

Meeting #4

TEXT: “The Scent of Time” by Byung-Chul Han

- Sensation of time moving/fluttering, duration and time:
- heterochronia: different events occurring at different times.
- uchronia: used to think about alternative scenarios to history.
- teleology: study of the ends of something/their purpose
- theology: study of religion
- hyper-kinesis: excessive movement (ex: the need to be busy)
- eschatological: relating to death - belief that time ends in “death”
- Kant thinks of time as space/an empty plane (Byung-Chul Han is partially inspired by Kant)
- ontology: the study of knowledge/how we know things

Do we always think of alternate scenarios and never live in the present?

Achievement:

- A lot of people like to think about ways situations could diverge
- Our society is living in an “achievement society” - *The Burnout Society*,
- Are we “achieving machines/forced to achieve somehow?”

Yes, the way the system is constructed. We are sent to school and expected to learn things, and then submerged into a binary society of goal-measurement.

Examples of conditioned ‘achievement’ in our society:

- The school system: do schools encourage taking up a lot of workload early?
- The college board! —> because it’s always been this way, we should continue operating the way we do.
- The system builds expectations backwards: fear of death?

What drives us to keep going?

- Fear of death does not equal willingness to make life fulfilled. — “fullness” does not equate “fulfilled.”
- The Denial of Death* —> the fear of death is what keeps us going.
- “Oppressed by death”

The idea of living:

- The Myth of Sisyphus* - “absurdity” life is absurd
- Hedonism: you should live your entire life according to your own personal pleasures
- Nihilism:

Do we treat time as a currency?

- “You can either spend time to gain money or spend money to gain time.”
- Time is notably zero-sum for everyone involved — time is treated as a resource, there is no opportunity for growth in the quantity of time. We cannot improve time with productivity.
- The sense of productive time
- We want to be as productive as possible — we want to do as much as possible with the time that we have.

Developing goals as a sense of identity

- Time is a method by which productivity is achieved
- Defining our identity and extrinsic approval

- The need for the 'control' of time and how it affects humanity.
- Byung-Chul Han argues that God originally controlled time, but that now it has been given to humanity, as humanity has a desire to "control" time.
- The 'atomization' of time: is it ironically ineffective?
- Is reflection a proper counter-argument?
- What time of reflection does Byung-Chul Han imply? —> Reflection just for the purpose of completing goals, or reflection merely for the purpose of introspection.

- The salience is Byung-Chul Han's philosophy:
Think of the world as consciously as possible — the goal is not to be as happy as possible, but assure a certain degree of satisfaction.

God and free will:

- The grounds of believing of free will and also the existence of God
- The

(next meeting!! the existence of free will and God??)

Analytical philosophy:

- premise
- premise
- conclusion

continental philosophy:

- language
- language's purpose