

Hope *

A: al-'amal. – F: espoir. – G: Hoffnung. – R: nadzieja.

S: esperanza. – C: xiwang 希望

The Romance appellations are derived from the Latin *spes/sperare*, from which one can still read the double meaning of a positive, joyful expectation and a neutral reference to the future. **Virgil** still uses *sperare* for the expectation of pain (*sperare dolorem*; *Aeneid* IV, 419). The Greek equivalents *ἐλπίς ἐλπίσεων* originally mean >generally and formally a reference to the future< (**Link** 1974, 1157), to which the neutral terms of expecting or assuming correspond. Traces of it are still found in modern linguistic usage, e.g. in the Spanish *esperar* (to wait). The **Grimm** dictionary was still reporting in 1877 a general meaning of >to expect something, to wait< – e.g. in the language of hunters (>nach dem Fuchs hoffen<, >hoping for the fox<) (IV, 1669).

The discrepancy between antique and modern usage is important for an understanding of the philosophical controversies surrounding H. In linguistic history two other strands of meaning – lost meanwhile – also resonate, namely the aspect of waiting contained in expecting, which appears passive from the standpoint of an actively intervening praxis, and on the other hand the usage especially in antiquity of the paramount sense of considering something as probable. So H could be associated

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with inactivity as well as with the $\delta\omicron\xi\alpha$ (the mere opinion) and *illusio*.

The terminological inconsistencies seem to be based on an ambiguity in the very nature of H itself. According to Ernst **Bloch** it is >the most human of all mental feelings< (1959/1986, 75), which however for the want of possibilities for realization can easily become >empty H<, the drive to self-deception. >One hopes, as long as one lives<, is a common saying, but also: >Hoffen und Harren macht manchen zum Narren.< (>Hoping and waiting make fools of some people<). What keeps humans alive and future-oriented is at the same time an anthropological characteristic within which the turnaround into fear, doubt and hopelessness might take place. H, deprived of a realistic basis, prepares the soil both for nihilism and resentment, as well as for various forms of eschatological displacement and religious exaltation. In societies in which emancipation and self-realization take place primarily at the expense of others, who are excluded from them, H itself is permeated by social contradictions: What for some is the H of victory or social ascent, is for others the prospect of ruin or misery. Thinking about H in this antagonistic field of meaning has also taken the most diverse positions.

1. In the *Iliad* and the *Odyssey* the Elpis connections can express both the open meaning of assuming (e.g. *Il* 16.278 et sqq.; *Od* 6.297), as well as the positive meaning of hoping (e.g. that of Penelope for Odysseus; *Od* 16.101; 20.328), that are, to be sure, deceived several times and proven illusory (e.g. *Il* 21.600ff), and finally also those meanings of fear and anxiety contrary to H (e.g. *Il* 15.110f

and 16.28 *Od* 3.228). The **Homeric** warrior aristocracy does not >hope< for a religious hereafter, but for posthumous fame (see Woschitz 1979, 78; van Menxel 1983, 45).

On the other hand **Hesiod** criticized the passivating and at the same time illusory aspects of Elpis from the point of view of a peasant's work ethic: >The unworking man, who stays on empty anticipation, needing substance, arranges in his mind many bad thoughts, and that is not a good kind of hopefulness which is company for a man who sits, and gossips, and has not enough to live on.< (Hesiod 1959/1998, 498 et sqq.) The terms contrary to >empty H< are work, intelligent precaution and foresighted diligence (295 et sq., 384 et sq., 474 et sqq.). Hesiod's version of the Pandora story shows Elpis in a sinister form: Zeus punishes humans for the theft of fire by Prometheus (the foresighted one), by giving his brother Epimetheus (the hind sighted one who loses out because of his failure to look ahead) the beautiful Pandora, the female >evil, [which they hold] close to their hearts and take delight in it< (59). The woman lifted the cover of the great jar and let the evils out, which since that time have been plaguing humans silently; >Hope was the only spirit that stayed there in the unbreakable closure of the jar, under its rim, and could not fly forth abroad< (95 et sqq.). According to Karl Matthaues **Woschitz** here Elpis, imprisoned >according to the will of the cloud-bearing Zeus< (98 et sq.), signifies >the illusionary which lacks the possibility of becoming real< (Woschitz 1979, 83). On the other hand Francois **van Menxel** translates ελπίς as the foreknowledge of a (bad) fate and interprets it as an evil, which humans were spared (1983, 50).

Relevant for the influence of the Pandora legend are the versions reported by **Theognis** and **Barrios**, according to which Elpis is represented as a good goddess who is the only one that remained with humans, while the other gods abandoned them. Humans pray to these, but they count on H, and therefore she receives the first and the last sacrifice, as **Theognis** has it (1135 et sqq.). In the account of **Barrios** furthermore, it is not Pandora who opens the jar, but >the human being< in the shape of the curious Epimetheus. The myth is scarcely taken up by the Roman classical authors, but the church fathers use the Pandora figure as a confirmation of female original sin, by setting her opening the jar parallel with the enjoyment of the forbidden apple (see Panofsky/Panofsky 1956, 9 et sqq.). The fact that in the fine arts and literature since the Renaissance the topos of a >box< brought from the sky along with Pandora was established can be traced back to a translation error made by **Erasmus**, who confounded the stationary supply jar (πίθος) with the mobile box (πυξίς) (ibid., 15f).

The positive interpretation of Elpis, which is commonly thought to have set in with the 5th century BC, and here above all with **Euripides** (Dihle et al. 1991, 1162; van Menxel 1983, 86 et sq. and 94), is accompanied frequently by a religious connotation. With **Plato** a positive H appears where the Platonic **Socrates** is dealing with immediately approaching death: >good reason there is to hope< that dying is something good, is declared in the *Apology* of Socrates, because it is either a kind of non-being, which the dead one does not feel, or a relocation of the soul, thus in both cases a >wonderful gain< (40c-41d). In the *Politeia* he has Cephalos say that in old age the just are accompanied by the H of a happy life after death (1.331a).

Philosophy is treated in the *Phaedo* as a learning to die (*ars moriendi*), whereby the H is directed toward the release of the soul from the body, its return to the >true heaven< and its convergence with God (64-68, 80-84, 110-111). Here especially the philosopher practiced in abstinence has the privilege of being released forever from his body (114c).

On the other hand, the orientation of H on an afterlife of this kind is questioned by an approach that is critical of religion. **Democritus** explains the faith in an afterlife with the ignorance of the dissolution of human nature (DK, Frg 297), and differentiates between the reasonable foresight of the thoughtful person and the impossible expectations of those lacking in understanding (Frg 58 and 292). In order to force back the power of chance (*τυχη*), behind which humans deceive themselves about their helplessness (Frg 119), it is necessary to establish H on reason, wisdom and deliberation. **Epicurus** states that the fear of death is groundless because with death the soul disintegrates into atoms again: >what has disintegrated lacks awareness; and what lacks awareness is nothing to us< (Proposition II; see *to Menoikeus*, 124 et sq.). Instead H is regarded from the viewpoint of the human capacity for happiness and its dialectical relationship to the future. On the one hand the joys of the soul are also caused by hoped for future pleasures, on the other hand it is stupid to neglect the present and to set everything on the future, because >the future is neither wholly ours nor wholly not ours< (127). The art of living that is sought for is that of meeting the future with H without making it into an absolute. Here the *Elpis* has a positive place in a >coherent and emancipatory system< (**van Menxel** 1983, 138), certainly without being concerned with politics and

>withdrawn from the multitude< (to *Pythokles*, Diog. Laert., X.119, and Theorem XIV).

2. Before the translation into Greek (Septuaginta) in the 3rd. century BC, which will strongly influence the language of the New Testament (NT), there is no uniform word for H in the Hebrew bible. Nonetheless right here an intensive linkage is developed between divine >promise< and human H, which differs significantly from the philosophical articulations of Greek and Roman antiquity: in the center is located a monotheistic god, who has made a >covenant< (*berith*) with his chosen people; his promises are primarily worldly, the emancipation from slavery, a country full of >milk and honey< (Ex 3.17) and numerous descendants; and finally H is seen as demanding obligatory loyalty, so that doubting its realization and >grumbling< become a transgression.

2.1 In terms of social history the belief in Yahweh is primarily about the H.s of a people threatened or directly subjugated by one of the great powers of antiquity (Egypt, Assyria, Babylon, Persia), a people whose social ethics were long shaped by the pre-state social structures of a >segmentary society< (Crüsemann 1978, 203 et sqq., Sigrist 1994).

According to the biblical narrative the history of Israel begins with the exodus of the aged **Abraham** from Ur, one of the earliest class societies organized as states, and with the promise to make his name great through a large number of descendants with their own country (Gen 12.1 et sqq.; see 15.7 et sqq., 17.2 et sqq.). The exodus from the state of an >advanced culture<, re-actualized in the exodus from Egypt and from Babylon, is connected with a completely

improbable future promise (in view of the advanced age of Sarah) and becomes precisely through that a constant point of reference for the demanded attitude of faith and hope against all common sense (see *Rom* 4.3 and 9.22; *Gal* 3.6). In the first commandment the imageless God is defined as he >who brought you out of the land of Egypt, out of the house of slavery< (*Ex* 20.2; see *Lev* 26.13; *Hos* 13.4; *Ez* 34.27). >Exodus [...] gives the Bible, from here on, a basic resonance which it has never lost< (**Bloch** 1959/1986, 496). The exodus is regularly recalled to memory by ritual and liturgical repetition (e.g. in the Jewish Seder) and thus becomes part of the >cultural memory< (**Assmann** 2011, 6 et sqq.) for the articulation of popular Hs, which extends into the ideological attraction of the US-American and Israeli exceptionalism (see **Bove** 2003).

The prophetic judgement sermon brands the violation of the regulations for social protection of the Torah by the dominant elite as a falling away from Yahweh, and makes it responsible for the breakup of the Israeli kingdom into two partial states, as well as for the loss of autonomy and exile in Babylon (approx. 587-539 BC). In a second liberation a just distribution of land is promised, as well as the H-image of a small peasant >association< without exploitation (**Veerkamp** 1993, 301) is painted: >They will not build for others to live in, or plant so that others can eat. [...] and my chosen ones wear out what their hands have made< (*Isaiah* 65.22; see 23 and 25). The social pauperization in the 5th. and 4th. centuries gave rise to an eschatologization, which moves the overthrow caused by Yahweh to the end of history. The reversal can take place with the assistance of a Davidic messiah who, contrary to the real kings, rides humbly on a donkey (*Zechariah* 9.9). The promises exceed those of the exodus, but >they do not

invite anything like the ongoing human effort required in the Exodus story< (**Walzer** 1985, 122). The stone, which in the Apocalypse of Daniel destroys the previous world empires, broke away completely on its own, >untouched by any hand< (*Dan* 2.34).

2.2 The central NT usages update and modify the eschatological and apocalyptic H.s for reversal of the Hebrew Bible in the context of the Roman Empire. In the confrontation with the ideology of the Pax Romana, which propagates the Roman Empire as the fulfilment of humanity's H.s (>golden age<), the New Testament H articulates itself in the context of a worldwide counter-empire: It is founded on the hopeless absurdity of a crucified messiah. Those excluded from the hoped for goods of the Roman Empire become the yardstick and crystallization point of the >Kingdom (*imperium*) of God<. Whereas the lowly are raised up and the hungry are satisfied, the wealthy and the elite lose their power and receive nothing (*Lk* 1.46-55). Many H-stories are structured according to this reversal logic. The specific characteristic of the New Testament lies in the peculiar tension between an already-there and a not-yet: on the one hand H is directed toward an imminent return (Parousia) of the resurrected one, which **Paul** still hopes to experience (*1 Kor* 15.52), and on the other hand the >last things< of the eschatology are brought back into the present: through Jesus Christ the time is already >close at hand< (*Mk* 1.15) and the kingdom of God >is among you< (*Lk* 17.20f).

With **Paul** H stands together with >faith< against a >law<, which produces nothing but anger and transgressions (*Rom* 4.15). It arises from crushing hopelessness: the creation was subjected to nullity, so that it >from the beginning

until now has been groaning in one great act of giving birth, and we too groan inwardly and wait for [...] our bodies to be set free< (8.20 and 22f). This is the language, which by way of the mystic Sebastian **Franck** reached Ludwig **Feuerbach** - God as >an unutterable sigh, lying in the depths of the heart< (cited in Feuerbach 2012, 82) -, and from there was adopted by the young **Marx**: Religion as the >sigh of the oppressed creature< (MECW 3, 175 [1/378]). The subjection of creation to nullity occurred, according to Paul, precisely with creation having >the H of being freed like us, from its slavery to decadence, to enjoy the same freedom and glory as the children of God< (Rom 8.21). This H is invisible, he insists, and therefore >it is something we must wait for with patience< (8.25). In turn, longer suffering is bearable through this, >as we know that these sufferings bring patience, and patience brings perseverance, and perseverance brings H< (5.2-4). >Patience< becomes the hardened state of H in times of hopelessness, and with the deferral of the Parousia of Jesus it will remain as the primary Christian virtue of the subaltern.

In connection with the faith in Christ H functions as a constituting concept for the new communities, which elevates these from those, who >have no H< (1 Thess 4.13; Eph 2.12). At the same time, profound tensions between a religious settling in the present and a >rapturous< expectation articulate themselves within the already-and-not-yet-structure, which threaten to destroy the cohesion of the communities. Confronting the social and religious polarizations in the Corinthian congregation, **Paul** arranges the three qualities >that last<, >faith, H, and love<, which he brings into a hierarchy, saying that love (*Agape*)

is greatest among them (1 Cor 13.13). This gradation probably demonstrates the fear of a fixation on H and faith driven by an egoistic striving for salvation, which is to be prevented with the connection back to love as a praxis of compassion and solidarity towards fellow humans.

2.3 The triad is worked out by **Augustine** as a threefold Christian cardinal virtue. The **Pauline** immanent expectation is replaced by the Catholic Church, whereas the link to the future is redirected into a neo-Platonic other-world.

Whereas faith can refer to past, present and future, H is aimed only toward good and future things *spes bonarum rerum futurum* which **Augustine** conceptualizes from the point of view of the individual hoping person (*Enchiridion* 11.8).

This definition is assumed and supplemented by **Thomas Aquinas**: In contrast to cupidity and longing the future good is difficult to attain, yet it is in principle attainable (*Summa Theologiae*, Ia IIae, 40.1). In order to prevent H from tipping over into the >sins< of arrogance and despair, Thomas must balance them by fear, which above all as childlike and chaste is indispensable for the fulfilment of the law, as well as to the welfare of the soul, and keeps H on track and at the same time in check (IIa IIae, 19 and 22). Also for **Luther** H is not conceivable without the counterpart of fear. Between both >as between the upper and nether millstone, we must always be ground and kept that we never turn either to the right hand nor to the left< (Luther 1519/1903, 225). When in the course of the convergence with the princely state the seigniorial elements won out against the >communalistic< tendencies in Lutheran theology (see Blickle 1992; Brady 1985), H was also affected: as in the open confrontation against >enthusiasts<, faith was increasingly bent into obedience,

H was brought down to the passive meaning of >patience< and defined from there (see Luther 1522/1959, 71).

3. **Spinoza** sees in H primarily the uncertain, which he depicts as a deficiency in the context of his emphatic concept of the reason-led capacity to act (*potentia agendi*). The emotions, loaded with doubt, >are not so constant<, until humans have attained certainty over the outcome of the thing (Spinoza 1677/1996, 81; III.18 note 1), and these include both H and >*inconstant joy*< (*inconstans laetitia*) as well as fear as >*inconstant sadness*< (note 2). >Therefore, these affects [of hope and fear] cannot be good of themselves< (IV.47). There is no H without fear, fear is aversion and thus directly bad, unless it contributes to restraining an excess of desire (IV.41 and 43). Both emotions indicate an insufficiency of the spirit (*impotentia mentis*): >Therefore, the more we strive to live according to the guidance of reason, the more we strive to depend less on hope, to free ourselves from fear, to conquer fortune< (IV.47, note).

According to David **Hume**, H as well as fear is determined by uncertainty: If one is certain of the pleasure, one feels joy, is one certain of the pain, sadness. The uncertainty >gives rise to FEAR or HOPE, according to the degrees of uncertainty on the one side or the other [of good and bad]< (*Treatise*, 1739, II.III.IX; 1874/1898, 215). The mixing proportion is determined according to an internal probability calculation. The impressions oscillate between the poles of joy and pain. But the passions on which they are laid are slower, like stringed instruments, which resound after each note. This asynchronicity produces an

uncertain mixture of opposite passions (216 et sqq.; 179 et sqq.).

From here **Hume** criticizes in the *Dialogues Concerning Natural Religion* (1779) that religion affects the mixing proportion of the passions unfavourably: Although both H and fear enter into religion, nevertheless the fright dominates the pleasure, and besides that this is lived as >fits of excessive joy<, which fatigues the spirit and quickly turns again into superstitious fright. Clamped between an eternity of happiness and an eternity of misery, a balanced condition of mind is not to be reached (XII; 1874/1898, 466). With **Kant** on the contrary, H is the crucial instance in the >moral proof of God<, and thus the pivot point, at which his >transcendental idealism< without God tips over into one with God. In the context of the epistemological question >What can I know?< he had refuted the previous proofs of God and identified them as >transcendental Ideas<, which may be understood only as >regulative<, in the mode >as if<, and not >constitutive<, as referring to the real existence of God, (Kant 1781/1984, 345 et sqq. and 388 et sqq.). The moral question >What ought I to do? < (457) he answered likewise without resort to a divine transcendence through the practical-reasonable construction of a >categorical Imperative<, which as >pure moral law< he distanced from any self-interest or striving for happiness (458). With the third question >What may I hope?< he encounters the problem that his apriori deontology becomes an >empty pipe dream<, because it only makes a moral agent >worthy< of happiness without being able to give him the H of also really participating in it. Because the >Ideal of the Supreme Good< requires a linkage of morality and proportional happiness (459 et sq.). From the realistic observation that the >world of sense< in this

life does not offer us this connection, it follows for Kant that we must accept a life after death and a God who creates this connection (Kant 1781/1984, 460 et sq.; 1788/1997, 117). The introduction of H, which was excluded previously, into the connection between morality and happiness, forces the emphasis onto the afterlife, which is now itself given as the basis of H: >Only if religion is added to it does there also enter the hope of some day participating in happiness to the degree that we have been intent upon not being unworthy of it.< (1788/1997, 108) With this reversal Kant's critique of religion flows back into the courses of a conservative view of religion, which makes H for happiness a religious monopoly and puts it off for eternity.

In the same motion, in which with **Hegel** the moral problem dissolves into the self-movement of the spirit, H also disappears as an independent topic. Where the term is used, it remains in the hands of the religious. The young Hegel argues along the same lines as **Hume** that the alternative between eternal bliss and eternal damnation leaves mankind >endlessly vacillating between terror before the universal Judge and hope in a merciful and forgiving Father< (Hegel 1793-94/1984, 87; W 1, 81). He reproduces the anti-Judaistic opposition between a Christian moral H and a >Jewish H<, of the re-establishment of the Israeli state: Jesus' attempts to kindle >higher Hs< in Judaism fail because of its >hypocrisy and sanctimoniousness< (Hegel 1795-96/1948, 180; W 1, 107). Also in the *Phenomenology of the Spirit* there is only concern about the >H of becoming one with it [the beyond] <, and this must simply remain >H, i.e. without fulfilment and present fruition< (1807/1977, 129). **Hegel** is not interested in a philosophical elaboration of the concept: Whereas he concerns himself

intensively with the mediation between faith and reason, H is left behind with the religious faith in the hereafter.

4. The lack of interest in the H-dimension shown by post-**Kantian** idealism is probably the reason for the fact that the term is used only rarely by **Marx** and **Engels**, and then mostly with the negative connotation of the illusionary. Apart from isolated expressions in the style of the common rhetoric of the workers' movement, for example the >proud H of future victories< (**Engels**, MECW 26/439 [21/341]), H usually appears as a synonym for >pious wishes< and contrary to >better realization< (**Marx**, MECW 1/124 [1/18]). >Not a single hope had become reality<, was said of the >cherished Illusions< of the petty bourgeois in the revolution of 1848/49 (MECW 11/254 et sq. [8/262]), and it is not only the H for the return of prosperity which proves to be >chimerical< and must be given up (MECW 15/568 [12/505]). If **Marx** states that the >European peace is relegated to the domain of hope and faith< (MECW 19/167 [15/468]), this means nothing else but that a war is presumably approaching.

More fruitful are passages in the text in which H and hopelessness are set in relationship. >No people wholly despairs, and even if for a long time it goes on hoping merely out of stupidity, yet one day, after many years, it will suddenly become wise and fulfil all its pious wishes<, writes **Marx** in 1843 in a letter to Arnold Ruge (MECW 3/134 [1/338]). The sentence is directed against Ruge's preceding >funeral song<, which is not >political< because it deplores only the rule of the >philistine< and overlooks the precariousness of this rule, and here especially the possibility of the >stupidity< of the people's illusionary

H suddenly turning into its >wise< fulfilment (ibid.). Does **Marx** hold >too high< an opinion of the present with this analysis of contradiction (141 [342])? In answer to this self-posed question he writes: If he were not to despair over the present, >it is precisely the desperate situation which fills me with hope< (ibid.). H is placed in a >rupture within present-day society, a rupture which the old system is not able to heal< (ibid. [343]). A half century after this **Engels** in old age welcomes the strike of the London dock workers in 1889 as the >movement of the greatest promise< for years, especially because it was organised by the most hopeless part of the working class: of these, the >odds and ends of all trades<, one could say with **Dante**, >lasciate ogni speranza<, abandon all hope >for want of self-confidence and of organization<, and if >they can combine, and terrify by their resolution the mighty Dock Companies, truly then we need not despair of any section of the working class.< (MECW 26/545 [21/382]).

>Arise, ye starvings from your slumbers<, is the first line of the >Internationale<, which then continues: >We have been nought, We shall be all!< That Marxism in the 19th. and 20th. centuries in an historically very short time could become a far-reaching movement of worldwide proportions is connected to a liberation of H-potentials which can be compared to early Christianity with regard to its dynamics and intensity. The ethical core of this release is >the *categorical imperative to overthrow all relations*, in which man is a debased, enslaved, forsaken, despicable being< (MECW 3/182 [1/385]). The liberating intention, which **Bloch** calls the >warm stream< of Marxism (Bloch 1959/1986, 209), is oriented on the perspective of an >association, in which the free development of each is the condition for the free development of all< (*Communist*

Manifesto, 1848/2002, 244 [4/482]). For the description of such a goal **Marx** resorts to the term used by **Luther** >Realm of Freedom< (e.g. Luther 1521, Werke 8, 326), in order to designate the sphere of human self-determination [Selbstzwecksetzung], which begins >beyond the sphere of actual material production< in the strict meaning of the term (MECW 37/807 [25/828]). Certainly H here has not been moved into an otherworldly or eschatological perspective, but refers to the shortening of the working day and the collective regulation of the >necessary< metabolism with nature (ibid.).

In substance the merit of **Marx** and **Engels** lies above all in the development of a set of analytic tools which are relevant for the distinction between illusionary and realistic H. What the late **Engels** brought into the formula >from the utopian to the scientific< (MECW 24/281 [19/177]), is directed against political concepts which exploit human H-capabilities for unrealistic goals, and burn them up. **Marx**, in the context of his criticism of **Bakunin**, criticises a utopian socialism which tries to >foist new illusions onto the people<, instead of finding its support in the social movement made by the people themselves (MECW 24/520 [18/636]). Utopian thinking can recognize no >historical initiative< on the side of the proletariat (*Communist Manifesto*, 1848/2002, 254 [4/490]). Already in 1843 **Marx** describes the advantage of the new direction, stressing >that we do not dogmatically anticipate the world, but only want to find the new world through criticism of the old world< (MECW 3/142 [1/344]). This includes the critical analysis of the religious or political self-consciousness, which brings to light, >that the world has long dreamed of possessing something of which

it has only to be conscious in order to possess it in reality< (144 [346]).

The proposed examination of the dreams of the people can be described as the translation of illusionary H.s into grounded ones. For this **Marx**, following **Hegel**, developed a peculiar type of critique called >determinate negation<, whose ^no^^ does not come from outside, but has its standpoint in the negated (see W.F.Haug 1973, 179; 1995, 177 et sqq.). It orients on finding developed >elements of the new society< in the womb of bourgeois society, and >setting them free< (MECW 22/335 [17/343]). Without such >latent< seeds of the new >all attempts to explode it would be quixotic< (MECW 28/97 [42/93]). Limits to revolutionary expectation are set, since humankind >inevitably sets itself only such tasks as it is able to solve< (MECW 29/263 [13/9]). According to the meaning of the Greek word for discerning (κρίνειν), a critique of this kind enables one to distinguish between what shall be kept and what is to be negated, between attainable and unattainable moments; thereby it can become an orientating activity which affects the horizon of expectation of H.

5. Opposing a Christian understanding of H as a virtue, Friedrich **Nietzsche** reverts to its antique definition by **Hesiod**. Confusing it with happiness is part of the illusionary features of human nature. >Zeus did not want man to throw his life away, no matter how much the other evil might torment him, but rather to go on letting himself be tormented anew. To that end, he gives man hope. In truth, it is the most evil of evils because it prolongs man's torment.< (Nietzsche 1878/2004, 58 [KSA 2, 82]) The triad Faith/H/Love of the New testament describes not real

virtues but >three Christian *ingenuities*< (Nietzsche 1895/1924, 76 [KSA 6, 191]), i.e. those of human seduction: >H, in its stronger forms is a great deal more powerful stimulans to life than any sort of realized joy can ever be. Man must be sustained in suffering by a H so high that no conflict with actuality can dash it - so high, indeed, that no fulfilment can *satisfy* it: a hope reaching out beyond this world< (1895/1924, 76 [KSA 6, 190]).

Nietzsche conceived his theory of the >eternal recurrence< not least as an alternative to the teleological seduction by H. The Christian teachings, which divert eternal value away from life into an otherworld, are to become in such a way >inverted< that metaphysics >emphasizes precisely *this* life with the *heaviest* accent< (KSA 9, 515). We should live in such a way, >that we want to live again and live that way for eternity< (494 et sqq.; see KSA 3, 570). The separation of the important from the unimportant according to the criterion of the desired eternal recurrence promises to bring, through a >religion of religion< the eternity-effect better to bear than past religions, and above all better than the Christian one, which is filled with the hopes for salvation of those at the bottom: >Let us press the image of eternity onto our life! < (KSA 9, 503; see 505, 513, 515; KSA 11, 488). Günther **Anders** criticizes the doctrine of the eternal recurrence as a compulsory obligation to repetition transposed into philosophy, >only that in this case the compulsion is not ^to act^^, but, an ^event compulsion^^< projected into the universe (as its mode of being) (1982, 100). The called for new >heavy accent< on one's own life is to accompany a >philosophy of indifference< toward >humanity's< problems (KSA 9, 494 et sq.). Then again this is supposed to engender a charging of the moment, since according to **Nietzsche** life shall be

eternally repeated only for the sake of certain orgiastic >supreme moments<: >the value of the shortest and most fleeting one, the seductive gold flashing on the belly of the serpent of life< (KSA 12, 348). This is most notably what postmodern attempts to oppose the enjoyable lightness of the present moment to H will recur to.

6. Ernst **Bloch** reconnected Marxism with H-traditions, from which it had been separated due to Hegelianism as well as through its own anti-utopian determinism. The fact that **Hesiod** reckons Elpis to the evils can only have the sense that he refers >to its deceptive aspect, even to the powerless aspect which it still represents for itself alone<; not meant is the >founded, [...] mediated with the real Possible< H; the later version of the Pandora story, in which H as a positive good remains in the box, is for **Bloch** > in the long run [...] surely the only true one; H is the good thing that remains for men [...], in which man can become man for man and the world homeland [Heimat] for man< (Bloch 1959/1986, 334 et sq.).

Bloch's terminology is laid out so that the seductiveness of H confirms its fundamental anthropological relevance: That it >is preached from every pulpit< and >deception [...] must work with flatteringly and corruptly aroused hope< does not speak against H, but shows that the reference to the future represents the central field of the ideological arguments. >Hopelessness is [...] downright intolerable to human needs<, which indicates that, >man is essentially determined by the future< (Bloch 1959/1986, 4 et sq.).

Accordingly **Bloch** attempts to anchor H as an emotional substructure for the specifically human >anticipation< in a theory of the affects. For this he differentiates the

emotions first into >filled< and >expectant emotions<: with the first the intention-contents are in a >set horizon< (**Husserl**), i.e. that of the memory conception, while to the latter he reckons anxiety, fear, H, faith; they are >long-term<, and their specifics lie in the >incomparably greater anticipatory character< (74 and 108). In a second step, taking a front position against **Heidegger's** >ontology of anxiety<, he contrasts the >positive<, expectant emotions of H and confidence with the >negatives< of anxiety and fear: only the latter are >suffering, oppressed, unfree<, of >passive passion<, Bloch argues in implicit dialogue with **Spinoza's** theory of the affects, but the former are much more actively reaching out and linked with the human ability for anticipation (110 and 75). >The emotion of hope goes out of itself, makes people broad instead of confining them [...]. The work of this emotion requires people who throw themselves actively into what is becoming, to which they themselves belong.< (1)

For **Bloch** it is a matter of taking the H out of the >rationalistic< critique of affects. To be sure, it still has in common with anxiety >a mood-based element<, but it stands at the same time, as one of the >most exact emotions<, above every mood, >capable of logical and concrete correction and sharpening< (111 et sq.). Through its connection with anticipation it is at the same time a >directing act of a cognitive kind< and thus a counterpart not only to anxiety, but also to memory (12 and 112).

Bloch's concept of H is connected with the project of a >psychology of the unconscious of the other side, of forward dawning<, the Not-Yet-Conscious (116), which can be connected with the >objectively Possible< (122). In this sense, H is also an unexplored >place in the world< [Weltstelle], a >basic determination within objective

reality< (6 et sq.). If this becomes conscious, then H arises no longer merely as a >self-based mental feeling<, but becomes an >utopian function< (144). >Reason cannot blossom without H, H cannot speak without reason, both in Marxist unity - no other science has any future, no other future any science.< (1367)

The language oriented on the pathos of the young **Marx** makes it easy to overlook the fact that **Bloch** conceives of the relationship between H and its realization as a contradictory tension which he describes as a >melancholy of fulfilment< (299): If the hoped for is there and if everything is good, then nevertheless >the hoping itself is no longer there<, and it >carried something with it which does not make itself known in the existing pleasure< (178 et sq.). Bloch explains this discrepancy in the context of his theorem of >the darkness of the lived moment< [Dunkel des gelebten Augenblicks], the blind mark in the soul (313) that brings about that >you can never experience beautiful days as beautifully as they later shine in memory or previously shine in H< (**Jean Paul**, quoted in 313). >No earthly paradise remains on entry without the shadow which the entry still casts over it< (299). This tear in the actualization can lead to a >reification< of H, which eternalizes utopia and thwarts the pleasure of the here and now (299 and 314). The example of disenchanting infatuation shows the extent to which this tension can arise as a destructive opposition: >Experience was not forbearing with H, but this H was not forbearing with experience either; and the latter became exaggeratedly disappointing.< (180) The reduction or abolition of this >incognito<, the >remaining minus< of the >homo absconditus<, is the topic of all humanistic dreams: >to educate the educator, [...] to Realize the Realizer himself< (300).

Anders ascribes to **Bloch** an >incapability not to hope<, which bends the world and even God as >works in progress< into shape - >putting all past philosophers of progress in the shade< (Anders 1982, 138 and 159). The criticism of such >naivety< (138) can rely on passages, in which H appears as a *given*, together with a utopian >tendency-latency< as >a basic determination within objective reality< (Bloch 1959/1986, 7). However, Bloch conceives of H primarily as something that is *assigned* to us: >It is a question of learning to hope<, making it to >docta spes, comprehended H< (3 and 7). The >objective<, >hoped< H - *spes, quae speratur* -, which Bloch distinguishes from the >subjective<, >hoping< H - *spes, qua speratur* - can also never be fully confident; otherwise it would not be H any longer. It remains >open history<, so that optimism is only conceivable as >militant optimism, never as certain< (1372). In contrast to the different narrations of an >end of history< Bloch's concept of H holds firmly to the >openness of the historical process which is continuing and has by no means been defeated up to now: it is not yet the evening to end all days, every night still has a morning< (305).

7. The *Principle of Hope* caused an upswing of H-theologies, which - partly supplementary to **Bloch**, partly competing with its >atheistic< interpretation - tried to define the Christian faith as essentially eschatological. The most well-known example is Jürgen **Moltmann's** *Theology of Hope* from 1964, which attempts to demonstrate >H as the foundation and the mainspring of theological thinking as such< (1967, 19). His argument has two prongs: On the one hand he questions the religious bending of an

eschatological H into a belief in the hereafter, which took place in the course of the hellenization of Christianity, on the other hand he tries, in the confrontation with Marxism, to direct the H-intentions which **Bloch** had detached from religion back into a religious form. The >homeland< [Heimat], toward which Bloch's *Principle of H* points (Bloch 1959, 1376), must not be identified with a Marxist >Realm of Freedom<, but can only be grasped through faith in a divine counterpart (**Moltmann** 1966, 322 et sq.).

It is primarily this argument which was introduced into the Christian-Marxist dialogues in 1965. Thus for example, William **Dantine** is of the opinion that in contrast to traditional individualistic eschatology a >Theology of H< will >force new questions on obstinate atheism< (quoted from Kellner 1966, 74). >How can there be H without promise? <, asks Johann Baptist **Metz** in his answer to Roger **Garaudy** (ibid, 109). **Metz**, who welcomes the common Christian-Marxist >rejection of the veiled *cult of the absurd* in our historical thinking<, sees the >apportionment of the beyond into the later<, claimed by **Bloch**, to be rooted in the Biblical message (221). Christians must take H out of the >bracket< of their theology, take it >out of the subordinate clause in which they transmit it, and involve it in the main clause of their confession, thus revealing it as the sought for essence of Christian existence< (222). From this perspective Christians are >quite simply those ^^who have H^^< and convert the orthodoxy of faith into an >*orthopraxis* of changing this world< (223).

Hans **Jonas** attempts to unhinge the >Principle of Hope< by means of an >Imperative of Responsibility<. However, he obscures the destructive tendencies of the capitalistic

domination of nature as >quasi-utopian dynamics< of technology as such, and simply attributes it to the >utopian< itself, which he claims violates the present in favour of an engineered future. (Jonas 1984, 201) The H for improvements must be unhooked >from the bait of utopia<, and must subordinate itself to a >non-utopian ethics of responsibility< (201 and 386), which Jonas, referring to Heidegger, conceives of as >concern for another being, recognized as obligation< (391). Again the hoped for humanizing of humanity is replaced by the eternally >ambiguous< human being, the >preappearance< of a liberated and reconciled society in the work of art by its >timeless appearance in itself< (381 et sq.). Finally, ethics is about learning reverence and fear again, which reveal to us a (not further determined) >holy< (392 et sq.). This conservative farewell to H is not conducive to Jonas' own claim of an ecological conversion of technology.

8. Walter **Benjamin** treated the topic of H and hopelessness in the context of the fatal love between the figures Eduard and Ottilie in his study of **Goethe's** *Elective Affinities*. The starting point is a sentence which he considers the watershed of the piece, and in which the entangled ones seal their fate without being aware of it. >Hope shot across the sky above their heads like a falling star<. This means according to **Benjamin** >that the last H is never such to him who cherishes it but is the last only to those for whom it is cherished< (Benjamin 1922/2002, 354): >Only for the sake of the hopeless ones have we been given hope.< (356) The sentence becomes clearer if one reads it with another: >^^Elpis^^ remains the last of the primal words: the certainty of blessing that [...] corresponds to the

hope of redemption that we nourish for all the dead. This hope is the sole justification of the faith in immortality, which must never be kindled from one's own existence.<

(355) >Only for the sake of the hopeless ones< is a statement against the private-egoistic temptations of H, and not least against the salvation-egoistic temptations of religious H for immortality, which have determined the belief in the hereafter since the adaptation of Christianity to neo-Platonism. What is required is to conceive of H from the standpoint of those who have nothing to lose >but their chains< (*Communist Manifesto* 1848/2002, 258; [4/493]).

The idea that the only legitimate H is one directed toward the salvation of the dead is pursued by **Benjamin** in his theses *On the Concept of History*. He turns it here against the conception of progress held by a social-democratic labour movement which considers itself to be the >redeemer of future generations< (Benjamin 1940/2004, 394): it should orient itself not on the >ideal of the liberated grandchild< but on the image of the >enslaved ancestors< (ibid.). Taken by itself this opposition is not convincing. To the extent that it - going beyond the criticism of the linearity of the concept of progress - attempts to drive any orientation on the future out of H, it neglects the importance of the anticipatory for human behaviour, indeed, even for animal activity (see Holzkamp 1983, 142 et sqq., 261 et sqq., 340 et sqq.). Nevertheless, it contains a dimension which is neglected in a one-sided future-fixation of H: the task of >fanning the spark of hope in the past<. Every age must strive >anew to wrest [tradition away] from conformism< thereby >appropriating a memory as it flashes up in a moment of danger< (Benjamin 1940/2004, 391).

Benjamin's reflections coincide with **Bloch's** concept of a

past which is >undisposed of< [unerledigt], >not yet wholly discharged< [nicht ganz abgegolten] (Bloch 1935/1991, 55, 110, 112), with the difference that the image of the salvation of the dead already formulated in judgement prophecy takes the place of a future embedded in the past which is still to be realized.

In another way, shortly before his execution, Dietrich **Bonhoeffer** attempted to formulate the paradoxical possibility of H under conditions of hopelessness in his *Letters from Prison*. >For most people the forced renunciation of future planning means that they have succumbed to living only for the moment at hand, irresponsibly, frivolously, or resignedly; some still dream longingly of a more beautiful future and try thereby to forget the present<, but for us there remains only >the very narrow path, sometimes barely discernible, of taking each day as if it were the last and yet living it faithfully and responsibly as if there were yet to be a great future. [...] To think and to act with an eye on the coming generation and to be ready to move on without fear and worry< (Bonhoeffer 1951, 17 et sq.). If the illusion is already so great a power, then the >grounded H< is even much more (474). Optimism is not an opinion about the present situation, but >a power of hope [...] that never abandons the future to the opponent but lays claim to it.<. This >will for the future< should never be despised, even if it is proved wrong a hundred times (18).

9. >Contradictions are our H!<, is the slogan of Bertolt **Brecht's** *Dreigroschenprozess*). Yet H itself is pervaded with contradictions. The fact that **Bloch's** title, *The Principle of Hope*, has become the usual formula for

conjuring up a rise of the stock exchange, or that in the USA proclaiming America >a beacon of hope< forms a core component of ideological interpellations, are indications of the extent to which the anthropological characteristic of expecting the future can be instrumentalised by dominant ideologies. The daydreams which **Bloch** in his criticism of **Freud** emphatically defined as advanced >anticipations of a better world< (1959/1986, 581), are often shaped by the illusion industry in such a way that the dreamers, usually >filled with hope reinforce their oppression rather than change it< (F.Haug 1984, 693). Conversely, equating H with illusionary self-deception disregards the experience that the disappointing release from illusions does not by any means necessarily lead to hopelessness, but can also bring about a strengthening of the capacity to act and anticipate. The expectation that an >other world is possible< (World Social Forum), can be abused and alienated in various ways, but without it nothing moves.

In view of this ambivalence it would be one-sided to idealize H as a >good< essence of human nature. The reverse one-sidedness consists in the abstract negation of H. What matters is the analytic and practical ability to differentiate again and again concretely between >empty< and >well-founded< H. This requires the realistic estimation of both the social balances of power and the potential for development, as well as the individual possibilities for action and motivations. The critical elaboration of the art of distinction making is not only an intellectual exercise, but itself a practical activity which contributes to structuring the contents and horizons of H. A dialectic approach can learn both from the philosophical criticism of H as well as from its mass mobilization in popular movements, be it in religious or

secular contexts. It will orient on deciphering the illusory desire projections of H and on criticizing their private-egoistic narrowness by defining them from the point of view of the survival interests of the hopeless ones, and work constructively on transforming the hopelessness of the subaltern into >concrete anticipation< (**Bloch** 1959/1986, 723).

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-->anticipation, anxiety, fear, charisma, christianity and marxism, christian-marxist dialogue, congregation, parish, critique, critique of religion, death, despair, determinate negation, disillusionment, dream, elements of the new society, emancipation, end of history, enthusiasm, eternity, faith, fatalism, forgetting/remembering, God, happiness, hereafter, hopelessness, illusion, imaginary, indifference, Jewish Question, joy, knowledge, liberation, love, materialist Bible reading, messianism, optimism/pessimism, phantasy, possibility, project, prophecy, reason, redemption, religion, rescuing critique, responsibility, sense, utopia

-->Angst/Furcht, Antizipation, Befreiung, bestimmte Negation, Charisma, Christentum und Marxismus, christlich-marxistischer Dialog, Elemente der neuen Gesellschaft, Emanzipation, Ende der Geschichte, Enthusiasmus, Enttäuschung, Entwurf, Erkenntnis, Erlösung, Ewigkeit, Fatalismus, Freude, Gemeinde (christliche), Glauben, Gleichgültigkeit, Glück, Gott, Hoffnungslosigkeit, Illusion, Imaginäres, Jenseits, Juden, Kritik, Liebe, materialistische Bibellektüre, Messianismus, Möglichkeit, Optimismus/Pessimismus, Phantasie, Prophetie, Religion, Religionskritik, rettende Kritik, Sinn, Tod, Traum, Utopie, Verantwortung, Vergessen/Erinnern, Vernunft, Verzweiflung