

INTERPRETING BECKMANN

Charles Werner Haxthausen

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(Apologies for missing footnote references!)

1 Introduction

“Nothing could be more ridiculous or irrelevant than a ‘philosophical conception’ painted purely intellectually without the terrible fury of the senses grasping each form of beauty and ugliness. If from those forms that I have found in the visible, so-called *literary* subjects result . . . they have all originated from the senses, in this case from the eyes, and each intellectual subject has been transformed again into form, color, and space.”¹ This statement, from the speech Beckmann delivered in London’s New Burlington Galleries in July 1938, contains a remarkable admission: “Literary” was a *Schimpwort*, a pejorative term, in his vocabulary. At various times he had dismissed the work of the expressionists and the Neue Sachlichkeit artists as “literary.” Here he is in effect saying: “Yes, alright, I do admit to painting literary subjects, to painting ‘philosophical conceptions’; then he absolves himself of the charges of literariness by asserting, in effect, “in the end I have remained faithful to the formal imperative of painting.”

The chronological context of these remarks is significant, I believe. Beckmann spoke at the New Burlington Galleries on the occasion of the exhibition “Twentieth Century German Art.” Among the six Beckmann paintings and one lithograph exhibited there, *The King* (1933), and his recently completed second triptych, *Temptation* (1936-37) were likely to provoke questions about “meaning.” They belonged to a small number of paintings that Beckmann had produced since 1932 that challenged the “realist” label that had been assigned to his art by his most enthusiastic supporters in Germany before 1933. And because this new direction in Beckmann’s art, which began with his painting *Man and Woman* of 1932, coincided with the end of the Weimar Republic and a radical limitation of Beckmann’s exhibition opportunities, little had been seen of them. In London *Temptation* was being seen for the first time; *The King* had been shown earlier

in the United States, but was not shown in Europe until February 1938, along with another painting in this mode, *Birth* (1937). *Brother and Sister* (1933) and *Journey on the Fish* (1934) would not be shown until 1941 in New York; another work in this mode, *The Hurdy-Gurdy Player* (1935), not until 1947. Beckmann's first triptych, *Departure*, begun in 1932 and completed in 1935, was, like *Temptation*, also exhibited for the first time in 1938, in the Buchholz Gallery in New York.

Beckmann scholars have come to characterize these paintings as “mythic.”² Yet, if we may rightly speak of a “mythic turn” in Beckmann's art during the 1930s we should also bear in mind that such paintings as these, which have dominated the scholarship on Beckmann, constituted a very small percentage of his output during these years: of the roughly 130 paintings listed in the catalogue raisonné for the period 1932 through 1937, there are no more than ten such works; the rest fall into traditional genres like portraiture, landscape, still life.

Yet there can be little doubt that Beckmann considered these “mythic” pictures to be his most ambitious,³ and the London speech was his first public statement since this turn in his imagery.⁴ In London, Beckmann seemed to be anticipating questions about this shift, and it is tempting to believe that a recent exchange with the emigré dealer Curt Valentin in New York might have had something to do with that. Upon receiving Beckmann's *Departure* in fall 1938, Valentin wrote the artist asking him for some explanatory remarks about its hermetic imagery. After Beckmann refused, Valentin tried again:

It's a shame that you have refused to write me something about the triptych. You certainly would have written if you were familiar with the psychology of the Americans, who want an explanation for everything. Certainly—I don't need such an explanation—. . . But even Alfred Barr wanted some explanation. Perhaps you will decide after all to write something about the triptych.

It was in response to this letter that Beckmann, unimpressed and/or unmoved even by the name of the Director of the Museum of Modern Art, wrote his famous reply:

Put the picture away or send it back to me dear Valentin. If people cannot understand it of their own accord, of their own inner collaboration, there is no sense in showing it. For me the picture speaks of truths impossible to put in words and of which I was previously unaware. It can speak only to people who consciously or unconsciously carry within them the same metaphysical code. Departure, yes departure from the deceptive illusions of life to the essential things in themselves that are concealed by appearances. But this applies ultimately to all of my pictures.⁵

Beginning in the 1950s, commentators on Beckmann's art *did* attempt to explain this and other hermetic Beckmann paintings with words, in effect to offer iconographic decodings of them, as if they were representations of narratives, traditional paintings, or allegories. Writing in 1984, Hans Belting complained that this approach had mistakenly cast Beckmann in the role a Baroque literary painter, a fact that would no doubt have appalled him.⁶ In this regard Beckmann scholarship has made decisive progress in recent years, and here I refer in particular to the work of Reinhard Spieler and Ortrud Westheider. In the final chapter of his 1998 book on Beckmann's triptychs, Reinhard Spieler has offered a particularly useful discussion of Beckmann's approach to myth and his idiosyncratic use of it in his pictures. I am in complete agreement with his conclusion that the triptychs—and one could extend that to Beckmann's other mythic pictures—do not yield any unified pictorial narrative. "This," writes Spieler, "is the decisive difference with the pictorial world of the 19th century, in which pictorial sources were of a literary nature, and accordingly, could be retold in literary terms."⁷ Echoing Ortrud Westheider, Spieler concludes that despite Beckmann's commitment to the rehabilitation of the object within an avant-garde culture of abstraction his practice is ultimately consistent with the values of that Avant-garde.

What I will attempt to do in this short paper is elaborate this point by examining the discursive environment in which Beckmann began to make his mythic pictures. What was the prevailing aesthetics of reception with regard to visual art in German culture up to 1933? What kind of critical models existed at the time for interpreting such pictures? How, within the writing on contemporary art, *did* one discuss the subject matter of paintings? And if, as Belting was the first to point out, Beckmann's mythic turn in the 1930s parallels larger currents in European

culture at that time, what impact did this have on art criticism?⁸ To answer this last question is problematic, because the mythic turn in Beckmann's painting after 1932 coincides with the end of the German art world of which he had been a central player for a quarter of a century. The venues in which Beckmann first showed these paintings—Switzerland, London, New York—were a different world, with different critics and different discourses.

Given the limited time at my disposal, I wish to focus on three topics: the hegemony of formalism in German art history and art criticism before 1933; Wilhelm Fraenger's 1924 analysis of Beckmann's 1921 painting, *The Dream*, within this methodological context; and, finally, the emergence of iconographic studies and their impact on Beckmann commentary after World War II.

2 Discourse on Form and Content

In his book, *Late Roman Art Industry* (1901) the Austrian art historian Alois Riegl declared:

The iconographic content is fundamentally different from the artistic content; the purpose that the former serves is extraneous, comparable to the utilitarian purpose of works of design and architecture, while the true artistic purpose is exclusively directed toward representing things in color and contour, in plane or or space in such a way that they stimulate feelings of calm and pleasure in the beholder.⁹

Iconographic determinations can only have a truly art-historical value, Riegl concluded, if one can show that that content is a product of the same drive, the same *Wollen* that has produced the properly artistic aspect of the work of art.

The formalist position was shared by German art history and art criticism, in which before the War it was most effectively represented by the critic Julius Meier-Graefe, who later became one of Beckmann's strongest advocates. It remained the dominant attitude in Germany up to 1933, shared by advocates of impressionism, expressionism, and the *Neue Sachlichkeit*, with which Beckmann was usually associated. Even as expressionist critics spoke of a religious art, they did not speak of a return of religious iconography—the communicative power of art emanated from

its form. Paul Westheim, a major critic and the editor the most important art magazine of the Weimar Republic concisely summed up the hegemony of formal values in 1919: “We must accept that for the contemporary painter there is no specifically modern subject matter; subject matter as was a matter of course to Bruegel, El Greco, Watteau, or Courbet and their respective epochs. Today we tolerate any and every content. God and the world, the pathetic and the idyllic, it is all fine with us. Our time is indifferent to the content of artistic representations as no time has ever been before. For today’s artist form is itself the content.”¹⁰

Then what of the mythic turn in European culture in the late 1920s? Did this not have an effect on art criticism? In the case of the German art critic Carl Einstein, who knew Beckmann and included a tough-minded, insightful section on him in his *Art of the Twentieth Century*, it most certainly did. Throughout his writings of the late twenties and early thirties Einstein registered the discrediting of a mechanistic world view founded on reason and causality and the return of myth. It was, Einstein proposed. The future task of art to create “visual myths. . . for all future reality begins and awakens as myth. Similarly it seems to us that society, too, will be shaped not merely by economic forces but by social myth.”¹¹ These are views that seem in part compatible with Beckmann’s utopian views on the power of painting, expressed in his essay of 1927, “The Artist in the State.” But for Einstein, who was always hostile to any literary contamination of artistic form (in his view George Grosz and Wassily Kandinsky were guilty of it), visual myth did not encompass *literary* illustration or allusion to previous myths or archetypes, literary *or* visual. It required the creation of new objects out of the unconscious processes of the psyche, tempered by tectonic form.

To be sure there was opposition to this formalist hegemony, most notably in the work of Aby Warburg and the group of scholars who later became associated with his library in Hamburg. Another critical voice was that of Hans Tietze, a pupil of Riegl who was unusual in that he was a historian of older art who also wrote on avant-garde art—he had published a review of the first *Der Blaue Reiter* exhibition in 1912. In his monumental *Method of Art History*, published in 1913, Tietze addressed the marginalization of iconographic studies in contemporary art history,

which had flourished in the late nineteenth century through the example of Anton Springer, the founder of iconographic scholarship. Tietze attributed iconography's relegation to the "provinces of scholarship" and the dominance of formal analysis to two factors—the influence of impressionism, to which he attributed a doctrine of "art for art's sake" and the Neo-Kantian art theory of Conrad Fiedler, who held that the content of art was fully identical and limited to its form.¹² But Tietze also offered a critique of a narrow formalism that ignored the significance of subject matter. To illustrate his point he quoted an earlier dissent by Riegl's contemporary Franz Wickhoff:

Courtesy demands that we listen to someone who is speaking to us, and no one would be pleased if we told him that we had paid no attention to what he was saying, that we merely enjoyed the sound of his voice. Shouldn't we owe to Leonardo what we are willing to grant to any dandy, that we listen to what he wants to say to us?¹³

Religious and literary aspects of the larger culture, Tietze asserted, were not extraneous to the work of art once they became embodied in artistic form; the human body was not simply a formal element but also an expressive one. Content was therefore just as much an expression of the *Kunstwollen*, of the art drive, as was form. "Form and content are a unity not only in the individual work, but also in the individual artist; art history has the task of establishing as a fact that this unity also extends to the *Kunstwollen* of the time."¹⁴

3 Wilhelm Fraenger

The early work of the art historian Wilhelm Fraenger, who was a decade younger than Tietze, can be seen as motivated by this goal. He had written his dissertation, submitted in 1917, on the art theory and pictorial analyses of the 17th century French classicist Roland Fréart de Chambray, who had sought to create a rational basis for art criticism. What was original in the theory of Fréart de Chambray, Fraenger concluded, could be traced to the influence of his friend the great classical painter Nicolas Poussin;¹⁵ specifically, his adaptation of the Ancient Greek

musical modes to painting. Each mode—the Lydian, the Dorian, the Phrygian, and so on—was governed by rules of rhythm and harmony that produced a particular emotion in the listener. Poussin, wrote Fraenger, wanted to transfer these modes to painting to achieve the expression of emotion not merely by means of the narrative image, but by means the affective power of line, color, and composition, “everything borne by a unified formal dynamic in which he would achieve the ultimate classical unity of form and content.”¹⁶ This model subsequently shaped Fraenger’s own approach to interpretation, which was evident in early books on the young Rembrandt and Pieter Bruegel the Elder’s painting of *Flemish Proverbs* in Berlin. Moreover, like Tietze, Fraenger was a scholar of older art who was passionately committed to contemporary art, and in 1922/23, at the Mannheim Kunsthalle, he presented a series of ten lectures with the title “Interpreting the New Art.”¹⁷

One can see Fraenger’s method at work in a short article on Edvard Munch’s 1906 *Self-Portrait with Wine Bottle*, published in 1920. An “exceedingly detailed formal dissection of the work should serve merely as the sober and rigorous prelude to the attempt at interpreting the content of this portrait,” he declares. The painting’s most conspicuous feature is what Fraenger characterizes as a tension in its configuration of space: Munch presses forward against the picture plane, resisting the tyranny of the exaggerated perspective that sucks up everything else into its system, while the room seems to rush away from him. In this manipulation, Fraenger concludes, we experience at once the proud aloofness of the artist and his lonely estrangement. “The surrounding world and space flee him. . . . The picture unveils as its spiritual meaning the disintegration of an individual before the world,” the fate of a person who, rather than building productively on his individuality is consumed by it. It was this content, Fraenger concluded, that is motivated the particular form of the work.¹⁸

The challenge of interpreting the Munch self-portrait was relatively modest compared to that Fraenger set himself when, two years later, he published on Max Beckmann’s 1921 painting, *The Dream*. Beckmann had been the topic of Fraenger’s 8th lecture in his series “Interpreting the New Art” at the Mannheim Kunsthalle in 1923, and one suspects that he presented a version of this

article. Extending over 24 printed pages, this essay is unique not only in the annals of early Beckmann criticism but, to my knowledge, was unequalled as an analysis of a contemporary painting in the early criticism on modern German art.¹⁹

The Dream had provoked more commentary than any Beckmann painting since *The Night*, which was completed two years earlier, in 1919. But in revolutionary and counter-revolutionary violence of 1919 Germany, the content of *The Night* was relatively transparent: reviewing the first exhibition of the work, Eduard von Bendemann observed: “the subject matter is never offered as a mere literary illustration that is in need of commentary, rather it has assumed readily intelligible form. One must only be under the spell of the spirit of the time in order to understand it.” With *The Dream* this was hardly the case. The bewildering effect that the painting must have had on many contemporary viewers is conveyed by the erroneous caption to its first reproduction, in the journal *Der Ararat* in November 1921: *Irrenhaus*, “Madhouse.”²⁰

Fraenger takes this bewildering, disturbing irrational character of the image as his point of departure. He asks: “What do these five figures want, they who in a bare attic encounter one another in a carnival dream of misery? One has crawled out of the military hospital. Another is clad in prison garb. The third is a beggar. The maidservant has stumbled in drunk. And in the midst of these shady characters sits a young girl from the country: They are all united in a desolate dream.” Time does not permit me to dwell on the many wonderful details of Fraenger’s close reading or to quote extensively from his often brilliant characterization of *The Dream*, what concerns me here is his method. To get at the content of this densely hermetic picture Fraenger proceeded differently than with the Munch picture—there he began with the work’s most conspicuous formal feature, the distorting spatial idiosyncrasies of the image and he found therein the key to the painting’s content. With *The Dream*, however, he begins with a detailed reading of the puzzling image, and only then proceeds to analyze its formal characteristics, and finally considers the relation of one to the other to arrive at an interpretation of the painting’s content. In interpreting both Munch and Beckmann, however, his ultimate question was the same: How does the subject matter relate to the form and how are they fused to create the

content? But *The Dream* presented an unusual case because here Fraenger saw the subject matter *in conflict with the form*. The nightmarish, chimerical, phantasmic realm of dreams is given a harsh concreteness, an intense palpability by virtue of the hyperplastic forms, whose palpability is intensified by the clear, hard light and by the manner in which Beckmann has crammed them into a claustrophobically tight, angular space that seems barely able to contain them. He appears to mount a willful assault on that organic unity of form and subject matter that Fraenger is at pains to find, and yet in the end it is in this very contradiction that Fraenger finds the meaning of the picture. The formal means of Beckmann's paintings, Fraenger asserts, are Beckmann's counterattack against the tyrannical spell of the nightmare: "The taming of nightmarish forces by means of a wide awake formal consciousness"—that, concludes Fraenger, is the formula that underlies this powerful painting. And that is why Beckmann's form is "so tyrannical, so coercively violent."

Fraenger's effort remained unique, unduplicated; his article did not become a model for the interpretation of Beckmann's paintings. Indeed, it was nearly thirty years before anyone would again offer such a close reading of a painting by Beckmann and the circumstances had changed—now there was the challenge of interpreting the hermetic imagery of the nine triptychs that Beckmann had completed between 1935-50. The American Clifford Amyx, writing in 1951, cited Fraenger's essay as a pioneering effort at understanding Beckmann's art, but the title of his own article, "Max Beckmann: The Iconography of the Triptychs," immediately tells us that we are in a different methodological culture from the one that both Fraenger and Beckmann inhabited. "Beckmann's work," Amyx writes, "is a genuine iconography."²¹ Essentially, Amyx's interpretation is limited to decoding the image, he terms his approach interpretation at a "conventional" level, focused on "meanings which are available through the structure of meanings in the work itself." What is missing from his analysis, however, is that stringent investigation of the relationship between image and form that characterized Fraenger's brilliant essay.

Erwin Panofsky

In using the term “conventional” to characterize his interpretation, Amyx reveals his methodological inspiration, Erwin Panofsky’s terminology in the introduction to his *Studies in Iconology* of 1939. In that text, probably the most widely read on any aspect of art-historical methodology, Panofsky uses that term to categorize the properly iconographic reading of a work of art: “It is apprehended by realizing that a male figure with a knife represents Saint Bartholomew, that a female figure with a peach in her hand is a personification of veracity, that a group of figures seated at a dinner table in a certain arrangement and in certain poses represents the last supper.” . . . The identification of such images, stories, and allegories is the domain of what is normally referred to as “iconography.” This level of interpretation demands, as Panofsky formulated it, a knowledge of “literary sources, and “specific themes and concepts.”²²

Panofsky divided the task of interpretation into three levels, the pre-iconographic, the iconographic, and the iconological. What interests me for my present purposes, is the hierarchical relationship between the primary and secondary levels and the relationship between form, expression, and meaning. The primary level Panofsky labels “natural subject matter,” and he subdivides it into two components, the *factual* and the *expressional*. Form is of interest to him here only insofar as it produces the identifiable image, objects capable of being described. The expressive or expressional level is confined to this *image*—it is not, as Panofsky defines it, the forms and colors and spaces that are expressive, but the scene, or the persons in it (in this he remains true to the essentially Albertian, Renaissance meaning of expression.” This level has a subservient role in relation to the secondary, iconographic, level, where the true intended meaning of the work is to be found, a meaning that can be stated in language and ultimately refers to a literary source or a concept. In 1932 Panofsky had published a first version of the essay in German in 1932, with the title “On the Problem of Describing and Interpreting the Content of Works of Visual Art.”²³ This was of course the same year in which Beckmann

initiated the “mythic turn” in his painting with *Man and Woman* and the beginning of his work on *Departure*. Despite this chronological coincidence, however, it should be clear by now that for interpreting Beckmann’s art Panofsky’s method is an anachronistic one.

4 Conclusion

In conclusion, I wish to return to the remark from Beckmann’s 1938 London lecture that I quoted at the beginning of this paper—his admission that he painted literary subjects’. There you will recall that in the end he affirmed that “each intellectual subject has been transformed again into form, color, and space.”²⁴ This statement I would like to link with another one in the London lecture: “*Almost without wanting to* I have moved from formal principles to transcendent ideas.” So, in the process of painting, Beckmann claims to move from literary subjects to form, and, seemingly involuntarily, from form to “transcendent ideas.” This may seem a contradiction but I would argue that it is not. For Beckmann, ideas were not to be equated with what the Germans pejoratively called “Gedankenmalerei,” thought painting, which was a cousin of literary painting, equally to be avoided. Rather, this and other passages in Beckmann’s lecture suggest that in theorizing his position on this issue he may well have found support in the philosophy of Schopenhauer, which he read and reread throughout his life. In the third book of *The World as Will and Representation*, copiously underlined and annotated by Beckmann, Schopenhauer makes a distinction between Idea (*Idee*) and Concept (*Begriff*) in visual art that seems relevant here. For him the purpose of visual art was the “facilitation of the knowledge of the Ideas of the world”; these Ideas were not something abstract but were “thoroughly accessible to vision;” they constituted the “unity that has fallen into multiplicity,” and making visible that underlying unity within multiplicity, this “apprehended Idea,” was “the true and only source of every genuine work of art.” The *concept*, on the other hand, achieves its unity through *abstraction*, not through *visual perception* but through *reason*. In contrast to the Idea, which is manifest through visual perception and is inexhaustible, the concept is “communicable by words without further assistance, entirely exhausted by its definition.” In other words, for Schopenhauer, concepts are

linked with *language* and discursive thought; they are derived from, are abstract signs for, the *Ideas* directly manifest to visual perception.

Also relevant in this context is Schopenhauer's distinction between two layers of meaning in visual art, the *nominal* meaning, which corresponds to the concept, and the *real* meaning, which manifests the Idea. The nominal, the particular subject of a painting, identical with iconography in Panofsky's sense, is "the outward meaning, added, however, only as concept." The most reprehensible form of nominal meaning in Schopenhauer's view is allegory, "a work of art signifying something different from what it depicts." The *real* meaning, on the other hand, represents the Idea of humankind that becomes evident to perception through the picture. "The real meaning is effective only so long as we forget the nominal, allegorical meaning. If we think of the latter, we forsake visual perception, and an abstract concept occupies the mind." In such cases, Schopenhauer writes, "The picture or statue is intended to accomplish here what is accomplished more fully by a book."²⁵ Here Schopenhauer constructs a hierarchy of levels of meaning that turns that of Panofsky upside down.

Given Schopenhauer's differentiation between Idea and Concept, with which Beckmann was certainly familiar, one can readily see how he could rationalize his current "mythic" practice against accusations of literariness. For in the last analysis what he painted, as he explained to Valentin, could not be communicated in words (i. e., in concepts), and was therefore not "literary"; no, he asserted, he painted *Ideas*, "transcendent ideas."

Notes

¹Max Beckmann, "On My Painting," in *Max Beckmann: Self-Portrait in Words: Collected Writings and Statements, 1903–1950*, edited by Barbara C. Buenger (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1997), 304. Earlier in the lecture, Beckmann offered this variant: "It is not the subject that matters but the translation of the subject into the abstraction of the surface by means of painting." (302).

² See, for example, Hans Belting: *Max Beckmann: Tradition as a Problem in Modern Art* (1984), 69.

³This can be seen by comparing their dimensions with those of his other paintings. For the period in question the "mythic" works consistently tend to be in larger in format.

⁴His last was in the catalogue of the 1928 Mannheim exhibition.

⁵ Letter of February 11, 1938 to Curt Valentin: In: *Briefe. Band III: 1937-1950*, ed. Klaus Gallwitz, Uwe M. Schneede, and Stephan von Wiese. München: Piper, 1996, 29.

⁶ Belting: *Max Beckmann*, 97-98.

⁷ Reinhard Spieler, *Max Beckmann: Bildwelt und Weltbild in den Triptychen* (Cologne: DuMont, 1998).

⁸ Belting: *Max Beckmann*, 69-78.

⁹ Riegl, *Spätromische Kunstindustrie*, p. 229. „Der ikonographische Inhalt ist eben durchaus verschieden von dem künstlerischen; der (auf Erweckung bestimmter Vorstellungen gerichtete) Zweck, dem der erstere dient, ist ein äußerer gleich dem Gebrauchszwecke der kunstgewerblichen und architektonischen Werke, während der eigentliche Kunstzweck lediglich darauf gerichtet ist, die Dinge in Umriß und Farbe, in Ebene oder Raum derart darzustellen, daß sie das erlösende Wohlgefallen des Beschauers erregen./ Einen wahrhaften kunstgeschichtlichen Wert können daher ikonographische Feststellungen erst dann gewinnen, wenn man zeigt, daß in ihnen das gleiche Wollen zum Ausdrucke gelangt ist, das die eigentlich bildkünstlerische Seite des Kunstwerks - die materielle Erscheinung - so und nicht anders gestaltet hat.“

¹⁰ Paul Westheim, *Die Welt Als Vorstellung: Ein Weg Zur Kunstanschauung* (Potsdam: Gustav Kiepenheuer, 1919), 27.

¹¹ Einstein, *Georges Braque* (1934), in” *Werke* 3, 278-279.

¹² Hans Tietze, *Die Methode der Kunstgeschichte* (Leipzig: E. Seemann, 1913), 229. See Konrad Fiedler, *Schriften Zur Kunst*, 2nd ed., edited by Gottfried Boehm (Munich: Wilhelm Fink Verlag, 1991), 1: 37

¹³ Hans Tietze, *Die Methode der Kunstgeschichte* (Leipzig: E. Seemann, 1913), 230 n3.

¹⁴ Hans Tietze, *Die Methode der Kunstgeschichte* (Leipzig: E. Seemann, 1913), 233, 235.

¹⁵ Wilhelm Fraenger, *Die Bild-Analysen Des Roland Fréart de Chambray der Versuch einer Rationalisierung der Kunstkritik in der Französischen Kunstlehre Des XVII. Jahrhunderts*. (Heidelberg: T. Berkenbusch, 1917), 36 et passim.

¹⁶ Wilhelm Franeger, “Zur Geschichte der Kunstkritik und Kunsttheorie,” *Repertorium Für Kunstwissenschaft* 52 (1920): 48.

¹⁷ Petra Weckel, *Wilhelm Fraenger: Ein Subversiver Kunstwissenschaftler Zwischen den Systemen* (Potsdam: Verlag für Berlin-Brandenburg, 2001), 400.

¹⁸ Wilhelm Fraenger, “Zu einem Selbstbildnis von Edvard Munch,” *Der Cicerone* 12, no. 23 (1920): 837–40.

¹⁹ Wilhelm Fraenger, “Max Beckmann: *Der Traum*: Ein Beitrag zur Physiognomik des Grotesken”. In: Curt Glaser, Julius Meier-Graefe, Wilhelm Fraenger und Wilhelm Hausenstein, *Max Beckmann* (Munich: Piper, 1924), 35-58. When Beckmann learned that Fraenger was writing on him, he wrote to the publisher Reinhard Piper, “Was Fränger schreibt scheint ja lustig,—hoffentlich wird er nicht zu litterarisch.—Aber schließlich warum auch nicht.” Letter of January 18, 1923, in *Max Beckmann Briefe, Band I: 1899-1925* (Munich: Piper, 1993), 227.

²⁰ Guido von Kaschnitz, “Max Beckmann,” *Der Ararat* 2, no. 11 (November 1921): 276.

²¹ Clifford Amyx, “Max Beckmann: The Iconography of the Triptychs,” *The Kenyon Review* 13, no. 4 (October 1951): 610-23.

²² Erwin Panofsky, *Studies in Iconology: Humanistic Themes in the Art of the Renaissance* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1939):6-7.

²³ Erwin Panofsky, “Zum Problem der Beschreibung und Inhaltsdeutung von Werken der bildenden Kunst” (1932). In: *Aufsätze zu Grundfragen der Kunstwissenschaft*. Berlin 1964,

²⁴ Max Beckmann, “On My Painting,” in *Max Beckmann: Self-Portrait in Words: Collected Writings and Statements, 1903–1950*, edited by Barbara C. Buenger (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1997), 304. Earlier in the lecture, Beckmann offered this variant: “It is nto the subject that matters but the translation of the subject into the abstraction of the surface by means of painting.” (302).

²⁵ Arthur Schopenhauer, *Die Welt als Wille und Vorstellung*, vol. 1, Book 3. In: *Sämtliche Werke*, hg. v. Julius Frauenstädt, Bd. 2, S. Leipzig 1891, 274-275 (§ 48).