THE JMC Review
ISSN:2456-9550
Volume 8 (2024): The Aesthetics of Interruption

RESEARCH ARTICLE

*(*The views expressed in this article are the author's personal opinion and do not in any way reflect or represent the position of the institution and/or the journal)*

The Aesthetics of Interruption in Walter Benjamin's *Funkstunde* Broadcasts for Children

Payal Anil Padmanabhan

[ABSTRACT: This essay will look at Walter Benjamin's lesser-known career in writing for the radio in the years leading up to World War II, especially in the shadow of the rise of fascism in Germany. While briefly charting the history of Benjamin's radio stories, the essay will focus on Benjamin's interest in writing scripts for child listeners. The essay will delineate Benjamin's investment in the figure of the child and the period of childhood while exploring his sustained interest in technology and the reception of art. Through engagement with Benjamin's writing about montage as well as his interest in Bertolt Brecht's alienation effect, the essay will also explore how Benjamin consciously seeks to produce the aesthetic of interruption in his own radio broadcasts in order to mobilise his audience to think critically. By focusing on the radio story "Theodore Hosemann", this essay will examine the connection that Benjamin develops between aesthetic interruption and the production of a revolutionary consciousness through the medium of radio.
KEYWORDS: Walter Benjamin, Radio Broadcasts, Technology, Interruption, Writing for Children, Bertolt Brecht, Gestus and Epic Theatre]

Radio broadcasting began in Germany in October 1923, and epistolary evidence shows that Walter Benjamin became interested in writing for the radio by 1925. Known for his theoretical and philosophical work, especially on the impact of technology on art, it is no surprise that Benjamin also explored the mass medium of the radio. With help from his school friend Ernst Schoen, who worked at the Frankfurt Radio Station, Benjamin was eventually able to accomplish his desire. In 1927, his lecture on 'Young Russian Poets' became the first of many broadcasts in the years to come for both Radio Frankfurt and Radio Berlin. Benjamin's career in radio also maps how the rise of Hitler in Germany

©Payal Anil Padmanabhan, Assistant Professor, Department of English, Jesus and Mary College, University of Delhi. <ppadmanabhan@jmc.du.ac.in>

would come to impact not only him, but other intellectuals from the Frankfurt school. By early 1932, he mentions how the increasing state control of mass media was impacting his radio broadcasts. January 29, 1933, was Benjamin's final radio broadcast, with Adolf Hitler being sworn in as the chancellor on the very next day.

What is significant to note is that while Benjamin's work for the radio spanned a variety of formats, the primary audience of his broadcasts was children. In his writing for children, we see the use of 3 forms—radio stories, radio plays, and his "*hörmodelle*", or "radiomodels" (Benjamin, 2005c, p. 583), or "listening models" (Rosenthal, 2014, Introduction). Lecia Rosenthal (2014) observes that Walter Benjamin's radio work has received comparatively lesser academic attention than his other writings due to the fragmented archiving of his radio work that was also impacted by the rise of the Nazi regime and the Cold War years of Germany. She also laments that while Benjamin delivered his own talks and also performed radio plays and *hörmodelle,* recordings of his voice have not survived. As a scholar of comparative literature with a focus on Modernism, Rosenthal is able to decipher issues pertaining to the new mediality of radio at the time. She notes how some of his writing for radio, especially the stories, have been misclassified: "the *Gesammelte Schriften* makes some confusing choices, collapsing, for instance, the important categories of the *Hörspiel* [radio play] and the *Hörmodell* [listening model]" (Rosenthal, 2014, Introduction). In fact, this has also impacted the availability of translations in English, with the first English translation of all of Benjamin's radio work only being made available as late as 2014. In this paper, I will be focusing on one of the lesser-known and discussed radio stories for children titled "Theodor Hosemann". While I will be referring to my own translation[1] (which is included at the end of the essay and is being published for the first time), I will be flagging some observations on approaches to translation by comparing my translation with the first-ever translation of the story published in 2014. I will also be tracing the impact of Brecht's theatre work on Benjamin's thinking, specifically Brecht's use of 'gestus' [gesture] and the value that Benjamin found in the aesthetics of disruption, which was also seen in his appreciation of montage. The goal of this paper will be to understand Walter Benjamin's unique approach to radio, especially in the context of his work on the effect of technology on the creation and reception of art.

Benjamin, Radio, and 'Interruptions'

As a form, the radio was still developing when Walter Benjamin began his broadcasts. British historian Aristotle K. Kallis (2005) notes that "it had not developed a clear physiognomy, combining—often awkwardly—information as an *ersatz* newspaper and entertainment in lieu of more traditional social activities, such as music and theatre halls" (p. 31). It was only after the beginning of the Nazi *Gleichschaltung* [coordination] that broadcasting in Germany was really developed. There were attendant aesthetic, commercial and political concerns about how to best mobilise the radio. In "Reflections on Radio", Benjamin notes that "the radio listener, unlike every other kind of audience, welcomes the human voice into his house like a visitor" (Benjamin, 2005c, p. 544). Even as he notes the radical potential of the radio, Benjamin remarks that "there has never been another genuine cultural institution that has failed to authenticate itself by taking advantage of its own forms of technology—using them to create in the public a new expertise" (2005c, p. 544). His writings of 1931 reveal that his initial enthusiasm for this new form and its potential for revolution had been dulled by a certain cynicism. While these remarks suggest the failure of radio to galvanise the masses into thinking critically,

©Payal Anil Padmanabhan, Assistant Professor, Department of English, Jesus and Mary College, University of Delhi. <ppadmanabhan@jmc.du.ac.in>

they also pre-empt his critique of cinema and photography in his famous essay of 1935, "The Work of Art in the Age of Mechanical Reproduction". Benjamin's cynicism about radio seems to come from observing the slow deployment of technology for Fascist and Nazi propaganda in Germany. Ultimately, in 1933 (the same year of Benjamin's last radio broadcast), the Reich Ministry for Public Enlightenment and Propaganda was established, and the process of taking over the press, radio and film began. Over a short time, the Reich Minister for Propaganda, Joseph Goebbels was able to commandeer the transition of the various radio stations into the singular entity of the *Großdeutsches Rundfunk* [Great German Radio].

In order to trace the method behind Benjamin's broadcasts, one needs to dwell on his understanding of montage as well as Brecht's theatre. Montage refers to the artistic method where separate images/sequences are pieced together—meaning is born through disjunction. As a cinematic form, filmmakers from the Soviet Union made an unparalleled contribution to the history of film through the use of montage. In his 1941 lecture on montage, Russian filmmaker Sergei Eisenstein notes:

> Those who discarded montage have forgotten that it is above all an active method of narrative, that the exposition of an event through montage enables the viewer's attention to be captured and led along the necessary sequence of vision. Shooting in long take is almost always neutral and passive. (1985, p. 11)

Stanley Mitchell (1998) notes that for Walter Benjamin 'montage' became the "modern, constructive, active, unmelancholy form of allegory, namely the ability—to connect dissimilars in such a way as to 'shock' people into new recognitions and understandings" (p. xiii). Mitchell further argues that Benjamin viewed montage "as the major constitutive principle of the artistic imagination in the age of technology" (1998, p. xiii). It is precisely this ability to 'shock' that Benjamin traces in Brecht's work. In "Theatre and Radio", Benjamin begins by talking about contemporary collaborations between theatre and radio before focusing on Brecht's theatre. He argues that Epic Theatre and its "construction of *gestus* is nothing but a retranslation of the methods of montage—so crucial in radio and film—from a technological process to a human one" (2005c, p. 584). To explain *gestus*, I will turn to Benjamin's "What is Epic Theatre? (II)"[2], which explains *gestus* as the specific gestures undertaken by actors in Epic Theatre: "when an actor quotes his own gesture on the stage" (Benjamin, 2006, p. 305). In Brecht's theatre, there is an emphasis on actors both *showing* as well as *telling*[3]. The use of *gestus* empowers the audience as they are conscious of the performance, rather than enamoured by it. Thus, *gestus* is a form of aesthetic interruption, visible in the actor's performance, but also through the songs, captions, and experimental projections characteristic of Brecht's theatre. Benjamin further argues that the principle of interruption that is characteristic of Epic Theatre:

> has a pedagogic function and not just the character of a stimulus. It brings the action to a halt, and hence compels the listener to take up an attitude toward the events on the stage and forces the actor to adopt a critical view of his role. (2005c, p. 585)

The reason that Benjamin discussed Epic Theatre in conjunction with radio was because he was deeply interested in the revolutionary potential of the radio, both as an observer of technology and as someone interested in writing for the medium. In fact, in "Reflections on Radio", Benjamin writes that the failure of radio "has been to perpetuate

©Payal Anil Padmanabhan, Assistant Professor, Department of English, Jesus and Mary College, University of Delhi. <ppadmanabhan@jmc.du.ac.in>

the fundamental separation between practitioners and the public, a separation that is at odds with its technological basis (Benjamin, 2005c, p. 543). A similar sentiment is echoed by Brecht in 1932:

> The radio would be the finest possible communication apparatus in public life. . .That is to say, it would be if it knew how to receive as well as to transmit, how to let the listener speak as well as hear, how to bring him into a relationship instead of isolating him. (1974, p. 52)

For Brecht, the transformation of the radio into a two-way medium would turn the radio audience into critical listeners, not just passive ones. Here, it is relevant to cite Brigid Doherty's (2000) close examination of Benjamin's 1930 radio broadcast "Karussell der Berufe" ("Carousel of Jobs") that draws attention to how the economic crisis in Germany after World War I pressured young teenagers to choose a profession as soon as possible. She concludes that Benjamin assumes the familiarity of his audience with the processes of occupational counselling for German students and, in fact, puts questions to his audience that transcend the utilitarianism of such counselling: "How does an occupation form and transform a human being? ... How does an occupation influence human beings and by what means?" (as cited in Doherty, 2000, p. 445). Furthermore, Benjamin declares that the audience may mail their responses to the radio station, which will even release the findings from an examination of those responses. Doherty uses this particular broadcast to show that Benjamin was actively seeking to transform his listeners into participants. For her, this choice was inspired by Brecht's theatre experiments, and she declares "Benjamin's radio broadcast is a Brechtian experiment" (Doherty, 2000, p. 446). She consistently observes Benjamin's admiration for Brecht's alienation effect, which is primarily produced through the use of *gestus* visible in the manifold interruptions it displays in his work. Tracing Benjamin's polemics throughout his writing, it becomes clear that he feared the mass standardisation of thought due to the increasing use of technology in public discourse. His consistent return to the aesthetic of interruption in montage, Brecht's theatre, and also his experimental radio broadcasts reveal the power he attributed to challenging the dulling of the sensorium induced by both capitalism and fascism. His writing also displays a curiosity in identifying spaces of resistance, while his writing for radio reveals that he identified childhood as a major site for resistance.

Benjamin's Investment in the Child

As a scholar of children's literature, Margaret R. Higonnet (2009) notes that for the Modernists, the child often became the central figure of renewal in an age where all sense of certainty was lost (p. 86). Her observations are useful as they help to situate Benjamin's choice of the figure of the child within the context of the larger Modernist movement where "the child [is] offered [as] an aesthetic metaphor, an artistic model, and an ideal audience" (Higonnet, 2009, p. 86). Benjamin himself observes that society's growing interest in children's toys and books was symptomatic of a larger anxiety that adults had lost control over their adult world and sought comfort in the world of the child,

> But the adult, who finds himself threatened by the real world and can find no escape, removes its sting by playing with its image in a reduced form. The desire to make light of an unbearable life has been a major factor in the growing interest in children's games and children's books since the end of the war. (Benjamin, 2005b, p. 100)

©Payal Anil Padmanabhan, Assistant Professor, Department of English, Jesus and Mary College, University of Delhi. <ppadmanabhan@jmc.du.ac.in>

This shows that Benjamin's choice of the figure of the child, while part of a larger Modernist paradigm, was historically located, and this awareness prevented him from reifying the child in the way that capitalism does. Through the changes in toys made for children and illustrations for children's books, Benjamin notes the effects of capitalism. In "Children's Literature" Benjamin observes that the new trends of children's illustrations move to replace older illustrations, which "maintained something which became increasingly rare in literature—namely, the pure seriousness of mastery and the pure playfulness of the dilettante, both of which create for children *without doing so deliberately*" (Benjamin, 2005b, p. 252). What Benjamin here suggests but develops further in "Old Toys" is that providing a child something complete, which does not require the child to make its "most enduring modifications" (Benjamin, 2005b, p. 101), reduces the goal of play to a function of the plaything instead of playing itself. This is a development of a thought that is first seen in an earlier piece "Old Forgotten Children's Books", where Benjamin notes of picture books that "For children a whole new world opens up with black-and-white woodcuts" (Benjamin, 2005a, p. 411). Observing the changes in picture book illustrations post-Enlightenment, he suggests that the adult understanding of colour for children is quite different from a "child's view of colour" and therefore the way a child will chose to re-colour a black-and-white image will be different from the way an adult would expect a child to desire a colour version of the same image. He observes "The coloured picture immerses the child's imagination in a dream state within itself. The black-and-white woodcut, the plain, prosaic illustration leads him out of himself... the child inhabits them... children fill them with a poetry of their own" (Benjamin, 2005a, p. 411) through their scribbling. For Benjamin the world of monochrome pictures allows for the "secret understanding between anonymous craftsman and the childlike reader" (Benjamin, 2005a, p. 412) to exist and flourish. He goes on to write, "Unlike the coloured pictures, the surface of black-and-white illustration seems to be incomplete and hence in need of additions. So, children imaginatively complete the illustrations" (Benjamin, 2005a, p. 436). The 'secret understanding' between producer and consumer is categorised by the 'incompleteness' of the illustration. As the child consumer transforms into a co-producer, we witness the characteristic montage-like 'interruption' of pure consumption without any critical thought that Benjamin has been tracing in a variety of aesthetic forms. Benjamin's particular perception of children's play and unfettered imaginations drives him to make them the audience of his radio work.

Radio for Children

Having demonstrated that Benjamin was deeply interested in the aesthetics of interruption, it is time to trace the revolutionary "*gestus*" in his own approach to writing for radio, especially for an audience of children. Even as Benjamin discusses the end of the 'aura' and the elimination of distance through photography, he also writes that "criticism is a matter of correct distancing.... Now things press too closely on society" (Benjamin, 1979/2007, p. 89). Once more, Benjamin suggests that in order to critique one needs a certain distance between oneself and the object of critique. This further reveals the influence of Bertolt Brecht's *Lehrstücke* [learning plays] on Benjamin's thought and method. Brecht's *Verfremdungseffekt,* or Alienation Effect as "a representation that alienates allows us to recognise its subject, but at the same time makes it unfamiliar" (Brecht, 2002, p. 87). As already noted in this essay, actors in Epic Theatre do not act but use 'gesture', or *gestus,* to turn the audience from spectators to observers (Brecht, 1974, p. 89). Just as Brecht emphasises the responsibility of the actor in not putting "the

©Payal Anil Padmanabhan, Assistant Professor, Department of English, Jesus and Mary College, University of Delhi. <ppadmanabhan@jmc.du.ac.in>

audience into a trance" (Brecht, 2002, p. 89), Benjamin stresses the connected roles of the critic and the storyteller in facilitating critical thought. Of the figure of the critic, Benjamin writes: "Instead of giving his own opinion, a great critic enables others to form their opinion on the basis of his critical analysis" (Benjamin, 2005c, p. 549). A good storyteller, on the other hand, must tell a story not based on the level of plot but created after critical analysis, based on argument. To return to the discussion on critical distance, it should be noted that in "The Storyteller", while discussing the novel as the end of the traditional process of storytelling, Benjamin writes, "the novelist has isolated himself" (Benjamin, 2007, p. 87), and the novelist's audience too is isolated. In contrast, he notes that "a great storyteller will always be rooted in the people primarily in the milieu of the craftsman" (Benjamin, 2007, p. 101). It is through this thought that we can see how Benjamin develops the link between the radio and storytelling. The setting of the radio is communal, like that of storytelling. Its technological nature imbues an aural intimacy, yet a simultaneous distance, which can be used to produce a Brechtian "alienation effect" that motivates people into action. Thus, we see that Benjamin's own invocation of Brecht's *gestus* in his storytelling for the radio is to use the intimacy of the form to create alienation that makes one active rather than creating isolation, which makes one passive.

While Benjamin was deeply impacted by Brecht, his engagement with Asja Lacis is crucial to understand his location of revolutionary politics in the figure of the child. After meeting the Latvian theatre director and actress in 1924, Benjamin was influenced by her experiments with proletarian children's theatre. Endorsing the model of "improvisation" (Benjamin, 2005b, p. 204) characterising such theatre, Benjamin also reveals the nature of his political investment in children as the target audience for his radio broadcasts. After studying Lacis' theatre work, Benjamin found that children needed adults merely as facilitators and were more than capable of taking their theatrical project forward without further adult supervision. In terms of a pedagogical approach, Benjamin observed that improvisation allowed children to craft their own gestures and liberate their imaginations: "the performance is like the radical unleashing of play—something which the adult can only wonder at" (Benjamin, 2005b, p. 205). He contrasts this proletarian pedagogical approach with the bourgeois angst to control and police children's choices. In "A Communist Pedagogy", Benjamin observes that the children of the bourgeoisie have the potential to be the "helpers, avengers, liberators" (Benjamin, 2005b, p. 273), and this is the reason that adults feel the need to constantly mediate their lives. In contrast, Benjamin notes that, instinctually, children confidently seek to make meaning in their own way and views them as natural "tinkerers" (Gess, 2010, p. 702). Benjamin argues:

> For children are particularly fond of haunting any site where things are being visibly worked upon. They are irresistibly drawn by the detritus generated by building, gardening, housework, tailoring, or carpentry... In using these things, they do not so much imitate the works of adults as bring together, in the artefact produced in play, materials of widely differing kinds in a new, intuitive relationship. Children thus produce their own small world of things within the greater one. (1979/2007, p. 52–53)

In "A Child's View of Colour", an early text where Benjamin documented his fascination with the child's gaze at the world, he noted that "Children are not ashamed, since they do not reflect but only see" (Benjamin, 2005a, p. 51). Whether it be his reading of children's interactions with toys, picture books, or theatre, or his observations on bourgeois

©Payal Anil Padmanabhan, Assistant Professor, Department of English, Jesus and Mary College, University of Delhi. <ppadmanabhan@jmc.du.ac.in>

parenting, it is clear that Benjamin invests a lot in the imaginative play of children because it is not yet conditioned by society. Thus, Benjamin concludes his observations of Proletarian Children's Theatre by writing "what is truly revolutionary is the *secret signal* of what is to come that speaks from the gesture of the child" (Benjamin, 2005b, p. 206). For Benjamin, the child's imaginative play has the capacity for revolution, very similar to Brecht's *gestus*. The celebration of the child's unfettered engagement with the world, which is not driven by fear of loss later emerges in Benjamin's figure of "the destructive character". Benjamin explains, "The destructive character knows only one watchword: make room. And only one activity: clearing away.... The destructive character is young and cheerful. For destroying rejuvenates, because it clears away the traces of our own age" (Benjamin, 2005c, p. 541). The destructive character has no allegiance, it only chases destruction, thereby making way for something new to come into existence. Thus, the destructive character's freedom from constraints embodies the freedom of the child tinkerer and actively makes space for the revolution by removing the detritus of the past. It is significant to note that, even as Benjamin admires the figure of the child, he also identifies children's demanding and even despotic tendencies (Benjamin, 2005b, p. 206). Nicola Gess (2010) identifies that the:

> child functions for Benjamin as a Utopian figure. This is, however, not in the sense inherited from Romanticism, of an embodiment of plenitude in harmony with nature, but rather in view of both the 'barbaric' and 'primitive' tendencies that children display. Their destructive and mimetic potential come together in the games children play, leading dialectically to a gain of sovereignty in which intimacy with history or the strange, analytical destruction and steady new creation mutually specify each other. (p. 683)

Thus, in the "destructive character" (Benjamin, 2005c, p. 541) of child's play, objects lose their aura, sacrosanct boundaries are crossed, and through "pure imaginative contemplation" (Benjamin, 2005a, p. 443), the revolutionary *gestus* is conceived. Finally, in relation to the radio, Benjamin observes the failure of adult perception in contrast to the child's perception: "a child can see that it is in the spirit of the radio to put as many people in front of a microphone on every possible occasion" (Benjamin, 2005c, p. 543). It is for their keen perception and commitment to the destructive character of play that Benjamin chooses children and not adults as the audience for his broadcasts. As Lecia Rosenthal notes, "Benjamin puts forward a pedagogical approach in the children's radio pieces, a mode of storytelling that, for instance, invites his audience to tune into and even to teach their parents a critique of commodity fetishism" (2014, Introduction).

"Theodor Hosemann"

Informed by his critique of bourgeois pedagogic methodology, Benjamin's radio broadcasts sought to address children without patronising them; much like Benjamin's Brechtian radio experiment "Karussell der Berufe" ("Carousel of Jobs") that actively sought responses from the listeners. Another significant aspect is that most of his broadcasts describe violent historical, natural, and technological events—the Lisbon earthquake, the storming of the Bastille, the train accident at the Firth of Tay, among others. When reviewing his writing for children, one notes that the monologues and dialogues he created were disguised so that the parents of the children he addressed

©Payal Anil Padmanabhan, Assistant Professor, Department of English, Jesus and Mary College, University of Delhi. <ppadmanabhan@jmc.du.ac.in>

would deem them appropriate, but secretly reached out to what he had identified as the revolutionary potential of the child. To understand this better, my essay will look closely at the radio story "Theodor Hosemann" (Benjamin, 2014). Benjamin had previously endorsed Hosemann when he appreciated the work of illustrators for children's books, which consisted of black and white lithographs, or woodcuts (Benjamin, 2005a, p. 411). It is no coincidence, therefore, that Benjamin chooses to tell the story of Theodor Hosemann, and one of the most famous characters he illustrated: Eckensteher Nante.

Hosemann was an illustrator working during the *Vormärz* ('before March') period (1830–1848) before the Berlin March Revolution of 1848 that led to the downfall of the German Confederation. This period has been characterised by extreme censorship under the leadership of conservative Minister Klemens von Metternich, full of "abortive political activism and forgotten oppositional writers with more truculence than talent" (Clark, 2006, p. 19). In many ways, this broadcast shows the transmutations of Benjamin's strongest beliefs about counter-narrativising into *praxis*. Benjamin begins with an introduction to the circumstances that Hosemann grew up in: affected by the political turmoil of Europe, his family, like many others, was barely scraping through. Benjamin clearly shows that "education is a function of class struggle" (Benjamin, 2005b, p. 274) when, at just 12 years old, Hosemann was forced to begin an apprenticeship. As it allowed him to follow his artistic passion, Hosemann did not see it as a burden. The poverty of his family fed into the very first illustrations he published, which were being used by publishers to inculcate good manners in bourgeois children. Of this kind of literature, Benjamin notes, "Naturally, children want to learn everything. If we show them the world always only through decent and well-behaved side, then they are bound to get on their feet to learn about the other side themselves"[4] (see self-translation of "Theodore Hosemann" later in this essay; henceforth cited as "Theodore Hosemann"). He reiterates the trend of children's literature to not give any importance to children's power of reason. Furthermore, he reiterates the natural curiosity of children that enables them to unleash their radical play upon the world. Benjamin then goes on to explain the art of lithography in some detail, which is his attempt at reintegrating the process of production with the process of consumption. By explaining to little children exactly how acid works to create lithographs, he seeks to re-establish the connection between the craftsman and the child. In both his radio stories, "Demonic Berlin" and "Theodor Hosemann", Benjamin appreciates E. T. A. Hoffmann[5] and Hosemann not only for their respective crafts of writing and drawing, but even more so for their skill of observation. Both Hoffmann and Hosemann are seen as physiognomists of Berlin who closely observed "both the city and the people who inhabit it" (Benjamin, 2005b, p. 324) across class and location. Why is it that Benjamin gives great importance to physiognomy? As a physiognomist of sorts himself who has written extensively on flânerie, consumerism, and mapping the city, Benjamin understood the value of the power of observation. To observe, one had to be alert, see beneath the surface and therefore constantly resist the reverie induced by capitalism, something he also sees in children: "you will also *deduce* [my emphasis] why I discuss him in the *Berlinstunde*" ("Theodore Hosemann").

Hosemann received very little public acclaim because his art depicted life on the streets, whereas the trends of the day demanded historical paintings, or *Genrebilder*. This is where Benjamin really aligns Hosemann within his own revolutionary project: "But thank God that there were also others. The masses and the children. It is for them that Hosemann worked" ("Theodore Hosemann"). Once again, Benjamin aligns children with the proletariat. Benjamin reiterates his belief that the seeds of revolutionary *gestus* are sown in childhood and this is the reason he addresses children in his broadcasts. Introducing

©Payal Anil Padmanabhan, Assistant Professor, Department of English, Jesus and Mary College, University of Delhi. <ppadmanabhan@jmc.du.ac.in>

the repressive *Vormärz* period, he mentions that even at such times, methods to avoid censorship can be created. He does not obfuscate the truth; rather it must be noted that he believes that children can be empowered with information. In his broadcast, he also discusses how the satirist Adolf Glassbrenner enlisted Hosemann to provide visuals (Fig. 1) for his work *Berlin wie es ist und trinkt* [Berlin, As it eats/Is[6] and drinks]. He invokes Glassbrenner's writings, attacking the class system: "we are always divided through everything. Through eccentric manners and upbringing, through money, through language and clothes" ("Theodore Hosemann"). This statement in the broadcast shows children how physiognomy can reveal the operation of class in society. The "class consciousness" (Benjamin, 2005b, p. 274), which came naturally to Hosemann because of his childhood, needs to be induced in the minds of the bourgeois child audience, whose families are consistently attempting to protect them from class consciousness. It is after this that the beloved character "Eckensteher Nante", now finally enters the broadcast. 'Eckensteher' literally means 'man-on-the-corner' and referred to the *Dienstman* [service man] waiting on street corners, "whose nominal function was to carry goods and luggage in return for tips, but who became the byword for laziness and alcoholism" (Clark, 2006, p. 189) as they often passed long hours waiting for work. Thus, the word is often translated as 'loafer' or 'idler'.

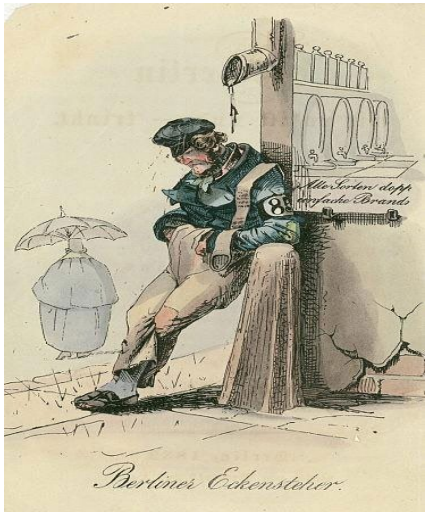

Fig. 1. "Berliner Eckensteher" in *Berlin wie es ist und trinkt*
(Source: Hosemann, 1834)

Adolf Glassbrenner deploys Nante as the Everyman of the proletariat. The success of the folio was because of the illustrations and the sharp jibes at the indifference of the establishment. Its size, which allowed people to transport it with ease, helped it to remain popular despite contemporary censorship. In the dialogue, Nante tells the actuary, "Please don't act like you don't know me" ("Theodore Hosemann"), once more hitting out against the bourgeoisie who, though dependent on the *dienst* [duty/service] of the proletariat, avoid acknowledging them. In fact, Nante reminds the actuary that he too was born "as a person" ("Theodore Hosemann"), even as the actuary continues to address him in the third person as if he was not really there, thereby denying his personhood and dehumanising him. Even as Nante describes his poverty, "Once because I was unemployed, I was attempting to discover if I could live off the wind" ("Theodore Hosemann"), the

©Payal Anil Padmanabhan, Assistant Professor, Department of English, Jesus and Mary College, University of Delhi. <ppadmanabhan@jmc.du.ac.in>

actuary is only interested in seeing how often he has been under investigation and asserting his own authority over Nante. When Nante asserts himself by holding forth forcefully, we see the following interaction:

> A: Very sad, but I don't have the time to listen to your stories. You cannot keep me any longer.
>
> N: So, not keep you any longer? I can no longer keep myself, the way I am. I have prevented myself as long as nature had created me. So, I will not be heard[7] then. When I eat lunch at home. Here you are the only one to be heard. Live long and prosper, Mr. Superior. ("Theodore Hosemann")

The verb 'keep' used by both Nante and the actuary reflects two alternate states of class consciousness; the proletariat cannot eat into the time of the actuary by keeping him from his work, whereas Nante is too poor to afford food to keep himself and his family alive. Nante names the actuary "Herr Vorgesetzer". *Vorgesetzer* means one who is in a superior, or senior position. In fact, the 2014 translation of the radio story by Jonathan Lutes, Lisa Harries Schumann, and Diana K. Reese uses "Herr Justice Server" (Benjamin, 2014). The word may also be translated to 'disciplinarian'. I prefer "Mr. Superior" in my translation to indicate how Benjamin uses the word as a bitter and sarcastic indictment of the actuary's absolute power by virtue of the authority of his class position, which eventually forces Nante to succumb.

Conclusion

True to his earlier comments, Benjamin gives children a story, a product, complete in its "incompleteness", giving us a glimpse of the "speaking Nante, rather than the illustrated one" ("Theodore Hosemann") and leaving us to 'deduce' the rest. We do not even get a description of Hosemann's illustration of Nante, but we receive the dialogue as written by Glassbrenner. The choice to actively invoke an illustrated character through a non-visual medium is a form of Benjamin's *gestus* that prevents easy consumption. In the dialogue, one sees Nante being facetious and mocking the actuary, but ultimately surrendering to his authority. It can be argued that Benjamin's rather synchronic use of this dialogue from a large pantheon of polemical writing shows it to be reactionary, instead of revolutionary. If so, how does this help? Within the same piece, Benjamin acquaints his young audience with the ways of challenging the establishment—find ways to avoid censorship, turn to satire to mock authority—ultimately culminating in the March 1848 Revolution, where "also that a great part of the Berlin bourgeoisie moved together with the Berlin working class in front of the palace" (Clark, 2006, 6). The point is that Benjamin does not want us to be content with seeing just a glimpse; he wants to leave things for us to discover ourselves, create an 'interruption' which will mobilise us to act. Though Benjamin seems conscious of Glassbrenner's problematic use of *Volkskunst* (Clark, 2006, p. 22) his admiration for Glassbrenner is because the latter tried "to show, which craft is hidden in the People and in its language, and how much one can learn from it and most importantly, how little it can be suppressed in the long run" (Clark, 2006, p. 5).

For Walter Benjamin, the narrative of revolution had to challenge the grand capitalist narrative of what Paul Valéry called an "increasing aversion to sustained effort" (as cited in Benjamin, 2007/1968). Benjamin understood the immense responsibility that

©Payal Anil Padmanabhan, Assistant Professor, Department of English, Jesus and Mary College, University of Delhi. <ppadmanabhan@jmc.du.ac.in>

he himself placed on the storyteller when he said in his broadcast "The Lisbon Earthquake", "I feel like a chemist when I talk to you over the radio. My weights are the minutes, and I have to measure them out very accurately: so much of this and so much of that, if the final mixture is going to come out right" (Benjamin, 2005c, p. 536). The metaphor of the pharmacist indicates that the masses have to be cured out of their diseased slumber. Reintegrating the material process of production into the form and content of storytelling and play has been Benjamin's central concern, which, as we have seen, is something he integrates into his own storytelling practice for the radio. Lecia Rosenthal rightly notes that Benjamin sought to "bend radio away from unidirectional transmission in favour of a two-way apparatus, a radio that turns the listener from a passive consumer into an active producer, expanding the public's understanding of its own expertise" (2014, Introduction). His broadcasts constantly surprise the listener by taking unexpected turns and diversions. The interruptions and loose connections force the listener to step out of their complacency and nurture a critical thinking capacity. For Benjamin, "children are perfectly able to appreciate serious matters" (Benjamin, 2005b, p. 407). They will be able to see the montage, the interruption that characterises his revolutionary *gestus* and "that moment of shock is socialist revolution" (Eagleton, 1981, p. 78).

****

"Theodor Hosemann" by Walter Benjamin (2014)

First Broadcast on 14 April 1930 in Berlin
Translated from German

Is the name familiar to you all? Probably not. You cannot find his name in your picture books anymore. But on the day you are rummaging through those books that either your father or mother had, you might discover this name on a title page. If it stands there, then he has illustrated the pictures in the book. But as he was a very modest man, his name was not always written on all the books, and so it is likely that you know the pictures of Hosemann, without having heard his name.

Hosemann was, in other words, a painter. Why would we want to talk about him in the *Berlinstunde*? Firstly, he is not even a real Berliner; instead, he was born 123 years ago in Brandenburg an der Havel. Secondly, is it not a wild idea to talk about a painter on the radio? It is, of course, out of the question that I will sit here and describe to you the pictures of Hosemann. But if I don't describe any pictures and only reveal how the man came to paint, draw, illustrate and what people thought of his pictures, how they worked, then you will firstly understand who this man was, and secondly, you will also deduce why I discuss him in the *Berlinstunde* even though he was born in Brandenburg.

Hosemann was not pampered in his lifetime, especially not by the Berliners amidst whom he lived and for whom he worked. Why that was so, we are yet to learn. That is why it was not a bad surprise when one day he received a letter from a professor from his birthplace, in which he inquired about his youth, as he wanted to write about Hosemann. Now we will read the answer—it was written five years before his death—"In the year 1816, about which my memory is very clear", at that time he was nine years old.

©Payal Anil Padmanabhan, Assistant Professor, Department of English, Jesus and Mary College, University of Delhi. <ppadmanabhan@jmc.du.ac.in>

> [I]n a wretched canvas sail boat we arrived on the banks of the Rhein in Düsseldorf. Now our cupboard was nearly always bare[8], through the war against Napoleon and other difficulties, my parent's fortune was completely depleted, the sixteen or seventeen Taler monthly salary of my father fell short for basic amenities in the inflation of the time. Our first apartment in Düsseldorf was a small, secure room just under the roof, in a captain's guesthouse. Thanks to my age, I was happy and oblivious and could not grasp why my sister and my mother cried daily. I comforted myself with my box of colours and was happy if I found a tiny piece of paper anywhere. But now things would get really difficult in our life. I saw the sick mother with my sister early in the morning to late in the night, knitting curtain fringes in the winter by the small oil lamp. But I also had to help earn, and so I came to work at the colour studio of Arnz and Winckelmann, where during the day, depending on how much time permitted me I could satisfy my inclination of using brush and colours to my heart's content. And I was the world's happiest child when, besides that, at the end of the week, I gave to my affectionate, loving mother the pennies I brought home.

Later, in pictures how often did Hosemann illustrate a poor, happy family, day in and day out, the way their diligent hands earned little. And often there was also a sick mother or a feverish child in the bed to see; then the youth publications of the time that Hosemann illustrated really loved the way sentimental (stock) stories worked on children and which promised great success for their good manners. It was probably wrong. Naturally, children want to learn everything. If we always show them the world only through a decent and well-behaved side, then they are bound to get on their feet to learn about the other side themselves. However, one has not heard, for example, from Max and Moritz that the children would become naughty and had tried to stuff their teacher's pipe with powder. Now we want to return to Hosemann. As he wrote this letter, he was already Professor and associate of the Art Academy. But what a laborious way it had been till there. Hardly twelve, the young boy had to begin earning, and that it was not just fun, how much he learnt and how capable he made himself, one sees that when at just 15 years he became the youngest illustrator in his firm with an annual salary of 200 Talers.

Of this firm Winckelmann that shifted from Düsseldorf to Berlin a few years later, we will speak in detail because it determined Hosemann's entire life. By the way, it survived him by almost exactly 50 years and has disappeared only very recently. It rose, just like Hosemann himself, with lithography. Lithography is stone printing and is the art of designing a drawing with chemical crayon or with feather on a stone slab that when covered with a dye can be printed. This technique was discovered at the end of the eighteenth century; however, it needed almost 20 years for this technique to be practically used on a large scale. For all things, it definitely laid the basis for a new kind of illustration in France and Germany. And as in the year 1816, the first children's book with beautiful pictures came out in lithography—Hey's *One Hundred Picture Fables*, with illustrations by Otto Speckter—then Winckelmann came up with the idea to make such lithographic children's books his main business. To broaden the prospects of his firm, he went to Berlin. He could not have found a better co-worker than Hosemann. And once more through the work his publisher bound him to, Hosemann steadily moved into Berlin like no one else of his time through the sharp observation and the alert study of Berlin life. From art and educational trips to Paris or Italy that were common among the painters in those times, he never learnt anything. His farthest trips drove him to Antwerp and Tirol. But his regular destinations were Charlottenberg or Schöneberg, and in the summer,

©Payal Anil Padmanabhan, Assistant Professor, Department of English, Jesus and Mary College, University of Delhi. <ppadmanabhan@jmc.du.ac.in>

sometimes he went with the family to the Bad Freienwalde of Brandenburg, which appeared very elegant to him and over whose high price he sometimes bitterly complained.

His art came out of the very craft of his hands. He had neither many grand ideas nor the right artistic training; other than that he became increasingly adept. The clarity of his observation, the exactness of his illustrations, his sense for the comical, and his knowledge of sentiments, led him to bond so intimately with his next object, Berlin, that in the 50 years that he lived there, pictures and drawings exist through which we can acquaint ourselves with the various aspects of Berlin life. Just as likely the philistines on their Sunday treat, the garden festival or Skat[9] in the hostel, as the work of the craftsman, the chimney sweep, the mason or the shoemaker, the hustle of rag pickers, the military and the servants, the helper, Sunday rider or the Musicians. One should then think that the Berliners took great pride in and could not leave such an artist, who pursued the city in all its smallest lanes with such love. But it was not so at all. Here, once more, their sense for the so-called academies played a trick. They found this art of Hosemann a bit ordinary, not refined and educated enough. They troubled their heads over such questions about art like: if it is finer to paint so-called historical pictures, big battle scenes, Reichstag and coronation scenes or so-called *Genrebilder* [genre pictures], by which they understood artificial, fancy, ornamented scenes out of daily life, not of the emperor and military but instead friars, the salon owners from Tyrol, the scribbler and the helper. For example, one would paint a fat friar who holds up his wine glass and lets the sun shine through it and smiles at that. Or a lady, who reads a love letter, and behind, the bridegroom who wrote it, looks through a gap in the door, and is surprised. For such junk, the Berliners were excited at that time, the least, that which was to be kept.

But thank God that there were also others. The masses and the children. It is for them that Hosemann worked. In his love for the people and Berliners, he met with the true explorer of the Berlin masses and the Berlin dialects in literature, namely the famous Adolf Glassbrenner[10]. In 1834 came the first opportunity that they could work in collaboration: one folio out of the collection *Berlin, wie es ist und trinkt* [*Berlin, As it eats/Is and drinks*]. It would become the inspiration for a lot of similar series that were sold in the newspaper stands at that time, like the illustrated newspaper today. This little book, named *Buntes Berlin* or *Lustige Soldatenbilder* or *Berliner Stadtklatsch* or *Komische Gerichtsszenen* would be smaller. One could easily store it in the bag, without creasing that beautifully coloured title page made for everyone to see. But a miraculous episode occurred with these folios. Maybe you all know what is meant by the so-called *Vormärz*[11]. This was the time of the outbreak of the March Revolution of 1848. As the war of liberation began, the King of Prussia knowingly promised rights and had not upheld this promise later. Instead came the so-called reaction; it was all the people who wrote, hell seen on the fingers, so that nothing would be written, that did not suit the government. So often in history have such times existed, in which all that is printed is strictly surveyed and completely banned when they were not happy; so often the people who did not want to give in to this have come up with possibilities to say what they think in such a way that everyone understood, and yet the police cannot deduce anything[12]. So, it was with Glassbrenner as well. “Of the greatest part of the People”, he said, “we are always divided through everything. Through eccentric manners and upbringing, through money, through language and clothes. Without us to become one with the people, without us to balance the masses, no freedom is possible”. To show which craft is hidden in the People and in its language, and how much one can learn from it and most importantly, how little it can be suppressed in the long run, Glassbrenner invented his famous “Types”. The man-on-

©Payal Anil Padmanabhan, Assistant Professor, Department of English, Jesus and Mary College, University of Delhi. <ppadmanabhan@jmc.du.ac.in>

the-corner Nante[13], representing the Berlin Proletariat and the rentier, Buffay, as the type of the Berlin bourgeoisie, but overall, when it comes to the point of his manner, he did not think differently from Nante. So, it is later also that a great part of the Berlin bourgeoisie moved together with the Berlin working class in front of the palace.

This is the way that this Glassbrenner thought, who Hosemann worked with. The free man was truly careful; he had an aspirational nature. For example, in November 1848 he reported the riots in Berlin in a letter to a friend: "I write to you, my dear Schulz," here the goings-on, that I myself have survived, permit me no further description about it. And also, please, nevertheless, you must contain all judgments and other observations, beyond the facts. The others we will already think to ourselves. Understood?" So slyly it appeared in Berlin and also in our Hosemann. But he had only to paint the pictures. And he was in complete understanding with his friend Glassbrenner, when, as an example, he showed his man-on-the-corner Nante, how the Berliner was impressed and even understood how to succeed against an official figure of respect. And here I will stop, instead of describing an illustration, I will read out a portion of the hearing[14] that the actuary started against the loafer Nante. "Come near", said the Actuary.
"Sure", said Nante, went closer, moved the hair from his face and took up a grand pose. "Now you can fully appreciate me, Your Honour."

A: How does he address himself[15]?
N: You.
A: What does that mean?
N: I address myself as Du, I will not address myself as Sie[16].
A: I want to know what his name is. Is he not the loafer Nante?
N: Yes, this does seem to be me. Please don't act like you don't know me. Who else am I supposed to be, if not Nante. Nante remains Nante, always the same person.
A: Born?
N: Yes, I was born. Je suis. Excuse me, if sometimes I use a little French when I speak.
A: I am asking *where* he was born?
N: Oh, *where*! In Roßstraße, but as a person. When I was born, I lived with my mother. Later I left my home and screamed because I had two legs. Later I got my teeth.
A: Ten legs?
N: I got teeth. Here they are. That is a misfortune, to get teeth but to have nothing to eat.
A: Religion?
N: Religion?
A: What is his religion?
N: Oh, I thought, I was to repeat after you. Evangelist.
A: Were you under investigation once already?
N: No, God forbid! Twice! Once, because I was unemployed, I was attempting to discover if I could live off the wind; and I was under investigation here because I borrowed cakes from a baker without telling him. And the third time I was here under investigation because I found a horseshoe.
A: Under investigation for that? Are you crazy?
N: Crazy? Not so crazy like you --- maybe think. I found a horseshoe on the street, and when I glanced at it at home, there was a horse on it. Naturally, that was bad luck."

©Payal Anil Padmanabhan, Assistant Professor, Department of English, Jesus and Mary College, University of Delhi. <ppadmanabhan@jmc.du.ac.in>

A: Enough, enough.
N: Great! (Turns to leave)
A: Halt, you are not yet done.
N: Oh, I thought that you had had enough of my conversation? Not so good! Then I will tell you a few stories. If you like tragic tales, then I will tell you an experience that happened to me with my wife and 3 children. We were thrown out of our home, because we could not immediately pay the 3 Taler rent.
A: Very sad, but I don't have the time to listen to your stories. You cannot keep me any longer.
N: So, not keep you any longer? I can no longer keep myself, the way I am. I have prevented myself as long as nature created me. So, I will not be heard[17] then. When I eat lunch at home. Here, you are the only one to be heard. Live long and prosper, Mr. Superior.

Here, I have produced for you the speaking Nante, rather than the illustrated one. And it does not suffice, that today at the end Hosemann has hidden himself behind Glassbrenner. One day we will hear more of Glassbrenner, then Hosemann is bound to show up once again.

Funding: No funding was received to research, write or publish this article.

Notes

[1] I had the pleasure of working on this translation during my M.Phil. coursework in 2013 for Dr. Nandini Chandra at the department of English, University of Delhi. I am grateful for her mentorship.
[2] The numbering of this essay is to distinguish the essay published in 1939 from the unpublished fragment that was a 1931 draft of the same essay and was published posthumously in 1969.
[3] I make this statement based on Brecht's "The Street Scene: A Model for an Epic Theatre", where he explains how the enactment of an accident by an eye witness is the most primitive example of Epic Theatre. Of the eye witness, Brecht writes, "Suppose he cannot carry out some particular movement as quickly as the victim he is imitating; all he need do is to explain that he moves three times as fast, and the demonstration neither suffers in essentials nor loses its point. On the contrary, it is important that he should not be too perfect" (1964, p. 122). See Brecht, Bertolt. *Brecht on Theatre: The Development of an Aesthetic*, translated by John Willett, London: Eyre Methuen, 1964.
[4] As mentioned earlier, in my discussion of this particular broadcast, I will be referring to my own translation of Walter Benjamin's broadcast "Theodor Hoseman." The broadcast was first published in *Gesammelte Shriften* VII, 1 (R. Tiedemann, H. Schweppenhäuser, C. Gödde, H. Lonitz & G. Smith, Eds.) Suhrkamp, 1991.
[5] E. T. A. Hoffmann (1776–1822) was a German Romantic writer, known mostly for his tales of the supernatural. One of his most famous short stories, "Der Sandmann" was discussed in Freud's essay "The Uncanny".
[6] In German, 'ist' translates to 'is'. However, considering the title of Glassbrenner's work is '*Berlin wie es ist und trinkt*', Glassbrenner is actually making a pun by using a homophone for the word 'ist'. The German word 'isst' translates to 'eats' and can also be

©Payal Anil Padmanabhan, Assistant Professor, Department of English, Jesus and Mary College, University of Delhi. <ppadmanabhan@jmc.du.ac.in>

appropriately juxtaposed with 'trinkt', or 'drinks'. My translation also translates the pun for non-German speakers.

[7] *Vorgesetzten* indicates someone in control, the one calling all the shots. Once more, Benjamin plays with this word to highlight how it is only the powerful, who get preference. This is why I have used "heard" so as to indicate the discrepancy in treatment.

[8] German proverb: "Jetzt wurde Schmalhans Küchenmeister".

[9] Card game.

[10] Adolf Glassbrenner (1810–1876) was a German writer and satirist, who attempted to use the art of political caricature and satire to sway the masses towards revolution. Clark notes that "Combining the traits of *Volk* and *Philister*, activist and theorist, revolutionary and reactionary, he summed up the inner conflicts and inertia that combined to keep *Vormärz* Germany in Metternich's thrall" (2006, p. 22).

[11] This means 'before March' and refers to the historical period (1830–1848) before the Berlin March Revolution of 1848. This period has been characterised by extreme censorship under the system of Klemens von Metternich, "abortive political activism and forgotten oppositional writers with more truculence than talent" (Clark, 2006, p. 19).

[12] In the regressive age, people had to find alternative ways of resisting power. This might be a general reference to the censorship of the period or a specific reference to 'Papa Biedermeier', a character conceived in the polemical verses of Ludwig Eichrodt, which were published pseudonymously in *Fliegende Blätter*. (http://www.biedermeier-vienna.com/biedermeier.php?section=history)

[13] *Eckensteher* literally means corner man and referred to the *Dienstman* [service man] waiting on street corners, "whose nominal function was to carry goods and luggage in return for tips, but who became the byword for laziness and alcoholism" (Clark, 2006, p. 189) as they often passed long hours waiting for work. Thus, the word is often translated as "loafer", or "idler". Berliner *Dienstman* Ferdinand Strumpf was the inspiration behind Nante who featured in many plays and became a major public figure when Adolf Glassbrenner also decided to use him in his stories. ('Humor ist, wenn man trotzdem lacht - Mit Nante und Brenneke durch die Märzrevolution' http://www.zlb.de/projekte/1848/kap4/index.html)

[14] Actuary vs. loafer/cornerman/man of the street.

[15] *Nennen* means to name or address. However, when people introduce themselves or others, they use the verb '*heißen*'. So Nante is punning on the verb and being facetious. Also, it must be noted that throughout the narrative, the actuary addresses Nante in the third person, as if he is not really there. This shows the disrespectful attitude of the actuary towards the proletariat in general.

[16] *Du* is the form of informal address, whereas *Sie* is formal address.

[17] See Note 7 above.

References

Benjamin, W. (1978). *Reflections: essays, aphorisms, autobiographical writings* (P. Demetz, Ed.; E. Jephcott, Trans.). Harcourt Brace Jovanovich.

Benjamin, W. (1979). *One-way street and other writings* (E. Jephcott & K. Shorter, Trans.). NLB. (Original work published in 1928)

Benjamin, W. (1991). *Gesammelte shriften VII, 1* (R. Tiedemann, H. Schweppenhäuser, C. Gödde, H. Lonitz & G. Smith, Eds.) Suhrkamp.

©Payal Anil Padmanabhan, Assistant Professor, Department of English, Jesus and Mary College, University of Delhi. <ppadmanabhan@jmc.du.ac.in>

Benjamin, W. (2005a). *Selected writings, volume 1: 1913–1926* (M. W. Jennings, H. Eiland & G. Smith, Eds.; R. Livingstone, Trans.). Harvard University Press.

Benjamin, W. (2005b). *Selected writings, Volume 2, Part 1: 1927-1930* (M. W. Jennings, H. Eiland & G. Smith, Eds.; R. Livingstone, Trans.). Harvard University Press.

Benjamin, W. (2005c). *Selected writings, volume 2, part 2: 1931–1934* (M. W. Jennings, H. Eiland & G. Smith, Eds.; R. Livingstone, Trans.). Harvard University Press.

Benjamin, W. (2006). *Selected writings, volume 4: 1938–1940* (M. W. Jennings, H. Eiland & G. Smith, Eds.; R. Livingstone, Trans.). Harvard University Press.

Benjamin, W. (2007). *Illuminations* (H. Zohn, Trans.; Reprint). Schocken Books. (Original work published in 1968)

Benjamin, W. (2014). Theodore Hosemann. In L. Rosenthal (Ed.), *Radio Benjamin*. Verso. Kindle Edition

Brecht, B. (1974). *Brecht on theatre: The development of an aesthetic*. (J. Willett. Ed.; J. Willett. Trans.; 3rd ed.). Eyre Methuen.

Brecht, B. (2002). A short organum for the theatre. In Anand Prakash (Ed.), *Approaches in literary theory: Marxism*. Worldview Publications.

Clark, F. S. (2006). *Zeitgeist und zerrbild: Word, image and idea in German satire 1800–1848*. Peter Lang.

Doherty, B. (2000). Test and gestus in Brecht and Benjamin. *MLN*, 115(3), 442–481.

Eagleton, T. (1981). *Walter Benjamin, or, towards a revolutionary criticism*. NLB.

Eisenstein, S. M. (1985). *On the composition of the short fiction scenario* (A. Y. Upchurch, Trans.). Seagull Books.

Gess, N. (2010). Gaining sovereignty: On the figure of the child in Walter Benjamin's writing. *MLN,* 125(3), 682–708.

Higonnet, M.R. (2009). Modernism and childhood: Violence and renovation. *The Comparatist* 33, 86–108. https://dx.doi.org/10.1353/com.0.0036.

Hosemann, T. (1834). *Berliner Eckensteher* [Book illustration]. *Wikimedia Commons*. <http://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:Hosemann_Eckensteher.jpg>

Kallis, A. A. (2005). *Nazi propaganda and the second World War*. Palgrave Macmillan.

Mitchell, S. (1998). Introduction. In Benjamin, W., *Understanding Brecht* (A. Bostock, Trans.; pp. vii–xix). Verso.

Rosenthal, L. (2014). Walter Benjamin on the radio: An introduction. In *Radio Benjamin* (L. Rosenthal, Ed.; J. Lutes, Trans.). Verso. Kindle Edition.

****

©Payal Anil Padmanabhan, Assistant Professor, Department of English, Jesus and Mary College, University of Delhi. <ppadmanabhan@jmc.du.ac.in>