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A Moment in Time: From the Digital Record of a Migrating Library

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In May 2002 the Centre for Intercultural Studies at the University of Glasgow was successful in obtaining a major research award from the Arts & Humanities Research Board for a project centred on the German philosopher Ernst Cassirer (1874-1945). Cassirer has two links with Glasgow: he was awarded the honorary degree of Doctor of Laws by the University in 1936, and his son Heinrich (1903-1979) took his Ph.D. there in 1938 with his Commentary on Kant’s Critique of Judgment and was subsequently a lecturer in the Philosophy Department. The Glasgow Cassirer Project has two particular aims: first, to investigate the concept of Kulturwissenschaft or ‘cultural science’; second, to produce a digital edition of correspondence relating to Cassirer in the Archive of the Warburg Institute, which is now part of the School of Advanced Study in the University of London.

This paper draws on the Glasgow Cassirer Project digital edition to illustrate the transfer at the end of 1933 of what is now the Warburg Institute from its original home in Hamburg to London. The story of this transfer - or cultural migration - has been frequently told. Together with the history and work of the Institute under its previous German name, the Kulturwissenschaftliche Bibliothek Warburg or KBW, it has formed the subject of continuing study since at least the 1970s, particularly in Germany, and there is now an extensive literature.\footnote{1}{Only in recent years however has retrospective indexing of the Archive permitted fuller consideration of the important documentary evidence which it contains. Warburg was a meticulous keeper of records: apart from the originals of incoming correspondence, a majority of his outgoing correspondence is preserved in file copies, and the activities of the KBW, including for example visitors or internal discussions, were recorded in its official diary (\textit{Tagebuch}) from 1926 to 1929.\footnote{2}{The Glasgow Cassirer Project will therefore provide a further step in making a part of this evidence available, and has already collected some extra evidence on the effect of the KBW’s transfer to London on the scholarly communities it sought to serve - the close-knit group that had worked together at the University of Hamburg; the new community in Britain; and those who became separated from it, either remaining in Germany or emigrating to countries other than Britain, in particular to the United States.}

Aby Warburg was born in Hamburg in 1866, the eldest of five brothers in the distinguished Jewish banking family. He studied in Bonn, Strassburg and Florence and continued his studies privately
thereafter, travelling to the United States (especially the south-western states) and in Europe (particularly Italy). His initial interests in art history widened to include areas of anthropology and religion, and to support these he developed a private library from the 1880s onwards; the funding for this came from the family, as the result of an arrangement whereby Aby had ceded his interest in the bank, as the eldest son, to his younger brother Max (1867-1946). During the period after the First World War when Warburg, who had suffered a nervous breakdown, was away from Hamburg for a prolonged period, two major changes occurred: first the new Hamburg University was constituted and second Fritz Saxl (1890-1948), originally appointed as Warburg’s librarian, opened the KBW in 1920 with the agreement of the Warburg family as a research institute, based round the Library. Warburg himself had always been generous in making its contents available to other scholars, to encourage the exploration of questions that interested him.

Cassirer was appointed to the Chair of Philosophy at Hamburg in June 1919. Since 1906 he had been working as a Privatdozent (a lecturer, but not on the salaried staff) at the University of Berlin. He had published several major works on epistemology and logic, notably a study of Leibniz in 1902, the first two volumes of The Problem of Knowledge in Modern Philosophy and Science [Das Erkenntnisproblem in der Philosophie und Wissenschaft der neueren Zeit] in 1906-1907 and The Concept of Substance and Function [Substanzbegriff und Funktionsbegriff: Untersuchungen über die Grundfragen der Erkenntniskritik] in 1910. He first visited the Library in November 1920, an occasion reported by Saxl in a letter to Warburg on 28 November and recalled in his 1945 memoir of Cassirer. Saxl enlisted the staff of the new University in developing and realising his plans for the KBW by means of public lectures and two parallel series of publications, the Lectures (Vorträge) and more extended Studies (Studien). Cassirer contributed a paper on the concept of ‘symbolic form’ in the humanities to the first volume of the Lectures, published in 1923, and his Conceptual Form in Mythical Thought was published as the first of the Studies in 1922. Both works indicate the path his research and thought was to take during the 1920s, marked by the successive publication of the three completed volumes of The Philosophy of Symbolic Forms between 1923 and 1929. It is difficult to imagine that Cassirer could have realised this work in the same or perhaps in any way without the twin stimulation of the KBW and the exchange of ideas that was facilitated between those most associated with it - Warburg himself, Saxl, Cassirer, the art historian Erwin Panofsky (1892-1968), and others who came later, including Raymond Klibansky (1905-2005). The themes of the first two volumes were combined in Cassirer’s separate Language and Myth, published as the sixth of the Studies in 1925, which also embraced aspects of Saxl’s work on the history of religions. He marked Warburg’s sixtieth birthday in June 1926 by a
dedication copy of *The Individual and the Cosmos in Renaissance Philosophy*, published the following year as the tenth of the Studies.\(^8\) In 1928 Cassirer received an invitation to move to Frankfurt University and Warburg mounted a strenuous but successful campaign, in the press and elsewhere, to ensure that he stayed in Hamburg.\(^9\) He was elected Rector of the University for the year 1929/1930. After Warburg’s death in October 1929, he remained in Hamburg until he resigned from his post in April 1933, in protest at the laws enacted against Jewish professors. He accepted the offer of a Fellowship at All Souls College, Oxford where he stayed [218] for two years, moving to Gothenburg in Sweden in 1935 and subsequently to the United States in 1941.

As the research programme of the KBW had developed by means of lectures and associated publications, Saxl, assisted by others on the staff, notably Gertrud Bing (1892-1964), Cassirer’s doctoral student, oversaw the parallel development of the Library, its organisation and cataloguing; by 1926 it had outgrown Warburg’s own house in Heilwigstrasse and expanded into an adjacent purpose-built library, suitable for holding meetings and more accommodating to University staff and students as well as members of the public.\(^10\) Warburg had returned to Hamburg in 1924. The relationship between Saxl and himself was not always easy, partly for reasons of temperament. Apart from a period when Warburg was working in Italy, Saxl spent much of his time after 1926 until Warburg’s death travelling throughout Europe, but particularly in England where he visited libraries in London, Oxford and Cambridge in the preparation of his catalogue of Latin astrological manuscripts.\(^11\) The photographs that he took were added to the photographic collection of the KBW, which was, and remains, a major aspect of the Institute’s work. Shortly before Warburg’s death, an agreement was drawn up in Hamburg with his four brothers to safeguard the continued funding of the KBW, through majority American ownership. In the past, financial support had come principally from the New York firm, headed by Felix M. Warburg (1871-1937), which had guaranteed the Library an advantageous income in dollars during the period of German hyper-inflation in the 1920s. As a consequence of the post-1929 Depression, however, its income was reduced suddenly and substantially, and it struggled to maintain subscriptions to periodicals.

Worse was to follow in January 1933 when the Nazi Party gained a majority in elections to the Reichstag. As an institute with strong Jewish origins and connections, both intellectual and financial, the KBW was highly vulnerable to political interference. Saxl together with his assistant Edgar Wind (1900-1971) - some argue that the lead was taken by Wind or Klibansky\(^12\) - immediately sought an alternative home outside Germany. Although Italy and Leiden in the Netherlands were considered, various factors – not least that of financial support - combined in
favour of moving the Library to London. Both Saxl and Wind had established contact with scholars in Britain during the 1920s. This had enabled them, together with Emil Wolff (1879-1952), to plan a series of lectures on the influence of classical antiquity in England held at the KBW in 1930 and 1931, for which the relevant holdings of the Library were expanded and to which four scholars from Britain contributed. Subsequent visits were made to Hamburg by staff from the Courtauld Institute, the librarian Rhoda Welsford (d. 1975) and its director Professor William Constable (1887-1976). The Courtauld Institute had been founded in 1931 as the first dedicated British institute of art history and these visits heralded an understanding that accommodation would be found if the KBW were sent on loan to London for a period of three years. The existence in London of the Academic Assistance Council, which had as its purpose support for displaced or exiled scholars, was also a key factor. The authorities in Hamburg would only agree to the removal of the Library on a three-year loan basis, while the Hamburg branch of the Warburg family, headed by Max M. Warburg (1867-1946), was fearful that any failure to comply, or to acknowledge that the loan might become a permanent arrangement, might jeopardise its own position under the Nazi regime. The packing up of documents, photographs and some 70,000 books, together with the shelves and associated equipment, began on 6 November 1933, as Saxl reported in a letter to Max Warburg’s son Erich (1900-1990), who had acted as the family’s agent in the negotiations. By December everything was ready and the Library was delivered to London in 531 crates, conveyed from Hamburg on two steamers. Rented accommodation for the period to 1936 was made available in Thames House, an office building on Millbank, near Westminster, and a committee of management, under the chairmanship of Arthur Hamilton Lee, Viscount Lee of Fareham (1868-1947) was formed.

Saxl, Bing and Wind were joined in London by other staff from Hamburg, Hans Meier (1900-1941), the librarian, and Otto Fein (1906-1966), the bookbinder and photographer. It took until May 1934 for the shelving to be installed and the books to be arranged ready for opening to the public. Saxl himself was under no illusions that the use of the Warburg Institute, as it now became known, would be fundamentally different from that of the KBW. There were clear reasons for this, apart from the obvious cultural ones. In Hamburg, there had been a close community of scholars who were receptive to Warburg’s ideas, the philosophy behind the Library and its organisation. Warburg had been dead for four years and that community had been dispersed, with the particular loss of Panofsky to the United States - although Saxl and others had made strenuous efforts to find him a position in Britain and the less distant relocation of Cassirer to Oxford. An alternative user-community had to be built up, partly from other émigré scholars or visitors to London, but
principally from British scholars. It has occasionally been suggested that contact with the latter was slow to emerge, and indeed this was one of the arguments advanced by the American branch of the Warburg family based in New York in their efforts, both at that time and later, to secure the Library for that city.\textsuperscript{19} This claim is, however, contradicted by the evidence of the early annual reports\textsuperscript{20} and is largely unproven, for two reasons: first, German-language scholarship (much the largest in quantity, as is apparent from the bibliography) has concerned itself less with the post-1933 period or shows less familiarity with the British milieu; and second, the documentary evidence in the Archive for the significant years from 1934 onwards is still in the course of being fully indexed and abstracted. Though much work remains to be done in this area, it is possible to illustrate at least some of the diversity of what was being achieved, with reference to the Cassirer correspondence and other sources.

The problems facing the Institute were substantial. The eventual position of the Library at the expiry of the three-year loan period in December 1936 was a continuing anxiety, even from the earliest days. Ill-timed interventions from the New York-based Warburgs, particularly Felix Warburg’s son Edward (1908-1992), who had been born in America, and with some support from Panofsky, caused embarrassment to Bing, Saxl and the Hamburg-based Warburgs, especially Erich, since they considered that relations with supporters in Britain and efforts at fund-raising there would be compromised.\textsuperscript{21} Financial worries were considerable. Although the London stay had been underwritten by Samuel Courtauld, and the salaries of Saxl and Edgar Wind were initially met in part by a grant from the Rockefeller Foundation, Saxl was determined that the research function of the Institute should be maintained through its publications and meetings, and \textsuperscript{220} money for the former, in particular, was difficult to obtain. Approaches to the Rockefeller Foundation, to the Warburg family in Hamburg and to charitable foundations such as the Pilgrim Trust (in early 1934) were all unavailing.\textsuperscript{22} Nor did the budget allow travel for scholarly research. Most immediate was the need to establish contacts. Saxl, Bing or Wind drew up several documents (these are normally in unattributed copies in the Archive) to discuss means of publicity. One, probably by Saxl, dated 30 May 1934 lists six options, from daily newspapers (an idea rejected in the document, but used in fact on at least two occasions \textit{[Daily Telegraph, 1 June 1934; Observer, 10 June 1934]})) to personal letters.\textsuperscript{23} Bing contributed an article to the \textit{Library Association Record} for August 1934, in which she drew attention to the Library’s organisation and classification scheme, a feature which provoked such interest that Edgar Wind contributed a second article in May of the following year specifically on this aspect.\textsuperscript{24} Other contacts were developed with the British Museum, where the photographic collection proved particularly valuable, and with learned societies: Saxl, for example,
was invited to give lectures at the British Academy and to the Classical Association. An aspect in which the Institute was keen to engage was interchange with other British libraries. To this end, a copy of its catalogue was deposited with the National Central Library, and its continuing contacts with German libraries also enabled books to be borrowed for the use of British scholars.

One such scholar who was receptive to the aims of the Warburg Institute from its arrival was Sir Stephen Gaselee (1882-1943), Librarian and Keeper of the Papers at the Foreign Office since 1920. A classical scholar educated at Eton and King’s College Cambridge, Gaselee’s well-stocked and inquisitive mind had been applied to diverse areas, such as Coptic texts, printing and bibliography, liturgical practice and hymnody, and mediaeval Latin. He had a fine private library, given in instalments to Cambridge University Library from 1934 onwards. In 1932 he was President of the Bibliographical Society; he had also edited The Year’s Work in Classical Studies, a survey journal of current scholarship published by the Classical Association, and this gave him a sympathetic insight into the similar venture undertaken by the Institute. Gaselee first visited the Institute in April 1934 and met Saxl, who showed him the Library. The two discussed questions relating to mediaeval Latin proverbs, and Saxl offered to obtain a loan from Germany of a rare work, Julius Wegeler’s Philosophia patrum (1877), which the Institute did not possess. The book was ordered on 10 April from the Prussian State Library in Berlin and received at the Institute on the 19th, with a loan period of four weeks. It was sent out by Hans Meier to Gaselee, who returned it on 7 May. In his accompanying letter, he recalled his most recent visit to the Institute on 27 April when Saxl had given him offprints of articles (which have also been an important feature of the Institute’s collections). Enclosing some of his own, he made the interesting suggestion that the Institute might act as a distribution centre for such offprints. Saxl replied on 9 May, thanking him and noting that he had forwarded some duplicates to Raymond Klibansky. Further documented contact took place in 1934 and 1935, but the most significant appreciation of the Warburg Institute’s aims was made by Gaselee in his Sandars Lectures entitled Bibliography and the Classics, which he delivered in Cambridge in February 1936. The lectures were unpublished in the exact form in which they were delivered, but exist in typescript. The copy in the British Library includes near the end of the second lecture a manuscript addition that draws attention to the first volume of A Bibliography on the Survival of the Classics, published by the Institute in 1934 and one of the publications that Saxl hoped would be an additional pointer to its scholarship. The Bibliography, which was a collaborative venture begun in Germany before the move to London, consisted of only two volumes, the first of which discussed publications from 1931 and the second (issued in 1938) those from 1932 and 1933. What Gaselee had to say about the Institute and the
significance of the Bibliography here was exactly the sort of scholarly understanding for which Saxl had wished when the Institute moved to London:

“The Warburg Institute ... exists to help students to investigate the transmission of classical forms and ideas through the middle ages to modern times ... Some time or other there will be a full inventory, alphabetical and analytical, of all its great store: but meanwhile it has published a preliminary volume, surveying books and articles in periodicals during the year 1931 ... Every entry has a brief but careful analysis ... and I regard this as the beginning of an undertaking which may be of the greatest use to workers in a very wide field.”

Other Archive correspondence reveals the identity of scholars who worked in the Institute during its early days in Britain. In 1935, for instance, the historian of science Benjamin Farrington (1891-1974), later Professor of Classics at University College, Swansea, used the Institute while working on his Science in Antiquity. He wrote in May 1936 to Saxl expressing his thanks and enclosing a copy of the book; he also asked about any special requirements for students using the Institute. The donated book, which in fact contains no separate indication of Farrington’s use of the Library, was acknowledged in a letter to him the following month. To the question about students - though ‘student’ is an ambiguous term – came the answer that there were no such requirements, and this is illustrative of the open-door policy which the Library continued to offer in London, just as it had in Hamburg. One of the major points stressed repeatedly by Saxl and Bing in their descriptions was the advantage offered to the user by free access to all the book-stock, that encouraged - as Cassirer had noted on the occasion of his first visit in 1920 - browsing to feed the intellect.

In an important letter to Felix Warburg in New York dated 1 June 1934, Saxl set out his plans for the newly-opened Institute and reviewed what had been achieved so far. (The text is given in full as Appendix 1.) Cassirer’s name figures prominently in this letter. In fact, Cassirer spent fewer than two years in Britain: he had arrived in September 1933, and spent much of the summer of 1934 travelling in Europe, particularly in Sweden where he lectured at Uppsala University. He did not return to Oxford until October, and moved to Sweden in June 1935. Nonetheless, Saxl enlisted his support in the introductory lectures about the Institute given for German-speaking audiences in London. Even among such an audience, however, it could not be taken for granted that Cassirer’s name was known, as Saxl’s letter shows. More significantly, Cassirer continued the same close relationship with the staff at the Institute and sought to use the Library’s facilities in the same way; this was of even more importance since his own library had been left behind in Hamburg, and he
was not able to have access to \[222\] until he was living in Sweden. In February 1934, for instance, he wrote to Saxl from Oxford mentioning that he had been asked to lecture on Hegel’s moral theory and had not found the literature on the subject in the Bodleian Library sufficiently extensive.\(^{34}\) Could the Institute staff, even though the Library was not formally open, check a list of books and see whether it could help him out?

Cassirer was also among the lecturers at the Institute in the autumn of 1934, when he gave a series of lectures on the new ideal of truth in the seventeenth century, which he had planned with Saxl during May.\(^{35}\) He had contributed in a minor way to the *Bibliography on the Survival of the Classics*. But by far the most important contact between the Institute and Cassirer at this time was the Festschrift which was prepared for his sixtieth birthday on 28 July 1934. This was edited by Raymond Klibansky and Herbert James Paton (1887-1969), at that time Professor of Logic and Rhetoric at Glasgow, and published by Oxford University Press under the title *Philosophy and History* in 1936.\(^ {36}\) It was consciously designed to bring together British and European scholars from different countries, and Saxl had viewed it in his letter of 1 June and elsewhere as one of the principal means of establishing the Institute’s reputation.\(^ {37}\) Because of the intensive work required to prepare for the opening of the Institute during the first part of 1934, the publication could not be completed in time (Saxl’s own contribution was not finished until September), but the Press printed a prospectus listing the eventual contents and this was sent with a message of congratulation to Cassirer who was staying in Austria, according to the memoir by Cassirer’s wife Toni.\(^ {38}\) Three days before the 28\(^{th}\), the Austrian Chancellor Dollfuss had been murdered and this had plunged Cassirer into gloomy introspection and fear for the future. On this occasion, and uncharacteristically - for, as Bing had noted as early as 1923, his manner was not particularly revealing either in what he said or wrote\(^ {39}\) - Cassirer replied in a highly personal way. He recognised that the gift had “its own much higher value”, that is, in the values it espoused in comparison to the general uncertainty of the times; in its bringing together of different scholarly disciplines and traditions; and in its revisiting of the diverse intercultural developments that the KBW had encouraged in the previous decade. He was touched by the contributions of younger scholars and concluded with a personal word to Saxl: “I do not know whether I really deserve the praise of my ‘clear-headedness’ that you accord me. But in one thing I am certainly clear-headed, and will remain so: in my feeling for you and in my opinion of what your own work and that of the [K]BW, unimaginable without you, signifies for us all.”\(^ {40}\) It is perhaps ironic that the Festschrift in one way marks an ending: Cassirer’s philosophical interests were turning back towards his earlier historical works, or forward in directions that were eventually to produce his *Essay on Man* (1944). It also marked an ending of close relationships:
Panofsky was by this time firmly settled in America; of the other former KBW associates who contributed, only Klibansky and Wind retained a close relationship with the Institute in Britain.

Its work went forward in other ways, through other projects, such as the transmission of Plato, in the *Plato Latinus* series edited by Klibansky as part of the *Corpus Platonicum Medii Aevi*, and the establishment of the *Journal of the Warburg Institute*, co-edited by Wind. But the strong personal connection between Cassirer, his wife, and the Institute remained and is traceable in their later correspondence, beyond that moment in time. [223]

**Appendix 1**

*Letter from Fritz Saxl to Felix Warburg 1 June 1934*

[WIA, GC (Felix Warburg file); unsigned typescript copy]

1st June, 1934

Dear Mr. Warburg,

Many thanks for your letter concerning Dr. [Ernst] MOERING. In the meantime I have obtained information about him from two personal acquaintances of his in Breslau, and the moment I get an answer to my last night-letter-telegram to you, I shall proceed to look for something suitable for him through the Academic Assistance Council. I hesitate to send an invitation from our own Institute, as the name “Warburg” might perhaps do more harm than good to Dr. Moering.

It was very kind of you to enquire after our welfare. We have spent the last four weeks arranging the Library, a task which took all our energies. Fortunately the work is now more or less completed. In the course of the next few days I shall send you some photographs of what the Library now looks like. All visitors, both English and German, find the premises excellent; most of those who knew the Library in Hamburg say that it is now easier to use than ever before.

As we have only just opened our doors, the process of establishing contact with English students is still in its beginnings, but we are not at all dissatisfied with our success so far. A group of forty students, forming the “Mediaeval Group”, approached us to know whether they might hold their meetings at the Institute, and now they regularly come here and English and German scholars alternately hold lectures, followed by discussions.

Our friends, Dr. WIND and Dr. KLIBANSKY are honorary lecturers at the University of London, which I shall also soon become. This gives us an opportunity of getting to a certain extent into touch with the work of the University.

CASSIRER, whom we established at All Souls, Oxford, last year, has been asked to stay on for a further year which we hope he will do. Besides this, the University of London and also three Scottish Universities have invited him to give some lectures within the course of the next weeks. His sixtieth birthday is on July 28th of this year, and we are preparing an international *Festschrift* for him, which will be edited by Dr. Klibansky and the Warburg Institute; the Oxford Press is
prepared to publish it. This will, we expect, not only go towards making Cassirer’s name still better known in the English world, but also be of some use to the Warburg Institute, as the standard of the Festschrift will be very high.

But apart from this work of establishing contact in England, we are much concerned to do whatever possible for our old countrymen. I have arranged a series of German lectures on the problems of the Warburg Institute, the audience of which too is mostly German, although a few English people, who know German well enough, like to come too. These lectures appear to be a complete [228] success. The other day I received a letter from one of those present at our last lecture delivered by Cassirer, beginning – “Ich habe den Vortrag C.’s genossen wie schon lange nichts derartiges .... Cassirer, den ich bisher weder schriftlich noch mündlich kannte, war für mich ein wirkliches Erlebnis.” This series of lectures aims not only at creating a new circle of collaborators who are willing to work more or less along our lines with their research work, but above all to give these scattered compatriots of our[s] a new centre where they can feel at home. You know that I always considered this one of my prime duties when the Institute was transferred to England, and without being too optimistic I think I can safely say that I am achieving this.

Of course, this sort of Seelsorge has not only an idealistic but also a very practical side to it. Through all these weeks German refugees have been coming to me and asking my advice. I did my best to give them the advice they needed and I believe that I am on the whole better able to do this than most people as I have not only a very natural sympathy and understanding for my own countrymen, but have also by this time gained a fairly sound insight into English conditions.

Thus I have succeeded in bringing Cassirer’s son [Heinrich] to Glasgow for two years as a research fellow; I brought a Hamburg astronomer [Arthur Beer], a poor very decent man who helped us when we were preparing the Planetarium Exhibition, to an English Observatory; Dr. WITTKOWER who was an assistant at the German Institute for Art History in Rome is working at our Institute but will be paid through the Academic Assistance Council. Another grant I procured for Dr. KLIBANSKY, a former Privatdozent of Heidelberg, etc. etc.

Many a time the Academic Assistance Council has asked my advice, so that I could, besides facilitating [sic] their work, help them in avoiding to incur unnecessary expenses and making unnecessary grants.

All this, of course, I could only achieve as Director of the Warburg Institute, as the Institute has already got a certain renown over here. With time we shall start giving public lectures as we did in Hamburg, and I hope that this will prove another means of acquiring new English friends.

Yours very sincerely,

[address]

Felix Warburg, Esq.,
52, William Street,
NEW YORK. [229]
Appendix 2

Supplementary Bio-bibliographical Notes

Bing, Gertrud (1892-1964): educated at Hamburg University; doctoral Promotion (Der Begriff des Notwendigen bei Lessing: ein Beitrag zum geistesgeschichtlichen Problem Leibniz-Lessing), supervised by Cassirer, 1921; on the staff of the KBW 1921-; assistant to Warburg, 1926-1929; emigrated with KBW to London 1933; Assistant Director, Warburg Institute 1933-1955; Director 1955-1959; editor of Warburg’s Gesammelte Schriften 1-2: Die Erneuerung der heidnischen Antike (Leipzig: Teubner, 1932) and of Saxl’s lectures (London: Warburg Institute, 1957).


Cassirer, Ernst (1874-1945): educated at Marburg University; Privatdozent, Berlin 1906; Professor of Philosophy, Hamburg 1919-1933; emigrated to Britain 1933; Fellow of All Souls College, Oxford 1933-1935; Professor of Philosophy, Gothenburg 1935-1940; Visiting Professor, Yale 1941-1943; Visiting Professor, Columbia University 1944-1945; author of Die Philosophie der symbolischen Formen (Berlin: B. Cassirer, 1923-1929), etc.


Cassirer, Heinrich or Heinz (1903-1979): elder son of Ernst and Toni Cassirer; emigrated to Switzerland thence to England, 1934; lectured at Glasgow and Oxford; Ph.D., Glasgow, 1938; author of Aristoteles’ Schrift “Von der Seele” und ihre Stellung innerhalb der aristotelischen Philosophie (Tübingen: Mohr, 1932); A Commentary on Kant’s Critique of Judgment (London: Methuen, 1938); Kant’s First Critique (London: Allen & Unwin, 1954); translator of the New Testament, published posthumously as God’s New Covenant (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1989).


Oxford DNB, 13: 25-26


Lee of Fareham, Arthur Hamilton Lee, Viscount (1868-1947): statesman, benefactor; bequeathed his collection of paintings to the Courtauld Institute; encouraged and facilitated transfer of KBW to London 1933; Chairman of Committee, Warburg Institute, 1934-1944 (?)

Panofsky, Erwin (1892-1968): art historian; educated at Freiburg im Breisgau, Berlin, Munich; Professor, Hamburg, 1926-1933; guest professorships in USA, 1931-1935; emigrated to USA, 1934; Professor, Institute for Advanced Study, Princeton, 1935-1962, Professor Emeritus, 1962-1968; Professor of the Literature of the Arts and Design, New York University, 1962-1968; author

Panofsky, Korrespondenz 1910 bis 1936 [note 1].


Oxford DNB, 43: 52-53.

Saxl, Fritz (1890-1948): educated in Vienna; in charge of Warburg’s Library during his absence from Hamburg, 1920-1924, responsible for opening KB as a research institute; Director of KBW after Warburg’s death, 1929-1933; emigrated with KBW to London, 1933; Director of the Warburg Institute, 1933-1948; Professor of the History of the Classical Tradition, 1944-1948; author (with Panofsky) of Dürers ‘Melencolia I’: eine quellen- und typengeschichtliche Untersuchung; Verzeichnis astrologischer und mythologischer illustrierter Handschriften des lateinischen Mittelalters. 1-2 (Heidelberg: Winter, 1915-1927); 3 (London: Warburg Institute, 1953); Mithras: typengeschichtliche Untersuchungen (Berlin: H. Keller, 1931), etc.


Warburg, Aby (1866-1929): educated at Bonn, Strassburg, Florence and Berlin, and private studies thereafter; Warburg’s private library in Hamburg developed with financial support from his brothers; visited America, 1895-1896; honorary title of Professor, 1912-; illness after the First World War caused him to be absent from Hamburg until 1924; occasional lectures, but comparatively little published during his lifetime; travelled to Italy 1928-1929, working on Mnemosyne-Atlas project (unfinished); lectures/papers published posthumously as Gesammelte Schriften 1-2: Die Erneuerung der heidnischen Antike (Leipzig: Teubner, 1932); English tr. by D. Britt published as Aby Warburg: the Renewal of Pagan Antiquity (Los Angeles: Getty Research Institute, 1999).


Chernow, The Warburgs, especially 349-352; index under ‘Warburg Library’.

Warburg, Felix M. (1871-1937): brother of Aby; banker, philanthropist, especially in respect of Jewish welfare charities such as the American Jewish Joint Distribution Committee; partner in Kuhn, Loeb & Co. (New York) and in M.M. Warburg & Co. (Hamburg); tried to secure KBW for New York.

Chernow, The Warburgs, especially 90-101; index under ‘Warburg Library’.


Chernow, The Warburgs, especially 141-156; index under ‘Warburg Library’.


Wolff, Emil (1879-1952): studied at Munich; taught at Gent, 1918; Professor of English Language and Culture, Hamburg, 1919-1952; organised 1930 lectures on England und die Antike at KBW with Saxl and Wind; author of Francis Bacon und seine Quellen (Berlin: E. Felber, 1910-1913); Die goldene Kette (Hamburg: Hansischer Gildenverlag, 1947), etc.


Notes


2 Published as Karen Michels and Charlotte Schoell-Glass, eds. Tagebuch der Kulturwissenschaftlichen Bibliothek Warburg (Berlin: Akademie-Verlag, [2001]).

3 Warburg Institute Archive [WIA], GC [General Correspondence] Fritz Saxl to Aby Warburg 28 November 1920. See also Toni Cassirer, Mein Leben mit Ernst Cassirer (Hamburg: F. Meiner, [2003]), 126. Saxl’s memoir was published as
“Ernst Cassirer,” in *The Philosophy of Ernst Cassirer*, ed. P.A. Schilpp (Evanston, IL.: Library of Living Philosophers, 1949), 47-51. Cassirer also played a significant role, through his 1924 visit to Warburg at Dr Ludwig Binswanger’s sanatorium at Kreuzlingen, in assisting Warburg’s recovery from illness and his subsequent return to Hamburg [Toni Cassirer, *Mein Leben...*, 150-151]. That Cassirer was held in such high regard by Warburg and Saxl is at least partly attributable to this.


9 WIA, III.29.2 “Warum Hamburg den Philosophen Cassirer nicht verlieren darf.”


14 Memorandum by Erich Warburg: WIA, GC (Erich Warburg file) 17 November 1933; also WIA, GC (Erich Warburg file) Erich Warburg to Lord Lee 27 October 1933.


16 This was also a factor in subsequent negotiations over the Institute in 1936. See for example WIA, GC (Felix Warburg file) Max M. Warburg to Felix Warburg (cable) 13 February 1936; Erich Warburg to Felix Warburg (letter) 13 February 1936; Felix Warburg to Erich Warburg (cable) 15 February 1936; WIA, GC Gertrud Bing to Walter Friedländer 28 February 1936.

17 WIA, GC (Erich Warburg file) Fritz Saxl to Erich Warburg 6 November 1933.
The question of the transfer of the Warburg Institute to London, as far as members of the Warburg family were concerned, is highly complex. An interpretative difficulty is caused by the fact that some of the evidence exists in more than one copy, where annotations present in one but not in another may also cast significant light. An example of this is the report of a meeting held at the New York home of Percy Straus in October 1936 [Panofsky, *Korrespondenz 1910 bis 1936*, 930-934, letter 597B, reproduced from a copy in the M.M. Warburg & Co. Private Archive], where the WIA copy [WIA, GC (Max M. Warburg file) Walter Cook to Max M. Warburg 19 October 1936] includes comments and queries by Erich Warburg, who was not present at the meeting. In general, Felix M. Warburg and his son Edward, of the New York branch of the family, had a strong desire to see the Library in America, initially as a joint memorial to Aby and his brother Paul who had died in 1932. Their motivation was also guided by the fact of majority American ownership and financing, but their view of the Library seems to have been limited to its role as a resource for the study of art history, despite the fact that both had visited it in Hamburg and that Edward was a member of the Institute’s committee of management after its transfer to London. There were attempts, even after the initial London arrangements were in place in October 1933, to revoke these [WIA, GC (Erich Warburg file) Erich Warburg to Warburg (Amsterdam) 16 November 1933 (cable); memorandum by Erich Warburg 17 November 1933], although the Hamburg-based Warburgs pointed out the risks, were the carefully-negotiated agreement with the Hamburg authorities for the loan of the Library to break down.

It was the wish of both Max M. and Erich Warburg that any consideration of the future of the Library after the initial three-year loan period expired in 1936 should be deferred, both to avoid giving displeasure to its British sponsors, such as Lord Lee, and to give the Institute a chance to become established in its new home, but in October 1934 Edward Warburg wrote to Saxl (whose name he misspelled as ‘Sachsel’), asking his opinion on the possibility of transferring the Institute and Library to America [WIA, GC (Edward Warburg file) [225] Edward Warburg to Fritz Saxl 2 October 1934 = Panofsky, *Korrespondenz 1910 bis 1936*, 757-759, letter 483)], and Saxl was forced to respond in a defensive though restrained manner [WIA, GC (Edward Warburg file) Fritz Saxl to Edward Warburg 8 November 1934; also (Erich Warburg file) Erich Warburg to Edward Warburg 8 February 1935]. During 1935 the idea emerged (in one draft letter [WIA, GC (Erich Warburg file) Fritz Saxl to Fritz Saxl 27 January 1936] Saxl mentions it as “my idea”) that a separate memorial library should be set up in New York and that 20,000 selected volumes from the Library in London should be transferred to the new foundation, being replaced by copies funded from America, together with a copy of the Institute’s catalogue [see also Panofsky, *Korrespondenz 1910 bis 1936*, 930-937, 939-940, letters 597B, 598, 601]. This proposal from New York was felt by Lord Lee to compromise the prospects of fund-raising for the Institute in Britain. Meanwhile difficulties over housing the Library after the expiry of the Thames House lease occupied much of Bing’s and Saxl’s time; discussions proceeded with both the British Museum and with London University.

The dispute between New York and Hamburg/London was also mirrored in the strain caused to the relationship between Saxl and Erwin Panofsky; on this see Panofsky, *Korrespondenz 1910 bis 1936*, 873-876, letter 562 (Panofsky to Saxl, 7 February 1936) and 882-883, letter 567 (Saxl to Panofsky, 17 February 1936).

WIA, KBW 1933 box: “Appeal to Pilgrim Trust 1933”; otherwise undated, but referred to in a letter from Saxl to Erich Warburg, WIA, GC (Erich Warburg file) 16 March 1934. The request was turned down [WIA, GC (Erich Warburg file) Gertrud Bing to Erich Warburg 17 April 1934].

WIA, Saxl Papers 1934: “Memo re Warburg Institute 30th May 1934”.

Summary of the Classical Association lecture in: *Proceedings [of the] Classical Association* 32 (1935): 32-35. Saxl’s lecture was given on 9 April 1935 at the General Meeting of the Association at University College, Southampton, with the title “The Origin and Survival of a Pictorial Type (the Mithras Reliefs)”. The lecture was not published in this form in the collection of Saxl’s lectures edited by Bing (London: Warburg Institute, 1957), but his lecture to the local Southampton branch of the Association on 31 January 1936 was (as “The Revival of Late Antique Astrology,” *Lectures*, volume 1, 73-84). In the 1935 lecture, Saxl took the opportunity to advertise the philosophy and the work of the Institute.


First edition: *Confluentibus* [Koblenz]: Hergt, 1869. The fourth edition was published in 1877 with a supplement in 1879.

WIA, GC Hans Meier to Stephen Gaselee 19 April 1934; Stephen Gaselee to Hans Meier 7 May 1934.

The British Library shelf-mark is Ac.2660.m.(8).

The first volume of the *Bibliography* was originally published in a German edition as *Kulturwissenschaftliche Bibliographie zum Nachleben der Antike. Erster Band: Die Erscheinungen des Jahres 1931*. (Leipzig: Teubner, 1934). It was reissued in an English edition [*A Bibliography on the Survival of the Classics. First volume: The Publications of 1931* (London: Cassell, 1934)] with a translation of the introduction by Edgar Wind, but the text was otherwise identical to the German edition. The second volume was published by the Institute in 1938. Material for the planned third and fourth volumes is assumed to have been destroyed in the 1941 air raid that killed Hans Meier. Wind’s introduction to the German edition is reprinted in Wuttke, *Kosmopolis der Wissenschaft*, 279-293. [226]

For example WIA, GC (Felix Warburg file) Gertrud Bing to Felix Warburg 26 September 1934.

WIA, GC Ernst Cassirer to Fritz Saxl 21 February 1934.

WIA, GC Ernst Cassirer to Fritz Saxl 18 May 1934 (letter and postcard).

Since this paper was first written, additional evidence on the Festschrift has come to light in the Archives of Oxford University Press. The relevant file (7479) contains information on the preparation, publication and subsequent sales of the Festschrift. It also contains an original letter from Cassirer, dated 28 April 1936 and addressed to the Clarendon Press, thanking the Press for its part in the production of the volume. Through the kind offices of Dr Martin Maw, the Archivist, and with the permission of the Secretary to the Delegates of the Press, it will be possible to include much of this material in the Glasgow Project.

WIA, GC (Erich Warburg file) Fritz Saxl to Erich Warburg 30 April 1934; Erich Warburg to Fritz Saxl 3 May 1934; Fritz Saxl to Erich Warburg 26 November 1934. See also Appendix 1.


WIA, GC Gertrud Bing to Aby Warburg 29 January 1923.

WIA, GC Ernst Cassirer to Fritz Saxl 30 July 1934 (translation by the author).

(volume 1 for 1937-1938); they were joined by Anthony Blunt for the second volume, and Blunt and T.S.R. Boase for the third. The fourth volume (1940-1941) was published as the *Journal of the Warburg and Courtauld Institutes*.

42 I wish to express my warmest thanks to Dr Dorothea McEwan, Archivist at the Warburg Institute, who kindly read and commented on the first draft of this paper; to Professor Charles Hope, Director of the Warburg Institute, for permission to publish the Saxl letter in Appendix 1 and the illustration of Thames House; to Mrs Stephana Babbage and the British Library for permission to quote from Sir Stephen Gaselee’s unpublished Sandars Lectures; and to Yale University Press, copyright-holder of the literary estate of Ernst Cassirer, for permission to include my translation of part of Cassirer’s letter to Saxl (note 40). It is also appropriate to acknowledge the indispensable help and facilities provided by Professor Hope, Dr McEwan and other members of staff at the Warburg Institute in connection with the Glasgow Cassirer Project. [227]
The Reading Room and Stack Area, Warburg Institute, Thames House, London in 1934

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