

# *The Edgar Wind Journal*



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# *The Edgar Wind Journal*

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# Introduction: Edgar Wind and a New Journal

Fabio Tononi and Bernardino Branca

This issue inaugurates the Edgar Wind Journal, which is dedicated to the works and research interests of the historian and theorist of art and culture Edgar Wind (1900–1971). The foundation of a journal is always a challenge, entailing a declaration of intent. Our belief is that fifty years after his death, Wind's remarkable achievements deserve new attention. Wind explored a variety of themes (for example the afterlife of antiquity, the role of symbols in art, and portraiture), historical figures (for example Leonardo da Vinci, Raphael, and Ronald Brooks Kitaj), and disciplines, contributing to the study of art history, cultural history, and the history of science.<sup>1</sup> Wind's opus requires further study in connection to his cultural context and in light of recent advancements and methodologies in the study of images and cultural history.<sup>2</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> For Wind's studies of the afterlife of antiquity and the role of symbols in art, see, for instance, Edgar Wind, *The Eloquence of Symbols: Studies in Humanist Art*, ed. by Jaynie Anderson (Oxford and New York: Oxford University Press and Clarendon Press, 1983). For Wind's studies of portraiture, see Edgar Wind, *Hume and the Heroic Portrait: Studies in Eighteenth-Century Imagery*, ed. by Jaynie Anderson (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1986). For Wind's studies of Leonardo da Vinci, see Edgar Wind, 'Mathematics and Sensibility', in *The Listener*, 47 (1 May 1952), 705-706; Edgar Wind, 'The Last Supper', in *The Listener*, 47 (8 May 1952), 747-748; and Edgar Wind, 'Leonardo as a Physiognomist', in *The Listener*, 47 (15 May 1952), 787-788. For Wind's studies of Raphael, see *Edgar Wind's Raphael Papers: The School of Athens*, ed. by Bernardino Branca (Wroclaw: Amazon fulfilment, 2020). For Wind's studies of contemporary art in general and Ronald Brooks Kitaj in particular, see Ben Thomas, *Edgar Wind and Modern Art: In Defence of Marginal Anarchy* (London: Bloomsbury Academic, 2021). For Wind's contribution to the history of science, see Edgar Wind, *Experiment and Metaphysics: Towards a Resolution of the Cosmological Antinomies*, trans. by Cyril Edwards (Abingdon: Routledge, 2017).

<sup>2</sup> See, for example, Fabio Tononi, 'The Aesthetics of Freud: Movement, Embodiment and Imagination', in *Reti, saperi, linguaggi: Italian Journal of Cognitive Sciences*, 1 (2021), 125-154; Fabio Tononi, 'Andrea Mantegna and the Iconography of Mourners: Aby Warburg's Notion of *Pathosformeln* and the Theory of Aesthetic Response', in *IKON: Journal of Iconographic Studies*, 13 (2020), 79-94; Fabio Tononi, 'Aesthetic Response to the Unfinished: Empathy, Imagination and Imitation Learning', in *Aisthesis: Pratiche, linguaggi e saperi dell'estetico*, 13(1) (2020), 135-153; Fabio Tononi, 'Intermediality and Immersion in Gaudenzio Ferrari's *Adoration of the Magi* in Chapel V of the Sacred Mountain of Varallo', in *PsicoArt: Rivista di Arte e Psicologia*, 10 (2020), 1-18; Vittorio Gallese, 'Embodied Simulation. Its Bearing on Aesthetic Experience and the Dialogue between Neuroscience and the Humanities', in *Gestalt Theory*, 41 (2019), 113-128; David Freedberg, 'From Absorption to Judgment: Empathy in Aesthetic Response', in *Empathy: Epistemic Problems and Cultural-Historical Perspectives of a Cross-Disciplinary Concept*, ed. by Vanessa Lux and Sigrid Weigel (New York: Palgrave MacMillan, 2017), pp. 139-180; Sigrid Weigel, 'Embodiment in Simulation Theory and Cultural Science, with Remarks on the Coding-Problem of Neuroscience', in *A Neuro-Psychoanalytical Dialogue for Bridging Freud and the Neurosciences*, ed. by Sigrid Weigel and Gerhard Scharbert (Cham: Springer, 2016), pp. 47-71; Vittorio Gallese, 'Aby Warburg and the Dialogue Among Aesthetics, Biology and Physiology', in *Ph*, 2 (2012), 48-62; Andrea Pinotti, 'Neuroestetica, estetica psicologica, estetica fenomenologica: Le ragioni di un dialogo', in *Rivista di Estetica*, 37 (2008), 147-168; and David Freedberg and Vittorio Gallese, 'Motion, Emotion and Empathy in Aesthetic Experience', in *TRENDS in Cognitive Sciences*, 11 (2007), 197-203.

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Wind's intellectual biography reveals an articulate and multidisciplinary scholarly career, which was the result of extensive and diverse reading, travel, and intellectual encounters. In this respect, it is worth mentioning the most significant aspects of Wind's life.

In 1918, Wind enrolled at the University of Berlin, where he studied classics, philosophy, and art history under the supervision of Adolf Goldschmidt.<sup>3</sup> There, he also attended the lectures of the Protestant theologian and social historian Ernst Troeltsch and the neo-Kantian philosopher Ernst Cassirer. On one occasion, Wind travelled to Munich to attend a lecture on Rembrandt delivered by Heinrich Wölfflin.

In 1919, Wind spent a term at the University of Freiburg, where he attended the lectures of Edmund Husserl and Martin Heidegger, and another term at the University of Vienna, where he attended those of Julius von Schlosser, Josef Strzygowski, and Max Dvořák. In the same year, Wind moved on to the University of Hamburg, where he began writing his dissertation under the supervision of Erwin Panofsky and Cassirer, who had become a professor at that university. In 1922, Wind obtained his doctorate with a thesis titled *Ästhetischer und kunstwissenschaftlicher Gegenstand: ein Beitrag zur Methodologie der Kunstgeschichte*, examined by Panofsky and Cassirer.<sup>4</sup> Wind published only a portion of his dissertation. After achieving his doctorate, Wind returned to Berlin and set to work preparing the paper required for his habilitation.

In 1924, Wind met Aby Warburg for the first time in Hamburg, after Warburg had been decommissioned by the Kreuzlingen clinic.<sup>5</sup> In March, Wind left for the United States, where he remained until 1927. In 1925, Wind was appointed Lecturer in Philosophy at the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill, where he remained for two years.

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<sup>3</sup> For more on Edgar Wind's intellectual biography, see Bernardino Branca, *Edgar Wind filosofo delle immagini: La biografia intellettuale di un discepolo di Aby Warburg* (Milan: Mimesis, 2019); Peter Burke, *What is Cultural History?* (Cambridge, UK: Polity, 2019), pp. 13-14; Ben Thomas, 'Edgar Wind: A Short Biography', in *Stamperczy*, 1(8) (2015), 117-137; Gianni Carlo Sciolla, *La critica d'arte del Novecento* (Turin: UTET, 2006), pp. 118-127, 142, 278-283; Creighton Gilbert, 'Edgar Wind as Man and Thinker', in *New Criterion Reader*, 3 (1984), 36-41; and Hugh Lloyd-Jones, 'A Biographical Memoir', in Edgar Wind, *The Eloquence of Symbols: Studies in Humanist Art*, ed. by Jaynie Anderson (Oxford and New York: Oxford University Press and Clarendon Press, 1983), pp. xiii-xxxvi.

<sup>4</sup> Edgar Wind, *Ästhetischer und kunstwissenschaftlicher Gegenstand: ein Beitrag zur Methodologie der Kunstgeschichte* (unpublished doctoral thesis, University of Hamburg, 1924 [1922]).

<sup>5</sup> For Warburg's principal works, see Aby Warburg, Christopher D. Johnson, and Claudia Wedepohl, 'From the Arsenal to the Laboratory', in *West 86th*, 19 (2012), 106-124; Aby Warburg, 'Manet and Italian Antiquity', trans. by Henriette Frankfort, ed. by Claudia Wedepohl, in *Bruniana & Campanelliana*, 20 (2014), 455-476; Aby Warburg, *Werke in einem Band*, ed. by Martin Tremml, Sigrid Weigel, and Perdita Ladwig (Frankfurt am Main: Suhrkamp, 2010); Aby Warburg, 'The Absorption of the Expressive Values of the Past', trans. by Matthew Rampley, in *Art in Translation*, 1 (2009), 273-283; Aby Warburg, *Der Bilderatlas Mnemosyne*, ed. by Martin Warnke and Claudia Brink (Berlin: Akademie Verlag, 2003); Aby Warburg, *The Renewal of Pagan Antiquity: Contributions to the Cultural History of the European Renaissance*, trans. by David Britt (Los Angeles: Getty Research Institute for the History of Art and the Humanities, 1999); and Aby Warburg, *Images from the Region of the Pueblo Indians of North America*, trans. by Michael P. Steinberg (Ithaca and London: Cornell University Press, 1995).

During this time, he acquired knowledge of and an interest in the American tradition of pragmatist philosophy. This had a considerable effect upon his later reflections, including his readings of the works of Charles Sanders Peirce.

In 1927, Wind returned to Hamburg, where he met Warburg for a second time. Warburg was so impressed by Wind that he stated: ‘Ich vergesse immer daß Sie [Wind] eingeschulter Kunsthistoriker sind. Sie haben es ja so nett mit dem Denken’ (‘I always forget that you are a trained art historian. You know how to think so nicely’).<sup>6</sup> At the end of 1927, Wind became Warburg’s personal research assistant at the Bibliothek Warburg.<sup>7</sup> Although Warburg died two years later, the relationship played a decisive role in Wind’s intellectual path.<sup>8</sup>

In 1937, Wind and Rudolf Wittkower became founding editors of the Journal of the Warburg Institute, in which Wind published his first iconographical studies of Renaissance

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<sup>6</sup> Bernhard Buschendorf, ‘Auf dem Weg nach England – Edgar Wind und die Emigration der Bibliothek Warburg’, in *Porträt aus Büchern*, ed. by Michael Diers (Hamburg: Dölling und Galitz Verlag, 1993), pp. 85-128 (85). Translated in Thomas, *Edgar Wind*, 119.

<sup>7</sup> For more on the Warburg Library, see Fritz Saxl, ‘The History of Warburg’s Library (1886–1944)’, in Ernst Gombrich, *Aby Warburg: An Intellectual Biography* (London: The Warburg Institute, 1970), pp. 325-338. See also Emily J. Levine, *Dreamland of Humanists: Warburg, Cassirer, Panofsky and the Hamburg School* (Chicago and London: University of Chicago Press, 2013).

<sup>8</sup> On Warburg’s method, see, for example, Salvatore Settis, *Incursioni: Arte contemporanea e tradizione* (Turin: Feltrinelli, 2020); Claudia Wedepohl, ‘Why Botticelli? Aby Warburg’s Search for a New Approach to Quattrocento Italian Art’, in *Botticelli Past and Present*, ed. by Ana Debenedetti and Caroline Elam (London: UCL Press, 2019), pp. 183-202; David Freedberg, ‘Gombrich and Warburg: Making and Matching, Grasping and Comprehending’, in *Art and the Mind – Ernst H. Gombrich: mit dem Steckenpferd unterwegs*, ed. by Sybille Moser Ernst (Göttingen: Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht, 2018), pp. 39-62; Georges Didi-Huberman, *The Surviving Image: Phantoms of Time and Time of Phantoms* (University Park, Pennsylvania: Pennsylvania State University Press, 2016); Carlo Severi, *The Chimera Principle: An Anthropology of Memory and Imagination*, trans. by Janet Lloyd (Chicago: HAU Books, 2015); Claudia Wedepohl, ‘Mnemonics, Mneme and Mnemosyne. Aby Warburg’s Theory of Memory’, in *Bruniana & Campanelliana*, 2 (2014), 385-402; Claudia Wedepohl, ‘Mnemosyne, the Muses and Apollo: Mythology as Epistemology in Aby Warburg’s *Bilderatlas*’, in *The Muses and their Afterlife in Post-Classical Europe*, ed. by Kathleen W. Christian et al. (London and Turin: The Warburg Institute and Nino Aragno, 2014), pp. 211-270; Sigrid Weigel, ‘Warburg’s “Goddess in Exile”: The “Nymph” Fragment between Letter and Taxonomy, Read with Heinrich Heine’, in *Critical Horizons. A Journal of Philosophy and Social Theory*, 14 (2013), 271-295; Christopher D. Johnson, *Memory, Metaphor, and Aby Warburg’s Atlas of Images* (Ithaca, NY: Cornell University Press and Cornell University Library, 2012); Claudia Cieri Via, *Introduzione a Aby Warburg* (Rome: Laterza, 2011); Andrea Pinotti, *Memorie del neutro: Morfologia dell’immagine in Aby Warburg* (Milan: Mimesis, 2001); Ernst Cassirer, *The Logic of the Cultural Sciences*, trans. by Steve G. Lofts (London and New Haven, CT: Yale University Press, 2000); Matthew Rampley, ‘From Symbol to Allegory: Aby Warburg’s Theory of Art’, in *The Art Bulletin*, 79 (1997), 41-55; Kurt W. Forster, ‘Aby Warburg: His Study of Ritual and Art on Two Continents’, in *October*, 77 (1996), 5-24; Carlo Ginzburg, ‘From Aby Warburg to E.H. Gombrich: A Problem of Method’, in id., *Clues, Myths, and the Historical Method* (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 1989), pp. 17-59; Ernst Gombrich, *Aby Warburg: An Intellectual Biography* (London: The Warburg Institute, 1970); and Erwin Panofsky, ‘Professor A. Warburg’, obituary notice in *Hamburger Fremdenblatt*, 28 October 1929.

works of art.<sup>9</sup> In 1939, Wind approved the renaming of the journal to the *Journal of the Warburg and Courtauld Institutes* and the accession of T.S.R. Boase and Anthony Blunt to its board of editors.<sup>10</sup> Wind continued to work as an editor of and contributor to the journal until 1942.

In 1955, Wind was appointed Professorial Fellow at Trinity College, University of Oxford. Here, he fulfilled the difficult task of establishing a new discipline – art history – in a conservative institution. In order to promote a cultural and historical approach to the study of art, distinct from the curatorial perspective of the Ashmolean Museum, Wind established a new department with its own research library. He gathered a noteworthy collection of books which, together with his own personal library, subsequently became the Wind Reading Room in the Sackler Library. The artist Ronald B. Kitaj, who studied at the Ruskin School of Drawing and Fine Arts from 1958 to 1961, was one of those who attended and was inspired by Wind's lectures at the University of Oxford.<sup>11</sup> Kitaj showed Wind his drawings and was in turn introduced by Wind to Warburg's serpent ritual lecture.<sup>12</sup>

In 1958, Wind published *Pagan Mysteries in the Renaissance*.<sup>13</sup> In 1963, Wind published his Reith Lectures as a book with the title *Art and Anarchy*, in which he summarised his lifetime of thought.<sup>14</sup> In 1967, Wind retired and left the chair of art history at the University of Oxford. A revised and expanded edition of *Pagan Mysteries in the Renaissance* appeared in the same year.<sup>15</sup>

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<sup>9</sup> Edgar Wind and Rudolf Wittkower (eds), *Journal of the Warburg Institute*, 1–2 (1937–1939). For Wind's articles published on the first issue of the *Journal of the Warburg Institute*, see Edgar Wind, 'Donatello's Judith: A Symbol of Sanctimonia', in *Journal of the Warburg Institute*, 1 (1937), 62-63; Edgar Wind, 'Aenigma termini [the Emblem of Erasmus of Rotterdam]', in *Journal of the Warburg Institute*, 1 (1937), 66-69; Edgar Wind, 'Platonic Justice designed by Raphael', in *Journal of the Warburg Institute*, 1 (1937), 69-70; Edgar Wind, 'The Maenad under the Cross: I. Comments on an Observation by Reynolds', in *Journal of the Warburg Institute*, 1 (1937), 70-71; Edgar Wind, 'An Emendation of Pope by Lessing', in *Journal of the Warburg Institute*, 1 (1937), 78-79; Edgar Wind, 'Studies in Allegorical Portraiture, I: 1. In Defence of Composite Portraits', in *Journal of the Warburg Institute*, 1 (1937), 138-142; Edgar Wind, 'Studies in Allegorical Portraiture, I: 2. Albrecht von Brandenburg as St. Erasmus [by Grünewald]', in *Journal of the Warburg Institute*, 1 (1937), 142-162; Edgar Wind, 'The Christian Democritus', in *Journal of the Warburg Institute*, 1 (1937), 180-182; Edgar Wind, 'The Saint as Monster', in *Journal of the Warburg Institute*, 1 (1937), 183; and Edgar Wind, 'Verrio's Terribilità', in *Journal of the Warburg Institute*, 1 (1937), 184-185.

<sup>10</sup> Edgar Wind, Rudolf Wittkower, T. S. R. Boase, and Anthony Blunt (eds), *Journal of the Warburg and Courtauld Institutes*, 3–5 (1939–1942).

<sup>11</sup> See Thomas, *Edgar Wind and Modern Art*.

<sup>12</sup> Aby Warburg, 'A Lecture on Serpent Ritual', in *Journal of the Warburg Institute*, 2 (1939), 272-292.

<sup>13</sup> Edgar Wind, *Pagan Mysteries in the Renaissance* (London: Faber and Faber, 1958).

<sup>14</sup> Edgar Wind, *Art and Anarchy*, The Reith Lectures 1960 revised and enlarged (London: Faber & Faber, 1963).

<sup>15</sup> Edgar Wind, *Pagan Mysteries in the Renaissance* (Harmondsworth, Middx.: Penguin Books, 1967).



In 1971, he published a harsh review of Ernst Gombrich's *Aby Warburg: An Intellectual Biography*.<sup>16</sup> This was his last, definitive tribute to Warburg, who was perhaps the main source of inspiration of his research.

The significance of Wind's intellectual legacy still requires study. Above all, the investigation into his archive – which contains unpublished texts of his courses, notes, projects and a very important correspondence – is an important task that scholars should undertake today. The Edgar Wind Journal wishes to make initial contributions in this direction.

To this end, this issue presents five articles that are early explorations of Wind's works and research interests from different perspectives. The first is Bernardino Branca's "The Giordano Bruno Problem": Edgar Wind's 1938 Letter to Frances Yates', which analyses the letter that Wind sent to Frances Yates in September 1938. Branca's interpretation of what Wind says in this letter focuses on the relationship between Bruno's thought and Warburg's theme of the survival of antiquity and on what Wind perceived to be Bruno's extraneousness to the methodology of seventeenth century science. The full transcript of the letter is in the appendix of the article. This letter offers important insight into Wind's perspective on Bruno and the Italian Renaissance, and the influence that the letter had on Yates' subsequent works on Bruno.

In the second article, titled 'On Form: Wind and Warburg Examined', Guido Boffi asks the following question: 'what is *the issue* of the artwork's form?'. Boffi addresses this question by referring to the works of Wind and Warburg. Boffi's argument is that, for both Wind and Warburg 'the artwork reveals itself as the connection *along time* between the deep background (mythical-energetic), and its phenomenality, in which it materializes but can never be exhausted'. From this perspective, 'the form is the differential between *being* and a *configuring*, expressive force'.

The third article, titled 'Time and Space in Dante's *Inferno*: The Invention of Dante's Clock', is by Gioachino Chiarini, who proposes a remapping of the movements and time of Dante and Virgil in Hell. Chiarini does so by focusing on the literary imagery of astronomic descriptions in Dante's *Divine Comedy*, an approach inspired by that of Warburg and Wind.

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<sup>16</sup> Edgar Wind, 'On a Recent Biography of Warburg', in *The Eloquence of Symbols: Studies in Humanist Art*, ed. by Jaynie Anderson (Oxford and New York: Oxford University Press and Clarendon Press, 1983), pp. 106-113. Originally published as Edgar Wind, 'Review of E. H. Gombrich, *Aby Warburg: An Intellectual Biography*, London, 1970', in *The Times Literary Supplement* (25 June 1971), 735-736. See also Gombrich, *Aby Warburg*; and Claudia Wedepohl, 'Critical Detachment: Ernst Gombrich as Interpreter of Aby Warburg', in *The Afterlife of the Kulturwissenschaftliche Bibliothek Warburg. The Emigration and the Early Years of the Warburg Institute in London*, ed. by Uwe Fleckner and Peter Mack (Hamburg and Berlin: Vorträge aus dem Warburg-Haus, 12, and De Gruyter, 2015), pp. 131-164, 232-240.

In the fourth article, titled ‘Freedom and Exile: Edgar Wind and the Congress for Cultural Freedom’, Ben Thomas explores Wind’s concept of freedom by focusing on Wind’s involvement in cultural events organised by the Congress for Cultural Freedom between 1952 and 1953. As Thomas points out, Wind’s definition of freedom (that is, ‘the breaking up of habitus’) contrasts to Martin Heidegger’s concept of ‘dwelling’ and reflects Theodor Adorno’s idea on the impossibility of dwelling, referring to that specific time.

In the fifth article, titled ‘The Problem of the Unfinished and the Shaping of the Canon of Finiteness in the Italian Renaissance’, Fabio Tononi explores one of the most important research interests of Edgar Wind – the Italian Renaissance – from an aesthetic perspective. Particularly, Tononi focuses on the phenomenon of the unfinished in the visual arts. In doing so, he proposes the existence of the *canon of finiteness*, that is, a canon that establishes when a work of art is finished.

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