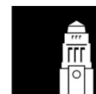


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**Article:**

Stainforth (2021) Excavating the Future: Utopia as a Method of Historical Analysis. Utopian Studies, 32 (3). pp. 598-612. ISSN 1045-991X

https://doi.org/10.5325/utopianstudies.32.3.0598

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**Excavating the Future: Utopia as a Method of Historical Analysis**

Elizabeth Stainforth

**ABSTRACT**

This article explores the question of "excavating the future" and utopia's potential to expand the modalities within which history has been written and thought. Here, utopia is positioned both as a lens through which to understand the growth of modern historical thinking and as a method for historical analysis. The first part of the article investigates the emergence of the temporal utopia in the modern period and its entanglement with history. The second part of the article begins to trace the contours of utopia as a framework for interrogating history. This framework draws from a branch of utopianism, adapted from the work of Ruth Levitas and Fredric Jameson, via reference to Michel Foucault's writing on genealogical methods. The article ends by highlighting some examples of historical studies in which the future emerges as an analytical category, to signal a way forward for utopia as a method of historical analysis.

**KEYWORDS:** Utopia, history, modernity, archaeology, genealogy, method

In the conclusion of *A Singular Modernity* Fredric Jameson contends that "ontologies of the present demand archaeologies of the future, not forecasts of the past."[1] In this directive, there is a rejection of the limited scope of future projection, as a continuation of the same, and a call to excavate those emergent impulses in the present that push the boundaries of what seems possible. Jameson's argument is that, to find openings for a better future, the present must be historicized, a strategy that elsewhere in his work has been identified with the narrative function of utopian and speculative fiction.[2] Jameson's view feeds into broader debates in utopian studies about the capacity of utopian literature to provide critical

perspectives on present social systems and, from the standpoint of historical utopian texts, to mediate between the world that is and the world that is coming to be. These ideas have largely circulated among scholars of literary studies, for whom it is established practice to ground texts in the historical conditions of their production.[3] Yet, an approach that considers utopias as both historical artifacts and one source of societies' past hopes could also be adapted for the study of history, and has implications for recovering the future as a realm of historical inquiry. In this context, utopia's potential to expand the modalities within which history has been written and thought—a shift from "what happened" toward "what might have been"—begins to be revealed.

In the following discussion, the conceptual category of utopia is used, both as a lens through which to understand the growth of modern historical thinking, and as a method of historical analysis. The first part of the article investigates the emergence of the temporal utopia in the modern period and its entanglement with history. I argue that utopia—understood as a historical form of modernity—may be peculiarly suited to the task of diagnosing the ambitions and scope of the future in a given present. The second part of the article begins to trace the contours of utopia as a framework for interrogating history. This framework turns to a branch of utopianism, adapted from the work of Ruth Levitas and Fredric Jameson, via reference to Michel Foucault's writing on genealogical methods. Finally, I touch on some examples of historical studies in which the future is positioned as an analytical category, to signal a way forward for utopia as a method of historical analysis.

## Utopia as a Historical Form of Modernity

The designation and naming of utopia as such originates in Thomas More's *Utopia*, first published in Latin in 1516. The utopian tradition that stems from More's text has been characterized as geographically and historically specific, as opposed to broader definitions

that encompass a vast range of symbolic expressions of hope in human thought and communication.[4] Fundamental to this tradition is the influence of European overseas colonization, which would provide the basis for the establishment of capitalism as a world system. Scholars have drawn attention to colonial currents in modern utopias via the conception of land as *terra nullius* (no place) and the use of temporal modalities to reinforce and naturalize hierarchies of civilization and progress.[5] The lineage of these utopias must also be understood within the context of modernity, a temporal structure that distinguishes itself as qualitatively new, and which constantly reasserts itself on the basis of an ever-receding and -expanding past.[6] Here, I will first elaborate on the defining features of modernity as an ethos and an experience, then show how utopia gives narrative expression to the developing historical consciousness of the modern period through recourse to a progressive future. Among the many theorists who have written on modernity, it is the philosopher Michel Foucault and the conceptual historian Reinhart Koselleck who are best placed to give an account that speaks to tracing this phenomenon.[7]

At first sight, the attempt to bring Foucault into dialogue with theories of utopia is counterintuitive, since much of his career was spent dismantling such universalizing systems.[8] Yet his historical-critical mode of investigation is well equipped to respond to the question of utopia as a historical form of modernity. During the 1970s he started to propose that historical inquiry should involve a critical appraisal of the present rather than a reconstruction of the past. In one of his last essays, “What Is Enlightenment?,” Foucault borrows the title of the 1784 essay by Immanuel Kant to give an analysis of the philosopher’s position and to pose the question again two centuries later. Kant describes Enlightenment as a measure of “man’s release from his self-incurred immaturity,” a breaking with the past as a source of authority.[9] For Foucault, this break underpins the basis of an entire form of philosophical reflection, “the mode of reflective relation to the present,” which is concerned

at the most basic level with what difference today introduces with respect to yesterday. He suggests, "We must try to proceed with the analysis of ourselves as beings who are historically determined, to a certain extent, by the Enlightenment," that is, through recognition of our constitution through modern institutions and power relations, although these are nevertheless the focus of critique.[10]

Foucault also identifies in Kant's essay a critical ontology of the present, when the idea of the contemporary moment first becomes apparent. In trying to draw out the attributes of "being modern," Foucault moves from Kant to a consideration of Charles Baudelaire's poetry. Baudelaire's interest in the "ephemeral, the fleeting, the contingent" is in keeping with the sense of temporal rupture experienced as part of modernity, but Foucault locates the attitude of being modern in the response to that experience, an attitude in which "the high value of the present is indissociable from a desperate eagerness to imagine it, to imagine it otherwise than it is, and to transform it not by destroying it but by grasping it in what it is." He writes, "Baudelairian modernity is an exercise in which extreme attention to what is real is confronted with the practice of liberty that simultaneously respects reality and violates it."[11] Foucault's acute observation, that the ethos of modernity is defined by its simultaneous respect for and defiance of reality, is complex, involving the difficult performance of imagination and realization. The narrative form of this ethos can be discerned in the modern utopian tradition and its move from space to time. Further exploration of the historical dimensions of modernity will clarify the way in which utopian narratives became future-oriented and the basis upon which they were legitimated.

The date of Kant's essay was 1784, and the second half of the eighteenth century is also the period in which Koselleck notes a growing awareness of the difference of the past, when time itself gains a historical quality.[12] His argument is that this disjuncture between the past and the future creates the conditions for the rise of modern consciousness. Under these

conditions, the relationship of a given present to a given past and future is constituted by the horizons of experience and expectation. Along with his description of historical time, which is marked by development and transition, Koselleck isolates progress as “a modern category whose content of experience and whose surplus of expectation was not available before the eighteenth century.”[13] Originally associated with a natural, spatial movement forward, progress was temporalized and generalized during the eighteenth century and came to refer to the progress of history or the progress of humanity (narrowly defined). The critical mode that enabled Kant to consider his own present and use autonomous reason is the same mechanism that facilitates the transformation of progress into a task of infinite human striving, through a process of social-technological advancement.

Progress is also at the heart of Koselleck’s discussion of utopia, which directly addresses the arrival of the future within it, what he terms “the temporalization of utopia.” Through analysis of the novel *The Year 2440* by Louis-Sébastien Mercier, he demonstrates how utopian narratives became aligned with progress in the conceptualization of a better future. Mercier’s utopia is interesting for several reasons; the first edition of 1770 was published around the time the first Europeans reached the east coast of Australia and represents, for Koselleck, the stage at which “utopian spaces had been surpassed by experience.”[14] The limits of what was discoverable within the settler colonial project thus shifted the European utopian imagination from the spatial to the temporal mode.

The method by which Mercier establishes the legitimacy of his vision is also notable. The city of 2440 is still recognizably Paris but, predictably, the streets are cleaner and the citizens more considerate. The effect of such a device, as Koselleck explains, is that the credibility of the utopia relies on points of connection to the empirically redeemable present.[15] Here, the ethos of modernity that Foucault describes becomes discernible; the futuristic utopia displays close attention to features of the present, onto which the imagination

is imposed to create a more desirable situation. The future is not beyond the present's reach but perceived, rather, as a rational extension of current conditions. Further, the surplus of expectation, identified by Koselleck in the concept of progress transforms hopes and desires into the inevitable outcome of a process of improvement and this quality is exemplified in *The Year 2440*. While the novel's setting derives its futuristic element from progressive Enlightenment thinking, Koselleck notes that the theoretical foundation of progress is actually much older, originating in the classical doctrine of *perfectio*, which went from being understood as a goal or ideal state to a path of development, giving momentum to the notion of a perfectible society. To emphasize the significance of the connection, Koselleck makes reference to the political theory of Jean-Jacques Rousseau and his account of perfectibility. In Rousseau's view the human capacity to produce and organize, to build civilizations, is countered by the increased risk of decay, through violence, destruction, and moral corruption. It is those technological gains that fuel the possibility of catastrophe and mass death, and the redefinition of progress as an infinite and unfinished task only makes the chances of decay more likely.[16] Progress thus finds its dialectical corrective in the concept of decline, exposing the preclusion of that dynamic in Mercier's utopia, which is a unidirectional extension of the present.

Koselleck's work scrutinizes temporal modalities such as progress and decline and their contingent relation to the present.[17] These modalities hold various degrees of tension or mixing between the past and the future, giving shape to the historical consciousness that distinguishes modernity. Narratives of progress have been found to structure modern utopias, as in *The Year 2440*, a temporal scale that is also inflected in interpretations of the past. That is not to imply that utopia can only be understood via recourse to progress; rather, progress occurs as a distinctive feature in modern utopian narratives and is perhaps best discerned as a symptom of historical change. With regard to historical inquiry, then, one approach to

understanding such changes involves attempting to draw out how different kinds of future horizons are materialized in a given historical present. The next section will focus on the structural logic of these horizons in order to flesh out the dynamics of utopia as a method of historical analysis.

## Excavating the Future

The foregoing discussion of utopia has shown the futurity of the concept to be historically contingent, coinciding with the transformation of progress as part of the emergence of historical thinking in the eighteenth century; in other words, the temporality of utopia is inseparable from modernity, though not, as indicated, inseparable from narratives of progress. As Phillip E. Wegner observes, "all [. . .] works that participate in the generic institution of the narrative utopia are involved in the project of remaking the form so that it will be adequate to a changing experience of modernity."[18] Therefore, in considering the question of utopia as method, it may be possible to mobilize the remaking of the utopian form to open up perspectives on history.

The work of Ruth Levitas offers a clear and sustained treatment of utopian methods, in particular her 2013 publication *Utopia as Method: The Imaginary Reconstitution of Society*.[19] In it she builds on her research on the concept of utopia and the historical shifts that have influenced the form, function, or content of the utopian imagination. Levitas's recognition of the limitations that follow from defining utopia based on these categories leads her to call for an analytic definition, which would establish a common point of reference across various manifestations of utopianism. She goes on to propose that the desire for a better or different way of living fulfills that role, whereby the disruption of the present in anticipation of a future state of satisfaction becomes the focus, rather than what is desired or the prospect for the desire to be realized. This definition has the capacity to reconcile

numerous disagreements within the field of utopian thought, and points toward a way of thinking about utopia as method. As Levitas explains: "A definition of utopia in terms of desire is analytic rather than descriptive. It generates a method which is primarily hermeneutic but which repeatedly returns us from existential and aesthetic concerns to the social and structural domain."[20] In highlighting the link between utopia and desire, Levitas is influenced by Miguel Abensour's notion of the education of desire, which he defines as the organizing function in *News from Nowhere* by William Morris.[21]

The work of Ernst Bloch is equally significant for her development of the hermeneutic of utopia and the idea of a utopian impulse that underpins the desire for social transformation. Bloch argued that the traces of this impulse could be found in a vast array of social and cultural forms, what he called "anticipatory consciousness" of the future within the present.[22] Against the view that such traces only constitute compensatory fantasies, he asserted that they may be understood as a set of real but not existing possibilities; therefore, the transcendental aspects of utopia could be located within the immanent, material world. However, Bloch also distinguished between those futures that were real possibilities and those that were not in terms of abstract and concrete utopias. Whereas abstract utopia was comprised of wishful thinking and escapism, concrete utopia held the potential for effective change. Hence, his central concept of the "not yet" (simultaneously an expected, future presence and a current absence) refers to real possibilities which are not yet actual because they have not fulfilled all the conditions of their possibility.[23]

It is this embedded quality in human practice and culture that is a source of influence for Levitas. Her thinking around the analytical definition of utopia, also described as the Imaginary Reonstitution of Society (IROS), develops a link between utopia and the speculative strand of sociology and focuses on the importance of society imagined differently. Levitas proposes a tripartite structure for IROS: the archaeological mode, as a

piecing together of the images of the good society that are embedded in political programs and social and economic policies; the ontological mode, as a questioning of what kinds of ways of being are shaped by particular societies; and the architectural mode, as the imagination of potential alternative scenarios for the future. It is possible to see parallels between IROS and other forms of critique, and Levitas is quick to dispel the idea that it constitutes the *invention* of a method.[24] She stresses that the different modes are part of the same method, subject to shifting emphases, although there are clearly separate implications for each. Most relevant here is IROS in its critical, archaeological mode. Levitas elaborates on the details of utopia as archaeology as follows:

> Archaeology undertakes excavations and reconstructions of both artefacts or cultures, based on a mixture of evidence, deduction and imagination, representing as whole something of which only shards and fragments remain. Where images of the good society are buried and denied, they are rendered partial and fragmentary. Utopia as archaeology entails the imaginary reconstitution of the models of the good society underpinning policy, politics and culture, exposing them to scrutiny and critique.[25]

In her uptake of archaeological tropes, Levitas shares some affinities with Jameson's designation of utopia. Jameson's 2005 anthology, *Archaeologies of the Future: The Desire Called Utopia and Other Science Fictions*, investigates the development of the utopian form and its relationship with science fiction. His study is written in the Marxist intellectual tradition and is concerned with the dialectics and contemporary political relevance of utopia. Similarly informed by the distinction between the utopian program and the utopian impulse, he too draws attention to the effectiveness of Bloch's interpretive principle in revealing "the operation of the Utopian impulse in unsuspected places, where it is concealed or repressed."[26] However, in his literary critical account, Jameson concentrates on utopian texts, developing insights from his earlier writing about the ideological and utopian features of works of art.

*Archaeologies* does not expand fully on the structural significance of the archaeological for utopia, although Jameson does comment in a footnote: "Utopia, which combines the not yet-being of the future with a textual existence in the present is no less worthy of the archaeologies we are willing to grant to the trace," marking his interest in excavating ontologies of the future.[27]

In a later 2010 essay, "Utopia as Method, or the Uses of the Future," Jameson considers the operation of utopia in more detail, again gesturing toward archaeology and Foucault's genealogies.[28] He writes:

> I consider the utopian method outlined here as neither a hermeneutic nor a political programme, but rather something like the structural inversion of what Foucault, following Nietzsche, called the genealogy [. . .] The genealogy was, in effect, to be understood as neither chronological nor narrative but rather a logical operation. [. . .] The operation, however, consists in a prodigious effort to change the valences on phenomena that so far exist only in our own present and experimentally to declare positive things that are clearly negative in our own world, to affirm dystopia is in reality utopia if examined more closely, to isolate specific features in our empirical present so as to read them as components of a different system.[29]

Genealogical inquiry entails an interpretive principle that historicizes the emergence of truths and essences in societies, regarding as fragments those elements that appear unified.[30] The utopian version, described by Jameson, locates components of a different system in the future dimensions of current phenomena, in order to disrupt the systematic nature of history and the social totality.[31] That is not to say that Jameson aligns himself with a Foucauldian approach; in advancing his Marxist hermeneutic, he has explicitly challenged Foucault and other poststructuralist thinkers.[32] Rather, the reference to genealogy would suggest that he is interested in the structural conditions of possibility for ideological closure. This indicates a

move away from some of the more problematic concepts in Bloch's philosophy, which has attracted criticism for the anticipatory function it assigns to utopia. For example, Matthew Charles points out that the surplus of intentional expectation that grounds the idea of anticipatory consciousness has a tendency to reassert, rather than disrupt, historical continuity.[33]

Levitas shows awareness of such criticisms in her discussion of utopias and literary theory and is in turn critical of Jameson and the fact that his work underscores the limits of our ability to imagine the future. She argues, "overemphasis on openness, process and impossibility [. . .] and sidestepping the substance of imagined alternatives can go too far." Levitas's concern with utopian impulses is primarily oriented toward uncovering images of the "good society," which is connected to her aim of reinstating utopia within the discipline of sociology. Therefore, the social function of utopia is important, and her overall project is more unequivocally Blochian in the sense that she foregrounds the causal role of utopia: "The utopian method allows preferred futures—including the survival of humanity on earth—their proper causal role in the emergent future."[34]

In articulating a utopian method of historical analysis, it is possible to draw elements from both Levitas and Jameson. While Levitas's methodological study of utopia is useful, Jameson provides important insights in relation to the structural logic of the utopian form, the full implications of which are not explained in Levitas's scheme. If genealogical methods enable a critique of ideas or truths that appear naturalized in the present, they can potentially do the same from the perspective of the future and make evident the partial utopian content of ideological propositions. As indicated earlier, Foucault's qualified suspicion of utopia as society in its perfected form is potentially problematic for a theoretical framework that aligns him with methodological utopianism. However, Jameson's formulation of the utopian method as a structural inversion of genealogy points toward how they might be made compatible.

Where Foucault examines how systems of thought have defined the boundaries of knowledge and truth, Jameson uses the standpoint of the future to excavate emergent features of "a different system." In both cases, there is no essential meaning to be interpreted; the move consists, rather, in performing a critique of the historical present from the perspective of the past and the future respectively, on the understanding that meaning is always already conditioned by historically contingent relations of power.[35]

**Toward Utopia as a Method of Historical Analysis**

Foucault's genealogical method sharpens those insights about utopia's archaeological potential in Levitas and Jameson, giving a sense of how the task of "excavating the future" might be achieved. In the context of history, this task must be applied to the question of past futures. By way of conclusion, I will touch on some studies that succeed in excavating dimensions of the future in their analysis, deploying tactics that constitute an innovation in the form of historical writing. Although their approaches are distinct, in each there is an emphasis on how hopes for the future have been manifested in the past, which is characteristic of a utopian mode of historical analysis.

As discussed previously, Koselleck's conceptual historical project has been influential in establishing a framework for modern understandings of time and history. The cultural anthropologist David Scott has a longstanding engagement with how narratives of the past shape political thought and generate or foreclose future possibilities and has drawn from Koselleck's work to address the problem of the future in historical temporality.[36] This method informs his 2004 book *Conscripts of Modernity: The Tragedy of Colonial Enlightenment*, in which Scott's subject is *The Black Jacobins* (1938), CLR James's history of the Haitian Revolution (1791–1804). James's republication of the book in 1963, including new material that reflected on the "tragic alternatives" faced by the revolutionaries, forms the basis of

Scott's argument that James's revision signals a recognition of the significance of tragedy to questions of colonialism and revolution, twenty-five years after the first publication of the book. Such a recognition, Scott observes, "depends upon identifying the difference between the questions that animated former presents and those that animate our own."[37] While in close dialogue with questions of history, Scott's project is ultimately centered on the (postcolonial) present and on how to reconceptualize the past in order to imagine futures beyond the utopias that animated former anticolonial struggles. As he writes in the prologue to the book,

> part of what it will mean to imagine new futures out of the uncertain presents we live in is a fresh encounter with *The Black Jacobins*. This is because James' fidelity to the present out of which (his questions about the future) arose ought to inspire us to seek out the historical idioms and historical rhythms in which our own present might yield to us a desirable future.[38]

In broader terms, then, *Conscripts of Modernity* deals with the historical shifts in past and present hopes in order to diagnose their emergent energies and possibilities.

Kristin Ross is also attentive to the political energies of imagined futures in her work, an aim that is made explicit in *Communal Luxury: The Political Imaginary of the Paris Commune* (2015). The book combines history and critical theory to flesh out a lived historical landscape of the Commune and to explore its impact on the political thought of figures such as Peter Kropotkin, William Morris, and Elisée Reclus. Ross emphasizes that in the writing of Morris and Reclus the new "could only be modeled on anachronisms land-locked in the present," referencing their reworking of the medieval commune to provide the basis for a transformed future. Along similar lines, she focuses on how ideas and figures from the past—notably that of *commune*—helped to shape "a mode of being intensely in the present" for those that participated in the events of 1871. Ross's desire to recover the utopian impulse of the Paris Commune is connected to her interest in unmooring it from the narrative flow of

French national history and affirming its internationalist scope. Elsewhere in the book, decentralizing the flow of history is credited as "a way of allowing other paths taken through historical time, including the time to come, to become visible." As such, *Communal Luxury* is both historical and present-oriented, and Ross suggests that "like Walter Benjamin [. . .], I believe that there are moments when a particular event or struggle enters vividly into the figurability of the present, and this seems to me to be the case with the Commune today."[39] Drawing parallels between the lived experience of the Commune as "equality in action" and contemporary efforts to "live differently" in the capitalist global economy, Ross registers the utopian function of the commune-form and its potential to imaginatively expand the political horizons of the future.

In *Freedom Time: Negritude, Decolonization, and the Future of the World* (2015), Gary Wilder's study of the intellectual thought of Aimé Césaire and Leopold Senghor, the work of Koselleck is used once again, to highlight the qualitative dimensions of time, and the "untimeliness" of modern temporality, a key analytical trope in the book. Wilder explores Césaire's and Senghor's attentiveness to the complex relationship between politics and time in their writings on colonial emancipation, and their concern with how French colonies could achieve self-determination without state sovereignty. He situates these thinkers in a constellation with Frankfurt School figures such as Theodor Adorno, Walter Benjamin, and Ernst Bloch, who together "reveal the dreamlike, poetic, and untimely aspects of the world-historical moment they inhabited." Taking his cue from this group of writers, Wilder foregrounds the politics of the untimely in the present, especially as it applies to the realm of action; that is, to the capacity of social actors "to misrecognize or deliberately conflate one historical period for another, to act as if they inhabited an epoch that had already passed or had not yet arrived."[40] He claims that untimely practices enabled Césaire and Senghor to

cultivate an orientation toward the future that transcended the French national imaginary and anticipated a new stage of world history.

These examples do not comprise an exhaustive survey of scholarship, which could be called utopian in its approach to history, not least because the focus has been limited to English-language publications. Rather, such works are representative of the tendencies I have sought to distinguish in this article, of excavating past hopes as a legitimate realm of historical inquiry. They also contribute to the work of unsettling the colonial foundations of the modern utopia; Scott and Wilder through showing how the motif of a desirable alternative future could be mobilized as a strategy of resistance by colonized peoples; Ross by narrating how the communards sought a disidentification from French nationalism, condemning colonial repressions.[41] Finally, such studies provide the necessary groundwork for further research, particularly in relation to the realm of revolutionary history, in which an (often fraught) engagement with utopian thought is explicitly articulated.[42] My aim here has been to argue for the centrality of the utopian impulse in animating these efforts, and to illustrate how the structural logic of utopia, in its archaeological form, can be utilized in historical analysis.

**Notes**

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[1] Fredric Jameson, *A Singular Modernity* (London: Verso, 2002), 215.

[2] See Fredric Jameson, *Archaeologies of the Future: The Desire Called Utopia and Other Science Fictions* (London: Verso, 2005).

[3] See, e.g., Phillip E. Wegner, *Imaginary Communities: Utopia, the Nation, and the Spatial Histories of Modernity* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2002).

[4] See Krishan Kumar, *Utopia and Anti-Utopia in Modern Times* (Oxford: Basil Blackwell, 1987).

[5] See, e.g., Antonis Balasopoulos, "Unworldly Worldliness: America and the Trajectories of Utopian Expansionism," *Utopian Studies* 15, no. 2 (2004): 3–35; Johannes Fabian, *Time and the Other: How Anthropology Makes Its Object* (New York: Columbia University Press, 2014); Karl Hardy, "Unsettling Hope: Settler-Colonialism and Utopianism," *Spaces of Utopia: An Electronic Journal* 2, no. 1 (2012): 123–36.

[6] See Peter Osborne, "Modernity Is a Qualitative, Not a Chronological, Category," *New Left Review* 1, no. 192 (1992): 65–84; Osborne, *The Politics of Time: Modernity and Avant-garde* (London: Verso, 1995).

[7] Foucault's history of critique in "What Is Enlightenment?' is comparable to Koselleck's conceptual histories, and his identification of Enlightenment critique that relied on the philosophy of history as progress.

[8] See, e.g., Michel Foucault, "Texts/Contexts: Of Other Spaces," *Diacritics* 16, no. 1 (1989): 22–27.

[9] Immanuel Kant, "What Is Enlightenment?," in *The Enlightenment: A Sourcebook and Reader*, ed. Paul Hyland with Olga Gomez and Francesca Greensides (London: Routledge), 53.

[10] Michel Foucault, "What Is Enlightenment?," in *The Foucault Reader*, ed. Paul Rabinow (New York: Pantheon Books, 1984), 32–50, https://foucault.info/documents/foucault.whatIsEnlightenment.en/ (accessed October 10, 2020).

[11] Ibid.

[12] Reinhart Koselleck, "The Eighteenth Century as the Beginning of Modernity," in Koselleck, *The Practice of Conceptual History: Timing History, Spacing Concepts* (Stanford, CA: Stanford University Press, 2002), 154–69 (165).

[13] Koselleck, "'Progress' and 'Decline': An Appendix to the History of Two Concepts," in ibid., 218–35 (219).

[14] Koselleck, "The Temporalization of Utopia," in ibid., 84–99 (84, 86).

[15] Ibid., 88.

[16] Ibid., 91.

[17] See also Reinhart Koselleck, *Futures Past: On the Semantics of Historical Time* (New York: Columbia University Press, 2004).

[18] Wegner, *Imaginary Communities*, xxiii.

[19] See also Ruth Levitas, *The Concept of Utopia* (Syracuse, NY: Syracuse University Press, 1990).

[20] Ruth Levitas, *Utopia as Method: The Imaginary Reconstitution of Society* (Hounmills, Basingstoke, Hampshire: Palgrave Macmillan, 2013), xiii.

[21] Miguel Abensour, "William Morris: The Politics of Romance," in *Revolutionary Romanticism*, ed. Max Blechman (San Francisco: City Lights Books, 1999), 125–61 (145).

[22] Ernst Bloch, *The Principle of Hope*, Vol. 1, trans. by Neville Plaice, Stephen Plaice, and Paul Knight (Cambridge, MA: MIT Press, 1986), 12–13.

[23] Wayne Hudson, *The Marxist Philosophy of Ernst Bloch* (London: Macmillan, 1982), 90.

[24] Levitas, *Utopia as Method*, 184, xvii, xiv.

[25] Ibid., 154.

[26] Jameson, *Archaeologies of the Future*, 3.

[27] For further discussion, see Ian Buchanan, “Metacommentary on Utopia, or Jameson's Dialectic of Hope,” *Utopian Studies* 9, no. 2 (1998): 18–30; Peter Fitting, “The Concept of Utopia in the Work of Fredric Jameson,” *Utopian Studies* 9, no. 2 (1998): 8–17.

[28] Archaeology and genealogy are similar methods used by Foucault but where the former principally addresses the organization of knowledge production and power relations, the latter is concerned with how (through this organization) truth and falsehood come to be distinguished.

[29] Fredric Jameson, “Utopia as Method, or the Uses of the Future,” in *Utopia/Dystopia: Conditions of Historical Possibility*, ed. Michael D. Gordin, Helen Tilley, and Gyan Prakash (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 2010), 21–44 (42).

[30] Foucault’s method has been described by Hubert L. Dreyfus and Paul Rabinow as combining “a type of archaeological analysis which preserves the distancing effect of structuralism, and an interpretive dimension which develops the hermeneutic insight that the investigator is always situated and must understand the meaning of his cultural practices from within them,” in *Michel Foucault: Beyond Structuralism and Hermeneutics* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press: 1983), xii.

[31] Jameson, *Archaeologies of the Future*, xii.

[32] For example, Jameson acknowledges “a new hermeneutic, is already to announce a whole polemic program, which must necessarily come to terms with a critical and theoretical climate variously hostile to these slogans. It is, for instance, increasingly clear that hermeneutic or interpretive activity has become one of the basic polemic targets of contemporary post-structuralism in France,” in *The Political Unconscious: Narrative as a Socially Symbolic Act* (London: Routledge, 2002), 5.

[33] Matthew Charles, "Utopia and Its Discontents: Dreams of Catastrophe and the End of 'the End of History,'" *Studies in Social and Political Thought* 18 (Winter 2010): 29–40 (37).

[34] Levitas, *Utopia as Method*, 124, 218.

[35] For Foucault, part of this critique consisted in producing counter-histories and reading alternative accounts into the dominant narratives of history. For Jameson, utopia at once challenges the existing order and surfaces currently unrealizable futures in the present. Raymond Williams is a source of influence for Jameson here; see Raymond Williams, "Dominant, Residual, and Emergent," in Williams, *Marxism and Literature* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1977), 121–27.

[36] See David Scott, *Refashioning Futures: Criticism after Postcoloniality* (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 1999).

[37] David Scott, *Conscripts of Modernity: The Tragedy of Colonial Enlightenment* (Durham, NC: Duke University Press, 2004), 3.

[38] Ibid. 22.

[39] Kristin Ross, *Communal Luxury: The Political Imaginary of the Paris Commune* (London: Verso, 2015), 116, 29, 74, 2.

[40] Gary Wilder, *Freedom Time: Negritude, Decolonization, and the Future of the World* (Durham, NC: Duke University Press, 2015), 48, 37.

[41] Ross, *Communal Luxury*, 32.

[42] See, e.g., Danny Evans and Liz Stainforth, *Anarchism and Utopia in the Spanish Civil War* (Madrid: Desperate Literature, 2017).