Jacob Taubes (1923–1987), philosopher of religion and of Judaism, subversive intellectual, and the most extensively networked agent provocateur of postwar intellectual life on three continents, accepted an offer to join Berlin’s Free University in 1966, founding its Institute for Judaic Studies as well as its Institute for Hermeneutics. While his regional influence should not be underestimated and while he has had a continuous impact on Berlin’s and Germany’s academic life, he is currently being discovered internationally as a ceaselessly provocative and highly original thinker. With the English translations of Taubes’s lectures on Paul, his earliest book Occidental Eschatology, and the essay collection From Cult to Culture, Taubes has joined the echelons of the “Theory” elite. He is being read alongside Giorgio Agamben, Alain Badiou, Carl Schmitt, Walter Benjamin, Gershom Scholem, and others. His work is being hotly debated in many contexts, from political philosophy to intellectual history, from so-called post-secularism to cultural studies.

We convene this workshop as an attempt to collect these interests, but also to bundle and focus them, and to contemplate Taubes as a thinker, historical phenomenon, and exceptional intellectual in his own right.

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Monday February 21, 2011

14.00  Dana Hollander (McMaster University, Hamilton/Ontario, ZfL) / Martin Treml (ZfL):
       Begrüßung – Introduction

14.30  Daniel Weidner (ZfL):
       “Zwischen Judentum und Christentum”. Jacob Taubes, Albert Schweitzer, Gershom Scholem und ihre gegenwärtigen Leser

Arnd Wedemeyer (Duke University, Durham)
       Malediction and Verheißung: Jacob Taubes’s Pauline Curses

16.00  Coffee Break

16.30  Michael Bartos (McMaster University, Hamilton/Ontario):
       Text discussion: Two excerpts from Jacob Taubes,
       Abendländische Eschatologie (1947)

17.30  Coffee Break

18.00  Herbert Kopp-Oberstebrink (ZfL):
       Hans Blumenberg und Jacob Taubes: Korrespondenzen, Divergenzen, Konstellationen

Iris Nachum (Tel Aviv University):
       The Correspondence between Margherita von Brentano and Jacob Taubes

Tuesday February 22, 2011

10.00  Martin Kavka (Florida State University, Tallahassee):
       Text discussion: Jacob Taubes, “Theology and the Philosophic Critique of Religion” (1954), and “On the Symbolic Order of Modern Democracy” (1955)

11.00  Coffee Break

11.30  Nitzan Lebovic (Lehigh University, Bethlehem, PA):
       Taubes's (End-)Time

Christina Pareigis (ZfL):
       Beyond Law and Judgement. Susan Taubes’s Idea of a Messianic Age in 1952 as Reflected in Her Exchange with Jacob Taubes

13.00  Lunch Break

14.00  Amir Engel (Stanford University):
       Text discussion: Jacob Taubes, “Die Intellektuellen und die Universität” (1963)

15.00  Coffee Break

15.30  Gesine Palmer (Berlin):
       “Freud vermorialisert die Psychologie”. Eine Randnotiz von Franz Rosenzweig im Lichte der Antinomismusdiskussion von Jacob Taubes

Bruce Rosenstock (University of Illinois, Urbana-Champaign):
       Palíntropos Harmoniê: Schmitt and Taubes im liebenden Streit