Saturn's Jews

On the Witches' Sabbat and Sabbateanism

Moshe Idel





Contents

Abbreviations ix

Prefac	e xi
1 I	From Saturn, Sabbath and Sorcery to the Jews 1
	Introduction 1
	On Abraham ibn Ezra's Visions of Saturn 5
	Two Thirteenth-Century Kabbalists: Abraham Abulafia
	and Joseph Ashkenazi on Saturn, Sorcery and Sabbath 12
	Some Fourteenth-Century Texts 22
	Some Fifteenth-Century Jewish Texts on Saturn 24
	Saturn in the Sixteenth Century: Joseph ibn Tzayyah,
	Isaac Karo and Abraham Yagel 27
	Jewish Resistance to and Critique of the Saturnization
	of Judaism 29
	Some Possible Repercussions 38
2 I	From Saturn to Sabbatai Tzevi: A Planet that Became Messiah 47
	Some Preliminary Reflections on Jewish Culture 47
	Astrology, Messianism and Universalism 51
	Saturn, Binah and Messiah 54
	Sabbatai Tzevi and Saturn 64
	Saturn, Forbidden Sexual Relations and Sabbateanism 69
	More on Sabbateanism and Astrology 72
	Nathan of Gaza and Moshe Ḥayyim Luzzatto
	on Saturn and Sabbatai Tzevi 76
	Some Conclusions 77

3 From Saturn to Melancholy 85

Some Saturnian Discussions in the Eighteenth Century 85
Between Aby Warburg's School and
Gershom Scholem's School 88
On Some Elite Jews and Melancholy in
the Twentieth Century 91

Concluding Remarks 99

Appendix 109

Notes 119

Bibliography 181

Index of Subjects 189

Index of Persons 195