

**Eduard Fuchs and the Dialectical Image of Caricature:
Marxist Cultural Theory in an Age of Fake News**

by

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A thesis submitted in partial fulfilment of the requirements for the degree of

Doctor of Philosophy

in

History of Art, Design, and Visual Culture

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Abstract

The Marxist cultural historian Eduard Fuchs (1870–1940) made major contributions to our understanding of caricature which are of continuing relevance today. Although he has been criticised for his inconsistent methodology, the question of whether Fuchs treats caricature in a dialectical fashion remains insufficiently answered. To address this question I examine Fuchs' earliest scholarly works published between 1898 and 1904, in which he outlines the manner in which caricature is used as a weapon in class struggle. This period of his career marks a turn from his previous journalistic activity.

I also compare Fuchs' methodology with that of other early historians of caricature such as Thomas Wright, Jules Champfleury, and Arsène Alexandre. They had already set a standard for survey histories of caricature which avoided overt political analysis in favour of hagiographic or nostalgic frames of reference, staying safely distant from recent caricatures that might still risk offending some readers or drawing the attention of state censors. Fuchs was unique not only in his Marxist approach to caricature, but also in carrying his analysis through to his own present.

My analysis relies heavily on the concept of the dialectical image as theorized by Walter Benjamin and Susan Buck-Morss. Using this concept I plot the oppositional tendencies of caricature, and extrapolate the characteristics of other forms of mass persuasion such as state propaganda. With the dialectical image the inherent and irresolvable tensions of caricature are clearly articulated and the power dynamics come into sharper focus. Contemporary forms of political satire are also susceptible to this type of analysis, which permits us to untangle current debates about free speech, fake news, and the fundamental need for a free press that can continue to employ humour and ridicule as critical tools.

Acknowledgements

I owe sincere thanks to my supervisor, Dr. Dennis Sweeney, for his encouragement and support over nearly a decade. I would also like to thank the members of my multi-disciplinary committee including Dr. Richard Westerman and Dr. Lisa Claypool, as well as my master's thesis supervisor Dr. Steven Harris. I am also thankful to the Social Sciences and Humanities Research Council of Canada (SSHRC) for their support of my research. I must also mention Dr. Andreas Huyssen, whose assistance in publishing my first peer-reviewed article was invaluable. Finally, my thanks go to Dr. Eduard Fuchs himself, whose life and work have been an inspiration to me.

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Foreword

Eduard Fuchs (1870–1940) is one of those fleeting historical figures of whom it may be said that while he was alive he had a significant impact on the political and cultural fabric of his time, but after his death languished into obscurity. He is the quintessential “man in the shadows”¹ whose written work and political activity deserve to be rendered visible once more, so that he may find his proper place in history. If he is remembered today, it is mostly as a Marxist cultural historian: a writer, art collector, and political activist of the social democratic movement and, later, the communist movement. A deeply outspoken man with strong convictions, Fuchs eventually accumulated enough wealth from his publishing activity to create a private museum of caricature and erotica, and to assist in the formation of the Institute for Social Research. Fuchs had become something of a public figure by the 1920s and was frequently in the German press, thanks to his legal battles with the authorities regarding the sensitive nature of his research.² These conflicts, while doubtlessly irksome, were occasionally successful, giving him an opportunity to foreground the scholarly nature of his interests. But his well-known political views and association with the communist movement also earned him the ire of German fascists, who effectively eradicated his work once the National Socialists came to power in 1933. As a

¹ “Der Mann im Schatten”—the man in the shadows—was a phrase coined by Lenin in 1918 to describe Fuchs, in reference to his capacity to work behind the scenes to further the cause of a worldwide Marxist revolution.

² Although I am focusing on Fuchs’ work on caricature, he was also interested in other forms of marginalized and often anonymous art, such as Chinese ceramics, and, more importantly, erotica. It is through the latter that Fuchs courted so much public controversy.

result, Fuchs was forced to spend his last years in exile in Paris, where he died in reduced circumstances.

My first encounter with the work of Eduard Fuchs came about as a happy accident, after I had recently graduated from the MFA program at the University of British Columbia (UBC) in 2001. Taking advantage of my alumni status, I could indulge my desire to read all the material on art theory and philosophy that I had not had time for as a student, with essentially unlimited borrowings from the library. I was about to make my way to the checkout with a pile of books when a glinting title just at eye level caught my attention: *Die Juden in der Karikatur* (The Jews in Caricature). At that time I knew very little German, but I certainly knew enough to understand that, so I set my pile of books aside and pulled the volume down for a closer look. In addition to the foreign language, the densely-packed Fraktur font was virtually impenetrable to me, but I immediately saw that there were hundreds of historical reproductions, dating from the Middle Ages right up until the publication date of 1921. This quick glance clearly showed that it was a historical survey of representations of anti-Semitism from all across Europe. Whether Fuchs himself was anti-Semitic (which I doubted) or an opponent of anti-Semitism I could not yet ascertain, but I had seen enough to pique my interest, and added it to my pile. The illustrations alone would be worth the added weight. Later, when I had time to peruse the book more thoroughly, I realized that Fuchs could not be anti-Semitic. No anti-Semite would characterize the physiognomic exaggeration of Jews *as* caricature; rather, such representations would be presented as congruent to reality, as the naked truth, supported by bombastic slogans and exclamations that were clearly missing from Fuchs' lengthy text.

Nevertheless, my initial efforts to find out more about Fuchs were not fruitful, as I could find little mention of him in any other records. There were only two more of his own titles at the

university library: one in special collections, the other on microfiche. Far more tantalizing was a list of eight previously published volumes on the colophon page of *Die Juden in der Karikatur*, which gave me a better starting point. It also showed me the breadth of Fuchs' interests, which revolved around caricature of all kinds: *Die Frau in der Karikatur* (Women in Caricature), *Der Weltkrieg in der Karikatur* (The World War in Caricature), and *Die Karikatur der europäischen Völker* (The Caricature of European Peoples). It was not until two more years had passed that I discovered Walter Benjamin's biographical essay on Fuchs, which had somehow escaped my attention until that moment. Benjamin's tale confirmed many of my assumptions about Fuchs, filling in the broad strokes of his life and career. It was only then that I understood the great potential for research into Fuchs, and that it would be well suited for a doctoral program in art history.

In the years that followed I managed to build a complete collection of Fuchs' original volumes, mostly through online platforms such as *eBay*, *Antiqbook*, and more recently, *booklooker*. Knowing how scarce these volumes were, and how invaluable they would be for me at the point when I would return to university, I thought it best to have my own copies. I spent many a happy hour e-mailing antiquarian booksellers in Germany, Austria, Switzerland, and France, asking for close-up pictures of bindings and sample shipping costs—just as Fuchs himself had once perused the antiquarians of his own time in search of rare caricatures. During this period (2002–2011) I also managed to acquire most of the available secondary literature on Fuchs, which even now amounts to only four books (all in German), and about twenty essays and book chapters (in German, French, and English). If I had doubted it before, I could see now that there was indeed a lacuna in the literature on Fuchs, most notably where English-language readers were concerned. One of my motivations in undertaking this research has therefore been

to raise the status of Eduard Fuchs among the English-speaking academic community, to publish his work in English for the first time, and to bring Fuchs into the discourse on caricature and political satire in general.

In 2011, armed with two dozen antique books, several night courses in German, and two volumes of Fuchs laboriously transcribed and partly translated, I was finally ready to go back to class. My 2014 Master's thesis, portions of which appear in Chapter 4, centred on an analysis of Fuchs' essay on the revolutionary caricature of 1848. It was here that Fuchs first articulated his insights into the dialectical nature of caricature, which became the seed for my work on the dialectical image. Later, I developed this into an analysis of John Heartfield for a paper published in *New German Critique* in 2017, which appears in a reworked form in Chapter 5. In addition, I presented a paper on physiognomy and pathognomy at the Early Modern Studies Conference at the University of Reading in 2015, which has informed portions of Chapter 3.

Finally, a brief note on translation. None of Fuchs' writing has ever been translated into English, except for his introduction to Franz Mehring's biography of Karl Marx.³ As a result, all of the quotations from Fuchs in the following pages are my own translations. I will give the German titles of Fuchs' books in order to avoid confusion, offering the English translation of the titles only where they are first mentioned. Other works in French and German are also frequently quoted with my own translations, and will be noted on each occasion.

³ Fuchs first wrote this introduction in 1919, and updated it for subsequent editions in 1920, 1923, and 1933. The English edition, translated by Edward Fitzgerald, was published in London by George Allen & Unwin in 1936, with subsequent posthumous printings in 1948 and 1951. Ulrich Weitz, *Salonkultur und Proletariat: Eduard Fuchs – Sammler, Sittengeschichtler, Sozialist* (Stuttgart: Stöffler & Schütz Verlag, 1991), 494.

Introduction

Who Was Eduard Fuchs?

This is the question asked by Peter Gorsen in the title of his 2006 essay,⁴ which he characterizes as a continuation of the more “significant” essay published by Walter Benjamin in 1937.⁵ A self-described autodidact and cultural historian, Fuchs lived in what can best be called interesting times, witnessing the transition of German society from the Wilhelmine era to the Weimar Republic,⁶ followed by the rise of fascism. If he is an obscure figure today, even in Germany, it is not entirely due to the suppression of his work by the Nazis, but also because of his own perceived shortcomings as a scholar, which Benjamin articulated in his biographical paper for the journal of the Frankfurt-based Institute for Social Research. His obscurity is compounded by the unfortunate coincidence of Fuchs’ exile beginning just as his career was drawing to a close, thanks in large part to his failing eyesight. Where Benjamin drew the broad

⁴ Peter Gorsen, “Wer war Eduard Fuchs?” in *Zeitschrift für Sexualwissenschaft* 19/3 (September 2006): 215–233.

⁵ Walter Benjamin, “Eduard Fuchs, Collector and Historian” in *The Essential Frankfurt School Reader*, edited by Andrew Arato and Eike Gebhardt (New York: Continuum, 1988), 225–253.

⁶ The Wilhelmine period is generally regarded as starting in 1890 with the resignation of Otto von Bismarck and ending with Wilhelm II’s abdication in 1918. It is largely characterized by the poor statesmanship of the Emperor, in contrast to Bismarck whose diplomacy and gentlemanly conduct were highly regarded across Europe. The subsequent Weimar era takes its name from the city where the constituent assembly was held, establishing a modern German republic until the Nazi victory in 1933.

strokes of Fuchs' life and career, and analysed Fuchs' work on political caricature from the perspective of historical materialism, Gorsen adds his own analysis of Fuchs' parallel work on erotica, the second field of study to which he had devoted decades of collecting, writing, and publishing. These two fields, caricature and erotica, were linked by their marginality, their anonymity, and their ephemerality, providing rich fodder for the "man in the shadows," as Lenin once described Fuchs.

Why a man in the shadows? It would seem that Fuchs had two identities, one lived in public as a journalist, editor, researcher, and writer, on topics that were frequently controversial and subject to state censorship; the other lived in secrecy as a negotiator, organizer, and financier in support of various Marxist institutions. Born in Göppingen in 1870, Fuchs was already politically active at the age of 18, when he was fined for an altercation in which he took down a political opponent's placards. In Munich he joined the satirical journal *Süddeutscher Postillon* (South-German Postilion) first as an accountant, but quickly working his way to an editorial position. In 1901, after a ten-month prison sentence for *lèse-majesté*, he published the first of his popular survey histories, the two-volume *Die Karikatur der europäischen Völker* (Caricature of European peoples). He then moved to Berlin where he joined the staff of *Vorwärts* (Forwards), and within a few years struck up a long and productive relationship with the publisher Albert Langen. Together they published weighty and expensive tomes on various themes such as women in caricature, Jews in caricature, the World War in caricature, as well as a three-volume illustrated history of morals. Fuchs occasionally collaborated with other authors by providing access to his private collection of caricatures, personally illustrating a text on Richard Wagner in caricature as well as a three-volume series on *Die Weiberherrschaft in der Geschichte der Menschheit* (The rule of women in the history of mankind). In the 1920s Fuchs remodelled his

home into a museum of caricature, albeit one that was not open to the general public. He also published works on the history of erotica, which resulted in several public prosecutions for disseminating obscene material. He was on friendly terms with Theodor Adorno, Max Horkheimer, Franz Mehring, Frank Wedekind, and many other prominent figures during the Weimar period.

Clearly Fuchs was a man who took some risks in opposing an authoritarian, bourgeois establishment, especially with his highly publicized court cases. But he was also very active behind the scenes, performing work that he kept carefully hidden from the public eye. During the course of his career, he occasionally used his law degree to represent various estates as executor, thereby supporting the founding of the Institute for Social Research as well as making monthly contributions to political parties. As a member of the Spartacus Group, he even negotiated prisoner exchange with Lenin after the war, and thereafter maintained connections with the Third International, or Comintern. In 1933, after the victory of the National Socialists, he was forced to flee to Paris. His house and art collections were confiscated and eventually auctioned, despite repeated attempts to negotiate their return. He died in 1940.

At the height of his career, Fuchs had achieved not only a degree of fame and notoriety, but also of wealth. His books were marketed to the collector of rare editions rather than to the broad masses of proletarian workers, and however we may now judge their scholarly merit, they were mostly prized for their extensive illustrations. Fuchs dared to argue that it was both worthwhile and respectable to study the marginalized subject matter of caricature and erotica, and to frame caricature as a weapon in revolutionary class struggle. Unlike other historians of caricature, Fuchs saw a continuity between the caricature of the past and that of the present, and argued for its continuing use in shaping public opinion. The threat that he presented to his

opponents was not so much that he was a known communist sympathizer, but that he was an articulate, passionate scholar who legitimized the ridicule and mockery of the powerful, and who came to symbolize academic freedom and resistance to censorship.

However, this fame did not last. When the Nazis came to power Fuchs was already at the end of his career, and it is doubtful that he could have continued his research much longer. With his sudden departure from Germany, the establishment of state control over the media, the burning of his books where they could be found, and the confiscation of his collections, Fuchs' legacy had already begun to deteriorate. In Paris Fuchs met Walter Benjamin, also in exile, who was tasked with writing an essay on Fuchs' life and career. After delaying for several years, Benjamin finally delivered the essay for publication in 1937, but its reach at the time was limited, and it would be decades before it was translated into English. With the onset of the Cold War, Fuchs' Marxist approach to caricature was no longer considered tenable by an academic and artistic community whose "capital" had shifted from Paris to New York.⁷ As a result, other methodologies began to take hold. All these factors contributed to the diminution of Fuchs' work, and a mere handful of scholars have shown interest in him ever since.

The question still remains: what exactly was Fuchs' contribution to the discourse on caricature? Was he popular merely because he printed scandalous images under the guise of scholarship? Did he ask penetrating questions of caricature that others had failed to raise, or did he pander to the vagaries of a booming book trade? What did he offer that was different from

⁷ If Paris was "The Capital of the Nineteenth Century," as Benjamin had described it in his *Passagenwerk* (Arcades project), then New York was undoubtedly the capital of the twentieth, a position cemented by the post-war triumph of abstract expressionist painting and Clement Greenberg's formulation of modernism.

other historians of caricature? What was so unique in his approach that no one either before or since his time has followed the same course of inquiry—in short, what were the driving questions behind Fuchs’ lifelong pursuit of caricature? And why, after more than a century, does caricature retain a degree of the distasteful in the academic world? To answer these questions requires taking a step back, in order to take into account not only the history of caricature but also the development of an art historical discourse on caricature.

The Question Concerning Caricature

As a field of artistic production, caricature is frequently situated at the margins of art historical discourse. And yet, both political and social caricature are forms of visual culture that have long and well-documented histories dating to antiquity. Caricaturists employ a theoretical knowledge of physiognomy (the study of the fixed features) as well as a practical knowledge of pathognomy (the study of facial expressions) to mock and ridicule their targets. The larger field of satire, of which caricature is a part, first found expression in classical theatre and poetry, and frequently took its cues from the moralizing fables of the Aesopic tradition with its animal characters. Later in the scriptoriums of the Middle Ages, monks often illustrated their hand-copied books with fantastical drawings that lampooned otherwise unassailable figures—people of power, wealth, and authority. The introduction of new printing technologies to Europe in the 15th century finally provided an avenue for the mass reproduction of caricature, through which it could reach a wider audience. In the early modern period a lively market in caricature broadsheets sprung up across Europe, targeting social types based on class, gender, and race. By the eighteenth century, specific political figures could also be caricatured, since their visages

could now be recognized from their frequent appearance in illustrated newspapers. As censorship increased during the nineteenth century, caricature migrated from independently produced journals to the pages of daily or weekly newspapers, further widening its reach and increasing the immediacy of its responses—if also softening its blows in order to mitigate the risk of prosecution. The practitioners of caricature were no longer independent tradesmen eking out a living in constant fear of crushing fines, imprisonment, or, worst of all, confiscation of printing equipment; they were now staff artists with far more secure positions, but also stricter guidelines. Political satire continually renewed itself throughout the twentieth century, finding its way onto television via vaudeville and variety programs, while editorial cartoons have maintained a steady audience in daily newspapers around the world. Today the digital realm provides a new platform for political satirists to practice their peculiar form of wit, even as the once obvious boundaries between revolutionary satire and reactionary propaganda have begun to erode.

If we were to view caricature broadly—as Fuchs did—as an attempt to persuade the public, rather than simply as a form of lowbrow entertainment, we might ask by what means it hopes to achieve political or social change. We might also ask how we can measure its effectiveness, both historically and in the present. Certainly there have been times when a caricature has had real consequences, both desirable and undesirable. In 1876, Thomas Nast's caricature of Boss Tweed in *Harper's Weekly* (fig. 1) caused the criminal gangster to be recognized and arrested when he fled to Spain. On the other hand, caricatures of Captain Alfred Dreyfus between 1894 and 1906, such as “The Traitor” in Victor Lenepveu's *Museum of Horrors* series (fig. 2), poured fuel on the fire of French anti-Semitism at the expense of a man who was ultimately found innocent of selling military secrets. These two examples shed light on a further question through which we can better articulate the dynamics of power in public

discourse. That is, how might we distinguish political caricature from other forms of persuasion such as journalism, advertising, and especially propaganda? Finally, we can ask why caricature remains a marginalized area of study, and how this might be corrected.

These are the essential questions that inspired Eduard Fuchs, whose many articles and books on political and social caricature elevated the status of mass-reproduced art, and asked serious questions about the role of caricature in public discourse. Naturally Fuchs was not the first to write about caricature from a historical standpoint, as it had already become a popular subject in Britain, France, and Germany. Large, expensive volumes, often lavishly illustrated with hundreds of reproductions, were published by popular writers such as Thomas Wright, Arsène Alexandre, and Gustave Kahn, targeting scholars, libraries, and collectors; while others such as Jules Champfleury and John Grand-Carteret published smaller, more affordable volumes for the growing middle class.

Fuchs stands out from all of these as the only writer of a decidedly political bent, one whose purpose was neither to indulge in nostalgia, nor to assume a falsely objective stance, but rather to educate and to agitate for political change. For Fuchs, a caricature was not simply a historical document, or a “loaded portrait;” it was a weapon wielded in the struggle for class equality. A staunch Marxist and a committed communist, Fuchs’ scholarly research is inseparable from his political activity, as each informs the other. His attempt to understand caricature dialectically through Marxist cultural theory is the only significant example of its kind in the literature. While it remains important to understand Fuchs’ life and career in the context of his cultural and intellectual milieu, it was his approach to caricature as a Marxist that was unique and which still points the way to a better understanding of how caricature functions in society today.

The historiography of caricature has, ironically, been dominated since its inception by intentionally apolitical methodologies. Nineteenth-century commentators often portrayed caricature in a purely nostalgic light, deliberately avoiding any recent examples that might still risk offending their readers, instead restricting their content to a safely distant past in order to maintain appeal across the political spectrum. This also meant that they would not invite unwanted attention from the authorities, thus avoiding censorship or fines that might be incurred by criticizing a person or institution that still wielded power. For example, Thomas Wright's biography of James Gillray is little more than a paean to the artist's perceived moral uprightness and the wit of his drawings, designed to deflect attention from his well-documented alcoholism and extramarital relationship. Despite these controversies, Gillray was a safe subject for Wright given that he had died over fifty years earlier, and his caricatures of Napoleon or George III could be analysed without fear of political reprisals. Wright famously did for Gillray what Fuchs later did for Honoré Daumier, that is, he repopularized the life's work of a caricaturist who had fallen into obscurity after his death. However, even though Wright could only rely on second-hand accounts of those who had known Gillray, he went to great pains to protect Gillray's reputation: "Gillray was unfortunately an example of the imprudence that so frequently accompanies genius and great talent—his habits were in the highest degree intemperate. For many years he resided in the houses of his publisher Mrs. Humphrey ... by whom he was most liberally supplied with every indulgence. ... It has been whispered that there was a *liaison* between Gillray and Mrs. Humphrey not essential to their relation as designer and publisher; it is

due to the memory of the lady to contradict that slander; such a *liaison* did not exist.”⁸ Wright’s assertion can neither be proven nor disproven, though it seems unlikely that such strict moral standards would be observed by an “intemperate” man living with an unmarried woman. But after briefly dispensing with these questions, the bulk of Wright’s book consists of an annotated bibliography of Gillray’s known works from 1779 to 1818, with descriptions that offer some political and social context to otherwise long-forgotten issues.

Antipathy towards political interpretation of caricature remained widespread for some time. In 1901 Fuchs was criticised by another historian of caricature, Georg Hermann, for making political arguments about caricature. Following the publication of one of Fuchs’ earliest works, Hermann complains that “Eduard Fuchs tries in his *1848 in der Caricatur* to depict the role that it has played as a weapon in political turmoil; but it is difficult and impossible to prove with the examples he has chosen.”⁹ It is possible that Hermann simply viewed Fuchs as an unwelcome competitor, or perhaps he was disturbed by Fuchs’ affirmation of the political in a field where it had always been carefully avoided. By contrast (and with a greater degree of hindsight) Walter Benjamin observed in 1937 that “Fuchs was one of the first to develop the

⁸ Thomas Wright, *Historical and Descriptive Account of the Caricatures of James Gillray* (London: Henry G. Bohn, 1851), xi.

⁹ “Eduard Fuchs versucht in seinem ‘1848 in der Karikatur’ die Rolle, welche diese in den politischen Wirren als Kampfmittel gespielt hat, zu schildern: doch ist es schwer und unmöglich, zahlengemäß die Richtigkeit der Ausführungen zu belegen.” Georg Hermann, *Die deutsche Karikatur im XIX Jahrhundert* (Bielefeld und Leipzig: Velhagen & Klasing, 1901), 6–7.

specific character of mass art and thus to germinate the impulses which he had received from historical materialism.”¹⁰

In the years following Fuchs’ death, Austrian researchers Ernst Kris and E.H. Gombrich wrote extensively about caricature and editorial cartoons from the perspective of Freudian psychoanalysis, asking questions about the psychology of perception and the mechanisms of pictorial representation.¹¹ By the time of these publications they had emigrated to the United States and Britain respectively, so their works immediately entered and remained in the lexicon of English-language academe, while their earlier works in French and German had a lesser impact. Once again, by supressing questions of ideology and political agency in favour of questions about meaning and interpretation, they sidestepped the political minefield of the McCarthyist era while also cementing caricature as a subject properly belonging to the art historian.

Subsequent historians of caricature have tended to employ sociological approaches, in keeping with the now widespread notion of a social history of art established by the groundbreaking work of Arnold Hauser.¹² As an outlier in the field of art history, Hauser’s social history of art was initially rejected by the establishment when it first appeared in the 1950s. His focus on ideology was countered by more conservative historians (including Gombrich), while his empiricism was later criticized by the New Left. Hauser attempted to reconcile the problem

¹⁰ Walter Benjamin, “Eduard Fuchs: Collector and Historian,” 252.

¹¹ Ernst Kris and E.H. Gombrich, *Caricature* (Adprint Ltd. & Henderson & Spalding, 1940).

¹² Arnold Hauser, *The Philosophy of Art History* (New York: Knopf, 1959).

of stylistic change, which had dominated art historical discourse for decades, with a dialectical understanding of the “individual and collective”—i.e., the relationship between art as an autonomous field of cultural production and art as a product of its social conditions and relations of production. Moving away from his earlier Marxism, Hauser ultimately identified three factors that influence the analysis of art: the stylistic, the psychological, and the sociological.

This sociological approach to art was further cemented by Janet Wolff in the 1980s.¹³ Wolff contextualized the production of art (that is, art as such rather than as individual artworks) as a dialectical relationship between human agency and determinism. She argued for the collective nature of creativity, in opposition to the modernist myth of the artist-as-genius who observes society from a privileged, objective position. Technology, class structure, markets, and ideology all play a role in how art is produced, as does reception and interpretation (in the form of art criticism). Most importantly, Wolff asserted that cultural production is not only embedded within ideology, but also that it can never exist outside of it.

As a result, Eduard Fuchs has remained the sole historian to grapple directly with the ideological nature of caricature (at least, until the 1990s). Because of his belief that caricature played an intrinsic role in class struggle, he viewed it as an essential weapon for swaying public opinion against authoritarian structures, and for holding public figures to account—especially in circumstances of pronounced class disparity or violent, repressive regimes. In essence, Fuchs viewed caricature through a revolutionary lens, to which end he frequently resorted to military metaphors: caricature was “the sharpest weapon” with a “devastating effect,” its “missiles” caused “wounds” in its targets. But it was also a means of education and enlightenment, through

¹³ Janet Wolff, *The Social Production of Art* (New York: New York University Press, 1981).

which “follies” and “prejudices” could be revealed by the light of criticism, in service to “the highest of virtues, which is the love of truth.”¹⁴ Retrieving Fuchs’ work from the margins of art historical discourse will likely prove fruitful in expanding Marxist cultural theory. Marxism treats all forms of mass communication as instruments or weapons of class struggle. The very notion of a mass public was itself a fairly new concept in Fuchs’ time, reflecting the high level of literacy in Germany, and the development of new media such as radio, film, and television. It is in the Wilhelmine period and during the years of the Weimar Republic that Marxist cultural theory begins to take shape, and to which Fuchs makes a major contribution.

Previous scholarship on Fuchs has focussed on bringing his biographical details to light, which have been diminished by the passage of time, Nazi persecution, and the lack of English translations. While it is generally acknowledged that Fuchs contributed to the history of caricature at a time when it was still a relatively new field of study, the extent of his contribution has not been adequately judged relative to the subsequent development of the discipline of art history. Once relegated to the status of “kitsch,” mass-reproduced art such as caricature is now referred to as “visual culture,” disregarding obsolete distinctions between “high” and “low” culture.¹⁵ More importantly, it now falls acceptably within the purview of the art historian, where

¹⁴ Eduard Fuchs, *1848 in der Caricatur* (München: Maximin Ernst Verlag, 1898), 10.

¹⁵ Art critic Clement Greenberg famously articulated these terms in his seminal 1939 article “Avant-Garde and Kitsch.” Framed in a teleological argument, he links the avant-garde to notions of the absolute, while characterizing kitsch as a rear-guard which, “using for raw material the debased and academicized simulacra of genuine culture, welcomes and cultivates [an] insensibility”—a markedly “proletarian” insensibility—towards “the values of genuine culture.” Clement Greenberg, “Avant-Garde and Kitsch” in *Art and Culture: critical essays* (Boston, MA: Beacon Press, 1961), 10.

it formerly belonged to the cultural historian or cultural anthropologist. Traditionally, art history's focus on canonical works of painting, sculpture, and architecture failed to take into account the simple fact that these media were closely tied to the highest tiers of society, and that they were intended to represent the highest achievements of each culture—but only within the framework of competition between nations and in support of the status quo of class relations. All the newspapers, labels, packaging, fashion, furniture design, graffiti, pamphlets, handbills, calling cards, pictures, posters, postcards, currency, book covers, silent film intertitles—what Greenberg referred to as “popular, commercial art and literature with their chromeotypes, magazine covers, illustrations, ads, slick and pulp fiction, comics, Tin Pan Alley music, tap dancing, Hollywood movies, etc.”¹⁶—all this forms a larger field of visual culture within which *all* members of society, regardless of class, exist together at all times. As a result, there is much that the art historian can learn by turning away from the standard expressions of power—institutional buildings, paintings of historical, allegorical, and mythical subjects, statues of leaders, conquerors, and philosophers—and focussing instead on the minutiae of everyday life.

Fuchs himself was keenly aware of the marginal status of caricature. In the early decades of the 20th century, art history was deeply embedded in the prevailing ideologies which gave shape to scientific and academic research, namely empiricism and positivism. In an effort to distinguish its unique area of concern from the overlapping fields of cultural history, anthropology, and ethnography, art history borrowed liberally from the practices of the natural historian, giving primacy to the identification, description, and categorization of objects of art. The fundamental questions of authenticity, originality, authorship, connoisseurship, style—all of

¹⁶ Ibid., 9.

these are essentially moot in regards to caricature. Caricature was always an art of the masses, ephemeral and consumable, designed for quick impact and a wide reach. They were often either anonymous or published under a *nom de plume*, and their style was often dictated by the technical restrictions of the print medium. These qualities link all of Fuchs' avenues of research: caricature, erotica, even Tang dynasty ceramics. As a self-described autodidact whose formal education resulted in a doctorate of law, Fuchs did not consider himself to be an art historian; nevertheless, his research interests bring him into close proximity with the discourse of art history as it stands today.

My own research is therefore characterized by two objectives. The first is to situate Fuchs in an art historical context, between his peers and predecessors in cultural history and his successors in art history and visual culture. His application of Marxist cultural theory will be compared with and evaluated against the methodologies typically employed by others: hagiography, historicism, psychoanalysis, semiotics, sociology. I will attempt to show how Marxist analysis bears more fruit as a methodological approach to caricature, while also outlining the effectiveness and shortcomings of other methodologies. Second, I will try to build on Fuchs' initial research in an attempt to overcome the flaws in his approach that some commentators have observed, and ultimately try to answer the underlying question of the persuasive capacity of caricature. To this end I will begin by demonstrating the inherent dialectic of caricature to which Fuchs alludes. I will then develop this into an analytical tool known as the dialectical image, a theoretical structure through which we can visualize and articulate the opposing tensions within cultural phenomena. Through this we can hope to better understand the political caricature of today, and to untangle the increasingly heated debates about so-called

“fake news,” free speech, and the fundamental need for a free press that can continue to employ humour and ridicule as critical tools.

I will begin by reviewing Fuchs’ life and career in greater depth than I have thus far, examining his network of political and cultural connections and tracing their influences. I will also briefly review Fuchs’ many publications, starting from his initial turn from satirical poetry to Marxist scholarship. This spans a period between 1894 and 1930, and constitutes two essay compilations, twenty-two books, and a half-dozen collaborations with other authors.

In chapter two I will examine Fuchs’ critical reception, both during his life and afterwards. His success is only possible to understand with knowledge of the unique conditions in Germany at the time: the extremely high level of literacy, the incredible volume and range of the publishing industry, and the productive relationship he established with Albert Langen, publisher of the long-running weekly journal *Simplicissimus*.¹⁷ Fuchs’ many brushes with the law will also be examined as a reactionary response to his work, for which he devised increasingly sophisticated and creative countermeasures. I will also review the extant scholarship on Fuchs from Benjamin’s 1937 essay to the present day. Benjamin had the dual advantage of being able to interview Fuchs on several occasions, as well as having lived in the same cultural milieu. Even now his essay is considered the natural starting point for all studies of Fuchs.

¹⁷ Famous as the founder of the satirical journal *Simplicissimus*, Langen also had a wide network of allies including Frank Wedekind, Thomas Theodor Heine, and Ludwig Thoma. Published weekly from 1896 to 1967 (with a hiatus between 1944 and 1954), the journal’s mascot was a bright red bulldog, symbolizing its revolutionary stance. Nevertheless, Richard Christ observes that *Simplicissimus* was essentially bourgeois-democratic in orientation, since it refused any analysis of political causes or remedies in favour of a focus on symptoms in isolation. Although this strategy expanded its readership, it also pulled the teeth of the bulldog. Richard Christ, *Simplicissimus 1896–1914* (Berlin: Rütten & Loening), 1978.

Interest in Fuchs picked up in the late 1970s when some of his more famous books were reprinted in an affordable paperback format. Two articles on Fuchs also appeared in 1976 in the journal *Ästhetik und Kommunikation*, followed by a new edition of Fuchs' *Aus dem Klassenkampf* in 1978 featuring an introduction by Klaus Völkerling. However, it was not until 1985 and 1991 respectively that Swiss historian Thomas Huonker and German scholar Ulrich Weitz each published dissertations on Fuchs, based on archival research and accompanied by fully annotated bibliographies. Then in 1995, the second issue of the French journal *Ridiculosa* was dedicated to Fuchs, featuring six new essays. Since 2002, new articles and books on Fuchs have continued to be published sporadically, averaging one every two years.

In chapter three I will address the historiography of caricature, placing Fuchs in a continuum of popular scholarship. Underpinning both the practice and analysis of caricature are the twin pseudosciences of physiognomy and pathognomy, which have pedigrees extending through the early modern period back to antiquity, so a brief review of these areas is necessary. An understanding of the state of art historical practice and how it differed from cultural history, anthropology, and ethnography is also called for. Fuchs appears at a turning point in the study of caricature, marking a shift from simple historicism and hagiography to psychoanalysis and sociology. After the war, scholarship on caricature took a new direction thanks to the psychoanalytic approach of Kris and, at least initially, by Gombrich. Gombrich later followed a general turn to sociology that was paralleled by M. Dorothy George, Edward Lucie-Smith, and others. Fuchs' work does not fit neatly into this historiography as the interregnum of the Second World War and onset of the Cold War caused a discontinuity in scholarship, after which the interrupted flow of ideas took a new path. In the process Fuchs' body of writing was largely forgotten and sidelined for decades.

The first significant contributions to the history of caricature were from Thomas Wright and Jules Champfleury, whose works were published in the late nineteenth century. Closer to Fuchs' own time we see works by Arsène Alexandre, Gustave Kahn, and John Grand-Carteret. Fuchs was unique among both his antecedents and successors in using Marxist aesthetics as a methodology. The methodologies of all these writers will be examined, using common examples as points of comparison. Central to this comparison is Fuchs' two-volume historical survey of European caricature, although later volumes on erotica, women, Jews, and other themes will also play a role. The survey is organized chronologically, with later sections subdivided by country of origin.

In chapter four I will examine the validity of Fuchs' early observations about the dialectical nature of caricature, as he expressed them in his 1898 essay, *1848 in der Caricatur* [sic]. In this short essay Fuchs alludes to the inherent tensions within caricature, specifically the opposing force of "emotional reconciliation" that threatens to undermine the educational and agitational goals of caricature. However, where Fuchs preferred to write obliquely and allow a multitude of illustrations to speak for themselves, I find it necessary to perform an art historical formal analysis—in essence a form of empirical observation in which the art object is brought under the scholarly gaze. In this way I hope to articulate clearly what Fuchs takes as self-evident, and in so doing lay the groundwork for a further development of a true dialectic of caricature.

Chapter five will introduce the Marxist concept of the dialectical image, examining how it is modified by Walter Benjamin and further developed by Susan Buck-Morss. The dialectical image captures the cultural object—in this case caricature—in a "state of tension," or as Benjamin might have expressed, at the centre of a constellation of ideas that can only be grasped in a flash of insight. In the Fuchs essay Benjamin warns of the inadequacy of Marxist aesthetic

theory and the danger of falling into an overly simplistic understanding of base and superstructure—namely a teleological understanding mired in historicism. Such an overdetermined causality is often referred to as “vulgar Marxism.” However, Benjamin is himself considered an unorthodox Marxist. He turned away from mainstream Frankfurt School thought by reading Marx through the surrealist movement, with its dream imagery and the psychoanalytic concept of the unconscious, in an attempt to excise vulgar Marxism. In her analysis of Benjamin’s *Passagenwerk* (Arcades Project), Susan Buck-Morss provides a fundamental grounding for my own usage of the dialectical image. For example, while the principle of montage is essential for Benjamin, Fuchs tends to organize his writing along the lines of regional or thematic taxonomies that are not in themselves dialectical at all. Instead, it can be argued—as I will try to demonstrate—that each individual caricature embodies a dialectic, not only by encapsulating humour and prejudice simultaneously, but also by inciting political action at the same time that the potential for such action is undermined by the emotional reconciliation of laughter. Two distinct notions of the dialectical image come into play here: Benjamin’s is methodological, a means of constructing an image of the past that overcomes the pitfalls of historicist narrative; the other is embodied by the caricature itself, which sits at the centre of oppositional axes, pulled in all directions at once. To reconcile these concepts of the dialectical image is the task of this final chapter.

When applied to the case of John Heartfield’s satirical photomontages, the dialectical image allows us to visualize the relationship of caricature to other forms of mass persuasion, specifically propaganda, and to distinguish between different types of satire and propaganda. John Heartfield provides an excellent case study because his satirical images play directly against the visual propaganda of the Nazis. What is laid bare by this analysis are the power

dynamics of mass persuasion: who is addressing whom in communist satire, in social commentary, in anti-Semitic literature, in pro-Nazi magazines? Who is the ideal viewer that each image interpellates, and what mechanisms of persuasion come into play?

Starting from the seeds of Fuchs' earliest insights, and wielding the tools of art historical formal analysis and the dialectical image of Marxist aesthetic theory, the next step is clear. The forms of satire may be different today, but the means of persuasion have not changed. Appeals to emotion (ethos), to empathy (pathos), and to reason (logos) continue to characterize the rhetoric of both satire and propaganda, and the struggle of mass persuasion has today reached a fever pitch. Resurgent fascism around the world claims a new legitimacy by way of freedom of speech, while deriding any and all criticism as "fake news." Derogatory terms and euphemisms abound to denigrate one's opponents and falsely attribute their intentions: the "SJW" or social justice warrior, "cancel culture," "snowflake"—indeed, the trend begins very clearly with the subversion of "political correctness" in the 2000s, which has now come to mean the opposite of what it originally meant in the 1990s. Flashpoints of ideological conflict occur more and more frequently: the publication of anti-Arab cartoons in the Danish newspaper *Jyllands-Posten* in 2005; the *Charlie Hebdo* controversy in 2015; the rise of Trumpism in 2016; the removal of colonialist imagery from public spaces amidst cries of "re-writing history"; the storming of the U.S. Capitol in 2021. If we are to successfully analyse these new cultural phenomena, to decide what is satire and what is propaganda, to expose the dynamics of power in contemporary political discourse, the tools developed here will be invaluable. What Fuchs began over a century ago will continue to have repercussions for the study of political satire for many years to come.

Scholarship on Fuchs

Scholarly studies of Fuchs have unfortunately been sporadic due to his near-erasure from academic discourse. Between the efforts of the Nazis, the lack of English translations, and the ravages of time on his surviving books, knowledge of Fuchs has dwindled to a small circle of mostly German-speaking academics and historians. Among them there is a consensus that all research into Fuchs begins with Walter Benjamin. Benjamin's essay for the *Zeitschrift für Sozialforschung* (Journal for Social Research), "Eduard Fuchs: Sammler und Historiker" (Eduard Fuchs: Collector and Historian), was published in November 1937 while both men were living in exile in Paris. It is the most proximal account of Fuchs' life and political activity, much of its content having been garnered from one-on-one interviews conducted between 1935 and 1937 (although Benjamin had received the assignment as early as June 1933).¹⁸ Fuchs also loaned copies of most of his books to Benjamin, the reading of which he at first found distasteful but which nevertheless formed the basis of his research. The resulting essay provides an insightful and critical commentary on Fuchs' methodology, particularly regarding the failures and inconsistencies Benjamin perceived in it which had initially frustrated him.

Nearly four decades would pass before additional scholarship on Eduard Fuchs would appear. This took the form of two articles that appeared simultaneously in an issue of *Ästhetik und Kommunikation* in 1976—coincidentally, just one year after the first English translation of

¹⁸ Walter Benjamin, *The Correspondence of Walter Benjamin and Gershom Scholem 1932–1940*, edited by Gershom Scholem, translated by Gary Smith and Andre Lefevre (New York: Schocken Books, 1989), 90.

Benjamin's essay.¹⁹ The first article, co-written by Sylvia Bovenschen and Peter Gorsen, addresses the "biologism and anti-feminism" inherent in Fuchs' books on moral history and erotica.²⁰ The second article by Luciana Zingarelli addresses the scholarly turn in Fuchs' work, tracing the origin of his newfound role as a cultural historian to his earlier editorial work. She also provides a succinct overview of Fuchs' legal battles and the arguments employed in both the courtroom and the popular press.²¹

After this, two major books appeared. In 1985 the Swiss historian Thomas Huonker published his doctoral dissertation, *Revolution, Moral und Kunst. Eduard Fuchs: Leben und Werk* (Revolution, Morality and Art. Eduard Fuchs: Life and Work). Huonker relies heavily on various state and party archives for his information, including police reports, legal documents, and correspondence. Where Benjamin had only enough room in his essay to gloss over the facts of Fuchs' life, here it is broken down into painstaking detail, building a far more complete and

¹⁹ The first appearance of Benjamin's essay in English was translated by Knut Tarnowski, and appeared in *New German Critique* 5 (Spring 1975): 27–58. It was also translated by Kingsley Shorter in the collection *One Way Street and Other Writings* (London: New Left Books, 1979), 349–386. The edition I am using, from *The Essential Frankfurt School Reader*, uses the Tarnowski translation.

²⁰ Sylvia Bovenschen and Peter Gorsen, "Aufklärung als Geschlechtskunde. Biologismus und Antifeminismus bei Eduard Fuchs" in *Ästhetik und Kommunikation—Beitrage zur politischen Erziehung* 7/25 (1976): 10–30.

²¹ Luciana Zingarelli, "Eduard Fuchs, vom militanten Journalismus zur Kulturgeschichte" in *Ästhetik und Kommunikation—Beitrage zur politischen Erziehung* 7/25 (1976): 35–53.

faceted picture. Huonker devotes equal attention to Fuchs' biography and to his scholarly output.²²

This was followed in 1991 by Ulrich Weitz' dissertation, *Salonkultur und Proletariat. Eduard Fuchs: Sammler, Sittengeschichtler, Sozialist* (Salon Culture and Proletariat. Eduard Fuchs: Collector, Historian of Morals, Socialist). This latter work focuses even more on Fuchs' close involvement with the Spartacus Group, the Institute for Social Research, and various political parties. Weitz also demonstrates how deeply connected Fuchs was to the bohemian art community in Munich and, later, in Berlin. Together with Huonker these two books form the backbone of all biographic and bibliographic references to Fuchs.²³

²² Thomas Huonker, *Revolution, Moral & Kunst. Eduard Fuchs: Leben und Werk* (Zürich: Limmat Verlag, 1985).

²³ Weitz, *Salonkultur und Proletariat*.

Another spate of scholarship occurred in 1995 with the second annual issue of the French journal *Ridiculosa*, which was dedicated to Fuchs.²⁴ This included six new essays in three languages addressing Fuchs' legacy, the ambiguity of his work, his relationship with Langen Verlag, and his impact on Benjamin. Since then, there has been a steady trickle of scholarship on Fuchs, with new articles or book chapters appearing on average once every two years. The more significant contributions are outlined below.

In his 1996 essay "The Collector as Allegorist: Goods, Gods, and the Objects of History" Michael P. Steinberg pays special attention to the role of the collector, an activity passionately pursued by both Benjamin and Fuchs. This activity is decidedly important as it exists in tension with established theoretical, empiricist, and historicist tendencies in art historical

²⁴ Helga Abret, "'Das Fuchswerk wird mein bestes Verlagsgeschäft, wetten?'" Der Verleger Albert Langen und Eduard Fuchs" in *Ridiculosa 2* (Université de Bretagne Occidentale, 1995): 49–75.

William A. Coupe, "Eduard Fuchs and the ladies: "Die Frau in der Karikatur" ninety years on" in *Ridiculosa 2* (Université de Bretagne Occidentale, 1995): 19–29.

Alain Deligne, "De l'intérêt pris par Benjamin à Fuchs" in *Ridiculosa 2* (Université de Bretagne Occidentale, 1995): 109–120.

Jean-Claude Gardes, "Nouveauté et ambiguïté des theories d'Eduard Fuchs sur la caricature" in *Ridiculosa 2* (Université de Bretagne Occidentale, 1995): 7–17.

Clemens Klünemann, "Eduard Fuchs über die Juden in die Karikatur" in *Ridiculosa 2* (Université de Bretagne Occidentale, 1995): 31–48.

discourse. Important themes in the essay include art history as a praxis, Benjamin's concept of allegory, and the role of museological display as an adjunct to collecting.²⁵

Liliane Weissberg discusses Fuchs' work on the caricature of Jews in her 2002 essay "Eduard Fuchs und die Ökonomie der Karikatur" (Eduard Fuchs and the Economics of Caricature). According to Weissberg, Fuchs' unique approach to combining images and text was unfortunately overlooked by Benjamin. A fresh look at this approach may help to redeem Fuchs' work in light of Benjamin's otherwise justifiable criticisms.²⁶

In his 2006 article "Wer war Eduard Fuchs?" (Who was Eduard Fuchs?) the Austrian art historian Peter Gorsen claims to continue where Benjamin had left off. His focus is mostly on Fuchs' understanding and application of Freudian psychoanalysis as it applies to his work on erotica. According to Gorsen, Fuchs concluded that not only erotic art and caricature, but indeed all art, is underpinned by an auto-erotic impulse.²⁷

Another 2006 essay by Frederic Schwartz relates Benjamin's reading of Fuchs to Wölfflin, Riegl, and the Warburg Institute. He describes how Benjamin begins to fold art historical discourse into a larger historiographic project. For Benjamin, art history is not autonomous and cannot be separated from its political context. He therefore opposed the concept

²⁵ Michael P. Steinberg, "The Collector as Allegorist: goods, gods, and the objects of history" in *Walter Benjamin and the Demands of History*, edited by Michael P. Steinberg (Ithaca, NY: Cornell University Press, 1996), 88–118.

²⁶ Liliane Weissberg, "Eduard Fuchs und die Ökonomie der Karikatur" in *Babylon 20* (2002): 113-128.

²⁷ Peter Gorsen, "Mode und Erotik bei Eduard Fuchs" in *Die Listen der Mode*, edited by Silvia Bovenschen (Frankfurt: Suhrkamp, 1986), 390–403.

of *Kulturgeschichte* (cultural history) promulgated by Aby Warburg. In Benjamin's estimation that school of thought may have had the distinction of looking beyond the canon of high art, but it failed to take class struggle into account. On the other hand, Fuchs—despite claiming for himself the title of cultural historian—is most certainly concerned with class struggle, and this is what redeems his work for Benjamin.²⁸

A 2010 book chapter by Ulrich Bach examines Fuchs' collecting and publishing activities, which had ironically made him increasingly wealthy even as his politics became ever more radical. Two important issues are discussed here: the display of Fuchs' collections in his villa as a museum, and the state of book publishing in Germany which flourished during this period.²⁹

Finally, in 2014 Ulrich Weitz published a second book on Fuchs, *Der Mann im Schatten* (The Man in the Shadows), which greatly expands the known biography of Fuchs. New material brought to light addresses his adolescent years, the late stage of his relationship with Lenin, and—surprisingly, given his age and failing eyesight—his activities and future plans during the

²⁸ Frederic J. Schwartz, "Walter Benjamin's Essay on Eduard Fuchs: an art-historical perspective" in *Marxism and the History of Art: From William Morris to the New Left*, edited by Andrew Hemingway (Ann Arbor, MI: Pluto Press, 2006), 106–122.

²⁹ Ulrich Bach, "It would be delicious to write books for a new society, but not for the newly rich: Eduard Fuchs between Elite and Mass Culture" in *Publishing Culture and the "Reading Nation: German Book History in the Long Nineteenth Century*, edited by Lynne Tatlock (Rochester, New York: Camden House, 2010), 294–312.

period of his Paris exile.³⁰ Whether he could have fulfilled these goals under better circumstances is a tantalizing thought.

³⁰ Ulrich Weitz, *Der Mann im Schatten: Eduard Fuchs—Sitten-Fuchs, Sozialist, Konspirateur, Sammler, Mäzen* (Berlin: Karl Dietz Verlag), 2014.

Chapter 1: The Life and Career of Eduard Fuchs

The period in which Fuchs was born was rich in contradictions. It was a period which saw a flowering of cultural expression while long-gestating underlying tensions laid the groundwork for one of the darkest chapters in European history. It was a period that witnessed a major shift from an imperialist system, under the Wilhelmine dynasty, to a bourgeois system under the Weimar Republic. This was seen by many as a sign of social progress, but for Marxists it could only represent one stage in the gradual emancipation of the working class. For them, the ascendancy of the bourgeois meant a less overt, more insidious form of class struggle, where the preferred weapons of the dominant class changed from brute force to censorship and propaganda. Benjamin notes that “Fuchs writes in the time of imperialism: he presents the political energies of art polemically to an age in whose works these energies diminish from day to day.”³¹ But he also stresses that Fuchs is no objective outsider but a product of this environment, embodying all of its contradictions.

After the First World War, Germany was saddled with debilitating reparations payments under the terms of the Treaty of Versailles. This created an undercurrent of resentment and a general feeling that the war had not only been unsatisfactorily concluded, but also that it wasn't really over, having simply moved from the battlefield to the cultural arena. Economically, the German Mark was devalued by rapidly increasing inflation, which became acute by the mid-1920s. In addition, the new social democratic government based in Weimar was seen by both the left and the right as indecisive and powerless, unable to stand up to foreign powers or to satisfy

³¹ Benjamin, “Eduard Fuchs: Collector and Historian,” 244.

the demands of the population. Anti-Semitism and other expressions of prejudice continued to offer handy scapegoats, and of course it was during this time that the National Socialist party was formed.

At the same time, Germany was still experiencing rapid growth in the publishing industry, ever since the failed revolution of 1848. There had been a sudden maturation of its political and social caricature³² in response to the *Vormärz* (“Pre-March”: a term referring to the time leading up to the revolution which began in March of 1848), which marked a distinct change in production of German political prints. In the aftermath of the Lola Montez affair in Munich and the farce of the short-lived Frankfurt parliament of 1848-49, the era of the caricature broadsheet had come to an end, to be supplanted by satirical magazines. Despite the stronger impact and editorial freedom of the broadsheets, these often anonymous drawings tended towards a crude aggression, while the newer periodicals showed a greater sophistication of both artistic skill and humour. They could also reach a larger audience and respond to events more quickly. Coupe distinguishes the “punitive” satire of the previous generation from the mocking, “laughing” satire of journals and magazines, which was a safer approach in an era of increased scrutiny from government censors. The first appearance of right-wing caricature, properly termed propaganda, also dates from this period.

This outpouring of new satirical magazines was accompanied by a rapid increase in book publishing. There was already a well-established publishing industry in the German Confederation prior to 1848, with thousands of new titles appearing every month until

³² W.A. Coupe, “The German Cartoon and the Revolution of 1848” in *Comparative Studies in Society and History: An International Quarterly* XI/2 (The Hague: Mouton & Co., January 1967): 137–167.

production in the German states outpaced every other European nation.³³ Books on subjects of a sensitive nature (such as caricature or erotica) were not allowed to be made available to the general public, but could be sold with private subscriptions. This common method of distribution attracted wealthy collectors and encouraged the production of expensive luxury editions, while outmanoeuvring the efforts of the censors to protect public morality:³⁴ scholars and professional men could be trusted to view naughty images dispassionately and objectively, but women and children were vulnerable and had to be protected from exposure to them. This strategy of selling by subscription was adopted by Fuchs, although his volumes on erotica and moral history still brought him into legal conflict with the state. His long-time publisher, the Munich-based Albert Langen, was also a frequent target of the authorities. Langen was famous for his satirical magazine *Simplicissimus* (1896–1944, 1954–1967), which focussed mostly on social satire. Such periodicals were the battleground on which various factions fought for the hearts and minds of the German public. The extremes of communism and fascism were both seen as viable alternatives to the relative stalemate of social democracy, since neither had yet acquired the totalitarian connotations that we associate with them today.

It is against the backdrop of these conflicting, overlapping, and rapidly changing movements that Fuchs took up his research into the history of caricature. Although his formative

³³ Lynne Tatlock. "Introduction: The Book Trade and 'Reading Nation' in the Long Nineteenth Century" in *Publishing Culture and the "Reading Nation": German Book History in the Long Nineteenth Century*, edited by Lynne Tatlock (Rochester, NY: Camden House, 2010), 1–21.

³⁴ Matt Erlin. "How to Think About Luxury Editions in Late Eighteenth- and Early Nineteenth-Century Germany" in *Publishing Culture and the "Reading Nation": German Book History in the Long Nineteenth Century*, edited by Lynne Tatlock (Rochester, NY: Camden House, 2010), 25–54.

years coincided with the steady chancellorship of Otto von Bismarck, his entry into political life was shaped by the turbulent reign of Germany's last emperor, Kaiser Wilhelm II.

The Wilhelmine Era

Eduard Fuchs was born on 31 January 1870 in the small industrial town of Göppingen in the Kingdom of Württemberg, about a year prior to the unification of Germany. However, his family quickly moved to Stuttgart when the Franco-Prussian War began. Little is known of Fuchs' childhood and early adolescence, or indeed of his father, Ferdinand August Fuchs, who is variously described as a shopkeeper, a merchant, and in one case as a "wealthy machine manufacturer."³⁵ But there was very little wealth for the family when the elder Fuchs died on 2 March 1886, forcing Eduard as the eldest of three siblings to leave school and enter the workforce prematurely. As a commercial apprentice in a Stuttgart printing firm, he first came into contact with revolutionary ideas through his association with the typesetter Franz Wiesinger. Wiesinger was known to the police and had been previously expelled from Leipzig. He was seen as a radical element even in social democratic circles, leaning towards anarchy and provoking conflicts within the movement.³⁶ It is important to remember that at this time socialist political parties had been outlawed in Germany under the Sozialistengesetz (Anti-Socialist Law), so it was only to be expected that the police would monitor known socialist sympathizers along with

³⁵ Huonker notes that no source is provided for this information. Huonker, *ibid.*, 7.

³⁶ *Ibid.*, 9–11.

anarchists and communists. Despite this, in 1886 Fuchs readily joined the Sozialistische Arbeiterpartei Deutschlands (Socialist Worker's Party), the precursor of the modern Sozialdemokratische Partei Deutschlands or SPD (Social Democratic Party of Germany).

By March of 1888 Wiesinger had once again been forced to leave town, but his influence on the young Fuchs was already evident. Fuchs was identified by police spies as the author of two anarchist pamphlets, and was subsequently arrested along with five others on 5 April.³⁷ Given his role in writing the pamphlets, Fuchs received a sentence of five months imprisonment for the serious offence of *lèse-majesté*, while only two of his companions were convicted on a lesser charge related to distribution of the offending literature. Fuchs' mother died on 2 August, while he was still serving his sentence in Heilbronn.³⁸

Fuchs took a more moderate political stance after this, most likely as a result of the friendship he struck up with Jakob Stern. A former rabbi and a Spinoza researcher, Stern had made a very public break with official Judaism in the rather dramatic fashion of the time: "...he sat down in the middle of the market square in Stuttgart on a Saturday, i.e. on the Jewish Sabbath, at a place where numerous Jews returning home from the synagogue would have to

³⁷ Ibid., 19.

³⁸ Ibid., 21.

pass, and ostentatiously ate a number of ham rolls.”³⁹ Stern, whom Fuchs describes as “the spiritual mentor of my youth,” had published a letter in support of the Chicago anarchists of the Haymarket affair, who were found innocent shortly after their hasty trial and execution. Unfortunately, Fuchs once again fell afoul of the authorities for distributing this letter, and he served another five months in prison, this time in Rothenburg.⁴⁰ By this time the Stuttgart police regarded Fuchs as the nominal leader of a loose-knit group of about twenty young anarchists and socialists, and they successfully pressured one of its members to inform against Fuchs following a number of intimidating house searches. Facing this degree of overt and covert surveillance, the group—informal as it was—disbanded.

Upon his release from prison in August 1890, Fuchs was sought out by the social-democratic journal *Münchener Post* to fill the role of an accountant.⁴¹ The twenty-year-old (fig. 3) may not yet have had much work experience, but his political sympathies doubtlessly played a role in bringing him to the attention of the journal’s printer-turned-publisher, Maximin Ernst.

³⁹ “Als z. B. der geistige Mentor meiner Jünglingsjahre, der frühere Rabbiner und hervorragende Spinozaforscher Jakob Stern, seinen völligen Bruch mit dem offiziellen Judentum unwiderlegbar an die Öffentlichkeit bringen wollte, setzte er sich an einem Samstag, also am jüdischen Sabbath, in Stuttgart mitten auf den Marktplatz an eine Stelle, wo zahlreiche aus der Synagoge heimkehrende Juden vorübergehen mußten, und aß ostentativ eine Anzahl Schinkenbrötchen.” Eduard Fuchs, *Die Juden in der Karikatur* (München: A. Langen, 1921), 120.

⁴⁰ Huonker, 24.

⁴¹ Walter Benjamin, “Eduard Fuchs: Collector and Historian,” 229.

Having bought out the previous publisher, Louis Viereck, in 1889,⁴² Ernst was soon overwhelmed with the editing, design, and production of several weekly periodicals. The introduction of a new four-colour printing process in 1892 pressed his staff to the limit, whereupon he asked Fuchs to assume the editorial design of the May 1st issue of *Süddeutscher Postillon* (fig. 4).⁴³ The result was so well-received—and sold so many copies—that Fuchs was quickly promoted to editor-in-chief, a position he would retain for almost a decade. During his tenure the satirical magazine lost the right-wing revisionism it had maintained under Viereck, moving to the left of centre of the political spectrum. This helped it in its competition against the more successful Stuttgart-based *Wahre Jacob* (True Jacob), which stubbornly maintained a revisionist tone under editor Wilhelm Bloss. In 1896 more competition was introduced by the Munich-based publisher Albert Langen, whose magazine *Simplicissimus* maintained a wide appeal thanks to its independence from any political party.

The conflicting tendencies in these social-democratic periodicals—whether newspapers or satirical magazines—could be characterized as attempts at moderation in response to the Sozialistengesetz. Nevertheless, the Royal Bavarian press censors constantly harassed the *Süddeutscher Postillon*, confiscating some issues and prosecuting the staff. There was of course a certain amount of give and take between the investigating police and the state prosecutors.

⁴² Huonker, 31. Under Viereck's leadership the journal's turn to the right caused party divisions, and what little support he had collapsed after he lost his seat in the Reichstag in 1887. He eventually gave up on a political career and emigrated to the United States.

⁴³ May 1st had already come to be widely associated with the worker's movement throughout Europe, providing an occasion for special editions of worker's magazines.

Sometimes the charges would be dropped due to lack of evidence, and on other occasions the defendants were able to gain an acquittal.

However, two issues from 1898 put Fuchs back in prison, once again for *lèse-majesté*, although the articles in question could hardly be characterized as direct attacks against the state or its representatives. In fact, the offending passages were of a very general nature, deliberately framed as parables or legends in order to skirt the letter of the law. Nevertheless, the prosecution was successful and Fuchs was sentenced to ten months imprisonment, which he served in Nuremberg. This time, however, he had prepared for the eventuality with a doctor's diagnosis of neurasthenia, which prescribed solitary confinement with "moderate mental activity" in a facility near Munich⁴⁴—conditions that permitted Fuchs to remain close to his family, while also undertaking French translations and preparing a draft for his first major work of cultural history: *Die Karikatur der europäischen Völker*.

But this was merely the epilogue to an extremely active decade for Fuchs. In 1891 he crossed the Alps on foot to Italy, following the custom known as "Wanderjahre." This is akin to a "gap year" when journeymen approaching the end of their apprenticeships travel on foot while wearing a costume that signals their status (a tradition that is still practiced by some professions today). Two years later, Fuchs gave a speech at the party congress in Hamburg, where he caused a stir by audaciously claiming far more widespread support than he actually had.⁴⁵ His employer Ernst had to step in and defend both Fuchs and the *Postillon*, claiming that its previous

⁴⁴ Ibid., 50–51.

⁴⁵ Ibid., 37–39.

leadership (i.e., Viereck) was to blame for the unfair criticism it still garnered in party circles. In fact, Fuchs' main support, outside of the *Postillon* staff, came primarily from Georg von Vollmar, a member of the Reichstag with whom he maintained a friendly correspondence. In 1895 Fuchs went on another more ambitious walking tour, this time traversing the Balkans to Turkey. It was likely on this latter journey that he met his future wife, fellow Stuttgarter Frida Schön, whom he wed the following year (fig. 5).⁴⁶ Their only child, Gertraud, was born on 15 May 1897. It was also around this time that Fuchs started building his famous collection of historical caricatures. Fritz Brupbacher relates Fuchs' memory of his first such purchase: "The first sheet I bought cost one Mark, and my wife scolded me for it because there was no longer enough for dinner."⁴⁷

This was also a decade in which Fuchs' writing shifted from a provocative, exhortatory tone towards a more objective, scholarly stance couched in terms of cultural history. An example of the former approach can be found in a small book published by Ernst in 1894, in which socialist poems that had been printed in the *Postillon* were collected under the title *Aus dem Klassenkampf: Soziale Gedichte* (On Class Struggle: Social Poems). Fuchs collaborated on this project with fellow staff writers Karl Kaiser and Ernst Klaar. One of Fuchs' contributions describes the modern-day worker as "The Prometheus of our Time:"

On the rocky coast of work

⁴⁶ Ibid., 34–35. Huonker observes that Fuchs' friend, the painter Max Slevogt, depicted the two newlyweds as avid hikers who went on mountain tours together.

⁴⁷ "Das erste Blatt, das ich kaufte, kostete eine Mark, und dafür wurde ich von meiner Frau ausgeschimpft, weil es nun nicht mehr fürs Abendrot reichte." Ibid., 51.

forged by necessity,
In the worrisome ocean
always threatened with extinction,
From the liver of his spirit
the eagle of tyranny consumes him;
His joys of life all
devastated without remorse.
Nerves, brains and strength destroyed,
under the bondage of the sun's glow,
Storm and weather rage over him,

the arbitrary tide plunges over him.”⁴⁸

Like much of the book’s content, the poem aims to instil in its readers a sense of belonging to the proletarian class, as well as a sense of injustice at the treatment its members receive.

A few years later, Ernst also published a book of Fuchs’ aphorisms: *Gedanken eines arbeitslosen Philosophen* (Thoughts of an Unemployed Philosopher).⁴⁹ Once again it consists of content culled from the pages of the *Postillon*, “into which I have from time to time poured out my anger and bile, my mockery and my love.”⁵⁰ Like many such aphoristic books it is organized

“An der Arbeit Felsenküste
festgeschmiedet durch die Noth,
In der Sorgenmeereswüste
stets vom Untergang bedroht,
Von der Leber seines Geistes
zehrt ihm Adler Tyrannei;
Seine Lebensfreuden alle
ihm vernichtend ohne Reu’.
Nerven, Hirn und Kraft zerstörend,
wirkt der Knechtschaft Sonnenglut,
Sturm und Wetter ihn umtoben,
auf ihn stürzt der Willkür Flut.”

Eduard Fuchs, Karl Kaiser, Ernst Klaar, *Aus dem Klassenkampf: Soziale Gedichte* (München, M. Ernst, 1894), 8.

⁴⁹ Eduard Fuchs, *Gedanken eines arbeitslosen Philosophen* (München: M. Ernst, 1897). Although published anonymously, the style is consistent with Fuchs, and the book is widely attributed to him. However, the book has occasionally been falsely attributed to Heinrich Seidel, an error which tends to be repeated by internet booksellers. Seidel was an engineer and poet based in Berlin, but he had no connection to M. Ernst Verlag.

⁵⁰ *Ibid.*, 5.

thematically, with subject headings such as militarism, women's issues, and the "Historic Days" of the Paris Commune. Many of the entries are deeply cynical, attacking a range of social institutions. For example, under the heading "Bourgeois Morality" Fuchs writes that "Objectivity is the virtue of the well-fed."⁵¹ Under "Militarism" we find "The Tsar wants peace, France wants peace, Austria wants peace, Germany wants peace, and the friends of peace want peace. That is why the standing armies must be increased. I want to go to the psychiatric clinic and have the connection explained to me."⁵² And under "Religion and Church Festivals" he candidly observes "The legend of the three wise men has a deep meaning: how soon the kings took control of the church and how the people had to stay outside in front of the stable."⁵³

Fuchs dropped the satirical tone and aphoristic style of these publications by 1898 when he published his essay *1848 in der Caricatur*.⁵⁴ Presented as a limited edition portfolio, it represents his earliest attempt at scholarly writing, in which he took a step back from producing and editing highly-charged satirical content to examining it dispassionately as subject matter. Although the essay followed the pattern of reprinting material from the *Süddeutscher Postillon*, it was much more favourably received and even garnered some critical response. Whether or not he realized it at the time, the seeds of Fuchs' subsequent career had been planted.

⁵¹ Ibid., 10.

⁵² Ibid., 20.

⁵³ Ibid., 25–26.

⁵⁴ The original essay was published in issues 4, 5, 6, 7, and 15 of *Süddeutscher Postillon* in 1898. The portfolio was also published by Ernst in a limited edition of only thirty copies, but had the advantage of coming with full-page reproductions of sixteen caricatures, paralleling the by then defunct format of individual collectable broadsheets.

Fuchs' closest friends at this time were the painters, poets, and playwrights of the Schwabinger Bohème, including Max Slevogt, Robert Breyer, Oskar Panizza, and Christian Morgenstern. Schwabing was originally a separate town near Munich that had been incorporated into the fast-growing Bavarian capital in 1891. As the site of a new art academy in 1884, this new "Schwabylon" had become a haven for artists and scholars from across the German empire, where they met late in the evenings in salon-style coffeehouses. According to Fuchs' biographer Ulrich Weitz, the Schwabing district "became 'the intellectual antithesis of Wilhelmine Berlin', as the art and cultural policy there was less restrictive than in the Prussian metropolis."⁵⁵ And chief among its benefactors was Georg von Vollmar, whose wife Julia was an early patron of the playwright Henrik Ibsen. Despite the chilling effect of the Sozialistengesetz with its spies, censorship, police reports, fines, and incarceration, support remained strong for the social democratic movement and for the labour movement generally. In Schwabing these movements were further bolstered through their connections with bourgeois salon culture, in some ways prefiguring the origins of dada in Zürich at the Cabaret Voltaire.

In the latter months of 1900, Fuchs entered into a correspondence with Richard Fischer, managing director of the *Vorwärts* bookstore and publishing house in Berlin.⁵⁶ It seems, given the scant evidence of a few surviving letters, that Fuchs and Ernst had a falling out which resulted in Fuchs' abrupt dismissal at the end of the year. This may have been due to his growing

⁵⁵ "München, insbesondere Schwabing, wurde 'der geistige Gegenpol des wilhelminischen Berlin', da die dortige Kunst- und Kulturpolitik weniger restriktiv war als in der preußischen Metropole." Weitz, *Salonkultur und Proletariat*, 121.

⁵⁶ *Vorwärts* (Forwards) was the official newspaper of the Social Democratic Party of Germany (SPD), and is still in production since its founding in 1876.

interest in more serious writing, which was out of step with the mocking satire of *Süddeutscher Postillon*. His frequent brushes with the law also increased the legal risks for the magazine, by putting it under an unfriendly spotlight. Fuchs briefly considered working for the *Postillon*'s main competitor, *Wahre Jacob*, but plans to revamp that journal in a more serious format under the *Vorwärts* imprint did not materialize due to the resistance of editor Wilhelm Bloss.

Unemployed and with an uncertain future, Fuchs busied himself with his work on the history of caricature, as well as related contributions to the *Leipziger Volkszeitung* and other newspapers.⁵⁷ In fact the social democratic movement in Munich was becoming increasingly right-wing, while Fuchs himself had become more openly Marxist. The Bavarian socialist periodicals began to jettison their more outspoken leftist members, and Fuchs may simply have been a victim of this housecleaning. However, the party leadership in Berlin, represented by Fischer and the deputy chairman Paul Singer, defended Fuchs and tried to intervene on his behalf. When these efforts failed, Fischer offered Fuchs an editorial position at *Vorwärts*—essentially an honorarium to work as an independent writer—and Fuchs took up the post on 1 October 1901.⁵⁸

From this point on Fuchs' work on various cultural histories dominated his career. The first volume of *Die Karikatur der europäischen Völker* was finally published late in 1901 with a print run of 10,000 copies. Having taken five years of research that included reviewing about

⁵⁷ In addition to articles for the annual May festival issue of *Leipziger Volkszeitung*, Fuchs also published the following: "Sarah Bernhardt in der Karikatur" in *Bühne und Welt* 1 (Berlin: 1900): 19–25; "Die französische Karikatur im Jahre 1870/71" in *Sozialistische Monatshefte* 6/2 (1901): 611–626; and "Musikerkarikaturen" in *Zeitschrift für Bücherfreunde*, 12 (1901/1902): 449–464.

⁵⁸ Weitz, *Salonkultur und Proletariat*, 223–224. In fact the only real work Fuchs did for the *Vorwärts* publishing house was to edit the annual May 1 festival issues, a task that did not continue past 1909.

68,000 images, it was over 130,000 words in length and included five hundred black and white reproductions and sixty colour plates. Covering the historical development of caricature from ancient Egypt to 1847 (the year prior to the German revolution), it was a remarkable tome that found instant popularity. It was also far from inexpensive, designed specifically to appeal to the wealthy collector of fine books, unlike the smaller format books that Fuchs had contributed to while at the *Postillon*.

A second volume of equal size followed in 1903 covering the period from 1848 to the turn of the century, this time organized by country of origin. In this way Fuchs could not only show the various stages of development of the satirical image in different countries, he also began to allude to the idiosyncrasies of each nation's mores and cultural practices as revealed through caricature. This was an interest that he would soon follow up with an even larger project. In the meantime, he rounded out the survey history of caricature with a third related volume in 1904, *Das erotische Element in der Karikatur* (The Erotic Element in Caricature). This last book certainly raised the ire of state censors, but in anticipation of their reaction Fuchs had carefully planned that it should be published only as a limited edition of two hundred, matching the number of subscribers, and that it would not be publicly advertised or made available to the general public.⁵⁹ The loss of income from the reduced print run was easily compensated by the increased sale price, as this book was in every sense a luxury edition: gold gilt edging, half-leather binding, and thicker, high-quality paper. When the police inevitably appeared despite

⁵⁹ "Dieses Werk ist als Privatdruck des Verlages in einer einmaligen Auflage in der Höhe der Zahl der Subskribenten hergestellt und nicht zum allgemeinen Verkauf bestimmt. Ein Nachdruck wird niemals veranstaltet werden." Eduard Fuchs, *Das erotische Element in der Karikatur* (Berlin: A. Hofmann, 1904), ii.

these precautions, all copies of the book had already been shipped, and both Fuchs and Hofmann Verlag were eventually acquitted of all charges.⁶⁰

This was by no means the end of Fuchs' interest in erotica. The book had been sufficiently well received that he revisited the subject with a new and greatly expanded three-volume study under the title *Geschichte der erotischen Kunst* (History of Erotic Art). The first volume, *Das zeitgeschichtliche Problem* (The Contemporary Problem), appeared in 1908. The second and third volumes, addressing *Das individuelle Problem* (The Individual Problem), were not completed until well after the world war, appearing in 1923 and 1926. Unlike *Das erotische Element in der Karikatur* these were not luxury editions but rather ordinary scholarly texts, once again available only by subscription. Erotic art was not an unknown theme for other cultural historians at the time, any more than caricature was. For example, John Grand-Carteret had published *Die Erotik in der französischen Karikatur* (The Erotic in French Caricature)⁶¹ in 1909, and more notably a work was published in Vienna in 1908 by Cary von Karwath, titled *Die Erotik in der Kunst* (The Erotic in Art).⁶² Von Karwath's approach was very similar to Fuchs', invoking the great masters of the past such as Leonardo and Rembrandt for their use of eroticism as a motif. As in Germany, books addressing such morally sensitive subjects were not permitted

⁶⁰ Huonker, 62.

⁶¹ John Grand-Carteret, *Die Erotik in der französischen Karikatur* (Vienna and Leipzig: C.W. Stern Verlag, 1909). Grand-Carteret was a French journalist and historian of art and fashion, who, like Fuchs, wrote prolifically on caricature and cultural mores. He was a pioneer of iconology and was influenced by Jules Champfleury.

⁶² Cary von Karwath, *Die Erotik in der Kunst* (Vienna: C.W. Stern Verlag, 1908). In fact, Karwath had been Grand-Carteret's translator for the book on French caricature.

to be sold or even advertised to the general public. Nevertheless, on 7 December 1910 the Vienna Regional Court banned Von Karwath's book and ordered all remaining copies to be destroyed.

But caricature was never far from Fuchs' mind. In 1904 Fuchs returned to the subject of the German revolution, expanding an article he had previously written for the *Postillon* on Lola Montez, mistress of the Bavarian monarch Ludwig I. This was originally intended as a follow-up to *1848 in der Caricatur*, but with the changes to his situation Fuchs now had an opportunity to greatly expand its scope to that of a moderately-sized book, with the title *Ein vormärzliches Tanz-idyll: Lola Montez in der Karikatur* (An Idyllic Dance of the Pre-March Period: Lola Montez in Caricature). He was also able to more explicitly lay out his rationale for the historical importance of caricature, using the analogy of the "concave mirror" which enlarges its reflection:

Georg Brandes said at one point ... that if it were possible, he would write an entire story in anecdotes. Collecting anecdotes, which is what is commonly understood, is certainly not meant, but something essentially different. And in this respect Brandes is quite right when he says ... that a distinctive train, a bon mot, an anecdote, often serves much better for an apt drawing of an era, of a condition, an event or a person, than broad-gauge portrayals and so-called official documents. Namely, there are in fact numerous anecdotes which paint the manners and character of an age.

That one can do the same for caricature, so that it applies to them with much greater right, I would like to prove with this small study.⁶³

In some ways this elevation of the anecdotal prefigures the significance of quotation for Walter Benjamin, of whom Hannah Arendt writes that “his greatest ambition was to produce a work consisting entirely of quotations”⁶⁴—a work whose genesis we see in the unfinished *Passagenwerk*.

Many of the caricatures of Lola Montez criticized her for entering the exclusively male arena of political life, for example by depicting her with a moustache (fig. 6), or with a riding crop—a prop from her dancing days—surrounded by submissive men. This led Fuchs to an interest in *Weiberherrschaft*, best translated as “petticoat government,” which caricaturists (most famously William Hogarth and Thomas Rowlandson) had represented as a topsy-turvy world in which the dominance of women caused social mayhem. Fuchs thus followed *Lola Montez* with a volume devoted to the representation of women in 1905, *Die Frau in der Karikatur* (The Woman

⁶³ “Georg Brandes sagt an irgend einer Stelle seiner Hauptströmungen der Literatur des 19. Jahrhunderts, das wenn er es vermöchte, würde er eine ganze Geschichte in Anekdoten schreiben. Anekdoten sammeln, was man gemeinhin darunter versteht, ist damit freilich nicht gemeint, sondern etwas wesentlich anderes. Und in dieser Richtung hat Brandes ganz recht, wenn er über diese Art ‘ins Kleinliche gehen’ sagt, das zur treffenden Zeichnung einer Epoche, eines Zustandes, eines Ereignisses oder einer Person ein markanter Zug, ein Bonmot, eine Anekdote oft ungleich besser dient, als breitspurige Schilderungen und sogenannte offizielle Dokumente. In der Tat gibt es nämlich zahlreiche Anekdoten, welche Sitten und Charakter eines ganzen Zeitalters malen. Daß man dasselbe auf die Karikatur kann, ja dass es für diese mit noch viel größerem Rechte gilt, das möchte ich durch die vorliegende kleine Studie belegen.” Eduard Fuchs, *Ein vormärzliches Tanz-idyll: Lola Montez in der Karikatur* (Berlin: E. Frensdorff, 1904), 2.

⁶⁴ Hannah Arendt, “Introduction: Walter Benjamin 1892–1940” in *Illuminations*, edited by Hannah Arendt (New York: Schocken Books, 1968), 4.

in Caricature). This was another popular theme among cultural historians of the time, with similar books having appeared once again by John Grand-Carteret⁶⁵ and Gustave Kahn.⁶⁶ Fuchs returned to the subject of women again in 1913 with a major collaboration spanning three volumes: *Die Weiberherrschaft in der Geschichte der Menschheit*, co-produced with psychoanalyst Alfred Kind. In this instance Fuchs did not lend his authorship, but provided the illustrations and layout—something for which he could be depended on, and for which he had already amassed a sizable and ever-growing collection. In 1931 Kind added a fourth solo volume, covering developments during the war and post-war years.

In 1907 Fuchs entered into a much smaller collaboration, this time with his former *Postillon* colleague Ernst Kreowski, on the volume *Richard Wagner in der Karikatur*. Kreowski had followed Fuchs to Berlin in 1902, likely under similar circumstances. The publisher, B. Behr's Verlag in Leipzig, had requested that Fuchs undertake the work, likely prompted by the success of John Grand-Carteret's 1892 volume on the same subject combined with Fuchs' own growing reputation.⁶⁷ Once again Fuchs restricted himself to providing the accompanying images and layout for Kreowski's text. He wrote no more than a brief introduction in which he protested his ignorance of music history and the press of "other major obligations"⁶⁸—undoubtedly his all-

⁶⁵ John Grand-Carteret, *La femme en Allemagne* (Paris: Louis Westhauser, 1887).

⁶⁶ Gustave Kahn, *La femme dans la caricature française* (Paris: Albert Méricant, 1907).

⁶⁷ John Grand-Carteret, *Richard Wagner en Caricatures* (Paris: Librairie Larousse, 1892).

⁶⁸ Eduard Fuchs, Ernst Kreowski, *Richard Wagner in der Karikatur* (Berlin: B. Behr, 1907), 2.

engrossing work on the history of morals, which by this time had already taken several years to compile.

Fuchs had finally begun writing this magnum opus in 1906. The *Illustrierte Sittengeschichte* (Illustrated History of Morals) was an examination of moral practice that would grow to three volumes by 1912.⁶⁹ It was to become his most popular and enduring work, and one that cemented his relationship with Langen Verlag even after Langen's untimely death in 1909.⁷⁰ The first volume of *Sittengeschichte*, which appeared in 1909, focussed on the Renaissance; the second in 1911 on the "gallant time" of absolute monarchy; and the third volume in 1912 on "the bourgeois era."

In the aftermath of this major undertaking, and with the financial security of newly acquired wealth generated by these books, it was time for a vacation. From January to May 1914 Fuchs travelled to Egypt with his friend, the artist Max Slevogt. They were accompanied by another of Slevogt's patrons, Johannes Guthmann, and his friend Zimmerman (first name unknown). Details of this journey are available thanks to Fuchs' diary and Guthmann's travel memoirs, as well as the many photographs taken by the group and the *plein-air* paintings

⁶⁹ *Illustrierte Sittengeschichte* is sometimes described as having six volumes, as the first edition separated the illustrations. In this way the text could be sold in high volume to the public, and the images sold privately to subscribers.

⁷⁰ Langen died unexpectedly after an unsuccessful operation, and as a result the two men knew each other for only four years. Some confusion therefore ensues in discussing Fuchs' much longer relationship with the company, especially as the English word "publisher" can refer to both a person and a company. The German word "Verlag" denotes a publishing company, which in this case (as with Maximin Ernst and many others) is named after its founder. Thus Albert Langen refers to the individual, while Langen Verlag, A. Langen Verlag, and Albert Langen Verlag all refer to the company.

conducted by Slevogt. The rationale for the trip was one of artistic exploration; as with many German painters of the time, Slevogt sought “picturesque inspiration from the Orient, the land of his dreams.”⁷¹ Throughout the trip Fuchs made himself indispensable, ensuring that Slevogt could paint to his heart’s content without interruption or disturbance. His fellow travellers marvelled at Fuchs’ organizational skills and dedication; at one point, while trying to board a small boat for a painting expedition, high winds prompted Fuchs to grip a stretched canvas in his teeth while climbing down a rope ladder. But they were also bemused by Fuchs’ disregard for bourgeois social graces, as for example when he helped himself from another restaurant table while dining at a hotel.⁷² However, Fuchs parted ways with the group on their return trip through Italy, when Slevogt circumvented Fuchs’ usual habit of acquiring fresh paintings from his studio. Instead of giving his friend his accustomed first right of refusal, he sent all his new work from the trip to a gallery in Dresden. This incident marked the beginning of a break between the two friends, which culminated in Slevogt’s disillusionment with all political ideology as a result of his subsequent experiences as a war artist. Nevertheless they remained in contact, as Fuchs sent him a copy of his next book, *Der Weltkrieg in der Karikatur* (The World War in Caricature).

⁷¹ “Slevogt suchte mit dieser Reihe, die von Hans-Jürgen Imiela erschöpfend beschrieben worden ist, zum einen Erholung im südlichen Klima, zum andern malerische Anregungen aus dem Orient, dem Land seiner Träume, in dem er in der Fantasie, etwa anlässlich seiner Illustrationen der Märchen aus Tausendundeiner Nacht, schon seit langem zu Hause war.” Huonker, 111.

⁷² Guthmann writes: “Vorerst aber ging sein politisches Gleichheitspathos mit allen gemütlichen Kinderstubengepflogenheiten durch, wenn er etwa an Bord ode rim Hotel auf dem Nebentisch einen Menage mit den scharfen englischen Saucen und Mixed Pickles stehen sah, die auf dem unsrigen fehlte. Dann ergriff er einfach das Desideratum und pflanzte es, ganz gleich, ob uns der Appetit stand, vor uns auf: ‘Wir habbe grad so viel bezahlt wie die da!’” Ibid., 112.

From the First World War to the Second

On 3 August 1914 Germany declared war against Russia and its allies, with resounding support from all the major political parties. Naturally, Fuchs did not support the war effort in the slightest, siding instead with the worker's movement in Russia. His organizational skills found a new outlet in letter-writing campaigns to local police and government officials, through which he successfully arranged for the peaceful departure of thousands of Russian civilians from Germany in September. These were mostly anti-tsarist immigrants who suddenly found themselves in need of transportation to a neutral country. Fuchs was already a member of Karl Liebknecht's inner circle in 1914, and he spent his days taking an active role in pursuit of amnesty for political prisoners, sometimes personally arranging their movements. A 1920 article in the *Berliner Börsen-Courier*, probably written by Emil Faktor, states:

Fuchs achieved great merits from a human point of view by organizing an important part of the welfare for prisoners of war at the outbreak of the war ... namely the evacuation and permanent support of the Russian civilian population living in Germany, whereby 150–180,000 people were involved. Following this, Fuchs was appointed by the later Soviet government as plenipotentiary for the entire Russian war as well as civil prisoner welfare in Germany. Through all of this, the repatriation of German prisoners of war still in Russia was strongly promoted. And if the soldiers who returned from Russia last year were able to report benevolent treatment on the part of the Soviet government, they owe this primarily to

Eduard Fuchs' activities in Germany and the agreements he made with the Soviet government in favour of German prisoners of war.⁷³

Fuchs remained a pacifist throughout the war and refused to follow the vast majority of social democrats who fully supported the Kaiser. It was neither the first nor the last time that he would break with party ranks, but by this stage his relationship with the social democratic movement had worn thin. Even Langen Verlag had temporarily abandoned its satirical tone in *Simplicissimus* to add its voice in support of the war. But this did not discourage Fuchs from continuing to work with the publisher, and indeed a volume on the caricature of the World War was released in 1916. Helga Abret notes that “he tried to be as objective as possible and made no concessions to the *Zeitgeist*. This is best seen in his chapter on the Franco-Prussian War.”⁷⁴ *Der Weltkrieg in der Karikatur* was initially intended to be the first of two volumes but plans for the second were quietly dropped. The war greatly impeded Fuchs' ability to travel in search in source material, and there was also a shortage of good quality paper for printing.

⁷³ “Während des Krieges hat Fuchs sich in menschlicher Hinsicht große Verdienste dadurch erworben, daß er bei Ausbruch des Krieges in Gemeinschaft mit einigen Freunden seinen wichtigen Teil der Kriegsgefangenenfürsorge organisierte, nämlich den Abtransport und die dauernde Unterstützung der in Deutschland lebenden russischen Zivilbevölkerung, wobei es sich um 150–180,000 Personen handelte. Im Anschluß daran wurde Fuchs von der späteren Sowjetregierung zum Generalbevollmächtigten für die gesamte russische Kriegs- und Zivilgefangenenfürsorge in Deutschland ernannt. Durch dies alles wurde auch der Rücktransport der noch in Rußland befindlichen deutschen Kriegsgefangenen kräftig gefördert. Und wenn die im letzten Jahr aus Rußland zurückgekehrten Soldaten über eine wohlwollende Behandlung von seiten der Sowjetregierung berichten konnten, so verdanken sie das in erster Linie der Tätigkeit von Eduard Fuchs in Deutschland und der von diesem mit der Sowjetregierung zugunsten der deutschen Kriegsgefangenen getroffenen Vereinbarungen.” *Ibid.*, 125–126.

⁷⁴ “Er bemühte sich darin allerdings um größtmögliche Objektivität und machte keine Zugeständnisse an den *Zeitgeist*. Das geht am deutlichsten aus seinem Kapitel über den deutsch-französischen Krieg hervor.” Abret, 64.

Fuchs also published a book on the French caricaturist Honoré Daumier in 1917, in which he reproduced the artist's woodcut engravings. Fuchs' concern with the role of class struggle in caricature had led to a long-standing research interest in Daumier, whose work had fallen into obscurity after his death in 1879. Daumier's career had reached its zenith during the years of the July Monarchy (1839–1848), which ultimately brought about a final end to the French monarchy. During that time Daumier was involved in the creation of what could possibly be termed the first meme:⁷⁵ the image of King Louis Philippe as a pear. Fuchs' book was to be the first volume of a *catalogue raisonné* of the artist, a set of folio editions prioritizing large reproductions, which would ultimately have the effect of repopularizing Daumier throughout Western Europe.

But the political struggles of wartime were relentless. Fuchs' increasing disillusionment with the German social democratic movement was shared by many of his friends and colleagues, among them Liebknecht, Rosa Luxemburg, Franz Mehring, Clara Zetkin, and Ernst Meyer, a staff member of *Vorwärts*. When the war broke out they formed their own leftist organization called Spartakusbund, or the Spartacus Group, inspired by the Bolsheviks. This splinter organization of the SPD would eventually find legitimacy as the Kommunistische Partei Deutschlands or KPD (Communist Party of Germany) in late 1918. It must have been uncanny and perhaps a little exciting for the author of *1848 in der Caricatur* to be involved in planning a new proletarian revolution in Germany, as if following in the footsteps of Marx and Engels

⁷⁵ Richard Dawkins famously coined the word “meme” in his 1976 book *The Selfish Gene*, based on the word “gene.” Defined as a unit of cultural transmission, it is similar to a gene in that both are characterized by self-replication.

during their years in Köln. But it was also a difficult period for Fuchs personally, and not only because of his reduced capacity to conduct research. For reasons that have not been recorded, he and Frida divorced in 1915 after almost twenty years of marriage.

Despite wartime travel restrictions Fuchs had found occasion to visit Switzerland in 1915, to meet with members of an antimilitarist group. While in Bern they published the Zimmerwald Manifesto, after which Fuchs became the de facto contact person for Russians living in Germany.⁷⁶ Huonker writes, “As General Plenipotentiary for Russian prisoner welfare in Germany, Fuchs enjoyed the confidence of the Russian government. He was also a close comrade in arms to Rosa Luxemburg and the entire leadership of the Spartacus Group. Fuchs was therefore the right mediator between Lenin and the German revolutionaries on the question of the establishment of a new International.”⁷⁷ In 1917 Fuchs travelled once again, this time to Stockholm where he met with the Bolshevik foreign office to secure further aid for Russian civilians in Germany.⁷⁸ By a stroke of luck, Fuchs’ stay in Sweden was extended due to a nerve inflammation affecting his right hand, which delayed his return to Germany. As a result, he missed his draft notice and, by the time he was able to go home, he had exceeded the age limit for conscription.

⁷⁶ Weitz, *Salonkultur und Proletariat*, 386–387.

⁷⁷ “Fuchs genoß als Generalbevollmächtigter für die rußische Gefangenenfürsorge in Deutschland das Vertrauen der Sowjetregierung. Als engen Kampfgefährten schätzen ihn auch Rosa Luxemburg und die gesamte Führungsspitze des Spartakusbundes. Fuchs war also der geeignete Vermittler zwischen Lenin und den deutschen Revolutionären in der Frage der Gründung einer neuen Internationale.” Huonker, 141–142.

⁷⁸ Weitz, *ibid.*, 388.

As 1918 drew to a close, the Russian Embassy in Berlin hosted a banquet for Karl Liebknecht, who had spent the previous two years in prison. Fuchs took charge of ensuring his safe travel to the event. He also drove Rosa Luxemburg from Breslau to Berlin upon her own release from prison, all the while arguing with her in favour of the Bolsheviks, of whom she was increasingly critical. Fuchs was even involved in the brief occupation of the offices of the *Berliner Lokal-Anzeiger* (Berlin Local-Gazette), a conservative newspaper, which the Spartacists intended to co-opt for their own purposes. The risks Fuchs took during these hectic and uncertain months were tremendous—commandeering a military vehicle when his own car broke down,⁷⁹ and being locked in a closet with other occupiers of the *Lokal-Anzeiger* by armed counter-revolutionaries, anxiously waiting to learn their fate.⁸⁰ Finally in December Fuchs travelled to Moscow to visit Lenin in person, albeit unofficially. Little is known of this encounter except that it was kept secret even from some members of the Spartacus Group.⁸¹ Lenin mentions Fuchs briefly in a subsequent letter, and made minor concessions to the German revolutionaries which can likely be attributed to Fuchs' persuasiveness.

Fuchs did not return to Berlin until mid-January 1919, when the short-lived revolution—which had culminated in the Spartacist Uprising—was brutally overturned. Both Liebknecht and Luxemburg were among the dead: kidnapped, interrogated, tortured, and murdered by the counter-revolutionary Freikorps paramilitary unit. Fuchs was able to avoid the violence, staying

⁷⁹ Huonker, 135.

⁸⁰ *Ibid.*, 137–139. In this instance, Liebknecht was able to simply talk their way out of confinement.

⁸¹ *Ibid.*, 143.

at the side of Franz Mehring as the elder statesman succumbed to pneumonia amidst his own grief over the killings. Mehring's widow then appointed Fuchs as his literary executor, and Fuchs' first task was to write a new foreword to Mehring's biography of Karl Marx. In it he expresses his anger and disillusionment with the outcome of the revolution:

This work bears some of the proudest names of German and international socialism: Karl Marx, Franz Mehring, Rosa Luxemburg, Clara Zetkin. Even if I count myself among those who believe in the future, an unspeakable melancholy creeps over me at the thought that only the last of these heroes of the socialist liberation struggle (...) is fighting at our side; that the others were not granted the opportunity to see the bright morning of a victorious socialist ascent with their own eyes.⁸²

Even as the newly elected (and no longer outlawed) social democratic government was organized in Weimar, sporadic violence against socialists and communists continued. Fuchs continued to stay out of harm's way, despite the fact that he remained politically active. In the summer of 1920 he travelled with Paul Levi, the new head of the KPD, to attend the second congress of the Third International in Petrograd. Although Fuchs' name does not appear on the

⁸² "Dieses Werk trägt einige der stolzesten Namen des deutschen und des internationalen Sozialismus: Karl Marx, Franz Mehring, Rosa Luxemburg, Clara Zetkin. Wenn ich mich auch zu den Zukunftsgläubigen zähle, so beschleicht mich doch eine unsägliche Wehmut bei dem Gedanken, daß nur noch die letzte dieser Heroen des sozialistischen Befreiungskampfes [...] an unserer Seite streitet; daß es den anderen nicht vergönnt war, den lichten Morgen eines siegreichen sozialistischen Aufstiegs mit eigenen Augen zu schauen." Eduard Fuchs, "Foreword," in *Karl Marx: Geschichte seines Lebens*, by Franz Mehring (Leipzig: Verlag der Leipziger Buchdruckerei A.G., 1919), xv. Fuchs wrote these words more than two weeks before Luxemburg's body was discovered in a canal, but knowing what had happened to Liebknecht he flatly rejected the hopeful theory that she had merely been kidnapped.

delegate's list, he made an impression on the Swiss social democrat Walther Bringolf, also in attendance.⁸³ However, Fuchs' attention had finally returned to research and writing, and the next few years would once again re-establish his status as a cultural historian.

From 1920 to 1922 Fuchs published the next three volumes of his Daumier series, a chronological breakdown of the artist's lithographs from the magazine *Le Caricature* over more than four decades. Stone lithography was a relatively new reproduction technology in Daumier's time, which allowed an artist to draw directly on the printing stone with a grease pen and other implements. This allowed for much more freedom of expression in the line work, giving rise to the sketchy, hand-drawn look that made Daumier's caricatures so relatable: they looked like they had been done spontaneously, on the spot. By contrast, both wood and copperplate engraving took far more precision and physical effort, and were far less forgiving of errors. With lithography Daumier could capture a personality—either of a specific public figure or of a social type—with an immediacy and clarity of emotion that was heretofore unparalleled in any other form of mass media. Fuchs' presentation of the work in folio-size reproductions, one per page and single-sided, gave each caricature the space it needed to be fully appreciated.

In 1921 Fuchs published the last of his thematic studies: *Die Juden in der Karikatur* (The Jews in Caricature), documenting the representation of Jews from medieval woodcuts to the newspapers of his own day. In many ways this was an obvious choice of material for Fuchs to tackle, but as he was to discover it was also the most problematic, for it challenged his very definition of caricature. For perhaps the first time, as Huonker points out, Fuchs had to deal with

⁸³ Huonker, 155. Fuchs and Bringolf had a shared interest in the Bolshevik's program of Proletkult, or proletarian culture, and its potential to be introduced in Germany.

a motif that was not only divorced from any revolutionary sentiments, but which instead showed a reactionary trajectory in every single instance.⁸⁴ Fuchs theorized that periods of increased vitriol and frequency of anti-Semitic caricature closely reflected economic upheavals throughout European history. The inexorable logic of this connection led him to conclude that “the most horrific forms of hatred of Jews belong not only to the past, but on the contrary to the present. ... As terrible as the expulsions of Jews and the burning of Jews in the Middle Ages were, they pale in comparison to the mass tortures and mass slaughter of the Jews in the past few years.”⁸⁵ His visual evidence included caricatures that had appeared as recently as 1920, including one election poster showing the allegorical Germania, flanked by a physiognomically exaggerated Jew, presiding over the coffin of Germany (fig. 7). Adorned with swastikas, the poster is initialled by its creator, “A.H.”⁸⁶

At this time Fuchs was also involved in the formation of the Institute for Social Research, albeit strictly behind the scenes. In 1922 he joined a private foundation with Max Horkheimer and others which was established for this purpose. His friend Felix Weil hired him as trustee for

⁸⁴ Ibid., 493–494.

⁸⁵ “Die grauenhaftesten Formen des Judenhasses gehören leider nicht nur der Vergangenheit an, sondern im Gegenteil der Gegenwart. An die Qualen, denen die Ostjuden während des Weltkrieges überantwortet waren, an die Scheusäligkeiten der konterrevolutionären russischen Horden unter Koltshak und Wrangel, an die Bestialitäten der ungarischen Horthyoffiziere,—an diese modernsten Judenverfolgungen reicht nichts von dem heran, was die Vergangenheit an Judenverfolgungen aufzuweisen hat. So schrecklich die Judenvertreibungen, die Judenverbrennungen des Mittelalters mitunter auch waren, sie verblassen gegenüber den Massenfolterungen und Massenschlachtungen unter den Juden während der letzten Jahre.” Fuchs, *Die Juden in der Karikatur*, 76.

⁸⁶ If this is indeed a caricature by Adolf Hitler, it is included merely by historical accident. Hitler would not have been well known at that time, but it is likely that he would put his artistic skills to use in this fashion.

his father's fortune, as the silent backer funding the Institute. The following year Fuchs lobbied for the creation of an archive for the Institute, to which end he was contracted for 5000 Marks. This was intended to fill a lacuna in the existing documentation of social and political movements of the time, including "...fascism in Italy, the völkisch movement in Germany, the resurgence of anti-Semitism, communism in various countries, nationalism, the national independence struggles of the Irish, Turks, Egyptians, Indians (Ghandi), Negroes, etc., the peasant movements in the Balkans, the Ku Klux Klan movement in America, the Sun-Yat-Sen party in China, etc." Fuchs emphasised the urgency of the matter, observing that "Much of the material on all these questions, which will be of irreplaceable value to all future researchers, is in the streets today, but tomorrow no more."⁸⁷ From his own records, initially compiled for the *Illustrierte Sittengeschichte*, Fuchs was able to donate over 20,000 documents.⁸⁸ Fuchs remained active in other areas as well: in 1922 he added his name to an appeal to send famine relief to

⁸⁷ "Als Hauptgebiete nenne ich nur: Faschismus in Italien, die völkische Bewegung in Deutschland, das Wiederaufleben des Antisemitismus, der Kommunismus in den verschiedenen Ländern, der Nationalismus, die nationalen Verselbständigungskämpfe der Iren, Türken, Ägypter, Inder (Ghandi), Neger usw., die Bauernbewegungen auf dem Balkan, die Ku-Klux-Klanbewegung in Amerika, die Sunjatsen-Partei in China usw. Das Material über alle diese Fragen, das für alle späteren Forscher von unersetzlichem Wert sein wird, liegt heute vielfach auf der Straße, morgen jedoch nicht mehr." From a letter to the Society for Social Research, 1923. Weitz, *Salonkultur und Proletariat*, 414.

⁸⁸ The archive did not survive long. Within a year it was raided by the police, which brought to light the presence of KPD members among Fuchs' staff. Because of his complicated arrangement with the KPD, the Institute felt that its political neutrality was threatened and it decided to close the archive permanently.

Russia.⁸⁹ He also undertook the second and third volumes of *Geschichte der erotischen Kunst*, which had long been delayed.

The next year, following the advice and interests of his new wife Grete Fuchs-Alsberg, Fuchs undertook a three-volume study of ceramics. The first addressed Chinese tomb pottery from the seventh to the tenth centuries (*Tang-plastik, chinesische Grabkeramik des VII. bis X. Jahrhunderts*), and the second focussed on Chinese roof decorations from the fifteenth to the eighteenth centuries (*Dachreiter und Verwandte Chinesische Keramik des XV. bis XVIII. Jahrhunderts*). Both volumes were once again based on Fuchs' own collection, which had continued to expand at an astonishing rate despite the sharp devaluation of German currency. The third volume, *Die deutsche Fayence-Kultur* (German Faience Culture), was to be his last collaboration, published in 1925. Unlike his previous collaborations in which Fuchs contributed the illustrations for another author's text, this time Fuchs wrote an essay based on objects from the collection of art historian Paul Heiland. Faience, or tin-glazed pottery, preceded the introduction of porcelain in Germany, and Heiland had amassed over 3600 specimens.

Fuchs then published a folio-size monograph on another forgotten French caricaturist, Paul Gavarni, featuring eighty full-size reproductions of his lithographs originally done for the satirical magazine *Le Charivari*. Born Sulpice Guillaume Chevalier, Gavarni was a contemporary of Daumier, and although Fuchs was far more inspired by the latter, he still felt that Gavarni also deserved to be better known. Gavarni's images are more characteristic of social caricature than political caricature, primarily addressing class and gender issues. It is here, as Benjamin points out, that Fuchs raises the question of the success of a work of art: "Fuchs

⁸⁹ Huonker, 155.

criticizes the fact that in the history of art the question of the success of a work of art is left out of consideration.”⁹⁰ This is correct, insofar as art historical discourse was still preoccupied with questions of stylistic change and taxonomy. However, Fuchs’ answer to this was that not only was Gavarni’s success tied to an auto-erotic impulse, but that *all* art was motivated by the same impulse. He writes,

What are the causes of Gavarni’s so great and long-lasting success, which one can really call a global success without exaggeration? ... This omission is, of course, a deficit in our entire consideration of art since then, so it does not only concern Gavarni. And yet the uncovering of the real causes for the greater or lesser success of an artist, for the duration of his success and just as much for the opposite, seems to me to be one of the most important problems that are connected with art.

... I said above that the cited erotic nuances that determined Gavarni’s success are his specific erotic guideline, his special erotic wishful fantasy. Because they are, that is why one can say that Gavarni reenacted his longings for himself precisely by creating them artistically. Because

⁹⁰ Benjamin, “Eduard Fuchs: Collector and Historian,” 228.

creating art is always only the triggering and fulfillment of one's own
eros, one's own erotic wishful fantasy.⁹¹

Although Fuchs' manner of connecting artistic creativity with (specifically male) virility is problematic, the idea of an underlying auto-erotic impulse in art is borrowed directly from Freud's writing on the unconscious and wish-fulfilment. It was a theme that underpinned much of Fuchs' work on erotic art and moral history.

Also in 1925, Fuchs came to the rescue of the floundering publisher Malik Verlag, which was suffering from post-war inflation and on the verge of shutting down. Already famous as a publisher of foreign novels in German translation with dust jackets designed by John Heartfield, the company was transformed into a joint-stock venture, with Fuchs acting as president of the supervisory board overseeing the change.⁹² Fuchs would likely have met Heartfield at this time, and he could hardly have failed to be aware of the artist's innovative designs, which he would

⁹¹ "Welches sind die Ursachen von Gavarnis so großem und so lang anhaltendem Erfolg, den man wirklich ohne Übertreibung einen Welterfolg nennen kann? ... Diese Unterlassung ist freilich ein Defizit unserer gesamten seitherigen Kunstbetrachtung, sie betrifft also nicht bloß Gavarni. Und doch dünkt mich die Aufdeckung der wirklichen Ursachen für den größeren oder geringeren Erfolg eines Künstlers, für die Dauer seines Erfolges und ebenso sehr für das Gegenteil, eines der wichtigsten Probleme, die sich überhaupt an die Kunst knüpfen. ...

"... Ich habe oben gesagt, daß die angeführten erotischen Nuancen, die den Erfolg Gavarnis bestimmten, seine spezifische erotische Leitlinie sind, seine spezielle erotische Wunschphantasie. Weil sie dies sind, deshalb kann man sagen, hat Gavarni seine Sehnsüchte für sich selbst eben dadurch abreagiert, daß er sie künstlerisch gestaltet. Denn Kunstschaffen ist immer nur Auslösung und Erfüllung des eigenen Eros, der eigenen erotischen Wunschphantasie." Fuchs, *Gavarni* (München: A. Langen, 1925) 13–15.

⁹² Huonker, 158.

later apply to anti-Nazi political montages. It is lamentable that Fuchs never chose to write about photography or photomontage, given how well Heartfield adapted it for satirical purposes.

In 1926 the communist magazine *Arbeiter-Illustrierte-Zeitung* (Worker's Illustrated Magazine, or *A-I-Z*) documented Fuchs' involvement in a protest against new legislation aimed at curbing public immorality—an all too obvious euphemism for censorship (fig. 8). Joining with other prominent writers and intellectuals to present their case to the Reichstag, they were nevertheless unsuccessful in preventing the Schmutz- und Schundgesetzes (Filth and Trash Act) from being passed into law. For Fuchs this meant that his legal entanglements were not yet over, as the third and final volume of *Geschichte der erotischen Kunst* was also published that year.

Fuchs was not yet finished with Daumier either. Among the artist's neglected works were his impressionist paintings, for which he was less well known and less critically acclaimed. In fact, Daumier was not considered a notable painter by art historians (either then or now), especially considering that his caricature prints greatly overshadowed his efforts on canvas. But just like William Hogarth before him, Daumier's efforts to succeed in the more genteel activity of painting were hampered by the stigma attached to caricature. A draughtsman ranked far lower in the artistic hierarchy than a painter, and while a painter might be forgiven for dabbling in caricatures, a caricaturist would be hard pressed to find acceptance in the salons. By Fuchs' time however, these paintings had appreciated in value considerably due to their rarity and to Daumier's rising posthumous fame. As a result, Fuchs published *Der Maler Daumier* (The Painter Daumier) in 1927.

The next year Fuchs took another decisive step to the radical left. Throughout the 1920s he had remained somewhat aloof from Germany's fractional communist party politics, as the movement continually splintered and reformed. Nevertheless he had remained on friendly terms

with Paul Levi, Clara Zetkin, and August Thalheimer. Finally, thanks to Stalin's interference, Thalheimer and others were expelled from the KPD, whereupon they formed a new organization, the Kommunistische Partei Deutschlands—Opposition (KPO). The KPO refrained from declaring itself a new party and wielded little real influence, but it took the danger of fascism far more seriously than the mainstream communist movement in Germany. Fuchs took this occasion to resign from the KPD, transferring his support to the KPO where he financed their struggling newspaper *Arbeiterpolitik* (Worker's Policy, or *Arpo*) with a regular monthly contribution.⁹³

Fuchs' last major work, *Die grossen Meister der Erotik* (Great Masters of the Erotic), was published in 1930. Throughout the economic depression of the Weimar period Fuchs' books had continued to sell steadily, but Langen Verlag was on the verge of bankruptcy. Interest in moral history, or indeed in any expensive books, had begun to wane. By 1932 Fuchs had to grudgingly accept that the audience for his work had diminished, and those that remained could no longer afford the indulgence. In a letter to his friend Fritz Brupbacher, he writes:

Before, I couldn't follow book after book quickly enough. By the way, some people think that the time of my books, that is, books of this kind, is over after all. Firstly, all those who could be considered as buyers are impoverished; secondly, the majority of those who have the necessary interest in such heavy fare are gradually becoming extinct. I would only like to accept this view to the point that it will probably be a long time

⁹³ Ibid., 198–199.

before the material capacity of larger circles is sufficiently consolidated to be able to afford such costly tomes.⁹⁴

Fuchs had planned an additional volume on Daumier, one that would examine the artist's erotic drawings, but his new publishers showed no interest. In any case Fuchs' eyesight had deteriorated considerably by the late 1920s, culminating in surgery to remove cataracts. He had always been extremely near-sighted, and had to view artworks from a distance of as little as ten centimetres in order to properly examine them. Therefore, Grete often accompanied him in his travels, writing as he dictated his observations. "On one occasion [George] Grosz and Hermann Fiedler were looking with Fuchs at some large drawings by Thomas Rowlandson when they came across a piece whose erotic theme was obvious. Fuchs, peering as close as he could in an effort to make out the subject, finally announced with the utmost solemnity: 'This one is a highly erotic drawing ... Close the door, please. We don't want the ladies to see this!'"⁹⁵ By the early 1930s Fuchs was no longer able to undertake any further research. The decline of his vision was so severe that his wife often had to help him find his way, even around their own home.

In 1927, at the height of his career, Fuchs had purchased a villa in the upscale Berlin neighbourhood of Zehlendorf, where he could put his collections on permanent display. In fact

⁹⁴ "Früher konnte ich nicht rasch genug ein Buch auf das andere folgen lassen. Manche Leute meinen übrigens, daß die Zeit meiner, also derartiger, Bücher überhaupt vorbei sei. Erstens seien alle jene, die als Käufer in Frage kämen, verarmt; zweitens sei allmählich die Mehrzahl derer ausgestorben, die für solche schwere Kost das nötige Interesse hätten. Ich möchte diese Ansicht nur bis zu dem Punkt akzeptieren, daß wahrscheinlich geraume Zeit vergehen wird, bis die materielle Leistungsfähigkeit größerer Kreise wieder so weit gefestigt ist, um sich solch kostspielige Wälzer leisten zu können." Ibid., 174-175.

⁹⁵ M. Kay Flavell, *George Grosz: a biography* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1988), 189.

he had lived in Zehlendorf from his first days in Berlin, initially renting an apartment on Karlstraße.⁹⁶ The once rural village was incorporated into Berlin in 1920, much as Schwabing had become a part of Munich. The house Fuchs chose at Hermannstraße 14 had been built by Mies van der Rohe in 1911, early in his career, for the art dealer Hugo Perls. Fuchs purchased it directly from Perls for the thrifty price of five paintings by Max Liebermann.⁹⁷ The now-famous architect agreed to expand the villa (which is still known today as Haus Perls) to accommodate Fuchs' extensive collections. The entire ground floor was turned into a museum with a newly added wing, while the living quarters were kept upstairs (fig. 9). Pictures were hung salon-style, using every available bit of wall space, with paper documents organized in flat drawers and *objet d'art* displayed in glass cases (fig. 10). Fuchs' collections functioned on a far more sophisticated level than that of the *Wunderkammer*, the seventeenth-century chamber of curiosities: entire rooms were dedicated to drawings of erotica and caricature numbering in the tens of thousands, all carefully organised (fig. 11). By this time Fuchs had also acquired several of Daumier's paintings, which were prominently displayed alongside contemporary works by Liebermann, Slevogt, and others. Naturally such a museum could not be opened to the general public, as once again the legal question of public morality hindered such an idealistic goal. In practice only interested scholars could view the museum or conduct research there, essentially by appointment only. George Grosz gives a vivid description of his visit to Fuchs' home in his memoirs:

⁹⁶ Huonker, 57.

⁹⁷ Carsten Krohn, *Mies van der Rohe: The Built Work* (Basel: Birkhäuser Verlag, 2014), 20.

Fuchs had diligently collected all the material for this over the years and is now keeping it in his villa, which was built by a modern architect. It was like a real museum; even in the bathroom there were pictures, engravings, hand drawings—one next to the other, from floor to ceiling and sometimes on the ceiling. And everywhere there were cleverly hidden wires which one necessarily had to stir, when the power was switched on, that would summon the police, because there were irretrievable treasures that were stored here.⁹⁸

According to Carl Meffert, a young artist that Fuchs had taken under his wing, it had been Fuchs' intention to bestow the house and its contents to the city of Berlin as a permanent museum.⁹⁹

By this time Fuchs had spent three decades building his collection, sometimes spending thousands of Marks on a single excursion. For Fuchs this represented a long-term investment that allowed him to reproduce original materials in his books, materials which he possessed and

⁹⁸ “Alles Material dazu hatte Fuchs im Lauf der Jahre fleißig gesammelt und hob es nun in seiner von einem modernen Architekten gebauten Villa auf. Es war wie ein richtiges Museum; sogar im Badezimmer hingen Bilder, Kupferstiche, Handzeichnungen—eine neben der anderen, vom Boden bis an die Decke und manchmal noch an der Decke. Und überall lagen geschickt versteckte Drähte, an die man unbedingt rühren mußte um, wenn der Strom angestellt war, die Polizei herbeizurufen, denn es waren ja unwiederbringliche Schätze, die hier lagerten.” George Grosz, *Ein kleines Ja und ein großes Nein: sein Leben von ihm selbst erzählt* (Hamburg: Rowohlt Verlag, 1955), 186.

⁹⁹ Huonker, 190.

could use without restriction. His friend and long-time supporter Baron Fedor von Zobeltitz, editor of the *Zeitschrift für Bücherfreunde* (Magazine for Booklovers) wrote in 1922:

As a passionate bibliophile, Fuchs is also a first-rate collecting genius. ... He was never satisfied with only using the image material stored in museums and copper engraving cabinets, because he recognized that although the stacks in these institutions were large, the systematic arrangement necessary for his purposes was not there, and much too was missing because it could not be included in the official scheme. So he began, at his own expense, as far as he could to gather the material he needed.¹⁰⁰

Even earlier, in 1909, J.A. Bondy had written an article on “A Berlin Private Collection:”

Eduard Fuchs (...) actually owns a collection that is unparalleled in Germany. ... Just two examples and comparisons: Fuchs has no less than 3800 Daumier prints; the Berlin Engraving Cabinet owns barely 50 copies, and even the Bibliothèque Nationale in Paris cannot outdo it. While you

¹⁰⁰ “Fuchs ist als passionierter Bibliophile auch ein Sammelgenie ersten Ranges. Nicht im Sinne der ‘Omnivoren’, der Allesfresser auf den Sammlergebieten, sondern im Rahmen seiner Lebensarbeit ein Sammler kulturgeschichtlicher Werte solcher Art, die ihm als Urkunden zur Menschheitsgeschichte bedeutsam erscheinen. Er besitzt einen beneidenswerten Spürsinn, die Nase des Jagdhunds, die uns Bibliophilen das Aufstöbern erleichtert. Er hat sich nie damit begnügt, nur das in Museen und Kupferstichkabinetten augespeicherte Bildmaterial heranzuziehen, weil er erkannte, daß in diesen Anstalten zwar die Maße groß war, daß es dort aber an der für seine Zwecke nötigen systematischen Anordnung gebrach und vieles auch fehlte, weil es sich nicht in das offizielle Schema unterbringen ließ. So began er den, auf eigene Kosten, soweit es in seinen Kräften lag, das Material zusammenzutragen, dessen er bedurfte.” Ibid., 101–102.

can only find about a dozen engravings by Rowlandson in the Berlin Cabinet, Fuchs brought together over 300.¹⁰¹

Fuchs' increasing reputation as an avid—and wealthy—collector often meant that prices inexplicably rose as he entered a shop. To counter this he sometimes used proxies to purchase the items he had previously identified, without coming in himself. He also travelled widely in search of specific materials, guided always by his “hunting dog’s nose.” He eventually earned the epithet “the man who eats all of Paris.”¹⁰²

Unfortunately, Fuchs had long been identified by the Nazi party as an undesirable person, one whose association with Jews and Marxists and whose licentious writings earned him their immediate and irrevocable condemnation. In September 1933, just a few months after Hitler was appointed chancellor, the newly-formed *Reichskulturkammer* (Imperial Chamber of Culture) ordered the confiscation of Fuchs' property and art collections. Under no illusions about his chances, Fuchs and Grete fled first to Switzerland and then to France, taking with them only the few oil paintings by Daumier. The sale of these six small works—the pride of his collection and also the most valuable pieces—allowed him to maintain a modest three-room apartment in Paris for his remaining years (fig. 12). Meanwhile, despite terse negotiations conducted by letter, the

¹⁰¹ “Eduard Fuchs (...) besitzt tatsächlich eine Sammlung, die in Deutschland nicht ihres gleichen findet. [...] Nur zwei Beispiele und Vergleiche: Fuchs hat nicht weniger als 3800 Daumier-Blätter; das Berliner Kupferstichkabinett besitzt im ganzen kaum 50 Stück, und selbst die Bibliothèque Nationale in Paris kann ihn darin nicht überbieten. Während man im Berliner Kabinett nur etwa ein Dutzend Stiche von Rowlandson finden kann, hat Fuchs über 300 zusammengebracht.” Ibid, 104.

¹⁰² “‘C’est le monsieur qui mange tout Paris’. Deshalb ist er auch bei allen Händlern sehr beliebt. Er betritt nie ein Geschäft, bloß um herumzustöbern, sondern stets, um eine wissenschaftliche Beute zu machen.” Ibid., p. 180.

Nazi government steadfastly refused to release his collections and eventually auctioned their contents.¹⁰³ It is thanks to the auction catalogue that we have a detailed record of at least part of Fuchs' collections (fig. 13). The house itself, according to architectural historian Carsten Krohn, was "converted under the direction of Albert Speer into a secret facility for the production of instruments and gauges for retaliatory weapons (V-rockets). After the war, the company continued to flourish producing technical medical equipment from the house until the end of the 1970s."¹⁰⁴

While in Paris, Fuchs was interviewed several times by Walter Benjamin for an essay that was to appear in late 1937 in the *Zeitschrift für Sozialforschung* (Journal for Social Research, or *ZfS*), the journal of the Institute for Social Research. Benjamin was given the assignment by Horkheimer, who had long wanted "a good report" on Fuchs to appear in the journal, given their long association and Fuchs' support of the Institute. With the rapidly deteriorating situation in Germany during the 1930s, it is easy to see how imperative it was for Horkheimer to do justice to his aging friend. On the other hand, Benjamin was far from inspired by Fuchs' material and complained bitterly about the assignment in various letters, postponing

¹⁰³ Ulrich Bach summarizes the auction contents as "481 artifacts of Fuchs' various collections: furniture, porcelain, and thirty-two paintings by Slevogt. The remainder—799 items of East Asian art, sculptures, and other miscellany,—went on the block a year later." The library of 6–8000 art-historical reference books, and the tens of thousands of printed works, were lost and quite possibly burned. Bach, p. 298.

¹⁰⁴ Krohn, *ibid.*, 23.

the research for a full two years. Even after they finally met Benjamin still took an additional two years to finish the essay. However, in the end he expressed satisfaction with his final product.¹⁰⁵

Fuchs remained in Paris until his death on 26 January 1940. An obituary in the *New York Times* shows to what extent Fuchs was still well-known. It states, “Word was received here yesterday of the recent death at his residence in Paris of Dr. Eduard Fuchs, German author known especially for his works on the history of morals. ... Dr. Fuchs was among the first to discover the genius of Daumier and wrote several books on the French caricaturist and painter. The list of his writings in the German ‘Who’s Who’ covers twenty-five lines ... He was violently attacked by the Nazi regime and because his second wife, the former Grete Alsberg, was a Jewess, had to flee Germany.”¹⁰⁶ Fuchs was interred at the Père Lachaise cemetery in Paris’ 20th arrondissement, not far from his hero Daumier and the fighters of the Paris Commune.

¹⁰⁵ Benjamin writes in a letter to Gershom Scholem, dated April 4, 1937: “Now dress me in your mind’s eye in a herald’s armour and imagine me at the bow of a four-master cutting through the Mediterranean surf as swiftly as an arrow, because that is the only fitting way to convey the grand news to you: the ‘Fuchs’ is done. The finished text does not entirely have the character of penitence, as my labouring on it quite rightly seemed to you. On the contrary, its first quarter contains a number of important reflections on dialectical materialism, which are provisionally tailored to my book. [...] The ‘Fuchs’ has been greeted with great acclaim. I see no reason to hide the fact that the tour de force it achieves is the substantial as well as major cause of this success.” Benjamin, *The Correspondence of Walter Benjamin and Gershom Scholem*, 193.

¹⁰⁶ Anonymous, “Dr. Eduard Fuchs, German Author Known for His Works on History of Morals” in *The New York Times* (7 February 1940): 27.

Chapter 2: The Success and Critical Reception of Fuchs

Fuchs has become so obscure today that it is difficult to reconstruct an accurate picture of his standing in German society. How could he have achieved so much fame as an author of books that, for the most part, were simply not available to the general public? How did those books generate the incredible wealth he enjoyed? His level of success as an author, the reviews of his work, how it was advertised, even the criticisms aimed at him can tell us something about the popular discourse surrounding his work. In addition, the controversy he courted with his works on erotica and mores brought him into frequent conflict with the authorities, who had a standing remit to investigate and prosecute offenses against public morality. As a result there is a great deal of archival documentation that can provide insight into Fuchs' reception during his lifetime.

Early in his career Fuchs wrote for a mass audience but with limited reach and success—*Süddeutscher Postillon* was only published for ten years and restricted to the Bavarian region. It never approached the circulation or longevity of competing magazines such as *Wahre Jacob* or *Simplicissimus*, let alone the even more widely known *Fliegende Blätter*¹⁰⁷ or *Kladderadatsch*.¹⁰⁸ It was Fuchs' cultural histories that brought him widespread attention, both positive and negative, despite having a necessarily narrow audience. The change in his fortunes took place

¹⁰⁷ *Fliegende Blätter* (Flying Leaves) was a Munich-based humour magazine published from 1845 to 1944, reaching a peak circulation of 95,000 in 1895. It remains famous as the source of the rabbit/duck illusion in 1892, drawn by a staff artist.

¹⁰⁸ *Kladderadatsch*—an onomatopoeic word for the clanging sound of a dropped pot—was a Berlin-based satirical magazine. It was published by Hofmann Verlag from 1848 to 1944.

over just a few years, between 1900 and 1904. The immense wealth he accumulated from the sale of these books, which gave him the freedom to build his collections and write more books, could not have been accomplished without the unusual conditions that prevailed in his time.

The Business of Book Publishing

Even before Fuchs was born, book and journal publishing in Germany had grown to incredible proportions. New titles were appearing at an astonishing rate, far in excess of other European countries. Of this unique phenomenon Lynne Tatlock writes:

Between 1821 and 1845 the number of book titles tripled, growing from an annual production of 4,505 titles to 14,059. Despite setbacks in times of war and economic downturn and despite struggles with censorship throughout this period, by 1910, thirty-nine years after unification, Germany could boast 31,281 book titles published in a single year, far more than other leading industrial nations, for example France at 12,615, England at 10,804, and the United States of America at 13,470. In 1913, a year before the outbreak of the First World War, Germany still led the world with 34,871 books published in a single year. Even after the turmoil of the war years and their immediate aftermath, Germany experienced

sturdy book publication; the year 1927 witnessed a record high of 37,866 titles.¹⁰⁹

This peak period coincides with the greatest successes of Fuchs' career. Collectors eagerly sought out expensive editions and box sets as a mark of status and sophistication, while daily and weekly journals on every conceivable topic were widely available to the mass market. Publishers of every political inclination were to be found as well, with many offering a range of political viewpoints in their titles. Both progressive and reactionary publications were disseminated side by side, among a wide swath of broadly popular subjects that steered clear of political extremes.

Fuchs' first major success came shortly after his move to Berlin, with the culmination of his survey history of caricature. Volume one of *Die Karikatur der europäischen Völker* appeared under the imprint of Albert Hofmann Verlag in 1901. A second, enlarged edition appeared in 1902, and was reprinted in 1904. A further enlarged edition was published by Langen Verlag in 1921. Volume two had a similarly convoluted history. The first edition appeared in 1903, and a second edition appeared in 1906. A fourth, enlarged edition was published by Langen Verlag in 1921 (there is no extant record of the third edition).¹¹⁰ Complicating matters is the fact that some early volumes do not explicitly state whether they are a first or second edition. For example, the second Hofmann edition makes no mention of being either a second or enlarged edition, and it is

¹⁰⁹ As a result, antiquariat booksellers are still commonplace in Germany today and enjoy a brisk business, which has in part moved online. Tatlock, "Introduction: The Book Trade and 'Reading Nation' in the Long Nineteenth Century," 4.

¹¹⁰ Weitz, *Salonkultur und Proletariat*, 490–91.

therefore frequently mistaken for the first edition. However, the first edition is distinguished by the mention of Hans Krämer on the binding of the first volume, and a unique art nouveau cover design on the second volume (fig. 14) that never appeared again, while the second edition has matching, more subdued covers.

After this, however, Fuchs' books began to address more sensitive topics, and had to be marketed to subscribers only. Looking at Fuchs' most popular titles, it becomes apparent that it was this method of distribution that was largely responsible for generating his substantial wealth. It meant that his books could be targeted to wealthy collectors, but it also put Fuchs under pressure to meet pre-determined release dates. After Fuchs' break with Maximin Ernst and a few titles published by Hofmann Verlag and B. Behr Verlag, he established a mutually beneficial relationship with the Munich-based Albert Langen Verlag which would endure for three decades. Langen had actively courted Fuchs as early as 1904, and both men recognized the potential for material success in the work Fuchs was conducting. Part of the appeal of this arrangement for Fuchs may have been the simple fact of having his publisher located in another city, as a strategy to complicate matters for the Berlin authorities.¹¹¹

Langen's printing shop was located in yet another city. He had established his own popular magazine, *Simplicissimus*, in 1896, and its bold colours and high quality were managed by the Leipzig printing firm Hesse & Becker.¹¹² It was to them Langen turned to undertake the production of *Die Frau in der Karikatur*, for which we have more information than Fuchs'

¹¹¹ Police correspondence indicates that some attempt was made to coordinate efforts between Berlin and Munich, however the success of these efforts is difficult to evaluate. Huonker, 63–64.

¹¹² Abret, 55.

earlier titles. Selling Fuchs' work by subscription meant that Langen could advertise upcoming titles—and collect pre-sales—before they were released. This greatly reduced the financial risk associated with printing expensive illustrated books, in effect funding their production. Langen foresaw this very clearly, writing prophetically to his star illustrator Thomas Theodor Heine that “Fuchs will be my best publishing business, care to bet?”¹¹³

The first edition of *Die Frau* appeared in 1906 with an initial print run of 10,000 copies. A second edition of 5,000 copies was undertaken the following year, indicating that the first run had completely sold out. A third enlarged edition appeared in 1928, adding another 5,000 copies.¹¹⁴ The first edition sold for 25 Marks, but it was accompanied by a limited collector's edition of 200 copies which sold for 50 Marks.¹¹⁵ To put these figures in perspective, Fuchs had earned an annual salary of only 2000 Marks at the *Postillon*, which the police considered too low for him to afford to pay fines (hence his multiple incarcerations).¹¹⁶ This meant that in the space of a single year *Die Frau* grossed the equivalent of twelve and a half times his former salary.

Subsequent titles achieved similar levels of success. *Illustrierte Sittengeschichte* first appeared in three volumes between 1909 and 1912, again published by Langen, each in a run of 10,000 copies.¹¹⁷ *Die Juden in der Karikatur* appeared in 1921 with 10,000 copies and again in

¹¹³ “Der Fuchs wird mein bestes Verlagsgeschäft, wetten?” Ibid.

¹¹⁴ Weitz, *Salonkultur und Proletariat*, 491.

¹¹⁵ Abret, 56.

¹¹⁶ Huonker, 48.

¹¹⁷ Weitz, *Salonkultur und Proletariat*, 492–93.

1928 with another 5,000.¹¹⁸ Even a less successful title such as *Der Weltkrieg in der Karikatur* suffered no financial losses. Fuchs' books were so popular that some of them were reprinted without permission in France.

Fuchs obviously benefitted tremendously from subscription sales, as did Langen, but the resulting exclusivity of his titles meant that their social impact would remain limited. Unlike the caricatures that were his subject matter or the magazines for which he once worked, these books were not works of mass persuasion as they were priced beyond the reach of the working class. If Fuchs had any reservations about producing Marxist literature for a nominally bourgeois audience, he did not voice them until after the World War when altered economic conditions pushed his prices even higher. In the introduction to *Die Juden in der Karikatur* in 1921, he writes that this increased cost "is the greatest inhibition when writing. Writing books, which for the most part can only be bought by people with increased income, that is almost literary prostitution. At least I find it so. To write for a new humanity would be exquisite, but not for the newly rich. Happy are those who experience this new humanity."¹¹⁹ Nevertheless he continued to operate more or less as before.

Langen Verlag was to experience a different fate. The publishing house had thrived during the Wilhelmine era and built a reputation as a front-line literary publishing house, but it began to accumulate massive debts from 1926 onwards. Only Fuchs' regular production of new

¹¹⁸ Ibid., 494.

¹¹⁹ "Und das ist für mich die größte Hemmung beim Schreiben. Bücher schreiben, die in der Hauptsache nur noch von Leuten mit gesteigertem Einkommen gekauft werden können, das ist fast literarischer Huredienst. Wenigstens empfinde ich es so. Für eine neue Menschheit zu schreiben, müßte köstlich sein, nicht aber für die neuen Reichen. Glücklich jene, die diese neue Menschheit erleben." Fuchs, *Die Juden in der Karikatur*, 3.

titles kept the company afloat during this time, but by May 1931 Langen could no longer stave off its creditors. It was sold for 500,000 Marks to the right-wing Deutschnationaler Handlungsgehilfen-Verband (German National Sales Aid Association or DHV), which categorically refused to publish Fuchs' work any longer.¹²⁰ However they did agree, with Fuchs' consent, to sell the publishing rights to Hesse & Becker, who in any case already possessed the printing plates. This transfer netted Langen Verlag an additional 200,000 Marks, but even this was not enough to prevent its absorption into Georg Müller Verlag the following year, forming a new company which still exists today: Langen-Müller Verlag.¹²¹ The secretive DHV operated through its public face, the Hanseatische Verlagsanstalt (Hanseatic Publishing House or HVA), which had been engaged since at least 1918 in an ideological program of buying up liberal and left-wing publishers. Gary Stark writes,

The HVA acquired the Albert Langen and Georg Müller houses in the late 1920s the better to carry on its anti-Semitic struggle. These two firms, according to the directors of the HVA, contained some of Germany's finest authors but because of financial difficulties, were in danger of falling into the hands of Jewish businessmen. By purchasing the houses, the HVA claimed it had guarded German national values by "foiling the

¹²⁰ Gary Stark notes that the term "deutschnationale" was one of the era's euphemisms for anti-Semitic." Gary D. Stark, *Entrepreneurs of Ideology: neoconservative publishers in Germany, 1890–1933* (Chapel Hill, NC: University of North Carolina Press, 1981), 24.

¹²¹ Abret, 67.

Jewish manipulators of German cultural life” and by “slamming the door shut on further Jewish infiltration into German publishing.”¹²²

By 1938 the remnants of Langen-Müller Verlag were brought under more direct Nazi control, and finally absorbed into the Nazi party’s own publishing house in 1942. Langen-Müller Verlag was not reinstated until 1954, whereupon it resumed publication of *Simplicissimus*.

Despite the bitter denouement of Fuchs’ long and productive relationship with Langen Verlag, he did not hesitate to take advantage of the new arrangement with Hesse & Becker. In 1931 and 1932 he arranged for reprints of his most popular works, including both volumes of *Die Karikatur der europäischen Völker*, the entire sets of *Illustrierte Sittengeschichte* and *Geschichte der erotischen Kunst*, as well as *Der Weltkrieg in der Karikatur* and *Die Juden in der Karikatur*. Even his books on Chinese pottery were reprinted. Sales were possibly bolstered by the public’s uncertainty about the future availability of these titles, seeing that two of Germany’s finest literary publishers were now in the hands of reactionaries, anti-Semites, and Nazi supporters. However, Hesse & Becker was uninterested in publishing any new works Fuchs might undertake, citing both the financial and political risks, and they discounted the sale price of his existing titles by 10 to 25%.¹²³

Posthumous printings of Fuchs’ books have proven to be far more sporadic. In the late 1970s a new wave of feminism sparked renewed interest in Fuchs’ work on erotica and the depiction of women, resulting in a fresh round of inexpensive paperback reprints. These included

¹²² Stark, 210.

¹²³ Huonker, 173.

Die Frau in der Karikatur, reprinted in 1979 by Verlag Neue Kritik in Frankfurt am Main, and a six-volume paperback set of *Illustrierte Sittengeschichte* edited by Thomas Huonker in 1985 and published by Fischer Taschenbuch Verlag, also in Frankfurt am Main. Two dissertations on Fuchs then appeared, one by Thomas Huonker (1985) and another by Ulrich Weitz (1991), inspiring even more reprints. Some of these, such as *Illustrierte Sittengeschichte*, were translated into French, Spanish, and even Russian; no English translations ever appeared, however. Finally, *Die Juden in der Karikatur* was reprinted in 1985 in a paperback edition produced by Verlag Klaus Guhl in Berlin. Fuchs' original texts have not seen a new publication since then, barring the occasional print-on-demand supplier today.¹²⁴

Mixed Critical Response

Yet these facts and figures can only tell us about the results of Fuchs' popularity, and not the reasons for it. Chief among these reasons was the plethora of historical images that he included in all his work, making every volume into its own collection. This meant that instead of laboriously collecting original images as Fuchs had done, or visiting libraries and antiquarians, readers could benefit directly from his efforts and possess the results for themselves. Other writers such as Thomas Wright had provided only written descriptions, or, as with Jules Champfleury, copyists were hired to make new illustrations that suited the printing requirements.

¹²⁴ The variable quality of print-on-demand services sometimes results in books based on unreadable scans. Other times the foreign language content cannot be read by the publisher, so that misspellings and misattributions occur in online descriptions. On occasion, though, as with Paris-based Hachette Livre, the quality of digital reprints is consistently very high.

But Fuchs made great efforts to reproduce the historical images directly. Walter Benjamin points out that “In contrast to the history books illustrated by living artists ... these were the first historical works illustrated with documentary pictures.”¹²⁵ Liliane Weissberg confirms that “... Fuchs dispensed with current illustrations, and in his search for truth or authenticity in his texts attaches historical images to carry his argument.”¹²⁶ This approach was only possible because of the introduction of photolithography, while an earlier generation of historians of caricature had to work with copies in the form of wood or copperplate engravings. This was the manner in which Wilhelm Blos’ history of the German Revolution (fig. 15) was “richly illustrated”. In that case the resulting illustrations produced for *Die Deutsche Revolution von 1848 bis 1849* appear equalized in style and scale, imposing a visual uniformity that occludes the diversity of the source images.

Fuchs preferred to reproduce historical images with photolithography, as close to their original size as possible, rather than having an engraver copy them. This provided an added value for the reader, who could now confront original images directly without the intermediary of a contemporary illustrator (fig. 16). Fuchs also wanted to be directly involved in the page-by-page layout of his books, to a degree that greatly exceeded the norms of the time. Abret writes that “he had the ambition to only use documents in his possession and not to use any image twice.”¹²⁷ He wanted to control where each image appeared on each page, so that every spread

¹²⁵ Benjamin, “Eduard Fuchs: Collector and Historian,” 229.

¹²⁶ Weissberg, 116.

¹²⁷ “... er besaß den Ehrgeiz, nur in seinem Besitz befindliche Dokumente zu verwenden und keine Abbildung zweimal zu bringen.” Abret, 62.

would present a harmonious balance between image and text, providing a pleasing visual experience. Thomas Huonker also saw that Fuchs was deeply involved in the page-by-page layout of his books, starting from his earliest days with the *Süddeutscher Postillon*. Image and text were always precisely balanced, even to the extent of ensuring that every full-page illustration was followed by a full page of text.¹²⁸ This provides some insight into the collecting practices which made Fuchs' books so popular—that is, they tended to be valued more for the entertainment provided by their images than for their subtle arguments. Fuchs' obsession with detail in *1848* and *Lola Montez*, informed by his experience as editor of *Süddeutscher Postillon*, resulted in a unique approach that greatly added to the immediate appeal and subsequent value of his work.

The quality of these reproductions was easily matched by their frequently piquant content, which could be either titillating or offensive depending on one's point of view. An idea of what a prospective buyer could expect appears in an advertisement to subscribers for the first volume of *Illustrierte Sittengeschichte*:

From the contents of the first volume, which will begin to appear in autumn, the following items may be mentioned: the Renaissance ideal of beauty, marriage in the 15th and 16th centuries, the beginning of individual sexual love, premarital chastity, the mechanical protection of marital fidelity, the history of bathhouse life, feasts and festivals, dance

¹²⁸ Huonker, 449–50.

and folk amusements, carnival games, wedding customs, prostitution and courtesans, etc.

The approximately 450 text illustrations and the 50 to 60 supplements will include all those documents in which the moral conduct of this revolutionary phase of development of modern European culture was manifested, and in addition to the most significant artistic creations, the rare and valuable single-sheet prints, also visually demonstrate important and peculiar cultural documents of the most varied kinds.¹²⁹

Little wonder that the books sold “brilliantly, despite or because of the high price.”¹³⁰

This is a point echoed by Abret, who writes that “Literature and art criticism reacted rather cautiously [to Fuchs] ... However, that never applied to the illustrations, which have

¹²⁹ “Aus dem Inhalt des ersten bandes, der im Herbst zu erscheinen beginnt, seien folgende Gegenstände genannt: Das Schönheitsideal der Renaissance, die Ehe im 15. und 16. Jahrhundert, der Beginn der individuellen Geschlechtsliebe, die voreheliche Keuschheit, der mechanische Schutz der ehelichen Treue, die Geschichte des Badehauslebens, Feste und Festtage, Tanz und Volksbelustigungen, Fastnachtsspiele, Hochzeitsgebräuche, die Prostitution und die Courtesane usw.

“Die etwa 450 Textillustrationen und die 50 bis 60 Beilagen werden alle jene Dokumente umfassen, in denen sich das sittliche Gebaren dieser revolutionären Entwicklungsphase der modernen europäischen Kultur manifestierte, und neben den bedeutsamsten künstlerischen Schöpfungen, den seltenen und wertvollen Einblattdrucken ebenso wichtige und eigenartige Kulturdokumente der verschiedensten Art bildlich demonstrieren.” Ernestine Koch, *Albert Langen: ein Verleger in München* (München: Albert Langen—Georg Müller Verlags, 1969), 148.

¹³⁰ *Ibid.*, 147.

always received unanimous praise.”¹³¹ Fuchs reproduced a great multitude of images in all of his books, presenting historical caricatures as a form of evidence for his “scientific” analysis—a characterisation of his work that would lend credence and legitimacy to the reproduction of “sensitive” images. It was important to Fuchs to include as many reproductions as possible, even if he did not have room to discuss them all. But this is not to say that his cultural histories are primarily portfolios of images with an accompanying historical narrative. Instead, image and word form an interwoven hypertext in Fuchs’ books, running in tandem with each other, sometimes in agreement and at other times in counterpoint. Luciana Zingarelli writes that “The text accompanies the illustrations, but in reality does not analyze them.”¹³² This is similar to the strategy of early modern writers who used the *superscriptio* and *subscriptio* (captions above and below an illustration) to problematize the main body of text, which was formally restricted to demonstrating knowledge of classical sources. Illustrations appeared scattered seemingly at random throughout the body of text, and were a constant reminder of the topic under discussion. Often an image was referred to many pages before or after its appearance, if at all, which necessitated a constant flipping back and forth as one reads. It was a very deliberate strategy to engage the reader haptically as well as optically, a strategy that Fuchs emulates.

¹³¹ “Die Literatur, bzw. Kunstkritik hat auf Die Frau in der Karikatur, wie auf frühere oder spätere Werke von Fuchs, eher zurückhaltend reagiert. Das gilt allerdings nie für die Illustrationen, denen immer einhellig Lob gezollt wurde.” Abret, 57.

¹³² “Der Text begleitet die Illustrationen und analysiert sie in Wirklichkeit nicht.” Zingarelli, 43.

Weissberg notes that "... Fuchs' essays do not analyse these images, but instead oddly parallel them, 'accompany' and refer to them..."¹³³ The truth of this is particularly evident in volumes where Fuchs collaborated with other authors, as he did not merely open his collections to another scholar's use but carefully selected the images to be included himself, again deciding how they would be laid out. One might almost say that he preferred to construct his arguments visually, writing with images. If, as Fuchs claimed, the material evidence of images could and should speak for itself, then more images would lend strength to his arguments. On the other hand, he may also have been motivated by the desire to share as much of his collection as possible, to give a second life to obscure and forgotten images.

In social democratic press circles, Fuchs' work was initially widely promoted, especially by his friends Karl Kautsky in the journal *Neue Zeit* and Fedor von Zobeltitz in his *Zeitschrift für Bücherfreunde*. Both *1848 in der Karikatur* and *Die Karikatur der europäischen Völker* were positively reviewed, but "there was an embarrassing silence after its scandalous sequel *Das erotische Element in der Karikatur* appeared."¹³⁴ Even less favourably received was the *Illustrierte Sittengeschichte*, which offended the bourgeois morality of the party faithful. Paul Kampffmeyer's negative review in *Sozialistische Monatshefte* was to be the last review of Fuchs' work in the social-democratic press. Huonker writes, "Kampffmeyer criticized the moral

¹³³ Weissberg, 116.

¹³⁴ "... so herrschte nach dem Erscheinen von dessen skandalumwitterter Fortsetzung "Das erotische Element in der Karikatur" im sozialdemokratischen Blätterwald peinliches Schweigen," Ibid., 81.

history with a sniff as ‘too narrowly defined (...). It is essentially only the story of one side of moral life: sexual morality.’”¹³⁵

The critical response to Fuchs’ work in the early years of the twentieth century is documented by Zingarelli, in which “a subdued struggle between the bourgeois press and the party organs is performed.”¹³⁶ Edgar Steiger, theatre critic for *Neue Zeit*, saw Fuchs’ emphasis on reproductions as the triumph of practice over theory.¹³⁷ Heinrich Schneegan, in a review in *Der Lotse*, criticized Fuchs’ *Karikatur der europäischen Völker* for its “overvaluation of the economic moment.”¹³⁸ The art historian Walther Gensel, writing for *Deutsche Rundschau*, faulted Fuchs for the “exaggerated political importance that is attributed to caricature,” while conceding that he nonetheless had surpassed Wright and Champfleury.¹³⁹ Friedrich Stampfer, who would later become editor in chief of *Vorwärts*, defended Fuchs by pointing out that “A

¹³⁵ “Kampffmeyer kritisierte die ‘Sittengeschichte’ nasertümpfend als ‘zu eng begrenzt (...). Sie ist im wesentlichen nur die Geschichte einer Seite des sittlichen Lebens: der sexuellen Sittlichkeit.’” Ibid.

¹³⁶ “Um das Werk wird ein verhaltener Kampf zwischen der bürgerlichen Presse und den Parteiorganen geführt, ...” Zingarelli, 41.

¹³⁷ “Steiger scheint im Werk von Fuchs mit Erleichterung den Vorrang der Praxis gegenüber der Theorie zu bemerken: eine Seite von Fuchs zählte mehr als die ganze Ästhetik von Vischer!” Ibid.

¹³⁸ “Im gleichen Jahr wird in einer Rezension von Schneegans in *Der Lotse* trotz der Anerkennung des Werkes die ‘Überbewertung des ökonomischen Moments’ kritisiert.” Ibid.

¹³⁹ “Obwohl Fuchs zugestanden wird, die Klassiker (Champfleury und Wright) übertroffen zu haben, bemängelt Gensel anschließend die übertriebene politische Bedeutung, die der Karikatur zugeschrieben wird, die ‘Glaubwürdigkeit der Quellen’, d. h., ein unpersönliches Vorgehen, und auch den Mangel an ‘Wissenschaftlichkeit’ (es fehlen bibliographische Hinweise).” Ibid., 42.

history of caricature is intellectual history. This means political and moral history.” At the same time he could not deny that the work suffered from “a lack of attention to the artistic facts as such,” most notably in what he perceived as an absence of any real formal analysis and lack of proper citations.¹⁴⁰ Such was the range of critical response to Fuchs’ work in the early years of his scholarly turn.

This disjuncture between his images and text, and the consistent lack of bibliographic references, was not the only defect that was noticed in Fuchs’ *oeuvre*. Of rather more concern was his “unhealthy” interest in sexual mores, which was seen in some circles as a threat to public morality. All of Fuchs’ commentary on sexuality and gender relations swings wildly between a dispassionate, materialistic standpoint and a curiously prudish reticence when certain invisible boundaries are crossed. Fuchs’ professed objectivity is therefore undermined by an innate chauvinism that subsumes gender inequality under the umbrella of class struggle. For example, in discussing the question of women’s emancipation in *Die Frau in der Karikatur*, Fuchs argues strongly for the equality of the sexes but nevertheless insists on the reality of biological difference—men belonging by nature in the public sphere as their creativity finds outlets in cultural and intellectual production, while women belong by nature in the private sphere as their creativity is by necessity restricted to the role of childrearing. Fuchs himself later criticized his book, complaining of the hurried nature of the production which prevented him from devoting the necessary time and attention to the text. As a result it “fails to satisfy requirements of modern scholarship” according to William A. Coupe, the late Head of German at the University of

¹⁴⁰ “Die Einschränkung des Werkes liegt in einer fehlenden Beachtung der künstlerischen Fakten als solcher und der bestehenden Beziehungen zwischen Basis und Überbau.” Ibid.

Reading. He writes, “Notoriously Fuchs took great pains to achieve an aesthetically pleasing balance between his illustrations and his text. He has produced a pleasing layout, but in so far as the text and the illustrations are a unit, the one explaining the other, the result is a disaster where scholarly criteria or even common sense seem to have been abandoned.”¹⁴¹ It is also unfortunate that Fuchs failed to adequately assess the conditions that would soon give rise to the “New Woman” in Germany: specifically the struggle for legal emancipation and suffrage, both of which would be realized after the First World War. At best we can agree with Coupe that “the material in Fuchs’ collection has retained a remarkable topicality and interest,”¹⁴² as evidenced by its revival in the 1970s.

Ironically it is in his most successful work, the *Illustrierte Sittengeschichte*, that Fuchs makes his weakest arguments. He was heavily influenced by the Social Darwinistic tendencies of August Bebel and especially of Karl Liebknecht, constantly returning to the biologically-determined roles of men and women, which he characterised as a “natural necessity.” Liebknecht in particular articulated the evolution of civilization, and of the individual, as logical extrapolations of the evolution of species (a concept that Darwin himself had vehemently opposed as a misapplication of his theory). Of this tendency in Fuchs, Sylvia Bovenschen and Peter Gorsen conclude that “...we must regard the attempt to transfer the evolutionary principle of biology to the social field and even to the field of ideologies, the history of art, as a failure.”¹⁴³

¹⁴¹ Coupe, “Eduard Fuchs and the ladies: ‘Die Frau in der Karikatur’ ninety years on,” 23–24.

¹⁴² *Ibid.*, 27.

¹⁴³ “Wir müssen heute den Versuch, das evolutionäre Prinzip der Biologie auf das soziale Gebiet und sogar den Bereich der Ideologien, der Kunstgeschichte zu übertragen, als gescheitert ansehen.” Bovenschen and Gorsen, 23.

Fuchs therefore decried any caricature that depicted the masculinisation of women or the effeminisation of men (both of which appear in the caricatures of Lola Montez) as “debauchery” and “decadence,” in unison with the many anti-feminist caricatures which he reproduced. While he was critical of the hyperbole of their exaggerations—such as those of the “bluestockings” by Thomas Rowlandson—he nevertheless fundamentally agreed with their reservations about the disastrous potential of a topsy-turvy world in which gender roles were reversed. Fuchs’ notion of gender equality therefore remained mired in bourgeois class values, overlooking the reality of working-class women’s lives. He wanted each gender to somehow attain social equality while remaining in its “natural” role, without disturbing the established order in which the male was “active” and “productive,” while the female remained “passive” and “reproductive.” Bovenschen and Gorsen continue: “Behind this misinterpretation and misprediction was the fear of being integrated into a new epoch of single-sex Amazonian rule, just as the same fear must be assumed behind the metaphysical concern for an autonomous, unrivalled female culture.”¹⁴⁴ M. Kay Flavell adds,

As Fuchs insists on the primacy of sexuality as a source of all creative cultural endeavour, he regards the free expression of sexuality as enhancing creativity, and associates sexual repression with cultural sterility. ‘Bourgeois morality’ and censorship are his twin bugbears. ...

¹⁴⁴ “Hinter dieser Fehlinterpretation und Fehlprophezeiung steckte die Angst, in einer neuen Epoche eingeschlechtlicher Amazonenherrschaft integriert zu werden, wie die gleiche Angst ebenso hinter der metaphysischen Sorge um eine autonome konkurrenzlose Weibliche Kultur vermutet werden muß.” Ibid., 24.

But there is a large blind spot in Fuchs' view of sexuality: he regards all sexual energy as male, and assigns women a purely passive role.¹⁴⁵

In this way the very real debates about emancipation, enfranchisement, and the marginalisation of women in public and private life, were constantly overshadowed by an irrational antifeminism driven by the fear of emasculation.

Despite all of this, Fuchs' series on moral history remained his most popular and financially successful work, the one for which he is most commonly remembered and which, more than anything else, cemented his reputation as a cultural historian. It was wildly popular upon its first publication, and there can be little doubt that the reason for this lies in its wealth of "indiscreet" and "naughty" imagery, reproduced liberally and with high quality. In Germany the very word "Sittengeschichte" was tinged with sexual innuendo, with the taint of something forbidden and licentious. This fact was not lost on either Fuchs or Langen, who both understood the erotic appeal of the collected images and their potential for commercial success.

Although moral history as a genre did not survive the passing of the Weimar era, Fuchs' contribution to that field remains one of its last, and easily most celebrated, examples. Huonker writes:

The point in time of this very last bloom of the genre of moral history, which lasted until the outbreak of the global economic crisis, is now somewhat surprising. Compared to the prudish prewar period with its stiff surface, the golden twenties had given the imperial capital Berlin a sex

¹⁴⁵ Flavell, 189.

appeal that was completely unimaginable at the time of the emperor, with an American touch, the symbol of which was Marlene Dietrich, who was still rivaling well-known Hollywood greats at an advanced age.

Nevertheless, this relaxation of manners with short skirts, bobcuts and American jazz music was apparently only so superficial that broad sections of the German population still relied on the outlet of moral history.

... The moral historians of the Weimar Republic had not become unemployed as a result of the relaxation of customs in the twenties, but only more frank, so that the sexualization of moral history had only now reached its climax.¹⁴⁶

¹⁴⁶ “Der Zeitpunkt dieser allerletzten Blüte des Genres der Sittengeschichte, die bis zum Ausbruch der Weltwirtschaftskrise anhielt, ist nun allerdings einigermaßen überraschend. Gegenüber der an ihrer steifen Oberfläche so pruden Vorkriegszeit hatten doch die Goldenen Zwanzigerjahre der Reichshauptstadt Berlin einen zu Kaisers Zeiten völlig unvorstellbaren, amerikanisch angehauchten sex appeal gebracht, dessen Symbol die noch in weit fortgeschrittenem Alter erfolgreich mit bekannten Hollywood-Größen rivalisierende Marlene Dietrich war.

“Dennoch war diese Lockerung der Sitten mit kurzen Röcken, Bubikopf und amerikanischer Jazz-Musik offenbar doch nur so oberflächlich erfolgt, daß nach wie vor breite Schichten der deutschen Bevölkerung auf das Ventil der Sittengeschichte angewiesen blieben.

“... Die Sittengeschichtsschreiber der Weimarer Republik waren durch die Lockerung der Sitten in den zwanziger Jahren nicht etwa arbeitslos geworden, sondern nur freimütiger, sodaß die Sexualisierung der Sittengeschichte erst jetzt ihren Höhepunkt erreicht hatte.” Huonker, 520, 522.

After the world wars, increased sexual liberation and a wider circulation of Freudian concepts obviated the need for moral history as an outlet or release valve for social tensions. Writers on sexuality and sexual mores from this time onwards tended to distance themselves from the prudishness of earlier literature, using “less antiquated titles” in favour of more modern terminology.

The Struggle Against Censorship

Fuchs’ standing as a public figure was additionally heightened by his many legal battles, which were well-documented in the German newspapers. Wilhelmine society, which was often linked to Victorian society in its attitudes towards gender, class, and sexuality, tended to react negatively to anything that smacked of overt sexuality or licentiousness. Books like *Die Frau in der Karikatur* and *Illustrierte Sittengeschichte* were frequently targeted by the police—especially as individual booksellers sometimes ignored the stipulation not to advertise or sell them directly to the public. But the prosecutors found that neither Fuchs nor Langen could be held accountable for these rogue sellers. Furthermore, after his early experiences in prison, Fuchs found many creative ways to circumvent the authorities, outwitting them wherever he could. For example, after he was acquitted of obscenity charges stemming from the publication of *Das erotischen Element in der Karikatur* in 1906, the subsequently expanded and revised *Geschichte der erotischen Kunst* included testimony in its foreword from the various academic supporters who had contributed to his acquittal.¹⁴⁷ As a result the public prosecutor refused to bring up new

¹⁴⁷ Huonker, 65.

charges. Later, when the first edition of *Illustrierte Sittengeschichte* was released, all images and text of potentially “immoral” subject matter were relegated to supplements that could only be purchased, once again, by subscription, while the main text, which was unobjectionable, was made available to the general public. Once again, attempts to press charges were unsuccessful, as even the police’s own hired expert—a professor of art history—could find no basis for the commission of an offence.¹⁴⁸ Further attempts to punish individual booksellers or owners of the material were invariably overturned in higher courts, and other attempts to press charges against Fuchs for the perceived “moral harm” of the *Sittengeschichte* failed to gain traction.

Even during the Weimar era, Fuchs was not free from harassment. Critics in the bourgeois press continually denounced him for his lack of “objectivity” in dealing with “dangerous” material, even accusing him of “pecuniary speculation” and dilettantism.¹⁴⁹ The courts also continued to press charges whenever they could, if not against Fuchs and Langen directly, then against any second-hand bookseller who allowed the work to be seen by the public. Throughout these struggles Fuchs represented himself in the courtroom, a task for which he was not only capable but also qualified. Although his formal education had been cut short in 1886 when he was forced to leave school, he later received a doctorate of law. This most likely occurred during his years with M. Ernst Verlag, where he had started out as a bookkeeper.

Early in 1928 Fuchs was called before a court in Munich to answer charges of disseminating obscene material, under the recently passed Schund- und Schmutzgesetz. With

¹⁴⁸ Ibid., 67.

¹⁴⁹ Zingarelli, 42.

Max Horkheimer testifying in his defence, Fuchs was acquitted on the grounds that the images reproduced in his books, while of a decidedly sensitive nature, were not meant to be viewed as pornography. They were instead intended to serve as evidence for his scientific studies of caricature and erotica. Although the judgement was in his favour, the book was forbidden, as usual, from being sold to the general public. An earlier judgement had stated unequivocally that “Women and children should be principally excluded” from exposure to such morally threatening material.¹⁵⁰ It was not until February of 1928 that further investigation into Fuchs’ publishing activity was officially terminated, given the unlikelihood of ever gaining a conviction.¹⁵¹

Benjamin’s Interpretation of Fuchs

Benjamin saw Fuchs through the lens of historical materialism, and his criticisms are far more constructive than the contemporary reviews which were largely congruent with the political *Zeitgeist*. Benjamin casts Fuchs as the romantic, Balzacian figure of the collector, a figure “motivated by dangerous though domesticated passions.”¹⁵² Such a man, he says, is driven not only to preserve the treasures of the past, but to exhibit them publicly as well, and Fuchs does so both through reproductions in his books and in the museum setting of his home. For Benjamin,

¹⁵⁰ Zingarelli, 47.

¹⁵¹ Huonker, 170.

¹⁵² Benjamin, “Eduard Fuchs, Collector and Historian,” 241.

collecting is a subjective activity that acts as a corrective to the linear narrative of historicism by examining items and images that have been marginalized from mainstream culture—what he calls “border disciplines.”¹⁵³ Benjamin’s progress on the essay followed a tortuous path, which has been recorded in his correspondence. His exchanges with Theodor Adorno (then director of the Institute for Social Research), his friend Gershom Scholem, and his editor Max Horkheimer allow us to see how his attitude towards the assignment changed as he made his way through the many volumes by Fuchs. A few tantalizing clues regarding his research, the essay’s reception, and the benefit he eventually derived from it, can be gleaned from these letters.

Nothing was more important to Walter Benjamin, or more fundamental to his critical practice, than the task of shattering widely-held assumptions about the nature of historical progress. These assumptions were shared by Marxists and fascists alike, and entailed a belief in the linear continuity of history and its progression towards a foreseeable end. Under these conditions the task of the historian was to mine history for its discoverable truths, which could then be instrumentalized in pursuit of progress. Influenced by Social Darwinism, or naturalism, this teleological conception of history is, for Benjamin, a product of bourgeois ideology based on a false consciousness towards the material objects of history. Casting historical progression as a utopian project acts to justify the status quo of class relations, by saying that history has and could only have developed in a way necessary to bring these conditions about, inevitably defining the present age as a step along the way to a predetermined end. He calls this notion “historicism,” emphasising its reified, ideological aspect which erases class struggle from memory. Benjamin instead posited a dialectical historical practice, one which would present a

¹⁵³ Ibid., 234.

radically new concept of allegory that would lay bare the ideological foundations of modernity. He named this practice “historical materialism,” borrowing the Marxist term for his own purpose, and in contrast to a merely descriptive theory.

What exactly is historical materialism? Briefly, it is the presenting of a historical object, which is present to us, in the context of both its pre- and post-history; that is to say, the material conditions of its creation are considered together with the accumulation of its various receptions over time in an exposition of its meaning. In the Fuchs essay he writes, “For the person who is concerned with works of art in a historically dialectical mode, these works integrate their pre- as well as post-history; and it is their post-history which illuminates their pre-history as a continuous process of change.”¹⁵⁴ Historical materialism, in Benjamin’s usage, is therefore not a reconstruction of meaning, for this would merely reinforce the historicist ideal of a singular truth. It is instead the construction of a new meaning, which follows in the wake of an explosive destruction of the mythic past, a blasting of the object from the reified continuum of history.¹⁵⁵

Benjamin encapsulated his ideas on historical materialism in his “Theses on the Philosophy of History” which he completed in 1940, but he first articulated them in his essay on Eduard Fuchs. Undertaken at the behest Horkheimer, the essay describes and criticises Fuchs’

¹⁵⁴ Ibid, 226.

¹⁵⁵ This ballistic terminology is borrowed from Benjamin’s discussions of history, and is indicative of the urgency he ascribed to his task. Of this rhetoric Werckmeister writes, “Benjamin’s terrorist metaphors betray an attempt to transfer his revolutionary designation of the writer to the historian, to whom history reveals its pervasive tendency towards liberation because he already has a revolutionary understanding of its destiny.” Otto Karl Werckmeister, “Walter Benjamin’s Angel of History, or the Transfiguration of the Revolutionary into the Historian” in *Critical Inquiry* 22 (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, Winter 1996): 255.

inconsistent application of the materialist dialectic. Benjamin was at first reluctant to undertake the assignment and found it difficult to engage with Fuchs' writing, but he eventually found a common methodological ground, connecting the material practice of collecting with dialectical exposition of the works of art. It is important to remember that Benjamin himself was also a collector, even during periods of financial hardship. His own collection of children's literature, which he describes in the 1931 essay "Unpacking my Library," is echoed in his approach to the Parisian arcades in the unfinished *Passagenwerk*, which begins with a painstaking collection of literary fragments. This archaeological effort, however, is only the first half of his project, the task of which is to reveal modernity's underlying ideology. Benjamin did not succeed in completing the exposition of this history due to his untimely death, but he described it as a form of montage or quotation, a series of interruptions which make room for the objects themselves to come before us in our present.

This task, and the role of the collector as a historian, needs further analysis. Although Benjamin was ambiguous about art historical research, and especially so of Fuchs' practice regarding his own collections, he nevertheless concluded that it was a problem worthy of attention. But at first Benjamin approached Fuchs with grave reservations. In his correspondence with Gershom Scholem over the two and a half years he worked on the essay, he described his difficulty in engaging with Fuchs' texts. He found an inherent contradiction woven throughout the work, which wavered between inherited historicist concepts and a true dialectical approach:

In his thinking, an old dogmatic and naïve idea of reception exists together with the new and critical one. The first could be summarized as follows: what determines our reception of the work must have been its reception by its contemporaries ... Next to this, however, we immediately find the

dialectical insight which opens the widest horizons in the meaning of a history of reception.¹⁵⁶

Benjamin focused on two major faults in Fuchs' thinking, the first of which was his strict moral stance. The *Illustrierte Sittengeschichte* in particular was deeply embedded in bourgeois morality despite Fuchs' aspirations to moral relativism. Benjamin wrote that this was inconsistent with a materialist approach, and was based on the widely held assumption that the bourgeois revolutions of the preceding century "are the genealogical root of a proletarian revolution."¹⁵⁷ These revolutions were not in fact designed to emancipate society from the burden of class structure itself, but rather to advance the growing power of the bourgeoisie over against the aristocracy. Bourgeois morality could therefore only act to uphold bourgeois power. Secondly, Benjamin criticized Fuchs' "biologism," the conflation of artistic creativity with biological virility. This "cult of creativity" relied heavily on conscious intention as an explanation for the artistic impulse, at the expense of "the class interest which is unconsciously at work within the individual."¹⁵⁸ Furthermore, despite some familiarity with Freud, Fuchs did not allow sublimation or transference to complicate his notion of artistic intent.

Despite these shortcomings, and the constant reappearance of teleology, Fuchs became a passionate, even a Romantic figure for Benjamin. To be sure, Fuchs' works often fell into the trap of merely illustrating an already given history with examples carefully culled from his

¹⁵⁶ Benjamin, "Eduard Fuchs, Collector and Historian," 228.

¹⁵⁷ *Ibid.*, 244.

¹⁵⁸ *Ibid.*, 247–48.

extensive collection. But it was his choice of subject matter—caricature and erotic art—that revealed a desire to problematize the unity and continuity of historical narratives. It was the activity of collecting, and the focus on the marginal, ephemeral, and consumable leavings of mass culture, that inspired Benjamin to see in Fuchs a “pioneer” of historical materialism. He writes, “Historicism presents the eternal image of the past; historical materialism presents a given experience with the past, an experience which stands unique. The replacement of the epic element by the constructive element proves to be the condition for this experience.”¹⁵⁹ This “constructive element” is the process of collecting itself:

What is decisive in collecting is that the object is detached from all its original functions in order to enter into the closest conceivable relation to things of the same kind. This relation is the diametric opposite of any utility, and falls into the peculiar category of completeness. What is this ‘completeness’? It is a grand attempt to overcome the wholly irrational character of the object’s mere presence at hand through its integration into a new, expressly devised historical system: the collection. And for the true collector, every single thing in this system becomes an encyclopaedia of all knowledge of the epoch, the landscape, the industry, and the owner from which it comes. ... Collecting is a form of practical memory, and of all the profane manifestations of ‘nearness’ it is the most binding.¹⁶⁰

¹⁵⁹ Ibid., 227.

¹⁶⁰ Walter Benjamin, *The Arcades Project* (The Belknap Press of Harvard University Press, 1999), 205.

Benjamin further distinguished the private collection from the public museum, which is beholden to the state as a repository of “showpieces” which serve to conflate the notion of cultural history with that of, once again, an uncritical belief in progress. “The private collection,” writes Michael P. Steinberg, “controlled as it is by the art market—to which Benjamin is no more sympathetic than Heidegger—has the paradoxical potential to liberate art from the commodifying and fetishizing power of the market.”¹⁶¹ It is the market then that produces a false consciousness towards the art object. And the museum, unlike the idiosyncratic private collection, is an institution for generating metanarratives, be they evolutionary, nationalistic, or cultural.

Benjamin also saw allegory everywhere and used it to express himself when a more scholarly approach might threaten to fall back into historicism. Most often quoted is his allegory of history inspired by a painting by Paul Klee, *Angelus Novus*, which he describes in his “Theses:”

This is how one pictures the angel of history. His face is turned toward the past. Where we perceive a chain of events, he sees one single catastrophe which keeps piling wreckage upon wreckage and hurls it in front of his feet. The angel would like to stay, awaken the dead, and make whole what has been smashed. But a storm is blowing from Paradise; it has got caught in his wings with such violence that the angel can no longer close them. The storm irresistibly propels him into the future to which his back is

¹⁶¹ Steinberg, 113.

turned, while the pile of debris before him grows skyward. This storm is what we call progress.¹⁶²

Benjamin's interpretation of *Angelus Novus* is a "construction of history that looks backward, rather than forward, at the destruction of material nature as it *has actually taken place*, [providing] dialectical contrast to the futurist myth of historical progress (which can only be sustained by forgetting what has happened)."¹⁶³ The angel is therefore the true historian, one who sees history as incomplete.

The other allegory that is relevant here is that of the collector himself. Steinberg also makes this connection: "The collector is an allegorist" whose collection acts as a kind of "voluntary memory"—akin to what Benjamin called mimesis, or remembrance. "The convergence of the collector and the historian involves the convergence of allegorical thinking and a developed understanding of historical meaning."¹⁶⁴ Benjamin posited an opposition between the flâneur's optical instincts and the collector's haptic response. "It must be kept in mind that, for the collector, the world is present, and indeed ordered, in each of his objects. Ordered, however, according to a surprising and, for the profane understanding, incomprehensible connection. This connection stands to the customary ordering and schematization of things something as their arrangement in the dictionary stands to a natural

¹⁶² Walter Benjamin, "Theses on the Philosophy of History" in *Illuminations* (New York: Schocken Books, 1968), 258.

¹⁶³ Susan Buck-Morss, *The Dialectics of Seeing: Walter Benjamin and the Arcades Project* (Cambridge: MIT Press, 1991), 95.

¹⁶⁴ Steinberg, 115.

arrangement.”¹⁶⁵ Furthermore, “collectors are physiognomists of the world of things,” finding connections and building structures of meaning beyond the accepted purview of historicist thought. For Benjamin, these objects, discarded and ruinous—what Susan Buck-Morss calls the “debris of mass culture”—were the “source of philosophical truth.”¹⁶⁶ In the *Passagenwerk* he writes,

The allegorist is, as it were, the polar opposite of the collector. He has given up the attempt to elucidate things through research into their properties and relations. He dislodges things from their context and, from the outset, relies on his profundity to illuminate their meaning. The collector, by contrast, brings together what belongs together; by keeping in mind their affinities and their succession in time, he can eventually furnish information about his objects. Nevertheless—and this is more important than all the differences that may exist between them—in every collector hides an allegorist, and in every allegorist a collector.¹⁶⁷

The activity of the collector as an allegorist is the activity of setting up an anti-history, an alternative narrative whose intent is to place the present in critique, rather than merely explaining or justifying the present as status quo. But Benjamin does not suggest that progress itself is a myth. Alfredo Lucero-Montano explains that “It would be a mistake to understand that Benjamin

¹⁶⁵ Benjamin, *The Arcades Project*, 207.

¹⁶⁶ Buck-Morss, ix.

¹⁶⁷ Benjamin, *The Arcades Project*, 211.

is against progress; he is against that man internalizes the logic of progress, and in this way he would indefinitely reproduce it.”¹⁶⁸ What is troubling is that ever since the Industrial Revolution, technical innovation has been taken as the model of progress of mankind itself, a mistake embedded even in Marxist discourse. Benjamin asks, “Must the Marxist understanding of history necessarily be acquired at the expense of the perceptibility of history? ... The first stage of this undertaking will be to carry over the principle of montage into history. That is, to assemble large-scale constructions out of the smallest and most precisely cut components. Indeed, to discover in the analysis of the small individual moment the crystal of the total event.”¹⁶⁹ Here then is the final piece of the puzzle. In order to give voice to this anti-history, the collector cannot rely on the accepted morphology of a linear continuum of history. He can at best offer flashes of insight through the use of montage, or quotation. This strategy interrupts the flow of historicist thought with its destructive power: “...interruption is one of the fundamental devices of all structuring. To give only one example, it is the basis of quotation. To quote a text involves the interruption of its context.”¹⁷⁰ In her introduction to Benjamin’s work, Hannah Arendt writes that “quotations have the double task of interrupting the flow of the presentation with ‘transcendent force’ and at the same time of concentrating within themselves that which is

¹⁶⁸ Alfredo Lucero-Montano, “Walter Benjamin’s Historical Materialism” in *Palinurus* 11 (2007), accessed March 16, 2021, <https://anselmocarranco.tripod.com/id56.html> .

¹⁶⁹ Benjamin, *The Arcades Project*, 461.

¹⁷⁰ Walter Benjamin, “What is Epic Theater?” in *Illuminations* (New York: Schocken Books, 1968), 151.

presented.”¹⁷¹ Benjamin’s writings are therefore replete with quotations, which serve not as scholarly verifications but as the main body of his work, especially in the case of the *Passagenwerk*. He writes, “This work has to develop to the highest degree the art of citing without quotation marks. Its theory is intimately related to that of montage.”¹⁷² Unfinished or not, it is the correlation and arrangement of quoted fragments that creates meaning, not the imposition of ideology. Furthermore, it is the present with its existing problems that needs to be clarified and elaborated, not the imagined perfect future when the problems have somehow already been overcome.

The same can be said of Fuchs, although his fragments are pictorial ones rather than literary. In Fuchs’ books the text is littered with reproductions which punctuate it, although only a fraction of them are directly addressed. In the 1848 essay every page has at least one image, and every layout is balanced for a pleasurable reading and viewing experience (fig. 17). Where the left page has an image centred between the two columns of text which flow around it, the right page follows suit. Where the left page has an image in the upper left corner, the right page has one on the lower right or lower half. Symmetrical layouts tend to be paired, as are asymmetrical layouts. The illustrations work together to enlarge the historical image of mass culture that he elucidates. No two consecutive spreads share the same layout, so every turn of the page reveals a fresh and surprising layout. In this particular example the essay is followed by sixteen full-page images on separate sheets, but in the majority of his books these larger images,

¹⁷¹ Arendt, “Introduction”, 39.

¹⁷² Benjamin, *The Arcades Project*, 458.

including colour plates, are also interspersed among the body of text. Normally these would be bunched together in a single signature, as was common practice even as late as the 1950s.

Perhaps the only people unhappy with Fuchs' arrangement were the bookbinders.

Fuchs took the persuasive capacity of satire quite seriously, unlike other historians who had merely reproduced the most popular or controversial images of bygone times. Although popular in the press, caricature was considered a minor genre even by its classic historians. Benjamin writes, "Fuchs was one of the first to develop the specific character of mass art and thus to germinate the impulses which he had received from historical materialism."¹⁷³ Nor did Fuchs take his cue from anthropologists or art historians such as Aby Warburg, Alois Riegl, and Heinrich Wölfflin, who had also turned their attention to non-canonical or anonymous works. Instead, Fuchs came to the writing of history from within the production of satire, as an editor of satirical content and occasional contributor of satirical poetry.

¹⁷³ Benjamin, "Eduard Fuchs, Collector and Historian," 251.

Conclusions

In art historical discourse today Eduard Fuchs has been relegated to the status of a fringe character, an independent scholar with no formal academic training whose published writings are difficult to find and even more difficult to interpret. Fuchs certainly did not consider himself to be an art historian, and Benjamin also refrained from describing him as such. In Fuchs' time formalist theories such as that of Heinrich Wölfflin were in ascendance, representing a positivist treatment of the art object that dislocated it from the conditions of its production. These principles had gained ground in opposition to the understanding that all cultural products, including works of art, were indicative of a *Weltanschauung*, which in turn begged the question of art history's boundaries. In other words, if any cultural product could serve as an indicator of historical truth, then there was no reason to focus exclusively on the category of art. But the formalist approach then cuts the work of art off from its historical context altogether in favour of a narrative of stylistic elements. These issues were still largely unresolved in Benjamin's time, thirty years later. Nevertheless Fuchs' work is important for today's art historians because his methodology, flawed and inconsistent though it may be, has broad implications for the study of visual culture. Benjamin already saw the need for this in the mid-1930s: "Fuchs has to be placed in this line of great and systematic collectors who were resolutely intent on a single subject matter. It is his idea to give back to the work of art its existence within the society from which it had been cut off. The work of art had been detached from society to such a degree that the place in which the collector found it had become the art market. ... From a historical point of view,

Fuchs' greatest achievement may be his having cleared the way for art history to be freed from the fetish of the master's signature."¹⁷⁴

Frederic Schwartz writes of Benjamin's deep-rooted ambiguity towards the discipline of art history: "Benjamin is profoundly sceptical that any study of works of art that takes its problematic to be fundamentally a historical one could ever yield any valid sort of knowledge about history *or* about the work of art."¹⁷⁵ Through his study of Fuchs, Benjamin eventually discovered the historical materialist approach that offered a way out of the trap of treating art objects as epiphenomena of a larger cultural history: "The fact that [Fuchs] considers scorned and apocryphal matters indicates his real strength. And he has cleared the way to these matters as a collector all by himself, for Marxism had but shown him the beginning."¹⁷⁶ More than a centring of the margins or a displacement of one narrative with another, a historical materialist approach to art does away with narrative altogether in favour of a 'state of unrest.' Change still occurs, but it is no longer cast as upwards progression. Instead of a line, it draws a constellation: between the art object, the conditions of its production, its original reception, changes to that reception over time, and to its present interpretation. The work of art only ever exists *for us*. Art history therefore becomes an ongoing discourse or dialogue, rather than a fixed exegesis of the art object.

¹⁷⁴ Ibid.

¹⁷⁵ Schwartz, 110.

¹⁷⁶ Benjamin, "Eduard Fuchs, Collector and Historian," 252.

Historical materialism then, consists of two interrelated practices for Benjamin: the initial allegorical activity of collecting, and the subsequent expository activity of quotation and montage. Its purpose is to “brush history against the grain,”¹⁷⁷ to expose the ideology that characterises the present, the ideology of modernity which perpetuates existing class structures with its historicist justifications. He writes, “The products of art and science owe their existence not merely to the effort of the great geniuses that created them, but also to the unnamed drudgery of their contemporaries. There is no document of culture which is not at the same time a document of barbarism. No cultural history has yet done justice to this fundamental state of affairs, and it can hardly hope to do so.”¹⁷⁸ The foundation of modernity, the historical metanarrative we have inherited from the Enlightenment and the bourgeois revolutions, is this barbarism, the subjugation and disempowerment of the working class. “Barbarism lurks in the very concept of culture—as the concept of a fund of values which is considered independent not, indeed, of the production process in which these values originated, but of the one in which they survive.”¹⁷⁹ These values are perpetuated by historicism in the service of the ruling class, whereas “...historical materialism does not reconstruct history by repeating the present, but constructing its ‘interferences.’”¹⁸⁰ Instead of linearity, discontinuity; instead of unity, incompleteness; instead of a blindness towards the past, an engagement with it. “These

¹⁷⁷ Benjamin, “Theses on the Philosophy of History,” 257.

¹⁷⁸ Benjamin, “Eduard Fuchs, Collector and Historian,” 233.

¹⁷⁹ Benjamin, *The Arcades Project*, 467–68.

¹⁸⁰ Lucero-Montano, *ibid.*

discontinuities are no less than the outcome of the *aporias* (inherent contradictions) of the present. In short, the task of historical materialism is to construct an alternative history...”¹⁸¹

This is the task that Fuchs undertakes.

¹⁸¹ Ibid.

Chapter 3: The Study of Caricature

Fuchs and his Antecedents

Fuchs' survey histories of caricature belong to a small body of literature that extends only from the mid-nineteenth century to the present day, shifting between various fields of study. Caricature was first cast as a historical subject fairly late in its development, with Thomas Wright's 1851 biography of James Gillray, followed by *A History of Caricature and Grotesque* published in 1865. Jules Champfleury followed suit with a series of period-based studies published between 1876 and 1888. These were small, affordable volumes with numerous illustrations based on the original material. Taking a different approach, John Grand-Carteret's books published between 1885 and 1908 were organized thematically, making use of lithographic reproductions instead of engraved copies. Then in 1892 a book appeared that could easily be mistaken for one of Fuchs' own, when Arsène Alexandre published a major survey history of caricature, *L'Art du rire et de la caricature* (The Art of Laughter and of Caricature). Like Wright and Champfleury, he traces the history of caricature from ancient Egypt through the grotesque of the Middle Ages to the modern period. Fuchs of course was familiar with all of these authors, but was mostly influenced by Grand-Carteret and his organization of the subject into themes and motifs.

By the turn of the century, histories of caricature were appearing more frequently, as the subject had become immensely popular. Most of these were of middling quality and offered nothing substantially new, but there were still a few that stood out. Chief among them are Gustave Kahn's 1907 volume on women in caricature, and another in 1908 on Europe's princes

“in the moral mirror of caricature”. Curt Netto published a unique volume on Japanese caricature in 1901, a subject that had previously been treated in Champfleury’s 1888 book *Le musée secret de la caricature* (The Secret Museum of Caricature). And finally there were Fuchs’ direct competitors such as Karl-Friedrich Flögel, Georg Hermann, Cary von Karwath, and Johannes Scheible. Although popular at the time of publication, their contributions did not experience the same longevity and did not make a lasting impact on the history of caricature.

It is of particular interest that none of these authors were art historians. Wright (1810–1877) was an antiquarian with a specialization in the Middle Ages. He was also a gentleman-archaeologist, who had supervised the excavation of a Roman site. He shared Fuchs’ interest in moral history, documenting the “Domestic Manners and Sentiments” of the Middle Ages. His books ranged broadly across many forms of mass culture, encompassing poems, ballads, carols, essays, letters, and a variety of popular literary works. He was the first, however, to elevate the graphic art of caricature for serious consideration.

His immediate successor, Jules François Felix Fleury-Husson (1821–1889), was an art critic and novelist writing under the pen name of Champfleury. His articles in the magazine *L’Artiste* promoted the paintings of Gustave Courbet and the then little-known El Greco, as representatives of the Realist movement. Like Wright he took a similarly international view of the origins and development of caricature, but drew further connections between European caricature and Caragueuz, the satirical marionette theatre of the Arabic world, as well as the caricature of Japan during the Meiji Restoration.

John Grand-Carteret (1850–1927) was a French journalist and popular historian of art and fashion, who, like Fuchs, was an avid collector of graphic material. He published larger books on visual culture filled with illustrations, taking advantage of the new printing method of

photolithography. However, instead of a sweeping survey history, his volumes of the 1880s address the “mores and caricature” of individual nations. Later works focussed on specific figures and themes such as the caricature of Otto von Bismarck or of Emile Zola, the Franco-Russian Alliance, and, interestingly, the depiction of men in “the mirror of caricature.” While several authors of this period, including Fuchs, wrote about the stereotypical depiction of women, Grand-Carteret is the only one to broach the question of homosexuality.

Arsène Alexandre (1895–1937) was another well-known art critic whose articles in *Le Figaro* promoted the Impressionist painters and the Salon des Refusés. He was among the first to use the term “pointillism” to describe the work of Georges Seurat and Paul Signac. In 1894, inspired by the Dreyfus Affair, he helped establish the satirical magazine *Le Rire* (Laughter) and became its first editor. One of France’s longest-lived satirical magazines, it continued to publish until the 1950s, followed by a brief revival in the 1970s. Alexandre approached caricature differently than his predecessors, publishing a single, lavishly-illustrated survey history instead of smaller, more affordable books. In many ways, *L’Art du rire et de la caricature* prefigured Fuchs’ *Die Karikatur der europäischen Völker* a decade later.

Gustave Kahn (1859–1936) was a French symbolist poet and early proponent of free verse. His luxury volume on the depiction of women in caricature—*La femme dans la caricature française* (1907)—was published simultaneously in France and Germany, the same year as Fuchs’ own *Die Frau in der Karikatur*. A subsequent volume, *Europas Fürsten im Sittenspiegel der Karikatur* (Europe’s Princes in the Moral Mirror of Caricature), was published in Germany in 1908. He was a strong supporter of Emile Zola during the Dreyfus Affair, and was devoted to the fight against anti-Semitism.

Also of note is one of Fuchs' contemporaries, Georg Hermann (1871–1943), who was a bestselling German-Jewish novelist. Hermann (actually Georg Hermann Borchardt) provides a largely uncritical survey of caricature in his *Die deutsche Karikatur im XIX Jahrhundert* (German Caricature in the 19th Century) of 1901. This softcover book is short but well-illustrated and would have appealed to the bourgeois as well as the working class. It was larger than the handbook format of the cheaper volumes offered by Champfleury, but consisted of a mere 132 pages as opposed to the 400–500 pages one typically finds in a volume by Fuchs, Kahn, or Alexandre. Hermann pointedly objected to Fuchs' politically engaged approach, claiming to value the stance of the neutral observer. This was a common stance among historians, the better to associate their activity with empirical science. As a result, Hermann remains firmly embedded in the historicism that Benjamin finds so undialectical. Of course, Hermann would only have known Fuchs' 1898 treatise at the time of publication, as Fuchs' *Karikatur der europäischen Völker* did not appear until shortly afterwards. Hermann is the only one of Fuchs' immediate competitors to respond directly to his work.

From this list it is apparent that for the fifty years prior to Fuchs' own survey history, caricature had enjoyed increasing success as a historical subject. But its historians were popular writers rather than academics: art critics, novelists, moral historians, and satirists. Fuchs fits in with his antecedents exceedingly well. By contrast, the art historians of the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries did not normally extend their purview to caricature, focussing instead on the canonical arts of painting, sculpture, and architecture. The only major exceptions would have been Aby Warburg and Alois Riegl, who were initially considered outliers in the field, or altogether outside of it. Warburg had coined the term *Kulturwissenschaft* to describe what eventually came to be known as cultural anthropology, extending the gamut of visual culture far

beyond the traditional canon of academic arts. Meanwhile, Riegl characterized stylistic change in art as *Kunstwollen* (literally the volition of art), which came about partly as a result of changes to the cultural conditions of production. Riegl defined style very broadly as something that found expression in *all* forms of cultural production:

[T]he *Kunstwollen* of antiquity, especially in the final phase, is practically identical with other major forms of expression of the human *Wollen* during the same period. All such human *Wollen* is directed towards self-satisfaction in relation to the surrounding environment (in the widest sense of the word, as it relates to the human being externally and internally). Creative *Kunstwollen* regulates the relation between man and objects as we perceive them with our sense; this is how we always give shape and color to things. Yet man is not just a being perceiving exclusively with his sense (passive) but also a longing (active) being. Consequently, man wants to interpret the world as it can most easily be done in accordance with his inner drive... The character of this *Wollen* is always determined by what may be termed the conception of the world at a given time [*Weltanschauung*] (again in the widest sense of the term), not only in religion, philosophy, science, but also in government and law.¹⁸²

¹⁸² Alois Riegl, *Late Roman Art Industry*, translated by Rolf Winkes. (Rome: Giorgio Bretschneider Editore, 1985), 231. First published as *Die spätromische Kunstindustrie nach den Funden in Österreich-Ungarn* (Vienna, 1901).

These ideas did not take hold for some time however, and the mainstream of art historical discourse during Fuchs' lifetime continued to defend its traditional boundaries. It also continued to envision a clear hierarchy of media with painting at its apex, followed by sculpture, architecture, and the decorative arts. Even within painting, various subjects were held in different degrees of esteem: history painting ranked highest, followed by allegorical painting, then portraiture, genre painting, landscapes, and still life. Caricature was not even considered an art form *per se*, but rather as part of the stock in trade of the lowly draughtsman.

Physiognomy and Pathognomy

Despite the low esteem in which it was held by art historians, caricature shares several points of contact with the painted portrait in its historical development. This fact was not lost on Grand-Carteret, whose book on "Napoleon in images" devotes equal space to painted portraits and to caricatures. Both of these art forms appear in their modern form around the same time: the late Renaissance to early modern period. Prior to the Renaissance, painted figures were heavily coded with allegorical symbols for identification, portraying religious or mythological characters. Realism as such was not highly valued. Caricatures, in the form of woodcut illustrations, also tended to portray social types rather than individuals, easily identified by the accoutrements of their trade or position: the soldier, the aristocrat, the clergyman, the tradesman, but also the prostitute, the drunkard, the beggar, the Jew. But with the growing influence of humanist philosophy at the onset of the early modern period, both portraiture and caricature underwent significant changes. Portrait artists began to emphasise the *likeness* of their sitters, so that they could be easily and unambiguously recognized by those who knew them. Caricature

followed suit in the form of the “loaded portrait,” or *caricare*. Striking caricatures by Carracci and Bernini famously adorned their sketchbooks, perfectly capturing the likeness of their subjects with a few simple lines (fig. 18). While social types continued to appear in popular pamphlets, and later in broadsheets, the caricature of recognizable public figures originates from this period. Even the word “caricature” dates from this time. *Caricare*, in Italian, means to charge or to load, and comes originally from Latin, *carricare*, meaning to load a cart. Thus, the “loaded portrait” of the Italian Renaissance represents an etymological shift from the literal to the metaphorical, as the caricature is loaded or charged with meaning.

Although examples of caricature can be found as early as the first century (fig. 19), it was not taken seriously as a form of satire until the 1500s. Satire—broadly defined as the use of humour for the purpose of serious social commentary—had initially found expression on the stage (Aristophanes, Sophocles), and later in poetry (Horace, Juvenal) and literature (Swift, Rabelais). These connections had already been explored by Wright, and further elaborated by Champfleury and Alexandre. It was not until in the early modern period that satire could be disseminated in the form with which we are now most familiar: the mass-reproduced image. Today we view caricature as a form of visual satire, in which the elements that characterize a person or social type are exaggerated for the sake of humorous subversion. The methods by which this is achieved have their roots in two related discourses that inform both the practitioners and historians of caricature: physiognomy and pathognomy.

In the ancient world, physiognomy was the practice of judging a person’s character based on the appearance of the fixed features of the skull and the facial muscles at rest. It was a *bona fide* science whose origins predate the Aristotelian corpus. Although not empirical as we now understand science, neither was it a pseudoscience or an occult science, as it tends to be

characterized today. Physiognomic practice was founded on the belief that there was a connection between appearance and disposition, and that each could affect the other (although this is in fact a case of *petitio principii*, assuming the truth of an unproven premise). The practice was guided by widely-shared allegorical knowledge, through which one could interpret the features and hence the disposition of another. But this allegorical knowledge, largely borrowed from the Aesopic tradition with its animal characters,¹⁸³ was dropped from consideration during the Enlightenment, which demanded physical evidence and logical proofs. If we were to investigate the lines of causality in physiognomic practice—for instance, to ask whether character was determined by the features or vice versa, or if they were merely correlative with some third, unknown factor—we would be asking the wrong sort of questions. Such things were in fact heavily debated during the Enlightenment, and the practice became increasingly rigid and doctrinal as it struggled to establish universal rules. It abandoned allegorical interpretation altogether, finally culminating in the dead end of phrenology with its taint of eugenics. Ultimately physiognomy could not provide a testable hypothesis, and its results, dependent as they were on induction rather than deduction, were inconsistent and therefore inconclusive.

Pathognomy, by contrast, was the study of expressions, of the unfixed features of fleeting emotional states, commonly called the “passions.” Like modern portraiture and caricature, it too originated during the early modern period. The Swiss theologian Johann Caspar Lavater writes:

Physiognomy, as opposed to pathognomy, is the knowledge of the signs of the powers and inclinations of men. Pathognomy is the knowledge of the

¹⁸³ Wright in particular noted the introduction of animal motifs into satire in Roman theatre, and their frequent reappearance in the pamphlets of the Middle Ages.

signs of the passions. Physiognomy, therefore, teaches the knowledge of the character at rest; and pathognomy of character in motion. ... All people read the countenance pathognomically; few indeed read it physiognomically. Pathognomy has to combat the arts of dissimulation; physiognomy has not.¹⁸⁴

The pathognomist's art is therefore of a quite different nature to that of the physiognomist, or indeed of the caricaturist. Painters in particular found pathognomy to be of great value in constructing meaningful narratives, while caricaturists continued to employ physiognomy to reveal a subject's underlying character. The French court painter Charles Le Brun (1619–1690), famous for his role in establishing the first Royal Academy, created a handbook that would guide artists in the depiction of emotional expressions. He frequently lectured on the subject, and was posthumously published in 1698 under the title *Conférence sur l'expression*. Here he presents a systematic attempt to chart the features as they are distorted by a variety of emotional states. This effort lies as firmly within pathognomy as it does outside of physiognomy, as evidenced by Le Brun's use of a generic, genderless face upon which the varying emotions can be mapped (fig. 20). The artist approaches these related fields from, as it were, the opposite end: rather than interpreting a given set of features in order to discover character, character is instead moulded by manipulation of the features. Fleeting emotions had to be convincingly portrayed in order for the viewer to interpret faces in a desired fashion, one that supported the narrative of the image without leaving room for ambiguity.

¹⁸⁴ Johann Caspar Lavater, *Essays on Physiognomy*, 19th edition, translated by Thomas Holcroft (London: Ward, Lock & Bowden, 1878), 12.

Depicting and interpreting emotional expression continues to be important today: we still judge others according to their appearance, while simultaneously engaging in self-fashioning to evince a desired judgement of ourselves. We still attempt to dissimulate for a wide variety of purposes, and we still try to lift the veil of dissimulation in others. And visual artists—both portraitists and caricaturists—still use their knowledge of physiognomy and pathognomy to *construct* meaning, for the sake of a desired interpretation. By bringing physiognomy and pathognomy together, both the likeness and the character of a subject can be captured. Of this universal practice Fuchs observes:

People not only shape their gods with their own hands according to a certain ideal image, they also arbitrarily shape their earth-related favourites, both according to the same process. This is a phenomenon that, even if it was not recognized for a long time and remained unobserved because it happened unconsciously, today is confirmed every day anew and ever more strikingly by popular psychology. ...people have the habit of eliminating everything that does not suit them from the physiognomy of all those who claim their interest more or for a longer period of time, while increasing and exaggerating what they like. It happens just as much in the divine as in the diabolical sense, because the masses always look for and find the truth they like in the extreme. These procedures are extended

just as much to physical physiognomy as to the psychological character-image.¹⁸⁵

The link between everyday physiognomic interpretation and the manipulation of physiognomy for satirical effect did not go quite as unnoticed as Fuchs suggests. Seventeenth-century commentators on the caricature of their own time were greatly concerned with techniques and aesthetics, asking how and why comic effects could be produced and whether it was morally acceptable to do so. For example, in his 1601 treatise *De humana physiognomia*, Giambattista Della Porta relates the story of Socrates' encounter with the Syrian physiognomist Zopyrus. His students attempt to trick the visitor into making absurd claims about Socrates' character, but Socrates surprises them by confirming the poor evaluation he receives. In essence, Zopyrus' negative impression of Socrates was entirely correct, but the philosopher had taken steps to overcome his base nature. This was the art of self-fashioning, which could be used to improve a naturally immoral character. But as dissimulation, it could also be used to mislead

¹⁸⁵ “Die Menschen formen sich nicht nur eigenhändig ihre Götter nach einem bestimmten Idealbild, sie formen sich ebenso willkürlich deren erdverwandte Lieblinge und zwar beide nach demselben Verfahren. Das ist eine Erscheinung, die, wenn sie auch lange nicht erkannt wurde und unbeobachtet blieb, weil sie unbewußt vor sich ging—heute von der Völkerpsychologie täglich aufs neue und immer markanter bestätigt wird. Das sich immer gleichbleibende Verfahren ist das Interessante daran. Will man es kurz zusammenfassen, so kann man sagen: die Menschen haben die Gewohnheit, aus der Physiognomie all derer, die ihr Interesse stärker oder länger in Anspruch nehmen, jeweils all das auszumerzen, was ihnen nicht zusagt, dagegen das zu steigern und zu übertreiben, was ihnen behagt. Es geschieht das ebensowohl im göttlichen wie im teuflischen Sinne, denn die Masse sucht und findet die ihr genehme Wahrheit immer im Extrem. Diese Verfahren dehnt sie ebensowohl auf die körperliche Physiognomie wie auf das psychische Charakterbild aus.” Fuchs, *Die Karikatur der europäischen Völker vom Altertum bis zur Neuzeit*, 448.

others or to hide one's evil intentions. This disjuncture between appearance and character was of particular interest to caricaturists, who became adept at exposing it in their subjects.

By the mid-nineteenth century, Wright and Champfleury had charted a basic history of caricature that linked it to classical satire and to the visual exploration of physiognomy and pathognomy in the early modern period. This historical narrative was repeated by Grand-Carteret, Alexandre, and others. By the time Fuchs began the monumental task of compiling his own history of caricature, the field was already well enough established that it could be said to have formed a canon. That is to say that there was a high level of congruity among the various writers regarding whom they considered to be the most significant caricaturists, and which works had the most historical impact. One might even conclude, given this high level of agreement, that a canon was already largely in place by the time of Wright's first histories.

The construction of a canon, and the repetition of a linear narrative, is of course the very definition of historicism. Wright and his French successors established a historical narrative that showed caricature becoming more sophisticated over time, adapting to new reproduction technologies as well as to new social structures. Fuchs' contribution to the historical study of caricature was to upset this tradition, by viewing the given narrative through the lens of class struggle. Later, after the interregnum of the world wars, mid-twentieth century historians of caricature turned to psychoanalysis and sociology for their methodological frameworks, with sporadic forays into semiotics. Nevertheless, they did not abandon the canonical historical narrative that they had inherited, but continued to employ it and to invoke the pedigree of their nineteenth-century forebears. Fuchs' body of work lies precisely at this interregnum, and it is therefore prudent to compare his arguments—and his images—to those who came before him.

Case Study: Historiography of James Gillray

When Wright published his biography of James Gillray (1756–1815) in 1851, he held the famous caricaturist in the highest esteem. The prolific artist’s skills were unmatched: he was known to draw directly on the engraving plate without preparatory sketches. This was quite a feat as the engraving had to be done in reverse—including the text—so that it would be mirrored correctly when printed. But Gillray was also a pathetic figure, whose creative genius was tempered by a lifetime of alcoholism. Gillray had courted controversy through his unusual partnership with Hannah Humphrey, owner and proprietor of the print shop that bore her name. He lived on the premises, and she remained unmarried, which led to no end of public gossip and speculation. But Gillray’s prolific output and sharply satirical portrayals of George III and Napoleon made the little shop on St. James Street famous. It is entirely to Gillray that we can attribute the persistent (and incorrect) belief that Napoleon was below average height.

Thanks largely to Wright, Gillray was rediscovered by art historians and his work has since been endlessly reproduced. Among his most famous and widely-known images today is “The Plumb-pudding in Danger” (fig. 21). It was a typical example of the collectable broadsheets of the period, which were sold individually or as part of a set, and made available both as an affordable black-and-white print or as a more expensive hand-coloured version (colour printing had not yet been introduced to Europe). “Plumb-pudding” depicts the newly-crowned Emperor Napoleon sitting at table with the British prime minister Pitt the Younger. Wearing equally ostentatious hats, they greedily carve into an enormous, steaming plum pudding in the shape of the globe. Gillray’s caption reads, “The Plumb-pudding in danger; or, State Epicures taking *un Petit Souper*. The great globe itself and all which it inherit is too small to satisfy such insatiable

appetites.” Pitt carves into the Atlantic, representing Britain’s naval dominance, while the diminutive Napoleon slices into the bulk of continental Europe. The simple comparison of “insatiable appetites” with imperial ambition struck a chord that remains easy to interpret even two centuries later.

The caricature works on a number of levels, even without the expository captions. The figures of Pitt and Napoleon would have been easily recognized by their familiar accoutrements, but also by virtue of repetition: they were frequent subjects not only in Gillray’s broadsheets but in many other artists’ as well. The over-sized plum-pudding was a dessert associated with Christmas (at that time the word “plum” with its archaic spelling actually referred to raisins). The greed of the diners is expressed in their wide-eyed focus and their posture as they lean in to serve themselves. Napoleon—or “Little Boney” as Gillray christened him—is so anxious that he is on the edge of his seat. They use their swords, symbols of military strength and state authority, as knives, and their forks are enlarged to match. Forks had only just started to be more widely accepted in Britain, as they had long been regarded as a feminine affectation imported from continental Europe. They would have been adopted by the upper classes first, so the stigma attached to them might still have been apparent, implying a certain delicacy of nature in their use. Finally, humorous contrasts abound: the tall, lanky figure of Pitt versus the short, child-like stature of Napoleon; the palpable impatience amid the finery of the setting; the greatly enlarged hats making a mockery of their competition.

Disappointingly, Wright offers no more than a brief description of “Plumb-pudding:” “The new Emperor, and his opponent the English Minister, helping themselves—one taking the land, the other the sea. On the overtures made by the new Emperor for a reconciliation with

England in the January of 1805.”¹⁸⁶ Many of Wright’s descriptive entries are similarly abbreviated, with only occasional instances of longer explanations spanning several pages. These are generally reserved for caricatures that involve minor characters or events which had already faded from common memory, and therefore required additional background for Wright’s audience. It may seem surprising that Wright gave so little attention to this most famous of Gillray’s political caricatures, but he could not yet have known how much his own efforts would renew interest and appreciation for the artist, or which of his caricatures would capture the imagination of subsequent generations. Wright also chose to forgo illustrations in his Gillray volume, favouring verbal descriptions instead, although he does include some illustrations in his *A History of Caricature and Grotesque*, published fifteen years later. Nevertheless, “Plumb-pudding” can serve as a common point of comparison with which to compare the methodologies employed by Wright and his immediate successors: Champfleury, Grand-Carteret, Alexandre, and of course Fuchs himself.

In 1887 Champfleury briefly turned his attention to Gillray in the third of his caricature histories, *Histoire de la caricature sous la République, l’Empire et la Restauration* (History of Caricature under the Republic, the Empire and the Restoration). Following two earlier volumes on the caricature of the ancient world and caricature from the Middle Ages to the Renaissance, Champfleury contrasts Gillray’s political caricatures with the social (i.e., erotic) caricatures of his countryman Thomas Rowlandson. Rather than listing and annotating individual works, he instead writes broadly about Gillray’s entire oeuvre, noting his marked hostility towards the French Revolution and his relentless attacks against George III and Napoleon. He even quotes

¹⁸⁶ Wright, 240.

Wright, acknowledging him as “a sober archaeologist, who treats caricature as graphic art no more to be overlooked than a miniature manuscript, a church window, or an incunabula.”¹⁸⁷

Where Wright, however, elevated Gillray above all others with what can only be termed a hagiography, Champfleury followed a method closer to art-historical practice by comparing the work of two artists. By doing so the similarities and differences between them are thrown into relief, making his task at once easier and more fruitful. Champfleury also includes some illustrations—engraved copies of the examples he mentions—allowing him to abbreviate his descriptions. However, “Plumb-pudding” does not appear among them.

Grand-Carteret was the first to provide an actual reproduction of “Plumb-pudding” in his 1895 volume on Napoleon, and it is just barely large enough, at half the page, to make its text readable (fig. 22). But he, like Wright, says little of substance, once again merely listing works in order of appearance with brief explanatory notes: “The character who thus urges Bonaparte to cut up the geographic pudding is Pitt. While Bonaparte cuts himself out, with undisguised voracity, Holland, France, Spain, the English minister plunges his fork into the ocean, like a trident.”¹⁸⁸ Grand-Carteret was among the first to use photolithography for his reproductions, instead of copied illustrations, giving his readers a better sense of the original artwork. And like

¹⁸⁷ “Wright est un archéologue plein de mesure, qui traite la caricature en art graphique qu’on ne doit pas plus passer sous silence qu’une miniature de manuscrit, un vitrail d’église ou un incunable.” Jules Champfleury, *Histoire de la caricature sous la République, l’Empire et la Restauration*, 2nd expanded edition (Paris: E. Dentu, 1877), 243.

¹⁸⁸ “Le personnage qui aude ainsi Bonaparte à dépecer le pudding géographique est Pitt. Tandis que Bonaparte se découpe, avec une voracité non déguisée, la Hollande, la France, l’Espagne, le ministre anglais plonge dans l’Océan sa fourchette, en guise de trident.” John Grand-Carteret, *Napoléon en images: estampes anglaises (portraits et caricatures)* (Paris: Librairie de Firmin-Didot et Cie., 1895), 95.

Champfleury, doing so freed him to address the content of the images rather than merely their appearance.

Alexandre, like Champfleury, dwelled to a great extent on French caricature, devoting only a short chapter to the British trifecta of Gillray, Rowlandson, and Cruikshank. He also followed Champfleury's lead in speaking more generally about Gillray's career, and only names a few caricatures in passing. Interestingly, he prefers to emphasise the artist's social commentary, of which it is an understatement to say that this is not what he was known for. Alexandre barely even mentions the caricatures of Napoleon which dominate Gillray's oeuvre, saying only that one in particular (which he leaves unnamed) would be "very entertaining to compare with the painting by our [Jacques-Louis] David." It is almost as if, even ninety years on, Gillray's skewering of Napoleon still stung. Alexandre sums up Gillray's work as follows: "In short, Gillray's caricature, after that of Hogarth, brings a new note; a more simplified drawing, but an equal humor, more abundant perhaps, a less bitter, less cruel gaiety. Hogarth, however, was an observer, sometimes profound, although often exceeding his mark. Gillray, on the other hand, has almost no observations; but when one has a brain so fertile in absurd imaginations, in irresistible grimaces, observation would be a very unnecessary luxury."¹⁸⁹ Alexandre does a better job here than his predecessors of showing Gillray's position in a continuum of artistic production extending from Hogarth a generation earlier to Gillray's contemporaries Rowlandson

¹⁸⁹ "En résumé, la caricature de Gillray apporte, après celle d'Hogarth, une note nouvelle; un dessin plus simplifié, mais une drôlerie égale, plus abondante peut-être, une gaieté moins amère, moins cruelle. Hogarth pourtant était un observateur, parfois profond, bien que dépassant souvent le but. Gillray, lui, n'a presque aucune observation ; mais quand on a une cervelle aussi féconde en imaginations saugrenues, en grimaces irrésistibles, l'observation serait un luxe bien inutile." Arsène Alexandre, *L'Art du rire et de la caricature* (Paris: Quantin, Librairies-imprimeries réunies, 1892), 130–131.

and Cruikshank. He reproduces three of Gillray's caricatures, two of them in black and white next to the text (as Grand-Carteret had done), and one as a colour plate on a separate page. This combination was a style of layout that Fuchs would emulate in his own work.

Fuchs devotes a great deal more space to Gillray, bringing him up repeatedly as a point of comparison in the first volume of his *Die Karikatur der europäischen Völker*. He considered the "Plum-pudding" to be important enough that it deserved an entire plate to its reproduction, although he writes only that it appeared "on the occasion of Napoleon's suggestions to England regarding a blow-out and the division of the world: England the seas, him the mainland!"¹⁹⁰ However, this brief commentary appears in the context of a larger argument: "From such broadsheets one wants to infer the exceeding hatred of England towards France, which is a one-sided logic; the more correct conclusion points to the proud freedom of the press and to the importance that caricature can attain under such..."¹⁹¹ Fuchs places Gillray's counter-revolutionary caricature amidst similar responses from across Europe, including the clumsy ripostes from French caricaturists who then "fell silent" amidst the growing violence of the Reign of Terror. Fuchs also remarks that English caricature was the most developed and

¹⁹⁰ "Auf diese beiden Blätter folgte das geistreiche Blatt 'Der Plumpudding in Gefahr' und zwar anlässlich der Vorschläge Napoleons an England betreffs einer Ausföhnung und der Teilung der Welt: England die Meere, ihm das Festland!" Eduard Fuchs, *Die Karikatur der europäischen Völker vom Jahre 1848 bis zur Gegenwart* (Berlin: Albert Hofmann Verlag, 1903), 173.

¹⁹¹ "Man hat aus solchen Blättern auf den alle Maße überschreitenden Haß Englands gegenüber Frankreich schließen wollen, das ist eine einseitige Logik, der richtige Schluß weist auf die stolze Preßfreiheit und auf die Bedeutung, die die Karikatur unter einer solchen erlangen kann, denn das Kapitel 'England' wird später zeigen, daß der Ton, den die englische Karikatur gegenüber dem Geiz Georgs III., den Ausschweifungen des Prinzen von Wales, den Extravaganzen der Königin Karoline anschlug, um keinen Grad milder war." Ibid., 172–173.

sophisticated of the time, in contrast to the “naïve, clumsy” caricature of the German states. He writes,

While French revolutionary caricature showed itself through all stages as the purest folk art, in which the satirical spirit almost always found its intermediary in more or less skilful crafts, English caricature was an art that had long since flourished, with some very respected names in its ranks... It was especially Gillray who fought against the principles of the revolution. The contradiction between the deeds of the National Assembly and the Convention and its teachings gave it extraordinarily effective material. The more the Reign of Terror came to rule in France, and the blood orgies of unbridled passions raged, the more favourable ground did the counter-revolutionary caricatures find. It was undisputed by French caricature, which, as we know, fell silent with the victorious advance of the Reign of Terror...¹⁹²

¹⁹² “Zeigte sich die französische Revolutionskarikatur durch alle Etappen als die reinste Volkskunst, bei der der satirische Geist fast immer in mehr oder minder geschickten Handwerken seine Vermittler fand, so war die englische Karikatur eine längst blühende Kunst mit zum Teil sehr angesehenen Namen in ihre Reihen; Sayer, Rowlandson, Gillray.

“Besonders war es Gillray, der die Prinzipien der Revolution bekämpfte. Der Widerspruch zwischen den Thaten der Nationalversammlung und des Konvents mit ihren Lehren gab ihm außerordentlich wirkungsvolle Stoffe. Je mehr in Frankreich das Schreckensregiment zur Herrschaft gelangt, die Blutorgien der fessellosen Leidenschaften sich austobten, um so günstigeren Boden fanden die gegenrevolutionären Karikaturen. Unbestritten von der französischen Karikatur, die, wie wir wissen, mit dem siegreichen Vordringen des Schreckensregiments verstummte, beeinflusste sie die Gemüter.” Ibid., 156.

He then goes on to describe another famous Gillray, “A View in Perspective,” reproduced on a double-page plate situated fourteen pages earlier. For Fuchs, even when he occasionally pauses to dwell on a specific image, it was important to place caricature in a social or political context.

Yet another of Gillray’s broadsheets offers more insight into Fuchs’ thought process. However, it is reproduced not with photolithography, but as a small, copied engraving fitting alongside the text (fig. 23). Even though Fuchs prioritized large reproductions, he had not yet abandoned the earlier technique as it allowed him to include many more images, and to place them as he liked on each page. This particular caricature (which appears six pages before it is mentioned) has the distinction of being Gillray’s first depiction of Napoleon and, aside from the oversized bicorn hat, it does not yet bear the diminutive stature with which he later marked the Corsican general (fig. 24). Fuchs writes,

The caricature as a source of truth, which, as it were, illuminates the whole situation with a bolt of lightning, exposes the true essence of a person or thing—as such we get to know it in its first manifestations against Napoleon. On June 30, 1798, Bonaparte landed in Egypt and on November 20, in his first caricature of Bonaparte, Gillray marked with the visionary gaze of genius ... what the whole war between England and France was about: world domination. The globe is the dunghill around which angry boxing takes place. This broadsheet is a truly worthy introduction to the struggle of caricature against Bonaparte because of its clout and artistic simplicity. With this Gillray provided at the same time the key to the never-disappearing hatred of England against France, which

is always ready for new victims; England recognized Napoleon as her only serious and real rival.¹⁹³

Thus, with a few lines Fuchs manages to describe the appearance of the caricature, the circumstances of its production, and the underlying ideology which it reveals. Others had noted Gillray's hostility towards the Revolution and to Napoleon; Fuchs was the first to see in that hostility Britain's recognition of the impending threat posed by France's imperial ambition.

Fuchs reproduces substantially more of Gillray's images than his predecessors: over a dozen caricatures appear over a few short chapters, seven of them as full-page plates (additional images appear in other chapters as well). The remaining five, appearing on text pages, are smaller, copied engravings. Of the plates two are printed in colour, and another two are double-page spreads, inserted as single-fold signatures; another innovation. Where Champfleury, Grand-Carteret and Alexandre had only one image for every three or four pages, Fuchs reproduces at least one large or two smaller images on every single spread. These larger images doubtlessly increased the cost of Fuchs' books due to the additional labour of bookbinding, but they also increased their value as the details of the caricatures are finely reproduced at a scale much closer

¹⁹³ “Die Karikatur als Wahrheitsquelle, die sozusagen wie mit einem Blitzstrahl die ganze Situation erleuchtet, das wahre Wesen einer Person oder Sache bloßlegt – als solche lernen wir sie gleich in ihren ersten Manifestationen gegen Napoleon kennen. Am 30. Juni 1798 landete Bonaparte in Ägypten und schon am 20. November, in seiner ersten Karikatur auf Bonaparte, kennzeichnete Gillray mit dem Scherblick des Genies, das für das, was die Masse nur dumpf fühlt, sofort den klaren Begriff findet, schlagend, um was es sich einzig bei dem ganzen Kriege zwischen England und Frankreich drehte: um die Weltherrschaft. Der Erdball ist der Düngerhausen, um den wütend geboxt wird. Dies Blatt ist eine durch ihre Schlagkraft und künstlerische Einfachheit wirklich würdige Einleitung des Kampfes der Karikatur gegen Bonaparte. Hiermit lieferte Gillray zugleich den Schlüssel für den nie verschwindenden, zu immer neuen Opfern bereiten Haß Englands gegen Frankreich; England erkennt in Napoleon den einzig ernsthaften und wirklichen Rivalen.” Ibid., 167.

to the original. Finally, there is one more factor that characterises Fuchs' layout: unlike previous authors, the images he discusses—whether briefly or in depth—rarely appear on the same page as the related text. In most cases they are a few pages before or after, spaced out to provide periodic visual interest. Common practice prior to Fuchs was to put images on the same page, or at least the same spread, as the text which referred to them, except in those cases where full-page plates were bound together in their own signature.

Psychoanalysis and Caricature

In comparing Fuchs' treatment of Gillray, specifically of the "Plumb-pudding" broadsheet, with the claims Fuchs makes about caricature, several things become clear about Fuchs' approach to the subject. The first is that he only frames caricature as a "means of persuasion," as a "weapon in class struggle," when he discusses caricature *as such*. But when he narrows his attention to a particular theme, motif, period, or nation, or—as we have just seen—to an individual artist or image, he shifts to what we would now call a sociological perspective. That is to say that Fuchs explains the caricature in terms of the socio-political context of its original appearance. What he specifically does *not* do is treat the caricature dialectically: he fails to take into account the "post-history" of its reception over time, as it has been handed down to us today. Put another way, he fails to bring an interpretive hermeneutic to caricature, instead treating its meaning as having been fixed by its initial reception. It is this omission that stood out for Benjamin as Fuchs' biggest failing. However, in both regards—the general observations about caricature's role in class struggle, and the sociological context of its origin—Fuchs still

stands out as unique in his time. He elevated the history of caricature beyond mere facts, and made bold claims about its active role in the unfolding of history.

Die Karikatur der europäischen Völker met with instant success, significantly raising expectations for books on the history of caricature. Previously, only Alexandre's *L'Art du rire* had approached the historical depth and pictorial exuberance of Fuchs' work, even to the extent of bringing discussion of modern caricature right up to the author's own time. Even so it was restricted to a single volume, while Fuchs required two. The sudden explosion of caricature across Europe after 1848 could not be contained in a few chapters as Alexandre had done, but required its own volume to properly organize the subject by nation and by theme. Fuchs' division of the two volumes by the revolutionary year also foregrounds the significance of caricature as a weapon in class struggle, a significance that had been overlooked by his predecessors. Fuchs does mention Wright and Champfleury in passing, but he speaks more favourably of Grand-Carteret regarding his book on images of the Boer War.¹⁹⁴ Nevertheless he had previously lamented the fact that no German besides himself had yet undertaken to examine the political role of caricature. Referring to Grand-Carteret's 1885 volume *Les moeurs et la caricature en Allemagne – en Autriche – en Suisse*, he writes, "It was reserved for a Frenchman, the famous art critic Grand-Carteret, to write the first major work on German caricature."¹⁹⁵ One can thus assume that among Fuchs' early motivations was the desire to fill this lacuna in the literature.

¹⁹⁴ Ibid., 464.

¹⁹⁵ "Einem Franzosen, dem bekannten Kunstschriftsteller Grand-Carteret war es vorbehalten, das erste größere Werk über die deutsche Karikatur zu schreiben." Fuchs, *1848 in der Caricatur*, 5.

As Fuchs continued to publish new books, he frequently repeated his earlier claims about the political role of caricature. If, by 1937, Benjamin could look back and point out the shortcomings and contradictions in Fuchs' oeuvre, he also had to admit its value as a form of material practice. Fuchs had not yet intended to retire when he met Benjamin in Paris in the 1930s, despite his age and diminished eyesight. In fact, he had concrete plans for future books. However, during his Parisian exile he was instead forced into futile negotiations for the return of his seized collections, without which he could not proceed with further research. He died before the matter could be resolved, and the collections were auctioned. Thus it would be left to a subsequent generation of scholars to continue the discourse on the history of caricature.

The potential for a more fully-developed Marxist aesthetics would not be realized until long after Fuchs had faded from memory. In the years between the Russian Revolution and the Second World War, there had been a strong turn to the political in visual art, as evidenced by the formation of the *avant-garde* and the many movements it spawned. This turn was paralleled in art theory and criticism, with contributions from writers as diverse as Adolf Loos, Wilhelm Worringer, Walter Benjamin, and Theodor Adorno. However, during the 1930s many German and Austrian intellectuals were compelled to flee continental Europe to escape the threat of fascism. Those that arrived in the United Kingdom or the United States found an increasingly inhospitable audience for anything that bore the taint of communism. Therefore, Marxist art theory found itself severely handicapped in the English-speaking world, at least until the rise of the New Left in the 1960s. But the groundwork for a psychoanalytic theory of art, which would draw far less negative attention during the McCarthyist era, had also been laid.

Sigmund Freud, at a late stage in his career, was one such émigré who fled Vienna for London as late as 1938. By that time, he had written many popular books on psychoanalysis,

which were intended to demystify the practice for a lay audience. His work on humour, *Jokes and their Relation to the Unconscious*, had been published in 1905. Based on the observation that both jokes and caricature work to reveal something that is normally hidden, he concluded that the enjoyment of such humour had a psychological component. The fact that a humorous exaggeration or mimicry does not have to be based on an existing aspect of the subject of a joke or caricature in order to achieve its humorous effect points to humour's origin in the unconscious. Focussing on the social process of jokes, rather than on their psychological function in the individual, Freud claimed that humour, like dreams, could provide insight into our unconscious desires. He writes,

The prevention of invective or of insulting rejoinders by external circumstances is such a common case that tendentious jokes are especially favoured in order to make aggressiveness or criticism possible against persons in exalted positions who claim to exercise authority. The joke then represents a rebellion against that authority, a liberation from its pressure. The charm of caricatures lies in this same factor: we laugh at them even if they are unsuccessful simply because we count rebellion against authority as a merit.¹⁹⁶

Freud speaks of the joke-work as a “psychical expenditure” (in the same sense as the dream-work) from which pleasure is derived through the discharge of laughter. He invokes the psychic economy of the individual in which an inhibitory cathexis is overcome by laughter,

¹⁹⁶ Sigmund Freud, *Jokes and their Relation to the Unconscious*, translated by James Strachey (London: W.W. Norton & Company, 1960), 125.

revealing that which is normally hidden, and relieving the tension created by the joke.¹⁹⁷ In a similar vein, Fuchs had remarked in *1848 in der Caricatur* that although caricature seeks to agitate, to “wound” its target through ridicule, it also heals with the “universal remedy” of humour, which has a “reconciling effect.” Thus, Freud’s analysis of humour supports Fuchs’ insight into the dialectical nature of caricature.

Freud also made a considerable impact on his one-time colleague Ernst Kris, who had briefly worked alongside him in Vienna. After re-establishing himself in New York in 1940, Kris began to explore psychoanalytic theory, culminating in a book on visual art. Treating art as a form of communication, and resisting the temptation to generalize or simplify psychoanalytic principles, he acknowledged that social and historical factors also contributed to artistic creation. Kris claimed that caricature appeals to the unconscious—through allegory, selective exaggeration, double meanings—in order to spread its “aggression,” that is, its agitational purpose. Like the word play that occurs in the joke-work, “there is a renewal of the child’s pleasure when it just learns to master language.” He continues:

We have learned to define caricature as a process where—under the influence of aggression—primitive structures are used to ridicule the victim. Thus defined, caricature is a psychological mechanism rather than a form of art, and we can now easily understand why, once having come into existence, it has remained always the same in principle. Caricatures

¹⁹⁷ “...[jokes] employ the device of distracting attention by putting forward something in the joke’s form of expression which catches it, so that in the meantime the liberation of the inhibitory cathexis and its discharge may be completed without interruption”. *Ibid.*, 186.

like those of Louis Philippe as a pear are at bottom nothing but visual puns and the taste in puns may change but their mechanism remains the same.¹⁹⁸

The humour of a given caricature—or, according to Freud, any form of the comic (especially word-play)—leads to an unconscious renewal of infantile pleasure. This “element of regression” in caricature had previously remained hidden, and it took the science of psychoanalysis to reveal the inner workings of its humour.

Kris then turned his attention to the works of the German-Austrian sculptor Franz Xaver Messerschmidt (1736–1783). His unusual series of “character heads” (fig. 25) aroused suspicions about his mental health which dogged him throughout his career. Kris saw evidence in these sculptures of schizophrenia, castration anxiety, even fear of the taboo against distorting “divine form.” In the forty-nine completed heads from a projected series of sixty-four, Messerschmidt played with his own visage in search of what he called “canonical grimaces.” But what we actually see in them are a series of caricatures, sculpted rather than drawn, in which he plays with the extremes of pathognomic expression while leaving the physiognomy itself unchanged. In doing so he borrows as much from the tradition of the grotesque (with which, as a sculptor, he would have been deeply familiar) as from his theories about necromancy. Recent scholarship has situated Messerschmidt’s character heads in the context of the spreading influence of French academic curricula, which liberated artists from the strictures of an earlier mode of production limited to patronage. As a result, he may simply have found the character heads to be a more

¹⁹⁸ Ernst Kris, *Psychoanalytic Explorations in Art* (New York: Schocken Books, 1952), 197.

compelling use of his skills than conventional busts. In addition, Michael Yonan suggests that the heads “suggest a deliberate attempt to destabilize the edification we expect to gain in the dynamics of the one-on-one encounter.”¹⁹⁹ He explains,

In one sense, then, Messerschmidt’s art can be read as a series of attempts to chart the realms of subjectivity available to him as an artist and to use art to extend subjective boundaries in new ways through the pathognomic manipulation of the face.²⁰⁰

In fact, Messerschmidt may very well have suffered from some serious mental illness, but we cannot know this for certain, and even Kris admits that many of the stories about him are at best apocryphal. Furthermore, as Karl Jaspers has shown in his study of the works of Strindberg and Van Gogh, it is impossible to effectively psychoanalyse a deceased artist solely by examining their art.²⁰¹ Creative works are intentional and cannot provide a direct route to the unconscious; they are not fully congruent with the artist’s inner psyche but are also in part the product of rational processes. One must be able to speak to the artist in order to perform the work of psychoanalysis, since it is the person, and not the work, that has a psyche; the reflective writings or creative works of a deceased artist may provide some insight into their mental

¹⁹⁹ Michael Yonan, “The Man Behind the Mask? Looking at Franz Xaver Messerschmidt” in *Eighteenth-Century Studies* 42/3 (Spring 2009): 447.

²⁰⁰ *Ibid.*, 445.

²⁰¹ Karl Jaspers, *Strindberg and Van Gogh: an attempt at a pathographic analysis with reference to parallel cases of Swedenborg and Hölderlin* (Tucson: The University of Arizona Press, 1977).

condition, but are in the end a poor substitute for the living person. All that psychoanalysis can say with certainty of a work of art is how we as viewers interact with it now, and what that reception reveals about our own mental states.

Although Kris may have misinterpreted Messerschmidt's character heads in the early 1950s, he had earlier enjoyed a productive collaboration with his student E.H. Gombrich. In 1936 they worked on a joint manuscript on caricature,²⁰² and also organized an exhibition of Daumier in Vienna. Gombrich moved to London in 1939 and became director of the Warburg Institute in 1956, where he increasingly favoured Riegl's reception theory over psychoanalysis. However, he always maintained an interest in the psychology of pictorial representation, and repeatedly returned to the subject of caricature throughout his career. He observed that even without any serious attempt at realistic representation, caricature could still effectively capture a personality, a situation, or an ideology in epigrammatic form. He writes, "There is a danger in a discussion of cartoons that we stress the elements of humour or propaganda too much at the expense of the satisfaction the successful cartoon gives us simply by its neat summing up. ... What the so-called editorial cartoon does is to provide some kind of momentary focus."²⁰³

Gombrich emphasized the epigrammatic quality of caricature, focussing on the formal aspects of physiognomic reduction. His primary interest lay in our ability to recognize expression and personality in cartoon images, where very little visual information is provided in contrast to the academic style of painting. If academic paintings were the zenith of realistic representation,

²⁰² Ernst Kris and E.H. Gombrich, *Caricature* (London: The King Penguin Books, 1940).

²⁰³ E.H. Gombrich, "The Cartoonist's Armoury" in *Meditations on a Hobby Horse and Other Essays on the Theory of Art* (London: Phaidon Press, 1963), 131.

then cartoons and caricatures were the nadir—yet they too were easy to recognize and understand. In 1845 the Swiss humourist and draughtsman Rodolphe Töpffer had posited that human beings are naturally inclined to recognize expressions in even the most abject of marks, so that it is entirely unnecessary to achieve any degree in realism in order to tell a story visually.²⁰⁴ He demonstrated this with a series of drawings in which he slightly altered a few marks making up a cartoon face, each one succinctly capturing a very specific emotional expression. Gombrich quotes Töpffer at length in his defence of the cartoon:

The picture story to which the criticism of art pays no attention and which rarely worries the learned has always exercised a great appeal. More, indeed, than literature itself, for besides the fact that there are more people who look than who can read, it appeals particularly to children and to the masses, the sections of the public which are particularly easily perverted and which it would be particularly desirable to raise. With its dual advantages of greater conciseness and greater relative clarity, the picture story, all things being equal, should squeeze out the other because it would address itself with greater liveliness to a greater number of minds, and also because in any contest he who uses such a direct method will have the advantage over those who talk in chapters.²⁰⁵

²⁰⁴ Rodolphe Töpffer, “Essai de physiognomie” in *Œuvres complètes de R. Töpffer*, edited by Pierre Cailler (Geneva: A. Skira, 1942).

²⁰⁵ E.H. Gombrich, *Art and Illusion* (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 1969), 338.

Later experiments by psychologists confirmed Töpffer's claims, and in fact the phenomenon of recognizing faces and expressions in random patterns had been well-known for centuries.

Leonardo da Vinci, in his treatise on painting, had urged artists to practice drawing the faces that coalesced in clouds or that appeared on the stucco of a wall, as an exercise in careful observation.

Gombrich also found connections between political caricature and the symbolic art of the Middle Ages, which relied on "the power of the mythological imagination." He writes, "...the cartoonist can mythologize the world of politics by physiognomizing it,"²⁰⁶ employing "universal or natural metaphors" such as those of the Aesopic tradition. He continues,

I believe indeed that these physiognomic reactions are the ultimate resource of the cartoonist's armoury, the most potent and also, perhaps, the most dangerous. For the equation between these sensuous and moral qualities or feeling tones is so natural to all of us that we are hardly aware of their metaphorical or symbolic character. Racial propaganda has at all times exploited this unthinking fusion...²⁰⁷

Caricature thus presents a complex phenomenon, invoking humour as a critical tool, but it can also be employed by propagandists to create a desired "crowd psychology." Despite his unwillingness to grapple with ideology, Gombrich then falls into the same militaristic terminology as both Fuchs and Benjamin.

²⁰⁶ Gombrich, *Meditations*, 139.

²⁰⁷ *Ibid.*, 138–9.

Kris had spent the war years in Britain with Gombrich, analysing Nazi radio propaganda. After the war, Gombrich was increasingly unsettled by the taint of historicism that he saw in Kris, in Freud, even in Warburg. Louis Rose concludes from this that for Gombrich, “Caricature art represented a series of methodological advances, but not cultural or political progress.”²⁰⁸ In his later works, Gombrich therefore appears to withdraw from a political reading of caricature, sidestepping the question altogether. In his 1970 biography of Aby Warburg, Gombrich even imposes a Social Darwinist logic on Warburg’s concept of *Kulturwissenschaft*, literally the “science of culture.”²⁰⁹ Modern scholarship has shown this to be due to several factors, including the humanist tradition of *Bildung* (self-fashioning), Gombrich’s ambivalence towards their shared Jewish identity, and the conception of Warburg as a *lieu de mémoire* (a site of memory), in examining Gombrich’s “sense of himself as an apolitical scholar.”²¹⁰ The resulting historicism that thus creeps into Gombrich’s portrayal of Warburg is therefore a consequence of the fatalism he felt during the height of the Cold War, amidst a resurgence of fascist tendencies that undercut the promise of the New Left. Nevertheless, Gombrich’s writing on caricature was very influential when it appeared, and remains so today.

²⁰⁸ Louis Rose, *Psychology, Art, and Antifascism: Ernst Kris, E.H. Gombrich, and the Politics of Caricature* (New Haven: Yale University Press), 2016.

²⁰⁹ E.H. Gombrich, *Aby Warburg: an intellectual biography*, 2nd edition (Oxford: Phaidon Press, 1986).

²¹⁰ Matthew Edward Finch, “Ernst Gombrich and the Memory of Aby Warburg: Emotion, Identity and Scholarship,” Ph.D. dissertation (London: Queen Mary, University of London, 2007), 286.

Matthew Rampley offers “an important corrective to the traditional image of Warburgian *Kulturwissenschaft* as politically disinterested scholarship.”²¹¹ He raises questions about its relevance for contemporary art historians, given its social and political origins. Warburg himself gave primacy to the concept of *Bildung* in his own self-formation as a scholar, a liberal, and a professional. But this was in stark contrast to the reality of the exclusive, privileged property class of his home city of Hamburg, with its marked social rigidity and bourgeois morality—all of which ultimately informs the concept of *Kulturwissenschaft*. The very notion of an objective cultural science is dependent on a position of social, racial, and gendered privilege, which is not in itself the least bit objective. *Kulturwissenschaft* therefore unwittingly serves the interests of a hierarchical, expanding empire of colonizing European nations. While this does not negate its value, it certainly problematizes it as a methodology. And although it is difficult to say with certainty, Gombrich appears to have come to a similar conclusion.

In the latter third of the twentieth century, art historical discourse on caricature dwindled, and what remained reverted to treating caricature merely as historical documents. Edward Lucie-Smith epitomizes this trend, although it would be unfair to say that he was unaware of the existing discourse. In fact, he explicitly rejects the Warburgian school, which he characterizes as a teleology of style, as well as the psychoanalytic work of Freud and Kris. For Lucie-Smith, a historical caricature is a kind of portrait, although by this time the term “caricature” was now being used more broadly to refer to any parodic or essentializing representation. As such, caricature need not be political, or topical, or even humorous. The main characteristic of

²¹¹ Matthew Rampley, “Aby Warburg: *Kulturwissenschaft*, Judaism and the Politics of Identity” in *Oxford Art Journal* 33/3 (2010): 323.

caricature in its contemporary sense is the use of a “popular idiom,”²¹² distinguished from other art forms mainly by its mass audience. It is also distinguished from the comic strip or cartoon (which is merely amusing) by the additional element of satire (serious social commentary).

Despite his rejection of the established literature, Lucie-Smith does make some astute observations about caricature, most notably regarding its use of allegorical symbols.

The caricaturist combines incongruous elements successfully by frequent use of allegory, and in this sense (allegory addressed to a mass public) the caricaturist can be seen as the direct heir of the great religious and popular artists of the Middle Ages, who lived at a time when the theory of genres—with history painting at the top of the ladder and still life at the bottom—had not yet been worked out, and when there was as yet no hierarchy of either presentation or subject-matter. The gross and the sublime co-existed within the same framework, just as they do in caricature to this day.”²¹³

Allegory made use of easily understood symbols with a long-established history, so that the act of interpretation could be conducted with widespread agreement without the risk of viewers’ interpretations deviating too far from the intended meaning. Lucie-Smith correctly points out that eighteenth-century political caricature “relied more upon allegory than on skilful portrait

²¹² Edward Lucie-Smith, *The Art of Caricature* (London: Orbis Publishing, 1981), 9.

²¹³ *Ibid.*, 19.

caricature.”²¹⁴ Capturing a subject’s likeness was therefore less important for an audience’s reception than understanding the allegorical codes at play. Lucie-Smith also makes reference to the use of emblems, which were extremely popular in the early modern period. Emblems were standardized visual symbols that represented complex ideas, such as matrimony or chastity. Thousands of books documenting and organizing such emblems, often with mottos or inscriptions, were published during the Renaissance. By the time of the Enlightenment, emblems had become a widely-accepted form of cultural knowledge, used by academic artists and popular caricaturists alike. In a previous age this shared allegorical language was situated in the fables of Aesop and other classical literature; today it might be said to reside in cinematic tropes and archetypal characters such as the gunslinger, the space explorer, and the superhero.

Lucie-Smith even manages to provide some political interpretation, despite his reservations. He writes that Gillray “is a powerful political satirist” whose caricatures “are crowded with elaborate inscriptions in order to make their meaning plain, but contain a mixture of emblematic images and portrait caricature.”²¹⁵ As evidence he presents “Plumb-pudding” (along with four other caricatures by Gillray), in which physiognomic exaggeration is combined with allegory and an explanatory text, noting that Gillray “was probably the first artist to make a career out of political cartooning.”²¹⁶ He further notes that Gillray was an equal opportunist on

²¹⁴ Ibid., 52.

²¹⁵ Ibid., 62.

²¹⁶ Ibid., 68.

the political field, targeting Whigs and Tories alike, even taking commissions directly from individual politicians to lambast their opponents.

By contrast, Gombrich makes strong theoretical arguments, and illustrates his work profusely, but does not dwell on individual images. Gillray, for example, appears frequently throughout Gombrich's essays and lectures. He even reproduces "Plumb-pudding", but only as an example of "the reduction of the physiognomy to a convenient formula" which "made it possible to keep certain politicians constantly before the public eye."²¹⁷ Gombrich preferred to frame his analysis in terms of literary allusions: symbol, metaphor, allegory. And, although he also frequently mentions physiognomy, he performs very little formal analysis.

The Social History of Caricature

One significant exception to the psychoanalytic turn in the historiography of caricature stands out. The only major survey histories of caricature to appear during the 1950s and 1960s are by M. Dorothy George, and even these are strictly limited to English caricature. In her attempt to formulate a social history of caricature, she laments the lack of attention given to popular comic art: "...in general, historians—apt to neglect iconography—disregard the wonderful material buried—the word is hardly an exaggeration—in the great mass of English satirical engravings."²¹⁸ She notes that with advancements in engraving and printing techniques

²¹⁷ Gombrich, *Meditations*, 135.

²¹⁸ Dorothy M. George, *English Political Caricature to 1792: a study of opinion and propaganda* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1959), 1.

in the early modern period, caricature had displaced the popular songs of the Middle Ages, presenting instead a “sequence of presents in a series of dissolving views.”²¹⁹ George takes for granted that caricature is a reflection of public opinion, emphasizing the commercial necessity of gaining a wide audience, but she also notes its attempts to actively influence opinion.

Unfortunately, she underestimates the persuasive potential of caricature, and fails to develop its dialectical tension. It is telling, however, that like Fuchs, she divides the two volumes of her survey history by a revolutionary year, in this case 1793.

A sense of George’s approach to the social history of caricature can be garnered from her description of Gillray. Her layout is also more formalized, with over a hundred illustrations in each volume, collected as plates printed on glossy paper at the end of each book. This is a bookbinding technique common during the 1950s, which kept costs down by separating image and text. Fourteen Gillrays appear in the first volume alone, each on its own plate. An additional twenty Gillrays are reproduced in the second volume; sadly, “Plumb-pudding” is not among them. It is mentioned, however, in the context of Gillray’s weekly output in response to political developments at home and abroad. She writes,

Though the war was approaching a grand climax, party rancour was unbridled during the parliamentary session (15 January to 12 July), with Pitt worn down with over-work. After Gillray’s well-known caricature, *The Plumb-Pudding in Danger* ... in February, in which Pitt and Napoleon compete for the globe, the cartoonists are absorbed in political animosities.

²¹⁹ Ibid.

A debate on 6 March in which Sheridan attacked Pitt's defence measures ... is the subject of the House of Commons scene at the opening of Hardy's *The Dynasts*. It is also the subject of Gillray's plate *Uncorking Old-Sherry* on 10 March...²²⁰

Her approach here is clearly to give context to the various provocations which gave rise to individual caricatures, without bothering to describe them—even when they are not reproduced. On every page she demonstrates the truth of her claim that caricature reflects public opinion, while acknowledging that it operated as a business and needed to maintain profitability. She also takes pains to point out the rare occasions in which a caricature is specifically designed to instigate a certain action, a call to arms, or an outcry against some official measure. In English caricature of this period, such agitational images were rare enough to stand out.

In 1967 George published a larger format survey history, *Hogarth to Cruikshank: Social Change in Graphic Satire*. Political prints are in fact entirely absent, as the titular “Social” refers in this case to the subject matter, not the methodology. Following roughly the same chronology as before, George turns her attention to changes in fashion (the Macaroni fad, the introduction of top hats), and the treatment of social types (the sailor, the soldier), as recorded in caricature. Hogarth naturally figures much more prominently here than Gillray in her earlier volumes, as the bulk of Hogarth's engravings are moralistic and exhortatory in nature. But even the subsequent generation of caricaturists—Gillray, Rowlandson, Cruikshank, Newton, Bunbury—gave equal attention to social and political subjects. George writes, “‘Satire,’ like ‘caricature,’ is used

²²⁰ M. Dorothy George, *English Political Caricature 1793–1832: a study of opinion and propaganda* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1959), 79

loosely; it covers Hogarth's moralizing, Gillray's irony, Rowlandson's comedy, Newton's burlesque."²²¹ Seventeenth- and eighteenth-century England provided much fertile material for the caricaturist, with its affluent middle class, fads and fashions, and relative freedom enjoyed by the satirical press. She draws particular attention to a shift in the caricature business after Hogarth, as amateur artists such as Gillray began to etch their own designs, rather than being commissioned by others, saying that "Gillray has a claim to be the first English professional caricaturist."²²² Once again, George grounds the caricatures in the conditions of their production: the vagaries of business, the steady supply of material ripe for satirical treatment, and the stratification of society which made the print shops not only sustainable, but successful—a stratification that was not observed by English travellers abroad. Twenty-four Gillrays are reproduced among some two hundred illustrations in total, although "Plumb-pudding" is naturally omitted as it is a purely political print.

In the 1970s and 1980s a new generation of historians of English caricature was inspired by M. Dorothy George: for example, Herbert Atherton, Nicholas Robinson, H.T. Dickinson. The focus of their books and essays tends to be narrower, a trend that is seen throughout the field, so that large-scale survey histories have almost disappeared. Perhaps the last one of note is *The Age of Caricature: Satirical Prints in the Reign of George III* by Diana Donald in 1996. Gillray once again figures prominently, as one might expect: thirty-four of his caricatures are reproduced, although not only is "Plumb-pudding" omitted, it is not even mentioned (perhaps because, at this

²²¹ M. Dorothy George, *Hogarth to Cruikshank: Social Change in Graphic Satire* (London: Penguin Books, 1967), 13.

²²² *Ibid.*, 57.

point, it had become too much of a cliché). Donald remarks on the growing attention given to the caricaturist over and above the subject of caricature: “If any new quality can be discerned in his approach ... it is the increasing frequency with which witty ambiguity replaced obvious partisanship. At one level, this phenomenon must have represented a recognition of the artist himself as *auteur* rather than mere anonymous executant—the anomaly of frequent switches from one political viewpoint to another could only have become perceptible when the personal manner and artistic ‘handwriting’ of the caricaturists were strongly marked.”²²³ This observation is consistent with a growing recognition that the social function of English caricature at the time was not to influence public opinion,—i.e., it was not agitational—but rather, to give the public a voice by holding figures of authority to account, whoever they might be.

Mike Goode expands on this by addressing one of the basic assumptions underlying the study of caricature: that it exerts a desired influence over public opinion. Although there have been times and places in which caricature was put in the service of persuasion (as we shall see in the next chapter), this was not the case in Georgian England. Instead, due to the commercialization of the industry and the stratification of social classes, there were numerous publics interpellated by caricature, which both shaped and reflected public opinion. Goode identifies the mechanism of caricature’s influence in its intertextuality—the taxonomy of types and the viewing of collections: “Only through caricatures’ intertextuality with one another and with other art forms could their taxonomic functions have become effective as such and the commentaries annexed to those functions therefore become apparent: to register a type requires

²²³ Diana Donald, *The Age of Caricature: Satirical Prints in the Reign of George III* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1996), 42.

seeing more than one instance of it.”²²⁴ He draws particular attention to the motif of the print shop window, with excited crowds gathered around to view the latest caricatures—a motif employed by virtually every caricature print shop in England at the time. These “metacaricatures” had the effect of “encourage[ing] reflection on the activity of caricature viewing itself,”²²⁵ and “They reveal the extent to which caricatures, when viewed as they tended to be viewed in the period—that is, as collections or multi-print displays—encouraged the public to survey itself through the many different figures depicted.”²²⁶ The intention of caricature is therefore not so much to persuade as it is to create a public which is conditioned to see itself as an object of laughter.

Many more studies have appeared since the 1990, including books and articles by Michele Hanoosh, David S. Kerr, David Kunzle, Amelia Rauser, and Ian Haywood. These are all excellent additions to the discourse in terms of their foregrounding of ideology, but the age of the survey history has clearly passed. Fuchs’ place in that history remains in flux: he was a pioneer of Marxist aesthetics but one whose methodology was deeply flawed; a critic of historicist tendencies who could not himself escape them; a public figure deeply engaged with the political movements of his time, whose work was largely forgotten within a few years of his death. It is the task of the next chapter to grapple more closely with Fuchs’ texts, and to establish their value for future studies of caricature.

²²⁴ Mike Goode, “The Public and the Limits of Persuasion in the Age of Caricature” in *The Efflorescence of Caricature, 1759–1838*, edited by Todd Porterfield (Farnham, Surrey: Ashgate, 2011), 120.

²²⁵ Ibid., 125.

²²⁶ Ibid., 124.

Chapter 4: The Dialectic of Caricature

In 1898 Eduard Fuchs wrote of caricature that: “As a means of struggle it has always been underestimated, in its task almost always misunderstood, and as a work of art for a long time despised.”²²⁷ Turning his attention to the German revolution of 1848, Fuchs was determined to redeem caricature from its low estimation as a historical footnote, and to demonstrate the role it played in the political struggles of the time. For Fuchs, caricature was a weapon which, when wielded by those who did not fear censorship or other means of suppression, could inflict severe damage to those in authority. It accomplished this by means of ridicule and mockery, by taking the well-known characteristics of a person or institution and subverting them through hyperbole and exaggeration, reversal of expectations, and juxtaposition of contradictory words and actions.

Fuchs was also convinced that caricature could exert a powerfully persuasive influence on public opinion. Previous historians had treated caricature as little more than social commentary, neglecting its active role in public discourse. While an element of passive commentary does exist (especially in the caricature of social types, fashions, etc.), caricature was viewed largely as a responsive medium that entertained, but did not influence, the masses. That there was a mass public by Fuchs’ time cannot be doubted, given the high rate of literacy and the widespread reading culture in Germany. The many political newspapers and journals, both state- and party-sponsored, interpellated a variety of overlapping publics: the middle class, the pan-

²²⁷ “Als Kampfmittel wurde sie stets unterschätzt, in ihrer Aufgabe fast immer verkannt und als Kunstwerk lange Zeit verachtet.” Fuchs, *1848 in der Caricatur*, 5.

Germanic, the *Volk*, the proletariat. In the absence of radio and television, group identification and the formation of collective identities was conducted through print media.

Part of Fuchs' project then, was to demonstrate the agency of caricature in this public discourse, and specifically to show how political caricature could aid in the formation of a proletarian class consciousness. However, Fuchs did not avail himself of the dialectical tools of historical materialism and Marxist aesthetics, instead employing the more commonly used tools of the cultural historian: analogy and allegory. As a rule, arguments from analogy depend on inductive rather than deductive reasoning, and therefore do not generate new knowledge—at least from a rhetorical standpoint (they are *ana*-logical, or against logic). In purely scientific endeavours, arguments from analogy are used to form testable hypotheses rather than to draw conclusions. No chain of causality can ever be established using analogy; only the possibility of one. Instead, analogy makes an inference based on perceived similarities. It is therefore best used to make a claim of correlation, rather than one of causation—but this is precisely what makes it such a powerful rhetorical device in fields beyond the empirical sciences. The power of analogy lies in the fact that it gives us the opportunity to think about two disparate things in a relation that may not otherwise be obvious.

Fuchs also interprets caricature allegorically, tapping into its long tradition of representing intangible ideas and narratives as recognizable things. While allegorical caricatures can sometimes be blunt or heavy-handed, as for example when a character literally wears a label telling us what they represent, allegory can also be subtle and revealing as Fuchs demonstrates using the most memorable caricatures of 1848–49. Benjamin also has much to contribute to a discussion of allegory in his essay on Fuchs. Through it he finds a redemptive quality in Fuchs' oeuvre that makes up for his poor—indeed often absent—dialectics.

Nevertheless, there is a dialectical element to be found in Fuchs' arguments. Not in the Marxist sense of a history of critical reception, or even the Benjaminian sense of a constellation of ideas (although this, too, can be found in Fuchs' writing), but in a few basic observations about caricature that show his awareness of the internal tensions of the medium. These tensions simultaneously aid and undermine the agitational aspect of caricature that is so essential to Fuchs' thinking. If he has failed to make these observations more prominent, it can only be due to his desire to prove the efficacy of caricature as a medium of persuasion.

Analogy, Allegory, and the Critical Function of Ridicule

The 28-year-old Fuchs was still writing for the Munich-based satirical journal *Süddeutscher Postillon* when he published a monograph entitled *1848 in der Caricatur* in 1898, in which his criticism of the people and institutions of his own day remains implicit. Presented as a portfolio of sixteen reproductions with an accompanying essay, the work had previously appeared in five instalments earlier that year within the pages of the *Postillon* itself. This essay marks a significant turning point in his career, at which he shifted his criticism of autocracy from direct attacks to critique by analogy, from exhortatory satirical poetry to sober cultural history. His purpose in making this change may simply have been to circumvent further censorship, fines, confiscation of printed material, and imprisonment—all legal remedies to which he had previously been subjected. In particular, the lengthy prison sentences of his *lèse-majesté* offences may have provided an impetus for him to take a more objective and mature tone with his readers; to persuade rather than harangue. But the desire to avoid punishment was not the only reason for his turn to the scholarly. As a politically active Marxist, Fuchs wanted to convince his readers of

the historical materialist interpretation of history, and its dialectical unfolding through class struggle as described by Marx and Engels. In order to offer an effective counter-example to the official history of the dominant ruling class, a history that justified the status quo of power relations, Fuchs needed an approach that would not simply replicate a competing narrative of his own, an approach which would have been decidedly *undialectical*. Analogy presented an opportunity to critique the class struggle of his own time by examining a similar situation in the past.

In 1904 Fuchs published a larger companion volume to *1848*, narrowing his focus to the misadventures of Lola Montez, the controversial mistress of Ludwig I, King of Bavaria. Originally from Ireland, Montez was a dancer and courtesan who had exerted an unprecedented influence over Ludwig. In particular, her well-meaning attempts to introduce liberal reforms were greeted with open hostility by the public, who by all rights ought to have welcomed such reforms. Instead, they saw her from the start not only as an unwelcome foreigner but as a woman of ill repute attempting to rise above her station.²²⁸ This intolerable state of affairs quickly became a flashpoint for the whole of the German Confederation, and played a significant role in the events leading to the revolution. The degree to which criticism of Lola Montez dominated the press at that time cannot be overstated. Few Bavarian caricatures of the period fail to include Montez, and caricaturists as far as Frankfurt joined in taking aim at her. In fact, this melodrama was only rivalled by the attacks against Friedrich Wilhelm IV, the Hohenzollern heir of Frederick the Great. Oscar J. Hammen, in his biography of the young Marx and Engels, writes, “In Bavaria public resentment, expressed by student demonstrations, ultimately forced the

²²⁸ Bruce Seymour, *Lola Montez: A Life* (New Haven, CT: Yale University Press, 1996), 106–8.

romantic King Ludwig to face a future without the charms of the Irish-born, Spanish-named Lola Montez. It was a revolution of comic opera proportions, but the eviction of Lola represented a victory over royal caprice.”²²⁹ Montez’ rapid fall from grace was thus interpreted as an early gain for revolutionary sentiment against the power of hereditary monarchy.

Although Fuchs’ first attempt at private publishing was rather tentative—only thirty copies of the 1848 monograph were printed—it was intended for a very different audience than his satirical writing. Instead of the broadest possible readership among the bourgeois and the working class, serious works on cultural history were aimed at a more educated and affluent audience. This was an audience that could afford to collect expensive editions on topics which the general public might find too esoteric, or which government censors might object to. It was also one that had the leisure and the inclination to peruse lengthy tomes. Unlike Fuchs’ scandalous poems and inflammatory articles for the *Postillon*, which attacked reactionary policies and abuses of authority, this body of work was far more objective in tone and presented arguments about the evidential and persuasive value of caricature. Fuchs described caricature as a weapon in the struggle for class equality and spoke of its ability to uplift the morality of the masses by liberating them from “debilitating prejudices.”²³⁰ His new approach to caricature was scholarly and historical rather than practical and contemporary, but it was still informed by his Marxist outlook and his tendency towards political agitation. Fuchs treats caricature as a

²²⁹ Oscar J. Hammen, *The Red '48ers: Karl Marx and Friedrich Engels* (New York: Charles Scribner’s Sons, 1969), 185–6.

²³⁰ Fuchs, *1848 in der Caricatur*, 28.

“Volkskunst” (people’s art), a means of expression of the masses, and therefore as a “cultural factor of the first order.”²³¹

For Fuchs, the “March Revolution” of 1848 is an analogy for his own time, both politically and artistically. 1848 was an important year in Europe; it was the year that Marx and Engels, based in Köln, revived their agitational newspaper, the *Neue Rheinische Zeitung* (New Rhenish Newspaper); it was the year that revolutions broke out all over Europe, with varying degrees of success—in France it marked the end of the last vestiges of the monarchy, with Louis Philippe fleeing for England; it even saw lasting, if inconsistent, gains for liberal freedoms in the German states including universal manhood suffrage and Jewish emancipation. It was also a major turning point for German caricature, which had lagged far behind that of France and England in both its technical and conceptual sophistication. In the space of a few months, German caricature was suddenly emboldened as an expression of political satire and as a means of protest. Later, once the establishment had reasserted control, German caricature began to move from the sporadically and anonymously produced broadsheet to the pages of weekly journals and newspapers. It also shifted its focus towards social satire, largely as a result of increased censorship, but it remained a socially important phenomenon that was taken seriously by both readers and the authorities.

It is also significant that Fuchs would turn his attention to the *Märztage* (March Days) on its fiftieth anniversary. He explains this connection in terms of the “unfolding” of the forces of caricature:

²³¹ Ibid.

There have been times when satire was the only form in which one could still act impressively on the masses. Times ... where the people had shut their mouths, where truth had to go veiled through the alleys, where the right to demand was stamped as a crime, where servility was regarded as a virtue and strength of character was in pursuit of wages, times where, inwardly, all laughed derisively at the comedies that were performed, where nonetheless cowardice perched on everyone's lips, where there were therefore no other means of expression than satire.

There are those who say that these are *our* times. This—of course—we can not admit; but the ever more awakening desire to be told the truth wittily, the increasing taste for satire, indicates that they could come; these are signs of inward preparation for such times.²³²

²³² “Es hat Zeiten gegeben, in denen die Satire die einzige Form war, wodurch man noch eindrucksvoll auf die Massen wirken konnte. Zeiten [...] wo der Völker Mund verschlossen war, wo die Wahrheit verschleiert über die Gassen gehen mußte, wo das Recht zu fordern zum Verbrechen gestempelt war, wo der Knechtsinn als Tugend galt und Charakterfestigkeit Verfolgung zum Lohne hatte, Zeiten wo innerlich alles höhnisch der Komödien lachte, die aufgeführt wurden, wo aber trotzdem die Feigheit auf aller Lippen thronte, wo es darum kein anderes Ausdrucksmittel mehr gab, als die Satire.

“Es giebt Leute, die sagen das seien unsere Zeiten. Wir können das—natürlich—nicht zugeben; aber die immer mehr erwachende Lust, die Wahrheit geistreich gesagt zu bekommen, der zunehmende Geschmack an der Satire, deuten darauf hin, daß sie kommen könnten, das sind Zeichen der innerlichen Vorbereitung auf solche Zeiten.” Ibid., 28.

Parallels between 1848 and 1898 would have been fairly obvious to Fuchs' readers, although conditions in Fuchs' time were no longer as repressive as they had been fifty years earlier. The political situation in the German states remained thoroughly autocratic after the disbanding of the Frankfurt National Assembly in early 1849, despite their eventual unification in 1871. In the immediate aftermath of the March Revolution, during which Friedrich Wilhelm IV reasserted control, an effective democratic parliament could not be established. Efforts to emancipate the Jews and to establish freedom of the press, as well as to ensure personal and civil liberties, were not consistently upheld. In the two decades between revolution and unification, progress was slow and fractured: a liberal victory in one state was countered by defeat in another; emancipation laws successfully passed were often overturned in succeeding years. Even after unification, the struggle between liberalism and reaction continued. As chancellor between 1871 and 1890, Otto von Bismarck introduced various reforms through competent and diplomatic statesmanship, but his successors in the 1890s abandoned these reforms and focused instead on expanding the military. Kaiser Wilhelm II, who had dismissed Bismarck, was seen as a tactless and bellicose monarch, undoing many of the fragile political arrangements Bismarck had crafted. Although both men were unabashedly imperialist, the Kaiser was a poor judge of the effects his untempered speeches and ill-advised foreign policies would have. He therefore tended to inflame situations rather than resolve them.

This long slide towards autocracy was clearly retrograde, and it may have seemed on the fiftieth anniversary of the revolution that the balance of power had not significantly shifted from its original position. The clearest parallel that can be drawn between the two periods, without stretching credulity too far, is that public trust in the government was undermined in both cases by the perception that the affairs of state were in poor hands. But by focussing on the revolution

of 1848, which was by every measure a historical event, Fuchs could surreptitiously criticise the deteriorating political situation of his own time without openly challenging the current emperor. Throughout his reign, Friedrich Wilhelm IV had been generally regarded as a poor substitute for his illustrious ancestor, Friedrich II (Frederick the Great), and he was both criticized and ridiculed for his frequent overindulgence in champagne; furthermore, his actions following the *Märztage*—first agreeing to work with the National Assembly and later dissolving it when it had clearly lost momentum—smacked of hypocrisy and opportunism. Caricatures of 1849 show him exchanging his former crown for a new one, although in reality he refused the title offered to him by the Assembly, insisting on his divine right to rule.

In Bavaria, a different set of circumstances had also illuminated the growing tensions between monarchic privilege and the demands for liberal freedom. Ludwig I was so smitten with Lola Montez that when his Jesuit ministers told him that either she or they had to go, he unhesitatingly chose the latter. As a result, Montez was indirectly responsible for the dismissal of a hated and powerful Jesuit bureaucracy which was never again able to re-establish itself. Against all logic however, public opinion became even further inflamed against Montez. This protest was shaped, not against the philandering King who was still generally well-liked, but against Montez and against the arbitrary and capricious nature of autocratic rule which had permitted her elevation to Gräfin (countess). Frequent and occasionally violent student demonstrations in Munich also fed the revolutionary fervour of the *Vormärz* period. Coupe describes the prevailing attitude:

That the easy-going citizens of Munich should react with such violence to the last of his liaisons was undoubtedly due in part to the flagrant disregard of Lola and her lover for accepted proprieties, yet behind all the

moral indignation the protest against Lola Montez was essentially a political rather than a moral phenomenon. Whereas other mistresses had been content to stand aside from politics, or at the most had collaborated with reigning ministers, she sought through the king to impose her will on ministers and people. ... her sole practical achievement, apart from obtaining a rise in salary for underpaid schoolteachers, was to reveal the arbitrary nature of monarchical rule in all its nakedness and to provide in her own person a figure of symbolical proportions around whom the political issues of the day might crystallize.²³³

Coupe concludes that Lola's fiery temper and careless decorum "rendered her an impossible ally" to the liberal movement, despite their parallel interest in social reforms.

All these events were still well-known to the German public in Fuchs' day. They had been narrated in detail by Wilhelm Blos in his 1893 *Die Deutsche Revolution*,²³⁴ which was so popular that it was reprinted in 1921 and 1923. Fuchs makes a strong ideological connection to these events by reviewing them on their fiftieth anniversary. Nevertheless, the analogy between the March Revolution of 1848 and the suffocating political situation of 1898 is largely implied; Fuchs goes to some pains to claim that it is not *he* who says "these are *our* times"—although, in offering the comparison, he actually does so.

²³³ Coupe, "The German Cartoon and the Revolution of 1848," 140.

²³⁴ Wilhelm Blos, *Die Deutsche Revolution: Geschichte der Deutschen Bewegung von 1848 und 1849* (Berlin: J.H.W. Dietz Nachf. GmbH., 1923), 30–31.

It is therefore clear that causal forms of reasoning, such as those found in linear historical narratives (which Walter Benjamin would label *historicist*, emphasizing their ideological foundation), are not the only means by which an understanding of social phenomena can be attained. Arguments from analogy ask us to set aside reductive cause-and-effect thinking and to imagine social relations in a more complex way, to gain insights through comparison. Furthermore, in dealing with a complex and chaotic system such as human society, with its multiple and overlapping group identifications (race, language, nation, religion, gender, class, age, etc.), it is somewhat misguided and perhaps even pointless to attribute a particular action to specific causes.

Benjamin notes that Fuchs' activity as a collector also begins in earnest around the time of the 1848 essay, and this is the key which unlocks a materialist cultural history of caricature. Unlike historical materialism, which takes into consideration the political and economic forces which drive history, cultural history "lacks the destructive element which authenticates both dialectical thought and the experience of the dialectical thinker."²³⁵ Fuchs' work is therefore somewhat redeemed for Benjamin by its inclusion of a materialist element via collecting; the activity of collecting being not merely one of capitalist accumulation, but of organization and interpretation. Benjamin points out that the very concept of culture is a problematic unity, one which "carries a fetishistic trait" and "appears in a reified form."²³⁶ In contrast to the totalizing tendencies of cultural history, or even of Marxism itself, Fuchs prioritizes individual experience

²³⁵ Benjamin, "Eduard Fuchs, Collector and Historian," 234.

²³⁶ *Ibid.*, 233.

(*jeweilige Erfahrung*). The flashes of insight provided by the material fragments of history must be grappled with by each person who confronts the past. They cannot simply be presented as dry facts and raw data, as the cause-and-effect teleology of historicism.

At the same time, the fact that Fuchs' collections "strayed into border disciplines" such as caricature and erotica presented a challenge to the traditionally historicist continuum of art history. These marginal areas of cultural production were more valuable to Benjamin as a source of understanding than the formal analyses of Heinrich Wölfflin, whose lectures he had attended in Munich. In a 1931 essay on the Vienna School of art historians (following Alois Riegl), Benjamin derides Wölfflin's "universalizing" concept of art history as a barrier to "authentic" research: "...the hallmark of the new type of researcher is not the eye for the 'all encompassing whole' nor the eye for the 'comprehensive context,' but rather the capacity to be at home in marginal domains."²³⁷ Like the literary fragments of his own *Passagenwerk*, Benjamin privileged individual works of art as indicators of Riegl's *Kunstwollen*. The largely anonymous and collective productions to which both Benjamin and Fuchs were drawn breached the boundaries of particular disciplines and permitted different kinds of historical questions to be asked.

In the Fuchs essay, Benjamin further explains that in order to understand a work of art *as such*, it is necessary to take the work's pre- and post-history into account; that is, the subsequent receptions which carry the work to the present are at least as important as the conditions of its formation and its initial reception. Doing so brings to the historical materialist a "state of unrest

²³⁷ Walter Benjamin, "Rigorous Study of Art: On the First Volume of the *Kunstwissenschaftliche Forschungen*," in *October* 47, translated by Thomas Y. Levin (Winter 1988): 90.

which constitutes the beginning of any contemplation of history that has the right to call itself dialectical. This state of unrest refers to the demand on the researcher to abandon the tranquil contemplative attitude toward the object in order to become conscious of the critical constellation in which precisely this fragment of the past finds itself precisely in this present.”²³⁸ The object’s relation to the past is foregrounded, and the individual experience of the object finds its meaning for the present. In this way Fuchs discovered the means by which he could approach the task of historical materialism through the activity of collecting. Benjamin observes:

The work of art had been detached from society to such a degree that the place in which the collector found it had become the art market. There the work of art endured, shrunken to a commodity, and found itself equally as removed from its creators as from those who were able to understand it.²³⁹

But the object does not remain alienated and reified. Instead, the object’s detachment from the culture and conditions in which it is produced allows the collector to discover new meaning in it for the present.

Benjamin was also a collector, and his passion for collecting books of children’s literature must have provided him with some insight into Fuchs’ own motivations. For Benjamin, the activity of collecting is deeply personal, so much so that to speak of one’s collection is to speak of oneself. He writes, “...ownership is the most intimate relationship that one can have to

²³⁸ Benjamin, “Eduard Fuchs, Collector and Historian,” 227.

²³⁹ *Ibid.*, 251.

objects. Not that they come alive in him; it is he who lives in them.”²⁴⁰ At the same time, the collector gives the object a second life by renewing “its existence within the society from which it had been cut off.”²⁴¹ Benjamin also draws a sharp distinction between the private collection and the public museum. The greatest collectors “distinguish themselves mostly by the originality of their choice of subject matter”²⁴² and, quoting Fuchs, their idiosyncratic tendencies present all the “shabby working clothes” of the past rather than just the “splendid festive gown” found in state-sanctioned museums. By displaying his personal collection in print (and later by opening his home to interested scholars), Fuchs brings the caricature’s original reception into direct contact with its contemporary reception as a collected and curated historical artifact. He recontextualizes the work as historical evidence for a scholarly audience. In this dual task of collecting and display, Benjamin perceives a pioneering approach to the materialist consideration of art.

The activity of collecting is also related to the principles of montage and quotation that were so important to Benjamin’s later methodology. Montage, for example, establishes metaphorical and logical relations that form a constellation of ideas, through which flashes of historical insight can be gleaned—insights that would easily be missed by the historicist. Susan Buck-Morss explains how Benjamin employed montage in both the unfinished *Passagenwerk* as well as in his published essays:

²⁴⁰ Walter Benjamin, “Unpacking My Library: A Talk about Book Collecting” in *Illuminations*, edited by Hannah Arendt (New York: Schocken Books, 1968), 66.

²⁴¹ Benjamin, “Eduard Fuchs, Collector and Historian,” 251.

²⁴² *Ibid.*, 250.

The principle of construction is that of montage, whereby the image's ideational elements remain unreconciled, rather than fusing into one "harmonizing perspective." For Benjamin, the technique of montage had "special, perhaps even total rights" as a progressive form because it "interrupts the context into which it is inserted" and thus "counteracts illusion" and he intended it to be the principle governing the construction of the *Passagen-Werk*: "This work must develop to the highest point the art of citing without citation marks. Its theory connects most closely with that of montage."²⁴³

In addition, Hannah Arendt observes that quotation also has a "destructive power" that preserves ideas at the same time as it alters their meaning: "In this form of 'thought fragments,' quotations have the double task of interrupting the flow of the presentation with 'transcendent force' and at the same time of concentrating within themselves that which is presented."²⁴⁴ Quotations therefore bring the past and present together through juxtaposition, in precisely the same fashion that collecting renews the historical object with a second life.

In his 1996 book chapter on Benjamin's Fuchs essay, Michael Steinberg shows how the figures of the collector and the allegorist are interconnected: "For Benjamin, the collector is at once bourgeois, fetishistic, and antiquarian, and also with a different refraction, the historical materialist in the most literal manner. The figure of the collector, distinct, perhaps, from most

²⁴³ Buck-Morss, *The Dialectics of Seeing*, 67.

²⁴⁴ Arendt, "Introduction: Walter Benjamin 1892–1940," 39.

actual collectors, becomes for him as well an allegory of the allegorist, of the historian as allegorist.”²⁴⁵ In Benjamin’s words, there is a similar “state of unrest” between the roles of the collector and the allegorist:

The allegorist, is, as it were, the polar opposite of the collector. He has given up the attempt to elucidate things through research into their properties and relations. He dislodges things from their context and, from the outset, relies on his profundity to illuminate their meaning. The collector, by contrast, brings together what belongs together; by keeping in mind their affinities and their succession in time, he can eventually furnish information about his objects. Nevertheless ... in every collector hides an allegorist, and in every allegorist a collector.²⁴⁶

Benjamin’s concept of allegory is as a mode of thinking, but in its traditional usage allegory depends on a certain amount of prior knowledge in order to be correctly understood, whether such knowledge is literary, visual, cultural, or historical. For example, if we look at *Der Engelsturz* (The Fall of the Angels),²⁴⁷ one of the sixteen broadsheets Fuchs reproduces in his

²⁴⁵ Steinberg, 88–89.

²⁴⁶ Benjamin, *The Arcades Project*, 211.

²⁴⁷ The image is based on a well-known painting of the same name, *The Fall of the Angels*, or *The Rebel Angels* by Peter Paul Rubens, which was on permanent display in Munich at the time. Painted in 1620–21, it was previously in the picture gallery of Johann Wilhelm II von der Pfalz in Düsseldorf. In 1805 the entire collection was transferred by inheritance to the Alte Pinakothek in Munich, where it remains today. *The Getty Research Institute*, accessed June 2, 2021, https://www.getty.edu/research/exhibitions_events/exhibitions/display_arthistory/epilogue.html .

1848 monograph and the only one of Lola Montez, there are multiple levels of meaning (fig. 26). Montez, taking the place of Lucifer, is driven from her high social position into the yawning jaws of Hell, personified here as a gigantic demon. The student group “Allemania,” which had proclaimed itself her honorary guard, precedes her. Above stand the opposing student groups and university administrators. Fuchs explains:

Most caricatures depict her downfall. The most interesting of them is indisputably *Der Engelsturz*. This anonymous caricature is a parody of Rubens’ eponymous picture ... Above we see the students united with their professors as the direct originator of her fall. Lola is borne on the shoulders of the Gendarmerie Captain Bauer, one of her confidantes and an always faithful stooge to her wishes, into the jaws of hell, the likewise expelled Allemanen clinging to her skirts.²⁴⁸

Deciphering this image requires knowledge of Rubens’ painting and the allegorical imagery *it* contains from Christian mythology. Furthermore, it requires familiarity with the key figures in Bavaria in 1848, so that their casting in the roles of Rubens’ characters will make sense. Montez herself is identifiable by typical attributes such as her Spanish dress—she was often referred to as “the Spanish dancer,” although this was largely a conceit on her part—or by her dancer’s costume and shoes. The Allemania also make frequent appearances in caricature,

²⁴⁸ “Die meisten Karikaturen brachte ihr Sturz. Die interessanteste derselben ist unbestritten „Der Engelsturz.“ Diese anonyme Karikatur ist eine Parodie auf Rubens’ gleichnamiges Bild [...] Oben sehen wir die Studenten vereint mit den Professoren, als die direkten Urheber ihres Sturzes. Lola wird auf den Schultern des Gendarmeriehauptmann Bauer, einer ihrer Vertrauten und stets getreuer Handlanger ihrer Wünsche, in den Höllenschlund getragen, an ihre Röcke klammern sich die ebenfalls ausgewiesenen Allemanen.” Fuchs, *1848 in der Caricatur*, 21.

along with the identifying attributes of their office (swords, soldier's uniforms, etc.), and they are commonly depicted supporting Montez exactly as cherubs might support Venus. The lion of Bavaria sits among the university administrators, who had shut the institution down the very week of the caricature's appearance in order to curtail any further violence; a man positioned as the archangel Michael,²⁴⁹ with flaming sword and a shield bearing the emblem and motto of the city of Munich, leads the charge.²⁵⁰ Jesuits also appear among the crowds of the triumphant, despite their damaged reputation, since they too were against Lola. (Interestingly, the King himself is entirely absent.) It is therefore clear that allegory can be easily understood only so long as we have the required background knowledge; otherwise, we might take such an image to be a merely literal representation of a group of figures whose identities and activities are unknown to us. We might also identify the individuals depicted and understand the intent of the caricature to a certain extent, without recognizing the Biblical analogy which informs us, for example, that Montez is like the devil, the Allemania are like demons, and the rioting student body is like the heavenly host.

Allegory may be further complicated by altering conventional attributes for comic or satirical effect, as is often done in caricature. For example, in *The Apotheosis of Lola Montez* (fig. 27), another allegorical image from Fuchs' 1904 book, the figure of Ludwig is made to

²⁴⁹ The exact identity of this individual is no longer known. He is likely one of the leaders of the rioting students.

²⁵⁰ There is a degree of uncertainty over the significance of the date, February 11, which appears in the image. According to all available accounts the caricature was published on the 9th. The most likely explanation is that the 11th was the one-year anniversary of the resignation of Karl von Abel, the Jesuit minister who had demanded Lola's dismissal. Seymour, 195.

appear far more elderly and fragile than he actually was: naked, winged and carrying the bow and quiver of Cupid. Artists frequently exaggerated the monarch's age in their caricatures as a form of emasculation, and this motif was quickly cemented as one of Ludwig's recognizable attributes. But the supposedly elderly king was only 61, still healthy and not so bald as depicted here. Montez herself was 27, but she often prevaricated about her birthdate and was therefore believed (at the time) to be about 23. The king's exaggerated decrepitude therefore served to emphasise the difference in their ages. Furthermore, in mythology Cupid is the child of Venus, so the reversal of relative ages heightens the sense of ridicule. Montez, carrying her characteristic riding crop, is cast as the goddess of love, and she is held aloft by three cherubs: the Allemanen Captain Bauer and his associates. Symbols of Munich and Bavaria again appear, idealistically sitting atop a rainbow. Ludwig's coat of arms is modified, with one of the of supporting lions replaced by a dog whose tail sticks from between its legs. Even Abel's ministry makes an appearance in the form of a Jesuit silhouette, recognizable by its characteristic headgear.

Unlike allegory, analogy is a direct comparison of two concrete things which requires no specific background knowledge in order to understand. In figure 28 (*Such a one always follows!*) Friedrich Wilhelm IV is depicted as a drunken, lumbering oaf trying to literally follow in the footsteps of his ancestor. Frederick the Great, looking back over his shoulder, stands before the distinctive summer palace where he once patronized Voltaire, the "philosopher of Sanssouci." Wilhelm himself wears boots with enormous turned-down tops, an outdated fashion and one

which suggests that he could not “fill the shoes” of his illustrious ancestor.²⁵¹ The emperor was so incensed over this particular caricature that he immediately reinstated the censorship of graphic images, but it remained popular and even reappeared later in the year in the magazine *Der Leuchtturm* (The Lighthouse). No allegorical knowledge is necessary to interpret the image—Wilhelm’s ever-present champagne is enough to identify him, although the likeness is also effective; and the regal bearing, historical dress, and distant profile of the palace of Sanssouci in Potsdam serve to identify Frederick the Great. Only the identity of the figures is required to understand the image and its caption, and the artist provides plenty of clues for this purpose.

In figures 26 and 27, analogy and allegory are combined to create a more layered context for interpretation, while they are not present in the far more literal depiction of figure 28. Analogy is more easily interpreted than allegory, since it does not require the same degree of cultural knowledge, and yet it is also more open to multiple, possibly conflicting readings, since every direct comparison has limits beyond which the similarities cease. For example, the standard interpretation of figure 28 is that Friedrich Wilhelm IV is unable to live up to the example of Frederick the Great. But we could also say that he is raising a toast to a revered ancestor, or that his highly publicized attempt to restore Sanssouci was a well-meant tribute. However, his general bearing and the fact that Frederick’s back is turned towards him suggest otherwise. Furthermore, the visual emphasis on the footprints in the snow reinforces the

²⁵¹ To have “big shoes to fill,” or to “step in another’s shoes,” is an idiom unknown in German. Instead, they would say “to be in another’s place.” However, to “follow in another’s footsteps” is an idiom that both German and English share. Given the emphasis on footprints in the caricature, this would appear to be the intended meaning.

idiomatic reference to “following in one’s footsteps.” The analogy here is simply to a well-known figure of speech.

From these examples we can see that while analogy is primarily exegetic, requiring explanation (and therefore represents an “eternal” image of the past), allegory is hermeneutic and requires interpretation (thus lending itself to a dialectical methodology). Of course, Benjamin conceives of allegory as a mode of thinking, not merely as a figure of speech. His description of the collector in the Fuchs essay is constructed according to this principle.²⁵² With this in mind we can see that for Fuchs to be an allegorist in Benjamin’s sense means that he sees a significance in caricature beyond that of its immediate historical reception. The difficulty with Fuchs is that this is not apparent from the text alone. The visual appearance of the text, with its deliberate and considered layout of images, works together with the underlying activity of collecting to make an allegorist of Fuchs. Nostalgic reflection, the “contemplative attitude” of the historicist, was never his primary motivation for collecting or writing. What Fuchs wanted to accomplish above all was to confront his own contemporary audience with this historical material, to show that it still offered important lessons even when far removed from its initial reception.

According to Steinberg, Benjamin sees Fuchs’ project as more of a historical practice than as a theory, largely due to the role that collecting plays in his research. This practice, in which the character of earlier epochs may be grasped through their material artifacts, relates directly to materialism itself, whose basic tenet (which Engels locates in the philosophies of

²⁵² Benjamin formed his concept of allegory early in his career, in his notoriously difficult book on German baroque theatre. Based on his rejected Habilitation, or doctoral dissertation, it was first published in 1928 as *Ursprung des Deutschen Trauerspiels* (Origins of German Tragic Drama).

Bacon, Hobbes and Locke)²⁵³ is that knowledge is generated through the senses alone, never *a priori*. In other words, knowledge comes from experience—the same individual experience that informs Benjamin’s conception of the historical materialist. Fuchs’ cultural history of caricature is therefore a “materialist history of experience.”²⁵⁴ Steinberg concludes: “The convergence of the collector and the historian involves the convergence of allegorical thinking and a developed understanding of historical meaning. ... The collector becomes the cipher of an economy omitted from Marx’s classifications of use and exchange value: the material economy of memory, or of mnemonic value.”²⁵⁵ Fuchs’ collecting therefore combines materialist practice with allegorical—and analogical—thinking.

Evaluating Fuchs as a Historical Materialist

Fuchs was a politically active Marxist (even if as Benjamin observes, his methodology is not consistently dialectical) and his concern with class struggle is clearly reflected in his choice of subject matter. Fuchs was especially interested in the role caricature plays in political agitation—namely, its capacity to persuade, or as he phrases it, to “morally uplift” the masses. However, Benjamin takes Fuchs to task for his lack of rigorous dialectical thinking, and for repeatedly falling into the trap of historicism. Fuchs has a tendency to oversimplify Marxist

²⁵³ Friedrich Engels, “On Historical Materialism” in *Karl Marx and Friedrich Engels, Basic Writings on Politics and Philosophy*, edited by Lewis S. Feuer (Garden City, NY: Anchor Books, 1959), 47–49.

²⁵⁴ Steinberg, 96.

²⁵⁵ *Ibid.*, 115.

theory, to treat the goal of a classless society as a teleological outcome. He often made reference to the inevitability of social progress, and failed to address the unconscious working of ideology in class struggle. And as we have seen, he preferred other methodologies that were more familiar to the literary critic and the cultural historian. To what extent then can it even be said that Fuchs is a historical materialist? And can his work be redeemed for a Marxist aesthetics?

Looking at the entirety of his writing, Benjamin makes three fundamental criticisms of Fuchs. First, he finds that Fuchs tends to conflate artistic creativity with virility, often speaking of his favourite artists in terms of heroism, courage, manliness and bravery. This association (also noted by Bovenschen and Gorsen, Coupe, and others) is even more apparent in Fuchs' later works on erotica. Secondly, Fuchs lingers over the original reception of a work, making it not only the inevitable starting point for interpretation, but all too often the ending point as well. The subsequent history of a work's reception (a history in which Fuchs himself plays an active part as a collector and writer) is therefore not always taken into account. The confrontation of the historical object with the present, which Benjamin foregrounds in his own methodology, thus tends to be overshadowed by the narrative of its original appearance, in which historical objects are accepted as given (the "eternal image" of the past). Finally, historicist tendencies are seemingly inescapable for Fuchs, who repeatedly falls back on notions of linear, chronological progress and the inevitability of gradual social improvement.

Benjamin places the blame for these failures squarely on Fuchs' poor methodology. He points out that "Fuchs' historical materialism derives things more from the conscious economic interest of the individual than from the class interest which is unconsciously at work within the

individual.”²⁵⁶ This unconscious class interest, or ideology, arises from a world-view that is in turn based on an objective economic structure. In other words, Fuchs focuses on class struggle without attending to the material conditions of production which underpin class divisions. Fuchs’ failure then, according to Benjamin, is not that he is insufficiently political but that he is insufficiently materialist. In addition, Benjamin castigates Fuchs for addressing his books to the “bad consciousness” of bourgeois morality, instead of working to raise the moral awareness of the proletariat: “...a form of knowledge without access to practice, and which could teach the proletariat nothing about its situation, was of no danger to its oppressors. This was particularly the case with the humanities.”²⁵⁷ It is true that Fuchs’ cultural histories served mostly as a diversion for bourgeois collectors of fine books—however liberal-minded—instead of addressing a proletarian audience in need of revolutionary education. That was a task that he had abandoned when he left the *Postillon*. Fuchs’ books therefore take part in the very class divisions he wishes to eliminate. Of Fuchs’ oeuvre Benjamin writes, “...its greatness lies in its reaction to this state of affairs; its problematic lies in its participation in it.”

Despite these cogent criticisms, Fuchs remains an important figure for Marxist art history. His interest in caricature and erotica reflected a concern for marginalized forms of cultural expression. As such, he took a cue from practitioners such as Aby Warburg and Alois Riegl (whom he mentions in passing), both of whom had already expanded the field of material considered by the discipline. At the same time however, these cultural historians—as they

²⁵⁶ Benjamin, “Eduard Fuchs: Collector and Historian,” 248.

²⁵⁷ *Ibid.*, 230.

preferred to be called—found no room to discuss class struggle. Fuchs is therefore among the very first to address class struggle *as* a cultural historian. Otto Karl Werckmeister, a Marxist art historian of the New Left, sees the same trend in social art history of the latter half of the twentieth century. He observes that “...Marxist scholarship...was outflanked by a myopic social history of art, intent on artistic practices, milieus of patronage, and cultural functions of artworks, but refraining from any synthesis with political history at large.”²⁵⁸ Where cultural history, tainted by historicism, unquestioningly displays the spoils of the victor, the historical materialist prefers to shed light on the oppressed: not, once again, in order to replace one narrative with another, but to bring the very notion of a historical narrative into question, to confront the canon with the non-canonical. Werckmeister continues:

It is the expansion of pictorial culture into seemingly non-artistic fields such as pageantry or printed broadsheets, where a vital impact of imagery on social life is most apparent, that has attracted art historians to Warburg’s approach. No matter how inclusive, though, even this expansion takes visual culture for granted as a potent force without measuring it against the historical realities it purports to represent, that is, it stops short of ideology critique germane for the Marxist tradition...²⁵⁹

²⁵⁸ Otto Karl Werckmeister, “The Turn From Marx to Warburg in West German Art History, 1968–90” in *Marxism and the history of art: from William Morris to the new left*, edited by Andrew Hemingway (Ann Arbor, MI: Pluto Press, London, 2006), 215–16.

²⁵⁹ *Ibid.*, 217.

The caricatures Fuchs presents may nevertheless be dialectical images (which is the subject of the following chapter); but he does not examine them closely and prefers to talk about the political circumstances behind them. By contrast, Fuchs' contemporary Georg Hermann describes far more of the allegorical details in *Der Engelsturz*, even if he remains firmly embedded in a historicist frame. Hermann claims that Fuchs' choice of dated subject matter is ineffective for his political arguments, saying, "These investigations would have been better placed in the Dreyfus affair, where one could recognize the influence in France of the leading writers of the day...on the mood of the masses."²⁶⁰ This is in itself an astute observation, but Hermann fails to mention the revolution of 1848 or its Jubilee which is the occasion for Fuchs' publication. But if Fuchs also refrains from dwelling on this connection, leaving the points of comparison in his analogy up to the reader/viewer to comprehend, he more than makes up for it with his attention to the physical layout of his publications.

In *1848 in der Caricatur*, the essay portion preceding the sixteen plates is filled with vignettes and other caricatures, often reduced in size from the originals. These are mostly images he refers to in the text, including such famous ones as the four-stage transformation of Louis Philippe into a pear (fig. 29) by Charles Philipon.²⁶¹ There are also several images commissioned

²⁶⁰ "Besser wären diese Untersuchungen bei der Dreyfuß-affaire angebracht gewesen, wo man einmal in Frankreich von Tag zu tag den Einfluß der führenden Zeichner [...] auf die Stimmung der Massen hätte erkennen können." Hermann, 6–7.

²⁶¹ This famous image from 1831 originated as an in-court sketch conducted by Philipon as a defense of a previous caricature. His argument was that prosecution should not proceed based solely on resemblance. Otherwise, if the King's face resembled a pear, then all pears should be prosecuted. Although the defense was ineffective, the idea caught fire rapidly. A week later he published a lithograph of the sequence in his anti-monarchist journal *La Caricature*, redrawn by staff artist Honoré Daumier. It is the latter which is most often reproduced.

for the publication, including a decorative chapter heading incorporating the year 1848, and a frontispiece featuring a rooster (possibly intended as a reference to wakening, although Fuchs does not mention the image). The first historical image appears on the colophon page (fig. 30) but is not referenced until page 11. Even in this short essay one must constantly flip back and forth, especially with regards to the sixteen plates, although an image does occasionally fall on the same page on which it is discussed. These choices were not simply left to the whims of the publisher, ut were directed by Fuchs based on his hands-on experience in journalism and editing. Weissberg points out that even Benjamin fails to address Fuchs' unique approach to "the arrangement of the images" among the text. Fuchs uses images as illustrations, as evidence, as a running argument parallel to the text, and even as decoration, producing a type of *Gesamtkunstwerk* that is strangely at odds with the notion of a scientific study: "For Fuchs not only is the individual picture crucial, but the image sequence, which is already structured as an argument."²⁶² Looking and reading are thus combined, and the historicist tendency of the text is countered by the individual experience of seeing.

Fuchs' hands-on participation in the layout of his books is very much in keeping with the activity of the collector. In *Die Juden in der Karikatur*, Fuchs elaborates on his practice:

The contemporary picture for me is ... a very valuable source of truth, which is, I believe, never equally replaceable with words. That is why I seek in all my books to show off artwork so much to the reader, as much as book technology makes possible. In this case it follows that the image

²⁶² Weissberg, 117.

should not illustrate the text, but rather that the text should justify the wealth of images. Under these circumstances, of course, an encounter of text and image is ruled out.... I have adopted the sequence of individual images according to their historical merits, but in particular the arrangement has been driven by a desire for an artistic and harmonious overall effect.²⁶³

In other words, Fuchs wants to create an aesthetically pleasing object within the conventions of the German book industry. But in doing so he has unwittingly introduced an element of intertextuality, through which the pattern of images speaks to and against the text (and vice versa). The reader's encounter with the images dominates the experience of reading (or leafing through) Fuchs' books, and because of their independence from the text they take on a life of their own. In spite of his stated intentions, which are certainly modest, he has orchestrated a visual element that has the potential to carry meaning in tandem with his writing.

Therefore, it is possible to argue, contra Benjamin, that Fuchs does in fact present a dialectical argument, but that it only becomes clear when one takes into account the visual presentation of his books, and not by isolating attention to the content of his written text. A

²⁶³ "Das zeitgenössische Bild ist für mich, wie gesagt, eine überaus wertvolle Wahrheitsquelle, die nach meiner Überzeugung niemals durch Worte ebenbürtig zu ersetzen ist. Darum suche ich bei allen meinen Büchern dem Leser so viel an Bildmaterial vorzuführen, wie buchtechnisch irgendwie möglich ist. Dazu kommt im vorliegenden Falle, daß das Bild nicht den Text illustrieren soll, sondern daß der Text den Bilderreichtum begründen soll. Unter diesen Umständen ist selbstverständlich ein Zusammentreffen von Text und Bild ausgeschlossen [...] Die Reihenfolge der einzelnen Bilddokumente habe ich in der Hauptsache historisch getroffen, im besonderen aber ist das Arrangement bestimmt gewesen von dem Wunsch nach einer künstlerisch-harmonischen Gesamtwirkung." Eduard Fuchs, *Die Juden in der Karikatur*, iv.

dialectic is in fact present because there is already an encounter between the historical object (of 1848) and the contemporary audience (of 1898), via a diachronic re-presentation of caricature in an entirely new context, that of cultural history. Furthermore, this re-presentation is done in a manner that offers an interpretation of the images relevant to its new audience, rather than following historicism's treatment of the past as discrete from the present. Buck-Morss emphasizes that this encounter is the key to understanding the dialectical image: "It is the forceful confrontation of the fore- and after-life of the object that makes it 'actual' in the political sense—as 'presence of mind' (Geistesgegenwart)—and it is not progress but 'actualization' in which ur-history culminates."²⁶⁴ Here Buck-Morss refers not to the conventional Marxist definition of actualization, but to Benjamin's peculiar usage in which the unfolding of the present is traced by examining the past. Benjamin goes on to state that "Historicism presents the eternal image of the past; historical materialism presents a given experience with the past, an experience which stands unique. ... It is directed towards a consciousness of the present which explodes the continuum of history."²⁶⁵ This "ur-history," the origins of the present, is what Fuchs presents in his unique combination of image and text.

Buck-Morss proceeds to visualize Benjamin's nineteenth-century commodity as a dialectical image, caught along two axes of opposing tendencies, or "coordinates." She describes this as "a way of seeing that crystallizes antithetical elements by providing the axes for their

²⁶⁴ Buck-Morss, 219.

²⁶⁵ Benjamin, "Eduard Fuchs, Collector and Historian," 227.

alignment.”²⁶⁶ It is easy to mistake such a diagram for a Cartesian graph, but the “historically fleeting” truth illuminated by the dialectical image results not in a “synthesis” of resolution, but rather in “an unreconciled and transitory field of oppositions.”²⁶⁷ In a similar fashion, it may be possible to visualize caricature as a dialectical image, also caught along the axes of opposing tendencies. Fuchs lays the groundwork for such an understanding by opposing the persuasive and educational effects of caricature—its political agitation—against its humour, which exerts a “reconciling effect.” (This will be explored in more depth later.) We can label this axis *agitation—reconciliation*. Another axis can be posed to complement Fuchs’ formulation, one which would illuminate the power dynamics of caricature—namely, by identifying whether a given caricature is speaking from a position of power (in favour of the status quo of class relations) or against power (in favour of upsetting the status quo). We could provisionally label this second axis as *revolution—reaction*.

The introduction of a second axis is justified when we examine Fuchs’ encounter with anti-Semitic caricature, which did not fit into his previously-established ideas about the use of caricature as a proletarian weapon in class struggle. Caricature employs stereotypes for humorous effect, the negative connotations of which are not made readily apparent in Fuchs’ writing until his 1921 volume *Die Juden in der Karikatur*. The employment of stereotypes is meant to provoke laughter, but this can only be achieved by essentializing superficial characteristics. So long as caricature is emboldened to attack a conservative ruling class, it serves

²⁶⁶ Buck-Morss, 210.

²⁶⁷ Ibid.

an educational function. Fuchs writes, “In that unhindered caricature may castigate the follies of various individuals or those of entire classes, by being able to deliver old prejudices to ridicule, it becomes a cleansing bath through which people will attain to ever greater self-criticism, to be educated to the highest of virtues, which is the love of truth.”²⁶⁸ But when censorship is strictly enforced, as it was with the notorious September Laws of 1835 in France, caricature is forced to turn its attention to social follies rather than political ones: “For French caricature in general this recent gagging signified a degradation to a lower level; they could no longer deal freely with internal political issues, so naturally they turned about to the most promising area, the sexual. Caricature was thus demoralized and demoralizing.”²⁶⁹ This low point in caricature, from which only a few artists “were able to emancipate themselves” later on, tended to reinforce sexual stereotypes rather than challenge them, just as caricatures of the Jews (up to and including the Weimar period) tended to reinforce rather than challenge racial stereotypes. When forced “into the swamp” of social satire and erotica by the “police bludgeon,” the educational value of caricature is lost.

On the other hand, Fuchs also recognizes the persuasive capacity of caricature, its potential for political agitation. Revealing hidden truths can serve to provoke indignation, and in

²⁶⁸ “Indem die Karikatur unbehindert die Thorheiten der verschiedenen Individuen oder diejenigen ganzer Klassen geißeln darf, indem sie alte Vorurtheile dem Spott ausliefert, wird sie zum reinigenden Bad, durch das die Menschen zu immer größerer Selbstkritik gelangen werden, zur höchsten der Tugenden erzogen werden, das ist zur Wahrheitsliebe.” Eduard Fuchs, *1848 in der Caricatur*, 10

²⁶⁹ “Für die französische Karikatur im Allgemeinen aber bedeutete diese neuerliche Knebelung eine Degradation auf ein tieferes Niveau; mit innern politischen Fragen durfte sie sich nicht mehr ungehindert beschäftigen, naturgemäß wandte sie sich darum dem am meisten Erfolg versprechenden Gebiete zu, dem sexuellen. Die Karikatur wurde demoralisirt und wirkte demoralisirend.” *Ibid.*, 17.

turn raise the moral consciousness of a populace. But at the same time there is the “reconciling effect” that counteracts the agitational potential of caricature: “Although caricature is even more hurtful in its attacks than any other means of struggle, it nonetheless holds, one always hears said, that in the form that it wounds is contained the universal remedy against all wounds—humour.”²⁷⁰ Here Fuchs is arguing in favour of a free press, calling censorship a “blunt instrument” that is unsuitable for “raising the moral quality” of a populace. But as he points out, at the same time that caricature works as a call to revolutionary action, it also provides an emotional resolution to the conflict on which it sheds light. The essentializing nature of caricature simplifies a given subject so that it can be grasped as a humorous epigram, but the involuntary response of laughter relieves the agitational tension created by the caricature’s attack.

Any given caricature can easily lean heavily in the direction of humour or of agitation, while still maintaining a state of tension between the two poles. Certainly, those caricatures which best suit the model of a dialectical image are those which contain both extremes in equal measure. Such an image is Charles Philipon’s “The Pear” (and its numerous subsequent variations), which plays prejudicially on Louis Philippe’s jowled visage while simultaneously provoking laughter through ridicule.²⁷¹ Of course, humour is not always a necessary component

²⁷⁰ “Ist die Karikatur in ihren Angriffen auch meist verletzender, als jedes andere Kampfmittel, so birgt sie doch, hört man stets sagen, in der Form wie sie verwundet gleich wieder das Universalheilmittel gegen alle Wunden—den Humor.” *Ibid.*, 9.

²⁷¹ Philipon accomplishes this feat in two ways: first, by cutting the monarch down to size with his visual comparison; second, the French word for pear (*la poire*) lent itself to a variety of double meanings and metaphors which encompass buffoonery, bungling, and ripeness. Louis Philippe also shared his initials with *la poire*.

of caricature. Some caricatures are not meant to be funny or to make us laugh, but are intended primarily to provoke our indignation or illustrate a point, as with “Such a One Always Follows!” Here Friedrich Wilhelm IV is depicted as a figure of mockery or ridicule; but while the image certainly contains elements of humour, it is not particularly funny, such that it provokes laughter.

Gombrich also pointed out this phenomenon, clearly in favour of those images which achieve the reconciling effect that Fuchs describes: “Humour is not a necessary weapon in the cartoonist’s armoury.”²⁷² As an avowedly apolitical social historian of art—one who rejects the notion of art as autonomous from society—Gombrich values the ability of caricature to encapsulate a given situation epigrammatically, and does not give much credence to its persuasive capacity. Coupe, on the other hand, agrees with Fuchs: “Traditionally, the cartoonist tends to be radical in politics: he lives by his opposition to the powers that be and it is, at least in times of peace, virtually a professional necessity for him to be in some measure ‘against the government.’”²⁷³ But at the same time, he too notes that “Humour is not a necessary ingredient of the cartoon...”²⁷⁴ and once again prefers the “‘neat summing-up’ which Professor Gombrich discerns as an important element in modern cartooning.”²⁷⁵

This “neat summing-up” may certainly be found in the heavily allegorical broadsheets of the *Vormärz* period, but it achieves a far more effective expression in the tiny vignettes with

²⁷² Gombrich, “The Cartoonist’s Armoury,” 131.

²⁷³ Coupe, *Ibid.*, 160.

²⁷⁴ *Ibid.*, 156.

²⁷⁵ *Ibid.*, 160

which Fuchs so fondly illustrates his publications. Unlike the complex coded imagery of the allegorical broadsheets, such vignettes are easily taken in at a glance, with a minimum of necessary elements that do not require extensive prior knowledge for interpretation. They work very much as visual epigrams, capturing a given subject with wit and brevity. In fig. 30 we see a small drawing which appears on the colophon page of Fuchs' 1848 monograph. In it, Friedrich Wilhelm IV, the King of Prussia, is depicted as an anthropomorphized champagne bottle, carrying two cannons under his arms. Anonymous and without a title or caption, it nevertheless succinctly captures the most widely-held criticisms of the King without a single superfluous line. Wilhelm IV was already widely derided for his excessive fondness for champagne, and if there were any further doubt about the character's identity, the spiked helmet—a Prussian *Pickelhaube*—immediately dispels it. The exaggerated girth of the bottle, played against the thin limbs and minimal face, gives the character a comical appearance, suggesting great size without strength of limb, while the threat of punitive force is present in the cannons.

In terms of the axes of oppositional tendencies, it is possible to see how this caricature simultaneously exhibits both agitation (by provoking indignation towards the King's behaviour) and reconciliation (by provoking humour through exaggerated contrasts). Fuchs only laments that this particular association never reached the level of popularity that Louis Philippe's transformation into a pear did in France in the 1830s: "In his disposition free-spirited affections are paired with bigotry, which made him appear to the world as a hypocrite. ... But however numerous the caricatures of Friedrich Wilhelm IV may be, a caricature characterizing his whole appearance, exhausting his whole being and stamping him to such an extent that every draftsman

would involuntarily use this solution—such as ‘The Pear’—was not coined for him.”²⁷⁶ In other words, as a dialectical image it is not quite as successful at capturing the contradictions and internal tensions of its subject. Or to put it in today’s terms, it never “went viral” as a meme, in the same manner as Philipon’s motif of the pear.

Another revolutionary vignette, illustrating the stifling effect of censorship, appears in Fuchs’ *Lola Montez in der Karikatur* (fig. 31).²⁷⁷ Originally printed in the Munich satirical magazine *Leuchtkugeln* (Signal Flares) with the caption, “The Royal Bavarian Freedom of the Press,” this caricature again succinctly captures the spirit of its subject with all of its internal contradictions. In particular, the contrast between the title, which indicates freedom, and the image, which negates it, speaks specifically to the position of German writers regarding the strict censorship laws they faced. However, even without the caption or knowledge of the specific situation it refers to, the caricature remains an effective image of censorship. In this example, the intent is obviously to provoke indignation or moral outrage, although a reactionary viewer might interpret the silencing of anti-government writers as a positive development, or as a justifiable punitive measure. But this latter viewpoint can be discounted as unlikely, since the intended audience—readers of a satirical political magazine—is already primed for criticism of

²⁷⁶ “In seinem Gemüth paarten sich freigeistige Allüren mit Bigotterie, das ließ ihn der Welt als Heuchler erscheinen. ... Aber so zahlreich auch die Karikaturen Friedrich Wilhelm IV. sind, eine seine ganze Erscheinung kennzeichnende Karikatur, die sein ganzes Wesen erschöpft und ihn derart stempelt, daß jeder Zeichner diese Lösung unwillkürlich anwendet wie z.B. „die Birne,“ wurde auf ihn nicht geprägt.” Fuchs, *1848 in der Caricatur*, 24.

²⁷⁷ Fuchs, *Lola Montez in der Karikatur*, 11. This vignette appears on the first page of Chapter 1, “Die bayrische Vormärz” (The Bavarian Pre-March Period).

government policy. Furthermore, *Leuchtkugeln* had attracted considerable censorship during its few years in print and was forced to shut down in 1851, so a comment on censorship would clearly be seen as a protest against its own treatment.

In the final example (fig. 32), two feet appear with toes pointed up high among the clouds (or possibly kicking up a great deal of dust). Once again appearing anonymously and without title or caption, we know that this image is meant to ridicule Ludwig I and Lola Montez because of the pairing of an old-fashioned gentleman's buckled shoe with that of a dancer, from which additionally a crucifix irreverently hangs, pinched between the toes. This catholic emblem, the unseemly manner in which it is displayed, and the reference to Montez' profession, are enough to identify the caricature's primary target for its intended audience. The tension between agitation and reconciliation is foregrounded as the caricature simultaneously makes light of the royal affair while also provoking indignation at the disgraceful comportment of the royal personage and the unwelcome influence of the foreign woman of loose morality. It also questions the sincerity of Montez' faith, in a kingdom that was itself largely Catholic. Once again, wit and brevity give the caricature an epigrammatic quality which Fuchs highly values, and which give the image a life and relevance far beyond the immediate circumstances of its origin.

The larger broadsheets of *Lola Montez in der Karikatur*, represented by justifiably famous examples that have been examined by scholars both before and after Fuchs, instead rely heavily on allegory. They do not embody that zest, that immediacy, of which Fuchs speaks, or of Gombrich's "neat summing-up." Rather, it is the little vignettes scattered throughout Fuchs' books which capture the epigrammatic quality he so admires, according to criteria shared by Gombrich and Coupe. These vignettes convey the humorous summation of a given situation in

an instant, often without words, encapsulating a given subject in the most economical fashion: captions and titles are minimal or absent, there are only a few essential visual elements, and no need for allegorical exegesis. And as we have seen, each vignette contains opposing tendencies within itself which can be mapped onto the oppositional axes which pull the caricature in different directions. As Fuchs says, “Caricature acts as an illuminating flash,”²⁷⁸ an expression often repeated by Benjamin in his discussions of the dialectical image.

What then does the dialectical image of caricature reveal to Fuchs’ audience? To answer this, we must think of the caricature of 1848 in terms of how it represents an origin (*Ursprung*), or formative period, for the caricature of 1898. With the regrouping of the Prussian government after the failure of the National Assembly in 1849, increased censorship forced German caricaturists to back away from political subjects. As Fuchs lamented, the resulting turn towards social satire and, inevitably, to sexual themes, was a “gutter” that artists were forced into. At the same time, caricatures became more widespread by their inclusion in newspapers and magazines with a wide readership, as broadsheets were falling out of fashion and outright polemics were hardly possible any longer. Caricature therefore became institutionalized instead of entrepreneurial, with its practitioners now employed as permanent staff rather than as independent freelancers. Its peculiar mode of ridicule became normalized through constant repetition, under the guidance of editors who were answerable for the content of their publications. As a business, caricature was forced to adapt to changing tastes as well as changing political circumstances, foregrounding the commodity aspect of its production.

²⁷⁸ “Die Karikatur wirkt blitzartig erhellend.” Fuchs, *1848 in der Caricatur*, 28.

We might therefore take Fuchs' presentation of the caricature of 1848 to be a reminder of its formerly strong agitational potential, which he calls the "educative value" of caricature, with its ability to "raise the moral consciousness" of a populace. At this early point in his career though, Fuchs is still mostly concerned with describing the caricature's original reception, and he does not explicitly address his own period's confrontation with the historical caricature. Benjamin observes,

Works of art teach ... how their function outlives their creator and how his intentions are left behind. They demonstrate how the reception of a work by its contemporaries becomes a component of the effect which a work of art has on us today. They further show that this effect does not rest in an encounter with the work of art alone but in an encounter with the history which has allowed the work to come down to our own age.²⁷⁹

Benjamin finds that although Fuchs constantly struggles to escape historicist tendencies and bourgeois morality in his writing, and does not come to terms with the fact that he addresses a bourgeois audience with his books, he is also a "pioneer" whose "collections are the answers of a practical man to the irresolvable polarities of theory."²⁸⁰ Fuchs' presentation is therefore relevant to his audience by virtue of the fact that the images have been removed from their original context, placed in a scholarly discourse, and presented in a way that highlights their persuasive capacity—a capacity that he finds is misplaced in the social satire of own time.

²⁷⁹ Benjamin, "Eduard Fuchs, Collector and Historian," 226–7.

²⁸⁰ *Ibid.*, 228.

As we have seen, Fuchs also drew attention to the inherent contradictions within caricature, although these opposing tendencies are not fully elaborated by him in a dialectical fashion. For example, it is not entirely clear what he means when he speaks of the “reconciling effect” of caricature, since he devotes only a few words to the subject. He might mean that an effective caricature, one which neatly sums up its subject, inadvertently reconciles the viewer to the way things are, and in this way undermines the potential for agitation. At other times he speaks of reconciliation in the same way that Gombrich speaks of a “neat summing-up,” as the satisfaction derived from grasping a complex situation through an epigrammatic representation. Furthermore, Fuchs mentions prejudice often but it is unclear whether he means it in a positive or negative light, or if he uses it as a neutral term to indicate unconscious bias. In modern English the term “prejudice” carries a clearly negative connotation, which may not be present in the original German. Fuchs’ text therefore calls for further investigation and interpretation.

When we apply Benjamin’s criteria of the dialectical image to caricature, we can clearly see that it does exist in a state of tension, which is further reflected in the militaristic language that both he and Fuchs employ. The struggle illuminated by caricature is not merely one between classes, but also between its own opposing tendencies. In this way Fuchs sees the cultural-historical significance of caricature reflected in its “dual task” of ridicule and agitation:

Through caricature one can, as we have seen at different times, often indicate the character of a person quite aptly with just a few characterizing strokes, or bring complicated thoughts and ideas clearly to the understanding of the broadest popular circles, as even detailed explanations can hardly achieve. ... On the other hand, it can—at least to some extent—put in short truths about people and relationships which

could not otherwise appear with impunity before the public in any other form. Therefore, insights and truths come through it to the masses, which otherwise remain either incomprehensible or entirely concealed.²⁸¹

Some unanswered questions nevertheless remain about the efficacy of caricature, a concern that Fuchs brings up repeatedly. If a caricature's success in encapsulating a given situation relies on exaggeration and hyperbole, then to what extent are stereotypes employed unreflexively rather than critically? To what extent are "old prejudices" reinforced instead of challenged? When an injustice is illuminated, will the viewer's response be one of moral outrage resulting in political action, or one of simple agreement that the caricature effectively captures the way things are? The latter response is more often associated with social satire, which points out the follies of passing fashions or the misdeeds of prominent figures. But if political satire, according to Fuchs, has the goal of raising moral consciousness to the point of political action, is this potential not undermined by the reconciling effect of laughter? Finally, how may we look beyond these immediate receptions to the subsequent history of collecting and display which brings the printed caricature to Fuchs' time fifty years later—and to the subsequent scholarly discourse which carries it to our own time? If caricature is indeed a dialectical image of the past, then it is so not only by embodying the opposing tendencies of political agitation and emotional

²⁸¹ "Durch die Karikatur vermag man, wie wir verschiedenfach gesehen haben, oft mit nur wenigen charakterisirenden Strichen den Charakter einer Person so treffend zu kennzeichnen, komplizierte Gedanken und Ideen so klar zum Verständniß der weitesten Volkskreise zu bringen, wie es selbst durch ausführliche Darlegungen kaum erreicht werden kann. [...] Andererseits können durch sie—wenigstens in gewissem Maaße—Wahrheiten über Personen und Verhältnisse in Kurz gebracht werden, die sonst in keiner anderen Form ungestraft vor die Öffentlichkeit gelangen können. Es kommen also durch sie Erkenntnisse und Wahrheiten in die Massen, die diesen sonst entweder unverständlich oder ganz verschwiegen bleiben." Fuchs, *1848 in der Caricatur*, 28.

reconciliation, but also through the competing claims that have been made about it which resonate with the present.

A clue to this dilemma may be revealed by Fuchs' insight that the stance of caricature is inherently oppositional. He identifies caricature uniquely as a *Volkskunst*, an art of the masses: "The cartoonist who wants to bring to expression any protest from the people against the ruling classes, who wants to capture the spirit of the broad masses, to document their desires in his works, their thinking and their feelings, must speak the language of the workshop and use the arguments of the alley."²⁸² But he also points out that caricature is ineffective in the hands of the ruling class, since it cannot employ the full range of satirical weapons without risk to itself. Caricature therefore best employs its destructive tendency in a witty counterpoint to the reactionary images of academic painting and the metanarratives of state newspapers, as a challenge to the official interpretation of events promulgated by the ruling class which justifies the status quo of class relations. As Buck-Morss writes, the very fabric of historicism is ruptured:

Dialectical images as "critical constellations" of past and present are at the centre of materialist pedagogy. Short-circuiting the bourgeois historical-literary apparatus, they pass down a tradition of *discontinuity*. If all historical continuity is "that of the oppressors," this tradition is composed of those "rough and jagged places" at which the continuity of tradition breaks down, ... it corresponds to the understanding that "the classless

²⁸² "Der Karikaturist, der irgend einen Protest des Volkes gegen die Herrschenden zum Ausdruck bringen will, muß die Sprache der Werkstatt reden und die Argumente der Gasse benützen, will er den Geist der breiten Volksschichten erfassen, in seinen Werken ihren Willen, ihr Denken und ihr Empfinden dokumentieren." Ibid, 8.

society is not the final goal of progress in history, but its so frequently unsuccessful, yet ultimately accomplished interruption.”²⁸³

This finally is what makes the caricature of 1848 so revealing to later presents: its oppositional stance is mirrored (allegorically and analogically) by contemporary situations, by virtue of the persistence of the inherent tensions and contradictions of the caricatures themselves. Caricature thus has the potential to illuminate the formation of the present in the discontinuities and contradictions of the past.

Revolutionary Time

For Fuchs, caricatures are “the most peculiar contemporary documents, a type of world history in epigrams.”²⁸⁴ This epigrammatic quality, the ability to capture a subject with wit and brevity, allows us to see caricature as a dialectical image of the past. As such, caricature is suffused with tensions and discontinuities that can illuminate the forces that have given it shape, and which continue to give it new meaning for successive generations. Since these oppositional tendencies, which the dialectical image highlights, still exist today, we are provided with an insight into the formation of our own present.

The dialectical image of caricature therefore remains relevant. As a historical image, a given caricature can be known in both its pre- and post-history: its formation and initial reception

²⁸³ Buck-Morss, 290.

²⁸⁴ “...den eigenartigsten zeitgenössischen Dokumenten zusammengetragen, eine Art Weltgeschichte in Epigrammen.” Eduard Fuchs, *Die Karikatur der europäischen Völker vom Altertum bis zur Neuzeit*, iii.

are reshaped by its subsequent positioning as a collectable artifact, and as material for scholarly investigation. The dialectical image, like the writing of history itself, is continually re-constructed by each succeeding era. That is why it is important to revisit the past; each present writes its own history for itself. Susan Buck-Morss reiterates this point:

We are in history, and its time is not over. We make history in both temporal directions, past and present. What we do, or do not do, creates the present; what we know or do not know, constructs the past. These two tasks are inextricably connected in that how we construct the past determines how we understand the present course.”²⁸⁵

Therefore, the interpretation of caricature is always performed in the present both as a deconstruction and as a reconstruction; each present necessarily brings its own dialectic to bear. Yet the caricature also remains an image that is forever open to reinterpretation.

Benjamin’s concept of revolutionary time presents another way of understanding the relevance of historical caricature for today. Revolutionary time interrupts the flow of history, the historicist narrative written by the brokers of power. Their purpose is to maintain the status quo, whether it be the relations between classes, the distribution of wealth, or control of economic production. This is accomplished by the methodological subterfuge of historicism which, as Stéphane Mosès writes, in order “to justify its claims to scientific objectivity, makes do with

²⁸⁵ Susan Buck-Morss, “Revolutionary Time: the vanguard and the avant-garde” in *Benjamin Studies 1: perception and experience in modernity*, edited by Helga Geyer-Ryan, Paul Koopman, Klaas Yntema (New York: Rodopi, 2002): 213.

copying from mechanical physics the model of a linear sequence of causes and effects.”²⁸⁶

Mosès demonstrates that Benjamin’s methodology entails the positing of particular phenomena as historical capsules against historicism’s accumulation of mere facts. The objects themselves, in the form of images, come before us and are revealed through a process of becoming, through dialectical inquiry: an unending conversation between present and past. “Thus, we see that the dialectical image ... ultimately determines the political perception of history: to provoke the ‘telescoping’ of the past and the present to give birth to a dialectical image is precisely to decipher the past through our present, that is, to read it politically.”²⁸⁷ Fuchs and Benjamin each follow suit in their own work. Instead of generalizations, they offer concrete objects and images; instead of scientific data, they offer insights and interpretations. Instead of a totalizing linear progression, they offer a series of *discontinuities*, of ruptures. Revolutionary time thus opposes the “flow” of history by imposing a new structure over against older ones.

Unlike Benjamin however, Fuchs is admittedly not the most rigorous of historical materialists. Indeed, Benjamin’s self-imposed rigour also caused him to deviate from the mainstream of Marxist discourse, particularly in his conception of the dialectical image. Max Pensky, commenting on the *Passagenwerk*, writes: “The great theoretical struggles (with Adorno, with himself) over the status of the dialectical image can rightly be said to centre around just this question: whether it is the momentary, shocking *springing forth* of an image of historical truth from the fragments, or whether it is a *constructive achievement* of the materialist historian

²⁸⁶ Stéphane Mosès, *The Angel of History: Rosenzweig, Benjamin, Scholem* (Stanford, CA: Stanford University Press, 2009), 89.

²⁸⁷ *Ibid.*, 104.

that most adequately captures the status of the dialectical image.”²⁸⁸ Whether Fuchs represents the former, and Benjamin the latter, is a question difficult to answer without the completed form of the *Passagenwerk* for comparison. Its fragmentary nature and emphasis on interruption certainly favour the “flash of illumination,” but the dialectical image can encompass both models simultaneously, the sudden insight and the deliberate reconstruction. This may indicate a better way to think about Fuchs’ work. He discusses the flashes of illumination that caricature can provide through its epigrammatic quality, but his texts also stand as a cumulative construction, each new volume building on the previous ones. But whatever inconsistencies or lapses we find in Fuchs’ methodology, he remains one of the first to take caricature seriously as a document of the past, one which reveals the dialectical tensions that are the ur-form, the origins, of the present.

²⁸⁸ Max Pensky, “Tactics of Remembrance: Proust, Surrealism, and the Origin of the *Passagenwerk*” in *Walter Benjamin and the Demands of History*, edited by Michael P. Steinberg (Ithaca, NY: Cornell University Press, 1996), 189.

Chapter 5: The Dialectical Image of Caricature

To date, Eduard Fuchs remains the only historian of caricature to employ Marxist cultural analysis in the form of a survey history, and to frame caricature as a weapon in class struggle. Benjamin criticized Fuchs' inconsistent application of Marxism, especially where he turned his attention to erotica, as his own innate bourgeois tendencies repeatedly came to the fore. However, even in Fuchs' early writings we find insights of a dialectical nature on which to build. Although he did not develop these ideas to their full potential, the "reconciling effect" of humour clearly stands in opposition to the agitational goals of political caricature. For the caricaturist, it is not enough to simply illustrate the foibles of political figures or the abuses of privileged social classes, to ridicule and mock those in high positions. In order to be effective, caricature must also persuade a population to change its collective mindset: to vote differently, to raise its voice in protest, in short, to become conscious of itself as an underclass and to recognize its interests as such, to risk itself in actively opposing the establishment. But the very act of laughter—an involuntary physiological reaction in response to the humour of caricature—releases the tension created by this persuasive effect, the "tension of the joke" in Freud's terms, thus undermining the potential for political agitation. Therefore, the epigrammatic quality of caricature, the humorous capturing of the essence of a situation or personality, simultaneously creates and relieves this tension.

Following Fuchs' lead, the oppositional axes which articulate caricature's innate tensions can be extrapolated into a dialectical image of caricature. The dialectical image is well-suited to the study of caricature as it provides a means by which to categorize both audience and message, thus distinguishing truly agitational caricature from other forms of persuasion such as social

commentary and state propaganda. It also has the benefit of throwing into sharp relief the power dynamics between classes, who use the same means (for example physiognomic distortion, or argument by analogy) to persuade their respective audiences. These dynamics show that caricature can be used—or misused—to either challenge or bolster an existing power base, much as propaganda itself was once understood as a neutral term which could be used for good or for ill.

There is by no means a level playing field in class struggle, and the dialectical image of caricature aptly illustrates why: to challenge authority through ridicule and mockery, to challenge the status quo of class relations, is to speak truth to power; but to speak *from* a position of power in order to maintain the status quo is merely an exercise of that power. Fuchs explains:

A government's best supports are old prejudices, but nothing whets the weapon of satire so much as the institutions supported only by tradition.

... This explains the fact that caricature in most cases fights on the side of progress and that it has here also recorded its most brilliant attacks.

Caricature which is in the service of a government must twist and turn, so

as not to provoke; it must accomplish the feat of flying with clipped wings
in a room that is too low to walk upright in.²⁸⁹

The truth of this became especially evident for Fuchs while writing *Die Juden in der Karikatur*, as he found, perhaps for the first time, that the vast majority of the material supported an existing imbalance of power, rather than challenging it. To wit, anti-Semitic caricature was essentially counter-revolutionary, contrary to Fuchs' prior assumption that political caricature was primarily revolutionary in nature. Confusion thus ensues when speaking of caricature, as the term has been used so broadly in the discourse that it encompasses material across the political spectrum.

Clemens Klünemann observes that Fuchs' struggle to validate his presentation of anti-Semitic caricatures, his faith in the caricature as "a source of truth," was doomed from the start, as the material was deeply ideological in nature: "E. Fuchs' naivety consists in trying to explain anti-Semitism with moral criteria, where morality had long since given way to a brutal racial

²⁸⁹ "Einer Regierung beste Stützen sind alte Vorurtheile, aber an nichts wetzt die Satyre ihre Waffe so sehr als den nur durch die Tradition gestützten Institutionen. Mit anderen Worten: die Satyre respektirt nichts, was nur der Gedankenlosigkeit seine Achtung und seinen Bestand verdankt. Sie reduziert übertriebene und eingebildete Werthe auf ihre wirkliche Größe.

"Daraus erklärt sich die Thatsache, daß die Karikatur in den allermeisten Fällen auf Seiten des Fortschritts kämpft und daß sie hier auch ihre glänzendsten Waffengänge zu verzeichnen hat. Die Karikatur, die im Dienste einer Regierung steht, sie muß sich drehen und wenden, um nicht anzustoßen, sie muß das Kunststück vollbringen, mit beschnittenen Flügeln in einem Raum zu fliegen, der zu nieder ist, um aufrecht darin gehen zu können." Fuchs, *1848 in der Caricatur*, 8.

ideology.”²⁹⁰ Fuchs’ apparent philo-Semitism, in other words, could not be used as an effective remedy against anti-Semitism, as both depended on the same stereotypes. Therefore, what *Die Juden* makes most evident is a failure of terminology, as the word “caricature” itself, which typically implies a revolutionary sentiment, is also used to encompass reactionary satire (i.e., state propaganda). The dialectical image of caricature will allow us to divide the subject matter along ideological lines, and will necessitate the introduction of new definitions and terminology.

In his earlier work Fuchs had taken the objects of history (i.e., its material artifacts) and interpreted them, allegorically and analogically, in opposition to the accepted narratives that had been handed down by the official history books, narratives written by the victors in class struggle. He saw caricature as a voice raised against this victorious history, as the voice of the oppressed, the alienated, the disenfranchised—even if, in practice, caricatures typically appeared in forms that would be seen and/or collected by the bourgeoisie. But even if the public that Fuchs spoke of was more nuanced in its class stratification than he generally acknowledged, caricature still played a significant participatory role in political life. It occupied the public consciousness at least as much as the grand narratives of the state, as well as those of history painting or official newspapers. Fuchs’ practice is further related to a materialist history of art in that caricature embodies a dialectic of cultural reflection in tension with popular resistance grounded in the notion of class struggle. Therefore, caricature has been (and remains) revealing, and through it an image of the past can be constructed through a process of deconstruction and reconstruction.

²⁹⁰ “E. Fuchs Naivität besteht darin, daß er den Antisemitismus mit moralischen Kriterien zu erklären sucht, wo Moral längst einer brutalen Rassenideologie gewichen war.” Clemens Klünemann, “Eduard Fuchs über die Juden in die Karikatur” in *Ridiculosa* 2 (1995): 36.

This image of the past, which Benjamin calls the *dialectical image*, continues to provide new insights today, just as it did for Fuchs.

In Benjamin's imagistic model of the dialectical image, flashes of insight occur which are based on the juxtaposition of historical objects. The "image" itself is a material object made in the past, which reveals historical tensions to us as we look back on it with the knowledge and experience of our own time. For Benjamin these objects were the defunct and deteriorating arcades of European capitals, especially Paris; for Fuchs, they were the caricatures and erotic art of the past. In each case, what the dialectical image reveals to us is the unfolding of our present, or its origins (*Ursprung*). Therefore, as an application of historical materialism, the dialectical image also relies on a continuity between past and present. Benjamin writes,

It is not that what is past casts its light on what is present, or what is present its light on what is past; rather, image is that wherein what has been comes together in a flash with the now to form a constellation. In other words, image is dialectics at a standstill. For while the relation of the present to the past is purely temporal, the relation of what-has-been to the now is dialectical: not temporal in nature but figural *«bildlich»*. Only dialectical images are genuinely historical—that is, not archaic—images.²⁹¹

By 'historical' Benjamin here refers to a living, unfolding history, not the dry facts and statistics of the past which are worthless without interpretation. Genuine history is not to be found in mere

²⁹¹ Walter Benjamin, *The Arcades Project*, 463.

data; instead, it is something continually made and re-made in the present, reflecting our evolving relationship with those facts. Historical knowledge is therefore generated when we are given these flashes of illumination into the formation of our *own* time.

For example, Benjamin notes how Baudelaire viewed the prostitute as a dialectical image of modernity, at once both seller and commodity. Michael Jennings, in his book on the dialectical image in Benjamin, explains: “Even as Baudelaire’s complicity with his class situation produces poetry that reflects the determining factors in its production, the poetry also actively resists these forces.”²⁹² He points out that Benjamin’s focus on the mid-nineteenth century, and his interest in Baudelaire, lies in his understanding that this was modernity’s formative period.²⁹³ A dialectical image of modernity therefore takes shape by bringing this period into sharp contrast with the present. Jennings continues:

The truth of the past and the present emerges only in their collision. On the other hand, it cannot be denied that Benjamin attempts to reintroduce an explicit and conscious ethical element in history writing. The truth claims of historicism give way not merely to the different claims of the dialectical image but to the materialist historian’s impulse to rewrite

²⁹² Michael W. Jennings, *Dialectical Images: Walter Benjamin’s Theory of Literary Criticism* (Ithaca, NY: Cornell University Press, 1987), 39.

²⁹³ *Ibid.*, 35–36.

history in such a way that a purgative and redemptive political action ensues. Benjamin's is a corrective historiography...²⁹⁴

This, then, is how Benjamin links the dialectical image of history to Marxism. If, according to Jennings, the historicist model of progress is “the most dangerous ideological weapon in the capitalist arsenal,” then the flashes of illumination that the dialectical image provides throw light on the “fallen conditions” of the underclass. Progress is no longer to be measured by the gradual improvement of society towards utopian harmony, but by the “erasure of conditions of oppression.”²⁹⁵ It is also significant that the dialectical image *is* an image, which can be grasped all at once, in its entirety, with all of its contradictions immediately present. The flash of illumination is *seen*, while historical narratives are spoken or read in a linear continuum. “Dialectical images,” writes Jennings, “are bursts of recognition which, in revealing knowledge of a better world and a better time, may precipitate revolution.”²⁹⁶ The promise of this better world is the wish embodied by the commodity form, a wish whose negation, by acting contrary to one's class interests through revolution, may indeed be fulfilled.

Benjamin's notes for the *Passagenwerk* bring together his critique of historicism with a profound study of the Parisian arcades, home of the nineteenth century commodity. Once the height of bourgeois fashion, these arcades had since fallen into disrepute and ruin. He writes:

²⁹⁴ Ibid., 51.

²⁹⁵ Ibid., 37.

²⁹⁶ Ibid., 19.

To thinking belongs the movement as well as the arrest of thoughts. Where thinking comes to a standstill in a constellation saturated with tensions—there the dialectical image appears. It is the caesura in the movement of thoughts. Its position is naturally not an arbitrary one. It is to be found, in a word, where the tension between dialectical opposites is greatest. Hence, the object constructed in the materialist presentation of history is itself the dialectical image. The latter is identical with the historical object; it justifies its violent expulsion from the continuum of historical process.²⁹⁷

The historical object breaks through the linear narrative of historicism by means of a dialectical interpretation which confronts the present with the object's inherent tensions and contradictions. This is the dialectical image of the past.

Susan Buck-Morss expands on Benjamin's use of the dialectical image in her study of his *Passagenwerk*. She charts the ways in which the dialectical image works to interrupt the flow of historical narrative using the device of montage. Montage was an important concept for Benjamin, one which allowed for the juxtaposition of irreconcilable elements.

The "dialectical image" has as many levels of logic as the Hegelian concept. It is a way of seeing that crystallizes antithetical elements by providing the axes for their alignment. Benjamin's conception is essentially static (even as the truth which the dialectical image illuminates

²⁹⁷ Benjamin, *The Arcades Project*, 475.

is historically fleeting). He charts philosophical ideas visually within an unreconciled and transitory field of oppositions that can perhaps best be pictured in terms of coordinates of contradictory terms, the “synthesis” of which is not a movement toward resolution, but the point at which their axes intersect.²⁹⁸

Buck-Morss places the nineteenth-century commodity of the Arcades Project at the intersection of two pairs of coordinates, or “oppositional axes:” waking versus dream, and petrified nature versus transitory nature. These extremes delineate each axis, and the historical object—in this case the nineteenth-century commodity—is the dialectical image which lies at their centre. In her interpretation, the commodity then reveals four “faces” which correspond to the axial fields: fetish (phantasmagoria), fossil (trace), wish image (symbol), and ruin (allegory). These faces are the “physiognomic appearance” of the commodity, “moments” which create a “constellation of ideas” without finding resolution. In this way the dialectical image is a “philosophical representation,” a construction or montage, which sets aside both empirical knowledge and critical interpretation in favour of the “lightning flash” of truth. The dream-world of the object’s mythology—the wish-image it presents—is thus overcome by throwing its faces into sharp relief. This system of coordinates is not imposed by Buck-Morss without justification. Indeed, she finds a description of it buried in Benjamin’s notes.²⁹⁹ The purpose of this system is to situate

²⁹⁸ Buck-Morss, *The Dialectics of Seeing*, 210.

²⁹⁹ *Ibid.*, 213–5. The diagram Buck-Morss provides to sketch out these coordinates, while based on Benjamin’s description of coordinates, also resembles the semiotic square, or Klein group, which was used by structuralists such as Rosalind Krauss in the 1970s as a heuristic tool.

the commodity so that the discontinuities and contradictions of its origins are highlighted, not reconciled or overcome.

In a similar vein, it is possible to place caricature at the intersection of its own set of coordinates. As such, it too reveals physiognomic faces that correspond to its unique axial fields. As mentioned in Chapter 4, Fuchs had already alluded to the dialectical tension of caricature by describing the oppositional tendencies between political agitation and emotional reconciliation. That is to say that while a political caricature is intended to agitate the viewer to undertake some resolving political action, it is also susceptible to undermining itself by providing a psychological or emotional resolution instead. This “reconciling effect” results from the satisfaction of grasping a neatly summed-up situation—not unlike the cathartic effect of a closed narrative. The epigrammatic character of caricature is therefore problematic for Fuchs, since its persuasive capacity is thrown into question. On the other hand, Benjamin would say that this very discomfort is what produces astonishment or disturbance in the viewer, and is itself the source of alienation which is the necessary prerequisite for action. This interpretation constitutes a dialectical image of caricature—indeed, of all satire.

Fuchs’ study of anti-Semitic caricature, as we saw, was hampered by the lack of a framework for clearly distinguishing revolutionary caricatures from reactionary ones. Both were satirical and used the same visual language of physiognomic exaggeration and pathognomic distortion to attack their targets. But if we expand our view beyond traditional caricature to other forms of visual satire, such as the photomontage of the Nazi period, then the oppositional axes of the dialectical image can better reveal the inner structure of *all* satirical images. Fuchs himself refrained from taking this step, although he could hardly have failed to be aware of photomontage and its use in political satire. Photomontage was most famously used by John

Heartfield in his attacks against the Nazi regime, but it had also appeared in advertising, graphic design, and even in state propaganda. Using examples of each type, we can illustrate the “physiognomic faces” of the axial fields of the dialectical image of caricature. At its centre is the image itself, pulled simultaneously in all directions.

Case Study: John Heartfield and Photomontage

In 1852 Karl Marx published an essay on Louis Napoleon’s coup of the faltering French republic, which was launched on the anniversary of Napoleon Bonaparte’s crowning as Emperor. Marx tellingly describes Louis Napoleon as a caricature of his famous uncle, although he could not yet have known how the Second Empire would unfold. He writes, “Hegel remarks somewhere that all great world-historical facts and personages appear, so to speak, twice. He forgot to add: the first time as tragedy, the second time as farce.”³⁰⁰ In other words, the tragedies of history—war, corruption, injustice, and especially class struggle—are subsequently re-enacted in a comedic form, providing a type of closure not originally forthcoming. In practice the Second Empire was anything but an amusing reminder of the first. Instead of expansionist imperial ambitions, Napoleon III turned his attention to the regulation of his own citizens through repressive laws, censorship, urban planning projects, and increased class stratification. In hindsight, the farcical element of his reign resided in its thin pretence to democracy and the

³⁰⁰ Karl Marx, “The 18th Brumaire of Louis Bonaparte” in *Selected Works 1, Karl Marx and Friedrich Engels* (Moscow: Foreign Languages Publishing House, 1958), 247.

complete inversion of the principles of the French Revolution. Therefore, Louis Napoleon indeed became a prime target of caricature.

Fuchs notes that ridicule and mockery are essential weapons in the arsenal of the caricaturist, in that they serve to undermine the authority of their targets and lay bare their shortcomings:

Most people remain indifferent when one seriously demonstrates to them that their vices are abhorrent, they turn away bored if one condemns their error with the pathos of moral indignation, but they writhe in impotent fury when they are spilled with the corrosive lye of mockery, and those who have taken up the fight against a social institution, a class, obtain the most powerful spur for their action with the unsparing labelling or disclosure of the damages of this institution—therein rests the great culture-promoting and therefore virtuous effect of satire.³⁰¹

The language of armed revolution pervades Marxist literature, even on such seemingly innocuous topics as caricature and satire. But as yet there has been very little Marxist scholarship on the subject, as Terry Eagleton notes: “There has been no Marxist theory of comedy to date ... And there are good reasons why Marxism has suspected the comic: for what could more securely

³⁰¹ “Die meisten Menschen bleiben gleichgültig, wenn man ihnen ernstlich vorführt, daß ihre Laster verabscheuungswürdig seien, sie wenden sich gelangweilt ab, wenn man mit dem Pathos der sittlichen Entrüstung ihre Fehler verdammt, aber sie winden sich in ohnmächtiger Wuth, wenn man sie mit der ätzenden Lauge des Spottes übergießt und diejenigen, die den Kampf gegen eine gesellschaftliche Institution, eine Klasse, aufgenommen haben, erhalten den mächtigsten Ansporn für ihr Wirken in der schonungslosen Kennzeichnung und Preisgabe der Schäden dieser Institution—darin beruht die große kulturfördernde und deshalb sittigende Wirkung der Satyre.” Eduard Fuchs, *1848 in der Caricatur*, 6.

rivet us in our ideological places, having provisionally jolted us out of them?”³⁰² This remains a glaring omission, especially in light of the work of John Heartfield. During the Weimar era, political satire had found a new medium in the recently developed field of photomontage, and Heartfield was unquestionably its foremost practitioner. His political images appeared in the popular left magazine *Arbeiter-Illustrierter-Zeitung* (Worker’s Illustrated Journal, or *A-I-Z*) between approximately 1929–1938. Much of this work was conducted in exile in Prague, where both Heartfield and the magazine were forced to relocate in 1933. At its height *A-I-Z* attracted a wide audience with a circulation of half a million, and still maintained a readership of 12,000 during its hardest years abroad. Since *A-I-Z* answered directly to the Communist International in Moscow rather than to Germany’s Communist party (the KPD), it could promote a general political orientation without being hampered by regional party affiliations. As a result it sidestepped local issues and focussed its attacks on fascism, while also presenting an idealized image of communism that avoided any acknowledgment or criticism of the harsh realities of Stalinism.

John Heartfield adopted the militant language of Marxism in his motto “Benützte Foto als Waffe”—“Use photography as a weapon,” which accompanied his first political photomontage in 1929 (fig. 33). Heartfield’s photomontages, which appeared frequently and were closely associated with the magazine,³⁰³ were primarily aimed at the German bourgeoisie and supporters

³⁰² Terry Eagleton, *Walter Benjamin, or Towards a Revolutionary Criticism* (New York, NY: Verso, 1981), 159–160.

³⁰³ Heartfield’s contributions to *A-I-Z* eventually numbered 237. Sabine T. Kriebel, *Revolutionary Beauty: The Radical Photomontages of John Heartfield* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2014), 2.

of the National Socialists. But because of the magazine's wide readership they were viewed across the political spectrum as well as across class boundaries. Who then is the ideal viewer of Heartfield's photomontages, and how do his images help define them? In other words, what subject is interpellated by his images? Any attempt to answer this must address the mechanisms by which satire addresses its audience, how it communicates its message, and to what degree we might judge the effectiveness of satire as a means of persuasion.

That Heartfield's work was intended to persuade is in little doubt. He used the same means and methods as American-style advertising³⁰⁴—simple, striking visuals with memorable slogans—to appeal to mass psychology. Although agitational propaganda may appear to be as deeply based on ideology as state propaganda, its fundamental difference lies in its critical stance, its call to non-conformity and resistance to power. Art historian Sabine Kriebel notes that Heartfield engages the viewer “haptically, optically, and psychologically”³⁰⁵ in his effort to exert political persuasion. But unlike ideologically-motivated propaganda images, he also addresses a rational, if already left-leaning, subject. Heartfield's message is not intended to merely assuage the like-minded, to preach to those already converted. Rather, he uses every available technical means to shock and disturb the viewer from complacent reception, regardless of their political leanings. Kriebel notes: “Experiments with typography, layouts, colour and composition

³⁰⁴ Philosopher Arthur C. Danto links the rhetoric of advertising to the persuasive intent of political art in his 1993 article “John Heartfield and Montage” for *The Nation*. The article is reprinted in *The Madonna of the Future: Essays in a Pluralistic Art World* (New York: Farrar, Straus, and Giroux, 2000).

³⁰⁵ Sabine T. Kriebel, “Touch, Absorption and Radical Politics in the Magazine: The Case of John Heartfield” in *Kritische Berichte* 4 (2012): 24.

demonstrate an interest in jolting habitual patterns of perception to generate an active critical beholder.”³⁰⁶

Heartfield’s literal attacks against political authority are mirrored metaphorically by attacking the authority of the image. Just as collage in painting had challenged the conventions of Renaissance perspective, photomontage challenged the authorship and authenticity of photography. This was done in several ways: by reclaiming or repurposing well-known images; by combining elements that could not or would not occur in reality; and by adding captions that provided a particular and unexpected twist to the viewer’s interpretation. Through such manipulations Heartfield reveals the truth claims of photography as false, especially in cases where he appropriates images of public figures. Nevertheless, photography retains some of its truth-power despite such obvious manipulations. Unlike caricature it still represents fragments of the real world, even when cut up, collaged, and captioned. A sense of ambiguity is thus elicited from the viewer, in that what is shown is simultaneously both real and not real.

Fuchs recognized this inherent ambiguity in caricature as well, contrasting its persuasive capacity with its unintended “reconciling effect.” As a result, caricature was sometimes dismissed as an ineffective means of persuasion. In 1938, for example, Georg Lukács described photomontage as “one-dimensional:” despite its “striking effects,” its potential to become a “powerful political weapon,” it nevertheless had only “the same sort of effect as a good joke.”³⁰⁷ On the other hand, as Kriebel points out, the “righteous revulsion” evoked by satire “does not

³⁰⁶ Ibid., 26.

³⁰⁷ Frederic Jameson, ed., *Aesthetics and Politics* (London: Verso, 1990), 43.

end in reconciliation or propitiation, as Freud would have it, but remains unsublated; its aim is to unmask, not to give pleasure.”³⁰⁸

The question of political satire’s effectiveness was hotly debated in the USSR when Heartfield visited there for six months between 1931 and 1932. During that time he taught workshops on photomontage, as well as giving lectures, photographing several industrial sites, and exhibiting his own work.³⁰⁹ Questions were raised about what constituted truly revolutionary art, and how posters and other mass-produced images could be better employed to educate the masses, to instil in them a sense of class consciousness. Soviet commentators were especially critical of photomontage’s origins in German dada, which they viewed as “the epitome of bourgeois decadent art.”³¹⁰ Meanwhile Lukàcs continued to argue against the “formalism” of photomontage, its reliance on “isolated” facts. He argued instead that the artist could only overcome his reliance on “exposure of details” if he “chooses dialectical materialism as the basis of his creative method.”³¹¹ Sergei Tretyakov, on the other hand, pointed to Heartfield’s

³⁰⁸ Kriebel, 183.

³⁰⁹ Heartfield’s activities in the USSR are chronicled by Hubertus Gassner in “Heartfield’s Moscow Apprenticeship 1931–1932” in *John Heartfield*, edited by Peter Pachnicke and Klaus Honnef (New York: Harry N. Abrams, 1992), 256–289.

³¹⁰ *Ibid.*, 256.

³¹¹ *Ibid.*, 276.

combination of image and text elements as a way to ground meaning, to make explicit a particular interpretation from which the photograph alone could not be detached.³¹²

Heartfield himself was a strong advocate of the lasting effects of satire. In 1942 he wrote an article on Daumier,³¹³ remarking on the unexpected appearance of one of his caricatures (depicting two old Parisian women) in the Nazi journal *Das Reich*. He imagines himself reacting to this unusual circumstance alongside the recently deceased Fuchs, whose works on Daumier were still widely known. Together they lament the Nazis' abuse of Daumier in co-opting this image for their own purposes, sans caption, and simply titled "The Woman in Caricature." Heartfield criticizes the journal's "veneer of the culturally educated," its "disgrace to the spirit of Daumier," asserting that a more politically potent image from Daumier's oeuvre—particularly those critical of the Wilhelmine dynasty—"could not be exposed to such a severe stress test." He then proceeds to rescue Daumier by demonstrating how closely Second Empire France mirrored the rise of fascism in Weimar Germany, and how much the messages of class resistance and impending justice continue to resound with succeeding generations. In Heartfield's imagined scenario, Fuchs muses: "as it is with culture so it is with peace: *Both are indivisible*, one cannot

³¹² Ibid., 278.

³¹³ Reprinted in *Der Schnitt entlang der Zeit*, edited by Roland März (Dresden: Verlag der Kunst, 1981), 411–416.

be destroyed without killing both. They can only live again if barbarism is defeated. They can only flourish in a well-disposed and civilized society.”³¹⁴

The effects of photomontage were not limited to the political realm. It also presented a challenge to the privileged status of the artist or photographer as author of an image, a challenge that was greeted with enthusiasm in the USSR. Alexei Gutnov cast Heartfield as a “new type of artist” who was closer in spirit to an industrial worker, rather than remaining cloistered in the studio.³¹⁵ Tretyakov made a similar argument for the “deprofessionalization of literature.”³¹⁶ Heartfield’s working method was itself a deconstruction of artistic authenticity and originality. For example, he often gave detailed instructions to other photographers, rather than taking his own photographs. He also heartily encouraged public submissions of photomontage to *A-I-Z*, and engaged with various groups to collaborate in the creation of montages.³¹⁷ In his Moscow teaching workshops on photomontage techniques, he emphasized its role as a participatory mass medium. It is also believed that many of Heartfield’s captions originated with his brother

³¹⁴ “Ich denke, Monsieur Daumier, es ist mit der Kultur wie mit dem Frieden: Beide sind unteilbar, man kann sie nicht zerstückeln, ohne sie zu töten. Sie können nun wieder leben, da die Barberei geschlagen ist. Sie können nur in einer wohlgeordneten und gesitteten Gesellschaft gedeihen.” Ibid, 416.

³¹⁵ Gassner, 259.

³¹⁶ Ibid., 260.

³¹⁷ Maria Gough, “Back in the USSR: John Heartfield, Gustavs Klucis, and the Medium of Soviet Propaganda” in *New German Critique* 107, 36/2 (Summer 2009): 155–56.

Wieland Herzfeld,³¹⁸ who operated the publishing firm Malik Verlag for which Heartfield had also designed book jackets. Indeed, the brothers worked so closely together during this period that they often signed their work “Gebrüder Heartfield–Herzfelde,” positioning themselves primarily as collaborators rather than as autonomous artists.³¹⁹

Heartfield initially employed photomontage as an anti-aesthetic methodology in order to criticise the authoritarian values of the ostensibly bourgeois Weimar republic.³²⁰ As a participant in the Berlin dada movement, he believed that political revolution should be accompanied by a revolution in aesthetics. Photomontage offered a riposte to the traditional hierarchy of art which privileged academic realism in painting. It also presented a mechanical and impersonal foil to the German Expressionist movement which included artists such as Max Beckmann and Otto Dix. Despite the newness of the medium, Heartfield’s photomontages appear in an already mature form, focussing on constructive rather than destructive compositions.³²¹ This is demonstrated by his careful stagings and attention to detail, which are quite different from the random selections of avant-garde photomontage that had been previously conducted by dada and surrealist artists,

³¹⁸ Jindrich Toman, “Émigré Traces: John Heartfield in Prague” in *History of Photography* 32/3 (Autumn 2008): 278–79.

³¹⁹ Nancy Roth, “Heartfield’s Collaboration” in *Oxford Art Journal* 29/3 (2006): 398.

³²⁰ Magdalena Dabrowski, “Photomonteur John Heartfield” in *MoMA* 13 (1993): 13.

³²¹ Toman, 277.

as well as from his own early work for the magazine *Der dada*.³²² German culture in the Weimar period was characterized by a matter-of-fact practicality encapsulated by the term *Neue Sachlichkeit* (literally *new objectivity*) which was manifest in all areas, particularly the visual: architecture, painting, film, and especially photography. Cristina Cuevas-Wolf writes: “The predominance of objective images of a prosperous everyday life furthered the assumption that technological progress predetermined Social Democracy.”³²³ *Neue Sachlichkeit* therefore represented a sceptical stance towards modernity, preceding a more critical reading of photography that was able to question its “reputation as truthful witness.” Cuevas-Wolf continues:

The critique of rationality during the Weimar Republic expressed dissatisfaction with science and concern about the psychological and social consequences of the mechanized and standardized experience of the individual.³²⁴

Heartfield therefore contributed to the growing scepticism towards photography as a source of visual truth by revealing its artificiality.

³²² Andrés Mario Zervigón, *John Heartfield and the Agitated Image: Photography, Persuasion, and the Rise of Avant-Garde Photomontage* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2012), 127.

³²³ Cristina Cuevas-Wolf, “John Heartfield’s Insects and the ‘Idea’ of Natural History” in *Elective Affinities: Testing Word and Image Relationships*, edited by Catriona MacLeod, Charlotte Schoell-Glass, Veronique Plesch (Amsterdam: Rodolpi, 2009), 347.

³²⁴ *Ibid.*, 348.

Ambivalence about photography's claim to truth is contemporaneously portrayed by Kurt Tucholsky in his 1929 book *Deutschland, Deutschland über alles*, for which Heartfield designed the cover.³²⁵ Previously Tucholsky had professed great faith in the power of images to capture truth, but by this time he had begun to alter his views.³²⁶ Emphasising the growing importance of captions and the necessity of enlisting photography as a weapon in the political struggle against the bourgeois press, the book avails itself of photomontage only sparingly. Tucholsky preferred to rely on untouched images, using the sequential juxtaposition of images and text to interrupt and interrogate the traditional narrative of the book form. For example, a picture of a crowd of schoolboys rushing from class is closely followed by a scene of dead soldiers on the battlefield.³²⁷ Irony and the reversal of expectations are also produced through the judicious use of captioning. A picture of soldiers under netting is captioned by the *superscriptio* "Camouflage," followed by the *subscriptio* "The German army's newest protective device makes machine-gun divisions almost invisible. This net is not a net. It's an allegory."³²⁸ Tucholsky had imagined what An Paenhuysen calls a "counter-discourse"³²⁹ to photojournalism which would

³²⁵ Heartfield also contributed 10 photomontages, out of 181 images. Kurt Tucholsky, *Deutschland, Deutschland über alles* (Berlin: Neuer Deutscher Verlag, 1929).

³²⁶ An Paenhuysen, "Kurt Tucholsky, John Heartfield and Deutschland, Deutschland über alles" in *History of Photography* 33/1 (February 2009): 41.

³²⁷ Tucholsky, 213.

³²⁸ *Ibid.*, 35.

³²⁹ Paenhuysen, 54.

arrest the rapid progress of modernization. *Deutschland, Deutschland über alles* employs photography in a brutal and unrelenting critique of Weimar-era Germany, one which does not “visualize the new, but ... rather isolates traces of a persistent past.”³³⁰ These traces give the lie to the bourgeois view of a prosperous, happy Germany by casting an unsparing light on poverty, neglect, and corruption.

Although Heartfield’s exacting techniques deliberately hid the physical traces of collage,³³¹ much as an academic painter might hide their brushstrokes in pursuit of some notion of realism, the illusion presented by photomontage is not so much shattered as made uncanny by the juxtaposition of obviously disparate elements. As Kriebel notes, Heartfield used formal elements like the shadow in “German Natural History” (fig. 34) to ground everything in a shared space.³³² More often, the clipped edges of figures removed from their original ground are carefully disguised to situate them in a neutral environment. Harkening to his theatre work as a set designer, the art historian Nancy Roth writes, “...Heartfield ‘stages’ the event, using a backdrop, blocking the characters, coordinating the lighting, voices and other sounds.”³³³ In creating this illusion, the technique draws attention to the disparity of photographic elements rather than to the process of construction.

³³⁰ Ibid., 48.

³³¹ This was usually accomplished by careful airbrushing in order to eliminate the outlines of frayed or cut edges, and to equalize the values and contrast of photographs taken under different lighting conditions. Roth, 409.

³³² Kriebel, *Revolutionary Beauty*, 243.

³³³ Roth, 409.

As Heartfield developed his photomontage technique, he increasingly incorporated captions directly into his images as formal visual elements. By contrast, Tucholsky had used the familiar captioning format of *superscriptio* and *subscriptio* to parodically explain his images. Heartfield's method had the advantage of ensuring that the intended interpretation could not be accidentally separated from the image by subsequent reproductions, or missed by a disengaged reader who merely flips through to see the pictures without bothering to read. It also lent his photomontages an air of autonomy within the printed publication, by playing on the very idea of the caption as an explanatory text. Heartfield felt it was necessary to "force" the image to reveal its lie, thus proving the doubtfulness of photography's claim to truth.³³⁴ Willi Münzenberg, the founder of *A-I-Z*, was also conscious of the crucial importance of an image's caption, which could easily be changed to drastically alter the meaning of an image.³³⁵ As an element in montage, text contributes to the overall juxtaposition; its meaning is not to be taken literally, but in conjunction with (or perhaps, in contradistinction to) the satirical image. Heartfield's desire to direct the viewer's interpretation was therefore realized by incorporating the text imagistically into the montage, a process to which he again paid careful attention.³³⁶

³³⁴ Gough, 138.

³³⁵ Toman, 279.

³³⁶ Heartfield normally relied on the Bauhaus-inspired font Futura, developed in 1927 by Paul Renner, and other similar modern sans-serif fonts. Futura presented a calm and regular geometric style, in contrast to the screaming scripts employed by the Nazi propaganda magazine *Illustrierter Beobachter*, or the traditional Fraktur and Blackletter fonts that hearkened to the earlier Wilhelmine era. Heartfield's choice was also commonly reflected in Weimar-era newspaper headlines, invoking a degree of journalistic integrity.

For Walter Benjamin, montage both preserves and disrupts the meaning of a chosen fragment by removing it from its original context. That original context is still carried by the fragment in its new setting. He described montage as a form of interruption employed in writing, film, photography, and especially in Brechtian theatre, of which he writes, "...interruption is one of the fundamental devices of all structuring. It goes far beyond the sphere of art. To give only one example, it is the basis of quotation. To quote a text involves the interruption of its context."³³⁷ The Brechtian *gestus* interrupts the unfolding events of a play, depriving the audience of cathartic resolution, just as a parodic caption interrupts a pictorial narrative, or the disparate visual elements in a photomontage interrupt each other. The intrusion of unexpected events into a given narrative introduces a critical distance between image and meaning. Interrupting a narrative, whether literary, filmic, visual, or theatrical, creates a *Verfremdungseffekt*, an alienating effect or distanciation, whereby the audience simultaneously recognizes both the familiarity and the strangeness of a juxtaposition. This alienating effect appears frequently in the work of the surrealists, for example in Max Ernst's collages of engraved illustrations from shopping catalogues, or the paintings of René Magritte which often incorporated contradictory labels, or conflated day and night, or inside and outside, in a single scene. But in practice surrealist artists often failed to achieve the revolutionary goals of Marxism. The German art historian and curator Roland März writes,

Brecht hit the critical point of surrealist distanciation when he wrote "In painting, surrealism seeks to mystify the object. It tears it from its context,

³³⁷ Walter Benjamin, "What is Epic Theatre?" 151.

its convention—its objects do not return again from distancing.” Brecht and Heartfield on the other hand were to bring to recognition that which previously appeared strange. Their attention was given to enlightenment, not mystification. Their distanciations deny neither the reinterpreted iconographic conventions nor the supporting artistic medium of montage and alienation. The content thereby remains communicable and entitled to intervene in the social sphere.³³⁸

For both Brecht and Heartfield, therefore, it was imperative to use distancing for more “aggressive purposes” than the surrealists had managed to attain. In Benjamin’s view, a shock effect that failed to disturb the social sphere could produce empathy but not astonishment, without which there could be no political agitation. The importance of interruption as an instrument for political persuasion cannot be underestimated for him.

Of Heartfield, Benjamin says that photography had not only become politicized through the use of montage, but that it could also no longer fail to transfigure its subjects.³³⁹ But these

³³⁸ “Brecht traf den kritischen Punkt der surrealistischen Verfremdungseffekte, als er schrieb: ‘In der Malerei sucht der Surrealismus die Gegenstände zu mystifizieren. Er reißt sie aus dem Zusammenhang, der Konvention—ihre Gegenstände kehren aus der Verfremdung nicht wieder.’ Brecht und Heartfield hingegen war es um das Erkennen des vordem als fremd Gezeigten zu tun. Ihr Augenmerk galt der Aufklärung, nicht der Mystifizierung. Ihre Verfremdungseffekte leugnen weder die umgedeuteten ikonographischen Konventionen noch die sie tragenden rationalen Kunstmittel der Montage und Verfremdung. Das Inhaltliche bleibt dadurch vermittelbar und aktionsfähig im gesellschaftlichen Raum.” Roland März, “Über den Verfremdungseffekt in den Photomontagen John Heartfields” in *Forschungen und Berichte* 13 (1971): 124–5. For the sake of clarity I have rendered Verfremdungseffekt as distancing, and Verfremdung as alienation.

³³⁹ Walter Benjamin, “The Author as Producer” in *The Essential Frankfurt School Reader*, edited by Andrew Arato & Eike Gebhardt (New York: Continuum, 1982), 262.

transfigurations often took the form of mere aestheticization, as with surrealism or the *Neue Sachlichkeit*, which could make even the ugly into something beautiful (for example, with images of “urban decay”). Such works only responded to the relations of production and did not intervene in them. Benjamin instead calls for a positioning *within* the relations of production: “What we require of the photographer is the ability to give his picture that caption which wrenches it from modish commerce and gives it revolutionary use-value.”³⁴⁰ The photographer must also become a writer, and the writer a photographer, in order to employ “technical progress” in the service of “political progress.”

Montage invites a dialectical reading which requires, indeed demands, the viewer’s active participation. The art historian Dawn Ades notes that although photomontage can sometimes be found in fascist imagery (particularly in Spain and Italy), “it is ideally suited to the expression of the Marxist dialectic.”³⁴¹ Certainly the Nazis had recognized photomontage as an undesirable format, which, despite having occasionally employed it themselves, had the power to dispel the ideology of their images. But the disruptive effects of photomontage are largely negated when used for *counter*-revolutionary purposes, as Fuchs had previously observed of caricature.³⁴² In other words, propaganda cannot afford to invoke scepticism in its viewers, lest they look too closely and form opinions at odds with the intent of the image.

³⁴⁰ Ibid., 263.

³⁴¹ Dawn Ades, *Photomontage* (London: Thames and Hudson, 1986), 41.

³⁴² Cf. p. 198–9 of this dissertation.

One can therefore say that Heartfield's photomontages interpellate a particular kind of subject, a sophisticated viewer, one who is politically engaged—i.e., the images engender class consciousness. They accomplish this by producing scepticism or astonishment in the viewer, states that are uncomfortable and which demand resolution. By contrast, bourgeois aesthetics dictate a static, closed image, one which produces satisfaction or catharsis, but viewers can be better engaged for agitational purposes with striking juxtapositions of image and text. Heartfield forcibly creates his engaged viewer by employing the shock effect of distanciation. This effect, which Kriebel describes as a “psycho-somatic affect,”³⁴³ persists subsequent to viewing, leaving a latent emotional trace or “resonance” in the viewer. Agitation is therefore experienced physically as well as mentally, and can only be resolved through political action.

In summary, Heartfield's ideal viewer is one who is shocked from complacency by the distanciation or alienating effect of photomontage. As the dialectical process is brought to bear, the viewer—caught between opposing tendencies—must acknowledge scepticism of the truth-claims of photography and embrace an ambiguity of interpretation, thus becoming a producer of counter-knowledges. This engaged viewer is interpellated by the images themselves, which demand a critical interpretation. They offer a seamless but disturbing illusion, an interruption of normal, comfortable, and expected pictorial narratives. As noted above, the discomfort produced by scepticism or alienation demands resolution, unlike the empathy or catharsis evoked by non-agitational images. In this way persuasion can result in action. As a weapon in class struggle photomontage therefore has a distinct advantage over traditional hand-drawn caricature, in that it engages directly with the burgeoning world of photographic imagery. As such, it deals with

³⁴³ Kriebel, *Touch*, 29.

fragments of the real world, juxtaposed in ways that question the truth-claims of journalistic and documentary photography. The methodology of photomontage is therefore far more important than debates about its origins in dada and surrealism.³⁴⁴ The methodology in question is dialectical, put in the service of agitational propaganda. The dialectics of photomontage are intended to illustrate class struggle through stark juxtapositions of images and text, as well as in the tension between seamless illusion and phantasmagoria. Heartfield aimed his photomontages specifically at the intellectual community and those “doubtful sympathizers”³⁴⁵ who were most likely to be responsive as engaged viewers.

Visualizing the Dialectical Image

Heartfield’s photomontages are not ordinarily treated as a form of caricature, despite their obviously satirical edge. But caricature has always adapted to technical innovations in image-making. While the hand-drawn caricature continued to exist side-by-side with photography, it was the latter—particularly in the form of photomontage—that represented the cutting edge of technology in making and reproducing images. As such it had also been taken up for other uses: as scientific or juridical evidence, as state propaganda, as advertising, as illustration, as portraiture. Because of its widespread adoption and the lack of any stigma such as that which remained attached to caricature, photography/photomontage lent itself particularly well to the

³⁴⁴ Gough, 153.

³⁴⁵ Cristina Cuevas-Wolf, “Montage as Weapon: The Tactical Alliance between Willi Münzenberg and John Heartfield” in *New German Critique* 107, 36/2 (Summer 2009): 189.

development of a dialectical image. As a result I will use the term caricature in the following section in a broad sense that includes Heartfield's photomontages. Other photographic images can then be used for comparison, where there would be little or no analogous examples to compare to hand-drawn caricatures.

As stated previously, Fuchs described an axis of oppositional tendencies between political agitation and emotional reconciliation.³⁴⁶ That is to say that while a political caricature is intended to agitate the viewer to undertake some resolving action, it is also susceptible to undermining itself by providing a psychological or emotional resolution instead. This "reconciling effect" results from the satisfaction of grasping a neatly summed-up situation—not unlike the cathartic effect of a closed narrative. The epigrammatic character of caricature is therefore problematic for Fuchs, since its persuasive capacity is thrown into question. On the other hand, Benjamin would say that this very discomfort is what produces astonishment or disturbance in the viewer, and is the source of Brechtian distancing which is the necessary prerequisite for action. This interpretation is a dialectical image of caricature.

If we extend this analysis to other forms of satire (with an eye to Heartfield's photomontages), we can further complicate this dialectical image by adding a second oppositional axis between revolution and reaction. We can then plot these axes as a diagram which reveals the inner structure of caricature (fig. 35). On the horizontal axis, astonishment produces agitation, while opposing it is empathy which produces reconciliation. Against this we have revolution, which seeks to upset the status quo of class relations, opposed by reaction,

³⁴⁶ Fuchs, *1848 in der Caricatur*, 5.

which seeks to maintain or strengthen the status quo. At the centre is the caricature itself, pulled in all directions simultaneously, creating the alienating effect of *Verfremdung*.

Keeping in mind once again that this representation is not a Cartesian graph but represents the poles of opposing tendencies, we can now define the axial fields of each quadrant. Political satire belongs in the upper left quadrant, between agitation and revolution. Heartfield's photomontages are pulled more in this direction, as they emphasise agitation and speak from the position of an underclass. He forsakes the epigrammatic quality of caricature, with its danger of providing too neat a reconciliation, and relies instead on the witty juxtaposition of image fragments and text. Daumier also used humour to reveal the inner character of his targets, showing those in high positions of power as physiognomically debased through their greed, lust, arrogance, or corruption. The reversal of expectations he employs is a standard comedic trope, and Daumier uses it to encourage political resistance to the bourgeois Second Empire. From these two examples we can already see that this quadrant defines all political satire which employs humour for the sake of agitation against a dominant class.

Other forms of visual satire which are not overtly agitational but are still aimed at a dominant class are pulled towards the upper right quadrant, between reconciliation and revolution. This area would largely include caricature of social follies and stereotypes, which tends to remain a more permissible outlet even in periods of increased censorship. A good example of this is French caricature prior to 1789, which typically lampooned the increasingly bizarre wigs and dresses of fashionable women. Today's television sitcoms also tend to fall into this category, since they too are characterized by the use of humour to evoke empathy or catharsis, rather than political agitation. The quadrant can thus be named social satire.

State-sanctioned agitation also makes an appearance and is pulled towards the lower left quadrant, between agitation and reaction. The Nazi magazine *Illustrierter Beobachter* (Illustrated Observer),³⁴⁷ in many ways a foil to the communist *A-I-Z*, brandished its own satirical tools rather clumsily, as Fuchs had predicted (fig. 37). It too encouraged active participation in politics, but it did so by invoking prejudice from a position of authority. It played on the irrational fear and hatred of Jews to encourage political action that would support and strengthen existing power relations. The message of *Beobachter* was that hatred towards Jews was justified, and that more extreme measures were still called for. Julius Streicher's tabloid *Der Stürmer* (The Striker) was an even more virulent example of anti-Semitic hatred.³⁴⁸ Here the caricaturist Philipp "Fips" Rupprecht often relied on physiognomy to reinforce negative racial stereotypes, in stark contradiction to the methods of Heartfield, who preferred to turn physiognomy on its proverbial head by using the actual countenance of his subjects to map their inner ugliness. *Der Stürmer* was specifically designed to stir up hatred and provoke violence. A contemporary example of political propaganda would be the electoral attack ads common in the United States, which use hyperbole and unverified claims to demonstrate a political opponent's unsuitability for office, without troubling to mention the merits of the preferred candidate. In this context, images depicting a political opponent tend to be either black and white low-resolution images, dehumanizing the subject by obscuring their features, or garishly coloured close-ups,

³⁴⁷ *Illustrierter Beobachter* was published in Munich from 1926 to 1945 by Hermann Esser.

³⁴⁸ *Der Stürmer* was not an official Nazi publication, although Streicher himself was a Gauleiter. Its content tended to the obscene, and had called for the extermination of Jews as early as 1933.

emphasizing facial defects and grimaces. There is still an attempt to agitate, but in the service of furthering the goals of the class that already wields authority.

The final quadrant, social propaganda, lies between reaction and reconciliation. Another Nazi magazine, *Signal*, is an excellent example of this.³⁴⁹ Produced exclusively for foreign markets, it used photography and advertising techniques to encourage complacency in its readers. It presented images of a happy, athletic, active, and nominally bourgeois *Volk*, untroubled by issues of class, race, or gender—needless to say, an exceptionally unrealistic image (fig. 38). The KdF campaign—*Kraft durch Freude* (Strength through Joy)—was prominent in its pages, selling stamps for the forthcoming Volkswagen, advertising cruise ship vacations, and otherwise illustrating the idyllic, fulfilling life one could expect as a victorious Aryan. *Signal* thus appealed to a rational, intellectual milieu with active business interests, putting a positive face on anti-Semitism and on Germany's war efforts. It worked to normalize the state of affairs in newly occupied zones, since its goal was to produce empathy in its target readership rather than agitation. Although these images, such as the cover image of young women enjoying “physical exercise in the snow,” do not constitute caricature as such, they could be said to construct an image and interpellate a desired viewer in the same manner as Heartfield's photomontages, in that they combine carefully selected images and text to create a narrative.

These then are the “physiognomic faces,” the axial fields, of the dialectical image of caricature (fig. 36): political satire, social satire, political propaganda, and social propaganda. Of

³⁴⁹ *Signal* was published by the Wehrmacht from 1940 to 1945. It was never distributed in Germany itself, but primarily in occupied zones.

course, it must be admitted that the terms “satire” and “propaganda” are problematic at best, and are not mutually exclusive as my arrangement would imply. They were once both used in a far more neutral sense, as something that could be used for good or for ill, to criticize authority or to project authority. *A-I-Z*, for example, could be described as a propagandistic organ, just as much as *Illustrierter Beobachter*. But the term propaganda has since acquired a distinctly negative connotation for today’s audience, and is now largely associated with statements coming from a position of power (especially official state pronouncements). I am therefore using it here exclusively in association with reactionary images. Likewise, satire has been used broadly to describe any comedic send-up, whether it intends to mock the powerful or to reinforce negative stereotypes. But today the term satire is more closely associated with the critique of power rather than with its exercise, so I am using it primarily to describe those images of revolutionary origin, even though there are many examples of reactionary satire. Since the dialectical image of caricature throws light on the dynamics of power in its axial fields, it is important that we refine our definitions to maintain sight of this.

Each material image, whether it be a historical caricature, wartime photomontage, or contemporary advertisement, exists at the centre of these opposing tendencies and is pulled in all directions simultaneously. It is in this “state of tension” that its “physiognomic faces” are revealed. The coordinates themselves, the oppositional axes, are only useful for visualizing the opposing tendencies in certain forms of satire and propaganda. They do not show us where to plot individual images, which always remain at the centre, but rather which tendencies are stronger. In this way we can easily determine whether a given image speaks from or to power, and whether its intent is to instil a desire for change or a satisfaction with the state of things.

Of course, this dialectical image is not perfect and cannot account for all forms of graphic persuasion. For example, some Soviet agitational propaganda employed nationalistic fervour, and later the leader cult, to promote rapid industrialization. Without a satirical element, an element of humour, these images do not fit neatly into our diagram.³⁵⁰ Nor would the public service posters of the United States in the 1930s, such as those that promoted rural electrification. The social realism movement in communist countries is especially problematic in that it heroicized a disempowered peasantry. And finally, advertising is itself such a diverse field that only certain kinds of advertisements would fit into the scheme outlined above. Other types of images would have different oppositional axes, constituting a different type of dialectical image altogether. Therefore they would not fit neatly into any of our axial fields.

In a short but pointed article, critic Sue Taylor links Heartfield's satirical project with a continuum of practice that extends into both the past and the present. She likens Heartfield not only to Daumier, but also to contemporary television commentators such as Jon Stewart and Stephen Colbert.³⁵¹ In each successive era an existing medium is employed in new ways for the purpose of political persuasion, each one addressing a broad mass audience. The linking thread from etching to lithography to photomontage to television is the use of satirical humour to challenge political authority. But Taylor does not go quite far enough. The true home of political satire today is not only television, but specifically the televised skit, or comedy sketch. Instead of merely providing a satirical commentary, programs such as *Saturday Night Live* and

³⁵⁰ This is not to say that there were no examples of Soviet satire. Common motifs included anti-clerical and anti-capitalist caricatures, and these often appeared in the pages of the satirical magazine *Krokodil* (1922–2008).

³⁵¹ Sue Taylor, "Heartfield's Photo-Grenades" in *Art in America* (June/July 2006): 161.

*Spitting Image*³⁵² use actors to enact satirical political plays. Like photography, actors on a set are a part of the real world, and there is also a suturing of elements (via cinematography and editing) that creates a farcical illusion. The political skit format was developed to its fullest in the long-running Canadian satirical program, *Royal Canadian Air Farce*,³⁵³ in which politicians of all stripes actively participated by portraying caricatures of themselves. This included several serving and former prime ministers, as well as prominent parliamentarians and leaders of all major parties.

If Marx could have witnessed this spectacle he might have said that history no longer even waits to repeat itself, but does so simultaneously as events occur. We are therefore provided a with an emotional reconciliation through the release of the inhibitory cathexis of humour before ever having truly awakened to the tragedy of events taking place around us. The next logical step would be to invent political scenarios before they can even occur, so that when they inevitably do we will already have been satisfied with our farcical representations of it.

³⁵² *Spitting Image*, which ran from 1984 to 1996 on Britain's ITV, brought caricature to life by combining uncannily accurate puppets with talented voice actors. It was revived by BritBox in 2020.

³⁵³ Originally a live show, *Royal Canadian Air Farce* was adapted for radio in 1973, and ran until 1997. The televised version debuted in 1980 and remained on the air until 2008, and continued in its original theatrical format until 2019.

Conclusion

In the body of his published work, Fuchs has created nothing less than an archive of caricature and erotica, which, although it may be lacking in analysis, provides an empirical basis for subsequent research. He presents not only the most famous (and infamous) caricatures and caricaturists but the most obscure as well—the anonymous, the angry, the ineffective, the unsophisticated—furnishing a far more complex view of caricature through the ages and across the entirety of Europe than any other cultural historian or art historian before or since. The fruit of the seeds he planted is a Marxist aesthetics that can aid in interpreting political caricature and other forms of mass persuasion.

However, some questions regarding Fuchs remain to be answered. For example, what inherent value can we find in Fuchs' work, on its own merits, without looking at it through the lens of Benjamin—who has remained present throughout? What can Fuchs tell us about the state of socialist culture in his own time, rather than as a precursor to later developments? This remains the work of future studies that will narrow their focus directly to Fuchs' texts. For now, Fuchs has at times receded into the distance (especially in the last two chapters), but this was done with a view towards the development of a useful methodological tool, gleaned from the hints and scattered insights of Fuchs' body of work. Inspired by Fuchs and developed through the work of Benjamin and Buck-Morss, the dialectical image presented in Chapter Five has direct application to the satirical imagery of today.

In the early twenty-first century, political satire continues to be produced but is easily lost in a morass of propaganda, punditry, and advertising. Controversies surrounding the removal of historical statues, racist propaganda promulgated under the guise of journalism and free speech,

and the re-branding of political correctness as the unjustified demands of so-called special interest groups, all call for deeper analysis. There is also a widespread and increasing use of euphemisms that are deliberately designed to undermine critics of the establishment while legitimizing radical elements, terms such as the Social Justice Warrior (or SJW), the “snowflake,” Antifa, and most recently “cancel culture.” But the most divisive term of all in recent years has been the phrase “fake news.” Each of these must be unpacked to expose their meaning and intent. The dialectical image of caricature developed here can aid in this analysis, by laying bare the power relations at play in these terms, helping us to better understand who is speaking to whom and for what purpose. The oppositional tendencies of agitation versus reconciliation and revolution versus reaction can easily be applied to the wide variety of satirical and ideological statements we see today.

What is Fake News?

The concept of “fake news” is not a recent one, even though it is only since 2016 that it has been widely popularized. It originates from a time when newspapers openly competed for increased circulation, sometimes taking the risk of running a false story to increase sales. One of the earliest examples dates from a series of articles printed in the *New York Sun* in 1835 which revealed the astonishing sights witnessed by John Herschel, the eminent British astronomer, when he pointed a powerful telescope “of vast dimensions” towards the Moon from an observatory in South Africa. The sensational headlines described giant man-bats that spent their days collecting fruit and holding animated conversations; goat-like creatures with blue skin; and a temple made of polished sapphire. As a result the paper’s circulation rose from 8,000 to

19,000, briefly overtaking the *Times* of London. But it was the *Sun*'s editor, Richard Adams Locke, who was responsible for the story. He knew that it would take months for the story to be debunked, since communication with the Cape could only be conducted at that time by sea-going mail. In the meantime the papers had already been sold. Naturally the hoax was eventually revealed, with the abject lesson that it negatively affected the newspaper's reputation. True crime, which could be gleaned much more easily, proved to be a far more profitable source of sensationalism for the *Sun*, without the risk of alienating its readership by making them feel misled.

A strangely parallel example occurred around the turn of the twentieth century, when American astronomer Percival Lowell claimed to have discovered a network of dried-up canals on the surface of Mars. Unlike the intentionally misleading articles of the *Sun* however, Lowell really believed that he was seeing evidence of a lost civilization, and published his "findings" in 1895, 1906, and again in 1908. Lowell did not intend to perpetrate a hoax, but was himself a victim of confirmation bias. Other scientists were not able to replicate Lowell's claims, and later, improved telescopes showed only irregular natural features on the Martian surface, shaped by erosion. Furthermore, as Lowell was unable to take photographs through his telescope, he could only offer drawings of his observations, which weakened his arguments. Therefore, while many were still willing to believe his claims—perhaps influenced by the wildly successful H.G. Wells novel *War of the Worlds* (1897)—the evidence did not stand up to scientific review.

Neither of these examples of fake news constitutes material to which we can apply the dialectical image of caricature, as there is no satirical aspect to them. However, confirmation bias continues to play a role in mass media, especially in regards to news that *is* presented in a

satirical format. A 2009 study at the Ohio State University School of Communication³⁵⁴ measured the relative political conservatism and liberalism of 332 participants who viewed clips from the satirical news program *The Colbert Report*. They found that the relatively conservative people in their study reported that Stephen Colbert was actually showing disregard for liberals and covertly expressing his true conservative attitude. Liberals viewing the show tended to view the work as a sincere parody and viewed Colbert as presenting his true political opinions. Curiously, both the liberal and conservative viewers in the study found Stephen Colbert equally humorous, with no statistically significant difference. In Colbert's case, the intent is to entertain with satirical social commentary, and of course to mock and ridicule those in power—not to mislead. However, the use of news-reporting nomenclature (in the style of delivery, the camera angles, the explanatory picture-in-picture) can obfuscate this fact for unsophisticated viewers.

Satirical news certainly has the potential to be misinterpreted as serious news. This is expressed by a recently formulated concept known as Poe's Law, which states that without a clear indication of the author's intent, it is difficult or even impossible to tell the difference between an expression of sincere extremism and a parody of extremism.³⁵⁵ This is why satirical news programs are now often prefaced by a statement that they are, indeed, satire. In fact, some social media platforms have introduced a requirement that all parody and satire accounts be accompanied by a disclaimer which clearly states their nature, as there have been an increasing

³⁵⁴ Heather L. LaMarre, Kristen D. Landreville, Michael A. Beam, "The Irony of Satire: Political Ideology and the Motivation to See What You Want to See in *The Colbert Report*" in *International Journal of Press/Politics* 14/2, (April 2009): 212–231.

³⁵⁵ The adage first appeared in a Christian online forum in 2005, in which commenter Nathan Poe made remarks about the satirisation of creationists.

number of cases where satire was taken seriously. Certainly there have been many instances when an unlikely story from *The Onion* went viral *because* a certain segment of readers took it seriously. Often, when confronted with the satirical nature of the article, these readers continue to insist that it is a real story, and that those attempting to label it as satire are trying to hide the truth. Once again a simple litmus test based on the dialectical image of caricature can be conducted, by asking if the article (or news source) is speaking *to* power or *from* power.

In the history of fake news, the early examples of Locke and Lowell were relatively harmless. Locke wished to entertain with fictional headlines—he certainly can not have meant to belittle his own readers by making them feel gullible, even if he thought poorly of them—while Lowell was a victim of his own desire to discover evidence of alien life. But the most notorious example of fake news used to intentionally mislead the public occurred during the mid-1890s in New York. In an escalating battle for readership, competing newspapermen William Randolph Hearst and Joseph Pulitzer ran increasingly exaggerated headlines with lurid, suggestive illustrations, frequently allowing baseless speculation to overshadow the facts of a story. Their shady approach to news reporting came to be known as “yellow journalism,” and the role it supposedly played in sparking the Spanish-American War of 1898 was later fictionalized in Orson Welles’ film *Citizen Kane* (1941). Whatever the truth about Hearst and Pulitzer’s responsibility for fomenting war, the articles they ran certainly fall under the rubric of propaganda as they tended to target social stereotypes for the sake of political agitation.

Sensationalism in the gossip section of the newsstand is still fairly common. Perhaps the most enduring example of sensationalism is *Weekly World News* (1979–). For decades they have peddled unbelievably ludicrous stories, often resurrecting dead celebrities or delving into the occult. The absurdity of their claims knows no bounds, with miracle cures, alien visitations, and

supernatural manifestations all appearing in the same issue. Most tabloid newspapers restrict themselves to speculation about celebrity affairs: who is pregnant, who has cancer, who is getting divorced. They run a fine line between reportage and invasion of privacy, running the gamut between sneaking into backyards for grainy topless photos and hounding a subject to death in a car accident. But some readers have—and likely still do—take such material at face value. However, with its deliberately outrageous content and consciously overt photographic manipulation, *Weekly World News* is clearly intended as a tawdry, lowbrow form of entertainment, if not *as* satire. Whether it is in fact satire remains unclear: it is possible that it was once offered more seriously and has since *become* satirical, as evidenced by the magazine's increased self-effacement and repetition of popular motifs (most notably, the Bat-Boy). In recent years, as it has moved exclusively to an online platform, it has even begun to offer merchandise commemorating its most memorable, and least believable, stories. What the dialectical image of caricature tells us about such sensationalist gossip magazines is that they align closely to the social caricature and social commentary of the past, with their targets being primarily the rich and the famous.

Comedians have long aped the news delivery format as a vehicle for satire. Magazines such as *Fliegende Blätter*, *Wahre Jacob*, and even *Süddeutscher Postillon* were certainly inspired by official newspapers, countering state ideology with their own. They could also be seen as the antecedents of modern satirical news platforms such as *The Onion* or, in Canada, *The Beaverton*. But after the Second World War, television began to displace newspapers as the preferred delivery vehicle for daily news, and its format was widely adopted by comedy sketch shows and late-night variety programs as a satirical news segment. These include the long-running “Weekly Update” on *Saturday Night Live*, “Muppet News Flash” on *The Muppet Show*, and the Canadian

program *This Hour Has 22 Minutes*—a direct parody of *This Hour has Seven Days*, an actual news program from the 1960s. More confusingly, it also includes political commentators such as John Oliver, Jon Stewart, and of course Stephen Colbert, who mix serious observations with humorous delivery. All these examples constitute political satire, as they characteristically mock and ridicule those who exert power.

“Fake news” has been used intermittently throughout the twentieth century to describe yellow journalism and propaganda. But it was not widely adopted until Donald Trump’s presidential campaign in 2016. His overuse of the term in response to any and all negative media coverage was a blunt instrument to deflect attention from his many gaffes and blunders. Reputable news agencies that showed footage of his old interviews or quoted him verbatim in embarrassing ways found themselves ejected from the White House and labelled as “fake news agencies.” Trump’s supporters eagerly accepted his claims without hesitation, absurdly spurning the world-renowned CNN and elevating the plainly propagandistic Fox News. Evidence and logic were of no avail in correcting Trump’s spurious claims, and the desire—even the “right”—to believe whatever one wishes came to dominate public discourse in the United States. This relatively new use of the term “fake news” constitutes political propaganda, as it is designed to agitate in favour of strengthening the status quo of power relations (in this case, wielded by the white and the super-wealthy).

Fake news has continued to be a problem since Trump’s departure from the White House, especially when it has been used strategically to deliberately spread misinformation. On March 30, 2021, BBC News reported that “‘Fake’ accounts claiming to be Amazon workers have been

praising their working conditions on Twitter.”³⁵⁶ The tweets either decried the high costs of union membership or highlighted how well employees were treated by the company, but suspicions were raised as the account holders’ names were repeatedly changed. The tweets were made as votes were being counted in Alabama to decide on the formation of Amazon’s first employee’s union, which CEO Jeff Bezos has reportedly allocated millions of dollars to fight against. The stakes are particularly high as working conditions at Amazon have been under a negative spotlight for years. The company is clearly unwilling to allow a precedent to be set with the formation of even a single union, which would very likely threaten a strike as workers negotiate for better wages and conditions. Amazon had already garnered additional negative publicity as it made record profits during the COVID-19 pandemic, with Bezos and Tesla CEO Elon Musk vying for the position of world’s richest person. Twitter immediately suspended many of the associated accounts, which breached their terms of service regarding “spam and platform manipulation.” The article continues, “It is unclear whether the accounts are real employees, bots or trolls pretending to be Amazon Ambassadors”—the latter being staff who are openly paid to promote and defend the company on social media. Using social media as a propaganda platform to influence public opinion is clearly part of the company’s normal communications strategy, as it is for many business and institutions today. But after widespread debates and much practice during Donald Trump’s presidential campaign and subsequent term of office, the social media platforms themselves have become more willing to take immediate action against the propagandistic misuse of their products.

³⁵⁶ “‘Fake’ Amazon workers defend company on Twitter” (30 March 2020), <https://www.bbc.com/news/technology-56581266> (accessed June 2, 2021).

A more insidious and vindictive type of fake news occurred in Canada in January of 2017. Nick Kouvalis, a campaign manager for Conservative candidate Kellie Lietch, posted a claim on Twitter that Liberal prime minister Justin Trudeau had supported Hamas, a terrorist organization.³⁵⁷ The post was easily debunked, and its origins have since been traced to an earlier anti-Obama meme, complete with identical numbers. But Kouvalis refused to offer a retraction. To the contrary, he proudly revealed that his team was building a database of the negative reactions, then attempting to flush out real names from social media accounts. “We call it Operation Flytrap,” Kouvalis said. “We did it knowing that people who aren’t real Conservatives can’t help themselves, so they post something negative about me, or Kellie. Some of them use real names. We find out who they are, and check them against the membership list. I’m going to challenge as many as I can.” Kouvalis explained that he came up with the strategy in response to statements from political opponents who announced that they would buy Conservative memberships to stop Lietch from winning the party leadership race. This sort of unapologetic manipulation of the media is particularly Machiavellian, reaching nearly Goebbels-level heights of paranoia and Freudian transference. The claim itself constitutes a form of political propaganda, designed to agitate in support of reactionary power.

Clearly the term fake news has come to be used for many purposes. Claire Wardle of *First Draft News* categorizes fake news into seven types: 1) satire or parody, which has “no intention to cause harm but has potential to fool;” 2) false connection, “when headlines, visuals or captions don’t support the content;” 3) misleading content, in which information is used “to

³⁵⁷ Martin Patriquin, “Inside Nick Kouvalis’ fake news strategy” (11 January 2017), <https://www.macleans.ca/news/canada/inside-nick-kouvaliss-fake-news-strategy/> (accessed June 2, 2021).

frame an issue or an individual;” 4) false context, in which “genuine content is shared with false contextual information;” 5) impostor content, in which “genuine sources are impersonated” with false, made-up sources; 6) manipulated content, in which “genuine information or imagery is manipulated to deceive,” as with a doctored photo or a quote taken out of context; and 7) fabricated content, in which “new content is 100% false, designed to deceive and do harm.”³⁵⁸ She also delineates the many purposes for which fake news is disseminated, and the bulk of her examples fall under political agitation or propaganda. Ultimately Wardle chooses to reject the term altogether, and “censors it in conversation,” finding it “woefully inadequate to describe the complex phenomena of information pollution.”³⁵⁹ Instead she draws attention to three types of problems in public discourse today: mis-information (false information disseminated without harmful intent), dis-information (information created and shared by people with harmful intent), and mal-information (the sharing of genuine information with the intent to cause harm).³⁶⁰ Her approach reveals how widely the term “fake news” has come to be used, and how it obfuscates meaning and intent for specific ends: to divert criticism, to cast doubt on an opponent, and especially to propagate ideology. The scale at which this is now being conducted is alarming: from the 2016 presidential election in the United States, to the 2017 French federal election, to the ongoing generation of propaganda on social media platforms by highly organized bots and

³⁵⁸ Claire Wardle, “Fake news. It’s complicated.” (16 February 2017), <https://medium.com/1st-draft/fake-news-its-complicated-d0f773766c79> (accessed June 2, 2021).

³⁵⁹ Claire Wardle and Hossein Derakhshan, “Information Disorder: Toward an interdisciplinary framework for research and policymaking,” (Strasbourg: Council of Europe, 2017), 5.

³⁶⁰ *Ibid.*, 20.

trolls. Key to her critique is the fact that it has become “a mechanism by which the powerful can clamp down upon, restrict, undermine, and circumvent the free press.”

There are claims—typically from the far-right media, which self-identifies under the equalizing label “alt-right”—that both the left and the right of the political spectrum are equally susceptible to disseminating and consuming fake news. However, a study published by Dartmouth College in 2018³⁶¹ showed that Trump supporters were 800% more likely to visit certain known fake news websites than Clinton supporters. And according to BuzzFeed,³⁶² during the last three months of the presidential campaign, of the top twenty fake election-related articles on Facebook, seventeen were anti-Clinton or pro-Trump. Facebook users interacted with them more often than with stories from genuine news outlets. So while it is undoubtedly true that things like confirmation bias are fairly universal, the deliberate employment of fake news as a political tactic seems to lie mostly with the far right, that is, with reactionary propagandists.

This is precisely where the dialectical image of caricature can shed light on the power relations at play in these debates. Historically, both the left and the right have used propaganda and satire as tools of mass persuasion. But the one-sided nature of current debates has less to do with the political spectrum itself than with which side holds the reigns of power. It may be helpful to recall that the terms “left-wing” and “right-wing” originated during the French Revolution. When the National Assembly was formed in June of 1789, their first venue was an

³⁶¹ Andrew Guess, Brendan Nyhan, and Jason Reifler, “Selective Exposure to Misinformation: Evidence from the consumption of fake news during the 2016 presidential campaign.” Dartmouth College, 4 February 2018.

³⁶² Craig Silverman, “This Analysis Shows How Viral Fake Election News Stories Outperformed Real News On Facebook,” (16 November 2016), <https://www.buzzfeednews.com/article/craigsilverman/viral-fake-election-news-outperformed-real-news-on-facebook> (accessed June 2, 2021).

indoor tennis court, with the revolutionaries seated on the left and the monarchists on the right. But the left and the right *were never equals*: the revolutionaries wanted to depose the monarchy and introduce democratic reforms, envisioning a classless and truly equal society, while the monarchists wanted to restore the Bourbon dynasty and maintain strict class divisions between the aristocracy and the peasantry. The left wanted a more equal share of power; the right saw their power eroding and acted to preserve it. Such was the idealism of the revolutionaries that they introduced a new calendar, literally marking the dawn of a new age. If that idealism quickly degenerated into the violence of the Reign of Terror, one can observe that it took three revolutions to finally oust the monarchy once and for all. The point however is that the right has a vested interest in maintaining the status quo; their own wealth and power is threatened by any attempt to equalize social and economic relations, which would not only take away some of their class privileges but also encourage the lower classes to try to emulate them—a truly intolerable state of affairs! The left, by contrast, easily tires of living impecuniously under conditions of exploitation (ignoring for the moment the stratification of the left in the working class and bourgeoisie). These two positions are characterized in the dialectical image of caricature as revolutionary and reactionary, and their power dynamics must be foregrounded in any effort to counter fake news.

Today the term “fake news” is used so broadly and applied to so many things (including “true” news that is simply found unpalatable by a criticized subject) that it can only serve to obfuscate these variations and ultimately hide the truth. Its problematic nature has already led to calls for discontinuing its use. In October 2018, the British government decided that the term would no longer be permitted in official documents because it is “a poorly-defined and misleading term that conflates a variety of false information, from genuine error through to

foreign interference in democratic processes.”³⁶³ Instead it urged its ministers to use the terms “misinformation” and “disinformation,” hearkening to Claire Wardle’s analysis. Earlier that year the *Washington Post* had also warned that “It’s time to retire the tainted term ‘fake news’.”³⁶⁴ Though the term hasn’t been around long, its meaning already is lost.”³⁶⁴ In fact, as the dialectical image of caricature has amply demonstrated, we already have a perfectly good term for most “fake news:” propaganda.

Cancel Culture and Other Euphemisms

In March 2021, the rights holders of the Dr. Seuss children’s books announced that they would be withdrawing six lesser-known titles from future circulation, as they contained negative racial stereotypes of Asians and Blacks. Conservative pundits immediately decried the decision as yet another example of “cancel culture,” with Donald Trump Jr. claiming in an interview on *Fox and Friends* that “There’s no place they won’t go ... They cancelled Mr. Potato Head. This week alone they cancelled *The Muppets*. They’re cancelling Dr. Seuss from reading programs....” None of these claims were even remotely true—the makers of Mr. Potato Head had recently introduced an androgynous version of the classic toy, and reruns of a few specific episodes of *The Muppets* were now going to be preceded by a brief disclaimer on streaming

³⁶³ Margi Murphy, “Government bans phrase ‘fake news’” (23 October 2018), <https://www.telegraph.co.uk/technology/2018/10/22/government-bans-phrase-fake-news/> (accessed June 2, 2021).

³⁶⁴ Margaret Sullivan, “It’s time to retire the tainted term ‘fake news’” (8 January 2017), https://www.washingtonpost.com/lifestyle/style/its-time-to-retire-the-tainted-term-fake-news/2017/01/06/a5a7516c-d375-11e6-945a-76f69a399dd5_story.html (accessed June 10, 2021).

services. As for the six Dr. Seuss titles, none of them were well-known or likely on any school's reading list. Trump Jr. also refrained from identifying who he thought "they" were, aside from vague comments about "the radical left," as if Dr. Seuss Enterprises were bowing to the pressure of some external political groups. In fact, the decision to withdraw the titles was made by an internal review panel, citing insensitive and racist depictions. Rather than waiting for public outcry should the offending material come to light, they chose to proactively edit the available titles so as not to detract from the educational and entertainment value of Seuss' remaining books. It turns out that "they" are the only ones who have the legal right to make such a decision.

On April 26, former *Reading Rainbow* host LeVar Burton responded to the controversy during an interview with Fox program *The View* by calling cancel culture a "misnomer." Instead he offered the term "consequence culture," saying that "consequences are finally encompassing everybody in this society ... I think it has everything to do with a new awareness ... of the real nature of life in this country for people who have been othered since this nation began."³⁶⁵ The manner in which Burton's response was subsequently reported is also revealing. Left-wing media used headlines such as "LeVar Burton schools Meghan McCain on cancel culture," "LeVar Burton calmly explains the truth about 'cancel culture' to Meghan McCain," and "LeVar Burton, patron saint of patience, explained cancel culture to a clueless Meghan McCain." Right-wing media reported it unanimously as "LeVar Burton defends cancel culture." From this

³⁶⁵ Yale Halon, "LeVar Burton defends cancel culture as 'consequence culture': 'I think it's misnamed.'" (26 April 2021), <https://www.foxnews.com/media/levar-burton-defends-cancel-culture-as-consequence-culture-i-think-its-misnamed> (accessed June 2, 2021).

example and many others, we can see that “cancel culture” is a term designed to cast aspersions on political correctness while portraying oneself as a blameless victim.

Other IP holders have previously made similar choices to edit their historical content, long before these debates became so public. For example, Warner Bros. and Disney quietly began to pull racist cartoons from syndication in the 1980s and 1990s. These consisted mostly of wartime depictions of state enemies (the Jap, the Hun), as well as stereotypes of indigenous people (the Indian, the Eskimo, the Mexican). Naturally these media corporations did not deliberately draw attention to the process of removal—it was only noticed after a long period had elapsed—whereas the Dr. Seuss decision was brought to the public’s attention through a press release. But all of them understood that continuing to allow these negative depictions and stereotypes to circulate was not only unethical, but could potentially cause long-term damage to their brands. To label these acts as “cancel culture” is to imply that the companies are somehow being pressured to remove cherished, inoffensive content that harms no one, rather than exercising their legal right (and moral responsibility) to take ownership of past mistakes. Children are, after all, impressionable, and stereotypes can be extremely damaging to one’s self-image during the formative years.

Content creators can also edit their content, without waiting for the intervention of subsequent rights holders or outcry from a public that is increasingly sensitive to discrimination. The Belgian cartoonist Hergé (Georges Remi) continually revised the content of his early volumes of *The Adventures of Tintin* in subsequent reprintings, altering any artwork or dialogue that he felt was inappropriate. The most egregious example of stereotyping in the series occurs in *Tintin in the Congo* (1931), which was a holding of the Belgian colonial empire until 1960. In the original version of the story Tintin finds himself teaching colonial history to Congolese

schoolchildren. Subsequent editions substituted the dialogue for math lessons. The artwork however, which indulged in racist portrayals of Africans and cast Tintin as an ivory hunter, has been largely pulled from circulation. Another early story, *Tintin in the Land of the Soviets*, is also rare, and can only be found in certain collections (and certainly not in the children's aisle). Hergé expressed embarrassment about these stories, calling them a “transgression of my youth.” Unsurprisingly, no one was trying to “cancel” Tintin—in fact, many leapt to the artist's defence saying that he was no more racist than anyone else. But Hergé himself took responsibility for his own blind exercise of privilege as the unwitting beneficiary of a colonialist history.

These acts which are labelled as cancel culture are not themselves the object of the dialectical image of caricature, but rather the claims of cancel culture themselves. In other words, there is a type of fake news being promulgated by sensationalizing the self-editing of Dr. Seuss Enterprises, Disney, or Hergé. Who is speaking to whom when these claims are made, and what do they hope to gain? It seems once again to be a case of propaganda, albeit social rather than political propaganda as it mostly addresses racial stereotypes. Those who have benefitted from membership in a dominant racial group may see in these acts an erosion of their own privilege to discriminate, or an implication of responsibility in having perpetuated negative stereotypes or having benefited from them over successive generations. In an effort to preserve this supposedly harmless privilege, claims of “cancel culture” give expression to anger over loss of power, and redirect it in ways that deliberately avoid addressing the reasons for the changes.

“Cancel culture” is also sometimes mentioned in reference to the removal of historical statues, accompanied by the accusation of “re-writing history.” In the United States, calls to remove Confederate statues from public property as symbols of slavery and racism are countered by claims that they exist to teach history, to remind us of the past. This is a spurious dodge, as

history is primarily taught in books and classrooms. Statues, by contrast, have a primarily commemorative function, and their erection serves to demonstrate society's values. In Canada, statues of founding fathers John A. MacDonald and Egerton Ryerson are also being removed, as they represent two architects of the residential school system that abducted indigenous children from their families for generations, subjecting them to assimilationist policies and widespread, systematic abuse. Once again a reactionary outcry has called for preserving rather than rewriting history. But such statues have always been a form of propaganda, representing state-sponsored metanarratives such as white supremacy and manifest destiny. It can be argued that their erection was already a form of re-writing history, by ignoring the virulent racism of these men and their legacy of intergenerational poverty, forced relocation, restriction of movement, denial of voting privileges, and—in light of the recent discovery of 215 children's bodies in an undocumented gravesite at a residential school in Kamloops—genocide.³⁶⁶ No one will forget that MacDonald was Canada's first prime minister, or that Ryerson was instrumental in creating Canada's public school system. But now we are more widely aware of their deeply-rooted racism, and the double standards that they employed in treating the indigenous people around them. History, as Benjamin would have said, is not the mere facts of the past, but something that continues to unfold in our own present. Thus the repercussions of actions undertaken a century or two ago are still being felt today.

³⁶⁶ At the time of writing, over a thousand undocumented bodies have now been discovered at seven former residential schools in Canada and the United States, with widespread demands to use ground-penetrating radar at all such sites.

In the case of removing statues it is much more obvious that there is a political attack against a dominant class enjoying unearned privilege, as well as against the perpetuation of discriminatory narratives. To label such removals, even when they are done illegally or violently, as “cancel culture” is to employ propaganda from a position of power. The term itself, like “fake news,” is deliberately designed to hide these dynamics. These have been joined by a host of additional terms in recent years, largely coined on social media platforms and then repeated uncritically by news outlets. There is the derisive term “snowflake,” implying an overly-sensitive person who takes offense where none is intended. But in practice the real “snowflake” is usually the person using the term to accuse another—being themselves unable to tolerate criticism and uninterested in open discourse. These are usually individuals who are finding that their own blind exercise of privilege is being curtailed, and want things to go back to “the way they were.” The “special interest group” refers to any group that wants to be treated better or differently than everyone else, that wants the rest of society to give them special consideration. The term, which is bandied about primarily in political circles, is used to describe groups that have experienced systematic prejudice and want to be treated equally, as is enshrined in law: African-Americans, LGBTQ2+, ethnic and religious minorities, and especially refugees. If we accept the definition of special interest groups as those who want to obtain or preserve unearned privilege, then once again it is a term best suited to describe the people using it. Finally, the term “Antifa” (short for anti-fascist) was introduced by neo-fascist and white supremacist groups (who describe themselves as “alt-right”) to describe an organized radical left movement bordering on terrorism. Its usage is intended to equalize the fascist and the opponent of fascism as if they were both valid viewpoints or opinions. It implies that claims to white supremacy are a valid part of ordinary discourse, and those that oppose white supremacy are themselves exhibiting intolerance. All

these terms are simply disguises for reactionary populism, designed to legitimize and rationalize various forms of prejudice and privilege by casting their opponents as dangerous extremists.

Karl Popper famously described the paradox of tolerance in *The Open Society and its Enemies* in 1945. He claimed that there had to be limits to tolerance, in effect that society could not afford to tolerate *intolerance*. To do so would be to invite the erosion of tolerance, as had been accomplished by the fascists in Germany. Many of the social media debates described here seem very new, but in fact they are part of a political discourse that has its roots in the struggle between reactionary and revolutionary sentiments. If the dialectical image of caricature is relevant to these issues, it is in illuminating the power relations of mass persuasion. With every example we can simply ask if the speaker comes from a position of authority, of privilege, of majority rule, or a position of subjection, exploitation, and marginalisation. The fight for fairer treatment can never be equated with the fight to preserve privilege, and should be countered and contested in every instance.

The Future of Caricature

Since the 1980s, caricature has declined as a form of political satire, partly in response to the spread of political correctness. In its original formulation, political correctness simply meant becoming self-conscious about one's own biases, and the effect on caricaturists was that images poking fun at a subject's appearance, accent, weight, race, or gender became less and less acceptable. The once-ubiquitous editorial cartoon has therefore diminished to inoffensive social commentary, at least in those newspapers where it still appears. But today the phrase "political correctness" has been successfully rebranded by the far-right media to mean something very

different. Its usage now reflects the same web of concepts as the “snowflake” and the “special interest group;” instead of representing an awareness of bias, it obfuscates the reactionary struggle to preserve bias, by casting aspersions that it is itself guilty of.

Despite its decline, controversy over modern caricature erupted anew in 2005 with the publication of anti-Islamic cartoons in the Danish tabloid *Jyllands-Posten*. The caricatures in question were undeniably racist, mocking Islam generally and the Prophet Muhammad in particular, as well as stereotyping the Muslim minority living in Denmark. The global Islamic community was the first to respond, condemning the caricatures wholesale not only for their obvious prejudice, but also for blatantly defying the iconoclasm of modern Islam. The paper’s defenders responded predictably by asserting their freedom of speech as a “Western” value, finding support as radical elements in the Islamic community made threats and attempts at violence against its staff. In practice however, *Jyllands-Posten* cannot be characterized as a far-right newspaper, as its political stance has not always been consistent. Nevertheless, anti-immigrant sentiments have continued to appear sporadically in its pages, continually stirring the pot and resurrecting arguments over the anti-Muslim cartoons of 2005.

In France, the satirical magazine *Charlie Hebdo* reprinted the offending cartoons in 2011 and 2012, along with additional new cartoons targeting Muhammad. Where *Jyllands-Posten* was ostensibly a news organ representing the mainstream of society, *Hebdo* had always courted controversy with its political irreverence and anti-religious content. In 2015, after a series of attacks over several years, twelve employees were killed and a further eleven injured in a terrorist attack. The attack was in direct response to their ongoing caricatures of Muhammad and their vocal support of *Jyllands-Posten*. Like the Danish newspaper, their defence rested largely on freedom of speech, which in principle should indeed be more generous when it comes to

satirical content. *Hebdo*'s editors pointed out that they have always attacked all religions equally, and that they wanted to make Islam as "banal" as Catholicism. However, this claim once again ignores the power dynamics of the situation. When members of a largely white, patriarchal, middle-class, colonial culture satirize the religion of a marginalized and visible minority, there is an exercise of privilege that ignores the inequality of the two groups.

Publications like *Charlie Hebdo* and *Jyllands-Posten* can be characterized as reactionary only insofar as they are expressions of an ethnic majority with a history of colonialism. Their position on the political spectrum can be hard to pin down and is often inconsistent, but they do exercise a degree of social, economic, and racial privilege which gives the lie to any claims of victimhood, or of having treated majority and minority targets equally. And while they are largely curtailed by national laws that criminalize expressions of prejudice against identifiable groups, they still push the boundaries of what is permissible and court controversy with an alarming abandon.

Current trends in political satire have moved even further from the editorial cartoon, embracing live action and online media instead. Satirical skits have found a new lease on life on the internet and streaming services; and the satirical news format continues to grow in popularity around the world (Germany's *Heute Show*, BBC's *The Mash Report*). Satirical news has also been firmly entrenched on websites and social media, with long-running platforms such as *The Onion* and *The Borowitz Report* in the United States; *The Beaverton* and *Walking Eagle News* in Canada. Most of these find a healthy balance between political and social satire, maintaining a wide audience across class lines while also appealing to both ends of the political spectrum.

Where does Fuchs fit in to this situation? The study of historical caricature has certainly seen a resurgence in the last twenty years, as its ample visual material continues to engender both

scholarly and lay interest. Fuchs' cultural histories, while academically limited and largely forgotten, do offer some value in the direction they set. They still offer us a wealth of images that have continued to accumulate meaning in the ensuing decades, a meaning that is now coloured by modern developments in social media. The questions of fake news, propaganda, and satire have never been more pronounced, and the dialectical image developed here can be put to good use in untangling these heated debates. We study the past in order to understand the present, recognizing that history is not confined to the past but continues to unfold in the present day. Fuchs' contributions to that history therefore have a continuing relevance, and his observations about the caricature of his own time, and of his own history, have a direct relevance to our own understanding of satire today.

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Appendix A: Selected works of Eduard Fuchs

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HARPER'S WEEKLY

JOURNAL OF CIVILIZATION

Vol. XX.—No. 1018.]

NEW YORK, SATURDAY, JULY 1, 1876.

[WITH A SUPPLEMENT. PRICE TEN CENTS.]

Entered according to Act of Congress, in the Year 1855, by Harper & Brothers, in the Office of the Librarian of Congress, at Washington.

POLITICAL - CAPITAL -

THE "people are in a very puzzled and dependent state of mind about the political situation, and have got beyond the point at which they look for the appearance of the ideal statesman uniting the purest motives with the highest ability. They can get the pure motives, and they can get the high ability; but somehow, owing to no matter what circumstances, to get a man who unites both into a leading place in the government is a work of such difficulty that most people have given it up as (for the present at least) a bad job, and are willing to content themselves with any man who, for whatever motive, will do good work. It so happens, too, that the work to be done at this moment is not work which calls either for the highest order of genius or the highest aspirations. A man may do it very well without being a Moses or a Washington—without, in short, being either a prophet or a hero. He has neither to lead a race out of captivity nor call a nation into existence. The task before the American politician of to-day is the simple and somewhat homely one of preventing public officers from stealing and dividing the public money, and of preventing the government from cheating its creditors; and when a man offers himself for this work, there is no general disposition to ask whether he is a statesman of the first rank, or whether his political judgment has always been sure or his voice been always heard on the right side. In fact, they go so far as to say that to make capital in this way is a good thing to do, and they wish all politicians to engage in it. They are ready to forbear all curious inquiries into the motives or antecedents of men who will undertake to put an end to cheating and stealing. In fact, the voters of the country are sticking notices up offering the highest offices in their gift, and "no questions asked," to any body who will bring in a few plunderers of the state. Mr. Tweed has achieved his present success simply owing to his having, before any body else of his class, understood the exact nature of the situation. He perceived sooner than his competitors that the time had come to stop preaching, and to begin making arrests and drawing up indictments. He now finds, and his competitors find, that his acuteness has rendered him the highest service, and his enemies actually play into his hands."—The Nation, October 7, 1875.

IT HAS BLOWN OVER
WANTED REFORMERS
OF THE
TAMMANY CLASS.
WANTED REFORMERS
EDUCATED IN THE
TAMMANY HALL
SCHOOL
REFORM.

REWARD AND
NO QUESTIONS ASKED.
ANYBODY WHO WILL BRING
A FEW PLUNDERERS OF THE
STATE
TO JUSTICE (?)
WILL BE REWARDED BY THE
HIGHEST OFFICES
IN THE
GIFT
OF THE
PEOPLE.
G.D. LORD CONVICTED.
ONE OF THE
CANAL RING.

TAMMANY HALL
SCHOOL OF REFORM.
SCHOLARS WANTED
FOR REFORMERS.

REWARD TO THOSE
THAT HAVE ASSOCIATED
WITH THIEVES, AND
THE STATE
CONFIDENCE.

REWARD
TO ALL
PUBLIC THIEVES
WHO HAVE ENOUGH
AND
CAN STOP OTHERS
FROM CHEATING
AND
STEALING.
THEY WILL BE REWARDED
BY HONORABLE POSITIONS
AND
FAT OFFICES.

IT TAKES
A THIEF
OR ONE
WHO HAS
ASSOCIATED
WITH
THIEVES
TO CATCH
A
THIEF.



TWEED-LE-DEE AND TILDEN-DUM.

REFORM TWEED. "If all the people want is to have somebody arrested, I'll have you plunderers convicted. You will be allowed to escape; nobody will be hurt; and then TILDEN will go to the White House, and I to Albany as Governor."

Fig. 1: Thomas Nast, "Tweed-le-dee and Tilden-dum," 1876.

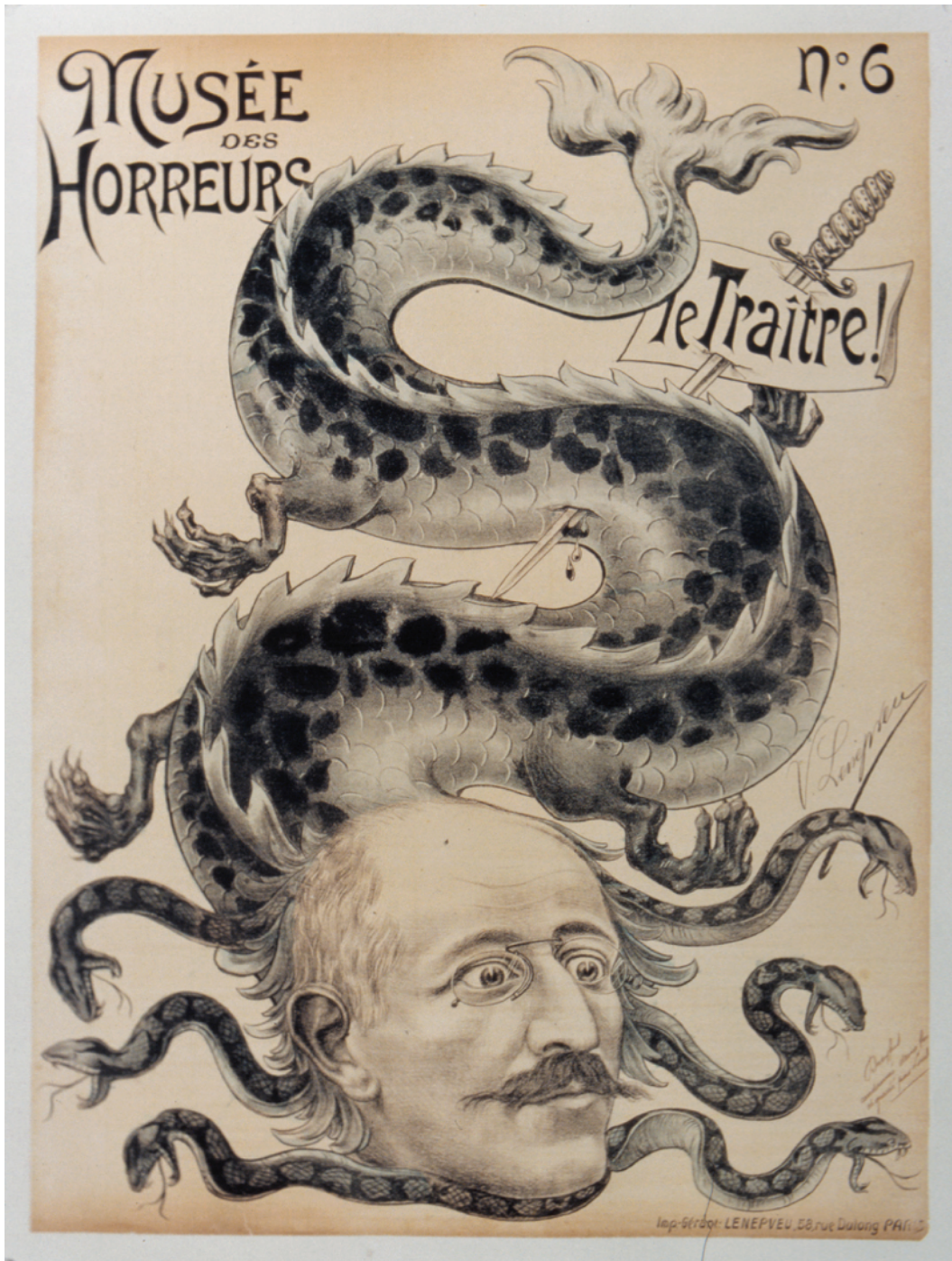


Fig. 2: Victor Lenepveu, "Museum of Horrors No. 6 (The Traitor)," 1900.



Fig. 3: Eduard Fuchs in Munich around 1890.

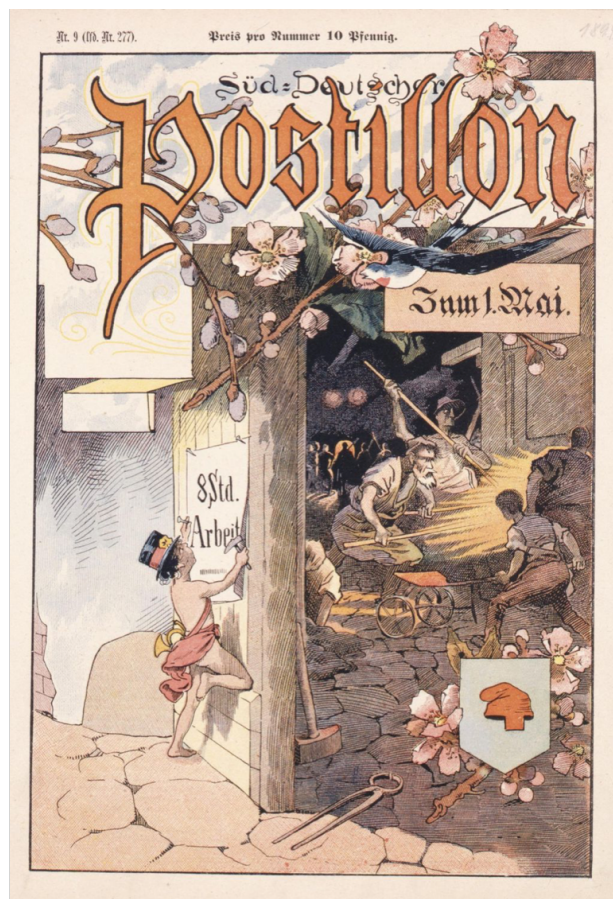


Fig. 4: Front page of *Süddeutscher Postillon*, 1 May 1894. Note the red Phrygian cap in the crest, which had been adopted as a symbol of liberty during the French Revolution. The placard (left) proclaims an 8-hour workday.



Fig. 5: Wedding photo of Eduard Fuchs and Frida Fuchs (née Schön). Munich, 1896.



Fig. 6: Carl, Prince Lichnowsky, "Lola on the Grandstand," Frankfurt, n.d.
In addition to her distinctive riding crop—a prop from her famous "Spanish Dance"—Montez sports the kingly robes of Ludwig I as well as a top hat, moustache, and goatee, signifiers of male authority.



Fig. 7: Anti-Semitic election poster for the Reichstag election, 1920.



Fig. 8: "Protest by well-known writers against the introduction of the Filth and Trash Act," published in *A-I-Z* Nr. 25, vol. 5, 1926, p. 3. "L-R: Wallauer, President of the cooperative, Dr. Ed. Fuchs, Felix Holländer, H.E. Jakob, Norbert Jaques, Fr. Timpe, Willi Haas and Johannes R. Becher."



Fig. 9: Haus Perls / Villa Fuchs at it appears today, with the 1926 extension to the left.



Fig. 10: The Slevogt Room (study) in Villa Fuchs.



Fig. 11: The Daumier Room (library) with paintings hung salon-style.



Fig. 12: Fuchs' Paris apartment at 6 Rue d'Auteuil, where he lived 1933–1940.



Fig. 13: Auction catalog for the Fuchs collection, 1938.

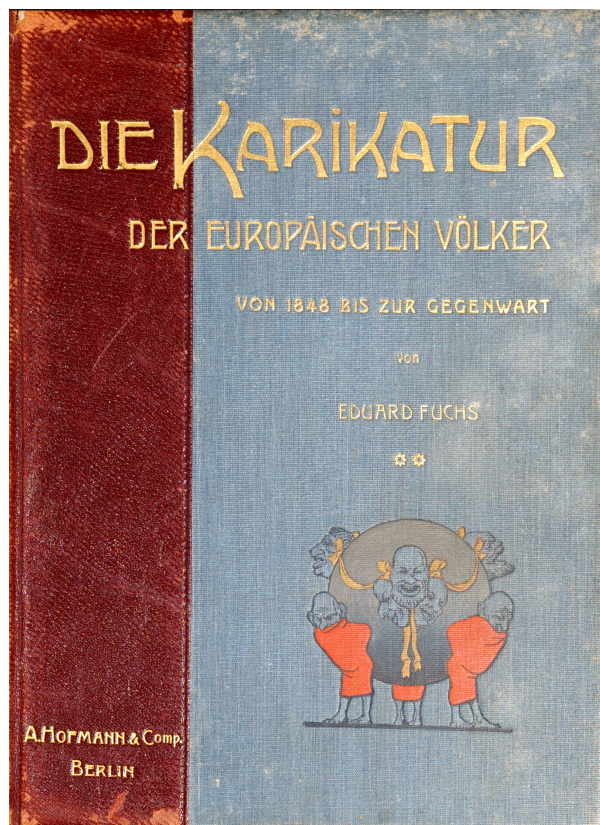


Fig. 14: *Die Karikatur der europäischen Völker von 1848 bis zur Gegenwart*, first edition, 1903.

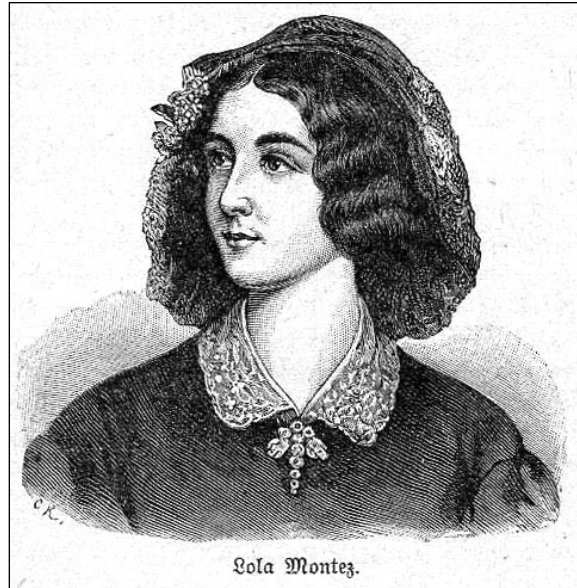


Fig. 15: Illustration of Lola Montez for Wilhelm Bloss, *Die Deutsche Revolution*, 1893.



Fig. 16: Portrait of Lola Montez by Joseph Stieler, 1847, as reproduced in Eduard Fuchs, *Ein vormärzliches Tanz-idyll: Lola Montez in der Karikatur*, p. 17.



Fig. 17: Layout of *1848 in der Caricatur*, 1898. The page size, which is typical for Fuchs, is quite generous at 28.3 x 24.9 cm.



Fig. 18: Gian Lorenzo Bernini, *Caricature of Cardinal Scipione Borghese*, 1632.



Fig. 19: Graffiti caricature head, ca. 79 C.E. Pompeii. An accompanying caption reads, "Amplificatus, I know that Icarus is bugging you. Salvius wrote this."

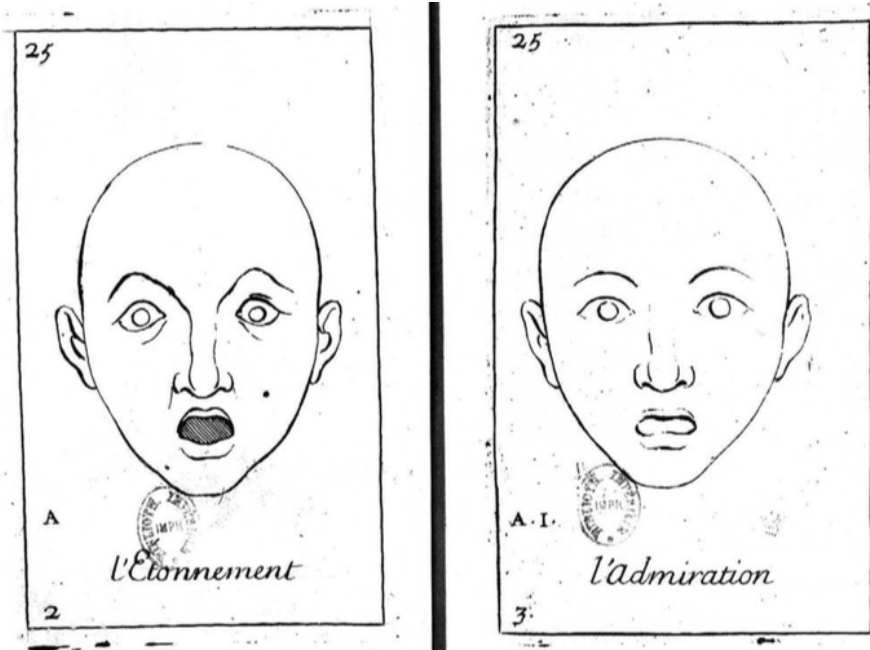


Fig. 20: Surprise and admiration, from Charles Le Brun's *Conférence*, 1698.



Fig. 21: James Gillray, "The Plumb-pudding in danger; or, State Epicures taking un Petit Souper," 1805.

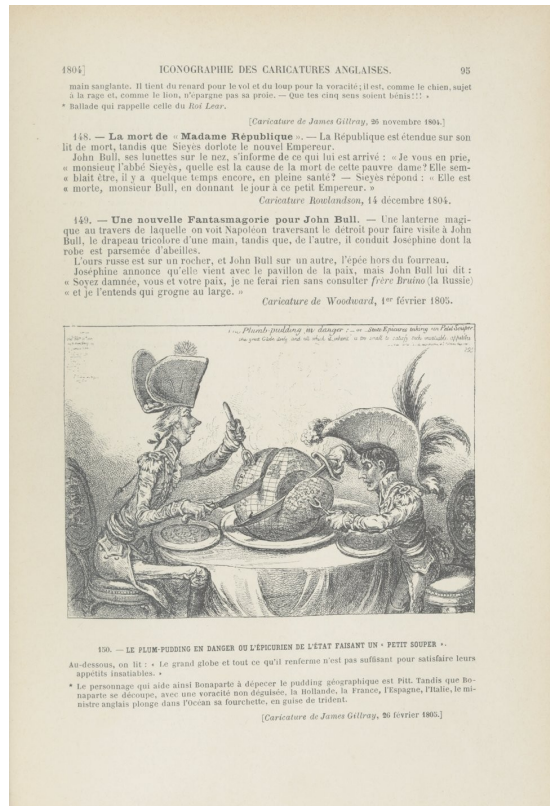


Fig. 22: John Grand-Carteret, page layout from *Napoléon en images*, 1895, showing “The Plumb-pudding in danger.”



Fig. 23: James Gillray, “The Struggle for the Dunghill,” 1798. The caricature is shown here as Fuchs’ illustrators copied it, with Jack Tar (a term for a British seaman) misidentified as John Bull.



Fig. 24: James Gillray, "Fighting for the Dunghill, or, Jack Tar settling Buonaparte," 1798 (Original broadsheet).



Fig. 25: Franz Xaver Messerschmidt, *Afflicted with Constipation*, 1771–83.



Fig. 26: Anonymous, "The Fall of the Angels," Munich, February 9, 1848.

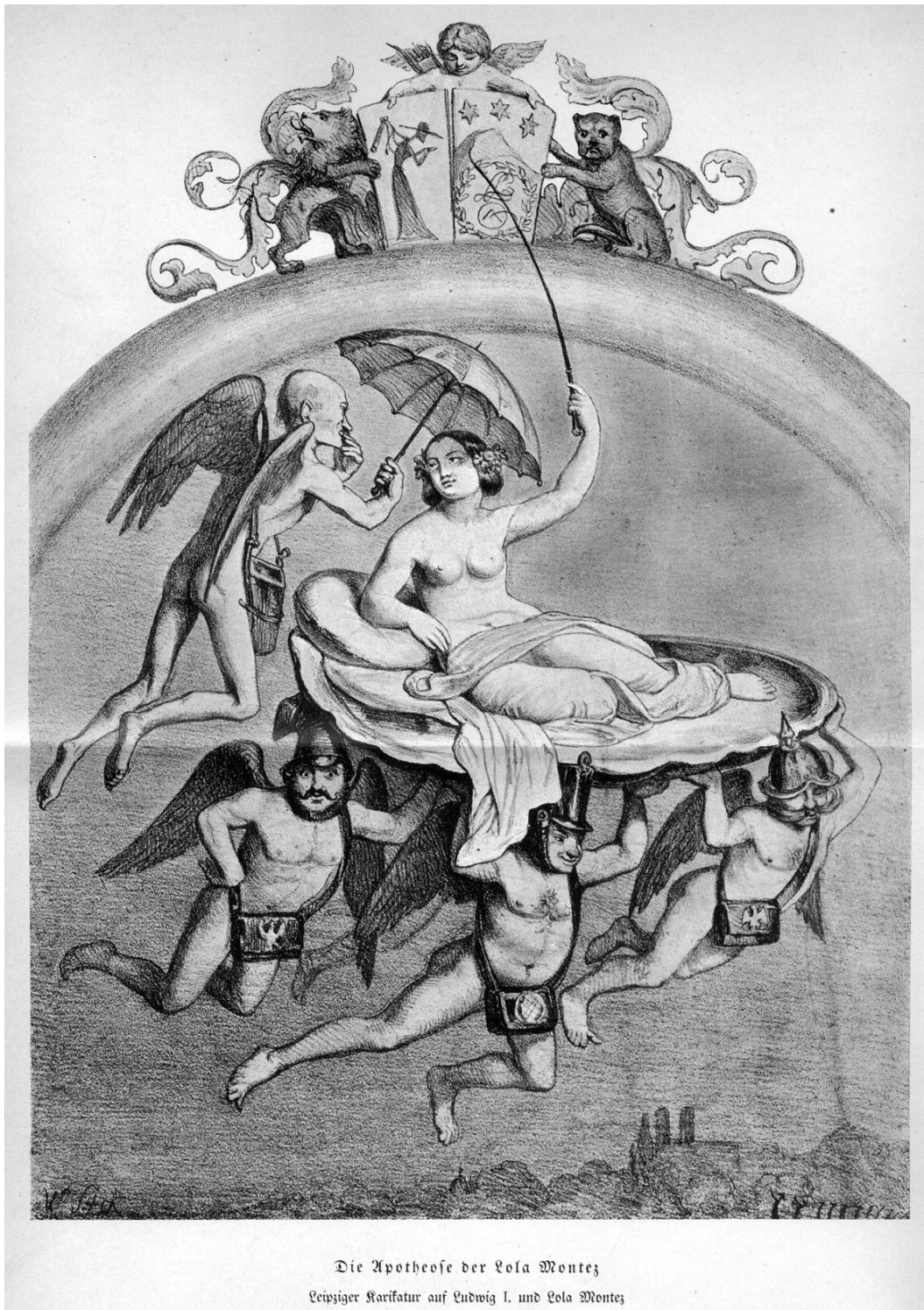


Fig. 27: Anonymous, "The Apotheosis of Lola Montez," Leipzig, n.d.



Fig. 28: Heinrich Wilhelm Storck, "Such a one always follows!" Leipzig, 1848.

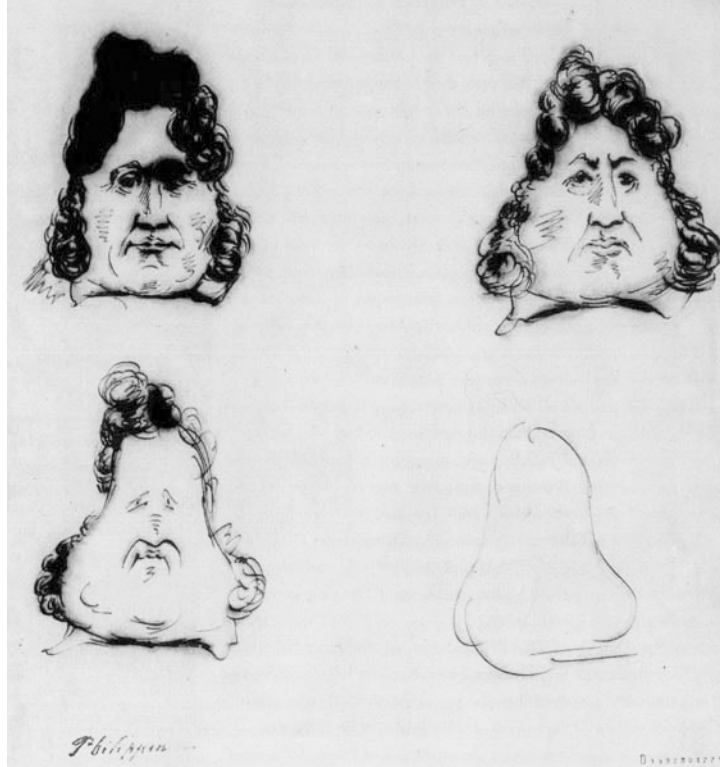


Fig. 29: Charles Philippon, “The Metamorphosis of King Louis Philippe into a pear,” Paris, 1831.



Fig. 30: Anonymous, untitled caricature of Friedrich Wilhelm IV, n.d.

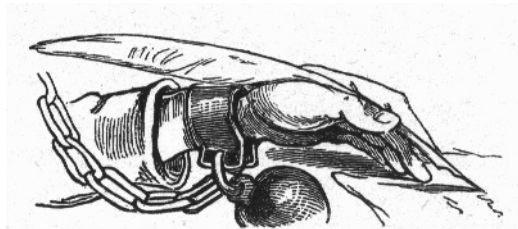


Fig. 31: Anonymous, “The Royal Bavarian Freedom of the Press.” *Leuchtkugeln*, Munich, n. d.

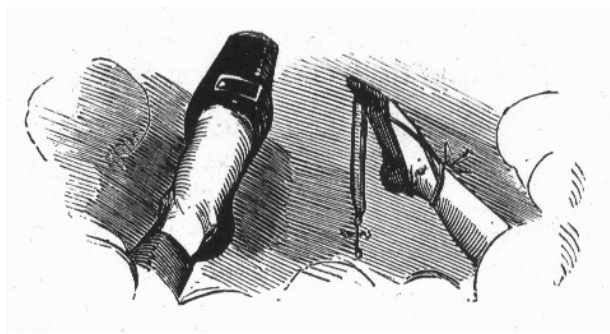


Fig. 32: Anonymous, untitled caricature of Ludwig I and Lola Montez, n.d.



Fig. 33: John Heartfield, "Self-Portrait." *A-I-Z* 8/37, September, 1929.

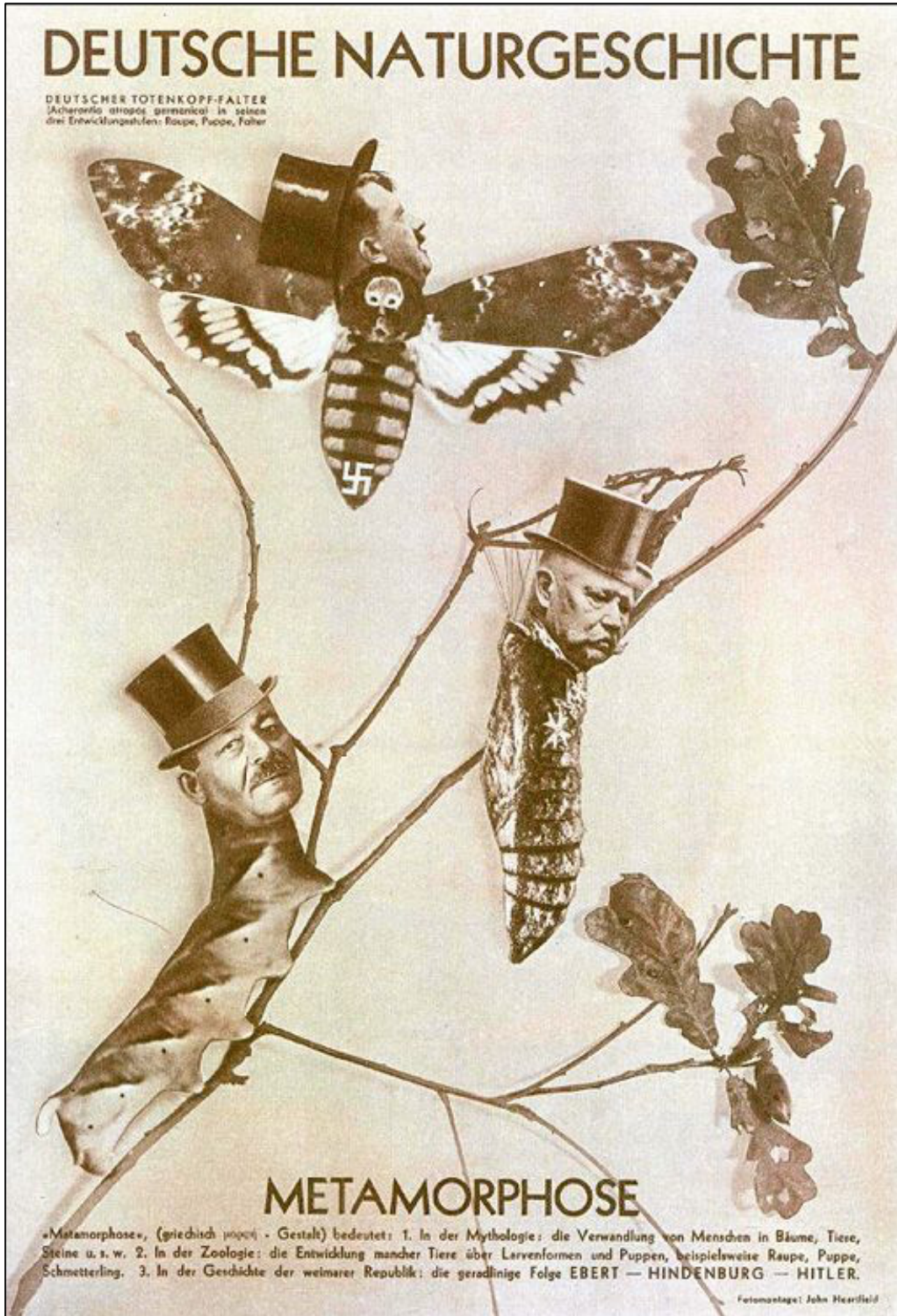


Fig. 34: John Heartfield, "German Natural History." *A-I-Z* 13/33, August 16, 1934.

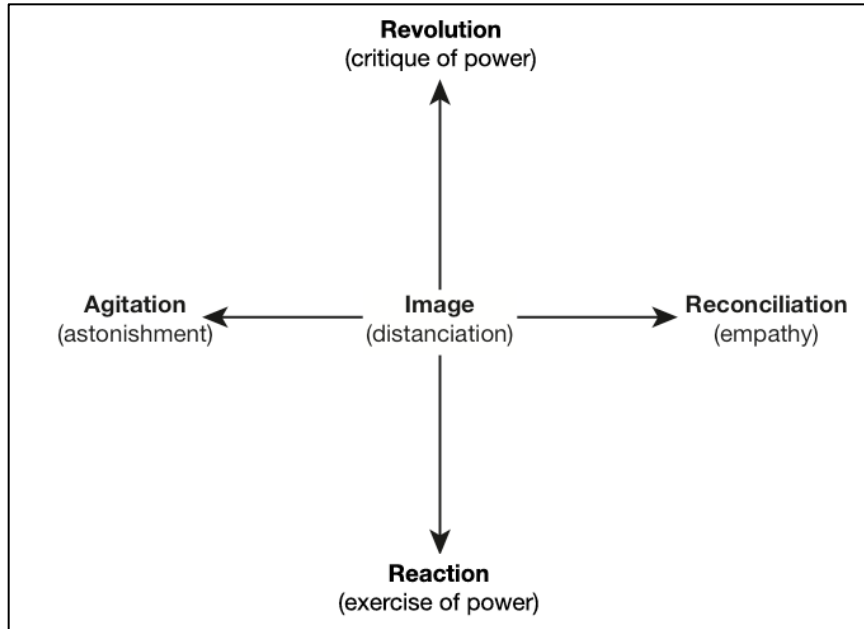


Fig. 35: The oppositional tendencies of caricature.

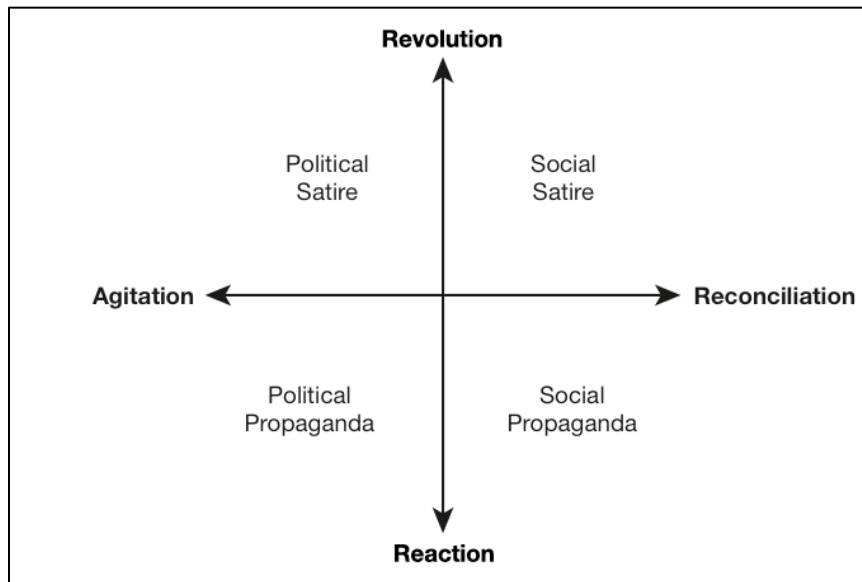


Fig. 36: The axial fields of caricature.

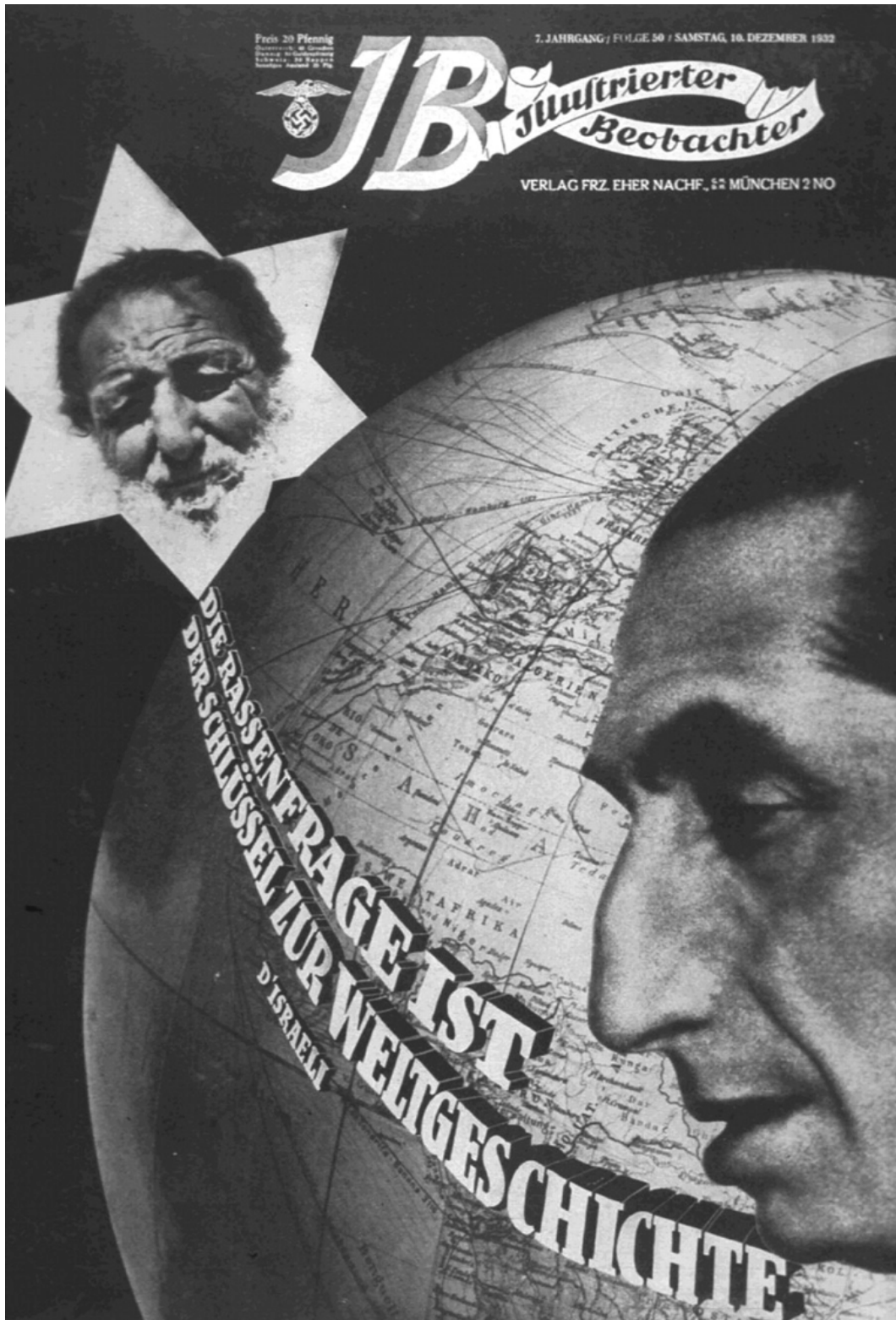


Fig. 37: *Illustrierter Beobachter* (Illustrated Observer), 19 December 1932.
“The Race Question is the Key to World History—D’Israeli”



Fig. 38: *Signal*, 1941.
“Strength through Joy—Physical exercise in the snow”