

135

aprile/maggio 2016

LA RIVISTA DI ENGRAMMA N. 135

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La Rivista di Engramma n. 135 | aprile-maggio 2016

IMPAGINAZIONE: luca guerini

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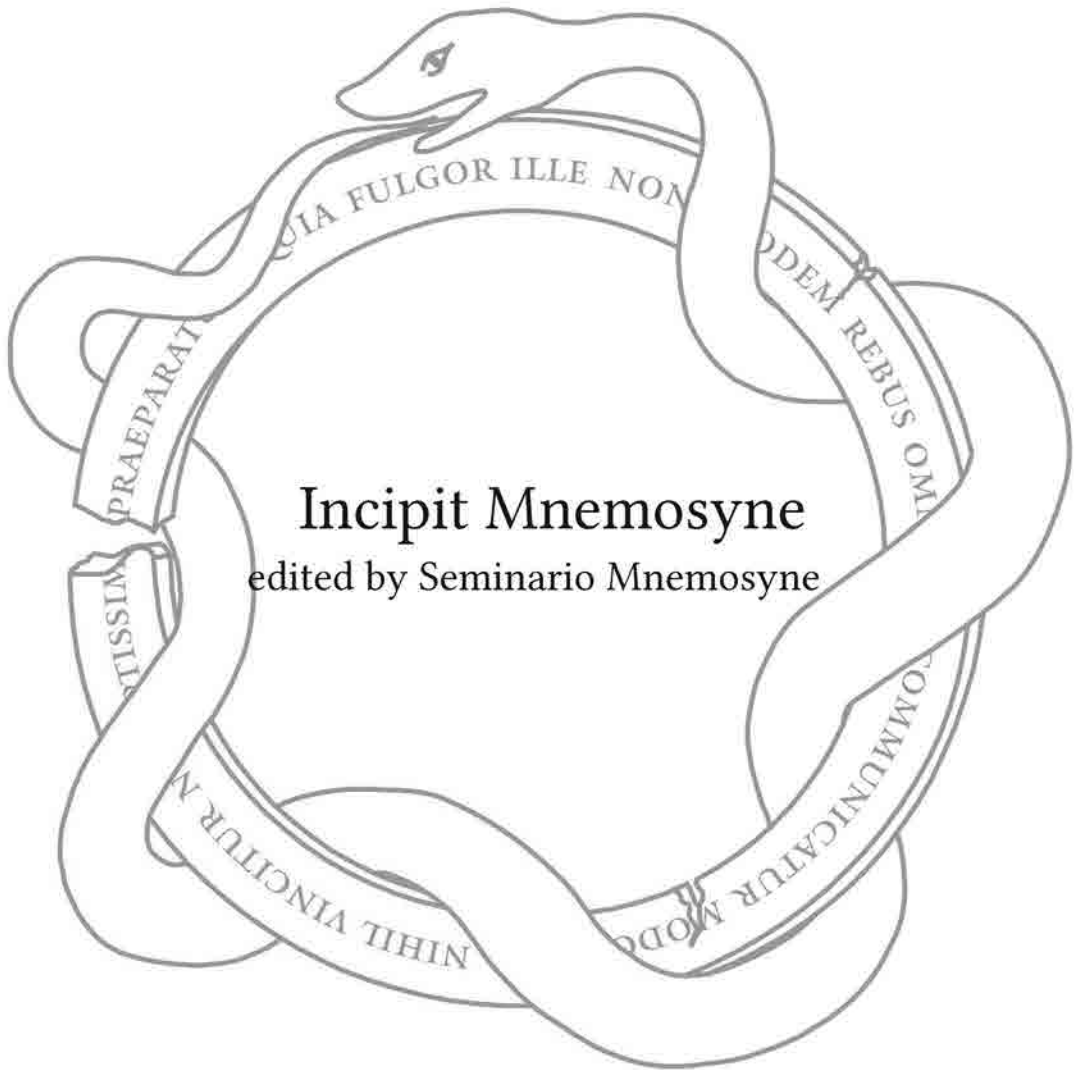
Sede legale | Associazione culturale Engramma, Castello 6634, 30122 Venezia, Italia

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www.engramma.org

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19.1.1929, Bibliotheca Hertziana, Rome: Reconstruction of the set of Panels

Mnemosyne Atlas: the incunabulum

Panels exhibited at the Bibliotheca Hertziana (January 19th, 1929)

edited by Monica Centanni and Silvia De Laude

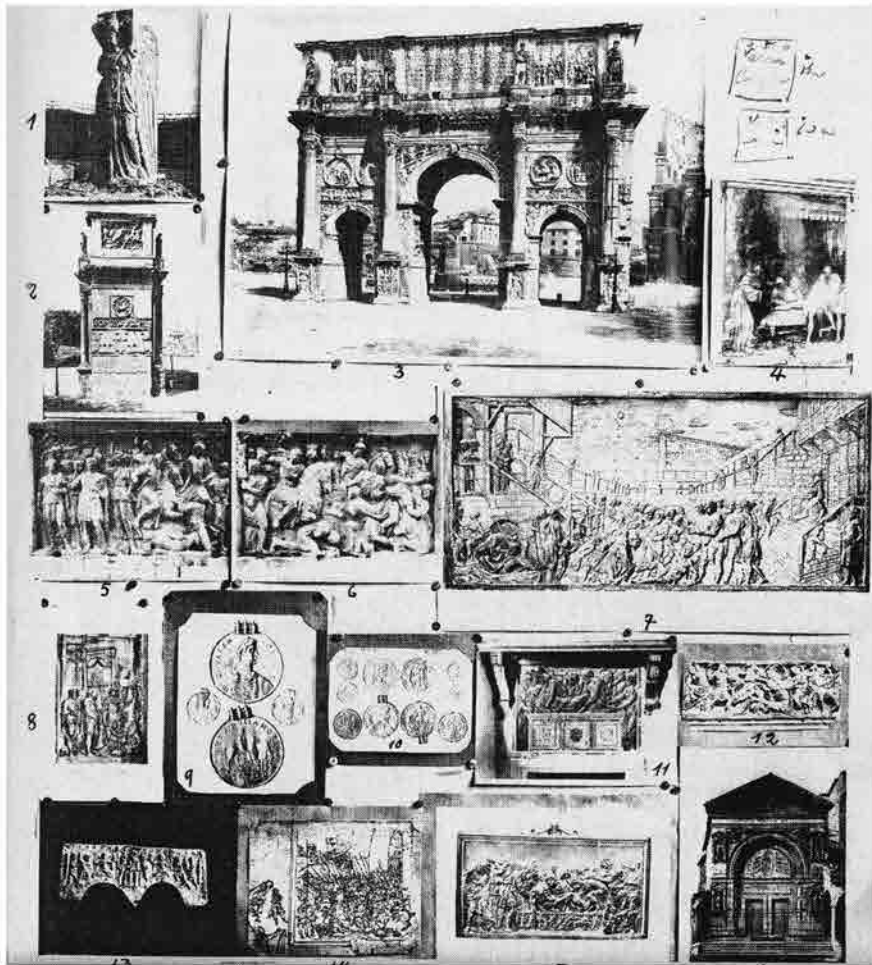
As we know, Warburg chose the Hertziana Library in Rome as site for the first public presentation and exhibition of the Bilderatlas Mnemosyne, (Gombrich [1970] 2003; De Laude, 2005; De Laude 2012). The occasion was solemn: the inauguration of the Great Hall of the Library was also an important social event for the intimate cosmopolitan circle which revolved around the Academies and the Italian capital's cultural foundations, such as the Deutches Historisches Institut, the Belgica Academy of Frantz Cumont and the French Villa Medici. Foreigners, as we know, always love to create a 'colony' for themselves.

The presentation took place on the 29th of January 1929, in front of an exceptional audience that included, among others, Kenneth Clark, Frantz Cumont, perhaps Ernst Kantorowitz, certainly Giorgio Pasquali and Ernst Robert Curtius, who was then a brilliant scholar of Contemporary History, friend of Christopher Isherwood, Paul Valéry, Klaus Mann, Andre Gide and Stephen Spender (who only later, and largely thanks to the influence of Warburg, would begin to take interest in the "survival of the ancient" in European literature: Curtius [1948] 1992). Thanks to the Roman Diary kept by Warburg and his assistant Gertrud Bing – written by both hands, truly both, with periods started from one and concluded by the other, or vice versa – we can rebuild the complex development of a discourse entrusted to images, pinned on black panels, almost "minute by minute" (Warburg, Bing [1928-1929] 2005).

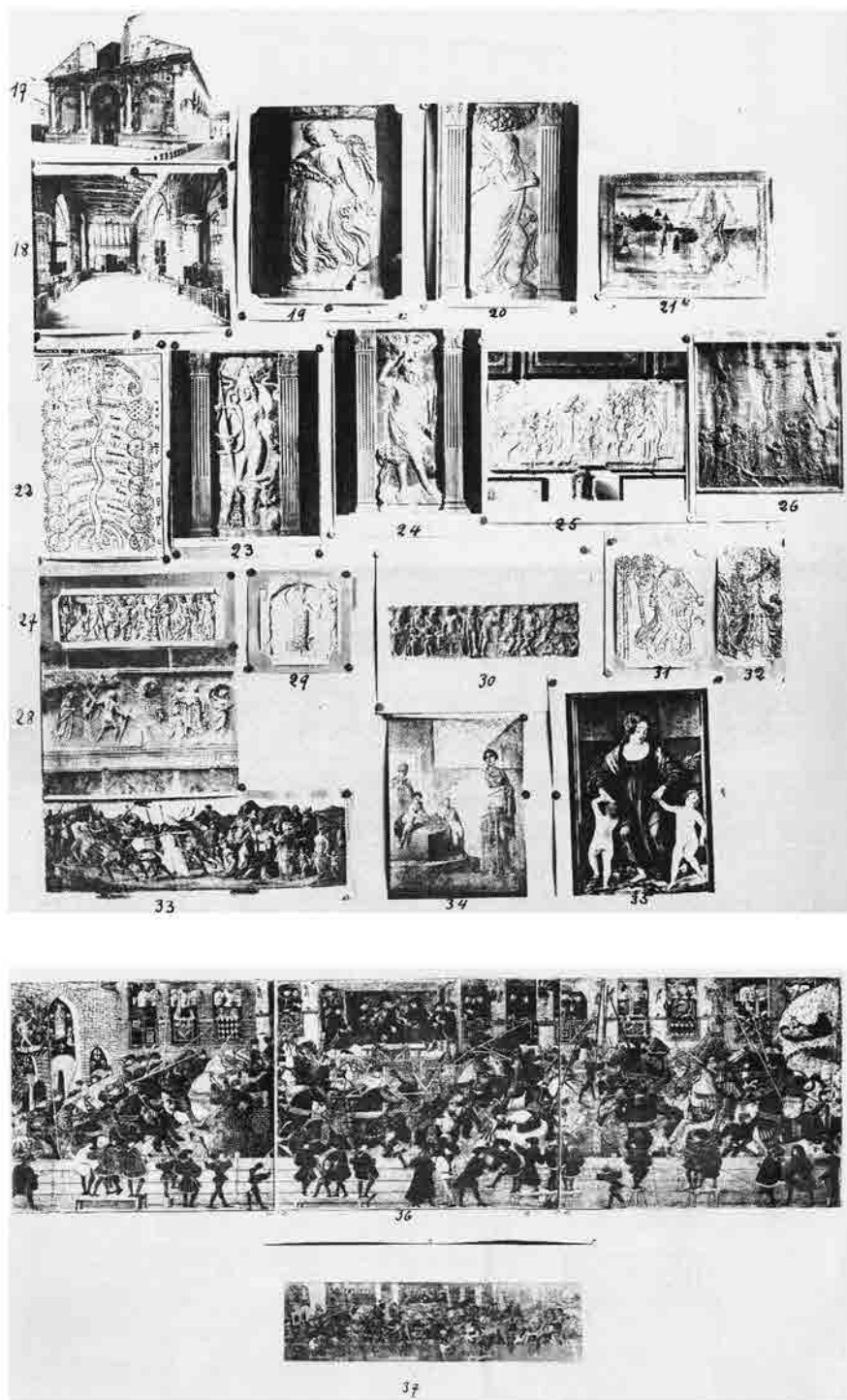
Accompanying the Diary are some photographs of the panels, as Warburg had presented them during the exhibition-conference on January 29th, speaking to his audience like a "long-time and successful actor" leaving the scenes, or as a lecturer keeping his conference in a Planetarium: indeed, this was another project that interested Warburg in those same years, which would manifest itself with his consultation for the construction of Hamburg's Planetarium, and with the conference on Stars and Astrology that was meant to accompany its inauguration, which was

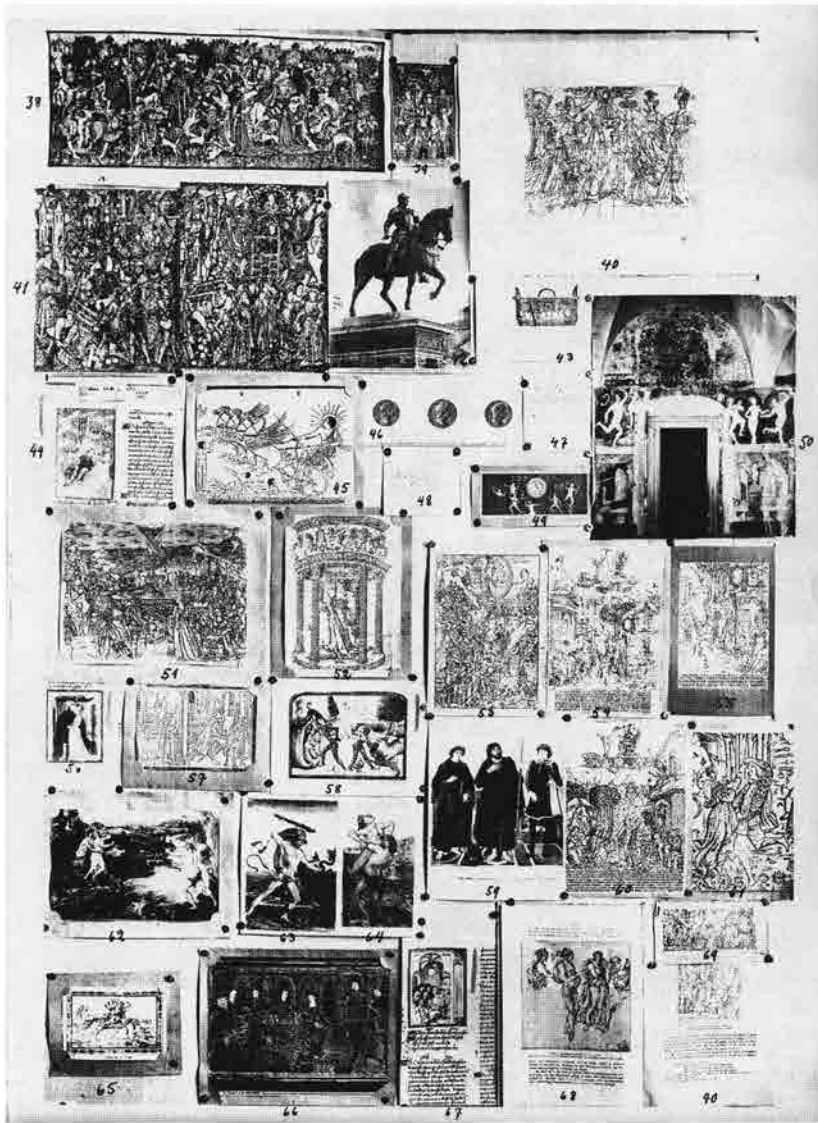
eventually read and presented by Fritz Saxl after Warburg's death (for the Astrology lead in the drawing of the *Bilderatlas*, see Boll-Bezold [1918] 2011; Ghelardi 2002; 2011; Stimilli, Wedepohl 2014; Warburg [1927] 2002; Warburg 1993).

There are two main differences between the Atlas version presented at the Hertziana Library (Rome, January 1929) and the so-called "final version" (Hamburg, October 1929). The Roman version is entirely lacking two central themes that are present in the "final version" of the Atlas: the Astrology theme and the "Orientation" theme, which in the "final version" are displayed in the Introductory panels, marked not by numbers but by letters of the alphabet (A, B, C). In our opinion, in the "final version" you can identify a double presence and intervention, both by Warburg and by his most trusted collaborator, Fritz Saxl (McEwan 1998; Grazioli 2005; De Laude 2015). Saxl had not followed Warburg's activity in Rome if not by afar, providing materials for the panels from Hamburg (Michels, Scholl-Glass 2001). Only when Warburg had come back to Hamburg did Saxl resume his place beside Warburg, replacing Gertrud Bing. Saxl himself seems to have helped Warburg in developing the "Orientation" theme (Kant [1876] 1996; Saxl [1929] 2004; Warburg [1924] 2014; Warburg [1927] 2002). In the Roman version, however, the central and perhaps one of the most problematic and fascinating issues throughout the Atlas is "Energy Inversion" (see Warburg least [1924] 2014 and Bordignon 2004; Ginzburg 2015).



Panel 1.





previous page: top, panel 2; bottom, panel 3.
above: panel 4.



Panel 5.



Panel 6.



Panel 7.



Panel 8.



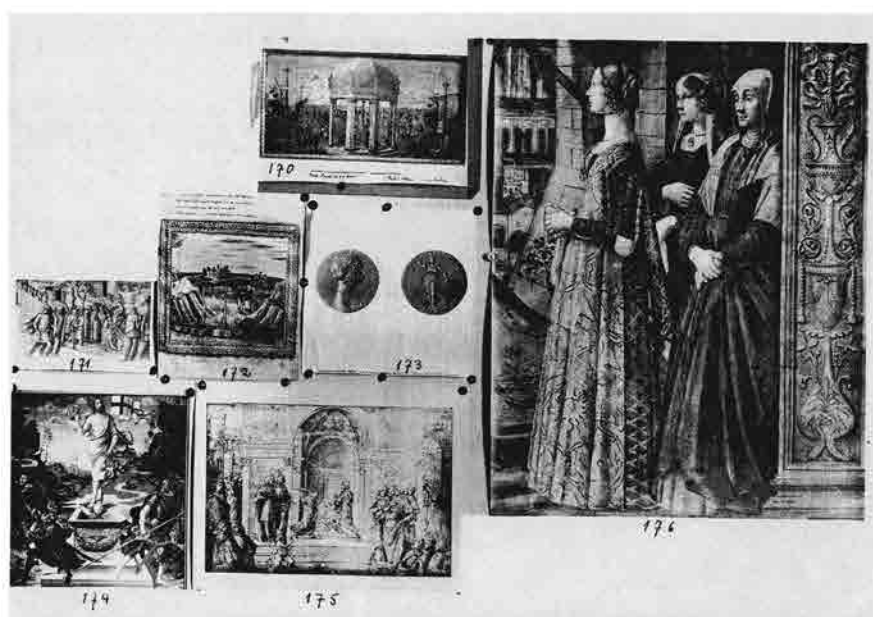
Panel 9.



Panel 10.



Panel 11.



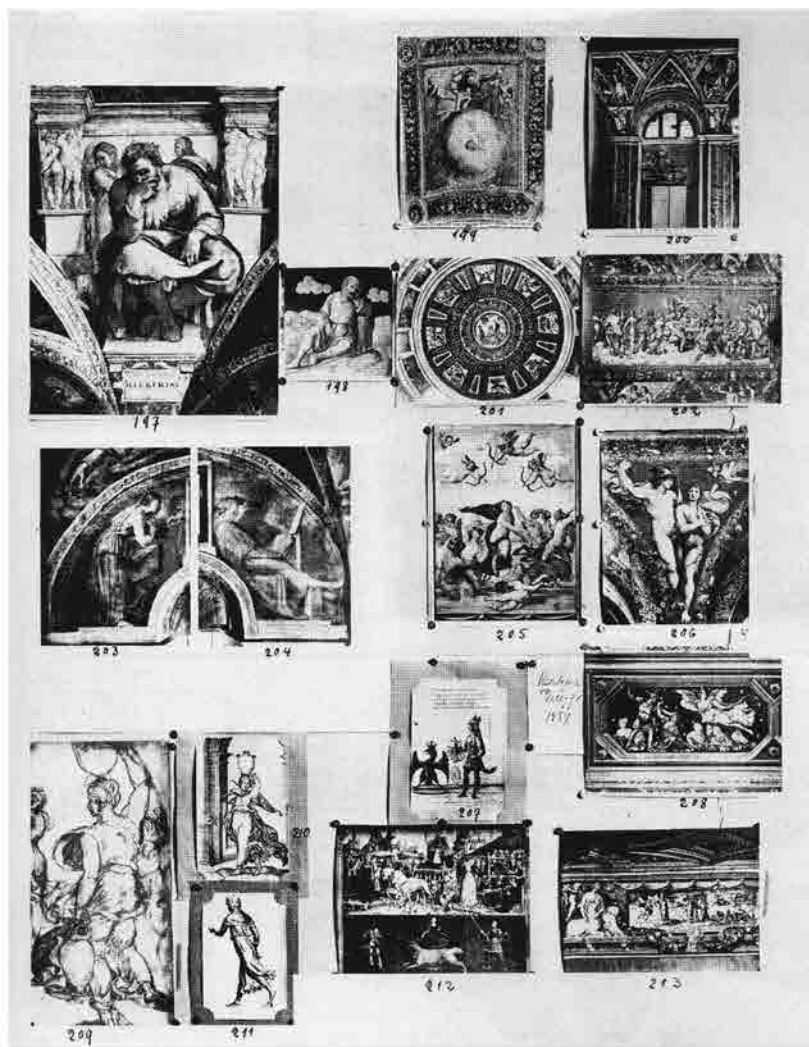
Panel 12.



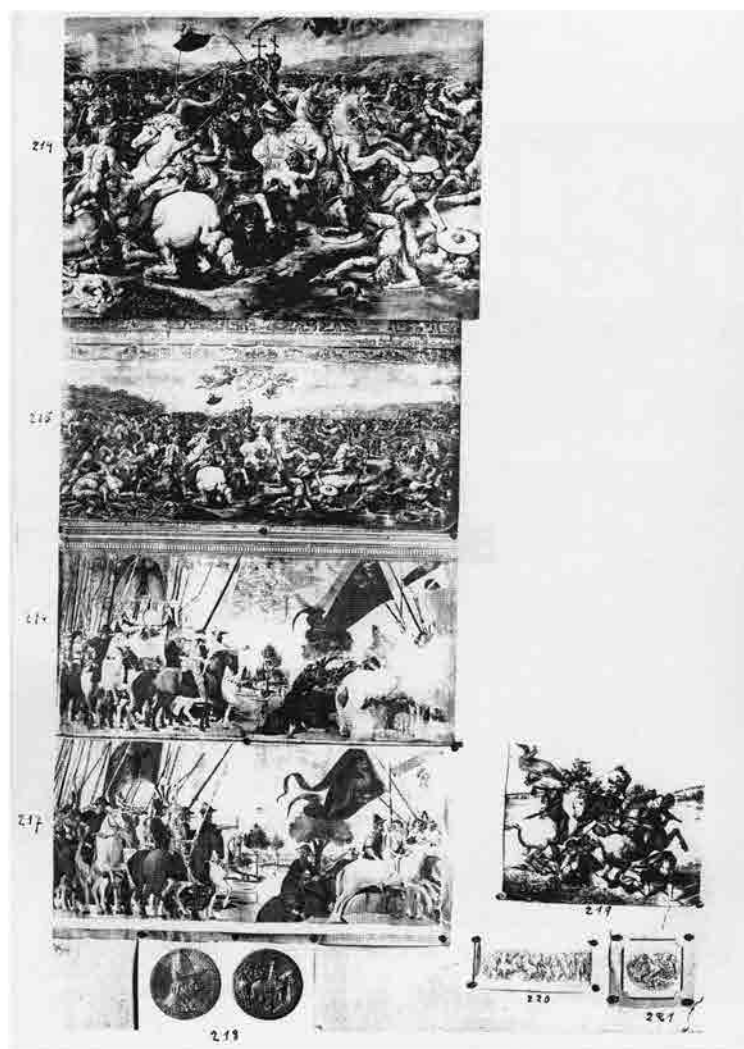
Panel 13.



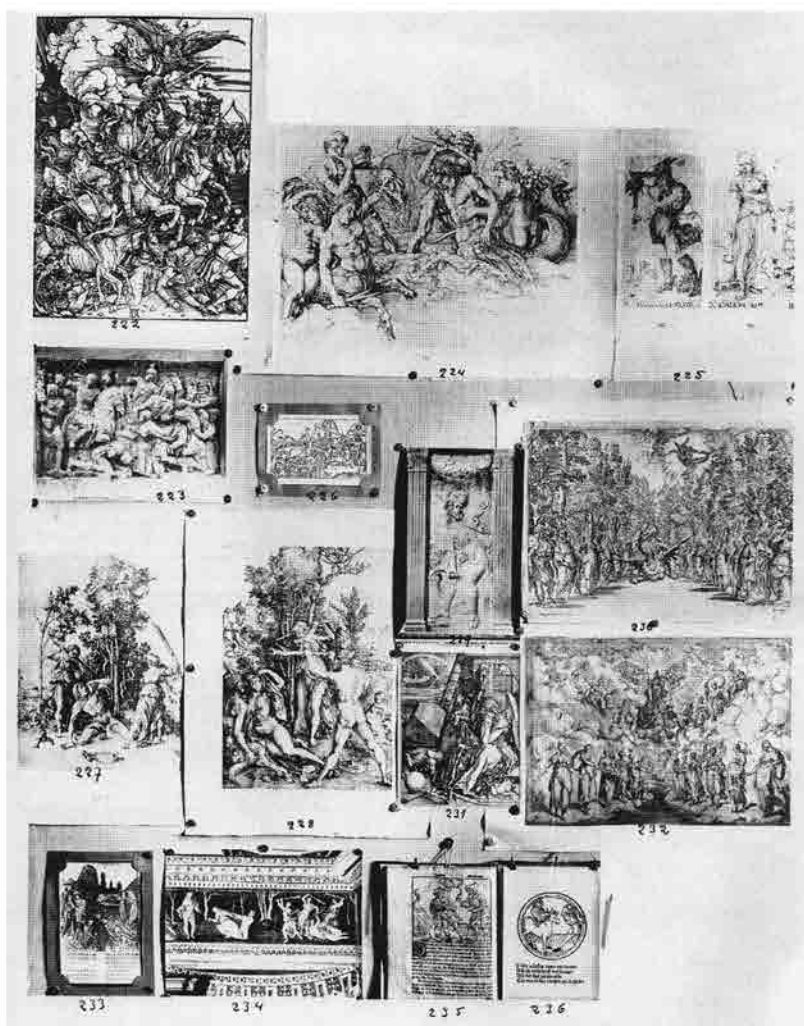
Panel 14.



Panel 15.



Panel 16.



Panel 17.



Panel 18.



Panel 19.



Panel 20.

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