



Walter Benjamin and Bertolt Brecht: The Story of a Friendship

Erdmut Wizisla

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Erdmut Wizisla's groundbreaking work explores for the first time the important friendship between Walter Benjamin, the acclaimed critic and literary theorist, and Bertolt Brecht, one of the twentieth century's most influential theater artists and poets, during the crucial interwar years in Berlin.

From the first meeting between Benjamin and Brecht to their experiences in exile, the events in this friendship are illuminated by personal correspondence, journal entries, and notes—including previously unpublished materials—from the friends' electric discussions of shared projects. In addition to exploring correspondence between the two, Wizisla presents documents by colleagues who shaped and shaded their relationship, including Margarete Steffin, Theodor Adorno, and Hannah Arendt.

Wizisla shows us the fascinating ideological exchanges between Benjamin and Brecht, including the first account of Berlin Marxist journal planned for 1931. The Minutes of its meetings record the involvement of Benjamin and Brecht, and offer a window onto the discussions on literature and politics that took place under the increasing threat of the German left's political defeat. Wizisla's examination of the friendship between Benjamin and Brecht, two artists at the height of their creative powers during a time of great political crisis, throws light on nearly two decades of European intellectual life.

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