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German Draughtsmanship in the Ages of Dürer and Goethe: Parallels and Resonance

In German art history, drawing assumed a leading role in two periods: around 1500, the age of Dürer, and around 1800, the age of Goethe or the Romantic era. The correspondences between ideas, themes, and practices in the drawings of these periods are the subject of this article. I will first discuss the interesting phenomenon of the parallels between the ages of Dürer and Goethe in the development of autonomous draughtsmanship. This introduction is essential for understanding the various ways that the art of Dürer, in particular, as well as that of his contemporaries, was received by early 19th-century German artists.

The visual arts of both periods show strong graphic tendencies, and their most eminent artists produced important works as draughtsmen. Many artists—and this applies particularly to the period of Goethe largely because a number of them died young—are documented primarily as draughtsmen. Parallel historical developments in Germany led to the autonomous position of drawing. Both periods were times of radical intellectual, religious, social, economic, and political change. The age of Dürer witnessed the transition from the late medieval age, the late Gothic, to the early Renaissance with the spread of humanism and the Reformation. In the age of Goethe, rococo, neoclassicism, various permutations of romanticism, and realism succeeded one another under the banner of Enlightenment. In both epochs, there were equivalent changes in the situation of the artist, that resulted from the loosening of traditional bonds and conventions: from the constraints of the guilds and from the anonymity of the collective workshop in the early time of Dürer; and from the strict regimen of the academies around 1800. This process of liberation had consequences for artistic creation that are still important today. The model sheet or workshop as a model for book-illumination, panel, or wall painting (Pl.1). It may be compared with a marginal illumination in an Austrian missal of 1492, in which the artist, while copying the motif of the falcon attacking the heron from the earlier model, used colour in the bird’s plumage, which indicates at least a slight interest in the observation of nature (Pl.2).7

Prints by Martin Schongauer were already disseminated widely during his lifetime. His engraving of a woman spilling oil from her lamp (Pl.3), part of a series illustrating the biblical parable of the Wise and Foolish Virgins, served as the model for a drawing by an unidentified artist of the late 15th century (Pl.4). The copy, although close to the engraving and its stereotypical character, exhibits a more individualized expression of sorrow in the woman’s face, apparently observed from life. Taken together, these two images reflect a phase of transition in which the model sheet and the study of nature overlap.

Other late Gothic model sheets illustrate in a similar way the development of the portrait. Two such drawings depict types of heads in different attitudes, copied from various sources. From a sheet drawn by Sigmund Holbein members of the Holbein workshop could select the desired head for an altarpiece. In the second example, done in Michael Wolgemut’s workshop around 1470 to 80, numerous women’s hairstyles and headaddresses are scattered across the sheet. The young Dürer might have made use of this drawing during his apprenticeship.

Schongauer’s pen study of the Head of a Bearded Old Man, in Basel, comes somewhat closer to an individual likeness, but still remains the type of an Old Testament high priest. However, the silverpoint drawing in Hans Holbein the Elder’s sketch-book in Berlin, depicting Leonhart Wagner, the famous Augsburg calligrapher and scribe, is a true individual and autonomous portrait done from life. The technique of silverpoint, so popular in Dürer’s time, was re-introduced by Anton Graff of Dresden for his miniature portraits in the late 18th century, and it experienced a revival in the early 19th century.

By the late Middle Ages, the artist had emerged from the anonymous collective workshop. With increasing self-awareness, he became conscious of his own artistic skills and initiated an internal dialogue in his art. Dürer, for example, in his youthful Self-Portrait of about 1492, for the first time and with expressive power, addressed the theme ‘Know thyself’ (Pl.5). A parallel, in terms of evolution and motif, can be found in Henry Fuseli’s self-portrait of about 1780 to 90, which also shows the artist in a melancholy pose, that suggests self-questioning and self-analysis (Pl.6). During the age of Dürer, the artistic category of the individual portrait developed only slowly, for example, through the individualization of figures of saints—traditionally stylized in a formulaic way or through the donor portrait. By the age of
Goethe the portrait did not have to be invented anew, as it still fulfilled the classic artistic task of creating a likeness of the sitter, its purpose ever since the early Renaissance. Over time, however, the portrait genre underwent various changes caused by the social status of the sitter, the representational purpose of the portrayal, and prevailing taste. Nevertheless, certain aspects of portraiture from both periods can be compared.

During the baroque and rococo periods the generalizing society portrait dominated the more individualized personal portrait. The former’s conventional formulas for conveying dignity, such as the inclusion of a classical column in the background, can still be found in the 1831 portrait of the Duke of Reichstadt, the son of Napoleon I., by Moritz Michael Daffinger. 13 This natural, realistic portrait seems to evoke a meditation on Neoclassicism and on the era of the Empire, which had come to an end with the downfall of Napoleon I.

While the many academies and drawing schools established in the late 18th century ensured the spread of the practice of drawing, these exercised a rather stultifying effect on the development of personal styles. The education of an artist was strictly regulated, and the basic training in drawing was prescribed step by step. Nature was studied indirectly by copying model sheets, and this applied both to the human figure and to landscape. The knowledge of human anatomy was acquired in an additive process, through the mechanical copying of individual elements such as the head, eyes, nose, ears, hands, feet and so forth. Thus there was no awareness of organic interconnections, which explains the often bloodless, lifeless effect of academic figurative art. Indeed, the model sheet material in the academies corresponds to that in the late medieval workshop. There were even formulas for portraying emotions, such as Surprise, Delight, Joy, or Pain, in the tradition of Charles Le Brun’s Passion, as shown in an engraving from Diderot’s Encyclopédie. 14 An example of this academic approach is seen in the red chalk portrait bust of a young man by Adam Friedrich Oeser, director at the Leipzig academy and the drawing teacher of the young Goethe. This sketch is an idealized likeness with a sentimental expression, rather than a portrait of an individual. 15

The emergence of the colour-neutral pencil as the favourite medium promoted the wide diffusion of realistic drawing styles at the beginning of the 19th century. German artists, especially the Nazarenes, preferred using a sharp pencil, not least because of its precise line and its ability to mimic the brilliant engraving technique developed in Dürer’s day. The Nazarenes produced important work in the field of portraiture, a fine example is the frontal likeness of a youth, formerly attributed to Peter Cornelius. 16 Though realistic in detail, the sharp calligraphy of the portrait’s line endows the face with a generalizing and cool, timeless expression that abstracts and transcends the individual features, reminiscent of carved marble. As portraiture developed, we find more natural likenesses, including that of the Nazarene painter Theodor Rehbenitz drawn by the engraver Carl Barth, a compelling portrait, that recalls Holbein’s silverpoint mentioned above. 15

In landscape, too, we can follow the development around the turn of the 19th century from representations of nature derived from models to those based on direct observation. Landscape drawing had not been practiced outdoors, but in the classroom by copying prototypes, usually prints, of trees and leaves, for example. The ‘German’ oak tree drawn in 1787 in red chalk by the Munich painter Joseph Georg Wintter demonstrates how powerfully the actual experience of nature continued to be influenced by earlier models; in spite of its pattern-like appearance, it was clearly drawn from nature, as its inscription ‘drawn from nature, oak tree’ confirms. 17 This is an example in which the study of the academic model and that of nature overlap, a phenomenon that again finds a parallel in the age of Dürer, when the nature study replaced the pattern-book. A clear change in the approach to nature is evident in Caspar David Friedrich’s many characteristic tree-studies, drawn directly outdoors, only a few years later, in 1801. 18 Free of any academic notions, he drew, in pencil, a leafless tree with a dead limb early in the month of April. Friedrich interpreted even this modest motif in metaphorical terms, commenting on the cyclical process of life and death through a detailed observation of seasonal changes in nature.

Academic traditions continued to affect not only the treatment of individual elements, but also the compositions of landscapes. Seventeenth-century Dutch and French conceptions of landscape had a decisive influence on German landscape art of the late 18th and early 19th centuries. Both treated landscape as a stage with scenery arranged in perspective to suggest spatial depth, a device evident in numerous landscape etchings by Anthonie Waterloo, for example, whose prints were favoured as model material at the German academies. This influence is clearly documented in landscape drawings by Johann Christoph Dietzsch of Nuremberg. Typical of his invented landscapes are the use of grisaille and the spatial construction of three planes – fore-, middle-, and background, which become lighter as they recede. His views suggest rather than accurately portray actual landscape, and are still remote from the authentic depiction of nature.

Also highly influential was the art of Claude Lorrain, especially through Richard Earlom’s graphic reproductions of Claude’s Liber Veritatis. These engravings, printed in sepia ink, were also kept as a preferred source material at the academies. A sentimental pastoral landscape in watercolour by Johann Georg von Dillis, for example, is totally conceived in Claude’s manner; it mixes artificial architectural elements, such as the bridge, with veduta-like elements taken from actual sites, such as the wooded Prater island in the Isar River near Munich. 19 The possible variations of landscape compositions created through this fluid transition from an artificial to a realistic depiction of nature were infinite.

Parallels in the art of drawing resulted from analogous historical developments. In the age of Dürer, a new approach to nature becomes evident with the rise of humanism; in that of Goethe, with the literary phase of Sturm und Drang. In both epochs, identical themes – such as landscape and the image of man – are the subject of keen artistic interest: these recur in the later period without knowledge of or without referring directly to their appearance in the earlier period.

The discovery of nature can be seen prominently in individual watercolour studies of plants, such as Dürer’s Irises of around 1495, 20 on the one hand, and Franz Horny’s Dahlia and Zinnias of around 1817, 21 on the other. Both are direct
German Draughtsmanship in the Ages of Dürer and Goethe: Parallels and Resonance

studies from life. Dürer examined the colours and forms of flora and fauna with scientific curiosity and the eye of an explorer. Horny and others, who had turned their back on the academy, showed a similar predilection. This also holds true for the treatment of a banal motif such as a precipitous cliff, depicted in watercolour by the same two artists. Dürer accurately rendered the wild, overgrown rock-formations, while Horny, who was apparently more inspired by the natural structures of the cliff, constructs his scene with calligraphic, rhythmic strokes of the pen.

Three drawings depicting topographically recognizable mountain landscapes, Albrecht Altdorfer’s Danube Landscape near Sarmingstein in Upper Austria of 1511, Wolf Huber’s Castle of Aggstein on the Danube in the Wachau of 1542 (Pl. 9), and Joseph Anton Koch’s View of the Jungfrau from Lütschinen valley near Berne of around 1793 – are all drawn, with free, flowing strokes. In the case of the earlier masters, Altdorfer and Huber, this indicates an assimilation of the Kunstwollen, reflected in the style of the Danube School; in the case of Koch, who sympathized with the ideas of the French Revolution, such loose handling reflects his visceral experience of the forces of nature in the High Alps, which he interpreted as symbolic of freedom.

Similar parallels can be seen in the portrayal of the human figure, especially in the study of the nude. Dürer received crucial inspiration in Italy, where the figural tradition had its roots in antiquity. His 1498 drawing of female nude standing on a globe within a niche – an allegory of fortune – breathes the spirit of the Renaissance (Pl. 7). This life study demonstrates the artist’s search for the accurate rendering of anatomy as well as for beauty in the harmony of proportions. Likewise, Julius Schnorr von Carolsfeld’s early drawing of a seated nude youth, done in 1821 in Rome, shows how a study after the live model could become idealized with the artist’s exposure to antique sculpture (Pl. 8).

The self-depiction of the artist as a nude is bold and unusual in both epochs. In the well-known drawing in Weimar, Dürer portrayed himself around 1503 in a state of illness, possibly alluding to Christ as martyr, while Franz Horny, in his sketchbook, also in Weimar, drew himself in an advanced stage of fatal tuberculosis around 1822. Both artists employed an unsparial realism in the search for truth.

A fascination with the process of human aging is common to both periods as well. With relentless scrutiny, Dürer drew the nearly skeletal face of his mother in 1514, just two months before she died. Done in charcoal and black chalk, the drawing is a strikingly true and deeply moving portrait of this 63-year-old woman, who had borne 18 children. Equally realistic and drawn in the same medium is Ludwig Emil Grimm’s 1809 portrayal of the elderly widow of the Munich rococo court painter Thomas Christian Wink. During the early 19th century, artists often borrowed themes and subjects from the age of Dürer and from the late Middle Ages. Inasmuch as Dürer was the focus of direct inspiration, one could speak of a ‘Dürer renaissance’. These three aspects of artistic reception can be distinguished: a nostalgia for the German late medieval period, the adoption of Dürer’s technique, and a creative dialogue with the iconography of Dürer and his contemporaries.

Much art of the age of Goethe looks back to late medieval art and history of about 1500, the period before the Reformation. The frequent rendering of Gothic architecture often reflects patriotic sentiments. It may also allude to the yearning for the reunification of the Protestant and Catholic denominations. In his impressive watercolour of the ruined castle-church of the Marienburg in West Prussia, the young architect Friedrich Gilly indicated the need for its preservation, indeed, the restoration of this building would become a project of national importance in the early part of the 19th century, comparable to the completion of the cathedral in Cologne later on. In a lithograph of around 1810, his pupil, the Prussian court architect Karl Friedrich Schinkel, depicted a cemetery with a Gothic church and a grove of trees with a ‘German’ oak: a fitting memorial reflecting patriotic sentiment during the time of the Napoleonic wars.

For a long time, Germans clung to the erroneous belief that Gothic architecture was of German origin. Goethe had fostered this misconception in his 1772 treatise ‘On German architecture’, a hymn to the legendary builder of Strasbourg cathedral, Erwin von Steinbach. This inspired Moritz von Schwind to execute a series of drawings on the subject. One dated 1822 depicts young Erwin’s vision in which the artist and guardian angel hover under the vault of the completed edifice, while another around 1840 shows the sculptor Sabina, his legendary daughter, chiselling the figure of Synagogue for Strasbourg cathedral.

After the fall of the Holy Roman Empire, when their country was split into a colourful palette of numerous states, Germans, then more aware of a common past and a common culture, yearned for national unity. During and after the Napoleonic wars, patriotic feeling rose even higher. Such artists as Ferdinand Olivier chose motifs from medieval times, for instance, the fortress of Salzburg, which was viewed as a monument of an idealized German past. Moritz von Schwind represented his ideal of the knightly age in a fantasy castle, constructed like a stage-set for a fairy tale or an opera (Pl. 10). Schwind’s composition recalls drawings of actual castles on mountains by artists of the Danube School, such a Wolf Huber’s 1542 Aggstein Castle on the Danube in the Wachau (Pl. 9).

During the romantic era, patriotic themes from history and literature provided sources for illustration in the wake of a growing national self-awareness. The Germanische Niebelung legend replaced the Homeric epics preferred by the earlier generation of neoclassical artists. The incunabula of Nazarene illustration are twelve drawings for Goethe’s Faust by Peter Cornelius, published as etchings in 1816. Of these, a typical example is the final scene in the dungeon, where Gretchen appears in the pose of the repentant Mary Magdalen with uplifted arms, as often depicted at the foot of the cross in early German altarpieces of the crucifixion, while Faust and Mephistopheles comport themselves like late Gothic morris dancers. Goethe initially liked this approach, because it reflected the time of the historical Faust, but later he rejected it as an excess of medieval ‘Germanomania’. He thought that Eugène Delacroix, the chief representative of the French romantic school, understood him better. In a lithograph of 1828, Delacroix staged the same scene but with painterly effects of light and shadow, resulting in a more dramatic and sensuous expression.
The theme *Death and the Maiden* was popular during the age of Dürer in the context of illustrations of the Dance of Death. In his drawing in Berlin, executed in 1515 with white gouache on paper prepared with a dark brown ground, Hans Baldung depicted Death lustfully embracing a vital young woman (Pl. 11). In the age of Romanticism, this theme was revived in literature, music, and art. The poem by Matthias Claudius and its subsequent musical interpretation by Franz Schubert inspired Moritz von Schwind in his pencil drawing (Pl. 12). The scene combines a contemporary *Biedermeier* setting with a figural composition reminiscent of late medieval Annunciation altar-pieces. While Baldung imparted a strong erotic component to the vanitas motif, Schwind's conception of the theme is devoid of sexual overtones, perhaps in keeping with the Nazarene principle, expressed by Friedrich Overbeck, that art should remain chaste.

Within the art of the romantic period, with its literary illustrative character, Moritz von Schwind assumes a special place, not least by virtue of his affinity for music and fairy tales. As we have seen, examples from his important early drawings of about 1820 to 1840 reveal various connections to Dürer and his contemporaries. The forest, with its connotations of the untamed and the mysterious is a central theme in Schwind's work. His drawing, *The Apparition in the Forest,* shows a subject which he used in his series of illustrations for the fairy tale of *Sleeping Beauty.* But here it is an independent work. A knight in early German Renaissance armour rides through the forest at night, following a graceful fairy that floats toward the crescent moon, perhaps showing him the way to redemption. Thirty-five years later, Schwind returned to his composition of 1823 in an oil painting. The fairy – transparent and weightless in the drawing – has lost its mysterious, ethereal quality, as the oil paint has transformed her into a heavy female figure who seems to be in danger of toppling over.

The second aspect of the artistic reception of earlier traditions is the deliberate adoption of Dürer's drawing manner. An essential trait of German draughtsmanship in the early 19th century is precision of line, through the use of a sharp pencil or pen; drawings executed in this style were often intended to resemble the brilliant engraving technique of Dürer's day. To emulate this style of drawing, engravings and drawings by Dürer and others were copied. Original works of art, often in private collections, were accessible to artists. One of these was the unique collection of Duke Albert von Sachsen-Teschen in Vienna, which forms the core of today's Albertina. In addition, several artists possessed prints by Dürer. The adoption of the early German engravers' manner was important especially for the Nazarenes, and in particular, Julius Schnorr von Carolsfeld, who created masterpieces of precise draughtsmanship in his copies. Among these are a detail of the lower left scene of a woodcut by Dürer from his *Birth of the Virgin* from the *Life of the Virgin series* and a motif of five stags taken from Hans Burgkmair the Elder's woodcut depicting Emperor Maximilian's triumphal procession. Finally, Schnorr, in an artistic *paragone* with Friedrich Olivier early in 1817, portrayed a twig with dry leaves, proving his mastery of this precise pen technique. Moritz von Schwind, partly inspired by Schnorr's example, also adopted Dürer's manner in his impressive drawing of the rock of the siren Lorelei. The scene shows a German knight rowing his boat in the river Rhine, risking his life by approaching the high rock from which the invisible seductress calls to her victims. Both subjects are drawn in a manner appropriate to the material depicted, with precise pen strokes reminiscent of early Germany engraving technique. The lively handling of line shows that both artists assimilated Dürer's style of drawing in emulation of engraving and, like the earlier master, produced here in true Federkunststicke, virtuoso masterpieces of the highest artistic calibre.

Newly invented at the turn of the 19th century, the reproductive technique of lithography played a crucial role for the dissemination of Dürer's drawing style. Highly important were the 1808 lithographic colour reproductions of Johann Nepomuk Strixner of Dürer marginal drawings of 1515 in the *Prayerbook of Emperor Maximilian I.* These lithographs from the original in the Bavarian State's Library in Munich, significantly reproduced the marginal drawings only, leaving out the printed text. Strixner's lithographs exerted a tremendous influence on the art of illustration in Dürer's manner throughout the 19th century; two characteristic examples are Eugen Napoleon Neureuther's marginal drawings for Goethe's poetry, published in several editions from 1829 on, and Adolph Menzel's lithographic title-page of 1841 to the third volume of Count Athanasius Raczynski's *History of Contemporary German Art.*

Carl Philipp Fohr, a highly gifted artist who died prematurely aged 22, focused, with patriotic intent, on Dürer and his time. During his studies at the academy in Munich, he very likely saw the original *Prayerbook,* at any rate he copied from Strixner's reproductions. Battle scenes associated with various peasant uprisings, which took place during the decade prior to the Peasants' War of 1524–5 inspired Fohr to draw *Three Robber Knights on a Boar Hunt* (Pls 13, 14). He freely borrowed not only the use of green ink, but also Dürer's refined, detailed handling. One of the motifs Fohr copied from Dürer was the fleeing horseman, who is pursued by Death. There is a clear variation of Dürer's horseman in Fohr's rider galloping off in haste at the left in his drawing of the late medieval robber knights; both share a similar pose as well as the detail of the mesh saddle blanket. Another motif Fohr copies from the *Prayerbook* is Dürer's market woman with an egg basket in one hand and the rosary and a bunch of keys hanging from her belt. Fohr adapted her for the figure of the midwife of Kappel in his watercolour of the scene with the water spirit of Lake Mummel, in the Neckar region, a sheet from the Baden-sketchbook of 1814.

Numerous motifs from Dürer's marginal drawings were copied and widely disseminated. Fohr, for example, copied Dürer's figure of *St. George on Horseback.* Isolated images from Dürer's marginal illustrations were often brought together in title-pages, such as that for the book of patriotic poems, *Greetings of the Harp – from Germany and Switzerland,* published in Zurich in 1823 by August Ludwigollen, a close friend of Fohr. It combines motifs from Maximilian's *Prayerbook,* such as St. George on the left, and the fleeing horseman below. Similar combinations of motifs from the *Prayerbook* occur as marginal illustrations of national and patriotic literature as, for example, in early editions of the
German fairy tales of the famous Grimm brothers, or in Wilhelm Grimm’s translation of old Danish heroic poems, ballads, and fairy tales, published in Heidelberg in 1811.

The third, and perhaps the most widespread aspect of reception, is what might be called a creative dialogue with the iconography of Dürer and late medieval artists. Given limitations of space, only a few comparisons between Dürer’s engravings and drawings and early 19th century German works can be offered here. A popular prototype, Dürer’s 1519 print of St. Anthony Reading a Book, with a view of Nuremberg behind in the distance, is echoed in Julius Schnorr’s View of Olevano of 1821, which shows the cross and a hermit reading a book in the foreground. In quoting Dürer, Schnorr instilled a religious tone in the Nazarene sense into his veduta.

The motif of the hermit as a symbol of the renunciation of worldly life plays an important role in Nazarene iconography; it is a leitmotiv throughout the work of Moritz von Schwind. In his 1830 pen drawing of Three Hermits he borrowed Dürer’s figure of the monk reading a book for the second hermit. Even the technique of precisely drawn contour and hatching lines resembles that of Dürer’s print.

The engraving, Melencolia I of 1514, perhaps the most famous of Dürer’s master-prints, was extremely influential (Pl. 15). An echo, in reverse, can be seen in the pencil life study of Ludwig Emil Grimm, the youngest of the Grimm brothers: the drawing shows a seated girl wearing a flower wreath in the pose of Melancholy. To prove that this interpretation of the portrait is not haphazard, one need only look at the girl at the left in Grim’s final composition, Three Girls Meditating Upon the Transience of Time. In this drawing, the artist even incorporated the vinitus symbol of an hourglass from Dürer’s print.

Another echo of Dürer’s Melencolia is the Allegory of Art by the late Nazarene artist Eduard von Steinle (Pl. 16). Here the artist created an emblematic image of Nazarene art. The pensive young woman in a melancholic pose with the flower wreath in her hair, resting her head on her hand holding the bible, is again a quote from Dürer’s seated allegorical figure. Even the motif of the compass was appropriated from Dürer, as was the style of this drawing, which resembles an engraving.

For about four decades, Julius Schnorr von Carolsfeld worked on an illustrated Bible. Even in the final phase of this project in August 1860, he drew direct inspiration from Dürer’s Apocalypse series of woodcuts of 1498. Specifically, Schnorr combined transformed motifs from Dürer’s second and third plates. While in Dürer’s third woodcut (Pl. 17), the Four Horseman of the Apocalypse, symbolizing illness, warfare, famine, and death, rush in the same direction, in Schnorr’s drawing (Pl. 18) they ride off in diagonal, divergent directions. The expressive motif of Death on horseback in the right foreground of Schnorr’s drawing is also an echo of Dürer’s respective figure in the left foreground of the woodcut.

Another motif borrowed from Dürer, with a change of meaning, however, is St. George Slaying the Dragon. An important subject in his day, Dürer drew two different versions of it in Maximilian’s Prayerbook. In both these drawings of 1515, as well as in his woodcut of about 1502, St. George alludes to the idea of the crusade against Islam, and represents the Christian knight defeating the heathen Mohammedan dragon. This idea of the struggle against evil and its personification was still vivid, in a new sense, in the early 19th century. Popular with the Nazarene artists, St. George became the symbol for the religious renewal of art. In a drawing of about 1840 by Moritz von Schwind, the saint appears as a pioneer for a new spirit in art, similar to his role as the Blue Rider in German art of the early 20th century. Moreover, Schwind made masterly use of the early German drawing manner and introduced dramatic suspense to the rendering of the subject.

The impact of late medieval German and early Netherlandish panel painting was likewise strong in the early 19th century, especially on Nazarene art. One work that clearly demonstrates this influence will have to suffice, the Homecoming at Night by Franz Pforr. Here the artist depicted an imaginary, happy scene with his ideal bride sewing in candlelight, awaiting his return. His palette and a stretched canvas are in the right foreground while in the background, one can see an alcove with a bed. The room and the disposition of the figures (see also Pl. 12) recall early German and Netherlandish compositions of the Annunciation – for example the left wing of Rogier van der Weyden’s Columba Altarpiece (Munich, Alte Pinakothek). Such Annunciations take place in middle-class living and sleeping quarters, a symbolic setting derived from the mysticism of the bride in the Christian tradition. This subtle reference also reflects the Nazarene’s concern with overlaying even their genre scenes with religious meaning.

At the beginning of this essay, I discussed how deep-rooted changes in society paved the way for parallels in the development of the artist’s status in the ages of Dürer and Goethe and provided some examples that show parallels of artistic creation. The variety of Dürer’s influence, in particular, on the early 19th century manifests itself unmistakably in the work of artists such as the literary Moritz von Schwind or, collectively, in the art of the Nazarenes. Of fundamental importance here were literary sources that fell on fertile ground, perhaps because of comparable social, historical, and intellectual trends in both periods. These texts oriented artists toward Dürer and Raphael at the same time. Profoundly influential was Wilhelm Heinrich Wackenroder’s treatise, Outpourings from the Heart of an Art – Loving Monk, which the author published in 1797 at the age of 23. In this book, Wackenroder placed art close to religion and compared the contemplation of art to worship. He saw art as a form of devotion, anticipated in an exemplary fashion in the art of Dürer and his contemporaries and in that of Raphael and the Italian Renaissance. His ‘outpourings’ awakened a desire to renew German religious art through the models of Dürer and Raphael, and indeed, the romantic cult of both artists began with this book. We still see its resonance in the works of the second generation of Nazarenes and other artists inspired by them; Friedrich Nerly portrayed himself in 1833 in Rome with the features of Raphael similar to the way the Italian master was depicted in the frontispiece of Wackenroder’s book. Both a personal confession and a programmatic image, this portrait attests to Nerly’s desire to resemble Raphael even in outward appearance by strictly following the Renaissance
artist in his own life and work. The *imitatio Raphaelis* is here analogous to the *imitatio Christi*, an idea and the title of a book of the late medieval mystic Thomas à Kempis. This book, extremely popular in Düer's day, was again widely disseminated in several editions in the early 19th century. Düer gave visual expression to this concept in his Christ-like frontal *Self-portrait* of 1500 (Munich, Alte Pinakothek); over 300 years later, Nerly evidently alluded to this idea in his own self-portrait.

The romantic cult of Düer and Raphael had its heyday in the first third of the 19th century. A lost allegorical drawing of about 1810 by Franz Pforr demonstrates this veneration of the two artists. Reproduced in an etching, this significant work shows Düer at left against the silhouette of Nuremberg and Raphael at right against that of the Eternal City, both kneeling in adoration before a Virgin Mary-like personification of art on the throne. Pforr saw himself in his artistic pursuit particularly as a follower of Düer, while his friend Friedrich Overbeck saw himself as a follower of Raphael. Pforr's close friendship with Overbeck led to the foundation of the Brotherhood of St. Luke, as the Nazarenes called themselves, the name itself a programmatic allusion to the late medieval guilds of painters. In another homage to the two earlier masters, done in Rome in 1814, Carl Christian Vogel von Vogelstein drew Overbeck studying a print by Düer, dated 1514, in front of an easel bearing a canvas of a Madonna painted in Raphael's style. Such works allude, not only to the idealization of the art of Raphael and Düer, but also to the friendship between *Italia* and *Germania*.

Friendship is a central theme in the collaborative pencil drawing in which Friedrich Overbeck and Peter Cornelius, the spiritual fathers and most influential of the Nazarenes, portrayed one another. This mutual double-portrait, drawn in March 1812, is a key example of the so-called 'friendship-picture' of the romantic era. The busts of the two young artists, both drawn with clear outlines, are reminiscent of carved and painted likenesses of the Italian Renaissance; in particular, the composition echoes Raphael's self-portrait with Sodoma in his fresco of the late medieval guilds of painters. In another homage to the two artists, both drawn with clear outlines, are reminiscent of carved and painted likenesses of the Italian Renaissance; in particular, the composition echoes Raphael's self-portrait with Sodoma in his fresco of the Vatican. Overbeck's face shows similarities with that of the young Düer, while Cornelius is dressed in Italian Renaissance style: a subtle hint of the Italy and Germany theme. Significantly, Overbeck named his 1828 painting *Italia* and *Germania*, which he originally, when conceiving it in 1812, intended to call *Friendship*.

It is perhaps appropriate to end this essay on Düer and his influence on German art in the age of Goethe with this particular example, for, parallel to this phenomenon, there was a similar resonance of Raphael and his time. However, this would be the topic for another paper.

**Author's Note**

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**Notes**


4. Lehrs 85.

5. Private collection.


15. Munich, private collection. Sieveking, 1998, no. 54, repr. in colour. This small study, done around 1817, presumably served as a preparatory drawing for an engraving.


17. One example is in a private collection, dated lower left: den 1. April 1801. For another example, see *Neuerwerbungen*, exh. cat., Staatliche Graphische Sammlung, Munich, 1982, no.13, fig. 3.


21. Düer's interest in this motif is documented through a whole group of watercolour studies of cliffs, for example, in the Biblioteca Ambrosiana, Milan (Winkler 107); the Kunsthalle, Bremen (Winkler 108); the British Museum, London (Bartrum 2002, no. 45); and the Kupferstichkabinett, Berlin (Winkler 111). For the latter see C. Müller, H. Mielke, et al., *Dürer, Holbein, ...


**Plate 1** Master E.S., Six of Birds, playing card, c. 1463. Engraving. Cincinnati Art Museum, Bequest of Herbert Greer French

**Plate 2** Master of the Wolfgang-Missal, Marginal decoration in the ‘Wolfgang-Missal’, 1492, detail of folio LXI recto. Watercolour and bodycolour heightened with gold. Private collection

**Plate 3** Martin Schongauer, The Fifth Foolish Virgin, c. 1470–82. Engraving. British Museum

**Plate 4** Anonymous after Martin Schongauer, The Fifth Foolish Virgin, 1490s. Pen and grey-brown ink. Private Collection
Plate 5 Albrecht Dürer, Self-Portrait, c. 1491-2. Pen and brown ink. Erlangen, Graphische Sammlung der Universitätsbibliothek


Plate 8 Julius Schnorr von Carolsfeld, Seated Nude Youth, 1821. Pencil. Munich, Private Collection

Plate 10 Moritz von Schwind, *Fantastic Medieval Fortress*, c. 1840. Pen and brown ink, heightened with white. Southern Germany, Private Collection


Plate 13 Carl Philipp Fohr, *Three Robber Knights on a Boar Hunt*, c. 1814. Pen and green and light blue ink over pencil. Munich, Private Collection

Plate 14 Albrecht Dürer, *Battle between Farmers and Armed Knights*, fol. 28 in the Prayerbook of Maximilian I, 1515. Green ink. (Reproduction from the facsimile edited by Karl Giehlow, Vienna, 1907)
Plate 15: Albrecht Dürer, Melencolia I. 1514. Engraving. British Museum

Plate 16: Edward von Steinle, Allegory of Art, c. 1828. Pen and black ink over pencil. Munich, Private Collection

Plate 17: Albrecht Dürer, The Four Riders of the Apocalypse, 1498. Woodcut. British Museum
Plate 18 Julius Schnorr von Carolsfeld, The Four Riders of the Apocalypse, 1860. Pen and grey-black ink on vellum. Private Collection