# Pregnant Women and Rationalized Workers. Alice Lex's Anonymous Bodies

RACHEL EPP BULLER

Alice Lex was one of many artists practicing during the Weimar Republic who addressed the body as a site of cultural conflict and critique. Hannah Höch, for example, privileged the New Woman's body in her work, questioning the emancipation of women so heavily propagated by the mass media, while Otto Dix and George Grosz featured the wounded and disfigured bodies of soldiers in their indictments of the First World War. Lex, however, distinguished her work through her focus on the working-class body, both as subject and as intended audience. Through her innovative methods of photomontage, photogram, stenciling and cropping, Lex employed a repeated and stylized anonymous body to critique hierarchical constructions of class and gender. Lex's fragmentations further sought to activate a socially critical viewer and make this viewer an integral component in the production of meaning.

An understanding of Lex's politically aligned montage work, however, is only possible by tracing the artist's political and artistic development. Born Alice Pfeffer in 1893, Lex pursued an artistic career from an early age, studying under Emil Orlik at the Kunstgewerbschule in Berlin from 1912 to 1914. Little is known of her student and early artistic work, though she began exhibiting in the annual "Große Berliner Kunstausstellung" in 1915. In 1918, she produced a series of eight "Dance of Death" graphics in an Expressionist style to illustrate Eduard

Reinacher's war poem *Der Tod von Grallenfels*.[1] Relatively little is known about Lex's artistic exploits immediately following the illustrations for Reinacher's book. Lex's first experimentations with photomontage were for a children's picture book, made in 1927 and dedicated to her son, Peter. The following year, she began to employ layered imagery to political ends, and from then until 1933, she produced the group of politically motivated photomontages and photograms for which she is best known.

Lex's eventual concentration on the working class was intimately linked to her involvement with the Communist Party and with the revolutionary artist groups that inspired her political photomontage production. Early in her career, Lex drifted between artist groups, associating first with the circle around Herwarth Walden and the journal *Der Sturm* and then with the group known as "Die Abstrakten" ("The Abstract Artists") later reconfigured as "Die Zeitgemäßen" ("The Contemporaries"). Lex's artistic and political ideals, however, were most closely aligned with a third artistic group, the "Assoziation revolutionärer bildender Künstler Deutschlands" ("Association of German Revolutionary Visual Artists," also known by the abbreviation ASSO). Artists affiliated with the German Communist Party (KPD) founded ASSO in Berlin in March 1928, with the primary goal of using art as a weapon in class struggle. The introduction of their founding manifesto quotes Karl Marx: "Die Kunst eine Waffe, der Künstler ein Kämpfer im Befreiungskampf des Volkes gegen ein bankrottes System" (Revolution und Realismus 1978: 21). In attempting to mobilize politically radical artists to join in their struggle, ASSO called for an end to the exploitation of artists by capitalist society, where artists are unable to develop freely their talents because of the constant pressure to turn a profit. Ironically, ASSO narrowly defined the "freedom" by which these talents should be developed. They opposed the notion of "l'art pour l'art," or art for art's sake, emphasizing that artists should play an important role in proletarian class struggle and that their art must thus adhere to the struggle through both style and content (for more on ASSO, see Guttsman 1997).

Lex turned to ASSO when disillusioned with other artist groups. Lex and her husband, artist Oskar Nerlinger, both felt that the artist groups in Berlin were too heavily bourgeois in orientation; only ASSO worked in close cooperation with the working class and acted on the group's politi-

1 Jay Clarke suggests that these illustrations are an early instance of Lex's political work. However, since they were commissioned works for a book and since the dance of death is a common series in the history of prints, I am not convinced that a specific political intentionality can be attributed to Lex in this case. See Clarke 2002: 96.

cal ideals.[2] Both artists joined ASSO in 1928 and wholeheartedly invested themselves in their newfound roles as artists who supported the working class.[3] As Nerlinger stated: "Er [der Künstler] muß sich als Teil des Volkes erkennen. Da werden sich ganz andere Perspektiven auftun. Er wird Menschen und Dinge mit anderen Augen sehen. Er wird das Bedürfnis haben, dieses künstlerische Erleben mitzuteilen" (Nerlinger 1975a: 16; see also Nerlinger 1975b: 16-17). As a way to impart their social critiques, Lex and Nerlinger both began to experiment with photographic processes. While Nerlinger believed that there could not be a definitive revolutionary form, only revolutionary content, Lex envisioned photomontage as the form best suited to address class issues:

"Die Arbeiten des 'Bundes revolutionärer bildender Künstler' bestanden nicht aus formalistischen, individualistischen Spielereien, sondern diesen Künstlern kam es darauf an, den revolutionären Klassenkampf mit der scharfen Waffe der politischen Fotomontage zu unterstützen" (Lex-Nerlinger 1975: 15).

In 1928, Lex joined the Communist party, a group that also employed photomontage as a means of propagating political ideas.[4] That Lex began to produce political photomontages immediately after she joined these two groups suggests that these memberships encouraged her to develop more fully a distinctive and coherent body of work.[5] Lex's repeated focus on class issues and the subject of the factory worker is also

2 When discussing Lex's marital status, mention must be made of the various names she used. Although she was sometimes referred to as Alice Nerlinger, or Pfeffer-Nerlinger, including her maiden name, she most often exhibited under the name of Lex and signed her works as such. I believe that she adopted this alternate surname specifically in order to distance her artistic production from that of her husband, establishing a separate artistic identity and implicitly refusing the proprietary assumptions of the married name. However, many recent publications have referred to her as Alice Lex-Nerlinger, disregarding her own practice and undermining her potential statement.

3 Marsha Meskimmon suggests that Lex fit a "traditional" model of the female political artist through her party associations and marriage to a political artist; she understands this model to suggest that Lex was influenced by her husband and was approximating male actions. See Meskimmon 1995: 19.

4 Examples of this abounded in the Soviet Union, as seen, for instance, in posters by Gustav Klutsis and Valentina Kulagina propagandizing five-year plans. See Bonnell 1997.

5 While Sally Stein suggests the significant coincidence between Lex's photomontages and her membership in the KPD, I believe it is equally likely that she was motivated by her membership in ASSO. See Stein 1994: 53.

consistent with the interests of the Communist groups with which she was affiliated.

Lex explicitly turned to photomontage in order to impart revolutionary ideas, yet she significantly distanced her own aims from those of her contemporaries, such as the Dadaists, which she considered frivolous. In an essay from 1959, Lex reflected on photomontage of the 1920s as having taken two directions: the first by the Dadaists, whom she viewed as employing the medium in a formalistic and individualized fashion to ends of satire and mockery rather than politics; the second by all those artists who produced the "far more important" type of agitational, political photomontage. Lex believed that her work's value lay in its potential for clear and incisive political critique: she made direct connections between her work and the use of photomontage in Soviet political practice, as well as to the Constructivist and agit-prop photomontage found in brochures and posters published by the KPD (Lex-Nerlinger 1975: 14-15).

Lex privileged the role of the viewer in political art and turned to photomontage particularly because she considered it a clear and unambiguous language that would be more politically effective and comprehensible to the viewer than abstract art. Lex believed the medium to be far more accessible to a general public of workers, farmers and soldiers than were traditional forms of high art.[6] Her explanation of the origins of photomontage links the medium's development directly to a focus on the working-class viewer: "[Die Fotomontage] wurde nicht erfunden, sondern sie entstand aus dem Willen der fortschrittlichen Künstler, eine revolutionäre, packende Bildsprache zu schaffen, die den Massen verständlich war" (Lex-Nerlinger 1975: 15). Lex's involvement with the KPD and ASSO inspired in her a need to engage and affect a larger audience, particularly the working class. She met that need by combining image fragments for obvious critiques of politics and society and by publishing them in such left-oriented, working-class periodicals as *Der Arbeiter-Fotograf* and *Rote Post.*

The economic situation in Weimar may have played a determining role in Lex's decision to devote significant attention to the working class, as she highlighted inequities of class, labor disputes and the fate of the factory worker. By 1925, the hyperinflation of 1922-1923 had given way to a brief period of economic recovery and relative prosperity, but by the end of the decade, the situation had worsened dramatically. The collapse of the United States stock market in 1929 had a ripple effect,

6 "Diese Sprache konnten die Arbeiter, die Bauern und die Soldaten verstehen" (Lex-Nerlinger 1975: 15).

heavily damaging the German economy. Factory strikes were rampant as wage disparities between workers and management became more pronounced, and, by 1932, over six million Germans were unemployed.

Lex cultivated a focus on industrial labor practices through a series of photomontages and photograms, made between 1928 and 1931 and dedicated to the anonymous worker within the rationalized factory setting.[7] The scientific management practices of Taylor and Ford gained currency throughout Europe and the Soviet Union in the 1920s. While German industry embraced practices such as the standardization of parts, the assembly line and the timing of worker productivity, many others outside of factory management criticized the new labor strategies for subordinating the human to the machine and in many cases rendering the human component unnecessary. In his 1923 Marxist analysis of society, Georg Lukács sharply criticized rationalization for fragmenting the personality of the worker (Lukács 1971). Many Berlin artists, among them John Heartfield, George Grosz and Otto Dix, denounced in their works the mechanized society that oppresses the working class. Lex focused, in particular, on the worker within the factory setting, rendered faceless and effectively anonymous by the repetitive and mindless labor. Her trope of anonymity took various forms throughout her works, from cropped and unidentifiable photographs of faces to stenciled photograms that were literally faceless. Her use of stencils and photograms to duplicate figures created an aesthetic parallel to the precise replication of products that occurred under scientific management.

Lex's repeated emphasis on anonymous bodies proved to be multivalent: not only did it reinforce the sense of worker alienation and subordination within the rationalized factory, but it also served as a didactic tool and provided a point of engagement for the viewer. Initially, the characters' anonymity may have prevented immediate identification, forcing the viewer to detach from the scene and become a critical observer in the manner of Bertolt Brecht's model of "alienation." This same anonymity, however, allowed the viewer a theoretical port of entry into a visually fragmented surface. By eliminating distinguishing features in her figures, Lex suggested that they could be Everyman or Everywoman, universal characters with whom her working-class audience might ultimately identify. Thus Lex's anonymous bodies simultaneously distanced and engaged their viewers, the ideal achieved result being their social and political enlightenment and activation.

7 While Lex never identified the works as a series, the repetition of titles and of compositional elements implicitly links the works.

Brecht's theory of alienation provided a point of engagement for Lex and other visual artists of the period. Brecht developed his theory with respect to epic theater, a dramatic form that newly defined the relationship between audience and actors. Whereas in previous theater, audience members were drawn into a story, identifying empathically with the characters, in epic theater, the actors and narrator periodically interrupt the action to speak directly to the audience, denying a continuous empathy. The actors and narrator attempt to make the familiar seem surprising and strange, with the purpose of developing in the audience a detached, distanced and critical attitude, similar to that of the historian. Brecht labeled this the *Verfremdungseffekt*.[8] As Brecht wrote, the "object of this 'effect' is to allow the spectator to criticize constructively from a social point of view" (Brecht 1964: 125). To achieve the goal of social criticism, Brecht activated the formerly passive spectator: by prompting a critical assessment of the events enacted, Brecht roused the viewer from the trance-like state developed in established bourgeois theater and included the viewer as an integral component of the play (see Subiotto 1982: 33).

Brecht's notion of alienation established significant parallels to montage. The alienation effect occurs when a familiar object is placed in new surroundings and gathers new associations, a phenomenon very similar to the processes of artistic photomontage. Writing in 1934, Walter Benjamin specifically described Brecht's epic theater as an enactment of montage, noting that the theatrical interruptions, denying a seamless experience for the viewer, echo the obvious fragmentation of photomontage, (Benjamin 1998: 99-100). The role of the spectator, too, generates connections between Brecht's epic theater and photomontage. The process of alienation that in turn activates the spectator to be a detached, critical participant mirrors the reception process in photomontage, in which the fragmentation encourages the viewer not to absorb passively but to approach the work more critically. In Lex's photomontages, as in the theater of Brecht, the viewer is activated in part through methods of fragmentation and alienation and subsequently becomes a necessary participant in the production of meaning.

8 Most scholars translate *Verfremdung* as alienation, though a few, such as Griselda Pollock, discuss it as distanciation and/or defamiliarization.


*Fig. 1: Alice Lex: Arbeiten Arbeiten Arbeiten. Photomontage (1928).*

Lex produced her most explicit and nuanced critique of industrial rationalization in *Arbeiten Arbeiten Arbeiten (Work Work Work),* a photomontage from 1928, full of image fragments that make direct reference to scientific management practices (fig. 1). Lex foregrounded the words of the title in order to reinforce the obvious subjugation of the worker to the factory machine, as pictured in the combined fragments. A large gloved hand, prominently placed in a red circle, holds a stopwatch and stands ready to time the productivity and relative efficiency of the laborers.[9] Below, repeated in a spiraling pattern, the images of machinery and workers imply the endless and mind-numbing repetition of rationalized labor, in which the worker is only an appendage of the machine and pro-

9 Stein argues that the gloved hand in a circle of Lex's montage is a critical counterpoint to El Lissitzky's *Self-Portrait as Constructor* (1924), which celebrates the union of man and machine. (See Stein 1994: 55). Lissitzky's work was reproduced in an architecture magazine, *ABC,* in 1925.

duction is regulated only by the clock. The repeated mouth and hands appear to communicate a silent message as they tightly clutch a piece of bread and shove it in the worker's mouth.[10] They may signify on one level the financial straits of the worker, meagerly rewarded for the day's labor. Positioned beneath the stopwatch, the hands and mouth also may signal that the worker must quickly devour the dry bread in order to get back "on the clock." Lex viewed negatively the conjunction of worker and machine, believing that rationalized industry led to increased accidents and fatalities. Writing about her works on the subject, she further explained: "Ich versuchte zu zeigen, wie der Arbeiter für den Unternehmer nicht mehr als ein Teilchen seiner Maschinen bedeutete und zwar ein leicht zu ersetzendes."[11]

While in many of her works, Lex rendered the workers completely anonymous, in *Arbeiten Arbeiten Arbeiten*, she at least suggested their gender. The fact that the repeated hands and mouth appear to belong to a woman complicates the image.[12] Female workers were not only dependent upon the factory and, like their male counterparts, alienated from their production, but also further subordinated within a patriarchal hierarchy. Heidi Hartman argues that the "material base upon which patriarchy rests lies most fundamentally in men's control over women's labor power" (Hartmann 1979: 11). Male superiors continually denied female workers opportunities for advancement, and co-workers resented their mere presence in the workplace, particularly during years of soaring unemployment. Lex's subtle reference to a gendered worker suggests that at this early stage of her montage experimentation, she wished to consider not only the effects of rationalization on the worker in general but also the specific fate of the female laborer.

In another work entitled *Arbeiten! Arbeiten! Arbeiten! (Work! Work! Work!*; 1928; fig. 2), Lex turned to photogram methods to render her workers completely anonymous.[13] Their faceless bodies are generalized shapes with only vaguely defined appendages and no hint of a specified

10 Lex herself suggested that the hands communicate a message, for she titled the original photograph, now in the collection of the Akademie der Künste, Hände reden 3 (Hands Talk 3).

11 Cited from unpublished papers from the Nerlinger-Archiv in the Akademie der Künste

12 The identity of the hands and face as female is perhaps more apparent in Lex's original photograph, Hände reden 3, than in the final photomontage.

13 Lex produced more than one version of this photogram, such as one in the Akademie der Künste collection dated 1931, but only the 1928 version displays the words of the title, which appear to be handwritten in white crayon on black paper and then affixed to the surface. The later versions have only blank white spaces where the title words would be.

gender. Using photograms also allowed her to replicate precisely each of the three segments: the same worker pictured in the same generic factory setting of ladders, gears and pulleys may allude to the interchangeability of the human component. Lex's repeated use of the *Arbeiten* title links the works to other of her labor-oriented productions. In this instance, however, the laborers are not only pictured at work, but are also under implicit duress: the exclamation points following each "arbeiten" suggest that the words do not merely describe the scene but are in fact authoritative commands delivered by an unseen superior, who times the workers' actions and aggressively encourages increased productivity.[14]

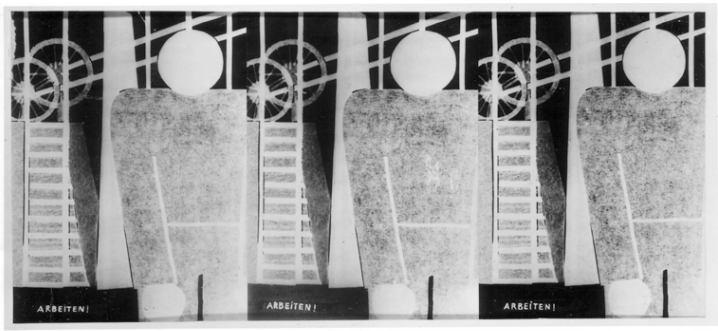


*Fig. 2: Alice Lex: Arbeiten! Arbeiten! Arbeiten! Photogram (1928).*

As Lex continued to feature the faceless worker in her photograms, her critiques became more pointed in nature. In *Für den Profit (For Profit*, 1931), Lex visually and symbolically subordinated the workers to both their machinery and the clock in order to suggest impending physical and mental harm. Each worker stands behind a gear, reaching through a pulley to work a wrench in such a way as to seem perilously tangled up in the machinery. In each image, the jagged-tooth circular saw appears precariously close to the worker's arm, perhaps a reference to work-related accidents in rationalized factories. The placement of the enormous clock partially obscures the heads of the faceless workers, suggest-

14 Lex produced two drawings, *Kapital und Arbeit (Capital and Work) I* and *II,* 1929, for the May 1929 *Kapital und Arbeit* exhibition organized by ASSO. The drawings exhibit many similarities to the *Arbeiten!* photogram, highlighting the faceless worker in the factory, but they more explicitly subordinate the workers to the machines and warn of potential dangers.

ing that they functioned not only under significant physical dangers but also under a considerable mental strain.

Lex produced a striking portrait of class disparity in *Arm und Reich (Poor and Rich),* a photogram-montage of 1930.[15] The diagrammatic layout of social demographics highlights startling differences between the rich minority and poor majority populations. In each row of photograms, Lex established a dichotomy between rich and poor, where the poor always outweigh the rich three to one. In the title, too, the poor are given priority. Lex's photograms provide three separate instances of stark class contrasts. In the top row, a rich, well-dressed man of leisure relaxes at a café, while a poor, crippled man begs outside. Below, a fur-draped mother strolls in the park as her child plays, a marked contrast to the kerchiefed, pregnant woman who pushes a cart of newspapers for sale, her child crammed in alongside. Along the bottom, a tennis-playing dandy embodies the lifestyle of leisure unattainable for the construction worker bent over a jackhammer.

In *Arm und Reich,* as in other works, Lex employed photograms to capitalize upon generic portrayals and thereby produce easily graspable political statements. While Lex occasionally commented upon specific historical situations, she most often highlighted standardized, even stereotypical figures.[16] The photogram was ideally suited to this end, since the layerings of light and shadow allowed Lex to elide any specific character demarcations. By producing relatively simplistic compositions through her photograms, Lex appeared to aim for works that would easily lend themselves to didactic ends. Rather than necessarily expecting the viewer intellectually to interpret subtle and complex layerings, Lex's photograms instead tended toward the propagandistic and readily understandable. The upper-class figures of *Arm und Reich*, devoid of individual identities, are easily criticized in their clichéd appearances. In her hopes of reaching the working class through her montage works, Lex apparently believed it most feasible to initiate a collective solidarity with a potential revolutionary power among the working class by calling on

15 Originally titled *Menschen auf der Straße (People on the Street),* the work was produced specifically for *Die Straße,* a graphic exhibition that Lex and other members of *Die Abstrakten* organized to appear within the 1930 *Große Berliner Kunstausstellung.*

16 Hanne Bergius asserts that Lex's use of anonymous figures shows her unconscious embrace of rationalization. (See Bergius 1994: 49). I believe it more likely, however, that Lex intentionally employed anonymous figures not only to present generic types but also to reflect and/or comment upon the trend to rationalize society in general. For example, see Grossmann 1983.

highly charged stereotypical class representations rather than organizing around more specified issues.

Lex reconsidered the anonymous body when she turned her attention to gender concerns through two works focused on women's struggle to control their role in human reproduction. In these works, Lex again spoke directly to pressing social issues, setting aside for a moment the subjugated factory worker in favor of the legally incapacitated woman. In the Weimar penal code, paragraph 184 prohibited the advertisement, display or sale of contraceptive devices; paragraphs 218 and 219 barred women from obtaining abortions and doctors from performing the procedure. In a much-publicized 1931 case, two Stuttgart doctors, Friedrich Wolf and Else Kienle, were arrested for helping women violate the abortion paragraphs. Their arrest sparked massive protests, drawing thousands of women and inspiring many artists to critique the situation visually. (For a good history of the struggle to overturn Paragraph 218, see Soden 1998).

Lex and many other artists addressed the topic of Paragraph 218 in *Frauen in Not (Women in Need),* a 1931 exhibition promoted by the Communist women's journal *Weg der Frau (Women's Way)* and supported by a wide range of artists and women's groups. Lex's photogram contribution, *Paragraph 218,* now lost and presumed destroyed, featured pregnant proletarian women, all faceless, with heads covered by handkerchiefs.[17] They share a common identity as representatives of the anonymous masses for whom Paragraph 218 was a disastrous piece of legislation, yet another burden upon the working-class mothers who could not afford to feed a multitude of children. The women appear both literally and symbolically imprisoned by the paragraph. Three women in black-striped clothing sit crouched behind bars, presumably incarcerated for their actions, while the prominent central figure stands with her feet behind bars, symbolically immobilized by her lack of choice.

Lex's repetition of figures in *Paragraph 218* continued an implication seen in other of her works that there is revolutionary potential in numbers, if properly organized. While the women initially appear helpless in their imprisonment, Lex aimed to motivate the viewer to action on their behalf. Their facelessness, a motif that Lex used in a dualistic manner, suggests that they could be any woman: although the anonymity initially alienated the viewer by removing an individual focus for empathy, it simultaneously provoked the viewer into understanding the commonality of women's plight. The organizers of *Frauen in Not* envisioned

17 Lex's *Paragraph 218* photogram was reproduced in a 1931 issue of *Der Arbeiter-Fotograf,* the only apparent remaining record of the work.

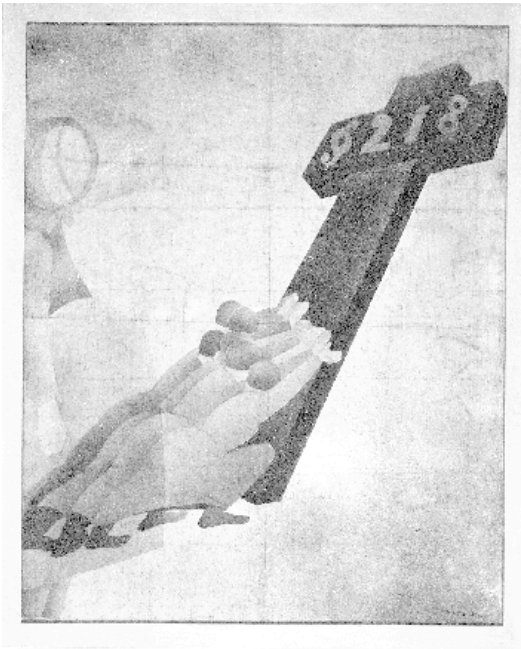


*Fig. 3: Alice Lex: Paragraph 218. Painting (1931).*

the exhibition as a way to unite and empower women, believing in the strength of the masses. In his foreword to the catalogue, Fritz Schiff argued:

"Doch die Frau ist nicht ohnmächtig, auch sie ist in der Masse stark, und so soll diese Ausstellung aufrufen, erziehen, bewusst machen, den Willen stärken, diese Zustände überwinden zu helfen. Nicht das einzelne Kunstwerk, die Ausstellung ist hier zur Waffe geworden" (Frauen in Not 1931: n.p.).

In a painted version of *Paragraph 218* (fig. 3), Lex made even more explicit the potential strength within women's ranks. She used an experimental combination of spray-painting and stencils to present a faceless pregnant woman, standing helpless and mute. Her kerchiefed head and anonymous face suggest that she could be any working mother, a device again used by Lex to connect with her viewer. More obviously than in the photogram, however, here Lex explicitly visualized the power of women's collective strength. A group of women in the foreground

struggle together to bring down an enormous cross labeled "§218," seeking to throw off the burden of abortion and contraception restrictions for the good of the proletarian mother. Lex pictured the cross already in its descent, suggesting that through their collective action the women have brought about a revolutionary change and thereby saved their sisters and daughters from lives of inevitable destitution and hopelessness.

Throughout her photogram and photomontage oeuvre, Lex demonstrated great concern for the working class, not only as subject matter but also as intended audience and as a potential force of revolutionary change. Her montage methods evoke Brechtian alienation, where fragmented juxtapositions draw attention to otherwise familiar images, presenting them in new contexts so as to mobilize the viewer to action. Some of Lex's works, however, forego subtlety in favor of a clear didacticism, presenting images to be read serially and easily understood by the audience. Lex's anonymous bodies bridge this gap, at once distancing the viewer by their facelessness and simultaneously offering generalized and accessible stereotypes. Walter Benjamin suggested that "political commitment, however revolutionary it may seem, functions in a counter-revolutionary way so long as the writer experiences his solidarity with the proletariat only *in the mind* and not as a producer" (Benjamin 1998: 91). Lex's photomontages clearly demonstrated her solidarity with the proletariat through their subjects, their publication in worker-oriented periodicals and the relative accessibility of the medium. Lex's productions were physical embodiments of her political ideologies and consequently align her with Benjamin's revolutionary persona. Through her fragmented juxtapositions, Lex courted the active participation of her audience. Her frequent focus on anonymity ultimately engaged the viewer through a perception that the figures were universal and accessible. Lex's involvement with ASSO and the KPD stimulated various aspects of her political production, from the inclusion of the viewer to a thematic focus on the working class. Lex's own retrospective reflections make evident the priority she placed on an easily graspable, revolutionary art that could politically activate the viewer:

"In eine Welt sinnlicher Begriffe und Anschauungen hineingestellt, müssen wir uns auch der uns verständlichen Formensprache bedienen, zum mindesten müssen diese Formen noch so konkret sein, daß sie dem Betrachter des Kunstwerkes dessen geistige Inhalte vermitteln können, sonst verlieren wir uns ins Bodenlose und die Kunst würde sich aufs neue isolieren und den Kontakt mit dem Volk verlieren" (Lex 1948: 19).

## References

Benjamin, Walter (1998): "The Author as Producer." In: Understanding Brecht, London and New York: Verso, pp. 85-103.

Bergius, Hanne (1994): "Fotomontage im Vergleich." In: Ute Eskildsen (ed.), Fotografieren hiess teilnehmen: Fotografinnen der Weimarer Republik, Düsseldorf: Richter Verlag, pp. 42-50.

Bonnell, Victoria E (1997): Iconography of Power: Soviet Political Posters Under Lenin and Stalin, Berkeley: University of California Press.

Brecht, Bertolt (1964): "The Street Scene: A Basic Model for an Epic Theatre." In: John Willet (ed.), Brecht on Theatre: The Development of an Aesthetic, New York: Hill and Wang. pp. 121-29.

Clarke, Jay (ed.) (2002): Negotiating History: German Art and the Past, Chicago: The Art Institute of Chicago.

Frauen in Not (1931): exhibition catalogue, Berlin: Haus der Juryfreien, n.p.

Grossmann, Atina (1983): "The New Woman and the Rationalization of Sexuality in Weimar Germany." In: Ann Snitow/Christine Stansell/Sharon Thompson (eds.), Powers of Desire: The Politics of Sexuality, New York: Monthly Review Press, pp. 153-71.

Guttsman, W. L. (1997): Art for the Workers: Ideology and the Visual Arts in Weimar Germany, Manchester and New York: Manchester University Press.

Hartman, Heidi (1979): "The unhappy marriage of Marxism and feminism." Capital and Class 8, pp. 1-33.

Lex, Alice (1948): "Die Kunst im Werden eines neuen Weltbildes." Bildende Kunst 4, pp. 18-21.

Lex-Nerlinger, Alice (1975): "Fotomontage—Ausdruck revolutionären Willens." In: Alice Lex-Nerlinger/Oskar Nerlinger: Malerei, Graphik, Foto-Graphik, Berlin: Akademie der Deutschen Demokratischen Republik, pp. 14-15.

Lukács, Georg (1971): History and Class Consciousness: Studies in Marxist Dialectics, trans. Rodney Livingstone, Cambridge, Mass.: MIT Press.

Meskimmon, Marsha (1995): "Politics, the Neue Sachlichkeit and Women Artists." In: Marsha Meskimmon/Shearer West (eds.), Visions of the 'Neue Frau': Women and the Visual Arts in Weimar Germany, Aldershot, England: Scolar Press, pp. 9-27.

Nerlinger, Oskar (1975a): "Politik und Kunst." In: Alice Lex-Nerlinger/Oskar Nerlinger: Malerei, Graphik, Foto-Graphik, Berlin: Akademie der Deutschen Demokratischen Republik, pp. 15-16.

Nerlinger, Oskar (1975b): “Wie wir zu ASSO kamen.” In: Alice Lex-Nerlinger/Oskar Nerlinger: Malerei, Graphik, Foto-Graphik, Berlin: Akademie der Deutschen Demokratischen Republik, pp. 16-17.

Revolution und Realismus. Revolutionäre Kunst in Deutschland 1917 bis 1933 (1978), exhibition catalogue, Berlin: Staatliche Museen zu Berlin.

Soden, Kristine von (1998): “‘Hilft uns denn niemand?’: Zum Kampf gegen den §218.” In: Kristine von Soden/Maruta Schmidt (eds.), Neue Frauen: Die zwanziger Jahre, Berlin: Elefanten Press, pp. 103-113.

Stein, Sally (1994): “Zu den lyrischen und anti-lyrischen Tendenzen in der foto/grafischen Werk von Alice Lex-Nerlinger.” In: Ute Eskildsen (ed.), Fotografieren hiess teilnehmen: Fotografinnen der Weimarer Republik, Düsseldorf: Richter Verlag, pp. 51-59.

Subiotto, Arrigo (1982): “Epic Theatre; A Theatre for the Scientific Age.” In: Graham Bartram/Anthony Waine (eds.), Brecht in Perspective, London and New York: Longman, pp. 30-44.