

- 1) It means to entertain a dialogue with Levinas, an extraordinary philosopher of our time. With Levinas the authors of this book interrogate problems that are at once philosophical, semiotical, and ethico-political —“eternal problems” concerning the human being, but “immer wieder,” problems repropounded in ever new forms.
- 2) It also means to discuss today's reality that like reality of all times is always the expression of dominant ideology. In our case, this is a question of Western ideology in its capitalist phase with respect to which Hegelian philosophy represents its synthesis, apex, and conclusion, its sunset. Referring to Western reality and its ideology the authors of this book discuss the problems inevitably imposed by globalization today.

This extreme form of capitalism consists in total commodification, including commodification of all communicative relations; its desperate task is to reproduce itself, this same reproduction system.

But to reason with Levinas means to take his point of view. By contrast with Western reason, this means to resist reproducing the Identical, to resist reducing our relations with others to reified relations of exchange, competition, and egoistic interests. Therefore, to reason with Levinas also means to propose a hypothesis and to verify it from his extraordinary perspective — extra-ordinary with respect to dominant ideology in Western thought.

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