



Religions

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Special Issue Reprint

Rabbinic Thought between Philosophy and Literature

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This Special Issue challenges the dominant models of pluralism and translation by examining the traditions of rabbinic thought, literature, and philosophy through a comparative theory of memory and history, introducing unslatability as a new way to understand how traditions unfold beyond translation and reconciliation. Scholarly critique often treats these traditions as bounded domains whose untranslatability limits their mutual understanding, given their supposedly compartmentalized and controlled pasts. By contrast, this Issue proposes the notion of unslatability: a condition in which the past cannot be stabilized as a completed object nor traditions understood as parallel but incommensurable developments. Pluralism in this register is not the mere coexistence of untranslatable worlds. It is the ethical engagement with disagreement once misunderstandings and premature alignments are stripped away. Such engagement attends to irreducible blind spots, to the inescapable “between” in which interpretation unfolds, and to the operative “before” of the past as past—a past that refuses stabilization and remains itself unslatable. Contributors explore how rabbinic reasoning, embodiment, memory, and dialogue unsettle conventional models of reconciliation, translation, and subjectivity. The Issue demonstrates that traditions unfold neither linearly nor discretely, but through ongoing encounters with their unslatable past, an unslatability that challenges the ways the humanities often construe pluralism, difference, and the historical record. We thus move from the pluralism of untranslatables to the pluralism of un-trans-slatables.



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