

author leaves no ambiguity, clearly expressing his thoughts and precisely defining key terms.

The fourth part of the book is dedicated to knowledge and cognition in and about mountaineering (pp. 199–260). It highlights themes such as the mountaineer's identity, the experience of sublimity, and the autotelic nature of mountaineering. The author adds a moral dimension to the discussion of mountaineer identity, explaining that the complex ethos of mountaineering is part of its ethical tradition and culture. It's unsurprising that, as the book reveals, alpinism is included in the UNESCO list of intangible cultural heritage. In this chapter, the author also provides aesthetic insights into mountaineering, from the aesthetic experience of the mountains to the feeling of sublimity.

The fifth part (pp. 261–315) focuses on the ethics and bioethics of mountaineering. It begins with discussing virtues and values, framed by questions about mountaineers' attitudes towards themselves, others, and the environment. The author emphasizes resilience as a unifying virtue encompassing qualities like self-control, courage, persistence, and emotional stability. His arguments for creativity as a "potential cardinal virtue of mountaineering" (p. 287) are particularly interesting. The book also discusses ethical guidelines and codes of conduct for mountaineers (e.g., Leave No Trace) and examines the role of mountaineer schools in Croatia. The final section describes the bioethics of mountaineering, emphasizing respect for life and advocating an interdisciplinary, even extra-academic, approach to life's problems.

In summary, the author aims to establish an academically rigorous sub-discipline of the philosophy of mountaineering, moving away from the subjective life philosophies of mountaineers. This complex task can only be achieved by a strict academic philosopher for whom mountaineering is an integral part of his life. Such a combination of intellectual curiosity, formal philosophical education, and strong inner drive is evident in this book. The work is undoubtedly scientific, characterized by rigorous argumentation, self-criticism, precision, and a burst of enthusiasm atypical for academic works, which is a welcome addition.

Ivana Zagorac

Hans Blumenberg, Hans Jonas

Briefwechsel 1954-1978 und weitere Materialien

**Hannes Bajohr (ed.),
Suhrkamp, Berlin 2022**

The first personal meeting of the philosophers Hans Blumenberg (1920–1996) and Hans Jonas (1903–1993) took place in the summer of 1953, on the occasion of the XI. International Congress of Philosophy in Brussels, Belgium. Blumenberg gave a lecture on "Technology and Truth" (p. 17), Jonas on "Motility and Emotion. An Essay in Philosophical Biology" (p. 17). In 1954, in the wake of this conference, now 70 years ago, a correspondence began that was to last until 1978 and then came to a halt. The last personal meeting took place in 1976.

Hannes Bajohr, who in 2017 presented a dissertation thesis on Blumenberg's philosophy of language, edited this correspondence between Blumenberg and Jonas at Suhrkamp Verlag, together with further material from Blumenberg's literary estate. Of the here collected letters, 31 were written by Blumenberg, 24 by Jonas, 4 were written by the latter's wife, Lore (1915–2012). The letters come from *Deutsches Literaturarchiv Marbach* where Blumenberg's estate is stored, as well as from the *Hans Jonas Archiv* of the *University of Constance*. The here presented, almost complete correspondence (two letters by Jonas are missing) is also supposed to be made accessible to the public in the context of the *Hans-Jonas-Gesamtausgabe (Vol. V/2)*, which will be published by Rombach-Verlag resp. Wissenschaftliche Buchgesellschaft (WBG). In the past, as this volume demonstrates, private correspondence was an important part of academic life. While today, even among academics, most correspondence is conducted via e-mail and the various channels of social networks rather than by letter, the texts presented here provide an insight into the collegial relationship between two outstanding thinkers of the twentieth century, into German cultural history and, last but not least, into university politics.

"I would like to thank you very much for your active interest", Jonas writes to Blumenberg from Ottawa on 8 April 1954. And he continues: "You are one of those powers working which make me a German author once again." (Letter 2, p. 21) It is Blumenberg who again and again shows great commitment when it comes to courting Jonas, who is 17 years older than the former, and who attempts to build a

bridge from Jonas's exile in the USA back to Germany. Blumenberg asks Jonas, who has fled from Germany in 1933 and whose mother was murdered in Auschwitz, to publish in his mother tongue and to return to Germany. Blumenberg also organises guest lectures in Germany, such as in Hamburg, Kiel and Gießen. Jonas's considerations, Blumenberg is certain, would enrich academic debates in Germany. Due to this conviction, he vehemently recommends Jonas as the successor of Ludwig Landgrebe (1902–1991). But Jonas refuses as vehemently. Although he is ready to write again in German, he finds it impossible to live in Germany.

This volume of correspondence shows how much the two philosophers appreciated each other, but also how their relationship became increasingly disturbed, alienated and strained. The letters presented here give a clear and authentic view of the senders and their respective works. Here and there, human qualities and weaknesses are also revealed.

In terms of content, Blumenberg makes clear that his own thought owes important stimulation to the bio-philosophical work *The Phenomenon of Life* and *The Nobility of Sight*, apart from Jonas's gnosis paper. In his letter to Jonas of 17 September 1954, Blumenberg writes about the gnosis work "that in my habilitation thesis I attempted to apply your methodical principles to the problem of the transition Middle Ages/Modern Age" (Letter 4, p. 29). For Blumenberg, the fact that Jonas pays particular attention to the physical-psychological reality of man is of philosophical significance. In his own essay "Light as a Metaphor for Truth" Blumenberg attempts to take up and make fruitful the "phenomenology of the senses" unfolded by Jonas. The anthropological considerations unfolded in Jonas's work *Homo Pictor* serve as reference points for Blumenberg's own anthropological deliberations. In the summer semester of 1976 Blumenberg even dedicates a course of lectures to his older colleague (Letter 51, p. 169). It is titled: *Das Werk von Hans Jonas (The Work of Hans Jonas)*. Jonas feels honoured. His answer of 7 May 1976, is as follows:

"A course of lectures by you about my work is the most beautiful gift I could be presented with in my older age (still I do not use the present perfect). As among all the philosophical contemporaries it is you whom I appreciate most, I take this as quite a particular honour." (Letter 52, p. 171)

In his own lecture courses and academic publications Jonas does not refer to Blumenberg, however in his letters he leaves no doubt about his respect and honest fellowship: Blumenberg's work *The Legitimacy of the Modern Age*, he writes, is his "most appreciated book on German philosophy for more

than a decade" (Letter 23, p. 99). It is, Jonas asserts, "that the Brussels acquaintance of 1953, by a rare and lucky coincidence, made me meet the best among the more recent generation of German philosophers" (Letter 21, p. 94). By the way, suggested by Jonas there even happens an exchange between Blumenberg and Arendt (Letter 13, 72). Both do not agree on how Bacon's programme is to be philosophically classified. Whereas Jonas wants to have a particular view at man's aspiration to power, which attempts to rule over nature, Blumenberg has reservations in this respect. He is also sceptical towards any teleology of nature.

The material added to the volume from Blumenberg's estate makes obvious that he has a very critical attitude towards Jonas's *Das Prinzip Verantwortung (The Imperative of Responsibility)* which is published in 1979 – as already mentioned, their correspondence has come to an end one year before. In a somewhat overly didactic manner, Blumenberg marks the works he has studied. Whereas the gnosis paper Blumenberg reads in 1948 (he will come back to it later: H. Blumenberg, *Arbeit am Mythos*, Frankfurt a. M. 1986, pp. 197–234; H. Blumenberg, *Höhlenausgänge*, Frankfurt a. M. 1989, pp. 225–234) achieves fulsome praise and the best possible mark (p. 22), over time the marks get worse. For the essay "Is God a Mathematician?" Blumenberg notes a "B", for the highly respected *The Imperative of Responsibility* he only grants a "D". What he considers to be problematic is Jonas's interpretation of the categorical imperative (282) and that what Jonas calls the "heuristics of fear" that, in his opinion, shows a preference of negative predictions.

This volume of letters connects to the letters exchanged among Blumenberg and historian Reinhart Koselleck (1923–2006), the sociologist of religion, philosopher and Judaist Jacob Taubes (1923–1987) as well as constitutional law scholar Carl Schmitt (1888–1982), all of them published by Suhrkamp Verlag. Also Jonas's correspondence with his philosopher colleague Günther Anders (1902–1992), with political theoretician Hannah Arendt (1906–1975), theologian Rudolf Bultmann (1884–1976), as well as with the historian of religion Gershom Scholem (1897–1982) have been known for quite some time and are presented, for example, by the *Hans Jonas Handbuch* (edit. by M. Bongardt, H. Burckhart, J.-S. Gordon and J. Nielsen-Sikora, Wiesbaden 2021), where also their significance is discussed. Now this volume of letters, with very knowledgeable and meticulous comments by Bajohr, closes a gap. The reader is offered an extended afterword (pp. 285–327), a list of letters (pp. 328–330), a list of materials (pp.

331–332), and finally an index of names (pp. 337–341), making any purposeful search for texts easier. The volume offers a new insight into biographical traces and stages of thought, historical contexts, interpersonal moods and even displeasure, previously unknown even to experts. From a philosophical point of view, the reader wishes that the two had discussed and even argued more about the topics that were particularly close to their hearts. Questions of nature, technology, freedom and what makes us the human being would have provided ample material for discussion.

Marcus Knaup

Peter Sloterdijk

Out of the World (Cultural Memory in the Present)

Stanford University Press,
Stanford 2024

The renowned, but controversial, European philosopher Peter Sloterdijk re-published one of his early books, *Out of the World*. Interestingly enough, the book was originally penned in 1993, even though it deals with topics that are of our current reality. Sloterdijk investigates how people seek to escape reality across cultures and historical periods, culminating in the escapism of today's terminally-online culture. As elaborate and eloquent as always, he presents a cross-cultural and interdisciplinary reflection on humanity's inclination to reject the world. Laying the groundwork for his theory – some have strangely enough called it anthropotechnics, suggesting that there are ethics that are not human or in reference to human experience – Sloterdijk explores consciousness as a medium that has been shaped and reshaped throughout technological and social history. Even without it being explicitly said, we can guess that the *leitmotif* of the discussion is the flux of technologically mediated experience of the world that occurs and reoccurs only through technological means – vicious circle of abandonment of the “humane”, to establish ourselves as humans. His focus is on the *Weltfremdheit*, the foreignness of the *sapient* to Nature, the “world-alien” aspect of human nature once formalized within religious institutions but

now increasingly addressed through modern psychotherapy. Sloterdijk delves into artificial environments and intoxicating experiences, ranging from early Christian monks in the desert to modern psychedelic-infused pharmacology. True to his style, he reinterprets concepts from ancient Greek philosophy to Heidegger, creating a strikingly relevant philosophical anthropology. The book consists of eight chapters poised as questions, the answers to these questions lead us to even more questions – sometimes the right questions are worth more than superficial answers.

The first chapter of the book, “Why is this happening to me? Guesswork concerning the animal that stumbles upon itself, that makes great plans, that often does not move from the spot, and that sometimes is fed up with everything” starts with this Heideggerian notion of anthropology:

“Anthropology is that interpretation of man that already knows fundamentally what man is and hence can never ask who he may be. For with this question it would have to confess itself shaken and overcome. But how can this be expected of anthropology when the latter has expressly to achieve nothing less than the securing consequent upon the self-secureness of the *subiectum*?” (P. 1.)

The first question for Sloterdijk becomes one of identifying oneself as a subject, borrowing from Ernst Bloch autobiographical notes, meeting one's *ego*.

“One day, as a child of perhaps ten years, out of the blue he felt his ego; it rushed into him like a thunderbolt that he was truly and irrevocably himself, and that he could no longer escape himself and his body alive. Such terrifying enlightenments occur only episodically. No discourse and no practice leads to this panicked self-experience of being-there.” (P. 2.)

Understanding this notion leads to the question asked in the chapter title, or as Sloterdijk writes:

“I am – and now I know it – no stone, no plant, no animal, no machine, no spirit, no god. With this sixfold denial I circumscribe the uncanniest of all spaces. Whoever is human lives in a place that absolutely stands out to itself. From then on I am only the scene of a question. My life is a theater of trembling over the fact that I have to be different from everything that enjoys the comfort of being a thing among things, a being among beings. Why is this happening to me?” (P. 2–3.)

This is the point Sloterdijk chose to start his investigation at, and it takes him through the notions of *Seins im Ichsein* and *Dasein*, but the answers remain few and the existential dread the history of philosophy has recorded doesn't help us to deal with these issues in the slightest. His attempts at defining the issues even lead to humorous remarks:

“Neither theory nor alcohol can guarantee a fool-proof contraception of *Dasein*. *Safer thinking, safer*