

ANATOMISING DYSTOPIA (2001-06, 12,000 words)

A/ UPDATING DYSTOPIA 2006: PREFATORY REFLECTIONS

B/ A LITTLE TRACTATE ON DYSTOPIA 2001

UPDATING DYSTOPIA 2006: PREFATORY REFLECTIONS TO A LITTLE TRACTATE ON DYSTOPIA 2001^{1/}

0. I wrote the following "Little Tractate on Dystopia" in Summer 2001 and sent it to some friends a few days before Sept. 11. They included Raffaella Baccolini and Tom Moylan, so that in our protracted e-mail discussions (which can be followed in our common contribution to Maniscalco Basile and Suvin eds.) the new atmosphere became a major intertext. Much could be added after five years of this new intertext imposed on the world by the competition of radically dogmatic monotheisms under capitalism: the contribution of capitalist globalization has been that today, Voltaire would have to put his slogan "Écrasez l'infame" into the plural, there are so many infamous and infamies of unbridled capitalism and the wrong reactions to it. I have made some minor changes and additions in sections 4, 7, and some at the end, and tightened up the phrasing in a dozen other places, but this is far from beginning to render the baleful perspectives deepening every day of those five years and going on (seemingly) without end in sight. However, it is not at all clear to me that additional understanding of such perspectives would best be made under the rubric of Dystopia/nism: I still believe in its relevance, but attempted to go on and reach them under the rubrics War, Terrorism, Communism, Exile, Power/Violence, Living Labour, and similar.^{2/} Obversely it is clear to me that I could not accommodate even significant echoes of such new rubrics into the form and horizons of my *Little Tractate*, since it would have to cease being both little and tractate. For better or worse, it has now jelled into its own form.

The best I can do is add some further thoughts, which are both a Post Scriptum to the 2001 tractate and might buttress it as an introduction in 2006.

1.1. Why talk about dystopia today, here?

Because we have to talk about our lives, here, today. We have to both testify and delve into, try to illuminate, what is happening to us all, in and around each of us.

What is that? This introduction cannot pretend to say it in any encompassing way, but perhaps it can suggest some neuralgic knots and calcifications of our body politic.

It is a devolution of the post-1917 Welfare-and-Warfare State, which has lost its welfare wing and

1dsthwal.wpd 2/07

is being rapidly devolved to Warfare-and-Bamboozlery State. Warfare is exported outside the - relatively, for a smaller and smaller minority - rich State-system of the metropolitan (capitalist, patriarchal) North, well represented 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 combined with the dismantling of the minimum solidarity and justice that brought about and sustained the Welfare State in both its Leninist and (reactively) Keynesian wings, violence as war abroad means also increasing violence as repression within, needed to quell the rising despair over and eventually protests against the devolution of public health, education, housing, and all other services and of all controls over savage capitalism without a human face, most prominently the shameless exploitation of immigrant workers without civic rights. It means the specter haunting us today of the police State, returning from the US-organized dictatorships around the world to roost in the native soil, first hypocritically and now openly with the dominion of the Bush Jr. administration. That this is practically invisible in all of our embedded mass media constitutes the bamboozlery wing of what, modifying President Eisenhower, we now have to call corporate-military-media complex ruling us. Each reader at all interested in dystopia can fill in the list of moral and political reasons for our indignation at such a huge impoverishment and militarization of our lives.

1.2. I propose to enrich this argument by seemingly backtracking into what we can learn from the exemplary modern dystopia, Evgeniy Zamyatin's great novel *My (We)* from ca. 1920, so as to compare our times and this Fordist ancestor. My hypothesis is that in our Post-Fordist historical epoch we necessarily read his great critique of Fordism with new eyes. Some of us had from the 1950s on defended *We*, and indeed adopted it as our banner against both Stalinism and capitalist technocracy as crypto-religious dogmatisms. If we ever get back – which is possible – to a society of dominant overt repressions, as shown in, say, *The Iron Heel* or *1984* or *The Handmaid's Tale*, we shall have to return to some form of such defence. But today, we have to hold fast to what is still relevant in Zamyatin's vision but also recognize its limits. I have argued this by means of lengthy analyses in a separate essay (Suvin, "Reflections"), and can here only incorporate the vantage-point which that discussion offered me: the fact that we have all gone through a world-historical change of Leviathans or dystopias that rule and subsume us, datable (maybe) with 1973. The transfer into the entrails of a new, but probably more pernicious and murderous, World Whale is surely crucial for understanding the position of all of us under the missing stars, and for a possible defence against being totally digested by the capitalist socioeconomic formation in its Post-Fordist shape.

How should this global whale be understood? The high cost of Nazism, high-tech destructivity, and possible revolutionary convulsions seems to have in some phases taught our ruling classes that the empowerment by direct physical violence, including mass torture and murder, is to be used, at least in the metropolitan countries of the North, relatively sparingly and whenever possible backgrounded in favour of the psychophysical alienation of corporate capitalist collectivism. This variant disguises elite power by a contractual legality based upon economic hegemony in the archipelago of upper-class and (shrinking) middle-class enclaves, while retaining open militarized suppression outside those enclaves.

In our "Northern" one-sixth of the globe, Post-Fordist collectivism means hugely growing
1dsthwal.wpd 2/07

unemployment and alienation in the working place - including universities or research groups. It means increasing political impotence of not only the working classes but also the "professional-managerial" classes (with some exceptions among the star CEOs, sports(women) or scientists equivalent to the military generals). While the ruled are encouraged to indulge in faddish (and deep-down also uniform) surface garishness of dress or music consumption, the rulers are a faceless, diffuse congeries of interlocking directorates: here too, the capitalists have learned that Hitler was too dangerous a tool. As opposed to the overt despotic configuration Dostoevsky and Zamyatin wrote about, this one suppresses individuality by brainwashing the majority into Disneyfied consumer contentment or at least stupefaction, and driving a minority of us into unhappy isolation (I have analyzed this in the *Tractate*, also in "Utopianism"). The "male horde" - as Capek calls it in *War of the Newt* - of overt brutal collectivism is in our North spelled as unisex grey suits and attaché cases, which can co-opt women and "ethnics" like Mrs. Thatcher or Ms. Rice. It is "the impersonal Nothing represented by the manager" (Kracauer 160), and articulated for us in Kafka and Beckett, or in SF the best cyberpunk and Piercy. Instead of Medieval choral music or Zamyatin's State odes and music-making machines instilling the sense of the rulers, we are force-fed muzak. Instead of the Unique State's Institute of State Poets and Writers, or the Stalinist Agitprop Section of the Politburo, today in the USA - and thus almost in the world - 20 or less interlocking media monopolies (in TV, movies, publishing) and their bankers "constitute a new Private Ministry of Information and Culture" (Bagdikian xxviii). Everybody is democratically free to be physically and psychically hungry while chewing abundant junk food.

2.1. Facing the Leviathans of today and not yesterday, it seems to me decisive that Zamyatin lived at a historical moment when non-individualist and anti-bourgeois utopianism, in a wide spread from theocracy to warm Marxism (say in Russia from Solovyov through Lenin to Bogdanov) had been debated and when its possibility, however precarious, was on the agenda of the post-1917 revolutionary openings. In numerous articles, he situated himself within this debate and pleaded for a radical utopia, one of tomorrow and not - as the Bolshevik one - of today; and I don't wish to retract my argument from *Metamorphoses of Science Fiction* that *We* judges its nightmare from the imagined vantage of such a utopian-socialist tomorrow. Yet he was unable to imagine a workable utopian variant. This is both the strength and the weakness of his novel. The strength resides in his fierce concentration on the creator-diarist D-503, the weakness in the consubstantial absence of views and norms alternative to the Romantic individualism Zamyatin and this creature of his share. The hiatus or indeed contradiction between his overt doctrine of permanent heresy or revolution and his covert untranscendable doctrine of individualism grows into what Marx called the "Robinson Crusoe fiction," acquiescing in the "I vs. We" dichotomies that constitute the alienation typical of capitalism.

E.J. Brown drew attention to the "belated Rousseauism" of the fact that "[t]here is no adequate attempt in [Zamyatin, Orwell or Huxley] to examine the concrete social or economic factors that would lead to the debasement of human values: they offer only an abstract argument in favor of the simple and primitive as against the complex and cultivated" (222). Finally, amid all the mathematics, architecture, construction technology, and the faceless crowds marching four abreast, Zamyatin's grotesque Cubist allegory is built around a central absence: within his novel there are practically no economics, nor productive labour, nor working people - no accounting for the distribution and maintenance of the food, housing, "aeros," telephones, electric whips, walls

for fencing in, and streets for marching. The anonymous masses are there only as a backdrop for his protagonists D- and I-. Zamyatin uses the political strand of the plot as means to a higher end - the sexual growth into a "soul." The novel's main concern with politics is the individual protest against its course. The founding "I vs. We" opposition translates as private vs. public. Most perniciously perhaps, reason is insistently identified with "We," and emotion (or imagination) with "I." This aspect in Zamyatin is late, impoverished, ideological individualism.

Thus, Zamyatin's generous indictment of life in a "super-barracks" Leviathan is of a much diminished importance for getting our bearings today in the richer "North," where the rulers still use regimentation only in the wings, while center-stage is held by the super-Disneyland Leviathan. *We's* bad collectivism recycles what are by now "paleotechnic" (Mumford) or Fordist elements and attitudes predating speculative finance capitalism. The insipid food in *We*, made from petroleum and distributed by the State, does not collate to our problems with the overspiced and cancerogenously hormonized "macdonaldified" burgers pushed by brainwashing us in the "free" market. Even less does it speak to the hungry and freezing millions of "freed" Russia.

2.2. However, I would not like to absolutize the out-of-date aspect of a rich and contradictory masterpiece I still in many ways admire. If the humanization of the overwhelmingly center-stage protagonist has been defeated and the temptress firing his imagination and organizing rebellion has been cruelly suppressed in the best Jehovaite tradition, at least two important aspects remain relevant and fertile today.

The *first* and esthetically most important one may be signalled by the inferences from its technology of writing: for all meaning resides in the form, and form cannot be disjoined from meaning. Zamyatin's Constructivist confidence is not only utopian but also deeply complicitous with, indeed unthinkable without, the very urbanization and industrialization, the productivity whose one, malevolent variant his novel stigmatizes. It constitutes the hidden positive values in the name of which the repressive aberrations are envisaged and judged. I cannot repeat here some proofs that the kind reader can find at length in my two previous engagements with him (in *Metamorphoses* and "Reflections"). But while the story of D- and I- ends in total defeat, the novel's ending remains ambiguous, not quite closed: the battle rages on, and O-90 has left the walled State to bear D-'s child: the defeat IN the novel is not the defeat OF the novel - that is, of its potentially liberatory effect on the reader. The utopian horizons judge the dystopian focus.

And *second*, perhaps more important for our stance outside the novel, the old State apparatus against which the battle is joined in *We* is neither fully nor definitely off the agenda of present history. The Global Corporate vs. State Leviathans don't spell each other as participants in a relay race or train connection. Rather, they relate at least as intimately as do geological strata, where a new formation can for long stretches be interrupted by remains or even re-emergences of the old formation upheaving and sticking up as whole mountain ranges. On the one hand the partnership and collusion between the capitalist global corporations and the Nation-States seems to me dominated by the big oligopolies headed by the IMF/WTO/World Bank Troika. On the other hand, the global corporations are still mainly "national companies with a transnational reach" (Wood 7, and cf. Krätke and Kagarlitsky). As we have seen in the three mendacious and cruel wars against Serbia and Irak, that special old Leviathan, the US State, can be summoned into operation at the

1dsthwal.wpd 2/07

touch of a cellular phone call or of a computer button whenever the new Leviathan needs it: they are, after all, equally instruments of capitalism, brothers under the skin. It is most eye-opening that the one thing the two Leviathans - Zamyatin's Fordist one and our Post-Fordist one - have obviously in common and are deeply dependent on (remember the imperialist interplanetary rocket D- is building!) is the massive war technology and the patriotic propaganda playing it up: this is the visible tip of the iceberg of continuing murderous class-rule. Perhaps the succession of not only modes of production but also of their main stages might best be understood as imbricated articulation rather than simple abolition (cf. Jameson, *Cultural* 67).

Dialectically, the old Leviathan is also, at given propitious places and times, available for useful work, bundling and accelerating a large national consensus in order to improve life, for ex., to institute medicare or social insurance, or to resist foreign exploitative domination by some approximation to popular sovereignty in poorer states brutally attacked by the subversive forces of international capital. This was prefigured by the Mexican and Kemalite revolutions, this is what Lenin's State decayed into at its best moments of defense of USSR, and this is what continued into the postwar experiences of the "non-aligned" nations from Tito through Nkrumah and Nehru to Castro. Small echoes of such usefulness still occur in the defense of national environments against US dumping, e.g. in France, or today in Venezuela and Bolivia.

3. But - to return spirally to my initial question - why talk about all such matters under the guise of dystopia rather than in essays or pamphlets within the disciplines of political or economic science ("science"?), or even of philosophy? Not only because - as somebody said about ascending Mount Everest - utopian writing in the widest sense I argue for in my *Tractate*, which includes eutopias and dystopias, is there, but furthermore also because it has some cognitive privileges. Dystopia as a literary and media form is alive and well everywhere the public sphere and public reflection has still the chance not to be confined to a fight for immediate survival. Such a psychophysical fight leaves no money and time for writing and reading fiction: indeed I believe the "precarization" of intellectuals and of the youth is an economico- political move or ploy to prevent them from thinking. Yet however precarious, this speech from the belly of the new Leviathan is both dystopia's strength and, no doubt, its limitation.

Clearly, some results of our fragmented social sciences or human sciences may be admirable and indispensable, especially those heretic essays and monographs which (from William Morris and Zamyatin to Bloch, Benjamin, and Jameson's *Archeologies*) militate against this fragmentation. However, I'd claim that even at best we critics lack the means to convey the feel of "thick" life and its experiences inside, with, and against Leviathan. There is something innate to storytelling, the imagination of alternative actions by agents in an alternative Possible World, which hearkens back to the rich primitive syncretism of singing dances around the campfire from which all our arts have evolved, as can be seen in the clearest of such throwbacks, music. For all such alternatives, however roundabout and disguised, are of course alternatives for us, for different paths that could be undertaken by humankind and its key social groups today. *Mutato nomine de te dystopia narratur*: just as all other imaginative fiction but perhaps more clearly so, the estrangements of eutopia and dystopia are warnings, proposals, and weighing of costs for each and all of us - here, today.

1dsthwal.wpd 2/07

Why not then write about utopia, or (as we have increasingly come to more properly call it) *eutopia*, the depiction of radically better Possible Worlds, rather than dystopia, the depiction of radically worse Possible Worlds? Again, first of all because eutopian writings aren't there any more, in close parallel to the loss of belief in actually proposed eutopian models of a more or less radically socialist kind. True, fictional eutopias had a very interesting last (so far) flurry within the feminist movement, mainly in the English-speaking countries, for a dozen years from the late 1960s on, in the work of Charnas, Piercy, Wittig, Gearhardt, and others, culminating to my mind in the rich "ambiguous utopia" of Le Guin's *The Dispossessed: An Ambiguous Utopia*. But Le Guin's subtitle signals that these texts already incorporated doubts not only about what eutopia was against but also what it was for, or better how it went about getting out of what it was against and getting into what it was for. And eutopias have since become rare and even more hybrid. To the contrary, dystopias have increasingly come to the fore since Wells's reactualization of the ancestral tradition stemming from Cyrano and Swift, and it has become characteristic of our days after the "mainstream" triad of Zamyatin's *We*, Huxley's *Brave New World*, and Orwell's *1984* (the quality of which to my mind descends as we go on, in direct opposition to their fame). These pioneering texts and their followers dealt principally with the State Leviathan. However, I have argued above that the Leviathan has mutated from State to (mainly) corporative dictatorship. Where we are at today is perhaps better prefigured in the cluster of US dark forebodings within science fiction, following upon Jack London's *Iron Heel* and identified in a pioneering survey by Kingsley Amis as the "New Maps of Hell" of Vonnegut, Bradbury, Pohl, Kornbluth, Knight, Bester, C.L. Moore, and Walter Miller Jr.

To what Amis discussed we'd have to add today not only the Great Ancestors of some Wells and Zamyatin but also dystopia's strong presence in the early Soviet writings of Mayakovsky and Platonov, the feminist prefigurations of Burdekin and Boye, the follow-up in some works by Lem in Poland and the brothers Strugatsky in Russia, the later feminist dystopias mentioned above, and the great flowering of US and UK "awful warning" SF in the 60s and early 70s. Much of it was sparked by fears of a nuclear holocaust and its aftermath, but some of it identified also more mundane economic-political processes as leading to similar results of devolution and breakdown, say in some works of Dick, Burgess, Spinrad, Brunner, Disch, Ballard, Russ, and Le Guin. This has not abated after the sea-change of the mid-1970s, in the dystopian tenor of the best "cyberpunk" SF by Gibson, Cadigan or Spinrad, the anti-war SF from Joe Haldeman to Joan Slonczewski, Dick's splendid late *A Scanner Darkly*, and the emergence of new voices from the 1990s on. The most powerful of them seems to me K.S. Robinson who went on, after the closely observed US "autopia" (life dominated by cars and drugs) of *Gold Coast*, to reinstate the clash of dystopia and eutopia into ongoing history with his *Mars* trilogy and *Days of Rice and Salt*. Beside the continuation of the original feminist impulse in the completion of Gearhardt's trilogy, Suzette Haden Elgin's recently completed trilogy *Native Tongue*, and Atwood's *The Handmaid's Tale*, the most prominent voices of dystopian writing from the last two decades include a disproportionate number of women writers, notably Marge Piercy's remarkable *He, She and It* and some novels by Slonczewski and Octavia Butler (most impressively, her *Parable of the Sower*). However, I do not pretend to have exhausted the richness or the complexity of the dystopian vein, say in the latest Ballard or in Ken MacLeod (to mention only two UK names) but merely to have indicated that it is very much "there."

Last not least, why call our theme and focus "dystopia", a neologism invented by J.S. Mill in 1868? Again, one of the reasons is that it was widely picked up by criticism from the 1950s on. As I discuss at length in the *Tractate*, there is by now wide scholarly consensus that the term of "anti-utopia" should be reserved for a specific subsection of dystopias written to warn against an existing utopia, not (as in most dystopias) against the existing status quo. But why did "dystopia" rightly win out against Bentham's earlier proposed term of "cacotopia" (the Google frequency count of references is more than 4000:1)? Notionally, possibly because the Greek root "dys", meaning bad, unlucky or generally negative, is not only richer than "kakos", meaning evil or ugly, but it's also widely used in medicine and science (dyslexia, dysentery, dysfunction, dyspepsia, dyspnea). But I suspect more poetic reasons are prominent here. Dystopia is not only shorter but it also amalgamates desperation and utopia: it keeps the utopian (eutopian) impulse but subjects it to the test of desperate, desolate, desertifying peril. As in Derrida's *pharmakon*, it simultaneously identifies a poison in and offers an antitoxin to the body politic.

4. Finally, a suggestion about the proper use of utopia/nism (dystopian and eutopian).

The term and notion of "Utopia" (with capital "U") was created by Thomas More within European humanism, where literature was not sundered into writings about philosophy, statecraft, and *belles lettres*. It was a work of imaginative fiction, which playfully pretended to an obviously unbelievable and not to be believed geopolitical factuality. Its particular type of pretence entailed identifying and describing in all strategic details and rubrics an enclosed country on a par with England but as far from it as Muscovy, India or the new Americas, and yet its anamorphically inverted or subverted image (a round instead of a triangular island, and so on). This new tool for thinking soon begat first a literary genre (which ought to have a lower case "u") and then a general stance or horizon of "utopianism," of orientation toward utopia. Yet in all its avatars, the constitutive move for utopia as such is an unceasing epistemological oscillation and shimmering between two consubstantial images: it is a rounded-off world, and it is not a world at all but a ludic yet deeply cognitive pretence aimed at the author's and reader's own world. If isolated from this cognitive *telos* (which was also Morus's horizon and intention), as in ca. 1750-1880, bourgeois readings became possible that forgot this cognitive fictionality of utopia, that dwells in such complex contraries and eversions.

"Utopia" meant originally - as Morus's Latin title had it - a discourse about "the best state of the polity," or at least - as more dynamic ages added - about a radically better condition of such a commonwealth (country, State). But I would claim that, however literal-minded the readings, no discursive derivation of this orientation (say "utopian thought") managed to free itself from the inalienably imaginary, and furthermore fictional, character of that felicitous naming as No-place - in Swiftian terms The Place That Is Not. The cognition which the utopian organon both carries and necessitates is roundabout or estranged, not to be literally realized: as I argued a third of a century ago, utopia can only be heuristically applied, not physically realized. True, "dystopia" (and "cacotopia") originated in the pragmatic conceptual discourse of political philosophy amid the 19th-Century rise of the industrial bourgeoisie and capitalism, which also invented a new dark use for "utopianism" in Bentham and similar thinkers. But all of these new terms and orientations

1dsthwal.wpd 2/07

were, just like the blatantly parasitic term of "anti-utopia," already - always already - derivative of a fictional state of affairs and country, depending on and from the Morean paradigm. They came out of epistemology and heuristics. Thus, to make out of utopia an ontology is bourgeois Positivism, whether you then approve or disapprove of the strawman you made. (Many socialists from Kautsky to Stalin, while rejecting the term because of its intellectual playfulness, also "positively" believed it was an ontology, a future country in whose image Germany, Russia or the world could be remade. Fourier, Marx, Engels, Morris, and Lenin were smarter.)

How is it in this light to be defended that in my 2001 *Tractate* I treat upon the same footing phenomena of literary fiction and phenomena of imaginative and playful (though deeply corrupt) involvement in an ideology such as Disneyfication, objectivized in the various mini-loci or allegorically compressed mini-countries of Disneyland or Disney World? What makes Disneyland more akin to a eutopia and/or dystopia than to England, France or indeed the USA of which it is part (and as I argue, a *pars pro toto*)?

A first answer is that there is a central existential difference between a life-world one is necessarily inside of and a secondary creation one may be outside of. In any really existing country people willy-nilly live and work, must die and may get children: their bodily, psychophysical life is fully engaged in and committed to their location. To the contrary, a piece of utopian literature, a Fourierist blueprint or Disney World does not fully enclose any person: one may visit it, but not live in it, one may dwell on but not in it, one is outside not inside. (Utopian colonies attempting to span this abyss therefore regularly cracked up.) The Book of Nature is not really a book, in whatever hieroglyphs it may be written; the World Theatre or Stage of Life (or of Society) is not really or only a theatre stage, whatever games may on it come and go. The metaphoric (topic) relationships and traffic between these entities - I have been calling them Possible World Zero and Possible Worlds One-to-N (PW_0 and PW_{1-n}) - are multiple and complex, and constitute indeed much of the critic's daily bread, but for the most important purposes the entities themselves remain as distinct as any two entries in a semiotic encyclopedia may be. Traffic piles up unless it goes between two distinct places.

It remains then, in this brief defence of my *Tractate's* methodology or epistemology, to ask whether these two species of my genus dystopia, the literary dystopia and Disneyland, exhaust the PW_{1-n} group. Of course they do not: other examples or species could surely be added. But while craft is long, life is short, and anyone paddling on such a vast and tempest-tossed ocean can count oneself lucky to have lashed together, as best one could, a catamaran based on two flimsy hulls.

Notes

1/ My thanks go to comments by Rich Erlich and Tom Moylan. Errors and opinions remain mine.

2/ The items referred to are my articles: "De la guerre 2001: triomphe du capitalisme sauvage," in M. Angenot and R. Robin eds., *La Chute du Mur de Berlin dans les idéologies*, Montréal:

Discours social n.s. no. 6, 2002, 161-74, a part expanded as "Sulle 'nuove guerre' identitario-territoriali," *Giano* no. 55 (2007); "Bertolt Brecht: *The Manifesto*" (translation) and "On Brecht's *The Manifesto*," *Socialism and Democracy* 16.1 (2002): 1-31; "Living Labour and the Labour of Living: A Little Tractate for Looking Forward in the 21st Century," *Critical Quarterly* 46.1 (2004): 1-35; "Exile as Mass Outrage and Intellectual Stance," in M.T. Chialant ed., *Viaggio e letteratura*, Venezia: Marsilio, 2006, 69-95 (briefer version in *New Left R.* no. 31 [Jan.-Feb. 2005]); and "Terms of Power, Today," *Critical Quarterly* 48.3 (2006): 38-62, available at www.blackwell-synergy.com/.

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Darko Suvin

A LITTLE TRACTATE ON DYSTOPIA 2001

"Usà puyew usu wapiw" ("Backward going forward looking," Swampy Cree tribe phrase and image taken from a porcupine backing into a rock crevice [lifted from U.K. Le Guin])

PREMISES

1. All of us on the planet Earth live in highly endangered times. Perhaps the richer among us, up to 10-15% globally but disproportionately concentrated in the trilateral USA-western Europe-Japan and its appendages, have been cushioned from realizing it by the power of money and the self-serving ideology it erects. But even those complain loudly of the "criminality" and in general "moral decay" of the desperately vicious invading their increasingly fortress-like neighbourhoods. We live morally in an almost complete dystopia - dystopia because anti-utopia - and materially (economically) on the razor's edge of collapse, distributive and collective.

2. Utopianism is an orientation toward a horizon of radically better forms of relationships among people. It establishes vectors of people's desire, need, and imaginative understanding toward radically better horizons. This was being discussed at length in the 1960s and 70s. But in the endangered today (Benjamin's *Jetztzeit*) this is, while still supremely necessary, not enough. Utopian reflections, in and out of fiction, have now to undertake openings that lead toward agency: action.

3. We therefore have to talk first about epistemology (imagination, semiotics, semantics, art) and then about ontology (application of imagination to really existing power relationships, politics). "Reality is not at all the same as the empirical being - reality is not a being, it is a becoming... the moment in which the new is born. Reality is admittedly the criterion of accurate thinking. But it does not just exist, it becomes - not without participation of the thinking." (Lukács)

A/ EPISTEMOLOGY AND UTOPIA

Introductory: The discourse around utopia/nism is not far from the Tower of Babel. Its ideological cause (capitalist maligning of non-capitalist alternatives) is difficult to affect. But it behooves us to try and affect secondary semantic muddiness. A toolkit needed to talk intelligibly has to be

proposed, subsuming my own earlier attempts and selected illuminations from criticism in English, German, Italian, French, and so on.

4. UTOPIA will be defined as: the construction of a particular community where sociopolitical institutions, norms, and relationships between people are organized according to a *radically different principle* than in the author's community; this construction is based on estrangement arising out of an alternative historical hypothesis; it is created by social classes interested in otherness and change.

Gloss 4a: This definition backgrounds the tradition arising out of Morus's island and title, in which the relationships between people are organized according to a radically more perfect principle than in the author's community. I believe we have to abandon the meaning and horizon of utopianism as automatically entailing radically better relationships. More perfect relationships have to be proved (or disproved) for each particular case or type of texts. Confusing *radical otherness* and *radically greater perfection* leads to muddle: incommunicability or wilful obscurantism.

Gloss 4b: Estrangement (Shklovsky's formal *ostranenie* issuing into Brecht's political epistemics of *Verfremdung*) is a cognitive strategy of perception-cum-evaluation based on radical critical desire. It comports multiple possibilities of anamorphosis and eversion of salient aspects in the author's world, which has as its purpose the recognition that the reader truly lives in a world of topsy-turvy values.

5. In case the imaginatively constructed community is not based principally on sociopolitical but on other, say biological or geological, radically different principles, we are dealing with Science Fiction (SF). The understanding that sociopolitics cannot change without all other aspects of life also changing has led to SF becoming the privileged locus of utopian fiction in the 20th Century.

Gloss 5: This means that utopian fiction is, today and retrospectively, both an independent aunt and a dependent daughter of SF. The lines of consanguinity begin to intertwine in H.G. Wells's sociobiological SF, where biology is mainly a metaphor for social class.

6. Utopia may be divided into the polar opposites of: EUTOPIA, defined as in 4. but having the sociopolitical institutions, norms, and relationships between people organized according to a *radically more perfect* principle than in the author's community; and the symmetrically opposed DYSTOPIA (cacotopia), organized according to a *radically less perfect* principle. The radical difference in perfection is in both cases 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.

Gloss 6: As in all other entities in these theses, we are dealing with ideal types. Example of proximity to eutopia: Morus's *Utopia*; to dystopia: Zamyatin's *My (We)*.

7. Dystopia in its turn divides into anti-utopia and what I shall call "simple" dystopia. As Jameson notes, the anti-utopia is a structural inversion of eutopia, "formally quite different from the dystopian narrative." An evolution of such differences will be discussed more at length in Thesis 23.

ANTI-UTOPIA is a significantly different locus which finally also turns out to be a dystopia, but which is explicitly designed to refute a currently proposed eutopia. It is a pretended eutopia - a community whose hegemonic principles pretend to its being more perfectly organized than any thinkable alternative, while our representative "camera eye" and value-monger finds out it is significantly less perfect than an alternative, a polemic nightmare.

"SIMPLE" DYSTOPIA (so called to avoid inventing yet another prefix to "topia") is a straightforward dystopia, that is, one which is not also an anti-utopia.

Gloss 7a: The intertext of anti-utopia is historically the strongest "currently proposed" eutopia. Ca. 1915-75 the intertext was therefore anti-socialism, but both earlier (from Souvestre to Kafka's *Penal Colony*) and later other intertexts, say of militarist or market violence, may prevail.

The intertext of "simple" dystopia has been and remains more or less radical anti-capitalism. Zamyatin, individualist but avantgarde critic of mass society, straddles both.

Gloss 7b: Examples of proximity to anti-utopia: all the poorer followers of Zamyatin, from Ayn Rand and Orwell on; of proximity to "simple" dystopia: Pohl-Kornbluth's *Space Merchants* (and in general the US "new maps of hell" of the 1950s-60s) or the movies *Soylent Green* and *Blade Runner*.

8. More clearly than for other genres of writing, all the delimitations above function only if understood within the *historical spacetime*, i.e. within the unrepeatable social formation and horizon, of a text's inception. It is obvious that for a post-industrial reader the statics of Plato's *Politeia (Commonwealth)* or Campanella's *Civitas Solis (City of the Sun)* translate the historically intended eutopian horizon into a dystopian one.

However, while eutopia and anti-utopia are more akin to satire and pamphlet (Frye's "anatomy") and "simple" dystopia to the standard individualist novel, to the extent they employ narrative agentes and chronotopes, all of these remain (pace Jameson) fictional strategies jelling into narrative genres.

Gloss 8a: A reader of Plato in, say, the 20th Century is reading against a different horizon of experiences and values, which colours all, so that the shadow of the SS falls on the Guardians' politics and erotics; we might call this the "Pierre M nard" syndrome or law.

Gloss 8b: This is not a defect but a strength of utopian horizons and artifacts: born in history, inciding on history, they laicize eternity and demand to be judged in and by history.

9. For this reason alone, it is mandatory to insert the overtly estranging satire into the utopian tradition, at the latest since Cyrano's * tats et Empires de la Lune* (*States and Empires of the Moon*). It took the second major step in that tradition: to import into utopia's other spatial (later: temporal) locus a radically worse sociopolitical organization, and to do this by exfoliating the perceptive and evaluative strategy of estrangement into an array of deeply critical micro-devices. Historically and psychologically, dystopia is unthinkable without, and as a rule mingled with, satire.

Gloss 9: Untranscended example: Swift's *Gulliver's Travels*; but the 20th-Century SF texts from Lem to Shekley, Dick, and Banks run a close second.

10. To use Swiftian terms: in utopia a Thing Which Is Not is posited as being (in eutopia as being supremely valuable), while in satire a Thing Which Is is posited as being despicable; one condemns what is by indirection and the other by direction. If utopia is to be seen as a formal inversion of salient sociopolitical aspects of the writer's world which has as its purpose the recognition that the reader truly lives in an axiologically inverted world, then satire wittily foregrounds the inherent absurdity, and thus counteracts utopia's necessary but often solemn doctrinal categorization. It adds the Ass to the Saviour's crib and entry into Jerusalem.

11. We have here, as already in 2., come up against the necessity of another set of analytic tools. From Plato's term *topos ouranios* (heavenly place) on, it is clear that utopia's location, while a very important signifier, is only seemingly spatial: it abounds in maps but it is not photographable. In the best cases it is less significant than the orientation toward a place somewhere in front of the oriented; and furthermore, even the place to be reached is not fixed and completed: it moves on. It is thus situated in an imaginary space which is a measure of and measured as value (quality) rather than distance (quantity). The necessary elements for utopian movement - of which stasis is a zero-form - are an agent that moves, and an imaginary space (or time - but all the metaphors for time are spatial) in which it moves. The agential aspects, to be approached at the end, open up the properly political problematic of who is the bearer of utopia/nism. The pertinent aspects of space are: a/ the place of the agent who is moving, his locus; b/ the horizon toward which that agent is moving; and c/ the orientation, a vector that conjoins locus and horizon.

Gloss 11: It is characteristic of horizon that it moves with the location of the moving agent, as demonstrated by Giordano Bruno. But it is, obversely, characteristic of orientation that it can through all the changes of locus remain a constant vector of desire and cognition.

12. A combinatorics of locus/horizon gives the following possibilities:

1/ $H > L$: open-ended or dynamic utopia;

2/ $L = H$ or $L > H$: closed or static utopia;

3/ $L (H = 0)$: heterotopia;

4/ $H (L = 0)$: abstract or non-narrative utopia(nism).

There seems to be no obstacle to applying these terms (as well as a further set of agential terms) as analytic tools to the whole range of utopian studies - fictions, projects, and colonies.

Gloss 12: #1 is the *dominance of Horizon over Locus*: Locus does not coincide with but interacts with Horizon: this makes for a dynamic, open utopia (e.g. Platonov's Chevengur, Le Guin's The Dispossessed). #2 is a *Locus that coincides with or swallows Horizon*: this makes for a dogmatic, static, closed utopia (e.g. Campanella's *Civitas Solis*, Cabet's *Voyage en Icarie*). #3 is *Locus alone*, without a utopian Horizon: this makes for heterotopia (e.g. Foucault, in fiction his disciple Delany). #4 has *Horizon alone*, without a utopian Locus; this is where non-localized "utopian thought" belongs, such as all the abstract blueprints, utopian programs, etc.

I have difficulty in seeing how can, in any strict sense, either a horizon without concrete locus - without Bakhtin's chronotope (#4) - be a fictional narration or a locus with no horizon (#3) be a good or bad utopia (tho they can be the narration's or the utopia's contradiction).

13. Finally: what is not usefully discussed as utopia but as some other beast? Among other things, any construction, I would say, that does not significantly deal with a radically changed community but with dreams of individual felicity within the social status quo (Don Juan) or outside of society (Robinson Crusoe). No doubt, these too are multiply connected with utopianism, by contraries or eversion, but englobing all dreams of betterment under the illicit metaphor of utopia - as in the most meritorious Ernst Bloch - leads to a loss of all explicative clarity. While supremely important today, Utopia is not the same as Being, or even as Supreme Good.

Gloss 13: Much of the otherwise highly interesting SF, from Dick through Delany to cyberpunk, backgrounds, fragments or indeed represses all kinds of utopianism so strongly that, although inescapably written between the eutopian and dystopian horizons, it would need too complicated analogical mediations to be usefully discussed here.

B/ POLITICS AND DYSTOPIA

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BI: Introductory: If in Part A a critic can be formal and impersonal, calling attention to the rules of method (suggesting what delimitations may be required), this is scarcely the case for the following Parts B and C. Even where I don't expressly introduce the first person singular, it is implied, so that the following theses are at best stimuli for what may be further debated.

14. If history is a creatively constitutive factor of utopian writings and horizons, then we also have to recognize the epistemic shift beginning in the 1930s and crystallizing in the 70s: capitalism co-opts all it can from utopia (not the name it abhors) and invents its own, new, dynamic locus. It pretends this is a finally realized eutopia (end of qualitative history) but since it is in fact for about 90% of humanity clearly and for 8-9% subterraneously a lived dystopia, it demands to be called anti-utopia. We live in an ever faster circulation of a whirligig of fads that do not better human relationships but allow heightened oppression and exploitation, especially of women, children, and the poor, in "a remarkably dynamic society that goes nowhere" (Noble). The economists and sociologists I trust call it Post-Fordism and global commodity market - unregulated for higher profit of capital, very regulated for higher exploitation of workers.

15. The unprecedented Post-Fordist mobilization and colonization of all non-capitalized spaces, from the genome to people's desires, was faced with the insufficient efficacy of orthodox religions (including scientism and liberalism). After "belief became polluted, like the air or the water" (de Certeau), culture began supplying authoritative horizons for agency and meaning. It does so either as information or as esthetics: information-intensive production in working time (for example biotechnology, whose output is information inscribed in and read off living matter) and "esthetic" consumption in leisure time, the last refuge of desire. The new orthodoxy of belief proceeds thus "camouflaged as facts, data and events" (de Certeau) or as "culture industry" images.

16. Early on within Post-Fordism, Raymond Williams sniffed the winds of change and drew attention to a new dominant in pragmatic as well as cultural history in which radical change (communist revolutions) has failed, largely because capitalism has managed to co-opt change. This went beyond the superficial yearly fashions, consubstantial to consumerist capitalism (Benjamin), to a truly different mode of doing business, soon to be known as globalization and Post-Modernism. Change is now permanently on the agenda but "primarily under the direction and in the terms [I'd add: and on terms, DS] of the dominant social order itself" (Williams). This led to the battle-cry "death to systems," meaning in practice not what the working classes earlier meant when opposing the System but an end to all-inclusive alternative projects. Those taking up the cry with Lyotard, Vattimo, and Co. did not mean that they themselves should not form a system of institutional and other power ties and that their writings should not become the dominant academic form of criticism known as Deconstruction, but that all talk of wholeness and totality be henceforth terrorized into extinction. The dogmas to be found in Soviet-type pseudo-socialism were fiercely ripped apart, the dogmas of "free market" (meaning demolition of public control over huge capitalist conglomerates), which I'd argue are at least as pernicious and murderous, were not questioned. This transfers into utopianism, Williams noted taking up terms by Miguel Abensour, as heuristics vs. systematics, and he went on to discuss even-handedly their strengths and weaknesses.

Gloss 16a: I can here identify three exemplary Post-Fordist constructions, all "esthetic." One is dystopian and anti-utopian: Disneyland (points 18-20), and two are reworkings of old stances and genres, Fallible Utopia and Fallible Dystopia (points 21-24). This already points to the fact that hegemonic bourgeois ideology (say in TV and newspapers) has kept resolutely systematic, albeit in updated guises such as disneyfication. Obversely, what may perhaps be called the "new" Left has in and after the 1960s found new ways to proceed in heuristic guise.

Gloss 16b: Of course, the overarching dystopian construct is the "informational" one of Post-Fordism and global capitalism itself, the killer whale inside which we have to live, but obeying my point 12, I shall not discuss it directly here.

17. However, heuristic means "serving to find out" and it is not incompatible with systematic, which originally meant both pertaining to "the whole scheme of created things, the universe" and to "a set of principles, etc.: a scheme, method" (OED): you can very well find out a universal scheme. This became rigid in the 19th Century, when Engels ironized that "the 'system' of all philosophers... springs from an imperishable desire of the human mind - the desire to overcome all contradiction." Rather, the heuristic should be contrasted to what philosophers call the "ostensive" mode: concentrating on the right formulation of a question vs. handing down received wisdom. The heuristic method induces the questioner to collaborate in finding the answer, which is indispensable in times of fast change, in learner or world: it foments a discovering rather than giving doctrinal (dogmatic) answers. No wonder that in computer programming it has come to mean cognizing by continual trial-and-error stages.

But any teacher - or other practitioner, say practical theologian (Bastian) - would know that you cannot reach anybody without using both methods: only on the basis of existing understanding can new knowledge be gotten. When vanguard knowledge began to proceed heuristically - as of 1905, when Einstein did not call his paper on relativity a theory but considerations from a "heuristic viewpoint," or indeed as of Marx, who called his considerations not a theory but "a critique" - it was taking off from improperly absolutized, closed systematicity.

Gloss 17: This can be clearly seen in the static eutopias that infested the Positivist age (Mercier, Cabet, Bellamy), which swallowed horizon in locus. They were fiercely combated by the Right because of their system (in anti-utopias such as Souvestre's) and by the Left because of their method (in metamorphic eutopias such as Restif's or Morris's).

B2: Disneyfication as Dystopia

18. An exemplary (bad) case of a dystopian misuse of eutopian images are the edulcorated fables and fairytales of Disneyland. I shall use it as a privileged *pars pro toto* of the capitalist and especially US admiss brainwash. Its spatial rupture with everyday life masks its intensification of commodity dominance. Its central spring is what I shall (adapting Louis Marin) call reproductive empathy. As Benjamin remarked, "the commercial glance into the heart of things demolishes the space for the free play of viewing" by abolishing any critical distance. This empathy functions (perverting Freud's dreamwork) by transfer ideologizing and substitution commodifying.

Gloss 18a: Transfer ideologizing is the continually reinforced empathizing immersion, the "thick," topologically and figurally concrete, and seamless false consciousness, that injects the hegemonic bourgeois version of US normality into people's neurons by "naturalizing" and neutralizing three imaginative fields: *historical time* as the space of alternative choices; the *foreign/ers*; and the *natural world*. Historical time is turned into the myth of technological progress, while the foreign and nature become the primitive, the savage, and the monstrous.

Gloss 18b: In substitution commodifying, the Golden Calf is capillarized in the psychic bloodstream as *commodity*. The pervasive upshot of Disneyland is: "life is a permanent exchange and perpetual consuming" (Marin's underline); it commodifies desire, and in particular the desire for happiness as signification or meaningfulness. The dynamic and sanitized empathizing into the pursuit of commodity is allegorized as anthropomorphic animals who stand for various affects that make up this pursuit. The affects and stances are strictly confined to the petty-bourgeois "positive" range where, roughly, Mickey Mouse introduces good cheer, the Lion King courage and persistence, etc.

19. Psychologically, the disneyfication strategy is one of *infantilization* of adults. Its images function as an infantile "security blanket," producing constantly repeated demand to match the constantly recycled offer. The infantilization entails a double rejection. First, it rejects any intervention into the real world that would make the pursuit of happiness collectively attainable: it is a debilitating daydream which appeals to the same mechanism as empathizing performances and publicity. Second and obversely, it rejects any reality constriction of one's desire, however shallow or destructive. Wedded to consumer dynamics of an ever expanding market, Disneyland remains deeply inimical to knowledge, which crucially includes an understanding of limits for any endeavour - and in particular of the final personal limit of death. Snow White must always be magically resuscitated, to circulate again.

Gloss 19: "Main Street, USA," the central thoroughfare of Disneyland, was constructed as an exact replica of the main street of Walt Disney's boyhood small town, except that it was, "down to every brick and shingle and gas lamp," five-eighths normal size, and that it created a sense of depth, both shortening and stretching the perception, by having each exterior level be larger than the one above it: "the intended effect was to recall the main street of every adult's distanced youth... with the remembered perspective of a child's eye." Disney passed most days inside his apartment above Main Street, "where he would stand by the window with tears streaming down his face as people walked along the boulevard of his dreams" (M. Eliot).

20. In sum: Disneyland's trap for desire, this fake Other, is a violence exercised upon the imaginary by its banalized images. Disneyfication is a shaping of *affective investment into commodifying which reduces the mind to infantilism* as an illusory escape from death: a mythology. It can serve as a metonymy of what Jameson has discussed as the Post-Modern "consumption of the very process of consumption," say in TV. It pre-empts any alternative imagination, any fertile possibility of a radical otherness or indeed simply of shuttling in and out of a story.

B3: Fallible Eu/Dystopia

21. From Moylan's pioneering delimitation and the wealth of his analyses of fictional and critical texts in *Demand*, I draw the following scheme for what I prefer to call the *Fallible Eutopia*, a new sub-genre of the US 1960s-70s:

- 1/ the society of textual action is eutopian, in open or subtle contradiction to the human relations and power structures in the writer's reality;
- 2/ this new Possible World is revealed as beset by dangers - centering on inner contradictions, but often including also outer, hegemonic counter-revolutionary violence - that threaten to reinstate class stratification, violence, and injustice;
- 3/ our hero/ine, often a multifocal collective, combats this threat with some chance of success.

This form supplements the usual utopian critique of the writer's (dystopian) reality with a second front against the involution and downfall of the eutopian society.

Gloss 21a: Examples: Robert Nichols's wonderful tetralogy *Daily Lives in Nghsi-Altai*; Naomi Mitchison's *Solution Three*; Sally M. Gearhardt's *Wanderground*; Suzy M. Charnas's *Motherlines* diology (now trilogy); the culmination of the first wave of this form, Ursula K. Le Guin's *The Dispossessed*, explicating in its two loci, braided chapter structure, and the subtitle of "An Ambiguous Utopia" the two fronts; and K. Stanley Robinson's work culminating so far in the *Mars Trilogy* and *Years of Rice and Salt*, the masterpieces of its second, dialectically post-feminist wave.

Gloss 21b: The evident basis of such works in the counter-hegemonic US and European movements of the times, from anarchist ascendancies through the centrally situated feminist ones to other counter-cultural ones (gay, ecological, "rainbow"), is clear in this "plague on both your houses" thrust typical of the anti-Stalinist "New Left." It is confirmed by the abrupt cessation of its first wave with the advent of Reagan and its reappearance when the shock of Post-Fordism had been digested.

22. From Moylan's pioneering delimitation and the wealth of his analyses of fictional and critical texts in *Scraps*, I draw the following scheme for what I prefer to call the *Fallible Dystopia*, a new sub-genre arising out of both the shock of Post-Fordism and its imaginative mastering:

- 1/ the society of textual action is dystopian, in open extrapolation or subtle analogy to human relations and power structures in the writer's reality;
- 2/ this new Possible World is revealed as resistible and changeable, by our hero/ine, often with great difficulty.

In the best cases, such as K. Stanley Robinson and Marge Piercy, this form begins to visit the "periphery" of capitalism, usually the Arab world. Obversely, the escape to a eutopian enclave as illusion of bliss, finally to the stars, inherited from earlier dystopian SF (for ex. *The Space Merchants*), is an individualist temptation persisting in SF from John Brunner (if not A.E. Van Vogt) to Octavia Butler.

Gloss 22: Representative works are to my mind Pamela Sargent's *The Shore of Women*, an exceptionally explicit self-criticism of separatist feminism, Robinson's *Gold Coast*, Piercy's *He, She and It*, Butler's *Parable of the Sower*, and Ken MacLeod's *Star Fraction*. The great ancestor is London's *Iron Heel*, while

Huxley's *Island* already prefigured the fall from Fallible Eutopia into Fallible Dystopia. Pat Cadigan's *Synners* melds the Fallible Dystopia and cyberpunk. A ludic variant at its margin is the "Culture" series by Iain M. Banks beginning with *Consider Phlebas* (1987). The reader should draw her own conclusion from the preponderance of female names, within an incipient regrouping of opposition to unbridled speculative capitalism.

23. The epistemic and political impulse of those two sub-genres or forms seems very similar, since they reflect upon the causes and implications of fatal politics "as systemic" (Moynan), in a flexible or "soft" totalizing interrogation (Jameson, Suvin "Two Cheers") carried by the epic and heuristic narrative. Both oppose monolithism and foster dialogues. Both redound back on the reader's reality, potentially investing its bleakness with indignant affect. Their differences stem mainly from the different structure of cognitive feeling in their historical moments (this can be well seen in Robinson's switch from the mainly dystopian *Gold Coast* [1988] to the mainly eutopian *Pacific Edge* [1990]). Rooted in a Gramscian "pessimism of the intellect, optimism of the will," interweaving glimpses of far-off horizons with the closure inside the belly of the beast, these are hybrid and often polyphonic writings. In the pragmatic absence and indeed breakdown of collective agencies, such as centralized parties, the writings focus on the *choices* by one or more focal agents, themselves endangered and fallible, who undergo a heuristic awakening to be followed by the reader - not least toward new collective agencies from the bottom up. Sometimes the choice is formalized as different time-horizons flowing out of some crucial choice (Russ, Le Guin, Piercy).

Fallible Eutopia had to devise more innovative textual strategies to counteract the dogmatic systematicity of its tradition and make room for the presence of the old hegemony inside and outside the eutopians. It is therefore as a rule heuristic and open, fit for epic action and articulation of change as process and not blueprint. Fallible Dystopia, with a shorter tradition, has no such rigid format to break, either formally or ideologically (nobody ever set out to realize a dystopia): it can simply follow the river-bed of societal history. Since this kind of Dystopia can incorporate rather than - as Eutopia - counteract the ancestral proceedings, its strategies seem more similar to dystopian SF from Wells and Čapek through the "new maps of hell" of Pohl, Vonnegut, Tenn or Sheckley to Dick and Disch.

Gloss 23: A polar opposition between the Fallible Eutopia and the Fallible Dystopia underlines thus again that these are ideal types which allow for a spectrum of intermediate, often ambiguous possibilities. Fallible Eutopia recognizes the threatening twofold dystopia; Fallible Dystopia shows at least a glimpse of eutopia as the locus of oppositional values. A balance of eutopian and dystopian horizons makes of Joanna Russ's *Female Man* and Marge Piercy's *Dance the Eagle To Sleep*, which deal partly or wholly with a flawed eutopian struggle within a fierce repression, ancestors of both these genres. Samuel Delany's *Triton* rejects both horizons in favour of showing up the micropolitics of his anti-hero, and seems to me not to belong in either sub-genre. (Generic categorization shows relevance to a given discussion, not necessarily quality.)

24. In sum, the strategies of what we may call a refurbished utopianism for sadder and possibly wiser times add to the panoply of deeply critical devices for creating inverted worlds whose salient aspects show up the author's pragmatic world as one of upside-down, death-dealing values and rules. This enriched horizon clarifies and activates liberating desire by means of textually embodied - not only ideological - alternative images and actions. To the illusory mythology of disneyfication (as example of hegemonic strategies for "commodity esthetics"), a Lotus-land for the weary, they oppose epic struggle. To addictive consumption

they oppose cognitive and practical creation. Through narrative choices, they affirm the possibility of a radical otherness, indeed its absolute necessity for the survival of human values and lives.

TABLE: SHIFTS OF UTOPIAN FEATURES

	CORPUS	DIFFERENT EXEMPLA-RY LOCUS	RUPTURE	UTOPIAN (EU- OR DYS-) QUALITY ¹	AXIOLOGY IN RELATION TO HEGEMONY
1	Morus	space - far ²	static - cut off ³	better sociopolit. organization (E)	<u>opposed</u>
2	<u>Gulliver</u> Bk. III-IV	as above	as above	worse sociopolit. organization (D+/-)	<u>opposed</u>
3	Bellamy- Morris	time - future	static - vision	better sociopolit. organization (E)	<u>opposed</u>
4	C19-20 anti-utopias	as above	as above	worse sociopolit. organization (D-)	<u>opposed</u> to <u>opposing</u> : back to hegemony
5	Wells I: <u>Time M.</u> & <u>First Men in the Moon</u>	time as socio-biological space	dynamic -- machine	inverted sociobiological organization (D+)	<u>opposed</u>
6	Wells II: other works ⁴	Possible Worlds ⁵ w/ 1 different variable each	invasion of different reality ⁶	mixture of all 5 above (E)	<u>opposed</u>
7	Disneyland (Disneyfication)	space - contiguous	intercalary dynamic (money, roller-coaster)	identification w/ desire for commodities (D-)	<u>intensified</u> : back to hegemony in spades
8	Fallible Eutopia	PW of flawed/ endangered E	d.d.: PW different from hegemony, internally split	struggle for E as process	<u>opposed</u> --but also to static E
9	Fallible Dystopia	PW of resistible D	d.d.: PW intensifies hegemony, internally split	struggle against D	<u>opposed</u>

^{1/} E = eutopia/n; D = dystopia/n (D- = dystopia + anti-utopia, D+ = "simple" dystopia); d.d. = double dynamic

^{2/} Borrowed from Antiquity, medieval religiosity, and folktales (Plato - Dante - Cockayne). Each name stands for a paradigm - in row 1, for ex., for the "alternate islands" of Bacon, Campanella, etc.

^{3/} Paradigm: King Utopus cuts the isthmus connecting Utopia to a continent.

^{4/} Wells I = *The Time Machine* and *First Men in the Moon*; all ruptures after this are dynamic. Wells II = for ex. *Days of the Comet*, *Food of the Gods*, *Modern Utopia*, *Men Like Gods*; while *War of the Worlds* contaminates Wells I and Wells II.

^{5/} Possible Worlds (PW) can be any variant of spacetime, including esthetic and virtual reality (semiotic spacetime).

^{6/} Borrowed from horror stories.

C/AUSKLANG ON AGENTS: WHO ARE WE? WHERE ARE WE GOING TO? (free after Gauguin)

25. At the end of Piercy's *He, She and It*, an anti-capitalist alliance is in the making between the high-technology intellectuals and politicized urban gangs of youngsters and labourers, under the aegis of a fighting eutopian emissary...

While it is not useful to blur the ontological differences between fact and fiction, both partake of, incide on, and are shaped by the same human imagination. It seems to me mandatory to end these much too long theses (testimony to the confusing times which we live through and which live through us) by talking about agency, in a brief attempt to identify who might be here talking to whom, in this endangered moment under the stars. My answer is (maybe alas): various stripes or fractions of *intellectuals*.

What can, and therefore must, an intellectual do today within, under, and against dystopia? If I may define this type as one who responds, who is responsive and responsible, a possible answer is: not too much; yet perhaps, with much effort and much luck, this might prove just enough.

Gloss 25: The above Bakhtinian dialogical definition excludes of course the great majority of those whom sociologists call "the professionals," people who work mainly with images and/or concepts and, among other functions, "produce, distribute and preserve distinct forms of consciousness" (Mills): the engineers of material and human resources, the admen and "design" professionals, the new bishops and cardinals of the media clerisy, most lawyers, as well as the teeming swarms of supervisors (we teachers are increasingly adjunct policemen keeping the kids off the streets). The funds for this whole congeries of "cadre" classes "have been drawn from the global surplus" (Wallerstein): none of us has clean hands. I myself seem to be paid through pension funds deriving from loans to the Québec government by German banks, or ultimately by the exploitation of people like my ex-compatriots in Eastern Europe.

26. This our intermediate class-congeries in the world has since 1945 in the capitalist core-countries been materially better off than our earlier counterparts: but the price has been very high. Within the new

collectivism, we are "a dominated fraction of the dominant class" (Bourdieu). We live a contradiction: while essential to the *encadrement* and policing of workers, we are ourselves workers - a position memorably encapsulated by Brecht's "Song of the Tame Eighth Elephant" helping to subdue his recalcitrant natural brethren in *The Good Person of Setzuan*. Excogitating ever new ways to sell our expertise as "services" in producing and enforcing marketing images of happiness, we decisively further the decline of people's self-determination and non-professionalized expertise. We are essential to the production of new knowledge and ideology, but we are totally kept out of establishing the framework into which, and mostly kept from directing the uses to which, the production and the producers are put. Our professionalization secured for some of us sufficient income to turn high wage into minuscule capital. We cannot function without a good deal of self-government in our classes or artefacts, but we do not control the strategic decisions about universities or dissemination of artefacts.

27. And what of the swiftly descending future? To my mind, but not only mine, the hope for an eventual bridging of the poverty gap both worldwide and inside single countries is now over. It is very improbable the Keynesian class compromise can be dismantled without burying under its fallout capitalism as a whole. Will this happen explosively, for ex. in a quite possible Third World War, or by a slow crumbling away which generates massive breakdowns of civil and civilized relations, on the model of the present "cold civil war" smouldering in the USA and indeed globally, which are (as Disch's forgotten masterpiece 334 rightly saw) only comparable to daily life in the late Roman Empire? And what kind of successor formation will then be coming about? Worst fears and maddest hopes are allowable. The age of individualism and free market is over, the present is already highly collectivized, and demographics as well as insecurity will make the future even more so: the alternative lies between the models of the oligarchic (that is, centrally Fascist) war-camp and an open plebeian-democratic commune.

28. In this realistically grim perspective, facing a dangerous series of cascading bifurcations, I believe that our liberatory corporate or class interests as intellectuals are twofold and interlocking. *First*, they consist in securing a high degree of self-management, to begin with in the workplace. But capitalism without a human face is obviously engaged in large scale "structural declassing" of intellectual work, of our "cultural capital" (Bourdieu, and cf. Guillory). There is nothing more humiliating, short of physical injury and hunger, than the experience of being pushed to the periphery of social values - measured by the only yardstick capitalism knows, our financing - which all of us have undergone in the last quarter century. Our younger colleagues are by now predominantly denied Keynesian employment, condemned to part-time piecework without security. Capitalism has adjoined to the permanent reserve army of industrial labour that of intellectual labour. Thus our interests also consist, *second*, in working for such strategic alliances with other fractions and classes as would consent us to fight the current toward militarized browbeating. This may be most visible in "Confucian capitalism" from Japan to Malaya, for example in the concentration-camp fate of the locked-in young women of its factories, but it is well represented in all our "democratic" sweatshops and fortress neighbourhoods as well as fortress nation-blocs, prominently in USA (see Harvey). It can only be counteracted by ceaseless insisting on meaningful democratic participation in the control not only of production but also of distribution of our own work, as well as of our neighbourhoods. Here the boundary between our as it were dissident interests within the intellectual field of production and the overall liberation of labour as their only guarantee becomes permeable.

29. The Modernist oases for exiles (the Left Bank, Bloomsbury, lower Manhattan, major US campuses) are gone the way of a Tahiti polluted by nuclear fallout and venereal pandemic: some affluent or starving writers à la Pynchon or Joyce may still be possible, but not as a statistically significant option for us. Adapting Tsvetaeva's great line "In this most Christian of all worlds/ All poets are Jews" (*V ètom khristianneishem iz vsekh mir/ Vse poèty zhidy*), we can say that fortunately all intellectuals are partly exiles from the Disneyland and/or starvation dystopia, but we are an "inner emigration" for whom resistance was always possible and is now growing mandatory. The first step toward resistance to disneyfied brainwashing is "the invention of the desire called utopia in the first place, along with new rules for the fantasizing or daydreaming of such a thing - a set of narrative protocols with no precedent in our previous literary institutions" (Jameson). This is a collective production of meanings, whose efficacy is measured by how many consumers it is able to turn, to begin with, into critical and not empathetic thinkers, and finally into producers.

30. All variants of dystopias and/or eutopias sketched above pivot not only on individual self-determination but centrally on collective self-management enabling and guaranteeing personal freedom. Whoever is not interested in this horizon will not be interested in them: and viceversa.

Lucca, September 2001

Works Cited

Full references with pagination may be found in my earlier publications, adduced at end by date. My pervasive debt to Raymond Williams's and Fredric Jameson's work is not well indicated by the one reference for each. Much work of Lyman Tower Sargent and other colleagues from the Society for Utopian Studies and elsewhere is also implied. The section at the end listing my works is a ploy to prevent this becoming "A Huge Tractate"; it has been updated to 2015.

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