University of Alberta

The Dialectical Image of Caricature:
Eduard Fuchs and the March Revolution of 1848

by

Misa Nikolic

A thesis submitted to the Faculty of Graduate Studies and Research
in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the degree of

Master of Arts

in

History of Art, Design and Visual Culture

Department of Art & Design

Abstract

The work of the Marxist cultural historian Eduard Fuchs (1870-1940) has been criticised for its inconsistent application of historical materialism to the fields of caricature and erotica. Although this criticism does have some merit, the question of whether Fuchs treats caricature in a dialectical fashion remains insufficiently answered. To address this I examine Fuchs' early study on the caricature of 1848, published on the fiftieth anniversary of the Revolution. My approach is also grounded in historical materialism, and uses the concept of the dialectical image to re-evaluate the interaction of image and text in his publications. My goals in this research are therefore twofold: first, to define the dialectical image and demonstrate how caricature presents a dialectical image of the past; and secondly, to determine to what degree Fuchs has achieved this in his study of the caricature of 1848.

Table of Contents

List of Illustrations

Introduction

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."[1] Turning his attention to the revolution in

Germany, then at its fiftieth anniversary, 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

sharp weapon, and when wielded by those who did not fear censorship or other

means of suppression, it could inflict severe damage to those in authority by

means of ridicule. He was convinced that caricature exerted a powerful persuasive

influence on public opinion, an influence that had been neglected by other

historians of the art. Part of his project then, was to demonstrate its political

agency in public discourse.

Fuchs' monograph *1848 in der Caricatur* [sic] is a seminal, mid-career

work that marks a turn in his writing from satirical journalism to a historical

approach based on research and evidence. Prior to this, Fuchs' work as an editor

of satirical newspapers had led him to write inflammatory political articles, a

strategy which often put him in direct conflict with authorities. By positioning

himself instead as a cultural historian, he could write with a more objective voice,

and his once harsh criticisms became far more subdued and subtle. He was

certainly still persecuted and faced many trials throughout his career, but he often

---

[1] "Als Kampfmittel wurde sie stets unterschätzt, in ihrer Aufgabe fast immer verkannt und als Kunstwerk lange Zeit verachtet." Eduard Fuchs, *1848 in der Caricatur* (München: Max Ernst, 1898) p .5.

won favourable judgements with the support of his contemporaries in the left-wing intelligentsia. He eventually became quite prominent as an author of luxury editions on caricature and erotica, and he flourished during the years of the Weimar Republic.

However, by 1933 Fuchs was forced to flee Germany, and he spent his remaining years in exile in Paris. There he met Walter Benjamin, twenty-two years his junior, who published a critical essay about his life and work for the *Zeitschrift für Sozialforschung* [Journal for Social Research] in 1937.[2] Both men had links to the Institute for Social Research, which published the journal, and they were both avowed Marxists. Benjamin's assessment of Fuchs' work was at once appreciative and critical, and his essay gives an overview of Fuchs' entire output. As his earliest and most proximal biographer, Benjamin has since become the standard entry point for virtually everyone who has written about Fuchs. But as Benjamin's star has risen throughout the twentieth century, so has Fuchs' fallen, so much so that his work has become rather obscure. As a graduate researcher I am partly motivated by the desire to retrieve this body of work and to situate it within contemporary art historical discourse.

Following from Benjamin's essay, I have generated some specific research questions, influenced by my understanding of the Marxist concept of historical materialism. For example, what was Fuchs' purpose in presenting a study of the caricature of the March Revolution of 1848 on its fiftieth anniversary? Is there an analogous link for Fuchs between the revolution and events in Germany in his

---

[2] Walter Benjamin, "Eduard Fuchs, Collector and Historian" in Andrew Arato, Eike Gebhardt (eds.), *The Essential Frankfurt School Reader* (New York: Continuum, 1988), p. 225-53.

own time, and if so, what parallels could be found to support such a link? And finally, is it possible to retrieve or extend this link for today? These questions generated more in turn along a theoretical axis, primarily: What is a dialectical image – a concept that Benjamin invokes in his discussion of Fuchs? Can the dialectical image be found in the examples of caricature examined by Fuchs? And, taking Benjamin's criticism of Fuchs into account, is Fuchs' treatment of caricature in itself dialectical?

My goals in this research will therefore be twofold: first, to define the dialectical image and demonstrate how caricature can present a dialectical image of the past; and secondly, to show to what degree Fuchs achieves this in his study of the 1848 period in Germany. Due to the significance of Benjamin's essay for Fuchs studies, a critical examination of his historiographic approach is essential. Ultimately I need to judge the importance of this body of criticism for contemporary art history, and the importance of Fuchs as an early critical investigator of caricature. In doing so I hope to clarify my own interpretation of the dialectical method and put it to use in my analysis.

Literature Review

The selections from Fuchs that I will be discussing pertain to German caricature related to the events leading up to the March Revolution in 1848 and its aftermath. This body of visual work is examined by Eduard Fuchs in 1898, and it is here that his conception of caricature is first formulated. Next comes

3

Benjamin's study of Fuchs' entire oeuvre in 1937, in which he discusses historical materialism and the dialectical image; finally, I turn to issues of historiography and the interpretation of caricature as a dialectical image. This stream of ideas connects a discrete body of surviving visual work with a discourse that is concerned with writing history "in both directions," that is, with interpreting the past in order to construct a better understanding of the present. Such a discourse offers an alternative to the linear narrative of *historicism*, a term Benjamin uses to emphasize the ideological structure of history writing.

Although I am using Benjamin as a methodological guide, it is Fuchs' own work that I want to focus on. Given the vast scope of his writing, however, it is necessary to narrow this focus as much as possible. Spanning some twenty-six volumes published between 1898 and 1930, as well as dozens of articles in numerous journals dating as far back as 1887, Fuchs' oeuvre presents the dual problem of being at once large and unwieldy while also being rare and difficult to acquire. I have therefore selected two early works on a related theme: *1848 in der Caricatur* [1848 in Caricature] and *Ein vormärzliches Tanzidyll: Lola Montez in der Karikatur* [An Idyllic Dance of the Pre-March Period: Lola Montez in Caricature]. *1848* is represented by a unique and extremely rare portfolio of sixteen broadsheet caricatures with an accompanying illustrated essay. Only thirty copies of this monograph were printed in Munich in 1898, although the material had also been published in instalments earlier that year in the *Süddeutscher Postillon* [South-German Postilion], a bi-weekly organ of the Sozialdemokratische Partei Deutschlands [German Social-Democratic Party, or

SPD] of which Fuchs was editor at the time. *Lola Montez* was published in 1904 in Berlin, and is a conventional book of almost two hundred pages with ninety-two illustrations. This provides a thematically coherent range of images to consider that is not too extensive, given Fuchs' propensity for including great numbers of reproductions amongst his writing. Additional material will come from Fuchs' 1901-02 major study, *Die Karikatur der europäischen Völker* [Caricature of European Peoples]. This two volume set, pointedly divided by 1848, was written amidst Fuchs' journalistic activity, a brief period of incarceration, and a relocation to Berlin to take over the editorship of the SPD journal *Vorwärts* [Forwards]. The introductions to these volumes provide some personal context for Fuchs' work, and there are also individual chapters in each volume which deal with the *Vormärz* [pre-March period][3] and the revolution respectively.

Studies of Fuchs have unfortunately been sporadic due to his near-erasure from academic discourse. Between the efforts of the Nazis, the scarcity of translations, and the ravages of time on his surviving books, knowledge of Fuchs has dwindled to a small circle of mostly German-speaking scholars. Walter Benamin's essay for the *Zeitschrift für Sozialforschung*, "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 it garnered from

---

[3] In this context the word *Vormärz* refers to the period leading up to the March revolution in Germany, sometimes encompassing a year or more. The *Märztage*, or March Days, refer specifically to March 18 and 19 when actual fighting broke out in Berlin. Not wishing to escalate matters, Friedrich Wilhelm IV withdrew his superior forces, thus giving the revolutionaries a *de facto*, albeit temporary, victory.

one-on-one interviews conducted from 1935-37 (although Benjamin received the assignment as early as June 1933).[4] Fuchs also loaned Benjamin copies of most of his published work, the reading of which Benjamin found distasteful but which nevertheless formed the basis of his research. The resulting essay provides an insightful and critical commentary on Fuchs' methodology, particularly of the failures and inconsistencies Benjamin perceived in it which he found rather frustrating. Benjamin casts Fuchs as the romantic, Balzacian figure of the collector, a figure "motivated by dangerous though domesticated passions."[5] 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-like setting of his home. For Benjamin, the subjective activity of collecting acts as a corrective to the linear narrative of historicism by examining items and images marginalized from mainstream culture. Also important for reconstructing the events surrounding the writing of the Fuchs essay is the accumulated correspondence that Benjamin and others have left behind. His exchanges with Theodor Adorno, his friend Gershom Scholem, and his editor Max Horkheimer allow us to see how his attitude towards the assignment changes as he makes his way through the many volumes of Fuchs. A few tantalizing clues regarding his research, the essay's reception, and the benefit he eventually derives from it, can be gleaned from these letters.

Two major books have been written on Fuchs since his death, both of

---

[4] Walter Benjamin, *The Correspondence of Walter Benjamin and Gershom Scholem 1932-1940*, ed. Gershom Scholem, trans. Gary Smith and Andre Lefevre (New York: Schocken Books, 1989), p. 90.

[5] Benjamin, "Eduard Fuchs, Collector and Historian," p. 241.

them in German. In 1985 Thomas Huonker published his doctoral dissertation, *Revolution, Moral und Kunst. Eduard Fuchs: Leben und Werk* [Revolution, Morality and Art. Eduard Fuchs: Life and Work]. This was followed in 1991 by Ulrich Weitz' well-researched biography, *Salonkultur und Proletariat. Eduard Fuchs: Sammler, Sittengeschichtler, Sozialist* [Salon Culture and Proletariat. Eduard Fuchs: Collector, Historian of Morals, Socialist]. This latter work publicized for the first time many aspects of Fuchs' life that had heretofore been forgotten, in particular his close involvement with Horkheimer, Adorno and Friedrich Pollock in founding the Institute for Social Research and its archives in Frankfurt.[6] Weitz also included a complete bibliography of Fuchs' writing starting in 1887, which accounts for every article, every edition, and every translation up until 1935 after his forced exile. Weitz also traces Fuchs' close friendship with the artist Max Slevogt, and the building and display of his art collections. These two books form the backbone of all biographic and bibliographic references to Fuchs.

The last few decades have seen a mild resurgence of scholarship on Fuchs.[7] This includes the 2006 article "Wer war Eduard Fuchs?" [Who was Eduard Fuchs?] by the Austrian art historian Peter Gorsen, who 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 concludes that not only erotic art and

---

[6] Ulrich Weitz, *Salonkultur und Proletariat. Eduard Fuchs: Sammler, Sittengeschichtler, Sozialist* (Stuttgart: Stöffler & Schütz, 1991), p. 413.

[7] Interest in Fuchs may have been prompted by the first appearance of Benjamin's essay in an English translation by Knut Tarnowski, which appeared in *New German Critique*, no. 5 (Spring 1975), p. 27-58. It was also translated by Kingsley Shorter in the collection *One Way Street and Other Writings* (London: New Left Books, 1979), p. 349-386. The edition I am using, from the *Essential Frankfurt School Reader*, uses the Tarnowski translation.

caricature, but indeed all art, is underpinned by an auto-erotic impulse. While this line of argument has little bearing on my current research as it deals with a later period in Fuchs' oeuvre, Gorsen is also useful as a bibliographic guide. Since he relies heavily on Huonker and Weitz, the need for extensive translations of those works is negated. Another essay from 1976 co-written by Gorsen and the German literary scholar Silvia Bovenschen, "Aufklärung als Geschlechtskunde. Biologismus und Antifeminismus bei Eduard Fuchs" [Enlightenment as the Science of Sex: biologism and anti-feminism in Eduard Fuchs], picks up on the same theme and examines Fuchs' often contradictory stance on women, which was one of the inconsistencies that bothered Benjamin. Again, I will not be pursuing this angle at present.

A recent book chapter by Ulrich Bach (2010) of Texas State University focuses on Fuchs' collecting and publishing activities, which had ironically made him fairly wealthy and something of a public figure, even as his politics became ever more radical. Two important issues are discussed here: the display of Fuchs' collections in the villa that he acquired in 1928;[8] and the state of private book publishing in Germany which flourished during this period. For my purposes it is Fuchs' relationship to the publisher Albert Langen, whom he met in 1905, and his initial entry into private publishing a few years earlier, that is salient. Two additional chapters from the same book – *Publishing Culture and the "Reading*

---

[8] Fuchs acquired the villa, located in the upscale neighbourhood of Zehlendorf, and asked the original architect, Mies van der Rohe, to expand and alter it to accommodate his already vast collections. Van der Rohe had designed the house in 1911-12 for the art dealer Hugo Perls, and this early work of the architect is still known as Haus Perls today. Luciana Zingarelli, "Eduard Fuchs, vom militanten Journalismus zur Kulturgeschichte" in *Ästhetik und Kommunikation – Beitrage zur politischen Erziehung*, vol. 7, no. 25 (1976) p. 36.

Nation": German Book History in the Long Nineteenth Century – will also be helpful in outlining the historical background of Germany's publishing culture, as they can account for how Fuchs could be widely read despite being privately published. Another book, Gary Stark's *Entrepreneurs of Ideology: Neoconservative Publishers in Germany, 1890-1933*, provides additional historical data on Albert Langen Verlag [publishing house] and other independent publishers of the Weimar period.

Frederic Schwartz of University College London relates Benjamin's reading of Fuchs to Wölfflin, Riegl, and the Warburg Institute in "Walter Benjamin's Essay on Eduard Fuchs: An Art-Historical Perspective" (2006). This will be relevant in terms of how Benjamin begins to fold art historical discourse, which admittedly was a relatively new field, 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 of *Kulturgeschichte* (cultural history) promulgated by Aby Warburg. In Benjamin's estimation, that school of thought had the advantage of looking beyond the canon of high art, but it failed to take class struggle into account. Fuchs is certainly concerned with class struggle, despite claiming for himself the title of cultural historian, and this is what redeems his work in Benjamin's estimation. To regard the work of art dialectically, that is, as being held in tension between scholarship and political agitation, is essential for any materialist conception of history.

In "The Collector as Allegorist: Goods, Gods, and the Objects of History" (1996), Michael P. Steinberg of Brown University 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 is in tension with established theoretical, empiricist and historicist tendencies in art historical 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.

Liliane Weissberg (University of Pennsylvania School of Arts & Sciences) discusses Fuchs' work on the caricatural depiction of Jews in her 2002 essay "Eduard Fuchs und die Ökonomie der Karikatur" [Eduard Fuchs and the Economics of Caricature]. Although much of the essay is concerned with the theme of characterizations of Jews and Judaism, and especially with Fuchs' 1921 volume *Die Juden in der Karikatur* [The Jews in Caricature], it also provides an excellent discussion of his unique approach to combining images and text. Based on Fuchs' years of experience working for the satirical newspaper *Süddeutscher Postillon*, his books on cultural history employ images as a kind of hypertext, deliberately distributed throughout the book to act as both a reinforcement of and counterpoint to the ideas he expresses. This aspect of his presentation, according to Weissberg, was unfortunately overlooked by Benjamin and may help to redeem Fuchs' work in light of Benjamin's otherwise justifiable criticisms.

Finally, a particularly relevant article from 1976 comes from Luciana Zingarelli (Accademia di Belle Arti di Bari, Italy), entitled "Eduard Fuchs, vom militanten Journalismus zur Kulturgeschichte" [Eduard Fuchs, from militant journalism to cultural history]. In it she specifically addresses the scholarly turn in Fuchs' work between 1894–1901, tracing the origin of his newfound role as a

cultural historian in his editorial work. She also provides a succinct retelling of Fuchs' legal battles and the arguments employed by both the state prosecution and the defendant.

One item from this period that I will exclude is Terry Eagleton's discussion of Fuchs in his 1981 book on Walter Benjamin. In it, Eagleton perceives an inherent contradiction in the activity of collecting. He writes: "The collector releases things from the tyranny of traditional hierarchies into the free space of sheer contiguity, transforming a metaphorical relation between objects – this is valuable because it is like/unlike that – into one of simple metonymy."[9] He therefore views the collected object as divorced from both its use-value and its exchange value, but also as once again fetishized under a different textuality: "The collector, who levels things in one sense only to foreground their uniqueness in another, thus repeating the gesture of the very commodities he disdains, is a destroyer who himself offers a prime target for historical destruction."[10] According to this analysis, Fuchs challenges the textuality of art history, with its concepts of beauty, mimesis, and allegorical content, by examining the marginalized world of caricature; but he then re-inscribes these works with a narrative of political protest. However, Eagleton focuses on Fuchs' collecting at the expense of his writing, and thus misses the vital interaction between these two aspects of Fuchs' practice. He also ignores the metaphorical relations that exist within a collection, which are vital for the historical materialist.

---

[9] Terry Eagleton, *Walter Benjamin, or Towards a Revolutionary Criticism* (New York: Verso, 1981), p. 61.

[10] Ibid., p. 62.

I have also consulted several sources pertaining to a more general discussion of caricature, but which are still relevant to the 1848 period in Germany. The first of these is a 1967 article by W.A. Coupe of the University of Reading, "The German Cartoon and the Revolution of 1848," in which he demonstrates how German caricature flourished for the first time during the *Vormärz* period. Prior to 1848 German caricature tended to be conceptually unsophisticated, and as a medium it did not attract the best artists, who often remained anonymous. Such work as there was is therefore characterized by naïve drawing, vague concepts or excessive captioning. It is also much more crude and aggressive in voicing its protest. The March Revolution gave German caricature an impetus it had previously lacked, making wit and ridicule far more potent weapons. After the dissolution of the Frankfurt National Assembly in May of 1849, caricature moved from the furtively published broadsheet to the pages of regularly published journals, and it turned its attention from politics to society. But the political awakening of the German public in the months leading up to the March Revolution gave caricature the means to enter public consciousness and establish its own voice in the debates of the time, an impetus that had been experienced decades earlier in France and England.

In the same vein as Coupe, the prominent British art historian Ernst Gombrich provides a psychoanalytic discussion of caricature in a chapter of his 1963 book, *Meditations on a Hobby Horse*. Gombrich's mentor Ernst Kris was an associate of Freud, and although their work on art history is decidedly apolitical, it still provides some insights on the status of caricature as a field of study. All of

these writings cite examples of caricature from the *Vormärz* period that are found in Fuchs as well, and which can therefore act as a critical balance to his own interpretations.

A recently translated book by the late French-Israeli philosopher Stéphane Mosès, *The Angel of History*, links the "revolutionary time" of Benjamin (and of his contemporaries Franz Rosenzweig and Gershom Scholem) to Jewish Messianism. This and Uwe Steiner's 2010 book *Walter Benjamin: An Introduction to his Work and Thought*, have been helpful in their discussion of historical materialism and how Benjamin applies it to the discourse of art history. Understanding Benjamin's peculiar conception of historical materialism, and how it differs from what is expressed in the writings of Marx and Engels, is necessary for any critique of Benjamin's reading of Fuchs.

Susan Buck-Morss of Cornell University provides a valuable interpretation of Benjamin's *Arcades Project* in her 1989 book *The Dialectics of Seeing*, as well as in her more recent speech "Revolutionary Time: the vanguard and the avant-garde" for the first Benjamin Studies conference held in Amsterdam (2002). Her work will provide a fundamental grounding for my development 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 emotional reconciliation. Once again, the paramount question for Fuchs is the persuasive capacity of caricature. 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 in caricature itself, in the thinking that goes into its construction. To reconcile these concepts of the dialectical image is the task of my second chapter.

Finally, two books provide historical detail about the events of 1848. The first is Bruce Seymour's biography *Lola Montez: A Life* (1996). Seymour examines Montez' trials and tribulations during her time in Munich in great detail, with particular attention to the public perception of her activities and how they fed into the revolutionary fervour of the larger German public. The second is Oscar J. Hammen's seminal 1967 book, *The Red '48ers: Karl Marx and Friedrich Engels*. Objective in tone, Hammen traces the political developments throughout Germany in 1848/9, foregrounding the constant struggle between revolutionary and reactionary forces. Although he focuses on the activities of Marx and Engels in Köln, he also attends to the Frankfurt National Assembly, the Prussian government in Berlin, the unification question, the loss of Schleswig-Holstein, and of course the "comic opera" of events in Munich. I have relied on these two books for most historical data.

Only a few of the most popular works of Fuchs have ever been translated, and then only into French or occasionally Spanish. These are limited to *Die Karikatur der europäischen Völker*, *Der Frau in der Karikatur* [Women in

Caricature], and the *Illustrierte Sittengeschichte* [Illustrated History of Morals].

None of Fuchs' work has ever been translated into English, although for the

purpose of this thesis the relevant selections are not overly long. They include the

complete *1848 in der Karikatur*, portions of *Lola Montez in der Karikatur*, the

introductions to both volumes of *Die Karikatur der europäischen Völker*, and a

single chapter from each volume. *Lola Montez*, published six years after the first

monograph on 1848, is a larger companion to that work which examines the

events in Bavaria leading up to the revolution. Between the 1848 monograph and

the Lola Montez book, Fuchs published the two massive volumes of the

Europäischen Völker, which together constitute well over a million words and

over a thousand illustrations. The introductions to each volume give some

personal context and describe Fuchs' aims in undertaking the work, and the 1848

section of volume two is an expanded version of his initial essay on the subject.

Since these works are closely related and occur at the beginning of his career as

an independent author, I will limit my discussion of Fuchs to this period and

select examples of caricature that both he, and later scholars, have considered

historically significant.

As a result I will be excluding the bulk of Fuchs' later works (1905-1933).

These include additional volumes on caricature, each focusing on a specific theme

(women, Jews, the World War, and erotic caricature). His books on erotic art and

morality are also left out, as are his *catalogues raisonné* of the French artists

Daumier and Gavarni. Fuchs also loaned the use and reproduction rights of his

collection to other authors, most notably his second wife Grete (on their joint

collection of Chinese ceramics), Ernst Kreowski (on Wagner in caricature), and Alfred Kind (on the phenomenon of "petticoat government"). Fuchs' early journalistic archive and satirical poetry are also absent, as they are to be found almost exclusively in German archives.

Needless to say, there had already been much scholarly interest in caricature prior to Fuchs' time, and various tracts published in the decades prior to his *1848* monograph would have been familiar to him. In particular he himself mentions the works of Jules Champfleury, Arsène Alexandre and Thomas Wright (see appendix). These authors wrote straight-forward histories of print culture, and tended to focus their gaze either thematically or chronologically. One of Wright's books, for example, deals exclusively with images of George III, while Champfleury wrote several volumes divided by era: these include antiquity, the middle ages and Renaissance, and Second Empire France, among others.

Most of these works, excepting Alexandre, were published in a small format with illustrations greatly reduced in scale, as was more common in mid-nineteenth century publishing. By the turn of the century, however, the book trade in western Europe had grown extensively, especially in Germany. Larger-format books became more common, and often took the form of luxury editions sold exclusively by subscription. In this way authors could avoid confiscation and circumvent censorship, since technically the works were not being made available to the general public. In such volumes, historical caricatures could be reproduced, sometimes with colour plates, and this is the style of presentation that typifies Fuchs' published work after 1901. Those of his contemporaries who had also

turned their attention to caricature, such as Gustave Kahn, Georg Hermann, and

Cary von Karwath followed suit. One early adopter of this grander format, whose

major works appeared in Paris in the late 1880s, was John Grand-Carteret, whose

books on caricature are the closest antecedent to those of Fuchs. Fuchs speaks

favourably of Grand-Carteret's book on images of the Boer War in the second

volume of *Europäischen Völker*.[11] Nevertheless he also laments the fact that no

German – besides himself – had yet undertaken to examine the political role of

caricature.[12]

Historical Background

Eduard Fuchs was born January 31, 1870 in the small industrial town of

Göppingen in Baden-Württemberg in the south of Germany. He is remembered

today mostly as a Marxist scholar of culture and history, a writer, art collector,

and political activist. His father, who was a shopkeeper, died when Fuchs was

sixteen, at which time he began to work in Munich. Early in his life, the younger

Fuchs had already developed socialist and Marxist political convictions. In 1886

he joined the then-outlawed Socialist Workers' Party (a precursor of the modern

SPD, the German Social-Democratic Party). Fuchs eventually received a doctor of

law degree and practiced briefly as an attorney. In 1892 he became editor-in-chief

of the satiric journal *Süddeutscher Postillon* and later co-editor of the *Leipziger*

---

[11] Eduard Fuchs, *Die Karikatur der europäischen Völker vom Jahre 1848 bis zur Gegenwart* (Berlin: A. Hofmann, 1903), p. 464.

[12] Fuchs, *1848 in der Caricatur*, p. 5.

Volkszeitung [Leipzig People's Newspaper]. His inflammatory articles –

including one that accused Kaiser Wilhelm II of being a mass murderer – resulted

in occasional jail sentences. During his periods of confinement, Fuchs wrote

various social histories utilizing mass-produced images as one of his primary

sources. The first of these was his *Die Karikatur der europäischen Völker*, 1902,

quickly followed by a second volume.[13]

About this time he also moved to Berlin where he took over as editor for

Vorwärts, the daily newspaper of the Social Democratic Party. The following year

he began writing his magnum opus, the *Illustrierte Sittengeschichte*, an

examination of moral practice that ran to three volumes by 1912. While engaged

in this series, he also followed up his interest in caricature with a volume devoted

to the representation of women, *Die Frau in der Karikatur*, 1905. Another book

documenting the stereotypical representations of Jews appeared in 1921. Fuchs

travelled with the artist Max Slevogt to Egypt in 1914, shortly before the outbreak

of World War I. He was a pacifist during the war, and in the summer of 1917 he

met with the Bolsheviks in Stockholm. Officially he was there to negotiate an aid

package for Russians interned in Germany; unofficially, as an envoy of the

Spartacus League.[14] In the latter capacity he was then sent by Rosa Luxemburg to

interview Lenin on the establishment of the Third International, who agreed to put

---

[13] The first edition of volume one lists Hans Kraemer on the spine as co-author, although this name does not appear on the title page and is eliminated entirely in later editions. Kraemer had invited Fuchs to collaborate with him on the project while Fuchs served out his six-month prison sentence. However, Kraemer suddenly took ill and was unable to offer any significant contribution, whereupon Fuchs took on the entire task himself. Fuchs describes these circumstances in his foreword. Fuchs, *Die Karikatur der europäischen Völker vom Jahre 1848 bis zur Gegenwart*, p. vi.

[14] Weitz, p. 388.

him in charge of prisoner exchange with Germany; Fuchs was also among the German delegates at the Comintern in Berlin in 1919. That same year he also became a founding member of the German Communist Party (KPD). There he formed a close friendship with Franz Mehring and later became his literary executor, publishing his collected works in 1929. In 1928 however, he resigned from the Communist Party and joined the Communist Party Opposition (KPO), which he supported with a regular monthly contribution of 250-500 Marks.

Fuchs' interest in societal concerns in caricature eventually led to a research interest in Honoré Daumier. In 1927 Fuchs published a *catalogue raisonné* on the artist in five volumes. In 1933, following the Reichstag fire, Fuchs escaped with his wife to Paris where he continued to support his friends in the KPO. He remained there until his death on January 26, 1940, and was buried at the Père Lachaise cemetery, where Daumier and the fighters of the Paris Commune had also been laid to rest.

Fuchs' reception during his lifetime was often polarized between his defenders in liberal intellectual circles and constant legal scrutiny from German censorship authorities. Fuchs had become very well known throughout Germany by the twenties, and in France as well thanks to translations of some of his works. His fame was due in part to the controversy surrounding his numerous trials, but mostly to the enormous popularity of his books, which despite being printed exclusively for libraries and scholars generated substantial wealth for him. Ulrich Bach indicates that "The cultural liberalism of the Weimar Republic fostered some of his best publications […] and enabled him to live a comfortable life

surrounded by his exquisite collections."[15] In particular his *Die Karikatur der europäischen Völker* and the *Illustrierte Sittengeschichte* were both reprinted several times during his life. Book publishing in Germany was in its heyday, and collectors eagerly sought expensive editions and box sets as a mark of status. Book production in Germany had far exceeded that of other European nations for decades and continued to grow right up until 1913.[16] Furthermore, changing attitudes towards the acquisition and display of wealth encouraged the emergence of bibliophiles and connoisseurs, further legitimizing the extravagance of expensive luxury editions.[17] Publishers of every variety and inclination were to be found, some of whom went so far as to publish both liberal and antisemitic works simultaneously. Fuchs quickly established a relationship with the small Munich-based Albert Langen Verlag which lasted over thirty years.[18]

In 1928 Fuchs moved into a large villa in the upscale Berlin neighbourhood of Zehlendorf, where he could put his collections on permanent display. The house became a much-visited site for interested scholars and intellectual figures, and prior to 1933 he even took steps to transform the

---

[15] 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*, ed. Lynne Tatlock (Rochester, NY: Camden House, 2010), p. 302.

[16] Lynne Tatlock, "Introduction: The Book Trade and 'Reading Nation' in the Long Nineteenth Century" in *Publishing Culture and the "Reading Nation"*, p. 4.

[17] Matt Erlin, "How to Think About Luxury Editions in Late Eighteenth- and Early Nineteenth-Century Germany" in *Publishing Culture and the "Reading Nation"*, p. 26.

[18] In May 1931 Albert Langen Verlag was saved from bankruptcy by the Hanseatic Publishing Institute, which wanted to use its reputation as an important literary publisher to promote its own antisemitic agenda. The purchase price was 500 000 Marks. Gary D. Stark, *Entrepreneurs of Ideology: Neoconservative Publishers in Germany, 1890-1933* (Chapel Hill, NC: University of North Carolina Press, 1981), p. 28-29.

residence into a real museum.[19] His collections functioned on a far more

sophisticated level than that of the *Wunderkammer*, the seventeenth-century

chamber of curiosities: entire rooms were dedicated to paintings and drawings of

erotica and caricature, as well as anonymously produced Chinese ceramics. These

rooms were named for figures important to Fuchs: the Daumier Room and the

Slevogt Room, for example. Works on paper numbered in the tens of thousands,

and it was largely these that were later destroyed by the Nazis, while more

valuable paintings and antiques were auctioned.

However, in the same year that Fuchs acquired the villa he was called

before a court in Munich to answer charges of disseminating obscene material. At

his trial Max Horkheimer testified in his defence, and Fuchs was acquitted on the

grounds that the images reproduced in his books, while of a "sensitive" nature,

were not meant to be consumed as pornography, but were presented as evidence

for his "scientific studies" of caricature and erotica. Although the judgement was

in his favour, his work was forbidden, as usual, from being sold to the general

public. An earlier judgement had even stated that "Women and children should be

principally excluded" from exposure to such morally threatening material.[20] Such

books could therefore only be purchased by libraries and scholars through

subscription, a method referred to as 'private publishing.'

By 1933 Fuchs had come to the attention of the Nazi party. In September,

less than a year after Hitler was appointed chancellor, the newly-formed

---

[19] Luciana Zingarelli, "Eduard Fuchs, vom militanten Journalismus zur Kulturgeschichte" in
Ästhetik und Kommunikation – Beitrage zur politischen Erziehung, vol. 7, no. 25 (1976), p. 50.

[20] Zingarelli, p. 47.

Reichskulturkammer [Imperial Chamber of Culture] ordered the confiscation of Fuchs' art collections. He fled to France with his second wife Grete, who was Jewish, and took with him only a few valuable oil paintings by Daumier. The sale of these six works – the pride of his collection and also the most valuable pieces – allowed him to maintain a modest apartment in Paris for his remaining years. Meanwhile, despite terse negotiations conducted by letter, the Nazi government steadfastly refused to release his collections and eventually auctioned their contents.[21] His last major work to be published, *Die großen Meister der Erotik* [Great Masters of the Erotic], had appeared in 1930, but due to his age, failing eyesight and reduced circumstances he was no longer able to undertake significant research.

While in Paris, Fuchs was interviewed several times by Walter Benjamin for an essay that was to eventually appear in the *Zeitschrift für Sozialforschung* in late 1937. The assignment was given to Benjamin by Horkheimer, who had long wanted "a good report" on Fuchs to appear in the journal. Horkheimer's association with Fuchs dates back to the founding of the Institute, which had been funded by the fortune of Felix Weil in 1924. Weil, the Argentinian-born son of a wealthy grain merchant, had become a Marxist during his education in Germany, and he named Fuchs as the financial executor of the his estate.[22] Fuchs also donated over 20 000 documents from his own collection to help build the

---

[21] Ulrich Bach summarizes the auction contents as "481 artefacts 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, are lost and were quite possibly burned. Bach, p. 298.

[22] Fuchs' qualification as a doctor of law allowed him to fulfil such roles on occasion, although he did not pursue a legal career. Weitz, p. 413-14.

Institute's archives, and maintained a close association with Horkheimer thereafter. Therefore, given the rapidly deteriorating situation in Germany during the 1930s, it is easy to see how important it was for Horkheimer to do justice to his aging friend. Benjamin, on the other hand, was far from inspired by Fuchs' material, complaining bitterly about the assignment in various letters, and he postponed undertaking 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.[23]

---

[23] 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. I hope you will be getting the printed article before the year is out." *The Correspondence of Walter Benjamin and Gershom Scholem 1932-1940*, ed. Gershom Scholem, trans. Gary Smith and Andre Lefevre (New York: Schocken Books, 1989), p. 193.

I. 1848 in Caricature

Fuchs' study of caricature of the March Revolution in Germany marks a turning point in his career. In 1898, 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*. 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*. It is particularly significant in Fuchs' oeuvre because it represents his first foray into the world of private publishing, following six years of political journalism. The monograph was followed by a companion volume in 1904, *Ein vormärzliches Tanzidyll: Lola Montez in der Karikatur*. This book examines the reactions in caricature to the controversial mistress of Ludwig I, King of Bavaria. Originally from Ireland, Montez was a dancer and courtesan who exerted an unprecedented influence over Ludwig. In particular, her well-meaning attempts to introduce liberal reform were greeted with open hostility by the public, who saw her from the start not only as an unwelcome foreigner but as a woman of ill repute attempting to rise above her station.[1] As a project, *1848* is closely related to the later volume on Lola Montez, as well as to Fuchs' two-volume history of European caricature, all of which came out in the few years between 1898 and 1904. It also cannot be overemphasised how dominant the criticism of Lola Montez had become in German caricature of the *Vormärz* period. The situation in Bavaria between Ludwig and Montez had

---

[1] Bruce Seymour, *Lola Montez: A Life* (New Haven, CT: Yale University Press, 1996), p. 106-8.

become a flashpoint for the whole of Germany, and few Bavarian caricatures of the period fail to reflect this. Montez' rapid fall from grace represented an early gain for revolutionary sentiment against the power of hereditary monarchy. In fact this drama was rivalled in German caricature only by 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 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."[2]

Although Fuchs' first attempt at private publishing was rather tentative – only thirty copies of the *1848* monograph were printed – it was intended for an different kind of audience than satirical journals. Instead of the broadest possible readership among the bourgeois and the working class, books on cultural history were generally made available only through subscription to the publisher. Such texts were aimed at a more culturally literate and affluent audience, one that could afford to collect expensive editions on topics which the general public might find too esoteric, or which government censors might object to. 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 values of caricature. Fuchs described caricature as a weapon in class struggle, and

---

[2] Oscar J. Hammen, *The Red '48ers: Karl Marx and Friedrich Engels* (New York: Charles Scribner's Sons, 1969), p. 185-6.

spoke of its ability to uplift the morality of the masses by liberating them from "debilitating prejudices."[3] His approach to satire 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 *Volkskunst*, a means of expression of the masses, and therefore as a "cultural factor of the first order."[4]

The March Revolution stands for Fuchs in an analogical relationship to his own time, both politically and artistically. It is significant that he 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:

> 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;

---

[3] Fuchs, *1848 in der Caricatur* (München: Max Ernst, 1898), p. 28.

[4] Ibid.

these are signs of inward preparation for such times.[5]

1848 was an important year both within and outside Germany; 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 including universal manhood suffrage and Jewish emancipation. It was also a major turning point for German caricature. Having lagged far behind the caricature of France and England in both its technical and conceptual sophistication, German caricature was suddenly emboldened during the *Vormärz* period as a means of political satire and protest. Once the reaction had reasserted control, caricature began to move from the sporadically and anonymously produced broadsheet to the pages of regularly appearing journals and newspapers. It also changed its focus to 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.

---

[5] "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., p. 28.

Many parallels can be found between 1848 and 1898 that would have been obvious to Fuchs' readers, without requiring him to point them out. The political situation in Germany had remained thoroughly autocratic since the disbanding of the Frankfurt National Assembly in early 1849, despite the eventual unification of the German states in 1871. In the immediate aftermath of the March Revolution, during which the monarchy slowly reasserted its control, an effective democratic parliament could not be established, and 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 region 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 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 clearly 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 distracted by his young mistress, the self-styled "Spanish" dancer Lola Montez, that when told by his Jesuit ministers that either she or they had to go, he unhesitatingly chose the latter. Ironically, this further inflamed public opinion against Montez, even though she was indirectly responsible for the dismissal of a hated and powerful Jesuit bureaucracy which was never again able to re-establish itself. Public protest was shaped, not against

29

the philandering King who was still generally well-liked, but against Montez and against the arbitrary and capricious nature of autocratic rule. The frequent and sometimes violent student demonstrations in Munich fed the revolutionary fervour of the *Vormärz* period. W.A. Coupe neatly sums up 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.[6]

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.

---

[6] Coupe, W.A., "The German Cartoon and the Revolution of 1848" in *Comparative Studies in Society and History: an international quarterly*, vol. XI, no. 2 (The Hague: Mouton & Co., January 1967), p. 140.

All these events were still well-known to the German public in Fuchs'

day. They had been narrated by Wilhelm Blos[7] in his illustrated book *Die*

Deutsche Revolution of 1893, which was so popular that it was reprinted in 1921

and again in 1923. Fuchs makes a strong ideological connection to these events by

reviewing them on their fiftieth anniversary.

Fuchs as an Analogical Historian

Starting with his *1848* monograph and continuing in his later work, Fuchs

shifts his criticism of autocracy from direct attacks to analogical comparisons. His

purpose in doing so 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 more extreme

punishment of his *lèse majesté* offences may have provided an impetus for him to

take a more objective and mature tone with his readers. Therefore in *1848 in der*

Caricatur he makes only an implicit criticism of the people and institutions of his

own day, leaving it to the reader's imagination to fill in the details. This

represents a significant change to his writing style and to his approach to

caricature.

The desire to avoid punishment, however, is not the only reason for such a

change. As a politically active Marxist, Fuchs would have wanted to convince his

readers of the historical materialist intepretation of history, its dialectical

---

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

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 acts to justify the status quo of power relations, Fuchs needed an approach that would not simply replicate a competing narrative of his own, which would be decidedly undialectical. The use of analogy presented an opportunity to critique the class struggle of his own time by examining a similar situation in the past.

As a rule, analogical arguments depend on inductive rather than deductive reasoning, and therefore do not generate new knowledge – at least from a scientific standpoint (they are *ana*-logical, or not logical). In purely scientific endeavours, arguments from analogy are used to form testable hypotheses rather than to draw conclusions. No causative or observed link can be established in this manner, 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 – and this is what makes it such a powerful rhetorical device in other fields. 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.

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. Analogical argumentation asks 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 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. Of course,

historical materialism is also a causal theory, but it acknowledges the presence of

other influences, emphasizing the primacy of economic forces.

In Fuchs' case the analogy between the March Revolution of 1848 and the

suffocating political situation of 1898 is largely implied by circumstance.

Certainly the significance of the revolution's anniversary would have been

immediately apparent to his readers. But it is also at this point in his career that he

begins to address a different audience. Fuchs' early journalistic work is

distributed widely to the masses across class lines, while his later books are

marketed to a narrower, but better educated, bourgeois audience. Furthermore, as

Benjamin notes in his essay on Fuchs, his activity as a collector also begins in

earnest around this time, and it 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."[8] Fuchs' work is redeemed for Benjamin by

its inclusion of a materialist element; the activity of collecting being not merely

one of accumulation, but of organization and interpretation. Benjamin points out

---

[8] Benjamin, "Eduard Fuchs, Collector and Historian," in Andrew Arato, Eike Gebhardt (eds.), *The Essential Frankfurt School* Reader (New York: Continuum, 1988), p. 234. I will be discussing historical materialism and dialectics in more detail in chapter two.

that the very concept of culture is a problematic unity, one which "carries a fetishistic trait" and "appears in a reified form."[9] In contrast to the totalizing tendencies of cultural history (or even of Marxism itself), he prioritizes individual experience [*jeweilige Erfahrung*]. The flashes of insight provided by material fragments 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 linearity 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 Wölfflin, whose lectures he had attended in Munich. In an essay from 1931 on the Viennese School of art history (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."[10] Like the literary fragment, Benjamin privileged individual works of art as indicative of what Riegl named the *Kunstwollen*, a historically and culturally specific structure of perception. The largely anonymous and collective productions, to which both Benjamin and Fuchs were drawn, breached the boundaries of particular

---

[9] Ibid., p. 233.

[10] Walter Benjamin, "Rigorous Study of Art: On the First Volume of the *Kunstwissenschaftliche Forschungen*," trans. Thomas Y. Levin, *October* no. 47 (Winter 1988), p. 90.

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 into account both the work's pre-history and post-history; 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 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."[11] The object's relation to the past is foregrounded, and the individual experience of the object finds its meaning for the present. Therefore, Fuchs discovers the means by which he can 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.[12]

But the object does not remain alienated and reified. Instead, the object's detachment from the culture and conditions in which it is produced allow the

---

[11] Ibid., p. 227.

[12] Ibid., p. 251.

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 also to speak of oneself. Furthermore, "…ownership is the most intimate relationship that one can have to objects. Not that they come alive in him; it is he who lives in them."[13] 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."[14] 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"[15] 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 private collection in print (and by opening his home to interested scholars), Fuchs brings together the caricature's original reception into direct contact with its contemporary reception as a collected historical artefact on display. He recontextualizes the work as historical evidence for a scholarly audience. In this dual task of collecting and display Benjamin sees a pioneering approach to the materialist consideration of art.

The activity of collecting is related to the principles of montage and

---

[13] "Unpacking My Library: A Talk about Book Collecting" in *Illuminations*, ed. Hannah Arendt (New York: Schocken Books, 1968), p. 66. First published in *Literarische Welt*, 1931.

[14] Benjamin, "Eduard Fuchs, Collector and Historian," p. 251.

[15] Ibid., p. 250.

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 writings:

> 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."[16]

Quotation, according to Hannah Arendt, 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

---

[16] Susan Buck-Morss, *The Dialectics of Seeing: Walter Benjamin and the Arcades Project* (Cambridge, MA: MIT Press, 1989), p. 67.

within themselves that which is presented."[17] 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.

Taking its cue from montage and quotation, allegory also interrupts the

narrative of historicism. In his 1996 book chapter on Benjamin's Fuchs essay,

Michael Steinberg examines 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

actual collectors, becomes for him as well an allegory of the allegorist, of the

historian as allegorist."[18] In Benjamin's words, there is a similar "state of unrest"

between the roles of collector and 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

---

[17] "Introduction: Walter Benjamin 1892–1940" in *Illuminations*, ed. Hannah Arendt (New York: Schocken Books, 1968), p. 39.

[18] Michael P. Steinberg, "The Collector as Allegorist: goods, gods, and the objects of history" in *Walter Benjamin and the Demands of History*, ed. Michael P. Steinberg (Ithaca, NY: Cornell University Press, 1996), p. 88-89.

an allegorist, and in every allegorist a collector.[19]

Benjamin's concept of allegory is as a mode of thinking, but in its traditional usage it 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*[20] (fig. 1), one of the sixteen broadsheets Fuchs reproduces in his *1848* monograph (and the only one he includes which addresses the situation in Bavaria) there are multiple levels of allegory. Lola Montez, taking the place of Satan, is driven from her high social position into the jaws of Hell, as the student group Alemannia, 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

[19] Walter Benjamin, "Convolute H: The Collector" in *The Arcades Project*, trans. Howard Eiland and Kevin McLaughlin (Harvard, MA: The Belknap Press of Harvard University Press, 1999), p. 211.

[20] 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 October 17, 2013, http://www.getty.edu/research/ exhibitions_events/exhibitions/display_arthistory/epilogue.html.
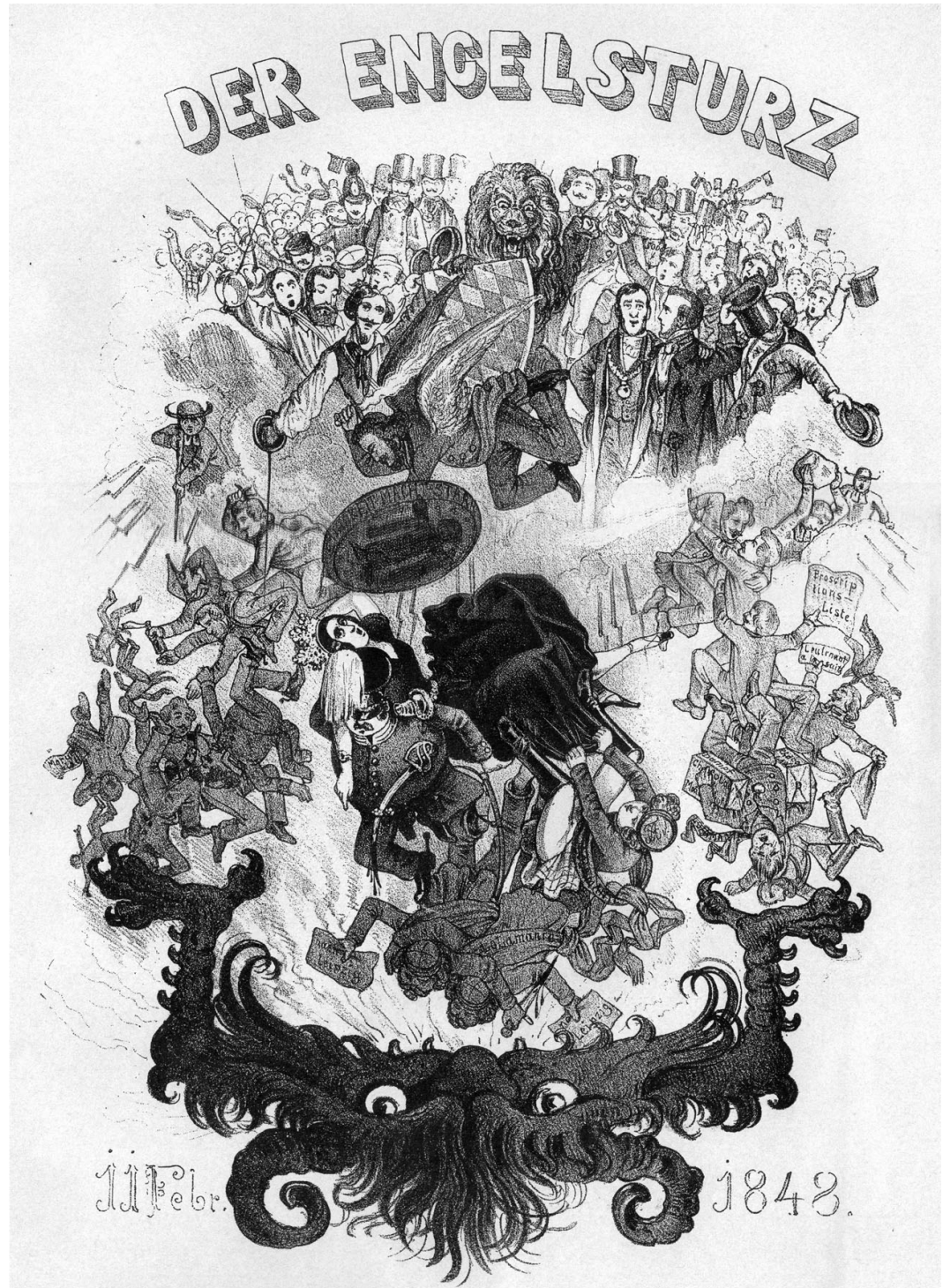
Fig. 1:   *The Fall of the Angels*, anonymous. (Munich, February 9, 1848.)

an always faithful stooge to her wishes, into the jaws of hell, the likewise

expelled Allemanen clinging to her skirts.[21]

Deciphering this image requires knowledge of Rubens' painting and the

allegorical imagery it contains from Christian mythology. Furthermore, it requires

familiarity with the players 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 Alemannia, her honorary student guard, also make

frequent appearances in caricature and are commonly depicted literally supporting

her, as cherubs might carry Venus, along with the identifying attributes of their

office (swords, soldier's uniforms, etc.). The lion of Bavaria sits among the

university administration, which had shut the institution down the very week of

the caricature's appearance in order to circumvent any further violence; a man

positioned as the archangel Michael,[22] with flaming sword and a shield bearing

the emblem and motto of the city of Munich, leads the charge.[23] Jesuits also

---

[21] "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*, p. 21.

[22] The identity of this individual, if there is one, does not appear to have been recorded. He is likely one of the leaders of the rioting students.

[23] 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, p. 195.

appear, despite their reputation, among the crowds of the good, since they too were against Lola. (Interestingly, the King himself, although a major player in these events, 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 depiction to a certain extent, without recognizing the Biblical analogy which informs us, for example, that Montez is like the devil, the Alemannia like demons, and the rioting student body 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. 2), another allegorical image, the figure of Ludwig (naked, winged and carrying the bow and quiver of Cupid) is made to appear far more elderly and fragile than he actually was. This particular liberty was frequently taken by artists and was quickly cemented as one of Ludwig's attributes in caricature. But the supposedly aged 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. Emphasis is therefore placed on their age difference by exaggerating the King's appearance. Furthermore, in mythology Cupid is Venus' child, so the reversal of relative ages heightens the sense of ridicule. Montez, carrying her characteristic riding crop, is cast as the goddess Venus, and she is held aloft by

42

Die Apotheofe der Lola Montez

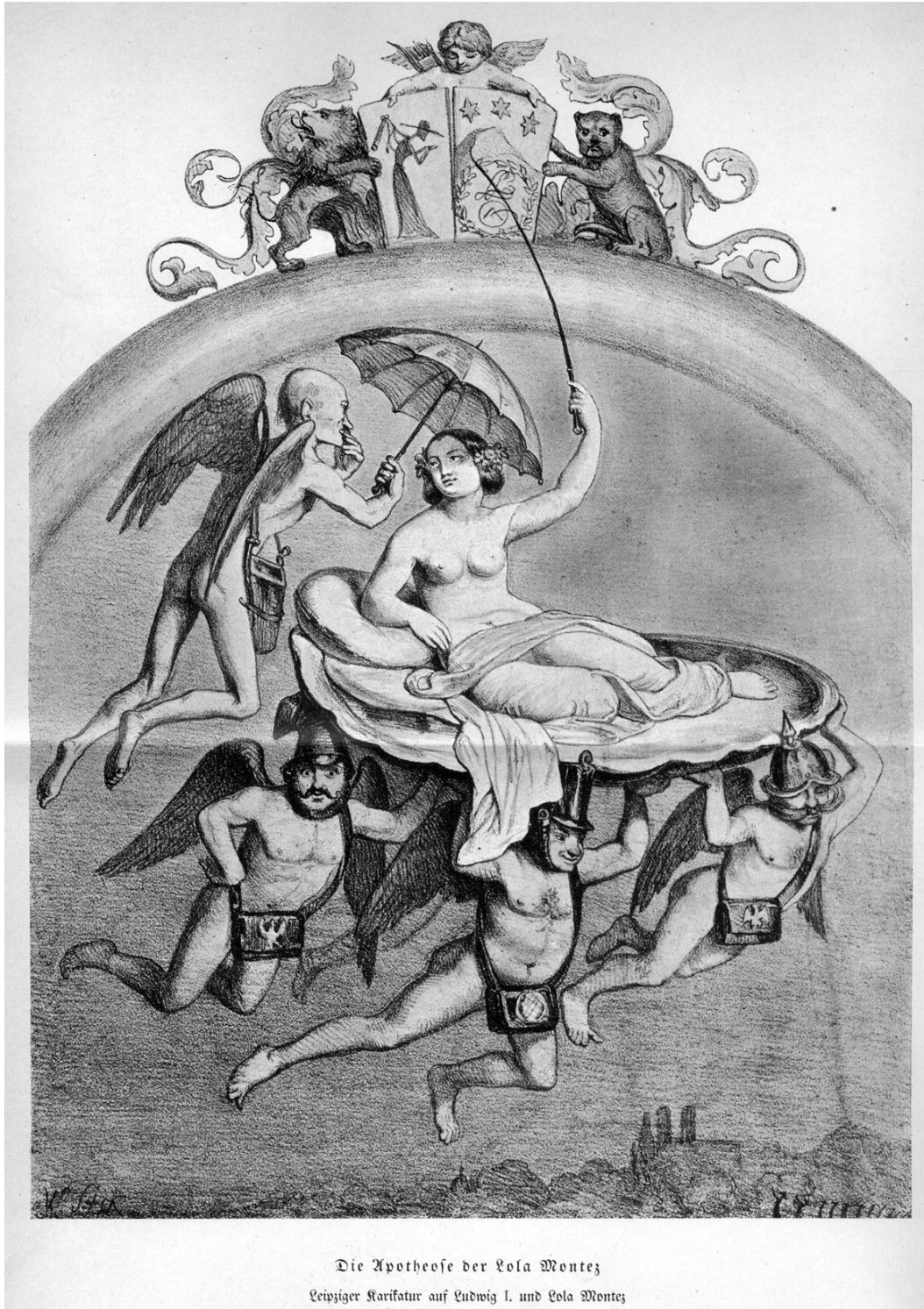Leipziger Karifatur auf Ludwig I. und Lola Montez

Fig. 2:   *The Apotheosis of Lola Montez*, anonymous. (Leipzig, n.d.)

three cherubs, the Alemmanen 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 3 (*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, who stands before the distinctive 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 position.[24] The emperor was so incensed over this caricature that he immediately reinstated image censorship, but the caricature remained popular and even reappeared later in the year in the journal *Der Leuchtthurm* [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 profile of the distinctive palace of Sanssouci in Potsdam identify Frederick the Great. Only the identity of the figures is required to understand the image and

---

[24] To have "big shoes to fill," or to "step in another's shoes," is an idiom unkown in German. Instead, they would say "to be in another's place." However, to "follow in another's footsteps" is an idiom that German and English share. Given the emphasis on footprints in the caricature, this would appear to be the intended meaning.

Fig. 3: *Such a one always follows!*, Heinrich Wilhelm Storck. (Leipzig, 1848)

its caption, and the artist provides plenty of clues for this purpose.

Analogy and allegory can work together in varying degrees to provide clues for understanding. In the first two examples, they are combined to create a more layered context for interpretation, while they are not present in the far more literal depiction of figure 3. Analogy is more obvious than allegory, since it does not require specific 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 3 is that Friedrich Wilhelm IV is unable to live up to the example of Frederick the Great. We could also say that he is raising a toast to a revered ancestor, or that his highly publicized attempt to restore Sanssouci is 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 idiomatic reference to "following in one's footsteps." The analogy here is to a well-known figure of speech. In this sense we can say that while allegory is merely exegetic, requiring explanation (and therefore represents an "eternal" image of the past), analogy 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.[25] 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 careful layout of images, and the underlying activity of collecting, are what together make an allegorist of Fuchs. Nostalgic reflection, the "contemplative attitude" of the historicist, was not his primary motivation for collecting or writing. What Fuchs wanted to accomplish above all was to confront

---

[25] Benjamin forms 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 published in 1928 as *Ursprung des Deutschen Trauerspiels* [Origins of German Tragic Drama].

his own contemporary audience with this historical material, both in the form of reproductions in his books and displayed in the museum setting of his home.

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 artefacts, relates directly to materialism itself, whose basic tenet (which Engels locates in the philosophies of Bacon, Hobbes and Locke)[26] is that knowledge is generated through the senses alone. 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."[27] 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."[28] Fuchs' collecting therefore combines materialist practice with allegorical – and analogical – thinking.

---

[26] Engels, "On Historical Materialism" in Karl Marx and Friedrich Engels, *Basic Writings on Politics and Philosophy*, ed. Lewis S. Feuer (Garden City, NY: Anchor Books, 1959), p. 47-49.

[27] Steinberg, p. 96.

[28] Ibid., p. 115.

Fuchs is 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 is 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 him

to task for his poor application of dialectical thought throughout his career, and

for repeatedly falling into the trap of historicism. He makes three fundamental

criticisms of Fuchs, all of which are on the surface perfectly justifiable. 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 is even more apparent in Fuchs' later works on erotica, where

Benjamin additionally notes the lack of influence by Freudian psychoanalysis.

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 end point as

well. The subsequent history of a work's reception (a history in which Fuchs

plays an active part as a collector and writer) is therefore not taken into account.

The confrontation of the historical object with the present, which Benjamin

foregrounds in his own methodology, is therefore 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.[29]

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."[30] 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 dialectical.

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."[31] 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. Benjamin therefore sees Fuchs' books as taking part in the very class divisions he wishes to eliminate: "…its greatness lies in its reaction to this state of affairs; its problematic lies in its participation in it."

---

[29] Fuchs' historical materialism likely evolves over time much as his politics do, although that is beyond the scope of this project. In his essay, Benjamin discusses the entirety of Fuchs' output without regard to this development.

[30] Ibid., p. 248.

[31] Ibid., p. 230.

Despite Benjamin's criticisms, Fuchs remains an important figure for Marxist art history. His focus on caricature and erotica reflects a concern for marginalized cultural productions. As such, he takes a cue from practitioners such as Aby Warburg and Alois Riegl, who had expanded the field of material considered by the discipline. At the same time however, these cultural historians – as they 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."[32] 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. 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

---

[32] 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*, ed. Andrew Hemingway (Ann Arbor, MI: Pluto Press, London, 2006), p. 215-6.

measuring it against the historical realities it purports to represent, that is, it stops short of ideology critique germane for the Marxist tradition…"[33]

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. For example, one of his contemporaries, Georg Hermann, describes far more allegorical detail than Fuchs in *Der Engelsturz* (fig. 1), even if only in a purely historicist/nostalgic frame. Furthermore, Hermann claims that Fuchs' choice of subject matter is inappropriate for his arguments:

> 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. 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.[34]

Hermann himself does not even mention the revolution of 1848 or its Jubilee

---

[33] Ibid., p. 217.

[34] "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. 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." Georg Hermann, *Die deutsche Karikatur im XIX Jahrhundert* (Bielefeld und Leipzig: Velhagen & Klasing, 1901), p. 6-7.

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.

Fuchs reproduces a great multitude of images in all of his books, placing historical caricatures in the framework of a scientific analysis. It was important for him to include as many reproductions as possible, even if he did not have room to discuss them all. As a typical example, the first survey volume of *Die Karikatur der europäischen Völker* included 500 black and white images as well as 60 colour plates – and these had been selected from among 68 000 pieces.[35] Fuchs was also careful not to unintentionally duplicate any image, even in subsequent publications. But this is not to say that his books were primarily portfolios of images with an accompanying historical narrative, as with the work of Georg Hermann and other, mostly French historians of caricature (see appendix). Instead, image and text form an interwoven hypertext in Fuchs' books. Images appear scattered seemingly at random throughout the body of text, and are a constant reminder of the topic under discussion. Often an image is referred to many pages before or after its appearance, if at all, which necessitates a constant flipping back and forth as one reads. It is a very deliberate way to engage the reader. Furthermore, the images form a kind of visual essay that runs in tandem with the text, sometimes in agreement and at other times in counterpoint. Liliane Weissberg, in her 2002 article on Fuchs, examines the relationship between his

---

[35] Fuchs, *Die Karikatur der europäischen Völker vom Jahre 1848 bis zur Gegenwart*, p. vi. It is unclear if this represents the total size of his collection at the time, or merely of the relevant material.

images and text: "…Fuchs dispensed with current illustrations, and in his search for truth or authenticity in his texts attaches historical images to carry his argument. Thereby Fuchs' essays do not analyze these images, but instead oddly parallel them, 'accompany' and refer to them…"[36] In other volumes, where the writing was left to another author (such as *Richard Wagner in der Karikatur* from 1907, written by Ernst Kreowski) Fuchs does not merely open his collections to another scholar's use, but himself carefully selects the images to be included, and chooses how they will be laid out. One might almost say that he prefers to construct his argument visually, writing with images. Thomas Huonker, in his 1985 doctoral dissertation, also notes that Fuchs was deeply involved in the page-by-page layout of his books. Image and text were precisely balanced, to the extent of ensuring that every full-page plate was followed by a full page of text.[37]

In *1848 in der Caricatur*, the essay portion preceding the sixteen plates is filled with vignettes and other caricatures, normally at a scale reduced 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. 4) by Charles Philipon.[38] There are also several images commissioned for the publication, including a decorative chapter heading incorporating the year 1848,

---

[36] Liliane Weissberg, "Eduard Fuchs und die Ökonomie der Karikatur", *Babylon*, vol. 20 (2002), p. 116.

[37] Thomas Huonker, *Revolution, Moral & Kunst. Eduard Fuchs: Leben und Werk* (Zürich: Limmat Verlag 1985), p. 449-50.

[38] 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.

and a frontispiece featuring a rooster (possibly an reference to wakening, although Fuchs does not mention it at all). The first historical image appears on the colophon page (fig. 5) but is not referred to 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, and are likely influenced by Fuchs' 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. Images are used as illustrations, as evidence, as a running argument parallel to the text, and even as decoration, producing a kind 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."[39] Looking and reading are thus combined, and the historicist tendency of writing is countered by the individual experience of seeing. This practice of juxtaposition is also in keeping with the activity of the collector. In his 1921 volume *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
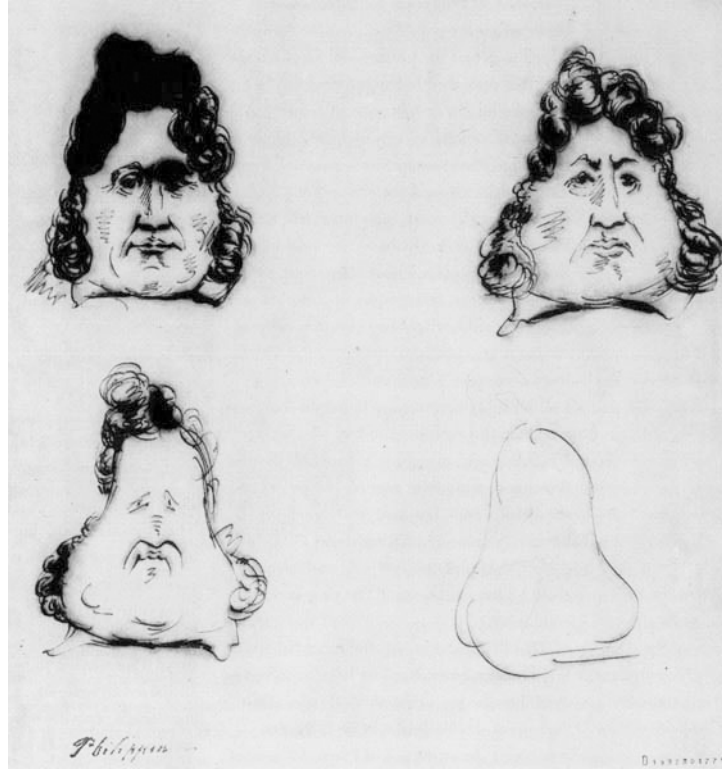
---

[39] Weissberg, p. 117.

Fig. 4: *The Metamorphosis of King Louis Philippe into a pear*, Charles Philipon. (Paris, 1831)

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

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.[40]

---

[40] "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

In other words, Fuchs has two competing ambitions in employing montage: first, he wants to create an aesthetically pleasing object within the conventions of the German book industry; more significantly, he wishes to orchestrate a visual element that functions in tandem with his writing.

One can therefore argue, against Benjamin, that Fuchs does in fact present a dialectical argument, but that this is only clear when one takes into account the visual presentation of his books, and not by isolating attention to the content of the written text. A dialectical method may in fact be present because there is an encounter between the historical object (of 1848) and a contemporary audience (of 1898), a diachronic re-presentation of caricature in an entirely new context. 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."[41] Benjamin states 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

---

illustrieren soll, sondern daß der Text den Bilderreichtum begründen soll. Unter diesen Unständen 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* (München: Albert Langen, 1921), p. iv.

[41] Buck-Morss, p. 219.

directed towards a consciousness of the present which explodes the continuum of history."[42] This "ur-history," the origins of the present, is what Fuchs presents in his unique presentation of image and text.

As Benjamin repeatedly comments throughout his writings, the primary task of historical materialism is to construct an alternative to historicism. This alternative reveals the changeability of history, and is thus a method as well as a politics. Fuchs strives precisely for this alternative after the initial experiment of *1848 in der Caricatur*. In the Fuchs essay, Benjamin derides the pioneering historian Leopold von Ranke for his attempt to grasp the past "how it really was,"[43] explaining that the historical materialist shows how the past exists for us today, as a "unique experience." Fuchs takes the objects of history (or its material artefacts) and interprets them, allegorically and analogically, in opposition to the accepted narratives that have been handed down by the official history books, narratives written by the victors in class struggle. He sees caricature as a voice raised against this victorious history, the voice of the oppressed, the alienated, the disenfranchised. As such, caricature plays a significant participatory role in political life, and occupies the public consciousness at least as much as the grand narratives of approved histories, as well as those of history painting or official newspapers. Fuchs' practice is further related to a materialist history of art in that

---

[42] Benjamin, "Eduard Fuchs, Collector and Historian," p. 227.

[43] Benjamin mentions Ranke only in passing, in reference to Fuchs' decidedly undialectical approach to reception. Ranke, clearly a historicist in his reactionary treatment of history, was a frequent target of Marxists. Oscar Hammen notes that Marx himself "seemed unaware of, or untouched by, the revolution that was going on in Berlin University in the field of historical study and criticism where Leopold von Ranke had introduced the seminar method. It is not surprising that Ranke's aim to picture the past as it was, with no attempt to distil guidance and inspiration for the future, did not appeal to a Marx who was falling under the influence of Hegelian philosophy. Ranke's method ran counter to the Hegelian dialectic…" Hammen, p. 15.

caricature embodies a dialectic of cultural reflection in tension with popular

resistance grounded in the notion of class struggle, a notion I will examine in

greater detail in the following chapter. Caricature has therefore been (and

remains) revealing, and through it an image of the past can be constructed through

a process of deconstruction and reconstruction. This image of the past, which

Benjamin calls the *dialectical image*, continues to provide new insights today, just

as it did for Fuchs.

II. The Dialectical Image

Before we can discuss the dialectical image in greater detail, we must first understand what is meant by dialectic itself. For Hegel, dialectical thinking is essential for the pursuit of truth; it is a method of argumentation by which false consciousness (or the unconscious working of ideology) can be overcome, or negated, to achieve a better understanding of the relationship between the self and the world. Freedom – overcoming alienation – cannot be achieved without a *true* consciousness, one which exhibits the "dialectical movement" of Sense-certainty, Perception and Understanding (the thesis, antithesis, and synthesis of consciousness). "Consciousness itself is the *absolute dialectical unrest* [sic], this medley of sensuous and intellectual representations"[1] which, through the negative movement of dialectics, achieves true consciousness. Phenomenologically, true consciousness cannot come from within as the result of self-actualization; rather, it *is* only through reciprocal recognition of the Self and the Other; through recognition of the other qua recogniz*ing* subject.[2] It is therefore a synthesis of recognition and being recognized, in which the contradictions between Self and Other are resolved. As a way of thinking, dialectics distinguishes itself from what it thins about, rather than effacing "its own relationship to objective reality."[3] Negation is therefore self-conscious, aware of itself nad its relation to the world.

Marx takes the negative movement of dialectics and applies it to the

---

[1] Georg Wilhelm Friedrich Hegel, *Phenomenology of Spirit*, trans. A.V. Miller (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1977), p. 124.

[2] Ibid., p. 110.

[3] Ibid., p. 124.

historical process, specifically through his understanding of historical materialism. This formulation posits political and legal consciousness as a superstructure based on economic relations. These in turn are based on the material conditions of production. Changes to these underlying conditions (which come about periodically as a result of competition, scientific discovery, or technical innovation) are therefore the motivating force of historical movement; as the material conditions of production change over time, they create new property relations in conflict with existing relations, or with the ruling class. Only through revolution could these contradictions be resolved to achieve synthesis.

To take a well-known example, the introduction of the horse collar to Europe from China during the middle ages resulted in an increase of grain production, from subsistence to surplus levels. With this basic need now met and exceeded, the conditions for greater specialization of labour and the rise of a merchant class were created, conditions which challenged the power of the established feudal system through a redistribution of wealth. Engels traces these developments as they played out in Germany in his 1850 book *The Peasant War in Germany*. In the early sixteenth century, a new and growing burgher class found itself caught in a bitter and prolonged conflict between the reactionary feudal princes and an increasingly subjugated agricultural peasant class. This nascent bourgeoisie found itself tied to the feudal lords by credit, and to the peasantry by a shared struggle for increased freedom. Engels writes: "The German peasant of that day has this in common with the present-day proletarian that his share in the products of labour was limited to a subsistence minimum

60

necessary for his maintenance and the propagation of the peasant race."[4]

The German bourgeoisie thus felt itself being pulled in opposite directions, on the one hand favouring liberal freedoms which the peasants also wanted, and on the other hand wanting to align themselves with a reactionary government in order to secure their own tenuous position against a large mass of labourers. Because of this they were unreliable allies to the peasants and were easily persuaded to abandon them on the battlefield, in return for minor concessions. Engels portrays this class betrayal as analogous to the revolution of 1848, and his comparison is worth quoting at length:

Here also the analogy with the movement of 1848–50 leaps to the eye. In 1848, as in the Peasant War, the interests of the opposition classes conflicted and each acted on its own. The bourgeoisie, much too developed to suffer any longer the feudal and bureaucratic absolutism, was, however, not as yet powerful enough to subordinate the claims of other classes to its own interests. The proletariat, much too weak to count on a rapid passage through the bourgeois period and on an immediate conquest of power, had already learned too well under absolutism the honeyed sweetness of the bourgeois regime and was generally far too developed to identify for even a moment its own emancipation with that of the bourgeoisie. The bulk of the nation – petty burghers, owners of workshops (artisans), and peasants – was left in the lurch by its currently

[4] Friedrich Engels, *The Peasant War in Germany* (Moscow: Progress Publishers, 1956), p. 126.

natural ally, the bourgeoisie, because it was too revolutionary, and partly

by the proletariat, because it was not sufficiently advanced. Divided in

itself the bourgeoisie achieved nothing, while opposing fellow opponents

on the Right and Left. As to provincial narrow-mindedness, it could hardly

have been greater among the peasants in 1525 than it was among the

classes participating in the movement of 1848.[5]

But as I have previously indicated, analogy has limits beyond which it cannot be

maintained: "As for the revolution of 1848, it was not a domestic German affair

[as in 1525], and was an episode in a great European movement. Its motive forces

throughout its duration transcended the narrow limits of one country, and even

those of one part of the world." As a result, Engels still held great hope for a more

successful conclusion to the class struggle of his own time.

Thus we can see that at the same time changes to the material conditions

of production threaten established class relations, they can also create the very

means by which such antagonism might be resolved, leading to periodic shifts in

the structure of society – that is, through revolution. Even when such revolutions

are unsuccessful, they are characterized by conflict between a conservative ruling

class, whose power depends on maintaining pre-existing economic relations, and

a rising underclass, empowered by changes to the very conditions of material

production.[6] Marx divides history into epochs marked by such social revolutions

---

[5] Ibid., p. 130.

[6] Karl Marx, "Excerpt from *A Contribution to the Critique of Political Economy*" in Karl Marx and Friedrich Engels, *Basic Writings on Politics and Philosophy*, ed. Lewis S. Feuer (Garden City, NY: Anchor Books, 1959), p. 43-44.

(which he names the Asiatic, ancient, feudal, and bourgeois), following to some extent the epochal historical development outlined by Hegel in his *Philosophy of History* (Oriental, Greek, Roman, and German). Revolutions mark the uneven progress of society towards a classless – but not homogeneous – state.

But even among the proponents of Marxism, there is an ideological tendency to deny the dialectical process of history. As a result, a division already occurred in Marx's time between those who believed that gradual, peaceful change was possible, and those who insisted – like Marx and Engels – on the necessity of a rupture with the past. Many self-proclaimed "Marxists" have preferred to view the elimination of class struggle as an inevitable outcome, a final social state which would bring about the end of history, an end to the historical process. This utopian viewpoint is at odds with historical materialism, which Engels takes pains to rectify. In a letter to Conrad Schmidt, he claims not to assume, as many "young Germans" do, that the socialist society will be a "fixed and stable" one; but that it will continue to change and develop as the material conditions of production – the "*primum agens*" – also change.[7] Engels further reaffirms, in a letter to Joseph Bloch, that although he and Marx place great emphasis on the conditions of material production as the primary motivating factor of history, they do not deny the influence of other factors such as religion and ideology. Since none of these factors are themselves static, historical development will inevitably continue, creating new social divisions and hence, new struggles. Historical materialism is therefore characterized by struggle

---

[7] Engels, "Letters on Historical Materialism," Ibid., p. 396.

between opposing groups (not necessarily divided by class or by class alone), and *not* by a utopian end to social progress.[8]

In order for class struggle to result in social progress rather than in a reactionary movement, individuals have to strongly identify themselves as members of a unified underclass, a class which does not rule and which is subject to conditions of alienation and estrangement. This is why Marx places greater emphasis on the *class* consciousness of the individual than on Hegelian self-consciousness: political change can only occur when the proletariat recognizes its economic inequality and is willing to take action as a class. This is also what Benjamin refers to when he says that historical materialism is driven by individual experience: it is the individual's experience of being a member of a disenfranchised class that can motivate political action (although Benjamin, like Marx and Engels before him, was a member of the bourgeoisie and therefore acted against his own class interests). Engels, too, clearly places class struggle at the heart of historical materialism; but he clarifies that is the symptom, rather than the root cause, of conflict.[9] Economic and political inequality are the factors that define class struggle, and periodic changes to the material conditions of production provide the impetus for shifts in the balance in power. Historical materialism is therefore dialectical in two respects: first as a means of understanding the unfolding of class struggle, and second as a guide to political action designed to counteract these inequalities. It is simultaneously a theory and a method, a praxis.

---

[8] Ibid., p. 398-99.

[9] Engels, "On Historical Materialism," Ibid., p. 54.

Despite the Marxist application of Hegel's mode of thinking to political economy, dialectical thought remains grounded in phenomenology. Herbert Marcuse, a key early member of the Institute for Social Research along with Adorno and Benjamin, emphasizes the link between the Hegelian dialectic and negation, or "negative thinking." Negation (Benjamin's "destructive element") is the refusal to take facts merely at their face value, and always implicates the thinker in that which is thought about: "Dialectical thought invalidates the a priori opposition of value and fact by understanding all facts as stages of a single process – a process in which subject and object are so joined that truth can be determined only within the subject-object totality."[10] Marcuse goes on to explain that dialectical thinking demonstrates the fundamentally alienated nature of human existence (its false consciousness). It rejects that logic which obscures the historical structure of existence – the logic of historicism which keeps the past separate from the present. In other words, the dialectical uncovering of *historical* factors results in a *political* negation, and it is here that the importance of historical materialism as a method lies for both Marxists and Hegelians: it is an understanding of the past that opens the way to understanding the present.

As a Marxist, Walter Benjamin also takes up the theme of history being driven dialectically by class struggle. However, he arrives at a more imagistic model, one in which flashes of insight are based on the juxtaposition of historical objects: a model he calls the dialectical image. This image is a material object made in the past, one which reveals historical tensions to us as we look back on it

---

[10] Herbert Marcuse, *Reason and Revolution: Hegel and the rise of Social Theory* (Boston, MA: Beacon Press, 1960), p. viii.

with the knowledge and experience of our own time. But what it 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:

> 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.[11]

By 'historical' Benjamin clearly means a living, unfolding history, and not the dry facts and statistics of the past which are worthless without interpretation. Genuine history is not to be found in facts and data; instead, it is something continually made and re-made in the present, and thus it reflects our evolving relationship with those facts. Historical knowledge is therefore generated when we are given flashes of illumination into the formation of our *own* time.

For example, Benjamin notes how, for Baudelaire, the prostitute was a dialectical image of modernity, at once both seller and commodity. Michael Jennings, in his book on the dialectical image in Benjamin, further notes: "Even

---

[11] Walter Benjamin, "Convolute N: On the Theory of Knowledge, Theory of Progress" in *The Arcades Project*, trans. Howard Eiland and Kevin McLaughlin (Harvard, MA: The Belknap Press of Harvard University Press, 1999), p. 463.

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."[12] He points out that Benjamin's focus on the mid-nineteenth century, and his interest in Baudelaire, lies in his belief that this was modernity's formative period.[13] A dialectical image of modernity therefore takes shape by bringing this period into sharp contrast with the present:

> 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 history in such a way that a purgative and redemptive political action ensues. Benjamin's is a corrective historiography…[14]

This, then, is how Benjamin links the dialectical image of history to Marxist thought. If, according to Jennings, the historicist model of progress is "the most dangerous ideological weapon in the capitalist arsenal," then the flash of illumination that the dialectical image provides throws 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

---

[12] Michael W. Jennings, *Dialectical Images: Walter Benjamin's theory of Literary Criticism* (Ithaca, NY: Cornell University Press, 1987), p. 39.

[13] Ibid., p. 35-36.

[14] Ibid., p. 51.

conditions of oppression."[15] It is also significant that the dialectical image *is* an image, which can be grasped in its entirety with all of its contradictions, rather than by words alone, which are inherently linear. 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."[16] 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.

Benjamins's notes for the *Passagenwerk* (Arcades Project), 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:

> 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

---

[15] Ibid., p. 37.

[16] Ibid., p. 119.

historical process.[17]

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.

The Co-ordinates of Caricature

Susan Buck-Morss expands on Benjamin's use of the dialectical image in *The Dialectics of Seeing*, her study of the Arcades Project. She charts the ways in which the dialectical image acts 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 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

---

[17] Benjamin, *The Arcades Project*, p. 475.

axes intersect.[18]

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.[19] The purpose of this system is to situate the commodity so that the discontinuities and contradictions of its origins are highlighted, not reconciled or overcome in a Hegelian synthesis.

---

[18] Susan Buck-Morss, *The Dialectics of Seeing: Walter Benjamin and the Arcades Project* (Cambridge, MA: MIT Press, 1989), p. 210.

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

In a similar vein, it is possible to place caricature at the intersection of its own set of coordinates. Although Fuchs does not explicitly do so, he does discuss opposing tendencies in caricature, which can be further developed into oppositional axes. One set of opposing tendencies is that of prejudice and humour; the other, agitation and reconciliation. Like the physiognomic faces of the commodity, these axes' true nature is political and historical consciousness, which can be either true or false. As a dialectical image, both the commodity and the caricature exhibit opposing tendencies along each axis.

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 an educational function: "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."[20] 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

---

[20] "Indem die Karikatur unbehindert die Thorheiten der verschiedenen Individuen oder diejenigen ganzer Klassen geißeln darf, indem sie alte Vorurtheile dem Spott ausliefern kann, 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* (München: Max Ernst, 1898), p. 10

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."[21] 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 serves to provoke indignation, which raises the moral consciousness of a populace. But at the same time there is a "reconciling effect" that undermines the persuasiveness 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."[22] 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 can work as a call to revolutionary action, it also provides an emotional resolution to the conflict on which it sheds

---

[21] "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., p. 17.

[22] "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., p. 9.

light. The essentializing nature of satire simplifies a given situation to the point of absurdity, which might then be easily dismissed through laughter instead of challenged with political action.

Since humour lies on an axis opposite prejudice, caricatures can easily lean heavily in one direction or the other, while still maintaining a degree of tension between the two. Certainly, those caricatures which best fit the model of a dialectical image are those which contain both extremes at once. Such an image is Philipon's "The Pear" (and its numerous subsequent variations), which plays prejudicially on Louis Philippe's appearance while simultaneously provoking laughter through ridicule (fig.4).

Of course, humour is not always a necessary component 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 figure 3. Here Friedrich Wilhelm IV is depicted as a figure of mockery or ridicule, but although the image contains elements of humour it is hardly a funny image, one that provokes laughter. Ernst Gombrich also points out this phenomenon, clearly in favour of those images which achieve the reconciling effect Fuchs describes: "There is 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 by its neat summing up. Humour is not a necessary weapon in the cartoonist's armoury."[23] As an avowedly apolitical social historian of art, Gombrich values the ability of caricature to encapsulate a given situation

---

[23] Ernst Gombrich, "The Cartoonist's Armoury" in *Meditations on a Hobby Horse: and other essays on the theory of art* (London: Phaidon Press, 1963), p. 131.

epigrammatically, and does not give much credence to its persuasive capacity. W.A. 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.'"[24] But at the same time, he also notes: "Humour is not a necessary ingredient of the cartoon…"[25] and once again prefers the "'neat summing-up' which Professor Gombrich discerns as an important element in modern cartooning."[26]

This "neat summing-up" may certainly be found in the heavily allegorical broadsheets, but it achieves a far more succinct form in the tiny vignettes with which Fuchs so fondly peppers his publications. Unlike the complex coded imagery of the broadsheets, such vignettes are easily taken in at a glance, with only a few necessary elements that do not require specific prior knowledge. They work very much as epigrams, capturing a given situation with wit and brevity. In fig. 5 we see a small drawing, which appears on the colophon page of Fuchs' *1848* monograph, that depicts Friedrich Wilhelm IV as an anthropomorphized champagne bottle, carrying two cannons under its arms. Anonymous and without a title or caption, it nevertheless succinctly captures the most widely-held criticisms of the Kaiser without a single superfluous stroke of the pen. Wilhelm IV was already widely derided for his fondness for champagne, and if there were

---

[24] W.A. Coupe, "The German Cartoon and the Revolution of 1848" in *Comparative Studies in Society and History: an international quarterly*, vol. XI, no. 2 (The Hague: Mouton & Co., January 1967), p. 160.

[25] Ibid., p. 156.

[26] Ibid., p. 160

any further doubt about his identity, the character's spiked helmet – the Prussian *Pickelhaube* – immediately dispels it. The exaggerated girth of the bottle, played against the thin limbs and minimal face, gives the character a comic appeal, suggesting great size without strength of limb, while the threat of punitive force is present in the cannons.

Fig. 5:   Untitled caricature of Friedrich Wilhelm IV, anonymous. (n.d.)

In terms of the axes of opposition, it is possible to see how this caricature contains both humour (through exaggerated contrasts) and prejudice (by mocking the Kaiser's appearance and behaviour). In addition, it provokes indignation against his use of military force while simultaneously providing the "reconciling effect" of a "neat summing-up," which undermines the potential for political agitation by providing a good laugh. Here it becomes apparent that it is the neat summing up – not humour or wit alone – which provides the reconciling effect of which Fuchs speaks. Fuchs only laments that this particular image never reached critical mass in Germany in the same way that Louis Philippe's transformation into a pear did in France around 1830: "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."[27] In other words, as a

dialectical image it is not quite as successful at capturing the contradictions and

tensions of an epoch.

Another revolutionary vignette, illustrating the stifling effect of

censorship, appears in Fuchs' *Lola Montez in der Karikatur* (fig. 6).[28] Originally

printed in the Munich satirical journal *Leuchtkugeln* (Signal Flares) with the

caption, "The Royal Bavarian Freedom of the Press," this caricature again

succinctly captures the spirit of the situation 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 events it refers to, the caricature remains an

effective image of censorship.

In this example, unreconciled tension between humour and prejudice is

---

[27] "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*, p. 24. The French word for pear, *la poire*, also lent itself to a variety of double meanings and metaphors which are lost in both German and English. These meanings encompass buffoonery, bungling, and ripeness. Louis Philippe also shared his initials with *la poire*. Wilhelm IV's association with champagne lacked these linguistic parallels.

[28] Eduard Fuchs, *Ein vormärzliches Tanzidyll: Lola Montez in der Karikatur* (Berlin: E. Frensdorff, 1904), p. 11. This vignette appears on the first page of Chapter 1, "Die bayrische Vormärz" (The Bavarian Pre-March Period).

less evident than that between agitation and reconciliation. 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 journal – is already primed for criticism of government policy. Furthermore, *Leuchtkugeln* suffered intense scrutiny during its few years in print, and was eventually forced to close its doors in 1851, so a comment on censorship would clearly be seen as a protest against its own treatment.
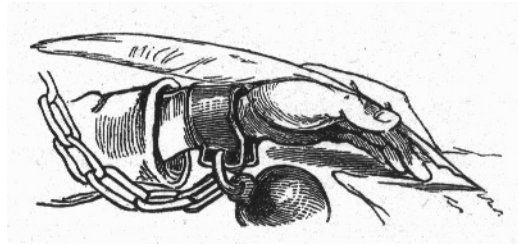

Fig. 6:   *The Royal Bavarian Freedom of the Press*, anonymous. (*Leuchtkugeln*, Munich, n.d.)

In the final example (fig. 7), 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 ridicules 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 manner in which it is displayed, and the reference to Montez' profession, are enough to identify the caricature's primary target. Once again humour and

prejudice take a back seat to agitation and reconciliation, as the caricature simultaneously makes light of the royal affair while 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.
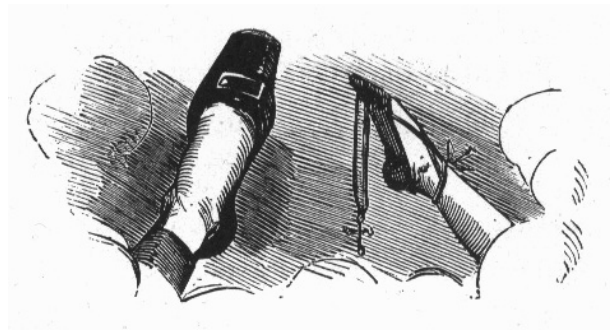

Fig. 7:   Untitled caricature of Ludwig I and Lola Montez, anonymous. (n.d.)

The broadsheets, represented by justifiably famous examples that have been examined by scholars both before and after Fuchs, rely heavily on allegory. They do not embody that zest, that immediacy, of which Fuchs speaks, or Gombrich's "neat summing-up." Rather, it is the little vignettes scattered throughout his works which capture the epigrammatic quality he 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, using wit and brevity to encapsulate a given situation in the most economical fashion: captions and titles are minimal or absent, there are only a few visual elements, and no need for allegorical exegesis. And, as we have seen, each vignette contains

opposing tendencies within themselves which we have attempted to map as a system of coordinates. As Fuchs says, "Caricature acts as an illuminating flash,"[29] an expression often repeated by Benjamin in his discussions of the dialectical image.

What does the dialectical image of caricature reveal? 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 caricaturists to back away from politics. 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 journals with a wide readership, since broadsheets had fallen out of popularity and outright polemics were hardly possible any longer. Caricature had therefore become institutionalized instead of entrepreneurial, with its practitioners now employed as staff rather than 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, caricaturing was forced to adapt to changing tastes as well as changing political circumstances, highlighting the commodity aspect of its production.

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

---

[29] "Die Karikatur wirkt blitzartig erhellend." Fuchs, *1848 in der Caricatur*, p. 28.

"educative value" of caricature and its ability to "raise the moral consciousness" of the 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 writes that

> 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.[30]

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."[31] 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 brings out their persuasive capacity – a capacity that he find is misplaced in the social satire of own time.

---

[30] Benjamin, "Eduard Fuchs, Collector and Historian," p. 226-7.

[31] Ibid., p. 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 a situation, 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." 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 a biased judgment. In today's English the term 'prejudice' certainly carries a negative connotation, which may not be present in the original German. Fuchs' writing therefore requires further investigation and interpretation.

When we apply the Benjaminian system of co-ordinates to caricature, we can clearly see that it contains tensions, which are further reflected in the militaristic language Fuchs employs. 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.[32]

Therefore some unanswered questions remain about the efficacy of caricature, a concern that Fuchs brings up repeatedly in his writings. If a caricature's success in encapsulating a given situation relies on exaggeration and hyperbole, then to what extent are stereotypes employed critically rather than unreflexively? To what extent are "old prejudices" challenged instead of reinforced? 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 public 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

---

[32] "Durch die Karikatur vermag man, wie wir verschiedenfach gesehen haben, oft mit nur wenigen charakterisirenden Strichen den Charakter einer Person so treffend zu kennzeichnen, komplizirte 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*, p. 28.

immediate receptions to the subsequent history of collecting and display which brings the printed caricature to Fuchs' time fifty years later, and the history of scholarship which carries it to our own time? If caricature is indeed a dialectical image of the past, then it is so not only by highlighting the opposing tendencies of humour and prejudice, agitation and reconciliation, but also through the competing claims that have been made on 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."[33] In the hands of the ruling class caricature is ineffective, since it cannot employ the full range of satirical weapons without risk to itself. "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."[34] Caricature therefore employs its destructive tendency in a witty response to the images of history painting and the narratives of state newspapers, as a challenge to the official interpretation of events promulgated by the ruling class. It ruptures the fabric of historicism, as Buck-Morss notes:

---

[33] Ibid, p. 6-7.

[34] Ibid., p. 8.

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 *dis*continuity. 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 society is not the final goal of progress in history, but its so frequently unsuccessful, yet ultimately accomplished interruption."[35]

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

---

[35] Buck-Morss, Ibid., p. 290.

Conclusion: Revolutionary Time

As a Marxist, Fuchs' interest in class struggle is clearly reflected in his choice of the caricature of 1848 as a subject for historical analysis. He is especially concerned with the role that caricature plays in political activity – namely, its persuasive capacity. He tries to show the potential of caricature to educate the masses regarding their class interests, and thus to raise their "moral consciousness" for the purpose of revolutionary agitation. Furthermore, Fuchs' monograph on the caricature of 1848 is deliberately presented on the fiftieth anniversary of the revolution, in order to make a claim of correlation between that time and his own.

However, Benjamin takes Fuchs to task for inconsistently applying a materialist dialectic to his analysis, and for occasionally falling under the influence of historicist thinking. This criticism is certainly valid when taking the long view of Fuchs' career, as Benjamin did, where Fuchs' approach to morality and the auto-erotic impulse in art was hindered by his "bourgeois morality." Fuchs often referred to the inevitability of social progress, and failed to address the unconscious working of ideology in class struggle. But in the early stage of Fuchs' career, his focus on caricature coincided with, and indeed grew out of, his work as an editor, journalist and political activist. Fuchs' formative ideas on caricature therefore offer us an insight into his its continuing historical significance.

For Fuchs, caricatures are "the most peculiar contemporary documents, a

type of world history in epigrams."[1] This epigrammatic quality, the ability to capture a situation with wit and brevity, allows us to interpret 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, forces which can undermine its persuasive capacity. For example, its potential to act as an agitational force is hindered by the "reconciling effect" of humour, and its ability to shed light on "old prejudices" is contradicted by the propagation of stereotypes. Since these oppositional tendencies, which the dialectical image highlights, still exist today, we are provided with an insight onto the formation of our own present.

The dialectical image of caricature therefore remains relevant. Because of its disposition to political persuasion, the caricature of 1848 has much to tell us about the relationship of political authority to mass psychology – a relationship that continues to work in mass media today. As a historical image, caricature can be known in both its pre- and post-history: its formation and initial reception are reshaped by its subsequent status as a collectable and as material for scholarly investigation. The dialectical image, like the writing of history itself, is constantly re-constructed by each succeeding era. That is why it is important to revisit the past; each present writes its own history. 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

---

[1] "…den eigenartigsten zeitgenössischen Dokumenten zusammengetragen, eine Art Weltgeschichte in Epigrammen." Eduard Fuchs, *Die Karikatur der europäischen Völker vom Altertum bis zur Neuzeit* (Berlin: A. Hoffman, 1902), p. iii.

connected in that how we construct the past determines how we understand the present course."[2] Therefore, the interpretation of caricature is always performed in the present both as a deconstruction and a reconstruction; each present brings its own dialectic to bear. Yet it remains an image that is forever open to reinterpretation as well.

Stéphane Mosès' interpretation of Benjamin's concept of revolutionary time also presents a possible 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 a methodological subterfuge which, "to justify its claims to scientific objectivity, makes do with copying from mechanical physics the model of a linear sequence of causes and effects."[3] Mosès demonstrates that Benjamin's methodology entails the positing of particular phenomena as historical capsules against historicism's accumulation of 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

---

[2] Susan Buck-Morss, "Revolutionary Time: the vanguard and the avant-garde" in *Benjamin Studies 1: perception and experience in modernity*, ed. Helga Geyer-Ryan, Paul Koopman, Klaas Yntema (New York: Rodopi, 2002), p. 213.

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

dialectical image is precisely to decipher the past through our present, that is, to read it politically."[4] Fuchs follows suit in his own work. Instead of generalizations, both he and Benjamin offer concrete objects and images; instead of scientific data, insights and interpretations. Instead of a totalizing linear progression, a series of *dis*continuities, or structures. Revolutionary time thus opposes the "flow" of history by imposing a new structure over against older ones.

Unlike Benjamin, Fuchs is not the most rigorous of historical materialists. Indeed, Benjamin's self-imposed rigour caused him to deviate from the mainstream of historical materialist thinking, particularly in his conception of the dialectical image. Max Pensky, commenting on the *Arcades Project*, writes: "The great theoretical struggles (with Adorno, with himself) over the status of the dialectical image can rightly be said to center 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 that most adequately captures the status of the dialectical image."[5] Whether Fuchs represents the former, and Benjamin the latter, is a question difficult to answer without the completed form of the *Arcades Project* for comparison. Its fragmentary nature and emphasis on interruption certainly favour the "flash of illumination," but clearly the dialectical image can encompass both models simultaneously, the sudden insight and the reconstruction. This may be a

---

[4] Ibid., p. 104.

[5] Max Pensky, "Tactics of Remembrance: Proust, Surrealism, and the Origin of the *Passagenwerk*" in *Walter Benjamin and the Demands of History,* ed. Michael P. Steinberg (Ithaca, NY: Cornell University Press, 1996), p. 189.

better way to think about Fuchs' work. He discusses the flashes of illumination that caricature can provide via its epigrammatic quality, but his work also stands as a cumulative construction, each new volume building on the prior ones. But whatever inconsistencies we find in Fuchs' efforts, 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.

Bibliography

1. Bach, Ulrich, "'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*, ed. Lynne Tatlock (Rochester, NY: Camden House, 2010), p. 295-312.

2. Benjamin, Walter, *The Arcades Project*, trans. Howard Eiland and Kevin McLaughlin (Harvard, MA: The Belknap Press of Harvard University Press, 1999).

3. Benjamin, Walter, "Eduard Fuchs, Collector and Historian" in Andrew Arato, Eike Gebhardt (eds.), *The Essential Frankfurt School Reader* (New York: Continuum, 1988), p. 225-253.

4. Benjamin, Walter, "Rigorous Study of Art: On the First Volume of the *Kunstwissenschaftliche Forschungen*," trans. Thomas Y. Levin, *October* no. 47 (Winter 1988), p. 84-90.

5. Benjamin, Walter and Gershom Scholem, *The Correspondence of Walter Benjamin and Gershom Scholem 1932-1940*, ed. Gershom Scholem, trans. Gary Smith and Andre Lefevre (New York: Schocken Books, 1989).

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

7. Buck-Morss, Susan, *The Dialectics of Seeing: Walter Benjamin and the Arcades Project* (Cambridge, MA: MIT Press, 1989).

8. Buck-Morss, Susan, "Revolutionary Time: the vanguard and the avant-garde" in *Benjamin Studies 1: perception and experience in modernity*, ed. Helga Geyer-Ryan, Paul Koopman, Klaas Yntema (New York: Rodopi, 2002).

9. Coupe, W.A., "The German Cartoon and the Revolution of 1848" in *Comparative Studies in Society and History: an international quarterly*, vol. XI, no. 2 (The Hague: Mouton & Co., January 1967), p. 137-167.

10. Eagleton, Terry, *Walter Benjamin, or Towards a Revolutionary Criticism* (New York: Verso, 1981).

11. Engels, Friedrich, *The Peasant War in Germany* (Moscow: Progress Publishers, 1956).

12. Erlin, Matt, "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*, ed. Lynne Tatlock (Rochester, NY: Camden House, 2010), p. 25-54.

13. Fuchs, Eduard, *1848 in der Caricatur* (München: Max Ernst, 1898).

14. Fuchs, Eduard, *Die Karikatur der europäischen Völker vom Altertum bis zur Neuzeit* (Berlin: A. Hoffman, 1902).

15. Fuchs, Eduard, *Die Karikatur der europäischen Völker vom Jahre 1848 bis zur Gegenwart* (Berlin: A. Hofmann, 1903).

16. Fuchs, Eduard, *Ein vormärzliches Tanzidyll: Lola Montez in der Karikatur* (Berlin: E. Frensdorff, 1904).

17. Fuchs, Eduard, *Die Juden in der Karikatur* (München: Albert Langen, 1921).

18. Gombrich, Ernst, "The Cartoonist's Armoury" in *Meditations on a Hobby Horse: and other essays on the theory of art* (London: Phaidon Press, 1963).

19. Gorsen, Peter, "Wer war Eduard Fuchs?" in *Zeitschrift für Sexualwissenschaft*, vol. 19,

No. 3, (Sept. 2006), p. 215-233.

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

21. Hegel, Georg Wilhelm Friedrich, *Phenomenology of Spirit*, trans. A.V. Miller (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1977).

22. Hemingway, Andrew, "Introduction" in *Marxism and the History of Art: From William Morris to the New Left*, ed. Andrew Hemingway (Ann Arbor, MI: Pluto Press, 2006), p. 1-8.

23. Hemingway, Andrew, "New Left Art History's International" in *Marxism and the History of Art: From William Morris to the New Left*, ed. Andrew Hemingway (Ann Arbor, MI: Pluto Press, 2006), p. 175-195.

24. Hermann, Georg, *Die deutsche Karikatur im XIX Jahrhundert* (Bielefeld und Leipzig: Velhagen & Klasing, 1901).

25. Horkheimer, Max, *A Life in Letters: Selected Correspondence*, (Lincoln, NE: University of Nebraska Press, 2007).

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

27. Jennings, Michael W., *Dialectical Images: Walter Benjamin's theory of Literary Criticism* (Ithaca, NY: Cornell University Press, 1987).

28. Lonitz, Henri ed., *Theodor W. Adorno and Walter Benjamin: The Complete Correspondence 1928–1940*, trans. Nicholas Walker (Harvard, MA: Harvard University Press, 1999).

29. Marcuse, Herbert, *Reason and Revolution: Hegel and the rise of Social Theory* (Boston, MA: Beacon Press, 1960).

30. Marx, Karl and Friedrich Engels, *Basic Writings on Politics and Philosophy*, ed. Lewis S. Feuer (Garden City, NY: Anchor Books, 1959).

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

32. Pensky, Max, "Tactics of Remembrance: Proust, Surrealism, and the Origin of the *Passagenwerk*" in *Walter Benjamin and the Demands of History,* ed. Michael P. Steinberg (Ithaca, NY: Cornell University Press, 1996), p. 164-189.

33. Scholem, Gershom ed., *The Correspondence of Walter Benjamin and Gershom Scholem 1932-1940*, trans. Gary Smith and Andre Lefevre (New York: Schocken Books, 1989).

34. Scholem, Gershom and Theodor W. Adorno eds., *The Correspondence of Walter Benjamin 1910-1940*, trans. Manfred R. Jacobson and Evelyn M. Jacobson (Chicago, IL: University of Chicago Press, 1994).

35. Schwartz, Frederic J., "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*, ed. Andrew Hemingway (Ann Arbor, MI: Pluto Press, London, 2006), p. 106-122.

36. Seymour, Bruce, *Lola Montez: A Life* (New Haven, CT: Yale University Press, 1996).

37. Stark, Gary D., *Entrepreneurs of Ideology: Neoconservative Publishers in Germany, 1890-1933* (Chapel Hill, NC: University of North Carolina Press, 1981).

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

39. Steiner, Uwe, *Walter Benjamin: an introduction to his work and thought* (Chicago, IL: University of Chicago Press, 2010).

40. Tatlock, Lynne, "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*, ed. Lynne Tatlock (Rochester, NY: Camden House, 2010), p. 1-21.

41. Weissberg, Liliane, "Eduard Fuchs und die Ökonomie der Karikatur", *Babylon*, vol. 20 (2002), p. 113-128.

42. Weitz, Ulrich, *Salonkultur und Proletariat. Eduard Fuchs: Sammler, Sittengeschichtler, Sozialist* (Stuttgart: Stöffler & Schütz, 1991).

43. Werckmeister, Otto Karl, "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*, ed. Andrew Hemingway (Ann Arbor, MI: Pluto Press, London, 2006), p. 213-220.

44. Zingarelli, Luciana, "Eduard Fuchs, vom militanten Journalismus zur Kulturgeschichte" in *Ästhetik und Kommunikation – Beitrage zur politischen Erziehung*, vol. 7, no. 25 (1976) p. 32-53.

Appendix

Selected works on caricature and visual culture by Fuchs' predecessors and

contemporaries:

1. Alexandre, Arsène, *L'art du rire et de la caricature* (Paris: Quantin, Librairies-imprimeries réunies, 1892).

2. Champfleury, Jules, *Histoire de la caricature antique*, 2nd ed. (Paris: E. Dentu, 1867).

3. Champfleury, Jules, *Histoire de l'Imagerie populaire* (Paris: E. Dentu, 1869).

4. Champfleury, Jules, *Histoire de la caricature au moyen âge et sous la Renaissance*, 2nd ed. (Paris: E. Dentu, 1876).

5. Champfleury, Jules, *Histoire de la caricature sous la République, l'Empire et la Restauration*, 2nd ed. (Paris: E. Dentu, 1877).

6. Champfleury, Jules, *Histoire de la caricature sous la Réforme et la Ligue. Louis XIII à Louis XVI* (Paris: E. Dentu, 1880).

7. Champfleury, Jules, *Histoire de la caricature moderne*, 3rd ed. (Paris: E. Dentu, 1885).

8. Champfleury, Jules, *La musée secret de la caricature* (Paris: E. Dentu, 1888).

9. Grand-Carteret, John, *Les moeurs et la caricature en Allemagne – en Autriche en Suisse* (Paris: L. Westhausser, 1885).

10. Grand-Carteret, John, *La femme en Allemagne* (Paris: L. Westhausser, 1887).

11. Grand-Carteret, John, *Les moeurs et la caricature en France* (Paris: La Librairie illustrée, 1888).

12. Hermann, Georg, *Die deutsche Karikatur im XIX Jahrhundert* (Bielefeld: Velhagen, 1901).

13. Kahn, Gustave, *La Femme dans la caricature française. De la contradiction du féminisme et de la caricature* (Paris, A. Méricant: 1907).

14. Von Karwath, Cary, *Die Erotik in der Kunst* (Vienna: C.W. Stern, 1908).

15. Wright, Thomas, *A History of Caricature & Grotesque in Literature and Art* (London: Virtue Brothers & Co., 1864)

16. Wright, Thomas, *Caricature history of the Georges; or, Annals of the House of Hanover, compiled from squibs, broadsides, window pictures, lampoons and pictorial caricatures of the time*, new ed., first published 1848 (London: Chatto, 1904).