

Details and Expression. Giovanni Morelli's Model and Aby Warburg's "Types" in Connection with Experimental Psychology during the 19th century

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Abstract

This essay aims to build a comparison between Giovanni Morelli (1816-1891), one of the founders of the concept of authorship in the 19th century, and Aby Warburg (1866-1929), to whom we attribute the origin of iconology. In particular, the article is focused on one of the first works written by Warburg during his youth and concerns the Masolino and Masaccio frescoes in the Brancacci Chapel, Church of Santa Maria del Carmine (Florence, Italy). This essay shows, indeed, that the same cultural background that inspired Morelli in the elaboration of his method can be found in Warburg, even though the outcomes reached, especially on the long run by this latter, were far away from connoisseurship and authorship. Nevertheless, both Morelli and Warburg were persuaded of the importance to build a "science of art", meaning a reliable knowledge distant from pure aesthetic speculations.

Keywords: Connoisseurship, physiognomy, authorship, Renaissance painting

1. Introduction

The idea of writing a paper that could link Giovanni Morelli (1816-1891), one of the founders of the concept of authorship in the 19th century, to Aby Warburg (1866-1929), to whom we attribute the origin of iconology, rose thanks to the early essay of this last researcher on the "Types" of the Brancacci Chapel, which is located in the church of Santa Maria del Carmine, in the city of Florence.

As it is well known, Morelli's method required the analysis of those particular paintings' details, that were judged as insignificant at first glance, meaning the nails or the ear lobes of the characters. He therefore focused on those details that were thought to be realized by inertia and that, for this reason, became his distinctive feature. Scholars, the academy or the copyists, concentrating on the main aspects of the representation and trying to make it as similar as it could be to the real one, left out these minutiae, by giving them little consideration. As a consequence, insisting on these details, Morelli's investigation permitted to distinguish an authentic work from a forged art, the hands of a painter from the ones of his scholars (Figure 1 and Figure 2).

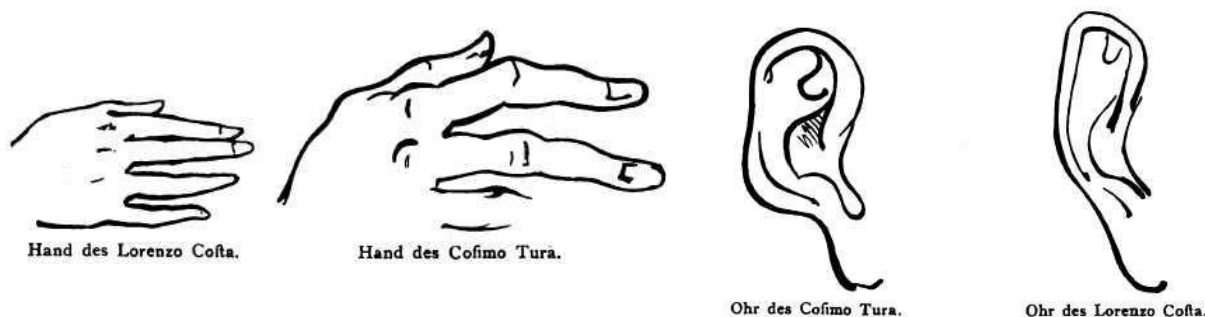


Figure 1. Giovanni Morelli, Lorenzo Costa and Cosimo Tura's hands model, *Die Werke italienischer Meister in den Galerien von München, Dresden und Berlin*. Leipzig, 1880.

Figure 2. Giovanni Morelli, Cosimo Tura and Lorenzo Costa's ears model. *Die Werke italienischer Meister in den Galerien von München, Dresden und Berlin*. Leipzig, 1880.

So, if from a theoretical point of view, the method does not allow many problems thanks to its simple comprehension, the actual concrete realization of the method is something different. The interpretation of the works of Italian painters in the galleries of Munich, Dresden and Berlin had put to the test the great expectations

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nourished since the beginning (Morelli, 1886). Morelli itself highlights the error margin that the person in charge of assigning the authorship has to put into consideration, remembering not to deal with any sort of preconception nor with the opinion of other earlier critics, as he explains in this quotation:

Therefore, I suggest to young people studying art, if they really want to instruct themselves in Art Galleries, that they should examine without any prejudice the works of art that are there and they really should not care about other people's opinion. There is no doubt that they will do more than one mistake by doing so, but erring is human and it is only by dint of falling that you learn how to stand. (Morelli, 1886, p. 13-14; translation EDR)

This reassuring behaviour enables us to understand that there can be errors by using this method, which is surely not a *tout court* scientific process. Moreover, this investigation of details and more generally speaking of shapes, both in a scientific or speculative way, does not allow the researcher to explore the entire knowledge of the work since it leaves out some important elements, such as the historical context in which the painter worked, the historical moment in which we are now and the one in which Morelli himself lived, as well as, the influences received by other cultures or periods.

2. Rationalizing the *connoisseurship*: links between Morelli's method and other disciplines

Even though the method presents such limits, Morelli first presented a scientific process in an environment in which indefiniteness was the protagonist. The *connoisseur* was, in fact, considered both as a person that had amazing abilities that not many others had and that could not be explained through teaching, and as a charlatan. Interesting from this point of view are the words of Edgar Wind, who outlines a short story in which authenticity and art forgeries are at the centre of attention:

This is shown in a vivid but nasty letter that he [Hogarth] published in a daily newspaper over the signature "Britophil". In it he described how an innocent Englishman was bamboozled into paying a large sum for a "dark" painting, which he did not particularly like. His tempter persuaded him to commit this folly by addressing him in a superior way: "Sir [he said], I find that you are no *connoisseur*; the picture, I assure you, is in Alessio Baldminetto's second and best manner, boldly painted, and truly sublime ..." – Then, spitting in an obscure place, and rubbing it with a dirty handkerchief, [the quack] takes a skip to t'other end of the room, and screams out in raptures, - "There's an amazing touch! A man should have this picture a twelvemonth in his collection before he can discover half its beauties!" (Wind, 1963, p. 30-31)

In the past years, many links have been made between Morelli's method and other disciplines, which are meant to be very far from the artistic one, psychoanalysis for example (Ginzburg, 1986). Freud knew about Morelli's essays, published under the name of Ivan Lermolieff, as he recounts in the *Moses*:

Long before I had any opportunity of hearing about psychoanalysis, I learnt that a Russian art-connoisseur, Ivan Lermolieff, had caused a revolution in the art galleries of Europe by questioning the authorship of many pictures, showing how to distinguish copies from originals with certainty, and constructing hypothetical artists for those works whose former supposed authorship had been discredited. He achieved this by insisting that attention should be diverted from the general impression and main features of a picture, and by laying stress on the significance of minor details, of things like the drawing of the fingernails, of the lobe of an ear, of halos and such unconsidered trifles which the copyist neglects to imitate and yet which every artist executes in his own characteristic way. I was then greatly interested to learn that the Russian pseudonym concealed the identity of an Italian physician called Morelli [...]. It seems to me that his method of inquiry is closely related to the technique of psycho-analysis. It, too, is accustomed to divine secret and concealed things from despised or unnoticed features, from the rubbish-heap, as it were, of our observations. (Freud, 1989, p. 222)

Other connections have been made with the detective stories by Sir Arthur Conan Doyle in relation to his detail-oriented analysis during the resolution of murder cases and also with Alphonse Bertillon, who founded in 1870 the first laboratory of criminal identification and who was inventor of the legal anthropometry (Wind, 1963 and De Paolo, 2011). Still regarding the field of criminology, an interesting link can be seen with Cesare Lombroso (1835-1909), theorist of criminal anthropology and supporter of the idea that the origin of criminal behaviour was innate in the anatomical features of men. He, in fact, describes special traits of a human being as symbols of his criminal intents and desires: It was not a simple idea, it was more like a revelation. While I was watching that skull, I suddenly saw [...] the problem of the nature and the criminal: an atavist human being who copies in his own person the savage instincts of primitive humanity and of the inferior beasts. So, this was the reason why from an anatomic point of view were understandable the big jaws, the high cheekbones, the prominent eyebrows, the disjointed palmar furrows, the excessive size of the eye orbit, the handlebar ears seen in criminals, in savages and in monkeys, the hypersensitivity to pain, the acute view, the tattoos, the extreme laziness, the orgiastic passion, the

irresponsible greed for the evil, the desire to end not only victims' lives, but also to maim their bodies, rip their flesh off and drink their blood. (Lombroso, 1911, p. XIV-XV; translation EDR)

Finally, it is also important to underline the sad link between Morelli's method and racial anthropology, widespread during the second half of the 19th century. In relation to these pseudoscientific theories, human beings could be classified in a zoological scale for their intellectual abilities, just like animals were. As a consequence to this, the idea of a race that had to be preserved because of its superiority rose, a race that had to be protected through eugenics. Also the idea of inferior races stepped trough and how these could be recognized by their specific anatomic traits, just like Lombroso's criminals (Montaldo, 2009).

The diversity of juxtapositions underlined so far, develops in relation to the "types" of the Brancacci Chapel in the antithetic double value of figurative details in which, according to Warburg, God is hidden (Sassi, 1983, p. 86-91). All of this thanks to formal markers which allow to assign authorship, elements in between shape and content used to identify human expressions, formal spies of a specific substance that hasn't changed throughout time.

Indeed, there seems to be a great difference between shape and its full attention, and content, constantly changing throughout time and whose elements are to be identified in relation to cultural, symbolic and historical aspects. However, the cultural *milieu* in which these two different visions were born, was made of the same elements: empiric observation to support the theoretical study in order to link it all to other disciplines, the need to have Art History become a serious and systematized field, far from arbitrary knowledge and empty aestheticism, as it happens, for example, during the first Italian Renaissance.

The puzzled opinion of Morelli's method most probably depends on the constant attacks he received throughout his life, such as the ironic glosses of Wilhelm von Bode (1845-1929) and Max Friedländer (1867-1958) or the irritation of Jacob Burckhardt (1818-1897) (Agosti, 1993, vol I, p. 69-81).

According to Friedländer, Morelli was one of those that, in between naivety and sham, announced a method with inadequate scientific pretence. This because the process mainly concerned the academic background of the observer, leaving out the use of parameters which are considered universal (Morelli, 1993). Von Bode's case took place during the exhibition on Hans Holbein, organized in Dresden the same year in which the Art Gallery opened and where the national artistic features were analysed (De Paolo, 2011, p. 77-89). In 1891, von Bode, who was director at the time of Berlin's Kaiser Friedrich Museum, defined Morelli as a "quack doctor" who only filled out a catalogue of fingers and ears and who claimed with no doubt to identify the real painters of Renaissance time.

Although Morelli and Burckhardt had the opportunity to meet only once in 1882, Burckhardt knew about Lermolieff's work and its success. For his whole life, Burckhardt as well as other researchers, such as von Bode, Crowe and Cavalcaselle, was considered an expert in Italian art and the numerous reprints of his *Cicerone*, left no doubt on his approval among the public. However, he was also considered a cultural historian par excellence (*Die Kultur der Renaissance in Italien*, 1860). He looked into both the cultural background of the researchers and the idea of a more complex cultural dimension of history, of which Warburg himself will make good use.

Surely the meeting between the two was quite deluding, especially over time. Not long after that, Burckhardt went to Germany, stopping in Berlin first and Dresden afterwards. In Berlin he met von Bode, who wanted his advice to declare new authorships. Burckhardt was happy about it, but still quite hurt considering that these scientific thesis were spreading towards Art History. He got irritated with Morelli and his method, as *Old Cicero's Lamentation* (Klage des alten Cic.), actually written in 1882 in Dresden, recounts:

Shaking the head we climb/ the stairs well known/ there were Rubens/ Titian call us with spectral voice/
But scepticism climbs the stairs with us,/he brings the doubt in every step/ as much as we sink/ in contradict
baptisms./ And for what concerns the provenance/ of this or that panel/ - from Padua, Milan or Florence/
(might it be only chitchat) - / [...] here it comes with the tongue out / the terrible Morelli. (Agosti, 1993, vol I, p. 77; translation EDR)

When Morelli died, Burckhardt discovered his art collection and dedicated one of his last Conferences to this topic (Anderson, 1999 and Agosti, 1993). The big difference between the two in relation to the analysis of works, seemed to be left out in favour of the only element that they had in common and that had been silently hidden after their first and last encounter: the recognition of the didactic value of attributing a work to its author and the great artistic sensitivity necessary to this process.

Even the Italian critique after Morelli's death did not emphasize his method. Carlo Ludovico Ragghianti spoke about "mental laziness" in accepting the comparative method. Same did also Lionello Venturi, Roberto Longhi and Emilio Cecchi, who describes as "crude", Morelli's attempts (Morelli, 1993). Even though Morelli's method did not have success, part of it is linked to a positivist movement that soon became stronger than the idealist one in this field. Moreover, comparing did not leave much space to intuition nor it was organised in specific rules that could be taught and therefore learnt by other researchers.

The method's scientific pretence, which at least shows how this method has been the first one with the aim of rationalizing the *connoisseurship*, results from the specific historical moment in which it was elaborated. In the cultural climate of the beginning of the 19th century, in fact, words such as "fragment" and "cataloguing" were main elements in fields far from Art History. As an example of this, we can quote Morelli's master thesis *The Inguinal Region* (De Regione Inguinali), composed under the guidance of the biologist and Professor of Comparative Anatomy, Ignatius Dollinger (1770-1841).

The idea of "cataloguing" reached Morelli's research thanks to the studies in physiognomy by Johann Kaspar Lavater, in biology by Georges Leopold Chretien Frédéric Dagobert Cuvier (1769-1832) and in physiology by Carl Gustav Carus (1789-1869) (Locatelli, 2011). After all, Morelli was the first to put morphology at the service of art and such thing, which can be seen from the drawings of hands and ears of the Renaissance artists, happened thanks to the reproduction of animal drawings by Cuvier and Johann Baptist Ritter von Spix (Agosti, 1993, vol III, pic. 86-94).

Both the interpretation of Goethe's vegetal morphology and the reproduction of Cuvier's bestiary, even if both very interesting, were not related to human beings, who's structure, morphologically speaking, was already clear to Morelli. For this reason it is important to underline another component of his thought: physiognomy, a pseudoscientific framework that aims to establish psychological and moral details of a person from his or her physical aspect, especially by analysing facial features and expressions.

There are two different types of physiognomy. The first one was born during the 5th century B.C. and it is defined as "predictive". It consists in a strong relationship between physical and facial aspects and personality traits. The second type, instead, is considered "scientific" physiognomy in the sense that physical aspects and personality traits are statistically estimated from a genetic factor, deriving its justification from a genetic determinism of personality. Many definitions have been made regarding this field. Pomponio Gaurico, in his *Sculpture* (De Sculptura, 1504), underlines that big watery eyes are linked both to a great spirit or to an irascible and superb soul. A dumpy nose, such as a lion's one, is a sign of strength and arrogance, while a squared forehead indicates wisdom and intelligence. From Giambattista Della Porta's *Human Physiognomy* (De Humana Physiognomonia, I ed., 1583; II ed., 1599), in which drawings of human faces are compared to animals' representations, we can deduce that people with facial traits similar to the ones of a sheep are considered stupid and people with appearances of an ox are seen as angry (Figure 3 and Figure 4).



Figure 3. Giambattista Della Porta, *De Humana Physiognomonia* (Man-Sheep). Naples, 1599.

Figure 4. Giambattista Della Porta, *De Humana Physiognomonia* (Man-Ox). Naples, 1599.

Finally, Lavater's studies, which we have already mentioned, are very famous, especially *Essays on Physiognomy* (Von der physiognomic, 1772), a full collection of human profiles and *Essays on Physiognomy; for the Promotion of the Knowledge and the Love of Mankind* (Physiognomische Fragmente zur Beförderung der Menschenkenntnis und Menschenliebe, 1775-1778), partly illustrated by Goethe.

As a contribution to this scientific flow, we can mention the work of Carl Gustav Carus, *Symbolology of the Human Form* (Symbolik der menschlichen Gestalt, 1858), in which the author revises Lavater's lecture by substituting his visionary approach with a proper scientific method, anticipating what will be Morelli's process in writing *Osservazioni e pensieridinanzi a unaselezione di quadridella Galleria di Dresda (1867)* (Locatelli, 2011). Carus, with a medical background, thought that science had to be nourished by what morphology, the history of evolution and physiology could explain about any kind of human beings' creation.

In this cultural climate, more precisely in 1874, Morelli's essay *Zeitschrift für bildendeKunst* appeared in Leipzig. The essay was dedicated to the revision of the catalogue about Renaissance Italian painters of Galleria Borghese and Galleria Doria Pamphilj in Rome (Morelli, 1897).

The process for a correct assignment of authorship was divided into three levels. The first one questioned the expressive elements that determine the general impression of the composition (ex. body position, facial shape, colour, drapery), the second one matched the anatomical details, meanwhile the third one gathered all the small details that can be analysed in most painters, but not in all of them. They identify the idiosyncrasies of the artist, the habitual use of expressive models in an involuntary and sometimes even improper manner (Anderson, 1999).

3. Masaccio's Types: Warburg essay on the Brancacci Chapel

In fall 1888, while Morelli was in his seventies, Aby Warburg went to Florence together with August Schmarsow (1853-1936), Max Friedländer and other colleagues. Schmarsow's idea was to found the German Institution of Art History, the *Kunsthistorisches Institut in Florenz*, with the aim of promoting research in the field of Italian art. In this occasion, Warburg had the task to write an essay regarding Masolino and Masaccio's frescoes from Brancacci Chapel, highlighting the differences between the two.

At this point, some relatively new topics became essential to Warburg, the same ones that aroused interest in Schmarsow, such as: gestures and movement, or the bond between primitive mentalities and violent body expressions. Moreover, it was in this same occasion that the central question of Warburg's entire critic activity started to arise: the role of Antiquity in Renaissance Art (Gombrich, 1970). For this reason, Warburg's stay in Florence proved to be very prolific for many different causes. He had the opportunity to see Andrea Pisano's and Ghiberti's reliefs on the doors of the Battistero, Botticelli's paintings and, most importantly, he started noticing the survival of Pagan antique elements throughout the Renaissance Naturalism.

During his stay, Warburg read by chance *The expression of emotions in man and animals*, by Charles Darwin (1809-1882), who analyses the origin and meaning of human expression in relation to animals (Darwin, 1998). Darwin prescribed the observation of artworks by famous painters and sculptors in order to better understand the origin of human expressions. However, the English scientist also supported the idea that the help that these paintings can give does not always achieve its goal since beauty and its reproduction have a leading role in the work.

Generally speaking, Darwin's influence on Warburg is divided into two aspects: on one hand Warburg grasps the expression of a certain emotion and on the other hand he observes the existence of a systematic process that subconsciously links a specific expression to a certain emotion which is already present in the collective memory of human beings. Differently from what researchers claimed before him, Darwin supported the fact that the structure of expressions was innate and well connected to a specific specie, meanwhile "modulation" was transmitted in a cultural way, as we would say today, of epigenetic nature.

Darwin was not the only one who inspired Warburg's work on the Brancacci Chapel (Die Typen der BrancacciCapelle, 1888), The ideas of the psychologist August Schmarsow's - as it has already been highlighted - together with the concepts of "Einfühlung" and "empathy" by Robert Vischer (1847-1933), the theories on the myth by Hermann Usener (1834-1905) and the work of Tito Vignoli (1829-1914), all contributed to his essay. The essay regarding the "types in Masaccio" was divided by Aby Warburg into three periods, according to decreasing importance of meaning in relation to details (Warburg, 2004, p. 29).

The first period has two particular aspects: the importance of details and the awareness of how much the painting of facial details in works by both Masaccio and Masolino are related to the Antique. As an example, we can quote *Adam and Eve in the Earthly Paradise*, *Tabita's Resurrection* and *St. Peter sited in his Chair*.

The observation of details recalls Morelli's process in analysing such aspects, but at the same time, it alienates it in favour of the decomposition of the various parts of the painting. Eyebrows, hair and eyes are the most analysed elements of all and an explication to the empty and tired look of each character is at the centre of attention. This fact, as the author suggests, might depend on a reduction and a strong emphasis given to the

eyelids. What he also suggests, is that this vacuum and tired sight might be determined by the eyes' position or by the absence of a light source in the eyes.

As for what comes from the Antique, clearly appreciable in Adam's look, which recalls Tiberius' one, we can inscribe those elements in a more general idea of similarity to specific ideal types of physiognomy (Figure 5).



Figure 5. Masolino da Panicale, *The Temptation of Adam and Eve* (detail), 1424, fresco, Brancacci Chapel, Church of Santa Maria del Carmine, Florence.

The “type of Peter and the old man” appears here for the first time and Warburg’s attention concentrates mostly on the change of facial expression when the character appears amazed. The details that change this expression are to be seen in the lifting of an eyebrow or in its raising above the nose and it is therefore evident the connection with Darwin:

Attention if sudden and close, graduates into surprise; and this into astonishment; and this into stupefied amazement. Attention is shown by the eyebrows being slightly raised; and as this state increases into surprise, they are raised to a much greater extent, with the eyes and the mouth widely open. The raising of the eyebrows is necessary in order that the eyes should be opened quickly and widely; and this movement produces transverse wrinkles across the forehead. The degree to which the eyes and mouth are opened corresponds with the degree of surprise felt; but these movements must be co-ordinated[...]. (Darwin, 1872, p. 278)

Here is why Warburg can talk about “momentary expression”, underlining how characters want to fully express the emotion they show in that specific moment. It is impossible to confuse amazement with some other emotion, unless the emotion is similar to the one taken into account, such as astonishment or terror, as Darwin describes.

The second period focuses on the observation of the head, which stops expressing any kind of movement in favour of stillness. The first scene related to this second period is portrayed in *Payment of the Tribute*. Warburg highlights the earthly dimension of each character by closely analysing the apostles’ traits. However, some characters are still idealized because of their important role in the scene, such as Christ, Peter, Andrew and John. From the attention given to the observation of the head of these figures, we can also notice the position of the body, of the eyes and the connection between head and look in relation to the rest of the body. Another example of this period are the scenes about Peter’s miracles and the *Baptism of Newbies*.

The third period is to be found in the scene representing *Expulsion from Paradise*.

In this scene the importance of details decreases and each part of the body presents a specific movement, as Warburg describes. “Momentary expression” is no longer there since each movement tries to send to the observer the negative effect that the hunting has raised in each of the characters. We cannot speak of ideal types nor of earthly figures since we are facing an individualizing representation inspired by a sense for the essential (Warburg, 2004).

These are Masaccio's types (Figure 6 and Figure 7), these are the essential representations, but in what sense really? Essential because in Eve's scream and Adam's sobs the primitive impulses of human beings are to be tangible. The interest in Dionysiac dimension starts entering Warburg's words when he describes the movements that run through Adam and Eve, revealed through their bodies' escape: the head bowed in shame and covered with hands in the case of Adam and in the raised face with all the traits shocked in grief in the case of Eve.

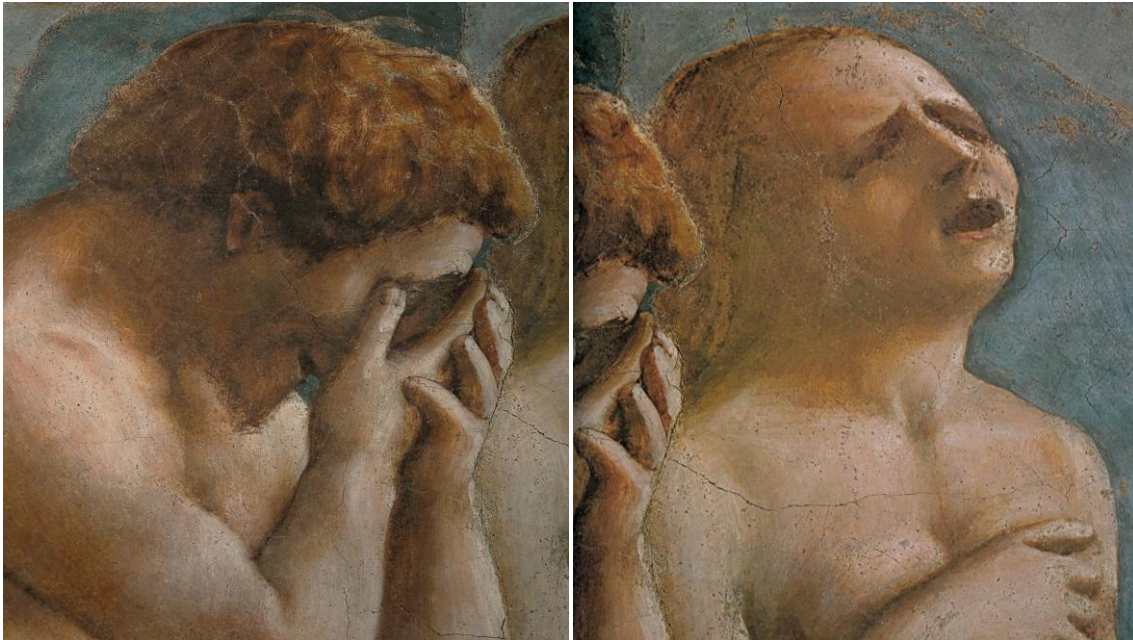


Figure 6. Masaccio, *The Expulsion from the Garden of Eden* (detail of Adam), 1424-1425, fresco, Brancacci Chapel, Church of Santa Maria del Carmine, Florence.

Figure 7. Masaccio, *The Expulsion from the Garden of Eden* (detail of Eve), 1424-1425, fresco, Brancacci Chapel, Church of Santa Maria del Carmine, Florence.

It seems that Warburg has been charmed by the *pathos* of these characters, forgetting about the study of the details of expression and avoiding to fractionate the faces like he did in the scene of the Original Sin, without finding an explication to the tanking of the eyes. Moreover, it surprises the absence of a clear reference to Darwin since the scientist did study the aspects that change facial expression during desperation, such as paleness, the stretching of traits, the slanted position of the eyebrows and the raising of the corners of the mouth.

In the essay *The Renewal of Pagan Antiquity*, written in 1914, Warburg describes the history of the ancient *typus* of Victory, characterized in its forms by a vibrant disruption for battle and triumph (Warburg, 2004). He analyses the Roman's triumphs starting with the reliefs of Constantine's Arch passing through Ghirlandaio's frescoes in Santa Maria Novella, focusing, in particular, on the scene picturing the birth of Saint John Baptist. Having dealt with typological images, their origins, their survival and having Warburg indicate in his essay on the Brancacci Chapel, Adam and Eve kicked out of Paradise as Masaccio's types, we can now retrace the origin of this typological image.

Even though the scene we are going to observe is not quoted by Warburg in his works after 1889, it shows more than others a topic that will be protagonist in the future years: the survival of Antique in its different variations. More specifically, the image of Adam and Eve chased out of Paradise is the first symptom of interest towards these topics such as pursuit, robbery, sacrificial dancing, mourning and the exuberance of those who have gained a victory. All of those are expressed from 1924 onwards, according to Warburg's particular process, through images on thematic panels (Cieri Via, 2011).

Three years later, at Hamburg's *Kulturwissenschaftliche Warburg Bibliothek*, the exhibition regarding Ovid's *Metamorphoses* was inaugurated. The way the panels were exposed helped the observers think through images. These were in fact divided into schemes that showed the influence of the Antique in the European society. The first element that created this influence was the myth, the first expression of mimical language. As a consequence, the interest in the *Metamorphoses* and those myths full of *pathos*, which left, for this reason, a strong trace in the historical memory of humankind. The first board was an introduction to the rest and shows expressive women that incarnate the concept of *Pathosformel*, already part of his earlier researches.

Even though Masaccio's Eve does not appear among those women, she can easily be linked to them with no kind of uncertainty, mostly because each figure here collected by the researcher, such as Maenad, Gradiva and Botticelli's Venus, anticipated by Masaccio's Eve if we think of her position, is a tangible expression of the entry of a new ideal style intensively animated.

However, what Eve is missing in comparison with Botticelli's Venus are the movement details, which still appear through some other small aspects. In first place the black rays that come from the door of Paradise are a clear sign of the scream that caused the chase of Eve. Secondly, the drapery of the angel's gown clearly shows that a breath of wind is coming from the right hand side of the painting (Figure 8).



Figure 8. Masaccio, *The Expulsion from the Garden of Eden* (detail of the Angel), 1424-1425, fresco, Brancacci Chapel, Church of Santa Maria del Carmine, Florence.

According to my point of view, Masaccio's "types" can be linked to the panels' exhibition of 1927 thanks to the concept of metamorphosis. Warburg quoted many examples of pursuit and seduction that gave birth to transformation. Apollo and Daphne in Galleria Borghese, Zephyrus and Chloris in Spring or the myth of Actaeon are all examples of this.

In these cases, transformation is clear both in the story and in the representation: the bark that surrounds Daphne's legs, roots that come out of the toes, blossoms that appear from Chloris' mouth and that herald the transformation into Flora. I think we can speak about transformation even in Adam and Eve, even though it is a different form of transformation, much lighter, not anticipated by concrete details, as in the legendary nymphs. This transformation has an immediate consequence, the appearance of a new awareness: ancestors notice their nudity and therefore cover themselves and it is the same consciousness that leads them to shame and desperation.

The expression of these dramatic feelings can be related to another particular topic dear to Warburg: the mourning.

4. Conclusion

In conclusion, we could support the idea that Warburg's formulas, therefore, the typical images that express such shapes, can be connected with the simple literary forms described by André Jolles, Warburg's close friend since his stay in Florence, and by doing this he makes reference to Goethe's *Metamorphosis of Plants* (Versuch die Metamorphose der Pflanzen zu erklären, 1790) (Cieri Via, 2013).

Goethe uses the word *Gestalt* in order to appoint the sphere of existence of a real thing. Such expression assumes the existence of a homogeneous *quid*, which is observed, isolated and conserved in its proper aspect. Jolles supports the fact that this definition is a major element in a morphological investigation in Literary Studies. Therefore, the typical images of which Warburg talks about are that homogeneous *quid* from which we can operate a comparison with the morphological classes portrayed by Morelli.

Morelli, moreover, underlined the existence of prototypes that overcame the combination of model and author, allowing a wider cataloguing in areas such as painting school. In this regard, here is a quotation from one of his essays:

[...] There are cases in which the nails' form and cut can help to distinguish, for instance, a Northern picture (Flemish or German) from an Italian one [...] it is precisely this hand with the thumb's nail cut with scissors in three different times, so it acquires an octagonal fragment form - as it is possible to see in many hands of Northern pictures, and never in the Italian ones - and it is the very detail that betrays in the most evident way an artist from the North. (Morelli, 1897, p. 40, translation EDR)

According to Max Friedländer, it seems that the expert can obtain a correct attribution of authorship at the moment in which he operates a comparison between the work that needs “paternity” and the one he already has in his mind (Friedländer, 1955). We could therefore say that there is a subconscious memory, which explains why it is not for all men to attribute a correct authorship to a specific work. Again, according to Friedländer, Lorber’s thesis affirms that facial expressions, details related to colours and Morelli’s elements have in common the possibility of retracing visual aspects, hidden deep down in the memory of men (Lorber, 2012, p. 201-203).

The subconscious memory is that ideal place in which we store souvenirs, sensations and experiences, even though we are not conscious about doing it. For example, during the first approaches between mother and child, the baby learns that when his mother has an angry look, bad news are coming. When he becomes an adult, by seeing the same expression on other people, he will know that bad news are coming, but he will not remember how he learnt this and when he actually started to link a certain angry look to bad news.

In conclusion, according to Lorber’s thesis, Morelli’s details and the typical images described by Warburg reactivate various past experiences, of which we do not know the starting point. These experiences can be awakened by special elements that contribute to their emersion.

However, we need to keep in mind the big differences between these two entities. Morelli’s system has an exclusively stylistic feature, since its aim is to give a correct authorship to a work. Meanwhile, Warburg’s typical images survive through time, space and have left unavoidable traces in the mind of human beings, as well as the traces that Morelli follows during his investigation in identifying the artist who created a certain painting.

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