BLACK UTOPIAS

Speculative Life and the Music of Other Worlds

JAYNA BROWN

BLACK UTOPIAS

BLACK OPIAS

Speculative Life and the Music of Other Worlds

JAYNA BROWN

Printed in the United States of America on acid-free paper ∞
Cover and text designed by Courtney Leigh Richardson
Typeset in Futura Std and Warnock Pro
by Copperline Book Services

Library of Congress Cataloging-in-Publication Data
Names: Brown, Jayna, [date] author.
Title: Black utopias : speculative life and the music of other worlds / Jayna Brown.
Description: Durham : Duke University Press, 2021. | Includes bibliographical references and index.
Identifiers: LCCN 2020030935 (print) | LCCN 2020030936 (ebook) | ISBN 9781478010548 (hardcover) | ISBN 9781478011675 (paperback) | ISBN 9781478021230 (ebook)
Subjects: LCSH: Philosophical anthropology. | Philosophy, Black. | Utopias. | Racism. | African Americans—Attitudes. | African Americans—Race identity. | Utopias in literature.
Classification: LCC BD450 .B67 2021 (print) | LCC BD450 (ebook) | DDC 128—dc23
LC record available at https://lccn.loc.gov/2020030935
LC ebook record available at https://lccn.loc.gov/2020030936

Cover art: *Black Girl's Window*, 1969. Mixed media, 35¾ x 18 x 1½ inches. © Betye Saar. Digital image © The Museum of Modern Art/Licensed by SCALA/ Art Resource, New York.

Contents

Acknowledgments

This book took a long time, so I have more than a decade of people and institutions to thank for their support. First, I'd like to thank my editor, Ken Wissoker, for his patience and faith in this project and the Duke University production team for their hard work. A big thank you to my anonymous readers. I appreciate your careful, thoughtful, and generous feedback, which was essential in this book's development.

I'd also like to thank the many friends and colleagues who were kind enough to read drafts of parts or all of this book: Bruce Dorsey, Macarena Gómez-Barris, Jack Halberstam, Saidiya Hartman, Lynn Hudson, Lisa Lowe, Fred Moten, Tavia Nyong'o, Ann Pellegrini, and Christina Sharpe. Your brilliance inspired me to think as widely as I could about blackness, queer worlding, feminism, music, narrative structure, relationality, and the spirit world—and to be vulnerable enough to try and write something alive. Thanks to Mel Y. Chen and Dana Luciano for guiding me as I was beginning to think about race and materialism, and for publishing what has become chapter 4 of this book. I thank José Muñoz in spirit for our discussions of Ernst Bloch and other things utopian. I wish we had had more time to work and think together.

I thank Robin Bernstein and my fellows at Harvard's Charles Warren Center for a wonderful fellowship year in 2012–13. Thanks to Bruce Dorsey and Ann Pellegrini for encouraging me not to be afraid to write about religion. Thanks to my writing partner, Lynn Hudson, for her enthusiasm. Thanks to Christina Sharpe and Lisa Lowe for hanging out with me that year, and to the women of the Dark Room Collective for an intellectually stimulating experience. Thanks to Tsitsi Jaji for being my brilliant friend and flatmate in

Somerville, Scott Poulson Bryant for being my bestie while at Harvard, and Emily Owens and Sandy Placido for hanging out with me. Thanks to Martin Summers and Karl Mundt for your unconditional support. You all kept me (reasonably) sane.

At UC Riverside, thanks to Dylan Rodriguez, for being a fearless comandante during rocky times, and to Dean Stephen Cullenberg, for having my back. Thanks to Aisha Finch for our Saturday movie nights. Thanks to Henri Lucas and the rest of the Downtown L.A. crew for morning and afternoon coffee hangouts.

I have many libraries and institutions to thank. In London, 2014-2015 I worked in the British Library's Rare Books and Manuscripts Room, and I thank the fine librarians there for helping me find those quirky odds and ends about utopian communities, colonialism, and eugenics, the latter of which I learned a great deal more about—in fact, more than I ever wanted to know—in the Eugenics Collection down the street at Wellcome House. Thanks always to Paul Gilroy, for your support and for my residence as a visiting fellow at King's College London. Back in the Los Angeles area, I thank the talented librarians at the Huntington Library in Pasadena, who helped me navigate through the voluminous Octavia E. Butler papers.

In 2017, I moved to Brooklyn and began teaching at Pratt Institute. Big thanks to Jon Beller, Ira Livingston, Mendi Obadike, Minh-Ha Pham, and Ethan Spigland for welcoming me to the Graduate Program in Media Studies and to Jennifer Miller for her playful approach to the very serious.

My heart is full as I thank my oldest and dearest friends. To my scar clan sister Catherine Fox, thank you for more than thirty years of friendship and for being a fabulous traveling companion. I thank my UK friends Loo How and Julie Stewart for decades of patience and humor. I will always have deep love for Macarena Gómez-Barris, who has shared her wisdom and strength with me for over a decade, and helped me navigate through choppy waters. I thank Tavia Nyong'o for his consistent friendship and intellectual generosity. You are all dear friends with whom I am proud to stay young, and I am looking forward to many more years of collaboration.

Thanks and big love to my bio family. Love to my mother for teaching me to wonder at the world. Thanks to my father for his sometimes-lucid dreaming. To my visionary artist sister, Geneva, and to my athletic and fiery niece Simone. And to my creative and brilliant niece Xandra, whom I thank for the gift of blue lipstick and for taking me to my first opera.

CODA: Since I began writing this book the world has become ever more apocalyptic as we face, among other conditions, a global pandemic; the climate crisis; a rampant, voracious, and brutal system of global capitalism; and authoritarianism and white supremacy. I dedicate this book to our collective endeavor as we try to imagine other possibilities after the final days to come.

Introduction

I am black; I am in total fusion with the world, in sympathetic affinity with the earth, losing my id in the heart of the cosmos. . . . I am black, not because of a curse, but because my skin has been able to capture all the cosmic effluvia. I am truly a drop of sun under the earth.
—FRANTZ FANON, *Black Skin, White Masks* (1967)

Prologue

This book is about the force of black speculative vision and practice. It is about the curious modes of being manifest in such visions and practices, modes that pay no mind to inclusion within the confines of the human. Dystopia, the horrific terms of being black in our earthly condition, is a starting point for critique; dystopia forms the terrain of our existence. But forms of black life and liveliness are claimed and created in the terror. These forms do not end with death, social or otherwise. What is on the other side of death, where we reside? What kinds of strange ways and worlds do we inhabit there? Looking past death, or considering it a limited construct, I am not arguing for life according to a model in which we have been restored to some original state, or for life in which we have been granted rights according to some social contract. I don't hope for that. In fact, I don't think utopia needs hope at all. Hope yearns for a future. Instead, we dream in place, in situ, in medias res, in layers, in dimensional frequencies. The quality of being I find in the speculations considered here is about existence beyond life or death, about the ways we reach into the unknowable, outside the bounds of past, present, and future, of selfhood and other. This is what I call utopia: the moments when

those of us untethered from the hope of rights, recognition, or redress here on earth celebrate ourselves as elements in a cosmic effluvium.

I begin in the bleak and bloody dimension we are taught to call reality, with my father's story. Raised in rural Oklahoma, my father spent the first part of his adult life as a political activist and member of the Black Panther Party (BPP). But, after his exile and imprisonment, my father became a clairvoyant. In a series of self-published books he prophesied "the final days before the new days begin." My interest in dystopian narratives, utopian thought, and other science fictions is inspired by my father's speculative imaginings.

My father has a story like that of many other black radicals of his generation in the United States. He started out getting on the bus as a Freedom Rider and was arrested for the first time in Jackson, Mississippi, in 1961. He then spent his twenties and early thirties as a member of the BPP, living first in Oakland and then in Santa Cruz, California. Like many others who believed in revolution, he went underground as a result of COINTELPRO. In 1981 he was arrested for attempted murder, which was the result of a racist altercation. To avoid an all-white jury and what would surely have been a severe sentence, he jumped bail and went into exile. We thought he would be safe, but we underestimated the racist memory of the carceral state. Thirteen years later, when he was fifty-six, the FBI extradited him from the island in the Caribbean where he had been living, teaching high school and writing for the local newspaper. From a dank island jail he was brought back to the United States and placed in a medium-security unit, where he was the oldest inmate. After a few months he had a heart attack due to untreated high blood pressure. My sister and I visited him as he lay in a hospital bed, his wrists bound to the bedrail with heavy chains. These chains went with him everywhere; they bound him to his wheelchair on our subsequent visits to the jail and were wound around his waist and ankles as he stood in the courtroom.

My father was a writer and a poet, and gave quite a powerful speech before the judge. His sentence was fairly light—five years' probation and time served—as the judge took into consideration the racist nature of the initial confrontation and the character references sent in by his students and colleagues from the island. But after his trial my father's conversations and letters became increasingly epic and declarative in scope. With somber grandiosity, my father proclaimed himself a prophet. Born wrapped in his mother's caul, he told my sister and me, he was gifted with extreme sensitivity, premonitory powers, and the ability to speak with spirits. He announced that he

was no longer African American but a Native of African descent, tracing his psychic and spiritual powers through our indigenous ancestors. After his days as a warrior, he explained, he would now spend the rest of his life as a seer, a truth-teller with direct access to the wisdom of our Creek and Cherokee ancestors from Alabama. He then migrated to Canada and began signing his letters first as Chief Two Eagles and then as Painted Wolf. (He addressed me as "Daughter of the Chief.")

Thus began my father's speculative visions of final days and the days to follow, which he collected in a number of volumes. He spent several years in trances and oracular states, channeling spirit beings, most often a nineteenth-century Creek chief named Oktaha and a spirit named Golden Ray. Through auditory visitations and dreams, and in the moments after waking, the chief or the spirit would speak to my father of disasters soon to come and of the new age to follow. First, there was to be a great reckoning; as the result of racism, capitalism, and other violent systems of oppression and exploitation, the world was to be destroyed through economic disaster, fire, flood, earthquakes, and disease. But a new age was to succeed this end of days. The human life that survived would be radically transformed. Capitalism would be dismantled. Forms of sociality were to shift; people would cohabit in collective units instead of families, sharing the responsibility for reproduction and child rearing. Adept spirits like Golden Ray, who already exist among us as vibration and frequency, would provide guidance. Humans would physically evolve; without the need for hierarchical power relations and systems of oppression, races and genders would cease to be relevant and disappear. All vocal speech would become redundant, replaced by extrasensory forms of communication. Finally, Golden Ray told my father, human beings would be biologically modified by astral beings from another dimension. These cosmic entities would alter human DNA, bringing in a new era of existence. Humans as such would die, as they evolved into new states of being.

"What will you do when the final days begin?" he asked me sternly. My first reaction was a deep compassion. As Frantz Fanon wrote, many of his generation suffered in the mind from the effects of direct combat in the wars against colonialism and the afterlives of slavery. But my sister made me think twice about my assumption that he was suffering from psychosis. "Who knows. Maybe he's right," she said. Soon after my father's admonishment came a terrifying series of disasters that disproportionately affected the poorest among us. There was disease: in 2003 an outbreak of SARS struck China. There were massive floods. In 2004 an underwater earthquake and subsequent tsunami devastated South Asia, killing more than 225,000 people and displac-

ing millions. That same year a flood killed in excess of 2,500 people in Haiti. In 2005 Hurricane Katrina struck the southern United States, and the levees breached in New Orleans; federal and state governments neglected those stranded in the city's Superdome and convention center, and white police officers refused to let black residents cross over a nearby bridge to safety. My father's prophetic visions of total planet-wide disaster actually seemed quite plausible.

But these events were not sudden or unforeseeable; they were horrific escalations of preexisting conditions. After all, people of the Global South (and black and brown people in the Global North) had been living in suspended apocalypse for some time. Certainly, my father's psychosis was a fair response to the apocalypse of the everyday, the fantastical obscenity of this world for black people, which, if looked at directly and/or experienced for too long, can easily appear as hallucination. Reality begins to lose its footing and becomes less and less meaningful. Had my father really been in danger of being caught or killed during his years in hiding, or was his belief grandiose paranoia? We asked ourselves these questions when he had insisted the phone was bugged and that we couldn't use names or refer to specific places while talking to him. Despite our derision, he had been right. Perhaps he was right about the rest.

My father's predictions of the mythical days to come began to appear to me as quite wonderful, and perhaps not improbable, considering the ongoing intimacy between fact and the fantastical and black lives' proximity to where they joined. Maybe my father *was* touched, gifted with mystical and mythological insight. After all, black people's existence is mythological in the first place. We don't really exist, according to the logic of the human. And what does this current plane of reality, also known as a mutually agreed-upon fiction, mean to us anyway? And who mutually agreed upon it? Since black people didn't seem to have been asked, it would make perfect sense that we would be more in touch with/at home in other realities. All of us very well might have extrasensory access to the spiritual afterlife, like my father, or be particularly open to other forms of material existence, other forms of energetics, sonic and haptic as well as visual.

I started this book without consciously making the connection between my father's prophecies and my own interest in utopian dissent—at least on a conscious level. I was and still am conflicted as I read my father's accounts of the end of days and times to follow and contemplate the connection between his visions and the speculative worlds I am drawn to write about. Where is the line between vision and madness? Does it matter? What does listening to other frequencies entail? Most of the artists and thinkers in this book are

touched in some way; they are mad souls all. What does it mean to be open to these worlds? To a madness all my own? This project is a way of residing in spaces of ambiguity without trying to answer these questions. What I did do, in relation to my father's work, was resolve to write, in my own way, with the same dedication he had to seeing and feeling radically different worlds, practices, and modes of being.

I did not grow up with my father. He was a difficult man to be around. The last time we spoke he asked me what it was like working for The Man. "I have health benefits," I replied, spitefully, and refused to talk about my writing or its connection with his. I didn't want him to think that I was somehow carrying out his patriarchal legacy. He could be incredibly misogynistic and didn't treat women very well. In a softer moment I had promised him I would make sure his writings were left to an archive, but I grew so tired of his masculinist declarations that I haven't done so yet (Daughter of the Chief indeed). Still and all, I can see him as I did that day in the courtroom, a frail older man with a white halo of hair, wrapped in heavy metal chains but standing unflinchingly before the judge, still refusing to comply with a system designed to kill him or leave him in a state of permanent injury. This man I will continue to learn from, and with him I would go to the stars.

The day after I submitted this book to the press my father died. I hadn't had the chance to tell him how central his hallucinatory visions of the world to come were to this project. Or how important his previous political commitment was to my own process of intellectual inquiry. But I am glad to have remembered him here, and it pleases me to think of him now as free, as a "drop of sun under the earth."

Years ago I managed to rescue a box of his writings from the basement of one of his old acquaintances who had agreed years back to store them. Looking through these boxes I found files full of lesson plans for the Black Panther school where he taught. I found photos of all the Brothers and Sisters, young and full of swagger. There were pictures of him standing proudly with Huey Newton. And I found sheaves of poems and plays he had written over the years. I conclude with one of the poems he wrote in 1972:

a war song: for sleeping giants

so—
with tomorrow's frightful history
in my brain:

i prepared this song, (for those who would be slain),
and laughed a dirge for those: (our enemies),
in their new pain:

and with the sound of (chains) dancing
in my ears—
i wove a war of poetry,
(an attack on our fears),
and each morning that i
would poet/dream, I would dream an—
APOCALYPSE!

and launch legions against
these chains until they could no longer
rattle/sting,
and—at dawn: after our first bloody beginning:

something new was born—a new order!
a new civilization
quite complete where others—
(oppressed like me):
could also poet/dream—
with songs to launch
and rhymes to scheme!
    where we touched the sky and danced again
to the ANCESTORS daily rhythming!

Black Utopias

Utopia is often used as a pejorative to indicate the failure of a humanist project ("That's just utopian thinking!") or to acclaim the hope of its fulfillment, the achievement of the good life, in which all our earthly needs would be met by a given system. Neither applies here. Instead, I take the concept of utopia into a no-place, into an elsewhere. We are still made of matter, but we are rocketed into another dimension.

With black speculation as my methodology, I use the term *utopia* to signal the (im)possibilities for forms of subjectivity outside a recognizable ontological framework, and modes of existence conceived of in unfamiliar epistemes. These (im)possibilities open up where the human has abandoned us and onto a much bigger universe, when we jump into the unknowable. I say the unknow-

able, not the unknown, for the condition of utopia is to accept that we, in our present state, cannot fully know anything. Utopia is a state of being and doing. Sometimes we leave our bodies, and sometimes we don't; sometimes the flesh transmigrates, as utopia has materiality even as it materializes through strange frequencies. The versions of utopia I develop refer to forms of animation that are quite complex and that change the terms of engagement. These forms of what I call utopia—physical, visual, auditory, spatial, theoretical—supersede the juxtapositions of you and me, here and there, then and now.

Dominant social formations have denied African diasporans the rights and freedoms associated with being defined as human. My claim is that because black people have been excluded from the category *human*, we have a particular epistemic and ontological mobility. Unburdened by investments in belonging to a system created to exclude us in the first place, we develop marvelous modes of being in and perceiving the universe. I am claiming that there is real power to be found in such an untethered state—the power to destabilize the very idea of human supremacy and allow for entirely new ways to relate to each other and to the postapocalyptic ecologies, both organic and inorganic, in which we are enmeshed. I argue that those of us who are dislocated on the planet are perfectly positioned to break open the stubborn epistemological logics of human domination. To imagine as best we can outside these epistemological and ontological circumscriptions does not mean we save the human race, at least not that race as we know it. Salvage may not be possible at this point, although this is not necessarily a catastrophe. The untethered state does allow for the possibility of real change on a vast inhuman scale.

I am inspired by some new materialist thought, particularly its desire to challenge speciesism, decenter the human, and destabilize the category. But I balk at the all-too-familiar claims for the universalism of the Anthropocene. The catastrophe this new materialist thought seeks to avert has already happened, and continues to happen, for many beings. That we are in a crisis is not news for those already living amid the rubble, but my intervention challenges the bleak turn in black studies, which mourns our inhumanity, our "natal alienation."[1] I argue that because of such alienation we have the "freedom not to be," as the musician Sun Ra puts it. What I am claiming is that it is in precisely this shadow state that we have built, and continue to build, alternative worlds, in this dimension and in others, and practice alternative ways of being alive. Since fact and fiction are already indistinct, let us continue to live out our imaginations.

Dreaming in terms of utopia invokes an archive of black alternative worldmaking, to be found in the practices of black mystics and musicians and in

the imaginative worlds of speculative fiction writers. The utopias I find in the speculative worlds of radical black visionaries bring into question definitions of well-being based in a liberal humanist model of the possessive individual, a model that directs us to limited notions of freedom. The art and practices I consider involve a *radical refusal* of the terms by which selfhood and subjectivity are widely lived and understood. Along the way arise questions of desire and fulfillment, seemingly key concepts at the heart of utopian thought. The texts I explore reach for ways desire and fulfillment can be imagined outside of the confines of individualist claims.

In re-visioning a self diffused within the elements of the universe, my utopian archive is part of a trajectory of black aesthetics and philosophy in which the metaphysical world is inseparable from material, elemental, and sometimes biological incarnation. Many of the radical black fictions I examine reach to the limits of our paradigms for life. Some speculation (like my father's), has the power to imagine humans out of existence. I am interested in what happens when we fully abandon the idea of the human or at least attempt to denaturalize the assumptions the term *human* carries regarding evolution, species, subjectivity, language, and sentience.

To talk about utopia requires that we think about time and how it folds. In the archives I explore, time has, as Sun Ra puts it, "officially ended."[2] Utopia requires a complete break with time as we know it—an entirely new paradigm. In his brilliant book *Cruising Utopia: The Then and There of Queer Futurity*, José Esteban Muñoz proposes that we "see and feel" our way "out of the quagmire of the present."[3] Rather than postponing to a "then and there," as Muñoz refers to his conceptualization of futurity, I argue for a spatial/temporal fold within the here and now. The versions of utopia I explore involve relationalities that radically disrupt the very idea of the future, as they tune into an alter-frequency. Utopia is a condition of being temporally estranged. I suggest that we see and feel our way not into a future but into an altogether different spatiotemporality that is not discoverable along a human timeline. Utopia is inaccessible because it requires a complete shift in how we understand time. It is not accessible in standard linear time or in normative spaces. As we open ourselves up to the possibility of new ways of being, we must be brave enough to accept the idea that there are temporalities and spatialities beyond human imagining. In this utopian dimension, "it's after the end of the world," as vocalist and Sun Ra collaborator June Tyson exclaims.[4]

As Sylvia Wynter elucidates, racialized and colonized subjects have been excluded from "the human," a category made ontological through the naturalization of Western imperial origin narratives. Wynter reaches for a new uni-

versalism as she posits the possibility for new genres of the human, for understandings of ourselves based in entirely different epistemes. Wynter writes, "In order to *speak* the conception of ontological sovereignty, we would have to move completely outside our present conception of what it is to be human and therefore outside the ground of the orthodox body of knowledge which institutes and reproduces this conception."[5] This provocation leads to a few questions for me: What does moving "completely outside our present conception" entail? What do we consider essential to the human, i.e., what do we assume is fundamental to the species? What is worth saving? What, exactly, do we want to preserve and retain about the human? And what if the answer to the entire question of being were not ontological sovereignty at all but a different ontology altogether, other forms of awareness beyond the self, beyond individuated autonomous will? What could individuation mean outside the model of possessive individualism? I explore this question of what happens when we let go of the idea of subjectivity as a stable and essential component of freedom and selfhood. We move from Wynter's call for a new genre of the human to new genres of *existence*, entirely different modes of material being and becoming. What if utopia had no humans at all, reenchanted or otherwise? To loosen anthropocentric notions of human sanctity is to imagine the possibility of a profound paradigm shift, a perspectival sea change to a view of ourselves as made of the same elements as the rest of the universe—and as enmeshed in a wider ecology.

I am thinking of practices, real and imagined, through which we access other realms—planes of material reality and consciousness that, as Henri Bergson writes in *The Creative Mind: An Introduction to Metaphysics*, are always with us and around us, like electricity or sound waves. "Nothing would prevent other worlds . . . from existing in the same place and the same time," he writes.[6] Bergson uses the metaphor of music to explain the nature of consciousness and time, matter, and memory: "In this way twenty different broadcasting stations throw out simultaneously twenty different concerts which coexist without any of them intermingling its sounds with the music of another, each one being heard, complete and alone, in the apparatus which has chosen for its reception the wave-length of that particular station."[7] Bergson writes, "Duration . . . is the uninterrupted humming of life's depths."[8] As G. William Barnard writes of Bergson's theory, "It is possible to hear a series of overlapping sounds in which each pulsation is qualitatively unique, and yet is intrinsically connected to the other pulsations of sound, sounds that have no definite and fixed spatial location, sounds that are both outside and inside us, simultaneously, sounds that have no clear cut boundaries—sounds that

are a continuous, interconnected, yet ever changing whole."[9] We shut off access to these other worlds, but they can be tuned into. "If telepathy be real," Bergson states in his presidential acceptance speech to the Society for Psychical Research, "then it is possible that it is operating at every moment and everywhere."[10] We access these realms through states of ecstasy, the fulfillment of passions, the denial of passions; through sounds waves and vibration. The visions and practices I look into invite exploration of spatial and vibrational dimensions no less grounded in the material world. As Steve Goodman writes, "One way or another, it is vibration, after all, that connects every separate entity in the cosmos, organic or inorganic."[11] Vibrations/sound waves mark the porousness between this world and otherworldly states of being. For the musicians in my study, sound is not a metaphor but the pulse of other levels of consciousness. In Alice Coltrane/Turiyasangitananda's Hindu-based cosmology, sound vibration is the beginning of creation. Music is the vehicle through which to merge with a larger cosmic consciousness. Music, for Sun Ra, is a form of travel through which our material bodies transfigure past time and the human form into other worlds.

In *Creative Evolution*, Bergson is thinking biologically and embraces change as an overarching principle encompassing and linking the physical with the psychical. For a "conscious being," to exist is to change.[12] "I find first of all, that I pass from state to state. . . . I change without ceasing. . . . But this is not saying enough. Change is far more radical than we are at first inclined to suppose. . . . There is no feeling, no idea, no volition which is not undergoing change at every moment."[13] For Bergson, "We are creating ourselves continually."[14] Change is not a matter of will but of wonder. Everything is always in a state of Newness.

I am not interested in tracing utopian blueprints or totalizing remedies, but I am fascinated by how people have envisioned utopian worlds—in, through, and outside of the European tradition, which is long.[15] I therefore seek out black quotidian practices and visions of communality, sociality, and kinship already operating outside the bounds of normalizing imperatives. These practices are based in forms of relationality and reciprocity that bring into question marriage, heterosexualism, and capitalism. These existing practices and imagined worlds are important, considering the long history of black social and political conservatism that sees the repair of black life as possible only through the adoption of heteronormative models of gender, sexual reproduction, communal structures, and class aspiration. This book shows that intentional community building was, and is, not only the idealistic purview of a white privileged class. To miss the moments of intentional and improvised

black collective-formation and kinship-making is to romanticize only certain black communities—those rooted in blood kinship, patriarchal institutions, or national affiliation—as authentic and natural.

In my research I found myself drawn to various black mystics and mad souls, from the Shaker Rebecca Cox Jackson to the musicians Alice Coltrane/Turiyasangitananda and Sun Ra, who all claimed they had been chosen, like my father, not only to form alternative social structures but to lead us into alternative dimensions of existence. While all believed they were singularly chosen, the practices they used to travel to these alternative dimensions—ecstatic worship, music, dance, and vocalization—were always collective. These mystics consistently practiced multiple and relational formations. To this end, I begin the book with black women mystics, both historical and fictional. I begin with them because their beliefs and practices reflect a utopian response to living as subjects removed in multiple ways from the center of the human fold—black and female, aliens amid the alienated. The women mystics were among those least served by such liberalist notions of self and community and were therefore free to envision new worlds and forms of subjectivity. Chapter 1, "Along the Psychic Highway: Black Women Mystics and Utopias of the Ecstatic," follows Sojourner Truth, Zilpha Elaw, Jarena Lee, and Rebecca Cox Jackson as they preach to mixed crowds under the bowers of trees, at prayer camps, and in schoolhouses and living rooms: provisional utopian enclaves, forming non- and, often, anti-institutional, publics. I explore the ways their "spiritual theater" demonstrated alternative forms of subjectivity as they and their women's prayer bands practiced the "nonunitary vision of the subject."[16] I argue for the sensual nature of the ecstatic, looking to the ways Jackson and Truth were drawn to spaces—women's holy bands and intentional communities—where emotional, spiritual, and physical intensities often melted into each other.

The politics of touch reaches under the skin. As Gregg and Seigworth say, touch brings us "both into and out of . . . the intracellular divulgences of sinew, tissue, and gut economies, and the vaporous evanescences of the incorporeal (events, atmospheres, feeling-tones)."[17] I refer here to flesh rather than bodies—fleshliness as well as embodiment—because to surrender to touch, to our sensations, is to loosen the bounds of individualism, to mingle with other flesh and with the elements. Hortense Spillers delineates sternly and mournfully between flesh and the body. While Spillers asserts our "New World diasporic flight . . . sever[s] the captive body from its motive will, its active desire," I am not sure that desire is exclusively the property of individual will.[18] Flesh can be ripped apart but has the ability to reinvigorate itself, to reach for a con-

dition of liveliness. Flesh is not synonymous with a "captive . . . subject position"; rather it is free of the need for subjectivity.[19] I contend there is freedom in flesh, in the moments when it is excluded from being marked, as it feels, and responds to, touch.

In her reflections on her life, black mystic and preacher Jarena Lee fondly recalled times with her women's prayer bands. These were times of enacted intimacies, about being touched, often in a literal sense. Lee describes moments of communal strength as "melting time[s]," a dissolve into the ineffable.[20] This state was not a loss of self; Lee, like other radical women mystics I write about, practiced and performed "non-linearity, non-fixity and non-unitary subjectivity" in her ecstatic modes of being.[21]

I follow the first chapter with another mystic, the musician Alice Coltrane, who in 1976 became a swamini and founded an ashram in the Agoura Hills of Southern California. Chapter 2, "Lovely Sky Boat: Alice Coltrane and the Metaphysics of Sound," follows Alice/Turiyasangitananda's musico-devotional practice, musical sessions that were "melting times" when the self was "saturated in god consciousness," diffused into elements within a wide expanse of immaterial and material forces.[22] Through her devotion, Alice/Turiya gained the ability to achieve other states of beingness beyond the boundaries of space or time. Like Rebecca Cox Jackson, she traveled from astral plane to astral plane. Alice/Turiya's devotional practice, music, and syncretic cosmology were part of a long history of black alter-world-making and refusal to participate in the perceived reality of dominant consensus, with its assumed parameters and priorities. To change reality was not to retreat from the world but to redefine (or indefine) it, to be released into absolute consciousness.

This diffusion, or letting go of the individual, also affects how we think of the biological, of life itself. I became obsessed with science fiction that imagines the reconfiguration or disappearance of humans. I am interested especially in how black science fictions imagine processes of biological transformation, with or without extraterrestrials. My third chapter reads the visions of the black mystic Lauren Olamina, the protagonist in Octavia E. Butler's *Parable* series, for the ways her visions meld the mystical with the material, and I focus on how the author, in her texts, thinks through the biological, particularly by exploring ideas of evolution. In chapter 3, "Our Place Is among the Stars: Octavia E. Butler and the Preservation of Species," I take the series' protagonist as an echo of the nineteenth-century visionaries from chapter 1 as I follow her across a dystopian landscape, with her own vision of God and band of fellow travelers, to the utopian community—dedicated to taking the human species to extrasolar worlds—that her group establishes. This chap-

ter's central exploration is the ways in which, for Butler, particular formulations of the human, biology, nature, and evolution shape utopian possibility. I argue that the texts' biological determinism and investment in the idea of human species exceptionalism limit the *Parable* series' central tenet of change. What is it that Olamina wants to preserve through bringing humans into space? Here I have my father's visions in mind: If God is change itself, as Olamina believes, what is to say the human species will not, through a process of continual becoming, turn into something unrecognizable?

In chapter 4, "Speculative Life: Utopia Without the Human," I marvel at the organic and biological. I explore the strange and miraculous lability of living matter for the ways such exploration can release us from accepted ideas of the human. I continue exploring the idea of infinite changeability of biological matter as I am profoundly interested in the possibilities, real and imagined, for "utterly new mode(s) of existence for human matter"—as in the potential for alternative versions of life and liveliness.[23]

When imaginings of biological lability retain notions of human superiority, and racial, gendered, and ablest hierarchies, when they harbor transhumanist dream of species perfectibility, they breed eugenical fantasies. If we estrange our perceptions of life itself, however, we can think expansively about what it means to be biological entities. What happens if we expand our thinking spatially, at the level of cells and molecules, and temporally, across greater expanses of time than we can see?

I am purposefully not using the term *posthuman* as this term actually stabilizes the idea of the human, universalizes it, and retains it as the determining center of analysis. Inherent in the term is the white man's burden to carry history forward, to continue shaping the world and determining its course. In contrast, I pursue perspectives, either embodied or envisioned, in which all notions of the human are denaturalized and the elements of the universe, of which we are made, are sources of marvel. To see what this estrangement can produce is a productive utopian thought experiment.

But what of pleasure, desire, and the fulfillment of our needs? These would seem the bedrock of any materialist exploration of utopia. Chapter 5, "In the Realm of the Senses: Heterotopias of Subjectivity, Desire, and Discourse," is about queer utopias of gender, sexuality, and sociality in Samuel R. Delany's novel *Triton,* and in the outlandish vision of nineteenth-century socialist utopian Charles Fourier. Both envision utopian worlds based in the total fulfillment of human desires and passions. Delany's utopian satellite, Triton, and Fourier's Harmony appear to be worlds of infinite freedom. But Delany's text holds an implicit critique of the ordering of this kind of utopia. The core of

its critique is of Triton's liberal humanist model of the subject: whole, stable, autonomous. In order to be inviolable, the subject must be fixed in place, with firm boundaries around itself. Both Triton society and Fourier's world are built around classification, on the hardening of predilection into fixed identities. Such fixation, the problem of language itself, and Triton's underpinning philosophy that the "subjective reality" of all individuals is "politically inviolable" occlude the mutability of human passions and their tendency to be fluid and protean.[24] There is crisis between such protean surfaces and the need for fixation. Does the self need a bounded wholeness in order to feel? Or can it thrive in the effluent?

Surely our desires have some bearing on what individualizes us—shapes us as discrete bodies as opposed to fairy dust. But does desire need a stable subject? If we decenter, or abandon, the liberal notion of the human, how do we account for pleasure and joy? At their basic level, needs and desires are corporeal and sensual, and they shape us. An individual's desires, their favored sensations, are fundamental to the formation of selfhood. As Sara Ahmed argues, the senses individuate us, demarcate our boundaries. "It is through the recognition or interpretation of sensations, which are responses to the impressions of objects and others, that bodily surfaces take shape," she writes.[25] But sensations also mark the ways our bodies are open. The body, the self, is porous, receptive, impressionable, and not so easily individuated. We are flesh that both gives and receives chemical and electrical signals from other sensate and insensate worlds. The senses therefore make the self both coherent and porous, both unitary and multiple. Moments of utopia happen through the gratification of sensual desires; we open up and let ourselves go.

Perhaps we can think of desire differently: not as consumption but as relational and charged with the potential to explode all attempts to order and contain it. Critical social and fictional utopias and social arrangements based in utopian ideals commit to seeing and feeling our needs and desires past the aim of personal and private gratification to a politics of fulfillment. Herbert Marcuse figures utopia as a "qualitative change in the character of wants and needs."[26] The education of desire is to "teach desire to desire, to desire better, to desire more, and above all to desire in a different way."[27] We can think of desire, and especially its fulfillment, as deeply political in the context of black life.

The Future, or, Time and Time Again

Ideas of the future, and concepts of futurity, are intimately bound up with the way utopia has been defined. My use of the term *utopia* involves time but does not rely on the idea of a future. I resist the deferment of fulfillment to a then and there, and I disengage temporality from a narrative of past-present-future. I dream instead of the possibilities for coeval otherworlds that instead require a complete break with time as we know it. Utopia refers to a quality of the unknown, or of the unknowable, and of the unexpected—the leaps in all directions that are an element of change in the universe. We must jump into the break, the cut, into an entirely different paradigm.

The future appears, implicitly and explicitly, across fields, courses, and disciplines. Concepts of the future have been crucial in the development of politics of liberation. Different ideas of what a future means cluster around emancipatory agendas. My conversation is with Afrofuturism, queer theory, and utopian studies as I respond to concepts of the future and futurity in those fields. I suggest we open up the possibility for radical temporalities: those not governed by earth time and that are intertwined with equally radical notions of spatiality.

Futurity as it is embedded in the creative field of Afrofuturism is generative of all kinds of temporal distortions that refuse a Western chronology of civilization. In John Akomfrah's film, *The Last Angel of History*, a key text in the identification and definition of the concept of Afrofuturism, the data thief, a "hoodlum, bad boy," shuttles back and forth in time, disrupting linear notions of progress.[28] Queer theories of futurity, particularly as formulated by José Esteban Muñoz in *Cruising Utopia,* also break with dominant ordering regimes. They refuse heteronormative time at the same time as they complicate and challenge a strain of queer theory, à la Leo Bersani and Lee Edelman, around the concept of antirelationality and particular models of negativity.[29] Commonsense understandings see the future as a state of being subsequent to the present, as the contiguous culmination of preceding actions. In this sense, the future is situated in normative linear chronologies of time, which implies the notion of some kind of continuous progress or, in dystopian imaginings, degradation. But this model of the future is limited as it can only lead to compensatory utopian dreams or dystopian nightmares that project the outcome of current conditions.

Ideas of the future are key within utopian thought, particularly in interpretations of the work of Ernst Bloch. As utopian studies scholars have elucidated, for utopia to avoid the dangers of totality we must remember that

utopia remains always unfinished and never fully attainable. We cannot fully know the details of what a state of Newness would be like because utopian realization remains just beyond the horizon. We can't realize utopian totalities, for they will be the consequence of historically situated processes and we are unable to imagine past our current paradigm. This is to understand utopia as a continual reaching forward. My own use of the term does not have in mind realizability or totality but, instead, ongoing processes that we can never bring to a completion as they exceed our own limited terms.

Bloch's concept of the "Not Yet" inspires many utopian thinkers in their models of the future.[30] For Bloch, utopia resides in the state of "anticipatory illumination," a utopian propensity or proclivity that infuses cultural practices, a thread of consciousness that manifests in daily forms of life and with particular force in artistic forms including literature, music, and dance.[31] What animates collective and communal artistic creation, to use Fredric Jameson's term (à la Aristotle), is a utopian "energeia."[32] Instead of totalities, we look for currents, processes, and practices rooted in a creative urge, or pulse, particularly present in music and art. This pulse would be incorrectly interpreted as an essential human quality, an ontological a priori. Such an interpretation does not fit with Bloch's Marxist understanding of historical materialism. Bloch states that "there is no fixed generic essence of man. . . . Rather the entire course of human history is evidence of a progressive transformation of human nature."[33] Jameson interprets Bloch's concept of a utopian pulse as inherently political, a "political unconscious" that spans historical moments and movements and "produces in any instance a space, a stance, a possibility that is necessarily suspicious and unwilling to locate its own achievement in terms of any present alternative."[34] As such, the utopian pulse comes through as "recoverable traces of radical longing in various cultural forms," utopian theorist Tom Moylan writes.[35]

Radical longing, or as Sun Ra puts it, the "burning need for something else," is a key element in the creative movement called Afrofuturism.[36] Sun Ra's mixing of science and the fantastical make him an (retroactively enlisted) elder statesman of this movement. Afrofuturism "uses extraterrestriality as a hyperbolic trope" standing in for a sense of black alienation and the possibility of other worlds.[37] I do not lean on the term *Afrofuturism*, for the concept is often masculinist: Afrofuturism, and studies done under its aegis, have given us a host of beloved brothers and patriarchs. From Sun Ra to George Clinton, the Mothership is manned, so to speak. The (feminized) ship is the ultimate symbol of the diaspora and of Michel Foucault's heterotopias, of the mode of transcendence into the galaxy, away from the limited human idea of

Earth—but it is men who direct the ship. We have Lee Scratch Perry's Black Ark (where it all went down), Sun Ra's famous breast-like vessel, and the great Pfunk Mothership, now at the Smithsonian National Museum for African American History and Culture.

Afrofuturism takes as its main force a temporal propulsion. The term recognizes the ways African diasporans have long understood the sense of fracturing, disorientation, and alienation associated with modernity and holds an epistemology of the future that challenges a linear Western model of progress. Improvised uses of science and technology, coupled with references to arcane and ancient African and Asian forms of knowledge and culture, refuse Western historical time, based in Greco-Roman origins and the idea that the most advanced civilizations are European. I am interested in this disruption, for instance, in the way Sun Ra's music troubles time. As Kodwo Eshun puts it, Afrofuturism is a "program for recovering the histories of counter-futures."[38] Afrofuturism's evocation of the future is a powerful way to estrange us from the present and trouble linearity. The concept of Afrofuturism is most notable for resisting disciplinary boundaries and remaining an amorphous category that refers to a wide and eclectic range of collective black artistic practices. It can, however, in some cases, desiccate into a shallow term of surface and style rather than remaining an inquiring concept.

Like Afrofuturism, the concept of futurity in queer theory troubles normative, and normalizing, temporalities as it affirms a forward-leaning desire for life lived otherwise. Here I am very much in conversation with José Esteban Muñoz, who powerfully responds, in *Cruising Utopia*, to the antirelational approach in queer theory, such as that articulated by Leo Bersani. Lee Edelman continues this antirelational argument in *No Future: Queer Theory and the Death Drive*, in which he argues against what he calls "reproductive futurity."[39] Edelman conflates any desire for a future with an attachment to biological reproduction, marking any such desire as heteronormative. Muñoz recuperates what is useful about negativity, namely its critique of essentialized notions of queer communality. But Muñoz refuses to give up a future on these terms. The future, Muñoz argues, is a forward moving and collective "doing," a reaching for a potentiality always on the horizon. Muñoz writes, "Queerness is a structuring and educated mode of desiring that allows us to see and feel beyond the quagmire of the present. . . . Queerness is also a performative because it is not simply a being but a doing for and toward the future."[40] While I like the idea that queer utopia is a "doing," I think that the present is actually dimensional and the place of great improvisations. I suggest we descend into the quagmire, for it holds great depth.

I am deeply grateful for Muñoz's careful readings of Ernst Bloch, which situates the potential for queer theory to contain concrete utopian possibility. Muñoz's reading and my reading of Ernst Bloch's *The Principle of Hope* are slightly different, which bears witness to the rich complexity of Bloch's three volumes. While Muñoz's engagement is with the future as a recuperable concept in the face of queer anti-utopianism, I am interested in the synchronic layering of Bloch's spatial terminology and metaphor rather than in diachronic interpretation of his theories of hope. My observation is that Bloch writes in spatial and geographical terms more often than with a language of temporality. I pick up the full version of his phrase, which is the "Not-Yet-*Conscious* [my italics]," as the utopian exists as a state of consciousness.[41] The Not-Yet-Conscious is not the same as a preconscious state or a Freudian repressed consciousness, which are of the past. It refers to another state of consciousness altogether—a utopian consciousness. There is not a future here but an entirely different dimension; Bloch writes in spatial terms, as the Not-Yet-Conscious bends "towards its other side, forwards rather than backwards. Towards the side of something new that is dawning up, that has never been conscious before."[42] I am interested in Bloch's concept of this third kind of consciousness, capable of conjuring otherworldly forms of existence. Bloch's concept of *Not-Yet*, of anticipating that which is always on the horizon, is a more architectural idea than wishing into a future.

As Henri Bergson writes, everything is constantly changing. So, as I ask in chapter 4, what is this process of change? While we may need to reconfigure what we mean by "the future," any change requires movement. What kind of movement brings about a radical transformation? While Bloch's concept of the Not-Yet-Conscious is anticipatory, a state of newness is only achievable through a dialectical process. He writes, "Real venturing beyond never goes into the mere vacuum of an In-Front-of-Us, merely fanatically, merely visualizing abstractions. Instead, it grasps the New as something that is mediated in what exists and is in motion, although to be revealed the New demands the most extreme effort of will. Real venturing beyond knows and activates the tendency which is inherent in history and which proceeds dialectically."[43] For Bloch, radical change is the result of a Hegelian dialectic, the interplay of oppositional forces with a material basis. Bloch's stance is quite muscular, requiring individual endurance; utopian change is only possible through the "goal determination of the human will."[44] Bloch refers to the quality of the "New" as the "Novum," the results of struggle and stamina.

I am inspired by Bloch's theories of utopia, but throughout this book I question the Hegelian/Marxian dialectical model for understanding historical

change. I argue that instead of thinking of processes of change as necessarily based in a binary of opposition and antagonism, we can consider the possibility for processes of becoming that involve multiple forms of relations—cooperative, desirous, sometimes conflictual—between multiple elements. In this I am drawn to Bergson's theories of change. In Bergson's temporal theory of *durée*, life is constant change, a continual becoming. Durée was Bergson's complex understanding of the "temporal flux of our consciousness" in the context of a vast vibratory fluidity we call the universe.[45] We do not experience existence as a succession of static states, in linear progression. Instead, conscious experience of time is as a constant swirl, with no linear coordinates, no beginning, middle, or end. Our conscious perception is a filter, electing what it wants to perceive out of the swirling potential, creating as it does so the illusion of past, present, and future.

In *The Principle of Hope* Ernst Bloch reserves his most biting criticism for Bergson. "There is absolutely no genuine Novum in Bergson," Bloch writes. "He has in fact only developed his concept from sheer excess into capitalistic fashion-novelty and thus stabilized it; élan vital and nothing more is and remains itself a Fixum of contemplation. The social reason for Bergson's pseudo-Novum lies in the late-bourgeoisie, which has within it absolutely nothing new in terms of content."[46] Bergson, Bloch says, speaks only of unceasing repetition.

Bloch had an aversion to Bergson's idea of a continuum, but I adopt a Bergsonian approach for its simultaneity and multiple forms of recognition. With Bergson there is no need for a phallic Novum; instead, there are multitudinous waves and crests, or nodes—convergences in space and time. I argue that a Marxian orthodoxy misses what is so powerful about Bergson's philosophy. For him, change is not dependent on dialectical conflict; instead, change is organic, indeterminate, unpredictable. Change is the unforeseeable materialization of multiple relationalities, ecologies of interchange and interdependence. It may be the uncontrollability of life and its ineffable qualities, as postulated by Bergson, that we can look to for profound epistemological shifts in how we think about life itself. Life and the forms it takes are "indeterminate, i.e. unforeseeable," Bergson writes. "More and more indeterminate also, more and more free, is the activity to which these forms serve as the vehicle."[47] Bergson looks to neurons, "at the extremity of each [of which] manifold ways open in which manifold questions present themselves, [a]s a veritable *reservoir of indetermination*" (my italics).[48] By thinking on a different scale, we must be willing to accept a process of change that sends us into the unknown and the unknowable.

As in the utopian practices of Sojourner Truth, Jarena Lee, and Rebecca Cox Jackson, Sun Ra reaches through his music and performance for a radical utopianism that helps us recalibrate, or expand, what we mean by *radical* and *political*. In chapter 6, "The Freedom Not to Be: Sun Ra's Alternative Ontology," I consider Sun Ra's conceptualizations of the human and his larger idea of beingness in a universe that is not human centered. Unlike Sylvia Wynter, Sun Ra does not wish for a new genre of the human but, rather, calls for alternative modes of existence itself. He calls for us to embrace our inhumanness, to "transmolecularize," to join in the material phenomena of the universe.[49] As I continue my exploration of radical worlds and subjectivities. I am interested in how Sun Ra's philosophies of time, space, and existence reach beyond a politics of black nationalism or struggle for inclusion in a US or global body politic. Sun Ra's music and philosophy cast out into the galaxies, away from the "earthman" and into an expansive kind of existence.

With this book I hope to kick up some dust, to leave loose ends, to raise more questions than answers. I hope I am able to make it all seem even more impossible, unrealistic, and escapist.

Notes

INTRODUCTION

1 Orlando Patterson, *Slavery and Social Death*, 5.
2 Sun Ra, in *Space Is the Place,* directed by John Coney written by Sun Ra and Joshua Smith, featuring Sun Ra and his Intergalactic Solar Arkestra (North American Star System, 1974) 85 min.
3 Muñoz, *Cruising Utopia*, 1.
4 June Tyson, in *Space Is the Place*.
5 Wynter, "Re-Enchantment of Humanism," 136.
6 Bergson, *Creative Mind*, 62.
7 Bergson, *Creative Mind,* 62.
8 Bergson, *Creative Mind*, 160.
9 Barnard, *Living Consciousness*, 11.
10 Bergson, "'Phantasms of the Living,'" 79.
11 Goodman, *Sonic Warfare*, xiv.
12 Bergson, *Creative Evolution*, 10.
13 Bergson, *Creative Evolution*, 4.
14 Bergson, *Creative Evolution*, 9.
15 Frank Manuel and Fritzie Manuel offer an exhaustive resource for the history of utopian thought in Europe. See Manuel and Manuel, *Utopian Thought.*
16 Braidotti, *Transpositions,* 14.
17 Gregg and Seigworth, "An Inventory of Shimmers," in Gregg and Seigworth, *The Affect Theory Reader*, 2.
18 Spillers, "Mama's Baby, Papa's Maybe," 67.
19 Spillers, "Mama's Baby, Papa's Maybe," 67.
20 Lee, *Religious Experience and Journal*, 24.
21 Braidotti, "Posthuman, All Too Human," 201.
22 "Forevermore Transcending: the Ashram Albums of Alice Swamini Turiya-

sangitananda-Coltrane." Dublab online radio program produced by Mark "Frosty" McNeill. Accessed July 8, 2018. http://dublab.com/forevermore-transcending-the]-ashram-albums-of-alice-swamini-turiyasangitananda-coltrane/. 60 minutes.

23 Landecker, *Culturing Life*, 140.
24 S. R. Delany, *Triton*, 269.
25 Ahmed, *Cultural Politics of Emotion,* 25.
26 Levitas, *Concept of Utopia*, 160.
27 Thompson, *William Morris*, 790–91.
28 Edward George in *The Last Angel of History*, directed by John Akomfrah (London: Black Studio Film Collective, 1996).
29 See Bersani, "Is the Rectum a Grave?," and Edelman, *No Future.*
30 Bloch, *Principle of Hope*, 1:11.
31 Geoghegan, *Ernst Bloch*, 37. "Anticipatory illumination" is one version in English translation for Bloch's concept *Vor-Schein*.
32 Jameson, "Islands and Trenches," 6.
33 Bloch, *Natural Law and Human Dignity*, 192.
34 Moylan, "Introduction: Jameson and Utopia," 4.
35 Moylan, "Introduction: Jameson and Utopia," 5.
36 Sun Ra, "My Music Is Words," in *Sun Ra Collected Works,* 1:xxxii.
37 Eshun, "Further Considerations on Afrofuturism," 298.
38 Eshun, "Further Considerations on Afrofuturism," 301.
39 Edelman, *No Future*, 1.
40 Muñoz, *Cruising Utopia,* 1.
41 Bloch, *Principle of Hope*, 1:11.
42 Bloch, *Principle of Hope*, 1:11.
43 Bloch, *Principle of Hope*, 1:4.
44 Bloch, *Principle of Hope*, 1:202.
45 Barnard, *Living Consciousness,* 7.
46 Bloch, *Principle of Hope*, 1:201–2.
47 Bergson, *Creative Evolution,* 139.
48 Bergson, *Creative Evolution*, 140.
49 Sun Ra, *Space Is the Place.*

CHAPTER 1. ALONG THE PSYCHIC HIGHWAY

Abbreviations

GP Rebecca Cox Jackson, *Gifts of Power: The Writings of Rebecca Cox Jackson, Black Visionary, Shaker Eldress*, ed. Jean McMahon Humez (Amherst: University of Massachusetts Press, 1981).

JL Jarena Lee, *Religious Experience and Journal of Mrs. Jarena Lee, Giving an Account of Her Calling to Preach the Gospel* (Philadelphia: printed by the author, 1849).