

**PETER FENVES**

Joan and Sarepta Harrison Professor of Literature

Professor of German, Comparative Literary Studies, Jewish Studies, and Asian  
Literatures and Cultures

Kresge Hall 3-305  
1880 Campus Drive  
Evanston, IL 60208 USA

Email: p-fenves@northwestern.edu

**SELECTED PUBLICATIONS****Books**

A Peculiar Fate: Metaphysics and World-History in Kant. Ithaca and London: Cornell University Press, 1991.

“Chatter”: Language and History in Kierkegaard. Stanford: Stanford University Press, 1993; chapter five reprinted in Søren Kierkegaard: Critical Assessments of Leading Philosophers, ed. Daniel W. Conway (London and New York: Routledge, 2002), 4: 79-122.

Arresting Language: From Leibniz to Benjamin. Stanford: Stanford University Press, 2001.

Late Kant: Towards Another Law of the Earth. London and New York: Routledge, 2003; German translation by Thomas Schestag (Göttingen: Wallstein, 2010); Spanish translation by Victor Ibarra and Rudy Pradenas (Santiago and Buenos Aires: Editorial Palinodia, 2019).

The Messianic Reduction: Walter Benjamin and the Shape of Time. Stanford: Stanford University Press, 2011.

Walter Benjamin entre los filósofos, trans. Filipe Quinteros and Eduardo Sabrovsky. Santiago and Buenos Aires: Editorial Palinodia, 2017.

**Edited books**

Raising the Tone of Philosophy: Late Essays by Kant, Transformative Critique by Derrida, ed. Peter Fenves. Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 1993. (Paperback reprint, 1998)

“The Spirit of Poesy”: Essays on Jewish and German Literature and Philosophy in Honor of Géza von Molnár, ed. Richard Block and Peter Fenves. Evanston: Northwestern University Press, 2000.

Points of Departure: Samuel Weber Between Spectrality and Reading, ed. Peter Fenves, Kevin McLaughlin, and Marc Redfield. Evanston: Northwestern University Press, 2016.

Werner Hamacher, Two Studies of Friedrich Hölderlin, ed. Peter Fenves and Julia Ng. Stanford: Stanford University Press, forthcoming.

Walter Benjamin, Toward the Critique of Violence, ed. and trans. Peter Fenves and Julia Ng. Stanford: Stanford University Press, forthcoming.

### **Introductions to books**

“The Topicality of Tone.” In Raising the Tone of Philosophy, 1-48.

“From Empiricism to the Experience of Freedom.” In Jean-Luc Nancy, The Experience of Freedom, trans. Bridget Macdonald. xiii-xxxi. Stanford: Stanford University Press, 1993.

“Avoiding the Bible.” In Brian Britt, Walter Benjamin and the Bible. 5-7. 2<sup>nd</sup> ed. Lewiston, New York: Edwin Mellen Press, 2003.

“Introduction to the New Edition: The Kafka-Werfel-Einstein Effect.” In Max Brod, Tycho Brahe’s Path to God, intro. Peter Fenves and Stefan Zweig, trans. Felix Warren Cross. vii-lviii. Evanston: Northwestern University Press, 2007.

“Introduction: The Layout.” In Points of Departure (see above), 3-12.

### **Translations of books**

Werner Hamacher, Premises: Literature and Philosophy from Kant to Celan, trans. P. Fenves. Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard University Press, 1996. (Paperback reprint: Stanford University Press, 1999)

### **Chapters in books**

“Søren Kierkegaard.” In The Johns Hopkins Encyclopedia of Literary Theory. Ed. Michael Grodin and Martin Kreiswirth. 441-43. Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 1993.

“The Tower of Babel Rebuilt: Some Remarks on ‘The End of History.’” In Francis Fukuyama and his Critics. Ed. Timothy Burns. 217-37. Lanham, Md.: Rowman & Littlefield, 1994.

“The Genesis of Judgment: Spatiality, Analogy, and Metaphor in Benjamin’s ‘On Language as Such and on Human Language.’” In Walter Benjamin: Theoretical Questions. Ed. David Ferris. 75-93. Stanford: Stanford University Press, 1996.

“Marx, Mourning, Messianicity.” In Violence, Identity, and Self-Determination. Ed. Samuel Weber and Hent de Vries. 253-70. Stanford: Stanford University Press, 1997; translated into Dutch by Ton Groeneweg, Benjamin Journaal 4 (1997): 53-73.

“Die Scham der Schönheit: einige Bemerkungen zu Stifter.” In “Geteilte Aufmerksamkeit”: Zur Frage des Lesens. Ed. Thomas Schestag. 91-111. New York: Lang, 1997.

“Alterity and Identity, Postmodern Theories of.” In The Routledge Encyclopedia of Philosophy. Ed. Edward Craig et al. 1: 187-92. London and New York: Routledge, 1998; partially reprinted in The Concise Routledge Encyclopedia of Philosophy, 25.

“Jean-Luc Nancy.” In The Routledge Encyclopedia of Philosophy (see above). 6: 651-54; revised and expanded for the new edition, forthcoming; partially reprinted in The Concise Routledge Encyclopedia of Philosophy (see above), 610.

“Hölderlin, Johann Christian Friedrich.” In The Encyclopedia of Aesthetics. Ed. Michael Kelly. 2: 415-22. New York: Oxford University Press, 1998; revised and expanded for 2<sup>nd</sup> edition, 2014.

“The Scale of Enthusiasm.” In Enthusiasm and Enlightenment in Europe, 1650-1850. Ed. Lawrence Klein and Anthony La Vopa. 117-52. San Marino, Ca.: Huntington Library Press, 1998. (Reprint of the article published in the Huntington Library Quarterly; revised as the third chapter of Arresting Language)

“Measure for Measure: Hölderlin and the Place of Philosophy.” In The Solid Letter: New Readings of Friedrich Hölderlin. Ed. Aris Fioretos. 25-43. Stanford: Stanford University Press, 1999.

“Die Unterlassung der Übersetzung.” In Übersetzen: Walter Benjamin. Ed. Christiaan L. Hart-Nibbrig. 159-73. Frankfurt am Main: Suhrkamp, 2001.

“Language on a Holy Day: Mendelssohn and the Temporality of Language in Jerusalem.” In Perspectives on Early Modern and Modern Intellectual History. Ed. Joseph Marino and Melinda Schlitt. 419-41. Rochester: University of Rochester Press, 2001. (Revised as the second chapter of Arresting Language)

“Out of the Blue: Secrecy, Radical Evil, and the Crypt of Faith.” In Futures: Of Jacques Derrida. Ed. Richard Rand. 99-129. Stanford: Stanford University Press, 2001. (Revised and expanded as the fourth chapter of Late Kant)

“The Revelation of Irony: The Young Kierkegaard Listens to the Old Schelling.” In International Kierkegaard Commentary: “The Concept of Irony.” Ed. Robert Perkins. 391-416. Macon, Ga.: Mercer University Press, 2001; translated into Japanese by Kazuhiro Shimizu in Gendai Shiso (2014) 42: 222-45.

“Derrida and History: Some Questions Derrida Pursues in his Early Writings.” In Jacques Derrida and the Humanities: A Critical Reader. Ed. Tom Cohen. 271-95. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2001; translated into Spanish by Ariel Dillonas in Jacques Derrida y las humanidades. 343-72. Mexico City: Siglo XXI Editores, 2005.

“What is Aufklärung (in Pennsylvania)?” In American Babel: Literatures of the United States from Abnaki to Zuni. Ed. Marc Shell. 465-88. Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard University Press, 2002.

“Tragedy and Prophecy in Benjamin’s Origin of the German Mourning Play.” In Benjamin’s Ghosts: Interventions in Contemporary Theory and Cultural Studies. Ed. Gerhard Richter. 237-59. Stanford: Stanford University Press, 2002.  
(Revised as the seventh chapter of Arresting Language)

“The Sovereign Sentence.” In Law, Justice, and Power. Ed. Sinkwan Cheng. 97-114. Stanford: Stanford University Press, 2004. (Revised as the second chapter of Late Kant)

“Is There an Answer to the Aestheticizing of the Political?” in Actualities of Aura. Ed. Erik Steinskog and Dag Petersson. Oslo: Norwegian Summer University Press, 2005; reprinted in Benjamin and Art (= Walter Benjamin Studies, vol. 2). Ed. Andrew Benjamin. 60-72. New York: Continuum, 2005; translated into Spanish by Silvia Villegas in Walter Benjamin: Culturas de la imagen. Ed. Alejandra Uslenghi. 75-98. Buenos Aires: Eterna Cadencia, 2010.

“Imagining an Inundation of Australians; or Leibniz on the Principles of Grace and Race.” In Race and Modern Philosophy. Ed. Andrew Valls. 88-96. Ithaca and London: Cornell University Press, 2005.

“What ‘Progresses’ has Race-Theory Made Since the Times of Leibniz and Wolff?” In The German Invention of Race. Ed. Mark Larrimore and Sara Eigen. 11-22. Albany, N. Y.: SUNY Press, 2005.

“Über das Programm der kommenden Philosophie.” In Benjamin-Handbuch. Ed. Burkhardt Lindner. Trans. Markus Hardtmann. 134-50. Stuttgart: Metzler, 2006.

“Technica Speciosa: Notes on the Ambivalence of Technics in Kant and Weber.” In Experimenting: Essays with Samuel Weber. Ed. Simon Wortham and Gary Hall. 85-101. New York: Fordham University Press, 2007.

“Toward another Teichology.” In Babel: für Werner Hamacher. Ed. Aris Fioritos. 142-50. Urs Engeler Editor: Basel, 2008.

“Um Worte Verlegen: Zur Benjamins gegenhistorischen Lektüre Hölderlins.” In Walter Benjamin und die romantische Moderne. Ed. Günter Oesterle and Heinz Brüggemann. Trans. Markus Hardtmann. 465-500. Würzburg: Königshausen & Neuman, 2008.

“The Courage of the Critic: Avital Ronell and the Idea of Emergence.” In Reading Ronell. Ed. Diane Davis. 31- 48. Champaign, Ill.: University of Illinois Press, 2008.

“Niemands Sache: Die Idee der ‘Res Nullius’ und die Suche nach einer Kritik der Gewalt.” In Philo: Xenia. Trans. Thomas Schestag. 123-205. Basel: Engler, 2009.

“Martin Heidegger.” In The Encyclopedia of Literary and Cultural Theory. Ed. Michael Ryan, Gregory Castle, Robert Eaglestone, and Keith Brooker. 1: 232-34. London: Wiley-Blackwell, 2011.

“‘Workforce Without Possessions’: Kafka, ‘Social Justice,’ and the Word Religion.” In Freedom and Confinement in Modernity: Kafka’s Cages. Ed. Kiarina Kordela.and Dimitris Vardoulakis. 107-26. New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2011.

“Absent an Even Finer Feeling: A Commentary on the Opening of Observations on the Feeling of the Beautiful and the Sublime.” In Cambridge Companion to Kant’s “Observations on the Feeling of the Beautiful and Sublime”. Ed. Susan Shell and Richard Velkey. 219-33. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2012.

“Chatter.” In Kierkegaard’s Concepts (= Kierkegaard Research: Sources, Reception and Resources, vol. 15). Ed. Steven Emmanuel, William McDonald, and Jon Stewart. 181-83. Hampshire, UK: Ashgate Publishing House, 2013.

“Vollendung: de Heinrich Rickert à Benjamin-Heidegger.” In Cahier Benjamin. Ed. Patricia Lavelle. 365-71. Paris: L’herne, 2013.

“‘When Christianity is Finally Over’: Images of a Messianic Mobility in Heine and Benjamin.” In Messianic Thought Outside Theology. Ed. Paul North and Anna Glazova. 155-68. New York: Fordham University Press, 2014.

“Kierkegaard and the Definition of the Demonic.” In Das Dämonische nach Goethe: Schicksale einer Kategorie der Zweideutigkeit nach Goethe. Ed. Lars Friedrich, Eva Geulen, and Kirk Wetters. 192-200. Paderborn: Fink, 2014.

“Benjamin’s Early Reception in the United States: A Report,” In Benjamin-Studien 3, Ed. Daniel Weidner and Sigrid Weigel. 253-59. Paderhorn: Fink, 2014.

“Entanglement—Of Benjamin with Heidegger.” In Sparks Will Fly: Heidegger and Benjamin. Ed. Andrew Benjamin and Dimitris Vardoulakis. 3-26. Albany, N. Y.: SUNY Press, 2015; translated with revisions in Walter Benjamin entre los filósofos (see above).

“Kant in Benjamins Wahlverwandtschaften-Essay.” In Benjamins Wahlverwandtschaften. Zur Kritik einer programmatischen Interpretation. Ed. Helmut Hühn, Uwe Steiner, and Jan Urbich. Trans. Clemens Ackermann. 221-37. Frankfurt am Main: Suhrkamp, 2015.

“Completion Instead of Revelation: Toward the ‘Theological-Political Fragment.’” In Walter Benjamin and Theology. Ed. Colby Dickenson and Stéphane Symons. 56-74. New York: Fordham University Press, 2016; translated into by Paola Morgavi for Walter Benjamin, Gershom Scholem e il Linguaggio. Ed. Tamara Tagliacozzo. 57-75. Milan: Mimesis, 2016.

“Messianism.” In German Aesthetics: Fundamental Concepts from Baumgarten to Adorno. Ed. J. D. Mininger and Jason Peck. London. 155-62. Bloomsbury, 2016.

“Experiments in Cultural Connectivity: Early Twentieth-Century German-Jewish Thought Meets the Daodejing.” In Tensions in World Literature—Between the Local and Universal. Ed Weigui Fang. New York: Palgrave Macmillan, forthcoming; translated into Chinese by Li Sha for World Literature Between the Local and Universal: Ideas and Methods. 209-18. Beijing: Peking University Press, 2017.

“Aura und Irrtum: Das Problem der Popularisierung von Benjamin bis Heidegger.” In Benjamin und Wissenschaftstheorie. Ed. Kyung-Ho Cha. 61-77. Trans. Peter Brandes. Vienna: Turia + Kant, 2017.

Four contributions to The Cambridge Kant Lexicon. Ed. Julian Wuerth. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, forthcoming: “On the Miscarriage of All Philosophical Trials in Theodicy,” “The End of All Things,” “An Attempt at Some Reflections on Optimism,” and “Thoughts on the Premature Demise of Herrn Johann Friedrich Funk.”

“Zur Idee eines Hyper-Kommentars: Jacques Derrida befragt Le Livre des questions.” In Nachträglich, grundlegend? Der Kommentar als Wissensform der jüdischen Moderne. Ed. Lilian Weisberg and Andreas Kilcher. Trans. Clemens Ackermann. Göttingen: Wallstein, forthcoming.

“The Category of Philology.” In For the Love of Language: Responses to Werner

- Hamacher's "95 Theses on Philology." Ed. Gerhard Richter and Ann Smock. Lincoln, Neb.: Nebraska University Press, forthcoming.
- "From the Metaphysics of Law to the Critique of Violence." In Critique in German Philosophy. Ed. María del Rosario Acosta and Colin McQuillan. SUNY University Press, forthcoming.
- Special editions of journals**
- "Politics of Friendship," Eighteenth-Century Studies 32, 2 (winter 1999).
- "Aesthetics and the Disciplines," Eighteenth-Century Studies 35, 3 (spring 2002).
- Articles in journals**
- "Marx's Doctoral Thesis on Two Greek Atomists and the Post-Kantian Interpretations," The Journal of the History of Ideas 46 (1986): 433-52.
- "The Exiling of the Encyclopedia: The Individual in George Eliot's 'Janet's Repentance,'" Nineteenth-Century Literature 41 (1987): 419-44; reprinted in Short Story Criticism, vol. 139, ed. Jelena Krstovic (Detroit: Gale, 2010).
- Critical discussion of Alexander Nehemas's Nietzsche: Life as Literature in Philosophy and Literature 11 (1987): 163-70.
- "Autopsies of Faith in Kierkegaard's Philosophiske Smuler," Modern Language Notes 102 (1987): 162-89.
- "Antonomasia: Leibniz and the Baroque," Modern Language Notes 105 (1990): 432-52. (Revised and expanded as first chapter of Arresting Language)
- "Testing Right—Lying in View of Justice," Cardoza Law Review 13 (1991): 1081-1113.
- "Image and Chatter: Adorno's Construction of Kierkegaard," Diacritics 22 (1992): 100-114.
- "From Empiricism to the Experience of Freedom," Paragraph 16 (1993): 158-79.
- "Measure for Measure: Hölderlin and the Place of Philosophy," Philosophy Today 37 (1993): 369-82.
- "Taking Stock of the Kantian Sublime," Eighteenth-Century Studies 28 (1994): 65-82.
- "Under the Sign of Failure: Kant's 'Toward Eternal Peace,'" Idealistic Studies 26 (1996): 135-51. (Revised as the fifth chapter of Late Kant)

- “‘Out of the Order of Number’: Benjamin and Irigaray toward the Politics of Pure Means,” Diacritics 28 (1998): 43-58. (Revised as the eighth chapter of Arresting Language)
- “Politics of Friendship—Once Again,” Eighteenth Century Studies 32 (1998-99): 133-55. (Revised and expanded as the sixth chapter of Late Kant)
- “The Scale of Enthusiasm,” Huntington Library Quarterly 60 (1998-1999): 117-52.
- “Continuing the Fiction: From Leibniz’ ‘petite fable’ to Kafka’s In der Strafkolonie,” Modern Language Notes 116 (2001): 502-20; reprinted in Short Story Criticism (Detroit: Gale, 2010), vol. 128.
- “An Introduction to ‘Aesthetics and the Disciplines,’” Eighteenth-Century Studies 35 (2002): 339-41.
- “A Critical Relation: On the Goethe Scholarship of Géza von Molnár,” Goethe Yearbook 11 (2002): 27-31.
- “Of Philosophical Style—From Leibniz to Benjamin,” Boundary 2 30 (2003): 67- 87.
- “Marital, Martial, and Maritime Law: Toward Some Controversial Passages in Kant’s Doctrine of Right,” Diacritics 35 (2005): 101-120.
- “The Mathematical Messiah: Benjamin and Scholem in the Summer of 1916,” Reflexão 33 (2008): 161-71.
- “An Idea in Combat with Itself: Benjamin, Hölderlin, and ‘Temporal Plasticity,’” PMLA 124 (2009): 280-82.
- “Combustion-Focal Point: Studying the Image in Benjamin’s ‘Life of Students,’” The Yearbook of Comparative Literature 56 (2010): 182-88.
- “At the Confluence of Etymology and Thinking: A Response to Jean-Luc Nancy,” SubStance 40.3 (2011): 20-24.
- “Diverging Correspondences Concerning the Problem of Identity: Russell-Wittgenstein and Benjamin-Scholem,” Modern Language Notes 127 (2012): 542-61; translated with revisions in Walter Benjamin entre los filósofos (see above).
- “‘Thankless Trouble’—Ethical Contemplation of Nature,” The Yearbook of Comparative Literature 58 (2012): 57-70.
- “Benjamin, ‘Existence Toward Space’: A Confluence of Philosophy, Poetics, and the Messiah,” trans. Li Sha (in Chinese.) Theoretical Studies in Literature and Art 34.3 (2014): 124-32.

“Renewed Question: Whether a Philosophy of History is Possible,” Modern Language Notes, 129 (2014): 514-24; translated with revisions in Walter Benjamin entre los filósofos (see above).

“From Nietzsche’s Philosophy of History to Kant’s—and Back,” History and Theory 54 (2015): 277-286.

“The Problem of Popularization in Benjamin, Schrödinger, and Heidegger circa 1935,” The Germanic Review 91 (2016): 112-25.

“Benjamin, Einstein, Nietzsche: Some Remarks on The Republic of the Living,” Philosophy Today 60.2 (2016): 537-543.

“Transition in Theory,” trans. Li Sha (in Chinese), Culture and Politics 18 (2014): 13-21. [Published in 2016]

“Toward Messianic Nature—from Cohen to Benjamin,” Paradigm: Rivista di critica filosofica 35 (2017): 13-25; translated with revisions in Walter Benjamin entre los filósofos (see above).

“Benjamin, Studying, China,” Positions: Asia Critique 26 (February 2018): 35-57.

### **Translations of essays**

Werner Hamacher, “The Word Wolke—If It is One,” Studies in Twentieth-Century Literature 11 (1986): 133-62; reprinted in Benjamin’s Ground, ed. Rainer Nägele. 147-76. Detroit: Wayne State University Press, 1988.

Werner Hamacher, “The Second of Inversion: Movements of a Figure Through Celan’s Poetry,” in Word Traces, ed. Aris Fioretos. 214-63. Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 1994.

Immanuel Kant, “On a Newly Arisen Superior Tone in Philosophy” and related short essays from the 1790s, in Fenves, Raising the Tone of Philosophy.

Walter Benjamin, “The Rainbow: Dialogue on Fantasy” and “The Rainbow or the Art of Paradise,” in Fenves, The Messianic Reduction.

### **Book Reviews**

Jean-Luc Nancy, L’Impératif catégorique, in Modern Language Notes 100 (1985): 1136-39.

Kathleen Higgins, Nietzsche’s Zarathustra, in Philosophy and Literature 13 (1989): 215-16.

Gerhard van den Berg, Adornos philosophisches Deuten von Dichtung, in International Journal in Philosophy 23,4 (1992): 123-24.

Timothy Bahti, Allegories of History, in Modern Language Notes 108 (1993): 597-600.

Reiner Ansen, “Bewegtheit”: Zur Genesis einer kinetischen Ontologie bei Heidegger, in International Studies in Philosophy 25,3 (1994): 99-100.

Roger Poole, Kierkegaard: The Indirect Communication, in Journal of English and Germanic Philology 94 (1995): 299-301.

Richard Eldridge, Beyond Representation: Philosophy and Poetic Imagination in The Review of Metaphysics 51 (1998): 927-29.

Howard Caygill, Walter Benjamin: The Experience of Colour, in The Review of Metaphysics 53 (2000): 920-923.

Marc Fremont-Meurice, That Is To Say: Heidegger’s Poetics, in The Review of Metaphysics 54 (2000): 136-39.

Julian Young, Heidegger’s Philosophy of Art, in Dialogue 41 (2002): 598-601.

Peter Park, Africa, Asia, and the History of Philosophy: Racism and the Formation of the Philosophical Canon, 1780-1820, in Critical Philosophy of Race Journal 3 (2015): 152-57.

“Benjamin Tells a Story....” Los Angeles Review of Books, 29 September 2016.  
<https://lareviewofbooks.org/article/benjamin-tells-story/>