

# ABY WARBURG AND THE PUZZLE OF CULTURAL MEMORY

Lecture by Prof. Tullio Viola  
(Maastricht)

**February 28 at 1-2:30 pm**

Leslokaal 1.10  
Blandijnberg 2  
Campus Boekentoren



Aby Warburg (1866 - 1929) is one of the towering figures of twentieth-century humanities. He revolutionized the study of the history of art and culture at large. In this lecture, I will briefly present his life and work, as well as the tradition of studies he initiated at the *Kulturwissen-schaftliche Bibliothek Warburg*, a very special library he founded in Hamburg and which is now located in London. In the second part of the lecture, I will focus on one specific problem that Warburg left open: the problem of cultural memory. I will claim that Warburg's legacy is located at the threshold between a nineteenth-century conception of cultural memory resulting from a quasi-biological kind of transmission to a twentieth-century conception, which moved the problem to a sociological dimension.

Tullio Viola is assistant professor in philosophy of art and culture at Maastricht University. He is the author of a monograph on "Peirce on the Uses of History" (De Gruyter 2020) and has published on the Warburg tradition, American pragmatism, the philosophy of art and culture in the German-speaking world, and the dialogue between philosophy and the social sciences in the nineteenth century.

*Lezing in het kader van de cursus  
"Receptiegeschiedenis: De klassieke traditie",  
M. Formisano*

