

Summary

In this thesis I explore the relation in Buber's and Levinas's understanding. Both of these Jewish philosophers endeavoured to describe an essence of genuine dialogue and both saw in dialogue the word that turns to a Thou, the primal deed of spirit. Nevertheless in spite of these similarities there are also differences in their understanding of a dynamics within the genuine dialogue. Whereas Buber talks about a reciprocity in such a relation Levinas asserts that there is an asymmetry there and therefore he radicalizes Buber's conception and responsibility towards the other.

In the first part of my thesis I focus on important influences on Buber's and Levinas' lives and introduce a "poetics" of their understanding of a genuine dialogue based particularly on their main piece of work: Buber's I and Thou and Levinas's Totality and Infinity. Although there was a communication between these two thinkers according to some philosophers it often exhibited a lack of dialogue and a failure to understand each other. Therefore I outline the similarities and differences in detail in the final chapters.

Keywords

Buber, Levinas, Rosenzweig, I – Thou relationship, face, reciprocity, asymmetry, responsibility, ethics, infinity