



Utopia, Migration, Ecotone

Edited by / Édité par
Justine FEYEREISEN

In collaboration with / Avec la collaboration de
Sabrina PARENT



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Utopia, Migration, Ecotone

Collection « Horizons anglophones »

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Cette collection, dirigée par des membres d'EMMA (équipe « Études montpelliéraines du monde anglophone »), a pour ambition de réunir des contributions de spécialistes du monde entier et de favoriser le dialogue dans ces domaines de recherche.

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Série *PoCoPages*

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Série PoCoPages

General Editor/Responsable de la série : Judith Misrahi-Barak

Quelques pages ayant été tournées, *Les Carnets du Cerpac* sont devenus *PoCoPages*, édité par Judith Misrahi-Barak. Le terme *Poco* fera peut-être penser à un groupe de rock country américain, ou à divers rituels de possession associés à l'Afrique et à la Caraïbe. C'est pourtant à l'abréviation de postcolonial que référence est faite ici. Le terme, dans sa diversité, reflètera l'intérêt de *PoCoPages* pour les cultures et les littératures postcoloniales, diasporiques, trempées de métissage et de frontières traversées.

After turning a few pages, Les Carnets du Cerpac has become PoCoPages, edited by Judith Misrahi-Barak. Though the term Poco may stir up in the reader's mind images of some American country rock band, or again various possession rituals associated with Africa or the Caribbean, the reference here however is to the abbreviation of postcolonial. The term in its diversity is meant to reflect the interest of PoCoPages for postcolonial, diasporic cultures and literatures, steeped in métissage and crossed borders.

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In memoriam Jean-Pol Madou

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ON KOINOTOPIA: RECONSTRUCTING UTOPIA
IN THE AGE OF NEO-LIBERALISM, POLITICAL
ECOLOGY, AND INTERSECTIONALITY

Thomas TELIOS

As Gilles Deleuze and Felix Guattari remark in their *What is Philosophy?*: 'it is with utopia that philosophy becomes political and takes the criticism of its own time to its highest point.'¹ Without using this specific terminology, utopia consist for Deleuze and Guattari of three distinctive yet interrelated axes. The first is a *temporal* axis. Utopia '*is what links philosophy with its own epoch*' (1994: 99–100, my emphasis),² thereby serving as a negative—as Deleuze/Guattari call it paying tribute to the Frankfurt School—diagnostic tool for current pathologies, injustices, and contradictions. The second is a *spatial* axis. Utopia '*stands for absolute deterritorialization*' (1994: 100) since it envisions and sets in motion, in the here and now, a different way of organizing being that cuts across existing forms of life. Finally, the third is a *normative* axis. Utopia serves as a normative benchmark that provides us with evaluative mechanisms for assessing whether utopian goals have been achieved. What is at stake is a pluralistic understanding of utopia that does justice to the 'different types of utopia' (1994: 100), as Deleuze and Guattari put it.

The temporal and the spatial axes have always been entwined in the fabric of utopianism.³ It was, however, the failures of the norma-

1. Gilles DELEUZE and Felix GUATTARI, *What is Philosophy?* New York: Columbia University Press, 1994: 99.

2. Unless indicated otherwise, all emphases reflect the original text.

3. Recall Samuel Butler's *Erewhon* (1872), where the title is an anagram both of the spatial 'no-where' and the temporal now-here'.

tive axis that (as will be outlined in part 3) have always haunted and ultimately discredited utopian projects. This is the problem that the concept of *koinotopia*, which I will develop throughout this paper, is being called on to rectify. Namely, I aim to recalibrate the components of inclusivity, collectivity, and performativity as the normative core of the *koinotopian* project so that one-dimensional, exclusive, and therefore both authoritarian and totalitarian understandings of utopia can be avoided. From the Greek *κοινός* (common), the concept of *koinotopia* designates a *plastic* and *magmatic* mode of conflictual and processual deliberation. In this deliberation, the different utopian projections of each of the participating groups and identities both form and allow themselves to be formed by each other (*plasticity*).⁴ This thus creates a *collective being-in-common*⁵ that, due to the social-ontological structuration of the subject and the Other through each other, is aware of the irreducible inseparability and dependence of the subject and the Other from each other (*magma*).⁶

In what follows, I begin part 2 by arguing that revisiting the concept of utopia arises from a political necessity as well as a theoretical lacuna. The political necessity for reconceptualizing utopia draws from the diagnosis that the democratic pathologies and backlashes that we are currently experiencing are the result of the abandonment and unwillingness to conceptualize a 'better' radical future. Without a future to which we can, and are willing to, aspire towards, our democratic present will only further recoil to its, allegedly, overcome undemocratic past rendering thus—albeit counterintuitively—the re-utopianization of politics to a matter of *Realpolitik*. The theoretical lacuna that necessitates a reconceptualization of utopia is derived from the rise and establishment of decoloniality, political ecology and

4. Cf. Catherine MALABOU, *The Future of Hegel. Plasticity, Temporality and Dialectic*. London: Routledge, 2005.

5. Cf. Jean-Luc NANCY, *Being Singular Plural*. Stanford: Stanford University Press, 2000.

6. On the concept of magma, cf. Cornelius CASTORIADIS, 'The Logic of magmas and the Question of Autonomy'. *Philosophy & Social Criticism* 20.1/2 (1994): 123–154. On the concept of the magmatic, i. e., collective agency, cf. Thomas TELIOS, 'Resisting the Creativity Narrative. Towards Magmatic Agency', *Symposium. Canadian Journal for Continental Philosophy* 23.1 (2019): 31–55. Given that Miguel Abensour was intellectually schooled in the group *Socialisme ou Barbarie* which was led by Castoriadis (and Claude Lefort) it does not surprise that—leaning on Emmanuel Lévinas and Pierre Leroux—he underlines the importance of alterity and association in order to 'democratize utopia' and "'utopianize" democracy'; cf. Miguel ABENSOUR, 'Persistent Utopia'. *Constellations* 15.3 (2008): 406–421; 417.

intersectionality. Both the demands towards a holistic, inclusive, and radical-democratic reorganization of the future called for in these academic disciplines as well as the political awareness and activism that generated them and that these disciplines helped consolidate had severe repercussions on the conventional utopian thinking.

As I argue in part 3, in order for utopian thinking to rise to these challenges it requires, *first*, the fundamental transformation of the utopian project from a *narrative* to a *performative method*. As a narrative, utopia illustrates and depicts different and full-fledged political and social forms of life, both political and social, that are desirable to the extent that they juxtapose a 'better' form of life with the one that we currently have. On the contrary, utopia as a method designates the *way* (gr. μέθοδος; μετά-ὁδός: the path) to achieve such a 'better' form of life while making the outcome of this heuristic process dependent on the processual operations and normative presuppositions that are developed and critically self-reflected on throughout the process.⁷

To do so, however, utopian thinking requires, *second*, to revisit the role of the Other within the process of the subject's structuration as well as regarding the subject's imagination of its/the future. As will be seen in part 4, following Bloch, the Other is disclosed as a constitutive factor regarding both the subject's structuration as well as the subject's imagination of its/the future. Indeed, it is the Other's partaking in the subject's production that necessitates the transformation of utopia *from* narrative *to* method; and it is the Other's participation in the subject's production that prevents utopia from being reduced to a mere solipsistic and one-dimensional subjective projection and transforms it—as will be analysed in detail under part 5—to an inclusive, collective, and performative *koinotopia*.⁸

7. I borrow the term 'performativity' here in the way that Erika Fischer-Lichte uses it to connote a contingent, open, and experimental form of practice that in the moment of its execution generates its own self-awareness; cf. Erika FISCHER-LICHTE, *Performativität. Eine Einführung*. Bielefeld: Transcript, 2012: 75–135. Note that also Fischer-Lichte sees in performativity a means towards a 'reenchantment of the world'; cf. Erika FISCHER-LICHTE, *The Transformative Power of Performance. A New Aesthetics*. London & New York: Routledge, 2008: 181–207.

8. By underlying the constitutivity of the Other for the utopian thinking, the *koinotopian* project furthers what Jacques Derrida insists upon when underlying the necessity 'of the reference to the other, and thus of radical alterity and heterogeneity, of difference [...] in the presence of the present that it dis-joins *a priori* in order to make it possible' (Jacques DERRIDA, *Specters of Marx. The State of the Debt, the Work of Mourning and the New International*. London: Routledge, 2006: 94). To a certain extent, the components of *koinotopia* that will be discussed later (under 5) specifies the anti-essentialist

The soft reading of the subject's dependence on the Other would be that the subject needs to take this into account only in order to set in motion the processes leading to a 'better' future. Moreover, this future is therefore 'better' because the Other has been incorporated in this future's designation and materialization in an inclusive, collective, and performative manner. The strong reading of the subject's dependence on the Other would be that the subject cannot think of any other future apart from a future where the Other has been incorporated in an inclusive, collective, and performative manner. Whereas in the soft reading, *koinotopia* remains a normative devise, in the strong reading *koinotopia* becomes a register that combines praxeological normativity with social-ontological necessity. Regardless of the answer to this question, the political fundament that *koinotopia* as a method leading to a 'togetherness of diversity',⁹ as Theodor W. Adorno qualifies utopia in his *Negative Dialectics*, ultimately upends is that our shared and common world must be transformed from a utopian place of solipsistic narratology to a *koinotopian* method that seeks to open up and create a space that is common (*koinos*) to us all and excludes no one. Thus, the lines of demarcation no longer run between 'us' and those who are different to us. On the contrary, they run between those who seek the exclusion of some and those that base their present and construct their future in recognition of the mutual and reciprocal constitutivity of everyone.

Grasping the Momentum

The concept of utopia is currently experiencing an unprecedented revival, cutting through all levels of academia, bringing together different academic disciplines, and venturing beyond established academic landscapes. The reasons for this are both political-diagnostical as well as academic:

First, the neoliberal self-proclamation of the end of history and the Left's apathetic subordination to it at the beginning of the 1990s led to the abandonment of all further political, social, economic, and

program of 'messianism without content, of the messianic without messianism' (82) and the *koinotopian* practices should be seen as an actualization of the 'ten-word telegram' (100–105) of Derrida's *New International*.

9. Theodor W. ADORNO, *Negative Dialectics*. London & New York: Routledge, 1973: 150.

cultural demands related to the 'collective self-determination'¹⁰ of the subject. This did not just precipitate the dismantling of the social welfare state. It also led to the delegitimization of core concerns that were considered common sensical and had been achieved after relentless struggles to go without a fight. Benumbed from this disillusionment, the Left forfeited its vanguard thinking and began to recoil in the face of a populist, neo-conservative, neo-fascist, and barbaric Right that seized the chance to theorize and govern unopposed. Thus, the world fell prey to what may be the only Comtean law that has withstood the test of time, namely the entropic tendencies of a society that cannot avoid regressing if it fails to envision its own future.¹¹ From this perspective, and in times of political backlash, nothing serves as a better bulwark against the corrosion of rights and achievements than the resurgence of utopian thought which forces us to rethink and compel the future. As Ernesto Laclau and Chantal Mouffe assert: 'Without "utopia", without the possibility of negating an order beyond the point that we are able to threaten it, there is no possibility at all of the constitution of a radical imaginary'.¹²

Second, the rise of the fields of decolonial studies, posthumanism, and political ecology reshuffled drastically the political horizon concerning not only what constitutes a legitimate political objective, but

10. Martin SAAR, 'What is Social Philosophy? Or: Order, Practice, Subject'. *Proceedings of the Aristotelian Society* 118. 2 (2018): 207–223; 217.

11. August Comte calls such entropic tendencies 'retrogradation' and attributes them to the disdainfulness towards utopias that characterizes what he terms 'stationary doctrine'. This is, namely a type of conservative thinking that seeks to uphold the status quo and avoids engaging in or furthering the political-theoretical struggle of its era; cf. August COMTE, *The Positive Philosophy of Auguste Comte*. London: Chapman, 1853: 25–28.

12. Ernesto LACLAU and Chantal MOUFFE, *Hegemony and Socialist Strategy. Towards a Radical Democratic Politics*. London: Verso, 1985; 190. As Laclau/Mouffe add at the end of the quoted passage, utopia is the condition for a radical imaginary 'whether democratic or of any other type'. The recent rise of populist movements is to be attributed to the successful propagation of such an account of utopia that serves the political scopes 'of any other type' and Zygmunt Bauman describes as 'retrotopia'. With the neologism 'retrotopia', Bauman connotes a reactionary and restorative type of utopia that aims at the 'rehabilitation of the tribal model of community, return to the concept of a primordial/pristine self predetermined by non-cultural and culture-immune factors, and all in all retreat from the presently held (prevalent in both social science and popular opinions) view of the essential, presumably non-negotiable and *sine qua non* features of the "civilized order"'. Zygmunt BAUMAN, *Retrotopia*. Cambridge: Polity, 2017; 6. On the contrary, the project of *koinotopia* serves to strengthen the constitution of a democratic radical imaginary.

also the political actors that may come into question. Western ideals and heuristic tools such as freedom or the dichotomy between culture and nature respectively were disproven. Furthermore, traditional political formations such as party and political collectives based on a shared identity, goal, ideal or the pursuit of a common interest were revealed to be just as authoritarian as the forms they once sought to overthrow. Additionally, the human was dethroned as the only source of action and supplemented by networks of agents—human and non-human, organic and inorganic, embodied and AI. These examples of tectonic shifts put an unprecedented pressure on dominant utopian models and imaginaries, not only regarding what a different, ‘better’, world ought to look like, but also in regard to the agents and vectors of historical change. The concept of the ecotone is particularly indicative of the new and holistic approach to political reality that decolonial studies, posthumanism, and political ecology bring along. It demonstrates the extent to which these radically ‘multipolar’ and ‘pluriversal’¹³ theoretical edifices condition utopian thinking, necessitating thereby a ‘re-enchanting’,¹⁴ as Silvia Federici puts it, or *re-utopianization*, as I would like to call it, of the Political. An ecotone is a dynamic concept that, according to Thomas Lacroix and Judith Misrahi-Barak, is ‘initially defined to designate an ecological transition zone’.¹⁵ As ‘a contact zone between two ecosystems, sea and land, plain and mountain, forest and savanna, etc.’, the ecotone is ‘a space of interpenetration, reciprocal adaptation, exchange, production of hybrid species, competition, disruption and relegation’. The ecotone is not limited to the sphere of nature alone, however. Building on Florence Krall’s concept of ‘cultural ecotone(s)’, Lacroix and Misrahi-Barak introduce the concept of the ‘migratory ecotone’, a concept that does not merely belong, as the word first suggests, to migrational studies. Rather, it is supposed to designate a synthetic functionality that any—critical, as

13. Walter D. MIGNOLO, ‘Foreword. On Pluriversality and Multipolarity’, in *Constructing the Pluriverse: The Geopolitics of Knowledge*, Bernd REITER, ed. Durham, NC: Duke University Press, 2018: ix-xvi; Arturo ESCOBAR, *Pluriversal Politics: The Real and the Possible*. Durham, N.C.: Duke University Press, 2020; Arturo ESCOBAR, *Designs for the Pluriverse. Radical Interdependence, Autonomy, and the Making of Worlds*. Durham, NC: Duke University Press, 2018.

14. Silvia FEDERICI, *Re-enchanting the World. Feminism and the Politics of the Commons*. Oakland: Kairos, 2019.

15. Thomas LACROIX and Judith MISRAHI-BARAK, ‘The Interstitial Ecotones of Migration: Working Towards a Transdisciplinary Approach’ (2021): 1–14; 1. halshs-03471335 (accessed on 6/04/2023).

I would like to add—concept ought to be able to perform. This critical functionality pertains to the following three operationalizations, or *angles*, as Lacroix and Misrahi-Barak put it. First, a *geographical* angle, where the ecotone acts as both the locus of a circumscribed history and the knot where the local and the distant meet and converge. Second, a *sociological* angle, where the ecotone becomes the point of condensation where new forms and identities are being formed and forged; and finally. Third a *political* angle, where the ecotones serve as vectors of interventionist organization and empowerment by imposing themselves on existing structures and by reconfiguring the dispersion of agency. As Lacroix and Misrahi-Barak summarize, the ecotone is supposed to provide a space where “‘the plural humanity”, the humanness, of the person [...] is *re-instated*, even as they have lost their national allegiance.’

Third, the appearance, refinement, and subsequent establishment of intersectionality and intersectional thinking, both as a theoretical toolkit and a political project, provided the long sought-after intermediate ground between idealist monism and poststructuralist devoidness. As a theoretical project, intersectionality foregrounds ‘a richer and more complex ontology than approaches that attempt to reduce people to one category at a time.’¹⁶ The intersectional subject is comprised of ‘multiple and shifting identities’¹⁷ that go back to different forms of oppression, discrimination, exploitation, exclusion, and unequal power distribution. These different modes of subjectivity production lead ‘to the constitution of differences as well as their historical interconnectedness’¹⁸ producing ‘experiences of both privilege and marginalization’.¹⁹ With such an understanding of subjectivity as a springboard, intersectionality, as a political project, ‘describe[s] and combat[s] overlapping systems of oppression’.²⁰ The latter has

16. Ann PHOENIX and Pamela PATTYNAMA. ‘Intersectionality’. *European Journal of Women’s Studies* 13.3 (2008): 187–192; 187.

17. Kathy DAVIS, ‘Intersectionality as Buzzword: A Sociology of Science Perspective on What Makes a Feminist Theory Successful’. *Feminist Theory* 9.1 (2008): 67–85; 71.

18. Gudrun-Axeli KNAPP, ‘Fragile Foundations, Strong Traditions, Situated Questioning: Critical Theory in German-Speaking Feminism’. In *Adorno, Culture and Feminism*, Maggie O’NEILL, ed. London: Sage, 1999: 119–140; 130.

19. Wendy G. SMOOTH, ‘Intersectionality: From Theoretical Framework to Policy Intervention’. In *Situating Intersectionality: Politics, Policy, and Power*. Angelia R. WILSON, ed. New York: Palgrave, 2013: 11–41; 11.

20. Antonio DURAN and Susan R. JONES, ‘Intersectionality’. In *Encyclopedia of Critical Whiteness Studies in Education*, Zachary A. CASEY, ed. Leiden: Brill, 2020: 310–320; 310.

far-reaching historical-philosophical implications. As Wendy Smooth writes, '*social identity categories and the power systems that give them meaning shift across time and geographical location*' (Smooth 2013: 12), making us aware of the fact that different temporalities and spatialities are at play. Forms of oppression, discrimination, exploitation, exclusion and unequal power distribution, such as 'capitalism', are not unilateral; there are various 'capitalisms' dispersed across the globe, and they appear in different forms when combined with equally varied and dispersed forms of patriarchy, sexism, racism, colonialism etc. Similarly, progress is not to be regarded as unilinear, but as relative, relational and synthetic. *Relative*, because it takes different forms depending on the socio-political context. *Relational*, because (social and political) rights that are considered established or even outdated in a certain cultural context are still regarded as desirable from another cultural perspective. *Synthetic*, because the emergence of new rights of self- or co-determination in some forms of life go hand in hand with the simultaneous decline of already won rights in others forms of life, hence requiring a synthetic judgement over a concrete period of time.²¹

In this light, the present often seems to fall behind the past and a universal and conclusive evaluation of a historical period is rendered impossible if judged from alternating standpoints. Seen this way, the intersectional subject does not have to be either a sovereign, a solipsist, or an integral entity capable of thetic self-expression and self-realization, nor does the subject have to be a mere product of societal structures bereft of imagination. Rather, the intersectional subject has been socially constructed as a collective entity at the intersection of more than one simultaneously acting mode of subjectivity production. As such, it not only can, but *needs* to both *act* and *imagine* in a constellational, collective, and inclusive way that addresses its multiple modes of subjectivity production. Intersectionality renders the subject able to oscillate between the idealist totalitarian utopianism of a subject that projects itself into the future and imposes its needs upon the Other(s), and the poststructuralist utopian defeatism of a subject that was deprived of a future other than the one that would inevitably eventuate. However, intersectionality theorists never really sounded out the utopian potentiality of the type of sub-

21. Cf. Amy ALLEN, *The End of Progress: Decolonizing the Normative Foundations of Critical Theory*. New York: Columbia University Press, 2016.

jectivity they had carved out.²² In contrast to queer theory—which emerged roughly in the same period but quickly became aware of its utopian potential, claiming utopian thinking for itself by, correctly, detecting in the de-essentialization and fluidification of utopia the ‘true’ understanding of utopianism²³—intersectionality remains largely at odds with its own utopian potentiality.

From Image to Method

The inherent drawbacks of utopian narratology that the methodologization of utopia is called upon to remedy are well known and can be found along the following three axes:

22. Charles Masquelier’s ‘Pluriversal Intersectionality, Critique and Utopia’ (*The Sociological Review* 70.3 [2022]: 616–631) is a recent, positive, exception to this rule. He too turns to Ruth Levitas’ concept of utopia as a method and understands utopia not as a blueprint, but as an invitation (i) ‘to assess any possible future based on the principle of relationality, that is, by ensuring that the proposed institutional forms do not lead to the emancipation of one group at the expense of another’; (ii) ‘to affirm the possibility and cultivate the desire for envisioning alternative economic and political institutions that can speak to the demands of highly diverse struggles’; and, finally, (iii) to ‘cultivate the desire for forging coalitions and initiating a dialogue on a collective political project with the potential to affirm our *inter-existence*.’ (627; my emphasis). Further, Masquelier underlines also the subject’s dependence on the/its Other when arguing that ‘emancipation is not [...] achieved by identifying with other oppressed groups [...] but because I recognise that my emancipation from structures of oppression is co-constituted by, and co-constitutive of, other groups’ emancipation’ rendering thus ‘emancipation as something achieved not in spite of other groups, but through them.’ (621) However, Masquelier endorses, as he himself admits, a ‘libertarian strand of socialist thought’ (624) which forces him to set—consequently and expectedly—a high value on concepts such as self-management and (intentional/sovereign) mutuality and reciprocity. In contrast, the concept of *koinotopia* that I propose, and the reason that I go back to Ernst Bloch, does not instrumentalize collective action and collective practices as a means to a ‘better’ future, as Masquelier does. Rather, thinking of the future in a *koinotopian*, i.e., inclusive, collective, and performative, way is the only way in which the subject can think of the future since the subject is nothing but the product of more than one mode of subjectivity production that have been mediated by the Other and the reason for which the Other keeps acting *through* and *as* the subject.

23. Cf. José Esteban Muñoz, *Cruising Utopia: the Then and There of Queer Futurity*. New York: New York University Press, 2009; Antje DANIEL and Christine M. KLAPEER, ‘Einleitung: Wider dem Utopieverdruss—Queer* Feministische Überlegungen zum Stand der Debatte’. *Femina Politica—Zeitschrift für Feministische Politikwissenschaft* 28.1 (2019): 9–31.

First, and as explicated by Theodor W. Adorno, utopian imageries *deflect critique* by sketching a future world that is presented as the only and inescapable possible better world, thus naturalizing and legitimizing given life forms while deceptively pretending to criticize them. Like Deleuze & Guattari, who attribute to utopia the politicization of philosophy, Adorno also underlines the epistemological potential of utopia laying in helping us to 'break through the narrowness of that other thinking'.²⁴ He cautions, however, the realization of what is presented as utopian. As he demonstrates in his treatise on Aldous Huxley's *Brave New World*, the 'practical consequence of the bourgeois "Nothing to be done"', which resounds as the novel's echo, is precisely the perfidious "You must adjust" of the totalitarian *Brave New World*'.²⁵

Second, utopian narratives lead to a defeatist and resigned kind of daydreaming. By propagating an inescapable future, utopias do not just defuse critique, they also narcotize practice. As Jacques Derrida observes in *Not Utopia, the Im-possible*, utopias may possess 'critical powers that we should probably never give up on'.²⁶ At the same time, though, they can be 'too easily associated with dreams, or demobilization, or an impossible that is more of an urge to give up than an urge to action' (Derrida 2005: 131).

Third, utopian imaginaries tend to oversimplify unilateralizations that reinstate discrimination and thereby perpetuate exclusion. Eva Kreisky—who is just as ambivalent about utopia as Adorno and Derrida before her—underlines on the one hand the role of utopian 'dreaming reason'²⁷ (*träumende Vernunft*) as a necessary political force. On the other hand, she is nevertheless aware of the partiality of 'social and political scenarios' that—'despite exuberant utopianism—still contain elements of patriarchal fantasies' (Kreisky 2000: 7), ultimately leading to a 'patriarchal generality' that 'was not imagined as a place of and for women' (Kreisky 2000: 20).

The strategy of viewing utopia not as a narrative or thought figure²⁸, but as a method, was first introduced by Ernst Bloch. Bloch develops

24. Theodor W. ADORNO, *Negative Dialectics*. London & New York: Routledge, 1973: 128.

25. Theodor W. ADORNO, *Prisms*. Cambridge, MA: MIT Press, 1997: 113.

26. Jacques DERRIDA, *Paper Machine*. Stanford: Stanford University Press, 2005: 131.

27. Eva KREISKY, "'Die Phantasie ist nicht an der Macht.': vom Verschleiß des Utopischen im 20. Jahrhundert'. *Österreichische Zeitschrift für Politikwissenschaft* 29.1 (2000): 7–28; 11.

28. Alexander NEUPERT-DOPPLER, *Utopie. Vom Roman zur Denkfigur*. Stuttgart: Schmetterling, 2015.

his ideas in a parallel vein to Adorno who, in his short 'Resignation' in *Critical Models* 3, argues that the 'utopian moment in thinking is stronger the less it [...] objectifies itself into a utopia and hence sabotages its realization'.²⁹ Bloch subsumes in his *Principle of Hope* the above-mentioned inherent flaws of utopian narratology under what he called 'abstract utopias'. Abstract utopias content themselves in 'novels of an ideal state'³⁰ that, by merely visualizing abstraction (Bloch 1996: 4), promulgate a 'pure wishful thinking' (146) that leads to a 'random and abstract escapism' (14). This does not mean, however, that utopian thinking is to be given up altogether. Rather, abstract utopianism needs to be supplemented by *concrete* utopias, where utopia is recalibrated as a '*methodical organ for the New, an objective aggregate form of what is coming up*' (157). However, surprisingly enough, Bloch did not elaborate on what he meant when attributing to utopia the status of a method. Instead, British sociologist Ruth Levitas continued this task.

For Levitas, utopia as a method aims to sketch out 'alternative *holistic* models of society',³¹ since it invites us to rethink the entirety of 'the interrelationships of social processes' (Levitas 2001: 450) from which society surfaces. In this light, it prompts us to think 'about the connections between economic, social, existential and ecological processes in an *integrated* way'.³² According to Levitas, however, the fact of integration is not contingent but necessary. This is because the different (social and political) processes must be viewed as integrated and interconnected since they are conditioned by the subject—or, as Levitas puts it, they depend on 'who "we" are' (Levitas 2001: 450). Therefore, addressing utopia as a method not only provides a foundation for a holistic and inclusive critique of society, it also serves as the analytical instrument of the subject's processual becoming as a collective entity amidst the different modes of subjectivity production. Levitas summarizes her aspirations for utopia as a method as follows:

[Utopia as a method] provides a critical tool for exposing the limitations of current policy discourses about economic growth and ecological

29. Theodor W. ADORNO, *Critical Models. Interventions and Catchwords*. New York: Columbia University Press, 1998: 292–3.

30. Ernst BLOCH, *The Principle of Hope: Volumes 1, 2 and 3*. Cambridge, MA: MIT Press, 1996: 14.

31. Ruth LEVITAS, 'Against Work: a Utopian Incursion into Social Policy'. *Critical Social Policy* 21 (2001): 449–465; 450.

32. Ruth LEVITAS, *Utopia as Method. The Imaginary Reconstitution of Society*. London: Palgrave, 2013: 18–19.

sustainability. It facilitates genuinely holistic thinking about possible futures, combined with reflexivity, provisionality and democratic engagement with the principles and practices of those futures. And it requires us to think about our conceptions of human needs and human flourishing in those possible futures. The core of utopia is the desire for being otherwise, individually and collectively, subjectively and objectively. Its expressions explore and bring to debate the potential contents and contexts of human flourishing. It is thus better understood as a method than a goal. (Levitas 2013: xi)

Levitas identifies the following three forms or modes in which utopia as a method manifests itself: an analytical, *archaeological*, mode; a constructive, *architectural* mode; and finally, a third, *ontological* mode.³³

(i) The *archaeological* mode consists in ‘excavating from political discourse the underpinning model of the good society, piecing together actions, statements and silences into something resembling a coherent whole, in order to lay this open to scrutiny and to public critique’ (Levitas 2010: 543). It is the most political-programmatic mode, since it envisages the prospective form of society, reflects upon current pathologies, and criticizes the analytical tools that guided the normative-evaluative operations that were implemented within these processes.³⁴

(ii) The *architectural* mode ‘demands a more holistic and institutionally specific look at the collective alternatives open to us’ (Levitas 2010: 543); ‘[i]t involves the institutional design and delineation of the good society—and [...] its partial concrete instantiation.’ (Levitas 2013: xvii). It is the most sociological-practical of all the modes, since it entails drafting the concrete institutions that will realize the visions extrapolated through the archaeological mode. In addition, it requires experimenting and evaluating those institutions to determine their effectiveness.

(iii) Finally, the *ontological* mode of the utopian method is, as the term admittedly conveys, the most philosophical one. Its functionality consists in providing an account of the subject, i.e., of the

33. Ruth LEVITAS, ‘Back to the Future: Wells, Sociology, Utopia and Method’. *The Sociological Review* 58, 4 (2010): 530–547; 541.

34. For a different and, perhaps more accurate, application of Michel Foucault’s concept of archaeology in the context of utopian studies (but without Levitas’s further-reaching conceptual ramification), cf. Fredric JAMESON, *Archaeologies of the Future. The Desire Called Utopia and Other Science Fictions*. London: Verso, 2005.

agent of the utopian restructuration of society. It is concerned 'with the subjects and agents of utopia, the selves interpellated within it, that utopia encourages or allows' (Levitas 2013: xvii). This mode entails 'narratives of self that place us in other relationships' (Levitas 2010: 544) and connotes fantasies that are, as Levitas argues with Bloch, 'the beginning of utopian desire for a better life and a better world' (544). These result in creating different 'versions of human nature' that 'are at work in all the current attention to happiness and wellbeing' (545).

The novelty that Levitas's methodologization of utopia brings about, in contrast to conventional utopian narratology, pertains to this last, ontological parameter. Should the subject be a presupposed, sovereign, integral, and therefore essentialist entity, then it would be difficult to avoid narratological projections that are based on the subject's alleged ability to draw blueprints of what a utopian society should look like, prescribe how this utopian society ought to be achieved, and foreclose who is predestined as the historical force of change towards a utopian society. On the contrary, the methodologization of utopia entails *also* the methodologization of the subject. Levitas's account of subjectivity is neither ahistorical, nor is it purely ontological. Rather, it is *social-ontological*: a term that Levitas might not use, but one that I am confident that she would not object to, given that she calls this last mode of the utopian method *ontological* 'for want of a better term' (Levitas 2010: 541). Levitas's subject is an effect of socially anchored and culturally contextualizable modes of subjectivity production (Levitas 2013: 184), is entangled in a series of relationships that determine it incessantly (183), and it is, ultimately, to such an extent embedded that this embeddedness leads to a continuous reconfiguration of the subject resulting in a the multiplication and plurification of human nature.³⁵ Therefore, and if the subject of the social-ontological mode of the utopian method is 'interpellated' (xvii), or exists in relationships that can be reallocated (Levitas 2010: 544), then it is only logical to enquire into the role of the Other, both with regard to shaping the subject's utopian projectivity and to the subsequent necessity of including the Other in the materialization of any utopian project.

35. Levitas speaks of 'versions of human nature' in plural; (LEVITAS 2010: 545).

From this perspective, it is astounding, given the length that she went to describe the subject's social embeddedness and dependence, that Levitas does not address Otherness. Indeed, nor does she examine the subject's dependence on the (concrete social) Other or the effects of this dependence on the subject's utopian capacity. She notes, of course, that to a certain extent every utopia is a study on Otherness, since the temporal, spatial, and ethical deferments that any utopia entails cannot be anything but an opening to Otherness. Yet, she does not go so far as to examine how the utopian projections of the subject are conditioned by the incising Other. Nonetheless, there are three philosophical models that have undertaken the task of examining the utopian projection *not* of a subject that is driven by its alleged desires, but of a subject that carries within its structuration (and therefore has resulted as the product of) an Otherness. These are to be found, first, in Roland Barthes's concept of *atopia*, second, in Michel Foucault's concept of *heterotopia*, and third, in Ernst Bloch's concept of the 'Not-Yet'.

Tropes of the (U-)Topical Otherness: Barthes, Foucault, Bloch

Barthes's concept of *atopia* is certainly not a fully worked out theory of utopia.³⁶ '*Atopos*' is but a two-and-a-half-page fragment in Barthes's *A Lover's Discourse*, a treatise on love consisting of lexicological entries that Barthes calls discourses or 'outbursts of language' (Barthes 1978: 4). The word *atopos* is borrowed from a series of Platonic dialogues, where it crops up as a characteristic attribute of Socrates. Without hesitating, Barthes states that '[t]he other whom I love and who fascinates me is *atopos*' (34), meaning that the other is unclassifiable and therefore unique, 'the singular image which has miraculously come to correspond to the specialty of my desire' (35). This is not to say, however, that the Other cannot be approximated. As a matter of fact, the Other becomes intelligible thanks to patterns of behaviour that are codified and crystallized in what Barthes calls 'character traits' (35). Barthes nonetheless detects an unidentifiable 'innocence' (35), as he calls it, within the Other. This opens a distance between the actions of the Other and the sedimentation of his/her actions into a charac-

36. Roland BARTHES, *A Lover's Discourse. Fragments*. London: Penguin, 1978.

ter or identity. By setting him 'aside from himself' and 'outside of his own character' (35), this innocence exonerates the Other, casting the Other beyond 'all criticism or commentary' (35). As Barthes puts it: '*Atopia* resists description, definition, language [...]. Being Atopic, the other makes language indecisive: one cannot speak of the other, *about* the other; every attribute is false, painful, erroneous, awkward: the other is *unqualifiable* (this would be the true meaning of *atopos*)' (35).

This incommensurability is, however, not the end of the atopic process. More radically, Barthes sees in the Other the determining instance of the subject, or the 'figure of my [the subject's] truth' (35), as he puts it. While the Other manages to resist the subject's penetrating gaze, thereby remaining innocent, the subject cannot assume the same for itself. On the contrary, '[c]onfronted with the other's brilliant originality, I [the subject] never feel myself to be *atopos*, but rather classified' (35). Observed by an Other it cannot make sense of, the subject resorts into stereotypical patterns of behaviour to attract the Other's attention and figure out the Other's likings. This notwithstanding, there is also, for the subject, an atopic way to avoid signification. It can recede and find solace in the 'relation itself' (35), or what Barthes calls the 'original' (36) relation. For Barthes, the atopic Other is not the same as the original 'relation without a site'. While the atopic Other upholds his/her singularity and his/her grasp on the subject by demanding that the subject continue to strive to comprehend him/her, the 'relation without a site' is a relationship that has forfeited its concrete, signified, relationality.

It is this form of utopia as *atopia* that is of interest for our discussion here. To a certain extent, distancing is intrinsic to every understanding of utopia. Whether as an opening that prepares the ground for a different spatial arrangement, an anticipation of a future prospective situation, or as a designation of a different and better form of life, utopia connotes a distancing, a shifting, and a deferment. From this perspective, utopia has always been a trial on Otherness. What was at stake here, however, was the question of how the Other affects the utopian faculty of the subject. The Otherness that Barthes stages here, through the figure of the beloved and loving Other, is one of unqualifiable innocence. This is to say, one that we cannot access, get a glance of, or grapple with. It is certainly attractive to think of utopia as something incommensurable and indeterminable. However, every utopian endeavour oriented toward such an ineffable and atopic Other would be unrealizable since we would never know in which direction we should

orient our practices. As atopia, utopia is rendered truly *ou*-topian, namely, a no-place that does not and can never exist.

Coming to Foucault's concept of heterotopias,³⁷ his case is straightforward. Heterotopias are to be understood as a counter-project to the great historical utopias of the 19th century which ended up being 'fundamentally unreal spaces', and thus 'emplacements with no real place' (Foucault 2008: 17). According to Foucault, heterotopias fulfil following functions: They designate concrete institutions that serve certain functionalities and fulfil certain socially neuralgic tasks. They organise time by providing the space for different activities within it (e.g., fairgrounds). They hierarchize forms or geographical regions of higher or lesser culture, as in the case of museums and libraries. They defuse crises by providing shelter for those members of society who are considered, according to the predominant discourse of the time, endangered or sullied, such as 'adolescents, menstruating women, pregnant women, the elderly, etc.' (18). They set the stage for certain rites of passage, whether the barrack, where male sexuality was supposed to emerge, or the honeymoon hotel, where 'the young girl's deflowering' (18) could be serendipitously completed outside hearth and home. Finally, they protect society by providing a place for those individuals 'whose behaviour is deviant in relation to the mean or required norm' (18). Rest homes, psychiatric hospitals, prisons, and retirement homes expectedly fall under this last category.

Unlike Barthes, heterotopias are for Foucault concrete and identifiable spaces of collectivization through power discourses. Heterotopias are, of course, not supra-individual subjects. They do not delineate collectives or groups. However, they do mark orders of matter where subjects are brought together because they share certain qualifications that the power discourse deems (to a certain extent) excludable and not worthy of being positioned at the centre of communal, political, and social life. In this light, Foucault's notion of heterotopias could come into question to highlight alternatives to the existing forms of power distribution that are collectively shared by the subject and the Other.

This is not to say that Foucault's concept of heterotopia is problem-free. As Heidi Sohn remarks, there are two readings of Foucault's notion of heterotopia. Both share the fact that due to their ex-/in-

37. Michel FOUCAULT, 'Of Other Spaces'. In *Heterotopia and the City: Public Space in a Postcivil Society*, Michiel DEHAENE and Lieven DE CAUTER, eds. London: Routledge, 2008: 13–29.

sion in a sequestered areality, heterotopias function as placeholders of otherness confronting thereby 'notions of *homogeneity*, *sameness* and *uniformity*, in short, of homotopia'.³⁸ However, whereas the one reading sees in heterotopias 'potentially subversive, challenging and resistant formations' that can function as 'positive, utopian transformative powers' (Sohn 2008: 48), the other reading sees in heterotopias 'an ambivalent formulation meant to destabilize discourse and language, [...] a rather obscure conception endowed with negativity, defying clarity, logic and order.' (48).

Notwithstanding the critical, if not emancipatory potential that those two readings attribute to heterotopias, when it comes to the *koinotopian* project Foucault's concept of heterotopia is unsatisfactory from a different perspective. While heterotopias are collective enclaves within the social fabric, they cannot be networked with one another to launch an orchestrated reaction against the power relations that dominate this fabric. Heterotopias may enable a genealogical critique of their effectuation (e.g., a critique of medical discourse, of dominant religious practices, of the orders of sexuality, of the regimes of identity, of the cultural hierarchies, etc.) and maybe even set in motion emancipatory practices. However, both the critique and the emancipatory practices remain topical and confined within the particular counter-space of each heterotopia. As such, heterotopias remain foreign to each other; they are defined and concrete, but also incapable of communicating with one another. The enlightenment and practices that occur within their boundaries cannot surpass the particular and cannot expand to become holistic or inclusive. From this perspective, the critique they exert and the practices that they generate does not lead to the formation of an orchestrated action that is able to change, in a holistic and inclusive manner, the entirety of the social fabric.

This brings us to the last model of how Otherness shapes the subject's utopian imaginary: Bloch's concept of the 'Not-Yet'. The first thing that needs to be said is that Bloch, in his concept of the 'Not-Yet', takes over an element of subjectivity that has not appeared thus far; namely, that of open-ended processuality. As he asserts in the opening lines of his *Experimentum Mundi*: 'I am. But I do not have possession of myself *yet*. We *still* do not know anything of what we are; too

38. Heidi SOHN, 'Heterotopia: Anamnesis of a Medical Term'. In *Heterotopia and the City: Public Space in a Postcivil Society*, Michiel DEHAENE & Lieven DE CAUTER, eds. London: Routledge, 2008: 41–50; 47.

much is full of something that is missing.’³⁹ Further, and like Foucault, Bloch’s ‘Not-Yet’ is a figure that connotes collectivity. As Bloch puts it in another famous opening, that of *The Spirit of Utopia*: ‘I am. We are. That is enough. Now we have to begin. *Life has been put in our hands.*’⁴⁰ The simultaneous co-appearance of the subject and the Other debunks the inherent monism of utopian imaginaries and narratives and transforms utopia into a collective project.⁴¹ Furthermore, even if not in the later post-structural terminology, Bloch’s conception of utopia seems to presuppose a socially constructed type of subjectivity. The fact that the subject does not own its ‘life’ but that the subject’s life has been bestowed, heteronomously, upon the subject suggests a socially constructed type of subjectivity and anticipates the post-structuralist understanding of a subject whose appearance is conditioned from the Other.⁴²

However, the conditionalization of the subject from the Other is not just ethically demanded in the manner of a poststructuralist ethics of radical alterity. Rather, and anticipating Levitas, the conditionalization of the subject from the Other is *social-ontologically* necessitated since it pertains to the subject’s structuration in accordance with the modes of production that underlie the subject’s historical becoming. As Bloch puts it in a third famous opening, that of *The Principle of Hope*, the subject may ‘start out empty’,⁴³ but what it can become, or

39. Ernst BLOCH, *Experimentum Mundi: Frage, Kategorien des Herausbringens, Praxis*. Frankfurt: Suhrkamp, 1975: 11 (my translation, my emphasis). The German original reads: ‘Ich bin. Aber ich habe mich noch nicht. Wir wissen mithin noch nirgends, was wir sind, zuviel ist voll vom Etwas, das fehlt.’

40. Ernst BLOCH, *The Spirit of Utopia*. Stanford: Stanford University Press, 2000: 1; my emphasis.

41. In Jean-Luc Nancy’s jargon the simultaneous co-appearance of the subject and the Other is called ‘compearance’ (Jean-Luc NANCY, ‘La Comparution/The Compearance: From the Existence of “Communism” to the Community of “Existence”’, *Political Theory*, 20.3 [1992]: 371–398) and the collectivity that it instantiates is called ‘symbolic’; Jean-Luc NANCY, *Being Singular Plural*. Stanford: Stanford University Press, 2000: 58. Derived from the Greek prefix *συν-* (with) and the verb *βάλλω* (to put or to throw) a symbol creates an ‘opened interval’ (58) where ‘everyone produces himself or herself as a subject *with* others’ (53) and where what is being projected is that each one is ‘with one another [*les-uns-avec-les-autres*]’ (58). Unfortunately, there is no space here to delve further in the similarities and/or differences between Nancy and Bloch.

42. It was Manfred Riedel who first suggested that Bloch could be read as a post-modernist *avant la lettre*; Manfred RIEDEL, *Tradition und Utopie: Ernst Blochs Philosophie im Licht unserer geschichtlichen Denkerfahrung*. Frankfurt: Suhrkamp, 1994.

43. Ernst BLOCH, *The Principle of Hope: Volumes 1, 2 and 3*. Cambridge, MA: The MIT Press, 1996: 21. It would be interesting to compare the different understandings of

its 'Can-Be', in Bloch's terminology, is determined by the modes of production that the subject finds on its path. For Bloch, the subject is 'the real possibility of everything which has become of him [the man, the subject; T.T.] in his *history*' (Bloch 1996: 235, my emphasis). This is what qualifies the subject as a 'not-yet-being'.⁴⁴ The subject starts with an upbeat, an anacrusis, where the modes of subjectivity production that surround it fulfil what Bloch calls 'the situation of the being-before-itself' (Bloch 1970: 112). Starting from the intentional and amorphous Nothing or void, the subject is filled in by the Other that underlies the subject's historical development (or *tendency* in Bloch's terminology). Therefore, the utopian horizon, or *Novum* (a further Blochian term), cannot but be conditioned by every element that was invested in the process of subjectivity production. This structural determination does not mean, however, that this tendency is foreseeable or *predetermined*. Rather, and due to the interplay of these elements, the outcome is always *latent* (another key Blochian concept). The nothingness at the beginning of the utopian process is slowly filled in by the Other(s) vested in the subject throughout the process of the subject's production, opening up this original nothingness to contingent and plural(istic) possibilization. As Bloch writes it, the subject's current and prospective manifestation is conditioned 'not in unilinear development but entirely polyrhythmically and polyphonically' (112).

This collective emanation and social conditioning of the subject does not leave the subject's utopian potentiality untouched. Instead of being the expression of the subject's allegedly innate and pre-social desires and needs, utopia becomes the effect of 'the whole of [the subject's] internal and external conditions, condition-determinants' (112). Further, the subject's dependence on the Other—not only in the form of a social structure, but also in the form of a direct encounter with a *concrete* social Other through which the social structures are mediated—forces the utopian projections of the subject to incessant deferments and reconfigurations. Moreover, acknowledgement of the subject's dependence on the Other influences the spatial and temporal

utopian philosophies that the three openings, of *The Spirit of Utopia* (1st rendition 1918; final version 1923), of *The Principle of Hope* (1954–1959) and the *Experimentum Mundi: Frage, Kategorien des Herausbringens, Praxis* (1975) suggest. In my reconstruction here I tried to provide a coherent account of how to understand these three openings regarding the role they attribute to the Other and how they consequently influence the subject's utopian thinking.

44. Ernst Bloch, *A Philosophy of the Future*. New York: Herder and Herder, 1970: 112.

vectorization of the subject's utopian potentiality: First, it renders it necessarily inclusive and maximalist, since it cannot but include all modes of subjectivity production and the encountered concrete social Others who have partaken in the subject's production. Second, each encounter between the subject and the Other forces the subject's utopian projections to shift, defer, and get reconfigured *according to* this Other, who cuts across the subject's projected path.

Finally, and unlike Foucault, Bloch's collectivity is not a secluded, isolated, and encapsulated space where deviants and abjects co-exist. Rather, Bloch's utopia acquires the form of a 'multiverse', as he calls it, which accounts for the interrelated and simultaneous coexistence of plural and diverse understandings of lifeforms and, subsequently, of history, society, and politics. As he puts it in his fourth thesis on progress in his *Tübinger Einleitung in die Philosophie* (1963), which was translated as *A Philosophy of The Future* (1970), utopian futurity (Bloch's understanding of progress):

will not tolerate any 'cultural spheres' which require a reactionary nailing down of time to space. It requires not unilinearity but a broad, flexible and thoroughly dynamic '*multiverse*': the voices of history *joined* in perpetual and often *intricate counterpoint*. A unilinear model must be found obsolete if justice is to be done to the considerable amount of non-European material. It is no longer possible to work without curves in the series; without a new and *complex time-manifold*.

(Bloch 1970: 143, my emphasis)

It is this multiverse that disallows utopia to be understood as a narrative, a figure of thought, or a blueprint that can be pre-set, followed, and realized. The Other lends to the multiverse its polyphonic, poly-rhythmic, and contrapuntal character which renders utopia to the result of a collective and inclusive experimentation.

Utopia as *Koinotopia*

What are then the components of *koinotopia* that can be extrapolated from the previous analysis? How does the Other as a constitutive parameter of the subject also determine the subject's utopian agency? And, more importantly: How do they help us reconstruct and reanimate utopian thinking to rise to the political challenges raised by neo-liberal apathy and the theoretical demands raised by political

ecology and intersectionality? The components that I would like to discuss are following: (i) inclusivity; (ii) collectivity; (iii) performativity.

Inclusivity

Koinotopia is a joint venture that cannot be traced back to one set of needs, an exclusive ideology, concrete interests, or a particular identity of the subject. Instead, it is the correlation of all the elements that the subject's environment consists of and have been engrafted through the Other in the subject during the subject's processual becoming. As a rule, utopias wear themselves out in fulfilling the ideals, needs, desires and/or interests of *one* of the subject's identities. Caught in the orbit of modernity, if not heralding its advent,⁴⁵ utopias universalize particular identity interests to the disadvantage of an inclusive account of the identities that comprise the subject in these identities' singularity. When envisioning a society freed from political arbitrariness and despotism, they do so by basing the welfare of (the island) Utopia on aggressive wars and slave trade.⁴⁶ By trying to overcome gender or sexual discrimination, they forget to take into account and tackle class inequality.⁴⁷ The drafting of an egalitarian community comes at the cost of technological progress regressing thereby to a lagging community caught in the ban of the past.⁴⁸ And lastly, as soon as they put all their cards on technology, this techno-optimism overlooks the fact that technology is nothing but a means, not a remedy, for social pathologies, alienation, and power structures.⁴⁹

45. On the status of utopia as a concept of modernity *par excellence*, see most importantly Reinhard KOSSELCK, *The Practice of Conceptual History. Timing, History, Spacing Concepts*. Stanford: Stanford University Press, 2002: 84–100. Similarly see Reinhard KOSSELCK, *Futures Past. On the Semantics of Historical Time*. New York: Columbia University Press, 2004; Reinhard KOSSELCK, *Sediments of Time. On Possible Histories*. Stanford: Stanford University Press, 2018. This thesis has been recently disputed by Karma Lochrie in her fascinating *Nowhere in the Middle Ages*. Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 2016, where she proves that the Middle Ages were not ignorant of temporal shiftings that were later to be associated with utopian thinking.

46. Thomas MORE, *Utopia*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2002.

47. Ursula LE GUIN, *The Left Hand of Darkness*. New York: Ace Books, 1969; Alexandra BRODSKY and Rachel KAUDER NALEBUFF, *The Feminist Utopia Project: Fifty-Seven Visions of a Wildly Better Future*. New York: The Feminist Press at The City University of New York, 2015.

48. Charles FOURIER, *Harmonian Man: Selected Writings of Charles Fourier*. Garden City: Doubleday, 1971.

49. Ivan YEFREMOV, *Andromeda: A Space-Age Tale*. Moscow: Progress Publishers, 1980.

This is not the case with *koinotopia*, which thinks and ties together the demands and aspirations of *all* modes of subjectivity production that have been embodied in the subject throughout its production. If utopia is expected to ‘constantly shatter the present achievements and compromises of society and point to that which is not yet experienced in the human project of fulfilment and creation’,⁵⁰ this is not in favour of an ‘activity which opens human imagination *beyond* present limits’ (Moylan 2014: 40, my emphasis). Rather, the ‘new and radically different/other ways of being and thinking’⁵¹ that *koinotopia* manifests pertains to shattering the presently predominant solipsist and one-dimensional projectionism that has been the primary mode of utopian narratology. In doing so, *koinotopia* includes the Other who is thereby established as the condition of the ‘human project of fulfilment and creation’ (Moylan 2014: 27).

This inclusion of Otherness unravels alongside two registers. The first is the register of the subject, and the second is the intersubjective register of the subject’s relationship to the Other. On the subjective register, *koinotopia* underlines the necessity that the subject considers all modes of its production when crafting its utopian futurity. On the intersubjective level, *koinotopia* incorporates and coordinates in its programming the identities, ideals, needs, desires and/or interests of both the subject and the Other. This inclusivity, however, is neither a normative yardstick nor a utilitarian tool. It does not answer whether a utopian project is morally admissible or merely advantageous. Rather, inclusivity is a constitutive component of *koinotopia*. *Koinotopia* is either inclusive or it cannot be at all.

This renders *koinotopia* to a negative ‘epistemological utopia’—a term introduced by Leszek Kolakowski.⁵² What Kolakowski associates with epistemological utopias is the search for ‘either a perfect certainty or an ultimate source of cognitive values’ (Kolakowski 1982: 230), and the assertion that both are possible. The epistemological utopianism of *koinotopia* is negative to the extent that it owns up to the impossibility of ever being able to assume that it has included everyone. This negative epistemology of *koinotopia* forces it, on the

50. Tom MOYLAN, *Demand the Impossible. Science Fiction and the Utopian Imagination*. Frankfurt: Peter Lang, 2014: 27.

51. Lucy SARGISSON, *Contemporary Feminist Utopias*. London: Routledge, 1996: 56.

52. Leszek KOLAKOWSKI, ‘The Death of Utopia Reconsidered,’ in *The Tanner Lectures on Human Values*, vol. 3, Sterling M. McMURRIN ed. Salt Lake City: University of Utah Press, 1982: 229–247.

one hand, to stay on the lookout for new sets and forms of demands that will need to be included. On the other hand, it forces it to conceive of, introduce, and guarantee practices that will promote visibility and enable visibilization.

Finally, inclusivity as a component of *koinotopia* flags up antireductionism as core of the utopian project. It is not enough to say that *koinotopia* is inclusive in that it incorporates the different identities of the subject, factors in the subject's Other, and fosters visibility and visibilization. In order to do itself justice, *koinotopia* needs to assure that the different identities of the subject and the Other, as well as the demands that will emerge in the future, do not get subsumed under a unifying paradigm, such as an alleged common good or hierarchized urgency regard certain struggles and objectives. Therefore, each of the ideas that the *koinotopian* project engulfs need to be treated as irreducible and equally worthwhile. A future classless society, to take one of the most pertinent misconceptions, is neither more important, nor the prerequisite, for a society liberated from patriarchy, sexism, heteronormativity, colonialism, nationalism, Eurocentrism, ableism, etc. Rather, it is the interplay of all those forms of oppression, discrimination, exploitation, exclusion, and unequal power distribution that guarantee the *koinotopian* character of the *koinotopian* project. Going back to the intersectional and political-ecological inspirations of the concept of *koinotopia* that was mentioned in the beginning, if the core of intersectional thinking lies primarily in the diagnosis that 'social identity categories such as race, gender, class, sexuality, and ability are *interconnected* and operate *simultaneously* to produce experiences of both privilege and marginalization',⁵³ then the future that this subject envisages for itself cannot target, and thereby privilege, certain forms of discrimination and exclusion while leaving others intact. Instead, it must account for and include all modes of subjectivity production that the subject has both gone through and finds itself sharing with other subjects.

Collectivity

Coming to *koinotopia's* second component, it would of course be inaccurate to assume that *koinotopia* is the first theorization of utopia

53. Wendy G. SMOOTH, 'Intersectionality: From Theoretical Framework to Policy Intervention'. In *Situating Intersectionality: Politics, Policy, and Power*. Angelia R. WILSON, ed. New York: Palgrave, 2013: 11–41; 11—my emphasis.

to bring collectivity forward or underline its necessary character.⁵⁴ As a matter of fact, it is the unavoidably collectivist character of utopias that has contributed to the delegitimization of utopias as a political form allegedly destined to eradicate the individual.⁵⁵ However, the collectivity that koinotopia brings forward is of a different calibre. The collectivity of koinotopia is indeed a *quantitative* collectivity that seeks to mobilize and bring together more than one individual. However, this collectivity does not subordinate the individuals under a unifying and universal cause. Rather, the collectivity of *koinotopia* can assume itself as such *only if* it upholds and keeps intact the difference(s) between the variety of projects that are nested in *koinotopia*. Creating a supra-individual entity that bows to one and exclusive ideal, identity, scope, or interest might indeed be quantitatively collective. However, from a *qualitative* perspective, this collective is nothing but totalitarian. Therefore, it is only when guaranteeing that the different projects remain different that collectivity—and with it also *koinotopia*—become also *qualitatively* collective.

This does not mean, however, that this collectivity which is based on the preservation of difference implies the parallel execution of different utopian projects that do not interact and communicate with one another. Should this be the case, then koinotopia would fall back to being heterotopian. On the contrary, the (qualitatively) collective character of koinotopia manifests itself in the fact that the different koinotopian projects are aware that they depend on each other in order to be realized. The latter renders the *koinotopian* project distinguishable from the provisional and contingent character of the multitudinal project, where the different utopian forces coalesce with one another for a short period of time and in a spontaneous manner.⁵⁶ Therefore, and in contrast to the totalitarian mass, heterotopian seclusionism, and multitudinal temporariness, the *koinotopian* collectivity is not just aware of the entanglement of the different utopian projects. Rather, *koino-*

54. Plato's utopian republic is proof enough not only of the primordially collective character of utopias but also of how quick utopias can tip over into authoritarianism and totalitarianism; PLATO, *The Republic*. New Haven, Conn.: Yale University Press, 2008.

55. Richard SAAGE, *Utopische Profile*, vol. 1. Münster: LIT-Verlag, 2001: 112.

56. Here I refer to the concept of multitude as laid down and furthered by Antonio Negri and Michael Hardt; Michael HARDT & Antonio NEGRI, *Empire*. Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 2000; Michael HARDT & Antonio NEGRI, *Multitude: War and Democracy in the Age of Empire*. London: Penguin, 2009.

topia It raises this entanglement to a constitutional guideline of the *koinotopian* programmatic.

Analogously to the case of inclusivity discussed above, the concept of collectivity that koinotopia delineates is not to be confused with neoliberal flexibility, adaptability, and diversity⁵⁷ nor with postmodern sympathy, openness or hospitability.⁵⁸ Regarding the former, (i.e., whether koinotopia is flexible, adaptable and diverse), the partaking of the Other in the subject's collective practices is not a discretionary matter. Rather, and if, as argued by Bloch, the subject is the collective result of more than one mode of subjectivity production mediated through the Other, then the subject does not get to choose whether to act collectively or not. On the contrary, the subject's ability to act (agency), just as the subject's ability to conceive its future (call this 'utopian agency'), is conditioned from, and therefore necessarily includes, the Other. In this light, and regarding the latter, *koinotopia* is more than a sympathetic and hospitable opening of the subject towards the Other. Rather, the Other imposes itself upon the subject by engrafting itself in the subject throughout the subject's structuration, rendering itself to an inextricable vector that determines the subject's power of imagination, as well.⁵⁹ Seen this way, utopia as a narrative that merely envisions the subject's 'better' future becomes a *koinotopian* method as soon as it incorporates the subject's Other as constitutive factor of the subject's and the Other's joint future. *Koinotopia* does not sketch a future where the Other has been allegedly included. Rather, it underlines the necessity that the way leading to this future needs to be paved and constructed in accordance with and with the help of the methodical and methodological participation of the Other. The sooner the subject becomes aware of its heteronomous structuration through the Other, the quicker the subject will be able to (collectively) self-determine its future. On a similar note to

57. Catherine MALABOU, *What Should We Do with Our Brain?*. New York: Fordham University Press, 2008: 40–46.

58. See, for instance, Jennifer Wagner-Lawlor's postmodern and feminist take on utopia as an ethically demanded 'imaginative sympathy' and a 'critical faculty' towards 'a feminist version/vision of a hospitable utopia'; Jennifer A. WAGNER-LAWLOR, *Postmodern Utopias and Feminist Fictions*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2013: 21.

59. I draw here from Judith Butler's argument regarding the transitivity of power according to which 'power not only *acts on* a subject but, in a transitive sense, *enacts* the subject into being.' (Judith BUTLER, *The Psychic Life of Power. Studies in Subjection*. Stanford: Stanford University Press, 1997: 13).

the case of inclusivity, the subject's future will be either collective or it will not be at all.

From this perspective, collectivity stresses the relational interwovenness of *koinotopia*. While *koinotopia* takes off from the anti-reductionist and inclusive necessity of every utopian project depending on the various identities, ideals, needs, desires and/or interests, it is at the same time aware that those projections acquire a different form as soon as they encounter one another. While the different forms of oppression, discrimination, exploitation, exclusion, and unequal power distribution, as well as the practices that seek to defy them, must be kept analytically irreducible, *koinotopia* is conscious of the fact that, as intersectionality also suggests, these particular ways of subjectivation are 'intermeshed'⁶⁰ and can never be found in a Weberian ideal-typical form.⁶¹ Capitalism, patriarchy, sexism, heteronormativity, colonialism, nationalism, Eurocentrism, ableism, etc. do not exist independently from one another. Rather, they create unique and parallelly existing conglomerates. To go back to the initial question in respect to how *koinotopia* can overcome the challenges of intersectionality, another crucial insight of intersectionality lies in '*resisting additive models that treat categories of social identity as additive, parallel categories and instead theorizes these categories as intersecting.*' (Smooth 2013: 21). In this regard, the *koinotopian* project cannot content itself with creating encapsulated and withdrawn (heterotopic) communities or 'safe spaces'. Rather, *koinotopia*, as a collective concept, makes a point of society's interwovenness, namely the fact that the different modes of subjectivity production are entangled within the same societal fabric.

Lastly, the collective character of *koinotopia* accentuates the necessity for a holistic utopia. The imagination of a world without a certain form of heteronomous subjectivity production goes hand in hand and presupposes the defiance, abolishment and/or subversion of *every other* entangled mode of heteronomous subjectivity production. The preservation of the difference of a multitude of identities, ideals, needs, desires and/or interests, as well as the acknowledgment of their entanglement, or the fact that there is no heterotopian space exempt from oppression, discrimination, exploitation, exclusion, and unequal power distribution leads to the realization that the

60. Nira YUVAL-DAVIS, 'Intersectionality and Feminist Politics'. *European Journal of Women's Studies* 13.3 (2006): 193–209; 200.

61. MAX WEBER, *Max Weber on the Methodology of the Social Sciences*. Glencoe, IL: Free Press, 1949: 42–44; 90–107; 110; 114; 125.

change of the entirety of society as an articulated whole is not just yet another but rather the main task of *koinotopia*. As Adorno puts it in the discussion with Bloch mentioned at the outset: 'Whatever utopia is, whatever can be imagined as utopia, this is the transformation of the totality.'⁶²

Performativity

Finally, the concept of *koinotopia* designates a *performative* method of utopia that is not the rigid and congealed projection of the solipsistic subject's one-sided imagination. Rather it is the result of immanent, conflictual, and contextual practices.

The parameter of immanence is important since one could assume that utopian potentiality is a quality inherent to the subject. Thinkers as diametrically opposed as Fredric Jameson and Rainer Forst are two indicative examples of such a line of utopian thought. In a chapter on Marcuse and Schiller in his legendary *Marxism and Form*, Fredric Jameson debunks the reversal of 'revolutionary energy'⁶³ as 'a capitulation to the system itself [that] stands as a testimony to the power of that system to transform even its adversaries into its own mirror image' (Jameson 1974: 111). Notwithstanding, Jameson insists that the power of utopia lies in 'keep[ing] alive the possibility of a world qualitatively distinct from this one and takes the form of a *stubborn* negation of all that is' (Jameson 1974: 111, my emphasis). In his equally influential *Justification and Critique*, Rainer Forst stands up to the authoritarian or techno-optimistic understandings of utopia. However, he too is unwilling to relinquish the utopian promise. To this purpose, he identifies in 'human creativity' and 'human dignity'⁶⁴ a possible way out from this predicament. The moral respect of human dignity and creativity as a guiding force for human practices guarantees, for Forst, that utopias will not reinstate and/or perpetuate different forms of authoritarianism.

62. Theodor W. Adorno and Ernst Bloch, 'Something's Missing: A Discussion between Ernst Bloch and Theodor W. Adorno on the Contradictions of Utopian Longing'. In *The Utopian Function of Art and Literature. Selected Essays*. Cambridge: The MIT Press, 1989: 3.

63. Fredric Jameson, *Marxism and Form. Marxism and Form Twentieth-Century Dialectical Theories of Literature*. Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 1974: 110; my emphasis.

64. Rainer Forst, *Justification and Critique. Towards a Critical Theory of Politics*. Cambridge: Polity, 2014: 190.

The problem with Jameson's and Forst's views on utopia is not necessarily the aspirations that they attribute to utopia as either a reminder of the possibility of an alternative mode of existing or as a means to overcome the authoritarian collectivism that lurks in every form of togetherness. Indeed, the problem is that both trace back and attribute the subject's utopian ability to external, metaphysical presuppositions as the concepts of 'stubbornness' and 'creativity' betray. As one might imagine, *koinotopia* does not question the subject's utopian and emancipatory ability. However, it does question the attribution of the subject's utopian ability to an origin that is either (post-)metaphysical, such as dignity, or anthropological, such as stubbornness.⁶⁵ Instead, *koinotopia* argues for the immanence of this utopian agency as it unravels from the collective practices set in motion through the inclusion of the Other. The inclusion of the Other and the creation of a *qualitatively* collective collectivity upsets the subject's serendipitous and soliloquial/solipsistic contemplation of the future. The fact that the Other lives through the subject blurs the demarcation lines between the subject and the Other. Further, every time that the subject encounters the Other, this Other forces the subject to deviate from and rearticulate its course. This renders the *koinotopia* to a necessarily contingent form of practice. Whereas the subject cannot but take into account the Other(s) that brought it forward (necessity), the concrete outcome of these encounters is impossible to be determined in advance (contingency).

This openness towards the concrete outcome of the *koinotopian* project renders the modes of interaction between the subject and the Other equally indeterminable and variable. They range from communicative exchange and consensus-oriented deliberation, to struggle, dispute, and conflict. This point is important to avoid further misconceptions concerning the scope of *koinotopia* or the status of the forms of interaction of the different utopian projects that *koinotopia*

65. In a recently published article, Mark Featherstone seems to argue for in equally (metaphysically induced) anthropological understanding of the individual when brilliantly sketching his account of a tragic utopia defined by 'a recognition of human finitude, weakness, vulnerability and co-dependence with others and environmental systems' (Mark FEATHERSTONE, 'The Tragedy of Utopia in the Age of the Anthropocene: Beyond Dystopia, Despair and Catastrophic Futures'. *European Journal of Social Theory* 27.2 [2024]: 332–351; 345). However, whereas Featherstone does not further elaborate but presuppose the individual's finitude as cornerstone of his 'tragic utopia', the *koinotopian* methodologization of utopia that I suggest finds its origin in the social-ontological structuration of the subject and the Other through each other.

consists of. *Koinotopia* is undoubtedly a consensual project that implies the inclusion of every utopian project as they unravel from the different identities, ideals, needs, desires and/or interests. At the same time, though, it is opposed to curtailing the different utopian projects in the sense of a (Habermasian) compromise when a maximalist satisfaction of the different demands seems impossible, or in the sense of a strategic manoeuvre that would allow for later gains.⁶⁶ Further, *koinotopia* does not see in conflict a post-foundational ground of politics.⁶⁷ Conflict is, of course, unavoidable when it comes to concerting the different utopian projects pre-eminently, since this will undoubtedly include the partial cession of privileges. In addition, conflict is unavoidable because the more inclusive and collective the *koinotopia* becomes, and the more demands it realizes, the more it will in turn render visible and generate new demands. Conflict is a fixed component of *koinotopian* politics and *koinotopian*-making processes not because conflict has to be acknowledged as a fundamental (or at least post-foundational) trait of the political. Instead, it is because conflict corresponds to the differences of the different identities, ideals, needs, desires and/or interests as they were generated in the social sphere and then translated and transferred in the political arena. Conflict is the result of social struggles and not the ground for political agonisms and/or antagonisms.⁶⁸

Finally, performativity characterizes *koinotopia* to the extent that it shapes the *koinotopian* strategies to achieve *koinotopian* goals. To a certain extent, *koinotopia* is an experiment *on* and *with* difference. It fosters and renders difference visible, attempts to cope with difference, and strives to come up with ways to interact with difference. Going back to Fischer-Lichte's understanding of performativity as 'an extraordinary state of permanently heightened attention',⁶⁹ *koinotopia* is first and foremost a political tactic that underlines the necessity to hear

66. Jürgen HABERMAS, *Between Facts and Norms: Contributions to a Discourse Theory of Law and Democracy*. Cambridge, MA: MIT Press, 1998: 166.

67. Oliver MARCHART, *Post-Foundational Political Thought: Political Difference in Nancy, Lefort, Badiou and Laclau*. Edinburgh: Edinburgh University Press, 2007.

68. In this regard, *koinotopia* rehabilitates the Social that Hannah Arendt had extremely successfully outcasted from the sphere of politics; Hannah ARENDT, *On Revolution*. London: Penguin, 1990: 59–115. Regarding the need to rehabilitate the Social, see Sofia NÄSTRÖM, 'Democratic Self-defense: Bringing the Social Model Back In', *Distinktion: Journal of Social Theory* 22.3 (2021): 376–396.

69. Erika FISCHER-LICHTE, *The Transformative Power of Performance. A New Aesthetics*. London & New York: Routledge, 2008: 168.

and pay attention to the Other's and Others' identities, ideals, needs, desires and/or interests. Further, it interlineates the entangled character of projects and practices to 'postulate a reality that is not based on an "either-or"' but on an 'as well as' (Fischer-Lichte 2008: 168). Further, it shows the deficient limits of the solipsist utopianism that hierarchizes, prioritizes, and excludes by and seeking to accommodate one set of identities, ideals, needs, desires and/or interests. In doing so, it demonstrates the co-dependency of the different projects on each other and thus it lays the fundament of a holistic societal transformation where, as Fischer-Lichte puts it, 'the commonplace is transformed, too' (2008: 168).

From this perspective, the different means that can be engaged towards this transformation vary, depending on what is to be transformed. Juridical regimes change differently than discourses, just as economic structures that are scattered around the globe and engendered in different religious and national structures require different means and strategies. This is, finally, as I mentioned at the beginning of this text, what intersectionalist theorists aim at when pointing out that '*social identity categories and the power systems that give them meaning shift across time and geographical location*'.⁷⁰ This relationalization and shifting does not lead to the relativisation of the subject's horizon of action. Rather, it multiplies it. *Koinotopia's* answer is to demand the deliberation with every political actor within the given circumstances, the ponderance for forms of further development of political practices, and the initiation of trans-spatial and trans-temporal synergies. It is through *doing*, rather than through contemplative imagining, that utopia becomes possible. This is what renders utopia restless and a 'not-yet'. As Bloch puts it in his, always figurative, language: 'Not only if we travel there, but *in that* we travel there the island utopia arises out of the sea of the possible'.⁷¹

Seen this way, and against the defeatist postmodernist critique that 'there *cannot* now be any great causes left to fight for',⁷² there is cer-

70. Wendy G. SMOOTH, 'Intersectionality: From Theoretical Framework to Policy Intervention', in *Situating Intersectionality: Politics, Policy, and Power*. Angelia R. WILSON, ed. New York: Palgrave, 2013: 11–41; 2.

71. Theodor W. ADORNO and Ernst BLOCH, 'Something's Missing: A Discussion between Ernst Bloch and Theodor W. Adorno on the Contradictions of Utopian Longing'. In *The Utopian Function of Art and Literature. Selected Essays*. Cambridge: The MIT Press, 1989: 1–17; 3.

72. Krishan KUMAR, *From Post-Industrial to Post-Modern Society: New Theories of the Contemporary World*. Oxford: Willy-Blackwell, 2005: 155.

tainly a utopia that is worth fighting for. The point is, however, that this utopia is not the solipsistic utopia of the metaphysical individual but the *koinotopia* of the common and collective subject that echoes its parts; of a subject that, as Marx puts it, is even in its 'individual existence [...] at the same time a social being.'⁷³ This, finally, brings us to the telos of the *koinotopian* project. *Koinotopia* does not merely serve as a form and method of collective self-determination by being oriented against all forms of prospective projection that prioritize certain identities, ideals, needs, desires and/or interests over others. Nor does it exhaust itself in being a mere normative yardstick that can help us to assess the extent to which this place has been reached. The Greek etymology of *koinotopia* unravels an additional meaning: The word *koinotopos* (from *κοινός*: common and *τόπος*: place) connotes something that is so widely known, undoubtedly accepted, and profoundly evident that it has become common-sensical.⁷⁴ The goal of the *koinotopian* project lies precisely in rendering the subject's dependence on the Other, as the precondition of both the subject's and the Other's collective self-determination, an unequivocal truism.

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73. Karl MARX, *Economic and Philosophic Manuscripts of 1844 and The Communist Manifesto*. Amherst: Prometheus Books, 1988: 102. The original German text reads: 'In seinem individuellsten Dasein zugleich Gemeinwesen'. For a more detailed analysis, cf. Thomas TELIOS, *Das Subjekt als Gemeinwesen. Zur Konstitution kollektiver Handlungsfähigkeit*. Baden-Baden: Nomos, 2021: 57–93.

74. This understanding of common-sense leans on Frits van Holthoon and David R. Olson's definition of common as consisting 'of knowledge, judgement, and taste which is more or less universal and which is held more or less without reflection or argument.'; Frits L. HOLTHOON and David R. OLSON, *Common Sense: The Foundations for Social Science*. Lanham: University Press of America, 1987: 9.

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Francisco FUENTES ANTRÁS is a full-time Lecturer in the Department of English Philology at Universidad Autónoma de Madrid. He is interested in the study of English literature and world literature studies from an interdisciplinary and transversal perspective. His research focuses on the representation of diasporic identities, borders, and transcultural connections in the twenty-first century literature written by migrants. He is the principal investigator in the CIVIS European project 'Migrant Storytelling on Home and Belonging as Transformative Tools.'

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le décolonial et la littérature / les arts. Avec Jade de Cock, elle a obtenu un projet de recherche financé par le FNRS « Narrative and Imaginaries of Climate Action » (PDR, 2025-29) et par le Département de la recherche de l'ULB (FER, 2025-27).

Thomas TELIOS is Senior Lecturer of Philosophy at the University of St Gallen, Switzerland. He works on topics in Social and Political Philosophy, Social Ontology, Practical Philosophy, and Political Theory. His research covers themes like subjectivation, collective agency, solidarity practices, the foundations of social critique and utopian imaginaries. To do so he engages a broad spectre of theories from Western Marxism, the Frankfurt School, Post-War French Philosophy, Queer Theory, Intersectionality, and Decoloniality. He just submitted a book manuscript (*Common Sense: A Declaration of Dependence*) where he redefines the common in common sense as 'the articulation of differences to a collective'. Recent publications: 'A Relational-Psychoanalytic Analysis of Ovid's "Narcissus and Echo". Toward the Obstinate Persistence of the Relational' (*Open Philosophy*, 2025); 'Overdetermined Solidarity: Solidarity as Form of Agency, Set of Practices, and Normative Principle' (*Genealogy & Critique*, 2025).

Dénètem TOUAM BONA — Philosophe et artiste (dramaturgie), il s'attache à repenser la question du refuge. Face à l'extinction des espèces vivantes et du droit d'asile, face à l'empire croissant des algorithmes sur nos vies, il appelle à la réactivation des arts marrons du camouflage et de la fugue créatrice. Il est notamment l'auteur de *Fugitif, où cours-tu ?* (PUF, 2016) et de *Sagesse des lianes. Cosmopoétique du refuge 1* (Post Éditions, 2021). En 2021-2022, au Centre d'art et du paysage de Vassivière, Dénètem Touam Bona a conçu l'exposition afrodiasporique « Sagesse des lianes » et l'œuvre collaborative « Spectrographies, contes de l'île étoilée » (performances, films VR, sculptures). Porté par la Compagnie (Marseille), « Éloge de la submersion », son dernier projet (2024-2025), déploie des perspectives transe-océaniques.

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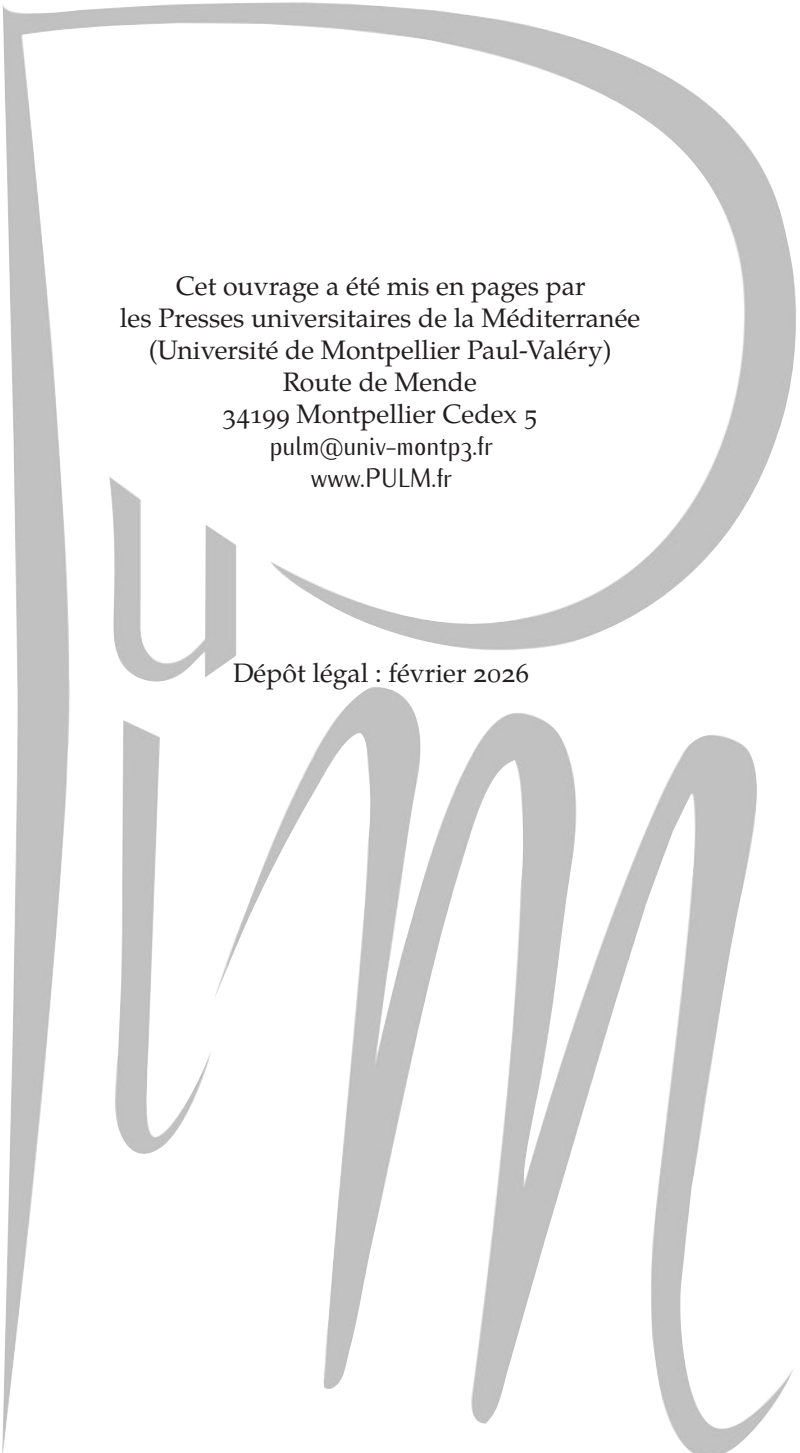
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THIS book offers a transdisciplinary reflection between literary studies, philosophy, and social sciences on the actualization of the concept of utopia from ecotones in the face of the habitability crisis. How do contemporary literature and theory conceive of utopia in inhospitable times, where borders, migration, and coexistence are described in terms of crisis? Can they renew our conception of utopia from places where reciprocal and non-alienated relationships between humans and the world are formed, places of temporal-spatial interrelation of cultures, that is, 'ecotones'?

CET OUVRAGE propose une réflexion transdisciplinaire entre les études littéraires, la philosophie et les sciences sociales autour de l'actualisation du concept d'utopie depuis les écotones face à la crise de l'habitabilité. Comment la littérature et la théorie contemporaines pensent l'utopie en des temps inhospitaliers, où frontière, migration et vivre-ensemble sont décrits en termes de crise ? Peuvent-elles renouveler notre conception de l'utopie depuis des lieux où se nouent des rapports réciproques et non aliénés entre les humains et le monde, des lieux d'interrelation temporo-spatiale des cultures, c'est-à-dire des « écotones » ?

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