

Walter Benjamin

- 15 July 1892** Walter Bendix Schönflies Benjamin is born in Berlin
- 1902-1912** pupil at the Kaiser Friedrich School in Charlottenburg
- 1905-1907** attends a country boarding school in Haubinda – first contacts to the youth movement
- 1910/11** under the pseudonym “Ardor”, Benjamin publishes first texts in the journal *Der Anfang*
- 1912-1919** a student at the universities of Freiburg i. Br., Berlin, Munich, and Bern
- 1915** breaks with the ideas of Gustav Wyneken – becomes acquainted with Gershom Scholem, Werner Kraft, Felix Noeggerath, and Rainer Maria Rilke
- 1917** marries Dora Sophie Pollak
- 1918** birth of their son, Stefan Rafael
- 1919** completes doctorate with the thesis *The Concept of Criticism in German Romanticism*, supervised by Richard Herberth in Bern – first meeting with Ernst Bloch
- 1920** makes the acquaintance of Florens Christian Rang
- 1921** initiates journal *Angelus Novus*
- 1923** prepares his *Habilitation* at the University of Frankfurt a. M. – first encounters with Theodor W. Adorno and Siegfried Kracauer – translation of the *Tableaux parisiens* by Charles Baudelaire
- 1924** trip to Capri, where Benjamin meets Asja Lacis
- 1924/25** essay “Goethe’s Elective Affinities” appears in Hugo von Hofmannsthal’s *Neue Deutsche Beiträge*
- 1925** *Habilitation* rejected by the University of Frankfurt – Benjamin begins translation of Proust
- 1926/27** two-month stay in Moscow
- 1927** work begins on *The Arcades Project* – first radio plays
- 1928** Rowohlt Verlag publishes *One-Way Street* and *The Origin of German Tragic Drama*
- 1929** contact with Bertolt Brecht intensifies
- 1930** divorced from Dora Sophie – plans for the journal *Crisis and Critique* with Bernard von Brentano, Brecht, and Herbert Ihering
- 1932** first stay on Ibiza – work on *A Berlin Chronicle* and *Berlin Childhood around 1900*
- 1933** March: emigration to France – while in exile, Benjamin publishes in the journals *Maß und Wert*, *Cahiers du Sud*, *Orient und Occident*, and *Das Wort*, among others – publication in Germany is only possible under a pseudonym – intensive correspondence with Gretel Karplus begins
- 1934** regular contributor to *Zeitschrift für Sozialforschung* – work on *The Arcades Project* resumes
- 1936** *The Work of Art in the Age of its Technological Reproducibility – German Men and Women* appears under the pseudonym Detlef Holz in Vita Nova Verlag, Luzern
- 1937** work on *Baudelaire* begins
- 1939** expatriated by Germany – “On Some Motifs in Baudelaire” published in the *Zeitschrift für Sozialforschung* – after war is declared, internment in a camp in Clos St. Joseph, Nevers
- 1940** return to Paris – work on the theses “On the Concept of History” – June: flees with his sister Dora to Lourdes – September: after an attempt to escape over the Pyrenees to Spain fails, Benjamin commits suicide in the border town of Portbou on 26 September.