



## **On Walter Benjamin: Critical Essays and Recollections (Studies in Contemporary German Social Thought)**

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Bringing together the best critical essays on one of the most fascinating literary figures of our time, this book immediately takes its place as a major secondary source for Benjamin scholarship. Hannah Arendt called Walter Benjamin the outstanding literary critic of the twentieth century, and his reputation has grown steadily since she introduced him to English-language readers in 1968 with the selection of essays entitled *Illuminations*. Although the translation of his work into English has been slow in coming, Benjamin has become something of a literary legend; the legend encompasses both his life and his work - a diverse and thoughtful series of writings on art, culture, and society - and the tragic circumstances surrounding his suicide at Port Bou in 1940. The twelve critical essays collected here are by contemporaries of Benjamin as well as by younger scholars. Covering the full range of his interests, from hashish to Goethe to the modern city, they include important essays by Gershom Scholem, Jurgen Habermas, and Charles Rosen. There are also several moving and evocative recollections of Benjamin by friends and colleagues such as Theodor Adorno and Ernst Bloch. Each essay is introduced by the editor. Gary Smith served as coeditor of the seventh volume of Benjamin's *Gesammelte Schriften* and prepared both the German and English edition of Benjamin's *Moscow Diary*. *On Walter Benjamin* is included in the series *Studies in Contemporary German Social Thought*, edited by Thomas McCarthy.

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