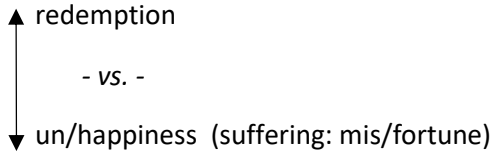


**Benjamin on history**

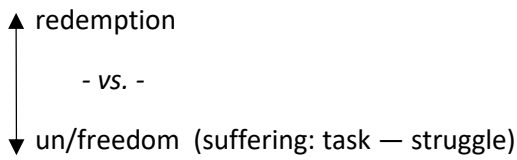
**“On the concept of history” and Theologico-political fragment**

Messianic / Ancient / sacred / eternal / Nature:



*becomes*

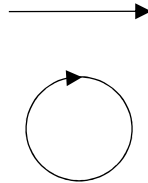
historical / Modern / profane / secular / History — “quest of free humanity for happiness”:



linear-progressive: new

- vs. -

cyclical-recursive / repetitive-regressive: old

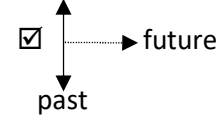


*history*

relation:

past — present — future

present



*critical history*

“History is like Janus; it has two faces. Whether it looks at the past or at the present, it sees the same things.”  
— Maxime Du Camp, quoted by Benjamin in “Paris, Capital of the 19th century” (*Arcades Project* exposé of 1939)

2 directions:

Nietzsche: the present critiques/judges the past

- vs. -

Benjamin: the past judges/critiques the present