

I first read Benjamin's essays in the early 1970s, when his *oeuvre* – about three decades after his later texts were written – had been increasingly recognised for its insights and style. Whatever I was working on throughout the times of my journalistic and research work in such fields as film theory, education, philosophy and cultural studies, Benjamin's "method" was manifestly or secretly reminding me about the epistemological machinery that unavoidably produces an aestheticized reality. Such reality became visible through Benjamin's inimitable writing, which I would call theoretical or reflexive descriptivism. In the age of new technological "revolutions" Benjamin's intuitions and visions are increasingly relevant. The strongest case in his discussion of *work of art in the age of mechanical reproduction*, the film, is being transformed as digitalisation "de-materialized" or rescued it from its dependence on celluloid tape. The film's potential for affecting the sensible capacity of viewers acquired new dimensions. Like in Benjamin's time, few saw any structural relationship (indeed not really correlation) between sound cinemas and rise of fascism nowadays the consequences, for which a technical advancement could be instrumental, are not clearly discernible – in spite of their being visible already to a superficial gaze. The expansion of possibilities for a cultural fulfilment on a massive scale simultaneously enables an eruption of a new kind of barbarism.

I realised that throughout the time of my different activities, I wrote a number of papers for journals, lectures and conferences and so I took time to put these papers together. Since most of them are dealing with artistic, cultural and political phenomena, I could arrange them in different parts, which are focused on some specific theoretical problems or specific fields or phenomena. Although these texts, which were written over a period of almost two decades, are not organised strictly in chronological order, I still tried to indicate a trajectory of my own conceptual evolution.

I am just one of many such writers who finds out a *fil rouge* running through different texts from different periods. Of course, the above-mentioned papers were mostly thoroughly reworked and restructured to somewhat round off what is a relatively fragmentary book. For the texts, which were published already, bibliographical footnote is added. Finally, a possibility to publish this work as a digital book matches the main book's content: mass culture, which would be unthinkable without mass media.