

A postcard entitled *Sunflower Elves* [*Sonnenblumenelfen*] (1905) in shades of brown-grey frames a couple in petals: they are the germ and the seed (fig. 1).¹ A king and his queen fix us with their bright-eyed gaze; their garments are classical, and yet this image exudes a fragrance of a universal, timeless nature. The carefree atmosphere is reinforced by vegetal decoration, a naked young couple dancing, an infant suckling at the breast, mice, a squirrel and a butterfly. The flower is a portrait, a looking-glass, an incubator – this is supposed to be <us>, the imagined audience. The artwork was made by Hugo Höppener, aka Fidus (1868–1948). After living in communes inspired by the artist Karl Wilhelm Diefenbach, he rose to prominence in the German-speaking world of the early twentieth century as the leading artist of the *Lebensreform* and youth movements, producing popular prints, book designs and paintings, many in vivid colours. Around 1900, images such as the *Sunflower Elves* – frequently with children and teenagers frolicking naked in field and forest, seemingly in all innocence but sometimes in love scenarios – were still broadly associated with yearnings for harmony between humans and nature and with a desire to reinvigorate the fledgling Reich by building a nation of healthy Germans.² And yet – quite apart from the demonic *femmes fatales* and the heroic warriors who followed later – there is more to this seed than meets the eye. Fidus, who operated outside the official art market with its bourgeois salons and galleries by setting up distribution channels of his own, was already gravitating around 1900 towards protagonists who subscribed not only to nationalistic views but also to ethnic supremacism. By 1910 he was moving largely within such circles.³ In 1908 he took up residence in the garden community of Woltersdorf-Schönblick near Erkner, which lay in Brandenburg to the east of Berlin, and here he founded his Fidus-Haus with its own publishing outfit, Fidus-Verlag GmbH, as a meeting-place for the St.-Georgs-Bund, Wandervogel groups of young ramblers and other anti-establishment associations with a nationalist ethos and a fondness for healthy outdoor activities.⁴ Fidus was, moreover, a founding member in 1912–1913 of the Germanische Glaubens-Gemeinschaft (GGG), a neo-pagan and unambiguously antisemitic cult led by artist and writer Ludwig Fahrenkrog, a man of *völkisch* (ethnicist) views.⁵ There is continuity to these connections, because religious communities of the GGG ilk, such as the one led until 2009 by the neo-Nazi Jürgen Rieger, still exist today.⁶ It has to be stressed that Fidus was part of this right-wing counterculture. It is therefore no great surprise that he supported Adolf Hitler, although he enjoyed no authority under the Nazi regime. In fact, like many members of right-wing splinter groups, he was isolated and even labelled <degenerate>. This,



1 Fidus: *Sunflower Elves* [Sonnenblumenelfen], postcard 1905

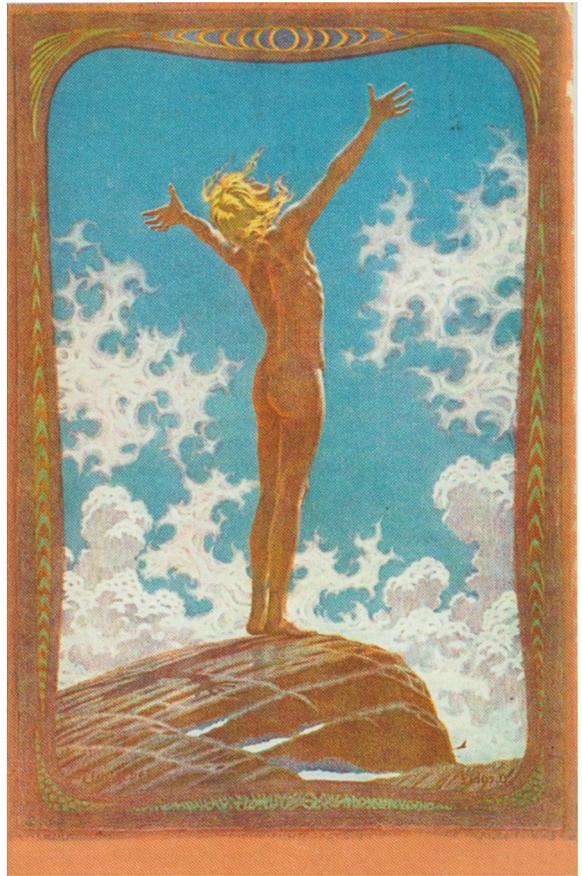
however, did not prevent the head of Hitler's chancellery, Martin Bormann, from purchasing a version of Fidus's popular *Prayer to the Light* [*Lichtgebet*] in 1941.⁷ The ideal physique propagated by the artist was, after all, definitely compatible with National Socialist ideology.

Not until the 1970s did researchers in the German-speaking world begin subjecting these connections to critical examination.⁸ At around the same time, proponents of West Coast hippie culture responded positively to the Fidus aesthetic, perhaps finding a foretaste here of heightened physical awareness and even psychedelic experience.⁹ The current interest in occultism among art historians, artists and the dark academia fostered by digital cultures have not always recognised the ethnicist origins of this iconography, and this has prompted a (further) revival. I shall focus here, by way of example, on the best-known motif, the *Prayer to the Light*. At times this work was so widespread that it hung on the walls of many German homes (fig. 2).¹⁰ The use of ritual and sacred symbols in this neo-pagan devotional image, which reflects ideas popular among the middle classes around 1900 – *Lebensreform*, pantheism, nature-based mysticism but also gnostic philosophies – has been studied exceedingly well by Jost Hermand, Janos Frecot, Johann Friedrich Geist, Diethart Kerbs, Claudia Biho, Marina Schuster and others. To this research I contribute an analysis of the aesthetic and somatic strategies associated with the art of Fidus, for these right-wing images were integrated into a performative practice.¹¹ And only by delving more deeply into the relevant occult and Theosophical theories can we grasp exactly how the images, their aesthetic and the associated politics actually functioned. What, then, is distinctive about the art of Fidus? In what traditions is it rooted, what biopolitics does it evoke?

Prayers to the light

The *Lebensreform* movement cannot be reduced to a single, coherent philosophy. It alludes, rather, to widely diverse and in some ways contradictory policies, attitudes

2 Fidus: *Prayer to the Light* [*Lichtgebet*], watercolour after the 8th version from 1913, also distributed as a postcard, K. Stehle's collection, Munich



and opinions.¹² What all these ideas had in common, however, was a concern for the body, and prayers to the light played an essential part in the nature-loving, mythical cult of the sun to which that concern gave rise. The ritual already featured prominently in Nietzsche's hymnic prose *Also sprach Zarathustra. Ein Buch für Alle und Keinen* (*Thus Spoke Zarathustra*, 1883–1885) as a ›bridge to the Superman‹; around 1900, moreover, the Romantic visions of Caspar David Friedrich and Philipp Otto Runge were undergoing a rediscovery.¹³ Fidus took this popular rite, rooted not least in iconographic depictions of the soul and the worshipful poses and attitudes of prayer cultivated by a number of religions, interpreted it in his own specific manner and transposed it into an iconic mystic motif.¹⁴ From 1890 – when the artist was still collaborating with Karl Wilhelm Diefenbach – until 1938 he produced various versions of a male sun worshipper.¹⁵ Although only one body is depicted, the image references a collective experience. As the writer Wilhelm Bölsche defined it 1904, drawing on Goethe, in an essay about how art had resurrected religious thinking:

«A character like Faust is packed with countless millions of human individuals, packed with entire ages and stages of humanity's most intimate history. [...] Given such a concentration, however, all the yearnings, all the ideals of those times and generations merge with such force into one flow that they suddenly emerge in a figure, as a tangible image, as a flaming

beacon onwards to the goal. [...] before us, shining from his eyes, we see the true uebermensch: the ideal into which our lives must be drawn.»¹⁶

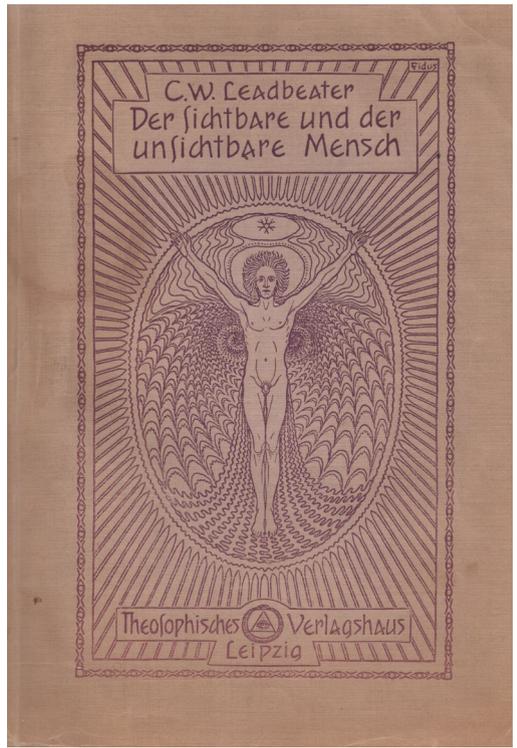
The motif first appears as an element of book design; as from 1906 Fidus substantially reworked it, publishing a special edition within a drawn frame; from 1910 onwards there were colour editions; the German title *Lichtgebet* was published in 1913. Subsequently the artist sold postcards and prints with further variations on the motif.¹⁷ The *Prayer to the Light* leapt to prominence in a version that was produced in 1913 both as a watercolour and as a colour lithograph, then sold as a postcard in October of that year at the First Free German Youth Festival on the Hoher Meissner massif in North Hesse.¹⁸

Although women also engaged in the ritual, for Fidus this somatically defined practice bears distinctly male hallmarks. The lean, sun-tanned figure with light blond hair and an androgynous air stands on a rocky crag with arms outstretched towards a sun set in a blue sky with scudding white clouds. As the literary scholar Gert Mattenklott so aptly observes, the «symbolic sloughing» induced by fasting and a vegetarian diet enabled the so-called *Neuer Mensch*, the New Person, to step out of the shroud of «yesterday's putrefying culture».¹⁹ The warming rays of the sun stimulate the life energy while at the same time, as Mattenklott points out, this body amid snow-capped rocks epitomises a «cosmic constellation that is increasingly ethereal, cool».²⁰ While the *Prayer to the Light* evokes a universal aspiration, at the same time it surely brought to mind the colonial rhetoric of Bernhard von Bülow, a minister of the German Empire, who demanded in a parliamentary debate on 6 December 1897 that the nation be given its place in the sun. And the tanning of a pale-skinned body does not, as the historian Maren Möhring has demonstrated, pose a challenge to racist argument. Reference to ancient bronze statues allowed tanned skins to be valued without undermining the construction of difference that othered Southern Europe and geographies outside Europe. From the 1920s onward in particular, a tanned and possibly oiled skin indicated that the body was tough and intact, that it had forged itself an armour and was fit enough to function as a war machine.²¹ As Fidus made explicitly clear, the *Prayer to the Light*, with its formulaic pathos and rarefied setting, was not a manual for exercise but a vision: it is no accident that the figure casts a shadow reminiscent of a crucifix. Franz Hartmann, the Theosophist and co-founder of the occult Ordo Templi Orientis, or O.T.O. for short, explained in his book *Die weisse und schwarze Magie oder Das Gesetz des Geistes in der Natur [Magic, White and Black: or, The Science of Finite and Infinite Life]*, published in 1901 with a cover designed by Fidus:

«The Man is himself the Cross. The Divine in him, the true portion of his essence, is part of the Eternal Infinite, while the lower earthly portion, his appearance, is part of the Changeable, Earthly and Limited. Humanity is «crucified» and bound in the animal human, Divinity in the earth-bound human; the Higher must conquer the Lower if out of the animal a human is to arise and out of the human a god. [...] This knowledge is the light and the light is the person himself.»²²

In this context, the body is not conceived solely as flesh and physical form. For Fidus, comments the literary scholar Jost Hermand, the «sun-soaked soul» is also a factor.²³ And this soul dimension is extremely complex. As the Theosophist Charles Webster Leadbeater explained in 1902 in *Man Visible and Invisible*, a person is a system where different states exist in parallel, «filling the same space and interpenetrating one another».²⁴ In short, a person functions on multiple levels and in multitudinous

3 Fidus: Book cover design for Charles Webster Leadbeater: *Der sichtbare und der unsichtbare Mensch* (*Man Visible and Invisible. Examples of Different Types of Men as Seen by Means of Trained Clairvoyance*, 1902), 2nd German edition, Leipzig 1908



conditions all at once. Rather than *one* soul, in this system we have seven different «planes of nature», six of them non-physical, and each of those planes divides into seven sub-planes.²⁵ Aided by the Theosophists Maurice Prozor and Gertrude Spink, Fidus designed the cover for the German edition of the book and must have been thoroughly familiar with this thinking, even if his visualisation simplifies Leadbeater's theory (fig. 3). Against a pale brown ground we see an idealised, naked, male form with arms raised as if praying to the light. The image is drawn in purple lines, a hue which, according to the «Key to the Meanings of Colours» in the book, stands for «High Spirituality» or «Devotion mixed with affection».²⁶ Force fields radiate out from the centre; their lines encompass a head like a halo and resemble an all-knowing eye. Whirls beginning at the arms and armpits form wings; other flows emanate from the hips towards the ground. The arrangement bleeds off the cover with intimations of longer rays, promising readers illumination. Not unlike the monism advocated by biologist and artist Ernst Haeckel as well as others, there is an almost religious message here of cosmic harmony and the union and ensoulment of all living creatures. Leadbeater borrows theories from the natural sciences of his day, such as descriptions of electrons, electricity, X-rays and radioactivity, linking these concepts to a psychic dimension. Seen from this angle, Fidus's *Prayer to the Light* does not so much depict a real body as illustrate the process whereby humans can advance from one plane of nature to the next until, upon reaching the pinnacle, they are transformed into a spectacle of light and encompass the whole world with their aura.²⁷ Occultism is not escapism from the world; the politics are clear: although historical complexities are ignored, Fidus and his companions did provide

their audience with images and practices to help them to achieve betterment in the spirit of evolutionary theory, eugenic discourse and the *völkisch* superman ideal.

Runic gymnastics

A key role is played here, besides, by specifically Aryan mythology in which the sun, conceived as male, is defined as the «primeval force» and «origin of all things».²⁸ In the *Prayer to the Light*, the cruciform shadow with its Christian connotations is transposed by the posture of the body into a different system, for the figure itself is a symbol in the runic alphabet invented around 1900 by *völkisch* groups.²⁹ The *algiz*, adopted by the Nazis as the life rune and as their *Lebensborn* logo, is still used by neo-Nazi organisations today as an emblem. In 1907 it was associated with male and female principles by Guido von List, co-founder of the Ariosophical movement, and taken to symbolise the «procreation of the human race».³⁰ The *Prayer to the Light* by Fidus marks a shift from the syncretic worship of light in the early *Lebensreform* movement to a *völkisch* interpretation.³¹ According to List, who cites the Theosophical root race theory of Helena Petrovna Blavatsky, occultist and co-founder of the Theosophical Society, runes were the «root words of the primal Germanic language», «the seed words and *ur*-words of the Aryan *ur*-language [...]»; they were more than mere «phonetic signs».³² As «healing signs» and auto-suggestive «magical characters» they aided mental concentration and intense meditation.³³ Reference to transcultural movements between Asia and Europe, such as those that practise yoga, must remain brief at this point. The crux: the interaction, the contemplation, veneration and internalisation of images, is not confined to a spiritual level in this right-wing esoterism. The philosopher and writer on the occult Carl du Prel, for example, speculates about «human breeding» techniques in his annex to Maximilian Ferdinand Sebaldt's book on Aryan «Sexual Religion» of 1897 – and again, it was Fidus who designed the cover and ornamentation.³⁴ Du Prel asserts with reference to ancient Greek author Heliodoros that pregnant women can influence the shape of an unborn child by looking at «fine pictures» in order to promote «racial refinement».³⁵ As the art historian Marina Schuster has established, in 1924 the Germanische Glaubens-Gemeinschaft made use of the *Prayer to the Light*, embellished with oak leaves, as an altarpiece during an act of consecration.³⁶ Fidus's embodiment of a linguistic sign with organic semantics is more than a cultic or devotional image in the general sense; it specifically served the «breeding» of a purportedly Aryan or Germanic race. The purpose was to create an ideal body that was proclaimed as the norm, or in other words to play an active role as a creator of one's own self.³⁷

And the powerful clairvoyant Fidus who, in his own words, has «ether eyes (radiographic vibrations)», has the ability to recognise connections between bodies, invisible worlds and politics.³⁸ Leadbeater took clairvoyance (both seeing and hearing beyond the normal range) literally: chosen initiates could perceive and manipulate the fine rays that emanated from objects and bodies.³⁹ Like a temporary telephone, telegraph, telescope or other communication tubes, clairvoyants could build links that enabled them to travel not only around geographies, but also around time.⁴⁰ Ariosophists such as Guido von List made similar claims when they reported that they could communicate telepathically with their Germanic ancestors through a kind of inverted reincarnation.⁴¹ It is striking that the imagery used by Fidus did not fundamentally change between the period around 1900 and the 1940s. In fact, the variation and repetition of motifs is a hallmark of his work. That is in itself a deliberate

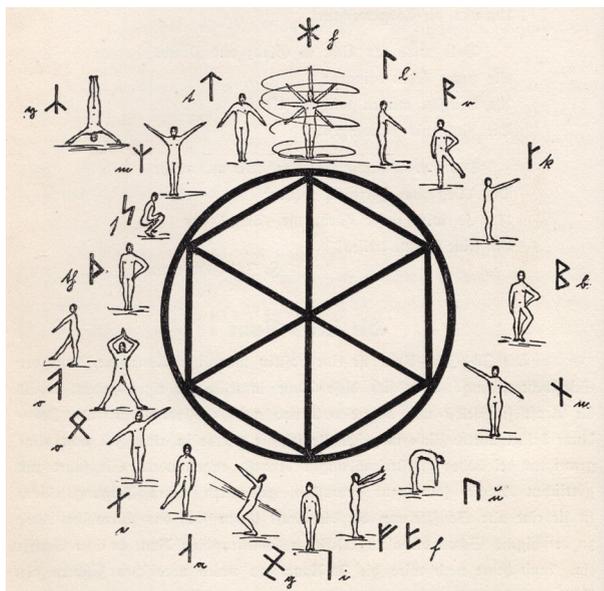
statement. According to Theosophical thinking at the time, all these images from past and future are saved on nature's hard disk, and the clairvoyant time traveller Fidus describes his temple pictures in 1919 as «mood pictures, as if from primal ages, experienced in former lives».⁴² Leadbeater believed that a clairvoyant could serve as a «channel for higher forces» when consulting the Akashic records, an astral Book of Life that contained all cosmic memory; Ludwig Fahrenkrog similarly believed in a *Weltenseele*, a «soul of the world».⁴³ Fidus apparently claimed nothing less for himself and his art than the ability to visualise and represent these eternal images, described by Blavatsky as «daguerreotype impressions» and by Leadbeater with an analogy to the «*cinematographe* or living photographs».⁴⁴ The alternative to the social «isolation» lamented by so many at the time was not community, not a collective or a cooperative, but «generality, spiritual universality», or as Bruno Wille summed it up in 1925, «the Platonic idea».⁴⁵ And this spiritual sharing called for clearly formulated, racist biopolitics. As Fidus put it that same year:

«The German nation is and must become a cultural unity and the Christian Germanic spirit must lead it; but its blood has long since fused into a «German race» and increasingly so.

But how this race develops, physically, hence «racially», depends less on its origins than on the spirit that prevails victoriously within it. The spirit moulds the race, not the origins!»⁴⁶

In revising the *völkisch* position here to argue that a correct mindset facilitates the optimisation of a given biological body, Fidus sets himself apart from other groups in his milieu. Nevertheless, every right-leaning splinter group was welcome at his Fidus-Haus.⁴⁷ In the 1920s and 1930s, other *völkisch* groups even performed «runic gymnastics», an occult practice for which Fidus had laid the ground. The exercises, which combined posture with breathing and chanting sounds, were often performed naked and outdoors. The aim was to replicate each rune with the body while murmuring or singing its name. The routines were sometimes accompanied by auto-suggestive texts, typically with eugenic content (fig. 4). Here again, the purpose was to nurture Aryan characteristics by an act of will and thereby «up-race» the nation.⁴⁸

4 «The hexagon that contains all the runes of the Futhork, which can also be sensed physically.»
Siegfried Adolf Kummer: *Heilige Runenmacht. Wiedergeburt des Armanentums durch Runenübungen und Tänze*, Uranus-Verlag Max Duphorn, Hamburg 1932, S. 30



From today's perspective, however, it is neither ether nor evolution, neither nature nor Platonism, that fuses past and present in somatic language – but racism, as Maren Möhring has accurately formulated with reference to philosopher Étienne Balibar.⁴⁹ A critical art history has the duty to include such examples of *völkisch* modernism featuring cult images and theatrical or performative acts: the conservative narratives that currently allude positively to idealism, Platonism, transcendence and nature worship cannot stand if they fail to incorporate this thread. The history must be named and described in order to permit a conscious response.

Notes

- 1 On the dating see Fidus: *Fidusbilder. Bebildertes Verzeichnis*, Woltersdorf bei Erkner-Berlin: Fidus-Verlag GmbH 1932, p. 15, Archiv der Deutschen Jugendbewegung (AdJb), Burg Ludwigstein bei Witzzenhausen, N 38 Nr. 318 as well as the albums N 38 Nr. 553 (1890–1940) and N 38 Nr. 489 (1890–1938). I am grateful to Susanne Rappe-Weber for her assistance with the research.
- 2 See Marina Schuster: *Fidus. Maler keuscher Nuditäten*, in: Michael Grisko (ed.): *Freikörperkultur und Lebenswelt. Studien zur Vor- und Frühgeschichte der Freikörperkultur in Deutschland*, Kassel 1999, pp. 207–237, here pp. 207, 220.
- 3 Jost Hermand: *Der Schein des schönen Lebens. Studien zur Jahrhundertwende*, Frankfurt am Main 1972, p. 103; Janos Frecot / Johann Friedrich Geist / Diethart Kerbs: *Fidus 1868–1948. Zur ästhetischen Praxis bürgerlicher Fluchtbewegungen* (1972), reprinted Hamburg 1997, p. 167.
- 4 Hermand 1972 (as note 3), pp. 97–98.
- 5 See Marina Schuster: *Bildende Künstler als Religionsstifter. Das Beispiel der Maler Ludwig Fahrenkrog und Hugo Höppener genannt Fidus*, in: Richard Faber / Volkhard Krech (ed.): *Kunst und Religion: Studien zur Kultursoziologie und Kulturgeschichte*, Würzburg 1999, pp. 275–287, here p. 79; Uwe Puschner: *Die völkische Bewegung im wilhelminischen Kaiserreich. Sprache – Rasse – Religion*, Darmstadt 2001, p. 240–248.
- 6 Marina Schuster: *Lichtgebet. Die Ikone der Lebensreform- und Jugendbewegung*, in: Gerhard Paul (ed.): *Das Jahrhundert der Bilder*, Göttingen 2009, pp. 140–147, here p. 146.
- 7 Frecot / Geist / Kerbs (1972) 1997 (as note 3), p. 301; Marina Schuster: *Fidus – ein Gesinnungskünstler der völkischen Kulturbewegung*, in: Uwe Puschner / Walter Schmitz / Justus H. Ulbricht (ed.): *Handbuch zur «Völkischen Bewegung» 1871–1918*, München et al. 1996, pp. 634–650, here pp. 643–644.
- 8 See Hermand 1972 (as note 3); Frecot / Geist / Kerbs (1972) 1997 (as note 3); Claudia Bibo: *Naturalismus als Weltanschauung? Biologistische, theosophische und deutsch-völkische Bildlichkeit in der von Fidus illustrierten Lyrik (1893–1902)*, Frankfurt am Main et al. 1995; among the many central publications by Marina Schuster, the following serve here as examples: Schuster 1996 (as note 7); Schuster 1999a (as note 2); Schuster 1999b (as note 5); Schuster 2009 (as note 6); *Künstler und Propheten. Eine geheime Geschichte der Moderne 1872–1972*, ed. by Max Hollein / Pamela Kort, exhib. cat., Frankfurt am Main, Schirn Kunsthalle, Cologne 2015, pp. 56–89.
- 9 See Schuster 2009 (as note 6), p. 147.
- 10 Frecot / Geist / Kerbs (1972) 1997 (as note 3), p. 299.
- 11 For essential reading see Erika Fischer-Lichte: *Ästhetik des Performativen* (2001), 12th edition, Frankfurt am Main 2021.
- 12 See Kai Buchholz et al. (ed.): *Die Lebensreform. Entwürfe zur Neugestaltung von Leben und Kunst um 1900*, 2 vols., Darmstadt 2001.
- 13 See on Nietzsche Barbara Mahlmann-Bauer: *Also sprach Zarathustra. Vademecum für Aussteiger und Lebensreformer*, in: Idem / Paul Michael Lützeler (ed.): *Aussteigen um 1900. Imaginationen in der Literatur der Moderne*, Göttingen 2021, pp. 51–140, here p. 88; Friedrich Nietzsche: *Thus Spoke Zarathustra. A Book for Everyone and No One (1883–1885)*, London 2003, p. 4. See also Schuster 1999b (as note 5), pp. 275–287, here p. 275.
- 14 See Heinz Demisch: *Erhobene Hände. Geschichte einer Gebärde in der bildenden Kunst*, Stuttgart 1984, p. 181.
- 15 See Fidus: *Mein Lichtgebet und seine Geschichte* (1925), in: *Jungnationale Stimmen* 6, 1931, no. 1, pp. 1–6, AdJb, N 135 Nr. 6; Frecot / Geist / Kerbs (1972) 1997 (as note 3), pp. 288–301; Schuster 2009 (as note 6), pp. 144–145.
- 16 Wilhelm Bölsche: *Die Auferstehung des Religiösen durch die Kunst*, in: *Der Kunstwart* 17.2, 1904, no. 21, pp. 364–368; no. 22, pp. 425–434, here p. 431.
- 17 Schuster 2009 (as note 6), p. 145; Frecot / Geist / Kerbs (1972) 1997 (as note 3), pp. 288–301.
- 18 Frecot / Geist / Kerbs (1972) 1997 (as note 3), p. 165, 296.
- 19 Gert Mattenklott: *Körperkult, Ökosophie und Religion. Ein kritisches Vorwort zur Neuauflage*, in: *Ibid.*, pp. VII–XXVIII, here p. XIII.
- 20 *Ibid.*, pp. XV, XVIII.

- 21** See Maren Möhring: *Marmorleiber. Körperbildung in der deutschen Nacktkultur (1890–1930)*, Cologne / Weimar / Wien 2004, pp. 254–260, 344–347.
- 22** Franz Hartmann: *Die weisse und schwarze Magie oder Das Gesetz des Geistes in der Natur*, Leipzig 1901, p. 193; translated as *Magic, White and Black. The Science of Finite and Infinite Life*, New York 1911, but not with the same content. See in general Bibo 1995 (as note 8).
- 23** Hermand 1972 (as note 3), p. 116.
- 24** Charles W. Leadbeater: *Man Visible and Invisible. Examples of Different Types of Men as Seen by Means of Trained Clairvoyance*, London 1902, p. 2; German as *Der sichtbare und der unsichtbare Mensch. Darstellung verschiedener Menschentypen, wie der geschulte Hellseher sie wahrnimmt*, 2. deutsche Aufl., Leipzig 1908.
- 25** *Ibid.*, pp. 7–9.
- 26** *Ibid.*, plate on page i.
- 27** Leadbeater 1902 (as note 24), p. 138.
- 28** Möhring 2004 (as note 21), pp. 237–238.
- 29** Frecot / Geist / Kerbs (1972) 1997 (as note 3), p. 15. The runes were requisitioned and redefined around 1900 by *völkisch* authors such as Guido von List: *Das Geheimnis der Runen, Groß-Lichterfelde* 1907.
- 30** Von List 1907 (as note 29), pp. 17–19; see in general Nicholas Goodrick-Clarke: *The Occult Roots of Nazism. The Ariosophists of Austria and Germany, 1890–1935*, Wellingborough 1985.
- 31** Hermand 1972 (as note 3), p. 101.
- 32** Von List 1907 (as note 29), p. 2.
- 33** *Ibid.*, p. 24. Siehe zu Blavatsky Ulrich Nanko: *Das Spektrum völkisch-religiöser Organisationen von der Jahrhundertwende bis ins «Dritte Reich»*, in: Stefanie von Schnurbein / Justus H. Ulbricht (ed.): *Völkische Religion und Krisen der Moderne. Entwürfe «arteigener» Glaubenssysteme seit der Jahrhundertwende*, Würzburg 2001, pp. 208–226, here p. 213.
- 34** Carl du Prel: *Menschenzüchtung*, in: Maximilian Ferdinand Sebaldt: *D.I.S.: Die Arische «Sexual-Religion» als Volks-Veredelung in Zeugen, Leben und Sterben*, Leipzig 1897, pp. 502–512, here pp. 503–506, 509.
- 35** *Ibid.*; see also Viktoria Schmidt-Linsenhoff: *Das koloniale Unbewusste in der Kunstgeschichte*, in: Irene Below / Beatrice von Bismarck: *Globalisierung / Hierarchisierung. Kulturelle Dominanzen in Kunst und Kunstgeschichte*, Marburg 2005, pp. 19–38, here p. 27, in reference to Heliodor's novel *Aithiopiká* (mid- or late 2nd century AD), where the African queen Persina contemplates a painting of Andromeda during intercourse with her Black husband and gives birth to a *white* daughter.
- 36** See Schuster 1999b (as note 5), pp. 277–278.
- 37** Möhring 2004 (as note 21), pp. 238–243.
- 38** Fidus (1914) as quoted in Auktion 116: *Fidus. Auf der Suche nach dem Licht*, Bassenge, Berlin 2020, p. 74.
- 39** Charles W. Leadbeater: *Clairvoyance*, 2nd edition, London 1903, p. 60; German edition as *Hellsehen*, Leipzig 1909, p. 54.
- 40** *Ibid.* (English version), pp. 66–67.
- 41** See Bernd Wedemeyer: *Runengymnastik. Zur Religiosität völkischer Körperkultur*, in: von Schnurbein / Ulbricht 2001 (as note 33), pp. 367–385, here pp. 375, 380.
- 42** Fidus: (1919), as quoted in Arno Rentsch: *Fiduswerk. Eine Einführung in das Leben und Wirken des Meisters Fidus*, Dresden 1925, p. 139.
- 43** Leadbeater 1902 (as note 24), p. 119; Ludwig Fahrenkrog: *Geschichte meines Glaubens, Halle an der Saale* 1906, p. 120.
- 44** Helena Petrovna Blavatsky: *Isis Unveiled [...]*, 2 vols., here vol. 1: *Science, United States* 1878, p. 185; Leadbeater 1903 (English version as note 39), p. 16.
- 45** Bruno Wille: *Der Künstler-Philosoph der Zukunftsehe*, in: *Die Schönheit* 21, 1925, no. 3: *Zukunftsehe*, pp. 99–106, here p. 105.
- 46** Fidus: *Zum Rassen- und Klassenstreit* (1925), in: *Junggermanische Stimmen* 6, 1931, no. 1, n. p., *Adjb*, N 135 Nr. 6; see also idem: *Tempelkunst* (1912), in: Rentsch 1925 (as note 42), pp. 134–139, here p. 135.
- 47** Jakob Feldner: *Fidus, Fidushaus und St. Georgsbund*, in: *Die Freude. Monatshefte für deutsche Innerlichkeit* 1, 1924, no. 16: *Fidus. Dem Menschen und Künstler*, pp. 439–448, here pp. 446–447, *Adjb* N 151 Nr. 388. An influential theoretician of «intellectual» racism was Friedrich Lienhard, see Puschner 2001 (as note 5), pp. 71 ff.
- 48** Wedemeyer 2001 (as note 41), pp. 369, 378–379.
- 49** Möhring 2004 (as note 21), p. 243; Étienne Balibar: *Rassismus und Nationalismus*, in: *Idem / Immanuel Wallerstein: Rasse Klasse Nation. Ambivalente Identitäten*, Hamburg / Berlin 1990, pp. 49–84, here p. 58.

Translation: Kate Vanovitch

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- 1 Postcard owned by the author, VG Bild-Kunst Bonn 2023
- 2 VG Bild-Kunst Bonn 2023
- 3 Charles Webster Leadbeater: *Der sichtbare und der unsichtbare Mensch*, 2nd German edition, Leipzig 1908
- 4 Siegfried Adolf Kummer: *Heilige Runenmacht. Wiedergeburt des Armanentums durch Runenübungen und Tänze*, Hamburg 1932, p. 30