

On Communism, Science Fiction, and Utopia: The Blagoevgrad Theses

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[What is necessary] is a theory that thinks the whole in its untruth.¹

What these Utopian oppositions allow us to do is by way of negation, to grasp the moment of truth of each term. Put the other way around, the value of each term is differential, it lies not in its own substantive content but as an ideological critique of its opposite number.²

Nun muss sich alles, alles ändern.³

These theses are written in the mode of a hypothetical imperative.

Truth in advertising: I was asked to open the conference "Science Fiction and Communism" organized by the American University in Bulgaria, Blagoevgrad, in May 2018.⁴ I couldn't attend, but we agreed I should send theses to be read at the beginning of the final wrap-up discussion, in which I then participated via Skype. Those theses lacked the final section on anti-utopia and counterrevolution (included here), planned then but written later. For both time and recapitulation reasons, I have used here large chunks of my previous texts. I hope regrouping and bringing them to a new point might result in further insight, and thus still be of help. A radical novelty might be found in the expression "anti-utopia as counterrevolution," articulated in the final section.

At the strategic beginning of *Works and Days*, Hesiod puts the allegory of the two Erises or Strifes. The first one makes for pernicious war and discord. The second is the good Strife that urges the mortals to work, for potter vies with potter and a singer

with another singer. I find this *splitting of notions* into good versus bad a most useful procedure, for it allows both a conservation of cultural inheritance and its radical renewal. Of course, this binary heuristic has to be believably supplemented in any particular investigation by an analogue spread between two ideal poles.

1. Good versus Bad Communism

Premise: We are talking about the relation between the original Marxian project of full social emancipation of people versus the state, of political relationships between people and institutions. We may identify the two poles as: Communism 1, or a real plebeian, direct-democracy communism that liberates and empowers people (C1), versus Communism 2, or the official state-party communism, at its beginnings often emancipatory but then as a rule devolving into statics and repression (C2). C1 is the axiological sense of the notion, or Ernst Bloch's "concrete utopia," C2 is its pragmatic embodiment in so-called "really obtaining socialism" of the 20th Century, paradoxically evolving from eutopia to dystopia — and finally, in the return to capitalism, to open anti-utopia.⁵

Thesis 1.1: To Rework Marx

When the communist state freed itself from capitalist class rule while preserving, in the best case, a capitalist organization of production and bourgeois law and while operating on the world capitalist market, the working people or plebeians were not freed from the "capital relationship," that is, the exploitation of labour and all particular group and personal egotisms that arise from it. This was accompanied by other class alienation factors: the legacy of patriarchal despotism, gender discrimination, city vs. country, intellectual vs. manual labor, and ecological blindness.

Political and legal emancipation through the state is, no doubt, a big step forward. It is the final step of human emancipation possible in the hitherto existing macro-framework of states and classes.

However, when people proclaim themselves socialist/communist *through the medium of the state*, they still remain non-communist (not C1 but C2), because they acknowledge themselves only through an intermediary, as in a lay religion: The state is the intermediary between people and their freedom. Similar to a state which professes religion, the so-called communist state is the imperfect state, and communism is regarded by it as the supplementation and sanctification of its imperfection. Communism thus necessarily becomes a means, and the state — a hypocritical state.

Thesis 1.2: On Party/State Communism

But what are the *limits of applicability* of this argument, adapted as closely as possible from Marx's *Jewish Question*?

A central hypothesis for understanding "real socialism," as argued in my book on SFR Yugoslavia *Splendor*, is that *the Party/State government was a two-headed Janus*

(at its progressive best, ca. 1945-68). It was then not only a factor of alienation, but also the initiator and lever of real liberation — up to a certain limit (the liberation is important and the limit is important). Liberation: banishment of occupiers and collaborators — capitalists, bureaucrats, and mercenaries — hence independence of the country as a prerequisite for all other moves toward self-government (Tito); nationalization and creation of a unified planned economy (Kidrič); realization of a bourgeois revolution, with universally accessible education up to and including the university level, in a patriarchal-comprador and despotic country; first steps toward a communist solidarity (the welfare state). This opened the doors to a possibility of full freedom or disalienation, its emblem was policy. It was a road to C1.

Limit: at the same time, the Party/State government was an intermediary and custodian of a liberation that increasingly turned towards oppression; in SFRY, the oligarchy grew in the sixties into a consolidated class, mercilessly suppressing the 1968 student revolt in Belgrade. In the Soviet Union, this happened in the bloodiest turn to Stalinism after 1928.⁶ The Party/State machine closed the doors to Marx's full human emancipation, its emblem was the *police*. C2 was fossilizing and fencing in C1.

Gloss: The historian can find overlapping causes for this enclosure: The Stalinist tradition of monolithism and non-transparency (obtaining in all states that did not have a radical bourgeois revolution); the strong economic and ideological pressures of capitalism from outside, and then increasingly from inside as well; the unfavorable turn of capitalist world market after 1973 against smaller and poorer states; and so forth. But the stone does not excuse the fallen.

Thesis 1.3: The Aporia and the Alternative

In revolutionary periods when state power is born violently out of society, when liberation through the state is the form in which people strive towards their liberation, in this time of etatistic self-confidence, the state seeks to suppress its prerequisite, the society of citizens, and to constitute itself as the real human fullness, devoid of contradictions. But the state can achieve this only by coming into violent contradiction with its own presuppositions, by permanent repressive violence, and the drama necessarily ends with a change in the character of the state or a change in the character of the society.

Only when real, individual people re-absorb in themselves the abstract citizen of the state and when individual humans have become in their day-to-day life, work, and relationships integrally human beings, only when people have recognized and organized their own powers as *societal* powers, and, consequently, no longer separate social power from themselves in the shape of state power, only then will human emancipation have been accomplished.

A real and integral democracy, both political and economic, is communist (C1): in it, people and their associations would be carriers of self-determination and self-awareness restraining and humanizing the often necessary state. Official state

communism (C2), however, may at best — when it is not simply a lying veil for a police state — dream of and postulate the sovereignty of humanity as the highest being, but this being is different from “really existing” people, the tangible reality, present material existence.

Gloss: Thus, whenever the state (C2) suppresses plebeian democracy from below (C1) — Stalinism, today the state capitalism in PR China and elsewhere — this is a counter-revolution that annuls the beginnings of disalienation (Enlightenment, welfare state, attempts at self-government, etc). My metamorphosis of Luxemburg’s slogan “socialism or barbarism” in conditions of hegemonic world capitalism with permanent warfare is: “Communism as plebeian democracy (C1) or counter-revolution into savagery.”⁷

2. Good versus Bad Science Fiction (Criteria)

Premise: We are talking about the ideal poles of useful vs. harmful in the narrative incarnation of a science-fictional stance of cognitive estrangement and of focus on a *novum*.

Thesis 2.1: On Estrangement Theory

Estrangement always comports and signals the fact that a semantic shift, one putting a dominant stifling norm into doubt, has occurred. It uses pleasurable perception against positivistic illusionism and Kantian *interesselos* (ambiguously “disinterested”) aesthetics. However, epistemologically, which today means also politically, estrangement has two poles, *the mythical* and *the critical*.

Brecht provides one “ideal type” of the critical method. In it plotting proceeds by fits and starts, akin to what Eisenstein called a montage of attractions. The intervals tend to destroy illusion and to paralyze the audience’s readiness to empathize. Their purpose is to enable the spectator to adopt a critical attitude both towards the represented behavior of the play’s agents and towards the way in which this behavior is represented. It is therefore also a permanent self-criticism. This means there is in Brecht’s plays no suspense as to whether and how a goal will be reached, but instead a convergence towards increased clarification as to the nature and causes of the conditions uncovered and seen afresh; the goal is implicitly presupposed and subtending the events. To the suspense of illusionistic theatre or media this opposes astonishment at many ensuing events and the human condition they delineate, differing from the humanizing goal and ideal.

The other pole is best represented in fascist ideologies: Knut Hamsun, Ernst Jünger or Ezra Pound practiced an estrangement wedded to various proto-fascist myths, rightly identifying liberal ideologies as hypocritical and wrongly arguing for a return to simplified brutality. To take a poetically pertinent example, Ezra Pound’s powerful invocation and condemnation of *usura* in the *Pisan Cantos* is a major semantic shift or estrangement of those aspects of capitalism that the “Left” fascists were

sincerely (though quite inconsequentially) spurning. However, as all such fixations on a supposed hierarchical *Gemeinschaft*, it is a cognitively sterile — or even actively misleading — estrangement: It does not make for a permanent critique and renewal but leads back to as dogmatic and pernicious certainties as in the most hidebound epochs, in a way worse than the conservative certainties it was rejecting. It spurns self-criticism as bloodless intellectualism; protofascism or full fascism is always dead certain.

Gloss: In short, in today's retrospect, estrangement (*Verfremdung*) is a neutral technical term, akin to Shklovsky's only perceptive — or at best aesthetic — *ostranenie*.⁸

Thesis 2.2: Toward Estrangement Practice

I have argued in *To Brecht* that Brecht's *Caucasian Chalk Circle* is to be understood as an open dramaturgy, opposed to predetermined religious as well as Stalinist horizons, embodying a directionally oriented but open, tendentially possible, just, and redemptive history. The historicity of matters shown is retained and encouraged but inserted within a formal process participating of utopian expectation. To apply Auerbach's *Mimesis*, it is a figural allegory "far more indirect, complex, and charged with history than the symbol or the myth," but its use of venerable or legendary matters is "youthful and new-born as a purposive, creative, concrete interpretation of universal history." It uses a lay and earthly pluri-temporality in all its sensory differentiations. Instead of an incarnation of the word, Brecht and his ilk start from a topological and verbal rationalization of the flesh and body, where the sensual and the visionary are not sundered. History does not end, so that each point reached is also the starting point for new contradictions and resolutions, subject to new estrangements.

Estrangement is then, at best, a periscope or prism to help us see ourselves in a different light, as the stranger of strangers or Other of the others — and often at that as the powerful Other against the powerless, humiliated, and exploited others (say the "extracommunitarians" of Africa and Asia drowning off our shores, or inside our society together with the native proletarians). It is clearly akin to the utopian slogan "things could be not so but radically different," to the *novum*, as well as to the shocking recognition of beauty as a kind of estrangement-effect alerting us to aliveness.

True, it is one matter to digest a perceptual-cum-cognitive shock, another to pass from an understanding to effecting change. Logically this may be a small and almost immediate step, practically it is a huge and time-consuming leap with a series of complex mediations. Thus this theoretical premise demands in any particular case a properly sociopolitical and historical examination *en situation* of the intended and the real addressee and user of art, poetry or estrangement.

Gloss: The practitioner of critical estrangement is thus in the company of poets or philosophers, and an ally — in however roundabout ways — of the ruled and exploited classes, she aims at cognition wherever it may take us, as long as it participates in

finding out a radical *novum* in people's sociohistorical relationships. The practitioner of mythical estrangement is in the company of priests — in pre-capitalist social formations often was a priest — and an ally of the rulers and exploiters, he aims at catharsis as a sophisticated reaffirmation of the class status quo, as long as it reveals the hidden transhistorical and cosmic forces.

Thesis 2.3: On *Novum* Theory — Presuppositions

In *Metamorphoses* (and then in chapter 13 of *Defined*) I defined estrangement as a feedback oscillation that moves now from the author's and implied reader's norm of reality to the narrative possible world in order to understand the plot-events, and now back from that world to the author's reality, in order to see it afresh from the new perspective gained. It is a cognitive strategy of *perception-cum-evaluation* based on a radical swerve and desire away from the ruling encyclopedia (Eco). In this intent, the *novum* is its main diegetic device, and it borrows its method from art, science, and empirical production. I proceeded to doubt its univocal use in 1997, much before the analogous doubting of estrangement.⁹

Concerning science, what struck me was not only that applied scientific mass production first came about in the Napoleonic Wars, and that the *novums* of institutionalized science have a huge stake in war, in killing and maiming people. The popular emblem of SF, the large space rocket, was developed and used mainly by competing genocidal armies. Indeed, the economy of overripe capitalism is, in its systematic dependence on weapons production as well as on strip-mining human ecology for centuries into the future, based on a productive system efficient in details but on the whole supremely wasteful and irrational. Science as institution has grown to be largely a cultural pressure-system legitimating and disciplining the world's cadres or elite, in unholy tandem with the converging pressure-systems disciplining and exploiting the less skilled workforce, usually through sexism and racism. Finally, the elite enthusiasm for bureaucratized and profit-oriented rationalism engendered the understandable (if wrong) mass mistrust and horror, reviving all possible irrationalism, and incidentally downgrading SF into a nostalgic precursor of a Fantasy mainly complicit with everyday horrors; I therefore proceeded to write quite a bit on the divorce of wisdom and knowledge, Science₁ vs. Science₂. To base *novums* on formal innovation as hegemonized by modern science grew quite untenable after its overarching *novum* became the transformation of Science₂ into capital: and clearly so when it was force-fed by much Rightwing money into "hard" SF, the "space cadets" of imperialist warfare.¹⁰

But at a deeper level, a suspicion also grew in my mind that the *novum* — the surplus or newly created knowledge — was finally anchored in the extortion of surplus or newly created value from the laboring people. To the extent that this may be true, it is poisoned at the source.

The plagues bothering us will not be dealt with by old antibiotics: progress,

expanding GNP onwards and upwards, reason identified with the bottom line, etc. We are between two major bifurcations: the “short twentieth century” ended about 1989; the other, economists whom I think well of speculate, may be expected somewhere around 2040, give or take a decade, and barring an earlier nuclear war. The old, including the old New, is dead, the new has not managed to see the light of the day, and we are not sure whether it will in our lifetimes (surely not in mine). In the meanwhile, a too long while, the old masquerades as the newest; as Gramsci and Brecht concluded, in the half-light monsters rise up. The incantatory use of the *novum* category as explanation rather than formulation of a problem has to be firmly rejected. *Novum* is as *novum* does: it does not supply justification, it demands justification.

Gloss: I could here invoke many critical allies, in the first place Fredric Jameson, but I’ll mention only three. For the emblematic example of the United States science fiction films of the 1980s, Vivian Sobchack has persuasively shown that their new depthlessness, ahistoricism, and hysterical tone no longer show the alienation generated by a new economic system, but rather our incorporation of that new system and our absorption by it.¹¹ Just so in science fiction, the endless Post-Fordist succession of unbearable 1500-page Tolkienesque or military series subordinate use-value (cognition and estrangement) to the brand-name “event.” Brian Aldiss phrased this as, “The awful victories of *The Lord of the Rings*, *Star Wars*, and *Star Trek* have brought — well, not actually respectability, but “instant whip” formulas to science fiction. The product is blander. It has to be immediately acceptable to many palates, most of them prepubertal.”¹²

Thesis 2.4: On *Novum* Theory — Positions

In brief, innovation has deliquesced into a stream of sensationalist effects largely put into service of outdated and replacing existing commodities for faster circulation and profit. Harvey has even suggested that spectacles, with their practically instant turnover time, i.e. the production of events rather than of goods, provide the ideal Post-Fordist model; just as oil, steel or electricity companies can only look with envy at the model monopolization in book publishing. In the USA already in the 1980s two percent of the publishers controlled 75 percent of the books published; three distributors handled 95 percent of all science fiction and fantasy. The lay of the land for the *novum* has changed from Baudelaire and Rimbaud to the investment of billions, to science and technology as the racing heart of corporate capitalism, where innovation is divorced from making our lives more pleasurable, beautiful, and easeful. Entire industries are based on “perpetually accelerating obsolescence,” most clearly the computer one.¹³ The *novum*’s “semantic impertinence” (as Ricoeur might put it) is in a great majority of cases abused for salesman touting. In sum, I strongly suspect we are already at the beginning of the Deluge. Is the proper position of a provisional survivor that if there’s no dry land left (no guiding values), if God and Communism are dead, then everything is permitted? Or is it rather, how many arks of what kind

do we need, who could build them how, and in which direction may the dove look for shores?

Therefore, *we need radically liberating novums only*. By “radically liberating” I mean not only a new quality as opposed to simple marketing difference: I mean a novelty that is *in critical opposition to degrading relationships between people* as well as to the commodification of human and surrounding nature, and in fertile relation to memories of a humanized past (see Bloch’s *Antiquum*). I mean also a novelty enabling us to understand whence comes the rising tide of racism and fascism 2.0, and crucially that it is fed by central commandment of capitalism: profit now, more and more profit, and let the straggling hundreds of millions be eaten by wolves.¹⁴ A textbook example: Robert Heinlein’s super-racist united humanity of egalitarian super-militarists in *Starship Troopers*, with genocidal discrimination transferred to non-humans — read: the dangerous classes — and economics suppressed.

Further, perhaps a labor-saving and nature-saving eutopian society would also need *novums*, but just how many? Might we not rather wish, as William Morris did, for the true *novum* of “an epoch of rest”? Philosophically speaking, should we not take another look at the despised Aristotelian final cause? Politically speaking, what if science is a more and more powerful engine in the irrational system of cars and highways with capitalism in the driving seat heading for a crash with all of us unwilling passengers — what are then the *novums* in car power and design? How can we focus on anti-gravity, or at least rolling roads, or at the very least electrical and communally shared cars — which could have existed in 1918 if the patents had not been bought up and suppressed by the automotive industry? How can we constitute a power system able to decide that there can be no freedom for suppressing people’s freedom?

For, as in Brecht-Weill’s *Alabama Song*, if we don’t find a way out from the genocidal mastery that rules us, then “I tell you, I tell you, I tell you we must die.” But then, as I concluded in “News from the Novum,” we need a new reasonableness: a rationality that incorporates much refurbished science but also permanent self-estrangement and self-criticism under the eyes of plebeian salvation, including practices not reducible to clear-cut concepts yet articulated in topological propositions — for example, those usually called emotions and approached in pioneering ways by some Feminist theoreticians.¹⁵ Already Nietzsche had surmised that we have to “look at science in the light of art, but at art in the light of life.”¹⁶

Gloss: As can be seen in the best works of SF in or following the generation for me culminating in much Ursula Le Guin and Stanislaw Lem and perhaps half of Philip K. Dick, say by Marge Piercy or Octavia Butler or Pat Cadigan or Stan Robinson or C.J. Cherryh or Ken Macleod.

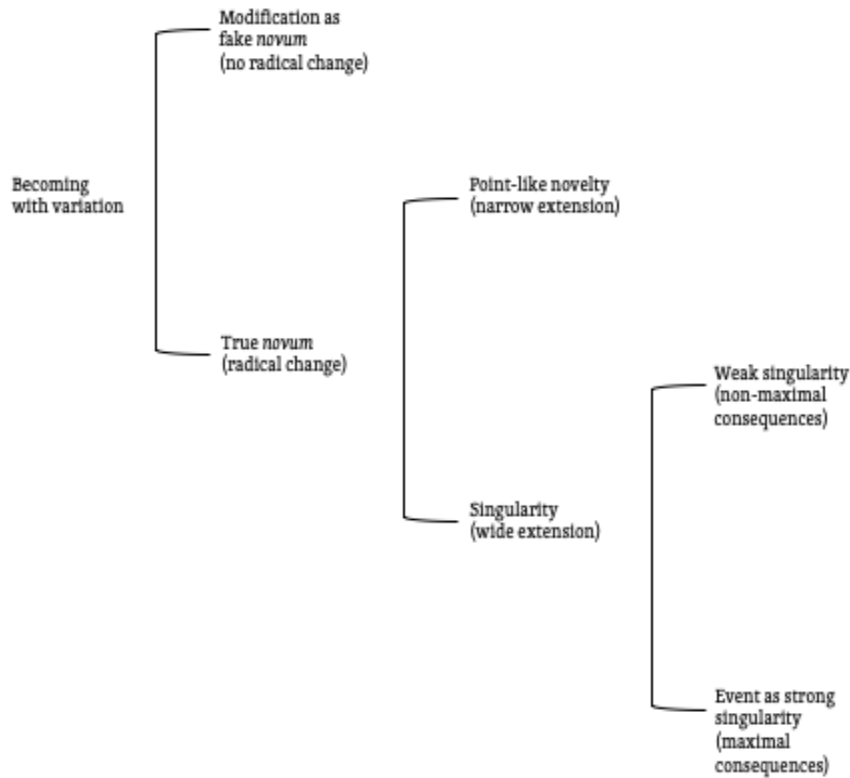


Figure 1. The Graph Sequence of *Novums*¹⁷

3. Good versus Bad Utopianism: Anti-utopia as Counterrevolution

Premise: What happens when, in a most radically bad *novum*, all of us find ourselves thrust inside anti-utopia, a kind of demented *Tron* movie we cannot get out of, increasingly more bitter if not impossible to live in?

Thesis 3.1: On Theory of Utopia and Negentropy

Here I don't need an initial Hesiodian splitting, since in the theory of utopia this has been done long ago by a group of people, most notably Lyman T. Sargent, Fredric Jameson, and Tom Moylan.¹⁸ Everybody agrees about the semantic usefulness of *eutopia* (the good one) and *dystopia* (the bad one). The good meaning or eutopianism is a presentation, orientation, and striving toward the horizon of radically better forms of relationships among people, an affirmation and annunciation. The bad meaning or dystopianism is a presentation of radically worse forms of relationships

among people, a negation and denunciation. In both cases, what is radically better or worse is judged from the point of view and within the value-system of a discontented social class or congeries of classes, as refracted through the writer. This factually and axiologically main body of utopian writings and horizons is an affirmation of life, liberty, and the pursuit of happiness; the pursuit of the possibility of action towards this Jeffersonian trinity is in thermodynamics called negentropy (the obverse or negation of entropy, see Thesis 3.2). It is very significant that in the Renaissance utopia underwent a sea-change from Platonic philosophical argument and blueprint — and then Augustinian theological devaluation of mundane existence — to a literary or narrative genre. Within the belly of the new, increasingly totalizing and dynamic Leviathan, storytelling, the imagination of alternative actions by agents in an alternative possible world, has added cognitive means to convey the feel of “thick” life and its experiences inside, with, and against Leviathan.

What needs to be disentangled is dystopia and anti-utopia. Given the small role of anti-utopia, I earlier thought these were both varieties of the “black” utopia, but this cannot be sustained any more. I would therefore propose that dystopia as an ideal type is an awful warning, denunciation, and negation of negating eutopian orientation and strivings, whereas — to follow Sargent — anti-utopia as an ideal type is precisely the opposite: a denunciation and negation of eutopian orientation and strivings. One differentiating characteristic may well be the battle over language, memory, and expression that usually develops in dystopia versus the monophony refusing any critique in Rand (or, e.g., on all world media).¹⁹ In practice, a number of “black” texts meld dystopia and anti-utopia at the expense of their quality, most prominently George Orwell’s 1984. Possibly, one ought to add a resigned and/or cynical version of anti-utopia that instead of equating utopia with hell says “Life is hell but this is immutable” — there is no contradictory history, only ontology — frequent today (e.g. in media).²⁰ Clearly, dystopia, so powerful from Zamiatin and Pohl-Kornbluth on, needs more discussion.²¹ At stake is after all what Ernst Bloch called “the principle of hope.”²²

However, I want to underline that any theory of utopia(nism) worth its oats made it crystal clear that utopia is an epistemological and not ontological beast. The argument that an approximation to eutopia or dystopia may be found or constructed in reality, as in blueprints or colonies, misses the point why they all necessarily fail: Utopia cannot be realized or not realized; it can be only imagined as a contrast or yardstick, a *Fata Morgana* in the desert of the oppressively real, a memento for the downtrodden or a stick for beating one’s ideological opponents.

Yet contrary to all of this, a powerful approximation to anti-utopia can and is being globally realized by present-day capitalism, its banks, armies, states, and ideologies. This unprecedented emergency must be considered and articulated. I begin by proposing what is at least a suggestive analogy to this totalizing situation whereby we are living in and being existentially shaped by this most corrupt or what

J.G. Fichte calls a “perfectly sinful” form of utopia/nism.

Thesis 3.2: Anti-Utopia: On Being Lived by Entropy

A real world-historical *novum* hit humanity like the Yucatan comet that extinguished the age of dinosaurs: in a ruse of history, the ideologico-political development of capitalism (that had all along produced fake *novums* galore, such as the rise of both fantasy and militaristic science fiction) morphed into an encompassing monster — the *anti-utopia*. It was brilliantly diagnosed in Part 1 of Jameson’s *Seeds of Time* in the early 90s, but its virulence has since become globally genocidal.

In thermodynamics, degradation of energy is the basic law of our universe.²³ *Entropy*, the central term and notion of thermodynamics, is usually explained as the inverse measure of the energy available to do work, but the Second Law of Thermodynamics means that the entropy of any isolated structure increases both constantly and irreversibly. Since life is tied to activity or work (doing things), any living entity survives by sucking low entropy from the environment, and thereby, regardless of local fluctuations, accelerating the transformation of the environment toward higher entropy. The Entropy Law founds a physics of irreversible qualitative development toward a narrowing of possible activity. And beyond being a branch of physics dealing with heat energy, thermodynamics underlies any biophysics of life and activity (including thinking). Life, thinking or cognizing, and creativity are fragile local reversals of and always threatened deviations from the cosmic norm; analogous are emancipatory revolutions deviating from the socio-political norm.

The analogy obtains between, on one hand, the closed cosmic segment subject to entropy, and on the other hand the existential closure in which all of us are encompassed and threatened by anti-utopia as the destiny of subjection within a long-duration collapse of capitalist structures of accumulation. This introduces a radical reversal from a situation in which interested readers looked *from outside* at utopia(nism) as a negentropic choice of freedom, a possible world, to a situation whereby all of us are willy-nilly *inside* anti-utopia in our empirical, more and more entropic zero world. In anti-utopia, imaginative understanding is being pre-empted by blind and malevolent doing. It functions rather like the mathematized models in capitalist financial speculation designed to make the modelled state of affairs more like the model (and quite incompatible with Baudrillard’s misleading approach to simulacrum as “the generation by models of a real without origin or reality,” 166). We are being forcibly lived by entropy, a growing restriction of possibilities to work for life-enhancing change. This is physically obvious when entire parts of the world are being thrust into destruction by capitalist armies, and even for the richer enclaves (just so nobody should be spared) by the capitalocene. *This changes all* — including utopia(nism), its theory and practice.

Capitalism has by now grown fully parasitic: profit is no longer accompanied by rising accumulation or productivity, it comes increasingly from political manipulation

of “rents” rather than from production (except in China). As we saw harshly illuminated in 2008, capitalism survives only by continuously increased extortion of surplus from the 95 percent of lower classes and nations to the rulers. It is by far the biggest entropy machine invented by our species — that is, the biggest manmade threat to liberty, cognizing, and creativity. Or simply to survival.

Gloss: If something like this is correct, my thermodynamic detour is no longer an analogy, but what is in epistemology and science called a model. And our analytic tools have to be thoroughly adjusted to this victory of ideology over utopia. One guideline: this cannot be done unless accompanied by thorough and explicit analysis speaking against the central features of anti-utopia — that is, today’s capitalism sliding into more or less fascism: racism, terror, and perpetual mega-warfare. When inside anti-utopia, use negative denunciation first of all. Positive annunciation is then necessary to supply the point of view and value-system within which the foregoing negation is legitimate and indispensable. The use of critical dystopias and eutopias to thwart anti-utopia is a matter of life and death.

Thesis 3.3: Anti-Utopia as Ptolemeian Counterrevolution

The pedigree of anti-utopianism has been little explored, but my hypothesis would be that it began first in essayistic ideological horror at the French and similar revolutions. Such Right-wing reactions opposed all strivings for human disalienation and radical democracy of the nineteenth century, and then especially after the 1917 Russian Revolution and its direct or indirect fallout, within which utopianism was often wedded with communism or socialism: the welfare state. Eventually they slopped over also into narrative form as the subgenre of anti-utopia, written to warn against utopias, not (as in dystopia) against the existing status quo, and culminating perhaps in Ayn Rand’s *Anthem*. Anti-utopianism is an embattled adoption of the point of view and value-system of globally ruling capitalism and the class — or congeries of classes — supporting it. *The anti-utopia is a targeted and openly political use of a closed horizon to refute, ridicule, and render unthinkable both the eutopia of a better possible world and the dystopia as awful warning about the writer’s and readers’ present situation, to stifle the right to dream and the right to dissent, to dismantle any possibility of plebeian democracy.*

The existential anti-utopia was historically brought about as a global ruling-class counter-project to the post-1917 welfare-and-warfare state, which first lost its welfare wing and was as of the 1970s rapidly devolved to a warfare-and-bamboozlery state. Warfare was exported outside the state-system of the metropolitan (capitalist, patriarchal) North, represented at the end of twentieth century by the “trilateral” group of North America, west-central Europe and Japan plus a smattering of their outcrops (the “little tigers” of East Asia, the “White dominions” of ex-British Empire). But war grew into a new norm in strict parallel to the dismantling of the (sometimes spotty) solidarity and justice that had brought about and sustained the welfare state

in both its Leninist and — reactively — Keynesian wings: now violence as war abroad also meant increasing violence as repression within, needed to quell the rising despair over, and possibly protests against, the sabotage of public health, education, housing, and all other services for people and controls over savage capitalism without a human face, spearheaded by the rising exploitation of immigrant workers without civic rights. It means that the specter haunting us today is the police state or indeed a reborn fascism 2.0, where bamboozling is replaced by outright Social-Darwinist cynicism, the warfare and repression state. As a rule these repressions returned from the US-organized dictatorships around the world to roost in the native soil, first hypocritically and then openly as of the George Bush Jr. administration and its “war on terror”; the old imperialist nostalgias of France and UK, and then the rising state capitalist power of China and the somewhat reconstituted Russia follow the same oppressive pattern, while providing some opportunities for maneuvering for smaller states and groups. Each reader can fill in the list of moral and political reasons for our indignation at such a huge impoverishment and militarization of our lives.

Beside warfare, the new super-technological capitalism is centrally developing through a depth *attack on life*. The pulsating heart of capitalism was always the unequal exchange of life (people’s time and labor-power) for money, well compressed by Ben Franklin 250 years ago as “Time is Money.” Now private property, having exhausted things, annexes also relationships, prominent among whom are vital the functioning between things, to which people are reduced (reified) as equally strip-mined “human resources.” A strategic link is private property on knowledge that exploded with the right to patent living matter — from genes to species — for profit, as decided by the United States Supreme Court in 1980; it is estimated there are by now more than 100,000 such patents. The true owners of life today are, besides the armed forces, pharmaceutical companies, agrochemical monsters, and information profiteers — all connected through international mega-banks.

This poses an epistemological problem. Since I do not believe in Original Sin, and especially not in the variant that the Devil rules on Earth, I have to — all of us have to — explain this slide from epistemology to ontology, from a thirst for understanding to a fetishism of the oppressively existing. I shall proceed by articulating an intermediary link: Disneyfication.

Thesis 3.4: Disneyland/Disneyfication: A Key Link in the Anti-Utopian Chain

As suggested in 3.2, there is a central existential difference between a *life-world one is necessarily inside of* and a *secondary creation one is as a rule outside of*. In any really existing situation people willy-nilly live, work, die, and (often) get children: their body and psychophysical interest is fully engaged in their location. To the contrary, a piece of utopian literature, a Fourierist blueprint or even a Disney World does not fully enclose a person: one may visit it, but not live in it, one may dwell on but not in it, one is never completely inside. Utopian colonies attempting to span this abyss regularly

cracked up. “The Book of Nature” is not really a book, in whatever hieroglyphs it may be written; the “Theatre of the World” (or of Society) is not really a theatre, whatever plays or games may on it come and go, for we are not an audience but on the stage. The relationships and traffic between virtual and actual reality, between the life world and secondary virtual creations or possible worlds are multiple and complex since both partake of human imagination in differing ways, but for the most important purposes the entities themselves remain distinct; as noted at the end of Freud’s “Transference” essay “nobody can be killed *in absentia* or *in effigie*.”²⁴ Traffic piles up unless it proceeds between two distinct places.

Disneyland and Disneyfication is a concentrated example of how to counteract eutopia, in which what is good cannot be seen in everyday reality whereas what is seen in everyday reality cannot be good.²⁵ To the contrary, “[commodified spectacle] says simply ‘what appears is good, and what is good appears’”; and Debord goes on to note presciently, “The spectacle is the moment when the commodity has attained the total occupation of social life. The relation to the commodity is not only visible, but one no longer sees anything but it: the world one sees is its world. Modern economic production extends its dictatorship extensively and intensively.”²⁶ This is here coupled with a restless rage, at times sensational and always cute, for addictive consuming as a new anchor for collective unanimity in lieu of radical disalienation. The cuteness is diametrically opposed to cognitive Modernist poetry from Baudelaire on, where “sensuous refinement... remains free of cuteness (*Gemütlichkeit*, coziness).”²⁷

Disneyland’s first move is spatial delimitation and then the layout of various “lands,” splendidly dissected by Louis Marin. Yet their presentation is by no means a qualitative rupture with the dominant imaginary encyclopedia, as in Thomas More or William Morris or even H.G. Wells, and Yevgeny Zamyatin. Instead, the omnipresent and invasive ideological continuity of vanguard Disneyfication with everyday hegemony has for its goal to intensify the turn to commodification. I deduced from this, first, that “the Disneyland experience” amounts to a not so hidden persuasion that the only way to live is by exchange-value, subject to the bottom line of “profit this year,” and second, that the Disney enterprise was an “*exemplum*... intended to be intentionally total (in all fields of life) and extensionally global as none before ... [a dynamically aggressive] anti-utopia.”²⁸ Without having fully experienced our existential anti-utopia, I found it implied in the logic of commodification and profit.

Three depth characteristics of Disneyfication were destined for a great future. The first one is a *truly totalitarian iron control* over the visitors to his theme parks (itself taken over from industrial shop-floor and chattel slavery): they are steered from the word go to one-way presentations, enclosed in vehicles, hectored by guidebooks and voiceovers telling them how to feel, given no space or time for reflection or spontaneous exploration, deprived of interpretive autonomy. The visitor is ceaselessly within the flow, constantly bombarded by subtle and unsubtle solicitations to buy/consume, surfeited by kitschy sensory overloads, not allowed freedom to catch her

breath even for a moment. Disney's type of "happy feeling" is stuffed down the throats of children and infantilized visitors as a substitute for a democratic public realm where dialogue and even opposition might happen: "Just try to get [things such as hunger, lack of shelter, cold or disease] past the turnstiles at Disneyland sometime!"²⁹ No work, no dirt, not even unregulated nature are permitted to be shown here, all must be predictably, manageably cozy (though in fact these illusions are produced by underpaid and precarious people working). This type of control is in our anti-utopian lives transferred from space to space-time management. As early as the later 1930s Benjamin, who had enthusiastically hailed the earliest disrespectful Mickey Mouse, was meditating about "the usability of Disney's methods for fascism."³⁰ How widespread such conformism was in the United States by the 1960s can be seen from Marcuse's noting a massive atrophy of mental faculties for grasping contradictions in favor of a "Happy Consciousness" in the service of a technologized death instinct.

A second characteristic of Disneyfication is *reproductive empathy*, the fact that "the Disneyland visitor is on the stage, an actor of the play being performed, caught by his role like the rat by the trap, and alienated into the ideological character he plays without knowing it. 'Performing' Disney's utopia, the visitor 'realizes' the ideology of the ruling class as the mythic legend of origins for the society in which he lives."³¹ Third is *transfer ideologizing* (the analogy to Freud's account of dreamwork is striking), the continually reinforced and quite uncritical immersion into the hegemonic bourgeois version of US society by "naturalizing" and neutralizing in the "lands" three imaginative domains: historical time as the space of alternative choices; the foreign(ers); and the natural world.

In sum, Disneyfication is a drug of the brainwashing variety. This drug functions using the brain's imaginative powers to create empathic images which constitute a fake *novum* or what Marin calls a degenerate utopia, predicated upon alienated labor that makes people crave satisfaction in "leisure time" consumption. The slogans of this alienation were "comfort, affluence, consumerdom, unlimited scientifico-technical progress, and good conscience, values assumed by violence and exploitation appearing disguised as law and order."³²

Gloss: However, the strategy of Disneyfication was developed during the New Deal and its fallout up to the 1970s, and its emphasis was upon persuasion and consensus. Disneyland was an intermediary link, and indeed a testing ground, in the chain leading from being outside and trying to understand (epistemology) to being inside and trying to survive (ontology): in it *you are inside but only for a time*, and within the framework of not simply leisure but infantilized consuming. The substitutive consumption gratifications were rechanneled utopian desires. In grimmer Post-Fordism, where compromise with the ruled by means of co-opted consumerism is no longer necessary, the Ayn Rand supermen operate by means of either direct physical killing or total precaritization with the permanent threat of hunger and destitution. The totalized control as well as the intensification and celebration of being

commodified is no longer experimental and intercalary à la Disneyland but extended over the whole country and globe, a new Borgesian map identical to the territory. As in the “American Dream” picket fence appearance of *The Truman Show* movie and similar fakely ideal sets in a number of science fiction stories by Philip K. Dick, anti-utopia can only be maintained if the inhabitants are persuaded it is the only reality. The utopia of personal freedom, as ideal or protest, is simply made unintelligible. As the Debord quote above ends, “Modern economic production extends its dictatorship extensively and intensively.”³³ There is no different present or future, time duration has for almost all of us shrunk to the next financial deadline for survival.

Thesis 3.5: Anti-Utopia as Constituted Absence

As to the theory of utopia(nism), we could salvage it by assuming *eutopia is in anti-utopia latently present as a constituted absence*: The sinister hollow is defined by a possible threatening plenitude – symmetrically obverse to the constitutive relation between life and death or between negentropy and entropy. This is an all-pervasive absence, it determines all defining traits of anti-utopia: not only the usual fake *novums* foreclosing radical ones, but also quantity instead of quality, closure instead of openness, fake ontology instead of modest epistemology, point-like inescapability instead of fertile traffic between past present and future, monologism instead of contradictoriness, impotent horror instead of intervening hope and indignation, cynicism instead of belief, vertical leadership and horizontal identities instead of polymorphic diversity with recall democracy, Mussolini, Carl Schmitt, and Ludwig von Mises as great ancestors instead of Jean-Jacques Rousseau, J.S. Mill, and Marx. Such traits culminate in the subsumptive unholy trinity of anti-utopia — hatred of plebeian creativity and roaming intelligence (*Denkverbot*), the state as repressive violence instead as public power, and annihilating warfare instead of creative emulation. These traits amount to an anti-utopian “mythological machine,” blending degraded numinosity, power, and commodity esthetics. It does not aim for truth — indeed truth is repressed and left in obscurity, somewhere behind — but for Austin’s performativity (i.e. a fascistoid effect on corruptible masses). In relation to the light of a disalienated humanity, it is, as Milton says in *Paradise Lost*, “No light, but rather darkness visible.” Sociologically, it is rendered concrete as capitalist mass media shaping mass opinion. It entails a thoroughgoing abolition of free choice, on which any worthwhile culture, and within it the system of literature and its genres, reposes — again quite analogous to the lack of meaningful choice in elections for the United States Presidency or the Council of Europe or the Chinese Communist Party Central Committee.

As Foucault never tired to argue, neoliberal governing comports “a formidable extension of the control and coercion procedures.... [of] the major disciplinary techniques that take in and take care of (*reprendre en charge*) the individuals’ everyday behaviour up to the smallest detail.”³⁴ The hypocritical inclusion of people into power and meaning is in fact a most frustrating exclusion, where the body or “naked life” is

the final and often only “capital” left (cf. Luhmann). The brunt is aimed at the category of revolution and any claim to fertile universality or totalisation (Wegner 121-28).

A surface example: Rancière notes that “the pseudo-European Constitution testifies to [hatred of democracy and egalitarianism] a contrario”; the absence of “the irreducible power of the people “is then constituted as ultra-elitist “expert management of monetary and population flows.”³⁵ In sum, democracy as freedom for individuals how to choose meaningful lives and pursue happiness is evacuated.

A middle-range example: the global neoliberalist market imposes its “intelligibility grid” on all non-economical human affairs, so that whatever cannot be used as “human capital” and subjected to “cost-benefit” and “supply-demand” criteria becomes simply non-intelligible — irrational and indeed inhuman — and is ruled out of court by power. Its perfect local complement is the carefully manipulated mini-nationalisms of globalization that mean, most clearly in Africa and eastern Europe, “linguistic unhoming, the deaccession of archives [including their physical destruction, DS], the eradication of historical memory, internal colonization” — a creeping version of Orwell’s *Newspeak*.³⁶

A central depth example: the frantic interlocking planning, usually for a year if not less, of all capitalist bureaucracies — financial, political, military, corporative — with the goal of maximum profit is the absencing of a plebeian, workers’ control system of flexible planning extending to long-duration coordination, where human welfare overrides profit. To generalize: the ideal-type eutopia does not know the categories of profit or servitude, dystopia shows them as crazy and inhuman, anti-utopia argues how to get more profit through servitude. Its mantra is “there is no alternative”; its biggest fear is freedom — while hypocritically invoking it in a castrated version. From Matthew 23:27: “like unto white[washed] sepulchres, which indeed appear beautiful outward, but are within full of dead men’s bones, and of all uncleanness.” In sum, Marx’s “profound hypocrisy and inherent barbarism of bourgeois civilization,” visibly naked in the colonies, has now been globalized.³⁷ Where he identified the reduction of the working day as the prerequisite for the realm of freedom, anti-utopia is a whirling turbine of unceasingly frenzied activities on pain of instant failure. No wonder the German term for our age is turbo-capitalism.

In terms of literary narration and history, anti-utopia was mainly confined to the anti-Bellamy cluster in the 1890s and the anti-Leninist one in the 1920s-30s, often by émigrés and always by reactionaries. As a rule, it was poor. The writer and style are less important, absent are all the usual qualities by which not only writers like More, Morris, Zamyatin, Lem, and Le Guin were great writers *tout court* but that also characterized a thick supporting substratum of what I’d call an important “2a class” of writers supplying stimulating ideas, alternatives, and plots — from Jack London to A.T. Wright, Stanley Weinbaum, and Aldous Huxley, as well as from early Heinlein, Orwell to (say) Ernest Callenbach, Frederik Pohl, and those mentioned in Thesis 2.4. Anti-utopia gets its force outside literature, from obsessive repetition of its ideological

points in all aligned media and think-tanks and from the whip of obscurity and hunger (where not drone liquidation) for dissenters. Anti-utopia is not “good to think with” as all other varieties of utopia, it is a preachment to the willy-nilly converted or kept at bay. What it amounts to, behind elaborate smokescreens shaming the puny Wizard of Oz, is a world where all, and primarily all people and human possibilities, exists only as adjunct capitals for profit. Overtly or covertly, this is the dominant horizon of “post-communism.” It is not even Aldiss’s “instant whip,” it is John Clute’s instant burger that eats your insides.³⁸

In sum, anti-utopia reposes both genetically and structurally on the fear of radical change (of plebeian self-empowerment, that is, revolution in and around production). Only the panic fear, rage, and loathing at the supposed Leninism — communism come to power — can explain the last forty-odd years of finally triumphant capitalism. Its allegorical emblem is the “terminator gene” introduced by mega-corporations into seeds to ensure their non-renewability, thus constituting the absence of thousands of years of human crop cultivation, of the utopian horizon of “bread for all.”³⁹ Centrally, the whole emancipatory panoply of capitalism’s radical bourgeois beginnings, from Enlightenment through revolutions, Romantics, and humanist culture in general is being ruthlessly and systematically scrapped, up to the shark-like liquidation of traces of welfare for (the) people. As Marx piercingly observed: When events force upon the bourgeoisie a democratic constitution, this helps the proletariat “and *threatens* the very foundations of bourgeois society.”⁴⁰ To give one weighty example: the abolition of torture, the favorite feudal tool against rebelling lower classes, was the crown jewel of true Enlightenment and bourgeois liberalism; it is now taken back.⁴¹ Rewinding history à rebours, the revolutionary and liberatory citizen aspect is being thoroughly expunged. The result is the relentless deepening and broadening of the “zone of non-being” identified by Fanon for the racialized and colonized subject.⁴²

In the style of the *Communist Manifesto* and Brecht, we could ask: Within the production of human suffering, what are Attila, Gengis Khan, and even the (fortunately) short-lived Hitler state compared to agribusiness, pharma business, the Seven Sisters of oil, and the capillary grip of financial capital?

Gloss 1: I came to the concept of constituted absence by being reminded of the role of the Baroque God in Pascal and Racine, whereof Lucien Goldmann speaks, or indeed of the Mbuya tribe’s father god Ñamandu in Pierre Clastres.⁴³ This absence was in history positively sublated by the appearance of a revolutionary wave of rich personalities like Denis Diderot, Jean-Jacques Rousseau, or Tom Payne. Alas, the constitutive absence of value signaled by anti-utopia is a repressed and anal-retentive obverse of the Baroque tragicalness. It flows out of triumphant counter-revolution and it is carried by impoverished Übermenschen like Ayn Rand and the Donalds, Rumsfeld and Trump. The return from bourgeois democracy to a semi-masked (and often open) bourgeois tyranny adds to cynicism, as Marx noted in the *18th Brumaire*, also a confession of weakness: true democracy would work against capitalism.

Gloss 2: Two indubitable examples of present anti-utopia: the post-federal-USSR and post-federal-Yugoslavia populations live in a state — and mostly in “miserable little statelets” — of primitive robber or mafia capitalism that could be called Dickens plus drones.⁴⁴ Economically, they are entirely dependent on raw material (gasoline, ore) export to metropolitan capitalism, scrapping and fire-sale of the considerable achievements of socialist industrialization, and deep immiseration of the working people; their rulers at home and abroad actively constitute the absence of communism (as the so-called communist parties themselves did for decades prior to their collapse). Neither am I aware, despite a large reservoir of creative people in those longitudes, of many *novums* in the realm of imagination — ideas, artefacts or inventions — from them (except, for example, in Slovenia, which deindustrialised much less precipitously).

| Corpus | Exemplary Locus | Rupture (total except for row five) | Quality | Relation to Political Hegemony | Emotion |
|--|---------------------------------------|--------------------------------------|-------------------------------------|--|-------------------------------------|
| Morus | Space (far) | Static (cut off) | Better socio-political organization | <i>opposed</i> | Joy, wonder |
| Bellamy-Morris | Time (future) | Static (vision) | Better socio-political organization | <i>opposed</i> | Joy, wonder |
| Nineteenth and twentieth century | Time (future) | Static (vision) | Worse socio-political organization | <i>Opposed to opposing</i> : back to hegemony | Horror, disgust |
| Wells I: <i>Time Machine, The First Men in the Moon</i> | Time as socio-biological | Dynamic – machine) | Inverted socio biological | <i>opposed</i> | Wonder, horror, sensation |
| Disneyland (Disneyfication) | Space (contiguous, time, provisional) | Intercalary (dynamic, rollercoaster) | Identification with desire for | <i>Opposed to opposing Intensified</i> : back to hegemony but only intercalary | Sensationalness, cuteness |
| Lived anti-utopia of existence in the twenty-first century | Global, perpetual present | Dynamic (financial and computerized) | Worse socio-political organization | <i>Opposed to opposing Intensified</i> : back to hegemony but only intercalary | Sensationalness, numbness, or anger |

Notes

1. Theodore W. Adorno, *Critical Models: Interventions and Catchwords*, trans. H.W. Pickford (New York: Columbia University Press, 1998).
2. Frederic Jameson, "The Politics of Utopia," *New Left Review* 25 (January/February 2004).
3. "Now all, all has to change." Ludwig Uhland (set by Franz Schubert) "Frühlingsglaube."
4. Theses do not suffer notes gladly. But I must thank the kind colleagues at Blagoevgrad, Dr. Emilia Karaboeva, Ralitsa Konstantinova, and Professor Emilia Zankina, as well as Frederic Jameson, but for interaction with whom the explanation of anti-utopia at the end could not have been written, and the responses and encouragement of Antonis Balasopoulos, Rich D. Erlich, Nenad Jovanović, Gloria Macmillan, Aleksandar Matković, and especially Tom Moylan. About entropy: while as a science student I took a course on thermodynamics, Pamela Zoline's splendid 1967 story "The Heat Death of the Universe" (*The Heat Death of the Universe and Other Stories*, McPherson & Co, 1988) precedes my argument in "Introductory Pointers toward an Economics of Physical and Political Negentropy (2009)," *Leviathan's Belly: Essays for a Counter-Revolutionary Time* (Rockville: Wildside Press, 2012) 331-50. My argument would have gotten nowhere without Hesiod and Marx, and then Benjamin, Bloch, Brecht, Debord, Goldmann, Gramsci, Harvey, Lukács, Luxemburg, Morris, the science fiction and utopia writers and critics named, and especially Jameson.
5. Darko Suvin, "Reflections on What Remains of Zamyatin's *We* after the Change of Leviathans: Must Collectivism Be Against People?" *Envisioning the Future: Science Fiction and the Next Millennium*, ed. Marleen S. Barr (Middletown: Wesleyan UP, 2003) 51-8.
6. Darko Suvin, *Lessons from the Russian Revolution and Its Fallout: An Epistemological Approach* (Belgrade: Rosa Luxemburg Foundation Southeast Europe, 2017) <http://www.rosalux.rs/en/lessons-russian-revolution-and-its-fallout>.
7. Darko Suvin, "Communism Can Only Be Radical Plebeian Democracy: Remarks on the Experience of S.F.R. Yugoslavia and on Civil Society," *International Critical Thought* 6.2 (2016): 165-89. <http://www.tandfonline.com/doi/full/10.1080/21598282.2016.1172695>
8. Darko Suvin, "Parables and Uses of a Stumbling Stone," *Arcadia* 5.2 (2017): 271-300.
9. See Darko Suvin, *Metamorphoses of Science Fiction: On the Poetics and History of a Literary Genre* (New Haven: Yale UP, 1979), Darko Suvin, *Defined by a Hollow: Essays on Utopia, Science Fiction, and Political Epistemology* (Oxford: P. Lang, 2010), and Tom Moylan, "'Look into the dark': On Dystopia and the Novum," *Learning from Other Worlds*, ed. Patrick Parrinder (Durham: Duke UP, 2001) 51-71.
10. Darko Suvin, "Of Starship Troopers and Refuseniks: War and Militarism in US Science Fiction," *Fictions* 3 (2005) 107-54.
11. Vivian Sobchack, *Screening Space: The American Science Fiction Film* (Newark: Rutgers University, 1987).
12. Brian W. Aldiss, *The Pale Shadow of Science* (Seattle: Serconia Press, 1985) 108-09. On the *novum* in general, see Victor Wallis, "Innovation," *Historical Materialism* 16.3 (2008): 227-32.
13. Victor Wallis, *Red-Green Revolution: The Politics and Technology of Ecosocialism* (Toronto: Political Animal Press, 2018) 82.
14. Darko Suvin, "To Explain Fascism Today," *Critique: Journal of Socialist Theory* 45.3 (2017): 259-302. <http://dx.doi.org/10.1080/03017605.2017.1339961>.

15. Darko Suvin, "On Cognitive Emotions and Topological Imagination," *Versus* 6869 (1994): 165201.
16. Friedrich Nietzsche, *Birth of Tragedy*, trans. W. Kaufmann (New York: Vintage, 1967) 19.
17. The capitalist *Das Immerwiedergleiche* though always with glitzy surface variations, simulating novelty — such as chrome tailfins on cars in the 1950s or NGOs pushing civil society in Eastern Europe of the 1990s. The true *novum* combined with point-like novelty as defined by Suvin in earlier writings. The terms "Singularity" and "Event" taken over from Badiou with thanks and anchored in possible world theory. "Weak Singularity" would bear more explaining. It is probably connected with compromise formations, such as Obama's initial healthcare proposals (anyway torpedoed because too near to a true *novum*). Stimulated by Badiou, *Logique des mondes*, without his ontology.
18. Suvin, *Defined by a Hollow* 381-412.
19. See Raffaella Baccolini, "Finding Utopia in Dystopia: Feminism, Memory, Nostalgia, and Hope," *Utopia-Method-Vision: The Use Value of Social Dreaming*, eds Tom Moylan and Raffaella Baccolini (Oxford: P. Lang, 2007) 159-189; Raffaella Baccolini, "Gender and Genre in the Feminist Critical Dystopias of Katherine Burdekin, Margaret Atwood, and Octavia Butler," *Future Females, The Next Generation*, ed. Marleen S. Barr (New York: Rowman & Littlefield, 2000) 13-34.
20. Søren Baggesen, "Utopian and Dystopian Pessimism: Le Guin's *The Word for World is Forest* and Tiptree's 'We Who Stole the Dream,'" *Science-Fiction Studies* 14.1 (1987): 34-43.
21. Raffaella Baccolini, "Breaking the Boundaries: Gender, Genre, and Dystopia," *Per una definizione dell'utopia* ed. Nadia Minerva (Ravenna: Longo, 1992) 137-46; Lyman Tower Sargent, "The Three Faces of Utopianism Revisited," *Utopian Studies* 5.1 (1994): 1-37. Tom Moylan, "Look into the dark"; Tom Moylan, *Scraps of the Untainted Sky: Science Fiction, Utopia, Dystopia* (Boulder: Westview, 2000); *Dark Horizons: Science Fiction and the Dystopian Imagination*, eds. Raffaella Baccolini and Tom Moylan (New York: Routledge, 2003).
22. Ernst Bloch, *The Principle of Hope* (Cambridge: MIT UP, 1986).
23. Darko Suvin, "Introductory Pointers," 331-50 and Nicholas Georgescu-Roegen, *The Entropy Law and the Economic Process* (Cambridge: Harvard UP, 1971).
24. Sigmund Freud, "Dynamics of Transference," in *The Standard Edition of the Complete Psychological Works of Sigmund Freud*, vol. 12 (London: Hogarth 1953-1974) 107. (translation amended).
25. Suvin, *Defined by a Hollow*.
26. Guy Debord, *Society of the Spectacle* (Detroit; Black & Red Press, 1970) 29.
27. Walter Benjamin, *Gesammelte Schriften* (Berlin: Suhrkamp, 1972-83) 671 and 675.
28. *Defined by a Hollow*.
29. Ariel Dorfman, *The Empire's Old Clothes* (New York: Pantheon Books, 1983) Dorfman 60.
30. Benjamin, *Gesammelte Schriften* 1045.
31. Louis Marin, *Utopiques: jeux d'espaces*. (Paris: Minuit, 1973) 298-99.
32. Marin, *Utopiques: jeux d'espaces* 298.
33. Debord, *Society of the Spectacle* 29.
34. Frantz Fanon, *Black Skin, White Masks*, trans. C.L. Markmann. (New York: Grove, 1967).
35. Jacques Rancière, *Hatred of Democracy*, trans. S. Corcoran. (London Verso, 2014) 95.
36. Emily Apter, "Untranslatability and the Geopolitics of Reading," *PMLA* 134.1 (2019): 195.
37. Karl Marx, "The Future Results of British Rule in India," *New-York Daily Tribune* (August 8, 1853).

- <https://marxists.catbull.com/archive/marx/works/1853/07/22.htm>
38. John Clute quoted in Darko Suvin, "Considering the Sense of 'Fantasy' or 'Fantastic Fiction,'" *Extrapolation* 41.3 (2000): 209-47.
 39. Predrag Matvejević, *Pane nostro* (Milano Garzanti, 2009).
 40. Karl Marx, "The Class Struggles in France, 1848 to 1850," *Selected Works Volume 1*, (Moscow: Progress Publishers, Moscow 1969) accessed via *Marxists.org*:
www.marxists.org/archive/marx/works/1850/class-struggles-france/cho2.htm
 41. Eric Hobsbawm, *Globalisation, Democracy and Terrorism*. (New York: Little, Brown, 2008) 143.
 42. Fanon, *Black Skin, White Masks* 7.
 43. Darko Suvin, "Power without Violence: A Lesson from Tribal Communism" *The Montreal Review* (August 2013) <http://www.themontrealreview.com/2009/Power-Without-Violence-A-Lesson-from-Tribal-Communism.php>.
 44. G.M. Tamás, "Words from Budapest." *New Left Review* 80 (2013): 5-26, <https://newleftreview.org/ii/80/g-m-tamas-words-from-budapest>
 45. Adapted from Suvin, *Defined by a Hollow*. First, each name stands for a paradigm - in row 1, for example, for the "alternate islands" of Bacon, Campanella, etc. Wells I = *The Time Machine* and *First Men in the Moon*; all ruptures after this are dynamic. The Paradigm: King Utopus cuts the isthmus connecting Utopia to a continent. The lived anti-utopia of existence in twenty-first century is reduplicated then as *das Immerwiedergleiche* in inferior narrations and media (e.g. with zombies).