Read Online Walter Benjamin: Theoretical Questions

This collection of nine essays focuses on those writings of Walter Benjamin (1892–1940) on literature and language that have a direct relevance to contemporary literary theory, notably his analyses of myth, violence, history, criticism, literature, and mass media. An introductory essay, David S. Ferris discusses the problem of history, aura, and resistance in Benjamin’s later work and in its reception. Samuel Weber, in a reading of Benjamin’s most influential essay, “The Work of Art in the Age of Mechanical Reproduction,” analyzes the status of the image and technology in Benjamin’s own terms and in the shadow of Heidegger. Rodolphe Gasché devotes himself to an analysis of Benjamin’s dissertation on the German Romantics, providing a valuable guide to a major text that has yet to appear in English translation.

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Walter Benjamin and the Arcades Project

Norbert Bolz 1991-06-01 Walter Benjamin (1892–1940) was one of the most intriguing and original Marxist cultural theorists of the twentieth-century. He made a precocious living in Berlin as a literary journalist and, partly under the influence of Ernst Bloch and Lukacs, turned toward the Critical Theory of the Frankfurt School. In the late 1920’s, he became a close friend of Brecht, championing his revolutionary “epic theater.” Driven from Germany in 1933 by the rise of Nazism, Benjamin settled in Paris where he had close associations with the surrealists. When the Nazis invaded France, Benjamin fled to the Spanish frontier where on being denied entry, he committed suicide rather than risk being delivered to the SS. Benjamin’s writings are a curious mixture of esoteric, sometimes mystical Jewish thought, artistic modernism, and unorthodox Marxism. He united an apocalyptic vision of history with a concern for the material, productive basis of art. Fascinated by tradition, yet a radical spokesman for the new technological media, steeped in high German philosophy, but a champion of the proletariat, Benjamin was in turn philologist, literary critic, political commentator, and philosopher of history. Bolz and van Reijen proceed from the standpoint that Benjamin’s thought was shaped by his attempt to connect extremes—to make the theological idea of salvation fruitful for political thought. Then, they go on to structure Benjamin’s important clusters of themes in light of the radical consequences of this intention.

Walter Benjamin and Romanticism

Andrew Benjamin 2002-11-01 Walter Benjamin and Romanticism explores the relationship between Walter Benjamin’s literary and philosophical work and the tradition of German Romanticism, as well as H-Hermlin and Goethe. Through a detailed and scholarly analysis of the major texts, the book explores the endurance of Benjamin’s relationship to Romanticism, the residual presence of Romantic Goethean and H-Heidelmian motifs in Benjamin’s subsequent writings and how Benjamin’s understanding of the relationship between criticism and Romanticism can still play a vital role in contemporary philosophical and literary practice.

John Donne and Baroque Allegory

Gerhard Richter 2000 Walter Benjamin and the Corpus of Autobiography is not merely the most extensive and insightful treatment of Benjamin’s autobiographical writings. It is a new cultural theory of modernity. Walter Benjamin and the Arcades Project provides the first comprehensive introduction to this extraordinary work accessible to English-language readers. The Project has had a remarkable impact on present-day cultural theory, urban studies, cultural studies and literary interpretation. Originally designed as a panoramic study chronicling the rise and decline of the Parisian shopping arcades, Benjamin’s work combines imaginative peregrinations through the changing city-scpe of nineteen-century Paris with passages that read like a blueprint for a new critical theory of modernity. Walter Benjamin and the Arcades Project provides the first comprehensive introduction to this extraordinary work accessible to English-language readers. The diverse range of issues explored include the nature of the collecting, the anatomy of the flaneur, the physiognomy of ruins, the dialectical image, Benjamin’s relation to Baudelaire, the practice of history-writing, and modernity and architecture. Contributors include Susan Buck-Morss, Stanley Cavell, Jonathan Culler, Bridg Doherty, Barbara Johnson, Esther Leslie, Gerhard Richter, Andrew Benjamin, Howard Caygill, Beatrice Hanssen, Detlef Mertens, Elisa Marder, Tyrus Miller, and Irving Wohlforth.
now a major figure whose work is essential to an understanding of modernity. Steiner traces the development of Benjamin’s thought chronologically through his writings on philosophy, literature, history, politics, the media, art, photography, cinema, technology, and the arts. Walter Benjamin reveals the meaning and value of representation as both a philosophical concept (What does it mean to create an image that “stands for” something absent?) and a political issue (Who has the right to represent whom?). The Triangle of Representation raises a range of theoretical, historical, and aesthetic questions, and offers subtle readings of such cultural critics as Raymond Williams, Paul de Man, Edward Said, Walter Benjamin, and Adorno. The book thereby, on the one hand, analyses the politics of reading Benjamin today and, on the other, sets his work against a variety of contemporary aesthetics and literature.

Language and History in Theodor W. Adorno’s Notes to Literature—Ulrich Plass 2007 Plass argues that Adorno’s essays on literature are of prime importance for an understanding of his aesthetics because they challenge the conceptual limitations of philosophical discourse.

Global Perspectives on Critical Architecture—Gevork Hartousian 2016-03-03 Judging from the debates taking place in both education and practice, it appears that architecture is deeply in crisis. New design and production techniques, together with the globalization of capital and even skilled-labor, have reduced architecture to a commodified object, its aesthetic qualities tapping into the current pervasive desire for the spectacular. These developments, which have changed the architect’s role in the design and production processes of architecture. Moreover, critical architectural theories, including those of Breton, Heidegger and Benjamin, which explored the concepts of technology, modernist, labour and capital and how technology informed the cultural, along with later theories from the 1960s, which focused more on the architect’s theoretical and critical approaches need to be reassessed. Bringing together essays and interviews from leading scholars such as Kenneth Frampton, Peggy Deamer, Bernard Tschumi, Donald Kuspit and Marco Biraghi, this volume investigates and critically addresses various dimensions of the present crisis of architecture. It poses questions such as: Is architecture a conservative cultural product serving a given producer/consumer system? Should architecture’s affiliative ties with capitalism be subjected to a measure of criticism that can be expanded to the entirety of the cultural realm? Is architecture’s infusion into the cultural the reason for the viability of architecture today? What room does the city leave for architecture beyond the present delirium of spectacle? Should the thematic of various New Left criticisms of capitalism be taken as the premise of architectural criticism? Or alternatively, putting the notion of criticality aside is it enough to confine criticism to the production of insightful and pleasurable texts?

Critique of Journalistic Reason—Tom Van Dusen 2019-01-01 An examination between philosophy and journalism recurs across the modern philosophical tradition. Images of reporters and newspaper readers, messengers and towncriers, announcements and rumors populate the work of such thinkers as Kierkegaard, Nietzsche, and Benjamin. This book argues that these three thinkers’ preoccupation with journalism cannot be separated from their philosophy “proper” but plays a pivotal role in their philosophical work, where it marks an important nexus between their theories of history, time, language. Journalism, in the tradition Van Dusen brings to light, figures before anything else as a cipher of the time in which philosophy is written. If the journalist and newspaper reader characterizes what Kierkegaard calls “the present age,” that is because they exemplify a present marked by the crisis of the philosophy of history—a time after the demise of history and a philologizable concept. In different ways, the pages of the newspaper appear in the European philosophical tradition as a site where teleological and totalizing representations of history must be retroactively constructing and fortifying that from which the break that set the movement of following into motion had occurred? The book explores the concept and movement of afterness as a privileged yet uncanny category through close readings of works such as Kant, Kafka, Heidegger, Bloch, Benjamin, Brecht, Adorno, Arendt, Lyotard, and Derrida. It shows how the vevent of afterness, following, and coming after shed new light on a constellation of modern preoccupations, including personal and cultural memory, translation, photography, hope, and the historical and conceptual specificity of what has been termed “after Auschwitz.” The study’s various analyses across a heterogeneous collection of modern writers and thinkers, diverse historical moments of articulation, and a range of media conspire to illuminate Lyotard’s apocalyptic statement that “after philosophy comes philosophy. But it has been altered by the ‘after’.” As Richter’s intricate study demonstrates, much hinges on our interpretation of the “after.” After all, our most fundamental assumptions concerning modern aesthetic representation, conceptual discourse, subjectivity, and politics are at stake.
Criticism of Heaven - Roland Boer 2007 Why do some of the major Marxists of the twentieth century engage extensively with theology? What is the influence on their other work? This book explores the interstices between Marxism and theology in the work of Ernst Bloch, Walter Benjamin, Louis Althusser, Henri Lefebvre, Antonio Gramsci, Terry Eagleton, Slavoj Žižek and Theodor Adorno.

Violence and Emancipation in Colonial Idolology - Bohan B. E. Price 2019-12-01 Are there ethics justifying anti-colonial violence? How and why did the violence and visions of nationalist movements become incorporated by colonial and neo-colonial rule? Using the insurrection by the Malay Communist Party (1948-1960) as an example, this book argues that resorting to violence sped up the decolonisation of British Malaya by forcing its colonial administration to invent Malay nationalism and pursue ameliorative social policy among the Chinese diaspora community in a manner clearly derived from the Party’s platform. Yet this was not the same as giving the country economic emancipation from the expectations of neo-colonial rule. Violence and Emancipation in Colonial Idolology entertains no warm colonial memories of the cold war years. Confirming Price’s reputation as a plain speaking critic of Empire apologia, this book asks how colonial idolology was considered to be beneath Eurocentric standards and why.

The One and Only Law - James Martel 2014-09-19 Walter Benjamin’s ‘Critique of Violence,’ widely considered his final work on law, proposes that all manifestations of law are false stand-ins for divine principles of truth and justice that are no longer available to human beings. However, he also suggests that we must have law—we are held under a divine sanction that does not allow us to escape our responsibilities. James R. Martel argues that this paradox is resolved by considering that, for Benjamin, there is only one law that we must obey absolutely—the Second Commandment against idolatry. What remains of law when its false bases of authority are undermined would be a form of legal and political anarchism, quite unlike the current systems of law based on consistency and precedent. Martel engages with the ideas of key authors including Alain Badiou, Emmanuel Kant, and H.L.A. Hart in order to revisit common contemporary assumptions about law. He reveals how, when treated in constellation with these authors, Benjamin offers a way for human beings to become responsible for their own law, thereby avoiding the false appearance of a secular legal practice that remains bound by occult theologies and fetishes.

Key Thinkers for the Information Society - Christopher May 2003 Key Thinkers for the Information Society provides an introduction to some important social theorists whose work has considerable relevance to today’s ‘fascinating new world’ of information and communication technologies. With the aim of widening current perspectives on the information society, each contributor introduces a particular theorist and discusses the way in which their insights can be reintroduced into debates regarding the social, political and cultural impact of ICTs. Theorists presented in Volume 1 include some well-known and some less well-known figures. Walter Benjamin, Murray Edelman, Jacques Ellul, Harold Innis, Lewis Mumford, Karl Polanyi, Eric Elmer Scattachneider and Raymond Williams. Each has something fresh and pertinent to say and taken as a whole this volume provides an exciting new resource for contemporary studies.

Experience and Infinite Task - Tamara Tagliacozzo 2017-12-20 Offering a panoramic view of much of Benjamin’s thought, and concentrating in particular on his early writings, this book derives from a philosophical analysis of readings and studies by Benjamin that he had not heretofore been considered in detail.

Walter Benjamin - Jean Nordquist 1989 A bibliography of books and articles by and about Walter Benjamin.

Metaphysics of the Profane - Eric Jacobson 2003 Walter Benjamin and Gershom Scholem are regarded as two of the foremost Jewish thinkers of the 20th century, yet much of their early work remains obscure and under appreciated. This volume concentrates on the period 1918-1923, when Benjamin and Scholem produced a dynamic body of ideas.

Heidegger and Kabbalalah - Elliot R. Wolfson 2019-10-01 While many scholars have noted Martin Heidegger’s indebtedness to Christian mystical sources, as well as his affinity with Taoism and Buddhism, Elliot R. Wolfson expands connections between Heidegger’s thought and kabbalistic material. By arguing that the Jewish esoteric tradition impacted Heidegger, Wolfson presents an alternative way of understanding the history of Western philosophy. Wolfson’s comparison between Heidegger and kabbalalah sheds light on key concepts such as hermeneutics, temporality, language, and being and nothingness, while yielding surprising reflections on their common philosophical ground. Given Heidegger’s involvement with National Socialism and his use of antisemitic language, these innovative readings are all the more remarkable for their juxtaposition of incongruent fields of discourse. Wolfson’s entanglement with Heidegger and kabbalah not only enhances understandings of both but, more profoundly, serves as an ethical corrective to their respective juxtapositions of monocentrism and essentialism. Wolfson masterfully illustrates the redemptive capacity of thought to illuminate common ground in seemingly disparate philosophical traditions.

Towards the Critique of Violence - Brendan Moran 2015-08-27 In the past two and a half decades, Walter Benjamin’s early essay ‘Towards the Critique of Violence’ (1921) has taken a central place in political-philosophical debates. The complexity and perhaps even the occasional obscenity of Benjamin’s text have undoubtedly contributed to the diversity, conflict, and richness of contemporary readings. In this book, a wide range of following sectors the essay in the works of such authors as Jacques Derrida and Giorgio Agamben have devoted to it. Agamben’s own interest started early in his career with his 1970 essay, ‘On the Limits of Violence’, and Benjamin’s essay continues to be a fundamental reference in Agamben’s work. Written by internationally recognized scholars, Towards the Critique of Violence is the first book to explore political-philosophical implications of Benjamin’s ‘Critique of Violence’ and correlative implications of Benjamin’s resonance in Agamben’s writings. Topics of this collection include mythic violence, the techniques of non-violent conflict resolution, ambiguity, destiny or fate, decision and nature, and the relation between justice and thinking. The volume explores Agamben’s usage of certain Benjaminian themes, such as Judaism and law, bare life, sacrifice, and Kantian experience, culminating with the English translation of Agamben’s ‘On the Limits of Violence’.

Cultural Studies Vol18 Issue 2 - Various Authors 2021-12-17 Issue 2-3 (2004) includes articles on rethinking everyday life, the myth of everyday life, the persistence of everyday, everyday tragedy and creation, time and space in everyday life, everyday utopias, profane illuminations, a different life - looking at Barthes and Foucault, routine and ambiguity, shame, presences, a mundane voice, limitations, and consumption of digital commodities in everyday life to name a few.

The Meaning of Life in Romantic Poetry and Poetics - Urs Wilson 2009-01-02 This volume brings together an impressive range of established and emerging scholars to investigate the meaning of ‘life’ in Romantic poetry and poetics. This collection involves sustained attention to a set of challenging questions at the heart of British Romantic poetic practice and theory. Is poetry alive for the Romantic poets? Is so, how? Does ‘life’ always mean ‘life’? In a range of essays from a variety of complementary perspectives, a number of major Romantic poets are examined in detail. The fate of Romantic conceptions of ‘life’ in latter poetry also receives attention. Through, for examples, a revision of Blake’s relationship to so-called rationalism, a renewed examination of Wordsworth’s fascination with country graveyards, an exploration of Shelley’s concept of survival, and a discussion of the notions of ‘life’ in Byron, Kierkegaard, and Mozart, this volume opens up new and exciting terrain in Romantic poetry’s relation to literary theory, the history of philosophy, ethics, and aesthetics.

Illuminations - Walter Benjamin 2019 Views from one of the most original cultural critics of the twentieth century, Walter Benjamin.

Mystics - Michael Kessler 2003-12-15 Mystics presents a collection of previously unpublished essays by prominent scholars that consider both the idea of mystics and mysticism. The contributors offer detailed discussions of a variety of mystics from history, and on mysticism in the twenty-first century.

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