social-technological interpretations of utopias by Saage and Habermas (who are right as regards the first level), here an element of individuality and non-determination – or non-identity, in Adorno's words – comes in.

This normative stance may ultimately be based on an awareness of human creativity. For the impossibility of imagining and establishing the perfect society leaves space for precisely the kind of spontaneity that every society must permit. In this respect, More remains faithful to Pico della Mirandola's conception of dignity: human dignity lies in its *indeterminate* nature and the ever-renewing capacity of humans to determine themselves.[46] This would mean that utopias take their orientation from the idea of human dignity after all. Yet happiness also features as an important normative aspect, but now as something that cannot be produced and directed or controlled. Happiness appears as a politically aporetic concept. This is the lesson of utopian reflection.

At the beginning I raised the question of why utopias are only a marginal topic in the history of political ideas. In the light of what has been said, it remains open whether this is primarily a function of the fact that the first normative level of utopian radicalism pushes towards a society beyond justice and also in a paradoxical sense beyond politics.[47] It is also possible that the various conceptions of happiness, in contrast to conceptions of rights and justice, have become outdated and essentially contested. But it might also be the case that the reasons why this is such a difficult tradition of thought are to be found in the second level of normativity, the hyperbolic and ironical skill of questioning oneself, a truly noble and rare art. For the critical irony expressed in utopias is the complex attitude of those who are able to let go of what human beings cling to – namely, the status quo *as well as* the dreams, but without betraying the latter.

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[46] Pico della Mirandola, *On the Dignity of Man*, p. 45.
[47] The thesis that utopias suspend the political is found in Jameson, "The politics of utopia."

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Index