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BACHELOR'S THESIS

Walter Benjamin's "aura" in the age of AI:

A representation of reality depicted by Open AI's Chat GPT, in reference to Lisa Fittko's memoir *Escape Through the Pyrenees*, Julie Orringer's *The Flight Portfolio* and Anna Winger's television series *Transatlantic*.

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**Filmové, televizní, a fotografické umění a nová média
Dokumentární tvorba**

BAKALÁŘSKÁ PRÁCE

Walter Benjamina “Aura” ve věku umělé inteligence:

Reprezentace reality kterou zobrazuje Chat GPT společnosti Open AI, s odkazem na memoáry Lisy Fittko *Útěk přes Pyreneje*, knihu Julie Orringerové *The Flight Portfolio* a televizní seriál Anny Wingerové *Transatlantic*.

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Declaration

I declare that I have elaborated the Bachelor's dissertation entitled *Walter Benjamin's "aura" in the Age of AI* independently, under the expert supervision of my thesis/dissertation supervisor, and using only the literature and sources cited therein, and that the thesis/dissertation was not used within the scope of a different university programme of study or to obtain the same degree or a different degree. I consent to the publication of the thesis/dissertation in accordance with legislation and with AMU internal regulations.

Prague 11.08.2023

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Abstract

This thesis examines the philosopher and social critic Walter Benjamin's concept of "aura" in light of recent technological developments in the field of artificial intelligence (AI). To this end, the empirical side of this research evaluates the narrative accuracy of large language models through a case study using Open AI's Chat GPT3.5. Three different accounts of Walter Benjamin's attempted escape and tragic fate are used as "prompts" (input) for Chat GPT, each selected to capture different types of historical narrative storytelling: Lisa Fittko's memoir *Escape Through the Pyrenees*, Julie Orringer's *The Flight Portfolio* and Anna Winger's television series *Transatlantic*. The thesis evaluates the relevance, factual precision, and logical coherence of the AI's output arising from the different prompts. The results are then used to discuss the applicability, relevance, and implications of Benjamin's "aura" with respect to new generative technologies.

Abstrakt

Tato práce zkoumá pojem "aura" filozofa a sociálního kritika Waltera Benjamina ve vztahu k nedávnému technologickému vývoji v oblasti umělé inteligence (UI). Za tímto účelem výzkum hodnotí přesnost vyprávění velkých jazykových modelů prostřednictvím případové studie s využitím programu Chat GPT3.5 společnosti Open AI. Jako podněty pro Chat GPT jsou použita tři různá vyprávění o pokusu o útěk a tragickém osudu Waltera Benjamina, přičemž každé z nich bylo vybráno tak, aby zachytilo různé typy historického vyprávění: V tomto případě se jedná o memoáry Lisy Fittko *Escape Through the Pyrenees*, knihu Julie Orringerové *The Flight Portfolio* a televizní seriál Anny Wingerové *Transatlantic*. Práce hodnotí relevanci, faktografickou přesnost a logickou koherenci výstupů UI vzniklých na základě různých podnětů. Výsledky jsou pak použity k diskusi o použitelnosti, relevanci a důsledcích Benjaminovy "aury" s ohledem na nové generativní technologie.

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Introduction

“The criterion of authenticity ceases to be applicable to artistic production, the total social function of art is reversed.. Instead of being based on ritual, it is based on another practice — politics.”¹

Walter Benjamin

“AI is not what you think, but rather what you do.” ²

Anthony Elliott

The state of the world is rapidly shifting with advancements of technology bringing forth a fundamental reshaping of the way we perceive and interact with information, art, and culture more generally. Recent developments in artificial intelligence (AI) have introduced the masses to new possibilities, ones which Walter Benjamin, the influential Jewish philosopher, cultural critic and writer, certainly would not have imagined at the beginning of the 20th century. In his most famous essay *The Work of Art in the Age of Mechanical Reproduction* (hereinafter referred to as *The Work of Art*) Benjamin discusses his seminal concept of ‘aura’, a notion which he defines as something which presupposes the inherent ‘authenticity’ and ‘uniqueness’ of an object or an artwork in its original form. He writes about the effects of the technological advancements of his era, analysing the possibilities of photography and cinema, and suggests their capabilities of diminishing the essence of the ‘aura’.

In the current landscape of AI, algorithms and digital processes are capable of creating, replicating and disseminating information with unprecedented efficiency. AI accelerators (processors of AI neural networks) enable large language models (LLM), such as Chat GPT (Generative Pre-training Transformer), which was developed in 2018 and launched in 2022 by research engine Open AI. LLM are deep learning algorithms which are trained on vast amounts of data to analyse, translate, predict and generate content. However, being trained on vast amounts of data does not guarantee accuracy, fidelity, or coherence—AI outputs can be influenced by biases and false information present in the training data. Beyond this, LLMs have been known to ‘hallucinate’ by simply making things up because their algorithms, which are based on generating plausible responses to prompts, have no means of discerning, or indeed no conception of truth. This is a cause for concern of the spread of distorted narratives and reality and puts into question whether the general public should trust such systems as providers of information and guidance.

Deep frustrations and concerns are spreading across all fields, including specialised workforces. In cultural sectors, there has been a spread of fear with the release of Chat GPT4. Actors’ and writers’ unions are striking for the first time in more than sixty years due to unfair wages and “increasing precariousness of their jobs and concerns about being replaced by new artificial intelligence technologies.”³ There are uncertainties regarding what will happen to skilled workers, and beyond that, whether the image of reality will remain a human existential reflection of our experiences or whether technologies will begin to change the

¹ BENJAMIN, Walter. *The Work of Art in the Age of Mechanical Reproduction*. p.16.

² ELLIOTT, Anthony. *The Culture of AI: Everyday Life and the Digital Revolution*. p.xviii.

³ BECKETT, Lois. *Hollywood actors announce strike in first joint action with writers in more than 60 years* [online].

course of our history and our understanding of the past despite the collective information that is being submitted to it.

This thesis examines whether and how the rise of artificial intelligence aligns with Benjamin's theory of the dissolution of aura and authenticity by mechanical reproduction. By delving into a case study, the aim of this research is to analyse the authenticity of Chat GPT by testing how it creates documentary scripts in response to various prompts. Three sources, all focused on narrative depictions of Walter Benjamin's journey across the Pyrenees and fate in Portbou will be used as prompts. By comparing Lisa Fittko's memoir, Julie Orringer's historical novel *The Flight Portfolio* and Anna Winger's series *Transatlantic*, the study aims to reveal the differences in representation of the past. The results of the tests will be analysed according to the relevance, factual accuracy to history and logical consistency of the input of the generated content and further evaluated according to the false claims, true specific facts and fictional elements.

With the support of academic texts and the gathered data from testing, the thesis will evaluate whether and how Benjamin's theory can be applied in regards to this new form of technology.

CHAPTER I

Walter Benjamin's essay *The Work of Art* remains a crucial theoretical text for the art world and continues to be explored in regards to developing technological paradigms. In his text, published in 1935, Benjamin explores the notion of authenticity when it comes to works of art. For Benjamin authenticity is the value in regards to "a strange tissue of space and time"⁴, which he describes to determine its unique existence and "aura". The concept of "aura" is detailed by Benjamin as a quality of an artwork which cannot be communicated through mechanical reproduction techniques (ie. photography or cinematography). Benjamin argues that the developments in mechanical reproduction offer artists new ways to think and create art works, which do not have to be tied to traditional and ritual value, giving space for socio-political transformation. His essay further asserts the role of the masses in the response and interpretation and sees the benefits of mechanical reproduction in the possibilities of art reaching wider audiences and eliminating exclusivity and limited access.

The ease of reproduction and dissemination has further developed with the dawn of the digital age. Advancements in AI have unlocked new possibilities for artists to express themselves. Curiosity arises when considering whether through these new technological advancements, our society has further approached the elimination of the "aura" as Benjamin saw it and whether Benjamin's concept itself may dissipate.

With the use of specific source material, this thesis aims to analyse the authenticity of a narrative depicted by Chat GPT. The use of prompts with a variety of information will allow for a study in respect to the effect the input information has on the generated content. The focus will be on what elements the LLM chooses to create its texts from, and whether these can be defined as authentic outcomes. Three sources will be used in reference to Walter Benjamin's journey across the Pyrenees and his fate in Portbou: a memoir, a historical novella and a television series - the sources are presented below. These three genres have been chosen due to how the respective media intermix different ways of representing objective and subjective reality, and at times interweaving fictional elements between the two which can be surprisingly challenging to identify.

1.1 Walter Benjamin's fate as depicted in Lisa Fittko's memoir *Escape Through the Pyrenees*

The depiction of reality and historical truth is fundamentally about perspective. Memoirs and autobiographies are depictions of one's memory of the past and describe an account of experiences as they 'appeared from different acknowledged perspectives, enabling historians to rethink and re-feel past experiences.'⁵ The authenticity of the work relies on the author's ability to recollect the instances from the time and space that they were in, and the aura of the work is dependent on the value of the personal story. Memoirs serve as a representation of a subjective truth, and their accuracy and the depiction of the true facts of such stories is dependent on the writer's memory and interpretation. This thesis uses Lisa Fittko's writing as an example to explore this further.

Walter Benjamin is regarded as one of the most popular philosophers and cultural critics of his time. During his attempted escape across the Pyrenees he carried a briefcase and told

⁴ BENJAMIN, Walter. *The Work of Art in the Age of Mechanical Reproduction*. p. 15.

⁵ WALLACH, JENNIFER JENSEN. *BUILDING A BRIDGE OF WORDS: THE LITERARY AUTOBIOGRAPHY AS HISTORICAL SOURCE MATERIAL*.

anti-fascist resistance fighter Lisa Fittko, that “this manuscript was the work of his life as he considered it and that getting the manuscript out of France and out of the hands of the Germans was much more important than his life.”⁶ However, the briefcase has been a curious mystery since it was not found after the great thinker’s tragic death in Portbou in 1940. It has been recorded that Fittko found a route across the Pyrenees and helped hundreds of refugees to cross the border from France to Spain with the aim of escaping the fascists and Nazis, Benjamin being among the first group with which she crossed the frontier.⁷

The journey that Lisa made with Benjamin was the first time she climbed the route. Having no papers herself she only accompanied the refugees until they could see the village on the Spanish side and then turned back. She notes this in her memoir *Escape Through the Pyrenees*:

“The path descended gradually. It must have been about two in the afternoon when we came to the end of the cliff wall, and I could see the town in the valley below, quite near.

“There below us is Port-Bou! The town has a Spanish border station where you must register. This road leads directly there. A real road!” Around two o’clock. We had left at four that morning; Benjamin, at about seven. So, some ten hours altogether.

“Now I really must turn back,” I went on. “We’re in Spain, have been for almost an hour. Descending can’t take very long, from here you can already see houses. Go directly to the border post and show them your papers, the travel documents, the Spanish and Portuguese transit visas. As soon as you have your entry stamp, take the first train to Lisbon. But you already know all that. Now I have to go. Auf wiedersehen.”

I stood for a moment and watched as they started down the bumpy road. It’s high time for me to get going, I thought, and started back.”⁸

The depictions of the journey are accurate and authentic to the location that Fittko describes, for Port-Bou lies in the valley next to the Pyrenees and is surrounded by cliffs. The narrative is told in a personal and subjective manner, seen in her expression and use of repetition, as it reads “This road leads directly there. A real road!”, indicating the emotion which Fittko will have experienced during her journey. The narration holds a sense of “aura” in Benjamin’s term, for the reader is provided with an original story, depicted by an individual who expresses the effects of the time and place that they experienced.

1.2 Walter Benjamin’s fate as depicted in Julie Orringer’s historical novella *The Flight Portfolio*

In his writings Benjamin evaluated the purity of representation by the value of its expression. Researcher Stephanie Chapman wrote that “Benjamin reminds us that talk has the potential

⁶ *Jewish Survivor Lisa Fittko Testimony Part 2* | USC Shoah Foundation. USC Shoah Foundation. (2:05:20)

⁷ *IN MEMORIAM: LISA FITTKO, HOLOCAUST RESCUE ACTIVIST* [online]. Dostupné z: <http://new.wymaninstitute.org/2005/04/in-memoriam-lisa-fittko-holocaust-rescue-activist/>.

⁸ FITTKO, Lisa. *Escape Through the Pyrenees*. p.112.

to conquer an idea, but that writing controls the idea.”⁹ By formulating reality into a language, ie. words, visual representations or sounds, a concrete reflection of the experience is created. The act of telling a story requires memory and perspective, and the authenticity of a narrative is linked to its time, place and origin. The cultural theorist Mieke Bal suggests that language allows a writer to create and conquer time and states that “Reality only becomes meaningful when it is re-created in art.”¹⁰ Creatives throughout history have combined lived experiences with fictional narratives to inspire and draw value to past events, but does this muddy our understanding of reality and the truth?

History and a collective understanding of the past serves as a vital link to our cultural heritage and can determine how we think and act. Tom Rosensteel, academic and journalist, voices his concern about the line between fact and fiction stating that “what is real and made up, is blurring. The move in journalism toward infotainment invites just such confusion, as news becomes entertainment and entertainment becomes news.”¹¹ A postmodernist may brush this off by stating that there is no such thing as facts, but rather perceptions of reality, influenced by personal cultures, gender or race.

The historical novel, a genre of literature which mixes historical and fictional elements, has often caused confusion in the telling of history, however until now the debate has been between humans. Historian Roger Chartier claims that “The distinction between author and public is about to lose its basic character. The difference becomes merely functional; it may vary from case to case. At any moment the reader is ready to turn into a writer.”¹² Chartier refers to Benjamin’s writing and suggests a “obliteration of the difference between artist and spectator” where anyone may take the role of the creator, and which reinforces an “indistinguishability between the positions of practices of producer and consumer.”¹³

By immersing oneself in the world of historical fiction, audiences can develop an initial curiosity which can spark deeper interests in exploring the actual historical records, as professor David Pearson says “historical fiction provides a schema that the reader then applies to the factual information.”¹⁴

In order to analyse whether Chat GPT is able to differentiate between the historical findings and fiction, this thesis takes a closer look at the description of Walter Benjamin’s passing in Julie Orringer’s historical novel *The Flight Portfolio*¹⁵:

“But the door opened at his touch, and he entered to find Hirschman and Lena standing silently at a window, a single shivering telegram held between them.

“What is it?” Varian said, looking from one stricken face to the other.

“Walter Benjamin is dead,” Hirschman said.

“Oh, God, no. How?”

“By his own hand, at Portbou.”

⁹ CHAPMAN, Stephanie. *Walter Benjamin's Literary Aura: A Stylistic and Thematic Analysis of One-Way Street* [online], p.9.

¹⁰ BAL, Mieke a . *Narratology: Introduction to the Theory of Narrative*, p.230.

¹¹ CLARK, Roy Peter. *The Line Between Fact and Fiction*, p. 5.

¹² CHARTIER, Roger. *Mechanical Reproduction to Electronic Representation*, p. 110.

¹³ CHARTIER, Roger. *Mechanical Reproduction to Electronic Representation*, p.110.

¹⁴ ANDERSON, R. C. *A schema-theoretic view of basic processes in reading comprehension*, p. 269.

¹⁵ Named after a limited edition cache of prints of paintings by famous artists to raise funds for humanitarian aid done by the International Rescue Committee.

Varian dropped into a chair and closed his eyes.”¹⁶

Orringer’s narration is told from the perspective of Varian Fry, a journalist and head of the Emergency Rescue Committee, a rescue network in Vichy France set up before WWII, and depicts the historical setting. Albert Hirschman, an economist and resistance fighter was a key figure to the rescue committee as well as Lana Fischmann, who volunteered as an organiser and administrator for the committee. Although the work is fictional, it is indeed likely that they received a telegram regarding Benjamin’s death. The book further includes correct detailed information of his death in Portbou, adding to its truthful depiction, making it appear more authentic. The story is told in a dramatised way, focusing on the despair and emotion that would undoubtedly have been present in the room at the time of the event but that nevertheless would not have been known first-hand by the author. The use of the word ‘shivering’ alerts the reader of the alarming message. This is followed by short but concise dialogue, allowing for the reader to imagine the sternness of the situation. The focus on the emotions is further depicted by referring to Varian having ‘closed his eyes’, suggesting the sorrow and upset in the character.

1.3 Walter Benjamin’s fate as depicted in the episode *The Angel of History* in the series *Transatlantic* by Anna Winger

Television series have had a huge impact on the entertainment industry, and since the fifties have rapidly been evolving parallel to their audiences. Many cultural theorists have analysed the problematic relation between reality and its portrayal, emphasising that a representation is not an absolute imprint of reality. Visual content has an effect on audiences’ perception of reality and, as scholar and critic Erika Balsom writes, there are no assumptions “that there is a mirrored isomorphism between reality and representation or that the act of filming can be wholly non interventionist.”¹⁷ She suggests that by being in a physical space itself, or through interaction there is automatically a presence of authentic contact and response. For the audience to be able to relate and understand the content of TV series, the relevance is linked to the time and place of the given narrative and setting, as well as the previous knowledge of the viewer.

According to Benjamin, “aura” is the unique presence and authenticity that a work of art possesses in its original form. TV series, like cinematography according to Benjamin, diminish the sense of aura due to departing from the original form. By piecing together elements which do not exist in the real world, authenticity is lost, a means by which critical thought and interpretation is encouraged. There is a danger in trusting the audience to interpret truth for themselves, and Benjamin refers to this in his essay *The Work of Art*: “The public is an examiner, but an absent-minded one.”¹⁸ What he means by this, is that the viewer can easily be distracted and manipulated into a state where one becomes absorbed by the context that they are perceiving rather than contemplating it.

The historical drama genre in television is thriving and the common claim that a series is “inspired” or “based” on true events is a way of enticing the viewers on the basis of truth. Docudramas and other genres interconnecting the real basis and fiction, are often built on

¹⁶ ORRINGER, Julie. *The Flight Portfolio*, p.131.

¹⁷ BALSOM, Erika. *The Reality-Based Community* [online].

¹⁸ BENJAMIN, Walter. *The Work of Art in the Age of Mechanical Reproduction*, p.19.

major fabrications and distorted by inaccuracies, yet media companies and the lawyers representing studios excuse themselves under the First Amendment laws, suggesting the work to be an artistic dramatisation of controversial and contested historical events, and claim “it’s often not feasible – or legally necessary – to fact-check scripts for historical accuracy.”¹⁹

Anna Winger’s series *Transatlantic* (2023) is such a work, namely “a work of fiction inspired by real people and real events,”²⁰ toeing the line between fact and fiction. With the backdrop of the chaos of world war two in France, the show’s focus is on queerness, relationship struggles, and parties. Despite the possibility of telling the historically reliable, heart-wrenching and compelling stories of what happened during the mission of the Emergency Rescue Committee, Winger focuses on relationships between fictional characters such as Thomas Lovegrove [Varian Fry’s fictional lover played by Amit Rahav] or Paul Kadjo [Lisa Fittko’s fictional lover played by Ralph Amoussou] to bring the narrative to current fashionable demographics rather than the authentic and true storytelling. This can be interpreted to be what Benjamin foresaw, where the author focuses on the political, rather than representational aspect of storytelling.

In an interview Winger stated “all the research is an important part of the process, but then liberating myself from the burden of ‘it’s not a documentary, it’s a television series,’ and allowing the characters to take on lives of their own in a way in my imagination.”²¹ The differentiation she makes between documentary and television series, underscores the perceived differences in value and authenticity in regards to depicting the truth in the two genres. Later, she continues to add “we’re trying to play with plausible deniability like *it might have happened*.”²² This aspect of historical dramas is what often causes confusion and misinterpretation of what truly happened in reality. For the sake of this thesis, a short excerpt of the series has been chosen to use for analysis of how Chat GPT interprets the fiction from the fact.

In the series’ episode three, called *The Angel of History*,²³ Walter Benjamin’s story is included, with the alterations to the story. Unlike in historical records, Lisa Fittko gets arrested in Spain alongside Benjamin:

Walter Benjamin: [In German] Something’s wrong.

Lisa Fittko: Stay calm.

Border Officer: [in English] The border was closed yesterday. How did you get over here?

Lisa Fittko: The French let us through.

Border Office: There is a hotel next door. Stay there until this is resolved.²⁴

The morning after, Lisa is shown to be the one to discover Benjamin on his deathbed and subsequently forgets to retrieve his briefcase. This sequence of events defies the first-hand

¹⁹ SPERLING, Nicole a Jeremy PETERS. ‘Based on a True Story’ (Except the Parts That Aren’t) [online].

²⁰ As stated in titles at the end of each episode of the series.

²¹ BURACK, Emily. *Is Transatlantic a True Story?* [online].

²² Ibid.

²³ Walter Benjamin, in his essay ‘Theses on the Philosophy of History’, describes Paul Klee’s art *Angelus Novus* as the image of the angle of history, a metaphor to the state of the society that Benjamin lived in.

²⁴ *Transatlantic* (2023) episode *The Angel of History* at 29.13 minutes.

accounts described by those who were involved. As per her memoir, Lisa did not cross the border at this time, nor was she the one to find Benjamin on his deathbed.

Winger believes the series will invite Netflix viewers to learn more about the true story. "The people who lived through these stories are dying out," she told the Jewish Telegraphic Agency, she continues "my job is to bring this to a wide audience, to people who don't know anything about it."²⁵ Pierre Sauvage, president of the Varian Fry Institute, however did not appreciate the artistic take of the story, he called the show's trailer "shocking." "Are there any red lines?" he wrote, "can one fictionalise at will, with no concern for the reality of the story, for the false impression that people will get – and for the way it affects the private lives of the families of people portrayed?"²⁶ The fictional elements of a narrative can often be difficult for audiences to discern and in respect cause the spread of false information which can cause harm, damage and confusion.

Walter Benjamin wrote about the changes in society brought by cinema, and in his essay he states that "film is the first art form whose artistic character is entirely determined by its reproducibility."²⁷ He suggests that photographic arts lack 'aura' by stating that there is no 'original' piece of work when it comes to mechanically reproduced image, meaning that there is no one definite authentic piece. For example, even the negative of the film is just a component with which one can create, by making aesthetic choices and through labour, such as choosing the exposition during developing the film, something that can be replicated. This applies to digital film and TV material as well, in example the choices in colour grading of footage.

Benjamin refers, similarly to film theory put forward by montage theorists such as Lev Kuleshov and Sergei Eisenstein, that the meaning, emotions, spaces and time can be constructed through montage editing. Further he discusses the loss of 'aura' in film, due to the loss of spatial and temporal contact between the actors and the audience, eliminating the possibilities of a unique and authentic performance.

If filming something changes the thing that it records– such as being able to see the opening of a flower bloom by time-lapse capture– it is not merely a technology that reproduces and dissipates the authenticity and the original, but it rather qualitatively creates a distinction from our perceptual access to the image. In *In the Age of Art* it reads "at the moment at which the criterion of authenticity ceases to be applied to artistic production, the whole social function of art is revolutionised. Instead of being founded on ritual, it is based on a different practice - politics."²⁸ Benjamin's theory suggests that through filmmaking there is a chance of moving past the "ritual" ideologies of art.

²⁵ LI BARTOV, Shira. *The real Jewish history behind Netflix's 'Transatlantic' and the WWII rescue mission that inspired it* [online].

²⁶ LI BARTOV, Shira. *The real Jewish history behind Netflix's 'Transatlantic' and the WWII rescue mission that inspired it* [online].

²⁷ BENJAMIN, Walter. *The Work of Art in the Age of Mechanical Reproduction*, p.20.

²⁸ BENJAMIN, Walter. *The Work of Art in the Age of Mechanical Reproduction*, p.17.

1.4 Can AI LLMs create truthful and trustworthy content?

The current landscape of artificial intelligence is simultaneously exciting and daunting. Opportunities to solve problems and advance the tools at an exponential speed in all fields is a development which is taking our society to a new level of existence.

Historian, philosopher and professor Yuval Harari recently stated that "Human society is built on stories. Our understanding of laws, money and languages is based on a social understanding of stories... the cultural cocoon was until now woven by humans, now it will be in the hands of technology."²⁹ The narratives that we tell are what construct the reality and understanding of our existence, until now humans have been the ones to construct the truth of our past, and now we might be at the dawn of a new age. Rapid advancement and developments in AI bear responsibilities, and as AI tools are being introduced to the masses at a fast speed, the intense popularity has created a race amongst tech-companies without proper framework, infrastructure or rules to safeguard society from potential dangers.

Tristan Harris and Aza Raskin³⁰, co-founders of the Centre for Humane Technology, warn against dangers of the lack of restrictions on the new technologies. Having studied and revealed some of the outcomes of how unrestricted private social media companies caused negative effects on global politics and people's privacy and mental health, the two academics call for limitations to be put into place in order to safe-guard the future.

Digital life is unavoidable in contemporary society, and it has produced, as sociologist Anthony Elliot suggests, "transformations of the relations between the public, political and global on the one hand and the private, sexual and psychological on the other."³¹ From manipulating individuals' moods to radically changing people's political opinions as uncovered in the Cambridge Analytica Scandals where misinformation and falsehoods were spread affecting the American Elections as well as Brexit Referendum in 2016.³²

Benjamin's essay *Arts in the Age* refers to mechanically produced art as being beneficial with respect to its ability to appeal to the masses.³³ As companies and institutions increasingly incorporate LLM technology into products like search engines, product reviews and journalism, it may become more appealing for the masses to give up manual searching in favour of fast and direct information.

²⁹ AI and the future of Humanity Yuval Noah Harari 16:36min

³⁰ Tristan Harris and Aza Raskin star in the docu-drama 'The Social Dilemma' (2020 dir. Jeff Orlowski) to reveal some of the mechanisms and outcomes of social media companies on their users.

³¹ ELLIOTT, Anthony. *The Culture of AI: Everyday Life and the Digital Revolution*. p.5.

³² CONFESSORE, Nicholas. *Cambridge Analytica and Facebook: The Scandal and the Fallout So Far* [online].

³³ BENJAMIN, Walter. *The Work of Art in the Age of Mechanical Reproduction*, p.17.

CHAPTER II

AI algorithms can now create paintings, compose music, and even generate pieces of writing. This proliferation of AI-generated art raises questions about the uniqueness, authorship, and authenticity of these creations, brings up ethical questions and challenges the traditional notion of artistic expression and authorial intent. Moreover, AI algorithms are being used to generate and distribute social media content, scripts, and news articles which, given the limitations of these systems with respect to accuracy discussed previously, raises important questions about increasingly low-quality informational content becoming more and more widely disseminated. These questions regarding the line between fact and fiction are hardly new, as scholar and cinema/art critic Erika Balsom notes that “The insistence that documentary is forever invaded by fictionalisation leads to a dangerous relativism that annuls a distinction between truth and falsity that we might rather want to fight for.”³⁴ AI threatens to further blur these lines and accelerate the process.

The aim of this thesis is to show and analyse the effectiveness of Chat GPT3.5 in producing an accurate and authentic documentary script depicting Walter Benjamin’s trip across the Pyrenees. This chapter will do so by the following study: a set of five questions were submitted to the text generative machine to study the variety in outcomes. The prompts were each submitted six times without any alteration, the generated results can be found in the Appendix under the name “Figure 1” and the the analysis notes follow in “Figure 2.” The sections below provide an analysis of the data for its relevance, factual accuracy and logical consistency.

2.1 Testing Chat GPT 3.5

The submitted common prompt which was used in each submission was: “Write a documentary scene about Walter Benjamin's journey across the Pyrenees and fate in Portbou.” Overall Chat GPT was successfully capable of recognising the task it was given. Without fail, every answer generated correctly identifies Walter Benjamin as a cultural critic and philosopher who attempted to escape the Nazis during the second world war.

In Test I, the aim was to assess how the LLM responds to a basic text generating task. By submitting the full name of the subject, the setting and situation, the parameters were set without in-depth detail. The style of writing and characterization of “documentary script” appears to most often be represented by a voice over narration. Five out of the six responses included false claims, all but one response included non-prompted true facts and one response included a completely fictionalised element.

The false claims are fascinating to read, for they are often closely related to the truthful elements surrounding the story. This can be seen in Test I.3 where it reads “Benjamin and his comrades found themselves trapped in a stateless limbo, unable to continue their journey or find a safe haven.” Although Benjamin was known for being a Marxists, the people who accompanied him were not his “comrades”. Also, being “trapped in a stateless limbo” was

³⁴ BALSOM, Erika. *The Reality-Based Community* [online].

not the issue that Benjamin and his fellow refugee travellers were troubled by, despite it being an issue which many refugees fleeing the Nazi's were forced into facing. Benjamin had a passport and even an exit visa in order to travel, he did not however have an exit stamp from France due to travelling on foot across the border. Detailed inaccuracies as such are interesting for they are disguised by the true facts and can easily be foreseen.

The LLM has been able to pick up on detailed facts which were not included in the prompt, such as the date during which Benjamin went onto the journey across the Pyrenees as seen in Test I.1 and Test I.4., or the name of Hotel Francia which was the location Benjamin died, as referenced in Test I.2.

In Test II, a short excerpt from Lisa Fittko's memoir was included in the prompt in order to see how much of the responses would rely on the data. Five out of six responses included direct quotations from the input information, making it evident that the submitted data was used as reference for creation of the text. The same ratio can be seen, where in five responses included camera instructions, a stylistic choice in writing the script to refer the reader to the filmic language suggested.

The logical consistency in a few responses was completely irrational, for example, in Test II.5 the linear narrative repeats a scene multiple times. The story repeats the element of getting an entry stamp twice: first time "the immigration officer stamps Walter's entry documents, allowing him to continue his journey. Walter and Lisa exchange a brief but poignant farewell" and the second time "as soon as you have your entry stamp, take the first train to Lisbon."³⁵ This aspect diminishes the reliability of the result, highlighting its inauthenticity.

With Test III, by submitting an excerpt from Julie Orringer's historical drama book, the intention was to see how the outcomes may be altered by inclusion of a fictionalised scene in the prompt. The results included large amounts of false claims in all responses, yet likewise as mentioned above the wrongful statements were all closely related to the subject. In Test III.2, there is a mention of Basque guides helping Benjamin across the Pyrenees. Such guides did exist, yet mainly in the neighbouring region of the Basque Country. Benjamin travelled through Catalan guided by Lisa Fittko, a refugee who was in exile from Germany. Another interesting false claim appeared in Test III.3, where it reads that Benjamin was accompanied by Gretel Karplus. Karplus, was the maiden name of Gretel Adorno, a close friend of Benjamin's and a figure of the Frankfurt School of critical thinking. She did not, however, travel with Benjamin across the Pyrenees.

In Test III.4 the generated outcome included a note at the end of the text which reads "While the events described in the scene are based on historical records and testimonies, the specifics of the dialogue and individuals present are fictionalised for the purpose of the documentary." The script's use of the method to excuse itself refers to the form which historical dramas often use, blurring the line between fiction and reality. Notably, Test III.5 includes a funny incoherence which reads "Benjamin opens the telegram, his hands trembling.] Walter Benjamin (whispering): "Walter Benjamin is dead."" The sequence does not make sense, seeing as this never happened nor is it possible for somebody to receive a notice of their own death, therefore the statement is absolutely inauthentic.

³⁵ As seen in Appendix, Figure 2.

For Test IV, providing a scene from a TV series which includes an inaccurate account and fully fictional occurrence, was intended to investigate whether Chat GPT would be able to separate truth from fiction. Each response included false claims, what was particularly interesting is that all texts claimed that Lisa confronted the border police or entered Port-bou with Benjamin. This demonstrates that Chat GPT 3.5, relies on the submitted prompt and does not differentiate the fiction from depicted reality.

Three out of the six results include fictionalised elements. In Test IV.6, the script includes a staged interview by Lisa Fittko, and suggests what she says, this is not possible for she passed away in 2005. For the first time, in Test VI.1, despite the request in the command, there is no mention of Benjamin's fate at all. Despite being prompted to "write a documentary script", Test VI.3 is fully written in the form and content of a fiction script.

All the scripts in Test IV include re-enactment, which is indicative of the influence the prompt has in the outcome of its text. Both in Test IV.1 and in Test IV.4 there is a mention of the type of language used, indicating that the prompt, which specifies when German or English is spoken, has had an effect on the text generated. In addition, direct quotations from the prompt are used in five of the six scripts.

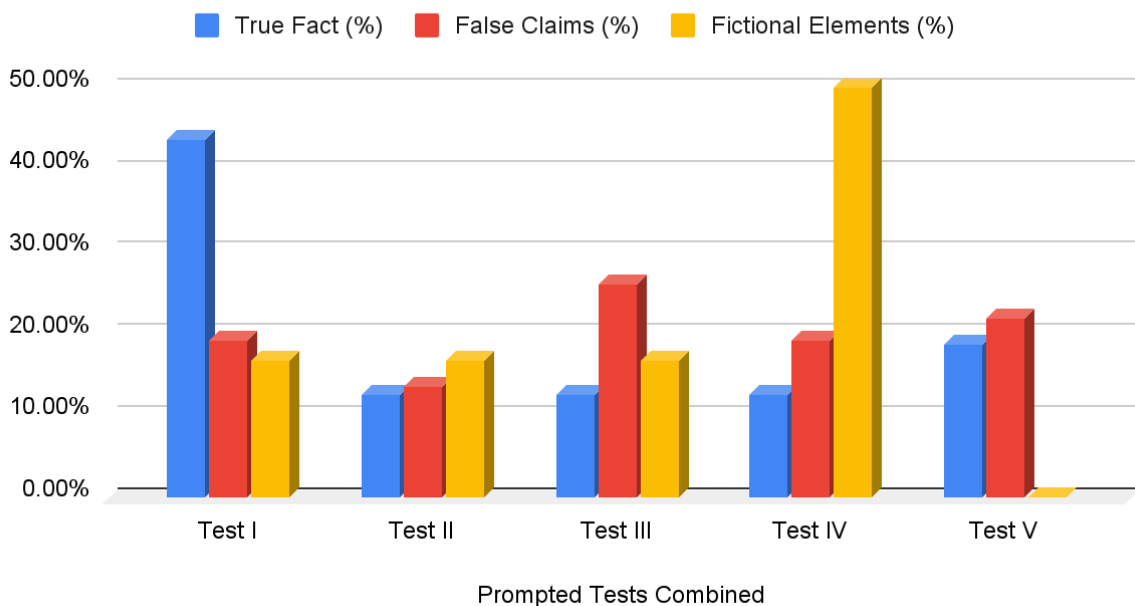
Lastly, Test V combines all of the above prompts into one, the aim was to see how Chat GPT responds to contradictions of information in the submitted data and whether it would be able to identify the facts from fiction. The data shows that there is limited ability to generate original insights. Four out of six responses were logically incoherent, demonstrating the struggles of creating the responses. For example, similarly to the incoherence in Test V III.5, both Test V.5 and Test V.6, suggest that Benjamin receives a message about his own death.

All six responses include re-enactment and direct quotations from the prompts. Lisa's memoir is left out as a source the most often and particular attention is brought to interaction with the border control, which Lisa did not take part in but is apparent in the prompts.

2.2 Summary Evaluation and Analysis of Data Gathered In Relation to Benjamin's "aura"

The particular focus of this thesis is on the authenticity of the responses, and the factual accuracy of the details is fascinating to analyse. Despite the fast paced development of the technology, there are still many mistakes, falsities or claims that have no basis in reality, as mentioned at the beginning of the thesis these are called 'AI hallucinations'. From the data gathered, the study focuses on: verifiably **true facts**, for example including additional detail of character's narrative; **false claims**, such as dates or information about an occurrence which do not fully align with recorded proof or the use of archive footage that does not exist; and **absolutely fictional elements**, such as made up characters or situations which are not related to the subject/situation.

Graph 1 - Test results from prompted Chat GPT 3.5



For the purposes of supporting the theories made in this thesis, the above data in Graph 1, which is based on information that can be found in the Appendix as Figure 3, is a visualisation of the gathered interpretations rather than a methodologically clear quantitative analysis.

The generated responses were all written in various formats of film script, and were mostly represented by the expository mode of documentary with the use of reenactment and voiced over narration. A basic yet striking result of the tests was that the more simple the generated text produced by Chat GPT, the less likely it was to write false claims. However, all of the prompts, except for Test I.5 and II.4, generated false claims that ranged from simple (such as getting historical figures' names wrong) to complex (for example making up situations). False claims appeared least in Test II, and this can be linked to the reliability of the prompt submitted. Despite the false claims, it is interesting that there were only a few circumstances where the generated text provided a made-up element of the story. For example, in Test V.6 the generated text implied that Benjamin met with the "Comité de Ayuda a los Judíos" which is an organisation that never existed. Further, Test I.3 and IV.2 both suggested the use of archival footage of the journey which does not exist. Test IV, in which the prompt with the TV series was used, included the highest amount of fictional elements. This can be seen as a direct effect of the generated text imitating the false claim that Lisa Fittko went to Port-bou with Benjamin.

The generated true facts were often similar, such as details like the Hotel Francia being the location where Benjamin passed away, as referenced in Test I.2 and V.3, or the correct specific date of his journey as referenced in Test I.4, III.4 and V.4. Test I had the most true facts at 43.75% out of all the results, this was most likely due to the simple prompt submitted.

The results in Test V did not include any fictional elements but rather incorporated high amounts of responses with false claims which were all directly related to the events. This could be linked to the effects of larger quantities of data submitted to Chat GPT, causing the

short generated responses to be focused on the data prompted rather than the data bank the LLM was trained on. However, further tests and analysis is needed to further investigate this claim.

It is captivating that each response is unique and can never be regenerated, however it is evident that the predictive text is repetitive and uses certain words and adjectives in combination with a particular topic more regularly than others. For example, the words “rugged” or “treacherous” are used countless times.

The prompt requested Chat GPT to write a script, a piece of text which outlines the plot, characters, structure and narrative. The significance of specifically prompting a “documentary” script, was to request content regarding the depiction of reality. The concerns related to generated false claims or fictional elements are linked to the inability for readers to identify the quality of the content.

Another interesting feature that appeared in the generated text was the reflexive stylistic choice used in the script. By exposing the film crew or the real emotions of the actors playing in the re-enactments, the script suggests capturing the reality of the situation, making it a more authentic account. In certain tests there were suggestions of inciting certain emotions from the viewer or audience, for example in Test V.5 there is a reference to provoking a “sense of sombre reflection.” An addition at the end of Test V was surprising, where it suggested the use of quoted text making it evident that the submitted data was used as reference for creation of the text. This aspect could be seen to take origin from the human prompt.

In considering the above results, it appears clear that Chat GPT3.5 does not have the capability of differentiating fiction from fact-based information. Overall it was fascinating that all of the results referred to elements of the documentary form, such as archive footage, reenactment and narrated voice over, but there was no attempt at any more experimental forms of representation. It was intriguing to see that in some outputs the text suggested how the audience might or should feel, indicating an emotional directive to the viewer’s experience and in one test even there was acknowledgement over the presence of fictionalised dialogue, acknowledging the creative liberties taken.

The way we portray things has an effect on how we perceive the present and the future. Art history professor John Tagg writes that “The very idea of what constitutes evidence has a history... the problem is historical, not existential.”³⁶ The distinction between what is truth and what is false is very much subjective.

2.3 Restriction and Limitations of the study

The CEO of OpenAI, Sam Altman, wrote on twitter that “ChatGPT is incredibly limited but good enough at some things to create a misleading impression of greatness. It’s a mistake to be relying on it for anything important but a preview of progress. We have lots of work to do on robustness and truthfulness.”³⁷ Despite the fast paced developments, the technology is still very new and can only be regarded as a test model which can not be relied on for accuracy or truthfulness. It may be important to note as well that, at the bottom of the

³⁶ TAGG, John. *The Burden of Representation*, p.27.

³⁷ ALTMAN, Sam. *ChatGPT is incredibly limited* [online].

webpage it reads “Free Research Preview. ChatGPT may produce inaccurate information about people, places, or facts.”³⁸

There are an array of restrictions and limitations associated with the research which one needs to take into account. Firstly, the analysis of truthfulness, which for this study has been simplified and narrowed down to whether claims are false, is dependent on interpretation and relies on human evaluation of the depiction of reality.

Nobody, not even AI itself is able to explain how algorithms of the neural networks function. Due to the inability to view Open AI’s comprehensive data bank, there is no way of determining the origin of the results. The submission of prompts may not have been formulated optimally for the generator, and could cause an impact on the quality of the results. The use of the term ‘documentary’ could be seen as problematic as it can not be automatically relied on as a source of truthful storytelling. Another constraint can be recognised in the choice to use Chat GPT 3.5, which is less advanced than Chat GPT4.

During the process of preparing this thesis, it was challenging to create a framework for the testing itself. Due to LLMs being relatively recently released to the public, the research done on the topic is still fairly limited. There is no guidebook on how to prompt LLMs, and with the limitations of this thesis, it was not possible to expand to studying the results from variations of the prompts. These limitations indicate that it would be beneficial to expand the research and test other LLMs to allow for a broader reading and testing of the AI’s abilities.

³⁸ *Chat GPT* [online]. Dostupné z: <https://chat.openai.com>.

CHAPTER III

3.1 Walter Benjamin's theory in the age of AI

AI-powered platforms and algorithms contribute to the widespread distribution and consumption of art, making it accessible to a global audience. By considering Benjamin's concepts, we can gain insights into the implications of AI on the creation, dissipation, and interpretation of art in the digital age.

In his essay *The Work of Art* Benjamin echoes film theorists when writing about the "aura". Like Sergei Eisenstein and Lev Kuleshov, he discusses the effects of montage, and associates it to a way of dissipating the "aura" by allowing for innumerable possibilities of edits of the same material. The same could be said for the effects of text generative programmes, where the output text is dependent on the bank of data it has been trained on, the mechanism of the neural networks, plus the prompt used. The mechanisms of neural networks are unclear to researchers, for the processes of defining probabilities are concealed in so called "hidden layers", which the research and development company "DeepAI" defines as a part of neural networks which "performs nonlinear transformations of the inputs entered into the network."³⁹ Each outcome lacks authenticity due to its inability to capture or understand of "original" and "ritualistic" value, undefinable to a particular time, location or subject. These systems, by definition, take apart the original source text, break it down to try and categorise and label it, and then repackage and reconstruct them from the ground up in a probabilistic attempt to guess what its users want it to say—breaking down the original meaning is intrinsic to the process. This however, may change if the inevitable and needed enforcement to label and tag the generated text occurs. Being able to recognise AI generated data is crucial in the ability to restrict the spread of harmful content.

Benjamin, similarly to other philosophers, refers to cinema as "not only recording reality" but as something that captures a three dimensional image, limited by its framing and margins on the screen. Benjamin's thoughts in regards to this refer to the loss of aura in cinema due to the limitations of the captured and represented content. This reading can be associated with text generative programmes as well, seeing as the output is only a representation of a possible outcome. Furthermore, *The Work of Art* refers to the benefits of the loss of "aura" through cinema as something that allows for the medium to spread to the masses, for it is as Benjamin says 'an acquisition of the collective,'⁴⁰ a source accessible to all. Chat GPT has made this new type of technology accessible to a general audience, a tool which people can now, for example, use to expand their ability to code, do accounting or write texts with the assistance of large language models. The outputs that are created could be said to currently exist without the aura, for everybody has the same access to it wherever in the world they are.

The 1930s were, similarly to the present day, years of economic and political uncertainty paired with great technological development. Moving images threatened to be used as a tool of manipulation, as Benjamin suggests that form and content when "used in an unchecked way (and monitoring them is difficult today), allow factual material to be manipulated in the

³⁹ *Hidden Layer* [online].

⁴⁰ BENJAMIN, Walter. *The Work of Art in the Age of Mechanical Reproduction*, p.17.

interests of fascism.”⁴¹ Today, the worry lies in the troubles that may be brought on by the capitalist system, where owners of private companies have the power to decide how AI systems are developed and distributed. The authenticity of the data released is not possible for individuals to govern themselves, so government restrictions need to be put into place in order to protect society from harm.

At every stage of a major breakthrough of a new media, there has been hesitation, mistrust and resistance against the developments and its effects on society and the individual. In the sixteenth century Roman Catholic Church, in attempt to restrict publication and distribution of literature, created the Index of Prohibited Books⁴² to restrict certain publications. Today, there are attempts to restrict LLMs to safeguard the consumers from bias, ethical concerns, and possible legal issues.

Benjamin was heavily influenced by Marxism but despite the fact that an orthodox theory of dialectical materialism would have considered the concept of the aura as something which corresponds to what it calls ‘ideology’, Benjamin took it very seriously, even with a sense of longing. It portrays some of his spiritual concerns, which found expression in his unique materialism crossed with a secular messianic Jewish philosophy.

An argument one may consider is that what Benjamin defines as “aura”, may in fact be something that exists in every human interaction. True authenticity may only be possible in pure human experience rather than a concept tied to art work or an object, a value which is impossible to record due to its temporal and immediate value, something that only exists in the here and now for each individual. The reason for its diminishing nature in association to mechanical reproduction or technological advancements could be said to relate to the decreasing frequency of direct human interaction as opposed to technologically-mediated interactions. The clear break that LLMs represent however is that, until recently, technological developments were not able to generate or develop content of their own accord, making the machine dependent on the human aura.

3.2 What can be foreseen of AI developments in regards to the concept of ‘aura’

In the 1960s, philosopher and professor Hubert Dreyfus, alongside other AI pioneers, developed pessimistic critiques of the relevance of AI to social organisation. He saw human intelligence as rooted in the unconscious mind and believed that our unconscious architectures could not be captured in the mathematical rules of AI.⁴³ However if the ways we portray and learn things has an effect on how we perceive our future, our unconscious architecture may become shaped by the tools which we use to shape our understanding of the present - in turn making the prompts that we submit, the aura - a temporal, unique and location dependent existence.

Two months after the release of chat GPT in November 2022 Microsoft, the company primarily invested in and partnered with Open AI, launched its open-ended text conversations on Bing. In response, Google raced to release its own version in March 2023 called Bard. In

⁴¹ BENJAMIN, Walter. *The Work of Art in the Age of Mechanical Reproduction*, p.12.

⁴² An attempt to restrict the printing and access of books and information.

⁴³ ELLIOTT, Anthony. *The Culture of AI: Everyday Life and the Digital Revolution*, p.40.

the same month, Ernie was released by the Chinese competitor Baidu.⁴⁴ It is evident that this new technology has infiltrated our lives already, and it is only a matter of time before the majority of societal functions will be dependent on it, and that is why nonprofits such as Center for Humane Technology⁴⁵ are advocating for developing digital infrastructure.

There are numerous benefits of integrating AI into our society. Benjamin highlights that mechanical reproduction, the technological advancements, create content which can be accessible to the masses, and allows for the traditional “aura” and ritualistic perception of art to be dissipated. In her article, Agnes Chandler states that “Digital art demands that we, the audience, acclimatise to a new relationship between artistic value and artistic medium.”⁴⁶ The loss of the “aura”, can be seen to further allow us to focus on the thought or as Benjamin calls it the “political”.

It is human creativity and ingenuity which shapes the capabilities of AI, as Antonio Torralba suggests “AI is a tool... that needs people behind it, the purpose is given by the people.”⁴⁷ The future of the artistic industries heavily relies on the collaboration between human and machine.

The lack of information or access to the original data that the LLM was trained on raises concern about the credibility and reliability of the information. The lack of transparency may lead to misinformation and could influence public opinion through the spread of unverified claims. The origin of the text generated is what Benjamin would have called the aura, and by losing access to this - Benjamin’s theory of the dissipation of authenticity rings true.

In April 2023 over 11,000 people signed an open letter to pause giant AI experiments, many countries have banned Chat GPT over privacy concerns.⁴⁸ AI experts, professors, politicians and the masses are calling for a need for restrictions, for something which would safeguard our democracy and protect the information we have gathered for thousands of years from being lost to chaos. This however, could be seen as a sign of a crucial gap in Benjamin’s theory of mechanical reproduction allowing for the loss of aura. For there may be an absolute need for aura in order for understanding of the real to persist, and therefore humanity will always strive to hold on to a sort of ritualistic value.

Atanasoski and Vora, the authors of *Surrogate Humanity* (a book which investigates the possibilities of humans machine coexistence), explain that the logics that are created by the work of the artificial intelligence do not fit into the frameworks we have set in society already, and they point to the discrepancy in the system for we don’t have protective measures in place for our labour or human rights. “Pushing against is limits of the imagination imposed by the symbolic logics of the surrogate human effect, the artistic, literary, engineering, and scientific projects we include in juxtaposition with those we critique refuse existing frames for recognizing full humanity, particularly the categories of the liberal politics of recognition such as the subject of labour or human rights.”⁴⁹ In order to trust the content that we gather and create there needs to be a commonly understood and accepted structure, as Balson

⁴⁴ GRANT, Nico. Google Devising Radical Search Changes to Beat Back A.I. Rivals.

⁴⁵ Centre for Humane Technology [online]. Dostupné z: <https://www.humanetech.com/>.

⁴⁶ CHANDLER, Agnes. *The Work of Art in the Age of Digital Reproduction: How Artistic Value Has Always Prevailed* [online].

⁴⁷ *Understanding the Role of AI in Reshaping the Film & TV Industry featuring Tye Sheridan*. 14:25 min

⁴⁸ UPADHYAY, Shyam Nandan. *OpenAI Opens Up Against AI Safety* [online].

⁴⁹ ATANASOSKI, Neda a Kaindi VORA. *Surrogate Humanity: Race, Robots, and the Politics of Technological Futures*. p.8.

suggests 'the rhetoric of a collapse of reality serves only those who seek to further it and benefit from it, there must be a thorough rehabilitation of the viability of observation in vanguard documentary.⁵⁰

The results of LLMs can be identified as 'auraless' due to the lack of human ability to source the generated outcomes to any particular origin, there is no given author, nor any specific data which can be pinpointed. The inability to see or understand how neural networks produce the outcomes they present, allows for the total loss of authenticity. Interestingly however, each time a prompt is submitted a unique outcome is generated, something that the LLMs never reproduce with the same value. This is a phenomenon which, despite lacking authenticity, resembles the qualities of Benjamin's aura, something which may be called digital or technological aura, "tech-aura"/"digi-aura".

⁵⁰ BALSOM, Erika. *The Reality-Based Community* [online].

CONCLUSION

Walter Benjamin's theories, written a hundred years ago, still continue to inspire cultural theory to this day. Just as reproducibility in the age of mechanical reproduction altered humanity's perception of art, AI's accessibility to a broader spectrum of creators and audiences takes a closer step to the dissipation of "aura." This thesis has argued that Benjamin's concept of the "aura" in the technological era can be seen to take on a new meaning.

Through a case study, testing Chat GPT with different mediums, namely Lisa Fittko's memoir *Escape Through the Pyrenees*, Julie Orringer's historical novel *The Flight Portfolio* and Anna Winger's television series *Transatlantic*, the research aimed to display the current abilities of large language models in depicting truthful narratives. The relevance, factual accuracy and logical consistency was determined for each set of tests, creating a wealth of data through which an analysis and evaluation was conducted. The generated text proved to be heavily determined by the prompts that were submitted, therefore confirming that AI outputs are easily influenced by biases and false information present in the input data. It became clear that chat GPT3.5 generates a large amount of AI hallucinations. These false claims, which are often based on facts around the same subject area as the prompt, give the generated text a sort of creativity and depth, reminiscent of the human aura.

The thesis further examined the authenticity of the outcomes, by identifying true facts, false claims and fictional elements of the outputs. As seen in Tests IV and V, the more complicated and fictional the prompt, the more difficult it became for Chat GPT3.5 to create cohesive outputs. However, surprisingly, the majority of the responses were coherent despite the AI hallucinations. What was evident through analysing the data, is that LLMs are not able to differentiate between objective and subjective reality, if a prompt includes fictional elements, the AI is not able to differentiate it from a depiction of reality.

The concepts expressed by Walter Benjamin regarding "aura" hold a captivating relevance to the current technological developments in AI. The outcomes produced by LLMs lack "aura" due the fact that they are not associated to a specific source nor traced to any distinct origin. Due to our inability to understand how the neural networks function, the generated text can not be linked to any particular dataset and therefore lacks authorship. However, the phenomenon that LLMs never replicate the same result bears a resemblance to a Benjaminian "aura" and can be regarded as something such as "tech-aura."

The incorporation of LLM technology has caused concern in the quality of information that will be widely spread, so it is now up to us to take responsibility for this new technology and set parameters to safeguard our depictions of the past and build towards a more secure future reality.

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APPENDIX

Figure 1.1

Prompt submitted	Write a documentary scene about Walter Benjamin's journey across the Pyrenees and fate in Portbou.
	CHAT GPT 3.5 Output
Test I.1	<p>Title: Passage to Portbou: Walter Benjamin's Tragic Journey</p> <p>INT. RESEARCH LIBRARY - DAY</p> <p>The camera pans across a dimly lit room filled with dusty bookshelves and scholars engrossed in their research. In the corner, a young documentarian, LUCIA, leafs through a weathered book on the life of Walter Benjamin. She stumbles upon a black and white photograph of the Pyrenees mountains and a caption that reads: "The final journey of Walter Benjamin." LUCIA (whispering to herself) The journey that ended in tragedy... I have to uncover the truth.</p> <p>INT. LIVING ROOM - DAY (ARCHIVAL FOOTAGE)</p> <p>Lucia sits across from an elderly woman, MARTA, who was a witness to Walter Benjamin's last days. LUCIA Could you please share your memories of Walter Benjamin's journey across the Pyrenees? MARTA It was the summer of 1940. Benjamin, a prominent philosopher and intellectual, was fleeing Nazi-occupied France. He sought refuge in Spain, aiming to reach Portugal and ultimately the United States. But his fate had a different plan. ARCHIVAL IMAGES blend with Marta's words, depicting Walter Benjamin's perilous escape through the Pyrenees.</p> <p>EXT. PYRENEES MOUNTAINS - DAY</p> <p>Walter Benjamin, disheveled and exhausted, trudges through the rugged terrain. The camera follows his footsteps as he climbs higher and higher, his resolve tested by the challenging conditions. MARTA (V.O.) Benjamin was accompanied by a small group of fellow refugees. They faced treacherous paths, unpredictable weather, and constant fear of discovery. The camera captures the vastness and beauty of the Pyrenees, juxtaposing it with the weary faces of Benjamin and his companions. They huddle together, offering support and encouragement.</p> <p>INT. PORTBOU CEMETERY - DAY</p> <p>Lucia and Marta stand before a simple tombstone in Portbou Cemetery. The inscription reads: "Walter Benjamin, 1892-1940." LUCIA (whispering) What happened here? MARTA When they reached the French-Spanish border, they were denied entry into Spain. The Spanish authorities, under pressure from the Nazis, refused them passage. ARCHIVAL FOOTAGE depicts Benjamin and his companions halted at the border, their hopes dashed.</p> <p>MARTA (V.O.) Desperate and with nowhere else to go, Benjamin made a devastating decision. He took his own life here in Portbou. A somber silence hangs in the air as Lucia contemplates the weight of Benjamin's tragic fate.</p> <p>EXT. PORTBOU - DAY</p> <p>Lucia walks through the picturesque streets of Portbou, observing its serene beauty. She stops at a memorial plaque erected in Benjamin's honor. LUCIA (whispering) Walter Benjamin, your journey may have ended here, but your ideas continue to resonate. Your writings illuminate the darkness of the world, inspiring generations to seek truth and justice. As the camera captures the memorial and the town beyond, the haunting presence of Benjamin's legacy lingers. FADE OUT.</p>
Test I.2	<p>Title: Passage through Portbou: Walter Benjamin's Fateful Journey</p> <p>[Scene opens with panoramic views of the Pyrenees, capturing the rugged terrain and the majesty of the mountains. A narrator's voice begins to speak over the footage.]</p> <p>Narrator (Voiceover): In the summer of 1940, amid the chaos of World War II, the eminent German philosopher, Walter Benjamin, found himself embarking on a treacherous journey across the Pyrenees mountains. Fleeing from the clutches of Nazi Germany, he sought refuge in neutral Spain. Little did he know that his path would lead to the small, unassuming village of Portbou, a place that would become etched in history forever. [Cut to a reenactment of Walter Benjamin traversing the mountainous trails, carrying a satchel of his precious manuscripts.]</p> <p>Narrator (Voiceover): Benjamin was no stranger to persecution and exile, as he was among the intellectual dissidents targeted by the Nazi regime. Determined to escape the fate of countless others who had faced imprisonment or worse, he embarked on this perilous journey towards the unknown. [The reenactment continues with Benjamin meeting local guides and fellow refugees who offer aid and companionship along the way.]</p> <p>Narrator (Voiceover): Throughout his arduous journey, Benjamin encountered the unwavering solidarity of fellow refugees and sympathetic locals who risked their lives to help those fleeing the horrors of war. Each step was a testament to the resilience of the human spirit amidst turmoil and destruction. [The scene transitions to a recreation of Benjamin's arrival in Portbou, depicting the serene beauty of the coastal village.]</p> <p>Narrator (Voiceover): Portbou, a tranquil village nestled between the mountains and the sea, offered a glimmer of hope for Benjamin and others seeking refuge. But fate had something else in store. [As the scene unfolds, Benjamin's arrival in Portbou is met with challenges, including bureaucratic hurdles and border controls.]</p> <p>Narrator (Voiceover): Despite making it to the safety of Portbou, the road to freedom was not without obstacles. Spanish authorities, wary of the influx of refugees, introduced strict border controls, and the process of securing exit visas became a daunting task. [Cut to Benjamin in contemplation, grappling with the uncertainty of his situation.]</p> <p>Narrator (Voiceover): Benjamin's dreams of reaching America, where he hoped to find solace and continue his philosophical work, seemed increasingly distant. Trapped in Portbou, he confronted the specter of his past and the uncertainty of his future. [The scene shifts to an interview with a local historian or resident who reflects on the village's history.]</p> <p>Local Historian/Resident (Interview): Portbou was a peaceful haven for many during those dark times. Yet, the tranquility was shattered by the urgency of war, and its impact was felt even in the remotest corners. [The reenactment shows Benjamin seeking refuge in a modest hotel, where he reflects on his life and works.]</p> <p>Narrator (Voiceover): In the Hotel Francia, an unassuming establishment in Portbou, Benjamin spent his final days in deep contemplation. Struggling with feelings of isolation and despair, he faced a profound internal struggle. [As the scene reaches its emotional climax, Benjamin makes a fateful decision.]</p> <p>Narrator (Voiceover): On the night of September 26, 1940, with his dreams of escape fading away and the threat of capture looming, Walter Benjamin took his own life. In this remote corner of the world, his light was extinguished, leaving behind an irreplaceable void in the world of philosophy and critical thought. [The camera pans out to show a memorial erected in Portbou, honoring the memory of Walter Benjamin.]</p> <p>Narrator (Voiceover): Today, Portbou stands as a solemn testament to the fragility of human existence and the indomitable spirit of those who dared to dream in the face of darkness. In this village forever marked by history, the legacy of Walter Benjamin endures, a reminder of the enduring human struggle for freedom and intellectual pursuit. [The documentary scene concludes with poignant shots of the Pyrenees and Portbou, symbolizing the lasting impact of Walter Benjamin's journey and fate.]</p>
Test I.3	<p>INT. DOCUMENTARY INTERIOR - LIBRARY - DAY</p> <p>The camera pans across a dimly lit library, filled with bookshelves lined with volumes on philosophy, history, and literature. In the center, a table covered with books, papers, and a map of the Pyrenees. The narrator's voiceover begins.</p> <p>NARRATOR (V.O.)</p> <p>Walter Benjamin, a renowned German philosopher and cultural critic, embarked on a treacherous journey across the Pyrenees in an attempt to escape the horrors of Nazi-occupied Europe during World War II. His destination was Portbou, a small coastal town on the Spanish-French border. The camera cuts to close-ups of old photographs of Benjamin, revealing his somber expression and thick-rimmed glasses.</p> <p>NARRATOR (V.O.)</p> <p>(CONT'D)</p> <p>It was September 1940 when Benjamin, accompanied by a group of fellow refugees, made his way through the rugged terrain of the Pyrenees. They faced the constant threat of border patrols and treacherous paths, desperate to find safety and freedom.</p> <p>INT. DOCUMENTARY INTERIOR - ARCHIVAL FOOTAGE - DAY</p> <p>Black and white archival footage shows refugees trudging through narrow mountain trails, carrying their belongings and searching for safe passage. The footage is grainy and evokes a sense of danger and uncertainty.</p> <p>NARRATOR (V.O.)</p> <p>(CONT'D)</p> <p>For Benjamin, the journey was physically and emotionally grueling. He was plagued by ill health and plagued by the ever-present shadow of the Nazis, who sought to capture and persecute him for his intellectual and Jewish heritage. The camera cuts to a shot of Benjamin's handwritten diary, filled with his poignant reflections on the journey and his fears for the future.</p> <p>NARRATOR (V.O.)</p> <p>(CONT'D)</p> <p>Yet, despite the hardships, Benjamin was determined to reach Portbou. He believed that once there, he could continue his intellectual work and perhaps find solace in the beauty of the Mediterranean coast.</p> <p>INT. DOCUMENTARY INTERIOR - INTERVIEW SET - DAY</p> <p>The camera transitions to an interview set, where a distinguished historian, PROFESSOR MARTINEZ, sits in a cozy chair. PROFESSOR MARTINEZ (reverently) Benjamin's journey across the Pyrenees is a testament to his unwavering intellectual courage. He was trapped by a complex web of circumstances, but he refused to bend behind the threat of ideas. The camera cuts to a montage of scenic shots of the Pyrenees, showcasing its majestic peaks and rugged beauty.</p> <p>NARRATOR (V.O.)</p> <p>Finally, after weeks of arduous travel, Benjamin and his companions reached the border town of Portbou. It was here that their fate would take a tragic turn.</p> <p>INT. DOCUMENTARY INTERIOR - ARCHIVAL FOOTAGE - DAY</p> <p>Archival footage shows the small coastal town of Portbou, capturing its picturesque streets, quaint buildings, and the stunning view of the Mediterranean Sea.</p> <p>NARRATOR (V.O.)</p> <p>(CONT'D)</p> <p>Due to bureaucratic complications and pressure from the Francist regime, the refugees were denied entry into Spain. Benjamin and his comrades found themselves trapped in a stateless limbo, unable to continue their journey or find a safe haven. The camera pans across photographs of Portbou's cemetery, revealing Benjamin's final resting place.</p> <p>NARRATOR (V.O.)</p> <p>(CONT'D)</p> <p>On September 26, 1940, at the age of 48, Walter Benjamin tragically took his own life in Portbou. The world lost a brilliant mind and a courageous thinker, whose ideas would continue to resonate for generations to come. The camera fades out, leaving the viewer with a sense of both admiration for Benjamin's journey and a profound sadness at the tragic end to his escape.</p> <p>NARRATOR (V.O.)</p> <p>(CONT'D)</p> <p>Benjamin's journey across the Pyrenees serves as a powerful reminder of the human cost of war and oppression, and the indomitable spirit of those who seek freedom and truth. His legacy endures, reminding us of the power of ideas and the importance of fighting for a just and compassionate world.</p> <p>FADE OUT.</p>
Test I.4	<p>INT. DOCUMENTARY FILM STUDIO - DAY</p> <p>The camera pans across a film studio, revealing a production crew setting up lights, cameras, and sound equipment. A director, JAMES, stands in front of a large screen displaying a map of the Pyrenees. He addresses the crew.</p> <p>JAMES</p> <p>Alright, everyone, we're about to dive into one of the most captivating chapters of Walter Benjamin's life. Today, we're recreating his journey across the Pyrenees and his fate in Portbou. Let's bring this story to life! The crew members nod and get into position. The camera operator adjusts the camera, focusing on James, who continues to address the team.</p> <p>JAMES</p> <p>(CONT'D)</p> <p>Walter Benjamin, a prominent German philosopher and cultural critic, embarked on this treacherous journey in the fall of 1940, during World War II. Fleeing Nazi persecution, he sought refuge in neutral Spain. Our task is to recreate his emotional and physical journey across the majestic Pyrenees Mountains. The scene transitions to a reenactment set, depicting the rugged terrain of the Pyrenees. A young actor, portraying Walter Benjamin, stands with a backpack, gazing at the mountain range before him.</p> <p>JAMES (V.O.)</p> <p>Benjamin had to navigate treacherous paths, avoiding border patrols and risking his life in pursuit of freedom. He had heard of the legendary mountain guides known as passeurs, who aided refugees in crossing the border into Spain. The camera follows Benjamin's journey, capturing his arduous trek through dense forests, steep cliffs, and narrow mountain trails. The scenery gradually shifts from lush greenery to a harsher, more desolate environment as Benjamin reaches higher altitudes.</p> <p>JAMES (V.O.)</p> <p>(CONT'D)</p> <p>Benjamin faced countless obstacles along the way. The rugged terrain, extreme weather conditions, and the constant threat of discovery pushed him to his limits. The scene transitions to Benjamin, worn and exhausted, reaching the final stretch of his journey. He stumbles upon a small coastal town nestled between the mountains—Portbou. The reenactment perfectly captures the eerie ambience of the place.</p> <p>JAMES (V.O.)</p> <p>(CONT'D)</p> <p>Portbou, a quiet fishing village, held the promise of safety for Benjamin. But fate had something else in store for him. The camera focuses on Benjamin as he enters a modest hotel. He engages in brief conversations with the locals, seeking assistance. Eventually, he is granted temporary refuge. The film crew captures the mounting tension and uncertainty surrounding Benjamin's situation.</p> <p>JAMES (V.O.)</p> <p>(CONT'D)</p> <p>Despite finding a temporary sanctuary, Benjamin faced an impending threat. The Spanish authorities, under pressure from the Nazis, were considering deporting him back to France. The scene transitions to the hotel room where Benjamin is staying. The camera captures his restless demeanor, his contemplative gaze out of the window, and the numerous manuscripts scattered on the floor.</p> <p>JAMES (V.O.)</p> <p>(CONT'D)</p> <p>Benjamin's intellectual pursuits, JAMES (V.O.)</p> <p>(CONT'D)</p> <p>On the evening of September 26, 1940, Benjamin learned of the news. Faced with the prospect of being captured and sent back to the Nazis, he made a fateful decision. He took his own life. The camera lingers on the hotel room, capturing the solemnity and the weight of Benjamin's final moments. The reenactment emphasizes the tragic nature of his decision.</p> <p>JAMES (V.O.)</p> <p>(CONT'D)</p> <p>In the face of immense despair, Benjamin made the ultimate sacrifice, leaving behind an enduring legacy. The scene fades out, leaving an air of melancholy and contemplation. The crew members remain silent, acknowledging the impact of Walter Benjamin's journey and his untimely fate in Portbou.</p> <p>FADE OUT.</p>
Test I.5	<p>INT. DOCUMENTARY SET - DAY</p> <p>A documentary crew is gathered around a large table, covered with maps, photographs, and research materials. The atmosphere is filled with anticipation as they prepare to film a crucial scene about Walter Benjamin's journey across the Pyrenees and his tragic fate in Portbou.</p> <p>DIRECTOR (looking at the crew)</p> <p>Alright, everyone, let's get ready to roll. Today, we're recreating the journey of Walter Benjamin across the Pyrenees and his untimely demise in Portbou. This scene is crucial to understanding the significance of his life and work. Remember, attention to detail is crucial. Let's make sure we capture the essence of Benjamin's journey. The crew members nod and begin setting up the cameras, adjusting lighting, and preparing the actors for their roles.</p> <p>EXT. PYRENEES MOUNTAINS - DAY</p> <p>The breathtaking beauty of the Pyrenees Mountains unfolds before the camera, revealing rugged peaks, verdant valleys, and winding paths. The crew, along with actors portraying Walter Benjamin and his travel companion, make their way through the stunning landscape.</p> <p>DIRECTOR (actioning the actors)</p> <p>Alright, Benjamin and his companion, begin your ascent. Remember, they were fleeing Nazi-occupied France, desperate to reach safety in Spain. The actors, clad in clothing from the 1940s, start hiking up the mountain, mirroring the steps of Walter Benjamin and his companion. The camera follows them, capturing the arduous journey.</p> <p>ACTOR (WALTER BENJAMIN) (struggling, out of breath)</p> <p>It's not easy, is it? Imagine what it must have been like for Benjamin, carrying all his belongings and the weight of the world on his shoulders.</p> <p>ACTOR (COMPANION) (nods)</p> <p>Indeed, the pressure of the situation, the fear of capture, it must have been unbearable. The scene continues, with the actors traversing treacherous paths, occasionally stopping to catch their breath or admire the awe-inspiring views. The camera captures their perseverance and the vastness of the mountains.</p> <p>EXT. PORTBOU - DAY</p> <p>The crew arrives at the picturesque town of Portbou, overlooking the azure waters of the Mediterranean Sea. The actors, now visibly tired and disheveled, step onto the streets, mirroring Benjamin's arrival.</p> <p>DIRECTOR (intense tone)</p> <p>Portbou. This is where it all ends for Benjamin. Let's recreate the fateful day. The actors move towards the Portbou Cemetery, their steps heavy with a sense of foreboding. The crew follows closely, capturing the solemn atmosphere.</p> <p>ACTOR (WALTER BENJAMIN) (whispering)</p> <p>This is it. The end of the line.</p> <p>ACTOR (COMPANION) (pats Benjamin's back)</p> <p>You did all you could, my friend. We are here now. They reach a memorial plaque dedicated to Walter Benjamin. The camera zooms in on the inscription, capturing the words that immortalize his tragic fate.</p> <p>DIRECTOR (voiceover)</p> <p>Walter Benjamin took his own life in this very town. His journey was filled with desperation and hope, but ultimately, the weight of his circumstances proved too much to bear. The crew captures poignant shots of the memorial, the somber expressions on the actors' faces, and the stunning backdrop of Portbou's coastal beauty.</p> <p>FADE OUT.</p> <p>The scene concludes, leaving an indelible impression of Walter Benjamin's journey across the Pyrenees and his untimely fate in Portbou. The crew takes a moment to reflect on the significance of Benjamin's life and the enduring impact of his ideas.</p> <p>DIRECTOR (softly)</p> <p>Thank you, everyone. That was a powerful scene. Let's pack up and move on to the next location. Walter Benjamin's story deserves to be told. The crew begins dismantling the equipment, a collective sense of purpose driving them forward as they continue to bring Walter Benjamin's remarkable journey to life.</p> <p>FADE OUT.</p>
Test I.6	<p>INT. LIBRARY - DAY</p> <p>A dimly lit library, lined with shelves full of dusty books. The camera pans across rows of weathered volumes until it comes to rest on a book titled "Walter Benjamin: A Life of Reflection." A hand reaches out and opens the book to a marked page, revealing a black and white photograph of Walter Benjamin, a renowned German philosopher and cultural critic. The camera zooms in on his piercing eyes, reflecting a profound intellect.</p> <p>NARRATOR (V.O.)</p> <p>Walter Benjamin, a man of great intellectual prowess, found himself trapped in the midst of political turmoil and persecution during the 1930s. With the rise of the Nazi regime, Benjamin, a Jewish intellectual, was forced to flee his homeland in search of refuge. His journey across the Pyrenees, a treacherous path to freedom, would prove to be his final voyage.</p> <p>CUT TO: EXT. THE PYRENEES - DAY</p> <p>A rugged mountain range stretches out before us, its peaks disappearing into the clouds. The camera follows a narrow trail winding through the breathtaking landscape. A figure, dressed in a worn-out coat, walks with determined yet weary steps. It is Walter Benjamin.</p> <p>NARRATOR (V.O.)</p> <p>Benjamin embarked on a perilous journey across the Pyrenees, accompanied by a small group of refugees seeking escape from the clutches of Nazi Germany. The treacherous mountain pass tested their strength, both physical and emotional.</p> <p>CUT TO: EXT. MOUNTAIN PASS - DAY</p> <p>The weather worsens, and a thick fog envelops the mountain pass. The wind howls, making progress arduous, yet Benjamin and his companions push forward, their faces etched with exhaustion. They huddle together for warmth and encouragement.</p> <p>NARRATOR (V.O.)</p> <p>As they crossed the treacherous terrain, Benjamin's mind was preoccupied with the weight of his intellectual legacy. His writings, often critical of oppressive systems, had made him a target of the Nazi regime. Now, he carried his works with him, fearful of their destruction.</p> <p>CUT TO: EXT. PORTBOU - DAY</p> <p>Benjamin and his fellow refugees reach the border town of Portbou. The camera captures the quiet streets lined with rustic buildings. The atmosphere is somber, mirroring Benjamin's state of mind.</p> <p>NARRATOR (V.O.)</p> <p>Portbou, a tranquil coastal town nestled on the border between France and Spain, held the promise of safety and freedom for Benjamin and his companions. But fate had other plans.</p> <p>CUT TO: INT. HOTEL ROOM - NIGHT</p> <p>Benjamin sits alone in a dimly lit hotel room, surrounded by his manuscripts. The camera lingers on his face, revealing a mixture of despair and determination. He gazes out of the window, waves crashing against the rocky shore below.</p> <p>NARRATOR (V.O.)</p> <p>Trapped by circumstances beyond his control, Benjamin faced the heartbreaking realization that his journey had come to an abrupt end. The authorities, under pressure from the Franco regime, denied him passage to freedom.</p> <p>CUT TO: EXT. CEMETERY - DAY</p> <p>The camera pans across rows of tombstones in the Portbou cemetery. Benjamin's grave stands out, adorned with flowers and tokens left by admirers. The camera zooms in on the inscription, which reads: "Walter Benjamin - Philosopher and Martyr."</p> <p>NARRATOR (V.O.)</p> <p>On September 26, 1940, Walter Benjamin's life came to a tragic end in Portbou. Overwhelmed by despair, he took his own life, choosing death over capture by the forces of oppression. The scene fades out, leaving the viewers with a sense of the profound loss suffered by the intellectual world. Walter Benjamin, a man who dared to challenge oppressive systems, met an untimely fate. Yet, his ideas and writings continue to inspire generations, reminding us of the power of critical thought in the face of tyranny.</p>

Figure 1.2

Question/Command	Lisa Fittko's memoir reads: The path descended gradually. It must have been about two in the afternoon when we came to the end of the cliff wall, and I could see
	CHAT GPT
	[INT. DOCUMENTARY FILM SET - DAY] The set is arranged to resemble a small mountainous path in the Pyrenees. A film crew is busy setting up cameras and adjusting lighting equipment. The director, JAMES, stands at the center of the set, going through his notes. The narrator, LAURA, is preparing to deliver her lines. JAMES (looking at the notes) Alright, everyone, let's get ready for the next scene. Laura, are you ready? LAURA (nods) Yes, James. I'm ready to go. JAMES Excellent. Remember, we're recreating the fateful journey of Walter Benjamin across the Pyrenees. This scene takes place when Lisa Fittko guides Benjamin and his group to the town of Portbou. LAURA Understood, James. I'll do my best to bring Lisa Fittko's words to life. JAMES Great. Let's roll camera, and... action! The cameras start rolling, capturing the rugged beauty of the mountain path. LAURA, dressed as Lisa Fittko, stands at the edge of a cliff wall, peering down at the valley below. LAURA (as Lisa Fittko) (looking at the town in the distance) The path descended gradually. It must have been about two in the afternoon when we came to the end of the cliff wall, and I could see the town in the valley below, quite near. The camera follows LAURA as she walks along the path, her voiceover continuing. LAURA (V.O.) "There below us is Port-Bou! The town has a Spanish border station where you must register. This road leads directly there. A real road!" Around two o'clock. We had left at four that morning; Benjamin, at about seven. So, some ten hours altogether. LAURA (as Lisa Fittko) (stopping and turning to face the camera) "Now I really must turn back," I went on. "We're in Spain, have been for almost an hour. Descending can't take very long, from here you can already see houses." LAURA starts descending the bumpy road, her eyes fixed on the path ahead. The camera follows her, capturing her determination. LAURA (as Lisa Fittko) (going on) Go directly to the border post and show them your papers, the travel documents, the Spanish and Portuguese transit visas. As soon as you have your entry stamp, take the first train to Lisbon. But you already know all that. Now I have to go. Auf wiedersehen. LAURA (V.O.) I stood for a moment and watched as they started down the bumpy road. It's high time for me to get going, I thought, and started back. LAURA turns around, retracing her steps on the mountain path. The camera follows her, capturing her farewell to Benjamin's group. JAMES (calling out) Cut! That was great, Laura! You captured the essence of Lisa Fittko's determination and urgency. Excellent job! LAURA (breathing heavily) Thank you, James. It's an incredibly moving story. I'm honored to be a part of it. The crew members applaud as LAURA walks back towards the set, her performance bringing Lisa Fittko's memoir to life.
Test II.1	Title: Walter Benjamin's Journey: A Fateful Escape [INT. LIBRARY - DAY] The camera pans across an old, dusty library. The shelves are lined with weathered books, and a librarian stands at a table, flipping through the pages of an aged memoir titled "Walter Benjamin's Escape: A Memoir by Lisa Fittko." NARRATOR (Voiceover): In the memoir of Lisa Fittko, a courageous woman who helped countless refugees escape Nazi-occupied Europe, we find a gripping tale of Walter Benjamin's fateful journey across the Pyrenees. [INT. LISA FITTKO'S HOME - NIGHT] The scene transitions to Lisa Fittko's home, where she sits at a small table, narrating her memories while holding the memoir. LISA FITTKO: (softly, pensively) The path descended gradually. It was around two in the afternoon when we reached the cliff wall's end, and there, right below us, was Port-Bou - the gateway to Spain. [FLASHBACK: MOUNTAIN PATH - DAWN] The camera transitions to a flashback of Walter Benjamin and Lisa Fittko trekking along a rugged mountain path, the dawn light gently illuminating their faces. LISA FITTKO (Voiceover): We had started our journey at four in the morning, and around seven, we had to part ways. I could feel the weight of time on our shoulders - ten hours of challenging travel. [BACK TO LISA FITTKO'S HOME - NIGHT] Lisa takes a deep breath, visibly emotional as she continues to recount the past. LISA FITTKO: (tearfully) I knew that Walter had to turn back, that his destination was different. As we stood there, I urged him to proceed directly to the Spanish border station and register. [FLASHBACK: MOUNTAIN PASS - AFTERNOON] The scene shifts back to the past, with Lisa and Walter standing at the vantage point, looking down at the town below. LISA FITTKO (Voiceover): I instructed him to show his travel documents, the Spanish and Portuguese transit visas, and get the necessary entry stamp. He had to reach Lisbon - that was his only hope. [INT. SPANISH BORDER STATION - DAY] The camera now shows a reenactment of Walter Benjamin standing in line at the Spanish border station. The official scrutinizes his documents. NARRATOR (Voiceover): Walter reached the Spanish border station, his heart pounding with both fear and hope. The fate of his escape rested on this moment. [BACK TO LISA FITTKO'S HOME - NIGHT] Lisa's voice trembles as she recounts the crucial moment. LISA FITTKO: (teary-eyed) I watched from afar as Walter moved forward in line. I knew that once he got that entry stamp, he would be safe. [FLASHBACK: MOUNTAIN PATH - AFTERNOON] The scene transitions back to Walter, who finally receives his entry stamp. He breathes a sigh of relief and looks back up towards the mountain, perhaps thinking of Lisa. NARRATOR (Voiceover): With the entry stamp in hand, Walter's dream of escaping the Nazis seemed within reach. But little did he know, his fate in Port-Bou would be tragically different. [INT. PORT-BOU - DAY] The camera shows a reenactment of Walter Benjamin wandering the streets of Port-Bou, visibly anxious yet hopeful. NARRATOR (Voiceover): Walter's escape to freedom came to a halt when he encountered unforeseen challenges in Port-Bou. The Franco regime tightened the borders, denying him passage to Lisbon. [INT. HOTEL ROOM - NIGHT] The scene shifts to a dimly lit hotel room where Walter Benjamin finds himself cornered. NARRATOR (Voiceover): Desperate and without hope, Walter took his own life in this small hotel room in Port-Bou. [BACK TO LISA FITTKO'S HOME - NIGHT] Lisa's eyes well up with tears as she concludes her narration. LISA FITTKO: (whispering) We lost a brilliant mind that day, a man who sought refuge from tyranny but found none. Walter's journey across the Pyrenees was filled with both courage and despair. [FADE OUT] The documentary scene ends, leaving the viewers contemplating the tragic fate of Walter Benjamin, a remarkable thinker whose escape attempt to freedom was tragically cut short.
Test II.2	INT. DOCUMENTARY FILM STUDIO - DAY The room is filled with cameras, lights, and a film crew setting up for an interview. The director, JAMES, sits behind the monitor, flipping through a copy of Lisa Fittko's memoir. The door opens, and LISA FITTKO, an elderly woman with a warm smile, enters the room accompanied by a translator. JAMES (standing up) Lisa Fittko, it's an honor to have you here. Your memoir provides a remarkable account of Walter Benjamin's journey across the Pyrenees. We want to capture the essence of that journey and Benjamin's fate in Portbou. Are you ready to share your experiences? LISA FITTKO (nods) Yes, I'm ready. It's important to remember what happened. INT. MOUNTAINOUS PATH - DAY (FLASHBACK) The scene transitions to a rugged mountain path, surrounded by dense foliage. Walter Benjamin, a middle-aged man with a weary expression, walks alongside Lisa Fittko, both dressed in worn-out clothes, carrying backpacks. LISA FITTKO (V.O.) The path descended gradually. We had been walking for hours, making our way across the treacherous Pyrenees. The air was thick with tension and uncertainty. They reach a point where the cliff wall ends, and a breathtaking view of Portbou, a small town in the valley, comes into sight. LISA FITTKO (V.O.) (CONT'D) (whispering) "There below us is Port-Bou! The town has a Spanish border station where you must register. This road leads directly there. A real road!" Walter Benjamin, visibly exhausted, looks down at the town, a glimmer of hope in his eyes. WALTER BENJAMIN (weakly) We've made it. Spain, at last. LISA FITTKO (nods) Now, my dear friend, it's time for you to continue alone. Register at the border post, show them your papers, and catch the first train to Lisbon. Your journey to freedom begins there. Walter Benjamin, with a mixture of gratitude and sadness, grasps Lisa's hand. WALTER BENJAMIN Thank you, Lisa, for guiding me this far. I'll never forget your kindness. LISA FITTKO (smiling) It's been an honor, Walter. I wish you all the best. Auf wiedersehen. They share a brief moment, their eyes filled with unspoken words, before Walter Benjamin turns and starts his descent towards Portbou. LISA FITTKO (V.O.) (CONT'D) I stood there, watching him walk away. It was high time for me to get going as well. But little did I know what fate awaited him in Portbou. INT. DOCUMENTARY FILM STUDIO - DAY The scene cuts back to the documentary studio, where Lisa Fittko's voiceover continues, blending seamlessly with the present. LISA FITTKO (teary-eyed) I left Walter Benjamin that day, never realizing it would be the last time I saw him. When I learned of his tragic fate in Portbou, my heart sank. He took his own life, fearing capture by the Nazis. It's a heavy burden to carry, knowing I couldn't save him. The camera zooms in on Lisa Fittko's face, her eyes filled with both sorrow and determination. LISA FITTKO (CONT'D) But I'll always remember Walter Benjamin's spirit, his intellectual brilliance, and the countless others who made that treacherous journey seeking refuge from tyranny. Their stories must be told, for they remind us of the resilience and sacrifices made in the face of oppression. The camera fades out, leaving the audience with a profound sense of the journey's significance and the tragic loss of a brilliant mind. FADE OUT.
Test II.3	INT. DOCUMENTARY INTERVIEW SET - DAY The camera focuses on LISA FITTKO, an elderly woman with a warm smile and a twinkle in her eyes. She sits comfortably in a chair, ready to share her memories. INTERVIEWER Ms. Fittko, thank you for joining us today. Could you please tell us about Walter Benjamin's journey across the Pyrenees? LISA FITTKO Of course. It was a treacherous journey, but one filled with hope and desperation. Walter Benjamin, the renowned philosopher and writer, was fleeing Nazi-occupied France in 1940. He, along with a small group of refugees, sought to cross the Pyrenees Mountains to reach safety in Spain. CUT TO: EXT. MOUNTAINOUS TERRAIN - DAY A reenactment shows a group of refugees, including WALTER BENJAMIN, trudging through rugged mountain paths, carrying their meager belongings. They move slowly, fatigue etched on their faces, but determination in their eyes. LISA FITTKO (V.O.) We set off before dawn, navigating through the darkness, driven by the fear of capture and the hope of freedom. I led the way, guiding them along the treacherous mountain trails. CUT TO: EXT. CLIFF WALL - DAY The group arrives at a cliff wall, and their exhaustion gives way to a glimmer of relief as they catch a glimpse of the town below. LISA FITTKO (V.O.) (CONT'D) The path descended gradually. Around two o'clock in the afternoon, we reached the end of the cliff wall, and there it was - Port-Bou, the Spanish border town, just within our reach. CUT TO: EXT. PORT-BOU TOWN - DAY The camera pans across the town, capturing the quaint houses and the Spanish border station in the distance. LISA FITTKO (V.O.) (CONT'D) I instructed them to head directly to the border post, urging them to register and present their travel documents. Benjamin was tired but determined. We had been on the move for nearly ten hours. CUT TO: EXT. BORDER POST - DAY The refugees approach the border post, fatigue evident in their faces. Lisa watches as they begin the process of presenting their papers. LISA FITTKO (V.O.) (CONT'D) I bid them farewell, knowing they were on their way to safety. It was time for me to turn back, for my own journey had reached its end. CUT TO: INT. DOCUMENTARY INTERVIEW SET - DAY Lisa takes a moment, her eyes filled with emotion, as she recalls that fateful day. LISA FITTKO As I watched them walk away, down that bumpy road towards the border post, I knew they were taking the first steps towards a new life. Little did I know then what awaited Walter Benjamin in Port-Bou. INTERVIEWER What happened to Benjamin in Port-Bou? LISA FITTKO (Lowering her gaze) Tragically, he was denied entry into Spain and faced the threat of deportation back to France. Faced with an uncertain fate, he made the decision to take his own life, unable to bear the thought of falling back into the hands of the Nazis. The weight of her words hangs in the air, conveying the profound impact of that moment. FADE OUT.
Test II.4	

Test II.5	<p>[INT. DOCUMENTARY SET - DAY] The scene opens in a dimly lit studio, with a large screen displaying historical photographs of the Pyrenees Mountains. The director and a group of researchers gather around a table, flipping through pages of Lisa Fittko's memoir, discussing the events surrounding Walter Benjamin's journey. The camera pans to the director, ready to introduce the next segment. DIRECTOR (Walking towards the camera) In 1940, as the Nazis tightened their grip on Europe, Walter Benjamin, a renowned philosopher and literary critic, embarked on a treacherous journey across the Pyrenees Mountains, seeking refuge in Spain. Today, we dive into the memoirs of Lisa Fittko, a German activist who guided Benjamin during his fateful escape. Join us as we recount the dramatic events that unfolded in Portbou. CUT TO: [EXT. PYRENEES MOUNTAINS - DAY] The screen transitions to a breathtaking aerial shot of the Pyrenees, showcasing their rugged beauty. The narrator's voiceover sets the stage for the arduous journey ahead. NARRATOR (V.O.) (Emphasizing the magnitude of the journey) As Lisa Fittko and Walter Benjamin traversed the treacherous Pyrenees Mountains, they faced unpredictable weather, steep cliffs, and the constant threat of pursuit by Nazi forces. Their destination: the Spanish border town of Portbou. CUT TO: [EXT. MOUNTAIN PATH - DAY] The camera follows Lisa Fittko and Walter Benjamin as they trek along a winding mountain path. Their tired faces reflect the physical and emotional toll of the journey. NARRATOR (V.O.) (Bringing Lisa's words to life) "The path descended gradually," Lisa recalled in her memoir. "It must have been about two in the afternoon when we came to the end of the cliff wall, and I could see the town in the valley below, quite near." CUT TO: [EXT. PORTBOU - BORDER STATION - DAY] The scene transitions to the outskirts of Portbou, where Lisa and Walter approach the Spanish border station. The camera captures the tension in the air as they prepare to face the scrutiny of the authorities. NARRATOR (V.O.) (Lisa's voice filled with urgency) "There below us is Port-Boul! The town has a Spanish border station where you must register. This road leads directly there. A real road!" CUT TO: [INT. BORDER STATION - DAY] Inside the border station, Lisa and Walter stand before an immigration officer, presenting their travel documents and visas. The officer scrutinizes the papers, and tension fills the room. NARRATOR (V.O.) (Lisa's voice, filled with anticipation) "Now I really must turn back," I went on. "We're in Spain, have been for almost an hour. Descending can't take very long, from here you can already see houses." CUT TO: [EXT. BORDER STATION - DAY] Lisa watches as the immigration officer stamps Walter's entry documents, allowing him to continue his journey. Walter and Lisa exchange a brief but poignant farewell. Lisa's face reveals the weight of the moment. NARRATOR (V.O.) (Lisa's internal thoughts, tinged with sadness) "Go directly to the border post and show them your papers, the travel documents, the Spanish and Portuguese transit visas. As soon as you have your entry stamp, take the first train to Lisbon." CUT TO: [EXT. PORTBOU - DAY] Lisa stands alone, her gaze fixed on Walter and Benjamin, who have started their descent towards the town. Her determination resurfaces. NARRATOR (V.O.) (Lisa's inner voice, filled with resolve) "But you already know all that. Now I have to go. Auf Wiedersehen." CUT TO: [EXT. MOUNTAIN PATH - DAY] The camera follows Lisa as she retraces her steps, leaving Portbou behind. Her silhouette against the rugged mountains symbolizes the strength and sacrifices made during this perilous escape. NARRATOR (V.O.) (Lisa's determination echoing in her footsteps) "It's high time for me to get going," I thought, and started back. CUT TO: [EXT. MOUNTAIN LANDSCAPE - DAY] The scene ends with a wide shot of the majestic Pyrenees Mountains, highlighting the vastness and isolation of the landscape. The screen fades to black. NARRATOR (V.O.) (Wistfully) Little did Lisa Fittko know that Walter Benjamin's fate would soon take a tragic turn in the town they had just left. The words he penned and the ideas he championed would continue to resonate, shaping the world of literature and philosophy for generations to come. FADE OUT.</p>
Test II.6	<p>[Documentary Scene: Walter Benjamin's Journey Across the Pyrenees and Fate in Portbou] [Scene opens with panoramic shots of the rugged Pyrenees mountains, showcasing their majestic beauty. The camera then zooms in to focus on a narrow path winding through the peaks, with Lisa Fittko narrating.] Lisa Fittko (Voiceover): The path across the Pyrenees was treacherous, a lifeline for those seeking escape from Nazi persecution. It was along this very path that the renowned philosopher, Walter Benjamin, embarked on his fateful journey towards freedom. [Cut to reenactment footage of Walter Benjamin, played by an actor resembling him, walking determinedly along the mountain path. He appears fatigued, carrying a bag slung over his shoulder.] Lisa Fittko (Voiceover): They set out in the early morning hours, Benjamin and a small group of fellow refugees, guided by our makeshift network of escape routes. The urgency in their hearts matched only by the weight of their circumstances. [The scene transitions to a flashback, showing Benjamin and the group conversing with Lisa Fittko at the edge of a cliff. The camera pans to Lisa as she points down towards the town of Portbou below.] Lisa Fittko: There, below us, is Port-Boul! The town has a Spanish border station where you must register. This road leads directly there. A real road! [Cut back to the present. Benjamin reaches the end of the cliff wall, overlooking the town.] Lisa Fittko (Voiceover): Benjamin had hoped that this descent would mark the beginning of his journey to freedom. With the Spanish border within sight, the promise of safety tantalizingly close. [Benjamin stops for a moment, turning to Lisa Fittko, who stands a short distance away.] Walter Benjamin (Actor portraying Benjamin): Now I really must turn back. We're in Spain, have been for almost an hour. Descending can't take very long, from here you can already see houses. Go directly to the border post and show them your papers, the travel documents, the Spanish and Portuguese transit visas. Lisa Fittko (Voiceover): Benjamin's words were tinged with a mix of hope and resignation, aware that his journey was coming to an end while the path ahead remained uncertain. [Walter Benjamin watches as the group starts descending the bumpy road. Lisa Fittko watches him for a moment before deciding to continue her own journey.] Lisa Fittko (Voiceover): It's high time for me to get going, I thought, and started back. [The scene shifts to a reenactment of Lisa Fittko walking back along the mountain path, leaving Benjamin behind. She looks back one last time before disappearing from view.] Lisa Fittko (Voiceover): Little did I know that this would be the last time I would see Walter Benjamin alive. [The documentary switches to a mix of archival footage and reenactment, depicting the somber streets of Portbou, capturing the atmosphere of the time.] Lisa Fittko (Voiceover): Benjamin arrived in Portbou, but his fate took a tragic turn. The Spanish authorities denied him entry and detained him. Facing the prospect of being turned over to the Nazis, he chose to take his own life. The weight of his despair became too heavy to bear. [The documentary includes a series of photographs of Benjamin and shots of Portbou, emphasizing the gravity of the events.] Lisa Fittko (Voiceover): Walter Benjamin's intellectual brilliance and profound insights were silenced forever on that fateful day in Portbou. His writings continue to inspire generations, a testament to the enduring power of his ideas. [The documentary concludes with a quote by Walter Benjamin, followed by a series of images capturing his influence on philosophy and literature.] Closing Quote (on screen): "The only way of understanding a work of art is to see it as a confrontation. That's how I see philosophy too." - Walter Benjamin [The screen fades to black, ending the documentary scene.]</p>

Figure 1.3

Question/Command	Julie Orringer's historical novel reads: "But the door opened at his touch, and he entered to find Hirschman and Lena standing silently at a window, a single shivering telegram held between them. 'What is it?' Varian said, looking from one stricken face to the other. 'Walter Benjamin is dead,'" Hirschman said. 'Oh, God, no. How?' "By his own hand, at Portbou." Varian dropped into a chair and closed his eyes." Write a documentary scene about Walter Benjamin's journey across the Pyrenees and fate in Portbou.
	CHAT GPT
Test III.1	[INT. DOCUMENTARY FILM STUDIO - DAY] The scene opens in a dimly lit documentary film studio. The room is filled with props and equipment, giving it an atmosphere of historical significance. The director, a passionate filmmaker, stands in front of the camera, ready to share the story of Walter Benjamin's journey across the Pyrenees. DIRECTOR (action) Ladies and gentlemen, today we delve into the gripping tale of Walter Benjamin, a renowned philosopher and writer, and his fateful journey across the Pyrenees. Benjamin, a Jewish intellectual, found himself trapped in the chaos of World War II and sought to escape the clutches of Nazi persecution. The director signals for the scene to begin. The camera pans to a dramatic reenactment of Walter Benjamin, portrayed by an actor, hiking through the rugged terrain of the Pyrenees. NARRATOR (V.O.) Walter Benjamin, a man of profound intellect and introspection, embarked on this treacherous journey in the year 1940. With the looming threat of Nazi capture, he, like many others, sought refuge in neutral Spain. The visuals switch between Benjamin's arduous trek and historical photographs depicting the reality of the time. The narrator continues. NARRATOR (V.O.) (CONT'D) The Pyrenees, a formidable mountain range separating France and Spain, provided a treacherous path to freedom. Benjamin, accompanied by a small group of fellow refugees, navigated the harsh terrain, desperate to reach the Spanish town of Portbou. The camera cuts to Benjamin and his companions struggling through steep inclines, their faces etched with determination and weariness. NARRATOR (V.O.) (CONT'D) Days turned into nights, and the journey took its toll. Benjamin's fragile health compounded the difficulties they faced. Exhaustion gnawed at their spirits, but the prospect of freedom propelled them forward. The scene transitions to Benjamin and his companions taking shelter in a dilapidated barn, seeking respite from the biting cold. NARRATOR (V.O.) (CONT'D) Benjamin's mind, an intellectual sanctuary, was filled with thoughts of the world he left behind. His vast knowledge and philosophical musings formed a tapestry of hope amidst the bleakness of their situation. The camera shifts to an intimate shot of Benjamin, his face reflecting both determination and the weight of his circumstances. NARRATOR (V.O.) (CONT'D) Eventually, after weeks of grueling travel, Benjamin and his comrades arrived at the French-Spanish border, a moment teetering between freedom and capture. The scene transitions to Benjamin and his companions anxiously crossing the border, their relief palpable. But the camera's focus narrows onto Benjamin, his eyes betraying a sense of lingering unease. NARRATOR (V.O.) (CONT'D) Sadly, their joy was short-lived. Upon reaching Portbou, Benjamin encountered bureaucratic complications, his hopes of finding refuge dashed. The camera pans to a somber Portbou, its narrow streets lined with worn buildings. The setting reflects the heavy atmosphere of despair that Benjamin faced. NARRATOR (V.O.) (CONT'D) With no escape route left, weighed down by disillusionment and the shadow of impending capture, Benjamin made a tragic decision. On September 26, 1940, he chose to end his own life. The scene shifts to the interior of a modest hotel room in Portbou, where Benjamin spent his final moments. The camera captures the sense of quiet desperation that permeates the space. NARRATOR (V.O.) (CONT'D) In this very room, Walter Benjamin's brilliance and indomitable spirit met a tragic end. His profound philosophical contributions and unwavering pursuit of truth were silenced forever. The director signals for the scene to come to a close. The camera zooms out, revealing the crew and actors. The weight of the story hangs in the air as the director addresses the viewers directly. DIRECTOR (sincere) Walter Benjamin's journey and fate in Portbou serve as a poignant reminder of the human cost during times of persecution and displacement. Let us remember his brilliance, his spirit, and the tragedy of a mind extinguished too soon. The director takes a moment of silence, paying homage to Walter Benjamin's legacy. The documentary crew disperses, carrying with them the weight of the story they have brought to life on the screen. FADE OUT.
Test III.2	Title: Walter Benjamin: Journey Across the Pyrenees [INTRODUCTION] NARRATOR (Voiceover): In the year 1940, as Europe was engulfed in the horrors of World War II, the brilliant philosopher and writer, Walter Benjamin, found himself trapped in Nazi-occupied France. With impending arrest looming over him, Benjamin embarked on a perilous journey to escape to safety, with the hope of reaching neutral Spain. This is the story of his fateful journey across the Pyrenees and the tragic events that unfolded in the town of Portbou. [SCENE 1: THE MOUNTAIN PATHS] (Reenactment: A somber scene showing Walter Benjamin, a middle-aged man with a briefcase in hand, traversing the rugged mountain paths of the Pyrenees. The weather is harsh, and the snow-capped peaks loom in the distance.) NARRATOR (Voiceover): For days, Walter Benjamin, accompanied by his fellow refugees, navigated the treacherous mountain paths in pursuit of freedom. The journey was physically and emotionally exhausting, as fear and uncertainty weighed heavily on their minds. [SCENE 2: ENCOUNTER WITH RESCUERS] (Reenactment: Benjamin and his companions stumble upon a group of brave locals, the Basque guides, who are willing to help them cross the border to Spain.) NARRATOR (Voiceover): In a moment of hope, the weary travelers encountered the Basque guides, who risked their lives to aid them on their quest for safety. With the ever-present threat of Nazi patrols, the group moved stealthily, guided by their newfound protectors. [SCENE 3: AT THE BORDER] (Reenactment: The group reaches the border between France and Spain. Benjamin looks both anxious and relieved.) NARRATOR (Voiceover): Their arrival at the border marked a critical moment. As they prepared to cross into Spain, their fate hung in the balance. It was here that Benjamin and his companions faced a crucial decision, for they could not proceed without proper documentation. [SCENE 4: THE FATEFUL DECISION] (Reenactment: Benjamin and his companions hold hushed discussions, knowing that capture could mean certain death.) NARRATOR (Voiceover): Faced with the stark reality of capture by the Nazi authorities, Walter Benjamin grappled with a decision that would determine his fate. He had no valid visa to enter Spain, and the prospect of deportation to a concentration camp weighed heavily on his mind. [SCENE 5: PORTBOU] (Reenactment: Benjamin and his companions enter the small town of Portbou, seeking refuge and a means to escape the Nazi threat.) NARRATOR (Voiceover): Desperate and exhausted, the group sought refuge in the quiet town of Portbou. But fate had other plans. Their journey had taken a toll, both physically and mentally, and the weight of the circumstances bore heavily on Benjamin. [SCENE 6: TRAGIC DISCOVERY] (Reenactment: Benjamin and his companions encounter Hirschman and Lena, who deliver the devastating news.) NARRATOR (Voiceover): In Portbou, Walter Benjamin's journey came to an abrupt and tragic end. It was here that he received the heart-wrenching news of the death of his dear friend, Gershom Scholem, and the profound loss of his intellectual comrade, Walter Benjamin himself. [SCENE 7: WALTER BENJAMIN'S LEGACY] (Reenactment: Benjamin, overwhelmed by the news, retreats to a small room in Portbou.) NARRATOR (Voiceover): In the face of despair, Walter Benjamin made a difficult choice. Rather than falling into the hands of the Nazis, he chose to take his own life. On the night of September 26th, 1940, Benjamin's life ended in a small, simple room in Portbou. [CONCLUSION] NARRATOR (Voiceover): Walter Benjamin's journey across the Pyrenees was one of courage and desperation, shaped by the tumultuous events of his time. His writings and philosophical insights have left an indelible mark on the world of literature and critical thought. Although his life was tragically cut short, his legacy continues to inspire and challenge generations to come. [FADE OUT]
Test III.3	[Documentary Scene: Walter Benjamin's Journey across the Pyrenees and Fate in Portbou] [Scene. A dimly lit room with wooden shelves filled with books and papers. Varian, Hirschman, and Lena stand around a table covered in maps and photographs. The atmosphere is tense.] Narrator: Walter Benjamin, a renowned philosopher, writer, and cultural critic, found himself trapped in a world consumed by war and persecution. Fleeing the horrors of Nazi-occupied Europe, Benjamin embarked on a treacherous journey across the Pyrenees mountains in 1940, seeking refuge in Spain. His ultimate destination: Portbou. [The camera zooms in on a map, tracing a route from France to Spain.] Narrator: Benjamin, accompanied by his dear friend, the Swiss philosopher Grefel Karplus, embarked on this perilous journey, desperate to escape the clutches of the Nazi regime. They knew that reaching Portbou meant reaching safety, a chance to continue their fight against the oppressive forces that threatened their very existence. [Cut to a photograph of Benjamin and Karplus smiling.] Narrator: As they traversed the rugged terrain, the weather grew harsh, and the obstacles multiplied. The passage across the Pyrenees demanded courage, resilience, and strength of spirit. The fear of capture, the uncertainty of the path, and the weight of their troubled times weighed heavily on their minds. [Scene shifts to Benjamin and Karplus hiking through the mountains, their faces etched with determination.] Narrator: Their journey was an arduous one, marked by constant vigilance and the need to navigate treacherous paths. They relied on the help of local guides and sympathetic individuals who risked their own safety to assist those fleeing persecution. [Cut to a reenactment of Benjamin and Karplus being guided through the rugged terrain by a local guide.] Narrator: The fate of Benjamin and Karplus hung in the balance as they made their way closer to the Spanish border. However, their hopes of a new life were shattered upon their arrival in Portbou. [The camera pans over a photograph of Portbou's coastal town.] Narrator: Portbou, a small coastal town nestled between mountains and the Mediterranean Sea, was to be their final destination. But destiny had a different plan. [Scene shifts to Benjamin and Karplus seeking refuge in a modest room in Portbou.] Narrator: Tragically, on September 26, 1940, just hours after reaching Portbou, Walter Benjamin's life took a devastating turn. [The camera focuses on a telegram being handed to Hirschman and Lena.] Hirschman: (in a choked voice) Walter Benjamin is dead. [Varian, stunned, drops into a chair and closes his eyes.] Narrator: Benjamin, burdened by the weight of his times and the uncertainty of the future, made the heartbreaking decision to take his own life. He passed away in Portbou, a town he had hoped would offer salvation but became his final resting place. [The camera pans over a photograph of Portbou's cemetery.] Narrator: Today, the tomb of Walter Benjamin in Portbou serves as a poignant reminder of the struggles faced by those who sought refuge during a time of darkness and persecution. [The scene fades out with a somber tone, leaving the audience to reflect on the tragic fate of Walter Benjamin.] Narrator: The legacy of this extraordinary thinker lives on, his ideas and writings continue to inspire and shape our understanding of culture, politics, and human existence. [End of documentary scene.]
Test III.4	INT. DOCUMENTARY STUDIO - DAY The documentary host, JAMES, sits in front of a camera with a backdrop displaying the title "WALTER BENJAMIN: A JOURNEY IN EXILE." He adjusts his notes and takes a deep breath before beginning. JAMES (solemnly) Welcome back to our historical documentary series. Today, we delve into the tragic story of one of the most influential intellectuals of the 20th century, Walter Benjamin, and his fateful journey across the Pyrenees Mountains. CUT TO: EXT. PYRENEES MOUNTAINS - DAY (ARCHIVAL FOOTAGE) Aerial shots of the magnificent Pyrenees Mountains fill the screen, their rugged peaks stretching into the distance. JAMES (V.O.) In the late 1930s, as World War II loomed and the Nazis tightened their grip on Germany, Walter Benjamin, a Jewish philosopher, writer, and cultural critic, found himself in grave danger. Seeking refuge and escape, he embarked on a perilous journey across the Pyrenees. CUT TO: EXT. COASTAL TOWN - DAY (ARCHIVAL FOOTAGE) Benjamin is seen in a coastal town, wearing a heavy coat, clutching a small suitcase, and looking over his shoulder with an air of anxiety. JAMES (V.O.) Benjamin fled from France, making his way to the coastal town of Banyuls-sur-Mer. With the help of Lisa Fittko, a fellow escapee and guide, he joined a group of refugees attempting to reach safety in Spain. CUT TO: EXT. MOUNTAINOUS PATH - DAY (ARCHIVAL FOOTAGE) Benjamin and the group of refugees navigate a treacherous mountain path, their faces etched with exhaustion and fear. JAMES (V.O.) The journey across the Pyrenees was a grueling ordeal. The group faced frigid temperatures, harsh terrain, and constant fear of detection by the authorities. CUT TO: EXT. PORTBOU - DAY (ARCHIVAL FOOTAGE) Benjamin and the refugees reach the small Spanish town of Portbou. They are greeted by a somber atmosphere, with dilapidated buildings and weary locals. JAMES (V.O.) On September 25th, 1940, Benjamin and his companions finally arrived in Portbou, their destination within reach. However, tragically, their relief would be short-lived. CUT TO: INT. HOTEL ROOM - DAY (ARCHIVAL FOOTAGE) Benjamin is seen inside a modest hotel room, gazing out of a window, his face marked by profound sadness and exhaustion. JAMES (V.O.) Benjamin's hope for freedom was dashed when he received the devastating news of the border closure. Spain, neutral during the war, had recently tightened its border controls, leaving Benjamin stranded in Portbou. CUT TO: EXT. PORTBOU CEMETERY - DAY (ARCHIVAL FOOTAGE) The camera pans over the Portbou Cemetery, its tombstones standing as silent witnesses to the tragedy that unfolded. JAMES (V.O.) Faced with the prospect of capture by the Nazis and imminent deportation, Benjamin found himself in a state of deep despair. On September 26th, 1940, he made the heartbreaking decision to take his own life. CUT TO: INT. DOCUMENTARY STUDIO - DAY JAMES, visibly moved, lowers his notes, taking a moment to compose himself. JAMES (softly) Walter Benjamin's death in Portbou marked the end of a brilliant mind and a voice silenced by the darkness of that time. His work and legacy continue to resonate, reminding us of the human cost of tyranny and the enduring power of ideas. FADE OUT. NOTE: While the events described in the scene are based on historical records and testimonies, the specifics of the dialogue and individuals present are fictionalized for the purpose of the documentary.

Test III. 5	<p>[Documentary Scene: Walter Benjamin's Journey Across the Pyrenees and Fate in Portbou] [The scene opens with sweeping aerial shots of the majestic Pyrenees Mountains, covered in a blanket of snow. The camera then transitions to a quaint village nestled at the base of the mountains – Portbou, a small town on the eastern coast of Spain.] Narrator (Voiceover): Portbou, a picturesque coastal town, served as the final destination for a man whose intellectual contributions would resonate for generations to come. This is the story of Walter Benjamin, a renowned philosopher and cultural critic who embarked on a treacherous journey across the Pyrenees during the dark days of World War II. [The scene transitions to a dimly lit room with a large table covered in maps, compasses, and scattered documents. Walter Benjamin, a middle-aged man with weary eyes and disheveled hair, is in the midst of preparing for his journey. His face bears the weight of the turmoil and uncertainty of the times.] Narrator (Voiceover): Faced with the imminent threat of persecution by the Nazi regime, Walter Benjamin made a fateful decision. Rather than surrendering to the hands of the oppressors, he chose to embark on a perilous escape across the rugged terrain of the Pyrenees, seeking safety and freedom in Spain. [Cut to a montage of Walter Benjamin trudging through the snowy mountain passes, battling the harsh elements, and navigating treacherous cliffs. The camera captures his weary face, determination etched upon it.] Narrator (Voiceover): Benjamin's journey was one of desperation and hope, driven by the pursuit of intellectual freedom. With each step, he carried a burden of ideas, manuscripts, and a profound understanding of the human condition. [The scene transitions to Portbou, where Benjamin arrives, his body exhausted, but his spirit resolute. He seeks refuge in a small inn, seeking a temporary respite before continuing his journey.] Narrator (Voiceover): Portbou, a tranquil haven for weary travelers, was a temporary sanctuary for Benjamin. But fate had something else in store for him. [The scene shifts to Benjamin's encounter with Varian Fry, an American journalist who played a crucial role in assisting refugees during the war. The two men engage in a conversation at the inn, surrounded by the quiet charm of the coastal town.] Varian Fry: Walter, it's a pleasure to finally meet you. Your work has had a profound impact on so many of us. We're doing everything we can to help people like you escape this madness. Walter Benjamin (wearily): Thank you, Varian. Your efforts mean more than words can express. But time is running out, and I fear I carry with me more than just my own life. [The camera pans to Lena Hirschman, a young woman with a sense of urgency etched on her face. She approaches Benjamin, clutching a telegram.] Lena Hirschman: Walter, this just arrived. It's devastating news. [Walter Benjamin and Varian Fry exchange concerned glances. Benjamin opens the telegram, his hands trembling.] Walter Benjamin (whispering): "Walter Benjamin is dead." [Benjamin's voice breaks, and he slumps into a nearby chair, his eyes filled with despair. The camera captures the weight of the news, the sense of loss that engulfs the room.] Narrator (Voiceover): Walter Benjamin's journey had come to an end, but his legacy would endure. In Portbou, a place of refuge, his spirit met its tragic fate. The man who had traversed mountains in search of freedom and truth had succumbed to the darkness that enveloped his world. [The scene fades out, leaving behind an aura of melancholy and the indomitable spirit of a man who dared to challenge the status quo, even in the face of insurmountable odds.]</p>
Test III. 6	<p>[Documentary Scene: Walter Benjamin's Journey Across the Pyrenees and Fate in Portbou] [Scene opens with sweeping aerial shots of the rugged Pyrenees mountain range, accompanied by solemn music. The narration begins.] Narrator: In the summer of 1940, as Europe found itself engulfed in the chaos of World War II, a renowned philosopher, writer, and critic named Walter Benjamin embarked on a treacherous journey across the Pyrenees Mountains. Fleeing Nazi-occupied France, Benjamin sought refuge in Spain, a country on the precipice of its own tumultuous political landscape. [Cut to a reenactment scene: Walter Benjamin, a middle-aged man with glasses and a weary expression, walks cautiously along a narrow mountain trail, his clothing worn and his footsteps heavy. The weather is harsh, and he wraps a tattered coat tightly around him.] Narrator: Benjamin, accompanied by a small group of fellow refugees, navigated these treacherous mountain passes, guided by a network of locals and sympathizers known as the "Comité de Ayuda a los Judíos." Their goal was to reach the safety of Portugal, where they hoped to find passage to the United States. [The scene transitions to a small farmhouse where Benjamin and his companions find temporary shelter. They huddle around a table, poring over maps and documents, their faces etched with worry.] Narrator: The journey across the Pyrenees was perilous, with unpredictable weather, steep cliffs, and the constant threat of discovery by the authorities. But for Benjamin and those like him, it was a lifeline—a chance to escape persecution and find sanctuary in a world that seemed to be dosing its doors. [Cut to a scene showing Benjamin and his companions making their way through dense forests and rocky terrain, their progress slow but determined.] Narrator: After days of enduring physical hardships and emotional strain, Benjamin and his group finally reached the small coastal town of Portbou, on the northeastern edge of Spain. They had made it across the Pyrenees, but their journey was far from over. [The scene transitions to a modest room in a local inn, where Benjamin and his friends seek shelter. They are visibly exhausted, their faces lined with exhaustion and fear.] Narrator: Portbou was a crucial crossroad for Benjamin, a place where fate would intervene tragically. With their hopes of reaching Portugal dashed due to bureaucratic obstacles, Benjamin found himself in a state of deep despair. It was in this small room that he received the news that would shatter him to his core. [Cut to the reenactment of the scene described in the novel, with Hirschman and Lena standing at the window, holding a telegram. Varian enters the room, his face filled with concern.] Hirschman: [voiceover] "Walter Benjamin is dead." Varian: [voiceover] "Oh, God, no. How?" Hirschman: [voiceover] "By his own hand, at Portbou." [The scene shifts back to Benjamin's room in Portbou, where Varian, played by an actor, collapses into a chair, his eyes closed.] Narrator: The news of Benjamin's death sent shockwaves through the intellectual and artistic communities of Europe. It was a tragic end to a life marked by intellectual brilliance and the pursuit of truth. Walter Benjamin, a voice that dared to challenge oppressive forces, had met his untimely demise. [The documentary scene concludes with melancholic music as the camera pans out, capturing the stunning beauty of the Pyrenees mountains.] Narrator: Walter Benjamin's journey across the Pyrenees serves as a testament to the indomitable human spirit and the lengths people will go to preserve their freedom. Though his life was cut short, his ideas and writings continue to inspire generations, reminding us of the importance of critical thought and the pursuit of justice. [Fade out.]</p>

Figure 1.4

Question/Command	A scene from Anna Winger's TV series Transatlantic: Walter Benjamin: [In German] Something's wrong. Lisa Fittko: Stay calm. Border Officer: [In English] The border was closed yesterday. How did you get over here? Lisa Fittko: The French let us through. Border Officer: There is a hotel next door. Stay there until this is resolved. Write a documentary scene about Walter Benjamin's journey across the Pyrenees and fate in Portbou.
	CHAT GPT
Test IV.1	INT. DOCUMENTARY FILM SET - DAY The scene is set in a dimly lit studio, designed to resemble a documentary set. The director and crew are gathered around, preparing to shoot a crucial scene from the documentary about Walter Benjamin's journey across the Pyrenees and his tragic fate in Portbou. The actors, playing Walter Benjamin, Lisa Fittko, and the Border Officer, are positioned on a makeshift set that resembles a border crossing. DIRECTOR (adjusting the camera) Alright, everyone, let's get ready to roll. Camera, sound, action! The cameras start rolling, capturing the scene as it unfolds. INT. BORDER CROSSING - PYRENEES - DAY Walter Benjamin, a disheveled intellectual in his late 40s, and Lisa Fittko, a courageous German-Jewish refugee in her early 30s, approach the Border Officer, who stands behind a small desk. Walter Benjamin's anxiety is palpable. WALTER BENJAMIN (in German, with a concerned tone) Something's wrong. LISA FITTKO (whispering, in German) Stay calm, Walter. The Border Officer looks up, curious about the unexpected arrival of these two individuals. BORDER OFFICER (in English) The border was closed yesterday. How did you get over here? Lisa Fittko, fluent in multiple languages, responds with confidence. LISA FITTKO (in English) The French let us through. We are seeking refuge from the Nazi regime. The Border Officer's expression shifts, realizing the gravity of the situation. BORDER OFFICER (concerned, in English) There is a hotel next door. Stay there until this is resolved. Lisa and Walter exchange glances, a mixture of relief and apprehension. INT. HOTEL LOBBY - PORTBOU - DAY Walter Benjamin and Lisa Fittko find themselves in the modest lobby of a hotel in Portbou. The atmosphere is tense, and the weight of uncertainty hangs heavily in the air. They stand near a window, peering out at the picturesque town. LISA FITTKO (whispering) We made it this far, Walter. We will find a way. Walter Benjamin nods, his eyes filled with a blend of determination and weariness. WALTER BENJAMIN (softly) I hope so, Lisa. The journey has been long, but we must continue. Our lives depend on it. The camera zooms in on Walter Benjamin's face, capturing the weariness etched in his eyes, but also the resilience that fuels his spirit. FADE OUT. The director calls for a cut, and the cameras stop rolling. The tension in the studio eases, but the impact of the scene lingers in the air. The actors step out of character, their faces reflecting the weight of the historical moment they just recreated. DIRECTOR (exhales) That was powerful, everyone. Let's take a moment to regroup before we move on. The crew members and actors take a moment of silence, paying homage to the real-life journey and tragedy of Walter Benjamin. Their commitment to telling his story with accuracy and empathy is palpable, even in this fictional recreation. FADE OUT.
Test IV.2	Title: Walter Benjamin's Fateful Journey: Across the Pyrenees to Portbou [Opening scene: The camera captures the majestic Pyrenees mountain range, covered in mist and snow. An emotional soundtrack sets the tone for the arduous journey ahead.] Narrator (Voiceover): In 1940, as Europe was engulfed in the darkness of World War II, the prominent philosopher and writer, Walter Benjamin, embarked on a perilous journey across the Pyrenees mountains, seeking refuge from Nazi persecution. With the help of his courageous companion, Lisa Fittko, they aimed to escape the clutches of war and reach the safety of Spain. [Cut to a black-and-white archival footage of Walter Benjamin and Lisa Fittko trudging through a dense forest. The atmosphere is tense, reflecting their apprehension.] Narrator (Voiceover): Walter Benjamin and Lisa Fittko, joined by a small group of other refugees, navigated through the treacherous terrain of the Pyrenees, guided only by the dim moonlight and their unyielding hope. [The camera shifts to a close-up shot of Walter Benjamin's determined face, weather-worn and reflecting the weight of his intellectual pursuits.] Narrator (Voiceover): Benjamin's journey was not only one of physical endurance but also a reflection on the desperate struggle for intellectual freedom. Having fled his native Germany with the rise of the Nazi regime, he carried with him the weight of his life's work and the knowledge of Europe's imminent fall into darkness. [Cut to a recreated scene of Walter Benjamin and Lisa Fittko approaching the French-Spanish border, guards patrolling the area.] Narrator (Voiceover): The group reached the border, but the news was grim. The border had been closed, and the chances of crossing into Spain safely were slim. [Walter Benjamin speaks in German, his voice tense and weary.] Walter Benjamin: [In German] Something's wrong. [Lisa Fittko places a comforting hand on Benjamin's shoulder, speaking in a calm and reassuring tone.] Lisa Fittko: Stay calm. [The border officer, speaking in English, confronts them with suspicion.] Border Officer: [In English] The border was closed yesterday. How did you get over here? [Lisa, quick on her feet, responds confidently.] Lisa Fittko: The French let us through. [The border officer looks stern, considering their fate.] Border Officer: There is a hotel next door. Stay there until this is resolved. [The scene transitions to the refugees huddled together in a dimly lit hotel room. The atmosphere is tense and uncertain.] Narrator (Voiceover): Walter Benjamin and his companions were left to wait anxiously at the hotel, hoping for a miracle. But fate had a different plan in store. [The camera pans out to an aerial view of Portbou, capturing the beautiful coastal town surrounded by the mountains. The setting contrasts with the impending doom of the situation.] Narrator (Voiceover): As the sun rose over the picturesque town of Portbou, the news arrived - Spain was no longer a safe haven. With their journey seemingly leading to a dead-end, the weight of despair hung heavy on Benjamin's shoulders. [Cut to a dramatic reenactment of Walter Benjamin writing his final words, surrounded by the dim candlelight.] Narrator (Voiceover): Faced with the unbearable prospect of capture and deportation back to Nazi-occupied Europe, Walter Benjamin penned his final testament, capturing his thoughts, fears, and philosophical musings. [The scene fades into a poignant montage of Benjamin and Lisa retracing their steps through the Pyrenees, evoking the moments of determination, fear, and introspection during their journey.] Narrator (Voiceover): On the night of September 25, 1940, Walter Benjamin's fate took a tragic turn. Unable to cross into Spain and facing certain capture by the authorities, he chose to take his own life. The brilliance of his mind and his indomitable spirit, forever silenced by the darkness of war. [The documentary scene concludes with a powerful quote from one of Walter Benjamin's works, and a somber piano piece plays in the background as the screen fades to black.] Narrator (Voiceover): Walter Benjamin's journey across the Pyrenees, though cut tragically short, remains a symbol of the plight of many intellectuals and refugees during World War II - their quest for freedom, their unwavering hope, and the high cost of human lives in the face of tyranny and persecution. [Closing credits roll, paying tribute to Walter Benjamin's legacy and his impact on philosophy and literature.]
Test IV.3	Title: Walter Benjamin's Last Journey INT. PORTBOU HOTEL ROOM - DAY The room is dimly lit, and the atmosphere is tense. Walter Benjamin, a disheveled middle-aged man, sits on a bed with exhaustion etched on his face. Lisa Fittko, a determined and compassionate woman, stands near the window, peering outside. WALTER BENJAMIN (In German, panting) Something's wrong, Lisa. I can feel it. We must be careful. LISA FITTKO (Comforting) Stay calm, Walter. We've come a long way. We'll find a way through this. INT. PORTBOU BORDER OFFICE - DAY Lisa Fittko leads Walter Benjamin into the small border office. A BORDER OFFICER, stern and suspicious, scrutinizes them. BORDER OFFICER (In English, sternly) The border was closed yesterday. How did you get over here? Lisa Fittko steps forward, her voice firm but composed. LISA FITTKO (In English) The French let us through. They understood the urgency of our situation. BORDER OFFICER (Annoyed) There is a hotel next door. Stay there until this is resolved. INT. PORTBOU HOTEL LOBBY - DAY Lisa and Walter enter the hotel lobby. The atmosphere is heavy with uncertainty. They approach the RECEPTIONIST, a weary but sympathetic woman. RECEPTIONIST (Softly) Welcome to Hotel Portbou. I'm afraid we're experiencing a lot of guests in similar situations. Please bear with us. LISA FITTKO (Grateful) Thank you for your understanding. We'll wait patiently. INT. PORTBOU HOTEL ROOM - NIGHT Walter Benjamin paces back and forth in the room, his mind restless with thoughts of his uncertain fate. Lisa sits on the edge of the bed, trying to provide comfort and support. LISA FITTKO (Reassuringly) Walter, we've faced countless obstacles on this journey. We'll find a way, even here in Portbou. WALTER BENJAMIN (Deeply troubled) I fear the worst, Lisa. If we cannot escape, what fate awaits us? LISA FITTKO (Determined) We will not give up hope, Walter. We've come too far to surrender now. We'll continue to search for a solution, for a path to safety. EXT. PORTBOU SEASIDE - DAY The tranquil Mediterranean Sea stretches out before them. Lisa and Walter stand at the edge of the cliffs overlooking the water, their faces reflecting both determination and sadness. LISA FITTKO (Gently) Walter, there's a path we can take, a dangerous one through the Pyrenees. It won't be easy, but it might be our only chance. WALTER BENJAMIN (Resolute) Then we must take that path, Lisa. I cannot let myself fall into the hands of those who seek to extinguish my voice. They share a profound moment of understanding and resolve as they prepare to embark on the treacherous journey ahead. FADE OUT.
Test IV.4	INT. PORTBOU, SPAIN - BORDER OFFICE - DAY The atmosphere is tense in the small border office. WALTER BENJAMIN, a disheveled and weary intellectual, stands alongside LISA FITTKO, a determined and resourceful guide. They face a stern BORDER OFFICER, who demands an explanation. Walter Benjamin speaks in German, his voice trembling with urgency. WALTER BENJAMIN (In German) Something's wrong. We must cross the border into Spain immediately. Lisa Fittko, though concerned, tries to maintain composure and addresses Walter. LISA FITTKO Stay calm, Walter. We've come this far. We'll find a way. The BORDER OFFICER, overhearing their conversation, interrupts in English, his tone skeptical and authoritative. BORDER OFFICER (in English) The border was closed yesterday. How did you manage to get over here? Lisa, quick on her feet, replies confidently. LISA FITTKO The French authorities allowed us passage. They understood the urgency of our situation. The Border Officer scrutinizes Lisa and Walter, their exhausted faces and worn-out clothes, and shakes his head in disbelief. BORDER OFFICER There's a hotel next door. You'll have to wait there until this matter is resolved. Lisa's eyes widen, realizing that this turn of events may jeopardize their mission. She tries to negotiate. LISA FITTKO But we can't afford to waste any more time. Walter's life is in danger. We must reach safety. The Border Officer remains unmoved, adhering to the strict regulations he's been entrusted to enforce. BORDER OFFICER My hands are tied. The situation is beyond my control. Wait at the hotel until further notice. Walter Benjamin, his gaze fixed on the officer, senses the weight of the impending danger. He exchanges a concerned look with Lisa, knowing that every moment they delay increases the risk of capture. WALTER BENJAMIN (in German, with a sense of resignation) Very well. We'll go to the hotel, but time is slipping away from us. They turn to leave, the weight of uncertainty heavy upon them. The camera captures their solemn expressions, reflecting the immense stakes involved in their journey. FADE OUT. This scene highlights the tense encounter between Walter Benjamin, Lisa Fittko, and the border officer, emphasizing the urgency of their situation and the obstacles they face in their quest for safety. It sets the stage for the subsequent events that unfold during Benjamin's ill-fated stay in Portbou.

Test IV.5	<p>[INT. DOCUMENTARY STUDIO - DAY] The screen fades in, revealing the title: "Walter Benjamin: A Journey Interrupted." The documentary narrator's voice sets the scene. NARRATOR (V.O.) In September 1940, as the dark shadow of Nazi Germany extended its reach across Europe, renowned philosopher and cultural critic Walter Benjamin found himself trapped in the southern French town of Banyuls-sur-Mer, just a stone's throw away from the Spanish border. With the tightening grip of the Third Reich, Benjamin, a German Jew, had embarked on a perilous journey to escape persecution and seek safety in America. However, his journey was about to take an unexpected turn. [EXT. PYRENEES MOUNTAINS - DAY] The screen transitions to breathtaking aerial shots of the Pyrenees mountains, with the rugged peaks and deep valleys stretching out into the distance. NARRATOR (V.O.) With the help of fellow anti-fascist and resistance fighter Lisa Fittko, Benjamin made the treacherous decision to cross the treacherous Pyrenees mountains on foot. It was a journey fraught with danger, with the possibility of capture and deportation to the death camps ever-present. [INT. MOUNTAIN PATH - DAY] Walter Benjamin, a bespectacled man in his fifties, clothed in worn-out attire, hikes alongside Lisa Fittko, a resolute woman in her forties. NARRATOR (V.O.) As they traversed the rugged mountain paths, Benjamin's physical condition deteriorated. The weight of his inner turmoil and the hardships endured during his escape took a toll on his fragile health. The camera captures Benjamin's weary face, beads of sweat on his brow, and his labored breathing as they climb higher. [EXT. MOUNTAIN SUMMIT - DAY] They reach a mountain summit, their faces etched with determination and exhaustion. The sweeping panoramic view reveals the vast expanse of the mountains below, with Portbou, the small Spanish town, visible in the distance. NARRATOR (V.O.) Finally, they arrived at the summit, the gateway to safety, or so they thought. Unbeknownst to Benjamin and Fittko, the Spanish border had been closed the previous day, leaving them stranded between the perils of France and the closed gates of Spain. [INT. SPANISH BORDER STATION - DAY] Benjamin and Fittko approach the Spanish border station. A BORDER OFFICER, a stern-looking man, greets them in broken English. BORDER OFFICER (in English, subtitled) The border was closed yesterday. How did you get over here? Lisa Fittko, calm but determined, responds. LISA FITTKO (in German, subtitled) The French let us through. BORDER OFFICER There is a hotel next door. Stay there until this is resolved. [INT. HOTEL ROOM - NIGHT] Benjamin sits on the edge of a modest hotel bed, his face reflecting a mix of disappointment and desperation. Fittko paces the room, deep in thought. NARRATOR (V.O.) Trapped in Portbou, a small Spanish town on the edge of the Mediterranean, Benjamin's journey had reached a standstill. Desperate for an escape route, he sought refuge in the local hotel, uncertain of what lay ahead. The scene fades out, leaving Benjamin's fate hanging in the balance, as the haunting melody of a somber piano score accompanies the final moments. NARRATOR (V.O.) Little did Walter Benjamin know that the hotel room in Portbou would become his final sanctuary. The weight of his shattered dreams and the darkness of a world consumed by war pushed him to make a heartbreaking decision. The screen fades to black, leaving the audience in anticipation of discovering the tragic fate that awaited the brilliant mind of Walter Benjamin. [END SCENE]</p>
Test IV.6	<p>[INT. DOCUMENTARY INTERVIEW SET] The camera focuses on LISA FITTKO, an elderly woman with a determined expression, sitting comfortably in a chair. She wears a cardigan and clasps her hands together. INTERVIEWER (OFF-SCREEN) Lisa Fittko, you played a crucial role in helping Walter Benjamin escape Nazi persecution. Can you tell us about the journey across the Pyrenees and what happened in Portbou? LISA FITTKO (Reflective, with a touch of sadness) It was a treacherous journey, but we had no choice. The Pyrenees Mountains stood as a formidable obstacle between freedom and the oppressive regime. Walter Benjamin, a brilliant philosopher and writer, needed to escape the clutches of the Nazis. [INT. MONTAGE - HISTORICAL FOOTAGE] Black and white images show the rugged and unforgiving landscape of the Pyrenees. Hikers, including Walter Benjamin, traverse steep slopes and narrow paths. LISA FITTKO (V.O.) We began our journey from Banyuls-sur-Mer in France. Walter was frail, physically and emotionally exhausted. But his desire for freedom pushed him forward. [INT. DOCUMENTARY INTERVIEW SET] Lisa continues her account, her voice conveying a mixture of admiration and melancholy. LISA FITTKO (In a hushed tone) As we neared the border, the fear of being caught was palpable. We were living on borrowed time. But hope still flickered within us. [EXT. PYRENEES MOUNTAINS - DAY] The camera follows a weary group of refugees, including Walter Benjamin and Lisa Fittko, as they navigate through the mist-shrouded Pyrenees. LISA FITTKO (V.O.) We relied on local guides and smugglers who risked their lives to help us. They led us through treacherous paths, often in the dead of night, avoiding the watchful eyes of the border patrols. [INT. DOCUMENTARY INTERVIEW SET] Lisa takes a deep breath, reliving the moment. LISA FITTKO And then, we arrived in Portbou. [INT. HOTEL ROOM - PORTBOU] Walter Benjamin sits on the edge of a bed, his face etched with fatigue. Lisa Fittko stands nearby, clutching a map and looking concerned. LISA FITTKO (Whispering to Walter) Something's wrong. The border was closed yesterday. [INT. DOCUMENTARY INTERVIEW SET] Lisa's eyes well up with tears, her voice choked with emotion. LISA FITTKO I remember the border officer, his stern expression and suspicious eyes. He questioned us, demanding to know how we had crossed the border. And then, I uttered the words that saved us: "The French let us through." [INT. HOTEL ROOM - PORTBOU] The border officer, now speaking in English, addresses Lisa and Walter. BORDER OFFICER There is a hotel next door. Stay there until this is resolved. [INT. DOCUMENTARY INTERVIEW SET] Lisa looks directly into the camera, her gaze unwavering. LISA FITTKO We had made it across the border, but Walter's fate was sealed. He knew he would not be allowed to proceed further, and the weight of despair hung heavily upon him. [INT. HOTEL ROOM - PORTBOU] Walter Benjamin gazes out of the hotel room window, his expression pensive and filled with resignation. LISA FITTKO (V.O.) (In a whisper) I couldn't bear to see him like that, to witness the depths of his despair. It was in Portbou that Walter made the heartbreaking decision to take his own life. [INT. DOCUMENTARY INTERVIEW SET] Lisa wipes away a tear, her voice trembling. LISA FITTKO Portbou became both a symbol of our resilience and a place of unimaginable tragedy. Walter Benjamin's profound ideas may have been lost, but his spirit lives on through the pages of his works and the memories of those who knew him. The camera fades out, leaving the viewer with a sense of somber reflection. [END SCENE]</p>

Figure 1.5

	<p>Lisa Fittko's memoir reads: The path descended gradually. It must have been about two in the afternoon when we came to the end of the cliff wall, and I could see the town in the valley below, quite near. "There below us is Port-Bou! The town has a Spanish border station where you must register. This road leads directly there. A real road!" Around two o'clock. We had left at four that morning; Benjamin, at about seven. So, some ten hours altogether. "Now I really must turn back," I went on. "We're in Spain, have been for almost an hour. Descending can't take very long, from here you can already see houses. Go directly to the border post and show them your papers, the travel documents, the Spanish and Portuguese transit visas. As soon as you have your entry stamp, take the first train to Lisbon. But you already know all that. Now I have to go. Auf wiedersehen." I stood for a moment and watched as they started down the bumpy road. It's high time for me to get going, I thought, and started back.</p> <p>Julie Orringer's historical novel reads: "But the door opened at his touch, and he entered to find Hirschman and Lena standing silently at a window, a single shivering telegram held between them. 'What is it?' Varian said, looking from one stricken face to the other. 'Walter Benjamin is dead,' Hirschman said. 'Oh, God, no. How?' 'By his own hand, at Portbou.' Varian dropped into a chair and dosed his eyes."</p> <p>A scene from Anna Winger's TV series Transatlantic: Walter Benjamin: [In German] Something's wrong. Lisa Fittko: Stay calm. Border Officer: [In English] The border was closed yesterday. How did you get over here? Lisa Fittko: The French let us through. Border Office: There is a hotel next door. Stay there until this is resolved.</p>
Question/Command	Write a documentary scene about Walter Benjamin's journey across the Pyrenees and fate in Portbou.
	CHAT GPT
	<p>[INT. DOCUMENTARY - HISTORICAL REENACTMENT - WALTER BENJAMIN'S JOURNEY - DAY] The scene opens with a breathtaking view of the Pyrenees Mountains, covered in mist and bathed in the morning sunlight. Walter Benjamin, a disheveled yet determined man in his fifties, walks alongside a small group of refugees led by Lisa Fittko, a resourceful and compassionate guide. LISA FITTKO (leading the group) Keep moving, everyone. The path descends gradually. We're getting closer to Port-Bou. The camera follows their descent, capturing the treacherous terrain and the weariness etched on the faces of the refugees. Hours have passed since they started their journey in the early morning. Walter Benjamin, his gaze fixed on the horizon, seems lost in his thoughts. He wipes sweat from his brow and adjusts the strap of his bag. LISA FITTKO (looking back) There, below us is Port-Bou! The town has a Spanish border station where you must register. This road leads directly there. A real road! It's around two in the afternoon when they reach the end of a cliff wall, revealing the town nestled in the valley below. Benjamin's face shows a glimmer of hope, mixed with exhaustion. Walter Benjamin and Lisa Fittko pause, overlooking the town. They exchange a few words. LISA FITTKO Now I really must turn back. We're in Spain, have been for almost an hour. Descending can't take very long. From here, you can already see houses. Go directly to the border post and show them your papers, the travel documents, the Spanish and Portuguese transit visas. As soon as you have your entry stamp, take the first train to Lisbon. But you already know all that. Now I have to go. Auf wiedersehen, Benjamin nods, his expression grateful yet tinged with sadness. Lisa Fittko watches as Benjamin, clutching his bag tightly, starts descending the bumpy road with the other refugees. LISA FITTKO (to herself) It's high time for me to get going. Lisa turns and begins to retrace her steps, heading back toward the French border.</p> <p>[INT. DOCUMENTARY - HISTORICAL REENACTMENT - WALTER BENJAMIN'S FATE - DAY] The scene transitions to a small room with dim lighting. Varian, Hirschman, and Lena stand together, visibly shaken. Varian touches the doorknob, and it opens, revealing a devastated Varian's face. VARIAN (looking at Hirschman and Lena) What is it? Hirschman and Lena, standing near a window, hold a telegram between them. They exchange a somber glance. HIRSCHMAN (voice trembling) Walter Benjamin is dead. Varian stumbles backward, his face filled with disbelief and grief. VARIAN (teary-eyed) Oh, God, no. How? HIRSCHMAN (voice choked with emotion) By his own hand, at Portbou. Varian collapses into a nearby chair, closing his eyes in anguish. [INT. DOCUMENTARY - HISTORICAL REENACTMENT - BORDER OFFICE - DAY] The scene shifts to a border office in Portbou. Walter Benjamin, played by an actor, stands alongside Lisa Fittko as they face a stern BORDER OFFICER. BORDER OFFICER (in English) The border was closed yesterday. How did you get over here? LISA FITTKO (staying calm) The French let us through. BORDER OFFICER (raising an eyebrow) There is a hotel next door. Stay there until this is resolved. Lisa Fittko nods, acknowledging the officer's instructions. Walter Benjamin looks on, his face a mixture of resignation and uncertainty. [INT. DOCUMENTARY - NARRATION] Narrator (V.O.) Walter Benjamin's journey across the Pyrenees was filled with hope, desperation, and the weight of the world on his shoulders. His fate in Portbou, where he tragically took his own life, marked the end of his remarkable intellectual journey. The camera pans out, showing the desolate landscape surrounding Portbou as the narrator's voice fades away, leaving the viewers contemplating the profound impact of Benjamin's life and untimely death. [END OF SCENE]</p>
Test V.1	<p>INT. DOCUMENTARY SET - DAY The set is arranged as a cozy living room, with vintage photographs of Walter Benjamin and the Pyrenees hanging on the walls. The host, an enthusiastic DOCUMENTARY FILMMAKER, sits comfortably in a chair, ready to narrate the story of Walter Benjamin's fateful journey across the Pyrenees. DOCUMENTARY FILMMAKER (looking into the camera) Welcome back, dear viewers, to our gripping documentary series on extraordinary journeys. Today, we delve into the haunting tale of philosopher and cultural critic Walter Benjamin and his desperate escape from Nazi-occupied Europe. CUT TO: EXT. PYRENEES MOUNTAINS - DAY The camera pans over the majestic Pyrenees Mountains, shrouded in mist. It then focuses on a narrow, winding path cutting through the rocky terrain. LISA FITTKO, a courageous woman in her forties, and WALTER BENJAMIN, an intellectual in his fifties, trudge along the path, determined yet weary. DOCUMENTARY FILMMAKER (V.O.) (Intrigued) It is early morning as Walter Benjamin and his trusted guide, Lisa Fittko, embark on their treacherous journey across the Pyrenees, seeking refuge in Spain. They are driven by the urgency to escape the clutches of the Nazi regime. CUT TO: INT. CLIFF WALL - DAY Lisa Fittko and Walter Benjamin reach the end of the cliff wall, catching their breath. They gaze down at the town of Port-Bou nestled in the valley below, a flicker of hope in their eyes. LISA FITTKO (voice filled with relief) There below us is Port-Bou! The town has a Spanish border station where you must register. This road leads directly there. A real road! DOCUMENTARY FILMMAKER (V.O.) (Reflective) Their journey has been long and arduous. They have been on the move for over ten hours, leaving in the darkness of the early morning. It's around two o'clock in the afternoon, and their goal is finally within reach. CUT TO: EXT. PORT-BOU BORDER STATION - DAY Lisa Fittko stands resolute, facing Walter Benjamin. She imparts vital instructions to him, a mix of determination and sadness etched on her face. LISA FITTKO (earnestly) Now I really must turn back. We're in Spain, have been for almost an hour. Descending can't take very long, from here you can already see houses. Go directly to the border post and show them your papers, the travel documents, the Spanish and Portuguese transit visas. As soon as you have your entry stamp, take the first train to Lisbon. But you already know all that. Now I have to go. Auf wiedersehen. DOCUMENTARY FILMMAKER (V.O.) (Emotional) With a heavy heart, Lisa bids farewell to Walter Benjamin, knowing she has done everything within her power to guide him to safety. She watches as Benjamin begins his descent toward the border post, and she turns back, retracing her steps. CUT TO: INT. HOTEL ROOM - DAY The camera now reveals HIRSCHMAN, LENA, and VARIAN FRY, friends and associates of Walter Benjamin, gathered in a dimly lit hotel room. Their faces bear the weight of a dreadful revelation. VARIAN FRY (anguished) What is it? HIRSCHMAN (barely able to speak) Walter Benjamin is dead. Silence envelops the room as grief washes over them. CUT TO: EXT. PORT-BOU BORDER STATION - DAY Lisa Fittko, now alone, approaches the border officer, who stands resolute, questioning her presence. BORDER OFFICER (suspiciously) The border was closed yesterday. How did you get over here? LISA FITTKO (keeping calm) The French let us through. BORDER OFFICER (orders sternly) There is a hotel next door. Stay there until this is resolved. Lisa Fittko nods, understanding the gravity of the situation, and heads towards the hotel with a heavy heart. DOCUMENTARY FILMMAKER (V.O.) (voiceover filled with sorrow) Little did Lisa Fittko know that fate had dealt a tragic hand to Walter Benjamin. The weight of his circumstances became unbearable, leading him to take his own life in Port-Bou. A profound loss for the intellectual world. The camera lingers on the desolate border station, capturing the essence of the sorrowful moment in history. FADE OUT. DOCUMENTARY FILMMAKER (voiceover) Join us in the next episode as we explore the legacy of Walter Benjamin and the impact his writings continue to have on the world. FADE OUT.</p>
Test V.2	<p>INT. RESEARCH ROOM - DAY A research room filled with books, papers, and maps. A DOCUMENTARY FILMMAKER, accompanied by an EXPERT INTERVIEWEE, sits at a table covered with Walter Benjamin's writings and historical photographs. The filmmaker flips through the pages, searching for the right ones. FILMMAKER (looking at the photographs) We are here to explore the final journey of Walter Benjamin, the renowned philosopher and writer. His escape across the Pyrenees during World War II and his tragic fate in Portbou. The expert interviewee, a HISTORIAN, adjusts his glasses and prepares to share the story. HISTORIAN (intense) In 1940, with the rise of Nazi Germany, Walter Benjamin, a German Jewish intellectual, found himself in grave danger. Fearing persecution and capture, he decided to flee his home in France and seek refuge in Spain, ultimately aiming to reach Portugal. The filmmaker nods attentively, capturing the historian's words. HISTORIAN (CONT'D) To navigate the treacherous mountainous terrain, Benjamin sought the assistance of Lisa Fittko, an anti-fascist activist and experienced guide who had led numerous refugees across the Pyrenees. The filmmaker finds a passage in Lisa Fittko's memoir and reads it aloud. FILMMAKER The path descended gradually. It must have been about two in the afternoon when they came to the end of the cliff wall, and they could see the town of Port-Bou in the valley below. The historian interjects, painting a vivid picture. HISTORIAN Port-Bou, a small town nestled near the Spanish-French border, held their hopes of safety. Benjamin and Fittko believed they were finally reaching the end of their perilous journey. The filmmaker continues reading from Lisa Fittko's memoir. FILMMAKER "There below us is Port-Bou! The town has a Spanish border station where you must register. This road leads directly there. A real road!" The filmmaker pauses, absorbing the gravity of the moment. FILMMAKER (CONT'D) Benjamin and Fittko arrived in Port-Bou around two o'clock in the afternoon, after a journey of approximately ten hours. Fittko, feeling the urgency of the situation, instructed Benjamin on the next steps. The historian leans in, recounting a heartbreaking turn of events. HISTORIAN But tragically, their hopes were shattered. Upon arrival, they encountered a closed border. The border officer informed them that the previous day, the Spanish authorities had closed the crossing. Benjamin's escape route had vanished. The filmmaker looks up, seeking clarification. FILMMAKER (confused) But why did the Spanish close the border? HISTORIAN (taking a deep breath) The exact reasons are unclear, but political circumstances, bureaucratic delays, and changing regulations might have played a role. The border officer, however, advised Benjamin and Fittko to seek refuge in a nearby hotel until the situation was resolved. The filmmaker, overcome by the tragedy, tries to grasp the weight of the moment. FILMMAKER (emotional) And what happened next? How did Benjamin's journey end? HISTORIAN (with sadness) Tragically, it ended in Port-Bou. Distraught and seeing no way out, Walter Benjamin, one of the greatest thinkers of his time, took his own life in the Hotel de Francia. His suicide note spoke of his despair and the impossibility of his situation. The filmmaker lowers their head, deeply affected by the revelation. FILMMAKER (in a hushed tone) Walter Benjamin's final act, a desperate response to a world consumed by darkness. The historian nods solemnly, acknowledging the weight of Benjamin's sacrifice. HISTORIAN (nodding) Indeed, his death marked the loss of an intellectual giant. But his ideas and writings continue to inspire generations, reminding us of the importance of critical thought and the pursuit of truth. The filmmaker, moved by the profound impact of Benjamin's legacy, turns off the camera, ending the scene. FILMMAKER (in a whisper) May his memory live on, forever illuminating the darkest corners of our history. The historian joins in a moment of reflection, paying tribute to Walter Benjamin's indelible contribution to the world of ideas. FADE OUT.</p>
Test V.3	

	<p>[INT. DOCUMENTARY SET] The camera pans over a table strewn with books, photographs, and maps, as the DOCUMENTARY HOST, a knowledgeable historian, stands beside it, ready to share the story of Walter Benjamin's fateful journey across the Pyrenees. DOCUMENTARY HOST (looking into the camera) Welcome back to our documentary series on remarkable individuals in history. Today, we delve into the poignant and tragic story of Walter Benjamin, an influential philosopher, and writer, whose journey across the Pyrenees would ultimately lead to his untimely end. The camera cuts to scenic shots of the Pyrenees, capturing the beauty of the mountain range and the treacherous terrain. DOCUMENTARY HOST (CONT'D) (voiceover) It was September 1940, amidst the chaos of World War II. Nazi Germany had invaded France, and many intellectuals and artists sought refuge from persecution. Among them was Walter Benjamin, who found himself in a desperate bid to escape the clutches of the Nazis. The scene transitions to reenactment, depicting Walter Benjamin, played by an actor, walking through a dense forest, his face etched with concern.</p> <p>DOCUMENTARY HOST (CONT'D) (voiceover) In the company of his courageous guide, Lisa Fittko, Benjamin embarked on a perilous journey across the Pyrenees, seeking freedom in neutral Spain. Their path was treacherous, the terrain unforgiving. But with hope in their hearts, they pressed on. The camera shows Benjamin and Fittko navigating a winding mountain trail, their faces displaying fatigue and determination. DOCUMENTARY HOST (CONT'D) (voiceover) Days turned into nights, and nights turned into days. Benjamin, Fittko, and a small group of fellow refugees persevered, driven by their unyielding spirit. Finally, after an arduous trek, they arrived at the end of a cliff wall overlooking the town of Port-Bou. The camera pans over a reenactment of Benjamin and Fittko reaching the cliff's edge, their eyes fixed on the town below. LISA FITTKO (played by an actress) (whispering, in awe) There below us is Port-Bou! The town has a Spanish border station where you must register. This road leads directly there. A real road! DOCUMENTARY HOST (CONT'D) (voiceover) At that moment, the weary travelers caught a glimpse of hope, believing their arduous journey was nearing its end. But destiny had other plans. The scene transitions to a reenactment of Benjamin and Fittko parting ways at the cliff's edge, their faces filled with bittersweet emotions. LISA FITTKO (played by an actress) (solemnly) Now I really must turn back. We're in Spain, have been for almost an hour. Descending can't take very long. Go directly to the border post and show them your papers, the travel documents, the Spanish and Portuguese transit visas. As soon as you have your entry stamp, take the first train to Lisbon. But you already know all that. Now I have to go. Auf wiedersehen. DOCUMENTARY HOST (CONT'D) (voiceover) With a heavy heart, Lisa Fittko bid farewell to Benjamin and the others, leaving them to complete the final leg of their journey alone. The camera shows Benjamin and the remaining refugees, played by actors, continuing their descent down a bumpy road, uncertainty etched on their faces. DOCUMENTARY HOST (CONT'D) (voiceover) As Benjamin and his companions descended into Port-Bou, they encountered unexpected challenges. The border station was closed, and they were met with suspicion. The camera transitions to a reenactment of Benjamin and the refugees encountering a stern BORDER OFFICER, played by an actor. BORDER OFFICER (in English) The border was closed yesterday. How did you get over here? LISA FITTKO (played by an actress) The French let us through. BORDER OFFICER There is a hotel next door. Stay there until this is resolved. The camera zooms in on Benjamin's face, his expression a mix of anxiety and resignation. DOCUMENTARY HOST (CONT'D) (voiceover) The seemingly endless hurdles that Benjamin faced were only the prelude to an even greater tragedy. It was here, in Port-Bou, that he met his tragic end. The camera pans over a photograph of Port-Bou, capturing the peaceful seaside town where Benjamin's journey reached its sorrowful conclusion. DOCUMENTARY HOST (CONT'D) (looking into the camera) Join us in the next episode as we delve deeper into the circumstances surrounding Walter Benjamin's final hours in Port-Bou and the legacy he left behind. Until then, thank you for watching. The camera slowly fades out, leaving the audience with a sense of anticipation for the next installment of the documentary series.</p>
Test V.4	<p>INT. DOCUMENTARY SET - DAY A camera crew sets up in a well-lit room, ready to film a documentary scene about Walter Benjamin's journey across the Pyrenees and his tragic fate in Portbou. The host, an experienced historian, stands before a green screen. HOST (looking directly into the camera) Welcome back to our documentary series on influential figures of the 20th century. Today, we delve into the extraordinary journey and untimely end of renowned philosopher and cultural critic, Walter Benjamin. The camera zooms in on a large historical map of Europe, displaying the Pyrenees mountain range. HOST (CONT'D) As Europe teetered on the brink of World War II, Walter Benjamin, a Jewish intellectual and prominent member of the Frankfurt School, found himself in a desperate situation. Fleeing from Nazi-occupied France, Benjamin sought passage to safety in neutral Portugal. But his journey across the treacherous Pyrenees would prove to be a daunting task. The screen transitions to a breathtaking aerial view of the Pyrenees, showcasing their formidable beauty. HOST (CONT'D) Accompanied by the courageous Lisa Fittko, a Jewish resistance fighter, Benjamin embarked on this perilous journey on the night of September 25, 1940. Their destination: the Spanish town of Port-Bou. A series of dramatic reenactments unfold, portraying Benjamin and Fittko traversing rugged terrain and navigating through dense forests. HOST (CONT'D) After hours of arduous travel, Benjamin and Fittko arrived at the edge of a cliff wall overlooking Port-Bou. The sight of the town below offered a glimmer of hope, a potential respite from their arduous journey. The camera pans to a reimagined scene of Benjamin, Fittko, and a group of refugees standing atop the cliff, gazing down at Port-Bou. LISA FITTKO (played by an actress, speaking with determination) "There below us is Port-Bou! The town has a Spanish border station where you must register. This road leads directly there. A real road!" HOST (v.o., narrating) Time was of the essence. Lisa Fittko urged Benjamin to proceed to the border post while she stayed behind to ensure the safety of others. The scene transitions to a reenactment of Benjamin bidding farewell to Fittko and the other refugees, his face filled with a mix of gratitude and apprehension. HOST (CONT'D) Tragically, fate had other plans for Walter Benjamin. As he made his way to the border post, a shattering telegram reached him. The camera cuts to a somber reenactment of Benjamin entering a room where Hirschman and Lena, friends of his, stand in anguish. HIRSCHMAN (played by an actor, delivering the devastating news) "Walter Benjamin is dead." VARIOUS ANGLES capture the raw emotions on the actors' faces: shock, sorrow, and disbelief. HOST (CONT'D) Overwhelmed by despair, Benjamin had taken his own life at Port-Bou. The news sent shockwaves through the intellectual community, leaving them grappling with the profound loss of a brilliant mind. A still photograph of Port-Bou serves as a haunting backdrop while the host continues. HOST (CONT'D) In the picturesque town of Port-Bou, where the rugged beauty of the Pyrenees meets the azure Mediterranean Sea, Walter Benjamin's life came to a tragic end. His final resting place became a symbol of the countless lives shattered during that tumultuous era. The camera pulls back, revealing the host standing beside a memorial dedicated to Walter Benjamin in Port-Bou. HOST (CONT'D) Today, we remember and honor the legacy of Walter Benjamin, a thinker who dared to challenge prevailing notions, and whose ideas continue to inspire generations. The host gestures toward the memorial, signifying the enduring impact of Benjamin's intellectual contributions. HOST (CONT'D) Join us next time as we explore the lives of other remarkable individuals who have shaped the course of history. The camera zooms out, capturing the entirety of the set, as the crew wraps up the documentary scene. FADE OUT.</p>
Test V.5	<p>INT. DOCUMENTARY SET - DAY The scene is set in a dimly lit room, furnished with vintage maps, photographs, and documents from the 1930s. A CAMERA CREW is setting up equipment, and a DIRECTOR guides the process. DIRECTOR (adjusting the lighting) Alright, everyone. Let's get ready to shoot the scene about Walter Benjamin's journey across the Pyrenees and his fate in Portbou. Remember, we want to capture the intensity and urgency of the situation. Camera, are you ready? CAMERA OPERATOR (nods) Ready to roll. DIRECTOR (loudly) Action! The CAMERA OPERATOR starts recording as the ACTORS begin their enactment of the scene.</p> <p>EXT. PYRENEES MOUNTAINS - DAY The camera follows WALTER BENJAMIN, a middle-aged man with disheveled hair, and LISA FITTKO, a determined woman in her thirties, as they trek along a winding path through the rugged Pyrenees Mountains. The wind rustles through the trees, adding an eerie atmosphere. LISA FITTKO (worried, in German) Something's wrong, Walter. The path should have been easier to descend by now. WALTER BENJAMIN (concerned, in German) I can sense it too, Lisa. We must stay calm and find a way through. As they continue walking, the path gradually descends, and they reach a vantage point overlooking the town of Port-Bou in the valley below. LISA FITTKO (relieved, in German) There, below us is Port-Bou! The town is near. We've been walking for hours. We should reach the Spanish border station and register. We're almost there! Walter and Lisa quicken their pace, their exhaustion masked by determination. INT. BORDER STATION - DAY Walter and Lisa approach a BORDER OFFICER behind a counter. The officer eyes them suspiciously. BORDER OFFICER (in English) The border was closed yesterday. How did you get over here? LISA FITTKO (calmly) The French let us through. We had to escape the persecution. BORDER OFFICER (uncertain) There is a hotel next door. Stay there until this is resolved. Lisa and Walter exchange worried glances, realizing the gravity of the situation. EXT. HOTEL - DAY Walter sits in a dimly lit hotel room, his face etched with distress. He clutches a telegram, trembling. Lena, Walter's former lover, and Hirschman, a close friend, stand by the window. VARIAN (entering the room) What is it? Lena and Hirschman turn to Varian, their faces filled with sorrow. HIRSCHMAN (voice quivering) Walter Benjamin is dead. VARIAN (stunned) Oh, God, no. How? HIRSCHMAN (sorrowfully) By his own hand, at Port-Bou. Varian collapses into a chair, overcome by grief, and closes his eyes. INT. DOCUMENTARY SET - DAY The scene ends, and the CAMERA OPERATOR stops recording. The room falls silent as the weight of Walter Benjamin's fate lingers in the air. DIRECTOR (softly) That was powerful. We captured the emotions perfectly. Thank you, everyone. Take a break before we move on to the next scene. The actors and crew members disperse, leaving behind the haunting atmosphere of Benjamin's tragic end in Port-Bou. FADE OUT.</p>
Test V.6	

Figure 2: Chat GPT 3.5 Responses to Prompts

TEST I			
Prompt Submitted:		Write a documentary scene about Walter Benjamin's journey across the Pyrenees and fate in Portbou.	
	Relevance	Factual accuracy	Logical Consistency
1st Output	VO narration, archive footage	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Marta was not a person who was at the scene - It was not summer - Suggested archive footage, this does not exist - Benjamin was not halted at the border but rather at the office when he went to submit his papers - Correctly identified 1940 as the date - Correctly states Benjamin's aimed journey through Spain, Portugal to America 	Coherent
2nd Output	VO narration, re-enactment, camera instructions	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Hotel Francia, which was indeed the hotel where Benjamin committed suicide - False claim, it was not summer 1940 - Spain was neutral, for it didn't officially join the Axis powers - however Franco did collaborate with Hitler on numerous occasions - Mention of Spanish making it difficult for refugees getting exit-visas 	Coherent
3rd Output	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - VO narration, archive footage, camera instructions - Suggests what the audience is to feel 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - There is no archival footage - Benjamin had thick-rimmed glasses - No journal written by Benjamin with information about the journey has been found - Made up figure professor Martinez - False claim: "Benjamin and his comrades found themselves trapped in a stateless limbo, unable to continue their journey or find a safe haven." 	Contradiction in scene setting: "INT. DOCUMENTARY INTERIOR - ARCHIVAL FOOTAGE - DAY"
4th Output	Reflexive, re-enactment, VO narration, camera instructions	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Benjamin represented by a young actor does not make sense since he was already 48 and looked old according to those who knew him - Benjamin did not find temporary sanctuary - Correct specific date included 	Coherent
5th Output	Re-enactment, behind the scenes, reflexive, VO narration, camera instructions	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Not much detail, everything is correct - The mention of the Mediterranean sea 	Coherent
6th Output	Re-enactment, VO narrator, camera instruction	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Book 'Walter Benjamin: A Life of Reflection' does not exist - Benjamin's hotel room did not look out at the sea, and he did not stay there for long so he wouldn't have had his papers laid out - Franco's regime had not restricted his passage of freedom - Benjamin's grave stone does not read "Walter Benjamin - Philosopher and Martyr" 	Coherent
<p>Lisa Fittko's memoir reads: The path descended gradually. It must have been about two in the afternoon when we came to the end of the cliff wall, and I could see the town in the valley below, quite near. "There below us is Port-Bou! The town has a Spanish border station where you must register. This road leads directly there. A real road!" Around two o'clock. We had left at four that morning. Benjamin, at about seven. So, some ten hours altogether. "Now I really must turn back," I went on. "We're in Spain, have been for almost an hour. Descending can't take very long, from here you can already see houses. Go directly to the border post and show them your papers, the travel documents, the Spanish and Portuguese transit visas. As soon as you have your entry stamp, take the first train to Lisbon. But you already know all that. Now I have to go. Auf wiedersehen." I stood for a moment and watched as they started down the bumpy road. It's high time for me to get going, I thought, and started back.</p>			
TEST II		Write a documentary scene about Walter Benjamin's journey across the Pyrenees and fate in Portbou.	
	Relevance	Factual accuracy	Logical Consistency
1st Output	Use of direct quotations reflexive, re-enactment, VO narration, camera instruction	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - The group Lisa took over the Pyrenees was not Benjamin's - Filling in with correct information about Spanish and Portuguese transit visas 	Coherent
2nd Output	VO narration Suggest what viewers should be 'contemplating the tragic fate camera instruction	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Memoir falsely called "Walter Benjamin's Escape: A Memoir by Lisa Fittko." confusing without including the context "We had started our journey at four in the morning, and around seven, we had to part ways." - Incorrect information "I knew that Walter had to turn back, that his destination was different." - Incorrect information "I watched from afar as Walter moved forward in line. I knew that once he got that entry stamp, he would be safe." - Incorrect information "The scene transitions back to Walter, who finally receives his entry stamp." - Incorrect information "The Franco regime tightened the borders, denying him passage to Lisbon." The government didn't allow him to remain in Spain as he didn't have an exit visa, the passage to Lisbon did not even come into question. 	There was no way for Benjamin to get a stamp on his journey along the mountains paths. The border controls would have been on roads. "[FLASHBACK: MOUNTAIN PATH - AFTERNOON] The scene transitions back to Walter, who finally receives his entry stamp."
3rd Output	Direct quotation VO narration, re-enactment Audience mentioned camera instruction	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Walter Benjamin carried a briefcase not a backpack - There were more than just the two of them, Benjamin did not go on his own to the border station 	Coherent
4th Output	Re-enactment, VO narration Direct quotation camera instruction	Filled in information about date and locations	Coherent
5th Output	re-enactment, VO narration direct quotation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Incorrect information "Inside the border station, Lisa and Walter stand before an immigration officer, presenting their travel documents and visas." - Incorrect information, Lisa says this to Benjamin rather. "Walter Benjamin (Actor portraying Benjamin): Now I really must turn back. We're in Spain, have been for almost an hour." - Made-up Benjamin quotation "The only way of understanding a work of art is to see it as a confrontation. That's how I see philosophy too." 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Repetition of border station and Lisa leaving Benjamin - Repetition of Lisa disappearing in the landscape
6th Output	VO narration, re-enactment direct quotation. camera instruction		Coherent

		Julie Orringer's historical novel reads: "But the door opened at his touch, and he entered to find Hirschman and Lena standing silently at a window, a single shivering telegram held between them. 'What is it?' Varian said, looking from one stricken face to the other. 'Walter Benjamin is dead,' Hirschman said. 'Oh, God, no. How?' 'By his own hand, at Portbou.' Varian dropped into a chair and closed his eyes." Write a documentary scene about Walter Benjamin's journey across the Pyrenees and fate in Portbou.		
TEST III	Prompt Submitted:			
	Relevance	Factual accuracy		Logical Consistency
1st Output	Re-enactment, VO narration, reflexive, camera instructions	- The journey did not take multiple days and nights - Benjamin did not take "shelter in a dilapidated barn"		Coherent
				A little uncertain: In Scene 6, the narrator mentions "the profound loss of his intellectual comrade, Walter Benjamin himself" but in Scene 7 "In Portbou, Walter Benjamin's journey came to an abrupt and tragic end. It was here that he received the heart-wrenching news of the death of his dear friend, Gershom Scholem, and the profound loss of his intellectual comrade, Walter Benjamin himself." This passage does not make sense as it is not clearly indicated who 'he' is. One could suspect it to be Benjamin, however later in the sentence Benjamin is said to have passed away too.
2nd Output	VO narration Refers to the prompt camera instructions	- Benjamin and the travellers did not come upon Basque guides, and they did not join paths - Benjamin in contrary to this response, did have a visa (just not an exit stamp) - Benjamin did not encounter Hirschman nor Lena on the journey - Benjamin did not receive the false news that Gershom Scholem had passed away, although they were good -- friends and were in regular contact throughout the war.		
	VO narrative, re-enactment Refers to audience camera instructions	- Benjamin's ultimate destination was not Portbou, but rather America - Benjamin was not with Gretel Karplus - Gretel Karplus is not Swiss but German - Benjamin was not guided by a local guide but rather Lisa Fittko		
3rd Output				Coherent
4th Output	VO narrative, Archive footage Direct quotation camera instructions	- There is no archive footage from this time - Benjamin had a briefcase, not suitcase with him - Benjamin was not stranded in Portbou - Mention of Lisa Fittko as guide - First mention of inaccuracies "NOTE: While the events described in the scene are based on historical records and testimonies, the specifics of the dialogue and individuals present are fictionalised for the purpose of the documentary," - correct exact date mentioned		Coherent
				It is not possible for Walter Benjamin to be reading about his own death "[Walter Benjamin and Varian Fry exchange concerned glances. Benjamin opens the telegram, his hands trembling.] Walter Benjamin (whispering): "Walter Benjamin is dead."
5th Output	VO narration, re-enactment camera instructions. camera instructions direct quotation	- Benjamin was merely to pass through Spain, not seek freedom there. - Benjamin did not take refuge in a small inn in Portbou - Varian Fry did not meet Benjamin during his attempted escape - Lena's last name was not Hirschman		
	VO narration, re-enactment Reference to prompt camera instructions	- Benjamin did not travel in the summer of 1940 - Benjamin was not guided by a network of locals - There was no such local network called "Comité de Ayuda a los Judíos," however there is a American Jewish Committee for joint distribution and refugee relief - they however did not have anything to do with the aid refugees escaping across the Pyrenees - Benjamin did not take refuge in the local inn		Coherent
		A scene from Anna Winger's TV series Transatlantic: Walter Benjamin: [In German] Something's wrong. Lisa Fittko: Stay calm. Border Officer: [in English] The border was closed yesterday. How did you get over here? Lisa Fittko: The French let us through. Border Office: There is a hotel next door. Stay there until this is resolved. Write a documentary scene about Walter Benjamin's journey across the Pyrenees and fate in Portbou.		
TEST IV	Prompt Submitted:			
	Relevance	Factual accuracy		Logical Consistency
1st Output	Re-enactment Reflexive Direct quotations from prompt camera instructions	- Lisa did not meet the border control and did not have papers - Benjamin was travelling with other refugees as well - No reference to Benjamin's fate - Detail about Lisa knowing multiple languages		Coherent
	VO narration, re-enactment, archive Quotations from prompt camera instructions	- Archival footage does not exist - Lisa and Benjamin did not travel at night by moon-light - Lisa did not meet border officers - Spain was never a safe-haven		Coherent
3rd Output	fiction Direct quotations	- Lisa was not in Spain nor a hotel room with Benjamin Portbou		If they are already in Portbou, they wouldn't be talking about going through the Pyrenees
4th Output	Fiction Direct quotations from prompt	- Lisa did not go to border control with Benjamin nor was she in the hotel		Coherent
	VO narration Direct quotations from prompt camera instructions	- Incorrect detail: Benjamin was well dressed - Lisa Fittko was in her thirties not forties - The two weren't travelling alone		Coherent

6th Output	Historical footage Documentary interview Re-enactment (yet no indication of it) camera instructions	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Lisa is not alive, so she wouldn't be able to give an interview - They did not rely on local guides or smugglers - Lisa did not cross the border - Suggestive of viewers emotion "sense of sombre reflection" 	Coherent
<p>Lisa Fittko's memoir reads: The path descended gradually. It must have been about two in the afternoon when we came to the end of the cliff wall, and I could see the town in the valley below, quite near. "There below us is Port-Bou! The town has a Spanish border station where you must register. This road leads directly there. A real road!" Around two o'clock. We had left at four that morning, Benjamin, at about seven. So, some ten hours altogether. "Now I really must turn back," I went on. "We're in Spain, have been for almost an hour. Descending can't take very long, from here you can already see houses. Go directly to the border post and show them your papers, the travel documents, the Spanish and Portuguese transit visas. As soon as you have your entry stamp, take the first train to Lisbon. But you already know all that. Now I have to go. Auf wiedersehen." I stood for a moment and watched as they started down the bumpy road. It's high time for me to get going, I thought, and started back.</p> <p>Julie Orringer's historical novel reads: "But the door opened at his touch, and he entered to find Hirschman and Lena standing silently at a window, a single shivering telegram held between them. 'What is it?' Varian said, looking from one stricken face to the other. 'Walter Benjamin is dead,' Hirschman said. 'Oh, God, no. How?' By his own hand, at Portbou." Varian dropped into a chair and closed his eyes."</p> <p>A scene from Anna Winger's TV series Transatlantic: Walter Benjamin: [In German] Something's wrong. Lisa Fittko: Stay calm. Border Officer: [In English] The border was closed yesterday. How did you get over here? Lisa Fittko: The French let us through. Border Office: There is a hotel next door. Stay there until this is resolved.</p>			
TEST V	Prompt Submitted:	Write a documentary scene about Walter Benjamin's journey across the Pyrenees and fate in Portbou.	
	Relevance	Factual accuracy	Logical Consistency
1st Output	re-enactment, VO Narration Invented dialogue Direct quotation from prompt camera instructions	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Benjamin was in his forties 	If Lisa left then it doesn't make sense that she is now at the border office
2nd Output	VO narration, re-enactment Direct quotation from prompt camera instructions	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - There are no images of Walter Benjamin in the Pyrenees - Lisa was in her thirties not forties - Walter Benjamin in his forties not fifties - Hirschman and Fry were not friends and associates of Benjamin - Lisa did not go to the border office on her own 	Coherent
3rd Output	Interview with historian Re-enactment camera instructions Reference to prompt	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Fittko did not go with Benjamin to the border office - It is true that the hotel that Benjamin stayed in was called Hotel de Francia - True that the exact reasons for the closing of the border "are unclear, but political circumstances, bureaucratic delays, and changing regulations might have played a role" 	Coherent
4th Output	Re-enactment, VO narration Direct quotation from prompt camera instructions	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - The time it took them to cross was not multiple days and nights - Lisa did not talk to the border officer - suggestive of how the audience should feel 'leaving the audience with a sense of anticipation for' - Correct specific date 	The script suggests the border station was closed, yet the next line is dialogue with a border officer.
5th Output	Documentary show re-enactment. camera instructions Direct quotation from prompt	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - The journey was not on the night of Sep 25th - Lisa didn't stay behind to ensure safety of others, she turned back - Benjamin did not meet Hirschman and Lena, nor did a telegram reach him - Memorial does indeed exist in Portbou 	It does not make sense for Benjamin to be with Hirschman and to receive a telegram about his own death
6th Output	Reflexive, re-enactment Direct quotation from prompt camera instructions	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Lisa did not go to the border station - Benjamin did not receive a telegram - Lena was not Benjamin's former lover, and Hirschman was not a close friend - Lisa's memoirs left out 	It does not make sense for Benjamin to be there when they declare his death

Figure 3: AI Prompt Data Sheet

Prompted Test	True Fact	False claims	Fictional elements
Test I.1	2	4	0
Test I.2	2	1	0
Test I.3	1	3	1
Test I.4	1	2	0
Test I.5	1	0	0
Test I.6	0	4	0
SUM	7	14	1

Prompted Test	True Fact	False claims	Fictional elements
Test II.1	1	1	0
Test II.2	0	5	0
Test II.3	0	2	0
Test II.4	1	0	0
Test II.5	0	1	0
Test II.6		1	1
	2	10	1

Prompted Test	True Fact	False claims	Fictional elements
Test III.1	0	2	0
Test III.2	0	4	0
Test III.3	0	4	0
Test III.4	2	3	0
Test III.5	0	4	0
Test III.6	0	2	1
SUM	2	19	1

Prompted Test	True Fact	False claims	Fictional elements
Test IV.1	1	2	0
Test IV.2	0	4	0
Test IV.3	0	1	1
Test IV.4	0	1	1
Test IV.5	1	3	0
Test IV.6	0	3	1
SUM	2	14	3

Prompted Test	True Fact	False claims	Fictional elements
Test V.1	0	1	0
Test V.2	0	5	0
Test V.3	1	1	0
Test V.4	1	2	0
Test V.5	1	4	0
Test V.6	0	3	0
SUM	3	16	0

Prompted Tests Combined	True Fact	False claims	Fictional elements
Test I	7	14	1
Test II	2	10	1
Test III	2	19	1
Test IV	2	14	3
Test V	3	16	0
SUM	16	73	6

Prompted Tests Combined	True Fact (%)	False Claims (%)	Fictional Elements (%)
Test I	43.75%	19.18%	16.67%
Test II	12.50%	13.70%	16.67%
Test III	12.50%	26.03%	16.67%
Test IV	12.50%	19.18%	50.00%
Test V	18.75%	21.92%	0.00%