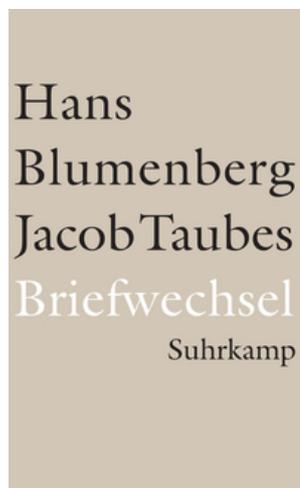


Hans Blumenberg, Jacob Taubes

Correspondence 1961–1981 - and related documents



(German title: Briefwechsel
1961–1981)
ca. 349 pages
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Hans Blumenberg (1920-
1996) was professor for
Philosophy at the University of
Münster.

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On the Süddeutsche Zeitung/NDR Best Non-Fiction list for
October 2013

About

A piece of intellectual history from the former West Germany

The correspondence between Hans Blumenberg and Jacob Taubes is a document of a rich though not entirely smooth relationship between two intellectuals who could not have been more different: On the one hand, Hans Blumenberg, whose works constitute one of the most impressive contributions to 20th century German philosophy; on the other hand, the philosopher of religion Jacob Taubes, who was without peer in his ability to bring intellectuals from all different disciplines into conversation with one another. The correspondence begins in 1961, when Taubes took a position as chair of the newly founded Jewish Studies Institute at the Free University in Berlin, and ends twenty years later, again with a letter from Taubes, in which he informs Blumenberg that he has discovered the latter's *The Readability of the World* at the Frankfurt Book Fair. In the interim the two men debate all manner of subjects: above all Blumenberg's work, of which Taubes was a congenial reader, but also the state of higher education and the famous research group »Poetics and Hermeneutics«. And of course they discuss Carl Schmitt and Gershom Scholem, not to mention the Suhrkamp Verlag, particularly its new »Theory« series, of which Blumenberg and Taubes were co-editors.

The 56 extant letters have now been published for the first time along with related documents and critical commentary. They take us right into the heart of the academic debates of the 1960s and 70s and constitute an important piece of West German intellectual history from the perspective of two of its most important intellectuals.

Edited by Herbert Kopp-Oberstebrink and Martin Tremml with the assistance of Anja Schipke and Stephan Steiner. With an afterword by Herbert Kopp-Oberstebrink

Praise

»Delving into this correspondence, the reader will discover not only a great deal of substance but also significant stylistic brilliance [...] A note on the presentation: it is exemplary, with explanatory notes, additional sources and precise commentary on the letters.« Martin Meyer, *Neue Zürcher Zeitung*

»Intellectual history, condensed into a Bildungsroman about West Germany« Mara Delius, *Die Welt*

»[...] rarely have two minds battled so artfully as in the case of these two highly idiosyncratic professors. This is a clash of two fascinating worlds, and the sparks do fly occasionally, until gradually the distance between them proves unbridgeable after all.« Alexander Camman, *Die Zeit*

»[...] There are correspondences, which, through their pulsating vulnerability, are able to pull in readers of later generations, giving them hope that they can feel the mood of a bygone age, of a particular milieu, of an entire discourse. This is the case with the Correspondence between Hans Blumenberg and Jacob Taubes.« Oliver Müller, *Süddeutsche Zeitung*

»Their correspondence attests to the brilliance of a lost debate culture [...] [It] brings us very close to those distant academic sixties, when there was always something new to discover.« Stephan Schlak, *Die Literarische Welt*

»Thus, at the end of this correspondence-thriller we are left with a body but no murder. Along the way it describes an extremely personal debate between two ultimately irreconcilable positions.« Cord Riechelmann, *Frankfurter Allgemeine Sonntagszeitung*

»Rarely has one been pulled into the lively academic atmosphere of those years on the eve of the student revolts, as one is by this correspondence.« Stephan Schlak, *Deutschlandradio Kultur*