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## EMBRACING THE CONCEPTS OF MEMORY AND FORGETTING THROUGH POETICAL THOUGHT IN ITALIAN DESIGN

SISSE TANDERUP

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### Abstract

This paper concerns the Italian art of memory since the 18<sup>th</sup> century with special reference to design and architecture. The philosopher Giambattista Vico and the architect and designer Aldo Rossi provide the theoretical backbone of the analyses together with interviews with Italian designers and design theorists such as Paolo Portoghesi, Alessandro Mendini, Gianni Braghieri, Alba Cappellieri and Giampaolo Babetto. The question of how the concepts of memory and forgetting can be enfolded by poetical thought in design is addressed, and design examples by Alessi and Babetto are introduced in this context. Both Alessi and Babetto see poetry and memory as very important components in the design process, providing their products with value and aim.

Keywords:

memory, jewelry, product design,  
architecture, Alessi, Italian design

## Introduction

A piece of jewelry may symbolize protection and individuality, but at the same time, it represents a desire to relate to the outside world. Jewelry is thus both a monologue and a dialogue. It is also a declaration of identity with and a difference from the outside world. In its etymological sense, design means *making sense of things* and in that original meaning it suggests a connection with the etymological sense of memory: knowing and understanding something. Memory is a phenomenon, which is directly related to the present. Our perception of the past is always influenced by the present. But at the same time memory is also shaped by our thoughts about the future. In that way the memory process does not seem chronological, but rather circular, according to the Italian architect and designer Aldo Rossi (Braghieri, 2008). Poul Connerton suggests that forgetting is a condition in our modern society because we live our lives at great speed and the cities have become so enormous that they are no longer memorable. Furthermore, consumerism has become disconnected from the labour process. This lack of connection has changed the foundation on which we build our memories (Connerton, 2009, p. 142). According to Alba Cappellieri, memory in design has to do with the tactility of objects and the territory of production. The culture of Italian gold tradition is a particularly wide universe made up of knowledge of different traditions. The gold sector in Italy is historically characterised by its geographical structures as well as including the gold districts of Vicenza, Valenza, Arezzo and Marcianise where special traditions are linked to materials: for example, coral-working in Torre del Greco, micro mosaics in Venice and Florence, and filigree in Sardinia and Liguria. However, if the production is moved to another country it has consequences for the product and for our ability to remember through design. In its utmost consequence, the sense of materials and traditions disappears (Cappellieri, 2011).<sup>1</sup>

This paper concerns the Italian art of memory since the 18<sup>th</sup> century with special reference to design and architecture. One character who is especially relevant in this context is the philosopher and scientist Giambattista Vico (1668–1744). In his book *New Science* (1725) he relates the power of memory to the poetic consciousness in which civilization began. Another important character is the architect and theorist Aldo Rossi who wrote the book *A Scientific Autobiography* (1981). Vico's and Rossi's works are used as a theoretical background for this paper because the combination of rational and poetical thoughts is present in both works. They live side by side, sometimes confronting each other. According to Paolo Portoghesi, Aldo Rossi was deeply inspired by Vico's understanding of how fantasy can be used as a tool to understand the past. Historical consciousness requires an empirical understanding of the past. At the same time, fantasy can be used as a tool to reconstruct this past, if the knowledge is big enough (Portoghesi, 2013).

- 1 Alba Cappellieri is architect, design critic and professor at the Faculty of Design of the Politecnico of Milan. She teaches History of Architecture and Design and is the Head of the Jewelry Design Lab.

The Italian way of dealing with memory, as exemplified by Vico and Rossi, will form an introduction to this paper. Afterwards, design examples by Alessi's designers, such as Alessandro Mendini will exemplify what potentials memory design can have for a company. Conclusively, jewelry design and design thinking by Giampaolo Babetto will challenge the notion of memory in design seen as something that triggers our notion of memory and forgetting. Interviews with Babetto and Mendini by the author are chosen in this context because they are aware of memory issues when they explain their design process. Often, designers do not deliberately consider questions about memory such as the nature of memory design. A main reason why memory in design is difficult to deal with, is that it often is often misinterpreted as something restrictive, only bonded to the past without a relation to the present and the future.

This paper is also based on interviews with other Italian designers and design theorists. In a way, it sums up an Italian dilemma posed by the Italian architect Massimiliano Fuksas: "How can a designer be innovative and at the same time create a link to our past and present – and thereby to our memory?" (Fuksas, 2010). Aldo Rossi may have answered this question by writing on a card for an exhibition "Non invento, ricordo" (I do not invent, I remember) (Bilancioni, 1998).

In order to understand the meaning of artistic products, we have to forget them for a time, to turn aside from them. This kind of forgetting has nothing to do with repression but rather with *poiesis* in the sense of Aristotle's view of *mimesis* as a fundamental expression of our human experience with the world. For Aristotle, *poiesis* is restricted to making or producing something, whose aims and values go beyond itself, for example shipbuilding, which has the aim of producing a vessel with which one can be moved from one place to another. It is distinguished from *praxis* (action – conduct), which has aims and values in itself. *Poiesis* belongs to *techne* (craft), while *praxis* belongs to *phronesis* (practical reason). In another sense, *poiesis* is used specifically for poetry and its composition. This paper addresses how poetical thought through design can embrace the concepts of memory and forgetting. The design process has thus a lot to do with deciding what to remember and what to forget, and sometimes poetry arises when the two concepts balance.

## From Vico to Rossi: The importance of memory

In Italy, there has been a long tradition of working with memory, which is inherited from the Greeks to whom an understanding of a trained poetic memory<sup>2</sup> (Yates, 2001, p. 11) was very important already in archaic time. Aristotle is especially relevant in this context with his thoughts about recollection as the recovery of knowledge or sensations, which one had before. Frances A. Yates states that "It is a deliberate effort to find one's way among the contents of memory, hunting among its contents for

2 The Greeks created an elaborated memory system, based on a technique of impressing places and images on memory (Yates, 2001).



what one is trying to recollect” (Yates, 2001, p. 48). It is easier to remember things, which have an order. We use association to make a connection between the things we try to remember, according to Yate’s interpretation of Aristotle (Yates, 2001, p. 48).

There has also been a long Italian tradition of working with interdisciplinary research involving areas such as philosophy, architecture and science, which primary stems from the Renaissance desire to master all sciences. The Italian philosopher Giambattista Vico is thus both a natural and a human scientist. He states that students “should be taught the totality of the sciences and arts, and their intellectual powers should be developed to the full” so that they “would become exact in science, clever in practical matters, fluent in eloquence, imaginative in understanding poetry or painting, and strong in memorizing what they have learned in their legal studies” (Costelloe, 2012). In *New Science* Vico criticizes that memory has become the power of the Cartesian way of deduction. Instead, memory should be seen as a recollection and the truth should rather be found in poetic metaphors than in rational concepts, in the works of art and not in authoritarian histories, in popular customs and not in official laws (Boyer, 1994, p. 308).

Vico’s *New Science* shows a re-orientation of thoughts about the use of memory. Previously, memory would be understood as a technique to uncover forgotten origins seen as lost poetic powers. The quest to touch the imaginative power that makes us creative was essential for the poets and philosophers of the Romantic period in the early nineteenth century. It showed a new interest in autobiography, where a notion of continuous development replaced the sense of unity found in religious belief (Hutton, 1987). This is why romanticists sought back to the Roman and Gothic periods where the Faustian autobiography was born.

Following Vico, memory can be understood through traces in artifacts and documents from the past, which is traditional historical memory. But Vico contributes in a new way to memory research, especially when he stresses the importance of fantasy as a way to shape our understanding of the findings from the past. Memory and fantasy thus constitute the base of any great historical work. Historical consciousness requires both empirical understanding of past events and imaginative reconstruction of these events in such a way that we feel an identity with ourselves and the past, which can be seen as a merging of the horizons of the past and the present. Fantasy is the basis of self-knowledge, a way of remembering particulars and shaping a whole, thus inductively going from particularity to universality (Vico, 1953, p. 337) as opposed to Cartesian deduction.

The structures of Rossi’s *A Scientific Autobiography* (1981) and Vico’s *New Science* are reminiscent of each other, as both Vico’s and

Rossi's thoughts move in jumps and associations, even though there is a general order and progress of thoughts in both books. Many unusual subjects for Vico's time are discussed in *New Science* such as the origin of the wedding ring and the origin of the coin (Vico, 1953, pp. 179–180, 223). *New Science* concerns how a culture develops. To Vico, it is important to begin with the Divine in order to find one's own self-worth. The Divine is also important to Rossi when he lets saint San Carlo Borromeo bless his architecture in order to make it human (Rossi, 1981, p. 42).

Aldo Rossi expresses himself in poetic and philosophical language in *A Scientific Autobiography*. This book is not really characterised by Rossi writing about himself, but rather by connections with architectural and literary history and with philosophy (Rossi, 1981). It is indeed this very interaction between individual history and collective history that fuels the poetic and scientific character of the book. The word *scientific* refers, according to Rossi, both to his practical works in Mantua (1979) (Rossi, 1981, p. 29) and to his theoretical work with *A Scientific Autobiography*. Both in his theoretical and practical work with architecture, Rossi want to work analytically as a scientist. The poetic side of Rossi's design thinking is linked to his view of analogy, which is clearly expressed in *A Scientific Autobiography*. Aldo Rossi's words that: "Nothing can be beautiful, not a person, a thing, or a city, if it signifies only itself, indeed, if it signifies nothing but its own use" (Rossi, 1981, p. 66), become essential in the understanding of analogy. To Vico and Rossi, pure scientific language is insufficient, which explains the use of poetry as poetic language creates images. With Rossi, the nature of analogy thus becomes not only the father of science but also the father of poetry.

Vico has not extensively treated the subject of forgetting in *New Science* but uses the river Styx as an example of forgetting as a necessity. Rossi points out that memory and forgetting are connected (Braghieri, 2008).<sup>3</sup> He states that for him it is essential to forget architecture (Rossi, 1981, p. 53). Forgotten architecture disturbs people because it reminds us of what modern society neglects, as for example the ruins after the bombardments during the Second World War. In his drawing for a graveyard complex in Modena in Northern Italy Rossi has shaped this kind of forgetting. He made a chimney<sup>4</sup>, which was meant for the burial, and thereby commemoration, of partisans and other people from World War II who were forgotten (Braghieri, 2008). In this way, as seen with Aldo Rossi, memory is connected to what has been lost, a melancholic loss (Braghieri, 2008).<sup>5</sup> However, at the same time he wishes to save the continuity of the historical city as a space and place of life. If there are just a few primary elements left in the city, e.g. a museum and a cemetery, a new and other city can be built. He attempts to connect the memory of forgotten people in forgotten architecture with familiar spaces in society. This is clearly exemplified in his pictures where the other spaces, the unknown spaces, that could be anonymous coffee pots, lead us to question the spaces that we are familiar with, the life that we live.

3 Gianni Braghieri is professor and dean at the Department of Architecture at the University of Bologna.

4 But unfortunately this part of the project was never realized. The model can be found in: Aldo Rossi and 21 Works, In: Architecture and Urbanism, extra edition, Tokyo, Nov., 1982, p. 63.

5 In author's interview with Gianni Braghieri (Nov. 2008), Braghieri states that Aldo Rossi in his thoughts about memory and forgetting is inspired by Walter Benjamin.

The forgetting of architecture, to Rossi, happens in the analogous city. As mentioned earlier he defines analogous thinking as something more than just function (Rossi, 1981, p. 66). It may be that Rossi remembers in analogies, because in the analogous city things melt together, as he puts it. Memory is essential and he explains that “the special” does not exist without memory and memory only exists when born out of a special moment. In such a moment, you get to know yourself and your non-self. You hereby see your original non-self as something in you that you have not been attentive to before. You get to know it as a part of you. Here, Rossi approaches Vico as they both see memory as a realization of one self and of the other, the unknown in you (Rossi, 1981, p. 62).

Rossi remembers through vision and images and explains that by watching things he can turn these things into memory. Rossi understands vision as a tool to remember with and refers to Marcel Proust’s description of the ability of the senses to act as catalysts of memory (Braghieri, 2008). To Proust, the senses of sight and taste are involved in primarily the personal memory process. According to Rossi, the senses also pave the way for an access to a collective memory. Through a combination of personal and collective memory it becomes possible to get very close to design, architecture, literature, art, and poetry that have been created many years before your own time, such as during the antiquity (Rossi, 1981, p. 42).

### Italian memory design between theory and practice

In Italy, there has been a long tradition in design and architecture schools of focusing on the humanities, making culture and memory issues an essential part of the education. For example, the Italian design firm Alessi has been eager to cooperate with design schools by challenging teachers and students with innovative projects, promoting workshops, sharing labs and resources. Alessi has thus formed a research centre, directed by the researcher Laura Polino that organizes workshops about memory and design at design schools such as the Royal College of Art in London and the Politecnico di Milano. When Alessi’s designers create their products, they are usually inspired by cultural forms (e.g. architecture), often specifically by the concept of memory in philosophy, sociology and psychology. They investigate the concept of memory because it adds a cultural dimension to design objects, enabling the objects to make an identity-forming impact. In Alessi’s jewelry collection *Giritondo Bracelet*, the designers were inspired by childhood, where children cut simple silhouette paper figures.



Figure 1  
Giritondo Bracelet by the King-Kong  
Team for Alessi. Silver 925 and brown  
leather. 1999.

Stefano Giovannoni and Guido Venturini from the King-Kong Team collaborated with a psychologist in the design process, aware of the fact that memory deals with a basic cognitive need/desire to go back in time. Alessi does not work with critical design in this project; it merely expresses that Alessi as a company is aware of fundamental elements in our way of remembering. It could be called a basic kind of memory, perhaps the kind of memory that serves as the foundation for more complex memory systems. In Alessi's case, it is a sort of *happy memory*, borrowing Paul Ricoeur's term, introduced in his book *Memory, History, Forgetting* from 2000. He stresses that happy remembering represents a desire to be faithful to the past. It could be added that it represents a wish for a better future. Cognitive psychologist Martin A. Conway works with this aspect of our memory. His research has revealed, by examining people who have lost some memory function (e.g. in a car crash), that memory is generally bonded more with future thinking (how we can create a happy future) than with past thinking (Conway, 2010).<sup>6</sup> Alberto Alessi supports this thinking by saying that when jewelry represents our happy memory it is much easier to remember.

In buying design, you tend to buy things that make you feel happy, but you may also buy something, which has a critical function and makes you reflect. Sometimes our memory of something is not a happy memory. It could be more appropriate to call it a dark memory or dirty memory, *memoria sporca*, as the Italians may call it (Braghieri, 2008).

6 Keynote speech by Martin A. Conway (professor of cognitive psychology, University of Leeds) at the Conference Theoretical Perspectives on Autobiographical Memory (13–16 June 2010), arranged by Con Amore (Center on Autobiographical Memory Research), Aarhus University, Denmark.

Making memory design, which is culture-critical, has a lot to do with economy. According to professor of Management of Innovation at Politecnico di Milano, Roberto Verganti, it is especially in periods of economic crises that products with meanings become even more relevant and that producers should be able to cut costs without cutting identity and value. If products were designed with meaning, people would buy them not because of their low price but because they are able to suggest a meaning, which allows a space for further interpretation in the user's mind (Verganti, 2009, pp. 30–36). It requires a long research process for a firm to pursue radical innovation in what household objects (and other products) could mean to people. Verganti sees Alessi as an example of an Italian design firm that successfully collaborates with researchers. Alessi has collaborated with Donald Winnicott, a pediatrician and psychologist who noticed how children associate everyday objects with feelings and meanings, for example toys and teddy bears that represent a happy world where children still are united with their mothers. These transitional objects help children to move from intimate dependence of their mothers to a more autonomous psychological state. This example shows that the actual function of an object can be transformed to another purpose with a different meaning.

Alessi draws on this design thinking when they transform articles for everyday use, such as corkscrews and toothpick holders, into poetic objects in an attempt to provide substitutes for teddy bears for adults, in that way making us remember our childhood.

The use of only eyes and ears as facial cues in the toothpick holder named "Magic Bunny" reminds us of children's peek-a-boo game. At the same time, "Magic Bunny" refers to magic tricks. In that way, the act of selecting toothpicks is transformed from something dull into a magic ritual, which the upside down hat underlines. The use of bright yellow and soft looking transparent plastic also refers to a mother, for which a bunny is a substitute. At first sight, the magic bunny appears only as a happy figure, but by taking a closer look you will notice it's scary, or scared, eyes, which tell us that the magic world, just as our reality, may also be frightening. In that way memory is also about being faithful to a complex past and present.



Figure 2  
Magic Bunny (toothpick holder) by  
Stefano Giovannoni (1998, Alessi).

When Alberto Alessi undertook the Magic Bunny project, it was innovative in changing our attitude towards design objects. According to Alessi, boring objects that most often lack emotion and poetry surround us. To him, poetry has to do with memory making us see things differently (Braghieri, 2008).

This is exactly what Alessandro Mendini does with his corkscrews named “Anna Etoile”, which are his homage to a personal memory from his childhood, where his grandmother named Anna was dancing when she opened a bottle of wine (see figure 3). “She was like a ballerina, moving her arms up and down while turning around. She told me that opening a bottle of wine is a positive ceremony. So this is a personal story. A ceremony is a story in itself” (Mendini, 2013). On a cultural level, Mendini’s dancing lady is a tribute to ballerinas in general. It is as if the corkscrew itself has transformed into something else: a ballerina wearing a lot of jewelry. The lady with the red stones (to the right) reminds us of shooting stars in the night sky. The woman in the middle uses flowers as jewelry, at the place of her beating heart. The woman to the left wears pearls and

jewels on her shoulders to indicate that the movement of her shoulders is important. Indeed, this movement is important when a ballerina is dancing around and when a bottle of wine is opened. The dance is very important but complex, which the jewelry underlines. When you wear a lot of jewelry, it is difficult to move around as a ballerina. So even though the ballerinas at first sight seem happy this happiness is also restricted which their mask-like faces underline. The grey tone of the steel also shows a melancholic feeling in the objects. Mendini explains that the grey colour was dominant in the faces of the objects from the 1990s. It is for him what *memoria sporca* is also about.

*It deals with the mistakes you do as human beings through life. It can be technical, social, political, artistic mistakes. In general, my view of life is pessimistic but I try to be optimistic in my work. I try to give the objects a positive energy. In that way there is a contrast between optimism and pessimism in my work. I am here inspired by the Middle Ages where the tragicomic theatre in Italy was very important. I later find an important tragicomic dimension in Walter Benjamin's writings about the tragedy. (Mendini, 2013)*



Figure 3  
Alessandro Mendini: Anna Etoile  
(corkscrew) The corkscrew is made of  
steel with jewelries in gold, silver and  
precious stones (2009, Alessi).

Walter Benjamin states that tragedy and comedy are inseparable. The tragic mask is the expressionless countenance while the comic mask depicts the natural innocence of man. Paraphrasing his remarks on the philosopher Herman Cohen's dictum in *Fate and Character* (Benjamin, 1996, p. 206), the ballerinas cast a comic shadow even though their actions are also tragic.<sup>7</sup> The tragic aspect also lies in the reason for dancing, which may be to forget a tough reality for a moment. Dancing makes you and others laugh, casting a comical shadow behind you. The ballerinas also smile because Mendini's grandmother made him smile. Mendini's *Anna Etoile* ladies thus remind us of the importance of dancing when seen as complex memory (a fusion of *happy memory* and *memoria sporca*).

7 Cohen Herman: "...every tragic action, however sublimely it strides upon its cothurnus, casts a comic shadow, in its most appropriate context."

## Giampaolo Babetto

According to Alba Cappellieri, memory in Italian jewelry design could be seen as something that manages to rework technique and material from the Italian gold tradition. The Italian jewelry tradition is famous for having a sense of materials, from coral to filigree and from mosaics to lava rocks. It is important to teach students the old techniques and a sense of material so these do not disappear with time. The challenge for designers today is to interpret the various techniques and materials with the aim of providing ancient knowledge with a contemporary look (Cappellieri, 2010).

Giampaolo Babetto is an example of an architect who works with this connection between past and present, between memory and forgetting. He explains that it is impossible to design without memory in Italy. He sees memory as a kind of storytelling where old and new things, personal and cultural memories, form a kind of memory process. When design becomes memory, poetry emerges (Babetto, 2010). According to Babetto, the poetical aspect could lie in a small detail, as poetry to him lies within the intimate. The combination of personal memories and cultural memories are very important to him as a designer. His brooch entitled *Pontormo* is an example of this connection. He has named the brooch *Pontormo* as a reference to his youth where he studied art history and architecture. He was then fascinated by Pontormo frescos. At first sight, colors are dominant in the frescos but after a while silhouettes of human beings appear. It is this tension between form (silhouettes) and color that fascinates him and it is his ambition to recreate this tension in his *Pontormo* brooch (Babetto, 2010). But at the same time, memory in this brooch is seen as a kind of "shock experience" related to a personal tragedy. Babetto's daughter was seriously disabled from birth and unable to walk, and it is his dream or fantasy that she will be able to walk.

His brooch, where two golden legs are depicted, is thus a reference to this dream. In the Greek Orthodox Church there is a tradition of hanging different silver body parts, such as ears, eyes and legs, in the church if





Figure 4  
Giampaolo Babetto: *Da Pontormo* by  
Babetto (1989). Yellow gold 750, 12k  
gold, and silver 800. Photo: Lorenzo  
Trento-PD. It is partly inspired by a  
detail of Pontormo's fresco, preserved  
in the Certosa del Galluzzo in Firenze  
(1523–25), Italy.

one's beloved is ill, in hope for a cure (Babetto, 2010). Babetto transforms this hope into the brooch where two legs are walking down a couple of steps in a geometrically defined setting. It is as if the architecture resembles the simple silhouettes in *Girtondo Bracelet*. But the legs are more sculptural as the figures of *Jacopo da Pontormo*, which inspired Babetto.

Babetto took his inspiration from the man walking down the stairs in the background of the fresco. Formally, the man is walking down to the figure of Jesus, who is centrally placed and looking down with a sad expression. His posture underlines this melancholic feeling, which could signal his lack of mental contact with his surroundings and a general loss of self-esteem during Mannerism. The expression of doubt is strengthened by the gestures of confusion by the crowd surrounding Jesus. According to the Passion of the Christ, a hesitant Pilate responding to the pressure from the crowd condemns Jesus.

The identity of the man walking down the stairs while carrying a kind of blanket is uncertain. The young man does not seem elongated or frail and melancholic like the figure of Jesus. His legs are reminiscent of the sculptural forms in figures from the Renaissance, which also inspired Pontormo. At that time there was still a belief in the divine human nature. However, during Mannerism God became *Deus absconditus*, an unknowable, hidden God. Man was no longer supported by the divine order, which created difficulties in Pontormo's fresco. This is the reason why Pontormo made distorted shapes during Mannerism.



Figure 5  
A detail of Pontormo's fresco *Christ before Pilate* (300 cm x 290 cm), preserved in the Certosa del Galluzzo in Firenze (1523–25), Italy.

PHOTO: LUIGI PELLEGRINI

Babetto's legs are deformed and transformed into trees that seem to burst into leaf. A tree crown is placed on the balustrade as a folded blanket. Even though that architectural setting is very rational, his unstructured drawings of the architecture nearly transform the brooch into a picture or a sculpture. The right leg has trouble walking due to its deformity whereas the left leg is less deformed and therefore able to walk down the stairs. The left leg represents a frail hope. In Babetto's brooch, a dialectic fusion between past and present takes place. Babetto calls his jewelry "infinito" (Babetto, 2010), to indicate that the user can use her fantasy to add her own memory. A dialectic fusion between past, present and future thus takes place.

## Epilogue

Memory is connected to forgetting and fantasy. When bad memories "cut you like a knife", as stated by Massimiliano Fuksas (Fuksas, 2010), the fantasy of the designer transforms bad memories into something different. Babetto reconstructs his daughter's legs making her nearly able to walk. He uses his fantasy as a tool to transform reality into a wish for his child. In this way, he forgets and changes reality for a moment and his personal history becomes universal.

Religion becomes human in Babetto's Pontormo brooch as the brooch represents a kind of conversation with Pontormo. But Babetto's legs differ from Pontormo's young man, as they tell about the fragility of human nature. For Rossi it was important to depict this fragility, when

he focused on the importance of memorizing the forgotten people, the forgotten architecture and the forgotten things that the Italian cultural history had neglected. Rossi tells us that a way of memorizing is to make analogies between past and present using our fantasy as a tool to make this connection.

The purpose of creating a conversation between Vico and Rossi in this paper is to point out that science can be expressed poetically. This could be a way of teaching students how to think and realize design and architecture. Both Vico and Rossi's works had that purpose. Memory was a way of creating this connection.

Both Babetto and Rossi are also engaged in the role of divinity within human beings. With Rossi, it was expressed through the frequent presence of a saint in his drawings who would bless his architecture. This faith came from a childhood fantasy, where coffeepots metamorphosed into fantastic architecture. This belief had to do with humanity, as its aim was to create relations between things, and thus people, in the world. Rossi was highly engaged by Vico's concept of God. Through Vico, Rossi saw that God's providence and grace could help people. God's grace manifested in the human urge to be caring and to speak truthfully even though humans harbour an inherent drive to be egotistical (Portoghesi, 2013). This ideal of caring is suggested by Babetto when he makes his personal story universal. Mendini's dancing ladies also show how rituals pave the way to creating a connection between past and present, personal and collective memory. They tell us a universal story about the importance of the dance.

The chosen design examples (Giovannoni, Mendini, Babetto) show that you should hesitate to only buy things that make you feel happy and consider buying something, which has a critical function and makes you reflect.

Our *happy memory* is the most popular kind of memory even though, at times, we cannot escape from *memoria sporca*, and sometimes it is easier to cope with bad memory when it is transformed into *happy memory*. That is the reason why *happy memory* is what people often buy. Memory design can be seen as design that mediates between our *happy memory* and our *memoria sporca*, between our cultural and personal memory. It can be seen as a poetic way of communicating stories to others. The stories involve both our cultural memory (shared) and our personal memories. In practice, it is quite difficult to differentiate sharply between personal and cultural memory. For example, our cultural memories consist of different personal memories. Personal memory is however also dependent on it being culturally situated: if a person does not maintain his memories by for example telling others about them they tend to fade away.

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Tanderup's PhD project entitled *The use of memory in Italian and Danish jewelry design* examines if and how the dimension of memory can contribute significantly to jewelry design (after 1945) and also to our design thinking. Interviews with Italian and Danish designers/architects and researchers play a significant role in the project.

