## **Contents**

Acknowledgments

	Note on Documentation and Style	xii
	List of Abbreviations	X
	Preface	xvi
Part	One: Gershom Scholem and Walter Benjamin	
	Introduction	
	The Story of a Friendship: Germans and Jews	3
	The Catastrophes of Progress	
	1. Language and Redemption	15
	Language Critique	16
	The Philosophical Quest for Language as	
	Knowledge	20
	"The Task of the Translator"	25
	The "Pure Language"	32
	Hermetic and Orphic Language	33
	"Plenty of Hope, but Not for Us"	38
	Scholem and Messianic Delay	44
	Kafka	47
	Halakah and Aggadah: Anarchic Suspension and	
	Historical Concretion	52
	2. Suspended over the Abyss	62
	"On Language as Such"	62
	Interpreting Genesis	66
	Hidden Ideologies in Debates over Theories of	
	Language	71
	Language, Materialism, and the Mimetic	
	Faculty	78
	The Meaningless Word and the Divine Nothing	82
	3. The Legacy of German Idealism	93
	Jewish Law and German Idealism	97

хi

viii Contents

	German Romanticism and "Spilt Religion":	
	The Symbol	102
	Scholem and Symbol	104
	The Symbol as Static or Dynamic	110
4.	Allegory and Redemption	116
	Benjamin and Scholem: The Politics of	
	Historiography	116
	Benjamin: The Critic as Allegorist and the	
	German Tragic Drama	123
	Faithfulness and Betrayal: Sacred and Profane	128
	Benjamin's Baroque Allegory and deMan's	
	Deconstructionist Criticism	132
	The Return of the Symbolic: Hope for the	
	Hopeless	137
	Allegory and Modernity	140
	Citing the Past	143
5.	Memory Is the Secret of Redemption:	
	Messianism and Modernity	149
	History, Modernity, and Messianism	153
	History Will Not Bring the Messiah	160
	"My secularism is not secular"	163
	The Angel of History	167
Part Two	0: Emmanuel Levinas	175
6.	The Rupture of the Good	177
	Levinas's Background	177
	Reason-for-the Other: Sources for Levinas's	
	Critique of Philosophy	181
	Ontology and Violence: Ethics and Politics	188
	Exteriority and Eschatology	195
7.	The Trace, The Face, and, the Word of the	
	Other	202
	Time and the Other	202
	Fecundity	205

*Contents* ix

	The Face, the Trace, and the Ethical Relation	208
	Language and the Face: Rosenzweig's Speech-	
	Thinking	217
	Subjectivity as Vulnerability: Language as	
	Gift and Exposure	223
8.	Parodic Play, Prophetic Reason, and Ethical	
	Rhetoric: Derrida, Levinas, and Perelman	226
	Derrida's Critique of Levinas	228
	Skepticism and Philosophy	233
	Rhetoric, Skepticism, and Violence: Levinas and	
	Chaim Perelman	235
	Philosophical Pairs and the Dissociation of	
	Concepts	245
	The Saying and the Said: A Subject of Flesh and	
	Blood	250
	Passivity: The Subject as Lung	259
9.	GreekJew/JewGreek	263
	"Here I Am"	265
	The Witness and the Holocaust	271
	The Holocaust: To Love the Torah More Than	
	God	275
	Ambiguous Revelation as Ethical Positivity	278
	Inspiration, Revelation, and Exegesis	282
	The Return of History	290
	The Return of the Law	293
	Levinas and Scholem: Mysticism, Myth, and	
	Law	297
	Ethics versus Aesthetics	303
10.	Talmudic Messianism	306
	Levinas's Talmudic Lectures: Interpretive	
	Methodology	307
	Anachronism and Historicism	315
	Talmudic Messianism	319

x Contents

Political Life or Moral Life; Redemption via	
Human or Nonhuman Action?	323
The Conditions for the Messiah: When Is the	
End of History?	325
Universal History and Its Ruptures	327
Who Is the Messiah?	330
History, Historicism, and Philosophy	332
The Possibility of a Modern Messianism	335
Conclusion: Before and beyond the Book	
Revelation and Messianic Knowledge	338
Repairing the Broken Tablets	342
Notes	
Works Consulted	
Index	