



Altered Reading: Levinas and Literature

Jill Robbins

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How might the ethical philosophy of the renowned French thinker Emmanuel Levinas relate to literature? Because his philosophy addresses the very opening of ethical experience, it cannot be applied readily as a critical method to literary texts. Yet Levinas's work, studded as it is with literary sources and quotations, demands a literary account.

With an attitude at once respectful and interrogative, closely attentive to Levinas's texts while in dialogue with readings by Derrida, Blanchot, and Bataille, *Altered Reading* shows how the thread of the literary leads directly to the internal tensions of Levinas's ethical discourse. Jill Robbins provides a comprehensive critical account of Levinas's early and mature philosophy as well as later key transitional essays. In an invaluable appendix, she includes her own translation of an important, previously untranslated essay by Bataille on Levinas.

Altered Reading will interest philosophers, literary critics, scholars of religion, and others drawn to Levinas's work.



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