Seeing Class:
Graphic Satire and the Cultivation of Radicalism in the Weimar Republic

by

Grant Mandarino

A dissertation submitted in partial fulfillment
of the requirements for the degree of
Doctor of Philosophy
(History of Art)
in the University of Michigan
2018

Doctoral Committee:

Professor Matthew Biro, Chair
Professor Geoff Eley
Professor Emeritus, Andrew Hemingway, University College London
Professor Alexander Potts
Associate Professor Claire Zimmerman

Grant Mandarino

gwm@umich.edu

ORCID iD: 0000-0001-8331-1135

© Grant Mandarino 2018

For Larry Leggett and Alex Mandarino
in memoriam

Acknowledgements

Most stereotypes of graduate study are false, particularly the idea that academic labor is a solitary pursuit necessitating monastic devotion. While there is a certain degree of attractiveness to this notion, and we may even at times attempt to play the part of the cloistered scholar, the work of graduate study is in truth a daunting endeavor requiring the guidance, assistance, and collaboration of many people. In a situation of increasing precarity, wherein the "market value" of humanistic scholarship has diminished and competition between junior scholars intensified, it is easy to get overwhelmed and lose sight of one's supporters. Getting here has been a difficult but rewarding path, and I have incurred many debts in the process.

First and foremost I thank the members of my dissertation committee: Alex Potts, for modeling the kind of art historian I aim to be, Geoff Eley, for keeping me on track, Clarie Zimmerman, for her early and enthusiastic advocacy of my work, Andrew Hemingway, for keeping my kind of social art history alive, and especially my advisor Matt Biro, for never giving up on me, even after I had (several times). Outside the official committee, I likewise benefitted from the support of several colleagues within the History of Art department including: Rebecca Zurier, Megan Holmes, Martin Powers, Kevin Carr, Susan Siegfried, Celeste Brusati, and Achim Timmermann; members of the department staff: Jeff Craft, Christy Elkins, Debbie Fitch, and Kim Wolf;

and my fellow cohort members: Wendy Sepponen, Emily Talbot, Alice Sullivan, Nick Hartigan, and our unofficial member, Joss Kiely. Elizabeth Sears aided me both intellectually and professionally with her insightful feedback and recommendations (I shall miss our conversations of English spies). Special thanks go to Kristin Schroeder for expanding my knowledge of all things Weimar, and to Alexandra Fraser, for being there in the good times and bad. Outside the department, I had the opportunity to get to know faculty members who likewise made an impact on the project, namely Johannes von Moltke and Alan Wald. Alan in particular has been a good friend and sympathetic interlocutor to a young engagé. Further afield, I would not be the scholar I am without Steve Edwards and Gail Day, whose hospitality and brilliance fortifies me every time I am with them.

Research, like everything else, costs money, and without the financial backing of several institutions this project would have amounted to very little. A fellowship from the DAAD enabled me to spend a full academic year in Berlin, where I gathered most of the archival materials. Further funding from the Rackham Graduate School at the University of Michigan in various forms provided for several shorter trips to Amsterdam and Durham, North Carolina to complete my research and allowed me time to write.

Many institutions played an integral role in the project, including: the University of Michigan Libraries (thank you Deirdre Spencer!); the University of Michigan Museum of Art (thank you Ruth Slavin and David Choberka!); the Staatsbibliothek zu Berlin; the International Institute for Social History in Amsterdam; the Archiv der

Akademie der Künste, Berlin; the Germanisches Nationalmuseum, Nürnberg; the Bundesarchiv, Berlin; Special Collections at the Rubinstein Library, Duke University; and the "Digitalisierung und Erschließung illustrierter Kunst-und Satirezeitschriften des 19. und frühen 20. Jahrhunderts" project at the Universität Heidelberg. Thanks to all the various staff and archivists who assisted me and put up with my inadequate conversational German.

Many old friends are to be thanked as well: Gabe Dixon, Jon Banfill, Zack Elway, Troy Mink, Ben Davis--they all left a impression. Erik Wallenberg, deserves special recognition for being himself, steadfast and true; Jessie Kindig for keeping it real. Solidarity to all my comrades: Martin Gaughan, John Macdonald, Loren Balhorn, Sean Larson, Adam Petcoff, Jason Farbman, Sami Khatib, Dan Hartley, Fredrik Petersson, Ralf Hoffrogge, Gelb Albert, Joel Reinstein, Andrew Baker, Michael Holtzman, Maximilian Alvarez, Natasha Abner, Bill Mullen, Tithi Bhattacharya, Matthieu Desan, Martin Gaughan, Peter Linebaugh, Austin McCoy, Keeanga Yamahtta-Taylor, Michael Löwy, and everyone at the Graduate Employees' Organization 3550. And because fictional beings, consumables, and people I do not know but admire have also played a major role this past eight years, I wish to thank: David Bowie, Slinga Troll, Elvis Costello, Single-Malt Scotch, Anthony Blunt, the Gruffalo, William Hogarth, Raymond Williams, E. P. Thompson, Ludo from Labyrinth, Johann Sebastian Bach, Eduard Fuchs, George Smiley, Yorkshire Tea, Tangerine Dream, George Grosz, Wombats, and Citalopram.

Last but not least, a big shout-out to Ross Etherton, aka "Dirty Goethy," for being my dissertation partner and for all the fun we had in Jena during spring break 2015.

I have dedicated the dissertation to two family members unfairly taken from the world during the course of its preparation, one by cancer, the other by cops; both are malicious forces I hope will someday be overcome. My family, both near and far, has been a huge support and I owe them a great deal--including Boose R. Dog. My parents have been an especially important source of love, intellectual stimulation, and emotional succor throughout the PhD program. Dad, I too now know what it is like to work for years crafting an object. Mom, I did it!

Finally, I need to thank my sweetie, Katie Jaeger, upon whom nothing is wasted, and Frances, for whom I would do anything.

Table of Contents

Dedication ii

Acknowledgements iii

List of Figures ix

Abstract xxii

Introduction: Class, Communism, and the History of Graphic Satire 1

- **The Operations of Communist Graphic Satire** 5
- **Visualizing Class: Identity/Consciousness** 13
- **Graphic Satire: Documents/Artworks/Catalysts** 26
- **Chapter Outline** 37

Chapter One--The Politics of Graphic Satire: Eduard Fuchs, Editor and Historian 41

- **Introduction** 41
- **Fuchs the Editor** 47
  - The Süddeutscher Postillon 49
  - Graphic Satire as Kampfmittel 55
  - Re-Presenting Politics 61
- **Fuchs the Historian** 68
  - The Material Art of Graphic Satire 69
  - Graphic Satire as Erziehungsmittel 75
  - Socialist Graphic Satire? 91
- **Conclusion** 98

Chapter Two--Developing Communist Graphic Satire:
Grosz's Haß and the Art of Class Consciousness 104

Introduction 104

Revolutionary Graphics--Dada Intervenes 111

Satire and Legibility--Dada Retreats 127

Toward a Grosz Realism 133

Reading *Das Gesicht* 143

Faces 148

Types 152

Structures 156

Workers 160

"See Berlin with the eyes of a Bolshevist!" 164

Conclusion 176

Chapter Three--Deploying Communist Graphic Satire:
***Der Knüppel* in the Weimar Image-World** 179

Introduction 179

Presenting the Red Truncheon 181

Communist Entertainments 185

Der Knüppel 192

Agitprop 198

Exposing the Republic 204

Political Spectacles 207

Artists of the Revolution? 211

Criticisms 219

Conclusion 232

Conclusion 234

Communist Graphic Satire Remodeled 234

The Afterlife of Communist Graphic Satire 242

Figures 246

Bibliography 425

List of Figures

Fig. 0.1 "The Enemies of the Working Class (*Die Feinde der Arbeiterklasse*)," from *Die junge Genosse*, vol. 4, no. 3 (September 1924) 246

Fig. 1.1 Photograph of Eduard Fuchs (c. 1930) 247

Fig. 1.2 Interior of Fuchs' Villa (c. 1927) 247

Fig. 1.3 Rudolf Grossmann, "Portrait of Eduard Fuchs" (1926) 248

Fig. 1.4 Photograph of Eduard Fuchs (c. 1903) 249

Fig. 1.5 Honoré Daumier, "Art Lovers" from *Le Charivari* (1863) 250

Fig. 1.6 Cover of the*Süddeutscher Postillon*, vol. 16, no. 6 (1867) 251

Fig. 1.7 Center fold image from the *Süddeutscher Postillon* 252

Fig. 1.8 Anonymous, "Metamorphosis, or how to transform a Bavarian breaddumpling into the esteemed leader of the Bavarian Center Party and then into a Hippopotamus (*Metamorphose, oder wie sich ein bayrischer Knödel erst in einen hervorragenden bayrischen Zentrumsführer und dann in ein Nilpferd verwandelt*)," from the *Süddetuscher Posttillon*, vol. 17, no. 10 (1898) 252

Fig. 1.9 Max Engert,"Surronded by Enemies! (*Feinde Reingsum!*)," from the *Süddeutscher Postillon*, vol. 16 (1897) 253

Fig. 1.10 Anonymous [Max Engert?], "The 'Victims' of Colonialism (*Die Opfer der Kolonialismus*)," from the *Süddeutscher Postillon*, vol. 16 (1897) 254

Fig. 1.11 Ephraim Moshe Lilien, front cover to Fuchs' *1848 in der Caricatur* (1898) 255

Fig. 1.12 Heinrich Wilhelm Storck, "Such always follows! (*Wie einer immer daneben tritt!*)" (1848), reprinted *1848 in der Caricatur* 256

Fig. 1.13 Anonymous, caricature of Friedrich Wilhelm as champagne bottle (n.d.), reprinted in *1848 in der Caricaur* 256

Fig. 1.14 Reprint of André Gill, "Sovereign's Toy (*Fürstenspielzeug*)," from the *Süddeutscher Postillon*, vol. 17, no. 2 (1898) 257

Fig. 1.15 Max Engert, "How Tirpitz gained an advantage (*Wie Tirpitz seine "Schepkens in's Trockene* bringt)," from the *Süddeutscher Postillon*, vol. 17, no. 2 (1898) 258

Fig. 1.16 Comaprison between Fig. 1.14 and two photographs of Louis Napoleon (c. 1868) 259

Fig. 1.17 Comparison between Fig. 1.14 and two photographs of Kaiser Wilhelm II (c. 1900) 260

Fig. 1.18 André Gill, "Authentic portrait of Rocambole (*Portrait authenique de Rocambole*), cover of *La Lune*, no. 89 (Decmber 1867) 261

Fig. 1.19 Cover of Fuchs' *Der Karikatur der europäischen Volker* , vol. 1 (1901) 262

Fig. 1.20 William Hogarth, *Industry and Idlenes* (plate one) (1747) Engraving 263

Fig. 1.21 William Hogarth, *Gin Lane* (1751) Engraving 264

Fig. 1.22 (left) Cover of *Der auch Sozialistische* Monatscircus (1909); (right) Cover of *Sozialistische Monatshefte* (1909) 265

Fig. 1.23 Walter Crane, "The Capitalist Vampire" (1885) 266

Fig. 1.24 Honoré Daumier, "Thi..." [Portrait of Adolphe Thiers] (1833) 267

Fig. 1.25 Theodor Thomas Heine, "A Committee of the united Parties of Order celebrate their electoral victory (*Ein Comité der vereinigten Ordnungsparteien feiert seinen Wahlsieg*)," cover of *Simplicissimus*, vol. 3, no. 13 (1898) 268

Fig. 1.26 Photograph of the delegates to the Second Comintern Congress (1920) 269

Fig. 1.27 Detail of Fig. 1.26 270

Fig. 2.1 George Grosz, cover of *The Face of the Ruling Class* (*Das Gesicht der herrschenden Klasse* (1921) 271

Fig. 2.2 Theodor Thomas Heine, "The artist George Grosz asks his audience, whether he should slaughter or butcher the bourgeois in accordance with kosher regulations (*Der zeichner George Grosz fragt sein Publikum, ob er den Bourgeois schlachten oder schächten soll*)," from*Simplicissimus*, vol. 30, no. 37 (December 14, 1925)..272

Fig. 2.3 Max Pechstein, "To the Lamppost (*An die* Laterne)," poster for a journal of the same name (1919)...273

Fig. 2.4 Rudi Feld,"The Danger of Bolshevism (*Die Gefahr des Bolschewismus*)" (1919)...274

Fig. 2.5 Erich Schilling, "Which will the entente choose? Wilson or Lenin? (*Wie wird die Entente entscheiden? Wilson oder Lenin?*), cover of *Simplicissimus*, vol. 23, no. 43 (Februrary 1919)..275

Fig. 2.6 Karl Arnold, "Spartakus--We want to prove to the world that the people also have the right to do something things (*Wir wollen der Welt beweisen, das auch das Volk das Recht hat, Dummheiten zu machen*)," from *Simplicissimus* vol. 22, no. 38 (December 1918) 276

Fig. 2.7 Eduard Thöny, cover of the *Simplicissimus' War Pamphlet* (*Kriegs-Flugblätter des Simplicissimus*), no 1 (March 1915)...277

Fig. 2.8 Anonymous, "Come on, kids, let's go! Now only a beating will do! (*Nun, Kinder, drauf los! Jetzt hilft nur noch das Dreschen!*)," cover of *Der Wahre Jakob*, no. 733 (August 1914)..278

Fig. 2.9 W. A. Wellner, "Look here, boys, will do it without you (*Seht ihr, Jungens, wir schaffen auch ohne euch*)," from *Lustige Blätter--Kriegsnummer 5*, vol. 29, no. 36 (1914)....279

Fig. 2.10 [Artist?], "The earth in 1916 as seen from the moon (*Die Erde im Jahre 1916 vom Mond aus gesehen*)," cover of *Der Wahre Jakob*, no. 784 (August 1916)..............................280

Fig. 2.11 [Artist?], "Moscow (from the history of socialism) Bakunin: From here will the redemption of the world emerege, as I always predicted. Marx: The redemption of the world will not come from here, only the greatest misery for workers (*Bakunin*: *Von hier wird die Welterlösung datieren, wie ich immer vorausgesagt hat. Marx: Nicht die Welterlösung wird von hier ausgehen, sondern nur das große Elend aller Arbeiter*)," cover of *Der Wahre Jakob*, no. 892 (1920)..281

Fig. 2.12 George Grosz, cover of *Everyone their own Football* (*Jedermann sein eigenen Fussball* (February 1919)...282

Fig. 2.13 Georg Grosz, "Cheers Noske!--the proletariat has been disarmed (*Prost Noske!--das Proletariat ist entwaffnet!*)," cover of *Die Pleite*, vol. 1, no. 3 (April 1919)....................283

Fig. 2.14 George Grosz, "Cheers Noske! The young revolution is dead! (*Prost Noske! Die junge Revolution ist tot!*)," from *Das Gesicht der herrschenden Klasse* 284

Fig. 2.15 Karl Arnold, "The young republic. Do not stifle the child with revolution and protests (*Die junge Republik. Erstickt das Kind nicht in Revolutionen und Protesten*)," cover of *Simplicissimus*, vol. 23, no. 41 (January 1919)...285

Fig. 2.16 Detail of Fig. 1.21, Hogarth, *Gin Lane* (1751)...286

Fig. 2.17 (above) Photograph of the opening of the First International Dada Fair (June 1920); (next page) Photograph of Dada Fair, room two..287

Fig. 2.18 John Heartfield, *Fathers and Sons* (*Väter und Sohne*) (1924) 289

Fig. 2.19 John Heartfield and George Grosz, *Hustle and Bustle in the Universal City, Five Past Noon* (*Leben und Treiben in Universal-City, 12 Uhr 5 mittags*) (1920)..........................290

Fig. 2.20 Cover of Wieland Herzfelde's *Society, Artists, and Communism* (*Gesellschaft, Künstler, und Kommunismus*) (1921) 291

Fig. 2. 21 (left) George Grosz, "We praise God, the righteous (*Wir treten zum Beten vor Gott den Gerechten*)," from *Das Gesicht der herrschenden Klasse*; (right) George Grosz, *Pillars of Society* (1926) Oil on canvas..292

Fig. 2.22 GeorgeGrosz, "By the grace of capital (*Von Geldsacks Gnaden*), cover of *Die Pleite*, vol. 1, no. 1 (1919) 293

Fig. 2.23 Anonymous, "The soon-to-be president of the German Republic: Ebert the first (*Der beinahige Präsident der deutschen Republik: Ebert der* Erste) from *Die rote Fahne* (December 14, 1918) 294

Fig. 2.24 Theodor Thomas Heine, "Pictures from family life, No. 2: Papa, what do you really want to be? (*Bilder aus dem Familienleben, Nr. 2: Papa, was willst due eigentlich 'mal werden?*)," cover of *Simplicissimus*,vol. 1, no. 36 (1896)..295
Fig. 2.25 (left) [Artist?], "From the election campaign (*Aus der Wahlkampagne*)," cover of *Der Wahre Jakob*, no. 312 (July, 1898); (right [Artist?], "A good-natured type (*Ein Gemütsmensch*)," from *Der Wahre Jakob*, no. 500 (September, 1900) 296

Fig. 2.26 Commemorative poster of Kaiser Wilhelm II (n.d.)..297

Fig. 2.27 Portrait of the Council of People's Deputies (*Rat der Volksbeauftragten*) (December 1918--after members of the USPD left). From left to right: Otto Landsberg, future minister of justice (*Reichsjustizminister*); Philipp Scheidemann, future chancellor

(*Ministerpräsident*); Gustav Noske; Friedrich Ebert; Rudolf Wissel, future minister for labor (*Reichsarbeitminister*) 298

Fig. 2.28 Two portraits of Otto von Bismarck: at left, from 1863; at right, from 1871 (next page: a cartoon from *Kladderadatsch* satirizing Bismarck's various governmental roles) 299

Fig. 2.29 Two portaits of Kaiser Wilhelm II with family members: (left) from 1907; (right) from 1896....................301

Fig. 2.30 Three portraits of Friedrich Ebert: (left) from 1921; (middle) from 1919; (right) a commermorative photo issued after his death in 1925....................302

Fig. 2.31 George Grosz, "H[is]. M[ajesty]. (*S.[eine] M[ajestät].*)," cover of *Die Pleite*, no. 7 (June 1923) 303

Fig. 2.32 Karl Holtz, "Bless the holy order! (Ebert, the supporters of his throne, and his subjects) (*Heiliger Ordnung, segesreiche!! (Ebert, sine Thronstützen und seine Untertanen*)," cover of *Die Aktion* , vol. 9, no. 8/9 (March 1919) [NB: The same image appears on the cover of a later issue of *Die Aktion*, vol. 11, no. 39/40 (1921)....................304

Fig. 2.33 Four examples of Ebert caricatures: (left) Wilhelm Schulz, "H[is]. M[ajesty]. Ebert (*S[eine]. M[ajestät].* Ebert)," from Simplisicissimus, (February 1920; (right) Gravens, "Friederic the great (*Frédéric le* Gros)," from *Kladderadatsch* (September 1919); (next page, left) A. Johnson, "Federico Eberto," ccover of *Kladderadatsch* (March 1919); (next page, right) Trier, "Friedrich the only and Philipp the good (*Friedrich der Einzige und Philipp der Gute*), cover of *Lustige Blätter* (1919?) 305

Fig. 2.34 Cover of the *Berliner Illustrierte Zeitung,* [vol. 28?], no. 34 (August 1919) (Next page: the source photograph for the cover)....................307

Fig. 2.35 Anonymous, "The communization of tast (*Die Kommunisierung des Geschmacks*)," cover of *Satyr*, no. 25 (1919)....................309

Fig. 2.36 [Laszlo Griffel?], "After Hamburg and Saxony, soon they'll no longer need swimtrunks! --Dedicated to Ebert and Noske on the fifth anniversary of their Republic (*Nach Hamburg und Sachsen bald brauch'n se keine Badehosen mehr! Ebert und Noske zum fünften Jahrestag ihrer Republik gewidmet*)," from *Die Pleite*, no. 8 (November 1923)........310

Fig. 2.37 (left) Karl Arnold, "[Wilhelm] Marx and [Gustav] Stresemann--Wonderful this wide horizon--that's something you can only afford during the holidays! (*Herrlich, dieser weite Horizont--so was kann man sich auch nur in den Ferien leisten!*)," cover of *Simplicissimus* , vol 31, no. 15 (July 1926); (right) A. Johnson, "Germany sets a precedent! Latest recording of presidents Wilson and Poincaré (*Deutschland macht Schule! Neueste*

Aufnahme der Präsidenten Wilson und Poincaré)," cover of *Kladderadatsch*, vol. 72, no. 37 (September 1919) 311

Fig. 2.38 Interior cover of *Das Gesicht* with Malik-Verlag emblem by George Grosz.....312

Fig. 2.39 David Chodowiecki, *The Progress of Virtue and Vice* (1777) 313

Fig. 2.40 Richard Newton, *Treason!* (1798) 314

Fig. 2.41 Karl Holtz, cover of *The Upside-down World* (*Die verkehrte Welt*) (1922)............315

Fig. 2.42 George Grosz, "The German Pest (*Die deutsche Pest*)," from *Das Gesicht der herrschenden Klasse* 316

Fig. 2.43 Group portrait of members of the *Reichswehr* (c. 1923?) 317

Fig. 2.44 George Grosz, "Made in Germany (*Den macht uns keiner nach!*)," from *Das Gesicht der herrschenden Klasse*...318

Fig. 2.45 "The profile of the war," cover of *Die Freie Welt*, vol. 2, no. 48 (1920)..............319

Fig. 2.46 (left) portrait of Graf Harry Kessler (c. 1920?); (right) George Grosz, "It reeks here of the rabble! ('*S riecht hier nach Pöbel!*) from *Das Gesicht der herrschenden Klasse*...320

Fig. 2.47 Portrait of Gustav Noske, cover of *Berliner Illustrierte Zeitung,* vol. 28, no. 9 (March 1919) 321

Fig. 2.48 (left) George Grosz, "Iron Noske (*Der Eiserne Noske*)," from *Das Gesicht der herrschenden Klasse*; (right) Hindenburg monument (c. 1916?)..322

Fig. 2.49 Anonymous "The Nailed Noske (*Der vernagelte Noske*)," from *Die Freie Welt*, vol. 1, no. 10 (July 1919) 323

Fig. 2.50 Cover of *Die Freie Welt*, vol. 1, no. 11 (June 1919) 324

Fig. 2.51 (left) Portrait of Constantin Fehrenbach (c. 1918); (right) George Grosz, "Fehrenbach, Germany's most-Christian chancellor (*Fehrenbach, des deutschen Reiches allerchristlicher Kanzler*)," from *Das Gesicht der herrschenden Klasse* 325

Fig. 2.52 George Grosz, "From the life of a Socialist (*Aus dem Leben eines Sozialisten*)," from *Das Gesicht der herrschenden Klasse* 326

Fig. 2.53 George Grosz, "Entrepreneur Intitiative (*Unternehmer-Initiative*)," from *Das Gesicht der herrschenden Klasse*...327

Fig. 2.54 George Grosz, "How capitalism builds the economy," from *Die rote Fahne* (June 2, 1920)....................................328

Fig. 2.55 (left) Eduard Thöny, "The lesser evil (*Das kleinere* Uebel)," from *Simplicissimus*, vol. 13, no. 52 (March 1909); (right) George Grosz, "From Kapp's menagerie (*Aus Kapps Menagerie*)," from *Das Gesicht der herrschenden Klasse* 329

Fig. 2.56 (left) George Grosz, "For German law and German customs! (*Für deutsches Recht und deutsche Sitte!*)," from *Das Gesicht der herrschenden* Klasse; (middle) George Grosz, cover of *Gott mit uns* (1919); (right) George Grosz, "Pimps of death (*Zuhälter des Todes*)," from *Das Gesicht der herrschenden Klasse*....................................330

Fig. 2.57 Karl Arnold, "The Municher (*Der Münchner*)," cover of *Simplicissimus*, vol. 28, no. 36 (October 1923)....................................331

Fig. 2.58 Karl Arnold, cover of *Berliner Bilder* (1924) 332

Fig. 2.59 Karl Arnold, "The value menu (*Der Valutakarte*)," from the *Berliner Bilder* series 333

Fig. 2.60 Karl Arnold, "Metropolitan Berlin petit-bourgeoisie (*Großberliner Kleinbürger*)," from the *Berliner Bilder* series 334

Fig. 2.61 (left) Karl Arnold, "Friedrichstrasse," from the *Berliner Bilder* series; (right) George Grosz, "O Marburg, o Marburg..." from *Das Gesicht der herrschenden Klasse*......335

Fig. 2. 62 (left) George Grosz, cover of *Abrechnung folgt!* (1923); (right) Karl Arnold, "Bourgeois masochist. This sour republic would be bearable, even if the beer tax, if only we had a dictator! (*Bürger Masoch. Diese Saurepublik mitsamt der Biersteuer wäre erträglich--hätten wir nur einen Diktator*)," cover of *Simplicissimus*, vol. 34, no. 2 (April 1929) 336

Fig. 2.63 George Grosz, "The Communists fall--and profits increse! (*Die Kommunisten fallen--und Devisen* Steigen)," from *Das Gesicht der herrschenden Klasse* 337

Fig. 2.64 (left) George Grosz, "Where dividends come from...*(Wo die Dividenden herkommen*)"; George Grosz, "...and where they end up (*...wo sie hinkommen*)," both from *Das Gesicht der herrschenden Klasse* 338

Fig. 2.65 George Grosz, "Five o'clock in the morning (*Früh um 5 Uhr!*)," from *Das Gesicht der herrschenden Klasse* 339

Fig. 2.66 George Grosz, "Divinely ordained dependence (*Gottgewollte Abhängigkeit),*" from *Das Gesicht der herrschenden Klasse* 340

Fig. 2.67 Anonymous, "Divinely ordained dependence. How much longer? (*Gottgewollte Abhängigkeit. Wie lange noch?*), from *Die rote Fahne*, (April 25, 1921)................................341

Fig. 2.68 Anonymous, "The Wirepuller (*Der Drahtzieher*)," nationalist right-wing election poster (1924)..342

Fig. 2.69 George Grosz, "Reconstruction (*Wiederaufbau*)," from *Das Gesicht der herrschenden Klasse* 343

Fig. 2.70 George Grosz,"Return to order (*Rückkehr geordneter Zustände*)," from *Das Gesicht der herrschenden Klasse* 344

Fig. 2.71 George Grosz, "How the constitutional court should look (*Wie der Staatsgerichtshof aussehen sollte*)," from *Das Gesicht der herrschenden Klasse* 345

Fig. 2.72 Anonymous, "The day will come when we get even... (*Es kommt der Tag, da wir uns rächen*...)," from *Die rote Fahne* (March 31, 1921)...346

Fig. 2.73 George Grosz, "Vampires of humanity (*Vampire der Menschheit*)," from *Das Gesicht der herrschenden Klasse*...347

Fig. 2.74 George Grosz, "The court of the ruling class (*Das Gericht der herrschenden Klasse*," from *Das Gesicht der herrschenden Klasse* 348

Fig. 2.75 George Grosz, "Ants (*Ameisen*)," from *Im Schatten* (1921) 349

Fig. 2.76 George Grosz, "The Toads of Property (*Die Besitzkröteni*)," from *Das Gesicht der herrschenden Klasse* 350

Fig. 2.77 George Grosz, "Our world in spite of everything! (*Unser die Welt trotz alledem!*), from *Die rote Fahne* (March 18, 1923) 351

Fig. 2.78 George Grosz, "Damned of the world, awake! (*Wacht auf, Verdammte dieser Erde!*)," from *Abrechnung folgt!* 352

Fig. 2.79 Karl Holtz, "That is Bolshevism. Michel in worldview training (*Das ist der Bolschewismus! Der deutsche Michel im Anschauungsunterricht*), from *Die rote Fahne* (December 13, 1918) 353

Fig. 3.1 George Grosz, portrait of *Rote Gruppe*, from *Die rosarote Brille* (1924) 354

Fig. 3.2 George Grosz, "Germany, you have a hog! (*Deutschlan, hast du ein Schwein!*)," cover of *Der rote Knüppel*, general edition 355

Fig. 3.3 George Grosz, "Election under a state of emergency (*Wahl unter Ausnahmezustand*)," cover of *Der rote Knüppel*, Thuringia edition 356

Fig. 3.4 George Grosz, "I almost would have led glorious times in Bavaria (*Beinahe hätte ich auch Bayern herrlichen Zeiten entgegengeführt*)," cover of *Der rote Knüppel*, Bavaria edition 357

Fig. 3.5 Günther Wagner, "Police Truncheon (*Polizeiknüppel*)," from *Die rote Fahne* (May 11, 1923)....................358

Fig. 3.6 Anonymous, "Not with the ammunition of barbarians...but with the red truncheon! (*Nicht mit dem Rüstzeug der Barbaren...aber mit dem Roten Knüppel!*), from *Der rote Knüppel*, general edition....................359

Fig. 3.7 [George Grosz?], "Do you want to sleep forever? (*Willst Du denn ewig schlafen?*), *from Der rote Knüppel,* general edition....................360

Fig. 3.8 [Rudolf Schlichter?], from *Der rote Knüppel*, Thuringia edition 361

Fig. 3.9 (left) Rudolf Schlichter, "Vote for the Communists!" (*Wählt Kommunisten!*)," from *Der rote Knüppel*, general edition (1924); (right) poster version of the same, with new untertitle "Away with the trash! Vote for the Communists! (*Hinab mit dem Geschmeiß! Wählt Kommunisten!*) (1924) 362

Fig. 3.10 (left) Rudolf Schlichter, "Michel, how much longer? Throw off the hooked yoke! (*Michel, wie lange noch? Wirf ab das Hakenjoch*)," from *Der rote Knüppel*, Bavarian edition (1924); (right) poster version of the same, with "Proletarian (*Prolet*)" substituted for "Michel" 363

Fig. 3.11 George Grosz, "United Front (*Einheitsfront*)," from *Abrechnung folgt* (1923) 364

Fig. 3.12 [Rudolf Schlichter?], advertisement for *Der Knüppel* (1924) 365

Fig. 3.13 Cover of *Sickle and Hammer* (*Sichel und Hammer*), vol. 3, no. 12 (October 1924) 366

Fig. 3.14 Cover of *Der rote Stern*, vol. 1, no. 12 (November 1924)....................367

Fig. 3.15 *Die rote Bilderbogen*, no. 3 (1924) 368

Fig. 3.16 Cover of *Die Arbeiter Illustrierte Zeitung*, vol. 4 (December 1925)....................369

Fig. 3.17 (left) cover of *Chronik des Faschismus*, vol. 2, no. 10 (April 1924); (right) cover of *Das Hakenkreuz*, no. 1 (September 1923) 370

Fig. 3.18 Laszlo Griffel, cover of *Der Knüppel*, vol. 2, no. 1 (June 1924) 372

Fig. 3.19 George Grosz, cover of *Der Knüppel*, vol. 3, no. 2 (February 1925) 372

Fig. 3.20 Laszlo Griffel, back cover of *Der Knüppel*, vol. 3, no. 2 (February 1925)....................373

Fig. 3.21 (at left) George Grosz, cover of *Der Knüppel*, vol. 3, no. 7 (June 1925); (at right) George Grosz, "Vier Jahre Mord," form *Abrechnung folgt!* (1923)....................374

Fig. 3.22 (at left) George Grosz, from *Der rote Knüppel* (1924); (at right) George Grosz, "The Gustavs to the front," back cover of *Der Knüppel*, vol. 5, no. 3 (April 1927) 375

Fig. 3.23 (at left) John Heartfield, cover of *Der Knüppel*, vol. 5, no. 4 (June 1927); (at right) John Heartfield, from *Der Knüppel*, vol. 4, no. 6 (June 1926)....................376

Fig. 3.24 (at left) John Heartfield, cover of *Der Knüppel*, vol. 4, no. 4 (April 1926); (at right) John Heartfield, cover of *Der Knüppel*, vol. 5, no. 3 (April 1927) 377

Fig. 3.25 [Alfred Beier-Red?], cover of *Der rote Sachsenspiegel* (1926)....................378

Fig. 3.26 (at left) Laszlo Griffel,cover of *Der Knüppel*, vol 3, no. 12 (October-November 1925); (at right) John Heartfield, from *AIZ* (1930) 379

Fig. 3.27 Alfred Beier-Red, back cover of *Der Knüppel*, vol. 3, no. 10 (September 1925) 380

Fig. 3.28 Boris Angeluschew (Fuck), "Gulliver and the Dwarves," from *Der Knüppel*, [?] 381

Fig. 3.29 George Grosz, from *Der Knüppel*, vol. 4, no. 3 (March 1926) 382

Fig. 3.30 Theodor Thomas Heine, "The mass murder in Essen (*Der Massenmord in Essen*)," cover of *Simplicissimus*, vol. 28, no. 4 (April 1923) 383

Fig. 3.31 (at left) Rudolf Schlichter, "The verdict of history (*Das Urteil der Geschichte*)," back cover of *Der Knüppel*, vol. 3, no. 4 (March 1925); (at right) Honoré Daumier, from *La Caricature*, no. 251 (August 1835) 384

Fig. 3.32 A. Johnson, cover of *Kladderadatsch*, vol. 78, no. 12 (date?)....................385

Fig. 3.33 Laszlo Griffel, "The Dawes Flag (*Die Dawesflagge*)," from *Der Knüppel*, vol. 2, no. 3 (July 1924) 386

Fig. 3.34 (above) Richard Newton, *Spectacles for Republicans* (1798); (below) Thomas Rowlandson, *The Contrast* (1793) 387

Fig. 3.35 Karl Holtz, "Reichstag representative Ludendorff (*Reichstagabgeordneter Ludendorff*)," cover of *Lachen Links*, vol. 1, no. 19 (May 1924) 388

Fig. 3.36 [Artist?], SPD election flyer (1924?) 389

Fig. 3.37 Anonymous, "How the Communists run an election campaign," from *Der roter Stern*, vol.1, no. 12 (November 1924) 390

Fig. 3.38 Rudolf Schlichter, "Please flush! (*Hier gilt es auszumisten!*)," cover of *Die rosarote Brille* (October 1924) 391

Fig. 3.39 Laszlo Griffel, from *Die rosarote Brille* 392

Fig. 3.40 Detail of fig. 3.40--"Ah! Roast goose with wine! With these rose glasses one sees how highly the SPD considers us! Under their leadership it will also be like this" 393

Fig. 3.41 Laszlo Griffel, "Toward a new coalition (*Einer neuen Koalition Entgegen*)," cover of *Die Pleite*, no. 10/11 (June 1924) 394

Fig. 3.42 Detail of fig. 3.40-- "Glancing at the SPD candidates: 'Yes, this smart group absolutely belongs in parliament!'" 395

Fig. 3.43 Detail of fig. 3.40 396

Fig. 3.44 Anonymous,"Through rosy-tinted spectacles (*Durch die rosarote Brille*)," cover of *Lustige Blätter*, vol. 6, no. 27 (July 1891) 397

Fig. 3.45 George Grosz, portrait of John Heartfield from *Die rosarote Brille* 398

Fig. 3.46 George Grosz, portrait of Laszlo Griffel from *Die rosarote Brille* 399

Fig. 3.47 George Grosz, portrait of J. Förste from *Die rosarote Brille* 400

Fig. 3.48 George Grosz, portrait of Rudolf Schlichter from *Die rosarote Brille* 401

Fig. 3.49 George Grosz, self-portrait from *Die rosarote Brille* 402

Fig. 3.50 George Grosz, "Song of the Intellectuals (*Gesang der Intellektuellen*)," from *Abrechnung folgt!*....................403

Fig. 3.51 (at left) George Grosz, "Steady sits and snores, the Republic (*Fest sitzt und schnarcht die Republik*)," *from Abrechnung folgt!*; (at right) fig. 3.50....................404

Fig. 3.52 Various artists, "Art in the service of the Republic (*Die Kunst in Dienst der Republik*)," from *Die rosarote Brille* 405

Fig. 3.53 [Rudolf Schlichter?], detail of fig. 3.53....................406

Fig. 3.54 Photograph of the *Siegessäule* 407

Fig. 3.55 [Artist?], parody of the *Siegessäule*, from *Die rosarote Brille* 408

Fig. 3.56 Rudolf Schlichter,"Gather for the referendum! (*Sammeln zum Volksentscheid*)," cover of *Der Knüppel*, vol 4, no. 6 (June 1926) 409

Fig. 3.57 Rudolf Schlichter,"The working class lines up: Thälmann is their man! (*Die Arbeitsleute treten an: Ihr Mann ist Thälmann!*)," cover of *Der Knüppel*, vol. 3, no. 4 (March 1925) 410

Fig. 3.58 John Heartfield,"Rationalization marches on! (*Die Rationaliserung marschiert!*), from *Der Knüppel*, vol. 5, no. 2 (February 1927 411

Fig. 3.59 Anonymous, examples of workers'drawings and poetry, from *Der Knüppel* , vol. 5, no. 2 (February 1927) 412

Fig. 4.1 [Alfred Beier-Red?], cover *Eulenspiegel*, vol. 1, no. 1 (April 1928)....................413

Fig. 4.2 Karl Holtz, "The bourgeois culture-octopus. Watch out, Proletarian--or it will eat you up! (*Der burgerliche Kultur-Polyp. Wehr dich, Prolet--oder er frißt dich!*)," from *Eulenspiegel*, vol. 2, no. 9 (July 1929) 414

Fig. 4.3 Rudolf Schlichter, "Regulation of the unemployment question through coalition policy! (*Regelung der Arbeiterlosenfrage durch die Koalitionpolitik!*)," from *Eulenspiegel*, vol. 2, no. 10 (October 1929)....................415

Fig. 4.4 Rudolf Schlichter, "Two class militants (*Zwei Klassenkämpfer*)," from *Eulenspiegel*, vol. 1, no. 8 (November 1928)....................416

Fig. 4.5 (left) Charles Girod, cover of *Eulenspiegel* (1928); (right) portrait of Hermann Müller (c. 1929)....................417

Fig. 4.6 Alfred Beier-Red, "Zörgiebel, the representative election assistant for the SPD (*Zörgiebel, der repräsentative Wahlhelfer der SPD*)," from *Eulenspiegel*, vol. 3, no. 8 (September 1930) 418

Fig. 4.7 J. Sauer, "Play the new German national song: I kiss your hand madam" (*spielen Sie mal das neue deutsche National-Lied: Ich küsse Dir die Hand Madamm!*)," from *Eulenspiegel*, vol. 2, no. 3 (March 1929) 419

Fig. 4.8 (left) Alfred Beier Red, "Republican protection law (*Republik-Schutzgesetz*)," cover of *Eulenspiegel*, vol. 3, no. 4 (April 1930); (right) Alred Beier Red, "Steel or rubber (*Stahl oder Gummi*)," cover of *Eulenspiegel*, vol. 3, no. 10 (October 1930)........................ 420

Fig. 4.9 (left) Heinrich Zille, cover of *Eulenspiegel*, vol. 1, no. 5 (August 1928); (right) Heinrich Zille, from *Eulenspiegel*, vol. 2, no. 4 (April 1929) 421

Fig. 4.10 Two images from Heinrich Zille, *Berlin Stories and Pictures* (*Berliner Geschichten und Bilder*) (Dresden: Carl Reissner, 1924) 422

Fig. 4.11 (left) Gü, "Our success: Red pepper ! (*Unser Treffer: Roter Pfeffer!*), cover of *Roter Pfeffer*, vol. 5, no. 1 (January 1932); (right) Herrmann, "Only the dummest calves vote for their own butcher! (*Nur die allerdümmsten Kälber wählen ihre Metzger selber!*)," cover of *Roter Pfeffer*, vol. 5, no. 7 (July 1932).. 423

Fig. 4.12 (left) John Heartfield, "All fists clenched in one (*Alle Fäuste in einer geballt*)," cover of *AIZ*, vol. 13, no. 4 (October 1934); (right) John Heartfield, "The Nazi's play with fire. 'If the world burns, we'll prove that Moscow set the flames' (*Das Spiel der Nazis mit dem Feuer. 'Wenn die Welt erst brennt, werden wir schon beweisen, daß Moskau der Brandstifter war'*)," cover of *AIZ*, vol. 14, no. 9 (February 1935) 424

Abstract

The power of visual images to foster political identities and mold ways of seeing has long been a concern for scholars of print. From the outbreak of the Reformation to the development of serial illustrated publications, historians of European print culture have documented a widespread belief that print media, properly aimed and deployed, can transform like-minded viewers into reliable constituencies, or even a revolutionary force. While such insights have proven decisive for studies of eighteenth- and nineteenth-century graphic satire, art historical discussion of twentieth-century production remains oddly unaffected, especially so in the case of the Weimar Republic, a period of intense political polarization that saw a resurgence of graphic satire.

Seeing Class: Graphic Satire and the Cultivation of Radicalism in the Weimar Republic aims to address this lacuna through an in-depth exploration of how artists of the interwar period reshaped graphic satire for political ends. The representational flexibility of graphic satire provided partisan artists ample resources to attack the republican government and ridicule perceived enemies. Focusing on the German Left, I show how the targeting of working class audiences spurred formal experimentation and led to reevaluations of graphic satire's artistic import and political potential.

Upon its foundation in 1919, the German Communist Party (KPD) garnered immediate support from a number of recognized avant garde artists (e.g. George Grosz,

John Heartfield, Rudolf Schlichter) who eventually became regular caricaturists for party publications. Their goal was to translate structural foes of the working class into identifiable enemies whose visibility would assist in propagating a revolutionary perspective. How to meet this goal became a topic of debate, as the party struggled to define a consistent approach to visual culture and artists struggled to relate to a politics of proletarian revolution. Early efforts were guided by the writings of the Marxist cultural historian Eduard Fuchs, who championed graphic satire as a potent "agitational medium" (*Kampfmittel*) before WWI. By the end of the 1920s, however, the political value of such imagery was no longer so clear. Criticized for being aloof and “too negative" by party leaders, the sardonic drawings of Grosz, Schlichter, and fellow caricaturists gave way to more positive, "social" themes. Over the course of three chapters I discuss why this shift occurred and how it relates to changing conceptions of class, visual culture, and artistic production during this period, within and beyond the Communist milieu. I combine extensive archival research with analyses of images within and across specific publications, resulting in an approach that holds the political significance of visual art to be irreducible to formal innovation and highly dependent upon its ability to resonate with the lived experience and perspectives of specific audiences.

Introduction: Class, Communism, and the History of Graphic Satire

[Fig. 0.1] The back cover of a September 1924 issue of the Communist magazine *The Young Comrade* (*Der junge Genosse*) features a contest for its young readers under the heading "The Enemies of the Working Class (*Die Feinde der Arbeiterklasse*)."[1] A tiered series of small vignettes make up the page. On top, distinguishable types representative of the reigning social order stand in a row: a policeman, a soldier, a judge, a priest, a censor—behind them, sketched almost as an afterthought, a hurried man (some kind of civil servant by the looks of him). Below appear three members of the ruling class: a rentier, a *Junker*, and an industrial capitalist. On the bottom, leading figures of the Republican government are depicted in monarchical trappings. In the middle, Friedrich Ebert, leader of the German Social Democratic party (*Sozialdemokratische Partei Deutschlands* or SPD) during World War I and first president of the Weimar Republic, sits on a raised throne with all the accoutrements of former imperial rule, his paunch

[1] Initiated in 1921 under the direction of the Executive Committee of the Communist Youth International, *Der junge Genosse* was first published in Berlin and edited by Edwin Hoernle, the KPD's leading authority on educational issues. In 1923 editorship of the publication shifts to Bruno Peterson, and the following year it came under the direction of a Viennese organization, likely to subvert legal issues—with which the KPD's publishing efforts often dealt. In the November 1924 issue the name of the publication changes to *Young Spartacus: Magazine for Working-Class Children* (*Jung-Spartakus: Zeitschrift für Arbeiterkinder*), which it retained thereafter. A close colleague of Rosa Luxemburg's before World War I, Hoernle was a founding member of the German Communist Party and, in addition to overseeing the party's policy on education issues, he likewise played a leading role in its efforts to draw in rural laborers. Later he helped to theorize the workers' photography movement with his influential essay "The Eye of the Worker," first published in *Der Arbeiter-Fotograf,* vol. 4, no. 7 (1930).

prominently displaying the Iron Cross.[2] To his right stands Gustav Noske, fellow SPD-man and first defense minister of the Republic. Best known for his controversial role in the bloody suppression of the Spartacus uprising in 1919, Noske is dressed in outdated military attire (the spiked helmet, or *Pickelhaube*, was retired after 1918). To Ebert's left, Philip Scheidemann is likewise attired in a way seemingly at odds with his political background. Long a member of the SPD and its parliamentary faction, it was Scheidemann who proclaimed the German Republic from a balcony of the Reichstag on November 9, 1918 and served (briefly) as its first chancellor. A supposed champion of the German working class, here Scheidemann is decked out as bourgeois, complete with watchfob and top hat. Gathered together in this fashion and displayed as they are, it is clear that these portraits of living politicians are meant to operate symbolically. Noske, Scheidemann, and Ebert are transformed into types emblematic of social democratic hypocrisy. They too are enemies of the working class.

That the contest includes both examples of recognizable social types that circulated in commercial illustrated magazines and caricatured depictions of prominent members of the SPD is significant. It suggests that, for the editors of *Der junge Genosse*, satirical drawings could provide more than entertainment. Properly displayed, they could be instructive. The details of the contest ask individual branches of the

[2] Originally instituted by King Friedrich Wilhelm III of Prussia in 1813 during the Napoleonic Wars, it was subsequently fell out of favor until recommissioned during the Franco-Prussian War and again at the beginning of World War I by Emperor Wilhelm II. Although technically a Prussian award for military service, due to the oversized importance of the Prussian state, it became a German decoration in general meeting. This accounts for the significance of its re-appearance under the Nazis after 1939 as a German, rather than Prussian award. For a general, but limited, historical overview, see Gordon Williamson, *The Iron Cross. A History, 1813-1957* (Poole, Dorset: Blanford Press, 1984).

Communist youth organization to send in written descriptions of why each figure in the series is "our" enemy.[3] Branches are advised to keep their answers short and keep as close to the images as possible. Winning descriptions will help branches to expand their organizational libraries (first prize: a trilogy of books by the Czech socialist Alois Theodor Sonnleitner;[4] consolation prize: a pamphlet about Spartacus, the "slave liberator."). The enjoyment of the game is thus linked to a pedagogical goal; by means of graphic satire, children are taught to differentiate people according to class, to distinguish "them" from "us" by means of visual cues inherited from past examples of the art that continued to circulate in updated forms during the Weimar period. And lest we see this as mere child's play, drawings of a similar nature were ubiquitous in Communist publications of the era and utilized for similar purposes.[5] It was not solely the Communist youth who were being taught to see class in a revolutionary way.[6]

---

[3] Begun in 1920, the *Kommunistische Kindergruppe* organization oversaw pedagogical issues and was associated with the German Communist Party. Later, it became the *Jung-Spartakus-Bund*. For background, see Heiko Müller, *'Kinder müssen Klassenkämpfer werden!' Der kommunistische Kinderverband in der Weimarer Republik (1920-1933)* (Marburg: Tectum Verlag, 2013).

[4] Born Alois Tlučhoř, Sonnleitner won renown for his trilogy *The Cave Children* (*Die Höhlenkinder*), which takes place just after the Thirty Years war and recounts the story of two children who become isolated in a valley and must survive on their own. For further background, see *Lexikon der Kinder- und Jugenliteratur*, vol. 3, ed. Klaus Doderer (Weinheim; Basel: Verlag Beltz, 1979), 411-413.

[5] As Hoernle writes in a 1923 lecture:

> [i]f someone wants to know how much the struggles and movements of our time are reflected in the minds of working-class children, how much the working-class child is already accustomed to the life of adults, all one has to do is look at the drawings and poems of our children. Inflation is rising, and so is the number of images that focus on hunger and deprivation. And almost always the experience of hunger is at the same time formed as an accusation against the rich

--published as *Die Arbeit in der kommunistischen Kindergruppen* (Vienna, 1923), and discussed further in Dieter Richter, *Das politische Kinderbuch* (Darmstadt: Leutcherhand, 1973), 226-7.

[6] Thomas Mergel, "Propaganda in der Kultur des Schauens. Visuelle Politk in der Weimarer Republik," in *Ordnungen in der Krise: Zur politischen Kulturgeschichte Deutschlands 1900-1933*, ed. Wolfgang Hardtwig (München: R. Oldenbourg Verlag, 2007): 521-559. Riccardo Bavaj, "'Revolutionierung der Augen' Politische Massenmobilisierung in der Weimarer Republik und der Münzenberg Konzern," in *Politische Kultur und Medienwirklichkeiten in den 1920er Jahren*, eds. Ute Daniel, Inge Marszolek, Wolfram Pyta, und Thomas Welskopp (München: R. Oldenbourg Verlag, 2010): 81-100.

Artists worked across titles, and images that appear in *Der junge Genosse* can be found in adult magazines as well. The early Communist movement made every effort to enlist vision for the cause, based in a belief that class-consciousness could be fostered through visual media. Graphic satire came to play a critical role in this endeavor.

My title, therefore, is not meant to be taken metaphorically. All the major parties of the Weimar era, and even the minor ones, put print to work for political ends, and the German Communist Party (*Kommunistische Partei Deutschlands*, or KPD) was no different. The attraction of left-wing radicalism following the collapse of the German imperial state and initial success of the Russian revolution inordinately benefitted the KPD in this pursuit, however. Conditions in post war Germany pushed many leading artists of the avant garde into the orbit of the party and the broader milieu it shared with various (often intransigent) groupuscules and associations.[7] There they were joined by lesser known professional cartoonists and émigrés from the white terrors of Eastern Europe, and together forged an explicitly Communist graphic satire whose full impact has been largely neglected in the existing literature. The following dissertation seeks to rectify this situation by attending to the generation of Communist graphic satire in the early years of the Weimar Republic, its operational framework, methods of deployment, and increasing fracture over the course of a decade. At its core lies a question with theoretical ramifications that extend far beyond the historical material at

[7] To account for the array of disparate groups, sects, and organizations that shared a revolutionary, Communist political orientation but were not always allied with the KPD, historians such as Klaus Michael Mallmann have coined the term "communist milieu," which I too will employ when discussing individuals or associations beyond the KPD's party apparatus. See Klaus Michael Mallmann, *Kommunisten in der Weimarer Republik – Sozialgeschichte einer revolutionären Bewegung* (Darmstadt: Wissenschaftliche Buchgesellschaft, 1996) for more.

issue, but whose shape and gravity will hopefully become plain by the conclusion: *How does class become a way of seeing?*

The Operations of Communist Graphic Satire

The production and dissemination of Communist graphic satire during the Weimar period was predicated on a fact that the labor movement recognized from the very beginning: class politics is visual through and through. Collective agency thrives on visual distinction, and various modes of representation, from allegorical symbolism to naturalistic depiction, have long aided militants in rallying supporters toward a common goal or against a common enemy. With the rise of the labor movement in the nineteenth century, a perceptual shift occurs whereby the target of political satire moves away from individual actors towards the reigning forces on whose behalf they act. It is no longer the folly of a particular industrialist or politician that is ridiculed, but instead their *position* as a capitalist or bourgeois politician that comes to the fore. Satirists on the left encouraged their audiences to visualize the unequal relationships that conditioned society by transforming structural foes into identifiable enemies, resulting in the emergence of distinctive social "types" (e.g. the fat bourgeois, his equally rotund wife, their lanky petit-bourgeois clerk, his slovenly bohemian son, the lascivious coquette who seduces him, the rigid police officer who finds them, the dirty, dutiful laborer who ignores them all) that continue alongside real-life personalities in graphic satire thereafter. Communist graphic satire generated during the Weimar period conforms to this model, only more so. It is defined not so much by the originality of its content as the acerbity of its formal presentation and sardonic mode of address.

Behind these qualities was an operational framework of four interacting parts that will comprise the core of my analysis:

- First and foremost, Communist graphic satire *functioned in accordance with a dialectic of propagation and cultivation, with partisan artists at its fulcrum point*.[8] I have chosen these active forms of the words propaganda and culture to acknowledge the indeterminate status of graphic satire within the Communist milieu. Though they recognized its popularity, Communist critics were unsure of its artistic status. Satire's value as propaganda, on the other hand, seemed self-evident, but this too became a subject of debate. Ultimately, what graphic satire *was* became less important than what graphic satire could *do*. And what it did, according to a 1921 Comintern directive, was to render Communist politics into a simplified, accessible form that would aid in propagating a revolutionary perspective while cultivating a collective, class-based identity.[9] This is why, despite its initial hesitance, the KPD embraced graphic satire after 1921 and deployed it vigorously.
- Second, the propagation-cultivation dialectic at the basis of Communist graphic satire *ran on sustained imagery rather than unique or individual artworks*. Repetition of visual tropes, emblems, personalities, and characters within and across

[8] In his book *Geschichte der europäischen Karikatur* (Berlin: VEB Deutscher Verlag der Wissenschaften, 1976), the East German art historian Georg Piltz argues that the "proletarian-revolutionary" graphic satire produced during Weimar displayed a conjunction of "negation and affirmation" (*Verneinung und Bejahung*). Although similar to the dialectic I outline here, Piltz's is far more rigid and tied to a political evaluation of material produced in alliance with the KPD far different than my own. The book is nevertheless a quintessential source, one of the only dedicated to this material that places it within a macro-historical overview of graphic satire's development.
[9] The directive was published in full in the October 27, 1921 issue of *Die rote Fahne* and is discussed in chapter two.

Communist-affiliated publications served to familiarize readers with a proletarian iconography customized for maximum effect. Although in many cases drawn from earlier precedents and pre-existing traditions, such elements were re-coded or updated to buttress an anti-Republican political orientation. Thus, the scope of analysis must move beyond singular images to capture how publications performed inter-visually.

- Third, Communist graphic satire *was directed toward the lived reality of Weimar-era urban society*. Nearly all the KPD's publications spoke to an urban, working class audience, although the actual readership extended to other classes as well. Their intended goal was to provide content that would resonate with working-class experience in its two asynchronous dimensions: one, the narrow, mundane, and routinized experience of everyday life; the other, the expansive, spectacular, and increasingly commercialized experience of the Weimar image-world.[10] The latter, fueled by reproductive media technologies that saturated urban life with visual material as never before, belonged to leisure time; the former to labor and domestic duties. That working-class life in interwar Germany comprised *both* experiential dimensions, separate yet intermingled, means that we cannot assume workers inhabited an exclusive "proletarian public sphere."[11] Even if

[10] I employ this term to refer to the agglomeration of images (original or reproduced, contemporary or inherited) that saturated the metropolitan environments of interwar Germany and spread beyond these to rural areas through publications, advertisements, exhibitions, etc., such that a majority of people living during this period knew about a wide variety of images, as well as what they looked like, even if they had not actually encountered them in person.

[11] The proletarian public sphere is a term used by Oskar Negt and Alexander Kluge in their study, *Public Sphere of Experience: Analysis of the Bourgeois and Proletarian Public Sphere*, trans. Peter Labanyi, Jamie Owen Daniel, and Assenka Oksiloff (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 1993; repr., London; New York: Verso, 2016). Its German publication in 1972 was aimed at complicating the historical narrative set

they did not belong to the world of parliamentary politics, high society, and bourgeois culture, they certainly knew about that world and could recognize its inhabitants. The resonance of Communist graphic satire depended upon this multi-dimensional reality of working class experience; it was the raw source material that artists sought to mold into a political perspective.

- Finally, Communist graphic satire *required an active mode of reception.* For the resonance of Communist graphic satire to take hold in its intended fashion, viewers needed to know how to engage with these images. Unlike works of fine art, these were not images meant to be contemplated over a long period of time. There were timed and employed to be seen quickly, perhaps even in a state of distraction. Even a momentary view of graphic satire is an active process, however, since viewers must compare mental images they bring with them to the images they see in order for the satirical effect to work. The resulting political charge is dependent upon a broader context that exists *outside* the image and *inside* the viewer's mind. In contrast to models of ideological interpellation that "hail" viewers into particular subjects, I am interested in what viewers brought to the images that set the propagation/cultivation dialectic of Communist graphic satire in motion. Some guidance could be found in the textual support

---

out by Jürgen Habermas in *Strukturwandel der Öffentlichkeit* (1962) by theorizing a counter-bourgeois milieu of proletarian 'public opinion' into the twentieth-century. While Habermas' book, published in English as *The Structural Transformation of the Public Sphere: An Inquiry into a Category of Bourgeois Society*, trans. Thomas Burger (Cambridge, MA: MIT Press, 1989), has become a common touchstone for historians of culture, Negt and Kluge's remains neglected. For two assessments that discusses this lacuna further, see Eley, "Politics, Culture, and the Public Sphere," *positions: east asia cultures/critique,* vol. 10, no. 1 (SPring 2002): 219-236, and Miriam Hansen, "Unstable Mixtures, Dilated Spheres: Negt's and Kluge's *The Public Sphere and Experience* Twenty Years Later," *Public Culture*, 5 (Winter 1993): 179-212.

that supplemented satirical imagery, but it also came in the form of visual training (*Anschaauungsunterricht)*, like that found in the *Junge Genosse* contest. Although never properly theorized, visual training underlay the KPD's initial faith in graphic satire. Critics in the Communist press advertised its political efficacy; examples were presented at party meetings and discussed; publications were deployed in coordination with specific political campaigns and cultural initiatives. Vision was a practice that could be shaped, honed. This was the object of Communist graphic satire's operation.

Several aspects regarding Communist graphic satire need to be addressed before moving on to a discussion of its key components. The operational framework I have outlined is an analytical construction meant to capture the complexity of Communist graphic satire in as succinct a manner as possible. What I refer to as the "dialectic of propagation and cultivation" seldom functioned as smoothly or mechanically as this framework may suggest. The actual production and dissemination of Communist graphic satire was much messier and convoluted, as we shall see. However, in order to better ground the analysis historically, I felt it best to begin conceptually with a model against which the impact of the Weimar Republic's turbulent politics could be assessed and evaluated. Moreover, how Communist graphic satire was supposed to operate can tell us a great deal about how the interwar Communist milieu conceived of politics and visual culture.

That the content of Communist graphic satire is predominately male-oriented and racially homogenous cannot be denied. As scholars have rightly argued, masculinity

dominates the visual culture of the interwar Communist milieu and has served to overshadow the domestic realm and other, more public sites where women contributed in significant ways to contemporary class struggle.[12] Women rarely appear in Communist graphic satire except as allegorical figures or nameless social types. The same is true of commercial satire magazines of the period, except for few notable exceptions including Clara Zetkin, an important, early advocate of the Bolsheviks and founding member of the KPD, and Ruth Fischer, the only woman to ever lead a European Communist party.[13] The ramifications of this upon studies of working class culture and the very notion of class that Marxist historians employ I fully acknowledge and will contend with when necessary.[14]

---

[12] *Dokumente der revolutionären deutschen Frauenbewegung zur Frauenfrage, 1848-1974*, eds. H. J. Arendt, J. Kirchner, J. Müller, E. Schotte, and F. Staude (Leipzig: Verlag für Frau, 1975). C. Benninghaus, "Mothers' Toil and Daughters' Leisure: Working-Class Girls and Time in 1920s Germany," *History Workshop Journal*, 50 (2000): 45-72. R. Bridenthal, "Beyond *Kinder, Küche, Kirche*: Weimar Women at Work," *Central European History*, vol. 6, no. 2 (1973): 148-66. Belinda Davis, *Home Fires Burning: Food, Politics, and Everyday Life in World War I Berlin* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 2000). K. Hagemann, *Frauenalltag und Männerpolitik: Alltagsleben und gesellschaftliches Handeln von Arbeiterfrauen in der Weimarer Republik* (Bonn: J. H. W. Dietz, 1990). K. Hagemann, "Men's Demonstrations and Women's Protest: Gender in Collective Action in the Urban Working-Class Milieu in the Weimar Republic," *Gender and History*, no. 5 (1993): 101-119. S. Kontos, *Die Partei kämpft wie ein Mann* (Frankfurt am Main: Stroemfeld Verlag, 1979). Eric Weitz, "The Heroic Man and the Ever-Changing Woman: Gender and Politics in European Communism, 1917-1950," in *Gender and Class in Modern Europe*, eds. L L. Frader and S. O. Rose (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 1996).

[13] Not to mention Rosa Luxemburg, of course, the early leader of the revolutionary wing of the SPD. Although she lived to see the founding of the KPD, her assassination by a member of the *Freikorps* in early 1919 kept her from its subsequent transformation into a mass party. Zetkin, a close friend and ally of Luxemburg, played a leading role in the KPD from the beginning, orchestrating much of its outreach to women and formulating some of the earliest responses to the rise of fascism. Fischer (née Elfriede Eisler), on the other hand, belonged to a younger generation of cadre who rose to positions of influence early on, but later found themselves on the wrong side of Stalin. Her two brothers also held influential party roles: Hanns Eisler composed music for party events and the plays of Bertolt Brecht, eventually penning the national anthem for the German Democratic Republic; Gerhart began as editor of the KPD's *Die rote Fahne*, later became a Soviet agent in China and the USA and ended up chief of radio in East Germany. For further details, see Mario Keßler, *Ruth Fischer: Ein Leben mit und gegen Kommunisten (1895-1961)* (Köln: Böhlau, 2013).

[14] Kathleen Canning, "Gender and the Politics of Class Formation: Rethinking German Labor History," *American Historical Review*, vol. 97, no. 3 (June 1992); reprinted in *Society, Culture, and the State in Germany, 1870-1930*, ed. Geoff Eley (Ann Arbor: The University of Michigan Press, 1997):105-142.

The issue of nationalism raises similar problems. Histories of interwar Communism tend to approach the subject in terms of distinct, national developments. While adequate for tracing the minutiae of party maneuvers and political maturation, especially across the caesura of World War II, charting the history of German Communism can be limiting when it comes to cultural production[15]. National though it was in geographic and linguistic terms, Communist graphic satire was in scope and orientation distinctly international. Like the cultural initiatives run by the Communist International that overlapped with the KPD's own during the period, the creation of Communist "alternative culture" was built upon a goal of establishing transnational solidarity between working classes across national borders.[16] This is why I prefer Weimar Communism as a period designation, in line with scholarship that stresses the composite character of the Communist milieu at this time—especially in Berlin, where Communist graphic satire emerged.[17]

In terms of method, I stand squarely in the tradition of the social history of art. For me this entails a commitment to the most basic principle of Marx's materialist conception of history, elegantly captured by Arnold Hauser in his contention that

---

[15] The two best general surveys of the KPD include: Eric D. Weitz, *Creating German Communism, 1890-1990. From Popular Protests to Socialist State* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1997) and Ben Fowkes, *Communism in Germany under the Weimar Republic* (London; Basingstoke: Macmillan Press, 1984). In German, Hermann Weber, *Die Wandlung des deutschen Kommunismus* (Frankfurt am Main: Europäische Verlagsanstalt, 1969).

[16] Kasper Braskén, *The International Workers' Relief, Communism, and Transnational Solidarity: Willi Münzenberg in Weimar Germany*, Palgrave Studies in the History of Social Movements, eds. Stefan Berger and Holger Nehring (Basingstoke; New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2015). Braskén's is a welcome antidote to Sean McMeekin's horrible *Red Millionaire: A Political Biography of Willi Münzenberg* (New Haven; London: Yale University Press, 2003). Michael David-Fox, *Showcasing the Great Experiment: Cultural Diplomacy and Western Visitors to the Soviet Union, 1921-1941* (Oxford; New York: Oxford University Press, 2012).

[17] *Weimar Communism as Mass Movement, 1918-1933*, eds. Ralf Hoffrogge and Norman LaPorte (London: Lawrence and Wishart, Ltd., 2017).

> [t]he real meaning of historical materialism…consists…in the insight that historical developments have their origin not in formal principles, ideas and entities, not in substances which unfold and produce in the course of history mere 'modifications' of their fundamentally unhistorical nature, but in the fact that historical development represents a dialectical process, in which every factor is in a state of motion and subject to constant change of meaning, in which there is nothing static, nothing timelessly valid, but also nothing one-sidedly active, and in which all factors, material and intellectual, economic and ideological, are bound up together in a state of *indissoluble interdependence*, that is to say, that we are not in the least able to go back to any point in time, where a historically definable situation is not already the result of this interaction [my emphasis].[18]

It likewise signals a commitment to foregrounding the political valence of visual art, albeit not in a reductive or formalist manner. I intend to get away from readings drawing narrowly from the political commitment of the artist-producer. This is why I instead emphasize practices; first the practice of making Communist graphic satire, and second, the practice of viewing it. What I am after is a better understanding of the Communist political imaginary that arose amongst the working class in Germany and across Europe after 1917. In this pursuit I am, as so many before me, indebted to Benedict Anderson's *Imagined Communities*, with the necessary caveat that the working-class community I mean to explore was not imaginary, but real, its political commitments and vacillations more than the sum of their representations.[19]

---

[18] Arnold Hauser, *The Social History of Art*, vol. 3, 161. Historical Materialism is no longer what it once was, of course, and Marxists have developed this basic principle in conversation with the work of other fields and other insights, rendering the historical materialism of today a much richer, and more complex, methodological standpoint. For an excellent apposite example, see David Camfield, "Theoretical Foundations of an Anti-Racist Queer Feminist Historical Materialism," *Critical Sociology*, vol. 42, no. 2 (2016): 289-306.

[19] Benedict Anderson, *Imagined Communities: Reflections on the Origin and Spread of Nationalism*, rev. ed. (London; New York: Verso, 2016). Anderson's discussion of "print-capitalism" and its collusion in the formation, spread, and consolidation of national consciousness through such quotidian products as newspapers has proved extremely influential for scholars of print culture. For a trenchant critique of Anderson's main thesis from a Marxist perspective, see Neil Davidson, "Reimagined Communities: Benedict Anderson's Theory of Nationalism," in *Holding Fast to an Image of the Past: Exploration in the Marxist Tradition* (Chicago: Haymarket Books, 2014).

Visualizing Class: Identity/Consciousness

In his 1958 essay "Culture is Ordinary," Raymond Williams famously asserts "there are in fact no masses; there are only ways of seeing people as masses."[20] One could make the analogous claim that there are in fact no classes; there are only ways of seeing people as classes. Williams, were he still living, would doubtless consider this a step too far—and rightly so—but such a claim does reveal an essential truth: the existence of class does not guarantee the appearance of people as classes. In the strict, Marxist sense of the term, class does not look like anything. Belonging to one social class or another is not the result of an individual's visible appearance, but rather their location vis-à-vis the reigning material relations of production.[21] This has made class a tricky subject for social historians of art.[22] Whereas once the rise and fall of distinct

---

[20] Originally included in the volume *Conviction*, ed. Norman Mackenzie (London: MacGibbon and Kee, 1958) it has been reprinted in *Resources of Hope.Culture, Democracy, Socialism*, ed. Robin Gale (London; New York: Verso, 1989): 3-18. Williams expanded upon his assertion in *Culture and Society, 1780-1950* (London: Chatto & Windus, 1958), commonly viewed as one of the originating texts of British cultural studies, alongside Richard Hoggart's *The Uses of Literacy.*

[21] As Olin Wright notes, although both Marxist and Weberian versions of class analysis define class relationally, Marx draws attention to conflicts within relations of production as the determining factor of class society, whereas Weber instead looks the market as the primary determinate of class. For Marx, distributional conflicts are tied to conflicts over production that arise from the daily reality of exploitation, an "antagonistic interdependence of material interests" that binds capitalists and wage workers together (10). Weber instead sees class in terms of "life chances" shaped by the market:

> We may speak of a 'class' when (1) a number of people have in common a specific causal component of their life chances, insofar as (2) this component is represented exclusively by economic interests in the possession of goods and opportunities for income, and (3) is represented under the conditions of the commodity of labor markets…Class situation is, in this sense, ultimately market situation

--cited from *Economy and Society,* ed. Guenther Roth and Claus Wittich, 2 vols. (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1978), 926-7. For a more detailed comparison of competing traditions, Marxist, Weberian, Durkheimian, and Bourdieuian, see *Approaches to Class Analysis*, ed. Erik Olin Wright (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2005).

[22] An introduction to many of the methodological touchstones of the social history of art can be found in Janet Wolff, *The Social Production of Art* (London; Basinstoke: Macmillan Press, 1981) and the older, and far more daunting, Arnold Hauser, *The Sociology of Art*, trans. Kenneth J. Northcott (Chicago; London: University of Chicago Press, 1982; originally published as *Soziologie der Kunst* (Munich: C. H. Beck'sche Verlagsbuchhandlung, 1974).The best introduction to the history of the social history of art and its

social classes seemed to provide a cogent timeline upon which stylistic developments could be charted and explained, by the end of the 1970s confidence in this narrative had been irrevocably damaged and class was no longer seen as the primary determinant of artistic production. The same has been true of Marxist-aligned cultural history in general. Today, when class is spoken of (if spoken of at all), it is in terms of class *identity*. This is at variance from an older modality, wherein class was understood primarily in terms of class *consciousness*. The distinction carries significant theoretical weight, particularly in relation to the analysis of working-class cultures and class-oriented art forms.[23]

According to Marx, the structural position of the proletariat places them in a unique position to overturn capitalism. No other social class is ultimately capable of putting an end to capitalist relations of production because no other class is its living product/producer[24] .This position of potential strength, not marginal to the constitution

---

Marxist genesis is *Marxism and the History of Art: From William Morris to the New Left*, ed. Andrew Hemingway (London; Ann Arbor: Pluto Press, 2006), though we lack a comprehensive study of this history.

[23] In English, Vernon L. Lidtke groundbreaking study, *The Alternative Culture: Socialist Labor in Imperial Germany* (New York; Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1985), influence much of the subsequent scholarship related to the Wilhelmine period. For the Weimar era, W. L. Guttsmann's book *Workers' Culture in Germany. Between Tradition and Commitment* (Oxford: Berg, 1990) has been equally important, as has the follow up study *Art for the Workers. Ideology and the Visual Arts in Weimar Germany* (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 1997). In German, scholarship on this subject for both periods is far more extensive. An overview can be found in Geoff Eley, "Cultural Socialism, the Public Sphere, and the Mass Form: Popular Culture and the Democratic Project, 1900 to 1934," in *Between Reform and Revolution. German Socialism and Communism from 1840 to 1990*, eds. David Barclay and Eric Weitz (London: Berghahn Books, 1998): 315-340. For my purposes, the work of Adelheid von Saldern has been most helpful, especially her "Arbeiterkulturbewegung in Deutschland in der Zwischenkriegszeit," in *Arbeiterkulturen zwischen Alltag und Politk. Beiträge zum europäischen Vergleich in der Zwischenkriegszeit*, ed. Friedhelm Boll (Wein; München; Zürich: Europa-Verlag, 1986), 29-70. A collection of von Saldern's essay has been translated as *The Challenge of Modernity: German Social and Cultural Studies, 1890-1960*, trans. Bruce Little (Ann Arbor: The University of Michigan Press, 2002).

[24] For a recent exegesis of *Capital* attuned to to its immediate political context that directly relates to this connection, see William Clare Roberts, *Marx's Inferno: The Political Theory of Capital* (Princeton; Oxford: Princeton University Press, 2017).

of capitalist society but at its very core, is why, in opposition to utopian socialist and populist theories, Marx argued that it was the working class alone that would usher in a classless society.[25] Fundamentally, class is about material interests and power, not how one looks.[26] This has remained a central tenet of the "classical" Marxist tradition from its constitution in the nineteenth century.[27] In practice, however, socialist movements have always relied upon visualizations of class to win people to the cause. The theoretical impersonality of Marxist class analysis may reveal the underlying dynamics that condition our social environment, but it takes living human beings to put this knowledge to work.[28] Any serious analysis of the subject must contend with the

---

[25] As famously described in the *Communist Manifesto*, "[a]ll previous historical movements were movements of minorities, or in the interest of minorities. The proletarian movement is the self-conscious, independent movement of the immense majority, in the interests of the immense majority. The proletariat, the lowest stratum of our present society cannot stir, cannot raise itself up, without the whole superincumbent strata of official society [*der ganze Überbau der Schichten, die die offizielle Gesellscahft bilden*] being sprung into the air"—Marx and Engels, *Collected Works,* vol. 6 (New York: International Publishers, 1976), 496. The key Marxist study on the subject of the politics of different classes, past and present, remains Hal Draper's *Karl Marx's Theory of Revolution: Volume III, The Politics of Social Classes* (New York; London: Monthly Review Press, 1978).

[26] Erik Olin Wright's work on class remains the most thorough and extensive re-working of the classical Marxist position. For an introductory evaluation, see his *Class Counts. Comparative Studies in Class Analysis* (Cambridge; New York: Cambridge University Press; Paris: Maison des sciences de l'homme, 1997).

[27] There are various, and conflicted, definitions of the "classical" Marxist tradition, largely dependent upon who belongs and when it ends. My usage of the term refers to the standardization of texts and formulation of a cohesive Marxist framework during the period of the Second International and its revolutionary reformulation during the early period of the Third International, up until it became the deformed "Marxism-Leninism" of Stalin. The major figures of the tradition, according to my definition, are therefore Marx, Engels, Kautsky, Luxemburg, Lenin, and Trotsky. Another figure who deserves credit for forging this tradition is Karl Kautsky, the one-time "Pope of Marxism," whose theoretical authority was widely recognized until he chastised the Bolsheviks and was branded a reformist. For more on Kautsky's role, see Jukka Gronow, *On the Formation of Marxism: Karl Kautsky's Theory of Capitalism, the Marxism of the Second International, and Karl Marx's Critique of Political Economy* (Leiden: Brill, 2016; Chicago: Haymarket Books, 2017).

[28] A note on what I am calling the "theoretical impersonality of Marxist class analysis." The working class that appears in Marx's own writings is often highly personalized and dominated by descriptions of working class *men*. Yet, such particulars do not invalidate the analytical force of Marx's conception of capitalist class relations; on the contrary, as subsequent Marxists have argued, Marx's views have proven invaluable in understanding how class exploitation and various forms of oppression are reinforcing. Social Reproduction Theory has been pathbreaking in this respect; see, for example, Tithi Bhattacharya's "How Not to Skip Class: Social Reproduction of Labor and the Global Working Class," in the collection

complexity of class as a *lived reality*, embroiled in external dynamics that become intertwined with relations of production, a fact Marxist historians of culture have long argued.

Scholars often speak of the rise of a specific "cultural Marxism" after World War II in opposition to "real existing Socialism," the legacy of high-Stalinism, and, more specifically, the crushing of the Hungarian Revolution by Soviet tanks in 1956.[29] While it is true that these events and conditions did trigger a re-evaluation of inherited models of "Diamat" and "Histomat," eventually leading many Marxist historians out of their respective Communist parties and into looser, de-centralized branches of the New Left, characterizing their work as "culturalist" overlooks the extent to which cultural concerns and debates date back to the very beginning of the Marxist tradition and downplays the theoretical complexity of their contribution to historiography.[30] Nevertheless, there was a growing consensus in some quarters of left-wing scholarship that cultural factors had been overlooked and needed to become a more central concern. The steady introduction of a counter-canon of "Western Marxism" over the course of the following two decades supported this shift, as did the burgeoning field of cultural

Social Reproduction Theory. Remapping Class, Recentering Oppression, ed. Tithi Bhattacharya (London: Pluto Press, 2017): 68-93. For an approach that seeks to amend intersectional approaches to various oppressions through a Marxist focus, see Holly Lewis, *The Politics of Everybody: Feminism, Queer Theory, and Marxism at the Intersection* (London: Zed Books, 2016).

[29] For more on the impact of Stalinism on the postwar period, see *The Stalinist Legacy: Its Impact on Twentieth-Century World Politics*, ed. Tariq Ali, rev. ed. (Chicago: Haymarket Books, 2013).

[30] Although he employs the term in far too general a fashion, Dennis Dworkin does present an excellent overview of these developments in the UK, where much of this work originated, in his study *Cultural Marxism in Postwar Britain: History, the New Left, and the Origins of Cultural Studies* (Durham; London: Duke University Press, 1997). Diamat is short for "dialectical materialism," Histomat for "historical materialism," both of which are outlined in their "official," mechanistic interpretation in chapter four of the *History of the Communist Party of the Soviet Union (Short Course)*, a standard textbook for members of western Communist parties well into the post-World War II period.

studies.[31] Although chiefly Anglophone in the beginning, the cultural turn later spread to other regions. In Germany, for example, the emergence of *Alltagsgeschichte*, or the history of "everyday life," in the 1980s owes much to earlier precedents developed in England and the US.[32]

In simple terms, the historical approach that emerged out of these shifts can be characterized as a "bottom-up" perspective, attuned to the practices, beliefs, attitudes, and struggles of common people. Of central importance is the issue of *class formation,* or how it is that individuals belonging to a common class position come together to form a collective group of actors.[33] There are several reasons why common labor conditions

---

[31] Rather than separate the rise of British cultural studies between a "pre" and "post" New Left, Tom Steele stresses a continuity between it and the earlier extramural teaching organizations of the labor movement in *The Emergence of Cultural Studies, 1945-65: Cultural Politics, Adult Education, and the English Question* (London: Lawrence and Wishart Ltd., 1997). Continuity is also stressed in several studies that trace the political biography of key figures, such as Stephen Woodhams, *History in the Making: Raymond Williams, Edward Thompson, and Radical Intellectuals, 1936-1956* (London: Merlin Press, 2001), and Harvey Kaye, *The British Marxist Historians*.

[32] For a general assessment of *Alltagsgeschichte's* contribution to German historical study, see David Crew, "Alltagsgeschichte: A New Social History 'From Below'?" *Central European History*, vol. 22, no. 3/4 (September-December 1989): 394-407, and Geoff Eley, "Social History, 'Alltagsgeshichte': Experience, Culture, and the Politics of the Everyday—a New Direction for German Social History?" *Journal of Modern History*, vol. 61, no. 2 (June 1989): 297-343. Both authors single out the work of Alf Lüdtke, whose own formulation of *Alltagsgeschichte* as a social historical trend can be found in the introduction to *The History of Everyday Life. Reconstructing Historical Experience and Ways of Life,* ed. Alf Lüdtke, trans. William Temple (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1995)—originally released in German in 1989. An earlier collection in English drawing upon methods derived from an *Alltagsgeshichte* perspective is *The German Working Class, 1888-1933. The Politics of Everyday Life*, ed. Richard Evans (London: Hutchinson, 1982).

[33] Long held to be a hold-over from Marx's early infatuation with Hegelian philosophy, the *class-in-itself* versus *class-for-itself* (*Klasse-in-sich vs. Klasse-für-sich*) has nevertheless remained a touchstone for the Marxist tradition on this question. It first makes its appearance in *The Poverty of Philosophy*, Marx's brutal critique of Proudhon written in 1846-7:

> Economic conditions had first transformed the mass of the people of the country into workers. The combination of capital [*Die Herrschaft des Kapitals*] has created for this mass a common situation [*gemeinsame Situation*], common interests [*gemeinsame Interessen*]. This mass is thus already a class as against capital, but not yet for itself [*noch nicht für sich selbst*]. In the struggle, of which we have noted only a few phases, this mass becomes united, and constitutes itself as a class for itself. The interests it defends become class interests. But the struggle of class against class is a political struggle

--Marx/Engels, *Collected Works*, vol. 6 (New York: International Publishers, 1976), 211.

and relations of exploitation would propel workers to recognize their common, class-based interests; but there are just as many reasons why it does not[34]. To account for how and why classes formed in the past, one must focus on the *process* of formation as a historical phenomenon, cued to the ever-shifting front of class struggle. E. P. Thompson's *The Making of the English Working Class* exemplifies this approach, and in many ways remains the defining text of "culturalist" Marxist historiography,[35]

For Thompson, class is not some static "thing" that can be invoked a-historically or slotted into theoretical conjectures. It begins with the recognition of a fundamental antagonism.

> Class happens when some men as a result of common experiences (inherited or shared), feel and articulate the identity of their interests as between themselves, and as against other men whose interests are different from (and usually opposed to) theirs.[36]

This recognition leads to class consciousness, which Thompson describes as, "the way in which these experiences are handled in cultural terms: embodied in traditions, value-

---

[34] Formidably analyzed in Claus Offe and Helmut Wiesenthal, "The Two Logics of Collective Action," *Political Power and Social Theory*, vol. 1 (1980): 67-115, albeit confined to the conditions of late industrial capitalism.

[35] In opposition to common assumptions that Marxist class analysis conforms to a "geological model," Ellen Meiskins Wood argues that "for 'classical' Marxism the focus is on the social relation itself, the dynamic of the relation between appropriators and producers, the contradictions and conflicts which account for social and historical processes,"--"Class as Process and Relationship," in *Democracy Against Capitalism. Renewing Historical Materialism* (London; New York: Verso, 2016), 76-77. It is for this reason that Wood defends the Marxist bona fides of Thompson, claiming that his "culturalist" approach is, in truth, closest to Marx's own.

[36] Edward Palmer Thompson, *The Making of the English Working Class* (New York: Vintage Books, 1963), 9. Notice how Thompson uses "identity" here in a non-substantive sense. It is, furthermore, the sole use of the word in the famous preface. In his later diatribe against Althusser, Thompson restates this process to include women:

> Classes arise because men and women, in determinative productive relations, identify their antagonistic interests, and come to struggle, to think and to value in class ways: thus the process of class formation is a process of self-making, although under conditions which are 'given,'

--cited from *The Poverty of Theory and Other Essays* (London: Merlin, 1978; repr., New York: Monthly Review Press, 2008), 106-7.

systems, ideas, and institutional forms."[37] Class structure may influence the process ("[t]he class experience is largely determined by the productive relations into which men are born—or enter involuntarily"), but it only becomes *real* in active struggle. In other words, class exists experientially, and we must look to the cultural remainders Thompson lists to see past formations as more than mere constructs.[38] For social historians of art, this has been taken to mean that works of art must be seen as an integrated part of the landscape of class experience[39].

Thompson's generous definition of class consciousness provided a flexible model for tracing the determinations of social conflict in history, while maintaining an allegiance to the Marxist tradition.[40] Crucially, it enabled him to detect class struggle where more rigid models could not.[41] However, his reliance upon experience as the key

---

[37] Ibid., 10.

[38] For an astute assessment of the role of "experience" in Thompson's book, and its possible derivations, see Stuart Middleton, "The Concept of 'Experience' and the Marking of the English Working Class, 1924-1963," *Modern Intellectual History*, vol. 13, no. 1 (2016): 179-208.

[39] T. J. Clark's *Image of the People* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1973) is indicative of this. In the first chapter of his book ("On the Social History of Art"), Clark explicitly says that he is not interested in exploring the ways in which certain artworks "reflect" class relations or history; instead, he is interested in recapturing how specific artworks are imbricated *directly* in the social world. As Clark argues, artworks are not reducible to a specific class perspective; some are able to *subvert* prevailing ideas. Thus, while Clark is certainly interested in explicating the reality of class division and tension that existed in mid-nineteenth century France and demonstrating how Gustave Courbet and his artworks negotiate such divides and tensions, he is not interested in doing so in terms of designating particular outlooks or positions to particular classes. Clark's method is instead, through close visual analysis, to weave individual works into competing social discourses to see how they push against or easily slip into different categories and characterizations. One could argue that Clark *narrativizes* visual artworks.

[40] The work of Raymond Williams has been equally influential in this respect, especially his re-conceptualization of the classic "base-superstructure" relationship, discussed in "Base and Superstructure in Marxist Cultural Theory," originally published in *New Left Review* 82 (November-December 1973) and reprinted in *Culture and Materialism: Selected Essays* (London; New York: Verso, 1980; rev. ed. 2005): 31-49). A further treatment by Williams can be found in his influential *Marxism and Literature* (Oxford; New York: Oxford University Press, 1977) and later book *Culture* (London: Fontana, 1981)—published in the US as *The Sociology of Culture* (New York: Schocken Books, 1982).

[41] E. P. Thompson, "Eighteenth-Century English Society: Class Struggle without Class?" *Social History*, vol. 3, no. 2 (1978): 133-65. In the midst of this one-man struggle against the influence of Althusser, Thompson re-defines his evaluation of class in this essay, bringing to it a higher theoretical consistency than employed in *The Making of the English Working Class*.

mediator of class formation left Thompson open to attack. For some, the approach modeled by Thompson reduced the objective reality of class to class consciousness and relied upon exclusionary categories and weak theoretical moorings.[42] By the late 1970s, the influence of "structuralism" and its de-centering of a (human) subject of history began to overshadow "culturalist" perspectives.[43] A growing belief in the ideological saturation of social reality made notions of experience seem quaint.[44] Meanwhile,

---

[42] Anderson's early assessment of Thompson's historical work and theoretical premises, especially in relation to *The Poverty of Theory*, comprises the book-length essay, *Arguments within English Marxism* (London; New York: Verso, 1980). See also the statements by Stuart Hall and others, along with Thompson's riposte, in "Culturalism: Debates around The Poverty of Theory," in *People's History and Socialist Theory*, ed. Raphael Samuel (London: Routledge and Kegan Paul, 1981): 375-408. Also see Richard Johnson, "Thompson, Genovese, and Socialist-Humanist History," *History Workshop Journal*, no. 6 (1978). There are a variety of critical viewpoints represented in *E. P. Thompson: Critical Perspectives*, eds. Harvey J. Kaye and Keith McClelland (Philadelphia: Temple University Press, 1990)—see, in particular, William H. Sewell, Jr.'s contribution on Thompson's treatment of class formation, "How Classes are Made: Critical Reflections on E. P. Thompson's Theory of Working-Class Formation," 50-77. The exclusionary aspect of *The Making of the Working Class*, especially in terms of gender, has been pointed out by several feminist historians, most notably Joan W. Scott in her *Gender and the Politics of History*, rev. ed. (New York: Columbia University Press, 1999), and Carolyn Steedman," Culture, Cultural Studies, and the Historians," in *Cultural Studies*, eds. Lawrence Grossberg, Cary Nelson, Paula A. Treichler (New York; London: Routledge, 1992): 613-620. Meanwhile, the lack of a racial dimension to Thompson's narrative has been addressed by Ron Ramdin in *The Making of the Black Working Class in Britain* (Aldershot; Brookfield, VT: Gower, 1978; repr., New York; London: Verso, 2017).

[43] The leading representative of "structural Marxism" was Louis Althusser, who, along with a cohort of students, published *Lire le Capital* in 1965. To do so, Althusser in his contribution to the book relies extensively upon Marx's use of the term *Träger* in *Capital*:

> the structure of the relations of production determines the places and functions occupied and adopted by the agents of production, who are never anything more than the occupants of these places, in so far as they are the 'bearers' *(Träger*) of these functions. The true 'subjects' (in the sense of constitutive subjects of the process" are therefore not these occupants or functionaries, are not, despite all appearances, the 'obviousness' of the 'given' of naïve anthropology, 'concrete individuals,' 'real men'—but the definition and distribution of these places and functions. The true 'subjects' are these definers and distributors: the relations of production (and political and ideological social relations). But since these are 'relations,' they cannot be thought within the category subject

-- "The Object of *Capital*," trans. Ben Brewster, in *Reading Capital: The Complete Edition* (Paris: François Maspero, 1965; repr., New York; London: Verso, 2015), 334-335.

[44] Following Althusser, many cultural and art historians today posit ideology as an *unconscious* operation that binds subjects to a dominant conceptual framework or hegemonic discourses. My own conception of ideology follows a more traditional, critical formulation as charted in Jan Rehmann's *Theories of Ideology: The Powers of Alienation and Subjection* (Leiden: Brill, 2013; Chicago: Haymarket Books, 2014), which I discuss further in chapter three.

analyses of language and "discourse" suggested that articulations of class thought to represent class consciousness in the Marxist sense were, in fact, something else entirely.[45] Similar criticisms were mounted against German scholars of class formation such as Jürgen Kocka, whose work has been influential in the field of German labor history and working class culture.[46]

Confronting these challenges required the historians focused on culture to take further account of the mediated, conflicted, and intersectional nature of everyday life, which resulted in class becoming less and less the determining factor. Reconfigured as one of several potential subjectivities activated through discourse, class becomes an *identity* independent of the reigning material relations of production.[47] Interest in the politics of identity have overtaken earlier studies of working class culture during the Weimar period, and this has extended to studies of Weimar Communism as well.[48] In

---

[45] Gareth Stedman Jones, *Languages of Class: Studies in English Working-Class History, 1832-1982* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1983). For a rebuttal, see Neville Kirk, "In Defense of Class. A Critique of Recent Revisionist Writing upon the Nineteenth-Century English Working Class," *International Review of Social History*, no. 32 (1987): 2-47.

[46] Kocka, "Problems of Working-Class Formation in Germany: The Early Years, 1800-1875," in *Working-Class Formation: Nineteenth-Century Patterns in Western Europe and the United States*, eds. Ira Katznelson and Aristide R. Zolberg (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1986), 282. For a comparison of Kocka and Thompson, see Willfried Spohn, "Klassentheorie und Sozialgeschichte: Ein kritischer Vergleich der klassengeschichtlichen Interpretationen der Arbeiterbewegung druch Edward P. Thompson and Jürgen Kocka," *Prokla. Zeitschrift für politische Ökonomie und sozialistische Politik*, 61 (1985): 126-38. For criticism see, Kathleen Canning, "Gender and the Politics of Class Formation: Rethinking German Labor History," in *Society, Culture, and the State in Germany, 1870-1930*, ed. Geoff Eley (Ann Arbor: University of Michigan Press, 1996): 105-142. For a general introduction to this issue as it relates to German historiography, see Geoff Eley, "Problems with Culture: German History after the Linguistic Turn," *Central European History*, vol. 31, no. 3 (1998): 197-227.

[47] The works of Michel Foucault and Pierre Bourdieu have been paramount in this regard—see Rehmann, *Theories of Ideology*, 190-209; 221-240. Bourdieu's work in particular has influenced the social history of art in the last twenty years, in particular his books *Distinction: A Social Critique of the Judgement of Taste* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1984) and *The Field of Cultural Production*, a collection of essays edited by Randal Johnson (New York: Columbia University Press, 1993). For a cogent critique of Bourdieu's concept of "cultural capital" vis-à-vis Marx's *Capital*, see Mathieu Hikaru Desan, "Bourdieu, Marx, and Capital: A Critique of the Extension Model," *Sociological Theory*, vol. 31, no. 4 (2013): 318-42.

[48] Feminist scholars of the Weimar period have led the way in this shift. In addition to groundbreaking

her most recent book Sabine Hake argues that the affective attachment to a "proletarian dream" was more instrumental in solidifying working-class identity than any materially-determined, shared class experience. Revolutionary socialism, in her reading, required "a new set of illusions" to take hold.[49] Class formation becomes a purely imaginary process.

Because my analysis takes place beyond immediate sites of production and instead looks to how class struggle was broadened to include the domain of visual culture, I will not mount a vigorous defense of the materialist basis of Marxist class analysis against all forms of "culturalist" revisionism, as some Marxists deem necessary.[50] My sympathies lie more with Thompson and earlier models of Marxist cultural history.

---

collections such as *When Biology Became Destiny: Women in Weimar and Nazi Germany*, eds. R. Bridenthal, A. Grossman, and M. Kaplan (New York: Monthly Review Press, 1984), recent scholars have greatly expanded our understanding how female identity was represented and conceived during the period, often in contradictory ways. For a general introduction, see Kathleen Canning, "Women and the Politics of Gender," in *Weimar Germany*, ed. Anthony McElligott (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2009): 146-74, and several of the essays in *Weimar Publics/Weimar Subjects*, eds. Kathleen Canning, Kerstin Brandt, and Kristin McGuire (London: Berghahn Books, 2010). Anita Grossman has explored these issues as they related to the KPD in "German Communism and New Women: Dilemmas and Contradictions," in *Women and Socialism: Socialism and Women*, eds. H. Gruber and P. Graves (Oxford: Berghahn, 1998): 133-68. For studies that instead look to cultural ramifications, see V. R. Petersen, *Women and Modernity in Weimar Germany: Reality and its Representation in Popular Fiction* (Oxford: Berghahn, 2001), R. W. McCormick, *Gender and Sexuality in Weimar Modernity: Film, Literature, and New Objectivity* (Basingstoke: Palgrave, 2001), I. Sharp, "Riding the Tiger: Ambivalent Images of the New Woman in the Popular Press of the Weimar Republic," in *New Woman Hybridities: Femininity, Feminism, and International Consumer Culture*, eds. A. Heilmann and M. Beetham (London: Routledge, 2004): 118-41, and M. Meskimmons and Shearer West, *Visions of the Neue Frau: Women and the Visual Arts in Weimar Germany* (Aldershot: Ashgate, 1995).

[49] Hake writes:

> from the 1870s to the 1930s, the discursive field marked by the term 'proletarian' remained fluid and elusive enough to operate on multiple and contradictory levels: as a political program, a social myth, a cultural construction, and an ideological fantasy; it remained an object of intense emotional attachments and investments. The conventional description of Marxist thought as a rupture of the veil of illusions (i.e. ideology) was achieved precisely through the creation of a new set of illusions I call the proletarian dream

—cited from *The Proletarian Dream: Socialism, Culture, and Emotion in Germany, 1863-1933* (Berlin; Boston: Walter de Gruyter GmbH, 2017), 62-3.

[50] For a particularly strident example, see Vivek Chibber, "Rescuing Class from the Cultural Turn," *Catalyst. A Journal of Theory and Strategy*, vol. 1, no. 1 (Spring 2017): 27-56.

Their methods will guide my own, albeit tempered by developments in Marxist theory over the last half century. I do, however, think our contemporary fixation on identity has distorted our view of class. What contemporary notions of class identity miss is that, according to the Marxist tradition, identification is never meant to be a permanent condition. Whatever collective or common identity is forged by the working class is merely a prelude to the eventual radical undermining of that identity. The ultimate victory of the working class is marked by its own erasure, via a process of self-annihilation (as a class).[51] This is the logic of revolutionary socialism.[52] Moreover, the very use of the term "identity" represents an anachronistic application of a late twentieth-century notion to an earlier historical moment. As Marie Moran argues in *Identity and Capitalism*, our contemporary notion of identity is built around it being something you have or *own*.[53] This is difficult to square with Marx's conception of the proletariat, because the proletariat, as a class, is defined by the fact that, besides its own

---

[51] As suggested in *The German Ideology*:

> Both for the production on a mass scale of this communist consciousness, and for the success of the cause itself, the alteration of men on a mass scale is necessary, an alteration which can only take place in a practical movement, a *revolution*; the revolution is necessary, therefore, not only because the *ruling* class cannot be overthrown in any other way, but also because the class *overthrowing* it can only in a revolution succeed in ridding itself of all the muck of ages and become fitted to found society anew

--see Marx/Engels, *Collected Works*, vol. 5, 52-3.

[52] See Guido Starosta, *Marx's Capital: Method and Revolutionary Subjectivity* (Leiden; Brill, 2015; Chicago: Haymarket Books, 2016) and Luca Basso, *Marx and the Common: From Capital to the Late Writings* (Leiden: Brill, 2015; Chicago: Haymarket Books, 2016) for two recent theoretical presentations of this argument.It is also an integral aspect of Lukács' conception of class consciouness, as discussed in chapter two.

[53] Marie Moran, *Identity and Capitalism* (Los Angeles; London; New Delhi; Singapore; Washington DC: Sage, 2015). Moran's book engages critically with scholarship that trace modern notions of identity and contemporary theories of "identity politics" back to the seventeenth-century, most notably Linda Nicholson's *Identity Before Identity Politics* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2008) and Craig Calhoun (ed.), *Social Theory and the Politics of Identity* (Oxford: Blackwell, 1994). Drawing upon the model of Raymond Williams' *Keywords* (1983), Moran traces the emergence of "identity" as a subject of interest in twentieth-century scholarship, arguing that, prior to the 1960s, it did not mean what it does at present, nor carry such political weight as today. While at times overly-tendentious, hers is nonetheless an important and welcome cultural materialist intervention.

labor power, the proletariat *owns nothing*. Thus, the very idea of something like a proletarian identity politics makes no sense.

This is not to say that identity played no role in Communist cultural politics; on the contrary, it played a pivotal role. As I have explained, the operation of Communist graphic satire relied upon a dialectic of propagation and cultivation that encouraged collective identification against a common enemy, capitalism, and all its many avatars. Yet, rather than a substantive form of identity, this was relative form of identification meant to be achieved by means of class consciousness. This raises an obvious question: what was class consciousness in the eyes of Weimar Communists? *What did it look like*?

Incredibly, given its prominence as a concept, class consciousness is remarkably under-theorized. There are two key theoretical texts that directly address this question from the interwar period, the first (and most famous) being Georg Lukács' 1920 essay "Class Consciousness," reprinted three years later in his collection *History and Class Consciousness*.[54] The other is Wilhelm Reich's 1934 article "What is Class Consciousness?"[55] In Lukács' conception, class consciousness amounts to a *Weltanschauung*, a perspective or orientation that enables the working class (potentially) to see through the illusions of capitalism more effectively than other social classes, due,

---

[54] Georg Lukács, *History and Class Consciousness: Studies in Marxist Dialectics*, trans. Rodney Livingstone (London: Merlin Press, 1971; repr., Cambridge, MA: The MIT Press, 1990). There are several volumes that evaluate the role of class consciousness as an idea in Lukács' intellectual development, most notably *Aspects of History and Class Consciousness*, ed. István Mészaros (New York: Herder and Herder, 1972). Rarer are scholars who assessed utility of Lukács' conception of class consciousness, a notable exception being Erik Olin Wright, whose book *Classes (*London; New York: Verso, 1985) addresses the topic in relation to post-WWII society.

[55] Originally published a pseudonymous pamphlet from his exile in Denmark, Reich's essay draws upon his own experience within the German Communist milieu and can be seen as a political critique of the KPD's failure to counteract the ideological appeal of Nazism. It appears in Wilhelm Reich, *Sex-Pol: Essays, 1929-1934*, ed. Lee Baxandall (New York: Vintage Books, 1972; repr., New York; London: Verso, 2012).

once again, to its position vis-à-vis the material relations of production. In other words, class consciousness is the result of a standpoint, a partisan, "subjective" point of view that constitutes a more valid perception of capitalism than the "objective" point of view of bourgeois political economy. Olin Wright refers to class consciousness in this strict, Lukácsian sense, as "class-pertinent consciousness," or a consciousness that is rational, consistent, and true to the material interests of the working class[56]. It is the consciousness the working class *ought to have* or *could have*, were its material interests and revolutionary potentiality readily accessible or transparent. That class consciousness of this order and magnitude is in no way reflective of the impressionistic experience of the working class as it exists, nor the sum total of the individual experience of its members, led Lukács to argue that it must be "imputed" (*zurechnen*) to the workers' movement by Communists; and although it never became the official position of the KPD, the visual metaphors Lukács employs in his formulation of class consciousness is indicative of contemporary usage of the term. Reich's essay, by contrast, stresses that class consciousness must be understood in terms of everyday, lived experience, and that missing out on this dimension has dire political consequences. One of the guiding points of the dissertation is to demonstrate how conceptions of class consciousness, such as those of Lukács and Reich, are not separate from visual culture, but integrally linked to the production and reception of images It

[56] Olin Wright summarizes the logic elegantly:

> If class structure is understood as a terrain of social relations that determine objective material interests of actors, and class struggle is understood as the forms of social practices which attempt to realize those interests, then class consciousness can be understood as the subjective processes that shape intentional choices with respect to those interests and struggles

-see *Classes*, 246, n. 54.

was through visual images, I will argue, and graphic satire in particular, that class consciousness was theorized in practice.

Graphic Satire: Documents/Artworks/Catalysts

If in the preceding discussion of the class component of Communist graphic satire diverged from the social history of art to cultural history more generally, this is largely due to the fact that innovative work on graphic satire in the last three decades has occurred more regularly in the latter field than the former. Studies of graphic satire from within the Marxist wing of the social history of art are rarer still.[57] One might assume that its reputation as a demotic art,[58] dating back to the emergence of print as a commercial medium during the fifteenth century in Europe, would make graphic satire an attractive subject for scholars interested in tracking the cultural intricacies and long-term visual effects of class struggle. And so it has, but not without repercussions from the historiographic shifts I have so far charted. Much of this has been beneficial; the influence of cultural studies and theoretical reflection upon the nature and significance of popular culture has deepened our understanding of graphic satire[59] immensely. But

---

[57] The most noteworthy being Francis Klingender's *Hogarth and English Caricature* (London; New York: Transatlantic Arts Ltd., 1944), published in conjunction with an exhibition he mounted on behalf of the Artists International Association, and Frederick Antal, *Hogarth and His Place in European Art* (New York: Basic Books, 1962), composed posthumously by his wife from Antal's notes and his earlier article, "The Moral Purpose of Hogarth's Art," *Journal of the Warburg and Courtauld Institutes*, vol. 15, no. 3/4 (1952): 169-197. That both these works were written by Communists, one a central European émigré who experienced the Hugarian Soviet Republic first-hand (Antal), the other the UK-born son of a German painter, in England during or soon after WWII is doubtless as much due Popular Front politics as it is to their inherent interest in the work of William Hogarth.

[58] Edward Lucie-Smith describes it as "the most universal and democratic form of visual art in a modern society," *The Art of Caricature* (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 1981), 14; 19.

[59] Studies of popular print and "print culture" since the 1970s have been decisive in this respect, most notably A. Hyatt Mayor's catalog *Prints and People: A Social History of Printed Pictures* (New York: The Metropolitan Museum of Art, 1971), R. W. Scribner's, *For the Sake of Simple Folk: Popular Propaganda for the German Reformation* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1981), and, perhaps most influential of all, Elizabeth L.

several critical issues remain unresolved, among them the ambiguity of terminology. Technically speaking, caricature refers solely to the art of exaggerated portraiture that arose in aristocratic circles during the sixteenth century; as it became more and more prevalent, however, the term often came to stand for graphic satire as a whole. Historians frequently utilize both terms, sometimes interchangeably, a practice equally true for the German context. (I will continue to use graphic satire as a catch-all term except when speaking of caricature in its strict sense and indicate as such when translating from the German.) Of more direct relevance to my investigation is the lack of scholarly consensus regarding the historical status of graphic satire, a subject of continuing debate.

The most common approach is to regard past satirical prints as *historical documents*. Early, nineteenth-century studies of graphic satire are typical in this sense. Although recognizing the skill of individual artists, the authors of these early studies emphasize what satirical images can tell us about past and present conventions, morals, and popular opinion. They hold popular print to be reflective of its historical context. More recent examples instead argue that prints do not show us the past, so much as "a sequence of presents in a series of dissolving views."[60] Characterized by its concern for

---

Eisenstein's *The Printing Revolution in Early Modern Europe* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1983; rev. ed., 2005). The most important theoretical reflection from the period on such interests remains, Stuart Hall's "Notes on Deconstructing 'the Popular," in *People's History and Socialist Theory*, ed. Raphael Samuel (London: Routledge, 1981): 227-239, although Peter Burke's essay in the same collection, "The 'Discovery' of Popular Culture," (216-226), is likewise notable for his reflection on the earlier, and groundbreaking study, *Popular Culture in Early Modern Europe* (London: Maruice Temple Smith, 1978; rev. ed., Aldershot: Ashgate, 1994). The influence of such studies can be readily seen in more recent general survey, such as Kirk Varnedoe and Adam Gopnik, "Caricature," in *High and Low: Modern Art and Popular Culture* (New York: MoMA, 1991): 101-150, where the popular association of graphic satire is mined for insight into the "low taste" of modern masters.

[60] M. Dorothy George, *English Political Caricature to 1792: A Study in Opinion and Propaganda* (Oxford:

audience, symbolism, and historical topicality, the documentary approach tends to overlook the uniquely visual elements of graphic satire in favor of grounding it more solidly in its historical context.[61]

By contrast, a narrower, formal approach regards past satirical prints as *historical works of art*. Symptomatic of this approach is a narrative of formal innovation, whereby the history of European graphic satire moves from esoteric symbolism to contemporary cartoons.[62] Further characteristics include:

- Reliance upon a teleological conception of artistic development, with caricature as the key stylistic transition[63]
- Focus on recognized artists over anonymous and professional cartoonists, evaluated according to visual acumen or distinct style
- Disregard for elements that disrupt the visual economy of an individual work, such as text or allegorical symbolism
- Lack of interest in the synchronic relationship of an individual image to contemporary visual culture

---

Clarendon Press, 1959), 1. Herbert M. Atherton refers to satirical prints as documents that elucidate the "ideas and habits of mind that were a basic part of the political folklore" of the eighteenth century in *Political Prints in the Age of Hogarth: A Study of the Ideographic Representation of Politics* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1974), vi.

[61] Indeed, as Lucie-Smith suggests, defining caricature is best achieved "not by examining any particular manner the artist happens to adopt, but by trying to discover what kind of audience he has in his mind's eye," *The Art of Caricaturei, 9.*

[62] The quintessential example of this approach can be found in Werner Hoffmann, *Caricature from Leonardo to Picasso* (London: John Calder, 1957). The narrative tends to follow a specific geographical trajectory as well, neatly summarized by W. A. Coupe in his 1967 essay, "The German Cartoon and the Revolution of 1848":

> The 'grand tradition' of European political caricature, although a child of the Reformation, in effect by-passes Germany. It starts in France at the time of the Wars of Religion, is transplanted to Holland in the course of the quarrel with Spain, and emerges latterly, thanks to the Anglo-Dutch alliance, in the England of Hogarth and his successors, whence it returns to France early in the nineteenth century, only to be re-exported as a recognized element of journalism in the satirical journals which have since sprung up through the world in imitation of *La Caricature* and *Charivari,*

--*Comparative Studies of Society and History*, vol. 9, no. 2 (January 1967): 138.

[63] As evidenced by David Kunzle's claim:

> It was the stylistic revolution of caricature which enabled the artist to ridicule his subject without having recourse either to allegorical devices or to the heavily laden backgrounds of Hogarth. The comic mechanisms inherent in allegory are transformed by the apparently simple formal means of caricature, where realism is maintained under the cloak of exaggeration and distortion

--see *The Early Comic Strip. Narrative Strips and Picture Stories in the European Broadsheet from c. 1450 to 1825* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1973), 427.

- Strong interest in the diachronic relationship of an individual image to past and future works of art

While the formal approach captures the distinctly visual aspect of graphic satire better than approaches that treat print as mere documents, it nevertheless tends to downplay the dense interplay of cultural dynamics to which all images belong.[64] It tends to *de-historicize* graphic satire in order to *art-historicize* it.

While admittedly schematic, these two general approaches differ significantly from more recent studies that stress the opacity of graphic satire, its intermedial nature, and ephemeral status. An interest in semiotics and conflicting notions of the popular have spurred methodological reflection, resulting in studies that present new ways of "reading" print.[65] The vast majority of this new scholarship has been devoted to eighteenth-century material, and of English manufacture in particular. In distinction to standard accounts of the "golden age" of satirical print, with leading artists such as William Hogarth, Thomas Rowlandson, Isaac Cruikshank, and James Gillray singled out for their accomplishments, newer studies return to the messy reality of satirical print in its original, contingent moment of publication.[66] Individual images are viewed

---

[64] The best general surveys combine these two approaches. For a classic example, see *Bild als Waffe: Mittel und Motive der Karikatur in fünf Jahrhunderten*, eds. Gerhard Langemeyer, Gerd Unverfehrt, Herwig Guratzsch, Christoph Stölzl (München: Prestel- Verlag, 1984). For a more recent, less successful attempt, see Constance C. McPhee and Nadine M. Orenstein, *Infinite Jest: Caricature and Satire from Leonardo to Levine*, exh. cat. (New York: Metropolitan Museum of Art, 2011).

[65] See Brian Maidment, *Reading Popular Prints 1790-1870* (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 1996) and Peter Wagner, *Reading Iconotexts: From Swift to the French Revolution* (London: Reaktion Books, 1995) for two representative examples.

[66] Exemplary studies of this trend include: Marcus Wood, *Radical Satire and Print Culture, 1790* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1994), Nicholas K. Robinson, *Edmund Burke: A Life in Caricature* (New Haven; London: Yale University Press, 1996), Mark Hallett, *The Spectacle of Difference: Graphic Satire in the Age of Hogarth* (New Haven; London: Yale University Press, 1999, Tamara Hunt, *Defining John Bull: Political Caricature and National Identity* (London: Ashgate, 2003), Max Bill, *The Age of Satire: London in Caricature* (London: Museum of London, 2006),), and the collections *The Efflorescence of Caricature, 1759-1838*, ed. Todd Porterfield (London: Ashgate, 2011) and *The Other Hogarth: Aesthetics of Difference*, eds. Bernadette

in relation to an existing image-world composed of past and present visual material that resonated differently to disparate audiences. Doing so requires broadening the historical scope to address historical viewing practices, as Diana Donald has argued in her book *The Age of Caricature: Satirical Prints in the Reign of George III*.[67] What distinguishes Donald's study is her divergence from narratives of formal innovation based on the subsumption of graphic satire by caricature. "Rather than fusing with and subsuming the indigenous emblematic tradition," she argues, "the aristocratic art of caricature was, for much of the century, a separate distinguishable art form, and the opposing qualities of the two modes could be exploited in the prints as an articulation of meaning.[68]" Associated with the lower classes, some artists drew upon the emblematic tradition for the enjoyment of genteel audiences; others did so to reach audiences less accustomed to caricature's naturalistic conventions. Although she warns

---

Fort and Angela Rosenthal (Princeton; Oxford: Princeton University Press, 2001). Important earlier studies of a similar focus, such as John Brewer, *The Common People and Politics 1750-1790s* (Cambridge: Chadwyck-Healey, 1986) and Michael Duffy, *The Englishman and the Foreigner* (Cambridge: Chadwyck-Healey, 1986), both from a series drawing upon the British Museum's collection, were reviewed in an influential piece by Roy Porter that many site as a trigger for newer approaches, see "Review Article: Seeing the Past [review of Chadwyck-Healey series]," *Past and Present*, vol. 118, no. 1 (1988): 186-205. Monographic studies have been affected as well. Both in Patricia Phagan, *Thomas Rowlandson: Pleasures and Pursuits in Georgian England*, exh. cat. (Vassar: Frances Lehman Loeb Art Center; London; GILES, 2011) and Richard Godfrey and Mark Hallett, *James Gillray: The Art of Caricture*, exh. cat. (London: Tate Gallery, 2001), the newer trend can be discerned. The same is true of earlier work, as reflected in Helen Pierce, *Unseemly Pictures: Graphic Satire and Politics in Early Modern England* (New Haven; London: Yale University Press, 2008), and later graphic satire from the early nineteenth-century, evident in Patricia Anderson, *The Printed Image and the Transformation of Popular Culture* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1991), Brian Maidment, *Comedy, Caricature, and the Social Order, 1820-50* (Manchester; New York: Manchester University Press, 2013), and Henry Miller, *Politics Personified: Portraiture, Caricature, and Visual Culture in Britain, c. 1830-1880* (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 2015).

[67] Speaking of the inadequacy of existing studies, Donald claims that "[w]e have thus lacked a means of interpreting caricature images as eighteenth-century viewers would have interpreted and passed judgement on them—a mode of analysis which must arise from the study of visual characteristics as historical phenomena," *The Age of Caricature: Satirical Prints in the Reign of George III* (New Haven; London: Yale University Press, 1996), vii.

[68] Ibid., 47.

against assuming that a particular political standpoint is "coexistence" with a particular way of seeing, her attention to completing satirical traditions and the class-based connotations they held is instructive for historians of later periods. Graphic satire is a directed art form whose past legibility was often coded to what an imagined audience expected—and desired. Whatever documentary value it may have must be reconciled with the contemporary *functions* graphic satire was meant to serve, for its purpose was to shape experience, not just reflect it.

Rich as these studies are, their material dates to a period before the rise of mass-produced illustrated satire magazines of the sort known to Weimar-era workers. Growth of a commercial market for satirical print arose in the eighteenth century but reached epic proportions after the introduction of mechanized printing presses and concomitant marketing innovations during the nineteenth. Increased capital diversified subject matter, such that non-political genres of "social" graphic satire became increasingly popular. Humorous and inoffensive, social graphic satire lampooned relatively safe topics such as fashion, habits, and marriage. Unlike political satire, which remained unruly and highly personalized, social satire was appropriate for all readers.[69] Greater diversity of satire made it harder for individual artists to make an impact since the breadth and depth of the image-world increased as well; however, the volume of new social types, tropes, and emblems typical of social graphic satire expanded the

[69] There has been a notable lack of theorization of the difference between political versus social graphic satire, with the notable exception of two essays: Lawrence H. Streicher, "On a Theory of Political Caricature," *Comparative Studies in Society and History*, vol. 9, no. 4 (July 1967): 427-445, and W. A. Coupe, "Observations on a Theory of Political Caricature," *Comparative studies in Society and History*, vol. 11, no. 1 (January 1969): 79-95.

visual iconography upon which artists could draw, and because more and more people had a common familiarity with this iconography, existing types and tropes could be recycled with ease, and for political ends. Nowhere was this truer than in Paris, where artists like Honoré-Victorin Dauimer, Paul Gavarni, Jean Ignace Isidore Gérard Grandville, and André Gill became adept and moving back and forth between political and social subject matter.[70] Their utilization of published *Physiologies*, thematic illustrated collections of social types popular at the time, and other visual material in distinctly political works, as well as their politicization of established social satirical subject matter, set important precedents that German Social Democratic-, and later Communist-, graphic satirists would follow.[71]

That the continuities between Communist graphic satire and earlier German Social Democratic and French publications remain under-researched is unfortunate. Apart from a few illuminating studies, outside of Germany there has been little written on Wilhelmine- or Weimar-era graphic satire as a cultural practice and socio-political

---

[70] The literature on this subject is legion. Patricia Mainardi's most recent book, *Another World: Nineteenth-Century Illustrated Print Culture* (New Haven; London: Yale University Press, 2017), offers an essential overview of the subject, while Michele Hannoosh's *Baudelaire and Caricature: From the Comic to an Art of Modernity* (University Park: Pennsylvania State University Press, 1992) addresses the "modernity" of its imagery. Other key sources include: David Kunzle, *The History of the Comic Strip. The Nineteenth Century* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1990). *The Popularization of Images: Visual Culture under the July Monarchy*, eds. Petra ten-Doesschate Chu, Gabriel P. Weisberg (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1994). James Cuno, "Charles Philippon, La Maison Aubert, and the Business of Caricature in Paris, 1829-41," *Art Journal*, vol. 43, no. 4 (Winter 1983): 347-54, and *Karikatur zwischen Rpublik und Zensur*, ed. Raimund Rütten, Ruth Jung, and Gerhard Schneider (Marburg: Jonas Verlag für Kunst und Liberatur, 1991), translated in full as *La Caricature entre République et Censure* (Lyon: Presses Universitaires de Lyon, 1996).

[71] On the popularity of French *Physiologies*, see Richard Sieburth, "Same Difference: The French *Physiologies* 1840-1842," in *Notebooks in Cultural Analysis: An Annual Review*, ed. Norman F. Cantor (Durham: Duke University Press, 1984): 163-200 and Judith Wechsler, *A Human Comedy: Physiognomy and Caricature in Nineteenth-Century France* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1982).

phenomenon[72]. German scholarship directly related to Communist graphic satire is primarily, but not exclusively, the product of East German art historians.[73] They too see graphic satire produced within the Communist milieu as a medium of "class consciousness," though their conceptualization tends to be less flexible than my own. Still, these works warrant further engagement. They open up a wide range of material that has been neglected by Anglo-American scholars of the Weimar period. When such material is addressed in Anglophone studies, it tends to focus on individual artists, and almost always George Grosz or John Heartfield. The existing literature on Grosz covers most aspects of his career; yet, as thorough as it is, we still lack a full investigation of his

---

[72] The single best introduction to Communist graphic satire in English is Sherwin Simmons' article, "War, Revolution, and the Transformation of the German Humor Magazine, 1914-1927," *Art Journal*, vol. 52, no. 1 (Spring 1993): 46-54. In terms of nineteenth-century German satire, the most important study in English remains Ann Taylor Allen, *Satire and Society in Wilhelmine Society* (Lexington: University Press of Kentucky, 1984). German sources on the subject are far more plentiful. For a look at the Weimar period, see Herman Haarman (with Andrea Klein), *"Pleite glotzt euch an. Restlos." Satire in der Publizistik der Weimar Republik. Ein Handbuch* (Opladen: Westdt. Verlag, 1999). In terms of the Wilhelmine period, Knut Hickethier provides a quintessential introduction to the iconography of proletarian-aligned graphic satire his chapter "Karikatur, Allegorie und Bilderfolge—zur Bildpublizistik im Dienste der Arbieterbewegung," for the *Beiträge zur Kulturgeschichte der deutschen Arbeiterbewegung 1848-1918*, ed. Peter von Rüden (Frankfurt am Main: Büchergilde Gutenberg, 1979): 79-166, while Ann Robertson provides an in-depth look at the production the SPD's premiere satire magazine, *Der Wahre Jakob*, in her full-length study *Karikatur im Kontext: Zur Entwicklung der sozialdemokratischen illustrierten satirischen Zeitschrift 'Der Wahre Jakob' zwischen Kaiserreich und Republik* (Frankfurt am Main; Bern: Peter Lang, 1992). Ursula E. Koch focuses on Berlin as a key site for graphic satire production in *Der Teufel in Berlin: Von der Märzrevolution bis zu Bismarcks Entlassung. Illustrierte politische Witzblätter einer Metropole 1848-1890* (Kön: Informationspress C. W. Leske Verlag, 1991). The collection edited by Klaus Herding and Gunter Otto, *Karikaturen* (Gießen: Anabas-Verlag; Günter Kämpf KG, 1980), offers a more wide-ranging and theoretical view.

[73] The prime example of DDR-era scholarship on the subject remains Piltz's *Geschichte der europäischen Karikatur*, and the *Klassiker der Karikatur* series issued throughout the 1980s by Eulenspiegel Verlag, publisher of the premiere East German satire magazine, *Eulenspiegel*. Other notable works include Ursula Horn's chapter, "1917-1933," in *Sozialistische deutsche Karikatur 1848-1978*, ed. Harald Olbrich (Berlin [DDR]: Eulenspiegel Verlag, 1978), a historical overview of the period, and Alfred Beier-Red's semi-biographical account, "Die Karikature als Kampfmittel der revolutionären Arbeiterschaft in der Weimarer Republik," *Bildende Kunst*, no. 10 (1963): 517-20, and Klaus Haese and Wolfgang W. Schütte, *Frau Republik geht pleite. Deutsche Karikaturen der zwanziger Jahren* (Leipzig: Edition Leipzig, 1989)--NB: Not sure if this title is pre-or post-DDR.

numerous print series in their formal, iconographic, and political complexity.[74] Interest in Weimar-era graphic satire has also flagged relative to photography; the most innovative studies in the last few years have focused on photomontage, Heartfield's in particular. In a study germane to my own, Sabine Kriebel has argued that Heartfield's late-Weimar works are directed toward an "alternative Communist subject," one who, in her words, "indulges in puerile humor, contemptuous laughter, the aesthetics of distaste and who revel in unstable meaning."[75] My own research suggests that the mode of address Kriebel sees at work in these photomontages draws directly from earlier precedents in other media, namely drawings and prints (some by Heartfield himself), and that the "alternative Communist subject" interpellated in the early 1930s was thought to be every German Communist in the early 1920s.[76]

The approach I will take closely follows the engaged historicism of the most recent scholarship on graphic satire, with its attention to visual culture and formal distinctions, albeit with one crucial deviation. In opposition to a perspective that values graphic

---

[74] The key biographical studies of Grosz during the interwar period remain Barbara McCloskey's *George Grosz and the Communist Party: Art and Radicalism in Crisis, 1918 to 1936* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1997) and Beth Irwin Lewis' earlier, *George Grosz: Art and Politics in the Weimar Republic* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1991). McCloskey's thorough analysis of Grosz's conflicted relationship to the KPD covers much of the same ground I do, particularly in chapters two and three, and this project owes a great deal to her path-breaking study. Mary Kay Flavell's *George Grosz, a Biography* (New Haven; Yale University Press, 1988), though comprehensive, neglects the political context McCloskey and Lewis provide. The best study in German is Rosamunde Neugebauer, *George Grosz: Macht und Ohnmacht satirischer Kunst* (Berlin: Ger. Mann Verlag, 1993).

[75] Sabine Kriebel, *Revolutionary Beauty. The Radical Photomontages of John Heartfield* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2014), 202. Another study of Heartfield, equally innovative in its focus is Andrés Mario Zervigon's *John Heartfield and the Agitated Image. Photography, Persuasion and the Rise of Avant-Garde Photomontage* (Chicago; London: University of Chicago Press, 2012).

[76] A connection Kriebel touches on in an earlier essay, "Radical Left Magazines in Berlin," in *The Oxford Critical History of Modernist Magazines*, vol. 3, ed. Peter Brooker, Sascha Bru, Andrew Thacher and Christian Weikop (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2009). For a critique of Kriebel's use of an "interpellation" model of ideology similar to my own, see Daniel Spaulding, "John Heartfield's Communism," a review of *Revolutionary Beauty*, in *Historical Materialism*, vol. 25, no. 3 (2017): 223-238.

satire as documents and/or works of art, I instead want to suggest that we think of these images as *catalysts*, infused with a visual charge that exceeds their historical moment of publication. We get some inkling of what this might entail in the writings of E. H. Gombrich. Within art history, Gombrich's influence has been decisive for considerations of graphic satire. This is in some ways paradoxical; for as much as Gombrich's approach to the topic set the teleological trajectory the formal approach has followed, his core assessment of caricature, first adumbrated in the late 1930s with co-author Ernst Kris, presents its effect as *transhistorical*. In "The Principles of Caricature" (1938), Gombrich and Kris argue that caricature is a "psychological mechanism rather than a form of art" that "once having come into existence…has remained always the same in principle."[77] While they in no way deny the visual development of graphic satire, they nonetheless claim that, since the emergence of caricature during the Renaissance, it has relied upon caricature's essential characteristics—reduction of complex, physical rendering to simple, linear outline; repeated use of similar tropes—that define its crudity and explain its attraction.[78] "Caricature means freedom, but

[77] E. H. Gombrich and Ernst Kris, "The Principles of Caricature," *British Journal of Medical Psychology*, vol. 17 (1938): 338. Much of the Freudian reasoning that guides the argument made in this early article derives from Kris' research, first presented in a 1934 paper and later expanded into the essay, "The Psychology of Caricature," *The International Journal of Psychoanalysis* (January 1936): 285-303. Although the two began work on a full-length study of caricature during this period, it never came to fruition. Only a much shorter, truncated version saw publication as *Caricature* (Middlesex: Penguin Books, Ltd., 1940). Louis Rose discusses the failed project and its political origins at length in his *Psychology, Art, and Antifascism: Ernst Kris, E. H. Gombrich, and the Politics of Caricature* (New Haven: London: Yale University Press, 2016), building upon his earlier "Daumier in Vienna: Ernst Kris, E. H. Gombrich, and the Politics of Caricature," *Visual Resources*, vol. 23, no. 1-2 (2007): 39-64. The politics of Kris' psychoanalytical investigations are also addressed in Evonne Levy's article, "Ernst Kris, *The Legend of the Artist* (1934) and *Mein Kampf*," *Oxford Art Journal*, vol. 36, no. 2 (2013): 207-229, and Stefan Krüger's book, *Das Unbehagen in der Karikatur: Kunst, Propaganda und persuasive Kommunikation im Theoriewerk Ernst Kris* (München: Wilhelm Fink Verlag, 2011).
[78] "The reason why the methods evolved by the first caricaturists of the seventeenth century did not lose their vigor but lived on in modern caricature," they argue, "lies in the fact that they set in motion certain psychic mechanisms which, since those days, have always formed the essence of caricature's effect"

freedom to be primitive," they argue, '[t]his innermost primitiveness in style as well as in mechanism, in tendency as well as in form, is the secret of caricature's appeal."[79]

The "crudity" Gombrich and Kris detect in caricature operates beyond the image itself, becoming a way of seeing transmitted to others.

> We learn through the artist to see [the target] as a caricature. He is not only mocked at, or unmasked, but actually changed. He carries the caricature with him through his life and even through history. [...] Great satirists are very well aware of their magic power to evoke in the memory-picture the repetition of the transformatory process.[80]

One need only think of Charles Philipon's graphic mutation of Louis Philippe I into a humble pear to get a sense of Gombrich's meaning. The ubiquity of pear imagery that appeared in the illustrated publications issued in the final months of 1831 undermined the pageantry of Philippe's reign and resonated with widespread discontent in Paris. No amount of censorship was able to decouple Louis from his caricature, and such images forever changed the face of France's bourgeois king.[81] The standard trajectory of the formal approach takes on a sinister dimension when considered in this manner.

> Portrait caricature, as established by Carracci and Bernini, reached its culmination as a social weapon only when it entered the realms of […] broadsides and cartoons. This evolution began in England during the eighteenth

---

(ibid.) In a subsequent essay on the subject,"Magic, Myth and Metaphor: Reflections on Pictorial Satire (1989)," Gombrich writes: "Nothing is more characteristic of pictorial satire than its conservatism, the tendency to draw on the same old stock of motifs and stereotypes," reprinted in *The Essential Gombrich: Selected Writings on Art and Culture*, ed. Richard Woddfield (London: Phaidon, 1996), 343.

[79] Ibid., 342.

[80] Ibid., 339-40.

[81] The story of Philippon's trial, his drawing of Louis Philippe, and the subsequent explosion of pear imagery is recounted in David S. Kerr, *Caricature and French Political Culture, 1830-1840: Charles Philippon and the Illustrated Press* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 2000). For further analysis of such imagery and a collection of examples, see Elise K. Kenney and John M. Merriman, *The Pear: French Graphic Arts in the Golden Age of Caricature*, exh. cat. (South Hadley, MA: Mount Holyoke College Art Museum, 1991), and Sandy Petrey, "Pears in History," *Representations*, no. 25 (Summer 1991): 52-71.

> century. And, from a studio joke, caricature has developed into one of the most feared of social weapons, unmasking pretension and killing it by ridicule.[82]

Focusing on the underlying principle of caricature as a visual practice, Gombrich and Kris draw attention to graphic satire's *function*, which, as I have argued, was of paramount important to the interwar Communist movement. Their account relies too much upon a static conception of human psychology and does not account for the broader dynamics of production, deployment, and repetition that activate and guide this function. Graphic satire, containing caricature or otherwise, never operates at the level of images alone, it relies upon other circulating images, ideas, and points of view. The catalytic dimension that Gombrich and Kris designate as a "psychological mechanism" is better understood in political terms, I will argue (following Eduard Fuchs' example), as the reverberations of past struggles that images, redeployed, are able to amplify.

Chapter Outline

My presentation unfolds over the course of three chapters:

Chapter one presents a detailed examination of the writings of Eduard Fuchs, whose historical studies of graphic satire published in the years leading up to World War I influenced conceptions of graphic satire during the Weimar period. Known today largely by way of Walter Benjamin's 1937 essay "Eduard Fuchs, Historian and Collector," I discuss how Fuchs, in publications such as *The History of European Graphic Satire* (*Die Karikatur der europäischen Völker*) (1902-3), stresses the art form's dual role as

[82] Ibid., 330.

"political agent" (*Kampfmittel*) and "educational agent" (*Erziehungsmittel*). These functions, operating dialectically in and across specific images, correspond to the KPD's later conviction that graphic satire could propagate a revolutionary class-conscious perspective while cultivating a Communist identity. By playing close attention to Fuchs' visual analyses and relating them to his prior experience as the editor of a Social Democratic satirical journal in the 1890s, the connection between Fuchs' writings and political activity becomes evident. The chapter reassesses the historical and theoretical significance of Fuchs' writings and highlights his central role behind the scenes of the German Left.

Chapter two describes how artists belonging to the Berlin Dada movement set the stage for the development of Communist graphic satire after 1921. Employing a novel form of social realism, George Grosz, John Heartfield, and fellow Dadaist Rudolf Schlichter depicted the urban environment of Berlin as a ravaged battlefield and the ruling class of the newly formed Weimar Republic as corrupt, despicable goons. All three artists became close collaborators with the KPD, producing an array of emblematic tropes and recognizable social "types" that spoke to a charged political climate. Characters generated by Grosz in print portfolios such as *The Face of the Ruling Class* (*Das Gesicht der herrschenden Klasse*) formed an integral part of an emerging proletarian iconography drawn from real-life personalities, contemporary cartoons, and remodeled examples from the history of graphic satire. The chapter examines how raw visual material, drawn from past publications and the image world of the early Weimar period, was refracted through the acerbic perspective of these artists.

In chapter three I turn to the creation of *The Truncheon* (*Der Knüppel*), one of several illustrated periodicals launched by the KPD in 1923-24. These years mark an important shift in Communist cultural policy towards an embrace of graphic satire, with drawings by partisan artists discussed in chapter two appearing widely in KPD publications. *Der Knüppel* alone, however, presented their work on a regular basis and as an artistic collective. In June 1924 Grosz, Heartfield, and Schlichter formed an association of Communist artists, the Red Group (*Rote Gruppe*), and it was as such that they oversaw the production of *Der Knüppel*. Although previous scholars discuss the magazine in general terms, none so far have analyzed the magazine's contents on an issue-by-issue basis. By doing so I show how former Dadaists became Communist caricaturists, employing visual strategies attuned to specific political circumstances and anchored in contemporary media imagery. Central to my analysis is the way in which symbols, known personalities, and social types are sustained across and within individual issues of *Der Knüppel* and beyond its pages. A special satirical election pamphlet produced by the Red Group artists in October 1924 entitled *The Rosy-hued Glasses* (*Die rosarote Brille*) exemplifies how Communist graphic satire was intended to operate and the chapter foregrounds this case study in relation to *Der Knüppel* as a whole.

I conclude by looking at the final years of the Weimar Republic and the abandonment of *Der Knüppel* in 1927, signaling a further re-evaluation of graphic satire by the KPD, exemplified in the creation of *Owlglass* (*Eulenspiegel*), an alternative, more "popular- (*volkstümlich*)" oriented satire magazine. As the party became increasingly

sectarian and desperately tried to mobilize workers during a period of economic crisis, party leaders deemed the work of Grosz and his colleagues to be "too negative." This returns us to the question of class. That class consciousness as a way of seeing was fashioned by artists affiliated with, but not belonging to, the working class was an issue that brought the difference between class consciousness and class identity into plain view. Their position meant that they could only be advocates, or at best mediators of class experience. This explains the often-problematic relationship between political committed artists and the audiences/organizations on whose behalf they worked. (As Brecht is supposed to have told Grosz, "You hate the bourgeoisie not because you are a proletarian, but because you are an artist.")[83] That these conflicts are often registered in the images themselves may have rendered them politically unstable at the time, but allow the social historian of art today to get closer to the ideological complexity of Weimar Communism's political imaginary.

[83] Quoted in David Large Clay, *Berlin* (New York: Basic Books, 2000), 200.

Chapter One--The Politics of Graphic Satire: Eduard Fuchs, Editor and Historian

Introduction

[Fig. 1.1] The German socialist, collector, and amateur historian Eduard Fuchs (1870-1940) belongs to a small circle of militant left-wing intellectuals whose influence spanned the caesura of World War I and continued into the Weimar Period. By the time he fled Nazi Germany in 1932, Fuchs was considered a leading authority on art and cultural history. He published over twenty-five books, on topics ranging from caricature to French porcelain, erotic art to Tang dynasty sculpture. Royalties from these studies, in particular his best-selling three volume *Illustrated History of Custom* (*Illustrierte Sittengeschichte)*, enabled him to amass an art collection that, in the words of the influential critic Paul Westheim, "[k]nows no boundaries or limitations."[84] The collection included numerous examples of graphic satire, six thousand by the famous French caricaturist Honoré Daumier alone. These, in addition to the twenty-six paintings he owned by the artist, made him one of the leading private collectors of Daumier in Europe.[85] He also owned paintings by the contemporary (and controversial)

---

[84] Detailed in Westheim's article "Das Haus eines Sammlers. Die Sammlung Eduard Fuchs, Zehlendorf, "Das *Kunstblatt* (1926). An earlier article on Fuchs' collection appeared in 1912—Robert Breuer, "Die Sammlung Eduard Fuchs," *Kunst und Künstler*, vol. 10, no. 10 (1912). The acquisition of works was aided by Fuchs' marriage his second wife, Greta Alsberg, whose family owned Tietz, the third largest department store chain in Germany.

[85] The other major German private collector of Daumier during this period was Otto Gerstenberg, who owned a total of seventeen paintings by Daumier, as well as works by Manet, Degas, Renoir, Delacroix

Impressionists Max Liebermann and Max Slevogt, as well as renowned works of sculpture and porcelain. As demonstrated in a photo of the interior of Fuchs' villa on the western outskirts of Berlin, his residence resembled a museum more than a private home.[86] **[Fig. 1.2]** George Grosz later recalled seeing works "even in the bathroom…from the floor to the ceiling and sometimes even on the ceiling."[87]

Today Fuchs is remembered—if remembered at all—as the subject of an essay by Walter Benjamin, "Eduard Fuchs, Collector and Historian."[88] Taking a highly critical view of his protagonist, Benjamin casts Fuchs as a foil to his own conception of cultural history. As Frederic Schwartz has argued, "the Fuchs essay remains the most forceful account of what he [Benjamin] saw as the shape and possibilities of a materialist and dialectical history of art," and it is as such that most scholars discuss the text.[89] Fuchs' breadth of interests and various activities, neither of which Benjamin discusses in detail, have thus been relegated to little more than a footnote in studies of Benjamin, cursorily

---

and Courbet. For more details, see Werner Hofmann's *Daumier und Deutschland* (Munich; Berlin: Deutscher Kunstverlag, 2004). Hofmann describes Gerstenberg as a Francophile who belonged to "the liberal wing of the Berlin haute-bourgeoisie, who rejected the doctrinaire cultural politics of the Kaiser [Wilhelm II]" (46). While not as radical as Fuchs, the two collectors thus shared a common internationalist outlook when it came to cultural matters, which was typical of a fraction of the *Bildungsbürgertum* up to the outbreak of WWI. For further background, see Peter Paret, *The Berlin Secession: Modernism and its Enemies in Imperial Germany* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1980).

[86] Originally designed by Mies van der Rohe for the art dealer Hugo Perls, Fuchs purchased the villa in 1918, apparently for the sum of five Liebermann paintings, Weitz, 220.

[87] George Grosz, *Ein Kleines Ja Und Ein Großes Nein* (Hamburg: Rowohlt, 1955), 186--although originally published in English in 1946, the most edition is a translation of the German text, see *George Grosz, an Autobiography*, trans. Nora Hodges (New York: Macmillan, 1983).

[88] Originally published in the fall 1937 issue of *Zeitschrift für Sozialforschung*, the essay first appeared in an English translation by Knut Tarnowski in *New German Critique*, no. 5 (1975). Citations in this chapter instead follow the most recent translation by Howard Eiland and Michael W. Jennings from Walter Benjamin, *The Work of Art in the Age of its Technological Reproducibility and other Writings on Media*, eds. Michael W. Jennings, Brigid Doherty, and Thomas Y. Levin (Cambridge, MA; London: The Belknap Press of Harvard University Press, 2008), 116-156.

[89] Frederic Schwartz, "Walter Benjamin's Essay on Eduard Fuchs: An Art-Historical Perspective," in *Marxism and the History of Art. From William Morris to the New Left*, ed. Andrew Hemingway (London; Ann Arbor: Pluto Press, 2006), 106.

mentioned if not outright dismissed.[90] Contemporary letters to friends indicate that Benjamin himself felt no great love toward Fuchs. "The more closely I engage with his work…the bleaker it seems," he wrote to Alfred Cohen in 1935, adding two years later "I have dragged on, finding no redeeming feature in either his writing or his person."[91] Antipathy toward Fuchs doubtless accounts for why it took Benjamin nearly five years to finish the essay, and then only after gaining considerable latitude from Max Horkheimer, who originally commissioned it.[92]

It would be wrong to conclude from this that Benjamin saw no worth in Fuchs. While he may not have cared much for Fuchs as a person or a writer, Benjamin is nonetheless fascinated by what Fuchs personified, and insofar as he relies upon visual analogies to make his argument, the essay in fact tells us a great deal about Fuchs' impact as a promoter and historian of graphic satire. *For it is through caricature that Benjamin draws attention to what he saw as redeemable in Fuchs.*

This is most evident in the conclusion of the essay, when Benjamin compares Fuchs to certain social types that appear in the work of his beloved Daumier. He likens

---

[90] Schwartz's essay, it should be noted, is unique in suggesting that Fuchs is an important figure in his own right, deserving of greater scholarly attention. By way of comparison, the editors of the Essential Frankfurt School Reader (New York: Continuum, 1982) describe him as a "relatively insignificant Social Democratic intellectual" (225). In their recent biography of Benjamin, Eiland and Jennings write: "The essay is remarkable, then, not so much for its engagement with the work of Eduard Fuchs as for the theory of cultural historiography Benjamin sets out in its opening pages," *Walter Benjamin. A Critical Life* (Cambridge: Belknap Press of Harvard University Press, 2014), 546.
[91] Both letters can be found in Benjamin's *Gesammelte Briefe*, vol. V (1935-1937), eds. Christoph Gödde and Henri Lonitz (Frankfurt am Main: Suhrkamp Verlag, 1999), 165; 480. They are also quoted in Schwartz, although our translations differ slightly.
[92] Letters between WB and the editors of the *Zeitschrift für Sozialforschung* that discuss the text over the course of its execution can be found in *Gesammelte Schriften*, II/3, eds. Rolf Tiedemann and Hermann Schweppenhäuser (Frankfurt am Main: Suhrkamp Verlag, 1977/1989), 1316-1355. They document the alterations in argument that Benjamin proposed and changes to the essay that were made before it appeared in the journal.

Fuchs to the connoisseurs, dealers, and aficionados that inhabit Daumier's lithographs of the mid-nineteenth-century Parisian art scene. "All of these characters resemble Fuchs, right down to the detail of his physique," he writes, "[t]hey are tall, thin figures whose eyes shoot fiery glances."[93] Fuchs indeed struck a remarkable figure in his prime, easily amenable to parody, as can been seen in a portrait drawing of him from the mid-1920s **[Fig. 1.3]** and the numerous caricatures of Fuchs that appear in the pages of the satirical magazine he edited between 1892 and 1901, the *South-German Postilion* (*Süddeutscher Postillon)*. If we compare a photograph of Fuchs from 1903 with connoisseurs of fine art as depicted by Daumier **Figs. 1.4 & 1.5]**, one does begin to see the similarities Benjamin suggests. Fuchs shares their lanky stature, their slightly disheveled appearance, and of course their hyperopia.

These physical features, according to Benjamin, are the direct result of Fuchs' passion for cultural objects and mark him as a collector in the bourgeois mode.[94] Benjamin speaks of Fuchs' "descent from the race of bourgeois giants of around 1830," comparing him to Balzac, Dumas, and others whose penchant for the grandiose led them to tackle subjects in their totality[95]. Fuchs' ambitions were certainly bold for an amateur historian; his first major study of graphic satire, *The History of European Graphic Satire* (*Die Karikatur der europäischen Völker*), encompasses the entire history of the art form, from its beginnings in ancient Greece to the conclusion of the nineteenth century. Nothing of the kind had ever been attempted in Germany. Yet, in linking Fuchs to such

---

[93] Benjamin, "Eduard Fuchs, Collector and Historian," 143.
[94] Ibid.
[95] Ibid., 133.

bourgeois predecessors, Benjamin is paying him what we might call a dialectical compliment. Belonging to a pedigree of "bourgeois giants" is not what most Marxist cultural historians aim for, particularly when, as Benjamin argues, this aversely conditions one's thought. Bogged down by a mishmash of crude Darwinism, naïve teleological conceptions of history, and a whole host of other misguided faiths, Benjamin judges Fuchs' writings to be symptomatic of a faulty framework shared by a generation of pre-war Social Democratic intellectuals.

What saves Fuchs' reputation in Benjamin eyes is his practice as a collector. The "pioneering" aspects of Fuchs' work, the "elements of any future materialist consideration of art," exist latently in his activities as a connoisseur of popular art.[96] It is Fuchs' attention to technologies of reproduction and his interest in mundane iconography that single him out from his milieu. Benjamin depicts Fuchs as a man whose natural proclivities trump his intellectual abilities; he is revolutionary in deed, but reactionary in mind.[97] The goal of Benjamin's essay is thus to draw attention to those aspects of Fuchs' character that evaded his theories but were integral to his practice. By exaggerating these aspects in a caricatured fashion, Benjamin presents Fuchs *the collector* as a precursor to Benjamin's own historical materialist approach to art.

---

[96] Ibid., 126.

[97] Michael P. Steinberg makes a similar argument in his essay "The Collector as Allegorist: Goods, Gods, and the Objects of History," in *Walter Benjamin and the Demands of History*, ed. Michael P. Steinberg (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 1996). He writes: "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" (88-89).

Yet, as this chapter will demonstrate, Fuchs' significance extends beyond the terms of Benjamin's essay and exceeds his habits as a collector.[98] Fuchs made his most important impact as a promoter of the political and cultural relevance of graphic satire through his editorial work for the *Süddeutscher Postillon,* Germany's second-most popular Social Democratic satire magazine. It was Fuchs *the editor* who recognized the political value of graphic satire for the Left, and Fuchs *the historian* who sought to historicize this political value in accordance with Marxist principles.[99] Fuchs' studies of graphic satire are the direct outgrowth of his experience as a partisan editor and political activist, and they sketch a framework through which to understand the production and reception of graphic satire and caricature (terms used interchangeably).[100] At the core of this framework lies his argument that graphic satire is both an effective agitational agent (*Kampfmittel*) and educational agent (*Erziehungsmittel*), able to express oppositional political perspectives as well as foster

---

[98] The recent publication of Ulrich Weitz's *Eduard Fuchs. Der Mann im Schatten* (Berlin: Dietz Verlag, 2014) makes the full details of Fuchs' life available for first time. Although it draws heavily from Weitz's earlier study, *Salonkultur und Proletariat. Eduard Fuchs – Sammler, Sittengeschichter, Sozialist* (Stuttgart: Verlag Bernd Stöffler and Dieter Schütz, 1991), it includes numerous details previously unknown concerning Fuchs' political activities after WWI. The earlier study contains more about Fuchs' life before the war and includes descriptions of his various collections and writings that do not appear in the later biography. Another, earlier study by Thomas Huonker, *Revolution, Moral, & Kunst. Eduard Fuchs, Leben und Werk* (Zürich: Limmat Verlag Genossenschaft, 1985), provides an analysis of Fuchs' methodological interests unequaled in any other publications on Fuchs.

[99] Distinguishing this period of Fuchs' career from his subsequent work follows Luciana Zingarelli's overview in "Eduard Fuchs, vom militanten Journalismus zur Kulturgeschichte," *Ästhetik und Kommunikation – Beitrage zur politischen Erziehung*, vol. 7, no. 25 (1976): 32-53. Zingarelli's article remains one of the best short introductions to Fuchs' career.

[100] As Fuchs explains in the introduction to volume one of *Die Karikatur der europäischen Völker*, graphic satire comprises a variety of stylistic forms, including epigrams, grotesques, and cartoons. "[I]f we too now apply, as is done in everyday speech, the name "caricature" to all of these graphic means of expression, we only do so because the modern lexicon has employed the word in this broad manner and has embraced it so strongly that a correct assessment of the word and a differentiation of the concepts it covers would at the moment only cause confusion" (8).

collective political identification. Fuchs discusses these two interactive dimensions through a historical exploration of the subject, first in a series of articles for the *Postillon* in 1898 that were re-published as a short book, *1848 in der Caricatur*, to mark the fiftieth anniversary of failed German revolution, and later in the more substantive, two-volume *Die Karikatur der europäischen Völker*.[101] His focus on the popular character of graphic satire constitutes a crucial intervention into the debates that arose over the broadening image-world of early twentieth century Germany and would subsequently influence the production and conceptualization of Communist graphic satire during the Weimar Republic.

Fuchs the Editor

Serial satirical publications arose in Germany during the revolutionary turmoil of 1848. Recognized titles such as *Crash* (*Kladderadatsch)* and *The Flying Pages* (*Fliegende Blätter*) date back to this period and were at first defined by their liberal opposition to Prussian hegemony. This oppositional stance weakened over the course of the later nineteenth century as Bismarck's politics split the liberals and won erstwhile foes to his nationalist project.[102] After 1890 Social Democratic satire magazines such as *The True*

[101] That Fuchs' initial foray into the historical study of graphic satire was connected to contemporary politics is made explicit in the conclusion to *1848 in der Caricatur*. Therein he writes, "If we undertook the production of this work during the jubilee of the revolution, it was because, in our view, the time is particularly suited to demonstrating the importance of graphic satire *(Karikatur*) as an agitational as well as educational agent (*Kampf- wie als Erziehungsmittel, eindringlich vor Augen zu führen*)" (28).

[102] For an extremely in-depth overview of the various Berlin-based publications, see Ursula E. Koch, *Der Teufel in Berlin: Von der Märzrevolution bis zu Bismarcks Entlassung. Illustrierte politische Witzblätter einer Metropole 1848-1890* (Köln: Informationspresse Leske, 1991). On *Kladderadatsch* see Klas Schulz, *Kladderadatsch, ein bürgerliches Witzblatt von der Märzrevolution bis zum Nationalsozialismus 1848-1944* (Bochum: Brockmeyer, 1975) and *Kladderadatsch: Die Geschichte eines Berliner Witzblattes von 1848 bis ins Dritte Reich,* ed. Ingrid Heinrich-Jost (Köln: Informationspresse Leske, 1982). On *Fliegenden Blätter*, see Ursula E. Koch, "Die Münchner Fliegenden Blätter vor, während und nach der Märzrevolution 1848: 'ein deutscher Charivari und Punch'?" in *Politik, Porträt, Physiologie. Facetten der europäischen Karikatur im Vor-*

Path (*Der Wahre Jakob*), the SPD's premiere, Berlin-based humor magazine, became the most popular adversary of the government and the editors of such publications played a key role in extending socialist politics to a broadening audience.[103] This dates back to the earliest days of the movement, when socialist publications served as a key organizing tool, with editors and colporteurs serving double duty as party agitators at the local level. After the Anti-Socialist laws were implemented in 1878, following an unsuccessful assassination attempt on Kaiser Wilhelm I, such haphazard arrangements became a practical necessity. The state revoked workers' right of association and outlawed the SPD outright, along with all its affiliated associations and official publications. Apart from parliamentary elections, the party could not conduct political work openly.[104] To circumvent such restrictions and keep the organization alive, party members formed ersatz organizations and so-called "colorless" newspapers that did not openly advertise their socialist orientation—or else transferred existing publications abroad to be smuggled into Germany by couriers.[105] After the Anti-Socialist laws

und Nachmärz, eds. Hubertus Fischer and Florian Vaßen (Bielefeld 2010), 199-255. Fuchs discusses *Kladderadatsch, Fliegenden Blätter*, and many more nineteenth-century German satirical publications in volume two of *Die Karikatur der europäischen Völker*, tracing their shift from steadfast liberalism to a more submissive, anti-SPD orientation. This became even more pronounced after WWI.

[103] *Der Wahre Jakob* began in 1879 as a non-illustrated satirical newspaper based out of Hamburg, but it did not become an illustrated publication until 1884, when it moved to Berlin. The most thorough study of *Der Wahre Jakob* remains Ann Robertson's *Karikatur im Kontext. Zur Entwicklung der sozialdemokratischen illustrierten satirischen Zeitschrift Der Wahre Jakob zwischen Kaiserreich und Republik* (Frankfurt am Main: Peter Lang, 1992). Also see Konrad Ege, *Karikatur und Bildsatire im Deutschen Reich: der Wahre Jacob* (Münster; Hamburg: Zugl: Kassel, Gesamthochsch., Diss.1992).

[104] For details concerning the SPD during these years of near-total illegality, see Vernon L. Lidtke, *The Outlawed Party: Social Democracy in Germany, 1878-1890* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1966). On the restrictions expressed by oppositional publications, Hans-Wolfgang Wetzel, *Presseinnenpolitik im Bismarckreich (1874-1890)*: *Das Problem der Repression oppositioneller Zeitungen* (Berlin: Herbert Lang, 1975).

[105] By far the most influential of these was *Der Sozialdemokrat*, the official party organ after the Anti-Socialist laws came into effect, edited and published in Zürich, first by Georg Vollmar and later by Eduard Bernstein. Issues of the publication have been reproduced in *Der Sozialdemokrat* eds. Horst Bartel, Wolfgang Schörder, Gustav Seeber and Heinz Wolten (Berlin: Dietz, 1970). For a broader overview of the

expired in January 1890, the SPD press expanded rapidly. The party controlled over 60 publications in 1890. Of these, nineteen appeared six times a week, increasing to thirty-nine by 1895. The SPD also created inserts and stand-alone magazines targeted to specific audiences, including: *Equality* (*Die Gleichheit)*, edited by Clara Zetkin and aimed at female workers; *The New Times* (*Die Neue Zeit)*, a theoretical journal; and *The New World* (*Die Neue Welt)*, which showcased serialized novels and articles on science and technology.[106] It was during this period Fuchs rose to prominence through his work for the Munich-based *Süddeutscher Postillon*.

The Süddeutscher Postillon

[Fig. 1.6] Originally founded as a weekly supplement to the SPD-aligned newspaper *Die Süddeutsche Post* in 1882, the magazine offered readers content similar to what they might find in other satirical publications, albeit with a Social Democratic hue. After a brief hiatus following the ban of the *Süddeutsche Post* by the Munich authorities, the *Postillon* began to appear again as a monthly in 1884 and continued as such until the party publisher, Louis Viereck, sold his concern to Maximin Ernst after a dispute with leading members of the Bavarian SPD. (Under Ernst the magazine shifted to a bi-monthly publication schedule, which remained in force until 1910 when it ceased publication altogether.[107]) Like its better-known, Berlin-based counterpart *Der Wahre*

SPD press during this period, including its "colorless" publications, see Gerhard Eisfeld and Kurt Koszyk, *Die Presse der deutschen Sozialdemokratie. Eine Bibliographie* (Bonn: Verlag Neue Gesellschaft, 1980).

[106] Kurt Koszyk, "Kultur und Presse der Arbeiterbewegung," in *Beiträge zur Kulturgeschichte der deutschen Arbeiterbewegung 1848-1918*, ed. Peter von Rüden (Frakfurt am Main: Büchergilde Gutenberg, 1979): 63-78.

[107] The history of the *Süddeutscher Postillon* is outlined in the introduction to Udo Achten, *Süddeutscher Postillon* (Berlin, Bonn: Dietz Verlag, 1979), a collection of pages from the *Postillon* over the course of its publication in facsimile. When the paper changed hands, Kegel went to work for *Der Wahre Jakob*. For details of Viereck's working-class oriented publications prior to his turning over his publishing house to Ernst, see Ulrich Hess, "Louis Viereck und seine Münchner Blätter für Arbeiter, 1882-1889," *Dortmünder*

Jakob, issues featured an array of subject matter, including regional anecdotes or news items (often related as "letters" from contributors based in Saxony or other areas, and distinguished by the use of strong dialect for humorous effect), amusing stories and fables, poetry, aphorisms, short literature reviews, advertisements, and, of course, illustrations. The *Postillon*'s length and price were similar to other publications as well.[108] Several aspects distinguished the *Postillon*, however; its format, which increased from 23.5 x 29 cm in 1882 to 24 x 33 cm in 1890, made it slightly larger than its competitors, and few printed so many pages in full color.[109] Prior to 1890, with the Anti-Socialist laws in full force, both *Der Wahre Jakob* and the *Postillon* refrained from publishing full-page illustrations on the front cover so as not to antagonize the censors, and limited overt expressions of allegiance to the SPD.[110]

Fuchs became editor of the *Postillon* in the summer of 1892, two years after he moved to Munich to sort out the accounts of the SPD's local publishing house, which had been left in disarray after Ernst took over from Viereck. Prior to this Fuchs had been living in Stuttgart, where he worked at a local printer's as an accounting clerk. His

---

Beiträge zur Zeitungsforschung, 6 (1961): 1-50.

[108] Each issue cost 10 Pfennig, approximately equal to the price of two cigars, 2 "Schnäpse," or a glass of beer—see Ursula E. Koch, "Eduard Fuchs und das politische Arbeiter-Witzblatt Süddeutscher Postillon," *Ridiculosa*, Nr. 2 (1995), 18 n. 20.

[109] By way of contrast, *Der Wahre Jakob*'s format in 1884 (23.5 x 32 cm), though initially larger than the *Postillon*, remained unchanged and thus the smaller of the SPD's two satirical magazines after 1890. It featured fewer color illustrations than the *Postillon*. The first illustrated paper to incorporate color prints was the Berlin-based *Lustigen Blätter* in 1886. For more on the relationship between the SPD's competing satirical magazines see Klaus-Dieter Pohl, *Allegorie und Arbeiter: bildagitatorische Didaktik und Repräsentation der SPD 1890-1914. Studien zum politischen Umgang mit bildender Kunst in dem politische-satirischen Zeitschriften "Der Wahre Jakob" und "Süddeutscher Postillon"* (Osnabrück Dissertation, 1986) and Klaus Völkerling, *Die politisch-satirischen Zeitschriften 'Süddeutscher Postillon' und 'Der Wahre Jakob.' Ihr Beitrag zur Herausbildung der frühen sozialistischen Literatur in Deutshcland und zur marxistischen Literaturtheorie*, unpublished Ph. D thesis, Univeristy of Potsdam (1969).

[110] Robertson, *Karikatur im Kontext*, 82.

family had moved to the city in 1871 from his hometown of Göppingen, and the death of his father in 1886 forced Fuchs to leave school and earn a living. It was during this time that he became politically active, joining the local branch of the then illegal SPD. Serving as a courier for a time, he smuggled outlawed publications into the country, and quickly gravitated to the most radical circles within the underground party. Along with a group of fellow comrades, he began publishing anarchist pamphlets. This led to his first encounter with the law, and a brief jail sentence—the first of many. By the time he arrived in Munich he had moved away from his early anarchist leanings and was looking to acquire more solid employment. As Benjamin relates in his essay, Fuchs' position as a clerk in Munich eventually led to his assisting with the layout and content of an issue of the *Postillon* in 1892, the resulting success of which proved his acumen.[111] Ernst subsequently put Fuchs in charge of the special May Day issue that year, which likewise sold a record number of copies.[112] This ensured his position as editor-in-chief.

Under Fuchs' editorship the *Postillon* solidified its reputation as an original and politically sharp publication. Unlike much of the SPD-aligned press, which Fuchs criticized for publishing lackluster and trivial images, the *Postillon* embraced new artistic trends drawn from Fuchs' associations within the progressive cultural milieu of Munich, centered around the Schwabing district.[113] Through his close friendship with

---

[111] Benjamin, "Eduard Fuchs, Collector and Historian," 120.

[112] According to Benjamin, the May issue sold 60,000 copies, more than ten times its typical average sales. Weitz concurs--*Der Mann im Schatten*, 49.

[113] Fuchs first made such criticisms public at the 1893 party congress held in Cologne, see *Protokoll über die Verhandlugen des Parteitages der Sozialdemokratischen Partei Deutschlands zu Köln am Rhein, 22. Bis 28. Oktober 1893* (Berlin 1893), 112, also quoted in Weitz, *Der Mann*, 54. Fuchs attended the conference as an official delegate from the local party in Rosenheim, a small town southeast of Munich where he engaged in political organizing during 1892-93.

the artist Max Slevogt Fuchs gained entry into this milieu[114]. As editor he helped to launch the career of several Schwabing artists by commissioning pieces for the publication, including Sascha Schneider, Max Engert, E. M. Lilien, and Bruno Paul [**Fig. 1.7**]. [115] In addition to utilizing color reproduction technology to include bigger and more numerous color illustrations on the front and back covers as well as the inside pages, Fuchs incorporated further innovations, such as two-page centerfold illustrations of socialist themes or large format caricature, and Jugenstil-inspired typography. As a devout Francophile, Fuchs shared with a growing number of German artists and critics of this period a cosmopolitan sensibility that increasing isolated them from the official, nationalistic academies.[116] This was a sensibility Fuchs strove to bring to the Social Democratic milieu by modeling the *Postillon* on earlier French precedents, such as Charles Philipon's *La Caricature*.

For Fuchs, Philipon exemplified the role of a politically engaged editor. In a 1898 *Postillon* article, Fuchs praises Philipon's organizational skill in addition to highlighting the quality and tenacity of his publications. "[N]ever before had a government had such

---

[114] Gerdi Huber, *Das klassische Schwabing. München als Zentrum der intellektuellen Zeit- und Gesellschaftskritik an der Wende des 19. zum 20. Jahrhundert* (Munich, 1973). Robin Lenman, "A Community in Transition: Painters in Munich, 1886-1924," *Central European History*, vol. xv, no. 1 (March 1982): 3-33.
[115] Schneider went on to design many of the covers for Karl May's publications in the 1920s and Lilien an important artist for the emerging Zionist movement. Engert, meanwhile, became one of the main contributors to the *Postillon* during Fuchs' time as editor, and Bruno Paul, a friend of Engert, went on to be a stalwart of *Simplicissimus* into 1910s.
[116] Peter Paret discusses how modern trends in visual art, particularly those associated with France (such as impressionism), sparked bitter debate between more conservative, nationalist-oriented academy members and cosmopolitan, more-liberal oriented artists in his book *The Berlin Secession: Modernism and its Enemies in Imperial Germany* (Cambridge, MA: Belknap Press of Harvard University Press, 1980). A similar debate led to the creation of a Secession movement in Munich in 1892, recounted in Maria Makela, *The Munich Secession. Art and Artists in Turn-Of-The-Century Munich* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1990). For a broader overview of the organizational and economic circumstances that often underlie and fueled such aesthetic debates, see Robin Lenman, *Artists and Society in Germany, 1850-1914* (Manchester; New York: Manchester University Press, 1997).

adroit enemies, nor a king such relentless opponents," he writes.[117] The collaborative efforts that Philipon initiated with his caricaturists inspired Fuchs to follow suit by working closely with his own roster of artists, cooperating on specific covers and suggesting content for particular drawings, at times recycling subjects from issues of *La Caricature* and Philipon's later daily, *Le Charivari.* [**Fig. 1.8**] A drawing in the May 1898 issue of the *Postillon* entitled "Metamorphosis," for instance, echoes Philipon's famous pear image: over the course of five images a bread dumpling is transformed into the leader of the Catholic Center Party and then into a hippopotamus.

It was Fuchs' re-incorporation of historical precedents, internationalist scope, and defiant attitude that made the *Postillon* stand out politically. While the magazine may have presented itself as one of a crew of satirical publications aiming to pester the ruling powers of the German state—personified in an image from 1897 as a uniformed Junker, surrounded by each of the major contemporary publications' trademark emblems [**Fig. 1.9**]—it tended to strike a more forceful, oppositional tone. Attacks on recognizable political personalities were relentless, and the German government's colonial policy also became a key target during the years of Fuchs' editorship. At the same time that the SPD began to debate the position social democrats ought to take toward Germany's colonial conquests, the *Postillon* depicted Germany's position vis-à-vis the dominant imperialist nations (the UK and USA) as farcical, its colonial dreams as delusional or self-defeating.[118] [**Fig. 1.10**] Such images tell us a great deal about the way

117 "1848 in der Karikatur (II)," (*Süddeutscher Postillon*, Nr. 5 (1898).
118 Hans Christoph Schröder, *Sozialismus und Imperialismus: Die Auseinandersetzung der deutschen Sozialdemokratie mit dem Imperialismusproblem und der "Weltpolitik" vor 1914* (Hannover: Verlag für Literatur und Zeitgeschehen, 1968). *Discovering Imperialism. Social Democracy to World War I*, eds. Richard

colonialism impacted domestic politics in the decades leading up to WWI, and how racial tropes filtered into political discourse, even amongst the strongest opponents to the Kaiser's imperialist ambitions.[119]

After 1896 the *Postillon* faced increasing competition with the establishment of the commercial magazine *Simplicissimus*. Founded in Munich by the publisher Albert Langen, *Simplicissimus* became one of the most long-standing and popular publications in Germany. Although its circulation was limited at first (around 15,000 in 1898, rising to around 86,000 by 1908), it followed the *Postillon* in embracing new trends in visual art and illustration.[120] Langen brought to the magazine an appreciation for innovative methods and French precedents equal to that of Fuchs. The popularity of commercial magazines did not deter Fuchs' belief that graphic satire could be an effective means of propagating a socialist perspective, however. Nearly 85,000 people subscribed to *Der Wahre Jakob* in 1890, almost double the number that subscribed to the official party organ, *Vorwärts*. By 1906 the number of subscribers topped 200,000, cresting in 1912 at

---

Day and Daniel Gaido (Leiden: Brill, 2011).

[119] Depictions of racial difference within pre-WWI German satire magazines remains an underexplored topic, particularly in regard to the SPD press, which, although largely opposed to colonialism, relied upon racialized categories and visual imagery to make its critique. Volker Langbehn explores this problematic phenomenon in his essay "Satirical Magazines and Racial Politics," in *German Colonialism, Visual Culture and Modern Memory*, ed. Volker Langbehn (New York: Routledge, 2010), and discusses several examples in *Der Wahre Jakob*, but further research into the relationship between the SPD's development of a theoretical explanation for imperialism and its visual culture would be necessary to fully explicate the contradictions within the party over this issue. For a broader view of how German colonialism colored diverse aspects of domestic visual culture (including caricature), see John Phillip Short, *Magic Lantern Empire: Colonialism and Society in Germany* (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 2012) and David Ciarlo, *Advertising Empire. Race and Visual Culture in Imperial Germany* (Cambridge, MA; London: Harvard University Press, 2011).

[120] Langen later on became Fuchs' main publisher. For more on Langen, see Helga Abret, *Albert Langen: ein europäischer Verleger* (Munich: Langen Müller, 1993). There is an earlier biography that focuses more on Langen's local influence, Ernestine Koch, *Albert Langen. Ein Verleger in München* (Munich: Langen Müller, 1969).

380,000.[121] The *Postillon*, by contrast, rarely had more than 40,000 subscribers, but even this was a considerable achievement for a radical, socialist magazine. What is more, newspapers and magazines during this period were routinely shared amongst friends, co-workers, and comrades, either read aloud or passed along by hand. SPD-aligned organizations as well as local bars and meeting-houses sympathetic to the cause often took out a subscription for their patrons. It is therefore quite possible that the actual number of working-class readers totaled two or even three times these numbers.

Graphic Satire as Kampfmittel

Fuchs' promotion of graphic satire as an effective agitational agent (*Kampfmittel*) began in earnest amidst the SPD's jubilee celebration of the 1848 revolutions. For members of the SPD, the failure of bourgeois liberalism to unite the country and secure democratic reforms underlay the party's claim to be the rightful inheritors of political progress in Germany. As Fuchs maintains in a piece written to commemorate the anniversary,

> Social Democracy, the representative of the working class that has come to political consciousness, is the only party that not only keeps alive the memory of the revolution of 1848, but also struggles to achieve the political liberty aimed at during that time but has yet to be realized.[122]

To demonstrate how political satire could aid efforts to spread socialist politics and garner support for the party, Fuchs published a series of five articles in the *Postillon*

---

[121] Robertson provides a number of helpful appendices that chart the subscription rates of *Der Wahre Jakob* and other publications from the 1890s to the 1930s at the conclusion of her study, *Karikatur im Kontext*, 322-329. Much of her data is drawn from *Sperlings Zeitschriften- und Zeitungs-Adreßbuch*, a trade publication based in Leipzig that published yearly statistics on the German press.
[122] Dated March 1898, the article appeared in both the *Münchner Post* and *Augsburger Volkszeitung*, quoted in Weitz, *Salonkultur*, 210. see for example Franz Mehring's two-volume *Geschichte der deutschen Sozialdemokratie* (Berlin: Dietz, 1960), first published in 1896-7.

exploring the political impact of graphic satire produced in 1848. [**Fig. 1.11**] The series subsequently became the basis for his first book, *1848 in Graphic Satire* (*1848 in der Caricatur*).[123] In contrast with his earlier writing on graphic satire, such as the regular feature "Politics in Images" that he published in the *Leipziger Volkszeitung,* the 1848 series presents a historically grounded defense of graphic satire's import as a popular, tendentious art form.[124]

Graphic satire is defined by its mode of address, according to Fuchs, and this accounts for its political efficacy. Through graphic, he explains,

> one is able to aptly indicate the character of a person, bringing an understanding of complicated thoughts and ideas to the broadest of audiences, in a manner that even the most elaborate expositions are unable to achieve…By way of graphic satire (*Karikatur*) truths and insights reach the masses that would otherwise remain incomprehensible or concealed.[125]

Fuchs elaborates upon his argument by highlighting various specific examples dating back to 1848. In Bavaria, for instance, opposition to monarchical rule focused on Ludwig I's consort, Lola Montez, whose purported arrogance and questionable made her a target for libel across the political spectrum. Fuchs describes how Montez became the subject of political graphic satire in support of revolution despite her support for

---

[123] The book is published in a limited edition by Maximin Ernst, the publisher of the *Postillon*, and includes all the images that accompany Fuchs' articles, along with several supplemental, full-page reproductions that were sold separately. For an extended analysis of the study see Misa Nikolic, *The Dialectical Image of Caricature: Eduard Fuchs and the March Revolution of 1848*, unpublished MA thesis, University of Alberta (2014).

[124] The *Leipziger Volkszeitung*, although SPD aligned, was identified closely with the left-wing of the party. Its editor, Bruno Schönlank, gave up an academic career to run the paper, and contributors included Mehring, Luxemburg and other future Spartacists. For more on Schönlank, see Paul Mayer, *Bruno Schönlank 1859-1901. Reformer der sozialdemokratischen Tagespresse* (Hannover: Verlag für Literatur und Zeitgeschehen, 1971).

[125] *1848 in der Caricatur*, 28. Reprinted from "Die politische Karikatur im verflossenen Wahlkampfe," *Süddeutscher Postillon*, Nr. 14 (1898).

liberal reforms because of her association with Ludwig's arbitrary power[126]r. In Frankfurt, by contrast, the feckless members of the constituent assembly became the primary targets of satirists, while caricaturists across Germany lampooned the Prussian King Friedrich Wilhelm IV for his lack of demeanor and love of champagne. [**Fig. 1.12**] Drawing upon a particularly astute image from the period that depicts Friedrich as a disheveled drunk, Fuchs describes how the king "sought to follow in the footsteps of Frederick the Great, but unfortunately always trod alongside them, managing to produce nothing more than a comical imitation."[127] By contrasting Friedrich's questionable character with his illustrious predecessor in an immediately accessible and entertaining manner, such images galvanized existing discontent and win support for the liberal opposition. Fuchs sees this as evidence of graphic satire's political import.

Even so, Fuchs concludes that German graphic satire of the period ultimately paled in comparison to that produced in other countries, namely France. This was primarily due, he argues, to the fact that "political caricature in the modern sense of the term is substantially older in France than in Germany."[128] Whereas the creation of

---

[126] Much of the ire directed toward Montez stemmed from her disregard for courtly behavior and the influence she held over Ludwig. William A. Coupe discusses how Montez became "a figure of symbolical proportions" amidst the political conflict in his "The German Cartoon and the Revolution of 1848," in *Comparative Studies in Society and History: An International Quarterly*, vol. XI, no. 2 (January 1967): 137-167.Fuchs subsequently published a book on the many caricatures of Montez that were produced during this period, *Ein vormärzliches Tanz-Idyll. Lola Montez in der Karikatur* (Berlin: Verlag Ernst Frensdorff, 1904). An earlier draft of the text first appeared as "Lola Montez in der Karikatur, "Zeitschrift *für Bücherfreunde, Monatshefte für Bibliophilie und verwandte Interessen*, vol. 1, no. 3 (June 1898): 105-126.

[127] "1848 in der Karikatur (IV)," *Süddeutscher Postillon*, Nr. 7 (1898). Nikolic writes that the image of Fredrich Wilhelm IV so enraged the king that he censored the image, but that it remained popular nonetheless and was later republished in the publication *Der Leuchtthurm*.

[128] "1848 in der Karikatur (II)," *Süddeutscher Postillon*, Nr. 5 (1898). For background on the French context, see Beatrice Farwell, The Charged Image: French Lithographic Caricature 1816-1848 (Santa Barbara: Santa Barbara Museum of Art, 1989), and *Die Karikatur zwischen Republik und Zensur. Bildsatire in Frankreich 1830 bis 1880 – eine Sprache des Widerstands?* (Marburg: Jonas Verlag, 1990).

regular, politically-oriented satirical publications came relatively late to Germany, such publications existed in France as early as 1830. Fuchs sees the lack of a widely-circulating satirical press, equal in artistic quality and potency to earlier French examples, as a key reason why German political satire never rose to the heights of Philipon's *La Caricature.* Much as they tried, German artists were unable to match the popularity and symbolic potency of Daumier's *Gargantua* or Philipon's pear. Renderings of Friedrich as a cannon toting champagne bottle, clever as they may be, failed to resonate in the same way [**Fig. 1.13**].[129]

An inability to formulate resonant images was not, however, the sole cause of German deficiency. Lack of press freedom proved equally, if not more, debilitating, according to Fuchs. The efficacy of political graphic satire, he argues, is directly tied to stringency of censorship.

> The more press freedom a country has at its disposal and the longer the people enjoy the same, the more important the expansion of political caricature is and the more influential a role it plays in the daily struggles of the country.[130]

Censorship hindered the development of political graphic satire after the revolutionary turmoil of 1848 had been suppressed, forcing publications to turn to less combative subject matter. Explicit political themes gave way to more generalized, "social" content. Fashion, customs, manners, marriage, and sex: these became the most regular topics of graphic satire after 1849, as they had during previous periods of political repression.

---

[129] Fuchs explains that "the caricatured portrait (*das karkirte Porträt*), which had been introduced by Honoré Daumier in France and which greatly increased the effect of graphic satire (*Karikatur*), was little cultivated in the German works at that time; it became naturalized (*eingebürget*) with us much later"—*1848 in der Caricatur*, 24.

[130] *1848 in der Caricatur*, 9.

Social graphic satire could and usually did carry political undertones but required audiences to "read" the images in a far more active manner in order to work out the implicit political message. Fuchs demonstrated this practice through contextualization of historical examples by Daumier and others, but his immediate goal was to revive production of explicit, political graphic satire in Germany. Publishing past and present examples from abroad in the pages of the *Postillon* aided this effort, and was likewise necessary, since as Fuchs explains in a 1897 article,

> foreign countries—France, England, America—are politically free, they have freedom of the press. We Germans, by contrast, are politically gagged and our press is consequently dependent upon the most limited of bureaucratic discretion (*Bureaukratenverstand*).[131]

Outlawed during the years of the Anti-Socialist laws, the SPD-aligned press remained a target after they fell, subject to all sorts of government machinations, creating a situation analogous to the one faced by revolutionaries after 1848. This would not have been lost on sympathetic readers of the *Postillon*, and more than likely accounts for Fuchs' decision to review graphic satire of the period. By doing so, he connected earlier revolutionary struggle to contemporary Social Democratic politics and the repression faced by the labor movement.

German imperial law formally guaranteed freedom of the press, but such freedom was rarely accorded to oppositional publications. All newspapers were required to deliver copies of every issue to the local police authority, and both the police and the local state prosecutor's office had the power to order the confiscation of

[131] "Die orientalische Frage im Bilde der ausländischen Satire," *Süddeutscher Postillon*, Nr. 8 (1897).

printed material.[132] SPD publications were routinely confiscated or temporarily outlawed, and their distribution subject to restriction. Students at the University of Munich, for example, were forbidden to read *Vorwärts*. Social Democrats similarly found themselves the target of a repressive judicial system aimed at curtailing their popularity and hampering their growth. Between 1890 and 1912 members of the SPD were sentenced to a total of 164 years hard labor, 1,244 years in jail and 557,481 Marks in fines.[133] Paragraphs in the *Reichsstrafgesetzbuch* of 1871, the official legal code of the Wilhelmine period, commonly used against Social Democrats included those pertaining to the disturbance of public order and inciting class hatred.[134] The most notorious was §95, relating to *Majestätsbeleidigung*, or the defamation of the head of sate (more commonly known by the French *lèse-majesté*). After 1890 Social Democrats were disproportionately signaled out for prosecution under this paragraph. In 1895 Wilhelm Liebknecht, one of the founding members of the SPD and a leading authority within the party, was convicted for *Majestätsbeleidigung* following remarks he made at a public meeting and was sentenced to a term of four months in prison, which he began in December 1897 at the age of seventy-two. The editor of the *Leipziger Volkszeitung* was in turn sentenced to three months imprisonment for merely criticizing Liebknecht's sentence in the paper.[135] What made the paragraph onerous was its ambiguity. Because

[132] Alex Hall, *Scandal, Sensation and Social Democracy. The SPD Press and Wilhelmine Germany, 1890-1914* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1977), 64-65. All those connected with the editorial or production aspects of a journal could be prosecuted in any locality where the publication was distributed.
[133] Hall, 55.
[134] The incitement of class hatred was forbidden under paragraph 130, breach of public order under paragraph 360xi—see Hall 70-71. For an overview of the legal restrictions faced by the SPD in Bavaria, see Erich Schosser, *Presse und Landtag in Bayern von 1850 bis 1918* (Munich: Stadtarchiv München; Munich: Buch- und Kunstantiquariat Wölfe, 1968).
[135] Hall, 69 n. 171.

the Kaiser was identified as the very embodiment of the imperial state, any criticism of the government could be construed as an attack on the Kaiser's person, or vice versa. The Kaiser represented both the authority of the imperial rule as well as the national state, and while this dual stature had long been a subject of debate, with reforms implemented to establish a relative autonomy for state institutions, it nevertheless represented a powerful holdover from the feudal past that retained considerable symbolic power. Just how sensitive the government could be about the symbolic stature of the Kaiser was revealed by a peculiar incident that occurred in the course of Fuchs' 1848 series.

Re-Presenting Politics

Just prior to the appearance of the first article on the graphic satire of 1848, Fuchs reproduced a small work by the French caricaturist André Gill in the pages of the *Postillon*. [**Fig. 1.14**] The image depicts a burly bewhiskered man in bedclothes and a top hat craning over a shallow basin of water. A toy sailboat floats on the surface and the man's face, contorted by his effort to propel the boat, looks ridiculous, as does his inelegant pose. That a grown man, a bourgeois by the look of him, would stoop in such a childish manner to play toy boats—particularly in private—suggests that we are to view him as a buffoon, his antics laughable. The textual description that Fuchs wrote to accompany the piece clarifies Gill's intention:

> What we now present to our readers is a small reminiscence, certainly not current, and its subject, like its ingenuous creator, is dead. It is Napoleon III, whose foreign policy the French caricaturist Gill so cruelly satirized. Mighty was the wrath of the imperial buffoon that his policies had been depicted as mere child's play in such an insouciant manner, and the censor discharged his duties. The issue of *L'Eclipse* in which the image appeared in 1868 was confiscated, as

> were so many before. Yet it survives for posterity, and though not a speck of dust remains of the imperial windbag whose image it records, we laugh and jeer at his antics.[136]

Reproducing the work is thus meant to demonstrate graphic satire's ability to provoke the authorities, as well as establish an historical distance between the present day and this past episode. Fuchs casts Napoleon III's reaction in a comical light, suggesting that heavy-handed censorship of this kind is doomed to fail, since satire outlives its subject.

The next issue features an article entitled "Masterpieces of Graphic Satire (*Karikatur*)," along with two smaller reproductions of works by equally renowned artists. A short notice regarding the image by Gill appears as well:

> As we go to print we have learned that the previous issue of the *Süddeutscher Postillon* has been confiscated, due to the appearance within of A. Gill's 1868 caricature (*Karikatur*) of Napoleon III. This absolutely incomprehensible confiscation will naturally not deter us from our long-developed plan to acquaint readers with the key masters of graphic satire (*Karikatur*).[137]

The Wilhelmine censors apparently felt that Gill's image of Napoleon III represented more than just an example of historical graphic satire. In addition to confiscating the issue of the *Postillon* in which the image appeared, Fuchs was brought up on charges of *Majestätsbeleidigung*. This incident represents the culmination of years of harassment by the state prosecutor of Bavaria, who had long sought to shut down the Postillon.[138] Already in 1894, the *Postillon* had come under fire for its content, and again in 1897. So why did this particular instance so incense the authorities?

---

[136] *Süddeutscher Postillon*, Nr. 2 (1898), quoted in Weitz, *Der Mann im Schatten*, 104-105.

[137] "Meisterwerke der Karikatur," *Süddeutscher Postillon*, Nr. 3 (1898).

[138] Weitz details numerous attempts made by the Bavarian authorities to stymie publication of the *Postillon* in *Der Mann im Schatten*, 97-103.

Uncomfortable correspondences between Gill's drawing and the contemporary political situation in Germany made Fuchs' choice to republish this image especially provocative. The caricature of Napoleon III cannily alludes to the French emperor's consolidation of France's colonial holdings through a modernization of the navy beginning in the 1850s. Kaiser Wilhelm II attempted to do much the same in the 1890s, supporting the creation of a more powerful imperial navy under the direction of Admiral Alfred von Tirpitz.[139] Appropriation bills to fund these efforts were fiercely debated in the Reichstag, and members of the conservative parties, alongside government officials, backed the creation of right-wing nationalist interest groups to mobilize support[140]. Such groups were expressly formed to counter the influence of the SPD, who strongly opposed the Kaiser's colonial policy, as mentioned previously.[141] Depicting Napoleon III at play was Gill's way of surreptitiously criticizing the French emperor's political ambitions; reproducing Gill's depiction was Fuchs' way of doing the same to the German emperor.

The allusions that Gill's image evoke were further reinforced by other segments in the *Postillon* issue. According to documents filed by the censor, three components led

---

[139] For further details see Jan Rüger, *The Great Naval Game: Britain and Germany in the Age of Empire* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2007), Gary E. Weir, *Building the Kaiser's Navy. The Imperial Naval Office and German Industry in the Tirpitz Era, 1890-1919* (Annapolis: Naval Institute Press, 1997) and Patrick J. Kelly, *Tirpitz and the Imperial German Navy* (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 2011).
[140] Geoff Eley, "Sammlungspolitik, Social Imperialism and the Navy Law of 1898," *Militärgeschichtliche Mitteilungen* (Jan. 1971): 29-63. Eley expands upon this in his book *Reshaping the German Right: Radical Nationalism and Political Change after Bismarck* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1980).
[141] David Blackbourn writes that Tirpitz and his supporters went so far as to refer to the navy as a "palliative" to the influence of Social Democracy—*History of Germany 1780-1919. The Long Nineteenth Century* (Oxford: Blackwell Publishing, 1997), 340. The most in-depth analysis remains Volker R. Berghahn, *Der Tirpitz-Plan: Genesis und Verfall einer innenpolitischen Krisenstrategie unter Wilhelm II* (Düsseldorf: Droste Verlag, 1971).

to the charge of *Majestätsbeleidigung* issued against Fuchs. One was a notice welcoming the establishment of a new, Berlin-based satirical publication entitled *Narrenschiff* or "ship of fools," clearly a reference to the government's naval policies; another an allegorical fable about monarchical tyranny.[142] The third, Gill's caricature, was intended to satirize German colonial policy, as was the image on the back cover [**Fig. 1.15**], which refers explicitly to the occupation of the Chinese port of Tsing Tao by German naval forces in 1897 but strangely played no role in Fuchs' prosecution.

The potency of Fuchs' re-presentation of the Napoleon caricature results from its ability to resonate across the span of time between its initial publication and subsequent reproduction and can be broken down into three co-determining elements. There is first the similarity of subject matter, or the way the image speaks to both the French and German emperors' colonial ambitions. Second, there is the concomitant historical dimension, suggesting that the Kaiser's imperial delusions are only a farcical repetition of an earlier dream. Third, there is the all-important physiognomic dimension, the resemblance between the two emperors that bolsters the presumption that Gill's image, although directed at Napoleon III, is equally redolent of Wilhelm II [**Figs. 1.16-1.17**].

Furthermore, the appearance of this image within the pages of the *Postillon* complicates any straightforward analysis of its agitational value. Its original effectiveness as political caricature, outlined in Fuchs' retelling of how it led to the confiscation of the issue of *L'Eclipse* in which it first appeared, is regenerated by its publication in the *Postillon* and re-confirmed by provoking the censors once again.

[142] Weitz, *Der Mann im Schatten*, 103-104.

Although, formally speaking, the image remains the same, its meaning has shifted. The location of the image's original political value, connected to a mid-nineteenth-century French context, has been transposed to a late-nineteenth-century German context. Based on their familiarity with the SPD's need to cloth polemic in analogy so as to circumvent censorship, Fuchs counted on readers of the *Postillon* to understand what he was up to. Readers are meant to see through the historical relevance of Gill's drawing and view the image as both historical and contemporary, a work of art as well as a potent political symbol.

This indicates that Fuchs was perhaps a cannier, more dialectical thinker than Benjamin gave him credit. In his notes for the Fuchs essay Benjamin writes "Fuchs has no understanding of the historical dimension of anticipation in art. For him, the artist is, at best, the expression of the historical status quo, never of what is coming."[143] But the re-deployment of Gill's caricature of Napoleon III demonstrates that Fuchs the editor, was no simple historicist. Although the image by Gill does not exactly anticipate the use Fuchs would put it to, Fuchs does showcase its ability to speak beyond its own historical context. In doing so he provides an example of the practice Benjamin believes a historical materialist must follow:

> For the dialectical historian concerned with works of art, these works integrate their fore-history (*vor-geschichte*) as well as their after-history (*nach-geschichte*); and it is by virtue of their after-history that their fore-history is recognizable as involved in a continuous process of change. Works of art teach him how their function outlives their creator and how the artist's intentions are left behind. They demonstrate how the reception of a work by its contemporaries is part of the effect that the work of art has on us today. They further show that this effect

[143] Benjamin, *Gesammelte Schriften*, II/3, 1356.

> depends on an encounter not just with the work of art alone but with the history which [sic] has allowed the work to come down to our own age.[144]

This is precisely what occurs when Fuchs reproduces political graphic satire from the past, knowing full well that the contemporary context will recharge the critical force latent in the image. Once effective because of its recognizable subject being posed in such a childish fashion, the redeployed caricature becomes effective once again because of its indirect or, one might even say, allegorical meaning. For within the pages of the *Postillon,* Napoleon III is no longer meant to represent solely the French emperor; repurposed, he likewise symbolizes the German emperor, or even a social "type" (the bourgeois ruling class) familiar to readers of the magazine. This is the best evidence of Fuchs' credentials as a dialectical thinker, and it demonstrates his editorial savvy, showcasing graphic satire's political efficacy at first hand.

What makes this incident even more notable is the fact that Fuchs' story about Gill's drawing is a complete fabrication. The image does not appear where Fuchs claims it does, nor does it appear in any issue of *L'Eclipse* during 1868. Fuchs is doubtless referring instead to a different caricature of Napoleon III by Gill that so offended the French emperor that the publication in which it appeared, *La Lune*, was forced to close down, re-emerging as *L'Eclipse* a few months later. [**Fig. 1.18**] The caricature of the French emperor at the basis of the story does not bring to mind Kaiser Wilhelm II as

---

[144] Benjamin, "Eduard Fuchs, Collector and Historian," 118. The concepts of "fore-" and "after-history" are discussed by Benjamin in his contemporaneous notes for the Paris arcades project. Howard Caygill discusses the importance of these notions for Benjamin's understanding of cultural history in "Walter Benjamin's Concept of Cultural History," in *The Cambridge Companion to Walter Benjamin*, ed. David S. Ferris (Cambridge; New York: Cambridge University Press, 2004), 71-94. For a contrasting approach, see Harry D. Harootunian, "The Benjamin Effect: Modernism, Repetition, and the Path to Different Cultural Imaginaries," in *Walter Benjamin and the Demands of History*, ed. Michael P. Steinberg (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 1996), 62-87.

effectively as the one Fuchs chose to publish, nor does it allude to naval and colonial policies in the same way. This further suggests that Fuchs purposefully reproduced the image to attack the Kaiser.

Unfortunately, the censors also saw through the image and fully grasped its contemporary political relevance. Fuchs denied having chosen the piece for any reason other than historical significance at his subsequent trial, claiming that to see the image in any other light would be mistaken:

> To suggest that the caricature [*Karikatur*] of Napoleon III alludes to the German Kaiser is ridiculous. I took it upon myself to present examples of political graphic satire [*Karikatur*] so as to make up for the lack of understanding in Germany and to familiarize the public with the best examples of foreign satire. Insulting the Kaiser is against Social Democratic principles; we don't fight the individual, we fight the state of affairs in general.[145]

Fuchs' defense is notable for the way in which it attempts to derail the case by drawing on the SPD's political orientation, maintaining that the party only sought to overturn the system through legal means (true enough in the case of the reformists within the party, but not so for the revolutionary wing to which Fuchs belonged). At the trial Fuchs's lawyer presented numerous examples of satirical imagery to demonstrate how Fuchs' editorial activities were indicative of satirical publications across the political spectrum.[146] Unconvinced, the court rejected Fuchs' defense and sentenced him to ten

[145] Fuchs' statement at trial was republished in the Münchener Post und Augsburger Volkszeitung the following day (February 26, 1898) and is quoted in Weitz, *Der Mann im Schatten*, 105.
[146] Nine years later, John Grand-Carteret published a collection of graphic satire depicting Wilhelm II, culled from an array of European newspapers, and translated into German as *"Er" im Spiegel der Karikatur* (Wien; Leipzig: Wiener Verlag, 1906). Fuchs would doubtless have found some vindication in the fact that, after being thrown in prison for publishing an *implicit* caricature of the Kaiser, a whole book of *explicit* examples could be enjoyed by a broad audience.

months in prison.[147] It was there that he began preparing his first major study, *Die Karikatur der europäischen Völker.*

Fuchs the Historian

In his *1848 in der Caricatur,* Fuchs bemoans the fact that "[w]e posses neither a history of graphic satire (*Karikatur*) nor even a work that presents the role it has played during key social movements or in relation to particularly relevant political events.[148]" He used his time in prison to rectify this situation, beginning work on his two volume history of European graphic satire. Although based once again on earlier precedents, namely those of Champfleury and John Grand-Carteret, Fuchs brings to his overview an explicit Marxist orientation.[149] The study may therefore be read as an evaluation of the art form's past triumphs, written to bolster Fuchs' arguments for what it can do in the present (and future). But unlike his *Postillon* articles, *Der Karikatur der europäischen Völker* is a huge, expensive study that was marketed toward connoisseurs. Together the

---

[147] Fuchs spent the ten-month sentence at the Nürnberger Zellengefängnis after an appeal was rejected in early April. Fuchs seems to have won some time by having a doctor claim that he needed a "cold water cure" during the summer. Fuchs began his sentence in August, and was released the following June—see Weitz, *Der Mann im Schatten,* 106-107 for further details. *Simplicissimus* faced a *Majestätsbeleidigung* charge in 1898 as well, forcing Langen to flee Germany for a time. It arose over an issue focused on the Kaiser's visit to Palestine. For details see Allen, 39 and Helga Abret and Aldo Keel, *Die Majestätsbeleidigungsaffäre des "Simplicissimus"—Verlegers Albert Langen. Briefe und Dokument zu Exil und Begnadigung 1898-1903* (Frankfurt am Main: Peter Lang, 1985).

[148] *1848 in der Caricatur*, 5.

[149] Both authors wrote numerous studies of graphic satire, but those cited by Fuchs include Champfleury's *HIstorie de la Caricature Antique* (1865) and *Historie de la Caricature Moderne* (1865), and Grand-Cartelet's *Les Moeurs et la Caricature en France* (1888)—though one suspects Grand-Cartelet's earlier *Les Moeurs et la Caricature en Allemagne, en Autriche, et en Suisse* (1885) also influenced Fuchs' account. Another precedent listed by Fuchs is Thomas Wright's *A History of Caricature and Grotesque in Literature and Art* (1865), which he knew in its 1875 French translation. Huonker argues that it was Grand-Carteret's above all that influenced Fuchs and characterizes the Swiss antiquarian's work as lacking a strong political orientation, apart from "a certain Helvetic republicanism in his penchant to show crowned heads caricatured," *Revolution, Moral and Kunst*, 332.

two main volumes comprise nearly a thousand pages of text, accompanied by over five hundred images and sixty color plates, all drawn from Fuchs' growing collection.[150] (A third, supplemental volume appeared in 1904 and later became the basis for Fuchs' later study, *Geschichte der erotischen Kunst*.[151]) Fuchs retains the socialist orientation of his earlier writings and ultimately aimed for a mass readership; still, the study constitutes a far more exclusive, "scholarly" presentation of graphic satire's political and cultural value than Fuchs' earlier writings.[152] The shift in emphasis is most evident in Fuchs' attention to graphic satire's stature as an art form. As an editor Fuchs stressed the agitational significance of graphic satire; as an historian he foregrounds its artistic and moral significance. Combining his earlier perspective with a focus on graphic satire's role as an educational agent (*Erziehungsmittel*), Fuchs presents a cohesive theoretical framework for assessing graphic satire as mass art form.

The Material Art of Graphic Satire

---

[150] Fuchs' salary from editing the *Postillon*, around 3,000 M annually, allowed to him begin collecting prints as early as 1893. According to Benjamin, those chosen to illustrate the first volume of *Die Karikatur* came from a sample of some sixty-eight thousand in Fuchs' collection—"Eduard Fuchs, Collector and Historian," 133.

[151] This third volume, not included in subsequent republications of the study, was published privately by Fuchs in an edition of 200 copies. It was re-released in a French edition in 1906 before being expanded into *Geschichte der erotischen Kunst* (Berlin: Verlag A. Hofmann and Co., 1908). Fuchs' primary publisher after 1906, Verlag Albert Langen (Munich), who also owned *Simplicissimus*, issued the book in an expanded version in 1912 and again in 1922. A subsequent version is published in 1932 by Verlag Hesse & Becker (Leipzig) and again in 1977 by Verlag Klaus Guhl (as *Geschichte der erotischen Kunst in Einzeldarstellungen*).

[152] Fuchs is explicit about his desire for a mass audience in the introduction to *Die Karikatur*, a point discussed by Ulrich Bach in "'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: Camden House, 2010): 295-312. In 1897-8 Fuchs wrote two articles for a publication called *Zeitschrift für Bücherfreunde. Monatshefte für Bibliophilie und verwandte Interesse,* which shows that even at this early date he was already interested in aiming at two kinds of audiences, a general readership (social democratic in orientation) and a more specialized, connoisseur readership. The two articles are: "Noch einige Jahn-Karikaturen," vol. 2, p. 582-585) and "André Gill," vol. 2, 597-601.

[**Fig. 1.19**] Volume one of *Die Karikatur der europäischen Völker*, covering developments before 1848, first appeared in 1901; its companion, covering post-1848 developments, followed two years later.[153] By this time, Fuchs had moved to Berlin, and began work at the *Vorwärts* publishing house, where he oversaw the production of the SPD's annual May Day publication (*Maifestzeitung)* and other commemorative pamphlets.[154] In addition to publishing studies of graphic satire, Fuchs gave a series of lectures on the subject at the Berlin *Volksbühne* in 1902, and mounted an exhibition of prints by Daumier, Gavarni, and Henry Monnier from his own collection at the Cassirer gallery that same year. These activities cemented Fuchs' reputation as a leading expert on art within SPD circles, but won him little regard from established scholars and bourgeois commentators, who dubbed his scholarly efforts "amateurish."[155] Fuchs' concern for the technical prerequisites of artistic production and reproduction, combined with his interest in mass art forms, diverged from standard, formalist conceptions of artistic "genius" and stylistic development that characterized art history at the time. In Benjamin's view, this divergence accounts for Fuchs' pioneering influence; his "amateur" perspective foregrounds "elements of any future materialist considerations of art," that bourgeois, idealist accounts neglected.[156]

---

[153] Between the volumes Fuchs publishes two articles with material drawn directly from the study, "Die Geburt der modernen politischen Karikatur", in *Die Zeit: Wiener Wohenschrift für Politik,* nr. 343 (1901): 56-57, and "Die Französische Karikatur im Jahre 1870/71," in *Sozialistische Monatshefte* (1902): 611-626.
[154] Fuchs moved his family (wife Frida, daughter Gertraud, sister Rosa, and nephew Theodor) to Zehlendorf, southwest of Berlin's center, in October 1901. He listed his profession in the official police registry as "freelance editor" for *Vorwärts* and *Sozialistische Monatshefte*, both SPD publications. For further background, see Weitz, *Der Mann im Schatten*, 130-140.
[155] See, for example, the reviews of Fuchs' writings in the bourgeois press discussed in Zingarelli, "Eduard Fuchs, vom militanten Journalismus zur Kulturgeschichte," 44-46.
[156] Benjamin, "Eduard Fuchs, Collector and Historian," 126.

The materialist aspect that so impressed Benjamin can be found throughout *Die Karikatur der europäischen Völker.* Fuchs is careful to discuss where and how graphic satire circulates and spends an inordinate amount of the text investigating how technical innovations affected, positively or negatively, the production of graphic satire and its political efficacy. This is particularly clear in his discussion of the conditions that fueled graphic satire in nineteenth-century France. In his earlier writing on the subject, Fuchs highlights the political context, singling out France's relatively lax press laws after the revolution of 1830 as crucial for the emergence of political graphic satire in its "modern" form, the illustrated newspaper. In *Die Karikatur* he expands upon this analysis by charting the conjuncture of three factors that led to this development. The first is technical, discussed in chapter eight, otherwise devoted to the period of political reaction that set in after the defeat of Napoleon and the restoration of the Bourbon monarchy. Alois Senefelder's invention of lithography in 1796, Fuchs argues, laid the basis for a new relationship between artists and their audience. Lithography offered a more direct, and cheaper means of translating drawing into print than copper engraving and woodcut, enabling graphic satire to play "an important role in an increasingly rapidly evolving age."[157] The full potential of this "important revolution in reproduction technology" remained stymied until censorship relaxed (briefly) under Louis Philippe, and economic advancements made the regular publication of illustrated newspapers affordable, the second and third factors Fuchs discusses in chapter nineteen. For Fuchs, the rise of the illustrated press constitutes the moment of political

[157] *Die Karikatur* vol. 1, 226.

graphic satire's modernity. "For the first time in history," he writes, "graphic satire (*Karikatur*) entered into its proper union with the press."[158] Fuchs defines "modern" as that which most resembles the practices of his contemporary period, and thus charts of history of graphic satire in accordance with his prior experience at the *Postillon*.

Fuchs' approach is materialist insofar as he does not define modern political caricature in terms of a singular artist-genius or overarching *Zeitgeist*, but instead discusses how temporally disparate elements coalesce under specific historical circumstances. He concedes that Charles Philipon may be seen as the "true father of modern political graphic satire (*Karikatur*)," but primarily because he "recognized the great value of the close connection between graphic satire (*Karikatur*) and the press for the political struggle."[159] It was the co-existence of determining elements that proved decisive—economic, political, and most importantly, technological. In a later study Fuchs makes a more explicit link between reproduction technologies and historical change:

> Every age has very specific techniques of reproduction corresponding to it. These represent the prevailing standard of technological development and are, like artistic style or the materials chosen by art in a certain time, are the absolute result of a specific need of that period (*Zeitbedürfnisse*). For this reason, it is not surprising that every historical upheaval that pushes or brings to power other classes than the ruling or dominant ones has regularly resulted in a change of pictorial duplication technology *(bildliche Vervielfältigungstechnik*). The observable upheaval in methods of image reproduction (*Bildreproduktionstechnik*) at all historical turning points must be clearly pointed out, because in this fact an important key to the close connections between art and life can be found.[160]

[158] Ibid., 324.
[159] Ibid.
[160] Fuchs, *Honoré Daumier: Holzschnitte, 1833-1870* (Munich: Albert Langen, 1918), 13. First volume of a series on Daumier prints written by Fuchs between 1918 and 1922, the latter three volumes dealing with the artist's lithographs. Benjamin quotes the passage (in a summarized form) as further evidence of Fuchs' materialist orientation— "Eduard Fuchs, Collector and Historian" 142.

Benjamin summarizes this passage as evidence of Fuchs' materialism, and it corresponds with many of the factors Benjamin explores in his most famous essay, "The Work of Art in the Age of its Technological Reproducibility," which he revised concurrent with preparing the Fuchs essay.[161] For Fuchs, graphic satire is the quintessential mass art form; whereas for Benjamin, writing more than thirty years later, it is film. They both argue that the constitution of an art form is ultimately determined by material factors external to any individual work, but that these factors come to shape how all works of that form are experienced. And like Benjamin, Fuchs maintains that the political potency of images depends upon their mode of deployment and resonance with external socio-political dynamics. This is evidenced in the introduction to the first volume of *Die Karikatur der europäischen Völker*, when Fuchs claims that caricature, in the strict sense of the term, is politically "neutral" (*Tendenzlos*).

> The fact that caricature is primarily employed to serve a satirical aim has nothing to do with the concept of caricature itself. What determines the function of the caricature is ultimately the tendency in whose service it is employed. Violent satirical depictions can be achieved by means of caricature that chastise enemies with devastating effect, but it can also function in an opposite manner, as popularizer, or creator of immortality…Caricature enables the artist to accomplish any goal.[162]

---

[161] Horkheimer commissioned the Fuchs essay in 1933-4, and Benjamin began researching the topic soon after. However, he did not begin drafting the piece until early 1937. Meanwhile, he wrote the first version of "The Work of Art in the Age of its Technological Reproducibility" in the autumn of 1935 and published a second version in the *Zeitschrift für Sozialforschung* in May 1936 (translated into French)—the third version, from which most English translations are made, was completed in 1939 and published posthumously. This explains the congruence of themes between the two essays. For further background on Benjamin's publication history during this period, see Howard Eiland and Michael Jennings, *Walter Benjamin: A Critical Life* (Cambridge, MA: The Belknap Press of Harvard University Press, 2014), 483-575.

[162] *Die Karikatur* vol. 1, 6. That Fuchs is referring here to caricature in the strict sense is clear from earlier references in the text.

Emphasizing the neutrality of caricature as a mode of depiction enables Fuchs to posit that the study of graphic satire is a legitimate art historical project, thereby challenging the dominant understanding of caricature in Germany at the time. Yet, it would likewise seem to contradict Fuchs' earlier insistence upon the political relevance of graphic satire in his series on 1848. However, in distinguishing between caricature as a neutral artistic practice and caricature as a mode/genre of satire, Fuchs is able to showcase both the political and cultural relevance of the art form. It affords him the opportunity to explain how it is that a visual means of attacking a ruling monarch can ironically lead to that monarch becoming immortalized by the very image used to ridicule him. It likewise enables him to discuss how images carry political meanings that can be re-activated in later historical contexts. Fuchs seeks to model an active engagement with graphic satire, not just cultivate an appreciation for it. His discussion of the cultural-historical relevance of graphic satire confirms this. It provides us, Fuchs argues, with crucial documentary evidence of past popular opinion, communicating historical experience in a visual form.

> No language speaks the language of an age so faithfully as graphic satire (*Karikatur*)…Just as amber protects in its golden mass the most delicate and subtlest organisms of the past intact in their original form for hundreds of years, so too does graphic satire (*Karikatur*) preserve the past in its present-tense."[163]

One could read this, as Benjamin might, as evidence of a naïve historicism, a belief that graphic satire presents us with transparent views of past popular opinion. It certainly partakes of the "documentary" approach common to nineteenth-century studies of

[163] Ibid., 15-16. It is in this sense that Michael Steinberg refers to Fuchs' history of caricature as a "materialist history of experience"—Steinberg, "The Collector as Allegorist," 47.

popular imagery and graphic satire. But seeing as how Fuchs had discovered first-hand how the political charge of a past "present-tense" could be re-generated in his own, we could also read this as a slyer sort of historicism, akin to Marx's intermixing of past forms and present contents in *The Eighteenth Brumaire Louis Napoleon*.[164] As scholars have noted, in this polemical account of Louis-Napoléon Bonaparte's 1851 coup d'etat Marx draws attention to intersecting contexts and layered temporalities in order to better capture the immediate political ramifications of this historical event and clarify its theoretical implications.[165] Fuchs may have intended something similar. In a review of *1848 in der Caricatur*, Franz Mehring, the SPD's leading cultural historian, writes that "Fuchs rightly sees political and social caricature as an effective weapon and therefore a significant cultural factor that later on becomes an important aid to historical understanding.[166]" That Fuchs believed a historical understanding of graphic satire held contemporary relevance for working class emancipation is reflected in his defense of the art form as an educational agent (*Erziehungsmittel*).

Graphic Satire as Erziehungsmittel

Fuchs' promotion of graphic satire as an effective educational tool represents a conscious effort to shift the visual culture of German Social Democracy. According to SPD leaders, art appreciation contributed to workers' cultural sensitivity and moral

---

[164] Written between December 1851 and and March 1852, the lengthy essay first appeared in *Die Revolution*, a monthly magazine published in New York run by Joseph Weydemeyer, a follower of Marx and Engels who subsequently established the first (tiny) Marxist organization in the US, the *Proletarierbund*, and worked closely with the American Workers League before fighting on the union side during the Civil War.
[165] See, for example, Massimiliano Tomba's "Marx as the Historical Materialist: Re-reading *The Eighteenth Brumaire*," *Historical Materialism*, vol. 21, no. 2 (2013), 21-46.
[166] Mehring's reviews appears in *Die Neue Zeit*, vol. 17 (1898/99), 377, and is further discussed by Weitz, *Der Mann im Schatten*, 79.

improvement. Party publications and lecturers stressed the educational value of canonical works of art and literature over contemporary styles and commercial entertainment. But, as Fuchs argues in the introduction to *Die Karikatur der europäischen Völker*, only a "small fraction" are able to devote sufficient leisure time to art appreciation, and most museums and private art collections remain inaccessible to the vast majority. This accounts for graphic satire's educational potential. "For the masses, graphic satire (*Karikatur*) will be the best instructor (*Erzieherin*) of a correct perspective," writes Fuchs[167]. As a mass art form, a true "art of the streets (*Kunst der Gasse*)," graphic satire provides what the more exclusive, fine arts cannot: a medium for introducing a modern aesthetic sensibility and Social Democratic identity to lower class Germans. Yet, in making his case, Fuchs relies upon a conceptualization of art's social purpose at odds with his support for an uncompromising popular art.

The limits of Fuchs' approach arise in his discussion of social graphic satire, whose evolution he charts separately from that of political graphic satire. According to Fuchs, the "birth" of modern social graphic satire occurs in eighteenth-century England, a whole century prior to the "birth" of modern political graphic satire; and whereas he defines modern political graphic satire in terms of its mode of deployment, modern social graphic satire is instead associated with a specific mode of address, exemplified in the works of William Hogarth. In Hogarth's prints, Fuchs argues, "symbolic concepts have completely disappeared, everything is achieved through physiognomic enhancement[168]." Fuchs traces this shift to the influence of seventeenth-century Dutch

---

[167] Ibid. These comments echo claims Fuchs had been making as early as 1897.
[168] Fuchs, *Die Karikatur* vol. 1, 103.

graphic satire, drawing heavily upon the writings of Georg Christoph Lichtenberg, who published a series of commentaries on Hogarth's work after they began to appear in Germany in the 1790s.[169] Contrary to more contemporary views that stress the greater accessibility of a more traditional "emblematic mode" of graphic satire, Fuchs claims that, by approaching his subject "coarsely" and without symbolic or allegorical allusions, Hogarth presents moral lessons

> not in the manner of the Puritans, pasting bible verses over the objectionable and pleading that wrath and forgiveness descend from heaven. Rather, he audaciously and boldly called vice by its true name, he depicted vice as it truly was, and said, laughing: that is vice, that is filth, that is meanness.[170]

In line with a formalist approach, Fuchs singles out the naturalism of Hogarth's imagery as its key, "modern" element; yet he maintains that this naturalism denotes a commitment to the popular that extends beyond stylistic innovation. Rendering familiar urban environments and recognizable personalities and social types in a naturalistic manner reflects a desire on Hogarth's part to ground his "lessons" in everyday reality. His use of a graphic language resonant with an audience's lived experience is

---

[169] Lichtenburg's commentaries were published between 1794 and 1799 and contain much discussion of the physiognomic theories of Lavater and their influence upon graphic satire. They have been republished in Englis as *The World of Hogarth. Lichtenberg's Commentaries on Hogarth's Engravings*, trans. Innes and Gustav Herdan (Boston: Houghton Mifflin, 1966). For more on Lichtenberg as an important cultural mediator between England and Germany see David Kunzle, "Goethe and Caricature: From Hogarth to Töpffer," *Journal of The Warburg and Courtauld Institutes*, vol. 48 (1985): 164-188. The primary conduit for images by Hogarth into Germany was the journal *London und Paris*, which featured foreign satirical prints as part of its coverage of the goings-on in these metropolises—for details, see Christian Deuling, "Aesthetics and Politics in the Journal *London und Paris* (1798-1815)," in *(Re)Writing the Radical: Enlightenment, Revolution and Cultural Transfer in 1790s Germany, Britain and France* (Munich: Walter de Gruyter, 2012): 102-118.

[170] Fuchs, *Die Karikatur* vol. 1, 96. The "emblematic mode," composed of emblems and non-naturalistic modes of depiction, is contrasted to more "modern," post-Enlightenment develops in Donald, *The Age of Caricature*, 44-50.

comparable, Fuchs suggests, to Luther's utilization of graphic satire during the Reformation:

> If Luther understood the important fomenting effect of caricature as an agitational agent (*Kampfmittel*), Hogarth recognized its moral worth as a powerful educational agent (*Erziehungsmittel*). And both had in common what makes the best agitators and educators: they spoke the common language of the streets.[171]

As distinctive as Hogarth's mode of address is, Fuchs still regards the artist as a product of his historical context. By the eighteenth century, Fuchs writes, English culture had become increasingly bourgeois in orientation, regardless of the form or outward appearance of the state.[172] Members of the bourgeoisie (and those who supported it) targeted the customs and morals of the aristocracy as a social ill, seeking to establish around this opposition a new culture and collective identity. In Fuchs' view, Hogarth helped to define this identity.

> The mood of the age expected nothing at all from art but painted sermons, moral exemplars (*Sittenstücke*), in which virtue is victorious and vice infallibly receives its due punishment…Hogarth is the truest scion of this moralizing mood.[173]

Fuchs has works such as the narrative series *Industry and Idleness* (1747) **[Fig. 1.20]** in mind, which contrasts the fate of the hard-working, moral, and Christian apprentice (Francis Goodchild), with his slovenly, immoral, and lascivious co-worker (Thomas Idle), qualities associated with aristocratic excess and libertinage. That the moral lesson of the series is propagated in a visually entertaining form renders the message more

---

171 Fuchs, *Die Karikatur* vol. 1, 95.

172 Fuchs, *Die Karikatur* vol.1, 89. This more or less follows the standard narrative of history as understood within the Second International during this period—see Neil Davidson, *How Revolutionary Were the Bourgeois Revolutions?* (Leiden: Brill, 2011), particularly chapter eleven "Classical Marxism (1): 1889-1905. Bourgeois Revolution in the Social Democratic Worldview," 181-197.

173 Ibid., 94.

digestible than a didactic text or emblematic tract. Hogarth does not rebuke folly and vice, *he exposes it.* By rendering social ills in a satirical fashion, Hogarth draws attention to their "true" appearance in everyday life, transforming virtue into a way of seeing conducive to a cultivated, bourgeois identity. This is why Fuchs holds him to be the "father" of modern social graphic satire.[174]

Today, Fuchs' lionization of Hogarth and the claims he makes for works like the *Industry and Idleness* series are no longer serviceable. Although there is some overlap between his focus on the formation of a distinct bourgeois identity and contemporary interest in the growth of the bourgeois public sphere and "civil humanism," Fuchs' eighteenth-century England is very different from the one historians recognize today.[175] Social historians of art would similarly find his embrace of Hogarth overly simplistic.[176]

---

[174] "For us Hogarth is the exemplary illustrator of morality, standing at the beginning of modern bourgeois society, a time when moral chaos reigned, showing his contemporaries, with unsparing gestures, the path out of the depths towards the heights where humanity would be worthy of its name," ibid., 103.

[175] Alongside Habermas' *The Structural Transformation of the Public Sphere*, the work of political historian J. G. A. Pocock has established an influential framework for contemporary study of the period, especially the latter's focus on the rise of a civic humanism and culture of politeness amongst the gentry and emerging bourgeoise. These influences can be seen in standard accounts such as John Brewer's *The Pleasures of the Imagination: English Culture in the Eighteenth Century* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1997), and correspond to the cultural turn that has come to dominate the field more generally. By way of contrast, Douglas Hay and Nicholas Rogers maintain a more classically social focus on class relations in their *Eighteenth-Century English Society: Shuttles and Swords* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1997), as does Roy Porter in his earlier *English Society in the Eighteenth Century* (Harmondsworth, Middlesex; New York: Penguin Books, 1982), although both examples devote attention to issues of race, gender, and empire as well.

[176] Congruent with shifts in social history, social historians of eighteenth-century English art nowadays stress the influence of ideological discourses over class struggle, and this has impacted Hogarth's reception. For instance, in his path-breaking study *Painting for Money: The Visual Arts and the Public Sphere in Eighteenth-Century England* (New Haven; London: Yale University Press, 1993), David Solkin traces the transposition of "politeness," keyword of the discourse of civic humanism, from politics to culture to painting, and explains how it brought the landed gentry and haute bourgeoisie together by fashioning a code of conduct and cultural sensibility. Opposed to many of the tenets of civic humanism, Hogarth's work is nevertheless determined by this dominant discourse in Solkin's account. Focused on how discourse generates consensus, Solkin evades the issue of class conflict; unlike Fuchs, he does not hold Hogarth's satirical naturalism to be socially progressive in the same way—rather the opposite.

Even Frederick Antal, whose Marxist perspective shared much in common with Fuchs', counters the heroic image of Hogarth in *Die Karikatur der europäischen Völker*. In a 1952 essay, Antal contends that Hogarth's "moral purpose" shifted during the course of his life, and that prints such as *Gin Alley* (1751) **[Fig. 1.21]** were intended to "fix" the lower classes in a paternalistic manner rather than oppose aristocratic manners and custom[177]. More recent scholars have further demonstrated that Hogarth's works engage with contextual dynamics that complicate the "social reform" perspective they have long been associated with, and that even claims made for his naturalism overlook a continued reliance upon allegory and symbolism.[178]

Outmoded though it may be, the stress Fuchs places on Hogarth's naturalism and moral perception must be viewed in relation his ongoing struggle with the cultural arbiters of the SPD. Concerns about the moral stature of its constituency and fears of the growing influence of commercial entertainment made party members uneasy.[179] Novel

---

[177] Frederick Antal, "The Moral Purpose of Hogarth's Art," *Journal of The Warburg and Courtauld Institutes*, vol. 15, no. 3 (1952). The contents of this essay and other writings on Hogarth were published posthumously as Frederick Antal, *Hogarth and his Place in European Art* (New York: Basic Books, 1962).

[178] Although the scholarship on Hogarth is vast, Mark Hallett's *The Spectacle of Difference. Graphic Satire in the Age of Hogarth* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1999) discusses this aspect at length, particularly in chapter two on gender. Ronald Paulson's three volume biography of Hogarth, *Hogarth* (New Brunswick: Rutgers University Press, 1991-1993), provides the most in-depth analysis of his works and their relationship to social and political dynamics of the period, particularly volume three, "Art and Politics, 1750 to 1764." Jenny Uglow's more recent, single-volume biography, *Hogarth: A Life and a World* (London: Faber and Faber, 1997) gives a more accessible introduction to this context, while Hallet's concise *Hogarth* (London: Phaidon, 2000) does the same for his entire oeuvre.

[179] One can see this, for example, in response to the growing attraction of film pre-WWI. In response to a 1912 article in *Die Gleichheit* on the effect of film on women viewers, a anonymous author argues

> For Social Democrats, the cinema's most harmful effect has to be that it turns the proletariat away from the political and economic efforts of its class, that it lames the will never to rest in the struggle for freedom, that it steals time from men and women, distracting them from their continuing education, that it lays waste to the minds of our growing youth. For this reason, we must turn decidedly against the cinema as it stands today, and not merely against individual films

--republished in *The Promise of Early Cinema: German Film Theory, 1907-1933*, eds. Anton Kaes, Nicholas Baer, and Michael Cowen (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2016), 232-234. That belief that women (and

stylistic developments proved equally controversial, as evidenced by the debate that arose over naturalism during the 1896 party congress held in Gotha. Edgar Steiger, a freelance literary scholar and ranking party member, had taken over editorship of *Die Neue Welt* earlier that same year, and as a devotee of literary naturalism, immediately began publishing works indicative of the new style. Steiger's choices drew complaints from several local party branches, and delegates to the congress expressed their disapproval of the explicit content of one story in particular: Wilhelm Hegeler's *Mutter Bertha*. At one point in the narrative, Hegeler depicts the main character, Bertha, squatting to piss behind a bush. By publishing such material, one delegate declared, Steiger was circulating "portrayals which are an insult to all sense of decency."[180] Wilhelm Liebknecht agreed, proclaiming, "Filth does not belong in *Die Neue Welt*."[181] Of greatest concern was the fact that, because the publication was a popular Sunday supplement, targeted toward families and therefore read by women and adolescents, such frank descriptions of bodily processes and sexuality might lead to immoral thoughts or behavior.[182] Naturalism hued too close to the sensationalist and immoral entertainment offered by the bourgeois-controlled entertainment industry. Its "realism" was *too real* and did not reflect the dominant view within the party that art should be

children) were more susceptible to the influence of film was a common trope during the period, and carried over into the Weimar era as well.

[180] *Protokoll über die Verhandlungen des Parteitages der Sozialdemokratischen Partei Deutschlands: Abgehalten zu Gotha vom 11. Bis 16. Oktober 1896* (Berlin: 1896), 79.

[181] Ibid., 105.

[182] For details regarding the debate and its outcome, see Lidtke, "Naturalism and Socialism in Germany," *The American Historical Review*, vol. 74, no. 1 (February 1974): 14-37. Articles related to the debate are also collected in *Dokumente und Materialien zur Kulturgeschichte der deutschen Arbeiterbewegung 1848-1918*, eds. Peter von Rüden and Kurt Koszyk (Frankfurt am Main: Büchergilde Gutenberg, 1979).

uplifting, positive, and consistent with the party's promotion of a sober, cultivated Social Democratic identity.

The subject of art was thus directly tied to questions of morality. Workers were encouraged to stay away from purely "diversionary" activities (beer drinking, film) and instead improve their cultural sensibility through traditional artistic fare. As noted in a resolution to a Bremen SPD meeting in 1905 by one of two members charged with drafting an education program for the party, "Art should help in the class struggle by giving the worker a respite from the noise of battle—but neither too much, nor too often to weaken his political resolve.[183]" Party-backed initiatives and organizations were founded to assist in acculturating German workers and to "democratize" the cultural products that had long been denied them.[184] Cultural programs were frequently dominated by traditional fare, the same "heroes" of German letters long celebrated by bourgeois educators. In contradiction to the party's internationalist political orientation, its educational policies relied heavily upon a national cultural tradition. By doing so, one historian has argued, the party denied the relevance of workers' own cultural agency and attempted to overcome "actually existing working-class existence" by

[183] Quoted in Guttsman, *Workers' Culture in Weimar Germany*, 31, the author is Heinrich Schulz, a former teacher and editor of the socialist *Bremer Bürgerzeitung* who later joined the SPD leadership body, served in the Reichstag, and after 1920, became state secretary for school and educational issues for the ministry of the interior. The other SPD member charged with formulating the party education program was Clara Zetkin.

[184] For an overview of SPD cultural initiatives, see Lidtke, *The Alternative Culture.* Lynn Abrams explores the contradictory nature of such initiatives in her essay "From Control to Commercialization: The Triumph of Mass Entertainment in Germany 1900-1925?" *German History*, vol. 8, no. 3 (1990): 278-293, and subsequent book *Workers' Culture in Imperial Germany. Leisure and Recreation in the Rhineland and Westphalia* (London; New York: Routledge, 1992).

fashioning a Social Democratic identity that, paradoxically, replicated many of the repressive aspects of dominant cultural norms (e.g. gender relations).[185]

This was partially the result of the party's embrace of *Bildung* as the cornerstone of working-class emancipation. The notion of *Bildung* denotes a process of cultivation or self-formation, based upon a familiarity with humanistic study.[186] A person of taste and refinement, educated in civility, knowledge, and reason is *gebildet*. Such were those trained to be civil servants and professionals through German institutions of higher education during the Wilhelmine period, the so-called *Bildungsbürgertum*.[187] The idea of a working-class variation of self-formation, an *Arbeiterbildung,* date back to the 1830s with the establishment of educational associations (*Bildungsvereine*) targeted to workers. Initially, focused on fostering communal support, in the 1860s some became nascent political parties in their own right. (Two such groups, the *General German Workers' League* (*Allgemeine Deutsche Arbeiterverein*) and the *Union of German Workers' Leagues*

---

[185] Geoff Eley makes this argument in "Cultural Socialism, the Public Sphere, and the Mass Form: Popular Culture and the Democratic Project, 1900-1934," in *Between Reform and Revolution: German Socialism and Communism from 1840 to 1990*, ed. David E. Barclay and Eric D. Weitz (New York: Berghahn Books, 1998). Guttsman draws a similar conclusion in his distinction between "workers' culture" and "labor movement culture," *Workers' Culture in Weimar Germany*, 10-17.

[186] A notoriously difficult term to define, with multiple derivations, Reinhart Koselleck argues that the concept of *Bildung* is primarily focused on the individual but "has no diachronically homogenous history" in terms of application. Its meaning, he maintains, constantly shifts following its emergence in the eighteenth century—see "On the Anthropological and Semantic Structure of Bildung," in *The Practice of Conceptual History*, trans. Todd Samuel Presner (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 2002): 170-202. Hans-Georg Gadamer writes that by the nineteenth century, *Bildung* is "intimately associated with the idea of culture and designates primarily the properly human way of developing one's natural talents and concepts--*Truth and Method*, trans./ed. Garrett Barden and John Cumming (New York: Seabury Press, 1975), 10.

[187] Fritz Ringer, "*Bildung* and Its Implications in the German Tradition, 1890-1930," in *Toward a Social History of Knowledge. Collected Essays* (New York; Oxford: Berghahn Books, 2000): 193-212. For a historical analysis of this class fraction, see the four-volume study, *Bildungsbürgertum im 19. Jahrhunderts*, eds. Jürgen Kocka and Werner Conze (Stuttgart: Klett-Cotta, 1985-1992), in which Koselleck's "On the Anthropological and Semantic Structure of Bildung" first appeared—see previous footnote.

(*Verein deutscher Arbeitervereine*), became the nucleus of the future SPD.[188]) *Bildung* in turn began to be presented to members as an integral part of the project of working class self-emancipation. In his famous 1872 speech "Knowledge is Power," Leibknecht claims that the failure of the German bourgeoisie to fulfill their emancipatory role in 1848 meant they were no longer the bearers of social and cultural progress. Workers were now called upon to take up this role, with the SPD in the lead. "Social Democracy," he asserted, "is in the most eminent meaning of the word the party of *Bildung*."[189]

In practice, there were two competing conceptions of *Bildung*'s function within the SPD milieu. The first, closely related to the right-wing, "revisionist" tendency in the party, emphasized the importance of workers' integration into the existing body politic (tied to the idea that the party should do the same and ditch its revolutionary principles).[190] For the revisionists, *Bildung* comprised a process of cultural assimilation, transforming workers into citizens. The second, associated with the writings of Franz

---

[188] Both formed in the same year, 1863, but the first, led by Ferdinand Lassalle, was a much tighter organization than the VDAV. Originally allied with bourgeois reformists, under the leadership of Wilhelm Liebknecht and August Babel, the VDAV moved to a more independent, working-class orientation after it affiliated with the First International in 1868. The following year it reconstituted itself as the *Sozialdemokratische Arbeiterpartei* at a congress held in Eisenach. Thereafter, the "Eisenachers" and the "Lassalleans" remained rivals until finally uniting as the *Sozialistische Arbeiterpartei Deutschlands* in 1875. This was the party Fuchs joined in the 1880s. The final name change occurred in 1890, following the conclusion of the anti-socialist laws. For further background, see Gary P. Steenson, *After Marx, Before Lenin: Marxism and Socialist Working-Class Parties in Europe, 1884-1914* (Pittsburgh: University of Pittsburgh Press, 1991), 47-107.
[189] A full English translation of the speech appears in *WIlhelm Liebknecht and German Social Democracy: A Documentary History*, ed. William A. Pelz (Westport, CT: Greenwood Press, 1994; repr. Chicago: Haymarket Books, 2016), 9-40. For further discussion on SPD education initiatives during the period, see Lidtke, *The Alternative Culture*, 159-191.
[190] The characterization of the revisionists cultural politics as "integrationist" is Guttsman's—*Workers' Culture in Weimar Germany*, 35. It was a view based upon an evolutionary, parliamentary conception of socialism, to be won through reforms rather than revolution, and commonly associated with the writings of Eduard Bernstein.

Mehring, instead maintained that it was necessary to historicize cultural heritage and appropriate the canon only to the extent that it would help the working class to usher in a new socialist society.[191] Mehring, who would eventually become the leading authority on cultural and aesthetic issues for the early KPD, stressed the necessity of maintaining a distance between the past and the present so as to better assess the political value of art. He suggests in several essays published during the 1890s however, that what most appeals to workers are positive portrayals of heroism, such as those found in works of art associated with the historical rise of new social classes against the existing status quo. Workers, Mehring argues, are drawn to portrayals of revolutionary ardor that prefigure the ideals of social democracy, and by historicizing such portrayals, social democrats are able to adapt the political tenor of canonical works to meet the needs of the contemporary working class.[192]

That Fuchs shared Mehring's position is clear from his historical evaluation of modern political and social graphic satire. Fuchs attempts in *Die Karikatur der europäischen Völker*, to relate Mehring's arguments vis-à-vis theater and literature, which dominated discussion of aesthetics during this period, into a historical account of popular imagery. This makes sense, given Fuchs' close relationship with Mehring after

---

[191] In his study *From Naturalism to Expressionism. German Literature and Society 1880-1919* (New York: Basic Books, 1973) the Marxist literary historian Roy Pascal provides a concise summary this position:"[it] holds that the working class has to appreciate and assimilate the best culture of the time in order to surpass it, that a higher socialist culture will emerge only after the social revolution, and that the best artists of the bourgeoisie anticipate the coming new culture" (21).
[192] This argument is made in "Naturalismus und proletarischer Klassenkampf," *Die Neue Zeit*, 17/1 (1898-1899), 637-640, where the majority of Mehring's writings on artistic matters were published. They are collected in volume eleven of his collected works—*Gesammelte Schriften*, ed. Hans Koch (Berlin: Dietz, 1961). For more on Mehring's views, see Peter Kiefer, *Bildungserlebnis und ökonomische Bürde. Franz Mehrings historische Strategie einer Kultur des Proletariats* (Frankfurt am Main: Peter Lang, 1986).

his move to Berlin.[193] Unlike Mehring, however, Fuchs supported the naturalist trend, defending *Die Neue Welt* under Steiger's direction in a satirical article for the *Postillon*.[194] His support for an uncompromising realism, born of a long struggle against the cultural conservatism he had fought as the editor of a subversive publication, put him at odds with the revisionists.[195] In 1908 they pushed him out of *Vorwärts*; Fuchs returned the favor by publishing pamphlets for party conferences that satirized internal party battles, specifically targeting the revisionists. The most famous example is the *Socialist Monthly Circus* (*Sozialistischen Monatscircus*), a send-up of the revisionist-affiliated publication *Socialist Monthly* (*Sozialistische Monatshefte)* that he produced for the 1909 SPD congress in Leipzig [**Fig. 1.22].** On the cover, Eduard Bernstein, figurehead of the revisionist wing of the party, is ridiculed as a weak facsimile of muscular blacksmith

---

[193] Following Mehring's death in 1919, Fuchs became the executor of his estate, later writing the introduction to the first edition of Mehring's collected works, *Franz Mehring: Gesammelte Schriften und Aufsätze*, ed. Eduard Fuchs (Leipzig: Verlag Soziologische Verlagsanstalt, 1929-1933).
[194] The article accompanies a drawing by Max Engert satirizing the main figures in the debate, *Süddeutscher Postillon*, nr. 24 (1896). A more in-depth discussion of the Naturalism debate, including Mehring's views on Naturalism, can be found in Georg Fülberth, *Sozialdemokratische Literaturkritik vor 1914. Die Beziehungen von Sozialdemokratie und bürgerlicher ästhetischer Kultur in den literaturtheoretischen und –kritischen Beiträgen der 'Neuen Zeit' 1883-1914, der 'Sozialistischen Monatshefte' 1895-1914, und bei Franz Mehring 1888-1914*, diss. (Philipps-Universität, Marburg an der Lahn, 1969).
[195] One of the campaigns Fuchs was involved in during the late 1890s as editor of the *Postillon* was against the implementation of the so-called "Lex Heinze," which would have let to greater censorship of visual art and illustrated publications. For details, see Robin J. Lenman, "Art, Society, and the Law in Wilhelmine Germany: The Lex Heinze," *Oxford German Studies*, vol. 8, no. 1 (1973): 86-113.

that regularly appeared on covers of *Sozialistische Monatshefte*.[196] Soon after, Fuchs ceased to take part in party efforts.[197]

Despite his aversion to a revisionist-inspired conception of *Bildung*, Fuchs presents the educational efficacy of graphic satire in moral terms that reflect an equal investment in formulating a Social Democratic identity. This is clear in his appraisal of Hogarth as the modern exemplar of social graphic satire and consistent with Fuchs' view of satire more generally. In an 1897 article, quoted in *1848 in der Caricatur*, Fuchs describes satire as a weapon of moral clarity that can serve political ends:

> An age's morbidity cannot be better stigmatized than when its putrefaction is shown in the distortive mirror of graphic satire (*Karikatur*). Most people remain indifferent when they are provided with an earnest presentation of the abhorrence of their vices; bored, they turn away when one condemns their defects with the pathos of moral indignation, but they writhe in helpless rage, when one pours the caustic lye of mockery upon them. And those who have taken up the fight against a social institution, *such as a class*, maintain their hold on the powerful stimulus for their work in the unsparing identification and disclosure of the detriments of this institution – it is here that satire's culture-promoting and thus moral effect resides.[198]

---

[196] According to Weitz, the blacksmith served as an allegory of the German proletariat, forging the sword of truth. Bernstein instead forges a sword of tin—see Weitz, *Den Mann im Schatten*, 155-159 for further details on the contents of this pamphlet. The textual supplement to the caricature of Bernstein, composed by artist Max Engert, a close collaborator of Fuchs' on the *Postillon*, refers to act one, scene three of Richard Wagner's *Siegfried* (1876). After arguing over how to repair the mythical sword Nothung with the dwarf mime (the brother of the Nibelung Albreich) who has raised him, Siegfried instead melts the pieces and casts the sword anew, declaring "I'll not patch a sword with tin! (*Mit Bappe back'ich kein Schwert!*). In reversing the line—"I'll patch my sword with tin! *(Mit Bappe back'ick mein Schwert!*)"—Bernstein is lampooned in comparison to Siegfried.

[197] According to Weitz, his satirical attack on the revisionists shows that by 1909 Fuchs "no longer saw a political home in social democracy," *Der Mann im Schatten*, 156. Huonker claims that Fuchs' criticism of the party during this period extended as well to Kautsky and the "center" position he represented between the revisionists and the left-wing associated with Luxemburg, *Revolution, Moral und Kunst*, 93.

[198] 1*848 in der Caricatur*, 6 (my emphasis). The article quoted originally appeared in the *Leipziger Volkszeitung*.

To disarm the ruling class, one must demonstrate its moral hypocrisy and depict society in its true visage, however negative the appearance. Through this process, Fuchs suggests, an alternative, identity is cultivated.

In his appraisal of *Die Karikatur der europäischen Völker*, Benjamin rejects the theoretical underpinnings of Fuchs' defense of graphic satire as an educational agent (*Erziehungsmittel*), characterizing his approach as "German Jacobinism":

> [Fuchs] believes that his attack must be directed against the conscience of the bourgeoisie. He considers bourgeois ideology to be duplicitous…[he] does not think of judging the concept of *bona fides* (good conscience) itself. Yet this will occur to historical materialists, not only because they realize that the concept is the bearer of bourgeois class morality, but also because they will not fail to see that this concept furthers the solidarity of moral disorder with economic anarchy.[199]

According to Benjamin, there is an essential contradiction between Fuchs' "moralistic consideration of history" and its historical materialist foundations that bespeaks a lack of attention to the specificity of working-class interests.[200] He fundamentally misunderstands the function of ideology, Benjamin writes, believing that "exploitation conditions false consciousness, at least on the part of the exploiter, because true consciousness would prove to be a moral burden," when, in point of fact, the intercession of juridical and administrative bureaucracies has freed capital of its need

---

[199] Benjamin, "Eduard Fuchs, Collector and Historian," 136. Why conscience does so is explained earlier: "Conscience advises the property owner to act according to concepts which are indirectly beneficial to his fellow proprietors. And conscience readily advises the same for those who possess nothing. If the latter take this advice, the advantages of their behavior for the proprietors become more obvious as this advice becomes more doubtful for those who follow it, as well as for their class" (135).

[200] "He was convinced…that his moralistic consideration of history and his historical materialism were in complete accord. This was an illusion, buttressed by a widespread opinion badly in need of revision: that the bourgeois revolutions, as celebrated by the bourgeoisie itself, are the immediate source of a proletarian revolution"—ibid., 135.

for a conscience.[201] The pre-WWI SPD did not adequately account for the ideological function of historical *forms* of knowledge and custom, believing them to instead be neutral conduits of false or irrational *content*.

> They believed that the same knowledge which secured the domination of the proletariat by the bourgeoisie would enable the proletariat to free itself from this domination. In reality, a form of knowledge which had no access to practice, and which could teach the proletariat nothing about its situation *as a class*, posed no danger to its oppressors (my emphasis).[202]

The "greatness" of Fuchs' writings he adds, "lies in its reaction to this state of affairs; its problems lie in the fact that it contributes to this state."[203] Later scholars have developed this critique further, pointing to the slippage that often occurs when Fuchs champions older, bourgeois moralists as models for socialist artists to follow.[204]

While it is certainly true that Fuchs' reliance upon bourgeois precedents muddies the proletarian orientation of his historical writings, his support for Mehring's conception of cultural *Bildung* shows that he held a tangential position to that of the revisionists, whose outlook typifies Benjamin's critique. Fuchs' defense of naturalism and "negative" depictions of social reality likewise indicate a refusal to settle for the "positive," idealist imagery of working class politics SPD leaders preferred. Whereas

---

[201] "The members of these bureaucracies no longer function as fully responsible moral subjects," writes Benjamin," and their 'sense of duty' is nothing but the unconscious expression of this deformation"—ibid.,136.

[202] Ibid., 121.

[203] Ibid. Benjamin's critique must be viewed in relation to his own, later contention with the Popular Front policy of the Comintern during the 1930s, when the issue of cultural heritage returned to the fore of Marxist cultural debate. This is a connection Schwartz describes at length—"Walter Benjamin's Essay on Eduard Fuchs," 121-122.

[204] This becomes most problematic when Fuchs discusses moral issues in relation to gender, an issue explored by Silvia Bovenschen and Peter Gorsen in their essay "Aufklärung als Geschlechtskunde. Biologismus und Antifeminismus bei Eduard Fuchs," *Ästhetik und Kommunikation – Beiträge zur politischen Erziehung*, vol. 7, no. 25 (1976): 10-30, occasioned by the reprint of Fuchs' *Die Frau in der Karikatur* (1906) in 1973.

most scholars have followed Benjamin in discounting the relevance of Fuchs' historical studies, they proved extremely influential in the years following their publication, and were widely regarded as innovative, astute, and militantly Marxist. This is evidenced by contemporary reviews in the Social Democratic press that highlight Fuchs' theoretical framework.[205] Although the books may have remained out of reach of most working-class readers, the parameters of graphic satire Fuchs outlines had a wide impact on subsequent production and reception practices.

Nevertheless, Benjamin does touch on a point that would become especially relevant during the interwar period, as Communists struggled to disassociate themselves from prior Social Democratic cultural policy. Like the SPD more generally, Fuchs engages with his audience as a "mass" rather than in explicit class terms. As he writes in *1848 in der Caricatur*,

> The cartoonist, who wants to express a protest of the people against the rulers, must speak the language of the workshop (*Werkstatt*) and use the arguments of the street (*Gasse*) if he wants to capture the spirit of the masses (*Geist der breiten Volkesschichten*) in his works, and document their will, their thinking, and their feelings.[206]

The slippage between general designations (the people, the masses) and more specific, socialist terminology (proletariat, working class) occurs throughout Fuchs' writings and

[205] Both Edgar Steiger and Franz Mehring published reviews of *Die Karikatur der europäischen Völker* in *Die Neue Zeit* drawing attention to Fuchs' political and cultural defense of graphic satire—Steiger's, on the first volume, appears in the collected edition of *Die Neue Zeit*, vol 19:2 (1900/1901): 282-284; Mehrings, on the second volume, in vol. 23:1 (1904/1905): 290-91. Other relevant reviews include one by Friedrich Adler in the collected edition of *Sozialistische Monatshefte*, vol. 7:2 (1903): 801-802, and an article by Friedrich Stampfer, "Im Zeughaus der Revolution," *Die Neue Zeit*, vol. 21:1 (1902/1903): 342-345. The art historian Eugen Kalkschmidt penned a longer, far more critical review in the art magazine *Kunstwart* as well—"Aus der Geschichte des Zerrbildes," *Kunstwart*, vol. 18:1 (1904-5): 724-747. See Zingarelli, "Eduard Fuchs, vom militanten Journalismus zur Kulturegeschichte," 41-43 for further discussion (however, several of the citations listed in her bibliography are inaccurate).

[206] *1848 in der Caricatur*, 8.

further complicates his appeal for a sharper, Social Democratic graphic satire, especially given the fact that, as he implies here, it is up to the artist to translate popular sentiment into effective satirical imagery. These issues come to a head in his discussion of socialist graphic satire at the conclusion of the *Die Karikatur der europäischen Völker*.

Socialist Graphic Satire?

According to Fuchs, the value of graphic satire as an agitational medium had been confirmed by the fact that nearly every European Social Democratic party had established a satirical publication by 1900. But its "functional potential" (*Wirkungsmöglichkeit*) had yet to be being fully utilized. The reason for this, he says, is that graphic satire is best deployed by established political parties oriented toward a mass audience, and due to the relatively recent maturation of Social Democracy from a purely utopian and sectarian past, true socialist graphic satire had not yet fully developed. This accounts for its continued dependence upon "pathetic allegory" instead of a more social realist mode, Fuchs writes.[207] As an example he cites the work of the English illustrator Walter Crane **[Fig. 1.23]**, whose drawings often appeared in Social Democratic publications (including the *Postillon*[208]), and compares the symbolic imagery utilized by Crane and similar artists to religious proselytizing.[209] In contrast to

---

[207] Fuchs, *Die Karikatur* vol. 2, 482-3.

[208] For background on Crane and his politics, see Morna O'Neill's study, *Walter Crane: The Arts and Crafts, Painting, and Politics, 1875-1890* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 2010), as weel as her recent essay "Cartoons for the Cause? Walter Crane's *The Anarchists of Chicago*," *Art History*, vol. 38, no. 1 (2015): 106-137.

[209] Fuchs draws a comparison between the use of allegory by early socialist and communist movements and the preachings of Jesus. "Jesus did not fight and teach with the weapons of ridicule, but with those of inflamed pathos and morally indignant, solemn preaching. As the direct followers of Jesus' activity and the first serious implementers of his social doctrine, so too did the majority of modern communists"—*Die Karikatur* vol. 2, 479. While at first glance a strange comparison to make, Fuchs may be drawing upon Wilhelm Weitling's *Gospel of a Poor Sinner* (*Evangelium eines armen Sünders*) (1845), an early, utopian

this allegorical tradition, Fuchs calls for a more "naturalistic" socialist-oriented satire, drawing upon historical and international examples.

Even more essential, Fuchs claims, is the further development of socialist-oriented *social graphic satire*, a sorely neglected element of the art form's potential:

> When reviewing the entirety of European socialist graphic satire (*Karikatur*) one is struck by a fact that deserves special consideration. This is the lack of social graphic satire (*Karikatur*). Given that the critique of bourgeois society in regard to its moral quality has been a primary aspect of the international socialist movement's agitational material for decades, one would assume that the movement would have made use of social graphic satire (*Karikatur*) and that it would have achieved a virtuosity precisely in this field. But that has in no way been the case.[210]

Fuchs offers several reasons why not. For one, working-class existence does not predispose one to humor; the life of a typical worker "proceeds too seriously, one might even say tragically" to produce in him (or her) a humorous disposition amenable to work as a satirist[211]. (As a whole, he adds, Germans tend to be less receptive to satire than the French.) The most significant factor by far is the discrepancy Fuchs sees between workers and the class position necessary to produce effective satire. "One must have first-hand experience of the world one wishes to satirize," Fuchs writes,

> one must be intimately acquainted with it, perfectly able to speak its own language, so that the characteristic word is always at hand: absolute authenticity is the prerequisite of effective satire. Moreover: the use of this language must resonate; a satirical publication lives not least from the spirit that flows into it from its public, not so much in the form of contributions, as from an accustomed understanding (*entgegenkommenden Verständnisses*). All this cannot be attained from within the fenced-in quarters (*Gartenzaunbillet*) that life grants the proletarian for his existence. Looking in from the outside does not suffice…The key conclusion to be drawn from this is that the best destroyers of a class or of

socialist tract that he republished as part of a series of of such works in the 1890s.

[210] Fuchs, *Die Karikatur* vol. 2, 483.

[211] Ibid.

society never emerge from amongst the enemy, but always from within: all great satirists have been the flesh of the body which they castigate.[212]

This suggests that, for Fuchs, modern graphic satire, be it political or social, is ultimately class-determined. Only the most accomplished artists are able to transcend the limits of their bourgeois social milieu, and it is only by presenting their most intimate knowledge of this milieu that they do so. To capture the true character of a class, the artist must translate their class *position* into a class *consciousness*. No artist better exemplifies this process than Honoré Daumier, Fuchs' great love.

The obsession with Daumier lasted most of Fuchs' life, and features prominently in his collected works.[213] According to Benjamin, Daumier is responsible for the dialectical glimmers that arise in his study of graphic satire. "Whenever Fuchs speaks of Daumier," he writes, "all his energies come to life."[214] It is via Daumier's works that Fuchs came to realize how an artist's perspective exceeds his class position by, paradoxically, displaying his social milieu as faithfully as possible. In *1848 in der Caricatur,* Fuchs acknowledges the limits of Daumier's politics, noting "Honoré

---

212 Ibid., 484.

213 Hofmann discusses the scholarship on Daumier published in Germany concurrently with Fuchs' in *Daumier und Deutschland*. The earliest is Julius Meyer's *Geschichte der modernen französischen Malerei* (Leipzig, 1867). Meyer groups Daumier with Grandville and Gavarni but singles him out for his artistic expertise. Daumier's second major appearance is in Richard Muther's *Geschichte der Malerei im 19. Jahrhundert* (Leipzig: 1893/94). Muther, who Fuchs draws from heavily for *Die Karikatur*, focuses mainly on Daumier's style and formal abilities as well. Karl Eugen Schmidt's *Französischen Malerei 1800-1900* (1903) characterizes Daumier as belonging to "half a dozen great artists that France produced in the nineteenth century," (quoted on 37). Five years later in 1908 there appears two studies: Kurt Bertel's *Daumier als Lithograph* (1908), and Erich Klossowski's monograph, *Daumier* (Munich: R. Piper and Co.). According to Hofmann, Klossowski's approach sidelines Daumier as a cartoonist to focus more on Daumier as a painter, which conforms to how Daumier was elevated as a major "republican" artist in France after his death. For discussion of this re-contextualization of Daumier, which had repercussions in Germany as well, see Michel Melot, "Daumier and Art History: Aesthetic Judgment/Political Judgment," *Oxford Art Journal*, vol. 11, no. 1 (1988).

214 Benjamin, "Eduard Fuchs, Collector and Historian," 140.

Daumier and several of the brightest political caricaturists of the year 48 were certainly ardent republicans, using all their strength for political freedom; but for the social demands of the Parisian proletariat they had little sympathy."[215] As Fuchs remarks in a later, 1921 study of Daumier's lithographs, the artist supported neither socialism, nor women's rights[216]. "Daumier lived and died as a petty bourgeois (*Kleinbürger*)," he insists, contrary to the biographies that depicted the artist as a member of the proletariat.[217] Yet this in no way means that Daumier was a philistine (*Spießbürger*). On the contrary, Fuchs argues,

> Daumier was in the best sense revolutionary; certainly not because he spent his nights drinking and lantern smashing, but because, with tireless diligence and through boldly artistic deeds, he drew open the blinds upon political reaction and all forms of human pettiness so that the light of the day could penetrate unhindered.[218]

In Fuchs' view, Daumier's unique ability to capture the political tenor of the 1830s makes his drawings representative of the revolutionary consciousness that then existed within his class[219]. His "penetrating character analysis (*Seelenanalyse)*" of leading

---

[215] Fuchs, *1848 in der Caricatur*, 17. On the republican identity crafted by the liberal opposition after 1830, to which works such as Daumier's *Gargantua* (1831) relate, see Laura O'Brien, *The Republican Line: Caricature and French Republican Identity, 1830-52* (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 2015).

[216] "The limit of his knowledge is bourgeois democracy. A higher political-economic ideal other than a social order built up on the basis of the private-capitalist mode of production is as incomprehensible to him as the possibility that he could give a woman a higher goal in life than that of the caring wife and mother, who cares of for cooking at her children," *Honoré Daumier: Lithographien 1828-1851* (Munich: Verlag Albert Langen, 1921), 21. Fuchs likewise cites the drawings Daumier produced satirizing contemporary feminists as proof of his "petit-bourgeois outlook (*kleinbürgerliche Anschauung*), "*Honoré Daumier: Lithographien 1828-1851* (Munich: Verlag Albert Langen, 1921), 21.

[217] Ibid., 19. Fuchs explains that "i]t is wrong because the word proletarian today, if used properly, has a substantially different meaning, and is applied to Daumier only to the extent that it is understood in its narrowest sense, that of the unpropertied (*Nichtbesitzend*]."

[218] Ibid., 20.

[219] Ibid. 8. "In the July Revolution of 1830," Fuchs writes,"the French bourgeoisie realized the form of state they had initiated with the great revolution of 1789. There is no more significant, because no more fruitful, period in modern history France than that of 1830. The essence of the [1830] revolution is the essence of Daumieresque art (*Daumiersche Kuns*)."

statesmen, epitomized in the *Portraits chargés* he produced during this period **[Fig. 1.24]**, utilize physiognomy for political ends, and showcase Daumier's acumen and visual economy. They are, Fuchs writes, "the first political cartoons of real importance."[220] And even after censorship reigned in Philipon's publications and muzzled Daumier's more explicit political imagery, he brought to social graphic satire an equally shared point of view, sensitive to "the characteristics and typical appearance of social class."[221] As Mehring spoke of certain bourgeois literary stylists, so too does Fuchs portray Daumier as a "hero" of his time.

> Daumier is the force that boldly sets out to storm the world, and who until the last day firmly believes that they will conquer the world, that their ideals will one day be realized: the bourgeoisie in its great historical rise.[222]

Where does this leave the issue of socialist graphic satire, and a socialist *social* graphic satire in particular? Clearly, Fuchs does not believe Daumier's works represent a socialist-oriented graphic satire in terms of political tendency. Daumier's politics were thoroughly representative of his class, or at best, equivocal.[223] Fuchs does believe,

---

[220] Fuchs, *Die Karikatur* vol. 1, 343.
[221] "We call him a caricaturist, whereas in reality he was a major historian (*Geschichtsschreiber*) of the nineteenth century. His work is a contemporary history (*Zeitgeschichte*) in epigrams," ibid., 371.
[222] *Die Karikatur* vol. 2, 342.
[223] In more recent art historical scholarship, Daumier's class position tends to be presented as neither bourgeois, nor proletariat. In *The Absolute Bourgeois. Artists and Politics in France, 1848-1851* (Princeton: Princeton University press, 1973), for example, T. J. Clark argues "[i]t is Daumier's equivocation that counts—the physical immersion in the life of the Paris streets, yet the social isolation, jealously guarded. It is the way Daumier is neither worker nor bourgeois, but in sight of both, with a detachment that has nothing to do with objectivity" (102). Clark, like Fuchs, discusses how the Daumier's upbringing colored his later outlook, remarking upon his childhood in Marseilles and how his being an lithographer led him to identity with contemporary artisans, who he describes as "proud, literate and often literary…living inside a tight-knit community, with the world defined by one's trade and fellow tradesmen." He artisans, he adds, "were the first proletariat" (100). A more detailed biographical overview can be found in Bruce Laughton, *Honoré Daumier* (New Haven: Yale UP, 1996), although most of the study is devoted to Daumier's paintings rather than his work in print.

however, that Daumier's artistic prowess demonstrates the "functional potential" of graphic satire, based largely upon his ability to produce insightful caricatures of living personalities and familiar social types. The works of Daumier model how the *Tendenzlos* art of caricature is best practiced. Moreover, Fuchs sees in these works the visual articulation of a class-conscious way of seeing, attuned to the reality of bourgeois society in all its narrow-mindedness, folly, and hypocrisy. Behind this class consciousness lay a desire to right these wrongs, Fuchs maintains, and this renders Daumier's depictions of the "negative" aspects of society effective as an agitational and educational agent. Insofar as the work bespeaks an optimism that conditions can alter, Daumier is a satirist in the true sense of the word. As Gilbert Highet contends in a classic study of the genre, "[t]he purpose of satire is, through laughter and invective, to cure folly and punish evil." But, he adds, "if it does not achieve this purpose, it is content to jeer at folly and to expose evil to bitter contempt."[224] Fuchs argues much the same, contrasting Daumier with the works of Thomas Theodor Heine, one of the leading artists for *Simplicissimus*[225]. "Heine…is the cynical pessimist, whose belief in the sacred, in ideals, and similar childishness (*Kinderei*) lasts less than an hour—[he represents] the bourgeois world at the point in its development when it relentlessly and

---

[224] From *The Anatomy of Satire* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1962), 156
[225] Heine studied at the art academy in Düsseldorf and later at the academy of fine arts in Munich before joining the magazine upon its creation in 1896, subsequently becoming a co-owner. It was one of Heine's covers that led to the confiscation of *Simplicissimus* in 1898 and landed Heine in prison for six months (see n.147). After the Nazis came to power in 1933, Heine, who was Jewish, fled the country, remaining in Scandinavia for most of his later life. Other artist-editors such as Karl Arnold, Olaf Gulbransson, and Edward Thöny, continued work under the Nazi regime. For further background on Heine, see Monika Peschken-Eilsberger's biography, *Der Herr der roten Bulldogge* (Leipzig: E. A. Seemann, 2000), and Timothy W. Hiles, *Thomas Theodor Heine: Fin-de-Siècle Munich and the Origins of Simplicissimus* (New York: Peter Lang, 1995).

self-destructively mocks itself."[226] (Heine's summer 1898 cover for the magazine is the kind of image Fuchs likely had in mind **[Fig. 1.25]**. It depicts bourgeois representatives from the National Liberal and Catholic Center parties drunkenly carousing after the results of the previous week's Reichstag elections, in which the latter retained their supremacy—despite the SPD gaining the most votes, as had been the case since 1890. The disorderly conduct of this so-called "union of the parties of order," is typical of Heine's work during the period.) Although Fuchs concedes that *Der Wahre Jakob* constitutes a "significant agitational agent (*Agitationsmittel*) of German Social Democracy," his evaluation of contemporary socialist graphic satire is highly critical.[227] *Simplicissimus* he describes as "the *Zeitgeist* manifested satirically and artistically."[228] Social Democrats faced a daunting task in overtaking its influence.

Fuchs became the main conduit through which Daumier would become a figure of repute for the Left during the Weimar period; although, as his discussion of the artist's class position and socio-political outlook makes clear, mere appreciation of Daumier was not what Fuchs was after. In order to revive the progressive role of political satire and couple its power to Social Democratic ends, one instead had to *appropriate* Daumier's stylistic innovations and social realist perspective. The aim was to *repurpose* these aspects to serve working-class interests, just as Fuchs had repurposed

---

[226] *Die Karikatur* vol. 2, 342.
[227] Ibid., 80. Fuchs describes his own *Süddeutscher Postillon* as "much sharper in tone" and more receptive to political satire than *Der Wahre Jakob,* though he does not take credit for this, or even mention his prior editorial role.
[228] Fuchs calls the creation of *Simplicissimus* in 1896 a "revelation," and compares magazine favorably with Philipon's *La Caricature*: "The great importance of the *La Caricature* was that it was not just the mouthpiece for an exclusive point of view. This is also the significance of *Simplicissimus* and the key reason why a "Simplicissimus-spirit" today dominates the entire public spirit of Germany," ibid., 341.

André Gill's 1868 caricature of Napoleon III to lampoon the Kaiser. Properly contextualized, the works of Daumier, Hogarth, and other bourgeois satirists offer insight into class struggles of the past. More importantly, they suggest effective practices for the present, and help Social Democrats to understand how a way of seeing connects to a political standpoint that is shaped by, but not reducible to, a particular class position. This is the underlying argument of *Die Karikatur der europäischen Völker* in simple terms.[229] That it influenced conceptions of graphic satire during the Weimar period is evident from publications by other cultural historians of popular imagery; that it aided the development of Communist graphic satire by the regard paid to Daumier and other bourgeois satirists in the Communist press. As we shall see however, the link Fuchs draws between class position and class consciousness quickly became a subject of contention within the Communist milieu. How could artists who did not belong to the proletariat relate their point of view? How might a class-conscious way of seeing be produced irrespective of class identity? These were questions that came to a head after World War I, when the political climate polarized, revolutionary turmoil filled the streets, and graphic satire became weaponized.

Conclusion

---

[229] Beginning with *Das erotische Element in der Karikatur* and emerging more fully in the three-volume *Illustrierte Sittengeschichte*, a greater interest in psycho-sexual theories comes to typify Fuchs' account of the development of art in general. While pertinent to his discussion of graphic satire during the Weimar period, this development did not impact the theoretical framework discussed here and will thus be explored further in subsequent chapters. I have found Huonker's discussion of the aesthetic and psychoanalytic sources of Fuchs' writings particularly informative on this subject—see *Revolution, Moral and Kunst*, 393-446.

Fuchs was an active participant in these developments, and thus, in addition to contending with Fuchs the editor and historian, we must address a further aspect of his career: Fuchs *the Communist*.

Fuchs abstention from political organizing ceased in 1917, when he joined the Independent Social Democratic Party (*Unabhängige Sozialdemokratische Partei Deutschlands* or USPD) soon after its formation.[230] Within he party he played an important supporting role for the Spartacus League (*Spartakusbund*), the revolutionary, anti-war faction around Rosa Luxemburg and Karl Liebknecht, raising over 8,000 M for antiwar agitation materials between March 1917 and March 1918.[231] He likewise supported Luxemburg financially during her wartime incarceration. In the winter of 1918 Fuchs traveled to Russia on behalf of the *Spartakusbund* to liaise with the victorious Bolsheviks, thereby missing out on the German Revolution[232]. Upon his return to Berlin in January, he joined the newly formed KPD, and although Fuchs never held an official title or position within the party, he served as the treasurer of the Comintern's

---

[230] In the midst of WWI, the antimilitarist and revolutionary factions of the SPD refused to follow the party leadership, and founded a new party, the Independent Social Democratic Party, in April 1917. For details, see David W. Morgan, *The Socialist Left and the German Revolution: A History of the German Independent Social Democratic Party, 1917-1922* (Ithaca; London: Cornell University Press, 1975), and Dieter Engelmann and Horst Naumann, *Zwischen Spaltung und Vereinigung: Die Unabhängige Sozialdemokratische Partei Deutschlands in den Jahren 1917-1922* (Berlin: Edition Neue Wege, 1993). During the war Fuchs published *The World War in Graphic Satire* (*Der Weltkrieg in der Karikatur*) (Munich: Albert Langen, 1916), comprised of examples drawn from international publications that explores how the rival powers used satire for propagandistic purposes, discussed further in chapter two.

[231] Weitz, *Der Mann im Schatten,* 216-217.

[232] Fuchs carried with him a letter of greeting to Lenin from Rosa Luxemburg, written in halting Russian:

> Dear Vladimir, I am using uncle's trip to send you heartfelt greetings from our family, Karl [Liebknecht], Franz [Mehring], and all the others. God grant that all our wishes will be fulfilled this coming year. All the best! Uncle will tell you about our lives and goings-on. For the time being I shake hands and greet you. Rosa.

First made public in the pages of *Pravda* in 1925, a facsimile of the letters appears in Luxemburg, *Ausgewählte Reden und Schriften*, vol. 2 (Berlin: Dietz Verlag, 1951), 625-6. For further details regarding Fuchs' trip, see Weitz, *Der Mann im Schatten*, 225-231.

clandestine Western European Secretariat and attended the Second Congress of the Communist International in 1920[233]. (A photograph of the delegates to the congress includes Fuchs in the background left, between Karl Radek and Nikolai Bukharin—**Fig. 1.26.)** His cultural expertise and connections within the art world proved helpful to the KPD as well. When the party decided to erect a commemorative monument to Luxemburg and Liebknecht in 1924, they turned to Fuchs to assist with the commission. Fuchs chose Mies van der Rohe for the project, who he had recently hired to design an extension off the back of his villa to make room for his growing collection. Originally the design was to feature a neo-classical façade, surmounted by a Rodin sculpture, *Génie de la Guerre* (1879), that Fuchs planned to donate for the cause. Van der Rohe instead proposed an abstract construction, and it was up to Fuchs to convince the party executive to accept this modernist design. That he was successful in doing so confirms the esteem with which he was held in party circles.[234]

---

[233] The Western European Secretariat of the Communist International was organized by Jakob Reich (1886-1956), a Galician-born Bolshevik who was a student in Bern when the Russian revolution broke out and first served as editor of *Russische Nachrichten*, the information bulletin of the diplomatic mission set up by the Soviets in Switzerland in 1918. After he helped organize the first congress of the Communist International in March 1919, he was sent to Berlin to establish the secretariat, which would oversee efforts across Western Europe. Under the cover name "Thomas" (although most comrades called him "fatty"), Reich brought Fuchs onto the secretariat as treasurer, alongside other leading members of the KPD: Paul Levi, August Thalheimer, Hermann Remmele, and Willi Münzenberg. Reich led the organization until his return to Moscow in 1925. A short memoir of Reich's early work for the Comintern appears as "The First Years of the Communist International," in *Revolutionary History*, vol. 5, no. 2 (1994), and for more on Reich's career see Alexander Vatlin, "'Genosse Thomas' und die Geheimtätigkeit der Komintern in Deutschland 1919 bis 1925," in *Die Komintern: Gründung, Programmatik, Akteure* (Berlin: Dietz Verlag, 2009): 247-270.

[234] Unveiled in 1926, the monument was later destroyed by the Nazis in 1932. For more on the monument's execution and symbolism, see Rolf-Peter Baacke and Michael Nungesser, "Ich bin, ich war, ich werde sein! Drei Denkmäler der deutschen Arbeiterbewegung in den Zwanziger Jahren," in *Wem gehört die Welt – Kusnt und Gesellschaft in der Weimarer Republik*, exh. cat. (Berlin: Neue Gesellschaft für Bildende Kunst, 1977): 280-298.

Fuchs supported other left-wing organizations too, including many Comintern-backed front groups and aid organizations, such as Willi Münzenberg's International Workers' Relief (*Internationale Arbeiterhilfe)*.[235] And he served on the board of the Society for Social Research (*Gesellschaft für Sozialforschung)*, a financial association established in 1922 to fund the Institute for Social Research, along with Kurt Albert Gerlach, Friedrich Pollock, and Lucio Felix José Weil, its primary benefactor.[236] He later acquired the greater part of the KPD's archives for a research archive in Berlin co-sponsored by the Institute. Due to harassment by the police and subsequent legal battles, the archive closed within a year of its opening.[237]

In 1929, disillusioned with inner-party squabbles, Fuchs joined the German Communist Party-Opposition (*Kommunistische Partei Deutschlands-Opposition*), led by his old friends Heinrich Brandler and August Thalheimer.[238] Though apart from providing the opposition with monthly financial support, Fuchs refrained from participating as an active member (he was nearly 60 years old by this point). The chaos that followed the burning of the Reichstag in February 1933 forced him to flee Berlin, and Fuchs spent the final years of his life in Paris, desperately trying to regain control of his vast art

---

[235] Details can be found in Braskén, *The International Workers' Relief*—see n. 16 in the introduction.

[236] The standard historical account of the Institute remains Martin Jay, *The Dialectical Imagination: A History of the Frankfurt School and Institute of Social Research, 1923-1930* (Boston; Toronto: Little, Brown, and Company, 1973), but for a more recent re-evaluation of the school and its members, see Stuart Jeffries, *Grand Hotel Abyss: The Lives of the Frankfurt School* (London; New York: Verso, 2016).

[237] Weitz, *Der Mann im Schatten*, 271-290.

[238] Established in December 30, 1928, almost a decade to the day from the KPD's original founding, the KPD-O is commonly referred to as the "right opposition" because it stood between the Trotskyist Left opposition (meaning it did not break with defense of the USSR and general Comintern principles) and the Stalinist "center." The party opposed Thälmann's leadership of the KPD and called for united front tactics against the Nazis. Further background can be found in Theodor Bergmann, *Gegen den Strom: Die Geschichte der Kommunistischen-Partei-Opposition* (Hamburg: VSA-Verlag, 1987). Heinrich Brandler and August Thalheimer, who had led the KPD central committee in 1921-1923, were friends of Fuchs dating back to the early days of the Spartakus League.

collection from the Nazis, who seized it soon after he left the country. This is where Benjamin made his acquaintance, meeting with him several times over the course of writing his essay.

*　　*　　*　　*　　*　　*

The caricature of Fuchs one finds in Benjamin's "Eduard Fuchs, Collector and Historian" captures neither the breadth, nor the depth of Fuchs' political conviction. It rightly highlights the contradictory aspects of his theoretical approach to graphic satire—his model is not one any social historian of art, Marxist or otherwise, would likely employ as-is in our present moment—but it overlooks the subtler ways Fuchs sought to undermine dominant models of cultural socialism prevalent in the pre-WWI SPD milieu and steer a course for a trenchant, unidealized form of art that could simultaneously undermine bourgeois ideology and bolster working-class resolve. As I have argued in this chapter, the framework Fuchs outlines in *Die Karikatur* grew out of his first-hand experience editing a partisan satire magazine whose content directly challenged the government and strove to foment an oppositional, Social Democratic point of view. Fuchs held that artists who did not belong to the working class could nevertheless participate in such an effort, and his own career demonstrates how class identity and class consciousness are not determined by any simple base-superstructure relationship. Fuchs was a connoisseur able to cross between the worlds of high culture and Communist activism. During the Weimar period, and especially after 1925, this would become a more difficult feat, as George Grosz, John Heartfield, and their fellow artists would discover. The initial producers of a Communist graphic satire struggled to

gain recognition from the KPD for the class-conscious perspective embodied in their works of the immediate post-WWI period. Unlike Fuchs, party leaders took a more skeptical view of graphic satire, not recognizing its effectiveness as an agitational and educational agent until after 1921. Nevertheless, as I will argue in the next chapter, Fuchs' championing of social realist satirical imagery, particularly in regard to a socialist graphic satire, eventually came to fruition during the Weimar Republic, aided by a group of bourgeois defectors: the Berlin Dadaists.

Chapter Two--Developing Communist Graphic Satire: Grosz's Haß and the Art of Class Consciousness

Introduction

Upon its publication in the spring of 1921, George Grosz's *The Face of the Ruling Class* (*Das Gesicht der herrschenden Klasse*) **[Fig. 2.1]**, comprised of fifty-four drawings and one photomontage, garnered immediate acclaim within the German Communist milieu. First reviewed by the official party organ *The Red Flag* (*Die rote Fahne*) in May, Grosz is credited with having discovered a novel and effective means of politicizing visual art.

> In an unprecedented and ruthless manner, the illustrator George Grosz has pilloried the shameful deeds of the ruling class; over fifty caricatures (*Karikaturen*) testify to his satirical genius, one never before encountered in Germany. Here art has found expression as a revolutionary weapon (*Kampfmittel*), that neither verse nor prose can equal.[239]

Such praise marks a significant shift in Grosz's stature vis-a-vis the party. Less than a year before he and his fellow Dadaists had been lambasted in the pages of *Die rote Fahne* as a "bourgeois literary clique" whose works were "ridiculously small, petty, and pathetically irrelevant in comparison with the grand liberation struggle of the

[239] [Kurt] Kersten, "Das Gesicht der herrschenden Klasse," *Die rote Fahne* (May 1, 1921). Kersten later became editor of the Communist tabloid *Welt am Abend* in 1926 and published a number of books, included a biography of Lenin and a report on his travels to Soviet Russia in 1924. In 1933 he fled to Prague where he worked with Willi Münzenberg and John Heartfield, later emigrating to New York, where he published Arthur Rosenberg's *Entstehung und Geschichte der Weimarer Republik* (1955). In 1957 he published an article in *Deutschen Rundschau* describing his and Münzenberg's shift toward an anti-stalinist position in the 1930s and claimed that Münzenberg had been assassinated by Soviet agents.

proletariat."[240] So what changed? The fortunes of KPD for one. Following an abortive insurrection in March 1921, the party was briefly outlawed, resulting in a leadership struggle and further isolation in the public sphere.[241] To regain membership and broaden its appeal, party leaders initiated new publishing ventures with an increasing focus upon visual media, a process that came to fruition in 1923-4. This provided an opportunity for artists aligned with the party to play a more active role in defining its culture. Grosz, who along with the brothers Herzfelde--Wieland and Helmut (aka John Heartfield)--joined the party in 1919, affirmed his association with the international Communist movement in several statements following the collapse of Berlin Dada in late 1920.[242] In an article for *Das Kunstblatt* he called upon his fellow artists to take up a proletarian point of view or else risk the persistence of "bourgeois nihilism."[243] Grosz's

---

[240] Gertrud Alexander, "Dada, " *Die rote Fahne*, July 25, 1920, reprinted in *Die rote Fahne: Kritik, Theorie, Feuilleton. 1918-1933.*, ed. Manfred Brauneck (München: Fink, 1973), 77.

[241] Background on this event, known as the "March action (*Märzaktion*)," see Ben Fowkes, *Communism in Germany*, 63-73, and Pierre Broué, *The German Revolution, 1917-1923*, ed. Ian Birchall and Brian Pearce, trans. John Archer (Chicago: Haymarket Books, 2006), 491-526. A more detailed analysis of the insurrection and its aftermath in and beyond Berlin can be found in Sigrid Koch Baumgarten, *Aufstand der Avantgarde—die Märzaktion der KPD 1921* (Frankfurt; New York: Campus, 1986) and Stefan Weber, *Ein Kommunistischer Putsch—Märzaktion 1921 in Mitteldeutschland* (Berlin: Dietz Verlag, 1991).

[242] Herzfelde later claimed that all three artists, along with the proletarian theater director Erwin Piscator, received their membership cards from Rosa Luxemburg herself at the founding party conference in January 1919—"John Heartfield und George Grosz: zum 75. Geburtstage meines Bruders" *Die Weltbühne* (June 15, 1966). Scholars have so far been unable to corroborate the claim, but most agree that the artists gravitated toward the KPD in the spring and summer of that year. According to a January 18, 1919 entry in the diary of Graf Harry Kessler, an aristocratic supporter of the artists whose own politics ran along liberal lines, Herzfelde had by this time already become a Communist. Kessler writes:

> In the afternoon a visit from Wieland Herzfelde. He frankly admitted to being a Communist and supporter of the Spartacus League. Not, he insisted, like Liebknecht for sentimental and ethical reasons, but because Communism is a more economic method of production that we have at present…He also regards terror as necessary because human nature is not naturally good and therefore sanctions are ineluctable. On the other hand, terror need not be of the bloody sort

—cited from *Berlin in Lights: The Diaries of Count Harry Kessler (1918-1937)*, trans. and ed. Charles Kessler (New York: Grove Press, 1971), 61. For more information on Kessler's relationship to the German avant-garde on either side of WWI, see Laird McLeod Easton, *The Red Count: The Life and Times of Harry Kessler* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2002).

[243] According to Grosz:

> There will come a time when the artist will no longer be a woolly (*schwammig*) bohemian

drawings likewise began to appear more frequently in the pages of *Die rote Fahne*, accompanying articles detailing the privations of proletarian existence and the machinations of capitalism.[244] The KPD's embrace of Grosz's satirical outlook grew out of a realization that highly partisan graphic satire could be deployed for revolutionary ends.

This chapter charts the development of an explicitly Communist graphic satire out of the work of George Grosz and fellow Dadaists after WWI. It explores how inherited conventions, emblems, figures, and faces from the history of graphic satire were remodeled to expose the underlying conditions of the newly established Weimar Republic and set in motion the propagation-cultivation dialectic outlined in the introduction. To visualize how the republican order perpetuated capitalist relations of exploitation and oppression, Grosz and his comrades transformed social types familiar to readers of pre-war satirical magazines into the goons of post-war German society. In doing so they sought to resonate with a revolutionary structure of feeling widespread amongst the urban working class and channel this sentiment into a class-conscious way of seeing.

---

anarchist, but instead a sound, fit worker in the collective community. As long as this goal has not been met by the working masses, the intellectual (*der Geistige*) will waver in cynical disbelief —"On my latest pictures (*Zu meinen neuen Bildern*)," *Das Kunstblatt*, (January 1921), 11; 14. According to the postscript, Grosz wrote the article in November 1920.

[244] McCloskey dates Grosz's premiere in *Die rote Fahne* to May 1, 1921 with the appearance of his drawing "Special Justice (*Ausnahmegericht*)" (91), but Grosz's "How capitalism builds up the economy (*Wie der Kapitalismus die Wirtschaft aufbaut*)" already appeared in the paper the previous June, the same month the First International Dada Fair opened. This same image was reproduced in the pages of *Der Gegner* two weeks later under the title "Entrepreneur initiative (*Unternehmer-Initiative*)," which it would retain when subsequently included in *Das Gesicht der herrschenden Klasse*. Drawings by Grosz did not become a regular feature of *Die rote Fahne* until after 1923.

The complicated relationship between the Berlin Dadaists and the international Communist movement is a subject too broad to cover here in all its shifting and contextual detail.[245] Existing studies provide crucial background on the social, cultural, and political dynamics that drove Grosz, Heartfied, and others into the orbit of the KPD and analyze their works in relation to broader art historical and theoretical issues, such as the evolution of *Neue Sachlichkeit*, the prototype of a post-humanist modern subjectivity, or what one scholar has as characterized as the "global mutation in the structure of signification."[246] My focus is instead much narrower in scope and more modest in its claims, concerned primarily with Grosz's *Das Gesicht der herrschenden Klasse* and what Georg Lukács refers to in an untranslated essay of 1932 as "the artistically productive role of revolutionary class hatred (*die künstlerisch fruchtbare Rolle*

---

[245] Michael White's *Generation Dada: The Berlin Avant-Garde and the First World War* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 2013) provides background to the initial formation of Berlin Dada and the networks between individual artists that influenced their political radicalization during and immediately after WWI. The best studies on the ensuing relationship with the KPD remain McCloskey, *George Grosz and the Communist Party*, and Lewis, *George Grosz: Art and Politics,* although more recent work on Heartfield by Kriebel and Zervigon offer many new insights, particularly during the later 1920s—see Introduction, n.75 in the introduction.

[246] Devin Fore, *Realism after Modernism: The Rehumanization of Art and Literature* (Cambridge, MA; London: MIT Press, 2012), 295. According to Devin Fore, "[t]his global mutation…was caused by the saturation of everyday life with technical media such as photography and film, means of serial reproduction that subverted the ontological distinction between original and copy on which the classical semiotic order had been based" (ibid., 295-6). Insofar as Fore's argument pertains to the resurgence of physiognomy during this period, I will contend with his claims. However, given that historians of print and graphic satire have shown how even prior to the invention of photography and film much of everyday life was suffused with the products of "technical media," the shift from quantitative to qualitative change that Fore dates to this period, closely following Guy Debord, applies the "society of spectacle" far too literally than seems appropriate. Overviews of the development of post-WWI German art toward *Neue Sachlichkeit* include:John Willett, *Art and Politics in the Weimar Period: The New Sobriety, 1917-1933* (New York: Pantheon Books, 1978); Dennis Crockett, *German Post-Expressionism: The Art of the Great Disorder 1918-1924* (University Park, PA: The Pennsylvania State Univeristy Press, 1999), Shearer West, *The Visual Arts in Germany, 1890-1937: Utopia and Despair* (New Brunswick: Rutgers University Press, 2001), and *New Objectivity: Modern German Art in the Weimar Republic 1919-1933*, eds. Stephanie Barron and Sabine Eckman (Los Angeles: LACMA; Munich: Prestel Verlag, 2015). For more on Dada and post-humanist subjectivity, see Matthew Biro, *The Dada Cyborg: Visions of the New Human in Weimar Berlin* (Minneapolis; London: University of Minnesota Press, 2009).

des revolutionären Klassenhasses)."[247] hatred." Hate (*Haß*) is a common refrain found in contemporary reviews of Grosz's work, and the efficacy of his imagery was often ascribed to his misanthropic disposition. According to Kurt Pinthus, writing for *The Daily* (*Das Tagebuch*), Grosz "hates soldiers and the bourgeoisie like no painter ever hated a human species (*Menschenart*)."[248] In an article for *The World Stage* (*Die Weltbühne*), Kurt Tucholsky claims that the secret of Grosz's work is that "he not only laughs—he hates."[249] Grosz's contempt for the bourgeoisie became itself a subject of satire during this period [**Fig. 2.2**], and while some judged his disdainful view of social relations and his Communist affiliation as an unfortunate--and hopefully temporary--blight upon an otherwise noteworthy oeuvre, critics on the left instead praised their sardonic vision.[250] In a 1920 issue of *The Free World* (*Die Freie Welt)*, the weekly illustrated supplement to the USPD's daily paper *Freedom* (*Freiheit*), Felix Stössinger refers to Grosz as the "draftsman of the revolution," arguing

[247] Lukács, "On the question of Satire (*Zur Frage der Satire*)," in *Werke*, vol. 4 (*Essays über Realismus*) (Neuwied; Berlin: Luchterhand, 1971), 103. The essay originally appeared in the Communist journal *Internationale Literatur* in 1932. Rarely discussed in the literature on the Weimar period or Lukács outside of Germany, it does make a brief appearance in Kriebel *Revoltuionary Beauty*, chapter four ("Left-wing Laughter"):167-214.

[248] Kurt Pinthus, "So siehst du aus!" *Das Tagebuch*, November 19, 1921. Pinthus incorrectly refers to *Das Gesicht* as *Das Angesicht der herrschenden Klasse*.

[249] Tucholsky, "Fratzen von Grosz," *Weltbühne* (August 18, 1921), reprinted in *Gesamtausgabe: Texte und Briefe*, vol. 5, ed. Antje Bonitz (Reinbek bei Hamburg: Rowohlt, 1996), 99-101. Tucholsky, the most well-regarded and famous satirist of the period, though never a member of the KPD, did produce material for Communist publications, though usually under a pseudonym. For a good introduction to various roles he played, see Bryan P. Grenville, *Kurt Tucholsky: The Ironic Sentimentalist* (London: Oswald Wolff; Atlantic Highlands, NJ: Humanities Press, 1981).

[250] In a 1926 article for *Kunst und Künstler, the* art historian and critic Karl Scheffler argues that Grosz's work after 1924 is superior to earlier work because clearer focus on "character" rather than "caricature," drawing from a distinction that dates back to Hogarth. He likewise argues that Grosz's talent is aversely affected by the tendentiousness of his political affiliations—see "Der Künstler als Journalist," *Kunst und Künstler* (1926), 354-358, and Scheffler's earlier piece in the same publication, "George Grosz" (1924), 182-186.

> [h]is drawings are the sharpest, most radical, most bolshevist denunciation of militarism in art. No one before him has so captured the animal in an officer's face, the brutal murderer as a deputy platoon leader (*Feldwebel*). … All previous art has served to suppress a large part of mankind by the minority. Grosz seeks for the first time to liberate the proletariat and foster a tremendous increase in class hatred (*Klassenhasses*).[251]

The Communist critic Alfred Kémeny (aka Durus) would later make a similar claim in *Eulenspiegel*, placing Grosz in a lineage "great satirical artists" such as Hogarth, Rowlandson, Goya, and Daumier. As evidence of Grosz's effectiveness, Durus cites a passage from Alexander Stenbok-Fermor's 1928 book *My Experiences as a Miner* (*Meine Erlebnisse als Bergarbeiter*), wherein a Ruhr-valley miner is quoted as saying

> [T]he dumbest of proletarians will be aroused by these drawings, they will awake a hatred even in those whose feelings are blunted. Yes, that is what we need--unlimited hate. Hate against the exploiters. And Grosz's pictures breathe such hate.[252]

Described by Beth Irwin Lewis as "the epitome of conscious communist *Tendenzkunst*," *Das Gesicht* showcases the duplicity of the Germany's first republican government and skewers its bourgeois and social democratic supporters in a series of visually interconnected scenes.[253] And while it was common at the time (and remains so today) to relate the caricatures that populate these scenes to characters alive on the streets of

---

[251] Felix Stössinger, "Moderne Revolutionäre Kunst," *Die Freie Welt*, vol.2, iss. 39 (1920), 4-5; 8. *Feldwebel* was the highest ranking non-commissioned officer level in the German imperial army until 1918, after which it was divided into three levels under the re-organized *Reichswehr*.

[252] Durus "Künstler des Proletariats (17): George Grosz," *Eulenspiegel,* vol. 4, no. 7 (July 1931): 111. The son of Latvian aristocracy and grand-nephew to Peter Kropotkin, Stenbok-Fermor fought on the side of the whites during the Russian civil war and later moved to the left while working as a miner in the Ruhr valley between 1922-23. Subsequently, he worked as free-lance writer for various papers, joining the League of Proletarian-Revolutionary Writers (*Bund proletarisch-revolutionärer Schriftsteller*) in 1928, and later participated in efforts to win over nationalist military officers to the KPD in the early 1930s. After 1933 he was arrested and upon his release worked with various resistance groups. For further background on Stenbok-Fermor's book, see Carol Poore, *The Bonds of Labor. German Journeys to the Working World, 1890-1990* (Detroit: Wayne State University Press, 2000), 127-138.

[253] Lewis, *George Grosz: Art and Politics*,141.

Weimar-era Berlin, to do so misses a crucial dimension of their operation. Their affective charge, their ability to "breathe hate," relied upon active viewing practices of comparison. As much as they sought to portray the enemies of the working class in a recognizable and convincing manner, Grosz's drawings were equally attuned to the mediated experience of everyday life in an urban metropolis. *Das Gesicht* operated in dialogue with a reality outside its pages, a reality permeated with *other images*, new and old, material and rhetorical, that conditioned the conceptual and affective responses of its target audience, the German proletariat.

In theory, the book's class-conscious perspective offered a means of teaching workers to *see class* in a new, revolutionary way. Nonetheless, it took a considerable amount of self-promotion on Grosz's part, aided by Herzfelde, to secure his reputation as the "draftsman of revolution." After all, like Daumier before, Grosz was a bourgeois artist, with representation and patrons, not, strictly speaking, a member of the working class.[254] This may have mattered little in the eyes of a connoisseur like Fuchs; but it in the eyes of the KPD, it called into question the sincerity of his politics. And although his commitment to the international Communist movement wavered over the course of the 1920s, Grosz's affiliation with radical politics in the immediate post-WWI years was no mere flirtation.[255] Far from being an extrinsic factor of Grosz's artistic viewpoint, it was

---

[254] Grosz's dealer during the early years of the Weimar Republic was Han Goltz, who owned a gallery in Munich and published the art magazine *Der Ararat*. Goltz represented Grosz during the war as well, at least as far back as 1916, when the artist's other regular patron was, surprising for an anti-militarist, a wholesaler to the Germany army.

[255] Theda Shapiro characterizes Grosz and his fellows' politics as "quixotic communism"in (*Painters and Politics: The European Avant-Garde and Society, 1900-1925* (New York: Elsevier, 1976), 198). In his later autobiography, Grosz distanced himself from Communist politics, dating this shift to 1922, following a trip to Soviet Russia. But the fact that he continued to contribute and participate in KPD-sponsored initiatives until at least 1926 suggests that this retrospective view may have been colored by the

precisely his revolutionary outlook during this period that made him such a perceptive satirist. His ability to capture the temper of Weimar's early crisis years and translate his hatred (*Haß*) into a social realist portrayal of the ugly (*hässlich*) truth of the Republican order gave his drawings a singular force. Grosz realism became the model for Communist graphic satire, and the initial steps of this transformation began during the German Revolution of 1918.

Revolutionary Graphics--Dada Intervenes

Military defeat at the hands of the entente in 1918, compounded by the blunders of Germany's war-time leaders, resulted in catastrophic economic conditions that fueled unrest across the country and set the stage for a revival of political graphic satire.[256] Turmoil amongst soldiers on the front lines, combined with the increasing frequency of food riots back home, fueled a widespread insurrectionary sentiment that eventually led to the revolutionary events of November 1918, during which the Kaiser was dethroned and the imperial state dismantled in favor of a republican government

---

environment and political temper of Grosz's location at the time, the end of WWII in America—see n. 87 in chapter one for more details. However, as scholars have shown, Grosz remained close to the Left even after emigrating to NYC in 1930s. For further background on this often-neglected period of Grosz's career, see *George Grosz and the Communist* Party, chapter four (148-192) and McCloskey's latest book, *The Exile of George Grosz: Modernism, America, and the One World Order* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2015).

[256] On the turmoil of the immediate conclusion of the war, see Richard Bessel, *Germany after the First World War* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1993) and Belinda Davis, *Home Fires Burning: Food, Politics, and Everyday Life in World War I Berlin* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 2000), which provides an excellent corrective to studies that overlook the role of women in the process of radicalization that occurred during these years. For a broader overview of the long-term effects of WWI across Europe, see Adam Tooze, *The Deluge: The Great War and the Remaking of the Global Order, 1916-1931* (London: Penguin Press, 2014) The collection *Cataclysm 1914: The First World War and the Making of Modern World Politics*, ed. Alexander Anievas (Leiden: Brill, 2015; Chicago: Haymarket Books, 2016) treats the same subject in a more theoretical fashion.

initially led by the SPD.[257] These events had a radicalizing effect on German artists, many of whom created organizations modeled on the workers' and soldiers' councils that formed in November, and pledged their support for wide-ranging, socialist reform.[258] Some went further, aligning themselves with the Bolsheviks and becoming avowed revolutionaries.

According to most accounts, the Dadaists radicalized during the war but diverged politically during the revolution. Richard Sheppard refers to the group in Berlin as politically "bifurcated," between those like Grosz, Heartfield, Schlichter, and Herzfelde, who gravitated to the KPD, and those who professed a more individualist or anarchistic political outlook (if any at all), like Raoul Hausmann, Johannes Baader, and Richard Hülsenbeck.[259] Yet, in spite of their their divergent political leanings, the Berlin

---

[257] The existing literature on the German Revolution of 1918-1919 is extensive and wide-ranging. Broué provides an in-depth analysis in *The German Revolution*, albeit through the perspective of the KPD—see n. 241. Other classic studies include: Francis L. Carsten, *Revolution in Central Europe 1918-1919* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1972), Sebastian Haffner, *Failure of a Revolution: Germany 1918-1919*, trans. Georg Rapp (London: Deutsch, 1973 [German ed. 1969]), and, for the later events of 1921-23, Werner T. Angress, *Stillborn Revolution: The Communist Bid for Power in Germany, 1921-1923* (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 1963). For a more recent perspective, see *Germany 1916-1923. A Revolution in Context,* eds. Klaus Weinhauer, Anthony McElligott, and Kirsten Heinsohn (Bielefeld: Transcript Verlag, 2015), and Ralf Hoffrogge, *Working-Class Politics in the German Revolution: Richard Müller, the Revolutionary Shop Stewards and the Origins of the Council Movement*, ed. Radhika Desai, trans. Joseph B. Keady (Leiden: Brill, 2015), which looks at the instrumental role played by working-class activists outside of established political parties. Two important documentary sources are *Groß-Berliner Arbeiter und Soldatenräte in der Revolution 1918/1919: Dokumente der Vollversammlungen und des Vollzugsrates*, eds. Gerhard Engel, Bärbel Holtz, and Ingo Materna, 3 vols. (Berlin: Akademie Verlag, 1993; 1997; 2002), and *All Power to the Councils! A Documentary History of the German Revolution of 1918-1919*, ed. Gabriel Kuhn (Oakland: PM Press, 2012). Most of these sources focus on developments in Berlin; alternative, regional perspectives can be found in Sean Dobson, *Authority and Upheaval in Leipzig, 1919-1920: The Story of a Relationship* (New York: Columbia University Press, 2001) and Martin H. Geyer, *Verkehrte Welt: Revolution, Inflation und Moderne: München 1914-1924* (Göttingen: Vandenhoek und Ruprecht, 1998).

[258] The best overview of the various artists' groups that formed in Germany after the war remains Joan Weinstein, *The End of Expressionism. Art and the November Revolution in Germany, 1918-1919* (Chicago; London: University of Chicago Press, 1990). Further background on the individual artists can also be found in *German Expressionism: The Graphic Impulse*, ed. Starr Figura (New York: Museum of Modern Art—distributed by D.A.P, 2011).

[259] See the chapter "Dada and Politics," in Sheppard's *Modernism--Dada--Postmodernism*, 304-350 (Evanston, Ill: Northwestern University Press, 2000) on this question, also discussed in McCloskey, *George*

Dadaists nevertheless shared a common aversion to the "bourgeois" republican order and readily embraced slogans and perspectives seen to be the most radical at the time. Hülsenbeck's claim in an early historical overview of the movement that "Dada is German bolshevism" may be an exaggeration, but it does tell us something about the ambition of its members.[260] By choosing to identify with an ideology demonized by bourgeois and Social Democratic supporters of the Weimar Republic, the Dadaists sought to ally themselves with the revolution and garner support from insurgent and working-class audiences. Moreover, prior to the unification of the KPD with a split from the USPD in October 1920, the German Communist movement was relatively amorphous, and the lines between the official party apparatus and various syndicalist, anarchist, and other "ultra-left" formations remained porous.[261] "Bolshevism" in these early years did not denote the hardened party-form it would after 1925, and to retroactively apply a sharp distinction between affiliation with the KPD and other revolutionary tendencies overlooks the intermingling of ideas that occurred within the post-WWI Communist milieu.

Those outside the radical left rarely made distinctions between its various currents. Ideologues across the political spectrum propagated biased reports about the Bolshevik party, linking its members to terrorism, vandalism and atrocities. Leaders of

---

Grosz and the Communist Party, 11-47.

[260] Hülsenbeck, "En Avant Dada (1920)," in *Dadas on Art: Tzara, Arp, Duchamp and Others.*, ed. Lucy R. Lippard (Mineola; New York: Dover Publications, Inc., 1971),

[261] Manfred Bock, *Geschichte des "linken Radikalismus" in Deutschand: Ein Versuch* (Frankfurt am Main: Suhrkamp, 1976). Lenin on ultra-leftism. The parody of the Spartakus declaration, "Was ist der Dadaismus und was will er in Deutschland? by Hausmann, Hülsenbeck, and Jefim Golyscheff, first published in *Der Dada* 1 (1919)

the provisional government installed during the revolution saw the appeal of Communism in any form as a direct threat to the institutional order they hoped to secure through a compromise with the army and leading industrialists. To combat its spread, they quickly established a propaganda agency, the "Publicity Office the German Socialist Republic (*Werbedienst der deutschen sozialistichen Republik)*, to advocate for a national assembly and promote "republican values" over calls for further insurrection and the establishment of a council-based order on the model of Soviet Russia.[262] Led by the writer Paul Zech, the agency created the journal *To the Lamppost!* (*An die Laterne!*) in January 1919 with drawings and texts by fellow Expressionists, to act as a pole of attraction away from other journals, such as *Action* (*Die Aktion*), that published articles in support of Communism.[263] In an advertising poster for the journal [**Fig. 2.3**], Max Pechstein depicts a column of shouting, flag-waving Communists streaming past a man hung upon a lamp-post, while a group of onlookers flee the scene[264]. While less explicit than other contemporary anti-Soviet posters, such as Rudi Feld's "The Danger of Bolshevism (*Die Gefahr des Bolschewismus*)" [**Fig. 2.4**], those produced through the

---

[262] For background, see Christian Vogel, *Werben für Weimar: Der "Werbedienst der deutschen sozialistischen Republik" in der Novemberrevolution 1918–19* (Aachen: Shaker, 2008), and, regarding the actual posters, Ida Katherine Rigby, "German Expressionist Political Posters 1918–1919: Art and Politics, a Failed Alliance," *Art Journal* 44, no. 1 (Spring 1984): 33–39.

[263] Franz Pfemfert, who oversaw *Die Aktion* and played a prominent role within the left during Weimar, has yet to garner the attention he deserves from Anglo-American scholars of the period. In the meantime, the best German studies are Paul Raabe, *Ich Schneide die Zeit aus: Expressionismus und Politik in Franz Pfemferts Aktion 1911-1918* (München: Deutscher Taschenbuch Verlag, 1964), Lother Peter, *Literarische Intelligenz und Klassenkampf: "Die Aktion" 1911-1932* (Köln: Pohl-Rugenstein, 1972), and Ursula Walburga Baumeister, *Die Aktion 1911-1932: Publizistische Opposition und literarischer Aktivismus der Zeitschrift im restriktiven Kontext* (Erlangen: Palm & Enke, 1996). Marcel Bois discusses Pfemfert's later friendship with Trotsky, with whom he shared an aversion the Stalinist distortion of Communist politics, in "A Transnational Friendship in the Age of Extremes: Leon Trotsky and the Pfemferts," *Twentieth Century Communism: A Journal of International History*, vol. 10 (2016): 9-29.

[264] For an in-depth overview of Pechstein's art and politics, see Bernard Fulda and Aya Solka, *Max Pechstein: The Rise and Fall of Expressionism* (Berlin: De Gruyter, 2012).

auspices of the republican *Werbedienst* likewise presented Communism as a violent, foreign menace to a burgeoning socialist order.

Public denigration of Communists also came from the political right and center. A number of right-wing satire publications emerged during the revolution that, although short-lived, enjoyed support from former war-propaganda officials, including: ready access to paper supplies (a sought-after commodity during these years), distribution support, and legal protection.[265] These revanchist publications, virulently anti-Soviet and often anti-Semitic as well, extended their attack to the newly established Weimar Republic, officially instituted in August 1919, prefiguring later national socialist publications like *The Striker* (*Der Stürmer*)[266]. "Cultural Bolshevism" was similarly employed to sully the reputation of artists associated with the left or who worked in a modernist style. Liberal-oriented commercial publications such as *Simplicissimus* attacked the Bolsheviks as well, frequently depicting them as crazed, blood-thirsty monsters [**Fig. 2.5**].[267] The *Spartakusbund* faired little better in these publications [**Fig. 2.6**] and were vilified for their support of the Russian revolution.

---

[265] For details on the shifting allegiances of satire magazines during the war and after, see Sherwin Simmons "War, Revolution, and the Transformation of the German Humor Magazine, 1914-1927," *Art Journal*, vol. 52, no. 1 (Spring 1993): 46-54, the single best introduction to the topic. An expanded version of the article appears as "Picture as Weapon in the German Mass Media, 1914-1930," in *Art and Journals on the Political Front, 1910-1940*, ed. Virginia Hagelstein Marquardt (Gainesvill: University Press of Florida, 1997): 142-182.

[266] The most recent studies on the publication and its founder Julius Streicher are Daniel Roos, *Julius Streicher und "Der Stürmer," 1923-1945* (Paderborn: Ferdinan Schöningh, 2014), and Vinicius Liebel, *Politische Karikaturen und die Grenzen des Humors und der Gewalt: eine dokumentarische Analyse der nationalsozialistischen Zeitung "Der Stürmer"* (Opladen: Budrich UniPress, 2011). Book-length studies in English are rarer, but see Dennis Showalter*, Little Man, What Now? Der Stürmer in the Weimar Republic* (Hamden: Archon Books, 1982).

[267] The artist Erich Schilling, who produced this image in his signature wood-blockesque style, later became a propagandist for the NSDAP after Hitler came to power and took his own life before American troops entered Munich in 1945.

In many ways these images represent a continuation of the visual rhetoric employed during the war to garner support for the military and silence dissent.[268] Most liberal-oriented publications muted their political opposition to the government after August 1914 or lampooned the emerging antiwar movement.[269] Some openly supported for the war and produced supplementary issues to be distributed at the front [**Fig**. **2.7**]. If and when liberal-leaning publications did address domestic conditions, it was done in an inoffensive, comedic fashion, focused on social rather than explicitly political themes. Given the SPD's long-standing hostility to imperialism, one might assume that party leaders would have steadfastly opposed the war. But this was not the case.[270]

---

[268] The viciousness of visual propaganda produced by all sides in the conflict has been subject of many studies and was a topic of concern to contemporaries as well. Ferdinand Avenarius' *Das Bild als Narr* (Munich: Georg D. W. Callwey, 1918), provides an overview of how graphic satire was utilized to further military and political ends. Fuchs' *Der Weltkrieg in der Karikatur* takes a longer-view, and showcases how graphic satire reflected and influenced foreign policy dating back to the emergence of capitalism, based on his view that

> [b]ecause the world war begun in August 1914 is not an isolated war, its essence and its grandiose content can only be fully and logically understood if it is presented in the context of overall economic and political development. Therefore, a general history of war in caricature must likewise begin with the wars of the sixteenth century and the beginning modern developments in Europe

—*Die Weltkrieg in der Karikatur*, vol. I (Albert Langen, 1916), vi. Although a second volume was planned, it never appeared. For more on the subject see the collections: *Persuasive Images: Posters of War and Revolution from the Hoover Institution Archives*, ed. Beth Irwin Lewis (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1992), .*Die letzten Tage der Menschheit: Bilder des ersten Welkriegs*, ed. Rainer Rother (Berlin: German Historical Musuem/Ars Nicolai, 1994), and *European Cultures in the Great War: The Arts, Entertainment and Propaganda, 1914-1918*, eds. Ariel Roschwald and Richard Stites (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1999). Matthieu Frachon's, *Le Rire des Tranchées*, 1914-1918: La Guerre en Caricatures (Paris: Balland, 2013), is an excellent study of French examples.

[269] Ann Robertson discusses this topic by of *Simplicissimus* in "Karikaturen im Dienste der Gegenrevolution. Über wenig beachtete Inhalte des Simplicissimus," in *Wem gehört die Welt: Kunst und Gesellschaft in der Weimarer Republik* (Berlin: Neue Gesellschaft für Bildende Kunst, 1977): 398-411.

[270] In what remains a classic study of the "revisionist" trend and its consequences, Carl E. Schorske outlines debates over colonial policy in *German Social Democracy 1905-1917: The Development of the Great Schism* (New York: Harper and Row Publishers, 1955). Other notable studies include: Friedhelm Boll, *Frieden ohne Revolution? Friedensstrategien der deutschen Sozialdemokratie vom Erfurter Programm 1891 zur Revolution 1918* (Bonn: Dietz Verlag, 1980); Hans-Christoph Schröder, *Gustav Noske und die Kolonialpolitik des Deutschen Kaiserrieichs* (Bonn: Verlag J. H. W. Dietz, 1979), and Shröder's earlier study on the relationship, along with *Discovering Imperialism* – n. 118 in chapter one.

Over the objections of an anti-militarist minority led by Karl Liebknecht, the party's parliamentary faction voted for war credits in August 1914, setting in motion the eventual split that would give rise to the USPD and the revolutionary *Spartakusbund*.[271] The dampening of Social Democratic satire soon followed. *Der Wahre Jakob*, committed to an anti-colonial and anti-militarist editorial policy before 1914, began to publish satire targeting Germany's opponents in a chauvinistic manner. The most infamous example, long after reprinted in Communist publications as evidence of the SPD's degeneration, portrays the "German Michael (*Deutsche Michel)*," a traditional personification of the German everyman (similar to England's John Bull), smashing the heads of his nation's enemies[272] [**Fig. 2.8**] Michael appeared sporadically in *Der Wahre Jakob* before WWI, and usually as a stand-in for the industrious but downtrodden working class, the victim of oppression and exploitation at the hands of *Junkers* and

[271] On August 4th Hugo Haase, co-chairman of the SPD with Friedrich Ebert, declared to a session of the Reichstag: "We are threatened with the horrors of hostile invasions…It is for us to ward off this danger and to safeguard the culture and independence of our country…in the hour of danger we shall not desert our Fatherland." Haase himself had been opposed to granted war credits to the government, but maintained discipline for the benefit of the party, only later making his opposition public. He was subsequently forced to resign, became a leader of the USPD, and served as joint-chairman of the provisional government after the revolution in 1918 (again with Ebert). For further background on the SPD's capitulation, see Broué, *The German Revoultion*, 43-73 and more in-depth German sources such as Suzanne Miller, *Burgfrieden und Klassenkampf: Die Deutsche Sozialdemokratie im Ersten Weltkrieg* (Düsseldorf: Droste, 1974), Dieter Groh, *Negative Integration und revolutionärer Attentismus: Die deutsche Sozialdemokratie am Vorabend des Ersten Weltkriegs* (Berlin: Propyläen, 1973), and Wolfgang Kruse, *Krieg und nationale Integration: Eine Neuinterpretation des sozialdemokratischen Burgfriedensschlusses 1914/15* (Essen: Klartext, 1993). WWI's outbreak provoked a crisis in other European Social Democratic parties as well, recounted in Georges Haupt, *Socialism and the Great War: The Collapse of the Second International* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1972), and David Kirby, *War, Peace, and Revolution: International Socialism at the Crossroads 1914-1918* (New York: St. Martin's Press, 1986). R. Craig Nation looks at the influential meeting of revolutionaries from these parties that laid the groundwork for the anti-war effort and the future Third or Communist International in his book *War on War: Lenin, the Zimmerwald Left, and the Origins of Communist Internationalism* (Durham: Duke University Press, 1989).
[272] Karl Riha provides background on this traditional character in "Der deutsche Michel. Zur Ausprängung einer nationalen Allegorie im 19. Jahrhundert," in *Karikaturen*, eds. Klaus Herding und Gunter Otto (Geißen: Anabas-Verlag Günter Kämpf KG, 1980), 186-205.

capitalists. His depiction here, acting in solidarity with "national interests," thus represents an explicit reorientation of Michael's symbolic meaning, in line with the SPD's acceptance of the Kaiser's policy of national reconciliation (*Burgfrieden*). In speech to German troops in early August Wilhelm had declared "We are going to give them a beating (*Nun aber wollen wir sie dreschen*)," and artist of the *Wahre Jakob* cover plays on the double meaning of the German word *dreschen*, which literally means to "to thresh," as in "to beat wheat." Other satire magazines did much the same [**Fig. 2.9**] The pro-military position of *Der Wahre Jakob* began to change after 1916, as evidenced by the August 4 cover that year, displaying a blood-draped globe [**Fig. 2.10**]; but for many, and especially those to the left of the Social Democrats, all the existing satire magazines were complicit with forces seeking to undermine or slow the pace of the revolution. As late as 1920 *Der Wahre Jakob* used satirical images to negatively depict the Bolsheviks [**Fig. 2.11**]. Graphic satire's oppositional élan had been compromised and was in need of political regeneration.

The Berlin Dadaists' intervention was decisive in this regard. They took the initial steps toward formulating a graphic satire adapted to the revolutionary tenor of the streets.[273] In February 1919, Grosz, Herzfelde, Heartfield, and their compatriot Walter Mehring distributed a satirical pamphlet called *To each his own Football* (*Jedermann sein eigenen Fussball*) under pretense of a mock funeral procession (complete with brass band) from the Gedächtniskirche in the western part of the city to

---

[273] For an introduction to Berlin Dada's distinct activities vis-à-vis other locations where the movement too root, see Brigid Doherty's essay in*Dada: Zurich, Berlin, Hannover, Cologne, New York*, ed. Leah Dickerman (Washington, D.C.: National Gallery of Art, 2006), 84-112.

Alexanderplatz in the east. Herzfelde had conceived *Jedermann* as a competitor to *Die Aktion*, the most prominent left-wing magazine in artistic circles at that time.[274] The front cover features a parody of recent elections for the national assembly [**Fig. 2.12**], and the lead article polemicizes against parliament, portraying it as a reactionary institution (echoing the KPD's decision not participate in the elections[275]). Explicit advocacy for revolutionary policies met with differing responses along the course of the procession, as Mehring later recounted.

> While we had become more of a laughing stock in the fashionable West, our business quickly increased the more we advanced into the Berlin North and East of the petit-bourgeoisie and workers. [...] In the avenues of the projects, gray from garbage, still honeycombed from the bullets of the Spartacus machine guns and slit open from the howitzers of the Noske-regime, the brass orchestra, playing its showpieces, "I once had a comrade" and "The mossy bank at the parents' grave" on the way was greeted with cheers and heaped with applause.[276]

The popularity of *Jedermann* in the working-class districts of northern and eastern Berlin was doubtless due to the composition of the spectators. Compared with the more affluent districts in the west, these areas of the city had experienced first-hand the suppression of the so-called "Spartacus Uprising (*Spartakusaufstand*)" the month before.[277] Police officers broke up the Dadaists' procession and subsequently banned

---

[274] Hanne Bergius,"*Dada Triumphs!" Dada Berlin, 1917-1923: Artistry of Polarities, Montages-Metamechanics-Manifestations*, trans. Brigitte Pichon (New Haven, Conneticut: G. K. Hall & Co., 2003), 52. The book is a translation of Bergius's earlier *Montage und Metamechanik. Dada Berlin--Artistik von Polaritäten* (Berlin: Gebr. Mann Verlag, 2000).
[275] A decision Rosa Luxemburg and Karl Liebknecht firmly opposed—see Broué, *The German Revolution*, 209-226, for further details about this crucial vote and its immediate and longer-term consequences.
[276] Quoted in Bergius, *Dada Triumphs*, 52.
[277] After November 1918 a second revolutionary situation emerged in Berlin following the government's dismissal of Emil Eichhorn, the USPD-affiliated chief of police, on January 4, 1919, after he refused to discipline workers' demonstrations the month before. The following day, huge crowds of workers converged in the center of the city, many of them armed, and several train stations and newspaper offices were occupied, including the SPD's *Vorwärts* office. Leaders of the USPD and KPD called for a general

publication of *Jedermann*. Herzefelde responded with *Bankruptcy* (*Die Pleite)* an equally subversive publication explicitly supportive of the international Communist movement, publishing information about developments in Soviet Russia and reports from the Comintern. The Berlin Dadaists' publications were also one of the few places Berliners could read uncensored reports about the young workers' state

These actions represent an alignment between art and revolutionary politics through which the Dadaists hoped to promote the movement and themselves. According to Barbara McCloskey, this effort drew heavily upon the example of the proletarian culture movement that arose in Russia during 1917, common known by the acronym Proletkult, because it "suggested a model for reconciling Dada with Communism."[278] Unlike Franz Mehring, whose conclusion that art had only a minor role to play in a socialist revolution initially guided the KPD's cultural policy, leaders of the Proletkult movement attempted to create a working-class culture independent of bourgeois precedents that would prefigure the socialist future and thereby help to instill a revolutionary political perspective in the here and now.[279] The extent of

---

strike to begin two days later and formed a "Provisional Revolutionary Committee (*Provisorischer Revolutionsausschuss*)" to oversee events. Differences between the two parties, as well as factions within each, soon surfaced and scuttled a united front. Meanwhile, Ebert empowered Noske to hire volunteer units of demobilized soldiers (*Freikorps*), notorious for their dedication to ethno-nationalist ideologies, to re-establish order. When the *Spartakusbund* learned of this, they called upon their members and supporters to take up arms. Over the course of several days, the two sides battled it out on the streets of Berlin, resulting in the deaths of over 150 workers and 17 *Freikorps* members. On January 15, Luxemburg and Liebknecht were captured by a *Freikorps* unit commanded by Captain Waldemar Pabst, and later that same night murdered, their bodies dumped—Luxemburg's in the Landwehr canal, where it was not discovered until June. For further details, see Broué, *The German Revolution*, 227-260.

[278] McCloskey, *George Grosz and the Communist Party*, 59.

[279] In his 1898 book *Kunst und Proletariat,* Mehring explains that "[a]rt can expect its regeneration only from the economic and political victory of the proletariat; it can play little part in the actual emancipatory struggle of that class," quoted in Frank Trommler, "Working-Class Culture and Modern Mass Culture Before WWI," *New German Critique*, 29 (Spring/Summer 1983): 57-70.

Proletkult's significance for the Dadaists remains a subject of debate.[280] Yet, it is clear from the content of their various publications that the Dadaists sought to intervene in the public sphere on the side of the revolution, and the small number of organized Communist media outlets provided them an opportunity to do so. It was as such that Herzfelde first conceived of Malik-Verlag, the publishing house he founded in 1916 to promote the work of the Dadaists.[281] Malik-Verlag produced both *Der Dada*, experimental in format and content, and more conventionally formatted, explicitly political magazines like *The Adversary* (*Der Gegner*) and *Die Pleite*.[282]

---

[280] By the fall of 1919 major texts by leaders of the movement were available in Berlin, including the essay "Proletkult" by the bolshevik Anatoly Lunacharsky, head of the People's Commissariat for Education (better known by its Russian acronym, Narkompros), and the book *Art and the Working Class* (*Die Kunst und das Proletariat*) by Alexandr Bogdanov, Lunacharsky's father-in-law, early rival of Lenin, and one of the intellectual founders of the movement. law. In addition, the authors Arthur Holitscher and Friedrich Natteroth had established the first German Proletarian Culture Group (*Bund für Proletarische Kultur*) around this time, and had drawn well-known writers, artists, shop stewards, and members of working-class education committees around them. There is no indication that this group prospered however, or that the ideas of the Proletkult movement gained as wide an appeal as they did in Russia. Sheppard argues that Proletkult meant little to the Berlin Dadaists, given that none of them mention the movement or its central ideas in their writings (*Modernism-Dada-Postmodernism*, 346-347). Some left-leaning artists dismissed the very idea of a "proletarian culture" out of hand. For example, when asked to join a Proletkult group, the artist Käthe Kollwitz replied:

> To my mind, proletarian culture is nonsense. There is no such thing. There will be a socialist culture once we have socialism. Then the culture which will belong to it will grow. The proletariat, however, is a transitory phenomenon, a state of things which we must overcome

--quoted in Guttsman, *Workers' Culture*, 44. This does not mean that McCloskey's view is mistaken. Like the term "bolshevism," "Proletkult" signified many different things during this period. While in Soviet Russia the Proletkult movement was a vast organization that grew to rival Narkompros in the major cities, it lacked a comparable operational structure in Germany and thus functioned more as an ungrounded ideology. For more on the growth of Proletkult in Russia see Lynn Mally, *Culture of the Future: The Proletkult Movement in Revolutionary Russia* (Berkely: University of California Press, 1990). Background on Lunacharsky can be found in Shelia Fitzpatrick, *The Commissariat of Enlightenment: Soviet Organization of Education and the Arts under Lunacharsky, October 1917-1921* (Cambrige: Cambridge Univeristy Press, 1970).

[281] For an overview of the house's history, see Ulrich Faune, *Im Knotenpunkt des Weltverkehrs. Herzfelde, Heartfield, Groß und der Malik-Verlag 1916-1947* (Berlin; Weimar: Aufbau, 1992), while Frank Hermann provides a comprehensive listing of its publications in *Der Malik-Verlag 1916-1947. Eine Bibliographie* (Kiel: Neuer Malik Verlag, 1989). For more on the relationship to the contemporary market, see Germanie Stucki-Volz, *Der Malik-Verlag und der Buchmarkt der Weimarer Republik* (Berlin: Peter Lang, 1993).

[282] For further discussion of these publications, see Biro, *The Dada Cyborg*, 32-50 and Kriebel, "Radical Left Magazines in Berlin," introduction, n. 76.

The latter publication stands out for its stark opposition to the government. *Die Pleite*'s first issue contains an article entitled "To the Intellectuals!" (*An die Geistigen!*) by the art historian Carl Einstein, calling upon artists and writers to revolt against the bourgeoisie and move closer to the "masses"; the second is devoted to a lengthly description of the thirteen days Herzfelde spent in "protective custody" (*Schutzhaft*, also the title of the issue) in March 1919 and was subsequently re-issued as a pamphlet in opposition to bloody events that occurred during that month.[283] On March 3, the USPD and KPD backed another general strike to protest unemployment that lasted several days. After receiving false reports that demonstrators had attacked the Lichtenberg police force, Noske once again authorized *Freikorps* units working for the government to open fire, eventually killing around 1500 people. Herzfelde was detained on March 7, while Grosz hid from the authorities, machine gun fire echoing through the streets of the Berlin. Grosz later summed up the event on the cover of *Die Pleite*'s third issue in April 1919 **[Fig. 2.13]**, depicting a member of the "Reinhardt" *Freikorps* unit raising a glass to Noske amidst a field of slaughtered workers. (Tucholsky later referred to this

---

[283] Einstein was an astute critic on the left during the period who wrote several articles analyzing the work of the contemporary avant-garde, particularly Cubism and the influence of African art. He later published *The Art of the Twentieth Century* (*Die Kunst des 20. Jahrhunderts*) (Berlin: Popyläen-Verlag, 1928), an influential survey that remains untranslated. The last twenty years or so interest in Einstein has skyrocket within the field of art history and beyond. In 2004 a special issue of the journal *October* (107) was dedicated to Einstein and several full-length studies have since appeared in English, including: David Quigley, *Carl Einstein: A Defense of the Real* (Vienna: Schlebrügge; New York: D.A.P., 2007); *The Invention of the 20th Century: Carl Einstein and the Avant-Gardes*, eds. Uwe Fleckner, trans. Judith Hayward, exh. cat. (Madrid: Museo Nacional Centro de Arte Reina Sofia, 2009), focused on Einstein's 1928 survey; and Sebastian Zeidler, *Form as Revolt: Carl Einstein and the Ground of Modern Art* (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 2015), editor of the *October* special issue. For more on Einstein's thought germane to my issue discussed here, see Uwe Fleckner, "The Real Demolished by Trenchant Objectivity: Carl Einstein and the Critical World View of Dada and 'Verism'," in *The Dada Seminars*, ed. Leah Dickerman (Washington: National Gallery of Art, 2005), and Matthew Biro, "Allegorical Modernism: Carl Einstein on Otto Dix," *Art Criticism*, vol. 15, no. 1 (1999): 46-70.

issue as "the strongest political pamphlet of our times.")[284] The image reappears as "Cheers Noske! The young revolution is dead" ("Prost Noske! Die junge Revolution is tot!") in *Das Gesicht* [**Fig. 2.14**], with the addition of a small baby impaled upon the soldier's sword. An association between the new republican order and a newborn child had already appeared on the cover of *Simplicissimus* in February [**Fig. 2.15]**, drawing upon a long tradition of using babies to symbolize the beginning of a new year or historical development (and to warn against further revolutionary agitation, in this case). This element may also refer to Hogarth's *Gin Lane*, which includes a crazed man brandishing a pole that has skewered a child [**Fig. 2.16**—details of **Fig. 1.21**].

The Dadaists' identification with revolutionary politics was solidified further following the abortive Kapp-Lüttwitz putsch in March 1920, led by disaffected military leaders and *Freikorps* regiments.[285] After the government fled the capital, fearing that the army would not protect them, it was left to local trade unionists and independent party members to organize a general strike that brought down the putschists.[286] Afterwards, government ministers belonging to the SPD agreed to send in *Freikorps* units to disarm workers in the Rhineland who refused to dismantle the councils they had established during the strike, adding insult to injury. Such missteps cost the SPD dearly in the Reichstag elections of June 1920; they lost 16.2% of their former support and much

---

[284] See n. 249.

[285] Background on those who organized the putsch can be found in Johannes Erger, *Der Kapp-Lüttwitz Putsch: Ein Beitrag zur deutschen Innenpolitik, 1919/20* (Düsseldorf: Droste, 1967).

[286] At first the KPD refused to support calls for a general strike, only to contradict themselves and support the strike a day later. The only area where the KPD led striking workers from the beginning was around Chemnitz, for more on the party's response see Broué, *The German Revoluiton*, 349-504, and Fowkes, *Communism in Germany*, 45-49.

respect in the eyes of working-class Berlin.[287] Three weeks later the First International Dada Fair (*Erste Internationale Dada-Messe*) opened in two rooms on the ground floor of a former post office in the Tiergarten district.[288] Comprised of one hundred seventy-four objects by twenty-seven artists, the exhibition combined pictures of a damaged society—crippled soldiers, shattered cityscapes, twisted men and women, broken machines—with declarations of the group's political credentials— "Dada is political" ("Dada ist politsch"), "Dada is the willful disruption of the bourgeois mentality" ("Dada is die willentliche Zersetzung des bürgerlicher Begriffswelt"), "Dada stands on the side of the revolutionary proletariat!" ("Dada steht auf Seiten des revolutionären Proletariats!") [**Fig. 2.17**]. McCloskey argues that the *Messe* engaged in a "two-way polemic," demonstrating their adamant rejection of bourgeois aesthetics and the Expressionist movement, while at the same time addressing their reputation as a group as bourgeois misfits.[289]They had only recently been labeled as such in the pages of *Die rote Fahne* by Gertrud Alexander, the party's leading art critic.[290] Alexander's distaste for

[287] Eberhard Kolb provides extensive statistical detail regarding regional and national elections during the period in *The Weimar Republic*, 2nd Edition, trans. P.S. Falla and R. J. Park (London; New York: Routledge, 2005).
[288] The exhibition was financed by Dr. Otto Burchard, a specialist of Chinese Song-dynasty ceramics, an included works by artists outside the Berlin group. For further background, see Helen Adkins's article on the fair in *Stationen der Moderne. Die bedeutenden Kunstaustellungen des 20. Jahrhunderts in Deutschland* (Berlin: Nicolai, 1989): 157-169. Bergius also provides extensive details in *Dada Triumphs*, chapter three.
[289] McCloskey, *George Grosz and the Communist Party*, 69.
[290] Born Gertrud Gaudin of French Huguenot stock, she came to Marxism via the father of her first husband, the lawyer Edward Alexander (aka Edward Ludwig), also later active with the KPD (though they divorced at some point in the 1920s). According to her own autobiographical notes, her most important teacher was Clara Zetkin after she moved to Berlin 1911 and began moving in the more revolutionary circles of the SPD. While her husband was at the front during WWI, Leo Jogisches used a room in her house during the day while organizing the *Spartakusbund*, and she recalls later meeting Eduard Fuchs in 1917, who asked her to hide agitational material he received from the Bolsheviks to aid the formation of the KPD--"Lenin saw Fuchs as a kind of 'banker' for the movement in Germany, so to speak," she writes. Later she became a critic for *Die rote Fahne*, and claims her reply to *Der Gegner* was the first article she published as the new editor of the paper's *Feuilleton* section and represented part of the

the Dadaists had been triggered by an article Grosz and Heartfield published in *Der Gegner* that April in which, according to her, they blithely advocated an iconoclastic position toward cultural heritage at odds with proletarian class struggle.[291] The interspersion of placards amongst the works was thus an attempt to re-assert Dada's revolutionary affiliation; that it failed was attributed by critics to the location and character of the exhibition. In a review for *Freiheit*, Adolf Behne writes that

> [e]ven though a poster in the exhibition assures us that Dada is on the side of the revolutionary proletariat, the exhibition in fact amounts to the presentation of the spiritual dictatorship of the proletariat in front of a well-off number of philistines who pay for a ticket.[292]

KPD's effort to combat "ultra-left" tendencies in the movement.The same notes contain discussion of subsequent cultural debates and initiatives, and includes a letter she sent to Lu Märten expressing regret that the party's cultural knowledge remained weak. These notes, totaling hundreds of pages, remain unpublished except for an excerpt that appears in *Beiträge zur Geschichte der Arbeiterbewegung*, no. 5 (Berlin [DDR]: Dietz Verlag, 1981): 714-721. The full manuscript is located in Alexander's archive, SAPMO SgY 30/0007/1-2: Erinnerung von Gertrud Alexander (1882-1967)—also see SAPMO NY 4225/1-4 for materials relating to Alexander.

[291] When fighting broke out between striking workers and *Freikorps* members in Dresden during the Kapp-Lüttwitz putsch, a stray bullet flew into the Zwinger art gallery and damaged a painting by Rubens. The Expressionist artist Oskar Kokoschka, who was a professor at the Dresden Art Academy during this period, suggested that both sides resolve their conflict by "single combat between respective political leaders" far from the repositories of "works of human culture" in the future. In their response, Grosz and Heartfield accused Kokoschka of putting works of art before the lives of workers and down-played the importance of historical artworks. Following Alexander's response, a debate in the pages of *Die rote Fahne* ensued, ending only a few days before the Dada fair opened.According to Brigid Doherty, this debate had a direct impact on the *Messe*, and suggests that the title of the humanoid sculpture visible in exhibition photos, entitled *The Philistine Heartfield Gone Wild* (*Die wildgewordene Speißer Heartfield*) refers to Alexander's characterization of the group as suffering from "the fear of the bourgeois gone wild" (die Angst des wild gewordenen Bürgers) in *Die rote Fahne*—see her "The Work of Art and the Problem of Politics in Berlin Dada," *October* 105, no. Summer (2003): 73-92. The original *Der Gegner* essay can be found in *The Weimar Republic Sourcebook*, ed. Anton Kaes, Martin Jay and Edward Dimendberg (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1994), 483-485. and the debate followed in *Die rote Fahne*: *Kritik, Theorie, Feuilleton*, 63-75.

[292] Adolf Behne, "Dada," *Freiheit* (July 9, 1920). Six months prior to the opening of the *Dada-Messe*, Behne had mounted his own "Workers' Art Exhibition" (*Arbeiter Kunstausstellung)* at the Center for Proletarian Youth (*Haus der Proletarischen Jugend*) under the auspices of the Working Council for Art (*Arbeitsrat für Kunst*). Whereas historians have compared the *Dada-Messe* to exhibitions organized by fellow Dadaists in Zurich, Paris and Cologne, no one to my knowledge has analyzed it in relation to Behne's show. This is a significant oversight, given the similarities between the two. Both exhibitions expressly rejected conventional notions of "art" and emphasized the egalitarianism of the works on display. Both exhibitions also refused to conform to a didactic model of art associated with the idea of *Bildung*. In an article Behne wrote addressing the exhibition, he explains

> [t]he Council did not want the exhibition to mimic an art salon. Nor did we want to string

Situated in an affluent neighborhood, Behne doubted whether the fair would address anyone other than the very audience the Dadaists sought to denigrate.[293] Tucholsky, in his review, went further and questioned whether Dada even retained its earlier charge:

> [t]he exhibition looks like a messy junkshop. A fat stuffed sailor hangs on the ceiling and looks down blessedly upon the turmoil of old hatboxes, cardboard, rusted nails, very improperly placed dentures, and speckled paintings below. It is somewhat quiet in the small exhibition, and no one is outraged anymore. Dada—big deal.[294]

> together a necklace of expressionistic masterpieces. Above all however we were unconcerned with promoting education. Instead we wanted visitors to have a good time. We wanted to cultivate the spontaneous pleasure of creation, emphasized in the artistic 'molding-instinct' that all people claim as their own during their childhood but is sadly lost more and more on the path from child's drawings to the monumental works of 'great artists.' […] A further aspect of our exhibition differs from the usual. We did not seek to bring together a harmonious exhibition. We instead consider exhibitions to be makeshift means of overcoming the 'exhibition' form. We want to provide fun, most certainly! But there should be a little bitterness in this fun. We would be most pleased with the visitor who said: 'There are many nice things there. But it would be truly nice if it were art and not an art exhibition. If it were reality, not a wax museum!' Therefore, we have not allayed the sharp dissonances that go together in today's art. We do not want to simulate a cosmos where chaos exists

— "Art Exhibition for Workers (*Kunstausstellung für Arbeiter*)," originally published in *Freiheit*, (January 5, 1920), reprinted in *Arbeitsrat für Kunst* (Berlin: Akademie der Künste, 1980), 111

[293] Entrance to the exhibit cost around three marks, a sizable sum for many during this period. By the time it closed, approximately three-hundred tickets had been sold, far fewer than the Dadaists had hoped. In addition to hiring a photographer for publicity purposes, Herzefelde also issued a guide to the exhibition detailing its underlying conception. In this pamphlet Herzefelde attacks conventional notions of art and their institutional expression:

> Throughout the centuries, the unequal distribution of opportunities for living and developing has produced in the realm of art, as in all other spheres, scandalous circumstances: On the one side a clique of so-called experts and talents that, in part through decades of training, in part through patronage and doggedness, in part through inherited specialized abilities, has monopolized all matters of valuation in art; while on the other side, the mass of human beings with their modest and naïve need to represent, communicate, and constructively transform the idea within themselves and the goings-on in the world around them, has been suppressed by the clique of trendsetters. Today the young person, unless he is willing to forego all training and broadening of his native abilities, must submit to the thoroughly authoritarian system of art education and of the public judgment

—"Introduction to the First International Dada Fair," trans. Brigid Doherty, *October* 105 (Summer 2003): 93-104. The similarities between Herzefelde's and Behne's position speak to a broader interest in "dilettantism" on the German left during this period, a topic that would benefit from further research.

[294] Kurt Tucholsky, "Dada," *Berliner Tageblatt*, July 20, 1920, reprinted in *Dada Berlin. Texte, Manifeste, Aktionen.*, ed. Karl Riha (Stuttgart: Philipp Reclam jun. GmbH & Co., 1977), 125-136. Tucholsky does however single out the work of Grosz for praise: "There is one there, however, who upsets the whole place. This one, alone worth the visit, is George Grosz…If drawings could kill, the Prussian military would certainly be dead" (ibid).

It took just a little over a year, it seems, for Berlin Dada's hijinks to lose much of their revolutionary luster,[295] and the group more or less broke up in the months following the closure of the *Messe*. Many of the visual techniques and artistic innovations indicative of Berlin Dada lived on in the works of its member-artists, but for those seeking to reconcile their art with the international Communist movement, Dada clearly held no future. Later reflecting on their Dada experiences in a 1925 essay, Herzefelde and Grosz draw much the same conclusion: "Dadaism, carried out with caterwauling and derisive laughter, was a breakout from a narrow, arrogant, overrated milieu that, hovering in the air between the classes, did not recognize any shared responsibility for the life of the collective." [296] Alexander could have put it no better.

Satire and Legibility--Dada Retreats

One of the reasons Alexander refused to acknowledge Dada's political import was because she doubted the effectiveness of their satirical mode of address. "Do these gentlemen (*Herrschaften*) truly believe that they have harmed the bourgeoisie?" she writes in her review of the Dada-Messe, "[t]he bourgeoisie merely laughs…they smell in [Dada's nonsense] the flesh of their own flesh: bourgeois decadence."[297] In her eyes,

---

[295] A reviewer in the *Rostocker Anzeiger*, for example, dismissed the *Messe* completely, writing:

> The Dadaists have now organized a regular 'art exhibition.' A visit cannot be recommended highly enough to German psychiatrists. For there can only be one question: are these people poor lunatics who think that these excrements of polluted brains are the revelation of some strange but sacred art, or are they impudent jesters who wish to fool people, and who want tofill their pockets by appealing to stupidity

—quoted in Bergius, *Dada Triumphs*, 275.

[296] "Art is in Danger" (Kunst ist in Gefahr) (1925)," reprinted in *Art in Theory, 1900-1990: An Anthology of Changing Ideas*, ed. Charles Harrison and Paul Wood (Oxford, UK; Cambridge, MA: Blackwell, 2000), 450.

[297] *Die rote Fahne* (July 25, 1920)—see n.240.

the class position of the Dadas rendered their derisive point of view invalid, and no amount of posturing was liable to change this. The fact that several of the Dadaists were brought up on charges for "insulting the military" as a result of the *Messe* (and for exhibiting Grosz's collection of anti-militarist caricatures, *God with Us* (*Gott mit uns*), in particular) may have proved that their satirical works could provoke the authorities, but it did little to assuage suspicions within the KPD that satire was an inappropriate basis upon which to formulate a proletarian aesthetic.[298]

That the Dadaists did not belong to the proletariat, on whose side they claimed to "stand," jeopardized the alliance they tried to forge between their work and a Communist outlook. In his study of Berlin cabaret during this period, Peter Jelavich argues that whereas satire is great for lambasting figures of authority, without sufficient grounding in organized resistance it all too easily leads to cynicism toward any political stance and concludes that the Berlin Dadaists were politically ineffective for just this reason[299]. However, were one to follow the framework outlined by Fuchs in *Die Karikatur der europäischen Volker,* one could argue that it was precisely their separation from the working class that enabled them to document the bourgeois world they inhabited in such a revealing manner. As discussed in the previous chapter, Fuchs held that the social realist mode of graphic satire perfected by Hogarth and Daumier can

---

[298] On April 20, 1921 Grosz, Herzfelde, Burchard, Baader and Schlichter stood trial for "insulting the military." Charges had been brought by the Ministry of the Army (*Reichswehrministerium*), whose headquarters were coincidentally located near the exhibition. The main witness for the prosecution was one Hauptmann Matthäi, who visited the fair undercover. Grosz and Herzfelde, echoing Fuchs' defense at his trial in 1898, maintained that satirical works like *Gott mit uns* were not aimed at the military per se, only certain leaders' misuse of its authority. Most of the Dadaists were let off without penalty, but Grosz was fined three hundred marks, and Herzefelde six hundred—see Neugebauer, *George Grosz,* 51-80 for a full account of the trial.

[299] Peter Jelavich, *Berlin Cabaret* (Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard University Press, 1993),145-146.

only be achieved by artists intimately acquainted with the milieu they seek to disclose, and that the resulting images are the product of a class-conscious perspective.

It is therefore significant that the sole person outside the group to defend Dada in the pages of *Die rote Fahne* does not follow this line of argument. In a two-part article written a month after Alexander's review, the Communist art critic Lu Märten refutes the censure of the Dadaists, not because she believed their work to be of great satirical importance, but rather because she felt it captured the reality of the moment.

> Dadaism is a phenomenon of the times, no mere invention. What it aims to satirize already represents itself strangely enough irrespective of Dada's signature (*was er mit bestimmten Mitteln satirisch versucht, stellt sich sonderbar genung auf nicht dadaistisch signiertem Gebiet dar*). That is to say: there is no longer a medium, much less an art, necessary to present satire or caricature, no intellectual form required to translate subject matter into the satirical dialectic (*satyrische Dialektik*); rather, time and society, the material substance of capitalism in all things is in and of itself satire. A simple reproduction of present circumstances is sufficient.[300]

Placing the Berlin Dada group in a longer history of satire, Märten argues that the earlier connection between satirical works of art and an oppositional popular culture had broken down and no longer held the political potential it once had. Under the absurdist rule of capital, one could only hope to document the reality of reigning conditions.

---

[300] "History, Satire, Dada, and More (Geschichte, Satyre, Dada und Weiteres)," *Die rote Fahne*, (August 22 and 25, 1920), and reprinted (in abbreviated form) in the catalog *Revoultion und Realismus: Revolutionäre Kunst in Deutshland 1917 bis 1933* (Berlin [DDR]: Staatliche Museen zu Berlin, 1978), 85-86. More of Märten's, not including the above, are collected in the volume *Formen für den Alltag: Schriften, Aufsätze, Vorträge* (Dresden: VEB Verlag der Kunst Dresden, 1982), and further background on her can be found in Martin I. Gaughan, "Lu Märten and the Question of a Marxist Aesthetic in 1920s Germany," in *Renew Marxist Art History*, eds. Warrren Carter, Barnaby Haran, and Frederic J. Schwartz (London: Art Books Publishing Ltd., 2013), 283-295, and the book-length study by Chryssoula Kambas, *Die Werkstatt als Utopie: Lu Märtens literarische Arbeit und Formästhetik seit 1900* (Tübingen: Max Niemeyer Verlag, 1988). The fact that my translation differs significantly from both Gaughan's and McCloskey's is due to the ambiguity of Märten's own phrasing—see *George Grosz and the Communist Party*, 81-82.

Dada's "realism" is a subject that has preoccupied historians of art and directly pertains to the development of Communist graphic satire. Long recognized for its aversion to aesthetic conventions, naturalistic depiction, prior movements, and artistic institutions, the strong, avant-garde reading of Dada has led to the common misconception that Dadaists were uniformly anti-art and anti-realism[301]. In the case of Berlin Dada, however, the realist premise of group was present from the beginning. The first Berlin Dada manifesto, drafted in 1918 reads

> The highest art will be that which in its conscious content presents the thousandfold problems of the day, the art which has been visibly shattered by the explosions of the last week, which is forever trying to collect its limbs after yesterday's crash.[302]

Moreover, the individual members of the group all worked in a realist mode of one manner or another. Shearer West, for example, has characterized Grosz's drawing during this time as "caricatural 'realism'," because they "sparked bitter laughter[,] as their representations of a corrupt society were both apt and horrible."[303] Most of the recent art historical literature likewise stresses the realist modality of Berlin Dada and assess how, via techniques of formal estrangement, Dada artists forced audiences out of

---

[301] Though not guilty of overlooking the realist dimension of Dada himself, this narrow, formalist conception owes much to Peter Bürger's pioneering book Theory *of the Avant-Garde,* trans. Michael Shaw (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 1984). One found this view most often in art history textbooks keyed to the works of Marcel Duchamp, although, fortunately, these too are beginning to recognize the diversity of aesthetic modes that existed under the umbrella term "Dada," thanks to several impressive and wide-ranging exhibitions in the last ten years—see n.305. For a view of the avant-garde closer to my own conception, see Raymond Williams, "The Politics of the Avant-Garde (1988)," in *Politics of Modernism: Against the New Conformists* (London; New York: Verso, 1988; 2007), 49-64. For an older, "Marxist" take on the topic, see Nicos Hadjinicolau, "On the Ideology of Avant-Gardism," *Praxis*, no. 6 (1982): 39-106, and, more recently John Roberts, "Revolutionary Pathos, Negation, and the Suspensive Avant-Garde," *New Literary History*, vol. 41, no. 4 (2010): 717-730.

[302] Quoted in *Dadas on Art: Tzara, Arp, Duchamp and* Others, ed. Lucy R. Lippard (Mineola; New York: Dover Publications, Inc., 1971), 47.

[303] West, Shearer, *The Visual Arts in Germany, 1890-1937: Utopia and Despair* (New Brunswick: Rutgers University Press, 2001), 165.

conventional ways of seeing.[304] Generally speaking, these studies follow one of two approaches: either the distorted forms, disorienting views, and damaged figures within Berlin Dada works serve as an artistic analogue to the experiential reality of the immediate post-WWI period; or else they are believed to address a deeper, more pervasive, and historically indeterminate modern condition.[305] The first approach tends to focus on the contingency of Dadaist realism, the second on its afterlife as an alternative model of modernism. Some scholars combine aspects of both approaches;[306] others make a clear distinction between the disorderly appearance of Dada and the greater legibility of post-Dada works by members in the group. The latter is true of Andrés Zervigon's book on John Heartfield, which demonstrates the challenge he, Grosz, and other politically like-minded Dadaists faced in responding to Alexander's dismissal and Märten's critique.

In reference to one of Heartfield's earliest photomontage posters, *Fathers and Sons* (*Väter und Söhne)* **[Fig. 2.18]**, first displayed in the shop window of the Malik Verlag's bookstore-cum-gallery just off Potsdamer Platz in 1924, Zervigon makes the point that in this work there is a "simplification" of earlier Dada methods. "Rather than assault

---

304 Often drawing upon Benjamin's description of the "ballistic" quality of Dadaist artworks in "The Work of Art" essay, which he sees as anticipating the effects of film—see *The Work of Art in the Age of its Technological Reproducibility*, 19-55. For further background on the place of this text in Benjamin's oeuvre and its relationship to contemporary discussions of film, see Miriam Bratu Hansen, *Cinema and Experience: Siegfried Kracauer, Walter Benjamin, and Theodor W. Adorno* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2012), especially part two: 75-206.

305 Captured nicely in Leah Dickerman's characterization of the Dadaists as "diagnosticians" who reveal "the symptoms of modernity," in her general introduction to *Dada: Zurich, Berlin, Hannover, Cologne, New York*, ed. Leah Dickerman (Washington, D.C.: National Gallery of Art, 2006), 9.

306 Biro's *The Dada Cyborg* is an example of how the combination can work to illuminate micro- and macro-historical issues. For a less successful attempt to combine the two approaches, see Amelia Jones, *Irrational Modernism: A Neurasthenic History of New York Dada* (Cambridge, MA: MIT Press, 2004).

consciousness with a dismantling of coherent meaning's very possibility," he argues, "this poster now sought to stimulate and shape perception with a carefully launched and detonated message."[307] Its increased legibility relative to earlier Dada montages such as *Hustle and Bustle in the Universal City, Five Past Noon* (*Leben und Treiben in Universal-City, 12 Uhr 5 mittags* (1920) **[Fig. 2.19]**, accomplished via a smaller number of photographic elements, more defined spatial planes, and a comprehensive message, made it better suited for political purposes. Although Zervigon detects a pull between two "impulses" in Heartfield's and Grosz's works dating back to 1918—one "to impart striking and legible propaganda"; the other to "assault their viewers with disorienting visions that mirrored the moment"—it became clear after the *Dada-Messe* that the former provided the better option for winning recognition within the Communist milieu.[308] "Dismantling the very possibility of coherent meaning" was no longer politically viable, however attractive it may appear in retrospect.[309] Being "radical"

---

[307] Zervigon, *John Heartfied*, 185.
[308] Ibid., 147.
[309] McCloskey argues that the shift from Dada to overt Communist affiliation resulted in a sacrifice of "Dada's vision of radical social transformation":

> Where Dada had questioned the conventionally gendered divisions between public and private life and politics and sexuality, Grosz' work for the Party naturalized those relationships once again into a masculinized political physiognomy" (*George Grosz and the Communist Party*, 102).

While it is certainly true that in terms of visual culture the Dadaists embraced a more flexible conception of gender than the KPD, from what we know about the internal group dynamics of Berlin Dada, specifically their treatment of Hannah Höch and other women who orbited their circles, I am not sure this flexibility extended beyond the fictional worlds created in their works. Similarly, although its visual culture was highly masculinized, the KPD did include a number of prominent female and homosexual members and was often ahead of other parties in fighting gender oppressions. For more on this subject, see Weitz, *Creating German Communism*, 188-232, and Carsten Schmidt, "Die Befreiung der Frau und die KPD," in "Best of KPD: Linke Organisierung damals und heute," *Theorie21*, vol. 3, no. 4 (2014): 173-218. Background on Höch can be found in Maud Lavin*, Cut with the Kitchen Knife: The Weimar Photomontages of Hannah Höch* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1993), and on the double standards faced by women artists during this period, Marsha Meskimmon, *We Weren't Modern Enough: Women Artists and the Limits of German Modernism* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1999). Two recent books address the role of women in the Dada movement worldwide head on: *Women in Dada: Essays on Sex, Gender, and Identity*, ed. Naomi Sawelson-Gorse (Cambridge, MA: MIT Press, 1998); and, Paul Kamenisch, *Mamas of Dada: Women*

shifted away from an aesthetic identification to a political one, and this necessitated a different relationship to art making, attested to in writings by Dadaists after the summer of 1920.[310]

Toward a Grosz Realism

It was in the midst of this situation that a Grosz realism emerged. Based in the graphic works of Grosz, it extends to fellow former Dadaists who also became caricaturists for the KPD, namely Rudolf Schlichter and Laszlo Griffel. By 1924, *Die rote Fahne* joking referred to a "Groszian School" of art and, as the next chapter will discuss, Grosz's drawings set the tone for Communist graphic satire as a whole. But before this could happen, Grosz had to convince the KPD of the political value of his satire. In this Grosz found a champion in Herzfelde.

In statements by Grosz published in 1920-1, he describes how his work has changed and become more focused on aiding the class struggle. "In lieu of a biography (*Statt einer Biographie*)," re-published from a catalog in *Der Gegner*, chides bourgeois

---

of the European Avant-Garde (Columbia: University of South Carolina Press, 2015).

[310] In an unpublished manifesto signed by Grosz, Hausmann, Heartfield, and Schlichter dated September 1920, the authors argue "[p]ainting is a language that must raise the optical impressions of the masses toward singleness of meaning," and declares that "we are introducing historical materialism into painting." Entitled "The Laws of Painting (*Die Gesetze der Malerei*)," though never published, is widely quoted thanks to Hannah Höch, who saved the original draft. The full text can be found in *Hannah Höch: Eine Lebenscollage*, ed. Cornelia Thater-Schulz (Berlin: Berlinische Galerie, 1989), 969-698. For a very different shift toward politics, overtly embracing a more "ultra-left" position, see Lynette Roth's book on the so-called Cologne Progressives, *Painting as Weapon: Progressive Cologne1920-1933* (Cologne: Walther König, 2008). One of the leaders of the group, Franz Seiwert, was a frequent contributor to *Die Aktion* and a member of a left split from the KPD in 1920. Another prominent member, Gerd Arntz, went on to design many of the symbols for Isotype (acronym for: International System Of Typographic Picture Education), part of Otto Neurath's plan for a universal form of visual communication—for more on this fascinating subject, see *Isotype: Design and Contexts, 1925-1971*, eds. Christopher Burke, Eric Kindel, and Sue Walker (London: Hyphen Press, 2013) and Otto Neurath, *From Hieroglyphics to Isotype: A Visual Autobiography*, eds. Matthew Eve and Christopher Burke (London: Hyphen Press, 2010; written in 1943-5).

artists for remaining indifferent to the proletariat. "Get out of your parlors (*Stuben*," he tells them, "however difficult it might be…let yourself be caught up in the ideas of working people and help them to fight this rotten society."[311] In another article published in *Das Kunstblatt,* Grosz refers to his latest pieces as "[t]raining-works (*Trainings-Arbeiten*)," practically-oriented and "without a view to the eternal."[312] Such statements were meant to counteract criticisms of his Dadaist works and confirm that he had moved toward a more explicitly political position. In September 1921, and due to the instigation of Herzfelde, *Die rote Fahne* published "In lieu of a biography" in its pages, along with an introductory paragraph by Herzfelde arguing "[n]ot since [Heinrich] Heine...has a more dangerous, more poisonous, more insolent enemy of the German bourgeoisie appeared."[313] But the most sustained effort to forge a role for the partisan artist appears in Herzfelde's four-part essay "Society, Artists, and Communism (*Gesellschaft, Künstler und Kommunismus*)," originally published serially in *Der Gegner* and subsequently issued as part of the Malik-Verlag's Little Revolutionary Library (*Kleine revolutionäre Bibliothek*) series in 1921 with a silhouette profile of Grosz on the front cover[314] **[Fig. 2.20]**

Herzfelde begins by addressing the socio-economic circumstances faced by artists as a class under capitalism. "The artist is a worker, and he is exploited like

[311] Grosz, "Statt einer Biographie," *Der Gegner*, vol. 2, no. 3 (1920/1), 69-70. The piece is dated August 1920.
[312] Grosz, "Zu meinen neuen Bilder," 14—see n.243.
[313] Herzfelde, introduction to "George Grosz Portrays Himself (*George Grosz zeichnet sich selbst*)," *Die rote Fahne* (September 27, 1921).
[314] The four individual sections appeared over the course of 1920-1: the first in September 1920, one month after the publication of Grosz's "Statt einer Biographie"; the final in August 1921. The full text is included in Wieland Herzfelde, *Zur Sache – geschrieben und gesprochen zwischen 18 und 80* (Berlin [DDR]: Aufbau-Verlag, 1976), 54-92, and remains to this day untranslated.

others," he argues, but "he is not a proletarian; for his joys and sorrows, his defeats and successes are not shared by his comrades as they are with the proletariat. He has no comrades, only rivals and competitors; his existence is bourgeois."[315] He accepts that artists often act with an "excessive individuality" (*überladende Individualität*) but argues that this is not a transhistorical condition and criticizes the KPD for rejecting modern artists as so many adherents to irrelevant "isms" and not clarifying the role artists should play in the movement. Simply joining the party is not enough, according to Herzfelde; instead, "the artist must fundamentally change his way of producing, feeling and thinking, because as a break-away (*Splitter*) he is not, like the proletarian, a soldier of the class struggle, but rather a deserter from bourgeois front."[316] Like Fuchs before him, Herzfelde suggests that the class position of the bourgeois artist places him or her in a unique relationship that is not definitive, but instead subject to modification and re-direction via a commitment to seeing beyond their class identity.

> It is easy and requires no revolutionary act to provoke the state prosecutor (*Staatsanwalt*) or be shot at by white-guards [i.e *Freikorps*]; it is infinitely harder, and therefore a much rarer occurrence, to unmask (*demaskieren*) the bourgeoisie and their system so nakedly, so compellingly and irrefutably, that everyone recognizes them for what they are. [...] To do this and nothing else is the historical task and the revolutionary duty of those who have the capacity to do so: communist artists![317]

[315] Herzfelde, *Zur Sache*, 65. Because of this, Herzfelde, goes on to say, "it is impossible to speak of the generic "artist's" path to communism (as in the case of factory workers, farm workers, or the strangers and civil servants), but only the path of actual artists to communism" (ibid.)
[316] Ibid., 69.
[317] Herzfelde, *Zur Sache*, 74.

Herzfelde does not suggest that such artists must belong to the working class, only that they demonstrate a revolutionary class-conscious point of view. And while Herzfelde does not name him in the essay, it is clear that Grosz is who he had in mind.

Grosz accomplishes this task by harnessing the logic of physiognomy toward a revelatory exposé of the Republic. His drawings are as much about recognizing visible markers of class and living "figures of the pseudorevolution" as it is about seeing *through them* to the structural relations they embody and control.[318] This was a dimension critics picked up on quickly. According to Pinthus in review of *Das Gesicht*, Grosz

> lets us see through the clothes of people—and we see skeletons and bloated meat (*gedunsenes Fleisch*) ... he opens up brainpans (*Hirnschalen*) and out climb legal clauses (*Paragraphen*) and steaming dung heaps; the heads of politicians turn into animal skulls (*Politikerköpfe gehen in Tierschädel über*)."[319]

Pinthus is referring to one drawing in *Das Gesicht* in particular, "We gather to ask the Lord's blessing (*Wir treten zum Beten vor Gott den Gerechten*)," whose three foreground figures, representing the military, bureaucracy, and bourgeoisie, would later reappear in altered form in his 1926 painting *Pillars of Society* **[Fig. 2.21].**[320] The combination of surface qualities and hidden "truths" is a critical aspect of Grosz realism and relates to

---

[318] In her influential essay, "Figures of the Pseudorevolution," Brigid Doherty discusses how figures such as Ebert and Noske became symbolic for the gross duplicity of the Republic and deals with many of the same themes as I, though more focused on Dada and photomontage than graphic satre—see *October* 84 (Spring 1998): 64-89.

[319] Pinthus, "So siehst du aus!" In *Gesichchte der europäischen Karikatur*, Piltz makes a similar argument, albeit far more stridently: "Grosz was the first to discern in the soul of German citizens their readiness for fascism, the desire, no longer borne by bourgeois moral conventions, to take revenge on those who fundamentally rejected bourgeois 'order'" (255).

[320] The title refers to a hymn commemorating the Dutch defeat of Spanish troops in the 16th century. Subsequently translated into German (by the poet Joseph Weyl), it became a favorite of the Kaiser and was later invoked by Hitler in speeches during the 1930s.

traditional methods of caricature. By exaggerating particular physical characteristics or associating specific individuals with a common social type or emblematic trope, Grosz stamps his target, and through repeated use of this maneuver, transformations these visual cues into tabs of recognition that follow his victims thereafter.[321] According to Gombrich, caricature "offers a visual interpretation of a physiognomy which we can never forget and which the victim will always seem to carry around with him like man bewitched."[322] This was the goal, to habitualize the look of Republican leaders as gross, duplicitous, and greedy by casting them in the role of types familiar from past and present graphic satire.

Grosz's portrait of Ebert for the cover of the initial issue of *Die Pleite* is an early case in point [**Fig. 2.22**]. Accompanied by the trappings of imperial power but clothed in a manner typical of industrialists and bankers, it presents the first president of the Weimar Republic as a portly bourgeois Kaiser. The same association circulated during the revolution and appears in visual form in a December 1918 issue of *Die rote Fahne* [**Fig. 2.23**] Anonymously drawn, it depicts Ebert in the ceremonial robes and crown of the emperor and declares him "the soon-to-be president of the German Republic. Ebert the first." Grosz physiognomizes the association by amplifying the physicality of Ebert

[321] I take this notion from an essay by Gombrich in which he discusses the function of masks as aids to visual perception: "The mask here stands for the crude distinctions, the derivations from the norm which mark a person off from others. Any such derivation which attracts our attention may serve us as a *tab of recognition* and promise to save us the effort of further scrutiny"—"The Mask and the Face: The Perception of Physiognomic Likeness in Life and Art," in *Art, Perception, and Reality* (Baltimore; London: The John Hopkins University Press, 1972): 1-46. The English caricaturist David Low presents much the same idea in his semi-autobiographical account of the history of caricature, *Ye Madde Designer* (London: The Studio Limited, 1935), when he speaks of the idiosyncratic attributes of an individual that can be abstracted but used to clearly identify a subject "tabs of identity"—Low's prime example is Hitler's mustache.

[322] Gombrich, *Art and Illusion*, 344.

in order to ridicule his official position. We are meant to notice the contrasts that symbolize Ebert's new position: the difference between Ebert's fat hairy fingers and the daintier hands of the butler toting a glass of sekt; the discrepancy in clothing that points to the triumph of the bourgeoisie over the military. His fat body stretches the folds of his jacket to breaking point, its mounds mimicking the stuffed upholstery of the chair in which he sits. His stubby legs, barely able to reach the floor, rest at perpendicular angles to one another upon a cushion, lifeless, useless.

If we compare the portrait with earlier caricatures of the bourgeoisie it becomes apparent just how embedded Grosz's rendition is in an image world of recycled types and emblems. All the markings of "bourgeoisness" that Grosz draws upon in representing Ebert--the suit and tie, cigar, watch fob, and portly appearance; what one scholar has called the "Stigmata of the German bourgeoisie"--can be found in numerous pre-war publications. [323] Heine's presentation of a bourgeois family breakfast from a December 1896 issue of *Simpliccismus* is just one of many examples [**Fig. 2.24]** In the figure of the father we find a precedent for Ebert's bourgeois physicality, as we do in two other instances from the pages of *Der Wahre Jakob* [**Fig. 2.25**]. These are stereotypical depictions that draw upon far older precedents and were prevalent in European satire magazines, which Grosz knew well.[324]

Grosz does more than simply re-purpose these stereotypes, however; he weaponizes them. By playing upon their congruence with modes of self-presentation

---

[323] From Freya Mülhaupt's article in *Karl Arnold. "Hoppla, wir leben!" Berliner Bilder aus den 1920er Jahren*, exh. cat. (Ostfildern: Hatje Cantz Verlag; Berlin: Berlinische Galerie, 2010).
[324] Grosz refers to his life-long passion for caricature and graphic satire in his autobiography—*George Grosz, an Autobiography*, 30-45.

indicative of the new republican order, Grosz exposes the shallowness of the new republican regime. As scholars have argued, the inauguration of the Republic compromised traditional symbols of national power and left the government vulnerable to attack in the press. Prior to WWI, Kaiser Wilhelm II's well-crafted persona and manipulation of media coverage had provided a "cultural frame" through which German sovereignty was conceived--for better or worse[325] **[Fig. 2.26].** This frame was shattered during the revolution, and the visuality of the state changed dramatically. Republican politicians became media "stars," their faces and bodies reproduced in drawings and photographs in illustrated newspapers, magazines, and election campaign material.[326] Instead of the military regalia and accoutrements worn by leaders of former empire, black suits and top hats became *de rigueur* for leaders of the Republic [**Fig. 2.27**]. Bismarck had been an able sartorial strategist when chancellor, alternating between *Pickelhaube* and frock coat depending on the occasion [**Fig. 2.28**], and even the Kaiser too at times sought to present a more up-to-date, bourgeois image to the German public through the publication of "private" portraits and family images **[Fig. 2.29]**. But it was the newly installed leaders who made bourgeois fashion into a symbol of the republican order itself through publicity photos and election materials showcasing the new Republican president as a solemn bourgeois statesman [**Fig. 2.30**]. In addition to

---

[325] For more on the concept of a "cultural frame" in the manner I use it here, see Clifford Geertz, "Centers, Kings, and Charisma: Reflections on Symbolics of Power," in *Culture and its Creators*, ed. Joseph Ben-David (Chicago: Chicago University Press, 1977), 150-171, and, from within the field of art history, Lynn Hunt, "Hercules and the Radical Image in the French Revolution," *Representations*, no. 2 (1983): 95-117.
[326] Thomas Mergel, "Propaganda in der Kultur des Schauens. Visuelle Politk in der Weimarer Republik," in *Ordnungen in der Krise. Zur politischen Kulturgeschichte Deutschlands 1900-1933*, ed. Wolfgang Hardtwig (München: R. Oldenbourg Verlag, 2007): 521-559.

newspapers, images of this kind were frequently issued by government agencies for specific political purposes as these likely were.[327] Although the clothes befit a bourgeois gentleman, the regal countenance of Ebert in official portraits was meant to convey authority and suggest a certain continuity between the pre-war empire and the post-war republican Reich. It is precisely the deceit of this self-performance that Grosz's drawing is meant to reveal. By undermining the crafted appearance of Weimar's leaders, he highlights the ideological operation at work in such images.

The "realist" charge of the drawing like this thus lies in its dialogic relationship to a known tradition of graphic satire as well as novel contemporary representations of Ebert that circulated in the public sphere. Merged by Grosz these sources produce a highly effective visualization of the leading "government socialist," scourge of the revolutionary working class. The title, "[b]y the grace of capital," furthers the association, suggesting that Ebert has achieved his position through the intervention of counter-revolutionary interests rather than "by the grace of God," which was the traditional proclamation of the emperor's legitimacy. The parody of this traditional declaration mocks the solemnity of Ebert's rule and solidifies the link between him and

---

[327] At the beginning of the Republic, leaders created an official department to oversee the formation of new national emblems and to create propaganda material toward strengthen republican sentiment. For background on this department, see Klaus W. Wippermann, *Politische Propaganda und staatsbürgerliche Bildung. Die Reichszentrale für Heitmatdienst in der Weimarer Republik* (Köln: Verlag Wissenschaft und Politik, 1976), and Johannes Karl Richter: *Die Reichszentrale für Heimatdienst. Geschichte der ersten politischen Bildungsstelle in Deutschland und Untersuchung ihrer Rolle in der Weimarer Republik,* 1963. In addition, the art historian Edwin Redslob was appointed *Reichskunstwart* to oversee cultural and artistic matters pertaining to the new Republic. His work often overlapped with that of the *Reischzentrale für Heitmatdienst*—see Annegret Heffen, *Der Reichskunstwart. Kunstpolitik in den Jahren 1920-1933. Zu den Bemühungen um eine offizielle Reichskunstpolitik in der Weimarer Republik* (Essen: Verlag die Blaue Eule, 1986). In her unpublished dissertation, Manuela Achilles addresses both these offices and offer a compelling analysis of the debates that arose regarding symbolic practices during this period—*Reforming the Reich: Symbolics of the Republican Nation in Weimar Germany* (University of Michigan dissertation, 2005).

the bourgeoisie. It serves to transform Ebert into a type whose ideological function increases through subsequent repetition. He reappears, for instance, on a later cover of *Die Pleite* accompanied once again by markers of his "bourgeois" office--champagne, top hat, suit, cigar--although this time depicted by Grosz in a much more thuggish manner, with a portrait of Karl Kautsky in the background to strengthen the association with reformist Social Democracy [**Fig. 2.31**].

Grosz was not the only one to caricature Ebert in this fashion. A Dadaist fellow traveler, Karl Holtz (unlike Grosz a professional caricaturist) picked up on the ersatz kaiser motif as well.[328] For the March 1919 cover of *Die Aktion*, Holtz pictures Ebert atop a "chariot" of his closest advisors, disreputable figures all [**Fig. 2.32**]. Other examples from the period are plentiful [**Fig. 2.33**].[329] None, however, match Grosz's incisiveness. Taken together, these images speak to a pervasive structure of feeling that distrusted the new republican leaders. This was a period of heightened anxiety and increasing political polarization that threatened to spark renewed civil conflict at any time.[330]

---

[328] Holtz published some drawings in Dadaist publications but was never, to my knowledge, a major contributor to the group. As early as 1918 he likely published in *Die rote Fahne*, as well as *Die Freie Welt*, *Die Aktion* and other left-wing publications. In 1924 he became the lead caricaturist for *Lachen Links*, the SPD's re-formatted update of *Der Wahre Jakob*. Whether Holtz did so out of professional or political reasons is uncertain, but given that had no representation, nor gained any recognition as a fine artist, his options were limited. In the later twenties he continued to publish in both Communist and Social Democratic publications. During the 1930s he was not allowed to publish, and in 1939 drafted into the army. After deserting in 1945, Holtz made his way to the Soviet zone of occupation in eastern Germany and began work again as a caricaturist. However, in 1949 he was arrested for publishing a caricature of Stalin in a Swiss magazine and was sentenced by a military court to twenty-five years in prison. He was pardoned in 1956, though never rehabilitated by the party. Outside of Germany, the only art historian to have considered his work in any detail is Sherwin Simmons, who focuses on his early photomontage work in particular in "Photo-caricature in the German Popular Press, 1920," *History of Photography*, vol. 20, no. 3 (Autumn 1996): 258-263.

[329] For a general overview, see Gaby Sonnabend, *Darüber lacht die Republik. Friedrich Ebert und 'seine' Reichskanzler in der Karikatur* (Heidelberg: Stiftung Reichspräsident-Friedrich-Ebert-Gedenkstätte, 2010).

[330] In a recent study the intellectual historian Enzo Traverso goes so far as to characterize the period as an on-going civil war—see Enzo Traverso, *Fire and Blood: The European Civil War 1914-1945*, trans. David

Identifying enemies through physiognomic means was a practice engaged across the political spectrum, and brought with it considerable danger.[331] As Gombrich warns, "the cartoonist can mythologize the world of politics by physiognomizing it," recasting political conflicts into wars of ethnic identity or worse.[332] Yet, in the immediate term, it mattered how each image was situated within a particular publication, what it was doing "there" rather than somewhere else. Images to do not function autonomously, after all, especially in regard to politics.

The location of publication or reproduction of satirical images, regardless of their common subject matter, made a difference, since it was in relation to the publication in which it was deployed that its political charge was contextualized and directed to a particular kind, or class, of reader. This can be seen by reviewing satirical responses to the so-called "bathing-suit controversy" that arose after the *Berliner Illustrierte Zeitung* published a photograph of Ebert and Noske at the beach on the front cover of its August 1919 issue. [**Fig. 2.34**] Unclothed and ill-matched, the portrait of these two republican leaders was widely held as a revelatory image, exposing the naked truth of the new Weimar order embodied in these unsightly men. The nature of the truth revealed, however, was refracted through competing political viewpoints. For the right-wing press, the portrait came to symbolize the pathetic, flaccid nature of Germany's

---

Fernbach (London; New York: Verso, 2016).

331 Richard Gray provides a historical overview of the impact of physiognomic theories in Germany in his book *About Face. German Physiognomic Thought from Lavater to Auschwitz* (Detroit: Wayne State University Press, 2004), which discusses at length how such theories, when taken as "science," were deployed toward racist and, eventually, genocidal ends. For a look at physiognomy over the *longue durée,* see Martin Porter, *Windows of the Soul. Physiognomy in European Culture, 1470-1780* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 2005).

332 Ernst Gombrich, "The Cartoonist's Armory," in *Meditations on a Hobby Horse and other Essays on the Theory of Art* (London; New York: Phaidon, 1963), 139.

republican government; whereas, for the left-wing press, it symbolized the ineptitude and ridiculousness of “social democracy.” These differences influenced satirical renditions of the photograph that followed. An anonymous caricature that appeared on the cover of the nationalist-oriented magazine *Satyr* soon after the controversy broke out racializes Ebert and Noske and ties their defilement of the Reich, here symbolized by the shorts they wear modeled on the former imperial flag, to the "communization of taste" [**Fig. 2.35**]. By way of contrast, in the eighth issue of *Die Pleite* from November 1923, the famous photo is instead transformed into an indictment against Ebert and Noske and the suppression of uprisings in Hamburg and Sachsen the month before [**Fig. 2.36**].While the "bathing suit" photo became a visual trope in its own right, utilized for various contexts as evident in later examples form *Simplicissimus* and *Kladderadatsch* [**Fig. 2.37**], its ideological value as an image remained secondary to the political framework in whose service it was utilized.

It was in order to generate a cohesive context for Grosz realism that *Das Gesicht* came about. By reproducing individual images as a collection, Grosz presents a more sustained version of his Communist outlook, with repeated faces, figures, textual supplementation that helped to orient readers toward a class-conscious way of seeing.

Reading *Das Gesicht*

Das Gesicht was issued by the Malik-Verlag as the fourth title of its *Kleine revolutionäre Bibliothek* series (Herzfelde’s *Gesellschaft, Künstler, und Kommunismus* was the sixth), with a logo advertising the house’s Communist allegiance, also designed by

Grosz[333] **[Fig. 2.38].** Unlike Grosz's earlier print series, produced as limited-edition portfolios (*Mappe)* on higher quality paper and priced for collectors, *Das Gesicht* sought a much broader audience. Collectors could purchase one of fifty, numbered and hand-signed editions of the series; others could choose from a mid-range version, bound and on lesser quality paper, or the even cheaper brochure format intended for a working-class audience.[334] While nowhere near as inexpensive as an issue of *Die Pleite* or *Die rote Fahne*, it is not inconceivable that branches of the KPD, working-class associations or trade union locals, and even bars popular with left-wing workers would have owned a copy or at minimum been a place where people who had seen the book could tell others about its images. Most of these had already appeared in Malik-Verlag magazines or party papers like *Die Freie Welt*. Others are recycled from earlier portfolios; in defiance of the court, who outlawed further publication of *Gott mit uns,* Grosz included nearly all the drawings from that portfolio in the new book, likely at the instigation of Herzfelde,

---

[333] The general editor of the series was Julian Gumperz, who co-founded *Der Gegner* in April 1919 (with Karl Otten) and helped to run the publication after Herzfelde came on board in June 1920. Gumperz vigorously defended the Dadaists in the pages of *Die rote Fahne* during the debate of the *Dada Messe*, was for a while a member of the KPD, and attended the First Marxist Workweek (*Erste Marxistische Arbeitswoche*) in 1922, an important precursor to the formation of the Institute for Social Research, where he met Lukács. In 1924 Gumperz began living with Hede Eisler (née Tune), then married to Gerhart Eisler, brother of Ruth Fischer. They married in 1927 but divorced a couple years later, by which time Gumperz had become a student of Friedrich Pollock at the Institute. Hede began a relationship with Paul Massing, also at the Institute, and was later recruited to Soviet Intelligence by Richard Sorge, who earlier worked as a librarian at the Institute. Gumperz was sent to the US in 1933 (he was born in NYC in 1898) to scope out the possibility of moving of the faculty moving there to escape the Nazis and stayed in the US thereafter. Hede ran a group of agents during the 1930s in Washington D.C. that included high-level members of Roosevelt's New Deal administration, but later defected and testified against Alger Hiss and others. Her autobiography provides further background on Gumperz and his work for the Malik-Verlag, one of the few sources we have on this connction—see Hede Massing, *This Deception* (New York: Duell, Sloan and Pearce, 1951).

[334] Two earlier *Mappe*, *In the Shadows* (*Im Schatten*) and *The Robbers* (*Die Rauber*) (1920), were issued in a cheaperr format as *Organizationaufgabe* for trade union—see Alexander Dückers, *George Grosz: Das druckgraphisches Werk* (Frankfurt am Main: Propyläen Verlag, 1979) for details regarding the formal particulars of Grosz's various series.

who first proposed that Grosz produce a series of caricatures addressing the "miserable conditions of the day."[335] Nearly all the images in *Das Gesicht* carry new titles and are bound together, literally and conceptually, to present a cohesive outlook toward society.

Scholars have long sought precedents for *Das Gesicht* in the history of graphic satire, but nothing quite fits the political tendentiousness of its mode of address and the acerbity of its Grosz realism. The work of Daumier was a common association made by contemporary critics, as was that of Hogarth. According to Count Harry Kessler, a contact of Herzfelde and a supporter of the avant-garde, Grosz had been studying Hogarth intensely during this period.[336] In a diary entry from February 5, 1919, Kessler writes:

> In the morning I visited George Grosz in his studio in Wilmersdorf…He wants to become the German Hogarth, deliberately realistic and didactic; to preach, improve and reform. Art for art's sake does not interest him at all. […] He is really a Bolshevist in the guise of a painter. He loathes painting and the pointlessness of painting as practiced so far, yet by means of it wants to achieve something quite new or, more accurately, something that it used to achieve (through Hogarth or religious art), but which got lost in the nineteenth century. He is reactionary and revolutionary in one, a symbol of the times.[337]

That Hogarth's commitment to a partisan, social realist graphic satire would have been attractive to Grosz at this time makes sense, but it would be a stretch to claim *Das Gesicht* represents a "progress" on the order of *Marriage à la Mode* (c. 1745) or *The Four Stages of Cruelty* (1751). Like the latter, it contains a significant amount of violence, and,

---

[335] Herzfelde does so in a 1918 letter to Réne Schickele, editor of the *The White Pages* (*Die weißen Blätter*), a magazine with which he hoped Malik-Verlag could collaborate—see Zervigon, *John Heartfield*, 143 for details.
[336] For background on Kessler, see n. 242.
[337] Kessler, *Berlin in Lights*, 64. Zervigon briefly addresses this connection as well in *John Heartfied*, 146.

like the former, it skewers the customs and hypocrisy of the ruling class; but *Das Gesicht* lacks an overall narrative scheme like those found in these earlier precedents and indeed all of Hogarth's "modern moral subjects," or German variations of the same, such as David Chodowiecki's *The Progress of Virtue and Vice* (1777) **[Fig. 2.39]** and the cartoons of Wilhelm Busch.[338] The contrasts established between individual scenes across the gutter formed by open pages in *Das Gesicht* draws upon a logic indicative of a series like *Industry and Idleness*, as does the re-introduction of common types and faces, but the "lesson" imparted is far more trenchant.[339] According to David Bindman, Hogarth's series advocate a "middle way between vice and excessive virtue" by focusing on social vices via types, rather than attacking specific individuals in a political manner.[340] *Das Gesicht* does precisely the opposite. By politicizing social vices more directly and sardonically than past caricaturists like Hogarth and Daumier, and contemporary caricaturists such as Heine or Karl Arnold, Grosz forges a Communist outlook that is political through and through. Grosz is closer in sensibility to Gillray or Richard Newton **[Fig. 2.40]** than Hogarth, his drawings more in line with the ribaldry of

---

[338] According to Antony Griffiths, this series marks the beginning of the collaboration between Chodowiecki and Lichtenberg, Hogarth's German champion. For further background, see Giffiths and Frances Cary, *German Printmaking in the Age of Goethe*, exh. cat. (London: British Museum Press, 1994). For more on Busch, creator of *Max und Moritz* and a social critic in his own right, see Eva Weissweiler, *Wilhelm Busch: Der Lachende Pessimist* (Cologne: Kiepenheuer and Witsch, 2007).

[339] Works like *Industry and Idleness*, according to scholars, draw upon the popularity of eighteenth-century chap-books, entertainment products that seconded as manuals of "moral improvement." See Barry Wind, "Hogarth's *Industry and Idleness* Reconsidered," *Print Quarterly*, vol. 14, no. 3 (September 1997): 235-251 for a recent take on this connection, and John Ashton, *Chapbooks of the Eighteenth Century* (London: Skoob Books, 1990) for a collection of examples.

[340] *Hogarth and his Times: Serious Comedy* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1997), 33. Following David Solkin's lead, Bindman argues "[i]t seems beyond argument that Hogarth's enterprise was Addisonian," i.e. directed toward imparting lessons congruent with a culture of "politeness," although Bindman does acknowledge the more subversive side of Hogarth as well in this and his earlier *Hogarth* (New York; Toronto: Oxford University Press, 1981).

Père Duchêne than *La Caricature*.[341] The closest equivalents are the French *Physiologies* of the nineteenth century, Daumier's Robert Macaire series, and, closer in context, Karl Holtz's *The Noske System* (*Das System Noske*), a collection of caricatures from the pages of *Die Freie Welt* re-issued as a brochure in 1920.[342] Subsequent examples of similar composition include *The Upside-down World: Documented in Hard-hitting Verse* (*Die verkehrte Welt: In Knüttelversen dargestellt*) (1922), written by Tucholsky (under the pseudonym Kasper Hauser) for the KPD's publisher (with drawings by Holtz) [**Fig. 2.41]**, and *Germany Above All Others* (*Deutschland, Deutschland über Alles*), a collection of Tucholsky's writings with photomontages by Heartfield, published by Münzenberg in 1929.

In *Das Gesicht*, all the bourgeoisie are ugly, and all the workers impoverished; reality is exaggerated to accentuate the partisan point of view on display.[343] Workers were meant to "read" *Das Gesicht* much like Benjamin suggested they might view August Sander's later *Profile of the Age: Sixty Photographs of Twentieth Century Germans*

---

[341] A radical newspaper edited by Jacques Hebért during the French revolution and known for its liberal use of the word "fuck" (*foutre*), *Père Duchêne* was a favorite of Marx's and lived on after its creator's death (by guillotine in 1794), in various forms throughout the nineteenth century, most notably as *Le Fils de Père Duchêne* during the Paris Commune. See *Revolution in Print: The Press in France, 1775-1800,* eds. Robert Darnton and Daniel Roche (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1989), and Robert Darnton, *The Devil in the Holy Water or the Art of Slander from Louis XIV to Napoleon* (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 2010).

[342] That *Das System Noske* served as a model for *Das Gesicht* is a distinct possibility, given the relationship between Holtz and the Dadaists, not to mention that fact that Felix Stössinger, who wrote an introduction for the book, praised Grosz in the pages of *Die Freie Welt*, which he edited, and published drawings by him in its pages as well (see n. 327). For background on Robert Macaire, see Stanislav Osiakovski, "History of Robert Macaire and Daumier's Place in It," *Burlington Magazine*, vol. 100, No. 668 (November 1958): 388-393.

[343] And in this it follows Tucholsky's dictum that "Satire must exaggerate and is unfair by its very nature: It inflates the truth so that it becomes clearer, and it cannot work by any other means than those of the biblical phrase: the righteous suffer with the unrighteous," in "What is satire allowed? (*Was darf die Satire?*)," *Berliner Tageblatt*, (January 27, 1919), reprinted in Tucholsky, *Gesamtausgabe*, vol. 5, 30-32.

(*Das Antlitz der Zeit: Sechzig Aufnahmen deutscher Menschen des 20. Jahrhunderts*) (1929): as a training manual, albeit with no attempt to adhere to an objective, or "scientific" viewpoint.[344] *Das Gesicht* was meant to teach its readers how to recognize the ruling class in all its various guises and, just as importantly, to see *through* the illusions of Republican society to the naked class rule beneath.The face of the ruling class was not singular, but multiple; its representatives and structural determinations visible everywhere, if only one knew how to look

Faces

Unsurprisingly, one finds several portraits in the book, both of real-life personalities like Ebert and anonymous social types meant to personify the worst elements of Germany society. Military officers, a frequent target of Grosz's hatred, appear in great number. The countenance of "The German pestilence (*Die deutsche Pest*)" **[Fig. 2.42],** identifiable as a cavalry officer by the shape of his cap and the leaf-form on his jacket lapel, typifies the hardened jaw, beady eyes, and steely glare associated with officers in general, and those who joined the right-wing *Freikorps* in particular—charming fellows all, no doubt **[Fig. 2.43].** We are meant to apprehend this portrait in a straightforward physiognomic manner, the smug expression as a sign of the murderous soul deep within.

---

[344] In his 1931 essay "Little History of Photography (*Kleine Geschichte der Photographie*), Benjamin makes a claim that Sander's book, representing just a small section of a project the photographer had been working on since 1911, represents a "scientific viewpoint" with immense political potential:

> Work like Sander's could overnight assume unlooked-for topicality. Sudden shifts of power such as are now overdue in our society can make the ability to read facial types a matter of vital importance. Whether one is of the Left or the Right, one will have to get used to being looked at in terms of one's provenance. And one will have to look at others the same way. Sander's work is more than a picture book. It is a training manual

--in *The Work of Art int he Age of Its Technological Reproducibility*, 287—see n.88 in chapter one.

Other faces are more ambiguous. A rather grotesque profile of a solider twenty pages before the appearance of "*Die deutsche Pest*" lacks the swagger of the monocled officers and generals that frequent so much of Grosz's work [**Fig. 2.44**] Instead we see a representative of the "working-class" soldier, the common grunt, whose brutal physique shown in side-profile is offered as evidence of the degenerated lifestyle of the military. The ironic title, "Made in Germany (*Den macht uns keiner nach!*)," further suggests that the high profile of the German army (renamed the *Reichswehr* in 1919) belies the true, brutish character of its culture. Yet, when viewed in relation to other media imagery of the period, specifically the photographs of wounded veterans that began to appear in newspapers and magazines after 1917, we might instead see this figure as a living testimony to the brutality of that conflict[345] **[Fig. 2.45].** Given that "*Den macht uns keiner nach!*" likewise appeared in *Die Freie Welt* in 1920, it is possible to view this figure as a victim of reigning social conditions rather than a representative of authoritarianism, particularly when compared to "*Die deutsche Pest*."

Similarly ambiguous is the portrait on the cover of *Das Gesicht*. The same image appears within the book, entitled "It reeks here of the rabble (*'S riecht hier nach Pöbel*)," referring to the proletariat in an outmoded language meant to underline the aristocratic bearing of the man depicted. He in no way resembles the plump bourgeois figures symbolic of the ruling class in so many other scenes, and likely stands in for the younger, fashionable nobles who, although members of the ruling class, took an interest

[345] For more on this connection, see Biro, *The Dada Cyborg*, chapter four, 153-198. A more extensive study of the cultural impact of wounded WWI veterans can be found in Robert Weldon Whalen, *Bitter Wounds: German Victims of the Great War, 1914-1939* (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 1984).

in liberal politics and bohemian sub-cultures. Men like Kessler, who the portrait resembles [**Fig. 2.46]**, which is ironic, given all that he did to aid Grosz and his comrades. Even if it is not meant to satirize Kessler, or has been included here in jest, the Kessler-like face is a fine example of the *kind of man* the younger, German aristocrat was thought to look like. The line between real-life personalities and types in *Das Gesicht* is purposefully blurred.[346]

This is plain to see in the less ambiguous faces that populate the book, like that of Gustav Noske [**Fig. 2.47**], represented as "The iron Noske (*Der eiserne Noske*)," a reference to the giant, wooden statue of Hindenburg that was constructed during WWI for national propaganda purposes.[347] [**Fig. 2.48**] Like the famous general before him, Noske is here "celebrated" for his role as military dictator. The same allusion is made in an anonymous caricature in *Die Freie Welt* [**Fig. 2.49**]. The mustache and glasses are the key tabs of recognition in both drawings, though they have been abstracted slightly in the *Das Gesicht* image, the mustache contrasting with jagged teeth clenching a blood-spattered sword. In the anonymous *Freie Welt* caricature the sword, incised with "I am the law," is positioned just as Hindenburg's sword was in the actual monument; whereas in the *Das Gesicht* image, Hindenburg's sword lies broken on the ground, the usurper Noske having toppled this representative of German rectitude and authority

[346] This is a point also made by Lewis, who characterizes Grosz as "a social and political satirist who used caricature as a tool to attack institutions, attitudes, types. When he attacked an individual, it was generally a figure who had attained symbolic and stereotyped value within the communist outlook," *George Grosz, Art and Politics*, 88. However, her conclusion that Grosz's drawings do not comment on specific events is mistaken, as I have demonstrated.
[347] As discussed by Sherwin Simmons in his article "Men of Nails: Monuments, Expressionism, Fetishes, Dadaism," during events held in connection with the erection of such monuments, people were offered the chance to purchase iron nails that they would then hammer into the wooden statues for good luck and to demonstrate their patriotism—in *RES: Anthropology and Aesthetics,* no. 40 (2001): 211-238.

and taken over his role. Noske holds two grenades and a sign that reads "Whoever advances will be shot," referring to the oft-invoked warning used by Noske's *Reichswehr* to suppress striking workers during this period [**Fig. 2.50]**. Grosz's portrait of Constantin Fehrenbach, leader of the Catholic Center Party during WWI, subsequent president of Weimar's National Assembly (*Nationalversammlung*) and later chancellor of the Republic betwen June 1920-May 1921 (overseeing the first cabinet with a representative of the SPD), is another example [**Fig. 2.51**]. Entitled "Fehrenbach, Germany's most Christian chancellor (*Fehrenbach, des deutschen Reiches allerchristlichster Kanzler*)," it refers to his claim that "the children will wipe away [our] shame" made during a Assembly session that was seen to reflect a pro-militarist position (this was also the title it bore when the image first appeared in *Die Freie Welt*, Grosz' inaugural appearance in that publication).[348]

Repeated use of types and recognizable personalities strengthens the realism of *Das Gesicht*'s outlook, but also reveals the stark reality that is obscured by its respectable surface appearance. This effect is achieved through the interaction of word and image. Reproduced next to the "Iron Noske" is the image of Ebert as an ersatz Kaiser from *Die Pleite* [**Fig. 2.52**], only this time the accompanying title reads "From the life of a socialist." Although similarly banal as a title, connoting the quotidian activities of an anonymous party member, its satirical import results from its being attributed to Ebert's role as president of the Republic, hardly an activity belonging to the "life of a socialist."

[348] The image appears as "Fehrenbach in the National Assembly: 'The children will wipe away [our] shame' (*Fehrenbach in der Nationalversammlung: 'Die Kinder werden die Schmach abwischen'*)," *Die Freie Welt*, vol. 1, no. 5 (May 1919).

Or at least it is *should not* belong to the life of a socialist. This is the implied meaning of the title, an ironic dimension spurred by the incongruence between Ebert as known personality, and the situation in which Grosz depicts him. The satirical thrust of the image is activated by the text, and together, within the context of *Das Gesicht*, serves to further its ideological operation.

The same result is occasioned by the use of a social type in an image titled "Entrepreneur--Initiative (*Unternehmer – Initiative*)" [**Fig. 2.53**]. Unremarkable as a sentence in itself, and typical of what one might find in the business section of a daily newspaper, the fact that it accompanies an image of a monstrous capitalist astride a heap of human bones alters its connotation. Instead of a positive resonance, the title now connotes an ominous, barbaric process, perhaps even suggesting Marx's discussion of "primitive accumulation" in *Capital*.[349] This connection is made more explicit in a previous reproduction of this same image in the pages of *Die rote Fahne* entitled "How capitalism builds up the economy (*Wie der Kapitalismus die Wirtschaft aufbaut),"* Grosz's premiere in that publication [**Fig. 2.54**].[350]

Types

In addition to real-life figures of authority, Grosz presets an array of social types, most of whom readers would have recognized. According to Ursula Horn, left-wing caricaturists of the period often employed visual material "already firmly integrated in

[349] Marx uses this term to describe the enclosure of common land and outright pillaging that helped to set in motion the development of the capitalist mode of production during the early modern period—see Marx/Engles, *Collected Works*, vol. 35, chapter 26 "The Secret of Primitive Accumulation," 704-707. For an up-to-date review of debates regarding this term in the Marxist tradition, past and present, see Roberts, *Marx's Inferno*, 193-207.
[350] See n. 244

the consciousness of the masses"[351] Grosz thus relied upon his readers' familiarity with standard characters of graphic satire, such as the fat bourgeois and the overbearing military officer. Even if these types circulated primarily as figures of speech, they still would have brought to mind a mental image whose traits could be compared to visual images met by readers. Working with recognizable types provided Grosz with a visual language familiar to working class readers and the opportunity to recharge these tropes, politicizing their iconographic connotations.

We see this, for example, in Grosz's portrayal of soldiers and military types. As Georg Piltz has argued, Grosz's rendition of officers draws much from pre-WWI examples popularized by Eduard Thöny, a caricaturist who drew for *Simplicissimus* [**Fig. 2.55**]. Whereas Thöny presented the Prussian officer core as simple-minded representatives of traditional hierarchical mores, Grosz instead transforms them into blood-thirsty monsters.[352] But like Thöny before him, Grosz maintains a consistency in his representation of such types. Several of the soldiers and officers in *Das Gesicht* reappear in separate images completely unchanged or only partially so; some even reappear from earlier portfolios, such as the monocled and *Pickelhaube* wearing creep on the cover of Grosz's *God with us* (*Gott mit uns*) (1920) found in "Pimps of death (*Zuhälter*

---

[351] Horn, "1917-1933," 136—see n. 73 in the introduction. Piltz adds that the works of Grosz and others for *Die Pleite*, "denied both the foundations of bourgeois society and its individual manifestations, including those that the cartoonists of the *Simplicissimus* and *Lustige Blätter* had always considered harmless, *Geschichte der europäischen Karikatur*, 258.

[352] Piltz writes: "Thöny's lieutenants were transformed by Grosz's pen into the arrogant murders of the Eden Hotel," a reference to the headquarters of several *Freikorps* units during the Spartacus uprising—*Geschichte der europäischen Karikatur*, 258.

des Todes)" and again in "For German law and German customs (*Für deutsches Rect und deutsche Sitte*)" **[Fig. 2.56].**[353]

In addition to reviving types from historical precedents, Grosz likewise drew upon types found in popular commercial satire magazines like *Simplicissimus*. Most of these publications also published graphic critical of the government, but in support of a liberal politics, supportive of the republican government and wary of all forms of extremism, left or right. Nevertheless, several of the types in *Das Gesicht* share a resemblance with those found in the social satire drawings of Karl Arnold, one of *Simplicissimus'* leading caricaturists.[354] Arnold, like Grosz, was (and remains) celebrated for the visual economy of his drawing and renewal of traditional satirical tropes.[355] But unlike Grosz, Arnold's works were not associated with a particular political orientation and are today generally believed to reflect a less tendentious, more humorous point of view. Freya Mülhaupt claims that Arnold "did not judge his

---

[353] No doubt due to the inclusion of the images from this portfolio into *Das Gesicht.*

[354] Although he remained a professional caricaturist his entire life, Arnold is today recognized as a major artist of the Weimar period. Ten years older than Grosz, Arnold likewise won acclaim at a relatively young age. While attending the academy of fine art in Munich, where he studied under Franz von Stuck alongside Kandinsky and Klee, Arnold published his first drawings in the pages of *Simplicissimus* in 1907. During the war he worked for the *Liller Kriegszeitung*, an occupation paper, and won acclaim for his drawings. After the war he returned to *Simplicissimus,* soon becoming a partner and given charge of illustration production. He remained at the magazine until 1942, even after the forced resignation of Heine, one of his partners. Although Arnold did not join the NSDAP, he indirectly benefitted from the party's patronage, receiving the title of professor in 1939 after it had been denied him in the late 1920s. For further background on Arnold, see *Karl Arnold: Leben und Werk des großen "Simplicissimus" Zeichners*, ed. Franz Arnold (Reinbek bei Hamburg: Rowohlt Taschenbuch Verlag GmbH, 1979). Two recent exhibition catalogs speak to the renewed interest in his work. They include: Andreas Strobl, *Karl Arnold: Zeichner des Simplicissimus* (München: Staatliche Graphische Sammlung München; Deutscher Kunstverlag, 2012); and *Karl Arnold: "Hoppla, wir leben!" Berliner Bilder aus den 1920er Jahren* (Ostfildern: Hatje Cantz Verlag; Berlin: Berlinische Galerie, 2010)

[355] In his contribution to *"Hoppla, wir leben!"* (see previous note) Thomas Matuszak writes that Arnold "draws from the reservoir of European graphic satire, and uses means common to the arsenal of caricture," albeit moderately: "looking closely at these drawings, one notices that he does not exaggerate (in the strict sense of 'caricature') but instead presents things just as they look!" (16).

contemporaries according to their social class, but rather perceived them as individuals, registering how they appeared, acted, talked."[356] Though at times he produced barbed images that spoke to political current events **[Fig. 2.57],** Arnold generally stuck to social, rather than political themes, such as his *Berlin Scenes* (*Berliner Bilder)* series, begun in 1920 and published as a bound collection in 1924 **[Fig. 2.58]**. In this series Arnold presents a number of types similar to those found in Grosz's drawings from the same period, such as the rentier **[Fig. 2.59],** the petit-bourgois philistine (*Spießer*) **[Fig. 2.60]**, and the crippled war veteran **[Fig. 2.61].** That Grosz new of these images is near certain, given the popular of *Simplicissimus* in these years; that he consciously modeled his types to resemble Arnold's less so—Grosz's are far more cutting and gruesome than Arnold's; they share more in common with Otto Dix's wounded soliders and broken men[357]. More likely is that both artists drew upon popular conceptions of these types that circulated in non-visual forms—via jokes, puns, verbal descriptions, pantomime—that lived in the collective experience of day to day urban existence. These were stereotypes based in real life that comprised part of the reality of the Weimar image-world, the visual "stuff" from which graphic satire takes its material and adds its own. It is therefore unsurprising to find commonalities between their work, implicit and explicit **[Fig. 2.62].**

---

[356] Mülhaupt, *"Hoppla, wir leben!"* 47.

[357] As Schmied argues in his introduction to *Karl Arnold: Leben und Werk*:

> George Grosz, aggressive and agitational, was able to capture the world in its contradictions. They pushed him, opened his eyes, aroused his hatred, made his quill into a barb. He juxtaposed opposites as painful conflicts. Karl Arnold, more congenial and cooler, instead had an eye for the dissonance of reality, for the disproportionate nature of its antagonisms, for the equally comical and tragic side of the incongruity of illusion and reality, utopia and fulfillment, and for the absurdity of false myths, false pathos, and false (12).

Structures

Faces, figures and social types in *Das Gesicht* are interspersed with images that instead stress structural inequities through visual contrasts, either within a single image or across images. "The Communists fall--and profits rise! (*Die Kommunisten fallen – und die Devisen steigen!*)" is a good example of the former [**Fig. 2.63**]. While a crazed band of Freikorps officers and soldiers brutally massacre a pair of workers above, a bourgeois type and his military companion calmly feast below. The poised table manners of the ruling class, safe from the slaughter from which they benefit, signal their complete divorce from the lives of common workers—although Grosz has not spared them the ugliness of their underlings. The extended pinkie finger of the officer at right in no way masks the grossness of his bulging underbite, nor does his partner's smart bowtie overcome the misshapen quality of his head and arms, or the stubble that barely covers his grizzled neck muscles and fat right cheek. Their hideousness is presented as the physiognomic result of overseeing a system in which the murder of one class is capitalized upon by another.

The same result is achieved across images in "Where dividends come from--- (*Wo die Dividenden herkommen…*)" and "and where turn up (*…wo sie hinkommen*)" reproduced on facing pages [**Fig. 2.64].** In the first image, we see a group of miners, whose labor, often conducted in dangerous conditions, frequently resulted in death, symbolized here by the grieving woman at bottom huddled over blanketed corpse. A cause and effect relationship is thus established across the gutter between the two pages, linking the largely invisible, strenuous, and ultimately life-threatening labor of the working class

symbolized in the first image, to the expenditure of the profits it generates in the second image. There, instead of physical toil and its consequences, we see rentiers and military men enjoying themselves; their blimpish bodies and flaccid faces bare no evidence of labor, and they are accompanied by traditional symbols of the bourgeoisie—cigars, champagne glasses. Labor power, rendered visible in the guise of mining, fuels the profligacy of the ruling class. And like the previous example, the contrast elicited in these two images is as much moral as it is political.[358] Grosz attacks the political legitimacy of the ruling class by revealing its imagined excesses in contrast to the harshness of working class life. This is even more exaggerated in "Five o'clock in the morning (*Früh um 5 Uhr!*)" [**Fig. 2.65**]. Here the moral and physical degradation of the bourgeoisie is contrasted with the earnestness of the working class. Inside a brothel, three "gentlemen" continue the pleasures of the night before (another in the extreme foreground pays for indulging too much); outside, workers travel to their various jobs, tools in hand, for another regulated day of labor. These are the early morning activities of each social class, the image suggests, and readers are meant to judge which of the two represents a lifestyle of degeneracy—*Industry and Idleness* reversed.Structural conditions are also depicted as symbolic forms, such as the giant puppet master in "Divinely ordained dependence [?] (*Gottgewollte Abhängigkeit)*" [**Fig. 2.66].**[359]

---

[358] McCloskey discusses how images like these and those appearing in Grosz's next portfolio, *Ecce Homo* (1922), were reviewed positively in *Die rote Fahne* for "resolving the relationship between sexuality and politics across class lines"—see *Grosz and the Communist Party*, 106-7. Publication of *Ecce Homo*, like *Gott mit uns*, resulted in charges brought against Malik-Verla and another trial (this time on charges of distributing obscene images). Grosz, Herzfelde, and Gumperz were each fined 500 Marks and seventeen drawings and five watercolors banned from further publication—see Neugebauer, *George Grosz*, 81-122 for full details.

[359] Although the title refers to the bible and was a commonly used metaphor, there is nonetheless an interesting correlation between its usage here and in a contemporaneous essay by Hugo Preuß, who

Representing the all-powerful rule of capital, this cannon-toting behemoth holds in his hands the strings that control an array of ruling class types. The same theme is presented in an anonymous drawing reproduced in a near-contemporaneous issue of *Die rote Fahne,* only with the various puppets controlled by ruling class interests—embodied in the forms of Erich Ludendorff, Georg Escherich (leader of a anti-Semitic paramilitary group in Bavaria), and the industrialist Hugo Stinnes—are named [**Fig. 2.67].**[360] Right-wing organizations employed the theme of the puppet master as well, albeit it re-casting the embodiment of capital as Jewish [**Fig. 2.68].**

There are two drawings in *Das Gesicht* that represent an inversion of the ruling order and interrupt the otherwise negative thrust of the book. The first, entitled "Reconstruction (*Wiederaufbau*)," remains ambiguous in its meaning [**Fig. 2.69].** Rather

---

drafted the Weimar constitution and went on to serve as a prominent lawyer and defender of the Republic. In "From the Authoritarian State to the Nation State," Preuß writes:

> On the basis of common political self-determination, a national feeling of unity (*nationale Einheitsgefühl*) and state consciousness (*Staatsbewußtsien)* must become an effective counterweight to the economic and social class antagonisms inherent to any fully developed and highly differentiated social structure. If political life is forced to conform to the dogma of social class struggle, and political activity is placed in unconditioned dependence, that is to say, "God-given dependence" (*Gottgewollte Abhängigkeit*) on the relation to the means of economic production, this in truth means the negation of political freedom and healthy national development

—see "Vom Obrigkeitsstaat zum Volkstaat" (1921), in *Gesammlte Schriften*, vol. 4 (Tübingen: Mohr Siebeck, 2008), 170. Obviously, the kind of class consciousness Grosz and the KPD were interested in fomenting was aimed at undercutting just this kind of liberal policy-thinking.

[360] Ludendorff served as a general during WWI and as a co-military dictator with Hindenburg during the final years of the conflict. During and after the revolution, he supported right-wing nationalist causes and took part in both the Kapp Putsch and Hitler's Beer-Hall putsch in 1923 but was acquitted at the trials that followed each attempt. In 1925 he ran for president and was soundly defeated, souring his relationship with Hindenburg, who beat him. Although he continued to support anti-semitic and nationalist groups in the late 1920s, he moved away from the NSDAP by 1933. Hugo Stinnes was one of Weimar's richest and most powerful industrialists. He was a founding member of the right-wing liberal German People's Party (*Deutsche Volkspartei*), a reformatted version of the pre-war National Liberal Party, and entered the *Reichstag* as a representative of the same in June 1920. In the early 1920s he bought up several newspapers and publishing houses to promote national-liberal policy and attack the Versailles Treaty. But he was most notorious for buying up companies with borrowed funds at the hight of postwar inflation; at the time of his death in 1924 he was rumored to own over four thousand companies and manufacturing plants—for further background, see Gerald Feldman, *The Great Disorder. Politics, Economics and Society in the German Inflation* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1993).

than depicting a scene of ruling class types lording over workers, as in the more typical "Return to order (*Rückkehr geordneter Zustände*)" **[Fig. 2.70],** Grosz instead shows armed working class (one of whom looks an awful lot like the artist himself) supervising the labor of these same types. Here the roles seem to be reversed, although it hardly seems to be a "utopian" image, given the devastation in which it takes place. What are we to make of this reversal of fortune? Could this be an image of the future aftermath of a revolutionary civil war, after which the *ancien regime* will be forced to carry out the hard labor of "rebuilding"? Or is this a class-conscious version of the traditional "world turned upside down" trope, with those in power reduced to carrying out menial activities familiar to workers everywhere?[361]

The second example of a "utopian" image is more straight-forward. Entitled "How the constitutional court should look (*Wie der Staatsgerichtshof aussehen sollte*)" [**Fig. 2.71**], it refers to the judicial body called for under article 108 of the Weimar constitution. Yet, in spite of its republican credentials, this court was viewed by much of the revolutionary left as little more than a reformed version of the "class justice (*Klassenjustiz)*" that had long targeted the political opponents of the empire before WWI and had protected members of the *Freikorps* and political Right since the revolution. This is symbolized, for example, in a March 1921 drawing in *Die rote Fahne* that depicts three apish judges decked out in military garb and sitting beneath an honorary image of Kaiser Wilhelm ruling against a proletarian figure [**Fig. 2.72**] (The title reads: "The day

---

[361] As a trope, images of the "world turned upside down" date back centuries and were commonly associated with carnival, and often times used to express popular, subversive sentiments. For further background on the topic, see Bob Scribner, "Reformation, Carnival and the World Turned Upside-Down," *Social History*, vol. 3, no. 3 (October 1978): 303-389.

will come when we get even--then we will be the judges! (*Es kommt der Tag, da wir uns rächen – Dann wir die Richter sein!*).") Grosz's drawing is an imaginative rendition of this day of reckoning. Instead of legal apes, a people's court passes sentence upon a group of military officers in shackles, figures who elsewhere in *Das Gesicht* represent the gross reality of war. The fat man in profile at lower right, for instance, looks identical to the figure at lower right in the image on the opposing page, "Vampires of humanity (*Vampire der Menschheit*)" **[Fig. 2.73]**. The judges--one of whom, notably, is a woman--are likewise a collection of proletarian types from Grosz's other drawings. Behind them armed members of a workers' militia stand guard on either side of a framed portrait of Karl Liebknecht hung on the back wall as a patron saint of proletarian justice in place of the Kaiser. This is an image of what "should be"—or "must be," as originally suggested in its first appearance on the cover of *Bloody Serious* (*Der blutige Ernst*)—set in the pages of *Das Gesicht* to overturn "The court of the ruling class (*Das <u>Gericht</u> der herrschenden Klasse)*" **[Fig. 2.74]**, presided over by the usual "pillars of society"—the military, the church, and the bourgeoisie: Grosz's triumvirate of reaction.[362]

Workers

Finally, there are the working-class figures scattered through the pages of *Das Gesicht*, whose portrayal, as should be plain from the examples discussed so far, in no way conforms to the heroic workers found in later Socialist Realist paintings and

---

[362] The final drawing in *Das Gesicht*, "Parting is bitterswee (*Scheiden tut weh*)," first reproduced on the cover of *Die Pleite* in January 1920 as "Capital and the military wishes each other a blessed new year! (*Kapital und Militär wünschen sich: Ein gesegnetes neues Jahr!*)" and featuring representatives of each hanging from the gallows potentially represents a third such image. *Der blutige Ernst* was yet another publication published by the Malik-Verlag in these years, edited by Grosz and Carl Einstein.

Communist publications. On the contrary, proletarian life looks fairly miserable in all Grosz's drawings from this period. Most of the images in *Das Gesicht* extend the straight, almost naturalist outlook represented in *In the Shadows* (*Im Schatten*), a limited-edition portfolio of nine lithographs also released by Malik-Verlag in 1921. Scenes such as "Ants (*Ameisen*)" **[Fig. 2.75],** depicting a group of downtrodden and well-seasoned laborers, are typical of this view, and appear in various configurations in *Das Gesicht*—near exact in the top portion of "Five o'clock in the morning," and as similarly cast individuals in "Toads of Property (*Die Besitzkröten*)" **[Fig. 2.76].** There are exceptions to this negative representation of the working class, such as "Our world, in spite of everything (*Unser die Welt trotz alledem*)" **[Fig. 2.77]**, which first appeared in a 1922 issue of *Der Gegner*, then in *Die rote Fahne* in March 1923, and later in Grosz's next political series *The Day of Reckoning* (*Abrechnung folgt!*) from that same year (number ten in Malik-Verlag's Kleine Revolutionäre Bibliothek series, and discussed further the next chapter).[363] Like the concluding drawing from this same series, "Damned of the earth, awake! (*Wacht auf, Verdammte dieser Erde!*)" **[Fig. 2.78]**, a reference to *The Internationale,* Grosz presents a more defiant and active working class, albeit still without the muscle-tone or bright complexions of later heroes of Soviet labor.

---

[363] The phrase "Trotz alledem" comes from a translation of Robert Burn's poem "A Man's a Man for A'That," in support of Scottish independence, by Ferdinand Freiligrath in 1848, and became a standard within the Social Democratic movement. It was also the title of Karl Liebknecht's last article published in *Die rote Fahne* before his murder. The image's appearance in *Der Gegner*, vol. 3, no. 1 (1922) is titled "On the graves of March: "Beware!" (*Über der Gräbern des März: "Hütet Euch!"*)," in reference to the suppression of the March Action the previous year, and clearly meant as a warning. McCloskey likens the main figure to a self-portrait by Grosz and argues that the image "featured prominently in subsequent KPD-sponsored exhibitions where Grosz's work functioned to define the party's political physiognomy of militant revoultionary resolve and proletarian challenge to the dominant cultural order," *George Grosz and the Communist Party*, 101.

The overall tenor of Grosz's imagery endangered its potential resonance with a working-class audience. While his negative portrayal of the ruling class in all its various visages proved a valuable means of distinguishing "them," *Das Geischt* offers little to identify *with*. Reflecting on pictorial satire in a lecture from the late 1980s, Gombrich suggests

> [w]hat is described nowadays as a sense of identity is always buttressed by an assumption of superiority over those who do not belong. It is this function satire has always served, whether we think of images, of songs, or merely of anecdotes and jokes at the expense of neighbors[364].

This is what precisely what Grosz's drawings do *not* accomplish. *Das Gesicht* does not provide a consistent visual identity of superiority, class-based or otherwise, and this has led critics, past and present, to characterize them as "misanthropic." But for Grosz, not providing a "positive" class identity was the point, stating in a later 1928 interview with a Soviet satire magazine

> I don't consider it necessary to satisfy the demands of "hurrah-Bolshevism," which imagines for itself a smoothly-coifed proletariat in ancient heroic costume [...] to help the worker to understand his oppression and suffering--to compel him to openly recognize his own misery and slavery, to awaken in him self-awareness, to rouse him for class struggle--this is the task of art. And I serve this task.[365]

In other words, Grosz's "negative" depiction of working class figures as suffering and oppressed was not meant to be defeatist: it was meant to be "real"—or at least relatable to a working-class audience whose daily experience was conditioned by exploitation and oppression. If there is a "superiority" modeled in a work like *Das Gesicht*, it is solely

---

[364] Gombrich, "Magic, Myth, and Metaphor," 340—see n. 78 in the introduction.
[365] Quoted in McCloskey, *George Grosz and the Communist Party*, 129

an *ideological* superiority, a class-consciousness perspective aimed at fomenting hatred toward reigning social conditions that the minority they benefited.

This is something Gertrud Alexander picked up on in the months after the *Dada Messe*. In her review of *Das Gesicht* for *Die rote Fahne*, Alexander writes:

> Whomever sees these figures and faces once does not easily forget them. They encounter them daily on the streets. Unfortunately, it must be said that this is not self-evident for every worker; they do not view the ruling class in this manner. The proletarian sees only his own miserable existence and that of his nearest comrade; he knows that many suffer and that a layer of men lives above him no less human or better them him, but in a comfortable and elegant world [...] [yet] he is not always able to grasp the insensibility (*Gleichgültigkeit*) of his ugly existence with that sphere of luxury, to grasp the juxtaposition in all its meaning. Still less is he conscious of the fact that this splendor is possible only at the expense of his misery. This provocative truth has long been unclear to every proletarian. The brutal satire of George Grosz serves to open their eyes to it.[366]

The revelatory quality Alexander recognizes in *Das Gesicht* led to Grosz realism becoming the default mode of Communist graphic satire until the late 1920s. The new way of seeing Grosz modeled in his drawings, based upon the social *inferiority* of working class identity, but the *superiority* of class consciousness, enlivened Marxist politics. Five days after Alexander's review, *Die rote Fahne* published a circular issued by Executive Committee of the Comintern calling for more frequent use of satirical images in the party press:

> [t]he ordinary worker enjoys well-executed mockeries of his opponent. A good caricature, correctly aimed, is significantly better than a dozen boring, so-called 'marxist' articles. Our newspapers must carefully seek out people who know how to serve the proletarian revolution, pencil in hand. We must publish more often drawings and caricatures that enliven our papers and, in the most accessible form possible, explain what needs to be explained.[367]

---

[366] G. G. L., "Das Gesicht der herrschenden Klasse," *Die rote Fahne* (October 22, 1921)—

[367] Published as "The Tasks of a Communist Newspaper (*Die Aufgaben einer kommunistischen Zeitung), Die rote Fahne*, (October 27, 1921). At the conclusion of the directive the following notice appears:

> The editors of *Die rote Fahne* will convene a special meeting of editors and workers'

This set in motion the KPD's full embrace of the former Dadaists after 1923. Properly deployed, graphic satire could aid the party in shaping working-class consciousness. And yet, the question remains: What exactly was class consciousness thought to be at this time?

"See Berlin with the eyes of a Bolshevist!"

Throughout this chapter I have presented Grosz realism, exemplified in *Das Gesicht*, as an art of class consciousness, spurred by Grosz's hatred for a system built upon exploitation, murder, and fraud, and directed toward eliciting similar feelings from working class viewers. The everyday visual experience with which it engages, however, was not class-specific; all his types and personalities were recognizable to any urban dweller attuned to the Weimar image-world. As Hannah Arendt recalled later in life, "[w]e young students did not read the newspapers in those years...George Grosz's cartoons seemed to us not satires but realistic reportage: we knew those types; they were all around us. Should we mount the barricades for that?"[368] Arendt's recollection is ambiguous—whose side of the barricades is she referring to?—but its sentiment telling. Grosz realism had a political charge because it captured a widespread structure of feeling, a pervasive sense of uncertainty, anger, resentment, and dread. But feelings of disgust or hate were seen as the beginning, not the end, of the class-conscious way of seeing Grosz sought to formulate and direct toward Communist politics. Hate was

representatives from the major factories as early as possible, together with the Groß-Berlin district branch, in order to put the Executive's suggestions into action as soon as possible.

[368] Quoted in Peter Gay, *Weimar Culture. The Outsider as Insider.* (New York: W. W. Norton, 2001), 70.

meant to spur a commitment to revolutionary class politics, to win over workers to Communism by exposing the underlying source of their oppression and the ugliness of the world: capitalism. It is notable then, that as early as *Jedermann sein eigener Fussball*, Grosz advertised that his drawings would help viewers "see Berlin with the eyes of a Bolshevist."[369] In 1918, this claim may have been made in jest; by 1921, it was instead taken seriously.

In suggesting that *Das Gesicht* functioned as visual primer of class consciousness, I am relating Grosz's graphic satire to a conception of ideology critique nowadays seen to be discredited or obsolete. Devin Fore, speaking of the work of Heartfield, has argued that "Interwar Germany possessed no mysteries, no secrets, since all aspects of this society of the spectacle were already on display," thus negating a Marxist ideology critique based on the exposure of underlying structural relations indicative of the capitalist mode of production.[370] Given this, he adds,

> Heartfield took the side of the obvious, using the language and imagery of public media that were already widely disseminated, elements that were not just public, but avowedly and militantly clichéd. Here the corrective to false consciousness proceeds not through the revelation of new information--the uncovering of a hidden signified--but through the manipulation and reorganization of a teeming mass of information already at hand.[371]

---

[369] The advertisement is for the *Kleine Grosz Mappe* (1917), Grosz's earliest portfolio with Malik-Verlag, with drawings he made during WWI—see McCloskey, *George Grosz and the Communist Party*, chapter one. Zervigon briefly discusses this advertisement in *John Heartfied*, 152.

[370] Devin Fore, *Realism after Modernism: The Rehumanization of Art and Literature* (Cambridge, MA: The MIT Press, 2012), 300-1. A point made clearer a few sentences later:

> if the traditional strategies of leftist critique presumed, first, that hidden social realities before the surface of everyday appearances and, second, that ideological enlightenment would result from the revelation of these obfuscated truths, this method of *Ideologiekritik* is rendered ineffectual within a society that has nothing to hide. Indeed, ideology can no longer even be properly defined as 'false consciousness'…since knowledge and information have now become the very medium and expression of power (ibid.)

[371] Ibid.,304.

Fore is correct in stating that Heartfield constructs his partisan images out the raw material of the Weimar image-world, just as Grosz does in his satirical drawings; but to claim that the ideological operation remains at the surface is to overlook how, why, and who deployed these works where they were, when they were, and in what connection to other visual and textual supplements. It likewise offers a limited understanding of Marx and the centrality of consciousness to interwar theories of ideology.

For starters, Marx never once refers to "false consciousness" in writings. Its only appearance in the foundational texts of Marxism occurs in a letter from Engels to Franz Mehring of all people.[372] Consciousness, on the other hand, is term Marx often used, albeit not in the way we tend to today. For Marx, consciousness refers to more than mere ideas. We find this, for instance, in the early theses on Feuerbach, wherein Marx stresses the physical side of conscious "awareness" (*Anschauung*--commonly mistranslated as the more passive "contemplation"), and the conscious side of physical human activity.[373] As argued later in *The German Ideology:*

---

[372] Thanking Mehring for sending him a copy of his recent study *The Lessing Legend*, Engels comments upon his discussion of ideology in an appendix on historical materialism writing:

> Ideology is a process accomplished by the so-called thinker consciously, it is true, but with a false consciousness (*Die Ideologie ist ein Prozß, der zwar mit Bewußtsein vom sogenannten Denker vollzogen wird, aber mit einem falschen Bewußtsein*). The real motive forces impelling him remain unknown to him; otherwise it simply would not be an ideological process. Hence, he imagines false or seeming motive forces. Because it is a process of though he drives its form as well as its content from pure thought, either his own or that of his predecessors. He works with mere thought material, which he accepts without examination as the product of thought, and does not investigate further for a more remote source independent of thought; indeed, this is a matter of course to him, because, as all action is mediated by thought, it appears to him to be ultimately based upon thought

—dated July 14, 1893 the letter is reprinted in *The Marx-Engels Reader*, ed. Robert C. Tucker, second ed. (New York; London: W. W. Norton and Company, 1978), 765-767.

[373] This is clarified in thesis five: "Feuerbach, not satisfied with abstract thinking, appeals to sensuous awareness (*Anschauung*); but he does not conceive sensuousness as practical, human-sensuous activity (*praktische menschlich-sinnliche Tätigkeit*)—Marx/Engels, *Collected Works*, vol. 5, 4—I have altered the translation slightly.

> Humans are the producers of their conceptions, ideas, etc., that is, real, active people, as they are conditioned by a definite development of their productive forces and of the intercourse corresponding to these, up to its furthest forms. Consciousness (*das Bewußtsein*) can never be anything else than conscious being (*das bewusste Sein*), and the being of humans is their actual life process.[374]

This has quite rightly led subsequent Marxists to stress the materialism of consciousness and address its practical manifestations—rituals, practices, and most notably, language—over dis-embodied ideas or forms of knowledge.[375] Yet, as Raymond Williams argues in one of the best exegeses of the text, there are a number of passages in which consciousness and material activity are described as conjoined, others in which they are separated.[376] Such discrepancies are to be expected, given that the text was never edited by Marx and Engels for publication (up until its first full publication in 1932, Marxists had only a 1926 abridged version to work with); but they have inadvertently given rise to conflicting views on the subject of consciousness within the Marxist tradition, and class consciousness in particular.

---

[374] From *The German Ideology*, in Ibid., 36—I have altered the translation slightly to account for the fact that when referring to the active agents in this text, Marx tends to use the word *Menschen*, which is gender-neutral, but is commonly translated as "men." Much of the exclusionary language found in anthologies of Marx's works is the product of translators, not Marx himself.

[375] Marx writes:

> The 'mind' is from the outset afflicted with the curse of being 'burdened' with matter, which here makes its appearance in the form of agitated layers of air, sounds, in short, of language. Language is as old as consciousness, lanugage is practical, real consciousness that exists for other men as well, and only therefore does it also exist for me…Consciousness is, therefore, from the very beginning a social product, and remains so as long as men exist at all (ibid., 44).

[376] Raymond Williams, "Marx on Culture (1983)," in *What I Came to Say* (London: Hutchinson Radius, 1989), 195-225. Therein he writes:

> [i]t is in the movement from a sense of the simultaneous and fundamentally indissoluble human process of conception and labor, labor and conception, to the narrower polemical sense of what is in effect a two-stage process [...] that all the difficulties of Marx's own and many Marxist conceptions of culture can be seen to begin (208).

Rehmann also detects a contrast within *The German Ideology* between a "neutral" and "critical" conception—see *Theories of Ideology*, 21-60.

The earliest theoretical formulation of the concept was Lukács', first outlined in a 1920 essay entitled "Class Consciousness" that was subsequently published in his 1923 collection *History and Class Consciousness (Geschichte und Klassenbewußtsein*), number nine in Malik-Verlag's Kleine Revolutionäre Bibliothek series.[377] Lukács presents class consciousness as conceptual world-view (*Weltanschauung)* in the essay, arguing that, due to its position vis-a-vis the material (capitalist) relations of production, a working class perspective is able (potentially) to see through the illusions of capitalism more effectively than another other social class. In other words, class consciousness is the result of a specific standpoint—albeit a theoretical one:

> By relating consciousness to the whole of society it becomes possible to infer the thoughts and feelings which men would have in a particular situation if they were able to assess both it and the interests arising from it in their impact on immediate action and on the whole structure of society…class consciousness consists in fact of the appropriate and rational reactions 'imputed' (*zugerechnet*) to a particular typical position in the process of production.[378]

Class consciousness for Lukács is not the sum of real thoughts or feelings based on workers' immediate experience of daily life, but instead a virtual, "class-pertinent" perspective based upon an objective, theoretical analysis of capital that can be used to gauge the effectiveness of political action and spur workers forward.[379] It is Lukács who contrasts this perspective to the "false" consciousness of the bourgeoisie (though always placing the qualifier false in quotations to signal its inadequacy as a measure of

---

[377] The essay originally appeared in *Internationale Literatur,* a Comintern publication. It is likely that Malik retained the book through the efforts of the series' general editor, Julian Gumperz, who met Lukács as the Erste Marxistische Arbeitswoche in May 1923, an important forerunner to the later Institute for Social Research. Gertrued Alexander also participated. For more on Gumperz, see n. 333.
[378] Lukács, *History and Class Consciousness*, 51.
[379] I draw here upon Erik Olin Wright's discussion of the text in *Classes*—see n. 56 in the introduction.

value).[380] For this, his understanding of class consciousness has been subsequently criticized for replicating the supposed "elitism" of Leninism, or the idea that actual workers will never move beyond a "trade-union consciousness" on their own, necessitating the imposition of "Social-Democratic consciousness" into the workers' movement from an outside source (either revolutionary intellectuals or the revolutionary party).[381] That Lukács consciously modeled his conception on Lenin's text is made clear in the preface he wrote for a 1967 republication of the text,[382]; and while in retrospect we might be wary of this connection, given what we know of the afterlife this formulation played in the creation of Marxist-Leninist dogma, at the time it would not have appeared so misguided—firstly, because of the authority of Lenin within the

[380] According to Lukács:

> The barrier which converts the class consciousness of the bourgeoisie into 'false' consciousness is objective; it is the class situation itself…The class consciousness of the bourgeoisie may well be able to reflect all the problems of organization entailed by its hegemony [*Herrschaft*] and by the capitalist transformation and penetration of total production. But it becomes obscured as soon as it is called upon to face problems that remain within its jurisdiction, but which point beyond the limits of capitalism

—*History and Class Consciousness*, 54.

[381] Based largely on arguments Lenin made in his 1902 essay *What is to be done?* before the split in the Russian Social Democratic Labor Party that led to the formation of the Bolsheviks. The quote typically cited is the following:

> We have said that there could not have been Social-Democratic consciousness among the workers. It would have to be brought to them from without. The history of all countries shows that the working class, exclusively by its own effort, is able to develop only trade-union consciousness, i.e. the conviction that it is necessary to combine in unions, fight the employers, and strive to compel the government to pass necessary labor legislation, etc. The theory of socialism, however, grew out of the philosophic, historical, and economic theories elaborated by educated representatives of the propertied classes, by intellectuals. By their social status the founders of modern scientific socialism, Marx and Engels, themselves belonged to the bourgeois intelligensia

—Lenin, *Collected Works*, vol. 5 (London: Lawrence and Wishart, 1970), 375.

[382] Lukács explains therein that, in using the term "imputed," he "meant the same thing as Lenin in *What is to be done?* when he maintained that socialist class consciousness would differ from the spontaneously emerging trade-union consciousness in that it would be implanted in the workers' 'from outside'," *History and Class Consciousness*, xvii. As part of the self-critique provided in this preface, Lukács goes on to refute the "contemplative" aspect of this early formulation of class consciousness, writing "[i]n my presentation it would indeed be a miracle if this 'imputed' consciousness could turn into revolutionary praxis" (ibid., xix). His next book was devoted to Lenin—*Lenin: A Study on the Unity of his Thought* (1924).

Communist milieu; secondly, because, as scholars such as Lars Lih have shown, it was an formulation generally accepted by Social Democrats before WWI and thus would not have appeared as a deviation from the Marxist tradition.[383] This may not have won over Lukács' contemporary critics, but it did mean he was attempting to put into theory principles that had been guiding socialist politics for some time.[384]

In the end, Lukács likes class consciousness to an ideology, one with which the working class can fulfill its ultimate goal.

> The proletariat cannot liberate itself as a class without simultaneously abolishing class society as such. For that reason, its consciousness…must both lay bare the nature of society and achieve an increasingly inward fusion of theory and practice. 'Ideology' for the proletariat is no banner to follow into battle, nor is it a cover for its true objectives: it is the objective and weapon itself."[385]

And it is clear from the text that, for Lukács, this is not a matter of class identity. Quite the contrary, in fact:

The proletariat only perfects itself by annihilating and transcending itself, by creating the

---

[383] As Lih demonstrates in his extremely in-depth study of *What is to be done*? Lenin's formulation came from Karl Kautsky, the theoretical leader of the SPD, specifically 1901 article Kautsky published in *Die Neue Zeit* criticizing changes to the program of the Social-Democratic Party of Austria that had recently been made at a conference it held in Vienna. Victor Adler, founding member and leader of the Austrian party, wanted to add a passage to the program stressing the subjective element of socialism, but Kautsky argues that Alder's passage falsely presents "socialist consciousness as the necessary and direct result of proletarian class struggle." Instead, Kausky mantains,

> Modern socialist consciousness can only arise on the basis of deep scientific insight [...] [and] the bearer [*Träger*] of science is not the proletariat but the bourgeois intelligentsia. In individual members of this stratum modern socialism arose, and through them it was imparted to gifted proletarians who subsequently carried it into the class struggle of the proletariat where conditions permitted. The socialist consciousness is thus something that has been brought into the class struggle of the proletariat from the outside, not something that has emerged directly from it

—"The Revision of the Austrian Social Democracy's Program (*Die Revision des Programms der Sozialdemokratie in Österrich*)," *Die Neue Zeit*, vol. 20, no. 1 (1901): 79-80. See Lars Lih, *Lenin Rediscovered: What is to be done? in Context* (Leiden: Brill, 2005) for further background and details, especially 631-635. For background on the Kautsky's critique and the relationship between SPD and its sister party in Austria, see Steenson, *After Marx, Before Lenin*, 190-6.

[384] For an overview of the critics Lukács faced in Germany and Soviet Russia, which led to defense he wrote in 1925-6, see Georg Lukács, *A Defense of History and Class Consciousness: Tailism and the Dialectic*, trans. Esther Leslie (London; New York: Verso, 2000).

[385] Lukács, *History and Class Consciousness*, 70.

> *classless society through the successful conclusion of its own class struggle*…it is not just a battle waged against an external enemy, the bourgeoisie. It is equally the struggle of the proletariat *against itself*: against the devastating and degrading effects of the capitalist system upon its class consciousness[386] (original emphasis)

If there is something like an "identity politics" implied here, it is one that serves as a means to an end, rather than a goal in itself. Clearly Lukács' conception of class consciousness does not, therefore, constitute a "neutral" form of ideology, that is, a shared mentality, cultural practice, mode of discourse, or common ritual that serves to coalesce individuals into a collective subject or social group. It is instead closer to "critical" theories of ideology that stress the distorting power of capitalism and originate in Marx's discussion of "commodity fetishism" in chapter *Capital*. There Marx presents a re-tooled application of the inverse model of ideology presented in *The German Ideology*, arguing that the mystification of material relations is a direct outgrowth and operating principle of the capitalist mode of production, turning commodities into "sensuous supersensuous (*sinnlich übersinnlich*)" things with two faces, use-value and exchange-value, that are both *real,* if not always visible.[387] Ideology,

---

[386] Ibid., 80.

[387] It is a common misconception that Marx is referring to some innate quality of a particular thing, or the appeal of surface qualities or power of advertising when he speaks of "commodity fetishism," when, in fact, it is nothing of the sort. It is rather a *real* abstraction carried out daily through capital's reproduction as a *system*. This is well summarized by Wiiliam Pietz:

> A factory machine, a wheat field, a pension fund, and other 'things' reckoned as capital by accountants and political economists are fetishes, in Marx's view, not in their physical existence or concrete functions per se but in their reality as material forms…of a distinctive type of social system. The truth of capital, for Marx, is found in its social essence as an organizing principle, as the universal form for social processes aiming at the formation and accumulation of precisely this sort of materialized value: that odd type of 'sensuous supersensuous thing'…called capital. Fetishism is the term Marx used to characterize the capitalist social process as a whole

—see "Fetishism and Materialism: The Limits of Theory in Marx," in *Fetishism as Cultural Discourse*, ed. Emily Apter and William Pietz (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 1993), 129-30). For more on what I refer to as the "inverse model of ideology," see Rehmann's discussion of *The German Ideology* in *Theories of Ideology*, 29-42.

according to this conception, is a universal condition that affects all classes, or, in its stronger versions, is likened to an *unconscious* relationship to social reality (or even "lived reality" itself).[388] While this conception has proved widely influential, it has nonetheless been criticized by social historians for its tendency to essentialize ideology, making it impervious to class struggle and blind to exogenous ideologies concerning race, gender, and sexuality.

In a recent essay that engages with this debate, Beverley Best differentiates between the two conceptions, defining the critical view as interested in the "organic dimension of the capitalist mode of production…which functions to stabilize and aid in the reproduction of the exploitative social relations that are the substance of capital," and the neutral view in differing "modalities" through which subjects become defined or self-defining groups.[389] More importantly, she argues that

> [t]he critical formulation of the ideological operation in capitalism…does not subsume or displace a neutral sense of the ideological operation in the context of

---

[388] Terry Eagleton sums up this move as one based in the difference between *The German Ideology* and *Capital:*

> whereas in *The German Ideology* ideology was a matter of not seeing things as they really were, it is a question in *Capital* of reality itself being duplicitous and deceitful. Ideology can thus no longer be unmasked simply by a clear-eyed attention to the 'real life-process,' since that process, rather like the Freudian unconscious, puts out a set of semblances which are somehow structural to it

—Eagleton, *Ideology: An Introduction* (New York; London: Verso, 1991), 84. Although I would argue that Eagleton makes too much of this difference when it comes to Marx, he is certainly right when it comes to later Marxists. The apparent "unconscious" effect of ideology is one reason why Marxist theorists such as Althusser have found the psychoanalytic theories of Freud and Lacan to be a vital source for their re-formulation of the concept of ideology—see, for example, Althusser's foundational essay "Marxism and Humanism (1965)," in *For Marx*, trans. Ben Brewster (London; New York: Verso, 2005), 219-238, which he later reputed in favor of a more "Gramscian" conception of ideology in *On the Reproduction of Capitalism* written after 1968 but not published (except for one essay in 1970) until 1995, in French, and 2014 in English—see Louis Althusser, *On the Reproduction of Capitalism: Ideology and Ideological State Apparatuses*, trans. G. M. Goshgarian (London; New York: Verso, 2014). For an updated version a Lacano-Marxist take on the issue, see Samo Tomšič *The Capitalist Unconscious*: *Marx and Lacan* (London; New York: Verso, 2015).

[389] Beverley Best, "Distilling a Value Theory of Ideology from Volume Three of *Capital*," *Historical Materialism*, vol. 23, no. 3 (2015), 105.

> capitalist societies…Rather, the critical and neutral formulations of the ideological operation are *distinct but articulated*; in capitalist reproduction, the two modes of ideology operate within distinct ontological and epistemological registers, and a comprehensive analysis of capitalist reproduction requires capturing both this distinction and the mode of their articulation[390] (her emphasis).

In contrast to Fore, Best defends a "depth" model of ideology that does not lose sight of the reality and importance of surface phenomena. She does this by means of what she calls the "perceptual economy of capital," or "the particular essence-appearance dynamic that is immanent to capital."[391] (116). Operating at a high level of abstraction, it nonetheless accounts for the most mundane aspects of everyday life—our conception of "wages" as the marker of labor's value, our notion of worker as the primary means of existence, our reduction of human beings to economic data, and so on. As she explains, "the perceptual economy of capital establishes the foundation, building blocks, or 'raw material' for the development of collective imaginaries, common sense, and so on."[392] And it is precisely this "hidden" aspect of reality, I believe, that Lukács' formulation of class consciousness seeks to expose *in theoretical terms*. What I have been arguing is that Grosz realism seeks to do so *in visual terms*.

Ultimately, the Lukácsian version of class consciousness fails to account for the operation of Grosz's drawings because it leaves out the active mode of reception they relied upon to "work." As I have demonstrated, images like those in *Das Gesicht* operate

---

[390] Ibid., 106. Crucial to Best's model is the historically specific and limited purview of the critical formulation, which, she argues "can only address those appearances that are generated as structural components of the mode of exploitation and domination immanent to capital" (Ibid., 116). Far from making the critical formulation weaker, addressing its limitation strengthens its competency, since it no longer need to account for all and every form of ideology present in a given society.
[391] Ibid., 116.
[392] Ibid., 106.

in accordance with dual dimensions of experience: the mundane and the spectacular, the "meat-world" and the image-world. They called upon viewers to compare aspects of one with the other, and their political charge emerged in the activity of this comparison—or so it was hoped. They therefore act upon a conception of class consciousness more akin to Gramsci's description of Marxism as

> a criticism of 'common sense,' basing itself initially, however, on common sense in order to demonstrate that 'everyone' is a philosopher and that it is not a question of introducing from scratch a scientific form of thought into everyone's individual life, but of renovating and making 'critical' an already existing activity[393]

Elsewhere Gramsci speaks of the "contradictory consciousness" workers carry around with them and suggests that both influence their actions and point of view.[394] To bring the two together into a cohesive, or at the very least manageable, class consciousness, Communists had to engage with directly with these contradictions. Rather than coming in full form from outside, class consciousness would need to be fashioned out of existing conceptions, habits, and experiences.

This is the operative principle behind Grosz's drawings, which, due to the public trials resulting from he and Herzefelde were subjected to, would have been known to a

---

[393] Part of Gramsci's extensive notes, this passage can be found in *Selections from the Prison Notebooks*, ed. and trans. Quintin Hoare and Geoffrey Nowell Smith (New York: International Publisers, 1971), 330-1.

[394] From another note in his prison notebooks:

> The active man-in-the-mass has a practical activity but no clear theoretical consciousness of his practical activity which nonetheless involves understand the world in so far as it transforms it. His theoretical consciousness can…be historically in opposition to his activity. One might almost say that he has two theoretical consciousnesses (or one contradictory consciousness): one which is implicit in his activity and which in reality unities him with all fellow workers in the practical transformation of the real world; and one superficially explicit or verbal, which he has inherited from the past and uncritically absorbed

—reprinted from Gramsci's prison notebooks in *The Antonio Gramsci Reader: Selection Writings, 1916-1935*, ed. David Forgacs (London: Lawrence and Wishart, 1988), 326.

wide audience by 1923, if not from personal experience then through second-hand descriptions of the *kind of imagery* Grosz produced. Embracing Grosz realism as Communist graphic satire, the KPD put this principle to work in their own publications—though they also employed a more direct approach as well, utilizing images by Grosz and like-minded former Dadaists for posters and demonstration placards. Several images from *Das Geischt* were likewise transferred to slides for use as visual aids during Communist educational events.[395] A report in *Die rote Fahne* describes a "Red evening (*Roter Abend)*" in December 1921, during which a comrade named Schüller contrasted rhetoric typical of a right-wing, nationalist outlook—the dignity of the fatherland, the superiority of its people *(Volk)*, the honor of its military, that kind of thing—with Grosz's satirical renditions of similar themes.[396] The contrast was meant to expose the contradiction between words and "reality." A similar presentation took place the following January.[397] Later that same year, Gertrud Alexander comments that Herzfelde presented slides of *Das Gesicht* with commentary during the welcoming meeting of the party's national education conference (*Reichsbildungskonferenz*).[398] During the conference itself, Karl August Wittfogel, who later became a prominent member and theorist for the KPD's agitprop department, proposed broadening the use of visual

---

[395] An internal report from the KPD's department in charge of education (*Bildungsarbeit*) from 1922-3 notes: With the publication of a series of photographs of the famous political caricatures of George Gross and the arrangement of film evenings together with the National Committee for Worker Assistance for Soviet Russia (*Reichskomitee der Arbeieterhilfe für Sowjetrussland*), we have begun to put these modern visual aids in the service of propaganda—SAPMO RY1/I2/707/4: 89

[396] Notice appears as "Roter Abend des 13 Bezirks," *Die rote Fahne* (December 10, 1921).

[397] Anonymous, "Das Gesicht der herrschenden Klasse," *Die rote Fahne* (January 12, 1922).

[398] G. G. L., "Kunstabend zur Begrüßung der Reichsbildungskonferenz," *Die rote Fahne* (August 7, 1922). All three of these events are discussed by McCloskey as well—see *George Grosz and the Communist Party*, 95-98.

images for education purposes, specifically as an "orientational agent (*Anschauungsmittel*)."[399] This kind of orientational training (*Anschauungsunterricht*), satirized in a 1918 cartoon by Holtz in *Die rote Fahne*'s pages [**Fig. 2.79**], became a frequent aspect of the KPD's cultural initiatives after 1923 in combination with the production of a wider-ranging variety of Communist-oriented publications. It was during this same 1922 conference that the creation of satire magazine (*Witzblatt*) was suggested, setting in motion the emergence of *Der Knüppel.*

Conclusion

In an autobiographical essay published in February 1924, Grosz discusses his development since Dada in the following manner:

> Today I know (and with me all the other founders of German Dadaism as well) that our only mistake was to have taken so-called art seriously at all ... We saw the insane end products of the prevailing social order and burst out laughing. We did not yet realize that this lunacy was based on a system. The approaching revolution (*nahende Revolution*) has brought with it the realization of this system [...] Today I no longer hate people indiscriminately, today I hate their bad institutions and the rulers who defend these institutions. And if I have a hope, it is that these institutions and the human class that supports them disappear. This hope serves my work ... So whether my work is called art depends on the question of whether one believes that the future belongs to the working class.[400]

---

[399] Cited by Gertrud Alexander in her report the day after—"Die erste Reichskonferenz der Bildungsobleute," *Die rote Fahne* (August 8, 1922). Wittfogel, member of the German youth movement (*Wandervogel*) before WWI, first joined the USPD in 1918 and then the KPD in 1920. Close to Karl Korsch, he likewise participated in the Erste Marxistische Arbeitswoche, was a member of the Institute of Social Research through the 1920s, and published his first book, *Die Wissenschaft der bürgerlichen Gesellschaft: Eine Marxistische Untersuchung* in 1922 with Malik-Verlag—number eight in the Kleine Revolutionäre Bibliothek series. In 1933 he was captured trying to escape to Switzerland but released after an international effort the following year. After the publication of the Molotov-Ribbentrop pact in 1939, Wittfogel broke with Communist movement and subsequently became a vocal critic of "real existing socialism," both in Europe and Asia.He is best known in the US as a scholar of China, and for his 1957 book, *Oriental Despotism: A Comparative Study of Total Power.* For further background, see Neil Smith, "Rehabilitating a Renegade? The Geography and Politics of Karl August Wittfogel," *Dialectical Anthropology*, vol. 12 (1987): 127-136.

[400] George Grosz, "Execution [?] (*Abwicklung*)," *Das Kunstblatt*, vol. 8, no. 2 (February 1924), 37-38—the essay was originally written for a catalog of Grosz's work to accompany a 1923 exhibition in Vienna.

This chapter has closely followed the development Grosz outlines, charting the transformation of a Dadaist sensibility into a Grosz realism that became *Das Gesicht*, an important precursor of Communist graphic satire. The class-conscious outlook presented in this graphic series, timed to the political turmoil of the immediate post-WWI period and in dialogue with an image-world of past and present social types, attempts to steer hatred of the system into solidarity with the international Communist. It does so not through the promotion of a proletarian identity, but instead by propagating a revolutionary outlook and cultivating a sense of solidarity in opposition to the ruling class. The sole form of identification on offer is a "negative" one, defined by what readers of *Das Gesicht* are not. Leaving open the question of class identity was important because it muddled Grosz's own class position as a bourgeois artist. To become a Communist caricaturist, he had to present himself as a bourgeois traitor and recast his "art" as something else, something the KPD could use to further the movement. This something was "agitprop."

According to Zervigon, the aesthetic debates that arose in the Communist milieu during these early years of the Weimar Republic resulted in limits being placed on what the party would consider "art," but opened up the boundaries of what might count as "agitprop."[401] After 1923 and the on-set of a period of "relative stability," agitational and propaganda material became increasingly important. Communist parties were

[401] This was crucial for John Heartfield, Zervigon argues, insofar as "[t]hese conditions enabled [Heartfield] to make his most valuable contribution to interwar European culture: political propaganda based in the aesthetic invention of Germany's avant-garde," *John Heartfield*, 194. McCloskey likes argues that "[f]rom 1921 on, the propagandistic and agitational value of Grosz's work began to be recognized on a wider scale," *George Grosz and the Communist Party*, 95.

directed to downplay insurrectionary policies/tactics and were eventually re-cast into highly centralized, top-down organizations subservient to Soviet policy (albeit it with significant pushback and opposition on the part of minority factions in the KPD). Concomitant with this alteration in party activity, calls for the establishment of an "alternative mass media" tasked with reaching a broader audience within and outside the working class were put forward and acted upon, following the model inaugurated by Willi Münzenberg's International Workers' Aid *(Internationale Arbeiterhilfe*) organization. It was in league with this effort that Grosz and his comrades became regular caricaturists for KPD publications.

Chapter Three--Deploying Communist Graphic Satire: *Der Knüppel* in the Weimar Image-World

Introduction

In June 1924 readers of *Die rote Fahne* were introduced to the members of the Red Group (*Rote Gruppe*), an association of revolutionary artists aligned with the KPD. Their manifesto, republished in the paper, outlines a ten-point program that insists upon the political value of art. "The members of this group," it states,

> are imbued with the conviction that a good communist is a communist first and foremost and only after that a specialist worker, an artist, etc. and furthermore that all his knowledge and skill is only an instrument in the service of the class struggle.[402]

---

[402] Ten points are listed in the manifesto as areas of activity for the group:

1. The organization of ideologically uniform propaganda evenings.
2. Practical assistance to be given to all revolutionary activities.
3. A stand must be taken against survivals of the Free German ideology in proletarian institutions (such as the romanticism of songs about the fatherland).
4. Artistic educational work to be conducted in the party districts, models to be proposed for wall newspapers, instructions to be given for the preparation of posters and banners for use in demonstrations, etc., and support to be given to the as yet dilettantish attempts of party members to proclaim in words and pictures their will to accomplish the revolution.
5. The organization of traveling exhibitions.
6. Ideological and practical educational work among the revolutionary artists themselves.
7. Counter-revolutionary cultural manifestations must be opposed, and a position taken up against them.
8. Work must be done among the bourgeois artists to cancel out or neutralize their efforts.
9. Bourgeois art exhibitions must be utilized for propaganda purposes.
10. The students at art academies should be contacted with a view to revolutionizing them.

–"The Red Group: Manifesto of the Communist Artists Collective (*Rote Gruppe: Manifest der Vereinigung Kommunistischer Künstler),*" *Die rote Fahne* (13 June 1924). Grosz is listed as the chair of the group, with Heartfield as secretary. This translation is taken from the forthcoming collection, *Communism and the Avant-Garde in Weimar Germany: A Selection of Documents*, trans. Ben Fowkes (Leiden: Brill).

Despite this public airing of their revolutionary commitment, the former Dadaists who established the *Rote Gruppe* did not at first present themselves as "artist-workers," the way many later Communist artists would. Instead, a group portrait drawn by George Grosz that appears in an October 1924 satirical election pamphlet portrays them as crazed lunatics [**Fig. 3.1**]. Cavorting pell-mell in a strange, unfurnished interior, Grosz appears at left in suit and hat, drilling with a broom, while Heartfield, standing on his hands, cries "Hurrah!" through the soles of his boots. In the mid-foreground, Rudolf Schlichter seems to be in the process of hanging himself from a gaslight chandelier. Three others wrestle with their clothes (and each other) in the far background, and Otto Schalmausen, dressed as a sailor, pushes a scooter toward the wall. At bottom right, a partially hidden man plays the former imperial anthem on a gramophone; the lyrics trail off to the right, leading us to an unidentified figure in the process of defecating out the window. Above his bare, pink ass dangles a toy figure of a German nationalist, Prussian flag in hand. The accompanying caption provides a context for the disparate and deranged activities on display.

> Every day the members of the Red Group practice standing on their heads, toppling over, crawling and drinking beer, in order to meet the heavy demands of a democratic citizen. Some of them even plan on pursuing a career working for the state and are already unable—out of enthusiasm for the Republic—to keep from thinking about the profitable ministerial posts to come.

The message is crude but effective: to be a bourgeois artist, favorable to the Republic, is to be deranged. Here the leaders of the *Rote Gruppe* declare their allegiance to the German Communist Party (KPD) by ridiculing themselves.[403]

---

[403] Both McCloskey and Lewis discuss this portrait, but do not analyze it in connection with the entire pamphlet in which it appears—see *George Grosz and the Communist party,* 110-112 and *George Grosz: Art*

Presenting themselves in this manner was in large part a promotional effort. These artists had recently been put in charge of the KPD's official satirical magazine, *The Truncheon* (*Der Knüppel*), the premier showcase for Communist graphic satire. First published in the summer of 1924, *Der Knüppel* became a regular conduit for the *Rote Gruppe* and in time came to influence the visual culture of the party more broadly. Its emergence marked a significant shift in German Communist visual culture that coincided with a period of dramatic fluctuation in party policy. Forced to compete with an ever-expanding field of commercial illustrated publications for the attention of working class audiences, the KPD needed a product that would that catch the eye of viewers and aid the party. The contents had to be both entertaining and tendentious, capable of channeling anti-republican sentiment into the class-conscious outlook of a Communist. As discussed in the previous chapter, graphic works produced by Grosz and others affiliated with the Malik-Verlag seemed to offer a solution, and so an unusual alliance was struck between a group of avant-garde artists and the largest Communist party outside of Russia. This chapter examines the parameters of their relationship, with particular attention paid to how *Der Knüppel* was intended to operate in conjunction with party campaigns, other media forms, and changing conceptions of class consciousness.

Presenting the Red Truncheon

The inaugural collaboration between the *Rote Gruppe* and the KPD dates to the early summer of 1924 and the publication of *The Red Truncheon* (*Der rote Knüppel*), an

---

and Politics, 118-119.

election pamphlet produced to coincide with the May 1924 Reichstag elections. The KPD's election campaign would be the first true test of its power after a five-month period of illegality that followed the debacle of the "German October."[404] Regional representatives from around the country were called to a conference in Berlin to coordinate election materials, and the party produced an impressive array of publications, including: 13 separate guides for lecturers (*Referentenmaterialen*) (30,500 copies); 8 different posters (380,000 copies total); 13 different flyer designs (*Flugblätter*) (5,330,000 copies total); 456 transparencies for film viewings (*Diapositive für Kinopropaganda*); 30 copies of a series of 80 slides to accompany; and 20,000 copies of *Der Rote Knüppel*.[405]

In addition to a generic version of the pamphlet, featuring a porcine caricature of Ebert by Grosz [**Fig. 3.2**], regional variations were designed as well. The front cover of the edition for Thuringia depicts workers forced to undergo a gauntlet of soldiers to vote [**Fig. 3.3**], the Bavarian edition a caricature of Ludendorff decked in medals and a swastika-emblazoned top hat [**Fig. 3.4**]—both by Grosz. The visual trope of the red truncheon that became a prominent feature of the masthead of *Der Knüppel* and served as a metonym for the magazine is introduced in these pamphlets—or rather, introduces itself. On an inside page of the generic version of *Der rote Knüppel* the truncheon addresses the reader directly:

---

[404] For background on this period, see Harald Jentsch, *Die KPD und der 'Deutsche Oktober' 1923* (Rostock: Ingo Koch Verlag, 2005). Further details can be found in *Deutscher Oktober 1923. Ein Revolutionsplan und sein Scheitern*, eds. Bernhard H. Bayerlein, Leonid G. Babicenko, Fridrich I. Firsov, and Aleksandr Vatlin (Berlin: Aufbau Verlag, 2003), a collection of primary documents.
[405] These preparations are discussed in detail in a report presented to the central committee at the 10th party congress in 1925, see—SAMPO RY1/I2/707/1: 38-49.

> Look, my friends, I the red truncheon have become an election campaigner (*Wahlagitator*). Surpised? Me too. I had a completely different job—last October…I wanted to deal with the capitalists, profiteers, and landlords once and for all. They have long had it coming (*Die Kerle haben mich schon lange nötig*). But thanks to your frugality and meekness, proletarians, I have come into this important work instead […]
>
> But I cannot speak your language, at best only my own truncheon-language (*Knüppelsprache*)—which packs a punch (*die schlägt gut ein*). My colleague the white truncheon has already been at work on you for a while. If he hasn't convinced you who to vote for, then you're hopeless.
>
> What I'm saying is: vote for the Communists! They are decent fellows (*Kerle*), firstly because they are illegal, second because, in addition to intellectual powers, they have strong fists—and something in those fists. But if you think that your'e going to be able to clear away [General von] Seeckt and [Hugo] Stinnes with a ballot, then you're, well...I better not use a bad word.

The truncheon, associated with the police and forces of reaction—frequently the subject of satire, as in this example from *Die rote Fahne* [**Fig.3.5**]—is transformed into and emblem of working class defiance. And in addition to being depicted as an object of use [**Fig. 3.6**], the red truncheon is often shown as an actor itself [**Fig. 3.7**]. Indeed, in these early pamphlets and later in *Der Knüppel*, the character of the red truncheon becomes a symbol of proletarian opposition [**Fig. 3.8**]. Individual drawings in the pamphlets were subsequently reworked for the magazine and immediately reproduced as posters for the campaign. Two images by Rudolf Schlichter are good examples: the first shows a giant worker kicking off a cliff a bound assortment of reactionaries [**Fig. 3.9**] that includes Noske, Ebert, Hitler, Stinnes, and various right-wing generals; the other depicts the Deutsche Michel as a member of the proletariat, bearing a swastika upon his back atop which sit the competing right-wing forces [**Fig. 3.10**]—the caption implores him to throw off the "hooked yoke" (*Hakenjoch*) that oppresses him, a clear

play on Christ's bearing of the cross and the German term for the swastika, *Hakenkreuz* or "hooked cross."

The elision between the right wing and the Social Democrats that features prevalently in *Der rote Knüppel* may appear strange at first glance but reflects the sharp re-orientation of party policy that occurred during this period. The failure of the postwar revolutionary upsurge in the fall of 1923, exacerbated by the Ruhr Crisis that year and months of hyperinflation, resulted in acrimonious factional struggle within the KPD and a refutation of united-front tactics (*Einheitsfrontpolitik*). Debated by international delegates at the third congress of the Comintern in the summer of 1921, and drawn up in the recognition that to garner support for revolutionary ends the KPD had to cooperate with trade union officials and the SPD to win reforms in the short term, the united front subsequently became the guiding political/organizational strategy of the KPD until 1923.[406] After the "German October," the far more instransigent and sectarian policy towards other forces on the Left won out, as the left wing of the party, led by Ruth Fischer and Arkady Maslow, took over the leadership in early 1924. This resulted in the end of the "united front" strategy, purges, and, most significantly, the recasting of the SPD as counter-revoultionary "social fascists." The new position was spelled out at at the ninth KPD party congress held in April 1924.

[406] As originally formulated by the Executive Committee of the Communist International, the united front policy called for the "greatest possible unity of all workers' organisations in every practical action against the united capitalists", while assuring revolutionary socialists and other participating currents "absolute autonomy" and "freedom in presenting their point of view"--for background see John Riddell's forward to the full transcript of the proceedings of the Comintern's third congress, *To the Masses. Proceedings of the Third Congress of the Communist International, 1921*, ed. and trans. John Riddell (Chicago: Haymarket Books, 2015).

> Social democracy has been so thoroughly exposed that even a temporary cooperation of the KPD with Social Democratic leaders is out of the question. It is a vital matter for the development of the revolution that this most dangerous counter-revolutionary party be annihilated.[407]

Frustration and a growing impatience with incremental struggles for social and economic reforms fueled support for the left turn. An estimated seventy percent of KPD members were unemployed at the beginning of 1924, and the five-month period of illegality imposed on the party in November 1923 only further consolidated a sectarian outlook. The majority of delegates to the ninth party congress belonged to the Left; Fischer and Maslow's influence likewise dominated in the Berlin-Brandenburg district, consistently a stronghold for "ultra-left" deviations. It is therefore not at all surprising that *Der Knüppel*, published in the midst of this shift, took a strident tone against the SPD, ridiculing its leadership and casting them as murderers, traitors, and worse.

The leftward shift of 1924 seems to have fit with the perspective of the *Knüppel* artists as well. Grosz, for instance, had already lambasted the "united front" strategy in 1923, representing it as an absurd "unity" of fat, bourgeois Social Democrat and an emaciated worker [**Fig. 3.11**]. In the context of 1924, *Der Knüppel* amplified the slogans of the party through images to aid in propaganda efforts. Indeed, *Der Knüppel* presented itself as opposed to the two faces of "fascism," as evidenced in a promotional poster for the magazine that presents Ebert and Hitler against the red truncheon [**Fig. 3.12**].

Communist Entertainments

---

[407] Quoted in Fowkes, *Communism in Germany*, 118.

During the earlier united front period the Communist press expanded, and the role of Communist newspapers changed. In addition to influencing how the party conducted itself toward other parties and organizations, the implementation of this strategy likewise resulted in an attempt to engage more diverse audiences through publications and cultural initiatives. These differed from pre-WWI SPD efforts by engaging with new media and entertainment, albeit still beholden in many ways to the *Blidung* orientation discussed in chapter one. It was the organizational aptitude and success of Willi Münzenberg's efforts on behalf of the *Internationale Arbeiterhilfe* (IAH) that changed all this and established a model for an alternative, Communist mass media.[408] Münzenberg, with the financial backing of the Comintern, created an array of media outlets across Western Europe in support of IAH initiatives. Promotional materials created by well-known artists such as Käthe Kollwitz and Hans Baluschek, special screenings of Soviet films such as *Potemkin*, and the publication of illustrated magazines like *Sichel und Hammer* [**Fig. 3.13**] played a key role in Müzenberg's effort to win members of the working class to the international Communist movement and to establish a sympathetic constituency that would support the movement and its aligned organizations (whether overt or covert). Sustaining a constituency built on "solidarity" with the working class and its plight required a different mode of address than building

[408] Münzenberg's life and activities under the aegis of the Comintern continue to be a subject of scholarly debate, but an informative overview can be found in Helmut Gruber, "Willi Münzenberg's German Communist Propaganda Empire 1921-1933," *The Journal of Modern History*, vol. 38, no. 3 (September 1966): 278-297. Biographies of Münzenberg tend to be highly partisan, with Babette Gross's *Willi Münzenberg. A Political Biography*, trans. Marian Jackson (Lansing: Michigan State University Press, 1974) representing a "left" interpretation, and McMeekin's *The Red Millionaire*, a "right" rejoinder--see introduction, n. 16.

a revolutionary organization of workers built on allegiance and active involvement. This in turn necessitated a re-conception of the Communist press.

Party newspapers traditionally served as an organizing tool as much as a means of propagating a revolutionary perspective, a role that dates back to the socialist organizations of the 19th century. In the years leading up to the 1905 Russian Revolution, Lenin theorized this role further, establishing a conception for the Bolsheviks that would subsequently influence the international Communist movement.

> The role of a newspaper...is not limited solely to the dissemination of ideas, to political education, and to the enlistment of political allies. A newspaper is not only a collective propagandist and a collective agitator, it is also a collective organizer. In this last respect it may be likened to the scaffolding around a building under construction, which marks the contours of the structure and facilitates communication between the builders, enabling them to distribute the work and to view the common results achieved by their organized labor.[409]

Lenin developed this perspective in the midst of considerable turmoil among revolutionaries in Russia, seeing the establishment of a centralized newspaper as a key means of uniting the disparate forces across the country (or in exile) and thereby solidifying a unified political perspective. The result was *Iskra*, which played a key role in consolidating the revolutionary wing of Russian Social Democracy.[410]

Iskra, and later *Pravda*, provided the model for Communist party newspapers to follow after the Russian Revolution. The first issue of *Die rote Fahne*, printed by members of the *Spartakusbund* on the occupied machines of the commercial newspaper, followed this model. It thereafter became the primary means of disseminating the

---

[409] Lenin, "Where to Begin," in *Collected Works*, vol. 5, 12.

[410] Iskra provided an arena for debate, reported on local/regional struggles, and connected émigre members who lived abroad with those opposing Tsarism at home. It also included caricature, provided by Eduard Fuchs--see Weitz, 121-125.

political line of the KPD through editorials and reports on international, national, and regional politics. The relationship between party members and the party organ were clarified by the Comintern in the summer of 1921.

> Communists achieve the closest connection with their newspaper when they sacrifice and work for them. It is a daily weapon, which has to be re-sharpened and steeled every day to be useful. Only with continued material and financial sacrifices will the communist newspaper be maintained.[411]

While the Bolshevik model continued to be an effective organizing tool, providing a means of focusing individual recruitment efforts and informing members about key political events/debates, it failed to maintain a broad, engaged readership.

Of primary concern was the fact that Weimar-era Germany, and Berlin in particular, was flooded with newspapers. *Die rote Fahne* struggled to compete with commercial publications, even amongst party members. By 1925 30 different daily newspapers were published in Berlin, as were nearly 40 distinct dailies for the various parts of the city.[412] This does not count the weekly papers, which were hugely popular and brought considerable revenue, particularly the *Berliner Illustrierte Zeitung* published by the Ullstein publishing house, one of three major concerns that dominated the market (the other two being Mosse and Scherl). More and more workers abandoned *Die rote Fahne*, instead turning to commercial dailies as their newspaper of choice, most often Ullstein's *Berliner Morgenpost*. Criticism of the KPD press arose early on, with critics arguing that the monotone coverage of politics made *Die rote Fahne* exceedingly

---

[411] Quoted in an internal report on the party's agitprop efforts--see SAPMO RY1/I2/707/1: 99-101.
[412] Bernhard Fulda, *Press and Politics in the Weimar Republic* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2009), 17. Fulda provides the most comprehensive account of the period's illustrated and non-illustrated newspapers, which constituted a major part of the Weimar image-world and directly impacted political viewpoints, particularly after 1923.

boring to read. By 1924 it had become such a concern that *Die rote Fahne* issued a survey to readers in order to find out why they rejected the paper. Responses indicate that party members found the paper to be insufficently "entertaining," too focused on politics, and not written in an accessible manner for common, uneducated workers. Others reported that the paper did not relate to the lives and interests of female party members and Communist wives.[413] Party members, it seems, were looking for more from their press.

The creation of specialty publications aimed at different audiences sought to address this issue, and the KPD followed Münzenberg's model. Beginning in 1923 the party created a range of publications to broaden their readership and meet the demands of their membership looking for more than the latest party line. These new publications built upon an already established range of media outlets aimed at specific groups within the party, including a journal for trade union members, newspapers dedicated to individual districts or work places, monthly guides directed to party functionaries, etc. Most notably, *Die Kommunistin*, established in 1921, targeted female workers, whether or not they belonged to the party, and the wives of male workers/members. The new 1923 publications differed from such precedents insofar as they foregrounded visual material, both graphic and photographic. These included *The Red Star* (*Der Rote Stern*) [**Fig. 3.14**], a weekly illustrated supplement to *Die rote Fahne* and other, regional Communist dailies; *The Red Broadsheet* (*Der Rote Bilderbogen*) [**Fig. 3.15**], an infrequent

---

[413] Fulda provides a detailed discussion of these illuminating reports in ibid., 26-27. Such criticisms were not confined to the KPD, Fulda adds, demonstrating how SPD publications also came under fire from working class members of the party.

full-page comic strip narrative; *The Evening World* (*Welt am Abend*), a daily tabloid, and *Der Knüppel*.[414] *Roter Stern* and *Welt am Abend* were clearly meant to compete with commercial magazines such as the *Berlin Illustrated Newspaper* (*Berliner Illustrierte Zeitung or BIZ*) and *Morning Berlin* (*Berlin am Morgan*) that were primarily distributed on the street and thus drew readers' attention by way of their sensational headlines and images.[415]

Seeking to bring a distinctive visual and documentary dimension to the Communist movement in Germany, these illustrated magazines followed the format of Münzenberg's internationally focused *Sichel und Hammer*, which in turn utilized many of the formal innovations employed by commercial venues that Herzfelde had championed.[416] Rather than fill pages with dense columns of text, the layout of individual pages are opened to make room for more and bigger images. Likewise, more attention is paid to the relationship of text and image, with captions playing a more important role in establishing a contextual framework for the images, or the images placed to illustrate descriptions in the text. Greater concern for the overall topic or theme of an individual issue is further evidenced by the way in which specific elements

---

[414] *Rote Bilderbogen* lasted only a few issues and mainly served as an updated version of the political broadsheets that had been popular in Germay for centuries, dating back to the Reformation and used for political purposes. Numbers 1 and 2, published in November and December 1924, were issued in editions of 100,000 and used for political campaings and as inserts for party newspapers--see SAPMO RY 1/I2/707/137.

[415] Under the KPD's direction, *Welt am Abend* failed. Only later, after Müzenberg purchased the magazine in 1924-5, did its readership increase dramatically, becoming the most popular Communist publication by the end of the Weimar period-- see Fulda, *Press and Politics in the Weimar Republic*, 39-41 for further details

[416] Münzenberg's publications did not fall under the purview of the KPD, and thus represented a relatively autonomous orientation from party dictates. Nevertheless, many of the writers for *Sichel und Hammer* were members of the KPD and it shared a distribution network with KPD-aligned publications--see Braskén, *The International Workers' Relief*, for details.

are organized to buttress a cohesive perspective toward the events and/or issues presented. In November 1924 it became the *Workers' Illustrated Magazine* (*Arbeiter Illustrierte Zeitung* or *AIZ*) [**Fig. 3.16**], an explicitly Communist-aligned illustrated magazine that offered a partisan alternative to commercial offerings.[417] What began in 1921 as an effort to strenghen ties with the Soviet regime and garner financial support for famine victims became by the end of the 1920s the second most popular illustrated magazine in Germany (reaching a circulation of over five hundred thousand by 1929) and presented innovative formatting and visual techniques that other publications, including the NSDAP's *Illustrated Observer* (*Illustrierter Beobachter*), adapted or outright copied.

Münzenberg also pioneered the use of graphic satire for more targeted purposes. In addition to the *Chronicle of Fascism* (*Chronik des Fascismus*), a political journal that sought to explain the emergence of fascism and guide the anti-fascist movement after 1923, Münzenberg also created *Hakenkreuz,* an anti-fascist satire magazine. Both publications featured drawings by members of the *Rote Gruppe* [**Fig. 3.17**]. As discussed in the last chapter, after 1921 the Comintern held that graphic satire presented a means of spreading information and fomenting a revolutionary perspective in an accessible manner—as Fuchs had argued, and Grosz sought to demonstrate. This was the justification for promoting the works of Grosz in party circles and turning over a party satire magazine to the *Rote Gruppe* artists. *Der Knüppel* offered these artists the possibility of a sustained, working-class readership and a means of aligning themselves

---

[417] The history of the AIZ is recounted in Heinz Willmann, *Geschichte der Arbeiter-Illustrierten Zeitung, 1921-1938* (Berlin: Dietz Verlag, 1974).

with the international Communist movement *as artists*. It was as such that Herzfelde would later describe their collaboration with the KPD.[418]

Der Knüppel

Der Knüppel was published by the *Association of International Publishing Institutions* (*Vereinigung Internationaler Verlagsanstalten*), KPD's main publishing house, commonly referred to by its acronym, VIVA. It was placed under the editorial direction of Heartfield. Contrary to nearly all the existing scholarly literature, which dates its creation to the summer of 1923, there are no extant issues of *Der Knüppel* prior to 1924.[419] The June 1924 issue [**Fig. 3. 18**] is the first to be mentioned in VIVA's internal reports, which describe the magazine as a "(new) satirical workers' paper (*Arbeiterzeitung*), printed in three colors, issued on the 10th and 25th of every Month" and available "through most party press distributors as well as bookstores."[420] The emphasis upon it being a satirical *workers*' paper is significant, as earlier Dadaist publications had been typically classified as "militant satire pamphlets (*satirische Kampfblätter)*," while *Der*

[418] The manuscript of a 1971 lecture entitled "Stunde der Akademie. Wieland Herzfelde: George Grosz, John Heartfield, Erwin Piscator, Dadaismus und die Folgen—oder die Macht der Freundschaft," that Herzfelde gave (probably for the East German Academy of Art) explains:

> For Grosz, Heartfield, and I, as well as [Erwin] Piscator, we saw the 'important problems,'… more clearly every day. It was only logical that in the summer of 1923, when the KPD founded the satirical weekly 'Die Knüppel', Heartfield and Grosz took over the direction and many of their colleagues, including foreigners, were pulled in to collaborate

— see AdK--Herzfelde Archiv 2495/8, p. 31-32.

[419] An internal party memo from July 1924 explains that the publication represents "an amalgamation of *Der rote Knüppel*, Berlin and *The Whip* (*Die Peitsche*), Düsseldorf," which I have so far been unable to find copies of. The fact that *Der Knüppel* is described as "new," suggests that its first appearance had been a recent event, despite the fact that the first four issues appeared under the heading "II Jahrgang." This may be partially explained by the continued existence of *Die Pleite*, the Malik-Verlag satirical magazine that included many of the same artists and is also listed as a "satirisiche Kampfblatt" available to local party newspapers and litearture branches (*Betrieben*) through the central party publisher, VIVA. Or perhaps the earlier run of *Die Peitsche* is taken into account--see SAPMO RY 1/I2/707/137 for further background

[420] Ibid.

Knüppel's closest competitor on the Left, the SPD-aligned *Lachen Links*, called itself "the Republican humor magazine" (*das republikanische Witzblatt)*--the *Süddeutscher Postillon* was classified as a "political-satirical workers' paper" as well.

With Heartfield at the helm, it is unsurprising that *Der Knüppel* followed in the line of *Die Pleite*. Measuring 26.5 x 37 cm, it was smaller than *Die Pleite*, but larger than the *Süddeutsche Postillon*. Each issue numbered eight pages, often with a two-page centerfold full image or narrative work. Images are usually captioned, either internally or externally, sometimes with straight commentary, other times with pieces of dialogue meant to narrativize the image. While almost none of the images operate purely visually, they nevertheless do not function as illustrations for specific texts. Texts tend to be satirical pieces that refer to current events; many take the form of poems or stories rather than straight reportage. The language is simple and direct, though some pieces feature regional dialects. Unlike the shorter-lived Dadaist magazines, however, *Der Knüppel* conforms to a more "standard" layout, similar to pre-WWI examples such as *Der Wahre Jakob* and *Süddeutscher Postillon*. Gone are the disorienting juxtapositions of text and image indicative of early issue of *Die Pleite* or *Jedermann sein eigener Fussball*. This does not necessarily dampen the ferocity of its contents, however; *Der Knüppel* was equally adept at mocking contemporary mores and skewering politicians. One could even argue that its reliance upon a more recognized layout design enabled readers to take in the contents more easily than publications that utilized radical formal techniques.

The front and back cover of each issue typically featured a three-tone color illustration, all photo-lithographs. Sometimes interior pages also featured color illustrations. Color usage was strategic and varied. Certain issues feature a single, dominant color that acts to unify the issue's theme. For example, the February 1925 issue utilizes the color green. In the front cover by Grosz [**Fig. 3.19**], green lettering announces the issue's theme—"Here comes the Cheka!"—as well as shades the background and shadows cast by the thugs let loose by the giant bourgeois figure behind them. On the back cover [**Fig. 3.20**], green instead highlights the contrast between the Soviet secret police, seizing bourgeois hoarders of foodstuffs and currency, and the German secret police (commonly associated with their division of the police force: 1.a.), seizing "conscious" workers to enrich the profits of the bourgeois masters controlling them while the SPD representative, identifiable by his flag at lower left, runs off.

Several of the Dadaists who had followed Heartfield, Herzefelde, and Grosz into the KPD orbit (most notably Schlichter and Lazlo Griffel) produced drawings regularly for *Der Knüppel*.[421] Schlichter became a prominent artist within the Communist milieu thanks to his work in the magazine, as did Griffel.[422] Grosz produced many drawings

[421] Internal party records document general production costs but there is no readily available information regarding whether illustrators or writers were paid for their contributions, and if so, how much. The price of the publication was kept low to ensure a working-class readership, and the party subsidized publication--there are no advertisements in the pages of *Der Knüppel* in contrast to commercial publications.

[422] Schlichter's work is singled out for paise by none other than Gertrud Alexander in a 1924 *Sichel und Hammer* article. Griffel, born László Dállos in 1896, attended art school in Budapest and moved to Germany in 1920 after the fall of the Hungarian Soviet Republic. He joined the *Rote Gruppe* and worked on *Die Pleite* before joining *Der Knüppel*. In 1927 he moved to Soviet Russia, where he continued to work for Communist publications until his death in 1937.

specifically for *Der Knüppel* on a semi-regular basis, but also reused images from his print portfolios. The front cover image of the June 1925 issue, for example, features a bloodied worker at bayonet point, an image appropriated from one in Grosz's 1923 portfolio *Abrechnung folgt!* [**Fig. 3.21**]. It is clear from the shape of the negative space behind the man's back, where once existed the soldier's right arm and sword, that the print has been retrofitted for the cover (likely by Heartfield). By contrast, the back-cover image of a later 1926 issue features a multi-color representation of Gustav Noske in full military regalia that is based on an image from *Der rote Knüppel* but has been significantly altered, suggesting that Grosz may even have re-drawn the earlier image [**Fig. 3.22**]. In addition to overseeing the magazine, Heartfield also produced several photomontages for *Der Knüppel* [**Fig. 3.23**], in addition to a few drawings, notably two covers [**Fig. 3.24**]. These better-known artists were joined by a number of others outside the Dadaist milieu, many of whom had fled to Berlin after counterrevolutionary events in their respective countries.[423]

---

[423] These include: Boris Angeluschew (aka Bruno Fuck, or Fuck); Jolán Szilágyi (aka Joli), the sole female caricaturist I have come across; Sándor Ék (aka Alex Keil); and from Wiesbaden, Alois Erbach (aka Aleus). I have pieced together the following biographical information on these artists and others who published in *Der Knüppel*:

- Boris Angeluschew (Fuck): 1902-1966. Bulgarian. Begins study at the Hochschlue für Bildende Kunst in Berlin in 1924. Founding member of ASSO.
- Alfred Beier-Red: 1902-. Joins KPD in 1923. Founding member of ASSO. Begins working for KPD press in 1924.
- Peter Paul Eickmeier: 1890-1962. Joins KPD in 1922. Works as KPD caricaturist from 1925 on. Member of ASSO.
- Alois Erbach: 1888-1972. Studies in Münich. Friend of Heartfield. Works on Die Pleite. Joins Rote Gruppe, later ASSO. From 1926-1927 works in central Agitprop-Abteilung.
- Otto Griebel: 1895-1972. Friends with Grosz and Dix. Enter KPD in 1919. Founding member of the *Rote Gruppe*.
- Jecheskiel Chaskiel David Kirszenbaum: 1900-1954. Polish. Studies at Bauhaus with Kandinsky and Klee in 1923. Moves to Berlin and joins KPD in 1925. Later member of ASSO. Works for *Rote Pfeffer*.
- Jólan Szilágyi (aka Joli, Yoli, Dobri, Jo): 1895-1972. Moves to Berlin in 1922. Works in Agitprop-

Although Heartfield retained his position until 1926, his name never appeared on the masthead of *Der Knüppel.* A man named Heinrich Knipschild is instead identified as the editor in 1924. In reality, Knipschild was only a mid-level administrator in the VIVA offices at this time. As long practiced by the German Left, publications chose a representative to list as editor in case the authorities sought to close down publication. Should this occur, the listed editor would take the fall and pay the fine, or spend a short time in prison, as Fuchs had done on behalf of the *Süddeutscher Postillon*. At the beginning of 1925, and due to the inordinate number of complaints (*Klagen*) against Knipschild filed by the authorities, Julius Deutsch, then acting director of VIVA, wrote to the party leadership and suggested that a member of the KPD's parliamentary fraction instead be named editor, so as to protect the publication through his/her legal immunity.[424] Subsequently, in May 1925, Hermann Remmele, long-time member of the party and Reichstag representative became editor of all VIVA's publications, including

---

Abteilung after 1923. Member of the *Rote Gruppe*. Founding member of ASSO.

Most of these artists, as well as Grosz and Heartfield, joined the Association of Revolutionary Visual Artists of Germany (*Assoziation revolutionärer bildender Künstler Deutschlands*), commonly known as ASSO, in 1928. Based on the Soviet Association of Revolutionary Artists of Russia (known by its Russian acroynm *AchRR*), it became the KPD's main cultural organization during the final years of the Weimar Republic, comprising nearly 800 in Berlin and regional groups before it was outlawed in 1933. Unlike the *Rote Gruppe*, ASSO was directly overseen by the party and focused more on agitprop production, overseen by Max Keilson, leader of the KPD's Agitprop Ateiler after 1925. For more on the organization, see Jürgen Kramer, "Die Assoziation Revolutionärer Bildender Künstler Deutschlands (ARBKD)," in *Wem gehört die Welt*, 174-204 and Matthais Wagner, "Kunst als Waffe: Die 'Asso' in Dresden (1930 bis 1933)," in *Neue Sachlichkeit in Dresden*, ed. Birgit Dalbajewa (Dresden: Sandstein Verlag, 2011): 130-135.

[424] Deutsch's February 22, 1925 letter to the central Polbüro clarifies why this is necessary:

> Comrade Heinrich Knipschild, one of our clerks (*Expeident*), will be responsible for our two magazines *Der rote Stern* and *Der Knüppel*. In addition to the approximately 15 complaints (*Klagen*) currently running against these two publications, another half a dozen have been issued against Knipschild as the responsible editor. run against Gen. Knipschild. It seems to us urgent that the Headquarters nominate a comrade who is either a Reichstag or Landtag member to be responsible for these two journals, so that the various processes we currently face can be avoided in the future, and thus offset various expenses and loss of time.

--from SAPMO RY 1/I2/707/138.

Der Knüppel. Nevertheless, Heartfield remained the *de facto* editor of the magazine until the publication was re-organized to address criticisms raised by party members at the party's tenth congress, discussed later.

Although none of the speciality publications the KPD initiated in 1923-4 touched the dominance of commercial publications, they were at first embraced by working class readers. Several early internal documents report that *Der Knüppel* was "very well received by the workers," and the print run doubled over the course of the first three issues (from roughly 30,000 to 70,000).[425] A report drawn up by VIVA in late 1924, based on reports from hawkers and bookstores where *Der Knüppel* was sold, states that "the political and propaganda function of this recognized and excellent magazine is undoubtedly very strong."[426] It is nevertheless next to impossible to determine with any certainty who read *Der Knüppel*. Although the national membership of the KPD hovered around 115,000 in 1924, it is unlikely that members outside of Berlin would have read *Der Knüppel* regularly (if at all), although they may have been familiar with more sporadic satirical publications issued by the KPD that were regionally-oriented and modeled on *Der Knüppel*, such as *Der rote Sachsenspiegel* [**Fig. 3.25**]. Of the approx. 17,000 KPD members who lived in Berlin in September 1924 there is no way of knowing how many of these read *Der Knüppel*. The sizable print run for the the magazine indicates that the KPD sought to reach an audience much broader than their own membership, locally and nationally. Given the fact that the Communist milieu—comprised of KPD

[425] Circulation details for *Der Knüppel* within the KPD party archives are numerous, but inconsistent. A July 1924 VIVA report states that the print run (*Auflage*) rose from 30,000 for issue #1 (June 1924) to 70,000 for issue #3 (July 1924); subsequent years saw a run of approx. 40,000--see SAPMO RY 1/I2/707/137.
[426] Quoted from a report in SAPMO RY 1/I2/707/116: 101-113.

members, fellow travelers, and those sympathetic to causes raised by the party on a contingent basis and/or its allied organizations—was much larger than party membership numbers, it is quite possible that *Der Knüppel* circulated broadly. Fluctuations in membership and support for the KPD varied widely during this period, but the genuine popularity of Communist-aligned publications on the whole, including those produced by Münzenberg's various organizations, suggests that the visibility of *Der Knüppel* was not insignificant, particularly in urban areas and working-class districts. For even workers opposed to Communism were probably not wholly immune to the sardonic visions of the *Knüppel* artists.

Agitprop

The creation of *Der Knüppel* did not represent a new-found appreciation for the *art* of graphic satire/caricature amongst the leadership of the KPD, so much as a realization that satirical images were prime examples of what came to be known as "agitprop." Short for "agitation-propaganda," agitprop as a concept dates back to the pre-WWI period. The Russian Marxist theoretician Georgi Plekhanov had argued early as early as 1892 that "[a] propagandist presents many ideas to one or a few persons; the agitator presents only one or few ideas, but he presents them to a mass of people."[427] Lenin drew out this distinction further in *What is to be done?* setting the model for agitprop departmental practices:

> The propagandist dealing with, say, the question of unemployment, must explain the capitalist nature of the crisis, the causes of their inevitability in modern society, the necessity for the transformation of this society into a socialist

[427] From an essay repbulished in G. V. Plekhanov, *Selected Philosophical Works* (Moscow: Foreign Language Publishing House, 1961), 187.

> society, etc. [...] The agitator, however, speaking on the same subject, will take as an illustration a fact that is most glaring and most widely known to his audience [...] and utilizing this fact, known to all, will direct his efforts to presenting a *single idea* to the masses [...] he will strive *to rouse* discontent and indignation among the masses against this crying injustice, leaving a more complete explanation of this contradiction to the propagandist.[428]

The compound term elides a division of practice that Lenin explain thusly: "[T]he propagandist operates chiefly by means of the *printed* word," he argues, "the agitator by means of the *spoken* word." Elsewhere Lenin instead draws upon a visual metaphor to describe the function of the revolutionary newspaper, one well suited to the class-conscious way of seeing fashioned by Grosz and the *Rote Gruppe*:

> A basic condition for the necessary expansion of political agitation is the organization of comprehensive political exposure. In no way except by means of such exposures can the masses be trained in political consciousness and revolutionary activity. […] The consciousness of the working masses cannot be genuine class consciousness unless the workers learn from concrete, and above all from topical, political facts and events to observe every other social class in all the manifestations of its intellectual, ethical, and political life…the worker must have a clear picture in his mind of the economic nature and the social and political features of the landlord and the priest, the high state official and the peasant, the student and the vagabond; he must know their strong and weak points; he must grasp the meaning of all the catch words and sophisms by which each class and each stratum camouflages its self strivings and its real 'inner workings.'[429]

In many ways, Lenin gives voice to the guiding principle of political graphic satire, as understood by Fuchs and practiced by Grosz. And like Lenin, they recognized the

---

[428] Lenin, *Collected Works*, vol. 5: 409. Peter Kenez discusses Lenin's theorization in further detail and its subsequent re-conceptualization during the Stalinist period in his *The Birth of the Propaganda State: Soviet Methods of Mass Mobilization, 1917-1929* (Cambridge; New York: Cambridge University Press, 1985).

[429] From an article republished in *The Lenin Anthology*, ed. Robert C. Tucker (New York; London: W. W. Norton and Company, 1975), 42-3. And least one think that Lenin is offering a sectarian position here, he makes clear that "Working-class consciousness cannot be genuine political consciousness unless workers are trained to respond to all cases of tyranny, oppression, violence, and abuse, no matter what class is affected" (ibid.).

affective power of "political exposure."[430] It was in line with this conception that the agitprop department of the KPD would deploy Communist graphic satire.

The KPD did not organize a proper agitprop department (*Abteilung*) until after the party's seventh congress held in August 1923. Prior to this, cultural initiatives and materials for demonstrations were dealt with by the department for education and propaganda (*Abteilung für Bildung und Propaganda*), created August 1921.[431] This earlier department was headed by Edwin Hoernle (later one of the main theorists for the Workers' Photography Movement), Gertrud Alexander, and Hermann Drunker. They oversaw efforts to train members and functionaries at all levels of the party, and to deepen members' theoretical knowledge of Marxism through the organization of libraries, programs for revolutionary celebrations, texts for proletarian choirs and theater productions, and the publication of party literature.[432] It was in regard to such cultural initiatives that the department sought artists' support, as outlined in an internal document:

---

[430] According to Lenin, if Russian Social Democrats are able to harness agitation in the way he outlines,

> the most backward worker will understand, or will feel, that the students and religious sects, the peasants and the authors are being abused and outraged by those same dark forces that are oppressing and crushing him at every step of his life. Feeling that, he himself will be filled with an irresistible desire to react, and he will know how to hoot the censors one day, on another day to demonstrate outside the house of a governor who has brutally suppressed a peasant uprising--ibid.

For an insightful discussion of this text in relation to affect theory and the creation of a "revolutionary counter-mood," see Jonathan Flatley, "How a Revolutionary Counter-Mood is Made," *New Literary History*, 43 (2012): 503-525.

[431] For a detailed overview of the department, see SAPMO RY1/I2/707/4.

[432] They also generated a hypothetical plan for the consolidation of national art museums and educational institutions after the victory of a German socialist revolution, modeled upon what the Bolsheviks had done after their own victory in 1918-1919--the report is located in the KPD archives, SAPMO RY1/I2/707/107: 22-29, later reprinted in the East German journal, *Beiträge zur Geschichte der Arbeiterbewegung*, 5 (Berlin [DDR]: Institut für Marxismus-Leninismus beim Zentralkomitee der Sozialistischen Einheitspartei Deutschlands, 1981): 702-706.

> By collaborating with and influencing revolutionary-minded artists, actors, and writers, the department hopes to make these forces useful for revolutionary propaganda on behalf of the Communist party.[433]

After the failure of the "German October" in 1923 the department was re-organized to establish a closer relationship between the department and the party's leadership committee. This put it in closer alignment with the Bolsheviks and the Comintern (whose agitprop department at this time was run by the notorious Bela Kun). Various sub-departments were likewise created so as to standardize its activity.[434] This is discussed in a report produced after its brief period of illegality from November 1923 to March 1924 that outlines the activity of the department since its creation. The document states that all party publications are to be placed under the control of the central agitprop department, and that all existing magazines were to become bi-monthly supplements (*Beilage*) for all the major, regional party newspapers, including *Der Rote Stern*, and *Der Knüppel*.[435]

Although materials produced under the auspices of the department thus circulated through regular publications, specific political campaigns were the central focus of agitprop activity and the primary context in which visual materials and publications were deployed. These had already been a part of Communist routine but were coordinated much more centrally by the new central agitprop department. During the period of illegality, the department organized a campaign for a demonstration in

---

[433] SAPMO RY1/I2/707/4: 83-92. Entitled "Die Bildungsarbeit der Kommunistischen Partei Deutschlands," the document is unsigned and undated.
[434] SAPMO RY1/I2/707/4: 93. A separate report, SAPMO RY1/I2/707/4: 107-109, from June 1924 gives the date of September 1923.
[435] Ibid.

late February 1924 in support of an eight-hour work day (which had been undermined following the debacle of October 1923) and coordinated efforts between the illegal press and members at the district and local levels. It was also active in regional election efforts (Lübeck, Mecklenburg, Thüringen, Bayern) during this period.

A further consolidation of the KPD's conception of agitprop arose at the national agitprop conference held in conjunction with the 10th party congress in the summer of 1925.[436] The conference was overseen by Ernst Schneller, who at the time served as the nominal leader of the central agitprop department (a position he would hold again later in 1932).[437] Working under Schneller was Max Engel, who led the day-to-day affairs of

---

[436] A transcription of the proceedings of the conference and the congress as a whole were subsequently published as *Bericht über die Verhandlungen des X. Parteitages der Kommunistischen Partei Deutschlands* (Berlin: Vereinigung Internationaler Verlags, 1926).

[437] It is exceedingly difficult to ascertain the leadership of the department from year to year, due to the lack of clear documentation and the opacity of its internal structure. However, after the 10th Party Congress in 1925, it appears that the leader of the KPD's Agitprop Abteilung had to be a member of the central political bureau (*Politbüro*), so as to centralize the department (prior to this it had been under the general direction of the organization bureau or *Orbüro*). What is not clear is whether the leader who belonged to the Politbüro led the day to day activities and duties of the Abteilung, or if this was instead taken up by his or her representative (*Stellvertreter*) (as seems to be the case outlined in the personnel description of the Abteilung outlined in an earlier internal report). This may go some length toward explaining the inconsistency in leadership. For example, Hermann Weber lists the composition of the Agitprop Abteilung in the years between 1924-1929 as follows: 1924--Max Engel, Paul Dietrich, Hermann Duncker, Joseph Winternitz (aka Lenz, Sommer); 1927--Alexander Emel (Moses Lurje), Max Engel, Hermann Duncker, Paul Fröhlich, Fritz Rück, Joseph Winternitz; 1929--Alexander Emel, Hermann Duncker, Walter Gollmick, Kollwitz (?). However, based on my own research (primarily from internal documents discovered in the archive), the following chronology of leadership may prove more accurate:

- *Early* 1921-1922(?): Edwin Hoernle
- *Late* 1921/early 1922: Duncker and G.G.L. Alexander
- *October* 1922: Hoernle
- *January* 1924-December 1924: Hugo Eberlein
- *January* 1925: Ernst Schneller
- *Feburary* 1925 (Sekretär?): Willi Münzenberg
- *(After the Offener Brief)*1925: Ruth Fischer
- "*Nach* der Abreise der Ruth Fischer" (fall 1925?): Hugo Urbahns
- *1925/1926:* Max Engel (as Stellvertreter?)
- *1931:* Joseph Winternitz (aka Kraus)
- *June 1932:* Ernst Schneller (stellvertreter Gollmick)

the department.[438] Drawing from past and present experiences, Engel discusses in his speech the importance of visual materials and stresses the need to pay closer attention to the factors that account for the strength of bourgeois ideology and its reproduction.

> It is clear that in society ideologies are not clear cut according to class [*klassenmäßig gescheiden sind*]. If that were the case, the revolution would have long been a reality. We know that capitalist society has mastered the ability to influence the perception of all working people, and that it has an immense number of institutions for this single purpose… The most important factor in the creation of ideology is undoubtedly the press.[439]

Engel cites newspaper totals as evidence for this—including the commercial satire magazine *Uhu*, with a circulation of 200,000 in these years. A cover of *Der Knüppel* by Griffel alludes to this and may be the source for Heartfield's more famous "cabbagehead" photomontage [**Fig. 3.26**]. Engel speaks to the key problem of the KPD press being its conception by most members as a one-way party organ, rather than a proper Zeitung. Engel also speaks to the need for more compelling visual propaganda—posters, specifically—pointing to cinema posters as an example.[440] The most crucial object of study for the KPD, Engel explains, is to understand how ideology takes hold, how it is that the working class come to see the world and events "through bourgeois spectacles (*durch die bürgerliche Brille)*."[441] This because, although there is a contradiction between "the bare facts (*Tatsachen*) of exploitation" and "bourgeois

---

[438] Born in 1887, Engel joined the labor movement after moving to Berlin at a young age from the small town of Woddow and entered the KPD in 1920 with the left-wing of the USPD. He was promoted to work in the Agitprop Abteilung in 1924 by the "ultra-left" leadership, who wanted more workers in functionary positions and subsequently ran the Abteilung in 1925-1926. In March 1928 he left the party, saying he had found God. A letter written by Engel on November 25, 1925 provides contemporary evidence for a chronology of leadership outlined in the previous note-see SAPMO RY1/I2/707/4: 224.
[439] *Bericht über die Verhandlungen des X. Parteitages*, 675--see n. 436.
[440] Ibid.
[441] Ibid., 676.

phraseology," its is not enough just to point out the “facts." To be effective, agitprop had to achieve the level of “political exposure” called for in *What is to be done?*

Exposing the Republic

Through an analysis of the contents of *Der Knüppel* it is possible to discern how the *Rote Gruppe*, now Communist caricaturists, sought to expose the Republic by drawing upon pre-existing tropes from the history of graphic satire and their readers’ familiarity with persons and types circulating in the Weimar "image-world," as discussed in chapter two. This resulted in an iconography well suited to the sectarian shift to the left the KPD took in 1924.

Post-WWI graphic satire in general looked to the past for visual ingredients that were already familiar to German audiences, so as to make their work "legible," and *Der Knüppel* was no exception.[442] In terms of formal technique, scale had long been a way to visualize contrasts of power and inequality, either real or imagined. Giant proletarian figures or proletarian body parts (fists and feet being most popular) disrupt the normalized processes of capital or government, symbolizing the strength of the working class, as in an example by Alfred Beier-Red from the back cover of a September 1925 issue of *Der Knüppel* [**Fig. 3.27**]. Allusions to classic stories or fairy tales, such as *Gulliver's Travels*, were also used to contrast mighty proletarian figures with diminutive representatives of the ruling classes [**Fig. 3.28].** There are numerous examples of images

[442] Ursula Horn, in study of the period, claims that many of the figures of post-1917 graphic satire were "already integrated into mass consciousness" before the war. See Horn, "1917-1933," 136.

such as these in the pages of *Der Knüppel*, conforming to precedents established in pre-war social democratic publications.[443]

Use of traditional allegorical figures such as the German "Michel," are utilized much more sparingly. We have already encountered a proletarian version of Michel in *Der rote Knüppel*. A very different iteration of figure appears in an issue of *Der Knüppel* [**Fig. 3.29**]: this time he is depicted by Grosz as a war veteran, crippled and forced to beg on a street corner. The caption at bottom identifies the figure as Michel by way of a line from Heinrich Heine, suggesting that the depleted national symbol in Grosz' drawing is a cunning attribution to a readymade image. Representations of foreign allegorical figures are much more frequent, particularly the English figure of John Bull (most likely the model for the German Michel) and the French female symbol of republicanism, Marianne, although both typically appear in negative, sometimes grotesque forms (which was also true of commercial satirical magazines, especially during the Ruhr crisis). [**Fig. 3.30**].

In addition to recycling formal techniques and visual tropes, the *Knüppel* artists also made outright visual allusions to canonical works of graphic satire. In a cutting response to the death of Friedrich Ebert in 1925, Schlichter redeploys a figure from Daumier's contribution to the final issue of *La Caricature* [**Fig. 3.31**]. In the earlier French context, the figure represents a free press. Here instead he symbolizes the "twenty-thousand slain revolutionaries" whose blood is on the hands of the "traitor" Ebert.

---

[443] Many examples are detailed in Knut Hickethier, "Karikatur, Allegorie und Bilderfolge. Zur Bildpublizistik im Dienste der Arbeiterbewegung," in *Beiträge zur Kulturgeschichte der deutschen Arbeiterbewegung 1848-1918*, 79-166.

Depictions of social types, namely "workers" and the "bourgeoisie," vary significantly. Scholars have argued that it is typically figures or social types associated with the ruling class that are depicted grotesquely, while working class or proletarian figures are rendered in a more realistic, albeit solemn, manner.[444] This is not, however, always the case. In regard to the bourgeoisie, *Der Knüppel*'s cast of industrialists and officials certainly conform in large part to those found in Grosz's *Das Gesicht der herrschenden Klasse.* The working class, however, are depicted as powerful when it fits the context, but also weaker or defeated if the context calls for it. The message or overall perspective is what is critical, not conforming to type. The brutality displayed in the guises and physiognomies of ruling class figures points to their twisted nature as the oppressors and exploiters of the working class; their rendering as grotesque figures reveals the true reality of their nature. Depictions of the grotesque demeanor and guises of proletarian figures operates differently. These markings are meant to be read as the result of their oppression and exploitation, results of social conditions that have been thrust upon them and from which they seek to escape, as argued in the previous chapter.

While there is considerable variation in the representation of class, there is little to no differentiation when it comes to depicting gender. The iconography of *Der*

[444] Horn notes that

> Communist artists rarely caricatured workers. They instread depicted the proletariat as realistic and class conscious. In the worker, readers could recognize themselves and identify. The portrayal of the inhuman proletarian working and living conditions almost always focused on the causal connection between them and existing class relations and sought hate for the exploiters

--"1917-1933,"137. While Horn here sums up the propagation-cultivation dialectic, it rarely ran so mechanically or smoothly as she suggests.

Knüppel is a strictly male-oriented one. Images that specifically target female readers are nonexistent, and those that do feature women, in the rare occasions when they do, focus on bourgeois women or else working-class mothers in the style of Käthe Kollwitz. Despite the fact that publications like *Die Kommunistin* and *Der Weg der Frau*, another Münzenberg outlet, were created with female audiences in mind, women largely remained invisible (with the notable exception of the later *AIZ*). This marks a stunning contrast to liberal-oriented, commercial satire publications, which often featured working-class women and prominent female members of the KPD, albeit caricatured as hysterical furies [**Fig. 3.32**].

Emblematic symbols associated with the ruling class and Republican government are a frequent subject in *Der Knüppel* as well. Military uniforms and accoutrements, religious symbols, and most notably flags are targeted for distortion. In this example from a 1924 issue of *Der Knüppel*, the new Republican national flag is translated into a symbol of capitalist exploitation and bloodshed [**Fig. 3.33**]. Other visual tropes allude to the ideological illusions fostered by the Social Democrats and Republican leaders, the most prominent, and historically resonant, being the use of spectacles as a symbol of "false" consciousness.

Political Spectacles

Spectacles have long been associated with political viewpoints and ideological ways of seeing in the history of graphic satire, as evidenced in an example by Richard Newton from 1795, which combines the trope with a comparative display (indebted to an earlier work by Rowlandson) to underline the political message [**Fig. 3.34**]. A 1924

cover of *Lachen Links* similarly connects Ludendorff's notorious blue spectacles with the nationalist Right's view for the future[445] [**Fig. 3.35**]. An SPD election cartoon from the same year does much the same [**Fig. 3.36**]. A special election pamphlet produced by the *Rote Gruppe* in the fall of 1924 provides a much more sustained and reflexive usage of the trope.

Entitled *The Rose-tinted Spectacles* (*Die Rosarote Brille*), it appeared in October, in the midst of a three-month suspension of *Der Knüppel* by the authorities, and during the lead-up to Reichstag elections that December.[446] Preparations for the previous election in May, to which *Der rote Knüppel* belonged, had been extensive; nevertheless, the effort put into this second election dwarfed earlier preparation. Nearly forty-thousand printed materials of various kinds were published--more than the total number published between May and September of that year combined—and a sense of the variety is captured in an issue of *Der roter Stern* [**Fig. 3.37**]: notice how many are Groszian in style. The party also made greater use of satire during this campaign, including mock SPD publications and "political satire evenings" of various content, and over one hundred

---

[445] During the revolution, Ludendorff apparently tried to escape Germany by donning a disguise that included blue spectacles.

[446] It is not entirely clear what led to this injunction, although it seems it was initiated by the Prussian Interior Minister, Carl Severing of the SPD. A letter written by the head of VIVA to the Agitprop Abteilung dated September 11, 1924 (soon after the injunction was declared) enquires whether it would be advantageous to publish Severing's injunction along with the official response from the party, suggesting that this act of censorship might have propaganda usage. It reads

> Attached you will find a copy of Severing's "directive (*Verfügung*)" regarding the ban of *Der Knüppel* and the objection made on our behalf. We ask for your opinion whether it is advisable to deliver both documents in this detailed form through our press service. We are not entirely clear about this, as we believe that publishing the full text as it stands may also result in bans on the newspapers it would then appear in, since the complaint represents far more than satire

--SAPMO RY 1/I2/707/137. There is a handwritten reply on the memo by Max Engel,"agreed on publication through the press service!"but I have yet to locate notices in any of the KPD's newspapers.

thousand copies of *Die Rosarote Brille* were issued to lambast their Social Democratic rivals.

The front cover features a recognizable plaza in Berlin where the Reichstag should be, indicated by the surrounding buildings and the statue of Bismarck that at that time stood in an adjoining square [**Fig. 3.38**]. But in place of the Reichstag we instead find a giant toilet, crowned, with a title entreating readers to "flush" its contents. Beneath the image is a poem that introduces the spectacle's trope.

> 'Twas in the beauteous month of May
> and we had shivers in our bones
> For the SPD, on voting day,
> had promised us everything.
> They promised justice and freedom
> Fair wages, food, and other delights.
> And where's all that, my dear son?
> You'd like to know? Well, go on:
> Behold!
> With these rose-colored glasses you can see
> the riches accumulate.
> If this is what you like, then go
> and vote for the SPD!
> But if you want to clean out the shit
> then cast your vote for the Communists!

The suggestion made is that the promises the SPD had made during the last Reichstag elections meant "shit," and that only through rosy-tinted spectacles could such shit even appear to be the "riches" that had since accumulated. The open lid of the toilet mimics eyeglasses, and this association is further explored on the next two pages, which present the experiences of an unemployed worker who has received a pair of such spectacles from the SPD [**Fig. 3.39**]. The notice above explains:

> In an effort to finally convince the population of the blessings of democracy, the government has decided on the occasion of the election to substitute the usual

distribution of free beer with a pair of rose-tinted glasses, especially for those the least well off.

It goes on to say that the brand name of the glasses is "Democrats' Dream," their lenses are ground following the most exact standards of "reform-evolutionism," are beautifully toned, with every illusion guaranteed by the manufacturer, the SPD-aligned trade union association, under the direction of "Prof. Kautsky." Their effect, as illustrated in the story that follows, is to distort the reality of working class experience and cast the Social Democrats in a favorable light. The worker, sitting down to a meagre meal, instead sees it as a feast [**Fig. 3.40**]. The same man appears on the cover of a near contemporaneous issue of *Die Pleite*, likewise blinded by the SPD [**Fig. 3.41**]. Later the man in *Die rosarote Brille* catches a glimpse of the SPD Reichstag candidates, and misidentifies a pack of asses for "intellectuals" [**Fig. 3.42**]. Finally, after he is mistakenly attacked by the police and imprisoned, his spectacles break, and with them the social democratic illusion. His final words are reported as "Damned Ebert! Without these glasses I can no longer live under the Republic" [**Fig. 3.43**].

The use of color is a functional element in the pamphlet that likewise draws attention to the visuality of ideology. We are meant to understand the view provided by the SPD's rosy-tinted spectacles as a distortion of reality, but it is we, addressed as Communist readers, who see flashes of rose spread throughout the pamphlet, sometimes highlighting the gist of the image (the rosy-tinted glasses), but other times used in an almost arbitrary manner. How were readers meant to see it? In the introduction to the story of the deluded unemployed worker, the *rote* of *rosarote* has been crossed out with an asterisk, directing readers to a fine-print explanation at bottom

that reads: "After enquires to the police commissioner, Comrade Richter, we felt obliged to strike the word 'red' so as to provide no reason for the police department to intervene." The suggestion here is that the very mention of the color red, associated as it was with the international Communist movement, could have jeopardized the publication of the pamphlet, alluding to the recent suspension of *Der Knüppel*, likewise associated with the color red. Although clearly meant to be taken as a joke, the deletion of *rote* further signals that the rosy hue on view in the pages of the pamphlet is an ideological distortion operative in the world but to which Communists can remain immune by recognizing the operation in action. The goal is to call attention to the reality that "false" consciousness distorts and to show the production of ideology in action. Although a precedent exists as the cover of an 1891 issue of *Lüstige Blätter* referring to Chancellor Caprivi's inability to see the reality of immiseration among the German lower classes [**Fig. 3.44**], *Die rosarote Brille* demonstrates Communist graphic satire in its most blatant operational form.

Artists of the Revolution?

Perhaps the most surprising aspect of *Die rosarote Brille* is the inclusion of a section wherein the *Rote Gruppe* artists satirize themselves. The satirical group portrait presented at the beginning of this chapter concludes a series of portraits by Grosz that relates "a hypothetical scenario (*eine unwahrscheinliche Geschichte*)" in which the members of the group decide to renounce their revolutionary politics:

> The spirited actions of the republican authorities against the KPD has led us to enthusiastically return to the ground of democracy (*auf den Boden der Demokratie zu flüchten*). In particular, the recent mass arrests and house-searches of

> Communist functionaries and representatives convince us more and more of the unprecedented republican freedom of this state. Such a perfect democracy can no longer be resisted even by renegade revolutionary artists like us. The heroic deeds of the political police in recent days have won our hearts and convinced us that the people can only lose their chains in a peaceful election campaign. We return repentently to the lap of the only true (*alleinseligmachend*) bourgeois order and call on all proponents of peaceful development in Germany to join in proclaiming: Down with violence! Long live the rubber truncheon (*Gummiknüppel*)! Praise the political police (*Hoch die Ia*)! Long live the peaceful election campaign!

The heavy irony here indicates that we are not to take these conversions seriously but instead recognize how the renunciation of revolutionary conviction accords with popular stereotypes regarding artists and intellectuals. Grosz's individual portrait drawings confirm this reading. In each, members of the *Rote Gruppe* succumb to stereotypical behavior and are transformed. Heartfield, for instance, trades in his cudgel for a watering can of raspberry lemonade [**Fig. 3.45**]. Depicted as a stocky buffoon, the caption explains that the artist will henceforth serve the cause of "national rejuvenation." Griffel, donning a fashionable suit and tie, becomes an intellectual (*Geistiger*), proclaiming: "I'll go to the Romantisches cafe, where I'll only *talk* about the revolution" [**Fig. 3.46**]. J. Förste, a writer associated with the group, embraces the romantic nationalism of far-right groups, growing out his beard and literally "returning to nature" [**Fig. 3.47**]. Schlichter, head hidden beneath a night cap, disavows the revolution and joins the SPD, declaring "I can no longer stand the sight of red" [**Fig. 3.48**]. Grosz, finally, takes on the role of the bourgeois philistine, snoring away in a comfortable chair while his fat fellows gamble away their ill-gotten profits [**Fig. 3.49**].

Clearly these portraits are meant to resonate with popular conceptions that held artists and intellectuals to be wishy-washy fellow travelers whose political convictions

were suspect, the sort of prejudice they had faced as Dadaists. The trope of the petit-bourgeois intellectual caught between the bourgeois and the proletariat and thus prone to a wavering commitment to the revolutionary cause (at best) or a complete rejection of politics (at worst) had been a popular subject of caricature dating back to the 19th century. Grosz's "Gesang der Intellektuellen," in *Abrechnung folgt!* is an updated version of a common trope [**Fig. 3.50**]. So what are these portraits seeking to achieve? We have here a rare case of artistic self-satire, unique to this pamphlet, and it speaks directly to the earlier rejection of Berlin Dada by the KPD. Recall that, at first, the KPD had been wary of the Dadaists' antics, regardless of their party membership, and that Gertrud Alexander had even described their work as the product of "petit-bourgeois infantilism." Thus, the Dadaists were originally cast as representatives of exactly the same stereotypes they seek to ridicule in *Die rosarote Brille*. The fact that Grosz addresses these tropes directly, placing the *Rote Gruppe* members into these roles and publicly naming them suggests that the artists were seeking to clarify their relationship to the KPD publicly and to define their role as Communist artists. For although these portraits are clearly meant to introduce readers to the *Rote Gruppe* as individuals, they obviously do so in a very complicated manner that relies upon readers being able to recognize visual tropes as tropes and to see through the distortions of ideology, which coheres with the pamphlet as a whole.

When we focus on the Grosz self-portraits the complexity of how these satirical images were meant to function can be adumbrated. At the core of this function is a similar interplay between what is immediately visible and legible and what the viewer

must bring to the image. The scene is a re-purposed image from *Abrechnung folgt!* shrunk to fit the page, but otherwise unaltered [**Fig. 3.51**]. The rose-colored highlights follow the theme of the pamphlet but do not seem to signify a specific meaning; the rose-tinted glow of the levitating money bag suggests a connection between capitalist profits and the distorted vision of the SPD, but the rose pillow and ottoman are more difficult to define. It is the caption and photograph of Grosz's head that puts the work into action. Grosz's identification as a petit-bourgeois philistine (*Spießer*) places him in the position of precisely those figures the Dadaists loved to taunt and, ironically, the class position he had been identified as belonging to by Alexander. But although all these elements serve to identify Grosz as a recognizable social type, the context of the pamphlet requires us instead to overlook these markers, to see Grosz as the opposite of how this self-portrait portrays him. It is a case, in other words, of negative identification. Grosz seeks to establish an identity for himself and his fellow artists that does not conform to known visual tropes or stereotypes, even those perpetuated by the party. Readers are meant to see through these portraits, to recognize the ideological distortion in action much like the narrative of Social Democratic spectacles.

Why include these portraits in an election pamphlet? Thematically, it fits with *Die rosarote Brille*'s attempt to visualize ideology and model a class-conscious way of seeing. It likewise profiles the *Rote Gruppe* artists in a manner congruent with their primary mode of artmaking--visual satire. Nevertheless, lampooning their status as artists only re-enforces the ambiguity of its political effect. Such reflexive self-satire conforms to the playful undermining of stable identity indicative of earlier Berlin Dada

work. Grosz, Heartfield, and Schlichter had experimented before with critical self-portraiture, aligning themselves with various identities incommensurate with their own. Given the context, however, there is arguably more at stake here than visual play. While the satirical thrust of the portrait series was certainly meant to be humorous and to further ridicule republican values, it likewise aims to define the *Rote Gruppe*, creators of the pamphlet, as committed, Communist artists. Viewers are asked to not only recognize the tropes in play as ideological, and thus false, but to also see past them, to recognize that the *Rote Gruppe* artists do not conform to common stereotypes of artists and intellectuals. This is asking a lot of working class viewers of the period, since, in strict Marxist terms, these artists did not belong to the proletariat. Their political commitment resulted from a rejection of their own class, not from a realization of their material class interest, and this rendered their position as artists suspect.

Fuchs had raised this issue in regard to proletarian social satire in his *Die Karikatur*, as discussed in chapter one. The fact that, in Fuchs' view, only the "flesh of the body which they castigate" could effectively satirize their class was one of the reasons he held Daumier in such high regard. Grosz would doubtless have known about this through Fuchs' works or from Fuchs himself. Heartfield later claimed that his knowledge of Daumier came directly from Fuchs, and there is no reason not to assume that Grosz's did as well.[447] The negative identification of these portraits is an attempt to rectify just this contradiction, by establishing a means of association with the working class in a non-identitarian manner. It is equally a means of promoting the art of the *Rote*

[447] Fore reports on Heartfield's claim in *Realism after Modernism*, 248-249.

Gruppe as revolutionary. For just as the status of Communist artists remained ambiguous, so too did the status of their art.

This topic is addressed in a further section of *Die rosarote Brille* that satirizes the notion of "republican" art. A two-page spread immediately preceding the *Rote Gruppe* portraits features eleven examples of artworks produced "in allegiance with the republic," with explanatory texts by John Heartfield [**Fig. 3.52**].[448] The caption at top left explains that a "national art week" planned for Februrary 1925 will feature works of various media representing the most important artists and art organizations of the period. "The purpose," it explains

> is to direct attention to German artistry and German art works, to stimulate and motivate trade in products of German artistic industriousness (*deutscher Kunstfleiß*), and to prove that the artists' work is an essential component of the national economy.

The examples on display, however, instead demonstrate the complicity of the Weimar Republic and its leaders with the repression and murder of Communists. The first example, for instance, is a medal to be awarded to SPD functionaries who aided the implementation of the Dawes Plan, complete with a fat moneybag inscribed "For loyal service [to] capital." The second envisions a poster demonstrating the useful relationship served by republican artists by depicting them as faithful dogs, commanded by President Ebert, who sits comfortably (cigar in mouth) holding their leashes [**Fig. 3.53**]. Each dog carries the head of a famous writer—Gerhard Hauptmann, Alfred Kerr, H. Eulenberg, von Unruh—all of whom supported the SPD. As Heartfield

---

[448] Heartfield is listed as the author at the conclusion of the text, and a typewritten manuscript is located in his acrhive at the AdK.

explains “just as every bourgeois keeps his dogs as luxurious beasts of burden, as obedient guardians of his property ... so too does capital keep its artists." Once again Ebert stands in as a representative of capital, while the pillorying of the status of the artist sets the stage for the subsequent *Rote Grupp*e portraits.

Most notable of all the proposed alternatives is Heartfield's re-envisioning of the *Siegessäule*. Originally designed in 1864 to commemorate Prussia's victory over Denmark, it was not inaugurated until 1873, after the conclusion of the Franco-Prussian war and the consolidation of the second Reich [**Fig. 3.54**]. Thereafter it came to memorialize these events as well, particularly with the addition of an eight-meter-tall bronze statue of Victory designed by Friedrich Drake to crown the column. It originally stood on the Königsplatz directly facing the Reichstag at the end of a ceremonial boulevard, the *Siegesallee*, whose construction had been overseen by the Kaiser and featured marble statues of historical personalities, mainly royal. Derided by contemporary critics, the statues and boulevard remained a subject of satire into the Weimar period. Heartfield, for instance, suggests extending the boulevard all the way to the gates of Moabit Prison, lining up statues of those who had betrayed the November Revolution.

Heartfield's plans for an alternative *Siegesäule* comprise a detailed iconographic program that substitutes each element of the existing monument with a Communist inversion [**Fig. 3.55**]. It becomes a monument to the continued "victory" over the proletariat. In place of the four bronze reliefs at its base, three of which depict battle scenes from each of the so-called "wars of unification," and the fourth a triumphal

parade of victorious troops marching into Berlin, Heartfield suggests substituting the following four scenes:

> The shooting of the six Vorwärtsparlamentäre [?], the scaling of the Communist parliamentary benches in the Reichstag by the political police (*Erstürmung des kommunistischen Abgeordnetenbänke im Reichstag durch kühnen Hanstreich der Ia*), the conquest of Saxony by the Reichswehr in 1923, and the bloodbath of striking shipyard workers in Hamburg by government troops under the strict shipyard workers in Hamburg.[449]

These events were common topics of the Communist press at the time, evidence of the objective revolutionary situation they felt existed as well as confirmation of the perfidy of the SPD. In place of the circular ring of columns just above the base, Heartfield envisions workers in chains, bearing the weight of the column as they do the burden of the capitalist system. Above them looms a crown of heads belonging to slain leaders of the revolutionary left: Karl Liebknecht, Rosa Luxemburg, Leo Jogisches, and Gustav Landauer. Next, replicas of the most famous jails known to all Communists, followed by a collection of trophies appropriated from the movement, including sticks of dynamite, Karl Radek's glasses, censored literature, and a copy of *Der Knüppel*. These trophies allude to the fact that the original three cylindrical blocks of the *Siegessäule* are decorated with bronze enameled cannon barrels captured from enemy forces; the fourth block, decorated instead with laurel branches, was added by the Nazis in 1938-39 when the column was moved to its present-day location in the Tiergarten. The inclusion of *Der Knüppel*, a clever touch on Heartfield's part, is clearly meant as a promotional

---

[449] Together the Prussian military victories over Denmark in 1864, Austria in 1866, and France in 1871 initiated and led by Bismarck comprise the "wars of unification" because they were instrumental in Prussia's political hegemony over the other German states, thus laying the ground work for the formation of the second German Reich. See Christopher Clark, *Iron Kingdom: The Rise and Downfall of Prussia, 1600-1947* (London; New York: Penguin Books, 2006), 525-552 for background.

device and to further the association between its artists and the proletarian class struggle. Finally, in place of the statue of victory atop the column, Heartfield suggests a gold enameled state prosecutor, as a "blazing symbol of Germany's ruling peace and order," alluding to the government's frequent invocation of "peace and order" (*Ruhe und Ordnung*) as a justification for suppressing strikes and more militant upheaval.

In alignment with other content in *Die rosarote Brille*, the attack on a famous national monument and the ridiculing of Republican art and artists seeks to counteract reigning ideas/ideology by providing an alternative perspective. But as we have seen, this perspective not only exposed the "reality" distorted by ideology, it likewise aimed to visualize the mechanics of ideological distortion itself. This required a twofold method of viewing, a simultaneous seeing *as* and seeing *through* the images on display in the pamphlet, that operated upon the audience's knowledge of the events and subjects targeted and their familiarity with a wide range of images, satirical or otherwise.

Criticisms

In a regular column he wrote his journal *Die neue Büchershau* at the beginning of 1925, Gerhart Pohl, a left-leaning novelist during the Weimar period, comments on *Die rosarote Brille* and commends its producers. Whereas most of the election campaign material produced for the recent election had been mundane and boring—"All the graphic expressions of the Social Democrats were simple and banal, an accurate image of the provincial plush-sofa mentality (*Plüschsofa-Mentalität*) of these fuddy-duddies (*Ewig-Gestrigen*)"—that of the *Rote Gruppe* stood out.

> Only one electoral pamphlet jumped out, a small brochure whose texts were intelligent and unerring, and drawings extraordinary. John Heartfield published *The Rose-tinted Spectacles* as a satirical pamphlet for the Communist Party with texts of by anonymous and pseudonymous authors, and drawings by George Grosz, Rudolf Schlichter and L. Griffel. What these illustrators are able to achieve with insight, skill and wit is extraordinary because it tackles the terms of a firmly established ideology and yet is still fresh and alive. One could call this publication the "*Simplicissimus* of 1924"[450]

Pohl's complimentary review was an exception to the otherwise critical reception the *Rote Gruppe* artists faced within the Communist milieu. Criticism of *Der Knüppel* arose relatively early, both from party functionaries and lower-level members. Most of the existing scholarship links the "failure" of *Der Knüppel* to such criticism, citing claims made after 1925 that the magazine lacked "positive content." Yet the "failure" of *Der Knüppel* was equally a result of disorganization, i.e. its tardiness in publishing, lack of coordination, and failure to improve sales. An important further factor was the changing conceptions of agitprop concomitant with the "Bolshevization" process the KPD underwent after the 10th party congress in the summer of 1925.

In response to the sharp turn to the left in 1924 and internal factional struggle, the leadership, spurred on by the Comintern, ushered in a top-down, near total restructuring of the party and reverted to a less agressive posture. Conducted under the slogan "Let us stabilize ourselves and Bolshevize our parties," the Comintern, by this time under the control of those nearest to Stalin, called for all Communist parties to tone down insurrectionary rhetoric and activities, seek accommodation with the parties of Social Democracy on some issues, and—above all—defend the USSR.[451] According to

---

[450] Pohl, "Kunstchronik," in *Die neue Büchershau*, II (1925): 16-17. Pohl mentions that the pamphlet was confiscated by the authorities, but I have found no corroborating evidence for this.

[451] Fowkes, *Communism in Germany*, 126. During this period Stalin enumerated five key tasks for all

its proponents, Bolshevization made sense given the objective conditions: a relative stabilization of the capitalist order in Germany, thanks largely to the Dawes Plan, coupled with a relative stabilization of the situation in Russia, thanks to the sidelining of Trotsky and other leading members of the Left opposition who rejected, among other things, Stalin's belief that socialism could be achieved in a single country.[452] As historians have argued, the process of Bolshevization resulted in a much more monolithic party apparatus with far less inter-party democracy and a tighter, more centralized hierarchy.

Evidence of this shift can be found in Ernst Schneller's speech at the national agitprop conference that immediately followed the congress, where Engel spoke about "bourgeois spectacles." Citing the need to "Bolshevize" the KPD's agitprop efforts, Schneller argues that the department lacks a centralized, systematic approach. He calls for a stronger central agitprop department, placed under the authority of the Politbüro along with the establishment of subordinate agitprop departments at the district-, city- and factory cell-levels of the party, each under the political direction of an assigned director (*Leiter*).[453] Schneller also proposes a stronger focus on internal party education,

---

Communist parties, the fifth being "to support the Soviet regime and frustrate the interventionist machinations of imperialism against the Soviet Union."

[452] Stalin's promotion of "socialism in one country," first outlined in 1924, went against all earlier Bolshevik and Marxist insistence that the struggle for socialism could only ever be won on an international basis, and therefore necessitated international organization. This is one of the reasons why Lenin and others had placed such high hopes in the German revolutionary upheaval after WWI, for they felt that, without the spread of revolution, the gains made in Russia would be severely jeopardized. Stalin's proposal that the USSR could instead made the leap toward true socialism alone, albeit with great sacrifice and allegiance from Communist Parties outside Russia, was further adumbrated by Bukharin in 1925 and made state policy in 1926. See Ali, ed., *The Stalinist Legacy* for further background.

[453] A document outlining the resolutions decided at the party crongress details the structure of the department after 1925 and clarifies aspects of the new leadership structure. It explains that, for the first time, Agitprop commissions would be established at all levels of the KPD, from the central committee down to the individual districts, factory cells and KPD-aligned fractions within working-class cultural

specifically the need to familiarize all members with the codified tenets of "Marxism-Leninism" that had begun to be dogmatized by the Russian Communist Party, transforming a living tradition into dogma.[454]

These alterations had a direct effect on the party's conception of agitprop, resulting in a redefinition of its meaning and purpose. In addition to highlighting the need for more effective Communist posters and publications at the conference, Engel also spoke to the difference between agitation and propaganda as one no longer solely between cognitive and affective modes of address:

> in our method of work, agitation and propaganda must be divorced because they both have a different goal. Propaganda is an internal process of consolidation (*Vertiefungsarbeit*) within the party, agitation an external activity of persuasion (*Werbetätigkeit*) directed outward toward the masses. We should employ this division throughout the party down to each individual [factory] cell.[455]

---

organizations, and that these various departments would conform to a centralized apparatus controlled from by the central department. The document explains that the primary activities of these departments can be divided into two categories: agitation and propaganda. Under agitation the following aspects are listed: coordination and leadership of campaigns; communist press; publications and the literature department; and production of political campaign materials. Under propaganda is listed: courses, party school, study circles; editorship of theoretical party organs; leadership and direction of fraction work in cultural/sport organizations; creation of an archive; libraries; statistics; and lecture materials--SAPMO RY1/I2/707/1: 78-88.

[454] To aid in internal education efforts, "Marxist-Leninist study groups" composed of 5-10 people were established and reports filed as a means of evaluating members' progress and to keep track of any residual traces of "Luxemburgist" deviation. As Schneller argues, "it is not enough that members register and pay due; they must also understand what the party is about" quoted in *Bericht über die Verhandlungen des X. Parteitages*, 668--see n. 436.

[455] A representative from the executive committee of the Comintern who attended the conference speaks to this difference as well:

> Propaganda is crucial educational work (*Erziehungsarbeit*), instilling the basic elements of Marxist-Leninist theory into the minds of members. This propaganda must serve as the basis for proper agitation. Agitation without prior mass propaganda is ineffective, almost impossible. Your agitation, as far as things are concerned, is a brilliant thing. In many respects it even surpasses the agitation of the Russian Communist Party...but as far as depth is concerned, it lags behind the agitation of the Russian party. And that's because propaganda is not the basis of your agitation. Comrade Schneller said your agitators are more propagandists than agitators. If so, it would be something. But I'm afraid that while they are propagandists, they are not good propagandists. That's the first thing that needs to be resolved

--Ibid., 683.

Speaking directly after Engel, Schneller backs this up, criticizing the department for mistaking one for the other. "Until now we have been merely propagandists…in the sense that we do not understand how to see through effective agitation."[456] As evidence, he contrasts effectiveness of the SPD's agitprop efforts during recent December Reichstag election:

> We saw during the elections that the SPD said: for the republic and against the monarchy. What did we do? We instead published a whole smorgasbord (*Sammelsurium*) of various slogans and attempted to present the entire doctrine of communism. It follows that we will have no effective slogans as long as we fail to understand how to deploy concrete agitation that summarizes the situation in a concentrated manner.[457]

The deficiency of the KPD's election agitprop material, according to Schneller, lay in its attempt to say too much, namely its attempt to provide a wide-ranging Communist perspective beyond the narrower goal of winning votes. A better tactic he suggests, would be to limit such wide-ranging goals to internal efforts, instead basing external efforts on simpler, clearer, and more tangible messages.

Underlying this shift in the conception of agitprop and its proper targeting was a vexing problem: to whom should KPD agitprop speak and how should it do so? As we have seen, the early goal of party publications and agitprop material had been to propagate a Communist perspective that would buttress class consciousness and cultivate a revolutionary, proletarian identity attuned to the lived experience of the German working class. The point was to harness experience to inculcate a class-conscious way of seeing. And although this ostensibly remained the goal of KPD

[456] Ibid., 670.
[457] Ibid., 671-672.

agitprop after 1925, in truth the goal shifted from trying to broaden and deepen revolutionary consciousness within the German working class to trying to maintain a constituency that would support KPD initiatives. Allegiance to the party, whatever its decisions, became much more important as internal party democracy was stifled and oppositional factions expunged. But an equally if not more important problem likewise faced the party: KPD agitprop failed to resonate with its target audience. Workers and even Communists didn't seem to like party publications very much. Although this had long been a concern, addressed by the move in 1923 toward more entertaining subject matter in the Communist press, it became increasingly apparent as the party struggled to maintain its membership and influence after 1925.

Der Knüppel was not spared such criticism.[458] During the discussion period following the speeches by Engel and Schneller at the national agitprop conference, a representative of the Berlin district, a "Comrade Kirschner," explains that a week before the conference, a meeting was held in Berlin among local agitprop functionaries, during which the relevance and quality of the KPD press was discussed. Kirschner reports that *Der Knüppel* was sharply criticized, stating "comrades say that, while they can sell two hundred copies of the *AIZ*, they cannot even sell fifty of *Der Knüppel*." He adds, "Were it good, it would sell much better within the ranks of the workers (*Reihe der Arbeiter*)." Kirschner follows these criticisms with a proposed resolution to be voted on by conference delegates listing specific deficiencies of the magazine and a set of

[458] The earliest criticism came from Kurt Tucholsky in correspondence with Grosz, who agreed with many of his arguments and blamed the insignificant budget and party dictates for the lack of artistic vigor--see McCloskey, *George Grosz and the Communist Party*, 119-120.

improvements to address them. Among the deficiencies listed is the fact that "[t]he journal has in many cases been unable to find the appropriate mode of expression for ordinary workers," instead printed "caricatures of colleagues…which are of no interest to any workers apart from those in the editorial offices." The most cogent criticism of all was that "[t]he ideological content of many drawings (including those by Grosz) constitutes merely an anarchist critique of the decay of bourgeois society, without giving expression to our communist critique and ideology."[459] Once again, a skepticism toward the class position and outlook of Grosz is offered as an explanation for the ineffectiveness of political graphic satire. The improvements proposed to correct these issues were as follows:

1. A stricter supervision by the Central Committee of the ideology and agitational work of *Der Knüppel.*
2. The introduction of a broader group of colleagues into the journal.
3. First and foremost, the involvement of worker-artists and correspondents (*Arbeiterzeichner-Korrespondenten*). While avoiding dilettantism, it must be made possible to place artistic forces from the ranks of the workers at the service of our agitation.[460]

The demand for direct control over the editorial board of *Der Knüppel* and a closer relationship between its contents and the party line fits with the overall tenor of the conference and the Bolshevization process unveiled a few days earlier. The labeling of drawings, in particular those of Grosz, as "anarchistic" and lacking "our Communist outlook" recalls early criticism of the Berlin Dadaists and would become an increasingly common criticism in the late 1920s. It is not certain to what extent Kirschner's criticism

[459] Ibid., 692-693.
[460] My translation follows Fowkes' in *Communism and the Avant Garde in Weimar Germany*--see n. 402. — These criticisms are discussed by McCloskey in *George Grosz and the Communist Party*, 122-124. .

reflects the views of the broader membership. There are any number of reasons why *Der Knüppel* might have been more difficult to sell than Münzenberg's *Arbeiter Illustrierte Zeitung* (e.g. price, the appeal of photography, etc.). But the fact that Kirschner's list was obviously prepared in advance by a group of local functionaries bespeaks real concern as to the political effectiveness of the publication and its inability to interest and resonate with workers.

What is significant, however, and not addressed in the existing literature, is that the leading members of the central agitprop department defend *Der Knüppel* against such criticism. In his closing statement Engel states:

> On *Der Knüppel*. In some respects, the comrade is right in his criticism, but it is mistaken in saying that *Der Knüppel* is not deployed in coordination with the specific party-political questions. We had the war issue…the 'red-relief' issue, etc. I therefore request that the resolution be withdrawn. We can not put more weight on *Der Knüppel* than the rest of our publications.[461]

Schneller goes even further in his closing statement, arguing that the reasoning behind the resolution is faulty, and only the proposed improvements worth a vote

> I suggest that conference delegates not approve the reasoning regarding the deficiencies [of *Der Knüppel*] …We must not jeopardize production (*Ausführung*) of the *Der Knüppel* by upsetting its contributors (*Mitwirkenden*)…I propose not to accept the reasoning of the resolution, but only the motions put forward, i.e. the three points that are mentioned.[462] [1]

Schneller's concern for the feelings of the artists is notable and speaks perhaps to a recognition of the somewhat unique status of *Der Knüppel*. Nevertheless, the resolution was passed, and immediate alterations were made to the organizational structure of the magazine and its contents that corresponded to the implementation of "Bolshevization."

---

[461] Ibid., 699.
[462] Ibid., 701.

A re-organization of the editorial board had already been initiated in early 1925 to overcome persistent publication delays and bring the magazine into closer alignment with the KPD's political line. In Februrary, according to an internal report, an "editorial committee" of three men took over responsibility for *Der Knüppel* from Heartfield. Heartfield would thereafter be joined by a "Comrade Dr. Grau" to oversee the artistic and literary direction of the publication, while Julius Deutsch, head of VIVA, took charge of its political orientation.[463] This change is confirmed in a report from the central agitprop department to the party's central committee (*Polbüro*) in August that explains how "an increase in circulation will only be possible by improving the quality, organization of the division of labor, and by setting a fixed date of publication."[464] These changes sought to return the publication to the heights of 1924 and better secure its financial standing. Also, a recommendation was made that the party department in charge of advertising put together a special insert, targeted to *Der Knüppel* readers, for

---

[463] The report states:

> We have been able to regain some order in the publication department (*Zeitschriftenabteilung*). Currently, it looks as if we have successfully reorganized the staff of *Der Knüppel*. An editorial committee consisting of [Julius] Deutsch, Heartfield and [?] Grau has been set up, with Deutsch in charge of political oversight, and Heartfield and Grau with artistic and literary management. We have managed to publish *Der Knüppel* punctually and should continue to do so. We will also be able to reach the previous heights of *Der Knüppel* once again.

--SAPMO RY 1/I2/707/137.

[464] SAPMO RY 1/I2/707/138 This same report provides further details about Heartfield's co-editor, Grau:

> Grau is not a member of the party, but he worked closely on the literary side of *Der Knüppel* since it was established and has always observed directives and instructions from the party. He is currently overseeing the publication of our workers' wall calendars...and the staff speaks highly of him.

Despite such support, his nomination to become the head editor of *Der Knüppel* and *Roter Stern* the following year resulted in a critical letter written to the KPD central committee by the executive board of VIVA (which included future party leader Walter Ulbricht):

> For VIVA, as well as for the party on the whole, regulations state that we only employ comrades who have been members of the KPD for a least one year Comrade Grau has only joined the party in the last few weeks. The responsible editor of a political-satirical journal should adhere ideologically to the party, if he is in fact to provide editorial guidance. This regulation has been strictly enforced in regard to technical staff and must be at least as strict with political staff.

the magazine to boost revenue. Such inserts had long supplemented party newspapers and had been successful for Münzenberg's *Arbeiter Illustrierte Zeitung*, but the lack of advertisements within the pages of *Der Knüppel* suggests that either this recommendation came to nought, or else a separate, supplemental insert was created.[465]

Changes to the contents of *Der Knüppel* came swiftly as well. In the September 1925 issue, for example, the following notice appears, requesting feedback and material from working class readers.

> Comrades! Worker-readers (*Arbeiter-Leser)*! *Der Knüppel* needs you! For some time, you have had the pleasure of buying, reading, and laughing with *Der Knüppel*. But *Der Knüppel* should not be a paper run solely by the editors (*Blatt der Redaktion*), but a workers' paper (*Blatt der Arbeiterschaft*). For this we need your cooperation! Do not feel discouraged: it does not have to be artistic poetry or drawings. Every observation that you make in the workplace and on the street, every meanness and stupidity of bourgeois society that makes you laugh or scornful, translate into writing or drawing as best as you can and send it to us. *Der Knüppel* will know how to use it effectively (*Der Knüppel wird damit schon einen Hieb zu führen wissen*). And your criticism is valuable too. Write what you think is lacking in *Der Knüppel*, how you think it should look. Only if the connection between you and us becomes stronger, will *Der Knüppel* become the satirical paper of the working class.[466]

This appeal clearly addresses the concerns voiced by the Berlin delegates at the 10th party congress, as it speaks directly to issues raised in the resolution, specifically the workers' supposed lack of interest for caricatures enjoyed only by the editors and the desire for drawings and texts produced by working-class readers themselves. Efforts to

---

[465] A report in the archives suggests the latter was the case, and states:

> Advertisements, such as those adopted by the *Arbeiter Illustrierte* for psychics and such we must reject, since they do not correspond to the general level of *Der Knüppel*. We therefore suggest that the party advertising center (*Inseratenzentral*) commission ads for good products (cigarettes, chocolate) to promote in *Der Knüppel*. In our opinion, it should be possible to garner advertisements for a magazine that has a regular circulation of 65-75,000 copies.

--see SAPMO RY 1/I2/707/138.

[466] Appears in the September 15, 1925 issue, directly after the 10th party congress (there is no August issue that year)

garner feedback from party members continued into the following year.[467] Although responses to such appeals no longer exist in the archives, changes to the content of *Der Knüppel* indicate that efforts were taken to make the publication's ideological orientation clearer.

Several alterations were made to achive this goal Representations of more "positive" proletarian figures increase in the pages of the magazine after 1926. The cover of the June 1926 issue, published to correspond with a political campaign led by the RFB that summer, is a case in point[468] [**Fig. 3.56**]. Instead of a standard, satirical cover image, the front page features a straight, heroic portrait of a member of the RFB by Schlichter, calling members to defense of the organization; the verse at bottom makes this message plan, celebrating the alliance of “the red truncheon" and “the red fist." The only previous issue to feature a cover image of this type appeared in March 1925 during the presidential election campaign, featuring a portrait of the KPD's candidate, Ernst

---

[467] Two circulars put out by VIVA in 1926 to all party-aligned booksellers and magazine stands.The second circular, dated May 27, 1926, is typical:

> Der Knüppel. Appears from No. 6 on as 10 pages strong, 8 colored, and priced at 25 Pfg each. 40% discount [for orders]. A quarterly subscription available only through the post costs 60 Pfg. We have made *Der Knüppel* available through a mail listing so that individual subscribers in smaller areas where we have no local groups (let alone vendors) can obtain copies. A factual criticism of the content and the new appearance of *Der Knüppel* is welcome. Get colporteurs to write their own experiences to us

--see SAPMO RY 1/I2/707/138.

[468] The *Roter Frontkämpferbund* (RFB) was a paramilitary group organized by the KPD in 1924 to defend strikes and demonstrations. The rise of such groups was a distincitive feature of the Weimar period, as other parties likewise formed military wings, such as the SA and the SPD-led *Reichsbanner Schwarz-Rot-Gold*. For more on the RFB's structure and activities, see Kurt G. P. Schuster, *Der Rote Frontkämpferbund 1924-1929. Beiträge zur Geschichte und Organisationsstruktur eines politischen Kampfbundes* (Düsseldorf: Droste, 1975) and Kurt Fischer, *Geschichte des Roten Frontkämpferbundes* (Berlin [DDR]: Dietz, 1981). Carsten Voight's *Kampfbünde der Arbeiterbewegung. Das Reichsbanner Schwarz-Rot-Gold und der Rote Frontkämpferbund in Sachsen 1924-1933* (Cologne; Weimar; Vienna: Böhlau Verlag, 2009) compares the KPD's and SPD's respective organizations, focused on their activities in Saxony, a traditional stronghold of the Left.

Thälmann, also by Schlichter[469] [**Fig. 3.57**]. The RFB issue also includes two photomontages by Heartfield and a back-cover image by Hugo Gellert. Moreover, the Februrary 1927 issue features a collection of workers' drawings and poetry devoted to the issue of rationalization, fulfilling the desire for more content produced by workers themselves. These amateur sketches, introduced by a Heartfield montage [**Fig. 3.58**], are reproduced with descriptive captions and brief descriptions of their individual creators. Interspersed between them are clippings from contemporary newspaper reports [**Fig. 3.59].** The resulting juxtaposition generates a clash between "positive" evaluations of industrial rationalization and real-life, often "negative" effects of these policies. Here is evidence of the editors' enlisting "artistic forces from the ranks of the workers at the service of our agitation."

Despite these changes, however, *Der Knüppel*'s fortune continued to flag. VIVA reports from 1926 on bemoan, with increasing desperation, the seeming inability of the publication to reach 1924 numbers. A circular dated 15 July 1926 notes that, despite their best efforts, 10,000 issues of Nr. 6 and 4,000 of Nr. 7 remained unsold. To rectify this, the writer suggests a "Werbesonntag" focused on *Der Knüppel*, with support from the RFB. Members are encouraged to offer both issues at a reduced price (30 Pfg. for the pair) and to organize the sale systematically, or even militarily.

[469] Thälmann, a leader of the RFB and one of the few leaders of the KPD with a working-class background, eventually became a powerful figurehead for the party in the late 1920s. His 1925 Presidential campaign was a disaster; instead of yielding to the Social Democrats' preferred candidate (R. Marx) after they lost the first round, and thereby likely ensuring Hindenberg's loss, the KPD instead ran Thälmann a second time. They did so over the objections of the Comintern, who feared the resurgence of the monarchists on the right if Hindenberg won the presidency, which he did. For background see Fowkes, *Communism in Germany*, 145-166.

> Form columns and march through the working-class districts. Alert the population by using drums or trumpets. From time to time, a redoubtable party member or RFB comrade holds a short political speech about the continuation of the struggle for expropriation. Then participants of the demonstration go to the surrounding houses and offer *Der Knüppel* door to door.[470]

The failure of *Der Knüppel* to sustain its early success eventually led the KPD to suspend the publication in the fall of 1927. The following April Münzenberg's *Eulenspiegel* took its place, becoming the next outlet for Communist graphic satire, albeit of a very different temperament. Yet, although *Der Knüppel* lost favor, its artists continued to be praised--at least for a while. The Knüppel artists were featured in an exhibition mounted in September 1926, along with representatives of other party-aligned groups, that was reviewed favorably by *Die rote Fahne*.

> The true centerpiece of the exhibition…is the *Knüppel*-room. What you see here is real revolutionary art. The artists of *Der Knüppel* all know that today art only makes sense if it serves the class struggle, if it subordinates itself to larger, world-chaning goals (*Welt reinigenden Ziele*). […] The values of R. Schlichter, Griffel, Geroge Grosz, Julli, Aleus, Heartfield, Fuck, Keil and all the others are among the most important documents of the time.[471]

The exhibition was critically reviewed by Adolf Behne in the pages of *Die Weltbühne*, where he questions the relevance of painting featuring the drab existence of working-class life for a working-class audience.[472] This elicited a reply by Heartfield on behalf of the *Rote Gruppe*, defending the pessimism of the work on display and calling Behne to task.[473]

---

[470] See SAPMO RY 1/I2/707/138 for further details.

[471] Published as "Proletarische Kunstausstellung im "Ulap," *Die rote Fahne*, September 1926. Also included as a clipping in Heartfield's archive at AdK.

[472] Behne, *Die Weltbühne*, vol. 22, no. 9 (1926).

[473] Heartfield, "Grün oder--Rot?" *Die Weltbühne*, vol. 22, no. 11 (1926): 434-435.

Conclusion

In the coming years, KPD leaders would begin to link Grosz' sardonic imagery to his nihilism and misanthropy, his refusal, as one KPD critic claimed, to see the heroism of the German proletariat

> He does not want to see the proletarian fighter. He believes that the proletariat only needs to be told by him, Geroge Gross [sic], that it is starving and deprived of all 'human' traits, as though the mass of the exploited do not know that already![474]

Grosz realism, after 1927, failed to provide a visual analogue to the KPD's political policies, which were increasingly dictated by Soviet leaders in Russia. In spite of its "failure," *Der Knüppel* represents a major achievement for the period: it embodies a brief period of coalition between the artistic avant garde and a major political party toward a shared goal, the overturning of the socio-economic status quo. For many artists on the German Left, the publication served as an entry point for a career as a Communist caricaturist, procuring them a living and a sizable audience. While Grosz may not have needed *Der Knüppel*, he too benefited from his association with the publication, as did Heartfield. Commuinst graphic satire became an effective means of agitprop in its pages and spread beyond them to other KPD materials, quickly turning into a standard visual mode for a class-conscious way of seeing. That it did not likewise provide a "positive" image of the working class for viewers to identify with undermined its efficacy in the eyes of KPD leaders, but this primarily due to shifting political

---

474 Alfred Kurella, from an article entitled "Ein Künstler des neuen Berlin," (1930 or 1931) located in Kurella's archive at the AdK, folder 121. The article is ostensibly about the artist Otto Bittner, a working-class artist who drew pieces for *Berlin am Morgen* and is favorably compared to Grosz, Kollwitz, Arnold, Zille and others. Not certain if this manuscript was ever published—likely in Berlin am Morgen if so.

requirements rather than a deficiency of the works themselves. As the final crisis years of the Weimar Republic commenced after 1927, the operational framework of Communist graphic satire shifted gears in a dramatic fashion.

Conclusion

Communist Graphic Satire Remodeled

The cancellation of *Der Knüppel* in 1927 marked a turning-point in the operation of Communist graphic satire, coinciding with a major policy shift in the international Communist movement. At the sixth congress of the Comintern held in the summer of 1928, parties were instructed to break all ties with the existing labor movement and form their own independent unions and working-class organizations. According to the Comintern's leading theorist at this time, Nikolai Bukharin, global capitalism was entering a new period of crisis (referred to as the "Third Period," to distinguish it from the revolutionary situation following WWI, and the second period of "relative stability" that followed after 1923) that would see renewed mass radicalization of workers and necessitated the exclusion of reformist influences.[475] "Social fascism," used to excoriate SPD members of the republican government in 1923, was translated into a full-fledged theory of Social Democracy's duplicitous role in staving off proletarian revolution; in practice, party leaders painted a broad range of positions as "social fascist" to expel

[475] For background on the development of this policy shift, see Nicholas N. Kozlov and Eric D. Weitz, "Reflections on the Origins of the 'Third Period': Bukharin, the Comintern, and the Political Economy of Weimar Germany," *Journal of Contemporary History*, vol. 24, no. 3 (1989): 387-410, and Matthew Worley's introduction to *In Search of Revolution: International Communist Parties in the Third Period*, ed. Matthew Worley (London; New York: I. B. Tauris, 2004), 1-17. For its ramifications upon the KPD, Norman LaPorte's article "Presenting a Crisis as an Opportunity: The KPD and the Third Period, 1929-1933," in the same volume is a good introduction (38-64).

internal critics (usually Trotskyists and other "leftists" opposed to bolshevization and the growing power of Stalin) and scuttle united front initiatives.[476] Such sectarianism cost the KPD dearly, alienating much of its support within intellectual and artistic circles, and leaving it wholly unprepared to counter the rise of Nazism.[477] By the early 1930s, most party members were young, inexperienced, or unemployed and the field of political struggle had moved from sites of labor to the streets, where members of the NSDAP and KPD fought over the control of neighborhoods. And while, as Eve Rosenhaft notes, the KPD was "surprisingly responsive to the shifting needs of its actual and potential constituency, and above all extremely original in reaching out to groups with specific interests outside those arising from the direct conflict between capital and labor," the evisceration of earlier bonds of working-class solidarity resulted in dramatic changes to party culture and a remodeled form of Communist graphic satire.[478]

---

[476] See Fowkes, *German Communism under the Weimar Republic*, 145-171 for details. A more recent account is provided in, Lea Haro, "Entering a Theoretical Void: The Theory of Social Fascism and Stalinism in the German Communist Party," *Critique*, vol. 39, no. 4 (December 2011): 563-582.

[477] Criticisms linking the disastrous results of the Third Period to the earlier bolshevization process and the rise of Stalin came from both the "right" opposition, to which Fuchs belonged, and the "left" opposition, largely but not exclusively associated with Trotsky's, whose articles condemning the KPD's flat-footed response to Nazism are collected in *The Struggle Against Fascism in Germany* (New York: Pathfinder Books, 1971). For further background on this issue see Thomas Weingartner, *Stalin und der Aufstieg Hitlers: Die Deutschlandpolitik der Sowjetunion und der Kommunistischen Internationale, 1929-1934* (Berlin: de Gruyter, 1970), and for more on "left" opposition movements within the KPD, Marcel Bois, *Kommunisten gegen Hitler und Stalin: Die link Opposition der KPD in der Weimarer Republik* (Essen: Klartext, 2014).

[478] Even Rosenhaft, *Beating the Fascists? The German Communists and Political Violence 1929-1933* (Cambridge; New York: Cambridge University Press, 1983), xi. Pamela E. Swett, *Neighbors and Enemies. The Culture of Radicalism in Berlin, 1929-1933* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2004. Two examples of the KPD's outreach efforts were their support for rent strikes in Berlin's working-class neighborhoods and women's issues—on the latter, see Atina Grossmann, *Reforming Sex. The German Movement for Birth Control and Abortion Reform, 1920-1950* (Oxford; New York: Oxford University Press, 1995).

Eulenspiegel, the result of this shift, premiered in April 1928 and was promoted as a more "popular" (*volkstümlich*) alternative to *Der Knüppel* [Fig. **4.1**].[479] Edited by Otto Nagel, a painter and KPD member since 1920 who belonged to the *Rote Gruppe* but kept his distance from Grosz realism, *Eulenspiegel* originally circulated as a party publication, but within a year came under the direction of Willi Münzenberg's *Neue Deutscher Verlag* (NDV), and thereafter operated in relative autonomy from party dictates. The few scholars who have analyzed *Eulenspiegel* stress the frequency of social themes over direct political attacks; according to one, "the political direction [of *Eulenspiegel*] can be summarized as 'the struggle against reaction'," which differentiates it from earlier Communist graphic satire, despite the fact that many of the same caricaturists were featured in its pages.[480] Karl Holtz's "The bourgeois culture-octopus (*Der Burgerliche Kultur-Poyp*)" [**Fig. 4.2**] from a July 1929 issue is typical, as is Rudolf Schlichter's "Regulation of the unemployment question—through coalition policy (*Regelung der Arbeitslosenfrage—durch die Koalitionpolitik*) [**Fig. 4.3**] from October 1929. However, in the case of Schlichter's drawing, it is clear that the social indictment of "reaction" takes on a political tenor common to earlier condemnations of the Republic found in *Der Knüppel*,

---

[479] In a retrospective article, Alfred Beier-Red, one of *Eulenspiegel*'s most prominent artists who became a recognized artist in the DDR, writes:

> While *Die Pleite* and *Der Knüppel* were consistently aggressive from the first to the last page, and more tailored to the intellect, *Eulenspiegel* had a more popular (*volkstümlich*) character by way of its mingling of emotionally triggering social indictment (*gemütsbewegender, sozialer Anklage*) with biting satire

—see "Die Karikatur als Kampfmittel der revolutionären Arbeiterschaft in der Weimarer Republik," *Bildende Kunst*, nr. 10 (1963): 517-520. See also, Horn, "1917-1933," and Kriebel, "Radical Left Magazines in Berlin," for further background (introduction, n. 76).

[480] Rolf Surmann, *Die Münzenberg-Legende. Zur Publizistik der revolutionären deutschen Arbeiterbewegung 1921-1933* (Köln: Prometh Verlag, 1983), 126. This, according to Surmann, aligns it with other publications issued by the NDV during this period.

albeit in a more pronounced, moral register. The same is true of another Schlichter piece from November 1928, "Two class militants (*Zwei Klassenkämpfer*) [**Fig. 4.4**], that features two men: one an unemployed worker, ragged, and with cap in hand; the other, besuited, well-groomed and smoking a cigar. The accompanying poem (written pseudonymously by Tucholsky) explains how these two former "comrades" before WWI took different paths and ended up at opposite ends of the working class, unemployed and a Social Democratic deputy. Told from the point of view of the unemployed man, he asks whether the Social Democrat, fully embourgoised, remembers his former comrade or feels ashamed for abandoning the class struggle. Other issues address politics in an explicit fashion. A special 1928 edition published in connection with a campaign in opposition to the construction of battleships for the navy utilized the spectacles trope once again to cast chancellor Hermann Müller, who belonged to the SPD, as a Nazi [**Fig. 4.5**].[481] In a later issue, Karl Zörgiebel, the SPD police chief of Berlin who opened fire on demonstrating workers in 1929 killing thirty-three and wounding over a hundred, is depicted as a brutal murderer in a manner recalling Grosz's "Cheers Noske!" [**Fig. 4.6**].[482] The persistence of Grosz realism in *Eulenspiegel* suggests that the shift away from the sardonic "negativity" of *Der Knüppel* was not as comprehensive as once believed.

---

[481] For background on the anti-*Panzerkreuzerbau* campaign, see Braskén, *The International Workers' Relief*, 212-214

[482] In response to growing street violence, Zörgiebel had banned all demonstrations leading up to May Day, which the KPD defied, leading to several days of rioting early that month. According to the KPD leadership, Zörgiebel's actions proved the validity of the "social fascism" theory. For a full account, see Thomas Kurz, *'Blutmai' Sozialdemokraten und Kommunisten im Brennpunkt der Berliner Ereignisse von 1929* (Berlin: J. H. W. Dietz, 1988).

Images by Grosz appear infrequently in the pages of *Eulenspiegel*, but his influence can be found in the drawings of Schlichter, Alfred Beier-Red, and J. Sauer [**Fig. 4.7**]. Grosz had by this point distanced himself from the KPD but was still publishing drawings for publications within the Communist milieu such as *Die Aktion* [**Fig. 4.8**]. Except for one or two rare exceptions, those published in *Eulenspiegel* were recycled from earlier publications. That Grosz realism of any kind appeared in the magazine cuts against claims made by contemporary commentators and later historians that *Eulenspiegel* presented a more "heroic" or "positive" view of the proletariat. In the same profile quoted in the introduction to chapter two, wherein the critic Alfred Kémeny links Grosz to past masters of graphic satire, he nevertheless concludes that "George Grosz, incomparable in his use of the weapon of drawing as a struggling Spartacist, has not developed into a Bolshevist."[483] In practice, this meant that Grosz did not conform with the "proletarian aesthetic" that had begun to dictate the KPD's

[483] "Künstler des Proletariats (17): George Grosz," 111—see chapter two, n. 252. This article is the last in a series that ran sequentially in *Eulenspiegel* from February 1930 to July 1931, highlighting "artists of the proletariat. The featured artists are (in sequence):

1. Vol. 3, no. 2 (Feb. 1930): Theophile Alexandre Steinlen
2. Vol. 3, no. 3 (Mar. 1930): Honoré Daumier
3. Vol. 3, no. 4 (April 1930): Vincent Van Gogh
4. Vol. 3, no. 5 (May 1930): Käthe Kollwitz
5. Vol. 3, no. 6 (June 1930): Henry Schönbauer
6. Vol. 3, no. 7 (July 1930): Frans Masereel
7. Vol. 3, no. 8 (August 1930): Heinrich Zille
8. Vol. 3, no. 10 (Oct. 1930): Wilhelm Morgner
9. Vol. 3, no. 11 (Nov. 1930): Fred Ellis/Robert Minor
10. Vol. 3, no. 12 (Dec. 1930): Jean-François Millet
11. Vol. 4, no. 1 (Jan. 1931): Arbeiterkinder
12. Vol. 4, no. 2 (Feb. 1931): Aksel Jörgensen
13. Vol. 4, no. 3 (March 1931): Gustave Courbet
14. Vol. 4, no. 4 (April 1931): Constantin Mernier
15. Vol. 4, no. 5 (May 1931): Kurt Weinhold
16. Vol. 4, no. 6 (June 1931): John Heartfield
17. Vol. 4, no. 7 (July 1931): George Grosz

internal party culture. In the early years, when the borders between the party and the broader Communist milieu remained fluid, the daily rituals, practices, modes of discourse, and ways of seeing that made up this culture were performed in combination with existing struggles and in solidarity with the labor movement as a whole. After the "bolshevization" of the party in 1925, a cult of personality around the proletarian leader Ernst Thälmann was encouraged, members were "militarized" through participation in the Red Front Fighting League (*Roter Fronkämpferbund*) or Red Women and Girls' League (*Roter Frauen- und Mädchen Bund*),[484] and increased disciplinary and ideological training served as a prophylactic to stem the loss of employed membership entrenched in traditional working-class institutions. Early ramifications of these developments are reflected in *Der Knüppel*, as discussed in chapter three, but their full fruition came during the Third Period, when the elements of a future Socialist Realism began to emerge.

Contrary to most accounts of the Third Period, cultural experimentation did not immediately cease after 1928. There was a considerable array of innovative cultural initiatives and products put forward during this period—both within the immediate orbit of the KPD and beyond its confines.[485] *Eulenspiegel* falls within this field as well.

[484] Both leagues were ostensibly "above" party affiliation, but in actually served to recruit men and women into the KPD, politicize aspects of everyday life (i.e. food shortages, domestic labor issues), and, in the case of the first, protect Communist demonstrations from the NSDAP and related right-wing groups. For background, see Kurt Schuster, *Der Rote Frontkämpferbund, 1924-1929: Beiträge zur Geshichte und Organisationsstruktur eines politischen Kampfbundes* (Düsseldorf: Droste Verlag, 1975), Carsten Voigt, *Kampfbünde der Arbeiterbewegung. Das Reichsbanner Schwarz-Rot-Gold und der Rote Frontkämpferbund in Sachsen 1924-1933* (Köln: Böhlau, 2009), and Sara Ann Sewell, "Bolshevizing Communist Women: The Red Women and Girls' League in Weimar Germany," *Central European History*, no. 45 (2012): 268-305.
[485] This was particularly true in the realm of theater, as discussed in Richard Bodek, *Proletarian Performance in Weimar Berlin: Agitprop, Chorus and Brecht* (Columbia: Camden House, 1997). In terms of visual art, the most innovative work fell under the definition of agitprop, for reasons explained in chapter

For, although there are plenty of broad-shouldered, proletarian fighters in its pages **[Fig. 4.8]**, they co-exist with more Groszian types and the rotund characters of Heinrich Zille, whose depictions of the Berlin working-class "Milljöh" (a Berlinerisch rendition of "milieu") were hugely popular during this period. By embracing Zille's aesthetic over Grosz realism, Nagel sought to profit from the artist's stature beyond the Communist milieu, devoting several covers to Zille and naming him a "co-founder" of *Eulenspiegel* on the masthead after September 1929 **[Fig. 4.9]**. Combining heavy Berlin dialect with an ample number of children, Zille's representations of Berlin's traditional working-class districts and urban types provided a humorous contrast to Grosz's baleful social realism **[Fig. 4.10]**.[486] Grosz's workers may not embody a Third Period proletarian identity, but neither do Zille's. This is likely due to the fact that *Eulenspiegel* was not directly controlled by the KPD and was instead published by Münzenberg to maintain a broad constituency of support rather than recruit readers to the party or propagate a

---

three. For an introductory discussion of this work, see Andrés Mario Zervigon, "Die anderen Bildamateure: Agitprop, Werbung, und Montage," trans. Wolfgang Hesse, in *Das Auge des Arbeiters: Arbeiterfotografie und Kunst um 1930*, ed. Wolfgang Hesse (Leipzig: Spector Books, 2014): 55-72.

486 Zilles illustrated books were hugely successful before and after WWI, and won him acclaim from many critics and publications, despite his political affiliation with the Left. An early member of the Berlin Secession and close friend of Max Liebermann, Zille became a member of the Prussian Academy of Art in 1924. He was also a recognized photographer. Nagel became friendly with Zille during WWI, and subsequently brought him into the orbit of the KPD. In the lead up to the December 1924 Reichstag election discussed in chapter three, prominent artists and intellectuals were asked about their relationship to the party. Several responses were published in the November 28 issue of Die rote Fahne, including Zilles:

> In response to your questionnaire, I can only answer: I have been a socialist since fourteen years of age (1872). But not after 1914. Since after that point the Communists have said and pursued what the socialists earlier wanted to do but did not, I am a Communist!

For further background on Zille, his work, and his politics, see Typen mit Teifgang. Heinrich Zille und sein Berlin, eds. Matthias Flügge and Matthias Winzen (Oberhausen: Athena-Verlag, 2013), Amanda M. Brian, "Art from the Gutter: Heinrich Zille's Berlin," *Central European History*, 46 (2013): 28-60, and, especially relevant, Malcom Gee, "Heinrich Zille and the Politics of Caricature in Germany 1903-1929," *Balkan Studies*, issue 4 (2008): 107-129.

revolutionary class-conscious perspective. While the party disciplined its conception of a Communist "identity" during the Third Period, Münzenberg loosened his, and in the process shifted the operation of Communist graphic satire toward a new goal: popularizing an anti-fascist, pro-Communist political orientation less beholden to a class-conscious way of seeing. This is evident, for example, in the reissuing of *Eulenspiegel* as *Red Pepper* (*Roter Pfeffer*) in 1932 [**Fig. 4.11**], and the prominence of Heartfield's photo-caricature montages in the *Arbeiter Illustrierte Zeitung* during the early years of the Popular Front [**Fig. 4.12**].[487] Often every bit as as sharp as the drawings of Grosz and the work found in *Der Knüppel*, the operational parameters of photo-caricature differ significantly from those of graphic satire, raising issues outside the realm of this study in its current configuration.[488]

---

[487] On Heartfield's work for this publication, see Kriebel, *Revolutionary Beauty*, 65-104 and Andrés Mario Zervigon and Patrick Rössler, "'Die AIZ sagt die Wahrheit' Zu den Illustrationsstrategien einer 'anderen' deutschen Avantgarde," in *Deutsche Illustrierte Press: Journalismus und visuelle Kultur in der Weimarer Republik*, eds. Katja Leiskau, Patrick Rössler, and Susann Trabert (Baden-Baden: Nomos, 2016): 181-211. Cristina Cuevas-Wolf discusses the role such works played in forging an anti-fascist politics in her essay "John Heartfield's Thälmann Montages: The politics behind Images of International Antifascism," *New German Critique*, vol. 44, no. 2 (August 2017): 1-24.

[488] The place to begin would be Sherwin Simmons' essay, "Photo-caricature in the German Popular Press, 1920," *History of Photography*, vol. 20, no. 3 (Autumn 1996): 258-264, which provides an introductory overview of early efforts by artists such as Karl Holtz to employ photomontage for left-wing party newspapers. Kriebel's *Revolutionary Beauty* takes up this same theme and proposes a theory of photo-caricature by way of the notion of "suture," arguing that Heartfield's late photomontages, interpellating an "alternative Communist subject," sought to inscribe viewers into the party conflicts so as to buttress Communist policy and offer a psychological consolation for subsequent defeats. Her best example is presented in chapter three, "Photomontage in the Year 1932" (105-166), originally published as an article in *Oxford Art Journal*, vol. 31, no. 1 (2008): 99-127. Contrasting Kriebel and others' views with contemporary debates regarding the Workers' Photography Movement would demonstrate how the latter relied upon a notion of experiential practice similar to the one I employ here at odds with the interpellation model of ideology most scholars utilize when discussing this material. Doing so would require an analysis Best's theory of the "perceptual economy of capital" with Siegfried Kracauer's claim in his 1927 essay "Photography" that, as a historically specific mode of representation, photography "is assigned to a particular developmental stage of practical and material life. It is a secretion of the capitalist mode of production [*Der kapitalistische Produktionsprozeß hat sie aus sich herausgesetzt*]"— in *The Mass Ornament. Weimar Essays*, trans., ed. Thomas Y. Levin (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1995): 47-64.

The Afterlife of Communist Graphic Satire

Communist graphic satire lived on in émigré publications after the Nazi's took power, both in its Grosz realist and less acidic forms. Partisan artists outside of Germany followed in the footsteps of the *Rote Gruppe* in the late 1920s as well, producing caricature for radical publications well into the 1930s.[489] Never again, however, did it reach the heights it did during the turmoil of the Weimar years, when recognized artists of the avant-garde made a concerted effort to become Communist caricaturists. In a February 1942 article written for *Free German Culture* (*Freie Deutsche Kultur*), published in England for the German émigré community, Heartfield describes an imaginary meeting between himself and Eduard Fuchs (who died in Paris two years before). The topic of their discussion is the reproduction of a Daumier drawing in an issue of Josef Goebbels' *The Empire* (*Das Reich*), a popular Nazi weekly. Outraged, Fuchs flings the paper to the floor and Heartfield comments:

> The connection between this seemingly minor publication and the unimaginable atrocities of the Nazis is palpable to me. That's why I understand Fuchs' aversion and anger. To him the publication of the drawing in the Nazi press is an insult to the spirit of Daumier (*eine Schmähung des Geistes Daumiers*), a link in the chain of their misdeeds. It is a slander of culture. He is no longer calm and appears deeply hurt. I want to show him another picture in the same sheet, but I do not dare.

---

489 The most notable examples being William Gropper, in the US for publications like the *New Masses*, and James Boswell in England for the *Left Review.* Both artists translated Grosz realism into their own national context. For more on Gropper, see Louis Lozowick, *William Gropper* (Philadelphia: Art Alliance Press; New York: Cornwall Books, 1983); on Boswell, Robert Radford, "To Disable the Enemy: The Graphic Art of the Three Jameses," in *Weapon in the Struggle: The Cultural History of the British Communist Party*, ed. Andy Croft (London: Pluto Press, 1998): 28-47. Background on the influence of Weimar-era Communist art on US Communist visual culture is discussed in Helen Langa, *Radical Art: Printmaking and the Left in 1930s New York* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2004), and Andrew Hemingway, *Artists on the Left: American Artists and the Communist Movement, 1926-1956* (New Haven; London: Yale University Press, 2002). For background on the English context, see Robert Radford, *Art for a Purpose: The Artists' International Association, 1933-1953* (Winchester: Winchester School of Art Press, 1987).

Heartfield later on imagines the victims of Nazism, artists and workers alike, standing up to confront the outlawing of their works, the suppression of their voices, or the taking their lives in a future, post-Nazi era.

> Yes, and there is good old Eduard Fuchs again, standing next to Daumier, and I hear him say "When Hanns Johst, the chairman of the culture at the beginning of their reign of terror said 'When I hear the word culture, I release the safety on my pistol' that was the only time he ever spoke the truth. Their very mention of the word 'culture' is a deception. I think, Monsieur Daumier, that it is with culture as it is with peace: the two are indivisible; you cannot separate them without killing them. They can now live again, since barbarism has been defeated.[490]

My goal in this study has been to demonstrate that, despite the political twists and turns of undertaken by the KPD and the increasing dominance of new forms of visual media, graphic satire maintained its place within Weimar Communism's political imaginary. For the social historian of art, the questions that generate a project are rarely the sole result of an art historical interest, and *Seeing Class* is no different in this respect. In returning to the well-trodden path of Weimar-era visual culture I have sought to address two audiences, art historians and the contemporary Left. The arguments presented here are an attempt to intervene in debates that exist in each sphere.

For the art historians, I have sought to show how more traditional media retained their stature during the Weimar period, and not just as source material for or prefigurations of photography. Existing visual tropes and symbols were "weaponized"

---

[490] Heartfield, "Daumier im 'Reich'," *Freie Deutsche Kultur*, nr. 2 (February 1942) —the full text is reprinted in Eckhard Siepmann, *Montage: John Heartfield—vom Club Dada zur Arbeiter-Illustrierten Zeitung* (Berlin: Elefanten Press Verlag, 1977), 164, and is also discussed in Weitz, *Der Mann im Schatten*, 363-4. Johst, a right-wing novelist, dramatist, and poet joined the NSDAP in 1932 and won acclaimed for Nazi leader for his play *Schlageter*, performed on Hitler's 44th birthday in April 1933. The famous quote, mistakenly attributed to Nazi leaders, comes from this play.

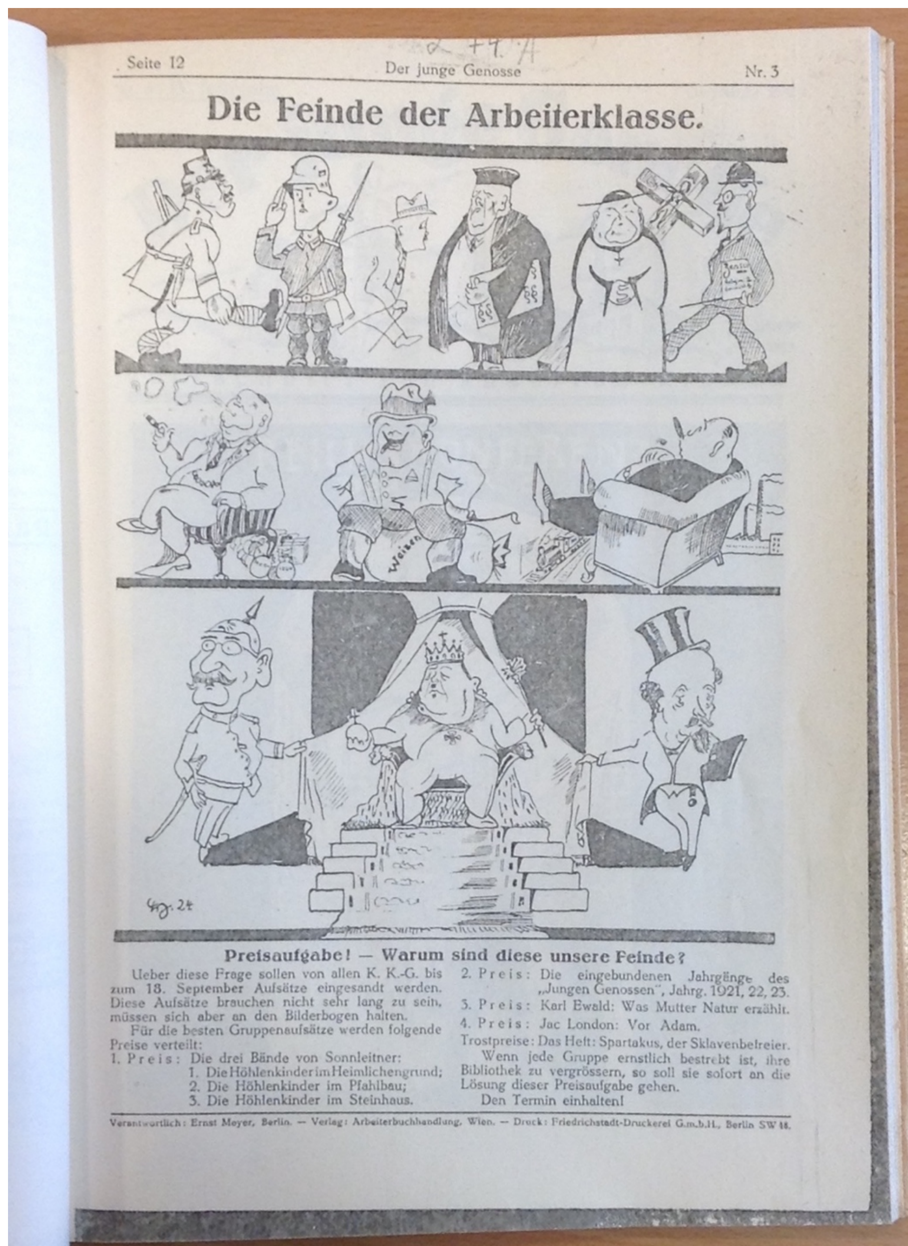
for specific audiences, muddying distinctions between art, propaganda, and popular imagery that necessitate a shift in focus away from avant-garde "tactics" toward a more grounded, cultural materialist assessment of who made what, why they did so, where it appeared, and how it was meant to operate. Contrasting the initial framework for political graphic satire developed by Eduard Fuchs in the pre-WWI period with the later, actual operation of Communist graphic satire in the post-WWI period provides an initial step in this direction.

For the contemporary Left, I have sought to show how vernacular practices within the Communist milieu and beyond impacted theories central to Marxist theory and working-class politics. By attending to the visual dimension of class formation and the vicissitudes of class identity during the Weimar era, I hope to offer some historical insight into current debates about our own increasingly turbulent period. Class consciousness, often invoked, is rarely discussed within the Left these days, and is often held to be an outdated and "idealist."[491] Yet, if we are to renew a politics of solidarity not reducible to the color, shape, or configuration of one's "body," it is imperative that we understand how even the most elemental forms of struggle change one's outlook upon the world. Class consciousness is not a mechanical process that can be inferred from a given class position or imputed as a fixed perspective; it must instead be formulated, re-worked, and nurtured from the lived reality of actual workers, whose

[491] Marxists these days tend to prefer theories of "class composition," drawing upon conceptions of class struggle outside the classical Marxist tradition, particularly younger scholars radicalized since the Occupy movement such as those around the journal *Endnotes*. For a discussion of the differences between the two conceptions, see Salar Mohandesi, "Class Consciousness or Class Composition?" *Science and Society*, vol. 77, no. 1 (January 2015): 72-97.

experience of exploitation and oppression is disparate. Art may play a role in this process but is never a substitute for its operation in the real world. The class struggle will not be won upon the field of images.

Figures



Seite 12 — Der junge Genosse — Nr. 3

Die Feinde der Arbeiterklasse.

Preisaufgabe! — Warum sind diese unsere Feinde?

Ueber diese Frage sollen von allen K. K.-G. bis zum 18. September Aufsätze eingesandt werden. Diese Aufsätze brauchen nicht sehr lang zu sein, müssen sich aber an den Bilderbogen halten.

Für die besten Gruppenaufsätze werden folgende Preise verteilt:

1. Preis: Die drei Bände von Sonnleitner:
   1. Die Höhlenkinder im Heimlichengrund;
   2. Die Höhlenkinder im Pfahlbau;
   3. Die Höhlenkinder im Steinhaus.
2. Preis: Die eingebundenen Jahrgänge des „Jungen Genossen", Jahrg. 1921, 22, 23.
3. Preis: Karl Ewald: Was Mutter Natur erzählt.
4. Preis: Jac London: Vor Adam.

Trostpreise: Das Heft: Spartakus, der Sklavenbefreier.

Wenn jede Gruppe ernstlich bestrebt ist, ihre Bibliothek zu vergrössern, so soll sie sofort an die Lösung dieser Preisaufgabe gehen.

Den Termin einhalten!

Verantwortlich: Ernst Meyer, Berlin. — Verlag: Arbeiterbuchhandlung, Wien. — Druck: Friedrichstadt-Druckerei G.m.b.H., Berlin SW 48.

Fig. 0.1 "The Enemies of the Working Class (*Die Feinde der Arbeiterklasse*)," from *Die junge Genosse*, vol. 4, no. 3 (September 1924)

Fig. 1.1 Photograph of Eduard Fuchs (c. 1930)

Fig. 1.2 Interior of Fuchs' Villa (c. 1927)

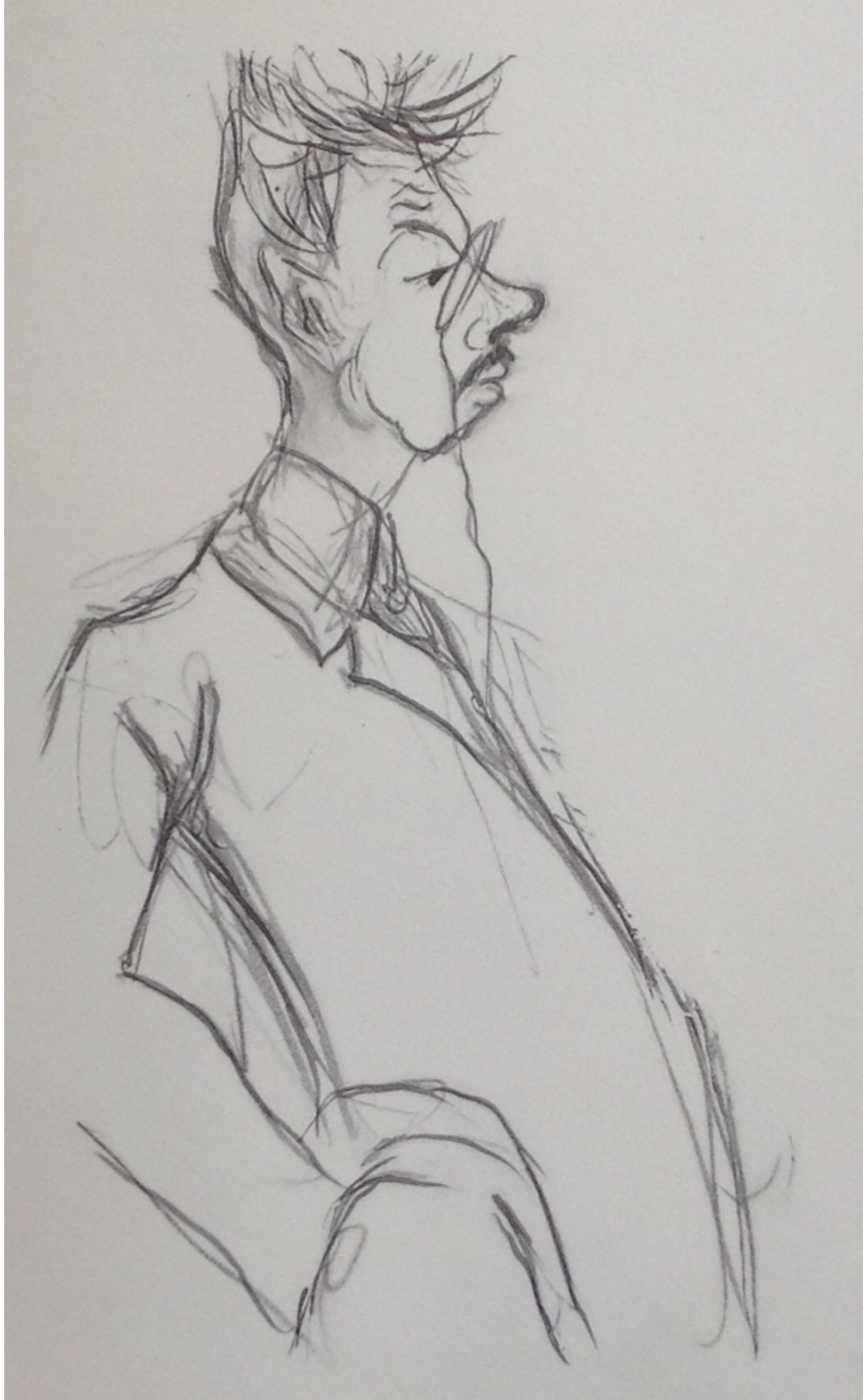
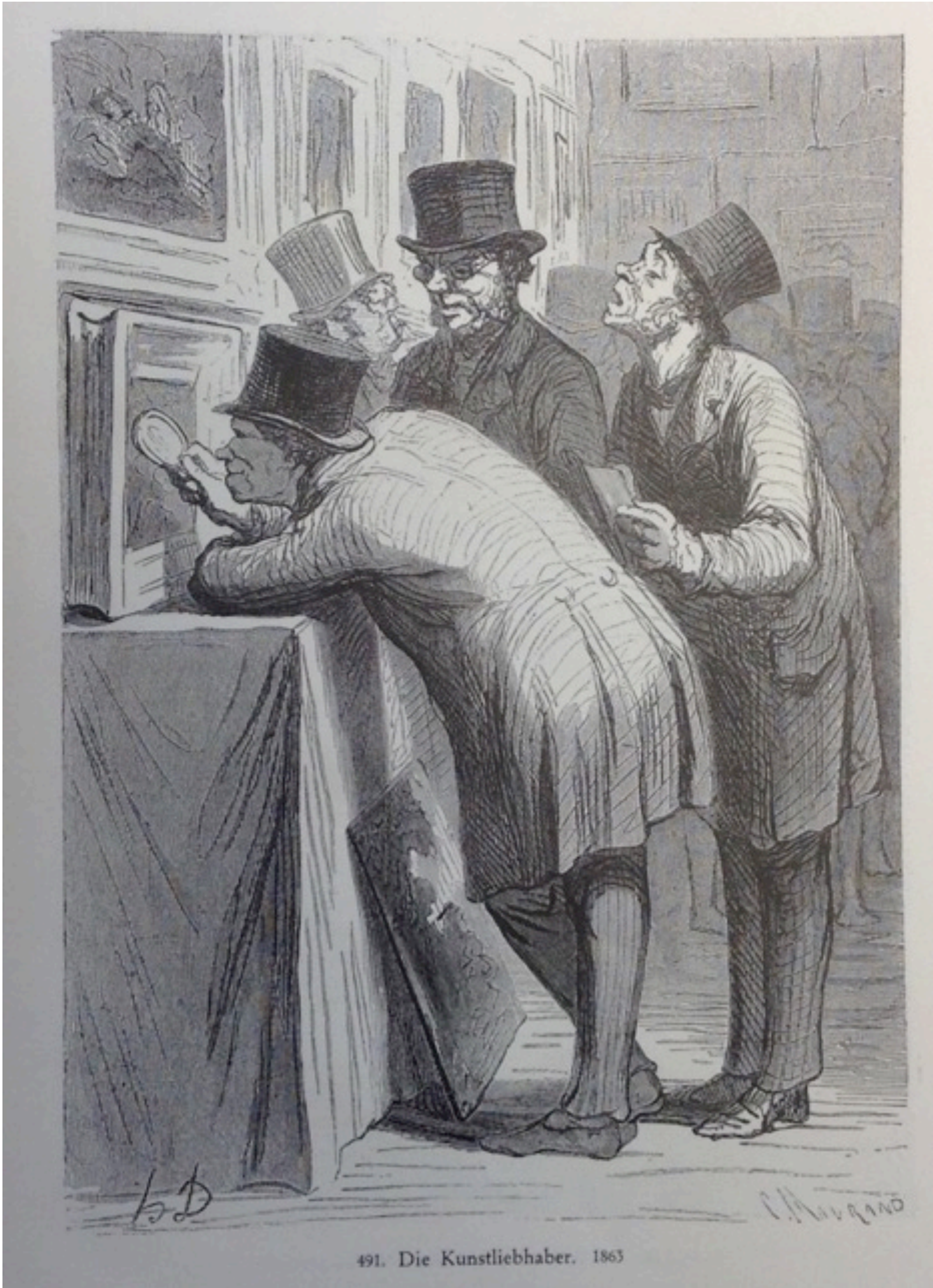


Fig. 1.3 Rudolf Grossmann, "Portrait of Eduard Fuchs" (1926)

Fig. 1.4 Photograph of Eduard Fuchs (c. 1903)



491. Die Kunstliebhaber. 1863

Fig. 1.5 Honoré Daumier, "Art Lovers" from *Le Charivari* (1863)

XVI. Jahrgang.

Nummer 6. 1897.

Süddeutscher

Postillon

Politisch-satyrisches Arbeiterblatt.

Erscheint alle 14 Tage.

Redakteur: Ed. Fuchs. Verlag: M. Ernst.

Preis pro Einzel-Nummer 10 Pfg.

Die Marseillaise.

Vision eines modernen Vormärzlers.

Verwahrt das Feuer und das Licht, daß unserm Staat kein Schaden g'schicht!

Fig. 1.6 Cover of the*Süddeutscher Postillon*, vol. 16, no. 6 (1867)

Fig. 1.7 Center fold image from the *Süddeutscher Postillon*

— 87 —

Metamorphose

oder wie sich ein bayrischer Knödel erst in einen hervorragenden bayrischen Zentrumsführer und dann in ein Nilpferd verwandelt.

Unsere **98er neuesten Modelle** concurriren mit den besten deutschen Fabrikaten in Qualität und Preisen

Fig. 1.8 Anonymous, "Metamorphosis, or how to transform a Bavarian breaddumpling into the esteemed leader of the Bavarian Center Party and then into a Hippopotamus (*Metamorphose, oder wie sich ein bayrischer Knödel erst in einen hervorragenden bayrischen Zentrumsführer und dann in ein Nilpferd verwandelt*)," from the *Süddetuscher Posttillon*, vol. 17, no. 10 (1898)

Fig. 1.9 Max Engert,"Surronded by Enemies! (*Feinde Reingsum!*)," from the *Süddeutscher Postillon*, vol. 16 (1897)

Fig. 1.10 Anonymous [Max Engert?], "The 'Victims' of Colonialism (*Die Opfer der Kolonialismus*)," from the *Süddeutscher Postillon*, vol. 16 (1897)

Fig. 1.11 Ephraim Moshe Lilien, front cover to Fuchs' *1848 in der Caricatur* (1898)

Fig. 1.12 Heinrich Wilhelm Storck, "Such always follows! (*Wie einer immer daneben tritt!*)" (1848), reprinted *1848 in der Caricatur*

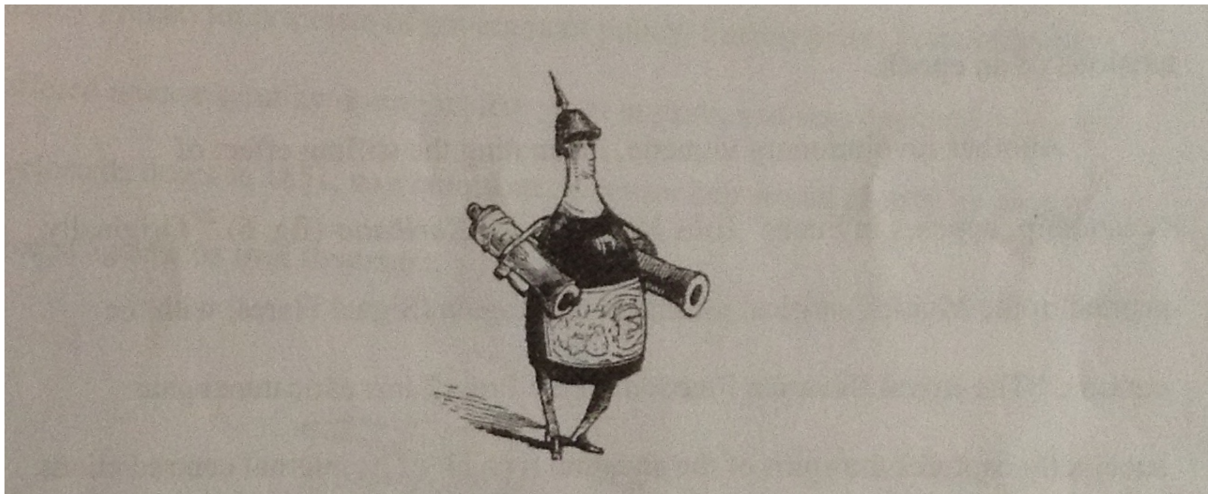


Fig. 1.13 Anonymous, caricature of Friedrich Wilhelm as champagne bottle (n.d.), reprinted in *1848 in der Caricaur*

— 14 —

Fürstenspielzeug. Von A. Gill.

(Siehe die untenstehende Notiz.)

Briefe aus Sachsen.

Mei liewer Bostilljohn!

Laß mich gleich im nei'n Jahre an dei dreiis Herz flich'n, denn mir wärdt's jetzt merßknebbch'n in Sachs'n so sachs'g'n ungemiedlich. Alis, awer och Alis wärdt jetzt bei uns den verflixt'n Breiß'n nachgemacht. Daß m'rsch breiß'sche Dreiklaff'nwahlrecht geackzebdierd hamm, das war ja gans scheene, unn daß m'r mit'n Verreinsgesetz jetzt och in de breiß'sch'n Fußdabb'n tret'n unn Kombensazjohn'n verlang'n, das is och nich iwel, aber schon de breiß'sche Bahnschteigschberre, die m'r jetz sogar in Dräsd'n gekriegt hamm, die will m'r nich recht baff'n. Das mächt awer noch sein! Was sagste denn nu awer daderzu, daß m'r sogar de Heeflichkeet geg'n de Behärd'n an d'n Nagel häng'n soll'n? Weil sich de breiß'sch'n Owerbehärd'n de Heeflichkeet verbet'n hamm, werd's bei uns nachgemacht un mir Sachs'n soll'n nu off eemal och nich mehr heeflich sein. Kee „ehrerbiedigst", kee „gehorsamst", kee „ergähmst", kee „geneigtest", kee „underdähnigst" mehr! Herrjehses nee — wo soll denn das nur noch naus? Ohne Heeflichkeet kenn doch mir heeflich'n Sachs'n gar nich lähm! Wenn's noch Sozjahldemokrad'n wär'n! Geg'n die sein m'r ja schon lange nich mehr heeflich. Awer geg'n de Behärd'n? Nee, das gibbt e Unglick! Da darf ich emende och nich mehr „dei gedreier Biedermeier" schreim, weil das zu heeflich is? Das dähd mir godd-schtrambach 's Herz abdrick'n! Awer du bist ja Godd sei Dank keene Behärde, unn da kann ich geg'n dich noch heeflich sein — awer die Andern? Unn was wärdt denn aus d'r Audohredäd, wenn mir geg'n de Beamt'n nich mehr heeflich sein därf? Das is d'r Ahnfang vom Ende — das is d'r Undergang d'r Welt! Mir wärd's gans wärwlig im Kobbe, denn nergends seh ich enn Reddungsanker, wo ich mich dran ahnklammern kennte, wenn die große Sindfluhd kommt. Unsre ganse sächs'sche Tradizjohn geht zum Deifel, wenn mir nich mehr heeflich sein därf'n, womit ich verbleiwe

dei gedreier

Biedermeier.

Des Postillons politisches Glaubensbekenntniß in Bezug auf seine Abonnenten.

Stockkonservativ, sofern es sich um die Erhaltung seines seitherigen Abonnentenstandes handelt;

Reaktionär, als er eifrig bestrebt ist, früher eventuell verlorene Abonnenten wieder zu gewinnen und

Wüthender Kommunist, indem er seine Exemplare unter alle Arbeiter vertheilt haben möchte.

Notiz zu Fürstenspielzeug.

Briefkasten.

Fürstenspielzeug. Von A. Gill.

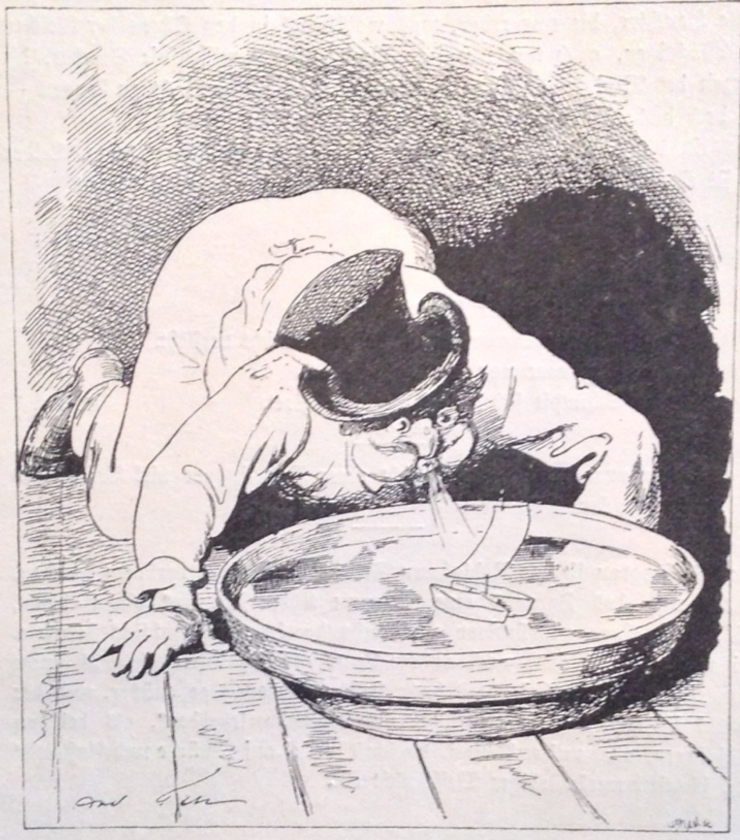


Fig. 1.14 Reprint of André Gill, "Sovereign's Toy (*Fürstenspielzeug*)," from the *Süddeutscher Postillon*, vol. 17, no. 2 (1898)

Fig. 1.15 Max Engert, "How Tirpitz gained an advantage (*Wie Tirpitz seine "Schepkens in's Trockene* bringt)," from the *Süddeutscher Postillon*, vol. 17, no. 2 (1898)

[NB: *Schepken* is low-German dialect for "little ship," and the title plays on the German proverb "to bring one's little sheep out of the rain (*sein Schäfchen ins Trockene bringen*)]

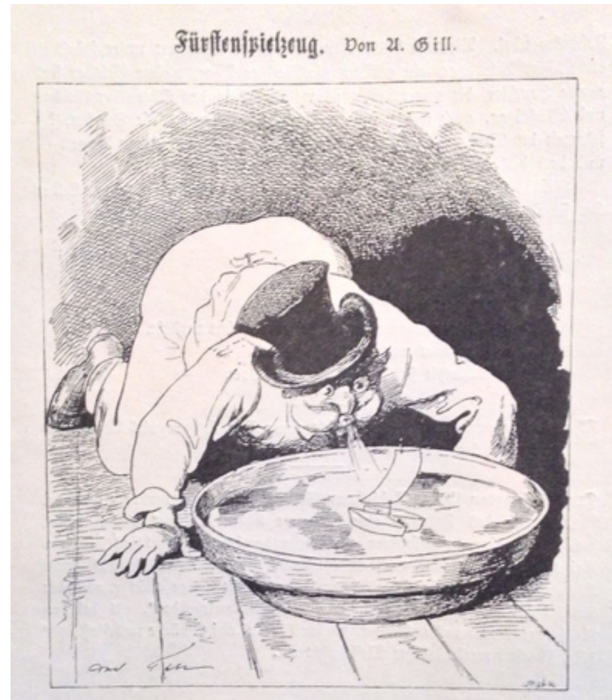


Fig. 1.16 Comaprison between Fig. 1.14 and two photographs of Louis Napoleon (c. 1868)

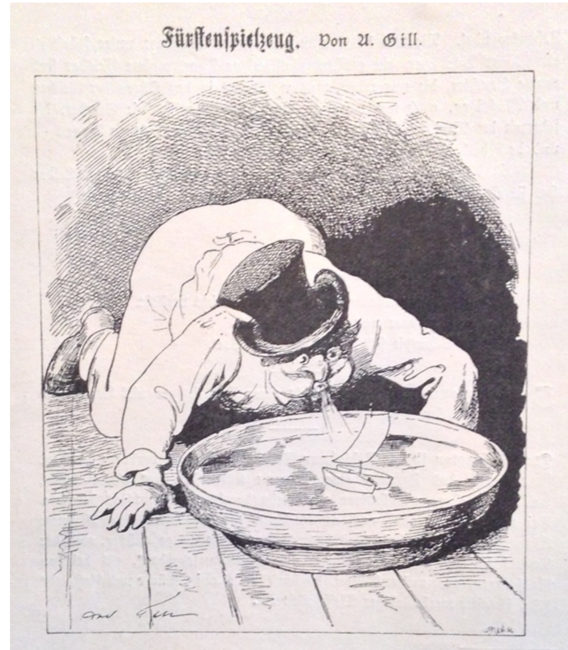


Fig. 1.17 Comparison between Fig. 1.14 and two photographs of Kaiser Wilhelm II (c. 1900)

Fig. 1.18 André Gill, "Authentic portrait of Rocambole (*Portrait authenique de Rocambole*), cover of *La Lune*, no. 89 (Decmber 1867)

Die Karikatur

der europäischen Völker

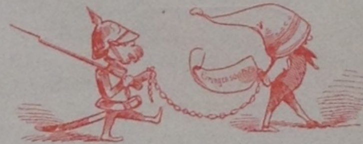
vom

Jahre 1848 bis zur Gegenwart

von

Eduard Fuchs

Mit 515 Illustrationen und 65 Beilagen hervorragender und seltener Kunstblätter in Schwarz und Farbendruck



Berlin

A. Hofmann & Comp.

Fig. 1.19 Cover of Fuchs' *Der Karikatur der europäischen Volker* , vol. 1 (1901)

Fig. 1.20 William Hogarth, *Industry and Idlenes* (plate one) (1747) Engraving

Fig. 1.21 William Hogarth, *Gin Lane* (1751) Engraving

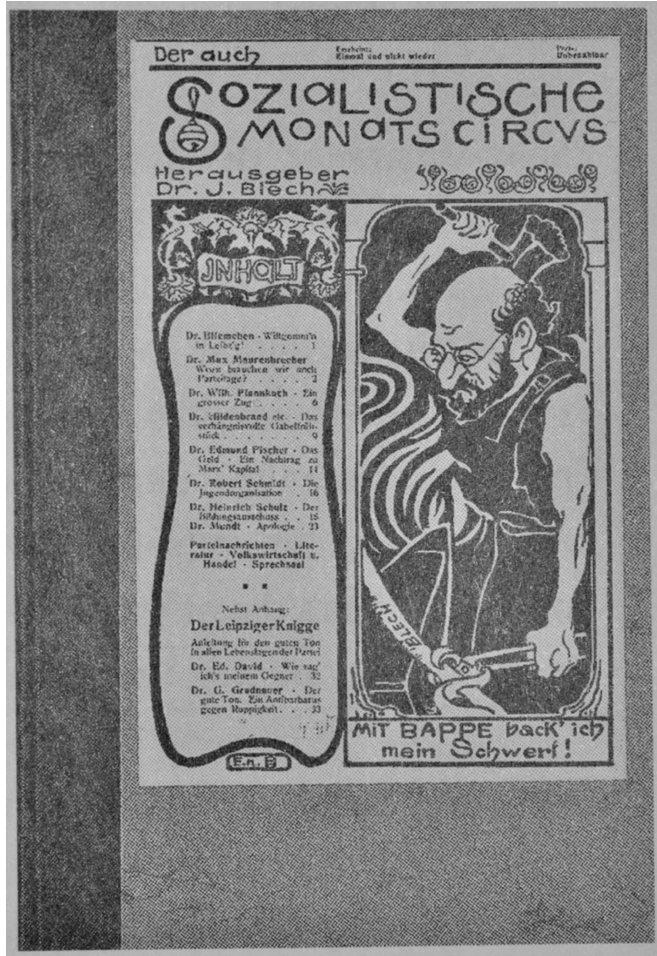


Fig. 1.22 (left) Cover of *Der auch Sozialistische* Monatscircus (1909); (right) Cover of *Sozialistische Monatshefte* (1909)

Fig. 1.23 Walter Crane, "The Capitalist Vampire" (1885)

Fig. 1.24 Honoré Daumier, "Thi..." [Portrait of Adolphe Thiers] (1833)

Fig. 1.25 Theodor Heine, "A Committee of the united Parties of Order celebrate their electoral victory (*Ein Comité der vereinigten Ordnungsparteien feiert seinen Wahlsieg*)," cover of *Simplicissimus*, vol. 3, no. 13 (1898)

Fig. 1.26 Photograph of the delegates to the Second Comintern Congress (1920)

Fig. 1.27 Detail of Fig. 1.26 showing Fuchs between Karl Radek and Nikolai Bucharin

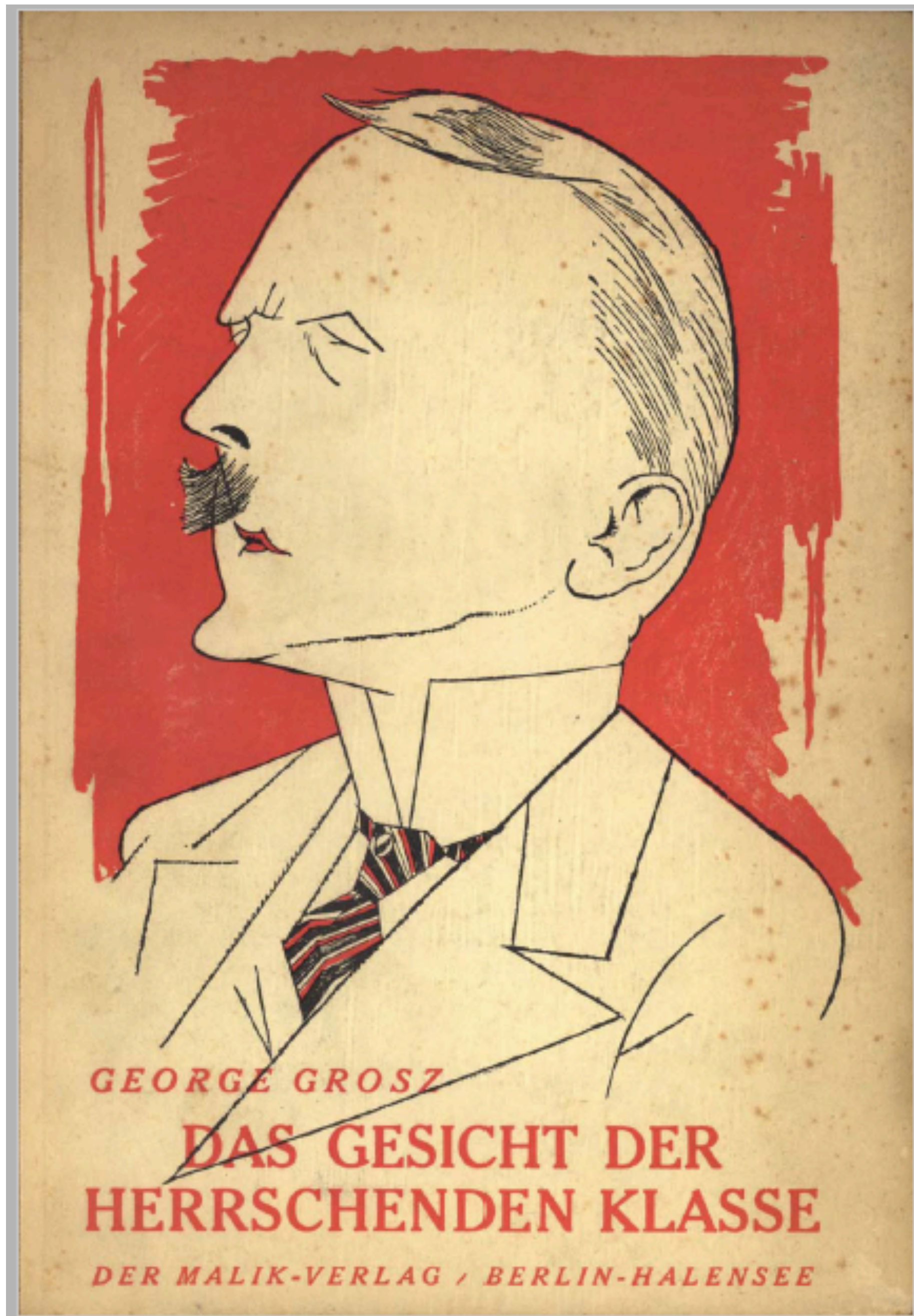


Fig. 2.1 George Grosz, cover of *The Face of the Ruling Class* (*Das Gesicht der herrschenden Klasse* (1921)

Fig. 2.2 Theodor Thomas Heine, "The artist George Grosz asks his audience, whether he should slaughter or butcher the bourgeois in accordance with kosher regulations (*Der zeichner George Grosz fragt sein Publikum, ob er den Bourgeois schlachten oder schächten soll*)," from*Simplicissimus*, vol. 30, no. 37 (December 14, 1925)

Fig. 2.3 Max Pechstein, "To the Lamppost (*An die* Laterne)," poster for a journal of the same name (1919)

Fig. 2.4 Rudi Feld,"The Danger of Bolshevism (*Die Gefahr des Bolschewismus*)" (1919)

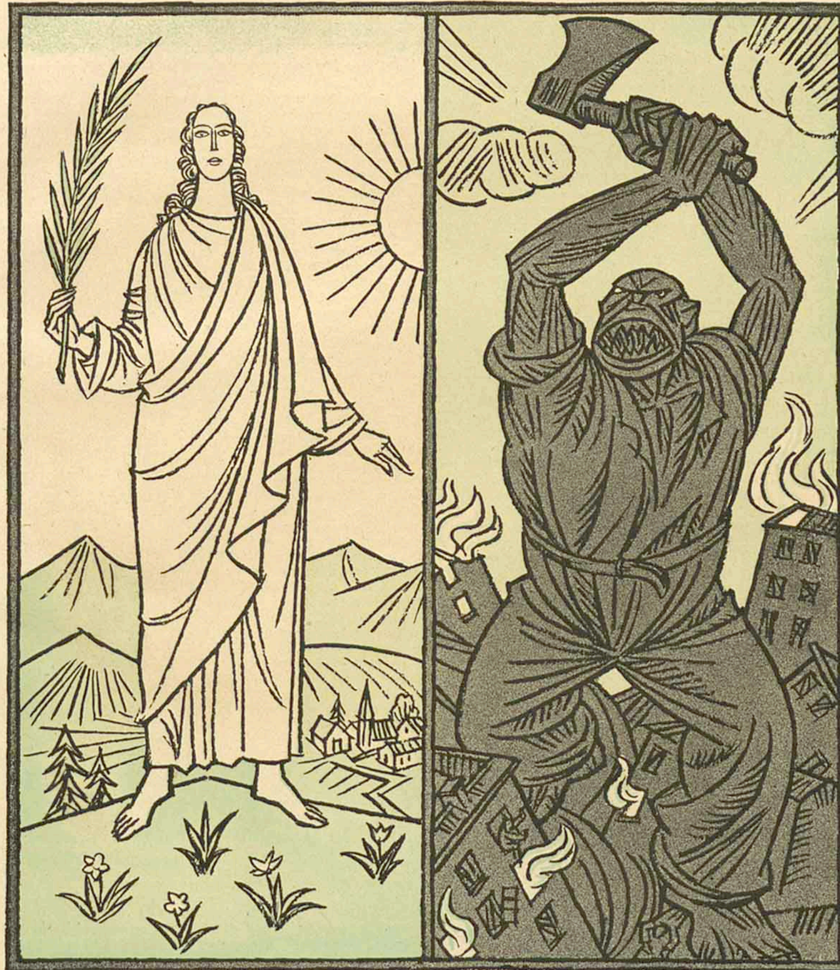
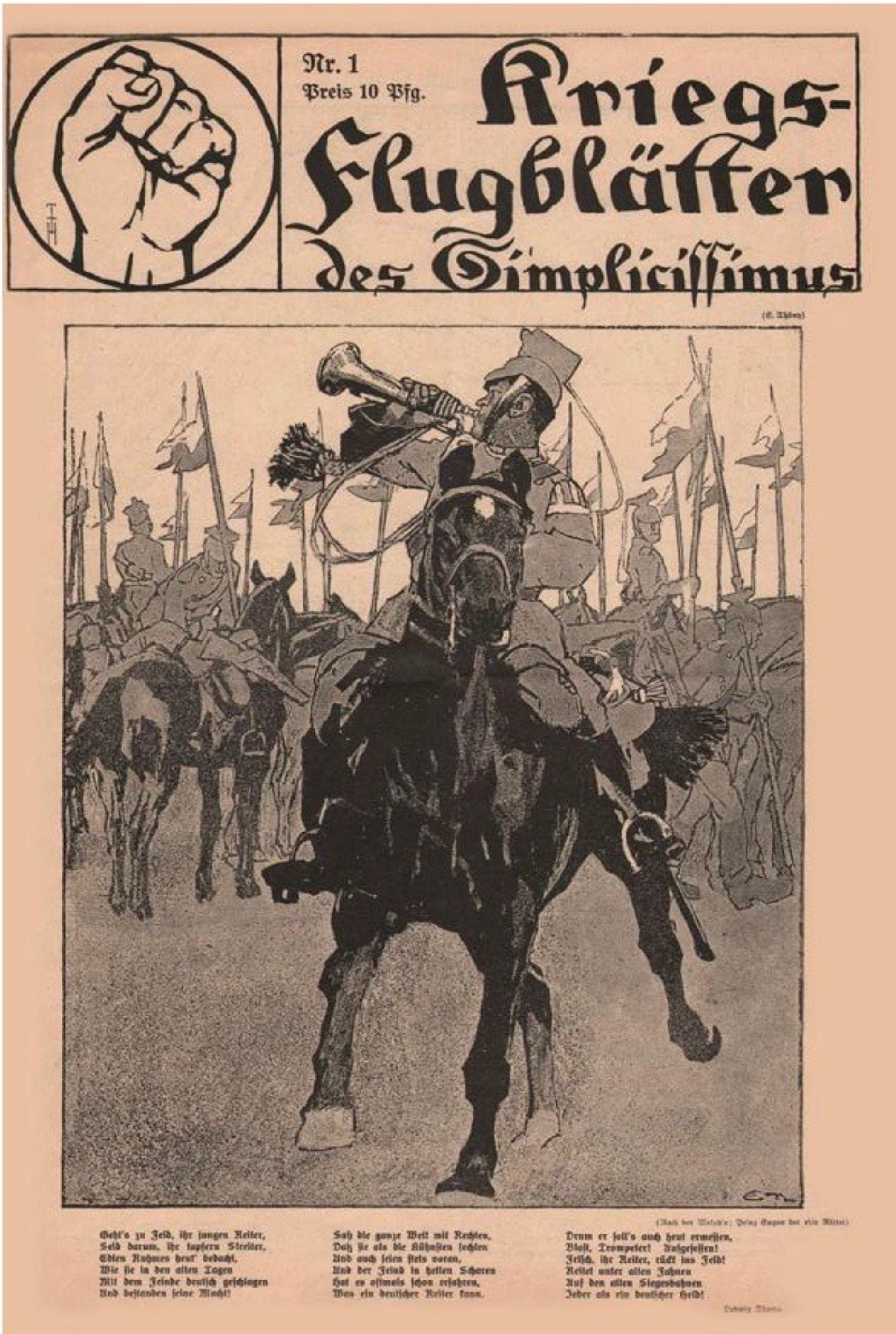


Fig. 2.5 Erich Schilling, "Which will the entente choose? Wilson or Lenin? (*Wie wird die Entente entscheiden? Wilson oder Lenin?*), cover of *Simplicissimus*, vol. 23, no. 43 (Februrary 1919)

Fig. 2.6 Karl Arnold, "Spartakus--We want to prove to the world that the people also have the right to do something things (*Wir wollen der Welt beweisen, das auch das Volk das Recht hat, Dummheiten zu machen*)," from *Simplicissimus* vol. 22, no. 38 (December 1918)



Nr. 1
Preis 10 Pfg.

Kriegs-Flugblätter des Simplicissimus

Geht's zu Feld, ihr jungen Reiter,
Seid darum, ihr tapfern Streiter,
Edlen Ruhmes heut' bedacht,
Wie sie in den alten Tagen
Mit dem Feinde deutsch geschlagen
Und bestanden seine Macht!

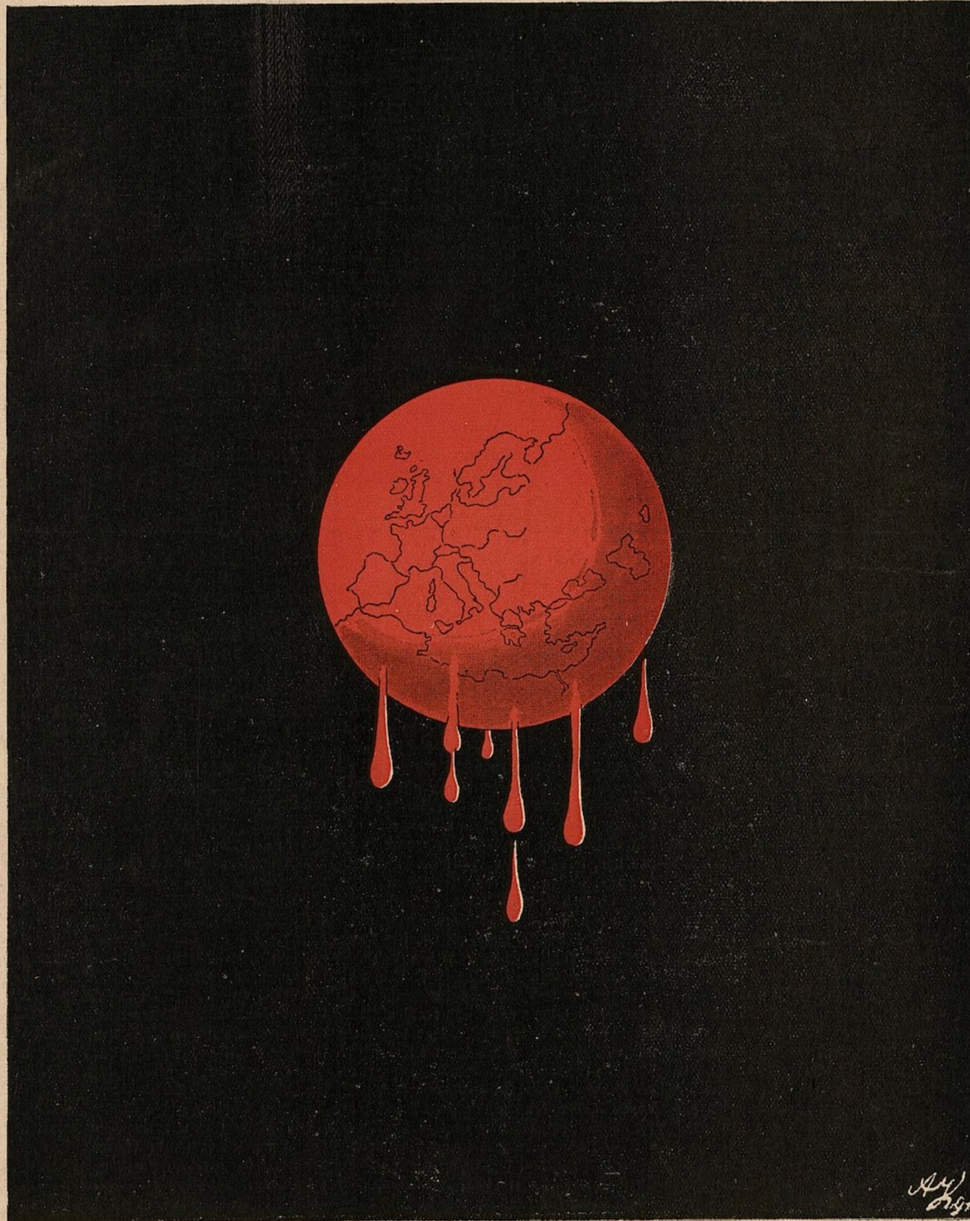
Sah die ganze Welt mit Rechten,
Daß sie als die Kühnsten fechten
Und auch seien stets voran,
Und der Feind in hellen Scharen
Hat es oftmals schon erfahren,
Was ein deutscher Reiter kann.

Drum er soll's auch heut ermessen,
Blast, Trompeter! Aufgesessen!
Frisch, ihr Reiter, rückt ins Feld!
Reitet unter alten Fahnen
Auf den alten Siegesbahnen
Jeder als ein deutscher Held!

Fig. 2.7 Eduard Thöny, cover of the *Simplicissimus' War Pamphlet* (*Kriegs-Flugblätter des Simplicissimus*), no 1 (March 1915)

Fig. 2.8 Anonymous, "Come on, kids, let's go! Now only a beating will do! (*Nun, Kinder, drauf los! Jetzt hilft nur noch das Dreschen!*)," cover of *Der Wahre Jakob*, no. 733 (August 1914)

Fig. 2.9 W. A. Wellner, "Look here, boys, will do it without you (*Seht ihr, Jungens, wir schaffen auch ohne euch*)," from *Lustige Blätter--Kriegsnummer 5*, vol. 29, no. 36 (1914)



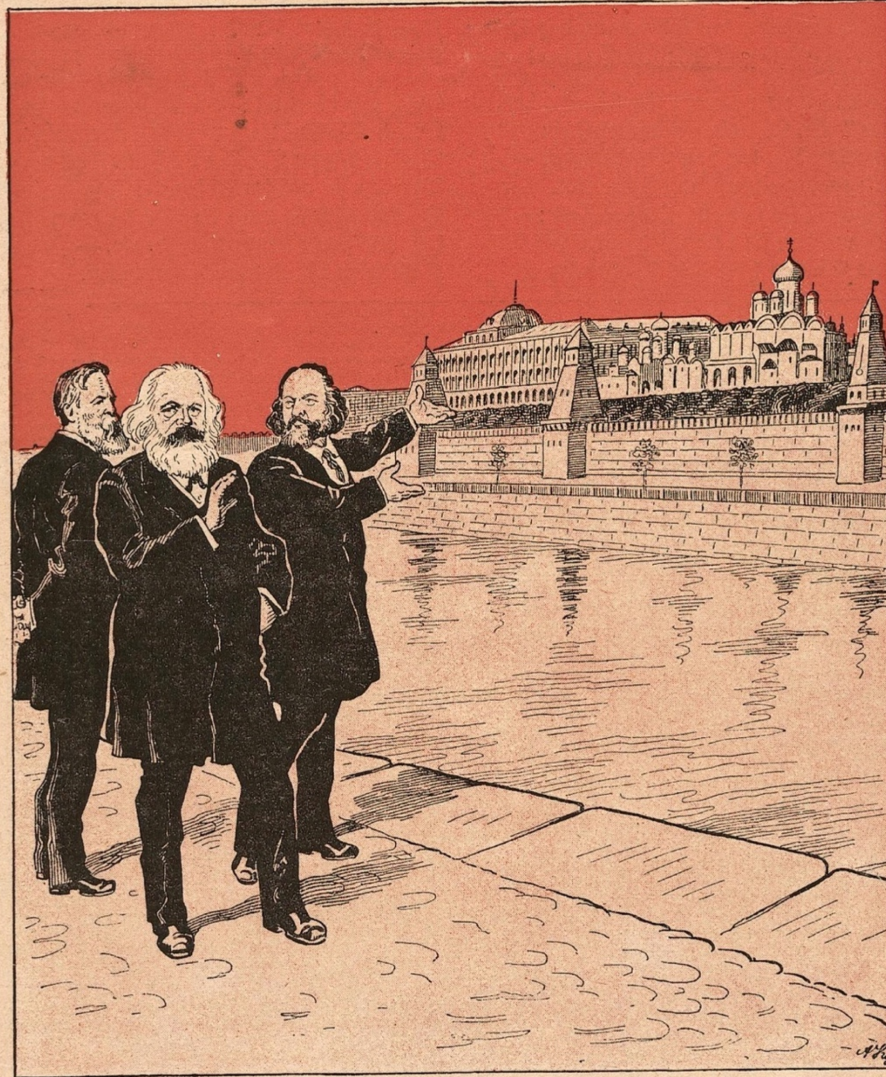
Nr. 784 16 | Stuttgart, den 4. August | 1916

DER WAHRE JACOB

Abonnementspreis pro Jahr Mk. 2.60 | Erscheint alle vierzehn Tage. | Verantwortlich für die Redaktion: B. Heymann in Stuttgart.
Anzeigen pro 4 gespaltene Nonpareille-Zeile Mk. 2.50 | Preis bei Postbezug vierteljährlich 65 Pfg. (ohne Bestellgeld). | Druck und Verlag von J. H. W. Dietz Nachf. G.m.b.H. Stuttgart.

Die Erde im Jahre 1916 vom Mond aus gesehen.

Fig. 2.10 [Artist?], "The earth in 1916 as seen from the moon (*Die Erde im Jahre 1916 vom Mond aus gesehen*)," cover of *Der Wahre Jakob*, no. 784 (August 1916)



Nr. 892 21 1920 Preis 60 Pfennig 37. Jahrgang

DER WAHRE JACOB

Abonnementspreis jährlich M. 15.60 | Erscheint alle vierzehn Tage in Stuttgart | Verantwortlich für die Redaktion: Georg Durst in Stuttgart
Bei Postbezug vierteljährlich M. 3.90 (ohne Bestellgeld) | Anzeigen für die 4gespaltene Nonpareille-Zeile M. 10.— | Druck und Verlag von J. H. W. Dietz Nachf. G.m.b.H. Stuttgart

Moskau
(Aus der Geschichte des Sozialismus)

Bakunin: Von hier wird sich die Welterlösung datieren, wie ich immer vorausgesagt habe.
Marx: Nicht die Welterlösung wird von hier ausgehen, sondern nur das große Elend aller Arbeiter.

Fig. 2.11 [Artist?], "Moscow (from the history of socialism) Bakunin: From here will the redemption of the world emerege, as I always predicted. Marx: The redemption of the world will not come from here, only the greatest misery for workers (*Bakunin*: *Von hier wird die Welterlösung datieren, wie ich immer vorausgesagt hat. Marx: Nicht die Welterlösung wird von hier ausgehen, sondern nur das große Elend aller Arbeiter*)," cover of *Der Wahre Jakob*, no. 892 (1920)

Durch Post u. Buchhandel à Nummer 40 Pf. Abonnement: Quartal (6 Nummern incl. Zustellung) 2 Mark. Vorzugs-Ausgabe: 100 numm. Exemplare 1-20 sign. auf echt Zanders Bütten à 10 M., 21-100 à 3 M.

Preis 40 Pf.

Anzeigenpreise: 1 Quadratzentimeter 0,50 Mark, einmal wiederholt 10 % Rabatt, zweimal wiederholt 20 % Rabatt. Exzentrischer Satz: 1 Quadratzentimeter 1,00 Mark, bei gleichen Rabattsätzen.

"Jedermann sein eigner Fussball"

Jllustrierte Halbmonatsschrift

1. Jahrgang | Der Malik-Verlag, Berlin-Leipzig | Nr. 1, 15. Februar 1919

Sämtliche Zuschriften betr. Red. u. Verl. an: Wieland Herzfelde, Berlin-Halensee, Kurfürstendamm 76. Sprechst.: Sonntags 12—2 Uhr

Preisausschreiben!

Wer ist der Schönste??

Deutsche Mannesschönheit 1 (Vergl. Seite 4)

Die Sozialisierung der Parteifonds

Eine Forderung zum Schutze vor allgemein üblichem Wahlbetrug

(Diese Ausführungen sollen den Unfug unserer Nationalversammlung selbst vom Gesichtspunkt der Demokraten aus illustrieren, jener Leute, die meinen, ein Volk dürfe keine Regierung besitzen, deren Niveau dem seines eigenen Durchschnitts überlegen ist.)

Man mag Demokrat sein, deutsch-sozialistischer Untertan oder Kommunist, man mag mit Schiller sagen: Verstand ist stets bei wenigen nur gewesen oder behaupten auf jede Stimme komme es (sogar mit Recht) an, die Tatsache wird man nicht bestreiten: Wahlen gehören zu den ge-

Fig. 2.12 George Grosz, cover of *Everyone their own Football* (*Jedermann sein eigenen Fussball* (February 1919)

Die Pleite

30 Pf. 1. Jahrgang, Nr. 3 Der Malik-Verlag, Berlin-Leipzig Anfang April 1919 30 Pf.

Prost Noske! — — das Proletariat ist entwaffnet!

Fig. 2.13 Georg Grosz, "Cheers Noske!--the proletariat has been disarmed (*Prost Noske!--das Proletariat ist entwaffnet!*)," cover of *Die Pleite*, vol. 1, no. 3 (April 1919)

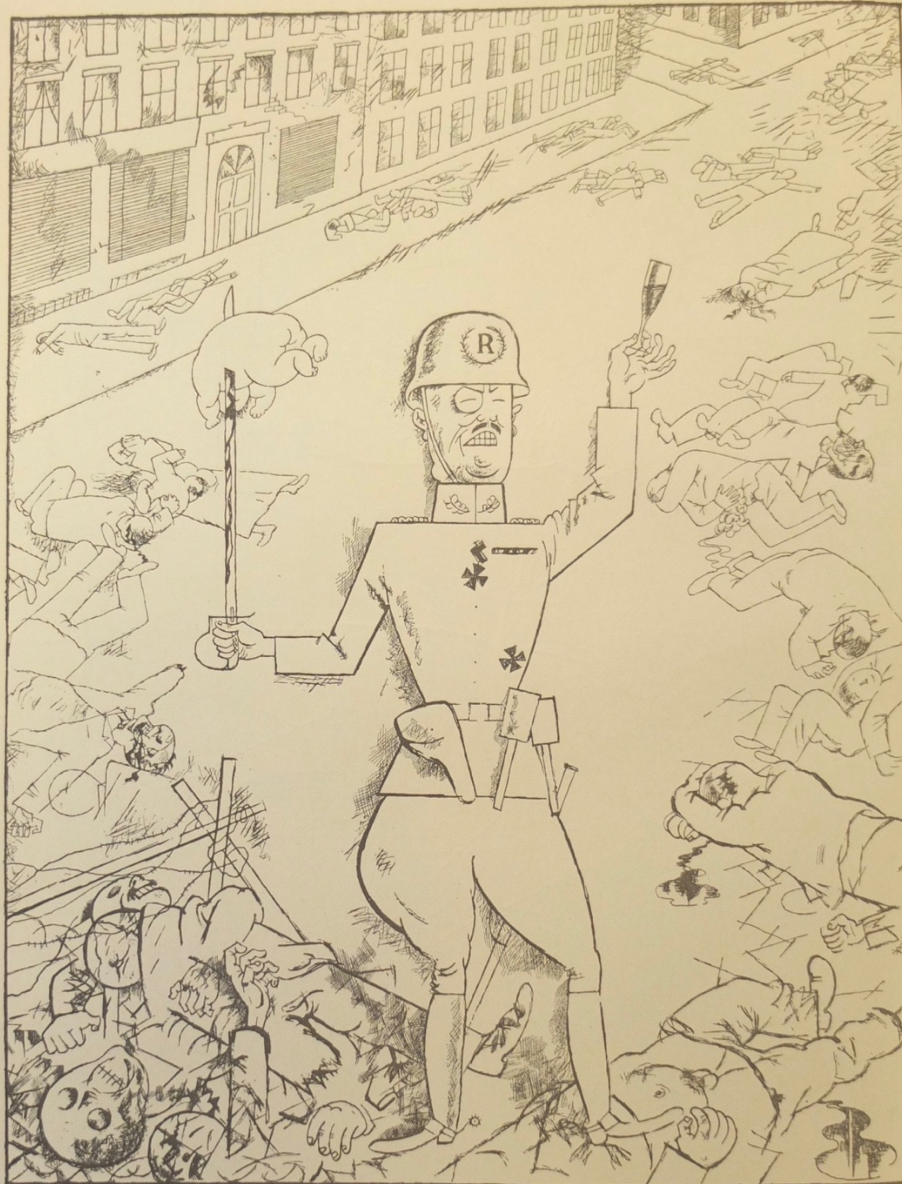


Fig. 2.14 George Grosz, "Cheers Noske! The young revolution is dead! (*Prost Noske! Die junge Revolution ist tot!*)," from *Das Gesicht der herrschenden Klasse*

Fig. 2.15 Karl Arnold, "The young republic. Do not stifle the child with revolution and protests (*Die junge Republik. Erstickt das Kind nicht in Revolutionen und Protesten*)," cover of *Simplicissimus*, vol. 23, no. 41 (January 1919)

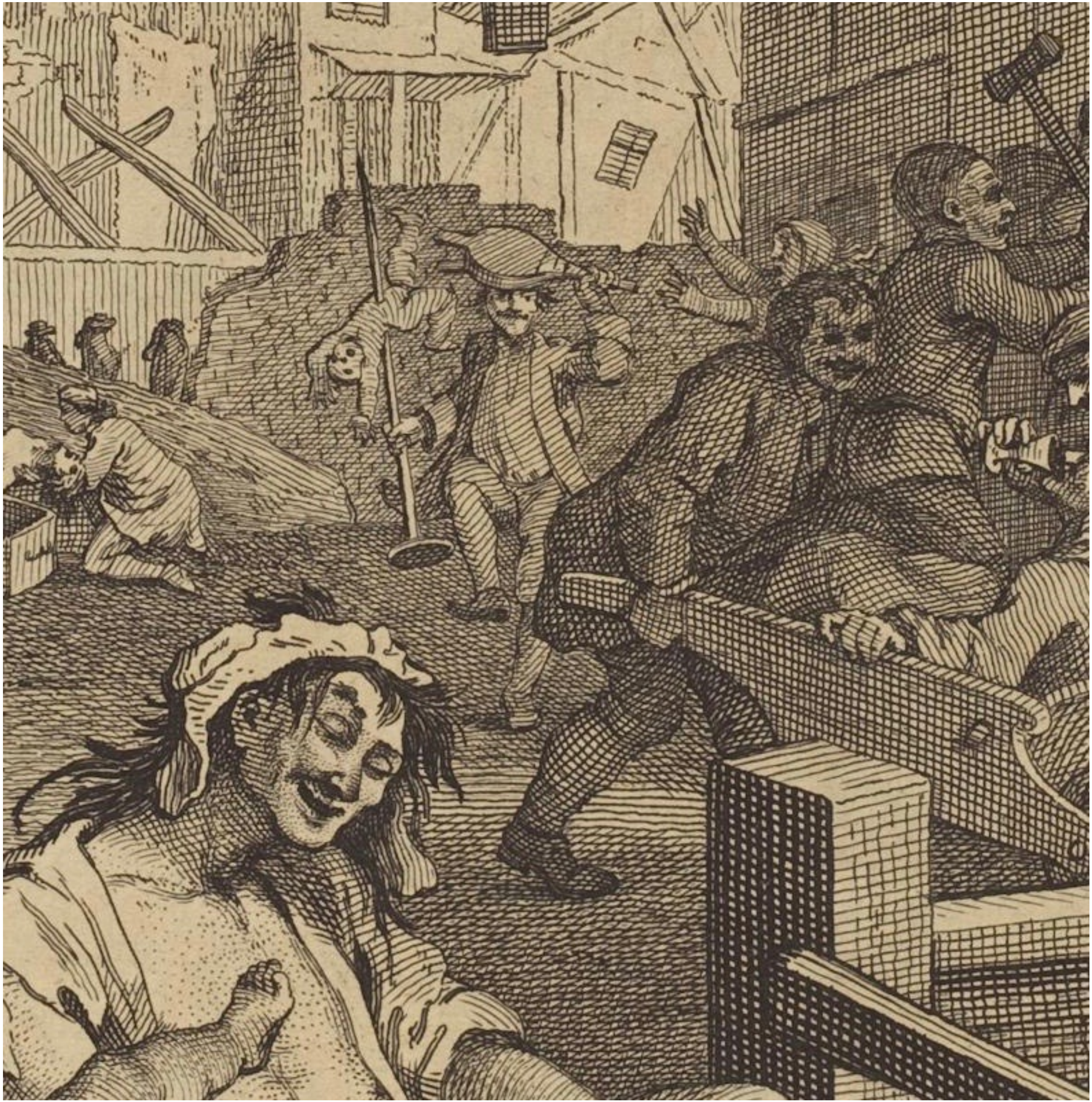


Fig. 2.16 Detail of Fig. 1.21, Hogarth, *Gin Lane* (1751)

Fig. 2.17 (above) Photograph of the opening of the First International Dada Fair (June 1920); (next page) Photograph of Dada Fair, room two

Sperren Sie endlich
Ihren Kopf auf!
Machen Sie ihn frei
für die
Forderungen der Zeit!
NEUE JUGEND
WIERTZ
DADA
willentliche Zersetzung
bürgerlichen Begriffswelt
DADA
steht auf
Seiten des revolutionären
Proletariats!

Fig. 2.18 John Heartfield, *Fathers and Sons* (*Väter und Sohne*) (1924)

Fig. 2.19 John Heartfield and George Grosz, *Hustle and Bustle in the Universal City, Five Past Noon* (*Leben und Treiben in Universal-City, 12 Uhr 5 mittags*) (1920)

Fig. 2.20 Cover of Wieland Herzfelde's *Society, Artists, and Communism* (*Gesellschaft, Künstler, und Kommunismus*) (1921)

Fig. 2. 21 (left) George Grosz, "We praise God, the righteous (*Wir treten zum Beten vor Gott den Gerechten*)," from *Das Gesicht der herrschenden Klasse*; (right) George Grosz, *Pillars of Society* (1926) Oil on canvas

Fig. 2.22 GeorgeGrosz, "By the grace of capital (*Von Geldsacks Gnaden*), cover of *Die Pleite*, vol. 1, no. 1 (1919)

Uebernahme ihrer Funktionen durch A.- und S.-Räte, sowie deren Ausschüsse und Organe.

Wahl von Arbeiterräten über ganz Deutschland durch die gesamte erwachsene Arbeiterschaft beider Geschlechter in Stadt und Land, nach Betrieben, sowie von Soldatenräten durch die Mannschaften, unter Ausschluß der Offiziere und Kapitulanten. Recht der Arbeiter und Soldaten zur jederzeitigen Rückberufung ihrer Vertreter.

4. Wahl von Delegierten der A.- und S.-Räte im ganzen Reich für den Zentralrat der A.- und S.-Räte, der den Vollzugsrat als das oberste Organ der gesetzgebenden und vollziehenden Gewalt zu wählen hat. Zusammentritt des Zentralrats vorläufig mindestens alle drei Monate — unter jedesmaliger Neuwahl der Delegierten — zur ständigen Kontrolle über die Tätigkeit des Vollzugsrats und zur Herstellung einer lebendigen Fühlung zwischen der Masse der A.- und S.-Räte im Reiche und ihrem obersten Regierungsorgan. Recht der lokalen A.- und S.-Räte zur jederzeitigen Rückberufung und Ersetzung ihrer Vertreter im Zentralrat,

[illegible] Angelegenheiten der Betriebe zu ordnen, die Arbeitsverhältnisse zu regeln, die Produktion zu kontrollieren schließlich die Betriebsleitung zu übernehmen hab

8. Einsetzung einer zentralen Streikkommission, die ständigem Zusammenwirken mit den Betriebsräte beginnenden Streikbewegung im ganzen Reich heitliche Leitung, sozialistische Richtung und die kräf Unterstützung durch die politische Macht der A.- und Räte sichern soll.

IV. Internationale Aufgaben.

Sofortige Aufnahme der Verbindungen mit den Br parteien des Auslands, um die sozialistische Revolution internationale Basis zu stellen und den Frieden durch di ternationale Verbrüderung und revolutionäre Erhebung Weltproletariats zu gestalten und zu sichern.

V.

Das will der Spartakusbund!

Und weil er das will, weil er der Mahner, der Drä weil er das sozialistische Gewissen der Revolution ist, wi

Politische Uebersicht.

Ebert wieder entlarvt.

Washington, 11. Dezember. (Reuter). Die in den ausländischen Blättern gebrachte Meldung, wonach Staatssekretär Lansing erklärt habe, wonach keine Lebensmittel nach Deutschland gesandt würden, bevor die Nationalversammlung gewählt sein wird, wird für unrichtig erklärt.

Der beinahige Präsident der deutschen Republik.

Ebert der Erste.

Die zweite Proklamation Eberts zum Präsidenten.

Diesmal war's nicht ein Spiro, sondern ein kommandierender General. Der übernahm beim gestrigen Truppenempfang, in Vertretung Ebert-Haases, die Begrüßung der weiter einziehenden Gardetruppen. Er forderte die Truppen auf, geschlossen hinter die Regierung zu treten bis hinauf zum Präsidenten.

Zum zweitenmal wird Cäsar Ebert die Präsidentenkrone angeboten. Diesmal geschlossene Truppen und ein kommandierender General an der Spitze.

Zweite stärkere Beschwörung also.

Wird Cäsar Ebert einer dritten Beschwörung widerstehen können?

Ein passender Abschluß der großen Szene:

Brutus Molkenbuhr, Mitglied des Vollzugsrats noch sprechen. Offiziere auf der Rednertribüne winken Militärmusik fällt ein, übertönt ihn, die Truppen ziehen ter und lassen das Mitglied des Vollzugsrats stehen.

Eberts zweite Proklamation zum Präsidenten fäll zusammen mit der Ausschaltung des Vollzugsrates.

Im selben Augenblick, in dem Ebert an die Staat steigt, verschwindet der Vollzugsrat in der Versenkung: Szene auf dem Pariser Platz legt diesen Zusammen plastisch-greifbar dar.

Die Rede Molkenbuhrs, in der Presse gedruckt, ist Rede, die sie nicht erreichte, — nämlich die Hörer.

Festgenagelt!

Auf alle unsere Enthüllungen in der gestrigen Nu schweigt die gesamte bürgerliche, regierungssozialistische auch die unabhängige Presse wie erschossen. Es schwei Morgenpresse, es schweigt die Abendpresse.

Die Pille hat gewirkt.

Der lebendige Leichnam.

Wenn ein Frosch schon tot ist, kann man, wenn man Nerven mit einem elektrischen Strome reizt, bewirken, da Tote noch einmal mit den Beinen strampelt.

Diesem Experiment ähnlich ist das Verfahren, das je [illegible]

Fig. 2.23 Anonymous, "The soon-to-be president of the German Republic: Ebert the first (*Der beinahige Präsident der deutschen Republik: Ebert der* Erste) from *Die rote Fahne* (December 14, 1918)

Fig. 2.24 Theodor Thomas Heine, "Pictures from family life, No. 2: Papa, what do you really want to be? (*Bilder aus dem Familienleben, Nr. 2: Papa, was willst due eigentlich 'mal werden?*)," cover of *Simplicissimus*,vol. 1, no. 36 (1896)

Nr. 312 Stuttgart, den 5. Juli. 1898.

DER WAHRE JACOB

Erscheint alle vierzehn Tage.

Aus der Wahlkampagne.

Protz (als Reichstagskandidat): ... Und sehen Sie, meine Herren, Alles was ich bin, bin ich ganz und gar durch mich selber ...
Stimme aus der Versammlung: Na, da ist Ihr Vater aber eine große Verantwortung los!

4809

Ein Gemütsmensch.

„Jetz, wann i nur grad' wüßt, was dö Sozi über die Grenzsperre und die Fleischnot z'schimpfn habn? Wann ma sei Maß' und an Gansbratn mit Knödel und Sauerkraut hat, nacha kann ma doch mit unsern Zuständen alleweil z'frieden sein!"

Fig. 2.25 (left) [Artist?], "From the election campaign (*Aus der Wahlkampagne*)," cover of *Der Wahre Jakob*, no. 312 (July, 1898); (right [Artist?], "A good-natured type (*Ein Gemütsmensch*)," from *Der Wahre Jakob*, no. 500 (September, 1900)

Fig. 2.26 Commemorative poster of Kaiser Wilhelm II (n.d.)

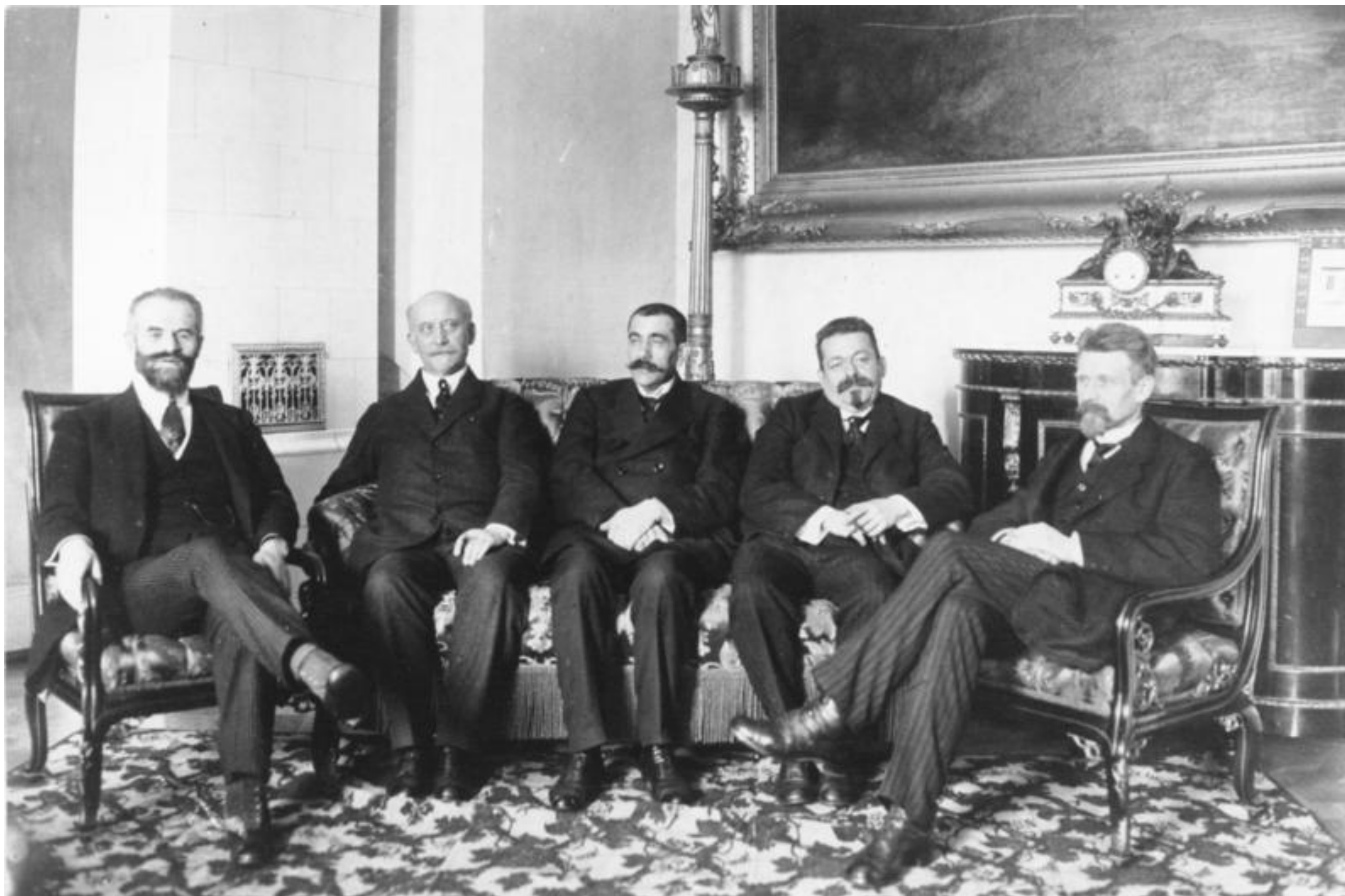


Fig. 2.27 Portrait of the Council of People's Deputies (*Rat der Volksbeauftragten*) (December 1918--after members of the USPD left). From left to right: Otto Landsberg, future minister of justice (*Reichsjustizminister*); Philipp Scheidemann, future chancellor (*Ministerpräsident*); Gustav Noske; Friedrich Ebert; Rudolf Wissel, future minister for labor (*Reichsarbeitminister*)--SPD members all

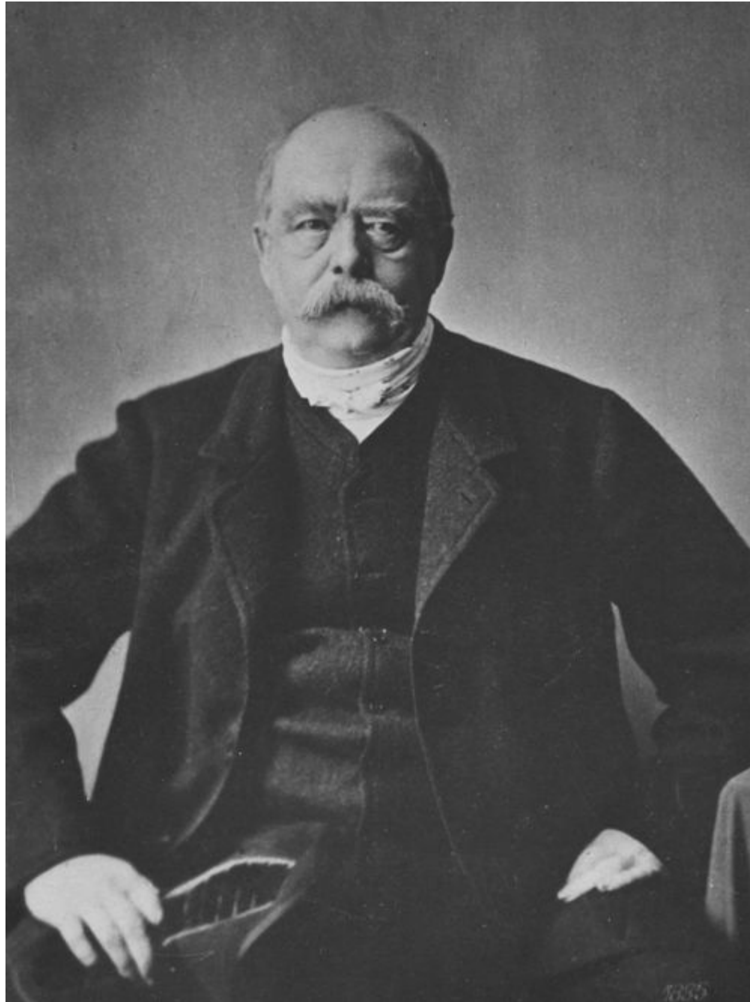


Fig. 2.28 Two portraits of Otto von Bismarck: at left, from 1863; at right, from 1871 (next page: a cartoon from *Kladderadatsch* satirizing Bismarck's various governmental roles)

„Die Verkleidungen unseres Hofmeisters."

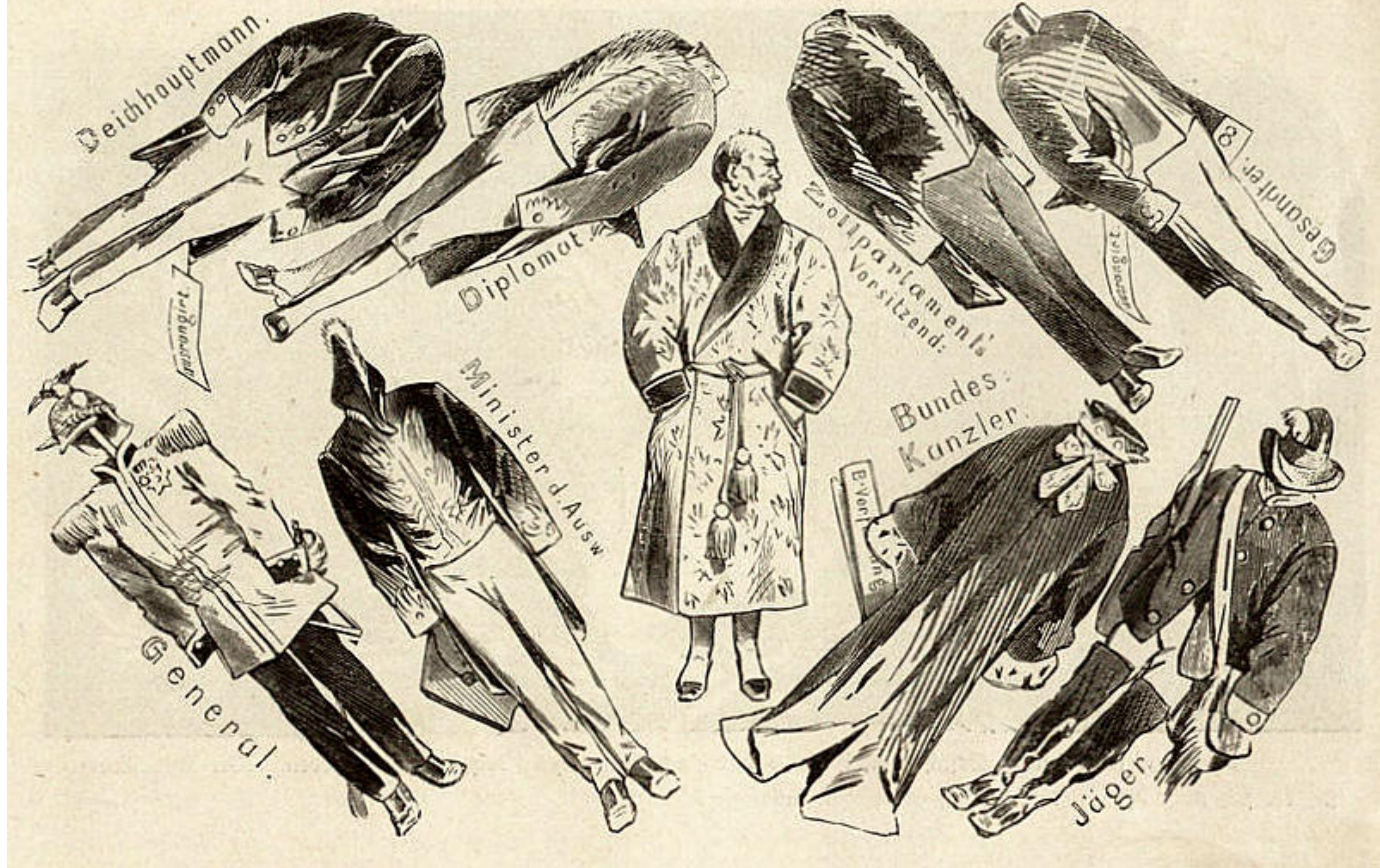


Fig. 2.29 Two portaits of Kaiser Wilhelm II with family members: (left) from 1907; (right) from 1896

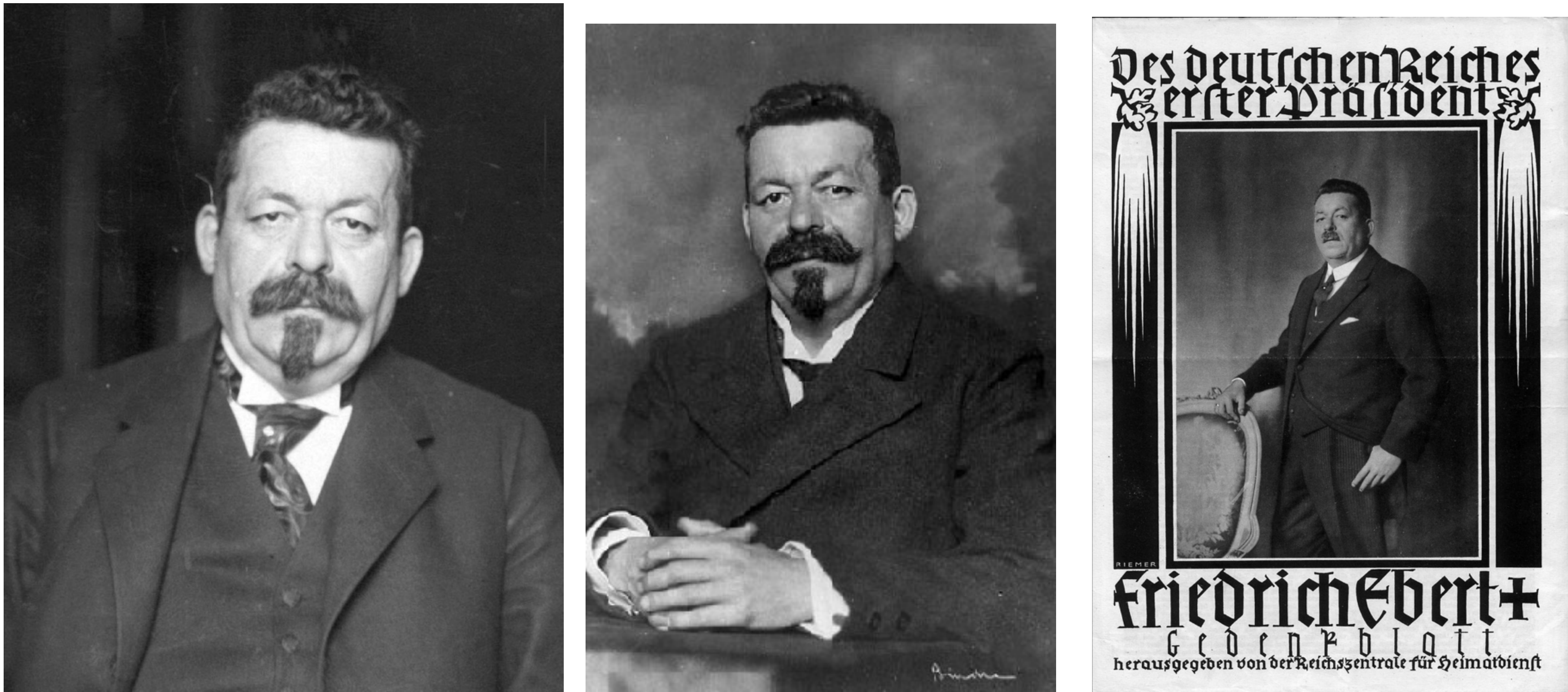


Fig. 2.30 Three portraits of Friedrich Ebert: (left) from 1921; (middle) from 1919; (right) a commermorative photo issued after his death in 1925

Fig. 2.31 George Grosz, "H[is]. M[ajesty]. (*S.[eine] M[ajestät].*)," cover of *Die Pleite*, no. 7 (June 1923)

DIE AKTION

9. JAHRGANG HEFT 8/9 1. MÄRZ 1919

Mit Gott und Flammenwerfern für Ebert

Ruhe! Ordnung!

Karl Holtz

Heilige Ordnung, segensreiche!! *(Ebert, seine Thronstützen und seine Untertanen)*

Fig. 2.32 Karl Holtz, "Bless the holy order! (Ebert, the supporters of his throne, and his subjects) (*Heiliger Ordnung, segesreiche!! (Ebert, sine Thronstützen und seine Untertanen*)," cover of *Die Aktion* , vol. 9, no. 8/9 (March 1919) [NB: The same image appears on the cover of a later issue of *Die Aktion*, vol. 11, no. 39/40 (1921)

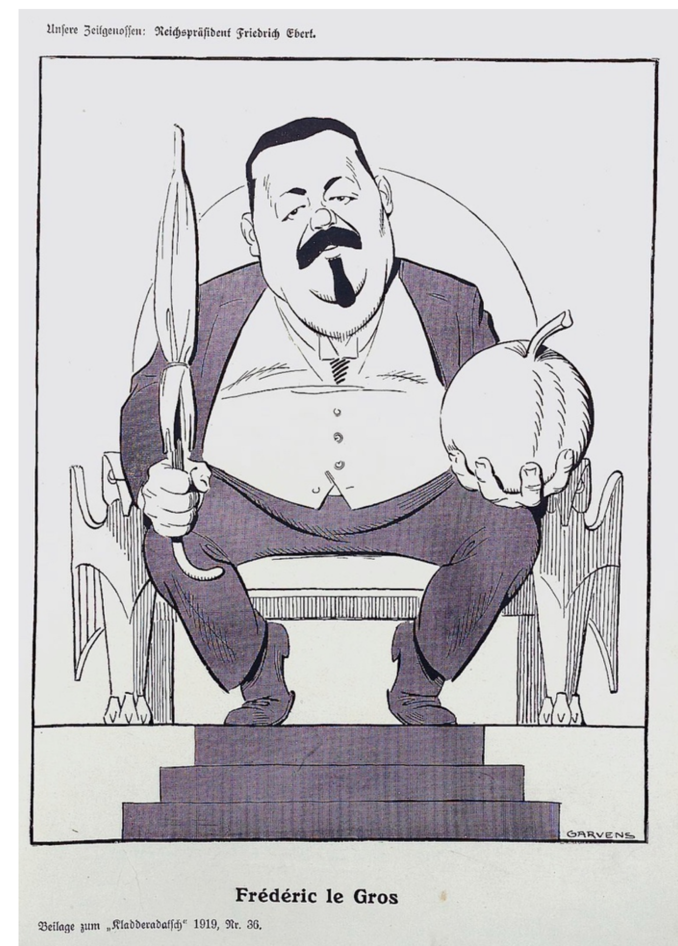
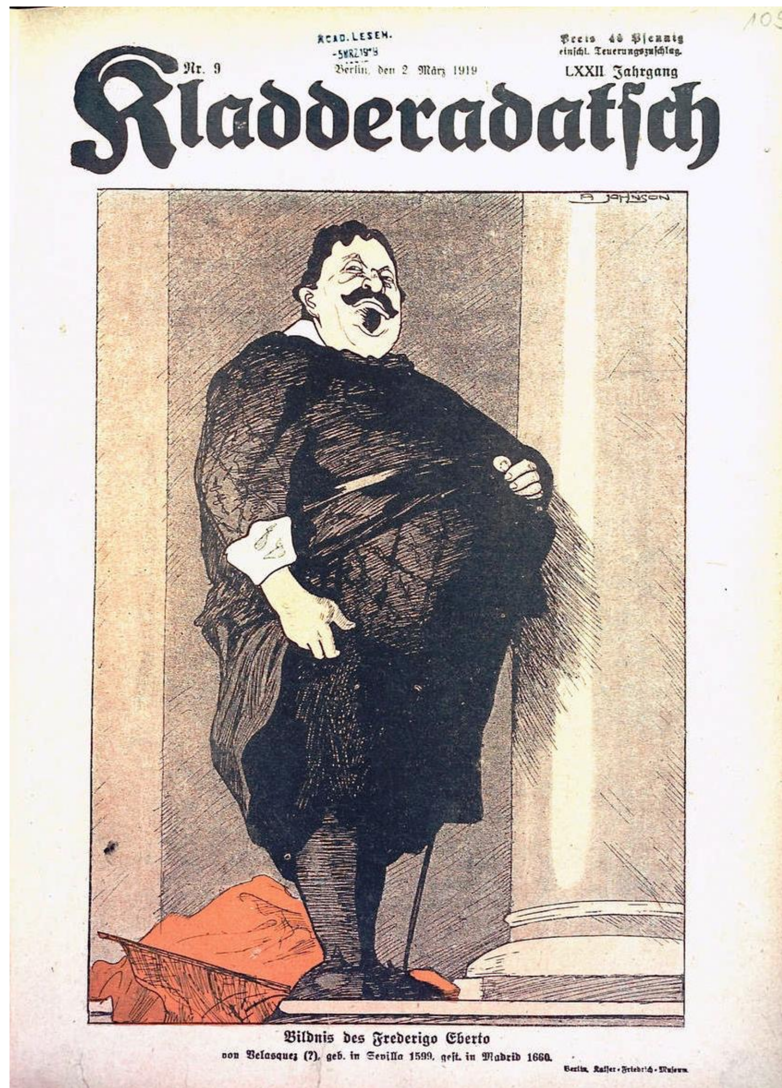


Fig. 2.33 Four examples of Ebert caricatures: (left) Wilhelm Schulz, "H[is]. M[ajesty]. Ebert (*S[eine]. M[ajestät].* Ebert)," from Simplisicissimus, (February 1920; (right) Gravens, "Friederic the great (*Frédéric le* Gros)," from *Kladderadatsch* (September 1919); (next page, left) A. Johnson, "Federico Eberto," ccover of *Kladderadatsch* (March 1919) [NB: the cartoon parodies Charles Mellin's *Portrait of a Man* (c. 1630), not a work by Velazquez]; (next page, right) Trier, "Friedrich the only and Philipp the good (*Friedrich der Einzige und Philipp der Gute*), cover of *Lustige Blätter* (1919?)


Nr. 9
Berlin, den 2. März 1919
Preis 40 Pfennig
einschl. Teuerungszuschlag.
LXXII Jahrgang
Kladderadatsch
A. Johnson
Bildnis des Frederigo Eberto
von Velasquez (?), geb. in Sevilla 1599, gest. in Madrid 1660.
Berlin, Kaiser-Friedrich-Museum

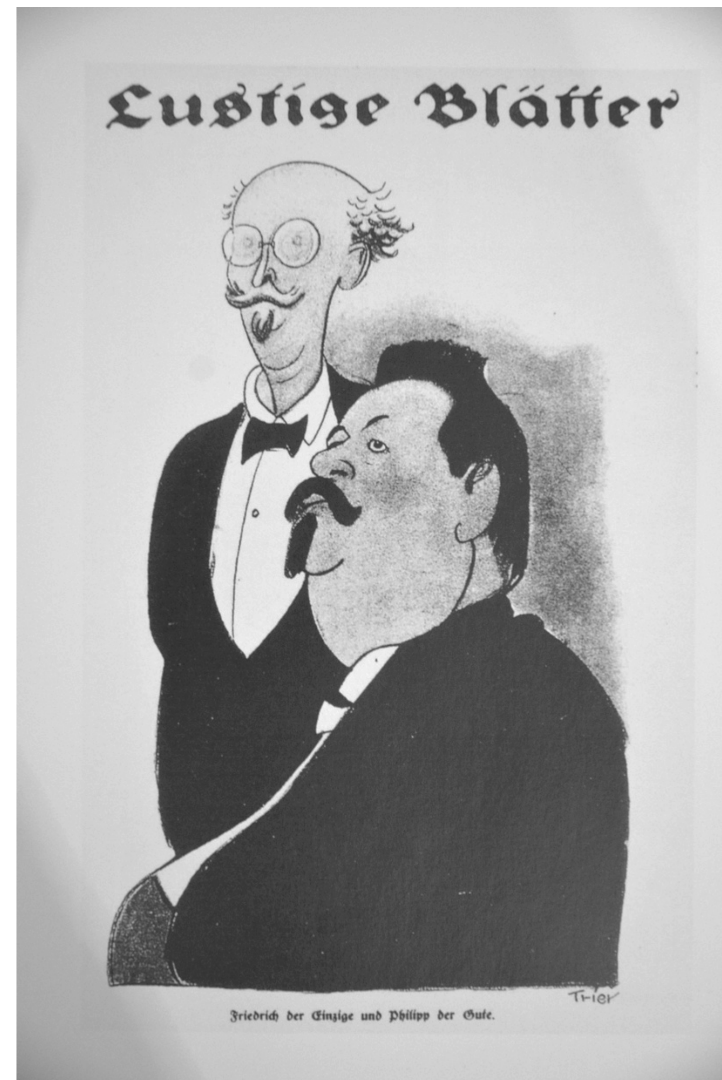

Lustige Blätter
Trier
Friedrich der Einzige und Philipp der Gute.

Fig. 2.34 Cover of the *Berliner Illustrierte Zeitung,* [vol. 28?], no. 34 (August 1919)
(Next page: the source photograph for the cover)

Fig. 2.35 Anonymous, "The communization of tast (*Die Kommunisierung des Geschmacks*)," cover of *Satyr*, no. 25 (1919)

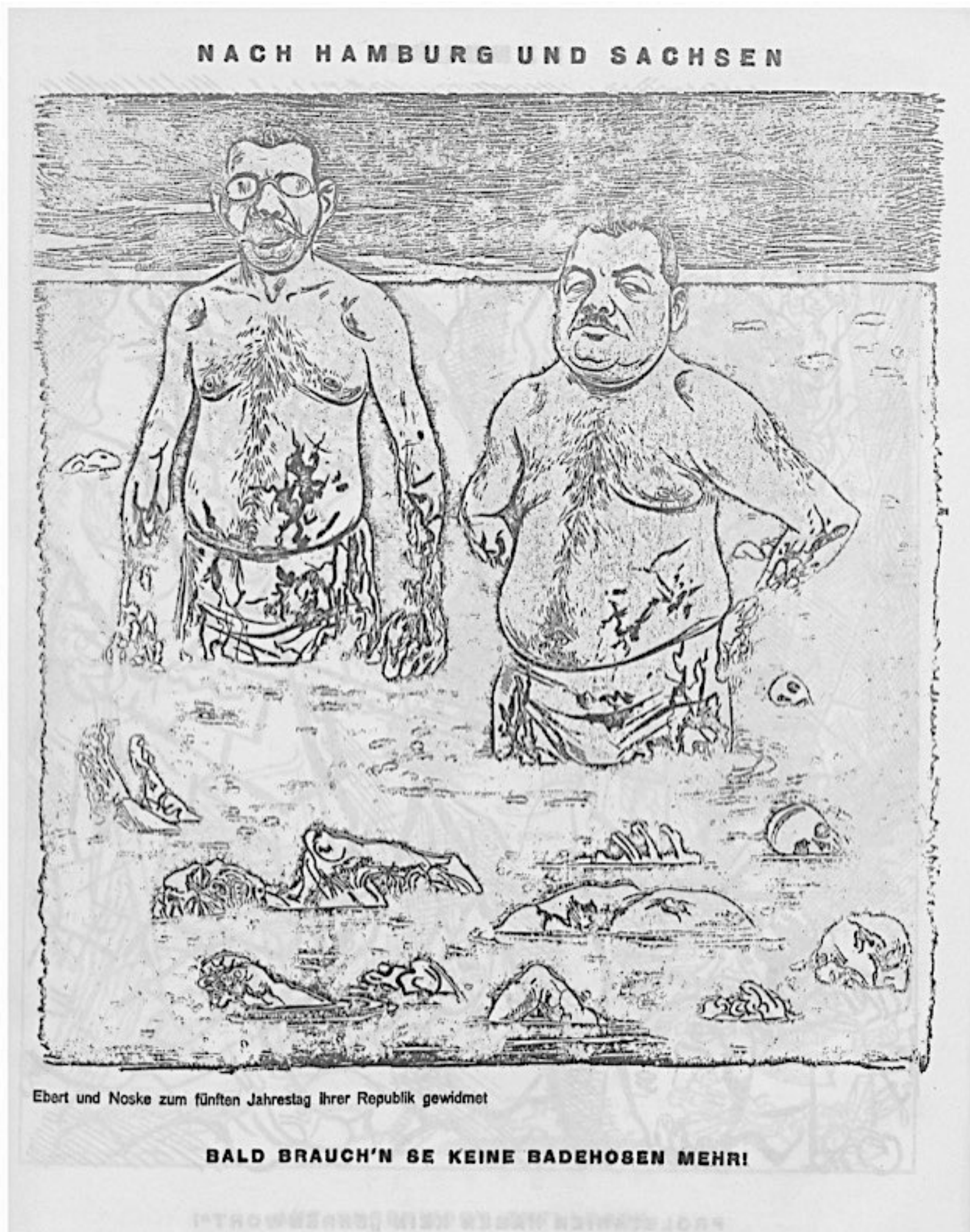


Fig. 2.36 [Laszlo Griffel?], "After Hamburg and Saxony, soon they'll no longer need swimtrunks! --Dedicated to Ebert and Noske on the fifth anniversary of their Republic (*Nach Hamburg und Sachsen bald brauch'n se keine Badehosen mehr! Ebert und Noske zum fünften Jahrestag ihrer Republik gewidmet*)," from *Die Pleite*, no. 8 (November 1923)

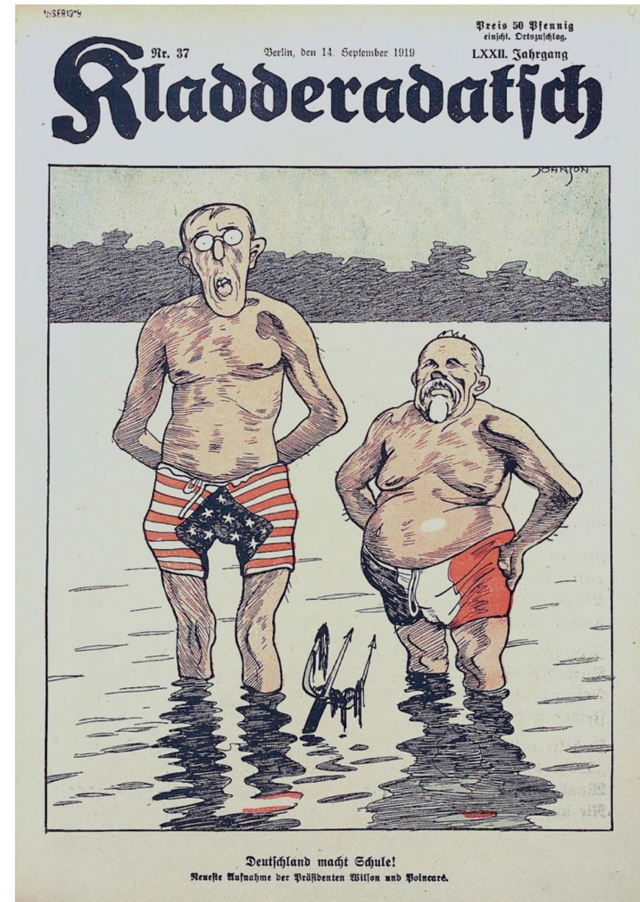


Fig. 2.37 (left) Karl Arnold, "[Wilhelm] Marx and [Gustav] Stresemann--Wonderful this wide horizon--that's something you can only afford during the holidays! (*Herrlich, dieser weite Horizont--so was kann man sich auch nur in den Ferien leisten!*)," cover of *Simplicissimus* , vol 31, no. 15 (July 1926); (right) A. Johnson, "Germany sets a precedent! Latest recording of presidents Wilson and Poincaré (*Deutschland macht Schule! Neueste Aufnahme der Präsidenten Wilson und Poincaré*)," cover of *Kladderadatsch*, vol. 72, no. 37 (September 1919)

KLEINE REVOLUTIONÄRE BIBLIOTHEK

HERAUSGEBER: JULIAN GUMPERZ / BAND IV

DAS GESICHT

DER HERRSCHENDEN KLASSE

55 politische Zeichnungen von

GEORGE GROSZ

DER MALIK-VERLAG / 1921

Fig. 2.38 Interior cover of *Das Gesicht* with Malik-Verlag emblem by George Grosz

Fig. 2.39 David Chodowiecki, ***The Progress of Virtue and Vice*** **(1777)**

Fig. 2.40 Richard Newton, *Treason!* (1798)

Fig. 2.41 Karl Holtz, cover of *The Upside-down World* (*Die verkehrte Welt*) (1922)

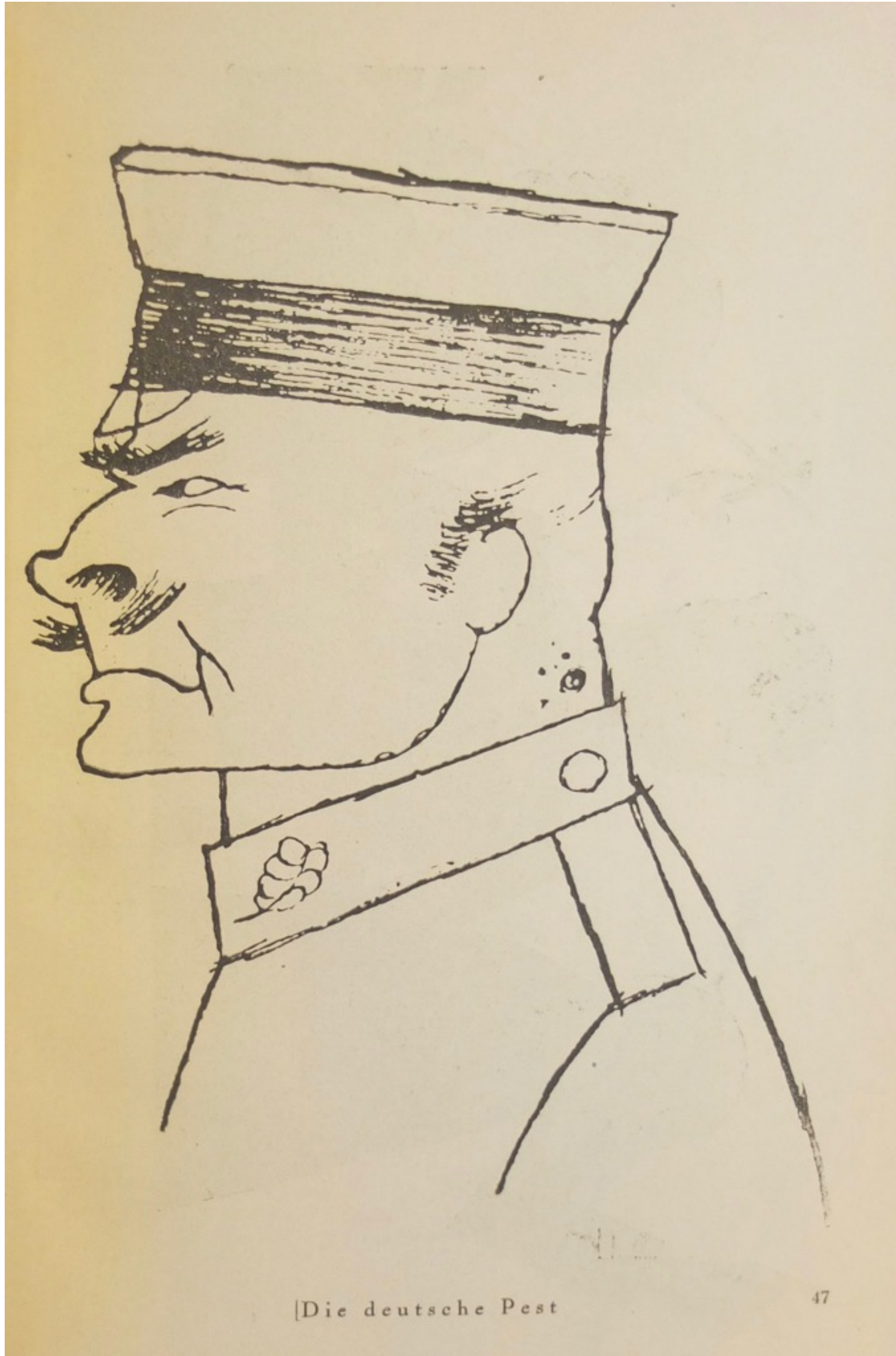


Fig. 2.42 George Grosz, "The German Pest (*Die deutsche Pest*)," from *Das Gesicht der herrschenden Klasse*

Fig. 2.43 Group portrait of members of the *Reichswehr* (c. 1923?)

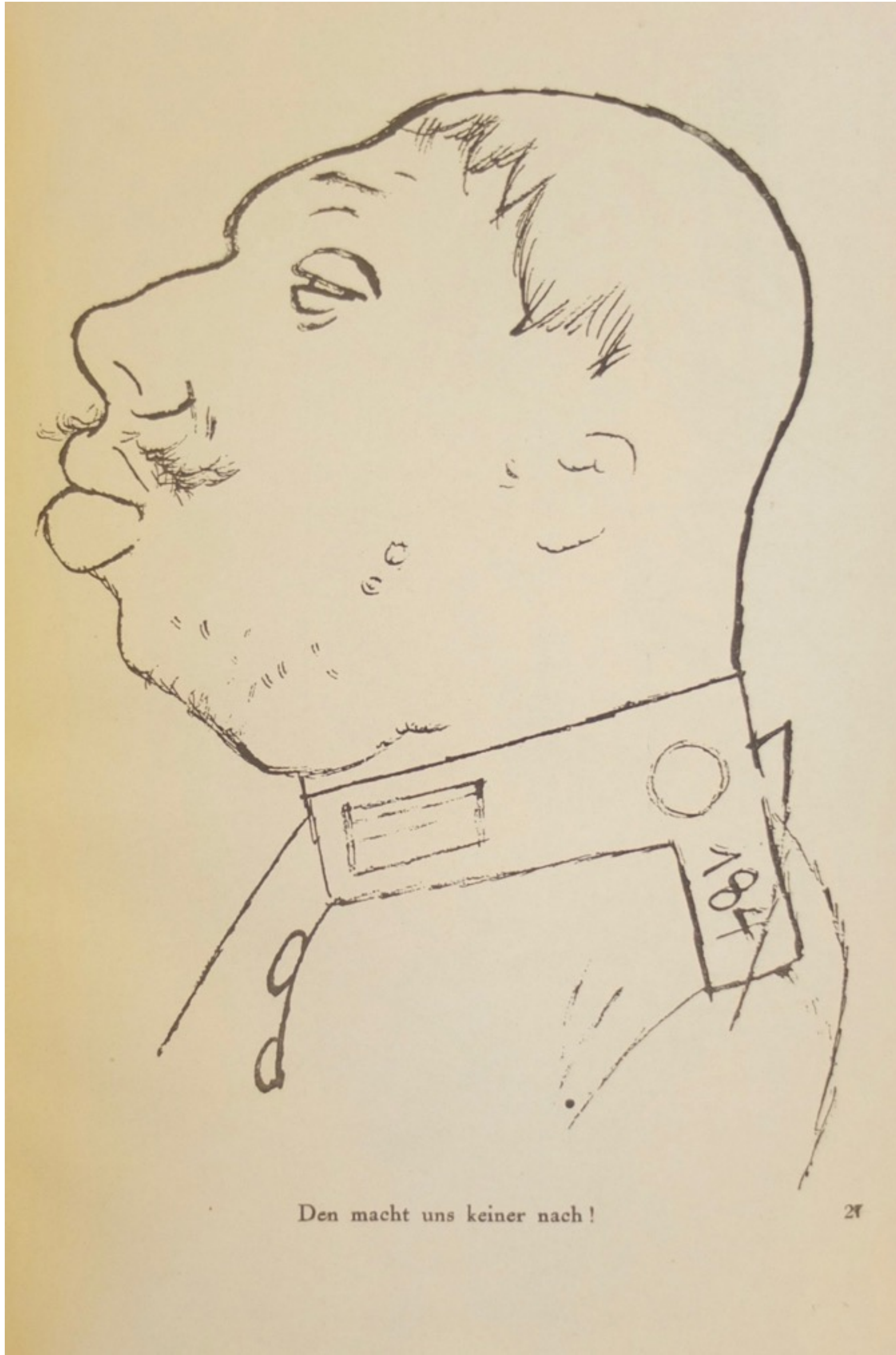


Fig. 2.44 George Grosz, "Made in Germany (*Den macht uns keiner nach!*)," from *Das Gesicht der herrschenden Klasse*

38. HEFT
2. JAHRGANG

PREIS
60 PFENNIG

FREIE WELT
JLLUSTRIERTE WOCHENSCHRIFT
DER
USPD

Das Antlitz des Krieges

Opfer des Krieges, an denen heute noch in den Lazaretten herumoperiert wird. In Deutschland allein gibt es 48 000 Verstümmelte dieser Art. 1. Granatsplitter riß 1915 das ganze Gesicht weg. Blind. Durch eigenes Fleisch und Rippenknochen große Teile des Gesichts und der Stirn ersetzt. 15 Operationen. — 2. Kunstakademiker. Durch Benzinexplosion Gesicht, Brust, beide Hände zerstört. — 3. Eisenbahner. Mund und rechte Hand ab. Unterkiefer zerrissen. — 4. Bein amputiert. Rechtes Auge verloren. Künstliche Nase.

(Vergleiche Bilder und Artikel auf der nächsten Seite)

Fig. 2.45 "The profile of the war," cover of *Die Freie Welt*, vol. 2, no. 48 (1920)

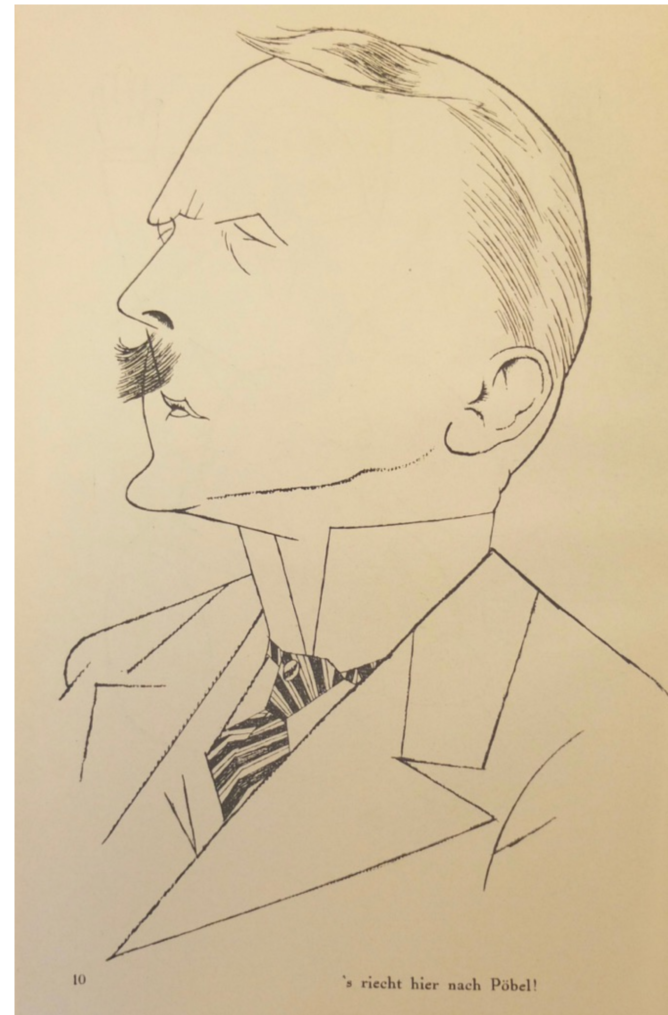
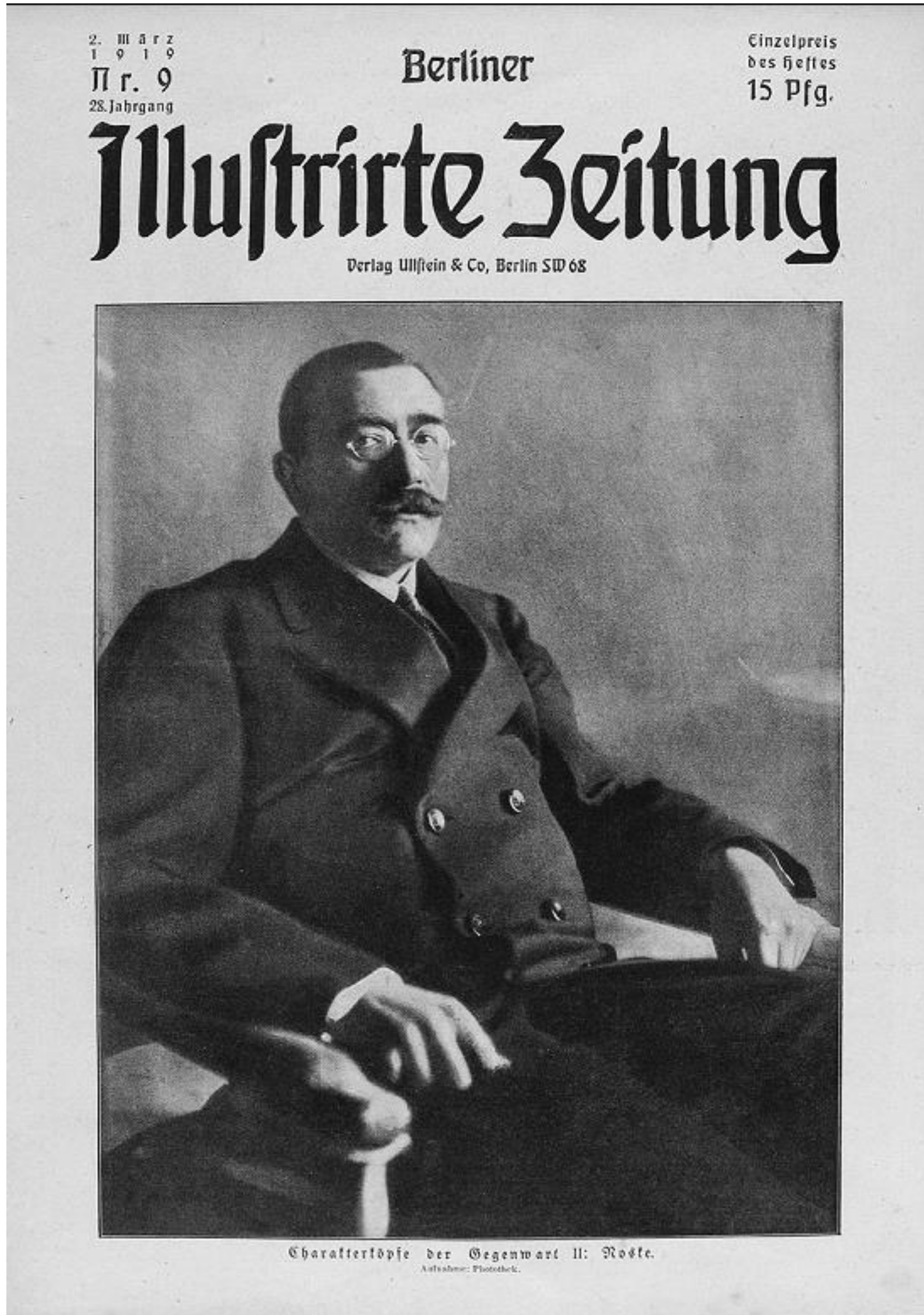


Fig. 2.46 (left) portrait of Graf Harry Kessler (c. 1920?); (right) George Grosz, "It reeks here of the rabble! (*'S riecht hier nach Pöbel!*) from *Das Gesicht der herrschenden Klasse*


2. März 1919
Nr. 9
28. Jahrgang

Berliner

Einzelpreis des Heftes 15 Pfg.

Illustrirte Zeitung

Verlag Ullstein & Co, Berlin SW 68

Charakterköpfe der Gegenwart II: Noske.
Aufnahme: Photothek.

Fig. 2.47 Portrait of Gustav Noske, cover of *Berliner Illustrierte Zeitung,* vol. 28, no. 9 (March 1919)

Fig. 2.48 (left) George Grosz, "Iron Noske (*Der Eiserne Noske*)," from *Das Gesicht der herrschenden Klasse*; (right) Hindenburg monument (c. 1916?)

Disziplin lockerte, mit drakonischer Strenge vorzugehen. (Fortsetzung folgt)

[3] Vater des jetzigen Grafen Andrassy, Minister im Freiheitskrieg.

Der vernagelte Noske

Wie wir hören, soll an Stelle des eisernen Hindenburg der vernagelte Noske vor der Siegessäule aufgestellt werden.

DER LETZTE SCHUSS

Keiner wußte, wie nah der Friede war.
Die Batterie setzte Schuß um Schuß in den Wald.
Da kam von hinten ein Telephonist gerannt,
schüttelte keuchend die rechte Hand,
brüllte mit breitem Munde von weitem „Halt!“

Fig. 2.49 Anonymous "The Nailed Noske (*Der vernagelte Noske*)," from *Die Freie Welt*, vol. 1, no. 10 (July 1919)

Heft 11
1. Jahrgang

Preis 20 Pf.
30. Juli 1919

Die Freie Welt

Illustrierte Wochenschrift
der Unabhängigen Sozialdemokratie Deutschlands

BERLIN AM TAGE DES INTERNATIONALEN PROTESTSTREIKS (Phototnek)
Schutz der „sozialistischen" Regierung vor sozialistischen Demonstrationen in der Wilhelmstraße

Fig. 2.50 Cover of *Die Freie Welt*, vol. 1, no. 11 (June 1919)

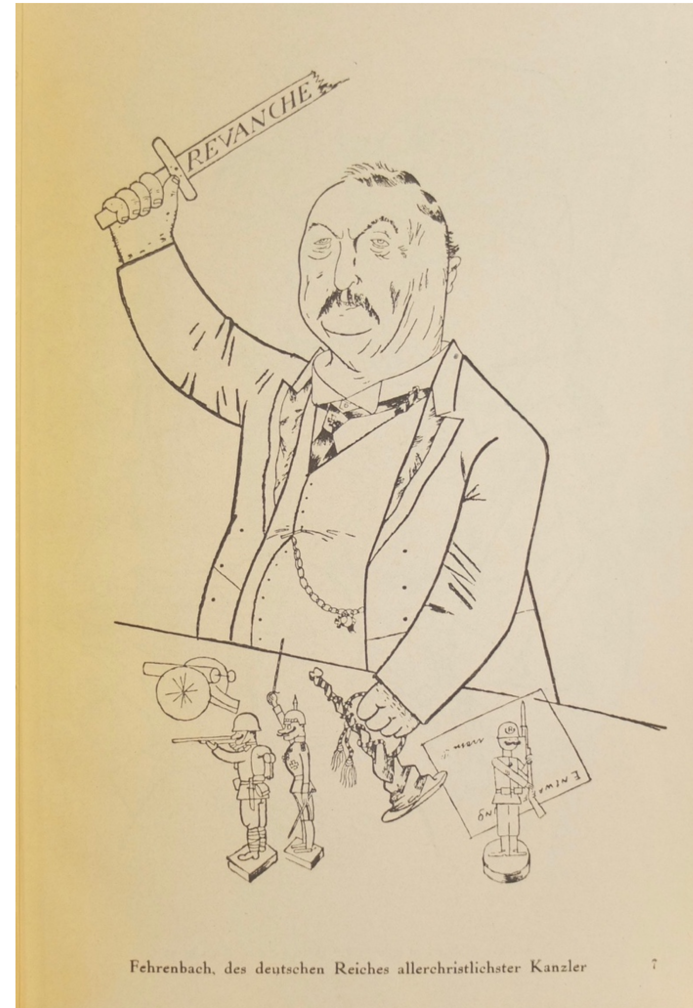


Fig. 2.51 (left) Portrait of Constantin Fehrenbach (c. 1918); (right) George Grosz, "Fehrenbach, Germany's most-Christian chancellor (*Fehrenbach, des deutschen Reiches allerchristlicher Kanzler*)," from *Das Gesicht der herrschenden Klasse*

Fig. 2.52 George Grosz, "From the life of a Socialist (*Aus dem Leben eines Sozialisten*)," from *Das Gesicht der herrschenden Klasse*

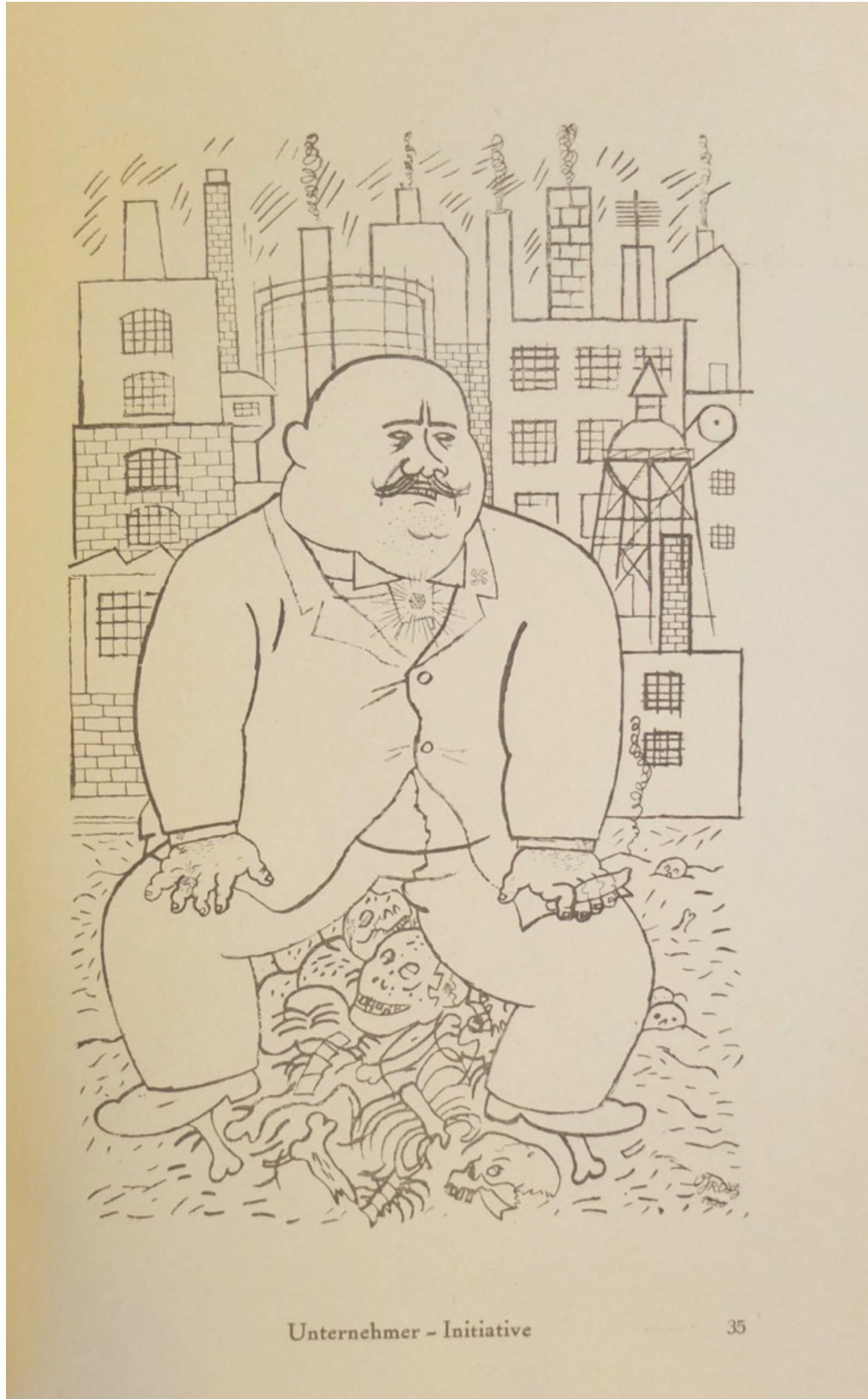


Fig. 2.53 George Grosz, "Entrepreneur Intitiative (*Unternehmer-Initiative*)," from *Das Gesicht der herrschenden Klasse*

| gehen.

g" auf dem Räte-Kongreß
auptstreich gegen die Macht
ie proletarische Revolution
gen.
ilt, diesen Plan der Gegen-
die Aktion der kapitalisti-
revolutionäre Aktion der

ßische Dreiklassenwahlrecht
enparlament gegen das
ıpfen, so werden wir die
ung zum Kampfe gegen die
en.
ie zu Ende. Die Teilnahme
kann heute für wirkliche
des Sozialismus nichts ge-
lichen Schema, mit der alt-
des Parlaments" zu soge-
ıften". Nicht im alten Trott
um an den Gesetzesvor-
und Schönheitspflästerchen
„Kräfte zu messen". Heer-
oder wie all die bekannten
er bürgerlich-parlamentari-
Wortschatz der Haase und

n der Revolution und die
eine gegenrevolutionäre
volutionäre Proletariat auf-
se Festung zu berennen und
gegen die Nationalver-
und zum schärfsten Kampf
Wahlen, dazu muß die Tri-
ıg ausgenutzt werden.
geoisie und ihren Schildträ-
achen: um die Bourgeoisie
mpel hinauszujagen, um die
zu erstürmen und die Fahne
auf ihr siegreich zu hissen,
den Wahlen nötig.
ehrheit in der Nationalver-
wer dem parlamentarischen
evolution und Sozialismus
entscheiden will. Auch über
rsammlung selbst entscheidet
hrheit in der Nationalver-
tarische Masse draußen
und auf der Straße.
ften um Ebert-Haase,
pitalisten und ihrem Trotz
sich unter sich ließe, und die
mit der Rolle der Zaun-
hauen, während da drinnen
n wird!
nichts. Mögen sie noch so

Wirt ist die proletarische Masse, der wirkliche Träger der Revolution und ihrer sozialistischen Aufgaben. Sie, die Masse, hat über die Schicksale und den Verlauf der Nationalversammlung zu bestimmen. Von ihrer eigenen revolutionären Aktivität hängt ab, was in, was aus der Nationalversammlung wird. Das Hauptgewicht liegt in der Aktion draußen, die an die Tore des gegenrevolutionären Parlaments ungestüm pochen muß. Aber schon die Wahlen selbst, und die Aktion der revolutionären Ver-

Wie der Kapitalismus die Wirtschaft aufbaut.

treter der Masse drinnen muß der Sache der Revolution dienen. Alle Kniffe und Schliche der werten Versammlung rücksichtslos und laut denunzieren, ihr gegenrevolutionäres Werk auf Schritt und Tritt vor der Masse entlarven, die Massen zur Entscheidung, zur Einmischung anrufen, — dies ist die Aufgabe der Beteiligung an der Nationalversammlung.

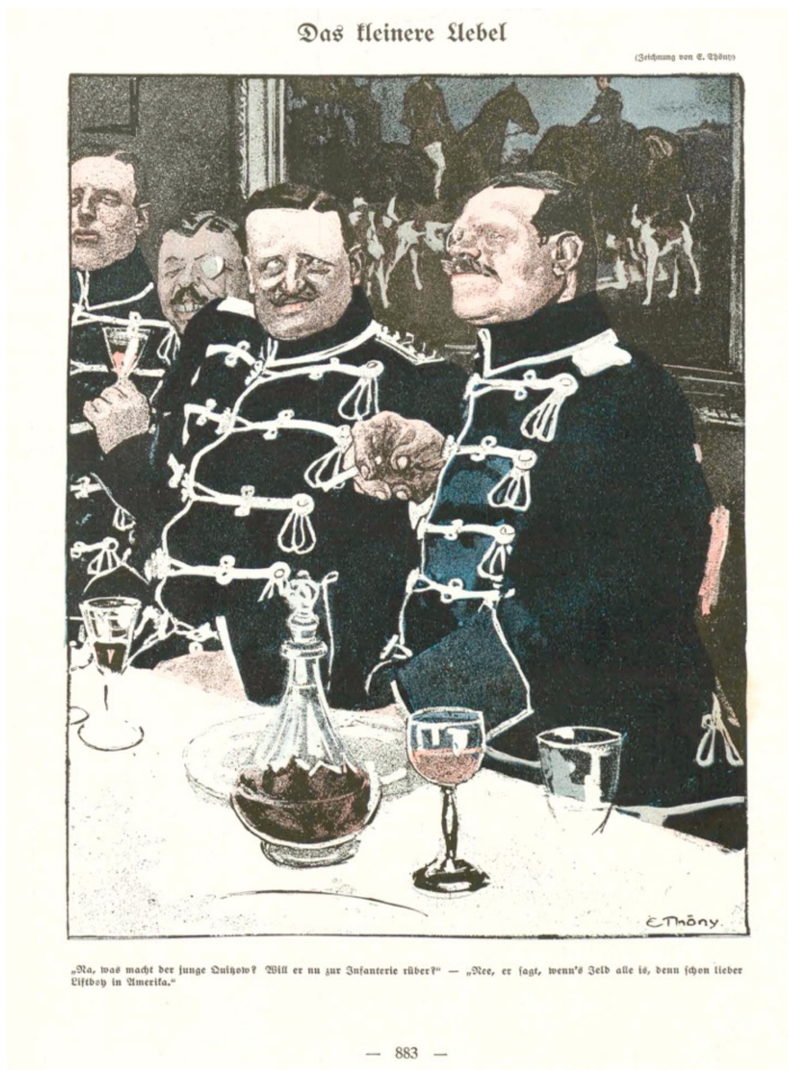
Die Herren Bourgeois, mit der Ebert-Regierung an der Spitze, wollen den Klassenkampf durch die Nationalversammlung bannen, lähmen, der revolutionären Entscheidung ausweichen. Diesem Plan zum Trotz soll der Klassenkampf in die Nationalversammlung selbst hinein-

keit, die wirtschaftlichen Konflikt
Wochen und Monaten unaufhalt
Auseinandersetzung zwischen Ka
Zukunft der Revolution in ihrem
Endresultat keine andere Entsch
Niederbruch der kapitalistischen
Triumph des Sozialismus: sie
tragen, daß die revolutionäre
der Massen mit jedem Tage wäch
Die Nationalversammlung
Ebert-Leute dieser revolutionäre
gegenstellen. So gilt es, die Fl
durch die Nationalversammlung
hinwegzuspülen.
Die Wahlaktion, die Tribü
nären Parlaments, soll ein Mit
Sammlung, Mobilisierung der r
Etappe im Kampf um die Aufr
Diktatur.
Ein Sturm der Massen an
sammlung, die geballte Faust d
tariats, die sich mitten in der Ve
Fahne schwenkt, auf der die f
Alle Macht den A.- und
unsere Beteiligung an der Natio
Proletarier, Genossen, ans
verlieren. Heute noch triumph
Klassen über die siegreiche Aktio
Rätekongreß, sie harren und h
als die Rückkehr ihrer ungetrüb
mögen nicht zu früh triumphiere
sind noch nicht vorüber und a
Der proletarischen Revolution
muß alles dienen, — auch die
sammlung. Ros
(Rote Fahne Nr. 38 vo

Karl Radek zum Pa

Die Weltrevolution ist
während dessen es mehr als ei
Ja, es unterliegt für mich kei
dem Lande das Proletariat
aufrichten und sie zusammenb
endgültig siegt. Wenn dem ab
unverzeihlicher Fehler, wenn
auch nur auf ein Mittel prin
das sie in der Zeit nach ein
könnte, zur Herstellung einer
diesem Standpunkt aus h
gen eines Teils unserer P
Fehler, die Partei prinzipi
Parlamentarismus abschwörer
keinen Augenblick, daß die br
sie zu dieser Frage Stellung
nationalen Proletariat sagt:
Durch Wahlen zum P
rung der Mehrheit im Parla

Fig. 2.54 George Grosz, "How capitalism builds the economy," from *Die rote Fahne* (June 2, 1920)



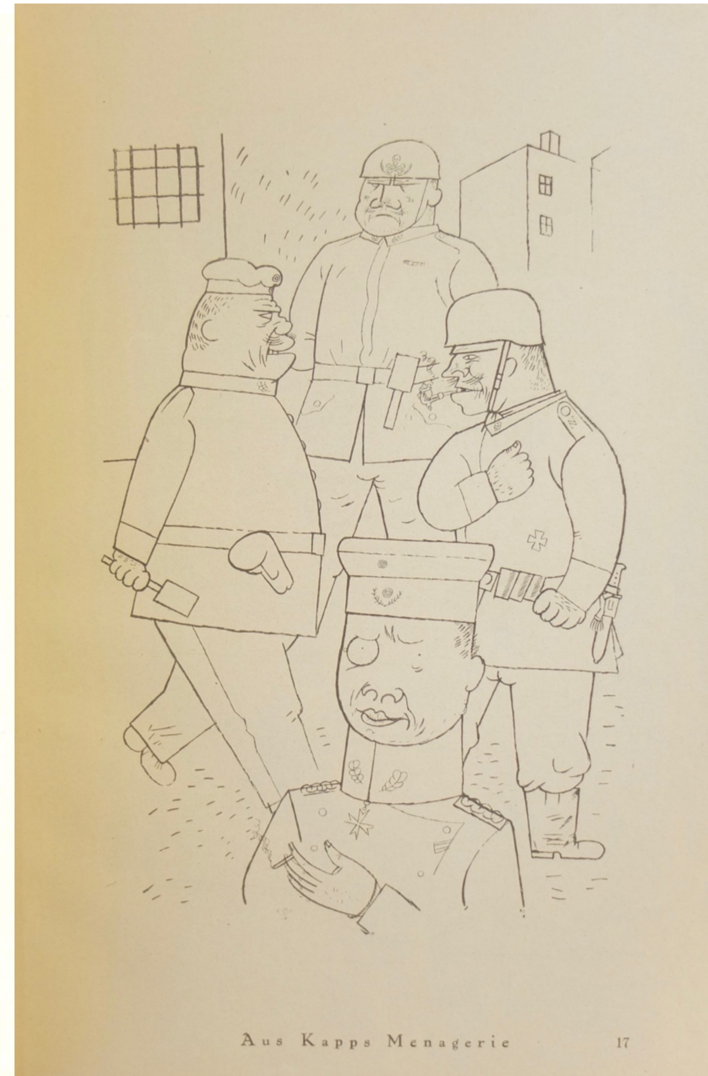
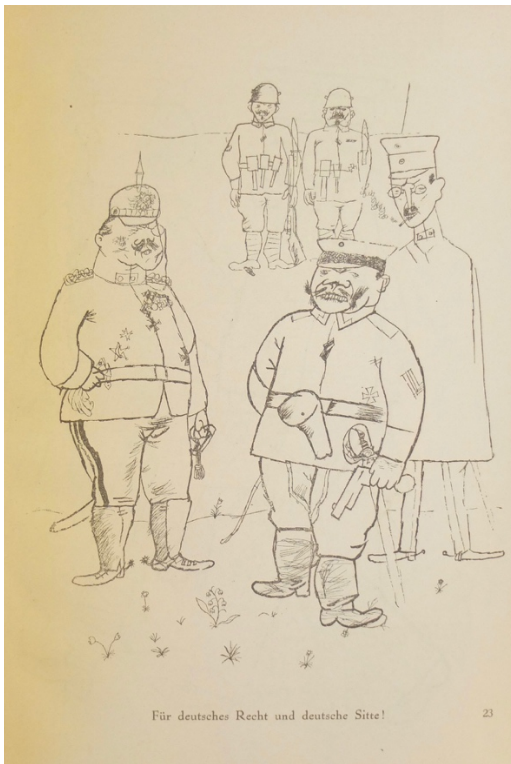


Fig. 2.55 (left) Eduard Thöny, "The lesser evil (*Das kleinere* Uebel)**," from *Simplicissimus*, vol. 13, no. 52 (March 1909); (right) George Grosz, "From Kapp's menagerie (**Aus Kapps Menagerie**)," from *Das Gesicht der herrschenden Klasse***



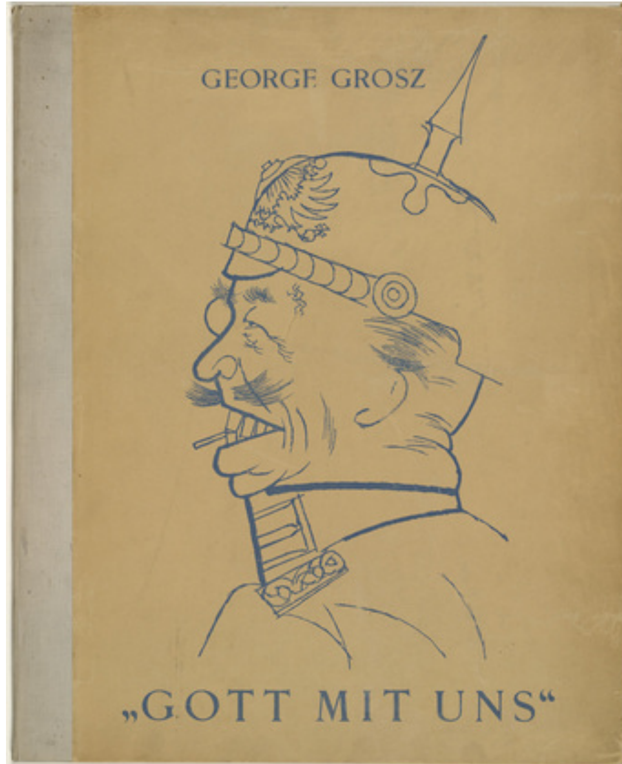


Fig. 2.56 (left) George Grosz, "For German law and German customs! (*Für deutsches Recht und deutsche Sitte!*)," from *Das Gesicht der herrschenden* Klasse; (middle) George Grosz, cover of *Gott mit uns* (1919); (right) George Grosz, "Pimps of death (*Zuhälter des Todes*)," from *Das Gesicht der herrschenden Klasse*

München, 3. Dezember 1923

Preis 30 Pfennig
(✂ Buchhändler-Schlüsselzahl)

28. Jahrgang Nr. 36

SIMPLICISSIMUS

Bezugspreis monatlich 1,20 Mark (✂ Buchhändler-Schlüsselzahl)
Alle Rechte vorbehalten

Begründet von Albert Langen und Th. Th. Heine

Bezugspreis monatlich 1,20 Mark (✂ Buchhändler-Schlüsselzahl)
Copyright 1923 by Simplicissimus-Verlag G. m. b. H. & Co., München

Der Münchner

(Karl Arnold)

Mei' Ruah möcht' i hamm und a Revalution,
A Ordnung muaß sei' und a Judenpogrom,
A Diktator g'hört hera und glei' davo'g'haut:
Mir zoagen's Enk scho', wia ma Deutschland aufbaut!

Fig. 2.57 Karl Arnold, "The Municher (*Der Münchner*)," cover of *Simplicissimus*, vol. 28, no. 36 (October 1923)

Fig. 2.58 Karl Arnold, cover of *Berliner Bilder* (1924)

Fig. 2.59 Karl Arnold, "The value menu (*Der Valutakarte*)," from the *Berliner Bilder* series

das war Menschenfreundlichkeit. Obersack hatte übrigens schwer mit sich gerungen nach jener Möbelwagenaffäre; denn wie man die Sache auch besah, sein Ruf war eigentlich dahin, und obwohl von oben beide Augen mit Wohlwollen zugedrückt wurden, lächelten doch ironische Individuen über ihn. Er hatte sich auch das Leben nehmen wollen, weil ja kein Staatsanwalt Lächeln ertragen kann, aber dann war ein großer Prozeß gekommen, in dem das ganze Gericht befürchten mußte, der Angeklagte werde freigesprochen. Da hatte Obersack sich, eigene Not vergessend, tüchtig ins Zeug gelegt und die Scharte glänzend ausgewetzt, so daß kein Mensch mehr lächelte. Der arme Teufel wurde gleich zweimal zum Tode und außerdem noch zu zwanzig Jahren Zuchthaus verurteilt, was immerhin schon wegen der Schwierigkeiten einer angemessenen Urteilsvollstreckung keine kleine Sache ist.
Zum Glück für den Verurteilten schrieb aber im letzten Moment der wirkliche Missetäter aus dem Ausland einen eingeschriebenen Brief, der sich beim besten Willen nicht übersehen ließ. Das war nun wieder Pech. Man mußte die ganze Sache nochmal machen, und Obersack stand erneut vor einer inneren Krise. Allerdings war er auch an einem Freitag geboren, und so etwas rächt sich immer. Doch schließlich — was bliebe einem Staatsanwalt trotz Freitag, Fischleim, Fräulein Meier und Gewissensnot anderes übrig — siegte er auch da und ward sogar befördert.
Da mußte er selber lachen.

Die alte Bötin

Die morschen Knochen im grauen Rock,
so thront sie auf dem Kutschenbock.
Bei Sonne und Regen, tagein tagaus,
haudert sie auf die Dörfer hinaus.
immer ein Sträußel vorgebunden:
im Sommer ist's aus Blumen gewunden,
im Winter ist's aus Reisig gefügt.
Und immer zufrieden und immer vergnügt.

„In Euren Jahren — fällt's nicht schwer,
bei Wind und Wetter dies Hin und Her?
Der ewig gleiche Hundetrab,
was bringt er ein? was wirft er ab?"

„Ich komm' schon durch, ich brauch' nicht viel.
Mein alter Magen ist rasch am Ziel.
Noch hab' ich mir bei jeder Fahrt
ein bissel Geld beiseite gespart.
Und werden die Zeiten nicht gar zu arg,
dann reicht's eine Grube und reicht einen Sarg.
Und auch der Pfarr' soll das Seine haben,
Dann können sie mich in Ehren begraben."

Dr. Owlglaß

Berliner Bilder

XVII.

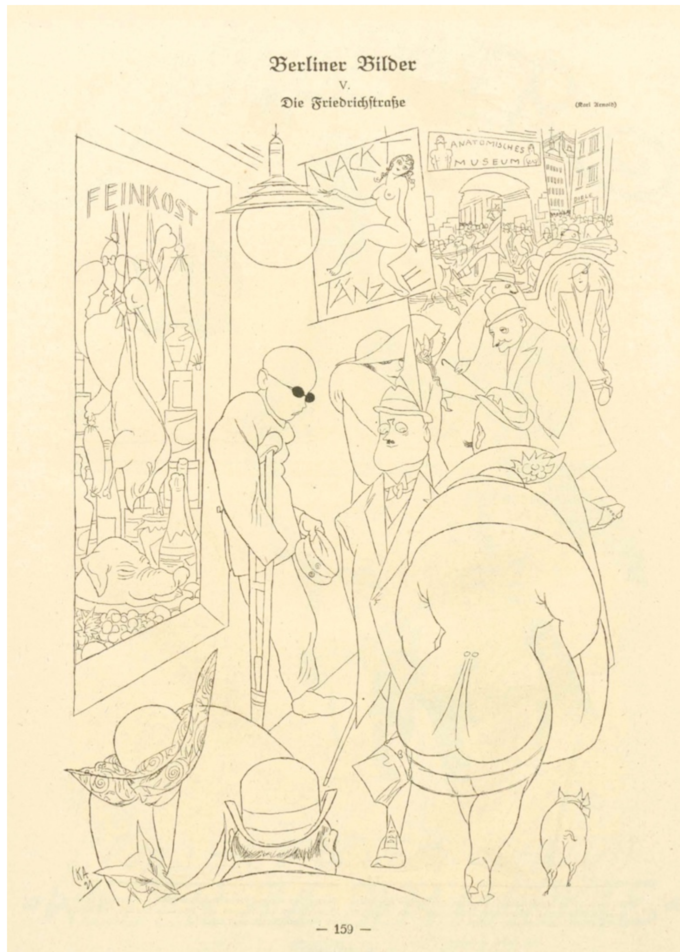
Großberliner Kleinbürger

(Karl Arnold)

„Stammeseijenart muß jewahrt bleiben. Wir haben den Skat, lassen wa den Bayern ihren Tarock."

— 327 —

Fig. 2.60 Karl Arnold, "Metropolitan Berlin petit-bourgeoisie (*Großberliner Kleinbürger*)," from the *Berliner Bilder* series



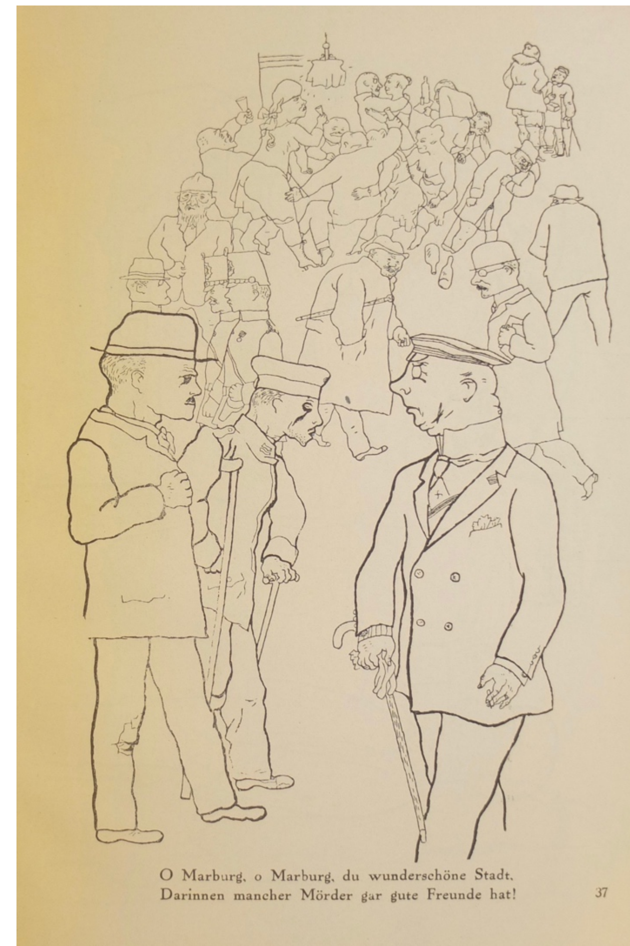


Fig. 2.61 (left) Karl Arnold, "Friedrichstrasse," from the *Berliner Bilder* series; (right) George Grosz, "O Marburg, o Marburg..." from *Das Gesicht der herrschenden Klasse*

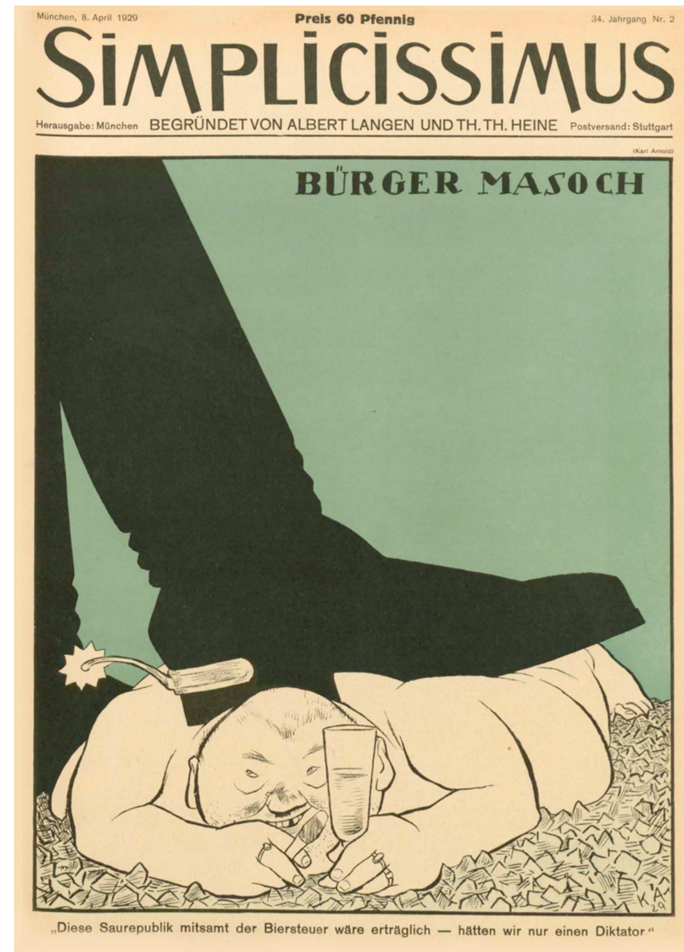


Fig. 2. 62 (left) George Grosz, cover of *Abrechnung folgt!* (1923); (right) Karl Arnold, "Bourgeois masochist. This sour republic would be bearable, even if the beer tax, if only we had a dictator! (*Bürger Masoch. Diese Saurepublik mitsamt der Biersteuer wäre erträglich--hätten wir nur einen Diktator*)," cover of *Simplicissimus*, vol. 34, no. 2 (April 1929)

Fig. 2.63 George Grosz, "The Communists fall--and profits increse! (*Die Kommunisten fallen--und Devisen* Steigen)," from *Das Gesicht der herrschenden Klasse*

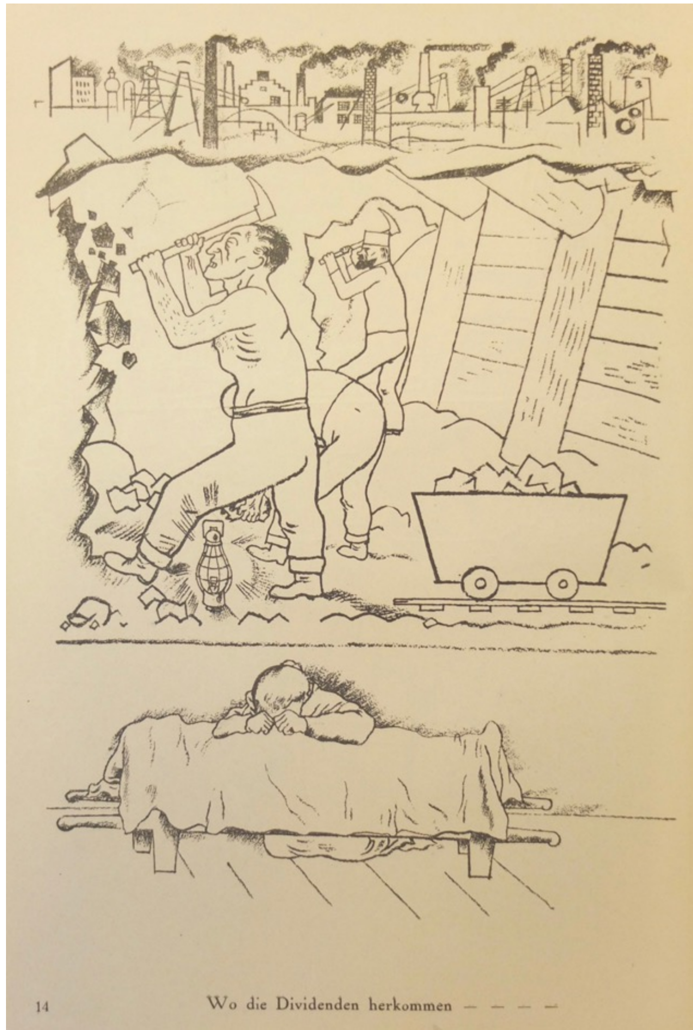


Fig. 2.64 (left) George Grosz, "Where dividends come from...*(Wo die Dividenden herkommen)*"; George Grosz, "...and where they end up (...*wo sie hinkommen*)," both from *Das Gesicht der herrschenden Klasse*

Fig. 2.65 George Grosz, "Five o'clock in the morning (*Früh um 5 Uhr!*)," from *Das Gesicht der herrschenden Klasse*

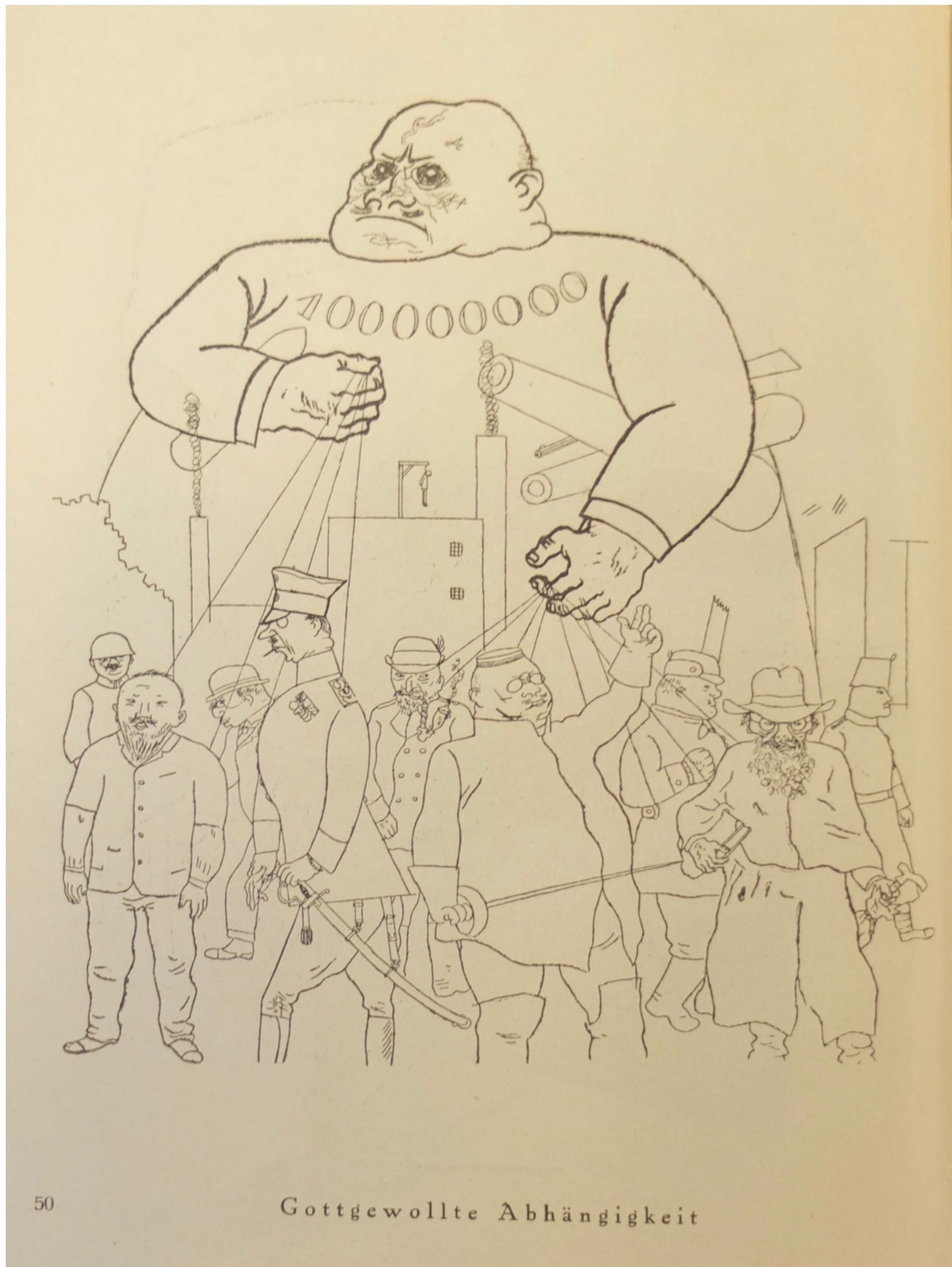


Fig. 2.66 George Grosz, "Divinely ordained dependence (*Gottgewollte Abhängigkeit*)," from *Das Gesicht der herrschenden Klasse*

Fig. 2.67 Anonymous, "Divinely ordained dependence. How much longer? (*Gottgewollte Abhängigkeit. Wie lange noch?*), from *Die rote Fahne*, (April 25, 1921)

Fig. 2.68 Anonymous, "The irepuller (*Der Drahtzieher*)," nationalist right-wing election poster (1924)