

The radio narratives of Walter Benjamin: teaching of cultural history and political formation

As narrativas radiofônicas de Walter Benjamin: ensino de história cultural e formação política

Andréa Giordanna Araujo da Silva*

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Abstract: The article presents a preliminary reflection of the pedagogical contents manifested in the narratives that compose the work “Children's Hour: Walter Benjamin's radio narratives”. The production brings together a set of 30 radio lectures produced between the years 1927 and 1932, when the author presented, in two German radios, educational-cultural transmissions intended for children. The compilation was divided, for analysis, into three thematic groups: social and environmental accidents, history and culture of marginalized subjects and other topics. The study made it possible to identify the approach of the concept of experience, developed in the texts “Experience” (1913) and “Experience and Poverty” (1933), of the themes selected for pedagogical-radio work with children in the context of foundation of the totalitarian government.

Keywords: Walter Benjamin; Cultural History; Experience.

Resumo: O artigo apresenta uma reflexão inicial dos conteúdos pedagógicos manifestos nas narrativas que compõem a obra “A Hora das Crianças: narrativas radiofônicas de Walter Benjamin”. A produção reúne um conjunto de 30 palestras radiofônicas produzidas entre os anos de 1927 e 1932, quando o autor apresentou, em duas rádios alemãs, transmissões educativo-culturais destinadas ao público infantil. A compilação foi dividida, para efeito de análise, em três grupos temáticos: acidentes sociais e ambientais, história e cultura dos sujeitos marginalizados e outros temas. O estudo permitiu identificar a aproximação do conceito de experiência, desenvolvido nos textos “Experiência” (1913) e “Experiência e Pobreza”

* Professor at the Education Center / UFAL and PhD in Education/UFPE.

(1933), das temáticas selecionadas para o trabalho pedagógico-radiofônico com as crianças no contexto de uma Alemanha em vias de instituição do governo totalitarista.

Palavras-chave: Walter Benjamin; História Cultural; Experiência.

Introduction

The text constitutes an interpretation and initial reflection of the pedagogical contents manifested in the narratives that compose the work "The Children's Hour: Walter Benjamin's radio narratives". The production brings together a set of writings produced between 1927 and 1932, when the author presented, in two German radios, educative-cultural transmissions destined to the infantile public. Composed of 30 radio lectures, the compilation was divided, for the purpose of analysis in this study, into three thematic groups: social and environmental accidents, history and culture of marginalized subjects and other subjects¹. The latter shall not be the subject of an examination of that article.

Among the texts dealing with social and environmental accidents, we specifically selected "*O terremoto de Lisboa*" as the object of analysis. The lectures that are part of this group usually address the history of a people's knowledge and culture without intending to create a happy ending for the agents of the historical processes described, but it aims to present the place of the subjects in the process of creation and solution of the environmental and social problems experienced. In the chosen text, the importance of research for the improvement of technology and science will be our interpretation component, because is common in Benjamin's writings, a strong critique of the utilitarian and a short-sighted perspective of modern science that the intellectual perceives the science (produced in the modern era) as a means of perfecting the social being.

The second group consists of texts in which, in a critical and analytical perspective, Benjamin approaches the histories and cultures of subjects treated as marginal (bandoneón, witches, gypsies, prisoners, peasants, marketers, soldiers and Jews) in European society and who were usually presented to the children in a mystified (depreciative) way, in adult narratives and in children's stories. These are constitutive themes of European Cultural History, especially Germany (Berlin). Let us focus, therefore, in the appreciation of four of these narratives: "*Processos contra bruxas*", "*Bandoleiros na*

¹ Composed by the radio lectures: "Histórias reais de cães" and "Um dia maluco".

antiga Alemanha”, “*A Bastilha, a antiga prisão nacional da França*” and “*As casernas de aluguel*”.

The work also presents texts that report events in other countries, such as the United States (“*Os bootleggers*”² and “*A enchente do rio Mississipi em 1927*”), Portugal (“*O terremoto de Lisboa*”) and China (“*O incêndio do teatro Cantão*”). The productions related to the United States present a content of political criticism to the use of the law as a manner of imposing the interests of the State on the population as a whole. Already the narratives of events that occurred in Portugal and China, although they present issues of a historical and cultural nature suitable for the understanding of the Benjaminian pedagogical work, these writings will not be object of our appreciation in this study, since our analyzes have as main interest to establish the approximation of the concept of experience, developed in the texts “*Experiência*” (1913) and “*Experiência e Pobreza*” (1933), of the themes selected for the pedagogical-radio work with the children in the context of a Germany in the process of establishing totalitarian government. In addition, the interpretation of the text “*Dois Tipos de Popularidade: observações básicas sobre uma radiopeça*”, written in 1932, allow us to understand the importance given by Benjamin and also by the Nazi government to radio as a means of communication that should occupy a prominent place in Germany in the 1930s.

Radio as a pedagogical resource for the cultural and political formation of children

Radio is an invention of the late nineteenth century, and the popularization of radio stations in Europe, and the monopoly of the state (France and Italy), will happen in the 1920s. This was a communication resource used mainly for the transmission of military, political and economic news and information, but there are records of the use of radio circuits for the transmission of concerts in Germany, Austria and Poland in the second half of the 1920s. At this time, this type of media had no commercial purpose yet.

In the text “*Dois Tipos de Popularidade: observações básicas sobre uma radiopeça*”, written in 1932, Benjamin states that “before the emergence of the radio, there were almost no means of dissemination that was properly popular or corresponded to purposes of popular education” (BENJAMIN, 1986, p. 85). For the author, radio presented itself as a means of communication for the appropriation of knowledge by society as a whole, which was excluded from access to knowledge because “scientific research conveyed its progress to specialists”. In addressing the pedagogical character of radio, the author presents this

² In the text “*Os bootleggers*” the author criticizes the heroic tenor attributed to the history of the alcoholic smugglers of the early twentieth century and the type of formally established violence (*prohibition*) by the United States to suppress illegal sales and trafficking in drinks.

means of mass communication as:

[...] much more comprehensive, but also much more intense. It requires total transformation and reorganization of the material from the point of view of popularity. It is not enough, therefore, to use as bait a current element in order to arouse the curiosity of the listener, and then to offer him something which he could also learn in any course of general culture. On the contrary, it must be conveyed to him that his own interest in the subject has an objective value and that his way of asking, even if it does not happen in front of the microphone, is to obtain new scientific knowledge. Thus, the external relation that once reigned between science and popularity, is replaced by a new procedure which science itself can no longer ignore. For here it is a popularity that not only guides the knowledge towards the public, but at the same time directs the public towards knowledge. In short: authentically popular interest is always active, it transforms the matter of knowledge and acts on science itself. The greater the liveliness demanded, on the part of the form in which such didactic work is carried out, the more indispensable the requirement that a living knowing be developed, not only an abstract, unverifiable, generic vitality. (BENJAMIN, 1986, p. 85).

Benjamin was an "author, critic, moderator, producer and broadcaster of radio parts and produced radio programs for the adult public". These broadcasts were intended to promote the "socialization and democratization of knowledge" and the perspective of the political formation of the listeners (MENEZES, 2007, 53). However, this may not have been a job, initially, for political reasons. During his lifetime, Benjamin faced severe periods of lack of financial resources (testimony expressed in letters sent by Gershom Scholem³). Already in the early 1930s, the intellectual went through difficult economic times, so when his friend "Ernst Scholem [...] became director of the radio station in the city of Frankfurt/Main, invited him to give (paid) radio lectures on books and cultural issues "(KONDER 1999, p. 57), possibly with the intention of helping him to maintain itself"⁴. Perhaps for this reason, radio plays may not have been an easy-performing intellectual activity for Benjamin. From the perspective of Konder (1999, p.58),

³ SHOLEM, Gershom. *The correspondence of Walter Benjamin and Gershom Scholem (1932-1940)*. Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1992.

⁴ "From 1931, Benjamin also collaborated with Wolf Zucker in the writing of small radio pieces" (KONDER, 1999, p. 57).

Although he had a shrewd view of the problem, Benjamin had practical difficulties in the preparation of his plays and relied heavily on Wolf Zucker's skills to writing them. He felt that it was not easy to "popularize" his conceptions. In one case, at least, he used it directly from his lived experience. One of his pieces consists of a text that, in a certain way, look like a "didactic piece" of the type that Brecht was writing at the time, but instead of teaching how to proceed in a revolutionary way, she presents a character called "Max Frisch" which teaches you how to ask for and get a salary increase. It was, undoubtedly, a question dramatically lived by the author in his daily existence.

Whether presenting theoretical frameworks on reality or reports of daily experience, the critical formation of the people was the ultimate interest of the radio work developed by the intellectual. Thus, although we do not have precise information about the reasons that brought Walter Benjamin to the development and the conclusion, in two German radios, of the educative work directed to the infantile public, it is possible that the Benjaminian educational radiophonic experience ended in 1932 because already "On March 13, 1933, Adolf Hitler created the most sophisticated state propaganda body, the National Ministry for Public Enlightenment and Propaganda" (PEREIRA, 2008, p.65). Soon the authoritarian control of the main means of communication and of information was established: press, radio, theater and cinema, aiming at the propagation of the Nazi doctrine.

Referring to the power of radio communication for the moral formation of the masses, Adolf Hitler stated in 1940:

There is a more effective means of communication than terror: it is the methodical transformation of the minds and sensibilities of the crowds. It's kind of an easier advertisement in our day because we have the radio. (RAUSCHING, 1940 apud PEREIRA, 2008, p. 68).

In Adolf Hitler's speech, the symmetry between military power and social terror is replaced by the need to train human sensibility in the quest for political consensus. Such an idea was possible because radio broadcasting had the capacity to cross physical boundaries, so "[...] it was seen as a way of weakening adversary regimes and integrating territories. The radio, then, was perceived as a powerful instrument of political action"

(ANDRADE, 2014, p.1).

The cultural and political formation of children was also the goal of the Benjaminian radio narratives. Yet in the backwash of Nazi propaganda, which used radio to spread anti-Semitism and discrimination against minority groups, like the Roma people, Walter Benjamin used the "cultural history of Germany" as a pedagogical resource for describing socio-economic and political spaces which had historically been reserved for groups that had been victimized by prejudice and social exclusion on the European continent. In the text "*Bandoleiros na antiga Alemanha*", the author presents the cultural richness and political performance of the gypsies and Jews throughout the social history of Europe:

Later, in the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries, it was not uncommon to even find Jews occupying the position of feared chiefs. In its earliest years, this relationship with the gangs was more like accomplices than the bushrangers' goods. Because, during the Middle Ages **the Jews were barred from showing the majority of free professions**, it is easy to imagine how they came to this situation. Along with the Jews, the group that had more importance in the emergence of the bushranger groups were the gypsies. (BENJAMIN, 2015, p. 140-141, our emphasis).

The teaching of the cultural history of Europe and Germany presents itself to Benjamin as a pedagogical tool for the critical formation of children and the invocation of the past (by means of the narrative of traditions) was intended to instill children in the practice of observing the context in a dialectical perspective. It is possible that Benjamin has followed this pedagogical path because he believes that "To think the change and contradiction, the subject must incorporate the truths of different 'moments'" (KONDER, 1999, p.16).

In this way, when approaching "*História cultural do brinquedo*" (1928), Benjamin tries to show how the close relationship between the toy's artistic production and the adults' interest in the children's universe was modified by the fragmented production of industrial toys:

And by imagining children's birch or straw dolls, a glass bead, or tin cannons, **the adults are actually interpreting their childlike senses in their own way**. Wood, bones, cloths, clay represent the most important materials in this microcosm, and all of them were already used in

patriarchal times, when **the toy was still the part of the production process that linked parents and children** (BENJAMIN, 2009, P. 92, emphasis added).

The author further explains in the writing “Velhos brinquedos” (1928), that

this is not a massive regression of childish life when the adult is overwhelmed with an impetus to play. There is no doubt that playing always means liberation. Surrounded by a world of giants, children create for themselves, playfully, their own little world; but the adult, who is harassed by a threatening reality, with no prospect of solution, frees himself from the horrors of the real through his miniaturized production (BENJAMIN, 2009, p.85).

It is observed that in dealing with the relation of the adult with the production of the toy, the intellectual makes an association of the universe of work, the toy producer, with those participating, the child in formation. This cultural bond between children and adults is broken with the industrial production and commercialization of the toy in the modern era.

This is one aspect of cultural reality that has been transformed by the "progress of the modern age" that served as an indication to Benjamin that prudence was needed with the rationalist logic of modern science and also with Christian morality. Thus, in narrating the “*Processos contra as bruxas*”, the author emphasizes the strong connection between modern science and mysticism:

In the fourteenth century itself, this belief showed its most frightening and dangerous face, it was the time of a great advance in the sciences. The Crusades had begun: with them were brought to Europe the most modern scientific doctrines for Europe the natural sciences, coming from the Arab world, which at that time was far ahead of other nations. And as unlikely as it may seem, this new science of nature spoke largely in favor of belief in witches. (SOUSA, 2015, p. 130).

According to Löwy (2002, p.240), “[...] fascism leads to the ultimate consequences of the typically modern combination of technical progress and social regression,” it is soon possible to think that in the late 1920s and early the 1930s, was effectively confronting the

foundations of totalitarianism when it used radio as a large-scale communication resource for the transmission of non-doctrinal historical and cultural content to children. The pedagogical work can be observed as innovative and counter-conservative, because the author caused the children to observe the reality with an investigative look and as a resource for the learning and the amplification of the own cultural formation, analytically:

One more time, if you want, I bring more story about the Berliner. But there is no need for you to wait. Those who open their eyes, clear their ears and walk through Berlin, will be able to gather many more of these beautiful stories than those I told here on the radio today (BENJAMIN, 2015, p.17).

In the text “Experiência”, written in 1913⁵, Benjamin presents the experience lived by adults as an almost “predestined” historical course in their view. For it is in her that the certainties of non-conquests and of frustrated dreams are deposited, it is a justification for the act of resignation through reality and a sense is also imposed as a mechanism of oppression of the “freedom of the young in the search the new and the true” (LIMA, BAPTISTA, 2013, p.435). But for Benjamin, the Benjaminian writing announces another quality of experience; it is a space for cultural development and improvement of the human spirit:

Once again: we know another experience. It can be hostile to the spirit and annihilate many flourishing dreams. However, it is the most beautiful, most untouchable and ineffable, since it will never be private of spirit if we stay young. [...] (BENJAMIN, 2014, “Experiência”, p. 24).

In this context, the social meaning of experience is to constitute and as experience⁶ (or experience in the modern era), exploration of the empirical world and production of knowledge (scientific and cultural). However, according to Lima e Baptista (2013), the term experience adds a new quality, from 1933, in the text “Experiência e Pobreza”:

[...] the term “experience” (Erfahrung) is the representative of knowledge

⁵ BENJAMIN, Walter. Experiência. In: BENJAMIN, Walter. *Reflexões sobre a criança, o brinquedo e a educação*. São Paulo: Duas Cidades; Editora 34, 2014.

⁶ It is important to note that in Benjamin experience and knowledge have different meanings. The first is directly associated with the search for truth; the second concerns the experience of the modern era, which was considered a poor and fragmented formation (LIMA; BAPTISTA, 2013).

transmitted between generations. Put another way, "experience" denotes the knowledge accumulated by generations which is generally transmitted by means of fables, stories, parables or proverbs. Benjamin observes: if the knowledge of experience was, to men of the past, a knowledge that constituted them fully, which was part of its history, modern men suffer to recognize this knowledge so naturally transmitted between generations (LIMA; BAPTISTA, 2013, pp. 462).

Even if it is not the origin for the change of meaning attributed to the term Experience, the radio narratives are the materiality of what was intended to establish as an action of formation of the spirit, in search of truth and due to the empirical observation of the traditions. The presentation of "fables, stories, parables or proverbs" are the main contents of the pedagogical work developed in the radio programs by Benjamin, which invites children to be active in the process of their formation and authors of their biographies: "Those who open their eyes, clear their ears and walk through Berlin, can gather many more of these beautiful stories" (BENJAMIN, 2015, p.17).

The radio work developed by Benjamin was intended to stimulate in children the acts of observation and interpretation of reality, perceived by the author as a collective, social and historical production (present reflections of the texts "*Sobre o conceito de História*"⁷ and "*Experiência*"). The intellectual wished to restore freedom of authorship "Of interpretation of history," as opposed to the acquisition of definitive explanation and information of the contents of oral and written texts that focus on the exposition of History as a set of cumulative associations of episodic events. The author sought to reaffirm the open and unfinished sense of collective (historical) experience (BIZELLO, 2013), and attributed to tradition the meaning of act-example, a knowledge that can serve to guide the practices of future generations, without provoking the rupture of the bond past-present as did modern science.

In the study on the introduction of radio as a mass media in Brazil, Azevedo (2002) points out that this instrument is capable of promoting "transformations in the way of obtaining and renewing knowledge", without necessarily promoting a break with "everyday cultural practices of society" (AZEVEDO, 2002, p.31). This seems to be the path Benjamin purposely pursued in the selection of the contents and the form of exposition of his radio narrations. There is in these texts a strong appreciation of the history of daily life

⁷ BENJAMIN, Walter. Sobre o conceito de história. In: BENJAMIN, Walter. Magia e técnica, arte e política: ensaios sobre literatura e história da cultura. São Paulo: Brasiliense, 1987.

and popular traditions, but the author presents new concepts and ponders the importance of creating some technological instruments for the expansion of cultural knowledge. It is observed in Benjamin's discourse a strong appreciation of culture and technology as spaces of formation (especially radio and cinema) and the perspective of warning that modern science must be taken as an object of analysis, since it must be constantly questioned ideological purposes that support them. In different narratives (*"A Batilha, a antiga prisão nacional da França"* and *"Processo contra bruxas"*), the author questions the legitimacy of the knowledge of science:

One of the most astonishing things in history is the fact that it took more than 200 years for lawyers to realize that a confession obtained under torture has no legal sense or effect. Perhaps because his books were full of such absurd, horrible things and without head and tail, so simple a thought had not occurred to them (BENJAMIN, 2015, p. 136).

It should be noted that in Benjamin's work selected for this study, technological production seems to be situated as a distinct element of modern science, which seeks explanation by the institution of a rational technical model, and can be configured as an indoctrination action politics, while technology has as materiality the production of knowledge and instruments that enable the development of knowledge about social and natural phenomena. Thus, in the lecture *"O Terremoto de Lisboa"*, Benjamin seeks to describe the process of technological evolution that made possible the understanding of the origin of earthquakes:

It is true that volcanic eruptions are often associated with an earthquake, or at least are announced by them. Thus, over the course of 2000 years, from the Greeks to Kant and onwards, until around 1870, people believed that earthquakes originated from ardent gases and vapors from within the Earth. **But when you proceeded to investigate things with precision-calculating tools** you cannot even imagine – neither did I – and when you could check everything out, you came to a completely different conclusion, at least about the great earthquakes, like what fell on Lisbon. They do not originate from the deepest interior of the Earth, which until today is thought to have a liquid form, or rather a kind of burning mud, but rather of phenomena occurring in the earth's crust. The earth's crust is a layer of approximately 3000Km thick, in constant instability. The masses

find themselves in constant displacement, always seeking to reach a balance. Some of the causes are known, **others still need to be discovered through exhaustive research.** (BENJAMIN, O terremoto em Lisboa, 2015, p. 238-239, our emphasis).

It is understood that technological artifacts are produced through a process of selection, mediated by ideological, political, economic and social interests, but in Benjamin, the technological advance seems to be linked to the idea of knowledge production useful to the development of the good of the collectivity, so they could not be confused with the scientific knowledge produced by modern science, which sometimes had instantaneous and fragmented interests, as was the case with many of the scientific productions of the twentieth-century totalitarian governments.

Although in the note of the German edition, Rolf Tiedemann affirms that the possible reason for Walter Benjamin to have made the radio narratives was the need to obtain financial resources, Sousa (2015) affirms that the political activism against the advance of science, politics and of the Nazi culture in Germany could have been an inductive element of the work developed in the two German radios.

Radio lectures "were written and narrated by Benjamin himself between 1927 and 1932" (SOUSA, 2015, p. 2190) and the uses of science in Nazi Germany⁸ (1933-1945) showed that the author's concerns had a historical sense (memory) and, unfortunately, a prophetic content. In the text "*Teorias do Fascismo Alemão*", written in 1930, Benjamin criticizes the little attention given by the intellectuals of his time to the material and symbolic interferences of the First World War under the contours of the politico-military reality in postwar Europe:

With pleasure and emphasis, the authors⁹ speak of the "First World War. But the obtuseness with which they speak of future wars, with no idea of what they are talking about, proves the lack of assimilation, through their experience, of a reality which they call a "world-wide real" with very strange exaltation. These pioneers of the *Wehrmacht* almost believe that the uniform is for them a supreme goal, desired with all the fibers of their heart, an objective that almost makes us forget the circumstances in which

⁸ Science was used in the attempt to forge the biological superiority of the "Aryan race," and yet many humans were transformed into guinea pigs in the process of producing chemical weapons.

⁹ Reference to the collection of essays entitled "*Guerra e guerreiros*", published in 1930, in which "right-wing intellectuals present a mythical portrait of World War I and a heroic image of the warrior by glorifying the experiences of the front line" (KANG, 2012, p. 66).

the uniform is used. This attitude becomes more understandable when one considers how far the war plead ideology is now obsolete compared to the state of European armaments. The authors omit the fact that the battle of material, in which some of them see the supreme revelation of existence, devalues the precarious emblems of heroism, which here and there survived the World War. The chemical warfare, for which the contributors to this book show so little interest, promises to give the war of the future a physiognomy that definitively dispenses soldier categories in favor of sports and puts military actions under the sign of the record. Its strongest strategic characteristic is that it is pure war of aggression, in the most radical way possible. Against air strikes with toxic gases there is, as is known, no effective defense. Even the individual protection measures, the gas masks, fail against sulfur gas and *levisit*. From time to time a "reassuring" news comes out, like the invention of an ultra-sensitive listening device, capable of recording at a great distance the buzzing of the propellers. And a few months later, the invention of a silent plane is announced. The chemical war will be based on records of extermination and involves risks leading to absurdity. If the beginning of the war will occur within the norms of international law - after a prior declaration of war - it is something nobody knows; your end will no longer have to rely on such barriers. **By abolishing the distinction between the civilian and the combatant population, the gas war overrides the most important basis of the law of nations.** It has already shown the last war that disorganization that the imperialist war brings with it threatens to make it an endless war. (BENJAMIN, 1986, p. 131, gour emphasis).

It is possible to capture the criticism of the author to the dilution of the historical and cultural senses, "moral and political judgments" (KANG, 2012, 67) that support the participation of the subjects in the military conflicts, since the probability of organizing a mediated armed confrontation exclusively by the political-technical content atomizes the human capacity of discussion and understanding of the effects of a war, beyond "the products" economic and political. In a panorama like this, principles and norms (the limits, "right of the people") are eliminated for the development of armed confrontations and human lives become only casualties or balances of war.

It is in this scenario and concerned with the critical formation of children, that Benjamin intends to stimulate the "sense of observation and detailed study" of reality (BENJAMIN, 2015: 100), the learning of conceptual contents and the understanding of

practices and representations that constitute the cultural history of the marginal subjects of European society at the beginning of the 20th century, and also esteem for the development of fair and solidary attitudes in the appropriation of the subjects' histories who were marginalized by the official narrative:

After all, most of these gangsters, with all their courage and trickery, were just poor, ignorant individuals, most often of peasant origin (BENJAMIN, *Bandoleiros na Antiga Alemanha*, 2015, p. 146).

With his work he fought the abominable Latin salad with German present in thousands and tens of thousands of cars filled with anger and abuse of power. With this book, and with what it came to provoke, Fredrich von Spee¹⁰ showed how much it is necessary to put humanity above erudition and wit (BENJAMIN, *Processos contra as Bruxas*, 2015, p. 137).

All these things show how much the Bastille was a tool of power, and how much it was not an instrument of law. Men are capable of enduring cruelty and severity if they realize that behind them is an idea, the idea that rigor is not only the reverse of the comfort of the powerful (BENJAMIN, *A Batilha, a antiga prisão nacional da França*, 2015, p. 169).

Unlike the traditional functions attributed to the mass media, which usually have the role of transmitting models of reference and unstable habits (SEDLMAYER, 2011) to be developed (consumed) by the subject-listener (in the case of the radio), Benjamin narrating the traditions, stories told and appropriated by orality, confronts the dynamics and volatility of the acquisition of information and news without historical meaning and collective social sense, process of intellectual accommodation that does not give space for interpretation and reflection of things heard and seen. In this scenario, feeling, the central locus for the development of human values and principles, must become an automatic element, an immediate effect of what has been heard and seen, and an individual character gesture. It is through this process that Benjamin's writings dismiss the experience as a cultural practice and of formation, and establishes "A new form of misery" sustained by the "poverty of experience [which] is no longer private but of all humanity" (BENJAMIN, 1986, p. 196).

¹⁰ German Jesuit who made a strong and well-grounded criticism of the arguments put forward for the development of the inquisitorial processes for the trial of subjects for acts of witchcraft.

The perspective of experience in Benjamin is configured as a timeless, enduring character (MEINERZ, 2008) and capable of being updated, being continually recontextualized in the historical times and places of the subjects, since it is a collective patrimony, a memory (knowledge) belonging to several generations.

The pedagogical action seems to have been taken by Benjamin as a strategy for the expansion of the cultural repertoire (appropriation of historical concepts and knowledge) of the listeners and as a resource to stimulate the observation of environments created by subjects of different epochs, but who share and recreate the same culture.

Open your ears, you can already hear what you cannot learn so easily in German, geography or civic moral classes, but which for you may be important (BENJAMIN, *As casernas de aluguel*, 2015, p. 87).

According to Veiga-Neto (2003: 7), the rationality of modernity presented a monocultural perspective for the formation of subjects, which implied in understanding education "[...] as the path to the attainment of higher forms of culture, taking as a model, the achievements already made by the most educated and, therefore, more educated social groups." Thus, in drawing attention to the need for appropriation of the knowledge produced in and by social experience, Benjamin confronts a fundamental postulate of modernity: the idea that scientific knowledge would be the only and authentic resource necessary for understanding the social world.

The contextual reading of radio narratives indicates that the work of exposing the historical and cultural trajectories of the subjects marginalized by official German historiography and the mass media (newspapers, film and radio) may have been one of the means Benjamin found to confront the speeches circulating in Germany in the 1920s and 1930s that underpinned the ideology of superiority between "peoples" and cultures. The proof of this last thesis still lacks a deeper analysis of the compilation "*A hora das crianças: narrativas radiofônicas*" in interlocation with the set of Benjaminian writings produced during the period of the radio lectures.

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