



# Founder's Lecture 2016

Professor Sir Brian Harrison, FBA

*'The history of the future'*

# THE HISTORY OF THE FUTURE

## **PHASE 1: THE AFTERLIFE AS INSPIRATION (c.1600-c.1800)**

religion & politics inseparable  
mercantilism enthroned

## **PHASE 2: SELF-HELP FACILITATES A 'HEAVEN BELOW' (c.1800-c.1900)**

industrialization loosens up change in all areas  
from mercantilism to free trade  
Liberal Party 'opens windows'  
respectability pursued  
'making of the English middle class'

## **PHASE 3: FROM INDIVIDUALIST UTOPIA TO STATIST DYSTOPIA? (c.1900-c.2000)**

urbanization & industrialization demand an expanding central state  
growth of government expertise & personnel  
utopian inspiration for early labour movement: Owen, Morris, Bellamy  
help from projecting existing trends forward  
BUT difficulties abound: hence crises of 1960s & 1970s  
dystopias advance (Forster, Huxley, Orwell) as utopias retire  
but dystopias have much in common with utopias  
and politicians deserve to be defended against both

## **PHASE 4: AN ALL-ABSORBING PRESENT**

accelerating media-driven preoccupation with the present  
ongoing secularization of an earth-bound future  
apologies for the past yoked to mortgaging of the future  
science fiction and 'futures studies' no guide to the future  
despite H.G.Wells's enthusiasm, they remain defensive in mood  
like historians, they depend inevitably on documents from the past



'London street corner on Sunday morning'

1856 Illustrated London News

# THE HISTORY OF THE FUTURE

## **PHASE 1: THE AFTERLIFE AS INSPIRATION (c.1600-c.1800)**

religion & politics inseparable  
mercantilism enthroned

## **PHASE 2: SELF-HELP FACILITATES A 'HEAVEN BELOW' (c.1800-c.1900)**

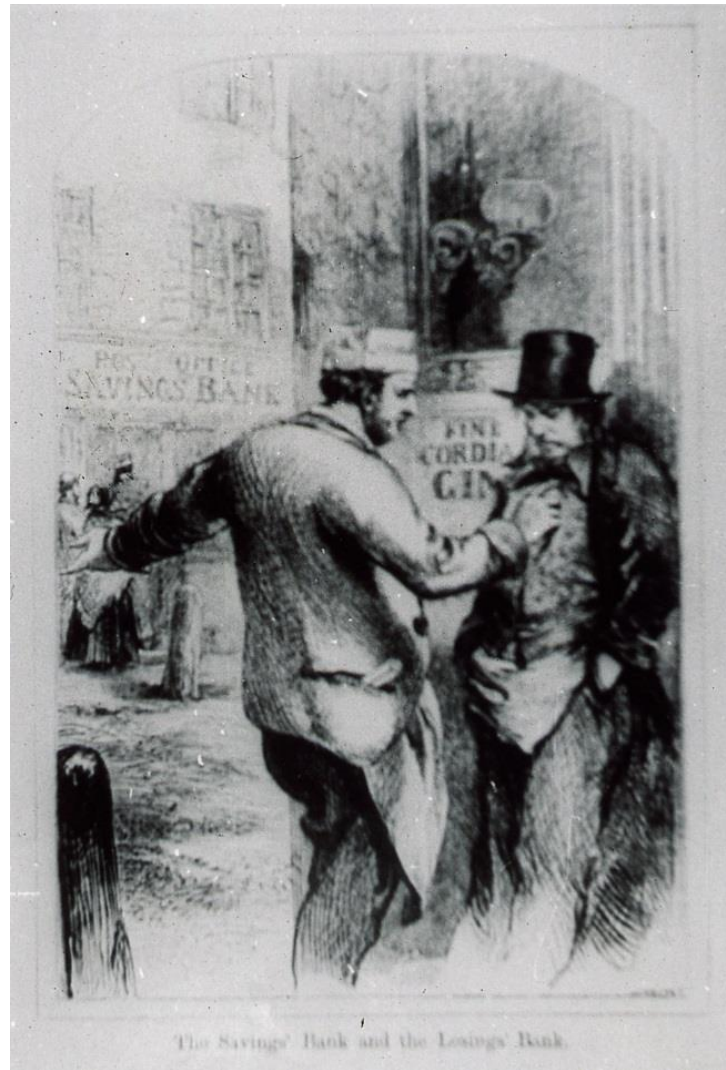
industrialization loosens up change in all areas  
from mercantilism to free trade  
Liberal Party 'opens windows'  
respectability pursued  
'making of the English middle class'

## **PHASE 3: FROM INDIVIDUALIST UTOPIA TO STATIST DYSTOPIA? (c.1900-c.2000)**

urbanization & industrialization demand an expanding central state  
growth of government expertise & personnel  
utopian inspiration for early labour movement: Owen, Morris, Bellamy  
help from projecting existing trends forward  
BUT difficulties abound: hence crises of 1960s & 1970s  
dystopias advance (Forster, Huxley, Orwell) as utopias retire  
but dystopias have much in common with utopias  
and politicians deserve to be defended against both

## **PHASE 4: AN ALL-ABSORBING PRESENT**

accelerating media-driven preoccupation with the present  
ongoing secularization of an earth-bound future  
apologies for the past yoked to mortgaging of the future  
science fiction and 'futures studies' no guide to the future  
despite H.G.Wells's enthusiasm, they remain defensive in mood  
like historians, they depend inevitably on documents from the past



The Savings Bank and the Losing Bank  
J. W. Kirton 'Four Pillars of Temperance' (1865)

# THE HISTORY OF THE FUTURE

## **PHASE 1: THE AFTERLIFE AS INSPIRATION (c.1600-c.1800)**

religion & politics inseparable  
mercantilism enthroned

## **PHASE 2: SELF-HELP FACILITATES A 'HEAVEN BELOW' (c.1800-c.1900)**

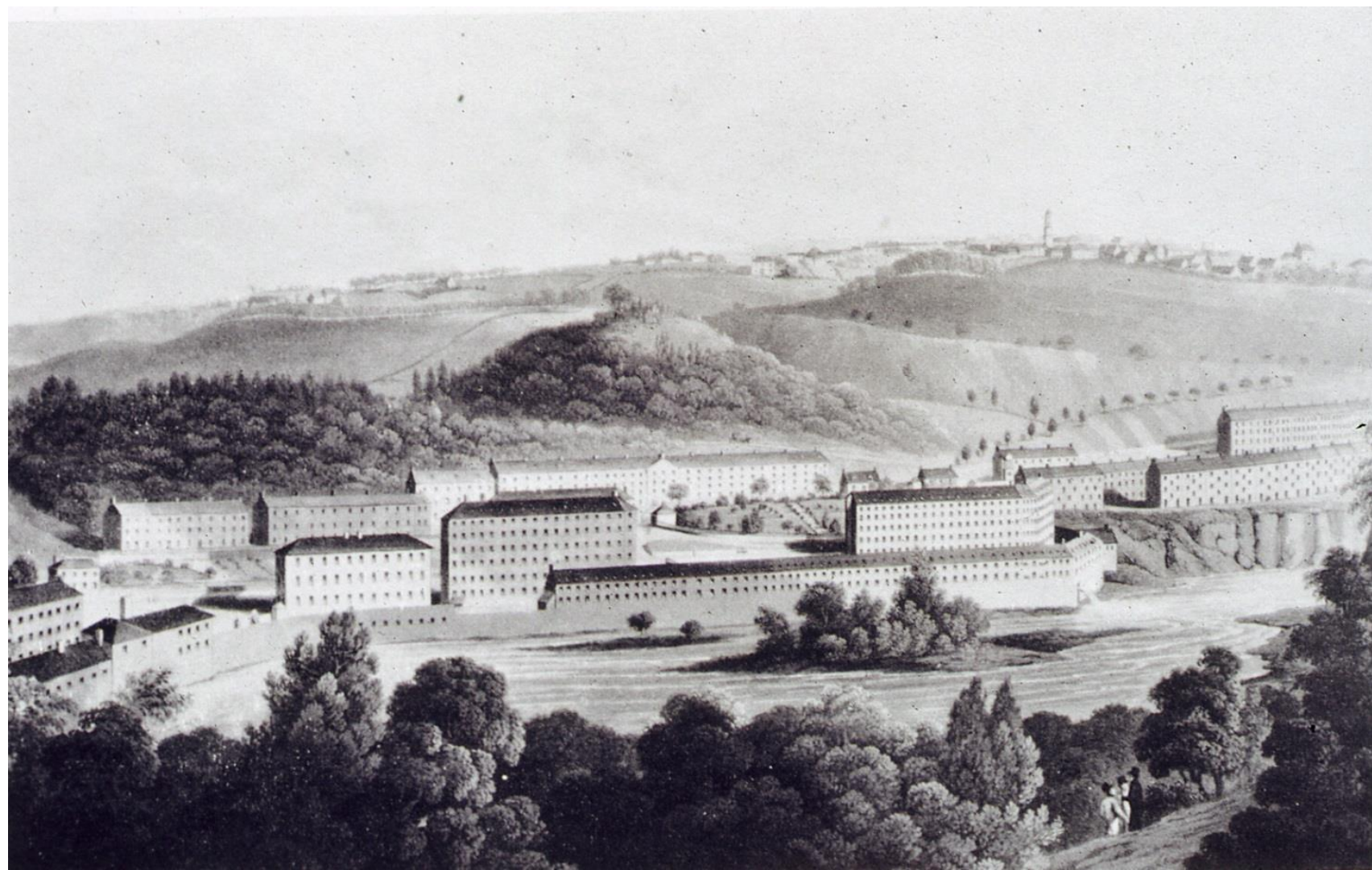
industrialization loosens up change in all areas  
from mercantilism to free trade  
Liberal Party 'opens windows'  
respectability pursued  
'making of the English middle class'

## **PHASE 3: FROM INDIVIDUALIST UTOPIA TO STATIST DYSTOPIA? (c.1900-c.2000)**

urbanization & industrialization demand an expanding central state  
growth of government expertise & personnel  
utopian inspiration for early labour movement: Owen, Morris, Bellamy  
help from projecting existing trends forward  
BUT difficulties abound: hence crises of 1960s & 1970s  
dystopias advance (Forster, Huxley, Orwell) as utopias retire  
but dystopias have much in common with utopias  
and politicians deserve to be defended against both

## **PHASE 4: AN ALL-ABSORBING PRESENT**

accelerating media-driven preoccupation with the present  
ongoing secularization of an earth-bound future  
apologies for the past yoked to mortgaging of the future  
science fiction and 'futures studies' no guide to the future  
despite H.G.Wells's enthusiasm, they remain defensive in mood  
like historians, they depend inevitably on documents from the past



# THE HISTORY OF THE FUTURE

## **PHASE 1: THE AFTERLIFE AS INSPIRATION (c.1600-c.1800)**

religion & politics inseparable  
mercantilism enthroned

## **PHASE 2: SELF-HELP FACILITATES A 'HEAVEN BELOW' (c.1800-c.1900)**

industrialization loosens up change in all areas  
from mercantilism to free trade  
Liberal Party 'opens windows'  
respectability pursued  
'making of the English middle class'

## **PHASE 3: FROM INDIVIDUALIST UTOPIA TO STATIST DYSTOPIA? (c.1900-c.2000)**

urbanization & industrialization demand an expanding central state  
growth of government expertise & personnel  
utopian inspiration for early labour movement: Owen, Morris, Bellamy  
help from projecting existing trends forward  
BUT difficulties abound: hence crises of 1960s & 1970s  
dystopias advance (Forster, Huxley, Orwell) as utopias retire  
but dystopias have much in common with utopias  
and politicians deserve to be defended against both

## **PHASE 4: AN ALL-ABSORBING PRESENT**

accelerating media-driven preoccupation with the present  
ongoing secularization of an earth-bound future  
apologies for the past yoked to mortgaging of the future  
science fiction and 'futures studies' no guide to the future  
despite H.G.Wells's enthusiasm, they remain defensive in mood  
like historians, they depend inevitably on documents from the past





*'Is it all right now Henry?'*  
*'Yes, not even scratched'*

Daily Express November 1940

# THE HISTORY OF THE FUTURE

## **PHASE 1: THE AFTERLIFE AS INSPIRATION (c.1600-c.1800)**

religion & politics inseparable  
mercantilism enthroned

## **PHASE 2: SELF-HELP FACILITATES A 'HEAVEN BELOW' (c.1800-c.1900)**

industrialization loosens up change in all areas  
from mercantilism to free trade  
Liberal Party 'opens windows'  
respectability pursued  
'making of the English middle class'

## **PHASE 3: FROM INDIVIDUALIST UTOPIA TO STATIST DYSTOPIA? (c.1900-c.2000)**

urbanization & industrialization demand an expanding central state  
growth of government expertise & personnel  
utopian inspiration for early labour movement: Owen, Morris, Bellamy  
help from projecting existing trends forward  
BUT difficulties abound: hence crises of 1960s & 1970s  
dystopias advance (Forster, Huxley, Orwell) as utopias retire  
but dystopias have much in common with utopias  
and politicians deserve to be defended against both

## **PHASE 4: AN ALL-ABSORBING PRESENT**

accelerating media-driven preoccupation with the present  
ongoing secularization of an earth-bound future  
apologies for the past yoked to mortgaging of the future  
science fiction and 'futures studies' no guide to the future  
despite H.G.Wells's enthusiasm, they remain defensive in mood  
like historians, they depend inevitably on documents from the past



# THE HISTORY OF THE FUTURE

## **PHASE 1: THE AFTERLIFE AS INSPIRATION (c.1600-c.1800)**

religion & politics inseparable  
mercantilism enthroned

## **PHASE 2: SELF-HELP FACILITATES A 'HEAVEN BELOW' (c.1800-c.1900)**

industrialization loosens up change in all areas  
from mercantilism to free trade  
Liberal Party 'opens windows'  
respectability pursued  
'making of the English middle class'

## **PHASE 3: FROM INDIVIDUALIST UTOPIA TO STATIST DYSTOPIA? (c.1900-c.2000)**

urbanization & industrialization demand an expanding central state  
growth of government expertise & personnel  
utopian inspiration for early labour movement: Owen, Morris, Bellamy  
help from projecting existing trends forward  
BUT difficulties abound: hence crises of 1960s & 1970s  
dystopias advance (Forster, Huxley, Orwell) as utopias retire  
but dystopias have much in common with utopias  
and politicians deserve to be defended against both

## **PHASE 4: AN ALL-ABSORBING PRESENT**

accelerating media-driven preoccupation with the present  
ongoing secularization of an earth-bound future  
apologies for the past yoked to mortgaging of the future  
science fiction and 'futures studies' no guide to the future  
despite H.G.Wells's enthusiasm, they remain defensive in mood  
like historians, they depend inevitably on documents from the past