



# **To Carl Schmitt: Letters and Reflections (Insurrections: Critical Studies in Religion, Politics, and Culture)**

*Jacob Taubes*

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## **To Carl Schmitt: Letters and Reflections (Insurrections: Critical Studies in Religion, Politics, and Culture)** Jacob Taubes

A philosopher, rabbi, religious historian, and Gnostic, Jacob Taubes was for many years a correspondent and interlocutor of Carl Schmitt (1888–1985), a German jurist, philosopher, political theorist, law professor—and self-professed Nazi. Despite their unlikely association, Taubes and Schmitt shared an abiding interest in the fundamental problems of political theology, believing the great challenges of modern political theory were ancient in pedigree and, in many cases, anticipated the works of Judeo-Christian eschatologists.

In this collection of Taubes's writings on Schmitt, which includes decades of letters exchanged between them, the two intellectuals explore ideas of the apocalypse and other central concepts of political theology. Taubes acknowledges Schmitt's reservations about the weakness of liberal democracy yet distances himself from his prescription to rectify it, arguing the apocalyptic worldview requires less of a rigid hierarchical social ordering than a community committed to the importance of decision making. In these writings, a sharper and more nuanced portrait of Schmitt's thought emerges, as well as a more complicated understanding of Taubes, who has shaped the work of Giorgio Agamben, Peter Sloterdijk, and other major twentieth-century theorists.

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