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The Infinite Citation: Walter Benjamin *and* Franz Rosenzweig

1. *The meaning of the And*

Titles with *and* are popular in academic writing. Usually the coordinating conjunction *and* stands between two names; as the Latin word *coniungere* says, *and* should indicate a kind of substantial connection or interrelation between two writers and their texts, which is not yet specified. It implies the assumption that texts from a certain author can be better understood via reading texts from another author. It is the task of the interpreter to make the implied connection plausible and explain its nature, to pinpoint the deeper insight one gains by connecting texts by different writers. But the constitutional vagueness of the *and* makes it possible to avoid a definitive concept. Maybe nearly any writer can be connected to another by the conjunction *and*, for it implies an almost infinite range of possible relations. In fact, very often the epistemological interest of the *and* in the title is not completely evident. The *and* can simply mean that two writers really knew each other, that they were friends or enemies in life, that they refer openly and intentionally to each other in their writings. But it can also signify the more abstract relation of quotation, or other processes of textual reference, which take place (at least in part) unconsciously. These relations fall under the classical paradigms of influence, reception, or intertextuality. The latter approach assumes that *every* text is constituted by such *ands*, or as a study about Walter Benjamin's readings puts it: "*Kein Werk ist ganz es selbst, sondern Text von anderem Text, digressive Wiederholung und paraphrasierende Gegenrede zu Gelesenem und Geschriebenem.*"¹ Intertextuality suggests that it is the hidden *and* – and not some kind of arcane inspiration – which is the source of poetic and philosophical production. It is the aim of my article to analyze the specific constitution of the *and* between Benjamin and Rosenzweig, which means the constitution of Benjamin's Rosenzweig citations. The *and* in the title of my article does not primarily suggest a possible philosophical affinity between the two German-Jewish thinkers. It rather indicates my interest in a theory of citation, in fact a genuinely modern "notion of citationality" which can serve as a model for writing itself.² I will argue that Benjamin's

reference to Rosenzweig can only be understood from within this theory, and that the former is more about the actual possibility of reference itself, of the condition of relation between two texts, than about the matter of the cited text. But nevertheless it is not by accident that Benjamin quotes Rosenzweig. Thus the latter can be read as a thinker of intertextuality as well – or even better, as an intertextual thinker. His *Star of Redemption* (written 1919 and published 1921) is densely woven with quotations of classical German literature and Biblical texts. At the beginning of the *Star* Rosenzweig defines the so-called “original words” – the German term is “*Urworte*,” which he adopts from Goethe. They symbolize phenomena as they can be comprehended by consciousness. Cognition is only possible in the correlation of antithetic contents, and for this form of access Rosenzweig uses the “original word” *and*. This definition can easily be read as a theory of meaning in language: “The *and* is not the secret companion of the particular word, but of the sequence of words. It is the keystone that completes the vault of the cellar above which is erected the edifice of logos, of reason in language” (SR 42³). Thus the *and* symbolizes the context and coherence of language, the linguistic possibility of saying *something* about something, and therefore, as a consequence, of corresponding to another text. So whereas Rosenzweig seems to be demonstrating a meaningful appropriation of the cited word, for Benjamin the quotation “wrenches it destructively from its context” (R 269), as he writes in his study on Karl Kraus (published in 1931). This means that in opposition to Rosenzweig, for Benjamin the *and* is not the “keystone” of the house of *logos*, but the explosive charge which disrupts “reason in language,” and refers back on an ontological status of language, its ‘linguisticity’ itself. We might also understand Benjamin’s own strange praxis of citation in this sense; in his book on *The Origin of German Tragic Drama* (written 1923–1925) for instance, nearly every “*Nachweis*” is wrong, and the quoted passages cannot be found in the stated places.⁴ Benjamin’s *and* – referring to the “notion of citationality” – is not so much a conjunction. It is in a certain way an indicator of a disjunction.

In this essay I try to draw together two classic lines of Benjamin scholarship. The first is inspired by Benjamin’s Jewish identity. The representatives of this school accentuate his rewriting and his reference to Jewish traditions, his role as a modern thinker of messianism. The second school is almost exclusively interested in the poetic quality of Benjamin’s writings. For the latter, Jewish identity is marginal to Benjamin’s work, its center

constituted by the linguistic and rhetorical deconstruction of identity. There is something missing in both views. A reading of Benjamin dealing solely with linguistic problems and with aspects of philosophy of language seems empty and in some way also ahistoric – but to present Benjamin’s texts as examples of Jewish thinking alone is not only naïve, it also ignores the philosophical dimension of his work. The problem of the citation marks the precise border between, as well as the common ground of both schools; it touches upon their linguistic and philosophical, but in a very Benjaminian way, also theological aspects.

2. *Gesture and Quotation*

In the academic literature that emerged around the names of Franz Rosenzweig and Walter Benjamin, there are a lot of *ands*. To mention only some recent examples: *Franz Rosenzweig’s ‘Star of Redemption’ and Kant*,⁵ *Schleiermachers ‘Reden’ und Rosenzweigs ‘Stern’*,⁶ *Rosenzweig and Heidegger*,⁷ *Walter Benjamin und Georg Simmel*,⁸ *Mikhail Bakhtin and Walter Benjamin*⁹ or *Kafka und Benjamin*.¹⁰ Albeit these combinations seem rather accidental at first sight, it is, for instance, manifest to suggest an important connection between Benjamin’s work and Kafka’s literary writings, for one of Benjamin’s most famous essays is on Kafka. In this essay – of which only two small parts were published in his lifetime in 1934 in the Zionist magazine “Jüdische Rundschau” in Berlin – one also finds one of Benjamin’s rare quotations of Rosenzweig. Of course, this reference has always been construed as a certain kind of Jewish or German-Jewish constellation.

Rosenzweig, who died in 1929 and theoretically could have read at least some of Benjamin’s publications, probably did not realize their significance, although Benjamin visited Rosenzweig in 1922, and more importantly, sent him a copy of *Tragic Drama* in 1928.¹¹ But *vice versa*, Benjamin markedly took notice of Rosenzweig’s *opus*, even if it is unclear how much of it he actually read. After Benjamin’s friend Gershom Scholem pointed out Rosenzweig’s “influence” on Benjamin, the first scholar who tried to examine the philological dimensions of Benjamin’s Rosenzweig reception and to analyze his evaluations of *The Star* was Stéphane Mosès. In a groundbreaking article Mosès carefully analyzed all Rosenzweig citations in Benjamin’s writings, as far as they were published at that time.¹² Mosès’

article makes it plain, that it was Scholem who called Benjamin's attention to Rosenzweig as early as 1921. However, in Benjamin's letters to Scholem his remarks are quite ambivalent. Already in the first reference to the *Star* in a letter to Scholem from Heidelberg, Benjamin writes on the 9th of July: "*Es ist also jeden Tag möglich, daß ich Dich sehr bitte, mir den 'Stern der Erlösung' zu senden – aber ich warte noch damit es keinesfalls unnötiger Weise geschieht.*" (GB II, 164). This remark is a typical expression of the deferral and postponement which informs so many of Benjamin's projects – especially projects concerning Jewish topics like learning Hebrew, and finally and tragically, his failed emigration from Europe.¹³ However, Scholem sent the book to Benjamin, as we can read in the *Gesammelte Briefe*. Some months later, in November 1921, Benjamin writes that he does not know if he would be able to judge the book after finishing it.¹⁴ In December 1922 Benjamin visited the already ill Rosenzweig in Frankfurt. In his short account to Scholem he speaks about the one-sidedness of the meeting, and paradoxically also about Benjamin's ostensible ignorance: "*Ich sprach mit Rosenzweig vom Einfluss seines Buches, seiner Bedeutung, seiner Gefahren [!]; er ist geistig vollständig klar, nur machte es das Gespräch schwer, daß ich überall die Initiative geben mußte ohne das Buch entsprechend genau zu kennen.*" (GB II, 300). Eight years later, in 1930, Benjamin reports with a strange mixture of pride and humility that he was asked to write an obituary by the "Frankfurter Zeitung," but happily dismissed it.¹⁵ In a similar manner Benjamin referred to himself as "*amhoorez*" [Yiddish for an ignorant person] in relation to Rosenzweig in a letter from October 1931 (GB IV, 52).

In contrast to these statements, in 1935 Benjamin writes that the *Star* has much occupied him (GB V, 113). Benjamin's remaining references to Rosenzweig in his letters, concern mostly the theory of Greek tragedy and more parenthetically the Bible translation with Martin Buber, for whom Benjamin felt a deep antipathy. By examining Benjamin's notes and drafts, Mosès ascertains that "Benjamin has most thoroughly studied Part One of *The Star*. He had probably read the other two sections, in which Rosenzweig develops his philosophy of language, history, and religion, but with the exception of one section of Part Two [...], he never alludes to them in any currently published text."¹⁶ As Mosès explains, "the influence of certain aspects of Rosenzweig's thought" on Benjamin is mostly evident in his *Tragic Drama*. "Benjamin proceeds from Rosenzweig's antithetical description of classical and modern tragedy, in order to set up the essential opposition between tragic drama and tragedy."¹⁷ In his later essay

on Bertolt Brecht and epic theatre, which he drafted in 1931, but which was published only in a second version in 1939, Benjamin returns to this adoption of Rosenzweig's theory of the tragic hero. In the *Star*, classical antiquity stands for the world before/without revelation and the remarks about the tragedy are only examples in the philosophical construction. But for Benjamin, Rosenzweig is one of the few thinkers who were aware of the German tradition of the "untragic hero," which he sees evolving from the baroque era over Gryphius, Lenz and Grabbe to Brecht. (GS II/2, 523; and I 149). At first view it is irritating that Benjamin refers to a religious thinker like Rosenzweig for the purpose of analyzing Marxist theatre, for the worlds seem to completely deny one another. According to Mosès' intuition the citation "seems to indicate that he [Benjamin] thought it important to stress, and perhaps not without a certain provocative emphasis, the continuity of his Jewish inspiration"¹⁸ also in his socialist period. Mosès gives a similar reading of the Rosenzweig citations in the Kafka essay, which seem to him "peculiar in that they refer to an idea which is quite peripheral to *The Star* as a whole."¹⁹ The quoted passages are on Rosenzweig's valuation of Chinese thinking, Taoism, and "the Chinese man" who forms for Rosenzweig, in contrast to the western concept of character "a completely elementary purity of feeling" (SR 83²⁰).

According to Rosenzweig, Chinese thinking is antipodal to the Greek notion of *logos*, and "the spiritual [...] turns into spirits" (SR 67²¹), which are absolutely individual. The Chinese world, as it is depicted in the very short passage of the *Star*, cannot be traced back to general ideas behind the phenomena. Benjamin sees a parallel between this view and Kafka's radically immanent world. For Mosès, the inclusion of the two passages, which are in fact minor, "seems both unmotivated and arbitrary," and he guesses that Benjamin quotes them "less for their content than for the name of their author and the connotations associated with this name."²² By alluding to the Chinese theme in Rosenzweig, who is tied to Jewish theological thought and marks a connection to Scholem, Benjamin at the same time calls Brecht to mind, as Scholem's Marxist antagonist. Mosès sees in this citation "a paradoxical figure of thought used to emphasise this dialectical tension and at the same time hint at its possible solution."²³ As a matter of fact, in the notes on Brecht, Benjamin speaks about an affinity with certain Chinese practices (see GS II/2, 525), but remarkably, without mentioning the China theme in the *Star*, to which he gives so much importance only three years later in writing the Kafka essay. But in

Benjamin's eyes Brecht and Kafka are both 'Chinese': Kafka's "Nature Theatre of Oklahoma" from the end of his unfinished novel *The Man who Disappeared* [*Der Verschollene*], refers back to the Chinese theatre "which is a gestic theatre" (I 120).

Only then will one recognize with certainty that Kafka's entire work constitutes a code of gestures which surely had no definite symbolic meaning for the author from the outset; rather, the author tried to derive such a meaning from them in ever-changing contexts and experimental groupings. (I 120).

[Dann wird man mit Sicherheit erkennen, daß Kafkas Werk einen Kodex von Gesten darstellt, die keineswegs von Hause aus für den Verfasser eine sichere symbolische Bedeutung haben, vielmehr in immer wieder anderen Zusammenhängen und Versuchsanordnungen um eine solche angegangen werden.] (GS II/1, 418)

Kafka's writing is a "code of gestures" and as such, an "experimental grouping" – but this is applicable to Brecht's praxis of the epic theatre as well. The most important task of the actor, Benjamin quotes Brecht, is "Making gestures quotable": "An actor must be able to space his gestures the way a typesetter produces spaced type" (I 151²⁴). The analogy of text and acting is established by the moment of citation. Like a word, a gesture can also be quoted. Like the quoted word, the gesture in epic theatre is a rupture or an incorporation, which is the motor of dialectical insight. It is neither the meaning of the quoted and incorporated text, nor the continuously developing argument, which lead to that insight. The meaning of the citation – like that of the gesture – is never sure *per se*; it is constructed in perpetually differentiating contexts and test arrangements. The citation/gesture itself forms a "standstill" and thereby opens the gate to another understanding. In his posthumously published typescript about epic theatre, Benjamin's metaphor for this moment is the "flash" which illuminates a situation only for an instant. The course of time is not "the mother of dialectics," because Time is only the medium in which the dialectical movement is constituted and does not lead to an insight. Likewise in epic theatre, the dialectical process of understanding is not driven by the contradictions in the plot or in the behaviour of the characters, but is formed by the "gesture itself."²⁵

First of all, this shows how early Benjamin formulated some of the world famous phrases of the *Theses on the Philosophy of History* – his last text of 1940 –, and it makes clear that the gesture of citation has an epistemological,

even utopian, and in a somewhat cryptic way, messianic dimension.²⁶ The dialectical transfer, which is hidden in the citation, comprehends the past (or the quoted text) as filled with “Now” [“*Jetztzeit*”], which can be blasted out of the continuum of history and context. (See I 261). Transferred from the political to the linguistic level, Benjamin’s idea of citation resembles his historico-philosophic notion of revolutions, which for him are not “carriers of an unstoppable progress, but rather of its interruption, that is, moments in which history is suddenly brought to a standstill, and ‘the truly new’ announces itself.”²⁷

So while I agree with Mosès’ assumption, that Benjamin is referring to the Rosenzweig passages “less for their content,” I will show in the second part of this article that the citations not only form a rhetorical strategy of dialectical navigation between the poles of historical materialism, i.e. Brecht, and the Jewish tradition, i.e. Scholem, but in a way perform the “essential purity” of the citation itself. For this undertaking it is necessary to once again – and with more precision – trace the connection between Benjamin and Rosenzweig and to dive deeper into their philosophy of language. Before I return to Mosès’ explanations of the amazing similarity in their concepts of language and time, I want to consider a very brief note, which Benjamin likely wrote in 1931, but which was not published until 1991 by Tiedemann and Schweppenhäuser in volume VI of the *Gesammelte Schriften*. In his article of 1982 Mosès could not refer to this striking passage as he probably did not know of it.

3. Origin

The relation of my notion of origin, like the work on the tragic drama and the essay on Kraus are evolving it, to Rosenzweig’s notion of revelation is to be analyzed. [my translation]

[Die Beziehung meines Begriffs des Ursprungs wie die Trauerspielarbeit und der Essay über Kraus ihn entwickelt zu Rosenzweigs Begriff der Offenbarung ist zu untersuchen.]
(GS VI 207)

The laconic remark forms either an instruction for self-interpretation – even if it is not very likely that Benjamin really had it in mind to write something on his relation to Rosenzweig – or it is indeed an advice for virtual readers. In any case, it is a brief but valuable hint. In the following I will analyze

Benjamin's "notion of origin" and try to connect it to Rosenzweig's "notion of revelation" as suggested in Benjamin's own memo. I will argue that it is exactly the relation between the terms "origin" and "revelation" which forms the background of Benjamin's Rosenzweig citations.

The German word "*Ursprung*" is difficult to translate. In his introduction to the English version of the *Tragic Drama* George Steiner writes: "It signifies not only 'source', 'fount', 'origin', but also that primal leap (*Sprung*) into being which at once reveals and determines the unfolding structure, the central dynamics of form in an organic or spiritual phenomenon" (O 15–16). The literal meaning of "*Ursprung*" – which is present in the etymology of the word²⁸ –, is vital to Benjamin's somewhat obscure metaphors of liquidity in his "Epistemo-Critical Prologue" to his *Trauerspiel* book. "Origin", he writes, "is an eddy in the stream of becoming, and in its current it swallows the material involved in the process of genesis" (O 45²⁹). The phrase implies that although origin is "an entirely historical category" (O 45), it is not conceived as the first point in time of a historical sequence of events. Origin does not mean beginning. The understanding of time that underlies Benjamin's notion of origin is not process-related; it is not a chronological time (this would be the time of "genesis"), but rather a time which undermines, confuses or disturbs the linear succession of genesis, like the image suggested by the "eddy in the stream of becoming." The time of origin, however, is linked with a singular and crucial instant of emergence: "The term origin is not intended to describe the process by which the existent came into being, but rather to describe that which emerges from the process of becoming and disappearance." (O 45). So far, the notion of origin is a crucial term of Benjamin's early historico-philosophical considerations, which oppose the Hegelian school on one side, and the neo-Kantian school on the other. But above all, the term "origin" is closely and intimately linked to Benjamin's conception of philosophical thinking, his esoteric methodology which he calls "the philosophical contemplation". The inner rules or principles of this contemplation are different from the idealistic assumption of a gradual and genetic understanding which in the end can realize a virtual totality of knowledge. Whereas the form of idealistic thinking can – in Benjamin's own imagery – be called a "stream," the structure of the contemplative method is that of the fragment, or the "eddy". The task of "contemplation" is analogical to the method of epic theatre; and what Benjamin calls "authenticity" in the *Tragic Drama* is structurally very similar to the state of humanity liberated from alienation in his notes

on Brecht. Thus, “philosophical contemplation” is connected to the notion of origin: “The principles of philosophical contemplation are recorded in the dialectic which is inherited in origin. This dialectic shows singularity and repetition to be conditioned by one another in all essentials.” (O 46³⁰). That means contemplation has to head towards a singular moment, which really illuminates the phenomena, and paradoxically the condition of this moment is its repeatability (which is *vice versa* the condition for its singularity). In this dialectic appears “the hallmark of origin in the phenomena:” its authenticity. Originality depends on authenticity. In order to discover the original quintessence of the phenomena it is necessary to discover the authentic, which comes to light unmediated and on the periphery of the object of investigation: “And the act of discovery can reveal it [the authentic] in the most singular and eccentric of phenomena, in both the weakest and the clumsiest experiments and in the overripe fruits of a period of decadence.” (O 46³¹). As Beatrice Hanssen pointed out, Benjamin’s methodological principle “calls for a recognition or anamnesis of the seal of origin in the phenomenon as a representative to long-forgotten connections to Revelation.”³² Hanssen deals with Benjamin’s draft manuscript of the “Prologue” which was published by Tiedemann and Schweppenhäuser in the appendix of volume I of the *Gesammelte Schriften*. Strikingly, in this primal version of the text Benjamin makes use of the word “*Offenbarung*” [“Revelation”], but effaces it for the print version. He writes: “*Alles Ursprüngliche ist die unvollendete Restauration der Offenbarung.*” (GS I/3, 935) Again, Benjamin’s methodological considerations and his theory of origin are “refracted through a concern with the eschatological model”³³ to which I alluded in my interpretations of the essays on Brecht and Kafka. But even more, it seems to me that Benjamin is absorbing an abstract thinking of purity; in every origin there is a part of the first origin, *the* origin itself which is lost and cannot be experienced again in the actual state of the world and of language – Benjamin lets go unanswered whether this *original origin* actually happened, or if Revelation in this strong sense is just a necessary fiction of his theory of language. In any case, from this cancelled passage a line can be drawn to Rosenzweig and his (different) understanding of revelation. Before I return to this correlation I want to take a look at certain passages concerning the term “origin” in Benjamin’s Kraus essay.

Benjamin’s typical ambivalence makes it impossible to decide if his access to the origin in the sign of the authentic is really a political vision (with an affinity to Brecht’s communism), or if it is rather a theological

concept, as the cancelled connection to “revelation” suggests. By all means, in the essay on Kraus, the religious motives dominate, even if the point of departure is Kraus’s poetic understanding of language. The essay opposes Kraus to Stefan George and “the Georgian cult of language.” For Benjamin Kraus’s way of writing seems somehow comparable to his concept of contemplation – and, here it becomes explicit, it also seems to be somehow “Jewish.”

To the cosmic rising and falling that for George ‘deifies the body and embodies the divine,’ language is only the Jacob’s ladder with its ten thousand word-rungs. Kraus’s language, by contrast, has done away with all hieratic moments. It is the medium neither of clairvoyance nor of domination. It is the theatre of a sanctification of the name – with this Jewish certainty it sets itself against the theurgy of the ‘word-body.’ (R 265)

[Dem kosmischen Auf und Nieder, das für George ‘den Leib vergottet und den Gott verleibt’, ist die Sprache nur die Jakobsleiter mit den zehntausend Wortsprossen. Demgegenüber Kraus: seine Sprache hat alle hieratischen Momente von sich getan. Weder ist sie Medium der Seherschaft noch der Herrschaft. Daß sie der Schauplatz für die Heiligung des Namens sei – mit dieser jüdischen Gewißheit setzt sie der Theurgie des ‘Wortleibs’ sich entgegen.] (GS II/1, 359)

In his poem “Templer” (1907) George speaks about time and about resisting the course of time. He uses the allegory of the “*grosse Näherin*”; it is the work of this tailoress to ‘deify the body and to embody the divine.’ This could mean a Christological concept of a salvific history. However, it is conceived in a secularized way, because George explicitly speaks about mastery of time. His Knight Templers are poets: “*Nie alternd nie entkräftet nie versprengt*”.³⁴ In this sense we can understand Benjamin’s characterization of George’s notion of language as a medium of “clairvoyance” or “domination.” To be a poet for George is to be a priest or a king. The task of the poet lies in a realm behind language, and thus it is *timeless* in the truest sense of the word. But Kraus’s language is no simple medium, but a “theatre,” i.e. a place where something is performed *in time*. This performance is the “sanctification of the name,” a procedure that is, if we believe Benjamin’s words, motivated by Jewish tradition – or, and this is of course an important difference, simply by *being Jewish*. The second possibility is suggested by the word “*Gewissheit*” which is only poorly translated as “certainty.” Whereas “certainty” defines an intellectual state of mind devoid of all doubt, “*Gewissheit*” is always associated with the word

“*Gewissen*” (conscious), with the inner instance of responsibility which is a kind of agent of unconsciously internalized social and religious values. But does the phrase “sanctification of the name” – which is according to Benjamin essentially Jewish – really refer to the theological concept of *kiddush hashem*, which is, as a matter of fact, altogether an expression of Jewish spirituality?

Not exclusively. For it refers to Benjamin’s early theory of – or better put, his belief in – “Language as such,” which opposes the so called “bourgeois conception of language” (R 318), and “knows no means, no object, and no addressee of communication. It means: *in naming the mental being of man communicates itself to God*” (R 318). In this sense Benjamin’s linguistic concept of the “sanctification of the name” is an expression of his own and very private Judaism which cannot be explained by Jewish theological concepts alone. Benjamin does not deny the semiotic character of language as a means of communication, but in contrast to pragmatic theories of language for Benjamin this character is not the principle of language, only a historically later and less authentic stage of linguistic development. Language is a kind of spiritual constitution of the world, its intrinsic matrix of communication. The *topos* that makes this constitution evident in human language is the name. The name sublates the instrumental relation between thing and sign, and realizes an immediate and authentic form of language.³⁵ We can hold that language is not language through the naming of things, but through its intrinsic *ability* to name things, through making the world nameable. The name is, for Benjamin, also one of the two linguistic moments – the second is rhyme – which inform Kraus’ writings. “From within the linguistic compass of the name, and only from within it, can we discern Kraus’ basic polemical procedure: quotation. To quote a word is to call it by its name” (R 268³⁶). In the process of citation the ‘linguisticity’ of language is made visible. In this sense it is the utopian moment in Benjamin’s thought that we can see the name of the single word through the citation, in other words, really get to a place where the pure, *original* state of language is at work, where the instrumental relation between *res* and *verba* is disconnected. It can be assumed that Benjamin was influenced by his readings in scholastic philosophy of language,³⁷ and the sentence “To quote a word is to call it by its name” can be interpreted as an ironic and cryptic quotation of the scholastic definition of the so called *suppositio materialis* (the notation of a logical relation where the term/word relates to the term/word itself). Of course Benjamin’s “Jewish

nominalism” is not congruent with classical medieval nominalism, as it was represented by William Ockham, for example. But paradigmatically, this little remark refers to Benjamin’s praxis of citation, in which every citation can also be read as a performance of citationality in a general sense. Citation is the place where the linguistic potential of language per se, “language as such,” is performed. Inherent in this performance – like in Kafka’s “Nature Theatre of Oklahoma” or Brecht’s epic theatre – is a dual eschatological dimension, salvation and punishment. This becomes clearer when we remember that citation “also designates the act of calling someone to appear in court as witness.”³⁸

In the quotation that both saves and chastises, language proves the matrix of justice. It summons the word by its name, wrenches it destructively from its context, but precisely thereby calls it back to its origin. It appears, now with rhyme and reason, sonorously, congruously in the structure of a new text. As rhyme it gathers the similar into its aura; as name it stands alone and expressionless. In quotation the two realms – of origin and destruction – justify themselves before language. And conversely, only where they interpenetrate – in quotation – is language consummated. In it is mirrored the angelic tongue in which all words, startled from the idyllic context of meaning, have become mottoes in the book of Creation. (R 269)

[Im rettenden und strafenden Zitat erweist die Sprache sich als die Mater der Gerechtigkeit. Es ruft das Wort beim Namen auf, bricht es zerstörend aus dem Zusammenhang, eben damit aber ruft es dasselbe auch zurück an seinen Ursprung. Nicht ungereimt erscheint es, klingend, stimmig, in dem Gefüge eines neuen Textes. Als Reim versammelt es in seiner Aura das Ähnliche; als Name steht es einsam und ausdruckslos. Von der Sprache weisen sich beide Reiche – Ursprung so wie Zerstörung – im Zitat aus. Und umgekehrt: nur wo sie sich durchdringen – im Zitat – ist sie vollendet. Es spiegelt sich in ihm die Engelsprache, in welcher alle Worte, aus dem idyllischen Zusammenhang des Sinnes aufgestört, zu Motti in dem Buch der Schöpfung geworden sind.](GS II/1, 363)

“Origin”, understood as the authentic horizon of phenomena, is one pole of the dual ontological potential of language. The other pole is “destruction,” the decontextualization of the word. The quotation is a kind of reactor in which this fission of language takes place. As the place *in* the text where the intertextual moment is realized, it is also the place where the original and the destructive potential of language “interpenetrate” [“*durchdringen sich*”], and thus become indistinguishable. The citation is therefore also a zone in language in which an eschatological dimension appears. This dimension has a juridical and a linguistic side. The assertion that the words

become “mottoes in the book of Creation” refers to the ideal of a pure language, in a certain way a ‘linguistical language.’ This language is not a medium of communication, but a performance of gestures. The “angelic tongue” [“*Engelssprache*”] Benjamin is imagining is a language of the gesture, the gesture of creation itself, in which words and things are not separated. This strange and utopian tongue indicates a total alterity *in* language. It can never be fully realized, it is only “mirrored” in the quotation, and thus we are only able to see its inverted image. In this sense we can refer back to Benjamin’s draft manuscript of the “Epistemo-Philosophical Prologue”: In the quotation the text performs the restoration of revelation [“*Restauration der Offenbarung*”] – but under human conditions this restoration must always be fragmented.

4. Revelation

For Benjamin, the second linguistic tool to open up the communication character of the text is the rhyme. Like the quotation the rhyme is a “theatre” [“*Schauplatz*”] of the “philosophical recognition” of originality. Benjamin holds that rhyme is the warrant of originality. He cites Kraus’ line “*Ein Wort, das nie am Ursprung lügt*” (GS II/1, 361) [“A word that never lies at its origin” (R 266)] from the highly self-referential poem “Der Reim” in which Kraus states that rhyme is not the form, but the expression of an inner law of language, something that cannot be mastered, but only found.³⁹ Benjamin is connecting this poetic credo to a messianic layer: In the rhyme the word, “just as blessedness has its source [= origin, *Ursprung*] at the end of time, has its at the end of the line” (R 266). The rhyme is the redemptive horizon of language – like “the end of time” or the eschatological moment is the condition of blessedness in life. As an analogue of the quotation the rhyme has a privileged function in language for which Benjamin uses a spatial metaphor: “The child recognizes by rhyme that it has reached the summit of language, from which it can hear at their source [origin, *Ursprung*] the rushing of all springs.” (R 266). This sentence – itself a poetic line – is ultimately esoteric in the sense that it is ambiguous and cannot be understood in the way an equation or a logical sentence can be understood. And an *esoteric* inside of language is exactly what is indicated by the rhyme: the aspect of language that is not about understanding something beyond language,

but about understanding language itself, its mediality (Benjamin speaks about “*Rauschen*”). The origin – i.e. the ultimate understanding of understanding – cannot be reached, it is more a centre of reference, the innermost point of alterity.

Benjamin must have had in mind this horizon of alterity when he connected himself to Rosenzweig’s concept of revelation. The whole *Star* can be understood as a hymn to revelation, which forms the core of the book. Like Mosès pointed out in his great classical study, revelation in the *Star of Redemption* is a complex and ambivalent notion. In the narrow sense it constitutes the relation between God and man. Revelation, then, is the movement through which God commits his own being to the human experience.⁴⁰ This experience is conceived not only as a religious or theological term, but secularized as a singular moment in which the given condition of creation, the world’s createdness, is realized by an individual being.⁴¹ In a wider sense, revelation is a basic term in Rosenzweig’s system. It describes the point at which the three elementary realities – God, man and world – become manifest in time, and in this sense transcend idealistic thinking. But revelation is neither a Biblical concept, nor only a philosophical category for thought. It is in general a poetic, maybe even Romantic operation of opening up, of parting: “[...] it can be nothing other than the self-negation of a merely mute essence by a word uttered out loud, the opening up of something locked, of a silently reposing permanence by the movement of a blink of the eye [*Augenblick*].” (SR 173⁴²). Interestingly, Rosenzweig speaks about “origin” [*Ursprung*] as well, but in the *Star* this term is opposed to “revelation,” in that revelation “can at every moment capture the origin in the brightness, in the manifest, in the non hidden, precisely in the present [...], from now on God is present, present like the moment, like every moment [...].” (SR 174). The irruptive experience of this meaningful event is fixed in language. It is through the act of speaking that man becomes a subject. To put it in theological terms, the created things get a name (man is speaking with God and *vice versa*); to put it philosophical terms, meaning becomes part of a discourse and consequently reality becomes accessible and communicable. Language is, for Rosenzweig, “the organon of Revelation” and “at the same time, the thread on which is aligned all that is human that moves under the miraculous light of Revelation and of its ever renewed presentness of experience” (SR 120). Suggesting that in language as such (the possibility of naming the world) man possesses the key to communicating with others, to accessing

a basic alterity. Revelation is the experience of this potential. Language is conceived as an original fact, as a “*Morgengabe des Schöpfers an die Menschheit*” and as something which is inherently comprehended in creation. Only when this latent language is becoming manifest in speaking to somebody does revelation become relevant in history; the word “permits Revelation to enter into time one day as historical Revelation and come to be there as something existing from all eternity” (SR 205⁴³). For Rosenzweig, this entry is performed in the sign of universal love – but this complex construction can here be disregarded. For the purpose of my article it is important only to observe that Rosenzweig’s notion of revelation is linguistically coined. Simplifying this we can say that revelation is the opening up of alterity in language.

The connection between philosophy of language and theological concepts is to be found again in Benjamin’s early writings (and also in his draft for the “Prologue”). In the essay about “language as such,” he notes that this correlation “leads to the concept that has again and again, as if of its own accord, elevated itself to the centre of linguistic philosophy and constituted its most intimate connection with the philosophy of religion. This is the concept of revelation” (R 329). At the date Benjamin wrote this early essay (1916⁴⁴) Rosenzweig had not yet written his *Star*. Benjamin was probably inspired by this book, which seemed to write out in full what he himself only insinuated some years before.

But like Mosès already stated, there are also some differences between Benjamin and Rosenzweig’s theories of language which should not be underrated, and these differences are even “more important.” For Benjamin, the communicative function of language “represents the main symptom of its degeneration,” but in Rosenzweig’s eyes, this function of language is on the contrary “identical with its quality of revelation.”⁴⁵ Mosès sums it up the compact formulation: “The two ideas – Benjamin’s language *of* revelation and Rosenzweig’s language *as* revelation – are diametrically opposed.”⁴⁶ Benjamin’s notion of origin implies that the original aspect of language is the ideal aspect, but this ideal can never be realized: Language is only the screen or stage where, in Benjamin’s metaphoric words, the ideal is “mirrored” or “heard” [“*zu vernehmen*”] through certain linguistic operations such as the quotation, or respectively the rhyme (another important and probably most frequently discussed operation is the translation). The reality, or to put it in a philosophical way, the ontological status of this original event *per se* is more than

questionable. On the other hand, Rosenzweig's notion of Revelation is deeply rooted in the idea of interpersonal communication as a utopian event of opening up the monadic individual. This event *really* takes place every time when two people actually speak *to one another* and is not just a remote echo of something perfect but lost, even if Rosenzweig also holds that the moment of communication is like a seal of humanity in every man, and the "language of humanity" itself – the "ideal of perfect understanding" – cannot be fully realized until the end of time (SR 120). But a careful explanation of differences and similarities between the two thinkers – as Mosès has definitely presented it – cannot grasp the specificity of the relation between Benjamin and Rosenzweig. In my opinion this is only possible from within a radical understanding of the citation itself as an "angelic tongue." In the final part of this article, I will show that this strange language is not only a messianic ideal in a peaceful sense, but has a violent and uncanny side, insofar its precarious and fugitive condition exactly calls the messianic possibility into question.

5. The 'Mise en Abyme' of the Citation

Benjamin's Rosenzweig citations in his Kafka essay are striking, because on the one hand he is quoting Rosenzweig's definition of the "Chinese man" and the "Tao," but on the other hand he is tacitly reversing its negative judgement. In a normal scientific text this would of course not be allowed.⁴⁷ In his aphoristic book *Einbahnstraße* Benjamin writes the (ironically often quoted) sentence: "Quotations in my work are like wayside robbers who leap out, armed, and relieve the idle stroller of his conviction."⁴⁸ In this sense Benjamin's praxis of citation is directly opposed to the usual scientific praxis – and it is more a usurpation of the text than a critical reading. For Rosenzweig, the "Tao" is in a way characterless: "It is entirely devoid of essence; nothing is in it [...]" (SR 44). In the construction of the *Star*, the Chinese worldview stands for the feigned overcoming of pantheism; it is based on a quasi-monotheistic concept. But this concept is not connected to life. The divine sphere in "China" lacks an individual connecting factor. It has no content in the sense that the correlation between individual man and God is necessary an external and abstract relation. Only the Jewish and the Christian God offer, in Rosenzweig's view, a meaningful and concrete relation, rooted in the personal experience of every single man, and this

experience he calls revelation. Apart from the fact that Rosenzweig's view of Buddhism is rather peculiar, Benjamin is not interested in this comparative study of religions. For him, Rosenzweig's short description of the "Chinese" is only an image to explain the function of the "Nature Theatre of Oklahoma" and Kafka's writing itself "to dissolve happenings into their gestic components" (I 120). Benjamin's quotation decontextualizes Rosenzweig's text: It can be understood as the application of Benjamin's theory of the quotation.

As I showed, this theory is constituted by the ideal of the "angelic tongue," a utopian language which is freed from its communicative function. The quotation is the (inter)textual place where this purity, an absolute alterity, can be *sensed*. In fact, one of the many difficulties of Benjamin's writings is the uncertainty about the status of this alterity; it might be totally absent, but it might also just not be accessible. Rosenzweig's notion of the "Tao" could also very well be a description of Benjamin's notion of the citation: "It is entirely devoid of essence; nothing is in it [...]." Benjamin's Rosenzweig citation in the Kafka essay is in this sense a *mise en abyme*; it mirrors Rosenzweig's text, but *in* the cited text we can again see Benjamin's own text, and there in turn appears Rosenzweig's text, and so on *ad infinitum*. The Rosenzweig citation in the Kafka essay is actually "devoid of essence," it performs the pure mediality of language, the sheer linguistic possibility of the text relating to another text, and thus far it is directed towards the absolute alterity of the meaningless ground of meaning itself. The specific relation between Benjamin and Rosenzweig, at least in the passage of the Kafka essay, is the relatedness itself. In other words, we can state that there is a structural parallel between the way Benjamin inverts Rosenzweig's judgements on Chinese thinking and the way he extends Rosenzweig's name to the level of the empty, pure name *precisely by quoting Rosenzweig*.

This structure of infinite reference can also be found in Benjamin's other Rosenzweig quotations. The Rosenzweig quotation from the *Tragic Drama*, and this quotation is the other crucial passage, is taken out of context. In this book Benjamin's intention is to differentiate the classic Greek tragedy, based on myth, and the "*Trauerspiel*" based on history. For this purpose he applies Rosenzweig's definitions of the tragic hero: "For this is the distinctive sign of the Self, the seal of its greatness, and the mark of its weakness, it is silent. The tragic hero has only one language that is in perfect accord with him: precisely, silence. [...] By being silent,

the hero dismantles the bridges that link him to God and the world, and he tears himself away from the landscape of personality, which, through the spoken word, marks out its limit and individualizes itself in the face of others in order to climb into the icy solitude of the Self” (SR 86⁴⁹). For Rosenzweig, the tragic hero is the precise expression of the antique and pagan world, and for him, everything depends on moving past this stage, and transcending the “icy solitude of the Self.” The allegorical counter image of the tragic hero is Job, who asks God about his destiny. In distinction, the tragic hero “does not understand what is happening to him, and he is conscious of not being able to understand it; he does not even try to penetrate the puzzling behaviour of the Gods. Poets may ask Job’s questions about guilt and fate; but unlike for Job, it does not even occur to the hero to ask these questions.”⁵⁰ According to Rosenzweig the tragic hero represents a Self, but not a Soul. The Self becomes Soul in revelation – when not only is God talking to man, but also man is able to speak to the creator.

Of course Benjamin stands far from these concepts. He does not even mention Rosenzweig’s idea of the speaking “Soul.” But Benjamin *knew* very well of the inadequacy of his quotation, as a letter to Scholem from 1925 suggests. Among other things the letter talks about the *Tragic Drama*. Benjamin writes in an ironic tone:

Eine neue Tragödientheorie gibt es auch; sie ist zu einem großen Teil von Rang [Florens Christian Rang]. Dasselbst ist nachhaltig Rosenzweig zitiert worden, sehr zu Salomons Mißvergnügen, der behauptet, das alles – was Rosenzweig über Tragik sagt – stünde schon bei Hegel. Und vielleicht ist es nicht unmöglich. (GB III, 15)

This indicates that Benjamin was fully aware of the dysfunction of his Rosenzweig reference. He knew that he probably would have been better to cite Hegel. But despite this insight he wanted to stick to his reference. *Prima facie*, he just did not know Hegel well enough to base his theory on the idealistic master thinker, but on another level he might have had a special interest in naming a *Jewish* representative of idealistic thinking (even if Rosenzweig is, of course, more of a contender for classical idealistic philosophy). Benjamin’s counter images to the Greek tragic hero are the archetypal figures of Baroque play, like the absolute sovereign or the courtier and intriguer. These figures do not represent a tragic and dark destiny. They embody instead a historical situation of universal

degeneration. The ruin of the Baroque figures is not owing to destiny. Their situation mirrors the disconsolate state of the world, and the “disconsolate chronicle of world-history.” Like a negative image they refer implicitly to “the restoration of the timelessness of paradise” (O 92). The common historico-philosophical ground of these figures is “the attempt to find, in a reversion to a bare state of creation, consolation for the renunciation of a state of grace” (O 81). In the Kafka essay this “reversion to a bare state of creation” is localized in Kafka’s characters, adjuncts or students, and this (in fact perpetually failing) attempt to find consolidation in it is expressed by the pure gesture.

Thus, the tension in this quotation from the *Tragic Drama* – displayed and hidden at the same time – is exactly the tension between Benjamin’s notion of origin and Rosenzweig’s notion of revelation. While revelation in the *Star* hints at the possibility of a lasting fulfilment, and mutual transcendence of language in the present, Benjamin’s instance of insight – when the original aspect of phenomena flashes up in the present – must always be ephemeral. Basically we can say that Rosenzweig and Benjamin share a similar concept of time, but differ radically in conceiving the constitution of the moment that transcends time. Benjamin’s quotation entirely ignores this basic difference. But precisely for this reason it also *demonstrates* this difference. The tragic hero is the mute man, the man who is enclosed in a monological language and an autistic experience of time. In other words, he is the man who is lacking the *and* – the and which signifies “the keystone that completes the vault of the cellar above which is erected the edifice of logos, of reason in language.” In referring to the concept of the mute self, but without touching the connective function of the *and*, Benjamin shows a kind of negative image of the messianic stage of mutual communication and – in contrast to Rosenzweig’s emphatic theory of communication – a deeply melancholic conception of language.⁵¹ The structure of his ‘notion of citationality’ is in this sense paradoxical; the *and* underlying Benjamin’s citation praxis is a conjunction of disjunction. This entails that the gesture of citation *per se* can be understood as the messianic moment, but *also* as a hint at an infinite and metaphysical emptiness. Thus far it reveals the ever conflicting condition of Benjamin’s writings: the absence or the inaccessibility of revelation, and at the same time the attempt to write as though revelation were happening in every word. The ideal this writing holds onto, is infinite citation.

Works of Walter Benjamin and Franz Rosenzweig:

- GS: Walter BENJAMIN: *Gesammelte Schriften*, ed. by Rolf Tiedemann, Hermann Schweppenhäuser, Frankfurt am Main: Suhrkamp, 1972–1989.
- GB: Walter BENJAMIN: *Gesammelte Briefe*, ed. by Christoph Gödde, Henri Lonitz, Frankfurt am Main: Suhrkamp, 1995–2000.
- R: Walter BENJAMIN: *Reflections. Essays, Aphorisms, Autobiographical Writings*, trans. Edmund Jephcott, ed. Peter Demetz, New York: Schocken Books, 2007 [1978].
- I: Walter BENJAMIN: *Illuminations. Essays and Reflections*, trans. Harry Zohn, ed. Hanna Arendt, New York: Schocken Books, 2007 [1968].
- O: Walter BENJAMIN: *The Origin of German Tragic Drama*, trans. John Osborne, London, New York: Verso, 1998.
- SE: Franz ROSENZWEIG: *Der Stern der Erlösung*, mit einer Einführung von Reinhold Meyer und einer Gedenkrede von Gershom Scholem, Frankfurt am Main: Suhrkamp, 1996.
- SR: Franz ROSENZWEIG: *The Star of Redemption*, trans. Barbara E. Galli, Madison WI, London: University of Wisconsin Press, 2004.

Notes

- 1 Alexander HONOLD: *Der Leser Walter Benjamin. Bruchstücke einer deutschen Literaturgeschichte*, Berlin: Vorwerk, 2000, p. 14 [“No work is wholly itself, but rather a text is generated by another text. It is a digressive iteration and a paraphrasing answer to something read or written.” (my translation)].
- 2 See Claudette SARTILIOT: *Citation and Modernity. Derrida, Joyce, and Brecht*, Norman, London: University of Oklahoma Press, 1993.
- 3 “Das Und ist nicht der geheime Begleiter des einzelnen Worts, sondern des Wortzusammenhangs. Es ist der Schlußstein des Kellergewölbes, über welchem das Gebäude des Logos, der Sprachvernunft, errichtet ist.” (SE 36)
- 4 See the elaborate and accurate documentation by TIEDEMANN and SCHWEPPEHÄUSER in GS I/3, pp. 964–981.
- 5 Richard A. COHEN: “Franz Rosenzweig’s ‘Star of Redemption’ and Kant”, in: *Philosophical Forum* 41,1–2 (2010), pp. 73–98.
- 6 Hans Martin DOBER: “Das Wir der religiösen Gemeinschaft. Schleiermachers ‘Reden’ und Rosenzweigs ‘Stern’”, in: *Rosenzweig Year Book* 5 (2010), pp. 160–176.
- 7 Peter Eli GORDON: *Rosenzweig and Heidegger: Between Judaism and German*

- Philosophy*, Berkeley, Los Angeles, London: University of California Press, 2003.
- 8 Marian MICKO: *Walter Benjamin und Georg Simmel*, Wiesbaden: Harrassowitz, 2010.
 - 9 Tim BEASLEY-MURRAY: *Mikhail Bakhtin and Walter Benjamin: Experience and Form*, New York N.Y.: Palgrave Mcmillian, 2007.
 - 10 Petra RENNEKE: "Kartographie des Denkens: Kafka und Benjamin im Kontext von Moderne und Judentum", in: *Zeitschrift für deutsche Philologie* 126,2 (2007), pp. 273–296.
 - 11 See letter to Martin BUBER from February 1st 1928 (GB III 330).
 - 12 Stéphane MOSÈS: "Walter Benjamin and Franz Rosenzweig", in: *Walter Benjamin. Critical Evaluations in Cultural Theory*, ed. Peter Osborne, London, New York: Routledge, 2005, III, pp. 99–115 [The article was originally published in German: "Walter Benjamin und Franz Rosenzweig", in: *Deutsche Vierteljahresschrift für Literaturwissenschaft und Geistesgeschichte* 56,4 (1982), pp. 622–640, and was reprinted in different books.]
 - 13 See Vivian LISKA: "Den europäischen Kreis im Rücken. Walter Benjamins langer Abschied von Europa", in: *Abschied von Europa. Jüdisches Schreiben zwischen 1930 und 1950*, ed. by Alfred Bodenheimer, Barbara Breysach, München: edition text & kritik, 2011, pp. 32–52.
 - 14 "Rosenzweig habe ich wieder etwas aufgenommen und erkannt, daß dieses Buch Unvoreingenommenen freilich seiner Struktur nach, die Gefahr es zu überschätzen notwendig nahe legt. Oder nur mir? Ob ich selbst wenn ich es zum erstenmale ganz durchgelesen habe es schon werde beurteilen können ist mir noch ganz fraglich." (GB II 208).
 - 15 "Da ich höre, daß Du zum Tode von Rosenzweig das Wort ergreifst, fühle ich mich doppelt geborgen in dem Bescheid, den ich gerade gestern, in Frankfurt, der Frankfurter Zeitung erteilte, die mich, sogar unter besonders günstigen äußern Bedingungen, einlud, über Rosenzweigs Gedankenwelt zu schreiben. Er war ablehnend. Gestern vergegenwärtigte ich mir die gewaltige Bemühung, die eine solche Arbeit mich gekostet hätte – die zudem meinem gegenwärtigen Beschäftigungskreis fern liegt – heute daneben das Ergebnis und wie dürftig es sich neben Deiner Rede sich hätte ausnehmen müssen, die aus dem Vollen kommt." (GB III, 506).
 - 16 MOSÈS, WB and FR, p. 102.
 - 17 *Ibid.*, p. 104.
 - 18 *Ibid.*, p. 105.
 - 19 *Ibid.*
 - 20 "Etwas ganz anderes als Charakter ist es, was den chinesischen Menschen auszeichnet: eine ganz elementare Reinheit des Gefühls." (SE 81).
 - 21 "Das Geistige, insofern es noch eine Rolle spielt, wird zu Geistern. Die Geister werden zu ganz individuellen Individuen [...]." (SE 64).
 - 22 MOSÈS, p. 106.
 - 23 *Ibid.*
 - 24 "Seine Gebärden muss der Schauspieler sperren können wie der Setzer die Worte. Dieser Effekt kann zum Beispiel dadurch erreicht werden, daß auf der Szene der Schauspieler seinen Gestus selbst zitiert." (GS II/2, 536).

- 25 “Immanent dialektisches Verhalten ist es, was im Zustand – als Abdruck menschlicher Gebärden, Handlungen und Worte – blitzartig klargestellt wird. Der Zustand, den das epische Theater aufdeckt, ist die Dialektik im Stillstand. Denn wie bei Hegel der Zeitverlauf nicht etwa die Mutter der Dialektik ist, sondern nur das Medium, in dem sie sich darstellt, so ist im epischen Theater nicht der widersprüchliche Verlauf der Äußerungen oder der Verhaltensweisen die Mutter der Dialektik, sondern die Geste selbst.” (GS II/2, p. 530)
- 26 See Manfred VOIGTS: “Zitat”, in: *Benjamins Begriffe*, ed. Michael Opitz, Erdmut Wizisla, Frankfurt am Main: Suhrkamp, 2000, I, pp. 826–850.
- 27 Marc DE WILDE: “Benjamin’s Politics of Remembrance: A reading of ‘Über den Begriff der Geschichte’”, in: *A Companion to the Works of Walter Benjamin*, ed. Rolf J. Goebel, Rochester, New York: Camden House 2009, pp. 177–194, p. 184.
- 28 Johann Christoph Adelung writes in the *Grammatisch-Kritisches Wörterbuch der Hochdeutschen Mundart* (Wien: Bauer 1811) under the headword “Ursprung”: “Im eigentlichsten Verstande ward daher eine *Quelle*, ein *Ursprung* genannt, in welcher Bedeutung es schon bey dem *Notker* vorkommt, und noch im *Schwedischen* gangbar ist.” IV, pp. 1157–1158.
- 29 “Ursprung, wiewohl durchaus historische Kategorie, hat mit Entstehung dennoch nichts gemein. Im Ursprung wird kein Werden des Entsprungenen, vielmehr dem Werden und Vergehen entspringendes gemeint. Der Ursprung steht im Fluß des Werdens als Strudel und reißt in seine Rhythmik das Entstehungsmaterial hinein.” (GS I/1, 226).
- 30 “Die Richtlinien der philosophischen Betrachtung sind in der Dialektik, die dem Ursprung beiwohnt, aufgezeichnet. Aus ihr erweist in allem Wesenhaften Einmaligkeit und Wiederholung durcheinander sich bedingt.” (GS I/1, 226).
- 31 “Das Echte – jenes Ursprungssiegel in den Phänomenen – ist Gegenstand der Entdeckung, einer Entdeckung, die in einzigartiger Weise sich mit dem Wiedererkennen verbindet. Im Singulärsten und Verschrobensten der Phänomene, in den ohnmächtigsten und hilflosesten Versuchen sowohl wie in den überreifen Erscheinungen der Spätzeit vermag Entdeckung es zu Tag zu fördern.” (GS I/1, 227).
- 32 Beatrice HANSSEN: “Philosophy at its Origin: Walter Benjamin’s Prologue to the *Ursprung des deutschen Trauerspiels*”, in: *Modern Language Notes* 110:4 (1995), pp. 809–833, p. 825.
- 33 Ibid.
- 34 Stephan GEORGE: *Gesamtausgabe der Werke. Endgültige Fassung*, Berlin: Georg Bondi, 1931, VI/VII, p. 53.
- 35 See Winfried MENNINGHAUS: *Walter Benjamins Theorie der Sprachmagie*, Frankfurt a. M.: Suhrkamp 1995, p. 144.
- 36 “Aus dem Sprachkreis des Namens, und nur aus ihm, erschließt sich das polemische Grundverfahren von Kraus: das Zitieren. Ein Wort zitieren heißt es beim Namen rufen.” (GS II/1, 362).
- 37 See Peter GARLOFF: *Philologie der Geschichte. Literaturkritik und Historiographie nach Walter Benjamin*, Würzburg: Königshausen und Neumann, 2003, pp. 106–108.
- 38 See SARTILIOT’s reference to LONGINUS, *Citation and Modernity*, p. 7 and p. 157.
- 39 Karl KRAUS: *Worte in Versen*, München: Kösel, 1959, pp. 80–82.

- 40 Stéphane MOSÈS: *System und Offenbarung. Die Philosophie Franz Rosenzweigs*, aus dem Französischen von Rainer Rochlitz, München: Wilhelm Fink 1985, p. 86.
- 41 *Ibid.*, p. 30.
- 42 “[...] es darf nichts weiter sein als das Sichauftun eines Verschlussenen, nichts als die Selbstverneinung eines bloßen stummen Wesens durch ein lautes Wort, einer still ruhenden Immerwährendheit durch einen bewegten Augenblick.” (SE 179).
- 43 “Aber wenn es keine Künstler gäbe, dann wäre die Menschheit ein Krüppel; denn es fehlte ihr dann die Sprache vor der Offenbarung, durch deren Dasein allein die Offenbarung ja die Möglichkeit hat, als historische Offenbarung in die Zeit einmal einzutreten und dort sich zu erweisen als etwas, was sie schon von uran ist.” (SE 212)
- 44 See GS II/3, pp. 931–935.
- 45 MOSÈS, WB and FR, p.108.
- 46 *Ibid.*, pp.108–109.
- 47 See Voigts, “Zitat”, p. 830.
- 48 See Walter BENJAMIN, “One-Way Street,” in *Selected Writings. Vol 1: 1913–1926*, ed. Michael Jennings and Marcus Bullock, Cambridge, Mass.: The Belknap Press of Harvard University Press, 1996, p. 481.
- 49 “Denn das ist das Merkzeichen des Selbst, das Siegel seiner Größe wie auch das Mal seiner Schwäche: es schweigt. Der tragische Held hat nur eine Sprache, die ihm vollkommen entspricht: eben das Schweigen. [...]Indem der Held schweigt, bricht er die Brücken, die ihn mit Gott und Welt verbinden, ab und erhebt sich aus den Gefilden der Persönlichkeit, die sich redend gegen andre abgrenzt und individualisiert, in die eisige Einsamkeit des Selbst. ” (SE 83–84).
- 50 *Ibid.*, p. 87.
- 51 See Bettina MENKE: “Das Nach-Leben im Zitat. Benjamins Gedächtnis der Texte”, in: *Gedächtniskunst: Raum – Bild – Schrift*, ed. by Anselm Haverkamp, Renate Lachmann, Frankfurt am Main: Suhrkamp, 1991, pp. 74–110.