

Memory and Distance: Learning from a Gilded Silver Vase (Antwerp, c. 1530)

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1. In 1929, a few months before his death, Aby Warburg wrote an introduction to his last intellectual project: the 'Picture Atlas' (*Bilderatlas*) which he dedicated to Mnemosyne, the Greek goddess of memory, whose name was inscribed on the front door of the Kulturwissenschaftliche Bibliothek he had founded. The opening sentences of Warburg's introduction, first published 70 years after his death in Italian translation, read: 'The conscious creation of distance between the self and the external world may be called the fundamental act of civilization. Where this gap conditions artistic creativity, this awareness of distance can achieve a lasting social function.'¹

Why was memory in Warburg's mind so closely connected to distance? In commenting on the aforementioned passage Ernst Gombrich wrote: 'Not that memory can create "distance", but it can widen the interval between the two poles of calm contemplation or orgiastic surrender to emotion, by providing models for either attitude.'²

In the introduction to his 'Picture Atlas', Warburg associated memory not only with individuals, but also with 'collective personalities' (*Kollektivpersönlichkeiten*). Gombrich argued that there is a 'suggestive parallel between the system Warburg developed and Jung's ideas about archetypes and racial memory'.³ I find this suggestion totally unconvincing. Warburg's project did not deal with ahistorical archetypes. It dealt with a memory that had been lost and recovered – the fragile, contingent memory of the Greek and Roman past. This recovery involved something more than an erudite and antiquarian enterprise, even if erudites and antiquarians played an important role in it. Visual and verbal formulas rooted in a distant past contributed to make the present familiar and to cope with distance: geographical, cultural, or both.

2. The European encounter with the New World vividly illustrates this interaction between past and present. 'We discovered innumerable lands, we saw innumerable

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people and different languages, and all were naked' ('*Discoprino infinita terra e vedemo infinitissima gente e varie lingue, e tutti disnudi*'), Amerigo Vespucci wrote in 1500 to Lorenzo of Pierfrancesco de' Medici.⁴ This nakedness, stressed by all European travellers, was regarded as indisputable evidence of a lack of civilization. 'They have no faith, no law. They live according to nature', Vespucci wrote.⁵ But in his extremely influential account *Decades de orbe novo* (1516), Pier Martire d'Anghiera turned this scornful judgment into its opposite: those people, he wrote as a comment on a dialogue with a 'naked philosopher', have no property, no laws, no books, no judges – 'they have the golden age'.⁶

It was a momentous event: the birth of the myth of the noble savage. Ancient texts and ancient images provided an appropriate framework to approach the inhabitants of the New World: a visual or textual idiom based on Greek and Roman mythology, which ultimately turned nakedness into nudity. To quote a well-known example: Piero di Cosimo's two panels representing episodes of Bacchus's life (*The Discovery of Honey*, Worcester, MA, The Worcester Art Museum; and *The Misfortunes of Silenus*, Cambridge, MA, Fogg Art Museum) have been compellingly interpreted by Erwin Panofsky as visual commentaries on 'the early history of man'.⁷ But strangely enough, Panofsky failed to notice that Piero di Cosimo's several paintings on this subject had been clearly inspired by the discovery of the New World, a topic made familiar to a Florentine audience by two accounts published in 1504–5 by Amerigo Vespucci, a Florentine: *Mundus novus* and *Sommario . . . di due sue navigazioni al magnifico messer Pietro Soderini*.⁸ (It may be noted that Federico Zeri, on purely stylistic evidence, dated this group of paintings by Piero di Cosimo between 1505 and 1507).⁹ As we learn from Vasari, Piero di Cosimo painted his *storie baccanarie*, stories involving Bacchus, for Giovanni Vespucci, or more likely for the latter's father, Guidantonio, a former ambassador to the court of Louis XI, King of France, and a prominent politician who had spent two years in Paris with a distant relative, his young *protégé* Amerigo Vespucci.¹⁰ Piero di Cosimo's panels obviously meant to be an indirect celebration of Amerigo's discoveries. Having missed this contextual evidence, Panofsky concluded that Piero di Cosimo's pictures on the early history of humankind had to be interpreted as the 'subconscious recollection of a primitive who happened to live in a period of sophisticated civilization'.¹¹ But Piero di Cosimo was, *pace* Panofsky, neither a 'primitive' nor an 'atavistic phenomenon'; he did not approach the newly discovered populations through a 'subconscious recollection' but through a conscious memory, deliberately inspired by antiquity. Nor was his approach exceptional. In 1521, Cesare Cesariano framed his illustration of Vitruvius's passage on the discovery of fire (II, 1, 1–4) with a comment mentioning the 'golden age' as well as the 'new populations' (*novi populi*) discovered by the fleets of the kings of Spain and of Portugal.¹² A few years later, Vasco de Quiroga, a judge, then Bishop of Michoacán, wrote that the most naïve populations of the New World were exactly like those of the Golden Age, quoting, as authorities, Thomas More's *Utopia* and Lucian's *Saturnalia*.¹³ Relying upon a Greek and Roman legacy, both textual and visual, European writers, antiquarians, painters, and sculptors tried to make sense of new lands and populations, of which Greek and Roman geographers had never suspected the existence.

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3. The case study I present here will focus on a gilded silver beaker, which is on display in the *Schatzkammer* of the Residenz, Munich (see Fig. 1).¹⁴ Due to its extraordinary quality and its unusual iconography, this imposing object – 47.5 cm high, 24.5 cm wide – has been mentioned and reproduced many times. To my knowledge, it has never been analyzed in depth.

According to its hallmark, the beaker was made in Antwerp, in 1524–5.¹⁵ It was suggested some time ago that the decoration was added at a later date.¹⁶ This hypothesis tries to explain an obvious stylistic gap, which has been repeatedly stressed, between the late Gothic shape of the beaker and the foliage between the stem and the bowl on the one hand; and the Renaissance flavor of the scenes decorating the lid, the cup and the foot on the other.¹⁷ On the surface, the beaker resembles a stylistic hybrid. Strangely enough, it was not noticed then that the beaker when seen from the inside also resembles a hybrid, for different reasons.

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Indeed, on closer inspection, a comparison between the insides of the lid, the cup, and the foot of the beaker reveals a striking difference (Fig. 2).

The insides of both the lid and the cup are covered with an additional layer of gilded silver, which conceals the reverse of the scenes decorating the outside. On the inside of the foot, however, the scenes are perfectly visible, in reverse (Fig. 3).

How can we interpret this divergence? The only possible answer is this: in the case of the lid and the cup, the decorated layer was put over a pre-existing vase, whose inside is still visible; the foot, which has no double layer inside, was made by the same goldsmith who decorated the lid and the cup. In other words, the beaker we see today at the *Schatzkammer* of the Residenz is made of two vases, one inside the other – except for the foot. The older vase was broken, for unknown reasons, at an unknown date, but certainly before the scenes decorating the exterior were created.

4. These scenes cover three zones of the beaker – the lid, the cup, the foot – with a circular frieze depicting human beings, animals, plants, buildings. The viewer is nearly overwhelmed by the amount of visual information displayed on the object; but the scenes are easily readable.

Most of the human beings (men, women, children) are either naked, or wearing a loincloth; a few have a more elaborate dress. Some men sport feathered headdresses; others have necklaces. The animals are sometimes real, sometimes imaginary. On the lid, for instance, besides an ape, we see a *kynokephalos*, a man with a dog's head, riding a sea-monster with the head of a bull and a serpentine tail. The monster is tied up with a rope by two naked men, who are pulling him out of a lake or a river. Two men bearing bows are shooting arrows at two animals which seem to be turkeys (a detail I will comment on later); another man is playing a musical instrument. In the background one sees high mountains, imposing buildings facing a lake or a river, boats with rowing men. The outlines of the mountains, the buildings and the boats are delicately carved on the gilded silver surface.

The cup shows palms and other vegetation. A naked woman with a mantle flung across her shoulders attends to a baby; an embracing couple sit beside her. An ape squats on the ground facing the viewer. A naked man, his loins covered by a cloth, stands holding a child seen from the back. A man and a woman, rather elaborately dressed, with prominent headdresses, look at two men blowing huge horns (Fig. 4).

A man seen from behind seems about to hit a horse with a stick. A small lion is running in the foreground; a woman with a feathered headdress rides a horse wrapped in a rich cloth; behind her a man rides an elephant. Then a water scene: a man, a woman holding a child, a couple swimming in the lake; in the background a ship, a camel on the shore, rocks, trees, buildings.

The foot displays scenes of very different character. Two men attack a lion, one with his bare hands, another with a stick. Two men club three *Kynokephaloi* (two of them lie lifeless on the ground). Surrounding this display of extreme violence (Fig. 5) is a sort of ceremonial procession: a couple of lovers riding a horse, children riding a camel.

These scenes have been regarded as depictions of exotic populations, and more specifically of American Indians, notwithstanding the presence of African-looking facial features. In making this observation, Hans Thoma argued that the beaker presumably came from the time of the *conquistadores*.¹⁸ This suggestion sounds convincing in light of the contradictory elements displayed in the scenes that decorate the beaker. On the one hand, we see naked, or nearly naked, men and women, surrounded by exotic trees and animals; on the other, huge European-looking build-

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ings. A reference to Europe would obviously have been absurd.¹⁹ Of the recently discovered lands, only Mexico had great cities and huge buildings. In Antwerp, one of the centers of international trade, news of Cortés' extraordinary conquest arrived quickly. A French translation of Cortés' second letter, and a Flemish version made out of his first two letters, were published in Antwerp in, respectively, 1522 and 1524.²⁰ The second letter included the following passage:

This province [of Mesyco] is circular and encompassed by very high and very steep mountains, and the plain is some seventy leagues in circumference: in this plain there are two lakes which cover almost all of it, for a canoe may travel fifty leagues around the edges. One of these lakes is of fresh water and the other, which is the larger, is of salt water . . . they travel between one lake and the other and between the different settlements which are on the lakes in their canoes without needing to go by land . . . This great city of Temixititan is built on the salt lake . . . The city itself is as big as Seville or Córdoba . . .²¹

This description may have inspired the mountains, buildings, and boats crossing the water represented on the beaker lid. Much more precise, since it must have been based on direct inspection, is the depiction of two turkeys, arguably the earliest, rather clumsy European image of the *gallus indicus*, or 'Indianische Hahn' which Cortés had sent from Mexico.²² But these more or less distorted fragments of factual information are incrustated into ancient-looking scenes, friezes *all'antica*. Those naked, or nearly naked, men and women which we see represented in the act of riding,

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fighting, swimming, making love, look like creatures of Greek and Roman mythology. Aby Warburg would have taken the scenes decorating the Antwerp beaker as evidence for his argument about the role played by ancient formulas of emotion (*Pathosformeln*) in the art of the Renaissance. Those formulas, which had been suppressed by the Church as pagan, idolatrous, and demonic, were (Warburg argues) rediscovered to articulate:

the whole gamut of expressions in the grip of emotions, from helpless brooding to murderous cannibalism. [This recovery] also imparts to the dynamics of human expressive movements which lie between the extremes of orgiastic seizures – such as fighting, walking, running, dancing, grasping – the hallmark of an uncanny experience. It made the educated public of the Renaissance, brought up in the discipline of the Church, look upon this sphere as a forbidden region where only the godforsaken who indulged in unrestrained passions were permitted to run riot.²³

5. The name of the silversmith who made the beaker is unknown; an isolated attempt to identify him, on stylistic grounds, with Peeter Wolfganck, seems utterly unconvincing. Also unconvincing, but much more interesting, is a related suggestion, connecting the beaker with Hans Burgkmair's woodcuts *Die kalikutischen Leut*, made for the series *The triumphs of Maximilian I* (1517–18, but published in 1526).²⁴ The vague *air de famille* shared by the woodcut and the beaker must be ascribed, in my view, to Mantegna's *Trionfi*, which Burgkmair must have seen during his Italian journey.²⁵ But the connection between the Antwerp silversmith and Mantegna seems more specific and direct. Both the fight with the sea-monster represented on the lid and the

battle between humans and *kynokephaloi* represented on the foot of the beaker are responses – very different, in their muscular energy, from the stately procession depicted by Burgkmair – to Mantegna's *Fighting Sea Gods*.

In his *Historia natural y general de las Indias*, Gonzalo Fernández de Oviedo lamented that great painters like Berruguete, Leonardo or Mantegna (whom he had met during his stay in Italy) were unable to take records of the New World. Oviedo might have appreciated the Antwerp beaker as an imaginative reworking of Mantegna's engravings.²⁶ Mantegna's *Fighting Sea Gods* must be dated before 1494, the year in which Dürer copied one of them.²⁷ Another evident source of inspiration for the Antwerp silversmith also points to the late Quattrocento: Pollaiuolo's *Battle of the nudes*, an engraving by a sculptor and draftsman who, as has been pointed out, never left the goldsmith's guild.²⁸

These references suggest a chronological and geographical background, which we should try to narrow down. Unfortunately, comparisons are not easy, since the beaker in the *Schatzkammer* of the Residenz is, it has been argued, 'the oldest remaining example of Antwerp work in precious metal' to have escaped 16th-century iconoclasm.²⁹ We may start by evoking an admittedly distant case, Cesare Cesariano's. In his commentary on Vitruvius, published in 1521 (a date presumably close to the beaker's), Cesariano, born in 1475, listed a few modern artists who had reached the excellence of the ancients: Mantegna, Leonardo, Bramante, Michelangelo (praised as a sculptor and as a painter). In fact, it has been suggested that Cesariano's illustrations tried to translate into a different medium some ideas of Leonardo, who had been his teacher.³⁰ A comparable list made by the Antwerp silversmith would have included Mantegna, Pollaiuolo – and, of course, Dürer, whose engravings are echoed in some of the beaker's landscapes.

But the absence of echoes from Italian 16th-century artists in the *Schatzkammer* beaker suggests that its maker, the Antwerp silversmith, must have been either an Italianate artist or an Italian who would have left Italy not much later than the year 1500. In order to make sense of this alternative, we may tentatively adapt to the Antwerp scene the distinction between the *Welsch* and the *Deutsch*, which Michael Baxandall analyzed in his splendid book *The Limewood Sculptors of Renaissance Germany*.

Let *Welsch* [Baxandall writes] be the Italianate style of German sculpture widely current between the 1510s and 1580s . . . It is a hybrid, a provincial sideshow in the great European Renaissance . . . It was initially affected by a very limited view of Italian art. For the early *Welsch*, Italian art was not Michelangelo and Raphael, or even Giotto and Donatello; rather it was engravings by Mantegna, and bronze plaquettes by such as Moderno, or Venetian art mediated through highly personal talents like Dürer's . . .³¹

The Residenz beaker can certainly be described as a hybrid on several scores. But the visual idiom spoken by the unknown Antwerp silversmith, especially in articulating the forms of human bodies, seems to be definitely Italian, not an Antwerp version of *Welsch* (see Fig. 4).

Let us submit this hypothesis to a few tests. The battle between humans and *kynokephaloi*, or dog-headed humanoids, represented on the beaker's foot, may have

been distantly inspired by the *Battle of naked men and peasants*, designed by the so-called master NH and executed by Hans Lützelburger in 1522.³² At an infinitely cruder level, the Antwerp silversmith may well have seen the front-page of the Flemish booklet based on Hernan Cortés' first and second letter, published in Antwerp in 1523.³³ But in both cases, the filter – that is, a visual education formed on Mantegna and Pollaiuolo – turned out to be more important than the filtered messages. A third case involves a closer borrowing. In 1527 Laurent Frieß, 'natural philosopher', physician and geographer, published in Strasburg a book entitled *Uslegung der Mercarthen oder Cartha Marina*: an often fanciful description of exotic lands which included, besides the sea map mentioned in the title, several illustrations which would deserve a closer study. One of them, the illustration attached to the chapter 'Von Canibalien' (p. XIV, v), which became the front page of the 1530 edition, must have caught our silversmith's attention.³⁴

But the *kynokephaloi* represented on the beaker's lid and foot (see Fig. 5) speak an Italian rather than a German idiom. All this seems to point to an Italian-born silversmith, active in Antwerp in the 1520s. Can we try to narrow down this hypothesis a bit further?

6. We can. In November 1520, coming back from the Netherlands, Dürer made a second stop in Antwerp. In his diary he wrote: 'Steffan Capello has given me a cedarwood rosary, for which I promised to take, and have taken his portrait'.³⁵ This portrait has been tentatively identified with a drawing, now in Berlin, which bears an inscription in Dürer's hand: 'a goldsmith from Malines, drawn at Antwerp 1520'.

The date fits with the diary's entry; moreover, we know that one Stefano Capello worked as a goldsmith for Margaret of Austria, regent of the Netherlands, aunt of the emperor Charles the Fifth.³⁶ Some scholars, including Panofsky, have rejected the identification, since Dürer, who knew Capello by name, would not have referred to him simply as 'a goldsmith'.³⁷ I am unable to make up my mind on this issue. (I will only note that in 1520, according to my guesses, the Antwerp silversmith who made the beaker would have been at least in his mid-30s – that is, presumably older than the man portrayed by Dürer). But I am more interested in the entry from Dürer's diary. Today, Stefano Capello is a mere name: no works by him have survived. Thus far, I have been unable to find any evidence concerning his early training in Italy.³⁸ In the light of Dürer's (and Margaret's) appreciation, Stefano Capello must have been a truly remarkable craftsman, used to working with different media. Dürer's reference to the cedarwood rosary that he bartered for a drawing is especially intriguing. The use of wood models as a preparatory stage for silver works is amply documented for later periods.³⁹ A man used to carving a softer material like wood might have developed the striking textural variety displayed in the scenes decorating the Antwerp silver beaker: froth, furs, scales, foliage, feathers, muscles – the soft and rough skin of things, of animals, of humans.

Between April and June 1529, Stefano Capello, 'a jeweler who had his residence in Antwerp' received 253 *livres* and 10 *sols*,

for a beautiful, high silver vase, decorated with ancient histories, and for its lid, also gilded outside and inside, weighing 10 marcs and 4 ounces . . . and for the case of the vase . . .

which Madame delivered to Baboz, lord of Bourdoisie, treasurer of Madame the regent of France

*(pour une belle et haulte coppe d'argent a moult belle façon garnye distoires antiques aussi de sa couverte de mesme doree dedans et dehors pesant 10 marcs 4 onces . . . et pour la custode dicelle coupe . . . laquelle mad. Dame a fait delivrer au tresorier de madame la Regente de France, nommez Baboz, Sr de Bourdoisie).*⁴⁰

Vases decorated with ancient histories were apparently Stefano Capello's specialty: seven years before, on 27 March 1522, he had been paid by Margaret of Austria for another 'beautiful, high silver vase, *faicte a lenticque*, well gilded with its lid outside and inside'. The vase made in 1522, given as a present to Madame de Noyelle, was much lighter, amounting to nearly a half of the one made in 1529; the amount of money paid to Stefano Capello in the two occasions varied accordingly.

Is the Antwerp gilded silver beaker identical to the 'beautiful, high silver [and gilded] vase, decorated with ancient histories' which Stefano Capello delivered in 1529 to Margaret of Austria? To answer this question, we must address two preliminary issues. The first is the date. The hallmark on the beaker points to 1524–5. One scholar has raised the possibility that the decoration might have been made at a later date. This hypothesis is reinforced by the close relationship between the cannibal scene illustrating Laurent Frieß's *Cartha marina*, published in 1527, and the scene decorating the foot of the Antwerp beaker (see Fig. 5). On the basis of this relationship between the engraving and the beaker (which cannot be reasonably reversed) I would take 1527 as a *terminus ante quem non* for the latter's decoration.

The second preliminary issue to be dealt with is the weight. The vase delivered by Stefano Capello weighed 10 marcs and 4 ounces. Since in Antwerp and Malines the marc was equal to 246.1 grams, the total weight of the vase delivered in 1529 was 2584.5 grams.⁴¹ The weight of the beaker on display in the *Schatzkammer* of the Residenz, Munich, is 3243 grams. But as we have seen, we are dealing with a hybrid, composite object, made of two different layers: a decorated cover over a half-broken vase. Herr Oelke, the restorer at the Residenz, was kind enough to share with me his guesses about the weight of the beaker minus the inside, half-broken layer.⁴² The result would be 2143 grams – that is, about 400 grams less than the 'beautiful, high silver vase, decorated with ancient histories' that Margaret of Austria paid for in 1529. But, as Herr Oelke reminded me, no guesswork can assess the exact thickness of the inside layer of the beaker. This means, if I am not mistaken, that the discrepancy with the data concerning the 1529 vase does not allow us to reach a definite conclusion, an uncompromising yes or no. This is not surprising, considering the heavy reworking to which the beaker has been submitted during its long history.

But why is the Antwerp beaker made of a decorated cover laid over a half-broken vase? In my view, the riddle can be solved by a passage in the detailed inventory of the paintings, books, jewels and furniture owned by Margaret of Austria. One of the items listed in the inventory is a 'large gold cup decorated with leaves' and a 'salt-box' that, 'by order of Margaret, were broken in order to make three small cups which were taken to Cambrai where the peace was signed'.⁴³ The 'beautiful, high silver vase, decorated with ancient histories' for which Stefano Capello was paid in

1529 was made for the same purpose: the diplomatic effort which led to the so-called 'paix des Dames', the treaty signed in Cambrai on 3 August 1529 by Margaret of Austria, aunt of emperor Charles V, and Louise of Savoye, mother of Francis I, king of France. The vase inside the Antwerp beaker might have also been broken on the eve of the journey to Cambrai, in order to be covered with a gorgeous, updated decoration. What we know for certain is that Stefano Capello's vase was ultimately given as a present to the treasurer of Louise of Savoye. As has been noted, Burgundy gold (as well as, we might add, silver) contributed to Margaret's diplomatic triumph.

The circumstantial evidence supporting the identification of the vase made by Stefano Capello in 1529 with the Antwerp beaker in the Residenz *Schatzkammer* is in my view reasonably strong. I will mention an additional element: the subject of the scenes decorating the beaker. We can easily imagine Margaret of Austria choosing, in the preparation of her journey to Cambrai, a present reminding the king of France, through his mother, of the most recent Spanish conquests across the Ocean. But in the scenes decorating the beaker there are no Spaniards. Why not?

The ancient vocabulary of extreme emotions – *Pathosformeln*, as Warburg labelled them – preserved by ancient sarcophagi and mediated by Mantegna's engravings, provided the idiom to articulate the battle that we see on the beaker's foot (see Fig. 5). Cortés' third letter, which the Antwerp silversmith (or should we say Stefano Capello?) might have read in a French version translated from Latin, published in Antwerp in 1524, will provide an appropriate comment to this image:

we entered the city [of Yztapalapa]. As the inhabitants had already been alerted, all the houses on the land had been abandoned and the people with their belongings had taken refuge in the houses over the lake; and there all those who had fled rallied and fought with us very fiercely. But Our Lord gave so much strength to His own that we drove them back into the water, some up to their chests and others swimming, and we took many of the houses on the water. More than six thousands of them, men, women, and children, perished that day, for our Indian allies, when they saw the victory which God had given us, had no other thought but to kill, right and left.⁴⁴

The narrative strategy displayed in Cortés' letter and in the Antwerp beaker is the same: there are no Spaniards; their presence has been displaced; the killing is performed by 'our Indian allies'.⁴⁵ The enemy clubbed to death is a half-human, sub-human enemy: nothing to worry about.

7. Half-human, half-animal beings are a cross-cultural phenomenon, a symptom of the porous frontier which separates humans and animals.⁴⁶ Porous and historically changing. Today transplants of animal organs unfold new perspectives of a healthier, longer life for humans, as well as chilling scenarios – like the one drawn one century ago by H. G. Wells, the founder of science fiction, in his *Island of Dr Moreau* – anticipating a society which might use biological engineering to create new, species-related hierarchies.⁴⁷ Blurred animal species are usually disturbing; they become much more disturbing as soon as they seem to leave the sphere of imagination to enter the realm of possibility. In the battle between humans and half-human hybrids that is depicted on the beaker's foot, I feel a threatening overtone which goes beyond its possible allegorical meanings, related to Cortés' conquest of Mexico. To

project this feeling into the Antwerp beaker would be, of course, anachronistic. But here we intersect once again the theme of memory and distance.

8. Today, the immediacy of memory is often opposed to the detached approach of history. But if we take into account, as Maurice Halbwachs showed a long time ago, the cultural and social dimensions of individual memories, things look more complicated.⁴⁸ As I suggested at the beginning of this paper, cultural memory was effectively used to overcome geographical distance. The New World was perceived and made familiar (as the Antwerp beaker shows) through an Old World idiom, based on visual formulas taken from classical antiquity and mediated by the Italian Renaissance. A visual language based on the superlative of violent expression worked, as we have seen, as a distancing device, projecting the gruesome reality of the Spanish conquest into a remote mythological world.⁴⁹ Both at an individual and a social level, memory can make the past either closer or more distant: a paradoxical ambivalence which should not be forgotten.

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Notes

1. For the Italian translation see *Mnemosyne. L'Atlante della memoria di Aby Warburg*, materiali a cura di I. Spinelli e R. Venturi, Roma 1988, pp. 33–43; for the German original see A. Warburg, *Der Bilderatlas Mnemosyne*, hrsg. von M. Warnke unter Mitarbeit von C. Brink, 'Gesammelte Schriften, II, 1', Berlin 2000, pp. 3–6. I quote from the English translation provided by E. H. Gombrich, *Aby Warburg. An Intellectual Biography*, London, 1970, p. 288.
2. E. H. Gombrich, *Aby Warburg*, pp. 288–9.
3. *Ibid.* pp. 241–2; see also p. 287.
4. A. Vespucci, *Il mondo nuovo*, a cura di M. Pozzi, Milano 1984, p. 71 ('Lettera a Lorenzo di Pierfrancesco de' Medici del 28 luglio 1500').
5. A. Vespucci, *Il mondo nuovo*, p. 79: 'Non tengono né lege né fede nesuna. Vivon secondo natura' ('Lettera a Lorenzo di Pierfrancesco de' Medici del 1502 da Lisbona').
6. Petrus Martyr de Angleria, *Opus*, intr. E. Woldan, Graz 1966, Decas prima, caput III, fol X. See also *Extraict ou recueil des isles nouvellement trouuees en la grand mer Oceane . . . fait premierement en latin par Pierre Martyr de Milan, et depuis translate en language francoys*, Paris, Simon de Colines, 1532, p. 23 r.
7. E. Panofsky, 'The Early History of Man in Two Cycles of Paintings by Piero di Cosimo', in *Id.*, *Studies in Iconology*, New York, 1939, pp. 33–68.
8. See A. Vespucci, *op. cit.*
9. F. Zeri, 'Rivedendo Piero di Cosimo' [1959], in *Giorno per giorno nella pittura. Scritti sull'arte toscana dal Trecento al primo Cinquecento*, Torino, 1991, pp. 175–82, especially p. 180.
10. E. Panofsky, *Studies*, p. 59, n. 69: Guidantonio's name was suggested by G. Gamba ['Piero di Cosimo

- e i suoi quadri mitologici', *Bollettino d'arte* 1936, pp. 45–57]. On Guidantonio see F. J. Pohl, *Amerigo Vespucci Pilot Major*, New York 1966, p. 26; G. Arciniegas, *El embajador. Vida de de Guido Antonio, tío de Amerigo Vespucci*, Bogotá, 1990.
11. E. Panofsky, *Studies*, p. 67.
 12. Vitruvius, *De architectura, translato commentato et affigurato da Caesare Cesariano*, 1521, ed. A. Bruschi, A. Carugo and F. P. Fiore, Milano, 1981, c. XXXI v. Panofsky reproduced Cesariano's illustration but missed the reference to the comment: see *Studies in Iconology*, p. 41, n. 23. See also C. Cesariano, *Volgarizzamento dei libri IX (capitoli 7 e 8) e X di Vitruvio, De Architectura, secondo il manoscritto 9/2790 Sección de Cortes della Real Academia de Historia, Madrid*, a cura di B. Agosti, Pisa 1996. See also the collection of essays *Cesare Cesariano e il classicismo di primo Cinquecento*, Milano, 1996.
 13. See C. Ginzburg, *No Island is an Island: Four Glances at English Literature in a World Perspective*, New York, 2000, p. 19.
 14. H. Thoma, *Kronen und Kleinodien. Meisterwerke des Mittelalters und der Renaissance aus dem Schatzkammern der Residenz zu München*, München, 1965, pp. 12, 22.
 15. M. Rosenberg, *Der Goldschmiede Markzeichen*, Dr. erw. Aufl., Berlin 1928, IV. Band, n. 5086.
 16. C. Hermmarck, *Die Kunst der europäischen Gold- und Silberschmiede von 1450 bis 1830*, München 1978, Abb. 141: 'Pokal mit (wahrscheinlich späteren) getriebenen exotischen Darstellungen'. Page 101 suggests a later date for the decorations and a comparison with Portuguese decorated plates (with no specific references).
 17. See for instance L. Voet, *Antwerp, the Golden Age, The Rise and Glory of the Metropolis in the Sixteenth Century*, Antwerp 1973, ill. p. 373 (in color); p. 352 caption; p. 372: 'the artist is anonymous, but the hallmark on this splendid chalice, with its openwork Gothic foliage between the stem and the bowl and around the edge of the tall lid, with chased friezes around the foot, and cup-shaped bowl, shows that it was made in Antwerp in 1524–25. It is the oldest remaining example of Antwerp work in precious metal. The friezes depict exotic scenes . . . Some features such as feathered headdresses, seem to indicate American Indians, but other elements, including the plants and animals, point to India. The silversmith probably drew his inspiration from woodcuts, but the actual source has not yet been discovered.' See also M. Rosenberg, *op. cit.*
 18. H. Thoma, *Kronen*, p. 12.
 19. Herbert Brunner (ed.), *Schatzkammer der Residenz München. Katalog*, 3. Auflage, München 1970, p. 60, no. 37: '... teils in exotischer landschaft, teils vor gravierten europäischen bauten und Schiffen'.
 20. H. Cortés, *Des marches, îles et pays trouvés et conquis par les capitaines du tres illustre . . .*, Anvers, Michiel de Hoostraten, after October 1st, 1522; H. Cortés, *De Contreyen vanden Eylanden ende Landtouwven . . .*, Antwerp, 1523 [reprint, Boston 1920].
 21. Hernán Cortés, *Letters from Mexico*, transl. A. Pagden, intr. J. H. Elliott, New York, 1971, p.102.
 22. According to Lise Lotte-Müller, 'Der Indianische Hahn in Europa', *Art the Ape of Nature. Studies in Honor of H. W. Janson*, ed. M. Barasch and L. Freeman Sandler, New York, 1981, pp. 313–40, especially p. 313, the earliest representation of a turkey in European art would be found in the frame of an illustration of René Boivin from Léonard Thiry, *Historia Jasonis*, 1550, f. 19.
 23. A. Warburg, *Der Bilderatlas Mnemosyne*, p. 3; my translation is taken from E. H. Gombrich, *Aby Warburg*, p. 291.
 24. P. Baudouin, P. Colman and D. Goethals, *Orfèvererie en Belgique XVIe–XVIIe–XVIIIe siècles*, Paris 1988, p. 50, ill. 25.
 25. Hans Burgkmair, *Das graphische Werk*, Augsburg 1973, n. 26.
 26. D. B. Quinn, 'New Geographical Horizons: Literature', in *First images of America: The Impact of the New World on the Old*, ed. F. Chiappelli, II, Berkeley and Los Angeles 1976, cites Oviedo, *Hystoria general* (1547), c. 91 v: 'porque es mas para ver le pintado de man de Berruguete o otro excelente pintor come el o aquel Leonardo de Vince o Andrea Mantheña famosos pintores que yo conocieren en Ytalia: que no para darle a entender con palabras. E muy mejor que todo esto es para visto que escripto ni pintado'.
 27. R. Lightbown, *Mantegna*, Oxford 1986, pp. 490–1 (with bibliography on the sarcophagi which inspired Mantegna). Dürer's copy mistakenly referred to the 'left-hand section' of Mantegna's two engravings.
 28. D. Landau and P. Parshall, *The Renaissance Print*, New Haven and London, 1994, p. 73.

29. L. Voet, *Antwerp, the Golden Age*, p. 372.
30. Vitruvius, *De architectura*, p. XLVI v: For the date of Cesariano's birth see B. Agosti, 'Riflessioni su un manoscritto di Cesare Cesariano' in *Cesare Cesariano*, p. 71.
31. M. Baxandall, *The Limewood Sculptors of Renaissance Germany*, New Haven 1980, pp. 135–42, especially p. 135.
32. D. Landau and P. Parshall, *The Renaissance Print*, pp. 212–13, ill. 224.
33. H. Cortés, *De Contrefeyen vanden eylanden ende landtouwten*, Antwerp 1523 (reprint Boston 1920 from the original, BN Paris).
34. Laurent Frieß, *Uslegung der Mercarthen oder Cartha Marina darin man sehen mag wo einer in der welt sey und wo ein yetlich Landt, wasser und Stadt gelegen ist. Das alles in den büchlin zu finden*, Getruckt zum Straßburg von Johannes Grieningen und vollendet uff san Erasmus tag. Im jar 1527, p. XIV v.; Id., *Underweisung und uslegung der Cartha Marina . . .*, Straßburg, 1530.
35. Albrecht Dürer, *Diary of His Journey to the Netherlands 1520–1521*, with an introduction by J.-A. Goris and G. Marlier, Greenwich, CT, 1970, p. 77 (spelling modified) (22–4 Nov. 1520). See ill. 29 (pen 15,9X10,1 cm. Inscribed by D. above: 'ein goltschmit von mechell zw antorff gemacht 1520'. 'Possibly a portrait of S. C.'). See A. Dürer, *Schriften und Briefe*, Leipzig 1993, p. 42: 'Item der Steffan Capello hat mir ein zederbaumen paternoster geben, dargegen soll und hab ich konterfet'.
36. G. Van Doorslaer, *La corporation et les ouvrages des orfèvres malinois*, Antwerpen, 1935, pp. 94–6.
37. W. L. Strauss, *The Complete Drawings of Dürer*, 4, New York, 1974, n. 1520/9.
38. P. Pazzi, *Dizionario biografico degli orefici, argentieri . . . operanti nello Stato Veneto . . .*, Treviso, 1998, lists one Stefano Capello who lived in the 18th century.
39. M. Hering-Mingau, 'Vom Holzmodell zur Silberplastik', in *Entwurf und Ausführung in der europäischen Barockplastik*, München 1986, pp. 135–56.
40. G. Van Doorslaer, *La corporation*, p. 96. F. Leitschuh referred to this vase in his edition of Dürer's diary: *A. Dürer's Tagebuch der Reise in die Niederlande*, Leipzig, 1884, p. 147.
41. H. Doursther, *Dictionnaire universel des poids et mesures anciens et modernes*, reprint 1965, p. 248.
42. Weight as today (g): 1255 cover; 1095 cup; 135 ring; 758 foot: total weight 3243 g. Hypothetical weight: 758 foot; 535 cup; 750 cover; 100 ring; total 2143 g.
43. L. de Laborde, *Inventaire des tableaux, livres, joyaux et meubles de Marguerite d'Autriche . . .*, Paris, 1850, p. 34: '249. Une grande coupe d'or ouvrée à feuillages pesant vi 1. xiii [On lit en marge] cette première coupe d'or et du corps de la salière est parlé au IIIe article suyvant, ont, par ordonnance de Madame, esté rompues et en sont esté faictes trois petites coupes pour en servir le voiaige de Cambray où la paix fut faicte et depuis Madame les donnyt aux marquise d'Arscot, contesses d'Aygremonet et de Gaure qui avoyent esté audit Cambray'. For a full edition of the inventory see H. Michelant, *Inventaire des vaisselles, joyaux, tapisseries, peintures, manuscrits, etc. de Marguerite d'Autriche, régente et gouvernante des Pays-Bas, dressé en son palais de Malines, le 9 juillet 1523*, Bruxelles 1870 (extrait du t. XII, n. 1 et 2, 3ème série, des *Bulletins de la Commission Royale d'histoire de Belgique*), p. 113.
44. Hernán Cortés, *Letters from Mexico*, transl. A. Pagden, intr. J. H. Elliott, New York, 1971, the third letter (pp. 160–281), 1522 [1st ed. Seville 1523; Latin transl. (by Pietro Savorgnani) Nuremberg, 1524, French version of the Latin transl., Antwerp 1524], pp. 174–5.
45. This can be regarded as an example of 'the rhetoric of innocence' brilliantly analyzed by F. Moretti, *Opere-mondo. Saggio sulla forma epica dal Faust a Cent'anni di solitudine*, Torino, 1994, pp. 22–8.
46. C. Ginzburg, *Ecstasies: Deciphering the Witches' Sabbath*, New York, 1991. Also, from a different perspective, C. Ginzburg, *Wooden Eyes: Nine Reflections on Distance*, New York, 2001 (essay on 'Myth').
47. H. G. Wells, *The Island of Doctor Moreau* [1896], ed. R. M. Philmus, Athens, GA, 1993.
48. M. Halb wachs, *Les cadres sociaux de la mémoire*, Paris, 1925 (nouv. éd. 1952).
49. On *Pathosformeln* as superlative: E. H. Gombrich, *Aby Warburg*, pp. 178–9. On the smoothing-out effect of classical idiom (*klassische Dämpfung*) see L. Spitzer, *Representative Essays*, ed. A. K. Forcione, H. Lindenberger and M. Sutherland, Stanford, CA, 1988, pp. 431–2 (with bibliographical references).