ARTICLE

Smells and politics of Utopia

Babette Babich

Fordham University, New York, NY, USA
Email: babich@fordham.edu

Abstract

Utopia is nominally a 'nowhere' that is also, as Thomas More tells us, a 'good' place. Although there are competing cognate notions, the Greek description looms large in most accounts of utopia. The details of this ideal are so specified that utopic literature consists in a catalogue (and critique) of specifications. This essay draws attention to the fragrance attributed to Lucian's 'Isles of the Blest' together with Ivan Illich's attention to 'atmosphere' and to the aura and the nose along with Nietzsche's emphasis on the sense of smell. Utopic suspicion is discussed as parallels are drawn with pragmatic critiques of utopia as inherently totalitarian along with the 'good life' in political theory and the programmatic default of techno-utopic fantasy. In the historical context of 'conspiracy' and the politics of living and breathing together in community, I conclude with Illich on *pax* and breath.

Keywords: Maps; atmosphere; totalitarianism; aura; conspiracy

Tracy Burr Strong (1943-2022), *in memoriam.*

ναυσὶ δ' οὔτε πεζὸς ἰών κεν εὕροις
ἐς Ὑπερβορέων ἀγῶνα θαυμαστὰν ὁδόν.[1]
— Pindar, 10th *Pythian Ode*

Ein Gewitter war in unsrer Luft, die Natur, die wir
sind, verfinsterte sich — *denn wir hatten keinen Weg.*
— Nietzsche

---

[1]William H. Race translates: 'And traveling neither by ships nor on foot could you find / the marvelous way to the assembly of the Hyperboreans' (Pindar 1997: 361). Hölderlin offers us: '*In schiffen aber· nicht zu füsse wandelnd / möchtest du finden zu der Hyperboreer kampfspiel / Einen wunderbaren weg*' (Pindar 1910: 56).

Archetypes

Utopia is a 'nowhere' locus articulated as a fantasy projection. Thus the 2nd Century C.E. Lucian of Samosata wrote one of the first accounts of utopia, also regarded as first in the genre of science-fiction: his 'true history' (or 'story') (Ἀληθῆ διηγήματα/*Vera Historia*) also included in the genre of tall tales as Lucian tells the reader that everything he says is a lie.[2]

Described from antiquity as an 'ideal' locale beyond everyday life, utopia is associated with paradise and Lucian lists: 'three hundred and sixty and five springs of water and as many more of honey', and 'of perfume five hundred, though these indeed are smaller than the springs of water and honey', and 'seven rivers of milk and of wine eight' (Church 1880: 67-68), numerically, volumetrically more than anyone could drink, with geographical details fulsome, glossy as a travel brochure. Tabulated abundance is a utopian signature, a 'standing reserve' – not unlike Heidegger's formula for modern technology – calculated to offset, in security and perpetuity, any imaginable lack.

Other characteristics of utopia are rules not to be broken. Paradise has a totalitarian dimension and by the same token dissonance if not predictable failure seems to haunt the story of the original paradise (*Gen.* 2-3) and so too Lucian's 'Blessed Isles' or Thomas More's *Utopia*. Thus fated, satire has been argued to have been More's original intention.[3] To the genre of satire or folly or 'light' literature must be added a roster of roles in Greek and Celtic epic traditions, continuing in gaming culture which may likewise be regarded as a scopic (and competitive) 'staging' of utopia.[4]

There is a variously specialized literature commenting on Homer, on Hesiod, on the excesses of Plato's ideal city or, on the lie as lie in the (tautologous) paradox of Lucian's *True History*. The liar who revels in details – details making, so Kant reminds us, the telling of a lie such a challenge to maintain – flaunts his prowess. Accordingly, Lucian is celebrated as 'lover of lies', title of a dialogue translated by Thomas More. Other authors drawing on Lucian have included Erasmus and Swift along with Goethe and Nietzsche. And Lucian draws on Pindar, thus today's science fantasy industry, including Lovecraft's Cthulhu, features Hyperborea, here to recall the *Song of a Hyperborean* by the Irish Thomas Moore (1779-1852) and in pulp fantasy literature of the mid-20th century, Conan the Cimmerian who would surely have known, to echo Pindar's 10th Pythian, the *way* to Hyperborea[5]: right next door to Cimmeria on the map in Robert E. Howard's *Conan the Conqueror* (1950 but cf. Bridgman 2002). And on a map reproduced on the book jacket of the late Henry Kissinger's (1923-2023), *World Order: Reflections on the Character of Nations and the Course of History*, 'Hyperborea' appears directly under the author's name (Kissinger 2015).

The first part of Lucian's *A True Story* takes the narrator's ship to the moon via whirlwind to witness a variety of stellar battles – complete with cosmic spiders – between

---

[2]See Branham 1989; Ebner et al. 2001, and reading Lucian's Πῶς δεῖ ἱστορίαν συγγράφειν/*De Historia Conscribenda* as historiography, Georgiadou and Larmour 1994; Kirkland 2022, 186f; and Anderson 1980.

[3]This is an established tradition. See, among many others, some to be cited below, Sylvester 1968; Schoeck 1978; and, comparing More and Swift, Reilly 1992.

[4]See gaming studies by McGonigal 2011, Bogost 2011, and Bateman 2011 in addition to others like Kłosiński 2018, Roth 2017, Wagner 2015, as well as, critically, Carr 2016.

[5]Cf., reading philology as 'travel narrative', Gagne 2021: 203-225.

the inhabitants of the moon and the sun (Lucian 1913: 260ff). In the second part, after relating how a seafaring vessel would be tricked out for a passage over ice and the sojourns of the crew in a leviathan and in caves beneath the ice, and including reports of islands of cheese and of cork and passing a pair of mountainous islands, crowned with smoking fire (usually assumed an allusion to Stromboli, famous to this day), the seafarers spy a flat, low-lying, i.e., conveniently accessible island:

> When at length we were near it, a wonderful breeze blew about us, sweet and fragrant like the one that, on the word of the historian Herodotus, breathes perfume from Araby the blest. (Lucian 1913: 309)

The travelogue continues, there are 'transparent rivers emptying softly into the sea', such that a 'rare, pure atmosphere enfolded the place and sweet breezes' added to a 'whisper of delightful unbroken music' (ibid.: 311). This, Lucian tells the reader, is 'the Isle of the Blest, and … the ruler was the Cretan Rhadamanthus' (ibid.). As Rhadamanthus judges the dead, Lucian explains that the crew has been 'translated' (Rohde 1894: 1) to one of the more fortunate loci (there are several) of Greek after-life. Law and justice are key not unlike the model of Homer's account of the Isle of Scheria where Odysseus is similarly judged (cf. Welcker 1833). Although Lucian and his companions are reminded that they will be judged again 'after death' and are thus permitted exceptional 'leave to remain' on the island for a period of 'not more than seven months' (Lucian 1913: 309), from the point of view of Greek Orphism and the mystery cults (and Plato's *Phaedrus*), the achievement is quasi-divine, including Empedoclean and Zoroastrian overtones as these recur in Hölderlin and Nietzsche.

The atmosphere includes botanical fragrances wafted by gentle breezes or zephyrs and Lucian inspires Goethe when he asks, and his query likewise echoes Pindar, if one 'knows the land, where lemon trees blossom'.[6] Lucian reports rivers of 'the finest myrrh' in which one can swim 'comfortably', bathhouses of 'glass warmed by burning cinnamon' (ibid. 315). Geographic and agricultural details, one more fantastic than the other (bettering the harvests of the Phaeacians referenced in Homer's *Odyssey*), with the grapevines of the Isle of the Blest yielding 'twelve vintages a year', with fields of wheat bearing 'loaves of bread all baked' (ibid.) etc. There is dining in 'thick meadows' with 'thick woods of all sorts round about it'. Lush and comfortable, domesticated and abundant, this 'nature' is utterly tamed, no dissonance, everything we want, nothing we don't (cf. Paquot 2005). Milk and honey: perfection piled on perfection.

Lucian's Isle of the Blest is an island of perpetual, if dim light, specified down to the totalitarian restrictions that are also characteristic of 'smart' architecture, with complicated echoes of Le Corbusier (1930; cf. Sobin 1996; Addington 2003; Babich 2023b). Exactly to spec: not too bright, not too dark. 'Perfect weather', there are no seasons: it is always spring. And timewise, no one ages, as in death: everyone stays the same age they were when they arrived (Lucian 1913: 315). Every day given over to conversation and sensual enjoyment: no pain, no war, no work.

---

[6]*Kennst du das Land, wo die Zitronen blühn, Im dunkeln Laub die Goldorangen glühn, Ein sanfter Wind vom blauen Himmel weht, Die Myrte still und hoch der Lorbeer steht? Kennst du es wohl? Dahin! Dahin möcht' ich mit dir, o mein Geliebter, ziehn.' Cited after *Wilhelm Meister's Lehrjahre* (Goethe 1827: 177). For a discussion, see, broadly, Kolb 2014 and, on the halcyonic, the final chapter of Shapiro's thus titled *Alcyone* (1991).

In Lucian's tale, the narrator reports his encounters with past famous personages, including 'demigods' and philosophers and – inspiring 'quotations' up to Woody Allen to this day – arranges a dialogue in which Homer himself settles all 'Homeric questions'.

On their departure, to the day and date specified, the changing smells around Lucian and his companions indicate their progress. No sooner had they

> passed out of the fragrant atmosphere when of a sudden a terrible odour greeted us as of asphalt, sulfur and pitch burning together, and a vile, insufferable stench as of roasting human flesh… (335)

These two regions border one another, very heaven and very hell.

Politically, the desire for sweets and the delights of sensual indulgence interrupts Plato's *Republic*. Upon hearing Socrates' description of a balanced and 'just' state, his two main interlocutors, Glaucon and Adeimantus, object, instigating Socrates to describe an imaginary city of 'inflamed' injustice (*Rep.*: 372e), with junior guardians sent off to war in search of unguents, perfumes, courtesans and sweets 'of all kinds' (373a), the accoutrements of the 'good' life. Socrates' interlocutors know that no matter how harmonious, a life in a sober 'state of nature', sleeping on beds 'of bryony and myrtle' and 'for dessert … figs and chickpeas' will not cut it. The young men in Plato's *Polity* know they will not be happy there. No more than Satan was inclined, as Milton has expounded, 'to serve in heaven' (1667: 1.263), no more could Adam and Eve successfully remain in the paradise in which/for which they were created to dwell.

Thomas More titled his 1518 satire, *Utopia* (More 2020; and see 1965), as a 'nowhere', speaking from the start of an *Eu-Topia*. Advertising his book (along with himself, its author), More tells us his topic is

> 'The best/state of a commonwealth/and the new island of Utopia,/a truly golden handbook,/no less beneficial than entertaining/by the most distinguished and eloquent man/Thomas More,/citizen and sheriff of the famous city of London'. (More 2020)

Learned commentary on More's book echoes More's own gloss, which he sets as legend beneath his map of the island (Figure 1):

> Called Utopia ['No Place'] by the ancients for my under-population,
>
> Now, I am a rival to Plato's city, perhaps its victor:
>
> What that city depicted with words, I alone have produced
>
> With men and resources and the best laws
>
> I should be called, deservedly, by the name Eutopia ['Good Place']. (ibid.: 7)

The island speaks, and the 'under-population' that drives Malthus and the dreams of today's globalists, the point regarding the *ou* ['No'] and the *eu* ['Good'] is here

Figure 1. Map of Utopia in More's 1516 edition.

(Cf. Hutchinson 1987: 270). *Qua* just-so story, *qua* make-believe, the reader is thereby informed that the author knows that what he says is 'fabulous' from the outset.

This fabulosity is Lucian's signature. We encounter his apology, or 'conceit', at the outset of *A True Story*, modelled as he says on the practice of sport as athletes emphasize intervals of relaxation (essential for bodybuilding, an art invented by the Greeks). Telling us that 'philosophers' tell any number of lies, as Plato and Plutarch echo the proverbial: πολλὰ ψεύδονται ἀοιδοὶ, 'many lies tell the poets', Lucian assures the reader that the poet, if seeking no less 'relaxation' than the philosopher, is more trustworthy: 'telling the truth in nothing else' (Lucian 1913: 253), the poet admits that he is a liar.

Lucian (and More and Swift) let the reader in on the joke and stylistic connivance is part of utopic literature. In a darker mode, Goethe's *Faust* and *Die Zauberlehrling* are indebted to Lucian's *Lucius or the Ass*. Similar 'dark arts' are key to the popular fiction of Hogwarts, with Professor Severus Snape teaching the secrets of potions to idealized (British school style) modern 'sorcerer's apprentices',[7] along with the complexities of love and the heart's forbearance conveyed by Goethe's *Verweile doch, du bist so schön*. For the classicist, Pierre Hadot, forbearance is key to Goethe's 'The present is our only happiness' (Hadot 2008), as Hadot reflects his own apprenticeship to the Stoic counsel (Hadot 1992) of Marcus Aurelius.

'Yes-saying' attends the first day in *Genesis*. Along with forbearance, Nietzsche recognized benediction as inviting the moment to stay as a tension for human impermanence in Plato's spirit. Thus we read the section of *Thus Spoke Zarathustra* titled, after Lucian, 'On the Blessed Isles [*Auf den glückseligen Inseln*]', beginning with the figs that for Marcus Aurelius signified the complicated beauty of age: 'they are good and sweet, and in that they fall their red skin tears. A north wind am I to ripe figs' (1980, 4: 109). To the sweetness of fallen figs, Nietzsche's Zarathustra adds: 'Autumn is about us and pure sky and afternoon', reading atmospheric signifiers illuminated in the paintings of the American engineer, Maxfield [Frederick] Parrish (1870-1966) (Figure 2).

Directionally associated with the Blessed Isles, as Ivan Illich will later speak of the 'rivers north of the future', Nietzsche adds the image of distant seas (*ferne Meer*). Echoing both the Pre-Platonic Philosophers and Plato contra God as a '*thought*' that is, as such, so Nietzsche writes: 'evil and *menschenfeindlich*', unthinkable, we know, post-Kant, for humanity:

> – all this teaching of the One and the Plenum and the Unmoved and the Satisfied and the Permanent [*Unvergänglichen*]! All the Permanent – that is only a parable [*Gleichniss*]. And the poets lie too much. – (Nietzsche 1980, 4: 110)

Nietzsche emphasizes the importance of 'impermanence' and dissonance in the context of the Blessed Isles: 'Yes, much bitter dying must be in your life, you creators!

---

[7]See overall for a connection with Illich (and Milton and flowers), my 'Weinberg und Rhythmus: Ivan Illich, Friedrich Nietzsche – und Harry Potter' in Babich (2021b: 283-314).
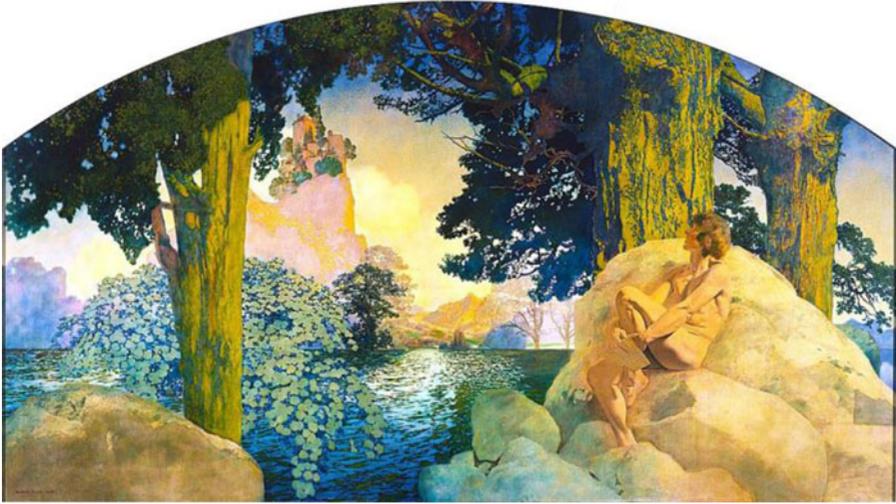
Figure 2. Maxfield Parrish, *Dream Castle in the Sky*, 1908. Public Domain.

Thus are you a prophet and redeemer of all impermanence' (ibid.: 110). Nietzsche's tone echoes Empedocles' lament:

> 'Verily, through a hundred souls I have already passed on my way and through a hundred cradles and birth pangs. Many farewells have I taken already, I know the heartbreaking last hours.' (ibid.)

Utopias, like the Isle of the Blest, have rigid laws. Similarly, Adam and Eve are created – not born – into a consumer's paradise complete with a consumer's catch. And just as the Phaeacians cannot but offend Poseidon, restoring Odysseus in one of their thought-guided transports to Ithaca, they suffer the consequences of their kindness even as their beneficiary rewards their generosity with angry incomprehension, cursing them as after so much time away (he has been gone two decades), Odysseus barely recognizes his home. Adam and Eve may eat from every tree with the exceptions of the tree of knowledge of good and evil and the tree of life, which forbidden fruit is just as automatically desired. The only reason paradise will need a snake is to have someone to blame for the inevitable transgression.

Adam and Eve are unhappy: they were disinclined, think of Goethe's formula as Hadot emphasises, to beg the beauties at their disposal to 'stay'. They wanted more. We hear the same impatient desire at the inception of the second book of Nietzsche's Zarathustra, 'Like a cry and a jubilation I want to travel across wide seas, until I find the blessed isles where my friends dwell: –' (1980, 4: 107) Signifiers of utopian voyage, suitably Lucianic, Nietzsche reflects that in addition to his friends, his enemies, likewise, belong 'to my bliss' (ibid.).

Walter Benjamin, reflecting happiness in a historical context, reminds us that the 'past can be seized only as an image which flashes up at the instant when it can be recognized and is never seen again' (Benjamin 1969: 255). The messianic

promise which, post-Nietzsche, Benjamin describes as 'the subduer of the Antichrist', epitomizes Klee's *Angelus Novus*, the strobe lightning flash of the moment illuminating the storm 'blowing from paradise, that has got caught in his wings with such violence that the angel can no longer close them' (ibid.: 259). For Benjamin, 'this storm is what we call progress' (ibid.) and Benjamin's cousin, Günther Anders, younger by a decade, takes this up in *The Antiquatedness of Humanity* (Anders 1956a). In this way, via Anders, critical theory features elements of utopic thought, just as other political readings connect utopia with Marx together with the pragmatic imperative and tech-promise of 'changing' the world.[8]

Along with the fragrance of the blessed, the 'odor of sanctity' (i.e., the sweetness of death as Ivan Illich and Michel de Certeau remind us) is the anticipation of disappointment. Benjamin's storm blowing from paradise is the worm of unhappiness in what should have been bliss in the garden of Eden but was not for the first created lovers who, given one another, should have had all they needed. Again: they did not. No sooner do we hear of a paradise be it in folkloric French-English: Cockaigne or in German: *Schlaraffenland* or today's restricted ideal of an ecological utopia (the long-promised Green revolution that never came and is now replaced by anxiety over Climate Change), like any manner of politically minded utopias from Plato to Augustine, Campanella and Voltaire, than we find ourselves sharing the spirit of Glaucon and Adeimantus: raising personally minded objections.

Darko Suvin has observed the relation between 'the Greek and Hellenistic "blessed island" stories, the "fabulous voyage" from Antiquity on, the Renaissance and Baroque "utopia" and "planetary novel", the Enlightenment "state (political) novel", the modern "anticipation", anti-utopia, etc.' (Suvin 1972: 372; cf. Suvin 2010). Political connections are key from the start yet before a theorist can finish articulating his/her schematism for a perfect land (or life or 'new world order'), his interlocutors, we, the readers, already guess its defects. Homer writes the objection into Odysseus' mouth with his insistence on home (and L. Frank Baum's Dorothy in his 1910 *Emerald City of Oz* likewise transfigures the ordinary by contrast with the phantasmagoric). Achilles who had raged at the beginning of the Iliad, laments at the end, longing for the life of an any-man, a day labourer. The presentiment of disappointment, badness of fit, links utopic tales with the dystopic. Above I recalled Benjamin's angel and I mentioned the ironic articulations of Swift[9] as Lucian links Swift and Nietzsche (and Goethe). Nor as we have seen, can satire be separated from the dream of utopia (see further, Babich 2011, 2013).

The same disconnect inspires the utopian vision of messianic paradise that is, as Max Brod heard it from Kafka, '*nicht für uns*'.[10] In the same way, a catalogue of negations constitutes the second 1980 volume of Günther Anders' *Die Antiquirtheit des Menschen*, from the 'looks' of things to materialism (think Baudrillard or Bourdieu), listing mass produced products, the human world, the masses, work,

---

[8]Here, emphasizing the influence of the *Bilderverbot* on critical theory, see Benzaquén 1998. Cf. Babich 2017 and 2022.

[9]There are many discussions but for a comprehensive and insightful overview, here to note its title: *Swift as Nemesis* (Boyle 2000) and including a focus on travel literature.

[10]"'So gäbe es außerhalb dieser Erscheinungsform Welt, die wir kennen, Hoffnung?' – Er lächelte: "Hoffnung genug, unendlich viel Hoffnung, – nur nicht für uns'". Cited from: Brod (1922: 58). I thank Tracy Strong for the variant formula: *Nicht für uns, Max: nicht für uns.*

machines, philosophical anthropology, the individual, ideology, conformism, limitations, the private (think the opposition as Arendt would speak of this between the public and the private), death, reality. Etc., etc., all the way to evil and all of it antiquated, *périmée.*

The roster was already present for Anders in his first collapsed utopia (Anders 1956a and b). The problem is the promise/disappointment of nature as 'paradise', as free good, repository of a largesse of and from which one may take what one will, *ad libitum.* This conviction, underwriting Locke's vision, regards 'nature' as 'raw material', as Anders writes, calculated as resource, existent (*Sein*) or else to be cultivated in terms of value (*Wert*). Thus 'a glance at the Milky Way' offers a much-too-much vision of utopia, the '*vielzuviel des Universums*' (Anders 1956a: 184), which can lead in Kant's phrase to a confession of 'the' moral law as much as to Nietzsche's refusal in his *Gay Science* description of a playing machine (§109), a music-box (*Spielwerk*).

Anders varies Schopenhauer's estimation of life as a 'business enterprise' that does not cover its costs, a 'metaphysical scandal' corresponding to the cosmos as spectacular waste. In a footnoted poem, Anders recounts the phantasms of a 'feverish' Columbus. Anders's poem relates the story of an explorer of coasts, Vespucci is not named any more than Herschel is in Anders's annotation-embedded poem, but he gives to such human, all too human explorers the task of recording angels – this is, after all, the project of the television fantasy series, *Star Trek* – asking a question fit for Gödel: who counts the recorders in the list of lists?

Anders' poem has apocalyptic and cosmological, metaphysical, eschatological overtones as he asks, and note the charting reference as this is also a link with More (and Anders can do with such a link as he writes his own novel, *The Molussians* (Anders 1992), complete with their own language, again like More, based on a Greek metric form, which Anders devises (see Babich 2022: 30ff):

> Which cartographer maps the anonymous
>
> Coral reefs, standing at the bottom of the sea,
>
> Veins of gold that have yet to be seen,
>
> Constellations still needing naming – (Anders 1980: 341)

In addition to Star Trek, one reads geography as archive: a catalogue of exotic loci throughout the 19th and 20th centuries. Anders listing cartographic details at the bottom of the sea, *Star Trek* mapping the stars, utopic geography catalogues exotic loci as standing reserve, for future development. As one candidate for Utopia, the 20th century highlights Tibet ('the mysterious') and the not-insignificant role (for Anders and others) of triangulation of maps and radio for the purpose of aerial bombardment in Richards 1992, 'Archive and Utopia', here with reference to James Hilton's *Lost Horizon* re the bombing of Shanghai, thence to Shangri-La. If the locale retains its mythic allure, political conflicts continue to this day via the more domesticated image of the no less politically problematic, Dalai Lama (Bernis 1999).

Like modern Europe, like the maps of all the world, Tibet's maps have been redrawn for political purposes and the cartographer's outline matters for More's *Utopia*. And travel accounts from antiquity give directions such that we can find Homer's Scheria

(said to be Corfu) and even where we are told, as in the case of Pindar, with respect to Hyperborea, that the way cannot be found by land or sea: negation captures imagination.

Nietzsche tells us that we ourselves, as he speaks of his Germans, are Hyperboreans (1980, 6: 169), allied to a race about whom we know everything *and* nothing. If the path is accessible, so Pindar tells us, 'by neither ship nor foot', the focus on the air and the winds, the atmospheric, implies the need to fly and thus Lucian outfits his *Icaromenippus, or the Sky Man*, and has his Menippus fashion one pinion on 'the right' from an eagle, motley as he flew, 'the left wing' from a vulture (Lucian 1915: 285-287). But that, we know, is a lie.

Utopic utility and tech apocalypse

Es beginnet nemlich der Reichtum	For Wealth begins in
Im Meere. Sie,	The sea. And they,
Wie Maler, bringen zusammen	Like painters, bring together
Das Schöne der Erd …	The beautiful things of the earth
	— Hölderlin, *Andenken/Remembrance*

As nowhere, Utopia is cloud-cuckoo-land, clouds being key as Pindar warned Hieron of Syracuse in a darkly lyric mode for failing to value his poet's work. Hieron had commissioned two poems from two different poets and did not, when he won, opt for Pindar's ode as his victory ode, which injury prompted Pindar to expand his original ode for free, adding to the 2nd Pythian the famous Castor song, repeating and intensifying the parallel with Ixion who as a mortal dwelling among the Olympian Gods sought to seduce Hera.

Deities outdoing poets and philosophers in deceptive prowess, Zeus (Figure 3) replaced Hera, the goddess, his spouse, object of Ixion's desire, with a phantom, Νεφελη, such that Ixion embraced a cloud, fruit of which atmospheric congress was a mongrel monster who proceeded, accelerating bastardy, to mate with Magnesian mares, engendering the race of centaurs.

The cautionary element in the Castor song is manifest in political genres of the utopic as 'monstration,' here in Bertrand de Jouvenal's sense:

If you can endow your 'philosophical city' with the semblance of reality, and cause your reader to see it, as if it were actually in operation, this is quite a different achievement from a mere explanation of the principles on which it should rest. This 'causing to see' by means of a feigned description is obviously what More aimed at: It is also the essential feature of the utopian genre. (de Jouvenal 1965: 220)

George Kateb, the Princeton political theorist, invokes utopia in a pragmatic vein via John Stuart Mill, reflecting on utilitarian definitions of the 'good life' post-cold war, conscious of the allure of socialist utopian claims exemplified on the left by Herbert Marcuse's indictment of a 'comfortable, smooth, reasonable, democratic unfreedom' (Marcuse 1964: 19), token of a then 'new' totalitarianism. Problematic for Kateb,

Figure 3. Peter Paul Rubens, *Juno's Deception*, 1620-1624. Print. British Museum.

who draws Schiller to his aid, is *satisfaction*, assuming such a 'good life' can be attained, a mere 'ideal of appetite' (Kateb 1965, 459).[11]

Kateb is one of only few political theorists of his day and continuing to date, apart from Anders – Carl Schmitt, earlier, would be an exception[12] – to write about technology. In the early to mid-1960s, Kateb was fairly sure, as was Anders and Ellul along with Horkheimer and Adorno, just a little earlier, that the culture of the West was on the brink of technologically delivered 'desublimation': everything, instantly, seamlessly in our grasp. For his part, Anders in 1956 had foregrounded the apocalyptic, emphasizing that the exemplar of human finitude is thus become 'Abel not Adam'. After August 6, 1945, the mortal syllogism has a new permutation:

1. All men are mortal.
2. All men are killable.
3. Humanity as a whole is killable. (Anders 1956a, 243)

---

[11]Kateb 1965 here cites Schiller's 24th Letter of *On the Aesthetic Education of Man*. See too Kateb 1963.

[12]Other, more contemporary exceptions include, on the sociological side, the late Stanley Aronowitz in addition to the radically minded Paul Virilio and, more philosophically, Dominique Janicaud and Jean Baudrilliard along with Bruno Latour, and in political theory proper, Gilbert Germaine and Langdon Winner, among not too many others.

Anders reads this claim to different ends and Kateb, who writes about Arendt, does not refer to Anders. For Kateb, in a later reflection on his 1963, *Utopia and its Enemies*, assuming the attainability of 'a world permanently without strife, poverty, constraint, stultifying labor', the question would remain: is this goal desirable? Note that Kateb is not pointing to the troubles compounding paradise but the compatibility of the political 'good life' with the lack of virtue:

> There need be no creativity involved, no esthetic significance; just easy pleasure taken in novelty, gadgetry, silly refinements of useless objects, the flash and roar of progress in transportation and communication; in self-indulgence, satiety, waste, and pretense. Given the presence of educated mind, these delights can be delights and still known for what they are. A utopian society could provide these delights recklessly, and without the motivations of planned obsolescence, max-imization of profit, and the stultification of rebellious or disturbing impulses. Thus, by the standard of human felicity, which is the essential Utopian standard, the life of mind can plausibly (at least) be described as the best life. (Kateb 1965: 470-471)

For Kateb, what's missing in the good life is (or can be) the 'good'.

Hans Jonas, writing post Anders' 1951 *Kafka* and post Ellul's 1954 technological gam-ble and post Heidegger on science and technology,[13] along with the gnostic reflections Jonas had earlier elaborated, reminds us that

> A critique of utopia has become necessary with the seeming possibility of its realization. For the first time in the annals of man, thanks to the powers of tech-nology, the dream appears to be capable of turning into a task, and Marxism has seized on this novel chance to give its political gospel eschatological exaltation and pragmatic credibility at the same time. (Jonas 1981: 435)

Illich, deferring for his own part to Ellul's earlier argument, had already observed the utopic technical promise along with its messianic default. As Illich writes in *Tools of Conviviality*:

> The hypothesis was that machines can replace slaves. The evidence shows that, used for this purpose, machines enslave men. Neither a dictatorial proletariat nor a leisured mass can escape the dominion of constantly expanding industrial tools. (Illich 1973: 23)

The 'good life' in 'utopia', specified as the 'life of human felicity', is what is prob-lematic on Kateb's reading, articulated for Marx, as 'the embodiment of appetitive indulgence' (Kateb 1965: 460) but refused by a number of thinkers including Marcuse and Arendt both of whom share 'a contempt for the consumer's paradise' (ibid.: 465), as Kateb quotes W. H. Auden's *Vespers*, epitomizing an epoch of jaded decadence and

---

[13] See for further references, Babich 2023a.

'some august day of outrage when hellikins cavort through ruined drawing-rooms' (ibid.: 460).

Writing about utopia, similar reservations are common: leisure sounds like laziness and self-satisfaction. The threat of boredom encroaches on the second half of Auden's line, matched with an artless misogyny coupled with what this 'fine political poet', here in Kateb's words, can do with a hyphen and well-placed majuscule: '...and fish-wives intervene in the Chamber'.

If Ellul and Anders were raising questions, if Horkheimer and Adorno were already challenging the ideal of technological utopia (including Odysseus), Nietzsche in the closing decades of his 19th century mocked the technological promise of the universal '*grüne Weide-Glück*' of the herd, featuring 'security, safety, comfort and an easier life for all' (1980, 5: 61), coupled with what Nietzsche calls the 'blessing of work', '*den Segen der Arbeit*' (ibid.: 382), i.e., 'mechanical activity', that is, the 'narcotization-effect' of technology. Alongside pop culture distraction, we need to hear such specifically philosophical voices post Aldous Huxley's *Brave New World*, post George Orwell's *1984*. As if anticipating the last three years of global 'pandemic', extended in climate change, print and cinematic fantasy, including science, fiction continues to paint a dismal future. Thus *Blade Runner* (1982) already anticipates the genesis of its own future-dated sequel, *Blade Runner 2049* (2017). The 'bad future' with its crack in technologically adumbrated promises of utopia is a given, as one critic of popular fiction observed even before the 2011 British sci-fi series, *Broken Mirror*: 'Utopian writing has gone dark' (O'Har 2004: 480).

At issue is less what does utopia mean, how can it be attained, than whether to bother at all? Like digitally-induced impotence, boredom is not the decay of desire but its extinction, Auden's flatly misogynistic, domestic paradise attained:

> Every work-day Eve fares
>
> Forth to the stores her foods to pluck,
>
> While Adam hunts an easy dollar:
>
> Unperspiring at even tide
>
> Both eat their bread in boredom of spirit.
>
>   – Auden, *City without Walls*

Writing utopia, writing about utopia, is typically read as code for writing about something else: socialism perhaps (as in Kateb above) or, eschatologically minded, the after-life and this too is part of political utopic schemes as a *sounds like, seems like*, danger. This is the difference once again between the *ou* and *eu*, to recall the life-and-death-bet Socrates proposes as the last of what he tells his Athenians: none have returned from death with a report confirming or contravening any of the tales told.

As a word, we quoted More's gloss on ambiguity above, utopia localizes *paradise.* Thus it has been argued that Judeo-Christian cults derive from archaic visions of Hesiod's 'golden age' and 'satellite myths of Elysium, Blessed Isles, Fortunate Isles,

enchanted gardens' (Manuel and Manuel 1972: 87).[14] This is significant as references to the mythic are likewise marked as geographic loci. Directionally, as Adolf Schulten emphasizes:

> for almost all peoples where the sun sinks down into the sea, one encounters the idea that in the far west, where the sun is extinguished, lies another, better world: the isles of the blest. (Schulten 1926: 229; cf. Frenschkowski 2016)

The problem with a utopia that cannot be attained and not less, this would be Kateb's point, one that cannot be ensured as 'good', even should we approximate to it, is that efforts to do so might lead, so Anders has argued since 1956, to the production of nothing: annihilation. This is compounded by accidental obliteration. What we know of the past, of Greek and Latin antiquity, noted by Erasmus and More and Milton, is incidental, fortuitous. Quoting Kittler quoting Goethe (on how we come to have many of the Pre-Platonic/Pre-Aristotelian 'fragments' we have):

> Literature, Goethe wrote, is the fragment of fragments; the least of what had happened and of what had been spoken was written down; of what had been written down, only the smallest fraction was preserved. (Kittler 1987: 105)

In this connection, Anders meditates on the prospect of apocalypse, a Nuclear Armageddon. And now that we can speak of Covid Armageddon or Climate Change Armageddon, the point remains the same (see Babich 2023a: 2022). Thus, echoing Anders, Kittler's citation from Goethe's *Wilhelm Meisters Lehrjahre* reminds us that everything (even had it been in fact) is and will 'be' 'as if' it had never been.

I noted above that the Isle of the Blest [Μακάρων νῆσος],[15] ruled by Rhadamanthus, a locus of judgment and law, are characterized as literally ethereal in Lucian's atmospheric roster of roses, narcissi and hyacinths, lilies and violets, myrrh and laurel, soft winds and birdsong, an allusion to the Elysian fields (Figure 4). If I also noted that Lucian's city of gold and emeralds inspired Baum's *Emerald City of Oz*, the phantom detail that the inhabitants are clothed in 'purple spider-webs' inspires the colors of the science fantasy of Jack Vance's *The Dying Earth:*

> they have no bodies but are intangible and fleshless, with only shape and figure. Incorporeal as they are, they nevertheless live and move and talk. In a word, it would appear that their naked souls go about in the semblance of their bodies. Really, if one did not touch them, he could not tell that what he saw was not a body, for they are like upright shadows only not black. Nobody grows old, but stays the same age on coming there. (Lucian 1913: 315).

Violet, ethereal, waited on by winds – cinematically realized in the disembodied servants in Cocteau's 1946 *La Belle et la Bête*, – with wine goblets that grow on trees, such

---

[14]I am inspired, solely on the periphery by the general reading offered in Ní Chuilleanáin (2007) but the connection is a glancing one as Chuilleanáin is concerned with More and his Latin just where reading Lucian (in Greek), the author is not wrong on this, is salutary quite as More already tells us.

[15]See here broadly, Gelinne 1988 and cf. Joly 1956 and Mahn-Lot 1989.

Figure 4. Albert Joseph Moore, *The Loves of the Winds and the Seasons* (1893) Blackburn Museum, Lancashire, UK. Public Domain.

is their life, drinking not only wine at table but drinking above all, as Lucian adds, from two springs: 'Laughter and Enjoyment'. Thus Lucian depicts a phenomenologically telematic vision similar to virtual reality, but physiologically augmented as in Orwell's *1984* or the dangers of nanotech adjuvants that fall from the sky.

On smell and atmosphere and the spirit

> ναυσὶ δ' οὔτε πεζὸς ἰών κεν εὕροις
> ἐς Ὑπερβορέων ἀγῶνα θαυματὰν ὁδόν.
> — Pindar, 10th *Pythian*, 29-30

I have been noting that no sooner has the prospect of utopia been described than one already guesses its deficits: 'nowhere' is characterized by what is not there. Politically minded thought turns, as in Plato, to remedial praxis. More emphasizes

that, beyond 'words' but given 'men and resources and the best laws' (More 2020: 7), the task will be a matter of drafting a contract for a polity such that goodness might be maintained. The remedial project has many representations. One theorist, largely concerned with fantasy utopias like the 'Wellsian utopias of science and socialism' (Kumar 2010: 554) lists additional articulations

> in the tradition of social thought that includes such works as Jean-Jacques Rousseau's *Social Contract* (1762), Nicolas de Condorcet's *Sketch for a Historical Picture of the Progress of the Human Mind* (1793), Robert Owen's *A New View of Society* (1813), and the works of 'utopian socialists'. (ibid.: 556)

Here, again, we recall Kateb's question: would the 'good life', seemingly within our technical reach (Kateb does not note that Ellul in his 1954 *La Technique ou l'enjeu du siècle* elaborates systematically endemic doubts),[16] actually be 'good'?

The project of remediation, designing a state of the art but classically political, technological utopia, corrected or updated for projected deficits (think Glaucon and Adeimantus) may itself be the problem. Perfection by design seems to fail before it begins. Thus well mindful of the technical meaning of the contingent, Ivan Illich refuses to offer utopic prescriptions in *Tools for Convivality*: it 'would not serve my purpose to describe in detail any fictional community of the future. I want to provide guidelines for action, not for fantasy' (Illich 1975: 27; cf. Gómez 2006, Babich 2017). Illich's caution here contra fantasy or the distractions of fiction (he also warns against the scopic *an sich*) is perhaps beginning to make sense beyond a romantic projection of ascetic or priestly proscription, given Herbert A. Simon's 'attention economy', since become the competitive basis for business/marketing theory (Wu 2016). The more time we spend 'online', the more depleted we become: screen-time contracts, along with our acuity, and is lost (Babich 2021a; 2022). Nor, as in a horror story, do we notice what is lost until too late.

Illich, reflecting in his 1998 Bremen lecture, 'The Cultivation of Conspiracy' on the *genius loci* of his youthful sojourns on the islands around the Dalmatian coastline, Illich confesses the contrastive utopic longing for atmosphere that cannot but accompany age and the depredations of memory. Parodic at his own expense, Illich finds himself walking

> through the pastures along the Wümme that are flooded twice a day by the tide from the North Atlantic? I who, as a boy, had felt exiled in Vienna, because all my senses were longingly attached to the South, to the blue Adriatic, to the limestone mountains in the Dalmatia of my early childhood. (2002: 234)

The reference to atmosphere runs throughout his Bremen Peace Prize lecture and Illich recalls his reasons for dissolving the apparently 'utopic' institution he founded,

---

[16]'Whenever men have taken utopian descriptions seriously, the result has been disastrous' (Ellul 1976: 24-25). Cf. here too, influential for Ellul, Friedmann 1946 and on Friedmann, instructively, Vatin 2004. For coincident objections, beyond systematic Anglophone inattention, see Donskis 1996.

his '"thinkery" ('*Denkerei*') in Mexico, … the Centro Intercultural de Documentación or CIDOC':

> …. atmosphere invites the institutionalization that will corrupt it. You never know what will nurture the spirit of *philia*, while you can be certain what will smother it. Spirit emerges by surprise, and it's a miracle when it abides; it is stifled by every attempt to secure it; it's debauched when you try to use it. (ibid.: 236)

Illich here writes in praise of friendship, the same friends Nietzsche longed for, the friends Illich's friends insist Illich had constantly around him. Yet for Illich, the emergence of spirit cannot neither be claimed nor prescribed by law or rule. Once again: it is 'a miracle when it abides'. If Illich refers to Goethe he has no need to be told that the spirit blows 'where it will'.

Illich's reflections on 'atmosphere' are offered '*faute de mieux*':

> In Greek, the word is used for the emanation of a star, or for the constellation that governs a place; alchemists adopted it to speak of the layers around our planet. Maurice Blondel reflects its much later French usage for *bouquet des esprits*, the scent those present contribute to a meeting. I use the word for something frail and often discounted, the air that weaves and wafts and evokes memories, like those attached to the Burgundy long after the bottle has been emptied. (ibid.: 237)

Illich had already remembered his childhood tutor who accompanied his family on holiday, teaching him, chemist by early inclination, how to paint watercolours, 'how to mix different pigments for the contrasting atmospheres of a Mediterranean and an Atlantic shore' (ibid.: 234).

For atmospheric aura, Illich tells us, color will not be enough, at stake is breath and smell. Blocking contact with one another as we have now factively done, keeping our distance, wearing masks for weeks, months at a time, is not only bodily avoidance but a spiritual avoidance. Hence where we typically invoke Benjamin to discuss 'aura', Illich reminds us that to

> sense an aura, you need a nose. The nose, framed by the eyes, runs below the brain. What the nose inhales ends in the guts; every yogi and hesichast knows this…. To savor the feel of a place, you trust your nose; to trust another, you must first smell him. (ibid.: 237)

Illich thus invokes his own Austro-German linguistic sensibilities:

> Some of that sense of mimesis comes out in an old German adage, *Ich kann Dich gut riechen* (I can smell you well), which is still used and understood. But it's something you don't say to just anyone; it's an expression that is permissible only when you feel close, count on trust, and are willing to be hurt. (ibid.)

Here Illich shifts from the sensually indulgent earmark of utopia to the vulnerability of what we are willing to risk and thus to lose for friendship, where possibilities are open-ended, that is, again: 'when you feel close, count on trust, and are willing to be hurt'.

Illich's emphasis on intimacy, trust, as on vulnerability is part of the reason Giorgio Agamben argues we might do well to return to Illich during the current political circumstance that is the global change in rule and power, for the sake of supposed 'security' (Agamben 2021). For Illich, the willingness 'to be hurt' is a prerequisite for friendship as for Illich's vocational attention to those who count as 'the least of our brethren'.

Like Illich, Nietzsche spoke of taste and smell inherent in the word '*sapio*: I taste' (1980, 1: 816), emphasizing the nose as the most sensitive of our sense organs, quite to the level of the nose hairs (akin to cat vibrissae), capable of sensing volcano explosions at a distance (1980, 9: 548). Thus Nietzsche writes in *Twilight of the Idols*:

> This nose for example, of which as yet no philosopher has spoken with esteem and gratitude is by far the most delicate instrument at our disposal: it is able to detect the smallest differentials in movement which even the spectroscope cannot detect. (1980, 6: 76)

The physiological science of Nietzsche's day reflected that even a tiny percentage of rose oil in a volume of air '1/200000 Mgrm' may be detected (Vintschgau 1880: 279), as the perfume industry can confirm (with a corollary, as Vintschgau immediately notes, that most rose oils need contain little 'actual' oil).

Smelling the other is not a thing (Illich underlines the point recalling his own prejudices in a missionary context) we suppose ourselves to want, yet, these days, we are beginning to learn the connection between cognitive faculties and olfactory sensitivity.[17] Thus that we would subject ourselves, as we did and sometimes still do, to the repeated physical invasion of our noses to a degree and on a scale never before encountered, remains difficult to fathom. And that we would have masked ourselves and blocked our breath, likewise.

Towards the end of his Bremen lecture, Illich, a historian, takes his audience back in time:

> The medieval town of central Europe was indeed a profoundly new historical gestalt; the *conjuratio conspirativa* makes European urbanity distinct from urban modes elsewhere. It also implies a peculiar dynamic strain between the atmosphere of *conspiratio* and its legal, contractual constitution. Ideally, the spiritual climate is the source of the city's life that flowers into a hierarchy, like a shell or frame, to protect its order. Insofar as the city is understood to originate in a *conspiratio*, it owes its social existence to the *pax*, the breath, shared equally among all. (Illich 2002: 242)

---

[17]See for a start and for further references: Kostka and Bitzenhofer 2022.

This *conspiratio*, the breath shared together, may be found in Benjamin as hope – along with Bloch and Adorno – the same hope that takes Anders to an attempt that, if predictably unassured, is 'morally impossible to renounce....' (Anders 1980: 428; cf. Babich 2022: 225).

   If utopia tends toward 'totalitarianism', as we learnt from Huxley and as we live its expression in our day, Illich reminds us of a complex '*pax*' that cannot be separated from convivial life: that is: 'the breath, shared equally by all' (Illich 2002: 242). Here, for Illich, everything will turn on what he calls *Umsonstigkeit* – utter swerve, *clinamen*, gratuitous grace.[18]

References

Addington M (2003) Your breath is your worst enemy. In Lightman A, Sarewitz D and Desser C (eds), *Living with the Genie: Essays on Technology and the Quest for Human Mastery*. Washington, DC: Island Press, 85–104.

Agamben G (2021) *Where are We Now? The Epidemic as Politics*, Dani V (trans). London: Eris Press.

Anders G (1956a) *Die Antiquiertheit des Menschen, Bd. I: Über die Seele im Zeitalter der zweiten industriellen Revolution*. Munich: Beck.

Anders G (1956b) The world as phantom and matrix. *Dissent* **3**(1), 14–24.

Anders G (1980) *Die Antiquiertheit des Menschen, Bd. II: Über die Zerstörung des Lebens im Zeitalter der dritten industriellen Revolution*. Munich: Beck.

Anders G (1992) *Die molussische Katakombe*. Munich: Beck.

Anderson G (1980) Arrian's "anabasis alexandri" and Lucian's "historia". *Historia: Zeitschrift für Alte Geschichte* **29**(1), 119–124.

Babich B (2011) Nietzsche's Zarathustra and parodic style: On Lucian's *Hyperanthropos* and Nietzsche's *Übermensch*. *Diogenes* **58**(4), 58–74.

Babich B (2013) Nietzsche's Zarathustra, Nietzsche's Empedocles: The time of kings. In Hutter H, and Friedland E (eds), *Nietzsche's Therapeutic Teaching. For Individuals and Culture*. London: Routledge, 157–174.

Babich B (2017) Tools for subversion: Illich and Žižek on changing the world. In Mazzini S and Glyn-Williams O (eds), *Making Communism Hermeneutical*. Frankfurt: Springer, 95–111.

Babich B (2021a) On necropolitics and techno-scotosis. *Philosophy Today* **65**(2), 305–324.

Babich B (2021b) *Nietzsches Plastik: Ästhetische Phänomenologie im Spiegel des Lebens. Vorträge und Aufsätze*. Oxford/Berlin: Peter Lang.

Babich B (2022) *Günther Anders' Philosophy of Technology: From Phenomenology to Critical Theory*. London: Bloomsbury.

Babich B (2023a) Gnosticism, political theory and apocalypse: Jacob Taubes and Günther Anders, Tracy Strong and Carl Schmitt. *Philosophy & Social Cricicism*. doi:10.1177/01914537231203551

Babich B (2023b) Breath: Technology and built environments. https://www.academia.edu/110229945/Breath_Technology_and_Built_Environments.

Bateman C (2011) *Imaginary Games*. Winchester: Zero Books.

---

[18]I am grateful to Tracy Strong for his engagement with the original draft for this essay, especially for his discussion of Kateb and Auden but also More and Marcuse.

Beil B, Freyermuth GS and Schmidt HC (eds) (2019) *Playing Utopia: Futures in Digital Games.* Bielefeld: Transkript.

Benjamin W (1969) Theses on the philosophy of history. In Arendt H (ed), *Illuminations.* New York, NY: Schocken Books, 257–258.

Benzaquén AS (1998) Thought and Utopia in the writings of Adorno, Horkheimer, and Benjamin. *Utopian Studies* **9**(2), 149–161.

Bernis U (1999) Research on Shugden controversy. Condemned to silence: A Tibetan identity crisis (1996-1999). https://www.dorjeshugden.com/all-articles/the-controversy/condemned-to-silence-part-1/

Bogost I (2011) *How to Do Things with Videogames.* Minneapolis, MN: University of Minnesota Press.

Boyle F (2000) *Swift as Nemesis: Modernity and its Satirist.* Stanford, CA: Stanford UP.

Branham RB (1989) *Unruly Eloquence: Lucian and the Comedy of Traditions.* Cambridge, MA: Harvard UP.

Bridgman TP (2002) Celts and hyperboreans: Crossing mythical boundaries. *Proceedings of the Harvard Celtic Colloquium* **22**, 39–55.

Brod M (1922) Der Dichter Franz Kafka von Max Brod. In Krojanker G (ed), *Juden in der Deutschen Literatur. Essays über zeitgenössische Schriftsteller.* Berlin: Welt-Verlag, 55–62.

Carr N (2016) *Utopia Is Creepy: And Other Provocations.* New York, NY: Norton.

Church AJ (1880) *A Traveller's True Tale, After the Greek of Lucian of Samosata.* New York, NY: Scribner and Welford.

Corbusier L (1930) *Précisions sur un état présent de l'architecture et de l'urbanisme.* Paris: Crès.

de Jouvenal B (1965) Utopia for practical purposes. In Manuel FE (ed), *Utopias and Utopian Thought.* Boston: Beacon Press, 219–238.

Didi-Huberman G (2019) *Ninfa fluida* (a *post-scriptum*). In Debenedetti A and Elam C (eds), *Botticelli Past and Present.* London: UCL Press, 237–265.

Donskis L (1996) The end of Utopia. *Soundings: An Interdisciplinary Journal* **79**(1/2), 197–219.

Ebner M, *et al.* (2001) *Lukian: Die Lügenfreunde oder Der Ungläubige.* Darmstadt: Wissenschaftliche Buchgesellschaft.

Ellul J (1976) Search for an image. In Bundy R (ed), *Images of the Future.* Buffalo, NY: Prometheus Books, 24–25.

Frenschkowski M (2016) *Fortunatae Insulae*: Die Identifikation mythischer Inseln mit realen geographischen Gegebenheiten in der griechischen und römischen Antike. In Jaspert N *et al.* (ed), *Konstruktionen mediterraner Insularitäten.* Amsterdam: Brill, 43–73.

Friedmann G (1956) *Problèmes humains du machinisme industriel.* Paris: Gallimard.

Gagné R (2021) *Cosmography and the Idea of Hyperborea in Ancient Greece: A Philology of Worlds.* Cambridge: Cambridge UP.

Gelinne M (1988) Les Champs-Elysées et les îles des Bienheureux chez Homère, Hésiode et Pindare. *Les Études Classiques* **56**(4), 225–240.

Georgiadou A and Larmour DHJ (1994) Lucian and historiography: "De Historia Conscribenda" and "Verae Historiae". *ANRW* **II.34.2**, 1448–1509.

Gómez MS (2006) Sociedad, Utopía y Educación en Ivan Illich. *Psicologia USP* **17**(3), 183–201.

Hadot P (1992) *La Citadelle intérieure. Introduction aux Pensées de Marc Aurèle.* Paris: Fayard.

Hadot P (2008) *N'oublie pas de vivre. Goethe et la tradition des exercices spirituels*. Paris: Albin Michel.

Heidegger M (1975) The Anaximander fragment. In Krell D, and Capuzzi F (trans), *Early Greek Thinking*. New York, NY: Harper & Row, 13–58.

Howard RE (1950) *Conan the Conqueror*. New York, NY: Gnome Press.

Hutchinson S (1987) Mapping Utopias. *Modern Philology* **85**(2), 170–185.

Illich I (1973) *Tools for Conviviality*. London: Calder and Boyars.

Illich I (1985) H_2O *and the Waters of Forgetfulness. Reflections on the Historicity of 'Stuff'*. Dallas, TX: Dallas Institute of Humanities and Culture.

Illich I (2002) The cultivation of conspiracy. In Hoinacki L and Mitcham C (eds), *The Challenges of Ivan Illich: A Collective Reflection*. Albany: SUNY Press, 233–242.

Joly R (1956) Vie idéale et apothéose philosophique. *L'Antiquité Classique* **25**(1), 73–84.

Jonas H (1981) Reflections on technology, progress, and Utopia. *Social Research* **48**(3), 411–455.

Kateb G (1963) *Utopia and Its Enemies*. New York, NY: Free Press of Glencoe.

Kateb G (1965) Utopia and the good life. *Daedalus* **94**(2), 454–473.

Kirkland NB (2022) *Herodotus and Imperial Greek Literature: Criticism, Imitation, Reception*. New York, NY: Oxford UP.

Kissinger H (2015) *World Order: Reflections on the Character of Nations and the Course of History*. London: Penguin.

Kittler F, D von Mücke and PL Similon (1987) Gramophone, film, typewriter. *October* **41**, 101–118.

Kłosiński M (2018) Games and Utopia. *Acta Ludologica* **1**(1), 4–14.

Kolb M (2014) Goethe's citrus, Nietzsche's figs, and Benn's olive: Poetic reverie, erotic fantasy, and botanic agency. *Monatshefte* **106**(2), 171–199.

Kumar K (2010) The ends of Utopia. *New Literary History* **41**(3), 549–569.

Lucian (1913) A true story. In Harmon AM (trans), *Lucian, v. I*. Cambridge, MA: Harvard UP, 247–358.

Lucian (1915) The downward journey or The Tyrant. In Harmon AM (trans), *Lucian, v. II*. Cambridge, MA: Harvard UP, 1–58.

Lucian (1915) Icaromenippus or the sky man. In Harmon AM (trans), *Lucian, v. II*. Cambridge, MA: Harvard UP, 267–324.

Mahn-Lot M (1989) Île des Bienheureux et Paradis terrestre. *Revue Historique* **281**(1), 47–50.

Manuel FE and Manuel FP (1972) Sketch for a natural history of paradise. *Daedalus* **101**(1), 83–128.

Marcuse H (1964) *One-Dimensional Man*. Boston, MA: Beacon.

McGonigal J (2011) *Reality is Broken: Why Games Make Us Better and How They Can Change the World*. New York, NY: Penguin Press.

Milton J (1667) *Paradise Lost: A Poem Written in Ten Books*. London: Samuel Simmons.

More T (1965) Utopia. In Surtz E and Hexter JH (eds), *The Complete Works of St. Thomas More*, Vol. 4. New Haven, CT: Yale UP.

More T (2020) *Utopia & Selected Epigrams*, Malsbary G (trans). Dallas: University of Dallas Press.

Ní Chuilleanáin E (2007) Motives of translation: More, Erasmus and Lucian. *Hermathena* **183**, 49–62.

Nietzsche F (1980) *Sämtliche Werke*, Colli G and Montinari M (eds). Berlin: Walter de Gruyter.

O'Har G (2004) Technology and its discontent. *Technology and Culture* **45**(2), 479–485.

Paquot T (2005) City and nature, a missed opportunity? *Diogenes* **52**(3), 65–74.

Pindar (1910) *Hölderlins Pindar-Übertragungen*. Berlin: Blätter für die Kunst.

Pindar (1997) *Olympian Odes. Pythian Odes*, Race WH (trans). Cambridge, MA: Harvard UP.

Richards T (1992) Archive and Utopia. *Representations* **37**, 104–135.

Rielly EJ (1992) Irony in gulliver's travels and Utopia. *Utopian Studies* **3**(1), 70–83.

Rohde E (1894) *Psyche*. Tübingen: Mohr.

Roth M (2017) *Thought-Provoking Play: Political Philosophies in Science Fictional Videogame Spaces from Japan*. Pittsburgh, PA: Carnegie Mellon University, ETC Press.

Schoeck RJ (1978) The ironic and the prophetic: Towards reading More's "Utopia" as a multidisciplinary work. *Albion: A Quarterly Journal Concerned with British Studies* **10**, 124–134.

Schulten A (1926) Die Inseln der Seligen. *Geographische Zeitschrift* **32**(5), 229–247.

Shapiro G (1991) *Alcyone: Nietzsche on Gifts, Noise, and Women*. Albany, NY: SUNY Press.

Sobin H (1996) From *l'Air Exact* to *l'Aérateur*: Ventilation and its evolution in the architectural work of Le Corbusier. In Kinnard J and Schwartz K (eds), *Proceedings of the 84th ACSA Annual Meeting*, 220–227

Suvin D (1972) On the poetics of the science fiction genre. *College English* **34**(13), 372–382.

Suvin D (2010) *Defined by a Hollow: Essays on Utopia, Science Fiction and Political Epistemology*. New York, NY: Peter Lang.

Sylvester RS (1968) "*Si Hythlodaeo Credimus*": Vision and revision in Thomas More's "Utopia". *Soundings* **52**(3), 272–289.

Vatin F (2004) Machinisme, marxisme, humanisme: Georges Friedmann avant et après-guerre. *Sociologie du travail* **46**(2), 205–223.

von Goethe JW (1827) *Goethe's Werke, Vollständige Ausgabe letzter Hand, Erster Band*. Stuttgart & Tübingen: J.G.Cotta'schen.

von Vintschgau M (1880) Physiologie des Geschmackssinns und des Geruchsinns. In Herman L (ed), *Handbuch der Physiologie*, Vol. 3. Leipzig: F.C.W. Vogel, 145–288.

Wagner R (2015) Video games and religion. In *Oxford Handbook Topics in Religion*.

Welcker F (1833) Die homerischen Phäaken und die Insel der Seligen. *Rheinisches Museum für Philologie* **1**, 219–283.

Wu T (2016) *The Attention Merchants: The Epic Scramble to Get Inside Our Heads*. New York, NY: Knopf.