

UTOPIA AND THE CONTEMPORARY BRITISH NOVEL

This book examines how the experience of time functions in a specific set of British novels to reveal the persistence of the utopian imagination in the twenty-first century. Through close textual analysis Edwards develops a new strategy of reading such anticipatory ‘fictions of the not yet’, including novels by Hari Kunzru, Maggie Gee, David Mitchell, Ali Smith, Jim Crace, Joanna Kavenna, Grace McCleen, Jon McGregor and Claire Fuller. Read in the context of the philosophical category of non-contemporaneity, these novels reveal a significant new direction in twenty-first-century fiction. Their formal inventiveness and suggestively non-mimetic encounters with otherwise realist narrative representations of contemporary experience open up a realm of utopian possibility that shines through in moments of temporal alterity: glimpses of the future, redeemed strands of past hopes and alternative social worlds already alive in the present.

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Birkbeck College, London



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University Printing House, Cambridge CB2 8BS, United Kingdom
 One Liberty Plaza, 20th Floor, New York, NY 10006, USA
 477 Williamstown Road, Port Melbourne, VIC 3207, Australia
 314–321, 3rd Floor, Plot 3, Splendor Forum, Jasola District Centre,
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www.cambridge.org

Information on this title: www.cambridge.org/9781108498708

DOI: 10.1017/9781108595568

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First published 2019

Printed and bound in Great Britain by Clays Ltd, Elcograf S.p.A.

A catalogue record for this publication is available from the British Library.

Library of Congress Cataloging-in-Publication Data

NAMES: Edwards, Caroline, 1983– author.

TITLE: Utopia and the contemporary British novel / Caroline Edwards, Birbeck College, London.

DESCRIPTION: New York : Cambridge University Press, 2019. | Series: Cambridge studies in twenty-first century literature and culture | Includes bibliographical references and index.

IDENTIFIERS: LCCN 2019002562 | ISBN 9781108498708

SUBJECTS: LCSH: English fiction – 21st century – History and criticism. | Time in literature. | Utopias in literature.

CLASSIFICATION: LCC PR890.T5 E39 2019 | DDC 823/.91409–dc23

LC record available at <https://lcn.loc.gov/2019002562>

ISBN 978-1-108-49870-8 Hardback

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*For Aelita,
who has always been both with us and not yet*

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Acknowledgements

Over the course of the past ten years, as I have been writing this book, I have many friends, colleagues and peers to thank for their guidance and insights. I offer my sincere gratitude to Peter Brooker with whom I shared early drafts of this work. The former Centre for Critical Theory at the University of Nottingham gave me an invaluable grounding in Marxist theory, and to Matt Mead, Adity Singh, Eva Giraud, Alex Dunst and Michael Eades I owe a sincere debt of gratitude for their support – both intellectual and personal. Since moving to the Centre for Contemporary Literature at Birkbeck, University of London, I have become immersed in a vibrant community of scholars. I have benefitted from the friendship of several of my Birkbeck colleagues, including Joe Brooker, Martin Eve, Roger Luckhurst, Anna Hartnell, Heike Bauer, Peter Fifield, Grace Halden, Agnes Woolley and Mark Blacklock. Moreover, the many wonderful postgraduate students I've had the pleasure to teach on our MA in Contemporary Literature & Culture gave me the opportunity to test out various ideas in my teaching; and I am indebted to those students for this experience.

Contemporary literature, or twenty-first-century literary studies, is a dynamic and exciting field to be working in and over the years I've made many friends through my work on the Gylphi 'Contemporary Writers: Critical Essays' book series, the British Association for Contemporary Literary Studies (BACLS), *Alluvium Journal* and countless conferences. I extend my gratitude to Sarah Dillon with whom I have collaborated on publications on David Mitchell, Maggie Gee and China Miéville; to Robert Eaglestone for his insight and generous support; and to Caroline Magennis, Zara Dinnen, Bianca Leggett, Jennifer Cooke and Siân Adiseshiah for enjoyable and thought-provoking debates concerning the contemporary period and literary production. As a scholar of living writers I've had the pleasure of meeting several of the authors whose writing has informed my ideas in this book and I thank Jon McGregor,

Acknowledgements

David Mitchell and Jim Crace for being such gracious and accommodating interviewees. I also thank Jim Crace, China Miéville and Adam Roberts for their interest in my work and their encouragement. To the peerless Maggie Gee I extend the warmest thanks for her kindness and support; she has inspired me in countless ways. Throughout my career I have straddled contemporary literary studies and critical theory, particularly continental political philosophy and utopian studies. I gratefully acknowledge the support of my utopian comrades, including Greg Claeys, Dave Bell, Adam Stock, Rhys Williams, Larry Wilde, Ian Fraser and Tony Burns. To Tom Moylan, Vincent Geoghegan, Ruth Levitas and Lucy Sargisson I extend my sincere thanks for sharing with me their unpublished work and encouraging my participation within the field of utopian studies. And to my utopian PhD students Chris Callow, Dan Barrow, Katie Stone, Raphael Kabo, Carly Robinson and Sasha Myerson I am thankful for the opportunity to explore ideas I've been developing over a number of years, as they come into contact with lively new doctoral projects.

Some parts of this book have appeared, in a different form, in journal articles and book chapters. An earlier version of the sub-section on Jim Crace in Chapter 5 appeared as 'Microtopias: The Post-Apocalyptic Communities of Jim Crace's *The Pesthouse*' (2009) 23(5) *Textual Practice* 763–86. An earlier draft of the sub-section on David Mitchell in Chapter 4 appeared as 'Strange Transactions: Utopia, Transmigration and Time in *Ghostwritten* and *Cloud Atlas*' in Sarah Dillon (ed.), *David Mitchell: Critical Essays* (Canterbury: Gylphi, 2010), pp. 179–203. Material on the 'networked novel', which informs my analysis of transmigration in Chapter 4, appeared as 'The Networked Novel' in Daniel O'Gorman and Robert Eaglestone (eds), *The Routledge Companion to Twenty-First Century Literary Fiction* (New York: Routledge, 2018), pp. 13–24; and material on British post-apocalypticism, which informs Chapter 5, appeared in "Rethinking the Arcadian Revenge: Metachronous Times in the Fiction of Sam Taylor," *Modern Fiction Studies* (2012) 58(3): 477–502. I would also like to thank the anonymous peer reviewers at Cambridge University Press whose attentive feedback and suggestions for revision have undoubtedly made this a better book.

Finally, my deepest gratitude to Denise, Julia and Andrew for their love and for listening to me talk endlessly about utopia. And, above all, to Iain – for everything.