

PHILOSOPHERS, ARTISTS AND SAINTS:
ERNST L. KIRCHNER AND MALE FRIENDSHIP IN PAINTINGS, 1914-1917

by

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Abstract

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Sharon Jordan

Advisor: Professor Rose-Carol Washton Long

This dissertation examines the profound role of Friedrich Nietzsche's early publications on the artist Ernst L. Kirchner's theories and artwork in contrast to interpretations that focus on the overriding influence of the philosopher's late work *Thus Spoke Zarathustra*.

Although it is well known that the German Expressionist artists' group Brücke, or "bridge," with Kirchner as a founding member, selected their name from a passage in *Thus Spoke Zarathustra* to signify their movement away from the conventional social and aesthetic values of Wilhelmine Germany upon their foundation in Dresden in 1905, Kirchner's intense, lifelong engagement with Nietzsche necessitates further examination. Of particular importance is Kirchner's close friendship with the charismatic Botho Graef, a Classical archaeologist and, like Nietzsche, a trained philologist.

Beginning in 1914, the men's relationship spanned three turbulent years that were interrupted by the devastating events of the First World War and ended with Graef's death in 1917. Graef introduced Kirchner to Nietzsche's first publication *The Birth of Tragedy*, a work centered on creative achievement as realized by the ancient Greeks through their productive reconciliation of dichotomous Apollinian and Dionysian forces.

This idea quickly fostered Kirchner's emergent interest in double-portraiture featuring Graef and the members of his circle with whom he maintained close pedagogical relationships modeled after the ancient example.

In Nietzsche's second publication *Untimely Meditations*, he explains that only a select few possess an understanding of how to successfully reconcile their actions within a framework of historical awareness to become supra-historical individuals, the "philosophers, artists and saints" of his text who are uniquely capable of transcendent cultural contributions. Kirchner navigated this period by relying equally on the example described in Nietzsche's publication and on his friendship with Graef to realize his most enduring and expressive artworks, thereby succeeding in realizing Nietzsche's ideal while establishing a potent means of artistic reconciliation and personal preservation that remained vital throughout the duration of the war and continued long after his union with Graef ended.

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Introduction: “Man is the Measure of Things”¹: Ernst L. Kirchner and Botho Graef: A Friendship in Paintings, 1914-1917

The German Expressionist artist Ernst L. Kirchner (1880-1938) created a prodigious number of artworks in various media, including over one thousand paintings made from 1905 until his death in 1938. Although his subject matter varied to include genre scenes, still-lives, cityscapes and landscapes, his numerous figural compositions, portraits and self-portraits are among his most revelatory and emblematic works.

In the overall literature on Kirchner, his innovative and bohemian Brücke period has received the most attention, a situation bolstered by the recent centennial anniversary of the group’s foundation in 1905.² The Brücke, meaning “bridge,” a name selected from a passage in Friedrich Nietzsche’s *Thus Spoke Zarathustra* to signify the member’s passionate embrace of artistic and societal choices outside of bourgeois conventions, was formed with a desire to elevate instinct and preserve the direct expression of inspiration as the idealistic young artists sought to merge their art making with their lifestyle. As

¹ Friedrich Nietzsche, quoting the Greek philosopher Protagoras, in *Beyond Good and Evil*, in *Basic Writings of Nietzsche*, trans. and ed. Walter Kaufmann, Modern Library Edition (New York: Random House, Inc., 2000), 201.

² The most recent examination of the Brücke group is the current exhibition at the Neue Galerie, New York, on view from February 26-June 29, 2009. For the accompanying catalogue, see Reinhold Heller, ed., *Brücke: The Birth of Expressionism in Dresden and Berlin, 1905-1913* (New York: Hatje Cantz and Neue Galerie, 2009). Despite the relatively recent popularity of German Expressionism in the U. S., this is the first major museum exhibition devoted exclusively to the group in this country; for a discussion of their belated reception, see the catalogue’s essay by Rose-Carol Washton Long, “Brücke and German Expressionism: Reception Reconsidered,” in *Brücke: The Birth of Expressionism*, 78-101. For comprehensive exhibition catalogues devoted to the Brücke group, see Javier Arnaldo and Magdalena M. Moeller, eds., *Brücke: El Nacimiento del Expresionismo Aleman* (Madrid: Fundación Colección Thyssen-Bornemisza, 2005); and Birgit Dalbajewa and Ulrich Bischoff, eds., *Die Brücke in Dresden, 1905-1911* (Cologne: Walter König, 2001); and for the group’s Berlin period, see Anita Beloubek-Hammer, Magdalena M. Moeller, and Dieter Scholz, eds., *Brücke und Berlin: 100 Jahre Expressionismus* (Berlin: Staatliche Museen zu Berlin and Nicolai, 2005). One of the best sources on the Brücke remains Jill Lloyd, *German Expressionism: Primitivism and Modernity* (New Haven and London: Yale University Press, 1991); and for Kirchner during the Brücke period, see Jill Lloyd and Magdalena M. Moeller, eds., *Ernst Ludwig Kirchner: The Dresden and Berlin Years* (London: Royal Academy of Arts, 2003).

such, the male artists relied on young women, including their girlfriends and their uninhibited, prepubescent neighbors Fränzi and her sister Marzella as models. These women were frequently depicted nude inside the artists' studios and outdoors together with the men in the group to signify the vital engagement with nature and the bodily freedom extolled by Nietzsche's protagonist Zarathustra. As a result of these abundant images, the female model has been identified as synonymous with Kirchner's work in the art historical literature and there have been numerous studies devoted to the women in his artworks.³ However, to date, there has been no systematic examination of how Kirchner's depictions of men function within his overall oeuvre.⁴

To remedy this, I plan to focus on the friendship between Kirchner and the charismatic Botho Graef (1857-1917), a Classical archaeologist, professor of art history, and modern arts patron, whose strong bond with the artist proved to be significant for both men. While Graef described the artist as being "enchanted to me," Kirchner

³ For an early study that advanced a one-sided and rather negative view of Kirchner as a masochistic painter of women, see Carol Duncan, "Virility and Domination in Early Twentieth-Century Vanguard Painting," in *The Aesthetics of Power: Essays in Critical Art History*, ed. Carol Duncan (Cambridge, MA: Cambridge University Press, 1993): 81-107. For a less biased, thorough study devoted to Kirchner's female models during the Dresden and Berlin periods see Gerd Presler, *Ernst Ludwig Kirchner: Seine Frauen, seine Modelle, seine Bilder* (Munich: Prestel, 1998); see also Hermann von Gerlinger and Herwig Guratzsch, eds., *Frauen in Kunst und Leben der Brücke* exh. cat. (Schleswig: Schloss Gottorf, 2000); and Hyang-Sook Kim, *Die Frauendarstellungen im Werk von Ernst Ludwig Kirchner: Vergorgene Selbstbekenntnisse des Malers* (Marburg: Tectum Verlag, 2002); and Barbara Nierhoff, *Das Bild der Frau: Sexualität und Körperlichkeit in der Kunst der Brücke* (Essen: Klartext, 2004). For a discussion of Kirchner's Dresden girlfriend, see Bernd Hünlich, "E. L. Kirchners Dresdener Freundin 'Dodo' Doris Grosse," *Dresdener Kunstblätter* 32, no. 4 (1988): 137-47.

⁴ Several recent publications have focused on Kirchner's self-portraits within the span of his life's work including Roland Scotti, *Ernst Ludwig Kirchner Selbstbildnisse* (Davos: Kirchner Museum, 1997); and Jutta Hülsewig-Johnen ed., *Ernst Ludwig Kirchner und die Brücke: Selbstbildnisse – Künstlerbildnisse* (Bielefeld and Leipzig: Kerber Verlag, 2005). Although the second publication is an illustrated chronology of Kirchner's self-portraits and representations of other artists, the content focuses almost entirely on the Brücke and the Swiss period with perfunctory mention of only two Berlin portraits of Alfred Döblin and Oskar Schlemmer and no discussion of the numerous, important representations of non-artists.

similarly viewed their relationship as “mutually adoring in character.”⁵ Beginning in early 1914, the men’s friendship was relatively short in duration, spanning three turbulent years that were interrupted by the devastating events of the First World War and soon over with Graef’s untimely death from heart failure in 1917. Even so, the friendship came at a crucial period for Kirchner, immediately after the break-up of the Brücke group, amongst whom he had come into his own artistically since their formation in 1905 until their dissolution in 1913. Furthermore, the relationship with Graef provided immense support for the artist who suffered from extreme mental and physical debilitation as the war progressed. Kirchner explained as much in a condolence letter to Graef’s sister Sabine Lepsius in which he stated simply: “He was everything, and he was always the only one who understood.”⁶

The inspiration that Kirchner found in the company of Graef, who was the pedagogical leader to a community of young, creative male artists and writers in the university town of Jena, is evident from the seven highly original paintings that reflect their friendship. Kirchner completed six paintings of Graef and his companion Hugo Biallowons in a burst of creativity during the second half of 1914 with one final painting of Hugo made in 1915 after the war had altered the course of all the men’s lives (Figs. 1-7).⁷ This output is comparable in number to the paintings featuring Erich Heckel and Otto

⁵ Graef, in a letter dated December 24, 1914, to Hugo Hertwig, as quoted in Volker Wahl, “Ernst Kirchner und Jena. Ein Beitrag zur Biographie des Künstlers anlässlich seines 100. Geburtstages,” in *Forschungen und Berichte, 150 Jahre Staatliche Museen Zu Berlin* 20 (Berlin: Staatliche Museen Zu Berlin, 1980), 481; and Lothar Grisebach, ed., *E. L. Kirchners Davoser Tagebuch* (Cologne: Verlag M. DuMont Schauberg, 1968), 246.

⁶ Kirchner, in an undated letter to Sabine Lepsius, in Lothar Grisebach, *Maler des Expressionismus im Briefwechsel mit Eberhard Grisebach* (Hamburg: Christian Wegner Verlag, 1962), 68.

Mueller, the two members of the Brücke group with whom Kirchner was closest; over a much longer span of eight years in which the group was active, Kirchner painted eight images of them.⁸ The seven paintings and numerous graphic works depicting Graef and Biallowons are unrivaled within Kirchner's oeuvre for their intimacy in subject matter and for their depiction of a deeply empathetic bond between the artist and his subjects.⁹

My discussion of the two men's friendship and its resultant imagery will unite central and interrelated aspects of their individual ideologies that have heretofore been overlooked in discussions of their relationship. To best understand Graef, it is imperative to consider how his all-encompassing interest in the arts, culture and practices of the ancient Greeks inextricably informed his identity and shaped his lifestyle. As will be

⁷ Additionally, Graef appears within the center of the landscape painting *Graef's Garden in Jena*, 1916 (Fig. 6.13), bringing the total number of paintings of Graef and Biallowons to eight although it is not a portrait like the others.

⁸ Throughout the text, for reproductions of the artworks that are discussed but not illustrated, a footnote will refer to Donald Gordon's catalogue raisonné for Kirchner's paintings with the corresponding Gordon # or to other sources where necessary for reference. Kirchner's paintings of Heckel include *Erich Heckel and Model in Studio*, 1905 (Fig. 2.4/G6); *Portrait of the Painter Heckel*, 1907 (Fig. 2.5/G28); *Portrait of Erich Heckel*, 1909 (not in Gordon/Bündner Kunstmuseum, Chur, and see Arnaldo and Moeller, *Brücke: El Nacimiento* exh. cat. #119); *Portrait of Erich Heckel*, 1910/1920 (Fig. 2.6/G167). Mueller joined the group in 1910 and he appears in paintings shortly afterwards, including *Otto and Maschka Mueller in the Studio*, 1911 (G197); *Otto Mueller with Pipe*, 1913 (Fig. 4.1/G296); and Heckel and Mueller are depicted together in two similar genre scenes *Erich Heckel and Otto Mueller Playing Chess*, 1913 (Fig. 4.7/G302); and *Erich Heckel and Otto Mueller Playing Chess II*, 1913 (G303). Later, Kirchner painted the men once more as part of his famous portrait of the Brücke in *Artist's Group Brücke*, 1926-1927 (G855).

Meanwhile, the only Brücke portrait painting depicting Kirchner is by Heckel, in *Kirchner with Pineapple*, 1910, on the reverse of the painting *Still-Life*, 1910. In 1917, after hearing about Kirchner's suffering during the war, Heckel painted two symbolic portraits, *Roquairol* and *The Friend*, both inspired by the Romantic writer Jean Paul's novel *Titan*, written in 1802, about the tragic demise and madness of the protagonist Captain Roquairol. (For reproductions of the later portraits see Paul Vogt, *Erich Heckel* (Recklinghausen: Verlag Aurel Bongers, 1965), 1917/2 & 3; and for a discussion of *Roquairol*, see Donald Gordon, *Expressionism: Art and Idea* (New Haven and London: Yale University Press, 1987), 55. *Kirchner with Pineapple* is listed in the Vogt catalogue raisonné as 1910/68 but not reproduced.)

⁹ Throughout the text, where graphic works are discussed but not illustrated, the reference number for the catalogue raisonné will be given; see Annemarie Dube and Wolf-Dieter Dube, *E. L. Kirchner: das graphisches Werk* (Munich: Prestel Verlag, 1967). In addition to the paintings, Kirchner executed two lithographs of Graef (both 1915) (L283, L284), one woodcut portrait (1915) (H248), two etchings of Graef together with Biallowons (both 1915) (Figs. 4.6, 4.9/R199, R201), four lithographs of Hugo in various poses (all 1915) (L277, L279, L281, L282), and one woodcut portrait in response to Hugo's death (1916) (Fig. 6.12/H277). In addition, he made numerous sketches and took several photographs of both men.

discussed throughout the forthcoming text, Graef frequently invoked the guiding role of the ancients in lectures and essays and his Jena home was structured around the example of ancient Greek pederasty, or the intimate union between an older male and a youth, of which he practiced an updated form in his pedagogical relationships with his young protégés and in his romantic union with Biallowons.

In an autobiographical text written in 1925, long after the period of their friendship, Kirchner described Graef's understanding of his artwork in relation to the ancients, explaining: "What Graef treasured in my work was its frank sensuousness and its unbroken development and autonomy...something new which, through the unconfined conception of life there expressed, connected it for him with antiquity."¹⁰ My discussion will unite this key component of Graef's identity with the foremost guiding role that Nietzsche's philosophies held for both Kirchner and Graef in order to provide a more complete assessment of the men's bond by considering the values they shared. As a result, such an examination will necessarily expand upon the partial understanding of Kirchner's lifelong dedication to Nietzsche's ideals that currently prevails in the literature.

Friedrich Nietzsche's *The Birth of Tragedy* as a Model for Reconciliation

Friedrich Nietzsche (1844-1900), a polemical figure whose philosophy profoundly influenced a generation of German artists at the turn of the century, is rightly discussed in the Kirchner literature as formative on the founding ideals of the Brücke

¹⁰ Kirchner, "Die Arbeit E. L. Kirchners," 1916-1925, in Eberhard W. Kornfeld, *Ernst Ludwig Kirchner Nachzeichnung seines Lebens* (Bern: Kirchner-Haus Davos, 1979), 336.

group.¹¹ As will be expanded upon in Chapter Two, the scholarship on Kirchner and the Brücke has dealt with Nietzsche's influence as largely synonymous with *Thus Spoke Zarathustra*, while the group's uninhibited embrace of sexuality has also been interpreted as indebted to his final publication *The Will to Power*.¹² In *Ernst Ludwig Kirchner*, Donald E. Gordon's catalogue raisonné for the artist's paintings, published in 1968, he devotes very little time to a discussion of the influence of Nietzsche.¹³ Primarily, he discusses the philosopher's influence in relation to certain details in the appearance of the central figure in one late painting, *The Wanderer*, 1922, based on the artist, as related to a passage in *Thus Spoke Zarathustra*.¹⁴

Gordon's subsequent book *Expressionism: Art and Idea* provides a thorough examination of German and Austrian Expressionism. But, Gordon maintains that it is

¹¹ The relationship between Nietzsche's *Thus Spoke Zarathustra* and the founding of the Brücke group was established in Georg Reinhardt, "Die frühe 'Brücke': Beiträge zur Geschichte und zum Werk der Dresdener Künstlergruppe Brücke der Jahre 1905 bis 1908," *Brücke-Archiv* nos. 9/10 (Berlin: 1977-1978). Magdalena M. Moeller, the Director of the Brücke-Museum in Berlin, in a recent exhibition publication on the centennial founding of the group, summarized the philosopher's seminal influence on the young artists: "The figure of Friedrich Nietzsche, pioneer of a new existentialist philosophy, whose works exerted a fascination on the younger generation that today appears almost incomprehensible, was probably the driving force behind the group's choice of name. The philosopher's writings were seen as synonymous with liberation from authoritarian constraints, from materially-oriented thought processes and petty bourgeois attitudes." (Moeller, as quoted in Arnaldo and Moeller, *Brücke: El Nacimiento*, 353.)

¹² For a discussion of Nietzsche's *Thus Spoke Zarathustra* in relation to the Brücke, see Gordon, *Expressionism*, 14; and Lloyd, *German Expressionism*, 18-24; and for *The Will to Power* as discussed in these sources, see Gordon, *Expressionism*, 14-15; and Lloyd, *German Expressionism*, 114-16.

¹³ Donald E. Gordon, *Ernst Ludwig Kirchner* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1968), 18; 78; 121; and 469, note 49.

¹⁴ Gordon finds the protagonist's "displaced ear, red gash of the lips and the haunted expression of the eyes" as originating in the existential crisis that affected Kirchner from 1915 until 1918 and resulted in the paintings *The Drinker*; *Self-Portrait* and *Self-Portrait as a Soldier*, both 1915, which share these features (Figs. 8, 9, and for *The Wanderer*, 1922, see Gordon, *Ernst Ludwig Kirchner*, color plate XXI (G677)). The passage from "Part Three: The Wanderer" in *Thus Spoke Zarathustra* reads: "Now as Zarathustra was climbing the mountain he thought how often since his youth he had wandered alone and how many mountains and ridges and peaks he had already climbed. I am a wanderer and a mountain climber, he said to his heart...in the end, one experiences only oneself." (Nietzsche, *Thus Spoke Zarathustra* in *The Portable Nietzsche*, ed., trans. and with an introduction by Walter Kaufmann (London: Chatto & Windus, 1971), 264; and Nietzsche, as partially quoted in Gordon, *Ernst Ludwig Kirchner*, 121.)

solely the later Nietzsche whose influence is so profoundly felt on the Expressionists, a claim he first made in the article “Content by Contradiction,” in which he states: “Without in any way denying the existence of multiple contributing factors, I would nonetheless claim that the chief model for ambivalence in Expressionist art was the influential philosophy of Friedrich Nietzsche. I mean primarily the later and not the earlier Nietzsche...”¹⁵ If ambivalence is defined as the coexistence of opposing forces, then in contrast to Gordon, I feel it is essential to look closely at Nietzsche’s first publication *The Birth of Tragedy*, originally published in 1872 and released with a new preface by the author in 1886, the subject of which is ambivalence within the Greek psyche around the dichotomous relationship between Apollinian and Dionysian forces, in order to understand how the influence of this publication manifests itself in Kirchner’s imagery made during his association with Graef.¹⁶

I will show that for the period spanning 1914-1917, while Kirchner was heavily influenced by Graef, that it was indeed the early Nietzsche that provided his primary ideological influences, from the philosopher’s first book *The Birth of Tragedy*, and with the onset of the war, the two subsequent essays “On the Utility and Liability of History for Life,” and “Schopenhauer as Educator,” originally published separately in 1874 and together in a volume of essays titled *Untimely Meditations* in 1885. To date, any accounting for the singular importance of the philosophies of Nietzsche on the friendship

¹⁵ Gordon, “Content by Contradiction,” *Art in America* (December, 1982), 78; and see his maintenance of this position in Gordon, *Expressionism: Art and Idea*, 13.

¹⁶ “Ambivalence” as defined in *The American Heritage Dictionary*, Third Edition (New York: Houghton Mifflin Company, 1994), 26.

between Kirchner and Graef or the possibility of these early publications as being equally as influential on Kirchner are entirely lacking in the existing literature.

Until now, the influence of Nietzsche's debut publication *The Birth of Tragedy* has been ignored because its central subject of the arts of the ancient Greeks was itself not an influence on Expressionist artists, who preferred instead bold color, abstracted forms and gestural brushwork. Although Nietzsche's views on the related themes of oppositional or youthful energy in the face of contemporary decline and the creative path for cultural regeneration originate in this book, the publication was read initially by a select audience interested in the culture of the ancient Greeks, which included Graef, compared to the much broader societal appeal of his later publications, particularly *Thus Spoke Zarathustra*.

The central premise of *The Birth of Tragedy*, which will be thoroughly discussed in Chapter One, is the reconciliation of oppositional forces to realize creative accomplishment. As will be reviewed in Chapter Two, Kirchner had earlier harnessed the expressive potential of primitive art forms to establish himself outside of bourgeois artistic traditions, and throughout the period spanning 1912-1914, his interest in the Gothic style was encouraged by Wilhelm Worringer's book *Form in Gothic*, first published in 1910, as a means of negotiating the prevailing dichotomy between national identification and international, avant-garde associations that was central to the emergent Expressionist artists of the Brücke.¹⁷ As my examination of Kirchner's devotion to the

¹⁷ For a discussion of this issue, see the recent essay Jill Lloyd, "Brücke: National Identity and International Style," in *Brücke: The Birth of Expressionism*, 58-77; and Rose-Carol Washton Long, "National or International? Berlin Critics and the Question of Expressionism," in *Künstlerischer Austausch / Artistic Exchange* 3 (Berlin: Akademie Verlag, 1993): 521-34. An edition of *Form in Gothic*, originally published in 1910, soon followed that contained illustrations with the text in Wilhelm Worringer, *Formprobleme der Gotik* (Munich: R. Piper & Co., Verlag, 1912).

early publications of Nietzsche during the period of his friendship with Graef will make clear, the idea of creative regeneration through a reconciliation of forces provided the artist with a means of continuity in his ongoing use of art forms to mediate cultural expectations and personal experiences while outlining for him a potent model for self preservation that was essential with the progression of the war.

Though Kirchner's interest in the male figure reached its innovative pinnacle between 1914-1915 during his friendship with Botho Graef, the artist's recently completed *Berlin Street Scene* series, featuring provocative urban prostitutes who personify the atmosphere of the metropolis at the turn-of-the-century, has since overshadowed interest in the artist's ongoing and ever-present male imagery. According to the Expressionist scholar Charles Haxthausen, the *Street Scene* series, "has tended to be the dominant, occasionally even the exclusive focus in discussions of his images of Berlin."¹⁸

¹⁸ Charles W. Haxthausen, "'A New Beauty': Ernst Ludwig Kirchner's Images of Berlin," in *Berlin: Culture and Metropolis*, eds. Charles W. Haxthausen and Heidrun Suhr (Minneapolis and Oxford: University of Minnesota Press, 1990), 70.

The interest in the *Street Scene* series is seen most recently in the exhibition *Kirchner and the Berlin Street* at The Museum of Modern Art, New York, August 3 – November 10, 2008. See its catalogue Deborah Wye, *Kirchner and the Berlin Street* (New York: The Museum of Modern Art, 2008). Kirchner's painting *Berlin Street Scene*, 1913, (G363) was acquired by the Neue Galerie, New York, in 2006, establishing a record price for the artist at auction. See its related publication Pamela Kort, *Ernst Ludwig Kirchner Berlin Street Scene* (New York: Neue Galerie, 2007).

Many interpretations of the series conclude that Kirchner's experience of the city was negative, particularly Rosalyn Deutsche, "Alienation in Berlin: Kirchner's Street Scenes," *Art in America* (January 1983): 65 – 72. Other discussions take a more appropriate, nuanced view, interpreting the images as reflective of the positive stimulus of the urban environment or discussing them as related to various contemporary issues, including prostitution and fashion. For these, see the important essays by Haxthausen, "'A New Beauty': Ernst Ludwig Kirchner's Images of Berlin," 58-94; and Sherwin Simmons, "Ernst Kirchner's Streetwalkers: Art, Luxury, and Immorality in Berlin, 1913-1916," *Art Bulletin* 82, no. 1 (March 2000): 117-48. See also discussions of the series within the larger historical context of Berlin in Barbara Alms, ed., *Großstadt, Eros und Natur* (Delmenhorst: Städtische Galerie Delmenhorst, 2005); and Katharina Henkel and Roland März, eds., *Der Potsdamer Platz: Ernst Ludwig Kirchner und der Untergang Preussens* exh. cat. (Berlin: Neue Nationalgalerie and G+H Verlag, 2001). A discussion of the formal characteristics circumvents these issues in Lucius Grisebach, *Ernst Ludwig Kirchner: Großstadtbilder* (Munich: Piper, 1979).

In the series, the dynamic character of the urban environment is paired with Kirchner's evolved style, illustrating a departure from his earlier preference for linear forms, curvaceous lines and expansive spatial planes to the short lines, staccato brushwork, steep angles and heightened structural tension that characterize both the legendary series and the artist's Berlin style. Made from hundreds of sketches and alongside numerous etchings, woodcuts and pastel drawings, the series initially comprised eleven consecutive paintings created in less than one year, from the autumn of 1913 until early 1914, with one painting, *Women on the Street*, made in 1915 after the period of Kirchner's friendship with Graef.¹⁹ The effulgent outpouring of the series parallels the forthcoming production of the images of Graef and his circle for both cycles of paintings comprise numerous powerful images united by the theme of human interaction, whether fetching women within the urban environment or the bonds of male

Numerous contributions to the literature have examined the dichotomy between urbanity and nature as reflected in Kirchner and the Brücke's work, including Reinhold Heller, "'The City is Dark': Conceptions of Urban Landscape and Life in Expressionist Painting and Architecture," in *Expressionism Reconsidered*, eds. Gertrud Bauer Picker and Karl Eugen Webb (Munich: Wilhelm Fink, 1979): 42-55; and Jill Lloyd, "The Painted City as Nature and Artifice," in *Divided Heritage: Themes and Problems in German Modernism*, ed. Irit Rogoff (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1991): 265-90.

All of these discussions build upon Georg Simmel's pioneering sociological theories of life in the urban environment, particularly his influential essay "The Metropolis and Mental Life" ("*Die Großstadt und das Geistesleben*"), originally published in 1903. See Simmel, "The Metropolis and Mental Life," in *Art in Theory 1900-1990*, eds. Charles Harrison and Paul Wood (Oxford and Cambridge, MA: Blackwell, 1992): 130-35.

¹⁹ Kirchner reversed the position of *Street Scene*, 1913 (G414v), an early image in the series, to make the painting *Portrait of Graef*, 1914 (Fig. 1/G414), as the new recto image one year later. Confirming the ongoing public interest in the series, this *Street Scene* was in a recent Sotheby's London auction on February 3, 2009, where it was featured on the cover of the catalogue and sold for \$5.4 million. *Portrait of Graef* remained the recto image until after the publication of Gordon's Kirchner catalogue raisonné in 1968, after which it was re-stretched to make the verso image recto. (See Sotheby's London, *Impressionist and Modern Art* catalogue (February 3, 2009), lot #13.) The other paintings in the series are *Five Women on the Street*, 1913 (G362); *Berlin Street Scene*, 1913 (G363); *The Street*, 1913 (G364); *Street Scene*, 1914/1922 (G365); *Street with Red Cocotte*, 1914/1925 (G366); *Friedrich Street, Berlin*, 1914 (G367); *Two Women on the Street*, 1914 (G369); *Potsdamer Platz, Berlin*, 1914 (G370); and *Women on the Street*, 1915 (Fig. 2.20/G427). The present location of one painting, *Leipzig Street with Electric Train*, 1914 (G368), is unknown.

companionship, that were similarly completed within a short, intensely focused period of time.

The period of Kirchner's friendship with Graef and Biallowons overlaps with the outbreak of the First World War. Kirchner's self-portraits of this period, particularly *The Drinker; Self-Portrait*, 1915, and *Self-Portrait as a Soldier*, 1915, and his claustrophobic and visually unnerving genre scene *Artillerymen in the Shower*, 1915, reflecting daily military life, potently express his psychological hardship during this time and the dire consequences of military service on the artist to the extent that they, too, often overshadow the importance of the images of Graef and Biallowons in the literature (Figs. 8, 9, 10). Indeed, Kirchner's experience during the war has become one of the most defining aspects of his biography.²⁰

The war abruptly ended the idyllic community formed around Graef in Jena and caused the death of Biallowons at Verdun in July 1916 and Graef in April 1917. As a result, Kirchner's military imagery should not be seen as separate from the paintings of the two men since their production overlapped. Kirchner's suffering and sense of isolation experienced during his period of service was likely exacerbated by the separation from his new companions with the war interrupting an inspired and productive interlude spent in their company. However, most studies of these images analyze the artist's output largely in terms of his own military experience while overlooking the

²⁰ According to the author Richard Cork, Kirchner "underwent perhaps the most traumatic and protracted suffering of any artist during the war." (Cork, "'A Murderous Carnival': German Artists in the First World War," in *War, Violence and the Modern Condition*, ed. Bernd Hüppauf (Berlin and New York: Walter de Gruyter, 1997), 263.) For other discussions of Kirchner and the First World War, see Joseph Masheck, "The Horror of Bearing Arms: Kirchner's *Self-Portrait as a Soldier*: the Military Mystique and the Crisis of the World War I (with a slip of the pen by Freud)," *Art Forum* 2 (1980): 56-66; and for a broader discussion of the arts in relation to the war see Richard Cork, *A Bitter Truth: Avant Garde Art and the Great War* (New Haven and London: Yale University Press, 1994).

relatedness of Kirchner's difficulties at the time with the ruination of the vital friendships that were forged prior to the outbreak of the war.

Interest in Kirchner's third and final body of work, made in Switzerland from 1917 until his death in 1938, has grown recently alongside interest in his output in media beyond painting, prints and sculpture, as seen in several recent publications and exhibitions.²¹ Of particular interest is the recent exhibition catalogue *Ernst Ludwig Kirchner and Friends: Expressionism from the Swiss Mountains*, which thoroughly examines Kirchner's friendships with three younger artists, Paul Camenisch, Albert Müller, and Hermann Scherer, all living in Switzerland, who together formed the *Rot-Blau* group in 1924-1925, and sought Kirchner out on the occasion of his exhibition at the Kunsthalle Basel in 1923.²² In an essay in the catalogue, the artist's paintings of these

²¹ Kirchner's Swiss period has been examined in Bernhard Mendes Bürgi, ed., *Ernst Ludwig Kirchner Mountain Life: The Early Years in Davos 1917-1926* (New York and Ostfildern-Ruit: Distributed Art Publishers and Hatje Cantz, 2003); and E. W. Kornfeld, *Ernst Ludwig Kirchner Werke, 1917-1923* (Davos: Kirchner Museum, 1989). For a thorough discussion of the impact of Kirchner's first return visits to Germany in 1925-1926, see the exhibition catalogue Ingrid Mössinger and Beate Ritter, eds., *Ernst Ludwig Kirchner: Die Deutschlandreise 1925/1926 von Davos nach Frankfurt am Main, Chemnitz, Dresden, Berlin* (Cologne: Wienand Verlag, 2007). For an engaging biographical study of the woodcuts made while Kirchner convalesced in a sanatorium in Switzerland in 1917 see Albert Schoop, *Ernst Ludwig Kirchner im Thurgau: Die 10 Monate in Kreuzlingen 1917-1918* (Bern: Verlag Kornfeld, 1992). Lavish publications have recently been devoted to specific areas of Kirchner's output, including textiles, photography and interiors, in Eberhard W. Kornfeld, *Textilarbeiten nach entwürfen von E. L. Kirchner der Davoser Jahre* (Bern: Verlag Galerie Kornfeld, 1999); and Roland Scotti, ed., *Ernst Ludwig Kirchner: The Photographic Works* (Davos: Steidl and Kirchner Museum, 2007); and Hanna Strzoda, *Die Ateliers Ernst Ludwig Kirchners* (Petersberg: Michael Imhof Verlag, 2006).

²² Beat Stutzer, ed., *Ernst Ludwig Kirchner and Friends: Expressionism from the Swiss Mountains* (Zurich: Scheidegger and Spiess, 2007). Though these friendships provided a valuable artistic palliative for Kirchner's creative isolation, they were short lived: Müller and his wife, who was a friend of Erna, died of typhus in 1926; Scherer in 1927; and Kirchner fell out with Camenisch quickly. Müller and Scherer are the subjects of the nearly identical painting *The Friends (Albert Müller and Hermann Scherer)* (G763), a similarly named sculpture and a woodcut (Dube H522), all 1924-1925, where the pair are depicted in a comradely embrace. The painting *Three Artists (Hermann Scherer, Kirchner and Paul Camenisch)*, 1926 (G804), features large spaces inserted between all of the figures indicative of Kirchner's increasingly aloof attitude towards them. It is interesting that while Kirchner depicted the other men several times, none of them painted his portrait though they did several of each another. All of these artworks are reproduced in the *Ernst Ludwig Kirchner and Friends* catalogue.

men are interpreted, “as if Kirchner wished to invoke in his work what, by and large, he missed so much in his self-imposed solitude, namely, regular contact with like-minded artists and art-lovers that would release him from his intellectual isolation.”²³ This publication is valuable by highlighting the interrelationship between Kirchner’s later friendships with his concurrent artistic output, adding impetus to the need for a better understanding of the vital role of his preceding friendships since Kirchner continued to write about Graef’s influence in autobiographical texts, letters, and in his journal throughout the 1920s.

The seven paintings resultant from Kirchner’s engagement with Graef are complex visual responses to male friendship while providing a unique perspective on Kirchner’s negotiation of the crucial events of 1914-1915, a fleeting period that has remained comparatively unexplored given its enduring influence on the artist and its central position in his life and work as a pivotal point of intersection between the production of the Berlin *Street Scene* series and the compelling self-portraits that chronicle the period of the First World War while acting as a bridge between the dynamic Brücke period, the complex Berlin work, and the later Swiss years.

Kirchner’s Friendship with Graef as Understood in the Literature

Donald Gordon’s catalogue raisonné *Ernst Ludwig Kirchner* remains one of the most thorough sources of information on the overall span of the artist’s life and work, but the text includes only a brief discussion of Kirchner’s friendship with Graef that is mainly

²³ Samuel Vitali, “The Image of the Artists: Self-Portraits and Portraits of Fellow Artists by Kirchner and his Circle in the 1920s,” in *Ernst Ludwig Kirchner and Friends*, 68.

concerned with the circle of patrons and collectors whom Graef introduced to Kirchner.²⁴ Gordon was the first scholar to identify Hugo as the subject of a photograph taken by Kirchner in his Berlin studio in 1915 that shows Biallowons dancing nude, entirely uninhibited and energized. This image forms the basis of the central figure in the painting *Dance Between the Women*, 1915, the last of the seven paintings featuring either man.²⁵ The personal significance of this painting for the artist is underscored by the duration of time Kirchner remained engaged by its central motif of Hugo dancing; he made an etching simultaneous with the original painting in 1915, followed by an etching, a woodcut, and a large wooden carved relief that served as a door inside his Wilboden house in the village of Frauenkirch near Davos, all made in 1919, at which time he also completed a second version of the painting by substituting Hugo's likeness with his own.²⁶

The interest in Graef's friendship with Kirchner began with the pioneering scholarship of Volker Wahl, who remains one of the leading scholars on the subject

²⁴ Gordon, *Ernst Ludwig Kirchner*, 25-27; 105-06.

²⁵ Gordon, *Ernst Ludwig Kirchner*, 467, note 79. Gordon recognized the personal importance that the painting *Dance Between the Women* held for Kirchner as "the first of only a few Kirchner paintings to be essayed in a second version in later years," in the painting *Dance Between the Women II*, made in 1919/1926 (G597). As another indication of Kirchner's view of the importance of the original painting, Gordon states that it was one of only four paintings chosen for color reproduction in Will Grohmann's important monograph in 1926. (Gordon, *Ernst Ludwig Kirchner*, 467, note 78.) The three other color plates are *Sick Woman*; *Woman with Hat*, 1913 (Fig. 2.17/G297), *Red Nudes*, 1913/1925 (G347); and *Street Scene*, 1914 (G365). Kirchner collaborated on the Grohmann publication, including writing the essay "Das Werk" in 1925, and the book, originally published in an edition of fifty copies, included an original signed engraving by the artist; see Will Grohmann, *Das Werk Ernst Ludwig Kirchners* (Munich: Kurt Wolff Verlag, 1926).

²⁶ In 1919, *Dance Between the Women*, 1915, was exhibited for the first time at the Galerie Ludwig Schames in Frankfurt, an event that likely re-awakened Kirchner's interest in the image. For reproductions, see Dube, *E. L. Kirchner: das graphische Werk*, for the etching *Dance Between the Women*, 1915 (R208); the second etching, 1919 (R289); and the woodcut, 1919 (H403). The wooden relief door is in the collection of the Bündner Kunstmuseum, Chur.

through his research on the cultural life of the German city of Jena.²⁷ In an article devoted to the period of time Kirchner spent in Jena, published for the centennial anniversary of the artist's birth, Wahl recognized Graef's role as an important mentor, father figure and selfless friend.²⁸ In a subsequent essay, "Botho Graef, der 'Leidenschaftliche Wortführer' der Jenaer Intellektuelle," Wahl outlined different aspects related to Graef's career in the arts, including his leading role in the intellectual and artistic communities in Berlin and Jena and his impact on the development of modern art concomitant with his unwavering support of artists, including Kirchner, Edvard Munch, Emil Nolde and Henry van de Velde, making him the "passionate spokesperson" of the essay's title.²⁹ With this essay, by including numerous recollections from Graef's colleagues, friends and family, Wahl succeeded in illustrating Graef's charismatic personality, his intellectual acumen and his breadth of knowledge in many areas of art history as well as the emotional loyalty he inspired from those around him. As Kirchner became increasingly ill towards the end of 1915, Graef's friendship was vital as he arranged for the artist's care at a sanatorium in Königstein where he would soon seek treatment himself in 1917.³⁰

²⁷ Volker Wahl, *Jena als Kunststadt 1900-1933* (Leipzig: E. A. Seemann Verlag, 1988).

²⁸ Volker Wahl, "Ernst Kirchner und Jena. Ein Beitrag zur Biographie des Künstlers anlässlich seines 100. Geburtstages," in *Forschungen und Berichte, 150 Jahre Staatliche Museen Zu Berlin* 20 (Berlin: Staatliche Museen Zu Berlin, 1980): 473-501.

²⁹ Volker Wahl, "Botho Graef, der 'Leidenschaftliche Wortführer' der Jenaer Intellektuelle," in *Avantgarde und Publikum: zur Rezeption avantgardistischer Kunst in Deutschland, 1905-1933*, ed. Henrike Junge (Köln: Böhlau, 1992): 119-28. Graef's close friend Henry van de Velde coined the phrase to characterize his efforts in cultivating the arts in Jena.

³⁰ Reflecting this, Wahl's most recent essay on the subject is "Botho Graef - Kirchners väterlicher Freund in Jena und Königstein," in *Ernst Ludwig Kirchner in Königstein: Aquarelle, Zeichnungen, Druckgrafik Fotografien* (Frankfurt: Galerie Jahrhunderthalle Hoechst, 1999): 63-75. In terms of the men's friendship, the contents of this essay are largely repetitious of the prior essay although there is valuable additional information about Graef.

A second German scholar, Thomas Röske, has built upon Wahl's research on the relationship between Kirchner and Graef. Röske's essay "Dokumente einer Freundschaft – Botho Graef und Hugo Biallowons auf Bildern Ernst Ludwig Kirchners" is an important contribution to the literature because of its focus on Kirchner's paintings of Graef and his companion Hugo in light of their homosexual relationship, a topic not touched upon by Wahl.³¹

Within Röske's essay, one of the most insightful sources of information on the activities within Graef's home is available from the recollections of the writer Hugo Hertwig (1891-1959), who lived with Graef as a lodger while in university in 1912. Röske's description of the nature of the relationship between Graef and Biallowons is reliant on large passages from two versions of an autobiographical text written by Hertwig in the early 1910s.³² From Hertwig's accounts, it is possible to better understand the artistic and pedagogic atmosphere that Graef fostered among the creative male community around him. Accordingly, the professor met his companion, twenty-two years his junior, in Berlin around 1903 while Biallowons was fulfilling military service.³³ Afterwards, Biallowons enrolled in schooling to become a forest ranger and on his application of 1905, he listed home schooling in Jena, likely referring to Graef's private

³¹ Röske, "Dokumente einer Freundschaft – Botho Graef und Hugo Biallowons auf Bildern Ernst Ludwig Kirchners," in Ehrmann and Wahl, *Kirchner: Von Jena nach Davos*, 40-48.

³² While a student in 1910, Hertwig began an autobiographical novel that was originally published as *The Young Heinrich* in 1912. After the First World War, Hertwig returned to the work to update it by including his time in Graef's home. Hertwig later wrote an account of contemporary sexual practices among men: *Das Liebesleben des Menschen* (Turbingen: Praxis-Verlag, 1949). Today, Hertwig's writings remain obscure outside of Germany.

³³ Röske, "Dokumente einer Freundschaft," 42; 48, note 19. In 1879, Biallowons was born in East Prussia. He stopped attending school in the mid-1890s, serving in the military instead before starting training as a forest ranger. He studied at the Tharnandt academy for forest services in Dresden and at another school in Eberswalde from 1903 until 1908. Scant information exists on the early life of Biallowons compared to Graef. Röske credits Hugo Hertwig's accounts and Volker Wahl for providing him with all the existing biographical information on Biallowons.

instruction.³⁴ From Graef, Biallowons received an education in literature, music, fine arts, philosophy and art history. Hertwig describes the two men taking frequent walking excursions in the forest together for they also shared a mutual love of nature. Hertwig confirms that since their relationship “never completely lost its erotic momentum,” it was impossible to conceal its true nature from others.³⁵ By the time Kirchner met them, the men had known each other for over ten years.

The painting *Dance Between the Women* forms the central subject of Thomas Röske’s second important publication on Kirchner’s work in relation to Graef and Biallowons.³⁶ *Ernst Ludwig Kirchner Tanz zwischen den Frauen* is a thorough iconographic examination of the myriad contemporary influences that contribute to the unique appearance of the metaphorical painting of the book’s title, not the least of which was Kirchner’s photograph of Hugo dancing. In the formation of the painting’s central figure, Röske examines the cultural influence of modern dance and he discusses the importance of Nietzsche’s philosophy on dance as explained in *Thus Spoke Zarathustra* as a means of embracing a higher, instinctual realm of experience and bodily freedom as embodied by the Greek god Dionysus.³⁷

³⁴ Röske, “Dokumente einer Freundschaft,” 42.

³⁵ Hertwig, as quoted in Röske, “Dokumente einer Freundschaft,” 42. Hertwig felt that many people, given the contemporary prejudice against homosexuality, sought to punish Graef and Biallowons for their love of each other. Between the two versions of his autobiographical text, Hertwig’s description of the relationship between Graef and Biallowons varies in its directness. Röske explains that some material was not included in the original publication because it was too sensitive and personal in content and as such, was left out to protect the men’s privacy. (Röske, “Dokumente einer Freundschaft,” 48, note 23.)

³⁶ Thomas Röske, *Ernst Ludwig Kirchner Tanz zwischen den Frauen* (Frankfurt and Leipzig: Insel Verlag, 1993).

³⁷ Röske, *Ernst Ludwig Kirchner Tanz zwischen den Frauen*, 94-95.

The work of Volker Wahl and Thomas Röske forms the core of the valuable publication *Ernst Ludwig Kirchner: Von Jena nach Davos*, an exhibition catalogue published to commemorate the 90th Anniversary of the founding of the Jena Art Association, an organization that was shaped early on by Graef's involvement.³⁸ In his capacity as editor, Wahl has brought together valuable primary source material in the catalogue's "Texte und Dokumente" section, including several essays and letters written by Kirchner and Graef that will be drawn upon throughout the forthcoming text.³⁹ In a separate essay, the Botho Graef-Stiftung at the Jena Art Association is discussed: it was formed in May 1918 by Kirchner and the art historian Eberhard Grisebach with Kirchner's gift of over two hundred and fifty woodcuts, lithographs and etchings as a testament to their friend's contribution to the development of modern art and to aid in keeping his memory alive.⁴⁰

This publication also includes a valuable essay by the Kirchner scholar Wolfgang Henze that focuses primarily on the *Street Scenes* and self-portraits made during 1913-1917, the period spanning Kirchner's friendship with Graef.⁴¹ Though Henze does not discuss the individual paintings featuring Graef or his companion Biallowons, he does state that Kirchner "found his way to the highest degree of intensity in his artistry between February and April 1914," which is the three month span coincident with

³⁸ Anna-Maria Ehrmann and Volker Wahl, eds., *Ernst Ludwig Kirchner: Von Jena nach Davos: eine Ausstellung zum 90. Gründungsjubiläum des Jenaer Kunstvereins* (Leipzig: E. A. Seemann, 1993).

³⁹ Wahl, ed., "Texte und Dokumente," in Ehrmann and Wahl, *Kirchner: Von Jena nach Davos*, 100-20. See Primary Sources section in Select Bibliography for expanded information on several essays.

⁴⁰ Wahl, "Ernst Ludwig Kirchners Botho-Graef Stiftung für den Jenaer Kunstverein," in Ehrmann and Wahl, *Kirchner: Von Jena nach Davos*, 65-72; and see also "Rekonstruktion der Botho-Graef Stiftung," 73-99.

⁴¹ Wolfgang Henze, "Die Kunst Ernst Ludwig Kirchners in den Krisenjahren 1913-1917," in Ehrmann and Wahl, *Kirchner: Von Jena nach Davos*, 49-58.

Kirchner's introduction to Graef in Jena.⁴² With his analysis, Henze reinforces the need to examine Kirchner's artworks as a complex synthesis of internal psychological factors and contemporary external events, rather than applying the unfortunate trajectory of the artist's biography to retroactively analyze his imagery.

The work of two additional scholars has been particularly instructive for their use of illuminating contextual analysis to variously interpret Kirchner's work. Peter Springer, in his thorough study *Hand and Head: Ernst Ludwig Kirchner's Self-Portrait as Soldier*, focuses on one of Kirchner's most well known images, his self-portrait painting of the publication's title, depicting the artist with a severed hand in an expressive, psychologically wrought response to the First World War (Fig. 9).⁴³ Unlike most discussions of this painting that focus exclusively on Kirchner's experience of military service, Springer finds many interconnected references, including wartime propaganda imagery and art historical source material, to explain the symbolism of the painting's gruesome iconography. One of the most interesting sources for Kirchner's adaptation of the painting's central motif is the "Raphael without Hands" legend, built upon the Renaissance theory of the relationship between the hand and the head of an artist or the interrelationship between the intellectual and the technical means of creating art, an idea that was popularized in the early-Renaissance by Albrecht Dürer, one of Kirchner's long-standing artistic role models.⁴⁴

⁴² Henze, "Die Kunst Ernst Ludwig Kirchners in den Krisenjahren," 49-50. Henze finds that the most significant influences on Kirchner during this period came from his companion Erna, the writer Alfred Döblin, and Botho Graef.

⁴³ Peter Springer, *Hand and Head: Ernst Ludwig Kirchner's Self-Portrait as Soldier* (Berkeley, Los Angeles and London: University of California Press, 2002).

The art historian Sherwin Simmons has written four essays on varied aspects of Kirchner's work that are extremely valuable. In "'To Stand and See Within': Expressionist Space in Ernst Ludwig Kirchner's *Rhine Bridge at Cologne*," Simmons discusses the architectural landscape depicted in the painting of the essay's title. Simmons determines that in Kirchner's interpretation of the Cologne environment, aspects of the site are amplified and their meaning transformed so that the visual power of the image resides in a merger of Kirchner's personal experience and collective memory in the creation of highly empathic spaces that comment upon the relationship between an individual and the nation, a subject that becomes increasingly relevant for Kirchner with the onset of the war. In "Split-Identity in Ernst Ludwig Kirchner's Woodcut Cycle *Peter Schlemihls wundersame Geschichte*," Simmons discusses the theme of fractured identity as manifest throughout one of Kirchner's most important graphic works to provide a better understanding of how the artist's imagery communicated his profound personal crisis in 1915.⁴⁵

The biographical content of Wahl's various essays on Graef and the iconographic examinations of Kirchner's paintings of his friend in Röske's texts provide a solid foundation for understanding much about this friendship and its resultant imagery. As we proceed, however, I will demonstrate that the value of Röske's texts, by providing a

⁴⁴ The artistic and intellectual circles in Jena around Graef would have known of this trope as it was commonly discussed in popular texts ranging from Giorgio Vasari's Renaissance biographies to Heinrich Heine, Friedrich Nietzsche, Georg Lukács, Ernst Bloch and Erwin Panofsky. (Springer, *Hand and Head*, 104; 108; and esp. 111-14; Chapter: Kirchner as a Follower of Dürer; and 115-30; Chapter: Raphael without Hands.)

⁴⁵ Sherwin Simmons, "'To Stand and See Within': Expressionist Space in Ernst Ludwig Kirchner's *Rhine Bridge at Cologne*," *Art History* 27, no. 2 (April 2004): 250-81; and Simmons, "Split-Identity in Ernst Ludwig Kirchner's Woodcut Cycle *Peter Schlemihls wundersame Geschichte*," *Zeitschrift für Kunstgeschichte* 70, no. 3 (2007): 409-32. See also Simmons' equally valuable essays "Ernst Kirchner's Streetwalkers: Art, Luxury, and Immorality in Berlin, 1913-1916," 117-48; and "Men of Nails: Monuments, Expressionism, Fetishes, Dadaism," *RES: Anthropology and Aesthetics* 40 (Autumn 2001): 211-38.

window onto Graef and Biallowons' homosexual union, is also its primary limitation. In Röske's analysis of the various paintings, which will be drawn upon throughout, his implication is that Kirchner is possibly suppressing homoerotic feelings. While this theory warrants further scholarly attention, his maintenance of this premise tends to dictate the terms of his discussion to the exclusion of other contributing factors.⁴⁶ As I will show, in order to fully comprehend the many layers of information that make up Kirchner's images, it is necessary to delve beyond the men's sexual orientation in order to understand the permeating example of the ancient Greeks for Graef alongside the overriding influence of the philosophy of Nietzsche for both men.

I will show that Kirchner found in Graef a kinship inspired by a mutual devotion to Nietzsche's philosophies that provided the underpinnings of their union. Specifically, I will show that Graef, a Classical archaeologist and trained philologist, like Nietzsche, introduced Kirchner to the philosopher's first publication *The Birth of Tragedy*, on the subject of creative achievement as realized by the ancient Greeks through the reconciliation of conflicting forces. This quickly fostered Kirchner's interest in interrelationship as seen in his portraits of the men and became a theme of increasing urgency and relevance with the progression of the First World War. As will be discussed in Chapter Six, by applying Nietzsche's instructive principles for artistic reconciliation and historical awareness, Kirchner realized a highly personal means of perseverance and preservation throughout the cataclysmic period beginning in mid-1914.

⁴⁶ For examples of analysis from an exclusive homoerotic point of view, particularly concerning the paintings *Graef and Friend* and *Farewell: Botho and Hugo*, see Röske, "Dokumente einer Freundschaft," 41-44; 46-47. Though Röske's discussion of *Dance Between the Women* is more inclusive of contemporary influences, the tendency is still seen in the discussion of Hugo; see Röske, *Ernst Ludwig Kirchner Tanz zwischen den Frauen*, esp. 69-81.

Before a discussion of Kirchner's friendship with Graef is possible, it is necessary to understand several aspects of each man's background prior to the beginning of their relationship in 1914. In Chapter One, I will provide information on several related elements. First, I will summarize the major developments in the fields of philology and Classical archaeology in Germany since this was the intellectual and cultural milieu that informed Botho Graef as a person and an art historian and the professional arena that felt the repercussions of the publication of *The Birth of Tragedy* in 1872. Following this, I will briefly summarize Graef's work in the field of art history and Classical archaeology until his appointment at the University of Jena in 1904 to illustrate how central Nietzsche's philosophies were to him.

In early 1914, Kirchner visited Jena for a solo exhibition of his work and it was from this event that the friendship developed between them. In Chapter Two, in order to bring us to this point, I will establish the pervasive influence of Nietzsche on Kirchner and the Brücke and discuss the changing character of his work related to his move to Berlin in 1911. This three-year period is critical for Kirchner personally with the dissolution of the Brücke group in 1913 and the beginning of a relationship with his life-long companion Erna Schilling in 1912. For the emerging Expressionist artists, a major influence at the time was the publication of Worringer's *Form in Gothic* in 1910, a subject that will be introduced in order to show with a subsequent discussion in Chapter Six that Kirchner's forthcoming pictorial response to his circumstances during 1915 were profoundly influenced by his dual understanding of Nietzsche's early publications alongside Worringer's prescient interpretation of the Gothic style since both related directly to his own experience and to the heightened nationalistic climate at the time.

In Chapter Three, I will begin a systematic iconographic examination of the images of Graef by discussing two individual portraits featuring him and his male companion in order to establish their relatedness to the predominant theme of Dionysian and Apollinian union as explained by Nietzsche in *The Birth of Tragedy*. Though the theme of Dionysian creativity is a leitmotif in all of Nietzsche's publications, it is only in his first book that the Dionysian force is discussed as interrelated to the Apollinian side rather than seen as acting individually. By considering *Portrait of Botho Graef, Jena: Music Room*, 1914/1926, and *Dance Between the Women*, 1915, in relation to Nietzsche's book, I posit that there remain new iconographic interpretations for two of Kirchner's key paintings from this period (Figs. 4, 7).

In Chapter Four, the subject of male friendships and masculine community will be introduced as a historical tradition bearing increasing relevance at the time. The symbol of the idealized male figure reliant on the example of the ancient Greeks became a viable sign of German nationalistic strength with the outbreak of the First World War as well as becoming an icon of one of the leading factions of the emergent homosexual emancipation movement. An understanding of the historical associations surrounding the use of the idealized masculine figure reminiscent of the Greeks as a symbol will provide the framework to discuss four of Kirchner's paintings, including the pair *Portrait of Graef* and *Portrait of Hugo*, and the genre scenes *Graef and Friend* and *Two Friends Conversing*, all 1914. A discussion of these paintings will illustrate how Graef's close friendships were inspired by ancient Greek pederastic customs and will show that Kirchner's depictions of this modern male community demonstrate his awareness of the important historical tradition of male friendship (Figs. 1, 2, 3, 5).

In Chapter Five, I will build upon the preceding discussion of creative union to focus on Kirchner's understanding of male companionship as depicted in one unusual double-portrait painting, the poignant *Farewell: Botho and Hugo*, depicting Graef and Biallowons in an emotional embrace as the younger man departs for military service. As will be examined, this complex image reflects Nietzsche's theme of productive interrelationship as explained in *The Birth of Tragedy* while interweaving highly relevant Greek source material with specific Renaissance sources that have heretofore never been considered in relation to Kirchner's work (Fig. 6).

In Chapter Six, I will conclude the discussion of companionship and reconciliation by examining Kirchner's self-portraits along with two architectural landscapes and the woodcut series *The Wonderful Story of Peter Schlemihl*. In these images, the iconography reflects a multi-layered synthesis of the ideologies of Nietzsche and Worringer in which Kirchner equated aspects of Nietzsche's philosophy on the abilities of the supra-historical individual to realize creative achievement and cultural regeneration as developed in his early publications alongside Worringer's discussion of the Gothic spirit with his own identity and those of Graef and Biallowons as a means of self-preservation and interpersonal union throughout 1915. As will be discussed, Kirchner navigated this turbulent period by relying equally on the philosophy of Nietzsche and on his friendship with Graef, who aided the artist in creating a distinctly new type of male portraiture in images that were simultaneously historically grounded in enduring nationalistic symbols yet innovative in their characterization of the male community and lasting bonds of friendship found with Graef.

Throughout my discussion, Kirchner's artworks of Graef and his circle and the portraits that followed will be compared with examples of Kirchner's images of other male figures and his concurrent images of women to highlight how and why the images of Graef remain singular in their simultaneous focus on Nietzschean philosophy and a devotion to the ideals of friendship and creative union. In addition to the iconographic analysis of Kirchner's artworks, I will rely on essays written by Graef that show his constant reckoning with the influence of the Greek example and on letters and texts written by Kirchner that express his views on Graef's role as a genuine friend and a true father-figure, someone who provided artistic inspiration, philosophical instruction and an irrepressible vitality that distinguishes his relationship with Kirchner above others.

Upon learning of Graef's death, Kirchner described his feelings in a letter to their mutual friend Eberhard Grisebach: "He did so much good for me...I feel as though my father has died – more, even more...on my way to Switzerland, I will pass through Jena and I will no longer find the house in which I was able to experience so many beautiful things... I want to be dead myself."⁴⁷ My study of the images reflective of this crucial friendship will contribute to a more thorough understanding of how Kirchner formulated highly personal, insightful and evocative portraits of Graef and the other men. This will in turn provide a better understanding of why this period should be viewed as central within Kirchner's overall life's work. In the words of Nietzsche: "Thus only he who has attached his heart to some great man is by that act consecrated to culture."⁴⁸

⁴⁷ Kirchner, in a letter dated April 13, 1917, to Grisebach, in Grisebach, *Maler der Expressionismus*, 67.

⁴⁸ Friedrich Nietzsche, "Schopenhauer as Educator," in *Untimely Meditations*, trans. R. J. Hollingdale (Cambridge; Cambridge University Press, 1983), 162-63.

By thoroughly examining the commitment to Nietzsche's philosophy that structured the ideological union of Graef and Kirchner, this study necessarily readdresses the long-standing view that the book *Thus Spoke Zarathustra* is central to an understanding of Kirchner's work. As I will show, it was the philosopher's early publications, *The Birth of Tragedy* and the essays "On the Utility and Liability of History for Life" and "Schopenhauer as Educator," that provided Kirchner with ongoing philosophical guidance and support that remained undiminished long after the brief interlude with Graef had abruptly ended.

Chapter 1: Botho Graef and the Influence of Classical Culture

A Brief Overview of the History of Philhellenism in Germany

In order to best understand Botho Graef, it is necessary to understand the fields of philology, the study of ancient literary or textual sources, and Classical archaeology, along with the cultural traditions related to these fields in place in Germany in the late nineteenth century. As these were Graef's chosen areas of study and artistic culture, they provided the ideological and aesthetic foundations that informed him and nurtured his interests, while the subject of these studies - the ideals of the ancient Greeks - equally influenced his outlook on life.

As we will see in the forthcoming discussion, the second half of the nineteenth century, when Graef, who completed his doctorate at the University of Berlin in 1886, entered the field, was a dynamic period for Classical studies. At the time, several large-scale excavations and a wealth of astounding discoveries fueled ongoing scholarly, political and public interest alike in the art and ideals of antiquity. The year 1886 proved pivotal in the field of Classics with ramifications soon felt on broader realms of art, culture and philosophy with the release of the second edition of Friedrich Nietzsche's publication *The Birth of Tragedy*. The book's contents ushered in a critical reappraisal of the ancient world while issuing an inescapable clarion call for cultural renewal that profoundly affected individuals such as Graef, who were interested in the role of art within society.

An investigation into the tradition of German philhellenism begins with Johann Joachim Winckelmann (1717-1768), whose publications in the eighteenth century largely

defined the development of the burgeoning field of archaeology and established many of the fundamental premises for the study of the history of art.⁴⁹ During Winckelmann's time, his association of the Greeks with nature, genius and freedom, in comparison to what he felt was the artificial, tyrannical and over-refined distinctions of courtly behavior in the eighteenth century, heralded a social revolution against prevailing tastes and values that was, according to the author Suzanne Marchand, perhaps his most significant contribution to German philhellenism.⁵⁰ According to Marchand, as a result of the interest and accolades of many influential German thinkers of the time, including Herder, Lessing, Schiller, Goethe, and Humboldt, Winckelmann's veneration of the philhellene was bequeathed to the nineteenth century as a "quasi-national legacy."⁵¹ Just as formative a legacy was his aesthetic appraisal of Greek sculpture, characterized by his well-known phrase "noble simplicity and quiet grandeur."⁵² With this description, he established the ideal standard of beauty with which to judge and understand ancient artworks.

In 1755, Winckelmann published his first book *Reflections on the Painting and Sculpture of the Greeks*. The book opens with his explanation that to imitate the Greeks was a necessary pursuit in order to achieve a greatness of any relevance. According to

⁴⁹ For an introduction to the vast scholarship on Winckelmann see Alex Potts, *Flesh and the Ideal: Winckelmann and the Origins of Art History* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1994); and David Irwin, ed., *Winckelmann's Writings on Art* (London: Phaidon, 1972).

⁵⁰ Suzanne L. Marchand, *Down From Olympus: Archaeology and Philhellenism in Germany, 1750-1970* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1996), 9. For an analysis of the reception to Winckelmann's ideas in his time see Denis M. Sweet, "The Personal, the Political, and the Aesthetic: Johann Joachim Winckelmann's German Enlightenment Life," in *The Pursuit of Sodomy: Male Homosexuality in Renaissance and Enlightenment Europe*, eds. Kent Gerard and Gert Hekma (New York and London: Harrington Park Press, 1989): 147-62. In addition to Marchand's book, for an introduction to the history of the philhellenic tradition in Germany see Eliza M. Butler, *The Tyranny of Greece Over Germany* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1935).

⁵¹ Marchand, *Down From Olympus*, 8.

⁵² Johann J. Winckelmann, *Reflections on the Painting and Sculpture of the Greeks*, trans. Henry Fuseli (London: Scholar Press, 1972), 26; 29.

him, “there is but one way for the moderns to become great, and perhaps unequalled; I mean, by imitating the ancients...We must be as familiar with them as with a friend.”⁵³ In the same year, Winckelmann moved to Rome where his first task in employment by the Roman Catholic Church was to catalogue the statues in the Cortile del Belvedere, including the *Apollo Belvedere*, the *Laocoön* and the *Belvedere Torso*, the musculature of which represented the ultimate in bodily perfection for him. Many publications followed, but Winckelmann’s *The History of Ancient Art Among the Greeks*, published in 1764, is regarded as his most significant and lasting achievement.

The book is one of the earliest works of its kind by presenting a chronological account of ancient Greek art that integrated the political, social and intellectual conditions that fostered creative activity to provide a coherent framework to understand the culture’s artistic output. Winckelmann’s view that a permeating mix of measured calm, harmonic balance, beauty and idealism applied equally to all sculptural examples met with its earliest reassessment in Gotthold E. Lessing’s publication *Laocoön*, originally published in 1776. While Lessing agreed with Winckelmann’s desire to understand the Greek world-view by classifying their artistic production, he countered that the visual arts of painting and sculpture and the literary arts of epic and tragedy were distinct and thus,

⁵³ Winckelmann, *Reflections on the Painting and Sculpture of the Greeks*, 2-3. Early in the text, his explanations begin to make clear his appreciation for the male figure. For example, his definition of the institutional purpose of the Greek gymnasium includes the following: “The gymnasium, where, sheltered by public modesty, the youths exercised themselves naked, were the schools of art. There the philosopher frequented, as well as the artist...Here he studied the elasticity of the muscles, the ever varying motions of the frame, the outlines of fair forms, or the contour left by the young wrestler on the sand. Here beautiful nakedness appeared with such a liveliness of expression, such truth and variety of situations, such a noble air of the body.” (Winckelmann, *Reflections*, 9-10.)

each must be analyzed for their unique aesthetic character by applying different standards to the varied art forms.⁵⁴

In Germany, Friedrich August Wolf (1759-1824) shaped the foundation of the developing field of Classical philology. Wolf's educational vision was to unify the sciences of antiquity by bringing together knowledge of ancient texts with works of art and physical remains to create a discipline inclusive of philology, art history, and archaeology, an area of study that came to be known as *Altertumswissenschaft* (the study of antiquity).⁵⁵ With his *Prolegomena to Homer*, published in 1795, Wolf outlined his belief that philology should assume the same status as the objective sciences to become a rational and scientific study of antiquity rather than employing subjective aesthetic judgments or speculative analysis. His interest in the discipline firmly rejected theological training, thus instigating a lasting break between scholarship and clerical control in Germany beginning in the eighteenth century.⁵⁶ According to Marchand, "Wolf's distaste for theology, and his disdain for all but the Greeks and Romans, soon became hallmarks of the professional (particularly Prussian) classicist."⁵⁷

In 1787, at the University of Halle, Wolf formulated a philological course of study aimed at the production of expert scholars by emphasizing the fundamental importance of scientific analysis applied directly to classical literature and artworks over

⁵⁴ Denis M. Sweet, "The Birth of *The Birth of Tragedy*," in *Journal of the History of Ideas* 60, no. 2 (April 1999), 348.

⁵⁵ Nancy Thomson de Grummond, ed., *Encyclopedia of the History of Classical Archaeology* 2 (Westport, CT: Greenwood Press, 1996), 1201-02.

⁵⁶ Marchand, *Down From Olympus*, 18.

⁵⁷ Marchand, *Down From Olympus*, 24.

speculative analysis.⁵⁸ Nietzsche later praised Wolf's commitment to his "serious desire to cultivate the pupil" over all else in establishing the new educational order, saying: "Wolf directed the new stream of classical thought, introduced from Greece and Rome by Germany's greatest poets, into the heart of the public schools. Thanks to his bold start, a new order of public schools was established, which thenceforward was not merely a nursery for science, but, above all, the actual consecrated home of all higher and nobler culture."⁵⁹

In 1810, Wilhelm von Humboldt (1767-1835), one of Germany's most important philosophers and linguists, founded and designed the curriculum for the new University of Berlin.⁶⁰ Humboldt elevated the disciplines of philology, philosophy, and the natural sciences above medicine, law, and theology, continuing the example begun in the eighteenth century and strongly endorsed by Wolf. He offered handsome salaries to gather the best young scholars in these fields, especially to classical philology, which he hoped to make the centerpiece of the new institution. Humboldt's influence on education extended beyond the university; as a result of his efforts, Classicism was established as the basis of secondary education in Prussia, where it was soon taught in the gymnasiums and became part of the testing for entrance to university. Classicism became one of the central aspects of *Bildung*, or self-cultivation, within a broad humanist education that

⁵⁸ Marchand *Down From Olympus*, 19, note 53. Many European and American universities subsequently followed Wolf's educational format, including the newly established universities of Berlin in 1810 and Bonn in 1811.

⁵⁹ Friedrich Nietzsche, "On the Future of our Educational Institutions," in *The Complete Works of Friedrich Nietzsche* vol. 3, Dr. Oscar Levy, ed., trans. and with an introduction by J. M. Kennedy (Edinburgh and London: T. N. Foulis, 1909), 64.

⁶⁰ In 1809, Humboldt was appointed Secretary of the Department of Education and Religion in the Prussian Ministry of the Interior. The University of Berlin was renamed Humboldt-Universität in 1949 in honor of the contributions of Wilhelm and his brother Alexander, a pioneering naturalist and explorer.

included arts and literature and that came to define the upper echelons of the bourgeoisie.⁶¹ Additionally, Humboldt's educational outlook stressed the importance of the ancient philosophy of platonic eros in which male friendship is viewed as sacred for the realization of one's "unique self" fostered through close relationships, a belief that was central to the writers of the *Sturm und Drang* ("Storm and Stress") literary movement.⁶²

During the first half of the nineteenth century, Classical philologists dominated the field of archaeology as respectable intellectual activity was increasingly defined by one's university affiliation. Accordingly, "the universities, and especially the University of Berlin, were unquestionably the cultural institutions from which appropriate understanding of the Greeks emanated."⁶³ During this period, it became apparent that there was a growing divide between proponents of the philological tradition who relied on the direct interpretation of textual sources versus leaders in the field of classical archaeology who emphasized categorization and the accumulation of physical artifacts. Soon, with the support of German state patronage to bolster archeological endeavors during the forthcoming century, the archeological realm grew stronger, oftentimes

⁶¹ Harold Mah, *Enlightenment Fantasies: Cultural Identity in France and Germany, 1750-1914* (Ithaca and London: Cornell University Press, 2003), 98. On German education see Walter H. Bruford, *The German Tradition of Self-Cultivation: Bildung from Humboldt to Thomas Mann* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1975), 1-28; Chapter 1: Wilhelm von Humboldt in His Letters. For a discussion of Humboldt's essay "The Theory of the Education of Man," published in 1793, in relation to his humanist outlook, see Frederick Lilge, *The Abuse of Learning; The Failure of the German University* (New York: Macmillan, 1948), 1-36; Chapter 1: The Brief Flowering of German Humanism.

⁶² Harry Oosterhuis and Hubert Kennedy, eds., *Homosexuality and Male Bonding in Pre-Nazi Germany: The Youth Movement, the Gay Movement, and Male Bonding before Hitler's Rise* (New York and London: The Haworth Press, Inc., 1991), 9.

⁶³ Marchand, *Down From Olympus*, 50-51.

overshadowing the less visible field of philological inquiry. Nonetheless, the two fields of study remained interrelated in many ways.

By the end of the eighteenth century, it became increasingly difficult to travel to the Eastern Mediterranean because of Ottoman Turkish occupation. However, an interest in the ancient world had firmly taken hold in Northern Europe where it greatly influenced educational realms. With the Greek War of Independence, beginning in 1821, support for the Greek cause was widespread throughout Europe and after the establishment of an independent Greek state in 1832, with Prince Otto of Bavaria chosen as its first king, a strong German presence remained in Greece thereafter.⁶⁴

By 1871, with the establishment of a unified Germany, interest in the ancient Greeks permeated cultural realms to such an extent that “Graecophilia” had become part of the national patrimony.⁶⁵ The historian Jacob Burckhardt (1818-1897), an important scholar of the Italian Renaissance and author of the book *The Civilization of the Renaissance in Italy*, published in 1860, began his subsequent publication *The Greeks and Greek Civilization*, posthumously published in 1898, with an elegant statement of this interrelationship: “From the time of Winckelmann and Lessing, a feeling has grown up of the existence of a “sacred marriage” between the spirit of Greece and the spirit of Germany, a special relationship and sympathy shared by no other Western people in

⁶⁴ Within archeological and academic circles, Winckelmann’s reputation was firmly established. In December 1828, a decade after the centennial anniversary of his birth, a group of scholars established the *Istituto di Corrispondenza*, later called the Archeological Institute in Rome, under the leadership of the Prussian ambassador. The Institute was an early model for international cooperation and systematic scientific study and it soon became an important center of Classical studies by mounting excavations and publishing periodicals. The Institute was taken over entirely by German scholars in 1871 although its two journals remained in Italian until 1886. For further information see Stephen Bleeker Luce, “A Brief History of the Study of Greek Vase Painting,” *Proceedings of the American Philosophical Society* 57, no. 7 (November 1918), 653.

⁶⁵ Marchand, *Down From Olympus*, xix.

modern times.”⁶⁶ By the 1880s, Greece became a feasible and popular destination for German travel; the guide Baedeker published its first volume on the country in 1883.⁶⁷ Public interest in archaeology grew in tandem with discoveries from several important excavation sites, including at Olympia, beginning in 1875 until 1881.

The excavations at Olympia were conducted under the tireless efforts of the Classical philologist Ernst Curtius (1814-1896), who lobbied for governmental support to fund the excavations by explaining: “Germany has herself inwardly appropriated Greek culture: the spirit of Greek antiquity has pervaded German scholarship; German art since Schinkel has begun to make the laws of Greek building its own. We recognize as a vital objective of our own *Bildung* that we grasp Greek art in its entire, organic continuity.”⁶⁸ According to Marchand, “his Olympia campaign had helped to usher in an age in which cultivating “spiritual” ties with the Greeks came to be seen as a state obligation,” and it was Curtius more than anyone who carried to its logical end the process begun by Humboldt of binding together the interests of philhellenists with the emergent German nation.⁶⁹ In 1868, Curtius was appointed Professor of Archaeology at the University of Berlin and made the Director of the antiquities division of the city’s museums.⁷⁰

⁶⁶ Jacob Burckhardt, *The Greeks and Greek Civilization*, trans. Sheila Stern, ed. and with an introduction by Oswyn Murray (London: Harper Collins, 1998), 11.

⁶⁷ Marchand, *Down From Olympus*, 92.

⁶⁸ Curtius, in an untitled memorandum, dated August 1853, as quoted in Marchand, *Down From Olympus*, 81.

⁶⁹ Marchand, *Down From Olympus*, 92. Curtius’ leadership at Olympia created a landmark precedent through his efforts at orchestrating an agreement between the German and Greek governments in 1874 that guaranteed all the excavation’s finds would remain in Greece. According to Grummond, “he was a key figure in turning archaeology from treasure hunting into both a science and a cooperative supranational enterprise.” (Grummond, *Encyclopedia of the History of Classical Archaeology*, 341.)

The German reception to the treasures found in the ancient Greek city of Pergamon provide an indication of the correlation between Greek artifacts and the notion of German nationhood as it developed in the final quarter of the nineteenth century. In 1879-1880, several recently unearthed Pergamon finds were exhibited in Berlin, including two large fragments from the *Gigantomachia* frieze, while excavations continued on location in northwestern Asia Minor, in modern Turkey, until 1886.⁷¹ For the Berlin Art Academy's one-hundredth anniversary in 1886, an enormous semi-circular panorama of the Acropolis at Pergamon, itself modeled after the example in Athens, was erected dwarfing all other exhibitions. A "Pergamene Celebration" was conducted in which 1500 costumed participants reenacted the ruler Attalus II's triumph over the Celts in the second-century BCE, an event that held clear psychological parallels with the recent victory of Bismarck over the French in the Franco-Prussian War.⁷²

Though representations of the human form in sculpture had been given pride of place in discussions of Classical antiquity since Winckelmann, after the 1870s, pottery and other minor art forms began to play an increasingly important role in archeological discussions.⁷³ The up-and-coming young archaeologist and scholar Adolf Furtwängler

⁷⁰ Curtius had studied at the University of Berlin under the distinguished eighteenth-century archaeologist Karl O. Mueller. In 1844, Curtius became tutor to the crown prince of Prussia, Kaiser Friedrich III (1831-1888), before being elected a member of the Berlin Academy in 1851. (Grummond, *Encyclopedia of the History of Classical Archaeology*, 341.)

⁷¹ Excavations were finalized after a second campaign lasting from 1901 until 1915.

⁷² Marchand, *Down From Olympus*, 95. In 1902, a new museum that is known today as the Altes Pergamonmuseum, devoted exclusively to the Pergamon treasures, was opened in Berlin with the Great Altar installed as its centerpiece.

⁷³ Marchand, *Down From Olympus*, 112. In 1874, German archaeologists established an archeological school in Athens, *Das kaiserlich deutsche archaologische Institut*, which began operations in 1876, including the publication of a quarterly periodical entitled *Mittheilungen*. The publication sought to expand and foster understanding of the diversity of media in ancient artworks by including many articles on vases and other minor art forms. (Luce, "A Brief History of the Study of Greek Vase Painting," 656.)

(1853-1907) was brought to Olympia under Curtius' direction to conduct a systematic study of the excavation's small finds, a task involving the inventory of thousands of bronzes, pottery shards and figurines. Furtwängler, who had perfected a method for pre-historical stylistic categorization, epitomized the technical focus now dominating the field of Classical studies with its overall interest in the categorization of objects.⁷⁴

Several additional scholars were instrumental in bringing greater awareness to the value of vases for their wealth of diverse visual information providing an accurate understanding of the myths, history and social customs of the ancient world. Alexander Conze (1831-1914) was credited with the identification of the geometric style of pottery in 1862. Conze had led a series of excavations at Samothrace, between 1873-1875, funded by the Austrian government, and later at Pergamon, from 1878-1886 and 1900-1902.⁷⁵ According to Marchand, as an archaeologist, his mission was to reconstruct the everyday life of the Greeks through careful and scientific reconstruction rather than to

⁷⁴ Marchand, *Down From Olympus*, 87. Furtwängler is the author of many important publications from this period, especially Adolf Furtwängler, *Beschreibung der Vasensammlung im Antiquarium* (Berlin: W. Spemann and Königliche Museen zu Berlin, 1885). It is a catalogue of all the vases in the Berlin antiquities collection, made while Furtwängler was an assistant to Ernst Curtius in the Berlin museums in charge of minor arts. By 1885, the collection had grown by the thousands and the necessity of an updated publication was clear. The original, published in 1834, had been supplemented by a subsequent publication in 1846. But, Furtwängler's publication can be seen as an example of the growing trend towards "big scholarship" that dominated the field of Classical study in the 1890s. One reviewer subtly criticized Furtwängler for the over-emphasis on categorization by giving the following example: under four universally accepted headings, there were thirty-five sub-divisions with a vase within one of these sub-divisions having no less than eighty-five further sub-divisions. The reviewer explained the trend in catalogues at the time: "A catalogue in the present state of science must no longer be merely a printed inventory, it must be a classification – a register not only of material, but of the high-water mark of opinion as regards the ordering of that material." (J. E. H., [untitled], *The Journal of Hellenic Studies* 8 (1887), 289-90.)

⁷⁵ Grummond, *Encyclopedia of the History of Classical Archaeology*, 280; and Marchand, *Down From Olympus*, 97.

focus on either the aesthetic study of artworks or on the mass accumulation of objects as an end in itself.⁷⁶

Conze was a student of Eduard Gerhard (1795-1867), who had become the “first great name as a vase expert” in the mid-nineteenth century.⁷⁷ In 1828, the discovery of over three thousand vases in Vulci, an ancient city northwest of Rome, fueled growing interest in the medium. Gerhard published extensively on these discoveries in archeological journals in the 1830s to show that vases provided a way to trace the development of art and cultural history.⁷⁸ Accordingly, he was instrumental in broadening the academic and popular conception of Classical art and in emboldening the standing of archaeology by favoring careful study and analysis of individual objects, upholding the philological emphasis on primary source material, over a focus on fantastic individual finds.⁷⁹

In the early 1880s, organized excavations began at the Parthenon on the Acropolis of Athens, a location that physically and symbolically signaled the pinnacle of the ancient world. Innumerable vases and fragments were unearthed promoting continued interest in

⁷⁶ Marchand, *Down From Olympus*, 97.

⁷⁷ Luce, “A Brief History of the Study of Greek Vase Painting,” 653.

⁷⁸ Marchand, *Down From Olympus*, 57-58. Between 1840 and 1858, Gerhard published the seminal chronology *Auserlesene Griechische Vasenbilder* (referred to by scholars as A.V. and still in use today), cataloguing 350 vases with 330 illustrative plates. Gerhard formulated a systematic approach to publications of comprehensive corpus material by establishing categories, including four major types of Greek vases from objects retrieved in Vulci. These findings were instrumental in understanding the origin of vases that were Greek but found in Etruscan graves. He served as the Director of the German Archaeological Institute from its foundation in 1828 until 1837, when he was appointed as an archaeologist for the national museums in Berlin. He also served as Professor at the University of Berlin; while there, Gerhard founded a new archeological periodical, *Archaeologische Zeitung*, which published from 1843 until 1885 when the Institute relocated from Rome to Berlin and absorbed Gerhard’s *Zeitung* within its publications. (Grummond, *Encyclopedia of the History of Classical Archaeology*, 490; and Luce, “A Brief History of the Study of Greek Vase Painting,” 654-58.)

⁷⁹ Marchand, *Down From Olympus*, 57-58.

the medium and showing anew the diversity available from ancient sites. Analysis and documentation was given to these vases and fragments in several publications, including one of the most important, written by the scholar Paul Hartwig and titled *Die Griechischen Meisterschalen der Blüthezeit des strengen rothfigurigen Stiles* (*Masterworks of Greek Red-Figure Vase Painting*), published in 1893.⁸⁰ In it, aesthetics and original scholarship were prized over the categorical presentation of an exhaustive amount of material. The book featured beautifully rendered, hand drawn illustrations of approximately seventy-five vases reproduced at their actual size to provide the best possible understanding of each vase's decorative effect, individual expressive power, and to aid in comparative purposes. In addition, Hartwig selected for illustration only those vases that had rarely, if ever, been reproduced, bringing to view many never before seen examples in the medium.⁸¹ Hartwig's emphasis on select scholarship was a counter example to the developing trend for extensive categorization by focusing instead on analysis devoted to a careful selection of objects for the purpose of scholarly advancement.⁸²

⁸⁰ Paul Hartwig, *Die Griechischen Meisterschalen der Blüthezeit des strengen rothfigurigen Stiles* (Stuttgart and Berlin, 1893).

⁸¹ Cecil Smith, [untitled], *The Classical Review* 8, no. 3 (March 1894), 126.

⁸² With this publication, Hartwig is credited with extending vase chronology back several decades by using the type of inscriptions found on the vases to secure the progression of styles within an individual artist's oeuvre. One reviewer stated of it: "It is a brilliant exposition of the comparative analysis, which has been so valuable with regard to sculpture, applied to vase-painting..." This reviewer also characterized the present state of scholarship: "At the present stage of archeological enquiry, what we chiefly need is publication, and yet again publication. With nations and schools and even individuals vying with each other in a feverish energy of excavation, discovery succeeds discovery so rapidly that the new material is not given time for digestion, and new theories form and are dissolved with kaleidoscopic brilliancy and result. If some proportion of the money now spent on digging the weapons of controversy out of dull theatres, and similar undertakings, were devoted to the issue of first-rate illustrations of important monuments, valuable time would be saved, and science would be decidedly the gainer." (Smith, [untitled], *The Classical Review*, 126.) For examples of publications favoring the alternate encyclopedic or categorical approach, see footnotes 74 and 78.

In the field of classical archaeology, the 1890s was increasingly defined by “big scholarship” in which the emphasis was on the accumulation of objects through large excavations that provided archeologists with both an admiring public and numerous artifacts. Embracing this trend, a three volume chronology of all the vases and pottery fragments found at the Acropolis site was published in 1909, entitled *Die Antiken Vasen von der Akropolis zu Athens (Attic Vases from the Acropolis in Athens)*, with contributions by Hartwig and other scholars, including Botho Graef who edited the compendium and provided its forward.⁸³

One influential scholar who took exception to the prevailing emphasis on “big scholarship” was Professor Dr. Carl Robert (1850-1922) at the University of Berlin. Robert worried that overspecialization would destroy the unity of the field and the integrity of its artistic comprehension. Feeling strongly about the need to revitalize the current field of philhellenic study by remaining true to its origins, he took the bold step of resigning his professorial position in the late-1880s in protest against what he felt was the advancing bureaucratization and lack of importance placed on aestheticism.⁸⁴

Just prior to his resignation, Carl Robert was a professor of Botho Graef at the University of Berlin where he acted as his dissertation advisor. The two men shared a

⁸³ Paul Hartwig, Paul Wolters, Robert Zahn, and Botho Graef, *Die Antiken Vasen von der Akropolis zu Athens I* (Berlin: Georg Reimer and Kaiserlich deutsches archäologisches Institut, 1909). The three-volume set was re-issued in 1925 with additional contributions by Ernst Langlotz (Berlin: Walter de Gruyter & Co., 1925).

⁸⁴ Marchand, *Down From Olympus*, 103. Robert was a student of the Classical scholar Otto Jahn in Bonn and in Berlin, he studied under two important archaeological scholars, Ulrich von Wilamowitz-Moellendorf (1848-1931) and Theodor Mommsen (1817-1903). Beginning in 1877, Robert was associate professor of archaeology at University of Berlin before advancing to full professor in 1880. Resigning just shy of a decade later, Robert went to the University of Halle where he became the director of a new archeological museum in 1890. There, he edited the classical journal *Hermes* for over forty years and contributed several volumes to an important corpus on Roman sarcophagi originally begun by Jahn, titled *Der Antike Sarkophagreliefs*, published between 1890-1919. For an expanded discussion of Carl Robert, see Grummond, *Encyclopedia of the History of Classical Archaeology*, 962.

scholarly interest in mythology and Roman sarcophagi; Robert contributed several volumes, including one devoted to mythology, to a multi-volume corpus publication of Roman sarcophagi, while Graef's dissertation, completed in 1886, was dedicated to Robert and focused on the depiction of Dionysus on Roman sarcophagi.⁸⁵

Botho Graef: A Modern Day Ancient

Franz Botho Graef admired and devoted himself to art, beauty and aesthetics in many different forms. Graef was born in Berlin on October 12, 1857, the son of Gustav Graef, a well-known academic painter, and Franziska Graef, a native Berliner. After his primary and secondary education, Graef studied architecture for approximately two years between 1876-1877 before determining that this was not his true calling. It is an interesting coincidence that both Graef and Kirchner, separated by generations, started their respective professional training in the architectural field before each changed paths.

From an early age, Graef was unreservedly a lover of the arts, whether visual, literary or musical. His sister Sabine Lepsius recalled that her brother was always highly intelligent and capable of prolonged periods of studied concentration and diligence in the pursuit of knowledge, which enabled him to complete his primary schooling early despite a period of poor physical health.⁸⁶ Sabine recalled that, "from his youth onward, he had a special inclination towards Classical antiquity," and furthermore, she believed that her brother's character was formed specifically by his interest in Classical culture, attributing

⁸⁵ The dedication is to Carl Robert and the well-known Classical scholar Ulrich von Wilamowitz-Moellendorff. It is a variation of both men's first names expressing Graef's devotion to them: "Carolo Robert de Udalrico de Wilamowitz-Moellendorff - pietatis ergo." (Botho Graef, *De Bacchi expeditione Indica monumentis expressa* (Berlin: W. Pormetter, 1886), following title page, unpaginated.)

⁸⁶ Sabine Lepsius, *Ein Berliner Künstlerleben um die Jahrhundertwende* (Munich: Gotthold Müller Verlag, 1972), 60.

aspects of his personality, including his balanced nature, the harmony he admired between body and spirit, his love of inner and outer beauty, his sense of independence, and even “his own well-formed physique with its effortless, relaxed movements,” as directly related to the ancient example.⁸⁷ One could further interpret that Graef’s love of beauty and disposition for balance and harmony reflect an Apollinian sense while his wit, energy and interest in music reflect a Dionysian nature. This type of duality, as discussed by Nietzsche in *The Birth of Tragedy*, was likely familiar to Sabine, who employed the ancients when comparing Botho with her other older brother Harald, saying: “The ancient contrast between the dark and light brother was embodied by the brothers...Everything that was dark, tortured, even tragic in Harald’s nature was light, joyful and blessed in Botho.”⁸⁸ After Graef returned from his first long visit to Italy and Greece, his sister recalled that, “he left me with the impression of a European who had educated himself through the world of the Greeks.”⁸⁹ In this respect, her characterization is aligned with Nietzsche’s description, in his third book *Human, All-Too Human*, published in 1878, of “a good European,” a phrase he used to signify his opposition to nationalism in favor of an unbiased merging of all nations and their creative individuals as a means of overall cultural enrichment.⁹⁰

⁸⁷ Lepsius, *Ein Berliner Künstlerleben*, 60.

⁸⁸ Lepsius, *Ein Berliner Künstlerleben*, 60. Kirchner appears to have employed the dark/light characterization in two early Brücke paintings made in 1908, both of which he re-worked in the 1920s. Siblings appear in the painting *Dodo and Her Brother*, 1908/1920 (G48), featuring the artist’s Dresden girlfriend Doris, who appears curvaceous in a flowing white dress alongside her lean and angular brother who is clothed in a black suit. The two women in *The Living Room; Interior with Two Women*, 1908/1926 (Fig. 3.4/G46), also feature the black and white motif in their clothing (this painting will be briefly discussed in Chapter Three).

⁸⁹ Lepsius, *Ein Berliner Künstlerleben*, 60.

Graef's passion for the literature of antiquity compelled him to study classical philology, and he later added archeological studies while at the University of Berlin, where he received his doctorate in philosophy under Carl Robert in 1886. Graef's dissertation, *De Bacchi expeditione Indica monumentis expressa*, was a thorough study of a popular mythological motif, the triumphant return of Dionysus from India on the back of an elephant as seen depicted on Roman sarcophagi and as frequently employed on Roman military and triumphal arches, a subject that was later revived on monuments during the Italian Renaissance.⁹¹ His choice of subject matter shows his multi-disciplinary interest in mythological themes and imagery from Greek and Roman antiquity as well as their influence on Renaissance artworks. Perhaps more importantly for my purposes, Graef's study shows his early interest in the subject of Dionysus.

The Apollinian and Dionysian relationship forms the core of Nietzsche's *The Birth of Tragedy* while Nietzsche's evolving discussion of the instinctual Dionysian side of creativity and human nature is a leitmotif that extends throughout all of his publications.⁹² Graef's dissertation was completed in the same year that *The Birth of Tragedy*, first published in 1872, was released in its second edition, with a new preface "Attempts at a Self-Criticism" by the author. Given Graef's commitment and devotion to

⁹⁰ The phrase "a good European" is from Aphorism 475: "The European Man and the Destruction of Nations" in *Human, All-Too Human*, in which Nietzsche explains: "It is not the self-interest of the many (the people), as one would have it, that urges this nationalism, but primarily the self-interest of certain royal dynasties, as well as that of certain commercial and social classes; once a man has understood this, he should be undaunted in presenting himself as a *good European*, and should work actively on the merging of nations. The German, because of their age-old, proven trait of being the *nation's interpreter and mediator*, will be able to help in this process." (Nietzsche, *Human, All Too Human: A Book for Free Spirits*, trans. and with an introduction by Marion Faber (Lincoln, NE, and London: University of Nebraska Press, 1984), 228.

⁹¹ William S. Heckscher, "Bernini's Elephant and Obelisk," *Art Bulletin* 29, no. 3 (September 1947), 159.

⁹² For an expanded discussion of the relationship between Nietzsche and Dionysus, see Rose Pfeffer, *Nietzsche: Disciple of Dionysus* (Lewisburg, ME: Bucknell University Press, 1972).

the ancient world and his immersion in the philological community at the time, it is impossible to think that he would have been unaware of the publication, particularly since it had generated much controversy within the field upon its original release. Furthermore, for the summer of 1880, Graef studied at the University of Greifswald under the Classical scholar Ulrich von Wilamowitz-Moellendorff, who was the author of the earliest published criticism of *The Birth of Tragedy*, a polemical pamphlet that was printed and distributed independently in 1872.⁹³

In 1887, prior to his teaching appointment, Graef was a fellow of the German Archeological Institute and over the course of two years he traveled widely throughout Italy, Greece and Asia Minor taking part in several archeological excavations. Later, he traveled again to Asia Minor and Egypt, and he visited the antiquities museums in Paris, London and the United States.⁹⁴

In 1890, Graef received a teaching position in archaeology at the University of Berlin alongside the noted archaeologist Ernst Curtius, who had conducted the excavations at Olympia. Throughout this period, Curtius was a frequent visitor at the Berlin home of the well-respected portrait painters, the married couple Reinhold and Sabine Lepsius, and in 1891, he sat for a painting by Reinhold.⁹⁵ The couple painted in the naturalistic style of their friends, the German Impressionist painters Max Liebermann

⁹³ Ulrich von Wilamowitz-Moellendorff, *Zukunftsphilologie!* (Berlin: Gebrüder Bornträger, 1872). Later in this chapter, the pamphlet will be discussed along with the critical response to the publication of *The Birth of Tragedy*.

⁹⁴ Wahl, "Graef, der 'Leidenschaftliche Wortführer'," 120.

⁹⁵ Reinhold and Sabine Lepsius were both noted painters of Berlin society at the turn of the century. For a discussion of the couple see Annette Dorgerloh, *Das Künstlerehepaar Lepsius Zur Berliner Porträtmalerei um 1900* (Berlin: Akademie Verlag, 2003). For Ernst Curtius' portrait, see page 229, color plate 13.

and Fritz von Uhde, and they were favored by prominent patrons of the time, including the writer Stefan George, who was a close friend. While the couple was committed to contemporary developments in art and design, such as commissioning the *Jugendstil* architect August Endell to design Sabine's painting studio in 1902, the ancient world permeated both of their backgrounds. Reinhold Lepsius was the son of Carl Richard Lepsius (1810-1884), the era's foremost Egyptologist, while Sabine Lepsius (1864-1942) (née Graef) was the only sister of Botho Graef.⁹⁶ Though separated in age by seven years, the siblings were extremely close with Botho taking a special interest in his younger sister's education. In her autobiography, Sabine recalled that her brother introduced her to the world of the Classical past through a mutual interest in Nietzsche:

His perceptiveness, his sixth sense for what was truly genuine, is what made him an archaeologist. He had the gift of recognizing important events of his time, even when they had just appeared over the horizon. In a time when Nietzsche was barely known to anyone, I discovered, on Botho's bookshelf, a copy of Nietzsche's *Beyond Good and Evil* [published in 1886], and I couldn't put it down, even though Nietzsche was not able to convert me to his world view...When Botho saw what a great impression this book made on me, he began talking to me often about cultural history and the connection between Greek art and culture. He was the first person who showed me these worlds. His gentle temperament, his lovability and generosity let us become close friends who shared everything with one another.⁹⁷

Graef appears to have been a natural educator. In an essay on the poet Stefan George, published in the *Deutsche Allgemeine Zeitung* in Berlin in 1928, the writer Rudolf Borchardt (1877-1945), who studied archaeology and classical philology at the University of Berlin, singled out Graef among the academic community:

⁹⁶ Carl Richard Lepsius is considered the father of the modern discipline of Egyptology. For many years, he served as Professor of Philology at University of Berlin. After leading the expeditions that discovered the pyramids of Giza, beginning in 1846, he was co-director of the Ägyptisches Museum in Berlin, becoming its Director in 1855. He served as President of the German Archaeological Institute in Rome from 1867-1880, and he was a top official of the Royal Library in Berlin from 1873-1884.

⁹⁷ Lepsius, *Ein Berliner Künstlerleben*, 61.

The university had stately and captivating figures at its disposal, such as the archaeologist Botho Graef, whose tall physical presence and quick, acerbic wit seemed to have descended from one of Van Dyck's frames, and whose table conversations were eagerly sought out by shining youths. With these people, the university had forces with which it could transmit the nurturing ideas behind research to society in a lively manner that was shared only by the oldest sites of culture in Paris and Oxford.⁹⁸

Graef's pure delight in the beauty of antique forms, specifically the male form, is evident in his choice of a sculptural artifact depicting the head of Helios found in Rhodes as his essay contribution to a book called the *Strena Helbigiana*, a publication that was given to University of Berlin's Dr. Wolfgang Helbig (1839-1915), a Professor of Archaeology and Philology, on the occasion of his sixtieth birthday in 1900 by his students and friends. In a subsequent article that focuses on the rarity of the head of Helios, the author remarks that the head is "described by Botho Graef in the *Strena Helbigiana* with such glowing enthusiasm as almost to counterbalance its sad and mutilated condition."⁹⁹ Graef's contribution to the field of Classical studies, along with his sensitivity and intuitiveness in analyzing artworks, is evident in the introductory comments to an article titled "A Revised List of Roman Memorial and Triumphal Arches" by the archaeologist A. L. Frothingham. He credits Graef's then fifteen year-old study "Triumph und Ehrenbögen" as "the classic treatment of the subject of Roman

⁹⁸ Borchardt, "Der Dichter und seine Zeit. Die Gestalt Stefan George," *Deutsche Allgemeine Zeitung* (Berlin, August 19, 1928), quoted in Lepsius, *Ein Berliner Künstlerleben*, 180.

⁹⁹ Theodore Leslie Shear, "Head of Helios from Rhodes," *American Journal of Archaeology* 20, no. 3 (July-September 1916), 283-84. Dr. Helbig was a professor at the University of Berlin during Graef's time as a student. In addition, he was the assistant director of the German Archaeological Institute from 1865-1887 where he produced a guide to the Classical collections in Rome. The *Strena Helbigiana* itself is quite rare. I have only been able to locate an announcement that preceded its publication showing Graef's contribution as "Helioskopf aus Rhodos," in *Strena Helbigiana* (Leipzig: B. G. Teubner Verlag, 1900): 99-110. According to this announcement, the *Strena Helbigiana* also contained essays by Fürtwangler ("Pallas Albani"), Paul Hartwig ("Eine antike Darstellung des Katzenjammers"), and seventeen other contributors.

memorial and triumphal arches...due to its systematic analysis and its distinction of the different artistic forms.”¹⁰⁰

Once Graef entered the field of philhellenic study, in the last quarter of the nineteenth century, the discipline had traditions that extended back to the Enlightenment and from which Germany’s institutional and artistic foundations had been established. According to Volker Wahl, Graef belonged to a generation of young scholars who would determine the course of the development of classical scholarship around the turn of the century.¹⁰¹ By applying formal analysis to antiquities, these men were instrumental in establishing the characteristics of the developing canon of artists from the ancient world. Ulrich von Wilamowitz-Moellendorff, one of Germany’s most distinguished Classical scholars, was among Graef’s generation as well as his teacher and colleague. His publication *History of Classical Scholarship* is still regarded as one of the best books of its kind. According to him, this period saw the completion of “the conquest of the ancient world by scholarship.”¹⁰²

From 1890 until he was offered a professorship in Jena in 1904, Graef lived in Berlin. This decade coincided with the beginning of widespread interest outside of the philological field in the ideas and cult-of-personality that formed around Friedrich Nietzsche amongst sophisticated intellectual circles to the extent that in 1891, he was

¹⁰⁰ A. L. Frothingham, Jr., “A Revised List of Roman Memorial and Triumphal Arches,” *Journal of the Archaeological Institute of America* 8, no. 1 (January – March 1904): 1. When Graef’s article was published in 1888, approximately 125 triumphal arches had been identified; by the 1904 publication of Frothingham’s article, over 500 had been discovered. Graef’s article was originally published in August Baumeister, *Denkmäler des Klassischen Altertums* III (Munich: Beck, 1885-1888): 1864-99.

¹⁰¹ Wahl, “Graef, der ‘Leidenschaftliche Wortführer’,” 120.

¹⁰² Ulrich von Wilamowitz-Moellendorff, *History of Classical Scholarship*, trans. Alan Harris (London: 1982), 105.

referred to as an “apostle of the future.”¹⁰³ In Berlin, Graef was part of several literary and artistic circles that were heavily influenced by Nietzsche. The salon of Reinhold and Sabine Lepsius (Graef’s sister and brother-in-law) was a popular gathering place for many of these individuals drawing a diverse crowd of prominent figures, including Rainer Maria Rilke, Hugo von Hofmannsthal, the industrialist Felix Deutsch, the politician Walther Rathenau, the artist Käthe Kollwitz, the architects Ludwig Hoffmann and August Endell, the musician Konrad Ansorge, the museum directors Ludwig Justi and Hugo von Tschudi, and Georg Simmel, who maintained a close friendship with Sabine from an early age.¹⁰⁴

Reinhold and Sabine Lepsius were friends with the eccentric poet Stefan George (1868-1933), who regularly attended gatherings at their home during the 1890s. Reinhold photographed Stefan many times and used several of his photographs to compose paintings and engravings while Sabine published a biographical account of their friendship with the poet shortly after his death.¹⁰⁵ In 1897, Georg Simmel met George at

¹⁰³ Steven E. Aschheim, *The Nietzsche Legacy in Germany, 1890-1990* (Berkeley, Los Angeles and London: University of California Press, 1994), 51; and Kurt Eisner, as quoted in R. A. Nicholls, “Beginnings of the Nietzsche Vogue in Germany,” *Modern Philology* 56 (1958), 24. Eisner published an essay entitled “Friedrich Nietzsche und die Apostel der Zukunft,” in *Die Gesellschaft* in 1891, which was followed by a book entitled *Psychopathia Spiritualis: Friedrich Nietzsche und die Apostel der Zukunft* (Leipzig: Wilhelm Friedrich, 1892). Eisner’s title is a reference to *Psychopathia Sexualis*, a book published in 1886 by one of the most influential sexologists of the period, the neurologist Richard von Krafft-Ebing whose book was intended as a forensic reference tool for doctors and judges that became the primary handbook for researchers into sexual deviance. This shows Eisner’s belief that Nietzsche ideas were dangerous and that his followers were psychologically deviant. (Aschheim, *The Nietzsche Legacy in Germany*, 26.)

¹⁰⁴ Dorgerloh, *Das Künstlerehepaar*, 261. Simmel had been a frequent guest in the Graef family home since the age of seventeen when he was a schoolmate of Harald Graef at the Werder gymnasium in Berlin. In addition, in 1890, he married Gertrud Kinel, Sabine’s closest girlfriend. Sabine appears to have highly valued her intellectual friendship with Simmel, describing: “He led me into worlds of thought that had remained closed to me before...As a wise teacher, his intellectual demands gradually increased, allowing me to feel a real sense of intellectual growth.” (Lepsius, *Ein Berliner Künstlerleben*, 62-65.)

the Lepsius' home as the poet read from his work with the writer Rilke and Lou Salomé, who had been a close friend of Nietzsche, also in attendance.¹⁰⁶ In her autobiography, Sabine's discussion of George's propensity for bestowing nicknames shows the group's awareness of the central theme of Nietzsche's *The Birth of Tragedy*. According to her: "He sought more beautiful forms of address... at one point, he referred to us - Reinhold the "Apollinian one" and Sabine the "Dionysian one" – as the "divine couple"."¹⁰⁷ Of her brother, she wrote: "George was attracted to my brother Botho in a special way; the beautiful reverence that the musical person [Graef was an accomplished pianist] holds for all true art elevated him from the score of Berliners..."¹⁰⁸

Both Graef and George shared a deep interest in ancient Greece and George was an ardent admirer of Nietzsche as well, finding his book *The Birth of Tragedy* to be his best work.¹⁰⁹ Like Nietzsche, George similarly felt that the rebirth of German culture required an understanding of the ancients and would come from the creative individual through the arts. However, George's ideas derived from a complicated, highly idiosyncratic interpretation of Nietzsche's philosophy mixed with his personal devotion to the ideal of male physical and spiritual beauty as well as a supremely self-confident

¹⁰⁵ Sabine Lepsius, *Stefan George: Geschichte einer Freundschaft* (Berlin: Verlag die Runde, 1935). The book includes facsimiles of over a dozen letters written to the couple from George between 1900-1905 and one letter written from George to Graef in February 1901. Its contents are concerned with a play written by Karl G. Vollmoeller sent by Graef to George for his comments.

¹⁰⁶ Harry Liebersohn, *Fate and Utopia in German Sociology, 1870-1923* (Cambridge, MA and London: MIT Press, 1988), 145. For a discussion of the relationship between Nietzsche and Salomé, who choose the affections of their mutual friend Paul Reé over Nietzsche, before beginning a relationship with Rilke, see Ronald Hayman, *Nietzsche: A Critical Life* (New York: Penguin Books, 1982), 244-54.

¹⁰⁷ Lepsius, *Ein Berliner Künstlerleben*, 181-82.

¹⁰⁸ Lepsius, *Ein Berliner Künstlerleben*, 180.

¹⁰⁹ Hans Reiss, *The Writer's Task from Nietzsche to Brecht* (London: The Macmillan Press, Ltd., 1978), 32.

sense of his central role as the poet to serve as the touchstone for an impending cultural transformation.¹¹⁰ Ernst Bertram, one member of George's circle, wrote an early, highly influential biography of Nietzsche, titled *Nietzsche: Versuch einer Mythologie* (*Nietzsche: Attempt at a Mythology*), published in 1918, which helped shape the philosopher's mythic reputation in Germany.¹¹¹ In his book, Bertram reinforces the relationship between Nietzsche's understanding of Hellenism as directly related to a uniquely German sense of identity:

Nothing demonstrates so immediately how deeply the positive valuation of Germanness (a self-valuation...) is rooted in Nietzsche as his unmistakable stylization of the Greek essence itself into the German character of becoming. Nietzsche is perhaps the first to have had the audacity to stylize historical Hellenism as the pinnacle of a kind of "German" development...

If Nietzsche perceives the upward striving for Greek heights out of the inner twilight of an innate chaos as German, then he describes the Greek achievement as having grown out of such an innate twilight and proximity to chaos, and he thus also bends the fates of these two peoples and cultures across an immeasurable span toward each other in mystical identity...¹¹²

Bertram continues his discussion of this issue with a straightforward summary: "The entire *The Birth of Tragedy* is in fact already such an inspired Germanized interpretation of Greekdom."¹¹³

¹¹⁰ For a discussion of George's beliefs on the heroism of the poet's task see Reiss, *The Writer's Task from Nietzsche to Brecht*, 11-46; Chapter 2: Stefan George.

¹¹¹ Bertram's book was reissued seven times between 1918 and 1927 and "it played a crucial role in the history of the völkisch appropriation of Nietzsche and his transfiguration into a Germanic right-wing prophet." (Aschheim, *The Nietzsche Legacy in Germany*, 77.) From 1922 until 1946, Bertram (1884-1957) was a professor of German literature at Cologne University until the Nazis dismissed him. For a brief discussion of Bertram during the later period, see Karl-Heinz Schoeps, *Literature and Film in the Third Reich* (Rochester, NY: Woodbridge and Camden House, 2004), 57-59.

¹¹² Ernst Bertram, *Nietzsche: Attempt at a Mythology*, trans. and with an introduction by Robert E. Norton (Urbana and Chicago: University of Illinois Press, 2009), 75.

¹¹³ Bertram, *Nietzsche: Attempt at a Mythology*, 77.

In his poetry, Stefan George's ideology was structured by his admiration for Hellenic masculine culture. For him, homoeroticism was the principal agent of national renewal.¹¹⁴ As Nietzsche foretold the necessity of mythology to inform art in *The Birth of Tragedy*, George formed a cult of identity around Maximin, his name for a young boy named Maximilian Kronberger, whom he had taken under his wing for his potential as a poet in 1902. After the young man died of meningitis at age sixteen in 1904, George worshipped his memory in a modern variation of the devotion shown by the Roman Emperor Hadrian towards his adored youth Antinous. George saw Maximin as the personification of the ancient male ideal previously found in the figures of Antinous, Adonis, Endymion, Heracles, and Ganymede.¹¹⁵ Around Max, he created a new mythology for his disciples to worship that mixed the idealized view of male beauty inherited from Winckelmann with the instinctual natural example of Dionysus from Nietzsche. Inspired by Max's death, George wrote his most famous cycle of poems, *The Seventh Ring*, in 1907, in which salvation lies within the figure of a heroic youth and the worship of his beauty. Initially, George's influence was felt by an intellectual, elite group of academics and writers who viewed male beauty as a sacred and exclusive unifying bond.¹¹⁶ Eventually, though, his fame spread, briefly eclipsing Rilke in influence, as his

¹¹⁴ George L. Mosse, *The Image of Man: The Creation of Modern Masculinity* (New York and Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1996), 60; and Butler, *The Tyranny of Greece Over Germany*, 327.

¹¹⁵ Butler, *The Tyranny of Greece Over Germany*, 324; 330-31.

¹¹⁶ Butler, *The Tyranny of Greece Over Germany*, 324. For an extensive discussion of Stefan George's milieu see Robert E. Norton, *Secret Germany: Stefan George and his Circle* (Ithaca, NY: Cornell University Press, 2002).

poems expressed the initial euphoria and hopefulness at the beginning of the First World War.¹¹⁷

In addition to the writers, artists and academics around Sabine and Reinhold Lepsius, and those in Stefan George's circle, including Rudolf Borchardt, Graef was friends with many other avant-garde writers who were influenced by Nietzsche, including Ernst Hardt, Karl G. Vollmoeller and Richard Dehmel, a well-known literary figure who was also a passive member of the Brücke in 1910.¹¹⁸ In the early 1910s, Dehmel and the writer Arnz Holz developed a style of poetry that attracted the interest of Herwarth Walden's *Der Sturm* circle.¹¹⁹ In a biography published in 1913, the author Emil Ludwig explained how Dehmel had entered into an eight day long "possession" in which he was enraptured by the rhythmic spirit of Nietzsche's pronouncements from *Thus Spoke Zarathustra*.¹²⁰

Though Graef was a devoted Classicist, he was an important champion of modern art, developing friendships with many contemporary artists and architects, including Emil Nolde, Edvard Munch, and Henry van de Velde.¹²¹ In her autobiography, Sabine Lepsius

¹¹⁷ Mosse, *The Image of Man*, 59; and Walter Kaufmann, *Nietzsche: Philosopher, Psychologist, Antichrist* (Cleveland and New York: Meridian Books, 1961), 20.

¹¹⁸ In exchange for annual dues of between 12 and 25 marks, passive members received a portfolio of prints by the artists, an illustrated membership card and reports on their activities. At varying times, there were approximately fifty members, including Hans Fehr in Jena and Harry Graf Kessler in Weimar, both from 1908-1909. For an expanded discussion and a complete list see Dalbajewa and Bischoff, *Die Brücke in Dresden*, 338-48.

¹¹⁹ Lloyd, *German Expressionism*, 139. Otto Mueller recalled in his autobiography that the Brücke members had read Holz's *Buch der Zeit* (*Book of the Times*), 1885, in Dresden. (Lloyd, *German Expressionism*, 248, note 35.)

¹²⁰ Emil Ludwig, *Richard Dehmel* (Berlin: S. Fischer, 1913), 118; and Aschheim, *The Nietzsche Legacy in Germany*, 30.

¹²¹ Wahl, "Graef, der 'Leidenschaftliche Wortführer'," 124-26. Graef and Reinhold and Sabine Lepsius were also friends with the painters Max Liebermann, Ludwig von Hofmann, Melchior Lechter and

recalled her brother's life-long interest in the company of artists and his early cultivation of their company in the family home:

Botho possessed the gift of ingratiating himself with people through a likeable mixture of generosity and restraint, criticism and empathy. He attracted young people from an early age; friendship was one of the highest goods to him, and he was the only member of the family who preferred artists to scientists and intellectuals when it came to keeping company. He couldn't stand philistines, as well as bourgeois, prude or humorless people...he was entirely free of the rationalist spirit prevalent in Berlin and its pompousness. According to him and his perception of life, he already belonged to a later generation, a generation more skeptical and conscientious, deeply mistrusting of all pathos and sentimentality... It was he, for the most part, who brought the young people into our house, including those who wound up becoming closest to me.¹²²

Graef developed a long-lasting friendship with Munch beginning in the late 1890s in Berlin. Once Graef was at the University of Jena, beginning in 1904, the men met regularly during Munch's second productive stay in Thuringia between 1905-1907.¹²³ In 1905, Munch visited the Nietzsche-Archive in nearby Weimar where he met with Elisabeth Förster-Nietzsche, who was the guardian of her brother's archive. While there,

Marcus Belmer. In his memoirs, Nolde praised Graef for helping to establish and solidify his reputation in Germany; see Emil Nolde, *Jahre der Kämpfe 1902-1914* (Flensburg: C. Wolff, 1957), 121.

¹²² Lepsius, *Ein Berliner Künstlerleben*, 61-62.

¹²³ For an expanded discussion of the relationship between Graef and Edvard Munch, see Wahl, *Jena als Kunststadt*, esp. 78-106; Chapter: Edvard Munchs Thüringer Aufenthalt 1904 bis 1907. During Munch's stay in Thuringia, he maintained close friendships with Henry van de Velde and Harry Graf Kessler. He painted several portraits of Kessler, who had recently been named Director of the Weimar Museum by the Grand Duke in the hopes of making the city an important arts center. Kessler summarized what the intellectual and artistic generation of the 1890s found in Nietzsche: "There grew within us a secret Messianism. The desert, to which every Messiah belongs, was in our hearts; and suddenly, like a meteor, Nietzsche appeared...The way in which Nietzsche influenced, or more precisely possessed, us cannot be compared with the effect of any other contemporary thinker or poet. He did not merely speak to reason and fantasy. His impact was more encompassing, deeper, and more mysterious...He bridged the abyss between us and reality with the veil of heroism. Through him we were transported out of this ice age, re-enchanted and enraptured." (Kessler, *Gesichter und Zeiten: Erinnerungen* (Berlin: S. Fischer, 1962), 229; 243.)

In 1911, Kessler worked on plans for a monumental outdoor memorial area for Nietzsche that was intended to institutionalize his philosophy into mass activity in the form of a gigantic festival area, featuring a memorial temple, a large stadium and a huge statue of Apollo, providing room for thousands of his devoted to use the public space for dance, art, theater and sports. Other prominent figures were supportive of the project, including the sculptor Aristide Maillol who agreed to make the statue of Apollo using the dancer Vaslav Nijinsky as a model. The project was abandoned when it lost the support of Elisabeth Förster-Nietzsche in 1913. (Aschheim, *The Nietzsche Legacy in Germany*, 49.)

in addition to painting her portrait, Munch studied Nietzsche's writings and the surroundings in which the philosopher spent his final years in order to prepare for an important commission. In 1906, he painted a portrait of Nietzsche for the Swedish art collector and banker Ernest Thiel in which the philosopher is depicted standing on a bridge with his hands and wrists crossed in thoughtful repose as he gazes towards a town in the distance (Fig. 1.1). Thiel was an ardent admirer of Nietzsche; he had translated his work into Swedish, calling him "the person to whom I shall be eternally grateful."¹²⁴ Munch expressed his own interest in painting Nietzsche as someone who had also been a victim of illness in his own lifetime.¹²⁵

In February 1906, Munch painted *Portrait of Felix Auerbach*, after he was introduced to Dr. Felix Auerbach, a Professor of Physics at the University of Jena, and his wife Anna, a prominent local activist and arts patron, by Graef, who brought the couple with him to meet the artist in the forest town of Oberhof in the beginning of January 1906.¹²⁶ Like Graef, the Auerbachs were affiliated with the University and active with the Jena Art Association and the "Society of the Friends of Art in Weimar and Jena." They were prominent socially by hosting regular musical evenings in their home, bringing together a mixture of professors, students, scientists and artists, including Richard Dehmel and his wife Ida, who was a close friend of Anna through their mutual

¹²⁴ Thiel, as quoted in Ragna Stang, *Edvard Munch*, trans. by Geoffrey Culverwell (New York: Abbeville Press, Inc., 1979), 187.

¹²⁵ Stang, *Edvard Munch*, 188.

¹²⁶ Barbara Happe and Martin S. Fischer, *Haus Auerbach: von Walter Gropius mit Adolf Meyer* (Berlin: Ernst Wasmuth Verlag Tübingen, 2003), 70. Correspondence between Anna and Munch indicate that both parties were very pleased with the portrait. Anna wrote to Munch: "It gives me special pleasure to be able to say how I love every stroke and dot in your portrait of my husband and how much I rejoice every day that I own it." (Anna, in a letter dated July 1908, as quoted in Happe and Fischer, *Haus Auerbach*, 74.)

membership in the German Association for the Right of Women to Vote, Walter Gropius, who designed their Jena home, Julius Meier-Graefe, Henry van de Velde, and Graef, who shared a love of playing the piano with Felix.¹²⁷ The couple was also close friends with Elisabeth Förster-Nietzsche, who regularly visited their home from neighboring Weimar.¹²⁸

Botho Graef and the Arts Community in Jena

Graef found his most inspired period in the Thüringian city of Jena, a relatively small city near Weimar but one with an intellectual university population and an active arts community among whom he exerted a strong influence during the first quarter of the twentieth century.¹²⁹ In May 1904, Graef succeeded the archaeologist Ferdinand Noack

¹²⁷ Happe and Fischer, *Haus Auerbach*, 59-62; and Ruth Kisch-Arndt, "A Portrait of Felix Auerbach by Munch," *Burlington Magazine* 106, no. 732 (March 1964), 131-33.

¹²⁸ Happe and Fischer, *Haus Auerbach*, 70. Although it seems unusual that the Jewish couple would have enjoyed a friendship with Elisabeth Förster-Nietzsche, a well-known anti-Semite, Förster-Nietzsche's estate contains over 230 letters written between her and Anna Auerbach during 1900-1925 and fourteen letters from Felix Auerbach to her.

In the fall of 1924, the Auerbachs moved into a modernist house designed by Walter Gropius in Jena just as the conservative parties gained majority control of state elections in Thuringia. The house was very different from the historical architecture around it in the western quarter of the city but the Auerbachs, like Graef, were committed to modern art and architecture. The couple enjoyed approximately seven years there. Once Felix suffered his second stroke and the threats of persecution became increasingly real under the National Socialists, the Auerbachs committed suicide together in their home by taking Veronal sleeping tablets on the night of February 26, 1933. (Happe and Fischer, *Haus Auerbach*, 42 and 78.)

¹²⁹ The city of Jena and its university maintained a strong reputation for fostering great talents in many disciplines. Winckelmann initially studied medicine and science at the University of Jena, beginning in 1741. In Jena and in nearby Weimar, the friendship between Schiller and Goethe developed. In the late-eighteenth century, some of the most deeply committed idealists of the cultural revival congregated in Jena, including Schiller, who lectured at the University in 1789; Gottlieb Fichte, professor there in 1794; and F. W. J. Schelling and Friedrich Hegel, both of whom began their teaching careers there at about this time. In March 1889, when Nietzsche first descended into madness, the famous Dr. Otto Binswanger was in charge of his treatment in the sanatorium in Jena. (Kaufmann, *Nietzsche*, 39.) Otto Binswanger was a professor and director of psychology at the University of Jena until 1919 and he may have known Graef from the faculty. In a strange connection with Nietzsche, Kirchner later received care at the Bellevue Sanatorium in Kreuzlingen, under the care of Dr. Ludwig Binswanger, whose uncle Otto had treated Nietzsche. Ludwig Binswanger was the Bellevue sanatorium's director from 1911 until 1956.

as Professor of Archaeology and Modern Art History at the University, a position he held until 1915, when he volunteered for military service despite his advanced age of fifty-eight. In addition to teaching, Graef was instrumental in founding the new Germanic and Archaeological Museum at the University, serving as its first Director upon its opening in 1907. He also assumed responsibilities for organizing the annual program for the University's prestigious Rose Lecture series, a tradition since 1845.¹³⁰

Graef became a popular lecturer on the arts of all eras and was soon recognized among his teaching colleagues for his broad areas of knowledge and expertise.¹³¹ He was able to provide his students with a perspective spanning centuries of art historical knowledge, encompassing his deep affinity for ancient Greece and Rome, his interest in the Italian Renaissance, and his unwavering support for developments in modern art. According to the architect Henry van de Velde, who was a close friend, rather than remaining limited within the confines of his specialty, as did many academic colleagues, Graef introduced his students to the recent works of Degas, Toulouse-Lautrec, Munch and the Brücke, reserving his highest praise for Kirchner.¹³² Van de Velde enlisted Graef to deliver two series of lectures, in the winter term of 1912-1913 and again the following year, on the subject of Greek art at the *Kunstgewerbeschule* in Weimar, the school of arts and crafts he founded in 1902 and served as director until 1915.¹³³

¹³⁰ Wahl, "Graef, der 'Leidenschaftliche Wortführer'," 122; and Wahl, "Graef - Kirchners väterlicher Freund," 69.

¹³¹ Wahl, "Graef, der 'Leidenschaftliche Wortführer'," 122.

¹³² Wahl, "Graef, der 'Leidenschaftliche Wortführer'," 122.

¹³³ Volker Wahl, ed., *Henry van de Velde in Weimar: Dokumente und Berichte zur Förderung von Kunsthandwerk und Industrie (1902 bis 1915)* (Cologne, Weimar and Vienna: Böhlau Verlag, 2007), 30; 265; 300.

Graef was part of a committee responsible for selecting the design by Van de Velde for a memorial monument to recognize the contributions of one of Jena's most important citizens, Ernst Karl Abbé, a Professor at the University and a noted scientist and social reformer, who passed away in 1905.¹³⁴ Selected over a proposal by the well-known classical sculptor Adolf von Hildebrand, Van de Velde's memorial, unveiled in July 1911, included a marble portrait bust of Abbé by Max Klinger and four bronze relief panels by Constantin Meunier illustrating the theme of labor.¹³⁵

Graef and Van de Velde were aligned in their mutual understanding of Nietzsche's cosmopolitan worldview, an element that had similarly attracted Graef's Berlin circles. To these individuals, Nietzsche was "a good European," as he himself proclaimed, meaning "a champion of the higher redeeming values and of the regenerating powers of art and the spirit" of the individual creative genius over a nationalistic outlook.¹³⁶ In 1903, Van de Velde had been commissioned to re-design the Nietzsche-

¹³⁴ Graef served on the committee alongside his friend Felix Auerbach, who was a prominent physicist and had been appointed as Associate Professor for Theoretical Physics in 1889 by Abbé. (Happe and Fischer, *Haus Auerbach*, 65-66.) Auerbach and Abbé were close friends and Auerbach wrote a well-received biography of him, first released in 1918; see Felix Auerbach, *Ernst Abbé. Sein Leben, sein Wirken, seine Persönlichkeit nach den Quellen und aus eigener Erfahrung geschildert* (Leipzig, 1918).

Ernst Abbé had revolutionized the design of the Zeiss microscope and his efforts at social reform helped to enact legislation changing the workday to eight-hours. For a discussion of him see N. Gunther, "Abbé, Ernst" in *Dictionary of Scientific Biography* 1 (New York: Charles Scribner's Sons, 1970), 6-9; and I. Glatzer, "A Successful Social Reformer: Ernst Abbé, 1840-1905," *The Economic Journal* 23, no. 91 (September 1913): 329-39. In the 1860s and 1870s, Abbé was at the center of a group of University of Jena scientists, philosophers and humanists whose efforts as activists and reformers were aimed at combating the negative effects of Wilhelmine modernization. For a discussion of this circle see Kevin Repp, *Reformers, Critics and the Paths of German Modernity: Anti-Politics and the Search for Alternatives, 1890-1914* (Cambridge, MA, and London: Harvard University Press, 2000): 249-53.

¹³⁵ Several years later, in 1914, Max Klinger created a memorial for the Alfred-Kröner-Verlag in Leipzig featuring a Nietzsche portrait bust situated atop a tall pedestal base adorned with relief sculptures depicting allegorical scenes of Greek-inspired male figures. It was the second portrait bust of the philosopher by Klinger, who had previously completed a bronze head of Nietzsche in 1902.

¹³⁶ Aschheim, *The Nietzsche Legacy in Germany*, 48.

Archives in Weimar by Elisabeth Förster-Nietzsche.¹³⁷ In 1908, Van de Velde also designed the book covers for publications of Nietzsche's *Thus Spoke Zarathustra* and the autobiographical *Ecce Homo*.

Graef found himself at home among the circles of modern art enthusiasts in Jena. At the urging of Botho Graef and Rudolf Eucken, a Nobel Prize winner in literature in 1908 and a University faculty member, the "Society of Friends of Art in Jena and Weimar" commissioned Ferdinand Hodler's monumental mural painting *The March of the Jena Students into the 1813 War of Independence*, a patriotic image commemorating the German victory over Napoleon's forces at Leipzig in 1813 after their defeat at Jena-Auerstädt in 1806, as a gift for the University in 1909 with Eucken's son Walter posing for several of the central figures.¹³⁸

Founded in December 1903, the Jena Art Association (*Jenaer Kunstverein*) became a leading institution in the region in its support of contemporary art by mounting exhibitions that introduced many important artists of the time, including Hodler, Kirchner, Munch, Nolde, Van de Velde, Wasily Kandinsky, Paul Klee, August Macke, and Oskar Schlemmer, to local audiences.¹³⁹ As a lively and charismatic speaker, Graef wrote and delivered many of the exhibition opening addresses between 1906-1914. According to Van de Velde, it was largely due to Graef's outspoken and tireless

¹³⁷ Van de Velde also designed a Nietzsche Memorial in the early 1910s, but it was never realized.

¹³⁸ Wahl, "Graef, der 'Leidenschaftliche Wortführer'," 123. For a discussion of the mural painting and its historical implications, see Wahl, *Jena als Kunststadt*, 107-29.

¹³⁹ For a complete listing of all the exhibitions mounted by the Jena Art Association, see Wahl, *Jena als Kunststadt*, 258-92; "Appendix: Ausstellungen." It is an impressive roster.

commitment to new art forms that the city of Jena became a leading center for culture, modern art and architecture during this period.¹⁴⁰

Graef brought to the Art Association a generous open-mindedness that was based on the individual impact of an artwork on the viewer rather than on stylistic categorization. Hans Fehr, a legal historian who served as the Association's Director in the 1910s, explained his friend's approach: "For years, [Graef] worked to educate a resistant audience in an appreciation of art, specifically modern art. He preached what is both logical yet difficult to grasp, that the viewer needs to rid themselves of the conventional qualification of "beautiful" and "not beautiful" and instead confront the work in a free, pure, naïve manner."¹⁴¹ Fehr saw Graef's role as singular, saying: "If ever an institution had a great mentor, it was Graef for the *Kunstverein*."¹⁴² Graef convinced the Association's board members to begin establishing a permanent collection for the Association, which began with gifts by members and soon progressed to acquisitions, including one of Kirchner's most important Brücke paintings, *Artist: Marzella*, 1910, in 1916.¹⁴³ One week after Graef's death in 1917, his friend Wilhelm Waetzold wrote of his commitment to art and aesthetics in the *Frankfurter Zeitung*, saying: "Living art has lost

¹⁴⁰ Wahl, "Graef, der 'Leidenschaftliche Wortführer'," 123; and Henry van de Velde, *Geschichte meines Lebens* (Munich: R. Piper and Co., 1962), 316. In addition to Van de Velde's Abbé monument incorporating works by Klinger and Meunier, further examples of Jena's cultural contribution to the arts included a new university building by Theodor Fischer in 1905-1908; August Rodin's gift of the sculpture *Minerva*, 1896, to the city in 1906; the mural painting by Hodler, made in 1907-1909; Ludwig von Hoffmann's mural *The Nine Muses* for the Jena town hall in 1909; and Hildebrand's *Bust of Abbé*, donated to the University in 1910.

¹⁴¹ Fehr, as quoted in Wahl, "Graef, der 'Leidenschaftliche Wortführer'," 124-25. Fehr was a longtime friend of Emil Nolde and he was a passive member of the Brücke in 1908-1909.

¹⁴² Fehr, as quoted in Wahl, "Graef, der 'Leidenschaftliche Wortführer'," 124.

¹⁴³ In addition to the painting *Artist: Marzella*, 1910 (G125), the Jena Art Association soon owned Kirchner's paintings *Woman with Goats by the Sea*, 1913 (G315), a gift from the artist in 1914; and *The Drinker: Self-Portrait*, 1915 (Fig. 8), on permanent loan from Karl T. Bluth between 1917-1921.

one of its most loyal friends in Botho Graef, a spirited and unabashed fighter.”¹⁴⁴

Waetzold explained that art history was Graef’s passion: “He had to breathe artistic air, whether this came from the Acropolis, the hills of Rome or Montmartre.”¹⁴⁵ As Kirchner similarly explained: “Graef was an archaeologist who remained a thoroughly alive and vibrant person.”¹⁴⁶

Graef’s aesthetic ideology appears to have been informed by many of his philhellenic predecessors, professional colleagues and artist friends. Graef’s admiration for the aesthetic beauty of Greek forms descended from Winckelmann and he shared with him an unabashed love for the male figure. His teacher Carl Robert, who felt a lack of aesthetic understanding was weakening the philological field in the 1880s, appears to have influenced Graef through his commitment to an open-minded appreciation and interest in all artistic periods, including in nineteenth-century French art at a time of increasing nationalist bias. Graef remained true to the foundations of the philological field of inquiry by finding a way of uniting his love for beautiful objects and artworks, whether from the ancient realm or the modern era, with a sophisticated, intellectual and inquisitive approach into a work’s individual merits and origins over its categorization. As Graef described in an essay posthumously published in an exhibition catalogue of Kirchner’s artworks in 1919: “It is advisable to approach a work of art, like these by Ernst L. Kirchner, without presupposition, as if one were encountering a new person...There is no option, no preconception from this position, and yet this is not a loss

¹⁴⁴ Waetzold, as quoted in Wahl, “Graef, der ‘Leidenschaftliche Wortführer’,” 127.

¹⁴⁵ Waetzold, as quoted in Wahl, “Graef, der ‘Leidenschaftliche Wortführer’,” 122-24.

¹⁴⁶ Kirchner, as quoted in Karlheinz Gabler, ed., *Ernst Ludwig Kirchner Dokumente* (Aschaffenburg: Aschaffenburg Museum der Stadt, 1980), 130.

of meaning and judgment, but a rich ability to care and feel for what he sees and what he experiences.”¹⁴⁷

Above all, though, Graef seems to have understood and been aligned with the philosophies of Nietzsche, which were equally as influential on many of his friends, from Stefan George to Van de Velde and Munch to Kirchner. In Nietzsche’s “Introduction to Philology” lecture, given in Basel in the summer of 1871, he stated that to be a philologist, one must not only love his subject but must display certain qualities that he regretted as lacking amongst many in his field at the time. According to Nietzsche, the three main requirements to fulfill the responsibilities of the profession were a gift for teaching, a genuine delight in antiquity, and a pure desire for knowledge - all qualities that appear to have seamlessly informed Graef’s identity.¹⁴⁸

Friedrich Nietzsche and the Philhellenic Community

In the field of philology, Nietzsche emerged as an unusual prodigy among the close-knit community of Classical scholars in the last quarter of the nineteenth century. In 1864, he began his studies in classical philology at Bonn University and in 1865, he continued this course at the University of Leipzig. In 1870, before receiving his doctorate, he was appointed to a full professorship in Classical Philology at the

¹⁴⁷ Graef, “Einige Worte von Professor Graef Über die Arbeit von E. L. Kirchner,” in “Texte und Dokumente” in *Kirchner: Von Jena nach Davos*, eds. Ehrmann and Wahl, 105-06. Graef’s “Einige Worte von Professor Graef,” 1914-1917, was posthumously published in support of Kirchner’s exhibition at the Galerie Ludwig Schames in Frankfurt in 1919 in the exhibition catalogue *Bilder von E. L. Kirchner* (Frankfurt am Main: Galerie Ludwig Schames, 1919).

¹⁴⁸ Hugh Lloyd-Jones, “Nietzsche and the Study of the Ancient World,” in *Studies in Nietzsche and the Classical Tradition*, eds. James C. O’Flaherty, Timothy Sellner, and Robert M. Helm (Chapel Hill, NC: University of North Carolina Press, 1979), 10.

University of Basel at age twenty-five.¹⁴⁹ He taught in Basel for nearly a decade before resigning in 1879 due to ill health that would plague him for the next ten years. Before his teaching appointment, throughout 1868-1869, Nietzsche traveled to Italy and Greece and throughout the period of his professorship, he returned regularly to various Italian locations. After leaving Basel, he preferred to spend the winters in Italy and the summers in the Swiss mountain village of Sils-Maria, in the northeastern Engadin region (Davos and its environs, where Kirchner would live out his life from 1917 until his suicide in 1938, is also part of the Engadin.) In an incredibly prolific period between 1883-1888, living peripatetically and in self-imposed isolation, Nietzsche wrote most of the publications for which he is recognized today as one of the most important philosophers of the modern era.¹⁵⁰ Beginning with a psychotic episode in December 1888, Nietzsche descended into a period of madness that lasted until his death in 1900.

¹⁴⁹ The University of Leipzig awarded Nietzsche a doctorate without his having written a dissertation largely on the basis of his appointment to Basel and the endorsement that had secured it. Professor Friedrich Ritschl, an editor, writer and professor at the University of Leipzig, informed Basel of the following in his recommendation in 1868-1869: "However many young talents I have seen develop under my eyes for thirty-nine years now, *never yet* have I known a young man, or tried to help one along in my field as best I could, who was so mature as early and as young as this Nietzsche. His *Museum* articles he wrote in the second and third year of his *triennium*. He is the first from whom I have ever accepted any contribution at all while still a student. If – God grant – he lives long enough, I prophesy that he will one day stand in the front rank of German philology. He is now twenty-four years old: strong, vigorous, healthy, courageous physically and morally, so constituted as to impress those of a similar nature. On top of that, he possesses the enviable gift of presenting ideas, talking freely, as calmly as he speaks skillfully and clearly. He is the idol, without wishing it, the leader of the whole younger generation of philologists here in Leipzig who – and they are rather numerous – cannot wait to hear him as a lecturer. You will say, I describe a phenomenon. Well, that is just what he is – and at the same time pleasant and modest. Also a gifted musician, which is irrelevant here... He will simply be able to do anything he wants to do." (For the complete letter see Kaufmann, ed., *The Portable Nietzsche*, 7-8.)

¹⁵⁰ After *The Birth of Tragedy*, Nietzsche published four essays on various aspects of contemporary culture, written between 1873-1876, published together in *Untimely Meditations* in 1885. After this, Nietzsche followed *Human, All-Too Human*, 1878, with *The Dawn* and *The Gay Science*. Between 1882-1888, or the last six years of his sane life, he also wrote *Beyond Good and Evil*, 1886, *Thus Spoke Zarathustra*, 1886, *The Genealogy of Morals*, 1887, *The Case of Wagner*, 1888, *Twilight of the Idols*, published in January 1889, by which time Nietzsche was unaware of his work, *The Antichrist* and *Nietzsche Contra Wagner*, both written in 1888 but not published until 1895, and *Ecce Homo*, written in 1888, but not published until 1908. Nietzsche intended to synthesize his thinking in a publication to be titled *The Will to Power*. Unfortunately, his madness prevented this and it was published under the editorship of his sister.

Nietzsche had strong views about the state of philhellenic study when he entered the field. He voiced these opinions publicly in a series of five lectures, titled “On the Future of Our Educational Institutions,” delivered at the University of Basel beginning in January 1872. Similarly, these were expanded upon in parts of his first publication *The Birth of Tragedy*, released the same year. In the introduction to his first lecture, Nietzsche stated that two seemingly antagonistic forces, “equally deleterious in their actions and ultimately combining to produce their results,” were currently dominating German educational institutions; the practice of spreading learning among the greatest possible number of students and the tendency among educators to renounce its highest claims in subordination to the service of the nation.¹⁵¹ While he admitted that this type of “bread-winning” education was necessary for the majority of people, largely to fulfill governmental positions, Nietzsche felt that true culture was for select minds and must have no part whatsoever in commercial or political realms.¹⁵² Nietzsche criticized the prevailing educational structure of the university lecture format, calling it “a community

Though written by him, it cannot be said to best represent his thinking as the contents were arranged according to his sister’s understanding of his notes and aphorisms.

¹⁵¹ Nietzsche, “On the Future of our Educational Institutions,” in *The Complete Works*, 3: 12-13. Nietzsche continued his attack on the German nation in his third lecture, delivered at the end of February 1872, saying: “Why this education of the masses on such an extended scale? Because the true German spirit is hated, because the aristocratic nature of true culture is feared, because the people endeavor in this way to drive single great individuals into self-exile, so that the claims of the masses to education may be, so to speak, planted down and carefully tended, in order that the many may in this endeavor to escape the rigid and strict discipline of the few great leaders, so that the masses may be persuaded that they can easily find the path for themselves - following the guiding star of the State!” (Nietzsche, “On the Future of our Educational Institutions,” in *The Complete Works*, 3: 89.) For an expanded discussion of Nietzsche’s views on German education, see Bruford, *The German Tradition of Self-Cultivation*, 164-89; Chapter 8: Friedrich Nietzsche Also Sprach Zarathustra; and Lilge, *The Abuse of Learning*, 84-110; Chapter 4: Criticism and Satire of Academic Culture: Nietzsche. For the broader context of Nietzsche’s criticisms among the academic community, which was in accordance with him on many issues by the 1890s, see Fritz K. Ringer, *The Decline of the German Mandarins: The German Academic Community, 1890-1933* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1969), 253-304; Chapter 5: The Origins of the Cultural Crisis, 1890-1920.

¹⁵² J. M. Kennedy, “Introduction,” to “On the Future of our Educational Institutions,” in *The Complete Works*, 3: viii.

which is striving to educate and enlighten its members on a scale so magnificently out of proportion to its size.”¹⁵³ He maintained that the tendency for inexact, divergent readings of the philological source material made for a poor dissemination of the actual Classical texts to the students; in a lecture delivered in February 1872, Nietzsche said: “Philologists seem much more eagerly engaged in introducing Homer and Sophocles to the young souls of their pupils, in their own style, calling the result simply by the unchallenged euphemism: “classical education”...It is in this department that the greatest number of deepest deceptions occur, and whence misunderstandings are inadvertently spread.”¹⁵⁴ In *The Birth of Tragedy*, Nietzsche elaborated on his unflattering view of current educational practices:

And those very circles whose dignified task it might be to draw indefatigably from the Greek reservoir for the good of German culture, the teachers of the higher educational institutions, have learned best to come to terms with the Greeks easily and in good time, often by skeptically abandoning the Hellenic ideal and completely perverting the true purpose of antiquarian studies...The cultural power of our higher educational institutions has perhaps never been lower or feebler than at present...There has never been another period in the history of art in which so-called culture and true art have been so estranged and opposed as we may observe them to be at present.¹⁵⁵

Throughout his lecture series, delivered long before Carl Robert resigned in protest over the same issue, Nietzsche warned against the overspecialization that he felt was weakening the philological field. He stated that the profession had become mechanized in its devotion to accumulating facts for their own sake while he insisted to the contrary that the acquisition of knowledge was a means of understanding rather than

¹⁵³ Nietzsche, “On the Future of our Educational Institutions,” in *The Complete Works*, 3: 16.

¹⁵⁴ Nietzsche, “On the Future of our Educational Institutions,” in *The Complete Works*, 3: 62.

¹⁵⁵ Nietzsche, *The Birth of Tragedy*, 122.

an end in itself.¹⁵⁶ In *The Birth of Tragedy*, Nietzsche stressed that the standard for the man of genius to aspire towards was to be found solely in the literary and artistic works of ancient Greece. He explained the predicament of his age:

Nearly every age and stage of culture has at some time or other sought with profound irritation to free itself from the Greeks, because in their presence everything one has achieved oneself, though apparently quite original and sincerely admired, suddenly seemed to lose life and color and shriveled into a poor copy, even a caricature. And so time after time cordial anger erupts against this presumptuous little people....And so, one feels ashamed and afraid in the presence of the Greeks, unless one prizes truth above all things and dares acknowledge even this truth: that the Greeks as charioteers hold in their hands the reins of our own and every other culture, but that almost always chariot and horses are of inferior quality and not up to the glory of their leaders...¹⁵⁷

Against the prevailing objective or categorical approach currently in favor in philological circles, Nietzsche stressed the importance of entering into the life of antiquity in one's imagination and he placed an emphasis on intuitiveness in grasping the difference between the ancients compared to the contemporary realm.¹⁵⁸ According to the Classical scholar Hugh Lloyd-Jones: "Nietzsche's picture of antiquity differed radically from that painted by the old classicists, for whom the Greeks served as types of rational enlightenment; but he agreed with old classicists against the new historicists in insisting that the value of the study of antiquity must lie in what it can contribute to the modern world."¹⁵⁹ According to Suzanne Marchand, in terms of the field of philology, Nietzsche

¹⁵⁶ Lloyd-Jones, "Introduction," to Wilamowitz-Moellendorff, *History of Classical Scholarship*, xii.

¹⁵⁷ Nietzsche, *The Birth of Tragedy*, 93-94.

¹⁵⁸ Lloyd-Jones, "Introduction," to Wilamowitz-Moellendorff, *History of Classical Scholarship*, xii; and Kennedy, "Introduction," to "On the Future of our Educational Institutions," in *The Complete Works*, 3: viii.

¹⁵⁹ Lloyd-Jones, "Nietzsche and the Study of the Ancient World," 10-11.

brought passion back to the exploration of classical antiquity and challenged his readers to find new ways of making the Greek past relevant.¹⁶⁰

Throughout *The Birth of Tragedy*, Nietzsche criticized the contemporary emphasis on scientific inquiry, which he felt was responsible for drawing attention away from the ancients and stifling instinct as a powerful form of expression. The unique insight of the Attic Greeks, owing them their singular greatness as a “tragic culture,” was, according to Nietzsche, their awareness that “wisdom takes the place of science as the highest end - wisdom that, uninfluenced by the seductive distractions of the sciences, turns with unmoved eyes to a comprehensive view of the world, and seeks to grasp, with sympathetic feelings of love, the eternal suffering as its own.”¹⁶¹ He discussed forms of knowledge as a panacea, making parallels between contemporary ills and the past.¹⁶² Nietzsche’s emphasis on intuitiveness and the instinctual aspect of artistic inspiration is precisely what initially attracted Kirchner and the other Brücke members to him. This outlook is similarly mirrored in Kirchner’s personal reminiscences of Graef’s approach;

¹⁶⁰ Marchand, *Down From Olympus*, 117.

¹⁶¹ Nietzsche, *The Birth of Tragedy*, 112.

¹⁶² Nietzsche, *The Birth of Tragedy*, 106-10. In one of his criticisms of the modern age, with its preference for “big scholarship,” Nietzsche draws a comparison between the glorious Attic period and the following Alexandrian period, saying: “Our whole modern world is entangled in the net of Alexandrian culture. It proposes as its ideal the theoretical man equipped with the greatest forces of knowledge and laboring in the service of science...All our educational methods originally have this ideal in view: every other form of existence must struggle on laboriously beside it, as something tolerated but not intended.” (Nietzsche, *The Birth of Tragedy*, 110.)

Walter Kaufmann explains that this link between the Alexandrian age and the nineteenth-century German age is an important critique. The Attic period of the fourth and fifth centuries, mainly associated with Athens, was highly creative and produced some of the greatest tragic poets, as well as the philosophers Thucydides, Plato and Aristotle, and the artists Phidias and Praxiteles, while the following Alexandrian period in Greek literature is characterized by the accumulation of knowledge in the immense library at Alexandria, the center of the Hellenic world from 300 – 30 BCE, and the production of erudite scholars and scientists over comparatively lackluster creative achievements in poetry and prose. (Kaufmann, in *The Birth of Tragedy*, 110, note 2.)

in an autobiographical text written in 1925, Kirchner recalled that Graef emphasized that in order to properly view his art works, “we have to allow ourselves to be led by it, naively and with sincere dedication.”¹⁶³

Nietzsche’s *The Birth of Tragedy*, published in January 1872, was one of the most resounding challenges to the philhellenic community by exposing its insular community to pointed criticism. The contents of Nietzsche’s first publication were eagerly anticipated within philological circles due to the emergent scholar’s young age and his unusual promotion to a professorship in advance of receiving his doctorate. Within the field, the publication generated intense interest immediately, both positive and negative.¹⁶⁴ Even more provocative than the book’s abundant criticism of the current state of professional philology, educational institutions, and contemporary German culture, however, was Nietzsche’s understanding of the Greeks. His discussion

¹⁶³ Kirchner, “Das Werk,” 1925, in Grisebach, ed., *E. L. Kirchners Davoser Tagebuch*, 83.

¹⁶⁴ There are alternating theories as to the magnitude of the controversy surrounding the publication of *The Birth of Tragedy* in 1872. Walter Kaufmann concedes, “most of the philologists of Nietzsche’s own generation considered the book preposterous.” (Kaufmann, *The Portable Nietzsche*, 10.) For a detailed discussion of its reception within the philological community see James Whitman, “Nietzsche in the Magisterial Tradition of German Classical Philology” *Journal of the History of Ideas* 47, no. 3 (July – September 1986): 453-68. Whitman explains that the book, in which Nietzsche did not include Greek quotations or footnotes and relied upon a free-form style of narrative, created a controversy within the close-knit community of philhellenic scholars. A chilly public silence was deliberately maintained over its release among these men who felt that the young scholar had breeched protocol via his unconventional approach.

The only philologist who publicly responded at the time of the book’s release was Ulrich von Wilamowitz-Moellendorff, who had attended the same elite preparatory boarding school, Schulpforta, near Naumberg, as Nietzsche. His critical reply came in the form of a self-published pamphlet *Zukunftsphilologie!* (Berlin: Gebrüder Bornträger, 1872). Although Wilamowitz-Moellendorff would be promoted to faculty member at University of Berlin in 1897 and go on to become one of Germany’s foremost classicists, at the time, he was unpublished and without a university affiliation. In his text, he attacked Nietzsche’s style over all, using his lack of quotations and abandonment of footnotes as evidence of faulty scholarship. Kaufmann explains that with the pamphlet as his first book, Wilamowitz-Moellendorff was attempting to establish the range and solidity of his own scholarship by cataloguing Nietzsche’s faults. (Kaufmann, *The Birth of Tragedy*, 4-5)

Nietzsche’s friend and colleague Erwin Rohde replied to Wilamowitz-Moellendorff in a pamphlet entitled *Afterphilologie*, also published in 1872, that provoked a final rebuttal in the form of a sequel to the original pamphlet, published in 1873. Knowledge of this series of exchange was limited largely to the philological community.

contradicted the accepted interpretation of the ancient world firmly in place since Winckelmann, a view characterized by the Greeks supposed genius for calm restraint, measure and harmony.

In *The Birth of Tragedy*, Nietzsche explains his premise that dramatic tragedy, the penultimate artistic medium of the Greeks, stems from the necessary dialectic between Apollinian and Dionysian elements.¹⁶⁵ Nietzsche opens the book with an outline of his thesis:

These two different tendencies run parallel to each other, for the most openly at variance; and they continually incite each other to new and more powerful births, which perpetuate an antagonism, only superficially reconciled by the common term “art”; till eventually, by a metaphysical miracle of the Hellenic “will,” they appear coupled with each other, and through this coupling ultimately generate an equally Dionysian and Apollinian form of art – Attic tragedy.¹⁶⁶

Apollo is the god of measure, harmony, idealized form and the realm of dreams while Dionysus is the representative of instinctual, intoxicating abandon, the urgent longing that seeks to destroy all codes and systems. According to Nietzsche, the Apollinian side symbolizes the principle of individuation and with it comes the desire to create harmonious beauty, as seen in sculpture. This force remains in conflict with Dionysian tendencies, which represents the dissolution of individuality in favor of a unity of vital creative forces, such as emotion and instinctual forms of expression including music and dance. Both elements remain essential and one need not be valued at the expense of the other because only the Apollonian ideal is able to control and harness Dionysian energy to use it creatively while Dionysian instinct remains the essential force without which the

¹⁶⁵ For a thorough discussion of the development of Nietzsche’s thoughts on the subject of ancient Greek tragedy culminating in this publication, see Denis M. Sweet, “The Birth of *The Birth of Tragedy*,” *Journal of the History of Ideas* 60, no. 2 (April 1999): 345-59.

¹⁶⁶ Nietzsche, *The Birth of Tragedy*, 33.

creation of aesthetic beauty would be impossible for there would be nothing to reconcile against in man or society's ceaseless striving to overcome limitations. It is from this striving for reconciliation or the coalescence of these opposing forces that superior forms of expression are achieved. According to Nietzsche, it was the Greek's unique ability to harness both sides, including the potentially destructive Dionysian element, that resulted in the invention of tragedy as an art form because creative greatness comes from the struggle for overcoming that utilizes the two opposing forces.¹⁶⁷ Unfortunately, according to Nietzsche, the cultural greatness evident in the sudden birth of Greek tragedy was short lived, followed by the no less sudden death of tragedy stemming from an overemphasis on rationalism.¹⁶⁸

In the text, the Greek god Apollo represents the aspect of Greek culture that found its best expression in Classical Greek temple architecture and idealized sculpture. What Nietzsche brought into the discussion of ancient Greece was another altogether different and largely ignored side of the Greek character, one best expressed by Dionysus through non-imagistic characteristics, including music, which was seen by Nietzsche as a vital force for creative expression. This side of the Greek psyche was exemplified by the boundless energy and ecstatic abandon of the Dionysian festivals that were reliant upon music, song, and dance for their potency.

The Dionysian force had previously remained difficult to reconcile with the prevailing interpretation of the Greek's perceived preference for calm, idealized grandeur and harmonious proportions. Winckelmann interpreted these Dionysian elements very

¹⁶⁷ Nietzsche, *The Birth of Tragedy*, 9-10.

¹⁶⁸ Nietzsche, *The Birth of Tragedy*, 9.

differently, explaining: “Every solemnity, every festival, afforded the artist opportunity to familiarize himself with all the beauties of Nature. In the most happy times of their freedom, the humanity of the Greeks abhorred bloody games.”¹⁶⁹ Nietzsche wholly disagreed with this conception, explaining that conflict was central to the Hellenic mind for it guaranteed that envy and ambition were effectively harnessed. Moreover, Nietzsche maintained that contests were an essential component in the education of Greek youths. In an early essay, titled “Homer’s Contest,” written in 1872, he explained: “Man, in his highest and noble capacities, is wholly nature and embodies its uncanny dual character. Thus the Greeks, the most human men of ancient times, have a trait of cruelty...that must strike fear into our hearts through their whole history and mythology, if we approach them with the flabby concept of modern humanity.”¹⁷⁰ To defend his position, Nietzsche referenced the scenes of combat in the *Iliad*; Achilles treatment of Hector’s body after his death; the prevalence for depictions of warfare and combat in sculpture; and he explained that Plato’s dialogues were themselves a contest in the art of oratorical skills for dramatists of the time.¹⁷¹

According to the author Eliza Butler, *The Birth of Tragedy* was the first unequivocal answer to Winckelmann’s conception of the Greeks, striking at the very core of traditional aesthetic assumptions by denying that a people who had produced the art form of Greek tragedy could ever have been peaceful and serene.¹⁷² Instead, Butler

¹⁶⁹ Winckelmann, *Reflections on the Painting and Sculpture of the Greeks*, 11.

¹⁷⁰ Nietzsche, “Homer’s Contest,” in *The Portable Nietzsche*, 32-33.

¹⁷¹ Nietzsche, “Homer’s Contest,” in *The Portable Nietzsche*, 37.

¹⁷² Butler, *The Tyranny of Greece Over Germany*, 310.

explains, Nietzsche evoked a somber, tragic, yet valiant and beauty-loving population who were intimately aware of the terrible nature of the world in which they lived and thus, created a glorious Apollinian art as a corrective for their reality. Lending credibility to Nietzsche's views, the historian Jacob Burckhardt, who was a colleague at Basel, endorsed Nietzsche's re-interpretation of the complex Greek psyche in his own book *The Greeks and Greek Civilization*, posthumously published in 1898 from his university lecture courses, saying: "The Greeks were less happy than most people suppose... What they did and suffered, they appear to have done and suffered freely, and thus differently from all earlier races... That is why in their creativeness and their potentialities they seem the representatives of genius on earth, with all the failings and sufferings this entails... if we ignore them we are simply accepting our own decline."¹⁷³

Although *The Birth of Tragedy* is concerned overall with the ancients and the origin of Greek tragedy, large passages are concerned with Nietzsche's views on compelling topical issues, including the relationship between art and science, the cultural traditions of Germany, and foremost, the failings of the modern era. In the book, Nietzsche draws many parallels between the ancient world and the modern one, which for him was in a period of cultural degeneration. The entire second half of the book is devoted to the composer Richard Wagner as a successful contemporary realization of

¹⁷³ Burckhardt, *The Greeks and Greek Civilization*, 11-12. Burckhardt taught at the University of Basel for over thirty years, beginning in 1844; in 1858, he was made Professor of History, and from 1874, he was also Professor of the History of Art. He was fifty years old when the twenty-four year old Nietzsche became Professor of Philology at the University in 1869-1870. The two men developed a close friendship based overall on their mutual admiration for the aesthetic philosophies of Arthur Schopenhauer. In 1899, Wilamowitz-Moellendorf, who was by then a well-known scholar of antiquity and who twenty years earlier had given Nietzsche's first book a scathing review, responded to Burckhardt's book with an equally critical review: "I would hold it cowardice if I did not here assert that the *Griechische Kulturgeschichte* of Jacob Burckhardt does not exist for scholarship." (Wilamowitz-Moellendorf, as quoted in Burckhardt, *The Greeks and Greek Civilization*, 3-4.) Kirchner owned a copy of Burckhardt's book, published as Jacob Burckhardt, *Griechische Kulturgeschichte* (Berlin: Spemann, 1898); see the list of the contents of his library in Gabler, *E. L. Kirchner: Dokumente*, 360.

cultural regeneration. Nietzsche's equation of Wagner as a modern embodiment of artistic greatness on par with the Greeks is reflected in the book's original title *The Birth of Tragedy Out of the Spirit of Music*.¹⁷⁴ As a way to characterize an overarching theme that emerges in the book, it could be said that Nietzsche's publication is concerned with "the dynamic process of human creativity in general."¹⁷⁵ His assessment of the role of art and the artist within society in this book is foremost among the issues that form the core of his life's work and these topics are expanded upon in different discussions throughout all of his subsequent publications, while the role and responsibility of the exceptional or the creative individual within society is taken up in the two essays written immediately afterwards, "On the Utility and Liability of History for Life" and "Schopenhauer as Educator," published in the collected volume *Untimely Meditations* in 1885.

In *The Birth of Tragedy*, Nietzsche voiced his dream for a heroic new era in tune with the Greeks as a model for cultural regeneration and renewed creative sophistication. It was his only book devoted to a study of the ancient Greeks and the only publication to incorporate a discussion of the interrelated force of the Apollinian and Dionysian elements. Nietzsche saw the Dionysian side as an inherent part of the German spirit, saying, "In the German Middle Ages, singing and dancing crowds, ever increasing in number, whirled themselves from place to place under this same Dionysian impulse."¹⁷⁶ Nietzsche's views on Dionysian creativity, however, figure prominently in subsequent

¹⁷⁴ Walter Kaufmann finds the book's greatest weakness the ten sections of *The Birth of Tragedy* in which Nietzsche praised Wagner and his music following the fifteen sections devoted to Greek tragedy. In his view, these gave the book the appearance of "mere special pleading for his idol" and made attacks or dismissals of the book's overall contents easier for critics. (Kaufmann, *The Portable Nietzsche*, 9.)

¹⁷⁵ Sweet, "The Birth of *The Birth of Tragedy*," 345.

¹⁷⁶ Nietzsche, *The Birth of Tragedy*, 36.

books, particularly the importance of harnessing its power in order to overcome personal or societal degeneration. This idea reaches its culmination in *Thus Spoke Zarathustra* and *Ecce Homo*, his last book written in 1888, in which he provides a critical appraisal of all his prior publications.¹⁷⁷ He concluded this text with a question to his readers and a defiant signature: “Have I been understood? Dionysus against the Crucified,” illustrating his believe in the irreconcilable power of creative instinct over Christian doctrine, a subject that occupied his attention increasingly over time.¹⁷⁸

Nietzsche’s views on the ancient Greeks and Classical culture remained antithetical to the mode of thought within the philological field that prevailed during the end of the century. After his debut book, he turned his back on the academic community and concerned himself more directly with issues related to contemporary culture. Nietzsche found a broad readership among intellectual circles with *Untimely Meditations*, a collection of four essays on different aspects of contemporary German culture under the overriding polemical stance that it had reached a point devoid of creative value. Hence, the essays collective title of delivering opinions that went against the grain. The four *Untimely Meditations* were written and originally published individually between August 1873 and July 1876, within the immediate aftermath of the Franco-Prussian War of 1871-

¹⁷⁷ Nietzsche also published one volume of poetry, which he began writing in 1883 and finished in 1888, titled *Dithyrambs of Dionysus*. See Friedrich Nietzsche, *Dithyrambs of Dionysus*, trans. with an introduction by R. J. Hollingdale (London: Anvil Press Poetry, 1984). A dithyramb is a Greek choric hymn to Dionysus as well as the language in which Dionysus speaks for and of himself. The Dionysian chorus is eventually integrated into the medium of Greek tragedy where its songs are performed along with music, forming core elements of this mode of expression.

¹⁷⁸ Nietzsche, *Ecce Homo*, in *Basic Writings of Nietzsche*, 791. In his notes, Nietzsche elaborated: “Dionysus versus the Crucified: There you have the contrast...The god on the cross is a curse on life, a pointer to seek redemption from it; Dionysus cut to pieces is a promise of life: it is eternally reborn and comes back from destruction.” (Nietzsche, in notes written in 1888, as quoted in Kaufmann, *The Portable Nietzsche*, 459.)

1872, which made Nietzsche's negative appraisal of the condition of German cultural and his international outlook even more trenchant.

Though Nietzsche's later publications have since overshadowed the contemporary relevance of this collection, especially the essay "On the Utility and Liability of History for Life," these individual essays were extremely influential at the turn-of-the-century on intellectuals, including Thomas Mann, Martin Heidegger, Wilhelm Worringer, and Stefan George's circle, who were particularly drawn by its discussion of great individuals who transcend their historical circumstances.¹⁷⁹ The first essay in the collection, "David Strauss the Confessor and the Writer," created a public sensation for its vitriolic attack on a contemporary author whose book *The Old and the New Faith*, published in 1872, was then viewed with acclaim.

In the second essay "On the Utility and Liability of History for Life," Nietzsche explains the role of history for the present. According to him, if one adheres solely to the "historical" outlook, the burden of the past inhibits one's activity rendering one unable to act.¹⁸⁰ An individual must learn how to suspend their memory of the past, in a sense to forget or act intuitively, in order to live "ahistorically" or free from the comparative constraints of history. Nietzsche describes how a combination of these outlooks is

¹⁷⁹ Gray, "Afterward," to Nietzsche, *Unfashionable Observations*, trans. and with an afterward by Richard T. Gray (Palo Alto, CA: Stanford University Press, 1995), 408. During the course of my research, I consulted two translations of the collected volume *Untimely Meditations*. As such, they will be designated by varying titles as follows: *Unfashionable Observations* refers to the aforementioned citation, while *Untimely Meditations* refers to Nietzsche, *Untimely Meditations*, trans. R. J. Hollingdale (Cambridge; Cambridge University Press, 1983). Throughout the text itself, I will continue to refer to the publication as *Untimely Meditations*. Nietzsche's original title of the collected volume *Unzeitgemässe Betrachtungen* has since been variously translated with the overall understanding that his essays ran counter to public opinion and thus provide an "untimely" or "unfashionable" commentary on contemporary culture. For a discussion of the preferences between the two translations of the title within the critical literature, see Gray, "Afterward," in *Unfashionable Observations*, 395-99.

¹⁸⁰ Nietzsche, "On the Utility and Liability of History...," in *Unfashionable Observations*, 85-86.

necessary for the health of an individual or a culture.¹⁸¹ Only society's most exceptional or talented, however, realize how to merge the two outlooks to become "supra-historical" in their understanding of how to pursue history for the purpose of life by applying a "critical historical" appraisal in which one remembers the past and understands how to interpret it while not attempting to merely recreate it or remain burdened by it.¹⁸² These supra-historical individuals are those who are responsible for the eternal and meaningful contributions to culture, a theme that becomes the focus of the following essay in the collection.

The third essay "Schopenhauer as Educator" is focused overall on the edifying value of recognizing one's genuine teachers, as Nietzsche did with the philosopher Arthur Schopenhauer (1788-1860), whose important book *The World as Will and Representation*, published in 1819, Nietzsche discovered while a student in Leipzig. Schopenhauer's book and his theories on aesthetics, which emphasized the subjective side of the aesthetic act as a process unfolding in two stages, alternately the assimilation of constant forms underlying an ever-changing reality and the suspension of knowledge of the self or losing oneself to become a pure, will-less subject to enhance aesthetic consciousness, heavily influenced the development of nineteenth-century aesthetic theory

¹⁸¹ Nietzsche, "On the Utility and Liability of History...", in *Unfashionable Observations*, 90.

¹⁸² According to Nietzsche, the "critical historical" outlook is the most valuable, though an understanding of the "monumental" aspect of history, meaning the knowledge that greatness which was achieved in the past may be possible once again, is necessary alongside an avoidance of the "antiquarian" view plaguing those who see all history as venerable while ignoring the inspiration to be found in the life of the present. For those crippled by the monumental outlook, they remain incapable of contemporary innovations believing that any potential undertaking will pale in comparison to the output of the past. Meanwhile, Nietzsche repeatedly complained that many of his contemporaries suffered from the antiquarian attitude. For Nietzsche's expanded explanation of the ahistorical and supra-historical outlooks, see Nietzsche, "On the Utility and Liability of History...", in *Unfashionable Observations*, 91-107. For an explanation of Nietzsche's view of the supra-historical man, see Kaufmann, *Nietzsche*, 125-33.

and exerted a profound influence on well-known artists, writers, and philosophers, including Thomas Mann and Sigmund Freud.¹⁸³

In the essay, Nietzsche explains how heavily indebted he was to Schopenhauer's spiritual guidance. He said: "Certainly, there are other ways of finding oneself, of coming to oneself out of the stupor in which we usually float as in a dark cloud, but I know of no better way than to reflect on one's educators and cultivators."¹⁸⁴ Written against the backdrop of the Franco-Prussian War, Nietzsche vehemently criticized the German state for using the military to organize "the herd," people who acquiesced in conformity rather than undertake the "heroic striving" necessary to attain a level of supra-historical awareness. For Nietzsche, non-conformity was the necessary attitude for the "highest specimens" who possess an awareness that man's debt is to culture not to the nation.¹⁸⁵ Overall, the essay is a strong encouragement to live according to one's individual standards. According to Nietzsche: "The human being who does not want to be part of the masses need only cease to go easy on himself; let him follow his conscience, which cries out to him: "Be yourself!"¹⁸⁶

The essay's theme of realizing one's supra-historical potential to enact cultural regeneration was influential in shaping the paradigm of the cult of the individual that developed in Germany soon afterwards. In 1890, Julius Langbehn anonymously

¹⁸³ For a discussion of Schopenhauer, see Harry Mallgrave and Eleftherios Ikonomou, "Introduction: The Rise of Aesthetic Formalism in the Nineteenth Century," in *Empathy, Form, and Space: Problems in German Aesthetics, 1873-1893* (Santa Monica: Getty Center for the History of Art and the Humanities, 1994), 9.

¹⁸⁴ Nietzsche, "Schopenhauer as Educator" in *Unfashionable Observations*, 175.

¹⁸⁵ Hayman, *Nietzsche: A Critical Life*, 172; Kaufmann, *Nietzsche*, 151.

¹⁸⁶ Nietzsche, "Schopenhauer as Educator" in *Unfashionable Observations*, 172-73.

published the influential book *Rembrandt as Educator*, written “by a German” according to its title page, a text that proved extremely influential and went into multiple printings.¹⁸⁷ The book’s title shows Langbehn’s reliance on Nietzsche’s essay in a book in which he cast Rembrandt as the true cultural genius and embodiment of the glorious spirit of the Low German peoples.¹⁸⁸ The fourth and final essay, “Richard Wagner in Bayreuth,” was a harbinger of Nietzsche’s break with the composer that nonetheless characterized his preeminent role in cultural renewal.

Nietzsche resigned his professorship in Basel in 1878 due in part to his declining health - he suffered from crippling migraine headaches, but also partly due to his conviction that his voice should be heard by the public rather than restricted to students of Classical philology.¹⁸⁹ With the publication of his third book, *Human, All Too-Human*, in 1878-1880, Nietzsche sought to enter the societal mainstream as an intellectual force. Sadly, the philosopher, who died in 1900, spent the final years of his life mentally incapacitated and unaware of his growing popularity.

By the turn-of-the-century, the tremendous influence of Nietzsche on German culture cannot be overstated. He achieved widespread influence in the 1890s as a vocal critic of Wilhelmine society and as a prophet of its overcoming and his philosophy was

¹⁸⁷ Julius Langbehn, *Rembrandt als Erzieher* (Leipzig: C. L. Hirschfeld, 1890). For an expanded discussion of Langbehn and the influence of this book, see Fritz Stern, *The Politics of Cultural Despair* (Berkeley and Los Angeles: University of California Press, 1961): 116-36; and 153-82; Part Two: Julius Langbehn and Germanic Irrationalism: Art and the Revolt against Modernity; and Langbehn and the Crisis of the 1890s.

¹⁸⁸ Langbehn had an extremely strange personal affiliation with Nietzsche. While Nietzsche was under the care of Dr. Otto Binswanger in Jena in 1889, Langbehn repeatedly visited the philosopher, taking him for long walks in hopes of gaining the confidence of Nietzsche’s mother in order to assume legal guardianship over him to assume care for the philosopher himself. (See Hayman, *Nietzsche: A Critical Life*, 340; and Stern, *The Politics of Cultural Despair*, 107-08.)

¹⁸⁹ Levy, “Introduction” to *Human, All-Too Human*, in *The Complete Works*, 7: viii.

perfectly attune to the growing cultural and political changes fomenting in Europe during this period.¹⁹⁰ Nietzsche was decidedly international in his outlook, bestowing phrase on French cultural contributions over native ones at a time when this was seen as anti-nationalistic in the wake of the Franco-Prussian War and it was his cosmopolitanism that initially appealed to Berlin intellectuals such as Graef. At the same time, he was seen as a specifically German thinker, a point made in the first public lecture given about him by the Danish philosopher Georg Brand at the University of Copenhagen in 1888, who said: “Little as he feels himself a German, he nevertheless continues the metaphysical and intuitive tradition of German philosophy, and has the German thinker’s profound dislike of any utilitarian point of view.”¹⁹¹

Nietzsche’s publications articulated a growing dissatisfaction with convention among many of his early followers who were drawn largely from the young and avant-garde and upon whom his influence was galvanizing.¹⁹² *The Will to Power*, released in 1901, was widely received as prophetic words from beyond the grave, coming one year after Nietzsche’s death.¹⁹³ But, of all Nietzsche’s books, *Thus Spoke Zarathustra* reached

¹⁹⁰ For a discussion of the spread of Nietzsche’s influence, see R. A. Nicholls, “Beginnings of the Nietzsche Vogue in Germany,” *Modern Philology* 56 (1958): 24-37. For a discussion of the broader cultural context of this period, see H. Stuart Hughes, *Consciousness and Society: The Reorientation of European Social Thought 1890-1930* (New York: Random House, 1958), esp. 33-66; Chapter 2: The Decade of the 1890s: The Revolt Against Positivism; and George L. Mosse, *The Culture of Western Europe: The Nineteenth and Twentieth Centuries*, 3rd ed. (Boulder and London: Westview Press, 1988), esp. 219-36; Chapter 13: Change in the Public Spirit of Europe.

¹⁹¹ Brand, as quoted in Frederick Copleston, *Friedrich Nietzsche: Philosopher of Culture* (London: Burns Oates and Washbourne Ltd., 1942), xi.

¹⁹² Aschheim, *The Nietzsche Legacy in Germany*, 22.

¹⁹³ Nowadays, this publication is seen as a highly problematic reflection of Nietzsche’s beliefs. Nietzsche’s sister Elisabeth Förster-Nietzsche retained exclusive literary rights to his material and manipulated his writings after his death to publish it from his unedited notes in the form of four hundred aphorisms in 1901. This was expanded to over one thousand in 1906 (see also footnote 150). Meanwhile,

the widest audience and proved to be his most popular.¹⁹⁴ Nietzsche himself said it was his favorite work, remaining exhilarated by the creative outpouring in which the majority of it was written in 1883.¹⁹⁵

By the 1910s, when Kirchner and Graef came together as friends, Nietzsche's influence was greater than ever on the German nation. His prescription for regeneration amidst societal stagnation was already influential among German artists and writers. With the onset of war, his philosophy on overcoming adversity and struggle as a necessary psychological salve proved highly instructive for the many young men preparing for military duty. According to the scholar Steven E. Aschheim, although he was not patriotic or overly political, the war made the Nietzsche myth into a nationalistic one with the current conflict viewed as a Zarathustra-like abyss that would provide the ultimate test of the self.¹⁹⁶ At the outset of the conflict, over 150,000 copies of a special, durable war edition of *Thus Spoke Zarathustra* were distributed to German troops and it is reputed that, together with the *New Testament* and Goethe's *Faust*, it was the most popular book taken by soldiers to the battlefield.¹⁹⁷ In 1917 alone, 40,000 copies of *Thus Spoke Zarathustra* were sold.¹⁹⁸ Simultaneously, the example of the Greeks remained

she suppressed his actual last work *Ecce Homo* until publishing it in an expensive limited edition in 1908. (Kaufmann, *Nietzsche*, 99-100; 348-52.)

¹⁹⁴ The episodic text of *Thus Spoke Zarathustra* was originally published in separate installments, with the first three between 1883 – 1884 attracting scant interest and the fourth and final installment not until 1892. Nietzsche's mother and sister held up the publication of the fourth part for fear that it would be perceived as blasphemous. By this time, Nietzsche was insane and unaware of events. Shortly after 1892, an edition of all four parts was released. (Walter Kaufmann, "Translator's Preface," in *Thus Spoke Zarathustra* (New York: Viking Penguin Books, 1966), xiii.)

¹⁹⁵ Kaufmann, *Nietzsche*, 55.

¹⁹⁶ Aschheim, *The Nietzsche Legacy in Germany*, 136-38.

¹⁹⁷ Aschheim, *The Nietzsche Legacy in Germany*, 135.

heavily draped over German society not the least for providing the symbol of the idealized masculine figure to signify Germany's military identity. The Greek model of a unified, comradely force was invoked as an example of success in armed conflict, referring back to the powerful Spartan army and to famous Greek examples, including the bonds between Achilles and Patroclus, for example, as archetypal warriors.

Leading up to the war, Nietzsche's prescription for regeneration and for a more authentic culture appealed to many with society's increasing preoccupation for new sources of physical and mental health, including the growing *Wandervögel* movement, a youth organization that formed chapters throughout Germany to exercise outdoors and explore nature; and the *Lebensreform* movement, including *Freikörperkultur*, which emerged in the 1890s as part of an anti-bourgeois and anti-urban reaction to modern society that endorsed sun worship, nudity culture, and vegetarianism.¹⁹⁹ In 1902, the Society for Bodily Fitness was founded following the first "Sun and Fresh Air Sports Bath for Men in Berlin" and in 1906, the "German Association for Reformatory Living" was founded, describing their aim as "a renewal of bodily and spiritual strength of the people through education about the laws of nature...to create a true, humane cultural community."²⁰⁰

¹⁹⁸ Aschheim, *The Nietzsche Legacy in Germany*, 135, note 33.

¹⁹⁹ For a general discussion of these reform movements within their historical context, see Mosse, *Nationalism and Sexuality*, 48-65; Chapter 3: The Rediscovery of the Human Body; and Charles Kessler, "Sun Worship and Anxiety," *Magazine of Art* 45 (November, 1952): 304-12. The first chapter of the *Wandervögel* was founded in 1896. By 1906, various regional organizations had been established throughout Germany including one in Berlin. For a discussion of the *Wandervögel*, see Walter Z. Laqueur, *Young Germany* (London: Routledge and Kegan Paul, 1962).

²⁰⁰ As quoted in Lloyd, *German Expressionism*, 107; and for an expanded discussion of this and similar groups see Lloyd, "The Painted City as Nature and Artifice," in *Divided Heritage*, 265-77.

In Dresden, Heinrich Pudor was an advocate for the benefits of nudism. In the 1890s, he published a series of pamphlets influenced by the writings of Nietzsche, in which he attempted to provide a theoretical justification for the benefits of nudity. He conceived of man as a potential work of art, a Greek god, who had been perverted and become ridiculous by the trappings of modern civilization. Stripped of this disguise, he insisted that man in his natural, nude state would again become a work of art governed by Classical ideals of beauty.²⁰¹ Pudor also worshipped the Middle Ages, during which he believed the Germans lived in the nude. Although Pudor's ideas appear extreme and unusual, according to the historian George L. Mosse, the centrality of the nude male body in German culture at this time challenged notions of respectability; as a result, alternative movements sought to equate nudity with the philosophy and aesthetics of the Hellenic model to promote its acceptance and align it with nature.²⁰² As we will now discuss, it was precisely into this Nietzschean-infused cultural climate that the Brücke artists banded together, taking the bridge of their name to signify an appropriate means for traveling on a new route, both artistically and personally, away from and unshackled by society's conventional restraints guided by the philosopher's inspiration.

²⁰¹ Lloyd, *German Expressionism*, 108-09. Lloyd explains that the Brücke would have had ample opportunity to become familiar with Pudor's promotion of nudity culture. By 1906, he had eleven establishments in the Dresden area practicing nudism, including one near Mortizburg where the Brücke frequently visited. In addition, the Upper Forest Pond in Mortizburg was used as a nudist bathing resort in 1910 by the Society for Community Health, Dresden North and Vicinity, coincident with a visit there by Kirchner, Heckel and Pechstein in the same year. (Lloyd, *German Expressionism*, 110.)

²⁰² Mosse, *Nationalism and Sexuality*, 49.

Chapter 2: The Influence of Nietzsche on Kirchner's Development

The Brücke and Nietzsche

In June 1905, four young bohemian artists living in Dresden became the founding members of the artists' group Brücke, with Kirchner as their de-facto leader. The men were among many artists of the time who found in Nietzsche a spiritual forefather for the type of artistic revolution they sought to wage against conventional social and aesthetic values. What was shared among the four original members was a desire to enact a Nietzschean protest against what they felt were the petty, materialistic ideals of the bourgeois Wilhelmine society around them. They took their name, meaning "bridge," from a speech by the protagonist in the prologue of Nietzsche's *Thus Spoke Zarathustra*:

Man is a rope, tied between beast and overman - a rope over an abyss. A dangerous across, a dangerous on-the-way, a dangerous looking-back, a dangerous shuddering and stopping.
What is great in man is that he is a bridge and not an end: what can be loved in man is that he is an *overture* and a *going under*.
I love those who do not know how to live, except by going under, for they are those who cross over.
I love the great despisers because they are the great reverers and the arrows of longing for the other shore.²⁰³

An early artwork by Kirchner relates directly to the symbolism of the bridge in the group's foundation. In a 1905 woodcut, made as a possible insignia for the newly formed group, two male figures stand in the foreground, facing into the compositional distance spanned by a steeply pitched bridge across which a female figure stands with

²⁰³ Nietzsche, *Thus Spoke Zarathustra*, in *The Portable Nietzsche*, 126-27. See also this passage as included in Gordon, *Expressionism*, 14; and partial passage in Lloyd, *German Expressionism*, 18. Heckel recalled that it was Schmidt-Rotluff who came up with the name Brücke, because "it's a word with many meanings, which wouldn't suggest any particular program, but in a sense does lead from one side of the river to the other. What we had to leave behind was pretty clear to us. Where we were heading was definitely less certain." (Heckel, as quoted in Arnaldo and Moeller, *Brücke: El Nacimiento*, 353.)

upraised arms welcoming the expansive view in front of her. The following year, Kirchner made a second woodcut variation in which there are no longer figures and the image is devoted exclusively to the bridge in the middle functioning as a metaphorical conduit for the men's new creative endeavors (Fig. 2.1). The art historian Jill Lloyd interprets the symbolism of the bridge: "The central motif in this woodcut is the bridge itself, and in Nietzsche's text the emphasis is on the *process* of transformation, the halting and precarious position of man caught between two states, looking backwards and forwards...Just as civilization hinges in a precarious balance between progress and degeneration, the image of the bridge in *Zarathustra* is a powerful metaphor for man's position, stretched between spirit and body, between past and future, strung out between contradictory alternatives."²⁰⁴

Kirchner outlined the group's founding program in a 1906 woodcut with text that read: "With faith in evolution, in a new generation of creators and appreciators, we call together all youth. And as youths, who embody the future, we want to free our lives and limbs from the long-established older powers. Anyone who renders his creative drive directly and genuinely is one of us."²⁰⁵ As Kirchner's text makes clear, the Brücke group responded directly to Nietzsche's call to youth for they embodied a vital, instinctual and authentic experience in life. The Brücke's idealistic proclamation, "we call together all youth," followed Nietzsche's view, voiced in the essay "On the Utility and Liability of

²⁰⁴ Lloyd, *German Expressionism*, 18.

²⁰⁵ E. L. Kirchner et al., "Brücke Program," in *German Expressionism: Documents from the End of the Wilhelmine Empire to the Rise of National Socialism*, ed. Rose-Carol W. Long (Berkeley, Los Angeles, London: University of California Press, 1993), 23.

History for Life,” in which Nietzsche urges the young or uninitiated to act instinctively in order to reinvigorate German society:

We will therefore have to consider the capacity to live to a certain degree ahistorically to be more significant and more original, insofar as it lays the foundation upon which something just, healthy, and great, something that is truly human, is able to grow at all. The ahistorical is like an enveloping atmosphere in which alone life is engendered, and it disappears again with the destruction of this atmosphere...²⁰⁶

I have faith in youth, and I have faith that it has steered me correctly by forcing me into a position of protest against the historical education of the modern human being in his youth, and by forcing this protester to demand that human beings above all learn to live and to employ history only in the service of the life they have learned to live. It is necessary to be young in order to understand this protest.²⁰⁷

In one of Nietzsche’s first lectures as a Professor of Philology at the University of Basel in 1872, he spoke of his own student days, when he and a few close male friends conceived of the idea for a small club called *Germania*. Their intent was to provide themselves with a “stable and binding organization, directing and adding interest to our own creative impulses in art and literature,” wherein once a month, each man pledged to present an original piece of work – a poem, essay, architectural rendering, or musical composition, for the others to pass open and unrestrained criticism of in order to stimulate all of the member’s creative growth.²⁰⁸

²⁰⁶ Nietzsche, “On the Utility and Liability of History...,” in *Unfashionable Observations*, 91. Jill Lloyd quotes this passage, as well as a passage from Nietzsche’s *The Will to Power* to illustrate how these philosophies instilled in the Brücke an appreciation for the liberating and regenerative effects of a direct confrontation with life found by channeling their experiences directly into the creation of their artworks. From *The Will to Power*: “Man as a species does not represent any progress compared with any other animal. The whole animal and vegetable kingdom does not evolve from the lower to the higher – but all at the same time, in utter disorder over and against each other...the domestication (the culture) of man does not go deep – where it does it at once becomes degeneration – and in a certain sense his recovery, his cure form culture.” (Nietzsche, as quoted in Lloyd, *German Expressionism*, 114-16.)

²⁰⁷ Nietzsche, “On the Utility and Liability of History...,” in *Unfashionable Observations*, 158.

²⁰⁸ Nietzsche, “On the Future of our Educational Institutions,” in *The Complete Works*, 3: 18.

The Brücke shared an interest in working together to fuse the practice of art with life to enact something new and authentic. In 1901, while at the Dresden Technical University, Ernst Kirchner met fellow student Fritz Bleyl (1880-1966). The two architecture students “became inseparable companions,” working ardently together developing their mutual interest in the fine arts by drawing directly from nature and, by the summer of 1903, by painting.²⁰⁹ In 1904, Kirchner and Bleyl met Erich Heckel (1883-1970) and Karl Schmidt-Rotluff (1884-1976), fellow students at the University who were also devoted to artistic pursuits. Heckel had begun studying at the Dresden school in mid-1903 and Schmidt-Rotluff joined him there in the summer of 1904. Prior to this, both had been students in Chemnitz, where they had been members of the “Vulkan Society,” a student forum organized in 1902 for the discussion of modern poetry and the practice of drawing and painting from life.²¹⁰

As Kirchner recalled, the first time he met Heckel for a life-drawing exercise, Heckel greeted him by quoting aloud from Nietzsche’s *Thus Spoke Zarathustra* as he ascended the stairs to Kirchner’s small room.²¹¹ In the beginning, Kirchner considered

²⁰⁹ Gordon, *Ernst Ludwig Kirchner*, 15. Bleyl described his first impression of Kirchner as someone “possessed by a sheer mania to draw, to paint, to busy himself and come to terms with artistic things and ideas.” (Bleyl, as quoted in Gordon, *Ernst Ludwig Kirchner*, 15.) Later, he fondly recollected their early days together: “What beautiful hours and days in which we understood one another, demanded and acknowledged so much from each other.” After attending classes each day: “we met again in the afternoon to look at and assess our new work and chat animatedly until late at night...We looked for anything that might help us to progress, provide us with better training and help us break away from past traditions....Side by side with our important activity as self-taught painters and draughtsmen.” (Bleyl, as quoted in Arnaldo and Moeller, *Brücke: El Nacimiento*, 373.)

²¹⁰ For more on the “Vulkan Society,” see Magdalena M. Moeller, *Karl Schmidt-Rotluff* (Munich: Hirmer, 1997), 10-12.

²¹¹ Gordon, *Ernst Ludwig Kirchner*, 18; and Gordon, *Expressionism*, 14. Emil Nolde, who became a member of the group for a year and a half in 1906, recalled that upon meeting Schmidt-Rotluff, he also had a fondness for quoting from “Nietzsche and Kant or great men of this kind.” (Nolde, as quoted in Gordon, *Ernst Ludwig Kirchner*, 18; and Gordon, *Expressionism*, 14.)

Heckel to be “the most intelligent of us” and the two soon began working closely together, often side by side on images depicting the same subject matter.²¹² It was Heckel who enjoyed reading aloud to the group, often choosing works from Kirchner’s extensive personal library, particularly the works of Nietzsche, Walt Whitman and a few select others.²¹³

In 1905, the year of the founding of the group, Heckel made the woodcut *Portrait of Friedrich Nietzsche*, 1905. The portrait shows the origins of the group’s signature abbreviated style in woodcut, a medium they preferred for its direct, physically engaged handling of the materials. The philosopher is depicted with simplified and expansive areas of form, fully-rendered yet punctuated by brief, quick lines cut into the solid ground to guarantee the maintenance of instinct or authenticity over premeditation and to preserve a sense of vitality and spontaneity in the creation of an artwork, all characteristics extolled by Nietzsche in *Thus Spoke Zarathustra* (Fig. 2.2).

The group’s early practice of brief fifteen-minute sketching sessions was another means of capturing and preserving their visual sensations directly. According to Jill Lloyd, the Brücke’s understanding of Nietzsche’s philosophies were influential on their working methods, as seen in these sketching sessions, and on their desired fusion of art making with the deliberate pursuit of an anti-bourgeois, unconventional lifestyle.²¹⁴ Furthermore, according to Lloyd, the group’s preferences for alternative locations,

²¹² Kirchner, in Grisebach, ed., *E. L. Kirchners Davoser Tagebuch*, 74; and Kirchner, as quoted in Gordon, *Ernst Ludwig Kirchner*, 18. Bleyl recalled that Heckel “immediately brought new life into our group, enriching our artistic preoccupations and bringing fresh inspiration.” (Bleyl, as quoted in Arnaldo and Moeller, *Brücke: El Nacimiento*, 353.)

²¹³ Gordon, *Ernst Ludwig Kirchner*, 18. Heckel’s devotion to literature was such that for a period, he was undecided whether to devote himself entirely to writing or painting. (Gordon, *Expressionism*, 14.)

²¹⁴ Lloyd, *German Expressionism*, 24.

whether working outdoors in nature, which Kirchner did along with a changing contingent of the others at the Moritzburg lakes near Dresden in the summers of 1906 and 1907 and 1909-1911, where the artists depicted each other and their models nude in the natural landscape, or in Kirchner's studio, decorated with sexually-explicit scenes and exotic furnishings inspired by primitive, non-Western sources drawn from the Palau islands and the Ajanta Indian caves, was a means to "re-inject a spiritual value into a materialistic world" reflecting yet-again their devotion to Nietzsche's vitalist, regenerative philosophy.²¹⁵ The group's use of young girls to act as their models was preferred for their ability to be natural and uninitiated in their poses, such as Fränzi in Kirchner's painting *Fränzi in Carved Chair*, 1910, reflecting Nietzsche's philosophy of youth as well.²¹⁶ Two of these creative realms, the vital effects of nature coupled with the unpremeditated, instinctual force found in adolescents, are brought together in *Standing Girl*, 1910, Heckel's famous woodcut of Fränzi, in which expressive yet minimal lines merged with bold contrasting colors.²¹⁷

The Brücke artists initially kept a house notebook that opened with the inscription *Odi profanum vulgus* taken from Nietzsche's preface, titled "Attempt at a Self-Criticism," that accompanied the publication of *The Birth of Tragedy* after its second release in 1886.²¹⁸ In Nietzsche's introductory text, though he is critical of what he feels

²¹⁵ Lloyd, *German Expressionism*, 34; and see also Lloyd and Moeller, *Kirchner: The Dresden and Berlin Years*, 18

²¹⁶ For a reproduction of *Fränzi in Carved Chair*, 1910, see Gordon, *Ernst Ludwig Kirchner*, 67, color plate VII (G122).

²¹⁷ For a reproduction of *Standing Girl*, 1910, see Lloyd, *German Expressionism*, 37, Fig. 47.

²¹⁸ For a discussion of the house notebook's history, see Beat Stutzer, "Das Stammbuch *Odi profanum* der Künstlergruppe Brücke," *Zeitschrift des deutschen Vereins für Kunstwissenschaft* 36, no. 1/4

are the stylistic flaws of his first book, he maintains the value of its contents, explaining that it is “an arrogant and rhapsodic book that sought to exclude right from the beginning the *profanum vulgus* of “the educated” even more than “the mass” or “folk”...Still, the effect of the book proved and proves that it had a knack for seeking out fellow-rhapsodizers and for lurking them on to new secret paths and dancing places.”²¹⁹ The choice of this phrase is entirely apt for making clear the group’s anti-bourgeois principles upon their founding. The book was passed between Kirchner, Heckel, and Bleyl, who each added drawings and graphic works to its pages showing their collective spirit over stylistic cohesion.²²⁰

To the notebook, Kirchner added six erotic illustrations inspired by the book *The One Thousand and One Nights* providing a clear visualization of the forthcoming atmosphere of uninhibited sexuality that came to characterize the group’s studio practices

(1982): 87-105; and Leopold Reidmeister, ed., *Künstlergruppe Brücke. Fragment eines Stammbuches mit Beiträgen von Ernst Ludwig Kirchner, Fritz Bleyl und Erich Heckel* (Berlin: Gebr. Mann Verlag 1973). The house book was dismantled with each portion returned to the contributor in 1913 at the time of the Brücke’s disbandment.

²¹⁹ Nietzsche, *The Birth of Tragedy*, 19. Here, the phrase is translated as “the profane crowd.” The phrase was taken from the ancient poet Horace, who begins his ode *Contentment* with it. In Gordon’s discussion of the house notebook, he translates the phrase *Odi profanum vulgus* as “I hate the plebian crowd.” Peter Selz discusses the house book’s opening quotation, but only mentions Horace as the source, whereas Gordon attributes it solely to Nietzsche. (Gordon, *Expressionism*, 14; and Peter Selz, *German Expressionist Painting* (Berkeley and Los Angeles: University of California Press, 1957), 79.) The house book with Horace as the originator of the quote is also discussed in Victor H. Miesel, *Voices of German Expressionism* (Englewood Cliffs, NJ: Prentice-Hall, Inc., 1970), 15. The phrase is variously translated as referencing the philistine bourgeoisie middle class; see Lloyd, *German Expressionism*, 20; and Bernard Myers, *Expressionism: A Generation in Revolt* (London: Thames and Hudson, 1963), 83. Strangely enough, Myers does not include a single reference to Nietzsche in his book, even as he discusses some of his most ardent followers, including Stefan George.

²²⁰ Kirchner described the book in his “Chronicle of the Brücke” text, written in 1913: “Each man drew and wrote his ideas one next to the other, in a book *Odi profanum*, and in this way they compared their individual qualities. So they developed naturally into a group that came to be called Brücke. Each inspired the other.” (Kirchner, “Chronicle of the Brücke,” in Long, *German Expressionism: Documents*, 24; and Selz, *German Expressionist Painting*, 320-21.)

and resultant imagery throughout their Dresden period, from 1905 until 1911.²²¹

Kirchner's choice of these exotic harem scenes as illustrations in the house notebook show his alignment with the overall liberating influence he found in Nietzsche's philosophy and the incorporation of the phrase *Odi profanum vulgus* shows an awareness of *The Birth of Tragedy's* preface, from which the inscription was selected, but neither the illustrations nor the phrase indicates Kirchner's interest yet in the actual contents of Nietzsche's book, which is concerned overall with the artistic achievements of the ancient Greeks rather than with sexual freedom or the exotic Orient of his imagery.²²²

Although Nietzsche's interest in cultural regeneration permeated all of his books beginning with *The Birth of Tragedy*, it was his message of unconventional thought and authentic experience as promoting renewal rather than the context of the ancient world that appears to have interested Kirchner at this time. Jill Lloyd describes the Brücke's enactment of an unconventional bohemian lifestyle: "Nietzsche's model for this type of culture was that of ancient Greece, but Classical references in the visual arts by the turn of the century in Germany had become irrevocably linked to a decadent and academic historicist style. The Expressionists' adoption of tribal art answered the need to 'escape' history in a more radical way."²²³

²²¹ For a reproduction of one of Kirchner's illustrations, see Gordon, *Expressionism*, 15; and see Dube, *E. L. Kirchner: das graphische Werk*, (H484).

²²² Although Kirchner's library contained many of Nietzsche's books at the time of his death, *The Birth of Tragedy* was not among them. Kirchner's library included two copies of both *The Will to Power* and *Thus Spoke Zarathustra*; two volumes of the philosopher's letters; and one copy each of *Ecce Homo*, *The Twilight of the Idols*, and *Dionysos-Dithyrambs*. For Kirchner's library's Nietzsche holdings, see Gordon, *Ernst Ludwig Kirchner*, 456, note 34; and Gordon, *Expressionism*, 220, note 83. For a complete listing of the holdings in Kirchner's library, including Nietzsche, see Gabler, *E. L. Kirchner: Dokumente*, 353-61.

²²³ Lloyd, *German Expressionism*, 116. In terms of *The Birth of Tragedy*, Gordon briefly discusses the preface of the book, which provided the Brücke's house notebook inscription. Gordon interprets the

The Brücke members' engagement with the artworks of the Palau South Pacific islands and the masks, statuary and objects of Africa informed their artworks in tandem with their desire to create an alternative community wherein they could merge their art making with an uninhibited lifestyle conducted within the atmosphere of their studios decorated with primitive inspired handcrafted furnishings and objects.²²⁴ A sketch on a

later preface as evidence of what he feels is the heightened pessimism of the philosopher's later works, explaining this change in ideological tone by using a brief quote from each preface, stating: "This later Nietzsche was the shaper of German Expressionist thought - not so much the Wagner-inspired Romantic who thought that "art represents the highest task and the truly metaphysical activity of life" (1872), but more the unillusioned realist whose self-imposed task was "to look at science in the perspective of the artist, but at art in the perspective of life" (1886)." (Nietzsche, as quoted in Gordon, *Expressionism*, 13.)

In Gordon's view, by the 1880s, Nietzsche had turned against his earlier allegiance to Wagnerian notions of redemption through art as indicated by the change in *The Birth of Tragedy's* subtitle, from "Out of the Spirit of Music" in 1872 to "Hellenism and Pessimism" in 1886, and by the inclusion of the new preface. I disagree with this summation. Nietzsche added the preface "Attempt at a Self-Criticism" in 1886 to precede but not replace the book's original "Preface to Richard Wagner." Rather than illustrate an ideological change, the new preface and the book's new subtitle should be seen as a disavowal of Nietzsche's endorsement of Wagner by steering the reader away from the contents of the last ten sections of the book as well as a critique of his own stylistic immaturity. Furthermore, the new subtitle is not reflective of a change in his view on art as redemptive.

Gordon's isolated use of these excerpts to illustrate the notion of pessimism is misleading. The updated preface actually ends with an impassioned rallying cry to the like-minded from the mouth of Nietzsche's famed protagonist Zarathustra. He reminds the reader to remain non-conformist, spirited and genuine, saying: "Raise up your hearts, my brothers, high, higher! And, don't forget your legs! Raise up your legs, too, good dancers; and still better: stand on your heads!..This crown of the laughter, the rose-wreath crown: to you, my brothers, I throw this crown. Laughter I have pronounced holy: you higher men, learn - to laugh!" (Nietzsche, *The Birth of Tragedy*, 26-27.) This appeal is not pessimistic.

In Nietzsche's autobiographical publication *Ecce Homo*, written two years after the preface in late-1888, he explains his choice of the publication's new subtitle: "Hellenism and Pessimism" this would have been an unambiguous title for the first statement of the Greek teaching of the overcoming of pessimism. Tragedy as the proof that the Greeks were no pessimists." In addition, Nietzsche calls himself "the first tragic philosopher...that is the most extreme opposite and antipode of a pessimistic philosopher." (Nietzsche, as quoted in Pfeffer, *Nietzsche: Disciple of Dionysus*, 36-37.)

²²⁴ Both the sense of community and interest in primitivism are essential and often discussed aspects of the group's historiography. For a recent essay that maintains the central role of both these principles in the Brücke's ideology, see Reinhold Heller, "Brücke in Dresden and Berlin, 1905-1913," in *Brücke: The Birth of Expressionism*, esp. 20-26; Early Exhibitions and "Primitive" Influences and The Studio Environment. For a discussion of the Brücke's sense of community, see Heller, "Bridge to Utopia: The Brücke as a Utopian Experiment," in *Expressionist Utopias*, ed. Timothy O. Benson (Los Angeles: Los Angeles County Museum of Art, 1993): 62-83. For a discussion of primitivism related to the Brücke's working methods, see Donald E. Gordon, "German Expressionism," in *Primitivism in Twentieth-Century Art* vol. 2, William Rubin, ed. (Boston and New York: The Museum of Modern Art and Little, Brown and Co., 1984): 369-404; and Lloyd, *German Expressionism*, 21-49; Chapter 3: The Brücke Studios: A Testing Ground for Primitivism; and Colin Rhodes, "Through the Looking-Glass Darkly: Gendering the Primitive and the Significance of Constructed Space in the Practice of the Brücke," in *Gender and Architecture*, eds. Louise Durning and Richard Wrigley (Chichester, UK, and New York: John Wiley & Sons, Ltd., 1996): 189-207; and Rhodes, *Primitivism and Modern Art* (London: Thames and Hudson, 1994), 59-67; 84-106.

postcard by Erich Heckel, sent to Gustav Schiefler in December 1910, illustrates how the men's artistic identity was related to the exoticism of the studio spaces; the image features Kirchner in street clothes seated on a hand-carved stool inspired by the African example next to a sculpture of a nude female figure carved in wood (Fig. 2.7).

Throughout this period, Kirchner, Heckel and the others were firm devotees of *Thus Spoke Zarathustra* and their imagery is closely aligned with its contents, as seen in imagery descriptive of the regenerative powers of nature; the vital, instinctual importance of dance; and the variations on many of the archetypal motifs that figure prominently throughout the book, especially the archer and the tightrope walker.²²⁵ For Kirchner, the themes of nature, vitality, and regeneration are illustrated very directly in artworks, such as the woodcut *Bathers Throwing Reeds*, 1910, in which the figures are rendered with minimal details in contrasting colors to capture the essence of their uninhibited bodily freedom (Fig. 2.3); the paintings *Nudes Playing under Tree*, 1910, featuring two figures in an embrace who merge completely with the natural landscape; and *Bathers in Moritzburg*, 1909/1926, in which a figure who appears to be Kirchner is seen standing on the far left of a group of nude figures enjoying their lakeside setting.²²⁶ Popular pastimes in local nightclubs or outdoors provided the subject matter for scenes that incorporated Nietzsche's archetypal characters, as seen in the paintings *Tightrope Dancers*, 1910; and

²²⁵ For an expanded discussion of the tightrope walker and other Expressionist subjects in relation to Nietzsche see Janice McCullagh, "The Tightrope Walker: An Expressionist Image," *The Art Bulletin* 66, no. 4 (December 1984): 633-44.

²²⁶ Lloyd states of the painting *Nudes Playing under Tree*: "Kirchner suggests liberation from civilized constraints and regeneration by fusing the figures with the forces and rhythms of nature in a vitalist Nietzschean spirit." (Lloyd, *German Expressionism*, 114.) For reproductions, see Gordon, *Ernst Ludwig Kirchner*, for *Nudes Playing under Tree* (color plate VIII) (G141); and *Bathers in Moritzburg* (G93).

Fränzi with Bow and Arrow, 1909-1911.²²⁷ The female archer was a favorite motif for the men as seen on a poster lithograph featuring two identical kneeling female archers that was the first collaboration between Kirchner and Heckel made for the International Hygiene Exhibition in Dresden in 1910, for which they received an honorable mention award.²²⁸

Kirchner's artistic output is closely interrelated with that of Erich Heckel, as seen in their tandem working methods, their mutual interest in primitive art forms as source material, and through their frequent correspondence.²²⁹ Kirchner and Heckel's creative union was at its strongest between 1909-1911, during which time Heckel lived in his parent's home across the street from Kirchner's studio in Dresden.²³⁰

²²⁷ For reproductions, see Gordon, *Ernst Ludwig Kirchner*, for *Tightrope Dancers* (G114); and *Fränzi with Bow and Arrow* (G178).

²²⁸ For a discussion and illustration of this poster and the motif of the female archer within an expanded discussion of the group's development of the woodcut poster medium, see Sherwin Simmons, "Kirchner's Brücke Poster," *Print Quarterly* 23, no. 2 (June 2006): 155-74.

²²⁹ Several highly similar paintings by Heckel and Kirchner, likely made side-by-side, illustrate their close working relationship. Two mainstays of Kirchner and Heckel's Dresden imagery, the nude and primitive inspired imagery within the studios, is seen in the paintings Heckel, *Nude (Dresden)*, 1910, and Kirchner, *Nude with Painted Face*, 1910; while the uninhibited creativity of working outdoors is seen in Heckel, *Bathers at the Forest Pond*, 1910, and Kirchner, *Nudes Playing under Trees*, 1910. (For reproductions of Heckel's paintings, see Lloyd, *German Expressionism*, 41 (Fig. 51); and Dalbajewa and Bischoff, *Die Brücke in Dresden*, exh. cat. #263; and for Kirchner, see Gordon, *Ernst Ludwig Kirchner*, (G156); (G141).

The close symbiotic relationship between Kirchner and Heckel is also visually expressed in the many postcards written and illustrated by Kirchner that were sent to Heckel, mainly between 1909-1911. These form the subject of the publication Annemarie Dube-Heynig, ed., *Ernst Ludwig Kirchner: Postkarten und Brief an Erich Heckel* (Cologne: DuMont Buchverlag, 1984).

²³⁰ In 1907, Kirchner moved into a ground-floor studio at Berlinerstrasse 60 in Dresden-Friedrichstadt, across the street from Heckel's own attic lodgings in the top floor of his parent's house. In November 1909, Kirchner moved into his third and final Dresden studio, on the same street, at Berlinerstrasse 80. It was for this studio that Kirchner handcrafted his famous tribal furniture and sexually explicit tapestry decorations. For a discussion of their early working/living environment, see Bernd Hünlich, "Heckel und Kirchner auf der Berliner Strasse in Dresden," *Dresdener Kunstblätter* 27, no. 4 (1983): 115-21; and Lloyd, *German Expressionism*, 21-49; The Brücke Studios: A Testing Ground for Primitivism.

Kirchner made several portraits of his artistic companion that document his indebtedness to various Post-Impressionist artists in the development of his Expressionist style. The first painting, titled *Erich Heckel and Model in Studio*, 1905, shows the establishment of the men's preference for working from nude models within the studio, and its composition, with Heckel painting the model standing atop a platform, recalls the quarter-hour life drawing sessions the men developed built upon their understanding of authenticity and its preservation stemming from the philosophies of Nietzsche (Fig. 2.4).

The *Portrait of the Painter Heckel*, 1907, illustrates the formative influence of Vincent Van Gogh on the men. The painting features a thick application of paint and an expansive range of clashing, bold colors applied with dense, overlapping brushstrokes.²³¹ In *Portrait of the Painter Heckel*, the subject is shown painting *en plein air* directly from his source of inspiration in nature, as was Van Gogh's preference as well (Fig. 2.5).

A third portrait of Heckel shows the influence of Edvard Munch on the men during the Brücke period; *Portrait of Erich Heckel*, 1910/1920, is based on the Norwegian artist's use of long, sinuous lines and the vertical format of his *Portrait of Count Kessler*, 1906 (Fig. 2.6).²³² As we will see in the forthcoming chapter, Kirchner's friendship with Graef, by comparison, resulted in a series of portraits that express a sense of empathy and intimacy from the artist to his subject that is unrivaled in its iconographic focus on reciprocal friendship rather than an emphasis on the stylistic associations conveyed through these portraits of Heckel.

²³¹ For a thorough discussion of Van Gogh's influence on Kirchner and the Brücke group, see *Van Gogh and Expressionism*, eds. Jill Lloyd and Michael Peppiatt (New York and Ostfildern: Hatje Cantz and Neue Galerie, 2007).

²³² For an expanded discussion of Paul Gauguin and Munch's influence on Kirchner, see Donald E. Gordon, "Kirchner in Dresden" *Art Bulletin* 48 (September – December, 1966): 335-66. In his essay, Kirchner and Munch's two paintings are reproduced side-by-side as Figs. 43 and 44.

In 1911, Kirchner and Heckel moved to Berlin to join the other members of the Brücke group, which had by then expanded to include the German artists Max Pechstein (1881-1955), who joined in 1906, and Otto Mueller (1874-1930), who was the last to join in 1910.²³³ Jill Lloyd explains that among all of them, only Mueller showed any interest in Greek art, particularly an enthusiasm for Greek vases.²³⁴ Perhaps Mueller's personal interest was informed by an awareness of the work of his great-uncle Karl Otfried Mueller (1797-1840), who was a pioneering Classical archaeologist and the author of many influential studies of ancient Greece.²³⁵ While Mueller's figures tended to appear monumental and in calm repose, similar to their Classical example, the other artists' preferred a vitality or sense of movement reflecting that their imagery was inspired directly from life. By the turn of the twentieth century, the style of the ancients had lost its allure for the emergent Expressionist artists who prized the subjective intensity of the Post-Impressionists, including Edvard Munch, Vincent Van Gogh and Paul Gauguin, over the precisely rendered, idealized forms of the Classical example.

In their ongoing reliance on both non-Western sources and European avant-garde developments, Wilhelm Worringer's *Abstraction and Empathy*, published in 1908,

²³³ Emil Nolde (1867-1956) also joined the Brücke in 1906 but he only remained a member for approximately a year and a half.

²³⁴ Lloyd, *German Expressionism*, 43; see also a reproduction of a Mueller sketch dated January 1911, in the collection of the Altonaer Museum, Hamburg, featuring a figure in a crouching pose positioned alongside a sketch of the Greek vase that inspired it.

²³⁵ Otto Mueller is identified as the nephew of Karl O. Mueller in Myers, *Expressionism*, 173. In an interesting relationship, Karl O. Mueller was transcribing inscriptions at Delphi in 1839-1840 when he fell mortally ill. He was accompanied on the trip by his student Ernst Curtius, who was later a friend of Graef and the Lepsius couple in Berlin. Curtius cared for Mueller until his death and organized his burial at Colonus before returning to Germany in 1842. For a discussion of Karl O. Mueller's contribution to Classical studies and a list of his publications, see Grummond, *Encyclopedia of the History of Classical Archaeology*, 773-74.

provided the Brücke with a useful example.²³⁶ According to the art historian Peter Selz, with *Abstraction and Empathy*, Worringer quickly became a “spokesman” for various emerging German Expressionist artists because of his similar understanding of modern aesthetics favoring abstraction or the artist’s subjective inspiration over an alignment with the observation of nature.²³⁷

In a similar way, Worringer’s biography on the early-Renaissance artist Lucas Cranach, published in the same year, was also highly instructive for equating the artist’s work in woodcut with his identity as a German artist.²³⁸ As Worringer explained in regards to Cranach:

We chose woodcuts and drawings on purpose, because the individual, artistic style speaks most directly in them. He who wants to understand the genuine artistic qualities of German art must always turn to the graphic work, because most of the best is lost through the translation into color and the large format.²³⁹

This idea was likely understood by the Brücke artists who favored the woodcut in their production of self-referential works, including the founding program in 1905 and the

²³⁶ Wilhelm Worringer, *Abstraktion und Einfühlung* (Munich: Piper Verlag, 1908).

²³⁷ Selz, *German Expressionist Painting*, 9; and Lloyd, *German Expressionism*, 147. The term empathy or *Einfühlung* had been applied to aesthetics in the 1870s by Robert Vischer, who studied emotional projection in the act of perception by considering the subjective content that the viewer brings to aesthetic contemplation. The term was well known in the psychological literature of the late nineteenth century, particularly among Romantic writers in their descriptions of nature. (See Mallgrave and Ikonomou, “Introduction: Robert Vischer’s Theory of Empathy,” in *Empathy, Form, and Space*, 17-21; and Vischer, “On the Optical Sense of Form: A Contribution to Aesthetics,” in Mallgrave and Ikonomou, *Empathy, Form, and Space*, 89-125.)

²³⁸ Dr. Wilhelm Worringer, *Lukas Cranach* (Munich: R. Piper & Co., 1908). For a discussion of the woodcut as a Germanic art form, see Robin Reisenfeld, “Cultural Nationalism, Brücke and the German Woodcut: The Formation of a Collective Identity,” *Art History* 20, no. 2 (June 1997): 289-312; and Ida Katherine Rigby, “The Revival of Printmaking in Germany,” in *German Expressionist Prints and Drawings: The Robert Gore Rifkind Center for German Expressionist Studies* (Los Angeles and Munich: Los Angeles County Museum of Art and Prestel Verlag, 1989); and Frances Carey and Antony Griffiths, *The Print in Germany 1880-1933: The Age of Expressionism* (New York: Harper and Row, Publishers, 1984).

²³⁹ Worringer, *Lukas Cranach*, 44-47.

account of their group history “Chronicle of the Brücke” in 1913, both made by Kirchner. The Brücke’s commitment to their group identity was related to the woodcut medium as seen in their first exhibition catalogue for the Galerie Arnold in September 1910, in Dresden, in which one artist made a woodcut illustration of another artist’s painting in an effort to emphasize their communal nature as well as to create an opportunity to make a new work of art for the exhibition’s catalogue.²⁴⁰ Through these various statements of their artistic intention, Kirchner and the Brücke simultaneously positioned themselves as modern and innovative in their use of the woodcut, emphasizing bold and simplified forms and the maintenance of instinct and authenticity, while working within an illustrious national tradition. In this way, their identification with Cranach in particular was vital for he represented one of the original “German ‘primitives’” responsible for the creation of a unique cultural tradition during the period of social and artistic transformation from the late Gothic Middle Ages to the early Renaissance of which the Brücke positioned themselves as modern progenitors.²⁴¹

Kirchner explored this connection between Cranach, the woodcut and the artistic spirit very directly in the creation of a woodcut *Standing Nude with Black Hat*, 1911, after his earlier painting *Standing Nude with Hat*, 1910/1920, both of which were based on the Cranach painting *Venus*, 1532, in the Frankfurt collection and reproduced in Worringer’s publication.²⁴² Kirchner’s version of the woodcut brought together his

²⁴⁰ Selz, *German Expressionist Painting*, 116. For example, Kirchner made a woodcut illustration of Pechstein’s painting *Dance*, 1910; Heckel a woodcut of Kirchner’s painting *Marzella*, 1910 (G113); and Pechstein a woodcut of Kirchner’s painting *Artist: Marzella*, 1910 (G125).

²⁴¹ The Brücke’s relationship to Cranach is discussed in the recent essay Reinhold Heller, “Brücke in Dresden and Berlin, 1905-1913,” in *Brücke: The Birth of Expressionism*, 34-35.

interest in the Medieval German example merged with primitive imagery, as seen in the tapestry that serves as the figure's backdrop, with the ideal female model whose hat, shoes and accessories connect her to the modern world while reinforcing the feeling of uninhibited sexuality that was central to the creative environment within the Brücke studios.

Worringer's next book *Form in Gothic*, published shortly after *Abstraction and Empathy* in 1910, similarly influenced the Brücke artists. According to Jill Lloyd, just as Kirchner and the Brücke had previously relied on "primitive" forms to reinstate a sense of spirituality missing in both the art and life of their overtly materialistic society, from 1912-1914, the Gothic style similarly allowed them to engage in the successful mediation between national identity and international aspirations.²⁴³ Worringer's evaluation of the Gothic spirit as a Northern European phenomenon rather than solely a German one had a central role within an ongoing contemporary debate about the artistic character of Expressionism that was proving incendiary among critical and artistic circles in the pre-war period. Nationalistic factions remained critical of German artists who looked to French and outside sources while Worringer and others promoted the co-existence of varied sources of inspiration and a pan-European outlook in the creation of artworks uniquely representative of the complexities of the modern era.²⁴⁴

²⁴² In addition to including a reproduction of Cranach's *Venus* (Frankfurt), Worringer's publication also included Cranach's *The Judgment of Paris* (Darmstadt), often cited as a source for Kirchner's painting *The Judgment of Paris*, 1913 (G360). Cranach's *Venus*, 1532, is in the collection of the Städel Museum, Frankfurt, as is Kirchner's painting *Standing Nude with Hat*, 1910/1920 (G163) and a version of his *Standing Nude with Black Hat* woodcut. For a reproduction of the woodcut, see Dube, *E. L. Kirchner: das graphische Werk*, (H207).

²⁴³ Lloyd, *German Expressionism*, 50-60, esp. 59; 81-82; 116; and see Lloyd's recent essay "Brücke: National Identity and International Style," in *Brücke: The Birth of Expressionism*, 58-77.

Worringer maintained that the Gothic style's "will to form" was reliant on the initiative of non-Germanic elements.²⁴⁵ According to him: "In spite of the incontestable fact that Gothic was most firmly rooted in the countries with a Germanic tinge...Gothic was not directly bound up with any national condition, but was a super-national phenomenon of the period, characteristic of the late Middle Ages, when national differences were dissolved under the glow of consciousness...embracing the whole of European humanity."²⁴⁶ In the article "'To Stand and See Within': Expressionist Space in Ernst Ludwig Kirchner's *Rhine Bridge at Cologne*," Sherwin Simmons finds that Kirchner's inspiration for the painting *Rhine Bridge at Cologne*, 1914, is a passage from Worringer's *Form in Gothic*:

²⁴⁴ For an expanded discussion of the critical reception to Expressionism in relation to the origins of these debates see Long, "National or International? Berlin Critics and the Question of Expressionism," in *Künstlerischer Austausch / Artistic Exchange*: 521-34. For a discussion of the use of the term Expressionism to designate European versus uniquely German concepts at the time see Marit Werenskiöld, *The Concept of Expressionism: Origin and Metamorphoses*, trans. Ronald Walford (Oslo: Universitetsforlaget, 1984). Her text corrects the inaccuracies in a prior discussion by Donald E. Gordon, "On the Origin of the Word Expressionism," in *Journal of the Warburg and Courtauld Institute* 29 (1966): 368-85.

²⁴⁵ According to Worringer: "For this great and decisive act, an enthusiasm and an impulse of will were needed, which the peoples of predominantly Germanic character, with their ponderousness, were unable to compass. Their dull chaotic striving remained fettered by tradition and material, they lacked the great decisive impetus to liberate themselves from this subjection...The shock which was to liberate this energy had to come from without. It was Romance Western Europe upon which this function developed...It was in the heart of France, where Germanic and Romance elements interpenetrated most closely, that the act of liberation was performed, that the signal was given which ushered in the true Gothic." (Wilhelm Worringer, *Form in Gothic*, ed., trans. and with an introduction by Herbert Read (London: Alec Tiranti, 1957), 141.)

²⁴⁶ Worringer, *Form in Gothic*, 142; 151. Nietzsche's essay "On the Utility and Liability of History for Life," written in 1874, anticipated the early twentieth century debate that sought to situate Expressionism and Gothic art forms as representative of the German spirit. Nietzsche criticized his contemporaries saying German culture suffered from a "notorious inwardness" that led the conventional majority to abandon French schools, rejecting their emphasis on form in an effort "to become more natural and thereby more German." Nietzsche lamented: "We have been spoiled by history, it destroys hope for a national culture...The German unity in its highest sense to which we aspire, and to which we aspire more strongly than we do to political unification – the unity of the German spirit and German life after the destruction of the antithesis between form and content, between inwardness and convention." (Nietzsche, "On the Utility and Liability of History...", in *Unfashionable Observations*, 114-15.)

The modern art of steel construction has first given to us again a certain inward understanding of Gothic. Here again people have been confronted with an architectural form in which the artistic expression is taken over by the medium of construction. But in spite of all external affinities, a powerful internal difference can be observed, for in modern architecture it is the material itself which directly invites this exclusively structural significance, while in Gothic the structural ideas were attained, not by means of the material, but in spite of the material, in spite of the stone.²⁴⁷

In the painting, Kirchner organizes his composition to visually unite the realms of the modern and the Gothic as the arcing suspension system of the bridge in the foreground leads directly to the twin spires of the cathedral in the background.²⁴⁸ At this time, Kirchner and Heckel also collaborated in the decoration of a Gothic chapel for the international *Sonderbund* exhibition in Cologne in 1912, for which they used brightly colored batik textiles to evoke stained glass, thereby merging yet again their interest in the primitive and the Medieval or Gothic with the avant-garde character of the venue.²⁴⁹

Kirchner and Erna: A Life-Long Collaboration in Art

In early 1912, shortly after moving to Berlin, Kirchner met Erna Schilling (1884-1945) and her older sister Gerda, who both worked as nightclub dancers. Since the age of

²⁴⁷ Worringer, *Form in Gothic*, 109; and Worringer, as quoted in Simmons, "To Stand and See Within," 280, note 159.

²⁴⁸ Sherwin Simmons explains that the Cologne Bridge was an important symbol of German national identity. After construction ended in 1560, Kaiser Friedrich Wilhelm IV laid its first block to begin the cathedral's modern completion in September 1842 and the cathedral was finished in 1863. In 1851, Kaiser Wilhelm decided to build the first modern bridge across the Rhine at a site in front of the cathedral aligned on an axis with it. The bridge was built in 1859, but by 1895, the city needed a bigger bridge, which is depicted in Kirchner's painting. (Simmons, "To Stand and See Within," 253-59.) For a reproduction of the painting, see Gordon, *Ernst Ludwig Kirchner*, (G387).

²⁴⁹ For an expanded discussion of the Brücke's participation in the *Sonderbund* exhibition, see Lloyd, *German Expressionism*, 50-60. According to Lloyd: "The significance of the Gothic, as a national style, symbolizing a great period of northern achievement in the plastic arts, was implicit rather than explicit in stained glass revival." (Lloyd, *German Expressionism*, 56.) For a reproduction of the chapel, see Lloyd, *German Expressionism*, 59.

eighteen, the sisters had lived on their own, and it has been claimed that both worked as prostitutes out of necessity at times in Berlin.²⁵⁰ Kirchner was very close to both Erna and Gerda and both women immediately began to appear in his paintings quickly becoming his primary models. Numerous paintings feature two women showing their willing collaboration, including *Two Women with Washbasin*, 1913, *Artist Sketching with Two Women*, 1913, and Kirchner positioned in front of three women in a modern variation of the ancient myth in the painting *Judgment of Paris*, 1913.²⁵¹ In early 1913, soon after their introduction, Erna moved into Kirchner's Durlacher Strasse studio before they moved into an attic studio together at Körnerstrasse 45 in mid-1914.²⁵²

In a painting made shortly after meeting the women, Kirchner paints himself and his female model before a mirror in *Nude with Two Mirrored Figures*, 1912. The fringe of hair covering the forehead of the foreground woman is of the type worn by Erna. She looks towards the viewer while the woman reflected in the mirror looks instead at the male figure based on Kirchner standing next to her (Fig. 2.8). Additionally, the foreground woman wears heeled shoes while the woman in the mirror is barefoot. The use of the mirror device allows Kirchner to represent two different views of the woman's body, while possibly signifying the two sisters in their eagerness to model for him to create the elaborate tableaux. The shoes simultaneously reference the outside world

²⁵⁰ Gerd Presler, *Ernst Ludwig Kirchner: Seine Frauen, seine Modelle, seine Bilder* (Munich: Prestel, 1998), 54; and Roland Scotti, ed., *Erna und Ernst Ludwig Kirchner: Ein Künstlerpaar IV* (Davos: Kirchner Verein, 2003), 68. According to both Presler and Peter-Klaus Schuster, the sisters did not have a good relationship with their stepmother and left home early as a result. See Presler, *Kirchner: Seine Frauen, seine Modelle*, 19; and Schuster "Kalkulierter Expressionismus versuch über Ernst Ludwig Kirchners *Dame mit Hut*," in *Ikonographia: Anleitung zum Lesen von Bildern*, eds. Donat de Chapeaurouge, Bazon Brock and Achim Preiss (Munich: Klinkhardt & Biermann, 1990), 233.

²⁵¹ For reproductions, see Gordon, *Ernst Ludwig Kirchner*, (G295), (G301), and (G360).

²⁵² Presler, *Kirchner: Seine Frauen, seine Modelle*, 49.

through fashion and the barefoot male and female allude to the interior realms of the studio necessary for the fulfillment of these images. The painting *Seated Women with Wood Sculpture*, 1912, features Erna holding a cigarette seated opposite a primitive inspired wood sculpture again mediating the realms of urban culture through her sophisticated fashion with the exoticism of the studio (Fig. 2.9).

Almost immediately after their first meeting, Erna accompanied Kirchner to the Baltic island of Fehmarn.²⁵³ Kirchner was actively seeking a female companion to accompany him that summer to serve as a model and Erich Heckel's girlfriend Sidi, who knew the Schilling sisters through their mutual work as dancers, introduced them.²⁵⁴ According to several accounts, Erna soon confided to Kirchner that she was suffering from syphilis and hoped to use the vacation to recuperate as she began treatment with the newly introduced Salvarsan cure.²⁵⁵ Though the cure was apparently successful for Erna, Gerda, who was similarly afflicted, was not so fortunate; according to Gerd Pressler, she died alone from tertiary-stage syphilis in 1923 while living in the Prussian State Mental

²⁵³ Presler, *Kirchner: Seine Frauen, seine Modelle*, 53. Kirchner visited Fehmarn for the first time in 1908 with Emmy Frisch, where she introduced him to photography. (She later married Karl Schmidt-Rotluff.) He soon returned for three consecutive summers with Erna: in 1912, Heckel and his girlfriend Sidi accompanied them; in 1913, Werner Gothein and Hans Gewecke, two students from the short-lived MUIM Institute, a school founded by Kirchner and Pechstein, visited; and in 1914, Kirchner and Erna returned together.

²⁵⁴ Presler, *Kirchner: Seine Frauen, seine Modelle*, 53; Scotti, *Erna und Ernst Ludwig Kirchner*, 68-69.

²⁵⁵ Beloubek-Hammer, "Neue Modelle und Neue Freunde," 110; and Presler, *Kirchner: Seine Frauen, seine Modelle*, 53; and Simmons, "Ernst Kirchner's Streetwalkers," 148, note 202; and Scotti, *Erna und Ernst Ludwig Kirchner*, 68-69. In her text, Pamela Kort erroneously states it was Gerda who made this confession and originally accompanied Kirchner to Fehmarn. (Kort, *Berlin Street Scene*, 51.) For a discussion of syphilis at the time, see Ann Taylor Allen, "Feminism, Venereal Disease, and the State in Germany, 1890-1918," *Journal of the History of Sexuality* 4, no. 1 (July 1993): 27-50; and Bertrand Taithe, "The Rise and Fall of European Syphilisation," in Franz X. Eder, Lesley A. Hall and Gert Hekma, eds., *Sexual Cultures in Europe: Themes in Sexuality* (Manchester and New York: Manchester University Press, 1999): 34-57.

Hospital in Neuruppin.²⁵⁶ The sadness this caused Erna, who was by then living with Kirchner in Davos, is evident in the painting *Black Spring*, 1923. In it, a male figure based on Kirchner leans over in a gesture of consolation to comfort the seated figure based on Erna whose expression is listless and whose pose is inert (Fig. 2.10). The question remains as to whether Kirchner also suffered from the disease; his appearance in the forthcoming portraits *The Drinker; Self-Portrait*, 1915, and *Self-Portrait as a Soldier*, 1915, has fueled this speculation, in which the alternately limp or severed limbs references a loss of virility, and correspondence by Graef further confirms that the disease was a possibility in 1916, although Kirchner recalled that he remained healthy after learning of Erna's affliction.²⁵⁷

Several scholars have discussed the change in tone from the previously uninhibited genre scenes representative of the Dresden interiors to the carefully orchestrated compositions made in Berlin that display an increasingly introspective and interrogative mood.²⁵⁸ This shift has been variously attributed to the growing tensions

²⁵⁶ Presler, *Kirchner: Seine Frauen, seine Modelle*, 74.

²⁵⁷ Presler, *Kirchner: Seine Frauen, seine Modelle*, 53. On December 17, 1916, Botho Graef wrote to Gustav Schiefler after Kirchner entered the sanatorium of Dr. Edel in Berlin, saying he was waiting for the results of tests to determine if Kirchner was infected. Graef wrote: "K. has always denied having any kind of syphilis to me and to those who, suspecting as much, asked him directly; however, more recently, it appears he admitted as much to others. Since he has very twisted ideas about the relationship between syphilis and spiritual productivity, however, it is impossible to find out the truth." (Graef, in Wolfgang Henze, ed., *Ernst Ludwig Kirchner Gustav Schiefler: Briefwechsel 1910-1935/1938* (Stuttgart and Zurich: Belser Verlag, 1990), 84-85; and Graef, as quoted in Simmons, "Ernst Kirchner's Streetwalkers," 141; 148, note 199.) Sherwin Simmons sees this as Graef's implication that Kirchner remained "syphilophobic" despite the introduction of a cure for the disease in 1909. The symbolism of the hand as depicted in *The Drinker; Self-Portrait* and *Self-Portrait as a Soldier*, both 1915, will be discussed in Chapter Six along with the literature on the paintings.

²⁵⁸ Jill Lloyd discusses the change in mood and tone of Kirchner's Berlin studio scenes featuring Erna; see Lloyd, "Kirchner's Metaphysical Studio Paintings," in Lloyd and Moeller, *Kirchner: The Dresden and Berlin Years*, 15-22; and Wolfgang Henze finds that the subject of self-portraits, which held little interest for Kirchner before 1914-1915, increases as a sign of his introspection; see Henze "Die Kunst Ernst Ludwig Kirchners in den Krisenjahren," in Ehrmann and Wahl, *Kirchner: Von Jena nach Davos*, 51.

among the Brücke members, each of whom was becoming increasingly independent in their stylistic development since moving to the city, as well as to Kirchner's feelings of loneliness in the urban environment.²⁵⁹ The painting *Dancing School*, 1914, is frequently discussed as representative of the heightened tension of the Berlin studio scenes for the elongated limbs and tightly controlled arrangement is antithetical to the painting's purported subject of the freedom of movement in dance (Fig. 2.11).²⁶⁰ Though not reflective of dance, the painting reinforces companionship with one female figure positioned closely against the body of the standing male based on the artist to the extent that their bodies appear as two halves of one whole. Additionally, the hands of the women, one seated and the other standing, are connected through placement. In a second image, *The Tent: Interior in Berlin Studio*, 1914, the male figure based on Kirchner watches the model emerging from a tent that was built into the corner of his Berlin studio in a composition that also relies on the highly structured arrangement of its figures (Fig. 2.12). The artist and model are here united by several features, including their gazes, the placement of the model's hand on Kirchner's shoulder, and the position of the artist's arm, which fits snugly into the V-shape formed by the model's legs. In the painting, the tent itself alludes to collaboration in that Erna decorated it with lavish embroidery featuring couples frolicking together after designs by Kirchner inspired from their trip to

²⁵⁹ For the lack of cohesiveness among the Brücke in Berlin, see Selz, *German Expressionist Painting*, 140-43.

²⁶⁰ Wolf-Dieter Dube, *Expressionists and Expressionism* (Geneva: Editions d'Art Albert Skira, 1983), 96. According to Dube: "How much Kirchner's state of mind had changed, from the old notion of a free mingling of the sexes to an unresolved and irresolvable tension, can be seen from the picture misleadingly entitled *Dancing School*. The figures move self-consciously in a setting of shifting perspectives built up with curving and angular forms. Here it is the man who is caught in a circular form and courts favor in vain."

Fehmarn.²⁶¹ When examined closely, both of these studio scenes show an interest in joining the figures together by their limbs; like several of the forthcoming images of Graef and Biallowons, the narratives of *Dancing School* and *The Tent: Interior in Berlin Studio* are built upon the precise arrangement of figures with their interrelationship largely based on the connectedness of their bodies.

During the Fehmarn sojourns, Kirchner realized some of his best figural work finding inspiration in the setting and frequently depicting nudes in the landscape or at the beach that recall in their visual exuberance the Brücke ideal of nature. His interest in highly structured compositions is seen in *Tower Room: Self-Portrait with Erna*, 1913, which depicts the artist looking towards his muse Erna posed nude across a table within the room in the lighthouse accommodations where the couple stayed on two visits (Fig. 2.13).²⁶² *Striding into the Sea*, 1912, a large-scale painting made the previous summer, is one of Kirchner's images most often discussed as exemplifying the vitalistic merging of the uninhibited nude figures within the realm of nature (Fig. 2.14). The short brushstrokes and the angular spatial tensions appropriate to the accelerated tempo of the Berlin scenery has been entirely replaced by the curvilinear lines and warm colors of the expansive beachscape. As the man and woman run into the sea, their hands are clasped together, while the woman's other hand is positioned precisely to connect with the leg of the figure lying on the beach, visually uniting all of them together in one arching line.

²⁶¹ For a photograph of the tent featuring its embroidery, see Lloyd, *German Expressionism*, 44, Fig. 57. According to Kort, in the past, Erna had taken in sewing as an income. (Kort, *Berlin Street Scene*, 20.)

²⁶² Presler, *Kirchner: Seine Frauen, seine Modelle*, 58.

The appearance of Erna and Gerda may have helped to inspire the increasingly linear and structured compositions in which limbs are precisely positioned to emphasize figural relationships. In his autobiographical text “Die Arbeit E. L. Kirchners,” written in the mid-1920s, Kirchner explained of the sisters: “The crafting of people was heavily influenced by [them]. The beautiful, architectonic, rigidly shaped bodies of these two girls replaced the soft, Saxon bodies [of his girlfriend Dodo who had appeared often in his Brücke work]. In thousands of sketches, sculptures, and pictures, these bodies formed my sense of beauty in the crafting of the physically attractive woman of our time.”²⁶³

Despite the numerous essays exploring Kirchner’s relationship with Erna, it remains difficult to fully understand their long and complex union or to determine the early role of Gerda. Several discussions of the couple highlight Kirchner’s apparent ambivalence towards Erna, seen for example in the fact that they never married, and this is verified, as we will see, with remarks made by the artist that emphasize his dwindling physical attraction towards her.²⁶⁴ Above all, Kirchner remained devoted to his art but in his engagement with direct observation and sources of inspiration, he continually relied on Erna as his model and artistic companion, explaining that she “embodied the beautiful woman of our time, the one who, from now on, shared my life.”²⁶⁵

The Brücke disbanded in 1913, with the catalyst being Kirchner’s solipsistic account of the group’s history in the “Chronicle of the Brücke,” written the same year²⁶⁶

²⁶³ Kirchner, “Die Arbeit E. L. Kirchners,” in Kornfeld, *Ernst Ludwig Kirchner Nachzeichnung seines Lebens*, 335; and Kirchner, as quoted in Presler, *Kirchner: Seine Frauen, seine Modelle*, 48-49.

²⁶⁴ Gordon, *Expressionism*, 53-54.

²⁶⁵ Kirchner, “Die Arbeit E. L. Kirchners,” in Kornfeld, *Ernst Ludwig Kirchner Nachzeichnung seines Lebens*, 335; and Kirchner, as quoted in Presler, *Kirchner: Seine Frauen, seine Modelle*, 49.

In addition to the text, Kirchner made a woodcut image to serve as the publication's cover and in some ways, the image resembles the frontispiece of a Medieval manuscript with the four current members of the group depicted in bust-length portraits each framed within a niche (Fig. 2.15).²⁶⁷ Kirchner positions himself and Heckel at the top in a hieratic arrangement with Schmidt-Rotluff and Mueller on the bottom. All of the men are clearly recognizable though rendered simply. Kirchner's self-portrait is the most descriptive: if one looks closely, there is the face of a woman wearing Erna's fringe hairstyle merging with the artist's shoulder in a visual symbol that could be interpreted as Kirchner's early understanding of her as an important collaborator and ongoing artistic companion.

Kirchner's written statements reinforce that he was dependent on Erna for personal and artistic companionship from the time they met until his death. In an autobiographical letter written to Graef in September 1916, Kirchner explained the progression of his views towards his female companions from Dresden until the present, saying:

Through becoming more intimately acquainted with the one to be painted, there simultaneously came a psychic deepening. True models in the academic sense I have never had. Then, with the realization of the limits of interaction between interlocking human psyches came the withdrawal of one's own person and its resolution into the psyche of the other, for the purpose of more intensive returns. The less I was myself physically interested, which started quite early as a consequence of my frame of mind, the better and more frankly I could penetrate into the other and portray her. The technique kept up with the inner progression, until joining the military made me unsociable and caused new interest in landscape.²⁶⁸

²⁶⁶ Kirchner, "Chronicle of the Brücke," in Long, *German Expressionism: Documents*, 23-25. For an additional discussion of the "Chronicle," see Peter Selz, "E. L. Kirchner's "Chronik der Brücke"," *College Art Journal* 10 (Fall 1950): 50-54; and Selz, *German Expressionist Painting*, 140-43.

²⁶⁷ Reisenfeld, "Cultural Nationalism, Brücke and the German Woodcut," 297.

In his autobiographical text “Das Werk,” written in the third-person in 1925, Kirchner explains: “The purely erotic relationship to women from his earlier work made way for one of camaraderie, of two-ness. He was thus able to see with four eyes and attained a greater freedom in his perspective. His technique of image construction and, especially the crafting of detail refined itself in order to express the new emotions.”²⁶⁹

In 1918, Kirchner turned to the subject of the Renaissance poet Petrarch and his sonnets *The Triumph of Love* in a lithograph series of the same name. Kirchner had already completed one graphic variation in 1912, but the mood is very different in the later version. The toll of the war is felt on both the appearance and treatment of the subjects; in the earlier images, figures relax together amidst verdant landscapes while in the later series, the characters are rendered with sharp, angular forms, and there is a lack of interest in the beautifying of the background or on luxuriating in the beauty of the female form, though the vitality of the long and thin lines used throughout give it a sense of energy.

The final image of the series, titled *Eternal Longing*, depicts a male and female who are nearly identical in their forms and locked together by their gazes with the male figure extending his hand towards the female figure who is separated from him by a structure within the image’s center.²⁷⁰ Kirchner explained the meaning in a letter written

²⁶⁸ Kirchner, “Kirchner künstlerisches Selbstbekenntnis für Botho Graef,” 1916, in “Texte und Dokumente” in Ehrmann and Wahl, *Kirchner: Von Jena nach Davos*, 101; and Kirchner, in Grisebach, *Maler des Expressionismus*, 53-54.

²⁶⁹ Kirchner, “Das Werk,” in Grisebach, ed., *E. L. Kirchners Davoser Tagebuch*, 85-86.

²⁷⁰ For a discussion of the series, see Presler, *Kirchner: Seine Frauen, seine Modelle*, 55-57. Donald Gordon discusses this image as representative of a relationship that is more mental than physical within a broader discussion of Kirchner’s complex sexual outlook at the time; see Gordon, *Expressionism*,

the following year to his patron Gustav Schiefler: “In the inseparable union of two beings, held together by mutual regard. Mutual influences, with the masks of selfishness off, sets one free for further development.”²⁷¹ It is significant that Kirchner made the series while he convalesced alone in Switzerland after his breakdown of 1915 while Erna remained in Berlin until 1921.

Several canvases in the *Street Scene* series highlight how Kirchner mixed direct observation of the city’s inhabitants with a reliance on Erna and Gerda as his models. One of the central figures in the painting *Potsdamer Platz, Berlin*, 1914, wears a widow’s veil, a fashion accessory that became increasingly common with the advent of the war. Prostitutes quickly took to wearing the veil to appear as war widows in order to evade police detection, while the accessory also provided a practical means of concealing the ravaging affects of syphilis on their skin.²⁷² In a photograph taken between 1912-1913, Kirchner depicted Gerda wearing a veil and in the painting *Woman with Dark Veil*, 1912, made before the *Street Scene* series, she is seen wearing one reinforcing both her role as a model for this composition and confirming that she was likely suffering from the effects of the disease (Fig. 2.16).²⁷³ Gerda appears for the last time in Kirchner’s *Portrait of Gerda*, 1914/1926, where she poses with her head tilted to the side and an easy smile on

54-55. For a reproduction of this image and the complete series, see Dube, *E. L. Kirchner: das graphisches Werk*, (H342-350).

²⁷¹ Kirchner, in a letter dated November 25, 1919, to Gustav Schiefler, as quoted in Wolf-Dieter Dube, *Expressionism: A German Intuition, 1905-1920* (New York and San Francisco: The Solomon R. Guggenheim Museum and San Francisco Museum of Modern Art, 1980), 98; and Kirchner, as partially quoted in Gordon, *Expressionism*, 53.

²⁷² Simmons, “Ernst Kirchner’s Streetwalkers,” 130; 145, note 105.

²⁷³ Schuster identifies Erna as the sister wearing the veil in *Potsdamer Platz, Berlin*. I believe it is impossible to say either one with absolute certainty but more important is his overall discussion of how Kirchner relied on both women to serve as models for the series. (Schuster, “Kalkulierter Expressionismus,” 245-46.) For the photograph of Gerda in the veil, see Scotti, *Kirchner: The Photographic Work*, 50.

her face in a painting that was made alongside *Self-Portrait*, 1914, in which Kirchner represents himself as an artist absorbed in his work on the painting that appears before him, again reinforcing his enjoyment of painting both women (Figs. 2.17, 2.18).

Erna is the model for the well-known painting *Sick Woman; Woman with Hat*, 1913, painted shortly after the couple met. Erna's appearance, with the heavy make-up and gaunt face, may refer to her confession that she was ill when the couple met, while also illustrating Kirchner's interest in connecting his studio portraits with issues related to contemporary fashion (Fig. 2.19). Her plumed hat is similar to the styles frequently worn by prostitutes, variations of which are seen on all of the women in Kirchner's series.²⁷⁴ In Pamela Kort's recent publication on the painting *Berlin Street Scene*, 1913, she explains that Gerda acted as the model for the women in red and Erna the figure in blue, with Kirchner positioning himself as the male in the foreground whose outstretched palm is a reference to the hand of the artist and the cigarette a symbol of the image he cultivated in numerous representations.²⁷⁵

In 1915, with the looming military threat, much has been made in the literature on Kirchner's comparison of his unmoored situation with the plight of the urban prostitute, in a letter to his patron Gustav Schiefler written in November 1916, in which he equated his terrible view of events with his role as an artist:

The pressure of war is a heavier burden than anything else...I always have the sense of a bloody carnival...I am still trying to bring some order to my thoughts and to create out of all this confusion one picture of the time, which is of course, my task...The insanity of this war is incomprehensible. The most painful thing about it is this gradual dissolution of self and the feeling of not being able to help. One is so jaded and faltering, one hesitates to work, when all work is fruitless.

²⁷⁴ Haxthausen, "'A New Beauty': Ernst Ludwig Kirchner's Images of Berlin," 81.

²⁷⁵ Kort, *Berlin Street Scene*, 52-61.

I am now myself like the prostitutes I painted. Whisked away, gone the next time. Maybe I might still succeed in overcoming all this. To begin again.²⁷⁶

Charles Haxthausen, in his essay “‘A New Beauty’: Ernst Ludwig Kirchner’s Images of Berlin,” provides the most perceptive analysis of this remark in terms of Kirchner’s *Street Scene* series by recognizing that there is no sense of moral condemnation or negative attitude towards the women in the paintings but instead, Kirchner’s comparison shows his sympathetic understanding of their precarious situation in society akin to his own feelings during the war.²⁷⁷

Kirchner returned to his *Street Scene* series after the beginning of the war to make one final image in 1915. Despite the wealth of literature on the overall series, his decision to re-visit these images has not been adequately addressed. In all of the prior *Street Scenes*, the women navigate the busy streets of Berlin attracting the attention of male passersby who are participants through their covert glances or brusque bodily communication. While *Women on the Street* shares the basic composition of promenading female figures set within the urban landscape, it differs from the rest of the paintings (Fig. 2.20). Despite its title *Women on the Street*, the iconography is primarily concerned with the male and female foreground figures walking with their elbows joined, as the second woman appears less prominent and is relegated to a position in the middle ground behind the pair. Here, unlike in the other paintings, the chase is over and there is no longer any secrecy or illicit negotiation as the couple appears to walk confidently arm

²⁷⁶ Kirchner, in a letter dated November 12, 1916, to Gustav Schiefler, in Henze, ed., *Kirchner Schiefler: Briefwechsel*, 83; and Kirchner, as quoted in Gordon, *Expressionism*, 55; and Kirchner, as quoted in Gordon, *Ernst Ludwig Kirchner*, 27; and Kirchner, as quoted in Springer, *Hand and Head*, 41.

²⁷⁷ Haxthausen, “‘A New Beauty’: Ernst Ludwig Kirchner’s Images of Berlin,” 78-83. Haxthausen continues to say that Kirchner, the “most erotic of all German artists,” is not sexually explicit in his treatment of this theme; the women are never nude and none of the *Street Scenes* depict the women in acts of overt solicitation.

in arm in a composition that focuses almost entirely on them. Where previously the emphasis was on the social rituals of the prostitute in navigating the street to conduct business, this image, with figures that are united by their interlocking arms, appears concerned overall with human companionship and union and it is the only *Street Scene* to focus centrally on a male-female pair.

Perhaps Kirchner knew his productive relationship with both of the Schilling sisters was effectively over in light of their situation during the war? By returning to the series, he paints the motif of the prostitute, previously reliant on the collaborative modeling of both sisters and with whom he realized his strongest urban imagery, to depict the reality of their changed situation. With Gerda increasingly ill, it was only Erna by his side. A hint of this awareness is seen in the appearance of the plumed hat worn by the woman, which is very similar to the one worn by Erna in *Sick Woman; Woman with Hat* (Figs. 2.19, 2.20).

From 1915, Kirchner's images increasingly illustrate how he came to view Erna as a spiritual companion and a stable force in a time of disruption and instability. Though Kirchner and Erna never married, he began referring to her as his wife for the first time at the end of 1914.²⁷⁸ While Kirchner convalesced in the sanatorium in Königstein in 1917, Erna organized his studio and transported their belongings to Davos, where they lived together until the end of his life.²⁷⁹ Once they were settled into life in Davos, the themes of several paintings make clear the importance of their bond with one another by illustrating a mutual reliance between the male and female protagonists, as seen in

²⁷⁸ Henze, "Die Kunst Ernst Ludwig Kirchners in den Krisenjahren," 49.

²⁷⁹ After his suicide in 1938, Erna changed her surname to Kirchner and became the guardian of his estate. She stayed in Davos until her own death, seven years later, in 1945.

Lovers, 1921-1923, *The Marriage*, 1922; *Black Spring*, 1923; and *Two Against the World*, 1924 (Fig. 2.10).²⁸⁰ In addition, Kirchner also painted them as a couple in several double-portraits, including *Before Sunrise*, 1924-1925, and *Before Sunrise II*, 1927, in which the couple stands together on their balcony overlooking the landscape in the valley below with the morning light giving Kirchner the opportunity to incorporate rich blue, purple and pink colors to the canvas.²⁸¹ In *The Living Room; Interior with Painter*, 1923, Kirchner depicts himself at his work desk with Erna next to him busy with her sewing in their Wilboden living room.²⁸² In the year prior to his death, Kirchner wrote a reminiscence of his alliance with Erna:

This artist longed for only one thing: he would have liked to have had a comrade who shared his life and participated in his work. Then he met a young girl in an establishment, a quiet girl with refined intellectual features in spite of her simple background, and he fell in love her, and she with him. It was love at first sight. Soon they found one another, and the beautiful studio had two happy residents. She made her embroidery, he helped her with it, and since his name was already well known, she adopted it as her artist name.²⁸³

The Influence of Nietzsche in Berlin

By returning briefly to Worringer and Nietzsche, it is possible to once again draw attention to how heavily the philosophies of the two men, which were receiving widespread attention coincident with Kirchner's artistic development, influenced the artists, writers and creative individuals with whom he was in contact throughout this

²⁸⁰ For reproductions see Gordon, *Ernst Ludwig Kirchner*, for *Lovers* (G732), *The Marriage* (G680), *Two Against the World* (G765).

²⁸¹ For reproductions see Gordon, *Ernst Ludwig Kirchner*, *Before Sunrise* (G783), *Before Sunrise II* (G887).

²⁸² For a reproduction see Gordon, *Ernst Ludwig Kirchner*, (G731)

²⁸³ Kirchner, in an undated recollection, as quoted in Presler, *Kirchner: Seine Frauen, seine Modelle*, 54.

period. The philosophies of Nietzsche and Worringer regarding creativity and the importance of historical inclusiveness are related in several ways. Worringer shows his indebtedness to Nietzsche by opening *Form in Gothic* with a quote from the philosopher. In the first chapter, titled “Historical Methods,” Worringer opens by stating the aims of *Form in Gothic*:

The earnest endeavor of the historian to reconstruct the spirit of the past from the materials at his disposal is at best but an experiment, conducted with unsuitable means...To emancipate ourselves from the conditions of our own period, and to make our own the conditions of bygone ages to such a degree that we really think with its mind and feel with its soul, is something we shall never succeed in doing.²⁸⁴

He then continues by quoting from Nietzsche’s essay “On the Utility and Liability of History for Life,” in which Nietzsche criticized at length the failure of his contemporaries to properly understand how to use the example of the past, in this case, for their tendency to view history as a means of justification:

These naïve historians gauge all bygone opinions and deeds by the generally prevailing opinion of the moment and call this ‘objectivity’: herein, for them, lies the canon of all truths; their task is to fit the past into the triviality of the present. And every method of writing history which does not accept these popular opinions as canonical, is branded by them as ‘subjective’.²⁸⁵

In several ways, *Form in Gothic* parallels Nietzsche’s *The Birth of Tragedy*. Nietzsche’s book was a wholly new way to interpret the culture of the ancient Greeks by considering the development of their art forms as representative of their psychological make-up just as Worringer’s study of Gothic art was important as a means of examining

²⁸⁴ Worringer, *Form in Gothic*, 1.

²⁸⁵ Nietzsche, as quoted in Worringer, *Form in Gothic*, 1. Worringer cites Nietzsche as the source of the quotation, but he does not specify the text from which the quote is drawn; see Nietzsche, “On the Utility and Liability of History...,” in *Unfashionable Observations*, 125. The quote begins: “It is also true if we likewise disregard those wholly unreflective people who write as historians in the naïve faith that, according to all popular opinions, their age is right, and that to write in conformity with this age amounts to exactly the same thing as being just...”

the often overlooked Gothic period in relation to the uniquely Northern psyche. Both authors find that the best creative production of each culture is realized when outside forces act upon them, giving evidence of both author's ongoing promotion of a pan-national outlook amidst their mutual commitment to promote the arts and culture of Germany within their respective generations. In the essay "On the Utility and Liability of History for Life," from which Worringer's opening quote was drawn, Nietzsche maintained that the Greeks realized their true expressive character and ability to create beauty from chaos when it was imposed on them from outside their own culture:

There were centuries in which the Greeks found themselves threatened by a danger similar to the one we face today, the danger, namely, of perishing in a flood of things alien and past, of perishing of "history." They never lived in proud isolation; on the contrary, their "cultivation" was for many years a chaos of foreign – Semitic, Babylonian, Lydian, and Egyptian – forms and concept...But despite this, and thanks to that Apollinian imperative, Hellenic culture did not become an aggregate. The Greeks gradually learned how to *organize this chaos* by concentrating – in accordance with this Delphic doctrine – on themselves...They thereby took possession of themselves again...Based on the practical interpretation of Apollo's imperative, they themselves became, after a difficult struggle with themselves, the happiest enrichers and increasers of that inherited treasure; and became the first cultured people, and hence the model for all future cultured people.²⁸⁶

In regards to the Gothic, Worringer maintains a similar view:

These vicissitudes of Gothic will to form are chiefly determined, on the one hand, by its natural growth and increasing vigor, on the other by its adjustments to alien manifestations of style, amongst which, in addition to Oriental influences, Roman art with the classical tendency of its will to form comes most predominantly under consideration. The interesting drama of the adjustment between North and South, Gothic and Classical, the rich content of which determines the whole import of the development of medieval art, begins with the first influence of Roman culture on the North...The last act shows us the collapse of Gothic and the submergence of the feeling for form of the Northern nations in the European structure of the Renaissance.²⁸⁷

²⁸⁶ Nietzsche, "On the Utility and Liability of History...", in *Unfashionable Observations*, 166-67.

²⁸⁷ Worringer, *Form in Gothic*, 111.

Lastly, throughout the discussion of each author, the role of art and aesthetics was deemed essential to an individual's spiritual life; according to Nietzsche: "it is only as an aesthetic phenomenon that existence and the world are eternally justified," while Worringer stated in *Abstraction and Empathy*: "In the forms of the work of art we enjoy ourselves. Aesthetic enjoyment is objectified self-enjoyment."²⁸⁸

Worringer's ideas built upon the aesthetics theories of several prominent individuals, particularly Theodor Lipps (1851-1914), the influential scholar of aesthetics, who undertook an important systematic study of the psychological aspect of aesthetics, titled *Aesthetics of Space and Geometric-Optical Illusions*, published in 1893-1897, bringing interest in empathy to a wider audience, and Alois Riegl (1838-1905), whose subjective aesthetic theory of "artistic purpose," emphasizing the individual's inner creative process over the external appearance of an object, was introduced in a publication titled *The Late Roman Art Industry* in 1901 that studied the late antique period rather than the more frequently examined Classical Greek period.²⁸⁹

Worringer was also influenced by the sociological theories of Georg Simmel, particularly the idea that an "inner restlessness" drove artists of certain eras to abstraction, an idea that was built upon Simmel's pioneering theories on the

²⁸⁸ Nietzsche, *The Birth of Tragedy*, 52; and Worringer, "Abstraction and Empathy," in Harrison and Wood, *Art in Theory*, 69.

²⁸⁹ Mallgrave and Ikononous, *Empathy, Form, and Space*, 29; and Read, "Introduction," in Worringer, *Form in Gothic*, ix; and Selz, *German Expressionist Painting*, 6-9. For a discussion of Worringer's interpretation of Lipps, see Geoffrey C. W. Waite, "Worringer's *Abstraction and Empathy*: Remarks on Its Reception and on the Rhetoric of Its Criticism," in *Invisible Cathedrals: The Expressionist Art History of Wilhelm Worringer*, ed. Neil H. Donahue (University Park: Pennsylvania University State Press, 1995): 13-40. Riegl's book was originally published as *Die spätromische Kunst-Industrie, nach den Funden in Österreich-Ungarn* (Vienna: K. K. Hof-und Staatsdruckerei, 1901).

psychological impact of the forces of capitalist culture and the effects of urban living that contributed to social fragmentation and alienation.²⁹⁰

Lipps's discussion of empathy in terms of architecture and ornament similarly influenced August Endell and Henry van de Velde, both of who wrote about the new psychology of empathy in popular art publications.²⁹¹ The notion of empathy likely informed the discussions of Kirchner, Graef, Grisebach and the circle of artists and philosophers in Jena, all of whom were well-informed about developments in the field of aesthetics and art history. Additionally, Graef was friends with three of the architects who had written on the subject: Henry van de Velde was a close friend and the two worked together on several projects in Jena; in Berlin, August Endell was a regular guest at the home of Graef's sister Sabine Lepsius, designing her painting studio in Berlin in 1902; while Georg Simmel was a long time friend of Sabine after attending gymnasium with their brother Harald.²⁹²

In Berlin, the link that connected Kirchner and the Brücke artists with avant-garde literary circles in the city was a mutual admiration for Nietzsche among many of the men with whom they collaborated.²⁹³ Kirchner and the other members of the Brücke became

²⁹⁰ Selz, *German Expressionist Painting*, 9; and Lloyd, *German Expressionism*, 147. For an expanded discussion of Simmel's relationship, see Michael W. Jennings, "Against Expressionism: Materialism and Social Theory in Worringer's *Abstraction and Empathy*," in Donahue, *Invisible Cathedrals*, 87-104.

²⁹¹ August Endell's two essays considering the aesthetics of empathy, in which he championed the new psychology, are "Möglichkeit und Ziele einer neuen Architektur," in *Deutsche Kunst und Dekoration* 1 (1897-1898): 141-53; and "Formenschönheit und dekorative Kunst" in *Dekorative Kunst* 2 (1898): 119-25. The text by Henry van de Velde that reflects his interest in the theory of empathy is *Kunstgewerbliche Laienpredigten* (Leipzig: Hermann Seemann, 1902).

²⁹² Lepsius, *Ein Berliner Künstlerleben*, 62-63.

²⁹³ For an examination of the Brücke's association with literary figures in Berlin see two recent essays: Anita Beloubek-Hammer, "'Nur wer sich Wandelt, bleibt mit mir Verwandt' zum Geistigen und

active with *Der Neue Klub* and *Das Neopathetische Kabarett* through the young writer Simon Guttman, a founding member of *Der Neue Klub*, who introduced them to the interrelated literary groups, whose members included Kurt Hiller (1885-1973), Erwin Loewenson, Jakob van Hoddis, Erich Unger and John Wolfson.²⁹⁴ *Der Neue Klub* was founded with Nietzsche as its chief inspiration in March 1909, with Kurt Hiller serving as the first president; in 1910, it was transformed into *Das Neopathetische Kabarett*, which hosted regular literary evenings, meeting Wednesdays at the Nollendorf Casino on the Kleiststrasse or at the Café des Westens.²⁹⁵ The cabaret was intended by its founders to be an active instrument to work towards cultural regeneration as prescribed by Nietzsche and many of the contributions to the performances were directly inspired by him, including the program for the first evening during which Loewenson read aloud from selected aphorisms from Nietzsche's publications.²⁹⁶

Kurt Hiller described the founding philosophy of the *Kabarett* as "to give pathetic form to the daily experiences of highly sophisticated man; that is an authentic representation of the thousand great and small pleasures and pains that confront the

Stilistischen Wandel in der Brücke-Kunst in Berlin" in *Brücke und Berlin: 100 Jahre Expressionismus*, 293-300; and Katrin Wiethege, "Kirchner – Berlin und die neue Literatur," in Henkel and März, eds., *Der Potsdamer Platz*, 163-69; and see Lloyd, *German Expressionism*, 139-41; 249, notes 43 and 48.

²⁹⁴ For an expanded discussion of *Der Neue Klub* and Kirchner's relation to it, see Patrick Bridgwater, *The Poet of Expressionist Berlin: The Life and Work of Georg Heym* (London: Libris, 1991). For a discussion of the literary groups in relation to Nietzsche's influence, see Seth Taylor, *Left-Wing Nietzscheans: The Politics of German Expression 1910-1920* (Berlin and New York: Walter de Gruyter, 1990), esp. 37-59; Chapter 2: Expressionism and Nietzsche.

²⁹⁵ Aschheim, *The Nietzsche Legacy in Germany*, 69; and Lloyd and Moeller, *Kirchner: The Dresden and Berlin Years*, 219; and Paul Raabe, ed., *The Era of German Expressionism*, trans. J. M. Ritchie (Woodstock, NY: The Overlook Press, 1985), 16.

²⁹⁶ The aphorisms were drawn from *The Gay Science*, *Twilight of the Idols* and *The Will to Power*. (Taylor, *Left-Wing Nietzscheans*, 41-42.) For a complete listing of all the programs and an accounting of the chosen aphorisms, see Richard Sheppard, ed., *Die Schriften des Neuen Club, 1908-1914 2* (Hildesheim: Gerstenberg Verlag, 1980), 282; 362, note 135; 396; 449, note 31.

intellectual and city dwellers.”²⁹⁷ Hiller advocated a “new urban intellectualism” based on irony, dissonance and an abstract, multi-layered form of writing that related to the experience of city life.²⁹⁸ Ernst Loewenson gave the group’s inaugural lectures, called “The Decadence of our Times and the Foundation of the New Club,” beginning in November 1909.²⁹⁹ In the first lecture, he described the influence of Nietzsche’s belief in instinctual, vital Dionysian force to counteract degeneration in the life of Western man.³⁰⁰ In the second lecture, his criticism was again geared towards the decadence he felt was dominating German culture stemming from the overly ordered life and the herd mentality indicative of the current university system, an idea that was heavily reliant on Nietzsche’s early essay “On the Utility and Liability of History for Life” in *Untimely Meditations*.³⁰¹ Among the club’s poets and writers, their interest in the city was also influenced by the third book of Nietzsche’s *Thus Spoke Zarathustra*, whose protagonist undertakes a survey of his urban surroundings and describes the destruction of the city as a sign of the coming of a new age.

Georg Simmel, who was a lecturer at the Friedrich-Wilhelm University in Berlin from 1885-1914, while Hiller and Loewenson were students there, was influential in his

²⁹⁷ Lloyd, *German Expressionism*, 139; 248, note 37; see also Hiller, *Die Weisheit der Langenweibe* (*The Wisdom of Boredom*) I and II (Leipzig: Wolff, 1913), 119.

²⁹⁸ Lloyd, *German Expressionism*, 139.

²⁹⁹ Lloyd, *German Expressionism*, 139.

³⁰⁰ Loewenson explained that the group’s use of the word “pathos” was drawn from Nietzsche’s use of the term to explain positive stimulus as an “exaggerated sense of the intensity of life.” (Lloyd, *German Expressionism*, 139) This was a counter for the “spiritual exhaustion” that was the primary symptom of the contemporary German cultural decadence experienced in Berlin and other cities. Nietzsche’s notion of pathos was aimed at restoring the balance between intellect and the power of instinct. (Taylor, *Left-Wing Nietzscheans*, 39-41.)

³⁰¹ Taylor, *Left-Wing Nietzscheans*, 39-41.

analysis of urban culture.³⁰² Simmel's understanding of how to preserve a sense of autonomy from the urban crowds within the constantly shifting flux of modern, metropolitan life was indebted to Nietzsche, particularly his concept of *Vornehmheit*, or the "ideal of distinction," applied by Simmel to represent the preservation of individual dignity wherein an individual consciously separates themselves from the masses rather than succumb to the effects of society's economic corruptibility.³⁰³ Simmel, who became increasingly interested in aesthetics in the years prior to the First World War, had recently written a book on the relationship between Nietzsche and Schopenhauer in terms of their aesthetic philosophies, published in 1907, which he considered to be among his finest work.³⁰⁴

Several artworks resulted from Kirchner's association with *Der Neue Klub*, including a portrait of one of its founding members. In *Portrait of Simon Guttman*, 1911, Kirchner depicted his youthful friend in a bust-length pose as he sits smiling in front of a colorful studio backdrop featuring a Japanese umbrella.³⁰⁵ Kirchner designed scenery for several of Guttman's pantomime performances, contributed to the short-lived journal *Das Neue Pathos*, and made a painting after a pantomime performance by

³⁰² Lloyd, *German Expressionism*, 249, note 43.

³⁰³ Aschheim, *The Nietzsche Legacy in Germany*, 41-43; and Liebersohn, *Fate and Utopia in German Sociology*, 141-42.

³⁰⁴ Liebersohn, *Fate and Utopia in German Sociology*, 141-42. The book was Georg Simmel, *Schopenhauer und Nietzsche: Ein Vortragszyklus* (Leipzig: Dunckler and Humbolt, 1907). Simmel had previously written about the philosopher in the mid-1890s, referring to Nietzsche's establishment of the criteria for understanding modern ethics as "a Copernican deed," in the essay "Friedrich Nietzsche: Eine moralphilosophische Silhouette," published in *Zeitschrift für Philosophie und philosophische Kritik* 2 (1896): 202-15. (Simmel, as quoted in Aschheim, *The Nietzsche Legacy in Germany*, 23.)

³⁰⁵ For a reproduction, see Gordon, *Ernst Ludwig Kirchner*, 296 (G215).

Hans Reimann, another cabaret member.³⁰⁶ Kirchner's painting *Pantomime Reimann: The Dancer's Revenge*, 1912, features a strange dislocated head positioned to overlook the dancers in a modern update of the Salomé theme.³⁰⁷

Through these literary groups, Kirchner was introduced to Herwarth Walden's circle around his gallery and publication *Der Sturm*. Walden was an early fan of Nietzsche and his publishing endeavors provided an early outlet for prose and images related to his philosophy.³⁰⁸ From April 1911 to March 1912, eleven woodcuts by Kirchner were reproduced in Walden's journal, including two that were featured on its cover.³⁰⁹ Prior to this, the work of Alfred Döblin was published in *Der Sturm*, including several short essays on various modern subjects of urban entertainment that were all related to primary motifs in Nietzsche's *Thus Spoke Zarathustra*.³¹⁰ In *Portrait of Dr.*

³⁰⁶ Lloyd, *German Expressionism*, 97; 139. The Brücke artists Schmidt-Rotluff and Heckel also designed programs for the cabaret and in 1912, Heckel made a woodcut lithograph to advertise a pantomime performance featuring Guttman and the dancer Sidi Riha, his future wife.

³⁰⁷ For a reproduction, see Gordon, *Ernst Ludwig Kirchner*, (G227). The dislocated head appears in two other paintings made in the same period: *Still Life with Mask*, 1911 (G218); and *Nude with Mirror and Man*, 1912 (G225).

³⁰⁸ Walden founded *Der Sturm* in 1910 committed to art of the avant-garde. In 1909, he briefly acted as editor of the journal *Der neue Weg*, where he was heavily influenced by the philosophy of Nietzsche. Its founding program under Walden read: "*Der neue Weg* is the organ of free spirits, of the good Europeans. No other prefatory declarations shall be made here. Our action shall reveal what we want and whether we can accomplish it. German actors had the courage to act. They will travel the new road, which they have set upon, with the free spirits of all the arts and cultures. The pages of this journal are dedicated to their interests." (Walden, as quoted in Taylor, *Left-Wing Nietzscheans*, 43-44.) Nietzsche popularized the phrases "free spirit" and "a good European." Walden was dismissed as editor of the popular journal for attempting to make its contents more "intellectual" by publishing materials from Nietzsche's archives and other similar sources. (For a discussion of Walden and the journal, see Peter Selz, "Emergence of the Avant-Garde: *Erster Deutscher Herbstsalon* of 1913," in Selz, ed., *Beyond the Mainstream: Essays on Modern and Contemporary Art* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1997), 45.

³⁰⁹ Featured on the cover were *Variety Show* (no. 71, August 1911) and *Dancers* (no. 77, September 1911), as reproduced in Wye, *Kirchner and the Berlin Street*, 23.

³¹⁰ Döblin's short stories in *Der Sturm* included "Die Tänzerin und ihr Leib" ("The Dancer and Her Body") no. 2, March 1910; and "Zirkus Pantomim" ("Circus Pantomime") no. 3, March 1910. (Lloyd, *German Expressionism*, 249, note 48.)

Alfred Döblin, 1912, Kirchner depicted the novelist and psychiatrist who was an important influence on him during this time.³¹¹ In the bust-length portrait, Kirchner utilizes the angular lines and short, jagged and layered brushstrokes that came to form his newly developed Berlin style (Fig. 2.21). Kirchner's treatment of the painting's surface mirrors the writer's syncopated textual rhythms, with both its subject and style reflective of the fluctuating movement and cacophonous tempo of the city that inspired both men.

The young writer Georg Heym was active in the *Das Neopathetische Kabarett* circle. After Heym drowned in January 1912, the cabaret members mounted a memorial celebration with poetry and performances in April and his book *Umbra Vitae* was posthumously published in May 1912.³¹² Years later, in the early 1920s, Kirchner revisited the Nietzschean-inspired spirit of these men when he made a series of forty-seven woodcuts to illustrate a new edition of Heym's *Umbra Vitae*.³¹³

In 1916-1917, while Kirchner convalesced from his war induced illnesses at a sanatorium in Königstein, his stay overlapped with two literary figures from these circles; the poet Leonhard Frank and the satirical writer Carl Sternheim, who was a member of

³¹¹ For a discussion of Döblin's influence on Kirchner see Lloyd, *German Expressionism*, 138-42. According to Lloyd, Döblin was influenced by Nietzsche's "rejection of romantic idealism and conventional aesthetics of beauty" but he "objected to Nietzsche's insistence on the psychological individuality and the historical development of the "Übermensch." Instead, Döblin "sought to replace this with the idea of anonymous protagonists seen from the point of view of their arbitrary and often illogical actions and frequently absorbed in the movement and force of the urban crowd." (Lloyd, *German Expressionism*, 140.)

Showing the twentieth century lag in interest in Kirchner's portraits of men in the United States, the portrait of Döblin is identified as a self-portrait in Peter Selz, "Kirchner's *Self-Portrait as a Soldier* in Relation to Earlier Self-Portraits," *Allen Memorial Art Museum Bulletin* 14, no. 3 (Spring 1957), 94; and in Selz, *German Expressionist Painting*, 299, and Plate 137.

³¹² For an account of Heym's unexpected death, see Raabe, *The Era of German Expressionism*, 17-59; *The Early Years, 1910-1914*: Berlin.

³¹³ For Kirchner's woodcut illustrations in the publication, see Georg Heym, *Umbra Vitae: Nachgelassene Gedichte* (Munich: Kurt Wolff, 1924); and see Dube, *E. L. Kirchner: das graphische Werk*, beginning with (H760).

Der Neue Klub before the war and who was now living nearby with his family.³¹⁴

Kirchner painted a portrait of each man: in *Portrait of the Poet Frank*, 1917, the writer appears deep in thought, resting his head in one hand with the other hand resting idle upon the table, perhaps sadly recalling better times before the onset of the First World War, while in the straightforward bust-length *Portrait of Carl Sternheim*, 1916, he shows the hand of the writer resting across his chest.³¹⁵ Kirchner executed a lithograph portrait, *Head of Sternheim*, 1916, in which the sitter's head and hand emerge out of a background composed of scratched and agitated lines (Fig. 2.22). In this image, the hand figures prominently in the foreground where it appears bent at an extreme angle at the wrist supporting the writer's chin. The surface texture and the unsettling effect of the short, scratchy lines of the etching, along with the unusual positioning of the hand, convey a sense of the mood and anxiety that Kirchner and others experienced during the war years.³¹⁶

³¹⁴ Beloubek-Hammer, "Neue Modelle und Neue Freunde," in *Kirchner: Erstes Sehen*, 121.

³¹⁵ For reproductions of these paintings see Gordon, *Ernst Ludwig Kirchner*, for Frank (G495); and for Sternheim (G458).

³¹⁶ The lithograph portrait of Sternheim was reproduced in the short-lived, pacifist journal *Der Bildermann* in 1916. (Beloubek-Hammer, "Neue Modelle und Neue Freunde," in *Kirchner: Erstes Sehen*, 121.) The journal was founded by the gallerist and art journalist Paul Cassirer in 1916 as a means of commentary on the increasingly bleak progression of the war and it featured original lithographic reproductions by contemporary artists. (For a discussion of the journal, see Peter Paret, *The Berlin Secession: Modernism and Its Enemies in Imperial Germany* (Cambridge and London: The Belknap Press of Harvard Press, 1980), 235-47; Chapter: *Der Bildermann*.) During the pre-war period, Sternheim experienced problems with governmental censorship of his work so the motif of the disabled hand in Kirchner's portrait holds several symbolic connotations. For a broader discussion of literary censorship at the time, see Gary D. Stark, "Trials and Tribulations: Authors' Responses to Censorship in Imperial Germany, 1885-1914," *German Studies Review* 12, no. 3 (October 1989): 447-68.

Kirchner's Introduction to the Arts Community in Jena

In mid-February 1914, Kirchner visited the city of Jena for the opening of a solo exhibition of his work at the Jena Art Association. In February and March of 1911, the Art Association had exhibited the work of the Brücke artists and it was at the earlier group exhibition that Kirchner made his initial acquaintance with Graef, who was by then a Professor of Classical Archaeology and Art History at the University of Jena.³¹⁷

On February 15, 1914, Graef delivered an enthusiastic opening address for Kirchner's exhibition in which he explained that the works on view both fulfilled and exceeded his expectations. He described how the gallery beckoned with light and color achieving a complete harmony. He praised the compositional power of the paintings on view, declaring not only that each was good, but more emphatically that some were perfectly composed if one understood how to examine them, namely without preconceived points of view.³¹⁸ Graef's discussion of how the viewer should approach Kirchner's work is consistent with Nietzsche's explanation in his essay "On the Utility and Liability of History for Life," about using history to understand life though not remaining indebted to its example. Furthermore, Graef's characterization of Kirchner's

³¹⁷ For an expanded discussion of the earlier exhibition and the work of the Brücke artists in relation to the Jena Art Association, see Wahl, *Jena als Kunststadt*, 148-84; Chapter: Die Maler der Brücke in Jena. The Art Association would continue to exhibit Kirchner's work throughout the war, including in a group exhibition in June-October 1916; a solo exhibition of his painting and sculpture in February-April 1917; an exhibition of his paintings within a joint exhibition in February-March 1918; a solo exhibition of his graphic works in the collection of the Association in December 1918; an exhibition of a selection of the graphic works donated by Kirchner to form the "Botho Graef-Stiftung" in February-April 1920; and a group exhibition of works from Jena private collections in February-March 1933. (Wahl, *Jena als Kunststadt*, 258-97; Appendix: Ausstellung.)

³¹⁸ Botho Graef, "Besprechung von Botho Graef zur Ausstellung Ernst Ludwig Kirchner im Kunstverein Jena 15. Februar bis 8. März 1914," in "Texte und Dokumente," in *Kirchner: Von Jena nach Davos*, eds. Ehrmann and Wahl, 101-03. Graef's opening address was originally published in support of the exhibition in the *Jenaische Zeitung* 53 (March 4, 1914), 2.

work shows his awareness of the current debates surrounding the international character of Expressionism:

Our time has been challenged with appointing a new form of expression for the spiritual. We possess our own spiritual manner that differs from that of the people of antiquity, the Middle Ages, the Renaissance and the Rococo, just like those periods differed from one another, and which justifies our urge to find our own artistic form of expression. Toward the century before ours we feel like people from another era. Our pride alone should yearn for an art to arise that aptly characterize us...

The widespread movement that has been growing for the last ten years in Europe and which is commonly called Expressionism does not entail the goal of an accurate and truthful representation of nature. Since the movement is already quite long-standing and well known, one cannot dismiss it as a passing disturbance, but must instead explore the work of its artists for their positive elements as objective researchers. We will find these elements in Kirchner's work for he definitely participates in this movement.³¹⁹

Before his death, Graef wrote a second essay on Kirchner's work that was posthumously published in a catalogue to support an exhibition at the Galerie Ludwig Schames in Frankfurt in 1919, which included Kirchner's *Portrait of Graef*, 1914. In his text, Graef elaborated on his understanding of Kirchner's work, saying:

[Kirchner] looks upon the world with eyes that understand the hidden life, and it is this that he wants to capture in his painting. It is never about the purely objective, the issue is always spiritual. Nothing is without a living spirit...Kirchner's art beseeches symbols that express the essence of the relationship between the artist and the objects. To experience this spiritual relationship means that one understands his art. If any art can express the ineffable, it would be his.³²⁰

In the mid-1920s, Kirchner recalled in an autobiographical text that Graef's approach to his work was the most appropriate, particularly in his advice that one must not approach

³¹⁹ Graef, "Besprechung von Botho Graef zur Ausstellung Ernst Ludwig Kirchner," in Ehrmann and Wahl, *Kirchner: Von Jena nach Davos*, 102.

³²⁰ Graef, "Einige Worte von Professor Graef," in Ehrmann and Wahl, *Kirchner: Von Jena nach Davos*, 105-06.

modern art with the old idea of art appreciation, but instead, in order to truly engage with it, “we have to allow ourselves to be led by it, naively and with sincere dedication.”³²¹

According to Nietzsche, in his early essay “On the Future of our Educational Institutions,” written alongside *The Birth of Tragedy* in the early-1870s: “If you wish to guide a young man, on the path of true culture, beware of interrupting his naïve, confident, and, as it were, immediate and personal relationship with nature...in them he must, as it were, come to know himself again in countless reflections and images.”³²²

Graef’s understanding of how to approach art forms shares a similar outlook with Nietzsche’s ideas for cultivating true creativity, with both men endorsing instinct and authenticity, and the necessity of remaining steadfast in one’s endeavors. Graef closed his aforementioned essay on Kirchner by equating the instructive power of Nietzsche’s words directly with the visual potency of Kirchner’s imagery, stating: “I will teach you the reason for the world, as Zarathustra spoke. This is what Kirchner paints.”³²³

The friendship that developed between Kirchner and Graef was significant not only for the personal support the artist received from his dedicated patron, but also for the many introductions that came from within Graef’s circle in Jena. Kirchner met Graef’s former student, colleague, and close friend, Eberhard Grisebach, a Professor of Philosophy at the University, who had organized the exhibition of his work as the Association’s current Director, a position he held since 1912. Grisebach remained a

³²¹ Kirchner, “Das Werk,” in Grisebach, ed., *E. L. Kirchners Davoser Tagebuch*, 83.

³²² Nietzsche, “On the Future of our Educational Institutions,” in *The Complete Works*, 3: 96.

³²³ Graef, “Professor Graef Über die Arbeit von E. L. Kirchner,” reprinted in “Texte und Dokumente” in Ehrmann and Wahl, *Kirchner: Von Jena nach Davos*, 106.

committed friend to Kirchner and later arranged for his care by his father-in-law Dr. Lucius Spengler in Davos in 1917.³²⁴

From Graef and Grisebach, Kirchner was introduced to the larger arts community of Jena. Rudolf Eucken and his wife Irene were founding members of the “Society of Friends of Art in Jena and Weimar.” Irene, who was well known for her widely exhibited embroidered women’s clothing, regularly invited Kirchner to gatherings in her home to cultivate support from within Jena society to alleviate his poor financial situation.³²⁵ In October 1916, Kirchner returned to his studio in Berlin to execute a series of woodcuts of fashionably dressed women to illustrate a catalogue for an exhibition of her clothing to be held in Bremen.³²⁶ Karl T. Bluth, a philosopher and poet who finished his degree in Jena under Rudolf Eucken in 1914, was a close friend of Graef and soon became a supportive friend to Kirchner, staying with him in Graef’s home during this period.³²⁷ Meeting Hans Fehr, a legal historian in Jena, who served as Director of the Art Association prior to Grisebach, would have fortuitous consequences for Kirchner in 1915 during his period of military service. Fehr was his superior in rank while both men were stationed in Halle and he was responsible for securing the discharge that allowed Kirchner to recuperate in a

³²⁴ Grisebach’s son Lothar continued his father’s commitment to Kirchner by editing publications on the two men’s correspondence and Kirchner’s notebooks in Grisebach, ed., *Maler des Expressionismus im Briefwechsel mit Eberhard Grisebach*; and Grisebach, ed., *E. L. Kirchners Davoser Tagebuch*.

³²⁵ Simmons, “Ernst Kirchner’s Streetwalkers,” 146, note 141. After August Macke’s death in the First World War, Irene Eucken worked with his widow and daughter to execute his designs into clothing.

³²⁶ Simmons, “Ernst Kirchner’s Streetwalkers,” 138. For these woodcut illustrations, see Dube, *E. L. Kirchner: das graphische Werk*, (H731-733).

³²⁷ Bluth wrote a moving poem about the difficulties Kirchner experienced during the war years. Bluth’s “Hymnus E. L. Kirchner,” is reprinted in “Texte und Dokumente” in Ehrmann and Wahl, *Kirchner: Von Jena nach Davos*, 114-15. It originally appeared in an exhibition catalogue of Kirchner’s work for Galerie Ludwig Schames in 1920 and is included in Karl T. Bluth, *Dichtungen* (Leipzig, 1923), 121-26.

hospital keeping him out of further military duty.³²⁸ After Graef's death, Kirchner came to rely increasingly on Henry van de Velde. The two men developed what became a supportive friendship and both Van de Velde and his daughter Nele visited Kirchner several times in Switzerland to look after his health.³²⁹

Perhaps most importantly in terms of his artistic career, Graef introduced Kirchner to the art dealer Ludwig Schames in Frankfurt who became his principal dealer. According to Donald Gordon, it was a result of the regular one-man exhibitions of Kirchner's work in late 1916, and annually from 1918 through 1922 at the Schames Gallery that the artist's reputation was firmly established in Germany.³³⁰ Furthermore, it was through these exhibitions that Kirchner found his first avid private collectors, Dr. Carl Hagemann and Mrs. Rosi Fischer, whose purchase of several dozen paintings between 1916 and 1919 helped to see him through the war years.³³¹ Hagemann, who met Kirchner in late-1915, provided ongoing support in the form of a modest monthly income during these lean years.³³²

Of all these auspicious relationships and introductions, Kirchner remained the closest to Graef. After the opening of the February 1914 exhibition, Kirchner remained in

³²⁸ Springer, *Hand and Head*, 22-42, 120-21.

³²⁹ Kirchner regularly encouraged Nele in her artistic pursuits. For a compilation of the letters between the three, see the publication E. L. Kirchner, *Briefe an Nele und Henry van de Velde* (Munich: R. Piper & Co. Verlag, 1961).

³³⁰ Gordon, *Ernst Ludwig Kirchner*, 26.

³³¹ Gordon, *Ernst Ludwig Kirchner*, 26. For an expanded discussion of Rosi Fischer's important collection, see Christopher B. With, *The Passionate Collectors: Ludwig and Rosi Fischer and German Expressionism* (Virginia: Alleghany Highlands Art & Crafts Center, Inc., 1985).

³³² Gordon, *Ernst Ludwig Kirchner*, 27. The wealthy industrialist was the possessor of the largest Kirchner collection in the world until the 1960s.

Jena for several months absorbing the atmosphere of his friend's home before moving into a new studio with Erna in Berlin in April. Graef was similar to Kirchner in that each man in their own way had successfully merged their respective passion for the arts with their life. Kirchner likely found tremendous inspiration in the centrality of the arts to life in Graef's home, devoted as it was to education, aesthetics and art, including painting, music, dance and conversation, among a community of young, creative male writers and artists, including Eberhard Grisebach, Karl T. Bluth, Hugo Hertwig and Hugo Biallowons, with Graef as their intellectual, pedagogical leader. Kirchner left Jena to spend the end of the summer on Fehmarn with Erna without realizing that the coming declaration of war would quickly bring an end to this idyllic introductory period.

Chapter 3: Kirchner's Paintings and Nietzsche's *The Birth of Tragedy*

How did the philosophy of Friedrich Nietzsche permeate Botho Graef's Jena home and find expression in the paintings that Kirchner made of him, his companion Hugo and their surroundings? What was the impact of Graef's abiding interest in the ancient Greeks on these paintings? As a Classical archaeologist and philologist, like Nietzsche before him, Graef's interest in Nietzsche's *The Birth of Tragedy* provided the philosophical underpinnings for Kirchner's understanding of the unique forms of companionship he observed within Graef's home. By examining the paintings in terms of the central concept of Nietzsche's book, the dual role of Apollinian and Dionysian forces, I will show how this publication united Kirchner and Graef in the visual understanding of images to best express the theme of companionship as it related to themselves.

In order to best illustrate how Nietzsche's *The Birth of Tragedy* remains omnipresent throughout this period and becomes interwoven in subtle ways into the iconography of the images, I will begin by discussing the two genre paintings that feature Botho and Hugo in individual portraits. *Portrait of Botho Graef, Jena: Music Room*, 1914, and *Dance Between the Women*, 1915, are very different images in both subject matter and in composition, but they remain alike in that they are the only two paintings of the seven in which the men are seen without male companionship (Figs. 4, 7). Botho is depicted standing alone in *Portrait of Botho Graef, Jena: Music Room*, and although Hugo is seen dancing between two female figures in the composition *Dance Between the Women*, he appears positioned precisely outside of physical proximity with the women and is impervious to their beckoning hand gestures. As a result, it can be said that he is

depicted acting individually. When taken together, these two images form a highly unusual type of thematic portrait pair.

Nietzsche's discussion of the dual, dialectical forces originating with Apollo and Dionysus was an entirely new interpretation of the ancient world. Chiefly, it was Nietzsche's insistence upon the necessary presence of the vital, instinctual Dionysian element that provided a counterbalance to the idealized calm and serene Apollinian side that made his book so unusual. According to Nietzsche, it is precisely the co-existence of the two forces that yields distinguishing results:

In contrast to all those who are intent on deriving the arts from one exclusive principle, as the necessary vital source of every work of art, I shall keep my eyes fixed on the two artistic deities of the Greeks, Apollo and Dionysus, and recognize in them the living and the conspicuous representatives of *two* worlds of art differing in their intrinsic essence and in their highest aims. I see Apollo as the transfiguring genius of the *principium individuationis* through which alone the redemption in illusion is truly to be obtained; while by the mystical triumphant cry of Dionysus the spell of individuation is broken, and the way lies open to...the innermost heart of things. This extraordinary contrast, which stretches like a yawning gulf between plastic art as the Apollinian, and music as the Dionysian art, has revealed itself...³³³

Though Nietzsche's later publications continually discuss the Dionysian element as instrumental in the creative process, only *The Birth of Tragedy* discusses the process as a synthesis of opposing forces. Nietzsche invokes the dichotomy immediately in the first sentence of the book, which opens with the explanation:

The continuous development of art is bound up with the Apollinian and Dionysian duality...Through Apollo and Dionysus, the two art deities of the Greeks, we come to recognize that in the Greek world there existed a tremendous opposition, in origin and aim, between the Apollinian art of sculpture, and the non-imagistic, Dionysian art of music. These two different tendencies run parallel to each other, for the most part openly at variance; and they continually incite each other to new and more powerful births, which perpetuate an antagonism, only superficially reconciled by the common term "art"; till eventually, by a metaphysical miracle of the Hellenic "will," they appear coupled with each other, and through this

³³³ Nietzsche, *The Birth of Tragedy*, 99-100.

coupling ultimately generate an equally Dionysian and Apollinian form of art – Attic tragedy.³³⁴

I propose that from the iconography of Kirchner's two individual portraits, there emerges the visual representation of the two creative forces that form the core of Nietzsche's publication *The Birth of Tragedy* as understood by Kirchner. As I will explain, the Apollinian side embodied by balance, perfect form and idealized beauty is seen in the figure of Hugo in *Dance Between the Women*, while the Dionysian side, built upon the creative foundation of music, instinct and vitality, is seen in *Portrait of Botho Graef, Jena: Music Room*. According to Nietzsche's explanation, when these two forces are brought together, one's creative potential is realized in superior art forms, such as the Attic Greeks fulfilled with the development of dramatic tragedy.

Nietzsche continues in his introduction of the two forces: "In order to grasp these two tendencies, let us first conceive of them as the separate art worlds of dreams and intoxication."³³⁵ In the atmospheric space of the painting *Dance Between the Women*, with its undefined darkened background, the figural imagery, rendered with uncharacteristically expansive strokes, appears hazy as in a dream-realm of enveloping rich celestial blue color whereas in *Portrait of Botho Graef, Jena: Music Room*, Graef stands next to a piano surrounded by vibrant colors and bold patterns of the precisely rendered furnishings as though the canvas itself has become intoxicated by the clashing, rhythmic patterns of color and form as one's ears would with the enveloping sounds of music in a room such as the one depicted. Metaphorically, it is possible to read Graef's painting as representative of the Dionysian side and Biallowons' image as embodying the

³³⁴ Nietzsche, *The Birth of Tragedy*, 33.

³³⁵ Nietzsche, *The Birth of Tragedy*, 33.

Apollinian. As I will explain, when taken together, the paintings' opposite qualities in composition and subject matter form a visual synthesis and summation of the primary theme of Nietzsche's *The Birth of Tragedy*.

Although the two paintings *Portrait of Botho Graef, Jena: Music Room* and *Dance Between the Women* appear very different, they share certain similarities that are worth considering mainly for how they compliment one another when thought of as a thematic pair. These two paintings are unique among the entire series of Kirchner's images of Graef and his circle in that both feature the men standing, with their individual figures spanning the entire height of their respective canvases. In the other five paintings, the figures sit, recline or appear bust-length. In both, the color blue figures prominently: Graef is clothed in a rich navy blue suit while Hugo appears vibrant against a darkened midnight blue background. *Portrait of Botho Graef, Jena: Music Room* features Graef dressed in a coat and hat, standing amidst a densely furnished room that is filled with objects and colorful textiles, but he stands out because of the solid, dark color of his clothing to form a striking vertical line that bisects the composition's center as does Hugo's body in his composition.

In *Dance Between the Women*, although Biallowons is flanked by two female figures, the women remain anonymous without individual identifying characteristics and undefined features. Thus, they function solely as examples of the female gender between which the male Hugo dances, his fluid and dynamic pose in opposition to their stiff, upright bodies. Here, Biallowons stands out for being a luminous pale figure with blue highlights added to his form, positioned in the middle between the yellow-toned women with red highlights, all set against a background completely void of objects, its

compositional expanse providing a suitable backdrop for his energized dancing form, just as the rich patterning of the dense space surrounding Graef in the other image frames and counterbalances his form. Since Biallowons appears nude, he is identified by his physical agility and by his ideal masculine body while Graef's presence and identity reside in his cultured sophistication and his intellect, his head framed by his hat, suit and his visual alignment with the piano. Effectively, both paintings are portraits of the men in relation to an artistic, creative pursuit with Graef alongside the piano conjuring up music and Biallowons engaged in a dance.³³⁶

Full-length portraits of male friends depicted head-to-toe as both men appear in these two paintings remain rare within Kirchner's oeuvre. Along with Hugo in *Dance Between the Women* and Graef in *Portrait of Botho Graef, Jena: Music Room*, there are only a few examples of a specific, individualized male figure in such a format.³³⁷ One is an earlier painting of Heckel, *Portrait of Erich Heckel*, 1910/1920, in which he appears striding forward with a long step (Fig. 2.6). It seems important that Kirchner felt compelled to depict each of these three men, Heckel, Graef and Biallowons, all of who impacted him creatively, in a full-length figural format. A second example of a full-length male figure is a portrait of Kirchner's care taker in the later painting *The Hospital Attendant*, 1917-1918, made several months after Graef's death, while the artist was

³³⁶ The two paintings share an additional feature: Kirchner returned to each of them in 1926 by reworking one and making a second version of the other, showing that both paintings and their subjects held a special and long-lasting interest for him.

³³⁷ Although there are genre scenes featuring full-length male figures, most as part of a dancing pair, such as *Dancing Couple*, 1914 (G389), or *Nude Youth and Girl on the Beach*, 1913 (G351), and *The Street*, 1913 (G364), these men are not recognizable as specific individuals. There are also several examples featuring Kirchner himself, such as *Nude with Two Mirrored Figures*, 1912 (Fig. 2.8/G226). Aside from his image, however, the only other examples of specific men in a full-length standing format include the men in *Dodo and Her Brother*, 1908/1920 (G48) (see footnote 88), and *Otto and Maschka Mueller in the Studio*, 1911 (G197).

being cared for by the staff at the Bellevue Sanatorium in Kreuzlingen. The attendant stands in a position similar to Graef's appearance in *Portrait of Botho Graef, Jena: Music Room* with his hands similarly aligned alongside his body as though the prior image of Graef played a role in its composition. Kirchner returned to the painting of Graef in 1926, at which time he added pink brushstrokes to clearly distinguish each long and elegant finger on Graef's hands, but in the original version of the painting, the hands are large, undefined areas that appear very similar to those of the attendant (Figs. 3.1, 3.2).³³⁸ The idea that Graef's memory was still very much with the artist is evident in the portrait that follows this one. In *Hospital Attendant Brühlmann, 1917-1918*, the pointed mustache and beard, the lively eyes, and the angular face of his second care-taker, whose delicate elongated fingers are held up prominently in the foreground, also appears similar in appearance to Graef (Fig. 3.3).³³⁹

Graef as a Dionysian Figure in *Portrait of Botho Graef, Jena: Music Room*

In *Portrait of Botho Graef, Jena: Music Room*, Graef is positioned in the middle of the canvas where he cuts a striking figure clothed in an impeccable blue suit. Kirchner has painted the defining attributes of Graef's face, his pointed beard and groomed

³³⁸ In 1923, the journal *Das Kunstblatt* (issue VII/3) reproduced the original version of the painting to illustrate a posthumously published essay on Kirchner written by Graef. The article "Botho Graef: E. L. Kirchner" is reproduced with the original illustrations in "Texte und Dokumente" in Ehrmann and Wahl, *Kirchner: Von Jena nach Davos*, 106-11.

³³⁹ After Graef's death in April 1917, under the arrangement of Eberhard Grisebach, Kirchner traveled to Davos in May to receive care from Dr. Lucius and Helene Spengler, Grisebach's in-laws. During the summer of 1917, Kirchner lived on the Stafelalp outside Davos and in September, he moved into the Bellevue Sanatorium of Drs. Ludwig and Binswanger for care, where he remained for nearly a year. In July 1918, in the company of his attendant Emil Brühlmann, he returned again to the Stafelalp for another summer during which both Henry van de Velde and Eberhard Grisebach visited. (Dr. E. W. Kornfeld and Christine E. Stauffer, *Ernst Ludwig Kirchner 1880-1938: Biographical Data* (Davos: Kirchner Museum, 1992), 20.

mustache, with care. He has applied delicate strokes of a soft yet vibrant pink to several areas of Graef's face and body. These highlights appear to accentuate elements related to the senses, including his fingertips, ears, eyes and the bridge of his nose. The pink tone is similar to that used in the earlier *Portrait of Graef* but here, his face is rendered in a subdued grayish-white which stands out further by being framed against the dark blue of the suit and the geometric form of his hat. His eyes are also a rich blue color, appearing open and alert as well as inviting and warm rather than sad ominous black discs that appear in Kirchner's first portrait in which he is waving goodbye to his companion. The colors in this image are more realistic than the strident yellow color of his face and the pink of his beard in the earlier portrait and unlike the more somber gesture of waving goodbye, the overall atmosphere of this composition is one imparting a visual complexity and a harmonious, colorful vitality.

In the painting, Graef is pictured inside the sitting room in the Jena home of his friends, the Euckens, directly in front of the entrance to their music room. He stands on a brightly patterned carpet in the middle of the doorway with the grand piano stretching behind him. That Graef was a well dressed, elegant and sophisticated presence among Jena society is clear from the painting and this impression corresponds with the descriptions by friends that permeate his obituaries.³⁴⁰ For example, his colleague, the Classical scholar Ferdinand Noack, confirmed that Graef was independently-minded and rejected conformity in his attitude, describing him as a man of "elevated, buoyant spirit,"

³⁴⁰ Three obituaries by Graef's friends are quoted from extensively in Röske, "Dokumente einer Freundschaft," 40-48; including Hans Fehr, *Botho Graef*, in *Das Kunstblatt* 2 (1918), 348; Ferdinand Noack, "Nachruf auf Botho Graef," in *Archäologischer Anzeiger* (1917), 47; and Wilhelm Waetzold, "Nachruf auf Botho Graef," in *Frankfurter Zeitung* (April 16, 1917), unpaginated. See also William N. Bates, "Archaeological News," *American Journal of Archaeology* 24, no. 1 (January – March 1920), 86.

who set great value upon his appearance and demeanor.³⁴¹ In another such recollection, there are clues alluding to his unconventional lifestyle; according to his friend and colleague, the Classical scholar Wilhelm Waetzold, Graef was “a free spirit, far ahead of his time,” who never married and remained “a proud bachelor, well aware of his freedom.”³⁴² In describing Graef, both men use variations of the phrase “a free spirit,” a characterization made popular by Nietzsche.³⁴³

In Kirchner’s painting, he appears tall and lean, evidence of the value the fifty-nine year old gentleman placed on a physically healthy body. According to Hugo Hertwig, who lived with Graef in Jena, communal bathing was a daily ritual in his home as it was among the ancient Greeks, and during this activity, Graef freely criticized the young men’s bodies and tolerated no fat.³⁴⁴ Another university associate, Hans Fehr, a friend through the men’s joint engagement with the Jena Art Association, characterized his appearance as standing out from the conventional academic types, explaining that while others carried a cane, Graef preferred “a pair of neat gloves, in which his fingers played.”³⁴⁵

Graef’s love of music is made clear by Kirchner’s organization of the composition. While Graef and the sitting room are level with the viewer’s gaze, the

³⁴¹ Noack, as quoted in Röske, “Dokumente einer Freundschaft,” 40.

³⁴² Waetzold, as quoted in Röske, “Dokumente einer Freundschaft,” 41.

³⁴³ Nietzsche’s book *Human, All-Too Human*, published in 1878, was subtitled “A Book for Free Spirits.” In it, “Aphorism 426: Free Spirit and Marriage” explains: “Will free spirits live with women? In general, I believe that, as the true-thinking, truth-speaking men of the present, they must, like the prophetic birds of ancient times, prefer to *fly alone*.” (Nietzsche, *Human, All Too Human: A Book for Free Spirits*, 205.)

³⁴⁴ Hertwig, as quoted in Röske, “Dokumente einer Freundschaft,” 41.

³⁴⁵ Fehr, as quoted in Röske, “Dokumente einer Freundschaft,” 40.

perspective shifts in the rear music room with its furnishings tilted up and towards the viewer at an exaggerated angle so that the piano is seen as though from slightly above. As a result, the instrument's keyboard appears parallel with Graef's body as it appears to rise upwards from his hand. His tall linear form merges with the piano providing a counterbalance to the large oblong shape of the instrument as both darkly colored forms occupy the composition's core center. The piano's white keys and the sheet music punctuate the large, dark area of the instrument. This is then paralleled by Graef's face and hands as bright, delicate areas amidst the darkened blue of his clothing, hat, and the surrounding piano.

All of the room's colorful furnishings serve to frame Graef next to the piano, drawing the viewer's gaze into the composition and towards him. The doorway to the rear music room is framed by an abstract, boldly patterned covering in deep purple and red. Kirchner has angled the perspective so that the doorway extends to the edge of the canvas on the left side, moving inward on a diagonal with the opposite side of the room's doorway behind Graef. Graef's left foot, extending just beyond the edge of the composition, draws the viewer's attention upwards to his elongated fingers with the instrument and sheet music positioned just beyond him. This side of the canvas features a wooden armoire whose bright yellow color is then balanced by the table, chair and piano stool opposite. An empty chair covered by a red and blue pattern is positioned in the middle foreground with its back jutting up and into the composition leading the viewer into the space and directly up to the piano stool as though inviting one to sit in the empty seat and listen.

The steep back of the empty chair in the foreground is a common pictorial device that is found in other interior scenes by Kirchner. A chair serves the same purpose in the painting *Tower Room: Self-Portrait with Erna*, 1913, drawing the viewer in towards the standing figure of Erna acting as the model across from the artist seated on a plunging bench that also serves to lead the viewer's gaze into the composition (Fig. 2.13). A similar overall organization is seen in the painting *The Living Room: Interior with Two Women*, 1908/1926, which also features a solid piece of furniture marking the edge of the canvas and a dense pattern, in this case on a carpet, guiding the viewer to the back of the deeply recessed room where the two figures are positioned (Fig. 3.4).³⁴⁶ The use of a chair or particularly of textiles draped over them in the foreground of a composition to lead the viewer into the pictorial space is a common pictorial device in Dutch paintings. Kirchner was aware of Heckel's admiration for two Vermeer paintings in the Dresden Museum, *The Procuress*, 1656, and *A Girl Reading a Letter by an Open Window*, 1657-1659, which feature such a use of patterned textiles.³⁴⁷

In *Portrait of Botho Graef, Jena: Music Room*, the foreground chair with its blue pattern leads directly up to the piano's seat and its keys. The precise alignment of objects in pairs, including the piano's pedals, the yellow rounded ends of the back of the facing chair, and the two empty seats near the piano reinforce the idea of a duet on the

³⁴⁶ Kirchner returned to the painting *The Living Room: Interior with Two Women*, 1908, in 1926, to re-do certain aspects, including changing the appearance of the woman walking through the door to give her a long stride, define her raised hand and turn her head to face the other women reclining, whose face and hands were only fully rendered in the later version. A curious aspect of these changes made to the painting is the resultant similarity created between the standing woman's curled hand and Hugo's hand in *Dance Between the Women*, 1915. Both versions of the painting *The Living Room* are reproduced in Mössinger and Ritter, *Ernst Ludwig Kirchner: Die Deutschlandreise 1925/1926*, 127.

³⁴⁷ Vogt, *Erich Heckel*, 15; and Selz, *German Expressionist Painting*, 74. The two Vermeers remain in the collection of the Gemäldegalerie, Staatliche Kunstsammlungen, Dresden.

instrument or of the roles of a musician and their listeners. In *The Birth of Tragedy's* opening explanation on the role of both the Dionysian and the Apollinian forces, Nietzsche explains:

Under the charm of the Dionysian not only is the union between man and man reaffirmed, but nature which has become alienated, hostile, or subjugated, celebrates once more her reconciliation with her lost son, man. Freely, earth proffers her gifts, and peacefully the beasts of prey of the rocks and desert approach. The chariot of Dionysus is covered with flowers and garlands... Transform Beethoven's "Hymn to Joy" into a painting; let your imagination conceive the multitudes bowing to the dust, awestruck – then you will approach the Dionysian.³⁴⁸

The patterns and colors on the furniture throughout the composition, particularly the chair in the foreground, can be interpreted as a metaphorical flower-covered vehicle to transport the viewer into a reverential state while viewing Kirchner's simultaneous transformation of the canvas into a suitably Dionysian work of art intoxicated with color and alluding to the permeating sound of music.

The painting *Portrait of Botho Graef, Jena: Music Room* can be further interpreted in relation to Nietzsche's *The Birth of Tragedy*, particularly in how Kirchner visually equates Graef with the Dionysian side of creativity originating in music symbolized by his placement alongside the piano. The Dionysian creative force encompasses the power of natural instinct, intoxication and energized vitality. Here, these elements are not understood as the reckless ecstatic physical energy of the orgiastic dancing maenads in worship of Dionysus so much as they are with Graef's intellectual instinct, as we have seen variously in his intuitive interpretation of artworks voiced in his opening address for Kirchner's exhibition at the Jena Art Association and his enthusiastic description of the head of Helios. Most of all, with Kirchner's emphasis in the painting

³⁴⁸ Nietzsche, *The Birth of Tragedy*, 37.

on visually equating Graef with music through the piano, he becomes a Dionysian figure, for music is one of their chief defining attributes. This establishes a direct link between Graef and Nietzsche, who commonly referred to himself as Dionysus, most notably at the end of his autobiographical *Ecce Homo*.

Graef played the piano and was interested in music throughout his life. Large portions of his sister Sabine Lepsius' autobiography are devoted to the practice of music and the artistic atmosphere within the family's home during their childhood. She recalls how she practiced daily with her brother and that music connected them to each other: "We spent countless hours together at the piano, and we organized quartet evenings. Our sense of belonging together was so profound that we mused about spending our lives together in a bachelor residence of sorts."³⁴⁹ She remembers her introduction to Beethoven's *Ninth Symphony*, by accompanying him to a performance, as "truly, an unforgettable moment," and she explains that Botho supervised her musical education, arranging for her lessons to include modern masters, such as Wagner and Berlioz, as well as the great German composers.³⁵⁰ In Jena, musical evenings were common at the home of Felix and Anna Auerbach, with Graef in frequent attendance.³⁵¹ Graef's Jena colleague, Ferdinand Noack, remembered his friend as realizing a "loving, highly demanding practice of great German music, especially Bach," among his protégés.³⁵² Hugo Hertwig, the student writer who lodged in Graef's home, described how central the

³⁴⁹ Lepsius, *Ein Berliner Künstlerleben*, 62.

³⁵⁰ Lepsius, *Ein Berliner Künstlerleben*, 61-62.

³⁵¹ Happe and Fischer, *Haus Auerbach*, 62; and Kisch-Arndt, "A Portrait of Felix Auerbach by Munch," 131.

³⁵² Noack, as quoted by Röske, "Dokumente einer Freundschaft," 41.

arts were to Graef and Biallowons' union: "I have experienced these men viewing paintings and sculpture. I have heard them speak verses. I stood in Botho's room, beside the grand piano, when they played Bach and Beethoven. The energy of their lively virility bonded Botho Graef and Hugo Biallowons together – they were exceptional men."³⁵³

Friedrich Nietzsche also loved music. He was self-taught, composing songs for the piano at an early age and in school, he was admired for his ability to freely improvise at the keyboard. He favored the great German composers of the past, only developing an interest in the modern music of Wagner quite late.³⁵⁴ His early practice lists favored Beethoven, Bach and Schubert with Schumann added while at boarding school. At the University of Bonn, his reading list included the author Karl Fortlage who was noted for his studies of the music of ancient Greece.³⁵⁵

Much of Nietzsche's initial publication is devoted to the role of music in the development of Greek tragedy and in the regeneration of culture. Expressing this relationship, the complete title of the book's first edition, published in 1872, was *The Birth of Tragedy Out of the Spirit of Music*.³⁵⁶ Music is a recurring theme throughout the book where it is seen as one of the most vital components of the Dionysian side of life

³⁵³ Hertwig, as quoted in Röske, "Dokumente einer Freundschaft," 42.

³⁵⁴ For a thorough discussion of Nietzsche's early musical development, see Frederick R. Love, "Young Nietzsche and the Wagnerian Experience," *University of North Carolina Studies in the Germanic Languages and Literatures* 39 (Chapel Hill: The University of North Carolina Press, 1963): 1-89. The author's conclusion is that Nietzsche was never a passionate devotee of Wagnerian music. He also includes a discussion of an early school essay, entitled *Oedipus rex*, written in 1864, in which Nietzsche offered his speculations on the function of music in the choruses of Aeschylus and Sophocles. The author sees this as the germination for what became the theme of the Dionysian nature of music in *The Birth of Tragedy*. (Love, "Young Nietzsche and the Wagnerian Experience," 17.)

³⁵⁵ Love, "Young Nietzsche and the Wagnerian Experience," 31.

³⁵⁶ In 1886, when the publication was reissued, it contained a new title page with the subtitle *The Birth of Tragedy: The Hellenic Spirit and Pessimism*. The original title page was retained but it followed the new one and Nietzsche's updated introduction "Attempt at a Self-Criticism."

responsible for the creative energy necessary to reach the highest realms of artistic achievement and integral to the identity of Dionysus, who was worshipped by the devoted who came together in music, song and dance to offer ecstatic praise of him in festivals. These forms of expression - music, song and dance - transcend the individual, reuniting participants with nature, their sense of instinct and the interconnected rhythms of life. In the book, Nietzsche sees music as related to the identity of Dionysus as directly responsible for the creation of Greek tragedy, explaining in several passages: “The history of the rise of Greek tragedy now tells us with luminous precision how the tragic art of the Greeks was really born of the spirit of music.”³⁵⁷ He continues: “just as tragedy perishes with the evanescence of the spirit of music, it is only from this spirit that it can be reborn.”³⁵⁸

In various passages throughout his text, Nietzsche explains the relationship between the Greek artistic developments of the Attic period as parallel to the required role of music to achieve a much needed modern cultural revitalization, explaining variously: “That striving of the spirit of music towards visual and mythical objectification, which increases from the beginnings of lyric poetry up to the Attic tragedy, suddenly breaks off after attaining a luxuriant development, and disappears, as it were, from the surface of Hellenic art...Will it not some day rise once again out of its mystic depths as art?”³⁵⁹ Nietzsche states of the power of music to foster creative brilliance: “Let no one try to blight our faith in a yet-impending rebirth of Hellenic

³⁵⁷ Nietzsche, *The Birth of Tragedy*, 105.

³⁵⁸ Nietzsche, *The Birth of Tragedy*, 99.

³⁵⁹ Nietzsche, *The Birth of Tragedy*, 106.

antiquity; for this alone gives us hope for a renovation and purification of the German spirit through the fire magic of music.”³⁶⁰ Nietzsche believed that it is the Dionysian force that can lead to a successful renewal in modern artistic production as it did for the Greeks, explaining: “the solemnly exuberant procession of Dionysian revelers responded, to whom we are indebted for German music – and to whom we shall be indebted for the rebirth of German myth.”³⁶¹ Nietzsche explains the importance of German composers in leading to the gradual re-awakening of the Dionysian spirit in the modern world, saying:

What hopes must revive in us when the most certain auspices guarantee the reverse process, the gradual awakening of the Dionysian spirit in our modern world!...Out of the Dionysian root of the German spirit a power has arisen which, having nothing in common with the primitive conditions of Socratic culture, can neither be explained nor excused by it, but which is rather felt by this culture as something terribly inexplicable and overwhelmingly hostile – German music as we must understand it, particularly in its vast solar orbit from Bach to Beethoven, from Beethoven to Wagner.³⁶²

Many of Nietzsche’s admirers at the turn-of-the-century equated him with music and his popularization throughout Germany was aided because of this. Richard Strauss’s orchestral composition *Thus Spoke Zarathustra*, named after the publication, premiered in Frankfurt am Main in November 1896, and Gustav Mahler’s *Third Symphony*, 1896, was indebted to Nietzsche’s inspiration as seen in its original title *The Gay Science*, after Nietzsche’s identically named publication, released in 1882.³⁶³

³⁶⁰ Nietzsche, *The Birth of Tragedy*, 123.

³⁶¹ Nietzsche, *The Birth of Tragedy*, 137

³⁶² Nietzsche, *The Birth of Tragedy*, 119.

³⁶³ Aschheim, *The Nietzsche Legacy in Germany*, 31-32; and Schorske, *Fin-de-Siècle Vienna*, 230. Gustav Mahler and other members of the Austrian Pernerstorfer circle were influenced by Nietzsche as early as 1875-1878, before the philosopher was well known in his native Germany. For an expanded discussion of his influence on this group see William J. McGrath, *Dionysian Art and Populist Politics in Austria* (New Haven, CT, and London: Yale University Press, 1974).

In *The Birth of Tragedy*, Nietzsche bestows his highest praise on his friend, the famous composer Richard Wagner, viewing him and his music as a vital bridge between antiquity and contemporary culture and finding in him the creative figure capable of enacting the regeneration necessary to restore German artistic achievement, giving an additional meaning to the book's original subtitle "*Out of the Spirit of Music*."³⁶⁴

As Wagner embodied for Nietzsche the creative figure to bridge the divide between past art forms and worthy present examples, Kirchner and Graef also used the example of the artist as a bridge in their discussions. Kirchner expressed Graef's understanding of his own work in relation to a bridge between the ancients and the modern; in an autobiographical text written in 1925, Kirchner explained: "What Graef treasured in my work was its frank sensuousness and its unbroken development and autonomy...something new which...connected it for him with antiquity."³⁶⁵ In a

³⁶⁴ While he was writing *The Birth of Tragedy* at the beginning of his tenure in Basel, Nietzsche visited Wagner and his wife Cosima over twenty times as they lived nearby in Tribschen, near Lake Lucerne. Exalted praise for Wagner makes up a third of the contents of *The Birth of Tragedy*. Upon reading the publication, Wagner, who did not mind having admirers, wrote to Nietzsche, saying: "I have never yet read anything more beautiful than your book." (Wagner, as quoted in "Translator's Introduction," in *The Case of Wagner*, in *Basic Writings of Nietzsche*, 603.)

Nietzsche soon followed this with the essay "Richard Wagner in Bayreuth" published in 1876, but the friends would soon break off relations as Nietzsche became increasingly apprehensive about Wagner's motives in writing *Parsifal* among other issues. After the friendship ended, Nietzsche wrote two texts critical of his former friend: *The Case of Wagner*, published in 1888 after Wagner had passed away, and *Nietzsche contra Wagner*, finished at Christmas 1888, just before Nietzsche's physical and mental collapse. This text is composed of numerous passages compiled from older writings dating back to 1877 and was intended to show that *The Case of Wagner* was not inspired by a sudden malice but that Nietzsche had long developed divergent views from the composer. It was not published until 1895 within *The Will to Power*, edited by Nietzsche's sister who sought to minimize the ill will expressed by her brother after the breakdown of the men's friendship.

In the publication *Ecce Homo*, Nietzsche explained that his prior publication *Human, All-Too Human* was a "monument to crisis" signifying his struggle to free himself from Wagner. To him, the book, with its subtitle "a book for free spirits," represented his freeing himself from everything not originating within himself, including Wagner's influence, in order to expose his own real nature. (Dr. Oscar Levy, ed., "Introduction," *The Complete Works of Friedrich Nietzsche*, vol. 17, *Ecce Homo*, trans. Paul V. Cohn (Edinburgh and London: T. N. Foulis, 1911), viii.)

³⁶⁵ Kirchner, "Die Arbeit E. L. Kirchners," in Kornfeld, *Ernst Ludwig Kirchner Nachzeichnung seines Lebens*, 336; and Kirchner, as quoted in Gordon, *Ernst Ludwig Kirchner*, 26. Reflecting this

newspaper article published in 1915 to garner public support for Kirchner's submission to a competition to erect a memorial "Iron Smith" figure in Hagen, for which he created three figural variations of a standing male all holding a symbolic hammer, Graef urged the public to relinquish their "amateur judgments" based on nothing more than a familiarity with Classical forms to support the artist's modern design.³⁶⁶ Graef explained to an audience that was reluctant to embrace new art forms over traditional figural variations: "Our times must remain proud of our unrivaled living culture. Now more than ever, we yearn for an art to reflect our own ethos. Let us continue learning from the Greeks, but let us learn what they have to teach: an art that originates purely from the life of a people. In this way, they may continue to be our idol... We do not create by copying Greek art as a "paragon of beauty"."³⁶⁷ Graef invoked Nietzsche's notion of a regenerative, creative bridge on behalf of Kirchner's proposed sculpture in the closing statement to his reluctant audience saying: "It is our duty to clear the path for such art in our time."³⁶⁸

connection between modern art and the past, in Graef's opening address for Kirchner's exhibition in Jena in early 1914, Graef invoked the need for modern artworks to reflect the spirit of their time in order to assume a position alongside the greatest movements of the past. In Kirchner's exhibition, he finds several examples that succeed in doing this, explaining, that "the yellow bathers persuades anyone for its composition in a tapestry" while he says a large painting of a dune rivals a sketch for a Renaissance fresco. (Graef, "Besprechung von Botho Graef zur Ausstellung Ernst Ludwig Kirchner," in Ehrmann and Wahl, *Kirchner: Von Jena nach Davos*, 102.

³⁶⁶ Graef, "Der Eiserne Schmied von Hagen," in "Texte und Dokumente," in *Kirchner: Von Jena nach Davos*, eds. Ehrmann and Wahl, 103; 105. Graef's essay in support of Kirchner's proposal was originally published in the *Hagener Zeitung* (October 2, 1915). The Iron Smith was a popular custom originating in the medieval period, in which an itinerant ironworker would mark his stay in a town by erecting a figure. During the war, these wooden figures were positioned in public so individuals could pound nails into them as a symbolic gesture of unity as well as a practical measure for gathering raw material and financial support for the war. The wooden figures covered with metal nails were effective propaganda in mobilizing a sense of invulnerability, strength and patriotic sacrifice. For a discussion of the three variations by Kirchner, see Springer, *Hand and Head*, 43-48.

³⁶⁷ Graef, "Der Eiserne Schmied von Hagen," in Ehrmann and Wahl, *Kirchner: Von Jena nach Davos*, 104.

For Nietzsche, the Dionysian force harnesses creative energy. I believe that Kirchner saw Graef as a personification of the Dionysian side central to fostering creative production with music as his avatar. In Jena, Graef aided the careers of artists he admired, including Munch, Van de Velde, Kirchner and others. To the younger men around him, including Biallowons, Hertwig, Grisebach and Kirchner, Graef was a Dionysian force in guiding them towards their own artistic or intellectual maturity and independence. Hugo Hertwig recalled as much in his autobiography in which he emphasized the patient, open-minded guidance and instruction the young men received from their pedagogical father-figure; according to him, Graef sought to help his young associates by fostering their independence and stressing a work ethic that promoted self-sufficiency.³⁶⁹

Graef's influential role on these men is acknowledged in several artworks. In the *Portrait of Dr. Grisebach*, a woodcut made after Graef's death in 1917, Kirchner illustrates that Graef remains an intellectual guide and a presiding spirit in the lives of his friends. Grisebach appears in a frontal position with an intense yet sad expression in his open, alert eyes with his face rendered in small dense lines with rays of light emanating from his head like a halo. The head of Graef appears in profile in black immediately next to him occupying the left side of the image, as though he is whispering directly into his protégé's ear with his mouth closely positioned next to Grisebach, who appears to receive the words of his departed friend (Fig. 3.5). Between 1915-1917, Kirchner completed a self-portrait drawing in which he appears similar to the composition of Grisebach in the woodcut. Here, Kirchner depicts himself with outstretched arms reaching towards a

³⁶⁸ Graef, "Der Eiserne Schmied von Hagen," in Ehrmann and Wahl, *Kirchner: Von Jena nach Davos*, 105.

³⁶⁹ Hertwig, in Röske, "Dokumente einer Freundschaft," 42.

disembodied head positioned facing him that culminates in a pointy beard resembling Graef (Fig. 3.6).

Kirchner's sketchbook from 1914 contains one unusual sketch that provides visual evidence for Kirchner's association of Graef with a bearded satyr, the figure who accompanies Dionysius during his ecstatic reveries (Fig. 3.7).³⁷⁰ There is a curious and atypical quality to the drawing for it is firmly rendered with only a few precise lines unlike the loose, abbreviated shapes in Kirchner's typical on-site drawings that favor overlapping, open-ended lines to create forms while not overly defining them.

In the sketch, Graef's hand is held in front of his chest and his simply-rendered feet are squared off giving the impression of hoofs at the end of an arching curve, with the limbs and pose resembling a creature in motion or dancing and it appears that his exaggerated penis is inverted to form a tail on his backside illustrative of the lascivious identity of the satyr. Graef's pointed beard is clearly recognizable. The sketch has a joyful, ebullient quality and its dynamic pose confirms the characterization of Graef as "a free spirit." We know from the recollections of Graef's friend Wilhelm Waetzold that he was "a proud bachelor, well aware of his freedom," and that he relinquished traditional family life for a life devoted to aesthetic cultivation, similar to the satyr who is devoted in praise of Dionysian worship through ritual dance, song, music and ecstatic celebration as displayed by the prancing figure of Graef in the sketch.³⁷¹

³⁷⁰ This sketch is page 21 of Sketchbook 39, 1914, which is in the Kirchner Archives in Davos. It is also reproduced in the publication devoted to Kirchner's sketchbooks: Gerd Presler, *Ernst Ludwig Kirchner Die Skizzenbücher* (Karlsruhe: Engelhardt & Bauer, 1996), 233, with the caption: "Skb 39/21 erotische Karikatur von B. Graef."

³⁷¹ Waetzold, as quoted in Röske, "Dokumente einer Freundschaft," 41.

In *The Birth of Tragedy*, Nietzsche identified the satyr's role: "From all quarters of the ancient world – to say nothing here of the modern – from Rome to Babylon, we can point to the existence of Dionysian festivals which the bearded satyr, who borrowed his name and attributes from the goat, bears to Dionysus himself. In nearly every case these festivals centered in extravagant sexual licentiousness, whose waves overwhelmed all family life and its venerable traditions."³⁷² Nietzsche expands on his discussion of the satyr later in the text, calling him "something sublime and divine," explaining:

The satyr, like the idyllic shepherd of more recent times, is the offspring of a longing for the primitive and the natural; but how firmly and fearlessly the Greek embraced the man of the woods, and how timorously and mawkishly modern man dallied with the flattering image of a sentimental, flute-playing, tender shepherd! Nature, as yet unchanged by knowledge, with the bolts of culture still unbroken – that is what the Greek saw in his satyr who nevertheless was not a mere ape. On the contrary, the satyr was the archetype of man, the embodiment of his highest and most intense emotions, the ecstatic reveler enraptured by the proximity of his god, the sympathetic companion in whom the suffering of the god is repeated, one who proclaims wisdom from the very heart of nature, a symbol of the sexual omnipotence of nature which the Greeks used to contemplate with reverent wonder.³⁷³

Graef himself had an individual interest in the god Dionysus as seen in his choice of dissertation topic, a study of Dionysus' triumphant return from India as depicted on Roman sarcophagi.³⁷⁴ When his study was published in 1886, it featured as the only illustration a drawing of a tableau vivant of a Dionysian triumph as staged at Alexandria as part of a splendid pageant under Ptolemy II in the third century BCE.³⁷⁵ The image features a densely packed arrangement busy with figures and animals parading an

³⁷² Nietzsche, *The Birth of Tragedy*, 39.

³⁷³ Nietzsche, *The Birth of Tragedy*, 61.

³⁷⁴ Botho Graef, *De Bacchi expeditione Indica monumentis expressa* (Berlin: W. Pormetter, 1886).

³⁷⁵ Heckscher, "Bernini's Elephant and Obelisk," 159.

eighteen foot high figure of Dionysus returning on the back of an artificial elephant cart being directed by a satyr who moves past while looking directly out towards the viewer from the composition's center (Fig. 3.8).

Preceding the drawing of Graef as a satyr in Kirchner's sketchbook is another sketch that went into the formulation of the composition for the painting *Graef and Friend*, 1914, and the sketchbook also includes two portrait drawings of Graef, one depicting him in a standing position and the other in a bust-length format (Figs. 3.9, 3.10, 3.11). These sketches from the same period show that Kirchner was in the midst of Graef's company at the time that he made the sketch of him as a satyr. How did Kirchner arrive at the idea of sketching Graef in such a guise unless the subject was discussed among them? The final pages of this sketchbook contain many drawings relating to dancing figures that show Kirchner was soon preoccupied with the subject of dance at the time as well. Dance, which is usually accompanied by music, was an art form that Kirchner found inspiring throughout his life. Dance as a symbol of liberation is seen previously in a postcard Kirchner sent to Heckel that shows him dancing around within his new Dresden studio.³⁷⁶ Nietzsche used dance as a metaphor to symbolize the power of instinct and the unity between the body and mind in its revolt against societal constraints in several publications, most notably in *Thus Spoke Zarathustra*. According to Nietzsche, both music and dance originate from the Dionysian festivals, and as such, they form a central role in creative production as discussed throughout *The Birth of Tragedy*. This

³⁷⁶ The postcard was written by Kirchner on November 2, 1909, to show Heckel, who was visiting the northern town of Oldenburg, his new studio, at Berlinerstrasse 80, into which he had just moved. The postcard is included in Dube-Heynig, *Ernst Ludwig Kirchner: Postkarten und Briefe an Erich Heckel*, 36.

brings us to the painting *Dance Between the Women*, featuring Graef's companion Hugo Biallowons.

Biallowons as an Apollinian Ideal in *Dance Between the Women*

Just as Graef's sophisticated appearance, coupled with his love of art and culture expressed through the colorful setting complete with its wall of books and the piano surrounding his figure, informs *Portrait of Graef, Jena: Music Room*, it is Biallowons' energetic physical charisma and vital masculine form that are conveyed through the iconography of the painting *Dance Between the Women*, 1915. With the discussion of the previous painting, if Graef may be seen to symbolize the Dionysian side of Nietzsche's philosophy, the instinctual or natural guiding creative force, I will explain my belief that in *Dance Between the Women*, Biallowons symbolizes his counterpart, the Apollinian side of the Greek creative identity, exhibiting ideal beauty and calm measure as understood within philological circles and explained by Nietzsche in *The Birth of Tragedy*. In addition, the painting presents a complex synthesis of the Apollinian and Dionysian realms brought together in a fulfillment of Nietzsche's premise for superior artistic production and serves as a visual summation of the Nietzschean principles that influenced Kirchner's friendship with Graef and Biallowons. It is Kirchner's final painting of the men marking the culmination of his friendship with them made after the men separated from one another with Biallowons leaving Jena to report for active duty and Kirchner returning to his Berlin studio for a tense winter awaiting his own orders.

Though the nude male figure is not a new theme for Kirchner, in *Dance Between the Women*, it takes on an entirely different appearance from the artist's previous male

nudes. In Dresden, Kirchner had photographed a male dancer Sam, standing nude within his Dresden studio, in order to complete a painting. In the photograph, Sam's upright frontal pose appears intended to maximize the view of his genitals as Kirchner seems to have been more interested in him as an exotic specimen of "primitive" manhood rather than for his individual character or personality; in the painting that followed, *Negro Couple*, 1911, the position of the figures no longer resembles their poses in the photograph and the anatomical attributes of Sam and his partner are exaggerated through their poses and the organization of the composition.³⁷⁷ During the Brücke period, images of nude men and women bathing together outdoors were common, with figures enjoying nature by swimming in the ponds at the Moritzburg gardens or cavorting in the forests. Although Kirchner's own image is recognizable in some of these images, including *Three Bathers by the Sea*, 1912/1920, *Four Nudes under Trees*, 1913, and *Striding into the Sea*, 1912, the male nude who is not based on the artist is usually generalized in his appearance, as he is in *Nude Youth and Girl on the Beach*, 1913 (Fig. 2.14).³⁷⁸ In Berlin, Kirchner depicts himself nude with Erna in several studio scenes, but in these, compared to Hugo's vital, carefree dance, he appears tense and introspective, as seen in the paintings *Nude with Two Mirrored Figures*, 1912, and *Man*, 1915/1925 (Fig. 2.8).³⁷⁹

³⁷⁷ For a reproduction of the photograph, "The artists Milly and Sam in Kirchner's atelier, Berliner Strasse 80, Dresden, ca. 1910-1911," see Scotti, *Ernst Ludwig Kirchner: The Photographic Work*, 45; and for the painting, see Gordon, *Ernst Ludwig Kirchner*, (G187). For a discussion of this painting see Rhodes, *Primitivism and Modern Art*, 98-106. For a discussion of the tendency to over-sexualize the anatomy of non-Western individuals in imagery in France and Germany at this time, see Sander L. Gilman, *Difference and Pathology: Stereotypes of Sexuality, Race, and Madness* (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 1985).

³⁷⁸ For reproductions of these paintings, see Gordon, *Ernst Ludwig Kirchner*, (G258), (G355), (Fig. 2.14/G262), and (G351).

³⁷⁹ For a reproduction of *Man*, 1915/1925, see Gordon, *Ernst Ludwig Kirchner*, (G439),

Dance Between the Women features the dancing male figure based on Hugo positioned between two females. Although all of the figures are nude, each gender occupies autonomous spatial planes and is depicted in separate colors. The male's feet are placed lower than the women, and the lighter tones used to depict the male's body make him appear to move forward onto the foreground spatial plan compared to the females who occupy the background. The precise placement of the women's arms serve to frame the male but there are no overlapping limbs and the male remains separated in the middle and on a lower register from the women. With the women flanking him closely on each side and their gazes directed towards him, all attention is pulled to the center of the canvas to Hugo dancing. This is similar in format yet a visual antipode to the busy composition of *Portrait of Graef, Jena: Music Room* in which the colorfully furnished room frames the bold standing figure of Graef within its center.

The painting *Dance Between the Women* stands out as very different among Kirchner's oeuvre for its loose, thinly applied and undefined brushwork; its dark, expansive and empty background; and its lack of clear setting or location. Stylistically, Kirchner's images from this period tend to feature a variety of vibrant colors, short brushstrokes, steep angles, overlapping figures, and densely positioned forms. This is not the case in *Dance Between the Women* in which each figure occupies their own spatial area with movement defined by sweeping brushstrokes applied with only a few contrasting colors.

There are few paintings in Kirchner's oeuvre in which the background of a genre scene is left undefined to the extent that it is here. In the other images of Graef and Biallowons, an interior setting is clearly established, whether it is the bathroom, the

sitting room or possibly an area created within the studio from tapestry hangings to demarcate the sitter's space. Dancing figures are usually seen within the nightclubs and venues of Berlin or Dresden, while studio scenes tend to incorporate layers of additional imagery, including furnishings and imagery on the walls, to form an added layer of interplay between the figures and their surroundings or between the "real" of the models and the objects surrounding them in a composition. Kirchner often used exotic or primitive imagery to contrast with recognizable figures, as seen in the image of Erna in the painting *Seated Woman with Wood Sculpture*, 1912 (Fig. 2.9). When the background is minimal, as it is in another painting made at the same time, *Woman with Dark Veil*, 1912, featuring Gerda, the background still alludes to the studio space in which it was made with its semblance of patterning referencing the tapestries or the patterned decorations on the walls (Fig. 2.15). In the first portraits of Hugo and Botho, the setting is abstracted as well. In these, the men's faces are surrounded and anchored by geometric shapes in blue but even these geometric elements are relinquished in *Dance Between the Women* (Figs. 1, 2, 7).

Kirchner based the central figure of Hugo in the painting on a photograph that he took of his friend while he danced nude in his Berlin studio during one of Hugo's visits on a military leave (Figs. 7, 3.12). Biallowons is framed carefully in the middle of the photograph. The other two figures are Erna, who stands just beyond Biallowons, and Werner Gothein, an artist friend who sits beyond Hugo against the studio wall. It appears clear that Kirchner sought to capture and preserve this moment contingent upon Biallowons' actions as he is positioned in the middle of the camera's frame and the other two figures are watching him. In the photograph, Biallowons displays a carefree

confidence with no sense of self-consciousness in his nudity. This is reinforced in a second photograph taken at the same time in which he rests from his dance to stand and talk with Gerda, who responds to his conversation with a large, unselfconscious smile and laughter (Fig. 3.13).³⁸⁰

Hugo's appearance in the photograph is translated closely to form the pose in the painting. In both, he appears in motion in the midst of a dance step with his right arm extended back while his left arm is twisted around his torso as his right foot moves upward and his face appears in profile. The final position of Hugo's foreground hand is very distinctive in both the photograph and the subsequent painting. With the mood of the photograph and the colors of the painting, there appears to be a return to the freedom and camaraderie symbolized by the exuberant nude male figure previously found only in nature in the company of like-minded artists and their companions or through dance. Biallowons, who was depicted twice before dressed in his military uniform, here sheds any association with the war except for his closely shorn hair by appearing nude in his natural state (Figs. 2, 6). Although Kirchner's helmet appears atop the bookcase on the right of the photograph as a reminder of the reality of the period, it, along with all other everyday items, disappears in the painting.

While the two photographs have been included in many publications, they are often used to illustrate the atmosphere within Kirchner's Berlin studio. Jill Lloyd, in her essay "Kirchner's Metaphysical Studio Paintings," discusses the psychological tension evident in Kirchner's Berlin studio images which she explains results from the artist's

³⁸⁰ Roland Scotti, the editor of the publication *Ernst Ludwig Kirchner: The Photographic Work*, states that although it cannot be said with absolute certainty that this female figure is Gerda Schilling, it is likely based on her hairstyle and the apparent similarity to her portraits, including *Gerda with Hat*, 1914. (Scotti, *The Photographic Work*, 315.)

increasingly self-conscious and introspective period after moving to the city, as seen in paintings including *Tower Room: Self-Portrait with Erna*, 1913, and *The Tent; Interior in Berlin Studio*, 1914, that both exhibit a heightened sense of figural opposition and structural tension compared to the carefree Dresden studio imagery (Figs. 2.12, 2.13).³⁸¹ Lloyd discusses the photograph of Hugo in relation to the altered studio atmosphere using the freedom of his energetic, vital pose to compare with Kirchner's own troubled mental health evident by his haunting appearance in self-portrait photographs also taken in his studio in which he poses in his military uniform (Fig. 3.14).³⁸² However, Lloyd's discussion does not expand upon the men's friendship or Biallowons' personal significance for the artist.

With the recent publication *Ernst Ludwig Kirchner: The Photographic Work*, it is possible to examine the photograph in relation to Kirchner's overall output in this medium in order to understand how often the motif of a dancing figure appears in photographs. Since Kirchner became increasingly interested in using photographs to capture aspects of movement, dance remained a foremost subject in his output and at least fifteen photographs show dancing figures, although none of these are from the Berlin period. Most were taken afterwards in Switzerland and feature mainly nude women, such as the dancer Nina Hard who visited Kirchner in 1921.³⁸³ After such a

³⁸¹ Lloyd, "Kirchner's Metaphysical Studio Paintings," in Lloyd and Moeller, *Ernst Ludwig Kirchner: The Dresden and Berlin Years*, 15-22.

³⁸² Lloyd, *German Expressionism*, 44. Here, Lloyd describes the two photographs: "Two 1915 photographs, which show Hugo Biallowons dancing nude in an increasingly shabby atelier space, indicate that the old studio atmosphere could be re-won on occasion, but in a less relaxed, more extreme form. The alternative to this scene of wild reveling is Kirchner's spectral self-portrait photograph in military uniform, and the description of him sitting in the darkened room after his release from the army surrounded by the ghostly white faces of his painted sculptures."

survey, it is clear that the photograph of Biallowons remains highly unusual and it remains the only image of a dancing nude male in either photographs or in paintings.³⁸⁴

Several months after the photograph, Kirchner composed the large-scale painting and he completed a sketch and an etching based on the photograph as well. In both of the graphic works, the three figures stand upon a carpet that serves to spatially unite them within the compositional space. In the painting, all evidence of any furnishings or a setting is eliminated in favor of a more celestial or metaphorical space created with the bluish-black background. In Donald Gordon's catalogue raisonné, he says Kirchner first turned to allegorical subject matter in 1915 with this painting as one of the first examples. Aside from saying that in *Dance Between the Women*, "although the allegorical meaning here is not yet clear, it apparently revolves around the sexual ambiguity of the central figure," Gordon does not further address the iconographic possibilities of the painting.³⁸⁵

Thomas Röske examines the painting in depth in his publication *Ernst Ludwig Kirchner Tanz zwischen den Frauen* to explain that the paintings atypical appearance provides important insight into Kirchner's subjective thinking at the time it was created.³⁸⁶ He finds that in *Dance between the Women*, Hugo displays a great freedom

³⁸³ Photographs of dancing figures include *Nelly and Sidi Heckel Dancing in Erich Heckel's Atelier*, Dresden, circa 1910-1911; *Barn dance on the upper floor of the Haus in den Lärchen with self-portrait at the left*, 1919-1920; *Nina Hard on the stage of the Clavadel Sanatorium in Zurich*, September 1921; two photographs of *Nina Hard Dancing in the upper floor of the Haus in den Lärchen*, both 1921; and a series of eight images entitled *Dancer in the Woods*, circa 1929, featuring Hard. All of these are reproduced in chronological order in Scotti, *Ernst Ludwig Kirchner: The Photographic Work*.

³⁸⁴ In Kirchner's other photographs taken in Dresden and Berlin, when movement occurs, it appears largely to be the result of chance unlike how Biallowons is framed precisely in the middle of this photo. For example, in the photograph *The Artists Milly and Sam in Kirchner's atelier, Berliner Strasse 80, Dresden*, circa 1910-1911, the nude male figure of the black dancer Sam is the focal point while Milly moves awkwardly out of the frame. For this photograph of Sam and Milly, see Scotti, *The Photographic Work*, 45, plate 12.

³⁸⁵ Gordon, *Ernst Ludwig Kirchner*, 105.

and physical confidence that he feels Kirchner had seldom encountered in another male before.³⁸⁷ Röske interprets Kirchner's interest in Hugo as representative of an ideal male who impressed the artist by being entirely unlike his own deteriorated physical condition after his difficulties in the military.³⁸⁸ Röske supports this with a discussion of Hugo's heightened sensuality as seen in a lithograph made by Kirchner in the same year, titled *Hugo After the Bath*, 1915, in which he lies recumbent with his robe open to reveal his chest and groin in a relaxed pose.³⁸⁹ Röske additionally interprets the male's independence in the painting and his liberation from the two women flanking him as especially appealing to Kirchner at the time as he interprets the artist as remaining dominated by his own sexual urges and entangled in tense interpersonal relationships, as seen in the painting *Dancing School*, 1914, which shares with *Dance Between the Women* the subject of dance (Fig. 2.11).³⁹⁰ Röske sees the progression from Kirchner's awkward, stiff, self-conscious figure in the first image to the liberated, instinctual figure of Hugo in *Dance Between the Women* as reliant on the liberation of dance inspired by Nietzsche as providing a way for Kirchner to negotiate the tensions in his interpersonal relationships with women.³⁹¹

³⁸⁶ Röske, *Tanz zwischen den Frauen*, 9.

³⁸⁷ Röske, *Tanz zwischen den Frauen*, 74.

³⁸⁸ Röske, *Tanz zwischen den Frauen*, 81. This will be discussed at length in Chapter Six. See also Springer, *Hand and Head*, 22-42; The Context: Kirchner's Time as a Soldier.

³⁸⁹ For a reproduction, see Dube, *E. L. Kirchner: das graphische Werk*, (L279). This lithograph *Hugo After the Bath* was made alongside a number of others featuring Biallowons and Graef in 1915, including one featuring Hugo reclining in his uniform (L277), Hugo posed upright in uniform (L281), Graef in a bust-length portrait (283), and Graef seated at a table (L284).

³⁹⁰ Röske, *Tanz zwischen den Frauen*, 65.

³⁹¹ Röske, *Tanz zwischen den Frauen*, 82-86.

Röske succeeds in finding several compelling visual references for the appearance of the figure of Hugo. These are related to my discussion but in different ways. One reference that Röske discusses for the figure of Hugo is from Vaslav Nijinsky's ballet "The Afternoon of a Faun," the story of a faun in pursuit of nymphs. The ballet opened in Paris in May 1912 with Nijinsky (1889-1950), the Russian dancer and choreographer, in the Ballets Russes' leading role with sets and costumes designed by Léon Bakst. His performance provoked a scandal and shocked audiences for its unusual choreography, but more so, for its obscenity, with Nijinsky miming masturbation in the final scene. The ballet premiered in Berlin in December of the same year and in Dresden in January 1913.

The performance was staged to resemble the atmosphere of archaic Greece, with the barefoot dancers moving across the stage in profile to mirror the style of imagery seen on a Greek vase or on a sculpted relief. As a result, Röske finds the stylized poses of Nijinsky's faun, with the head in profile and the torso frontal, as influential on the pose of Hugo in the photograph and painting.³⁹² Further, he identifies the faun, the Roman equivalent of the Greek satyr, as a follower of Dionysus (or Bacchus to the Romans), whose liberated lifestyle is praised by Nietzsche in *Thus Spoke Zarathustra*.³⁹³ Röske posits that Biallowons may have reenacted the faun scene from Nijinsky's ballet, which pays homage to Greek sources, with a satirical purpose to amuse Kirchner who likely recognized its "universal exploration of the Classical arts," as this related to Graef's interest in Greek artworks.³⁹⁴ Röske's evidence for this is the visual similarity between

³⁹² Röske, *Tanz zwischen den Frauen*, 88.

³⁹³ Röske, *Tanz zwischen den Frauen*, 95.

³⁹⁴ Röske, *Tanz zwischen den Frauen*, 92.

the modern use of the profile pose from the ballet with the type of representations commonly found on Greek Attic red-figure vases and Röske concludes that the Greek example may have guided the evolution of Kirchner's image from its origin in the ballet to the staging of the original photograph to the composition in the painting.³⁹⁵

Röske's in-depth analysis remains valuable for illustrating the complex range of popular and personal sources from which Kirchner drew to compose many of his paintings. While all the elements he considers certainly may be seen to contribute to Kirchner's image of Hugo, Röske does not adequately consider this painting as the culmination of Kirchner's immersion in Graef's milieu in Jena and the end of this inspired period. Kirchner remained a committed lifelong fan of dance from his Dresden beginnings into his Swiss period. It is one of the foremost motifs to appear throughout his work. Given his ongoing interest in Nietzsche as well as the dance, I believe it is likely that in Jena, under Graef's encouragement, the artist might have turned from *Thus Spoke Zarathustra* to Nietzsche's earliest publication *The Birth of Tragedy* to further explore two particular Nietzschean themes of interest to both men: the origins of dance as a Dionysian manifestation as originating with the ancient Greeks and the men's mutual interest in the philosopher's prescription for cultural regeneration, an issue introduced in his first publication. This was a theme of ongoing interest to Kirchner since the Brücke's origins and one that became especially resonant when he painted *Dance Between the Women* in 1915 given the continuation of the First World War.³⁹⁶

³⁹⁵ Röske, *Tanz zwischen den Frauen*, 92-93.

³⁹⁶ Röske's discussion of Nietzsche's influence on Kirchner and by extension the figure of Dionysus is limited to the subject of dance. Röske finds examples of Dionysus and dance as expressed in *Thus Spoke Zarathustra* and mentions by title Nietzsche's book of poems, *Dionysus-Dithyrambs*, in which the figure of Dionysus is conjured up several times although he does not discuss the book's contents.

I believe the iconography of the painting *Dance Between the Women* is tied directly to Nietzsche's discussion of the Apollinian and Dionysian elements that form the basis of *The Birth of Tragedy*. As I will explain, in the painting, Hugo symbolizes the Apollinian ideal upon which is exerted the instinctual, intuitive, energized creativity of the Dionysian side seen in the representatives of the Dionysian chorus in the form of the two female figures. As the painter, Kirchner's role is to recognize both forces in a visual composition that is worthy of bridging the divide between the ancient example and the modern era with his artistic production. In the opening of Nietzsche's text, as he explains the result of the introduction of the unique Dionysian element, resulting in "the gospel of universal harmony," his description could be applied to Hugo's appearance in the painting:

In song and in dance man expresses himself as a member of a higher community; he has forgotten how to walk and speak and is on the way toward flying into the air, dancing. His very gestures express enchantment...he feels himself a god, he himself now walks about enchanted, in ecstasy, like the gods he saw walking in his dreams. He is no longer an artist, he has become a work of art: in these paroxysms of intoxication the artistic power of all nature reveals itself to the highest gratification of the primordial unity.³⁹⁷

There are no other paintings in Kirchner's oeuvre with a background that lacks any recognizable specificity in its setting. In *Dance Between the Women*, the composition is very spare with the enveloping blue background accentuating the figures. The darkened expanse of empty space conjures up the realm of the imagination or of a dream. In Nietzsche's explanation of the feelings of the spectator in watching Greek tragedy, an outgrowth of Dionysian celebration, he explains how "reality dissolves into the unreality of spirits," continuing: "This is the Apollinian state of dreams in which the world of the

³⁹⁷ Nietzsche, *The Birth of Tragedy*, 37.

day becomes veiled, and a new world, clearer, more understandable, more moving than the everyday world and yet more shadowy, presents itself to our eyes in continual rebirths.”³⁹⁸

The atmosphere of the painting, featuring an individual dancing male nude within an indistinct spatial realm, elevates it into a mythical scene. At the close of his text, Nietzsche explains his opinion that contemporary society has lost the ability to connect with the power of myth in its devotion to objective, scientific cause, or the “spirit of our culture has so affected [modern man] that he can only make the former existence of myth credible to himself by means of scholarship.”³⁹⁹ Unfortunately, he explains, “without myth every culture loses the healthy natural power of its creativity: only a horizon defined by myths completes and unifies a whole cultural movement,” and he continues: “Myth alone saves all the powers of the imagination and of the Apollinian dream from their aimless wanderings. The images of the myth have to be the unnoticed omnipresent demonic guardians, under whose care the young soul grows to maturity and whose signs help the man interpret his life and struggles.”⁴⁰⁰ Is Biallowons here the young, mythic soul flanked by his demonic guardians in the form of the female figures, symbolizing maenads who are part of Dionysus’ entourage? The female guides direct his movement

³⁹⁸ Nietzsche, *The Birth of Tragedy*, 66. In his text, Nietzsche defends the power of the dream state, saying: “Though it is certain that of the two halves of our existence, the waking and the dreaming states, the former appeals to us as infinitely preferable, more important, excellent, and worthy of being lived, indeed, as that which alone is lived-yet in relation to that mysterious ground of our being of which we are the phenomena, I should, paradoxical as it may seem, maintain the very opposite estimate of the value of dreams. For the more clearly I perceive in nature those omnipotent art impulses, and in them an ardent longing for illusion, for redemption through illusion, the more I feel myself impelled to the metaphysical assumption that the truly existent primal unity, eternally suffering and contradictory, also needs the rapturous vision, the pleasurable illusion, for its continuous redemption.” (Nietzsche, *The Birth of Tragedy*, 44-45.)

³⁹⁹ Nietzsche, *The Birth of Tragedy*, 135.

⁴⁰⁰ Nietzsche, *The Birth of Tragedy*, 135.

through their hand gestures, helping him interpret life's struggles through the creative and instinctual process of bodily movement and dance.

Though he is engaged in a dance in the painting, Hugo's body is relaxed and he exhibits a calm and serene demeanor in a precise and measured pose – all attributes used to define and characterize the prevailing Apollinian essence in Greek artworks recognized by scholars since Winckelmann. Here, Hugo is flanked by two Dionysian representatives in the form of the female members of the Greek chorus showing Kirchner's understanding of Nietzsche's interpretation of the dualistic coalescence that fulfills creative accomplishment in the ancient world. Against the darkened background of the painting, Hugo's form emerges, appearing similar in pose and color to an ancient sculpture. In the text, Nietzsche refers to Apollo as appearing as an apotheosis, in which "alone is consummated the perpetually attained goal of the primal unity, its redemption through mere appearance."⁴⁰¹ Nietzsche's summary of the power of dreams loosely parallels the iconography of the painting. He says: "This joyous necessity of the dream experience has been embodied by the Greeks in their Apollo: Apollo, the god of all plastic energies, is at the same time the soothsaying god. He, who is the 'shining one', the deity of light, is also ruler over the beautiful illusion of the inner world of fantasy."⁴⁰²

In the painting, Hugo's appearance can be interpreted as further indebted to the ancient Greek masculine ideal, which additionally relates to characteristics associated with Apollo. Kirchner depicts him in a profile pose, the type commonly found on Greek relief sculptures or in imagery on vases. Kirchner frequently rendered Biallowons in

⁴⁰¹ Nietzsche, *The Birth of Tragedy*, 45.

⁴⁰² Nietzsche, *The Birth of Tragedy*, 35.

profile, as seen in the painting *Farewell: Botho and Hugo*, with his strong chin and high forehead, physical characteristics that were prized by the ancients, contributing to his handsome beauty (Fig. 6). Hugo Hertwig described Biallowons as a tall, slim man with a haughty, yet boyish face, an appearance that is confirmed in a photograph (Fig. 6.6).⁴⁰³ He recalled that Graef and Biallowons traveled extensively together to cultural sites in Italy and Greece, and during these travels, Biallowons frequently drew the attention of both men and women, all of whom reportedly fell in love with him instantly because of his beautiful appearance, like a modern-day Apollo.⁴⁰⁴

In the painting, he appears as an athletic, youthful and idealized figure. The god Apollo is associated with moderation and virtue, evidence in the painting by his ideal proportions and his healthy, physically fit body. Both Röske and Gordon mention the somewhat ambiguous appearance of the male figure, though recognizing he is obviously based on the photograph of Biallowons. They find that because of his svelte form, supple elegance and sensitive facial features, according to Röske, or his rounded hairstyle, curved chest and the lack of definition in the groin area, according to Gordon, that he imparts a gendered ambiguity.⁴⁰⁵ However, for the Classical Greeks, representations of the gods Apollo and Dionysus, such as the Apollo Belvedere, ca. 350 – 325 BCE, exhibited a preference for slender elegance in the bodily proportions and a delicate beauty to the face that was increasingly androgynous in representations appropriate for both the male and female form.⁴⁰⁶

⁴⁰³ Hertwig, as quoted in Röske, “Dokumente einer Freundschaft,” 47.

⁴⁰⁴ Hertwig, as quoted in Röske, “Dokumente einer Freundschaft,” 42.

⁴⁰⁵ Röske, “Dokumente einer Freundschaft,” 14; and Gordon, *Ernst Ludwig Kirchner*, 54.

In the painting, all of the figures are depicted using large, open brushstrokes, the two flanking women are rendered in yellow tones with reddish-brown highlights to define their contours, while the male is rendered in a white color, with heavier impasto on certain areas of his body, including his feet, with added blue highlights on his lower body. The use of a luminous white color for the male echoes a modern understanding of ancient Greek sculpture in which idealized sculptural figures appear pristine in white marble. In his text, Nietzsche explains how something is touched by the Dionysian spirit: “The noblest clay, the most costly marble, man, is here kneaded and cut, and to the sound of the chisel strokes of the Dionysian world.”⁴⁰⁷ Furthermore, as Nietzsche explains, man appears, as “the god of all plastic energies...the ‘shining one’, the deity of light.”⁴⁰⁸ In Nietzsche’s description of the Apollinian contribution to Greek tragedy, he says: “Everything that comes to the surface in the Apollinian part of Greek tragedy, in the dialogue, looks simple, transparent, and beautiful. In this sense, the dialogue is an image of the Hellene whose nature is revealed in the dance because in the dance the greatest strength remains only potential but betrays itself in the suppleness and wealth of movement.”⁴⁰⁹ He refers to the visual language of the Greek heroic figure as one who “amazes us by its Apollinian precision and lucidity,” that appears on its surface to be “a

⁴⁰⁶ Richard Brilliant, *Arts of the Ancient Greeks* (New York: McGraw-Hill, Inc., 1973), 370; and James M. Saslow, *Pictures and Passions: A History of Homosexuality in the Visual Arts* (New York: Viking Press, 1999), 35-37.

⁴⁰⁷ Nietzsche, *The Birth of Tragedy*, 37.

⁴⁰⁸ Nietzsche, *The Birth of Tragedy*, 35.

⁴⁰⁹ Nietzsche, *The Birth of Tragedy*, 37

bright image projected on a dark wall.”⁴¹⁰ These descriptions could be applied just as well to Kirchner’s depiction of Hugo in *Dance Between the Women*.

During 1915, as the war’s impact was increasingly felt and the three men were separated, their peaceful idyll in Jena was lost. Recognizing this, I believe that Kirchner, by painting *Dance Between the Women* after his separation from the men, produced his penultimate expression of his experience with Graef by simultaneously incorporating an image of Graef’s adored and admired, vital companion Hugo, while referencing the creative potency of Graef’s beloved ancient Greeks through Nietzsche’s discussion of them. The painting can be interpreted as Kirchner’s visual summation of Nietzsche’s philosophy on the dual necessity of the Apollinian contribution of beautiful form and harmonious balance with the instinctual Dionysian force of creative guidance. In *Dance Between the Women*, the Apollinian side is seen with Hugo in the middle with the female representatives of the Dionysian musical chorus flanking him. With their encouragement, Hugo abandons any self-consciousness and inhibition in favor of an instinctual, energized dance, related to the ritual of the Dionysian satyr, while his idealized nudity keeps in mind the calm beauty and grandeur of Apollinian form.

In the two original photographs taken by Kirchner from which the pose of Hugo dancing was derived for the painting, there appears one curious detail in the furnishing of Kirchner’s studio that has never been addressed - a large sheet of sketch paper is attached to the far wall of the studio (Figs. 3.12, 3.13).⁴¹¹ Hugo’s body in the central photograph

⁴¹⁰ Nietzsche, *The Birth of Tragedy*, 67.

⁴¹¹ In *Kirchner: The Photographic Work*, Roland Scotti identifies as many of the artworks on view in these photos as possible while making no mention of the sketch: the painting behind Biallowons to the left is *Houses, Bridge, and Train Tracks*, 1915 (G438); on the table to the left, next to the seated Gothein, is the sculpture *Lovers*, 1913; on the middle shelf of the case to the right is the relief *Lovers* 1910; and the

obstructs its view, but the sketch is clearly visible in the second photograph positioned directly behind the space in which he dances and across from where Kirchner has set up his camera to capture Hugo's spirited performance. The page appears to feature a sketch of an upright, animal-like creature complete with a visible tail and animalistic hind legs ending with hooves that I believe is a Dionysian satyr. The bent position of the satyr's arms roughly corresponds to the position assumed by Hugo in his dance. Did Kirchner place the sketch on the wall to conjure up the instinctual Dionysian realm to harness its potential? Is the sketch's purpose to direct Hugo's movements in an attempt to cast him as an ecstatic Dionysian reveler? Or, is its placement meant to stand in for the absent Graef, who was earlier represented as a satyr in a different sketch? While we may never know its purpose, its central placement on the studio wall shows that it was positioned to inspire and preside over the activities occurring within. Its placement opposite Kirchner's camera indicates that Dionysus and his emissaries are vital to the creation of the photograph and the related painting *Dance Between the Women*.

Nietzsche concludes *The Birth of Tragedy* with a summation of the antithetical yet harmonious relationship between the Apollinian and Dionysian forces: "Thus these two art drives must unfold their powers in strict proportion, according to the law of eternal justice. Whereas the Dionysian powers rise up as impetuously as we experience them now, Apollo, too, must already have descended among us, wrapped in a cloud; and the next generation will probably behold his ample beautiful effects."⁴¹² Just as the Greeks successfully harnessed the two forces to create the medium of dramatic tragedy, so, too,

textile appliqué on the bed is by Erna. The paintings to the far left and right cannot be identified. (Scotti, *Kirchner: The Photographic Work*, 289 (Fig. 41); and 308-09 (Fig. 241).)

⁴¹² Nietzsche, *The Birth of Tragedy*, 144.

does Kirchner succeed by visually merging the two realms to create a unique visual rendering of his time with Graef in the personification of Biallowons. Moreover, Kirchner conveys his understanding of Nietzsche's *The Birth of Tragedy* by encapsulating all that he has absorbed and experienced with Graef into the two very different depictions of each man in their individual portraits, *Portrait of Botho Graef, Jena: Music Room* and *Dance Between the Women*, thereby bringing together Nietzsche's text on the qualities and characteristics that distinguished the cultural achievement of the Greeks with the living inspiration he found in Graef and Biallowons. As Nietzsche states in his book:

I shall keep my eyes fixed on the two artistic deities of the Greeks, Apollo and Dionysus, and recognize in them the living and the conspicuous representatives of two worlds of art differing in their intrinsic essence and in their highest aims... This extraordinary contrast, which stretches like a yawning gulf between plastic art as the Apollinian, and music as the Dionysian art, has revealed itself...⁴¹³

⁴¹³ Nietzsche, *The Birth of Tragedy*, 99-100.

Chapter 4: Male Friendship in Portraits

Kirchner's five remaining paintings of Graef from 1914 are all double-portraits, featuring him in the company of his companion Biallowons, or in the case of one painting, *Graef and Friend*, with another young male protégé. All of these images illustrate the importance of the bonds of friendship and companionship for Graef in Jena. In this chapter, I will discuss the significance of four of these paintings as variations on friendship portraits as they reinforce three important factors relating to our discussion, including the pervasive influence of Nietzsche's philosophy on the reconciliation of Apollinian and Dionysian forces as explained in *The Birth of Tragedy*; the ever-present instructive role of the ancient Greeks on the ideology of Graef; and the importance of the sense of community fostered by Graef among the men.

Nietzsche's understanding of the role of dual, opposing elements in the creative process is based on the idea that the Apollinian force symbolizes the principle of individuation while the Dionysian side represents the dissolution of individuality in a return to the original unity of life, encompassing nature and remaining intertwined with instinctual forms of expression in music and dance. In the five paintings of Graef, the centrality of double-portraits represents an understanding of Nietzsche's theory of achieving the unity of these forces as realized through the forms of companionship seen in the various paintings. For Graef, the values and practices of the ancient Greeks were upheld in the men's daily lives, which included activities such as communal bathing and an emphasis on physical fitness inherited from their example. Graef enacted a modern form of the pedagogic relationship between a younger man with an older one inherited

from the Greeks, a practice known as pederasty, in both a platonic sense and in a romantic one in his union with Biallowons. Graef's devotion to the ancient Greeks makes more likely that he would have brought Nietzsche's *The Birth of Tragedy* to Kirchner's attention for the book provides a comprehensive assessment for realizing artistic regeneration on par with the example of the ancients. Throughout this period, Kirchner remained devoted to Graef for his supportive guidance as a friend and father-figure, a relationship made more potent by the pair's mutual interest in Nietzsche, to whom both men looked as an instructive ideological figure.

Male friendship was central to life in Graef's home. Kirchner had previously thrived on the dynamic of group activity by working and living with the other Brücke artists in Dresden. In Berlin, with Max Pechstein, Kirchner attempted to recreate this sense of community by forming a school, the short-lived MUIM Institute.⁴¹⁴ Although the school was founded primarily as a way to provide financial income for the men, it would have provided Kirchner with a leadership role and a new communal sense of purpose.

The year before his death, Kirchner reminisced in a letter to his patron Carl Hagemann about an early encounter he had had as a young man on a visit to Otto Lilienthal, a friend of his father who was a pioneer in the history of aviation for the

⁴¹⁴ Kirchner and Pechstein founded the MUIM Institute in November 1911 in Kirchner's Durlacherstrasse 14 studio in Berlin-Wilmersdorf. The advertisement for the school, a woodcut print made by Kirchner, appeared in the periodical *Die Werkstatt der Kunst*. It outlined the program for instruction in both the fine and decorative arts: "Modern instruction in painting, sculpture, graphic design, sculpture, rug design, glass and metal work, painting in architectural contexts. Instruction with new means in a new spirit. Life drawing in relation to composition...In the summer, sketching at the sea-side. Correction is adapted to individual needs and talents. Contemporary life is the point of departure for creation. Conversation provides access to the new art movements. Introduction to understanding and inspiration by means of observation and experience (also for non-practioners)." Despite additional advertisements in *Der Sturm* in March and May 1912, only two students materialized. Hans Gewecke and Werner Gothein developed friendships with Kirchner, but the school soon closed. (For information on the MUIM Institute, see Lloyd, *German Expressionism*, 9; and Simmons, "Ernst Kirchner's Streetwalkers," 122.)

earliest successful glider flights.⁴¹⁵ Kirchner wrote of his visit to Lilienthal's machinery factory near Berlin:

He lived with his workers like a father. He was a big, magnificently developed human being, full of life and kindness...His children, brought up without strictures, made friends with me. It seemed to me like a fairy tale. What a contrast to our own life in Chemnitz! Here was freedom, artlessness, and joy. I was invigorated. Lilienthal suggested to my father that I should stay with him and learn flying, but my father wouldn't agree...I would like to have stayed with L., even though his enthusiasm for flying didn't attract me as much as his way of life and character. The pull of painting was too fixed in me, but L.'s life, his friendly dealings, his freedom became inwardly an ideal and they remain so today.⁴¹⁶

Kirchner's recollections reflect an early desire for the type of father figure he found with Graef. In his essay "Schopenhauer as Educator," written shortly after *The Birth of Tragedy*, Nietzsche discusses the importance of a pedagogical relationship: "Your true educators and formative teachers reveal to you what the true basic material of your being is, something in itself uneducable and in any case difficult to access, bound and paralyzed: your educators can be only your liberators," and "Thus only he who has attached his heart to some great man is by that act consecrated to culture."⁴¹⁷

In Jena, it seems certain that Kirchner, recently unmoored by the break-up of the Brücke's community in 1913, would have felt revitalized by the creative environment of Graef's household, with his new friend as the pedagogical leader among creative young

⁴¹⁵ In Germany, Lilienthal was known as the Glider King and the Wright Brothers acknowledged his influence on their pursuit of flight. In developing his gliders, Lilienthal did research on the flight of birds, which he published in the book *Der Vögelflug als Grundlage der Fliegekunst* in 1889. The book was translated into English as Lilienthal, *Birdflight as the Basis of Aviation*, trans. A. W. Isenthal (London and New York: Longmans, Green, 1911).

⁴¹⁶ Kirchner, in a letter dated June 30, 1937, to Carl Hagemann, as quoted in Gordon, *Ernst Ludwig Kirchner*, 14. The art historian Bernard Myers stated: "The emotive character of the Expressionist artists' reaction to the world is traceable in many ways to unsatisfactory emotional relationships with father, teacher or minister." (Myers, *Expressionism*, 12.) For an interesting study of the role of the father within German households, see Bertram Schaffner, *Fatherland: A Study of Authoritarianism in the German Family* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1948).

⁴¹⁷ Nietzsche, "Schopenhauer as Educator," in *Untimely Meditations*, 129.

men. Nietzsche's view of the relationship between an individual and their educator strongly parallels the one forged between Graef and the men who benefited from his tutelage, including Kirchner. Nietzsche explains:

I profit from a philosopher only insofar as he can be an example...But this example must be supplied by his outward life and not merely in his books – in the way, that is, in which the philosophers of Greece taught, through their bearing what they wore and ate, and their morals, rather than by what they said, let alone by what they wrote.⁴¹⁸

Graef worked tirelessly to promote Kirchner's work, beginning with his solo exhibition in 1914 until his death in 1917.⁴¹⁹ One additional factor distinguishes this friendship from previous ones, such as with Heckel or Pechstein, in that it was non-competitive since Graef was not a practicing artist but instead, a generous, supportive patron and friend. Kirchner's immersion within the creative atmosphere of his home, wherein he found strong nurturing male friendships and solid emotional attachments, resulted in a continuing interest in double-portraiture immediately after this period that shows how important the idea of companionship and personal reconciliation became for the artist throughout this period.

⁴¹⁸ Nietzsche, "Schopenhauer as Educator," in *Untimely Meditations*, 136-37.

⁴¹⁹ Throughout 1916 -1917, both Graef and Grisebach were very active in their efforts to help Kirchner. Graef made plans for a major collection of his prints to be permanently housed in the Jena Art Association and he began efforts for a catalogue raisonné of his print work to be compiled by Gustav Schiefler. In the summer of 1916, Grisebach began promoting and organizing an exhibition of Kirchner's paintings, several of them owned by members of the Jena Art Association circle, scheduled for February and March 1917. After Graef's death, Kirchner and Grisebach organized the "Botho Graef Bequest" of over 250 prints given by the artist to the Jena Art Association in remembrance of Graef, who had hoped during his lifetime to create a museum of Kirchner's work in Jena.

Male Friendship Portraits: A Modern Variation

In mid-1914, Kirchner painted his first images of Graef and Biallowons in the form of two individual portrait paintings that feature the same bust-length figural composition. In each, the men are framed just below their shoulders and both of their heads are turned three-quarters to the right, their faces spanning nearly the entire height of each canvas. By their adjacent placement, the paintings form a double-portrait: the first of the archaeologist and art historian in *Portrait of Graef*, 1914, and by its side, one of his companion in *Portrait of Hugo*, 1914 (Figs. 1, 2). When the portraits are positioned with the painting of Graef on the left, the pair may be read as a narrative depicting Biallowons' departure for service as indicated by the younger man's military hat and by Graef's hand appearing to wave goodbye to Hugo, who was a deputy officer in a reserve infantry regiment at the time.⁴²⁰

Portrait of Graef and *Portrait of Hugo* are similar in color and composition making them a unified pair although there are subtle differences that heighten the narrative. *Portrait of Graef* is composed of interlocking geometric forms in deep rich blues enlivened by brushstrokes of intense color. The complexity of the composition is achieved largely from three colors and relies on short, overlapping brushstrokes rather than a precise modeling of forms. In the painting, Graef appears in front of a blue inverted triangle that surrounds and frames his face culminating in a pointed tip at the bottom coinciding with the position of his signature beard in front. His angular face is rendered in a bright, electric yellow and his features are rendered in pink mixed with

⁴²⁰ In Kirchner's catalogue raisonné, Donald E. Gordon positions the paintings in this manner with Graef's on the left side establishing their function as a double-portrait; see Gordon, *Ernst Ludwig Kirchner*, 326 (G414, G415); and this placement and function is discussed in Röske, "Dokumente einer Freundschaft," 43.

violet in areas of the hair, including his beard, mustache, eyebrows and the neatly parted coif of hair atop his head. Light swaths of a vibrant salmon-hued pink are added on his lips, eyelids, and the contours of his ear, neck, lining the eyes, and along the nose. Graef's eyes are expressive, rimmed by painted lines with heavy shadows underneath, while his pursed lips and pointy beard heighten the agitated effect, all imparting a somewhat melancholy mood.

Like its pair, the portrait of Biallowons resembles Graef's composition by featuring angular forms. In it, the subject's defined chin is accentuated in order to mirror Graef's pointed beard and the triangular points of Biallowons' military jacket collar compliment similar forms in Graef's canvas. Biallowons, in his uniform and hat, is positioned against an irregularly shaped, rounded geometric blue area that similarly frames his face as it continues off the right side of the canvas. His left epaulet and shoulder rise up in a sharp vertical to create an abrupt divide between him and the figure of Graef waving goodbye to his left while his gaze moves outside of the confines of the frame away from his companion, a detail that adds to the tension in the narrative. However, Kirchner uses color to visually unite the two portraits; each composition is formed with yellow background areas surrounding the blue forms that frame each of the figure's heads.

The bust-length portrait format was relied upon several times by Kirchner during his Berlin period. Upon moving to the city in 1911, Kirchner developed a new style identified by its short brushstrokes and angular lines. This was soon employed in several important portraits of creative male artists he admired at the time, including the well-known *Portrait of Dr. Alfred Döblin*, 1912; his Brücke comrade in *Otto Mueller with*

Pipe, 1913; and *Portrait of Oskar Schlemmer*, 1914, made immediately after this portrait pair, featuring the artist Schlemmer, who was likely acquainted with Graef through an exhibition of his work at the Jena Art Association (Figs. 2.21, 4.1, 4.2).

The tradition of male friendships within German artistic and literary circles was one of long-standing cultural importance. In ancient Greek literature, the glorification of heroic male union was a prevalent theme beginning as far back as Homer's *Iliad*, an oral myth committed to writing circa 850 BCE, in which the warrior Achilles is overwhelmed by grief at the death of his older companion Patroclus and avenges him by killing Hector.⁴²¹ During the Renaissance, there was a renewal of interest in the culture of the ancient Greeks and Romans after a period of dormancy. According to the art historian James M. Saslow, Albrecht Dürer (1471-1528) led this resurgence of interest in the Southern Mediterranean, making the "grand tour" fashionable for Northern Europeans to experience the history and culture of southern Europe.⁴²² Dürer visited Italy from Nuremberg several times, initially to see his lifelong friend Willibald Pirckheimer who was studying near Milan. Prior to Dürer's first visit to Italy, from autumn 1494 until spring 1495, it was more common for German artists to look at Bruges or Ghent in the north for inspiration rather than to the artworks of the Italian *Quattrocento*.⁴²³

Dürer's friendship with Pirckheimer was highly unusual for its time, both for the long-lasting closeness between the two men and for the difference in their background and social standing. According to the art historian Erwin Panofsky: "The relationship

⁴²¹ Saslow, *Pictures and Passions*, 16.

⁴²² Saslow, *Pictures and Passions*, 92.

⁴²³ Erwin Panofsky, *The Life and Art of Albrecht Dürer* (Princeton and Oxford: Princeton University Press, 2005), 8. Dürer's second trip to Italy lasted for one and a half years, commencing in mid-1505.

between this full-blooded humanist and Dürer was one of complete confidence and intimacy, bred out of affection, fostered by a close commonality of interests and spiced with good masculine chaff.”⁴²⁴ Pirckheimer, who owned an important collection of Greek and Roman coins, initiated in Dürer an appreciation of the Classical world while he similarly took it upon himself to keep his friend informed of developments in contemporary philosophy and archaeology.⁴²⁵

Winckelmann, while based in Rome and devoted to a study of antiquities, lived with his close friend, the German painter Anton Raphael Mengs (1728-1779). Mengs’ artworks realized Winckelmann’s ideas on the ancient Greeks in visual form, helping to popularize both his companion’s ideas and the formation of the nascent Neoclassical style throughout Europe. Mengs painted several portraits of Winckelmann, including one shortly after his friend settled in Rome that depicts the art historian holding a Greek edition of Homer’s *Iliad*.⁴²⁶ In a second painting by the Austrian artist Anton von Maron (1733-1808), the brother-in-law of Mengs, Winckelmann is depicted seated in his study looking at an engraving of the Roman youth Antinous (Fig. 4.3). Although his contemporaries never publicly mentioned Winckelmann’s homosexuality, his appreciation for the beautiful male form is evident in the smiling admiration he directs towards the image.⁴²⁷ According to legend, Antinous was regarded as one of the most

⁴²⁴ Panofsky, *The Life and Art of Albrecht Dürer*, 7

⁴²⁵ Panofsky, *The Life and Art of Albrecht Dürer*, 7-8. According to Panofsky, Pirckheimer assisted Dürer in his literary endeavors and often suggested amusing or cryptic subjects for his prints. Pirckheimer used his collection of ancient coins to write essays on the buying power of Classical and modern currencies. (Panofsky, *The Life and Art of Albrecht Dürer*, 31.)

⁴²⁶ The painting *Johann Joachim Winckelmann*, painted shortly after 1755, is in the collection of the Metropolitan Museum of Art, New York.

beautiful youths in the Roman Empire. After being discovered by the Emperor Hadrian during an official visit in AD 123 to the Greek-born youth's hometown of Mantineum, in modern day northern Turkey, he became the emperor's constant companion and object of his adoration.⁴²⁸

During the early Renaissance, companion portraits similar to *Portrait of Graef* and *Portrait of Hugo* became common, though they usually featured a husband and wife pair. Lucas Cranach, one of Kirchner's primary Renaissance influences, painted a companion pair of portraits that remain unusual by featuring a father and son. Cranach's pair, painted in 1509, features the father on the left in *Portrait of Johann the Steadfast*, the Elector of Saxony, with his young son and heir by his side in the separate *Portrait of Johann Friedrich the Magnanimous*, who succeeded his father as Elector in 1532. The poses and gazes of these two figures are similar to Kirchner's pair, with the older man looking towards his son whose eyes look away to the right in contemplation of his own future rather than returning his father's gaze.⁴²⁹

⁴²⁷ Sweet, "The Personal, the Political, and the Aesthetic: Johann Joachim Winckelmann's German Enlightenment Life," 147. The historian George L. Mosse points out the irony that Winckelmann, a homosexual, made Greek art fit for the German middle classes of the twentieth century and supplied them with their model for a national male stereotype. (Mosse, *Nationalism and Sexuality*, 14.)

⁴²⁸ Hadrian's reign lasted from AD 117 – 138. During a visit to Alexandria in AD 130, while Hadrian, Antinous and their entourage traveled down the Nile, the youth drowned. Strangely enough, this was on the same day that the local Egyptians celebrated their god Osiris, whose mythology included his own drowning in the Nile and his rebirth. Osiris was the judge of the dead in the afterlife as well as the agency that granted life through vegetation and the fertile flooding of the Nile River. Antinous' drowning has been interpreted as either an accident or self-sacrifice to prolong the rule of Hadrian. After his death, the emperor encouraged a cult of identity around his deceased companion, expressed through festivals and cults in his honor, and he established the city of Antinoopolis on the Nile in his memory. The way Hadrian mourned him and encouraged his cult throughout the empire was unprecedented. Many depictions of Antinous reference his linkage with Osiris by incorporating Egyptian elements or he is shown with long, abundant curly hair related to the spirit of Dionysus. (All information from museum labels from the exhibition *Hadrian: Empire and Conflict*, British Museum, London, July 24–October 26, 2008.)

⁴²⁹ Cranach's portrait pair hangs together in the National Gallery, London. The paintings' labels explain that the pairing of father and son portraits was unusual and may have arisen because of the death of six-year old Johann's mother, Sophia of Mecklenburg, who died during his birth.

The Greek model of male friendship grew in popularity during the eighteenth century. Close friendships were central to the *Sturm und Drang* literary movement and to Romantic circles, wherein friendship among men was held in high esteem as a representation of a bond forged from true, intimate feelings shed of all social pretense. The German expression *Freundesliebe*, or love between friends, originated in the *Sturm und Drang* period, where, in many university towns, literary societies of friends were formed in which men wrote each other passionate letters, dedicated love poems to one another, embraced and kissed each other warmly and shed tears when they had to take leave of one another.⁴³⁰ According to the historian Harry Oosterhuis, at the time, the personal character of friendship was closely related to an awareness of the gulf that existed between one's true self and the role that one played within society. Friendship was felt to be the arena in which the individual was able to evolve in an atmosphere of privacy and sincerity.⁴³¹ Furthermore, true friendship was reserved for an intellectual elite that consisted of men who viewed friendship as a form of love that could be passionate and sensual but need not be sexual.⁴³²

The leading proponents of the *Sturm und Drang* movement, which flourished in the 1770s, were Wolfgang Goethe (1749-1832), one of Germany's most illustrious literary figures, and Johann Gottfried Herder (1744 – 1803), a poet and philosopher

⁴³⁰ Oosterhuis, *Stepchildren of Nature*, 246. According to Oosterhuis, the link with emotion was important for it distinguished these eighteenth-century friendships from the type of older social customs descendant from the Enlightenment in which personal relationships were an expression of social virtue that served the general well being rather than a personal purpose. (Oosterhuis, *Stepchildren of Nature*, 246.) See various examples of Romantic writing in *The Political Thought of the German Romantics*, ed. and trans. Hans Siegbert Reiss (Oxford: Blackwell, 1955).

⁴³¹ Oosterhuis and Kennedy, *Homosexuality and Male Bonding*, 8-9.

⁴³² Oosterhuis and Kennedy, *Homosexuality and Male Bonding*, 9.

commonly referred to as “the father of German Romanticism” for renewing interest in the Gothic style as an embodiment of truly Germanic characteristics, including naturalness, spontaneity, creativity and bravery.⁴³³ Each sought to revive German literature through both its Northern origins and from the example of the Greek and Romans. The philosopher and historian Johann Schiller (1759-1805) developed a close and collaborative friendship with Goethe in Weimar and Jena and together, the pair wrote *Die Xenien*, a series of satirical poems in which they criticized individuals who were opposed to their aesthetic ideas. Schiller, in his work *The Aesthetic Education of Mankind*, 1795, focused on praising Greek beauty for ennobling the sexual act by elevating it from its base realm to the classical form, which in his view was the consummation of man’s humanity through physical beauty.⁴³⁴

The Romantic ideal of friendship was based on the bond between kindred spirits and provided an exclusive atmosphere within which one could give expression to their deepest and most personal emotions. Friendship portraits, called *Freundschaftsbild*, became a highly popular subject among German Romantic artists, many of whom traveled or lived in Italy, especially between 1810-1830.⁴³⁵ Later seen in Kirchner’s portrait pair, these friendship portraits tended to feature a subject that dominates the pictorial space with minimal background that nonetheless successfully conveys the character of the subject.⁴³⁶ Friendship portraits were intended for intimate audiences –

⁴³³ Barbara Lane Miller, *National Romanticism and Modern Architecture in Germany and the Scandinavian Countries* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2000), 8-9.

⁴³⁴ Mosse, *Nationalism and Sexuality*, 14.

⁴³⁵ Hans Joachim Meidhardt, “Solitude and Community,” in *The Romantic Spirit in German Art, 1790-1990*, ed. Keith Hartley (Stuttgart: National Gallery of Scotland and Oktagon Verlag, 1994): 285-88.

similarly, Kirchner's portrait of Hugo remained in his estate and was never exhibited during his lifetime. While *Portrait of Graef* was included in one exhibition at the Galerie Ludwig Schames in Frankfurt in 1919, the other descriptive genre portrait, *Portrait of Botho Graef, Jena: Music Room*, was kept in Kirchner's possession for his entire life and never publicly exhibited during his lifetime.⁴³⁷

One example of a group of artists for whom male friendships were central was called the Brotherhood of St. Luke, formed by students from the Academy of Vienna in 1808. The Nazarenes, as they became known for their embrace of medievalism in dress and appearance, settled into a deserted monastery in Rome in 1810.⁴³⁸ Reflective of the Romantic spirit in general, the Nazarenes elevated friendship into a kind of religion. Franz Pforr, the early leader of the group, asked the question: "What are all earthly things, compared with friendship?"⁴³⁹ The Nazarenes intertwined their love of Italy, its natural landscape and its history, with a sense of their own identity. This is seen in a pair of friendship paintings made by two members of the group, Friedrich Overbeck and Pforr, who each express their view of the other's character in terms of the relationship between Italy and Germany.

⁴³⁶ Klaus Lankheit, *Das Freundschaftsbild der Romantik* (Heidelberg: Heidelberg Kunstgeschichtliche Abhandlungen, 1952), 159.

⁴³⁷ Kirchner selected the painting to serve as a reproduction in the journal *Das Kunstblatt* (issue VII/3) in 1923 to accompany an essay on his work written by Graef.

⁴³⁸ For a discussion of the Nazarene's community, see Mitchell B. Frank, "The Nazarene *Gemeinschaft*: Overbeck and Cornelius," in *Artistic Brotherhoods in the Nineteenth Century*, eds. Laura Morowitz and William Vaughan (Burlington, VT, and Aldershot, UK: Ashgate Publishing Ltd., 2000): 48-66. St. Luke was the patron saint of artist's guilds reinforcing both the group's religious nature and their association with the medieval past. The Brücke was organized around a similar ideology aligned with early artist's guilds, forming a similarity with the Nazarenes in terms of embracing the spirit of the medieval guild. But, the Brücke favored friendship over religion. For a brief comparative discussion, see Reinhold Heller, "Bridge to Utopia: The Brücke as a Utopian Experiment," 66-67.

⁴³⁹ Hartley, *The Romantic Spirit in German Art*, 287; and Lankheit, *Das Freundschaftsbild der Romantik*, 96.

Paintings by both artists represent their close friendship and individual character as well as functioning as personifications of the intertwined relationship between Italy and Northern Europe in the form of two young women. In Overbeck's painting, titled *Italia and Germania*, 1828, the women sit with their hands clasped, positioned close together in calm repose as the figure of Germania, seated on the right, leans in to whisper something to the other figure. In the distance behind each woman there is a geographically accurate architectural landscape of the Italian countryside beyond Italia's shoulder and a Medieval German village behind Germania.⁴⁴⁰ In Pforr's painting, titled *Sulamith and Maria*, 1811, he uses two characters drawn from a fable he wrote. One woman is named Sulamith, the Hebrew word for peace, to represent Overbeck's tranquil character and the peaceful land of Italy from where he drew his artistic inspiration. The other figure, Maria, is representative of the North, a more passionate and melancholic figure in recognition of Pforr's own personality and his alignment with Dürer. In his painting, Sulamith is seated calmly in the guise of a Raphael Madonna in a serene garden with an Italianate landscape surrounding her as Maria sits pensively indoors, reading and consumed by her own thoughts in a darkened chamber with Medieval lattice windows characteristic of Northern Europe.

Throughout the first half of the nineteenth century, male friendships were valued and esteemed although soon, as homosexuality became an increasingly public issue, these friendships came under suspicion, in part for their lack of a clear distinction between a possible homosexual component. From 1788 until 1803, while Schiller's friendship with

⁴⁴⁰ Pforr's painting *Sulamith and Maria*, 1811, is in the Schäfer Collection, Schweinfurt, and Overbeck's painting *Italia and Germania*, 1828, is in the collection of the Bayerische Staatsgemäldesammlungen, Munich; both are reproduced in Hartley, *The Romantic Spirit in German Art*, 98 (Pforr) and 99 (Overbeck).

Goethe developed, he worked on a play centered upon the Order of St. John of Malta entitled *Die Malteser*, based upon *Männerbund*, the concept of close male friendships. The original play featured two knights whose passionate friendship found full expression in their physical union and was influenced by the heroic Greek model of male friendship, a tradition seen as producing the bravest and most capable warriors, such as Archilles and Patroclus and the Spartan army. When the play was performed after Schiller's death in 1865, however, the plot was changed to a heterosexual model.⁴⁴¹ In the 1890s, the philosopher Gustav Portig published a study of the friendship between Goethe and Schiller in which he advocated for a clear division between love and friendship claiming that the lack of distinction between these realms resulted in an objectionable, "effeminate" example that was morally unworthy of his subjects.⁴⁴² As evidence, he cited an ancient parallel: the Greek language had no differentiation between love and friendship in the word 'eros,' and, according to him, while under the influence of even the most illustrious thinkers, such as Plato and Socrates, the Greeks degenerated into the widespread practice of pederasty because of this lack of linguistic distinction.⁴⁴³

The German composer Richard Wagner cited the Greek example of eros in his defense of male unions in his essay *The Artwork of the Future*, published in 1849, in which he wrote that friendship was sensual because it came from one's sensitivity to

⁴⁴¹ Mosse, *Nationalism and Sexuality*, 30.

⁴⁴² Portig, as quoted in Oosterhuis, *Stepchildren of Nature*, 247. The publication was Gustav Portig, *Schiller in seinem Verhältnis zur Freundschaft und Liebe sowie in seinem inneren Verhältnis zu Goethe* (Hamburg: Voss, 1894).

⁴⁴³ Oosterhuis, *Stepchildren of Nature*, 247.

physical beauty and that he could not imagine friendship without love.⁴⁴⁴ According to Wagner:

The beautiful naked human form was the kernel of all Spartan culture; from the genuine pleasure in the beauty of the most perfect human – *male* – body arose *the love of men for one another* that permeates and forms the essence of Spartan civilization. In its original purity, male love presents itself to us as the most noble and selfless expression of the human affinity for beauty...in which a man submerges *his entire being* and passes into the being of the beloved other.

The higher element of that male love consisted in its exclusion of a moment of egoistic sensualism. It encompassed a purely spiritual bond of friendship, but a spiritual friendship nonetheless borne of the bloom, the perfect fulfillment of physical friendship, which sprang directly from the joy in the beauty of the loved one. Yet this joy was no egoistic yearning...⁴⁴⁵

The author Hanns Fuchs published a book on Richard Wagner in 1903, entitled *Richard Wagner und die Homosexualität*, in which he discussed his subject as a “spiritual homosexual,” something he felt was the preeminent mark of great artists and intellectuals, such as Wagner, Nietzsche, and many other prominent men.⁴⁴⁶ According to his account, in friendship, the physical passions were conquered and sublimated into works of art.⁴⁴⁷

Nietzsche, who developed a close, admiring friendship with Wagner, considered their break to be one of the defining episodes of his life.⁴⁴⁸ His description of male union,

⁴⁴⁴ Oosterhuis, *Stepchildren of Nature*, 11. Wagner’s essay *Das Kunstwerk der Zukunft* (*The Artwork of the Future*) was originally published in Leipzig in 1949.

⁴⁴⁵ Wagner, “The Art-Work of the Future,” in *Richard Wagner’s Prose Works*, trans. by William Ashton Ellis (London: K. Paul, Trench, Trübner and Co., 1895), 167-68; and Wagner, as quoted in Morris Mitchell, “Homosexuality and the Manly Absolute: Hanns Fuchs on Richard Wagner,” *The Opera Quarterly* 22, no. 2 (Spring 2006), 330.

⁴⁴⁶ Mitchell, “Homosexuality and the Manly Absolute,” 331. Fuchs’ book was originally published as *Richard Wagner und die Homosexualität* (Berlin: H. Barsdorf, 1903).

⁴⁴⁷ Mitchell, “Homosexuality and the Manly Absolute,” 332. Fuchs was a member of Adolf Brand’s “Community,” which will be discussed later in this chapter, and he shared with the group feelings of solidarity with other men and the idealization of masculinity rather than an interest in physical expressions of desire among men.

published in *Human, All-Too Human* in 1878, as he was emancipating himself from the friendship, sounds closely related to the explanation voiced by Wagner. In an aphorism entitled “Friendship,” Nietzsche explains: “A good friendship ensues when the one man deeply respects the other, more even than himself; loves him also, though not so much as himself; and finally, to facilitate intercourse, knows how to add the delicate bloom and veneer of intimacy, but at the same time wisely refrains from a true, real intimacy, from the confounding of “*meum*” and “*teum*”.”⁴⁴⁹ Throughout his writing, Nietzsche highly praised the importance of male friendships.⁴⁵⁰ In a letter to his close friend, the Classical scholar Erwin Rohde, written in October 1875, he said: “The truth is that I live through you. I make progress by leaning on you. My idea of myself is weak and pitiable and you have incessantly to guarantee me to myself.”⁴⁵¹ In his essay “Schopenhauer as Educator,” he stated: “No one who possesses true friends knows what true solitude is, even though he have the whole world around him for his enemies.”⁴⁵² Nietzsche’s understanding of male friendship also originated from the Greek example, particularly Plato’s *Symposium*,

⁴⁴⁸ Kaufmann, *Nietzsche*, 46. For an expanded discussion of their relationship see Joachim Köhler, *Nietzsche and Wagner: A Lesson in Subjugation*, trans. by Ronald Taylor (New Haven and London: Yale University, 1998).

⁴⁴⁹ Nietzsche, *Human, All-Too Human*, in *The Complete Works*, 7: 129. In *The Gay Science*, written in 1882, after his break with Wagner was complete, Nietzsche wrote: “Independence of the soul – that is at stake here! No sacrifice can then be too great; one’s dearest friend even one must be willing to sacrifice for it, be he yet the most glorious human being, embellishment of the world, genius without peer...” (Nietzsche, as quoted in Kaufmann, *Nietzsche*, 41.)

⁴⁵⁰ Kaufmann, *Nietzsche*, 42. According to Kaufmann, “few philosophers have written in praise of friendship more eloquently.”

⁴⁵¹ Nietzsche, in a letter dated October 7, 1875, to Erwin Rohde, as quoted in Hayman, *Nietzsche: A Critical Life*, 175-76.

⁴⁵² Nietzsche, “Schopenhauer as Educator,” in *Untimely Meditations*, 139.

a text concerned overall with the many variations of male eros, which was described by Nietzsche as the work of poetry most formative to this early thinking.⁴⁵³

While at the University of Basel, Nietzsche developed only a few, albeit strong and select, friendships. One such friendship was with the older historian Jacob Burckhardt, also a Professor of Philology and famous as a scholar of the Renaissance. Their friendship was based on intellectual admiration and a mutual interest in the ancient Greeks and in Renaissance Italy.⁴⁵⁴ In December 1870, in a letter to Rohde, Nietzsche wrote of his dream for a brotherhood of intellectuals dedicated to a life of contemplation and the arts as an alternative to modern society, “where “we shall love, work, enjoy for each other – perhaps this is the only way we can work for the whole.”⁴⁵⁵ This ideal of a community committed to intellectual and artistic endeavors parallels the household later realized by Graef in creating an environment that fostered expression among the writers and artists gathered in Jena.

Greek Eros in the Development of the Homosexual Emancipation Movement

Botho Graef was a complex person; erudite Classical scholar, modern arts patron, dedicated educator and devoted friend. He was also a homosexual male living in Berlin in the 1890s, a unique place in time that saw the emergence of the homosexual

⁴⁵³ Kaufmann, *Nietzsche*, 31. When he left for the University of Bonn, his curriculum vitae listed Plato’s *Symposium* as his “*Lieblingsdichtung*.”

⁴⁵⁴ According to Walter Kaufmann, “Nietzsche never relinquished his veneration for the older historian who was so remarkably free from most of the prejudices of the time, such as narrow nationalism or glib faith in relentless progress.” (Kaufmann, *Nietzsche*, 36.) One of Nietzsche’s other trusted friendships was with a second colleague in Basel, the theologian Franz Overbeck (1837-1905), with whom he shared a house for a time. When Nietzsche went mad in Italy in late 1888, Overbeck traveled to bring him safely home to Germany.

⁴⁵⁵ Nietzsche, in a letter dated December 15, 1870, to Rohde, as quoted in Hayman, *Nietzsche: A Critical Life*, 132; see also Lloyd, *German Expressionism*, 17; 238, note 29.

emancipation movement. For many early homosexual advocates, the understanding of Greek eros and the ancient practice of intellectual and physical pederasty from the Greeks lent an irrefutable historical credibility to the modern cause. One elite faction of the homosexual emancipation movement, rallied around the leadership of Adolf Brand, sought to return the masculine male to a foremost position of cultural prominence, an idea further aligned with Nietzsche's concept of the *Übermensch*, the individual who overcomes all barriers in the pursuit of an authentic life experience, as explained in his well-known publication *The Will to Power*. For Brand and other early advocates, their understanding of homosexuality and close male bonds originated with the Greeks. Thus, I will briefly review the relevant history of the homosexual emancipation movement in Germany as reliant on the Greek example to expand upon the societal underpinnings within which Graef lived, worked and forged friendships during this period before returning to a specific examination of Kirchner's paintings of him.⁴⁵⁶

In the 1860s, Karl Heinrich Ulrichs (1825-1895) emerged as one of the earliest prominent advocates for homosexual rights and his influence and ideas informed the movement into the twentieth century.⁴⁵⁷ The ancient Greeks directly informed his

⁴⁵⁶ An indispensable source for the study of gay culture and homosexual life in Berlin is the exhibition catalogue: M. Bollé, ed., *Eldorado: Homosexuelle Frauen und Männer in Berlin, 1850-1950* (Berlin: Frölich & Kaufmann, 1984), particularly the essay Wolfgang Theis and Andreas Sternweiler, "Alltag im Kaiserreich und in der Weimarer Republik," 48-73. For an introduction to the literature on the homosexual emancipation movement, see James D. Steakley, *The Homosexual Emancipation Movement in Germany* (New York: Arno Press, 1975); and John Lauritsen and David Thorstad, *The Early Homosexual Rights Movement, 1864-1935* (New York: Times Change Press, 1974).

⁴⁵⁷ For a biography of Ulrichs, see Hubert Kennedy, *Ulrichs: The Life and Works of Karl Heinrich Ulrichs, Pioneer of the Modern Gay Movement* (Boston: Alyson, 1988). Prior to Ulrichs, sexual identity and gender inversion were discussed in publications, notably by C. F. Michéa in the 1840s and by J. L. Caspar in the 1850s. For a discussion of events prior to the 1860s, see Gert Hekma, "Same-sex Relations Among Men in Europe, 1700-1990," in *Sexual Cultures in Europe: Themes in Sexuality*, eds. Franz X. Eder, Lesley Hall, and Gert Hekma (Manchester and New York: Manchester University Press, 1999): 79-103.

ideology. Ulrichs' theory of male homosexuality was based upon Plato's *Symposium*, which opens with Phaedrus delivering an oration on eros, the most potent form of love.⁴⁵⁸ His highest praise is reserved for Heavenly Eros: "the oldest of the gods, the most deserving of our respect, and the most useful for those men, past and present, who want to attain excellence and happiness."⁴⁵⁹ The origins of different variations on love is further clarified by the *Symposium*'s next speaker Aristodemus, who explains the existence of both Diana, the daughter of Zeus and Dione, known as Common Aphrodite, who reigns over sexual love between men and women; and Urania, the daughter of Zeus (or Uranus) alone, known as Heavenly Aphrodite, who rules over love between men. While the former was considered a less evolved emotion indebted to physical urges, the latter was considered a higher spiritual state.⁴⁶⁰ Aristodemus explains: "The Eros we should praise is the one which encourages people to love in the right way...those inspired by this love turn to the male, attracted by what is naturally stronger and of superior intelligence."⁴⁶¹ Thus, Ulrichs identified a male who desires men as an "Urning" or "Uranian," a type of third sex ("*das dritte Geschlecht*") akin to a female soul enclosed in a male body and a Dioning as a male who is attracted to women.⁴⁶² Ulrichs defended the

⁴⁵⁸ Plato, *Symposium*, in *Homosexuality in Greece and Rome: A Sourcebook of Basic Documents*, ed. Thomas K. Hubbard (Berkeley, Los Angeles and London: University of California Press, 2003), 180.

⁴⁵⁹ Plato, *Symposium*, in *Homosexuality in Greece and Rome*, 183; and see also the description in Saslow, *Pictures and Passions*, 13. Eros is described as the most venerable and valuable of the gods with the power to provide all virtue and happiness for men with the celebration of erotic desire one of the principle bonds that unite them.

⁴⁶⁰ James W. Jones, "We of the Third Sex": *Literary Representations of Homosexuality in Wilhelmine Germany* (New York: Peter Lang, 1990), 84; and Steakley, *The Homosexual Emancipation Movement*, 8.

⁴⁶¹ Plato, *Symposium*, in *Homosexuality in Greece and Rome*, 184.

Urning by invoking ancient Greece: “In Greece, Urnings were the fittest, noblest and most capable members of human society.”⁴⁶³ He believed these desires to be inborn and as a result, he asserted that it was cruel to pressure homosexuals to try to change their behavior while he advocated an end to the prejudices facing these men. According to him, “The Dionian [heterosexual] majority has no right to construct the human society as exclusively Dionian; such construction of it is only scandalous abuse, because we have as much rights as you in human society.”⁴⁶⁴

Ulrichs’ goal in publishing his work was to contribute to legal reform, rather than impact the related fields of medical pathology and sexual physiology, which increasingly sought to classify homosexuality as an illness diagnosable by one’s appearance and behavior.⁴⁶⁵ At the time, Ulrichs feared that with German unification, the criminal

⁴⁶² Although the term “homosexual” was not in use until 1869, whereas “Uranian” remained in use until the First World War, I am using it throughout my discussion for its eventual adaptation. For a discussion of the terminology within the homosexual discourse, see Gert Hekma, “A Female Soul in a Male’s Body”: Sexual Inversion as Gender Inversion in Nineteenth-Century Sexology,” in *Third Sex, Third Gender: Beyond Sexual Dimorphism in Culture and History*, ed. Gilbert Herdt (New York: Zone Books, 1994): 213-39.

⁴⁶³ Ulrichs, in a pamphlet entitled *Vindicta*, as quoted in Robert Aldrich, *The Seduction of the Mediterranean: Writing, Art and Homosexual Fantasy* (London and New York: Routledge, 1993), 110.

⁴⁶⁴ Ulrichs, as quoted in Jonathan Katz, ed., *Documents of the Homosexual Rights Movement in Germany, 1836-1927* (New York: Arno Press, 1975), 55.

⁴⁶⁵ See Kennedy, *Ulrichs*, 67; and Hekma, “A Female Soul in a Male’s Body,” 219; and Steakley, *The Homosexual Emancipation Movement*, 3-10. Ulrichs publicly referred to himself as a homosexual in his writing to aid his cause in the five book he had published by 1865. The police forbid their distribution throughout Prussia and confiscated any copies found in Berlin and other major cities.

For a good introduction to the subject of medical pathology and physiognomy, see Mosse, *The Image of Man*, 77-106; Chapter 5: Masculinity in Crisis: The Decadence. In the 1860s, the growth of modern psychiatry fueled a trend towards the treatment and classification of homosexuality as a medical pathology. In the 1870s in Germany, and the 1880s in France, sexual psychopathology became fashionable in psychiatric circles and many articles and books were published on the subject with contributions by many important figures in the field, including Alfred Binet, the inventor of fetishism as a sexual category; Jean-Martin Charcot, a specialist on hysteria as well as Freud’s teacher; Benjamin Ball, the first professor of psychiatry in Paris; Richard Krafft-Ebing, the emerging proponent of the new science of sexual aberrations; and Havelock Ellis, a specialist in England working on sexual perversions. For an expanded discussion of the medicalization of sexuality during this time, see Jeffrey Weeks, *Sex, Politics and Society: The Regulation of Sexuality Since 1800* (London and New York: Longman, 1981), 141-59; The

penalization of sodomy, or “unnatural fornication,” as upheld in Prussia, would be applied to all of Germany. Though several states, including Bavaria, followed the *Code Napoléon* of 1810 by punishing only the seduction of minors and forcible rape, the majority of states followed the example of Prussia, which punished homosexual acts with prison and a loss of civil rights.⁴⁶⁶ In 1871, various homosexual acts between consenting adults became a crime throughout unified Germany under the long-lived Paragraph 175 of the new criminal code despite various efforts made to repeal it, most notably a petition presented to the Reichstag in 1898 by the prominent homosexual rights advocate Magnus Hirschfeld.⁴⁶⁷ By this time, Ulrichs, age fifty-five, was “physically and spiritually drained” by his adversarial relationship with the Prussian state and relinquishing his efforts for the homosexual emancipation movement, moved to Italy in 1879 where, after living in Naples for three years, he settled in the hill town of L’Aquila near Rome.⁴⁶⁸

The Mediterranean attracted many men like Ulrichs for similar reasons. It was a particularly popular destination for homosexuals seeking respite from the restrictive

Theorisation of Sex. For a discussion of hysteria and Charcot, see Debora Silverman, *Art Nouveau in Fin-de-Siècle France* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1989). For a discussion of Richard Krafft-Ebing, see Harry Oosterhuis, *Stepchildren of Nature: Krafft-Ebing, Psychiatry, and the Making of Sexual Identity* (Chicago and London: University of Chicago Press, 2000).

⁴⁶⁶ Mosse, *Nationalism and Sexuality*, 28. The death penalty as punishment for homosexual acts was abolished in 1851. Prior to the 1871 legislation, in 1869 and 1870, the novelist Karl Maria Kertbeny (1824-1882) published two leaflets in opposition to the existing Prussian law arguing that the Prussian sodomy law violated the fundamental rights of man by making private acts subject to criminal law and further, exposing men to blackmail, which often led to suicide, a fate that had befallen friends of his. In these publications, he coined the term “homosexual” to replace the pejorative term “pederast” commonly used in the classification of sexual types. (Jones, *We of the Third Sex*, 53.)

⁴⁶⁷ The 1898 petition included over five thousand signatures from many notable individuals, including Albert Einstein, Hermann Hesse, Käthe Kollwitz, Heinrich Mann, Thomas Mann, Rainer Maria Rilke, Leo Tolstoy and Stefan Zweig. The petition was submitted again in 1922 and 1925 but the law remained in place well into the second half of the twentieth century. (Mosse, *Nationalism and Sexuality*, 28.)

⁴⁶⁸ Steakley, *The Homosexual Emancipation Movement*, 22.

norms at home with its inviting climate and appealing locals.⁴⁶⁹ When Goethe traveled to Italy to study the Classical world, visiting Pompeii and Herculaneum, he wrote in his journal that he was struck by the openness of homosexual friendships in Rome.⁴⁷⁰

Winckelmann had lived in Rome with his companion, the painter Mengs. John Addington Symonds (1840-1893), a British scholar, visited Greece and Italy frequently to produce his important scholarly work *Renaissance in Italy*, published in seven volumes between 1875-1886, and *A Problem in Greek Ethics*, one of the first English-language defenses of homosexuality by way of a study of ancient Greece, first published in 1883.⁴⁷¹ Oscar Wilde (1854-1900), who translated Greek poetry while a student at Oxford, lived in Naples after serving time in jail for homosexual offences in England in the 1890s.

In the nineteenth and early twentieth centuries, however, the Germans formed the largest contingent of gay visitors to the Mediterranean. Capri became a hedonistic location for gay exiles.⁴⁷² In 1826, the poet August von Platen (1796-1835) visited Italy for the first time and, aside from one visit to Munich in 1832-1833, subsequently made Florence, Naples or Rome his permanent home.⁴⁷³ The photographer Wilhelm von Gloeden (1856-1931) settled in the Sicilian city of Taormina where he used local youths

⁴⁶⁹ For an expanded discussion see Aldrich, *The Seduction of the Mediterranean: Writing, Art and Homosexual Fantasy* (London and New York: Routledge, 1993).

⁴⁷⁰ Aldrich, *The Seduction of the Mediterranean*, 56.

⁴⁷¹ John Addington Symonds, *A Problem in Modern Ethics: Being an inquiry into the phenomenon of sexual inversion, addressed especially to medical psychologists and jurists* (London: 1896).

⁴⁷² Hekma, *Sexual Cultures in Europe*, 89. In 1902, the Krupp scandal erupted in Germany around a wealthy, close friend of Kaiser Wilhelm. After it was reported in newspapers that Krupp was engaged in homosexual activities on the island of Capri, he was found dead of an apparent suicide. The equation of homosexuality with decadence and degeneration was employed in many press accounts. (Jones, *We of the Third Sex*, 101-02.)

⁴⁷³ Aldrich, *The Seduction of the Mediterranean*, 57-68.

in his homoerotic photography, with many dressed in Grecian inspired costumes using props suggesting antiquity. Italy provided the setting for Thomas Mann's famous novella *A Death in Venice*, first published in 1912, in which the northern protagonist longs for a local youth he becomes enamored with while watching him on the city's beach.

By the turn-of-the-century, there existed two leading factions to the homosexual rights movement in Berlin; one centered around the scientific efforts of Magnus Hirschfeld (1868-1935), who founded the first homosexual rights organization in Berlin in 1897, two years after Ulrichs' death, and the other around Adolf Brand (1874-1945). Although Brand's followers were a smaller, exclusive group compared to Hirschfeld's larger organization, his group's commitment to the example of the ancient Greeks and their devotion to the ideal masculine form are more relevant for this discussion.⁴⁷⁴

Beginning in 1896, Adolf Brand began publishing a journal to popularize his views.⁴⁷⁵ Its name, *Der Eigene*, meaning "the other," "self," or "the exceptional" was a

⁴⁷⁴ Hirschfeld and Brand are often discussed as in opposition to one another for Hirschfeld was publicly-oriented to promote change and sought to use science to aid his advocacy while Brand's circle extolled masculinity and remained highly select by comparison. Dr. Magnus Hirschfeld was a pioneering sexologist and the most influential homosexual rights activist in Germany. In 1897, Hirschfeld founded the first homosexual emancipation movement in Berlin near the Tiergarten, called the Scientific Humanitarian Committee (*Wissenschaftlich-Humanitäre Komitee*). The committee's motto reinforces Hirschfeld's aims: *per scientiam ad justitiam* or "through science, justice." He attempted to use science to explain that homosexuality was a natural and normal variation of sexuality and in his writing, he situated gay men as an intermediate or third sex (*zwischenstufen*), an innate condition. Beginning in 1899 until 1923, Hirschfeld published an annual yearbook to inform the homosexual community on recent issues, offer resources, and popularize information on a range of related topics. In 1914, Hirschfeld published his magnum opus *Die Homosexualität des Mannes und des Weibes* (*Male and Female Homosexuality*), in which he commented on the first decade and a half of his committee's existence emphasizing that in addition to the decriminalization efforts, the most important goals of the committee had been to educate public opinion and foster understanding about all aspects of homosexuality in order to alleviate public distrust and antagonism and to carry out scientific research. Hirschfeld's organization became the most significant repository for homosexual culture in the world and it thrived until it was closed down and its contents ransacked by the National Socialists. In February 1933, three weeks after Hitler became Chancellor, the National Socialists banned gay rights organizations.

reference to the philosopher Max Stirner and his concept of self-ownership. Throughout the 1890s, as Nietzsche's work began to reach a wider audience, Stirner's ideas were frequently discussed as an integral part of the development of his ideology, and continuing into the 1910s, there was ongoing debate about the extent of Nietzsche's interest in Stirner.⁴⁷⁶ Although the journal initially had an anarchist stance, beginning in 1898, Brand's focus changed to a literary and artistic focus, seen in the journal's subtitle "*A Periodical for Art and Masculine Culture.*" The cover of one issue of *Der Eigene* features the image of a young athletic male nude in a pose reminiscent of Polykleitos' *Spear Bearer*, ca. 450 BCE, showing Brand's commitment to the example of the Greek ideal of masculine beauty descended from Winckelmann (Fig. 4.4).

Throughout the journal, the beauty and ideal of "male love as an important factor in all cultural activities" was promoted.⁴⁷⁷ Brand saw a revival of the practice of ancient Greek pederasty, the dedicated love between men and youth characterized in German by the term *Lieblingminne*, as a model for cultural renewal and homosexual identity that stressed masculinity, rejecting Hirschfeld and others who promoted the scientific idea of the homosexual as an intermediate sex. The journal featured contributions by contemporary figures, including the photographer Wilhelm von Gloeden; illustrations by the graphic artist Fidus, whose imagery was also very popular with life-reform

⁴⁷⁵ Publication ceased in 1900. Despite financial setbacks and imprisonment in 1902 for publishing photographs of nude youths by the photographer Wilhelm von Gloeden in the journal, in 1903, publication resumed and the journal remained in circulation until 1931.

⁴⁷⁶ Nicholls, "Beginnings of the Nietzsche Vogue in Germany," 24-37. Since then, Nietzsche's reliance on Stirner has been largely dismissed.

⁴⁷⁷ Brand, as quoted in Mosse, *Nationalism and Sexuality*, 42.

movements; and articles by the writer Kurt Hiller, who was previously a founder of *Der Neue Klub* in Berlin before becoming increasingly political in his writing.⁴⁷⁸

In an essay in the journal's inaugural issue Brand outlined the importance of intertwining the Greek model of pederasty or male eros with the German Romantic tradition of male friendships, an institution which he felt had been maligned through the emphasis on medical and scientific theories:

And in ancient Germany, blessed through blood-brotherhood, which was practiced everywhere, there were similar famous male bonds and friend-love stood just as high in honor. For the Edda [a Germanic epic] says that "man is the joy of man."

Friend-love is, therefore, from time immemorial already something good, useful and noble. A rich, precious treasure, which everyone should faithfully cherish, and of which, among reasonable men, everyone can also openly and honestly be genuinely proud.

Therefore all the great men of world history have devoted themselves to friend-love, or at least have glorified its high value with praise. We find among those who courageously avowed it the most virile men of action – the most important war heroes, such as Alexander the Great, Caesar and Friedrich the Great; the outstanding philosophers, such as Socrates, Plato and Nietzsche; the most celebrated poets and artists, such as Anacreon, Pindar, Virgil, Horace, Hafiz, Michelangelo, Shakespeare, Goethe, Schiller – in general all the German Classics and likewise also all the great German writers and talented men of the present.⁴⁷⁹

An early issue of the journal featured an article by the poet, photographer and painter Élisar von Kupffer in which the author attacked Magnus Hirschfeld's

⁴⁷⁸ Dr. Kurt Hiller became a well-known political activist. He published frequently for the journal *Die Aktion*, edited the political journal *Das Ziel* (*The Goal*), an anti-war journal, from 1916-1924, and he was active in Magnus Hirschfeld's homosexual emancipation organization, which he joined in 1908, becoming a co-chair in the late 1920s. For an expanded discussion of his involvement with Hirschfeld's Committee, see Steakley, *The Homosexual Emancipation Movement*, 67-73; 103-06. For a discussion of Hiller's career as a Nietzsche-influenced political advocate, see Taylor, *Left-Wing Nietzscheans*, 60-88; Chapter 3: Nietzschean Politics: Kurt Hiller and the Philosophy of *Goal*.

⁴⁷⁹ Brand, "Freudesliebe als Kulturfaktor," *Der Eigene*, 1930, reprinted in *Homosexuality and Male Bonding in Pre-Nazi Germany*, eds. Harry Oosterhuis and Hubert Kennedy (New York and London: The Haworth Press, Inc., 1991), 151.

classification of homosexuality as an “intermediate sex” or “third gender” and particularly, the notion that homosexuals were effeminate.⁴⁸⁰ In 1900, Brand published a poetry anthology compiled by von Kupffer, entitled *Lieblingminne und Freundesliebe in der Weltliteratur* (*Chivalric Affection and Comrade Love in World Literature*), with poems collected from Renaissance Italy, ancient Greece and Rome, Elizabethan England, and nineteenth-century Germany.⁴⁸¹ In his introduction to the book, von Kupffer included the essay as it had appeared in the first two issues of *Der Eigene*, titled “The Ethical-Political Significance of *Lieblingminne*,” in which he outlined the dichotomy between Brand’s supporters and Hirschfeld’s camp. He explained:

I must take a stand against the entire recent direction and attack the sickly craze of our pseudo-scientific and related circles to talk about a “third sex” whose soul and body are supposedly mismatched...The word Urning or Uranian has spread like a menacing epidemic. The matter has been popularized...And the most vexing thing about all this is that in the process, the elite of our entire human history has been so deformed that these brilliant thinkers and heroes are scarcely recognizable in their Uranian petticoats.⁴⁸²

The author’s uncle, Hugo von Kupffer, the editor of the local journal *Berliner Lokalanzeiger*, attempted to block the publication of his nephew’s book, but he was overridden after the intervention of several prominent cultural figures, including Ulrich von Wilamowitz-Moellendorf, by then an important Classical scholar at the University of

⁴⁸⁰ Hekma, “A Female Soul in a Male’s Body,” 227.

⁴⁸¹ The anthology brought together for the first time much of the writing that has since gone on to define the canon of gay literature. A facsimile of the original, published in 1900, is available in Elisàrion von Kupffer, *Lieblingminne und Freundesliebe in der Weltliteratur: eine Sammlung mit einer ethisch-politischen Einleitung*, ed. Marita Keilson-Lauritz (Berlin: Verlag Rosa Winkel, 1995).

⁴⁸² The text appeared first in *Der Eigene* 1, nos. 6 and 7 (October 1899) and subsequently formed the introduction to his anthology *Lieblingminne und Freundesliebe in der Weltliteratur*, published in 1900. It is translated and reprinted in Oosterhuis and Kennedy, *Homosexuality and Male Bonding*, 142.

Berlin, who had been a teacher of and remained a friend to Graef.⁴⁸³ Kupffer and his companion Hans von Mayer, who had written an early study of Schopenhauer's aesthetics, moved to Italy together in 1902.⁴⁸⁴

The contemporary writer Max Katte also addressed the issue of masculine virility in an article titled "*Die virilen Homosexuellen*" ("Virile Homosexuals") published in Hirschfeld's yearbook in 1905. Here, Katte challenged the notion that all homosexuals were effeminate, opposing Ulrichs' long-standing view that a male homosexual was a "female soul in a male body," by countering with a supposition for the existence of a masculine and virile "male soul in a male body."⁴⁸⁵ In terms of platonic eros, the contemporary sexologist Iwan Bloch publicly lamented the neglect of friendship among men and vocalized his wish, in a publication titled *The Sexual Life of Our Times*, published in 1907, that "men could talk about love for each other without coming under the suspicion of homosexuality."⁴⁸⁶

In 1902, Brand formed *Die Gemeinschaft der Eigenen* ("The Community of the Others") with other men who shared his belief in the value of friendship and the masculine ideal.⁴⁸⁷ Rather than focus the Committee's activities on political advocacy,

⁴⁸³ Wayne Dynes, ed., *Encyclopedia of Homosexuality* (Chicago and London: Garland, 1990), 669.

⁴⁸⁴ While living in Italy, Kupffer wrote a monograph on the painter Sodoma and Mayer wrote a book on Pompeii. (Aldrich, *The Seduction of the Mediterranean*, 112.)

⁴⁸⁵ Katte, as quoted in John C. Fout, "Sexual Politics in Wilhelmine Germany: The Male Gender Crisis, Moral Purity, and Homophobia," *Journal of the History of Sexuality* 2, no. 3 (January 1992), 418.

⁴⁸⁶ Bloch, as quoted in Mosse, *Nationalism and Sexuality*, 76. Bloch's book was originally published as *Das sexuelle Leben unserer Zeit in seinen Beziehungen zur modernen Kultur* (Berlin: Marcus, 1907); and translated into English as *The Sexual Life of our Time: A Complete Encyclopedia of the Sexual Sciences in their Relation to Modern Civilization*, trans. by M. Eden Paul (New York: Falstaff Press, 1937).

⁴⁸⁷ Adolf Brand was allied with Gustav Wyneken (1875-1964) in their shared belief in the value of a Greek-inspired pedagogical relationship between a teacher and student. A pacifist and socialist, Wyneken

Brand modeled the Community after a Masonic lodge or Classical symposium, hosting weekly gatherings at his home near Berlin, where poems and prose were recited and issues relating to men were discussed.⁴⁸⁸

Wilhelm Jansen, a co-founder of the *Gemeinschaft*, was a leader in the *Wandervögel* and the two shared an interest in the importance of physical fitness and nature as fostering the development of the healthy body.⁴⁸⁹ A smaller section of the *Wandervögel* rallied around the charismatic leadership of Hans Blüher (1888-1955), for whom homosexual relations formed a natural part of *Männerheld* or male friendship.⁴⁹⁰ Though Blüher's followers were among a small percentage of the *Wandervögel*, many agreed with his overall formulation for the origin of national power residing in a

was an important innovator in education founding the Free School Movement in 1906, which flourished until the National Socialists closed the institution in the 1930s. In his book *Eros*, published in 1921, Wyneken advocated a "heroic asceticism" in sexual matters, but as a homosexual, he was closely associated with Wilhelm Jansen's *Jungwandervögel*. (Steakley, *The Homosexual Emancipation Movement*, 57.) Adolf Brand's Committee shared several ideals with Stefan George's circle, including a view of masculinity as the most vital societal force. For a discussion of the similarities between the two groups, see Steakley, *The Homosexual Emancipation Movement*, 48-49.

⁴⁸⁸ Oosterhuis and Kennedy, *Homosexuality and Male Bonding*, 4.

⁴⁸⁹ Jansen was forced to resign from the *Wandervögel* in 1910 in the face of public scrutiny and he established the *Jungwandervögel* against the puritanical leadership currently in vogue in the original organization.

⁴⁹⁰ Blüher's leadership centered on his role as a virile, masculine male who attracted others with his vibrant personality. In 1912, Blüher published his second book on these ideas, titled *Die deutsche Wandervögel bewegung als erotisches Phänomen* (*The German Wandervögel Movement as a Phenomenon*), in which he explained that all societies formed around the organizing principles of *Männerheld*, looking back to the Greek example, rather than a heterosexual, family-oriented type of love. In the publication, he publicly named many of the *Wandervögel* movement's early leadership as homosexuals. In a subsequent publication, *Die Rolle der Erotik in der Männlichen Gesellschaft* (*The Role of the Erotic in the Male Community*), 1917, Blüher advanced his theories about bisexuality's supremacy, saying the family necessitated heterosexual desires while the political state arose from the equally necessary and more valuable dedicated love between men. (Steakley, *The Homosexual Emancipation Movement*, 54-56.) For him, the inversion of the male/female norm was what distinguished a homosexual. Rather than inversion being viewed as a negative, neurotic malady or an effeminate state as expressed by some scientists including Hirschfeld, Blüher felt the homosexual was the most socially creative individual since his sexual energies were not directed towards a family but towards society. (Mosse, *Nationalism and Sexuality*, 87-88.) Later, Blüher was used as an example of how homosexuality could undermine the National Socialist movement from the inside out. (Oosterhuis and Kennedy, *Homosexuality and Male Bonding*, 255-57.)

dedicated love between men, including Brand, whose Community was further bolstered by the intellectual support of its third founder, the biologist Benjamin Friedländer (1866-1908). In Friedländer's publication *Renaissance des Eros Uranios*, 1904, he outlined a biological theory based upon three kinds of love, including married love between men and women, the motherly love of women for children, and most importantly, same-sex love between men in friendship and pedagogy that was not of a sexual nature. To Friedländer, this form of love among men was the foundation of social and political life and he looked to Greece and Renaissance Italy as model civilizations. His alignment with these past cultures is clearly seen in the book's title, referring directly to both Renaissance culture and the classical ideal of "Eros Uranios" from Plato's *Symposium*.⁴⁹¹

Brand's Community was similarly aligned with the *Lebensreformbewegung*, or life reform movement, in its advocacy of the benefits of nudity and nature, and a belief in the role of nude athletics. Friedländer had been a member of a nudist organization as early as 1893 and he endorsed the homoerotic relations between youth that the life reform movement extolled, saying: "As soon as natural people (who are unclothed people) in a natural mood (which is unconstrained happiness) deal with each other in a natural way (which is harmless friendship) Eros will surely be roused."⁴⁹²

Though all of the founders of Brand's Community sought a revival of the male-male bonds that formed an important part of ancient Greek culture, their contemporary

⁴⁹¹ Hekma, "A Female Soul in a Male's Body," 228; and Jones, *We of the Third Sex*, 32; 97-98; and Steakley, *The Homosexual Emancipation Movement*, 43; and Mosse, *Nationalism and Sexuality*, 41.

⁴⁹² Friedländer, as quoted in Steakley, *The Homosexual Emancipation Movement*, 44. For a discussion of Friedländer's racism, a heightened form of nationalism in which he faulted the Jews for attacks on homosexual eros that he perceived as an effort to undermine Aryan virility, see Mosse, *Nationalism and Sexuality*, 133-52; Chapter 7: Race and Sexuality: The Role of the Outsider.

ideal was to be realized with homoerotic imagery though not necessarily homosexual practices since the founders vehemently maintained that these male-male relationships be pure and free of physical union. Friedländer, Brand and von Kupffer were married but explained that male-female relationships, while necessary for procreation, did not offer intellectual or aesthetic satisfaction.⁴⁹³ Other members of the community endorsed this belief suggesting that man-youth love was a superior type of pedagogical bond that offered individually directed education, similar to the type offered to Biallowons by Graef.⁴⁹⁴ This brief review of the continuing reliance on the Greek example for the contemporary formulation of masculinity as a national ideal and the origins of homosexual identity bring us back to a discussion of Kirchner's images of Graef and Biallowons.

The National Identification with the Masculine Figure during the First World War

Since the eighteenth century, the Classical world provided inspiration for Germany's emerging national cultural identity.⁴⁹⁵ The aesthetic aspects of Classical art as understood beginning with Winckelmann's publications, with their descriptions of Greek sculpture as calm, noble and youthful, established the Classically-inspired masculine figure as the ideal representative for the developing identity of the German nation. Early in the nineteenth century, the role of the masculine ideal had been reinforced by the wars

⁴⁹³ Jones, *We of the Third Sex*, 97.

⁴⁹⁴ Oosterhuis and Kennedy, *Homosexuality and Male Bonding*, 122. Members of the Community also claimed that man-youth love saved young men from having to rely on prostitutes, thus putting themselves at risk of contracting venereal disease.

⁴⁹⁵ For a discussion centered on masculine identity in the eighteenth century, see David S. Ferris, *Silent Urns: Romanticism, Hellenism, Modernity* (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 2000); and Mah, *Enlightenment Fantasies: Cultural Identity in France and Germany, 1750-1914*.

against Napoleon as a virile manliness, encompassing the diverse characteristics of physical strength, courage, beauty and a precise pattern of manners and morals, was seen as a key component to national renewal against the French occupation of Prussia.⁴⁹⁶

In 1907-1909, the committee in Jena with Graef as a member commissioned Ferdinand Hodler to depict a scene of the region's students bravely rallying against Napoleonic forces to commemorate their victory in 1813, an event that held special centennial significance. Hodler's image depicts an array of precisely arranged soldiers marching in formation, their sense of destiny awoken just as the Napoleonic invasion itself had aroused the growth of a national consciousness nearly a century ago.

Throughout the Wilhelmine period, the adoption of a classical vocabulary was continually relied upon in an effort to provide a national symbol or stereotype of the ideal German male and to promote a sense of immutable force and security during a time of rapid, unpredictable change within which masculinity remained one of the most potent and powerful symbols of the period, especially with the onset of the First World War.⁴⁹⁷ The Greek example of strong capable warriors who were intimate friends was instructive at the time and looking at the military accomplishments of the ancient Greeks lent credence to the practice of eros or intimate male friendships. The close, devoted friendship between Achilles and Patroclus was as widely understood as their valor. The

⁴⁹⁶ Mosse, *Nationalism and Sexuality*, 13.

⁴⁹⁷ For a discussion of masculinity in light of German unification and industrialization, see George L. Mosse, *The Image of Man: The Creation of Modern Masculinity* (New York and Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1996). For a discussion of the interrelationship between masculinity and enthusiasm towards the war, see Mosse, *Nationalism and Sexuality*, 114-32; Chapter 6: War, Youth, and Beauty: The Twentieth Century and World War I. For a discussion of male friendship during this period, see Mosse, *Nationalism and Sexuality*, 67-89; Chapter 4: Friendship and Nationalism. Lastly, for the role of Classical symbols to represent concepts of nationhood in nineteenth-century Germany, see Mosse, *The Culture of Western Europe*, 65-84; Chapter 4: Nationalism.

Sacred Band of Thebes was a regiment established to fight the Spartans composed of three hundred teams of *erastai* and *eromenoi*, a committed pair formed between an older male and a youth, who fought valiantly alongside one another. It was thought that their love for each other and their mutual presence would give them added bravery and fortify them in battle to defend one another and perform greater acts of courage.⁴⁹⁸ As explained by the historian George L. Mosse:

The idea of masculinity, including its borrowed Greek standards of male beauty, was drafted by European nationalisms into service as national symbol or stereotype. The Greek ideal was stripped of any lingering eroticism, while its harmony, proportion, and transcendent beauty were stressed. Masculinity was expected to stand both for unchanging values in a changing age and for the dynamic but orderly process of change itself, guided by an appropriate purpose.⁴⁹⁹

The emphasis on masculinity and heroism as a sign of the inner spirit also had roots in the ideals of knighthood from the medieval example and these associations, with uniquely German origins, quickly became interrelated in the creation of a nationalist symbol with the onset of the First World War. The Middle Ages were regarded as a time when the Germanic national identity was formed, particularly during the Holy Roman Empire, which represented an immutable sense of power.⁵⁰⁰ There was a resurgence of interest in the legendary myth of Roland, Emperor Charlemagne's nephew, who had been killed in the Pyrennees in 778 while protecting the imperial army's withdrawal from its successful campaign against the Saracens. Roland had been an early folk hero to nineteenth-century Romantic writers such as Herder.⁵⁰¹ Given his Germanic origins,

⁴⁹⁸ Aldrich, *The Seduction of the Mediterranean*, 25.

⁴⁹⁹ Mosse, *Nationalism and Sexuality*, 31.

⁵⁰⁰ Miller, *National Romanticism and Modern Architecture*, 9; and 19-78; Chapter 1: The Origins and Transformation of the Dream of the North.

interest in his mythology was renewed in the modern conflict resulting in the proliferation of a new type of war monument called the “Men of Nails.” These were wooden figures that fused the symbolism of Roland, as depicted already in many statues throughout Germany as a knight with a raised sword, with the practical purpose of stoking nationalistic fervor.⁵⁰² Individuals were encouraged to support the war effort by paying for iron, gold or silver nails to drive into the wooden Men of Nails statues erected in towns and cities throughout Germany as a way of showing their support for soldiers and demonstrating their patriotism. The popularity of these figures culminated in the September 1915 dedication of a colossal Iron Hindenburg statue erected across from the Reichstag in the center of Berlin.

At the same time, Graef’s friend Karl Ernst Osthaus, the director and founder of the Folkwang Museum in Hagen, in an effort to support Kirchner during the war, opened a competition to erect an “Iron Man of Nails” for the city.⁵⁰³ In September, Kirchner supplied his design for a bearded figure holding a raised hammer bearing the symbol of the iron cross, with the figure’s small scale a practical consideration as well as one reminiscent of German sculpture from the Medieval period. Kirchner’s proposal failed to garner public support, which went instead to a monumental, Classically inspired male

⁵⁰¹ For a discussion of the Roland legend, see Harry Redman, *German Romantic Poetry’s Treatment of the Roland Legend* (Stuttgart: Heinz, 1988).

⁵⁰² For a discussion of these figures, see Sherwin Simmons, “Men of Nails: Monuments, Expressionism, Fetishes, Dadaism,” *Res: Anthropology and Aesthetics* 40 (Autumn 2001): 211-38.

⁵⁰³ From a prominent banking family, Osthaus was a major supporter of modern art and architecture. He opened the Folkwang Museum, designed by his friend Henry van de Velde, in 1902 to house his collection of avant-garde European art and in 1909, he founded the Museum for Art in Commerce and Industry in cooperation with the Deutscher Werkbund. For an expanded discussion of his contributions to the arts of Germany, see John V. Maciuika, *Before the Bauhaus: Architecture, Politics and the German State, 1890-1920* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 2005), esp. 171-72; and Frederic J. Schwartz, *The Werkbund: Design Theory and Mass Culture before the First World War* (New Haven and London: Yale University Press, 1996), 164-91.

figure designed by the sculptor Friedrich Bagdons.⁵⁰⁴ Graef published a plea in the local newspaper, the *Hagener Zeitung* on October 2, 1915, in support of Kirchner's proposal in which he sought to convince the reluctant public that although his design was thoroughly modern, it nonetheless evoked a specifically German character. Graef wrote:

Kirchner is one of the most talented of the living young artists, one of the most sincere and one who wants to depict purely what is distinctly his own without relying on empty conventional forms...The primeval contours of Kirchner's sculptures display a rich liveliness coming from within, reminiscent more than any other work of our times of the unsurpassed simplicity and direct expression of early German medieval art, unimpaired by extraneous details and righteously passed down paragons. It is our duty to clear the path for such art in our time.⁵⁰⁵

An icon to embody the ideals of the Germanic spirit, including its genius, originality, strength and courage, grew more urgent during the war. Nietzsche's concept of the *Übermensch* was consistently invoked as an invincible savior to satisfy this need and the Nietzsche myth soon became fused with that of the Germanic knight, whose qualities of determination, endurance and bravery were especially valuable at the time.⁵⁰⁶ Nietzsche's essay "Schopenhauer as Educator" is one example of how his influence, beginning in the 1890s, was increasingly built upon the cult of the individual in which emphasis was placed on the role of a great personality in the revival of culture.⁵⁰⁷ This is seen in Julius Langbehn's *Rembrandt as Educator*, published in 1890, in which he

⁵⁰⁴ Simmons, "Men of Nails," 220-22; and Springer, *Hand and Head*, 43-48.

⁵⁰⁵ Graef, "Der Eiserne Schmied von Hagen," in Ehrmann and Wahl, *Kirchner: Von Jena nach Davos*, 105; and Graef, as quoted in Simmons, "Men of Nails," 221.

⁵⁰⁶ Aschheim, *The Nietzsche Legacy in Germany*, 152-53.

⁵⁰⁷ Nicholls, "Beginnings of the Nietzsche Vogue in Germany," 28. The same could be said for the ten sections of *The Birth of Tragedy* devoted to Richard Wagner as the artist most capable of revitalizing German culture in the last quarter of the nineteenth century.

positioned Rembrandt as the ideal representative of the true German genius.⁵⁰⁸ The biography on Lucas Cranach by Wilhelm Worringer, published in 1908, focused on the similar elevation of the early-Renaissance artist as representative of the German spirit by equating his work in the woodcut medium with his national identity.

In 1914, there was a resurgence of interest in Albrecht Dürer's famous engraving *Knight, Death and the Devil*, 1513-1514, as a nationalist symbol of steadfast commitment and fortitude in the face of adversity (Fig. 4.5).⁵⁰⁹ Inspired by Dürer's print, images of heroic or victorious knights, such as St. George slaying the dragon, proliferated in the popular media.⁵¹⁰ Dürer's depiction of the knighted figure on horseback, itself inspired by the tradition of heroic equestrian monuments from Renaissance Italy, appears to have influenced the depiction of Otto von Bismarck, the "Iron Chancellor," in the monument by Adolf von Hildebrand, made from 1904-1910, for the city of Bremen. During the Franco-Prussian War in 1871, a year that coincided with the four hundredth anniversary of Dürer's birth, his image *Knight, Death and the Devil* had been invoked as a personification of victory in war and the artist himself was celebrated as representative of the heroic German spirit.⁵¹¹

⁵⁰⁸ Stern, *The Politics of Cultural Despair*, 116-36.

⁵⁰⁹ Simmons, "Split-Identity in Ernst Ludwig Kirchner's Woodcut Cycle," 248.

⁵¹⁰ For a discussion of the growth in popularity of knighted figures, including Dürer's image, see Thomas Noll, "Sinnbild und Erzählung: Zur Ikonographie des Krieges in den Zeitschriftenillustrationen 1914 bis 1918," in *Die letzten Tage der Menschheit Bilder des Ersten Weltkrieges* exh. cat., ed. Rainer Rother (Berlin: Deutsches Historisches Museum and Ars Nicolai, 1994): 259-73. Modern artists did variations on the figure of the knight, including Lovis Corinth, who depicted himself as a knight in *Self-Portrait in Armor*, 1914, (Kunsthalle, Hamburg), and, in 1915, painted *Old Man in Knight's Armor* (Nationalgalerie, Berlin). In 1915, in the autobiographical *Knight Errant*, Oskar Kokoschka depicted himself as a knight crippled by his pain from the events of his love affair with Alma Mahler (Solomon R. Guggenheim Museum, New York).

In the 1880s, Nietzsche had singled out Dürer's engraving as his favorite artwork.⁵¹² Two books published in 1918 reinforced this link: Ernst Bertram's publication on the philosopher, *Nietzsche: Versuch einer Mythologie* (*Nietzsche: Attempt at a Mythology*) contained a chapter titled "Ritter, Tod und Teufel" ("Knight, Death and the Devil") after Dürer's work that sought to equate the biography's subject with the symbolism of the artwork; and Thomas Mann, in his autobiographical *Reflections of a Nonpolitical Man*, emphasized that while many others misinterpreted Nietzsche's philosophy by taking it literally as endorsing immorality and reveling in the aesthetic freedoms this interpretation offered, he explained that he was attracted to something altogether different.⁵¹³ As Mann explains:

I boundlessly admired Nietzsche as a prose writer and psychologist in all stages of his life: the Nietzsche who really mattered to me and who, in accordance with my nature, had to affect me pedagogically most deeply, was the one who was still very close to Wagner and Schopenhauer, or who always remained close to them, the one who singled out from all plastic art *one* picture with lasting love - Dürer's *Knight, Death and Devil*: the one who told Rohde of his natural pleasure in all art and philosophy in which "ethical air, Faustian smell, cross, death and grave" could be detected: a phrase I immediately seized upon as a symbol for a whole world, *my world*, a northern-moral-Protestant, *German* one that is strictly in opposition to that world of ruthless aestheticism.⁵¹⁴

In books with altogether different focuses and points-of-view, both authors find in Nietzsche's love of this engraving an enduring symbol of the German character and spirit

⁵¹¹ Paul Münch, "Changing German Perceptions of the Historical Role of Albrecht Dürer," in *Dürer and His Culture*, eds. Dagmar Eichberger and Charles Zika (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1998), 186.

⁵¹² Love, "Young Nietzsche and the Wagnerian Experience," 60.

⁵¹³ Ernst Bertram, *Nietzsche: Versuch einer Mythologie* (Berlin: Georg Bondi, 1929), 53-75; and Thomas Mann, *Reflections of a Nonpolitical Man*, trans. and with an introduction by Walter D. Morris (New York: Frederick Ungar Publishing Co., 1983). Bertram's book was originally published in August 1918, Mann's book, also published in 1918, was originally titled *Betrachtungen eines Unpolitischen*.

⁵¹⁴ Mann, *Reflections of a Nonpolitical Man*, 399. (Italics are original author's own.)

that was ideally suited for the times. In both of Kirchner's double-portraits of Graef and Biallowons, the friendship pair *Portrait of Graef* and *Portrait of Hugo* discussed earlier and *Farewell: Botho and Hugo*, the younger man is dressed for military duty and the iconography shows his departure for service making these interrelated traditions of male friendship, masculinity, and German nationalism highly relevant within Graef's circle during this period.

Male-Oriented Domains in Kirchner's Genre Scenes of Graef

By considering the two remaining genre scenes of Graef, a better understanding of both the atmosphere within Graef's Jena home and the inspiration that would have proven so influential to Kirchner emerge. *Two Friends Conversing*, 1914, is a genre scene featuring Graef and Biallowons relaxing at home; like *Farewell: Botho and Hugo*, 1914, it depicts a personal or private moment giving a clear indication of the intimate nature of the relationship between Graef and Biallowons as well as Kirchner's closeness to both men (Figs. 5, 6).

In *Two Friends Conversing*, Biallowons appears to have returned on leave from service as his hair is cut very short. Graef occupies the foreground, reclining on a chair, while Biallowons reclines facing him on the sofa opposite. Both of Graef's hands are resting behind his head and he appears to have his eyes closed in calm repose mirroring Biallowons' facing position, with his left arm propped on the end of the sofa under his head as his right hand rests on Graef's leg. Both men appear relaxed and unguarded in the private setting, the décor of which includes a mix of red and blue colors in the patterned

furniture surrounding the men, including the couch and divan chair and the underlying carpets.

In the composition, both of Graef's legs are stretching across the space to rest in Biallowons' lap. This serves to visually connect the two men to each other while illustrating their intimate relationship and the casual demeanor between them. This intimacy appears to be reinforced by the precision of Kirchner's placement of the arms and legs; Biallowons' hand extends to rest on the side of Graef's extended leg, which rests in his companion's lap. These limbs in a symbolic way function as substitute phallic forms while simultaneously framing the younger man's genital area in a precise geometric configuration.

There is one etching that appears somewhat similar to the composition of *Two Friends Conversing* indicating Kirchner's preference for making sketches or etchings directly from life, which is also the case with the photograph and etching in advance of the later painting *Dance Between the Women*. In the etching, titled *The Siesta*, 1915, Biallowons is in a position very similar to his pose in the painting except he is asleep on a chair in the foreground of the image. In the etching, Graef is seated upright on the couch in contrast to Biallowons napping to his left and he gazes away from him. For the painting, however, Kirchner has chosen positions that reinforce the men's union with one another (Figs. 5, 4.6).

It is interesting to compare *Two Friends Conversing* with two paintings made by Kirchner one year earlier featuring Erich Heckel and Otto Mueller playing chess in Kirchner's Berlin studio, titled *Erich Heckel and Otto Mueller Playing Chess I*, and *Erich Heckel and Otto Mueller Playing Chess II*, both 1913, and nearly identical in

composition (Figs. 5, 4.7). The paintings were made as the Brücke group was in a period of disintegration before the members disbanded in 1913. In both of them, the men are seated and play chess in the foreground while a nude female model reclines in the background. The nude model, representative of the artistic muse that had served the Brücke so well in the past, is here relegated to the background and ignored by the men in favor of other pursuits.

In *Two Friends Conversing*, the young Biallowons reclines where previously the model had been positioned. In this composition, there is a clear visual relationship between the two men and a relaxed mood due to their reciprocal horizontal positions. Moreover, the viewer is led into the composition visually by the reclining Graef in the foreground whose pose and seat rise at a steep diagonal to meet the bisecting body of Biallowons who faces the viewer in a welcome position. This is unlike the images of Heckel and Mueller, who are both seated upright, hunched over and close together with the steep pitch of the floor heightening the agitated mood. It is also possible to interpret that in the company of Graef and Biallowons, Kirchner is inspired by them and no longer requires the incorporation of the female model. There is an empty chair placed precisely between the two men that perhaps symbolizes Kirchner's presence in their company; both men's faces are directed towards it as though it was recently occupied by someone participating in the conversation while their limbs physically bridge the space between them reinforcing their unique bond.

A second genre painting of Graef, titled *Graef and Friend*, 1914, depicts him in the company of one of his young protégés, a sculptor named Johannes Auerbach, who was the nephew of Graef's Jena friends Felix and Anna Auerbach, and for a period, a

student at the Bauhaus in nearby Weimar (Fig. 3).⁵¹⁵ This is the only painting from the group that includes a male companion who is not Hugo. As such, the image provides insight into the pedagogical relationships that were a significant part of life within Graef's home. Graef is shown in profile standing over and embracing the younger man and planting a kiss upon his forehead. Both of Graef's long, slender and elegant hands are visible with his fingers alternately wrapped around Auerbach's right shoulder or around his other arm at the elbow in an affectionate yet pedagogic pose. The painting was titled *Father and Son* when it was exhibited at the Galerie Ludwig Schames in Frankfurt in 1919; and in a letter from Auerbach to his mother, written in 1922, he refers to the painting as being of Botho and himself in a representation as father and son, which further confirms the pose's pedagogical intent.⁵¹⁶

According to the recollections of the writer Hugo Hertwig, Graef introduced Biallowons to literature, music, fine arts and philosophy; maintained a regular practice on the piano; immersed his lodgers in a study of the arts; and enforced a regular schedule of communal bathing and exercise to maintain physical fitness.⁵¹⁷ Graef's home life in many ways resembles the relationships between older men and younger ones enacted by the ancient Greeks in which the older man took on a younger companion in order to prepare him for becoming a productive member of society by introducing him to the

⁵¹⁵ From September-October 1925, the Jena Art Association mounted an exhibition of his work in sculpture and drawing. (Wahl, *Jena als Kunststadt*, 284.)

⁵¹⁶ Ehrmann and Wahl, *Kirchner: Von Jena nach Davos*, 221; and Röske, "Dokumente einer Freundschaft," 48, note 13; and Johannes I. Auerbach, *Eine autobiographie in Briefen*, eds. Renate Heuer and Frank Kind (Bad Soden: Woywod, 1989), 198. The painting was also titled *Father and Son* when it was included in the *Degenerative Art Exhibition* in Munich in 1937; see Stephanie Barron, ed., *"Degenerate Art": The Fate of the Avant-Garde in Nazi Germany* (Los Angeles: Los Angeles County Museum of Art, 1991), 273.

⁵¹⁷ Röske, "Dokumente einer Freundschaft," 40-42.

responsibilities associated with adulthood. In his recollections, Hertwig emphasized the patient, open-minded guidance and instruction the young men received from Graef. According to him, he sought to help his young associates by instilling in them the value of work and promoting a sense of independence and self-sufficiency, explaining: “He trained us to get out of the habit of having other people serve us...He would not readily answer our questions, he let us search for the answers ourselves.”⁵¹⁸ While the Greek practice often encompassed sexual relations, Graef’s relationships with younger men, aside from Biallowons, appears to have stressed the men’s intellectual and creative development, reflecting the emphasis on educational instruction that was one of the chief components of Greek pederasty in preparing youths to become productive citizens.⁵¹⁹ When comparing *Graef and Friend* to *Two Friends Conversing* or *Farewell: Botho and Hugo*, the pedagogical implications of its iconography are clear (Figs. 3, 5, 6).

In *Graef and Friend*, Auerbach’s appearance is similar to that in Kirchner’s earlier *Portrait of the Poet Guthmann*, made in Berlin in 1911, with both portraits featuring boyish looking young men, one a sculpture and the other a writer, posed frontally, each with one hand crossed over and resting on their chest, with delicate facial features, short hair and a pronounced smile on similarly shaped red lips.⁵²⁰

Kirchner did a preliminary sketch for the painting *Graef and Friend* in 1914. In the sketch, the pose of the two men is nearly identical to the painting with Graef’s pointy beard visible and his hand around Auerbach’s shoulder delineated with a few quick

⁵¹⁸ Hertwig, as quoted in Röske, “Dokumente einer Freundschaft,” 42.

⁵¹⁹ William Armstrong Percy III, *Pederasty and Pedagogy in Archaic Greece* (Urbana and Chicago: University of Illinois Press, 1996), 2.

⁵²⁰ For a reproduction of the painting *Portrait of the Poet Guthmann*, see Gordon, *Ernst Ludwig Kirchner*, 296 (G215).

strokes (Fig. 3.9).⁵²¹ The sketch focuses on the figures, with one horizontal line designating the mirror that becomes the background wall in the painting. The sketch does not contain the faucet that occupies a central position next to the figures on the right side of the painting that serves to establish the setting as within the bathroom.

In the painting, the setting is minimal, with the faucet on a rounded basin and a square mirror behind it occupying the right side. Kirchner visibly links Graef and Auerbach with the faucet through strong diagonal lines formed from Graef's face looking down to Auerbach and continuing with his left hand on the boy's shoulder touching its base and bisected by a second diagonal beginning in the center foreground at Graef's other hand continuing up to Auerbach to culminate at the faucet. In addition, the two shirts of each man and the faucet are the only elements of the composition painted in a grayish white color and from these, a wide V-shape form occupies the center of the canvas.

In his "Dokumente einer Freundschaft" essay, Thomas Röske calls attention to the phallic shape of the water fixture.⁵²² The appearance of a faucet is a common symbol to convey a location, particularly a bathhouse, as a popular meeting place for gay men.⁵²³ Röske's discussion of *Graef and Friend* hinges on both the faucet as a phallic symbol and on Graef's pose, which he interprets as an indication of Graef's attraction to his younger protégés and the physical urges he ascertains Graef would have had to stifle towards

⁵²¹ The sketch is in Sketchbook 39, 1914, the same book that contains the portrait sketches of Graef and the sketch of him as a satyr.

⁵²² Röske, "Dokumente einer Freundschaft," 42.

⁵²³ Theis and Sternweiler, "Alltag im Kaiserreich und in der Weimarer Republik," in Bollé, *Eldorado*, 53-55. The essay contains a photograph of the Russian-Romanian Baths for Men, located in Potsdam Place in Berlin, in which three men appear in the baths with a faucet included prominently on the left side of the image.

them.⁵²⁴ However, Röske fails to consider the pedagogical appearance of the pose in relation to Auerbach, who was an aspiring artist, and he fails to specify his identity as the nephew of Graef's close friends.

Felix and Anna Auerbach regularly looked after their nephew Johannes, who sketched his aunt and uncle on several occasions, and his sister Cornelia, who remembered regular get-togethers and frequent musical evenings at their home. I believe that rather than symbolize sexual overtones between Graef and Auerbach, the pose in *Graef and Friend* demonstrates Graef's pedagogical devotion and encouragement of the younger man's artistic talent. Kirchner may have similarly taken an interest in Auerbach for this reason, choosing to paint him as one of the only painters or sculptors among the group of writers and philosophers under Graef's tutelage.

In Röske's essay, the overriding focus on homoeroticism negates a consideration of the additional ways to interpret the symbolism of the faucet. In Kirchner's image, the faucet is merged with the two figures, serving to occupy the right side and balance the

⁵²⁴ Röske, "Dokumente einer Freundschaft," 41. As evidence of Graef having to restrain his urges, Röske mentions a letter to Hugo Hertwig written in December 1914 in which he described Kirchner, who was visiting at the time, as being "enchanting to me." Röske also mentions correspondence written later by Kirchner to friends, a couple named the Knoblauchs, in 1930; after reading a French novel entitled *Partenau* by Max-René Hesse, published in 1929, Kirchner wrote and said that the book made him think of his time in Jena with Graef. (Kirchner, as quoted in Röske, "Dokumente einer Freundschaft," 43; and *Ernst Ludwig Kirchner: Briefwechsel mit einem jungen Ehepaar, 1927-1937: Elfriede Dümmler und Hansgeorg Knoblauch* (Bern: Verlag Kornfeld, 1989), 112.)

The novel is centered on Lieutenant Ernst Partenau's unrequited love for a younger soldier, a situation that causes great embarrassment when revealed. The cadet tries in vain to convince Partenau that his love was misplaced, ascribing it to the war years and the lieutenant's inability to accept the values of civil society now that life in the trenches has ended. Partenau commits suicide as a result of the events.

My opinion is that the basic plot of *Partenau*, in which homoerotic feelings are best kept undisclosed or hidden, could likely remind Kirchner of time he spent with gay men who had to keep their true selves hidden to the outside world for many reasons. More importantly, *Partenau* is a novel set during the First World War - the time period of Kirchner and Graef's friendship. When looking back after a decade and a half, the novel's setting during the war years would easily have brought up associations with Graef and Biallowons. Graef died suddenly in 1917 from his profound sadness at losing so many of his younger friends, and in retrospect, Kirchner may have seen both the character of Partenau and his friend Graef as victims of the war.

composition as it emerges from a round, richly colored blue basin. The faucet, a conduit for water, brings with it several interpretations connected to the meaning of the substance it transports. The faucet motif has origins that reach back to the Renaissance. In 1496, Dürer made a woodcut engraving titled *The Bath House (Männerbad)* that depicts men in a variety of poses and activities within a bathhouse (Fig. 4.8). In the middle, one man plays the flute, an instrument reflective in shape of male genitalia, as he gazes towards a man on the left who is leaning upon a post containing a water spigot. On the post, the water faucet, topped with a small ornamental bird, juts out precisely in front of the man's groin. Here, Dürer is employing a verbal pun with the faucet's placement and the use of the bird since the German word for "tap" or faucet is the same as the word for "cock" (*Hahn*), designating both the genitals and a cockatoo bird.⁵²⁵ Prior to this, in Classical times, the appearance of a bird symbolized the Greek custom of an older man offering a cockerel bird as a gift to his younger beloved.⁵²⁶

The Bath House has been interpreted by one scholar as Dürer's representation of the mysteries of purification rituals of which Dionysus was the patron god, with the men depicting various aspects, including the figure at the tap who represents an individual suffering from melancholy, a disability that singled someone suffering from an overly dry constitution.⁵²⁷ The image further references Plato's *Republic*, in which a youth who is

⁵²⁵ James M. Saslow, *Ganymede in the Renaissance: Homosexuality in Art and Society* (New Haven and London: Yale University Press, 1986), 33. For an expanded discussion of the homosexual connotations of Dürer's image, see Jonathan Weinberg, *Speaking for Vice: Homosexuality in the Art of Charles Demuth, Marsden Hartley, and the First American Avant-Garde* (New Haven and London: Yale University Press, 1993), 93. Erwin Panofsky characterizes the figures in Dürer's bathhouse simply as "fun-loving men." (Panofsky, *The Life and Art of Albrecht Dürer*, 50.)

⁵²⁶ Saslow, *Ganymede in the Renaissance*, 33.

not yet initiated into the Dionysian rites looks on as an outsider, much like the figure in the background behind the bathhouse.⁵²⁸ The melancholy figure in Dürer's engraving is posed in a similar profile way to Graef in *Graef and Friend*. As we have seen in other images, Kirchner equated Graef with Dionysus, including in *Portrait of Graef: Jena; Music Room*, and with a satyr, Dionysus' companion, in his sketch. Kirchner may be associating his understanding of the Dionysian symbolism in Dürer's *The Bath House* with Graef's identity. Like the figure whose pose he resembles, Graef has also appeared melancholy in several others paintings, including *Farewell: Botho and Hugo* and *Portrait of Graef*, and the etching *The Siesta* (Figs. 1, 6, 4.6). In the painting *Graef and Friend*, Graef's tender pose and embrace of Auerbach may infer that the younger man has been initiated into their close-knit circle rather than remaining an outsider. In addition, at this time in 1914, the young man was likely a source of comfort for the melancholy Graef by being too young to be called up for military service. Instead, he is able to remain close to his mentor, unlike Biallowons whose departure is central to the narrative of the two other paintings.

In *Graef and Friend*, the inclusion of the faucet establishes the location as the room for bathing, a symbol corresponding to the possibility of Kirchner's awareness of the Dionysian rituals of purification. The faucet also adds several layers of information to the painting. First, the setting allows the viewer to understand the men's daily regime and the environment in Graef's Jena home, including the communal activities such as bathing and the pedagogical instruction received during this time. As Hertwig recalled, Graef

⁵²⁷ Edgar Wood, "Dürer's 'Männerbad': A Dionysian Mystery," *Journal of the Warburg Institute* 2, no. 3 (January 1939): 269-71.

⁵²⁸ Wood, "Dürer's 'Männerbad'," 269; and Panofsky, *The Life and Art of Albrecht Dürer*, 50.

upheld strict physical fitness and health principles among the younger men, and during the morning regime, he freely discussed these issues.⁵²⁹ Kirchner made an etching *Two Men in the Bath*, 1915, featuring just such a scene with Hugo bathing in a shallow tub with Graef seated next to the basin wearing a robe loosely covering his torso (Fig. 4.9). The men look towards one another as though engaged in a dialogue. Both are rendered thoroughly albeit with short and loose lines that was characteristic of Kirchner's abbreviated sketching style taken directly from life. The etching *Two Men in the Bath* and the painting *Graef and Friend* illustrate the parallels between Graef and his young associates with the ancient Greek tradition of intimate, pedagogical friendships between men where communal bathing and exercising together were commonplace.

How did water figure in philological discussions of the ancient Greeks?

Winckelmann lauded water above all other substances and white above all colors as the purest form for matter to take.⁵³⁰ In an early lecture, published under the title "Early Greek Philosophy and Other Essays," Nietzsche explained his understanding of the role of water:

Greek philosophy seems to begin with a preposterous fancy, with the proposition that water is the origin and mother-womb of all things. Is it really necessary to stop there and become serious? Yes, and for three reasons: firstly, because the proposition does enunciate something about the origin of things; secondly, because it does so without figure and fable; thirdly and lastly, because in it is contained, although only in the chrysalis state, the idea: Everything is one.⁵³¹

⁵²⁹ Hertwig, as quoted in Röske, "Dokumente einer Freundschaft," 41.

⁵³⁰ Marchand, *Down From Olympus*, 12.

⁵³¹ Nietzsche, "Early Greek Philosophy and Other Essay," in *The Complete Works of Friedrich Nietzsche* 2, ed. Oscar Levy, trans. Maximilian A. Mügge (Edinburgh & London: J. N. Foulis, 1911), 86.

Nietzsche's explanation reinforces the importance of understanding the interrelatedness of life, which relates visually to the poses of the figures and their placement alongside the faucet.

The prominence of the faucet in the composition as a conduit for the flow and presence of water has an important significance for Kirchner as it relates to the artist's association of nature, the outdoors, and especially water, with the liberated freedom and regenerative atmosphere of some of his favorite and most productive environments, as seen in many of his earlier bathing scenes made at the Mortizburg ponds in Dresden and on the beaches of the island of Fehmarn. Within Kirchner's Brücke period, outdoor bathing scenes are among his most emblematic and dynamic works in depicting the Brücke's freedom from convention in the uninhibited enjoyment and creative impetus found outdoors, such as the figures in the woodcut *Bathers Throwing Reeds*, 1910 (Fig. 2.3). In these images, the figures act naturally and uninhibitedly in tune with their environment, fulfilling Nietzsche's philosophy of vitality and authenticity. Here, in the image of Graef, although the setting is indoors, the faucet can be seen as a symbol for the same liberated atmosphere and unconventional freedom available to Kirchner and the other men in Graef's Jena home. The mood of the painting is clearly positive, with the young man smiling and Graef's pose appearing both nurturing and edifying.

The appearance of water is central to another very different painting by Kirchner. If we interpret the faucet in *Graef and Friend* as a conduit for water, a substance reflecting the purity, regeneration and joy to be experienced within it, then there are alternate interpretations for one of Kirchner's most famous military images, *Artillerymen in the Shower*, 1915, made once Kirchner began serving as an "involuntary volunteer" in

Halle (Fig. 10). This large scale painting features a group of men densely packed into a shower with one crouching figure who appears to be based on the artist stoking the furnace. The men shower under the gaze of a military commandeer in full uniform standing separately off to the right.

The painting *Artillerymen in the Shower* has long been interpreted as expressive of the alienation and loneliness Kirchner found in military service and the loss of individuality found in its regimentation.⁵³² If we focus on the elements of the composition that are influenced by the flow of water, however, we see it contains positive associations as well.⁵³³ The men stretch and relax their limbs under the flow of water, as seen particularly on the left side, where two men wash each other in an embrace, while others stretch their arms above or bend over allowing the water to flow over their bodies, away from the overseeing gaze of the dressed attendant who serves as a reminder of the day-to-day reality of their life. A prominent sign of masculine vitality and regeneration is seen in the arching yellow stream of paint in the same color used to render the men's bodies that Kirchner has applied projecting from the penis of one of the men on the right side of the composition mirroring an ejaculation.

⁵³² Cork, *The Bitter Truth*, 106-07; Gordon, *Expressionism*, 154; and Selz, *German Expressionist Painting*, 299.

⁵³³ Cork's interpretation of the painting is a good example of the tendency to view Kirchner's war imagery as overwhelmingly negative. He states: "Water spurts from the ceiling in short, stabbing shafts...Some of the men shy away from the shower's impact as if they were threatened by falling bayonets. The brushstrokes slashing their attenuated bodies reinforce the sense of assaults...Sprayed water here becomes a metaphor for the gunfire which will soon decimate so many of these wan young men." (Cork, *The Bitter Truth*, 106-07.) The interpretation of Selz is less strident: *Artillerymen in the Shower* is "a visual expression of the constraint and coercion he felt in the army: a large number of undressed young men, pressed into a tiny room, take showers under the surveillance of an officer barking orders. The soldiers seem to need to assume their elongated forms even to fit into the shower room." (Selz, *German Expressionist Painting*, 299.)

In 1916, after his period of military service was over, Kirchner returned to the subject of bathing men as his health improved in the sanatorium of Dr. Kohnstamm in Königstein. There, he painted a series of murals featuring nude bathers directly onto the walls of the sanatorium's communal dining area.⁵³⁴ The murals show how the theme of bathing signified health, wellness and personal regeneration as a therapeutic subject for the artist.

To briefly summarize, in these variations on double portraits, featuring a friendship pair and two genre scenes, Graef's role as spiritual leader of a community of men becomes clear. With *Graef and Friend*, Kirchner illustrates Graef's pedagogic relationship with his younger associates while the images featuring Graef with Biallowons, including *Two Friends Conversing* and the first portrait pair, reflect the long-standing nature of their friendship and the intimacy between them. Kirchner's most evocative image of the pair, another double-portrait, is the subject of the following chapter, and with it, we will see how Kirchner visually distinguishes this relationship from the others by incorporating historical examples that bring the ancients to the forefront in a complex, symbolically-laden image. Afterwards, the final chapter will undertake a discussion of how Kirchner sought to use his friendship with Graef and the ideological influence of Nietzsche in artworks made during the year 1915 as a means of stabilization and preservation.

⁵³⁴ For a discussion of these murals, see Meike Hoffmann, "Ernst Ludwig Kirchners Wandmalereien im Sanatorium Kohnstamm," in *Ernst Ludwig Kirchner in Königstein*, 33-50; and Röske, *Tanz zwischen den Frauen*, 56-58.

Chapter 5: Apollo and Dionysus: Intimate Friendship in the Painting *Farewell: Botho and Hugo*

The final double-portrait painting featuring Graef and Biallowons, *Farewell: Botho and Hugo*, 1914, is the most unusual (Fig. 6). In Kirchner's first portraits of the men, *Portrait of Graef* and *Portrait of Hugo*, the two men are depicted separately each in a traditional bust-length format following the example of friendship portraiture and the men's romantic union is not central to the narrative. These were followed by two different genre paintings: Graef's pedagogical role is illustrated in *Graef and Friend* while his companionship with Biallowons is depicted in *Two Friends Conversing*. Like the others, *Farewell: Botho and Hugo*, 1914, is a double-portrait. It also shares the same subject matter of Hugo's departure for service with the initial pair, but it is a complex, evocative consideration of the strength of the men's bonds featuring the pair in an emotionally expressive embrace (Figs. 1 - 6).⁵³⁵

In *Farewell: Botho and Hugo*, the two men are depicted in a seated position in an embrace as the younger man prepares to depart for combat duty, something Hugo did in mid-1915. In the painting, their intertwined pose is a poignant and potent symbol of the pair's union to offset the reality of the forthcoming separation between all three men.

Unbeknownst to them, Biallowons would die at the battle of Verdun, approximately one

⁵³⁵ Since the diptych pair and *Farewell* depict the event of bidding goodbye between Graef and Biallowons, it is worthwhile to quote Nietzsche regarding the subject. In Aphorism 251 titled "In Parting" in *Human, All-Too-Human*, he states: "Not how one soul comes close to another but how it moves away shows me their kinship and how much they belong together." (Nietzsche, *Human, All-Too-Human*, in *Basic Writings of Nietzsche*, 157.)

In Plato's *Symposium*, the philosopher Aristophanes, who was the banquet's fourth speaker in the dialogue, praised life-long partnerships by saying: "Whenever the lover of boys – or any other person for that matter - has the good fortune to encounter his own actual other half, affection and kinship and love combined inspire human emotions which is quite overwhelming, and such a pair practically refuses ever to be separated even for a moment." (Plato, *Symposium*, in *Homosexuality in Greece and Rome: A Sourcebook of Basic Documents*, 191.)

year later on July 9, 1916. As the fifth and final image featuring Graef that Kirchner painted in the fall of 1914, *Farewell: Botho and Hugo* shows how close his friendship with the men had become. By this time, Kirchner clearly understood their intimate relationship and had fully absorbed the creative environment within Graef's home to understand his friend's devotion to the ancient Greek example.

Unfortunately, this painting, which is the boldest of Kirchner's images of Graf and Biallowons in its unusually straightforward and emotionally charged depiction of a modern homosexual couple, was either lost or destroyed after its inclusion in the *Degenerate Art Exhibition* in Munich in 1937. Although evidence of it only exists in black and white photographs, it is still possible to get a sense of the unusual iconography of the composition with its intimate pose and the precise arrangement of the men's bodies. A postcard written later by Erna to the collector Carl Hagemann verifies the colors; Graef wears a black suit while Biallowons is in a green uniform.⁵³⁶ Biallowons also wears the same closely shorn hair of active duty as seen in the painting *Two Friends Conversing*, 1914, made immediately prior. While the other two portrait paintings of Graef feature a vibrant palette of bright yellow and pink balanced by deep blue, compared with the army green in *Portrait of Hugo* that is enlivened by the blue and yellow shapes that surround him, *Farewell: Botho and Hugo*, painted later and closer to Biallowons' actual departure for combat, includes a more somber palette that better reflects the mood of the event.

In Thomas Röske's essay "Dokumente einer Freundschaft – Botho Graef und Hugo Biallowons auf Bildern Ernst Ludwig Kirchners," he discusses the homosexual

⁵³⁶ Röske, "Dokumente einer Freundschaft," 29, note 29. The postcard from Erna to Hagemann, dated December 16, 1918, is in the Archive of the Stadelschen Kunstinstitute, Frankfurt am Main.

portraiture of Kirchner's contemporaries as a way of understanding how the artist arrived at this image and he compares *Farewell: Botho and Hugo* with Edvard Munch's double portrait *The Art Collector Albert Kollmann and the Writer Sten Drewsen*, 1901, and Max Slevogt's painting of his patron, the art historian Dr. Johannes Guthmann and his partner, the writer Dr. Joachim Zimmerman, 1915, made a year after the two men accompanied Slevogt on a five-week trip to Egypt.⁵³⁷ In Munch's painting, although the men face one another, their gazes do not meet; rather, on the left, the older man, who bears a similarity to Graef with his beard, long nose and sharp features, prominently holds a book in hand as he looks to his companion whose gaze is directed downwards and beyond rather than towards his companion.

In both Slevogt's painting and Kirchner's previous portrait diptych of Botho and Hugo, the formality of the poses bears no relationship to the romantic orientation of the subjects. In Slevogt's painting, one of the pair is positioned frontally while the other is in profile. Though one is positioned slightly in front of the other causing their forms to overlap spatially, there is no hint of a bond or a union between them. In both of these works, the gazes between the two men do not meet as one extends outwards, connecting to the viewer, and the other moves out of the canvas to the left side. Röske discusses a watercolor by Slevogt, made in 1912, in which the same subjects are depicted sunbathing nude and he draws a parallel with Kirchner's lithograph *Two Men in the Bath*, 1915, as both depict men in stages of undress within private situations. Kirchner's lithograph depicts Hugo bathing in a shallow tub with Graef seated next to him (Fig. 4.9). As Röske

⁵³⁷ Röske, "Dokumente einer Freundschaft," 45. Neither painting is reproduced in the essay: Munch's is part of the collection of the Hamburg Kunsthalle, Germany, and for Slevogt, see Hans-Jürgen Imiela, *Max Slevogt: Eine Monographie* (Karlsruhe: G. Braun, 1968), 323, illus. 195; and the exhibition catalogue Berthold Roland, ed., *Max Slevogt: Ägyptenreis 1914* (Landesmuseum Mainz, 1989).

explains, both artworks were made in more informal, or “intimate” mediums rather than the more formal oil painting.⁵³⁸ He finds that since it was necessary to conceal one’s homosexual orientation for fear of legal punishment, the oil paintings by comparison emphasize platonic friendship to maintain public standards of decency.

The question remains as to how Kirchner conceived of the iconography of *Farewell: Botho and Hugo*? He departs radically from the precedent of his first friendship portrait pair and the intricacy of the composition’s arrangement is very different from the images by his contemporaries. The painting shares several similarities, including its title, characters and subject matter, with a poem written by the homosexual advocate Karl Ulrichs, whose pioneering efforts in the mid-nineteenth century were discussed earlier. When Ulrichs’ life’s work was collected for publication, his political writings mixed with his poetry and prose amounted to twelve volumes under the collective title *Forschungen über das Rätsel der mann männlichen Liebe* (*Researches on the Riddle of Love Between Men*), edited by the well-known homosexual advocate Magnus Hirschfeld and published in Berlin in 1898. Like Hirschfeld, Graef was living and working in Berlin at the time and it is possible that Graef knew of the publication of Ulrichs’ writings. In the following poem, Ulrichs incorporates references to the ancient Greeks demonstrating his understanding of male love as influenced by Greek mythology. The poem shares the title “Farewell” with Kirchner’s painting. It was written in the late 1860s, and is concerned with Ulrichs’ declaration of love for his companion Eberhard, a hussar (light cavalryman), who is departing for service, a parallel with Hugo in Kirchner’s *Farewell: Botho and Hugo*. The poem reads:

⁵³⁸ Röske, “Dokumente einer Freundschaft,” 45; for Slevogt’s watercolor of Johannes Guthmann and Joachim Zimmerman see page 46.

And so farewell! perchance on Earth
 God's finger – as 'twixt thee and me-
 Will never make that wonder clear
 Why thus It drew me unto thee.

Oh Eberhard! I must despair,
 To roses young tell all my care,
 So red in spring wherever sown.
 No! I'll control the tears I feel!
 And burn that name of thine with steel!
 In my poor heart howe'er deep grown.

But once again I'll stand with thee
 Before the One who knows the past.
 I hope to see thee there by me;
 When thou thy Final Judgment hast.

But should I turn on thee my wrath?
 Nay, nectar blooms strew in thy path,
 Eternal youth from Latmos' vale.
 How sweetly thy eyes, I confess,
 Gave courage, strength, and happiness:
 And now from me a final "Hail!"⁵³⁹

In *Farewell: Botho and Hugo*, the two men are seated, posed frontally and side-by-side with their heads turned to face one another. Graef's face is tilted upwards and in a three-quarter position while Biallowons is in profile looking at him. The intensity of their reciprocal gaze is compelling. Though their heads are not identically level, Graef's mustache lines up evenly across from Biallowons' eyes and the tip of Graef's beard is then level with Biallowons' mouth forming a compact center in the middle of the composition. The two profile figures create the impression of two halves that together appear to form one whole, a visual reconciliation of forms paralleling the theme of

⁵³⁹ The classical reference is to the Greek myth of Endymion, a boy to whom Zeus gave eternal youth in the form of sleep and visited with an embrace every night in his grotto on Mount Latmos on Caria. Soon after its writing, Ulrichs submitted the poem for publication to the newspaper *Morganblatt* in Stuttgart where it was rejected. In his accompanying letter, he described it: "The content may perhaps not be understandable. It touches on the separation resulting from an extraordinarily tender friendship that was perhaps unique in its kind." Ulrichs eventually published the poem himself in 1868. (Kennedy, *Ulrichs: The Life and Works of Karl Heinrich Ulrichs*, 54-55.)

Nietzsche's *The Birth of Tragedy*, although Kirchner exacerbates their forthcoming physical divide by inserting a small table in the upper portion of the composition directly in between the space of their heads.

As they did in *Portrait of Botho Graef, Jena: Music Room* and *Dance Between the Women*, the figures occupy the entire vertical space of the composition with the focus entirely on them as a pair. There is scarce room in the composition for any furniture or decorative objects and the image includes none of the colorful elements that are central to the prior paintings of Graef. Aside from the armrest of the furniture upon which they are seated, visible next to Biallowons on the right side, and the table positioned above and behind them separating their heads, there are no extraneous details to detract from the emotional expressions on their faces and the intertwined engagement of their bodies.

Röske interprets the closely positioned bodies of the two men with touching hips and the variously stiff and loose, dark and light clothing, as seen in Biallowons tight-fitting pants versus his jacket, as imparting a charged eroticism by creating the illusion that Hugo's legs are nude.⁵⁴⁰ While there is clearly a phallic element to the placement of Biallowons' jacket, as it appears to visually meander across and into Graef's lap to rest near his genitals, the close positioning of their bodies is quite natural given their relationship and the subject matter. In my opinion, the image appears more emotionally charged than sexually erotic, while the tight-fitting pants remain consistent with the uniform Biallowons would have worn as a deputy officer in the infantry. Furthermore, it is possible that the detail of the tight-fitting pants of the uniform is deliberate, demonstrating Kirchner's awareness of contemporary issues in fashion. In the past,

⁵⁴⁰ Röske, "Dokumente einer Freundschaft," 44.

Kirchner incorporated specific aspects of women's dress in his artworks that show his interest in issues surrounding fashion, particularly as seen in his *Street Scene* series, all ten of which feature women wearing plumed hats of the type associated with prostitutes with some featuring the woman wearing a widow's veil, another popular accessory.⁵⁴¹

Although Röske mentions the eroticism of the appearance of the pants, he does not discuss the contemporary public attention given to the homoerotic implications of the military uniform in the popular media following 1906, when the Eulenburg-Moltke Affair erupted at the highest levels of the German government and military. In summary, a journalist and opponent of Kaiser Wilhelm II publicly charged two of his advisors, Prince Philipp zu Eulenburg and Count Kuno von Moltke, the Commandant of Berlin, with homosexual activities. This resulted in a series of libel and perjury trials that brought unprecedented public interest to the issue of homosexuality and was interpreted by many as an indication of the national decadence and degeneration that had infiltrated the highest levels of government and the military.⁵⁴² The trials included salacious revelations that centered on explicit activities among high-ranking officers. Witness testimony revealed that men in uniform frequently attracted the attention of other men while out publicly, to the extent that it became forbidden to wear the uniform off-duty for a period and certain areas were designated as prohibited from walking with patrols set-up to stop the solicitation of soldiers.⁵⁴³ As a result of this information, many caricatures appeared

⁵⁴¹ Haxthausen, "'A New Beauty': Ernst Ludwig Kirchner's Images of Berlin," 81.

⁵⁴² For an expanded discussion of the Eulenburg-Moltke Affair, see James D. Steakley, "The Iconography of a Scandal: Political Cartoons and the Eulenburg Affair in Wilhelmine Germany," in *Hidden From History: Reclaiming the Gay and Lesbian Past*, eds. Martin Bauml Duberman, Martha Vicinus and George Chauncey, Jr. (New York: NAL Books, 1989): 233-57. The essay includes reproductions of many of the popular media cartoons.

in the popular media that used the uniform's tight-fitting pants to satirize the lustful exploits of officers in pursuit of soldiers.

In *Farewell: Botho and Hugo*, the tension in the position of the men's arms and legs adds an element of overall agitation rather than eroticism. One could additionally interpret the pale color and proportion of Biallowons' clothed legs taken together with his profile pose and calm demeanor as giving him the vague appearance of a Classical sculpture known for maintaining calm facial repose regardless of adverse situations. His idealized composure is in contrast with Graef's wrought expression, which further relates to Hugo's idealized Apollinian image and Graef's melancholic temperament as seen in other images.

In the first portrait pair, we have seen how Kirchner relied upon traditional compositional solutions found in Renaissance family portraits and Romantic friendship portraiture. With *Farewell: Botho and Hugo*, I will explain Kirchner's development of a highly symbolic iconographic portrait that best describes the men's homosexual union by incorporating specific and relevant visual references from the art historical past to best describe the men in an insightful and unique composition. At the same time, Kirchner conveys several of the most vital aspects of Graef's identity, including his close relationship with Biallowons; his interest in aesthetics, artworks and art history; and his devotion and reliance on the ancient Greeks. In the painting *Farewell: Botho and Hugo*, Kirchner was able to interweave references to Graef's love of the ancient Greeks and the example of the Renaissance by drawing from select erotic iconography from the past that

⁵⁴³ Theis and Sternweiler, "Soldaten," in "Alltag im Kaiserreich und in der Weimarer Republik," in Bollé, *Eldorado*, 53-55.

results in a thoroughly modern image of Graef and Biallowons in the creation of one of Kirchner's most complex portraits to date.

In *Farewell: Botho and Hugo*, the placement of the figures is unusual. The legs, in a precise arrangement, dominate the lower half of the composition. Graef's legs are bent at the knee at a sharp angle bringing the viewer from the left corner up to the couple's grasping hands while Biallowons' legs, crossed at the calves, direct the viewer's gaze upwards from the opposite corner to his other hand. The legs create two clear diagonal lines that bisect the canvas in the middle whereby each man's legs lead directly up to the other man's body and shoulders which are then brought together at the top by their strong connecting gazes.

Three hands occupy the bottom half of the canvas just below the middle. The right hand of each man tightly grasps the other person and rests on Graef's thigh. Biallowons' other arm rests on his leg while Graef's left hand embraces his younger companion and pulls him close, his slender fingers visible under Biallowons' arm and reaching across his chest. The way in which Biallowons' arm extends across Graef's body to hold his hand means that each man's hand or arm covers the area around the heart of the other man. Is Kirchner symbolically representing the emotional connection from their hands to their hearts? This use of the hand for symbolic purposes is consistent with other images in which Kirchner prominently features the hand of an artist, including his own, to symbolize the activity of the hand with one's intellectual identity as an artist.⁵⁴⁴ Kirchner relied on the symbolism of the artist's hand in several paintings made during this period, including in *Self-Portrait*, 1913, and in *Portrait of Oskar Schlemmer*,

⁵⁴⁴ Springer, *Hand and Head*, 115-30; Chapter: Raphael without Hands.

1914, painted after his first portrait of Graef (Figs. 4.2, 6.1). In *Farewell: Botho and Hugo*, it could be said that where the subject is an emotional attachment, Kirchner uses the hands together with the heart to symbolize this idea.

The manner in which the men's legs and arms are positioned in *Farewell: Botho and Hugo* is very specific and unusual with no precedent in Kirchner's previous portraits. To embrace or bid goodbye does not require such contortions from a seated pose or position, particularly as seen in the angularity of Graef's bent legs, while the placement of the men's limbs is extremely precise in its linear arrangement. Kirchner relies upon precise placement and highly choreographed positions in other compositions, in examples such as *Dancing School*, 1914, and *The Tent; Interior in Berlin Studio*, 1914, both of which maintain distinct spatial boundaries between the figures, as does the organization of *Dance Between the Women*, 1915, but in *Farewell: Botho and Hugo*, individual spatial realms are abandoned (Figs. 7, 2.11, 2.12). In Kirchner's genre scenes, his compositions tend to reinforce that he is working directly from his source of inspiration to preserve the dynamism of his subject, as seen in his abundant images of popular entertainment or street scenes. To achieve this, Kirchner frequently made sketches directly from life, something he referred to as a "hieroglyph," and then expanded upon these quick renderings to formulate larger painted compositions.

In a sketchbook for 1914-1915, in addition to several sketches of Graef, Kirchner made a sketch for the painting *Graef and Friend*, 1915, painted just prior to *Farewell: Botho and Hugo*, which shows that in translating the imagery of Graef and his young protégé from drawing to painting, he followed his sketch of the figure's poses fairly closely to arrive at the painting (Figs. 3, 3.9). Given the complexity of the tightly

interlaced figural arrangement in *Farewell: Botho and Hugo*, it is curious that Kirchner conceived of such a composition without making preliminary sketches. Of course, it is also possible that any sketches have been lost or not included in the sketchbook. It is also possible that instead of a sketch, as I will discuss, he worked from alternative printed sources from Graef's library to arrive at the precise and complex arrangement.

The position of the figures in *Farewell: Botho and Hugo* provides the most compelling visual link to several historical sources as the example for the painting. As we continue, I will expand on how Kirchner interweaves compelling erotic iconographic sources from his understanding of Renaissance and Classical Greek imagery to create a highly informative and descriptive characterization of the relationship between Graef and Biallowons in which the emphasis is on the intellectual and emotional bonds of their union. I posit that Graef introduced Kirchner to the erotic Renaissance poetry of Aretino as it related to their shared interest in the provocations surrounding the issue of modern prostitution and explicit sexuality and that he introduced Kirchner to an understanding of the Classical Greek tradition of pederasty in images from Attic vases that related not only to homosexual union but to the strong bonds of friendships among men in this tradition. From these sources, Kirchner found complex and relevant imagery upon which to base his composition for *Farewell: Botho and Hugo*, and furthermore, with it, was able to communicate very specific and intimate information to Graef and a like-wise informed audience.

It is highly likely that Graef would study images with Kirchner given both men's interest in the visual arts. The two men also shared an interest in anti-bourgeois ideology with Kirchner committed to an unconventional bohemian lifestyle and Graef living

outside of conventional norm as “a proud bachelor, well aware of his freedom.”⁵⁴⁵ In addition, the specific source material incorporates, as we will see, explicit sexual iconography, which is a subject that Kirchner frequently incorporated into his work, as well as being drawn from areas that fall specifically within Graef’s areas of art historical interest and expertise.

A Renaissance Example

During the Renaissance, the use of the “slung-leg” motif with one figure’s legs thrown over or around another figure became a convention to represent the act of copulation just as the criss-crossing or intertwining of legs was frequently used to symbolize sexual union or love.⁵⁴⁶ In the sixteenth-century engraving *Apollo and Hyacinth* by Jacopo Caraglio, ca. 1527, the use of the slung-leg is seen (Fig. 5.1). In the engraving, part of a series of images titled *The Loves of the Gods*, the intertwined legs symbolize this affection with Apollo making his attraction for the youth clear by encircling Hyacinth with his legs. Hugo’s jacket visually positioned on Graef’s lap and the complex figural arrangement reference both the common use of disheveled drapery and the slung-leg position of limbs in Italian Renaissance images. The bunching of drapery alludes to recent amorous events in the bedroom and is a common motif, as seen in Annibale Caracci’s *Jupiter and Juno* fresco in the series *The Loves of the Gods*, made for the Farnese Palace in Rome from 1597-1608; and in the painting *Two Lovers* by

⁵⁴⁵ Waetzold, as quoted in Röske, “Dokumente einer Freundschaft,” 41.

⁵⁴⁶ Bette Talvacchia, *Taking Positions: On the Erotic in Renaissance Culture* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1999), 128.

Giulio Romano, 1523-1524, in which the bunched drapery covers the thighs and spreads across the lap of the seated couple.

Kirchner may have been familiar with the symbolism of the slung-leg motif from Northern Renaissance artists. In Lucas Cranach's painting *Apollo and Diana*, the goddess of the hunt is seated on a stag with one leg pulled up at the ankle to cross over the knee and one hand tucked in between the legs in a variation on the intertwining of limbs. Standing next to her, Apollo appears to be based on the idealized Greek example with his contrapposto pose and youthful form.⁵⁴⁷ The crossed position of Biallowons' calves bears the same meaning of a devoted companion as the male counterpart in one couple, seen on the right, and the legs of the couple lying on the left, in another painting by Cranach, titled *The Golden Age*, ca. 1530, in which various couples harmoniously occupy a mythical landscape of Eden in poses and groupings that symbolize love, happiness and union (Fig. 5.2).

In light of the symbolism of the intertwined legs, Thomas Röske compares the appearance of the men in *Farewell: Botho and Hugo* with the Northern Renaissance example seen in a painting titled *Hercules and Deianira* by Jan Gossaert (also known as Mabuse), 1543 (Fig. 5.3).⁵⁴⁸ However, if we pause to compare Kirchner's version with Gossaert's painting, we see that in Kirchner's artwork, the legs are not actually intertwined together. Biallowons' legs are crossed at the calves and Graef's are in a bent leg position while in Gossaert's composition, the men's legs are in the slung-leg position encircling the woman's legs and forming a phallic oval shape into which Deianira's legs

⁵⁴⁷ The Cranach painting *Apollo and Diana* was in the Berlin State collection at the time and it was reproduced in Worringer's book *Lukas Cranach* (Munich and Leipzig: R. Piper & Co., Verlag, 1908), 99.

⁵⁴⁸ Röske, *Tanz zwischen den Frauen*, 70; and Röske, "Dokumente einer Freundschaft," 44.

are inserted. The legs remain completely intertwined down to their feet and their hands are not clasped together while the placement of both sets of limbs in *Farewell: Botho and Hugo* is different as the hands are clasped tightly and the legs are positioned precisely yet independently from one another.

It is around the subject of the Renaissance writer Pietro Aretino (1492-1556) and his pornographic poetry that I believe the strongest Renaissance source emerges for the composition of *Farewell: Botho and Hugo*. Aretino, who was known as the “scourge of princes” is largely credited with introducing modern pornography to Italy in the sixteenth century through his writing.⁵⁴⁹ According to the Italian Renaissance historian Jacob Burckhardt, who was incidentally a friend of Nietzsche’s at the University of Basel, Aretino had developed a reputation while living in Rome as being “the greatest railer of modern times.”⁵⁵⁰ As Burckhardt explains, he was the first great example of the use or abuse of publicity, provoking a scandal to profit out of his explicit prose and accordingly, “in a certain sense may be considered the father of modern journalism.”⁵⁵¹ According to the Renaissance scholar James M. Saslow, “Aretino made no secret of his fondness for physical pleasure and was contemptuous of those whose suppression of eroticism seemed to him hypocritical.”⁵⁵² In his personal life, he was a hedonist, conducting numerous

⁵⁴⁹ By the 1520s, Aretino was well known for his popular religious tracts, plays and collection of letters as a visitor to the Papal courts and as an associate of the powerful Gonzaga family. (Thomas Caldecot Chubb, *Aretino: The Scourge of Princes* (New York: Reynal and Hitchcock, 1940); and Paula Findlen, “Humanism, Politics and Pornography in Renaissance Italy” in *The Invention of Pornography: Obscenity and the Origins of Modernism, 1500-1800*, ed. Lynn Hunt (New York: Zone Books, 1993), 52.)

⁵⁵⁰ Jacob Burckhardt, *The Civilization of the Renaissance in Italy* (London: Phaidon Press, 1945), 101; see discussion of Aretino on pages 100-03. This book was first published as *Die Kultur der Renaissance in Italien* in 1860; Burckhardt remains an important scholar of the Italian Renaissance.

⁵⁵¹ Burckhardt, *The Civilization of the Renaissance in Italy*, 101.

⁵⁵² Saslow, *Ganymede in the Renaissance*, 71.

affairs with both men and women while in his writings, he maintained the belief that art should incite physical passion. It was with his voyeuristic pornographic prose, the origins of which stemmed from the ancient *Dialogues of the Courtesans* by Lucian, that Aretino caused a sensation and fulfilled this idea. According to Paula Findlen: “By using pornography as a vehicle to attack everything from the humanist educational program to clerical piety to the vicissitudes of court life, Aretino exposed the vices of the upper classes to an indiscriminate readership. He further offended the upper-class sense of propriety by putting his pronouncements in the mouth of a “whore”.”⁵⁵³

In one series that came to be known as the *I modi*, meaning “the positions,” depicting various sexual positions between heterosexual couples, Aretino’s poetry accompanied images that were equally as scandalous as his writing. In 1524, the well-known engraver Marcantonio Raimondi, who was in Rome from Bologna at the time, completed a series of sixteen engravings depicting various sexual positions after drawings by Giulio Romano, who was a member of the Raphael workshop at the time.⁵⁵⁴ Romano was completing a commission at the Vatican when he undertook the execution of a series of sixteen sexually explicit drawings. Romano was a celebrated draftsman known for his unsurpassed ability to create modern drawings based on antique sources. The Renaissance biographer Giorgio Vasari had previously praised Romano’s drawings and his graphic skill, saying, “he was so facile in every field of art, and particularly in drawing, that we have no record of anyone who has produced more than he.”⁵⁵⁵ But, the

⁵⁵³ Findlen, “Humanism, Politics and Pornography in Renaissance Italy,” 101.

⁵⁵⁴ Chubb, *Aretino*, 112. Chubb speculates that Raimondi was in Rome attempting to profiteer from the sale of his own engravings that he was selling as having been made by Dürer rather than as copies. (Chubb, *Aretino*, 111-13.)

latest *I modi* series, which Vasari felt was nothing more than a guide to lechery, offended him deeply, depicting “the various ways, attitudes and positions in which licentious men have intercourse with women; and, what was worse, for each plate [Aretino] wrote a most indecent sonnet...”⁵⁵⁶ Upon its distribution, the *I modi* series, known today as “the paradigm of subversive erotic imagery in early modern Europe,” caused an immediate controversy in Rome.⁵⁵⁷ Raimondo was jailed for a year over the indecency of his engravings, while Romano quickly left Rome for a commission with the Gonzaga court in Mantua entirely avoiding the storm of controversy that ensued.

As it did for many artists of the Italian Renaissance, antique art freely served as Romano’s point of inspiration and his reputation was largely established on his ability to incorporate ancient motifs without merely copying them in the production of superb, elegantly-rendered modern drawings.⁵⁵⁸ By selecting a mythological or ancient subject, an artist had greater license to depict sexual iconography since the subject was removed from contemporary life and drawn from the ideal of the past example. According to one scholar, Romano, himself a collector of ancient artifacts and artworks, may have been indebted to an ancient Roman series, the *Spintriae*, a group of “chits” used as a form of payment in brothels that featured illustrations of heterosexual couples engaged in various

⁵⁵⁵ Vasari, *Lives of the Most Eminent Painters, Sculptors and Architects*, vol. 6, trans. by Gaston Du C. de Vere. (New York: AMC Press, 1976), 165. Giorgio Vasari’s biographies of Renaissance artists were originally published as *Le vite de’ più eccellenti architetti, pittori, et scultori italiani* in Italy in 1550, with a second edition in 1568. See Vasari, *Lives of the Most Eminent Painters*, vol. 6, for a complete discussion of Raimondo on pages 91-106 and Romano on pages 145-69.

⁵⁵⁶ Vasari, *Lives of the Most Eminent Painters*, 104-05.

⁵⁵⁷ Talvacchia, *Taking Positions*, 6.

⁵⁵⁸ Talvacchia, *Taking Positions*, xi.

sex acts, in the formulation of his sixteen erotic drawings.⁵⁵⁹ Although it is unknown whether Kirchner also knew this particular series, he was likely aware of the abundance of such sexually explicit graphic imagery in Roman decorations since he had prior expressed his admiration for the wall paintings of Pompeii, an enthusiasm he shared with Otto Mueller.⁵⁶⁰

In Romano's series of drawings, he exchanged the ancient or mythological figure for a contemporary subject, thereby removing it entirely from the realm of high culture to produce highly erotic imagery. These compositions abolished any sense of remoteness from the subject for the viewer since it was now the viewer's contemporaries rather than mythological figures on display. This shift heightened the scandalous feeling of looking at images set in contemporary interiors and greatly increased the sense of voyeurism. The tone is made obvious in one example where onlookers appear to be gazing through a window at one couple in the midst of their sexual activities.

Aretino, who knew the artist Raimondo personally from a portrait he had made, visited the pope himself to secure his release from prison. In exchange, Raimondi was instructed to destroy the plates of the engravings. Aretino, however, curious to see what had caused such a scandal, studied them first and was inspired to write sonnets to accompany them before he released the images again, this time accompanied by his poetry in 1527. The series, despite its origins with Romano, came to be known as Aretino's *I modi* after the inclusion of his sonnets. This version was judged to assail the

⁵⁵⁹ Findlen, "Humanism, Politics and Pornography in Renaissance Italy," 76.

⁵⁶⁰ Kirchner, in a letter dated October 15, 1930, to Carl Hagemann, as quoted in Gordon *Ernst Ludwig Kirchner*, 457, note 51.

senses more completely than any of his prior publications.⁵⁶¹ Vasari described it by saying: “I know not which was the greater, the offense to the eye from the drawings of Giulio, or the outrage to the ear from the words of Aretino.”⁵⁶²

Aretino fled Rome immediately after the publication’s release and the resulting scandal, seeking temporary safety in Mantua before settling in Venice in 1527, where he remained for the final thirty years of his life as it was the only city offering him safe asylum. Aretino enjoyed the controversy and publicly defended his sonnets, stating: “Their indecent memory, I dedicate to all hypocrites, for I am all out of patience with their scurvy strictures and with that dirty custom which tells eyes they cannot look on that they most delight to see.”⁵⁶³ He also continued to relish and glory in the scandals that followed his subsequent publications, particularly the *Sonnetti lussuriosi*, 1527, which was also accompanied by images from Marcantonio Raimondi, and the notorious *Ragionamenti*, 1534-1536, in which the protagonist is a prostitute named Nanna.

The genre of sexual erotica in the form of printed engravings was highly popular among the Renaissance elite.⁵⁶⁴ In 1527, the *I modi* series was released as a manuscript for popular consumption at a time when print culture was growing in popularity and Aretino was never lacking an audience eager to acquire his latest work. According to a recent study of Aretino, he had the uncanny ability to sense cultural change coincident

⁵⁶¹ For the entire series, see Lynne Lawner, *I Modi: The Sixteen Pleasures, an Erotic Album of the Italian Renaissance* (Evanston, IL: Northwestern University Press, 1988).

⁵⁶² Vasari, *Lives of the Most Eminent Painters*, vol. 6, 104-05.

⁵⁶³ Aretino, as quoted in Chubb, *Aretino*, 113.

⁵⁶⁴ For a discussion of Renaissance erotica, within which the *I modi* is discussed, see Talvacchia, *Taking Positions*, 49-51; and Otto Brendel, “The Scope and Temperament of Erotic Art in the Greco-Roman World,” in *Studies in Erotic Art*, eds. Theodore Bowie and Cornelia V. Christenson (New York and London: Basic Books, Inc., 1970), 41.

with the growth of vernacular printing and he immediately aligned himself with the leading printers of these easily produced publications.⁵⁶⁵ By 1559, the *I modi* publication was added to the “Index of Forbidden Books.”⁵⁶⁶ Although most original examples of the *I modi* publication were destroyed, its notoriety fueled interest in the series and its influence continued as many artists, including Agostina Caracci, the brother of Annibale Caracci, continued to complete new images inspired after Raimondi’s engravings published with Aretino’s provocative poetry.⁵⁶⁷

One such copy made after the *I modi* series, from Northern Italy and published in the 1550s, is named the *Toscanini* volume. It consists of woodblock illustrations based on the original *I modi* engravings in which Raimondi’s images are reversed in the print process and cropped to eliminate the surrounding settings focusing entirely on the areas featuring the figures.⁵⁶⁸ One image from this volume, inspired by the pair titled *Liebesakt* (*The Dear Act*) from Aretino and Raimondi’s *I modi* series, appears similar in the position of its couple to the seated figures of Graef and Biallowons in *Farewell: Botho and Hugo* (Figs. 6, 5.4). In both images, the couples face each other with their bodies and heads in the same vertical alignment with one another. The male on the left side of *Liebesakt* has deeply bent legs in the same position as Graef while the position of his

⁵⁶⁵ Raymond B. Waddington, *Aretino’s Satyr: Sexuality, Satire, and Self-Projection in Sixteenth-Century Literature and Art* (Toronto, Buffalo, and London: University of Toronto Press, 2004): 33-55; Chapter 2: Aretino and Print Culture.

⁵⁶⁶ Findlen, “Humanism, Politics and Pornography in Renaissance Italy,” 59.

⁵⁶⁷ The efforts of the Church in destroying Aretino’s offending version were so thorough that only one complete example of the cycle and various individual fragments exist. (Waddington, *Aretino’s Satyr*, 23.) One set of nine existing fragments, from the British Museum, London, was included in the recent *Art and Love in Renaissance Italy* exhibition at the Metropolitan Museum of Art, New York, November 18 - February 16, 2009.

⁵⁶⁸ See a discussion of the *Toscanini* volume in Andrea Bayer, ed., *Art and Love in Renaissance Italy* (New Haven and London: Yale University Press, 2008), 202-04.

outstretched arm, resting on the woman's shoulder, is similar to how Graef's arm extends around the shoulder of Biallowons. In addition, the taut arms and clasping hands in the foreground of both images is nearly identical, particularly as seen in how the extension of Biallowons' left arm to take Graef's hand resembles the woman's left arm taking the hand of her companion.

Within the *I modi* series, this image is unique and stands out among the other fifteen plates as a result of the obvious tenderness displayed between the man and woman. The image depicts a mutual adoration in the pose and the reciprocal gaze. Although the woman's hand is placed in the man's lap, it is much less sexually explicit compared to the positions of the figures in the other plates, all showing couples engaged in poses that are overtly graphic and alternately subservient, shocking, highly acrobatic or unusual. Here, the emphasis seems to be on a shared attraction and physical companionship symbolized by the symmetrical arrangement and the comparatively tender pose.

In sixteenth-century Italy, authors of pornography referred to whores and sodomites alike as "the third sex."⁵⁶⁹ In pornographic writing, homosexuals and prostitutes were frequently employed as characters since both embodied vice and both were detached from established social hierarchies due to their marginality.⁵⁷⁰ The persecution faced by both groups was severe at the time and centered around the same gender issues that led to the persecution of prostitutes and homosexuals in Kirchner's Berlin several centuries later, which was namely how both groups were seen to

⁵⁶⁹ Findlen, "Humanism, Politics and Pornography in Renaissance Italy," 59.

⁵⁷⁰ Findlen, "Humanism, Politics and Pornography in Renaissance Italy," 106.

undermine the traditional notion of procreative sexual relationships and how their ubiquity in everyday life was thought to destabilize the existing heterosexually-oriented social dynamic in place in both societies.⁵⁷¹ The designation as a “third sex” for the perceived deviant populations of the prostitute and the homosexual had a further parallel with modern Germany. Homosexual advocates beginning with Karl Ulrichs in the mid-nineteenth century referred to their ranks as “a third sex.” Dr. Magnus Hirschfeld (1868-1935), who founded the first homosexual emancipation movement, the Scientific Humanitarian Committee (*Wissenschaftlich-Humanitäre Komitee*) in Berlin in 1897, employed this term in his efforts to secure a scientific or medical categorization for homosexuality by arguing that it was an innate rather than an acquired condition, wherein homosexuals were a “third sex” occupying a distinct position between male and female gender poles, a designation made in order to counter opponents who classified sexual identity based on a set of rigidly defined “normal” and “abnormal” values.⁵⁷² Beginning in 1899, Hirschfeld published an annual yearbook to inform the homosexual community on recent social and political developments and to offer resources; this was expanded in a publication titled *Berlins drittes Geschlecht* (*Berlin’s Third Sex*), 1904, in which Hirschfeld characterized the city as a polymath sexual community with a collection of subcultures and sites of both open and coded exchange to provide all types, particularly homosexuals, with an awareness of the array of clubs, restaurants, hotels, dance halls and bathhouses available to them. The public’s equation of prostitutes and homosexuals as arbiters of vice in both Renaissance Italy and Wilhelmine Berlin brought together two

⁵⁷¹ For a discussion of the Renaissance, see James M. Saslow, “Homosexuality in the Renaissance: Behavior, Identity, and Artistic Expression,” in *Hidden From History*, 90-105.

⁵⁷² Weeks, *Sex, Politics and Society*, 104.

realms of interest that were highly relevant to both Kirchner and Graef during the time of their friendship.

Would Graef and Kirchner have discussed the *I modi* series as it united a discussion of prostitutes and homosexuals during the Renaissance with the men's own contemporary concerns with these issues? Kirchner's interest in the figure of the prostitute, as seen in his *Street Scene* series, is clear. Graef met Kirchner just after the artist completed the series and he felt that several of these paintings were among Kirchner's finest work. It was at Graef's urging that Kirchner selected the painting *Potsdamer Platz* as one of two artworks exhibited in the Free Secession exhibition in Berlin in 1916.⁵⁷³

During the period of Kirchner's friendship with Graef, he also completed a series of highly sexual graphic images. In 1911, he had made a series of six lithographs, titled *Liebespaar*, featuring heterosexual couples engaged in various sexual positions.⁵⁷⁴ Kirchner began the series in 1910-1911, and it employs rounded, linear forms comparable with his Dresden style. Kirchner's couples in the *Liebespaar* series are depicted in various poses engaged in sexual intercourse and all bear a visual similarity with Raimondi's engravings from the *I modi* reinforcing the likelihood that Kirchner was familiar with the infamous series (Figs. 5.5, 5.6). He returned to the series in December

⁵⁷³ Simmons, "Ernst Kirchner's Streetwalkers," 139.

⁵⁷⁴ Donald Gordon stated that the couple in this series was based on Sam and Milli, the African dancers befriended by Kirchner, and who represented an exotic and heightened sexuality for him. According to Gordon, Kirchner pulled only a few copies of the images in order to emphasize its "immediacy and authenticity." Prior to this series, Kirchner made a lithograph of the couple seated nude in his studio, which is likely the origin for the series. (Gordon, "German Expressionism," in *Primitivism in Twentieth-Century Art*, 373.) For reproductions, see Dube, *E. L. Kirchner: das graphisches Werk*, for the *Liebespaar* series (L185-190), and Sam and Milli (L184).

1913 to reprint it again; in 1915, he chose to re-print only one image before beginning a new series.⁵⁷⁵

The first lithograph series is very different from his next series of six erotic prints, under the general title *Fetishists*, made in 1915, featuring dense lines, blackened surfaces and an agitated linear quality depicting couples acting out various fetishes, such as one featuring a sadist, another a glove-fetishist, a foot-fetishist and a breast-fetishist among others (Figs. 5.7, 5.8). This etching series stands out in Kirchner's work for its highly provocative character seen in both the unusual sexual content and in its execution.

Kirchner employs the same battered stone – evident by the identical chip missing from the upper right corner of all the series' pages - without grinding it sufficiently, so that "each new image is seen through the residue of the previous one."⁵⁷⁶ The result is a series of deliberately "smutty" or hazy surfaces that match the lurid subject matter.

Furthermore, the viewer is forced to probe closely, acting as a voyeur to discern the "dirty" iconography from within the dirty looking surfaces of the illicit materials.⁵⁷⁷

Following this series of lithographs, Kirchner did several graphic works that feature Hugo, including some intimate scenes, and several lithograph portraits of Graef, showing

⁵⁷⁵ Kirchner described the series in a letter dated December 19, 1913, to Schiefler and he mentions it to him again in October 28, 1924. (Henze, ed., *Kirchner Schiefler: Briefwechsel*, 66-67; 304-05; see also Simmons, "Ernst Kirchner's Streetwalkers," 141; 144, note 59.)

⁵⁷⁶ Timothy Hyman, "Kirchner's Dance: Kaleidoscopes at a Stroke," *The Times Literary Supplement* (July 25, 2003), 17.

⁵⁷⁷ For an expanded discussion of the associations between filth and prostitution, see Maria Tatar, *Lustmord; Sexual Murder in Weimar Germany* (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 1995), 41-67; Chapter Three: Crime, Contagion, and Containment: Sexual Murder in the Weimar Republic.

again that he was in the company of the men during a period when highly sexualized subjects were engaging his attention.⁵⁷⁸

The scandal surrounding the *I modi* series and the efforts to suppress Aretino's work also parallel Kirchner's own view of himself as a victim of censorship. Several images by Kirchner and other Brücke members, including his poster for the MUIM Institute made in 1911, had variously come to the attention of police authorities for vulgar content although no penalties were enacted on Kirchner for his work.⁵⁷⁹ As prostitution became increasingly widespread in the 1870s and 1880s, political attention and public interest turned to related issues, including public hygiene and venereal disease. From 1885-1890, Moral Purity Associations were established to promote heterosexual marriage and to take up the cause of moral issues against threats to traditional family life.⁵⁸⁰ In a leaflet distributed by the Berlin Morality Association in 1891, entitled "The Struggle Against Morality," the authors equated Germany with Babylon, Assyria, Greece, Rome and modern France, explaining that these civilizations were all undermined and brought to ruin by just the sorts of immoral behavior rampant in Berlin.⁵⁸¹ To counter gains made by the women's emancipation movement, the moral purists equated female emancipation alongside homosexual rights as two sides of the same coin of social and

⁵⁷⁸ For reproductions, see Dube, *E. L. Kirchner: das graphisches Werk*, for the *Fetishists* series (L268-273), for the images of Graef and Biallowons all made soon after in 1915, see Hugo in (L277), (L279), (L281), (L282), and Graef in (L283), (L284).

⁵⁷⁹ Simmons, "Ernst Kirchner's Streetwalkers," 121-23.

⁵⁸⁰ Fout, "Sexual Politics in Wilhelmine Germany," 390; and John C. Fout, "The Moral Purity Movement in Wilhelmine Germany and the Attempt to Regulate Male Behavior," *Journal of Men's Studies* 1 (August 1992).

⁵⁸¹ Richard J. Evans, "Prostitution, State and Society in Imperial Germany," in *Past and Present*, no. 70 (February 1976), 121.

cultural decline, successfully equating both as threats to traditional marriage using declining birth rates as evidence.⁵⁸²

During the 1890s, the heightened regulation of public standards resulted in the enactment of the Lex-Heinze legislation, which according to the historian Richard J. Evans, “may be seen as one of a series of strongly repressive laws against subversion, revolution, industrial and social unrest, and moral decay, in which the government was attempting to assert its control over German society as the ever-accelerating pace of social change threatened to throw it off.”⁵⁸³ Lex-Heinze legislation enacted strict police regulation of and harsh penalties for prostitution and other “immoral” entertainments, with official oversight extending to the visual arts and the production of all types of visual imagery. According to Reinhold Heller, around 1900, Lucas Cranach’s *Reclining Nymph at the Fountain*, 1815, upon which Kirchner had based his earlier painting *Milly Sleeping*, 1910-1911, gained notoriety as postcard reproductions of it were confiscated by the enforcers of Lex-Heinze standards who deemed it overly erotic, immoral and obscene.⁵⁸⁴

Though defeated in 1900, by the end of 1913, when Kirchner was beginning his Berlin *Street Scene* series, local morality associations had renewed their efforts to impose

⁵⁸² Fout, “Sexual Politics in Wilhelmine Germany,” 408-09. For a discussion of the efforts to counter emancipation in Expressionist journals between 1910-1920, see Barbara Wright, “New Man, Eternal Woman: Expressionist Responses to German Feminism,” *German Quarterly* 60, no. 4 (1987): 582-99.

⁵⁸³ Evans, “Prostitution, State and Society in Imperial Germany,” 126. For an expanded discussion of the Lex-Heinze legislation, see R. J. V. Lenman, “Art, Society and the Law in Wilhelmine Germany: the Lex Heinze,” *Oxford German Studies* 8 (1973): 86-113.

⁵⁸⁴ Reinhold Heller, “Brücke and the Centrality of the Primitive,” in Arnaldo and Moeller, *Brücke: El Nacimiento*, 207; both images are reproduced on page 43. Cranach’s painting was and remains one of the showpieces of the Leipzig Museum der bildenden Künste and Kirchner’s *Milly Sleeping* is in the collection of Kunsthalle Bremen.

strict standards of regulation resulting in increased censorship and the possibility of a reinstatement of the laws, an issue that was widely debated in the media. Many types of images were deemed offensive, including reproductions on fine art postcards, and Kirchner likely felt his recent prostitution series made him particularly susceptible to charges of pornography or immorality within this climate. In 1915, Kirchner painted a version of Manet's *Olympia*, 1863, one of the most brazen artistic examples of sexual provocation, but in his version, the female figure rests her head demurely on a pillow with her body completely covered and wrapped by a patterned fabric to reveal no skin and exhibiting none of the brazen self-confidence of Manet's nude.⁵⁸⁵

Given Kirchner's prolonged interest in the subject of prostitution and in sexual couplings, it is likely he would have turned to one of the most notorious artistic examples from the Renaissance for his composition. The *I modi* series was similarly engaged with sexually explicit subject matter and it enjoyed an anti-establishment reputation in its time. The figure of Aretino may have appealed to both Kirchner and Graef because his attitude was not only outspoken and critical of conventional norms but he was also highly tolerant.⁵⁸⁶ In his explanation for his intervention in the *I modi* controversy, Aretino begins with a defense of erotic art, then progresses to a discussion from art to life maintaining that there is nothing shameful about viewing the sexual act before he advances a theory by offering praise of the penis as the most worthy part of the (male)

⁵⁸⁵ For a reproduction, see Gordon, *Ernst Ludwig Kirchner*, 327 (G420). The currents whereabouts of this painting are unknown.

⁵⁸⁶ Waddington, *Aretino's Satyr*, 9.

body, saying not only that it perpetuates the human race, but that it creates the best in life, notably writers and artists and everything beautiful, true and sacred.⁵⁸⁷

The Classical Influence

Prior to meeting Graef, Kirchner's artworks had shown little discernible stylistic interest in the art of ancient Greece and it played no role in the formulation of his expressionist imagery during the Brücke period.⁵⁸⁸ During Kirchner's time in Graef's home in Jena in 1914, however, he was likely introduced to much about Greek culture that was appealing to him for Graef had adopted a modern lifestyle that incorporated many practices related directly to his understanding of life in ancient Greece, including group exercise and communal bathing, an emphasis on the arts, and a commitment to pedagogical relationships among men. The community of men within Graef's home under his instruction in literature, fine arts, and music undoubtedly provided a creative and inspiring setting for the artist. Graef would have been able to illuminate many interesting aspects of ancient Greek art and culture, from artworks to the origins of epic poetry, Greek tragedy, and the centrality of dance and music, as well as drawing Kirchner's attention to Nietzsche's engagement with these same subjects in his first publication *The Birth of Tragedy*.

⁵⁸⁷ Waddington, *Aretino's Satyr*, 3.

⁵⁸⁸ Nonetheless, at the time of his death, Kirchner's library contained multiple publications devoted to Greek art and mythology, including Ernst Buschor, *Griechische Vasen* (1914), a detailed survey and history of Greek vase painting; Ernst Pfuhl, *Meisterwerke griechischer Zeichnung und malerei* (1923), a selection of Greek vases and Roman wall paintings from the larger, three volume *Malerie und Zeichnung der Griechen* (Munich: Bruckmann, 1923); and Gustav Schwab, *Die schonsten sagn des Klassischen Altertums* (1909), a compendium of Greek myths. (All part of Kirchner's library as listed in Gabler, *E. L. Kirchner: Dokumente*, 353-61.)

As a classical archaeologist, one area of Graef's scholarly interest was vase painting of the ancient Greeks. Among his various publications was *Die Antiken Vasen von der Akropolis zu Athens*, 1909, on the subject of vases found at the Acropolis, for which he organized the entries and contributed the forward.⁵⁸⁹ I believe there is a strong likelihood that Kirchner relied on one well-known Attic red figure Greek vase for the representation of Graef and Biallowons in the painting *Farewell: Botho and Hugo*. As we will see, its iconography opened up a descriptive visual language to communicate very intimate and discrete ideas about love between men while drawing upon a tradition of artworks that were especially beloved to Graef.

If Graef had indeed brought Kirchner's attention to the ancient Greek tradition of male eros in artworks to provide him with a visual precedent for his romantic and pedagogic attachment to Biallowons, then it becomes necessary to determine how the Greek tradition of pederasty had been discussed in the literature until Graef's time. As it turns out, the subject had been discussed a great deal within the field of German philological studies throughout the nineteenth century. The energy of various scholars was spent attempting to pinpoint where the ancient practice originated or alternately attempting to downplay the undeniable aspect of sexual intercourse as a central component of it.⁵⁹⁰ The tenure of the discussion was indebted to the important

⁵⁸⁹ Paul Hartwig, Paul Wolters, Robert Zahn, and Botho Graef, *Die Antiken Vasen von der Akropolis zu Athens I* (Berlin: Kaiserlich deutsches archäologisches Institut and Georg Reimer, 1909). Graef also contributed the forward to Karl O. Müller, F. Wiesler, Konrad Wernicke, and Botho Graef, *Antike Denkmäler zur Griechischen Götterlehre* (Leipzig: Dieterich'sche Verlagsbuchhandlung, 1903).

⁵⁹⁰ According to the scholar William Armstrong Percy, this is in contrast to contemporary studies in which interest in the practice of Greek pederasty stresses the sexual relationship over the often overlooked intellectual and educational component with its emphasis on instilling civic values and valor. For a complete discussion, see Percy, *Pederasty and Pedagogy in Archaic Greece* (Urbana and Chicago: University of Illinois Press, 1996).

archaeologist and scholar Karl Otfried Müller, who was a great-uncle of the Brücke member Otto Mueller. In his influential publication *Die Dorier (The History and Antiquities of the Doric Race)*, first published in 1824, Müller devoted eight pages to advance the argument for the Dorian origins of the tradition of *paiderastia*.⁵⁹¹ According to him, pre-historic Dorian warriors institutionalized a pure form of ritualistic non-sexual pederasty that then continued into historic times in both Sparta and Crete, though he maintained that any sexual aspects to the practice came later from the Lydians of the Near East.⁵⁹² According to the scholar Linda Dowling, Müller's manner of confronting the topic was important within its time. In the beginning of the nineteenth century, she explains:

Intent on recovering a sense of the past as it actually was...the German historicist approach insisted on viewing the past in its own terms and in its own widest context – encompassing art, mythology, religion, race, archaeology – while declining to hold past stages of history accountable to the moral assumptions of a later day. With regard to ancient Greece, the great example of this ethically detached historicist view was K. O. Müller's account in *Die Dorier* of Greek *paiderastia* which began with Müller's announcement that he would include no ethical censure of it.⁵⁹³

In 1903, Graef contributed the foreword to a publication written by Karl O. Müller on the subject of Greek sculpture, titled *Antike Denkmäler zur Griechischen Götterlehre*

⁵⁹¹ Percy, *Pederasty and Pedagogy in Archaic Greece*, 29. Müller's publication, *Die Dorier* (Göttingen, 1824), encompassed four volumes and was released in its second edition in 1844. Other publications from the period included Heinrich Hössli, *Die Männerliebe der griechen (The Male Love of the Greeks)*, 1836-1838; and J. H. D. Zschokke, *Eros oder über die Liebe (Eros or About Love)*, 1821, although these were not published by Classicists but rather from literary circles.

⁵⁹² Percy, *Pederasty and Pedagogy in Archaic Greece*, 29.

⁵⁹³ Linda Dowling, *Hellenism and Homosexuality in Victorian Oxford* (Ithaca and London: Cornell University Press, 1994), 75. According to Dowling, Müller's calmly neutral view of pederasty influenced the type of Classical studies that developed among future German and English scholars.

(*Ancient Monuments to the Greek Gods*), and it is highly likely he was acquainted with his colleague's earlier groundbreaking research.⁵⁹⁴

The first study devoted entirely to Greek pederasty was in the form of an extended encyclopedia article written by Montz Hermann Eduard Meier in 1837, in which he cited a Cretan origin to the sexual aspects of the tradition rather than a Dorian one.⁵⁹⁵

Generally, philologists tended to emphasize the prolific Greek sources that enabled them to maintain the “pure” or non-sexual side of Dorian pederasty drawn from the late sixth and seventh centuries, such as Xenophon and Plutarch, who stated that the lawgiver Lycurgus had forbidden anal intercourse as part of pederastic practices.⁵⁹⁶ In Plato's *Symposium*, male eros was seen as an activity that rendered individuals “great in spirit” and pederasty provided the foundations for strong friendships and unions among men and though references to sexual relations were prevalent, they were oblique.⁵⁹⁷ Since the term eros meant friendship as well as physical union, it was possible to defend the practice of pederasty without endorsing its physical components. Nietzsche emphasized the value of male friendship and defended the practice of pederasty in “Aphorism 259: A Male Culture,” in *Human, All-Too Human*, originally published in 1878:

The Greek culture of the classic age is a male culture...The erotic relation of men to youths was the necessary and sole preparation, to a degree unattainable to our comprehension, of all manly education...All idealism of the strength of the Greek nature threw itself into that relation, and it is probable that never since have young men been treated so attentively, so lovingly, so entirely with a view to their

⁵⁹⁴ Karl O. Müller, F. Wiesler, Konrad Wernicke, and Botho Graef, *Antike Denkmäler zur Griechischen Götterlehre* (Leipzig: Dieterich'sche Verlagsbuchhandlung, 1903).

⁵⁹⁵ Percy, *Pederasty and Pedagogy in Archaic Greece*, 30-31. The entry was originally published as M. H. Meier, “Päderastie,” in *Encyclopädie der Wissenschaften und Künste* 9 (Leipzig, 1837): 149-89.

⁵⁹⁶ Percy, *Pederasty and Pedagogy in Archaic Greece*, 31.

⁵⁹⁷ Percy, *Pederasty and Pedagogy in Archaic Greece*, 2.

welfare (*virtus*), as in the fifth and sixth centuries B.C. – according to the beautiful saying of Hölderlin: “For it is when loving that mortal man gives of his best.”⁵⁹⁸

By consulting many ancient authors, the sexual aspects of pederasty were impossible to ignore. For example, Sophocles wrote that “Ganymede’s thighs set Zeus aflame” and many ancients, including Plato, Aeschylus, Pindar and Xenophon, made clear their impression that the relationship between Achilles and Patroclus was inclusive of sexual activities.⁵⁹⁹ In the late nineteenth century, Ulrichs had studied homosexuality among ancient Greeks and his findings included information not only on the common practice of sexual pederasty but on discussions by Plato, Aristotle and Lucian that described individuals attracted to members of their own sex without an age distinction, meaning a non-pedagogical intent to their physical relations.⁶⁰⁰ The discovery of graffiti inscribed on the rocks of a cliff found in the vicinity of a gymnasium on the island of Thera (present day Santorini) made it impossible to deny the sexual practices of the tradition. The Classical scholar F. Hiller von Gaertringen published the inscriptions in 1898, connecting them to the Carneia, a feast to Dorian Apollo where naked boys danced to honor the god.⁶⁰¹

With the publication of an article entitled “*Die dorische Knabenliebe, ihre Ethic, ihre Idee*” (“The Dorian Love of Boys: Its Ethics and Its Idea”), by Erich Bethe in 1907,

⁵⁹⁸ Nietzsche, *Human, All-Too Human*, in *The Complete Works of Friedrich Nietzsche*, 7: 237-38.

⁵⁹⁹ Percy, *Pederasty and Pedagogy in Archaic Greece*, 39.

⁶⁰⁰ Percy, *Pederasty and Pedagogy in Archaic Greece*, 9.

⁶⁰¹ F. Hiller von Gaertringen, *Inscriptiones graecae insularum maris Aegaei* 12 (Berlin, 1898), illus. 3. According to one contemporary scholar, the publication of these rock paintings, “dropped like a bombshell on academia.” Modern scholars now interpret the graffiti as actual boasting or gossiping, akin to an example of “for a good time, call...” of the type one finds in a public restroom rather than related to any deeply religious events. (Percy, *Pederasty and Pedagogy in Archaic Greece*, 31-32.)

the silence on the subject of emotional bonds as an integral part of the pederastic relationship was broken. The article caused a sensation in the philological field for its original and straightforward assertion that the love of young boys was a firm part of the societal fabric of Greek life and one that served an entirely useful purpose.⁶⁰² Bethe believed the practice started in the seventh century BCE by the Dorians and soon spread from Sparta to the non-Dorian Hellas. He wrote:

What the Dorians brought was boy-love as a publicly recognized and honorable institution...legitimate pederasty was then unknown among the Asiatic Aeolians and Ionians. The same was true about their kinfolk remaining in the motherland...The Dorians strictly regulated the love relationship between man and boy and treated it as a very important arrangement very publicly with honorable earnestness under the protection of the family, society, the state, and religion...In Sparta, Crete, and Thebes...the education of the ruling class, resting on pederasty, [was directed toward] honor and manly virtue, which principally manifested itself in war.⁶⁰³

Scholars responded by attempting to criticize or downplay the importance of the emotional bonds formed between men and of the related physical component within the relationship. The well-known Classicist Wilamowitz-Moellendorf was one of these; in the publication *Staat und Gesellschaft der Griechen und Römer (The State and Society of the Greeks and Romans)*, published in Berlin in 1910, the author disavowed Bethe's theory that "*knabenliebe*" involved voluntary intercourse with youths. Instead, he ascribed the practice as coming from necessity wherein soldiers lacking the company of

⁶⁰² Georges Dumézil, "Preface" in Dover, *Greek Homosexuality*, xii; and Percy, *Pederasty and Pedagogy in Archaic Greece*, 27. Bethe's article was originally published in the journal *Das Rheinische Museum für Philologie* 62 (1907): 438-75. In an interesting postscript regarding this journal, during the last quarter of the nineteenth century, Albrecht Ritschl, who was Nietzsche's lecturer at the University of Bonn and then at Leipzig University, edited it. Nietzsche's first published article appeared in it in 1866 and this was the first time that Ritschl had asked one of his students to contribute to the publication. (Hayman, *Nietzsche: A Critical Life*, 81.)

⁶⁰³ Bethe, as quoted in Percy, *Pederasty and Pedagogy in Archaic Greece*, 27.

women resorted to intercourse with other men merely as an alternative.⁶⁰⁴ Wilamowitz did admit the erotic, even sexual bond of lover and beloved possible in this situation, but he emphasized its ennobling quality rather than the physical act, explaining: “The boy who is received into the community and has so much to learn needs the older comrade who initiates and protects him.”⁶⁰⁵ With the scholarly attention given the issue, it became impossible to deny the importance of the tradition of pederasty in the edification of Greek youth and it was understood, albeit reluctantly in some circles, that there was an important physical component to its practice.

The Attic vase, the *Peithinos Cup*, ca. 500 - 510 BCE, is a well-known part of the antiquities collection of the Staatliche Museen Preussischer Kulturbesitz, Berlin (Fig. 5.9). It entered the Berlin collection in 1834 after being excavated at Vulci near Rome, a fruitful dig that unearthed thousands of pottery pieces and brought increased interest to the medium of vases.⁶⁰⁶ This Attic red figure vase has been widely discussed in the literature on ancient Greek artworks and vase painting, including a thorough iconographic description in Adolf Furtwängler’s monumental categorical publication *Beschreibung der Vasensammlung im Antiquarium (Description of the Vases in the Berlin Antiquities Museum)*, 1885, published during Graef’s period as a student of Classical archaeology in Berlin.⁶⁰⁷ In addition, since Graef studied at the University of Berlin, it is likely he knew

⁶⁰⁴ Percy, *Pederasty and Pedagogy in Archaic Greece*, 33.

⁶⁰⁵ Wilamowitz-Moellendorf, as quoted in Percy, *Pederasty and Pedagogy in Archaic Greece*, 33.

⁶⁰⁶ Vulci was a wealthy ancient city located approximately fifty miles northwest of Rome near the Tyrrhenian Sea coast. It was the site of extensive excavations beginning in 1828 that yielded vases, bronze items and by 1856, the remains of over 15,000 tombs in the town necropolis with most dating from the 8th Century BCE.

the vase from firsthand observation among the antiquities collection of the Berlin Museum. During this time, both the inside and underside of the *Peithinos Cup* were illustrated for the first time as plates in a publication titled *Die Griechischen Meisterschalen: Der Blüthezeit des strengen rothfigurigen Stiles* compiled by Paul Hartwig.⁶⁰⁸ Hartwig's book was discussed in the opening chapter on the history of German philhellenism as an example of the type of selective scholarship that elevated the philological community outside of the encyclopedic approach that began to dominate the field by the 1890s. The book was an important contribution to the historiography of Greek vase painting when it was published in 1893 and, according to scholar Stephen Luce, it remained invaluable for many years as a study of technique given its careful and detailed plates.⁶⁰⁹ The book features one well-rendered, actual size illustration of an Attic vase per each two-page spread selected by Hartwig from never before reproduced examples.⁶¹⁰

The *Peithinos Cup* underside, reproduced as Plate XXV, contains the figural scene that is relevant for our discussion in relation to *Farewell: Botho and Hugo*. After a survey of all the vases selected by Hartwig for illustration in the book, it is curious that the majority of them are devoted to vases that feature exclusively male iconography with a high proportion of these featuring scenes devoted to satyrs, the emissaries of Dionysus, in various licentious activities and debauched pursuits, including several highly original

⁶⁰⁷ Adolf Furtwängler, *Beschreibung der Vasensammlung im Antiquarium II* (Berlin: W. Spemann and Königliche Museen zu Berlin, 1885), 559-60. The *Peithinos Cup* is not included in Furtwängler's prior publication *Eros in der Vasenmalerei* (Munich: Theodor Ackermann, 1874).

⁶⁰⁸ Paul Hartwig, *Die Griechischen Meisterschalen: Der Blüthezeit des Strengen rothfigurigen stiles* (Stuttgart and Berlin: Verlag Von W. Spemann, 1893), unpaginated (Plate XXV).

⁶⁰⁹ Luce, "A Brief History of the Study of Greek Vase Painting," 660.

⁶¹⁰ Smith, [untitled], *The Classical Review*, 126.

compositions.⁶¹¹ Given that Hartwig specifically selected rarely or never before reproduced vases for illustration in the text, I believe Graef would have likely acquired such a book for his personal library or at least been familiar with it given its relationship to his field of interest in vase painting. Later, Hartwig contributed to the book *Die Antiken Vasen von der Akropolis zu Athens* with Graef, published in 1909, lending credence to the likelihood that Graef would have been aware of his colleague's earlier publication on a subject that the two soon collaborated on.

The *Peithinos Cup* is named after the artist who included his signature on the inside, an area featuring an image of Peleus and Thetis, whose union resulted in the birth of Achilles, in a dynamic and dramatic scene. The interior is frequently discussed for its sophisticated game of storytelling, its elegant emphasis on the quality of line and its careful, yet complex two figure composition.⁶¹² Due to the unique iconography of the underside, the vase is frequently discussed in many recent studies of Greek cultural

⁶¹¹ After consulting this book at the British Library, my account of the variety of illustrations from the seventy-five plates are as follows: images with a focus on men and male youth, with some including dancing maenads: 33 plates; images of only male youths: 18; images of satyrs: 12; images featuring both men and women, including goddesses: 8 (including *Peithinos Cup* inside and underside); fragments too small to categorize: 3. Perhaps it is not curious at all but a reflection of Hartwig's personality that he favored the images he selected for illustration. According to the author Stephen L. Dyson, Hartwig was a member of elite expatriate homosexual circles in pre-World War I Rome. (Dyson, *In Pursuit of the Ancient Past: A History of Archaeology in the Nineteenth and Twentieth Century* (New Haven, CT: Yale University Press, 2006), 149.

⁶¹² John Boardman, *Athenian Red Figure Vases of the Archaic Period* (London: Thames and Hudson, 1975), 214. To this day, the cup remains the only confirmed vase by the painter Peithinos although one other fragment has been definitively attributed to him. Even so, the *Peithinos Cup* is recognized as one of the best examples of the late Archaic Greek period.

The *Peithinos Cup* was included in J. D. Beazley's important publication *Attic Red-Figure Vase Painters*, published in 1963, which remains a long-standing source for reference and documentation; see J. D. Beazley, *Attic Red-Figure Vase Painters I* (Oxford: Oxford University Press and Clarendon Press, 1963): ARV2, 115.1 and 115.2 (for cup's underside). This categorization system is followed by most subsequent scholarly publications. Additionally, the Berlin Museum designates the *Peithinos Cup* as F2279 within its antiquities collection.

history and homosexuality in particular.⁶¹³ In H. D. Shapiro's essay "Courtship Scenes in Attic Vase Painting," he introduces an early study by the scholar of ancient Greece J. D. Beazley, in which the iconography of courtship scenes from vases are categorized into three main groups, identified as alpha, beta and gamma.⁶¹⁴ All of the courtship interactions depicted on Attic vases feature either an alpha scene composed of two figures facing each other flirting in a traditional type of courtship and often reaching towards one another with their arms; a beta scene featuring the bestowing of gifts; or finally, a gamma scene showing two figures intertwined in the end culmination of a courtship flirtation. Rarely are all three stages of the courtship ritual shown together in one scene as they are in the *Peithinos Cup*.

The *Peithinos Cup* is a drinking vase or kylix and its underside is divided into two halves by its projecting handles with one side depicting a scene of youths courting boys and the other half featuring a scene of youths courting young women, either *hetaerae*, ancient courtesans, or more likely upper-class Greek women given their demure actions. Courtship often involved the bestowing of gifts, such as a flower, which is being exchanged by one pair. On the opposite side, four pairs of young men and boys appear in various stages of courtship while one individual young man stands alone at the outer edge. I will begin by describing the underside in its entirety in order to then proceed to

⁶¹³ For publications that discuss the underside of the *Peithinos Cup*, see John Boardman and Eugenio LaRocca, *Eros in Greece* (London: John Murray, Ltd., 1978), 92-93; and Kenneth Dover, *Greek Homosexuality* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1989), 95-96; and Eva C. Keuls, *The Reign of the Phallus: Sexual Politics in Ancient Athens* (New York: Harper and Row, 1985), 274-99; and Martin F. Kilmer, *Greek Erotica on Attic Red-Figure Vases* (London: Gerald Duckworth & Co., Ltd., 1993), 14-15; and H. A. Shapiro, "Courtship Scenes in Attic Vase-Painting," *American Journal of Archaeology* 85, no. 2 (April 1981): 133-43. The underside of the *Peithinos Cup* is sometimes referred to by alternate titles, such as "Kissing Competition," in Dominique Fernandez, *A Hidden Love: Art and Homosexuality* (Munich, Berlin, London, and New York: Prestel, 2001), 29.

⁶¹⁴ Shapiro, "Courtship Scenes in Attic Vase-Painting," 133; and J.D. Beazley, "Some Attic Vases in the Cyprus Museum," *Proceedings of the British Academy* 33 (1947): 3-31.

focus on the portion featuring one youth-boy pair that I believe is directly linked to the appearance of the two figures in *Farewell: Botho and Hugo* (Fig. 5.10).

On the *Peithinos Cup* underside, the inscriptions are all variations on the beauty of the figures, with the word *KALOS*, meaning “beautiful,” placed above several pairs, and the inscription *O PAIS NAICHI*, “the boy is also beautiful,” atop others, including the pair that is important for our comparison.⁶¹⁵ According to the historian Kenneth Dover, *KALOS* is a general term found on many vases and it is applicable to living beings and manufactured objects alike. In addition, a painter can use it to mean his own work or, as Dover posits is the case with the *Peithinos Cup* underside, to communicate to the viewer the sentiment: “if you saw in real life the scene which I have portrayed, you would exclaim at the beauty of the persons concerned.”⁶¹⁶ From Hertwig’s description of Hugo Biallowons, we know he was handsome and frequently drew the attention of both men and women, all of whom could not resist his good looks.⁶¹⁷ The inscription “the boy is beautiful” from the vase could be said to characterize Hugo’s appearance as well.

During the late Archaic period, from 530 until 470 BCE, to a degree unlike that of any other period in Greek art, sexual representations were informed with a sense of realism favoring imagery set within contemporary locations, such as banquet halls or gymnasium and, as seen on the *Peithinos Cup*, erotic iconography was drawn from scenes of everyday life.⁶¹⁸ According to the scholar Martin Kilmer, Greek erotic painting

⁶¹⁵ The inscriptions are translated on the Perseus Vase Catalog website, a scholarly online catalog for Greek art maintained by Tufts University. See: <http://www.perseus.tufts.edu>. Find the *Peithinos Cup* by the designation: Berlin F2279.

⁶¹⁶ Dover, *Greek Homosexuality*, 119-20.

⁶¹⁷ Röske, “Dokumente einer Freundschaft,” 47.

of the Archaic period is interesting for its overall concern with the aesthetic beauty of its images and its narrative quality taking precedence over overt eroticism.⁶¹⁹ During no other time was the choice of subject matter as free or as open as this period, though the popularity of the subject of courtship scenes was limited to a span of less than one century.⁶²⁰ Despite their popularity during the Attic period, the majority of known examples of eroticism in courtship pairs depict young men with women. The *Peithinos Cup* is a rare exception by including heterosexual and homosexual courtship scenes within one vessel.⁶²¹ Since there is no physical contact whatsoever on the heterosexual side, appearing “comparatively insipid,” according to the German Classicist Adolf Furtwängler, there is a marked difference between it and the male-male half.⁶²² In general, in Greek artworks, it was taboo to represent male-male anal intercourse since that required the visualization of the subordination of one partner. The courtship scene in the *Peithinos Cup* works by inference with the various poses serving as representational substitutes for the fulfillment of male homoerotic pleasures with the masterful depiction able to convey the heightened state of physical arousal in some of the pairs.

⁶¹⁸ Shapiro, “Courtship Scenes in Attic Vase-Painting,” 142.

⁶¹⁹ Kilmer, *Greek Erotica on Attic Red-Figure Vases*, 181.

⁶²⁰ Otto J. Brendel, “The Scope and Temperament of Erotic Art in the Greco-Roman World,” 31. According to Brendel, the late Archaic period was a time of vigorous thought and action and the patrons who desired a banquet scene or erotically-charged image were the well-to-do, assertive devotees of this popular iconography. There was a sharp decrease in courtship scenes at the end of the 6th Century BCE reflecting a change in popular sensibility in which it became less acceptable to show these depictions among upper class audiences. Instead, a subject that grew in popularity was the representation of Zeus and Ganymede, which is not a scene of courtship but one of pursuit or abduction. (Shapiro, “Courtship Scenes in Attic Vase-Painting,” 142.)

⁶²¹ Shapiro, “Courtship Scenes in Attic Vase-Painting,” 85, note 24. According to Brendel, the majority of examples of late Archaic depictions of eroticism depict ritual customs pairing men with women but “one remarkable example to the contrary is the outer frieze around the well-known drinking bowl with paintings by Peithinos,” featuring four young men and boys. (Brendel, “The Scope and Temperament of Erotic Art,” 25.)

⁶²² Furtwängler, as quoted in Dover, *Greek Homosexuality*, 95.

The setting of the underside of the cup is spare with the emphasis placed on the figures. They occupy the entire height of the underside of the vessel, from the figures' feet positioned atop the decorative band at the raised bottom to their heads culminating just underneath the rim. This is similar to the composition of *Farewell: Botho and Hugo* in which the figures cover the entire vertical height of the canvas. The inclusion of a few implements, including a strigil, a small *aryballoi* or oil jar, and a cloth, positioned precisely between each of the male youth-boy pairs makes clear that the setting of this half is a *palaistra* or gymnasium. These objects further serve to visually separate each pair into their own spatial realm though they are meant to occupy a public space. According to Shapiro, the gymnasium setting on this and similar scenes is significant: "The vases testify to the high social status of the *erastes* [youth] and *eromenos* [boys] and to their predilection for urban places of exercise."⁶²³

As we have seen, the practice of pederasty was an established custom in ancient Greece and as such, scenes reflective of it, whether depicting sport, education or sexual activity, are commonly found on artworks featuring male youth-boy pairs during the Attic period. However, a "love relationship" between male figures, such as the type seen on the *Peithinos Cup*, is unusual because of its rarity within Greek society, in which practical considerations of time and wealth restricted the possibility of genuine emotional commitments within a pederastic relationship to only a small number of the upper

⁶²³ Shapiro, "Courtship Scenes in Attic Vase-Painting," 136. Shapiro views the gymnasium setting as important in the dynamic of a homosexual courtship scene: "Our Athenian gentleman is paired with a youth of comparable free-born citizen status and equal social class. Favors are won with token gifts...and the encounter takes place, at least in its initial stages, in a public space. It is, accordingly, governed by a keen sense of dignity and an almost mannered propriety, no doubt fostered and perpetuated by artistic convention." (Shapiro, "Courtship Scenes in Attic Vase-Painting," 137, note 30.)

stratum of society.⁶²⁴ In addition, a reciprocal emotional bond was not necessarily a common component of these relationships. During this period, though erotic imagery proliferated, mutual sentiment or reciprocal affection is rarely seen exchanged in images of pederastic relationships. Brendel explains: “Love, described so objectively, may show shared pleasures, but the ingredient of a mutual sentiment is mostly lacking, or at least, not mentioned. Exceptions to this rule are extremely rare; the cup by Peithinos may be one of them.”⁶²⁵ Kirchner very accurately selected one particular pair from the *Peithinos Cup* for its unique expression of the romantic implications of a pederastic relationship (Fig. 5.11).

Images with scenes of erotic interactions, such as on the *Peithinos Cup*, were almost always seen on a vase as opposed to sculpture since pottery was one of a few art forms that was made primarily for private use and it was usually an affluent audience of connoisseurs who sought such erotic contemporary scenes on their objects.⁶²⁶ In Attic pottery, “painters had a clear notion of an audience and context in which various scenes were to be seen.”⁶²⁷ According to one classical scholar, “Vase painting was a popular medium that as the democracy arose provided the Athenian people with a set of changing

⁶²⁴ Shapiro, “Courtship Scenes in Attic Vase-Painting,” 85.

⁶²⁵ Brendel, “The Scope and Temperament of Erotic Art,” 36. Here, in this unique example, states Brendel: “desires are aroused, intimate caresses are offered or solicited and kisses are exchanged...The last named detail should be especially noted. For the kiss of lovers that is so important...occurs but rarely in erotic representations of Greek Archaic art.” (Brendel, “The Scope and Temperament of Erotic Art,” 26.)

⁶²⁶ Brendel, “The Scope and Temperament of Erotic Art,” 19. Brendel stresses that this was a closed social group with cultivated habits and that to acquire imagery such as this required the integral participation of select artists. He states: “the artists must have participated to some extent in their clients sensibilities and tastes or at least been no stranger to them.” (Brendel, “The Scope and Temperament of Erotic Art,” 34.)

⁶²⁷ Robert F. Sutton, Jr., “Pornography, Persuasion and Attic Pottery,” in *Pornography and Representation in Greece and Rome*, ed. Amy Richlin (New York and Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1992), 5.

self-images with which they could define themselves as individuals and in respect to one another.”⁶²⁸

This creates an interesting parallel with Kirchner’s portrait painting *Farewell: Botho and Hugo* for its small audience of initiates with Graef the informed patron. Additionally, this relates to the proliferation of Aretino’s erotic pornography within a specific upper-class circle of patrons during the Renaissance. In the painting, Kirchner’s reinvention of homoerotic imagery employs select visual signs and symbols effective for informed art connoisseurs to communicate obliquely during the early modern period when legal repercussions were still a legitimate concern. Viewers without an understanding of highly specific Greek and Renaissance sources would likely take the painting and its title at face value as a swelling of pride and emotion at the departure for military service between dear friends or between a father and son.⁶²⁹

Returning to Kirchner’s selection of one pair from the vase, there are two couples placed in the middle of the youth-boy side of the underside of the *Peithinos Cup* who appear to be the most physically engaged with one another (Fig. 5.10). Both pairs have surpassed the initial courtship ritual, such as the gift giving seen on the far left side, or the boy’s initial obligatory resistance to physical engagement, as seen on the opposite right side. In the middle two pairs, these gamma groups are side by side with their garments

⁶²⁸ Sutton, “Pornography, Persuasion and Attic Pottery,” 3.

⁶²⁹ The National Socialists exhibited the painting in the *Degenerate Art Exhibition* in Munich in 1937 with a caption that was intended to slander the judgment of the Reich curator Dr. Redslob for praising Kirchner’s work. The caption read: “The democratic Reich curator, Dr. Redslob, on Kirchner: ‘We are in the presence of the first German artist to achieve a penetrating quality that can be likened to that of Dürer – E. L. Kirchner.’” In addition to *Farewell: Botho and Hugo*, Kirchner’s *Self-Portrait as a Soldier* was hung immediately beneath and next to Otto Dix’s *War Cripples*, 1920, with a caption for both images reading: “Deliberate sabotage of our national defense. An insult to the German heroes of the Great War.” (Barron, “*Degenerate Art*,” 56.) Neither caption seems to be related to the homoerotic iconography of *Farewell* but instead, appears intended to criticize the curator for supporting such art and Kirchner for denigrating the memory of servicemen.

falling open to expose their torsos and genitals – a common pictorial device used in order to show more of the unobstructed male body to the viewer and to signify the stage of courtship immediately prior to intercourse.

One of these two pairs, on the right side, is unique among the rest in several ways that make it similar to *Farewell: Botho and Hugo* and relevant for our comparison (Figs. 6, 5.11). First, in terms of iconography, this pair is the closest to intercourse resulting in the most physically intimate pose with the two men's bodies as close together as possible of all the pairs on the underside. In art of the ancient Greeks, this pose is referred to as the "intercrucal," in which the older youth bends his knees in order to bring his genitals close to his partner's thighs in a simulation of intercourse. This gamma couple is the only pair in which the older male has such a bent knee stance, which in turn appears very similar to the position of Graef's legs in the painting.

Second, this pair is the only couple to have all four hands visible and actively engaged with one another. The figures stand facing each other, looking into each other's eyes, with the outstretched arms of each reaching towards the penis of the opposite male. In this pair, one of the youth's arms is around the shoulder of the boy and he holds the handle of a cane in the same hand as the other arm reaches across towards the boy's groin. The boy's arm, meanwhile, grasps the elbow of the youth while his other arm extends into the middle space between their bodies. All of the arms, though bent at the elbow, remain linear and appear elongated above the zig-zag folds of their drapery just as the taut arms in *Farewell: Botho and Hugo* heightens the angular tension of the men's poses. The youth's arm crossing over the shoulder is similar in position to Graef's arm in supporting Biallowons under his arm, while the youth's long, elegant fingers are similar

to other images of Graef in which his attenuated fingers are rendered with great care, as seen in *Portrait of Graef* as he waves goodbye to Hugo, in *Portrait of Botho Graef, Jena: Music Room* where his music abilities are represented, and in *Graef and Friend* (Figs. 1, 3, 4).

In this couple, the faces of the two males are positioned close together and at the same horizontal alignment. This is unlike the other Greek pairs on the underside. The heads of the couple next to them, for example, while closely positioned, are not on the same spatial plane as the youth stands above the boy with his head looking down while the boy's head is positioned upward so their faces and gazes meet though their heights differ. According to Dover, he explains of the position of our gamma pair: "With man and youth both erect and facing each other, this suggests their social equality."⁶³⁰ According to the Classical scholar Robert F. Sutton, the reciprocal gaze is essential, for in Attic vases, "emotional engagement is often shown through eye contact."⁶³¹ This couple is the only one exhibiting both equality and intimacy in pose and position. The relationship between the two figures in *Farewell: Botho and Hugo* features the same intimacy and equality as that seen on the gamma pair of the vase and as that seen in the *Liebesakt* pair from the *I modi* series. The placement of Graef and Biallowons' heads and eyes on the same plane in the painting is further representative of a different type of emotional relationship than that of the pedagogical placement of Graef who is positioned

⁶³⁰ Dover, as quoted in Shapiro, "Courtship Scenes in Attic Vase-Painting," 137, note 30. According to the scholar David Halperin, in Classical Athens, "sexual partners came in two different kinds – not male and female, but active and passive, dominant and submissive." The equal status of this pair makes the *Peithinos Cup* imagery even more unusual. (Halperin, "Sex Before Sexuality: Pederasty, Politics, and Power in Classical Athens" in *Hidden From History*, 50.)

⁶³¹ Sutton, "Pornography, Persuasion and Attic Pottery," 11.

above his young protégé as a mentor rather than a companion in Kirchner's previous painting *Graef and Friend*.

This couple is unique in one final interesting way. Out of the four figural groups on the youth-boy side, only this pair features a bearded youth.⁶³² In both *Farewell: Botho and Hugo* and this pair, the bearded figure occupies the left side of the composition with the figure's head topped by dark hair and tilted back in comparison to their partner's head, which is shown in both artworks in strict profile.

Save for the athletic implements hanging between the couples to establish the location of a gymnasium in the *Peithinos Cup*, the setting is minimal. In the composition of *Farewell: Botho and Hugo*, the focus is entirely on the individuals, who are vertical in orientation filling up an equally spare setting. Aside from the figures, there is the couch upon which the men sit, visible on Biallowons' side, and there is one small square table occupying the background between them upon which a circular vessel sits. The lack of adornment or decorative elements in the steeply angled composition appears similar to the figures silhouetted against the dark background of the *Peithinos Cup*. In the painting, the shape of the table's top and the round vessel on it appear vaguely similar to the flat shape of the hanging implements on the gymnasium wall between the male pairs of the *Peithinos Cup*. The only extraneous detail in Kirchner's painting is the round vessel on the table that is situated between the men's heads. Could the inclusion of the vessel on

⁶³² According to Shapiro, by 510-500 BCE, when the *Peithinos Cup* was painted, the *erastes* is more often seen as a beardless youth while his *eromenos* usually appears younger, sometimes barely pubescent, making this depiction all the more unusual within its time. (Shapiro, "Courtship Scenes in Attic Vase-Painting," 135.)

the table in the painting be interpreted as a visual clue to the source of the painting's imagery as coming from a Greek vase?

By referencing the *Peithinos Cup* in *Farewell: Botho and Hugo*, Kirchner is incorporating a historically accurate account of the bonds among men from the Attic Greek period as known in the early-twentieth century. This subject remained extremely relevant and personal for Graef, whose education in Classical studies would have informed him of much of this information, and moreover, it characterizes the organization of his own lifestyle upon the tenets of the Greeks, including the traditions of pederasty and pedagogical instruction and the intimate personal relationships among men as practiced by the ancients.

Nietzsche's discussion of the invention of tragic drama, resulting from the Greek's ability to synthesize the Apollinian and Dionysian forces, is mirrored in the iconography of *Farewell: Botho and Hugo*. The men are in an embrace that visually signifies the merging of the dualistic forces of Dionysus, the older guide, and Apollo, the idealized male youth, with one bidding goodbye to the other who is departing in a culmination or fulfillment of the purpose of the pederastic relationship, which is to educate the young male to be able to assume independent status and bravely accept adult responsibility, often through armed conflict for the Greeks. That the *Peithinos Cup* was made in the late-sixth century BCE, which is the same time period that saw the creation of Attic Greek tragic drama, the principle subject of *The Birth of Tragedy*, is one more reason to believe that Kirchner was systematically engaged with Greek art and culture through the combination of Nietzsche's publication and Graef's pedagogical guidance at the time he painted *Farewell: Botho and Hugo*.

Chapter 6: Kirchner's Artworks in 1915-1917: Preservation and Reconciliation

From the end of 1914 through April 1917, Kirchner's output in painting dropped nearly in half due to the two years of peripatetic travels to and from military training camp followed by visits to several doctors and sanatoriums.⁶³³ However, among this decreased output in painting are some of the highlights of his entire artistic oeuvre, including *Self-Portrait as a Soldier*, 1915, and *The Drinker; Self-Portrait*, 1915, and, though large-scale paintings were less viable during this prolonged period, there are two important exceptions with *Artillerymen in the Shower*, 1915, and the final image commemorative of this period in *Dance Between the Women*, 1915, one of the last paintings he made in Berlin. Meanwhile, Kirchner's work in smaller formats, particularly graphic work, expanded in number, with one woodcut series, *The Wonderful Story of Peter Schlemihl*, recognized as among his most important works.

As I will examine in this chapter, I believe that during this period, Kirchner relied upon the ideological immersion in the early writings of Nietzsche that had formed such an integral part of his friendship with Graef, specifically *The Birth of Tragedy*, concerned overall with realizing one's creative potential through reconciliation, and the two subsequent essays "On the Utility and Liability of History for Life" and "Schopenhauer as Educator," that were tied together by their related discussions of the supra-historical individual who contributes to culture, in order to depict his own experiences as a means of self preservation.

In late 1915, Kirchner wrote to his patron Carl Hagemann from his Berlin studio: "My head aches and fever trickles down my spine, but the temptation to work on a few

⁶³³ Gordon, *Ernst Ludwig Kirchner*, 101.

things is too great to leave earlier [for medical treatment].”⁶³⁴ Several months later, in 1916, Kirchner explained to Gustav Schiefler: “I’m half dead and am seeing a neurologist, since I can’t do anything other than work [as an artist].”⁶³⁵ As I will show, by drawing upon the lessons of Nietzsche, Kirchner was able to overcome his inadequacies as a soldier to contribute to the war effort through his unique identity as an artist. In so doing, he succeeded in transcending his own situation to fulfill the timeless issue central to Nietzsche’s philosophy: the value of aesthetic contributions to aid in cultural regeneration that only result from the unique capabilities of the supra-historical individual.

According to Nietzsche in *The Birth of Tragedy*: “Here, when the danger to his will is greatest, art approaches as a saving sorceress, expert at healing. She alone knows how to turn these nauseous thoughts about the horror or absurdity of existence into notions with which one can live: these are the *sublime* as the artistic taming of the horrible...”⁶³⁶ Put simply in the same text by the philosopher: “Art saves him, and through art - life.”⁶³⁷

In a letter to his patron Gustav Schiefler, written in January 1915, before he was called for service in May, Kirchner expressed his understanding of the way men who serve in the war effort attained a status aligned with that of artistic individuals, whom he implies occupy a higher standing: “I also believe that many of these men who have done

⁶³⁴ Kirchner, in a letter dated December 3, 1915, to Hagemann, as quoted in Springer, *Hand and Head*, 36-37; and Gordon, *Ernst Ludwig Kirchner*, 25.

⁶³⁵ Kirchner, in a letter dated September 1916, to Schiefler, in Henze, ed., *Kirchner Schiefler: Briefwechsel*, 81; and Kirchner, as quoted in Springer, *Hand and Head*, 41.

⁶³⁶ Nietzsche, *The Birth of Tragedy*, 60.

⁶³⁷ Nietzsche, *The Birth of Tragedy*, 59.

their duty in the field have acquired an appreciation of humanity that will teach them how to value artistic expression of human sensibilities. The evolution of these men parallels that of creative people, placing them outside their own selves in order to fulfill their high calling.”⁶³⁸

During the summer of 1914, Kirchner and Erna were on Fehmarn when the official declaration of war at the end of July caught them off-guard. They were forced to leave the island, which was declared a militarily strategic area and quickly secured. During the couple’s return to Berlin, the police questioned Kirchner as a possible Russian spy.⁶³⁹ As a result, Kirchner became increasingly paranoid, developing a phobia of going out during the daytime and staying inside his Berlin studio and, as he became increasingly despondent and mentally unbalanced, his physical deterioration was exacerbated by an ongoing abuse of alcohol, cigarettes, a dependency on sleeping pills (Veronal), the barbiturate Pyramidon, an addiction to morphine and malnourishment.⁶⁴⁰

In a calculated effort to avoid the more dangerous infantry division, Kirchner “involuntarily volunteered” for service and in May 1915, he was ordered to report to Halle to serve as a field artillery driver in the Manstein Field Artillery Regiment No. 75.⁶⁴¹ At the same time, Graef, age fifty-eight, also voluntarily enlisted and was assigned

⁶³⁸ Kirchner, in a letter dated January 27, 1915, to Schiefler, in Henze, ed., *Kirchner Schiefler: Briefwechsel*, 71.

⁶³⁹ Springer, *Hand and Head*, 22; and Henze, ed., *Kirchner Schiefler: Briefwechsel*, 70.

⁶⁴⁰ Springer, *Hand and Head*, 39-40. Here, Springer characterizes the quantities of morphine as “enough to kill a horse!” In a health report to Dr. Ludwig Binswanger made in 1917, Erna recalled that as early as 1913, Kirchner was frequently inebriated and had become addicted to Pyramidon, a very powerful barbiturate. She reported that while on Fehmarn in 1914, Kirchner complained of a loss of sensation in his hands and feet, symptoms synonymous with the drug’s abuse. (Springer, *Hand and Head*, 39; and Anton Henze, *Ernst Ludwig Kirchner: Leben und Werk* (Stuttgart: Belser, 1980), 44.)

⁶⁴¹ Springer, *Hand and Head*, 25.

as an interpreter and censor to several prisoner-of-war-camps.⁶⁴² While anxiously awaiting his military orders, Kirchner painted one of his most expressive and complex self-portraits, *The Drinker; Self-Portrait*, 1915, in which he clearly conveys his severely debilitated mental and physical condition, painted according to his own recollections, “while day and night the military trains screeched past my window.”⁶⁴³

In *The Drinker; Self-Portrait*, the artist’s gaunt, mask-like, greenish-yellow face, the hunched posture of his frail body lost within the large tunic, and the lifeless position of his hand hanging in the foreground all give a clear indication of his hopeless mood. The appearance of the unusual accessories, the long, striped scarf and the women’s shoes, have led many scholars to question their meaning with many interpretations viewing them, together with the artist’s limp hand, as indicative of Kirchner’s sense that his masculinity had been compromised by his ineffectiveness as a soldier.⁶⁴⁴ Since he had deliberately avoided the infantry, the limp arm aptly implies his feeling of emasculation because of his fear of service and his inability to assume the role of a masculine, heroic and brave soldier. Soon after being called up for training, Kirchner expressed his awareness of his lack of capacity and his feeling of worthlessness as a soldier.⁶⁴⁵ The

⁶⁴² Graef’s assignment began in Erfurt, from May 1915 until the summer of 1916, followed by a post in Halle in October 1916, and lastly, in Görlitz in December 1916. (Wahl, “Graef, der ‘Leidenschaftliche Wortführer,’” 127; and Springer, *Hand and Head*, 120.)

⁶⁴³ Kirchner, in a letter dated July 11, 1923, to Hannes Meyer, as quoted in Gordon, *Ernst Ludwig Kirchner*, 101. Meyer acquired the painting from its former owner, the poet Karl T. Bluth, who was a member of the Jena circle. *The Drinker; Self-Portrait* has alternately been dated 1914, most noticeably in this letter. However, the later date is consistent with Kirchner’s complaints of war-induced phobias. Donald Gordon dates it 1915 in the catalogue raisonné.

⁶⁴⁴ Richard Cork interprets the scarf and shoes this way, as indicating Kirchner “felt part of his masculinity had been impaired by the war.” (Cork, *The Bitter Truth*, 108.)

⁶⁴⁵ Kirchner wrote: “Military service, as interesting and honorable as it is – at least interesting in the beginning – requires more physical stamina than I have these days. It exhausted me to such a degree

lifeless appendage is also an appropriate reflection of how Kirchner's abuse of alcohol and his dependency on various medications, which had already resulted in periods of numbness in his limbs, possibly rendered him sexually impotent during this period.

The slack, hanging arm appears as the visual antithesis to the symbol of the active painting hand previously used to designate a creative individual, seen for example in *Portrait of Oskar Schlemmer*, 1914, completed not long before this image and immediately after the first two portraits of Graef and Biallowons, and in the earlier *Self-Portrait*, 1913, in which Kirchner's painting hand is displayed prominently in the foreground (Figs. 4.2, 6.1). The painting hand is equated with Kirchner's feeling of virility through its placement in the earlier *Self-Portrait with Model*, 1910/1920. Like the forthcoming *Self-Portrait as a Soldier*, the disabling of the hand is a key feature in the lithograph of the writer Carl Sternheim, 1913, where the hand of a fellow creative individual is bent at a disabling angle and rendered useless, in an image also made during the war in 1917 (Figs. 2.22, 6.2).

All of these interrelated factors contribute to an understanding of the iconography of this painting reflective of Kirchner's negative appraisal of himself and the crisis that gripped him in 1915. However, I believe the image should additionally be considered from within the context of Kirchner's interrupted union with Graef steeped as it was in the philosophies of Nietzsche. The central theme of *The Birth of Tragedy* is the successful merging of Apollinian realms with Dionysian instinctual or ecstatic energy. In

that I was released from hard labor and then had to watch how the dumbest recruits do better than I had done, and watch how everyone was working and laboring while I couldn't even draw anymore, but instead had to lie at home, in order to have enough strength for the handful of hours of service I still had to perform. It is dreadful to have to work with the awareness that you are contributing nothing. The whole time brought me down to such a degree that I was quite crazy recently, and still can't think clearly today – it is a very slow process..." (Kirchner, in a letter dated December 15, 1915, to Schiefler, in Henze, ed., *Kirchner Schiefler: Briefwechsel*, 73.

Section 1, Nietzsche states that in order to begin to understand these two tendencies, “let us first conceive of them as the separate art worlds of dreams and intoxication.”⁶⁴⁶ In

Section 2, Nietzsche explains how these dual “art impulses of nature” were developed by the Greeks:

Every artist is an “imitator,” that is to say, either an Apollinian artist in dreams, or a Dionysian artist in ecstasies, or finally – as for example in Greek tragedy – at once artist in both dreams and ecstasies; so we may perhaps picture him sinking down in his Dionysian intoxication and mystical self-abnegation, alone and apart from the singing revelers, and we may imagine how, through Apollinian dream-inspiration, his own state, i.e., his oneness with the inmost ground of the world, is revealed to him in a symbolical dream image.⁶⁴⁷

The state of Dionysian intoxication with connotations of ecstasy and spiritual transport can be realized in various ways, particularly through dance, sexual activity, religious rapture, or as symbolized by the revelry of the Greek god Dionysus through the excess consumption of wine, all inducing a state of intoxication that shares the German word *Rausch* with drunkenness.⁶⁴⁸ Nietzsche frequently discussed the Apollinian realm of dreams and the Dionysian condition of ecstatic intoxication as forms of creative inspiration that provide the means for mental escape useful for turning away from the world in the same way that the drunkard forgets himself.

In the painting, Kirchner emphasizes his relationship with the glass of absinthe by positioning the glass on the table precisely level with his eyes. Furthermore, he uses the tilted position of the table to frame his face and the glass together within its circular form. While Nietzsche’s interest in *Rausch* is not in the cause of drunkenness through alcohol

⁶⁴⁶ Nietzsche, *The Birth of Tragedy*, 33.

⁶⁴⁷ Nietzsche, *The Birth of Tragedy*, 38.

⁶⁴⁸ For a discussion of *Rausch* within Nietzsche’s writing, see Arthur C. Danto, *Nietzsche as Philosopher* (New York: Columbia University Press, 2005), 29-31; 46-47; and Julian Young, *Nietzsche’s Philosophy of Art* (Cambridge, UK: Cambridge University Press, 1993), 88.

but in the state of intoxication or ecstasy itself, the glass of absinthe implies Kirchner's awareness of this realm. In *The Drinker; Self-Portrait*, it appears as though Kirchner is subtly invoking both realms for he will surely enter the Dionysian realm of drunken intoxication with the actual consumption of absinthe, while this choice of liquor will simultaneously induce the Apollinian state of dreams since excess consumption of it results in hallucinations or dream-like fantastic visions.⁶⁴⁹ According to Nietzsche, in dreams, "the glorious divine figures first appeared to the souls of men...The beautiful illusion of the dream worlds, in the creation of which every man is truly an artist, is the prerequisite of all plastic art."⁶⁵⁰

Throughout this period, Kirchner stayed inside his studio in self-imposed isolation to escape from the dangers he felt were waiting outside. Therefore, as described by Nietzsche, he was "alone and apart from the singing revelers," in his separation from his friends and mired in "mystical self-abnegation."⁶⁵¹ In Halle, Kirchner had deliberately stopped eating his rations and denied himself food in order to become weak and disabled, a strategy that was successful in securing his first medical leave in September 1915.⁶⁵² In Nietzsche's book *Twilight of the Idols*, completed before his mental breakdown in 1888, he summarizes the evolution of his later philosophy in a text that is heavily reliant on the importance of the Dionysian element. Kirchner, who owned a copy of this book, may

⁶⁴⁹ Donald Gordon described the spatial distortions and motifs throughout the composition as creating a "convulsive, hallucinatory environment." (Gordon, *Ernst Ludwig Kirchner*, 101.) Richard Cork finds that the "aerial vantage chosen for the portrait imparts a feeling of disorientation." (Cork, *The Bitter Truth*, 108.)

⁶⁵⁰ Nietzsche, *The Birth of Tragedy*, 34.

⁶⁵¹ Nietzsche, *The Birth of Tragedy*, 38.

⁶⁵² Springer, *Hand and Head*, 40; and Simmons, "Split-Identity in Ernst Ludwig Kirchner's Woodcut Cycle," 417-18. According to Hans Fehr, his superior officer who was a friend from Graef's Jena circle, Kirchner hid his food in a special pocket sewn on the inside of his uniform.

have related to Nietzsche's explanation: "The danger that lies in great men and ages is extraordinary; exhaustion of every kind, sterility, follow in their wake...The genius, in work and deed, is necessarily a squanderer: that he squanders himself, that is his greatness. The instinct of self-preservation is suspended...his indifference to his own well-being, his devotion to an idea, a great cause, a fatherland...He flows out, he overflows, he uses himself up, he does not spare himself..."⁶⁵³ In the text, Nietzsche soon summarizes the power of the Dionysian realm: "It is only in the Dionysian mysteries, in the psychology of the Dionysian state, that the basic fact of the Hellenic instinct finds expression – its "will to life"."⁶⁵⁴ In the painting, is the artist visually alluding to an imagined retreat into a Nietzschean-inspired realm of intoxicated dream inspiration that will promote his creativity?

Kirchner's Alignment with Nietzsche

In the preface "Attempt at a Self-Criticism," added to *The Birth of Tragedy* for its second release in 1886 and from where the young Brücke artists selected the phrase "*odi profanum vulgus*" for their house notebook, Nietzsche begins by explaining that the book remains significant and deeply personal to him because of or "in spite of" the period in which it was written during the Franco-Prussian War of 1870-1871. In his conclusion to the preface, Nietzsche prophesized of the future:

Let us imagine a coming generation with such intrepidity of vision, with such a heroic penchant for the tremendous; let us imagine the bold stride of these dragon-slayers, the proud audacity with which they turn their back on all the

⁶⁵³ Nietzsche, *Twilight of the Idols*, in *The Portable Nietzsche*, 548. See also contents of Kirchner's library in Gabler, *E. L. Kirchner: Dokumente*, 353-61.

⁶⁵⁴ Nietzsche, *Twilight of the Idols*, in *The Portable Nietzsche*, 561.

weakling's doctrines of optimism in order to 'live resolutely' in wholeness and fullness; would it not be necessary for the tragic man of such a culture, in view of his self-education for seriousness and terror, to desire a new art...⁶⁵⁵

For Kirchner in 1914-1915, with Germany embroiled in a new conflict with its neighbor France, Nietzsche's earlier position as someone who had harnessed the forces of their historical circumstances to create something of lasting cultural significance through their work likely bolstered his resolve to contribute in his individual way as an artist to his country's war effort.

In a further parallel that may have strengthened Kirchner's sense of possibility, in 1870, Nietzsche had also volunteered to serve, in his case as a medically orderly, but he was quickly disillusioned from active service, by the "fearfully devastated battlefield, mournfully bespattered everywhere with human remains, and reeking pungently of corpses," as he described his experience.⁶⁵⁶ After aiding in the transport of wounded soldiers, Nietzsche became extremely ill with dysentery and diphtheria, requiring his own medical discharge just three months later.⁶⁵⁷ However, as he explained in a letter to his friend and fellow philologist Erwin Rohde, despite his illness and disillusionment, he resumed work and found "the best philological inspiration I have ever had."⁶⁵⁸

⁶⁵⁵ Nietzsche, *The Birth of Tragedy*, 26.

⁶⁵⁶ Nietzsche, in a letter dated August 29, 1870, to his mother, as quoted in Hayman, *Nietzsche: A Critical Life*, 128-29. There were editions of Nietzsche's letters available as early as 1900, including the five-volume edition *Friedrich Nietzsche Gesammelte Briefe* (Berlin and Leipzig: Schuster & Loeffler, 1900). In Kirchner's library at the time of his death, he owned one comprehensive volume of Nietzsche's letters and documents, published in the early-1930s, but it is possible he was familiar with the philosopher's letters from prior volumes. Kirchner owned Alfred Baeumler, ed., *Nietzsche in seinen Briefen und Berichten der Zeitgenossen* (Leipzig: A. Kröner, 1932.); see Gabler, *E. L. Kirchner: Dokumente*, 354.

⁶⁵⁷ Hayman, *Nietzsche: A Critical Life*, 131.

⁶⁵⁸ Nietzsche, in a letter dated October 23, 1870, to Erwin Rohde, as quoted in Hayman, *Nietzsche: A Critical Life*, 130. Hayman explains that this inspiration was Nietzsche's realization that there was no

Only four months after beginning training, Kirchner required his first month-long medical leave and he soon expressed his awareness that his contribution to the war effort would result from his work as an artist: “I’m merely tolerated there, I’m of less use than the worst soldier, whereas here [on recuperative leave] I could do something new. I so yearn to go back to work...”⁶⁵⁹ In the essay “Schopenhauer as Educator,” Nietzsche expressed a similar belief, saying, “The dangers are always great when things are made too difficult for people and when they are unable to fulfill any duties.”⁶⁶⁰ Nonetheless, Nietzsche advocated striving in the face of all obstacles: “The highest thing that a human being can attain is a heroic life. This sort of life is led by the person who, in whatever manner or for whatever reason, struggles against overwhelming odds, for something that in some way will benefit all, who in the end is victorious, and who receives for this little or no reward.”⁶⁶¹

In the preface to *The Birth of Tragedy*, Nietzsche reinforced the value and inspiration he found in his work during the war: “Eventually, in that month of profoundest suspense when the peace treaty was being debated at Versailles, he, too, attained peace with himself and, slowly, convalescing from an illness contracted at the front, completed the final draft of *The Birth of Tragedy Out of the Spirit of Music*.”⁶⁶²

stress accent in Greek verse, rather word accents were retained, which is considered one of Nietzsche’s major contributions to philological studies.

⁶⁵⁹ Kirchner, in a letter dated October 25, 1915, to Karl Ernst Osthaus, as quoted in Springer, *Hand and Head*, 36.

⁶⁶⁰ Nietzsche, “Schopenhauer as Educator,” in *Unfashionable Observations*, 208.

⁶⁶¹ Nietzsche, “Schopenhauer as Educator,” in *Unfashionable Observations*, 204.

⁶⁶² Nietzsche, *The Birth of Tragedy*, 17.

The contents of Nietzsche's various essays on historical striving in *Untimely Meditations* likely proved increasingly relevant and highly personal for Kirchner in his struggles during this period. He was likely aware of the second essay "On the Utility and Liability of History for Life" from the founding period of the Brücke group in Dresden in 1905, for it was there that Nietzsche voiced his call: "I have faith in youth, and I have faith that it has steered me correctly by forcing me into a position of protest against the historical education of the modern human being in his youth."⁶⁶³

In 1914-1915, statements made by both Kirchner and Graef show their familiarity with the contents of Nietzsche's essay. According to Nietzsche: "The supra-historical thinker illuminates the entire history of peoples and individuals from the inside, clairvoyantly divining the primordial meaning of the different hieroglyphs."⁶⁶⁴ According to Graef, who ended his published defense for Kirchner's proposed design for the "Iron Smith" of Hagen sculpture competition in 1915: "The primeval contours of Kirchner's sculptures display a rich liveliness coming from within, reminiscent more than any other work of our time of the unsurpassed simplicity and direct expression of early German Medieval art."⁶⁶⁵

⁶⁶³ Nietzsche, "On the Utility and Liability of History...", in *Unfashionable Observations*, 158.

⁶⁶⁴ Nietzsche, "On the Utility and Liability of History...", in *Unfashionable Observations*, 94.

⁶⁶⁵ Graef, "Der Eiserne Schmied von Hagen," in Ehrmann and Wahl, *Kirchner: Von Jena nach Davos*, 105. Graef's explanation of the worth of Kirchner's proposal begins with a clear endorsement of Nietzsche's critical-historical approach to history: "The historical researcher recognizes how, over long periods, all spiritual creations share a uniform character. He then sees how over time, this character changes the "style."...We played for a while with Roman grace and refinement, we have dreamed the dream of Greek beauty. This has contributed much to our education. But, it made us forget our own art and deadened our senses towards other realms of artistic creation, which are even more perfectly suited than those...The sole rule of the art of ancient Greece and Italian High Renaissance is a handcuff against which the Northern artists at the peak of their craft are rightfully defending themselves...Our times may be proud of our unrivaled living culture. Now more than ever we yearn for an art to reflect our own ethos. Let us continue learning from the Greeks, but let us learn what they have to teach, that is an art that originates purely from

Kirchner shows his awareness of the contents of Nietzsche's essay by adapting his use of the term "hieroglyph." Nietzsche used the term to signify the capacity of the supra-historical individual to distill from any language, written sign, or form of communication, the essence of "the same constant types of human needs" to thoroughly and intuitively understand the universality of experience.⁶⁶⁶ Kirchner applied the term to his sketch work to explain his abbreviated method of recording visual stimuli with brief linear notations in order to capture his observations directly and distill them into basic immediate forms. Kirchner's unique terminology for his method of sketching has frequently been discussed in the literature in relation to his work from both the Dresden and Berlin periods.⁶⁶⁷ However, Kirchner himself only publicly used the term for the first time in 1920, in an essay written under his pseudonym Louis de Marsalle, for the journal *Genius*, to refer to this visual method of notation: "All art is derived from man. The art of these pages strives for clear concise signs, for hieroglyphs which are broad enough to include a wealth and diversity of pictorial visions. Its forms are sensual and arise out of an intense love of life."⁶⁶⁸

the life of a people. In this, they may continue to be our idol." (Graef, "Der Eiserne Schmied von Hagen," in Ehrmann and Wahl, *Kirchner: Von Jena nach Davos*, 104-05.)

⁶⁶⁶ Nietzsche, "On the Utility and Liability of History...", in *Unfashionable Observations*, 94.

⁶⁶⁷ According to Donald Gordon: "Kirchner's 'hieroglyphs,' originally defined as mere simplified planar equivalents for natural form, were capable of precise symbolic or metaphoric meaning as well." (Gordon, *Ernst Ludwig Kirchner*, 119; and see Gordon's discussion of the term hieroglyph on 20; 24; 30; 31; 93; 126.) Peter Selz explains Kirchner's hieroglyph as a line that suggests or describes reality in abbreviated form rather than attempting to fully represent it, something "akin to abstract calligraphic handwriting." (Selz, *German Expressionist Painting*, 101; and see also 302.) In Reinhold Heller's recent essay on the Brücke, he uses the term hieroglyph to explain the shift in style visible in Kirchner's imagery, beginning in 1909-1910, from "the flowing curves inspired by Jugendstil and Matisse to a staccato accentuation of sharp angles and a hieroglyphic simplification of forms." (Heller, "Brücke in Dresden and Berlin, 1905-1913," in *Brücke: The Birth of Expressionism*, 26; and see also 49.)

⁶⁶⁸ Louis de Marsalle [Kirchner], "Drawings by E. L. Kirchner," in *Voices of German Expressionism*, ed. Victor H. Meisel (Englewood Cliffs, NJ: Prentice Hall, 1970), 24. Kirchner's essay "Zeichnungen von E. L. Kirchner," 1920, was originally published in *Genius* II, no. 2 (1920). In another

In his autobiographical essay “Das Werk,” written in the third person in 1925, Kirchner applied the term hieroglyph again, this time specifically to explain his Berlin output from the years 1914-1915. Kirchner wrote: “In the years of his illness, he was able to attain a maturity and a liberation that enabled him a true freedom in his craftsmanship and accelerated his development greatly. In his withdrawn state and in the peace of loneliness, he was able to view his entire oeuvre and recognize within it what was truly new, the conscious forming of the hieroglyph, the reinvention of the natural form into an art form.”⁶⁶⁹ Kirchner’s use of the term applied specifically to the period of 1914-1915 reinforces the likelihood that he was not only aware of Nietzsche’s use of the term “hieroglyph,” but was engaged by his essay during this period in order to equate Nietzsche’s application of the term directly with his own work.

A Metaphorical Reconciliation in Kirchner’s Images

By considering a series of images made during 1915, I will show how a complex mixture of contemporary ideas relating to historical reconciliation and artistic creativity were assimilated by Kirchner in a series of metaphorical images as a means of reestablishing a sense of security and identity during this increasingly difficult period. As

passage, Kirchner writes: “They are hieroglyphs in the sense that they change nature’s forms into simpler two-dimensional shapes and suggests their meaning to the observer...They are not hieroglyphs in the customary sense of always using a specific shape for the same object or idea.” (Marsalle [Kirchner], “Drawings by E. L. Kirchner,” in Meisel, *Voices of German Expressionism*, 22.)

In 1925, Kirchner also used the term hieroglyph in a second essay on his sculpture. In this essay, he described his method: “In this manner Kirchner gained the insight that the intensive study of nature and the assistance of the imagination could create a new form far stronger and of more intense effect than a naturalistic rendition. He discovered the hieroglyph and enriched our modern period with an important means of expression, just as in their own time Seurat invented the *touché*, the breaking up of color, and Cézanne the system of cylinder, cone, and sphere.” (Marsalle [Kirchner], “On the Sculpture of E. L. Kirchner,” in Long, *German Expressionism: Documents*, 120. Kirchner’s essay “Über die plastischen Arbeiten von E. L. Kirchner,” 1925, was originally published in *Der Cicerone* 17, no. 14 (1925).)

⁶⁶⁹ Kirchner, “Das Werk,” in Grisebach, ed., *E. L. Kirchners Davoser Tagebuch*, 87.

I will explain, Wilhelm Worringer's *Form in Gothic* played a vital role alongside Nietzsche's *The Birth of Tragedy* and his essay "Schopenhauer as Educator," published in the same volume with "On the Utility and Liability of History for Life." By immersing himself in the ideas expressed in these art and historical texts, Kirchner used his imagery as a potent form of commentary incorporating key concepts from both theorists to symbolically comment on his own circumstances and his response to his interrupted friendship with Graef and Biallowons.

There are allegorical implications that relate to both Worringer's *Form in Gothic* and Nietzsche's *The Birth of Tragedy* and to the identities of Graef and Biallowons in two architectural landscapes painted by Kirchner in 1915. *Red Tower in Halle* and *Brandenburg Gate*, made following *Self-Portrait as a Soldier*, and painted in sequence, constitute an architectural double-portrait functioning on several symbolic levels (Figs. 6.3, 6.4).⁶⁷⁰ The sequential appearance of the two structures, one a Classical Greek-inspired example of harmony and proportion and the other a Gothic or Germanic art form, illustrates Kirchner's ongoing interest in Nietzsche's *The Birth of Tragedy* and Worringer's *Form in Gothic*.

The *Red Tower in Halle* alludes specifically to Kirchner's situation during the war for the tram that appears in front of the tower moving towards the viewer was the transportation line that ended at the location of his barracks south of the city.⁶⁷¹ The

⁶⁷⁰ In his essay "To Stand and See Within," Sherwin Simmons introduces his discussion of the painting *Rhine Bridge at Cologne*, 1914, by stating that comparatively little scholarly attention has been given to the historical significance of the sites of Kirchner's various architectural images, including *Red Tower in Halle* and *Brandenburg Gate*. (Simmons, "To Stand and See Within," 250.) For the former, see his article Simmons, "Men of Nails," 211-38; and for the latter, see the brief catalogue entry in Dominik Bartmann, ed., *Stadtbilder: Berlin in der Malerei vom 17. Jahrhundert bis zur Gegenwart* exh. cat. (Berlin: Nicolaische Verlagsbuchhandlung and W. Arenhövel, 1987): 282-85.

location of both architectural structures holds personal significance in terms of Graef and Biallowons as well during 1915. Halle and Berlin are the two cities that brought the three men together during the war: Kirchner served his brief two to three month portion of training in Halle, where both men visited him, while Berlin was the city in which he sat out the remainder of his service after receiving a temporary discharge in the autumn of 1915, and where he received visits from both Graef and Biallowons.⁶⁷² The last photographs Kirchner took in 1915 were of the two men during one such visit to his studio with one an individual portrait of Graef and one of the pair (Figs. 6.5, 6.6). According to Wolfgang Henze, Kirchner kept the two photographs with him when he left Berlin to seek medical treatment eventually culminating with his move to Davos.⁶⁷³

As a double-portrait, the Classical Brandenburg Gate is based on a system that recalls the Apollinian creative side of measure and balance. We have seen this side previously represented by Biallowons in his appearance as an idealized male figure. The Gate is based on architecture from the ancient Greek example that also relates to Graef's personal interest in the Classical past. In addition, both Nietzsche and Graef consistently maintained the guiding role of the ancients in the creation of worthy modern art forms. By comparison, the Halle Tower, with its dynamic spiraling form accentuated in the painting by its expressive color and slightly tilting appearance, recalls the Dionysian side of creativity as discussed by Nietzsche alongside the Northern spirit as discussed by Worringer. In *The Birth of Tragedy*, Nietzsche equated the German spirit directly to

⁶⁷¹ Simmons, "Men of Nails," 226.

⁶⁷² Springer, *Hand and Head*, 22-42; 120; and Wahl, "Von Jena nach Davos Stationen eines Künstlerlebens," in Ehrmann and Wahl, *Kirchner: Von Jena nach Davos*, 25-26.

⁶⁷³ Henze, "Die Kunst Ernst Ludwig Kirchner in den Krisenjahren," in Ehrmann and Wahl, *Kirchner: Von Jena nach Davos*, 52.

music, calling for a rebirth to rival the ancients in “the German spirit through the fire magic of music,” which will result from “so deep, courageous and spiritual, so exuberantly good and tender...this choral of Luther sounds – as the first Dionysian luring call breaking forth...echoes the solemnly exuberant procession of Dionysian revelers...to whom we are indebted for German music – and to whom we shall be indebted for the rebirth of German myth.”⁶⁷⁴ This relates to the original purpose of the Halle Tower built in the town’s market square in the fifteenth century as a bell tower that would have called out to local townspeople through the musical chiming of its bells.⁶⁷⁵

In both paintings *Red Tower in Halle* and *Brandenburg Gate*, the compositional space is tilted at a sharp angle to bring the architectural forms close to the foreground as the structures dominate their respective compositions by hovering precariously above the viewer. The *Red Tower in Halle* is a rare image within Kirchner’s repertory of urban architectural monuments and locations from 1912-1915 in that it does not emphasize the inhabitants of a space, such as the bustling *Nollendorf Square*, 1912, and *Belle Alliance Place, Berlin*, 1914, or the opposite effect, in *Street in Schöneberg City Park; Innsbruck Street*, 1912-1913, where the expansive intersection serves to accentuate the few pedestrians.⁶⁷⁶

In *Brandenburg Gate*, the overall focus also appears to be largely the architectural form spread across the entire width of the canvas rather than the city’s inhabitants, to the extent that Donald Gordon described the image: “Kirchner populates the spaces and voids

⁶⁷⁴ Nietzsche, *The Birth of Tragedy*, 123; 137

⁶⁷⁵ The Tower’s neo-Gothic lower story was added in 1825. (Simmons, “Men of Nails,” 222.)

⁶⁷⁶ Donald Gordon says of *Red Tower in Halle*: “The painting is the first Kirchner street scene to be totally devoid of human habitation.” (Gordon, *Ernst Ludwig Kirchner*, 104.) For reproductions of the other cityscapes, see Gordon, *Ernst Ludwig Kirchner*, (G291), (G292), (G372).

of a Berlin cityscape with a dehumanized species of tiny scale. So frenetically and rapidly executed that several of the left-hand figures are decapitated, the picture depicts the architectural symbol of Prussian Germany...through which three armored cars crawl, bug-like, down the foreground toward the Western Front.”⁶⁷⁷ In Berlin, the Gate, situated opposite the Pariser Platz, served as the main ceremonial ground in the nineteenth century with frequent military parades and imperial celebrations taking place there.⁶⁷⁸ In Kirchner’s image, nationalism, patriotic furor, and pageantry are absent with the central lane through the Gate bisected by vehicles. Similar to the train in *Red Tower in Halle*, these vehicles relate to war transport rather than a foreground space occupied by pedestrians.

The architecture of the Halle Tower is quintessentially German Gothic, its appearance featuring ornate spires adorning the lone precariously ascendant form. The Red Tower occupies the square next to the Marienkirche and between these two buildings there is a memorial fountain to commemorate Halle’s dead from the Franco-Prussian war. In the painting, the memorial is situated precisely under the arched doorway to the church, possibly a subtle reference to Nietzsche’s criticism of the German State in its elevation of military ideals supplanting all else and reducing the populace to a regimented herd as expressed in the essay “Schopenhauer as Educator,” written in the wake of the Franco-Prussian war in 1874.

Worringer’s description of a Gothic cathedral resonates with Kirchner’s depiction of the tower. In *Form in Gothic*, Worringer writes: “We see only a kind of petrified,

⁶⁷⁷ Gordon, *Ernst Ludwig Kirchner*, 104.

⁶⁷⁸ Simmons, “Men of Nails,” 223, note 45.

vertical movement from which every law of gravity seems to be eliminated. We see only an enormously strong upward movement of energies... There are no walls, no mass, to procure for us an impression of fixed material existence, only a thousand separate energies speak to us... as bearers of an uncontrolled upward movement.”⁶⁷⁹ In Kirchner’s image, the tower appears strong and defiant as it pierces the surrounding space with its sharp blue Gothic form.

By comparison, the Brandenburg Gate relies on the Classical Greek understanding of unity, balance and harmony in its construction. In Kirchner’s image of the Gate, the vertical thrust of the columns is subtly offset by the contrasting horizontal elements and there is an overall sense of quivering motion from the quick application of brushstrokes that energizes the whole image. According to Worringer:

We have seen that Greek art animated this lifeless nature of stone, making it a wonderfully expressive organism... Between logical orderliness and organic necessity, a synthesis is created which is entirely in accordance with the other ideal classical synthesis of concept and intuition, of thought and experience, of intelligence and sensibility.⁶⁸⁰

Erected between 1788 and 1791, the Gate was built with the architectural gateway to the Acropolis of Athens, the *Propylaea*, as its example. King Frederick Wilhelm II of Prussia built the Gate as a sign of peace, making Kirchner’s choice of it during a time of war particularly compelling. The crowning sculptural monument atop the Gate, the Quadriga of Victory, features a horse drawn chariot driven by the personification of victory. The Quadriga was added in 1793 and soon afterwards, following the Prussian defeat in the Battle of Jena-Auerstedt in 1806, it was taken to Paris by Napoleon and

⁶⁷⁹ Worringer, *Form in Gothic*, 106.

⁶⁸⁰ Worringer, *Form in Gothic*, 105.

finally restored in 1814 after the subsequent Prussian victory.⁶⁸¹ Kirchner renders the crowning sculpture in rudimentary lines, with only quick black brushstrokes and no distinguishing form, as though symbolizing the uncertainty of the place for victory as it must have seemed at the time of the present conflict.⁶⁸²

In Kirchner's depiction of the Halle Tower, he also does not render the presiding national sculptural monument, in this case the Roland statue that is mounted on the southeast corner of the building.⁶⁸³ The presence of the statue is only acknowledged by a similar slashing brushstroke in the vague form of the actual standing knight with sword as though Kirchner has visually wiped out Germany's heroic legendary warrior figure.

In mid-December 1915, Kirchner completed the autobiographical woodcut cycle *The Wonderful Story of Peter Schlemihl*, based on a Romantic novella of the same name written by Adelbert von Chamisso (1781-1838), a German-French writer, originally published one hundred years earlier in 1814.⁶⁸⁴ Its centennial renewed popular interest in

⁶⁸¹ Simmons, "Men of Nails," 223, note 45. After its return, the prominent Neoclassical architect Karl Friedrich Schinkel designed the wreath surrounding an iron cross surmounting an imperial eagle that was added to the top of Victory's staff.

⁶⁸² In 1929, after a visit to Berlin, Kirchner painted a second version in *Brandenburg Gate, Berlin*, 1929 (G936). In the later painting, the Quadriga is rendered fully and in detail in a central position atop the Gate, with the structure itself rendered with precise orderly columns presiding above a plaza busy with figures and vehicles. Its depiction is very different from the tilting structure in the earlier barren image.

⁶⁸³ Simmons, "Men of Nails," 222.

⁶⁸⁴ When Chamisso wrote the story, he was torn between loyalties to his birth country of France while living in Germany during the conflict between the two nations in 1814. It was written shortly after Chamisso returned to Berlin to pursue a doctorate in botany at the University of Berlin. When the conflict with France escalated, he retreated to a friend's estate to avoid the personal conflict that he suffered in Berlin as a Frenchman due to fervent nationalism aroused by the Prussian declaration of war against the French on March 16, 1813. (Simmons, "Split-Identity in Ernst Ludwig Kirchner's Woodcut Cycle," 414.)

The uneasy relationship between French and German relations may have also influenced Kirchner's interest in the series. In the 1930s, this issue appears to have troubled him again. In a letter to his brother Ulrich, written in December 1933, Kirchner expressed concern about the growing issue of the "pure German" race saying their family had French blood alongside the Prussian. (See Lloyd, *German Expressionism*, 243, note 55, for several comments by Kirchner on this issue.)

the fable during 1915.⁶⁸⁵ Kirchner cast himself as the protagonist of the story, visible in the self-portrait on the opening plate with his emaciated face under a military hat staring out at the viewer in an expressive image illustrating his mental and physical fragility at the time (Fig. 6.7). In the story, Schlemihl unwittingly agrees to sell his shadow to a mysterious “little gray man” in order to win the affections of his beloved. However, he realizes too late that the loss of his shadow means the inability to exist within the realm of reciprocal human intimacy for he has rendered himself incomplete and he is then forced to come to terms with his loneliness and inability to forge human connections. Kirchner’s cycle is a poignant commentary on his sense of isolation and loneliness during his period of military service.

In Sherwin Simmons’ discussion of the series, he locates the artistic source for Kirchner’s cover portrait as Schlemihl as related to the artist’s interest in non-Western sources, particularly Kwakiutl transformation masks, which when opened during dance ceremonies expose interior images decorated with silhouette heads, seen as representative of Kirchner’s fractured sense of self.⁶⁸⁶ This is aligned with Kirchner’s preference for the

⁶⁸⁵ Kirchner was not the only artist interested in the novella’s theme. In 1911, in an essay that served to introduce the text in an anniversary edition, Thomas Mann interpreted the shadow as symbolizing the social dimension of the self, the “bürgerliche” or societal component of an artist’s existence in which he tries to gain acceptance into society, a theme that had relevance for several of Mann’s works. In Thomas Mann’s “Introduction,” he notes that the fable was not originally written as a fairy tale, but instead with autobiographical overtones. (Adelbert von Chamisso, *The Wonderful History of Peter Schlemihl*, with an intro. by Thomas Mann (London: Rodale, 1954), xxiv.)

⁶⁸⁶ Simmons, “Split-Identity in Ernst Ludwig Kirchner’s Woodcut Cycle,” 409-11. Simmons’ discussion explores the manifestations of split-identity throughout the series in the various images that feature doubles, including the overall novella’s theme of the protagonist and his shadow, in a comparison between the cycle’s opening self-portrait image followed by the interior silhouette image of a male figure (an image that only appears in the print’s initial version), and in the parallels between Chamisso’s historical context with Kirchner’s own as the basis for his interest in the autobiographical work. (Simmons, “Split-Identity in Ernst Ludwig Kirchner’s Woodcut Cycle,” 409-32.) The *Schlemihl* series is also discussed in Springer, *Hand and Head*, 43-56; and Gunther Gercken, *Ernst Ludwig Kirchner: Holzschnittzyklen – Peter Schlemihls wundersame Geschichte, Triumph der Liebe und Absalom* (Stuttgart and Zurich: Belser, 1980).

use of primitive sources of inspiration drawn from the ethnographic museum in Dresden during his Brücke period and similarly available in Berlin.

I believe that one image used as an illustration in an early edition of Worringer's *Form in Gothic* might have been the source for the appearance of the series' opening portrait. The illustration of the *Southern Germanic Buckle Clasp* features a frontal face flanked by abstracted animal and curvilinear forms as employed on Medieval manuscripts and on stylized objects, such as this belt buckle, and its one-dimensional linear character and the flanking abstract elements surrounding the figure's face correspond to the elements in Kirchner's portrait.⁶⁸⁷ Furthermore, there is a similarity between the pursed lips and wide-open eyes on both of the figure's beleaguered faces (Figs. 6.7, 6.8).

A variation of Albrecht Dürer's image *Knight, Death and the Devil* is incorporated in plate five of Kirchner's series, in which Schlemihl, modeled after the artist who was put in charge of a horse during his military training, appears on horseback in the role of the knight in confrontation with his adversary, the "little gray man" who assumes the role of death (Figs. 4.5, 6.9).⁶⁸⁸ Just as Dürer's knight is tested by the figures of death and the devil, Kirchner felt military service was a test of strength and perseverance that he was unable to overcome.

In *Form in Gothic*, Worringer refers to Cranach as inaugurating a great German Renaissance in art and he refers to Dürer, Grünewald and Holbein together as closely

⁶⁸⁷ The line drawing of the belt-buckle as a reproduction appeared in Worringer, *Formprobleme der Gotik* (Munich: R. Piper & Co., Verlag, 1912), opposite page 10 on the bottom of a vertical row of three illustrations. It continues to appear in later editions; see Worringer, *Form in Gothic* (New York: Schocken Books, 1957), 6, plate 2.

⁶⁸⁸ Kirchner's recollections of his horse provide some of the only positive assessments of his military experience; see Springer, *Hand and Head*, 26.

allied with the Gothic. Worringer expands on this discussion focusing solely on Dürer as the chief representative of the Northern Gothic example in a description that parallels

Kirchner's view of himself as examined within the woodcut series:

Albrecht Dürer became an absolute martyr to this clash of two worlds of artistic expression which were fundamentally incompatible. This it is which gives the great note of tragedy to the whole course of his development. That he was unable to relinquish himself, his Northern humanity, whilst nevertheless with his discordant temperament he struggled with all his powers to attain this new world, whose starting point and goal were harmony and beauty, this was the tragedy which made him so great and made him the true representative of the North.⁶⁸⁹

Kirchner had a personal interest in the Gothic style as the period from which Dürer had emerged. Several times, he attempted to situate himself as Dürer's modern representative, which is also why the woodcut, a central part of Dürer's legacy, was such an important medium for him. In the Brücke "Chronicle," written in 1913 and illustrated with Kirchner's woodcut frontispiece, he credited himself with the group's introduction to the medium. On an early trip in October 1903 to Dürer's hometown, Kirchner saw his predecessor's original woodcut printing blocks in the Germanic National Museum, of which he wrote: "From southern Germany Kirchner brought the woodcut, which he revived under the stimulus of the old prints from Nürnberg."⁶⁹⁰ In the mid-1920s, Kirchner prepared a text for Will Grohmann's comprehensive publication in which he said: "Most likely the greatest German master is Dürer; in him all other German painters of the Middle Ages are contained and in him the new German art will recognize the

⁶⁸⁹ Worringer, *Form in Gothic*, 115-16.

⁶⁹⁰ Kirchner, "Chronicle of the Brücke," in Long, *German Expressionism: Documents*, 24.

father.”⁶⁹¹ In the same text, Kirchner asked: “Did you know that about 1900 I had the bold idea of renewing German art?”⁶⁹²

Kirchner saw himself as the modern artist most capable of regenerating German art as Dürer had succeeded in doing before him and as Nietzsche had stressed the importance of realizing in both *The Birth of Tragedy* and the subsequent essay “Schopenhauer as Educator.” By including a modern version of Dürer’s *Knight, Death and the Devil* in his woodcut cycle *Schlemihl* in 1915, Kirchner visualizes the need for a symbol of strength and perseverance comparable to Dürer’s earlier image, while simultaneously situating himself as a modern representative of the Northern Gothic spirit as explained by Worringer in *Form in Gothic*.

Kirchner’s variation of Dürer’s image in the *Schlemihl* series, a fable concerned overall with the burden of loneliness over the loss of human companionship, has highly personal implications for Kirchner’s situation as well. Ernst Bertram, a member of Stefan George’s circle and a contemporary of Graef, whose influential book *Nietzsche: Attempt at a Mythology* was published in 1918, explained that the Dürer image was the only pictorial representation that Nietzsche remained attached to over the course of many years, remaining the “only one that he viewed and admired as a better part of himself.”⁶⁹³

He explained its significance: “In a kind of convulsion, he felt it to be autobiographical, a

⁶⁹¹ Kirchner, as quoted in Will Grohmann, *E. L. Kirchner* (New York: Thames and Hudson, 1961), 22. The original publication was Grohmann, *Das Werk Ernst Ludwig Kirchners* (Munich: Kurt Wolff Verlag, 1926).

⁶⁹² Kirchner, as quoted in Grohmann, *E. L. Kirchner*, 26. Grohmann states: “During all the Swiss years the five volumes of “Dürer’s Drawings” – an expensive work, edited by F. W. Lippmann – were lying on his table, and he consulted them often in order to reassure himself that he, like Dürer, was working from nature, that he was basically akin to Dürer.” (Grohmann, *E. L. Kirchner*, 10.)

⁶⁹³ Bertram, *Nietzsche: Attempt at a Mythology*, 38.

warning to himself, the way one only feels those things that appear to be spectral concretizations, as it were, of points where different curves in one's life intersect. Where decisive lines in one's trajectory converge."⁶⁹⁴ In Nietzsche's *The Birth of Tragedy*, in the discussion of his hope for an impending rebirth in the German spirit, he states:

What else could we name that might awaken any comforting expectations for the future in the midst of the desolation and exhaustion of contemporary culture?...One who is disconsolate and lonely could not choose a better symbol than the knight with death and devil, as Dürer has drawn him for us, the armored knight with the iron, hard look, who knows how to pursue his terrible path, undeterred by his gruesome companions, and yet without hope, alone with his horse and dog...But how suddenly the desert of our exhausted culture, just described in such gloomy terms, is changed when it is touched by the Dionysian magic!⁶⁹⁵

Nietzsche finds that the influential philosopher Arthur Schopenhauer represents Dürer's knight for him: "He lacked all hope, but he desired truth. He has no peers."⁶⁹⁶ In "Schopenhauer as Educator," an essay written immediately after *The Birth of Tragedy* in 1874, Nietzsche discusses the importance of having the type of spiritual guidance he found in Schopenhauer: "No one who possess true friends knows what true solitude is, even though he have the whole world around him for his enemies."⁶⁹⁷ Nietzsche, who himself owned a copy of Dürer's engraving, gave the image to Richard Wagner while he was a Christmas guest at the composer's home in Tribschen, Switzerland, in 1870 when their friendship was at its strongest.⁶⁹⁸ In December 1915, Kirchner dedicated the title

⁶⁹⁴ Bertram, *Nietzsche: Attempt at a Mythology*, 38.

⁶⁹⁵ Nietzsche, *The Birth of Tragedy*, 123.

⁶⁹⁶ Nietzsche, *The Birth of Tragedy*, 123.

⁶⁹⁷ Nietzsche, "Schopenhauer as Educator," in *Untimely Meditations*, 139.

⁶⁹⁸ Hayman, *Nietzsche: A Critical Life*, 133.

page of the first complete version of the *Schlemihl* cycle to Graef with the inscription:

“To my dear wise Botho Graef by your dedicated E. L. Kirchner.”⁶⁹⁹

Philosophers, Artists, and Saints: A Final Reconciliation

Self-Portrait as a Soldier, 1915, featuring the artist standing in uniform with his severed hand held up in the foreground and his model standing behind him is one of Kirchner’s most expressive images (Fig. 9). Kirchner’s personal failings as a soldier and thus as a masculine, viral male, and his deep despair at the events of the period, which compromised his work, his friendships and his health, all inform the painting. In Peter Springer’s publication *Hand and Head: Ernst Ludwig Kirchner’s Self-Portrait as Soldier*, which provides a thorough recapitulation of the major scholarly interpretations, the author concludes that the image should be viewed as “a metaphor for [Kirchner’s] own state of mind and sense of identity.”⁷⁰⁰ According to him, in Kirchner’s image, “[the

⁶⁹⁹ Simmons, “Split-Identity in Ernst Ludwig Kirchner’s Woodcut Cycle,” 426-31; and Springer, *Hand and Head*, 154, note 19; and Wahl, “Ernst Kirchner und Jena,” 478-79. When Graef passed away in 1917, this version of the series was given to Grisebach, for whom Kirchner added a second dedication: “To Eberhard Grisebach, Graef’s intellectual heir and friend in Jena.” This edition of the woodcut cycle is now in the collection of the Kunstmuseum, Basel.

⁷⁰⁰ Springer, *Hand and Head*, 128; and 13-21; Critical Interpretations of the Painting. The majority of interpretations discuss the severed hand as Kirchner’s self-referential declaration of his creative and physical impotence or symbolic castration by visually rendering himself incapable resultant from his negative experience and desire to avoid service. Cork states: “This macabre amputation fantasy serves as a brutal symbol of his impotence now that illness has brought his military service to an end. Unable to paint or fight, he brandishes the raw and useless limb like an accusation.” (Cork, *The Bitter Truth*, 109.) Gordon states: “The painting’s personal symbol is one of paralysis and castration, of functional loss both professional and sexual. Its social symbol, however, is one of defiance against military authority...” (Gordon, *Expressionism*, 145.) Selz also interprets the image in this way: “Kirchner declares not only the dreaded possibility of actual physical destruction or impairment, but the real “amputation” of his talents during the period of war. He cannot paint – he is completely handicapped in his life as an artist...The nude woman contrasted to his amputated hands can stand either for the obvious symbol of sexual impotence or – more generally – for the frustration of his entire creative life.” (Selz, *German Expressionist Painting*, 299-300.)

hands] loss means nothing less than the annulment of a tradition that identifies the artist with his creative tool.”⁷⁰¹

In *Self-Portrait as a Soldier*, Kirchner is flanked on one side by his artist’s model and on the other side by what appears to be an abstract canvas. The artist and model composition is a motif that was frequently employed by Kirchner, as seen in the early paintings *Erich Heckel and Model in Studio*, 1905, and *Self-Portrait with Model*, 1910/1920, in which the artist stands in the foreground holding his paintbrush as a substitute phallus, a symbol of the creative potency of the artist that is destroyed in the later image (Figs. 2.4, 6.2). The artist and model composition was also realized in the numerous variations featuring Kirchner with Erna or Gerda, including *Nude with Two Mirrored Figures*, 1912, *Tower Room; Self-Portrait with Erna*, 1913, and the pair *Self-Portrait* and *Portrait of Gerda*, both 1914 (Figs. 2.8, 2.13, 2.18, 2.19).

In 1915, Kirchner took a sequence of self-portrait photographs wearing his military uniform (Fig. 3.14). Given the detailed rendering of the uniform in the painting, in which the numbers on the lapel are not reversed indicating that the image was not painted from a mirror, the photographs may have served a practical purpose in the creation of the painting. One significant detail of these photographs is where they are staged within the studio. In them, Kirchner stands in front of the same low seat next to the stove positioned in front of the same satyr sketch that was behind Hugo in the photograph of him dancing used for the painting *Dance Between the Women*. Again, the presence of the satyr in sketch form on the wall forms an axis between the placement of

⁷⁰¹ Springer, *Hand and Head*, 6.

the camera and the subject of the photographs used to realize paintings implying that its presence was integral to artistic creativity.

Although *Self-Portrait as a Soldier* tends to be discussed individually as a potent symbol of Kirchner's crisis during 1915, it shares several distinguishing compositional features with *Farewell: Botho and Hugo* and was made following it once Kirchner was separated from Graef (Figs. 6, 9). Springer outlines how, in *Self-Portrait as a Soldier*, "important focal points of the painting connect in a linear framework...that links the two main components of the composition," which can also be said of the tightly interlaced figures and the diagonal placement of their limbs in *Farewell: Botho and Hugo*.⁷⁰² Moreover, Springer calls attention to an often overlooked detail in *Self-Portrait as a Soldier*; the placement of the nude model means that she appears without hands, making her similar to the artist whose one hand is severed and the other is bent at a grotesque, angle.⁷⁰³ This is in pointed contrast to *Farewell: Botho and Hugo* where the clasped hands prominently occupy the middle register of the composition visually symbolizing the men's connectedness, while their arms crossed over their hearts illustrate their emotional bond. Both compositions are double portraits that include two figures conjoined physically and emotionally by their limbs, with figures posed frontally with their heads turned towards one another and with one of the figures in each in their military uniform.

Just as the war has interrupted the union of Graef, Biallowons and Kirchner, as foretold in *Farewell: Botho and Hugo*, it has disrupted the artist's ability to work; as Graef bids farewell to his companion, Kirchner bids goodbye to his identity as an artist

⁷⁰² Springer, *Hand and Head*, 6.

⁷⁰³ Springer, *Hand and Head*, 95.

and his ability to create art by holding up his severed hand while his muse appears useless as inspiration.⁷⁰⁴ The predominant subject in both images is one's most beloved companion, a subject with dual implications for both Graef and Kirchner in terms of friendship and art. In *Farwell: Botho and Hugo*, the younger man is Graef's beloved companion as well as the embodiment of the Apollinian ideal of physical beauty, a reference to his passion for the Greeks, whereas Kirchner signals his foremost relationship to his art and to his own companion in the form of the female model. By viewing the two paintings together as a symbolically conceived pair, the possibility that Kirchner was again looking to Nietzsche for inspiration becomes compelling. In Nietzsche's essay "Schopenhauer as Educator," the philosopher gives practical advice to the individual who is struggling to find a way on their path to overcoming:

Let the youthful soul look back on life with the question: what have you truly loved up to now, what has drawn your soul aloft, what has mastered it and at the same time blessed it? Set up these revered objects before you and perhaps their nature and their sequence will give you a law, the fundamental law of your own true self.⁷⁰⁵

In a metaphorical sense, both paintings provide a commentary on the central narrative of Nietzsche's *The Birth of Tragedy*. In *Farewell: Botho and Hugo*, with Graef as the Dionysian element and Biallowons the Apollinian, the two forces described as instrumental to the creative process are fused in an embrace. As the emotional toll of the events of 1915 heightened Kirchner's pessimistic outlook, *Self-Portrait as a Soldier* can be interpreted as the opposite or the frustrating inability to harness creative inspiration, as

⁷⁰⁴ Selz, *German Expressionist Painting*, 299-300.

⁷⁰⁵ Nietzsche, "Schopenhauer as Educator," in *Untimely Meditations*, 129.

depicted by the model who represents the Apollinian sculptural ideal and by the artist whose instinctual Dionysian power has been rendered useless by the loss of his hands.

In *Self-Portrait as a Soldier*, Kirchner equates himself with a martyr or someone who has suffered profoundly for his beliefs with art being his personal sacrifice. Springer discusses the possibility of a portion of an early Renaissance triptych altarpiece serving as a source for Kirchner's adaptation of the imagery of the severed hand (Fig. 6.10). In the 1910s, this fifteenth-century triptych featuring St. Adrian of Nicomedia hung in the Marienkirche in the northern city of Lübeck, one of the largest churches in Germany, on Kirchner's route from Berlin to Fehmarn, a journey he had traveled four times by 1915.⁷⁰⁶ The opulent gilt-framed altarpiece features St. Adrian without his usual attributes of an anvil, ax or sword; instead, he is depicted carrying the hand that was severed in his martyrdom.

I believe this triptych is worth another look on account of the other figures depicted alongside St. Adrian. Three figures are framed overall within its Gothic arches, each with a golden halo crowning them as saints. St. Adrian occupies the right side with his gaze directed towards the other figures who are a bearded figure in a toga dressed as an ancient philosopher occupying the middle panel, his pensive gaze directed down, and a youthful looking saint dressed in full armor who stands on the left, his gaze off to the right side and away from the others. Is it possible that Kirchner had Graef, Biallowons and himself in mind when recalling the triptych? The middle figure wears the clothing of the ancient Greeks, appears melancholy and pensive and wears a beard, all attributes that are relevant to make him representative of Graef, a Classical philosopher. Next to him,

⁷⁰⁶ Springer, *Hand and Head*, 63.

the young saint in armor parallels Biallowons, who Kirchner depicted twice before in uniform for active combat and who bravely served as an officer in the infantry.

Furthermore, the manner in which this saint's gaze is directed outside of the altarpiece independent of his companions towards his individual fate is similar to the first *Portrait of Hugo*. By casting himself in the role of St. Adrian, Kirchner fulfills the triptych to unite the three men in two double-portraits with himself and his artist's muse in *Self-Portrait as a Soldier* and with Graef and Biallowons in *Farewell: Botho and Hugo*.

The appearance of three military figures occurs in one other curious artwork made around 1917. Kirchner crafted a metal belt buckle that features three men with joined hands dressed in uniform positioned across the buckle's oval form (Fig. 6.11). In Berlin, the Brücke artists began crafting jewelry in the hopes of generating a small income from its sale and metal work appears on the list of art forms for instruction at the MUIM Institute, founded by Kirchner and Pechstein in 1911. Although Kirchner's output in jewelry was smaller than that of the other men, he made several pieces of metal jewelry between 1912 and 1917, including brooches of the type worn by Erna in the painting *Seated Woman with Wood Sculpture*, 1912 (Fig. 2.9).⁷⁰⁷ That Kirchner choose to make a belt buckle featuring three men in military uniform also alludes back to the *Southern Germanic belt buckle* reproduced in Worringer's *Form in Gothic* that served as the inspiration for his opening self-portrait as a soldier in the *Schlemihl* series (Fig. 6.8).

The characterization that emerges of the three men's identities, as seen in these various images, reinforces the idea of the three men identified by Kirchner variously as a

⁷⁰⁷ For a discussion of the Brücke's output in jewelry, see the exhibition catalogue Katja Schneider, ed., *Nur für ihre Frauen: Schmuck von Karl Schmidt-Rotluff, Emil Nolde, Erich Heckel und Ernst Ludwig Kirchner* (Halle: Stiftung Moritzburg, Kunstmuseum des Landes Sachsen-Anhalt, 2003). Kirchner's jewelry is discussed on pages 14-17 and the belt buckle is reproduced on page 104.

philosopher, an artist, and as saints. This is closely aligned with the central discussion in Nietzsche's essay "Schopenhauer as Educator." By 1915, as Kirchner's *Self-Portrait as a Soldier* makes clear, Kirchner was struggling with his circumstances and the type of spiritual guidance and ideological bolstering from Nietzsche's text was needed more than ever. In his essay, Nietzsche maintains that through the most insurmountable challenges, when "we are too weak to endure those moments of profoundest contemplation...we have to be lifted up – and who are they who lift us?...They are those true men, those who are no longer animal, the philosophers, artists and saints."⁷⁰⁸

Nietzsche's discussion in the essay is situated within a critique of the contemporary German educational system and the recent Franco-Prussian War, making its subject timely for the men in 1915 in light of the latest nationalist conflict and for Graef's role as a university educator and pedagogical leader. Nietzsche explains the crucial role of a philosophical mentor, stating that a youth benefits from their guidance as they navigate life's challenges: "Your true educators and formative teachers reveal to you what the true basic material of your being is, something in itself uneducable and in any case difficult to access, bound and paralyzed: your educators can be only your liberators."⁷⁰⁹

In "Schopenhauer as Educator," Nietzsche states: "Given nature's own pressing need for redemption, it is certain that by producing the philosopher and the artist, it sought to make existence intelligible and meaningful for human beings."⁷¹⁰ In a speech

⁷⁰⁸ Nietzsche, "Schopenhauer as Educator," in *Untimely Meditations*, 158-59.

⁷⁰⁹ Nietzsche, "Schopenhauer as Educator," in *Untimely Meditations*, 129.

⁷¹⁰ Nietzsche, "Schopenhauer as Educator," in *Unfashionable Observations*, 234.

that was reprinted in essay form in the local newspaper in support of Kirchner's Jena Art Association exhibition in 1914, Graef explained the task facing artists at the time in language that recalls the content's of Nietzsche's text, saying: "So our artists now have the task of constructing a means of expressing the new soul, again working toward a colossal common goal."⁷¹¹

In his essay, Nietzsche explains that certain individuals are examples of transcendent self-fulfillment by realizing their supra-historical state of highest potential, and with these individuals, "nature, which never makes a leap, has made its one leap in creating them, and a leap of joy moreover, for nature then feels that for the first time it has reached its goal."⁷¹² In various successive passages, Nietzsche explains how these individuals, distinguished above others by their ability to overcome life's obstacles, are to be emulated. Integral to his explanation are the worth of art and culture as the reason for such striving, the need to remain steadfast and non-conformist in one's efforts, and the role of a teacher and of a unified community in undertaking this task, all of which relate to the atmosphere fostered within Graef's home and Kirchner's view of himself and his artistic tasks. Nietzsche writes:

Here I have arrived at an answer to the question whether it is possible to pursue the great ideal of the Schopenhauerean man by means of a practical activity. One thing above all is certain: these new duties are not the duties of a solitary; on the contrary, they set one in the midst of a mighty community held together, not by external forms and regulations, but by a fundamental idea. It is the fundamental idea of *culture*, insofar as it sets for each one of us but one task: *to promote the production of the philosopher, the artist and the saint within us and without us and thereby work at the perfecting of nature*. For, as nature needs the philosopher, so does it need the artist, for the achievement of a metaphysical goal, that of its

⁷¹¹ Graef, "Besprechung von Botho Graef zur Ausstellung Ernst Ludwig Kirchner," in Ehrmann and Wahl, *Kirchner: Von Jena nach Davos*, 102.

⁷¹² Nietzsche, "Schopenhauer as Educator," in *Untimely Meditations*, 159.

own self-enlightenment, so that it may at last behold as a clear and finished picture that which it could see only obscurely in the agitation of its evolution – for the end, that is to say, of self-knowledge...

Only when, in our present or in some future incarnation, we ourselves have been taken into the exalted order of philosophers, artists and saints, shall we also be given a new goal for our love and hate – in the meantime we have our task and our circle of duties, our hate and our love. For we know what culture is...

It is hard to create in any one this condition of intrepid self-knowledge because it is impossible to teach love; for it is love alone that can bestow on the soul, not only a clear, discriminating and self-contemptuous view of itself, but also the desire to look beyond itself and to seek with all its might for a higher self as yet still concealed from it. Thus only he who has attached his heart to some great man is by that act *consecrated to culture*.⁷¹³

Might Kirchner have applied Nietzsche's instructive essay to his identity and those of the other men? Graef fits the role of the philosopher and pedagogical leader; Kirchner the artist, and Biallowons, who bravely answered the call to war, the saint who sacrifices his own life for others, all striving to realize their highest cultural purpose as the Greeks accomplished in Nietzsche's *The Birth of Tragedy*.

In a letter written in January 1915, to his patron Gustav Schiefler, Kirchner's outlook towards the war was not yet bleak; before reporting for training, he explained his somewhat optimistic feelings about an individual's contribution to the war: "I also believe that many of these people who served in the field found their way to what is human, and will therefore appreciate the expression of humanity's emotions in art. The path of these men is parallel to that of the creators: setting yourself outside of the personal "I" in order to fulfill a higher obligation."⁷¹⁴ Kirchner's statement sounds very similar to Nietzsche's directive in "Schopenhauer as Educator," in which he states:

⁷¹³ Nietzsche, "Schopenhauer as Educator," in *Untimely Meditations*, 160; 161; 162-63.

There are moments and as it were bright sparks of the fire of love in whose light we cease to understand the word 'I', there lies something beyond our being which at these moments moves across into it, and we are thus possessed of a heartfelt longing for bridges between here and there...Anyone who believes in culture is thereby saying: 'I see above me something higher and more human than I am; let everyone help me to attain it, as I will help everyone who knows and suffers as I do: so that at last the man may appear who feels himself perfect and boundless in knowledge and love, perception and power, and who in his completeness is at one with nature, the judge and evaluator of things'.⁷¹⁵

Kirchner's *Self-Portrait as a Soldier*, an image of an artist or creator who is rendered unable to produce work, which is his individual contribution to cultural and personal overcoming, clearly relates to Nietzsche's essay "Schopenhauer as Educator" as a spiritual guide for Kirchner during this period of personal struggle. Furthermore, the contents of the essay provided him with a feeling of metaphysical unity with Graef and Biallowons by allowing him to view all three men as spiritual comrades together on their supra-historical journey of overcoming.

The End of Kirchner's Creation of a Personal Mythology

During the first half of 1916, Kirchner remained under much needed medical supervision while traveling between the sanatorium in Königstein and his Berlin studio. Though separated by location, Kirchner remained emotionally dependent on Graef. In a letter to him, written in February 1916, Kirchner's mood is utterly despondent and he references suicide: "There are infinite tasks before us, but unfortunately I will no longer take much part in them for I can endure everything except the systematic killing that is now in fashion and to which I perhaps shall fall as victim, whether I will or not. I am also

⁷¹⁴ Kirchner, in a letter dated January 27, 1915, to Schiefler, in Henze, ed., *Kirchner Schiefler: Briefwechsel*, 71. For a discussion of the enthusiasm that greeted the beginning of the war, see Ronald Stromberg, *Redemption by War: The Intellectuals and 1914* (Lawrence: Regents Press of Kansas, 1982).

⁷¹⁵ Nietzsche, "Schopenhauer as Educator," in *Untimely Meditations*, 161-62.

getting anxious at your not writing...Please answer me soon, or else send me the silken cord. What there is of my work, I give into your hands and then at least go as a decent human being.”⁷¹⁶

Kirchner sought his release from the sanatorium one week after Biallowons was killed at Verdun on July 9, 1916. In a letter written one month later to Gustav Schiefler, he described: “I feel very weak and often fall into deep sadness...I just spent a few days in Jena. I find sadness and illness everywhere...A good, honest friend of mine has fallen in battle. Mueller has been drafted. Everything is going away, and the dreadful war will not end. And if you peer into this world with seeing eyes, you cannot help but ask why, why; there has always been struggle, but why this brutality on top of it?”⁷¹⁷ In the same letter, Kirchner informs Schiefler that Graef was ill after deteriorating recently from the toll of the war.

Kirchner commemorated Hugo’s death in a woodcut with the inscription “Hugo Biallowons died for us on 9 July 1916” across the bottom. This image is one of the only portraits of Hugo that depicts him posed frontally, his wide-open eyes and direct gaze serving as a painful reminder of the loss and void left by his death (Fig. 6.12). Biallowons is positioned in front of fir trees, a reference to his love of nature and his work as a forest ranger, with the moon shining brightly in the background and strong clear lines radiating from his person. This is a device similar to the white lines that emanate from Graef’s spectral head as it appears to the left of Grisebach in his portrait woodcut (Fig. 3.5). The

⁷¹⁶ Kirchner, in a letter dated February 1916, to Graef, as quoted in Gordon, *Ernst Ludwig Kirchner*, 27.

⁷¹⁷ Kirchner, in a letter dated August 17, 1916, to Schiefler, in Henze, ed., *Kirchner Schiefler: Briefwechsel*, 79-80.

halo of light surrounding Biallowons' head appears in a varied form in a descriptive landscape painted made at the same time. In *Graef's Garden in Jena*, 1916, several figures are gathered in a verdant natural setting (Fig. 6.13). Donald E. Gordon interpreted the "aureole of candlelight behind the head of the bearded Graef" to the left of center as a halo.⁷¹⁸ Though it is difficult to distinguish, Graef and the other figures appear to be gathered around a space in the ground, possibly referencing their gathering around Graef at Biallowons' symbolic grave.

Nietzsche's discussion of the saint, in his essay "Schopenhauer as Educator," relates to Kirchner's image of Hugo in the woodcut and Graef's appearance within the landscape in the painting. Nietzsche states:

And so nature at last needs the saint, in whom the ego is completely melted away and whose life of suffering is no longer felt as his own life – or is hardly so felt – but as a profound feeling of oneness and identity with all living things: the saint in whom there appears that miracle of transformation which the game of becoming never hits upon, that final and supreme becoming-human after which all nature presses and urges for its redemption from itself. It is incontestable that we are all related and allied to the saint, just as we are related to the philosopher and artist; there are moments and as it were bright sparks of the fire of love in whose light we cease to understand the word 'I', there lies something beyond our being which at these moments moves across into it, and we are thus possessed of a heartfelt longing for bridges between here and there.⁷¹⁹

Making a woodcut in response to Hugo's death is an important choice of medium. The woodcut has historical implications extending back to the Gothic period making it quintessentially German. By depicting the virile, masculine Hugo, who courageously accepted the challenge of duty and bravely fought in combat, Kirchner appears to be

⁷¹⁸ Gordon further interprets: "the picture then becomes an allegory for Christ in the Garden of Olives, contemplating his earthly death while surrounded by unknowing disciples." (Gordon, *Ernst Ludwig Kirchner*, 106.)

⁷¹⁹ Nietzsche, "Schopenhauer as Educator," in *Untimely Meditations*, 160-61.

connecting his understanding of his friend's identity as a German with his choice of the medium. In a letter to his patron Carl Hagemann, written shortly after Hugo's death in 1916, Kirchner described him as "a blossom of our young Germany, which should carry bountiful fruits rather than die early."⁷²⁰

In September 1916, two months after Hugo's death, Kirchner arrived in Jena to stay in Graef's home for the remainder of the year. He visited Graef, who was stationed in Halle during the month of October, before making several trips to and from Berlin.⁷²¹ While in Jena, Kirchner wrote a brief autobiographical account of his life in the form of a letter to Graef and arranged for him to become the executor of his estate.⁷²² In December 1916, Graef wrote to Eberhard Grisebach of his worry that Kirchner would end up similar to Nietzsche, "for years in a state of helplessness."⁷²³ In early 1917, Graef and Grisebach arranged for Kirchner's care in the Kreuzlingen Sanatorium in Davos, where he spent much of 1917. Despite his own ill health, Kirchner tried to remain close to Graef, even offering to become his caretaker for he, too, was extremely ill by early 1917.⁷²⁴

Graef passed away from cardiac failure on April 9, 1917. One month before, he had written to Grisebach: "It is time for the war to finally end its fury."⁷²⁵ Nine days prior

⁷²⁰ Kirchner, in a letter dated July 24, 1916, to Hagemann, as quoted in Röske, *Tanz zwischen den Frauen*, 70; 107, note 90.

⁷²¹ Simmons, "Ernst Kirchner's Streetwalkers," 138; and Wahl, "Von Jena nach Davos Stationen eines Künstlerlebens," in Ehrmann and Wahl, *Kirchner: Von Jena nach Davos*, 29.

⁷²² Kirchner's letter, dated September 21, 1916, is included in "Texte und Dokumente" in Ehrmann and Wahl, *Kirchner: Von Jena nach Davos*, 100-01.

⁷²³ Graef, in a letter dated December 1, 1916, to Grisebach, in Grisebach, *Maler des Expressionismus*, 56; and Graef, as quoted in Wahl, "Botho Graef - Kirchners väterlicher Freund," 71. Nietzsche lived the last ten years of his life insane and cared for by his mother and then his sister.

⁷²⁴ Wahl, "Botho Graef - Kirchners väterlicher Freund," 71.

to his death, Graef was notified that his adored nephew Stefan, the only son of his only sister Sabine, had died in combat.⁷²⁶ As Grisebach stated in his eulogy, his close friend died “of a heart condition triggered by the sadness over the loss of many friends... with death arriving just in time to generously spare him the worst suffering. He was an enthusiastic teacher of youth, to whom he was devoted with a glowing soul. He watched many of his youngest friends sink away in war.”⁷²⁷ The poet Karl T. Bluth, a member of Graef’s circle, wrote:

If you saw him, it was only his eyes that spoke. They said something different, a deep suffering. One after the next, his young ones, his life, were taken away from him. When the last one fell, his heart was broken. In a sanatorium in Taunus – not outdoors, not at home, and without friends – he burned out like a light... Botho Graef, this humble professor, this friend of youth, this decent, lovable person.⁷²⁸

Kirchner received the news of Graef’s death too late to attend the memorial service in Jena. From his confinement in the sanatorium, he immediately made a drawing for the front and back view of a gravestone in his sketchbook (Fig. 6.14). The overall design is rendered with loose lines that appear to have been drawn quickly yet the iconography is clear along with the inscription: “Here rests Botho Graef.”⁷²⁹ The image conveys much information about Kirchner’s view of his friend. According to the scholar Roland Scotti, Kirchner viewed his sketchbooks as a visual diary, reflecting his frame of

⁷²⁵ Graef, in a letter dated March 18, 1917, to Grisebach, as quoted in Wahl, “Botho Graef - Kirchners väterlicher Freund,” 72.

⁷²⁶ Lepsius, *Ein Berliner Künstlerleben*, 242.

⁷²⁷ Grisebach, eulogy as originally published in the *Jenaische-Zeitung* (April 12, 1917), as quoted in Wahl, “Botho Graef - Kirchners väterlicher Freund,” 71.

⁷²⁸ Bluth, in a tribute published for the ten-year anniversary of Graef’s death, in the *Jenaische-Zeitung* (April 9, 1927), as quoted in Wahl, “Botho Graef - Kirchners väterlicher Freund,” 72; and Wahl, “Graef, der ‘Leidenschaftliche Wortführer’,” 119.

⁷²⁹ The inscription “Hier Ruht Botho Graef. Gestorben ...” translates “Here rests Botho Graef. Died.... The numbers that follow are difficult to read, although it appears that the date 1917 is at the end.

mind at any given time, something that Scotti finds is especially true for the sketchbooks spanning 1914-1918.⁷³⁰ In an article written in the 1920s, under his pseudonym Louis de Marsalle, the artist explained the importance of his drawings: “Kirchner’s drawings are perhaps his purest and most beautiful work. They mirror the feelings of a man of our times, instinctively and without premeditation.”⁷³¹

Remaining true to his friend’s passion for the ancients, the drawing of the gravestone appears similar in its elongated, upright rectangular form, positioned atop a base, to an Attic grave stele. The relationship to the Greek example is continued through the iconography in which two figures are contained within the rectangular form, as was the late-5th Century Attic stele style, positioned with their heads in profile and the bodies turned in a three-quarters view, also the Greek preference in order to provide the best possible understanding of the bodily forms and reinforce the appearance of spatial depth within the shallow relief format while, most importantly, attempting to engage the view and elicit their sympathy for the deceased.⁷³² Although the design was never realized, it shows Kirchner’s equation of Graef with the solemnity of the ancient Greek example.

Perhaps more important than the connection with the Greeks, however, is the iconography, which appears very similar to that in Kirchner’s painting *Graef and Friend* (Figs. 3, 6.14). In the sketch, Graef appears at the top bent over the head of a second male figure with the briefest of lines indicating his arm bent at the elbow to cradle the head of his companion, with his characteristic beard distinguished by the firmly rendered black

⁷³⁰ Scotti, “War, Art and Crisis: Ernst Ludwig Kirchner 1914-1918,” in Lloyd and Moeller, *Kirchner: The Dresden and Berlin Years*, 28.

⁷³¹ Kirchner, “Drawings by E. L. Kirchner,” in Meisel, *Voices of German Expressionism*, 24.

⁷³² Brilliant, *Arts of the Ancient Greeks*, 237; and Robin Osborne, *Archaic and Classical Greek Art* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1998), 193-95; 223.

lines, the darkest of the entire sketch, forming a pointed triangle to indicate that Graef is positioned kissing the top of his companion's head. The second figure, appearing in profile with a rounded head shorn of hair, a sharp nose and prominent chin, resembles other images of Hugo. This figure has his arm raised to occupy the foreground above the inscription of Graef's name in the gesture of an artist, further symbolizing Kirchner himself. The pose reinforces the pedagogical nature of the relationships between Graef and his younger protégés and illustrates Kirchner's enduring view of the emotional bond between the gravestone's subjects: an artist and his ever-attentive and devoted father figure. Perhaps Kirchner had in mind a passage from *The Birth of Tragedy*: "I know that I must now lead the sympathizing and attentive friend to an elevated position of lonely contemplation, where he will have but few companions, and I call out encouragingly to him that we must hold fast to our luminous guides, the Greeks."⁷³³

⁷³³ Nietzsche, *The Birth of Tragedy*, 137.

Conclusion

As a result of Ernst Kirchner's productive though fleeting engagement with Botho Graef in the first half of 1914, the artist completed seven highly original and descriptive paintings of his friend and the circle around him. These include four variations of double-portraits that show the importance of companionship for Graef, in paintings featuring Hugo Biallowons, his companion, beginning with the first friendship pair, *Portrait of Graef* and *Portrait of Hugo*; followed by the two men in the genre scene *Two Friends Conversing*; and culminating with the most emotionally telling portrayal of the couple in *Farewell: Botho and Hugo*. Here, Kirchner incorporated highly personal and relevant references to Renaissance artworks and ancient Greek sources to provide a summary portrayal of the romantic and pedagogic relationship between the men. In the double portrait *Graef and Friend*, Graef's important pedagogical role among his younger friends is also central to the composition.

In the two individual portraits that feature Graef and Biallowons, *Portrait of Graef, Jena; Music Room* and *Dance Between the Women*, the complex, interrelated compositions reveal far more than each man's physical appearance by conveying as well the leading ideological role of Nietzsche's philosophy as explained in *The Birth of Tragedy* and the importance of creative pursuits among the men by metaphorically representing the Dionysian realms of music and dance alongside the Apollinian ideal personified by Hugo. From Kirchner's first double-portrait pair to the poignant *Farewell: Botho and Hugo*, it is evident how the tenor of the images evolved, becoming increasingly descriptive of the three men's friendship. While the images appear

progressively more intimate as Kirchner spent time among them, his visual solutions for depicting them became more inventive by interweaving multiple layers of information incorporating art historical motifs, contemporary references and highly personal symbols to convey the strength of their bonds.

By relying equally on the philosophy of Nietzsche and on his friendship with Graef, Kirchner created images that are historically grounded in enduring nationalistic symbols yet innovative in their incorporation of Nietzschean ideals and ancient Greek references. The production of images of Graef and Biallowons, all visually concerned with interrelationship, are interspersed with and followed by several variations of thematic pairs and self-portraits that illustrate how the theme of reconciliation from Nietzsche and the positive aspects of companionship as experienced among Graef factored into Kirchner's output as a means of personal preservation and artistic regeneration throughout the increasingly difficult period resulting from the First World War in 1915.

Furthermore, Kirchner's embrace of Nietzsche's early publications provided him with an ideally suited means of positioning himself as the modern representative of an illustrious German artistic tradition begun during the late-Gothic or early Renaissance period by Albrecht Dürer and Lucas Cranach. Like Nietzsche before him, Kirchner found ideological bolstering in the meaning of Dürer's *Knight, Death and Devil* as discussed in both *The Birth of Tragedy* and "Schopenhauer as Educator." Kirchner invoked his influential Germanic artistic predecessors in several images in the *Schlemihl* woodcut series that are equally reliant on the discussion of Cranach and the Gothic from the publications of Wilhelm Worringer.

Once the friendship between Kirchner and Graef developed, it was *The Birth of Tragedy*'s main premise – the interrelated creative potential of reconciliation between the Apollinian and Dionysian forces - that proved inspiring. The book opens with Nietzsche's explanation of this concept: "These two different tendencies run parallel to each other...and they continually incite each other to new and more powerful births."⁷³⁴ In a sense, the same could be said for Graef's selfless friendship coupled with Nietzsche's ideological guidance for both men profoundly influenced Kirchner during this period resulting in some of his most evocative and expressive artworks.

The preface to *The Birth of Tragedy* had originally given the founding members of the Brücke their characterization for a house notebook with the phrase *odi profanum vulgus* used to identify themselves as aligned with Nietzsche and decidedly apart from conventional bourgeois values. Here, Nietzsche explained that the book was written in spite of the military conflict of the Franco-Prussian War of 1870-1871, making its contents highly personal for him, an idea that soon resonated with Kirchner as well.

By relying on Nietzsche's encouragement to the individual who heroically strives to reach a supra-historical state of overcoming, as explained in his two essays "On the Utility and Liability of History for Life" and "Schopenhauer as Educator," published in the philosopher's second book *Untimely Meditations*, Kirchner was able to successfully overcome his inadequacies as a soldier to contribute to the war effort and successfully transcend his circumstances to realize artistic regeneration and creative accomplishment. Showing his interest in "Schopenhauer as Educator," Kirchner metaphorically cast Graef, Biallowons, and himself as the "philosopher, artist and saint" from Nietzsche's essay to provide himself with a symbol of strength and purpose, for according to Nietzsche, when

⁷³⁴ Nietzsche, *The Birth of Tragedy*, 33.

“we are too weak to endure those moments of profoundest contemplation...we have to be lifted up – and who are they who lift us?...They are those true men...the philosophers, artists and saints.”⁷³⁵ Kirchner invoked this trio of supra-historical identity in several images, including in the combined interpretation of his double-portraits *Farewell: Botho and Hugo* with *Self-Portrait as a Soldier*, in the appearance of the three figures depicted on a belt buckle and in the saintly halos that crown Biallowons and Graef in several artworks commemorative of their deaths.

The essay “On the Utility and Liability of History for Life” also provided Kirchner with valuable insight into his work and personal outlook. In its contents, Kirchner found an appropriate mode for conceiving of his sketch work through Nietzsche’s use of the term hieroglyph as a universal symbol. Many years earlier, this essay had spoken directly to Kirchner during the Brücke period with its call to youth to act instinctually against prevailing traditions.

The most vital aspect of the friendship between Kirchner and Graef was the men’s mutual interest in and devotion to the philosophies of Nietzsche as expressed in these early publications. In “Schopenhauer as Educator,” Nietzsche extolled the importance of appreciating the role of one’s educators during life’s trials, with the philosopher stating: “There are other ways of finding oneself, of coming to oneself out of the stupor in which we usually float as in a dark cloud, but I know of no better way than to reflect on one’s educators and cultivators.”⁷³⁶ For Kirchner, though Nietzsche remained his most enduring educator, it was through his friendship with Graef that the artist realized his most

⁷³⁵ Nietzsche, “Schopenhauer as Educator,” in *Untimely Meditations*, 158-59.

⁷³⁶ Nietzsche, “Schopenhauer as Educator” in *Unfashionable Observations*, 175.

productive engagement with his philosophies. His reliance on both men remained undiminished long after the brief interlude with Graef had abruptly ended. In his journal, Kirchner wrote an entry in July 1919, in which he expressed Graef's undying wisdom and continuing influence in advice that recalls Nietzsche's own in "Schopenhauer as Educator" of the necessity of remaining true to one's self. Recalling Graef, Kirchner wrote: "Think of the deceased Graef, who said to you: You can only affect others indirectly. Hundreds of people will imitate your work - give them everything. You will not be understood most of the time, but if a grain of it comes into today's production than we have made progress. You have the nature of a true gentleman."⁷³⁷

An Enduring Alliance with Nietzsche

In the 1930s, as the National Socialists gained power in Kirchner's native Germany, their attacks on modern art caused increasing anxiety to the artist in exile in Switzerland. Kirchner was one of the prime targets of their assaults; in 1933, he was dismissed as a member of the Prussian Academy of Art and, in the course of the campaigns undertaken against modern art in 1937-1938, over six hundred of his artworks were confiscated from German collections, including the majority of the "Botho-Graef-Stiftung," Kirchner's donation of over two hundred and fifty graphic works given to the Jena Art Association in memory of his dear friend.⁷³⁸ During the 1930s, Kirchner's fear

⁷³⁷ Kirchner, in a journal entry dated July 6, 1919, in Grisebach, ed., *E. L. Kirchners Davoser Tagebuch*, 44.

⁷³⁸ Peter Guenther, "Ernst Ludwig Kirchner," in "The Works of Art in *Entartete Kunst*, Munich 1937: Artists' Biographies," in Barron, "*Degenerate Art*": *The Fate of the Avant-garde in Nazi Germany*, 269; and Beloubek-Hammer, "Neue Modelle und Neue Freunde," 119.

that the Germans would enter Swiss territory compelled him to destroy many of his woodblocks and sculptures.⁷³⁹

Organized by the National Socialists, the *Degenerate Art* exhibition, originating in Munich in 1937 and traveling to Berlin and other German cities, displayed the artworks of Kirchner and other modern artists to large crowds in a sensationalized context geared towards ridiculing those on view and highlighting their supposed “degenerate” nature as evidenced by their modernist techniques. The exhibition featured thirty-two of Kirchner’s artworks opening him up for public humiliation, with many from the mid-1910s, including two that epitomized the devoted, pedagogical bonds forged by Graef, in *Farewell: Botho and Hugo* and *Graef and Friend*; and the autobiographical *Self-Portrait as a Soldier*, all three of which had been acquired by important German public collections, as well as one of the versions of the “Iron Smith” figure that Graef had repeatedly lobbied for to garner public support for Kirchner’s modern variation of this national symbol in 1915.⁷⁴⁰ In the wall label for *Farewell: Botho and Hugo*, the caption brought attention to the recently dismissed Reich curator Dr. Erwin Redslob’s comparison of Kirchner with Dürer with incredulous sarcasm.⁷⁴¹ For Kirchner, who

⁷³⁹ Guenther, “Ernst Ludwig Kirchner,” in Barron, “*Degenerate Art*,” 271. According to Joseph Masheck, Hitler’s appointment of Count Baudissin as the Director of the Folkwang Museum, Essen, and his prompt removal of the collections’ modern art, originally amassed by Kirchner’s supportive ally Karl Ernst Osthaus, was decisive in the artist’s suicide. (Masheck, “The Horror of Bearing Arms,” 61.) For an introduction to a broader discussion of the National Socialists’ policies towards art, see Lynn H. Nicholas, *The Rape of Europa: The Fate of Europe’s Treasures in the Third Reich and the Second World War* (New York: Knopf, 1994).

⁷⁴⁰ *Farewell: Botho and Hugo* was in the collection of the Kunstsammlung, Stuttgart; *Graef and Friend* was in the Museum Mortizburg, Halle; and *Self-Portrait as a Soldier* was in the Städelches Kunstinstitut, Frankfurt. (See Gordon, *Ernst Ludwig Kirchner*, 433; Appendix A: Kirchner Paintings in German Public Collections before 1937.)

perpetually sought to position himself as the modern equivalent of Dürer, this dismissal, in tandem with the co-option of Dürer as the heroic Germanic ideal by the National Socialists, must have been deeply troubling.⁷⁴²

I believe Kirchner's final painting *Herd of Sheep*, 1938, shows his enduring devotion to Nietzsche's ideological guidance. The painting was on his easel on June 15, 1938, the day he shot himself to end his life (Fig. 7.1).⁷⁴³ In it, docile animals graze in an expansive alpine meadow within a mountainous landscape. Unlike the two paintings finished immediately prior, one featuring a woman herding goats and the other a shepherd tending sheep, in this image, there is no longer a caretaker for the animals, but they graze contentedly on their own.⁷⁴⁴

With the heightened nationalistic political climate of the 1930s, Kirchner found instruction in Nietzsche's essay "On the Utility and Liability of History for Life," written in the aftermath of the Franco-Prussian War, for its contents were appropriately suited to his current circumstances. In the essay, the philosopher gives advice to the reader about how to experience history and apply its lessons for the purpose of artistic creation.

⁷⁴¹ The caption read: "The democratic Reich curator, Dr. Redslob, on Kirchner: "We are in the presence of the first German artist to achieve a penetrating quality that can be likened to that of Dürer – E. L. Kirchner." (Barron, "*Degenerate Art*," 56.)

⁷⁴² Dürer's *Knight, Death and Devil* was appropriated by the National Socialists, along with the artist's birth city of Nürnberg, as uniquely representative of the truly Germanic spirit. (Münch, "Changing German Perceptions of the Historical Role of Albrecht Dürer," in Eichberger and Zika, *Dürer and His Culture*, 193-94.)

⁷⁴³ Gordon, *Ernst Ludwig Kirchner*, 415. For a discussion of the events leading up to Kirchner's suicide, see Presler, *Kirchner: Seine Frauen, seine Modelle*, 64-67.

⁷⁴⁴ For reproductions of the two prior paintings see Gordon, *Ernst Ludwig Kirchner*, for *Woman with Goat*, 1938 (G1022); and *Shepherd with Sheep*, 1938 (G1023).

The essay opens with a discussion of a herd of grazing animals in which Nietzsche explains that they are uniquely happy because they are not burdened by the past:

Observe the herd as it grazes past you: it cannot distinguish yesterday from today ...tethered by the short leash of its pleasures and displeasures to the stake of the moment... It is hard on the human being to observe this, because he boasts about the superiority of his humanity over animals and yet looks enviously upon their happiness...But he also wondered about himself and how he was unable to learn to forget and always clung to what was past; no matter how far or how fast he runs, that chain runs with him...Then the human being says "I remember," and he envies the animal that immediately forgets...Thus the animal lives ahistorically, for it disappears entirely into the present...The human being, by contrast, braces himself against the great and ever-greater burden of the past ...That is why the sight of a grazing herd...plays in blissful blindness between the fences of the past and the future, moves him as though it were the vision of a lost paradise. When death finally brings him the much longed for oblivion, it simultaneously also suppresses the present; and with this, existence places its seal on the knowledge that existence itself is nothing but an uninterrupted having-been...⁷⁴⁵

With his life's work ridiculed and his legacy defamed by the National Socialists and the memory of Graef additionally impugned by the *Degenerate Art* exhibition, the rising power of the National Socialists must have caused tremendous fear for the artist, not the least by dredging up the memories of the difficulties associated with the First World War.

Kirchner's earlier attempts at self-preservation by heeding Nietzsche's advice to strive to overcome by harnessing Dionysian creativity successfully led to his artistic contribution to German culture in some of his most expressive images, including *Farewell: Botho and Hugo* and *Self-Portrait as a Soldier*, both in the *Degenerate Art* exhibition. For the artist, these earlier efforts now likely seemed to have been a vain attempt. Unlike the contented animals depicted in his final canvas, Kirchner was

⁷⁴⁵ Nietzsche, "On the Utility and Liability of History..." in *Unfashionable Observations*, 87-88.

overburdened by the past and unable to forget the unnecessary tragedy of the events of the First World War that now seemed destined to repeat itself anew.

After the introduction of the ahistorical awareness of the animals, Nietzsche explains that by contrast, the supra-historical individual is resigned to understanding the answer to the question: “What could ten new years possibly teach that the past could not!”⁷⁴⁶ By taking his own life, Kirchner made one final act in alignment with Nietzsche by demonstrating his understanding of the philosopher’s explanation of the inevitable recurrence of history. Like Nietzsche, Kirchner also died unaware of the tremendous impact he had on the arts and culture of Germany.

⁷⁴⁶ Nietzsche, “On the Utility and Liability of History...,” in *Unfashionable Observations*, 94.

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