

Literary Texts and Formal Strategies in Emil Nolde's Religious Paintings

On February 20, 1912, the painter Emil Nolde wrote to his friend and patron Karl Osthaus, director of the Folkwang Museum in Hagen, concerning an upcoming exhibition there, and announced a major new work:

In the last year I have created a piece consisting of nine biblical pictures that belong together. I finished it during the last few weeks. I thought that I would also send this to you for exhibition. The size of the entire piece: 240cm high, 630cm wide.¹

On February 28, 1912, he wrote to his long-time friend Hans Fehr about the piece, enclosing a thumbnail sketch of it that shows a large central picture of a crucifixion flanked on either side by four paintings. Nolde identified the subjects of the eight smaller canvases in writing on the sketch: *Holy Night* and *The Twelve-Year-Old Christ* (left above), *The Three Magi* and *The Betrayal of Christ* (left below), *Women at the Tomb* and *Ascension* (right above), *Resurrection* and *Doubting Thomas* (right below).² All nine canvases of this work, known collectively as *The Life of Christ*, remain together today in the galleries of the Nolde Foundation, near Seebüll, Germany.³

The similarity of the format and iconography of the work to Late-Gothic Northern altarpieces seems obvious—although, oddly enough, it has seldom been discussed from this angle. I would like to consider not only the Medieval sources for the work, but more importantly, how contemporary conceptions of the Gothic era in Germany informed *The Life of Christ* and Nolde's entire enterprise of creating a modern and, to his mind, uniquely German art.

The Life of Christ is Nolde's sole monumental work, although he evidently did not conceive of it as a multi-canvas piece from the start. Rather, he created it in two separate phases, which he described in the second volume of his memoirs. According to this account, he painted the first three canvases—now to the left and above—in the summer of 1911, as an extension of the series

of religious pictures he had begun in 1909, and without any intention of creating a multi-canvas work.⁴ He also described how the expanded project occurred to him early in 1912:

Perhaps by chance, the picture of the three kings stood with the other two biblical pictures, frame on frame, beside and over one another. It occurred to me from this to add a fourth to them, then a large middle picture, and on the other side, four more pictures. The first four prior to the crucifixion, the other four after it... They would form a truly great, powerful pictorial group, in which all of the pictures would support each other artistically, all drunken with religious feelings and spirituality: *The Life of Christ*.⁵

The marked stylistic differences among the three paintings of 1911 bear out this recollection. They show him still testing a variety of modes, some new, some familiar, as he did throughout that year. *Christ and Judas*, for instance, possesses a vibrant, painterly style and qualities of light and atmosphere ultimately derived from Impressionism. However, in *The Three Magi*, painted after his discovery of tribal art in 1911, he reduced the surface mottling and generally used more opaque colors of much lower values.⁶ The contours are more angular and the picture has a clearer figure-ground relationship than his earlier religious paintings.

But even the six paintings that completed *The Life of Christ* display stylistic inconsistencies. *Resurrection* has a luminosity akin to that of *Christ and Judas* in its mottled colors, scumbled surfaces, and burst of radiance at the center. *Doubting Thomas* is the most severely primitivizing of the canvases of the series. Nolde placed his eight Apostles in a single plane to the rear, flattened and purified his colors, straightened his contours, restrained his brushwork, and worked with an unusually broad brush. The picture has neither an evident light source--natural or divine--nor any play of light on the figures.

Nolde no doubt recognized that the monumental scheme of *The Life of Christ*--far larger than any previous work--almost literally hinged on *Crucifixion*.⁷ For it he incorporated a symmetrical severity and a solidity of construction well beyond any earlier picture. The three crosses

establish the central axis, outer boundaries, and upper edge of the composition. Nolde pushed the figures almost into a single plane very close to the picture's surface. He reinforced the iconic effect that results with certain aspects of his primitivizing style, mainly angular forms, flat colors, and unworked surfaces. It is the severe order of *Crucifixion*, along with the uniformity of subject matter and the regularity of format of *The Life of Christ*, that hold in check the stylistic inconsistencies of the eight flanking works.

However fortuitous the inspiration for a multi-canvas work, when Nolde added six paintings to the original three in 1912, he established a distinct narrative sequence. As with many Medieval altarpieces, *Crucifixion* forms not only the pictorial center of the composition but also its temporal one. The canvases on the left follow a chronological and narrative sequence: upper left (*Holy Night*), lower left (*The Three Magi*); upper right (*The Twelve-Year-Old Christ*), lower right (*Christ and Judas*). The right side does not follow this scheme, causing confusion at first glance, but its reverse: lower left (*Resurrection*), upper left (*Women at the Tomb*); lower right (*Doubting Thomas*), upper right (*Ascension*). Nolde no doubt contrived the order of the right side to allow the heavenward movement of Christ in *Ascension* to proceed upward and off an upper corner.

In *The Life of Christ*, Nolde incorporated some of the most common Christian images and articulated some of the most conventional Christian themes of those found in his religious paintings. This work, more than any other, conveys that convergence of the progressive and the conservative so central to Nolde's series of religious paintings, incorporating as it does, traditional subjects and themes with a progressive, Post-impressionist style. In its most general sense, *The Life of Christ* can be read as a statement of the "two natures" doctrine, established by the Christian church already in 451 at the Council of Chalcedon, which asserted the integrity of

Jesus' divine and human natures and their union in the man. On the left, Nolde presented four scenes of the recognition of the divine in the human; on the right, four scenes of the revelation of the full divinity of the man; with the two mediated by the Crucifixion that, to the faithful, gives both natures meaning.

It is worth noting that one thing separating the paintings of 1912 from those of 1911 is the number of motifs that Nolde borrowed for the former from Northern Late-Medieval paintings. He had occasionally done likewise in his earlier religious paintings, but the degree of the borrowings in 1912 suggests a renewed, or perhaps intensified, interest in such art. Of the individual canvases for *The Life of Christ*, *Crucifixion* contains the most obvious traces of an interest in Northern Medieval art. Crucifixions from this period frequently include several motifs—all incorporated by Nolde. First, the tortured flesh of Christ, in the form of an emaciated body, prominent wounds, and streams of blood. Grünewald's Crucifixion from the *Isenheim Altarpiece* is the best known and most extreme example of this type. Second, the followers traditionally stand to the left of the cross and display intense emotions through gesture and physiognomy, often with the Magdalene on her knees and grasping the base of the cross and the Virgin collapsing into the arms of St. John. Third, many contrast the followers on the left with an equally distinct group of executioners and mockers to the right. Nolde even imitated a convention of some Medieval art by enlarging the body of Christ for prominence.⁸

The arrangement of the arms of Christ in Nolde's *Ascension* resembles that of the Resurrection in Grünewald's altarpiece. Nolde knew of the work by 1908, when he mentioned it in a letter.⁹ Nolde's *Resurrection* also contains elements undoubtedly from northern Medieval versions of the subject. Typically they show Christ risen at the center of the panel in a red robe that reveals portions of his upper body, a sarcophagus behind him with its lid askew, and

soldiers--three or four--seated to the front and sides. Nolde followed suit here.¹⁰ His *Holy Night*, a Nativity, has an unusual central motif--Mary lifting the child heavenward. However, in the background, it contains an unmistakable reference to Northern Medieval and Renaissance painting: the Annunciation to the Shepherds.¹¹

Given the format of *The Life of Christ* and its sources, it seems obvious that Nolde consciously modeled the nine-piece work on Medieval polyptychs. Churches and museums throughout Germany housed them, and in 1904, he had assisted in the restoration and reinstallation of an altarpiece in West Jutland, Denmark.¹² And Nolde almost certainly saw many works from this period—both individual panels and entire altarpieces. As a student in Munich at the turn of the century, he surely knew of the Bayerische Staatsgemäldesammlung, a collection particularly rich in Northern Medieval religious paintings, including many transferred to the royal court from their original ecclesiastical sites. It also contained the Boisserée collection, one of the first and most famous caches of Northern Medieval art in Germany. The paintings were spread between several galleries, including the Alte Pinakothek in Munich, the Königliche Gemäldegalerie at Schleissheim--both of which Nolde visited--and several smaller venues in and around Munich.¹³ And Nolde surely took the opportunity to visit the Germanisches Nationalmuseum, another branch of the Bavarian state collection, during a trip to Nuremberg in 1911. In fact, this last experience may have been pivotal to the conception of *The Life of Christ*, since in 1909 the museum received from Munich numerous panels from the royal collection to complete altarpieces already there in part.¹⁴

Nolde's evident fascination with Northern Medieval and Renaissance painting represents only one part of a greater concern for the role of national identity in the creative process--itself an essential element of his conception of art. On March 20, 1908, just over a year before he

created his first religious paintings, Nolde outlined his thoughts on the matter:

You write of the struggle for our art and of the struggle in the 80s and 90s. The great, truly important struggles have been fought in France; here in Germany there has been only a small side effect. The great Frenchmen Manet, Cézanne, van Gogh, Gauguin, Signac were the icebreakers. The French have excluded all of the old artistic elements, and only in this way is it possible to create an art that can be placed beside the old great art.¹⁵

He then made an explicit connection between his work, German art, and the issue of national identity--in essence establishing northern art as his model:

In Germany we have, if we are to truly succeed in creating a great German art, a second period--the first falls within the time of Grünewald, Holbein, and Dürer--a great up-hill battle before us. I feel myself on the verge of it, and I truly hope that this period of a great German art will come. The artists must lead the great fight. But it requires new young people with independent minds.¹⁶

It is notable that Nolde wrote not just of great art, or of great modern or European art, but of great German art. On September 14, 1911, he returned to the matter of national identity:

When our art has become of equal value with, or more important than the French, then it will also be, without particularly trying, completely German. In industry, trade, science, and others, we have gradually become not only equally good, but exemplary, and have self-confidence. In art the same thing will happen; all of the necessary preconditions are present in the nation. The generation that follows the Secession...knows that the fulfillment of a great task falls to it. With devotion they work intensely and strongly.¹⁷

It seems clear that an essentialist notion underpinned his conception of art: great, independent, original painting by his generation in Germany would necessarily be Germanic in nature.

That Nolde should ponder the role of nationality in art is not surprising, considering his conservative rural origins and the obsession with nationality in German society, politics, and culture during his day. The latter involved rancorous debates between advocates of conservative and national artistic styles and those of progressive, international styles.¹⁸ Behind many of them loomed the specter of French ascendancy and German dependency in the visual arts. One controversy involved the Swiss painter Arnold Böcklin, deceased in 1901 and at that time among

the most popular artists in Germany. The critic and historian Julius Meier-Graefe—the German champion of French Impressionism—declared his work trivial and his popularity an impediment to contemporary art in Germany.¹⁹ The art historian Henry Thode, son-in-law of Cosima Wagner, representing the cultural patriots, declared Böcklin to be the prophet of a new German art.²⁰ A second controversy in Berlin followed the publication in 1911 of the “Protest of German Artists,” a manifesto on the state of art in Germany by Carl Vinnen, a conservative painter.²¹ Like Thode, he decried the “invasion” of French art in Germany, especially condemning Post-impressionism and the critics who promoted its vogue. And like Thode, he couched his screed in ideological terms: alien influences effected fundamental cultural change in the land, threatening national characteristics. Germany faced spiritual usurpation, preventing artists of the nation’s own “flesh and blood” from leading the people to greatness.²²

Nolde never signed the Protest, but he had his own row with Max Liebermann, the president of the Berlin Secession—which looked to French Impressionism for its artistic model. This followed the rejection of Nolde’s *Pentecost* by the 1910 Secession jury after particularly strong objections from Liebermann.²³ Thin-skinned, Nolde responded with a vicious letter to the press critical of Liebermann, after which the Secession executive committee expelled him for, among other things, “behaving in a dishonorable and cowardly manner.”

Nolde’s position in these affairs reflects the same ambivalence toward French art found in his letters, and it cuts across conventional lines of nationalist/internationalist and progressive/conservative. Moreover, of course, Nolde eventually proved to be more progressive artistically than both Thode—who essentially rejected all of French art—and Meier-Graefe—who saw Impressionism as the culmination of modern art.²⁴ He registered no complaints against French art *per se*, and unlike Thode and Vinnen he did not call Liebermann (at least in the press)

French or somehow foreign--only mediocre.²⁵ For Nolde, national traits, while inherently significant, did not represent a standard so much as a given in great art; becoming German required originality, not disparagement of all French art or its exclusion from Germany.²⁶ He shared the missionary zeal of the two, and the intolerance it entails, but he never quite shared their propensity to cast differences in taste and aesthetics as moral and ideological absolutes.²⁷

Nolde's model for his renewal of modern German art was German Late Medieval art--but he did not conceive of it primarily as a stylistic model. In fact, although consistently a source for motifs in his religious paintings, earlier German painting had only a general stylistic impact on his work of this period. French Post-impressionism had a far greater influence. Thus, unable to transcend French Post-impressionist form, he perhaps looked to a national essence to distinguish his "German" art from its French models—a Germanness that would link his second period of great German art to the first.

Nolde was not the first artist in Germany to find national artistic characteristics in Germany's past. W. D. Robson-Scott summed up the German Romantic conception of the Gothic style in a discussion of Karl Friedrich Schinkel:

- 1) Gothic is the expression of an idea. 2) Gothic is the triumph of spirit over matter. 3) Gothic is the art of the transcendental. 4) Gothic is the specifically Christian architecture. 5) Gothic is the specifically German architecture. 6) The unity of Gothic is an inner and organic unity. 7) And finally, for all these reasons, Gothic architecture is superior to classical.²⁸

Schinkel himself even made a comment reminiscent of Nolde's opinions on originality in German art: calling Gothic art German, he regretted that "for centuries now unhappy circumstances have seduced the Germans from their natural bent and driven them to follow foreign influences all too slavishly."²⁹

Given the Romantic roots of so many of Nolde's ideas on art, it is not surprising that he

would idealize “the time of Grünewald, Holbein and Dürer;” that he would visit the cathedrals of Naumberg, Magdeburg, and Bamberg; or that he would model *The Life of Christ* on German Late Medieval altarpieces and incorporate so many motifs from them into the individual canvases. In fact, the attributes of the Gothic that Robson-Scott identified in Schinkel’s essay read almost like a catalogue of Nolde’s own attributes for his religious paintings.

The best evidence that many Romantic conceptions of the Gothic survived into Nolde’s day comes from the writings of Wilhelm Worringer—the premier German art theorist of the day.³⁰ They appeared in preliminary form in *Abstraction and Empathy* (1908) and more fully in *Form in Gothic* (1910). In the first, Worringer explicitly gave a racial basis to artistic volition. To him, the psychic disposition of “northern man” tended to the instinctive, and thus his artistic volition was “perforce abstract.” This disposition seeks and strives, displaying an inner need for expression, making “vigorous, urgent life” and “heightened movement, heightened expression” the “decisive formula for the whole medieval North.”³¹ In addition, to Worringer, religious transcendentalism always corresponded to transcendentalism in art. Christianity was of “Oriental-Semitic provenance,” so that its artistic volition incorporated the abstract trends prevalent in the “Semitic East.” As a result, true Christian art was abstract and transcendental.³²

The implications for Nolde seem obvious. When he began his religious paintings in the summer of 1909, Worringer’s words of 1908 perhaps stuck in his mind: the northern psychic disposition was unique and tended toward the instinctive and toward heightened expression and abstraction in the visual arts; where Christianity, a religion of transcendence, dominated, its truest expression was abstract and transcendental, with the Gothic being the paradigm of all of these.

In *Form in Gothic*, of 1910, Worringer specifically equated the northern artistic volition with

Germanness, speaking of the Gothic as its greatest embodiment, and as a “chiefly” Germanic development.³³ Nolde also would have agreed with Worringer’s assessment of the fate of the indigenous Gothic at the hands of the alien Renaissance: once abstract--and thus autonomous in form and a higher means of representation--German art now merely copied objective facts; once spiritually expressive in form, it now relied on antithetical intellectual constructs such as allegory and literary allusions.³⁴

Worringer’s fully elaborated concept of the Gothic, while published too late to have influenced Nolde’s first religious paintings of 1909, may have had a direct impact on his decision to format *The Life of Christ* like a Medieval altarpiece and to incorporate motifs from German Late Medieval painting into individual canvases. After all, Worringer stated that Gothic art was deeply mystical and that it “produced the highest capacity for spiritual characterization known in the history of art.”³⁵ But perhaps just as importantly for Nolde, Worringer also attempted to finesse the clear French priority of the Gothic in a fascinating way. He invoked a secret Gothic essence--a “Germanness” not unlike Nolde’s vague concept--that was northern in nature, suppressed in the Romanesque, and, until the advent of the Gothic, inchoate in the “ponderous” north. Central France, with its “Germanic leaven in the admixture of races,” but also a Latin “enthusiasm” and “clarity,” liberated the northern formulation and catalyzed the Gothic, but without compromising its Germanic essence.³⁶ This notion resembles Nolde’s view that the French “broke the ice” for his German art, and it may have encouraged him to lay Medieval German imagery over a Post-impressionist--or a French-inspired--style. At any rate, the myth nurtured by Worringer and others of the Gothic as original, German, and of international influence surely sustained him as he painted *The Life of Christ* and developed his novel, abstract, and expressionistic style.

¹*Emil und Ada Nolde--Karl Ernst und Gertrud Osthaus: Briefwechsel*, ed. Herta Hesse-Frielinghaus (Bonn: Bouvier Verlag Herbert Grundmann, 1985), p. 78.

²*Briefe aus den Jahren 1894-1926*, ed. M. Sauerlandt (Berlin: Furcht-Kunstverlag, 1927), p. 85. (Hereafter, *Briefe*.)

³For Nolde's paintings, see Martin Urban, *Emil Nolde, a Catalogue Raisonné of the Oil Paintings*, 2 vols. (London: Sotheby's Publications, 1987). The nine canvases of *The Life of Christ* are U421-423 and U477-482.

⁴Nolde's memoirs are in four volumes: *Das eigene Leben* (Berlin: Rembrandt, 1931); *Jahre der Kämpfe* (Berlin: Rembrandt, 1934); *Welt und Heimat. Die Südseereise* (Flensburg: Christian Wolf, 1965); *Reisen, Ächtung, Befreiung* (Cologne: DuMont, 1976). This quotation is from *Jahre der Kämpfe*, p. 167.

⁵*Ibid.*, p. 168. See also p. 166.

⁶For Nolde's interest in, and sketches of, tribal art, see Martin Urban, *Emil Nolde: Masken und Figuren* (Bielefeld: Kunsthalle, 1971).

⁷*Crucifixion* measures 220.5 X 193.5 cm.

⁸Nolde undoubtedly knew of this convention of separating the mourners from the executioners from northern altarpieces, for instance the *Crucifixion* of the *St. Michaelskirche Altarpiece* of 1465 by Hans Pleydenwurff in the collection of the Alte Pinakothek, or the *Crucifixion* of the *Tucher Passion Altar* in St. John's church in Nuremberg. He may also have seen the motif of the lot casters in a *Crucifixion* by the Master of the Kemptener *Crucifixion*, which was at Schleissheim until 1911.

⁹*Briefe*, p. 73. Nolde likely knew the luxury color folio on the *Isenheim Altarpiece* by Max J. Friedländer, published in the same year as this letter: *Grünwalds Isenheimer Altar* (Munich: F. Bruckmann, 1908). The tortured flesh of Christ in Nolde's *Crucifixion* also suggests his knowledge of the work.

¹⁰Nolde perhaps knew the Resurrection on the *St. Wolfgang Altar* in the church of St. Lorenz in Nuremberg. It closely resembles his work. Cf. also the altarpiece by Michael Wohlgemut and his assistants in the Friedenskirche in Nuremberg, the altar from the church of St. Michael in Hof, and the one from St. Katherine in Nuremberg by a painter from the Pleydenwurff circle.

¹¹In the Nativity on his *Paumgartner Altar* of 1503, Dürer inserted the motif in the distance. Martin Schongauer and Hans Baldung Grien did likewise in their versions of the subject. Nolde perhaps knew the first two--they entered the collection of the Alte Pinakothek in 1836 and 1881. The motif also appears in nativities in the Germanisches Museum, for instance in an anonymous version by a Mainfrankish painter, c. 1500, acquired in 1856; an anonymous lower Rhenish version, c. 1530, acquired in 1907; and an altarpiece from the church of St. Katherine.

¹²*Briefe*, p. 43. Nolde produced a detailed drawing of a large altarpiece in the Marienkirche in Flensburg in 1884. See *Das eigene Leben*, pp. 51-52.

¹³E.g. the Alte Pinakothek housed the wings of the former *Kaisheimer Altar* of circa 1502 by Hans Holbein the Elder. Its format resembles that of Nolde's work. It also housed the wings of the former high altar of the St. Michaelskirche in Hof of 1465 by Hans Pleydenwurff--with four scenes from the life of Christ. Both entered the collection in 1836.

¹⁴See the forward by E. H. Zimmermann in the catalogue of the collection, *Die Gemälde des 13. bis 16. Jahrhunderts* (Leipzig: K. F. Koehlers Antiquarium, 1937). One was an anonymous "passion altar" of c. 1538-39 from the church of St. John the Baptist in Cologne. See also a 1513 work on the life of Christ by an anonymous Nuremberg painter, with fifteen scenes in three rows; and the former high altar of the church of St. Katharine in Nuremberg. They entered the collection in 1906 and before 1855.

¹⁵*Briefe*, p. 73.

¹⁶*Ibid.*, pp. 73-74. Note also Nolde's comments on how he "loved passionately the old, pure German art for its harsh self-willed, spiritually perfect beauty, for its fantasy that is so deeply bound to nature and its ineffability," and how he hoped "to give back to German art its Germanic character, which it had lost two and a half centuries ago." *Jahre der Kämpfe*, p. 234. For his opinions (quite negative) on German nineteenth-century painting, see *Briefe*, p. 78. See also p. 78 for comments on the advantages and disadvantages of French modern art in German collections.

¹⁷*Ibid.*, pp. 78-79. See also: Hans Fehr, *Emil Nolde, Ein Buch der Freundschaft* (Paul List Verlag, 1957), p. 49.

¹⁸See Peter Paret, *The Berlin Secession* (Cambridge Massachusetts: Harvard University Press, 1980), chaps. 5 and 6.

¹⁹See *ibid.*, pp. 170-182, for an account of the controversy. See also Julius Meier-Graefe, *Der Fall Böcklin* (Stuttgart: J. Hoffman, 1905); and Kenworth Moffett, *Meier-Graefe as Art Critic* (Munich: Prestel Verlag, 1973).

²⁰He did so in a book and a series of lectures, later published: Henry Thode, *Arnold Böcklin* (Heidelberg, 1905); and *Böcklin and Thoma* (Heidelberg, 1905). For an early, favorable opinion of Nolde on Böcklin, see Fehr, p. 18. For Nolde's interest in Böcklin's art, see Manfred Reuther, *Das Frühwerk Emil Noldes; Vom Kunstgewerbler zum Künstler* (Cologne: DuMont Buchverlag, 1985).

²¹Paret gives a detailed account of the incident, pp. 183-199. See also Carl Vinnen, *Ein Protest deutscher Künstler* (Jena, 1911). It includes the names of 140 artists and extracts from their letters to Vinnen.

²²Nolde believed that the “Protest” was accurate in terms of the Berlin Secession: “Vinnen’s words...are directed mainly at the influence of the Berlin Secession and the aspirations of the young German painters. Since its founding, the Berlin Secession has, through its exhibitions, constantly and eagerly declared that the French are the truly great painters and they only mediocre. That is correct.” *Briefe*, p. 78.

²³In *Jahre der Kämpfe*, p. 141, Nolde claimed that Liebermann threatened to resign his post if the jury hung the picture.

²⁴In *Briefe*, p. 70, Nolde criticized Meier-Graefe’s Franco-centricity.

²⁵See *ibid.*, p. 83. To Fehr (p. 57), Nolde declared that Liebermann stood to Impressionism as Thorwaldsen did to the classical tradition—as a late, pale imitator.

²⁶Nolde’s opinions on French art and the Secession became more strident and quarrelsome later in his memoirs—particularly in *Jahre der Kämpfe*.

²⁷Cf. a letter to Fehr of July 21, 1910, where he criticized nationalistic German art critic Willy Pastor: “There is, perhaps, something of a weak possibility in what he says; but, as you also write, these glorifiers of the German [Germanenverherrlicher] know how to elucidate and to twist everything as if all that is great and good were German. He has incidentally discovered that Titian, Raphael, Michelangelo, and Leonardo da Vinci were all German.” Robert Pois first published this document in *Emil Nolde* (New York: University Press of America, 1982), p. 98.

²⁸W. D. Robson-Scott, *The Literary Background of the Gothic Revival in Germany* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1965), p. 233.

²⁹*Ibid.*, p. 235-36.

³⁰That the conception of the Gothic as German survived in academic circles seems remarkable, for in 1841 Franz Mertens demonstrated Gothic architecture’s French origins in *Ueber den Dom zu Köln und die französische Bauschule in Deutschland* (Cologne, 1841). See Paul Frankl, *The Gothic; Literary Sources and Interpretations through Eight Centuries*, trans. Priscilla Silz (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1960), pp. 642-44 and pp. 680-82, for German scholars who none-the-less continued to argue for a Germanic essence in the Gothic.

³¹Wilhelm Worringer, *Abstraction and Empathy; A Contribution to the Psychology of Style*, trans. Michael Bullock (New York: International Universities Press, 1963), pp. 77 and 108-09. Worringer found this volition preeminently in architecture, but also in Medieval German painting and sculpture (p. 117).

³²*Ibid.*, pp. 96, 101-03, 132.

³³Wilhelm Worringer, *Form in Gothic*, trans. Herbert Read (New York: Schocken Books, 1964), pp. 39, 180. Like Nolde, Worringer blurred art-historical categories, naming Grünewald,

Dürer, and Holbein as the epitome in painting of the Gothic spirit (p. 115).

³⁴Ibid., p. 65. See also p. 115.

³⁵Ibid., p. 65.

³⁶“Gothic itself did not arise in France, only the Gothic system....France created the most beautiful and living Gothic buildings, but not the purest. The land of pure Gothic culture is the Germanic north.” Ibid., p. 141-42.