving. Photo: Geisel Library, Special Collections,

University of California, San Diego.



Fig. 19. Images pinned to the author's studio wall: (bottom left) Burgess' goop character "Felicia Rops: Handling Things," from *The Goop Directory*, 1913. Source: Internet Archive: "Funny how Felicia Rops, Always handles things in shops! Always pinching, always poking, Always Feeling, always stroking, Things she has no right to touch! Goops like that annoy me very much!"; (top left) The symbolist artist Félicien Rops' *Selbstverliebt*, c.1878–1881, watercolor on paper, from whom Burgess' character "Felicia Rops" takes her name. Source: Wilhelm-Busch-Museum Hannover; (bottom right) Lee Miller, *Condom*, c. 1930. Source: screenshot from *Artnet*; (top right) David E. Scherman's photograph of Lee Miller, *Lee Miller in Adolph Hitler's Bathtub, Munich*, 1946. Source: screenshot from *LIFE Magazine* online. Photo by author.

Warburg's "Tragedy of Incorporation" and Burgess' Comic "Comatose Animation"

When studied as nested in the middle of surrounding prints in *Pan*'s layout, Warburg's reprint of Burgess' *Remarkable is Art* makes the humorless magazine for German print connoisseurs appear more self-aware. Pseudomorphism between the comic ornamental ribbon-strip along the right edge of *Remarkable is Art* and Warburg's own spiral-line-plane drawing in his *Foundational Fragments*, indicates that unconsciously, or perhaps even consciously, Warburg was amused by Burgess' goop because he found in it an ironic comedic "exploit" that coincidentally caricatured his own tragic take on "ornament," "adornment" and "flourish" as he had written about them between Florence and California.

It was the questions posed in these notes on ornament, adornment, and flourish that had led Warburg to his conversations with American ethnographer Cushing, and to his enthusiastic discovery of what, in the *Foundational Fragments*, he called his "psychological law" of "the "corporalization" of sensorial impression." This was the plastic energy of corporality and the symbolic that the older Warburg would later refer to as the "tragedy of corporalization," forgetting the comedy of corporalization of the same period that the younger Warburg had outlined in diary entries, publications, and early theoretical manuscripts.

The pseudomorphism between Burgess' *Remarkable is Art* and Warburg's spiral-line-plane drawing brings to the surface a dialectical swing between the comedy and tragedy of corporalization. In Burgess' comic ornamental ribbon-strip, the flight of the neurasthenic humanoid goop is a coiling flourish over elliptical wheels on a cart that leaves in its wake the looping after-image of an elliptical trajectory. In this trajectory, an anthropomorphized flourish and an ornamentalized human combine in the configuration of goop, horse, cart, and elliptical wheels. Meanwhile, in Warburg's spiral-line-plane drawing, subject and object positions encircle, embrace, and penetrate each other in a movement notation diagrammed between a coiling spiral designated "subject" and a combined vertical-line-and-plane designated "object." The elliptical animation that spins through both images evokes a manifold of relations between what Warburg called "graphic art" and "plastic art," "line," and "extension," the "subject as carrier," and the "object as being-carried," and which together characterize turn-of-the-century thinking on the plastic in-between the tragedy and the comedy of corporalization.

Philosophical studies of the importance of Warburg's work for the history of aesthetics connect the older Warburg's tragedy of corporalization, with the "abstraction-ornament-angst" triangulation in his 1890 fragments on the "flourish." The comedy of corporalization visible in Burgess' goop might therefore be referred to as his abstraction-ornament-ecstasy triangulation—ecstasy as in "comic ecstasy." Laughter in comic ecstasy "[does] not (...) deny the emotions

²⁶¹ The translation of *Schmuck* as "artifact of adornment" is from Spyros Papapetros, "World Ornament: The Legacy of Gottfried Semper's 1856 Lecture on Adornment," *Res* 57–58 (2010): 328.

²⁶² Warburg, "15.XII.90. Bf. an M H (Wbg)," 60. For examples of some of the many notes on "adornment," see Warburg, *Fragmente zur Ausdruckskunde*, 50.

²⁶³ Warburg, "299. Santa Fé, N M," 145.

²⁶⁴ Warburg, "[301.] 11.III.96 S. Fr.," 147 & 149.

²⁶⁵ Warburg, "306. 25. III. 96. S Frico," 150.

²⁶⁶ Pinotti, *Il Corpo dello Stile*, 184.

²⁶⁷ Peter L. Berger, *Redeeming Laughter: The Comic Dimension of Human Experience* (Berlin: Walter de Gruyter, 2014), 17.

evoked by the tragic (...)," rather it puts these emotions to psychological and political use. 268 It can be said—combining Warburg's terms from his spiral-line-plane drawing and his note on the plastic—that the "flourish" in the flight of the goop, a humanoid pendant hanging from reins on the neck of a horse, draws an "extension" or "radius" of human "adornment" around both horse and cart in Burgess' print. The plastic energy in this "plastic art" is not in the steady line with which Burgess portrays the forms of horse, wheels, cart, reins, and goop, rather it is in the pathos-formula of ecstasy that drives the looping goop through the contoured forms of horse, cart, reins, and elliptical wheels.

In the following ekphrasis of Burgess' comic ornamental ribbon-strip (fig. 20), the "plastic" formula in Burgess' strip should be thought of as the suppressed presence in the interstices made visible by the string of semicolons that link all descriptive phrases. At first, the extended right arm of the goop bends back to send a quivering squiggle into its whip, while its hanging left arm keeps a loose grip on the horse's reins (see fig. 22, left, top of ribbon-strip, right edge); as the horse trots forward, elliptical wheels lift goop and cart, pulling the reins of the horse tight to send the goop back on its seat (fig. 20, top center); the elliptical wheels at the front of the cart continue their revolutions forward, rolling onto their longer sides; the goop is thrown over itself onto the back of the horse and the reins toss into a hoop around the horse's neck (fig. 20, top second right); the right arm of the goop is raised with the momentum of its body's propulsion forward; the elliptical wheels and the back of the cart follow, throwing the goop back with elbowless arms and kneeless legs askance; the horse's legs curl up in a gallop as its reins twist into a tangled loop (fig. 20, top far right). Then the ride intensifies, the galloping horse runs left and the goop is a pendant on reins catapulted ahead of the horse, swinging over its head and under its neck (fig. 20, bottom center); horse and humanoid goop are the two poles of an ellipse whose circumference is drawn in space by reins; the form of a second ellipse doubles under the first in curves created by a combination of the back edge of the tipping cart, the sides of tilted elliptical wheels, the knock-knees of the rearing horse, and the contortions of its torso (fig. 20, bottom second right); the back wheels of the cart spin out as the rectangular plane of the cart collapses; the goop and horse poles of the first ellipse compress the ellipse onto itself (fig. 20, bottom far right).

An ekphrasis of Warburg's spiral-line-plane drawing produces the same plastic formula (fig. 21): this time, however, the elliptical formula plays out between the figures of a coiling spiral designated "Subjekt" and a vertical-line-and-plane designated "Objekt". Warburg's spiral-lineplane drawing²⁷⁰ is a choreography of "movements with object exchange"²⁷¹ in an "artistic act,"²⁷² which maps out a formula for plastic energy in a sequence of four configurations.²⁷³ First, the line-and-plane designated "O" for object, and the spiraling cone designated "S" for subject are presented separately as autonomous forms (fig. 21, first left). In the second notation labeled "tragen, Tracht, Schmuck [""carrying; costume; artifact of adornment"] (see fig. 3, left, and fig. 22, right) the spiraling cone is drawn below line-and-plane, which is tilted and rotated from its original autonomous position to make it perpendicular to the expanded opening of the spiral's coil (fig. 21, second left). In this tilted, rotated orientation, the line that was previously

²⁶⁸ Ibid.

²⁶⁹ The translation of *Umfang* as "conceptual radius" comes from Papapetros, "World Ornament," 328.

²⁷⁰ Warburg, "[301.] 11.III.96 S. Fr.," 147 & 149.

²⁷¹ Warburg, "307," 150–51. ²⁷² Warburg, "305. 23.III. 96," 150.

²⁷³ Warburg, "[301.] 11.III.96 S. Fr.," 147 & 149.

vertical (north-south) is now horizontal (east-west). The coil designated "subject"—what Warburg later explicitly defines in his note on the plastic as the "subject as carrier," "object of graphic art," "the line"—is supporting (or "carrying") the line-and-plane designated "object"—what Warburg's note on the plastic calls "object as being-carried," and associates with "plastic art" and "extension."



Fig. 20. Images pinned to the author's studio wall: Details of the goop "flourish" in elliptical animation (from Burgess' comic ornamental ribbon-strip on the right edge of *Remarkable is Art*, reprinted in Warburg's "American Chapbooks"). Source: University of Heidelberg Digital Library. Photo by author.

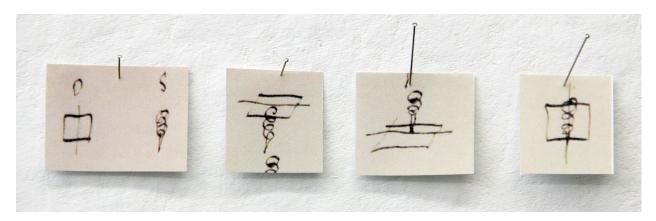


Fig. 21. Images pinned to the author's studio wall: details from Warburg's spiral-line-plane drawing (note [301.] 11.III 96). (from left to right) The individual notations that make up the sequence of four; in the original drawing the notations follow the same order but are oriented top to bottom rather than left to right. Source: Warburg Institute, London. Photo by author.

In this notation (fig. 21 second left) of "movement with object-exchange," the dominant motion is the "outlining" (i.e., circumscribing) movement in Warburg's phrase "abtastender

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²⁷⁴ Warburg, "306. 25.III 96 S Frico Public Libr.," 150.

umschreibender Befühlung" ["palpating, outlining visuo-haptic feeling"], which Warburg uses to define the "artistic act." The "line" Warburg associates with "graphic art" dominates the "extension" he associates with "plastic art." Thus, the prevalent formula is the extension of a surface to suppress a coiling impulse; "plastic" energy manifests as restraint and the three-dimensional acts as though it were two-dimensional. The result is the kind of simultaneously revealing and disappearing effect generated by clothing, or what Warburg calls in his labels of the spiral-line-plane drawing "costume" and "adornment." Both costume and adornment create contours of bodily extension in silhouettes only optimally perceived as one-with-the-body at a distance through what could be called "visuo"-dominant feeling, or eyesight.

In the third notation of the spiral-line-plane drawing, the spiraling cone designated "subject" hovers above the line-and-plane designated "object" (fig. 21, second from right). The point of the coil's tapering bottom is perfectly perpendicular with the horizontal line across the tilted and rotated plane. This configuration in the drawing is labeled "getragen werden" ["being carried"] and can therefore be linked to the "object of being carried" that Warburg identifies with "plastic art" and "extension" in his note on the plastic. 277 In this third notation, the "subject" or "object of graphic art" is supported by the "object," in this case, the "object of being carried" associated with "plastic art" and "extension." 1278 It is now the "palpating" gesture in the "palpating, outlining visuo-haptic feeling" that is dominant: extension explodes line, generating a plastic energy of "haptic"-dominant feeling or touch-dominant sight. Touch-dominant sight is sight of an object at close proximity to the body. What acquires a synthetic two-dimensional contour at a distance becomes three-dimensionally complex in sight at tangible proximity. Warburg does not provide any examples in his label for this particular notation, but using the previous example of "costume" or clothing, preoccupation with qualities like texture and folds can be considered examples of values privileged in touch-dominant sight.

In the final notation of the drawing (fig. 21, right), there is a more ambivalent relationship between the movements of subject and object positions with object exchange. Labeled "Einhüllen, nachahmen—sich mit dem Perpendikel identifiziren" ["enveloping, imitating—with perpendicular identification"], the notation presents the spiraling cone designated "subject" as coiled around the line in the combined line-and-plane designated "object." The spiral coiling around the line at the center of the plane is, in turn, enveloped by the square outline of the plane. The line-and-plane designated "object" has also returned to its original tilt and rotation, so that both spiraling cone and line-and-plane are oriented vertically in what Warburg calls, "perpendicular identification": this "perpendicular identification" appears to be an identification with an infinite absolute ground, literally the ground of the paper on which Warburg created the spiral-line-plane drawing. ²⁸⁰

In this cryptic notation, an object playing subject (the "subject as carrier" that is the "object of graphic art" or "line"), and an object playing object (the "object as being-carried" that is "plastic art" and "extension") are in "perpendicular identification" with a mediating force external to them: this force must be none other than the "artistic act," which Warburg describes four notes later, ²⁸¹ immediately before his note on the plastic. ²⁸² The spiral designated "subject"

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²⁷⁵ Warburg, "305. 23.III 96," 150.

²⁷⁶ Warburg, "306. 25.III 96 S Frico Public Libr.," 150.

²⁷⁷ Ibid

²⁷⁸ Ibid.

²⁷⁹ Warburg, "[301.] 11.III 96 S. Fr.," 147, 149.

²⁸⁰ Ibid

²⁸¹ Warburg, "305. 23.III 96," 150.

coils around the line of the combined line-plane designated "object;" however, the spiral is at the same time enclosed by the plane. The notation can therefore be interpreted as the object-playing-subject and the object-playing-object taking turns dominating each other, wrestling and toiling in object-exchange facilitated by an equal object partner, the artist.

In what Warburg calls the "artistic act," "inanimate" objects (what Burgess would call "comatose animates") engage in object-exchange among themselves, while also engaging in exchange with "animate" objects called "human artists." In their exchange with human "animate" objects (or artists), inanimate objects in object-exchange take turns assuming subject and object positions. Objects engaged in object-exchange assemble and disassemble one another while being assembled and disassembled: objects toil among each other, while toiling with the artist. The "tragedy of corporalization," or tragic loss of "sein Ich-Organgefühl" ["organic egofeeling"] that the older Warburg would come to describe thirty years later in his *Remembrances* about his *Foundational Fragments*, associates his image of "man as an animal that handles and manipulates," with what the young Warburg had described as a "visuo-haptic feeling," a combination of "palpating" and "outlining." This "visuo-haptic feeling" is the embodied perceptual process of the symbolic that contributes to producing the animal called "human." Paradoxically—and this is what the older Warburg perceives as "tragic"—this is also the feeling through which the animal called "human" unmakes itself to make its "human" worlds.

This is the basic formula of a "plastic" sense of human proprioception, or rather, the human body's sense of its spatio-temporal and socio-symbolic position as a fleshy fissure between inner and outer worlds, caught amidst the animal, the non-animal, and the feeling of being never-quite-human-enough. This is the feeling that characterizes awe and wonder over what it means to be human. As inhuman humanoid, between the human and the non-human, the goop exaggerates this "striking characteristic" and is thus the perfect "caricature" of a pathos-formula of the human.

Warburg made it a point to emphasize that the pathos-formula he theorized with reference to portrayals of mythological death by dismemberment, were "more than a studio motif of purely formal interest"; they always "stood for [...] passionately and knowingly felt experience." Pathos-formulas were an "outward symptom of an inward, historical process," a by-product of corporeal symbolization whose "animated image" manifested through processes of embodied abstraction caught in the "unresolved composite between realistic observation" of "idealizing" "familiar [...] sources," and a "sheer exuberant rhetoric of muscle" (a "more consistent style"). These passages show Warburg was interested in pathos-formulas as abstractions whose survival in socio-cultural memory depended on their avoiding "decorative emotive pathos" with "a coolness," an "overtone [...] of robust composure." His 1897 descriptions of Burgess' *Lark* as an example of "bizarre" and "labored" American "caricature," between powerful humor" and "deliberately sought after simplicity" indicate he felt he had found something similar in Burgess' goop eight years before his published theorization of the term "pathos-formula."

²⁸² Warburg, "306. 25.III 96 S Frico Public Libr.," 150.

²⁸³ Warburg, "305. 23.III 96," 150.

Warburg, "Dürer and Italian Antiquity (1905), 555; id., "Dürer und die italienische Antike (1905)," 447.

²⁸⁵ Warburg, "Dürer and Italian Antiquity (1905), 558; id., "Dürer und die italienische Antike (1905)," 449.

²⁸⁶ Warburg, "Dürer and Italian Antiquity (1905)," 556; id, "Dürer und die italienische Antike," 448; id., "Dürer und die italienische Antike (1905)."

²⁸⁷ Warburg, "Amerikanische Chapbooks," 348; id., "Amerikanische Chap-books (1897)," 577; id., "American Chapbooks (1897)," 710.

When the ekphrases of the comic ribbon-strip in Burgess' *Remarkable is Art* and Warburg's spiral-line-plane drawing are combined, the following hallucinatory image is produced. The goop is a humanoid pendant, or article of adornment, swinging around horse and cart. The coiling elliptical radius, or extension that results from the flourish in its flight, is a metonym of the movement Warburg diagrammed in his spiral-line-plane drawing. The goop's flight follows the choreography Warburg outlines in his drawing: it is the expression of the same movement-with-object-exchange Warburg diagrammed between the subject-object he called the "subject as carrier" and the object-object he called "object as being carried."

Using Warburg's words from his note on the plastic to describe Burgess' comic ribbon-strip, the "subject as carrier" or "line" generates "extension" in a "plastic art" that emerges, literally invisible (because not actually outlined in line) but nonetheless perceivable as the visuo-haptic after-image of an elliptical trajectory. This after-image of a trajectory is produced by the impression of movement in the sequence of the comic ribbon-strip goop (fig. 22). The invisible but perceivable, suppressed but present, elliptical arcs of the looping coiling goop enact the same dynamic formula that Warburg diagrams in his spiral-line-plane drawing, and that he verbally describes in his notes on the plastic and on the "artistic act" as "visuo-haptic feeling." To put Warburg's language of symbolic energetics in the simpler visual terms of Burgess' goop, the decorative flight or "flourish" of the goop as a humanoid "pendant" swinging around horse, cart, and elliptical wheels, leaves behind a trace of doubling elliptical coils not immediately visible in line, yet visuo-haptically tangible as plastic extension. It is visuo-haptically tangible to any viewer in the sequential effect of the ribbon strip composition; for the artist, Burgess, this sequential effect would have been amplified under cinematic-like conditions with the flashing lamps used in the photomechanical reproduction of drawings.

The goop as humanoid pendant is not only a metonym for the subject position in object-exchange that Warburg calls "the subject as carrier," it is also a metonym for the object position in object exchange—what Warburg calls the "object as being-carried" in simpler terms, the goop is both the ornamentalized human driver of the cart, and a humanoid pendant being carried to swing around the neck of a horse and the elliptical wheels of its cart. The elliptical wheels around which the goop swings on horse's reins, are a metonym for both the object and subject positions in object exchange or rather, the "object as being-carried." The wheels thrown about by the force of the goop's swinging trajectory are both the "object as being-carried" and the "subject as carrier" in elliptical wheels whose elliptical form throws the goop.

The feedback between subject and object positions exchanged in movements between objects, whether goops or wheels, produces what Burgess' verse calls the "remarkable" in "art": using Warburg's terms from his notes to describe Burgess' print, the goop is initially positioned as ornamentalized humanoid-driver-cum-pendant (fig. 23), or as the decorative inhuman humanoid "subject as carrier" or "vector" of the cart that has also become its "object as being carried." The "subject" position played by the goop in object exchange is upset by what—using Burgess' terms—could be called "comatose animation" (fig. 24). In inanimate elliptical wheels, "comatose animation" make wheels into their own kind of autonomous "accessories-in-motion" (what Warburg calls the "subject as carrier"). In the movement-with-object-exchange Burgess stages in his print, it is the animation in the stubborn elliptical form of elliptical wheels that is actually driving the movement of the cart, not the wheels themselves, not the horse, and not the whip in the hands of the inhuman humanoid goop (fig. 23).

²⁸⁸ Warburg, "[301.] 11.III 96 S Fr.," 147, 149; Warburg, "305. 23.III 96," 150.

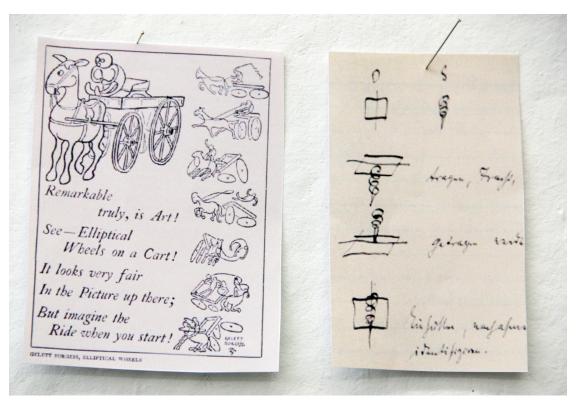


Fig. 22. Images pinned to the author's studio wall: (far left, right edge of print) Burgess ironic ornamental ribbon-strip from *Remarkable is Art* (December 1895) as reprinted in the Berlin-based *Pan* (*Elliptical Wheels*, 1897). (far right) A detail of Warburg's spiral-line-plane drawing (note [301.] 11.III 96), five notes before the note on "plastic art." Sources: (left) University of Heidelberg Digital Library; (right) *Fragmente zur Ausdruckskunde*, 2015, and Warburg Institute, London. Photo by author.

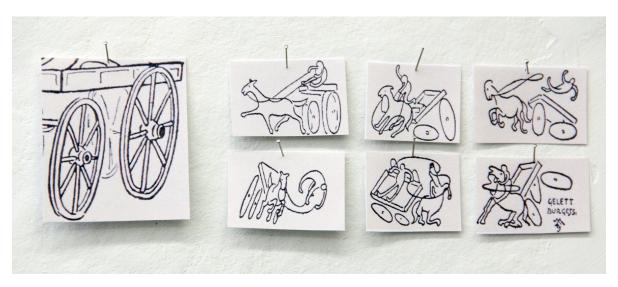


Fig. 23. Images pinned to the author's studio wall: details from Burgess' *Remarkable is Art* (1895) reprinted as *Elliptical Wheels* in Warburg's 1897 *Pan* article, *American Chapbooks*. (far left) Elliptical wheels at the center of the composition; (right) six of the seven scenes from the ribbon strip on the right of the composition. Source: University of Heidelberg Digital Library. Photo by author.

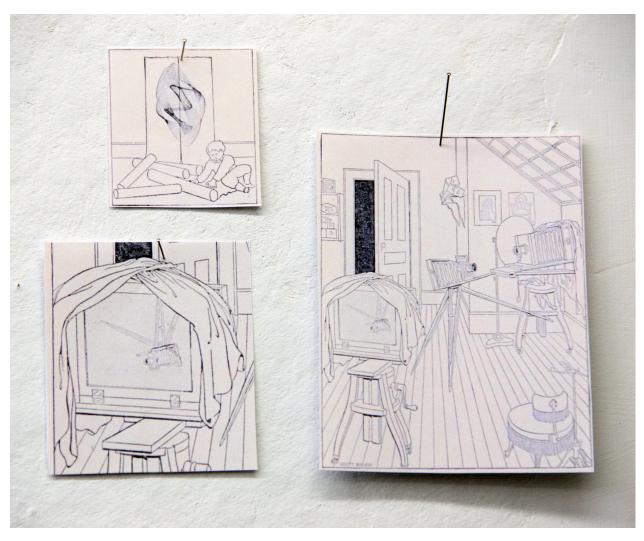


Fig. 24. Images pinned to the author's studio wall: examples of what Burgess called "comatose animation" in *The Lively City O'Ligg*. (top left) Burgess' "eccentric loom" autonomously produces complex designs and (right) the "blind camera" sees the world "*upright* instead of inverted" (*The Lively City O'Ligg*, 216 and 185). (bottom left) Detail of the blind camera. Source: Internet Archive.

The elliptical wheels move forward with the advancement of the horse, not with the will of the horse and not at the strike of the goop's quivering whip (fig. 23), but with the compulsion of their own "comatose animation" —their own plastic will to make "remarkable" art. In doing so, they transform the ornamentalized humanoid—the inhuman humanoid figure of a looping flourish—into an anthropomorphized artifact of adornment, a humanoid pendant. Between the two wooden wheels drawn-in-perspective at the center of Burgess' print, and the side view of the same wheels repeated schematically in the comic ribbon strip on the right, wheels achieve the comic beyond of their otherwise-inorganic bounds, and come to life (fig. 23). Elliptical wheels that spontaneously refuse to become circles are, however, in this scenario, perfectly natural; just as the plastic figure of the neurasthenic goop is not human but humanoid, the cart's wheels are not circular wheels at all, but elliptical wheels. The space the wheels occupy is the non-

Euclidean hyperspace of what Warburg had called Burgess' peculiar "idealism." In this "idealism," ellipses are simply ellipses, not caricatures of deformed circles employed to create the illusion of perspective. This movement-with-object-exchange in object and subject positions transforms the hostility of the typically-serious ribbon-strip as it usually appears in *Pan* into the self-deprecating plastic energy of a ribbon-strip outdoing itself as ornament to become an artful comic strip. The coiling between fixity and flexibility in *Remarkable is Art* is the expressive formula for plastic energy in art, or what Burgess called "comatose animation" (fig. 24): it is the animist tremor among objects that managed to survive "cidiviation"—Burgess' term for human civilization's emergence from its fracturing of living "things" into inanimate remnants, or dead "objects." In the "Preface to Skeptical Parents" Burgess wrote for his 1899 children's book, *The Lively City O'Ligg*, he lamented, "it is unfortunate that in this mechanical age most objects have lost more and more of those characteristics which were common to all before their *cidivation*. It may be said broadly, however, *that the nearer an Object approaches an art, the stronger its personality, whatever be its powers of will.* ²⁹²

The neurasthenic humanoid goop is what happens to the human body when the "cidivation" of objects generates human civilization. It is human intelligence that has worked itself into "comatose animation" through the frenzied working of the mechanical age desperate to extend the capacities and organs of the human body through objects like telegraphs and cameras (i.e., the capacity for sight; the organ of the eye), and modes of transportation like railways (i.e., the capacity for locomotion; the "organs" of the legs). In its attempt to distance itself from the threat of the animal, object and landscape intelligences that condition its movements and threaten its survival, human intelligence develops artificial intelligence through processes of "corporalization," in particular, "corporal introjection." In "corporal introjection," technologies are the by-product of the human body unconsciously introjecting itself with the very forms of intelligence that threaten it, in its tragic attempt to distance them.

Burgess' comedy of corporalization "comatose animation" is instead all about proximity: the "nearer an Object [whether the object-wheels or the object-human] approaches an art, the stronger its personality, whatever be its powers of will." The elliptical shape in the wheels in *Remarkable is Art* (fig. 23, far left) is the visualization of strength in the object personality or intelligence of wheels; the tubular shape in the body of the goop is the visualization of strength in the object personality, or intelligence, of the human. In Burgess' *Remarkable is Art*, the spiraling goops and the ellipse manifest as examples of the "Object" whose "personality" gets "stronger" as it "approaches art." 294

In the goop, the "personality" of the human—or human intelligence—approaches art by ornamentalizing or becoming-pendant: with this plastic energy, all ornamental features on the human figure—all features not considered necessary for uniquely human touch and sight—are ingested into the loop of the goop body (fig. 22, left). The "personality" of the flourish—or flourish-intelligence—strengthens as the flourish "approaches art" by anthropomorphizing: with this plastic energy, an ornamental flourish achieves is opposite, sprouts arms and legs, pops eyes and sucks out a mouth from its tubular surface.

²⁹⁰ Warburg, "Amerikanische Chapbooks," 348; id., "Amerikanische Chap-books (1897)," 577; id., "American Chapbooks (1897)," 710.

²⁹¹ Papapetros, "World Ornament," 328.

²⁹² Burgess, "Preface for Skeptic Parents," 25. My emphasis.

²⁹³ Ibid.

²⁹⁴ Ibid.



Fig. 25. Images pinned to the author's studio wall: Burgess' *Remarkable is Art* is not the typical comic strip. In Burgess' strip, the goop is always humanoid, there is no event that transforms the goop from human to goop. (far left and second from left) Comic strip *Never Satisfied* by French humorist Emil Cohl published in the British magazine *Punch* (1896). Source: Donald Crafton, *Emil Cohl, Caricature and Film* (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press), PAGE; in this conventional comic strip of role reversal, the foot of the human character is bitten by the fish that the human character failed to catch with his baited fishing line. (second from right) Detail of Burgess' *Remarkable is Art* as reprinted in *Pan*. Source: University of Heidelberg Digital Library; in Burgess' strip, roles are reversed in a redoubling loop that goes both ways. (far right) Detail from Warburg's spiral-line-plane drawing (note [301.] 11.III 96). Source: Warburg Institute, London. Photo by author.

The tubular loop of the goop that results from this movement-with-object-exchange is the humanoid ornament of goop, and its mischievous force Burgess called the "fourth dimension" of "nonsense." In this transmogrifying transubstantiation of human form, only the absolutely necessary ingesting orifices of eyes and mouth, and the essential function of hands to grasp like suction cups, remains. Likewise, in the cart's elliptical wheels, the ellipse—once an ornament that deformed the circle to give the illusion of perspective—is incorporated by the wheels to become an object of its own strength, the actual shape of the wheels (fig. 22, left).

Before he theorized the "pathos formula," Warburg found the perfect tragic expression of comic nervous exhaustion in Burgess' verse-and-cartoon *Remarkable is Art*: Burgess' photoengraving does not use the ellipse, the spiral and the human as expedient motifs but instead works with them as "an outward symptom of an inward, historical process," the "passionately and knowingly felt experience" of American neurasthenia. *Remarkable is Art* is an example of pathos-formula in-between the tragic plastic—Warburg's "tragedy of corporalization" and the comic plastic, or Burgess' comedy of incorporation, what he called the "cidiviation of

²⁹⁵ Burgess, *The Burgess Nonsense Book*, Frontispiece.

²⁹⁶ Warburg, "Dürer and Italian Antiquity (1905), 558; id., "Dürer und die italienische Antike (1905)," 449.

²⁹⁷ Warburg, "Unpublished Notes for the Kreuzlingen Lecture," 312, and in German from Didi-Huberman, *L'Immagine Insepolta*, 361.

inanimate things" in "comatose animation." Whether consciously or unconsciously Warburg chose to call *Remarkable is Art* a "caricature" (rather than a "verse-and-cartoon," Burgess' chosen term) because he perceived the print as exaggerating the tragic-comic aspects of the symbolic that he had identified as plastic processes of "corporalization." The productive and plastic energy generated by the interplay between plastic and graphic, between extension and line, is between corporal introjection in various kinds of artistic temperament, across various movements-with-object-exchange in the artistic act.

Remarkable is Art is experienced as humorous because its pathos-formula of nervous exhaustion does not use elliptical wheels as an expedient motif but rather as a psychologically impactful "accessory-in-motion": in other words, the goop does not become goop because the elliptical wheels stay elliptical, rather the goop is always already a goop. This is what Warburg notices when he writes of Burgess' humor as "seltsam berühren" ["disconcertingly odd"]: the goop is not the odd man out but rather the "odd one in."

To better explain, imagine the following counter-example: the typical comic strip (fig. 25, left) presents a world in which the proximity between the inanimate (in the case of the example, a fishing line) and the animate (a swinging human leg) are taken for granted by the human subject (a man fishing). As a result, the human subject meets its demise (consumption by a school of fish). In such a world, a human figure driving a horse and cart would have become goop after being tossed about by elliptical wheels. In other words, in the typical comic strip, only once the cart started moving would the inhuman transformation have occurred to a previously unambiguously human driver. Instead, in Burgess' goop, what Warburg identifies when he notices something "disconcertingly odd" in Burgess' print is a warning that there is something n-dimensional, something hyperspace, something neurasthenic about space itself.³⁰² This sense of something active in space itself is the "plastic." In Burgess' *Remarkable is Art*, the problem is not that something has gone wrong with circular wheels, thus humans become inhuman; rather, in the world of goops, the wheels are actually acting exactly as they should be by remaining elliptical in the n-dimensions of neurasthenic hyperspace.

This is "plastic" energy in art, a realm in which the three-dimensional must act like it is something flat, and in which flatness must act like it is three-dimensional: a realm in which the driving force is the plastic, where extension retreats into line and line disappears into extension, where these suppressions produce presence and destruction becomes productive. This is "plastic art" and "graphic art" as Warburg describes it, in a movement-with-object-exchange of subject-object relations in the artistic act. Warburg's *Elliptical Wheels* reprint of Burgess' *Remarkable is Art* makes art "remarkable" because it explicitly visualizes the formula of plastic energy animating those "forms of life" that Warburg would eventually come to theorize as "pathosformulas": the plastic is the coiling spark between actual bodies and their virtual contours in drawings and prints, between the visual and the haptic, between line and extension, between fixity and flexibility in artistic temperament, in object-exchange and in the artistic act.

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²⁹⁸ Burgess, "Preface for Skeptic Parents," 25.

²⁹⁹ Warburg, "299. Santa Fé, N M," 145.

³⁰⁰ For more on this redoubling in the comic, see Alenka Zupancic, *The Odd One in: On Comedy* (Cambridge, MA: MIT Press, 2008).

³⁰¹ Zupancic, The Odd One in, 213–18.

Warburg, "Amerikanische Chapbooks," 347; id., "Amerikanische Chap-books (1897)," 573; id., "American Chapbooks (1897)," 705.

Epilogue: Plasticism in California-Italian Foundational Fragments

In 1999, the introduction to the first English translation of Warburg's collected writings featured the reprint of an autobiographical drawing that had been archived with materials relevant to the Warburg's *Mnemosyne Bilderreihen Atlas*. The definitive English edition of Warburg's collected works was published in Southern California and, not surprisingly, the autobiographical diagram is presented in the introduction as a topological mapping of the importance of the American Far West to Warburg's intellectual development.

To the left of a broad elliptical arc between the labels "Hbg" (Hamburg, Germany) and "Florenz" (Florence, Italy) is a loop between Florence, and the label "Arizona" (fig. 26, top left): this loop connects Florence with both Arizona—where Warburg visited the ancient Hopi village of Walpi and worked on developing his ideas about "corporal introjection" in Moki animal dances —and an unidentified area to the right of Arizona marked with five vertical slash marks resembling train tracks (fig. 26, top right). Extending down from these five slash marks to the label "Florence" is a soft sweeping line crossed with a hard tapering zig-zag: this doubled stretch in the California-Italian loop of Warburg's "life's thread" could be called plastic because it is at once both a mark and the cancellation of a mark. The plastic "thread" surges under an elastic line pinched over a point labeled "Str" for Strasbourg. In Warburg scholarship, Strasbourg is generally considered to be a site of critical importance to Warburg's intellectual development.³⁰⁵ The diagonal pairing of Strasbourg and the American Far West in Warburg's topological diagram suggests both a certain parallelism, as well as complementary opposition in their significance to his education.³⁰⁶ If Strasbourg was important for Warburg's education as a reader of philosophy and history, the American Far West was important for Warburg's education as both a traveler—or body in motion—and as an observer of bodies in motion—of bodies engaged in the psycho-physiology of symbolic processes, or what the young Warburg called "corporalization."

Sixteen years have passed since the publication of Warburg's autobiographical diagram in the English edition of his collected writings; looking back at the diagram with an attention to Warburg's still untranslated notes from his *Foundational Fragments* suggests a new interpretation of the loop Warburg drew between the American Far West and Italy. The doubled thread of mark and cancellation—the plastic mark in Warburg's American-Italian loop—might also be read as an unconscious mapping of the central importance of the plastic to his thinking between Italy and California, California and Italy, amidst observations on the "tragedy of corporalization" in *Moki* dances, and amusement with the comedy of corporalization in a neurasthenic inhuman humanoid in Burgess' *Remarkable is Art*. Before Piet Mondrian's "Neoplasticism," there was the productive and plastic energy of "corporal introjection," between Warburg's dissertation on the autonomous life of "accessories-in-motion" and his later theorization of "pathos-formula", between his Italian musings on the "all too pliant" artistic temperament and his Californian amusement with "bizarre" and labored" humor, between Warburg's notes on the plastic and Burgess' writings on "comatose animation," between an art

³⁰³ Kurt Forster, "Introduction" in Aby Warburg, *The Renewal of Pagan Antiquity: Contributions to the Cultural History of the European Renaissance*, trans. David Britt. (Los Angeles: Getty Research Institute, 1999), 40–41.

³⁰⁴ Forster, "Introduction," 40–41.

³⁰⁵ Gombrich, Aby Warburg, 79.

historian-playing-empathetic-caricaturist and an artist-humorist studying the "remarkable" in art with a plastic figure called "goop" that made him laugh.

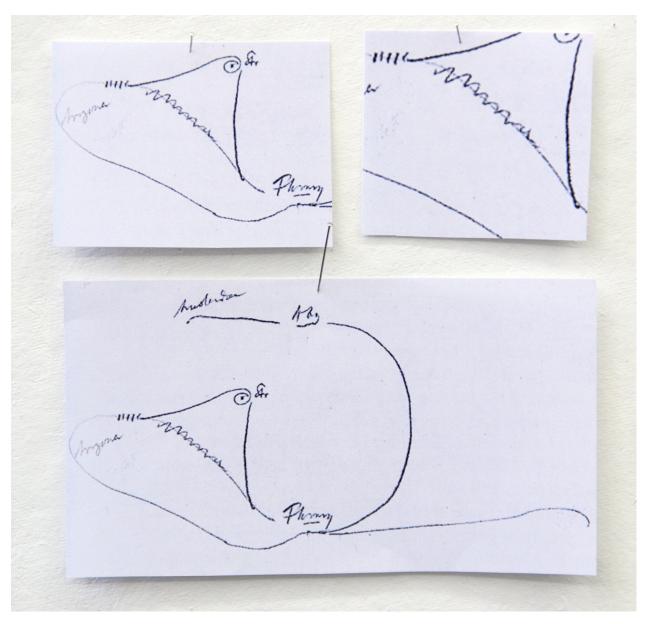


Fig. 26. Images pinned to the author's studio wall: details from Warburg's autobiographical diagram as reprinted in the Getty Research Institute's first English edition (1999) of Warburg's collected published writings. Source: *The Renewal of Pagan Antiquity*, 41, and Warburg Institute, London. Photo by author.

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