

*The Byung-Chul Han 's new book that the world  
has been waiting for!*

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# Byung-Chul Han

## *The Spirit of Hope*

«One of the stars of  
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In his new book, best-selling author Byung-Chul Han reflects on the significance and importance of hope. The author begins looking into western society in its actual state. In this case, identifying it as a society in fear. Both through media and politics, we are constantly being exposed countless apocalyptic narratives: fear of pandemics, of climate collapse or of an upcoming world war are omnipresent. The doomsday clock is constantly about to strike midnight. Fear and anxiety cause depression. They create the ground for right-wing movements. As Barak Obama said, Democracy can buckle when we give in to fear.

«This is not a book  
about hope, it is as  
much a book of hope».

*Anxiety isolates while hope creates  
community.*

Byung Chul Han leaves the patterns of his latest work, where he had analyzed actual social phenomena and present forms of acting and interacting. Due to the abstractness of its subject, hope, this book is necessarily less descriptive and more philosophical. The author debates critically with Spinoza, Hegel, Bloch, Arendt and Camus, and, above all, Heidegger, and finds more common ground in Nietzsche, Benjamin and Weil. Beyond classical philosophical texts, he quotes poets like Paul Celan, Ingeborg Bachmann and Marcel Proust.

The Greek culture understood hope as opposed to action. Hoping for a solution meant avoiding action. However, according to Han, hope precedes action and goes beyond presence. Hoping means looking into the future.

Hope inspires fantasy and enables us to think about what is yet to come. Hope is thus revolutionary. Hope makes action possible even in the midst of the deepest despair because it fuels us with meaning.

Hope creates its own insight. It recognizes the yet-not-being. According to Hegel, Philosophy is not capable to grasp what is yet to come. Hope, on the other side, searches in present reality the the yet unrealized possibilities. For any thought full of hope, truth is not what can be demonstrated to be or to have been. Hopeful finds truth in what is bad and wrong in the presence. Truth, in this sense, has its place in the future.

Moreover, hope also transcends the individual dimension. Hope —like anxiety— is, in terms of Martin Heidegger, a "grounding mood" (*Grundstimmung*). But in contrast to anxiety it is communal. Hope goes beyond the Self and is always looking towards the Other. In terms of Heidegger's thinking, existence, "our being-in-the-world" (*Dasein*) changes its natural state only when anxious. Han counters this everydayness with festivity, anxiety with hope, and what has been with what is yet to come. Following Han's explanation, in this new book, the idea of hope leads to a new and broader understanding of action, knowledge and existence.

The author

## Byung-Chul Han

(Seoul, South Korea, 1959) studied Philosophy at the University of Freiburg and German Literature and Theology at the University of Munich. In 1994 he received his doctorate from the first of these universities with a thesis on Martin Heidegger. He has been a professor of Philosophy at the University of Basel; of Philosophy and Media Theory at the Karlsruhe University of Arts and Design, and Philosophy and Cultural Studies at the Berlin University of the Arts.

Author of more than  
20 titles.

