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Graphic Impulses:  
Drawing, Sexuality, and Science in Germany, 1870-1933

By

Mark T Vanover

A dissertation submitted in partial satisfaction of the

requirements for the degree of

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in

History of Art

in the

Graduate Division

of the

University of California, Berkeley

Committee in charge:

Professor Emeritus Whitney Davis (Chair)

Professor Anneka Lenssen

Professor Christopher Hallett

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Spring 2023



Abstract

Graphic Impulses: Drawing, Sexuality, and Science in Germany, 1870-1933

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Mark T Vanover

Doctor of Philosophy in History of Art

University of California, Berkeley

Professor Emeritus Whitney Davis, Chair

This dissertation examines the roles played by drawing and the graphic arts in the conceptual emergence of the queer male subject in Germany over the course of the nineteenth and early twentieth centuries. A central premise, which provides the theoretical framework for the investigation, holds that early-nineteenth-century scientists and aesthetic theorists co-produced new conceptions of “healthy” and “degenerate” artistic expression that were intrinsically bound to a developing discourse on normative and non-normative sexual desire. This conception evaluated both human and artistic development according to a telic, hierarchical rubric that twinned creation and procreation, positing a healthy, disciplined sexual fantasy as a prerequisite for the development of artistic talent. The dissertation argues that within such a system, a persistent affinity developed between queer men and undisciplined drawing practices that stemmed from the perceived unnaturalness of both.

The project is comprised of four case studies spanning roughly 1830 to 1930, each of which explores how drawing and its attendant subgenres served crucial functions for both queer men (who came to rely on their pens and pencils to visualize their sexual identity) and scientists (who used these drawings to map the contours of the new scientific category of “the homosexual”). In analyzing four diverse object types and genres of drawing—private sketching, academic nude studies, tattoos, and book illustration—the dissertation argues for an understanding of drawing as an inherently queer medium. Furthermore, it argues for the central significance of graphic expression as a key site of queer male identity formation, a practice pursued against scientific discourses aimed at pathologizing homosexual subjectivity.

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## Introduction

### Erotographomaniacs: A Queer History of Drawing

In 1926, the German sexologist and homosexual activist Magnus Hirschfeld published the first volume of his five-part project *Geschlechtskunde: auf Grund dreissigjähriger Forschung und Erfahrung bearbeitet* (*Sexual Customs: On the Basis of Thirty Years of Research and Experience*). Hirschfeld, by the time of the book's publication, had established himself as a leading voice on topics related to sexuality and sexual behavior in Europe and around the world. The *Geschlechtskunde* project, which began with a volume on the psychosomatic foundations of sexuality and ended with an expansive visual *Bilderteil* (image volume) that functioned as both illustration and a comprehensive visual archive of sexual research, represented Hirschfeld's final concerted effort to produce a work that would synthesize his life's work and function as a kind of textbook for use by a wider public.

In the introductory clarification of his terms and methods, Hirschfeld turns to an explanation of his use of the term “erotic,” outlining the ways in which “*Erotomanie*” (erotomania) as theorized by the psychiatrist Jean-Étienne Dominique Esquirol had come to inform his work on sexual minorities. Describing erotomania as a state of “love frenzy” characterized by a “greatly increased sexual excitability,” Hirschfeld continues by noting that “one variation of this exuberance is *Erotographomania*, an increasingly obsessive addiction to giving crass-sexual, obscene, or at least lascivious ideas *written or drawn* expression. I have repeatedly had to examine cases in which people have gotten themselves into serious difficulties because the contents of their highly objectionable notes were taken at face value when, in fact, they only wanted to provide nourishment for their fantasy through them.”<sup>1</sup>

Though Hirschfeld does not ascribe erotographomania solely to homosexuals here or elsewhere, the frequency with which he recounts various encounters with homosexual men who drew makes clear that they often fell into this newfangled category of scientific description. Beyond the inclusion of a great many drawings by queer men into the *Bilderteil* of the *Geschlechtskunde* and into the archives of his Institute of Sexual Science more generally, Hirschfeld made reference to the prodigious creative capacities exhibited by the homosexual men he encountered in his research—capacities which, though also exhibited by some homosexual women and “transvestites,” were viewed primarily as the domain of queer men.<sup>2</sup> And while some of these men made paintings or sculptures and some wrote poetry or songs, a great many of them exhibited a particularly strong graphic impulse, putting their pens to paper in order to visualize their sexual subjectivities. The *variety* of drawings that these queer men produced was staggering: some men invited their love interests back to their apartments in

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<sup>1</sup> Magnus Hirschfeld, *Geschlechtskunde: auf Grund dreissigjähriger Forschung und Erfahrung bearbeitet*, vol. 1 (Stuttgart: Julius Püttmann Verlagsbuchhandlung, 1926), 13. “Eine Abart dieser Überschwenglichkeit ist die Erotographomanie, eine ins Krankhafte gesteigerte Sucht, kraßgeschlechtlichen, obszönen, zum mindesten lasziven Vorstellungen schriftlichen oder zeichnerischen Ausdruck zu geben. Ich habe wiederholt Fälle zu begutachten gehabt, in denen Personen in schwersten Ungelegenheiten gerieten, weil man den Inhalt ihrer höchst anstößig gehaltenen Aufzeichnungen ohne weiteres für bare Münze nahm, während sie tatsächlich durch sie nur ihrer Phantasie Nahrung geben wollten.“ Italics and translation mine.

<sup>2</sup> The number of extant drawings in Hirschfeld's archive produced by queer women and trans individuals is relatively small. This does not necessarily mean that such drawings did not exist, but rather that conceptual paradigms binding the male libido and graphic production—paradigms examined in this introduction—had shaped a conception of queer graphic production as primarily the domain of queer men. Analyses of drawings by queer female artists in the nineteenth and early twentieth centuries are exceptionally rare. See examinations of drawing in Camilla Smith, *Jeanne Mammen: Art Between Resistance and Conformity in Modern Germany, 1916–1950* (London: Bloomsbury, 2022); in *Jeanne Mammen the Observer. Retrospective, 1910-1975*, eds. Thomas Köhler and Annelie Lütgens, exh. cat. Berlinische Galerie, 129-135 (Munich: Hirmer, 2017); Nicole Albert, *Lesbian Decadence: Representations in Art and Literature of Fin-de-Siècle France* (New York: Harrington Park Press, 2016).

order to draw them, some visited tattoo studios to have obscene pictures drawn on their skin or scribbled erotic graffiti in public toilets, and others simply produced private drawings in their own sketchbooks that pictured their personal fantasies and desires. Hirschfeld's research makes clear, in short, that homosexual men were incurable erotographomaniacs.

Hirschfeld's deployment of the term "erotographomania" to describe drawing (and writing) as a form of visualizing one's sexual desires may have been relatively novel, but the idea that queer men were subjects obsessed with expressing themselves graphically was anything but new. The primary aim of this dissertation is to articulate the history of a relationship between drawing and queer male subjects that transcended the numerous shifts and turns that characterized the conception of queer male sexuality throughout the nineteenth and early twentieth centuries: pederasts drew, Urnings drew, *warme Brüder* ("warm brothers") drew, and homosexuals drew. The final decades of the nineteenth century and the first decades of the twentieth century were productive ones for research on drawing, and while it was widely accepted that everyone had the innate capacity to draw, sexual scientific literature indicates that it was also understood that queer men drew more frequently and with a greater degree of urgency than most.<sup>3</sup>

With this in mind, this study—the first of its kind—is a sustained examination of how particular scientific discourses participated in the alignment of queer male sexuality with problematic practices of drawing in modern Germany. The origins of this relationship, I contend, did not begin after the publication of the term "homosexual" in 1869 (though most of my case studies date to the final third of the nineteenth century, as it saw the discursive consolidation of the relationship through scientific texts explicitly aimed at queer drawing). Rather, I argue that the conceptual ties that bound these two terms were in place by the *early* nineteenth century, where this dissertation begins. Romantic aesthetic and scientific discourses had converged by the 1830s to posit graphic expression as evidence of the modern subject's perverse sexual proclivities, planting the seed for a persistent discursive affinity between queer men and drawing that would continue to grow undaunted throughout the turn of the twentieth century, through the early 1930s and beyond.

## 1. Drawing and Sexual Perversity

### 1.1. The Creative Imagination in Romantic Art and Science

In order to understand how drawing came to be associated with sexual perversion in the nineteenth century, we must begin in the early years of the century with the Romantics. As an initial starting point for an investigation that examines crossings between artistic production and the life sciences, it is crucial to acknowledge that Romantic thinkers did not bifurcate the arts and the sciences in the way that later became commonplace in the twentieth century. For Romantic thinkers, the arts were equally as viable as the sciences for the purpose of revealing fundamental truths about individual subjectivity and the natural world. As Robert J. Richards has succinctly noted, early-nineteenth-century philosophers furthered the notion that "...artistic experience and expression might operate in harmony with scientific experience and expression:

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<sup>3</sup> My use of the term queer—here and throughout the dissertation—makes use of twentieth-century theorizations of the term to denote a broader array of non-normative male sexualities beyond the specific definition of the homosexual offered by sexual scientists. In instances in which the male subject self-identifies as a homosexual or is referred to as such in contemporary literature, I use the historically specific, post-1869 term "homosexual." In other instances, where the subject might not have readily identified as "homosexual" but demonstrated marked erotic or sensual interests in the same sex, I invoke the more capacious term "queer." In this project, we might say that all "homosexuals" were queer, but not all "queer" men were, strictly speaking, homosexuals. While many scholars have defined queerness in productive and expansive ways, my use of the term is motivated by Holly Furneaux's conception of nineteenth-century queer sexuality as that which departs from traditional, normative life scripts and accommodates same-sex, non-marital, and non-reproductive forms of kinship. See Holly Furneaux, *Queer Dickens: Erotics, Families, Masculinities* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2009).

the basic structures of nature might thus be apprehended and represented by the artist's sketch...as well as by the scientist's experiment and the naturalist's observation."<sup>4</sup> For this reason, the drawings or diagrams of natural scientists and budding biologists could shed light on the nature of a subject by demonstrating that which was not conveyable by language; art served primarily to complement written scientific accounts rather than merely illustrate them. In the same way, artists were viewed as legitimate participants in the scientific endeavor to reveal the laws governing nature and the human spirit. For Romanticists, art and science existed in a symbiotic relationship, one perpetually unveiling and clarifying the other.

Artistic knowledge and production thus significantly contributed to scientific knowledge and output across a variety of subdisciplines, including natural science and the nascent field of human biology. Though many studies have been written detailing the ways in which sex occupied an important role in the work of Enlightenment thinkers, relatively little has been said about the role that sex played in Romantic thought.<sup>5</sup> Despite their attentiveness to metaphysical matter of the soul, the Romantics also participated in the ongoing project of locating the seat of sexual desire within the body. In a system in which art and science were inextricably intertwined, sexual intercourse came to be of interest not merely because Romantic thinkers were interested in the question of phylogeny and ontogeny, but also because the sexual reproductive systems that governed the creation of new life promised to shed essential light on the invisible mechanisms driving individual creativity and artistic production.

The mid-eighteenth-century physiologist Albrecht von Haller, for instance, wrote at length on human procreation, the sexual instinct, and the effects of sexual stimulation on the body. As a materialist and preformationist, Haller perpetuated the notion that a human embryo had preexisting, nascent parts that altered their shape and gradually became organs during the gestation period. Furthermore, he explained the body's vital functions from the shape and composition of its parts; the body was not governed by an external life force or drive, but rather by the harmonious collaboration of its various parts. But such a hardline materialist stance struggled to make sense of sexual desire itself: in the case of penile erection, Haller's materialist ideology held that stimulation occurred mechanically, independent of the will. That is to say, erections were natural physiological reactions rather than products of intention—a position that largely accorded with preceding Augustinian theological positions that delineated instances in which erections were occasioned by one's physiology and not choice.<sup>6</sup> “[A]nd yet,” as Raymond Stephanson notes, materialists could not ignore the fact that “the brain and mind are clearly involved in erection somehow, since ‘love,’ ‘desire of pleasure,’ and ‘voluptuous ideas’ can trigger tumescence, and are signs of the [penis’s] sensibility.”<sup>7</sup> Haller's analysis does not provide a clear or satisfactory answer to the problem of the erection's origins, caught as he was between materialism and the undeniable role played by imagination and emotion.

In contrast to Hallerian mechanism, Johann Friedrich Blumenbach (1752-1840) advocated for a model of individual development that hinged on epigenesis rather than preformationism. For Blumenbach, the formless, organic, raw materials of sex (i.e., ova and sperm) did not inherently contain the human in miniature (as in theories of the homunculus),

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<sup>4</sup> Robert J. Richards, *The Romantic Conception of Life: Science and Philosophy in the Age of Goethe* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2002), 12.

<sup>5</sup> For landmark texts on Enlightenment sexuality, see G.S. Rousseau and Roy Porter, eds., *Sexual Underworlds of the Enlightenment* (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 1987) and Julie Peakman, *A Cultural History of Sexuality in the Enlightenment* (London: Bloomsbury Academic, 2011).

<sup>6</sup> St. Augustine's precarious bifurcation of “lust” and “sexuality” held that priapism could be involuntary, erections caused “not by his own will (ad arbitrium voluntatis eius) but by the instigation of libido as if they had a will of their own (arbitrium proprium).” See James Grantham Turner, *One Flesh: Paradisal Marriage and Sexual Relations in the Age of Milton* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1993).

<sup>7</sup> Raymond Stephanson, *The Yard of Wit: Male Creativity and Sexuality* (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 2011), 71.

but instead received form and organization by way of a vitalistic *Bildungstrieb*, or developmental drive, that gradually produced differentiated organs and body parts. This force, which Blumenbach described as a power akin to gravity, did approximate Haller's concept in its telic epistemology, which followed a forward-looking path to embryonic maturity; this same drive was susceptible, however, to extrinsic forces that could deflect it from its path, leading to degeneration and variation within a species. Indeed, Blumenbach's theory of the telic *Bildungstrieb* was much admired by Immanuel Kant, who acknowledged his debt to Blumenbach's theory, which "unite[d] two principles—the physical-mechanistic and the sheerly teleological mode of explanation of organized nature."<sup>8</sup> Carl Friedrich Kielmeyer (1865-1844) expanded on Blumenbach's theory of the *Bildungstrieb* but elided the latter's notion of a divine Creator that pulled the strings behind the curtain. Kielmeyer advocated for the existence of a naturalistic *Reproduktionskraft*, or reproduction power, that propelled evolution and transformation. Importantly, his theory held that evolution was tripartite in nature—the history of natural evolution mirrored individual development mirrored embryonic gestation. In a theoretical move that in many ways anticipated the mid-nineteenth-century work of Darwin, Kielmeyer promoted the notion that ontogeny recapitulates phylogeny.

My invocation of these late-eighteenth-century physiologists and evolutionary theorists is not meant to serve as a comprehensive overview of their positions, which has already been written and is beyond the scope of this introduction. Rather, I wish to demonstrate that by the early nineteenth century, the discourse on sexual intercourse had become subsumed under the umbrella of a more general discourse on procreation and telic development. With the transition from pre-formationist to epigenetic understandings of species development, scientists foregrounded the existence of a reproductive force that was not blind or dependent upon individual physiology but was instead subject to a general natural law governing the progression and advancement of the individual, the species, the natural world, and *culture at large* from unformed to fully formed.

The early-nineteenth-century Romantics embraced the notion that a telic evolutionary drive might propel both biological or naturalistic development *and* artistic development. Johann Christian Reil, best known today as the father of modern psychiatry and a member of the circle of intellectuals orbiting Goethe, was particularly influenced by the notion that the procreative drive could be driven off track into degeneracy. Reil theorized that the psyche—that most elusive of forces—could be conceptualized as a force that existed in the nervous system. Nature, the replacement for the Creator, had the ability "ennoble" man *or* plant the seeds of madness (i.e., incite psycho-physiological degeneration).<sup>9</sup> Pathology thus occurred when one's self-consciousness was disrupted, shattering one's sense of self and disconnecting one from the world. Reil was determined to find cures to correct this degeneration, many of which relied on the stimulation of the imagination to rectify failing self-consciousness. The production of art and sexual stimulation were two key methods for inciting this nervous stimulation: the creative and the procreative drives are here twinned as complementary manifestations of a healthy universal propensity to reproduce. In his psychiatric practice, Reil deployed what scholars have described as an early form of art therapy, providing his patients with proper instruction in drawing, among other artistic practices, as a means of correcting the creative (and, thus, the procreative) drive and reconsolidating the shattered ego.<sup>10</sup>

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<sup>8</sup> Kant cited in Robert J. Richards, *The Romantic Conception of Life*, 231.

<sup>9</sup> Robert J. Richards, *The Romantic Conception of Life*, 264.

<sup>10</sup> For Reil's contributions to modern art therapy, see Michael Edwards, "Art, Therapy, and Romanticism," in *Pictures at an Exhibition: Selected Essays on Art and Art Therapy*, ed. Andrea Gilroy and Tessa Dalley, 74-83 (New York: Routledge, 1989) and Rachel Cohen, *Outsider Art and Art Therapy: Shared Histories, Current Issues, and Future Identities* (Philadelphia: Jessica Kingsley, 2017), 33-4.

One of Reil's contemporaries and interlocutors, Carl Gustav Carus (1789-1869), serves as perhaps the strongest advocate for this twinning of artistic creation and sexual procreation under the aegis of a healthy, reproductive drive. A medical doctor and close friend of Goethe, Carus accumulated an astonishing list of accomplishments that included contributions to physiology, comparative anatomy, and art theory. Like Goethe, Richards notes, "Carus maintained that art and science were interdependent ways of coming to terms with nature: science required an artistic sense of ordering of ideas and words, and art required scientific awareness. Both modes expressed the kind of divine, creative power that genius is able to recruit, the same power by which nature produces her creatures."<sup>11</sup>

Like the physiologists before him, Carus maintained that human development existed on a teleological scale: he drew not only on Blumenbach and Kielmeyer, but the work of contemporaries (like the intellectual adversaries Goethe and Lorenz Oken) to make claims about the gradual evolution of the human anatomy. Carus did not limit his theorization of human reproduction to sexual procreation, however; his work, more than any of his predecessors, conceives of artistic production as the natural bedfellow of sexual reproduction. In fact, his conception of artistic genius seemed to hinge on mastery of a "freely creative productive and reproductive power" that imitated "the eternally creative power of the cosmos" (I will explore the implications of this viewpoint for Carus's artistic production in the first chapter).<sup>12</sup>

Just as sexual procreation was governed by "natural" laws that dictated the process by which new life is conceived, however, so too was artistic creativity subject to certain provisions and mandates that safeguarded its proper progression along the telic, reproductive timeline. At the heart of the matter was the problem of the human imagination and its role in the production of images; for Carus, as for Goethe and Kant, a fundamental difference existed between the *reproductive imagination*, which reproduced pictures based on the ability to recall earlier memories and sensations, and the *productive imagination*, or *fantasy*, which functioned autonomously and was productive rather than reproductive. Carus's conception of the imagination was deeply Kantian. In his 1798 *Anthropology from a Pragmatic Point of View*, Kant delineates the fundamental differences between these two forms of imagination:

The power of imagination (*facultas imaginandi*), as a faculty of intuition without the presence of the object, is either *productive*, that is, a faculty of the original presentation of the object (*exhibitio originaria*), which thus precedes experience; or *reproductive*, a faculty of the derivative presentation of the object (*exhibitio derivativa*), which brings back to mind an empirical intuition that it had previously...The power of imagination, in so far as it also produces images involuntarily, is called *fantasy*.<sup>13</sup>

Fantasy, in Kant's view, often operated independently of will and according to its own principle: "we play with the imagination frequently and gladly," he notes, "but imagination (as fantasy) plays just as frequently with us, and sometimes very inconveniently."<sup>14</sup> Fantasy required discipline to minimize these inconveniences; when properly and adequately governed,

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<sup>11</sup> Robert J. Richards, "Romantic Biology: Carl Gustav Carus at the Edge of the Modern," in *The Palgrave Handbook of German Romantic Philosophy*, ed. Elizabeth Millán Brusslan, 347-74 (London: Palgrave Macmillan, 2020), 358.

<sup>12</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>13</sup> Immanuel Kant, *Anthropology from a Pragmatic Point of View*, trans. Robert B. Louden (New York: Cambridge University Press, 2006), 60.

<sup>14</sup> *Ibid.*, 68.



fantasy could be urged along a telic, developmental path, allowing one to ultimately perceive the metaphysical, underlying idea through the capacity of reason.

Importantly, fantasy for Carus indicated the ability of the mind to envision something new and was thus crucial to artistic production. In the eighth of his *Nine Letters on Landscape Painting*, Carus noted that the reproductive imagination formed a necessary basis for the practice of drawing, noting that without the ability “to imitate nature directly...there can be no *drawing* in the *higher* sense of the word.”<sup>15</sup> Carus’s suggestion that drawing should begin by imitating nature before progressing to “higher” forms of drawing—and, eventually, to painting—was part and parcel of a larger understanding of the late-eighteenth and early-nineteenth-century understandings of the *paragone*, which gave rank and order to artistic production in much the same way that naturalists gave rank and order to the natural world. Representative in this respect is the work of the “dilettante” art critic and theorist Joseph Friedrich, Freiherr zu Racknitz, whose 1792 *Letters about Art to a Friend (Briefe über die Kunst an eine Freundinn)* created a working taxonomic classification system with which to order painting and its attendant genres [fig. 0.1]. Racknitz’s system closely parallels, in its formal taxonomic structure, tracts produced by natural historians from roughly the same period, such as the classification system used by the Bavarian naturalist Matthias von Flurl in his influential *Grundlinien der Naturgeschichte (Foundations of Natural History)* (1800) [fig. 0.2]. As Oskar Bätschmann notes, in Racknitz’s system, painting “may be divided into two ‘classes’ (imitation of animate nature and of inanimate nature) and a number of ‘orders,’ made up in turn of ‘divisions’ and ‘subdivisions.’”<sup>16</sup> It is obvious that these terms were drawn directly from the Linnaean biological ranking system, originally comprised of kingdom, class, order, genus, and species. Though he only explicitly makes use of class and order, many of the artistic “subdivisions” that Racknitz identified (portraits, conversation pieces, landscapes, seascapes) would later be subsumed under the term “Gattung,” or genus, which simultaneously indicated a particular artistic genre and a biological class.

Such a taxonomic ranking of the arts was indicative of a more general tendency in the early nineteenth century for philosophers to categorize and rank disparate media, thereby revising earlier eighteenth-century conceptions of the *paragone* and the relative merits of various art forms. Catriona Macleod has analyzed the shift in aesthetic priorities around the turn of the nineteenth century away from the “plastic” arts valued by Winckelmann, Herder, and other Neoclassicists, and towards the “picturesque,” a category that referred to paintings and, by extension, the graphic arts.<sup>17</sup> In addition to aligning sculpture with morbidity and an ancient past, aesthetic philosophers like Schlegel warned against the potentially damaging effects of the plastic arts on imagination, asserting that “the plastic determination of reality is an iron cage on fantasy; indeed, it walls fantasy in, rendering it an object, not a creator.” By contrast, the picturesque as made manifest in painting captured “irregularity, incompleteness, transience, effects of light and shade, eclecticism, [and] heterogeneity” in a manner that appealed to the Romantic aversion to materiality; as art approached its ideal forms (i.e., poetry and music), it became less tethered to medium.<sup>18</sup> Painting was prized as an outlet for fantasy, one towards which the artist should strive; as Racknitz’s taxonomy indicates, however, painting itself was subject to strict ordering within a telic and developmental system meant to ensure a work’s approximation of the sublime.

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<sup>15</sup> Carl Gustav Carus, *Nine Letters on Landscape Painting*, trans. David Britt (Los Angeles: Getter Publications, 2002), 128.

<sup>16</sup> Oskar Bätschmann, “Carl Gustav Carus (1789-1869): Physician, Naturalist, Painter, and Theoretician of Landscape Painting,” in *Nine Letters on Landscape Painting*, 17-19.

<sup>17</sup> Catriona Macleod, *Fugitive Objects: Sculpture and Literature in the German Nineteenth-Century* (Evanston: Northwestern University Press, 2014), 30-33.

<sup>18</sup> Cited in *ibid.*, 31.

If Romantic biological perspectives on the rank and order of the natural world paralleled art historical conceptions of media in the early nineteenth century, then I further argue that, to the Romantic mind, drawing itself was not a vague, ill-defined monolith, but was rather a graphic practice with a range of pictorial possibilities that themselves existed on a telic scale. Indeed, “drawing” proper was not a catchall term, but rather one held particular significance as a specific and aesthetically acceptable graphic practice. Even if drawing occupied a relatively low rung on the paragonal ladder, it nonetheless figured into Romantic aesthetics in a way that other graphic “species,” did not.

## 1.2. The Graphic Hierarchy and the Danger of Fantasy

Such a system of nominating and attending to the variety of graphic practices connoted by the term “drawing” does not always register in contemporary scholarship or exhibition catalog entries, where a greater emphasis is often placed on the relationship between drawing and painting than on nuanced differentiations between graphic genres. This tendency is perhaps indicative of a more general, pervasive understanding of drawings as thought experiments executed on the way to a more complete or finished work of art (consider recent characterizations of drawings by Jacques-Louis David as “a quotidian necessity,” “rarely the goal,” and “incidental to his larger ambitions as a painter”).<sup>19</sup> This approach to drawings implicitly reproduces the telic system of evaluation that I will articulate below. Thus, the system of differentiation that I propose is not limited in its applicability to the nineteenth century; my conceit is that it was eminently applicable to late-nineteenth- and early-twentieth-century epistemes and remains so today. By the end of the Romantic period, art theorists had already produced a model for a broad and descriptive vocabulary with which to discuss drawing and its attendant subcategories.

The practice that occupied the lowest position within this system was doodling (*kritzeln*), a practice assumed in Romantic aesthetics to be the product of an errant, stunted, or lascivious fantasy. According to Christian Driesen, doodles embody a number of terms that place them beneath and outside the realm of drawing proper: they are formless, figureless, indefinite, occupying an “almost non-existent existence.”<sup>20</sup> But they are also inherently creative, as with all graphic phenomena; indeed, they are the ur-phenomeon of graphic practice. Cordula Grewe has identified Romantic doodling at work in the early comic-strip style work of the Swiss Rodolphe Töpffer. In his 1844 *Elvire’s Unfortunate End*, the artist has produced a frenzy of lines, scribbles, and amorphous shapes that result in a legible, though highly abstracted, picture [fig. 0.3]. Doodles were undisciplined fantasy detached from the laws of form, composition, and development. Goethe summed up the Romantic position on doodles well when he wrote: “bei vieler Lust und wenig Gaben, werd’ ich nur gekritzelt haben” (“with a lot of desire and few gifts, I will only have doodled”).<sup>21</sup>

A step beyond doodles on the path to revealing the subject’s idea were sketches (*Skizzen*). Art historians tend to fetishize the instability of the sketch, defaulting to excursions on the inability pin down concrete meaning that a sketch is often thought to exhibit. Albert Boime, for instance, referred to the sketch as the embodiment of “the open-ended ideal,” and Ernst Gombrich argued for an understanding of the sketch not as preparatory, but rather as part of an ongoing mental negotiation that keeps the artist’s mind in flux.<sup>22</sup> Though Romantics did laud

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<sup>19</sup> See Perrin Stein, “The Long Meditation,” in *Jacques-Louis David: Radical Draftsman*, ed., Perrin Stein, 15-34 (New York: Metropolitan Museum of Art, 2022), 15.

<sup>20</sup> Christian Driesen, *Theorie der Kritzerei* (Vienna: Verlag Turia + Kant, 2016), 9-30.

<sup>21</sup> While “Lust” can serve to mean “desire” generally, it often carries the connotation of sexual desire or lust.

<sup>22</sup> See Albert Boime, “Political Signification and Ambiguity in the Oil Sketch,” in *Arts Magazine* (September 1987), 45, and Ernst Gombrich, “Leonardo’s Method for Working out Compositions,” in *The Essential Gombrich*, ed. Richard Woodfield, (Phaidon: London, 1996), 217.

sketches for their “open-endedness,” this open-endedness was not an endpoint in itself, but rather a useful quality that allowed one to zero in on the elements of a subject that were indicative of its essential character. Carus lauded the sketch as an initial pictorial attempt to “suggest” something deeper about its subject by indicating “its most general, though authentic, properties.”<sup>23</sup> Caricature, though viewed by many artists and critics in the nineteenth century as a low form of creativity outside the telos of fine art development, also constituted an iteration of the sketch that relied on its unique properties to hone in on a subject’s distinctive characteristics; indeed, Ernst Kris and Ernst Gombrich noted that in ideal caricature, which pictorializes the “essential” in the pursuit of a truth “truer than reality itself,” “sketchiness” is an integral part.<sup>24</sup> Within a taxonomic system of the sort I myself am sketching, the sketch functioned as a midway point on the graphic route to drawing proper: as yet infused with the draftsman’s personal fantasy, but reaching towards noble comprehension of the subject through the distillation of its sensual components.

A page of sketches by the artist Adolph Menzel from 1836 provides an example of the sketch’s capacity to distill personal impressions into a legible gesture toward the idea [fig. 0.4]. Menzel has collated a number of disparate sketches onto the lower register of a sketchbook page: a boy dozing upright in a chair, a bridled donkey, two male heads in profile. Each of the sketches seems to have been quickly dashed off in rapid, gestural strokes of the artist’s pencil, recalling Eugène Delacroix’s well-known assertion that artists should have the technical ability to adequately capture a man falling from a fifth-story window before he hits the ground. Menzel’s goal here was not to render his subjects in realistic detail, but rather to pin down the *essence* of each subject: the deflated and slumped posture of the boy’s slumbering body, the mechanics of the donkey’s bridle, the way that textured hair curls and waves. Menzel’s seemingly quite workaday sketches are nevertheless exemplary of a graphic genre in which a subject’s salient features and characteristics are synthesized with the artist’s sensory impressions of that subject.

Studies (*Studien*) served as the next rungs on the ladder of graphic development, successively refining the draftsman’s fantasy and preparing the artist’s representation of the idea for translation into a “higher” artistic medium (i.e., painting). Relative to a sketch, we might conceptualize the study as a more refined graphic meditation on a subject—a detailed, methodical arrangement of the subject’s most authentic properties, often achieved through prolonged and sustained visual engagement with that subject. Studies often balanced observation and fantasy, secreting subjective impulses within objective representation. Frequently, though not always, artists deployed the genre of the study in order to work out modes of depicting individual figures or compositional aspects in preparation for a later work. We can look to the Romantic artist Julius Schnorr von Carolsfeld’s exquisite study of a medieval knight [fig. 0.5] as exemplary in this regard: though the strokes of the artist’s pencil are exacting and measured, the palimpsestic erasure marks around the figure’s left arm indicate that the artist experimented with his model’s posture over a protracted period of time in order to arrive at his final pictorial product. Carolsfeld permits his disciplined imaginative faculties

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<sup>23</sup> Carl Gustav Carus, *Nine Letters on Landscape Painting*, 101.

<sup>24</sup> Graphic caricature, though outside the parameters of my study, came to take on a wide appeal and vital social significance in the later nineteenth century. See the essay by Werner Busch, “The King Falls into the Hands of Caricature, Hanoverians in England,” in *Loyal Subversion? Caricatures from the Personal Union between England and Hanover (1714-1837)*, eds., Anorthe Kremers and Elisabeth Reich (Göttingen: Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht, 2014) and Patricia Mainardi, *Another World: Nineteenth-Century Illustrated Print Culture* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 2017). Like other forms of drawing generally, caricature has also been explored in great depth by psychologists, psychoanalysts, and historians of these disciplines. See, for instance, E.H. Gombrich and Ernst Kris, “The Principles of Caricature,” *British Journal of Medical Psychology*, vol. 17 (1938): 319-42, and Louis Rose, *Psychology, Art, and Anti-Fascism: Ernst Kris, E.H. Gombrich, and the Politics of Caricature* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 2016).

entry into the objective study of the figure before him, incorporating armor and a sword and preemptively delimiting the edge of the future canvas with a faintly drawn vertical line.

The final development in the lifespan of propaedeutic graphic expression is the preliminary drawing (*Vorzeichnungen*), which served as the final revision of the idea into a form capable of being translated onto a canvas in the form of an under-drawing and which could be manipulated as the artist prepared their final composition. At the preliminary drawing stage, the draftsman's productive imagination was perceived to have attained an adequate impression of the idea and developed to the point of graduation from graphic expression to the act of painting. In some cases, the preliminary drawing might be subsequently transformed into a cartoon, or a full-scale drawing produced to facilitate the transfer of a picture from the paper to a canvas, wall, or tapestry. Cartoons functioned as further insurance that the painted composition would remain faithful to the carefully designed preliminary drawing, allowing the artist, in some cases, to directly trace outlines of the *Werkzeichnung* ("blueprint") onto a canvas or wall to provide a template for the application of paint.

Carolsfeld's 1815 preliminary drawings for the 1816 canvas *Der Sechskampf auf der Insel Lipadusa* (*The Hexathlon on the Island of Lipadusa*) allow us to examine the translation of a preliminary drawing into a cartoon and, finally, a painted canvas. The preliminary drawing, titled *Die Schlacht von Lipadusa* (*The Battle of Lipadusa*), depicts a battle between Frankish Christians and Ottoman Muslims on the Sicilian island of Lampedusa [fig. 0.6]. The drawing is the culmination of many individual studies, similar to the aforementioned *Knight Study*, which the artist has grouped into three tableaux and arranged into a dynamic composition. Carolsfeld's pictorial experimentation has reached a near-final conclusion: he has determined the poses and postures to be included in the painted work and has produced an advanced compositional draft that incorporates perspective, shading, and scale. The artist subsequently created a cartoon for the monumental work [fig. 0.7], which included adjoining pendant panels and was cut to match the exact dimensions of the canvas [fig. 0.8, now in the Kunsthalle Bremen] to aid its translation from advanced drawing to oil painting, where the idea reaches its most refined and elevated state.

These categorizations of graphic expression serve as a kind of microcosm nested within a larger system of artistic taxonomy that ensured that painters were making steady, methodical progress towards the highest and clearest possible perception and representation of the idea. Drawings themselves, while aesthetically sanctioned graphic distillations of a subject's essence, were often perceived merely as propaedeutic to a larger painterly agenda—a bias which, as we will see, is forcefully and foundationally heteronormative, and one of which art historical scholarship has struggled to rid itself. Within this paragonal taxonomy, the artist's productive imagination climbed ever higher as it strove to propel a pictorial representation from formless, inadequate sketch to developed oil painting.

### 1.3. Keeping Fantasy on Track

What such a system failed to fully account for, however, were the myriad ways in which the imagination and fantasy could go awry. Whereas Carus optimistically saw the potential for fantasy to ennoble the creative drive and reveal a subject's inner truth, others viewed fantasy as a potentially problematic drive that could lead to violence, perversion, and degeneration. The aforementioned practices came to comprise a range of technical and formal possibilities unsuitable, to varying degrees, for an emergent Romantic aesthetic program; at best they were propaedeutic, and, at worst, they were sites of potential pictorial instability and non-conformity that coaxed the imagination into sexual perversion. Out of this anxiety came the need for safeguarding artistic production to ensure that its development mirrored nature's own. Such proscriptions on stoking one's fantastic sensibilities are evident in the work of the psychiatrist and early scientist of sexual behavior, Heinrich Kaan, whose 1844 work *Psychopathia sexualis*

explained the etiology of sexual perversion by referencing imagination and fantasy. The ability to produce images and pictures from memory opened the door to the possibility of a fantasy allowed to “run wild” that would undoubtedly lead to the corruption and aberration of other faculties and drives.

Kaan’s concerns about dangerous fantasy were not particularly new, especially to academicians and pedagogues tasked with the delicate project of ushering students of drawing from reproductive imitation to productive imagination. As Max Kunze has noted in his examination of teaching and pattern books produced for drawing instruction in Germany, the second half of the eighteenth century saw didactic drawing manuals become a central and foundational part of the academic curriculum, as artistic theoretical principles regarding anatomical proportion and depiction came to be applied within the realm of drawing pedagogy.<sup>25</sup> Students gradually progressed along a track that mirrored Carus’s telic theorization of the artistic imagination’s progression: students began their instruction by copying from instructional pattern books, progressing to freehand drawing in front of antique plaster casts and refining their ability to compose figures within larger groups, before graduating to life drawing with a live nude model. Each step of this developmental progression was governed by regulations and dictates intended, implicitly or explicitly, to curb potentially harmful deviations of the student’s productive imagination: the artistic emphasis on observation and close copying came to serve as a safeguard against not only individual artistic idiosyncrasies but also against the draftsman’s burgeoning capacity for fantasy and the potentially damaging derivations that fantasy might induce.

This Kantian safeguarding and insurance against detrimental fantasy is also evident in the work of the pioneering Swiss educator and pedagogue Johann Heinrich Pestalozzi. Though his engagement with drawing primarily approached the practice as a propaedeutic exercise to his larger goal of teaching children to write, his 1803 *ABCs of Sense Perception* proved to be particularly influential for pedagogies of drawing and artistic production more generally. For Pestalozzi, drawing instruction began with a grid, upon which his pupils would inscribe angles, curves, and lines, eventually arriving at a complete form, such as a letter, that could be built upon as the pupil learned to “draw” (or, more accurately, write) words and sentences [fig. 0.9]. The grid became a popular tool for teaching drawing, leading to the development of “stimography” by the Austrian Franz Carl Hillardt, who developed Pestalozzi’s system by pre-figuring the movements of the draftsman through a series of points that they must follow in order to arrive at a final image (much like today’s “connect the dots” children’s game) [fig. 0.10].<sup>26</sup> Over the course of the nineteenth century, other pedagogues would bolster this early-nineteenth-century tradition, producing increasingly complex patterns for their students to draw before they graduated to free drawing. For Pestalozzi (and those who built upon his principles) drawing was a means to a “higher” end—not only aesthetic, but also developmental. Only the mastery of a form’s requisite parts and components could lead to the realization of the whole; Pestalozzi’s system hinged on the creation of a continuum of artistic development that mirrored the continuum of the individual draftsman’s development. Critics decried the system’s potential to turn amateur draftsmen into thoughtless automatons—that is to say, to completely quash their productive fantasy—but those who championed Pestalozzi’s system saw its methodical elimination of derivation as an advantage. Drawing, more than other forms of pictorial expression, required careful shepherding to a more developed and sophisticated graphic consciousness before fantasy could be permitted to enter in.

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<sup>25</sup> Max Kunze, “Lehr- und Vorlagenbücher in 18. Jahrhundert,” in *Kunst und Aufklärung im 18. Jahrhundert. Kunstausbildung - Kunstvermittlung - Kunstsammlung*, Ausst.-Kat. Stendal, eds. Anja Kahlau and Max Kunze (Halle und Wörlitz: Ruhpolding 2005), 48.

<sup>26</sup> See Zeynep Çelik Alexander, *Kinaesthetic Knowing: Aesthetics, Epistemology, Modern Design* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2017), 153.

Zeynep Çelik Alexander has identified a counterpart to the grid system of drawing in the outline drawings (*Umrisszeichnungen*) popular in the early nineteenth century, which proffered distilled and simplified forms largely devoid of shading, contour, or extraneous detail.<sup>27</sup> Proponents of the outline drawing saw the metaphysical idea beautifully rendered in the simplification of complex forms into abstract outlines. Many Germans producers of outline drawings took their cue from the British artist John Flaxman, whose commissioned drawings of scenes from the *Iliad* and the *Odyssey* were immensely popular within neoclassical circles, as well as from J.H.W. Tischbein, the German artist responsible for producing outline drawings of Sir William Hamilton's Greek vase paintings [fig. 0.11]. The widespread popularity of outline drawings was part and parcel of what Cordula Grewe has called the "allure of the archaic," a search for "that embodiment of a childlike naiveté lost to modern man and consequently a treasured source of artistic renewal" that found an answer in the simplified linear forms of the outline.<sup>28</sup>

Much like Pestalozzi's gridded line patterns, outline drawings reduced and rationalized the external world of sensory impressions while ensuring that any fantasy that went into their production was striving towards a healthy manifestation of the idea. August Wilhelm Schlegel praised outline drawings for their hieroglyphic quality and reliance on suggestion to activate the viewer's imagination as it pursued comprehension of the underlying essence of the depicted subject; as the Dutch aesthetician Franciscus Hemsterhuis eloquently noted, these drawn outlines "set in motion the poetic and reproductive faculty of the soul."<sup>29</sup> This is not to say that outline drawings never breached the boundaries of the reproductive imagination to give fantasy an outlet; artists like Mortiz Retzsch used the conventions and associations of the genre to produce wildly novel interpretations of scenes from Goethe's *Faust*, such as the chaotic and claustrophobic *Witches' Festival* (c. 1840), in which the artist's imagination produced new pictorial subject matter without sacrificing "clarity and compositional purity" [fig. 0.12].

When viewed as extensions of the Pestalozzian impulse to contain fantasy within the bounds of rationality, outline drawings functioned as the graphic embodiment of a healthy and ordered fantasy. Such a conception of drawing as a practice that must be guided and ultimately defined by its adherence to a set system of conventions that maintained the health of the draftsman's fantasy butted against that which most scholars associate with Romanticism's relationship to the medium (i.e., as a medium imminently suited to conveying the unruly emotional subjectivity of the draftsman). Within this Romantic discourse, drawing came to constitute a distinct aesthetic category that was defined by its adherence to the rules of imitation and reproduction. Such theorists restricted drawing to the reproductive imagination while reassigning fantasy to the domain of the painter; whereas the painter had progressed through the system governing drawing and achieved the reason needed to productively imagine the fantastic painted subject, the lowly and relatively untrained draftsman was expected to serve their time by copying patterns and reproducing the objects placed in front of them. As the invention and imagination of the draftsman increased, the health of the resulting drawing decreased.

## 2. Genius, Penis, Brain: Sexual Fantasy and the Draftsman's Pen

My recurrent use of the term "healthy" to describe the ontology of drawings in the late eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries parallels contemporary debates about the state of the fantasies that produced them. Indeed, as the medium most closely associated with the

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<sup>27</sup> Ibid., 155-6.

<sup>28</sup> See Cordula Grewe, "Outline and Arabesque: Simplicity and Complexity in German Prints, and the Allure of the Antique," in *The Enchanted World of German Romantic Prints, 1770-1850*, ed. John Ittmann, p. 228-47 (New Haven: Yale University Press, 2017), 230.

<sup>29</sup> Ibid., 237.

productive human imagination, drawings were not only seen as indices of the human mind, but also treated as tell-tale graphic traces of an individual's health or pathology more generally. While scholars have long waxed poetic about the physicality of drawing, which leaves traces of their maker's hand upon the paper and are accompanied by a uniquely proximal phenomenological experience for the viewer, drawings also said a great deal about the draftsman's physical and psychological condition.

Perhaps unsurprisingly, given the aforementioned conceptual ties binding procreative imagination and human reproduction, drawing came to be understood as highly sexualized, and the practice of drawing and the fantasy that propelled it constituted a kind of shorthand for the male libido. Ray Stephanson's excellent study of male creativity and literary masculinity in eighteenth-century Britain highlights the dynamic that I propose was also at work in European discourses on drawing as a sexualized medium in the early nineteenth century. As Stephanson asserts:

The creative imagination as [penis] could take several forms: wit could be metaphorized variously as getting it up, as coitus, masturbation, ejaculation; the male poet's head might be imaged as a displaced privy member; the written work could be figured as male genitalia, something subject to expurgation which in turn was figured as a castration; pens and quills could be hard or soft yards spilling ink, semen, or urine...<sup>30</sup>

As Stephanson notes, however, the pen/penis association was not solely metaphorical or synecdochal; rather, it was also representative of an actual perceived relationship between the creative brain and the male genitals. As such, physiologists developed a persistent structural homology between the penis and the brain that correlated the activity of the two: cerebral fluid and semen were composed of the same substance, cranial irregularities could be used to deduce both artistic aptitude and sexual prowess, and artistic genius came to be viewed as directly tied to the ability to keep one's erotic desire in check.

By the early nineteenth century, emergent physiology had helped to create a cultural perception of the artist based on "creativity-sexuality conjunctions," that emphasized "links between genital physiology and male mind."<sup>31</sup> Put differently, the perceived structural and physiological connection between the brain and the penis led to the proliferation of discursive connections between the two in the creative sphere. Creativity came to be viewed as indicative of sexual fitness or its pathological inverse, and the artistic products (drawings, poems) approached not as autonomous and objective artworks, but as evidentiary indicators of the male maker's sexual proclivities and the state of his physiologically located sex drive. Associations between the artist's genitals and his creative output make clear sense; the image of the inky pen which spills the draftsman's (or in Stephanson's study, the poet's) creative fantasy onto the page was imminently useful for the purposes of crafting an image of the artist as a creatively and procreatively virile subject. The close discursive affinities between the pen and the penis are reinforced by evidence of German slang dating from at least the 16<sup>th</sup> century, in which the word for pen—*Stift*—was used informally to refer to both a virile young man and the penis.<sup>32</sup>

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<sup>30</sup> Raymond Stephanson, *The Yard of Wit*, 15.

<sup>31</sup> *Ibid.*, 35.

<sup>32</sup> See Heinrich Felder, "Das erotische Idiotikon des östlichen Teiles des Bergischen," in *Anthropophyteia*, ed. Friedrich S. Krauss, Bd. 4 (1907), 8-15, 14, and Heinz Küpper, *Wörterbuch der deutschen Umgangssprache* 1. Auflage. 36 (Berlin: Directmedia, 2006).

By the Romantic period, the word for paintbrush (*Pinsel*) had also accrued a secondary meaning as a slang word for the penis, from which the word itself stems.<sup>33</sup>

The discursive association between the penis and the pen was a central premise of Goethe's 1810 poem "Das Tagebuch" ("The Diary"), in which the poet tells of a businessman who makes a habit of keeping a diary of his travels to share with his beloved upon his return home. After his carriage wheel breaks, he is forced to overnight at a hostelry, where his nightly journaling is confounded by an earlier encounter with an attractive maid, whom he later propositions for a sexual liaison only to be flummoxed by his own impotence. As the maid lies sleeping beside him, the man recalls memories of his early sexual encounters with his wife and finds himself once more erect. Simultaneously struck by poetic inspiration, he rushes to his journal where words spill from his pen onto the paper, his sexual and creative potency restored in full. The act of writing here becomes a sort of placeholder for the sexual act itself. As Sven-Erik Rose has noted, "Goethe's poem dramatizes a dynamic link between writing and (male) sexual identity... Given the way the poem metaphorically associates semen and ink, penis and pen, it is not surprising to find that writing in the diary serves as a sort of ersatz eroticism."<sup>34</sup>

It is this very dynamic that Sandra Gilbert and Susan Gubar articulated in their foundational feminist examination of women writers in the nineteenth century, arguing that, in the nineteenth century, "male sexuality... [was] not just analogically but actually the essence of literary power. The poet's pen [was] in some sense (even more than figuratively) a penis."<sup>35</sup> In a powerful passage on the notion of "fathering" a literary text as one might father a child that bears quoting at length, Gilbert and Gubar argue that:

Though many... writers use the metaphor of literary paternity in different ways and for different purposes, all seem overwhelmingly to agree that a literary text is not only speech quite literally embodied, but also a power mysteriously made manifest, made flesh. In patriarchal Western culture, therefore, the text's author is a father, a progenitor, a procreator, an aesthetic patriarch whose pen is an instrument of generative power like his penis. More, his pen's power, like his penis's power, is not just the ability to generate life but the power to create a posterity to which he lays claim...<sup>36</sup>

Gilbert and Gubar's formulation validates the notion that the pen/penis connection both served as the foundation for conceptions of creativity as *also* procreativity and laid the groundwork for an understanding of creative genius predicated on one's (male) sex. Indeed, in light of this discursive association, it would be difficult not to read the penis/brain homology and subsequent pen-as-penis metaphor into the work of philosophers like Kant and Schopenhauer, for whom creative genius was perceived to be solely the remit of men. As Christine Battersby succinctly observed in her feminist analyses of these philosophers, in the late eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries, "genius, apparently, required a penis."<sup>37</sup> The goal of the artist, for these thinkers and others, was to transcend the sensual and subjective—to discipline biological and physiological drives—and direct their virility toward "the use of the phallic pen on the

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<sup>33</sup> See Jocelyn Holland, *German Romanticism and Science: The Procreative Poetics of Goethe, Novalis, and Ritter* (New York: Routledge, 2009), 94.

<sup>34</sup> Sven-Erik Rose, "Goethe's Splitting Image: Male Sexuality and/as Writing in "Das Tagebuch" and Beyond," *Goethe Yearbook*, vol. 9 (1999), 134.

<sup>35</sup> Sandra M. Gilbert and Susan Gubar, *The Madwoman in the Attic: The Woman Writer and the Nineteenth-Century Literary Imagination* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1979), 4-6.

<sup>36</sup> *Ibid.*, 4-6.

<sup>37</sup> Christine Battersby, *Gender and Genius: Towards a Feminist Aesthetics* (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 1989), 6.



‘pure space’ of the virgin page” to produce seminal (in the full etymological significance of the word) works of creative genius.<sup>38</sup>

The pen-as-penis discourse was not limited to literature and poetry, but also seeped into conceptions of the fine arts.<sup>39</sup> “Male [Romantic] artists,” Alexandra K. Wettlaufer notes, “...defined their own activity in terms of aggressively sexual metaphors, likening the pen or paintbrush to a penis and composition to ejaculation.”<sup>40</sup> This metaphor is baked into portraiture and self-portraiture from the early nineteenth century and is perhaps most apparent in the convention of depicting artists with their pen or paintbrush to hand, a standard gesture that signaled an artist’s creativity and, by extension, their virile *procreativity*. Poses and settings vary within the genre: some compositions are generic and unremarkable, simply picturing the sitter with his pen poised on paper or held betwixt his fingers, while others are more complex. Carl Christian Vogel von Vogelstein’s portrait of the painter, draftsman, writer, and archaeologist Otto Magnus von Stackelberg (1831) [fig.0.13] pictures the artist seated amongst column fragments in an Italian landscape, his gleaming golden pen between his fingers and a drawing board resting atop his lap. In Vogelstein’s portrait of Stackelberg, and those like it, the pen takes on a heightened significance as not only a sign of prolific artistic, literary, or scholarly prowess, but also a sign of procreative male virility. The pictorial convention of picturing the artist with his writing, drawing, or painting instrument turns on the pen-as-penis metaphor (or, alternately, the paintbrush-as-penis metaphor) which, by the 1830s, had become a legible and coherent discursive reference outside of the biological circles in which the homology had originated.

A more explicit artistic commentary on the metaphor may be found in a sketch by Goethe from around 1790 depicting a priapic herme with an enlarged and erect penis, bisected by an elongated and pointed instrument (a pen, perhaps?) that hovers above an inky puddle at the herme’s base [fig. 0.14]. Goethe’s priapic herme sketch was inspired by another drawing by the Swiss artist Heinrich Meyer, a “parody” of a priapic Greek scene that also features a herme, likely produced while in Italy in the 1780s.<sup>41</sup> Goethe has added both the erect penis and the stylus in his sketch, which are absent in the drawing that inspired it. The pen, for Goethe and for others, held a doubled function as an instrument for both creative writing and creative drawing; metonymically, the stylus as a tool could stand for creative style, fluency, and virtuosity, concepts which Goethe seems to attribute to the erect penis, as well.<sup>42</sup> Other drawn pictograms by the poet reinforce these associations: in his personal correspondence, Goethe attempts to solve an anagrammatic cipher from the Latin *Carmina Priapea*, drawing thick lines between stylized E’s and D’s in order to create phallic symbols [fig. 0.15]. These “obscene” drawings were the product of creative problem solving, erotic fantasy given pictorial form via the nib of the poet’s pen.

It was clear to early-nineteenth-century physiologists and art theorists that the question of artistic aptitude and the sexual drive were necessarily interdependent: if a man’s sexual drive

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<sup>38</sup> John T. Irwin, *Doubling and Incest/Repetition and Revenge: A Speculative Reading of Faulkner* (Baltimore: The Johns Hopkins University Press, 1996), 163.

<sup>39</sup> For important analyses of the “penis-as-paintbrush” metaphor, see Carol Duncan, “The Esthetics of Power in Modern Erotic Art,” *Heresies* vol. 1 (1977): 46-50; Lynda Nead, *The Female Nude: Art, Obscenity and Sexuality* (New York: Routledge, 1992), 81; and Nicholas Chare, “Sexing the Canon: Calling on the Medium,” *Art History* vol 32, no. 4 (2009): 664-89.

<sup>40</sup> Alexandra K. Wettlaufer, *Portraits of the Artist as a Young Woman: Painting and the Novel in France and Britain, 1800-1860* (Columbus: Ohio State University Press, 2011), 15.

<sup>41</sup> For discussion of the drawing by Meyer and Goethe’s citation of it, see Whitney Davis, “Homeroetic Art Collection from 1750 to 1920,” *Art History*, vol. 254, no. 2 (2001).

<sup>42</sup> The *stilus* as the basis for aesthetic conceptions of artistic *style* is an abiding and central art historical question. Perhaps the most foundational essay on this problem is Willibald Sauerländer, “From Stilus to Style: Reflections on the Fate of a Notion,” *Art History*, vol. 6, no. 3 (September 1983).

was disordered and his metaphorical pen spilled its ink in a manner that defied natural law, homology dictated that the pictures produced by his real pencils and pens were also unhealthy and pathological. By the mid-nineteenth century, “unnatural” same-sex desiring men were perceived to be primary producers of such “unhealthy” drawings, an association that proved to be stubborn and long-lasting. It persisted throughout the nineteenth century, emerging in disciplines and discourses examined in the subsequent chapters—in ethnography, anatomy, and physiology, and elsewhere.

Around the turn of the twentieth century, however, the perceived relationship between graphic expression and nonnormative sexualities received an official scientific name. In 1902, under the aegis of a burgeoning sexual science movement that he had helped found, Iwan Bloch made an attempt to name a version of this queer propensity for erotic mark-making in his *Beiträge*, coining a word that would come to inform the way subsequent sexual researchers would approach drawing in relation to sexuality. In an attempt to define the erotic pleasure gained from acts of graphic expression, Bloch deploys the term *Erotographomanie*, a term that he uses to describe the erotic compulsion to fill letters and correspondence with obscene musings. By 1910, the physician Oswald Berkhan had expanded the remit of erotographomania to include drawings specifically, relating a case study of a man who displayed what he termed *Bildschriftlicher Exhibitionismus* (the man broke into a woman’s home and left behind erotic writing and drawings). Gradually, this term was adapted in order to accommodate the longstanding associations between sexual perversity and perverse drawing in sexual scientific discourses.

By 1926, when Magnus Hirschfeld published the first volume of his monumental *Geschlechtskunde* project introduced in the beginning of this introduction, these associations had certainly been made part of sexological discourse in a significant way. It is clear from Hirschfeld’s writings that he believed homosexual men frequently fell into the category of erotographomaniacs; he maintained a robust archive of drawings by homosexual men and other queer individuals at his Institute for Sexual Science in Berlin, a small selection of which may be found printed in various publications by Hirschfeld himself as well as in other sexological publications (those printed by the Verlag für Kulturforschung in Vienna under the direction of Leo Schidrowitz, for instance). These drawings will be examined in greater detail in chapter four.

### 3. Positioning Queer German Drawings

A central goal of this dissertation, which has likely become apparent, is to provide an innovative model for approaching the medium of drawing and to contribute to an emerging body of scholarship on drawing in the modern period. To date, medieval and early modern historians of art have provided the majority of the discipline’s scholarship on drawings; this study has benefited from the work of scholars such as Michael Camille, Cammy Brothers, Caroline Fowler, and Horst Bredekamp, whose meditations on the role of drawing in arenas as varied as manuscript illumination and architecture have greatly expanded how art historians might approach the medium.<sup>43</sup> Scholars from disciplines beyond art history are also to thank for the development of scholarship on drawing as a practice. Psychologists like John Willats and Rudolf Arnheim, as well as analytic philosophers like Nelson Goodman and Patrick Maynard and artists like Deanna Petherbridge, have produced excellent and illuminating

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<sup>43</sup> See Cammy Brothers, *Michelangelo, Drawing, and the Invention of Architecture* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 2008); Michael Camille, *Image on the Edge: The Margins of Medieval Art* (London: Reaktion Books, 1992); Caroline O. Fowler, *Drawing and the Senses: An Early Modern History* (Turnhout: Brepols, 2017); Horst Bredekamp, *Galileo’s Thinking Hand: Mannerism, Anti-Mannerism, and the Virtue of Drawing in the Foundation of Early Modern Science* (Boston: de Gruyter, 2019).

studies on conceptualizing and denominating varieties of drawings that have worked their way into my own approach in demonstrable ways.<sup>44</sup>

The body of art historical scholarship on drawing in the modern period is less robust, though recent works by Sarah Betzer and Ewa Lajer-Burcharth make significant contributions to the study of modern drawing practices in the eighteenth century and beyond.<sup>45</sup> In the catalog that accompanied the Harvard Art Museums' 2017 exhibition *Drawing: Invention of a Modern Medium*, Lajer-Burcharth offers an array of thematic perspectives from which to view drawings and pursues a mission to "expand the field within which drawing operates."<sup>46</sup> It is Lajer-Burcharth's exploration of the *modernity* of drawing that underwrites project; drawing became "modern," in her view, in the eighteenth century, when "its practice, status, understanding, and uses were extended in scope and radically redefined," and drawing left "the narrow confines of the artist's workshop or studio to enter into an expanded field of discourse, culture, politics, and social life at large."<sup>47</sup> The implications of this argument have motivated my study at every turn. If we accept Lajer-Burcharth's formulation, queer drawings were thoroughly modern. As the following chapters will make clear, nineteenth- and early-twentieth-century queer drawings—and the debates and debacles that accompanied them—often extended well beyond the confines of the artist's studio. Queer drawings forced those who encountered them to reconsider extant understandings of the medium and the pictorial products that might constitute it, and their centrality to political, scientific, and cultural discourses on modern identity meant that the study of drawings was no longer just the domain of art historians, collectors, and connoisseurs, but of biologists, anatomists, psychologists, naturalists, and sexologists, as well.

In addition to the art historical proposals my dissertation makes, it also intervenes in scholarly debates occurring in German studies and gender and sexuality studies, providing a history of queer sexuality in Germany that moves beyond two typical tendencies of scholarship on modern German sexuality. The first of these is the tendency to focus on Berlin as the sole or primary site of scholarly intervention. Indeed, recent scholarship (such as, for instance, Robert Beachy's significant study *Gay Berlin*) has significantly contributed to metropolitan Berlin's centrality in historical narratives of German sexuality—a trend that is mirrored in a spate of texts on the history of sexuality with titles *Gay New York*, *Queer Budapest*, and *Queer London*.<sup>48</sup> While Berlin was certainly a significant locus of identity and knowledge formation throughout the nineteenth and early twentieth centuries, my study seeks to decenter it and press back against the tendency towards that which Jack Halberstam has termed "metronormativity," or the associations between queer individuals and the metropolitan city that privilege stories set in Berlin and other major international hubs. In actual fact, and as I aim to show, queer

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<sup>44</sup> See Fred Dubery and John Willats, *Perspective and Other Drawing Systems* (New York: Van Nostrand Reinhold, 1983); Rudolf Arnheim, *Visual Thinking* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1969); Nelson Goodman, *Languages of Art: An Approach to a Theory of Symbols* (Indianapolis: Hackett, 1976); Patrick Maynard, *Drawing Distinctions: The Varieties of Graphic Expression* (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 2005); Deanna Petherbridge, *The Primacy of Drawing: Histories and Theories of Practice* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 2010).

<sup>45</sup> See Sarah Betzer, *Animating the Antique: Sculptural Encounter in the Age of Aesthetic Theory* (University Park: The Penn State University Press, 2021), viz. chapter 4.

<sup>46</sup> See Ewa Lajer-Burcharth and Elizabeth M. Rudy, *Drawing: The Invention of a Modern Medium* (Cambridge: Harvard Art Museums, 2017).

<sup>47</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>48</sup> See Robert Beachy, *Gay Berlin: Birthplace of a Modern Identity* (New York: Knopf, 2014); George Chauncey, *Gay New York: Gender, Urban Culture, and the Making of the Gay Male World, 1890–1940* (New York: Basic Books, 1994); Anita Kurimay, *Queer Budapest, 1873–1961* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2020); and Matt Houlbrook, *Queer London: Perils and Pleasures in the Sexual Metropolis, 1918–1957* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2005).

identity in Germany was produced and constructed in a variety of settings and locales.<sup>49</sup> As such, this project tracks queer histories and narratives at work not only in Berlin, but also in Dresden, Leipzig, Weimar, Hamburg, in other German-speaking intellectual centers like Vienna, in exile and diaspora across Europe and the West, and in encounters with indigenous communities across the Global South. Queer sexuality was not “made” in the “laboratory” of interwar Berlin, but rather over the course of the nineteenth and early twentieth centuries by a complex cast of actors across Germany and across the world.

Secondly, and finally, I wish to note that my project moves beyond scholarly tendencies to inflate the role of sexual science in the production of sexual knowledge and the creation of queer subjectivity in German epistemes. While much groundbreaking work has been produced on the contributions of Richard Krafft-Ebing, Karl Heinrich Ulrichs, and Magnus Hirschfeld, amongst others, such a Foucauldian hangover has stymied productive scholarship that examines queer sexuality in Germany prior to 1869 and scientific discursive formations of queer sexuality outside of the scope of *Sexualwissenschaft* proper. As such, my study intends to rethink scientific engagement with the concept of homosexuality and its attendant characteristics, peculiarities, peccadilloes, and attributes in order to expand our understanding of what might constitute “sexual science” before and beyond its disciplinary foundations. Though the history of sexual science is an important one, it is by no means the only one or the most important one. As we shall see, the heroic Hirschfeld who looms large in histories of a Berlin-centric history of sexuality was but one figure in a longstanding, multidisciplinary, and transregional history from which scientific and cultural understandings of the modern German homosexual emerged.

For reasons that will be fleshed out in more explicit terms over the following four chapters, I believe that rethinking drawing—or more specifically, *queering* drawing—also allows us to discover important truths about the normative hierarchies that have structured our discipline since its foundation and how conceptions of desire and sexuality have been implicit to the maintenance of those hierarchies. As I argue in chapter one, drawing was closely associated with imagination, fantasy, and the concept of procreation; the hierarchies and taxonomies that gave order and structure to the natural world and to humanity generally were also at work in the hierarchies that structured aesthetic understandings of media and artistic expression. As I aim to show in my examination of Carl Gustav Carus and Carl Friedrich von Rumohr, early-nineteenth-century understandings of graphic expression were inextricably tied to theories of biological reproduction and sexuality, which pivoted on the notion that non-procreative sexual subjectivities were indicators of non-procreative artistic subjectivities.

Chapter two stages a close examination of the dynamics at work in the premiere institution of nineteenth-century artistic life—the academy—in order to consider how anatomical discourses on the male body, beauty, and sensuality sought to curb the queer mark, and how young artists, including Ludwig von Hofmann and especially Sascha Schneider, worked within these objectifying discourses to imbue their nude studies with their own erotic sensibilities. Defying scientific proscriptions meant to ensure graphic and physical “health” and safeguard against graphic and physical “degeneracy,” the chapter argues that homosexual artists subverted their anatomical training and knowledge of the male body for their own queer purposes.

The persistence of the perceived affinities between queer sexuality and queer mark-making, which operated on both a conceptual and biological level, also came to be informed by discourses on race and primitivity, which I examine in detail in chapter three. The focus of this chapter is tattooing, which was of central interest to anthropological and ethnographic

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<sup>49</sup> I here acknowledge comments by Bodie A. Ashton at the 2022 symposium “Weimar Visions: Picturing Sexual Subjectivities” in Berlin, calling for a critical review of our collective interest in “Weimar Berlin” and a greater sensitivity to histories outside of Berlin.

discourses in Germany during the period that saw the realization of its colonial ambitions across the Global South. These discourses, which approached tattoos as drawings on the skin, were fundamentally reliant upon art historical and aesthetic theories and methods to cast homosexual men as atavistic social degenerates and contemporary, domestic “primitives.”

Not all scientific investigations into homosexuality sought to pathologize the queer mark, however. Chapter four analyzes the Weimar vogue for print, examining the ways in which luxury portfolios and specialized book production offered new ways for both queer men and sexual scientists to engage with drawings. For queer men, the process of making erotic drawings permanent on the page held the promise of forging homosexual bonds based on visual experiences shared within subcultural bibliophile communities. For a sexologist like Magnus Hirschfeld, the reproduction of drawings promised to publicize theories that de-pathologized homosexual creativity to a wider print public. This chapter situates this print culture within the landscape of Weimar anti-obscenity censorship and the Nazi war on books that sent much of Weimar’s queer print media up in smoke on Berlin’s Bebelplatz in May 1933.

In their cutting across genre and medium, these four case studies challenge prevalent notions not only about what constitutes a drawing, but also about how form and function often shape prevalent notions of what materials we include in art historical narratives and which we exclude. The study deliberately engages a variety of materials that are diverse in their audiences and materials, but which were united by the critical roles they played in the personal lives of queer men and in the research of scientists of sexuality. An emphasis on examining strategies for picturing queer desire *vis-à-vis* scientific conceptions of natural sexuality and healthy creativity, my goal in each of the chapters, enjoins each case study to the next.

Though scholars often caution against the case study’s tendency to silo objects of study and limit the integration of the study’s subject into an overarching theoretical system, I have chosen to focus each of the four chapters that comprise this project on object types that combat this tendency. I approach these objects both within the specific context of their production *and* as paradigmatic of broader social, cultural, and scientific debates active during the period in which they were produced: chapter one’s emphasis on private sketchbooks contributes to the picture of scientific debates about fantasy and imagination; chapter two’s analysis of academic nude drawing in nineteenth-century Dresden opens onto conclusions about anatomy’s role in casting “modernity” as a byword for degeneracy; the tattoos examined in chapter three were part of an ethnological investigative project that was indicative of more general European concerns about indigeneity and atavism; the bibliophile books discussed in chapter four (and the debates about mass culture and censorship they occasioned) are inextricable from the discursive webs that each of the preceding chapters helped to construct. The case studies are not standalone, but conceptually linked, not limited or singular in their theoretical propositions, but expansive and collaborative.

Nevertheless, I insist that the four primary object types that I analyze—private sketchbooks, academic nude studies, tattoos, and illustrated books—be read as four of *many* possible object types that informed both queer male identity and the studies of queer creativity produced by the scientists who studied them. A list of subgenres and object types that demand further investigation beyond the confines of the dissertation must include drawn graffiti, which has a rich and under-researched history in queer subcultural communities. The inclusion of graffiti in chapter three serves as a starting point for examinations that extend beyond Germany’s borders and consider both the production and reception of homoerotic graffiti.<sup>50</sup> My consideration of early academic work by Symbolist artists in chapter two provides a prompt

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<sup>50</sup> Few researchers have taken up the problem of modern homoerotic graffiti, though it is a richly documented area. Among them are the Swedish Hallwylska museet’s research project on the graffiti documenter Bengt Claudelin and research produced in conjunction with the Berlin Schwules Museum’s “Fenster zum Klo” See the exhibition catalog *Fenster zum Klo: Hommage an den Klappensex*, ed. Marc Martin (Paris: Agua, 2017).

to consider the queer valences of Symbolist modes of graphic expression, namely automatic drawing. Automatic drawing consciously engaged psychoanalytic notions of the subconscious, to which I only passingly refer in this project, but which were formative for queer self-conceptions after the turn of the twentieth century.<sup>51</sup> Relatedly, how might we locate attempts to two-dimensionally depict abstract notions of sexuality by sexologists and psychoanalysts themselves? The sizable corpus of graphics and schematic mappings produced by (or for) Sigmund Freud, Magnus Hirschfeld, and Fritz Kahn is rife for analysis.<sup>52</sup>

Methodological concerns and the need for delimiting parameters led me to select genres of drawing that spoke to more pervasive intellectual concerns that transcend the objects themselves. My hope, however, is that the approaches taken in the following chapters facilitate further analyses of “queer” drawings—architectural drawings, caricatures, children’s drawings, fashion and costume designs—excluded from this study out of necessity, but no less valuable as sites of subjectivity formation.<sup>53</sup> As I hope to demonstrate, drawing has historically been viewed as a medium electrified with queer meaning and potential. In the following chapters, I aim to articulate models for putting our own pens to paper in order to examine historical episodes in which queer draftsmen have activated this potential. I endeavor to sketch out, in other words, a queer history of graphic expression.

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<sup>51</sup> Although automatism and automatic drawing are typically associated with Surrealism, Allison Morehead has demonstrated their utility for Symbolist artists working around the turn of the twentieth century. See Allison Morehead, *Nature’s Experiments and the Search for Symbolist Form* (University Park: The Penn State University Press, 2017).

<sup>52</sup> See Davis’s analysis of Freud’s *Sexualschema* in Whitney Davis, *Replications: Archaeology, Art History, Psychoanalysis* (University Park: The Penn State University Press, 1996). Michael Sappol has written a comprehensive study of Kahn’s infographics in Michael Sappol, *Body Modern: Fritz Kahn, Scientific Illustration, and the Homuncular Subject* (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 2017).

<sup>53</sup> Work is already well underway in a number of these areas, even if the analytical emphasis is not primarily or consciously on drawing. See, for instance, Matthew M. Reeve, *Gothic Architecture and Sexuality in the Circle of Horace Walpole* (University Park: The Penn State University Press, 2020). On queer caricature, see Dominic Janes, *Oscar Wilde Prefigured: Queer Fashioning and British Caricature, 1750-1900* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2016). On queer fashion illustrations, see Abigail Joseph, *Exquisite Materials: Episodes in the Queer History of Victorian Style* (Wilmington: University of Delaware Press, 2019).

## Chapter 1 Against Nature: Naturalist Teleology and Queer Romantic Drawing

### 1. Rumohr's Dead Birds

In the graphics collection of the Staatliche Kunstsammlungen in Dresden is a small sheet of drawings from a sketchbook of the German art historian Carl Friedrich von Rumohr [fig. 1.1]. Evocatively titled “Study page with dead birds,” the sheet contains three drawings: one, in ink, depicts two small birds lying lifeless on their backs, dark masses of quickly dashed lines and spidery, curled feet. Another sketch, in pencil, appears to show one of the birds from the reverse perspective, as though Rumohr rotated its small body ninety degrees. At the bottom of the page, below the triad of avian corpses, the head of a young man appears, face angled away and down, eyes averted, a small smile pulling at the corners of his mouth. Though the use of two different drawing instruments indicates that the three sketches were made in at least two different sittings, Rumohr only provides a single date—November 26, 1822.

The composition is admittedly odd. Rumohr made the sketches in the year following the second of what would eventually be four art historical research trips to Italy. Rumohr contributed significantly to the development of disciplinary art history, providing what Wilhelm von Humboldt lauded as the first source-critical art history by seeking out documents instead of relying on literary sources.<sup>54</sup> Like many thinkers of his time, however, Rumohr was not merely an art historian. He was a trained draftsman, a gastronome, and a disciple of Romantic *Naturphilosophie* (philosophy of nature). As such, he was very much invested in the burgeoning discourse on the dynamics governing the natural world that characterized early-nineteenth-century scientific inquiry.

As I will explore in greater depth later in this chapter, however, Rumohr's life and work were also bound up in his desire for other men—an open secret during his lifetime. After his return from Italy in 1821, Rumohr set up house in Hamburg, where he regularly hosted young male artists, serving as both their patron and their teacher. Rumohr's Hamburg home became well known as a “harem” for handsome young male artists seeking his support.<sup>55</sup> Though it is difficult to assess the sexual dynamics at work in Rumohr's household, his contemporaries were inclined to believe that he received at least as much pleasure from the beauty of the young men as he did from the artwork they produced. The young man in the 1822 sketch is one of these protégés; Rumohr helpfully scrawls a name just below the figure's chin—“Fette”—which allows us to identify the subject with a good deal of certainty as the painter Heino Gerhardt Fette. Born in Hamburg in 1802, Fette trained in Germany before relocating to Boston in 1836 and carving out a career as a portrait painter and miniaturist, Anglicizing his name to Henry Gerhard.<sup>56</sup> While exceptionally little is known about Fette's life in Hamburg, we do know that he was a student of the renowned portraitist, Friedrich Karl Gröger. It is likely that Rumohr first encountered the young Fette through his connection to Gröger; the two men were well acquainted, and Gröger had painted Rumohr as a young man in 1802. The sketched portrait of Fette exudes feeling: the essence of an intimate moment quickly captured by the strokes of Rumohr's pencil.

The juxtaposition of the young male—the handsome recipient of Rumohr's tender gaze—and the dead birds is striking, and beautifully pictures (consciously or unconsciously)

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<sup>54</sup> For a recent treatment of Rumohr's contributions to disciplinary art history, see Christopher S. Wood, *A History of Art History* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2021), 204-5.

<sup>55</sup> Paul Derks, *Die Schande der heiligen Päderastie: Homosexualität und Öffentlichkeit in der deutschen Literatur 1750-1850* (Berlin: Verlag rosa Winkel, 1990), 526.

<sup>56</sup> For what little information is known about Fette, see Christiane Rohrschneider, “Henry Gerhard Fette,” in *Allgemeines Künstlerlexikon*, eds., Andreas Beyer, Bénédicte Savoy and Wolf Tegethoff (Berlin, New York: K. G. Saur, 2021).

the dynamic that I seek to articulate in this chapter: namely, that early-nineteenth-century scientists constructed models of life, morbidity, individual development, and the natural order that reproduced newly emerging ideas of same-sex desire as “unnatural” and degenerative in the face of nature’s telic, generative progression. It is tempting to envision the conceptual ties that bind Rumohr’s dead birds and young man: both the birds and the homoerotic subject of Rumohr’s desire drop out of the natural order, both signal morbidity, both portend degeneration. If Bizet likened heterosexual love to a *rebellious* bird half a century later, Rumohr seems to indicate that same-sex love is a *dead* one.

Following on from the propositions laid out in the introduction to this dissertation, I aim to explore the ways in which the epistemes developed in the early nineteenth century, which conceptually bound various subgenres of graphic expression to errant and perverse same-sex desire, came to bear on the artistic and scientific landscape of Romantic Germany between roughly 1820 and 1840. In particular, I will focus on three groupings of drawings: one group produced by the polymath Carl Gustav Carus, a second by a cohort of young “German-Roman” artists on tour through Italy, and a third by the aforementioned Rumohr. By contextualizing these works within contemporary naturalist discourses on the “health” and “degeneracy” of both the sexual subject and the creative drive, I argue that the Romantic period saw artists consciously explore the utility of graphic expression for picturing sexual subjectivity—and the consolidation of a discourse that articulated the practice’s normative limits.

## 2. Healthy Drawing and the Romantic Landscape

As argued in the introduction, the early nineteenth century saw the construction of a biological system, and subsequently a discursive system, that conjugated male creativity and sexuality. Many Romantic artists, therefore, did not make hard and fast differentiations between their pursuit to artistically reveal nature’s metaphysical idea or essential truth and their pursuit to give pictorial form to their sexual subjectivity. To the extent that we can read sexual subjectivity into the creative output of these artists, we might say that those who adhered to normative cultural scripts imbricated their drawings with a procreative (that is to say, heteronormative) sexuality that implicitly bound both their heterosexuality and their artistic production to nature’s telic forward march. Within an episteme that determined artistic and masculine fitness based on adherence to paths pre-determined to ensure both creative and biological development and perpetuation, drawings signified on multiple levels: a disciplined graphic practice indicated a disciplined pen *and* penis as well as creative *and* sex drives subjected to dictates that ensured the production of strong, healthy, more fully developed progeny.

This twinning of sexual subjectivity and the revelation of nature’s idea was often directly imposed onto imagery of nature itself as it came to be invoked by the poet’s pen or the artist’s brush. Without treating the sexual valence of this dynamic, Joseph Koerner has deftly argued for the significance of landscape painting for Romantic artists, who freed the genre from the fetters of objectivity and recast it as the site of subjective experience.<sup>57</sup> The landscape as *Erlebniskunst* (or experiential art) offered to the artist the opportunity to endow “fragments” of nature—a thicket, an overgrown ruin, a tree—with the significance and monumentality of the whole. The ability of the landscape to signify as the site of symbolically charged subjectivity, as the site of the artist’s experience that also comes to be internalized by the viewer as their *own* experience, was as revolutionary to the history of art as it was instrumental to the artist’s ability to relay and repackage personal experience as intersubjective experience. This could (and indeed often *did*, as we will see) extend to the revelation and depiction of nature’s

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<sup>57</sup> See Joseph Koerner, *Caspar David Friedrich and the Subject of Landscape* (London: Reaktion, 1990).



procreative capacities, which flowed from the artist's pen or brush in (pro-)creative artistic acts.

Just as the observation of nature could serve as an outlet for sexual subjectivity, so too could sexual experience grant one a fuller understanding of nature. Richards describes this dynamic at work in Goethe's natural philosophy following his journey through Italy, where he succumbed to the sexual temptations of a young Italian woman. According to Richards, Goethe found that "nature," the essence of which Goethe and his circle most ardently wished to comprehend, was made manifest in his Italian lover. The "erotic authority" of nature to which Goethe submitted himself opened up onto a fuller understanding of nature writ large. His Italian travels and the erotic experiences (some scholars suggest these included *homoerotic* experiences) he had there led him to rework extant ideas about nature: nature was not the "emissary of an aloof, divine power...stand[ing] apart from human beings," but was part of the human world and capable of being harnessed by the artist.<sup>58</sup> Importantly, Goethe's suppositions were inherently gendered: nature was "fecund," "generative," and, above all else, "female." This sexing of nature fundamentally shifted the paradigms governing the relationship between the artist and the world around him: just as (feminized) nature employed the "objective idea" to endow the world and its inhabitants with natural beauty, so too did (masculine) artistic genius stem from the ability to capture this essence and commit it to the paper or canvas. This pursuit of beauty, for Goethe and his followers, implicitly engaged discourses on sex and sexuality, as the visual experience of natural beauty combined with fantasy to generate a pictorial representation of the natural ideal in an act that itself mirrored nature's generative capacities.

The feminization of nature writ large was, at its heart, buttressed by a strong tendency to anthropomorphize its forms. Nina Amstutz has written extensively on this Romantic tendency to locate oneself or others within the natural world generally, and particularly within landscapes. As she notes, anthropomorphizing nature was an act that fundamentally depended on the *productive imagination*, but this did not mean that it was an entirely baseless projection of fantasy: "discovering traces of the human body in nature was evidently not understood as an empty projection of the self onto inanimate objects...those artists and scientists versed in the discourse of *Naturphilosophie* were accustomed to looking for some kind of hidden life...that would reveal itself through careful looking. By reading the physiognomy of nature, one could begin to decipher her hieroglyphic language."<sup>59</sup>

Reading nature's physiognomy and representing it visually was thus an exercise in urging the imagination along its naturally ordained path and simultaneously revealed the ties that bound humanity to nature. Amstutz recalls the philosophy of the Romantic painter and draftsman Philipp Otto Runge, who believed that "natural forms are always charged with human significance and morphology, because an original unity ties human beings to nature. To look at nature is, thus, always at once to look deep into the self."<sup>60</sup> As a result, landscapes provided an excellent outlet for the imagination to look for the human in nature—and often to picture it in a way that revealed its reproductive capacities. This idea held great sway amongst many German Romantic artists, though the Austrian Moritz von Schwind ridiculed it in an often-reproduced cartoon from 1847-48 called *Organic Life in Nature*, in which humanoid tree people stalk across a forested landscape and laze suggestively in the foreground [fig. 1.2].

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<sup>58</sup> Robert J. Richards, *The Romantic Conception of Life: Science and Philosophy in the Age of Goethe* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2002), 403-4. For further analysis of the erotics of Goethe's aesthetic position, see Helmut Müller-Sievers, "Writing Off: Goethe and the Meantime of Erotic Poetry," *MLN*, vol. 108, no. 3 (April 1993): 427-45. For speculation on Goethe's homosexual trysts in Italy, purportedly the inspiration for his *Römische Elegien*, see Sander L. Gilman, *Goethe's Touch: Touching, Seeing, and Sexuality*, Andrew W. Mellon Lectures (New Orleans: Graduate School of Tulane University, 1988).

<sup>59</sup> Nina Amstutz, *Caspar David Friedrich: Nature and the Self* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 2020), 85-6.

<sup>60</sup> *Ibid.*, 76.

Nature thus came to function not merely as a site upon which Romantic artists could stage their own subjective experience, but as a vivified entity embodying universal procreative drives that could be mirrored in the creative production of the artist who depicted it.

### 2.1. Carus, Drawing, and Procreative Genius

Exemplary in his pursuit of artistic genius by way of depictions of the reproductive, anthropomorphic landscape was Carl Gustav Carus, who, in addition to his training as an artist and a physiologist, also trained and practiced as a gynecologist and obstetrician. In 1814, Carus was appointed to the position of Royal Gynecologist and received a professorship in obstetrics at Dresden's Royal Surgical Medical Academy. Carus published widely on the female reproductive system and anatomy, including an influential *Lehrbuch der Gynäkologie (Textbook of Gynecology)* in 1820 and *Zur Lehre von Schwangerschaft und Geburt: physiologische, pathologische und therapeutische Abhandlungen (On the Teaching of Pregnancy and Birth: Physiological, Pathological, and Therapeutic Essays)* from 1824. Though Carus was primarily interested in female reproduction and gestation, his interests also extended to locating the human reproductive system within a more expansive system of animal reproductive anatomy; Carus explored morphological similarities between various forms and features of the vagina across the animal kingdom in his 1827 *Introduction to the Comparative Anatomy of Animals*, which featured an appendix of twenty engraved plates depicting various features of animal anatomy, including diagrams of whale and kangaroo vaginas [fig. 1.3]. For Carus, whose study of comparative anatomy served a more general interest in locating the development of human life within an interconnected web, the human female anatomy and ability to reproduce was but one significant instantiation of a universal natural tendency to create.

Importantly, Carus conceived of his own artistic practice as a means of harnessing and communing with this procreative drive. The artist's writings and pictorial oeuvre evidence a preoccupation with nature as a sexed entity that presented itself for his pleasure and enjoyment. This propensity to view nature as a procreative female is perhaps most clear in his landmark work of aesthetic theory, *Letters on Landscape Painting* (1815-24). His ninth letter, for instance, is replete with suggestive references to the eroticism of the natural landscape, writing of the temptation to view a mountain range as a "shapely human body," with a "swelling grandeur and undulating outline...clad and rounded with flesh and skin."<sup>61</sup>

Carus produced a great number of works that took fecund, reproductive nature as their subject. Exemplary in this regard is a series of works that the artist produced based on a single, formative trip to the municipality of Oybin, a town on Saxony's border with Czechia and a site that was particularly popular amongst Romantic artists who flocked to view its medieval monastic ruins. Though Carus produced a number of works based on his impressions in Oybin, indicating multiple visits, his stay in the town in August 1820 proved to be particularly generative.

On this visit, the artist produced several sketches all assigned the same date (11 August 1820) as he moved throughout the monastic ruins, which allows us to trace his engagement with his subject from initial impression to the distillation and revelation of the idea. The first two, *Glimpse into the Choir of the Oybin Monastery Church* and *Gothic Window of the Oybin Cloister Ruins* [figs. 1.4-1.5], provide perspectives of the ruins that depict them nestled within a verdant treescape and highlight their soaring monumentality. The ruin's windows and arches are clearly the subjects of Carus's interest, but the viewer here has the sense that the artist has not committed to a single perspective or mode of representation: a view of the chancel windows through a central arch is succeeded by a view of a double-arched Gothic window glimpsed

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<sup>61</sup> Carl Gustav Carus, *Nine Letters on Landscape Painting*, 139.

through foregrounded, watercolor trees. The compositions show a clear interest in his subject, but the artist has yet to hone in on any single fragment or detail that might give his work its personally symbolic weight.

Following the completion of these two sketches, however, Carus produced a third work that demonstrates his selection of an architectural “fragment,” which he would develop and transform into a preliminary study and eventually an oil painting. In his *Gothic Window of the Oybin Monastery Church* (1820), Carus focuses his attention on a single segment of the monastery’s exterior wall, pierced by an arched window through which a second window, and the landscape on the other side, is visible [fig. 1.6]. The facture of the work is in many ways less refined than the other two drawings that the artist produced at the Oybin monastery; the pencil strokes that articulate the brickwork and the arc of the windows are rough and gestural, suggesting, perhaps, an attempt to lay down the *idea* for a composition rather than to capture the essence of the subject itself. This notion is supported by the further development of the composition in a painting from nearly eight years later titled *Gothic Windows in the Ruins of the Monastery at Oybin* (1828) [fig. 1.7]. The painting is clearly a painstaking development of the original study of the work taken onsite in Oybin in 1820. Gone is the rough, graphite sketchiness of the drawing; here, Carus has refined and enhanced the composition through the careful application of paint. The now beveled cornicing, the delicate punctuation of the tracery, and the incorporation of additional shrubbery and undergrowth evince the creative development of the original composition beyond the essential components captured in his sketch.

Though we can perhaps safely read the ruined Gothic window at Oybin as a charged “fragment” in Koerner’s sense of the term, attempts to derive any sort of explicitly erotic symbolism from the depiction of the ruins remain stunted at the level of conjecture (given Carus’s professional background as a gynecologist and his tendency to anthropomorphize natural forms, the viewer might be tempted to read the Gothic apertures as female genitalia, though the artist made no written claims that this was in fact the case). Irrespective of symbolism, the works do picture the harmonious, complementary binaries that, in Carus’s estimation, powered the natural world and sexual procreation alike. Just as earth complemented sky and animal complemented vegetation, so too did man complement woman, conjugating to generate and sustain new life. Generative systems could *only* function as a result of such harmonious oppositional pairings. In its final, painted iteration, Carus’s microcosmic meditation on the ruins at Oybin registers a number of harmonious and generative opposites (interior and exterior, landscape and ruinscape, light and dark, plant and mineral) that recall the macrocosmic generative opposites beyond the picture plane that were central to Carus’s aesthetic and philosophical program (genius and muse, revealer and revealed, active male and passive female). As such, the symbolism of the fragment becomes secondary to the significance of the teleological act of producing successive compositions that develop and refine these complementary binaries. In so doing, Carus positions himself as an emissary of nature’s procreative drive whose talent derives from his ability to replicate nature’s reproductive drive in his own creative process.

My interest here is the seriality of drawing in Carus’s picturing of procreative nature, which serves as a waystation on his successive progression through increasingly “higher” forms of graphic expression—a journey that reaches its terminus in oil painting. While a robust discourse on the merits of landscape painting had developed by the early nineteenth century, most scholars have tended to hone in on “landscape” as the operative term, and for good reason; as Oskar Bätschmann has noted, after the turn of the nineteenth century, landscape painting

came to “occupy a higher rank than before” in the hierarchy of genres.<sup>62</sup> But such a position was also predicated on medium: painting, in its perceived degree of finish and use of color, was also critical to this elevated status. Carus lauded sketches and preliminary drawings, like his early Oybin studies, for their ability to reveal important aspects of a subject, though he valued them only in so far as they could advance along a developmental timeline to “higher” forms, and here, too, they were subject to aesthetic regulations that ensured they were “noble” (i.e., healthy) and did not err from their true goal: painting. The merit of a finished landscape painting, such as *Gothic Windows*, was that it consolidated received impressions of nature’s essential mystery and refined them into the *most* “noble,” *highest* form of pictorial representation.

Carus’s artistic treatment of the sexed, generative landscape represented the aesthetically prescribed course that the productive imagination was expected to take. Within this dynamic, a heteronormative, procreative conception of nature held up a mirror to the artistic genius, who submitted their fantasy and drawing practice to developmental and telic dictates that ensured they would metaphorically father a true and noble representation of nature. But, of course, this fantasy sometimes erred from this procreative path, and drawings, as indices of sexualized fantasy, sometimes failed to adhere to proscriptions meant to ensure fitness and the revelation of the natural idea. Nowhere was this derivation more pronounced than in the case of the same-sex desiring subject.

### 3. Homosexual Fantasy and the Perverted Creative Drive

Just as healthy drawings could index a healthy and procreative fantasy, they could also function as traces of a disturbed, degenerate, or perverse fantasy driven wildly off its natural course. Within the realm of sexuality, an unnatural fantasy was most readily associated with practitioners of intercourse *sexus homogenii*, or same-sex intercourse, which constituted a carnal crime against nature. Indeed, the late eighteenth and early nineteenth century saw the development of a discourse that pitted same-sex intercourse against a new, robust concept of nature. Kant summarized this position in his *Lectures on Ethics*:

Second among the *crimina carnis contra naturam* is intercourse *sexus homogenii*, where the object of sexual inclination continues, indeed, to be human, but is changed since the sexual congress is not heterogeneous but homogenous, i.e., when a woman satisfies her impulse on a woman, or a man on a man. This also runs counter to the ends of humanity, for the ends of humanity in regard to this impulse is to preserve the species without forfeiture of the person; but by this practice I by no means preserve the species, which can still be done through a *crimina carnis contra naturam*, only that there I again forfeit my person, and so degrade myself below the beasts, and dishonor humanity.<sup>63</sup>

It was the work of a physician, not a philosopher, however, that fundamentally shifted the understanding of same-sex intercourse; in his work on the etiology of pathological sexual behaviors, Heinrich Kaan moved the discourse on same-sex desire away from philosophical musings and into the realm of biological pathology. Kaan posited the existence of a “scientifically defined unity of nature and morality,” the unity of which required that the individual’s *imagination* remain subordinate and adequately controlled.<sup>64</sup> Same-sex

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<sup>62</sup> Oskar Bätschmann, “Carl Gustav Carus (1789-1869): Physician, Naturalist, Painter, and Theoretician of Landscape Painting,” in *Nine Letters on Landscape Painting*, 26.

<sup>63</sup> Immanuel Kant, *Lectures on Ethics*, ed. Peter Heath (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1997), 161.

<sup>64</sup> Niklaus Largier, *In Praise of the Whip: A Cultural History of Arousal* (New York: Zone Books, 2007), 435.

practitioners, in Kaan's estimation, defiled nature and morality through their failure to discipline their fantasy. As Niklaus Largier notes, in Kaan's work,

A "healthy fantasy" follows a "healthy nature." By contrast, an overextravagant fantasy reflects not only a moral transgression of the norm and hence a morally dubious commerce with the libido, but an actual sickening or malformation of the psychical and physical constitution—of the underlying normality that determines "healthy sexuality."<sup>65</sup>

Homosexuality constituted a "sickening" of the individual's psychological and somatic constitution, which itself was the direct product of an unhealthy fantasy that corrupted both morally and libidinally. Kaan summarized the causal relationship between the imagination and sexual perversion by asserting that "in every distortion of the sexual instinct, it is the imagination that supplies the path that fulfills it, contrary to the laws of nature."<sup>66</sup> "Distortion" functioned as a kind of catchall term that effectively ascribed a host of "unnatural" perversions to same-sex practitioners; queer men were not only condemned on account of their lewd engagement with other men, but were also often closely associated with frequent masturbation, necrophilia, and bestiality. In Kaan's conceptual system, "all these types of deviation are merely forms of one and the same thing, and they cross into one another."<sup>67</sup>

Given the prevailing conception of fantasy as the engine powering graphic expression, it followed that individuals with "unnatural" and unchecked fantastic drives would produce drawings that similarly fell outside the boundaries of the normative creative telos. In order to more fully articulate the position of drawing within Romantic homosocial and homosexual dynamics, I will examine two discrete sets of works that occupied distinct positions on the continuum of graphic health—one set that tested the limits of healthy graphic expression and another which occupied a purely pathological position.

### 3.1. Romantic Artists and Homosocial Portraiture

The first of these sets is a robust body of drawings produced by German artists visiting or living in Rome (either temporarily or, in some cases, permanently) between roughly 1810 and 1830, which comprise an as-yet unexplored pictorial archive. These artists are typically referred to as the *Deutschrömer* (German-Romans) and their ranks were comprised of a number of artist groups (including the Nazarenes and the Ponte-Moll-Gesellschaft, among others) who had converged in the Eternal City for their own personal and artistic reasons. Beate Schroedter has written that a great many of these idealistic young artists traveled to Rome "following the spirit of Winckelmann," forming a transitional cohort of artists steeped in Neoclassical enthusiasm for antiquity while also beginning to explore Romantic tenets in their lives and practices. Schroedter estimates that thirty to forty German artists arrived in Rome each year at the peak of this artistic migration and that the number of newly minted German-Romans who relocated between 1813 and 1848 totaled well over 1,200.<sup>68</sup>

Despite the fact that many of the young male artists who traveled to Italy as *Deutschrömer* would hone their painting skills and achieve great recognition and success as

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<sup>65</sup> Ibid., 437.

<sup>66</sup> Heinrich Kaan, *Psychopathia sexualis: A Classic Text in the History of Sexuality* (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 2016), 82.

<sup>67</sup> Heinrich Kaan, *Psychopathia sexualis*, ed. Benjamin Kahan, trans. Melissa Haynes (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 2016), 82.

<sup>68</sup> Beate Schroedter, *...denn lebensgroß gezeichnet und vermessen stehst Du im Künstlerbuch. Porträts deutscher Künstler in Rom zur Zeit der Romantik* (Ruhpolding und Mainz und Winckelmann-Gesellschaft Stendal, 2008), 11.

portrait and especially landscape painters, a significant portion of the works produced while in Rome were studies of *each other*. The number of drawn portraits produced by these young men of the friends they met in Rome is remarkable and provides unique perspective into the dynamics that prevailed in these expatriate artistic circles. We might consider these works to be part of the larger Romantic cult of male friendship, which has been the subject of substantial scholarly debate by scholars of gender and sexuality.<sup>69</sup> Certainly, strong affective and emotional bonds were commonplace between men during the Romantic period, and men—including many of the men in this chapter—openly engaged in public displays of affection, dedicated poetry and works of art to each other, and corresponded with each other using verbiage we might today categorize as romantic or even erotic. Robert Deam Tobin has highlighted that the role of the male friend in the early nineteenth century was akin to the role a partner might occupy today; indeed, the relationship between male friends was the basis for marital relationships between a husband and a wife, not the other way around.<sup>70</sup>

Artistically, these male friendships often provided fodder for a pictorial genre known as *Freundschaftsbilder*, or friendship pictures. These pictures were intended to serve the critical function of memorializing male friendships and solidifying male communities that were based on intense affection and mutual admiration, but they often struggled to capture these qualities.<sup>71</sup> Take, for instance, an 1836 friendship portrait of the artists Rudolf Müller and Friedrich Horner by Gottlob Wenzel [fig. 1.8]. The two men sit side by side behind a sketchy and unfinished intimation of a table. Smartly dressed in topcoats and neckerchiefs, the two men are positioned in front of a rocky Italian seascape—a nod to their careers as landscape painters. The two men could not appear further apart, however, despite their physical proximity; they do not acknowledge the other’s presence, their eyes do not meet. The coldness has been recognized by scholars like Inge Eichler, who noted that the “double portrait could just as well represent a chance meeting between two people as a portrait of inseparable friends who were connected by a longstanding creative and living community.”<sup>72</sup> The difficulty to convey the attachments between the sitters is evident in a number of these friendship portraits, including Rudolphe Suhrlandt’s portrait of Wilhelm Schadow, Rudolf Schadow, Ferdinand Ruscheweyh [fig. 1.9]. Though beautifully drafted, the positioning of the three men fragments the picture plane; the work reads more like three disparate, individual portraits that have been collated into one composition—a symptom, perhaps, of not having the sitters in the same place at the same time. Whatever the reasoning for the awkward detachment that plagues a number of these friendship pictures, it is clear that they often failed to convey the emotional connectivity and interpersonal attachments of the sitters whose friendship it sought to memorialize.

The portraits that I will examine provide a foil to these friendship pictures and, I argue, had a greater degree of success as documents of affection and admiration. The production of such portraits was widespread and common primarily amongst German artists, but they were also popular amongst Austrian and Scandinavian artists living in Rome. Producing a friend’s portrait, and having your portrait drawn by a friend in turn, produced what Sine Krogh has termed a “friendship-economy” in which emotional attachments were both conveyed and

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<sup>69</sup> Important texts in this debate include Ewald Tscheck and Manfred Herzer, “Der mann-männliche Eros in der deutschen Romantik,” *Forum Homosexualität und Literatur* vol. 26 (1996); Alice Kuzniar, *Outing Goethe and his Age* (Palo Alto: Stanford University Press, 1996); and Robert Deam Tobin, *Warm Brothers: Queer Theory and the Age of Goethe* (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 2000).

<sup>70</sup> Robert Deam Tobin, *Warm Brothers: Queer Theory and the Age of Goethe*, 35-9.

<sup>71</sup> The seminal reference for the friendship picture is Klaus Lankheit, *Das Freundschaftsbild der Romantik* (Heidelberg: C. Winter, 1952).

<sup>72</sup> Beate Schroedter, *...denn lebensgroß gezeichnet und vermessen stehst Du im Künstlerbuch. Porträts deutscher Künstler in Rom zur Zeit der Romantik*, 227.

received in the production of drawings.<sup>73</sup> The drawings thus functioned as a kind of affective currency, whereby individual artists could demonstrate their admiration for friends and have friends express admiration for them in return.

The popularity of this practice led the German artists living in Rome in the 1830s to compile a bound album of these drawn portraits to keep in the library of the Villa Malta in Rome. Artists began the album, known as the *Sammlung von Bildnissen Deutscher Künstler in Rom* (*Collection of Portraits of German Artists in Rome*), in 1832 and continued it well throughout the 1840s. Strict rules were put in place to protect and regulate the volume's use and access: only artists from German-speaking countries were permitted to participate, artists had to reside in Rome for a specified period of time before their portrait could be included, and the portraits were required to be *drawn by hand*. The album was to remain in the depository of the Villa Malta's library, where it would be accessible on special occasions and every Sunday morning between eight and nine o'clock.<sup>74</sup>

The album is an invaluable document of the lives of German artists working in Rome in the early nineteenth century and features well over 150 drawn portraits. Though the album includes drawings of both young artists and more mature artists, the production of a portrait for the *Sammlung* seemed to primarily be a rite of passage for young artists still in the early stages of their artistic careers. A look through the collection reveals men in various poses and gestures, states of formality and dress, with and without props. It appears that, for all of the rules surrounding the album and the types of works that went into it, few restrictions were placed upon the artists with regard to the style of the drawing itself. A great many of the drawings are rendered with aching tenderness and attention to detail, presenting a portrait of a sitter that feels proximate to the viewer. A representative example of a portrait in the collection is Benno Toermer's portrait of Karl Wilhelm Götzloff, dating from October 15, 1835 [fig. 1.10]. Positioned in three-quarters view, Götzloff angles his head directly ahead and stares intently back at the viewer. Toermer has captured the sweep and curl of his friend's hair, a gleam in his eyes, the slight upward pull of his lip into a soft smile that ripples his cheek. Though the nature of the relationship between Toermer and Götzloff is unclear, both men were from Dresden and likely knew one another prior to relocating to Rome. As his friend's portraitist, Toermer has managed to strikingly convey those qualities that Julius Schnorr von Carolsfeld had seen in Götzloff's own work: "infinite fidelity and tenderness."<sup>75</sup>

Other portraits in the collection were produced as what we might term mutual portraits, or a set of portraits in which the artists took turns drawing each other. Such is the case with the portraits of the Bohemian artist Augustin Palme and the German artist Franz August Schubert. The vitae of these artists are relatively unremarkable: both artists studied under Julius Schnorr von Carolsfeld at the Dresden Academy (1829-1830) and both worked on monumental fresco and altarpiece projects back home in Germany. Schubert lived in Rome between 1834 and 1841, while Palme's stay in the city was much shorter, lasting from Spring 1836 to Autumn 1837.<sup>76</sup> The portraits that the artists drew of each other are dated between March and May 1837, indicating that the project was undertaken towards the end of Palme's time in Rome, just months before he departed for Munich by way of Naples and Capri.

When read in tandem, as pendants, the drawings are two of the most moving portraits in the collection [figs. 1.11-1.12]. In content and convention, the two works are relatively standard. Both men sit in three-quarter view in their best coats and ties. Each of the artists has

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<sup>73</sup> Sine Krogh, "Friendship and Portraits in the Age of Romanticism: Reflections of Eight Portraits by C.A. Jansen," *Romantik 04: Journal for the Study of Romanticisms*, vol. 4 (2015): 27-48. 30.

<sup>74</sup> Beate Schroedter, *...denn lebensgroß gezeichnet und vermessen stehst Du im Künstlerbuch. Porträts deutscher Künstler in Rom zur Zeit der Romantik*, 177-8.

<sup>75</sup> Cited in *Ibid.*, 151.

<sup>76</sup> *Ibid.*, 231, 241-2.

chosen to depict his sitter from the chest up, looking directly ahead. The direct eye contact that appears so striking to the contemporary viewer evidences intimate contact between the two men at the time of the drawing's production: the stare with which the viewer is confronted was once intended solely for his friend. Like Götzloff, Schubert wears a slight grin, the left side of his mouth drawing upwards. His eyes are orbs, oversized and light colored, the highlights of the irises echoing off the highlights in his hair. His gaze is penetrating, boring a hole into his friend the draftsman directly across from him. Palme's portrait by Schubert is equally breathtaking: the neutrality of Palme's expression belies the dynamism of his gaze, his eyes similarly gazing back at Schubert as he draws. Schubert has taken extreme care in his attention to detail, rendering the wear of his overcoat and the muss of his hair, tousled and curling at the temples, with the affectionate strokes of his pencil. The works evidence a temporally specific interpersonal exchange between two male friends that are masterworks in the genre of the study; they are records, we might say, of intense and prolonged visual engagements with the body of another, resulting in pictures of the men that are physically accurate representations of the sitters vivified by the creative imagination of a friend.

These drawings beautifully embody the emotionally charged intersubjective relationships that formed between artists during their stays in Rome. In fact, we might consider these portraits as pictorial explorations that sought to elucidate one's own subjectivity through engagement with the object of one's affection. The notion that one could learn fundamental truths about one's own subjectivity by looking outside of oneself and towards others was a key element of Romantic philosophy from the movement's earliest years and formed a cornerstone of the poet and philosopher Novalis's late work. Jane Kellner notes that:

...the fundamental interplay of the inner self with the outer world—especially with other “selves”—becomes a trope in Novalis's maturing philosophical and literary work...He worries about whether there are means other than mere sense perception for “getting outside ourselves and reaching other beings”...The answer to these metaphysical questions about the nature of the subject is that it is essentially social, and specifically it is most itself when it is “in love” with other human beings....<sup>77</sup>

This sizable body of drawings, I argue, constitutes a pictorial working through of Novalis's notion that the subject gains exclusive knowledge of himself as a result of social encounters and “‘interpersonal’ exchanges with nonsubject selves.”<sup>78</sup> That is to say, these drawings function as both traces of an intimate affective encounter between men and also as documents of the artist's coming to terms with his *own* subjectivity through the visual exploration of his beloved *friend's* subjectivity.

While it would be incorrect to suggest that all of the portraits in the *Collection of Portraits* contain traces of a homoerotic sensibility, it would be equally irresponsible to ignore the possibility that several of them, in fact, do. Many of the German artists who arrived in Italy had relocated not only in search of greater artistic freedom, but for greater sexual freedom, as well. In Rome, these young artists found an environment in which the aesthetic and sensual appreciation of the same sex was not only possible, but prevalent; even Goethe noted his surprise at the openness of “homosexual friendships” in Rome during his Italian travels.<sup>79</sup> Spaces such as the Villa Malta and the Palazzo Caffarelli, as well as Rumohr's own private villa in Olevano, provided the opportunity for these men to live, work, eat, and sleep in a

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<sup>77</sup> Jane Kellner, “Sociability and the Conduct of Philosophy: What We Can Learn from Early German Romanticism,” in *The Relevance of Romanticism: Essays on German Romantic Philosophy*, ed. Dalia Nassar (New York: Oxford University Press, 2014), 117.

<sup>78</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>79</sup> Nicholas Boyle, *Goethe: The Poet and the Age*, vol. 1 (New York: Oxford University Press, 1992), 505.



homosocial environment, not bound by conventions that may have precluded the possibility of close male-male relations in Northern Europe. Even within the Catholic spiritualistic Nazarene group, which relocated to Rome in 1810, male artistic bonds fluctuated and oscillated between fraternal friendship and amorous desire, as Cordula Grewe has expertly argued with regard to the relationship between Johannes Overbeck and the queer Franz Pforr.<sup>80</sup>

It is not my intention to retroactively “homosexualize” these artists—a move that would no doubt be met with hostility by scholars of Romanticism who vehemently (and, in some cases, quasi-homophobicly) refute the notion that the cult of male friendship that formed such a crucial cornerstone of same-sex relations in the early nineteenth century approached anything resembling homosexuality. I do wish to wish to argue, however, that these studies teetered dangerously close to the edge of healthy graphic expression, representing a genre that saw these young artists exploring their affection for their fellow men in ways that allowed them to work through their male relationships and, in some cases, sublimate queer desire into aesthetically and ethically sanctioned forms of drawing. Indeed, present in these drawn studies is a palpability that speaks to the intimacy, erotic or otherwise, that arises from—and is mediated by—the act of drawing another’s portrait. The sheer number of these homosocial studies is indicative of that which the theorist Jean-Luc Nancy describes as the “overwhelming compulsion to scribble, draft, trace, sketch out, or outline”—an ecstatic compulsion that borders on “priapism”—that these prolific artists channeled through the careful and measured strokes of the drawing implement.<sup>81</sup> That none of these studies advanced to the stage of preparatory drawings and were not executed as paintings, existing instead as standalone documents of a private encounter, bolsters an understanding of them as products of a creative drive and imagination reveling in male beauty, strength, or genius that presses against the boundaries erected against “unnatural” congress between men.

It is possible to measure these drawings against another collection of male portraits to see throw the liminality of the Roman drawings into relief. In the upper rooms of his home in Halberstadt, the German poet Johann Wilhelm Ludwig Gleim constructed a space he called the “Temple of Friendship” (*Freundschaftstempel*), which primarily functioned as a kind of memorial to male homosociality. Hung on the walls of the Temple were over 120 painted portraits of these friends and protégés painted by a number of commissioned painters, including the famed Swiss portraitist Anton Graff [figs. 1.13-1.14]. These relationships, as he memorialized them in his own personal museum, came to constitute “the sole force that gave life meaning.” John Harry North notes that, “as Gleim grew older, he surrounded himself with young men, his protégés, who remained with him as his house-guests and who relied on his patronage.”<sup>82</sup> Despite the clarity of the homosociality underpinning the Temple of Friendship, scholars have acknowledged that the creative imagination that led to the collection of these male portraits was, in fact, heteronormative; as George Mosse suggests on the basis of the poet’s personal letters and diaries, Gleim’s “fantasies were firmly heterosexual.”<sup>83</sup>

The portraits in Gleim’s collection offer a counter to the roughly contemporaneous collection of portraits made by the young German-Romans. Gleim’s holdings saw the sublimation of homosociality, the defanging of its potentially errant amative qualities, and the ascension of the creative imagination and its pictorial product to a fraternally platonic ideal;

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<sup>80</sup> This fraternal, one-sidedly erotic relationship played itself out at the level of the picture, as Pforr negotiated his desire for his friend Overbeck through the gender dynamics of his 1857 painting *Sulamith and Maria*, which transformed over the course of its translation from sketch to oil painting. See Cordula Grewe, *Painting the Sacred in the Age of Romanticism* (New York: Routledge, 2009), 61-98.

<sup>81</sup> Jean-Luc Nancy, *The Pleasure in Drawing* (New York: Fordham University Press, 2013), 15.

<sup>82</sup> John Harry North, *Winckelmann’s “Philosophy of Art”: A Prelude to German Classicism* (Newcastle upon Tyne: Cambridge Scholars, 2012), 88.

<sup>83</sup> George Mosse, *Nationalism and Sexuality: Middle-Class Morality and Sexual Norms in Modern Europe* (Madison: University of Wisconsin Press, 2020), 64.

the portraits of Götzloff, Palme, Schubert, and others threaten to elude such an ascension. They remain intimate studies indefinitely, their barefaced intimacy hinting at a transgressive imaginative drive and their removal from a developmental timeline (for they are not preparatory but exist for their own sake) jeopardizing their adherence to the “natural” course of both art and the development of heteronormative sexuality.

### 3.2 Carl Friedrich von Rumohr and the Queer Sketch

If the studies by the young German-Romans occupy an ambiguous or precarious place on the continuum of healthy graphic expression, we need only look to the graphic practice of their sponsor and patron, Carl Friedrich von Rumohr, to observe a practice deemed pathological by sexual-aesthetic standards. Rumohr was born into a wealthy aristocratic family near Lübeck in northern Germany in 1785 and attended the University of Göttingen from 1802 to 1804. It was here that he first encountered the Romantics via Ludwig Tieck. He also took drawing lessons from the artist Johann Domenicus Fiorillo, painter and author of the *History of Drawn Arts* (1798-1808) and the *History of the Drawn Arts in Germany and the United Netherlands* (1815-20). After receiving his inheritance upon the death of his father at age twenty, Rumohr departed on the first of three trips to Italy, a journey that would lead to a lifelong devotion to Italian art and culture and prove to be the genesis of his groundbreaking *Italian Studies*, published in three volumes between 1827 and 1831. Remembered today as the second major German intervention in the history of classical art following the work of Winckelmann and the first source-critical history of art, Rumohr based his *Italian Studies* upon extensive archival research in Siena, Florence, and Rome, and provided a history of Italian art from the medieval period to Raphael that placed critical pressure on the accounts of Vasari that he had intently studied during his time at Göttingen.

In addition to his scholarly work, Rumohr’s interest in Italy likely conformed to his interest in beautiful art and beautiful young men, an interest that he pursued both at home in Hamburg and on his Italian journeys. Following his first journey to Rome, where he met and mingled with the German Nazarenes, Rumohr returned to his familial home in Holstein. He would maintain his primary residence there until the end of his life. Rumohr became intimately involved with the burgeoning art scene in Hamburg as a patron and hobby instructor and in 1824 was elected to the Hamburger Kunstverein as an honorary member, a role which he filled until 1831/32. He served as a mentor to a number of young artists of the Hamburg School, including Franz Horny and Friedrich Nerly—both of whom participated in the aforementioned homosocial portrait-making sessions. Rumohr supplemented Horny and Nerly’s theoretical and practical education in Hamburg with trips to Italy, taking Horny on a trip to Florence, Siena, and Rome between 1816-21 and taking Nerly as his companion to Rome and Venice between 1828-29.

While Rumohr’s contributions to art history have largely been eclipsed by the earlier work of Winckelmann, so too has his desire for other men been elided from extant accounts. The most explicit account of Rumohr’s reputation as homoerotically inclined comes from the private letters of Heinrich Heine, the lauded (and inflammatory) poet of the early nineteenth century. In a letter to his friend Karl August Varnhagen von Ense dated January 3, 1830, Heine rails against Rumohr, referring to him as the “Missionary of Pederasty” and taking aim at the “artist’s harem” of young men that he maintained at his residence in Hamburg.<sup>84</sup> As additional evidence, Heine touts Rumohr’s close relationship with August von Platen, Heine’s nemesis and a man well known by his contemporaries as a lover of the same sex. Heine refers to Rumohr as Platen’s “body friend” (*Leibfreund*) and asserts that he and Platen had “stirred in the soup,”

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<sup>84</sup> Paul Derks, *Die Schande der heiligen Päderastie: Homosexualität und Öffentlichkeit in der deutschen Literatur 1750-1850*, 526.

a double entendre that likely played on Rumohr's successful 1822 gastronomic text, *The Spirit of the Culinary Arts of Joseph König*.<sup>85</sup> Rumohr and Platen did indeed share a close personal bond. The two men maintained a years-long correspondence and paid regular visits to each other when in Italy, often at Rumohr's apartments in the Villa Castellani in Florence. Given Heine's homophobic musings against Rumohr, prompted by his viewing of an 1829 staging of Platen's *The Romantic Oedipus* (a play that, in his mind, was a thinly disguised dramatization of Platen and his "clique"), it is reasonable to assume that his predilection for members of the same sex no great secret to those in German intellectual circles.

It certainly would have been known by Carus, with whom Rumohr was well acquainted and who performed a post-mortem autopsy on Rumohr after his death in 1844, writing a thorough report and taking a death mask for his personal collection. In actual fact, this death mask likely formed the basis for Carus's own scientific study of Rumohr's craniological structure. Following the publication of his aforementioned scientific text, *Basic Features of a New Cranioscopy* (1841), he published an accompanying atlas of illustrations entitled *Atlas of Cranioscopy*, a visual aid to the theories set forth in his text. In the atlas, Carus examines an astonishingly variegated assortment of craniological "types": in addition to skull profiles of an Egyptian mummy prince, a modern Greek male, a female suicide victim, a female "poison murderer," and a female "idiot," Carus provides analysis of three contemporary German men: the philosopher Immanuel Kant, the poet Christophe August Tiedge, and, notably, Carl Friedrich von Rumohr.

Carus's craniological exposition retains previously developed phrenological associations between the posterior portions of the brain, particularly the cerebellum, and sexuality.<sup>86</sup> The lithograph of Rumohr, originally drawn and printed under Carus's direction by the Dresden-based artist Moritz Krantz, is accompanied by an explanatory text, which highlights the most prominent features of the art historian's skull and their significance. "The occiput," Rumohr writes, "the region of the will and of drive, generally speaking, is strongly developed, but especially in breadth, which corresponds to the will as well as the sex drive..."<sup>87</sup> To drive home the notable breadth of Rumohr's occiput, made to expand and protrude by the outsized organ of amativeness, Carus provides a table that overlays the profile outlines of Kant, Rumohr, Tiedge, and the Egyptian mummy, resulting in a topographical mapping of craniological terrain [fig. 1.15]. Rumohr's skull is here outlined in black. Though the poet Tiedge demonstrably outsizes Rumohr in the height of the middle region (the region responsible for feeling) and the two men's frontal regions are roughly on par with each other (demonstrating active imaginative faculties), Rumohr's posterior region is shown to be far larger than those of either of his German contemporaries. According to the homology that correlated excessive sexual drive and errant imagination, Carus's contoured outline paints a scientifically supported image of Rumohr as subject with a potentially dangerous (that is to say, unnatural) sexuality and creative output.

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<sup>85</sup> Ibid., 528.

<sup>86</sup> Franz Josef Gall provided the most complete explanation of the ways in which emotional characteristics and subjective propensities could be deduced from a subject's neural anatomy—a field he termed craniology. For Gall, the cerebellum held the key to two of the most basic and essential human functions: physical love and reproduction. In Gall's estimation, the cerebellum was the seat of lust. A larger cerebellum indicated lasciviousness and excessive or aberrant sexual desire, while a small or underdeveloped cerebellum resulted in a lack of sexual appetite. The relative size of the cerebellum could be deduced through careful examination on the part of the trained physician or diagnosed based on symptoms, including skin hot to the touch or a propensity to sleep on one's back. See Richard C. Sha, "Scientific Forms of Sexual Knowledge in Romanticism," *Romanticism on the Net* no. 23 (2001).

<sup>87</sup> Carl Gustav Carus, *Atlas der Cranioscopie (Schädellehre)*, v. 2 (Leipzig: August Weichardt, 1845), Tafel II, 21.

Though I do not wish to suggest that Rumohr's individual case stands in for queer drawing *tout court*, I do argue that his career is indicative of a more pervasive sexual-creative dynamic. A key element of this reading hinges on the fact that Rumohr's artistic activity remained limited to drawings and sketches for the entirety of his career; though he completed hundreds of drawings and filled several sketchbooks, he completed no paintings. This loitering at the level of sketches and studies would have certainly registered as a defect within Carus's procreative and telic developmental framework.

Given that drawings formed virtually the entirety of the artist's practice, his oeuvre makes a natural case study in articulating the associations between graphic expression and same-sex desire. Beyond the assiduousness with which Rumohr pursues impressions of the male form in all its variations and guises, the artist's sketches also signify queerly at the level of composition. In a great number of sketches, currently held in Dresden, the artist integrates his interest in the male form and his interest in nature, curiously juxtaposing male faces and rural landscapes. In some compositions, mature male faces are sketched in the margins of more developed landscape sketches (as in *Mountain Landscape*, fig. 1.16) or form a counterpart to an equally as quickly sketched scene (as in the untitled page from a sketchbook in fig. 1.17). In some cases, as in his *Italian Landscape*, male faces rendered in ink bleed through the paper and imprint themselves as spectral presences within the landscapes themselves [figs. 1.18-1.19].

These idiosyncratic compositions do not lend themselves to an easy or straightforwardly erotic reading. The men in the sketches are not uniformly young and idealized, as we might expect; indeed, most of them are older, bearded men, like Rumohr himself—far more Homeric than ephebic. But though these sketches do not present a vision of “idealized” or classical male beauty that one might expect from the brand of queer aesthetics promoted by Winckelmann, for instance, the array of faces does accord with Rumohr's more expansive notion of beauty. Writing in his 1832 *Three Journeys to Italy*, Rumohr notes that beauty can take on multiple guises and manifest in three different ways: through the “purely sensual excitability” of sight, the “receptivity of the soul to more general moods” such as proportion, and the “excitability of the mind” that stems from character and expression.<sup>88</sup> For Rumohr, beauty could be imparted even to “indifferent or ugly material” in the artist's hands and appreciated as such. That Rumohr's men do not embody an eroticized masculine ideal does not preclude them from being read as “beautiful” in Rumohr's sense, as they represented for the artist the great variety of individual appearances that could stem from a universal idea of male beauty—a multiplicity made visible in a sheet of drawn male head studies that he produced between 1815 and 1820 [fig. 1.20].

Indeed, the variety of faces that Rumohr brings together evidences a distinctly queer Romantic conception of gender defined by multiplicity and transgression. As Laura George has noted in her study of gender in Romantic Britain, “the many species of men” that proliferated during the Romantic period placed pressure on normative gender roles and challenged notions of early-nineteenth-century masculinity both then and now:

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<sup>88</sup> „Der menschliche Geist, ja sogar die Ästhetiker, wann es sie überrascht, menschlicher, als systematisch zu denken, unterscheidet im Schönheitsgefühle folgende Stufen. Zuerst, die rein sinnliche Erregbarkeit des Gehöres oder Gesichtes. Zweitens, Empfänglichkeit des Gemütes für allgemeinere Stimmungen vermöge, in der Musik arithmetisch, in den sichtbaren Erscheinungen geometrisch aufzufassende, also überall reine Größenverhältnisse. Drittens, die Erregbarkeit des Gemütes durch jene schon bestimmtere Vorstellung, welche in der Musik das melodische Princip, deutlicher jedoch in den sichtbaren Erscheinungen dasjenige zum Bewusstsein bringt, was gemeinhin Charakter und Ausdruck genannt wird.“ See Carl Friedrich von Rumohr, *Drey Reisen nach Italien* (Leipzig: Brockhaus, 1832), 39.

[Such men] defy taxonomy in that they can neither be clearly distinguished, nor simply collapsed, nor easily grouped. They also, again inconsistently and in varying degrees, defy taxonomy in the ways in which they do and do not map onto other nonce taxonomic distinctions between the masculine and the feminine, the animate and the inanimate, the human and the non-human, the present and the absent.<sup>89</sup>

The proliferation of multiple masculinities thus resulted in a greatly expanded understanding of the male subject that placed queer, taxonomy-defying male “species” alongside normative, cis-gendered, heterosexual male subjects.

Much like Rumohr’s visual exploration of the various instantiations that masculine presentation might take in his male head studies, the queer artist Franz Pforr also produced a body of drawn studies that evidence the artist’s awareness of the various ways that “manliness” might manifest in the individual subject. The German artist Giovanni Pock (born Johann Poch) collated a staggering 494 portrait studies by Pforr into a remarkable album, held today in the graphics collection of the Berlin Staatliche Museen. Subdivided into sections based on subject type (“women,” “children,” “men,” etc.), the section devoted to drawings of male visages is by far the most substantial. Pforr’s subjects range from young aristocrats and soldiers to older, wiggled gentlemen, each of whom has been tenderly sketched by the young artist [figs. 1.21-1.22]. It is almost certain that these sketches were intended to provide a kind of working archive of appearances from which artists could pull for various compositions, but this function is belied by the highly individuated nature of each figure and the high degree of finish of particular portraits—an indication of the time and attention Pforr dedicated to them. Pforr’s sizable archive of masculine subjects would undoubtedly have delighted an artist like Rumohr; in their exploration of the multiple guises that the masculine subject could assume (guises both within and outside of normative taxonomic systems), the album drawings similarly evidence the artist’s search for naturally occurring variations of a universal male beauty—a search that I have argued also motivated Rumohr’s portrait sketches.

I suggest that the recurrent juxtapositions of male faces and landscapes are indicative of a drawing practice conscious of its own position within contemporary epistemes governing sexual attraction and creative development. Just as heteronormative artists like Carus depicted the landscape as an external representation of creative and reproductive generation—as traces of a productivity that would lead to new, more developed forms of art and life—so too did Rumohr use depictions of the natural world as a means of attempting to locate the place of his own same-sex desire within it. The sketched faces of handsome men abut sketched Italian landscapes at odd angles and in discomfiting ways, hidden beneath the sketched lines of a tree’s foliage, lurking in the margins, or appearing as an inky apparition from the reverse side of the page. Rumohr’s sketched men appear as an ill-fitting puzzle piece in the larger landscape, at odds with the composition as a whole. Rather than picturing nature as the womb in which creative genius would incubate, Rumohr’s depictions of the natural world are frustrated and foiled by his own subjective nature (i.e., his “unnatural” predilections). The artist’s creative imagination here appears inextricable from his sensual (if not explicitly erotic) imagination.

It is this dynamic that is most fully legible in the drawing that opened this chapter: *Study sheet with dead birds* [fig. 1]. As previously noted, Rumohr served as a patron and mentor to a number of young male artists from Hamburg, who came to constitute what his contemporaries called his “harem.” In all likelihood, the individual depicted in the *Studienblatt* was one of these young men, an artist named Heino Gerhardt Fette. In this sketch, which reprises the

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<sup>89</sup> Laura George, “Reification and the Dandy: Beppo, Byron, and other Queer Things,” *Romanticism on the Net*, no. 36-37 (November 2004, February 2005), §5.

convention of juxtaposing male visages and natural elements, Rumohr makes explicit anxieties that he merely hints at in the aforementioned works. Here, the tender, ghostly sketch of the young artist Fette evidences a distinct step towards the eroticization of his subject, a nuanced reworking of the more generalized juxtapositions exploring variations of male beauty and the natural world. The drawing emanates an intimacy reminiscent of the German-Roman artists' mutual portraits, but, unlike these intimate real-time encounters, Rumohr's sketch is undoubtedly one produced by his productive imagination after the fact; Fette's coy smile and downcast eyes, his hair tousled as he turns his head to the left, represents a mental image formed by fantasy as much as by recall. But as fantasy diverges from its natural course, so too does Rumohr's perception of his place within the natural order: twinned birds, homogenous as Rumohr and Fette, emerge as the artist's pictorial conclusion to the problem of nature and his place within it. The young man's face is a delicate and fleeting momentary pleasure in the face of the heaviness, finality, and inevitability secreted into the harsh black hatching of the two dead birds.

Rumohr's drawing of Fette beautifully pictures the ways in which the sketch, as a subgenre, could allow for the exploration of one's same-sex desire and offer a means of responding to the indictment of that desire as "unnatural" by scientists keen to impose order upon both artistic production and the natural world. As I suggested in the introduction, the sketch functioned as a pictorial response to sensual impressions—an attempt to convey the subject's most authentic properties, but also an attempt infused with the draftsman's unrefined fantasy. Rumohr's *Study sheet with dead birds* here pictures the artist's amorous imagination in its recollection of the young Fette, but the sensual impressions that he renders are morbid rather than "healthy." For Carus, sketching functioned to reveal nature's heteronormative "erotic authority," an eroticism that informed his own depictions of the natural world. For Rumohr, the sketch of Fette pictorialized a sensual impression that was, like the birds above it, non-procreative, non-generative, and dead on arrival. Rumohr's practice was confined to his sketchbook, his sketches failing to progress beyond the page onto which they were initially rendered in a quick flurry of pen strokes. While the subgenre of the sketch may have offered the opportunity to explore both same-sex longing and experiment with the role of that longing within the "natural" world, the ultimate failure of these two terms to accord within extant epistemes meant that, for Rumohr, his queer sketches would forever remain just that.

#### **4. Conclusion**

By the end of the first third of the nineteenth century, Romantic philosophy had produced a conceptual system in which artistic creation and sexual procreation were united under the aegis of generative reproduction. As such, the graphic production of the male artist was often expected to demonstrate not only a healthy artistic drive but also a healthy sex drive. As I hoped to show in the case of Carus and his depictions of the landscape, this sex drive was always already presumed to be heterosexual in nature; in his depictions of Gothic ruins in wild landscapes, Carus gave an outlet to heterosexual, procreative fantasy, generating depictions of nature that strove towards higher forms of being in a manner that paralleled nature's own perceived telic drive.

But the imagination occasionally drifted off its intended path, leading to graphic production that erred from healthy, aesthetically prescribed development. Same-sex desire was a particularly dangerous impulse that could jeopardize this proper, "natural" course; as individuals with a pathological and aberrant sexual drive that exempted them from the natural order, queer men were also conceptually bound to a creative pathology that stunted their movement up art's telic ladder. I sought to show how homosociality registered in the study-portraits that a host of German-Romans made of each other, representing a remarkable slide towards the precipice of healthy and natural graphic expression, and ended the investigation by

exploring how Rumohr's sketching practice simultaneously provided a space in which to explore male beauty and attempt to locate his own sensual desire within a creative and natural order that expressly forbade it.

I offer two observations by way of conclusion. The first of these conclusions is that artists and scientists of the early nineteenth century—and, in particular, the Romantics—provided the basis for productively aligning undisciplined graphic practices and queer sexuality. That is to say, graphic expression that flouted the prescribed course of natural and creative development was, by definition, queer. We might see in the dominant paradigm that the Romantics set out to ensure the health of the creative and procreative impulses echoes of what Elizabeth Freeman has termed “chrononormativity,” which seeks to organize lives through “teleological schemes...such as marriage, accumulation of health and wealth for the future, reproduction, childrearing, and death and its attendant rituals.”<sup>90</sup> Just as queer individuals disrupt and foil this chrononormativity by way of their “unnatural” sexual proclivities, so too did graphic practices like doodling or sketching disrupt the teleology of the artistic impulse to develop pictorial responses in increasingly perfect approximations of the ideal. “Undisciplined,” “unnatural,” and “undeveloped” graphic expression failed to strive, content instead to exist for its own sake and to function towards its own ends.<sup>91</sup> Indeed, we might rightly see queer graphic expression as a form of what Judith Halberstam has called “the queer art of failure,” which revels in and makes use of its position outside of the “serious” and “rigorous” boundaries erected in the name of disciplinary correctness.<sup>92</sup> In the chapters that follow, the liberatory potential of queer drawing's failure will become evident, as queer men used their lowly graphic practice to operate outside of heteronormative systems of power. So, too, will the policing and surveillance of undisciplined queer drawing and the subjectivities from which it stemmed become clear.

A second, related proposition follows from this conclusion, namely that the notion of drawing as a propaedeutic practice—one that existed along a developmental timeline and was expected to make steady progress towards “higher,” more sophisticated forms—is one that is inherently heteronormative and presupposes procreativity as a requirement for artistic health and positive valuation. I have sought to show that the Romantic ordering and ranking of graphic phenomena, which itself paralleled biological taxonomies that structured the natural world, created a hierarchical system in which lower “species” of graphic expression were valued only in so far as they were perceived to hold the germ of the next developmental stage.

If, as I suggested in the previous conclusion, queer graphic expression was defined by its “failure to start,” dwelling and loitering at seemingly more “preliminary” stages of development, I would subsequently like to propose a greater sensitivity to drawings that scraps such an implicitly heteronormative, chrononormative framework. Such a call is a disciplinary one; that is to say, it is an approach to drawings that requires us to rethink our theoretical and methodological approaches to graphic expression and how we deploy them in our work. By taking doodles, sketches, studies, and other subtypes of graphic expression seriously as complete and valuable works of art in their own right, by remaining attentive to their unique ontologies, we pick apart and lay bare the dominant systems that usurp drawing and submit it

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<sup>90</sup> Elizabeth Freeman, *Time Binds: Queer Temporalities, Queer Histories* (Durham: Duke University Press, 2010), 4.

<sup>91</sup> In this sense, Romantic teleologies of drawing perhaps anticipated later Walter Pater's aestheticist notions of *ars gratia artis*, or “art for art's sake,” in which the work of art as an autonomous object, the value of which stems primarily from its aesthetic values rather than its utilitarian or moralistic function. The persistence of Romantic philosophical tenets in later nineteenth-century aesthetics is acknowledged amongst scholars of this period. On the Romantic valences of Walter Pater's aestheticist orientation, see Kenneth Daley, *The Rescue of Romanticism: Walter Pater and John Ruskin* (Athens: Ohio University Press, 2001) and Lene Østermark-Johansen, *Walter Pater's European Imagination* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2022).

<sup>92</sup> Judith Halberstam, *The Queer Art of Failure* (Durham: Duke University Press, 2011), 6.

to their own ends, be they heteronormative, patriarchal, or race- or class-based. Removing the yoke of teleology and pulling apart the monolith of “drawing” as a catchall term permits us to attend to the “possibilities, gaps, overlaps, dissonances and resonances, lapses and excess of meaning” that graphic expression can make visible—in short, it awakens us to the medium’s inherent queerness.<sup>93</sup> It is this queerness that I hope to examine in greater detail in the chapters that follow, each of which examines queer graphic expression as both a liberatory practice of identification and as an archive of evidence instrumentalized by those seeking to pathologize queer creativity.

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<sup>93</sup> Eve Kosofsky Sedgwick, *Tendencies* (Durham: Duke University Press, 1993), 8.



## Chapter 2

### Ideal Specimens: Anatomy and the Homoerotics of Life Drawing at the Dresden Academy

#### 1. On Skeletons and Closets: Queering Academic Life Drawing

In the final decade of the nineteenth century, a series of relational dramas played out within a cohort of male art students enrolled in the Dresden Academy. Around 1890, a circle of promising young artists, including Oskar Zwintscher, Hans Unger, Osmar Schindler, Richard Müller, and Sascha Schneider, converged upon an institution in the throes of pedagogical and administrative upheaval to receive training from a new host of professors that promised to thoroughly modernize the antiquated academy. The interpersonal bonds that in many ways defined the academic experience of these young men have been a recent topic of interest within the relatively limited scope of the Dresden art historical and museological landscape; the 2022 exhibition *Weltflucht und Moderne (Escapism and Modernity)* at the Dresden Albertinum, which primarily focuses on the work of Zwintscher, brings work by this group together with a particular emphasis on the time the men spent at the academy and the bonds that they formed there.<sup>94</sup>

A host of artworks evince the messy web of affiliations, allegiances, and relationships between the men, the seeds of which were planted and germinated within the walls of the academy. At the center of this web was the homosexual artist Sascha Schneider, whose work from his time at the academy and in the years after forcefully asserts the centrality of these male friendships to his artistic and personal life. Schneider's epehebic sword bearer monument *Trauernder Genius (Mourning Genius)* for the grave of his friend Oskar Zwintscher and his 1902 canvas *Auf zum Kampf (Phalanx der Starken)* [*Towards Battle (Phalanx of the Strong)*], which prominently features his classmates Hans Unger and Richard Müller as models, are two of the most illustrative examples. Schneider likewise served as the model and subject for a number of works by his friends both during their years at the academy and after their departure.

Of all the friendships that Schneider formed whilst a student in Dresden, his friendship with Richard Müller was perhaps his most formative; inseparably close during their time at the academy, the two men left the institution in 1893 and shared a small studio on the fourth floor of the Mühlberg-Haus in Dresden. Following their departure from the academy, relations quickly soured between the men, culminating in a decisive break upon the occasion of Müller's marriage to an American woman in 1896. Schneider's drawn portrait of Müller from the same year, a final relic of their friendship, hauntingly captures a relationship in the final stages of breakdown: Müller's cold stare and knitted brow are imbued with the distinct feeling of love lost [fig. 2.1].<sup>95</sup>

I have loosely sketched some of the homosocial relationships between Schneider and his circle at the Dresden Academy to impress the fact that the years 1890-93 were intensely formative for Schneider both professionally and personally. A foundational premise of this chapter is one that has received remarkably little attention since Abigail Solomon-Godeau's 1997 examination of Jacques-Louis David's studio in *Male Trouble*, namely that the nineteenth-century art academy was a thoroughly queer space in which male students moved

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<sup>94</sup> The exhibition, which ran from 14 May 2022-1 January 2023, includes an in-depth examination of Zwintscher's relationships with this circle of young men during his time at the academy in a section titled "Dresden Years: Academy, Successes, Death." A catalog accompanied the exhibition; see Andreas Dehmer and Birgit Dalbajewa, *Weltflucht und Moderne: Oskar Zwintscher in der Kunst um 1900* (Dresden: Sandstein Verlag, 2022).

<sup>95</sup> It is also notable that Müller acquired a significant number of works on paper by Schneider following the artist's death in 1927, despite their estrangement. This portion of the estate that Müller purchased included most of the drawings produced by Schneider while the two men were students at the academy, including the nude studies that I examine in this chapter.

in circles around male professors, developing friendships, rivalries, and even romantic relationships with each other.<sup>96</sup> As we will see, the Dresden Academy in the 1880s and early 1890s was very much a space in which such a distinctly queer sensibility flourished despite programmatic attempts to stymie it.

But while scholars have partially attended to the ways in which this queer sensibility informed interpersonal relationships between student artists, the relationship between the artists and another male presence in the academy—that of the male model—has remained largely unexamined.<sup>97</sup> This lacuna is significant and surprising; while the academy generally provided a space for these queer male bonds to develop and grow, no space within the academy’s walls, I argue, was as highly charged or instrumental to the development of a queer sensibility than the *Aktsaal*, or the nude life drawing room. As the site where male students spent hours looking upon and sketching the bodies of nude male models, the *Aktsaal* was a space of immense possibility: for the artist, it provided the rare, sanctioned opportunity to gaze upon the nude male form. For the academician, however, the space posed the dangerous possibility that such sanctioned looking might serve licentious, erotic ends rather than noble, artistic ones.

Considering the homoerotics of the *Aktsaal* requires us to rethink what we know about such a space. Little to no documentary evidence of the life drawing room’s layout or inner workings from the nineteenth century exists (a glaring void resulting from the Anglo-American firebombing of the city in 1945). This is not to say that there is *no* extant evidence prior to 1945; a handful of photographs from the early twentieth century picture the arrangement of the life drawing and anatomical instruction rooms [figs. 2.2-2.3] and a number of anatomical models used in life drawing instruction survived to the present day [fig. 2.4]. But no archival materials detail the names of models employed by the academy, no firsthand accounts provide us with a picture of day-to-day life in the studio, and relatively few academic nude drawings by students have survived to the present day. We are left, in other words, with an evidential skeleton—and the knowledge that there once was flesh. Can we reconstruct a living model from the bones that are left? This chapter, as is the case with many queer histories, is an exercise of conjuring and reanimation, an attempt to resurrect a history long thought dead.<sup>98</sup>

I would thus like to begin my attempt to conjure the queer spirit of the Dresden Academy’s *Aktsaal* by examining a painting produced by the aforementioned Richard Müller titled *Zeichenklasse in der Akademie (Drawing Class in the Academy)*, a work that provides a glimpse into the academy’s life drawing room in 1920 after the artist had established himself as a professor at the academy [fig. 2.5].<sup>99</sup> Müller’s painting provides a momentary glimpse into the humdrum workings of an academic drawing class. In a picture plane multiply fragmented by a sea of easel stands, students sit in suits and smocks, drawing implements in hand. A number of bodies are dotted across the composition: the real, flesh and blood body of a nude

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<sup>96</sup> See Abigail Solomon-Godeau, “The Studio Fraternity,” in *Male Trouble: A Crisis in Representation* (New York: Thames & Hudson, 1997), 46-60.

<sup>97</sup> The most comprehensive study of life drawing in any period is undoubtedly Susanne Müller-Bechtel’s excellent study of the practice in the early modern period. Though the chronological framing is earlier than my own, many of her ideas and observations about life drawing—and the dearth of academic scholarship dedicated to it—inform this chapter. See Susanne Müller-Bechtel, *Von allen Seiten anders. Die akademische Aktstudie 1650-1850* (Berlin: Deutscher Kunstverlag, 2018).

<sup>98</sup> I join in this work a number of scholars who have done—and continue to do—the critical work of piecing together fragmented, overlooked, and way-sided queer histories. I am indebted to the work and expertise of Sarah Betzer, Whitney Davis, Jonathan D. Katz, Laurie Marhofer, Elizabeth Otto, Camilla Smith, Christiane Starck, Katie Sutton, and Robert Deam Tobin, among others.

<sup>99</sup> Given that drawing and anatomy curricula remained largely unchanged between the final decade of the nineteenth century and Müller’s tenure at the Academy, it is probable that Müller’s painting pictures a dynamic very similar to, if not exactly the same as, the dynamic at play in the life drawing room in the 1890s.

male model, a plaster cast of a female torso, a stuffed dummy, an anatomical skeleton mid-stride. The composition could not provide a starker departure from earlier compositions depicting the inner workings of academic life drawing classes from the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries, such as Martin Ferdinand Quadal's much earlier *Nude Life Drawing Class at the Vienna Art Academy* (1787) [fig. 2.6]. In his 1920 canvas, Müller depicts a thoroughly modern life drawing room in which the relationship between the artist and the model is made both more personal and infinitely more complex. Indeed, the ambiguity of the work prompts more questions than it answers: is the model actively posing, or is he simply waiting his turn on the podium? Are the students drawing another model just out of the frame, or are they lost in their own mental worlds?

We might say that the painting pictorializes a memory of a space, a series of dynamics, and, above all, a graphic practice that were front of mind in late-nineteenth-century academic discourses. The process of producing a study, which this chapter examines in relation to homosexual desire, is here on full display in all of its rich and contradictory complexity: though the study as a subgenre of drawing predicated on close observation of the human form, the canvas seems to picture a dynamic in which artists forego direct visual engagement with the male model hovering at the edge of the canvas, prioritizing instead remembered or imagined encounters with bodies that live in their memories. The effects of light on the model's skin or the angle of his arm akimbo are far from the minds of the men at their easels, who seem perfectly content with their dummy models—or with no model at all. As a commentary on the constellation of impressions that come to bear on studies of the live model, Müller's composition suggests that the repertoire of bodies remembered from past encounters or generated by the artist's fantasy played as crucial a role in the life drawing process as the body of the live model in the room.

Furthermore, the encounters with the model are simultaneously mediated by a number of complicating binary terms: living models stand alongside skeletal models, flesh abuts bone, the male model is juxtaposed by the female plaster cast. These “binarisms” (to borrow a term from Eve Kosofsky Sedgwick) that populate Müller's canvas provide a useful way to think through my suggestion that the life drawing room was a space shot through with explicit and implicit responses to homosexual desire and the problem of looking at the male nude. Here, students were both invited to look and forbidden to look, required to observe and prohibited from looking in the wrong way. In *The Epistemology of the Closet*, Sedgwick asserts her belief that “a whole cluster of the most crucial sites for the contestation of meaning in twentieth-century Western culture are consequentially and quite indelibly marked with the historical specificity of homosexual/homosocial definition, notably but not exclusively male, from around the turn of the century.”<sup>100</sup> For Sedgwick, *all* modern knowledge is inextricably linked to “sexual knowledge”; the production of binary terms assigned to various facets of modern life and culture came to function as extensions of a fundamental, homophobic preoccupation with defining and reinforcing the division between homo- and heterosexuality. Those navigating these binaries—those caught between terms, between professing their sexual subjectivity or hiding it away—find themselves in the titular closet, a conceptual space erected around homosexual subjects by heterosexual culture at large that walls them into an impossible and claustrophobic position between maintaining the secret of their sexuality and publicly disclosing it.

Might we then think of the life drawing room as a paradoxical space that functioned as both a site of homosociality and as a closet? As a space intentionally bloated with seemingly non-sexual binaries intended, in actuality, to boldly demarcate a line between homosexual and

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<sup>100</sup> Eve Kosofsky Sedgwick, *The Epistemology of the Closet* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2008), 72.

heterosexual desire? The primary goal of this chapter is to examine how academic curricular reforms—and more specifically, the institution of revised and modernized anatomy training—functioned as a means of constructing a series of binarisms that implicitly reinforced the homo-/hetero- divide. In each binarism, academic administrators and professors invoked one term as an antidote and safeguard against its queer opposite: classicism opposed modernity, beauty opposed sensuality, and objectivity opposed subjectivity. Academicians deployed scientific knowledge of the body (which, I will show, permeated and propped up a distinctly classicist aesthetic program) as a means of stemming and staunching any unnatural, homoerotic desire for the male body that might arise as a result of gazing upon it in the life drawing room.

The erection of the closet within the walls of the academy could not effectively defang life drawing's pervasive and inherent queerness or, in some cases, prevent students from imbuing their nude studies with their own burgeoning sexual subjectivity. As I aim to show in this chapter, life drawing in the nineteenth-century European art academy was, at its heart, a practice that queered young artists by urging them to visually engage with the nude male body in exceptional, atypical ways. The requirements of the drawing exercise, which drew on properties unique to the study as a graphic subgenre, abetted this pervasive and generalized queering effect. Life drawing offered students the possibility to pictorially work through the erotic desire the artist-model encounter might incite: rather than be silenced by an abundance of closeting binarisms, young artists used their pencils to produce studies that pictured their subjective desires, co-opting anatomy and the familiarity with the male form that it entailed to produce drawings that subverted the closet's contradictory demands for secrecy and disclosure.

## 2. Pohle, Pauwels, and Academic Reform

Though the choice to situate my inquiry in Dresden may at first appear strange, given the renown of art academies elsewhere in Germany, including Berlin and Munich, the Dresden Academy, in fact, was one of the premier institutions of artistic training in Europe for much of the nineteenth and early twentieth centuries and one of the oldest art academies in Germany. The Ur-academy, founded in 1680 as the *Zeichnen- und Malerschule* (Drawing and Painting School), was succeeded by the foundation of the *Allgemeine Kunst-Academie der Malerey, Bildhauer-Kunst, Kupferstecher- und Baukunst* [sic] (General Academy of Painting, Sculpture, Engraving, and Architecture) in 1764 at the behest of the Prince Elector Frederick Christian. By 1800, the academy had established a reputation as a preeminent training institution, a reputation bolstered by access to the city's unparalleled art collections. Dresden's *Kunstammer*, established in the sixteenth century by the Saxon electors, was a veritable treasure trove of works by Renaissance and early modern masters. The collection of antiquities held in Dresden was also a major draw; the collection caught the attention of a young Johann Joachim Winckelmann who in 1763 referred to the city's holdings as the greatest collection of antique sculpture outside of Italy.<sup>101</sup>

It was in the first third of the nineteenth century, however, that the academy came into full bloom, as it came to be closely associated with the Romantic Nazarene movement. Two monumental figures of the German Romantic movement discussed in the previous chapter trained at the academy—Carl Gustav Carus and Philipp Otto Runge—and professorial positions by the 1830s were filled by a number of Romanticism's greatest artists: Caspar David Friedrich, Julius Schnorr von Carolsfeld, Johann Christian Dahl, and Carl Christian Vogel von Vogelstein all held important teaching positions at the academy in the early decades of the century. This period in the academy's history set the tone for much of the remainder of the nineteenth century, pedagogically and ideologically. Carolsfeld, in particular, held great sway

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<sup>101</sup> See Johann Joachim Winckelmann, "Treatise on the Capacity for Sensitivity to the Beautiful," in Johann Joachim Winckelmann on Art, Architecture, and Archaeology, trans. David Carter, 149-67 (Rochester: Camden House, 2013), 159.

in maintaining the conservative tone of artistic education in Dresden, as both a highly esteemed painting professor and the director of the Dresden Academy and the Gemäldegalerie from 1846/7. Carolsfeld's career was in many ways defined by his artistic restraint and religious conservatism; he consciously drew on Renaissance styles and motifs, and the subject matter of his work was overwhelmingly biblical. His adherence to Nazarene artistic principles and subject matter informed the tenor of the academy until he vacated the positions in 1871, a year before his death.

Though Carolsfeld may have exerted considerable influence at the academy until the early 1870s, his retirement and death proved to be a turning point in the ways that the institution approached administration and artistic pedagogy. By 1870, it had become glaringly clear that the Romanticist aesthetic program advocated by Carolsfeld and the cadre of Romantic artists in professorial positions was no longer appealing or relevant to a new generation of artists influenced by the modernist turn sweeping through Europe. In the years that followed Carolsfeld's tenure as director, the academy underwent a large-scale transformation aimed at reinvigorating the academic curriculum and reconsidering the outmoded teaching methods that had remained much the same since the early decades of the century.

The two figures most closely associated with this transformation were the artists Ferdinand Pauwels, a Belgian artist who came to Dresden to serve as a professor of painting, and Leon Pohle, a German artist who had made his name as a portraitist. Under Pauwels and Pohle, the academy curriculum underwent important changes and was reorganized in a way that allowed for more thorough and holistic drawing instruction. For most of the nineteenth century, students spent two years copying from plaster casts in the so-called "sub-class" before progressing to the upper class, in which they were provided access to the *Aktsaal* and live models. Following curricular reforms around 1880, all students were expected to complete a *Vorschule*, or preliminary course, which ensured they were equipped with the fundamental basics necessary to make proper progress as a draftsman, graduating after an unspecified period of time, likely six to twelve months, to the plaster cast room and finally the life drawing room, in which they undertook life drawing and painting lessons simultaneously.<sup>102</sup> In addition to the expansion of the drawing curriculum, the reforms around 1880 also made anatomy and physiology core components of the artist's education and required students to participate in anatomy courses alongside their drawing courses.<sup>103</sup>

Beyond the walls of the academy itself, post-1870 reforms ensured that students at the academy had access to the expertise of art historians and archaeologists working in the city's art collections, which were also undertaking significant modernizing measures. Around the same time that curricular reforms were being enacted at the academy, the old arsenal located directly beside the academy building was transformed into the Albertinum, a space that came to hold the city's remarkable collection of antique sculpture as well as a number of works by modern sculptors, including Auguste Rodin and Max Klinger. From 1882 until 1915, the sculptural collection was headed by the archaeologist and academy professor Georg Treu, who provided his students access to this treasure trove of antique and modern sculptures for the purposes of copying them in drawing. For these reasons and others, the Dresden Academy had become one of the most dynamic art academies in Germany by the 1890s, particularly with regard to drawing instruction and the variety of artworks, both classical and modern, available to students.

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<sup>102</sup> Manfred Altner and Kurt Procksch, "Lehrbetrieb und Kunstauffassungen bis 1900," in *Dresden: von der Königlichen Kunstakademie zur Hochschule für Bildende Künste [1764-1989]*, ed. Hochschule für Bildende Künste, 172-96 (Dresden: VEB Verlag der Kunst, 1990), 178.

<sup>103</sup> See Gottfried Bammes, „Von einer Anatomie für Künstler zur Künstleranatomie,“ in *Dresden: von der Königlichen Kunstakademie zur Hochschule für Bildende Künste [1764-1989]*, 566-579.

Though the modernizing reforms that characterized the academy in the last third of the nineteenth century may at first glance appear liberal in their approach to artistic education, I suggest that they in fact functioned to subtly guide the course of student artistic progress along moral and ethical paths towards normative ends. The academy's revision of the standard path through the curriculum—a revision that divided the student's education into stages of increasing difficulty and sophistication until they arrived at the painting class—conformed to the theoretical system outlined in the introduction to this dissertation. That is to say, the academy reshuffled its curricular structure in order to more efficiently manage the healthy artistic development of the student along procreative and teleological lines. The newly established *Vorschule* (or “pre-school” in which the student learned universal artistic fundamentals) gave way to copying which gave way to access to the life drawing room—a stage that itself was preliminary to access to the painting class. Such a teleological system was steeped in lingering (hetero-)normative conceptual systems that bound artistic creation and sexual procreation and allowed academicians to monitor and guide the progress of students along a healthy developmental path.

These reforms also, however, served to enact a greater degree of surveillance on the interpersonal relationships between students. Such reforms were in large part a response to the perceived disintegration of the traditional masculine persona of the artist and paranoia about the possibility of insidious shifts in the quality of relationships between the male students enrolled at the academy. George Mosse has identified this widespread anxiety about German masculinity as the product of a number of interrelated social movements that reached their apex in the 1890s, including, most notably, the homosexualist movement and the increased visibility of queer men in both discourse and everyday life. The “continuous challenge” that homosexuals posed to normative masculinity, the “fear of a homosexual conspiracy,” elicited responses from every corner of Germany's social landscape, including, undoubtedly, the intensely homosocial space of the art academy.<sup>104</sup> The new awareness of the homosexual as a threatening persona who might very well be lurking within the ranks of German men instigated both a homophobic backlash and heightened levels of surveillance to ensure that relationships between men were of an appropriately platonic nature.

This invention of the homosexual, in both the public imaginary and in scientific discourse, coincided with the academy's transition from an outmoded Romantic institution to a modern one. As examined in the previous chapter, the early-nineteenth-century cult of male friendship was taken as a cultural given and viewed as an integral part of a young man's intellectual and spiritual development. The close male bonds advocated by the Romantics, however, received renewed attention from homosexual activists and theorists post-1860, who enthusiastically embraced the Romantic cult of male friendship as an example of queer love's social utility in practice; unsurprisingly, such a claim on this Romantic institution led to a pointed reconsideration of the respectability of male bonding amongst the general public.<sup>105</sup> Within the academic context, the subtle but significant shift is evident from close readings of the academy's governing bylaws prior to and following the reforms of the 1870s. Take, for instance, the shift in language between the 1814 academic prospectus and its 1881 revision: whereas the 1814 prospectus deployed language that emphasized uniting “individual sparks of creative power” within a nurturing “art community” of young men, the 1881 revision elides such language, opting instead for proscriptive verbiage that emphasized the student's responsibility to his institution and profession to maintain the “strictest impeccability” in his

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<sup>104</sup> George L. Mosse, *The Image of Man: The Creation of Modern Masculinity* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1996), 86-7.

<sup>105</sup> Robert Beachy, *Gay Berlin: Birthplace of a Modern Identity* (New York: Knopf, 2015), 107-8.

moral conduct and behavior in civil and social life.<sup>106</sup> Academic administrators were conscious that modernism brought with it a particular set of sexual dangers and implications that required previously unnecessary safeguards; skeptical of the necessity of uniting young men, academicians turned the institution's focus towards a heightened emphasis on monitoring the moral and ethical conduct of their students in social proceedings and relationships.

My suggestion here is that the reforms at the academy, while progressive and liberal on the surface in their advocacy for a more modern artistic curriculum, in fact instituted measures primarily concerned with regulating homosocial relationships within the academy's walls — measures that academic administrators had not felt compelled to put into writing prior to these reforms. Standard assumptions about the onset of European modernism, which position the modern as a liberatory break from traditionalism, are here subverted; the modernization of the Dresden Academy, I argue, in actuality saw the erection of closets rather than their deconstruction, as academicians sought to simultaneously embrace calls for aesthetic modernity and install protections against the onslaught of dangers encroaching in modernity's wake—dangers which included, of course, the threat of homosexual desire in a male-dominated social space like the academy. This movement constitutes a kind of paradox that indeed defined a great number of disciplinary responses to modernity and its newly emergent cast of characters: modernist thought swung wide the closet door for the homosexual, who walked straight into another, larger cultural closet erected to demarcate his position within society.<sup>107</sup>

A key site of this contention in the academy's reform project was, unsurprisingly, the *Aktsaal*, which functioned as a space in which not only relationships between students played out, but also relationships between students and their nude models. As I will examine in the following sections, academicians reified and reinforced a top-down, pervasive binarism that pitted classical beauty against modern sensuality in order to effectively eliminate the threat of modern sexuality as it presented in their young male students.

### 3. Looking Backward: Dresden's Queer Classical Inheritance

Despite the introduction of reformative measures, the Dresden Academy was, in the nineteenth century, an institution that was slow to change. Writing about the emergence of expressionism in Dresden in the first decade of the twentieth century, Joan Weinstein argues that the Dresden Academy was “in no way as opposed” to academic reform as the academies in Berlin or Munich; be this as it may, the academy between the administrative reshuffling of 1870 and the modernist rebellions against academic convention that emerged around the turn of the century was still very much an institution indebted to traditional teaching practices and oriented towards a conservative academic program centered on standards of beauty drawn from the art of classical antiquity.<sup>108</sup>

Classical aesthetics were not, however, without discursive baggage acquired during the neoclassical period. This baggage was sexual in nature and forced art historians to grapple with the associations between classicism and same-sex desire that came to occupy a central place in aesthetic discourse following the work of the historian of classical art, Johann Joachim Winckelmann. Indeed, Whitney Davis has deftly shown how Kantian idealist aesthetics were in part an attempt to cleave and separate aesthetic and moral beauty from eroticism, which

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<sup>106</sup> See Paragraph 26, “Studien und Verhaltensvorschriften für die Schüler der Königl. Akademie der bildenden Künste zu Dresden von 1881“ in *Dresden: von der Königlichen Kunstakademie zur Hochschule für Bildende Künste [1764-1989]*, 634-7. 636.

<sup>107</sup> This assertion jibes with the notion set forth by Sedgwick that even in the face of disclosing one's homosexuality, “the deadly elasticity of heterosexist presumption means that, like Wendy in Peter Pan, people find new walls springing up around them.” See Eve Kosofsky Sedgwick, *The Epistemology of the Closet*, 68.

<sup>108</sup> Joan Weinstein, *The End of Expressionism: Art and the November Revolution in Germany, 1918-19* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1990), 121.

Winckelmann's own aesthetic ideal had bound together.<sup>109</sup> Nevertheless, in Davis's view, normative, universalized aesthetic judgments in post-Winckelmannian Europe might be directly traced back to the art historian's openly homoerotic aesthetic writings, thus demonstrating how "the constitution of aesthetic ideals, cultural norms that claim validity within an entire society...have been based on manifestly homoerotic prototypes and significance."<sup>110</sup> This homoerotic valence of classical ideals would have been particularly front of mind in the city of Dresden, where academicians first had to detach the classical body, prized for its health and beauty, from the homosensual associations that stubbornly adhered to it.

### 3.1. Winckelmann, Treu, and the Dresden Antikensammlung

Any discussion of sexuality and aesthetics in nineteenth-century Dresden must grapple with Winckelmann's legacy and reception. The scholar's time in the city working with the collection of antiquities proved to be incredibly formative to his views and perspectives on classical aesthetics. Indeed, Winckelmann's stint in Dresden, between his departure from the position as court librarian to Count Büнау in 1754 and his relocation to Rome in 1755, was characterized by his biographer Carl Justi as "the most significant and decisive in Winckelmann's entire life."<sup>111</sup> His time in the city, which he prophesied would become "Athens for artists," was particularly fruitful and productive; by the time he left for Rome and the Villa Albani, he had published the work for which he would be best remembered, *Gedanken über die Nachahmung der griechischen Werke in der Malerey und Bildhauerkunst (Thoughts on the Imitation of Greek Works in Painting and Sculpture)*.

Relatively little scholarly attention has been paid to the ways in which Winckelmann's same-sex desire figured into the reception of his work in the nineteenth century and beyond. Sarah Betzer, who identifies in the scholar "nothing less than the queer machinery undergirding eighteenth- and nineteenth-century canon formation," posed the question thus: "...if we have come to recognize the degree to which Winckelmann's project was underwritten by a particular sexual politics and turned on the author's orientation to an idea of Greek same-sex desire, what purchase, if any, did these origins have on the subsequent embrace of Winckelmann's aesthetic and emulative priorities?"<sup>112</sup> Such a question is particularly salient in the context of Dresden, the city the forged many of Winckelmann's most potently homoerotic aesthetic ideas. If, as Betzer succinctly notes, Winckelmann's very name had come to serve as a "queer shorthand" by the early nineteenth century, how did this queer legacy register with nineteenth-century artists and scholars still working in Winckelmann's Dresden?<sup>113</sup>

In the academic landscape of the last third of the nineteenth century, the reception of Winckelmannian homoaesthetics was varied; though his ideas on this count were not widely held or accepted, there were indeed scholars who acknowledged and promoted them. Amongst those most invested in nurturing Winckelmann's ideas was the archaeologist Georg Treu, who was selected to serve as the director of Dresden's *Skulpturensammlung* in 1882. Over the course of the 1880s, Treu would supplement the city's classical holding with works by modern sculptors including Auguste Rodin and Max Klinger; in 1889, under his direction, the sculpture collection would move into the old arsenal complex across the square (now Georg-Treu-Platz) and assume the name "the Albertinum." Beyond his role as the director of the Albertinum, Treu

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<sup>109</sup> See chapter one, "Queer Beauty: Winckelmann and Kant on the Vicissitudes of the Ideal," in Whitney Davis, *Queer Beauty: Sexuality and Aesthetics from Winckelmann to Freud and Beyond* (New York: Columbia University Press, 2010).

<sup>110</sup> *Ibid.*, 23.

<sup>111</sup> Carl Justi, *Winckelmann: sein Leben, seine Werke und seine Zeitgenossen*, vol. 1 (Leipzig: F.C.W. Vogel, 1866), 334.

<sup>112</sup> Sarah Betzer, *Animating the Antique: Sculptural Encounters in the Age of Aesthetic Theory* (State College: Penn State University Press, 2022), 21

<sup>113</sup> *Ibid.*, 20.



also served as a professor of art history at the Technische Universität and the Dresden Academy, where he was also on the academic council.

For his part, Treu seemed to positively value the Winckelmannian legacy of the collection placed under his care—as well as its homosensual valence. Moritz Woelk has noted the affinities between Winckelmann’s aesthetic program and the goals that Treu outlined for his tenure as the custodian of the Dresden antiquities collection, noting that Treu “remained loyal to Winckelmann’s ideals” while supplementing these ideals with modern approaches and techniques (most notable in this regard was his pursuit to reconstruct the beauty of classical statuary by way of his research on polychromy).<sup>114</sup> To be sure, this engagement with Winckelmann’s legacy included engagement with contemporary debates about the contentious topic of Greek same-sex love and its place within the art of antiquity. Following Winckelmann’s incorrect identification of a purportedly “ancient” fresco depicting Ganymede kissing Jupiter, a work that was in reality painted by Anton Mengs or Giovanni Casanova in an attempt to dupe Winckelmann, a debate emerged amongst scholars of classical art regarding the historical accuracy of a motif that had, by the nineteenth century, become a well-known homosexual reference. While a great many scholars, including the highly esteemed archaeologist Johannes Overbeck, vehemently denied the existence of intimate, homosensual depictions of Jupiter and Ganymede from antiquity, Treu sought to validate Winckelmann’s misattribution; in his 1889 article “Erwerbungen der Antikensammlungen in Deutschland,” (“Acquisitions of Germany’s Antiquities Collections”), Treu put forth an example of an ancient work that he termed “unique in its straightforward depiction of the love affair between Ganymede and the enthroned Zeus,” providing an outline drawing of the relief, held in his own collection in Dresden, to which he referred [fig. 2.7].<sup>115</sup> Treu’s work, both scholarly and curatorial, seems to evince a strongly felt responsibility to the thought of Winckelmann, a figure whose intellectual and personal life had been so deeply marked by his engagement with the collection over which Treu presided.

In addition to his duties as a professor and collection director, Treu was involved in contemporary political movements that sought to afford homosexuals greater visibility in the public sphere. Treu was a signer—the *only* signer from Dresden’s artistic circles—of the Wissenschaftlich-humanitäres Komitee’s (Scientific-Humanitarian Committee) various petitions to repeal the German anti-sodomy law, Paragraph 175.<sup>116</sup> While this does not, in itself, confirm Treu’s awareness (let alone his endorsement) of the queer valence of the collection with which he worked, it does suggest a degree of fluency with contemporary homosexualist activism, which often pivoted on classical references and visual vocabularies. Given the ways in which Winckelmann’s queer legacy had permeated German intellectual circles by the late nineteenth century, and especially in light of his support of the decriminalization of same-sex relations, Treu likely brought to the academy a keen (if quiet) awareness of the queer charge that his collection carried and sought not to quash it, but rather to quietly promote it to students whose interest in antiquity was both aesthetic and libidinal.

The implicit embrace of the queer valence of the Dresden antiquities collection and the classical body (what we might call its Winckelmannian valence) was not a position held by all of Treu’s academic colleagues, however. In fact, the last third of the nineteenth century saw

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<sup>114</sup> Moritz Woelk, “From the Menagerie to the Plaster Gallery: The Herculaneum Women in Dresden,” in *The Herculaneum Women: History, Context, Identities*, ed. Jens Daehner, 141-55 (Los Angeles: Getty Publications, 2007), 153.

<sup>115</sup> This text is cited in Thomas Pelzel, “Winckelmann, Mengs and Casanova: A Reappraisal of a Famous Eighteenth-Century Forgery,” *The Art Bulletin*, vol. 54 no. 3 (September 1972), 300-15. 306.

<sup>116</sup> The Committee began its petitioning efforts to the German Reichstag in 1897, and various subsequent petitions circulated in the years after the turn of the twentieth century, including the version published in 1914. See *Gewichtige Stimmen über das Unrecht des §175 unseres Reichstrafgesetzbuchs* (Leipzig: Max Spohr Verlag, 1914), 81.

the culmination of artistic pedagogical strategies and theories that had been in development since the mid-century aimed at objectifying classical beauty. With the assistance of anatomists and physiologists, whose involvement in the academic landscape accelerated in European academies after 1800, aesthetic theorists developed a robust discourse on *die Wissenschaft des Schönen*, or the science of beauty. Attempts to provide an empirical, scientific justification for the classical body as the prototype of ideal beauty were, I argue, less concerned with endorsing a particular body type or set of proportions than they were with providing a justification for the continued artistic elevation of classical bodies on scientific grounds that reduced the possibility that such bodies could be prized based on their erotic appeal. The goal of such a project, in other words, was to short-circuit the normativizing mechanism that placed a Winckelmannian appreciation for the male body (i.e., a *homoerotic* appreciation for the male body) at the heart of modern aesthetic norms and standards of beauty.

### 3.2. Anatomy as Antidote

It is perhaps unsurprising that an uptick in the construction of this discourse occurred in the positivist 1850s and continued into the decades that followed; though not a new phenomenon, the subjection of the body to objectifying and normativizing scientific standards for the purposes of artistic training gained new traction in German-speaking Europe around the mid-century. As Tobias Teutenberg has shown, researchers from this period, such as Adolf Zeising, were beholden to the notion that beauty was governed by immutable laws, and that it was the job of the analytic researcher to reveal these laws through the study of anatomy.<sup>117</sup> Zeising's 1854 text *Der Körpermaß des Mannes (Body Measurements of Men)*, caused waves in the scholarly community because of its explication of ideal beauty in the scientific and mathematical terms of the golden ratio—the Apollo Belvedere, notably, was subjected to Zeising's exacting measurements [fig. 2.8].

These theorists were keen to demonstrate that the rational standards of the classical body were not merely theoretical but could be proven through the construction of models that confirmed these theories. By the end of the 1850s, the Dresden Academy's anatomical collection had amassed a large and unique collection of skeletal reconstructions based on classical sculpture for use in the instruction of students in the early stages of their drawing and anatomical training [fig. 2.9]. The centerpiece of this bizarre collection is a reconstruction of the Laocoon group using human skeletons [fig. 2.10].<sup>118</sup> The Dresden model is one of two such models known to have existed and the only one still in existence; the other, produced by the Viennese anatomist Josef Hyrtl around the same time, was destroyed during World War II. The Laocoon group was supplemented with a host of other skeletal antiquities including the Borghese Warrior and the Spinario [fig. 2.11] (a work, it is worth noting, that carried an explicitly homoerotic significance throughout the nineteenth century). Academic anatomists intended for such skeletal models to demonstrate for students the anatomical foundations of classical beauty—to provide, in other words, an exemplifiable and logical scientific basis for a widely-held belief in the supreme beauty of such works. Stripped of those features so revered by Winckelmann in his exegesis on the sculptural group—Laocoon's pang-pierced muscles, his groaning mouth, his contracted belly—the skeletal group produces a vision of the sculpture

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<sup>117</sup> See the section "Morphologen und Schönheit: Kämmerer, Zeising und Zimmerman" in chapter four of Tobias Teutenberg, *Die Unterweisung des Blicks: visuelle Erziehung und visuelle Kultur im langen 19. Jahrhundert* (Bielefeld: transcript Verlag, 2019), 194-205.

<sup>118</sup>The most thorough examination of these skeletal reconstructions is Sandra Mühlenberend, "Natürliche Skelette im Gestus antiker Kunstwerke: die anatomische Suche nach Vollendung," in *Schönheit: Vorstellungen in Kunst, Medien und Alltagskultur*, eds. Lydia Haustein und Petra Stegmann (Göttingen: Wallstein, 2006), 242-56. An excellent study of Hyrtl's Laocoon skeletal group can be found in Alys X. George, "Anatomy for All: Medical Knowledge on the Fairground in *Fin-de-Siècle* Vienna," *Central European History*, vol. 51, no. 4 (December 2018), 535-62.

as a *beautiful* one composed of anatomical building blocks rather than a *sensual* (which is not necessarily to say *sexual*) one racked with physical agony.<sup>119</sup>

Oftentimes, however, concerns about sensuality writ large often meant concerns about an explicitly *sexual* sensuality. Within the walls of the Dresden Academy, professors of anatomy and physiology were on the front lines of the efforts to curb this sensuality of the male nude in the drawing room. Illustrative in this regard is the work of the Berlin-born Ernst von Brücke, a physician and anatomist who, after graduating from the University of Berlin with his medical license in 1842, quickly carved out a place for himself as a leading anatomy instructor and advisor in matters pertaining to the human body. Indeed, from 1846, Brücke held a professorship of anatomy at the Akademie der bildenden Künste in Berlin. Brücke's interest in the intersections between science and aesthetics remained a constant throughout his career, and his writings on scientific aesthetics were immensely popular and circulated widely throughout not only Germany, but Europe writ large. In 1891, he published a work that would serve as the culmination of his thought on artistic depictions and anatomical instruction: *Schönheit und Fehler der menschlichen Gestalt*, translated into English as *The Human Figure: Its Beauties and Defects*. In this text, which was acquired by the Dresden Academy's library immediately following its publication, Brücke warns against the slippage from the beautiful (with its moral associations of goodness, purity, and virtue) into erotic sensuality, which he views as a fundamentally corruptive force in modern art. It was the job of the modern artist to become adept at recognizing these shortcomings of the modern body. "When standing before the living subject," he noted, "we tolerate much that the cold marble may not offer to our gaze...the artist ought to know the defects of the human body just as a judge of horseflesh knows the weak points in the build of a horse."<sup>120</sup>

The use of "beautiful" to describe the "classical body," terms which seem to flatten and homogenize classical styles of figural depiction, belies the fact that these scientists of beauty were highly selective and exclusive in the type of body that they chose to endorse. In fact, it seems that the pursuit of ideal beauty, in the Kantian sense, became intermingled with and muddled by Winckelmann's own categories of classical style in their theories about the ideal body: the prototypes of classical sculpture that Brücke and other scientists of beauty typically upheld seem to deliberately elide examples of the "beautiful style" in the Winckelmannian sense, endorsing instead the "high style" exemplified by the "genius" Phidias, "a perfect master of the superficial forms of anatomy."<sup>121</sup> The beautiful style and its attendant body types, associated as they were with Greek pederasty, had no place in the idealist canon of academic anatomists.<sup>122</sup> The use of the term "beautiful," which may at first seem non-specific and ill-defined, was likely, in truth, a consciously deployed term that pointed to—and evaded—specific connotations of the word within established aesthetic philosophical categories.

Brücke's influential text on classical beauty, I argue, did two things simultaneously. First, it sought to effectively eliminate the kinds of queer investments in the classical body that might come to the fore through prolonged, undisciplined engagement with works from the classical past. Sander Gilman has argued that Brücke's identification of a "normative body based in classical aesthetics" served as an example of how, "after the reception of the classics

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<sup>119</sup> See Winckelmann's florid description of the Laocoon group in Johann Joachim Winckelmann, "Thoughts on the Imitation of Greek Works in Painting and the Art of Sculpture," in *Johann Joachim Winckelmann on Art, Architecture, and Archaeology*, 31-56.

<sup>120</sup> Ernst Brücke, *The Human Figure: Its Beauties and Defects* (London: H. Grevel and Co., 1900), 3.

<sup>121</sup> See the introduction to Brücke's text by his colleague at London's Royal Academy, the professor of anatomy William Anderson. *Ibid.*, xii.

<sup>122</sup> For the pederastic-cum-homoerotic significance of the "beautiful style," perhaps best exemplified by the *Adorante* in antiquity, see Whitney Davis, *Queer Beauty: Sexuality and Aesthetics from Winckelmann to Freud and Beyond*, 23-50.

through the work of Winckelmann, Greek beauty [became] German beauty.”<sup>123</sup> I would qualify this observation by suggesting that this “normative” Greek-*cum*-German beauty was not merely adopted directly from Winckelmann, but was indeed subjected to *further* normativizing (i.e., *heteronormativizing*) discursive revisions. Brücke, like Treu, would have been keenly aware of the aforementioned Winckelmannian homoaesthetics that undergirded classical art scholarship and interpretations of Greek sculpture. His text, therefore, did the work of making classical bodies, to put it bluntly, deeply *unsexy*, as he sought to remove the possibility for sensual readings of them by shining a light on their every muscle and bone. Brücke introduces his text by noting that “where sensuousness has been sought for its own sake it has brought more harm than good.” He initially notes that the “incipient decline of Italian art” due to noble ideals of female beauty giving way to lower ones, a phenomenon he increasingly saw at work in his own day; relatively quickly, however, his analysis moves to include male beauty and its parallel decline in the modern period.<sup>124</sup>

It is perhaps unsurprising, then, that the list of classical sculptures that Brücke submits to his anatomical normativizing standards reads as a roster of works from antiquity that had fallen victim to Winckelmann’s lusty rhetoric or otherwise attained a queer significance: the angles of the Apollo Belvedere’s iliac crests are put forward as the source of his beauty, the perfect proportions of the pelvic regions exhibited by the marble copies of the Tyrannicides in Naples and the Farnese Diadumenos in Rome were due largely to pronounced but ennobling “furrows” between the scrotum and the thighs. The beauty of the classical body as rendered by ancient sculptors, Brücke concedes, was the product of “daily opportunities of seeing the nude form” and “making observations on famous athletes, such as we [moderns] no longer possess,” though he elides any reference to the homosocial environs of the classical gymnasium.<sup>125</sup> In his analyses of these works, Brücke ratifies and validates their beauty on scientific and “objective” terms: ancient bodies are beautiful because they represent perfected proportions and the physical body in an ideal state of moral and physical health, not because they pander to the “lowly” desires of the Winckelmannian viewer.

Secondly, Brücke’s “science of beauty” allowed him to make a scientific argument that the body as depicted in classical art (newly unleashed from homoaesthetic fetters) represented the ideal in physical perfection and was thus far superior to modern German bodies. Brücke’s anatomical examination of the aforementioned classical works (the Apollo Belvedere, the Doryphoros, and even Ganymede) served to show how these works displayed a higher form of beauty than the more sensual forms being produced by a new generation of modern artists. I will expand upon this second (and incredibly significant) point in the following section.

Treatises like Brücke’s—and the production of skeletal models, which I argue were part and parcel of the same discourse—did double duty: they not only provided a kind of scientific justification for the superiority of “high style” classical bodies over modern ones, but they also submitted classical bodies to scientific discourses meant to objectify their beauty, to explain it logically and rationally, and to thus prevent it from becoming eroticized in the hands of young art students with a sexual interest in the male body. The utility of this strategy was perhaps most evident in the early stages of drawing instruction, when students were tasked with copying the Apollos and athletic torsos held in the Academy’s plaster cast room or in the collection of

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<sup>123</sup> Sander L. Gilman, *Health and Illness: Images of Difference* (London: Reaktion Books, 1995), 58.

<sup>124</sup> Ernst Brücke, *The Human Figure: Its Beauties and Defects*, 3-4.

<sup>125</sup> Scientists of beauty danced around the topic of the classical gymnasium as a means of explaining the beauty of the classical male nude, likely because of the central role that it played in Winckelmann’s own queer theoretical system. These anatomists might instead allude to the prevalence of sport in ancient Greece, or otherwise make quasi-unfounded claims about quotidian customs or practices that might explain particular anatomical differences between the ancients and modern men (e.g., ancient Greeks did not sit as much as modern men, but laid and stood more). See Ernst von Brücke, *The Human Figure: Its Beauties and Defects*, x, 91.

the Albertinum. Beyond simply neutralizing any queer Winckelmannian charge that such works might have held, instructing students that the aesthetic pull of the stone sculptures that they drew stemmed from scientifically justifiable and demonstrable anatomical qualities positively claimed the classical body as a paragon of health and moral rectitude.

#### 4. Looking Forward: Modern Sensuality and Queer Degeneracy

##### 4.1. Mediating the Artist/Model Transaction

While the aforementioned strategies and discursive curbs (as well as the queer slippages facilitated by Treu) speak to the academy's response to its inheritance of Winckelmannian homoaesthetics—that is to say, to a queer *past*—an equally if not more pressing issue proved to be the *present* and *future* interactions between students and the live modern models that they encountered following their graduation to the upper class. Regulating the reproduction of classical sculptures and plaster casts was one thing (one that could more or less be managed in the case of most students) but ensuring the moral health of an interaction between a male student and a live male model was another thing entirely.

The dangers inherent to the interaction with the life model were all too apparent to academicians in the nineteenth century, who continued efforts to mediate the student's engagement with the male body by also exerting their influence over what Susan Waller has termed the “artist/model transaction.”<sup>126</sup> Indeed, the measures intended to extoll the moral and physical superiority of the classical body over the modern body (measures that included copying from classical sculptures already subjected to objectifying anatomical discourses) were in many ways preparation for this even greater challenge in the life drawing room. As Anthea Callen has succinctly noted, late-nineteenth-century academic approaches to the nude male body in life drawing classrooms urged students to view the model as a kind of extension of the plaster casts or classical sculptures they had learned to copy in the preceding years. Callen notes the prevailing academic attitude that:

Drawing the life model should be approached no different from drawing casts in the Antique academy...That these ideas required articulating at all demonstrates the urgent need to suppress the sensual distractions of the naked flesh...Study after classical prototypes also initiated a process of distancing oneself from the actual body of the posed life model: ‘idle thoughts’ would be drawn off because students were taught to see the model as inert matter, not living flesh and blood.<sup>127</sup>

Callen's observation is one that was palpable in art academies across Europe and the United States. It seems clear that the “idle thoughts” to which Callen refers absolutely included—perhaps even primarily referred to—lewd or sensuous thoughts about the model on display that seemed to haunt the practice of producing a study of the live nude model.<sup>128</sup> As laid out in the introduction, the utility of the study as a graphic subgenre was believed to lie in

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<sup>126</sup> Susan S. Waller, *The Invention of the Model: Artists and Models in Paris, 1830-70* (Burlington: Ashgate, 2006), xiv.

<sup>127</sup> In referencing “idle thoughts,” Callen is citing an 1830 quotation from James Northcote, a pupil of Sir Joshua Reynolds. Anthea Callen, *Looking at Men: Art, Anatomy and the Modern Male Body* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 2018), 79-80.

<sup>128</sup> Kristina Lewis has also noted the frequent difficulties associated with displaying a nude male model in the life drawing space in the nineteenth century, citing cases in which students were excluded from the Berlin Academy drawing room for their inability to maintain their “artistic composure in the presence of a life model.” See Kristina Lewis, “Nach dem Leben ist vor dem Bild—Der Erweiterung des Aktstudiums durch die Fotografie,” in *Vorbilder/Nachbilder: Die fotografische Lehrsammlung der Universität der Künste Berlin, 1850-1930*, ed. Ulrich Pohlmann, Dietmar Schenk, and Anastasia Dittmann, 188-225 (Gent: Snoeck, 2020), 188.

its ability to refine the impressionistic, primarily gestural knowledge acquired by way of the sketch into a more detailed, deliberate arrangement. Not yet preliminary drawings, studies were seen to occupy a transitional space in which the artist was asked to balance observation and fantasy. Of course, as previously discussed, the imagination was a faculty that required proper training and discipline, lest it err into perversion. The study was a key step in the artist's journey up the paragonal ladder, existing as a mode of depiction based on intense observation but which allowed the draftsman to call forth disciplined fantastical impressions to enhance the subject and reveal its essential idea. A defining component of the study was the duration of the artist's visual engagement with the subject of his drawing. Perhaps the most experimental graphic subgenre, the study provided an opportunity for the artist to toy with and manipulate perspective, light and shadow, and scale and record the effects of this manipulation on his subject over long periods of time and in various states of transformation.

But while extended visual engagement with the subject was believed to reveal important aspects and qualities of the subject, it also presented the possibility for visual overinvestment. Drapery studies, object studies, and studies of individual body parts (outstretched hands, arched feet, ears, eyes, and noses) were quite unlike studies of the live model in full; despite aforementioned attempts to reduce the nude body to inanimacy, the life model stood as an unabstracted, unfragmented, vital presence for the artist's observational gaze. To draw a study with a high degree of detail, as students were asked to do, required intense visual engagement with the model's body. What was couched as an exercise in training the observational gaze of the artist could easily (and often *did*) allow for the free play of a voyeuristic gaze. The intensity and duration of visual engagement with the nude that life drawing necessitated, I argue, made the practice fundamentally queer; that is to say, it *prescribed* same-sex interpersonal encounters between men that flew in the face of codes of conduct that regulated their relationships outside of the academy's walls.

If the queer valence of the life drawing encounter was a necessary evil in the context of an academic education, academicians seemed to be well aware of it and had, by the late nineteenth century, developed modes of surveilling it. Within the space of the life drawing room, however, the professor's ability to control the interpersonal interaction between student and model was limited—compared, at least, to the levels of control they were able to exert in the earlier stages of drawing instruction. Aside from their ability to direct the course of a session by posing the model themselves (a short-lived tactic that became ineffective as the student progressed to the production of more sophisticated, independently conceived poses), professors used three primary tools, I argue, in their attempts to mediate the encounter and reassert a quasi-inorganicity of the live model.

The first of these was the inclusion of other kinds of models into the workspace: ligamental skeletal models [fig. 2.3], plaster cast models of the male body [fig. 2.12] and prepared limbs [fig. 2.13] were an integral part of the life drawing room from the 1870s and functioned to “neutralize” the encounter by quite literally making the modern human body into a plaster cast (*à la grecque*) or by dissecting it and offering its disparate parts up to students in dislocated segments. The inclusion of these substitutes for the real, flesh-and-blood nude in the drawing room served to remind students of the objecthood of their model and implicitly suppressed their potentially dangerous vitality. This dynamic is on display in the canvas by Richard Müller examined in the introduction to this chapter [fig. 2.5], which pictures with striking clarity the interference that anatomical models ran in the relay between student and life model.

The second form of mediation came in the form of photographs of nude models in various academic poses produced *en masse* in folios and circulated to art academies throughout Europe. These teaching aids, which supplied students with a wide range of acceptable bodies in classical

poses, were immensely popular throughout the last third of the nineteenth century.<sup>129</sup> The Dresden Academy library held an important collection of these folios, evidencing their use in the life drawing classrooms; most notable are Ottomar Anschütz's *Augenblicks Photographien männlicher Akte in verschiedenen Bewegungen (Instant Photographs of Male Nudes in Various Motions)*, a collection of eighty stop-motion photographs of male nude models, and Max Koch and Otto Rieth's 1894 *Der Akt: 100 Modellstudien nach Naturaufnahmen in Lichtdruck (The Nude: 100 Model Studies in Photoengraving after Photographs from Nature)*.<sup>130</sup> While Anschütz was immensely popular in late-nineteenth-century Germany, the collection of photos by Koch and Rieth provide perhaps the best examples of academically-endorsed nude photography, as both Koch and Rieth held professorial positions at Berlin's School of the Museum of Decorative Arts.

The photographs by Koch and Rieth are remarkable in the inventiveness of the poses that the professors choose for their models. While some of the poses are relatively traditional, others find the models in positions that attempt to classicize the modern body, to make the body an approximation of an antique marble sculpture. These photographs picture the models posed as atlases between plinths and capitals [fig. 2.14] and precariously perched atop sloping cornices à la the dying warriors in the pediment from the Temple of Aphaia on Aegina [fig. 2.15]. In the sheer number of poses and gestures that these photographers captured, these photographs functioned to minimize the need for potentially problematic live encounters between artists and models in the drawing room or studio. But, of course, these folios themselves were not immune to the problem of sensuality; Koch and Rieth's folios were confiscated from many academic libraries after the institution of the Lex Heinze censorship law in 1900, which banned indecent and immoral works of art and literature.<sup>131</sup> Many scholars, most notably Tamar Garb, have shown how easily these "classicizing" photographs of nude or nearly nude male models posed as classical statuary could slip into the territory of the erotic. Later twentieth-century physique magazines, which were immensely popular within queer male communities, can be traced back to such nineteenth-century photographic folios.<sup>132</sup> Thus, nude model photographs, while perhaps intended to call into question the necessity of live encounters, did little to actually dispel the threat of sensuality that adhered to the nude model's body.

One final mode of managing the artist/model transaction—an attempt to curtail the voyeuristic gaze that might accompany the specific experience of drawing a study of the body—was the assertion of particular poses and gestures, most of which were drawn from classical precedents. This adherence to classical aesthetics is, in itself, no great revelation; the use of classical poses follows logically from the previously discussed discourses that extolled the virtues of a normative, classical body. What is more interesting, for my purposes, is the idea that pose and gesture became central to the conventions of the study precisely because they tied the work to a narrative that extended beyond the encounter in the *Aktsaal* itself. The posture of the model in the nude study, and the gestures that professors asked the models to hold, preempted the voyeuristic gaze and errant fantasy by ensuring that the artist was viewing the body not as a nude male from the street, but as a figure to be slotted into a future composition. By tying the study to poses that could be developed into subsequent, more complex preliminary drawings or painted tableaux, academicians guided students toward

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<sup>129</sup> Kristina Lowis, "Nach dem Leben ist vor dem Bild—Der Erweiterung des Aktstudiums durch die Fotografie," 190-94.

<sup>130</sup> Gustav Pauli, *Katalog der Bibliothek der Koeniglichen Akademie der Bildenden Künste zu Dresden* (Dresden 1897), 22-3.

<sup>131</sup> Kristina Lowis, "Nach dem Leben ist vor dem Bild—Der Erweiterung des Aktstudiums durch die Fotografie," 196.

<sup>132</sup> See chapter two, "Modelling the Male Body: Physical Culture, Photography, and the Classical Ideal" in Tamar Garb, *Bodies of Modernity: Figure and Flesh in Fin-de-Siècle France* (London: Thames and Hudson, 1998), 54-79.

drawing studies that focused on the subtleties of the model's physical posture rather than the spectacle of his naked flesh.

#### 4.2 The Threat of the Nude Male Model

The fact that life drawing classes and nude studies were commonplace (were, in fact, an indispensable and foundational component of an academic education) has contributed to a general dearth of information about the specific dynamics that held sway within the walls of the *Aktsaal*. This is especially true in the case of the Dresden Academy, where nineteenth-century archives were largely destroyed and are thus incomplete. This widespread blind spot in the archives contributes to a sense of the life drawing room as what Kristina Lowis describes as a “black box”: a frustratingly opaque and liminal space where interpersonal relations were fugitive and fleeting.<sup>133</sup> How might we arrive at a working understanding of what I have referred to as the queer sexual dynamics of such a space? An understanding of contemporary conceptions of the male model in late-nineteenth-century Dresden and a sensitivity to the nude studies produced by the students who moved within the academy's life drawing room will provide a clearer picture of these dynamics at work.

The goal of the academy's employment of nude models in life drawing classes was one riddled with nuances and caveats. First, and most practically, the academy sought to hire models with figures that approximated the ideal who might serve as the basis for *painterly* compositions. That is to say that the drawing of the model was oftentimes couched as a process that was preliminary to the production of a more sophisticated, painted composition. This approach to life drawing was widespread across Europe and taken for granted; I have explored the origins of the expectation that drawing should serve the purposes of painting in the introduction and chapter one. This goal, of course, required that the model meet physical requirements for beauty and physical fitness—requirements which, as I have shown, were oftentimes dictated by anatomists and based on the perceived bodily proportions of classical sculpture. In his aforementioned work on the science of beauty, Brücke notes that academies should be highly selective when choosing models for their life drawing classes, only choosing those men whose bodies were exceptional in their mimicry of classical precedents.<sup>134</sup>

Additionally, models chosen to pose in the life drawing room were expected to embody moral health and fitness in addition to physical health and fitness. “Model,” as Andrew Graciano notes, was a polysemous term that came to indicate not only a physical ideal, but an ethical one as well; models were meant to serve as exemplars of “exterior and interior beauty, connecting ideals of physical perfection to higher moral and intellectual character, which are to be noted and emulated by art students.”<sup>135</sup> As previously noted, the Dresden Academy made explicit reference to the necessity for moral uprightness in its student body in its 1881 academic prospectus. The academy was implicitly governed by the gender roles and conceptions of healthy sexuality that prevailed outside its walls; academicians were keenly aware of the need to ensure that their students were procreators and generators—terms that persisted from the earlier nineteenth century and which came to bear on the project of maintaining the moral order of art training institutions into the late nineteenth century. Thus, moral demands required that the life model be a moral subject as well as a fit physical specimen, lest the moral order of the

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<sup>133</sup> Kristina Lowis, “Nach dem Leben ist vor dem Bild—Der Erweiterung des Aktstudiums durch die Fotografie,” 198.

<sup>134</sup> Ernst von Brücke, *The Human Figure*, 5.

<sup>135</sup> Andrew Graciano, “Introduction: Models and Modelling in Art, Anatomy, and Medicine,” in *Visualizing the Body in Art, Anatomy, and Medicine since 1800: Models and Modelling*, ed. Andrew Graciano, 1-14 (New York: Routledge, 2019). 5.



academy begin to erode. As Anthea Callen notes, “the issue of morality in work from the live model was deep-rooted.”<sup>136</sup>

We must recognize that late-nineteenth-century standards for academic models were, in large part, a response to degeneration theory, which held that modern European bodies were becoming increasingly corrupt and unhealthy, both physically and morally. To show that the ancient body was healthy and moral, for many scientists in the late nineteenth century, was to simultaneously insist that the modern body was not. Degeneration theory, first articulated by Bénédict Morel in 1857, served as an immensely persuasive means of explaining abnormalities in psychological or physiological constitutions throughout the nineteenth century. For Morel, degeneration could be found in a wide range of cases, from mental illness, or “imbecility,” to poverty.<sup>137</sup> Importantly, the degeneration of the individual often begat degeneration in his or her offspring, the constitutions of which deteriorated further and further with each successive generation. With the assistance of degeneration theory as a theoretical buttress, academicians were effectively able to define the most desirable model as the individual whose body and physical features were untainted by the external markers of degeneration and whose moral core was similarly unspoiled by modern deviance and baseness.

The goal of locating individuals who could serve as both moral and physical models may have been a noble one, but it was not always an *achievable* one in reality. Many academies, including the Dresden Academy, suffered from a chronic lack of models interested in posing nude for their students—a lack instigated by budget constraints. As in most academies across the continent, the modeling work shifted from a profession to a job (i.e., from a consistent role with attendant monetary retribution and prestige to a part-time, bit positions filled by a rotating cast of hired models).<sup>138</sup> Pay for these models was relatively poor and seemed to have decreased over the course of the final years of the nineteenth century and after the turn of the twentieth century. The academy’s budget in 1909 indicates that a paltry 22,000 Marks were set aside for the reimbursement of live nude models over the course of the year—a sum that had only increased by 1,000 Marks the following year.<sup>139</sup> A letter addressed to the Academy’s director from 1924, shows that the model remuneration was a persistent problem; academic faculty voted to double the then-standard 30 pfennigs (cents) per hour to 60 pfennigs per hour in 1924 and received an expanded budget from the Ministry of the Interior in order to enact this wage increase.<sup>140</sup> These records indicate ongoing debates amongst academic administrators about increasing the payment provided to models for their work, as the meager compensation had led to a dearth of respectable models willing to pose nude in the academy’s life drawing rooms.<sup>141</sup>

Scholars have remarked upon the notable scarcity of hard evidence about models, particularly male models, hired by the German art academies in the second half of the nineteenth century (the names of male models, for instance, are only found in the archives of the Dresden Academy beginning in the 1930s).<sup>142</sup> In light of financial records that evidence the shrinking budget allocated to model payment and corroborative anecdotes from academic

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<sup>136</sup> Anthea Callen, *Looking at Men*, 79.

<sup>137</sup> Morel began developing his theories of degeneration in the 1850s and published them in print in 1857. See Bénédict Morel, *Traité des Dégénérescences* (Paris: J.B. Baillière, 1857).

<sup>138</sup> This gradual transition from “*modèle professionnel*” to “*modèle occasionnel*” is a central conceit of Waller in *The Invention of the Model: Artists and Models in Paris*, 25.

<sup>139</sup> Estimated budget for academic models, 1909 (28 April 1909), 171\_1, Archival Custody of the Hochschule für Bildende Künste Dresden.

<sup>140</sup> Correspondence concerning the wage of academic nude models, 1924 (5-31 March 1924), 01/184\_1 to 184\_4, Archival Custody of the Hochschule für Bildende Künste Dresden.

<sup>141</sup> Language in the aforementioned documents notes that the lack of suitable nude models had led to an inability to run life drawing classes “*ordnungsgemäß*”—properly, suitably, or according to the rules.

<sup>142</sup> Eva Monger-Vollmer, *Das Atelier des Malers: die Diskurse eines Raumes in der zweiten Hälfte des 19. Jahrhunderts* (Berlin: Lucas Verlag, 2004), 140.

artists, however, it is likely safe to assume that the Dresden Academy conformed to patterns that prevailed at other preeminent art institutions across Europe in its employment of men (and later women) from the social margins who were forced to accept minimal pay for breaching the boundaries of a growing sense of respectable modesty by posing nude for art students. Examinations of nineteenth-century art academies from Paris to Philadelphia substantiate the idea that, despite general moral condemnation of degenerate substrata society—which included impoverished peoples, criminals, and sex workers, among others—academies often hired “morally corrupt” individuals to pose in the life drawing room.

The degeneracy of the fin-de-siècle male model, which was frequently moral and often physical, figured into texts on the science of beauty in a significant way. Ernst von Brücke himself lamented the defective physical state of modern male bodies generally, and models specifically, by contrasting them with classical precedents [fig. 2.16]. Brücke wrote that “we are, by reason of our models and observations made in bathing resorts, so accustomed to seeing male figures with poorly-developed muscles and an ill-conditioned thorax, that we are constantly tempted to charge the ancients with exaggeration.”<sup>143</sup> Elsewhere, he notes the contrast between the modern German model and the ideal model of the classical period: “if models were placed before us with the proportions of the Apollo Belvedere or of the Apoxyomenos, we should certainly regard them as marvels of beauty, provided that they also exhibited the contours of the statues named. But such models are not to be found.”<sup>144</sup> In light of practical modern realities, the academy was often forced to compromise its own moral code and make do with models with suspect physical and moral states, even if those models embodied modern sensuality rather than classical beauty.

Given that Dresden was well known as a major center of homosexual male prostitution by the end of the nineteenth century, it seems likely that these sex workers also earned additional income by posing for the academy—a trend which would conform with the tendency for female sex workers to pose in studios and academies throughout the second half of the century across Europe.<sup>145</sup> Indeed, a major scandal at the Munich Academy of Fine Arts provides rare insight into the prevalence of male academic models who also earned a wage as sex workers. The scandal centered on a professor of painting, Paul Hoecker, and his 1898 canvas *Ave Maria*. Though the work was initially praised by clerical officials and the general public, it was soon revealed that Hoecker’s model for the Madonna figure had been one of Munich’s young male sex workers with whom Hoecker maintained an intimate relationship. The scandal was enough to force Hoecker to resign his post at the academy before departing Germany for Capri, where he would continue to use beautiful young paramours as his muses.<sup>146</sup> Notably, however, contemporary sources indicate that it was not the mere employment of a male sex worker as a model that formed the basis of public outcry, but rather that a sex worker had posed as the Madonna and that Hoecker’s sexual relationship with the young man had been made public knowledge. Magnus Hirschfeld, the Berlin sexologist and a confidante of Hoecker, wrote that he had lost his “celebrated position” at the academy for “standing by his art and his

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<sup>143</sup> Ernst Brücke, *The Human Figure: Its Beauties and Defects*, 93.

<sup>144</sup> *Ibid.*, 175.

<sup>145</sup> Works that informed my study include Sarah R. Phillips, *Modeling Life: Art Models Speak about Art, Life, and the Creative Process* (Albany: SUNY Press, 2006); Jill Berk Jiminez, ed. *Dictionary of Artists’ Models* (New York: Routledge, 2001); and Colleen Lucey, *Love for Sale: Representing Prostitution in Imperial Russia* (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 2021).

<sup>146</sup> While in Capri, Hoecker encountered the homosexual French poet Jacques d’Adelswärd-Fersen and his younger lover, Nino Cesarini, who sat for several portraits and pornographic drawings by the artist. See Whitney Davis, „Queer Family Romance in Collecting Visual Culture,” *GLQ* vol. 17 no. 2-3 (2011): 309-29 and Birgit Jooss: „... der erste Moderne in der alten Akademie’ – der Lehrer Paul Höcker,” in: *Die Scholle. Eine Künstlergruppe zwischen Secession und Blauer Reiter*, ed. Siegfried Unterberger, Felix Billeter and Ute Strimmer (Munich: Prestel, 2007).

nature,” rather than hiding it away.<sup>147</sup> That the model also worked as a sex worker was, in itself, not the subject of scrutiny supports the notion that academies were well aware their models’ other professional pursuits and that scandal typically only arose in rare cases in which a queer sexual relationship between model and artist became public knowledge.

My primary point is that, while examinations of the artist/model relationship in German art academies of the late nineteenth century, then as now, tend to focus on the relationship between a male artist and a female model, academicians at the Dresden Academy and elsewhere were acutely aware of an incipient threat that the male body might pose to impressionable male art students, regardless of their sexual identity or positionality, and took conscious steps to combat it. Academic artists sought to neutralize the threat of an encounter with a modern, degenerate model through a number of means, most of which centered on the reassertion of a scientific notion of beauty that drew on classical prototypes or the de-animation of the live model in an attempt to preclude the possibility of queer entanglements between the artist and the subject of his gaze. The following sections will focus on the work of two young artists whose work from their time at the Dresden Academy evince an awareness of the queerness inherent to life drawing, and a conscious harnessing of this quality as a means of constituting and nurturing their own homoerotic sensibilities.

## 5. Queer Students and the Erotics of the *Aktsaal*

### 5.1. Ludwig von Hofmann’s Graphic Fantasy

The first artist that I will examine whose nude studies responded in equal measure to anatomical imperatives and his own queer aesthetic sensibility is the German painter and graphic designer Ludwig von Hofmann. Born in Darmstadt in 1861, Hofmann entered the Dresden Academy in 1883 at the age of twenty-two. He studied there until 1886, when he took up studies at the academy in Karlsruhe before finishing his formal training in Paris at the Académie Julian under the direction of Pierre Puvis de Chavannes. After a stint as a painting instructor at the Grad Ducal Saxon Art School in Weimar, Hofmann would return to Dresden in 1916 and take up a post as a professor of painting, which he held until 1931.

Hofmann remains something of an enigma in the German artistic canon. Details of his personal life are scant and spotty, and although he legally married a female cousin in 1899, his life and work evidence a distinctly queer—even homoerotic—sensibility towards the male form.<sup>148</sup> Beyond his close associations with cultural figures today identified as decidedly queer, including the symbolist poet Stefan George and the art patron and *bon vivant* Count Harry Kessler, the subject matter of Hofmann’s oeuvre is chock full of depictions of nude young men in generic Arcadian landscapes, occasionally on horseback, sometimes performing arduous labor, and oftentimes by the seaside. Indeed, many of these works appear to employ the same visual vocabulary used by Wilhelm von Gloeden in his nineteenth-century homoerotic photographs of the Italian boys and young men he encountered in Taormina.<sup>149</sup>

Though Hofmann’s mature works threaten to blur into a difficult-to-differentiate series of pastel palettes and repetitive subject matter, the paintings and drawings clearly resonated within nineteenth- and early-twentieth-century queer circles. Thomas Mann notably admired Hofmann’s 1913 painting *Die Quelle (The Source)*, which features three featureless, lithe male

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<sup>147</sup> Magnus Hirschfeld, *Von einst bis jetzt: Geschichte einer homosexuellen Bewegung, 1897-1922*, ed. Manfred Herzer and James Steakley (Berlin: Rose Winkel Verlag, 1986), 108-9.

<sup>148</sup> Among the most informative works in the limited bibliography of Hofmann’s career are Rolf Günther ed., *Ludwig von Hofmann: Sehnsucht nach dem Paradies* (Dresden: Sandstein, 2011) and Annette Wagner and Klaus Wolbert ed., *Ludwig von Hofmann: arkadische Utopien in der Moderne* (Darmstadt: Institut Mathildenhöhe, 2005).

<sup>149</sup> The affinities between the oeuvres of these two artists have yet to be fully analyzed, but are recognized in Henrike Mund, “Visionen einer Gegenwelt: das Goldene Zeitalter um 1900,” in *Schönheit und Geheimnis: der deutsche Symbolismus, die andere Moderne* (Bielefeld: Kerber, 2013).

nudes situated amongst boulders. Mann acquired the work and hung it above his writing desk, using it as inspiration for scenes in his 1924 opus *Der Zauberberg* (*The Magic Mountain*).<sup>150</sup> For the purposes of this project, I am interested in works produced by a young Hofmann during his time at the Dresden Academy between 1883 and 1886. At the academy, Hofmann would have had his first contact with the male nude model in an artistic capacity; it is this dynamic that I propose to interrogate in order to reconstruct the ways in which the aforementioned homoerotics of the *Aktsaal* might have operated.

Before examining a nude study drawn by Hofmann in 1886, I would first like to examine two works that picture the artist's engagement with the male body even prior to his graduation to the life drawing room. Two drawings by Hofmann from 1884, the year after he entered the academy, serve to evidence the dialogic push and pull between anatomical accuracy and erotic desire for the nude body. These remarkable "*Gedächtnisskizzen*" ("memory sketches") were produced for a contest held by the academy that judged a student's ability to draw the human skeleton entirely from memory based on the knowledge of human anatomy gained during their first year of instruction. It seems likely that this contest was a unique feature of the curriculum at the Dresden Academy; none of the major academies in Germany or Austria recorded a similar event, and though presumably several first-year students participated, archival research has yet to reveal any sketches similar to those that Hofmann produced.

Hofmann's sketches are fantastic and bizarre. The first of the sketches depicts a male skeleton from behind in a contrapposto stance reminiscent of the Hellenistic *Terme Ruler*, his hips thrust to the right and his right arm akimbo atop his ilium [fig. 2.17]. His left arm is extended, clutching a staff with his bony hand. Rather than stopping at an accurate (and remarkably detailed!) memory sketch of the human skeleton, however, Hofmann finished his sketch by outlining the skeletal frame with the shape of a strapping young man: a solid line traces the spectral form of a model with curly hair, strong shoulders, bulky biceps, thick thighs and calves, and defined buttocks. A second sketch, undated but presumably from the same competition, depicts another skeletal model, this time laid flat on his back with his right leg hiked and his hips angled toward the viewer [fig. 2.18]. A lightly traced ribcage and spinal column fill the phantom model's chest cavity, leg bones and arm bones rest on the cushion within the outline of strong arms and legs. Just as Hofmann's first sketch included defined buttocks, the artist here makes sure to include faintly drawn nipples and a lolling penis.

Hofmann's drawings embody many of the binarisms alluded to in the introduction to this chapter, which I have argued were at play in the academy at large: the bodies he depicts are both flesh and bone, sentient and insentient, vivified and mortified. The studies take an academic exercise aimed at rewarding a student's ability to recall human skeletal anatomy from memory and imbue it with a second, subversive valence of personal significance. The skeletons both adhere to academic dictates *and* open up the possibility for the exploration of the artist's own homosensual interest in the bodies that he depicts. Try as they might to elide sensual connotations from the male body—even in the student's memory—by subjecting it to disciplinary measures, these sketches retain traces of Hofmann's own queer subjectivity that would continue to grow and develop throughout his time at the academy and beyond.

These sketches, and the competition that spawned them, are entirely unlike most academic studies from this period, in Germany or elsewhere in Europe. Much like the skeletal models of classical sculptures and the "science of beauty" discourses that proliferated from the mid-century, I argue that the *Konkurrenz* represented a mode of exerting influence over the imagination and fantasy of the student draftsman in an effort to ensure that even depictions of the male body produced from memory were objective and anatomically accurate

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<sup>150</sup> See Rodney Symington, *Thomas Mann's The Magic Mountain* (Newcastle upon Tyne: Cambridge Scholars, 2011), 259.

representations of a standardized and normative ideal. As examined in the introduction and chapter one, from the early nineteenth century, the affinities between queer eroticism and graphic expression were rooted in errant, unruly, or perverse fantasies. That young art students were expected to work their way up to the life drawing class by *reproducing* plaster casts rather than producing new compositions of their own creation is indicative of the general academic wariness towards the fantastic capacities of the student. A competition in which students were rewarded for their ability to accurately reproduce a male skeleton rather than actively and creatively imagine male bodies thus functioned as yet another control meant to mediate and regulate the artist's engagement with the male body (in this case, an imagined encounter in which the threat of erotic fantasy posed an imminent and preventable threat).

In Hofmann's case, the memory sketches function as prime examples of a queer artist working within heteronormative academic structures to explore an interest in the male body that such measures were enacted to curb. Jean-Luc Nancy has theorized that drawings exhibit a kind of "gestural pleasure" at the level of form when their execution moves beyond given or established intentions for their execution. "No engineer, nor athlete, nor farmer is content simply to carry out the successive steps of a plan given in advance," Nancy writes, "no *design* is resolved in the (re)production of a rigorously established *drawing*. Conversely, no *drawing* is limited to the simple transcription of the design from which it originates."<sup>151</sup> Pleasure—which for Nancy absolutely includes erotic or sexual pleasure—is produced in drawing's excesses, its movement beyond what is established, expected, or demanded in order to incorporate one's own intentions. Hofmann's memory sketches do just this; in their movement beyond simple reproduction of the skeletal body, Hofmann's undulating outlines express sensual pleasure *as* gestural pleasure. If the skeletons display Hofmann's fluency and virtuosity in the anatomical correctness of the male body, the fleshy outlines that encircle the skeletal frames imbue the sketches with a queerly sensual sensibility. Hofmann's imagination reproduces beautiful skeletons, to be sure, but the elements that exceed the limits of the drawing exercise—the ample buttocks, the nipples, the outlined penis—simultaneously assert a sensual pleasure drawn directly from the artist's fantasy.

Hofmann's hybrid sketches, which undermined the reproductive dictates of the anatomical competition by imbuing the skeletons with a distinctly queer fantasy of embodiment, are evident in other academic works that the artist produced in the years that followed. A study held in the graphics collection of the Dresden Staatliche Kunstsammlung dated May 1886—roughly three years after Hofmann's entry to the academy after his promotion to the upper class—realizes the erotic encounter between artist and model that had previously been figured within the artist's fantasy [fig. 2.19]. The work is clearly well-conceived and painstakingly detailed, though it was likely produced as an academic exercise rather than as a preparatory work. Similarly to Hofmann's gestural experiments in the skeletal memory sketches, Hofmann's male nude toys with and moves beyond conventions of the genre to imbue the work with a sensual significance. At first glance, the model's lean body appears to be perched on the corner of a prop box; upon closer inspection, it becomes clear that the box and cushions merely serve as a support for the model's left leg. The slightly awkward pose of his body appears designed for the purpose of capturing the left leg in its hiked position; the left thigh and calf frame the model's genitals, drawing the eye to a penis and scrotum hemmed by a tuft of dark pubic hair. The rough gestural sketch in the right corner of the sheet belies a high degree of staged artificiality: the model was not merely caught mid-movement, but intentionally posed in a manner that centers and emphasizes his sex.

There is little doubt that Hofmann's model is distinctly *modern*. His modernity is both physical *and* gestural, which is to say that it is not merely located in the leanness of the model,

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<sup>151</sup> Jean-Luc Nancy, *The Pleasure in Drawing* (New York: Fordham University Press, 2013), 39.

the individuated facial hair, and the overemphasized genitals, but also in the way that Hofmann has chosen to pose his model. Butterfield-Rosen's productive model for attending to gestural nuances and transformations in modern art argues that "pose or posture is a privileged locus for apprehending correspondences of concrete form and abstract content."<sup>152</sup> For my purposes, I am interested in the ways in which Hofmann's choice of pose quite literally figured his desire for the mustachioed model. Much like Butterfield-Rosen's case studies, Hofmann consciously departs from traditional gestures associated with classical aesthetics and sculpture—gestures, in other words, that the academy endorsed as "beautiful" and within the bounds of artistic respectability. Hofmann certainly produced works that adhered to the classical academic model, as well; another memory drawing, also from 1884, depicts a nude male model in a traditional pose modeled on the figure of Harmodios in the Tyrannicides group, feet set wide apart and left arm cocked at a right angle over his head [fig. 2.20].

In the case of Hofmann's study from life, however, the artist seems to move beyond classical postures and highlight the blatant modernity of his model; as Butterfield Rosen notes with regard to her case studies, the "'classical language of gesture' no longer seems to apply."<sup>153</sup> The model's pose comes close to citing postures associated with antiquity, such as the Spinario, but is emphatically *not* the Spinario: lacking in direct classical precedent and existing outside of the sketch-to-painting telos, Hofmann asserts the modernity of his nude model. The pose embodies Butterfield Rosen's observation that, in particular modern cases, "when 'pre-coined' gestures come into play...they do so to be transformed, travestied, or supplanted by opposing postural modes."<sup>154</sup> The pose thus dances around classical precedents but ultimately reworks them and reforms them into Hofmann's own idiosyncratic gesture.

Hofmann's engagements with the male body between 1884 and 1886 evidence a conscious attempt to reconcile the binaristic terms erected at the academy (beautiful and sensual, objective and subjective) and show a clear progression from the reiteration of classical poses to their reinterpretation within the context of his own queer desire. Rather than view these drawings as straightforward assertions of Hofmann's own "homoaesthetics," I suggest that they be read as personal negotiations of extant academic dictates that sought to govern the artist-model encounter (be it real or imagined) by subjecting it to academically endorsed notions of anatomical accuracy, beauty, and classicizing gesture. Hofmann's experimentation within these parameters foreshadows more drastic and conscious attempts at subverting academic standards and secreting homosensual desire into nude studies by students who followed after him—most notably, by his friend and colleague Sascha Schneider.

## 5.2. Sascha Schneider and the Figuration of Desire

Born in St. Petersburg in 1870, the artist Sascha Schneider spent the majority of his life and career in Germany, attending the Dresden Academy between 1889 and 1893 and subsequently taking a post as a professor of painting at the Grand-Ducal Saxon Art School Weimar (Großherzoglich-Sächsische Kunstschule Weimar) in 1904. Though Schneider is today perhaps best remembered for his monumental canvases, he in fact worked across media as a painter, sculptor, and printmaker. In his practice, the lines between media significantly blurred: oil paintings might be revised and printed as wood engravings, figures that populated paintings might later be sculpted in stone, prints might serve as the basis for new painterly iterations of old scenes and motifs.

Beyond his purely artistic merit, Schneider is also remarkable because of his documented homosexuality and the thinly veiled homoeroticism that is evident in his body of

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<sup>152</sup> Emmelyn Butterfield-Rosen, *Modern Art and the Remaking of Human Disposition* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2021), 5.

<sup>153</sup> *Ibid.*, 14.

<sup>154</sup> *Ibid.*

work. He disclosed his queerness to a number of friends and colleagues (such as the adventure novelist Karl May, for whose books Schneider produced a number of illustrations) and his sexuality was forced under the public microscope as a result of his relationship with his former student, Hellmuth Jahn, with whom he shared a roughly two-year romantic relationship between 1904 and 1906. After the two men relocated to Weimar in 1904, their relationship quickly deteriorated; Jahn relocated to Berlin in January 1906 and began the first of a series of blackmail attempts against the artist. Jahn “outed” Schneider in the spring of 1908, an act that forced him to address his homosexuality in a letter to the director of the Weimar Kunstschule and resign from his professorial post before fleeing to Italy to avoid prosecution.

The entirety of the small body of scholarly work on Schneider prioritizes his mature artistic practice, focusing on works produced in the late 1890s or in the first decade of the twentieth century and attending primarily to paintings and prints. This scholarly trend belies just how central drawing was to Schneider’s practice; the artist was a virtuosic draftsman, a talent that was recognized early on by the artist Max Klinger, who recommended Schneider for a professorship of life drawing at the Grand Ducal Saxon Art School in Weimar in 1903. My attention will thus remain on the artist’s early drawings, produced during his time at the Dresden Academy and immediately after his departure. Just as the practice of life drawing implicitly queered the work of students like Schneider, so too did Schneider work within and around academic structures to explore his own homoerotic investment in the sensual male nude.

Given the paucity of written sources from Schneider’s early years at the Dresden Academy as a student, much of what we know about Schneider’s developing conception of the model and life drawing comes from later sources, written after the turn of the century. The most useful source, from this perspective, is a short tract entitled *Gedanken über die Gestaltung einer Modellschule mit Angliederung einer freien Kunstakademie* (*Thoughts on the Formation of a Model School with Affiliation of a Free Art Academy*), an essay that Schneider wrote while in exile in Florence in May 1910.<sup>155</sup> The essay reads as a sustained reflection on the state of the German art academy and its practices of hiring male models for life drawing classes. These were topics that Schneider knew well; by 1910, he had not only been through the Dresden academic system but also served as the professor of life drawing at the academy in Weimar himself. The artist’s musings here represent the culmination of nearly twenty years of artistic engagement with life models, both within and outside of academic spaces.

Schneider’s essay is, in many ways, a lament; the overarching idea that forms the basis of the artist’s thoughts is that the male model—and his role as defined and shaped by the modern art academy—has become untenable and uninspiring. His characterization of the typical academic model confirms the notion that the men drawn to the academy for modeling work were oftentimes lower-class men or men at the social margins for whom modeling work was a temporary job functioning to buttress income from other trades and occupations. The majority of academic male models, Schneider notes, were “often brought to us by happenstance, joblessness, or hardship. In most cases, they secure for themselves a livelihood outside of the couple of modeling hours [at the academy].”<sup>156</sup>

Following on from these observations, Schneider’s remarks very much conform to contemporary discourses that condemn of the unfit state of the modern male body; in his estimation, the men who tended to seek modeling jobs were not always the men whose figures incited the greatest degree of inspiration in the artist. In a passage that bears quoting at length, Schneider writes that,

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<sup>155</sup> This nearly unexamined and exceptionally difficult-to-locate text was published by Breitkopf and Härtel, the same publishing house that printed a number of Schneider’s most well-known paintings and prints as collectible folios in the first decade of the twentieth century.

<sup>156</sup> Sascha Schneider, *Gedanken über die Gestaltung einer Modellschule mit Angliederung einer freien Kunstakademie* (Leipzig: Breitkopf & Härtel, 1910), 3-4.

In the art academies, young people now approach this inferior, plebian nude and are supposed to develop their taste and sense of beauty. No wonder that such study material, this species of model, very soon cools the young artist's enthusiasm so that he turns his back on this entire artistic task or that a baroque, unhealthy, and anti-cultural art movement finally develops. But one finds copying the old [masters] exhausting and cannot draw enthusiasm and new inspiration from nature!<sup>157</sup>

Left to decide between replicating plaster casts and drawing from physically uninspiring models in the life drawing room, Schneider suggests, the student artist is left without a satisfying option. This lack of suitable model was partially due, as previously noted, to economic concerns. Only models who are under considerable financial duress find the relatively dull work of modeling tenable for the meager sum that they are paid: academies, he noted, were only able to pay their models between 0.75 and 1 Mark per hour, while an unnamed "famous artist" was able to pay the physical culture icon "Lionel Strongfort" (Max Unger) 100 Marks per day for a month for his modeling services.<sup>158</sup> A primary issue seemed to be that the academy was not an attractive option for models who represented an ideal masculinity and state of physical and moral health; these models could find higher rates of pay (and a greater degree of recognition) for their services in private studios. Academies were often left, therefore, with "inferior, plebian" models that rarely approximated the ideal body so prized by academicians, theorists, and anatomists alike.<sup>159</sup>

These shortcomings were likely also evident to Schneider during his time at the Dresden Academy as he began to draw from life models. The earliest of Schneider's extant nude studies dates from 1890, shortly after Schneider graduated to the upper class and gained access to the life drawing room in April of that year. Aside from their virtuosic treatment of the body, these two studies are seemingly unremarkable. The first, dated 26 April 1890, depicts a well-muscled man in a traditional academic pose, legs crossed and right hand raised to his chin as he leans against a studio box for support [fig. 2.21]. The second drawing, which dates from 11 October 1890, depicts a nude male model from behind, his left leg bent and his right leg stretched to the corner of the page [fig. 2.22]. The model's fingers are laced behind his bent head and his right arm rests on a cushioned support. More noteworthy than the subject matter or the style in which the models are depicted, however, are Schneider's helpful notations that accompany the drawings. The first indicates that the work was produced for a "Pr. Grosse," likely Theodor Grosse, a painter of historical and mythological scenes who held a position at the academy from 1864. The second notation reads "gestellt v. Pr. Gey," or "posed by Professor [Leonhard] Gey," one of Schneider's mentors during his time at the academy.

Of interest here is that these traditional, classical poses were clearly mandated by the academician, who both assigned the exercise and determined the model's pose. Such exercises prepared students for the production of painted works in the final stage of their education by ensuring their familiarity with stock poses pulled from the classical past and the history of European art; the earliest study recalls any number of canvases depicting the mythological Paris and elements of the second study are clear reworkings and revisions of earlier experiments in composition, recalling, for instance, the second figure from the left in his Schneider's drawing *The Invention of the Plough* from July of the same year.

Though these earliest studies may at first appear to leave little room for Schneider's personal subjectivity, they in fact reveal the seed of Schneider's burgeoning sensual interest in the male form—an interest that combined classical and modern elements and integrated

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<sup>157</sup> Ibid., 5.

<sup>158</sup> Ibid., 8.

<sup>159</sup> Ibid., 5.



impressions from the real model with his own homoerotic imagination. Given the standardized poses and gestures of the models and Schneider's commentary on the uninspiring physical states of the models used in modern life drawing classes, one might expect the studies resulting from these life drawing encounters to be similarly lackluster. From an early age, however, it is clear that the artist was keenly attuned to the power of synthesizing observations from nature and one's impressions, toeing the line between realistic depiction and imaginative embellishment. This was a delicate dance that was relatively common in modern art academies; as Waller notes, life drawing pushed students to "negotiate the discrepancies between the flawed shape of the individual live body and the ideal."<sup>160</sup> Schneider recognized this dynamic in his 1910 text, writing that the model should in effect serve as a kind of starting point to which the artist's imagination could adhere, providing a springboard for the artist's fantasy.<sup>161</sup>

We can locate the homosensual valences of Schneider's studies I argue, in their very synthesis of idealistic physical features and naturalistic erogenous features. The artist has deliberately composed his study to include those physical elements ennobled by his fantasy (Schneider bulks up the model's arms and overemphasizes the V-shaped obliques of his abdomen) *and* the real physical elements that reinforce the flesh-and-blood embodiedness of the nude model before him (consider the dusting of pubic hair leading from the model's navel to his groin and the realistic rendering of his genitals). This queer synthesis of anatomical perfection and realistic erogeneity contrasts strongly with nude studies produced by the professors for whom the study was created. Schneider's model in the 26 April study is legibly modern when contrasted with a model depicted by Leonhard Gey in a roughly contemporaneous, though undated, study [fig. 2.23]. Gey's model demonstrates a notable lack of realistic bodily features such as body hair, is lean and lithe, and his genitals are little more than an oval surrounded by a circle. Gey here seems to overcompensate for the flesh-and-blood nature of his model by abstracting his body and turning it into a classical marble sculpture, devoid of physical elements that might indicate his humanity. It lacks, in other words, the *sensuality* of Schneider's study—and intentionally so. Schneider's engagement with the models, though managed and regulated by his instructors Grosse and Gey, signals a degree of sensual interest in the male body at odds with the mandate that models provide a starting point from which to approach beauty while eliminating unstable physical signifiers that might tempt the artist into carnal sensuality.

By 1891, his second year at the Dresden Academy, Schneider had begun to experiment with the classical prototypes and references held up by drawing and anatomy professors alike as the standard towards which students should strive. Importantly, however, Schneider's conception of antiquity was one heavily filtered through Georg Treu, the previously discussed classical archaeologist and director of the Albertinum, who latched onto the artist early on in his time at the academy. Treu undoubtedly stoked the young artist's interest in antiquity and the art of classical Greece, as well an interest in ancient Assyrian and Egyptian art that would inform the artist's work after he left the academy and established an independent studio.<sup>162</sup>

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<sup>160</sup> Susan S. Waller, *The Invention of the Model: Artists and Models in Paris*, 4.

<sup>161</sup> The ideal body of Schneider's homosensual fantasy and the academic ideal may have been worlds apart conceptually, but not in practice. That is to say that there were few qualitative differences that might set apart a homosexual artist's physical ideal from the anatomical ideal propagated by academicians within the walls of the life drawing room. If, as previously stated, the model was subject to the artist's productive imagination in order to ennoble and rehabilitate his purportedly degenerate physique, so too could Schneider give free rein to an erotic fantasy that delighted in the strong male nude under the guise of moving closer to a normative physical standard.

<sup>162</sup> Though Schneider's work as a student appears only to have engaged white, European bodies, he began depicting non-European subjects in 1894, the year following his departure from the academy. Many of his figures in works from the mid-1890s and the first decade of the twentieth century have been read as Middle Eastern or North African, though it is very unlikely that the figures depicted were based on encounters with

Christiane Starck has noted that correspondence between Schneider and Treu from after the turn of the century evidences that the two men shared a similar mindset and disposition, and that Treu held a central position in Schneider's world during his time at the academy and in the years following his departure in 1893.<sup>163</sup>

Their relationship and Treu's mentorship certainly help to explicate Schneider's abiding interest in classical aesthetics, which he puts forward as the cornerstone to his solution of the "model problem" that he outlined in his 1910 treatise. Here, he advocates for the establishment of a modeling school where young men would live together under controlled, nearly martial conditions optimized for physical health and fitness: models would enter the school around age fourteen and remain there until twenty-two or twenty-three years of age. They would live together in dormitories, their food would be "hearty but simple," and they would be prohibited from smoking tobacco and drinking alcohol. They would be expected to train their bodies daily, preferably outdoors and always in the nude, under strict discipline and medical surveillance.<sup>164</sup> The goal (perhaps an unachievable one under modern conditions, Schneider admits) would be the creation of a school akin to the Greek gymnasium. Schneider's concept of a modern gymnasium that could transform the modern body into an approximation of a classical body is clearly one that the artist had begun to consider early in his training; an 1891 academic study, *Male nude from behind fastening a belt* [fig. 2.24], serves as the first instance of a classically-inspired motif that would come to exemplify this desire for the athletically-trained Greek youth (Schneider would revisit this motif in his 1913 sculpture *Der Gürtelbinder* [*The Belt Binder*]).<sup>165</sup>

Schneider was not solely preoccupied with the classical body, however. More so than many of his professors or colleagues at the academy, Schneider's work evidences a strong interest in the sensual potential of the modern body. In 1893, Schneider left the academy following an incident in which he disrupted a speech by the academy's president at an academic feast celebrating the birthday of King Albert of Saxony—a speech filled with "patriotic phrases." Schneider left the hall and returned with a plate of "something unmentionable," which he placed before the speaker before exiting the hall.<sup>166</sup> The resulting uproar led to Schneider's removal from the academy. Freed from academic strictures, Schneider moved into a shared studio space in Dresden, where he would push his experimentation in the depiction of the nude male body to new heights.

Two studies produced during the two years following his departure from the academy and establishment as an independent artist demonstrate an artist breaching the boundaries of

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Middle Eastern or North African models. In fact, the incongruity of the bodies and heads in a number of his works depicting these figures perhaps indicates that the artist used local German models to pose for the body, but incorporated an imagined, "Orientalized" head to code the figure as non-European. Schneider would have been familiar with ancient Egyptian and Assyrian artworks and traditions of figuration from the sculpture collection of the Albertinum, which held a large corpus of Egyptian statuary and panels from the Palace of Assurnasirpal II at Nimrud, which the museum acquired in 1862. Non-European bodies tend to serve as a foil to classically beautiful white bodies in Schneider's works, variously symbolizing concepts such as despotism, tyranny, power, and darkness. Schneider's engagement with and depiction of non-European figures is an area ripe for analysis.

<sup>163</sup> Christiane Starck, *Sascha Schneider: ein Künstler des deutschen Symbolismus* (Marburg: Tectum Verlag, 2016), 22-3.

<sup>164</sup> Sascha Schneider, *Gedanken über die Gestaltung einer Modellschule mit Angliederung einer freien Kunstakademie*, 11-12.

<sup>165</sup> Scholars have yet to offer an interpretation of this unusual motif, which is only found elsewhere in a sculpture of the same name by the German artist Mathieu Molitor from 1905. It seems clear, however, that the reference is intended to be classical. Rebecca Levitan has suggested that the inspiration for the motif might lie in the 7<sup>th</sup> century BCE belted Daedalic bronze figurine found in Delphi, an archaic figurine that prominently features a belt not unlike the one worn by Schneider's figure in his 1913 series of statues.

<sup>166</sup> Christiane Starck, *Sascha Schneider*, 23.

academic respectability in order to depict thoroughly modern bodies. In the first of these studies, produced in 1894, the artist depicts a model from a highly unique vantage point: the model lies on his back on a large mat, his left foot supported by an additional abutting mat [fig. 2.25]. What would be a full, if foreshortened, view of the model's nude body is obscured by his bent legs; his hips are shifted, his legs pushed together, his toes lifted from the mat. Though his face is obscured from view, we are granted a glimpse of two knobby arms, which are outstretched and bent at the elbows. His hands, presumably, are laced behind his head. The study is intensely tender in its depiction of a model that is achingly contemporary: the developed muscles and anatomical normativity visible in the artist's earlier academic studies are replaced by lean, taut arm muscles, jutting hip bones and elbows, and swooping tibias highlighted beneath sinewy leg muscles.

A second study from a year later depicts a model lying flat on his back, his legs splayed and his right arm draped over a pillow that also supports his head [fig. 2.26]. A thin layer of chest hair lines the ridge of the model's stomach as it traces its way to his groin, where Schneider depicts the model's genitals crowned by a soft tuft of pubic hair. Whereas the model in Schneider's previous study was knobby and thin, however, here his model's chest and stomach are padded by a thin layer of fat that obscures abdominal and pectoral muscles. His feet are rough and calloused, his finger encircled by a ring that attests to Schneider's attention to detail; his model is a married man—one reason, perhaps, that the artist leaves his face unfinished and incomplete.

These studies are both more realistic and infinitely more sensual than the studies the artist produced while a student at the academy. Beyond the high degree of careful attention to the physical qualities of the model's distinctly modern anatomy, Schneider here throws away academic conventions of pose and gesture, opting instead to depict the model in intimate poses—stretched out on beds, languorous arms stretched above the head, chin resting on chest. In the private studio, the artist could explore the body in ways that he was not able to explore it in the life drawing room of the academy, experimenting with a more intimate artist/model dynamic that he would later highlight as central to his practice. Theorizing the nature of his hypothetical modeling school-*cum*-academy, Schneider noted the importance of unmediated encounters between the artist and his model, writing that, in his ideal academy, there would be “a better social relationship between the model and the artist, to the benefit of both parties.”<sup>167</sup> This he would achieve by predicating the encounter on natural observation and a lack of pretense or artifice: the artist should approach his session with the model with a great degree of freedom from expectations, conventions, and templates, or patterns, “observing, sketching, noting, measuring, and painting” the model freely and in a manner conducive to capturing the essence of his physicality.<sup>168</sup> Academic notions of beauty are here subverted in favor of a more explicitly sensual exploration of the male model's physique.

This focus on the radically modern body would not remain a fixture of the artist's visual vocabulary; in the years that followed, and particularly after the turn of the century, Schneider's male bodies became increasingly more “classical” (that is to say, approximating classical precedents) and less identifiably “modern” (that is to say, realistically depicting the “degenerate” bodies of men plucked from the streets of Dresden). Rather than explicate this trend in Schneider's work as merely a return to the classicizing forms favored by academicians, or even as a queer depiction of the “beautiful” body, I would like to posit that Schneider's relationship to the nude model was primarily dialectic. His depictions of male models in his work following the turn of the century collapse the binaries erected around the body that cast it as either classical *or* modern, healthy *or* unhealthy, beautiful *or* sensual. The artist's

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<sup>167</sup> Sascha Schneider, *Gedanken über die Gestaltung einer Modellschule mit Angliederung einer freien Kunstakademie*, 19.

<sup>168</sup> *Ibid.*, 18.

conception of the ideal male body was one that endowed a classically beautiful form with the intimate sensuality so closely aligned with the modern male body.

Anatomy was the lynchpin that allowed Schneider to synthesize these seemingly disparate binaristic terms. His admiration for the classical male form only went so far; in an aesthetic program like that propagated by the academy, the classical body existed only as inanimate marble or within the imagination of the artist and stunted artistic invention: “training the eye on the Greek masterpieces may mean a lot,” he noted, “but leads to convention and patterns.”<sup>169</sup> The emphasis on normativity to which the academy clung, the abiding belief that a model should demonstrate idealistic anatomical proportions and moral fitness, led to dead, dull compositions. This unity of physical body and spiritual rectitude was also, as we have seen, expected to eschew the sort of sensuality that gave way to homoerotic interest in the male form. For Schneider, however, this union of the body and the spirit could not exist without a healthy dose of eroticism; “coitus,” Schneider wrote, “is the *highest* and *fullest* harmony of the body and mind: the most natural common ground.”<sup>170</sup> An erotic interest in the model was an unspoken matter of course in the artist’s work, and anatomy—in practice, not merely in theory—was the tool by which Schneider could resurrect the classical ideal *in* the sensual modern subject.

In order to actualize these ideal male forms, Schneider made a version of his hypothetical modeling school a reality. In 1919, the artist founded the Kraft-Kunst-Institut (Strength-Art Institute) in Dresden. The Institute, which was in operation until 1935, served primarily as a fitness studio in which Schneider’s hired models were given the equipment and training necessary to turn their bodies into specimens that approximated classical prototypes. Photographs of the studio confirm this notion that Schneider’s goal was primarily the cultivation of the ideal male form through imitation of the ancients [fig. 2.27]. In the center of the room stands a bronze statue of a nude youth: his 1913 *Idolino*, a work that synthesized aspects of the Roman bronze *Idolino*, which Schneider likely encountered whilst in exile in Florence, and the *Diadumenos* that he came to know as a student in Dresden [figs. 2.28-2.29].

At the Institute, Schneider’s primary aim was to use modern *Menschenmaterial* (human material) to produce the sort of anatomical perfection that both conformed to an anatomic standard *and* approximated the artist’s own homosensual ideal.<sup>171</sup> A sketch from around 1900 makes clear that Schneider was already considering what proportions this exemplary model of human anatomy and erotic desire might exhibit; the rough schematic sketch of the male body features a scale not unlike that used by scientists of beauty to measure the proportions of classical sculptures [fig. 2.30]. In 1909, Schneider would translate the ideally proportioned figure from his sketch into the leftmost idealized figure in his now-lost canvas *Gymnasion* [fig. 2.31], a work in which the maturation of the boys depicted signals the progression from the “beautiful” to the “high” styles theorized by Winckelmann; Whitney Davis has argued that the work pictures both the competitive and erotic valences that propelled both the production of ancient Greek art *and* modern homoerotic art that, like Schneider’s work, dialectically engaged antique precedents.<sup>172</sup>

Fortunately, photographs of pupils who were trained at the Institute are still extant. A particularly striking example, printed in the Institute’s brochure, contrasts two black and white photographs of a seventeen-year-old young man from around 1919 [fig. 2.32]. The first

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<sup>169</sup> Ibid., 24.

<sup>170</sup> Christiane Starck, *Sascha Schneider*, 153. Emphasis mine.

<sup>171</sup> Schneider’s use of the term „*Menschenmaterial*“ can be found in Sascha Schneider, *Gedanken über die Gestaltung einer Modellschule mit Angliederung einer freien Kunstakademie*, 3.

<sup>172</sup> See, for instance, Davis’s recorded 2016 Rumble Fund Lecture at King’s College London. Whitney Davis, “Third Annual Rumble Fund Lecture: Queering Classical Art,” March 16, 2016, King’s College London, 1:07:15, <https://youtu.be/DqMyjTLK6wM>. 18:08.

photograph shows the subject upon entering the Institute, lanky, knock-kneed, undeveloped. The second photo shows the subject after his stint in Schneider's gymnasium: developed pectoral and abdominal muscles, strong thighs and arms—even a thicker head of hair—attest to the thorough transformation that the model underwent at the Institute. No contrast could better demonstrate the anatomical prerogative of Schneider's program than these photographs; indeed, the composition (black background, neutral expression, lack of performativity or staging) reads more like photos printed in contemporary medical texts than the photos that circulated in physical culture magazines. Though the end aim had an undeniably erotic valence, Schneider's photographic comparison accomplishes the task, paradoxically, that the academicians Koch and Rieth hoped to accomplish with their pseudo-classical male nude photographs: providing a visual prototype of the anatomically ideal male body as a specimen to be coolly observed and imitated by the artist.

I have suggested that Schneider's engagement with the male model traced a kind of dialectical trajectory over the course of his career as the artist explored and experimented within the binarisms set forth by the academy early in his career: classical versus modern, ideal versus real, beautiful versus sensual. Clearly, given his lifelong engagement with the academy writ large and his extensive writings on the importance of academic training, Schneider recognized the importance of discipline to his own practice and the practices of others. But Schneider's vision of an ideal academy was one in which beauty was pursued for sensual ends, not primarily moral ones. If Hofmann's studies were drawn largely from a sensual imagination, adding fleshy outlines to anatomically correct skeletons, Schneider's studies evidence an ardent desire for the *real*, a desire to use the study as a way of exploring how to effectively reconcile the academic hurdles put in place to ameliorate homosensual desire for the modern model and his own growing impulse to nurture it. The studies Schneider produced while at the Dresden Academy err on the side of a classical ideal endorsed by both anatomist and academician, though the seed of sensual realism that imbues the works would blossom into a full-fledged exploration of the modern model's erotic charge in the years immediately following his departure.

The resolution of the binaristic challenge posed by academic conventions, I argue, was a return to the foundational terms "model" and "anatomy." The pursuits that defined the last decades of Schneider's life and practice were defined by an explicit attempt to reconcile—or perhaps subvert—the anatomical dictates promoted by academic training: the artist/model transaction became predicated on drawing classical forms from modern bodies, deconstructing the barriers that separated artist from model, and extolling the sensual as a natural and healthy bedmate of the beautiful.

## **6. Conclusion: Subversive Orientations**

By the final decades of the nineteenth century, the academy—an institution that had dominated and dictated the trajectory of European art and arbitrated aesthetic judgments throughout the century—was forced to grapple with the wave of modernism and the challenges it posed. As I have sought to show, these challenges were not merely aesthetic, but also social. Indeed, my position has been that major social and cultural shifts occurring outside the walls of the academy, namely the entrance of the scientifically recognized and defined figure of the male homosexual, incited academicians to revise longstanding institutional practices and tenets in order to target, in the first instance, the homosociality of the academy rather than the art that the students produced. At the Dresden Academy, where antiquated Romantic ideals reigned until well into the modern period, the administrative reforms of the 1870s and 1880s were aimed at updating not only an outmoded pedagogical program and reconsidering early-nineteenth-century paradigms but also at taking stock of—and insulating the academy

against—perceived threats to the moral order of the academy that modernity had brought to its doorstep.

I have outlined a number of strategies that academicians and anatomists quietly pursued in an ongoing effort to manage relationships between men within the walls of the academy—particularly relationships between student artists and nude male models. Although life drawing constituted a longstanding and indispensable part of the artist's academic education, academicians had also become keenly conscious of the queer complications that might arise from the prolonged observation of the nude body and the degree of engagement with the model that the academic study necessitated. A renewed emphasis on anatomy instruction, a requirement for students that complemented their drawing instruction, came to serve a crucial role in the academic management of this problem: in the hands of anatomists and theorists of art, anatomy provided a tool by which to negate homosensual associations with classical bodies and hold those bodies up as a scientifically justifiable antidote to modern sensual degeneracy.

As I have argued, however, anatomical objectification did not always adequately foreclose the possibility that students would develop a sensual or erotic interest in the nude male model that they drew. For some students, the encounter with the model provided a rare opportunity to engage with the nude male body in a meaningful way—to study and record it in its entirety. I have sought to show how two of these students maintained the erotic charge of their encounter in spite of academic regulations and protocols that sought to disable it. Ludwig von Hofmann explored this sensual investment in the male form both within his own imagination and in the live encounter with his model; his exacting, anatomically precise skeletons enveloped by the imagined contour of a nude male body balanced academic dictates and a subjective fantasy that exceeded these dictates. His subsequently produced nude drawing effectively queered traditional, classical pose and gesture to subtly assert his own desire for the modern body before him. Sascha Schneider, similarly, produced studies that evidence fluency with academically endorsed notions of the anatomically ideal body— notions that turned on their proximity to ideal, oftentimes imagined, classical precedents—while also nurturing an interest in the “degenerate” (i.e., naturalistic) qualities of the model before him. Schneider's studies evince the artist's exploration of a wide array of body types and pictorial strategies. In the end, Schneider would take the static anatomical ideal offered to him by the academy (a *de facto* classical ideal) and enliven it through the inclusion of those physical markers that most forcefully appealed to his homoaesthetic sensibilities.

What, then, of the closet? To what extent might we say that works like those by Hofmann and Schneider functioned to push back against the institutional barriers that sought to entrench the academy within a decidedly heterosexual discursive field and drive into the shadows subjective expressions that might signal a queer departure from it? The first conclusion to be drawn from my analyses of the dynamics at work in the Dresden Academy and the pictorial negotiations of Hofmann and Schneider is that, while these artists could perhaps not dispense with the closet—a nearly impossible task in the late nineteenth century—they did use their work to effectively articulate its boundaries and perhaps place themselves beyond its double bind. The nude study became a site of anxiety to be surveilled by the academician, but also something slippery, unruly, and difficult to keep within the binarisms that the academy erected. Given that the anatomically ideal body often aligned with the body that most appealed to queer erotic sensibilities, the task of ferreting out homosensuality became far more difficult in practice than it appeared in theory. This difficulty was intensified by the deft handling of male anatomy by the student-artist, whose knowledge of the male body could at once serve scientific dictates and subjective erotic ends. In the hands of the queer artist, academic binarisms intended to entrap and subject them to definition were subverted and their terms renegotiated to accommodate queer subjectivity. Though I have sought to excavate this dynamic as it operated at the Dresden Academy, it was by no means an isolated phenomenon;

analyses of similar dynamics at play in academic life drawing rooms across Germany and Europe writ large would provide nuance to the overarching arguments I have made in this chapter.

Secondly, and most crucially, I argue that the importance of these studies—and studies like them produced by any number of student artists—played a role in both scientific discourse and in the lived experience of their makers that was far greater than the relative lack of art historical attention that they have received might suggest. Indeed, these studies constituted what Susanne Müller-Bechtel has termed “research instruments,” a role that the drawing, more than any other medium, is optimally primed to fulfill.<sup>173</sup> An instrument, strictly defined, is a device used to gauge and measure a specific characteristic or quality, and academic nude studies, I would suggest, fulfilled this definition doubly. Studies were a primary evidentiary trace by which the success of the aesthetic and scientific project articulated in this chapter (i.e., the assertion of anatomy as a safeguard against homosensuality) could be measured. Academic oversight of these drawings allowed them to be utilized as part of an ongoing feedback loop: the continual production of these cornerstones of artistic training provided a constant stream of information about how students were perceiving, revising, and depicting the body of the nude model in the life drawing room.

But the nude study also served as a kind of research instrument for the students who produced them. As a record of a sustained engagement or series of engagements with the male nude, the study held an equal (or perhaps even greater) utility for the student who produced it. Rather than provide a means by which to “dissect” the object of their inquiry, however, the nude study provided a tool with which to gauge their own personal responses to an interaction that was very much alive; the nude study was less an anatomical “autopsy” than a measure of an artist’s libidinal pulse.<sup>174</sup> In this way, we can posit the nude study as a key term in the development of a queer artist’s erotic sensibility towards his subject. To be sure, the studies produced by both Hofmann and Schneider contain the germ of a sensitivity to the eroticized male body that would become even more pronounced over the course of their careers.

The threatening precarity of the artistic encounter between men was not limited to the *Aktsaal* or to “high” art practices like life drawing in art academies. Indeed, by the turn of the twentieth century, scientific research had become preoccupied with locating and documenting instances of queer creative exchange in the wider social sphere. These scientists—primarily anthropologists and ethnologists—were similarly concerned with issues that concerned academic anatomists: homosociality, bodily proximity, degeneracy, and the “health” of the artistic product remained constants in this episode of scientific research. In the following chapter, I will track the ways in which a second group of German scientists pursued related methods to qualify yet another form of drawing determined to be particularly queer: the tattoo.

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<sup>173</sup> See Susanne Mueller-Bechtel, *Die Zeichnung als Forschungsinstrument – Giovanni Battista Cavalcaselle (1819–1897) und seine Zeichnungen zur Wandmalerei in Italien vor 1550* (Munich: Deutscher Kunstverlag, 2009).

<sup>174</sup> Mueller-Bechtel suggests that the nude study functioned as a kind of anatomical dissection in *ibid.*, 225.

## Chapter 3

### Skin Sketches: Tattoos, Ornamentation, and Queer Sexuality

#### 1. German Tattoo Research between Science and Aesthetics

##### 1.1. Rethinking Tattoos

Otto Griebel's *Der Schiffsheizer* (1920) is a sight to behold [fig. 3.1]. Positioned front and center, the half-nude body of Griebel's subject dominates the canvas, his legs splayed and his muscled shoulders hunched forward over his pipe. He juts his jaw to the side, his gaze averted in indifference: one gets the distinct feeling that he does not care to be the subject of Griebel's work. The background seems to tell its own story, though the plotline is unclear; tropical sea and sky stretch across the canvas in parallel bands, broken by the ochre-colored crevassed mountains that line the rim of the bay. A lone figure in a red dress looms in miniature at the edge of the canvas.

The boilerman's most striking features, however, are his numerous tattoos, which span his chest, biceps, and forearms, and even encircle his left ring finger. The man's tattoos provide a stark contrast to the subdued, lethargic scene at large, offering lively dynamism in what would otherwise be a rather conventional, undetailed, and perhaps even uninteresting composition. Indeed, the tattoos on the boilerman's body make up for what the larger composition lacks: the head-to-head battle occurring on his chest between two scantily-clad men remedies the distance that separates him from the figure in red; the sun, stars, and hot air balloon that float across his upper arms provide a stark contrast to the vast emptiness of the tropical sky; the man's glistening abdomen seems a far more hospitable environment for the snake that slithers across it than the parched, arid surrounds. In light of the lack of narrative context in a work that seems to hint at one, the painting becomes as much about the boilerman's tattoos as it is about the boilerman himself.

*The Boilerman* was one of the earliest successes of Griebel's career, and in many ways set the tone for his work (both professional and extra-curricular) in the years that followed. In his autobiography *Ich war ein Mann der Straße* (*I Was a Man of the Street*), posthumously published in 1986, the artist tells of a visit with friend and fellow painter Otto Dix to a nightclub in Düsseldorf in 1922, where they watched a performance by the "tattooed wonder," Maud Arizona, an event that Dix memorialized in an etching the same year [fig. 3.2].<sup>175</sup> The following year, in 1923, Griebel tells his reader that, while strolling through the Hamburg red-light district of St. Pauli, he was approached by two "harbor rats" who cornered him and demanded to see the portfolio of drawings he carried with him. Satisfied with his draftsmanship, the two men, who were in fact tattoo artists, took Griebel back to a dank pub where an English sailor sat waiting, a dragon half-tattooed upon his body. The men asked Griebel to finish the pattern by drawing the rest of the beast upon the man's back so that the tattooist might trace his lines. This was the beginning of Griebel's short stint as an *aide-de-camp* in the tattoo studios of Hamburg, where he supported himself by drawing intricate works on skin rather than on paper.<sup>176</sup>

Griebel's portrait of the boilerman is useful not only because it evidences a degree of contact between the worlds of "high" and "low" art, but also because it serves as a visual intervention in discourses surrounding the complexities of tattooing, sexuality, and the symbolism of erotic desire. A first gloss of the boilerman's tattoo iconography might read as a simple and straightforward index of heteronormative eroticism: the close proximity between the nude female figure on his left bicep and the woman in red is clear. A reading that ends here,

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<sup>175</sup> Jung-Hee Kim, *Frauenbilder von Otto Dix: Wirklichkeit und Selbstbekenntnis* (Münster: LIT Verlag, 1994), 31.

<sup>176</sup> Otto Griebel, *Ich war ein Mann der Straße: Lebenserinnerungen eines Dresdner Malers* (Frankfurt am Main: Röderberg Verlag, 1986), 178-85.



however, is reductive; the complex sexual dynamics at play become clear only when we move beyond the seemingly obvious significance of the female nude and shift our focus to the boilerman's right upper arm, upon which are clustered a six-pointed star, a laurel branch, a pair of clasped hands, the name "Jack," and the artist's own name, "O. Griebel" [detail, fig. 3.3].

This compilation of tattoos is far from random. In fact, it indicates a high degree of familiarity with literature on the erotic significance of tattoos in modern Europe. Griebel would not be alone in his fluency in this body of literature; many of his contemporaries, including the *Neue Sachlichkeit* painter Christian Schad, were well-versed in this genre of scientific literature and owned personal copies of landmark scientific texts on tattooing that informed their painterly and photographic artistic practices (as in Schad's 1928 photographic study, fig. 3.4).<sup>177</sup> In Griebel's painting, the tattoos on the boilerman's shoulder can easily be cross-referenced in the foundational work of the Italian criminologist Cesare Lombroso, *The Criminal Man* (*L'uomo delinquente*, 1876), a volume that immediately became popular after its translation into German as *Der Verbrecher* in 1887. In the illustrated atlas to Lombroso's work, which was included in the German translation and in a number of German texts on tattooing that followed, the criminologist includes several tables that serve to illustrate the iconography of tattoos and demystify their often obscure meanings for the uninitiated reader. In Lombroso's system, a multi-pointed star on the right arm, as seen on the boilerman, is an "emblem of love" [fig. 3.5].<sup>178</sup> The clasped hands motif located just below the star on the boilerman's bicep, which scholars have traditionally interpreted as a simple signifier of comradeship, is identified by Lombroso as an "erotic symbol frequently found on pederasts" [fig. 3.6].<sup>179</sup> It is only when read through the lens of contemporary scientific research on the social iconography of tattoos that the star (an emblem of love), the clasped hands (a symbol of homoeroticism), and the name of an unknown man ("Jack") take on new meaning and present the possibility for a decidedly queer reading of the erotic dynamics at play in Griebel's painting.<sup>180</sup>

In the few extant art historical treatments of Griebel's work, scholars have tended to approach his subject matter as emblematic of communist sympathy for the worker, linking his canvases to his involvement later in the decade with the Dresden branch of the *Assoziation revolutionärer bildender Künstler Deutschlands* (Association of Revolutionary Visual Artists of Germany).<sup>181</sup> When *The Boilerman* and his tattoos are mentioned at all, they only serve to evidence Griebel's passing interest in the practice during his stint as a moonlighting tattooist in the studios of Hamburg. But what if art historians took these tattoos more seriously? What if, instead of viewing them merely as a "low art" diversion from Griebel's "high art" painting

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<sup>177</sup> See Johannes Schmidt and Gisbert Porstmann, *Otto Griebel: Werkverzeichnis* (Bielefeld: Kerber Verlag, 2017) and Enno Kaufhold, *Christian Schad: Catalogue Raisonné Volume II: Photographs* (Köln: Wienand, 2007).

<sup>178</sup> Cesare Lombroso, *L'uomo delinquente: Atlante* (Torino: Fratelli Bocca Editori, 1897), xvi. "Sul braccio destro (4-5) emblemi d'amore."

<sup>179</sup> *Ibid.*, xiv. "Tatuaggi osceni (5) o simbolici d'amore (2, 3, 4) sulle natiche, frequenti nei pederasti (Lacassagne)."

<sup>180</sup> The traces of queer desire in the painting are in no way contradicted by the probable presence of heterosexual desire; as contemporary researchers were well aware, sexuality was difficult to pin down and often failed to adhere to scientific categories, which were continually in flux to accommodate peculiarities and derivations of the sexual drive. Homosexuality, particularly in men from the working classes, in the army or navy, or in other traditionally "masculine" milieux, was often approached as a kind of contingent or circumstantial homosexuality: under certain conditions and in certain environments, they conceded, men whose sexual object choice might typically be female were inclined to have sex with other men. Erotic desire for the opposite sex did not preclude the possibility of erotic desire for the same sex. In this sense, Griebel's boilerman might be situated within contemporary sexual scientific discourse, as well.

<sup>181</sup> See, for instance, Sergiusz Michalski, *New Objectivity: Painting, Graphic Art and Photography in Weimar Germany 1919-1933* (Cologne: Taschen, 2003), 65-70.

practice, we understood them as the artist himself likely understood them: as highly charged drawings on the body that took center stage in contemporary debates about identity and how to define the modern subject?<sup>182</sup>

This chapter focuses on tattooing as a form of drawing—not on paper, but on the queer male body—and is sustained by Caroline Arscott’s deft articulation of tattooed skin as “a paradoxical region in which are mingled the degraded and the high-minded, the primitive and the modern, the fragmentary and the cohesive, the ornamental and the pictorial, and pain and pleasure.”<sup>183</sup> As in the previous chapter, my inquiry focuses primarily on the position occupied by these “skin sketches” within contemporary scientific research. German researchers took up the work of Lombroso with particular zest and zeal and lifted tattoo research out of the limiting confines of criminological inquiry. Indeed, the so-called *Tätowierungsfrage* (“tattoo question”) had come to occupy a privileged position in a variety of scientific sub-disciplines and offshoots by the late nineteenth century, as it grew out of criminological research and found renewed life in anthropology and *Volkskunde* (ethnology), which deployed ethnographic methods to strike at the heart of who and what constituted a modern German individual.

In this chapter, I hope to articulate the ways in which scientific discourse and modern aesthetics co-produced a concept of the tattooed homosexual as an atavistic and expressively “primitive” modern subject. German scientific research on tattoos did not exist in a vacuum: by and large, German researchers primarily conceived of tattoos as ornamental *drawings* which, as traces of individual creativity, were of great value to their conception of how individuals signaled sexual desire. As the analysis of drawings typically fell outside the remit of the scientist, researchers looked to the realms of aesthetics and art history to inform their approaches to the *Tätowierungsfrage*.

Both scientific and aesthetic discourse, irrespective of discipline or method, were fundamentally concerned with tattoos as signifiers of a dichotomy between civility and primitivity. Given this, it is unsurprising that the earliest German scholarship on tattooing practices was based on data gathered on German colonial expeditions, a phenomenon I will unpack in the following section.<sup>184</sup> Although scholarship has tended to emphasize the ways in which anthropological research and reports from the colonies gradually filtered into work of art historians and theorists, scholars have shied away from examining how scientific researchers also consciously drew on aesthetic theory and art historical methods in order to characterize and define the subjectivity of the Other—both at home and abroad—as inherently

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<sup>182</sup> Art historical research on tattoos, while not plentiful, does seem to be experiencing an uptick in popularity (evidenced in part by the 2021 workshop “Tattooed Bodies in Early Modern Worlds,” co-organized by the Wellcome Collection and King’s College London). The most encyclopedic examination of tattoos is Anna Felicity Friedman and James Elkins, *A World Atlas of Tattoo* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 2015). Matt Lodder is perhaps the foremost art historical voice on tattooing generally; he has extensively written on tattooing as an artistic practice, primarily in the twentieth century. See Matt Lodder, “‘Things of the sea’: iconographic continuities between tattooing and handicrafts in Georgian-era maritime culture,” *Sculpture Journal*, vol. 24, no. 2 (2015): 195-210; Matt Lodder, *Tattoo: An Art History* (London: I.B. Tauris, 2024) [forthcoming]. Histories of gay tattooing are virtually nonexistent in any discipline. For the most complete references to gay tattooing traditions, see Samuel Steward, *Bad Boys and Tough Tattoos: A Social History of the Tattoo with Gangs, Sailors and Street-Corner Punks, 1950-1965* (New York: Routledge, 1990).

<sup>183</sup> Arscott sees tattooing and its reception by William Morris and Edward Burne-Jones as playing a central role in the two artists’ practices and in their mutual negotiation of their homosocial bonds with each other. See Caroline Arscott, *William Morris and Edward Burne-Jones: Interlacings* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 2008).

<sup>184</sup> Many scholarly works acknowledge in passing the German anthropological interest in tattoos, though few histories of this phenomenon as part of a larger colonial enterprise exist. A significant contribution to this topic is the valuable (if dated) essay by Michaela Frieß, “Die europäische Kultivierung einer südseesulanischen Tradition: Tätowierung als Kennzeichnung individualisierter sexueller, kultureller und nationaler Identität,” *Anthropos* Vol. 95, 1 (2000): 167-87.

atavistic. By the end of the nineteenth century, a robust Germanophone discourse on tattoos had emerged as the product of knowledge shared between aesthetic theorists and scientists of sexual customs, which included anthropologists, ethnologists, and, by the turn of the century, sexologists.

My goal here is ultimately to examine a discourse that aligned the propensity to ornament and adorn with sexual perversity. As I argue, scientific research on queer tattooing was implicitly, or in some cases explicitly, influenced by prevailing aesthetic debates about “ornamental” tattoos. These aesthetic theories, already shaped by ideas of evolution and development, were easily applicable to the project of homosexual definition: as prolific producers and bearers of tattoos, the “most original” conceivable form of ornamentation, queer ornamental expression came to be viewed as a tell-tale sign that the homosexual moved through the modern world as an anomalous and aberrant “contemporary primitive.”<sup>185</sup>

## 1.2. Ornament and Surface

Scientific and aesthetic discourses on tattooing practices met in their mutual interest in ornament and decoration. Indeed, ornamentation came to be a flash point in debates about the role of the applied arts in Europe in an age of rapid industrialization and technological advancement. The intense theorization of ornament that forms the basis of this chapter only arose after a period of reform and debate centered on the perceived threat of artistic degradation thought to accompany mechanical mass production.<sup>186</sup> Given the leading role Great Britain played in European industrialization, it is perhaps unsurprising that many of the ideas that came to inform applied arts reform elsewhere on the continent were imported from the British; leading German advocates for specialized artistic training for architects, ceramicists, and designers of goods, including pioneering applied arts reformers Hermann Schwabe and Hermann Muthesius, took inspiration from the South Kensington system, which relied on collections of artifacts deemed properly ornamented and of sound design for the instruction of designers and architects.<sup>187</sup> Thanks in large part to Schwabe’s unflagging advocacy of a system of applied arts *Kunstindustrie* (art industries) that resembled that of the British, Germany rapidly developed a network of applied arts museums in Berlin, Hamburg, Frankfurt, Leipzig, Nuremberg, and Munich. The museum in Berlin, the first of its kind in Germany, also housed a teaching branch focused on the instruction of applied artists from 1868, the same year that saw the foundation of the Royal Applied Arts School in Munich.

The cornerstone of Schwabe’s applied arts curriculum was drawing, as a firm foundation in the draftsmanship and design were skills that could be used to lend artistry to the machine-made object. Upon entering applied arts courses, students were trained in drawing ornament, the most basic artistic skill taught, before moving on to progressively more complex subjects (animals, plants). Students eventually graduated to the depiction of three-dimensionality and, finally, left drawing behind entirely in order to model the human form.<sup>188</sup> Drawing, in the applied arts context, served as a necessary skill that students could place in the service of the designs they manufactured in the workshop. As Jeremy Aynsley has pointed out, however, Schwabe’s “education of the artist” was very much indebted to Darwin’s model of evolution; he divided his curriculum into stages that progressed in difficulty and

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<sup>185</sup> The use of this terminology adopted from Paul Greenhalgh, *The Modern Ideal: The Rise and Collapse of Idealism in the Visual Arts* (London: V&A Publications, 2005), 213.

<sup>186</sup> See Isabelle J. Frank, “Owen Jones’s Theory of Ornament,” in *Ornament and European Modernism: From Art History to Art Practice*, ed. Loretta Vandt, 9-36 (Abingdon: Routledge, 2017). 9.

<sup>187</sup> Jeremy Aynsley, *Designing Modern Germany* (London: Reaktion Books, 2009), 27-8.

<sup>188</sup> *Ibid.*, 29-30.

sophistication.<sup>189</sup> Drawing, and drawing ornamentation specifically, was the most primary skill, a position that parallels its place in the telic hierarchies articulated in previous chapters.

This hierarchical approach to drawing and ornamentation would remain a feature of late-nineteenth-century theorizing on ornament, what Loretta Vandi has referred to as the “second phase” of European engagement with the practice.<sup>190</sup> In the last quarter of the century, German researchers were very much invested in the problem of ornamentation’s origins, as the answer promised to provide insight into the laws that governed human progression from “primitive” to “civilized” and the progression of society from undeveloped to fully developed. Ornament could tell the scientist a great deal about how a subject related to their environment and to those around them, in both a social sense and a sexual sense. Aesthetic philosophers and art historians were similarly concerned with ornamentation as a signifier of a culture’s relative civility or primitivity and with locating ornament temporally on the larger timeline of human history and creative development. With this as their goal, both scientists and art historians often made sweeping claims about the impulses that led to ornamentation and the relative merits of ornament in modern society.

In order to substantiate these claims about the origins of ornament and the place of ornament in a “civilized” modern Europe, researchers of both hues turned to the cultures thought to be in primitive stages of development. The colonies provided a wealth of valuable evidence. Once these researchers were on the ground in indigenous communities across the Global South, however, they were forced to reckon with a problem they had not been forced to consider in previous considerations of ornament in the West, namely the fact that ornament did not remain confined to indigenous costumes, pottery, and dwellings, but could frequently be found upon the bodies of indigenous peoples themselves in the form of tattoos. Tattooing, as it was conceived at this artistic and scientific juncture, troubled the prescriptions on drawing and ornamentation that governed academic artistic categories in the mid-nineteenth century primarily because its medium was the human body.

In other words, tattooing made the problem of ornamentation a problem of *surface*. Claudia Benthien has argued that, by the late eighteenth century, “skin had already become simply a place of passage to the inside,” eliciting “model[s] of knowledge based on dismemberment, extraction, and disembodiment.”<sup>191</sup> Skin, as scientifically and culturally conceived as a boundary between oneself and the world, had come to be seen as a barrier liable to be breached. It is no surprise, then, that accounts of tattooing in indigenous cultures from the late eighteenth century well into the nineteenth century, including many of those examined in the following sections, characterized tattooing as a perverse kind of ornamentation akin to invasive surgery and the tattooing ritual as a kind of surgical operation. Ornamentation on skin not only evidenced a wayward and misguided application of ornament; as tattoos relied on the piercing of skin, they simultaneously echoed Western fears about the proximity of primitivity and the threat that their own barriers (social, cultural, and bodily) might also be pierced.

Beyond their general apprehension about skin as the surface on which ornament was drawn, researchers were also aware that tattoos held implications for drawing itself. On the one hand, research on tattooing amongst indigenous peoples seemed to evidence the very basic impulse, articulated by the German explorer and researcher Richard Andree, that “undeveloped cultured beings could have great graphic talent.”<sup>192</sup> The impulse to draw, as evidenced by

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<sup>189</sup> Ibid., 28.

<sup>190</sup> Loretta Vandi, “Introduction,” in *Ornament and European Modernism: From Art History to Art Practice*, ed. Loretta Vandi, 1-8. (Abingdon: Routledge, 2017). 2.

<sup>191</sup> Claudia Benthien, *Skin: On the Cultural Border Between Self and the World* (New York: Columbia University Press, 2002), 10-11.

<sup>192</sup> Peter Déléage, “The origin of art according to Karl von den Steinen,” in *The Journal of Art Historiography*, Number 12 (June 2015):1-33, 2.

tattoos and various other markings documented by European scientists, seemed to imply that drawing formed the most foundational human creative drive. Concessions were usually made for the purportedly poor quality of these drawings because they were simply intended to serve a basic function that was wholly appropriate to the day-to-day functioning of the “primitive” culture that produced them. In other words, they served a specific *purpose* as bodily decoration with a particular sexual function. On the other hand, however, tattoos as a modern phenomenon amongst Europeans could *only* exist as an atavistic perversion of the creative impulse. While it may be permissible for “the savage” to draw ornaments or burn patterns into his own skin, the modern man’s impulse to draw must never approach useless dermal ornamentation but rather be sublimated into “higher” and more developed art forms. Independent of the question of surface, the mere fact that drawing in modern Germany should remain stunted at the primary level of ornamentation constituted it as a pathological, suspect, and potentially atavistic form of graphic expression.

Modern conceptions of ornamentation, and tattooing as atavistic ornamentation more specifically, saw the collaboration of scientists and art historians and theorists in two key areas. The first area of collaboration was at the level of theory, as scientists adopted key tenets of aesthetic theories put forth by art and architectural theorists who were themselves influenced by scientific discourses on evolutionary development. These aesthetic theories supported an evolutionary conception of artistic creativity’s development from primal attempts at mimetic reproduction through to developed modern artistic practice and were intimately bound up with colonial conceptions of the tattooed and sexually licentious Other that arose in response to Darwinian theories of sexual selection and growing nationalistic fervor. Conceptions of the sexually primitive indigenous outsider provided scientists with the support they needed to justify their theories of sexually atavistic Germans at home. Stated differently, aesthetic writing on indigenous ornamentation was integral to the scientific discourses that sought to cast undesirable tattooed subjects back home in the metropole—including, notably, homosexual men—as creatively and developmentally stunted.

The second area in which scientists drew from disciplinary art history in their treatment of queer tattoos was at the level of method, as scientists displayed a pronounced attentiveness to technique, process, materiality, and aesthetic value in their observation of tattoos and adapted art historical modes of documentation and visualization. Scientists came to view tattoos as drawings, first and foremost; it is perhaps unsurprising, then, that they should take their methodological cues from art historians trained in the observation and interpretation of pictures. Thus, at both the theoretical and methodological levels, modern scientific writing on the homosexual tattooed subject was imbued with art historical knowledge and informed by the discipline’s approach to the question of ornament.

## **2. Queer Ornamentation: Reading Aesthetics in Ethnological Research**

### **2.1. Pre-Colonial Naturalism and Indigenous Tattooing**

An inquiry into the uptake of queer tattoos in German discourse must necessarily start from the perspective of exploratory missions and colonial ambitions, for although tattooing of course existed within European society prior to the late eighteenth century, it only entered the Western imaginary in a substantial way as a result of colonial encounters with tattooing customs on colonial expeditions. Indeed, tattooing as it came to be conceived of in the second half of the nineteenth century was largely introduced to the West via encounters with indigenous “outsiders”; as most histories of tattooing in the Western imaginary are quick to point out, the very word tattoo was etymologically imported from the South Seas in the late eighteenth century by the British, whose translation of the Samoan word “tatau” provided the basis for its translation into European languages. Given the extent and force of their imperial projects, such encounters were particularly well documented amongst explorers from Great

Britain, Russia, France, and Spain; the German-speaking territories would not develop a cohesive global exploration program until after their unification in 1871. As Andreas Daum has shown, however, this did not preclude individuals from the German territories from participating in exploration missions under the flags of neighboring countries, as they often accompanied Russian or British crews on circumnavigation missions as naturalists.<sup>193</sup> Many of these men subsequently published accounts of their journeys in texts that doubled as both scientific studies and personal travelogues. These accounts enjoyed immense popularity and fanned the flames of a burgeoning enthusiasm for the cultures of the South Seas (*Südsee Enthusiasmus*).

It was through such travelogues that indigenous tattoos came to enter German discourse. Though we might expect that tattoos played a role in the fantasies of sexual subjection that characterized pre-colonial encounters between Germans and South Sea Islanders, primary naturalist literature provides little evidence that this was the case.<sup>194</sup> In fact, naturalists tended to give short shrift to the potential sexual significance of tattoos; if they called attention to the sexual dynamics of tattooing at all, it was usually only to characterize it as a heteronormative “coming of age” ritual. Writing in 1778, the pioneering naturalist Johann Reinhold Forster characterized tattoos as a rite of sexual passage, noting that pubescent women were “obliged...to have large arched stripes punctured on their buttocks” as a sign of fecundity.<sup>195</sup> Similarly, the German naturalist Georg von Langsdorff treated male tattooing as the sign of entry into manhood in his 1813 account of tattooing rituals in the Washington’s Islands. In the accompanying illustration of a young, tattooed Nukahiwian male, any sexualization we might be inclined to point out (the man’s well-toned musculature, the bulls-eye encircling his buttocks) is quickly subverted by the spectacular markers that designate him as a primitive Other, such as the horns that protrude from his head and the skull suspended from a string in his left hand [fig. 3.7]. In the vast majority of early naturalist accounts, tattoos are sexualized only insofar as they were believed to mark a transition into puberty. Often, researchers quickly glossed over the sexual significance of tattoos before turning to more sustained examinations of the role tattooing played as an apotropaic ritual within a “primitive” belief system.

In addition to examining the social and spiritual roles tattoos played in indigenous societies, naturalist accounts also sought to locate tattoos within the universal propensity to ornament, engaging in comparisons between indigenous peoples and Europeans that many scholars have chosen to read as a non-racist, equitable form of cultural relativism. In such accounts, researchers tended to align indigenous tattooing practices with classical aesthetics and a commendable knowledge of the human body. In his aforementioned account, Langsdorff refers to male tattoo designs “à la Grecque,” which featured curved lines and diamonds in “the most perfect symmetry” and tattoos on the arms of indigenous women had “much the same effect as bracelets worn by European ladies.” Langsdorff concludes his examination by noting that tattoos are worn as elegant badges of distinction, and in fact show “much taste and discrimination” within indigenous communities.<sup>196</sup>

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<sup>193</sup> Andreas W. Daum, “German Naturalists in the Pacific around 1800: Entanglement, Autonomy, and a Transnational Culture of Expertise,” in *Explorations and Entanglements: Germans in Pacific Worlds from the Early Modern Period to World War I*, ed. Harmut Berghoff, Frank Biess, Ulrike Strasser, 79-102 (New York: Berghahn, 2019).

<sup>194</sup> See Susanne Zantop, *Colonial Fantasies: Conquest, Family, and Nation in Precolonial Germany, 1770-1870* (Durham: Duke University Press, 1997).

<sup>195</sup> John Reinhold Forster, *Observations made during the Voyage Round the World, on Physical Geography, Natural History, and Ethic Philosophy* (G. Robinson: London, 1778), 433-4.

<sup>196</sup> Georg von Langsdorff, *Voyages and travels in various parts of the world during the years 1803, 1804, 1805, 1806 and 1807* (London: Henry Colburn, 1813), 122-3.

These statements, which at face value perhaps read as relatively liberal-minded, in fact belie an assertion of fundamental difference that was cloaked under allusions to surface similarities.<sup>197</sup> That is to say that, for all their points of comparison between ornamenting customs in the South Seas and European ornamenting customs, these researchers maintained that the cultures were fundamentally at two different stages of development.<sup>198</sup> As I previously argued, proscriptions on which surfaces were suitable for ornamentation were baked into these naturalist accounts from the outset: though tattoos may serve a similar function to European jewelry, tattoos and jewelry were fundamentally *dissimilar* because they ornamented the surface of the body in different ways. Langsdorff's illustrations seem to visualize his true view of indigenous tattooing; the disembodied hand, presumably meant to support his claims that female hand tattooing approximated European jewelry, in fact reads as a darkened, paw-like appendage with alien patterns and grotesque talons [fig. 3.8].

Even prior to social Darwinist theories of cultural evolution, German anthropological studies of the early nineteenth century touted the idea that culture existed on a developmental timeline. The immensely popular work of Gustav Klemm typifies this scientific trend; in his 1843 *General History of Human Culture*, Klemm built on the ethnological observations of German naturalists, from Forster to his own time, in order to chart three distinct phases of cultural development (savagery, bondage, and freedom) and two racial types (passive, primarily comprised of non-European peoples, and active, primarily composed of Germanic peoples).<sup>199</sup> Klemm is notable for his extensive use of artifacts plundered during exploratory voyages, which served as empirical "evidence" to combat the excessively theoretical and abstract philosophical notions of history and mankind that characterized preceding Romantic theories of cultural evolution.

It was Klemm's purportedly empirical-material theory of historical development that inspired one of the earliest aesthetic interventions on the question of tattoos-as-ornament from the German architect and theorist Gottfried Semper. Harry Francis Mallgrave has shown how Forster's account of Tahitian dwellings in the South Seas, filtered through Klemm's ethnological lens, shaped Semper's theories of architecture and ornament. Though there is little to suggest direct contact between the two men, who were both working in Dresden in the 1830s and 1840s, Semper cited Klemm's *General History* as a source in his 1868 magnum opus *Style in the Technical and Tectonic Arts*. Inspired by the architecture of the "primitive hut," Semper's overarching goal was to locate the origins of a primal creative urge and to trace its development as it progressed from the natural propensity to construct a dwelling in one's natural milieu. The human impulse to ornament corresponded with the instinctive need to build a structure's "cladding" with carpets and textiles, which effectively elevated the dwelling's disparate material components into something more closely approximating architecture. For Semper—as for Klemm—ornament and artistic creativity more generally were dictated first and foremost by the material concerns and realities of a particular time and place.

Semper used his concept of ornamental cladding to explain bodily adornment as well, which included clothing and tattoos. Tattoos, composed as they are of lines woven together on the skin to form a symbol, were essentially extensions of the creative impulse that incited early

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<sup>197</sup> My reading of Langsdorff's writing on tattoos slightly differs from the reading offered by Robert Tobin, who argues that writing about tattoos primarily functioned to provide naturalists like Langsdorff an acceptable outlet for homoerotic admiration of the Samoan male body. Should this be the case, I argue that the homoerotic valence was secondary to a more fundamental colonialist impulse to categorize non-Western subjects. See Robert Deam Tobin, *Peripheral Desires: The German Discovery of Sex* (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 2015), 155.

<sup>198</sup> See Bachner's lucid assertion in Andrea Bachner, *The Mark of Theory: Inscriptive Figures, Poststructuralist Prehistories* (New York: Fordham University Press, 2017), 218 n17.

<sup>199</sup> See Klemm's entry in Gérald Gaillard, *Routledge Dictionary of Anthropologists* (Abingdon: Routledge, 2004), 12.

humans to construct walls around their dwellings with the help of carpets and textiles. For many mid-nineteenth-century researchers, such a conception implied that tattoos were indicators of creative primitivity. While Jimena Canales and Andrew Herscher resolutely argue that Semper did not “associate [tattoos] with primitiveness,”<sup>200</sup> Semper’s examination in *Style* shows a degree of ambivalence. On one hand, Semper notes, the ubiquity of tattoos seemed to suggest that they should hold pride of place as the most “original” manifestation of a universal impulse to ornament. On the other hand, however, the fact that the impulse remained prevalent within “primitive” communities but had developed beyond bodily ornamentation and into more advanced forms elsewhere indicated that modern tattoos were actually signs of a “secondary cultural condition.”<sup>201</sup> In his citation here of Klemm, for whom tattoos served as evidence of a savage impulse to modify one’s body, the reader is tempted to assume that Semper’s view accorded with prevalent racist ethnological positions. Following on from early naturalist accounts of tattooing, Semper’s aesthetic theory of tattoos bolstered a scientific conception of bodily adornment as a manifestation of a creative impulse stunted in an archaic stage of development.

## 2.2. From the Outside, In: Darwinism, *Volkskunde* and the Domestic Other

While scientific and aesthetic researchers had laid the foundations for a conception of tattooing as a primitive creative practice by the mid-nineteenth century, tattoos do not appear to have played a significant role in the German construction of a “primitive sexuality” until the 1860s, when Darwinian theories of evolution and sexual selection were co-opted by a growing number of nationalists and advocates for a German colonial program. As Paul Weindling notes, biology came to occupy a privileged role in the German consciousness in the years after national unification in 1871, as the fledgling nation-state sought to capitalize upon a public responsiveness to ideas of “historical development and organic unity” that would lead to the health and perpetuation of the national organism.<sup>202</sup> Between the 1860s and 1890s, Darwinist theories of evolution, natural selection, and sexual selection transitioned from promising modes of social reform to nascently racist tools of social and cultural imperialism; Darwinist theories applied to the social body by biologists, ethnologists, and anthropologists did not merely promote the health of the German nation, but also lent scientific credence to categories of “civilized” and “uncivilized” that had long lurked behind treatments of the indigenous Other. Social Darwinism not only provided the biological grounding necessary to justify colonial expansion but also provided a model on which a developed German ideal could be fashioned in opposition to an undeveloped colonial subject.<sup>203</sup>

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<sup>200</sup> Jimena Canales and Andrew Herscher, “Criminal Skins: Tattoos and Modern Architecture in the Work of Adolf Loos,” *Architectural History*, v. 48 (2005), 235-56. 244.

<sup>201</sup> Gottfried Semper, *Style in the Technical and Tectonic Arts; or, Practical Aesthetics* (Los Angeles: Getty Research Institute, 2004). 172.

<sup>202</sup> Paul Weindling, *Health, Race and German Politics Between National Unification and Nazism, 1870-1945* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1993), 25-36.

<sup>203</sup> This assertion requires us to first and foremost rethink recent characterizations of nineteenth-century German ethnology and anthropology as more progressive or equitable than their European or American counterparts; recent studies by scholars such as H. Glenn Penny have explicitly refuted the notion that German ethnology was informed by colonial ambitions, instead characterizing its development as a “liberal endeavor” defined by its “broad liberal agenda” that followed Alexander von Humboldt’s lead, seeking to uncover mankind’s multiple variations as they strove towards a comprehensive understanding of human nature. Though this brand of ethnology, exemplified by the empiricist and anti-Darwinist Adolf Bastian, may have formed a key camp of ethnological thought, the wholesale denial of nineteenth-century ethnology’s racist and colonialist threads fails to account for the very real effects of social Darwinism in the second half of the century. German scientists, in short, were not immune to the fabrication of teleological narratives of progression deployed by the French and the British in order to situate themselves in relation to the “primitive” other. See H. Glenn Penny and



One way in which this goal was pursued was by constructing a notion of primitive sexuality that existed in stark contrast to German sexuality at home. As George Mosse has shown, sexuality and gender roles in nineteenth-century Germany were inextricably bound to notions of *respectability* and *Germanness*, both of which intensified after the independent German territories formed a unified nation. Society was defined by rigid classificatory systems that solidified and rehearsed “traditional” gender roles (i.e., passive femininity and active masculinity); of primary concern was the formation of a stable and healthy German populace, the base unit of which was the nuclear family.<sup>204</sup> The respectable German was one who adhered to these socially mandated sexual norms. Sexuality was a tool of the state, used to manage a growing nation and submit the sex lives of its citizens to the program of nation building.

Ethnological research was critical to this project, as respectable German sexuality could only exist in relation to its *reverse* image, drawn explicitly from the colonies. As the nineteenth century progressed and latent fantasies of colonial subjugation became manifest, characterizations of the indigenous individual as a “noble savage” were replaced by ethnologically fueled stereotypes of the colonial subject as both culturally primitive and sexually dangerous. As Mosse notes:

The stereotype of the so-called inferior race filled with lust was a staple of racism, part of the inversion of accepted values characteristic of the “outsider,” who at one and the same time threatened society and by his very existence and confirmed its standards of behavior. Racism branded the outsider, making him inevitably a member of the inferior race, wherever this was possible, readily recognized as a carrier of infection threatening the health of society and the nation.<sup>205</sup>

The strict policing of these codes of “respectability” at home, in conjunction with the conscious reconstruction of racial otherness as *also* sexual otherness, inevitably led to the conception of a distinctly “primitive” sexuality that threatened the national body not only from the outside, but also from the inside. Sexual perversity was already at work in German society within a deviant and abnormal subclass of German citizen that required definition so as to remain distinct from the respectable majority. Working hand in hand, racism and burgeoning nationalism led to immense panic about the sexual “savages” within their own ranks, whose sexual lasciviousness and abnormality placed them squarely outside the ranks of respectability.

It is easy to trace how tattoos came to serve as an external marker of sexual primitivity in this system of differentiation by looking at the writings of Darwin and those who took up his theories, perverting them for their own purposes. Darwin addressed the problem of tattooing in *The Descent of Man* (1871), making the generalizing anthropological observation that “not one great country can be named...in which the aborigines do not tattoo themselves.”<sup>206</sup> Darwin’s “aesthetic ethnography” of the savage propensity towards ornamentation insisted that tattooing, body modification, decoration with shells and feathers, and the extensive use of jewelry, was not without cause; on the contrary, such practices clearly exhibited a primal preoccupation with that which modern, civilized man would deem superfluous, but which served the important function of giving the individual a competitive advantage when it came

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Matti Bunzl, *Worldly Provincialism: German Anthropology in the Age of Empire* (Ann Arbor: University of Michigan Press, 2003).

<sup>204</sup> See, for instance, George L. Mosse and Mary Louise Roberts, *Nationalism and Sexuality: Middle Class Morality and Social Norms in Modern Europe* (Madison: University of Wisconsin Press, 2020) and Lisa Pine, *The Family in Modern Germany* (New York: Bloomsbury, 2021).

<sup>205</sup> George L. Mosse and Mary Louise Roberts, *Nationalism and Sexuality*, 141.

<sup>206</sup> Charles Darwin, *The Descent of Man and Selection in Relation to Sex* (New York: P.F. Collier & Son, 1905), 739.

to appearing more attractive to potential mates.<sup>207</sup> Darwin's theory of sexual selection hinged upon such customs and rituals, asserting that preferences for particular physical features and characteristics led to the gradual accumulation of "profitable" variations over successive generations. These characteristics might shift in their manifestations; humans, after all, are drawn to variation rather than staticity. For Darwin, the dynamic of sexual selection was, at its heart, an aesthetic dynamic, driven by taste and preference for the beautiful or sexually desirable. The inherently aesthetic valence of mate choice has led scholars like Richard Prum to identify sexual selection as the mechanism driving "aesthetic evolution."<sup>208</sup>

Darwin's theory of sexual selection and bodily ornamentation thus primed subsequent writers and researchers to approach tattooing as an inherently sexualized practice that ornamented the body in a way that appealed to humanity's primal attraction to variety. Darwin also located an origin of art in body modification and "disfigurement," like tattooing, which functioned as culturally-induced correlates to complement naturally occurring physical features that attracted sexual mates and partners. In this way, Darwin's conception of tattooing cast it as both integral to sexual mate selection and "wholly natural," even if it failed to conform to modern prescriptions placed on appearance and presentation.

Darwin's theories were rife for misinterpretation and misapplication and were taken up with great zeal by scientific thinkers like Cesare Lombroso, whose work on "criminal" tattoos I introduced in the introduction to this chapter. Though Lombroso's work was very much in conversation with pseudo-scientific discourses, he also drew inspiration from Darwin's work on sexual selection. Indeed, by the third edition of his text, Lombroso was consciously drawing on Darwin's propositions and popularity to lend credence to his own theories. As scholars have noted, "Lombroso aspire[d] to do for criminals what Darwin had done for plant and animal species."<sup>209</sup> As in the case of many nineteenth-century scientists, however, Lombroso's reading of Darwin slipped into dangerous territory; citing Darwin's theory of evolution, Lombroso proposed that human developmental variation was not blind, but rather driven by teleology in order to transform "inferior savage peoples into civilized man."<sup>210</sup>

Writing in the third edition of *The Criminal Man*, Lombroso argued that atavism, or anomalous reemergence of "primitive" characteristics in the genetic makeup of the modern man was "particularly useful in explaining the nature and recurrence of particular crimes": atavism could sufficiently explain anomalous behaviors like infanticide and pederasty, "which are holdovers from past epochs and peoples."<sup>211</sup> In Lombroso's system, homosexual desire was not a result of degradation from a state of health, but rather the unfortunate reemergence of the same archaic drives that led the Greeks to engage in same-sex intercourse. Going a step further, Lombroso suggested that the impulse that leads men to have sex with other men is qualitatively the same as the impulse that leads modern individuals to tattoo their bodies. Forensic medicine should approach tattoos as "professional characteristics" of criminals like homosexuals, Lombroso notes, and view them as calling cards of atavism, drawn in ink upon the body.<sup>212</sup> In their propensity to draw obscene, sexually explicit tattoos on their bodies, sexually atavistic modern homosexuals exhibited behaviors typically found only in uncivilized and "primitive" communities: "tattoos are external signs of belief and passions predominant among working-

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<sup>207</sup> Ian Duncan, "Natural Histories of Form: Charles Darwin's Aesthetic Science," *Representations* 151 (2020): 62.

<sup>208</sup> See Richard Prum, *The Evolution of Beauty: How Darwin's Forgotten Theory of Mate Choice Shapes the Animal World--and Us* (New York: Doubleday, 2017).

<sup>209</sup> Mary Gibson and Nicole Hahn Rafter, "Introduction," in *Criminal Man* by Cesare Lombroso (Durham: Duke University Press, 2006), 377n19.

<sup>210</sup> *Ibid.*, 391n4.

<sup>211</sup> Cesare Lombroso, *Criminal Man*, trans. Mary Gibson and Nicole Hahn Rafter (Durham: Duke University Press, 2006), 222.

<sup>212</sup> *Ibid.*, 61.

class men...It is only natural that a custom widespread among savages and prehistoric peoples would reappear among certain-lower class groups...as Darwin puts it somewhat exaggeratedly, tattoos are both a sign and a means of sexual selection.”<sup>213</sup>

Though Lombroso’s criminal characterization of tattoos was met with varying degrees of acceptance in Germany, it did evince the ways in which a discourse that had originated in the colonies had shifted in the post-Darwinian nineteenth century to shine a light on subjects in the metropole.<sup>214</sup> Whereas early-nineteenth-century tattoo discourse had argued that tattoos were markers of a primitive stage of *cultural* development, the growing need to set civilized Germans apart from their uncivilized colonial counterparts led tattoos to be read as markers of a sexual disreputability. Enid Schildkrout has noted that, as images of the colonial subject made their way into the European imaginary and into European spaces (as in the immensely popular *Völkerschauen*, or ethnological exhibitions, that brought indigenous peoples to Germany for crass display in touring shows), “representations of tattooing among the European underclass became conflated with the exotic bodies of Africans, Asians, and Native Americans.”<sup>215</sup> We might expand Schildkrout’s observation that tattooing had come to be conflated with race in late-nineteenth-century Europe to say that tattoos had also come to be conflated with an implicitly racialized *sexuality* in post-Darwinian, post-unification discourse.

This widespread understanding of tattoos as markers of sexual primitivity was not solely (or even primarily) an ethnological one, but rather one which took much of its lifeblood from work on the origins of art being concurrently developed by aesthetic theorists. Semper’s intervention into the question of tattooing as a form of primitive ornamentation in the 1860s initiated a decades-long collaboration between ethnologists and aesthetic theorists that reified and reinforced these notions of tattoos and tattooed subjects. Semper’s classification of tattoos as ornament—not simply ornamental in a general decorative sense, but in a specific aesthetic sense, with attendant implications about the quality of the ornamenter’s creative drive—opened the door for a particularly fruitful disciplinary collaboration; just as aesthetic theorists were influenced by Darwinism in its various guises and iterations, ethnologists and anthropologists were forced to grapple with the important assertions about ornament and tattoos made by theorists of modern aesthetics.

That scientists understood the question of tattooing as an aesthetic one in the late nineteenth century is perhaps best exemplified in the reception of theories propounded by the Viennese art historian Alois Riegl, whose writings evidenced a fundamental shift in the way that aesthetic theorists conceptualized ornamentation and its place in the natural creative order. As Marsha Morton has articulated, the trajectory of Riegl’s thought on ornamentation and the history of art more generally was fundamentally shaped by the cultural Darwinism that pervaded German-speaking Europe towards the end of the nineteenth century, filtered through the social Darwinism of zoologist Ernst Haeckel. Nowhere was this more apparent than in Riegl’s treatment of ornamental motifs and their stylistic development, a strain of inquiry that in itself represented a pivot from the materialistic preoccupations of Semper, his revered predecessor.

That Riegl, the art historian, drew from Haeckel, the scientist, is widely acknowledged. As Morton notes, “Riegl’s sleuthing for formal clues suggests parallels with the profoundly visual orientation of Haeckel...both Haeckel and Riegl shared the belief that formal patterns

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<sup>213</sup> Ibid., 58-61.

<sup>214</sup> It is difficult to ignore the parallels between the Italian unification project and the German unification project, which both culminated in 1871. That both newly unified nations should develop internal hierarchical systems that sought to define the modern Italian or German citizen in contrast to a criminal or primitive Other is beyond the scope of this chapter, but certainly bears further investigation.

<sup>215</sup> Enid Schildkrout, “Inscribing the Body,” *Annual Review of Anthropology*, v. 33 (2004), 319-44. 327.

embodied larger truths.”<sup>216</sup> Morton’s investigation makes apparent that Riegl’s system owes much to the concept of evolution, which often masqueraded as the more capacious German concept of *Entwicklung*, or development. For Riegl, the *Kunstwollen* that drove artistic development closely approximated the Darwinian theory of natural selection. “Just as Darwin discusses human evolution through ‘slow and interrupted steps’ over vast periods of time, with occasional reversions to ‘some of the characters of an early progenitor,’” Morton notes, “so, too, did Riegl define artistic development as unfolding ‘over thousands of years’ and marked by ‘spurts of progress mixed with moments of regression’ and ‘archaic survivals.’”<sup>217</sup>

It is this suggestion that ornamentation could be characterized as a kind of “archaic survival,” an atavistic throwback to an earlier and more primitive form, that interests me here, as it is clearly what Riegl had in mind in his treatment of tattooing practices. In his posthumously published text, *Historical Grammar of the Visual Arts*, Riegl developed a hermeneutic system in which all art served some combination of three purposes: decorative, practical, or conceptual.<sup>218</sup> The movement from decorative to practical, and from practical to conceptual, accompanied the evolution of a culture more generally; decorative art evidenced attempts at mere imitation, while conceptual art operated at the level of the idea. Riegl invoked the tattoo time and again to exemplify an archaic art form that is stuck at the level of the decorative, unable to develop a more sophisticated function. In his *Problems of Style* (1893), Riegl makes recourse to a picture originally printed in the British ethnographer John Lubbock’s 1871 *The Origin of Civilisation and the Primitive Condition of Man* [fig. 3.9]. The illustration depicts the heads of two Maori individuals whose alterity is signified by their unkempt and tightly curled hair, the crosshatch shading meant to convey dark skin, and, above all, the intricate and symmetrical spiral patterns tattooed on their faces. For Riegl, the fact that these spiral patterns also appeared in wood and stone carvings produced by the Maori peoples indicated that the desire to ornament preceded any utilitarian impulse to clad or clothe or protect the body. The impulse to tattoo must therefore be considered a “simple” and extremely “elementary” artistic drive.<sup>219</sup>

Though the fatal flaw of tattoos seemed to lie in the fact that they were stunted in the primary stage of the creative impulse’s development, Riegl also conceived of tattoos as the “ur-ornament[s]” of bodily adornment and as signifiers of an “elementary” desire that may hold “some intrinsic—perhaps apotropaic—significance.”<sup>220</sup> That tattoos might be believed to offer spiritual protection (or even signal to potential sexual mates) seemed not to register within Riegl’s system as a practical function. Such a conception made his history of their artistic origin and aesthetic ontology imminently useful to scientists also seeking to uncover how these “ancient and elemental” bodily ornaments facilitated sexual selection in indigenous communities.<sup>221</sup>

The connective tissue that permitted the leap from theories of a sexually suspect, tattooed colonial subject to theories of a disreputable, tattooed homosexual German came in the form of the newly emergent discipline of *Volkskunde* (directly translated as “folk customs,” but largely indistinguishable from ethnology), a distinctly Germanic field of study that had loyal contingents of scientific researchers in both Germany and Austria. The field grew out of

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<sup>216</sup> Marsha Morton, “Art’s ‘contest with nature’: Darwin, Haeckel, and the scientific art history of Alois Riegl,” in *Darwin and Theories of Aesthetics and Cultural History*, ed. Barbara Larson and Sabine Flach, 53-68 (Burlington: Ashgate, 2013). 56.

<sup>217</sup> *Ibid.*, 58.

<sup>218</sup> Alois Riegl, *Historical Grammar of the Visual Arts*, trans. Jacqueline E. Jung (New York: Zone Books, 2004). 297.

<sup>219</sup> See Jimena Canales and Andrew Herscher, “Criminal Skins: Tattoos and Modern Architecture in the Work of Adolf Loos,” 246.

<sup>220</sup> Alois Riegl, *Historical Grammar of the Visual Arts*, 301.

<sup>221</sup> *Ibid.*

the pioneering efforts of the Bavarian folklorist Wilhelm Heinrich Riehl and came to serve primarily as an ethnography of the domestic German populace, written as a “science of the present” that found its evidence in material cultural production.<sup>222</sup> *Volkskunde* scholars were split into factions with differing views of where one ought to seek the authentic spirit of the German people—conservative, essentialist researchers looked to the peasantry while more progressive researchers dismissed such approaches as romantic.

In the years around the turn of the twentieth century, these folk ethnologists became increasingly attuned to the insistent “cross-fertilizations” that linked the world of popular imagery and symbols to the iconography found in tattoos. Jane Caplan notes that this sort of relationship was seen by many German ethnographers to be the very essence of *Volkskunde* as a discipline; as such, tattoos became the subject of sustained ethnographic interest and comprised an important source of evidence for those researchers seeking to make claims about subsections of the German or Austrian populace.<sup>223</sup> While Caplan identifies an end-of-century shift away from the pathologization that characterized post-Lombrosian treatments of tattoos writ large, however, research undertaken by *Volkskundler* (ethnologists) on the topic of tattoos and sexuality upheld and perpetuated extant conceptions of “erotic” tattoos as markers of aberrant and atavistic sexuality. “Erotic,” in these accounts, took on a fluid and amorphous meaning, ranging from “obscene” tattoos depicting sexually explicit symbols or phrases to non-obscene tattoos that were particularly popular within communities associated with deviant sexual behaviors, including sex workers and homosexuals.

The primary organ of sexual ethnography in Germany was *Anthropophyteia*, subtitled the “yearbook for folkloric inquiry and research on the developmental history of sexual morality.” *Anthropophyteia* was the brainchild of Friedrich Saloman Krauss, the Austrian *Volkskundler* whose membership in the Association for Austrian Ethnology (Verein für österreichische Volkskunde) would have likely brought him into contact with the ideas of Riegl, who was also a member.<sup>224</sup> Krauss published *Anthropophyteia* through German publishing houses as a series of nine volumes between 1904 and 1913. The publication was expressly intended for a scientific readership, not for the general public, and featured a staggering array of sexual research conducted by German and Austrian folk ethnographers on topics ranging from the sex lives of Ukrainian peasants to Serbian erotic and scatological slang. Much of the research in the journal, however, focused on the sexual lives and customs of Germanic peoples, past and present. Tattoos were a popular topic in the journal, recurring time and again in research reports from the rotating cast of scientific contributors.

In general, *Anthropophyteia* contributors put forth theories of the propensity to tattoo that paralleled Riegl’s aesthetic theories of the origins of ornament. In his essay on erotic tattooing, the Zwickau-based physician Hugo Ernest Luedecke affirms that tattoos must be primarily seen as sexual adornment in the Darwinian sense.<sup>225</sup> He then proceeds to argue, however, that we must also consider tattoos as indicators of sexual psychopathy; while the impulse to adorn our bodies to make them sexually attractive lies dormant within each of us, he argues, only those guided by a psychopathic instinct to outwardly signal their sexual desires

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<sup>222</sup> Jane Caplan, “‘The Kaiser’s Navy and German Society’: the View from the Tattooist’s Studio,” in *People, Nations and Traditions in a Comparative Frame: Thinking about the Past with Jonathan Steinberg*, ed. D’Maris Coffman, Harold James, and Nicholas Di Liberto, 45–58 (New York: Anthem Press, 2021). 51.

<sup>223</sup> *Ibid.*, 45.

<sup>224</sup> Lawrence Shapiro has carefully reconstructed the ways in which Riegl and Krauss were united in their pursuit of folklore as an empirical science; though he acknowledges the lack of first-degree connections between the two, he highlights the numerous connections between the two scholars, including their membership in the Anthropological Society of Vienna (Anthropologische Gesellschaft Wien) and their joint pursuit of a rigorous, scientifically methodical ethnography. See Lawrence Shapiro, “Friedrich S. Krauss and Alois Riegl, Social Network Formation In Viennese Ethnography, 1883-1895,” doctoral dissertation, Cornell University, 2015. xiii.

<sup>225</sup> Hugo Ernest Luedecke, “Erotische Tätowierungen,” *Anthropophyteia*, v. 4 (1907): 75-83. 75.

or virility tattoo themselves. He compares tattooing to the body modification practiced by “Indian warriors,” who painted their bodies in order to awaken in an enemy the “idea of invincibility, cruelty, or strength.”<sup>226</sup> Krauss echoes this conception of tattoos in his own essay, noting that tattoos are little more than psychopathological creative attempts to make up for a perceived lack of virility in the eyes of potential mates, common in modern society only in the lowest classes and amongst sexually disreputable individuals.<sup>227</sup>

These ethnological accounts pivoted on the idea that tattoos should be considered manifestations of a universal creative drive to ornament; as Luedecke notes, however, this drive could only resurface in the modern period as a weakened, perverse derivation of an original, healthy impulse. Such a conception accords well with Riegl’s assertion that the progressive development of ornament could be compromised by the recursion of more “primitive” styles and “archaic survivals.” Together, ethnologists and aesthetic theorists developed a theory of the tattoo that assessed its health or pathology based on the level of evolution displayed by the culture in which it was found. Tattooing in modern Germany, for instance, came to be viewed as fundamentally inappropriate given the perceived level of German cultural development. The creative impulse to tattoo was not *inherently* degenerative, but only degenerative when it presented atavistically in the modern subject, where it ought not be present. Tattooing in indigenous communities indicated sexual primitivity, but tattooing in contemporary Germany indicated sexual pathology.

For virtually all German tattoo researchers, these tattooed “contemporary primitives” were defined by their social marginality. The cast of characters that comprised the tattooed German populace always included the homosexual male. Iwan Bloch, one of the founders of sexual science as a cohesive discipline in the 1890s, provided a thorough account of tattooing and the literature on tattooing in his 1907 text *The Sexual Life of our Time in its Relations to Modern Civilization*. Citing the Finnish art historian Yrjö Hirn, Bloch notes that tattoos functioned primarily as sexual lures, and that “tattooing was primarily carried out for the purpose of sexual allurements and stimulation.”<sup>228</sup> After providing further ethnological evidence of tattooing’s primitive sexual nature, including genital tattooing in the South Seas and the Tahitian custom of tattooing in conjunction with phallic festivals, Bloch notes that “among *modern civilized peoples* the practice of tattooing is generally confined to certain lower classes of the population...among whom the primitive impulses remain active in a quite exceptional strength.”<sup>229</sup> Tattoos on homosexuals indicated the presence of an atavistic tendency to ornament his body that separated him from his respectable German compatriots. Bloch’s assessment was not unique; by the time of his book’s publication, the notion that the degenerate or atavistic homosexual back home in the metropole approximated the indigenous subject in the far-flung colonies in his degree of development and the quality of his sexual impulse was standard and went unchallenged in scientific literature.

### 3. Borrowed Methods: The Social Scientist as Art Historian

As an ethnographic discipline oriented towards material cultural production, *Volkskunde* was not far removed from the world of the visual. Indeed, many *Volkskundler* were keenly interested in the role art played in German culture, though these researchers typically focused on folk art and the devotional objects they encountered in their field research in peasant communities. Many German *Volkskundler* were wholly uninterested in expanding the remit of their engagement with the visual to include popular contemporary images like tattoos; those

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<sup>226</sup> Ibid., 76.

<sup>227</sup> Friedrich S. Krauss, “Erotische Tätowierungen,” *Anthropophyteia*, v. 1 (1904): 507-13.

<sup>228</sup> Iwan Bloch, *The Sexual Life of our Time in its Relations to Modern Civilization*, trans. M. Eden Paul (London: William Heinemann, 1908). 134.

<sup>229</sup> Ibid., 135. Italics mine.

early-twentieth-century researchers who were invested in making tattoos a legitimate topic of rigorous ethnographic research were compelled to look beyond the statistical and observational methods that had historically formed the backbone of *völkisch* research.

Given *Volkskunde*'s commitments to visual and material culture, it is unsurprising that many of the methods used by ethnographic researchers to document and qualify tattoos closely mirrored methods deployed in disciplinary art history. Indeed, the very nomenclature used to discuss tattoos and tattoo artists substantiates the notion that these researchers approached the subjects of their research as *artworks* rather than as mere data points: a constant throughout this body of literature is the reference to the tattoo artist as the “draftsman” (*Zeichner*) and tattoos as “drawings” (*Zeichnungen*). As Jane Caplan notes, too, German scientific accounts of tattooing differed from most other national traditions of tattoo research in their emphasis on the artistic processes and techniques of tattooing, a thread that runs through German literature on tattooing from the mid-nineteenth century to the 1930s.<sup>230</sup> In their attentiveness to process, technique, material, and ultimately artistic value, German researchers functioned as connoisseurs of tattoos, determined to document variation and detail the artistic process used to produce these drawings in order to more accurately qualify the individuals who bore them.

### 3.1. Technique and Artistic Value

This quasi-art historical attention to process and technique formed a crucial component of the researcher's case study and provided the researcher with further evidence of his subject's pathological, atavistic state. A particularly illuminating example of this dynamic at work can be found in Friedrich Krauss's 1904 *Anthropophyteia* case study of a 22-year-old named “W.B.,” a German patient living in Korneuburg near Vienna [fig. 3.10].<sup>231</sup> Krauss notes that W.B. was heavily tattooed and provides a brief *vita sexualis* of the patient. Though he *seemed* to express a genuine aversion to his own sex, he was unlucky with women. Krauss traced his patient's preoccupation with tattoos to his experiences seeing nude tattooed men in public baths and notes the homosexual inclinations of the young man's tattoo artist – a 31-year-old engraver, wall painter, and carpenter known as “R.M.” Krauss claimed that the relationship between W.B. and R.M. was typical: homosexual tattoo artists tended to initiate relationships with younger men based on the premise of tattooing and “chain” the young men to them for the duration of the tattooing process.<sup>232</sup>

Krauss here describes in detail the process by which the tattoos were drawn onto W.B.'s skin. “Regarding the tattoos themselves,” Krauss wrote, “it is notable that they are executed with India ink, a black pigment which appears blue, as it is well known that black tones which are spread over a dull medium—here the semi-translucent epidermis—show through as blue.”<sup>233</sup> These observations are noteworthy for a number of reasons. Not only do they evidence a degree of familiarity with color optics, light, and the materiality of medium (here, human skin), but the emphasis on the distorted color of the black India ink (a pigment lauded in contemporary anthropological discourse as a “true” and “indestructible” black) makes clear the perverted use of material; esteemed though it may be in its proper context (i.e., on paper), the use of the pigment on human skin leads to distortion and warps the true color of the ink.<sup>234</sup> Additionally, the use of such a cheap and easy-to-produce solution, made from lampblack and

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<sup>230</sup> Jane Caplan, “‘National Tattooing’: Traditions of Tattooing in Nineteenth-Century Europe,” 165.

<sup>231</sup> This case study can be found in Friedrich S. Krauss, “Erotische Tätowierungen,” *Anthropophyteia*, v. 1 (1904): 507-13.

<sup>232</sup> I have previously examined this case in my essay “Sex Symbols: Tattoos, Science, and Visual Culture around 1900,” Genderblog, Zentrum für transdisziplinäre Geschlechterstudien, Humboldt-Universität zu Berlin. 3 Feb 2021.

<sup>233</sup> *Ibid.*, 510.

<sup>234</sup> Joseph Needham, *Science and Civilization in China: Volume 5, Chemistry and Chemical Technology, Part 1, Paper and Printing* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1985), 237.

water, served to further characterize the process as one associated with the lower classes: the ink would have been cheap and easy to produce from the materials found in the homosexual tattoo artist's "studio," which normally functioned as a wood workshop.

Abraham Baer, the chief physician at Berlin's Plötzensee Prison, was also interested in the process by which tattoos were drawn on the skin; his focus was on the degree of pain that the tattooed individual experienced as a result of the tattooing process. In his 1893 text *Der Verbrecher in anthropologischer Beziehung* (*The Criminal in anthropological Relation*), the physician compares the tattooing procedures of "wild tribes," who "draw in" tattoos by way of scarification or burning, with the more refined tattoo procedures popular in modern Europe, which used fine needles to draw patterns and insert pigment.<sup>235</sup> Baer's focus on the pain an individual experienced as the needle drew the picture into his or her skin is part of a larger debate about pain tolerance and civility; scientists and physicians widely accepted as fact the notion that "primitive" peoples did not feel pain to the same degree as the "civilized" subject. That modern tattooed Europeans were able to withstand the pain of the tattooing process indicated the presence of an atavistic tolerance for discomfort. Furthermore, the pain could easily slip into the realm of the sexual; this was particularly true in the case of obscene tattoos. In these instances, as in the case of W.B. and R.M., the relationship between the tattooed subject and his or her tattoo draftsman bordered on erotic, providing an additional valence of evidentiary significance to the tattooing process.

Following their analyses of technique and process, researchers tended to make value judgments of the tattoo under consideration in much the same way an art historian might assess the artistic merit of a traditional hand drawing. These aesthetic value judgments served as key evidence in the assessment of the subject's overall health or pathology; crudely drawn tattoos were strong indicators of a base and pathological subjectivity. Researchers generally acknowledged that tattoos were not *always* poorly drawn indicators of pathological atavism; Hugo Ernest Luedecke, who theorized that tattoos were typically markers of psychopathic sexuality, went as far as to recognize the potential for the tattoo to reach the realms of "true art," when the artist exchanges his pencil for a needle. Importantly, however, tattoos as a high art form were most typically found in Eastern cultures, where tattooing occupied a historically privileged position and was thus approached as a culturally sanctioned practice. In modern Europe, tattoos functioned only as ornament, serving no central or necessary function, and thus primarily existed as a low art form practiced by untrained and unskilled draftsmen.<sup>236</sup>

Indeed, Luedecke's diatribe against the "uncultivated" tattooing practices common amongst the rabble of German society (sailors, workers, criminals, prostitutes, and the sexually perverse) reinforced contemporary notions that the low artistic quality of modern tattoos reflected the fundamental corruption of the tattooed subject. Unsurprisingly, the worst artistic culprits belonged to those who drew *obscene* pictures on the bodies of others. This parade was always led by the tattooed homosexual. In the final case study of his essay on erotic tattooing, Luedecke takes to task the corrupt creativity of the queer tattoo draftsman. Effectively aligning the atavistic tendencies towards homosexuality and tattooing with artistic ineptitude, the physician relates the observations of a tattoo artist who, while at an army conscription camp in Essen, was repulsed by "a fellow...who bore a pederast scene tattooed on his back: two men squatting on top of one another, *terribly drawn*."<sup>237</sup> Tattoos in general, and obscene tattoos in particular, were precious evidence of the homosexual's doubled pathology: not only did they signal the presence of a primal sexual impulse, but their often-poor quality also provided

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<sup>235</sup> Abraham Baer, *Der Verbrecher in anthropologischer Beziehung* (Leipzig: Verlag von Georg Thieme, 1893), 228.

<sup>236</sup> Hugo Ernest Luedecke, "Erotische Tätowierungen," *Anthropophyteia*, v. 4 (1907), 75-83: 77.

<sup>237</sup> *Ibid.*, 83. Italics mine.



empirical evidence of the atavistic creative drive that defined the culture of tattooing within the dregs of queer German society.

### 3.2. The Scientist Draftsman: Recording Tattoos

Ironically, the same scientific texts that highlighted the poor drawing skills of the homosexual tattoo draftsman were also invested in pioneering recording techniques that sought to remedy the observing scientist's own lack of drawing skills. The most detailed explanation of methods that researchers deployed to record tattoos was written by the Frankfurt physician Karl Gotthold, who outlined several tactics that might be of use.<sup>238</sup> The first of these methods was the photographic documentation of the whole body; for subjects heavily tattooed over large expanses of skin, photography was "sufficient." Photographs of tattooed subjects were not uncommon, as seen in Otto Lauffer's photograph of a young, tattooed man from Hamburg or in Erhard Riecke's photographic tableaux of tattooed men in Jena [figs. 3.11-12]. But Gotthold notes that photographs were often insufficient for documenting details or individual tattoos; for this, he recommended tracing the tattoo from the subject's body using transparent paper, or, better still, delicately drawing the outline of the tattoo in wet ink and covering the outlined area with damp silk paper, allowing the ink to transfer and thus creating a detailed negative that the scientist could use to draw an accurate positive picture. Finally, Gotthold mentioned a fourth and final method that he did not recommend for general use: the freehand copying of the tattoo by the scientist's hand. Aside from the tendency for the resulting drawings to be inaccurate, Gotthold was quick to admit that this method was a poor choice because of the high degree of *draftsmanship* that it necessitated. Most often, Riecke conceded, scientists simply did not have a "very good talent for drawing."<sup>239</sup>

It is worth remarking on the way in which drawing and copying here challenged prevailing disciplinary conventions meant to maintain scientific objectivity. The popularity of the drawn copy as a mode of recording tattoos, even when photographic modes of documentation were available, undoubtedly surfaced age-old apprehensions regarding the intrusion of subjective artistic vision into the scientific method. As Lorraine Daston and Peter Galison have argued, the introduction of photography as a form of mechanical reproduction was lauded as a means of policing and surveilling the scientific illustrator or removing the need for an illustrator entirely.<sup>240</sup> From a phenomenological perspective, the process of copying tattoos from the body of the subject *by hand* meant an intersubjective engagement with between scientist and subject that made "de-individualization [and] emotional distance" a near impossibility; though the queer body may be abstracted out of the picture once the patterns were collated into pattern books, the body continually reasserted itself in the documentation process.<sup>241</sup> The proximity between scientist and queer subject echoed the proximity between the tattoo artist and the queer subject, or even the proximity required for one queer man to read the tattoos of a potential partner. If the tattoo evidenced the erotic ties between tattoo artist and tattooed subject or between tattooed subjects themselves on the cruising grounds, the scientific copy of the tattoo evidenced an uneasy relationship between the scientist striving for objectivity and the pathological subject of his inquiry.

In the ways outlined by Gotthold, scientists sought to remedy their own artistic lack with tracing, copying, and replication techniques in order to set down in print the tattooed lines

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<sup>238</sup> Karl Gotthold, "Vergleichende Untersuchungen über die Tätowierung bei Normalen, Geisteskranken, und Kriminellen," *Klinik für psychische und nervöse Krankheiten*, v. 9, no. 3 (1914): 196-7.

<sup>239</sup> *Ibid.*, 97.

<sup>240</sup> See Lorraine Daston and Peter Galison, "The Image of Objectivity," *Representations*, no. 40, Special Issue: "Seeing Science" (1992), 81-128.

<sup>241</sup> Lorraine Daston, "Objectivity and the Escape from Perspective," *Social Studies of Science*, v. 22 no. 4 (1992), 597-618. 603.

of the creatively atavistic subject. Such methods represented a new mode of documenting and replicating tattoos; in the South Seas, where tattoos were of interest solely as “savage” markings or signs of “primitive” erotic ornamentation, the mere spectacle of the tattooed body was often sufficient for the purposes of illustration. In most cases, including that of the early anthropologist Wilhelm Joest, researchers worked with lithographers and draftsmen back home in the metropole to visualize tattooed indigenous subjects, like those tattooed individuals observed by Joest on his expedition to Japan [fig. 3.13]. In indigenous tattoo research, few attempts are made to produce a collection or working archive of tattoo iconography: anthropologists deemed documentation of indigenous tattoos sufficient, it seems, as long as the document surpassed the threshold necessary to communicate spectacular barbarity.

In the case of the modern tattooed homosexual, however, researchers were faced with a conundrum: while most researchers agreed that tattoos were unnecessary ornamentation upon the body, they were also keenly aware that they were anything but unnecessary to their homosexual bearers, serving a critical function as communicative signs of sexual identity. These researchers were thus compelled to foreground the scientific study of tattoos as a pillar of their research on homosexual identity, and furthermore to pioneer new modes of documentation that allowed the scientist’s hand to index the tattooed picture, rather than leaving such visualizations to the artistic discretion of the lithographer. Unlike the indigenous subject of Joest’s inquiry, whose alterity was secure and whose visualization served as secondary support rather than primary evidence, the European homosexual subject’s alterity needed to be visualized in detail; racial otherness spoke for itself, but German atavism required careful documentation.

### 3.3. Archive Building: Patterns and Pathology

Once homosexual tattoos had been properly documented, scientists were obliged to confront the challenge of organizing their archive of drawings in a coherent and legible way. Here, too, the tactics of these researchers closely replicated the methods developed by art historians over the course of the nineteenth century to collate, organize, and visually present data. Scholars such as Marsha Morton and Margaret Olin have noted the popularity amongst late-nineteenth-century art historians to deploy graphic modes of illustration similar to those used by natural historians such as Louis Agassiz and Ernst Haeckel, who used line drawings as a means of presenting a wide variety of specimens for the purposes of comparative observation [figs. 3.14- 3.15].<sup>242</sup> Olin, for instance, sees a parallel project at work in art historical and connoisseurial scholarship by Riegl and Giovanni Morelli. For Morton and Olin, the absorption of these visualization techniques by art historians is characteristic of how scientific knowledge, methods, and techniques were translated into a modern *Kunstwissenschaft*, or science of art. In Riegl’s case, Olin sees the adoption of a natural scientific visualization style at work in his extensive use of line drawings to trace the developmental history of the lotus motif. In her words, the entirety of Riegl’s landmark *Stilfragen* project “can be considered an essay in classification of a *species of ornament*.”<sup>243</sup>

Though this is an acute observation, it is important to note that this model suggests that art historians merely absorbed scientific modes of depiction rather than also playing a constitutive role in the development of these visualization techniques. In fact, the role of art

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<sup>242</sup> See Marsha Morton, “Art’s ‘contest with nature’: Darwin, Haeckel, and the scientific art history of Alois Riegl,” in *Darwin and Theories of Aesthetics and Cultural History*, ed. Barbara Larson and Sabine Flach (Burlington: Ashgate, 2013), 53-68 and Margaret Olin, “‘Look at your fish’: Science, Modernism and Alois Riegl’s Formal Practice,” in *German Art History and Scientific Thought: Beyond Formalism*, ed. Mitchell B. Frank and Daniel Adler (New York: Routledge, 2016), 33-56.

<sup>243</sup> Margaret Olin, “‘Look at your fish’: Science, Modernism and Alois Riegl’s Formal Practice,” 39. Emphasis mine.

history in the development of scientific illustration was significant. The history of aesthetic theorists collating ornamental motifs in this manner did not begin after Agassiz and Haeckel but had a much older precedent in the proliferation of *Musterbücher* and *Muster-Vorlagen*, or ornamental pattern books and templates, that were in wide circulation throughout Europe by the early nineteenth century. These texts, typically written by art and architectural historians, provided comprehensive visual overviews of ornamental motifs based on field research and collated a vast array of ornamental examples into printed volumes, which allowed for the expedient location of specific historical styles and patterns. Works like Hamburg-based architect Georg Ungewitter's *Sammlung mittelalterlicher Ornamentik in geschichtlicher und systematischer Anordnung* (*Collection of Medieval Ornamentation in Historical and Systematic Arrangement*) from 1863 proved enduringly popular amongst academic historians and the wider public alike. The format that Ungewitter used to organize the ornamental details of his subject is standard for the genre, and he explicitly acknowledges the quasi-scientific gaze that such an organization of the pictures engenders: his ornamental specimens are organized into tables, so as to better illustrate similarities and variations between and amongst, for instance, Gothic column capitals, and aimed to present the viewer with a visual dissection of the "organisms" under consideration [fig. 3.16].<sup>244</sup>

Just as with biological organisms, however, artistic and architectural organisms could present pathologically. In addition to their basic function as visual collections of historical ornament, these pattern books also served to assess and diagnose the creative impulse of a particular age or culture. In his influential and foundational treatise, *The Grammar of Ornament* (1856), the British architect and designer Owen Jones consistently imbued his treatments of historical ornament with the language of illness and health: he considered medieval manuscript illuminations that had suffered from a loss of "fitness," German Renaissance ornamentation that was terribly "impure," and unnatural applications of color, which gave off a distinct sense of "sickness."<sup>245</sup> Jones's text proved to be immensely popular across the continent and was quickly translated into German in 1857, only one year after it appeared in English. For a generation of German art and architectural historians keenly attuned to notions of progression or degeneration in the cultural sphere, Jones's *Grammar* provided a kind of model for conveying which manifestations of the historical ornamental impulse were proper and which constituted pathological stylistic perversions.

Inevitably, the pictorial strategies that art and architectural historians used in their pattern books to present the ornamental features of classical, medieval, and modern visual and material culture became unwitting models for natural and life scientists seeking to illustrate homologous anatomical structures and pathological devolutions across species within the animal kingdom. Representative of this adaptation of the ornamental pattern book for the purposes of science is the German Darwinian Ernst Haeckel's *Kunstformen der Natur* (*Art Forms of Nature*), a multi-volume series of prints published between 1899 and 1904. Haeckel approached biological specimens as a kind of living ornament, which he carefully documented and presented as a series of tables that grouped specimens by shared features and physical characteristics. As the German biologist Olaf Breidbach has argued in his analysis of the tables, Haeckel's drawings in the *Kunstformen* are striking precisely *because* they pursue a mode of visualization that reads as an "ornamental interpretation of natural forms," which Haeckel saw as the true reproduction of nature.<sup>246</sup>

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<sup>244</sup> Georg Ungewitter, *Sammlung mittelalterlicher Ornamentik in geschichtlicher und systematischer Anordnung* (Leipzig: Weigel, 1863), 4.

<sup>245</sup> Owen Jones, *The Grammar of Ornament* (London: Bernard Quaritch, 1868), 104, 120, 71.

<sup>246</sup> Olaf Breidbach, *Bilder des Wissens: zur Kulturgeschichte der wissenschaftlichen Wahrnehmung*. (Paderborn: Fink Verlag, 2003), 181.

As a means of visually presenting the artistic/architectural *or* the scientific subject, therefore, ornamental drawings proved to be of central importance; as Ungewitter's reference to column capitals as "organisms" and Haeckel's treatment of specimen-as-ornament in his *Kunstformen* makes clear, aesthetic discourse was very much an active participant in the drive to produce new ways of visualizing scientific information and knowledge. Rather than the one-way transmission of scientific techniques and methods into the realm of aesthetics, the afterlife of the ornamental *Musterbuch* evidences the incorporation of methods used to visualize architectural ornament by scientists seeking to visualize biological ornament.

Scientific adoption of these pictorial conventions was not limited to the work of natural scientists; anthropologists and ethnographers were also heavily involved in the production of pattern templates to relay the results of their research and, in the wake of Jones's *Grammar*, to provide ornamental exemplars of "healthy" styles and motifs. It is in the work of anthropologists and ethnographers on the subject of tattoos that the spirit of the ornamental *Musterbuch* is most palpably felt. Indeed, a significant textual archive of anthropological, ethnographic, and sexual scientific works deploy this mode of visualization in order to present the findings of their research on tattoos.

Though one could fruitfully compare this corpus of scientific texts to any number of nineteenth-century *Musterbücher*, the art historian Albert von Zahn's work on ornament provides a particularly productive model for comparison. Zahn was a preeminent art historian at the University of Leipzig whose work on northern Renaissance art extended to the documentation of Renaissance ornamentation. In his *Musterbuch für häusliche Kunstarbeiten* (*Pattern Book for Domestic Artwork*, 1872-73), Zahn's primary motivation was to rescue ornamentation from those who perceived it to be a lesser and inferior art form.<sup>247</sup> In the text that accompanied Zahn's illustrations, he provided a basic structural and methodological model that we can also trace in the work of the ornament-oriented scientist: introduction to the research problem, detailed excursus on the methods and techniques used to trace, outline, draw, or copy the motifs included in the text, key or cipher to the illustrations, and, finally, the compendium of ornamental motifs themselves. Zahn's simple drawings, copied from his research on ornamental banners and crests, have been stripped down to clean, thin lines that facilitate the viewer's understanding of each motif's basic structure and composition [fig. 3.17].

This mode of presenting ornamental motifs was taken up by scientific researchers in various sub-disciplines throughout Europe whose work addressed the topic of tattoos. Typically included as supplements to their primary text, these line drawings served the primary purpose of cataloging tattoos traced from the bodies of an array of subjects (most of whom were deemed "criminal" by the researcher). Abraham Baer's *Der Verbrecher in anthropologischer Beziehung* (*The Criminal in Anthropological Relation*) is exemplary in its adoption of the *Musterbuch* mode of data presentation; collated into four tables spread across eight pages, Baer has organized his raw visual data by the individual from whose body the tattoos were taken [fig. 3.18]. The tattoo patterns are decontextualized and isolated from the bodies on which they were found; just as Haeckel removed his natural forms from their natural environs, so too does Baer remove tattoos from the skins of his subjects, transforming them into evidence for the scientific gaze. The removal of the individual body is furthered by Baer's tendency to identify the individual by the criminal offenses he committed (popular crimes include thievery, resisting arrest, *Unzucht* and *Kuppelei*—"fornication" and "coupling," terms which covered a wide array of sexual offenses) rather than by name. Familiar Lombrosian symbols reappear in Baer's iconography of criminal bodily ornamentation, including the clasped hand motif that indicates homoerotic desire. Baer's tables of tattoos effectively

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<sup>247</sup> See Albert von Zahn, *Musterbuch für häusliche Kunstarbeiten* (Leipzig: Wigand, 1864), 1.

functioned as an ornamental pattern book for the definition and identification of tattooed criminals generally and sexual criminals, in particular.

Other researchers, both in Germany and elsewhere in Europe, came to rely on the use of line drawings in these scientific *Musterbücher* to specifically document the bodies and tattoos of the homosexual subject. Some of these drawings served to document highly specific tattoo iconography found in rare and particular cases. Silvio Armando Neri, an Italian criminologist, contributed to this specialized archive of tattoo templates in his documentation of tattoos taken from two homosexual French criminals in his custody; in crude, bold lines, Neri recorded one man's tattooed penis (adorned to resemble the Prussian Kaiser Wilhelm I) and the other man's buttocks (tattooed to resemble Bellevue, Kaiser Wilhelm's Berlin palace) [fig. 3.19].<sup>248</sup> Other pattern templates sought to develop a more generalized iconography of homosexual and homoerotic tattoos, as in the case of Albert Moll's line drawings in his 1912 *Handbuch der Sexualwissenschaften (Handbook of Sexual Science)* [fig. 3.20]. While some of the line drawings that comprised the homosexual tattoo templates of Moll and others were taken directly from Lombroso's text, most were based on the vast archives of patterns developed by physicians, criminologists, and ethnographers in major cities across Germany, including Berlin, Jena, and Hamburg, who copied the patterns from the bodies of homosexual men during physical examinations.

The hypothesis that the primal and perverse sexual subjectivity of the (homo)sexually atavistic specimen manifested as obscene pictures inked upon his body was, conceptually and intuitively, a sound one. But in order to prove the hypothetical causal relationship between homosexuality and tattooing—both of which sat dangerously close to the border of topics considered appropriate for study by the serious scientist—researchers required empirical proof and rigorous methods. Printed collections of tattoo line drawings, which I have argued operated as scientific *Musterbücher* of homosexual tattoos, provided the visual evidence necessary to back up these hypothetical claims; if art and architectural pattern books historically functioned to illustrate healthy instantiations of the human impulse to ornament and safeguard against the repetition of its pathological manifestations, these scientific templates likewise investigated the acceptable limits of the creative impulse to ornament and, in much the same spirit, dutifully documented those drawings that evidenced an atavistic breach. As the culmination of a series of adoptions and adaptations of art historical theories and methods, the scientific *Musterbuch* functioned to underscore the notion of homosexual men as members of an atavistic substratum of German society, whose tendency to draw upon their bodies was hard evidence of their secondary cultural status.

#### 4. Secret Symbols and Pictorial Communication

Much like the larger project of criminal identification, scientific collections of homosexual tattoos served the primary purpose of deciphering a secret, specialized pictorial language to which scientific researchers were not privy. Ancillary to the foregoing methodological approaches to tattoos was a general supposition that they belonged to a world of communicative, symbolic pictures; all of the methods articulated in the previous sections stemmed from a general aesthetic understanding of the centrality of symbols to human communication and the drive to capture, collate, and translate vernacular symbols into scientific data that could then be used to draw conclusions about the subjects themselves.

Such scientific enterprises recall theoretical notions of ornamentation propounded by art historians such as August Schmarsow, whose work on ornamentation cast it as the spiritual genesis of art and the origin of primitive creativity. For Schmarsow, an early and staunch

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<sup>248</sup> This case is cited in Jane Caplan, "'National Tattooing': Traditions of Tattooing in Nineteenth-Century Europe."

advocate for psychophysiological interpretations of “primitive” artistic production, the basis of indigenous ornamentation was to be found in the psychological desire to impose order upon one’s environments. As Priyanka Basu notes with regard to Schmarsow’s theory, “ornament is...defined as having to do with the creation of order and hierarchy. Moreover, this is indicative of one of the primary assumptions of the contemporary understanding of the ‘primitive’ mind: that in its simplest state it is overwhelmed by perceptual chaos and that abstraction represents an intellectual mastery and ordering of this flux.”<sup>249</sup> Additionally, pure ornament served first and foremost as a means of communicating a value internal to an individual or community; as Christiane Hertel has eloquently noted, “for Schmarsow, there [was] something foundational, pre-iconographic, and ahistorical in creativity’s ornamental trace and its ability to communicate”, a quality that *Volkskundler* capitalized upon in their research on symbols as communicative ornamentation.<sup>250</sup>

Schmarsow’s research on the communicative capacities of ornament intersected in meaningful ways with contemporary discourse on drawing and the psychological development of indigenous subjects. Notable contributors to this body of scholarship included Richard Andree, mentioned in the introduction to this chapter, and Karl von den Steinen, a German anthropologist who wrote extensively about drawing and the origins of art in indigenous communities. For von den Steinen, drawings themselves existed on a developmental scale that indicated the psychological development of the draftsman; drawing a comparison that would persist throughout the early twentieth century, von den Steinen placed the drawings of “primitive” adults on the same level of development as children in civilized Western cultures.<sup>251</sup> “Primitive” drawings were schematic, as they were primarily focused on the communication of an idea, while more psychologically advanced drawings aimed at mimesis and aesthetic beauty: “Among primitive peoples, drawing, like gestures, serves to *communicate an idea* and not to reproduce the beauty of a form. I think that in so far as the explanatory drawing has something immediate about it, it is anterior to ornamental and artistic drawing [...]. Communicative drawing was therefore first.”<sup>252</sup> Von den Steinen sees this undeveloped communicative drawing impulse at work in, for instance, drawings by the Bororo peoples of Brazil, whose schematic stick figure portraits he published in 1894 [fig. 3.21]. Though von den Steinen was primarily concerned with drawing independent of ornamentation, drawing could of course serve the purposes of ornamentation, as in the case of tattoos; the anthropologist would take up the question of indigenous tattooing more explicitly in his 1925 *Die Marquesaner und ihre Kunst*, which in part seeks to decipher and make legible the communicative meanings of tattoo iconography documented on research trips to the Marquesas Islands.

Aesthetic theories that highlighted the communicative function of “primitive” symbols informed scientific research in various ways. Take, for instance, an essay by the Austrian criminal anthropologist Hanns Gross entitled “Die Gaunerzinken der Freistädter Handschrift.” Here, Gross creates a visual lexicon of secret symbols known to be used by various undesirable subsections of the German and Austrian populaces for the purpose of undetected

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<sup>249</sup> Priyanka Basu, “Ornament and empathy in August Schmarsow’s psychophysical history of art,” *RES*, v. 67-68 (2016-17), 94-110. 104.

<sup>250</sup> Christiane Hertel, “August Schmarsow’s Theory of Ornament,” in *Ornament and European Modernism: From Art History to Art Practice*, ed. Loretta Vandi, 67-103. (Abingdon: Routledge, 2017). 75.

<sup>251</sup> Peter Déléage, “The origin of art according to Karl von den Steinen.”

<sup>252</sup> *Ibid.*, 11. Original quote in Karl von den Steinen, *Unter den Naturvölkern Zentral-Brasiliens. Reiseschilderung und Ergebnisse der Zweiten Schingú-Expedition, 1887-1888* (Berlin: Diertrich Reimer, 2004); Portuguese translation: *Entre os aborígenes do Brasil central*, (São Paulo: Companhia Editora Nacional, 1940). 300. Emphasis mine.

communication.<sup>253</sup> Gross's essay was based upon the collection of an Austrian investigator named Kajetan Karmayer who collected these hand-drawn symbols in the early nineteenth century from the walls of houses, alleys, and public toilets. Though Gross's topic is not tattoos, the method with which he approaches criminal symbols closely approximates the methods used to document and collate tattoo patterns. Undaunted by the sheer number and variety of the symbols under consideration, Gross organized them by semiotic meaning, enumerating each symbol so that readers could locate its descriptive entry in the accompanying index—a project to which tattoo researchers aspired, but which largely failed to coalesce in a systematic and widespread way (fig. 3.22). Such efforts closely mirror similar projects undertaken by amateur symbologists such as the Swede Bengt Claudelin, whose extraordinary line drawings of sexual graffiti taken from bathrooms across Sweden comprised a lexicon of vernacular homoerotic symbols [fig. 3.23].<sup>254</sup> That this kind of project was also pursued by researchers across the continent is suggested by a cartoon in the popular French periodical *Assiette au beurre* depicting an older gentleman in a top hat and coattails precariously perched on the toilet of a filthy public lavatory, magnifying glass in hand as he examines the graffiti on the walls [fig. 3.24]. “Blushing,” the caption reads, “he follows ‘their’ traces.” These sorts of ethnographic projects, including the project by Gross, were used as evidence of creative degeneracy; as the architect and theorist Adolf Loos wrote, “one can measure the cultural development of a country by the amount of graffiti on the bathroom walls.”<sup>255</sup>

That tattoos were approached as one such mode of clandestine communication seemed to be taken for granted by most of the same ethnologists and sexual scientists who recorded tattoo patterns and preserved them in their pattern books. Other researchers felt inclined to spell this out more explicitly; following on the heels of Gross's exploration of “Gauernerzinken” (secret criminal symbols), one E. Kleemann wrote extensively about tattoos as part of specific criminal languages. No matter their subject matter or the feelings they were meant to invoke in the viewer, tattoos were primarily communicative, approximating the “primitive image writing of indigenous peoples.”<sup>256</sup> Not only were tattoos part of an intentionally exclusionary language, but they also provided a sense of community and belonging to those who bore them. Kleemann undoubtedly had homosexuals (amongst others) in mind in this essay; he later uses the development of homosexual slang to demonstrate that pictorial languages, like verbal languages, can also change, and are subject to the inner workings of those who use them (he traces, for instance, the development of “Warmer Bruder,” “Onkel,” “Tante,” and “Kodesch” as slang words developed from “pederast” and a bevy of slang words for “penis”).<sup>257</sup> Kleemann aligns tattoos and other “crook” icons with these linguistic signifiers, which were adopted by homosexual men, endowed with new meanings, and recoded as subcultural icons, the meaning of which was evident only to those within the group. Kleemann's essay is notable because it spelled out that which the research of so many of his contemporaries—including Krauss, Luedecke, Riecke, and others—had taken for granted, namely that tattoos functioned as communicative signals meant to be recognized and deciphered only by those in the know. Furthermore, it was the job of the researcher to crack the code and translate the tattoo from an original queer pictorial language into the language of science.

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<sup>253</sup> See Hanns Gross, “Die Gauernerzinken der Freistädter Handschrift,” Reprint from *Archiv für Kriminal-Anthropologie*, v. 2 (1899).

<sup>254</sup> Claudelin compiled these sketchbooks between roughly 1910 and 1930. Known as the *Klotterböckerna*, the sketchbooks have been digitized by the Hallwylska museet in Stockholm.

<sup>255</sup> Adolf Loos, “Ornament und Verbrechen,” in *Trotzdem 1900-1930* (Innsbruck: Brenner, 1931), 82.

<sup>256</sup> E. Kleemann, „Die Gaunersprache: ein Beitrag zur Völkerpsychologie,” *Archiv für Kriminal-Anthropologie und Kriminalistik*, vol. 30 (1908): 236-279. 248-9.

<sup>257</sup> *Ibid.*, 272.

As tattoos were intended to function as an unspoken pictorial code, virtually no written archival evidence exists that details how queer men tacitly agreed on which patterns or symbols should comprise a queer iconographic lexicon. As such, we are left with the task of critically piecing together how tattoos might have functioned on the ground based on the reports of those who made it their task to define and surveil the homosexual body (as in the scientific journals that have formed the bulk of the evidence in this chapter) or in rare anonymous accounts that refer to such visual codes. In his 1897 firsthand account of homosexual life in German-speaking Europe, *Die Enterbten des Liebesglückes*, the Austrian writer Otto Rudolf Podjekl (writing under the pseudonym Otto de Joux) wrote about the highly developed capacity for queer men to “instinctively recognize each other at first sight while average people overlook us, as if struck by blindness, so that we remain completely hidden from them.”<sup>258</sup> This instinctive recognition was primarily driven by the perception of visual cues and codes noticeable only by those looking for them.

Tattoos were undoubtedly an integral part of this signaling system. We must also consider the possibility, however, that the “semiotic” problem articulated by scientists on the trail of secret subcultural networks might have been a problem of their own creation, not recognized as a problem in quite the same way amongst queer men themselves. That is to say, it is possible that there was in fact *no* code indigenous to queer communities for “reading” and interpreting tattoo iconography, for deciphering it and translating its corresponding meaning—at least, not in the sense that scientists of sexuality assumed there might be. Queer men many have learned to recognize particular patterns over time, but there was surely no comprehensive codebook that these men could use to ascertain the meanings of such patterns. While some of the tattoo symbols recorded by researchers like Gross and Baer were fairly straightforward and clear in their erotic symbolism, others perhaps functioned in more subtle and open-ended ways, offering the queer viewer a pictorial starting point from which to revise extant subcultural meanings and craft their own new meanings. In this sense, queer viewers of tattoos could “read-in” to a design or pattern and endow it with their own personal significance—a tendency the anthropologist Franz Boas highlighted as crucial to indigenous interpretations of ornamental patterns.<sup>259</sup> In this sense, the queer “beholder’s share” of the tattoo would undermine stable and codifiable meaning, keeping the meaning of a particular symbol or pattern in flux and difficult to pin down in a scientific manual or journal.

For criminologists, the specific meaning of each tattoo was less important than the fact that the tattoo did in fact—somehow—signal homosexual desire. It is tempting (and, indeed, historically sound) to critically fabulate a scenario in which police officers approach a working-class homosexual in Berlin’s Tiergarten or by the docks in Hamburg, his tank top making visible an extensive program of tattoos on his forearms, biceps, and chest.<sup>260</sup> The man is suspected of offering (or perhaps soliciting) sex, apprehended, and taken in for examination. His tattoos, the pictorial communicators of his aberrant sexuality, are photographed or, more likely, copied by the hand of the examiner to be placed in a growing archive of tattoo patterns known to signal homosexuality. This archive grows to form a working pictorial lexicon that is in turn used by scientists, prison officials, and physicians seeking to determine the particular sexual pathologies of the sexually queer individuals they might encounter going forward, and so the process continues.

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<sup>258</sup> Otto de Joux, *Die Enterbten des Liebesglückes, oder Das dritte Geschlecht: ein Beitrag zur Seelenkunde* (Leipzig: Max Spohr Verlag, 1897). 99.

<sup>259</sup> Whitney Davis. “‘Reading-In’: Franz Boas’s Theory of the Beholder’s Share,” *Representations*, vol. 144, no. 1 (2018): 1-33.

<sup>260</sup> Research on sexual science and queer subcultural practices stands to benefit from Hartman’s theorization of critical fabulation given the systematic destruction of many of its archives and materials. See Saidiya Hartman, “Venus in Two Acts”, *Small Axe* 26, June 2008, 12, no. 2.



Scientific discourse propped up a pervasive sense of tattooing as a secret and coded language. The work of aesthetic theorists like Schmarsow, and the aesthetically oriented work of anthropologists such as Karl von den Steinen, laid the foundations for an alignment between the undeveloped schematic pictures drawn by indigenous peoples as communicative tools and the apparently facile skin drawings made by queer men and other degenerates for the purpose of signaling and communicating their subjectivities to those primed to pick up on such a message. Tattoos were particularly troubling markers, not only because they failed to develop beyond a primitive state of communicative figuration, but also because the usefulness of their communicative function (that is to say, their imminent ability to bring the pathological subject that which he most ardently sought: sex) encouraged their proliferation and actively discouraged their development into more advanced and socially acceptable artistic figuration. Those who could easily convey base sexual impulses with simple lines crudely inked upon the body had no need for the lofty idealistic aims of “true art.”

## 5. Conclusion

German scientific interest in the practice of tattooing in modern society grew out of a social Darwinist project that was largely the product of colonial ambitions and encounters with tattooing in indigenous communities. By the turn of the century, a robust body of literature informed by both criminological work and colonial anthropological research prompted German *Volkskundler* back home in the metropole to develop a wide-ranging conception of tattoos as signifiers of a fundamentally “primitive” subjectivity. Unsurprisingly, the subjects observed in order to substantiate these claims were drawn from a distinct subset of the population—criminals, sex workers, and, notably, homosexual men from the lower classes were often tattooed and were thus conceptually designated atavistic social degenerates with primal sexualities and pathological creative impulses.

As I have sought to show, however, the ethnographic use of tattoos as evidence to prove the hypothetical atavism of the modern queer subject was not a purely scientific pursuit; rather, scientists consciously approached tattoos as *drawings* made by unskilled hands on the skin of pathological subjects. As such, scientific treatments of tattoos drew on aesthetic theories of ornamentation set forth by scholars like Gottfried Semper and Alois Riegl, whose theories of ornamentation as the product of a functionless and stunted creative impulse provided theoretical grounding for a scientific theory of tattoos as an inherently atavistic mode of queer creativity. Furthermore, as I have argued, such scientists found support for their research on “skin sketches” in the methodologies similar to those used to address sketches on paper. These researchers approached the problem of tattoos much like amateur art historians, collating their visual evidence in ornamental pattern books and prioritizing process, materials, and technique in their observations. In their absorption of aesthetic theories of ornament and in their role as connoisseurs of drawings on skin, scientific researchers found constitutive support for their developing conceptions of homosexual men as creatively and sexually perverse subjects whose atavism was drawn in ink upon their bodies.

Two primary conclusions follow from these observations. The first, and perhaps most obvious, is that the scientific conception of the homosexual male subject was in part dependent upon scientific conceptions of the colonial Other. Scholars have identified what we might call a “global turn” in sexual scientific research around the turn of the twentieth century and have highlighted how sexual scientists such as Iwan Bloch and Magnus Hirschfeld drew explicit comparisons between the sexual practices of indigenous peoples and sexual perversions observed in the European underclass.<sup>261</sup> For many of these researchers, including those I have

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<sup>261</sup> Kate Fisher and Jana Funke, “Let Us Leave the Hospital; Let Us Go on a Journey around the World”: British and German Sexual Science and the Global Search for Sexual Variation” in *A Global History of Sexual Science*:

written about here, such comparisons did not function redeem the “savage,” but instead served to further denigrate the German sexual minority. Scientific attempts to demonstrate that sexual aberration was to be found across the globe did little to normalize perceived sexual perversions like homosexuality.

I argue, however, that the relationship between the indigenous subject and the homosexual subject was not simply one of equivalence. That is to say, recourse to research on indigenous sexuality did not simply function to show that homosexuality existed everywhere, at home as well as abroad. Rather, indigenous sexuality also provided a model for German scientists seeking to define the etiology of male homosexuality and categorize its manifold unruly behaviors and manifestations. As Rudi Bleys has lucidly argued, ethnologists outlined a strong affinity between the indigenous same-sex practitioner and the European homosexual, even as they worked to theorize such same-sex practices as “endemic” to indigenous societies and “minority” in Western societies.<sup>262</sup> Portrayed as the bearers of an orgiastic and non-procreative sexual hedonism, European homosexuals were represented as a kind of degenerate modern double of the perverse indigenous subject. Put more simply, the scientific image of the German homosexual male depended in key ways on the racist and colonial maltreatment of the indigenous subject for its lifeblood.<sup>263</sup> I have sought to show that the tattoo was an important term in this racialized articulation of homosexuality, though tattooing is undoubtedly but one of many of the visual cues and creative practices that scientists capitalized upon in order to contour their definitions of the modern homosexual.

Secondly, I argue that tattooing laid bare a persistent association between ornamentation and queer male sexuality. Beginning, perhaps, with Riegl’s idea that ornamentation (and tattooing, specifically) exemplified a creative impulse that had failed to develop a conceptual, or even a practical, function, we can identify the germ of an idea that would be developed in more explicit terms in the decades to follow: that ornamentation, as a creative practice, was inherently analogous to queer sexual perversion. In asserting its failure to serve a useful, well-defined function, Riegl’s conception of ornamentation, bodily or otherwise, dovetailed with contemporary biological conceptions of homosexuality as an essentially functionless and non-procreative manifestation of a universal drive. As homosexuality constituted the resurfacing of an unnatural primal impulse, it was no small wonder that homosexuals should exhibit a penchant for a practice as unevolved as ornamenting their bodies. That homosexuals should thus display a natural inclination for tattooing and ornamentation more generally made sound and logical sense.

It was the writings of an Austrian, however, that provided the most explicit alignment of ornament and male homosexuality. Adolf Loos, whose 1908 essay “Crime and Ornament” provides one of the strongest and most outspoken condemnations of the modern, tattooed European, effectively synthesized Lombrosian criminology and Riegl’s evolutionary approach to the history of ornamentation. After rehearsing popular scientific theories about cultural and

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1880-1960, eds. Veronika Fuechtner, Douglas E. Haynes, and Ryan M. Jones (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2017), 51-69.

<sup>262</sup> Rudi Bleys, *Geographies of Perversion: Male-to-Male Sexual Behavior Outside the West and the Ethnographic Imagination, 1750-1918* (New York: NYU Press, 1995), 190-2.

<sup>263</sup> Robert Deam Tobin’s research on German colonialist writings from Samoa provides great support for this notion. As he notes, “. . .the language of sexuality with its increasing focus on biological categorizations, relies on racial discourses that received their most extreme formulations in imperialist contexts.” See Robert Deam Tobin, *Peripheral Desires*, 134-61. Tobin also asserts that homosexualist activists often relied on rhetoric that posited homosexuals as *analogous* to other unjustly persecuted racial and ethnic groups, including Jews, a position that Laurie Marhoefer has suggested threatened to erase the precarious positionalities and unique politics of racial and ethnic minority groups and the intersectionality of queer communities of color. See also Laurie Marhoefer, *Racism and the Making of Gay Rights: A Sexologist, His Student, and the Empire of Queer Love* (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 2022), 80-87.

individual development and condemning the presence of “degenerate” and “primitive” urges in modern man, Loos turns to a scathing indictment of modern tattooing indebted to Lombroso’s theories of the born criminal.

Of greatest interest for my purposes is that Loos’s diatribe draws on evolutionary language to explicitly divorce ornamentation from the natural, procreative order: “modern ornament has no parents and no descendants, has no past and no future.”<sup>264</sup> Loos’s conception of ornamentation as a genetic anomaly, a biological error, a sterile orphan, takes to its extremes the idea set forth in Riegl’s scholarship, namely that tattooing—and those who were tattooed—exhibited a primitive creative impulse that presented atavistically in the modern subject. Whereas Riegl approached this problem as one of developmental stages in the history of styles and the will to art, Loos removes the ornamented (which is to say the tattooed) subject from history entirely.

Such a conception of ornament as lacking parent and progeny accords with contemporary biological conceptions of homosexuality, an association of which Loos was undoubtedly aware.<sup>265</sup> Central to medical and psychological studies of homosexuality’s psychopathic etiology from the early years of sexual scientific research is a condemnation of the non-reproductive nature of queer sex. The opinion that prevailed in scientific literature well through the turn of the century was established by the sexual psychiatrist Richard von Krafft-Ebing, who identified in the homosexual failure to propagate a fatal perversion. Non-procreative sexuality did “injury” to “natural law” for a number of social and moral reasons, not least of which was the failure to create offspring and perpetuate the species.<sup>266</sup> In language that closely approximates Loos’s tirade against progeny-less ornament, sexual scientists made clear their distaste with homosexuality’s apparent lack of reproductive function.

This chapter has sought to make more legible the ways that German tattoo research reified this longstanding historical association between homosexuality and ornament. The ideas suggested by Riegl and made explicit by Loos would only intensify over time. Though beyond the scope of this dissertation, one needs only to consider stereotypes of the ornately-dressed, frivolous fops and dandies from the eighteenth century, Huysmans’ decadent character Des Esseintes in his novel *À rebours* (1884), whose queer desires are sublimated into the decorative jewels he glues to the shell of his pet tortoise, or Susan Sontag’s articulation of the homosexual affinity for the decorative arts in *Notes on Camp* (1964) to see clear examples in which homosexuality was aligned with decorative or ornamental excess.

A history of the conceptual structures that identify both ornamentation and homosexuality with a privileging of form over function remains to be written. We might take our cue, however, from the important work of Anne Anlin Cheng, who has extensively and convincingly written on the problem of ornament as a primary determinant both in making visible racial (and/or gender) difference and determining how the ornamented body is conceptualized within dominant (white, heteronormative) epistemes that dictate the conditions of “legitimate” personhood. Her examination of the structures by which Chinese dress—as a form of ornamentation—historically functioned to make racial difference visible and justify persecution despite legal claims for the equality of all bodies before the law parallels in

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<sup>264</sup> Ibid., 186.

<sup>265</sup> The architectural historian Beatriz Colomina has carefully argued for the implications Loos’s essay on ornament had for gender and sexuality. Though Loos explicitly associates ornamentation with feminine sexuality, his essay constituted a thinly-veiled attack on “effeminate” fops and suburban dandies like Koloman Moser and Josef Olbrich, whose penchant for decoration he also referred to as a penchant for architectural “tattooing.” As Colomina argues, “when this ‘degeneration’ of the masculine into the feminine becomes associated with homosexuality, Loos’ raid against ornament is not only gender-loaded but openly homophobic.” Beatriz Colomina, “Sex, Lies, and Decoration: Adolf Loos and Gustav Klimt,” *Thresholds* (2010) (37): 70–81. 74.

<sup>266</sup> Richard von Krafft-Ebing, *Psychopathia Sexualis* (Stuttgart: F. Enke, 1903), 248.

important ways how tattoos-as-ornament functioned to highlight queer difference and negate queer personhood accordingly. Cheng powerfully argues that “how a body matters is less a function of flesh than of ornament”; when ornament is rendered permanent *on* the flesh, as is the case with tattoos, the ability to doff or cast off one’s social ornamentation becomes an impossible task.<sup>267</sup> Cheng’s approach to ornamentation as a “theory of being” that is both inherently aligned with otherness and a vital tool by which oppressed individuals might find modes of survival and agency lends itself well to a broader theory of ornamentation as a thoroughly queer practice with utility for queer actors.<sup>268</sup>

As a final word, let us return briefly to Griebel’s boilerman, who opened this chapter [fig. 1]. I opened the chapter with this painting in order to show how tattoos were not merely conceptualized as meaningless decoration in late-nineteenth and early-twentieth-century artistic and scientific discourse, but in actuality were loaded with connotations and viewed as reliable markers of an individual’s subjectivity. I hope the preceding arguments have substantiated that a number of important discursive threads meet in Griebel’s picture. We might be more sensitive to the semantics of the tattoos inked upon his body as a form of subcultural communication, decipherable only to those in the know. We might be inclined to recognize in his occupation as a boilerman an alliance of disreputable sexuality and working-class social status. If the brown-skinned woman in the red dress signals lusty desire, those erotics are legible in part due to the construction of discourses that pivoted on pitting “primitive” non-Western sexuality against respectable German sexual ideals.

The most forceful element of the painting, however, is its strong implication of an “elsewhere” to which the tattooed boilerman is relegated. Griebel’s decision to locate his subject in the tropical environs of an unidentifiable, generically tropical landscape instead of the ports of Hamburg or the pubs of Berlin makes visually explicit the ties that bound a tattooed, queer underclass of German citizen with a creatively and sexually stunted indigenous Other. Painted towards the end of a prolific period of tattoo research, just a decade before National Socialists would condemn such degenerate practices and their associated sexualities wholesale, Griebel’s work serves as a succinct shorthand for the conception of tattoos resulting from a long and generative discursive between ethnologists and aesthetic theorists. On the canvas, the distance between the atavistic German in the metropole and his indigenous counterpart in an undefined elsewhere collapses, conceptually stranding the queer tattooed German in a primitive no man’s land, separated from his normative compatriots by a vast blue sea.

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<sup>267</sup> Anne Anlin Cheng, “Ornament and Law” in *New Directions in Law and Literature*, eds. Elizabeth S. Anker and Bernadette Meyler (New York: Oxford University Press, 2017), 245.

<sup>268</sup> See also Anne Anlin Cheng, *Ornamentalism* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2019).

## Chapter 4

### Furtive Lines, Captured Marks: Bibliophilia and Graphic Homoerotica from Extra-Illustration to Print

#### 1. Introduction: E.J.'s Books

In the private collection of a Viennese collector is a curious set of objects that once belonged to a homosexual man known only as “E.J.” [fig. 4.1]. At first glance, the viewer is greeted with an innocuous row of early-twentieth-century German-language books bound in reds, yellows, and browns, spines cracked and bindings worn. Should the viewer pick one of the books up and attempt to leaf through it, however, they would be surprised to learn that the book is not merely a book at all: opening the front cover of any one of the tomes would reveal that the owner of the set has simply wrapped book bindings over a hollow box to create a kind of storage container [fig. 4.2]. Inside each is an array of homoerotic photographs: in some, young men in various states of undress pose with arms slung over the shoulders of lovers. In others, the subject is nude and erect, smiling for the camera. The photographs are carefully protected in sleeves, doubly concealed by their envelopes and the books into which they have been stowed.<sup>269</sup>

Though the presentation and mode of keeping his collection hidden from public view are unique, E.J.'s propensity to collect erotic objects and images—and to maintain the privacy of his collection in innovative ways—was not. Queer men were understood, by the early twentieth century, to be prolific collectors of objects that appealed to their sexual tastes and proclivities: they collected artworks, prints, newspaper clippings, ticket stubs, photographs, and, above all, books. Scholars of queerness and materiality have theorized a pervasive relationship between queer subjects and the book, noting that “bibliomania,” or a frenzied preoccupation with books, had by the nineteenth century come to be stigmatized as “inappropriate for its homosocial mixing of aristocrats and lower middle-class nobodies, its emphasis on the pleasures and excesses of collecting, and an unscientific, possibly unhealthy, focus on books as fetishized objects rather than as transmitters of knowledge.”<sup>270</sup> E.J.'s collection signifies as important on multiple registers: his collection of photographs bolsters longstanding conceptions of queer men as collectors, while his choice to conceal his photographs within a second collection—his *book* collection—evidences a much wider trend amongst queer men, for whom books and printed material offered an opportunity to create, conceal, and circulate their own personalized erotic collections beneath the radar of censors and police surveillance.

This chapter examines the homosexual relationship with the book, a relationship that was recognized by sexual scientists who themselves relied on books to promote and circulate their ideas. Magnus Hirschfeld, the Berlin-based founder of the Institute for Sexual Science and a staunch advocate for the de-pathologization of homosexuality, recognized the book as central to both homosexual life and his own activist goals. The library of the Institute, which prior to 1933 held what is presumed to be the world's largest collection of written works on topics related to sex and sexuality, collected both medical and psychiatric volumes *and* erotic texts, publications with a sizeable circulation *and* personal, private copies of texts intended for

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<sup>269</sup> This object was featured as part of the exhibition *Geheimsache:leben: Schwule und Lesben im Wien des 20. Jahrhunderts*, held at the Neustiftshalle in Vienna between 26 October 2005 and 8 January 2006. See the richly illustrated exhibition catalog, Andreas Brunner, Ines Rieder, Nadja Schefzig, Hannes Sulzenbacher, and Niko Wahl, eds., *Geheimsache:leben: Schwule und Lesben im Wien des 20. Jahrhunderts* (Vienna: Löcker Verlag, 2005), 119-20.

<sup>270</sup> Gillian Russell, “Ephemerophilia: A Queer History”, *Angelaki* 23, no. 1 (2018), 180-1.

a limited or selective readership.<sup>271</sup> Hirschfeld, as I aim to show over the course of this chapter, was keenly attuned to the importance of the book to queer life and sought to also harness the unique properties of print to create a public face for the homosexual in German society.

Scholars have fruitfully examined the ways in which mass media, including magazines, dailies, weeklies, radio broadcasts, and cinema, shaped the socio-cultural landscape of post-World War One Germany.<sup>272</sup> These analyses have also extended to examinations of the role that mass print media played in the development of a cohesive homosexual rights movement; Javier Samper Vendrell's excellent work on the various mass media publications of the Bund für Menschenrechte demonstrates how the organization sought to promote the respectability of the homosexual citizen to a skeptical public.<sup>273</sup> While "mass media" was certainly a salient feature of life in Weimar Germany, however, my study here seeks to press back against the tendency to implicitly link this period with the mass proliferation of information, knowledge, and images. Rather, I seek to track the *small-scale* circulation of luxury, specialty queer print media—primarily books and bound portfolios—that primarily existed for consumption by limited audiences. Rather than focus on the publications typically invoked in relation to queer print culture in Weimar Germany—magazines such as *Die Insel*, *Der Eigene*, and various other so-called *Freundschaftsblätter* ("friendship pages) that could be found in train stations and kiosks on city streets—the print materials that populate this chapter are one-off originals, individual books made unique through the addition of queer bookplates, portfolios with exceedingly small print runs, and, in the end, specialized medical literature intended for the eyes of a specialized print public.

These books provide an opportunity to consider the ways in which drawings made or collected by queer men operated within a burgeoning print culture. What opportunities for graphic expression did the private book offer to queer bibliophiles? Furthermore, how did the Weimar vogue for printed erotic books, a great many of which featured drawings made permanent on the page, change the way that drawings could signify within queer communities? Drawings, as I have argued over the course of this dissertation, served unique functions for queer men. For most of the nineteenth century and into the twentieth century, however, they often did so quietly, offering a way for queer men to work out their subjectivities in private sketchbooks, experiment with erotic desire in individual nude studies, or covertly signal their sexuality on the surface of their skin. Making drawings reproducible and capable of circulation mobilized them in previously unimaginable ways. As I aim to show, this process of translation into print held value for both queer consumers of printed homoerotic drawings as well as sexual scientists seeking to reconsider long-held conceptions of queer creative expression.

With this in mind, this chapter seeks to tease out the import of two gradual processes of "making permanent" within the micro-circulatory system of queer print media. The first of these processes is the movement from erotic extra-illustration to printed erotica. I examine two different modes by which collectors effectively queered books—both erotic and non-erotic—in their private collections. Both of these methods pivoted on the addition of original drawings or privately commissioned prints to re-code the book as an object of personal erotic

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<sup>271</sup> The erotic literature collection housed at the Institute has been thus far neglected by scholars. Mel Gordon mentions the unique profile of the Institute's holdings, though refrains from elaborating on its significance. See Mel Gordon, *Voluptuous Panic: The Erotic World of Weimar Berlin* (Los Angeles: Feral House, 2000), 164.

<sup>272</sup> The works that take up mass media in Weimar Germany are too numerous to name. For important contributions to this body of literature, see Peter Jelavich, *Berlin Alexanderplatz: Radio, Film, and the Death of Weimar Culture* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2009); Corey Ross, *Media and the Making of Modern Germany: Mass Communications, Society, and Politics from the Empire to the Third Reich* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2010); and Heidi J.S. Tworek, *News from Germany: The Competition to Control World Communications, 1900-1945* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 2019).

<sup>273</sup> Javier Samper Vendrell, *The Seduction of Youth: Print Culture and Homosexual Rights in the Weimar Republic* (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 2020).

significance. Following an examination of queer extra-illustration practices, I then examine the trend, beginning in the 1920s, of printing small runs of homoerotica that made erotic drawings indelible on the page at the time of their production. This movement from the addition of erotic drawings post-publication to the incorporation of erotic drawings as a deliberate and conscious component of the publication is an important one that scholars have yet to examine.

The second shift that made queer drawings indelible within the micro-climate of specialty queer media, I argue, occurred as a result of sexual scientific engagement with queer drawings. This chapter will thus also consider the ways in which sexologists like Magnus Hirschfeld conceived of queer erotic drawings and sought to make them indelible for another audience: the medical community and the educated German “print public” writ large. This co-optation of queer drawings (often purposefully ephemeral, impermanent, and secretive) functioned as a mode of transforming *ars erotica* into *ars medica*: Hirschfeld placed erotic graphic production, in other words, in the service of his own medical theories and sexological propositions. If persistent conceptual associations predicated on historical notions of degeneration and natural development bound queer sexuality and graphic expression, Hirschfeld’s intervention into this debate was an attempt to upend this paradigm. As I will argue, Hirschfeld’s working archive of queer drawings at the Institute for Sexual Science and his inclusion of them in his printed publications were part of his larger medical imperative to de-pathologize homosexuality and queer creativity. Indelibility, then, functioned as a way to proffer the captured queer mark to a very different viewing public than the audience for which it was originally intended.

E.J.’s “books” are exemplary of the queer relationship to books in the Weimar period primarily because they were not simply books at all. Books and print media, for queer collectors, signaled possibility that breached the bounds of that which such materials made possible to the normative public. Like E.J.’s books of erotic photographs, print media offered a repository for the homoerotic imagination. Queer print culture, as this chapter aims to demonstrate, allowed queer men and their advocates alike the opportunity to capture drawn queer pictures and circulate them to a community of viewers beyond their own libraries.

## 2. Print Media in the Weimar Republic

### 2.1. The Place of Print in Modern Germany

Before examining queer engagement with print media that I have variously referred to as small scale, luxury, and specialized, it is first necessary to articulate the broader media landscape of Weimar Germany between 1918 and 1933, when notions of “mass media” and “mass culture” took center stage. The beginning of the Weimar period saw numerous forms of media—newspapers, magazines, film, recorded music, and radio chief among them—reach German consumers in unprecedented numbers and permeate the social fabric with jarring rapidity, leading to a pervasive media saturation that M.M. Gehrke in 1930 saw as contributing to “the end of the private sphere.”<sup>274</sup> We may in fact identify in the expansion of media during this period the rise of a new form of “mass media” that coincided with the development of mass culture more generally. As Maud Lavin has argued, “mass media both participated in and responded to the process of modernization”: technological developments in film and photography, for instance, provided Germans with “the most up-to-date media available to depict new experiences and perceptions.”<sup>275</sup>

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<sup>274</sup> M.M. Gehrke and Rudolf Arnheim, “The End of the Private Sphere (1930),” in *The Weimar Republic Sourcebook*, edited by Anton Kaes, Martin Jay, and Edward Dimendberg (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1994), 613-15.

<sup>275</sup> Maud Lavin, *Cut with the Kitchen Knife: The Weimar Photomontages of Hannah Hoch* (New Haven: Yale University Press), 47.

While new technologies of course came to occupy a central role in the lives of Germans during this period (scholars have thoroughly examined the significance of film and the myriad uses of photomontage in Weimar Germany), “old” technologies and media forms, such as print, also experienced reinvention. The rise in popularity of the magazine (and, in particular, the *illustrated* magazine) is a case in point; by the mid-1920s, the number of magazines, tabloids, dailies, and weeklies in circulation in Germany easily exceeded 4,000 titles on topics that appealed to any imaginable interest, from aeronautics to cocaine.<sup>276</sup> The inclusion of photographs was a key feature of these publications, ushering in a fundamental shift to the ways that consumers of print media engaged with the magazine. Rather than rely solely on textual information, the advent of illustrated magazines produced a new class of German citizen for whom visual literacy was integral to understanding the fast-paced world in which they lived.

Not all Germans were convinced that this surge in the prominence of illustrated print material was beneficial. Writing in the periodical *Der Hellweg* in 1925, the writer Edlef Köppen bemoaned the uptick in mass, quickly consumable media like magazines. Rather than function to inform wider swathes of the reading and viewing public, magazines had come to be little more than entertainment, sullyng the work of true writers and artists and catering to a public with an increasingly short attention span and depth of knowledge. Like many features of the “Americanized” post-war society, the popularity of the magazine in modern Germany was presumed to be due in large part to the introduction of modes of production and circulation propounded in American and British print culture. “The mark of our age is haste, hurry, nervousness,” Köppen asserts. “People have no time, indeed they flee the calm of contemplation; they reel recklessly through the streets with no intention of taking hold. The rhythm of life pounds short and hard: further—further! The consequence is in many respects superficiality... Thus is the magazine a sign—and, as has been shown, a dubious sign—of our times.”<sup>277</sup> Nowhere was the “dubious” nature of the modern, illustrated magazine more evident than in the case of the printed, soft-core erotica that came to be a defining feature of Weimar-era print culture.

## 2.2. Mass Erotica and Queer Periodicals

This marked increase in the production and circulation of cheaply produced print media like newspapers, magazines, and periodicals, not only applied to media that circulated in the normative public sphere (media like tabloids, advertisements, and daily newspapers). It also had ramifications for a burgeoning *queer* print industry, as homosexual activists and advocates capitalized upon the ease of production made possible by new print technologies in order to publish magazines explicitly intended for queer audiences. The Weimar period marked an important milestone in the history of modern German sexuality, not only because of the relatively liberal social climate of cities like Berlin where queer sexuality thrived, but also because the period saw the cultivation of burgeoning homosexual activist movements aimed at securing greater recognition, tolerance, and political visibility for queer individuals.<sup>278</sup> A key tool in the homosexual activist’s toolbox was the magazine, which organizers believed held the potential to appeal to wide swathes of the far-flung German queer population and provide a public face of a burgeoning activist movement.

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<sup>276</sup> Anton Kaes, Martin Jay, and Edward Dimendberg, eds., “Visual Culture: Illustrated Press and Photography,” in *The Weimar Republic Sourcebook*, 641-3. 641.

<sup>277</sup> Edlef Köppen, “The Magazine as a Sign of the Times (1925),” in *The Weimar Republic Sourcebook*, 644-5.

<sup>278</sup> A robust body of literature surveys the political and social climate of Weimar Germany and the ways in which it catalyzed queer activism. See, for example, Robert Beachy, *Gay Berlin: Birthplace of a Modern Identity* (New York: Vintage, 2015); Clayton J. Whisnant, *Queer Identities and Politics in Germany: A History, 1880-1945* (New York: Harrington Park Press, 2016); and Laurie Marhoefer, *Sex and the Weimar Republic: German Homosexual Emancipation and the Rise of the Nazis* (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 2015).



These magazines were not anomalous or exceptional in the print media landscape. Throughout the 1920s, around thirty separate publications were in circulation across Germany and explicitly catered to gay, lesbian, and even trans audiences. Magazines like *Die Freundschaft* (*Friendship*, a magazine founded by Karl Schultz and active between 1919 and 1933), and a host of magazines published by Friedrich Radszuweit under the aegis of his Bund für Menschenrechte, including *Die Insel: Magazin der Ehelosen und Einsamen* (*The Island: Magazine of the Unmarried and Lonely*), *Das 3. Geschlecht* (*The Third Sex*), *Die Freundin* (*The Girlfriend*), and *Blätter für Menschenrechte* (*Pages for Human Rights*) were readily available in magazine kiosks, train stations, and by subscription, allowing publishers to reach readers both in major metropolitan cities and in rural areas.<sup>279</sup> These magazines were both profitable and invaluable for the purposes of activist organizing. As Laurie Marhoefer has argued in the case of *Freundschaft*:

The magazine reached a national audience and became a vital means of organizing for the “friendship leagues” [homosexual emancipation groups] that sprang up after the war in Berlin, Düsseldorf, Frankfurt am Main, Stuttgart, Hamburg, Dresden, Kassel, and other cities. The friendship leagues were the beginning of an important transformation of homosexual emancipation: it became a *mass movement*, and a more diverse one.<sup>280</sup>

A key feature of the magazine that made it appealing to the homosexualist activist was its ability to circulate as mass media to a mass audience that transcended a single city or locale. Scholars have begun to analyze the impact of this wide circulation and appeal; working in the wake of (and also alongside) previous periodicals that appealed to queer audiences, including Adolf Brand’s important *Der Eigene* (*The Unique*) and Magnus Hirschfeld’s early medical-activist publication *Jahrbuch für sexuelle Zwischenstufen* (*Yearbook for Sexual Intermediaries*), the unique contribution of these popular magazines was their ability to reach and rally queer individuals quickly and with regular frequency.<sup>281</sup>

Much like normative magazines and periodicals, these queer publications supplemented text with image; in addition to articles on topics addressing queer life and advertisements for books, clubs, and products aimed at a queer readership, many of these magazines prominently featured homoerotic photographs that toed the line between art and pornography. Take, for instance, the cover of the March 1927 issue of *Die Insel*, which features a photograph of a nude, smiling young man, his hair tousled by the wind and his eyes squinted against the sun [fig. 4.3]. He is seated next to a flute on a rocky outcrop with a generic, Mediterranean landscape stretching out behind him. As Javier Samper Vendrell has noted, the photograph easily recalls artistic precedents with queer significance, most notably Hippolyte Flandrin’s *Study (Young*

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<sup>279</sup> Laurie Marhoefer, *Sex and the Weimar Republic: German Homosexual Emancipation and the Rise of the Nazis*, 69.

<sup>280</sup> *Ibid.*, 21.

<sup>281</sup> These periodicals were printed by a variety of organizations and cohorts of activists. The aforementioned publisher Friedrich Radszuweit published many of his publications in conjunction with the Bund für Menschenrecht, or Association for Human Rights, a large and popular organization founded in 1920 that sought to educate a growing reading public on queer issues and advocate for the repeal of the anti-sodomy law, Paragraph 175. *Der Eigene*, published by the homosexualist Adolf Brand in conjunction with his *Gemeinschaft der Eigenen*, had less political aims. It billed itself as a periodical for “masculine culture,” celebrating same-sex love as healthy and productive. Brand was vehemently opposed to the work of Magnus Hirschfeld, who advocated that homosexuality was inborn and could be understood from a biological point of view. These various factions and their relative ideologies have been explored in great depth elsewhere, and the nuances of each are beyond the scope of this chapter. Of greatest interest here is that each group, regardless of their viewpoint, harnessed the power of print media to reach a wider audience and secure support for their aims.

*Male Nude Seated by the Sea*).<sup>282</sup> Such tactics were common and married boldfaced homoeroticism with respectable imagery from the history of art. Other journals did not cloak their homoerotic photographs behind high art references; the December 1930 issue of *Die Insel*, for instance, features three young men, nude from the waist up, with arms crossed over their chests [fig. 4.4]. The young men look at the camera with confidence, aware of (and relishing in) the gaze that their bodies elicit. Beneath the photograph in a sleek, modern typeface, the magazine boldly proclaims “Männer zu verkaufen”—“men for sale.”

Drawings occasionally feature in these magazines, printed without explanation or citation. In the fourth issue of *Der Eigene* from 1926, Brand includes a full-page reproduction of a drawing featuring a young blond man, shirtless, with his hands stuffed deep into his trouser pockets [fig. 4.5]. On the whole, however, it seems that publishers of these magazines were far keener to use photographs to stimulate their readers. As Samper Vendrell has noted, the photographs were repeatedly defended as works of art with attendant ethical value.<sup>283</sup> But photographs also summoned that which drawings could not as readily provide: relatively unmediated access to the nude (or semi-nude body) of the model. If photographs in newspapers and dailies catered to a public growing accustomed to attaining “a stronger impression of world events from pictures” than from words alone, erotic photographs provided a stronger impression—a closer proximity to—the nude body than amateur drawings photographically-reproduced and printed onto the page.<sup>284</sup> We might think of these photographic magazines as seeking to appeal to the homosexual “masses,” facilitating visual erotic encounters that transcended individual experience and provided a point of commonality for the growing base of queer readers who consumed these tantalizing photographs.

The homosexual magazines were not, however, unaffected by the censorship laws and prohibitions enacted against purportedly lewd material. Though Article 118 of the 1919 Weimar Constitution ensured freedom of expression in the new German Republic, the subsequent passage of Article 122 functioned as a proviso intending to protect German youth from the moral depravity that the consumption of certain media might incite.<sup>285</sup> This proviso was revisited in 1926 and reworked into the Law for the Protection of Youth Against Trash and Smut, a law that in actuality functioned to reinstate a degree of censorship on print media that had been previously abolished by Article 118. As Samper Vendrell succinctly notes:

In general terms, this law targeted any print material considered to be aesthetically worthless and immoral which could lead to the “overexcitement of the youthful imagination and have brutalizing and demoralizing effects.” More concretely, trash and smut referred to cheap adventure and romance stories, serial novels, and sensationalist newspapers, as well as the sex reform magazines and homosexual periodicals that proliferated during the Weimar Republic.<sup>286</sup>

Magazines like the aforementioned publications thus became susceptible to surveillance that stymied their circulation and put conditions on their sale. While magazines could be freely sold

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<sup>282</sup> Javier Samper Vendrell, *The Seduction of Youth*, 84.

<sup>283</sup> *Ibid.*, 79.

<sup>284</sup> Kurt Korff, “The Illustrated Magazine,” in *The Weimar Republic Sourcebook*, 646.

<sup>285</sup> A number of scholars have taken up the topic of media censorship in the Weimar Republic. For recent examinations, see Javier Samper Vendrell, *The Seduction of Youth*; Peter Jelavich, “Der demokratische Giftschränk: Zensur und Indizierung in der Weimarer Republik und Bundesrepublik,” in *Der ‘Giftschrank’: Erotik, Sexualwissenschaft, Politik und Literatur - ‘REMOTA’: Die weggesperrten Bücher der Bayerischen Staatsbibliothek*, ed. Stephan Kellner (Munich: Bayerische Staatsbibliothek, 2002); and Kara L. Ritzheimer, “Trash”, *Censorship, and National Identity in Early Twentieth-Century Germany* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 2016).

<sup>286</sup> Javier Samper Vendrell, *The Seduction of Youth*, 91.

and vended prior to a decision by the censors, their sale and circulation were significantly stymied following an official pronouncement of moral depravity. Such measures did not eradicate homosexual magazines or prevent them from maintaining a large subscription base, but they did hamper their visibility and call into question the moral “respectability” of the organizations that issued them.<sup>287</sup>

The introduction of censorship mandates made glaringly obvious the problems that could accompany attempts to appeal to queer audiences with mass print media. The utility of mass media came, in large part, from its ability to speak to large and far-flung populations. The introduction of restrictions on this critical function, however—restrictions enacted because such illustrated magazines were perceived to be unsuitable for the general masses—also meant that the overarching goal of a mass, queer print media industry ultimately fell victim to homophobic social structures that sought to limit its visibility and influence.

### 3. Homoerotic Extra-Illustration and the Personal Copy

#### 3.1. Sketching in the Margins

Given the heightened levels of censorship and policing of material deemed “smut” or “trash” by Weimar authorities, producers and consumers of queer erotica quickly pioneered alternate avenues by which to access and engage with homoerotic images that did not rely on the circulation of mass media in the public sphere. Rather than look to printing techniques that would allow for the production of texts and images in mass quantities, many of these consumers of homoerotica turned to older methods popularized in the late eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries in order to customize texts after their publication and incorporation into their collection. The primary mode by which this customization occurred was extra-illustration, a process by which book owners and other collectors of print material personalized their books and manuscripts by manually incorporating drawings or art prints into their pages after the volume had entered their private collection. While the early-nineteenth-century custom functioned, as Lucy Peltz notes, as a means of producing “public monuments” to social status and good taste as the extra-illustrated volume was displayed and shown off by its owner, the inclusion of homoerotic extra-illustrations was intended solely for private consumption and gratification, operating as they did under the radar of public view and censorship.<sup>288</sup>

One extra-illustration strategy that queer book owners pursued was the incorporation of original drawings into the text. Exemplary in this regard is a private copy of the 1929 collection of erotic poems *Die Braune Blume* (*The Brown Flower*) published anonymously in Berlin and currently held in the collection of erotic book collector Tony Fekete. While the poems are ripe for analysis in their own right, this particular copy of the text is notable because of its rich extra-illustration; twenty-five original drawings by the Hungarian artist Margit Gaál fill blank spaces beneath the text, carefully rendered in colored pencils. Though little is known about the circumstances of the extra-illustrated volume’s production, Gaál is known to have produced several works like it. Much of the artist’s subject matter was taken directly from Berlin’s gay and lesbian communities.<sup>289</sup>

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<sup>287</sup> Samper Vendrell takes up the question of respectability politics in relation to the magazines published in conjunction with BfM, arguing that the inclusion of photographs and illustrations that appealed to the erotic sensibilities of the viewer effectively prevented the publications from presenting the “respectable” image of the homosexual male that Radszuweit hoped to provide.

<sup>288</sup> Lucy Peltz, *Facing the Text: Extra-Illustration, Print Culture, and Society in Britain 1769-1840* (San Marino: The Huntington Library, 2017), 1.

<sup>289</sup> Gaál has not received scholarly attention, and little is known about her practice. She produced a number of erotic illustrations, both heteroerotic and homoerotic in content. She was known to be a fixture in Berlin’s homosexual subculture. See, for a brief reference, Florence Tamagne, *A History of Homosexuality in Europe*, vol. 1 (New York: Algora, 2006), 199.

The drawings that grace the pages of *Die Braune Blume* feature a number of homoerotic scenes that inventively stage the events described in the accompanying poem. One of the two most notable instances of Gaál's intervention occurs on page thirty-three of the text below a poem entitled "Ballad," which reads thus:

Above stands the rotunda,  
silently looking down into the valley,  
Mr. Councilman Lutschmunde  
appears from time to time.

The happy wanderers also  
sometimes enter into the temple  
to pray before the black wall  
after indulging in beer and wine.

Like a pious hermit  
the good man bows  
to the newcomer's proud middle [erect penis],  
which cannot piss because of lust.

When the ritual is over,  
the wanderer lets out his juice;  
and, turning his gaze upward,  
thinks: this is marvelous!<sup>290</sup>

Gaál's drawing in the blank expanse of the page beneath the final line [fig. 4.6] depicts a young man in a coat and cap (similar to those worn by working-class men and male sex workers in Berlin) receiving oral sex from an older man with a mustache, his head floating above a sketchy indication of hunched shoulders and a claw-like hand. The artist has used colored pencils in peach and brown tones to vivify the lips, hair, and skin of the men, who smile with pleasure, unaware of the viewer observing their sexual liaison.

The second extra-illustration comes on page fifty-nine of the text, at the end of an explicit stanza of a long-form poem titled "The Police Hour":

This evening in the club was  
quite original and wonderful,  
as the boy slid around, horny.  
I sucked his magnificent member  
and pulled up his skirt and shirt,  
pressed one of my hands to his flat stomach,  
his hair, and then  
as he came, he began to moan and  
reared up, knocking over a glass  
with a clatter. His belly was wet then too,  
and he was twitching madly, so that  
his glory slipped out of my mouth  
and the exquisite juice foamed

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<sup>290</sup> Anonymous, *Die Braune Blume* (Berlin: unidentified publisher, undated [c. 1929]), 33. [Collection of Tony Fekete, Göttingen, Germany]. Translation mine.

bottle-high from his tormented shaft.  
Only the first drops were mine,  
and I drank my life in them.  
Hardly had the snow of love been wiped away  
when the barman came in with the coffee.<sup>291</sup>

The illustration accompanying this poem [fig. 4.7] is rendered in much greater detail than the previous sketch: here, Gaál locates the two men within the setting of the club alluded to in the poem, a fringed lampshade dispersing a cone of light over a café table and the erotic encounter in the foreground. One man reclines in a chair, an arm propped on its back, with his coat unbuttoned, his shirt raised, and his trousers taken down. A second man is positioned betwixt his legs, his mouth around his genitals. As in the first illustration, Gaál has retouched the gray graphite drawing with colored pencil: yellow light falls from the lamp to illuminate dark red lips and the fleshy pink penis. The artist has also taken greater care in adding detail to the composition, using the nib of the pencil to delicately shade the reclining man's abdomen and render the blissful curl of his fingers and lips. The drawing effectively sets the text into motion, bringing to life the titillating words above it.

The extra-illustrated volume of *Die Braune Blume* is representative of a larger vogue for incorporating original erotic drawings into a text *after* the book had been purchased by the collector. Volumes of this sort are difficult to track down and seldom appear in scholarly investigations of queer print material; only in exceptional cases in which established and well-known artists have drawn in texts and made note of it in their own writings, as is the case with the homosexual Russian artist Konstantin Somov, have art historians examined this phenomenon at all.<sup>292</sup> Despite the fact that these texts are by their very nature idiosyncratic and non-reproducible, their existence suggests the centrality of graphic expression as a supplement to the experience of reading erotic texts.

Queer extra-illustration, like the drawings added by Gaál, served the critical function of transforming generic, oftentimes anonymously written and published erotic texts, into objects that registered the subjective erotic fantasies of the draftsman and/or the collector. Indeed, the unlimited graphic potential of the wide expanses of blank paper in a text like *Die Braune Blume* provides a foil to the highly structured modes of drawing previously discussed in this dissertation, which oftentimes relied on formulaic exercises and grids to structure and guide the draftsman's imagination. The primary utility of these sorts of drawings stemmed from the fact that they existed as highly individuated and singular pictorial responses to an erotic text; that these pictures resounded with other queer viewers, with the bibliophiles who were gifted these books or subsequently purchased them for their collections, evinces a

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<sup>291</sup> Anonymous, *Die Braune Blume*, 59. [Collection of Tony Fekete, Göttingen, Germany]. Translation mine.

<sup>292</sup> Extra-illustrated (or "Grangerized") books have, generally speaking, experienced an uptick in critical interest in the last decade. As the practice was prominent amongst upper-class bibliophiles, it is perhaps unsurprising that many documented and cataloged examples of extra-illustrated books are to be found in the libraries established by wealthy collectors (including the Huntington Library, the Morgan Library, and the Folger Shakespeare Library). National libraries have begun to seek out and denote extra-illustrated volumes in their collections, as well. Unfortunately, few to none of these volumes could be classified as homoerotic; in reality, the process for locating the extra-illustrated homoerotica that I analyze here has changed little since the early twentieth century: rarely found in research libraries, these volumes require the scholar to scour private collections and archives and directly inquire with private—often queer—collectors. The case of Somov is an isolated (and rare) instance of a queer extra-illustrated volume finding its way into a national library. Pavel Golubev, the leading authority on Somov and his sexuality, identified Somov's homoerotic extra-illustrations in George Barbier's private copy of *Le livre de la Marquise* (1918), currently held in the Bibliothèque nationale de France. Research findings currently unpublished.

homoerotic pictorial valence activated *after* the book's printing and entry into public circulation.

The drawings that activated this valence were produced by a variety of illustrators and entered queer collections in myriad ways; while many queer extra-illustrated texts were undoubtedly produced by queer male draftsmen before entering the private collection of another queer male consumer, other volumes, like the copy of *Die Braune Blume* under consideration, feature drawings produced by female artists. In many ways, the sex and sexuality of the illustrator are beside the point; the sketches that Gaál produced would have undoubtedly piqued a distinctly male homoerotic fantasy in their depiction of same-sex fellatio. Like many queer objects of personal significance, the provenance of the text is now lost. It is within the realm of reason, however, that this text would have been collected by a queer male patron for whom Gaál's homoerotic sketches registered as erotically satisfying and sexually stimulating.

No matter whether the drawings were produced by the collector himself or, in the case of Gaál's text, by a secondary draftsman who then passed the book on to another owner, the drawings that graced the pages of *Die Braune Blume* and volumes like it were powerful, but relatively limited in their viewership. In their singularity, the drawings do in fact function as "monuments"—not to good taste, as Peltz suggests is the case with normative extra-illustrated texts, but rather to an erotic encounter between the book and its reader, whose pictorial response on the page transformed the volume into a token of a highly individuated and temporally specific graphic encounter. This is not to say that all forms of queer extra-illustration had similarly limited audiences; as I will examine in the following sections, queer draftsmen also pursued other methods that sought to render their original drawings reproducible and capable of being circulated to larger viewing publics.

### 3.2. Bookplates and Print Additions

Before considering the transition from extra-illustration to homoerotica expressly produced *qua* printed erotica, I will analyze a second phenomenon that came to be central to queer engagement with books in early-twentieth-century Germany: a pronounced vogue for customized bookplates. Bookplates may at first seem a niche and unlikely genre of artistic production to consider in relation queer bibliophilia and graphic expression. I argue, however, that these small prints, often privately commissioned and produced as ancillary works to the artist's primary practice, might in fact provide valuable insight into the ways in which queer producers and consumers of print circulated queer drawings and circumvented proscriptive censorship mandates.<sup>293</sup>

Before I move to the bookplates in question, it is necessary to clarify my use of the term "homoerotic," a word that suffers from a lack of concrete or agreed-upon meaning. For my purposes, homoerotic denotes any quality that appeals to the sexual sensibilities of the queer maker or the viewer.<sup>294</sup> The term "erotica" encompasses a wide and diverse range of materials

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<sup>293</sup> Much like extra-illustrated homoerotica, the task of locating and attributing homoerotic bookplates is often confounded by the very qualities that made the bookplate appealing to early-twentieth-century queer bibliophiles. The unobtrusive and innocuous nature of bookplates tends to mean that they are not included in the cataloguing efforts of most libraries; they have instead been relegated to the purview of antiquarians and viewed as a niche specialty. The scholar is thus likely to find such bookplates in one of two ways: by chance, inside a volume that once comprised part of the library of a queer collector or removed from their original context in an auction catalog or the catalogue raisonné of an artist known to produce them. The former is, of course, preferable, as it provides bibliographic context for the bookplate. The latter is more common, however, and is the method by which I came to Schneider's bookplates. Further inquiry into bookplates as a form of extra-illustration would benefit from more careful cataloguing efforts that take seriously the role played by these seemingly ephemeral prints.

<sup>294</sup> Bradford Mudge recently defined the erotic as a term that "denotes pleasures of a specifically or potentially sexual nature." My use of the word follows Mudge's definition, which distinguishes "the erotic" from other

united by their ability to incite desire in those who engage with them. Erotica may well refer to the “obscene” or explicitly pornographic, and many heteroerotic bookplates from the early twentieth century are erotic in this sense: such plates tend to depict explicit sexual acts between men and women or otherwise superimpose the nude female body onto a rendering of the book in question, creating a fantastical composition in which the object of the male bibliophile’s desire is generated by the pages of his text [fig. 4.8].<sup>295</sup>

In these heteroerotic bookplates, the eroticism is fairly straightforward. The eroticism of homoerotic bookplates, however, necessarily worked in quieter and more subtle ways. If we think of erotica as objects, images, or texts defined by their affective qualities rather than their formal qualities or subject matter, it is possible to consider the erotic affect of images that may not at first appear overtly sensual, but which gain sensuality or eroticism for queer viewers within specific contexts. To this end, the homoerotic nature of most queer ex libris does not necessarily stem from explicit depictions of the male body, but rather from the ways in which the plate actualizes a triangulation of relations between the print’s producer, the print’s owner, and the text into which the plate is pasted.

It is my position that, in this sense, homoerotic bookplates constituted a second form of queer extra-illustration. Rather than relying on individual pictorial encounters with erotic texts, the dynamic driving the production of homoerotic bookplates relied on making the draftsman’s line permanent in ink and reproducing it for limited queer audiences. Such a reading recognizes the transformative potential of the bookplate as an active agent in our understanding of the book as an object—the very act of pasting it on the cover page of the volume allows us to think differently about the circumstances of the book’s production and the affective charge that the object held for the queer bibliophile who owned it.

With this in mind, I turn to a specific case study which allows us to think through these dynamics and better understand the ways in which the bookplate could function as a homoerotic object that makes visible a constellation of relationships and meanings that might otherwise remain hidden. Specifically, I will move to examine a set of ex libris by an artist examined in chapter two: Sascha Schneider. In addition to a robust body of paintings, prints, and sculptures, Schneider’s practice also included a number of bookplates privately commissioned by German intellectuals and professors.<sup>296</sup> Some of these were commissioned for the libraries of female patrons, such as these plates for Elsbeth Peterich (wife of the sculptor Paul Peterich) and another for Grete Ostwald (an artist who studied under Schneider in Weimar between 1905 and 1907) [figs. 4.9-4.10].<sup>297</sup> Others were commissioned by queer male patrons, as I will examine below. No matter the patron, virtually all of Schneider’s bookplates depict the nude male form, an abiding hallmark of the artist’s practice.

Two bookplates, in particular, take on a distinctly homoerotic significance in light of the personal subjectivities and relationships that they surface. The first of these, produced

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historically specific terms like “the pornographic” or “the obscene.” See Bradford K. Mudge, “Eros and Literature,” in *The Cambridge Companion to Erotic Literature*, ed. Bradford K. Mudge, 1-16 (New York: Cambridge University Press, 2017), 1.

<sup>295</sup> A small number of publications have examined the genre of heteroerotic bookplates in Germany and across Europe. See, for example, Emanuele Bardazzi, *Der Akt im modernen Exlibris: il nudo negli ex libris del primo '900* (Florence: Saletta Gonnelli, 2005) and Angela and Andreas Hopf, *Akt exlibris* (Munich: Mahnert-Lueg, 1986).

<sup>296</sup> Leading scholars on Schneider, Christiane Starck and Hans-Gerd Röder, have written on the significance of the artist’s bookplates. See Christiane Starck, “Ein Mikrokosmos symbolistischer Bildwelten. Die Exlibriskunst Sascha Schneiders,” in *Exlibriskunst und Grafik. Jahrbuch der Deutschen Exlibrisgesellschaft* (2013), 9-25, and Hans-Gerd Röder, “Sascha Schneider. Der Monumentalmaler als Exlibris-Künstler,” in *Jahrbuch der deutschen Exlibris-Gesellschaft* (1983), 13-22.

<sup>297</sup> Christiane Starck, *Sascha Schneider: Ein Künstler des deutschen Symbolismus* (Marburg: Tectum, 2016), 317.

sometime between 1909 and 1912, is a bookplate printed for Robert Spies, a young painter with whom Schneider became intimately acquainted while in exile in Italy (as noted in chapter two, he fled here in the spring of 1908 after he was blackmailed by a former lover and was forced to resign from his professorship at the academy in Weimar) [fig. 4.11]. Schneider's letters leave little doubt that he found a kindred queer spirit in the young artist, with whom he shared a residence in Forte di Marmi on the Italian coast. Writing in December 1908, Schneider noted that "the naked legs of the Florentine masturbators...put [Spies] in a kind of permanent calf cramp (state of sexual excitement)," and he referred to the "libidinal goat fantasies" of his companion, who he fondly called his "spoiled bullfinch with butterfly wings."<sup>298</sup>

The bookplate Schneider produced for Spies features a recurring character in the artist's visual vocabulary, the young Greek male nude, here armed with spears topped with "architecture" and "sculpture," "painting" and "music," and "poetry" (this is likely a play on words, as *Spieß* also means "spear" in German). Much ink has been spilled examining the erotic significance of the young ephebic male nude to queer visual culture throughout the nineteenth and early twentieth centuries, and it seems likely that Schneider was here conjuring these associations in the service of commemorating his relationship with Spies: further evidence of this is the inclusion of Spies's and Schneider's initials in Cyrillic in the corners (RA-Robert Alexandrovitch, AP-Alexander Rudolfovitch), further cementing the bond between the two queer artists by paying homage to their shared Russian roots (both Spies and Schneider were born in St. Petersburg). Such a bookplate is imbued with a queer—and potentially a homoerotic, significance regardless of the book into which it was mounted, functioning as a token of a queer relationship forged in exile and itself necessarily operating covertly so as not to incite public suspicion. The highly personal significance of this bookplate makes it unique amongst Schneider's oeuvre of *ex libris*; in its evocation of the artist's *own* queer relationship, the Spies bookplate is exceptional. More common is the production of bookplates for men (most likely queer men, based on a critical examination of available evidence) that draw on iconographies that resonated with the patron's own interests and referenced queer subjects and icons that spoke to the owner's life and work.

Illustrative in this regard is the bookplate Schneider produced for the German art historian, Dr. Robert Corwegh, around 1915. Professionally, Robert Corwegh made his name as an art historian of medieval and early modern art; after completing a dissertation on Romanesque architecture in Halle, he spent the remainder of his career as an editor for arts and culture publications and lecturing on Renaissance art across Germany. Though there is no "hard evidence" of Corwegh's sexual preferences, his correspondence, professional interests, and the iconography of a number of bookplates that he commissioned indicate that Corwegh was himself queer. The scholar's art historical specialty, and the work that earned him his reputation, was the life and work of the Renaissance artist Donatello; Corwegh spent a great deal of time in Florence on the trail of the Italian master, publishing the work regarded as his primary contribution to the discipline of art history, *Donatello's Sängerkanzel im Dom zu Florenz* (*Donatello's Cantoria in the Duomo in Florence*) in 1909. Of course, then, as now, Donatello's sexuality was the subject of intense scrutiny, and the artist's depictions of the male body were widely understood as part and parcel of his queerness. Associations between Donatello and "pederastic" activity were certainly in the cultural conversation by the early twentieth century. The central flashpoint in these debates was, unsurprisingly, the artist's bronze sculpture of David from the 1440s—a work that has incited a great deal of controversy since its creation for its openly sensual depiction of an ephebic, languorous, and androgynous David that departed from earlier, more muscly precedents. It seems highly likely, though of course not a given, that Corwegh would have been aware of these debates and the labels of

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<sup>298</sup> Ibid., 152.



“homosexual” and “pederast” that adhered to the artist. For a queer art historian like Corwegh, research on the Italian master would have provided a respectable topic of scholarly inquiry that also allowed him to hold a personal stake in the work of an artist whose life and oeuvre showed a clear erotic interest in the beautiful male form.

Corwegh seemed to acutely understand the signifying power of bookplates as avatars of their owners. Aside from his professional interest in art history, he was also a collector and connoisseur of bookplates, co-editing the journal *Ex libris: Buchkunst und angewandte Graphik* between 1913 and 1917. In the very first issue he edited, Corwegh included a short essay on his own collection of bookplates in a section titled “Exlibrisschau der Schriftleitung,” which includes, front and center, a print of Schneider’s aforementioned bookplate for his erstwhile flame, Robert Spies [fig. 4.12]. Corwegh lauds this *ex libris* for beautifully embodying the relationship between the artist and the owner, and for the ways in which it depicts the owner’s personal penchants and proclivities.<sup>299</sup>

It should come as no surprise, then, that when Corwegh commissioned a bookplate of his own from Schneider, the scholar selected a theme that spoke to both his professional identity as a Donatello scholar *and*, I argue, his own queer desire [fig. 4.13]. Corwegh’s bookplate, dated sometime between 1911-15, is relatively simple and sparse in its composition; Schneider fills the plate with an outline drawing of the biblical David, sword in hand and foot atop the severed, grotesque head of the giant Goliath. David’s slingshot, which reads more like a string of beads, is draped over his arm, providing the only adornment on his otherwise nude body.

Corwegh’s commission of the David bookplate speaks most obviously, of course, to the scholar’s lifelong interest in Donatello. But the specific choice of David as the subject matter of the print evidences, perhaps, a second and more personal dynamic at play in the *ex libris*. The persona of David was also an established queer icon by the early twentieth century, and not *only* because he was the subject of a homoerotic sculpture by Donatello: the story of David’s close friendship with Jonathan came to serve as a homosexual allegory, granting him a particular significance within queer male communities.<sup>300</sup> In this sense, the David bookplate is laden with both an explicit, surface-level significance and an implicit, coded meaning; it did double duty as both a sign of professional interest *and* a sign of sexual interest. We might say, in other words, that the *ex libris* served as an erotic icon capable of masquerading to the general public as an emblem of Corwegh’s professional preoccupations.

In addition to serving as a pictorial representation of Corwegh’s own queer subjectivity, the bookplate also served as a way to visualize the scholar’s close friendship with Schneider in much the same way that Schneider used the genre to visualize his relationship with Spies. Unlike in the Spies *ex libris*, which integrates the initials of each man into the composition, Corwegh’s print invokes an inside joke shared between the two men: Corwegh wrote that Schneider often referred to him as Dr. Gladius, “gladius” here referring to the long Roman sword that the ephebic David holds in his hands.<sup>301</sup> Though scholars have floated the suggestion that a reference to Corwegh as Dr. Gladius might well refer to the scholar’s intellectual mission to slay philistinism, as David slew Goliath, it is also tempting to read the in-joke as a thinly veiled erotic allusion to the phallic sword that the young man here wields between his hands. No matter the meaning that underlies the iconography of the bookplate, however, the fact

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<sup>299</sup> Robert Corwegh, “Exlibrisschau der Schriftleitung,” *Exlibris: Buchkunst und angewandte Graphik*, v. 23 (1913), 95.

<sup>300</sup> For a short bibliography of scholarship on the queer valence of the relationship between Jonathan and David, see Robert E. Goss, “Jonathan and David,” in *Reader’s Guide to Lesbian and Gay Studies*, ed. Timothy F. Murphy, 318-19 (Chicago: Fitzroy Dearborn, 2000).

<sup>301</sup> Ulrich Pfarr, “Carl Walther: Als Zeichner und Radierer durch ein halbes Jahrhundert deutscher Geschichte,” (H.W. Fichter: Frankfurt am Main, 2020), 6.

remains that the print was a collaborative creative effort that fused the patron's subjectivity and the artist's hand by pictorializing a commonly shared interpersonal reference.

I would thus like to suggest that Corwegh's "David" bookplate, made by a queer artist and deploying an established queer iconography made popular by a historical queer sculptor, functioned as a highly charged emblem of Corwegh's own sexual subjectivity and as a monument to his relationship with the homosexual Schneider. We might also consider the bookplate *erotic* in the sense that it might have appealed directly to Corwegh's extracurricular interest in the male form—an interest, in other words, that exceeded the bounds of scholarly investment and moved firmly into the realm of libidinal investment.

Furthermore, I also argue that, pasted into a book in Corwegh's library—we cannot say with any certainty *which* book—the print might have had the ability to transform, or more specifically, to *queer*, an otherwise normative volume on Donatello, or Michelangelo, or Leonardo da Vinci. This does not, of course, change the book ontologically, but it does change it phenomenologically—the experience of reading the book at hand, I maintain, would have been minutely but fundamentally altered with Schneider's lithe, young David standing sentinel at the opening of the text. Homoerotic bookplates, in their role as extra-illustration, had the potential to change the tone of the text and realign the volume's contents along a decidedly queer axis. Just as explicitly heteroerotic prints imaged the eroticized female body springing forth from the pages of the book, so too did the inclusion of readily recognizable homoerotic iconographies and—by extension, the various queer relationships they invoked—alter the experience of the words on the page. Taking a cue from another prolific producer of homoerotic bookplates, August Stoehr, we might be tempted to say that the desirable male bodies that graced such bookplates prepared the reader's palate to taste the now queerly coded "fruit between the pages" (*inter folia fructus*) [fig. 4.14].

How did bookplates harness the utility of drawings differently than other forms of extra-illustration, such as original sketches? Unlike Gaál's drawings, Schneider's bookplates made drawings indelible, reproducible, and capable of circulation to an audience beyond one's own library.<sup>302</sup> We might conceptualize bookplates as transitional media; not singular but hardly mass produced, bookplates functioned to replicate queer drawings as what William Ivins has famously called "exactly repeatable pictorial statements," here for the purposes of both actualizing a series of queer relations on a small, intimate scale *and* producing multiple copies of a singular queer image in order to effectively queer a private library.<sup>303</sup> Like the original drawings produced after a book's entry into a queer collection, however, bookplates required the active participation of a queer individual to transform the text in question into a personal erotic object. Such extra-illustrated texts anticipated the boom in the production of books and portfolios that prominently featured printed homoerotica from the moment of their publication—a phenomenon made possible by the unevenly policed censorship mandates of the Weimar period and a mounting desire to appeal to queer community rather than merely the queer individual.

#### 4. Widening the Circle: Printed Homoerotica

##### 4.1. The Weimar Vogue for Erotica

To suggest that the "luxury" market for homoerotic texts and images was limited to the kind of do-it-yourself extra-illustrated volumes produced by queer individuals through the

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<sup>302</sup> This is not to overstate the viewership, of course; "capable of circulation" did not necessarily mean that the bookplates had a large audience. Attempts to analyze bookplates are, in fact, susceptible to many of the same hurdles and challenges one encounters when attempting to analyze original drawings. Bookplates are also difficult to locate, given that they are rarely included in systematic inventories of books in libraries or archives; oftentimes, one happens upon these plates by chance rather than design.

<sup>303</sup> See William M. Ivins, Jr., *Prints and Visual Communication* (Cambridge: MIT Press, 1969).

addition of prints and original drawings would paint a false picture of queer print culture in the Weimar Republic. On the contrary, there existed a bustling market for erotic print material that was not confined to homoerotica but which catered to a variety of tastes, a phenomenon that Camilla Smith has argued stemmed from an “unabated enthusiasm for erotica in Weimar Germany.”<sup>304</sup> This enthusiasm latched onto and nurtured the growth of various types of erotic and quasi-erotic visual material, including erotic photographs, films, illustrated *Sittengeschichten* (moral histories), and books. Although extra-illustration formed a key mode of queer interaction with the book, the Weimar period gradually made possible other forms of print erotica that sated the appetite for explicit drawings: luxury erotic books and privately printed art portfolios constituted a kind of “readymade” erotica that contrasted with the participatory form of erotica production necessitated by extra-illustration and sidestepped censors seeking to confiscate such “smutty” or “trashy” materials on the basis of their lewd content.

Various parties led the charge in meeting the demand for this homoerotic print media: private presses contributed to the growing body of erotica, and anonymous artists joined the ranks of more well-known artists in the production of drawings to be printed in books and portfolios. Producers of normative erotic material also dipped their toes into the production erotica for queer audiences; while a great deal of the media produced during the Weimar period was distinctly heteroerotic in nature (i.e., featuring nude women for the intended gaze of the male consumer), a number of illustrators capitalized upon the growing purchasing power of the queer consumer by including homoerotic scenes alongside normative ones.<sup>305</sup>

A smaller cohort of presses and artists, though by no means an insignificant number, also produced explicit homoerotica exclusively for gay and lesbian audiences. Unlike in the case of media depicting heteroerotic or mixed hetero-/homoerotic scenes, which cornered a niche market and proved both profitable for presses and useful for artists seeking to make their name, homoerotica, I argue, proliferated in different ways and functioned to serve different ends. As the following sections aim to show, queer erotica primarily functioned as a mode of initiating a kind of “erotic community,” solidifying a communal sense of homosexual identity that transcended one’s personal and individual experience with homoerotic material.

#### 4.2. Queer Print and the Luxury Press

Before examining a selection of these homoerotic books and folios, it is necessary to first say a word about the presses that printed homoerotica. The Weimar period saw sharp growth in the business of printing luxury print media that catered to a different audience than the mass magazines and periodicals that also proliferated during this period. To be sure, presses that published scientific and activist print media related to homosexuality had existed since the 1890s.<sup>306</sup> By the 1920s, however, a secondary industry that specialized in both hetero- and

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<sup>304</sup> Camilla Smith, *Jeanne Mammen: Art between Resistance and Conformity in Modern Germany, 1916-1950* (London: Bloomsbury, 2022), 35.

<sup>305</sup> A notable example of such artistic exploration of both hetero- and homo-erotic scenes by artists is the Expressionist artist Max Pechstein’s 1921 print portfolio *Zusammentreffen* (*Encounter*) which consists of ten lithographs depicting drawn sexual acts between men and women, group sex scenes, and two scenes of “encounters” between homosexual men. Unsurprisingly, virtually none of the extant literature on Pechstein mentions his erotic drawings and prints.

<sup>306</sup> Chief among these presses was the renowned Max Spohr Verlag in Leipzig, which published a great deal of work by sexologists like Magnus Hirschfeld beginning in the 1890s and which remained a stalwart mouthpiece for the homosexual rights movement throughout the Weimar period. For a comprehensive history of and list of works published by the Max Spohr Verlag, see Mark Lehmstedt, *Bücher für das “dritte Geschlecht”: der Max Spohr Verlag in Leipzig; Verlagsgeschichte und Bibliographie (1881-1941)*, (Wiesbaden: In Kommission bei Harrassowitz, 2002).

homoerotic luxury books had also sprung up across Germany, even in the face of censorship laws that sought to limit such materials.

Without a doubt, the most important publisher of homoerotica during the Weimar period was the Fritz-Gurlitt-Presse, hereafter referred to as the Gurlitt Press, which was founded in 1914 by Wolfgang Gurlitt in Berlin. Wolfgang, the son of the influential modernist art gallerist and collector Fritz Gurlitt, took over operation of the family business around 1912 (it had changed hands several times following his father's death in 1893 before Wolfgang took control). The Gurlitt Press, established in his father's name, rejuvenated an ailing family firm and capitalized upon the widespread German vogue for collecting prints. The Press's early commercial successes included the publication of expressionist art prints and illustrated books, leading to the development of Gurlitt's reputation as a patron and facilitator of modern art, literature, and culture.<sup>307</sup>

By 1919, Gurlitt had expanded his printing enterprise. Joining forces with Alfred Richard Meyer, who owned a private printing press in Berlin, Gurlitt founded a special imprint of the Gurlitt Press known as the Privatdrucke der Gurlitt-Presse (Gurlitt Private Printing Press), which specialized in the publication of erotic books and folios. The Press consciously worked against the censorship limitations enacted against "smut" and "trashy" media, producing works under the radar of the censor that deliberately and explicitly breached its mandates. As Camilla Smith has noted:

As an art dealer and publisher of erotica, [Gurlitt's] commissions were often deliberately provocative and political, drawing on French libertinage as a way of attacking the limits of post-Enlightenment Weimar, which still censored obscene material. He was unusual, publishing without using pseudonyms, which saw him face charges in court and criticism from within his own family.<sup>308</sup>

The Gurlitt Private Press was relatively short-lived for reasons that I will examine in greater detail momentarily. Even following the collapse of the private press, however, Gurlitt continued to produce erotica under his primary Gurlitt Press into the 1930s. The tactics that he used in order to circumvent censorship varied as the 1920s progressed, but his dedication to the publication of erotica (and homoerotica, in particular) evidences an abiding investment in using his press as an organ of contemporary liberal political movements that sought greater degrees of freedom in the press and in the sexual lives of German citizens.

Of course, Gurlitt was not the only producer of printed homoerotica. Numerous private presses across Germany, but particularly in Berlin, cropped up in the 1920s to produce illustrated volumes with remarkably few details about the circumstances of their publication. Take, for instance, an album of homoerotic prints simply titled *Skizzen* (*Sketches*) [fig. 4.15]. The title page of the text is frustratingly opaque. The names of both the publisher and the illustrator are absent; the publisher has only indicated that the text is a "private edition" published in Berlin in 1921 and that only sixty copies of the volume were printed (including ten copies in which the prints have been initialed by the artist's own hand—alas, the initials provide no indication of the draftsman's identity). The anonymity of both the press and the

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<sup>307</sup> For details on the history of the Gurlitt family and Wolfgang Gurlitt's professional activities, see Birgit Gropp, "Studien zur Kunsthandlung Fritz Gurlitt in Berlin, 1880-1943," unpublished dissertation, Freie Universität Berlin, 2000, and Camilla Smith, "Sex Sells! Wolfgang Gurlitt, Erotic Print Culture, and Women Artists in the Weimar Republic," in *Art History*, special issue: *Weimar's Others: Art History, Alterity and Regionalism in Inter-War Germany*, vol. 42, no. 4 (2019).

<sup>308</sup> Camilla Smith, "Sex Sells! Wolfgang Gurlitt, Erotic Print Culture, and Women Artists in the Weimar Republic," 803.

illustrator were clearly intentional, their identifying details elided in order to frustrate attempts to trace the book back to specific individuals in the event it attracted the attention of the police.

The growth of queer private presses facilitated the production of luxury books and portfolios for a different demographic than that targeted by the mass media: a smaller, educated class of queer individuals with the financial means to purchase these rare and highly sought-after objects. Importantly, these objects also operated on a different generic register than the mass media magazines that formed a crucial component of queer Weimar print culture. The “slow” market for collectible bibliophile books and folios with a limited circulation and audience provided a foil to the “fast” market for relatively cheap and easily printable queer magazines like *Die Insel* or *Der Eigene*, which had the ability to be purchased in city stalls or by mail subscription. These very qualities, I argue, made privately printed objects valuable as tools for the projection of queer identity.

### 4.3. Drawings, Reproduced: Godal, Schoff, and Behmer

In order to examine the roles that printed homoerotic books and portfolios played within queer print culture in Weimar Germany, I will examine three works published in the decade between 1921 and 1931. These works represent different moments in the queer press’s years-long experimentation with modes of evading censorship and putting print materials—and particularly reprinted queer drawings—in the hands of queer consumers. Despite these differences, all of the prints and books examined here shared common characteristics that publishers sought to hone in order to keep their publications off of censorship lists: they were printed in small print runs, they were published under pseudonyms or anonymously to protect the identities of the illustrator and/or the press, and they appealed to highly-specific markets rather than to a general audience.

The commonly used tactic of publishing anonymously or under a pseudonym, while promising in theory, did not always prevent the censor from detecting homoerotica and identifying the true identities of erotic printmakers. A case in point is a 1922 portfolio of lithographs produced by the German illustrator and cartoonist Erich Godal under the pseudonym Guy de Laurence entitled *Das Lusthaus der Knaben* (*The Boys’ Pleasure House*). The series consists of ten hand-colored prints depicting various scenes inspired by a homosexual brothel, likely in Godal’s home city of Berlin: the title page depicts two of the titular boys, young (perhaps even underage), thin, and nude save for a plum-colored hat and a teal scarf that covers exceptionally little skin [fig. 4.16]. The boys pose suggestively on and around a striped sofa while three older men, clients, hover around them in tuxedos and tight, striped breeches. Two of the men carry walking sticks, thinly veiled phallic stand-ins, and they each wear glasses or a monocle in order to better peer down at the young men whose company they have presumably purchased for the evening.

The older clients reappear elsewhere in the portfolio, always clothed and rarely directly involved in the sexual acts that Godal depicts; most of the scenes presented in these drawings depict sexual acts between the “boys” themselves. Godal’s compositions are remarkable and striking: in one print, three young men seem to soar through the air in a ribbon of lithe nude bodies that slices horizontally across the page, each body connected to the other by hands greedily reaching towards genitals [fig. 4.17]. In another, the boys sprawl on beds and sofas engaged in a ménage-à-trois [fig.4.18]. The series functions as an invaluable example of homoerotica that did not hide behind classical or art historical references, but rather took its inspiration from the robust queer sex work scene to be found on the streets in post-World War I Germany.

Godal’s drawings-*cum*-lithographs are also remarkable because they serve as one example of a homoerotic publication that was, in fact, banned by media censors. In 1926, the Berlin police presidium published a highly confidential and comprehensive list of texts that

had been deemed “smut” or “trash” based on the aforementioned censorship code of the Weimar Constitution titled *Verzeichnis der auf Grund des §184 des Reichsstrafgesetzbuchs eingezogenen und unbrauchbar zu machenden sowie der als unzüchtig verdächtigen Schriften* (*List of texts confiscated and to be rendered unusable and suspected of being indecent on the basis of §184 of the Reich’s Criminal Codebook*).<sup>309</sup> This text, colloquially referred to as the Polunbi-Katalog (Deutsche Zentralpolizeistelle zur Bekämpfung unzüchtiger Bilder, Schriften und Inserate, or German Central Police Bureau for Combating Obscene Images, Texts, and Advertisements), served to register all of the texts prohibited for sale and circulation on the basis of their objectionable content and provided a code system meant to articulate the grounds on which the text had been condemned.<sup>310</sup> Interestingly, the majority of erotic texts included in the Polunbi Catalog were heteroerotic in content. Though a number of texts by sexologists like Hirschfeld, as well as texts published by presses such as the Max Spohr Verlag, were included on the list, the majority of the erotic texts of the type under consideration here—luxury, bibliophile volumes, portfolios, and albums—featured normative erotic content.

An exception to this trend was *Das Lusthaus der Knaben*. It is clear that the precautionary measures that Godal took to protect himself and his work from police scrutiny failed; the portfolio is correctly attributed to Godal rather than the pseudonymic persona under which the portfolio was published, Guy de Laurence.<sup>311</sup> The code that accompanies his entry in the list, an upside down triangle, indicates that the work had been “rendered unfit for use according to section 41” of the Reich’s Criminal Codebook, which stipulates that, “if the content of a writing, illustration or depiction is punishable, then the judgment must be pronounced that all copies, as well as the plates and molds intended for their production, are to be rendered unusable.”<sup>312</sup> Paragraph 41 came with a slight caveat, however, noting that “this provision applies only to copies in the possession of the author, printer, editor, publisher or bookseller and to those that are displayed or offered to the public.”<sup>313</sup> This meant, in other words, that the text was not illegal to own, but that its production and circulation were prohibited by law. Another of Godal’s print collections, an illustrated 1920 volume titled *Begebenheiten des Enkolp* (*The Story of Enkolp*) from Petronius’s *Satyricon*, which also featured erotic illustrations, also appears on the list.<sup>314</sup>

The wide-reaching arm of the censor that prohibited the sale and circulation of books and portfolios like *Das Lusthaus der Knaben* thus became a serious concern for publishers and producers of printed homoerotica, requiring well-established presses to reconsider their tactics. A case in point is a 1923 volume of erotic poetry, adapted for German audiences by Gurlitt’s private press partner Alfred Richard Meyer, titled *Das Buch Marathus: Elegien der*

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<sup>309</sup> See Deutschen Zentralpolizeistelle zur Bekämpfung unzüchtiger Bilder, Schriften und Inserate bei dem Preussischen Polizeipräsidium in Berlin, *Nachtrag Nr. 1 zum Verzeichnis der auf Grund des [Paragraphen] 184 des Reichsstrafgesetzbuchs eingezogenen und unbrauchbar zu machenden sowie der als unzüchtig verdächtigen Schriften*, 2. Auflage (Berlin: gedruckt in der Reichsdruckerei, 1929).

<sup>310</sup> The Polunbi Catalog was clearly linked to the kind of book censorship enacted by the Roman Catholic Church in the form of the Index Librorum Prohibitorum, which began in the early sixteenth century and continued well into the twentieth century. This surveillance and regulation of book circulation also led to the establishment of restricted sections of forbidden print materials (including, especially, erotica) in national libraries, which famously includes the British Library’s Private Case and a number of *Giftschränke* (“poison cabinets”) in the Bavarian State Library and elsewhere in Germany.

<sup>311</sup> *Ibid.*, 131.

<sup>312</sup> See Adolf Schönke, ed., *Strafgesetzbuch für das deutsche Reich* (Munich and Berlin: C.H. Beck’sche Verlagsbuchhandlung, 1944), 82.

<sup>313</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>314</sup> Deutschen Zentralpolizeistelle zur Bekämpfung unzüchtiger Bilder, Schriften und Inserate bei dem Preussischen Polizeipräsidium in Berlin, *Nachtrag Nr. 1 zum Verzeichnis der auf Grund des [Paragraphen] 184 des Reichsstrafgesetzbuchs eingezogenen und unbrauchbar zu machenden sowie der als unzüchtig verdächtigen Schriften*, 19.

*Knabenliebe*. The book was published in a small print run of 220 copies and featured five homoerotic etchings by the artist Otto Schoff, an illustrator who is best remembered today for producing a variety of erotic illustrations for luxury books. The five etchings are relatively tame and chaste, given the explicitness of many of Schoff's other homoerotic prints. In one classicized composition, two young men (one robed and one nude) embrace on a bench with heads pressed close [fig. 4.19]. In a second, one of the boys poses as a model for a drawing by the second, who lazes nude on the ground, head propped on his elbow with pencil to paper [fig. 4.20]. These prints were in the first fifty copies of the text, which were hand colored by Schoff before distribution.

Despite the clear homoerotic charge of the prints, the works were nevertheless published under the imprint of the Fritz Gurlitt Press—a risky gamble that would undoubtedly place the erotic production of the press in jeopardy should the text fall into the hands of the police. Schoff produced several portfolios, many of them homoerotic in nature, under the banner of the Gurlitt Press; his 1921 *Der Verfehlmte Eros (Outlawed Love)*, a series of twenty-five lithographs illustrating poetry by the Romantic poet and known homosexual August von Platen (previously discussed in chapter one), was similarly published by Gurlitt in an even smaller run of only one hundred copies. Remarkably, neither this volume nor *Elegien der Knabenliebe* were registered in the Polunbi Catalog of censored print media. This is particularly puzzling given that many erotic works printed by the Gurlitt press, including, most notably, the series *Der Venuswagen (The Chariot of Venus)*, which included heteroerotic illustrations by Schoff and others, did make the police's list shortly after its publication (Gurlitt was taken to court for publishing the series, in fact). It seems likely that Schoff's homoerotic volumes evaded the censors due to their extremely small print run and their standalone nature; *Der Venuswagen*, by contrast, was printed as a seven-part series in a (still relatively small) run of 700 copies and featured illustrations by well-known artists like Lovis Corinth.

Following the scandal in which the police prohibited the printing and sale of *Der Venuswagen*, the Gurlitt Press took new precautions that sought to protect the press (if not the artist) should the volumes or portfolios fall into the wrong hands. Schoff, for his part, seemed undaunted and approached Gurlitt with a second homoerotic series—an expansion and revision of the *Elegien*, simply titled *Knabenliebe (Boy Love)*. This series consisted of ten etchings and depicted young men *in flagrante* in bedrooms, in nature, and even on a boat. One etching, which depicts four young men in various stages of undress and sexual excitement whilst engaged in group sex, demonstrates the stark contrasts between the 1923 book and the 1925 portfolio [fig. 4.21]. No longer does Schoff intimate homosexual love by way of tender caresses and classical imagery; modern queer eroticism is here presented explicitly and unabashedly. Though we must assume that this portfolio was also printed in a very small run, information about its production is scant. This lacuna was intentional on the part of the Gurlitt Press, which chose to safeguard itself by eliding all details of the portfolio's publication aside from Schoff's name: the Gurlitt colophon, the city of publication, and even the year of publication have been deliberately removed from the first folio.<sup>315</sup>

The homosexual illustrator Marcus Behmer's 1931 portfolio *Divertimenti (Pleasures)* took the penchant for rarity and anonymity to new extremes. The portfolio consists of six prints featuring exquisitely drafted outline drawings of homoerotic scenes inspired by antiquity; one print, which depicts a bizarre sexual coupling between young men perched upon a ladder, is one representative example [fig. 4.22]. Precious little is known about the portfolio or the circumstances of its production. We do know, however, that Behmer's portfolio was printed in a run of only *twelve* copies—an excessively small run that ensured that the possibility of

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<sup>315</sup> For information about this series, see Andreas Sternweiler, "Das Lusthaus der Knaben – Homosexualität und Kunst," in *Goodbye to Berlin? 100 Jahre Schwulenbewegung*, ed. Manfred Baumgardt (Berlin: Rosa Winkel Verlag, 1997).

purchasing and owning the works was confined to an elite few.<sup>316</sup> The increasingly small print runs of these luxury, difficult to find books and portfolios presents a quandary when considering how (and within what circles) these print materials might have circulated. Certainly, the audience would have been incredibly limited and the books difficult to locate, even for members of the community for which they were intended.

I suggest, however, that the queer print industry of bibliophile books and portfolios in fact placed critical pressure on contemporary normative conceptions of the book as visible, slow to change, and easy to track. Gillian Russell has argued that, after 1800, books came to occupy a position diametrically opposed to the slipperier print category of “ephemera”: “ephemera, in relation to print, increasingly replaced the alternative term ‘fugitive’...a fugitive or flying piece of writing was one that could not be easily fixed or immobilized, in contrast to the increasingly more stable technology of leaves bound to form the spine of the codex-form book.”<sup>317</sup> Homoerotica, in the Weimar period, reversed the terms of this conceptual system: using the “stable” medium of the book, producers of queer erotica produced print media that did manage to cruise beneath the radar and evade immobilization. Unlike the previously discussed mass-produced magazines, which sought to harness the qualities typically associated with such ephemeral media to reach many people quickly and efficiently, the producers of luxury books and portfolios experimented with alterations to more stable media that reached a more limited audience, but which nevertheless managed to evade censorship and trade hands between queer collectors and bibliophiles.

It bears explicit notation that these books and portfolios did the important job of multiplying homoerotic drawings, making them indelible in print, and putting them in the hands of new visual consumers who would have otherwise never encountered them. Print made communication and communion possible on a previously unthinkable scale; homoerotic drawings that might have once languished in an individual’s sketchbook or have otherwise only existed as a sketch on a urinal wall were suddenly replicated twelve, one hundred, two hundred times and made available for purchase, if one had the means and knew where to look. This is not to say that homoerotica did not exist in book form prior to the Weimar period, but rather that *visual* homoerotica—and particularly homoerotic *drawings*—were supported and bolstered by the development of niche bibliophile markets, shifts in attitudes towards same-sex desire, and an awareness that printmaking could make queer drawings available to wider consumer bases via the processes of lithography and engraving. That these objects, as well as the previously analyzed extra-illustrated volumes, reached a limited audience does not mean that they had a negligible impact on the development of queer identity in the Weimar period. On the contrary, I argue that these slow-moving, stable objects with small audiences and limited print runs formed a critical site for identity communication and the formation of a distinctly queer bibliophile subculture. Conceding that the audience for these objects greatly depended upon income and social status, their circulation nevertheless enlarged the circle of viewers for the queer mark, making it capable of travel to viewers thirsting for access to such drawn pictures.

## 5. Ars Erotica to Ars Medica: Sexology and the Captured Queer Mark

### 5.1. Sexology and Queer Drawing

As a final analysis of the relationship between queer drawings and print culture, I will examine another process of “making drawings permanent” that occurred alongside the aforementioned initiatives undertaken by queer illustrators and presses: the project of reproducing such drawings in medical texts by the sexologist Magnus Hirschfeld, which he

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<sup>316</sup> Bernd-Ulrich Hergemöller, ed., *Mann für Mann: biographisches Lexikon zur Geschichte von Freundschaft und mann-männlicher Sexualität im deutschen Sprachraum* (Münster: LIT Verlag, 2010), 141.

<sup>317</sup> Gillian Russell, “Ephemerophilia: A Queer History,” 180.



undertook in earnest at the end of the 1920s. As I aim to show, Hirschfeld's approach to homosexual drawings demonstrates a degree of familiarity with the nineteenth-century paradigm that I have sought to articulate over the course of this dissertation—a paradigm based on the notion that queer graphic expression most often indexed a perverse imagination and thus constituted a pathological creative practice. For Hirschfeld, whose career-long mission aimed to scientifically prove that homosexual desire was not pathological, but rather one possible, natural variation of the sexual instinct, drawings came to constitute a valuable form of visual evidence. In reproducing erotic drawings like those discussed in the previous pages, Hirschfeld saw a unique opportunity to bolster and publicize his case that homosexual fantasy and its pictorial products were as natural and medically explicable as their heterosexual counterparts.

In order to examine the significance of rendering these drawings reproducible and permanent in print, however, it is useful to understand the ways in which early-twentieth-century sexual scientists conceived of drawings in relation to sexuality generally and homosexuality in particular. To this point in this dissertation, my engagement with the discipline of sexual science, or sexology, has been minimal. This lack of direct engagement has been, in part, intentional; studies of queer sexuality in the nineteenth and early twentieth centuries tend to privilege sexology as the primary site of homosexual identity formation in Germany during this period, thereby typically evading examinations of other scientific discourses that contributed to a broader cultural understanding of modern homosexuality. As I have shown in the preceding chapters, the project of defining homosexual men and their creativity was a collaborative one that drew in naturalists, anatomists, anthropologists, ethnographers, and aesthetic theorists long before *Sexualwissenschaft* emerged as a discrete field of inquiry.

But sexologists did, of course, play a key role in this project and were similarly concerned with, among myriad other issues, the inseparability of sexuality and creative production—and especially graphic expression. Though an in-depth excursus on the history of sexual science in Germany is beyond the scope of this chapter, it is important to note that the move towards a medico-scientific understanding of human sexuality was initiated in earnest in the 1880s and 1890s by physicians and psychiatrists working across the continent. In Germany, Richard von Krafft-Ebing's 1886 *Psychopathia sexualis* came to function as “a kind of gospel” for aspiring sexual scientists; in Italy, Paolo Mantegazza's groundbreaking work on sexuality paved the way for Pasquale Penta, who worked to found Europe's first sexological journal, *Archivio delle psicopatie sessuali* (*Archives of Sexual Psychopathies*) in 1896; in England, Havelock Ellis and John Addington Symonds co-authored the groundbreaking medico-legal defense of same-sex love, *Sexual Inversion*, published in German in 1896 and translated into English in 1897.<sup>318</sup> By the turn of the twentieth century, a relatively well-connected network of sexual scientists existed throughout Europe, with significant clusters of researchers in London, Berlin, Paris, Copenhagen, Vienna, Prague, Brno, Budapest, St. Petersburg, and beyond.

In Germany, a second wave of sexologists would build upon the work of their predecessors by reconsidering the aims of sexual science in a way that expanded its remit beyond purely medical treatments of sexuality. These sexologists, which included Iwan Bloch, Magnus Hirschfeld, Albert Eulenburg, and Paul Näcke, among others, understood that the study of sexuality must necessarily be interdisciplinary to be useful. Writing in 1906, Bloch argued that “sexual science must be treated in its proper subordination as a part of the general ‘science of mankind,’ which is constituted by a union of all other sciences—of general biology,

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<sup>318</sup> See the chapter “Pasquale Penta, ‘First Class Sexologist’” in Chiara Beccalossi, *Female Sexual Inversion: Same-Sex Desires in Italian and British Sexology, c. 1870-1920* (London: Palgrave Macmillan, 2011) and Robert Beachy, “The German Invention of Homosexuality” *Journal of Modern History* vol. 82, no. 4 (2010): 817.

anthropology and ethnology, philosophy and psychology, the history of literature, and the entire history of civilization.”<sup>319</sup> Sexology, as it came to be constituted in the early years of the twentieth century, did not limit itself to psychological or physiological explanations for homosexuality; indeed, artistic and cultural production occupied central positions in analyses by a great many thinkers whose inquiries took up questions of sexual subjectivity.

The study of drawing and graphic expression by sexual scientists, it must be noted, never occupied an outsized or dominant role in the grand scheme of the sexological project. Within discussions of how sexuality presented itself creatively, however, sexual scientists—particularly those working in Germany or writing for German journals—had a good deal to say about the practice of drawing. Descriptions of amateur erotic drawing may be found in the earliest German-language sexological literature (in Krafft-Ebing’s *Psychopathia sexualis*, for instance), though the notion of erotic graphic expression as a phenomenon worthy of nomination and close sexological examination began in earnest only after the turn of the century.<sup>320</sup>

One of German sexology’s leading voices, Iwan Bloch, was the first to give the relationship between sexual perversion and the pen a name in print. In his 1902 *Beiträge zur Aetiologie der Psychopathia sexualis* (*Contributions to the Etiology of Psychopathia sexualis*), Bloch writes thus: “Following on from this [verbal exhibitionism] is a sexual aberration that is currently extremely widespread, which I would like to call “erotographomania,” a kind of “writing sadism” or “writing exhibitionism.”<sup>321</sup> Erotographomania, for Bloch, primarily or typically takes the form of handwriting letters or diaries as a form of erotic stimulation or “mental masturbation” (*geistige Onanie*).<sup>322</sup> Though not the only culprits to exhibit this propensity, Bloch noted that homosexuals were particularly prone to erotographomania. He took up the issue again in his 1906 text *Das Sexualleben unserer Zeit in seinen Beziehungen zur modernen Kultur* (*The Sexual Life of Our Time in its Relations to Modern Culture*), noting that this particular sexual mania had been the driving factor behind a series of obscene letter exchanges between two homosexuals in East Prussia and had played a key role in their prosecution.<sup>323</sup>

Bloch’s identification of an erotic drive to express oneself graphically soon spread throughout sexological and criminological circles in Germany, as evidenced by a number of articles and studies printed in journals that served as mouthpieces for scholars of sex. Scholars writing in Bloch’s wake used several related terms to elaborate upon and expand his original theorization. Writing in 1909, the Berlin-based sexologist Georg Merzbach described the same tendency as a form of exhibitionism he termed “*Pornographomanie*,” or pornographomania.<sup>324</sup> In 1910, the physician Oswald Berkhan published an essay in the influential *Monatsschrift für Kriminologie und Strafrechtsreform* [*Monthly Journal for Criminology and Penal Reform*] that expanded the remit of erotographomania to include drawings specifically, relating a case study of a man who displayed what he termed *schriftbildlicher Exhibitionismus* (writing-picture

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<sup>319</sup> Cited in Kate Fisher and Jana Funke, “Let Us Leave the Hospital; Let Us Go on a Journey around the World”: British and German Sexual Science and the Global Search for Sexual Variation,” 51.

<sup>320</sup> See cases 44 and 80 in Krafft-Ebing’s *Psychopathia sexualis*, in which patients demonstrate the propensity for drawing erotic or obscene pictures to satisfy their sexual urges. Krafft-Ebing associates this urge with fetishism and exhibitionism. See Richard von Krafft-Ebing, *Psychopathia Sexualis*, trans. Charles Gilbert Chaddock (Philadelphia: The F.A. Davis Company, 1894), 92, 166, 384.

<sup>321</sup> Iwan Bloch, *Beiträge zur Aetiologie der Psychopathia sexualis*, vol. 1 (Dresden: H.R. Dorn, 1902), 107.

<sup>322</sup> *Ibid.*, 108.

<sup>323</sup> Iwan Bloch, *Das Sexualleben unserer Zeit in seinen Beziehungen zur modernen Kultur* (Berlin: Louis Marcus Verlagsbuchhandlung, 1908), 470.

<sup>324</sup> Georg Merzbach, *Die krankhaften Erscheinungen des Geschlechtssinnes* (Wien & Leipzig: Alfred Hölder, 1909), 128.

exhibitionism).<sup>325</sup> The case that Berkhan relates is that of a woman from the city of Braunschweig who awoke around eleven o'clock at night to an intruder who had entered the room through an open window, writing at her desk by lamplight. The document left by the, reproduced for the reader in print, features a sexual message and a poorly drawn set of male and female genitals, "similar to those sometimes found on the walls of public toilets" discussed in the previous chapter.<sup>326</sup> Writing in the German journal of sexual customs *Anthropophyteia* (see chapter 3) in 1910, the French psychologist Georges Henri Luquet highlighted the "childish," "primitive," and "prehistoric" quality to be found in works produced by those with an erotic graphic impulse in two separate essays, offering his reader reproductions of 107 such drawings in order to illustrate his argument.<sup>327</sup>

German theorizations of the erotic drive to draw were prominent enough to make their way across the Atlantic to the United States, where scientists and physicians were working to develop an American sexological movement. A report of a meeting of the German Medical Society in Chicago on 8 May 1913 notes that one "Mr. J. Grinker" spoke at length on, among other topics, the concept of erotographomania.<sup>328</sup> The Chicago-based urologist G. Frank Lydston would also expand upon the topic of erotographomania, suggesting it was inseparable from the drive to produce pornography. Lydston argued that "obscene writing and drawing, as seen on fences and the walls of public buildings and conveniences...is a manifestation of perverted psycho-sexuality" and that "the adult pornographer is a degenerate of low type."<sup>329</sup>

As these texts make clear, Bloch's 1902 theorization of *Erotographomanie* put a name to a propensity for sexuality (and homosexuality, in particular) to be expressed graphically, but it did not initiate a reconsideration of the general health of the erotographic impulse or its resulting pictorial products. On the whole, sexological thinkers continued to consider the erotic propensity to draw an aberration of the sexual instinct and an indicator of the draftsman's wayward sexual sensibilities, stunted creative capacities, and, occasionally, criminality. Writing in 1910, the legal reformer and sexologist Erich Wulffen wrote that "often...[the] artistic activity of the pornographer is only a psychic equivalent to the repressed, lewd plot. Here again, the close connection between productive activity and crime [...] becomes apparent."<sup>330</sup> Sexologists working in the decade that followed Bloch's naming of the relationship between sexuality and graphic expression were no doubt familiar with both each other's arguments on the topic and the earlier corpus of literature on drawing and homosexuality published in criminological and anthropological journals in the years after the turn of the twentieth century.

A notable exception to this intellectual trend was the world-renowned physician, activist, and founder of the Institute for Sexual Science in Berlin, Magnus Hirschfeld, who first referenced Bloch's theorization in print in his 1912 book *Naturgesetz der Liebe (Natural Law of Love)*.<sup>331</sup> Unlike most of his colleagues, however—Bloch included—Hirschfeld continued

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<sup>325</sup> This case cited in Diederik Janssen, "From corruption to perversion: sexually explicit imagery, forensic medicine, and sexual psychopathology (1862–1927)," *Porn Studies*, vol. 8, no.4 (2021), 464-84.

<sup>326</sup> Oswald Berkhan, "Schriftbildlicher Exhibitionismus," *Monatsschrift für Kriminologie und Strafrechtsreform* vol. 7 no. 5/6 (1910/11): 377–378. 378.

<sup>327</sup> See G.H. Luquet, "Sur la survivance des caractères du dessin enfantin dans des graffiti à indications sexuelles" and "Sur un cas d'homonymie graphique: Sexe et visage humain," in *Anthropophyteia*, ed. Friedrich S. Krauss, Bd. 7 (1910): 196-206.

<sup>328</sup> „Deutsche Medizinische Gesellschaft in Chicago. (Offizielles Protokoll.) Sitzung vom 8. Mai 1913," *Münchener Medizinische Wochenschrift* vol. 60, no. 34 (26 August 1913): 1916.

<sup>329</sup> G. Frank Lydston, *Impotence and Sterility with Aberrations of the Sexual Function and Sex-Gland Implantation* (Chicago: The Riverton Press, 1917), 48-9.

<sup>330</sup> Cited in Diederik Janssen, "From corruption to perversion: sexually explicit imagery, forensic medicine, and sexual psychopathology (1862–1927)," 470.

<sup>331</sup> Magnus Hirschfeld, *Naturgesetz der Liebe: Eine gemeinverständliche Untersuchung über den Liebes-Eindruck, Liebes-Drang und Liebes-Ausdruck* (Berlin: Verlag Alfred Pulvermacher, 1912), 245.

to engage with the term well into the 1920s. In the third volume of his 1920 textbook *Sexualpathologie: Ein Lehrbuch für Ärzte und Studierende* (*Sexual Pathology: A Textbook for Doctors and Students*), Hirschfeld provides a sustained discussion of erotographomania as he has encountered it in his patients. Approaching erotographomania as an anomaly rather than an aberration, Hirschfeld notes the frequency with which individuals (homosexuals, in particular) were “brought down” by their graphic production, which judges were wont to view as admissions of participation in lewd acts.<sup>332</sup> Though Hirschfeld remarks on the widespread practice of producing erotic drawing in public toilets, he notes that many queer men pursued their graphic practice in the privacy of their own homes. He relates an anecdote about a scholar who suffered a stroke while in the middle of an erotic drawing session; those who found the man slumped over his paper and colored pencils searched his desk drawer to find “thousands of self-made illustrations” depicting erotic scenes. In lieu of physical sexual acts with another party, the man chose to masturbate while drawing to satisfy his sexual appetite.<sup>333</sup>

Hirschfeld understood that “ignorami” (*Unwissende*) most often viewed drawings as “first-rate evidence” with which to denigrate and persecute their queer makers.<sup>334</sup> Indeed, it is no great leap of the imagination that he had the arguments of several of his aforementioned colleagues (Berkhan, Luquet, and Wulffen, among them) in mind in making such an observation, as his perspective on queer drawings departed in significant ways from the perspectives held by many of those in German sexological circles. Returning to the widespread belief that drawings might be used as hard evidence of sexual pathology once more in his 1926 textbook *Geschlechtskunde* (*Sexual Customs*), Hirschfeld provides a counterargument, suggesting that drawings were simply one outlet—a healthy, productive outlet—by which erotographomaniacs could work through their sexual desires pictorially and therefore nourish their fantasies.<sup>335</sup> For Hirschfeld, the practice of persecuting (and, in many cases, prosecuting) homosexuals merely on the basis of their penchant for producing “lewd” drawings was not only unfounded but also detrimental to the mental lives of the men whose sexual satisfaction was derived from it.

Hirschfeld’s conception of erotographomania as it developed over the course of the 1910s and 1920s offered a new perspective on homosexual drawing practices as fundamentally non-pathological, which I will track in the following sections. His awareness that homosexual men frequently exhibited symptoms of erotographomania and often pictorially expressed their sexual desires with their pencils is clear not only from his medical texts, but also from the collection of such drawings that he amassed at the Institute for Sexual Science. Beyond his own archive of queer drawings, several of which I examine below, Hirschfeld was also undoubtedly aware of the kinds of homoerotic drawings to be found in luxury bibliophile volumes and portfolios (as previously noted, the Institute’s library held the world’s largest collection of such “pornographic” volumes prior to 1933). As I argue, Hirschfeld’s engagement with drawings by queer “erotographomaniacs” suggested a familiarity with the pervasive nineteenth-century discourses that denigrated the queer mark as pathological and degenerate—a conceptual alignment that the physician-activist sought to upend by harnessing the power of print himself.

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<sup>332</sup> Magnus Hirschfeld, *Sexualpathologie: Ein Lehrbuch für Ärzte und Studierende* (Bonn: A. Marcus & E. Webers Verlag, 1920), 114.

<sup>333</sup> *Ibid.*, 115.

<sup>334</sup> Magnus Hirschfeld, *Sexualpathologie*, 114.

<sup>335</sup> Magnus Hirschfeld, *Geschlechtskunde: auf Grund dreissigjähriger Forschung und Erfahrung bearbeitet*, vol. 1 (Stuttgart: Julius Püttmann Verlagsbuchhandlung, 1926), 13. Italics mine.

## 5.2. Reconsidering a Paradigm: Hirschfeld's Archive and Print Activism

From its foundation in 1919, Hirschfeld envisioned his Institute for Sexual Science as a multivalent organization that would serve multiple roles for queer individuals in Germany and across Europe. First and foremost a clinic for the medical practices of Hirschfeld and a host of his colleagues, the Institute also housed a working archive, a library, and a museum. Michael Thomas Taylor has succinctly noted that, in its capacity “as an archive, the Institute collected, organized, and preserved a wealth of information and documentation about sexual practices and sexual identities....The material housed in the Institute also included a collection of artifacts and a library, as well as an enormous stock of personal confessions about sexual behaviors and histories...”<sup>336</sup> Tours and lectures on topics related to human sexuality were frequently given to public audiences as part of Hirschfeld's activist mission to share the research occurring under the roof of the Institute's gargantuan home in the Tiergarten.

In addition to the aforementioned library of sexological and erotic books, Hirschfeld's archive included a substantial art collection of works produced by well-known queer artists, amateur artists, and patients who sought out the assistance of Hirschfeld and his colleagues.<sup>337</sup> For Hirschfeld, queer art served as useful evidence in his battle to prove that the creative homosexual was a productive and healthy individual. Writing in 1914, he observed that “it is *natural* that artistically inclined homosexuals are not satisfied with photographs and illustrations, but rather are bent on painting or molding their ideal in their own creations.”<sup>338</sup> Drawing was a central practice that homosexual men used to provide an outlet for these fantasies; here and elsewhere, Hirschfeld remarks upon the adolescent tendency frequently found in homosexuals to draw their sexual desires—a desire which often persisted into adulthood and became manifest in many of the various graphic activities discussed in the pages of this dissertation. Drawing, he argued, constituted a critical mode of coming to conclusions about one's mental life and sexual character.<sup>339</sup> Far from being stunted expressions of a pathological subjectivity, drawing was a valuable, healthy practice by which homosexual men could work through their erotic fantasies and impressions, from childhood through to sexual maturity.

A key component of his visual archive, therefore, was drawings. Hirschfeld's Institute in Berlin mirrored—or perhaps even exceeded—the Institute for Sexual Research in Vienna, which described itself as home to a “collection of graphic representations, that is, original graphic works, not yet reproduced, of erotic content of artistic significance and expressive drawings...”<sup>340</sup> In actual fact, a significant portion of the drawings reproduced in texts published by the Viennese Institute cite Hirschfeld's archive as the picture's source. In addition to drawings by well-known artists, a great many of the drawings in the Institute's collection were produced specifically for Hirschfeld in conjunction with his patient's treatment or otherwise acquired from the patient before or following treatment.

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<sup>336</sup> Michael Thomas Taylor, “Magnus Hirschfeld's Institute for Sexual Science as Archive, Museum, and Exhibition,” in *Not Straight from Germany: Sexual Publics and Sexual Citizenship since Magnus Hirschfeld*, eds. Rainer Herr, Annette Timm, and Michael Thomas Taylor (Ann Arbor: University of Michigan Press, 2017), 23.

<sup>337</sup> Among the Institute's art holdings were homoerotic photographs by Wilhelm von Gloeden, likely, works by Sascha Schneider, though as Christiane Starck notes, the circumstances of when and under what circumstances works by Schneider entered the Institute's holdings are murky. See Christiane Starck, *Sascha Schneider: ein Künstler des deutschen Symbolismus* (Marburg: Tectum Verlag, 2016), 325.

<sup>338</sup> Magnus Hirschfeld, *The Homosexuality of Men and Women*, ed. Vern L. Bullough (Amherst: Prometheus, 2000), 105. Italics mine.

<sup>339</sup> Magnus Hirschfeld, *Geschlechtskunde: auf Grund dreissigjähriger Forschung und Erfahrung bearbeitet*, 183-4.

<sup>340</sup> Oskar F. Scheuer, „Sexualforschungs-Institute,“ in *Bilder-Lexikon der Erotik, Ergänzungs-Band 4* (Vienna and Leipzig: Verlag für Kulturforschung, 1931), 725–728.

We are able to support the notion that Hirschfeld was sensitive to the graphic production of his patients thanks to their survival as reproductions in a number of texts published by the physician in the 1920s and early 1930s. Indeed, Hirschfeld seemed to be acutely aware of the ways in which print media could function to bring his message to larger reading and viewing publics. Kevin S. Amidon has observed that,

...between Hirschfeld's first publications combining description of and advocacy about homosexuality in the 1890s and the publication of his multivolume medical textbooks in the 1920s and 1930s, printing technology advanced rapidly, and made possible the inclusion of large numbers of high-resolution glossy plates in reasonably priced publications.<sup>341</sup>

This shift in Hirschfeld's publishing strategy, a shift characterized by a movement away from pure text and towards the inclusion of reproduced visual material, indicates a more general shift in Hirschfeld's clinical strategy: moving away from the case history, the physician had, towards the end of 1920s, come to heavily rely on *visual evidence*. A preface to the *Geschlechtskunde's Bilderteil* (image volume), titled "Bilder sollen bilden" ("images should educate") evidences Hirschfeld's emerging penchant for the visual, even while cautioning against overreliance on decontextualized visual evidence.

Several of the plates that Hirschfeld reproduced in his scientific publications were, in fact, drawings produced by anonymous amateur draftsmen who took to paper to visualize their erotic desires and sexual subjectivities. In the *Geschlechtskunde Bilderteil*, for instance, Hirschfeld includes an array of such graphic works. One work, titled a "self-projection drawing" of the draftsman as an alternate persona called Voo-Doo, depicts a nude male figure with a mane of dark black hair set against a striped teal and navy background [fig. 4.23]. He throws his head back in a leaping arabesque, pink veils trailing from his wrists and ankles. Two others, presumably by the same artist (a "known artist who committed suicide" and left his drawings to the Institute), are what Hirschfeld has labeled "wish fulfillment" drawings [figs. 4.24-4.25]. In the first drawing, a nude blonde man stands between two blue-and-white-clad sailors. One of the sailors wields what appears to be a whip or riding crop, while the second ties the nude man's hands behind his back with rope. The second drawing by the same draftsman depicts a "passive masochistic fantasy." Here, the artist is engaged in a homosexual ménage-à-trois with the crop-bearing sailor and a nude Black man, who holds the artist's legs aloft to expose his buttocks. These drawings comprise a small portion of the drawings held in Hirschfeld's collection and printed in the pages of his texts.<sup>342</sup>

Regardless of the specific scenes conjured in the drawings, these works are significant due to the ways in which Hirschfeld chooses to categorize and nominate them within his own sexological framework. Seemingly discontent with the extant paradigm that interpreted drawings by queer men as pathological markers of an aberrant and unnatural sexual drive, Hirschfeld pushed the sexological interest in queer drawings a step further by applying special terminology to them, clearly pulled from psychoanalysis: the drawings he reproduces in print are variously referred to as *Wunschvorstellung* (wish fulfillment) drawings, *Selbstprojektion* (self-projection) drawings, and psychosexual expression drawings. This adoption of psychoanalytic language, of course, is not particularly surprising. Though Hirschfeld supported

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<sup>341</sup> Kevin S. Amidon, "Per Scientiam ad Justiam: Magnus Hirschfeld's Episteme of Biological Publicity," in *Not Straight from Germany*, 197.

<sup>342</sup> Other drawings collected by Hirschfeld, which fall beyond the scope of this chapter, depict sadistic and even hallucinated scenes of sexual violence and crime produced by queer amateur draftsmen. Hirschfeld's collection of erotic drawings was not limited to queer drawings; it also included several fetish and *Lustmord* drawings by the artist Rudolf Schlichter and others.

and rejected various elements of Freud's theorization of homosexuality over the course of his career (Freud's use of the psyche to explain homosexuality chafed against Hirschfeld's own biological explanations), it is understood that by the 1920s, he had come around to "quietly adopt[ing] a number of Freudian concepts" to explain elements of homosexual behavior.<sup>343</sup> These drawings, linked as they were to concepts like fantasy and imagination, would likely have seemed more easily definable to Hirschfeld in Freudian psychoanalytic terms than in purely biological or physiological ones, even if the literal iconographic approach he used to analyze them contrasted with the psychoanalytic tendency to search a picture for ambiguities that revealed subconscious aspects of the maker's sexual subjectivity.<sup>344</sup>

Although Hirschfeld's conception of drawings as indices of the maker's fantasy aligned with extant conceptions of the medium—conceptions articulated throughout this dissertation—the way that he subsequently interpreted the drawings did not. As he noted in his articulation of the term "erotographomaniac," the erotic drawings produced by queer draftsmen primarily served to nourish their own fantasies and, in and of itself, homosexual fantasy was no more or less pathological or perverse than heterosexual fantasy. Herein lies the crux of Hirschfeld's approach to such drawings, which contrasted with extant systems of valuation: if homosexual subjectivity was non-pathological and naturally occurring, so too were the imaginations and fantasies that gave way to the production of erotic works of art. Hirschfeld's comprehensive overhaul of social, cultural, and scientific conceptions of queer pathology extended to their creative output; homoerotic drawings were simply a genre of a healthy sexual variant stemming from a natural preference for one's own sex.

My primary suggestion is that Hirschfeld's engagement with drawings effectively lifted queer erotic drawings out of the murk and the mire of longstanding epistemes that denigrated them as little more than the traces of a degenerate and unnatural sexual subjectivity. Pathological, as a modifier, seems to only be applied to queer drawings that indicate another psychological disorder (narcissism, for instance, is often dubbed *pathologisch* in the captions that accompany particular drawings), but gone is the presupposition that *any* form of queer graphic expression is, in itself, indicative of an unhealthy fantasy, and, by extension, an unhealthy identity. Regardless of whether this move was conscious on Hirschfeld's part or not, his hesitance to lump all queer graphic expression together—his attempts to provide a more specific vocabulary with which to analyze and categorize such drawings—*did* press back against longstanding, normative systems that failed to take queer drawings seriously or otherwise devalued them.

To provide a contemporary counterexample to this approach to graphic expression, we need look no further than the work and collection of the psychiatrist and art historian Hans Prinzhorn, whose collection of artworks produced by patients under his care extended to the sexually aberrant and perverse and whose approach to these works, and to drawings in particular, in many ways perpetuated nineteenth-century biases towards amateur artworks by marginalized individuals. Contemporary scholarship on Prinzhorn remains somewhat divided on the question of Prinzhorn's approach to the art of the mentally ill, especially in light of his political conservatism and flirtation with National Socialism towards the end of his life and career. Sander Gilman, however, emphasizes that Prinzhorn stressed the "tribal" identity of his

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<sup>343</sup> Katie Sutton, *Sex Between Body and Mind: Psychoanalysis and Sexology in the German-speaking World, 1890s-1930s* (Ann Arbor: University of Michigan Press, 2019), 136.

<sup>344</sup> The projection diagnostic that Hirschfeld references in his categorization of patient drawings is clearly psychoanalytic, though the use of projection tests was still relatively new in 1930, even amongst psychoanalysts. Hirschfeld's adapted approach to projection seems to attempt to deduce information about the patient's sexuality from the works the patient himself produces, rather than developing an interpretation based on the patient's responses to external pictorial stimuli, as was the case with Hermann Rorschach's innovative ink blot tests, developed in the early 1920s.

patients, and Thomas Röske notes his citation of the racial hygienist Kurt Hildebrand and his attraction to eugenic ideologies that cast the art produced by his patients as degenerate and pathological.<sup>345</sup> Prinzhorn's conception of drawings by the sexually perverse, among others, closely mirrored the stance taken by other social scientists and aesthetic theorists of his day, including those ethnographers discussed in chapter three: a surface level celebration of such drawings as unfiltered expressions of a naïve or primitive subjectivity served to paper over the harmful categorization of the drawings as aesthetically unsophisticated and developmentally stunted. In this sense, Prinzhorn's conception of drawings reinforced implicitly the homophobic and racist teleologies propagated in the nineteenth century that cast drawings by marginalized individuals as indicators of a primitive and atavistic fantasy. While the approach pursued by Hirschfeld and other sexologists was by no means removed from the colonial modes of thinking that ran through Prinzhorn's project, it did seem at least to advocate for a new understanding of queer erotic drawings that existed for the primary purpose of nourishing the artist's own divergent, though not inherently pathological, sexual fantasy.

Hirschfeld's interest in queer drawings and their reproduction in his own texts probed how erotic art might be utilized for the purposes of advancing public acceptance for queer men. His use of print as a means of making queer drawings permanent and visible to a wider audience pursued a double-pronged strategy of de-pathologizing queer creativity within medical discourse while also evangelizing to a wider reading and viewing public. Amidon has argued that the publication of visual, illustrated texts for this "print public" constituted a form of persuasion intended to win converts to the cause of homosexual acceptance:

German biological science...was thus more significantly shaped by its practices of persuasion than by its forms and strategies of investigation. In most cases this persuasion was oriented toward print publics but also took place through varied disciplinary networks, including textual and visual forms of persuasion and publicity.<sup>346</sup>

Hirschfeld's reproduction of queer drawings housed in the Institute's archive, I argue, is a prime example of one such visual form of this "persuasion and publicity," placed in the service of a medical mission that simultaneously served emancipationist ends.

It is tempting to hear echoes of the homosexual relationship with print in Hirschfeld's own use of the medium. Like the previously examined homoerotic books and portfolios, Hirschfeld's text sought to widen the circle and reach of queer graphic expression—in this case, in the service of a public-facing sexual scientific movement that advocated for the decriminalization of same-sex acts and a greater degree of social acceptance for homosexual men. Hirschfeld's use of the illustrated book as a means of sharing this medical-*cum*-activist agenda is unique and, in many ways, parallels other uses of printed homoerotic drawings. Like many of the queer mass media publications discussed in this chapter, however, Hirschfeld's lofty hope to present a viewing public with a revised paradigm of queer drawing that freed it from the yoke of homophobic pathologization was duly quashed by political rumblings that reached a crescendo in May 1933.

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<sup>345</sup> See Sander L. Gillman, *Difference and Pathology: Stereotypes of Sexuality, Race, and Madness* (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 1985), 235 and Thomas Röske, "Hans Prinzhorn - ein "Sinnender" in der Weimarer Republik," in *Wahn, Welt, Bild: die Sammlung Prinzhorn; Beiträge zur Museumseröffnung*, eds. Thomas Fuchs, Inge Jádi, Bettina Brand-Claussen and Christoph Mundt (Berlin & Heidelberg, u.a., 2002), 38.

<sup>346</sup> Kevin S. Amidon, "Per Scientiam ad Justiam: Magnus Hirschfeld's Episteme of Biological Publicity," in *Not Straight from Germany*, 192.



## 6. Conclusion

On May 6, 1933, a National Socialist student group from Berlin's Humboldt University marched to the Tiergarten and forced their way into the Institute of Sexual Science. They plundered the Institute, physically dismantling and destroying items in the archive and library. In the afternoon, a second wave of destruction began, as S.A. officers carried out the systematic removal of these items; an eyewitness recalled that the officers carried out "basket after basket of valuable books and manuscripts" in addition to popular magazines, scientific journals, and Hirschfeld's own written research.<sup>347</sup> Hirschfeld had fled Berlin for Nice by the time of the attack, which followed months of persistent threats against him and his Institute. On May 10, the removed materials (which surely included several of the works discussed in these pages) were transported to Bebelplatz in the center of Berlin, where they were placed in a heap and set ablaze.<sup>348</sup>

The book burnings that occurred that night, not only in Berlin but across Germany, were intended to serve as a spectacular public display of power, one motivated by both anti-Semitic and homophobic sentiment. In addition to the "un-German" books and journals thrown onto the pyre, the National Socialists also burnt a bust of Hirschfeld taken from the Institute—a clear refutation of the doctor and his medical-activist agenda. George Mosse and James Jones have argued that "the tossing of the bust of Hirschfeld into the flames is the sole instance where an image was burnt with the books" on the evening of May 10.<sup>349</sup> This chapter, however, has proven this argument false. As I have shown, many of the books that occupied Hirschfeld's shelves and which went up in flames on the Bebelplatz contained not only text but also queer and homoerotic drawings rendered permanent in print. The terrorism of the book burning, of course, had clear continuities with Weimar censorship laws instituted prior to 1933 which sought to prohibit, among other things, "the reproduction of lewd drawings [and] the sale of rude books."<sup>350</sup> As Kara Ritzheimer has argued, "Nazi leaders undoubtedly capitalized on anti-"trash" rhetoric and refurbished it to accommodate their political and racial needs," appealing to "the population's familiarity with the idea that public authorities could competently determine which books and films were appropriate for general audiences and which ones warranted bans and restricted access."<sup>351</sup> This systematic destruction of books was also, consciously or unconsciously, the systematic destruction of homosexual drawings and a thriving queer print culture.

This chapter has sought to analyze how drawings by homosexual men, which had long operated as intentionally fleeting, temporary, and ephemeral traces of sexual subjectivity, gained new meaning as a result of translation into print. I have traced two processes of making the queer mark indelible and legible to a wider viewing public. The first of these processes saw queer mark makers and draftsmen transition from a reliance on various methods of extra-illustration (including the inclusion of original drawings and printed bookplates) to producing

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<sup>347</sup> Cited in Heike Bauer, "Burning Sexual Subjects: Books, Homophobia and the Nazi Destruction of the Institute of Sexual Science in Berlin," in *Book Destruction from the Medieval to the Contemporary*, eds. Adam Smyth and Gill Partington (Basingstoke: Palgrave Macmillan, 2014), 21.

<sup>348</sup> Fortunately, not all of Hirschfeld's work was destroyed in the ransacking of the Institute. A portion of his archive, including unpublished texts, research data, and personal correspondence and diaries, survive. The Magnus-Hirschfeld-Gesellschaft in Berlin has long pursued the goal of recreating, in so far as it is possible, the library of the Institute, and the Kinsey Institute at Indiana University holds a significant collection of Hirschfeld's work, including, notably, queer self-reported case histories and sexual orientation survey cards distributed to Berlin university students in 1903. Though infrequent, new materials believed to have once belonged to the Institute do occasionally resurface.

<sup>349</sup> George Mosse and James Jones, "Bookburning and the Betrayal of German Intellectuals," *New German Critique*, no. 31 (1984), 144.

<sup>350</sup> Klaus Petersen, *Zensur in der Weimarer Republik* (Stuttgart: J.B. Metzler, 1995), 158.

<sup>351</sup> Kara L. Ritzheimer, "Trash", *Censorship, and National Identity in Early Twentieth-Century Germany*, 11.

and consuming luxury, small-run homoerotic books and portfolios printed for a growing viewership by private presses. This shift in the modes of creating and accessing homoerotica effectively functioned to make erotic queer drawings reproducible, facilitating wider circulations that put them in the hands and libraries of queer men across Germany. Artists and presses developed strategies expressly intended to protect their publications against censorship—strategies which, documents show, were relatively successful and kept a great deal of homoerotic texts off police books.

The second project that sought to reproduce the queer mark was Hirschfeld's sexological attempt to render drawings accessible to a wider print public with the aim of de-pathologizing queer creativity and subjectivity. I have argued that Hirschfeld was very much aware of the role that graphic expression played in the lives of queer men; from childhood, drawing, sketching, and doodling offered modes of coming to terms with one's homosexual desire. That this tendency to draw continued into adulthood in the form of erotographomania—a condition exhibited by many homosexual men—led to the physician's pronounced interest in drawings, which formed a crucial component of the Institute's archive. Hirschfeld's approach to drawings conceived of them as natural expressions of a non-pathological sexual subjectivity, an idea that directly refuted many presuppositions about queer graphic expression that persisted from the early nineteenth century. Reproducing drawings in print functioned as a way to circulate these theories to a wider medical and reading public with the aim of inciting a revision to prevalent homophobic notions of degenerate queer creativity.

The first conclusion I draw from these analyses is that books (and portfolios produced by private presses) were critical sites of subcultural community formation for queer men during the Weimar period, not despite their status as stable, "slow" material objects, but precisely because of it. Scholarly focus has tended to privilege "flying," mass media publications like magazines and periodicals as the primary engines of queer print culture in Weimar Germany; books, however, were often capable of evading the sort of surveillance and attention to which mass media objects often fell victim. In her examination of books and lesbian community formation in the 1950s, Amanda Littauer has argued that books served to sustain queer subcultures by "creating shared reading practices that helped to build micro-communities."<sup>352</sup> Luxury books, I maintain, operated in a similar way for homosexual men in the Weimar period. But beyond merely creating shared reading practices, such books and portfolios also created shared *viewing* practices; drawings rendered in print in these publications provided sustenance necessary for the formation of queer micro-communities bound by shared visual encounters with the erotic image. These print materials provide a kind of foil to the homosexual magazine, achieving the goal of queer subcultural organizing pursued by mass media publishers by harnessing the book's measured ability to quietly circulate drawings and texts to queer consumers beneath the radar of the censor.

A second conclusion, drawn from failed attempts at mass publicization by Radszuweit and Hirschfeld alike, is that "capturing" the queer mark and categorizing it as such typically implied a degree of violence against homosexual subjects and communities that could rarely be avoided. Hirschfeld's project of reproducing queer drawings makes clear that even sympathetic attempts to render them visible within the normative public sphere were susceptible to the homophobic social structures that prevailed beyond the walls of the Institute. Narratives of homosexual emancipation that tend to define the Weimar period belie a more complex reality. Indeed, the atmosphere that prevailed in Weimar Germany was not unlike the atmosphere articulated by Craig Griffiths in 1970s West Germany: caught between a sense of socio-cultural upheaval and a sense of crisis, homosexual men were often subjected to the

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<sup>352</sup> Amanda Littauer, "'Someone to Love': Teen Girls' Same-Sex Desire in the 1950s United States," in *Queer 1950s: Rethinking Sexuality in the Postwar Years*, eds. Heike Bauer and Matt Cook (London: Palgrave Macmillan, 2012), 69.

“ambivalence” of a culture that left them in the lurch between the hostility of mainstream society and a political and sexological left that advocated for the decriminalization of homosexuality and increased public visibility for queer individuals.<sup>353</sup> The specialized private market for luxury print media in the face of efforts to produce a mass queer media perhaps suggests another register of ambivalence—that of homosexual men themselves, wary of the potential perils wrought by publicizing queerness in the name of political emancipation. Limiting the audience of the queer mark and taking measures to ensure its concealment, even from those intent on defending it, had significant advantages to a burgeoning subcultural community whose position in the mainstream was never assured.

Relatedly, and by way of a final, self-reflexive observation, I wish to note that the historical reticence to make queer drawings and prints publicly accessible continues to have ramifications for the scholar of these materials in the present day. As has likely become apparent over the course of this chapter (and, indeed, over the course of the dissertation more generally), many of the objects that I have chosen to engage are currently held in private collections, many with undisclosed owners and nearly all with unclear provenances. This obscurity has, at times, made the work of writing the histories articulated in this project difficult; erotic drawings reproduced in catalogs or scholarly texts frequently bear the citation “private collection,” a foreclosing and opaque refusal to disclose information that might prompt further research. Most often, I came into contact with these collectors through friends and colleagues of friends and colleagues rather than by direct or straightforward channels. And while many of these collectors were gracious and pleased to facilitate engagement with their objects, others (particularly queer owners with significant queer collections) failed to respond to my inquiries or otherwise demurred.

I was struck by a strong sense of this hesitation as a kind of holdover from the gatekeeping impulse that prevailed nearly a century ago. I do not use “gatekeeping” here in a pejorative sense; consciously limiting and safeguarding homoerotic archives has, historically, functioned to protect their owners and ensure the survival of these materials into the present day. On the surface, the insistence on anonymity that persists among some collectors today may seem unnecessary and obstructive (certainly, the repercussions for possessing these materials are not the same as they were in the 1920s and 1930s). But to insist that the owners of these works publicly “own up” to holding queer erotic materials in their private collections feels dangerously close to insisting that queer individuals publicly “own up” to their queerness by outing themselves to a wider public. The progress of queer liberation has not meant the eradication of homophobic social and political systems that might make publicization inconsequential for the producers of homoerotic pictures or their collectors. Furthermore, as the case of sexological treatments of queer drawing makes clear, “capturing” the queer mark in print for a general audience has the potential to disrupt queer micro-communities, the existence of which are predicated on their lack of a “public face.” While designating a work’s owner as a “private collector” or encountering this citation in print in the present day may feel frustrating or evasive, it is beyond the role of the researcher, I feel, to insist upon making permanent in print the name of an owner who has entrusted them with access to and stewardship of the objects in their care.

The problems of privacy and publicity are ethical issues that pervade this project and surely come to bear on others like it. To what extent is it the responsibility of the scholar to make visible a subculture intent on maintaining its invisibility? In writing this dissertation, I have participated in the project of making the queer line permanent on the page. Despite my good intentions, my work, like Hirschfeld’s project, nevertheless made visible that which many

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<sup>353</sup> Craig Griffiths, *The Ambivalence of Gay Liberation: Male Homosexual Politics in 1970s West Germany* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2021), 3.

queer makers intended to remain invisible to the general public. The stakes inherent to this “making public” are, in some ways, demonstrably different than they were in the 1920s and 1930s (most obviously, the drawings reproduced in these pages do not threaten to bring legal harm or social shame to makers no longer living). In other ways, the stakes are alarmingly similar: the policing of artistic production as a means of also policing the person is a problem that continues to plague queer individuals. Might my choice to shine critical light on these historical drawings and prints function, in a small way, to resist narratives that contemporary political regimes pursue to pathologize queer subjectivity and creativity today? Might my thinking through art objects produced by homosexual men in the past help us to think more in more critical, sensitive, and innovative ways about sexuality in the present? If so, perhaps the queer mark-makers whose works I have publicized here would forgive my indiscretion.

## Coda Through Lines

“To move, see, invent, transform, abstract, reduce, experiment, variegated, concentrate, try out, rotate, turn, think, write, repeat, repeat, float, fly, doubt, ask, research, investigate, superimpose, discard, breathe, grope, oscillate, make, accelerate, decelerate, pause, dream, deviate, veer off, summarize, bundle, send on its way, bring to the point, bring to mind, observe, circulate, remember, associate, communicate, construct, specify, clarify, explain, translate, recognize, complement, tell, make enigmatic, confuse, trip up, jolt, falter, marvel, sway, fight, recognize, unfold, unravel, stray, develop, empty out, disturb, destroy, note, copy, add, obtain, fasten, dissolve, abort, escape, collect, convulse, brace, thwart, thread, string together, expose, confound, let go, hold tight, draft, relax, exaggerate, withdraw, play, leap, travel, separate, arrange, briefly: to draw.”<sup>354</sup>

In June 1952, a 32-year-old Finnish man named Touko Laaksonen made a trip to the city of Hamburg with his sister and several friends. Several years before his trip, Laaksonen, who was coming to terms with his homosexuality, had begun to explore his same-sex desire with the aid of his pencil and his private sketchbook, producing homoerotic sketches not dissimilar from the erotic drawings that graced the pages of the illustrated books analyzed in the previous chapter [fig. 5.1]. Hamburg was a revelation for the young advertising designer and amateur draftsman; during this, his first visit to the German port city, he snuck away from his travel companions to seek out the homoerotic vendors he knew he could find there. “I had to go down to the waterfront,” he would later note, “and find a certain gypsy wagon—looking over my shoulder the whole time—and ask this old man with a huge mustache for ‘love stories.’ I don’t now remember the price, but it was outrageous for the time. I bought two.”<sup>355</sup> Laaksonen’s trip to Hamburg—a city to which he would return on a tour of Germany that he took with his lover Veli Mäkinen three years later in 1955—left a mark. Like many queer young men before him, Germany seemed a land full of possibilities for erotic encounters and self-discovery. In 1957, after sending his drawings to the American publisher Bob Mizer, Laaksonen adopted a new professional *nom de plume*: Tom of Finland.

While conducting research for this project and explaining its premise, I was obliged to confront a recurring question: “Are you looking at Tom of Finland?” I typically replied that although my inquisitor was thinking along the right lines, Laaksonen’s homoerotic drawings fell just beyond the scope of my project: too deep into the twentieth century, too disentangled from the sorts of scientific discourses I was pursuing, too far removed from Germany’s borders. But the questions pointed to an undeniable affinity between “Tom” and the artists I had chosen to examine: Touko Laaksonen was, in fact, a direct inheritor of the dynamics that I have sought to articulate. It did not take long to find circumstantial evidence that the artist’s practice was caught in an epistemological web woven in the early nineteenth century: we might consider Laaksonen’s now infamous assertion that “if I don’t have an erection when I’m doing a drawing, then I know it’s no good” within the context of the pervasive pen-as-penis paradigm established in the early nineteenth century.<sup>356</sup> Or, we might read a keen awareness of erotic

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<sup>354</sup> Christiane Schachtner, „Eine Typologie des Zeichnens und Schreibens im Skizzenbuch,“ in *Skizzenbuchgeschichte(n): Skizzenbücher der Staatlichen Graphischen Sammlung München*, eds. Christiane Schachtner and Andreas Strobl (Munich: Deutscher Kunstverlag, 2018). Translation mine.

<sup>355</sup> Kati Mustola and Alice Delage, “Gateway to the World: Tom of Finland and Hamburg,” in *Tom of Finland: Made in Germany*, eds. Juerg Judin and Pay Matthis Karstens, 28-45 (Milan: Skira, 2020), 28.

<sup>356</sup> Micha Ramakers, *Tom of Finland: The Art of Pleasure* (Cologne: Taschen, 1998), 68.

drawing's place in longstanding artistic hierarchies into his melancholic admission that his "dirty little drawings" were likely to never hang in the picture galleries of the Louvre.<sup>357</sup> Laaksonen readily acknowledged that his drawings were the products of his undisciplined fantasy—a fantasy untethered from the moral and aesthetic dictates that propped up, as I hope to have shown, creative *and* procreative teleologies steeped in heteronormativity. Perhaps it is no coincidence, given the fertile foundations laid by queer German (drafts-)men in the decades before his arrival to Germany, that Laaksonen's work was immediately popular within gay subcultures in cities like Hamburg and Berlin.

At the end of this project, however, it is another of Laaksonen's assertions that strikes me as particularly compatible with the queer histories of drawing that I have analyzed in these pages. Speaking of his artistic practice, Laaksonen noted that he produced his unflinchingly queer drawings with the express intention of counteracting the social and cultural shame that accompanied his existence as a homosexual man (quietly, at first, but much louder after his first exhibition in 1975 at a sex shop in Hamburg's St. Pauli district—the same neighborhood where Otto Griebel had moonlighted as a tattoo artist in the 1920s). Drawing, for Laaksonen, was a radically liberatory act that asserted graphic expression as a primary means of envisioning queer subjectivity as a source of happiness, power, and *jouissance*.

Might we approach the drawings encountered in these pages as similarly oriented exercises aimed at carving out space for queer presence? Michael Snediker's conceptualization of two prominent positions in contemporary queer theory might prove useful in arriving at an answer. In Snediker's estimation, a great deal of queer theory has, from its very inception in the 1990s, adhered to a kind of "queer pessimism," a "tropaic gravitation toward negative affect and depersonation" that trucks in "queer pessimistic constellation[s]" of terms such as "melancholy, self-shattering, shame, [and] the death drive."<sup>358</sup> Queer pessimism, as Snediker argues, "describes a current of enchantment that has privileged 'suffering' and 'dereliction'...as sites of both ethics and understanding." Queer theory has, to put it in psychoanalytic terms, pledged fealty to the death drive.<sup>359</sup> To be sure, "pessimistic" approaches have their place in queer theory and examinations of queer existence, and this dissertation has not been immune to the ripples that queer pessimism has produced. Rumohr's *Study sheet with dead birds* might well accord with Lee Edelman's theoretical injunction that queer individuals cease fighting the ascription of negative qualities like unnaturalness and abjection to queer identities and instead embrace such terms.<sup>360</sup> In a project that has sought to articulate historical circumstances in which queer men and their creative impulses have been conceptually relegated to fundamentally necropolitical categories (unnatural, degenerate, atavistic, pathological), perhaps a degree of queer pessimism is inevitable.

What Laaksonen's conception of his drawings makes explicit, however, is the extent to which the practice also occasioned opportunities for what Snediker theorizes as "queer optimism," a term deployed to refer to modes of conceptualizing queer existence that are predicated on—and *take seriously*—states of enjoyment, hope, happiness, and positive affect. Cognizant of the potential for his diacritical paradigm to be interpreted as a "reductive binary," Snediker counters by suggesting that optimism, as an analytic, multiplies theoretical possibilities rather than forecloses them. Drawings, as I hope to have shown, fundamentally functioned as a source of optimism for queer men throughout the nineteenth and twentieth centuries, just as they offer up the potential for optimistic theorizations of non-normative subjectivities by scholars sensitive to the medium's inherent queerness. Though the

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<sup>357</sup> Ibid., 16-17.

<sup>358</sup> Michael D. Snediker, *Queer Optimism: Lyrical Personhood and Other Felicitous Persuasions* (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 2009), 4.

<sup>359</sup> Michael D. Snediker, *Queer Optimism*, 4.

<sup>360</sup> See Lee Edelman, *No Future: Queer Theory and the Death Drive* (Durham: Duke University Press, 2004).

circumstances of their production varied, the drawings that I examined in the preceding pages are alike in their turn towards the possibility of hope, pleasure, and correlation: mutual friendship portraits offered the possibility of intersubjective connection to German-Roman artists; nude studies offered the pleasure of viewing the nude male body to Hofmann, Schneider, and countless others; tattooing offered the potential for erotic encounters to working-class queer men; illustrated books offered a means of community formation to their upper-class counterparts. For all of these men, as for Laaksonen, drawing offered a way to assert and cultivate critical aspects of their sexual subjectivities in the face of discourses, institutions, disciplines, and legal systems that were hostile to their difference.

Though it has likely become apparent over the course of the project, a final point bears explicit notation. Drawing, as I have argued, constituted a queer medium in both its theoretical constitution (its perceived stalled telos, its close association with sexual fantasy and the male libido) and in its various applied functions within the lives of queer men. It was a medium that was understood to exist at the threshold of human experience, capable of indexing impressions both real and imagined, present and absent. The queerness of the medium stemmed, in large part, from its ability to exist in flux, despite programmatic attempts to pin it down and subject it to (hetero-)normative and universalizing laws and principles. Queer modes of drawing defied such standards, and artists—professional, amateur, and in between—were imminently capable of shaping the practice to fit their own needs and desires. Christiane Schachtner’s expansive list of functions that drawing makes possible, which stands as this conclusion’s epigraph, takes a circuitous route to drive home a simple but important point: drawing is a fluid medium that mirrors the actions comprising lived experience. To call drawing a *queer* medium is not, of course, to imply that it is a *gay* medium, whatever that might be, though I hope to have shown how this inherent queerness was explored by homosexual men in ways that made the medium useful for their personal and collective politics. Rather, “drawing’s queerness” implies the medium’s own optimistic potentiality, the opportunities that the practice presents to the draftsman for imagination, experimentation, and collaboration.

This dissertation has prompted several questions to be pursued in the future. The first of these questions pertains to the ways in which the telic systems that I outlined have persisted into the present day and inflected contemporary systems of artistic valuation. I will not belabor the point here, as I have posed this question and explicated the import of its answer at various points over the course of this dissertation. I do wish to reiterate the significance of remaining sensitive to this problem, however, as the ramifications of these systems continue to inform canonical constructions within the discipline of art history. Julia Bryan-Wilson, David Cottington, and Julietta Singh, among others, have recently produced scholarship that implicitly engages with and begins to deconstruct such telic systems by approaching the formation of Western canons with an eye to questions of artistic amateurism, professionalization, mastery, and discipline.<sup>361</sup> The legacies of telic hierarchies, both artistic and biological, have stakes that transcend the nineteenth century and the delimiting boundaries of this dissertation.

Secondly, this project has generated questions about modes of depiction that demand further interrogation. How were drawing and its queer valences activated as figuration gave way to twentieth-century abstraction? Virtually all of the draftsmen examined in this dissertation operated within the bounds of figuration, consciously projecting their sexual subjectivities onto the (often nude) male body. This tendency, which privileges verisimilitude, did not begin or end during the period that I consider; indeed, to take Tom of Finland as but

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<sup>361</sup> See, for instance, Julia Bryan-Wilson and Benjamin Piekut, “Amateurism,” *Third Text*, vol. 34, no. 1 (2020): 1-21; David Cottington, *Radical Art and the Formation of the Avant-Garde* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 2022); and Julietta Singh, *Unthinking Mastery: Dehumanism and Decolonial Entanglements* (Durham: Duke University Press, 2018).

one contemporary example, queer artists continued to pursue quasi-realistic modes of figuration throughout the twentieth century and into the present day.

But we must also acknowledge that figuration was but one pictorial possibility, even during the period under consideration in this study. The tattoo codes and iconographies analyzed in chapter three might be considered abstractive, but what other possibilities did abstraction afford queer artists? To what ends could abstraction be deployed? Certainly, “drawing” and “abstraction” are both terms defined, in part, by their capaciousness. Historians of contemporary art have written exemplary histories of queer abstraction, a mode that artists have pursued in an effort to, as David Getsy has suggested with regard to queer art generally, “make visible the *otherwise* as a means of valuing it.”<sup>362</sup> But new interpretive possibilities would undoubtedly arise from a sensitivity to abstraction in the graphic works of “otherwise” artists in the nineteenth and early twentieth centuries. How might a queer analysis of Marsden Hartley’s *Berlin Symbols #6*, an abstract drawing produced within the context of a burgeoning queer subculture in Berlin and the artist’s own liaison with Karl von Freyburg, contribute to a history of the relationship between homosexuality and graphic abstraction [fig. 5.2]?

Relatedly, what might a queer history of avant-garde drawing look like? It is no doubt apparent that many of the artists and makers who form the basis of my study operated outside of cohesive art groups or movements, a symptom of the types of pictures and objects that I chose to engage. Queer histories of drawing within organized movements like Symbolism, Dada, Bauhaus, Constructivism, and Surrealism are certainly possible, however, and would do a great deal to enhance art historical understandings of these groups and the political underpinnings of their creative production. To be sure, recent art historical interventions into avant-garde movements, particularly those in Germany, have demonstrated a heightened sensitivity to drawing’s ability to negotiate questions of gender and sexuality that we might broadly define as queer: Zeynep Çelik Alexander’s brilliant study of drawing and gender at Munich’s proto-Bauhaus Debschitz School is a notable example, as are Elizabeth Otto’s analyses of drawings as registers of queer subjectivity amongst Dada creatives.<sup>363</sup> Further research into these drawing practices and others promises to contribute to a more holistic understanding of the sexual substrates that underwrote many strands of avant-garde artistic production.

Finally, the case studies and actors examined in this dissertation prompt further questions about the diversity of the individuals for whom drawing could be harnessed as an experimental, exploratory, and liberatory tool. Relative to other artistic practices, drawing is egalitarian, a practice that, more than painting or sculpture or printmaking, one can—and *does*—frequently and informally pursue, without training or instruction. It is perhaps this quotidian accessibility that has historically facilitated the practice’s uptake by marginal, amateur makers. Anyone—presuming their ability to fantasize and wield a mark-making instrument—can draw.

As such, the professional and amateur draftsmen examined in this project comprise a mere selective cross-section of those who drew in the nineteenth and early twentieth centuries—primarily cis-gendered, white males. The decision to focus the study on this demographic was largely determined by archives, which for the men examined in these pages were often meager, but which for non-white, gender non-conforming subjects were alarmingly sparse. This is not to say that this study was entirely dictated by extant evidence. As noted in the introduction to this project, references to drawings by queer women might be productively

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<sup>362</sup> David Getsy, “Queer Intolerability and its Attachments,” in *Queer: Documents of Contemporary Art*, ed. David Getsy (Cambridge: The MIT Press, 2016), 15. Italics mine.

<sup>363</sup> See Zeynep Çelik Alexander, *Kinaesthetic Knowing: Aesthetics, Epistemology, Modern Design* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2017) and Elizabeth Otto, *Haunted Bauhaus: Occult Spirituality, Gender Fluidity, Queer Identities, and Radical Politics* (Cambridge: The MIT Press, 2019).



mined to write a history of graphic expression in lesbian subcultural communities. The occasional appearance of drawings by gender non-conforming or transgendered individuals might occasion a further study of the practice's utility for these queer communities. Furthermore, we might pursue with greater urgency and a greater degree of imagination and flexibility any graphic traces left by Afrodeutsch, Sinti and Roma, and Jewish draftspeople—homosexual, heterosexual, or “otherwise.” If, as I have argued, drawing's queerness made it efficacious for the purposes of externalizing and communicating one's marginal subjectivity, this queerness surely made it useful not only to queer sexual minorities but also for racially and ethnically “othered” makers working at Germany's social and cultural margins.

This dissertation has sought to articulate the shape of a historical relationship between terms: a subjectivity and a medium, a mode of being and a mode of making. The narrative that I have pursued has made visible a thread, a strain—to continue an apt metaphor—a *line* that constellates an array of actors for whom drawing constituted an integral way of self-determining and self-presenting to each other and to the world. To trace this perambulating line from Rumohr to Schneider, from a tattoo artist in Hamburg's docklands to Gurlitt's private press in Berlin's Wilmersdorf—further, to Laaksonen and beyond—has been to simultaneously tend to the perceived problematics of a creative practice and to its optimistic potentiality. If drawing is fantasy represented, what other queer fantasies of hope, longing, and pleasure might this through line illuminate?

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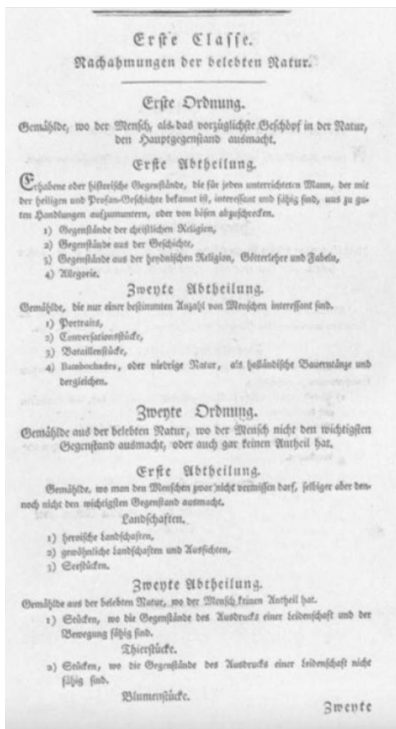
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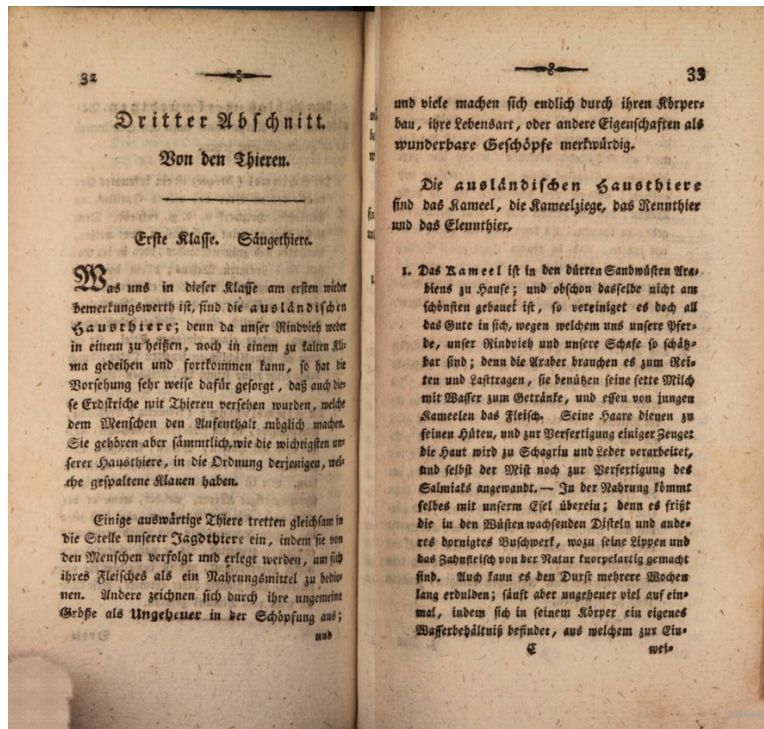
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## Introduction Figures



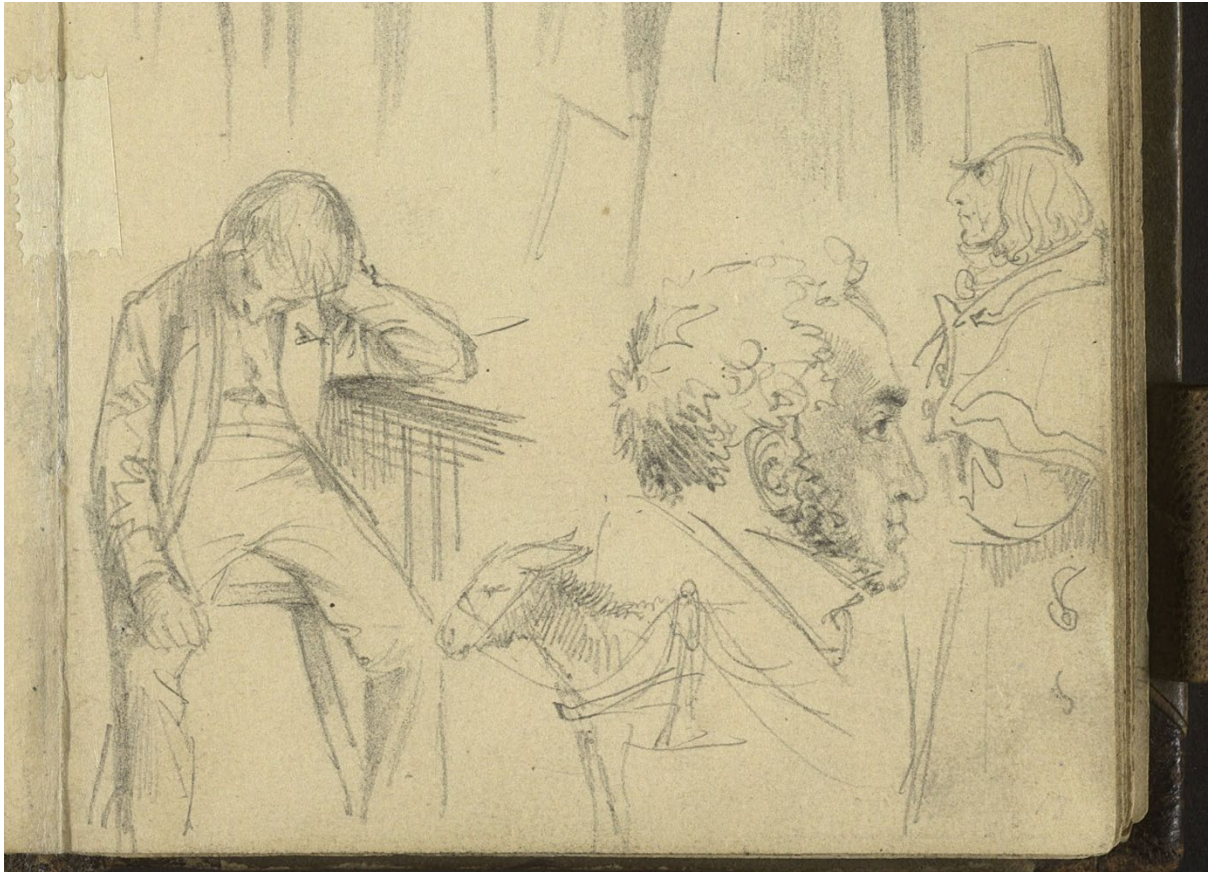
**Figure 0.1:** Joseph Friedrich, Freiherr zu Racknitz, Part of an outline of a classification of works of painting, from *Briefe über die Kunst an eine Freundin* (1792), after p. iv.



**Figure 0.2:** Matthias von Flurl, Animal classification, from *Grundlinien der Naturgeschichte* v. 5 (1800), 32-33.



**Figure 0.3:** Rodolphe Töpffer, *Elvire's Unfortunate End*, 1844. Steel-nibbed pen.



**Figure 0.4:** Adolph Menzel, *Drei Männer im Mantel mit hohem Kragen, ein Mann zusammengesunken auf einem Stuhl sitzend, Männerkopf, Mann, ein Esel* (detail), 1836. Berlin: Stiftung Preußischer Kulturbesitz.



**Figure 0.5:** Julius Schnorr von Carolsfeld, *Study of a Knight*, undated (19<sup>th</sup> century). Pencil, 43.8 x 26.7 cm. Dresden: Staatliche Kunstsammlungen Dresden.

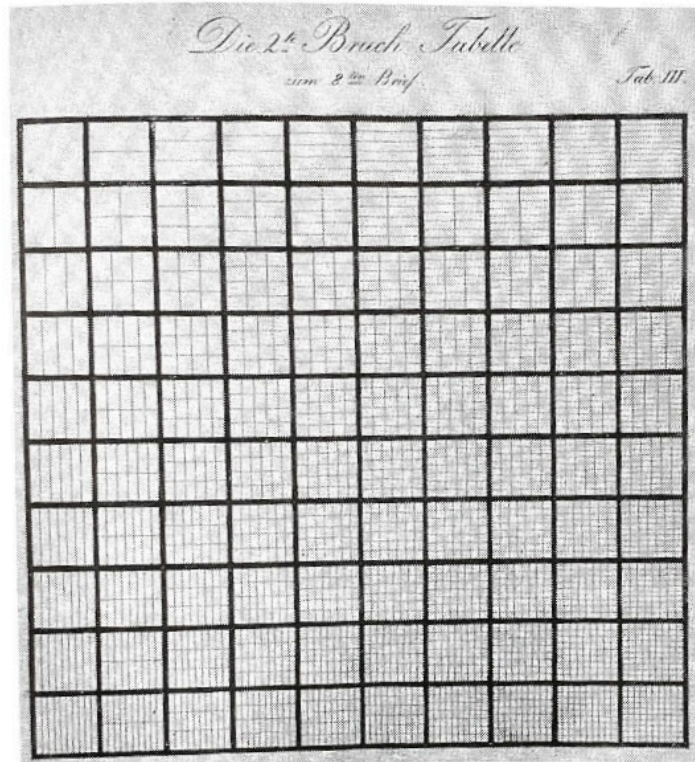


**Figure 0.6:** Julius Schnorr von Carolsfeld, *Die Schlacht von Lipadusa*, 1815. Pen in brown wash over pencil on brown paper, 51 x 68.5 cm. Berlin: Stiftung Preußischer Kulturbesitz.  
**Figure 0.7:** Julius Schnorr von Carolsfeld, *Karton zum Sechskampf auf der Insel Lipadusa*, 1815. Pen in black and gray ink over pencil, quartered and combined from multiple pieces, 96.5 x 169.5 cm. Dresden: Staatliche Kunstsammlungen Dresden.

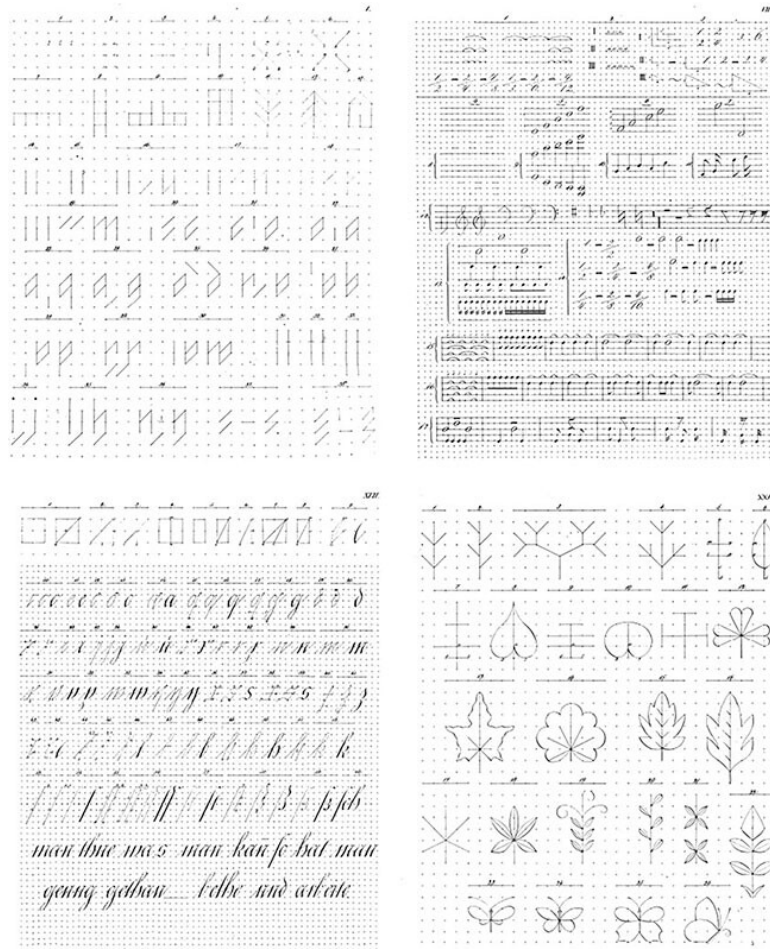




**Figure 0.8:** Julius Schnorr von Carolsfeld, *Der Sechskampf auf der Insel Lipadusa*, 1816. Oil on canvas, 102 x 170 cm. Bremen: Kunsthalle Bremen.



**Figure 0.9:** Anton Gruner, after Pestalozzi, *Table for teaching relationships of dimension*, 1804. Printed in *Briefe aus Burgdorf. Über Pestalozzi, seine Methode und Anstalt* (Hamburg: Friedrich Perthes, 1804), plate 3.



**Figure 0.10:** Franz Carl Hillardt, *Stigmographie. Das Schreiben und Zeichnen nach Punkten. Eine neue Methode* (Kohlmarkt: Mueller, 1846), Table III.



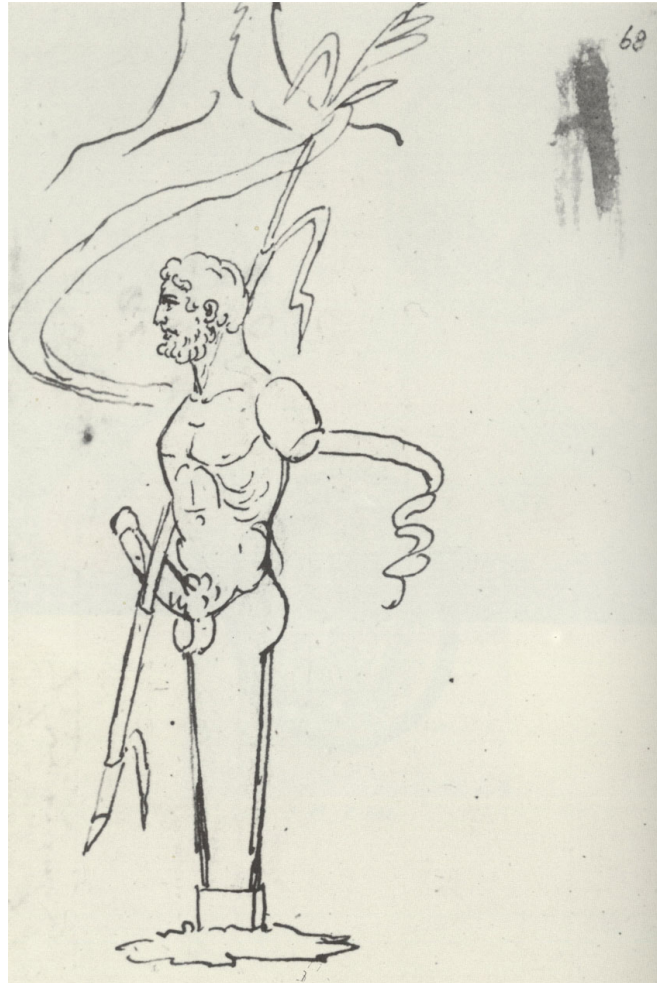
**Figure 0.11:** Johann Heinrich Wilhelm Tischbein, Plate 1 from Sir William Hamilton's *Collection of engravings from ancient vases mostly of pure Greek workmanship discovered in sepulchres in the kingdom of the Two Sicilies but chiefly in the neighbourhood of Naples during the course of the years MDCCLXXXIX. and MDCCLXXXV, 1791-95.*



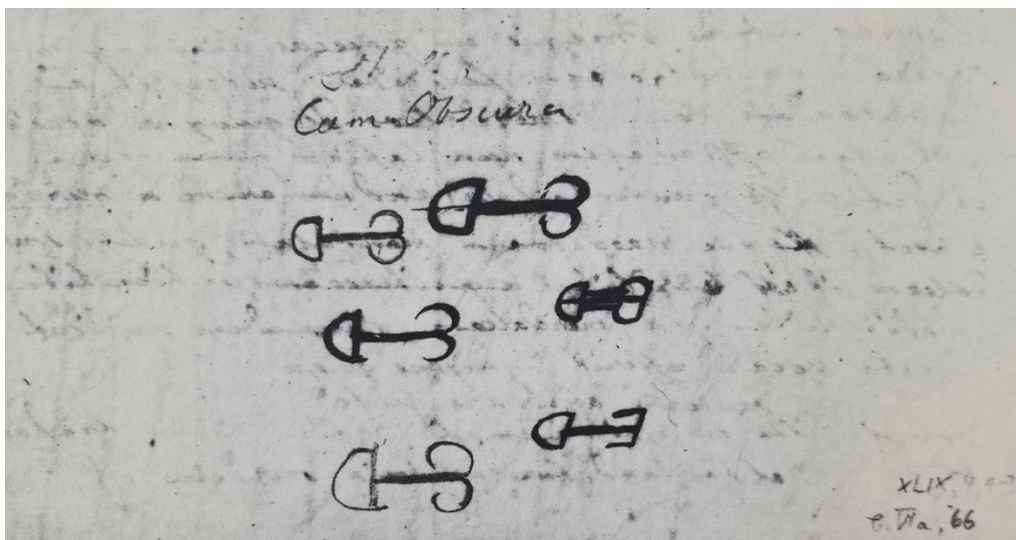
**Figure 0.12:** Moritz Retzsch, "The Witches Festival" from *Illustrations of Goethe's Faust*, 1843. London: Wellcome Library, no. 40376i.



**Figure 0.13:** Carl Christian Vogel von Vogelstein, *Bildnis Freiherr Otto Magnus von Stackelberg*, 1831. Oil on canvas, 26.5 x 18.5 cm. Dresden: Galerie Neue Meister.



**Figure 0.14:** Johann Wolfgang von Goethe, *Priapus Herme with Reed*, c. March/May 1790. Pen and ink.

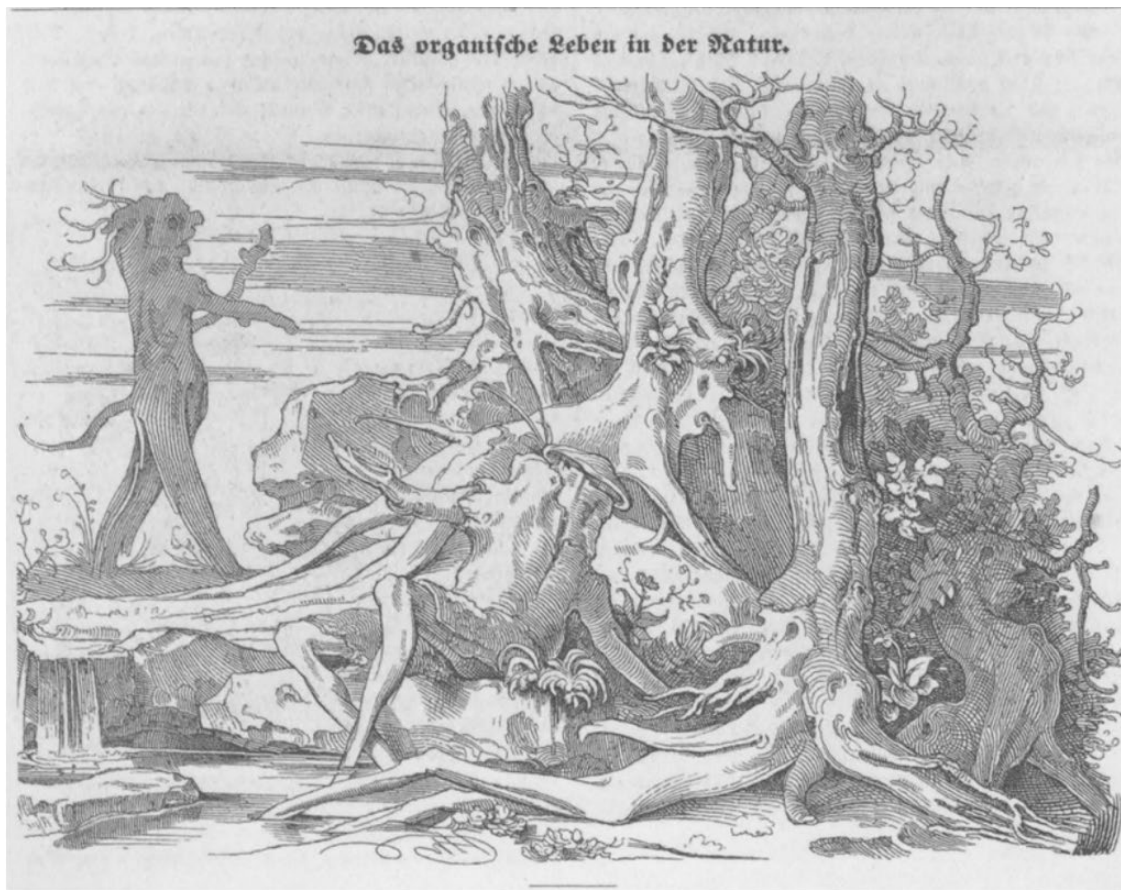


**Figure 0.15:** Johann Wolfgang von Goethe, *Phallus Cipher*, February/March 1790. Pen and ink.

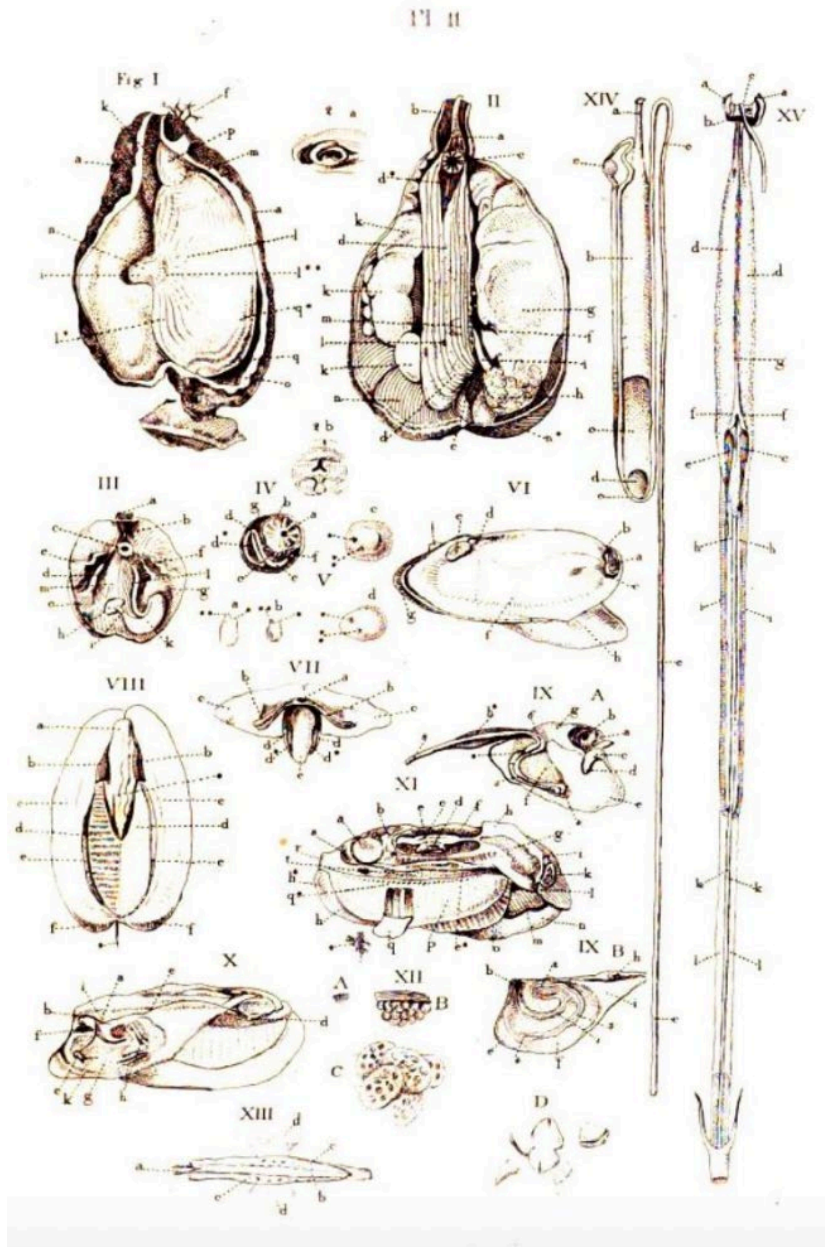
Chapter 1 Figures



**Figure 1.1:** Carl Friedrich von Rumohr, *Study sheet with dead birds (Studienblatt mit toten Vögeln)*, 1812. Pen and pencil. Dresden: Staatliche Kunstsammlungen Dresden.



**Figure 1.2:** Moritz von Schwind, *Organic Life in Nature*, cover of *Fliegende Blätter* 6, no. 144 (1848)



**Figure 1.3:** Carl Gustav Carus, Plate II depicting female animal reproductive organs from *Twenty Plates, with Explanatory References, Illustrative of an Introduction to Comparative Anatomy*, 1827.





**Figure 1.4:** Carl Gustav Carus, *Glimpse into the Choir of the Oybin Monastery Church*, 11 August 1820. Brush over pencil, 32.3 x 19.4. Private collection.

**Figure 1.5:** Carl Gustav Carus, *Gothic Window of the Oybin Cloister Ruins*, 11 August 1820. Brush over pencil, 31 x 19.5 cm. Private collection.



**Figure 1.6:** Carl Gustav Carus, *Gothic Window of the Oybin Monastery Church*, 11 August 1820. Brush over pencil, 20.9 x 14.9 cm. Staatliche Kunstsammlungen Dresden.

**Figure 1.7:** Carl Gustav Carus, *Gothic Windows in the Ruins of the Monastery at Oybin*, c. 1828. Oil on canvas. New York: Metropolitan Museum of Art.



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**Figure 1.8:** Francesco (Gottlob) Wenzel, Double Portrait of Rudolph Müller and Friedrich Horner, 1836. Pencil, charcoal, and white gouache, 23.3. x 30.3 cm. Biblioteca Hertziana, Rome.



**Figure 1.9:** Rudolph Friedrich Carl Suhrlandt, *Wilhelm Schadow, Rudolf (Ridolfo) Schadow, Ferdinand Ruscheweyh*, c. 1811-16. Pencil, 21.3 x 27.7 cm. Staatliche Museen zu Berlin - Preußische Kulturbesitz, Berlin.



**Figure 1.10:** Benno Friedrich Toermer, *Karl Wilhelm Götzloff*, 15 October 1835. Pencil, 33.7 x 23.6 cm. Biblioteca Hertziana, Rome.



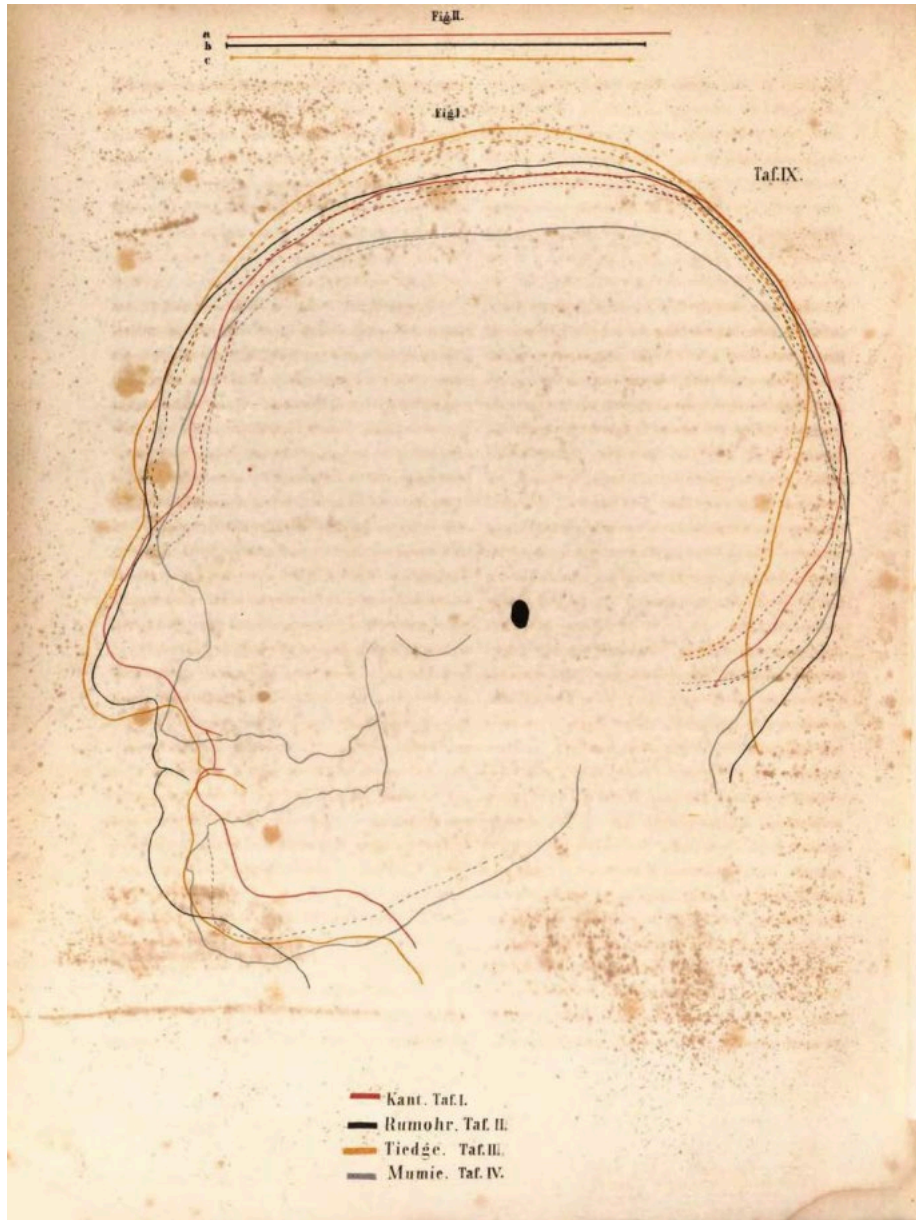
**Figure 1.11:** Augustin Palme, *Franz-August Schubert*, March 22, 1837. Pencil.  
**Figure 1.12:** Franz-August Schubert, *Augustin Palme*, May 1837. Pencil, 30.5 x 23.2 cm. Biblioteca Hertziana, Rome.



Der „Freundschaftstempel“ in Gleim's Geburtshaus zu Halberstadt. Nach einer Zeichnung von C. Jordan.



**Figures 1.13-1.14:** The "Freundschaftstempel" at Gleimhaus in Halberstadt.  
(Figure 1.13: Nach einer Zeichnung von C. Jordan, 1862. Woodcut.)



**Figure 1.15:** Carl Gustav Carus, Table IX from *Atlas der Cranioscopie (Schädellehre)*, v. 2, 1845.



**Figure 1.16:** Carl Friedrich von Rumohr, *Gebirgslandschaft*, links Baumgruppe, daneben karikierte Köpfe, undated. Pen and ink. Berlin: Stiftung Preußischer Kulturbesitz.



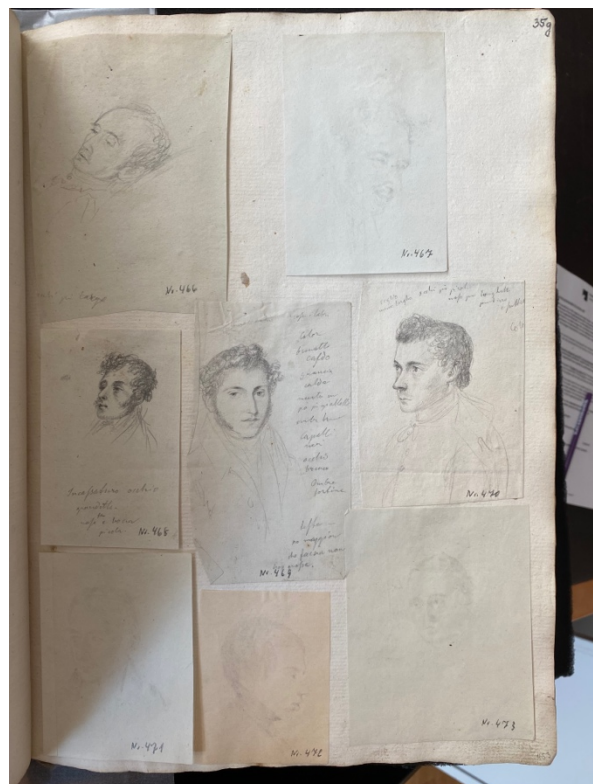
**Figure 1.17:** Carl Friedrich von Rumohr, Sketch sheet, early 19th century. Pen and ink. Dresden: Staatliche Kunstsammlungen Dresden.



**Figures 1.18-1.19:** Carl Friedrich von Rumohr, *Italian Landscape*, undated. Pen and ink.  
Dresden: Staatliche Kunstsammlungen Dresden.



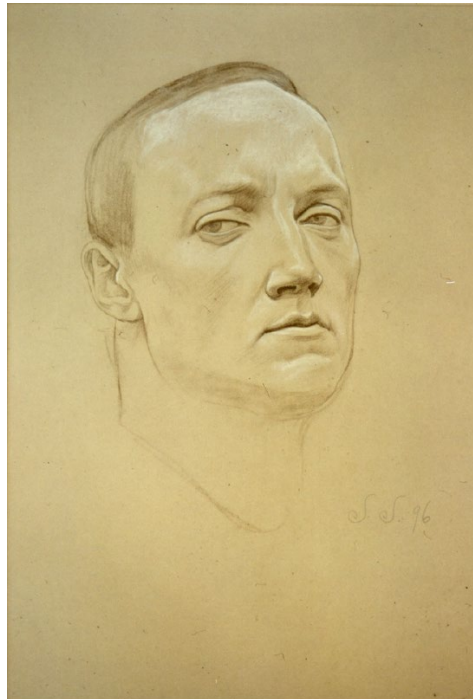
**Figure 1.20:** Carl Friedrich von Rumohr, *Head Study*, ca. 1815/20. Pen and pencil. Dresden: Staatliche Kunstsammlungen Dresden.



**Figures 1.21-1.22:** Franz Pffor, Studies of male heads, various dates (early 19<sup>th</sup> century). Pencil. Collated in Album mit 494 eingeklebten Bildniszeichnungen [SZ G.Pock 1], Kupferstichkabinett, Staatliche Museen zu Berlin.



## Chapter 2 Figures



**Figure 2.1:** Sascha Schneider, *Portrait Study of Richard Müller*, 1896. Lead, heightened with white. 41 x 44 cm. Private collection.



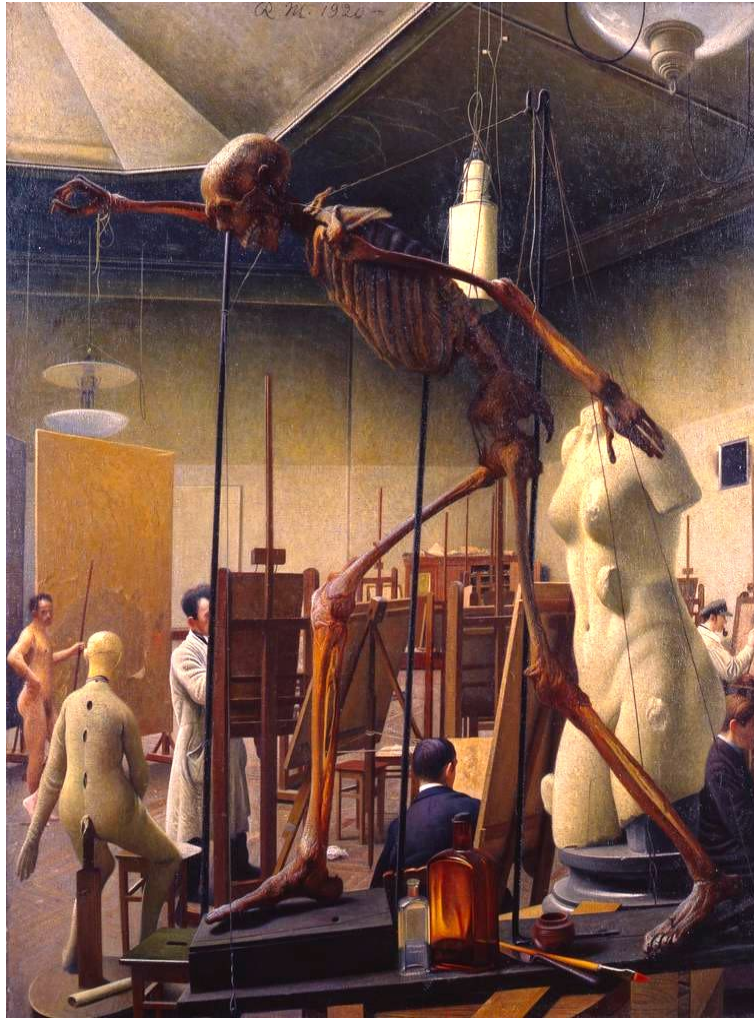
**Figure 2.2:** Unknown photographer, Life drawing room of the Dresden Academy, c. 1930. Archive of the Hochschule für Bildende Künste Dresden.



**Figure 2.3:** Unknown photographer, Anatomy room of the Dresden Academy, c. 1930-35. Archive of the Hochschule für Bildende Künste Dresden.



**Figure 2.4:** Skeletal model of the human arm in the anatomical collection of the Dresden Academy, ca. 1875-1890. Archive of the Hochschule für Bildende Künste Dresden.



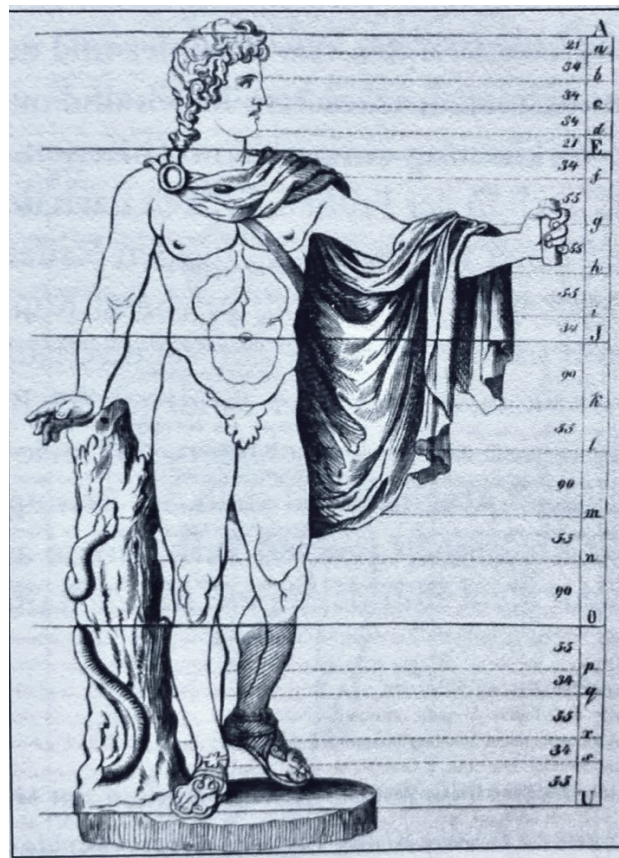
**Figure 2.5:** Richard Müller, *Drawing Class in the Academy*, 1920. Oil on canvas. 120 x 90.5 cm. Dresden: Galerie Neue Meister.



**Figure 2.6:** Martin Ferdinand Quadal, *Life Drawing Class in the Vienna Academy*, 1787. Oil on Canvas. Vienna: Akademie der bildenden Künste.



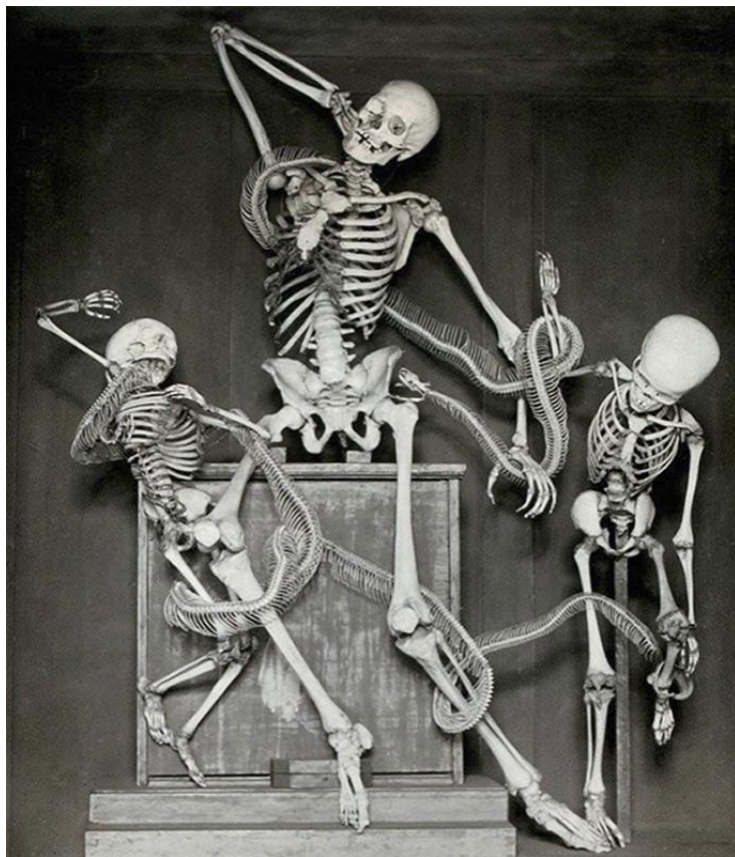
**Figure 2.7:** Unknown illustrator, Ganymede and Zeus relief, printed in Georg Treu, "Erwerbungen der Antikensammlungen in Deutschland" (1889).



**Figure 2.8:** Adolf Zeising, *Apollo Belvedere*, printed in Adolf Zeising, *Neue Lehre von den Proportionen des menschlichen Körpers* (1854).



**Figure 2.9:** Unknown photographer, Anatomical instruction room of the Dresden Academy, c. 1930-35. Photograph 08.01/00029, no. 2. Archive of the Hochschule für Bildende Künste Dresden.



**Figure 2.10:** Josef Hyrtl, Photograph of Laocoon skeletal reconstruction, c. 1929 (destroyed 1945). Photograph, 15.2 x 12 cm. Inv. No. 566107i. London, Wellcome Collection Library.

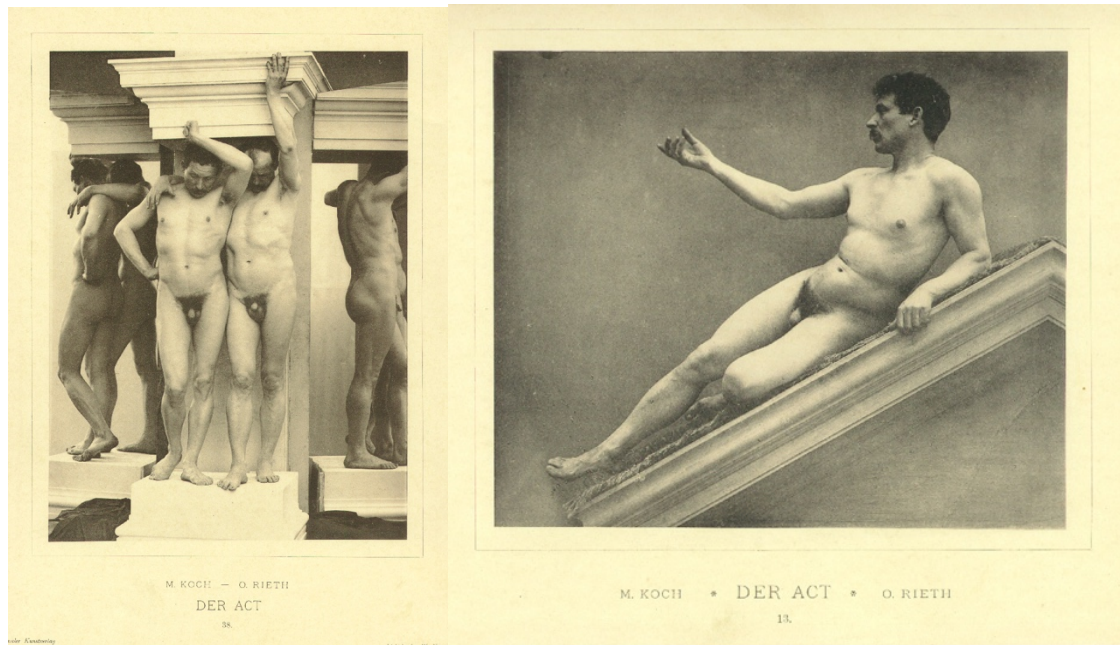


**Figure 2.11:** Unknown preparator, Skeletal reconstruction of the Spinario, c. 1850. Photograph: Jakob Fuchs.



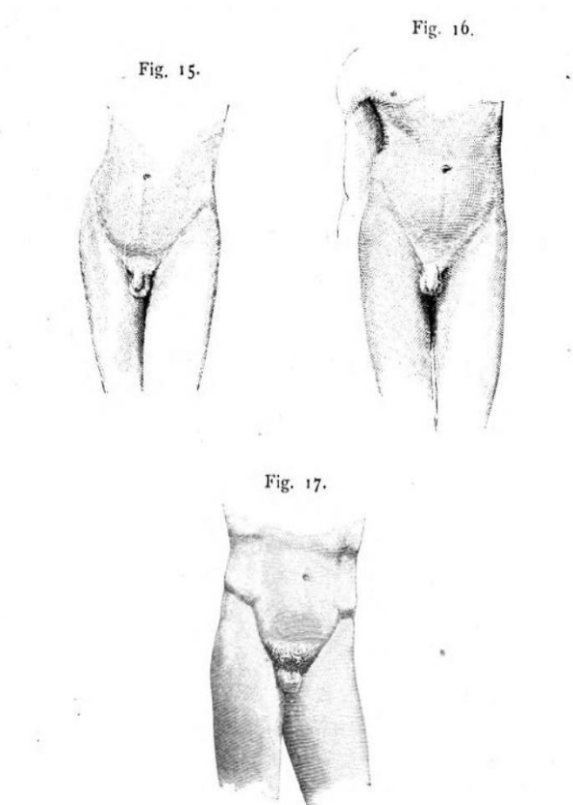
**Figure 2.12:** Plaster anatomical model of male body, c. 1875. Anatomische Sammlung, Hochschule für Bildende Künste Dresden.

**Figure 2.13:** Anatomical model of human leg, c. 1875. Anatomische Sammlung, Hochschule für Bildende Künste Dresden.

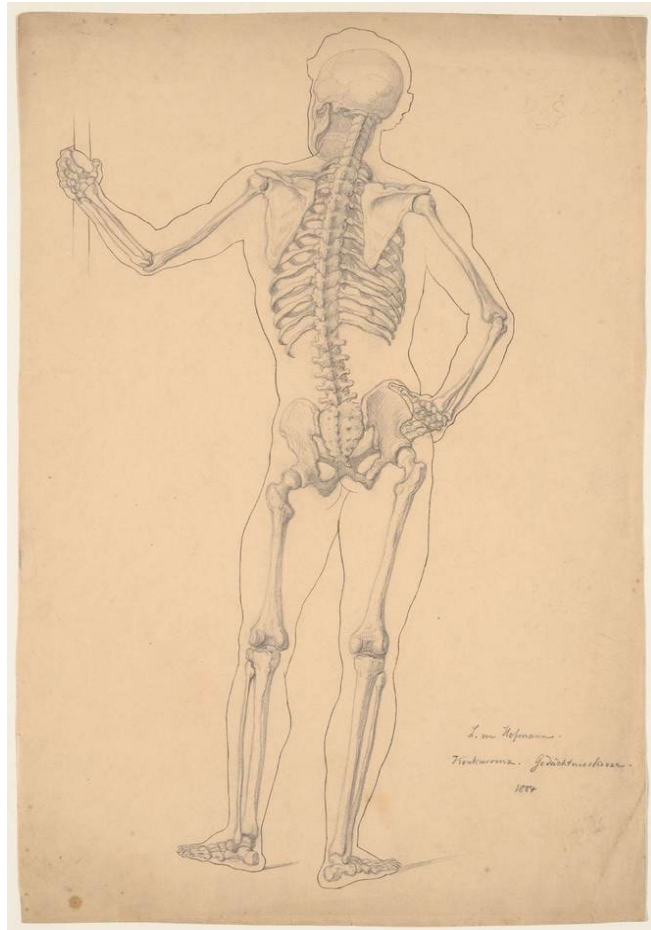


**Figure 2.14:** Max Koch and Otto Rieth, Male nudes, c. 1894. Printed in Koch and Rieth, *Der Act* (1894), p. 38.

**Figure 2.15:** Max Koch and Otto Rieth, Male nude, c. 1894. Printed in Koch and Rieth, *Der Act* (1894), p. 13.



**Figure 2.16:** Hermann Paar, Comparison of Diadumenos (fig. 17) and modern models, printed in Ernst von Brücke, *The Human Figure: Its Beauties and Defects* (1891), 116-8.



**Figure 2.17:** Ludwig von Hofmann, *Human skeleton*, 1884. Pen and ink, 51.8 x 33.9 cm.  
Kupferstichkabinett, Dresden.



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Kupferstichkabinett, Dresden.





**Figure 2.19:** Ludwig von Hofmann, *Sitting male nude*, 1886. Pencil on paper, 41.8 x 29.4 cm. Kupferstichkabinett, Dresden.



**Figure 2.20:** Ludwig von Hofmann, *Standing male nude*, 1884. Pen and ink, 41.2 x 29 cm. Private collection.



**Figure 2.21:** Sascha Schneider, *Standing male nude with right hand on chin*, 1890. Pencil on paper, 41.5 x 23 cm. Private collection.



**Figure 2.22:** Sascha Schneider, *Male nude from behind with arms interlocked behind his head*, 1890. Pencil on paper, 24.2 x 40 cm. Private collection.



**Figure 2.23:** Leonhard Gey, *Nude study of a young man, repetition of the head in the upper right*, undated (mid-nineteenth century). Red chalk on paper. Kupferstichkabinett, Dresden.



**Figure 2.24:** Sascha Schneider, *Male nude from behind fastening a belt*, 1891. Pencil on paper, 36.5 x 22.5 cm. Private collection.



**Figure 2.25:** Sascha Schneider, *Reclined male nude with legs drawn in*, 1894. Pencil on paper, 51 x 40 cm. Private collection.



**Figure 2.26:** Sascha Schneider, *Male nude lying on his back*, c. 1895. Pencil on paper, 62 x 47 cm. Private collection.



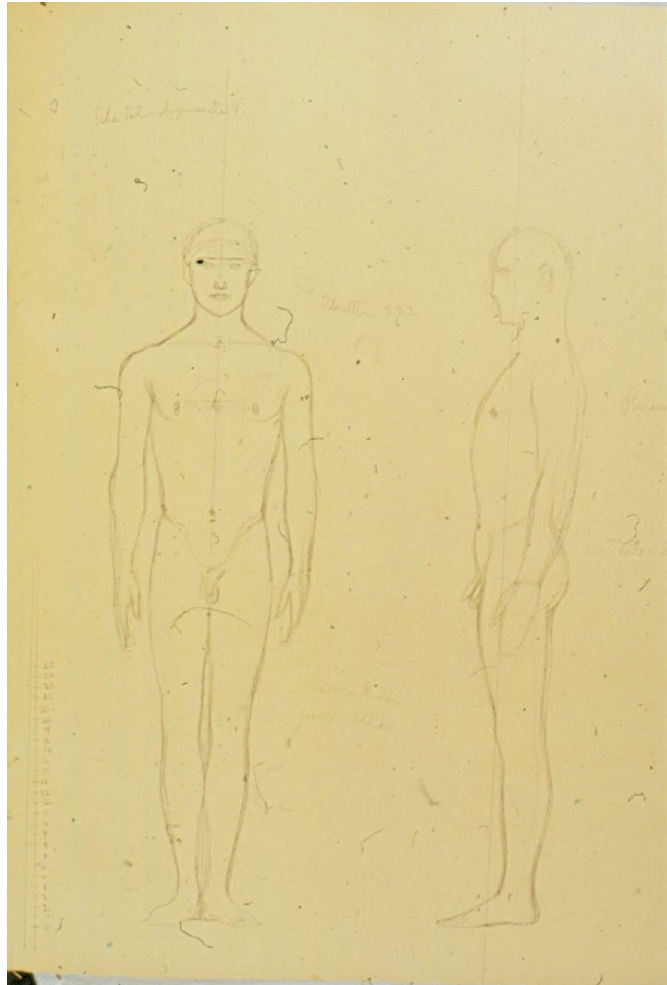
**Figure 2.27:** Unknown photographer, Interior of the Kraft-Kunst-Institut in Dresden, ca. 1920.



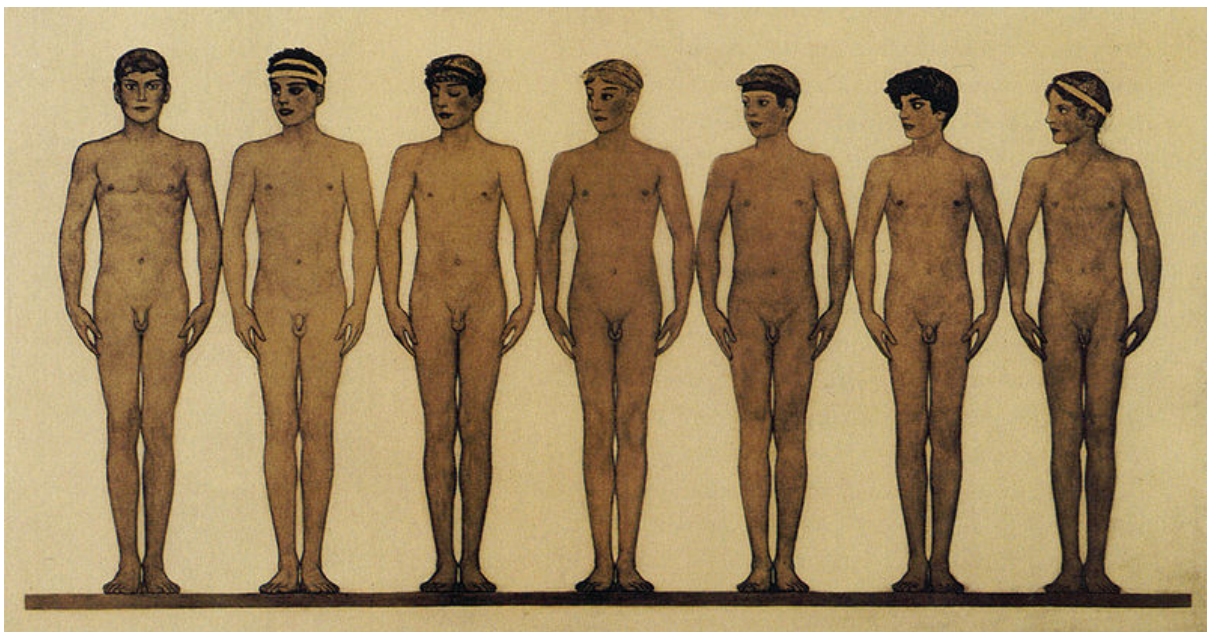
**Figure 2.28:** Sascha Schneider, *Idolino (Boy with Victor's Ribbon)*, 1911. Copper electrotype or galvano sculpture (hollow). Height 173.5 cm.



**Figure 2.29:** Unknown photographer, *Head of Diadumenos (Polyclitus)* in Dresden Albertinum, 1909. Photographic print. American Academy in Rome, Rome.

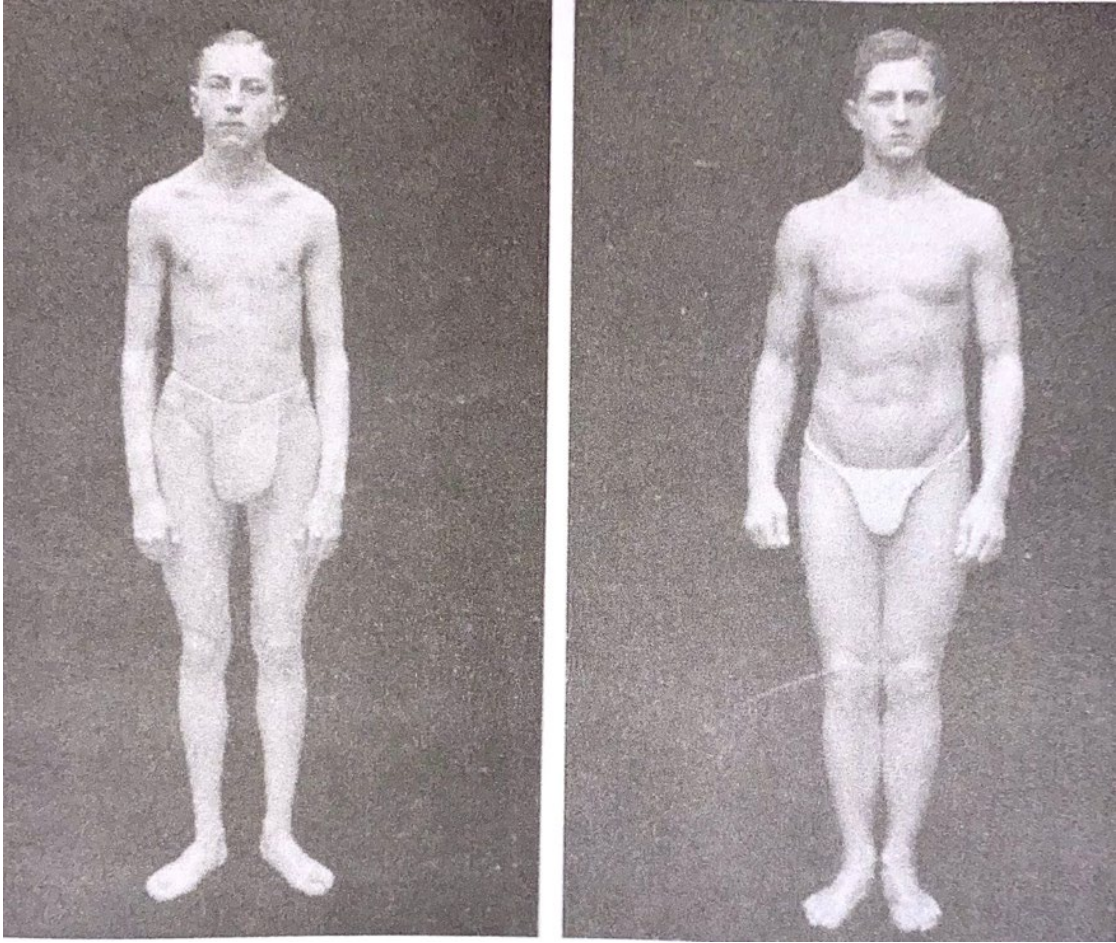


**Figure 2.30:** Sascha Schneider, *Study of ideal body proportions*, c. 1900. Pencil on paper, 62 x 47 cm. Private collection.



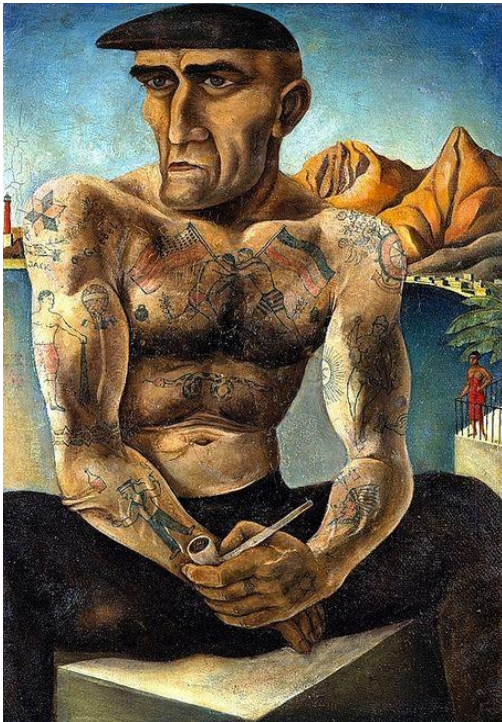
**Figure 2.31:** Sascha Schneider, *Gymnasion (Knabenriege)*, 1909. Oil on canvas. Location unknown.





**Figure 2.32:** Unknown photographer, *Undeveloped and ideal body of a 17-year-old pupil trained at the Kraft-Kunst-Institut, 1919.*

**Chapter 3 Figures**



**Figure 3.1:** Otto Griebel, *Der Schiffsheizer (The Boilerman)*, 1920. Oil on canvas. Private collection.



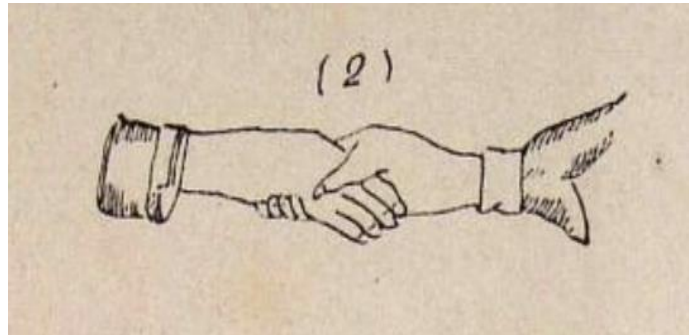
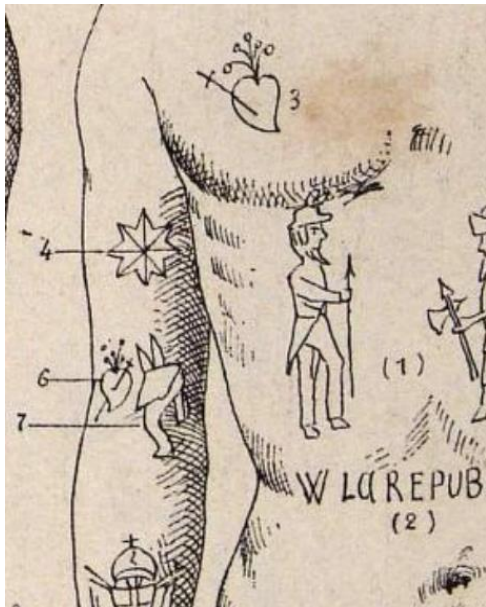
**Figure 3.2:** Otto Dix, *Maud Arizona (Suleika, The Tattooed Wonder)* from *Circus (Zirkus)*, 1922. Drypoint, 49.8 x 37.8 cm. Museum of Modern Art, New York.



**Figure 3.3:** Otto Griebel, detail of *Der Schiffsheizer (The Boilerman)*, 1920. Oil on canvas. Private collection.

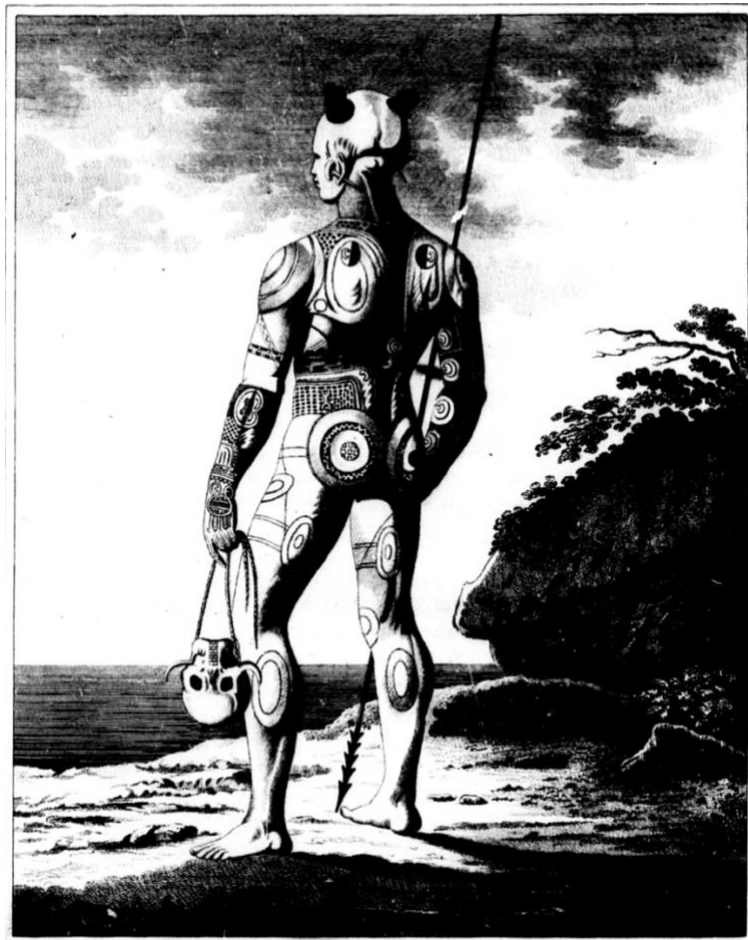


**Figure 3.4:** Christian Schad, *Tattooed upper arm*, c. 1928. Photograph. Christian Schad Stiftung, Aschaffenburg.

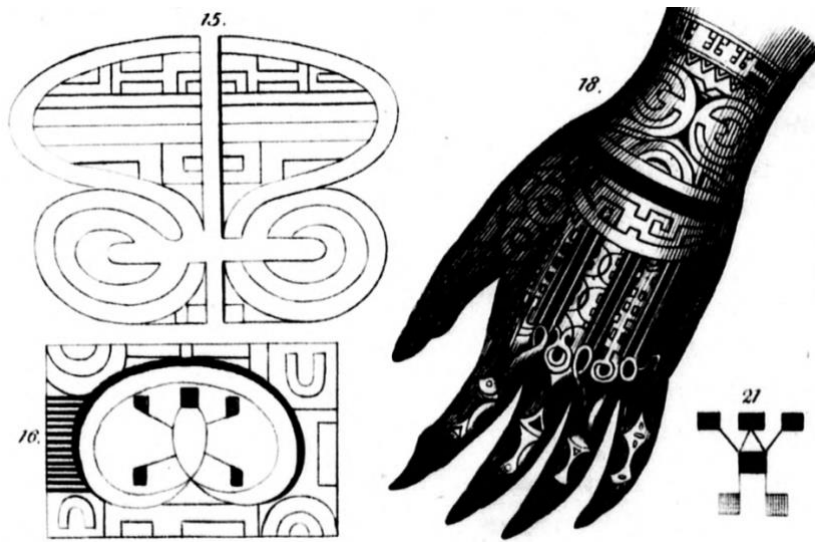


**Figure 3.5:** Cesare Lombroso, detail of star tattoo motif, printed in Cesare Lombroso, *L'uomo delinquente: Atlante* (5<sup>th</sup> ed., 1897), Table LXVII.

**Figure 3.6:** Cesare Lombroso, detail of clasped hands tattoo motif, printed in Cesare Lombroso, *L'uomo delinquente: Atlante* (5<sup>th</sup> ed., 1897), Table LXIV.



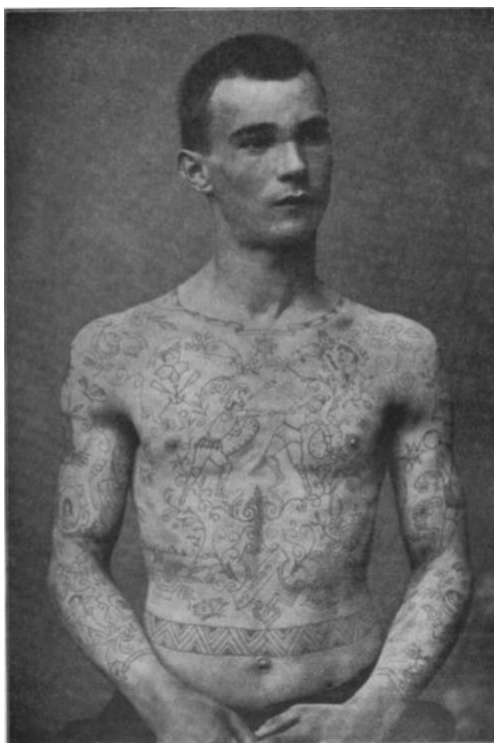
**Figure 3.7:** Georg von Langsdorff, “A young Nukahiwian not completely tattooed,” in *Voyages and Travels* (1813), p. 118.



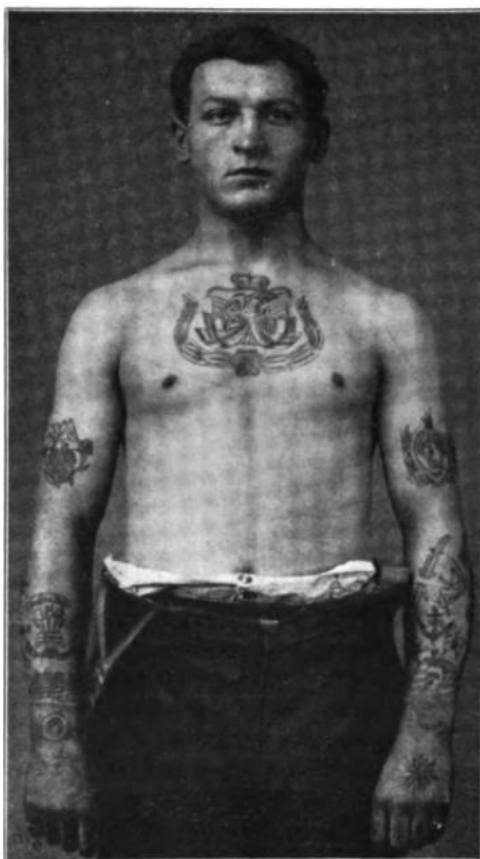
**Figure 3.8:** Georg von Langsdorff, “Figures used in tattooing,” in *Voyages and Travels* (1813), p. 123.



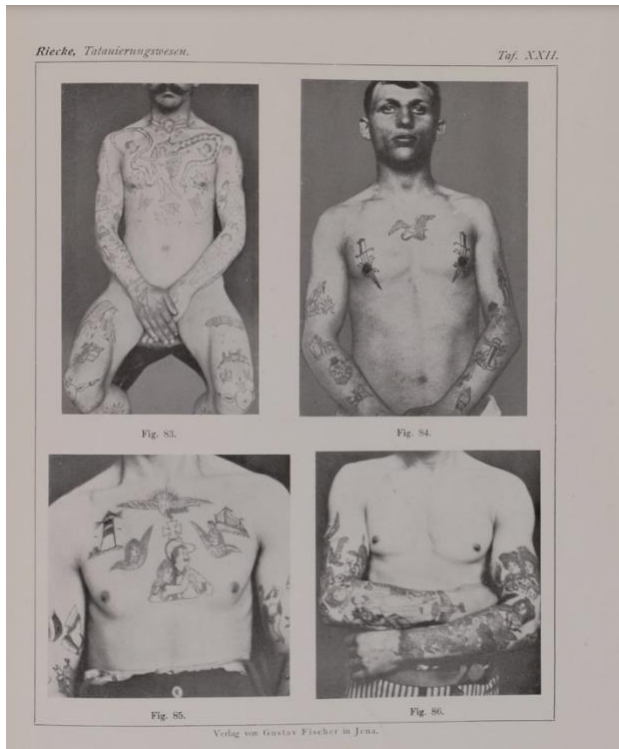
**Figure 3.9:** Tattooed faces (Originally from John Lubbock, *The Origin of Civilisation and the Primitive Condition of Man* (New York: D. Appleton, 1871), p. 47; as reprinted in Alois Riegl, *Stilfragen: Grundlegungen zu einer Geschichte der Ornamentik* (Berlin, 1893), p. 79.



**Figure 3.10:** Charles Skolik, “W.B.,” a tattooed German from Lower Austria, 1904. Printed in Friedrich Krauss, et al., *Anthropophyteia*, Bd. 1 (1904): 509.



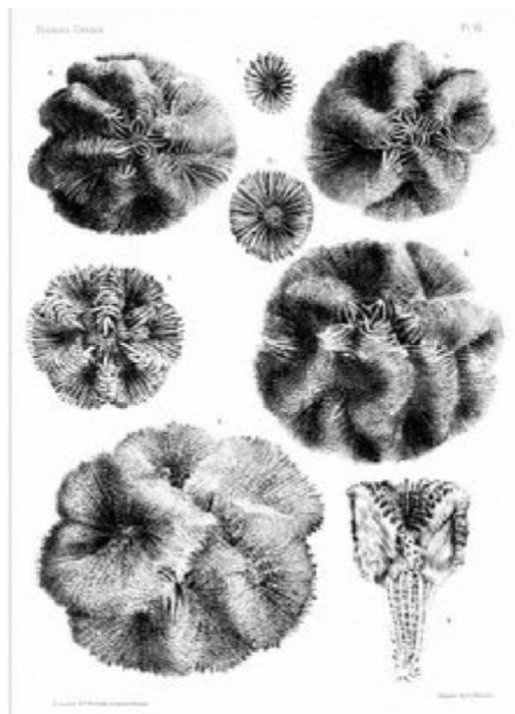
**Figure 3.11:** Unknown photographer, “Tattooed man from Hamburg,” 1914. Printed in Otto Lauffer, “Ueber die Geschichte und den heutigen volkstüml. Gebrauch der Tätowierung in Deutschland,” *Wörter und Sachen*, Vol. 6 (1914-15): 7.



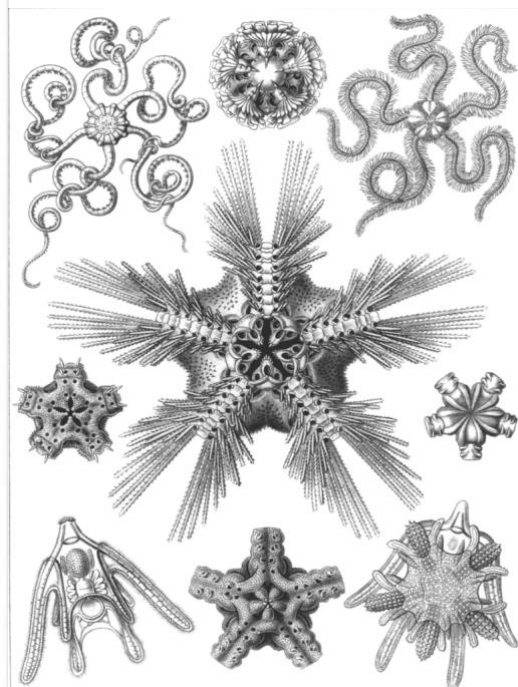
**Figure 3.12:** Unknown photographer, Tattooed man from Jena, 1925. Printed in Erhard Riecke, *Das Tätuierungswesen im heutigen Europa* (1925), Table XXII.



**Figure 3.13:** Unknown lithographer, Tattooed individuals from Japan, 1887. Printed in *Tätowiren, Narbenzeichen und Körperbemalen* by Wilhelm Joest (1887), p. 163.



**Figure 3.14:** Louis Agassiz, et al., “Isophyllia dipsacea,” 1880. Printed in Louis Agassiz, *Report on the Florida Reefs* (1880).



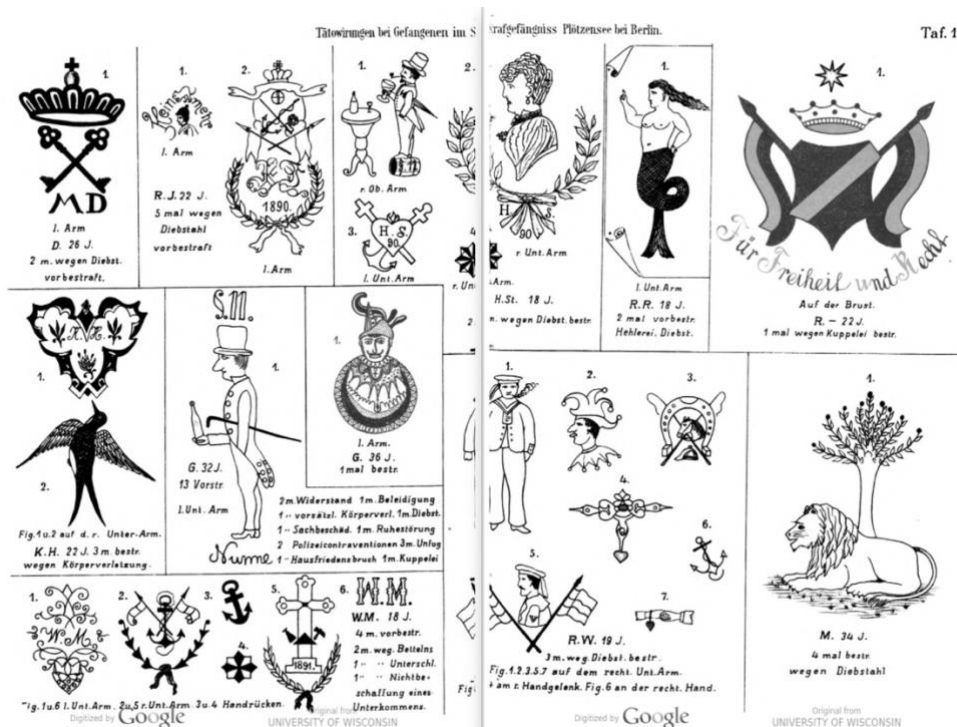
**Figure 3.15:** Ernst Haeckel and Adolf Giltsch, “Various types of starfishes,” 1899. Printed in Ernst Haeckel, *Kunstformen der Natur* (1899-1904, reprinted 2012), plate X.



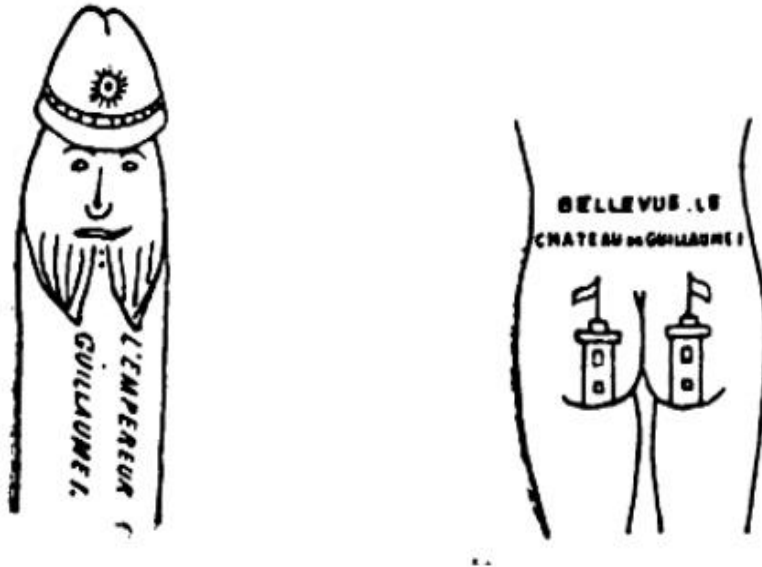
**Figure 3.16:** Kurt Ungewitter, “Capital details,” 1863. Printed in Georg Ungewitter, *Sammlung mittelalterlicher Ornamentik in geschichtlicher und systematischer Anordnung* (1863), Table 13.



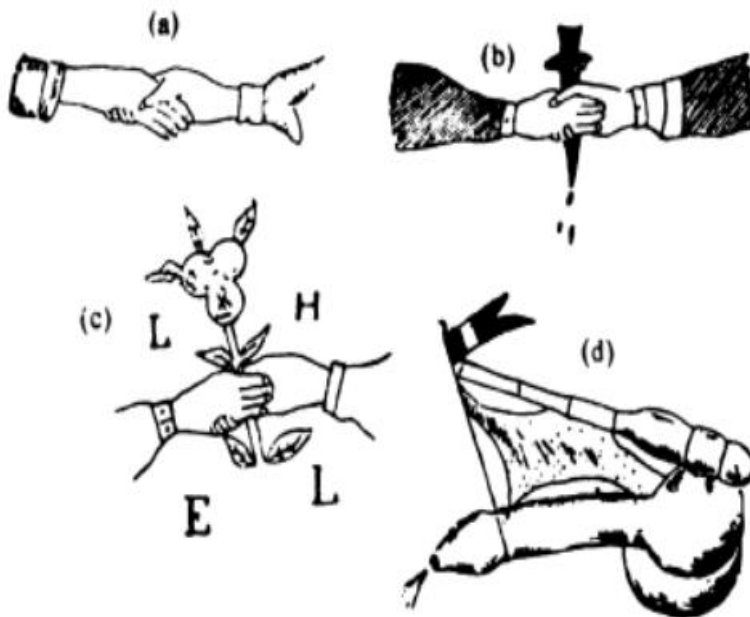
**Figure 3.17:** Albert von Zahn, Detail of crest and banner forms, 1864. Printed in Albert von Zahn, *Musterbuch für häusliche Kunstarbeiten* (1864), Table XXIII.



**Figure 3.18:** Abraham Baer, “Tattooing on prisoners in Plötzensee Prison in Berlin,” 1893. Printed in Abraham Baer, *Der Verbrecher in anthropologischer Beziehung* (1893), Table I.

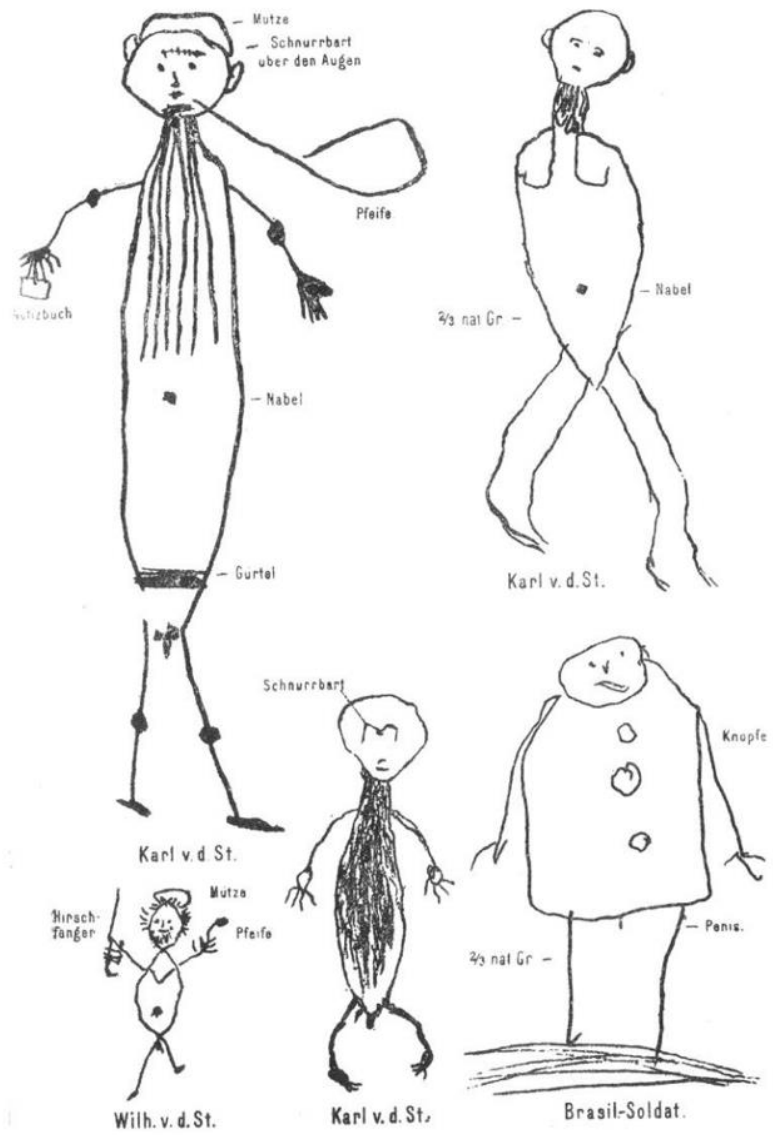


**Figure 3.19:** Silvio Armando Neri, Obscene pederastic tattoos on two criminals, 1902. Printed in *Archivio di psichiatria, scienze penali ed antropologia criminale* Vol. 23 (1902): 252.



**Figure 3.20:** Unknown illustrator, “Erotic symbols and obscene tattoos from the buttocks of pederasts,” 1912. Printed in Albert Moll, *Handbuch für Sexualwissenschaften* (1912), 687.





**Figure 3.21:** Drawings by Bororo individuals in Central Brazil, printed in Karl von den Steinen, *Unter den Naturvölkern Zentral-Brasiliens. Reiseschilderung und Ergebnisse der Zweiten Schingú-Expedition, 1887-1888.*

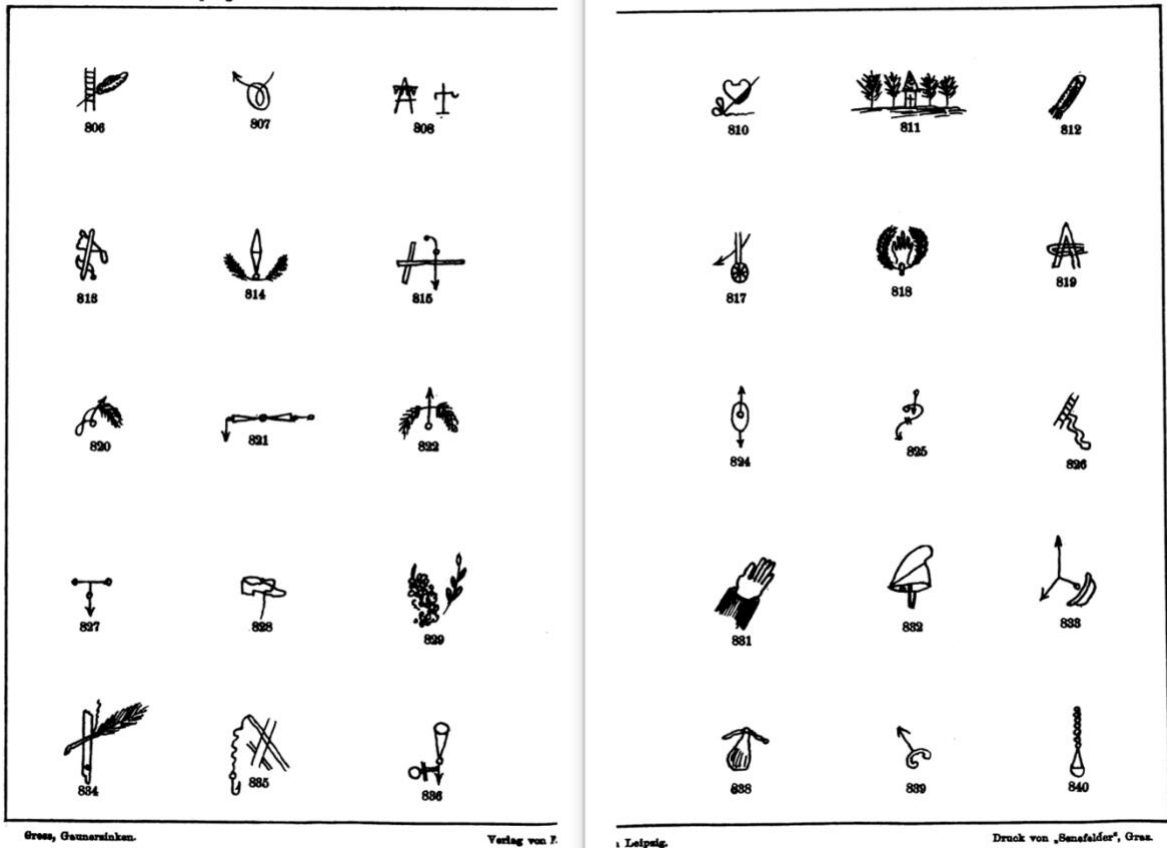
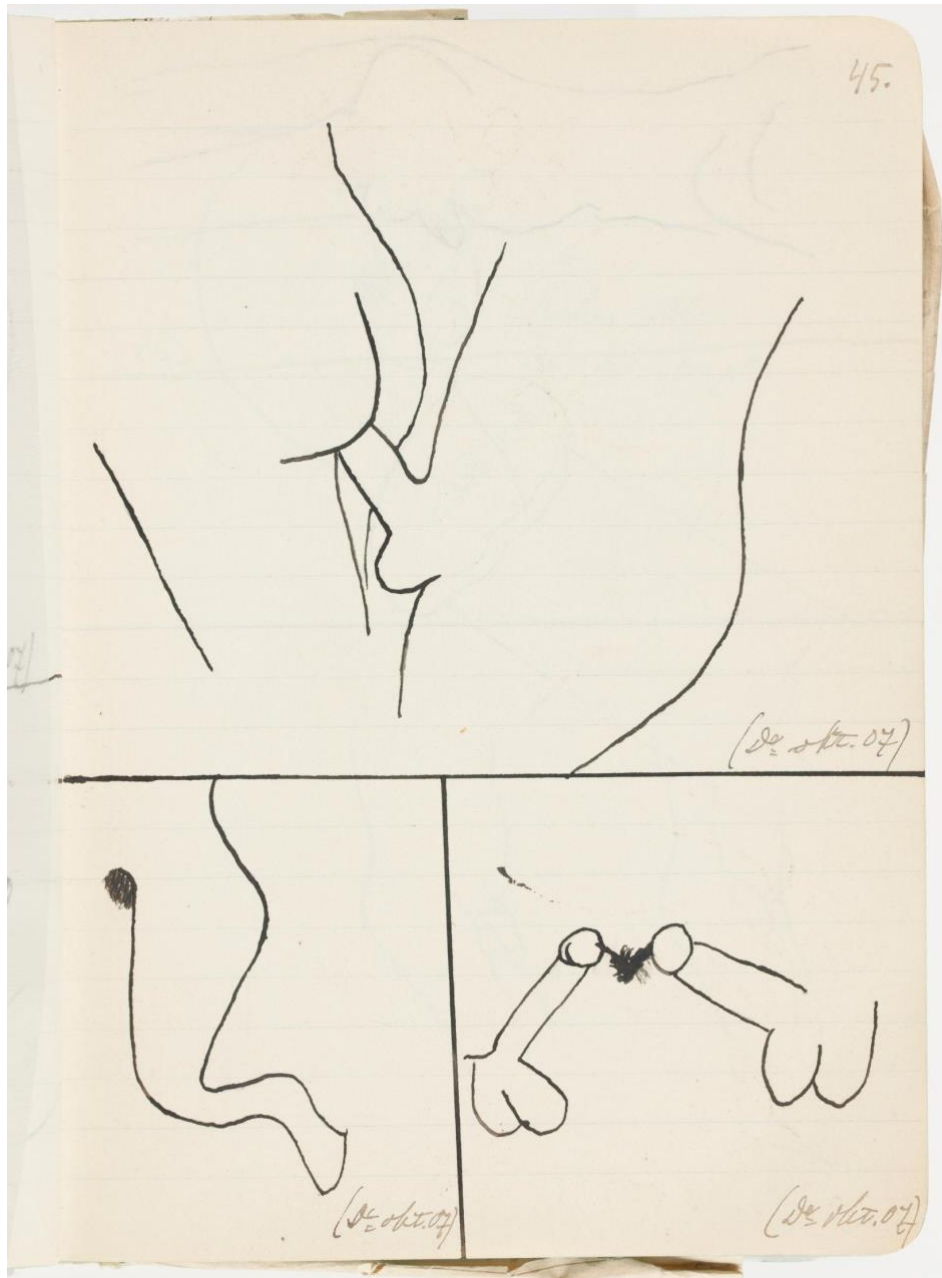


Figure 3.22: Hanns Gross, Table 24, “Die Gaunerzinken der Freistädter Handschrift,” Reprint from *Archiv für Kriminal-Anthropologie*, v. 2 (1899).



**Figure 3.23:** Bengt Claudelin, obscene homosexual graffiti from Swedish toilets, c. 1910-30. Taken from the *Klotterböckerna* (Hallwylska museet, Stockholm).



**Figure 3.24:** “Musacchio,” Cartoon printed in *Assiette au beurre*, early twentieth century.  
Reprinted in Leo Schidrowitz, *Bilder-Lexikon der Erotik*, vol. 2 (Wien: Institut für  
Sexualforschung in Wien, 1930), 12.

**Chapter 4 Figures**



**Figure 4.1:** “E.J.,” Book collection, c. 1914. Private collection, Vienna.



**Figure 4.2:** “E.J.,” Book with homoerotic photographs, c. 1914. Private collection, Vienna.

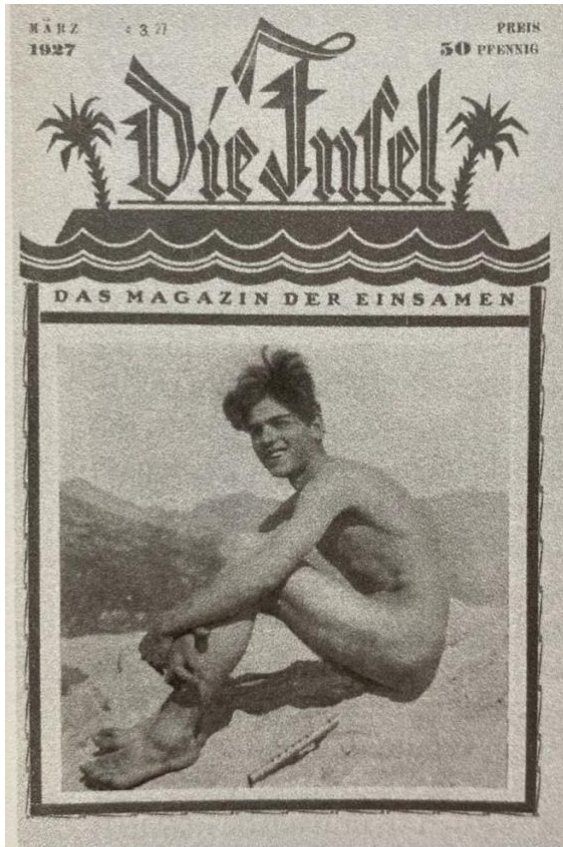


Figure 4.3: Cover of *Die Insel: Das Magazin der Einsamen* (March 1927)

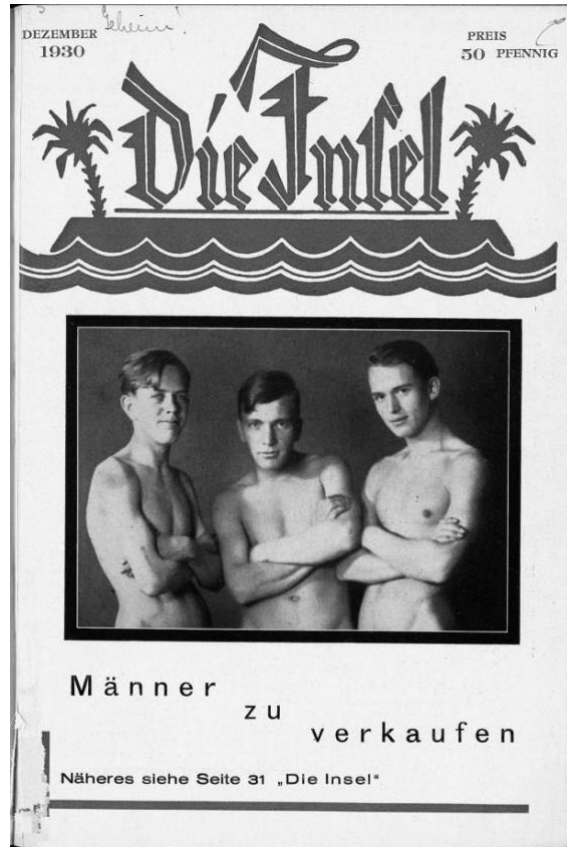


Figure 4.4: Cover of *Die Insel: Das Magazin der Einsamen* (December 1930)

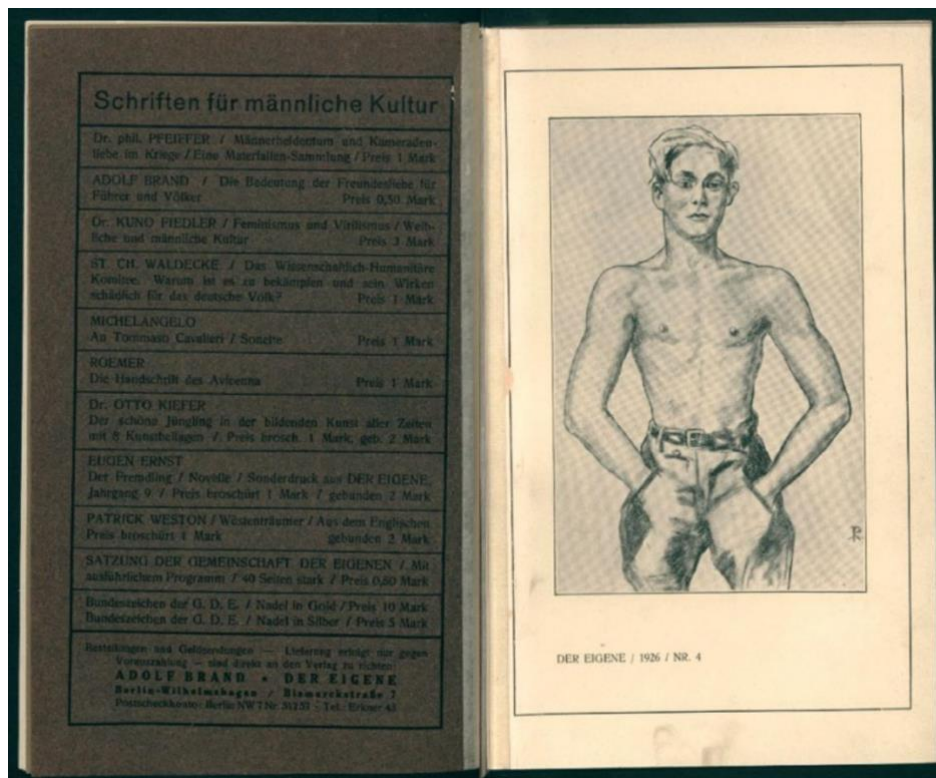
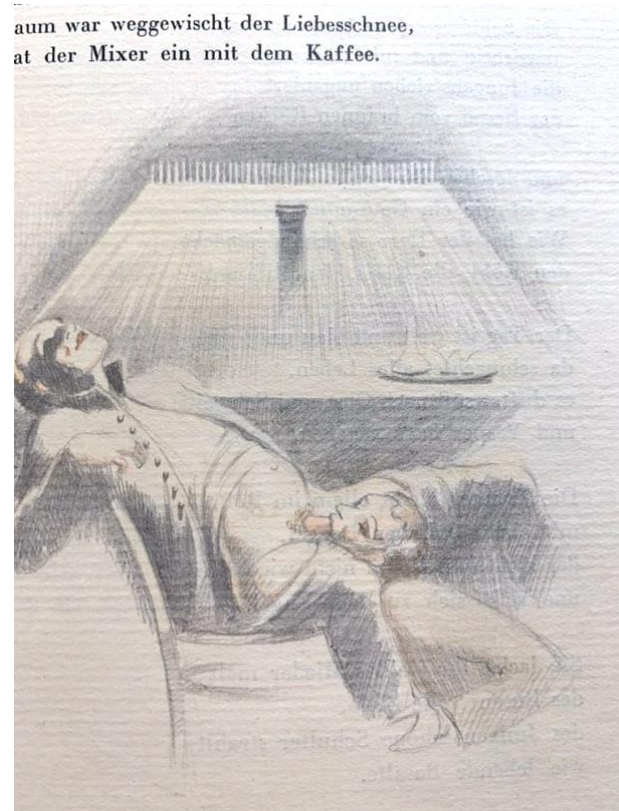


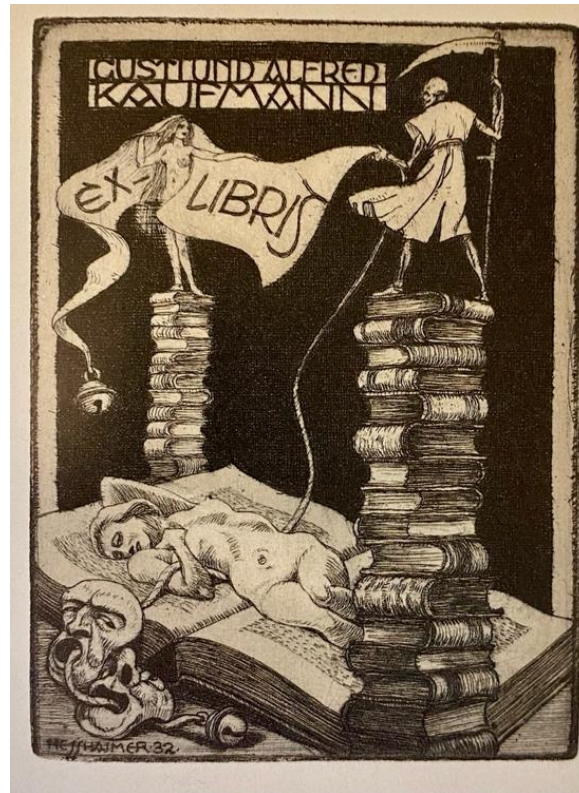
Figure 4.5: Unidentified artist, Drawing of a young man, printed in Adolf Brand's *Der Eigene*, v. 11 nr. 4, 1926.



**Figure 4.6:** Margit Gaál, Original illustration for “Ballad,” *Die Braune Blume* (Berlin: unidentified publisher, undated [c. 1929]), 33. [Private collection, Göttingen, Germany].



**Figure 4.7:** Margit Gaál, Original illustration for “The Police Hour,” *Die Braune Blume* (Berlin: unidentified publisher, undated [c. 1929]), 33. [Private collection, Göttingen, Germany].



**Figure 4.8:** Ludwig Hesshaimer, Ex libris for Gusti and Alfred Kaufmann, 1932.



**Figure 4.9:** Sascha Schneider, Ex libris for Elsbeth Peterich, 1908-16. Zinc etching, 8.5 x 7.9 cm. Private collection.



**Figure 4.10:** Sascha Schneider, Ex libris for Grete Ostwald, 1916. Zinc etching, 8.3 x 5.5 cm. Private collection.



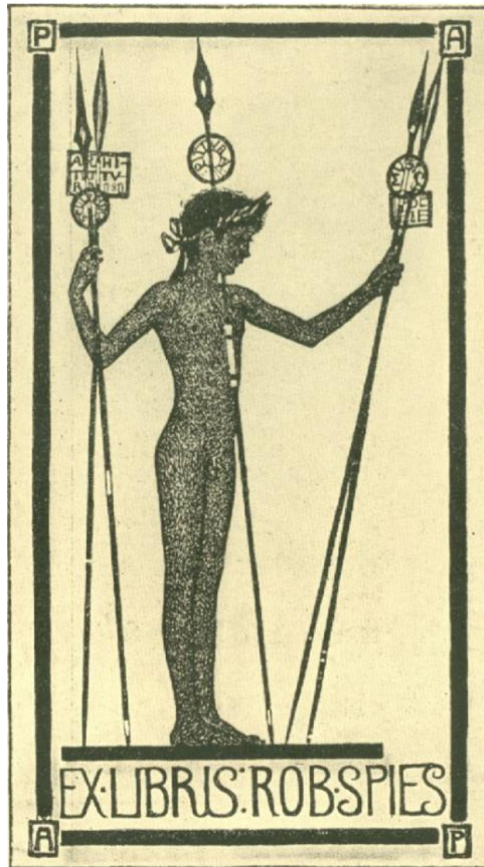


Figure 4.11: Sascha Schneider, Ex libris for Robert Spies, 1909-12. Zink etching, 10.9 x 6.5 cm. Private collection.

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### Exlibrischau der Schriftleitung.



aus meiner letzten Exlibrischau ist allen bekannt, wie meine kleinen Bucheigerzeichen mit ihren spitzen Ecken und Kanten Krieg miteinander führten, und wie nur mit Mühe und Not Frieden wurde. Aber ich bin der Überzeugung, daß ich unter dieser kleinen aufsässigen Gesellschaft für die Dauer nicht Ruhe gehalten hätte, wenn nicht Seltsames mir zur Hilfe gekommen wäre.

Meine Bitte hat nämlich Erfolg gehabt, und wenn ich hiermit eine Kollektivdanknote ausstellen muß, so geschieht es aus Mangel an Zeit, nicht aus Mangel an Dankbarkeit.

Von allen Seiten flohen mir Exlibris zu, und ich kann unseren Mitgliedern verraten, nicht einfache Klischeedrucke, nein, Radierungen, Originalfarbenschnitte, kurz allerlei, was der Sammler gern sieht und mit Schmunzeln betrachtet.

Aber diese Fülle der Neankömmlinge hätte vielleicht den Kampf nur um neue Heerscharen vermehrt, wenn nicht mit den Exlibris ein dickes Buch und zwei Mappen aufgetaucht wären; sie haben mit ihrem ganzen Gewicht höhnisch auf meine Sammlung gelegt, und nun mußten die Blätter stillhalten.

Es freut besonders, daß er das Verdienst Josef Sattlers um die Befreiung unsrer Kunst von allzu engem Stoffkreise erneut betont. Auch was er gegen das Luxusexlibris mit der Überfülle von Remarques hervorbringt, jenen zeichnerischen Randbemerkungen, ursprünglich als Ätzproben bestimmt, kann man nur unterschreiben und die Verwendung dieser großen Blätter als »Eigenblatt«, sein graphisches Symbol der Persönlichkeit des Besitzers mit Betonung seiner Hauptneigungen und -Interessen«, unterstützen. Über-

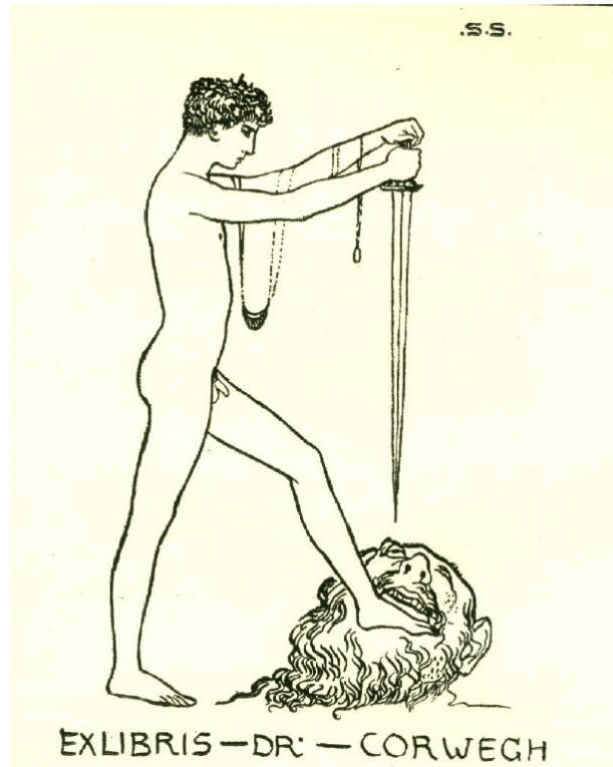


Sascha Schneider

Denn Buch und Mappen waren nicht nur schwer an spezifischem Gewicht, nein, sie trugen schwerer an ihrer geistigen und künstlerischen Fracht, die sich nicht in Gramm ausdrücken läßt.

»Neue Deutsche Exlibris« mit einleitendem Text von Richard Braungart, verlegt bei Franz Hanfstaengl-München in der Sammlung »Die Kunst unserer Zeit«, so heißt das umfangreiche Werk, das in einem stattlichen Bande Proben der besten deutschen Exlibriskunst vereinigt. Die Einleitung Braungarts gibt mehr als einleitende Worte, sie stellt ohne Härte für jede Exlibriskunst Prinzipien auf, denen man gern zustimmt.

Figure 4.12: Robert Corwegh, title page of "Exlibrischau der Schriftleitung," *Exlibris: Buchkunst und angewandte Graphik*, v. 23 (1913). 92.



**Figure 4.13:** Sascha Schneider, Ex libris for Robert Corwegh, 1911-15. Zinc etching, 8 x 5 cm. Private collection.



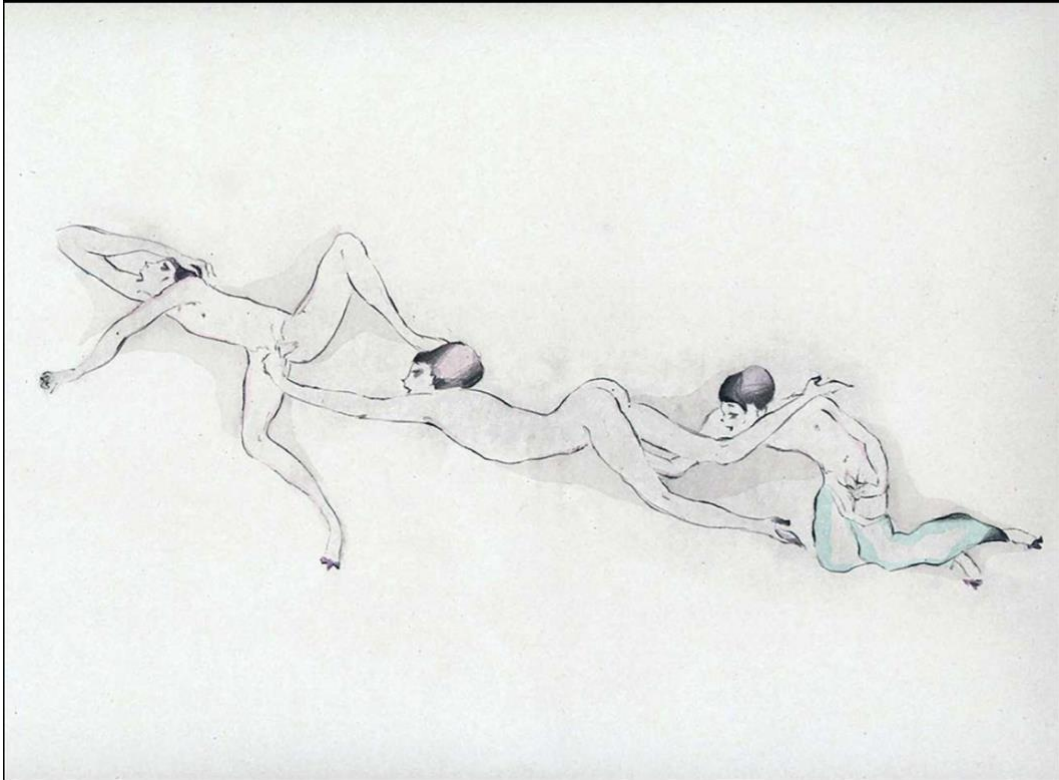
**Figure 4.14:** August Stoehr, „Inter folia fructus“ ex libris for Karl Emich Graf zu Leiningen Westerburg, 1902.



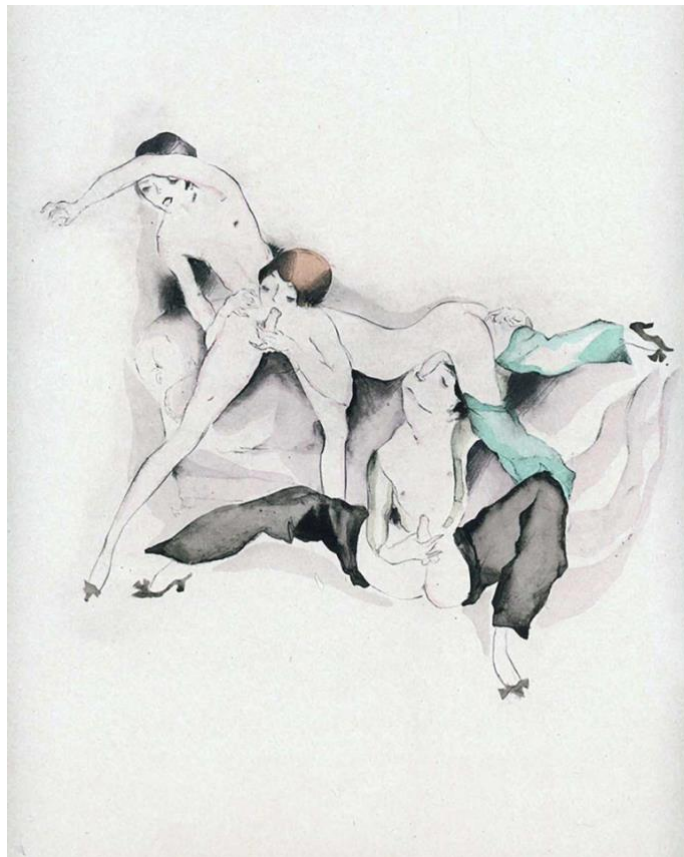
**Figure 4.15:** Anonymous, Title page of *Skizzen* (Berlin: 1921). Private collection.



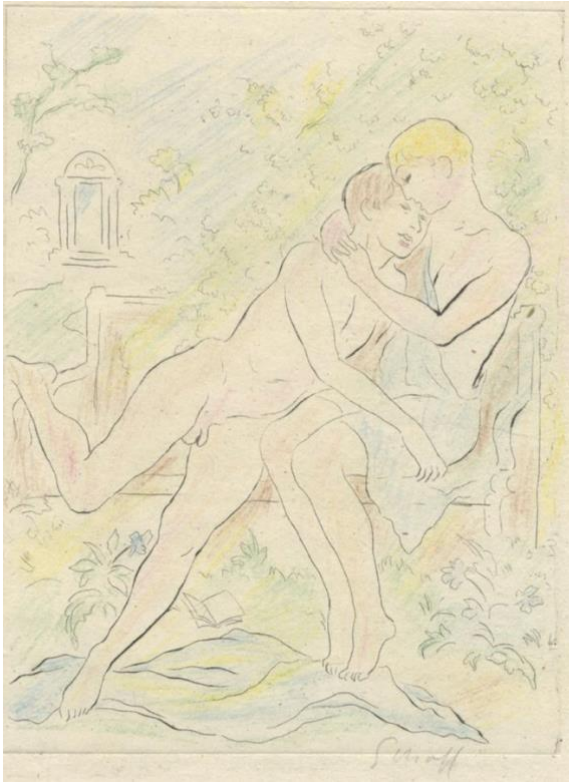
**Figure 4.16:** Erich Godal, Title page of *Das Lusthaus der Knaben*, 1922. Hand colored lithograph. Private collection.



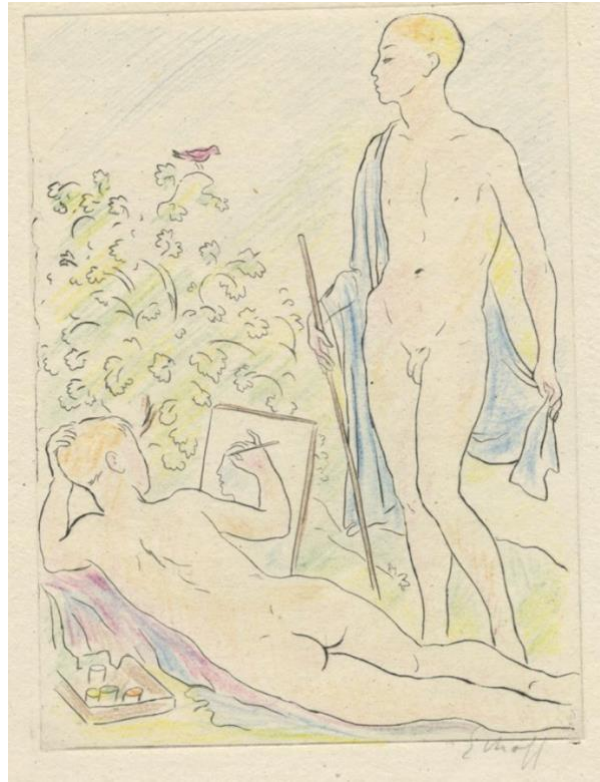
**Figure 4.17:** Erich Godal, Untitled print from *Das Lusthaus der Knaben*, 1922. Hand colored lithograph. Private collection.



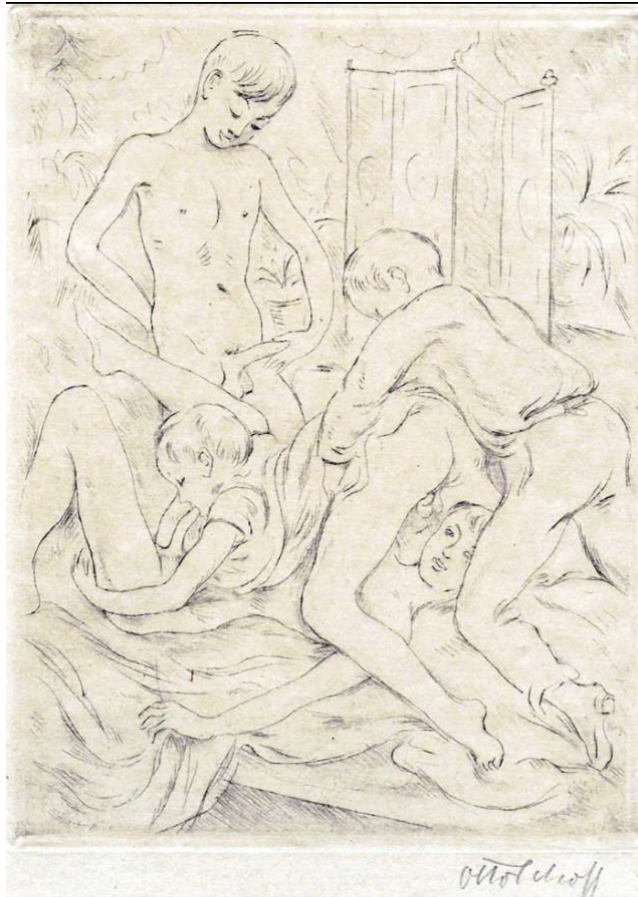
**Figure 4.18:** Erich Godal, Untitled print from *Das Lusthaus der Knaben*, 1922. Hand colored lithograph. Private collection.



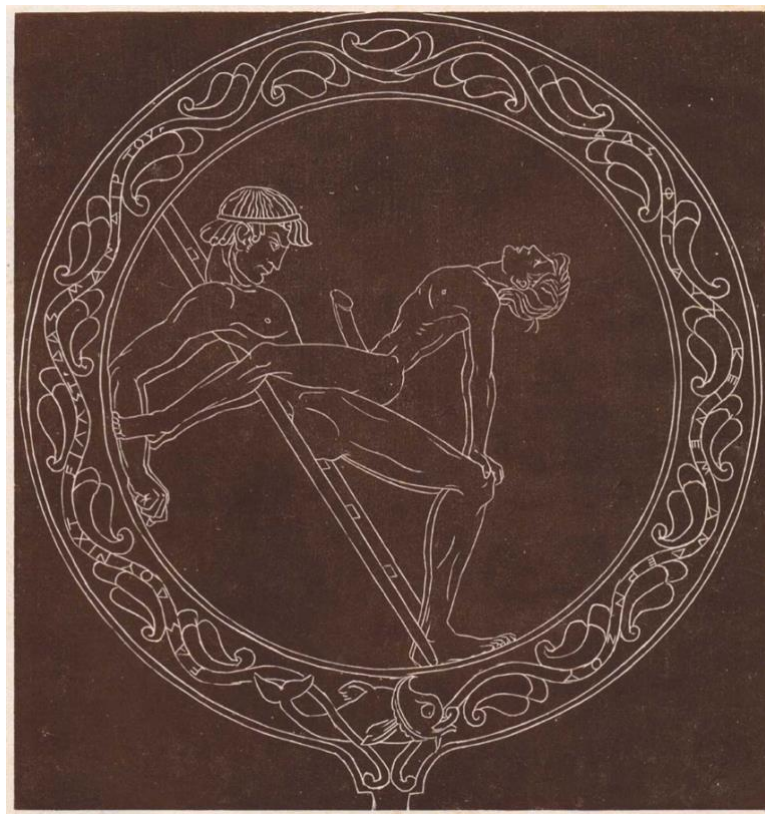
**Figure 4.19:** Otto Schoff, Untitled print from *Das Buch Marathus: Elegien der Knabenliebe*, Alfred Richard Meyer, ed. (Berlin: Fritz Gurlitt Verlag, 1923). Hand colored engraving. Private collection.



**Figure 4.20:** Otto Schoff, Untitled print from *Das Buch Marathus: Elegien der Knabenliebe*, Alfred Richard Meyer, ed. (Berlin: Fritz Gurlitt Verlag, 1923). Hand colored engraving. Private collection.



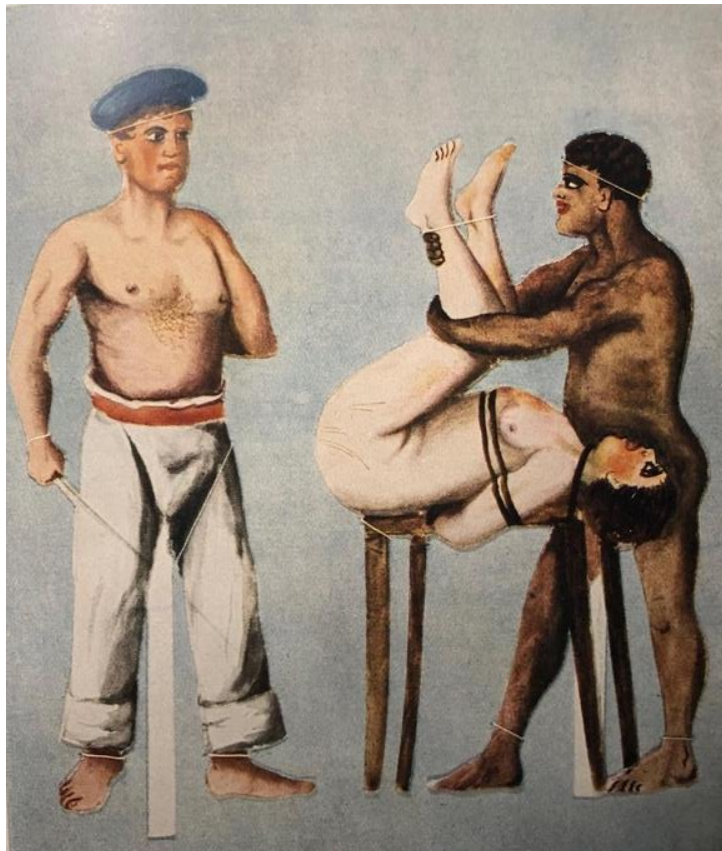
**Figure 4.21:** Otto Schoff, Untitled print from *Knabenliebe* (Berlin: Fritz Gurlitt Verlag, 1925). Engraving. Private collection.



**Figure 4.22:** Marcus Behmer, Untitled print from *Divertimenti*, 1931. Private collection.



**Figure 4.23:** Unknown artist, Self-projection drawing as “Voo Doo,” printed in Hirschfeld’s *Geschlechtskunde*, vol. 4, 1930.



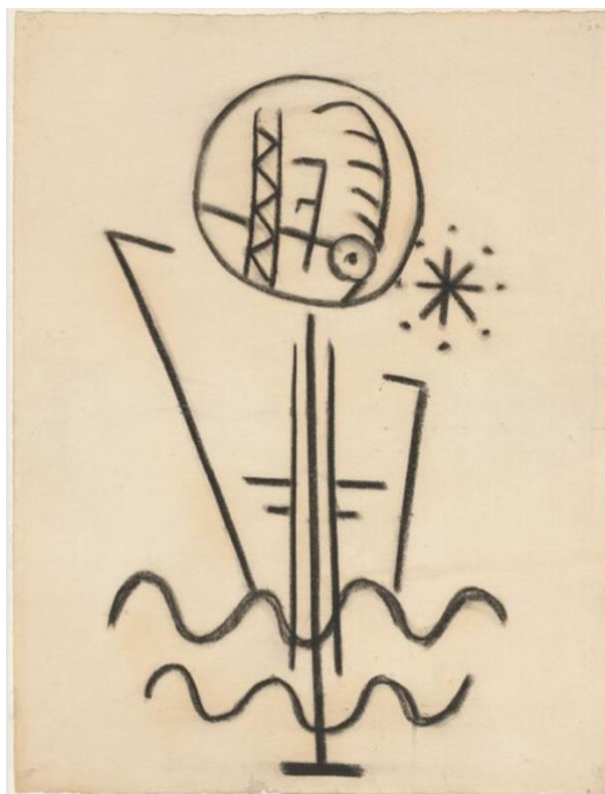
**Figures 4.24-4.25:** Unknown artist, Wish representation drawings of a passive masochistic man, printed in Hirschfeld's *Geschlechtskunde*, vol. 4, 1930.



**Coda Figures**



**Figure 5.1:** Touko Laaksonen, *Untitled*, 1944. Graphite on paper, 28.7 x 20.95 cm. Tom of Finland Foundation, Los Angeles.



**Figure 5.2:** Marsden Hartley, *Berlin Symbols #6*, 1914. Charcoal on laid paper mounted to paperboard, 63.5 × 48.26 cm. National Gallery of Art, Washington D.C.