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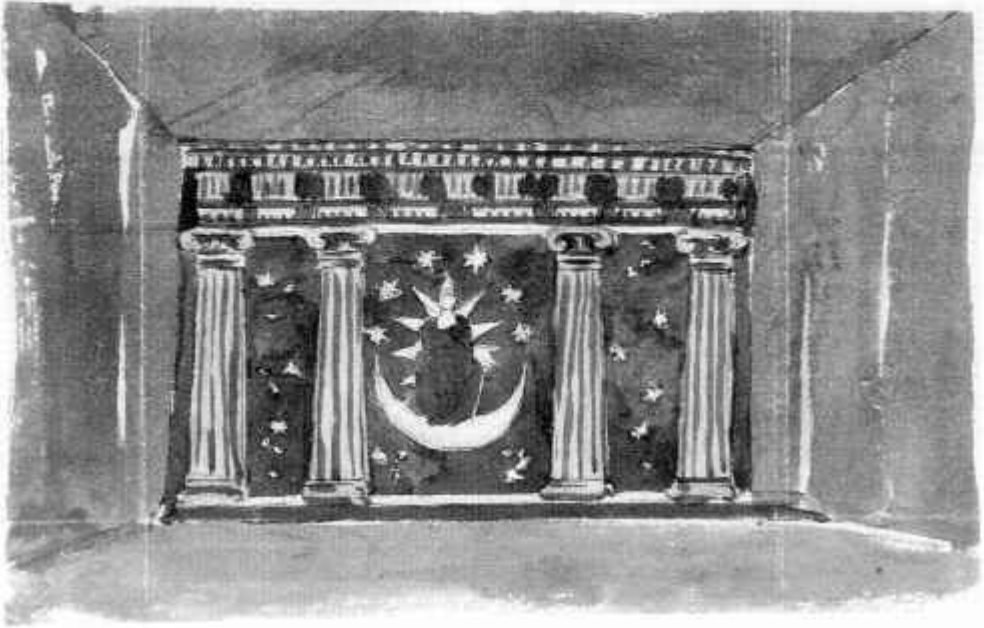


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FIG. 1. Stage design for *The Magic Flute: The Queen of the Night*, by Johann Wolfgang von Goethe, 1794. Photograph by Sigrid Geske. As director of the court theater in Weimar from 1791 to 1817, Goethe had *The Magic Flute* performed eighty-nine times. This is a stage design by Goethe for the January 16, 1794, premiere in Weimar.

Mann und Weib, and Baby Makes Two

Gender and Family in Johann Wolfgang von Goethe's Sequel to *The Magic Flute*

Robert B. McFarland

Latter-day Saints never grow tired of pointing out that Restoration scriptures and revelations could have not come forth in any other place than America. But the Restoration also came forth in a specific time, a period of important historical movements and cultural developments. It behooves us to deepen our understanding of the profound importance to the Restoration of the historical moment—not only through our study of political, religious, and biographical documents of the time but also through a careful consideration of the literature and art that interact with some of the most profound cultural and historical discourses of the late eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries.

The Magic Flute: A Symbol of Middle-Class German Culture

A powerful discourse of this period involves the struggle for the definition of roles assigned to the man and the woman in the family. Many studies have shown the importance of seeing the family and gender roles in their historical context, a process that reveals the dynamic nature of the family; families are constantly in negotiation, in flux, and highly susceptible to historical and cultural influences.¹ One of the most interesting texts from this period in terms of the formation of gender and family is Wolfgang Amadeus Mozart's operatic rendering of Emanuel Schikaneder's libretto *Die Zauberflöte*. This opera was an amazing cultural phenomenon in the last decade of the eighteenth century and the first decades of the nineteenth century.

Indeed, *The Magic Flute* was so influential that it spawned a series of sequels and related works that participate in the discourses of family and

gender formation at this time. For example, in his famous lyric story *Hermann und Dorothea*, Johann Wolfgang von Goethe makes references to *The Magic Flute* and shows that familiarity with the opera was a necessary part of German upper-middle-class education near the turn of the nineteenth century. In Goethe's story, Hermann, a naïve lower-middle-class boy, escapes the turmoil of the nearby French Revolution and seeks refuge with a prosperous German family, who listen to songs from *The Magic Flute* in their home. Unfamiliar with the music, Hermann asks about it, and the family responds by laughing at his lower-class piety.² Goethe thus creates a connection between *The Magic Flute* and the emerging German middle-class combination of family, aesthetics, and education, marking the opera as an integral part of middle-class symbolic capital. *The Magic Flute* acts as a kind of *tableau vivant* of the values of the rising German middle class, who increasingly tried—just as the main characters of Goethe's *Hermann und Dorothea*—to restore their system of familial, gender, and moral ideals after the intrusion of conflicting ideals from the French Revolution. Several of Goethe's other works deal with the possibilities of the cultural capital of the middle class and its intermingling with the French Revolution.³

Goethe's Sequel to *The Magic Flute* and Changing Gender Roles

Goethe was fascinated with the Mozart/Schikaneder *Magic Flute*, and during his leadership over the Weimar Court Theater between 1791 and 1817, he had it performed eighty-nine times. Figure one shows Goethe's artistic rendering of his plan for the staging of *The Magic Flute*. In 1795 he began work on a sequel. He was repeatedly disappointed in the composers with whom he collaborated, and he left the project unfinished. August Wilhelm Iffland wanted to perform the work in Berlin in 1798, which led Goethe to begin the project anew. Schiller suggested that Goethe give up the project unless a suitable composer could be found. Schikaneder's own sequel premiered in that same year, an event that might have dissuaded Goethe from completing his project. By the time that the Schikaneder sequel was performed in Berlin in 1803, Goethe had given up the idea altogether. Later attempts by Iffland to interest Goethe in revisiting the sequel remained fruitless.⁴ The unfinished work exists only in fragments.

At the center of Goethe's sequel are Tamino and Pamina, now parents; the story revolves around their separation from and reunion with their son, a character referred to in the text as "Genius." Schikaneder's libretto for *The Magic Flute* is highly charged with questions and conflicts of gender that culminate in the wedding of Tamino and Pamina. Goethe's *Der Zauberflöte*

zweiter Teil (literally, “The Second Part of *The Magic Flute*,” hereafter referred to as Goethe’s *Magic Flute* sequel) continues the social and aesthetic project of *The Magic Flute* by reifying the polarization of gender roles through the use of the Genius figure.

Scholarship surrounding Goethe’s *Magic Flute* sequel has for the most part ignored the question of gender. While most studies of the work allude to its basic gender and family structures, none has connected the gender constellations of the work into scholarship that explains gender roles and the changing family structure in the late eighteenth century. In her groundbreaking and often-cited work on the changing ways the family has been historically defined, Karin Hausen explains the importance of understanding what the term “family” meant in the late Enlightenment period.⁵ Whereas the family of pre-eighteenth-century German-speaking countries consisted of a man, a woman, children, other extended family members, servants, and others, the new middle-class notion of family included only a man, a woman, and their children. Hausen attributes this shift to the increasing interest in the individual brought about by humanism, the Reformation, and the Enlightenment. The concept of marriage underwent a change from an economic, religious, and sexual union to an institution that centered around two people bound together by love.

One of the strongest forces at work in the late-Enlightenment-era family was the polarization of gender characteristics of men and women. In the late eighteenth century, there was a search for a legitimization of the house-and-family-bound role of the woman and the increasing absence of the father. Hausen claims that the German Classical movement provided ideological patterns for the emerging middle-class family and the corresponding polarization of gender roles. These roles were represented as manifestations of a divine order that allowed the “natural” gifts and limitations of the respective genders to have their proper place. Men were assigned characteristics such as strength, bravery, activity, intellect, reason, knowledge, and dignity, while women were assigned characteristics such as weakness, malleability, dependence, feeling, sensitivity, religiousness, and beauty. This strict separation of gender characteristics was central to many aesthetic studies of the late eighteenth century.⁶

The polarization of gender characteristics is not limited to sociological and aesthetic studies. Contemporary literature and art were also active participants in the gender discourse. Christina Zech thoroughly explores the gender questions and conflicts in Schikaneder’s libretto for *The Magic Flute*. She sees the work as a fight between the genders, a fight that the women lose bitterly. She points out that not only the Queen of the Night loses her position—Pamina and Papagena also lose their power to act and

decide for themselves and become willing subhuman complements to their husbands. Zech carefully shows how the text and music of *The Magic Flute* support a gradual polarization of Tamino and Pamina into Enlightenment ideals of manhood and womanhood in keeping with Kant's claim that feminine virtue or vice is completely different from that of men, for while "she is sensitive, he is sensible."⁷

In his *Magic Flute* sequel, Goethe builds upon the gender stratifications of *The Magic Flute*, creating in the characters of Tamino and Pamina the ideal of perfected manhood and womanhood, enhanced by the appearance of an androgynous character that symbolizes a perfect mixture of the two. It is this character—the son of Tamino and Pamina, called "Genius"—who stands at the center of this work. Goethe's story line picks up right where *The Magic Flute* left off. At the end of Schikaneder's libretto, the Queen of the Night and her female cohorts, accompanied by the traitor Monostatos, attack the temple of Sarastro in an attempt to kill him and his priestly order to gain their power. The plan fails, however, when the rising sun, representing Enlightenment values as embodied by Sarastro and his order, casts the Queen of the Night and her co-conspirators into the bowels of the earth.

Goethe opens his sequel in the dark subterranean grottos where the Queen has been banished. Monostatos reports to the Queen of the Night that he has partially succeeded in helping her with her plans of revenge. He and his cohorts return to the palace of Tamino and Pamina just as the pair, now king and queen, are about to deliver their first child. After the child is born, Monostatos opens a golden casket given to him by the Queen of the Night. Darkness engulfs the scene, and he puts the child into the casket before the parents can see him. The casket is then sealed by the magic of the Queen of the Night and cannot be opened. When Monostatos tries to escape with the casket, however, Sarastro's blessing causes it to grow heavier until it cannot be removed.

Right from the beginning, the baby trapped in the coffin serves as a focal point for the gender issues of the opera. The child is the object of the continuing struggle between the two most polarized gender-marked characters in *The Magic Flute* pantheon: Sarastro, male prophet and leader of a male-dominated priesthood that lives under a credo of masculine control, and the Queen of the Night, the amazonian sorceress leader of a female-dominated realm that is characterized by emotion and lack of restraint. The child is trapped in a golden coffin and trapped in the struggle of two genders competing for power.

The competition is so fierce, in fact, that in the first opera, the Queen of the Night swears that she intends to destroy the male oligarchy even at the cost of her own motherhood:

If—at thy hands—Saraſtro doth not feel the pains of death
 So wilt thou be my daughter nevermore!
 Eternally forsaken! Eternally forbidden!
 Eternally destroyed be nature's bond between us both
 If, by thy hand, Saraſtro doth not perish!
 Hear, gods of vengeance, hear a mother's oath!⁸ (2.8)

With this oath, Schikaneder's Queen of the Night paradoxically swears upon her own motherhood that she will renounce all of the natural ties to her daughter that make her a mother in the first place. Goethe's Queen of the Night continues this tradition, turning her lust for power and revenge against her daughter and renouncing her role as mother. Monostatos points out that even in the holy realm of the male priests the curse and power of the Queen will destroy all of the bonds among mother, father, and child:

Should ever the parents
 Each other behold
 Terror and madness
 Shall conquer their souls!
 Should ever the parents
 See their own child
 It then shall be taken
 By fate's fury wild.⁹

Directly after these lines, Goethe gives stage directions that indicate that the whole stage should turn into chaos. This direct attack on the family is thus marked as the disintegration into chaos, which is the vengeful plan of the Queen, who herself has already destroyed nature's bonds by deviating from the role of mother and submissive woman to gain power and gratification for herself. The stage directions go on to say that out of this chaos materialize the royal chambers of the family, a realm of strict order visually contrasted to the previous chaos that is its enemy. It is here that the conflict in Goethe's *Magic Flute* sequel is located—between the chaos of deviating from and the order of adhering to ideal family and gender constructions. At the center of this struggle is the child himself, hidden from view by the golden casket. This lost boy is an intriguing figure who seems to dominate the entire work, although he himself appears only for a moment at the end of Goethe's piece.

As the central figure of a struggle between forces that are marked by maleness and femaleness, this child character is the focal point of gender interactions. One such interaction can be observed as Goethe describes the daily care of the locked-up boy: the coffin appears on stage being carried by

a “chorus of women” who form a solemn procession. One of the women explains their task:

Thus wander on, ne'er standing still,
Follow the men, their wisdom and will,
Trust in them, in obedience strive,
As long as we move, the child stays alive.¹⁰

These women are performing a motherly task: they are shown carrying the child, keeping it alive, singing to him, and telling him about his future. The act of carrying the child, however, is commanded by “wise men,” whom the women promise to trust and blindly follow. As long as these women submit to the will of the men, the child will live. The men have prescribed constant movement to keep the child alive, a motif of active manhood that is familiar in many Goethe texts, from the poem “Schwager Chronos” to *Faust*. Even the child’s father, Tamino, is described as constantly moving as an expression of his grief, as compared to Pamina’s crying: “There he paces, there she cries.”¹¹ As a male child, Tamino and Pamina’s lost boy is already subject to male patterning, as men impress upon him their ideals through the women that obey them. The men are clearly in charge of the child’s welfare at this point. Tamino commands the women:

Strive forward, ever on and on!
Redeemed and saved we soon shall be
By Sarastro’s godly song.
Hush! And listen for tiny cries.
Hear and report each of his sighs
To his poor father, in his grief.¹²

The women, whether the chorus women or Pamina, “carry” the child in terms of gestation or nurturing, but the males still are seen as the powerful ones: only Sarastro can free the child, only Tamino can make the commands that will keep him alive. It is only after the males have done the saving that the mother’s nurturing will be needed; when the child is “freed” and “saved,” he will “lay like an angel, bedded on mother’s breast.”¹³ Even sealed off in a golden casket, the child is subject to the gender constructions of an idealized family—a caring, nurturing mother and an active, commanding father.

The royal couple are not the only parents in the work that follow the pattern of patriarchal dominance. Papageno and Papagena, the beloved zoomorphic figures from Schikaneder’s libretto, appear again in Goethe’s sequel, this time as would-be parents. Even though their lives are easy and full of bodily enjoyments, they suffer because they remain childless. After

much complaint, the pair comes into possession of three golden eggs. Like Tamino and Pamina's child, the children of Papageno and Papagena remain hidden from them, encased in gold. All of the children in Goethe's work are kept from their parents by womb-like containers made of gold, the symbol of exchange and commerce. It would seem that Goethe has created a way for males to gestate—a gestation of action, of command, of power, of wealth. Sarastro eventually "delivers" Papageno's children, helping them to hatch with his mystical chants about the powers of nature. Sarastro also takes the time to teach the feathered parents about child-rearing. As with Tamino, Papageno is urged to action as a father: he is to take his progeny to the royal court to help cheer Tamino and Pamina and to play the magic flute.

While the male gender roles in Goethe's sequel are marked by dominance and action, the women's roles are developed as ideal representations of love and nurturing. In an uncompleted scene that Goethe describes, Pamina receives some sort of sign and takes the little gold coffin, which is hereafter referred to only as a box, to the altar of the sun. As she sets the box down, the altar sinks into the ground and takes the child with it. The priests report that the child is deep beneath the earth, between fire and water, between death and life, pleading for help. The entire kingdom is engulfed in darkness, and the priests plead with Tamino and Pamina to go down and save their son. This act of saving is based upon the power of Pamina's love:

My most treasured wife, my dearest!
Rushing torrents, fires and fears
Shrink before a mother's love!¹⁴

It is here that Goethe's *Magic Flute* sequel goes beyond the polarization of gender roles in *The Magic Flute*. In the Goethe text, Pamina makes it through the fiery and watery hindrances by virtue of her motherly love for her son, not by her romantic love for Tamino. Goethe's *Magic Flute* sequel expands the ideology of gender roles by portraying an entire family that reflects not only the polarization but also the transmission of gender characteristics.

Once freed from the golden coffin, the child proves to be a combination of both of the parents. Upon emerging, the child utters phrases that reflect the internalized virtues of each of his parents:

Here am I, beloved ones,
And am I not fair?
.....

Though armies should threaten
 And dragons offend,
 The boy will still vanquish
 And rise in the end!¹⁵

The newly liberated child immediately points out his own beauty and his love for his parents, as well as his bravery and need for action, reflecting the respective virtues of Pamina and Tamino as set forth in *The Magic Flute*. The character of Genius is prefigured in the three young boys of the first opera. Like the Genius figure, these boys fly: on their *Flugwerk*,¹⁶ or flying apparatus, they literally float between the gendered spaces and figures of the opera. Although the boys are given their task by the women in the feminine realm of the Queen of the Night, they are also marked with definite masculine characteristics. The boys are an integral part of Tamino's induction into the male order of Sarastro; they provide him with guidance during his initiation. The three little boys, mixtures of masculinity and femininity, help Tamino to behave like a man and Pamina to behave in the proper role as a woman. These androgynous characters bring Tamino and Pamina together through their ability to float between the strictly segregated male and female space of the opera to dispense their masculine or feminine wisdom as needed.

Goethe's *Magic Flute* sequel replaces the figures of the three little boys with the single-character of Tamino and Pamina's child. The Genius figure and the three boys are all repeatedly referred to as *Knaben*. The word *Knabe* is a gender classification that plays an important role in late-eighteenth-century gender discourse; it locates the character in a specific gender mode that stands outside the polarization of male and female ideals. The *Knabe* was the specific contemporary term for an immature male figure that was at the center of discussions of aesthetics. Catriona MacLeod points out that the forming of the icon of the *Knabe* was greatly influenced by the Greek ideal of beauty: the manliness of a beautiful boy who still possesses the forms of enduring feminine youth. This stage of maturation is neither masculine nor feminine but a "middle form."¹⁷ The idealized androgynes were modeled after adolescent boys—in the liminal and sexually indeterminate stages of puberty, described in imagery of water and waves, floating, hovering, and suspension. This polymorphous ideal of androgyny became reinscribed in the late eighteenth century as a desexualized aesthetic representation of a balanced heterosexual relationship.¹⁸ In works such as Wilhelm von Humboldt's *Über die männliche und weibliche Form* (Concerning Masculine and Feminine Form), the abstract ideal of androgyny was seen as the perfectly balanced union of art and freedom, form and

matter, the perfect masculine and the perfect feminine. This “third sex” was used to strengthen the polarization and idealization of manhood and womanhood.¹⁹

What is, then, the gender of Goethe’s Genius figure? He is androgynous, a perfect combination of his idealized mother and father. As such, Genius stands as a kind of gender-marker, an artificial catalyst for the idealized family. By existing as a “third gender,” the androgynous Genius can equally and perfectly take upon himself a balance of the ideal manhood of his father and the ideal womanhood of his mother. Pamina and Tamino, already very much polarized and idealized in terms of their gender at the end of *The Magic Flute*, are taken to a new level of idealization when placed in a family configuration with their androgynous *puer aeternus* offspring. The figure of Genius internalizes and solidifies the gender ideology of his two parents in a way that mere opera listeners such as Hermann’s middle-class neighbors could not begin to emulate.

The Genius character is, on one hand, a representation of aesthetic theories that Goethe was developing in his literary works. Besides this rather ethereal aesthetic purpose, Genius also serves as a locus for a very concrete manifestation of the late-Enlightenment gender discourse as he unifies a man and a woman into an ideal family that will serve as a model for families like the one Goethe portrays in *Hermann und Dorothea*. The character serves as a combination of the male and the female and thus as a locus of all of the polarized ideal virtues that are prescribed for each of the sexes. The figure of the flying boy—an allegorical representation of the power of artistic genius itself—is a product of a union of two idealized figures who serve as the ultimate expression of their respective gender roles. When neither sex deviates from the prescribed realms of womanly grace and male dignity, the result of such a union is shown to be something greater than the sum of its parts.

Considering the gender dynamics of *The Magic Flute* and Goethe’s *Magic Flute* sequel, what elements of these discourses could serve to enlighten the culture that surrounded the restoration of the Church in early nineteenth-century America? On one hand, works such as *The Magic Flute* furthered a middle-class tendency for polarization of genders into idealized traits and acceptance of male authority, and the effects of these gender ideologies still inform the ways that men and women participate in many aspects of Western culture. On the other hand, the opera and its sequel helped to prepare two continents for the radical notions of ideal societies led by prophets, of eternal marriage, and of sacred temple rites. Even before the Restoration, people across Europe and America were humming such tunes as “In These Holy Halls” and “Man and Woman—Combine

to Reach Divinity." While *The Magic Flute* did not directly pave the way for the Book of Mormon and early Latter-day Saint revelations historically, it was a very popular and influential part of the philosophy and new ideas that surrounded the Restoration.

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1. See Karin Hausen, "Family and Role-Division: The Polarisation of Sexual Stereotypes in the Nineteenth Century: An Aspect of the Dissociation of Work and Family Life," in *The German Family*, ed. Richard J. Evans and W. R. Lee (Totowa, N.J.: Barnes and Noble Books, 1981), 51–83. The Hausen citations in this paper are from the German version of Hausen's article, cited below.

2. Johann Wolfgang von Goethe, *Hermann und Dorothea* (Stuttgart: Philipp Reclam, 1987), 18.

3. Goethe, *Hermann und Dorothea*, 18.

4. Johann Wolfgang von Goethe, *Der Zauberflöte zweiter Teil, Sämtliche Werke, Briefe, Tagebücher und Gespräche. 6: Dramen 1791–1832* (Frankfurt a.M.: Deutscher Klassiker Verlag, 1993), 1043–48.

5. Karin Hausen, "Die Polarisierung der 'Geschlechtscharaktere': Eine Spiegelung der Dissoziation von Erwerbs- und Familienleben," in *Sozialgeschichte der Familie in der Neuzeit Europas: neue Forschungen*, ed. Werner Conze (Stuttgart: Ernst Klett Verlag, 1976), 363–93.

6. Gail K. Hart discusses an example of this in her investigation of the centrality of the notion of gender polarization in Schiller's seminal aesthetic work *Über Anmut und Würde* (On Grace and Dignity). She points out that the division of qualities along gender lines, especially the femininity of grace and the masculinity of dignity, is fundamental to Schiller's project. Gail K. Hart, "Anmut's Gender: The Marionettentheater and Kleist's Revision of *Anmut und Würde*," *Women in German Yearbook* 10 (1994): 85–87.

7. Christina Zech, "Ein Mann muß eure Herzen leiten: Zum Frauenbild in Mozart's *Zauberflöte* auf musikalischer und literarischer Ebene," *Archiv für Musikwissenschaft* vol. 4, no. 52 (1995): 304–15. Zech's original words: "Sie ist empfindlich, er empfindsam."

8. Wolfgang Amadeus Mozart, *Die Zauberflöte, Eine große Oper in zwei Aufzügen*, Libretto von Emanuel Schikaneder, Herausgegeben von Hans-Albrecht Koch (Stuttgart: Philipp Reclam, 1991), 48.

9. Goethe, *Der Zauberflöte zweiter Teil*, 226–27.

10. Goethe, *Der Zauberflöte zweiter Teil*, 227: "So wandelt fort und stehet niemals stille, / Das ist der weisen Männer Wille, / Vertraut auf sie, gehorchet blind, so lang ihr wandelt lebt das Kind."

11. Goethe, *Der Zauberflöte zweiter Teil*, 228: "Dort wandelt er, dort weinet sie."

12. Goethe, *Der Zauberflöte zweiter Teil*, 229: "Bewegt euch immer fort und fort! / Bald rettet uns mit heil'ger Weihe / Sarastro's lösend Götterwort. / Lauschet auf die kleinste Regung, / Meldet jegliche Bewegung / Dem besorgten Vater ja."

13. Goethe, *Der Zauberflöte zweiter Teil*, 229: "Und befreiet und gerettet, / An der Mutter Brust gebettet, / Lieg' er bald ein Engel da."
14. Goethe, *Der Zauberflöte zweiter Teil*, 247–48: "O mein Gatte, mein Geliebter / meine Gattin, meine teure / Sich das Wasser, sich das Feuer / Macht der Mutterliebe Platz."
15. Goethe, *Der Zauberflöte zweiter Teil*, 248–49.
16. Mozart, *Die Zauberflöte*, 54.
17. Catriona MacLeod, "The 'Third Sex' in an Age of Difference: Androgyny and Homosexuality in Winckelmann, Friedrich Schlegel, and Kleist," in *Outing Goethe and His Age*, ed. Alice A. Kuzinar (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 1996), 199–200. MacLeod uses the term "Mittlere Gestalt."
18. MacLeod, "The 'Third Sex,'" 199–200.
19. MacLeod, "The 'Third Sex,'" 194–97.