The Gender of Utopia and the Mode of Utopianism

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Observing the incisions in history from a subjective time perspective, Miguel Torga wrote the following note of expectation and demystification in his *Diário* (Diary) on the 11 December 1987: "Perestroika. What is yet to come, if the spirit is in keeping with the word! If the word means the recognition of the failure of the most widespread Utopia of our times: the Marxist redemption. If, in fact, blind ideology has finally given way to the empire that Descartes once supposed to be a generic gift of humanity: common sense. Common sense that, after all, has always slowly atoned for demagogic promises made by revolutions" (1511).

With the disenchanted clarity of a chronicler that closely and critically observed almost half a century of infamous tribulations and brilliant successes that have had no equal or parallel in the great narrative of human history, Torga gave vent to the comprehensible anathema poured on the idea of Utopia at the end of the century, partially identifying it with political totalitarianism and fiercely rejecting it as "blind ideology". At the same time, and in a conditional mode, Torga expresses the hope of a return to the Cartesian use of reason, taking it as both the most adequate norm of common sense in political management and as the ultimate human resort in the launching of a world-wide era of good human relationship. In other words, for Torga the great deception that the Utopian political and social experience of the Bolshevik revolution turned out to be –

a revolution that was carried out in the name of a supposed scientific reason, interpreter of the general laws of phenomena and of an infallible dialectic reasoning, a beacon of the civilising process – shattered, or even crushed, the heuristic meaning or the value of the idea of Utopia, turning it into the most despairing of human illusions. However, and despite all the legitimate suspicion that the word Utopia can conjure up *a priori*, its explicit or implicit depreciative enunciation continues to occur with the same frequency with which it is exultantly and positively used, even if it is only to proclaim the expectation of a social order governed by common sense and reason...

For, if there is a word, idea, concept or thought whose content is so erratic, indeterminate, historically variable and semantically equivocal as its expression is univocal and clearly etymologically defined, it is this aporia, that designates a non-physical place that is a place, containing a threefold and contradictory meaning: (i) the embodiment – in the best of its readings – either of a human volition to sublimate the ill-favoured aspects of the given reality or of a prospective human awareness to anticipate the necessary developments of history; (ii) a phantamasgoric construction – in the most common of its meanings – without connection with the sheer evidence of the "laws of life" and with Man's psychosocial nature; and (iii) a coercive social model – in the worst of its interpretations – of a totalitarian political design projected with distortional effects on the limits and practical needs of the known world. But apart from its inevitable axiological resonances, Utopia is acknowledged and questioned, separately or together, through one of the two following forms of thought and, therefore, through one of the two expressions derived from the terminology of linguistics: either as a figure of transposition, *i. e.*, metaphoric and purely imaginative, or as a figure of contiguity, *i. e.*, metonymic and operative within the domain of the possible.[1] Whether by means of "metaphoric projection" or "metonymic dislocation", the design of the effects projected on

a social scale can vary from the very good – represented by imagined islands with an ideal government or dreams of technical and bio-technological triumphs – to the very worst – represented by claustrophobic freedom-crushing social engineering or distressing eugenic operations, foreseen, *a priori*, in imaginary fiction, and experimented, *a posteriori*, in the immanent plan of history. To illustrate, on imaginary grounds, the best possible (or negatively and inversely, the very worst) in the different spheres of existence (with emphasis on the social), by means of a critical derogation or allegorical interpretation of that which is made known or is already known, is the ultimate function of the literary Utopia, *i.e.*, the function of that predominantly narrative literary form initiated by the English humanist Thomas More when he firstly published a fictional work in Louvain in 1516. Unknown to any genre classification and to any literary form described in the classical poetics, its long Latin title included the defining neologism, which no lexicon had until then registered, of a fictional place homologous with an ideal society.

The definitions of this new literary form are not, however, consensual regarding its thematic scope and formal structure, and even less concerning its genealogy. There are authors who raise the problem of the idea of the existence of an archetype or canonical model of Utopia linked to the detailed description of the organisation of a desired society. In a recent interview on the subject of Utopia included in a dossier organised by Magazine Littéraire, Alberto Manguel, author of *A History of Reading* and *Dictionary of Imaginary Places*, attributed the origin of what he called "Utopian literary tradition" (2000: 20) to three founding narratives, Thomas More's *Utopia*, Daniel Defoe's *Robinson Crusoe* and Jonathan Swift's *Gulliver's Travels*. What Manguel proposed with this triple genealogy, as far as we can see, was to widen the poetic-rhetoric notion of Utopia to other discreet literary forms, namely to the robinsonade and to the satyre. He may even have wanted to give the genre a syncretistic

quality, so that its fabulous limits were not merely confined to a narrative with an exclusive political-social theme.

The same procedure of relativizing the genre parameters of Utopia as an archetype narrative based on the eponymous work of Thomas More, *i.e.*, as the enunciation of a social criticism and a representation of an alternative ideal society, was also recently followed by John Carey, who edited the *Faber Book of Utopias*. In his introduction to the volume, Carey invokes a very personal point of view of what Utopia really is to justify the works he chose. He understands it not so much as a specific genre subordinated to defined codes of a thematic composition but as a generic term that describes positive or idealising, ironic representations, whether they be forms of social organisation, mythical-nostalgic places or subjective states of will. If it is possible for John Carey, without breaking the thread of illustrative coherence, to heteroclitically juxtapose, for example, fragments of Plato's *The Republic*, Montaigne's *Essays*, Robert Owen's *A New View of Society*, passages from poems such as John Milton's *Paradise Lost*, Alfred Tennyson's *The Lotos-Eaters* or W. B. Yeats's *Sailing to Byzantium*, it is because the criterion he used in his choice derived from a pluralistic notion of the textualisation of Utopia, not reduced to the exclusive field of literary fiction and to the three narrative models established by Manguel. Carey's criterion encompasses, therefore, both texts of a doctrinal-programmatic nature and others that are more ill-defined, enunciators of diffuse variations of wishful thinking. However, Carey mitigates the quasi-solipsistic elasticity of his choice of Utopian texts / vehicles of "expression of desire" and anti-Utopian texts/vehicles of "expression of fear" (Carey, 1999: xi) through a clear identification and an inventory of the themes and "topics" that, with greater or less emphasis, give them shape: "eugenics", "the role of the family", "crime and punishment", "nature", "reason", "justice" and the "social roles attributed to men and women". The inventory of the figurative structures (themes, topics, motives, topoi,

isotopes, according to the terminology of the theoretical perspective one adopts) most commonly used in Utopian fictional texts is a procedure frequently used in the strict genre determination of this type of narrative material, in order to distinguish it from both other textual representations of imaginary places and programmatic texts of a politico-philosophical purpose. However, it is curious to note that the most recent anthologies on the theme of Utopia, like the aforementioned one of John Carey, published in 1998, or *The Utopian Reader*, published in the following year by Gregory Claeys and Lyman Tower Sargent, or *L'Utopie*, edited by Frédéric Rouvillois and published in 1998, diachronically juxtapose doctrinal fictional-literary and politico-philosophical Utopias in a single sequential, expositional unit by placing more or less emphasis on the concept of an ideal society, as if, apart from the divergence of their different and correspondent choices of works, they bear witness to the persistence of the double and constant problem of the canon and hybridism of the literary genre in discussion.

Among anthologies recently published, mention must be made of one that was edited by Catriona Kelly and which came out in 1999. It is an example of the free use, or the legitimate deviation of the use, of the ample polysemy of the concept of Utopia, in order to gather, in a synchronic perspective, a collection of essayistic texts and aesthetic manifestos, not exclusively literary, of authors from the most widely differing artistic areas of Russian modernism. The criterion used in this case was to resort to the pluralism of the term Utopia, stripping it of its prosaic value of representing the model of a desired society, to encompass within it the original and innovative radical sense of aesthetic positions assumed in a determined, revolutionary, historico-cultural context.

Raymond Trousson and Vita Fortunati, publishers of the *Dictionary of Literary Utopias*, published at the end of 2000, chose a different and methodologically more delimited perspective in

relation to the anthologies already mentioned. They restricted their monumental compilation to fictional texts defined by a formalist criterion, a criterion which, in its general lines, had already been formulated by Trousson in his classic study *Voyages aux Pays de Nulle Part*. He pointed out in this work that Utopia appears whenever "in the framework of a narrative (which excludes political treatises) there is a description of a community (which excludes the *robinsonade*) organised according to certain political, economic and moral principles and correcting the complexities of social existence (which excludes the golden age and Arcadia), whether it is presented as an ideal to achieve (constructive Utopia) or as a forecast of a hell (modern anti-Utopia), or whether it is situated in real, imaginary space or in time, or whether described at the end of a probable or improbable imaginary journey" (Trousson, 1979: 28).

Despite all these differences of criteria, it seems that anthologists, "lexicographers" and experts of literary or programmatic Utopia are all in agreement in considering fictional texts and politico-doctrinal conceptions whose aims (literal or ironic) are either the optimum or the worst representation/conception of the organisation of a human social community as all belonging to the same category.

On coming to this point of our argument, two ideas regarding the literary Utopia must be mentioned. The first is that despite their minor narrative complexity, especially in relation to modern forms of fiction, this type of texts, characterised by limiting their thematic aims to a more or less allegoric or didactic purpose of describing an alternative and perfect model of society, are still, in their varied literary quality, recognised, as Peter Ruppert points out, for their performative effects at three discreet, but interdependent, levels: (i) **cognitive**, through the heuristic extension that they operate on the familiar limits of the known world; (ii) **therapeutic**, through the imaginary resolution in mediating and overcoming social and cultural contradictions; (iii) **prospective**, by

anticipating and envisaging possible historical and material developments that are fictionalised in them (Ruppert, 1986: 15-17). The second idea is that all narrative that is susceptible to being defined as belonging to the literary genre of Utopia, identifiable, therefore, according to thematic units or semantic features that constitute an idealised social fiction, necessarily mirror a dialectic undertaking that brings contradictory symbolic values or ideas into play at both the level of the plot and of the discourse. Literary Utopias therefore place in a more or less dramatised, antagonistic situation the dominant values or ideas of a given social formation, and which configure what Karl Mannheim designates as an "Ideology", and the alternative values and ideas that tend to derogate them, and which configure, in the words of the German sociologist, a "Utopia".[2]

But the enumeration of the dominant characteristics of Utopia, now represented in its double and simultaneous meaning as a literary form and an ideological programme of a social model, can be summed up in the following inventory of general characteristics made by James Holstun in his study on the relationship between the political-rhetorical expression of the English Puritan constitutional projects of the seventeenth century, which were Utopian in character, and the way they were put into practice. What seems to us to be the most important points referred to by Holstun will be interpolated in our own commentaries.

"1. Utopia has a bifocal vision".

This means that it is simultaneously literary and non-literary.

"2. Utopia is born *ex libris* and not *ab nihilo*".

Its origin as a project for society arises from the writing/reading of a text/book – which reminds one, in our opinion, of the purpose of the mystic doctrine of the Cabala, which attributed the Creation of the world to the writing of the Book of God and to the infinite combinations of the 22 letters of the Hebrew alphabet.

"3. Utopia is the site of a textual/practical dialectic".

The text inspires a social practice that, in turn, inspires new written texts/codes of Utopian good social management and civil conduct. It is worthwhile mentioning that More's *Utopia* inspired many of the first explorers of both South and North America to cluster the native population into social units and organise the administration of the colonies of the new continent. Among these were Vasco de Quiroga, the Spanish humanist who began the process of the social administration of the Indians in New Spain in 1535, and Sir Humphrey Gilbert, leader of the first English colonial expedition in 1583 (Kumar, 1987: 71).

"5. Utopia is something done to others".

The social model is imposed on another, whether or not it so wishes, through the effect of a personal or collective act of legislative will.

"6. Utopia is a factory for the disciplinary production of subjectivities".

Its well-intentioned and positive, pragmatic pursuit has the aim of educating and regenerating the civic and ethical conscience of individual citizens.

"7. Utopia is a marginal defence of reason against centralized custom".

Constructed according to rational principles, it is built outside of and in conflict with the secularised programmes of politico-social norms that, due to the routine of their practice, tended to pale in ideological formulae that are inadequate for the demands of new realities of humanity.

"8. Utopia's isolation is not withdrawal, but insular preparation for a rational expansion".

Efforts were made to put Utopian social programmes, as those framed by Robert Owen and other Utopian minds – the "phalansterians" of love, for example, conceived by Charles Fourier –, into practice in small communities with the experimental and pedagogic intention of making them world-

wide examples of human beings living in society.

"9. Utopia's theory of history is not regressive and nostalgic, but progressive and prophetic" (Holstun, 1987: 7-8).

Holstun emphasised the millenarianist component of Utopian spirit – studied philosophically, for instance, by Ernst Bloch and by Martin Buber – as a foresight of a social formula that is radically new and organised according to the rational possibilities of man. This opposed the mythical-paradisiacal component of the Utopian spirit – explained from the point of view of the phenomenology of religions by Mircea Eliade –, which is displayed in the irrational aspiration of man to return to the pure paradisiacal condition, *i.e.*, to the state of natural innocence and pure freedom that existed before the perpetration of a cosmic default and the emergence of the regulating and modelling law of the social state.

But mention must also be made of another structuring kernel of investigation that is abundantly produced on Utopia: the representative voices of the open, multidisciplinary paradigm, whose works base the widening of their research on a single principle of basic explanation (a "Utopian function", a "Utopian propensity" or a "Utopian mode").

Utopianism is a general substantive term that defines the content of this form of thought that is in the origin of and permeates the various forms of social behaviour and cultural expression, the latter including Utopia as a literary paradigm. Thus, Thomas More's supreme originality is not so much due to the fact that he is the founder of a literary sub-genre characterised or defined by two distinct discursive levels, involving, in the words of Peter Ruppert "the defamiliarization of a historical or real time and place – marred by disparities, waste, exploitation, repression – [and] the invention of an imaginary non-place or a non-time in which these contradictions are cancelled out or at least reduced" (Ruppert, 1986: 7). The great contribution of the English humanist was, so to say, to give a nominal form, in the context of the history of

Western ideas and culture and its diversified literary creation, to a sublimating propensity with a highly probable congenial inhesion in the human way of being, knowing and acting, a propensity that, in a very synthetic way and without ignoring the philosophical implications relating to the idealist theory of knowledge, consists in the reiterated and conscientious idealisation of the historical conditions of material life. The neologism Utopia invented by Thomas More works, therefore, at both a literary-genre level and at a theoretical-doctrinal level, as a sign whose **substance of expression** (to paraphrase the terminology used by the linguist Hjelmslev in defining his model of the structure of a natural language) is outlined on the continual human will to align the conscious representation of the world with an ideal (project of society), which, due to historical, cultural and doctrinal factors, varies in the delimitation and definition of its **substance of positive content**. In other words, the historical and clearly determined formation of the sign Utopia (non-place), associated, in its origins, to the modern era of the Renaissance and European Humanism, not only contributed to giving lexical form to the above-mentioned sublimating propensity of the historical conditions of material life, but also, metonymically, named a varied and wide range of meanings of erratic value that even contradicted one another. To some extent, such semantic erraticism resulted from the fact that the value and the sense of the project for an ideal society were limited by various structural determinations, from historical-temporal erosion to ideological obsolescence. This is the reason that many of the thematic motives of classical Utopias (literary or programmatic), namely those representing the rigid ordering of collective life and of social closure, can be contemporarily seen as being anti-Utopian. It is therefore important to recognise that Utopias cannot be seen as the imaginary embodiment of timeless ideas, but as plans and blueprints of circumstantial forms of organisation and social relationships considered as

being a more perfect alternative than those that are given and known in the relative plan of historical time.

The neologism Utopia, therefore, led to the creation of a vast semantic field, **Utopianism**, punctuated in its conceptual definition by different cognate terms and other lexemes that designate ideally imagined places and times. Glossaries of terms formed from the Latinised root of the Greek *topos* (place) and classifying inventories, more or less based on etymologies and erudite historico-literary research, in order to characterise different fictional-imaginary and historico-real representations on social formations and situations modelled on a supra-determined or totalitarian doctrinal conception, have been proposed as aids for the understanding of Utopianism, which can be generically defined as the ideal model to rationally fabulate or dream of a social or existential condition that is perfect or perfectible. Such glossaries and classifications have been published in order to clarify discreet forms of Utopianism in studies with widely differing aims. Examples, just to mention a few, are *Between Dystopia and Utopia* by Constantinos Doxiadis (1966: 87-88) – a work tailored to the perspective of the theory of architectural and urban space – the respective introductions both to the bibliographic compilation *British and American Utopian Literature, 1516-1985*, by the professor of political science Lyman Tower Sargent, and to the already-mentioned *Dictionary of Literary Utopias*, edited by the literati Raymond Trousson and Vita Fortunati, and also the politico-historiographic exegesis *Utopia and Ideal Society: a Study of English Utopian Writing 1516-1700*, by the social historian J. C. Davies. These glossaries reflect the contiguity and, above all, the polarisation of contrary but dialectically interdependent ideas on the "Utopian mode" – to use an expression synonymous with Utopianism of the sociologist Krishan Kumar (1987: 124) – *i.e.*, they play with the positive semantic value (eutopia, entopia) or the depreciative value (cacotopia, dystopia) of prefixes, with the meaning of compound terms (Utopian satyre, critical Utopia) and with the

specific conceptual determination of the constellation of ideal spaces (cockaigne, arcadia, community of moral perfection, millennium, etc.).

We are not going to re-examine the "Utopian state of the art" and the concomitant definition and determination of its possible literary and programmatic concretion, but, instead, to continue to explore the intersections between Utopia as a literary genre and the mode of Utopianism as a perennial urge to "dream" "of a better world". These latter expressions were used by the German philosopher Ernst Bloch, possibly the thinker who most systematically and minutely analysed the ontological bases, the gnosis and the historico-cultural effects of Utopianism, namely in his great works *The Spirit of Utopia* (1918) and *The Principle of Hope* (1955-1959). Apart from the aporetic evidence that the cognate and derived term (Utopianism) designates – in the words of Raymond Ruyer – a constant "mental exercise on lateral possibilities" (Rouvillois, 1998: 15) and, therefore, an earlier and hypertrophic reality in relation to the radical term that gave rise to it (Utopia), it must be reiterated that Thomas More's famous book plays a central role and is a stabilising factor in the history of this perennial volition to dream of a better world. This is clearly shown in the catalogue published by the New York Public Library, the English version of its French counterpart published by the Bibliothèque Nationale de France, as a bibliographic document for the exhibition *The search for the Ideal Society in the Western World/La quête de la société idéale en Occident*, which the two cultural institutions promoted in Paris during the Spring and the beginning of the Summer in 2000 and in New York in the Autumn 2000 and the beginning of January 2001. On a site with access to a profusion of thematic links available on the electronic page of the New York Public Library (**www.nypl.org**) created during the exhibition, one can see the double aim that led to its conception, which was to demonstrate that the vast range of responses given in the search for and definition of the

nature of the "ideal society, one organised in ways that guarantee the felicity of its members, has been a staple element in human experience through all of recorded history" and to reconstruct the way "how women and men have over the space of several thousands of years of Western culture imagined, depicted, described and created new versions of ideal societies (...) inseparable from the history of the people, cultures and periods that gave birth to them". The first pages of the excellent catalogue that document the event contain a picture of the first Latin edition of More's *Utopia* published in 1516, exactly with the aim of illustrating the crucial role it played in the history of the search for this ideal society. It is placed between a reproduction of a 1918 poster printed by the Central Union of Consumer Societies of All Russia with the exhortation "Women, go to the co-operatives", illustrated by two feminine figures of different ages and social strata but evoking a situation of social welfare and material abundance, and a 1445 manuscript of a German Bible depicting Adam and Eve in the act of eating the forbidden fruit which would bring an end to paradise and the beginning of the interminable search for and recovery of it.

In an essay in the catalogue entitled *Utopian Tradition: Themes and Variations*, Lyman Tower Sargent wrote a notable synthesis of this tradition, a synthesis which, in the context of the catalogue, works simultaneously as a historically documented portico essay and an expanded caption of the meaning of the above-mentioned illustration. Sargent essentially distinguishes between the "Utopias conceived without human effort" and the "Utopias conceived with human effort" (Sargent, 2000: 8-10), identifying the former with golden ages, arcadia, fortunate islands, earthly paradise, and certain forms of millenarianism, *i.e.*, mythical-religious visions that essentially reflect an archetypal nostalgia of paradise, and the latter with the urge of man to control his own earthly destiny through imaginary schemes progressively oriented to the creation of models of society seen as ideal, and among which

Plato's *Republic* occupies a prominent pioneering position. The exhibition, of which Sargent was one of the main organizers, was developed around that basic framework of reference and according to the following chronological order: (i) "ancient, biblical and medieval sources"; (ii) "other worlds – the Utopian imagination from More to the Enlightenment"; (iii) "Utopia in history – from the revolutionary age through the nineteenth century"; (iv) "dreams and nightmares – Utopias and Dystopias in the twentieth century"; (v) "metaworlds – Utopian visions of the internet and the metaphysics of virtual life".

Based on the research we have made on the theme of Utopia (Reis, 1997), it could be said that Utopianism appears to be indissociable from the human mind/spirit and from its essential volitional nature. It is important, therefore, in our opinion, that the idealist theory of knowledge should be taken into consideration for the elucidation of this assumption. It is also important to acknowledge that the configuration and materialisation of this Utopian spirit within the limits of Western culture is organically associated to its two main civilizational trends and to their corresponding religious, anthropological, philosophical, literary, doctrinal principles, which means to say that it is engraved on its **Classical (Greek-Roman) Humanist matrix** and, mainly, on its **Judaic-Christian matrix**. In a way, it can be said that the Classical matrix of the Western utopian spirit is thematically and discursively outlined in two different paradigmatic modes. The first is the rational-philosophical mode, a conceptualisation, basically impregnated with Platonism (*e.g.* Plato's *Republic*), envisaging the ideal form of political government and the social organisation of the city (one can speak here, within the general spirit of Utopia, of the constitution of the **Utopian-cosmopolitan paradigm**). The second is the aesthetic-literary mode, a representation of idyllic places or times of complete happiness (*e.g.* the golden age, the "champs elysées", the fortunate isles, etc.), which evokes both the archetypical

nostalgia of paradise and the ontological unity, original or final, round and perfect (**Eutopian-pastoral paradigm**).[3] The spirit of thematic and discursive Utopia can also be found in the Judaic-Christian matrix and also outlined in two different paradigmatic modes – pastoral and cosmopolitan – but enhanced with a sacred and prophetic sense, *i.e.*, invested with a **value** of transcendent truth, shaped by an apologetic, fideistic **conviction** and oriented by a **principle** of teleological reason, value, conviction and principle associated to the totalitarian codification and verbal explanation of the world, with its pious, literal and scholastic reading of the contents of the Book of God. In this case, the spirit of Utopia, by means of doctrinal faith, and continuing to reproduce the essential sense of the two paradigmatic modes mentioned above, is manifest in different ways in relation to the classical Eutopian-pastoral mode: (i) by reproducing the same evocative intention of the happy-Eutopian place transmitted by the classical imaginary literary tradition, but redefining it according to the sacred outlines of the image of biblical paradise, *i.e.* Eden; (ii) then by ascribing to the literary representation of this ideal place a real, though vague, location in the terrestrial geographic order, a place that becomes the object of a material description that emphasises its human inaccessibility and that encourages the religious spirit and the adventurous will of medieval and post-medieval European man to the imaginary or real search for it (*e.g.* the fictional *Mandeville's Travels* and the historical motivation for Columbus's first voyage to the West Indies in search for the terrestrial Paradise); (iii) and finally by elevating this (ideal) (non)-place to the condition of a symbol to spiritually signify the final stage of mystic pilgrimages and alchemic transformations of the soul. As to the cosmopolitan mode outlined by the spirit of the Judaic-Christian Utopia, it can be said that besides its purely symbolic dimension (the complementary expression for symbolic paradise), it juxtaposes the classical rationalist project of the ideal city with the final and

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prophesied hope of a divine and benignly transcendent intervention (the descent of a Celestial Jerusalem), envisaging that the whole world would become cosmopolitan (*e.g.* the theocratic-constitutional projects related to the idea of the fifth empire). In this last case, within the Judaic-Christian matrix and as if energizing the classical and stable Utopian-cosmopolitan paradigm, one may speak of the constitution of a **Utopian-prophetic-cosmopolitan paradigm** or a **Utopian-millenarianist paradigm** of the Western Utopian spirit. We may therefore say that there are two principal and crucial modes of

the Judaic-Christian matrix of Western culture engraved by the spirit of Utopia: the first mode is relative to both the literary evocation of the perfect place created by God on earth and to the narration of the search for the biblical paradise with its literary avatars, translations and ramifications of accounts of voyages to unknown continents (*e.g. Mandeville's Travels*), to mysterious islands (*e.g. The Voyage of St. Brendan*), to mythical kingdoms (the kingdom of Prester John), all places identified as other, better places, of spiritual sublimation or material well-being; the second mode is relative to the prophecy of the millennium, with its inherent promise-hope of a happy end, divinely redeemed or materially concluded, to the history of humanity, brought to a close through the triumphant efforts of a messianic entity: (i) a divinely inspired hero (the head of the fifth empire); (ii) a charismatic group of individuals (the vanguard of the saints); (iii) a providential social class (*e.g.* Marx's proletariat); (iv) an elected nation. In this way, the prophetic mode of the spirit of Utopia – of predominantly Semitic origin – associated as it is to the benign valorisation of the idea of the future, has not only clearly been a constituent of the lay and modern notion of **progress**, but has also been confirmed, with impressive intensity till today, (I) as an **operator of hope** in several historical circumstances, (II) as a **hermeneutic operator** in various fields of human conduct and human knowledge, such as (I) (i) in the psychological and spiritual consolation for the

miseries and privation of the historical present (*e.g.* the Judaic apocalyptic and the Christian millenarianism); (I) (ii) in the justification or affirmation of a national identity magnified by its providential role (*e.g.* the messianic nation – the Portugal of the *Apologia das Coisas Profetizadas* (Apology of Prophesied Things) by Padre António Vieira; the English Commonwealth in Milton's *Areopagitica*); (I) (iii) in the incitement to carry out either a heroic, warlike and collectively motivating act or a political act and one of radical social transformation (*e.g.* the theocratic programmes of the Puritan colonisers of North America, the lay programmes of Utopian and "scientific" socialism); (II) (i) in determining the general laws of the evolution of history that point to the apotheosis of the consummation of the cosmic process (*e.g.* Joachim de Fiore and his theological theory of the three estates; Teilhard de Chardin and his palaeontological and biological theory towards the omega point); (II) (ii) in the revelation of the laws of nature and in the evolution of scientific knowledge (*e.g.* Francis Bacon's *New Atlantis*); (II) (iii) in the epic-symbolic literature of messianic content (*e.g.* William Blake's poem *Jerusalem, the Emanation of the Giant Albion*; Fernando Pessoa's poem *Mensagem*).

The third conclusion we wish to emphasise is that discreet discursive-literary varieties, representative of an ideal existentialist condition, derive from the autonomy, juxtaposition, crossing and intersection of these paradigms of Utopianism – **the Utopian-cosmopolitan** (stable, of classical mode), the *Utopian-millenarianist* (dynamic, of prophetic mode) and the **Eutopian-pastoral** (either in its mythical-religious version or in its mystical-secular version) – variegated either by the Classical (Greek-Latin) matrix or by the Judaic-Christian matrix, or by the two together. These discursive-literary varieties basically follow two main paths of argumentation or thematic configuration: the first is of a **politico-sociological** incidence (the conditions of collective

life are seen as crucial in the orientation of personal behaviour), while the second is of an **axiologic-spiritual** inclination (the conditions of social life are supervenient in relation to the path of perfection of an individual being). In the first case, we clearly recognise, besides the political projects and programmes of social transformation, the literary genre of Utopia *tout court*, this last one with its two faces of Janus, with its dialectics of criticising the ideological values one wishes to deny and the enunciation of the Utopian values one wishes to affirm. We could point, by using these other criteria, to the constitution of

the **Utopian-sociological-programmatic paradigm** and the **Utopian-narrative-literary paradigm**. The latter, whether in an eminently spiritual form – **doctrinal-religious perspective** –, whether in an essentially ontological form – **mystical-existential perspective** –, encompasses what we generically call, borrowing from More's terms of reference used in his *Utopia*, eutopia or **Eutopian literary genre**. This Eutopia, which generically represents a condition – original or final – of ontic perfection and happiness, touched by either the Classical matrix or by the Judaic-Christian matrix, or by both, or being manifest in a simple secular form, can assume a threefold discursive configuration: (i) whether in an evocative mode of an imaginary *locus amœnus* where total harmony reigns, a nostalgic representation of a condition of a perfectly fulfilled life; (ii) whether in the religious mode of a reacquired spiritual condition or, (iii) whether in an **entopic** mode – to use the term of the architect Doxiadis, coinciding with an existent material place – of a good pastoral retreat, a place of refuge provided by nature for the practice of perfectibility and for the realization of possible human felicity. In this last case one may speak, within the spirit of Utopia, of the constitution of the **Entopic-Pastoral paradigm**.

The final conclusion. The embodiment of the spirit of Utopia, from its most humanly spontaneous form of the "waking dream" – in the words of Ernst Bloch – to the most literary or

rationally thought form, is indissociable from the ontologically vital dimension of time: of **past time** (with the nostalgia of paradise), of **future time** (with the hope of the millennium or of the fideistic or scientific certainty of an apocalyptic end to history), of **present time** (with the proposal of a model of life that is an alternative to an ill-managed historical society). However, the time that is most convenient for the aporia of Utopia (here taken in the sense of a non-place, an indispensable support, as the Italian philosopher Agamben clearly explained),[4] of all places, is the time of the aporia in which we participate, the time in which we are also made and in >> which we are, the time that is not perceived by our conscience, the time of the most inner I, which does not fall into categories and is irreducible to logical reason, the time of the eternal present, simply chronological and eternal (regarding this manifestation, we mean the most ineffable and incomprehensible of the spirit of Utopia, of its timeless Utopian quality); or, in the words of Ernst Bloch (1977: 287-316), the aporia of the timeless pulse within the flow of time itself, "the darkness of the lived moment", consubstantial with the Gordian knot of existence; or in the words, and in the most Socratic style, of the Utopian Portuguese "prophet" Agostinho da Silva, the aporia of the non-time of time, the chronological instant and eternal depository of the "ideal of ideals", the "do everything now, only now" so as to return "to our fundamental nature of being without understanding, to exist tranquilly without subject or object, to settle ourselves quietly in the present" (Silva, 1989: 68), *i.e.*, to aspire to attain the "gratuitous opportunity of adventure", according to the lesson in Torga's verse that "to live is to be in timeless time" (1995: 1631). <<

NOTES

[1] Using the thesis of Roman Jakobson, who declared that linguistic-discursive activity is developed predominantly according to two semantic lines, namely, either through a process of selection between similar linguistic units (paradigmatic process from which the metaphoric discursive mode derives) or of contiguity/combination between selected linguistic units (syntagmatic process, from which the metonymic mode derives), Louis Marin considered that the two main semantic operations present in Utopian texts involve the "metaphoric projection" and the "metonymic dislocation". According to him, "the critical power of Utopia derives, on the one hand, from the (metaphoric) projection of existing reality for a 'somewhere' that cannot be situated in historical time or in geographic space; and, on the other hand, from the (metonymic) dislocation, *i.e.*, from an accentuated variation in the interior of the reality that is expressed" (Marin, 1976: 71).

28>29 [2] It must be pointed out that for Mannheim the determination of the concept of Utopia is legitimate and valid only to the extent in which it translates performative effects: in his opinion, the use of the term Utopia is appropriate to characterise a political function, but not to define a form of aesthetic-literary expression.

[3] We have used the word Eutopia to designate the happy place, in accordance with the terminology proposed by Thomas More himself.

[4] Agamben wrote: "to have a place of things has no place in the world. Utopia is the topicality itself of things" (1993: 84).

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