UTOPIA'S QUEST FROM SOMEWHERE TO EVERYWHERE:

Humanitarian Thought-Experiment or Expansionist Blueprint?

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Abstract

This thesis investigates four utopias, Plato's Republic, Sir Thomas More's *Utopia*, Edward Bellamy's *Looking Backward*, and H. G. Wells's *A Modern Utopia*, in relation to postcolonial criticisms that present them as outlining ostensibly 'universal' values and as being inherently colonial, expansionist, and imperialist. This critique is often applied to the utopian genre as a whole, yet while widespread and popular, it is often in contrast with the ideas contained and measures proposed within the texts. In fact, a close reading shows that they resist such generalisations. The key themes investigated in each of these texts are: how they characterise their utopian people; how they construct their utopias physically; how they manage them in terms of education, law, family, and economics; how they imagine and map their boundaries; and, finally, how they view and interact with the 'other' – the non-utopian. These four canonical texts often outline philosophies and proposals intended for the benefit of humanity as a whole, which might be misinterpreted by some as imperialist in intent. It will be argued, however, that there is also a strong but under-recognised tendency within them not to expand, conquer, and incorporate, as commonly thought, but instead to withdraw and contract, a dynamic of non-interference. Along the way, it will be necessary to negotiate the difficult, slippery status of these texts, about which the reader is never fully clear whether they were intended to be taken as literal blueprints for real future societies, as non-committal thought-experiments, or as 'mere' literary entertainments.

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Introduction

Proposals of utopias and the concept of utopianism itself have been much criticised for various reasons, and most criticisms emerged during the twentieth century. This introduction will review this criticism and its effect on the genre, with a close focus on a particular field of recent criticism that has flourished: postcolonial critiques that have pooled theories from more general postcolonial discourse, and have been used against a number of utopian texts in particular and the genre in general. This thesis explores the provenance and validity of the postcolonial critique of select utopias and utopianism by conducting a close analysis of a number of canonical texts, those which have tended to be the focus of critical enquiry. The fundamental argument of the anti-utopian postcolonial critique is that these texts and projects are inherently expansionist, and tied directly into the Western colonialist and imperialist project. It is understandable that this critique is recognised as valid, however the purpose of this thesis is to interrogate whether this argument does full justice to the texts themselves or whether it limits their interpretation. I argue that these texts, when studied closely and in relation to their own historical contexts, frequently resist such readings, and thus can be interpreted as more than simply expansionist and imperialist in nature.

The importance of this thesis is that it compiles the various postcolonial discourses against utopia.[1] While there are a number of studies of resistance towards and scepticism of utopia (e.g., George Kateb's *Utopia and its Enemies*, Russell Jacoby's *The End of Utopia* and Krishan Kumar's *Utopia and Anti-Utopia in Modern Times*), currently there is no study that has focused exclusively on an interrogation of the postcolonial angle. As Frederic Jameson has observed, the postcolonial critique is more serious and damaging than any other type of criticism of utopia, so an in-depth consideration of this is perhaps overdue.[2] Bill Ashcraft concludes likewise that "little has been written" on this subject, despite it being "the newest and most strategic direction of this reading practice" against utopia.[3] It is unfortunate that such criticism has established itself in utopian studies and has become the preferred mode of utopian criticism, with a number of the most distinguished scholars in utopian studies uncritically endorsing this point of view in recent anthologies of utopian scholarship. Following the introduction, this thesis will conduct a close reading of several canonical texts in relation to the key strategies and themes of the postcolonialist critical armoury, to offer a counter-critique in defence of the richness and diversity of utopian literature. They cannot, in my view, be reduced to simple cyphers of western colonialist and imperialist expansionism.

For the remainder of the introduction, we will look in greater depth at the postcolonialist critique of utopia in order to draw out its main themes and strategies, before outlining the structure and approach of the main body of the thesis.

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[1] As Eóin Flannery holds that "there has never been an adequate commerce of ideas established between the respective contemporary fields of Utopian studies and postcolonial studies". *Ireland and Postcolonial Studies Theory, Discourse, Utopia* (London: Palgrave, 2009), p. 48.

[2] Jameson states: "my own feeling is that the colonial violence thus inherent in the very form or genre itself is a more serious reproach than anything having to do with the authoritarian discipline and conformity that may hold for the society within Utopia's borders". *Archaeologies of the Future: The Desire Called Utopia and Other Science Fictions* (New York: Verso, 2005), p. 205.

[3] 'Introduction: Spaces of Utopia', *Spaces of Utopia: An Electronic Journal*, 2:1 (2012), pp. 1-17 (p.1) <http://ler.letras.up.pt >

> A map of the world that does not include Utopia is not worth even glancing at, for it leaves out the one country at which Humanity is always landing. And when Humanity lands there, it looks out, and, seeing a better country, sets sail. Progress is the realisation of Utopias. (Oscar Wilde)[4]

Oscar Wilde expressed this sentiment during the heyday of utopia on both sides of the Atlantic. Edward Bellamy's *Looking Backward* (1888) and William Morris' *News from Nowhere* (1890) revived utopianism in the United States and Europe, and H. G. Wells's *A Modern Utopia* (1905) attempted to modernise the genre. This enthusiasm for utopia as a subject soon sank amid the troubles that followed the turn of the twentieth century and the genre became niche as a result of the pessimism of the time. As such, the popularity of the genre has fluctuated in accordance with certain periods of time. Although utopia and utopianism[5] have been criticised since the inception of the genre as a result of the doubts of its founders (Plato and Sir Thomas More), it was the anti-utopian – or *dystopian* – mode that emerged as the most prolific form in the twentieth century.

This anti-utopianism was shaped by two opposing views. Karl Marx preceded these currents by condemning utopia for being politically ineffective and not including perceptible revolutionary plans. Marx and Friedrich Engels distinguished their 'scientific socialism' from 'utopian socialism', which included works of contemporary writers such as Henri Saint-Simon, Charles Fourier, Robert Owen, and Étienne Cabet.[6] Utopia was

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[4] Excerpt from *The Soul of Man under Socialism*, *The Cambridge Companion to Oscar Wilde*, ed. by Peter Raby (Cambridge: Cambridge UP, 1997), p. 93. The footnotes include elaborations and discussions of certain points and arguments that are integral parts of this study.

[5] Utopianism is seen as "social dreaming" while utopia as "a non-existent society described in detail and normally located in time and space". This distinction is made by Gregory Claeys and Lyman Sargent in their *The Utopia Reader* (New York, N.Y.: New York UP, 1999), p. 1. Barbara Goodwin and Keith Taylor offer a similar distinction and believe that utopianism has been "more fashionable" in the twentieth century than utopia, or the "blueprint" as they describe it. *The Politics of Utopia: A Study in Theory and Practice* (London: Hutchinson, 1982), p. 16. Lyman Sargent also distinguishes utopianism as a phenomenon and utopia as the genre of utopian literature. 'Utopian Traditions: Themes and Variations', in *Utopia: The Search for the Ideal Society in the Western World*, ed. by Roland Schaer, Gregory Claeys, and Lyman Tower Sargent. (New York, N.Y.: Oxford UP, 2000), pp. 8-15 (p. 8).

[6] Henri Saint-Simon (1760-1825), a French social theorist, advocated the reorganisation of European society through science and technology; Charles Fourier (1772-1837), also a French socialist, similarly envisioned a reconstruction of society based on communal associations, and Fourierism as a movement and practice was particularly popular in the United States; Étienne Cabet (1788-1856) attempted to establish socialist communities in the United States, but was less successful than his peers; Robert Owen

considered to function as an ideology. Later, a number of liberal thinkers expressed even more radical anti-utopianism, ironically, as they were concerned with the realisation or imposition of utopian blueprints. Besides the threat of imposition, utopia's proposed reorganisation of society was also alarming to these intellectuals. Utopia was, in brief, seen to be totalitarian and authoritative. Karl Popper, in *The Open Society and its Enemies* (1945) and other writings, criticised utopia for being a threat to the 'open society', and as such it was mostly Plato who came under attack.[7] The same fears were expressed by Isaiah Berlin and others.[8] Utopia's economic schemes were no less disturbingly viewed. Fredric Hayek perceived utopia, which typically had a planned economy, to be against the spirit of free market capitalism.[9]

In other words, it is the realisation of utopia that is thought to have always been in the mind of utopian writers and sympathisers, and out of this fear of realisation, the demise or end of utopia is celebrated. For example, writer John Gray rejoiced that "the faith in Utopia, which killed so many in the centuries following the French Revolution, is dead".[10] However, the realisation of utopia has not always been as definite as claimed, but instead, has been vague and, especially with Plato and More, including the process and transition towards it. Rather than perceiving it as an impossibility, Walter Lippmann sees utopia as "a scheme, a description of something that should be created, without a showing of the process that can create it".[11] Later utopian writers, though still sceptical, did present more concrete suggestions and articulate plans towards the construction of their proposed organisations.

(1771-1858) was a manufacturer and reformer who advocated cooperative communities, and Owenism attracted followers both in the United Kingdom and the United States.

[7] Popper and Berlin recognised the ills of society but objected to utopian proposals, with Popper proposing 'piecemeal social engineering' instead.

[8] *Crooked Timber of Humanity: Chapters in the History of Ideas,* ed. by Henry Hardy (London: John Murray, 1990), p. 212 and elsewhere. The same idea is restated by Lewis Mumford who believed that early utopian totalitarian thought persisted "in open or disguised form, even in the supposedly more democratic utopias of the nineteenth century". 'Utopia, the City, and the Machine', in *Utopias and Utopian Thought,* ed. by Frank E. Manuel (London: Souvenir Press, 1973), pp. 3–24 (p. 9).

[9] *The Road to Serfdom* (New York: Routledge, 2006), p. 34.

[10] *Black Mass: Apocalyptic Religion and the Death of Utopia* (London: Allen Lane, 2007), p. 184.

[11] Cited in Barry D. Riccio, *Walter Lippmann: Odyssey of a Liberal* (New Brunswick, N.J.: Transaction Publishers, 1994), p. 24.

In fiction, the anti-utopian sentiment was crystallised by the rise of what would come to be called dystopian literature.[12] Dystopias were first regarded simply as anti-utopias, but they proved to have more complex functions. Although dystopias are born out of and respond to utopias,[13] there is a more complex relationship between the two.[14] Whilst a utopia is a constructed alternative for a dystopian reality (according to the utopian writer), a dystopia is not necessarily a constructed outcome of this utopian alternative. Principal examples of early dystopias are Yevgeny Zamyatin's *We* (1920), Aldous Huxley's *Brave New World* (1932), Arthur Koestler's *Darkness at Noon* (1940), and George Orwell's *Nineteen Eighty-Four* (1949). Dystopias should also be distinguished from anti-utopias, although the difference has been rather vague and confusing and the two are more than often used interchangeably. While a dystopia criticises particular utopias and the effects of their realisation, an anti-utopia is a mode that critiques utopianism and the utopian impulse itself.[15] Anti-utopianism is not necessarily a literary genre and responds to utopian thought as a force of social and political transformation.

On the other hand, several intellectuals and scholars helped to maintain a positive view of utopias and utopianism and toned down the anti-utopian critiques of Marxists and liberals. A number of neo-Marxists such as Karl Manheim and Ernst Bloch were more

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[12] The first use of the word was in 1747, and in 1748 it was used as opposite to utopia. Vesselin M. Budakov, 'Dystopia: An Earlier Eighteenth-Century Use', *Notes and Queries*, 57:1 (2010), pp. 86-8.

[13] Carlos Berriel, 'Brief notes on utopia and history', in *Utopia Matters: Theory Politics, Literature and the Art*, ed. by Fátima Vieira and Marinela Freitas (Porto, Portugal: University of Porto Press, 2005), pp. 101-8 (p. 101).

[14] Gregory Claeys writes that "rather than being the negation of utopia, dystopia may paradoxically be its essence", 'Three Variants on the Concept of Dystopia', in *Dystopia(n) Matters: On the Page, on Screen, on Stage*, ed. by Fátima Vieira (Newcastle: Cambridge Scholars Publishing, 2013), pp. 14-19 (p. 15); for Krishan Kumar "dystopia can well be seen as the shadow of utopia", 'Utopia's Shadow', in Dystopia(n) Matters, pp. 19-22 (p. 19); for Sargent, "Dystopia or negative utopia [is] a non-existent society described in considerable detail and normally located in time and space that the author intended a contemporaneous reader to view as considerably worse than the society in which that reader lived", 'The Three Faces of Utopianism Revisited', *Utopian Studies*, 5.1 (1994), pp. 1–37 (p. 8). The editors of *Utopia/Dystopia: Conditions of Historical Possibility*, define dystopia as "a utopia that has gone wrong, or a utopia that functions only for a particular segment of society", ed. by Michael D. Gordin, Helen Tilley, and Gyan Prakash (Princeton, N.J.: Princeton UP, 2010), p. 1.

[15] John Huntington, 'Utopia and Anti-Utopia Logic: H. G. Wells and His Successors', *Science Fiction Studies*, 9. 2 (1982), pp. 122- 146 (p.123); Gary Saul Morson, *The Boundaries of Genre. Dostoevsky's 'Diary of a Writer' and the Traditions of Literary Utopia* (Austin: U of Texas P, 1981), pp. 115-116; Tom Moylan, *Scraps of the Untainted Sky: Science Fiction, Utopia, Dystopia* (Boulder, Colo.: Westview Press, 2000), p. 129.

sympathetic to utopianism and distinguished it from ideology.[16] Echoing Oscar Wilde, Mannheim highlights the teleological importance of utopia:

> The disappearance of utopia brings about a static state of affairs in which man himself becomes no more than a thing. We would be faced then with the greatest paradox imaginable, namely, that man, who has achieved the highest degree of rational mastery of existence, left without any ideals, becomes a mere creature of impulses.[17]

Both Mannheim and Bloch's views can be abridged into what Frederik L. Polak summarises as the need for Western individuals to continue dreaming and thinking about the future days and their materials, because the only choices people have are to die or dream.[18] More recently, Fredric Jameson reiterated that utopia "keeps alive the possibility of a world qualitatively distinct from this one and takes the form of a stubborn negation of all that is".[19] Other writers like Paul Tillich recognise this important function but also warn of how "the affirmation of utopian goals without the power to change society could lead to terrorism and other demonic forces as an expression of the disillusioned and powerless".[20] Although he might seem to be endorsing utopia here, he sides more with the anti-utopian criticism.

Interestingly, these critics were arguing both for and against a mode and a literary genre that was already exhausted by the turn of the twentieth century. Some of these critics, in addition to proponents, recognised it,[21] and others celebrated it. The first to pronounce the 'end' of utopia was Herbert Marcuse in 1967, although not from a negative position towards utopia but in the belief that humanity had mastered its destiny.[22] Marcuse's

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[16] Karl Mannheim emphasised that utopias can be realised in contrast to ideology. For Mannheim utopia "transcends the present and is oriented to the future", and contrasts the negative "ideological outlook which conceals the present by attempting to comprehend it in terms of the past". *Ideology and Utopia* (London: Routledge & Kegan Paul, 1954), p. 86. Bloch states that "so far does utopia extend, so vigorously does this raw material spread to all human activities, so essentially must every anthropology and science of the world contain it". *The Principle of Hope*, trans. by Neville Plaice, Stephen Plaice, and Paul Knight, 3 volumes (Boston, Mass.: MIT Press, 1996), v2, p. 624.

[17] *Ideology and Utopia*, p. 236.

[18] *The Image of the Future* (San Francisco, Calif.: Jossey-Bass, 1973), p. 20.

[19] *Marxism and Form: Twentieth-Century Dialectical Theories of Literature* (Princeton, N.J.: Princeton UP, 1971), p. 111.

[20] Ronald H. Stone, 'On the Boundary of Utopia and Politics', in *The Cambridge Companion to Paul Tillich*, ed. by Russell Re Manning (Cambridge: Cambridge UP, 2009), p. 210.

[21] In *Ideology and Utopia*, Mannheim believes that this is true for both utopia and ideology (p. 230); one of Berlin's chapters in *Crooked Timber* is 'The Decline of Utopian Ideas in the West'.

[22] He contends that "there is one valid criterion for possible realization, namely, when the material and intellectual forces for the transformation are technically at hand […] and in this sense, I believe, we can today actually speak of an end of utopia". *Five Lectures: Psychoanalysis, Politics, and Utopia*, trans. by Jeremy J. Shapiro and Shierry Weber (Boston, Mass.: Beacon Press, 1970), p. 64.

conclusion reiterates the idea of the absence of a dream that guides and helps to achieve visions of the future. Ever since this theory, there has been a debate as to whether the concept of utopia is indeed dead, with many scholars believing it has indeed ended. As such, Wells is often considered to be the end of the utopian tradition, at least in its literary form. This view is based on a number of reasons, including the developments at the turn of the twentieth century that resulted in a loss of faith in a positive future. For A. L. Morton and Matthew Beaumont, Wells is the end of what they call any utopia of a positive character.[23] Similar judgments have also been made by Frank Manuel,[24] George Kateb,[25] and others. [26] Russell Jacoby laments that we are at a point "beyond utopia" with no belief that the future could be better than the present.[27] The end of utopia also takes a new angle, with Francis Fukuyama's argument that it had already arrived in the form of Western capitalism,[28] a view associated with the triumph of Western capitalism over socialism. This assessment, paradoxically, is utopian in its essence as it also shows an end point of the historical development, a perfect stage or the final form of evolution that humanity has reached. However, we can also assume that both Marcuse and Fukuyama exaggerated the association of utopia with their visions or reasons of decline. Marcuse stressed the advances of technology and its transformation of societies that would potentially lead to dystopias, and this is more of a science fiction vision than a utopia, and the failed socialist experiments that Fukuyama associates with utopia were recognised as dystopian as much as they were utopian.

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[23] *The English Utopia* (London: Lawrence and Wishart, 1952), p. 193. The negative utopias, which he believes to have continued after Wells, mainly convey satire and despair. For Matthew Beaumont, "utopian fiction continued to be published in some quantity until the outbreak of global conflict in 1914. At that point, history intervened decisively to stop the blood supply that had hitherto sustained utopian thought". *Utopia Ltd. Ideologies of Social Dreaming in England 1870–1900* (Leiden: Brill, 2005), p. 13.

[24] For him, Wells was "rather among the last of the nineteenth-century utopias". 'Toward a Psychological History of Utopia', in *Utopias and Utopian*, pp.69-98 (p. 80).

[25] He rhetorically asks: "Can there be anything more commonplace than the pronouncement that, in the twentieth century, utopia is dead—and dead beyond any hope of resurrection?" *Utopia and Its Enemies* (New York, N.Y.: Schocken Books, 1972), p. 3.

[26] J. R. Hammond, *An H.G. Wells Companion* (London: Macmillan, 1979), p. 3; M. Keith Booker, *Dystopian Literature: A Theory and Research Guide* (Westport, Conn.: Greenwood Press, 1994), p. 64; Marie Louise Berneri, in *Journey Through Utopia*, says that Wells is probably the last utopian writer (London: Freedom Press, 1950), p. 308.

[27] *The End of Utopia: Politics and Culture in an Age of Apathy* (New York, N.Y.: Basic Books, 1999), p. 16.

[28] Francis Fukuyama, *The End of History and the Last Man* (London: Penguin, 1993).

If the death of utopia is not certain, its decline is. Krishan Kumar believes that even if utopia was not pronounced dead, "no great utopia has been written that has commanded the attention of the educated public in the manner of the utopias of Bellamy, Morris and Wells at the close of the last century".[29] There is usually reference to a few utopias that were written after Wells and survived the decline. Lyman Sargent, in his bibliographic work, writes that since World War I, utopianism has been dominated by the dystopian,[30] while Robert C. Elliott writes "to believe in utopia one must have faith of a kind that our history has made nearly inaccessible. This is one major form of the crisis of faith under which Western culture reels".[31] Reference is made, in this regard, to significant dystopias written after H. G. Wells, and mentioned above. Others, most notably Barbara Goodwin and Keith Taylor, and Fredric Jameson, have presented a more positive view, that utopias and utopianism have somehow survived the twentieth century, albeit in different forms.[32] For example, utopia merged with science fiction, which resulted in a different form than the traditional one.[33] Yet utopia has seen a comeback of sorts in works that address issues of gender, the environment, and other social movements, and thus the genre has become a vehicle for these agendas. The most important post-Wellsian utopia was Ursula le Guin's *The Dispossessed* (1974), which was followed by others such as Ernest Callenbach's *Ecotopia* (1975) and Samuel R. Delany's *Triton* (1976). In any case, we might not be totally beyond utopia, as it is difficult to argue that utopian fiction is not prolific in the twentieth century. This becomes clear from the number of entries in utopian bibliographies.[34]

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[29] *Utopianism* (Minneapolis, Minn.: Minnesota UP, 1991), p. 99; this was also expressed much earlier in Judith Shklar's *After Utopia: The Decline of Political Faith* (Princeton, N.J.: Princeton UP, 1957).

[30] *British and American Utopian Literature 1516-1975* (Boston, Mass.: G. K. Hall, 1979), p. 10; the same conclusion is reached by Hoda M. Zaki, *Phoenix Renewed: The Survival and Mutation of Utopian Thought in North American Science Fiction, 1965-1982* (Mercer Island, Washington: Starmont House, 1988) and by Mark Robert Hillegas, *The Future as Nightmare: H. G. Wells and the Anti-Utopians* (New York, N.Y.: Oxford UP, 1967), p. 3.

[31] *The Shape of Utopia: Studies in a Literary Genre* (Chicago, Ill.: Chicago UP, 1970), p. 87.

[32] Goodwin and Taylor write that while "there [is] some evidence to show that there has indeed been a certain decline, there is certainly no justification for heralding the 'end of utopia'". *The Politics*, p. 226; Fredric Jameson believes that "utopia seems to have recovered its vitality as a political slogan and a politically energizing perspective". *Archaeologies*, p. xii.

[33] Edward James 'Utopias and anti-utopias', in *The Cambridge Companion to Science Fiction*, ed. by Edward James and Farah Mendlesohn (Cambridge: Cambridge UP, 2003), p. 219.

[34] The bibliographies present a confusing picture. For example, *The Utopia Reader* of Claeys and Sargent stops at 1974, and Berneri's *Journey Through Utopia* stops at Aldous Huxley's *Brave New World* (which is more dystopian in nature). Sargent produced two earlier bibliographic editions: *British and American Utopian Literature 1516-1975* and *1516-1985*.

However, although these show that utopias are still being produced, no such work has reached the same levels of the past great works of Bellamy or Morris. This might indicate a loss of interest in literary utopianism and not necessarily the quality or the vision of these utopias, but that still counts as a decline of interest in the genre.

The Postcolonial Critique of Utopia

The question of whether utopia is an exclusively western production has been contested,[35] because its sources are to varying degrees shared by many other non-Western cultures. For example the Golden Age, which is thought to be one of the sources of utopia, is a cross-cultural myth. However, the form and themes of utopia largely developed in the West, and thus criticism and fear of the concept unsurprisingly also came from Western thinkers including the above mentioned criticism. However, one particular set of criticism is mostly relevant to non-Western writers, particularly those coming from a postcolonial standpoint, and thus is the concern of this thesis. These writers attempted to establish a link between the utopian genre and colonialism, imperialism, and the attempted universalisation of the former's values. In this regard, it is argued that utopias seek to assert their newly established values across various other cultures apart from the locality in which a particular utopia is envisioned. This critique emerged amid the increasing rejection of universalism by multiculturalists, postmodernists, and postcolonial writers.[36] And in the context of utopia, it is the 'European universalism' that is invoked and questioned. Universal standards are increasingly challenged as a form of Western imperialism. The distrust of universalism in utopian fiction is suggested to arise from the attempt to validate the discursive maxim brought by the utopian writers on real social and cultural constructs. Furthermore, utopia is

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[35] There is an ongoing and unsettled debate whether utopia is an exclusively Western genre. Major scholars who believe it to be exclusively western include: Krishan Kumar, and Frank E. Manuel and Fritzie P. Manuel, (although the latter admit that certain traits of utopias do exist in non-Western societies). Within Western literature, it is believed that England was richest in production. *The Politics*, p. 20. On the opposite front are scholars like Lyman Sargent and Jacqueline Dutton. I have attempted to compare a number of supposedly Arabic utopias that Dutton cites (e.g., the most referenced is Alfarabi's *On the Perfect State*), but they fail to show the same aspects of Western utopias or are completely influenced by them.

[36] For example, Samuel Huntington states that "imperialism is the necessary logical consequence of universalism". *The Clash of Civilizations and the Remaking of World Order* (New York, N.Y.: Simon and Schuster, 1996), p. 310. Russell Jacoby in his *The End of Utopia* and elsewhere discusses this rejection of universalism and utopianism by multiculturalists and postmodernists in extensive detail.

linked to concepts such as the nation state and modernity, which constitute rich sources and material for postcolonial criticism. The involvement of utopia in colonial and postcolonial discourse is a result of its association with fields beyond the literary limits. Here, utopian fiction is seen as literal blueprints for political action. In Étienne Balibar's understanding, utopias are imaginary communities that are thought to "have material, pedagogical, and ultimately political effects, shaping the ways people understand and, as a consequence, act in their worlds".[37] Thus narrative utopias both narrate and create modern history, and play an essential role in "the constitution of the nation-state as an original spatial, social, and cultural form".[38]

This particular postcolonial criticism, as will be demonstrated below, is more specific than the general and traditional anti-utopian thought and 'critical utopias' although there are connections to be traced among them. Anti-utopia's focus is mainly to reject utopian schemes in the political area and although it shares similar interests with the postcolonial perspective as Frederic Jameson describes,[39] postcolonial criticism is more specific and inclusive to the historical and theoretical function and capacity of utopia. For the critical utopia, although it critiques the genre itself as postcolonial criticism does and challenges and undermines hegemonic structures of political power, the critical utopian project attempts to save and revive the genre through the transformation of its form and the negation of the forces that rejected utopia in the twentieth century. These utopias of the 1960s and 1970s that Moylan describes as critical utopias "reject utopia as blueprint while preserving it as dream" and attempt to include differences and imperfection within their societies.[40] However, we can conclude that these critical utopias were the product of oppositional counter-cultures and the theoretical developments of the time that also produced postcolonial theory and criticism along with other literary writings and studies. The focus of postcolonial utopian criticism, however, is on the genre's previous role in projects of colonial acquisition and imperialist expansion, calling attention to the victims of utopian projects. Critical utopias are not so much concerned with the past but rather focus

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[37] Étienne Balibar, cited in Phillip E. Wegner, *Imaginary Communities*: *Utopia, the Nation, and the Spatial Histories of Modernity* (Berkeley, Calif.: California UP, 2002), p. xvi.

[38] *Imaginary*, p. xvi.

[39] *Archaeologies*, p. 199.

[40] *Demand the Impossible,* p. 10.

on creating different alternatives of the present and its studies, thus examining how utopia should be developed through ongoing historical processes.

Postcolonial anti-utopia and criticism should not be confused with studies that research the usage of utopianism by writers from previously colonised countries and that predictably –tend to include anti-colonial sentiments. Research in this area has been carried out mainly by Bill Ashcroft and Ralph Pordzik,[41] with their studies identifying how the utopian vehicle is used to depict a postcolonial world by postcolonial writers. These postcolonial utopias presents counter-narratives of anti-colonial resistance, and the re-writing of canonical classics is somehow part of the critical utopia and is not against utopia and utopianism per se. Eric Smith also includes the field of postcolonial science fiction in a similar project that attempts to imagine alternative social, spatial, political, and representational horizons.[42]

For the purpose of this thesis, and in the absence of any study that compiles this particular criticism, this postcolonial reading can be classified into three related clusters or groups: 1) Universalising: utopia claims to be universal; 2) Civilising: based on this universality, utopia attempts to civilise other nations; and 3) Imperialising and Colonising: utopia has a colonial and imperialist outlook. A closer analysis of utopian works based on these arguments and criticisms makes this grouping inevitable. Below is an attempt to highlight better the concerns and the issues these critics raise against utopia under those general classifications.

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[41] Research in this area has recently flourished with studies like Ralph Pordzik' *The Quest for Postcolonial Utopia* (New York, N.Y.: Peter Lang, 2001); Lyman Sargent's 'Colonial and Postcolonial Utopias' in *The Cambridge Companion to Utopian Literature*, ed. by Gregory Claeys (Cambridge: Cambridge UP, 2010), pp. 200-222; Jacqueline Dutton's 'Non-Western Utopian Traditions' also in *The Cambridge Companion*, pp. 223-258; Bill Ashcroft's 'Postcolonial Utopianism: The Utility of Hope', in *Locating Postcolonial Narrative Genres,* ed. by Walter Goebel and Saskia Schabio (London: Routledge, 2012), pp. 27-43; and Ashcroft's 'Introduction: Spaces of Utopia', in *Spaces of Utopia: An Electronic Journal* 2:1 (2012) <http://ler.letras.up.pt > ISSN 1646-4729, pp. 1-17 [accessed 28 January 2013]. A number of these works, instead, depict failed utopias following the unexpected socio-political and economic realities in some post-independent African societies. Etop Akwang, 'Modernism as a Failed Utopia: A Postcolonial Critique of Wole Soyinka's Death and the King's Horseman and Ngugi Wa Thiong'so and Ngugi Wa Mirii's, 'I will Marry When I want', *The Dawn Journal*, 1:2 (2012), pp. 53-71 (p. 66).

[42] Eric Smith, *Globalization, Utopia, and Postcolonial Science Fiction: New Maps of Hope* (London: Palgrave Macmillan, 2012).

I. **Universalising**

It is claimed that utopia attempts to universalise its newly devised and fashioned values. At the micro level, utopian values are universalised on the individuals of the same culture or locality (hence the classic criticism of utopia as authoritarian or totalitarian), and on the macro level across other different cultures. In general, a universal monoculture (homogeneous) is seen to be an essential component of a utopia. This is not only recognised by postcolonial critics but also theorists and academics of utopian studies, with Ruth Levitas writing:

> Most utopias are portrayed as universal utopias. This portrayal entails that they necessarily make claims about human nature as a means of legitimising the particular social arrangements prescribed. Indeed, without the criterion of human needs and human nature we have no objective measure for distinguishing the good society from the bad, except the degree of fit between needs and satisfactions; and this does not distinguish happiness in unfreedom, the happiness of the cheerful robot, from 'real' happiness. The appeal to needs is made, in fact, to provide precisely such a (pseudo-) objective criterion, rather than make explicit the values involved in particular constructions of individuals and societies, and present this as what it is – a matter of moral choice.[43]

On the other hand, Levitas concedes that it is difficult to see "how a utopia could be constructed" without making such "implicit or explicit claims about human nature".[44] Previously, Goodwin and Taylor concluded that the utopian discovers truths about what is considered to be the correct type of social organisation from human nature, along with "the proper disposition of power and material goods".[45] This utopian universalism was a typical objection made by anti-utopian theorists such as J. S. Mill, Isaiah Berlin, and Walter Lippmann, who refused the idea of uniformity on the grounds that a variety of situations is essential for human development.

The point of objection from the postcolonial perspective does not come only from this attempted universalisation (that disregards local and native, and cultural and traditional variations) but also from the assumption that the new universalised values are based on western perspectives and are imposed on 'less civilised' people. Chinua Achebe writes in what can be a representative sample of postcolonial critics: "I should like to see the word 'universal' banned altogether from discussions of African literature until such a time as

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[43] *The Concept*, p. 214.
[44] Ibid, p. 213.
[45] *The Politics*, p. 98.

people cease to use it as a synonym for the narrow, self-serving parochialism of Europe".[46] Similar arguments are repeatedly seen in the context of utopian literature. The utopian universal values are based on western problems and experience, writes Nina Chordas,[47] and these values are presented as "superior" to other cultures, and designed to replace "native" or "local" cultures with other western universal standards, adds Dohra Ahmad.[48] Chordas also writes that More's *Utopia* might have brought some novel solutions, but the problems were more geared towards England and the Europe of his time.

The same utopian universal categories were blended in the European approach to the New World "in the belief that they were universal and therefore applicable".[49] The fear that liberal thinkers have shown is recurrent here, but by civilising powers on the less civilised and powerless. Although utopian societies are commonly constructed in fiction, they nonetheless attempt to impose these universal values on the material world, for example, the civilising mission in the New World using Old World categories as will be discussed in the next section. In brief, this criticism attempts to show that one nation's utopia is necessarily another's dystopia.

On the other hand, there is one view that, despite not negating utopia's attempt of universalisation, does show that the existence of a wider non-utopian world is vital to the existence of utopia. Here, though, the argument is still based on a negative view of utopia. Yannis Stavrakakis stresses utopia's need for an enemy or "intruder":

> The fantasy of attaining a perfect harmonious world, of realising the universal, can only be sustained through the construction/localisation of a certain particularity which cannot be assimilated but, instead, has to be eliminated. There exists then a crucial dialectic between the universal fantasy of utopia and the particularity of the—always local—enemy who is posited as negating it. [50]

A similar conclusion, still from the perspective of criticism, was made much earlier by Shlomo Avineri:

> Utopian thinking never really maintains that the given human nature is perfect: on the contrary, it has to be purged and cleansed from its intrinsic evil. Thus, if the positive traits are being isolated and consequently enlarged, hypostatised and institutionalised, the evil

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[46] 'Colonialist Criticism*', in The Post-Colonial Studies Reader*, ed. by Bill Ashcroft, Gareth Griffiths, and Helen Tiffin, 2nd edn (London: Routledge, 2006), pp. 73-76 (p. 75).

[47] *Forms in Early Modern Utopia: The Ethnography of Perfection* (Farnham: Ashgate, 2010), p. 65.

[48] *Landscapes of Hope: Anti-Colonial Utopianism in the United States* (New York, N.Y.: Oxford UP, 2009), p. 14. She applies this to Bellamy's *Looking Backward*, which is thought to have accepted the bourgeois civilisation as superior and universal.

[49] *Forms*, p. 65.

[50] *Lacan and the Political* (London: Routledge, 1999), p. 108.

side has to be banished, exorcised and relegated to a sphere outside the confines of the ideal state. Thus Utopias never can be universal, as evil has to reside somewhere outside the blessed realm.[51]

This criticism has ignored two important sides of the matter, if they proved utopian universalism. Firstly, their insistence on a single utopian space is proof of their respect for non-utopian theorists' choice, and thus contradicts Stavrakakis and Avineri arguments. Secondly, this supposed utopian claim of universality is not in conflict with the development of most ideas or human values, which are deemed to start from somewhere in particular. Utopian writers, being members of the wider human community, believe that all peoples and nations are equal in moving towards certain goals that they think would result in the prosperity and the well-being of humanity. On the contrary, utopias, with their usual passion of equality, have always speculated on the transformation of societies and nations from their inequality to equality. They have attempted to bring about a global culture for the sake of humanity, and have dismissed the interests of their nations and cultures. However, this is not the direction of the current thesis. Most of these utopias to which postcolonial critics refer have not attempted the universalisation of their ideals and values, as the following chapters show.

II.   **Civilising**

The utopian writer is also typically accused of attempting to educate other people outside the initial inhabitants and the boundaries of the constructed utopia. This is because the writer assumes that the utopian plan and values are universal and thus should be applicable to all individuals regardless of their location. This education is designed to lead to the inclusion of neighbours within the constructed utopian boundaries or to others adopting the proposed project in their own borders. This view, again, is not exclusive to postcolonial critics. Kateb, for example, writes that this civilising will lead to planned and coercive states and that the world should be "left alone, even though it strikes the utopian thinker as

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[51] 'War and Slavery in More's Utopia', *International Review of Social History*, 7 (1962), pp. 260–90 (p. 288).

chaotic".[52] Fredric Jameson categorises this among the "ethical problems of utopia", or "the right of advanced civilizations or cultures to intervene into the lower forms of social life with which they come into contact".[53] This utopian 'problem' or phenomenon is especially linked to Sir Thomas More. One particular devotee of *Utopia* who is frequently cited is the Spanish jurist Vasco de Quiroga, who attempted to construct a community on such utopian lines in Mexico not long after the publication of *Utopia*. Rather than simply being a form of self-fashioning, either individual or collective, his experiment is thought to extend to the fashioning of selves for other people, regardless of whether or not they like this.[54] To justify the civilising process, Christian Marouby shows that utopian authors rely on the labelling of certain cultures as "savage" in order to justify their decision to civilise them; "only by conceiving savage society as lack of culture can the European justify the imposition of his own cultural model [even if] this model informs the very operations of the civilizing process".[55] It is thought that utopia used the early descriptions of Native Americas to justify its cause further. Anthony Pagden states that

> whether they attempted to locate the Indian in some vague period of human prehistory, or to demonstrate by analogy that he belonged to the same genre as the familiar barbarians of the ancient world, these chronicles [the legendary images and myths of barbarians in Greek, Roman and the Christian Church] were trying only to solve the immediate problem of what to look for in a world of bewildering and unrecognizable shapes. [56]

This sense of superiority and the backwardness of other cultures often justified the European's overseas interventions. As the comparison drawn between western and non-western societies, this showed a gradual progression. According to Nicole Pohl, "this conjectural historiography not only reinforced the superiority of the 'Old World' but justified and naturalized the extensive appropriation and colonization of the 'New World'".[57] Commenting on More's *Utopia* and several others, Nina Chordas writes:

> Visions of bringing a "rude and uncouth" population to "a high level of culture and humanity" thus justify the violent means of bringing about such a desirable result; the

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[52] *Utopia*, p. 62.

[53] *Archaeologies*, p. 264.

[54] James Holstun, *A Rational Millennium: Puritan Utopias of Seventeenth-Century England and America* (New York, N.Y.: Oxford UP, 1987), p. 7.

[55] Christian Marouby, 'Utopian Colonialism', *North Dakota Quarterly*, 56.3 (1988), pp. 148-160 (p. 153).

[56] *The Fall of Natural Man: The American Indian and the Origins of Comparative Ethnology* (New York, N.Y.: Cambridge UP, 1982), p. 25.

[57] '"The Empress of the World": Gender and the Voyage Utopia', in *Gender and Utopia in the Eighteenth Century: Essays in English and French Utopian Writing*, ed. by Nicole Pohl and Brenda Tooley (Aldershot: Ashgate, 2007), pp. 121-132 (p. 122).

casual elision of the violence attending this process in the course of a reported conversation once again helps to make of the utopian agenda an unquestioned matter of course for the conquering and reshaping entity.[58]

It is unfortunate that these writers have ignored the difference between More's account of the New World and these early accounts. More's *Utopia* has been erroneously associated with the colonisation of the New World, and a pretext for colonisation in general, ideas of coercive civilising, and developmentalism. For More, if we assume that the association with the New World is established, then the imagined civilisation is far superior to that of the Old World.

Such a reading of More has assisted critics of utopia to extend their criticism to later utopias. Dohra Ahmad explains how utopia abandoned its initial literary conceit or trope, the myth of an empty land,[59] in favour of one of progress and developmentalism as a "tenable vehicle".[60] Ahmad refers to utopian fiction from More to Bellamy in this regard. This progress is believed by these utopian writers to be inclusive of every global citizen and attained through education. Ahmad accuses Bellamy of imagining that "a benevolent imperialism will uncomplicatedly foster developmentalist improvement everywhere",[61] arguing that this trend continued to the early twentieth century, when "utopian fiction conveyed a model of human history that regards the past as hopelessly primitive".[62] She shows that Bellamy's education and subsequent novels imagine a development and evolution to a Eurocentric civilization.[63] *Looking Backward*, and utopian novels that followed it, "revitalized the defunct genre of utopian fiction by merging it with the ideology of development".[64] Jameson ties this trend to an "unconscious concealment of the underlying socioeconomic or material bases of life" and the particular example of science fiction novels that prevents recognising distinct national or social groupings, and he continues:

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[58] *Forms*, p. 25.

[59] Utopia's use of this concept is also articulated by Karl Hardy: "For Utopia plainly articulates the colonial doctrines of terra nullius ("no man's land"), vacuum domicilium ("unoccupied home"), and inane ac vacuum ("idle and waste") which were used by European powers to establish legalistic grounds, via the "law of nature" for expropriating the supposedly uninhabited land. 'Unsettling Hope and Re‐Articulating Utopia', *Puerto del Sol*, 47.2 (2012), p. 42.

[60] *Landscapes*, p. 6.

[61] Ibid, p. 29.

[62] Ibid, p. 19.

[63] Ibid, p. 13.

[64] Ibid, pp. 20-21.

The real questions - whether "progress" is desirable and if so which kind of progress, whether a country has the right to opt out of the international circuit, whether a more advanced country has the right to intervene, even benignly, in the historical evolution of a less advanced country; in sum, the general relationship between indigenous culture and industrialization - are historical and political in character.[65]

This confusion occasionally occurs voluntarily and in good faith by proponents of utopianism. For example, Goodwin and Taylor write:

self-satisfaction in the industrial societies cannot hide the fact that in the countries of the Third World the standard of living is so miserably low that, looking at global society as a whole, Western man must surely recognize the need to radically improve global conditions through the implementation of some kind of plan of utopian dimensions.[66]

Kumar discusses the influence of such ideas of progress on nineteenth-century utopia, and argues that the industrial civilisation that was successful in the West was seen to be a utopian goal that other nations should imitate.[67]

The civilising and educational dimension found in utopias is thought to have influenced utopian experiments, one of the faces of utopianism. The Saint-Simonians (followers of Henri Saint-Simon) predicted a universal association that will unite societies and even the entire world.[68] In this regard, both Charles Fourier and B. F. Skinner are also quoted to have envisioned the expansion of their model to include the world and implant utopian colonies on a global scale.

Conversely, in this thesis I attempt to explore how early utopias lack this missionary vision and civilising process. I shall argue that a key element of the early utopian project was to let each part of the world attain its social and economic salvation in its own way and in accordance with its regional character, even at the cost of slow or imperfect attainment of that salvation. This, I maintain, is an original principle of the utopian genre, and was articulated by Plato at the outset, insofar as the existing historical record allows us to posit an 'outset'.

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[65] *Archaeologies,* pp. 265-6.
[66] *The Politics*, p. 251; Kumar also hints at the traditional association and fusion of imperial and utopian civilising projects. *Utopianism*, p. 80.
[67] Kumar, *Utopia and Anti-Utopia in Modern Times* (Oxford: Blackwell, 1987), p. 42, 388.
[68] *The Politics*, pp. 126-7.

III. **Imperialising and Colonising**

Utopia's faith in its universalism, which justifies its civilising mission, is seen to lead to imperialism and colonialism. Often, postcolonial critics of utopia do not make a clear distinction between these two latter terms, despite the fact that postcolonial critics in general usually do.[69] One of the fundamental bases to this criticism is the linkage of universal values to colonialism and political dominance, mostly European hegemony. Utopia is seen to be one of the tools to assist and justify this dominance of the colonial world, and this has surprisingly become the prevailing view of utopia by critics and opponents of the genre. The above-mentioned universalism is "a primary strategy of imperial control" and colonial power, writes Ashcroft,[70] and eventually leads to utopian colonialism, adds Marouby.[71] The main target is More's *Utopia* and its permitting of the colonisation of native peoples' uncultivated lands. While Antonis Balasopoulos shows that, paradoxically, More's seizure of the native inhabitants' lands is "less an act of dispossession than one of endowment",[72] as having a superior organisation, for Sargent More's definition of utopia involved viewing colonised inhabitants as unimportant, an attitude that can be seen in many examples of utopian fiction that are colonially contextualised.[73] More is believed to have participated in the debate over whether Spain's colonisation of the New World was legitimate, and he not only approved of it but also encouraged it.[74] Fatima Vieira has recently argued that More utilised European awareness of the new discoveries and the concept of the 'other' to encourage and legitimise the

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[69] Although both terms overlap, they are seen as distinct. Edward Said wrote that imperialism involves "the practice, the theory and the attitudes of a dominating metropolitan centre ruling a distant territory", while colonialism refers to the "implanting of settlements on a distant territory". *Culture and Imperialism* (New York, N.Y.: Vintage, 1993), p. 9. For Robert Young, imperialism is "susceptible to analysis as a concept", and colonialism "needs to be analysed primarily as a practice". *Postcolonialism: An Historical Introduction* (Oxford: Blackwell, 2001), p. 17.

[70] *'Colonialist Criticism'*, p. 55.

[71] Marouby, 'Utopian Colonialism', p. 153.

[72] 'Unworldly Worldliness: America and the Trajectories of Utopian Expansionism', *Utopian Studies*, 15:2 (2004), pp. 3-35 (p. 5).

[73] *The Cambridge Companion to Utopian Literature*, p. 204.

[74] D.B. Quinn, 'Renaissance Influences in English Colonization', *Transactions of the Royal Historical Society*, 26 (1976), pp. 73-93; Ellen Wood expresses the same conclusion, and groups together the Dutch seventeen-century international and natural law scholar Hugo Grotius, and John Locke with More. *Empire of Capital* (London: Verso, 2003), p. 72.

invasion of new spaces.[75] In this regard, Jameson approvingly repeats this view and believes that More's "*Utopia* is very much the prototype of the settler colony and the forerunner of modern imperialism".[76] For George Logan, *Utopia* and imperialism are hard to distinguish.[77] Jeffrey Knapp tries to explain how More's *Utopia* was considered to be "England's lamentable indifference to the New World" and was designed as a form of "colonialist propaganda". He argues that "*Utopia* represents More's attempt to turn England's classical nowhereness into a way of seeing England and America as destined for each other".[78] Further, "it contains perhaps the first Tudor attempt to elaborate a theory of colonization".[79] More recently, Karl Hardy concludes that:

> It follows then that More's *Utopia*—the namesake of the utopian literary tradition and utopian studies—was realized via settler colonialism. In fact, nearly all of the various expressions or "faces" of utopianism—from intentional communities to radicalized politics—which emerge from such settler societies ought to be recognized as being predicated upon and, therefore, implicated in the ongoing naturalization of settler colonization.[80]

What has been associated with More's *Utopia* extends to the genre in general and also at different periods. For Ahmad, utopia was from its very "inception a colonial genre",[81] and James Holstun states that utopian rationality is intrinsically a "program of domination and imperial expansion".[82] For Jean Pfaelzer, "utopianism is a narrative of expansion, a genre which presumes that change requires a vision of where it's headed".[83] Phillip E. Wegner, commenting on Bellamy's essay *Why I Wrote Looking Backward*,

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[75] 'The Concept of Utopia' in *The Cambridge Companion to Utopian Literature*, pp. 3-27 (p. 4).

[76] *Archaeologies*, p. 204. Here, Jameson cites and shows agreement with Antonis Balasopoulos.

[77] *The Meaning of More's "Utopia"* (Princeton, N.J.: Princeton UP, 1983), p. 223; Logan also approvingly cites Russell Ames who regards utopia as "the very Urtyp of all English ethical justification of imperialist Realpolitik", *Citizen Thomas More and His Utopia* (Princeton, N.J.: Princeton UP, 1949), p. 222.

[78] *An Empire Nowhere*: *England, America, and Literature from Utopia to the Tempest* (Berkeley, Calif.: California UP, 1992), p. 21.

[79] *An Empire*, p. 21; Sargent writes that "North America in the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries raises the question of the relationship between colonialism and utopianism. 'Utopian Traditions', p. 13. For Nicole Pohl the projecting of "archaic ideals of Paradise and utopia onto new worlds and planets" was under the influence of "contemporary quests of discovery and colonization". 'The Quest for Utopia in the Eighteenth Century', *Literature Compass* 5:4 (2008), pp. 685–706 (p. 693).

[80] *'Unsettling Hope'*, p. 42.

[81] *Landscapes*, p. 19.

[82] *A Rational*, p. 32. In a recent publication, *Patriotism and Other Mistakes*, Kateb states that imperial ambitions are utopian "in their very nature" (New Haven, Conn.: Yale UP, 2006), p. xiv.

[83] 'Dreaming of a White Future: Mary E. Bradley Lane, Edward Bellamy, and the Origins of the Utopian Novel in the United States', in *A Companion to the American Novel*, ed. by Alfred Bendixen (New York, N.Y.: Wiley, 2012), pp. 323-342 (p. 324).

identifies Bellamy's apologist rationale for imperialism, which Wegner considers is rooted in More and echoed in later imperialist ideologies.[84]

Not far from English utopias, Christian Marouby explores the relation between French utopias and colonialism, concluding that a "fundamental relation between utopia and colonialism" exists and that this relation:

> Which is not only historical, in the sense that the birth of modern utopia is contemporary with, and inseparable from, the first colonial enterprises -- utopia takes advantage of the discovery of new lands to give credence to its own imaginary world; and not only conceptual, in the sense that within the paradigm alluded to above the utopian model is the opposite of that of the primitive peoples which are subjected to the colonial conquest; but at the very root of the utopian project. [85]

Jameson believes that this is also true of experimental projects like the utopias of Fourier and Skinner.[86]

This association leads to the question of cause or effect. For Dawson, utopianism is "a by-product of colonisation", and "the creation of new societies from scratch" is not possible, with the exception of Ancient Greece.[87] Much earlier, Ernest Barker drew the same association and concluded that Greek colonisation assisted in the imaginary construction of utopias.[88] There is loose evidence as this practice of finding cities from scratch did exist elsewhere as will be discussed in the chapter on Plato. This view usually leads to the confusion between imaginary community building and extra territorial colonisation, on which postcolonial utopian criticism is based. For scholars such as Pfaelzer, late nineteenth-century utopias "recall the textual and contextual features of conquest narratives. Despite egalitarian promises, utopian fiction, as a literary form and as a species of political philosophy, presumes white dominance".[89] This reading emphasises a nostalgia for a white dominated past that is envisioned for future utopian societies. This reading is also contradicted by a closer look at Bellamy and Wells, both of whom sacrificed their extremely powerful nations' position to bring about a peaceful and equal world. On the other hand, imperial and colonial aspirations are also thought by many to include

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[84] *Imaginary*, p. 73.

[85] 'Utopian Colonialism', p. 159.

[86] Jameson writes: "situated in their respective country sides and less obviously extraterritorial, are no less quarantined, according to the wishes of the Utopians themselves; but they also articulate that other narrative possibility inherent in this enclave reality which is that of an outward or imperializing influence and as it were Utopian contamination of the surrounding area". *Archaeologies,* p. 204.

[87] *Cities*, p. 12 and p. 6.

[88] *The Political Thought of Plato and Aristotle* (London: Routledge and Kegan Paul, 1951), p. 194.

[89] 'Dreaming', p. 326.

utopian impulses. Nina Chordas shows that the "imperialistic conquest always contains utopian elements among its motives, text-based or no".[90] Balasopoulos concludes that "the presence of Utopian elements within expansionist ideology [should] be dialectically linked to the corresponding persistence of expansionist ideological elements within Utopian fantasy".[91] Occasionally, this confusion between colonialism and utopia might, Balasopoulos admits, have been the colonisers' misreading of utopian texts and utopian writers' misunderstanding of colonial aspirations and objectives. Balasopoulos writes that "the misreading, in the Utopian text, of extra-European expansionism as an immaterial means to a transcendent end rebounds as license to misread that text as a mere blueprint for the worldly and realisable ends of colonial settlement and territorial expansion".[92] In relation to the colonisers' misreading of utopia, he writes:

> A less positivist and historicist understanding of the past will emphasize the fact that, given their need to imagine what they did not yet know and to translate new and disorienting experiences according to what they knew, European explorers and conquerors could not help but rely on the ideological fuel provided by the scraps of older wishful *topoi* and replenished by the imaginative projections of the emerging Utopian genre itself. [93]

Balasopoulos refers to a number of occurrences that considered the utopian dream as a way of encouraging and enticing expansion overseas.[94] Nicole Pohl also admits that narratives exploring settlement in the New World used the genre to support and justify its civilising undertaking.[95] This reading, however, still accepts the relationship between utopia and colonisation. Colonisers might have misread utopias, or used them as pretexts, however, and as this study argues, utopian writers have not urged or been inspired by colonisation. Plato, for example was aware of it as a practical option but rejected its pursuit, as will be explained in the following chapter.

To summarise the postcolonial criticism, utopia draws new standards (usually emerging from the original Western context of the utopian writer), attempts to universalise these standards across various societies and cultures, and plans to impose them or educate others to embrace them usually from a position of imperial power. Based on the four major texts outlined, I argue that this criticism seems to originate from a number of assumptions

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[90] *Forms*, p. 67.
[91] 'Unworldly', p. 11.
[92] Ibid, p. 8.
[93] Ibid, p. 12.
[94] Ibid, p. 6.
[95] 'Utopianism after More', p. 52.

that are far from being well established arguments and are not well grounded in the interpretation of the utopian texts to which I refer. Apart from and prior to discussing these particular texts, a few notes should be highlighted as they are related to the utopian genre in general. These critics assume that a number of genre-related features are facts and develop their criticism accordingly, whereas in this thesis I argue that these features are far from being unquestionable. Firstly, it is assumed that these texts are written as realisable blueprints and as influential texts that have been seriously considered by their contemporary audiences, but this has not always been the case with utopian fiction.[96] This opinion, that utopias are not blueprints and influential texts, is not of a number of recent utopian scholars but also the traditional understanding.[97] In addition, although a few utopias have been influential, such as Bellamy's, this is not the case for the majority of utopias and especially the earlier ones that are referred to by these critics.[98] This is not the least because of the complexities in trying to decide exactly what Plato and More meant to convey. As such, this thesis shifts the focus away from treating the texts as realisable blueprints specifically designed for imperial and colonial purposes. Secondly, sometimes, and as mentioned above, utopian experiments are associated with utopian texts and are used to prove utopian colonialism. This relationship, between utopian communities and utopian

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[96] Although there are many writers who believe that utopias are written to be realised, others reject this assumption. Kumar writes that "utopias are not written to be realized, not at any rate in any direct, literal sense", *Utopianism*, p. 72; similar conclusion are drawn by the Manuels, p. 9; Goodwin and Taylor, p. 218 and Robert Nozick *Anarchy, State and Utopia* (Oxford: Blackwell, 1974), p. 332; Judith Shklar explains that the realisation of utopia is not a priority to utopian writers. 'The Political Theory of Utopia: From Melancholy to Nostalgia', in *Utopias and Utopian,* pp. 101-15 (p. 104). Ralf Dahrendorf writes: "Utopia means Nowhere, and the very construction of a utopian society implies that it has no equivalent in reality". *Essays in the Theory*, p. 112.

[97] Thomas Babington Macaulay (British historian 1800–1859) writes that "an acre in Middlesex is better than a principality in Utopia", cited in Jacoby, *The End,* p. 174; Robert Burton, in his own utopia *The Anatomy of Melancholy* (1621), states that "utopian parity is a kind of government, to be wished for, rather than effected" (New York, N.Y.: New York Review of Books, 2001), p. 99; John Milton states that: "To sequester out of the world into Atlantic and Utopian politics which never can be drawn into use will not mend our condition", cited in *The English Renaissance: An Anthology of Sources and Documents*, ed. by Kate Aughterson (London: Routledge, 1998), p. 334; For Marx and Engels, utopian writing was a purely mental exercise in which "Reason became the sole measure of everything", cited in J. C. Davis, *Utopia and the Ideal*, p. 14.

[98] Joyce Hertzler shows that "the utopias seemingly have never been taken very seriously", in *The History*, p. 2; H. F. Russell Smith states that "utopias are generally regarded as literary curiosities which have been made respectable by illustrious names, rather than as serious contributions to the political problems which troubled the age at which they appeared", in *Harrington and His Oceana: A Study of a Seventeenth-Century Utopia and Its Influence in America* (Cambridge: Cambridge UP, 1914), p. 12. Earlier, David Hume classified utopias as impractical ideas, and of no value. 'Idea of a Perfect Commonwealth', in *David Hume Selected Essays*, ed. by Stephen Copley and Andrew Edgar (Oxford: Oxford UP, 1998), pp. 301-314 (p. 301).

works, is loosely established and frequently dismissed, as previously discussed. Further, the association of More's *Utopia* with the New World, where most of these communities were established, is not certain as portrayed by these critics either. While there is a vague relationship, More is certainly not relying upon the early accounts of the New World as alleged by these critics.[99] This also extends to the relationship between utopia and travel narratives, since the latter are thought to be linked to colonialism. However, most utopias from Plato onward (with the exception of Wells and Bellamy) discourage travelling outside the boundaries of utopia, and thus this thesis argues that most utopian writers have been sceptical of the impulse of travelling and such adventures. Thirdly, utopia's relation with its immediate historical context has also been questioned by some scholars. For example, Judith Shklar and Theodor Olson believe that utopias are ahistorical,[100] and likewise Negley and Patrick add that "utopia represents a real effort to escape any restrains of historical time and place, and it is for this reason that utopia is necessarily fictional in form".[101] In other words, utopia has had little consideration for contemporary and historical events. Utopias cannot be properly understood without the historical reality of their time, but the exaggeratory connection will represent it as an imagined intellectual practice or a political blueprint for an imagined state of colonial agenda. Utopias do seek to alter the social order, or reorganise the institutions in place, but not by moving parts of a nation to somewhere else in the form of colonisation. By contrast, we can assume that transferring parts of the nation would solve the economic problems without the need for the painstakingly radical shifts proposed in these utopias. Similarly, the multiple utopian plans available to each utopia's contemporary decision makers might cause us to question which one can be considered the most suitable blueprint. It is simply not logical that all these utopias were meant to be presented as projects and to be realised concurrently or otherwise a competition

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[99] This will be discussed in the chapter on More. However, one example that can be stated here, which also illustrates the difference between *Utopia* and these accounts is that early accounts attempt to portray the New World as a paradise (as Amerigo Vespucci wrote of America in the *Mundus Novus* letters, 1503) brought without human effort, while for More it is an ideal city made by people and with constant labouring.

[100] Although *Utopia* (like other utopias) is critical of its times, for Shklar it is "not concerned with the historically likely at all. Utopia is nowhere, not only geographically, but historically as well. It exists neither in the past nor in the future". 'The Political Theory', p. 104. Similarly, for Theodor Olson, utopianism is ahistorical. *Millennialism, Utopianism, and Progress* (Toronto: Toronto UP, 1982), p. 143.

[101] *The Quest*, p. 4.

of the best utopia. Utopias are best understood as intellectual practices that critique the author's society.

Finally, one methodological flaw in a number of these studies, and which this thesis endeavours to address and repudiate, is the focus on one particular age and the false generalisation on the genre in general. Dohra Ahmad, for example, studied five utopias published between the end of the nineteenth century and the start of the twentieth century, and which together indicate a colonial outlook to the genre that would not be so strongly emphasised in a study of a wider temporal scope. Similarly, Marouby's conclusion is drawn only from two eighteenth-century French utopias, whereas many other scholars have relied solely on More's *Utopia* to pronounce their generic accusations and judgments. In contrast, this study will approach the genre from a contextual perspective and traces its historical development to draw the conclusions.

Utopia and its definition

Despite the decline in utopian literature, utopian studies and research have witnessed a tremendous increase in the last few decades. At the turn of the century, the rise of utopian studies was the result of a combination of Marxist criticism and science fiction literature. Utopia as a research field attracted academics from various fields, particularly from sociology and politics because utopia seeks modifications of the actual political and social institutions through imagined better ones, which constitute the primary interest of these fields. This is apparent as the literary dimension of utopia has always been secondary to utopian writers, and consequently utopias have rarely shown literary distinction. This has resulted, however, in socio-politically oriented scholars tending to emphasise utopias' realisation in contrast to those who read them primarily as works of literary imagination. This former reading helps to further the controversy over utopias being designed as political blueprints for the utopian writer's society against the latter, which merely sees them as literary exercises or perhaps as entertaining and provocative thought experiments. In other words, are these utopias intended as detailed images of a functioning society, projections of a desired for but impossible future, or simply as throwaway literary distractions? This, again, brings the matter back to anti-utopian criticism.

To side with one of these readings, it is important to refer to a definition of utopia. Unfortunately, this is not as easy as it might sound, as the matter of definition is an inherent problem of the genre. Sargent explains that the individuals interested in utopian fiction face problems in terms of limitations and a definition of the field.[102] Arguably, Plato and More created this problem as their genre-founding intentions are still an open question.

Another related limitation in addition to the genre's intention is its self-proclaimed contradiction of desire and practicality. Although a utopia is a better, if not perfect place, its originators nevertheless recognise and acknowledge its impracticality, as such fiction falls short of the realities of the time and ultimately is about despair rather than hope. Despite this, utopian writers refuse to compromise with anything less than their ideals. The fact that the utopian concept was usually blended with fiction is not the least of the problem, and shows that the genre intersects with others, especially science fiction and satire. This has resulted in the debate as to whether utopia can be considered to be a separate genre, for example as a sub-genre of science fiction or satire.[103] On the contrary, others view utopian fiction's relationship with science fiction to have revitalised the former, which is the "older genre".[104] Carl Freedman's description of utopian fiction being the older genre is further accredited by early critics, for example it has been considered a standalone genre as early as Robert Burton's *The Anatomy of Melancholy* (1621). Burton groups together ideas of a worldwide community of Christianity with Johann Valentin Andreae's *Christianopolitana* (1619), Campanella's *City of the Sun* (1613), and the works of Plato. Further, most utopian writers since More credit Plato in addition to later utopias influences and recognise the framework of the genre. With the rise of science fiction at the turn of the century, writers

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[102] Sargent, 'Utopia—The Problem of Definition', *Extrapolation*, 16 (1975), pp. 127-48 (p. 137).

[103] Robert Elliott argues that "satire and utopia are not really separable, the one a critique of the real world in the name of something better, the other a hopeful construction of the world that might be". *The Shape*, p. 24. Darko Suvin argues that utopia "is not a genre but the sociopolitical subgenre of science fiction". *Metamorphoses of Science Fiction: On the Poetics and History of a Literary Genre* (London: Yale UP, 1979), p. 61; this was also reiterated by Fredric Jameson, *Archaeologies,* p. xiv.

[104] Carl Freedman, *Critical Theory and Science Fiction* (London: Wesleyan UP, 2000), p. 78; Sargent admits that while in "the current situation many utopias are published as science fiction, both historically and with utopianism treated as here, utopias are clearly the primary root". 'The Three', p. 11. Negley and Patrick are more dismissive of this relationship, since science fiction, for them, "bears about the same resemblance to Utopian speculation that the tales of Horatio Alger bore to the economic theories of Adam Smith". *The Quest for Utopia: An Anthology of Imaginary Societies* (New York, N.Y.: Henry Schuman, 1952), p. 588.

like H. G. Wells were conscious of the boundaries of the two genres, often experimenting with both simultaneously.

What further complicates the creation of a robust definition of utopia is the usual emergence of a few contradictions with each utopic idea. These related matters include the relation between utopias and the form (utopianism), content, and the function of a utopia, as these make up the essence of utopian studies, its criticism, and its definition. Ruth Levitas shows that utopias were traditionally defined in all these terms (form, function, and content), and she believes that all are problematic.[105] Another concern that has not been extensively studied yet, and is related to this study, is the emergence of non-utopias with each utopia that is of interest to the post-colonial idea of utopia. These will be extended upon in the four following chapters. A few issues of these traditional criticisms, such as related form, content, and function, are still connected to postcolonial criticism and need to be presented here.

The forms or 'faces' of utopia are the manifestation of utopianism either as theory (non-fictional utopia), fiction, or communal experiments, as Sargent explains. Ernst Bloch in his three volumes of *The Principle of Hope* (1954, 1955, 1959) further traces utopianism in a range of other manifestations of popular culture besides fiction, such as non-fictional utopias. Literary utopias or fiction differ from political and social theories by their depiction of a functioning organisation rather than mere political views or theories. However, the boundaries between theory and fiction are not clear, and among them the focus is usually placed on literary utopias. Northrop Frye and Krishan Kumar have attempt to define utopia exclusively in a literary sense, although the latter also focused upon it as a form of social theory.[106] Glenn Negley and John Patrick attest to the political side of utopia, yet also conclude that utopias should be defined in terms of fiction.[107] On the other hand, Fredric Jameson emphasises that utopias "are non-fictional, even though they are also non-existent".[108] Barbara Goodwin and Keith Taylor argue that "the utopian impulse makes the link between political theory and practice quite explicit and public",[109] and that "the

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[105] *The Concept of Utopia* (New York, N.Y.: Syracuse UP, 1991).

[106] 'Varieties of Literary Utopia', in Manuel, *Utopias*, pp. 25-50; for Kumar, "the literary utopia is the only true utopia". 'The Ends of Utopia', *New Literary History*, 41: 3 (2010), pp. 549-569 (p. 556).

[107] *The Quest*, pp. 3-4.

[108] 'The Politics of Utopia', *New Left Review*, 25 (2004), pp. 35–54 (p. 54).

[109] *The Politics*, p. 9.

defining characteristic of utopianism is that it is a political theory specifically directed towards the creation of human happiness".[110] Despite this assertion, J. L. Talmon differentiates between political tracts and dissertations and utopianism altogether:

> Politics is concerned with the careful manipulation of concrete data of experience, by reference to the logic and to the limitations inherent in any given historical situation; whereas utopianism postulates a definite goal or preordained finale to history, for the attainment of which you need to recast and remold all aspects of life and society in accordance with some very explicit principle.[111]

Yet utopia's fictional setting and alternative historical developments through which the reorganisation of society occurs have not been difficult, at least for utopian writers, to contextualise with the present and its political reality (although they still believed the present reality undermined the achievement of their utopias).

Among these three main forms, communitarianism has been the least explored, and although there are some extensive studies on a number of such experiments, they usually focus on specific localities. A vital reason is that not all utopian scholars consider this practice to be directly linked to the concept of utopia and utopianism. This is important to note as this practice is a usual reference in postcolonial criticism of utopia and the relationship between theory and practice in this context. The vague relationship has been concluded by many utopian studies and dismissed by many academics. Glenn Negley in his bibliography states that:

> The generic use of utopian to designate the great number of communitarian enterprise in America, especially from 1700 to 1850, is understandable but misleading. In only one instance among more than one hundred and fifty experiments was the structure of the society the result of the inspiration and influence of a utopia as we have defined that genre for the purpose of this bibliography.[112]

Kumar writes that the "communal impulse" has its own independent existence, and is only tangentially affected by the theories that seek to guide it.[113] This was also reiterated by other anthologies and studies.[114] It is difficult to dismiss the relationship altogether, although this disagreement undermines the certainty of postcolonial claims in this regard.

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[110] *The Politics*, p. 207.

[111] *Utopianism and Politics* (London: Conservative Political Centre, 1957), p. 8.

[112] *Utopian Literature: A Bibliography* (Kansas, Mo.: Regents Press, 1977), p. xx.

[113] 'Utopian Thought and Communal Practice: Robert Owen and the Owenite Communities', *Theory and Society*, 19:1 (1990), pp. 1-35 (p. 23). Elsewhere he also states that it is a "tenuous' relation, and that they were in any case the palest imitation of utopian arrangements". *Utopianism*, p. 65

[114] For example, Frank E. Manuel and Fritzie P. Manuel believe that, "it would be valid to distinguish between theoretical utopistics and applied utopistics". *Utopian Thought in the Western World*

What is primarily related to literary utopia is its content, to which the above criticism of totalitarianism is mainly addressed. A related controversy centres on the perfection of these utopian organisations, with Sargent having been particularly vocal on this issue on various occasions showing strong opposition to this view. Other scholars like Nicole Pohl and Lucy Sargisson also explained that as these utopias include flaws, they are necessarily imperfect societies.[115] Krishan Kumar and J. C. Davis are usually criticised on these grounds, and whilst Davis does indeed express this,[116] he recognises imperfection and deficiencies in the nature of humanity, as it is the perfect utopian organisation that controls them. In this regard, Davis seems to contrast with Rousseau's concept of humanity's inherent goodness versus evil institutions. He explains that both Arcadia and the Land of Cokaygne idealise nature, since "the utopian idealises not man nor nature but organisation".[117] However, other utopian critics have also leaned towards reading utopias as perfect plans,[118] which is evidently the way some utopian writers considered their organisations. H. G. Wells writes:

> The Book of the Samurai has been under revision, much has been added, much rejected, and some deliberately rewritten. Now, there is hardly anything in it that is not beautiful and perfect in form. The whole range of noble emotions finds expression there, and all the guiding ideas of our Modern State.[119]

(Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard UP, 1979), p. 9. Bellamy discouraged an experimenter who was determined to build a community.

[115] Nicole Pohl writes, "utopias are discourses on change itself rather than simply blueprints". 'Utopianism after More: the Renaissance and Enlightenment', in *The Cambridge Companion to Utopian Literature*, pp. 51-78 (p. 51); Lucy Sargisson, *Fool's Gold? Utopianism in the Twenty-First Century* (Basingstoke: Palgrave Macmillan, 2012), p. 14.

[116] For him, "utopia is a holding operation, a set of strategies to maintain social order and perfection in the face of deficiencies, not to say hostility, of nature and the wilfulness of man". *Utopia and the Ideal Society: A Study of English Utopian Writing 1516–1700* (Cambridge: Cambridge UP, 1981), p. 37.

[117] *Utopia and the Ideal*, p. 38.

[118] For example, W. Warren Wagar writes that "Once a perfect or best possible social order has been established, nothing is left, either to the imagination or to the free play of politics". 'Dreams of Reason: Bellamy, Wells, and the Positive Utopia', in *Looking Backward, 1988-1888: Essays on Edward Bellamy*, ed. by Daphne Patai (Amherst, Mass.: Massachusetts UP, 1988), pp. 106-125 (p. 106); Joyce Oramel Hertzler defines utopias through More: "More depicted a perfect, and perhaps unrealizable, society, located in nowhere, purged of the shortcomings, the wastes, and the confusion of our own time and living in perfect adjustment, full of happiness and contentment". *The History of Utopian Thought* (New York, N.Y.: The Macmillan Company, 1923), p. 2; Ralf Dahrendorf writes that "all utopias from Plato's Republic to George Orwell's Brave New World of 1984 have one element in common: they are all societies from which change is absent". *Essays on the Theory of Society* (Stanford, Calif.: Stanford UP, 1968), p. 107; Northrop Frye recognises and approves the predominant understanding that utopia is "an ideal or flawless state", 'Varieties', in *Utopias and Utopian Thought*, pp. 25-50 (p. 31); and for Barbara Goodwin, utopias are "models of the perfectly constructed, perfectly functioning society". *Social Science and Utopia: Nineteenth-Century Models of Social Harmony* (Sussex, Harvester Press, 1978), p. 2.

[119] *A Modern Utopia*, p. 283.

William Dean Howells' *Altruria* (1894) aspires to "an order so just that it cannot be disturbed".[120] Apparently, these utopian writers thought that their plans were perfect, at least according to their temporal and spatial standards.

Function wise, the concept of utopia has been variously assessed in relation to how it affects or brings about change in the societies it addresses. Extensively discussed by Tom Moylan, one major function is the critical function, which stresses how "utopia negates the contradictions of a social system by forging visions of what is not yet realised either in theory or in practice. In generating such figures of hope, utopia contributes to the open space of opposition".[121] This was also emphasised by H. G. Wells.[122] In addition, other functions have also been identified, with Peter Ruppert classifying three groups of critics that expanded upon the function of utopia. The first group, led by Darko Suvin, stresses the cognitive function and belief that "utopias are essentially heuristic models of social justice and reason that function to de-familiarise and thereby illuminate existing standards, values and norms". The second group, with Northrop Frye as the leading figure, "has attributed to utopian literature a therapeutic effect that is similar to the function of myth. These critics emphasize the capacity of literary utopias to mediate or resolve, on the level of imagination, real cultural and social contradictions". The third group, comprised of theorists such as Ernst Bloch and Louis Marin, is anticipatory and maintains that "literary utopias not only give us a glimpse of better social possibilities but actually anticipate, or even predict, future developments".[123] For Zygmunt Bauman, utopias have three functions: firstly they provide an alternative to the present, secondly they give hope and this hope "supplies the missing link between practical and theoretical interests because it is intrinsically critical of the reality in which it is rooted", and thirdly they reveal and draw attention to society's primary divisions of interest.[124] The function of utopia is also significant when discussing utopias in light of postcolonial criticism, which attempts to illuminate the colonialist and imperialist function of a number of these works.

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[120] *A Traveler from Altruria* (New York, N.Y.: Hill and Wang, 1957), p. 151. Edward Bellamy describes his plan as "the best ultimate solution". *Looking Backward*, pp. 86-87.

[121] *Demand the Impossible: Science Fiction and the Utopian Imagination* (Oxford: Peter Lang, 2014), pp. 1-2.

[122] H. G. Wells in *A Modern Utopia* stressed that the primary function of utopia is social criticism.

[123] Peter Ruppert, *Reader in a Strange Land: The Activity of Reading Literary Utopias* (Athens, Ga.: Georgia UP, 1986), pp. 15-17.

[124] *Socialism, the Active Utopia* (London: Harper Collins, 1976), pp. 13-16.

Theorists acknowledge that this variety of utopian forms and functions hinders any attempts to present a definition that is generalisable across the genre and through its long history. Hence, these critics and theorists warn against attempts to form a restricted and narrow definition. Elizabeth Hansot believes that "any attempt to confine the variety and complexity of utopias within one definition is an invitation to failure".[125] In his second bibliography, following *The Quest for Utopia* (1952), Glenn admits that a strict adherence to such "definitive restriction" is not only extremely difficult but potentially impossible.[126] Shortly after Hansot and Glenn, Frank E. Manuel and Fritzie P. Manuel, in their comprehensive *Utopian Thought in the Western World* (1979), reiterate this belief, rejecting a "rigid definition" and instead attempting "to communicate the diversity of experiences in which this propensity has manifested itself in Western society".[127]

Instead of a definition, a typology of utopia is usually attempted. Lewis Mumford divides utopias into those of 'escape' and 'reconstruction',[128] whereas Bloch divides them into abstract and concrete utopias. Abstract or escape utopias, such as daydreams or wishful thinking, are not accompanied by a desire or will to change, but are rather compensatory, while concrete or reconstruction utopias are anticipatory. [129] Barbara Goodwin and Keith Taylor divide utopias into those that serve a critical function and those that depict an alternate society.[130] For Doyne Dawson, utopianism is divided into two categories: 1) myth and fantasy, and 2) political utopianism. The first involves legends from the golden age, whilst the latter can be further divided into either 'low' or 'high' utopias. The former suggest a thorough outline for what is considered to be an ideal urban state that should be realised where possible, but that should at the least critique the current institutions and

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[125] *Perfection and Progress* (Cambridge, Mass.: MIT Press, 1974), p. 2.

[126] *Utopian Literature,* p. xii. The result of this is the inclusion of, for example, science fiction in utopian bibliography as Glenn admits. Sargent also comes to the same conclusion. While in his 'The Problem', his definition of utopia is "a fairly detailed description of a social system that is non-existent but is located in time and space", p. 143, he presents even more broader definitions in later writings.

[127] p. 5.

[128] For him, utopias of reconstruction include the classic literary utopias of Plato, More, Bellamy, and others. While the other "belong to the department of pure literature" like the one of William Morris. Further, for Mumford: "The first utopia leads backward into the utopian's ego, the second leads outward—outward into the world". *The Story of Utopias* (New York, N.Y.: Boni and Liveright, 1922), pp. 19-22.

[129] In other words, abstract utopias are those perfect plans that are immature and vague that only sustain the status quo while concrete utopias are transformative plans and "of an anticipatory kind". *The Principle*, v. 1. p. 146.

[130] *The Politics*, p. 120.

create a plan for reforms on a smaller scale, like the *Laws* of Plato. In contrast, 'high' utopias are also outlines for the ideal urban state, but ones that were never meant to be realised in reality, such as Plato's *Republic*.[131] It can be noted that these typologies, although valuable, further extend the boundaries of the genre and they fail to replace a definition.

Consequently, broad definitions have been offered by some scholars, with Levitas defining utopia as the "desire for a better way of being and living".[132] For Russell Jacoby, utopia is hope "in its widest, and least threatening, meaning", since it is "a belief that the future could fundamentally surpass the present".[133] Sargent writes:

> I define the broad, general phenomenon of utopianism as social dreaming – the dreams and nightmares that concern the ways in which groups of people arrange their lives and which usually envision a radically different society than the one in which the dreamers live.[134]

Similarly, for Tom Moylan utopia is rooted in "the unfulfilled needs and wants of specific classes, groups, and individuals in their unique historical context".[135] Although these broad definitions are contested on the grounds that they are too vague,[136] this is the only way to clear the confusion about the inclusion of many works that for some critics are fully utopian and for others are only utopian to a small extent. Sometimes, definition is turned into description, for example the one forwarded by Darko Suvin:

> Utopia is the verbal construction of a particular quasi-human community where sociopolitical and individual relationships are organized according to a more perfect principle than in the author's community, this construction being based on estrangement arising out of an alternative historical hypothesis.[137]

While this description does not necessarily undermine utopia's fictional element, it ties it to historical projections and representations that have not always been recognised or emphasised by utopias or theorists who are less concerned with the detailed plans of utopias. The first description might be the one forwarded by the imaginary poet laureate of *Utopia*, who describes the island:

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[131] *Cities of the Gods: Communist Utopias in Greek Thought* (Oxford: Oxford UP, 1992), p. 7.

[132] *The Concept*, p. 8.

[133] *End of Utopia*, pp. xi-xii.

[134] 'The Three', p. 3.

[135] *Demand the Impossible,* p. 1.

[136] J. C. Davis comments on a similar definition, "a man's dreams of a better world" to be "too vague to be useful". *Utopia and the Ideal*, pp. 12-13.

[137] *Defined by a Hollow: Essays on Utopia, Science Fiction and Political Epistemology* (Oxford: Peter Lang, 2010), p. 30; Davis, presents a concept that is also similar to this where he emphasises that utopia's main concern is the reorganisation of society and its institutions. *Utopia and the Ideal*, p. 38.

The ancients called me Utopia or Nowhere because of my isolation. At present, however, I am a rival of Plato's *Republic*, perhaps even a victor over it. The reason is that what he has delineated in words I alone have exhibited in men and resources and laws of surpassing excellence. Deservedly ought I to be called by the name of Eutopia or Happy Land.[138]

Any definition should consider that utopia, despite being usually placed in the future, focuses on the present, which is the critical function that has been highlighted by utopian readers. Future is only deployed as a temporality of hope and promise thought to have been achieved (or will be) through a process that can be proven by dialectic and ontological reasoning. Here, we can side more with utopia as a method of Moylan rather than Sargent's social dreaming, although both are not necessarily mutually exclusive. Further, in order to recognise that there is a gradual recognition that no utopia can live in a dystopian world, the interest of utopian writers and commentators shifts to a more global outlook. Up until Wells' writings, utopias started from a certain locality and time. Broadly, and considering this gradual change, utopia can be defined as a fictional proposal for a better and equal social, economic, and political global organisation, occupied by more humane individuals than those who reside in the author's world. Here we stress the world instead of society, along with equality between countries and nations. This is because earlier utopias primarily recognised their society's problems and were less concerned with global issues shared by other societies. Additionally, their degree of involvement in these shared issues has differed and mostly ignored the rest of the world. The presence of more humane individuals reflects that utopias generally went into a revised historical development so that individuals could be brought up under better and equal circumstances.

Thesis Structure

The study selects the four utopias of Plato, More, Bellamy, and Wells, which together represent a chronological approach to canonical utopias written in different historical eras. The texts treated here, however selectively and partially, represent the turning-points of the history of utopia as each has established or revived the genre and inspired multiple utopias in response. Their order correlates with the formation and development of the utopian

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[138] Cited from Colin Starnes, *The New Republic: A Commentary on Book I of More's Utopia Showing Its Relation to Plato's Republic* (Waterloo: Wilfred Laurier UP, 1990), p. 54.

genre, and its frequent long gaps.[139] This order also highlights their relationship and contribution to the overall theme of the thesis, and incorporates them into a unified whole. Plato (arguably the "archetype" of utopian literature[140]) and More represent early utopias (Plato as classical and More as early modern), whereas the work of Bellamy and Wells are modern utopias.[141] These are popular works, a constant point of reference of the postcolonial criticism and utopian studies in general. Further, all these utopian authors, apart from More, had combined advocacy with their utopian plans. Additionally, these texts have the necessary relevance to the assumed utopian colonial project and in a chronologically arranged list as the authors addressed colonialism and imperialism of their time. The study will trace the issue of colonialism and imperialism in utopia over time and through its development from a single community into a vision for the whole world. In addition, these selected utopias bridge and construct the essence of the study: Plato imagined such a community and its foundations, More functionalised it, and Bellamy and Wells globalised it. Through this development, their narratives retain ultimate importance to the 'boundary problem' and relations with their neighbours despite a fear of the outside world. These works and beside the utopian foreign policy, also share other thematic contents including the subjects of war, overpopulation, the actualisation process and also contain explicit utopian counter-narratives and points of contention. These crucial characteristics provide a coherent material to the study. Besides the above rationale, historically these utopias have reacted to each other, since More's work responded to that of Plato, later texts reacted to More, and so on; this is what establishes and consolidates a genre. Wells is situated as the final addition to the list partly because of his global utopian project and also because he is often considered to be the last proper utopian writer, as mentioned earlier, or in the words of Matthew Beaumont, a "postscript" to the tradition.[142] There are a large number of potential works which could be considered for the issue in question, nonetheless a focus on four canonical texts is deemed to suffice for the purposes of this thesis in order to avoid reducing the work to simply a survey of utopian literature.

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[139] As explained by Lewis Mumford's *The Story*; A. L. Morton's *The English*, and Negley and Patrick's *The Quest*.

[140] Chad Walsh, *From Utopia to Nightmare* (Westport, Conn.: Greenwood Press, 1962), p. 39.

[141] There is a tendency to divide utopias as such, notably by Elizabeth Hansot, *Perfection and Progress*, Sargent also presents a similar division, 'Utopian Traditions', p. 14.

[142] *Utopia Ltd.*, p. 13.

Further, the selected texts' diversity and span serve to present the view of a genre, a historical continuity and not a particular author of a particular time.[143]

The chapters are structured to present the natural development of utopias from the visions and plans of a single community to the universalist vision for everywhere. Chapter One maps out the ways in which Plato's *Republic* is primarily an exercise exclusively for the Hellenistic world. Written during an epoch when colonialism was a standard practice, *Republic* shuns away from it and devises other solutions for the culture's potential expansion and overpopulation. Chapter Two examines More's utopia and its relation with the world of the early modern period, along with the New World, and challenges the predominant interpretation of More's advocacy of colonisation. Chapter Three explores Bellamy's proposal of a gradual transition of the world into a utopian system by discussing *Looking Backward* as a representative of American imperial aspirations that Bellamy manifested through this proposed utopia. It attempts to show the intention of Bellamy and the actual stake and role of the United States envisioned as the first utopia. Lastly, Chapter Four discusses Wells's attempt to present a more modern and global utopia and an alternative to the nation state. It argues that his proposal attempts to resolve conflicts in a multi-cultural world through a mobilisation of the existing political structure and the utopian tradition. The thesis draws to a close with a conclusion that attempts to restate the project's main assertion and summarise its arguments. It also addresses the significance of this study for the future of utopia as an academic discipline, as well as its possible global implications beyond the literary imagination.

The diversity of these texts and their historical and intellectual context requires that each chapter of the thesis outlines its own abstract, methods, and organisational structure. The chapters present and group together the anti-utopian stance into categories, and sets them against these texts. This method of combining insights from critics with utopian texts is to invalidate what utopia is assumed to be. By uncovering these texts, not through mere justificatory or negation but by analytical reading, the research hopes to redirect the conversation dominated by undercurrents of the postcolonial critical stance.

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[143] For example, it is thought that More was the first utopian writer to raise the issue of colonies; Sargent, 'Colonial', p. 204. However, it was of central importance to Plato too.

Chapter One: *Plato: The making of a Greek Utopia within Greece*

There is a general consensus that Plato's *Republic* marks the inception of the utopian genre, at least in its Western tradition and form.[1] Although utopianism existed in other forms and sources long before the *Republic*, it was this work that gave the concept a shape that has been more or less preserved ever since. Whilst it is therefore understandable that any criticism or study of utopia is bound to include this inaugural text, it is also important to note that the text also represents a sample of early Western thought and, as the first utopia, rejects the colonialism and expansion related to this study.

The *Republic* is a city born out of necessity, as Plato explains, and in it he attempts to prove that 'justice', at both the individual and the state levels, can be obtained and maintained. However, as the dialogue evolves between Plato and his interlocutors,[2] it becomes evident that the nature of the utopian city does not permit or encourage its expansion and domination over other cities. This chapter seeks to demonstrate that the *Republic* was intended to serve as an exemplar for the Hellenistic world, and it was by no means a universal recommendation for the entire world and all times, as has been argued elsewhere.[3] Far from being universal, the city in the text is Greek and particularly designed to suit some Greek citizens of the time despite its use of ostensibly universal values to prove its applicability and validity.

Drawing on Plato's own words, this chapter also argues that the *Republic* is not intended as a 'colonialist' tool, despite the claims by a number of critics that these ambitions have characterised the utopian genre since its inception. Most importantly, Plato was conscious and aware of the colonial and expansionist trends of his time, and discouraged colonialism during the age of colonisation. In particular, Plato's imagined city is, as the earliest sample of a proper utopia, designed to be exactly the opposite of what these accusations attempt to establish across the genre. This conclusion is reached first by Plato's articulated intention of the city, second by the *Republic's* particularity to Greek and Greece and its emphasis of their unity, thirdly by its nature, which limits the city's borders to one city, and finally by its doomed fate. These elements are to be introduced successively. Beside the *Republic*, occasional consideration is given to Plato's *Laws*, *Timaeus*, and *Critias*, with the latter including an imaginary non-Greek utopia, Atlantis.[4] The discussion will also briefly consider the relevant historical context.

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[1] Beside the *Republic*, Plato's *Laws* is occasionally included as another utopia, however being a more practical and feasible plan it is usually classified outside the utopia proper. Despite this, reference to it is essential in the context of this research.

[2] The form of dialogue is used by Plato because of its popularity and usage, especially by poets. It was also used by Aristotle.

[3] For example, Bhikhu Parekh states that "Plato's discussion of the ways of life was intended to be universally valid, applying not just to the Greeks but also to others". *Rethinking Multiculturalism*: *Cultural Diversity and Political Theory* (New York, N.Y.: Palgrave Macmillan. 2nd edition, 2005), p. 19. Similarly, Stanley Rosen argues that the "founding of a just city concerns all human beings' and this is the quality of the *Republic*". *Plato's Republic: A Study* (Yale, Conn.: Yale UP, 2005), p. 12. Glen Morrow writes: "Because the Greeks were such universal men, the ideal of a Greek city can never be merely a Greek ideal". *Plato's Cretan City: A Historical Interpretation of the Laws* (Princeton, N.J.: Princeton UP, 1960), p. 593.

[4] The story is thought to serve as an ethical exemplary to the Athenians. Plato still asserts that his story and despite "all its strangeness, is absolutely true". *Plato: Timaeus and Critias*, trans. by Robin Waterfield (Oxford: Oxford UP, 2008), 20 d. All quotations from *Timaeus* and *Critias* are from this edition. Atlantis

Plato's intention in the *Republic*

The aim and intention in Plato's *Republic* assist us in understanding his position in respect to the primary concern of this chapter, in particular where the imagined city is intended to go and the limits of its development. Not unrelated, the nature of his project as difficult if not impossible practice is articulated by Plato himself. He conditions the birth of the city on the rise in power of true philosophers, either one or more.[5] Later, he admits in the *Laws* that such a proposal is beyond the capacity of humans,[6] however we should still aspire to be as close as possible to this ideal. Therefore, arrangements are altered in Magnesia (the city in the *Laws*) with some instructions relaxed and others retained. Part of the controversy over the aim(s) is the seriousness of the work itself. This is not the least related to the tradition of utopianism that existed in Greece before Plato and which he put together in the form of a functioning city, the *Republic*. Some of these earlier examples were not regarded seriously either by their authors or audience.[7]

What Plato emphasises as the purpose of initiating the exercise of this city building is to find and show 'justice' and how it works in a city. The *Republic*'s question attempts to answer whether Cephalus, who is approaching death, has led a just life. This justice is then to be applied to humans (the structure of the psyche and tiers within it), assuming the structural similarity within and between both.[8] Plato takes this approach as a city is 'bigger'

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is usually seen to represent contemporary Athens, or the Persian Empire. Christopher Gill, 'The Genre of the Atlantis Story', *Classical Philology*, 72: 4 (1977), pp. 287-304. The story could also be seen as Plato's conforming to the literary tradition of idealising ancient Greece, which as P. J. Rhodes mentions: "most surviving Athenian tragedies have plots set in the heroic past of Greece". *A History of the Classical Greek World, 478-323 BC* (Oxford: Blackwell, 2006), p. 39.

[5] *The Republic*, VII, 450de. All citations are from Allan Bloom's translation with an *Interpretive Essay, 2nd edn.* (New York, N.Y.: Basic Books, 1991).

[6] It can be inhabited by "gods or the sons of gods" (*Laws*, V, 739 d e). All citations are from the translation of Thomas L. Pangle (New York, N.Y.: Basic Books, 1980).

[7] For example the 'Golden Age' of Hesiod, the Odyssey of Homer, communism as a theory was also advocated by the Pythagoreans before Plato. Among the Greeks, Hippodamus "anticipated Plato in his division of the State into three classes", others like the dramatist Cratinus and writers like Phaleas and Hippodamus at the end of the fifth century proposed equalisation of property. Ernest Barker, *The Political Thought*, pp. 92-3. In a play, fifteen years before Plato, Aristophanes 'imagines a group of women taking over Athens' legislature and abolishing private property, the traditional family, and unequal gender roles'. Cited in Nickolas Pappas, *Routledge Philosophy Guidebook to Plato and the Republic* (London: Routledge, 2003), pp. 13-4. Plato's most important contribution, we can note, is designing a manmade utopia and also drawing on all these partial thoughts into a fully administered utopia.

[8] *Republic*, V, 473cd; IX 580d.

than a man and "perhaps there would be more justice in the bigger and it would be easier to observe closely".[9] Such a comparison and analogy between man and city is not new to his interlocutors and he does not face objections to it. The method of approaching 'man by way of his society' has a tradition before Plato but was developed further by him.[10] Before leaving the discussion, Cephalus, the only elderly character in the *Republic*, presents an account of Athenian life from his past experiences. Plato's spokesman in the *Republic* is Socrates, and through him he describes the ills of Greek society and how they could be treated and perfected, thus departing from this same account. Cephalus concludes that if the elements of a human character "are orderly and content with themselves"[11] then justice and happiness can be attained. Indeed the same formulation will later be used by Plato, as the just city will be achieved, he says, through an 'orderly' and 'content' society. Socrates constantly reminds his interlocutors of this, whether they have glimpsed justice. Then, the work is a guideline of "a course of life on the basis of which each of us would have the most profitable existence".[12] This, again, is emphasised throughout the work and also towards the end when Plato reiterates that perhaps such a city is found in 'heaven' and not anywhere on earth. It is for people, he repeats, to establish within themselves.[13] The end of the story is moral, emphasising the importance of leading a good life:

> But if we are persuaded by me, holding that soul is immortal and capable of bearing all evils and all goods, we shall always keep to the upper road and practice justice with prudence in every way so that we shall be friends to ourselves and the gods, both while we remain here and when we reap the rewards for it like the victors who go about gathering in the prizes. And so here and in the thousand year journey that we have described we shall fare well.[14]

However, and despite all the emphasis from Plato, many critics remain sceptical and consider the work to be a blueprint for a totalitarian regime.[15] Such a conclusion is not without basis. For example, and as mentioned earlier, Plato brings about a more practical

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9 *Republic*, II, 369a.
10 Torsten Andersson *Polis and Psyche: A Motif in Plato's Republic* (Stockholm: Almqvist & Wiksell, 1971), p. 15.
11 *Republic*, I, 329d.
12 Ibid, I, 344e.
13 Ibid, IX, 592b.
14 Ibid, X, 620e, 621cd.
15 The most notable example is Karl Popper. Bertrand Russell writes: "Plato's Republic, unlike modern Utopias, was perhaps intended to be actually founded. This was not so fantastic or impossible as it might naturally seem to us". *A History of Western Philosophy* (New York, N.Y.: Stratford Press, 2006), p. 118. Early commentators, however, did not emphasise this. For example, Cicero thought that Plato meant to give us "a city to wish for rather than to hope for", cited in Dawson, *Cities*, p. 4.

blueprint in the *Laws*, in which he confesses that the *Republic* is still his ideal, evidenced through his establishment of an academy[16] and his attempts to become an advisor at the court of Dionysius (although prior to the *Republic* 367 or 366).[17] Further, the title of the work also encourages this interpretation.[18] Besides, it could be added that Plato encouraged the establishment of cities based on philosophically developed ideals. In the *Laws*, it becomes clear that projects and tasks of this nature were in demand, especially to the newly established colonies:

> The greater part of Crete, you see, is attempting to found a certain colony and has put the Knossians in charge of the affair. The city of the Knossians has in turn delegated it to me and nine others. We have been commissioned to establish the same laws as the ones there, if we find some satisfactory; but if we discover some laws from elsewhere that appear to be better, we are not to hesitate about their being foreign.[19]

This is also established by historical evidence.[20] However, this is less visible in the *Republic* where there is apparently no agenda or move by Plato to construct a city, yet he endorsed its ideals and repeated some of them in his other works.

Apart from arguing for or against his intention to construct the *Republic*, the work has two significant aims. Firstly, it serves and attempts to participate in the re-making of Greek culture, and Plato shows there is an opportunity for this. Secondly, and politically, it is a criticism of the Athenian pursuit of imperialism, which is the concern of this chapter. The *Republic* comes amid social upheaval and class conflict, which threatened the social

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[16] Plato and his fellow Academicians seem to have been active in this regard. Nickolas Pappas states "according to ancient accounts, the Academy functioned in part as a political consultants' group, with members traveling to other Greek cities to reform their constitutions. Two of Plato's associates at the Academy, Erastus and Coriscus, returned to their native city of Scepsis and persuaded its ruler to adopt a more liberal form of government". *Routledge Philosophy*, p. 7.

[17] Plato visited Syracuse twice hoping to persuade Dionysius I and later Dionysius II to put his ideals into practice, but both his missions failed.

[18] R. L. Nettleship comments on the misinterpretation the title might suggest and stresses that despite this, the book "is of political philosophy, rather it is moral philosophy". *Lectures on the Republic of Plato* (London: Macmillan: 1922), p. 4. This is also supported by the fact that the secondary title 'Concerning Justice', has been associated with the text, although it is believed to have been added later.

[19] *Laws*, IV, 702 d.

[20] Morrow, writes: "Such new cities always started their political life with a set of laws especially designed for them, and a competent legislator was often called upon to advise the founder, or the sponsoring city". *Plato's Cretan City*, p. 4; for example, "The city of Miletus is supposed to have begotten some three hundred cities, and many of its fellows were possibly not less fruitful. Since new cities could be founded there was plenty of chance for variation and experiment; and those who dreamed of a more, generous social order could set their hands and wits to making a better start from the bottom up", Lewis Mumford, *The Story,* p. 30. Similarly, Barker correlates between both phenomena: "it is certainly true that the colonial expansion, which is so great a feature of Greek history, involved the action of real and historical legislators". *The Political Thought*, p. 9. Aristotle tells us about a number of these planners who believed in equal rights to property. Lewis Mumford, *The Story*, pp. 30-1.

and economic structure of Greece.[21] Athens itself was defeated not long before Plato's writing by a cultural and economic rival.[22] So even if Plato presents an unsolicited proposal in the *Republic*, it came at the right time since people anticipated drastic changes.

Firstly, Plato shows that there is room for innovation and a modification of the Greek culture, and participation in making of a culture that is in the process of being shaped or misshaped.[23] In this regard, he gives an example of himself wanting to observe a festival that was to be held for the first time[24] and which involved a 'novel' torch race on horseback.[25] Besides religion, he describes the changing of various cultural norms:

> It is not so long ago that it seemed shameful and ridiculous to the Greeks - as it does now to the many among the barbarians - to see men naked; and that when the Cretans originated the gymnasiums, and then the Lacedaemonians, it was possible for the urbane of the time to make a comedy of all that.[26]

It is his understanding that the social, political, and economic practices of contemporary Athens are deemed to be unjust. In this regard he attempts to draw the attention of his hosts, including a number of young Athenians, to the possibility of imagining a better city. As such, the *Republic* is a kind of rear-guard action to prevent further degeneration or compromise of Greek culture, which is embodied by Athens. However, despite this criticism Athens is highly regarded by Plato, as will be further highlighted later.

Before the discussion becomes intense, Cephalus, an old man close to death – perhaps intended as a metaphor of old Athens – departs and leaves the discussion, which continues between Plato and the younger men, who are more open to the unconventional ideas that will follow thanks to their youth. Plato attempts to take advantage of these familiar but novel examples, to introduce new practices based on philosophically developed ideals. This also echoes his later plan to exclude from the Republic "all those in the city

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[21] For example at Argos in 370 BC, when people executed hundreds of wealthy citizens for conspiring against democracy, and during the 360 unrest in several other cities, a revolution at Syracuse in 357 BC where "the tyranny was overthrown, and the next year the democratic faction passed a resolution calling for the redistribution of all oikoi [property]. Their orators justified this unprecedented measure with a new slogan—'Equality is the beginning of freedom'". Dawson, *Cities*, pp. 99-100.

[22] The Athenians were defeated by the Spartans in the Peloponnesian War (431–404 BC).

[23] In the fifth century, many changes of religious forms took place and especially in Athens. Michael L. Morgan, "Plato and Greek Religion", in *The Cambridge Companion to Plato*, ed. by Richard Kraut (Cambridge, UK: Cambridge UP, 1992), pp. 227-247 (p. 229).

[24] *Republic*, I, 327a.

[25] Ibid, I, 328a.

[26] Ibid, V 452bc.

who happen to be older than ten" and "taking over their children".[27] He believes that instead of philosophers, poets have been responsible for the provision of culture and its misrepresentation. For him these poets are the primary ones who have provided and credited the way of life and thinking of Greek individuals, being considered as educators of Greek culture.[28] Plato discredits the Greeks for this,[29] seeming to describe a reality of his day as the poets were then the sources of philosophy and religion.[30]

It is an attempt, then, to replace the city's relation to philosophers with the one it had with poets.[31] In Plato's time, for example, Socrates "was widely perceived as" a people-hater,[32] who thought that none of the cities were governed well because of these poets. Hence, they will be banished from the perceived city and not be listened to:

> And, as to the violation of the oaths and truces that Pandarus committed, if someone says Athena and Zeus were responsible for its happening, we'll not praise him; nor must the young be allowed to hear that Themis and Zeus were responsible for strife and contention among the gods.[33]

Here Plato uses the dialogue form, which was exclusively the medium of tragic playwrights, to discuss ethical matters,[34] which would have caused confusion.[35] Next, Plato accuses sophists of having corrupted people, again demonstrating concern for the people's trust in these individuals' knowledge and capacity to teach:

> That each of the private wage earners whom these men call sophists and believe to be their rivals in art, educates in nothing other than these convictions of the many, which they opine when they are gathered together, and he calls this wisdom.[36]

Similar to poets, if not more so, they have had a great influence over people,[37] and were considered competitors and impediments to Plato's education of the young.

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[27] Ibid, VII, 541a.

[28] For example he writes, "when you meet praisers of Homer who say that this poet educated Greece". *Republic*, X, 606de. Similarly, in the *Laws* the Athenians are presented as quoting Homer for giving laws I, 624b.

[29] He refers to Pindar, Simonides, Aeschylus, and Homer, and discredits people who arrange their life according to poets. *Republic*, X, 606de.

[30] Nettleship says that "Homer and some of the other poets were a sort of Greek Bible". *Lectures,* p. 21.

[31] Plato here still echoes the fate of his teacher, for him; to borrow a phrase from Hannah Arendt, "the historical occasion which gave rise to the conflict between the polis and the philosopher", we notice to be in place. *The Human Condition* (Chicago, Ill.: Chicago UP, 1998), p. 16.

[32] Gregory Vlastos, *Socratic Studies* (Cambridge: Cambridge UP, 1994), p. 87.

[33] *Republic*, II, 380a.

[34] *Routledge Philosophy*, p. 11.

[35] Charles L. Griswold, 'Irony in the Platonic Dialogues', *Philosophy and Literature*, 26:1 (2002), pp. 84-106.

[36] *Republic*, VI, 493a

Secondly, the work aims at criticising Athens' pursuit of imperialism, since it seems to have advocated itself as the only powerful and potential option able to contain the danger posed by the Persians. In this regard, it established the League of Delos with a number of other island and city states in 478. As the wealthiest city, Athens dominated the confederation and banned any secession and imposed tributes on member cities. The league ended with the Spartans defeat of the Athenians, and the subsequent view of the role of Athens in this confederation by historians is mostly negative. Plato's position towards this is detailed through the particularity of his work to Greece and the nature and characteristics of the proposed organisation that are described below.

The *Republic*'s Particularity to the Greeks and Greece

The utopian writer, considering the shortcomings of his or her society, brings about a proposal for a better and more organised one, and necessarily departs from a number of norms and customs. The question is, then, how unconventional is Plato's departure and does it lead to a totally new and uprooted community, and is this radically different from Greek culture. Here, two opposing views are proposed, one that argues for the unconventionality of the proposal, and another that Plato still adheres to Greek culture.

The first to recognise the unconventionality of the proposal was Aristotle. For him the *Republic* is unprecedented and unorthodox in comparison with other proposals of a similar nature.[38] Perhaps what makes it unorthodox is the existence of a certain element of universality in Plato's proposals. This, and in a more general perspective, has been stressed to have necessarily transcended Greece and the Greeks, which has been expanded from a point of praise or criticism as has been referenced earlier. It has also been argued that Plato attempted to draw from some common human core, depending on ahistorical forms of "what is universal and unchanging".[39] For Allan Bloom, it is the particular concept of

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[37] Baker adds: "To go to the Sophists was to go to the university -- a university which prepared men for their after-life, and, since that life was to be one of politics, prepared them to be politicians". Barker, *The Political Thought,* p. 66. This might explain Plato's intention of his Academy.

[38] Catherine H. Zuckert, *Plato's Philosophers: The Coherence of the Dialogues* (Chicago, Ill.: Chicago UP, 2009), p. 473.

[39] Claes G. Ryn, *A Common Human Ground*: *Universality and Particularity in a Multicultural World* (Columbia, Mo.: Missouri UP, 2003), p. 7.

justice that Plato defines as "not Athenian, or even Greek, but is rather human" and thus transcends the boarders of his countrymen. This broad perspective of justice caused him to clash with his community and be charged with corrupting the young men of Athens of the time.[40] The young Athenian interlocutors present definitions of justice that are deemed to be too local. Bloom also writes that Plato uses other universal themes that transcend both the local city and man.[41] This use of universal principles places him in opposition to 'the unphilosophic' constituents of a city. Those unphilosophic men "are loyal not to cities in general but to their own city; they love not men in general, but this particular man or woman; they are not interested in the nature of the species, but their own fates", as he concludes.[42] This is essential, especially to utopian writers, as it is argued that the allusion to certain higher values and ideals is indispensable when attempting to inspire people.

On the other hand, others have argued that Plato is loyal to his context. The argument is that it is inaccurate to imagine that Plato proposes "a detailed new constitution for Athens" or that he "would have approved of the introduction of the new constitution by revolution into a society wholly unprepared to receive it".[43] This is also repeated in the context of the *Laws*.[44] Again, this particular 'justice', which Bloom stresses that Plato sought (proposed and emphasised for its applicability in a city), cannot be obtained by rejecting its context and "a simplistic denial of reality".[45] Plato's utopia is neither an escapist dream nor a haven but rather "a political act within an existing political order".[46] Lewis Mumford, studying the relationship of utopia and the city, also agrees that Plato could not overcome the contemporary Greek restrictions and give the example of his dependence on the city-state system.[47] Glen Morrow states that "the ideal itself which serves as his guide is not an irrelevant creation of philosophical imagination, but an ideal

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[40] Bloom, *Republic*, p. 309.
[41] Ibid, p. 394.
[42] Ibid, p. 394.
[43] A. E. Taylor, *Plato: The Man and His Work* (London: Methuen, 1960), p. 273; also Morrow, *Plato's Cretan City*, p. 591.
[44] It has been argued, "with some exaggeration but with essential insight, that Plato's *Laws* is a collection and codification of the whole of Greek Law", Morrow, *Plato's Cretan City*, p. 6.
[45] Adi Ophir, Plato's Invisible Cities, Discourse and Power in the Republic (London: Routledge, 1991), p. 83.
[46] Ophir, Plato's Invisible Cities, p. 83.
[47] 'Utopia, the City and the Machine', in *Utopias and Utopian*, pp. 3-24 (p. 9).

rooted in the soil of Greek history".[48] For R. L. Nettleship, Plato shows no consideration for humanity at large and only sympathises with his countrymen.[49] The latter view can be concluded through evidences from the *Republic*. What can be observed is that the *Republic*, regardless of whether it is a practical or unconventional project, is very much tied to its Greek context with no outlook to the wider world.

Plato is also loyal to this culture even though he departs from it occasionally and criticises a number of concepts of contemporary Greece. Geographically, his city is to be built next to and among Greek neighbours, and Plato emphasises this strongly. His starting point is to envision and design a Greek polis from scratch.[50] At no point does he claim that what suits the Greeks will suit the rest of the world. In fact, we can argue to the contrary based on a number of reasons. From the beginning, Plato introduces Socrates as a participant of the mainstream tradition, recounting tales of his visits to temples and participation in festivals,[51] and this proposed city is designed based on discussions with interlocutors with a Greek perspective, which is Plato's point of departure. Thus, the *Republic* is born within a specific political and social system that Plato does not reject completely but only modifies. The city, the section concludes, is not only to remain attached to the Greek culture it was born from but to strengthen the unity of Greece. Specifically, and to back up this view, this is evident throughout Plato's discussion of a number of concepts that are only tied and particular to his Greek context. Firstly, Plato's departure from his culture is overstated; secondly, he proposes the unity of Greece and the Greeks (through religion, war practices, and legislation), for example by using a number of demarcations to single out the Greek individual and nation from the rest of the world; and thirdly, Plato emphasises that this imagined organisation is to be designed uniquely for Greeks.

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[48] Morrow, *Plato's Cretan City*, pp. 591-2.
[49] *Lectures*, p. 183, and that Plato had "an ideal Sparta and an ideal Athens" in mind, Mumford, *The Story*, p. 31; Similarly, Barker repeats: "He has not, indeed, any notion of a universal brotherhood, or common human society, within which the State is contained, and by which its action is conditioned. Such an idea was impossible before the world-empires of Macedon and of Rome had done their work". *The Political Thought*, p. 307.
[50] This is usually thought to be an exclusively Greek practice. Additionally, Plato is also thought to follow the conventional Greek idea of a civic and organised community to be the only place to live well. Nettleship, *Lectures*, p. 5.
[51] *Republic*, I, 327ab.

Firstly, it is noticeable that Plato's departure from the local Athenian perspective and his universal outlook is at best overstated. He does, indeed, address his interlocutors by saying "but isn't justice human virtue?",[52] yet this is only by way of a reminder. Here, there is a need to remind the Athenians of their place in the general human order, set against narrow local understandings. Similarly, and in respect to the proposal's universality, if Plato's proposal is seen as unconventional, it only draws upon the then existing universal values as the basis for his arguments and proposals to amend laws, and the *Republic* does not bring forward new values or standards for the world. Further, Plato's use and application of universal themes only serve to stress the *Republic*'s particularity and not vice versa. Plato searches for commonalities to correct concepts and draw new laws, and he borrows from the Greek and sometimes barbarian (e.g., types of cities) concepts such as law, education, property, marriage, and family and alters them to suit his new city. Plato himself answers those who argue that the "founding of a just city concerns all human beings" by stating that the city he envisions is meant to be particularly Greek: "won't the city you are founding be Greek?"[53] Plato further acknowledges the difference between Greek and non-Greek affairs and matters, rebuking young philosophers who believe otherwise and think themselves "competent to mind the business of both Greeks and barbarians".[54] The 'human' justice, which Plato attempted to persuade his interlocutors to consider rather than their narrower understanding, is tamed to serve the *Republic's* locality and particularity. That is they do not trespass the boundaries of the *Republic*, neither the Greek nor the world, as the city is designed to remain single. He is not recreating the order of Greece and drawing upon a clean slate, as he does for the *Republic*.[55] It is also worth noting that even the name of the city that Plato uses in the *Republic* – Kallipolis, or "Beautiful city" – evokes a contemporary Greek town with a similar name.[56] Plato also heavily draws and builds on familiar existing local tools, including music, gymnastics, and most importantly myth, the latter of which he readily uses whenever reason dysfunctions.

Secondly, the *Republic* not only does not undermines the Hellenistic political and cultural system, but attempts to consolidate its unity and distinction in the world. He carries

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[52] Ibid, I, 335c.
[53] Ibid, V, 470de.
[54] Ibid, VI, 494bd.
[55] Ibid, VI, 501a.
[56] Cited in Bloom, *Republic*, p. 465.

out a number of demarcations that would lead to the separation of his city from Greece and at the next level the separation of Greece from the rest of the world. The city is built from scratch on a carefully selected location, which is chosen on Greek territory and near existing Greek cities,[57] although he had the option to locate it on an island or on others coasts away from Greece. This makes any accusation of his utopia subjecting foreign lands without considering ethical and property rights irrelevant in the context of the *Republic*. After walling his *Republic* from all other Greeks, the citizens are to be aware that "the Greek stock is with respect to itself its own and akin, with respect to the barbaric, foreign and alien".[58] He extends the family relationship used to describe the relationship of the citizens of the *Republic* to be the basis of the relationship of all Greeks, emphasising their unity with the rest of Greeks: "won't they be lovers of the Greeks? Won't they consider Greece their own and hold the common holy places along with the other Greeks?"[59] Conflicts among Greeks are to be labelled differently to those with other nations:

> Then when Greeks fight with barbarians and barbarians with Greeks, we'll assert they are at war and are enemies by nature, and this hatred must be called war; while when Greeks do any such thing to Greeks, we'll say that they are by nature friends, but in this case Greece is sick and factious, and this kind of hatred must be called faction.[60]

Plato puts this motto into practice, specifically through the war protocols. The outcome of this ethnic or national demarcation is the prohibition of slavery of Greeks in particular, and only allowing the slavery of the barbarians and the prohibition of the destruction of the Greek countryside and cities. In short, the existing forms of revenge and war among the Greeks should be transformed outside the Hellenistic world: "Toward the barbarians they must behave as the Greeks do now toward one another".[61] He continues:

> Therefore, as Greeks, they won't ravage Greece or burn houses, nor will they agree that in any city all are their enemies - men, women, and children - but that there are always a few enemies who are to blame for the differences. And, on all these grounds, they won't be willing to ravage lands or tear down houses, since the many are friendly; and they'll keep up

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[57] Greeks began to migrate from the mainland to islands and coasts in Asia Minor from c.1000. Rhodes, *A History of the Classical Greek World*, p. 2. However Plato chose to stay on the Greek mainland rather than escape to an island near or away from Greece.

[58] *Republic*, V, 470 c; this is also repeated in the *Laws*: "The tribal unity, the similarity of language and laws, since they imply a sharing of the sacred things and all such matters, create a certain friendship; but then again, they do not easily accept laws and regimes different from their own". IV, 708 b.

[59] *Republic*, V, 470 e; The Greek cities usually attributed themselves to common ancestors, or sometimes deities; Athenians called themselves "the folk of Athena". Barker, *The Political Thought*, p. 28. This seems to justify why Plato emphasises the family and tribe analogy to include all Greece.

[60] *Republic*, V, 470cd.

[61] Ibid, V, 471b.

the quarrel until those to blame are compelled to pay the penalty by the blameless ones who are suffering.[62]

This distinction that Plato draws between Greeks and barbarians is made by nature, and hence is natural, as Stanley Rosen believes, and which is "ingrained in our very mode of existence a preference for those who generated us, and whom we generate in turn".[63] Here, Plato is not drawing new borders but only highlighting what he believes to be the natural ones. Nevertheless, Plato stresses unity for a nation at the time, without a unified political order and with many differences and factions. Greece was a nation of city states in a world of different political orders, mainly comprised of powerful empires such as the Persians. This sense of unity was vital to the very existence of Greece that Plato encourages. Similarly, he uses religion to strengthen this unity further. For religious matters, the Republic is to follow the traditional interpretations[64] and other deeply rooted conventions: "Foundings of temples, sacrifices, and whatever else belongs to the care of gods, demons, and heroes; and further, burial of the dead and all the services needed to keep those in that other place gracious".[65] The same sense is repeated in the *Laws*. As such, religion seems to be the most visible element that distinguished the Greeks from other peoples.

Finally, and as Plato attempts to match the findings of the city's functions "to a single man",[66] he specifically admits that it would be a Greek man. He repeats: "won't the city you are founding be Greek?"[67] Accordingly, people that match this city can only be Greek and born of a Greek land. Plato continues to distinguish Greece from the rest of the world, as he believes that the special uniqueness of Greece has influenced the nature of its people, as other places do to their citizens.[68] This gives the Greek individual more potential to perceive such a city:

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[62] Ibid, V, 471b.

[63] Rosen, *Plato's Republic*, p. 197.

[64] *Republic*, IV, 427b.

[65] Ibid, IV, 427bc. He also adds, "from them are to be sent out the officers in charge of each mission to observe the common sacrifices, spectacles, and other sacred ceremonies shared in common with the Greeks, *Republic*, XII, 947a; and that "no one of intelligence will try to change what has been laid down by Delphi or Dodona or Ammon, or what has been ordained by the ancient sayings". *Republic*, V, 738d.

[66] Ibid, IV, 434e.

[67] Ibid, V, 470e.

[68] The exact concept is repeated in *Timaeus*:
The way things are organized and set up here was in fact formerly the way the goddess arranged things among you Athenians, when she founded your state at the time I'm talking about. She chose the region in which you had been born because she realized that the temperate climate there would produce men of outstanding intelligence. Because the goddess loves both war and wisdom, she chose this region as the

> It would be ridiculous if someone should think that the spiritedness didn't come into the cities from those private men who are just the ones imputed with having this character, such as those in Thrace, Scythia, and pretty nearly the whole upper region; or the love of learning, which one could most impute to our region, or the love of money, which one could affirm is to be found not least among the Phoenicians and those in Egypt.[69]

As Plato signifies the Greek from the rest of the world, it might be asked whether he believes that Greeks are a step ahead of other nations. Does he share the traditional public view of cultural superiority over the barbarians?[70] It has been argued that Plato "clearly believes that the best situation [for a utopia] will be to found the city in Greece and with Greeks".[71] Nettleship states that "it is impossible" to decide whether this is so, although he concludes that Plato "certainly saw in what he believed to be the best forms of society in Greece some imperfect approximations to what human society might be".[72] Bhikhu Parekh states that Plato viewed the Greeks as "a superior people to the Egyptians and the Phoenicians for, unlike the latter who took an instrumental and practical view of knowledge, they desired and pursued it for its own sake and valued 'theory' or pure contemplation".[73] Indeed, Plato seems inconsistent in his view about this matter. For example, in the story of Atlantis, he articulates that the Greeks are descendants of "the noblest and most heroic race".[74] However, elsewhere he indicates that people's special differences do not necessarily undermine their philosophical or political potential and capacity for attaining their own utopias:

> Therefore, if, in the endless time that has gone by, there has been some necessity for those who are on the peaks of philosophy to take charge of a city, or there even now is such a necessity in some barbaric place somewhere far outside of our range of vision, or will be later, in this case we are ready to do battle for the argument.[75]

Also, and in contrast with what has been argued above, Plato shows that there are nations that are more advanced than Greece in certain disciplines. For example, in the *Laws* he praises the Egyptian education system as more advanced than that of the Greek:

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one that would produce men who would most closely resemble herself and founded a city there first. 24, cd.

[69] *Republic*, IV, 436a.

[70] Greeks have been conscious or thought to enjoy the advantages of "civil society against a barbarian who does not". Eric Alfred Havelock, *The Greek Concept of Justice: From Its Shadow in Homer to Its Substance in Plato* (Cambridge: Harvard UP, 1978), p. 80.

[71] Rosen, *Plato's Republic*, p. 140.

[72] Nettleship, *Lectures*, p. 301.

[73] *Rethinking Multiculturalism*, p. 20.

[74] *Timaeus*, 23c.

[75] *Republic*, VI, 499c.

> So one should declare that the free men must learn, in each of these subjects, as much as the whole mob of children in Egypt learns along with their reading lessons. In the first place, as regards calculations, lessons have been invented even for little children that involve them in play and pleasure as they learn.[76]

Similarly, in story of *Atlantis*, he praises the Egyptian priests for being experts in history.[77] In the *Statesman*, which came later, he "digresses to reject arbitrary divisions of humanity into Greeks and barbarians".[78] For Plato, then, the distinction is emphasised to remind the Greeks of their duty to each other and not to place them above other nations. It is also difficult to imagine Plato who did not visualise his city as a model for the Greeks to have had the world in his mind. The *Republic*'s walls, which contain its philosophers, do not produce missionaries even to their Greek kin, and the demarcation of Greece from the rest of the world makes it twice as difficult for it to be observed by foreigners. In other words, the *Republic* is meant to be an ideal city in and for the Greek world rather than an ideal Greek city for the entire world.

The Organisation of the *Republic*

As Plato proceeds to embody justice in a city, two cities are projected. Initially a city is described that comes into being to fulfil basic needs; or a city of "utmost necessity" which "would be made of four or five men".[79] For Plato, a city "comes into being because each of us isn't self-sufficient",[80] which can barely be seen to have any utopian motives whatsoever.[81] His interlocutors Adeimantus and Glaucon, however, are not convinced of the austerity that results from this city and Plato reluctantly brings about a more modified version:

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[76] *Laws,* VII, 819b.

[77] *Timaeus*, 21d.

[78] Cited in Pappas, *Routledge Philosophy*, pp 81-82.

[79] *Republic*, II, 369d.

[80] Ibid, II 369b.

[81] Although Lewis Mumford's essay rightly describes the relation between utopia and the city, his argument is that "indeed the first utopia was the city itself", 'Utopia, the City and the Machine', p. 3, this is not supported by what Plato deems the reason of the founding of the first city. The finger counted citizens of the first city gather only to satisfy and secure their basic needs, and he believes there is not "another beginning to the founding of a city". *Republic*, II, 369, b. The best city for Plato, if we assume it has been proposed seriously, is not established for people seeking the best system or to lead a happy or best possible life.

> We are, as it seems, considering not only how a city, but also a luxurious city, comes into being. Perhaps that's not bad either. For in considering such a city too, we could probably see in what way justice and injustice naturally grow in cities. Now, the true city is in my opinion the one we just described - a healthy city, as it were. But, if you want to, let's look at a feverish city, too. Nothing stands in the way. For these things, as it seems, won't satisfy some, or this way of life, but couches, tables, and other furniture will be added, and, of course, relishes, perfume, incense, courtesans and cakes - all sorts of all of them. And, in particular, we can't still postulate the mere necessities we were talking about at first - houses, clothes, and shoes; but painting and embroidery must also be set in motion; and gold, ivory, and everything of the sort must be obtained. Isn't that so?[82]

This modified version is described as "luxurious" and "feverish", and commonly referred to as the second city,[83] versus the first "healthy" one which is rejected. The first city, however, is usually thought to be insignificant and thus creates a number of suggestions in this regard.[84] His interlocutors find it difficult to consider it as a city, perhaps because it clashes with their understanding of a city.[85] Critics who consider the first city as insignificant to the argument seem to be logical, for two reasons that we can add to their argument. Firstly, in the *Laws*, Plato dismisses such cities as relics of the past or utopias brought about without toil, and suggests that the conditions necessary to bring about these utopias are no longer at hand:

> First because they were delighted with one another and full of goodwill on account of the desolation. Then again, food was not something they fought over. At that time most lived from herding, and there was no lack of pasture land.[86]

Additionally, Plato believes that even in the second city, which is much larger than the first, it is very difficult to find justice, which is an agreed aim of this fictional city construction:

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[82] *Republic*, II, 372e, 373a.

[83] The idea of the second best city also appears in the *Laws*.

[84] Some writers believe that Plato was not serious about this city in the first place. Julia Annas, in her *Introduction to Plato's Republic*, states that there is no place for this city in the work's moral argument (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1981), p. 78. I. M. Crombie believes that it is not a genuine start. *An Examination of Plato's Doctrines* (London: Routledge & Kegan Paul, 1962), p. 89. Also Bernard Bosanquet concludes that: The "city of pigs […] does not therefore seem to be Plato's first ideal, as some have thought; it has rather the appearance of a satire on contemporary cynicism". *A Companion to Plato's Republic for English Readers* (London: Rivingtons, 1895), p. 84. It is also thought to be a criticism of the Stoic/Cynic utopias. This is as "the notion that Stoic/Cynic Utopian thought was purely individualistic and anarchistic". Doyne Dawson *Cities*, p. 3. We can note, however, that the first city can be seen as the first human gathering that is gradually developed later and determined by and under various influences. Here, the interlocutor attempts to develop it into a luxurious city.

[85] In its Classical form, Kurt Raaflaub says that a city is "a community of persons, of place or territory, of cults, customs and laws, and capable of (full or partial) self-administration (which presupposes institutions and meeting places)". 'Homeric Society', in *A New Companion to Homer*, ed. by Ian Morris and Barry Powell (New York, N.Y.: Brill, 1997), pp. 624-48 (p. 630). This, therefore, is not compatible with Plato's simple proposal of his first city.

[86] *Laws*, III, 679a.

"So then, Glaucon, we must, like hunters, now station ourselves in a circle around the thicket and pay attention so that justice doesn't slip through somewhere and disappear into obscurity".[87] He continues:

> your city would now be founded. In the next place, get yourself an adequate light somewhere; and look yourself - and call in your brother and Polemarchus and the others - whether we can somehow see where the justice might be.[88]

As it would almost be impossible to grasp it in a much smaller city like the first one he proposes, Plato turns to the larger 'luxurious' city for the bulk of his philosophical discussion, to which the first city was only an introduction. However, he wanted to place the modification upon their request rather than himself.

Plato is obliged to add another function to this second city, beside the first which was to prove justice and how it functions (as mentioned earlier), and that is whether a second ideal city which is luxurious and lavish can be sustained. Plato believes that these qualities - or vices - are what drive cities to expand at the expense of others. Now "there's need of more citizens than four for the provisions of which we were speaking".[89] Then "the city must be made bigger again. This healthy one isn't adequate any more, but must already be gorged with a bulky mass of things, which are not in cities because of necessity".[90] The objection Plato raises against the luxurious city is, in the first place, that they lead to phenomena like imperialism and colonialism in later stages of their development, as they are obliged to satisfy lavish wants:

> And the land, of course, which was then sufficient for feeding the men who were then, will now be small although it was sufficient. Or how should we say it?
> "Like that," he said.
> Then must we cut off a piece of our neighbors' land, if we are going to have sufficient for pasture and tillage, and they in turn from ours, if they let themselves go to the unlimited acquisition of money, overstepping the boundary of the necessary?[91]

So Plato's attempt to limit the desire for luxuries, etc. is interpreted as a method for limiting the desire/need to expand. However, and as he fails to proceed with his initial proposal, he is obliged to build the city based on special criteria to ensure that it does not grow out of control. These measures are put in place to guarantee what is born as the second city: "If,

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[87] *Republic*, IV, 432c.
[88] Ibid, IV, 427bc.
[89] Ibid, II, 370cd.
[90] Ibid, II, 373b c.
[91] Ibid, II, 373de.

therefore, any city ought to be designated stronger than pleasures, desires, and itself, then this one must be so called".[92] However, it is still ideal compared with its Greek sisters.

Relevant to the question of this chapter, this section attempts to investigate if these measures and criteria put in place prove that the nature of this utopian city is against colonisation and imperialism. The latter two concepts are treated individually and in light of the Greek context and not as later developments of their meaning and as described in the other chapters.

I.   Imperialism and the *Republic*

Plato rejects any form of imperialism over other cities, as can be concluded from the measures he put in place to limit the relations with other cities. Unlike the control of virtue over evil inside the city, his system is not allowed to govern Greece as a whole. Although Plato articulates that his city is the best among other Greek cities, and that there is one form of virtue and many forms of vice in regimes and souls,[93] the *Republic* is not designed to exercise any power, guidance, or control over other cities based on this ideal. There is no intention to build a city at the expense of the other cities, which is in parallel to the rule that no class is to enjoy happiness at the expense of other classes inside the city. From the beginning, Plato imposes a limited size and does not include any unnecessary land:

> Therefore, I said, this would also be the fairest boundary for our rulers; so big must they make the city, and, bounding off enough land so that it will be of that size, they must let the rest go.
> What boundary? he said.
> I suppose this one, I said, up to that point in its growth at which it's willing to be one, let it grow, and not beyond.[94]

The size is detailed again in the *Laws*, which states that it should be relative to the size of the nearby cities, not harm them, and defend them against any harm:

> Now the only correct way to determine the adequate size of the population is by consideration of the land and the neighboring cities. The land should be large enough to support a certain number of people living moderately, and no more. This number should be large enough to enable them both to defend themselves, if they suffer an injustice from their neighbors, and to be in a position to give at least some aid to their neighbors if someone

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[92] Ibid, IV, 431cd.
[93] Ibid, IV, 445cd.
[94] Ibid, IV, 223b.

else does them an injustice. When we have looked over the territory and the neighbors we will decide on these things in deed as well as in speech.[95]

The city is designed, through this policy, to preserve the Greek city-state system.[96] It is the duty of the rulers to be competent in managing their affairs with 'other cities'.[97] Even in case of war and enmity with other cities, the *Republic* would not take control over conquered cities; instead, it would be handed to the poor classes of the defeated city.[98] Further measures are introduced to make sure the city will remain under this original design and condition. The guardians, the most important citizens of the city, are not allowed to "possess any private property except for what's entirely necessary",[99] and they depend for their living on other citizens, which allows them to ignore the pursuit of wealth.

Their mobility outside the city is also restricted and they are confined within the boundaries of the city, "so, if they should wish to make a private trip away from home, it won't even be possible for them".[100] This obviously minimises the threat of other cities, which might seem more attractive, and prevents the danger of them getting attracted/seduced by luxuries available elsewhere and bringing them back to the *Republic*. Plato constructs a perfect psyche for his guardians by maximising their moral potential, yet he strips them of any practice of superiority, domination, and subjugation of others both inside and outside the city. It is questioned whether Plato is being unfair to his guardians as he hardly makes these men (and women) happy.[101] He replies that "in founding the city we are not looking to the exceptional happiness of anyone group among us but, as far as possible, that of the city as a whole".[102] Here, Plato seems to depend on the traditional Greek understanding of justice,[103] which might justify why his interlocutors make no

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[95] *Laws*, V, 737d.

[96] Plato is aware that there are a number of large Greek cities that take advantage of the smaller cities (*Laws*, I, 638b). He also mentions the fact that large cities are generally stronger than smaller ones. Both Athens and Sparta, for example, were very much larger than other cities, and probably Plato is alluding to them. Despite this, he limits the number of guardians at no more than one thousand. *Republic*, IV, 423, ab.

[97] *Republic*, IV, 428d.

[98] Ibid, IV, 422ab.

[99] Ibid, III, 416de.

[100] Ibid, IV, 420a; and in the *Laws*, too. It is important for him that there are no nearby neighbouring cities. *Laws*, IV, 704d; XII, 950d.

[101] *Republic*, IV, 419a.

[102] Ibid, IV, 420b.

[103] As Nettleship writes, "the dominant idea of justice in Greek thought was some sort of equality; that is, that everyone should have, not actually the same amount, but a fair proportion, measured according to his position in life or by some other standard". *Lectures*, p. 36. Or perhaps Plato also draws on earlier thought

further comment. Further, through these measures, he does not want them to feel special or better than others having economic power beside their military position. The *Republic* does not attempt to achieve dominance or hegemony over the neighbouring cities through the breeding of its master race of guardians. Plato mostly considers how they can contain the city and how the city contains them, or how they guard the city and how the city guards them.

Furthermore, he seeks to brainwash the guardians – and indeed all citizens – of the city into thinking that it is impossible for them to abandon it for a better or a new place. The guardians are to believe that this particular piece of land is where they were created from and something they must defend with their own lives. Additionally, the myth serves to create a family bond that unites all citizens:

> And now, as though the land they are in were a mother and nurse, they must plan for and defend it, if anyone attacks, and they must think of the other citizens as brothers and born of the earth.[104]

Although he criticised other poets for the creation of inappropriate myths, here Plato uses the power of myth to tie the guardians to a walled and particular land. Plato utilises a powerful component of the Greek culture – "Greece was fundamentally a culture of myth"[105] – to restrain his guardians from incorporating more lands from outside the original walls of their city. In addition to the myth, it has been argued that utopia itself has the power to make a place sacred and legitimate, thereby creating a new community in certain territories.[106] Plato relies on the power of the myth and not the one of utopia. In doing so, however, he denies the gradual conclusion of justice to this generation similar to the long discussion he had with his interlocutors.

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and as Barker describes: "the natural tendency of early Greek thought was one which accepted the order of the State and the rules which it enforced without murmur and without question". *The Political Thought*, p. 63. Plato believes that he is fair and that "we must let nature assign each group its share of happiness". *Republic*, IV, 421c.

[104] *Republic*, III, 414de.

[105] Ada Cohen, 'Mythic Landscapes of Greece', in *The Cambridge Companion to Greek Mythology*, ed. by Roger D. Woodard (Cambridge: Cambridge UP, 2008), pp. 305-30 (p. 305). Plato uses myth to restrict the mobility among the classes: there is an oracle that says the city will be destroyed when an iron or bronze man is its guardian. *Republic*, III 415, a b.

[106] Anthony D. Smith, *Myths and Memories of the Nation* (Oxford: Oxford UP, 1999), p. 153.

It is to be asked, then, why Plato expresses this strong rejection to expansion and imperialism. Taylor, along with the majority of critics,[107] links this to the historical development of imperial Athens:

> To me it seems clear that, so far as Plato has any particular historical development before his mind, he is thinking of what Athens itself had been before the period of victory and expansion which made her an imperial city and the centre of a world-wide sea-borne commerce.[108]

Indeed, Plato criticises Athens' pursuit of imperialism not only in the *Republic* but in the *Laws*, *Timaeus*, and *Critias*, suggesting that it was in a moral and political deterioration. Likening it to the Persian Empire, he states:

> We've been led to speak about these things at greater length because of the investigation into the regime of the Persians. We find that they got worse year by year, and we claim the cause is this: by going too far in depriving the populace of freedom, and by bringing in more despotism than is appropriate, they destroyed the friendship and community within the city. Once this is corrupted, the policy of the rulers is no longer made for the sake of the ruled and the populace, but instead for the sake of their own rule; if they suppose just a little more will accrue to themselves each time, the rulers are willing to overturn cities and overturn and destroy with fire friendly nations, and as a result, they give and receive bitter, pitiless hatred.[109]

It is also commonly noted that Plato favoured the Spartan way of life (designed and based on ideals), foreign policy, and military education, which contrasted with the Athenian preoccupations of active foreign relations, democracy, and wealth accumulation. However, more insight is needed into what part of the Athenian imperialism Plato is criticising,[110] and whether he was completely against Athens in this regard. It might be concluded that this is not always the case.

Firstly, despite his negative image of the empire, Plato recognises that Athens seemed to have real allies and followers in the allied cities.[111] Further, Sparta did not free

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[107] Pierre Vidal-Naquet, *The Black Hunter: Forms of Thought and Forms of Society in the Greek World*, trans. by A. Szegedy-Maszak (Baltimore, MD: John Hopkins UP, 1998), p. 275; Rhodes, *A History of the Classical Greek World,* p. 7; Geoffrey de Ste Croix, 'The Character of the Athenian Empire', in *The Athenian Empire* ed. by Polly Low (Edinburgh: Edinburgh UP, 2008), pp. 232-276 (p. 232); George Klosko, *The Development of Plato's Political Theory*, 2nd edn (Oxford: Oxford UP, 2006), p. 8.

[108] A. E. Taylor, *Plato: The Man and His Work*, p. 274; he adds that Athens' pursuit of imperialism is its source of misfortune. p. 478.

[109] *Laws*, III, 697cd.

[110] For example, it is difficult to imagine that Plato completely supports the complaints made by other ally cities, as has been argued, of the authoritarian and centralised nature of Athens.

[111] One of Plato's Letters states: "The Athenians preserved their Empire for seventy years by acquiring citizens as friends in each city". Also, and despite the resentment against Athens, many preferred them over oligarchies and the Persians. Malcolm F. McGregor, *The Athenians and Their Empire* (Vancouver: University of British Columbia Press, 1987), p. 172.

all the league members from the tributes collected by Athens, but instead took over the dominant role.[112] Plato must have been aware of this fact, and it does not qualify Sparta to be considered as the saviour of Greece. Additionally, and most importantly, the Athenian Empire was established to defend Greece from the Persian threat, in co-leadership with Sparta, in which they succeeded for a time. The Empire building in itself, apart from what Athens conducted later, was felt to be necessary.[113] In principle, Plato encouraged a form of unity of Greece and under certain conditions. In this regard, it is essential to highlight how Plato portrays Ancient Athens and praises it for defending Greece and the world[114] from the threat of Atlantis:

> Once upon a time, then, they combined their forces and set out en masse to try to enslave in one swoop your part of the world, and ours, and all the territory this side of the strait. This was the occasion, Solon, when the resources of your city, its courage and strength, were revealed for all to see; it stood head and shoulders above all other states for its bravery and military expertise. At first it was the leader of the Greek cause, and then later, abandoned by everyone else and compelled to stand alone, it came to the very brink of disaster, but it overcame the invaders and erected a trophy, thereby preventing the enslavement of those who remained unenslaved this side of the boundaries of Heracles and unhesitatingly liberating all the rest.[115]

Again, in the *Laws* he portrays Athens as the saviour of Greece, and this time makes reference to the real war against the invading Persians:

> There are many things that went on during the war at that time that would be the occasion for someone's making unseemly accusations against Greece. And if one were to say that Greece defended itself, he would not be speaking correctly; had not the common resolution of the Athenians and the Lacedaimonians warded off the approaching slavery, the Greek races would by this time probably be all mixed together, and there would be barbarians among Greeks and Greeks among barbarians.[116]

In the *Laws,* it is an Athenian lawgiver who gives laws to the newly intended colony. So Plato still considers Athens to be the cultural and philosophical centre of Greece. This

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[112] The burden of the payment of tributes was introduced by the Athenians, which did not have precedents among the Greeks. Delian League members were not liberated but taken over by Sparta, and tributes were collected and "oligarchic constitutions were imposed". Rhodes, *A History of the Classical Greek World*, p. 176 and p. 204.

[113] Prior to Plato, "there were some, indeed, like Isocrates, who heard the call of Empire, and felt that Greece could not take 'its place in the world', or fulfil 'its mission in the East', unless some sort of national unity, possibly under some form of monarchy, were first of all established!". Barker, *The Political Thought*, p. 23.

[114] Their role is also appreciated by the Egyptians. The old man, from Egypt "used to tell us that long ago Athens had performed impressive and remarkable deeds". *Timaeus*, 20 e.

[115] *Timaeus*, 25bc.

[116] *Laws*, III, 693a.

echoes, what is mentioned in *Timaeus,* the long history and credit ancient Athens had that might still qualify it for this:

> But in fact there was a time, Solon, before the greatest and most destructive flood, when the city which is now Athens was outstandingly well governed in all respects, and was unrivalled at warfare too. The noblest achievements and the finest political institutions we've ever heard of on earth are attributed to it.[117]

On the other hand, the Athenian empire is usually assessed in the light of and as a predecessor of later empires, and their model of expansion. Moreover, there is little justice in this as the Athenian empire was exclusive to the Hellenic context, unlike most other empires before or after it. One example, usually less quoted than the Persian Empire, is the Egyptian Empire, which stretched into foreign lands with or without reason.[118] Plato must have been aware of these forms of empires when describing Atlantis, which contrasts with the Athenian description.[119]

So what exactly was Plato against, beside the fact that he thought Athens' expansionist trend was the source of its misfortune? The answer is that Plato warned against the injustice that necessarily accompanied imperialism, because he always had in mind his ideal: the original aim of establishing justice within the city. The suppression of other cities, he states, the subjugation of "cities and tribes of men", is to perpetrate "injustice perfectly".[120] Plato toils to free the *Republic* from precisely this injustice. He asks Thrasymachus: "Would you say that a city is unjust that tries to enslave other cities unjustly, and has reduced them to slavery, and keeps many enslaved to itself?"[121] Thrasymachus agrees that this would be "most perfectly unjust".[122] Plato expresses his view that it is the injustice, implanted and "naturally grow[n] in cities" through lust and

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[117] *Timaeus*, 23c.

[118] One historical document describes the Egyptian empire as follows:

A report brought to the king in his palace outlining the mustering of specific enemies, and their hostile intentions and initial actions. Immediately the king prepares for battle and the campaign commences. In other cases the purpose is said to be simply 'to enlarge the boundaries of Egypt', a ritual phrase which was applied to actions well within the regular sphere of Egyptian activity, or just for the king to 'give vent to his desires throughout the foreign lands'. Cited from B. J. Kemp, 'Imperialism and Empire in New Kingdom of Egypt (c. 1575-1087 BC.)', in *Imperialism in the Ancient World: The Cambridge University Research Seminar in Ancient History*, ed. by P. D. A. Garnsey and C. R. Whittaker (Cambridge: Cambridge UP, 1978), pp. 7-58 (pp. 11-12).

[119] Atlantis, as he describes, had "foreign territories" in their empire. *Critias*, 117a.

[120] *Republic*, I, 348d.

[121] Ibid*,* I, 351ab.

[122] Ibid*,* I, 351b.

luxury,[123] that is responsible for the unjust enslaving and conquering of other cities. The same idea is repeated in the story of Atlantis:

> On this island of Atlantis a great and remarkable dynasty had arisen, which ruled the whole island, many of the other islands, and parts of the mainland too. They also governed some of the lands here inside the strait — Libya up to the border with Egypt, and Europe up to Etruria.[124]

Plato's emphasis on "enslaving" other cities in the context of Athenian imperialism can be related to a number of actual practices against those allied cities that challenged the Athenian supremacy.[125] He was also against the continued expansion of large cities, believing that they usually take advantage of smaller cities.[126] Athens invoked unity as a pretext for imperialism, and for Plato unity can be achieved through other means. Plato's core is in the upbringing of each individual in contrast to Athens's attempt to be so and having the rest of Greece as periphery.

> So, as it seems, we've found other things for the guardians to guard against in every way so that these things never slip into the city without their awareness.
> What are they? [Replied Adeimantus]
> Wealth and poverty, I said, since the one produces luxury, idleness, and innovation, while the other produces illiberality and wrongdoing as well as innovation.[127]

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[123] Ibid, II, 372e.

[124] *Timaeus*, 25bc.

[125] The Athenians besieged Eion and Skyros and "their populations were enslaved and their territories were colonised by Athenian settlers. Next Athens compelled Carystus on Euboea to join the league; clearly, the 'voluntary' principle had had a very short run. Soon Naxos tried to withdraw from the league (the precise date is uncertain), only to be besieged and crushed by Athens. Naxos was the first allied city to be enslaved against established usage". Moses Finley, 'The Fifth-Century Athenian Empire: A Balance-Sheet', in *The Athenian Empire*, pp. 14-40 (p. 16).

[126] Athens is given as an example, among others, for exercising its power over smaller cities. *Laws*, I, 638b.

[127] *Republic*, IV, 421e; 422a.

II. Colonisation and the Republic [128]

The city is also designed to observe its original size and unity and hence there is no colonisation outside its original boundaries. It should remain and die as a single city among its Greek neighbours. Plato proposes other strict measures to keep the city's original boundaries and population size intact and guarantee its preservation. The guardians are responsible for keeping this balance of the city: "Therefore, we'll also set this further command on the guardians; to guard in every way against the city's being little or seemingly big; rather it should be sufficient and one".[129] This is mainly through a method of population control to make sure the city is "within the limits of the possible".[130] Here, Plato seems to prefer this method over other solutions like building a new colony or leaving the city to expand and grow in size like other cities among the Greeks and elsewhere. It seems, that such a belief in population control was not unique to Plato, as this method was known among the Greeks and especially used to eradicate children deemed physically unfit in Sparta and elsewhere.[131]

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[128] Colonisation in the Greek context should not be completely understood in the term's later meanings. Sometimes it is thought to mean emigration or an extension of a city as we understand from the process described in the *Republic* and the *Laws*. Still, Dawson is doubtful as he explains that, among other reasons, the polis might not have existed at "the time of the first colonies" to have extensions. *Cities*, p, 31. R. Osborne puts it into its contemporary context: "Only when we accept that settlement in the West was a product of a world in which many were constantly moving across the seas, where there was a rich fund of knowledge about the shores of the Mediterranean, their peoples, and what those peoples' likes and dislikes were, and where individuals and small groups out for their own gain from time to time came to believe that more or less permanent settlement on foreign shores was both in their immediate best interests and was sustainable – only then will we get rid of the spectres of over-population, land shortage, and states with commercial policies". 'Early Greek Colonization? The Nature of Greek Settlement', in *Archaic Greece: New Approaches and New Evidence*, ed. by N. N. Fisher and H. van Wees (London: Duckworth, 1998), pp. 251-69 (p. 269). However, we can still conclude that Plato meant it as an extension of a city. This, as he was aware of both practices as an extension (as described in the *Republic* and *Laws*), was also based on the fact that he was aware of the Spartans, who originally settled their city by conquering a native population, the Helots, who were forced into the subservient position of performing all productive labour. In the *Laws*, he mentions two types of colonisations: "Where one tribe from one land undertakes the new settlement" and "when a part of a city may be compelled to move to some foreign place". *Laws*, IV, 708b.

[129] *Republic*, IV, 423bc.

[130] Ibid, V, 460a; we note that the proposed city is not typically a Greek polis, which"would contain both rural and urban areas, generally a series of agricultural villages ringing a walled central city. These territories were, again, small and can be assessed quite accurately. Klosko, *The Development*, pp. 5-6. Yet, the *Republic* is composed of only one city.

[131] Alfred Eckhard Zimmern, *The Greek Commonwealth: Politics & Economics in Fifth-Century Athens*. 1922 (London: Forgotten Books, 2013), p. 339; it was only prohibited at Thebes and due to the threat of depopulation, as he adds, p. 335.

Initially, and as mentioned above, Plato mentions the risk of fighting neighbours over land where it ceases to be enough for the maintenance of the population of both cities. Departing from this, a number of confusing interpretations are presented. For example, A. E. Taylor comments on why Plato thinks that over-population leads to war and not colonisation as a less aggressive solution. He explains:

> In the first place, peaceful colonisation of derelict territories had never been a feasible procedure for a Greek city. The founders of the ancient and famous cities we call the 'Greek colonies' had regularly had to wrest their sites from previous occupants not much inferior to themselves in culture. There was no America or Australia in the Mediterranean basin. And in the second, Socrates knows his countrymen and is well aware that a Greek 'surplus population' would not be likely to transport itself across the seas in quest of a new home so long as there was a fair chance of a successful inroad on its neighbours. He is, as he says, not discussing the morality of the proceeding; he is merely noting that it is what the city would, in fact, do.[132]

Seth Benardete, on the other hand, insists that the original city (the first city) of Plato was corrupted by Glaucon, who insisted on the provision of luxurious items (the second city) to its citizens. He writes that "we do not know whether in fact expansion leads to luxury or the desire for luxury to expansion" from Glaucon's perspective, yet Plato's original city is corrupted once and for all. [133]

However, Benardete ignores the fact that Plato abandons this option, that is to "cut off a piece" of land, when the nature of the *Republic* develops and its rules are set in more detail. He soon passes into the second city and discusses its defence and containment rather than fighting for necessities as he describes. Further, Taylor's conclusion that Greece preferred the occupation of the already established cities within Greece than peaceful colonisation is also not accurate. Plato himself proposes establishing a new colony in the *Laws*, and through peaceful means.[134] In addition, it was still a time where colonies were spreading all over Greece as most historians believe.[135] In fact, a few centuries before Plato,

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[132] Taylor, *Plato: The Man and His Work*, p. 274.

[133] *Socrates' Second Sailing on Plato's Republic* (Chicago, Ill.: Chicago UP, 1989), pp. 53-4.

[134] It was, however, to be built on the ruins of a Greek one. Describing the intended locality of the new colony, Plato writes: "For an ancient migration from the place has left the land deserted for an incalculably long time". *Laws*, IV, 704d.

[135] Kenneth Royce Moore, *Plato, Politics and a Practical Utopia, Social Constructivism and Civic Planning in the Laws* (New York, N.Y.: Continuum, 2012), p. 6; Morrow's study also concludes that colonisation was "less evident in Plato's century than it had been in earlier days, but still regarded as the best way to deal with a surplus of population". *Plato's Cretan City*, p. 3; also Barker, *The Political Thought*, p. 43; and Mumford, *The Story*, p. 30; Zimmern writes: "The stream of State-aided emigration never wholly dried up; there was never an age when no colonies were being sent out, from the first rush of the early navigators down to the great revival of the colonizing impulse under the inspiration of

the Greek settlements rounded the Mediterranean and Black seas.[136] While he does not allow colonisation in the *Republic*, he presents a different view in the *Laws* and allows colonisation to solve over-population, which does not lead to war.

The question, then, is why it is important for Plato to have his city remain single and oppose colonisation in the *Republic*, yet allow it, albeit reluctantly, in the *Laws*.[137] Plato lived in a world where the only means to keep the city strong and alive was to organise it based on conquest and colonisation. This could be answered in a number of ways. Plato did not see colonisation as an appropriate solution to overpopulation. Most importantly, in the *Laws*, Plato still encourages birth control, suggests an optimal (and limited) number of residents, and hints that the problem of overpopulation still would not be permanently solved by establishing new colonies, as pasture would not be enough to support people and raise animals.[138] This is in contrast with some utopian thinkers that preceded him,[139] in addition to the convention of Greek migration to new settlements outside their homeland. He also adds a more practical solution in the hopes of avoiding colonisation, which would enlarge the geographical size of the city. The size of Magnesia is significantly large and supports 5,040 citizen families, and as such it has been criticised to be superficially large.[140] Further, the nature of the city does not allow its expansion beyond that which preserves its unity, neither in size nor in population.[141] Plato is strictly against any 'evil' in the city that "splits it and makes it many instead of one" and stresses that

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Alexander". *The Greek Commonwealth*, p. 331; Plato, it is believed, had first-hand knowledge of a number of these colonies. Debra Nails, *The People of Plato: A Prosopography of Plato and Other Socratics* (Indianapolis, Ind.: Hackett, 2002), p. 281; and Klosko, *The Development*, p. 141.

[136] Dawson, *Cities*, p. 31.

[137] He writes: "But our method of purification is one of the gentler—something like this: those who, because they lack food, show themselves ready to follow men who lead the have-nots in an attack on the property of the haves will be looked upon as a disease growing within the city; they will be sent away in as gentle a manner as possible, in an expulsion that bears the euphemistic name 'colonisation'". *Laws*, V, 736a.

[138] *Laws*, III, 679a.

[139] For example, Phaleas of Chalcedon (4th century BC) saw that "civil dissension was because of economic strains and one way to solve it was in the foundation of new colonies based on equal property rights". Cited from Barker, *The Political Thought*, p. 92.

[140] For example, Aristotle in the *Politics* comments on the impracticality of its size: "We cannot overlook the fact that such a number would require the territory of Babylon". *Politics*, trans. by E. Barker (Oxford: Oxford UP, 1995), p. 1265, a. However, historical records show that this is overstated and the city is, although larger than most other Greek cities, still smaller than Athens and Sparta. Kenneth Moore, *Plato, Politics and a Practical Utopia*, p. 38.

[141] Unity for him is so important that he sacrifices the family unit and unity and other values to observe it.

which "binds it together and makes it one".[142] Early in the *Republic*, Plato sets the rules that the guardians must observe for the city to be always "up to that point in its growth at which it's willing to be one, let it grow, and not beyond".[143] He describes how overpopulation and a life of luxury would lead to disputes and conflicts.

III.   **<u>Doomed Fate of the *Republic*</u>**

The fate of Plato's state is more certain than its birth, since although Plato doubts its existence, he knows how it would collapse. It is a surprise for readers that Plato's city, at the end and after all this toil, all these innovative structures of a city that is perceived to be good, is destined to degenerate. Unfortunately, the causes of its demise are integral and ingrained, and thus could not be solved despite all these safeguards against alteration of the system or the expansion of the city. For Plato, when it comes into practice, degeneration necessarily occurs with the coming generations. He could not battle that which he claims to understand, which is the psychology of the soul, despite his tripartite division of the society in alignment with the types of souls as he believes (Guardian-reason, Auxiliaries-will, and the third class of people representing appetite) and maintaining it through education and censorship.[144] This proves that what matters for Plato is what the city stands for ('justice'), and not the existence of the city itself or the growth of its power. Sometimes the determined end is not highlighted by Plato's critics, as they tend to prioritise the plan for permanence, since "the happy ending is a timeless serenity" for utopian thinkers as is claimed.[145] Sometimes, the plan seems too good to collapse so easily.[146] One reason for its decay, which supports the argument of this chapter, is Plato's insistence on the unity of the city and preventing it from creating new colonies or from expanding. The fate is certain as Plato perceives its citizens giving birth more than the limits permissible, and once it does so it

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[142] *Republic*, V, 462ab.

[143] Ibid, IV, 423bc.

[144] In fact, his definition of justice is basically everyone and every element (in society, and mind) accepting their proper place in this hierarchy.

[145] Isaiah Berlin, *The Crooked Timber of Humanity*, p. 44; Popper expressed the same thoughts.

[146] Myles Burnyeat writes: "the non-existence of the ideal city is a fact of history, not of metaphysics". 'Utopia and Fantasy: The Practicability of Plato's Ideally Just City', in *Plato 2: Ethics, Politics, Religion, and the Soul*, ed. by Gail Fine (Oxford: Oxford UP, 1999), pp. 297–308 (p. 297).

will no longer be the *Republic* and will degenerate into an evil city. Glaucon asks how the city would degenerate into one of the evil types, to which Plato responds: "A city so composed is hard to be moved. But, since for everything that has come into being there is decay, not even a composition such as this will remain for all time",[147] continuing:

> Although they are wise, the men you educated as leaders of the city will nonetheless fail to hit on the prosperous birth and barrenness of your kind with calculation aided by sensation, but it will pass them by, and they will at some time beget children when they should not.[148]

Another reason for the decay is the careless selection of the guardians with less strict original division of "gold and silver and bronze and iron",[149] which results in the unfit ascending to the higher echelons:

> Each of these two races, the iron and bronze, pulled the regime toward money-making and the possession of land, houses, gold, and silver; while the other two, the gold and the silver - not being poor but rich by nature - led the souls toward virtue and the ancient establishment. Struggling and straining against one another, they came to an agreement on a middle way: they distributed land and houses to be held privately, while those who previously were guarded by them as free friends and supporters they then enslaved and held as serfs and domestics; and they occupied themselves with war and with guarding against these men.[150]

Here, Plato seems consciously to relate to what Josiah Ober describes as "the absence of a steep political hierarchy" in ancient Greece. This "was culturally remarkable; it was not typical of the contemporary neighbouring civilizations of Egypt, Anatolia, and western Asia".[151] Plato, then, was faced with two frontiers.[152] The first was the Greek culture, which he stretched to its utmost and that could contain his imagined proposal and maintain it at least for a few generations. The other frontier that failed him was human nature, with its lust for "money-making and the possession of land, houses, gold, and silver",[153] which would prevail after and despite all the training and efforts made to perfect it. This is exactly where Sir Thomas More both continues and concludes. Similarly, Plato also draws on

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[147] *Republic*, VII, 546a.
[148] Ibid, VII, 546bc.
[149] Ibid, VII, 546b.
[150] Ibid, VII, 546bc.
[151] Ober, *Political Dissent in Democratic Athens*, p. 4.
[152] To borrow Louis Marin's term 'two frontiers'. Marin referred to frontiers that define and limit utopia and the frontiers that are created by the utopian imagination. 'Frontiers of Utopia: Past and Present', *Critical Inquiry*, 19: 3 (1993), pp. 397-420.
[153] *Republic*, VIII, 547b.

another failed utopia, Atlantis, with its story of violent downfall and poetic justice,[154] but the cases are the same. Plato's *Republic* strived to defend and extend the Hellenistic city-state system that would soon collapse under King Philip of Macedon, ending the polis as was known to the Greek world. The polis, against Philip's will, would soon become an empire and a world state under his son Alexander.

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[154] Plato's description is that: "Sometime later appalling earthquakes and floods occurred, and in the course of a single, terrible day and night the whole fighting-force of your city sank all at once beneath the earth, and the island of Atlantis likewise sank beneath the sea and vanished". *Timaeus*, 25d.

Chapter Two: *Utopia and the Law of Nature*

Recent readings of Sir Thomas More's *Utopia* (1516) have been mainly resistant readings, a radical turn from the traditional criticism, and mainly focus on its references and relation to the discovery of the New World and its colonisation. The focus is particularly on the Utopians' practise of colonisation including driving the 'natives' from their lands and populating it with Utopians who can better exploit and benefit from it. While many studies have attempted to defend the genre from its traditional critics, doing so from this principally post-colonial perspective has been only briefly and infrequently attempted. This chapter attempts to set these criticisms against More's text and the overall Utopians' practises and views related to this issue of colonisation. To determine the validity of these criticisms, they are isolated into three main sources and impulses that lie behind them. Firstly, that More's text is an invitation to the English (and Europeans in general) to colonise the New World, secondly that it is a justification of the civilising of 'backward nations', and thirdly that it is a desire for the establishment of a British empire. These are discussed argued not to reflect what *Utopia* is, and followed by a proposal of what *Utopia* is. The chapter shows that most of these claims have little support from the text and are frequently exaggerated. The argument here is that *Utopia* is More's particular innovative understanding of natural law. This law justifies this action of seizing others' lands, which is under criticism. This law limits the possibility of planting colonies for a sole purpose and is not morally or typically endorsed by the Utopians. Still, it contends that this law of nature governs all other practices of the Utopians and is not invented as a pretext of this action alone nor is it justified by the *terra nullius* or empty land principle that developed in the following century. The chapter also illustrates that *Utopia* in no way approves ideas of civilising the natives or calls for expanding into an empire.

Utopia

While there has always been some utopian thinking embedded in the consciousness of European intellectuals, only few utopian visions produced after Plato. One of the few utopian literature is *Cicero's De Republica* (54- 51 BC).[1] Christianity, apart from the medieval myth of Cockaigne, dominated the development of utopianism through the Middle Ages with its utopian elements of 'earthly paradise', 'millennium' and 'heaven'. A chief example would be St. Augustine's *City of God* which ironically doubts the conception of a heaven on earth. Another form of utopianism was the monastic orders, with rules designed to create ideal commonwealths. Examples include, The Rule of St. Benedict and The Rule of St. Francis. A spate of secular utopias initiated by Thomas More restored and continued Plato's tradition of imagining utopia as a tool to reform the state. Despite the growth of geographical knowledge, More continued to imagine his utopia as an island in a little corner of the world. The emergence of the tradition coincided with Luther's reformation and the discovery of the New World. More's utopia is a wish for the reordering and stabilisation of society.

More's *Utopia*, which was originally written in Latin, is divided into two books. The first was written subsequent to the second and serves as a background of the contemporary social, political, and economic conditions of Europe, with a particular focus on England. The second book describes a community that was visited by a fictional traveller who only returned to narrate its marvellous organisation to the world. Together, the two parts function as a contrast between both organisations in place,[2] whilst the second also acts as proof of the existence of a better organisation.[3] This putative better society, More acknowledged, follows Plato but attempts to depict a functioning utopian organisation; in this sense it departs from Plato who was more concerned with dialogue. This departure in form is less significant compared to the content that More had to consider

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[1]   The Romans and in their triumph, as the Manuels describe, "were too complacent and too self-satisfied to dream of ideal polities; for them, Rome itself was utopia". *Utopian Thought*, p. 21.

[2]   Richard S. Sylvester suggests that this order represents More's final intention, so the second book can be related to his contemporary England. '"Si Hythlodaeo Credimus": Vision and Revision in Thomas More's Utopia', in *Essential Articles for the Study of Sir Thomas More*, ed. by Richard S. Sylvester and Germain Marc'hadour (Hamden, Conn.: Archon Books, 1977), pp. 290-301 (pp. 292-3).

[3]   The account of this character is the only proof of the existence of Utopia. Here, we can assume, he follows Lucian, stating in his *True History* "that is what it was like on the Moon. If you do not believe me, go and see for yourself".

for his Christian audience. He continued, however, to discuss similar issues, such as education, religion, and marriage, which other utopian writers also observed and followed later. Most importantly, More emphasises the contrast of the philosophies and consumption patterns of capitalism, sustenance, and communism, originally initiated by Plato, whilst adding the economy of abundance to his utopia. For More, communism develops into its second phase of the original plan where all the citizens live like Plato's guardians.

In the text, More is in Antwerp on official business, at which point he is introduced by his host Peter Giles to the narrator, Raphael Hytholday.[4] Raphael has extensive first-hand knowledge about unknown countries and peoples, Giles explains, and his impulse for travelling is clarified from the beginning, as he is described as "eager to see the world".[5] More is not the first person to have been introduced to him, as Raphael tells the story of being in England where he met with Cardinal Morton (Archbishop of Canterbury, and Lord Chancellor). There is a detailed account of this meeting where he advised against the injustice and inequality of the society among the defensive hosts, who represent the classes that maintained the situation. He specifies the example of the enclosure of land to have created thieves, saying "you create thieves, and then punish them for stealing", and through this he hinges on whether or not death is adequate punishment for stealing. Raphael shows himself only as an invited guest, and an outsider to the mainstream ideas of his hosts. This is significant as Book II can be considered to have been designed as a commentary on this.

More invites Raphael to his lodgings to record his account. When Raphael refers to the organisation of Utopia, Giles doubts him and seems to represent a Eurocentric view, saying: "You will have a hard time persuading me, that people in that new land are better governed than in the world we know. Our minds are not inferior to theirs, and our governments, I believe, are older".[6] The reply from Raphael indicates that the Utopian civilisation is also old, but he still recognises that the known world surpass them in "natural intelligence". Raphael admits that Utopians are less advanced in technology than the

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[4] More mixes true and biographical events and characters with fictional ones. The name means an 'expert in nonsense', and is one of a number of puns and joke references that More uses. Other examples include *Utopia* itself, which means 'no place', eutopos meaning 'good place', the utopian river of Anyder meaning "waterless", Ademos' ruler meaning "without people", and Alaopolitans meaning "people without a country".

[5] *Utopia,* p. 5, all quotations are from *Robert* M. *Adams's Norton Critical Edition of Utopia* (New York, N.Y.: W.W. Norton & Company, 1992).

[6] Ibid, p. 29.

Europeans, emphasising "two inventions, to be sure, they owe to [Europe]: the art of printing and the manufacture of paper". It is recognised that both cultures have short fallings but Europe is still the worst:

> While he told us many ill-considered usages in the new-found nations, he also described quite a few other customs from which our own cities, nations, races, and kingdoms might take example in order to correct their errors.[7]

Raphael justifies their superiority and differences mainly in terms of justice. For him they are closer to nature and the original principals of Christianity, whereas Giles' comparison and criteria are much more complicated and depend on historical and material development. As Raphael expressed that his motivation is to disseminate his account of Utopia, he is asked if he has considered being at the council of kings and princes. Raphael refuses in principle to be in service as a councillor, despite his impulse to show the world his utopia. His reason for this is that kings are mostly motivated to unjust annexation and domination of others: "They are generally more set on acquiring new kingdoms by hook or by crook than on governing well those that they already have".[8] Their maintenance of large armies, devoted for this purpose, are a factor of destabilisation. He recounts his admiration of a particular community he visited where its people decided not to expand their territories. For Raphael, lust and pride are the causes of the present conditions in Europe additionally, as long as there is private property and monetary transaction, every attempt to correct the system or to bring about a successful system would fail.

Raphael describes the birth of Utopia as the result of the arrival of a king, Utopus, who gave his name to the land previously called Abraxa.[9] King Utopus, who conquered the land, dug it like an island with the help of the natives and his soldiers. He adds that he *"brought its rude and uncouth inhabitants to such a high level of culture and humanity"*,

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[7] Ibid, p. 7.
[8] Ibid, p. 8 .
[9] This might indicate the birth of a new kingdom, or simply to suit his name 'utopia'. However, it is usually seen to invoke Columbus who commences his letter by asserting that after his victories he changed the native names to Spanish ones. These parallels are cited as evidence:
Both figures conceive of themselves in identical terms and both act in precisely the same way once the conquest is over. Both achieve their victories at their 'very first' landing, both utilize renaming as a symbol of the shift in power. As in both cases the victory is as much cultural as military. Peter C. Herman, 'Introduction: Opening the Borders', in *Opening the Borders: Inclusivity in Early Modern Studies. Essays in Honor of James V. Mirollo*, ed. by Peter C. Herman (Newark: University of Delaware Press, 1999), pp. 15-27 (pp. 19-20).

after "subduing them at his first landing".[10] The island tolerates diverse forms of religion, most of which are pagan, but agnostics also exist. Still, Christianity impressed the inhabitants and a number of them were baptised, Raphael explains. This toleration goes back to the founder who ended religious quarrelling, which was not unusual in this part of the world. In fact, this particular weakness helped him to conquer these natives. Any person who disturbs this peace would be punished by exile or enslavement. The island is two hundred miles across its milled part and includes fifty-four cities,[11] which are identical in their language and law. The social organisation is patriarchal and slave based, and citizens rotate their time between the city and the countryside. As with Plato's vision, the cities of Utopia must prevent their size from "becoming too large or too small",[12] although unlike for Plato this is not through controlling the birth rate but by controlling the number of adults. Adults are transferred from one city to another based on shortage and surplus. If the number exceeds the limits, they are transferred to a newly established colony in the mainland and this, the most controversial issue of the work, will be discussed in more detail later. Relocated colonists might be called back from these colonies if the population decreases on the main island.[13] Utopia is predominantly agrarian, usually with surplus production, and the island divides the surplus among its cities and exports it if their stores hold what is deemed sufficient for two years. One-seventh of the surplus is given freely to the poor countries, and the rest is sold at very low prices. In return, the exchange provides them with any materials they do not have in addition to an enormous amount of gold. The credit they have with these countries is seldom requested.

Their foreign relations are, in general, based on mutual respect. For example, the Utopians despise war and would only consider bellicose actions if necessary and for "good reasons", usually making concessions on their rights.[14] Therefore, the causes of their war are: to defend their country, to defend their friends from invaders, to assist people from tyranny (if requested to do so), and to avenge any injuries inflicted upon themselves or their

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[10] *Utopia,* pp. 31-32. Again this is the source of much criticism that will be discussed later.
[11] The island is about the size of England. Also, this number of cities matched the number of counties in England and Wales of the time. More: *Utopia*, ed. by George M. Logan and Robert M. Adams (Cambridge: Cambridge UP), p. 43.
[12] *Utopia,* p. 40.
[13] Although population decrease is not the norm, it happened twice in their history as a result of plagues.
[14] *Utopia,* p. 66.

friends.[15] Their moral values guide their relations with other countries in times of war and peace. This is more powerful, they believe, than treaties that could be broken for any reason. Living according to nature is their virtue, and this is a recurrent theme and motif in the work: their begetting of children, their worship of the divine nature, and their moneyless transactions are all from their understanding of nature, as are their manners with neighbouring countries and their sense of equality, as Raphael explains. From his account, we can conclude that this commonwealth is safe from both internal strife and external danger due to the strength of their organisation and their customs.

At the end of their meeting, More concludes the discussion with a controversial approval, and looks to act not like an agent of change: "I cannot agree with everything he said. Yet I confess there are many things in the Commonwealth of Utopia which I wish our own country would imitate - though I don't really expect it will".[16] This conclusion, which primarily appears to be the respectful agreement of a host,[17] has led to numerous explanations of his intention. However, J. H. Hexter rightly emphasises the importance of this passage:

> For our understanding of Utopia it does matter how we read that last passage about the jeopardy into which community of living and subsistence put nobility, magnificence, splendor, and majesty. If we take it seriously, we will take the condemnation of private property elsewhere in Utopia satirically or trivially - as a mere jeu d'esprit. If we take the passage satirically, we will take the condemnation seriously.[18]

There is no doubt, however, of the message and the wish to correct the social, political, and religious spheres of England through reason, but the question is how, by whom, and what content of the work he endorses.[19]

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[15] We note that More says 'good' and not 'just'. This might echo Erasmus's *The Education of a Christian Prince*: "I will suspend judgment on whether any war is entirely just; but who is there who does not think his cause just?" Trans. by Neil M. Cheshire, Michael J. Heath, and Lisa Jardine, ed. by Lisa Jardine (Cambridge: Cambridge UP, 1997), p. 104.

[16] *Utopia*, p. 85.

[17] "So with praise for their way of life and his account of it, I took him by the hand and led him to supper", says More. *Utopia*, p. 85.

[18] 'Intention, Words, and Meaning: The Case of More's Utopia', *New Literary History*, 6:3 (1975), pp. 529-541 (p. 541); Elsewhere he considers this ambiguity to have not been very helpful to the message, if there is any, "while ambiguity may enhance the value of certain special kinds of poetry, it does not enhance the value of social comment". J. H. Hexter, *More's Utopia: The Biography of an Idea* (Princeton, N.J.: Princeton UP, 1952), p. 11.

[19] It certainly succeeded in influencing a tremendous sort of speculation of fictional better organisations and inspired many works like: *Christianopolis* (1619) by Johann Valentin Andreae, *The City of the Sun* (1623) by Italian philosopher Tommaso Campanella, *New Atlantis* (1626) by Francis Bacon, and *The Commonwealth of Oceana* (1656) by James Harrington. John Locke suggested that More presented

Besides the conclusion, other factors contribute to the ambiguity. More at one stage was hesitant to publish the book,[20] and long after its publication he expressed a desire to burn it.[21] Moreover, he strives to establish that Utopia is not fictional and should not be read as such.[22] Controversy over this conclusion also extends to biographical information that contradicts with the message, i.e. the character of More as the author. This includes, for example, his position on religious tolerance which contradicts his views in *Utopia*.[23] Although extensive reliance on authorial biography is problematic, some critics find it difficult to separate between the two.[24] Anthony Kenny observes that "wherever we turn in Utopia, it seems, we find something which is contradicted in More's life".[25] This is not too difficult to verify. For example, the purpose of More's trip was to negotiate the increase of wealth of classes that Raphael criticises for their greed and enclosure of lands.[26] Also during the discussion, the only clear disagreement from More, the character, is about the

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government forms in order to teach " the World not what really was, but what ought to be"; cited in Eric Nelson, *The Greek Tradition in Republican Thought* (Cambridge: Cambridge UP, 2004), p. 23.

[20] Thomas More wrote in a letter to Peter Giles: "I'm still of two minds as to whether I should publish the text or not". Cited in Robert Adams' translation of the humanist letters, in *Utopia*, p. 111.

[21] As in the previous footnote, even before publishing it he states: "I'm still of two minds as to whether I should publish the book or not. For men's tastes are so various, the tempers of some are so severe, their minds so ungrateful, their tempers so cross, that there seems no point in publishing something, even if it's intended for their advantage, that they will receive only with contempt and ingratitude". Letter to Peter Giles, cited from Adams, *Utopia*, p. 111.

[22] In his letter to Peter Giles he claims that "truth in fact is the only quality at which I should have aimed, or did aim, in writing this book". Cited from Robert Adams' translation of the humanist letters in Utopia, p. 109; while and for example the narrator of Lucian's A True History declares that "everything we are about to read is [...] a patent lie". Stephen W. Smith, 'Literary Designs: Thomas More's Utopia as Literature', *Thomas More Studies*, 1 (2006), pp. 37-43 (p. 39).

[23] More does not object to the burning of heretics. On the contrary, in a letter he shows it is lawful and necessary. *The Complete Works of St. Thomas More*, 16 vols. ed. by Thomas Lawler, Germain Marc'hadour, and Richard Marius (New Haven and London: Yale UP, 1981) volume 6, part I, p. 19. In *Thomas More* (London: Oxford UP, 2000), John Guy calls him "Heresy hunter". For Jasper Ridley, he turned from an intellectual into an intolerant and fanatic. *Statesman and Saint* (New York, N.Y.: Viking Press, 1982), p. i.

[24] For example, Thomas S. Engeman writes, "In my view, the persona More, the Sheriff of London, represents More's most publicly defensible opinions. It would seem that the persona More stands nearer to, if he is not identical with, the author More in the most essential respects". 'Hythloday's Utopia and More's England: An Interpretation of Thomas More's Utopia', *The Journal of Politics*, 44. 1 (Feb., 1982), pp. 131-149 (p. 136); also, Thomas I. White expresses a similar opinion in 'Festivitas, Utilitas, et Opes: The Concluding Irony and Philosophical Purpose of Thomas More's "Utopia"', *Quincentennial Essays on St. Thomas More* (Boone, N.C.: Appalachian State UP, 1978), pp. 135-150.

[25] Anthony Kenny, *Thomas More* (Oxford: Oxford UP, 1983), p. 98.

[26] Whether More recognised these ironies himself is an unanswerable question, but at least they reveal what we learn from a study of his other works. He wrote that he built a world he could control and that, like most writers, he did not always take care to make that created world correspond entirely with the world where he had to make his way. Richard Marius, *Thomas More: A Biography* (London: J. M. Dent and Son, 1984), pp. 156-57.

question of whether a philosopher should enter the King's service. This urged Christopher Kendrick to consider the work only as "the result of a momentarily liberated humanism".[27]

In light of this controversy, there are two different interpretative typologies of *Utopia*. The first group believe that the text is a serious work and provides a great example of the social and economic changes that would affect the early modern world, and that it was More's response to the religious and economic problems of the time.[28] This category also includes neo-Marxist critics, who considered *Utopia's* criticism of the emerging capitalist economy and inequality;[29] notable examples of such scholars include J. H. Hexter, Edward Surtz, George M. Logan, and Robert M. Adams.[30] However, the fact remains that the proposal itself was only an argument and not a programme of solution to England. More also recognised this: "in that new world which is scarcely removed from ours by geography so far as it is by customs and life style".[31]

The second group look at the work rather as a rhetorical exercise and highlight its satirical purposes. William E. Campbell considers that More "himself regarded *Utopia* as the least serious of his literary efforts",[32] and Ronald Knox concludes that:

> to suppose that More would seriously have liked to exchange the usages of England for that of his Utopia in real life is to forget the irresponsibility of the humanists, their love of supporting paradox merely for its own sake, and of suggesting methodical doubts without being prepared to support them.[33]

For Alistair Fox, when More questions the ideal of Utopia he "experienced a loss of faith in his utopian vision".[34] The element of satire is deeply rooted. For Christopher Hollis, "when

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[27] Christopher Kendrick, 'More's Utopia and Uneven Development', *Boundary 2*, 13:2 (1985), pp. 233-66 (p. 236).

[28] Paul Turner, a translator of *Utopia*, explicitly states "that the book actually means what it says, and that it does attempt to solve the problems of human society". *Utopia* (Hammondsworth: Penguin Classics, 1965), p. 4.

[29] For example, Karl Kautsky and Fredric Jameson.

[30] For Edward Surtz, "Utopia could be labeled definitely as a work of the eve of the Reformation". *The Praise of Wisdom: A Commentary on the Religious and Moral Problems and Backgrounds of St. Thomas More's Utopia* (Chicago, Ill.: Loyola UP, 1957), p. 3; Logan is "convinced that More's book is, despite the wit and indirection of its manner, a serious work of political philosophy, and that it embodies More's profound sympathy with the ideals of Erasmina Christian humanism". *The Meaning*, p. ix.

[31] *Utopia*, p. 65.

[32] *More's Utopia and His Social Teaching* (London: Eyre and Spotteswoode, 1930), p. 24.

[33] 'The Charge of Religious Intolerance', in *The Fame of Blessed Thomas More* (London: Sheed and Ward, 1929), pp. 43-44.

[34] *Utopia: An Elusive Vision* (New York, N.Y.: Twayne Publishers, 1993), p. 32; this reading might be supported if More endorsed the belief of St. Augustine. J.C. Davis cites that More lectured in the *City of God* in 1501, 'Thomas More's Utopia: Sources, Legacy and Interpretation', in *The Cambridge Companion to Utopian Literature*, pp. 28-50 (p. 33).

all praise is allowed, it is but a felicitous trifle".[35] This is thought to be under the influence of Lucian, whose writings were translated by More in 1505 and 1506.[36] In a letter to Giles, More admits that following Lucian's combination of delight and instruction he chose "a seriocomic mode for utopia",[37] a sentiment also repeated on other occasions.[38] Alistair Fox stresses, on the other hand, that More's "encounter with Lucian was absolutely crucial to the development of his mature vision and its literary philosophical consequences were long lasting".[39]

To determine More's intention, we might look at the most controversial component of the work: the question of equal community. Raphael stressed that he was "wholly convinced that unless private property is entirely done away with, there can be no fair or just distribution of goods". More concludes:

> When Raphael had finished his story, I was left thinking that not a few of the laws and customs he had described as existing among the Utopians were really absurd. These included their methods for waging war, their religious practices, as well as other customs of theirs; but my chief objection was to the basis of their whole system, that is, their communal living and their moneyless economy. This one thing alone takes away all the *nobility*, *magnificence*, *splendour*, and *majesty* which (*in the popular view*) are considered the true ornaments of any nation.[40]

But we can contend that his idea of an equal community was something he seriously considered but, based on a range of evidence, disregarded.[41] For example, we should not consider More's rejection of much of their practices as taken for granted. A number of these "absurd" practices are not totally novel and have had experiences in reality. The

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[35] *Thomas More* (London: Bruce, 1934), p. 92.

[36] C.R. Thompson explains the influences that these translations might have had on the composition of Utopia, as he notes that More's "familiarity with Lucian which the translations compelled and which they attest […] contributed something to the verisimilitude of the wonderful Utopia". *The Translations of Lucian by Erasmus and St. Thomas More* (Ithaca, N.Y.: Cornell UP, 1940), p. 44.

[37] *Utopia*, ed. by Logan and Adams (Cambridge: Cambridge UP, 2002), p. xxi. Logan and Adams add, "but More was also attracted to the tradition of serio ludere for another, deeper, reason. The divided, complex mind, capable of seeing more than one side of a question and reluctant to make a definite commitment to any single position has a proclivity for ironic discourse; and serio ludere – in which the play can serve to qualify or undercut any statement – is one of the great vehicles of irony"; p. xxi.

[38] In a letter to Thomas Ruthall (to whom he dedicated his edition of Lucian), More praises the virtues of Lucian's writing and expresses his admiration for the author: "If, most learned Sir, there was ever anyone who fulfilled the Horatian maxim and combined delight with instruction, I think Lucian certainly ranked among the foremost in this respect". *Translations of Lucian*, *The Yale Edition of The Complete Works of St. Thomas More*, Vol. 3, part. 1, ed. by Craig R. Thompson (New Haven, Conn.: Yale UP, 1981), p. 3.

[39] *Thomas More: History and Providence* (Oxford: Blackwell, 1982), p. 35.

[40] *Utopia*, p. 84. [Emphasis added]

[41] Most critics dismissed this component in particular, like J. H. Hexter and Albert Duhamel, 'Medievalism of More's "Utopia"', *Studies in Philology*, 52: 2 (1955), pp. 99-126 and Thomas I. White.

method of waging war and war practices, for example, are considered to have been influenced by the Romans,[42] and the political structure, with its senates and governors, was inspired by classical texts.[43] To come to the most important objection to equal property by More, apparently also not completely unfamiliar to his audience, Raphael documents the existence of other commonwealths and compares his with them:

> When I run over in my mind the various commonwealths flourishing today, so help me God, I can see in them nothing but a conspiracy of the rich who are fattening up their own interests under the name and title of the commonwealth.[44]

For Pohl, Utopia is part of the larger conversation of the "best state of a commonwealth".[45] Miriam Eliav-Feldon has identified a number of ideal societies in the sixteenth century,[46] to which More may have alluded. Besides contemporary commonwealths, More had a number of classical examples in addition to Plato. For example, Virgil famously idealised the past Golden Age by stating "No fences parted fields, nor marks nor bounds divided acres of litigious grounds, But all was common", and Seneca said "to all the way was open: the use of all things was a common right".[47] To further support this suggestion, there are two more pieces of evidence that we might propose to demonstrate More's admiration (as the author) if not total approval of the commune system he forwards. Firstly, he attempts on a number of occasions in *Utopia* to link the commune mode of living to the early Christian community. In addition, in 1519, a few years after *Utopia*, More states:

> God showed great foresight when he instituted that all things should be held in common; Christ showed as much when he tried to recall mortals again to what is common from what is private. For he perceived that the corrupt nature of mortals cannot cherish what is private without injury to the community, as experience shows in all aspects of life.[48]

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[42] Shlomo Avineri, 'War', p. 262; J. Baumgartner, *Declaring War in Early Modern Europe* (New York, N.Y.: Palgrave Macmillan, 2011), p. 58. If this is accurate then *Utopia* is more a modification of previous practices rather than the proponent of new ones.

[43] Eric Nelson, 'Greek Nonsense in More's "Utopia"', *The Historical Journal*, 44: 4 (2001), pp. 889-917 (p. 892).

[44] *Utopia*, p. 83.

[45] 'Utopianism after More', p. 56.

[46] Her examples include models of good government, implying moral rather than institutional reform; idealisations of existing societies, e.g., the Republic of Venice; architectural designs for model cities; descriptions of a primitive golden age; programs for secret societies, real or imaginary; and plans for world empires and prophecies concerning theocratic millennial kingdoms. *Realistic Utopias*: *Ideal Imaginary Societies of the Renaissance*, *1516-1630* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1982), pp. 1-15.

[47] Cited in R. S. White, *Natural Law in English Renaissance Literature* (Cambridge: Cambridge UP, 1996), p. 122.

[48] *Complete Works*, vol. xv, ed. by Daniel Kinney (New Haven and London: Yale UP, 1981), p. 279.

Secondly, More's emphasis that nobility, magnificence, splendour, and majesty (in the popular view, as he says) reject anything but private property is of relevance. It can be noticed that scholars have missed an essential irony in these closing lines of More, who chose words that resemble the ones used negatively by Plato in the context of ignorant crowds and especially 'splendour'. More puts 'in the popular view' in brackets, and clearly the popular view contrasts with the philosophical view that Plato also explained.[49] Further, even in the popular view, More shows that these things are considered to be ornaments and not essentials, which can be easily abolished.

More's work is a serious work, representing the shift from land to commerce as a source of wealth and the source of empowerment. It shows and criticises the contemporary attempts to end the traditional commons (or collective property) in the country. Enclosure Acts represent this, the end of any commons, the supremacy of capitalism and individualism over this symbolic tradition of common property. Even if the customs of the Utopians are far removed from practicality, it is still a vision of an organisation that has achieved justice. More's message is, if Utopia achieved this then England also could. He attempts to draw as much as possible from the present sources, whether cultural or economic, to restructure the current organisation in place. More could not fully endorse an organisation that was not guided by divine revelation nor was he satisfied with his society, and the contradictions in his biography and his work might be explained by this. Still, there is an interchange between the conservative Christian voice and the rebellious communist with the voice of More in the centre, representing the Christian humanist. For More, religion is only supportive and not an agency of change, but it is not a disruptive force either. It is not for More or Raphael (void of any rebellious spirit) to expect all these changes to happen in Europe but the proposal does present a critique of the society and calls for change, and Cardinal Morton is an example of a possible reception and response.

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[49] For here alone will the really rich rule, rich not in gold but in those riches required by the happy man, rich in a good and prudent life. *Republic*, VII 521a.

Utopia and the New World

Utopia is a major writing of the Renaissance and is representative of its spirit of learning. The New World is not only at its centre but is also an important contributor to its formation, and reference to its discovery is made on a number of occasions in the text in addition to the narrator's travels to unknown lands. The travels of Amerigo Vespucci and his printed stories seem to have inspired More. However, a great many critics attempt to establish a direct connection between the work and the discovery of the New World.[50] This reading was emphasised in the context of postcolonial criticism and traditionally the relation to America was loosely established.[51] We can contend that More's focus was on Europe, particularly England, and that the discovery of the New World was only one among other influences. Local motivations appear to have been long considered as an impulse of More.[52] Erasmus, for example, comments that More "published *Utopia* to show what the causes of our civil problems are, having England which he knows and understands so well particularly in mind".[53] These causes include the social and economic distress of the age that motivated More to imagine a country that provided its citizens with all their needs. This traditional interpretation was based on the commentary of Book I, where More's focus was primarily seen to address his contemporary settings that were primarily economic. In short, the book serves to highlight what is wrong with Europe and how it can be corrected. This becomes more plausible if we consider the situation of the time, which paralleled that of Raphael's description of England.[54] The whole of Book I is written to establish a realistic

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[50] This is detailed in a number of studies, for example, Alfred A. Cave, 'Thomas More and the New World', *Albion: A Quarterly Journal Concerned with British Studies*, 23:2 (1991), pp. 209-229.

[51] Although it occurs occasionally, Christopher Hollis writes: "Henry VIII took but little interest in the outskirts of the world. Yet the mere discovery of the new Continent inevitably caused thoughtful men to ask themselves what relations with that country's inhabitants right ethics could countenance". 'Saint Thomas More, European', *Studies: An Irish Quarterly Review*, 24:95 (1935), pp. 379-390 (p. 386). Nicole Pohl, also includes the texts of Francis Bacon's *New Atlantis* (1629), Francis Godwin's *The Man in the Moone* (1638) along with More. 'The Quest for Utopia in the Eighteenth Century', p. 693.

[52] *R. W. Chambers*, 'The Rational Heathens', in *Twentieth Century Interpretations* of *Utopia*: A *Collection of Critical Essays*, *ed.* by *William Nelson* (Englewood Cliffs, N.J.: Prentice-Hall, 1968), pp. 17-33 (pp. 23-28).

[53] Cited in John C. Olin, 'The Idea of Utopia from Hesiod to John Paul II', in *Interpreting Thomas More's Utopia*, ed. by John C. Olin (New York, N.Y.: Fordham UP, 1989), pp. 77-98 (p. 88).

[54] For example, A. L. Morton describes the context that More wrote against:
"The early sixteenth century was a black enough time: enclosures, widespread unemployment and beggary, prices rising far more rapidly than wages, savage repressive laws against the exploited, constant wars between the national states springing up out of the ruins of feudal society, corruption, if not greater than before, at least enjoying fuller opportunity. And out of it all there arose a general sense of

setting with which the fictional world of Book II can be compared. Later utopian writers used other travel modes to reach their worlds, but here More has used the travels of the familiar and contemporary Vespucci for this purpose. Beside this vehicle, More has utilised the spirit of the age which tended to revive classical learning and reintroduce it, although this is not to deny the travel and discoveries as part of this spirit. Yet the major influence is Plato's *Republic* and this was far more significant than the discovery of the New World. This link to the *Republic* has long been recognised, by More himself: "I am a rival of Plato's republic, perhaps even a victor over it". [55] Erasmus acknowledged that while More was still young he "attempted a dialogue, in which he carried the defence of Plato's community".[56] The summary of this reading is made by Colin Starnes's thesis:

> More composed the *Utopia* as a rewriting of Plato's *Republic* in which he answered its central question in a form that would be relevant to his own day. The *Utopia* is the *Republic* recast in a new mould applicable to the demands of contemporary Christianity as these were understood by More and his circle of reforming friends. In a word, it is a Christianized *Republic*.[57]

It is likely that More followed Plato's claim that a republic like his might exist somewhere outside Greece, among the 'barbarians' (or non-Greeks according to Plato) and placed it in an unknown land.

Another reading, or influence, contextualises *Utopia* with the ideas manifested by Machiavelli. *Utopia* is a reaction and a commentary to the ideas that started to develop in Europe and were later manifested in *The Prince* (1513). Even if More had not read Machiavelli, the ideas he proposed in were circulating around Europe at the time and so it is likely that he would have been exposed to them.[58] More's attack of pride is echoed by Erasmus and recognised by Peter Giles (a student of Erasmus, a friend of More, and a

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bewilderment and despair. Everything known and secure seemed to be in question"; *The English*, pp. 48-9.

[55] Cited in *The New*, p. 54

[56] Cited in Colin Starnes, *The New Republic: A Commentary on Book I of More's Utopia Showing its Relation to Plato's Republic* (Waterloo: Wilfrid Laurier UP, 1990), p. 39; George Logan, suggests that More defends the Greek "city-state theory". *The Meaning*, p. 111.

[57] Starnes, *New Republic*, p. 3.

[58] J. H. Hexter writes, "for one thing they did not emerge anonymously from the folk; they were the work of readily identifiable individuals - More and Machiavelli - each of whom made a strong and indelible mark on the history of his Times"; in 'The Loom of Language and the Fabric of Imperatives: The Case of II Prince and Utopia', *American Historical Review*, 59 (1964), pp. 952-54 (p. 946).

character in *Utopia*), who praised More by highlighting *Utopia* as the source "from which all evils actually arise in the commonwealth".[59]

An isolated research claims that More's 'nowhere' was indeed somewhere. Arthur Morgan compares Utopian customs and practices with those of the Incas in Peru, particularly in relation to family groups, laws, agriculture, an economy of abundance, trade and handicrafts, and most importantly economy.[60] Morgan's research is supported by a comparison of the account of Vespucci (first voyage) and *Utopia*, although Logan has rejected much of the influence from the accounts of Vespucci [61] and Adams only admits to some traceable similarities.[62] However, some core elements are in Vespucci's letters that also exist in *Utopia*. The people that are described in these letters live in communal houses,[63] do not value gold and other precious materials,[64] are generous in giving, and do not feel restraint when it comes to asking for what they need.[65] However, although More alludes to these voyages, positioning Raphael as the traveller, what should be noted is that scholarship seriously doubts the authenticity of these letters and their dates.[66]

Were these letters fictional and only another attempt to exemplify Plato as did More in his *Utopia*? How far did More depend on them? Perhaps we will never know, but what we might conclude to a degree of certainty is More's interest in the New World. This is important to highlight as a number of interpreters who try to establish a direct association

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[59] Thomas I. White, 'The Key to Nowhere: Pride and Utopia', in *Interpreting Thomas More's Utopia*, pp. 37-60 (p. 43).

[60] Arthur E. Morgan believes that "there are several phases of the evidence which support the theory that More's book in the main is not a fictitious story, but a record of a trip to Peru and of what was observed there". *Nowhere Was Somewhere: How History Makes Utopias and How Utopias Make History* (Chapel Hill, N.C.: North Carolina UP, 1946), p. 34.

[61] Logan, *The Meaning*, p. 195.

[62] For example, Robert Adams states that "we know More had read" these letters and he admits that it only has "certain traceable influences on the Utopia", *Utopia*, p. 104. However, the similarity is certainly more essential than this description.

[63] For example, "[these houses are] of so great breadth and length, that in one single house we found there were 600 souls, […] and we saw a village of only thirteen houses where there were four thousand souls". All citations here and below are from *American Historic Documents*, Harvard Classics Volume 43, ed. by Charles Eliot (New York, N.Y.: P.F. Collier & Son, 1910), p. 34.

[64] "The wealth that we enjoy in this our Europe and elsewhere, such as gold, jewels, pearls, and other riches, they hold as nothing; and although they have them in their own lands, they do not labour to obtain them, nor do they value them". *American Historic Documents,* p. 34.

[65] "They are liberal in giving, for it is rarely they deny you anything: and on the other hand, liberal in asking, when they shew themselves your friends", *American Historic Documents*, p. 34.

[66] Clements R. Markham (trans.), Letters of Amerigo Vespucci, and other Documents Illustrative of His Career (London: Macmillan and Co, 1869), p. xxxi; also *Imago Mundi: A Review of Early Cartography,* XI, ed. by Leo Bagrow (Stockholm, E. J. Brill, 1954), pp. 37-8.

between the text and the discovery of the Americas aim to prove More's wish for an English and thus European colonisation of the New World.[67] To start with, the function of the New World's geographical location is totally overlooked, to the extent that Raphael never gives an exact location:

> For it did not occur to us to ask, nor to him to say, in what area of the New World Utopia is to be found. I wouldn't have missed hearing about this for a sizable sum of money, for I'm quite ashamed not to know even the name of the ocean where this island lies about which I've written so much.[68]

However, it does not matter whether or not he was asked, as Raphael would not have remembered as he does not remember other places he visited. On another occasion, More recounts what he had heard from Raphael:

> He told us that when Vespucci sailed away, he and his companions who had stayed behind in the fort often met with the people of the countryside, and by ingratiating speeches gradually won their friendship. Before long they came to dwell with them safely and even affectionately. The prince also gave them his favour (*I have forgotten his name and that of his country*). [69] [Emphasis added].

Further, More and Raphael elaborate on the nature of their interest in the New World, which is of an utterly different nature to what is hinted at by postcolonial interpretations. Peter Giles introduces Raphael to More because of his knowledge and extensive travels to "unknown peoples and lands", and also because he knows "More to be greedy for such information".[70] Raphael, like "Ulysses" or "Plato", travels to learn and learns from traveling,[71] and so for all three it is a question of what knowledge can be gained from the discovery of a new place.

The discovery of the Americas, then, appears to have offered More the opportunity to address his world, and thus opened up the minds of Europeans to new experiences and enabled them to move away from the static thoughts of the past. The letter from Vespucci also offered the same rich material for More's imagination as it did for his audience. Unlike

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[67] For example Nina Chordas, *Forms*, p. 30; James Holstun, *A Rational*, p. 32.

[68] Letter from Thomas More to Peter Giles, translated by Robert M. Adams, *Utopia*, p. 110.

[69] *Utopia*, p. 6. Such vagueness has been echoed by succeeding commenters to consider More's island as one of 'Fortunate Islands'. Carol Ginzburg, *No Island is an Island* (New York, N.Y.: Columbia UP, 2000), p. 15. French scholar Guillaume Budé, in a letter (1517) writes, "I personally, however, have made investigation and discerned for certain that Utopia lies outside the limits of the known world. Undoubtedly, it is one of the Fortunate Isles, perhaps close to the Elysian Fields". Cited in the Manuels, *Utopian Thought*, p. 132.

[70] *Utopia*, p. 4.

[71] Ibid, p. 5; the allusion here, probably, is to Plato's discussion of the types of governments and societies.

them, however, he attempts to learn from these new experiences, and it is his belief that the reason the Utopians are more advanced than the Europeans is their willingness to learn: "[They are] better governed and living more happily than we do, though we are not inferior to them in brains or resources".[72] This is frequently contrasted with the Europeans who do not attempt to borrow or build upon others' experiences, as Raphael says:

> Some twelve hundred years ago, a ship which a storm had blown toward Utopia was wrecked on their island. Some Romans and Egyptians were cast ashore, and never departed. Now note how the Utopians profited, through their diligence, from this one chance event. They learned every single useful art of the Roman civilization either directly from their guests, or indirectly from hints and surmises on which they based their own investigations. What benefits from the mere fact that on a single occasion some Europeans landed there! If a similar accident has hitherto brought any men here from their land, the incident has been completely forgotten, as it will be forgotten in time to come that I was ever in their country.[73]

The New World is to assist in the credibility of the existence of a better system than the ones of the Old World and particularly the dysfunctional one of More's England. All other details are complementary to the primary function of the work, which is mainly a commentary on the contemporary situation. More's insistence to place it somewhere unidentified in the New World or an unknown one adds another fictional and ambiguous element to the text. Furthermore, it offered him the freedom to envision customs incomputable to the traditions recognised by critics of *Utopia*, away from the imposed limitations of the Old World.

Utopian Wars and Colonialism

The section on Utopian wars and colonisation is the most problematic part of *Utopia*. The reasons given for their wars, along with the specific practices, have come under much scrutiny and criticism, although it is usually agreed that More approved of and endorsed these practices.[74] The most serious accusation against *Utopia* stems from its permission and justification of colonisation, which is presented as a valid reason for the Utopians to wage

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[72] Ibid, p. 30.

[73] Ibid, p. 30.

[74] For example, Douwe Fokkema concludes that More "had listed the wars that he justified and limited the Utopians to it", *Perfect Worlds: Utopian Fiction in China and the West* (Amsterdam: Amsterdam UP, 2011), p. 36; Edward L. Surtz writes that after the discovery of vast lands by the Europeans, "moral justification was necessary for their colonization and conquest", which More could provide. *The Praise*, p. 284.

war. The Utopians consider that if the natives resist their colonial advances, then they are permitted to drive them out from their lands and wage a war against them. The practice and its justification are described as follows:

> To keep the city from becoming too large or too small, they have decreed that there shall be no more than six thousand households in it (exclusive of the surrounding countryside), each family containing between ten and sixteen adults. They do not, of course, try to regulate the number of minor children in a family. The limit on adults is easily observed by transferring individuals from a household with too many into a household with not enough. Likewise, if a city has too many people, the extra persons serve to make up the shortage of population in other cities. And if the population throughout the entire island exceeds the quota, they enrol citizens out of every city and plant a colony under their own laws on the mainland near them, where the natives have plenty of unoccupied and uncultivated land. Those natives who want to live with the Utopians are taken in. When such a merger occurs, the two peoples gradually and easily blend together, sharing the same way of life and customs, much to the advantage of both. For by their policies, the Utopians make the land yield an abundance for all, though previously it had seemed too barren and paltry even to support the natives. But if the natives will not join in living under their laws, the Utopians drive them out of the land they claim for themselves, and if they resist make war on them. The Utopians say it's perfectly justifiable to make war on people who leave their land idle and waste, yet forbid the use of it to others who, by the law of nature, ought to be supported from it.[75]

The way this colonisation is performed raises questions that undermine the humanist, moral, and ideal spirit of the text. The above paragraph is often cited to establish the claim of More's colonial intentions by both critics and admirers of his *Utopia*. Later, this colonisation became the praxis of the principle articulated by More and those with similar intentions. Two German critics in the 1920s (Herren Oneken and Ernst Troeltsch), were the first to note the application of these practices: "The British Empire was *Utopia* come true".[76] Few of More's admirers have justified this proposal,[77] and this claim has almost established itself within recent utopian scholarship.[78] As David B. Quinn affirms,

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[75] *Utopia*, pp. 40-41.

[76] Christopher Hollis, rebuking them, writes that More had all of Christendom in mind and not his particular nation when thinking about "the great missionary task of extending the boundaries of Christendom". 'Saint Thomas More', p. 388; Henry Wolfgang Donner writes that "there can be little doubt that Professor Oncken is right in his interpretation of this episode as an expression of More's reaction against Henry's policy of continental conquest and a proposal for colonization". *Introduction to Utopia* (New York, N.Y.: Books for Libraries, 1969), p. 61.

[77] Donner justifies More, saying: "The evils from which England and Europe were suffering, the incessant wars, unemployment, and poverty, so eloquently set out in the first book of Utopia, might they not be cured by settling the surplus population overseas?" *Introduction*, p. 61.

[78] For example, see Christopher S. Ferns, *Narrating Utopia: Ideology, Gender, Form in Utopian Literature* (Liverpool: Liverpool UP, 1999); Chloë Houston, *New Worlds Reflected: Travel and Utopia in the Early Modern Period* (Farnham: Ashgate, 2010); Susan Bruce, 'Utopian Justifications: More's Utopia, Settler Colonialism, and Contemporary Ecocritical Concerns', *College Literature*, 42:1 (2015), pp. 23-43;

More's "hint is clear; to colonize can be legitimate, even good",[79] and Dominic Baker-Smith says that "the entire process has a painful similarity to the early settlement of the New World".[80]

Defending and analysing More's position has only been occasional and modest, and some critics who are embarrassed by it have attempted to distance More from it. Shlomo Avineri, who attempts to explain the logic of the practice, believes that the Utopian foreign policy is surprising only if *Utopia* is considered to be More's ideal state and if he approved of all its practices. George Logan believes that this practice and the foreign policy of the Utopians in general are not in agreement with More's humanist ideals and that "they greatly embarrass the interpretation of Utopia as a mirror of a reformed Europe".[81] One critic concludes that "these theories of the natural right of colonization are no part of the original description of *Utopia*, already written in 1515; they do not harmonize with it", and that they were probably added in the 1516 edition.[82] It is usually pointed out that More raises objections against Raphael's account of certain Utopian arrangements,[83] so that these particular war causes were rejected by him.[84] However, it is of note that this particular one is not among the practices to which More objects. Others have suggested that More strived to secure Utopia from external forces and practicality: "and as long as other

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Frederic W. Murray's 'The Image of Utopia as a Conceptual Determinant in the Structural Development of Spanish American Culture', in *Imagination, Emblems, and Expressions: Essays on Latin American, Caribbean, and Continental Culture and Identity* ed. by Helen Ryan-Ranson (Bowling Green, Ohio: Bowling Green UP, 1993), pp. 29-41; Timothy Sweet, *American Georgics: Economy and Environment in American Literature, 1580-1864* (Philadelphia, Pa.: Pennsylvania UP, 2002)*;* Dominic Baker-Smith, 'Reading Utopia' in *The Cambridge Companion to Thomas More*, ed. by George M. Logan, pp. 139-167; Eugene R. Hammond, 'Nature-Reason-Justice in Utopia and Gulliver's Travels', *Studies in English Literature, 1500-1900,* 22:3 (1982), pp. 445-468 (p. 455); Ellen Wood, *Empire of Capital*; Russell Ames, *Citizen*, among others.

[79] *Explorers and Colonies: America, 1500-1625* (London: Hambledon Press, 1990), p. 99.

[80] *More's Utopia*, p. 186.

[81] Logan, *The Meaning*, p. 231.

[82] Cited in R. W. Chambers, 'Rational', pp. 29-30.

[83] More is thought to disapprove of "some of the bad causes for which wars are fought" by the Utopians, and which mirror the Europeans of the time. T. S. Dorsch, 'A Detestable State', in *Twentieth Century Interpretations* of *Utopia*, pp. 88-99 (p. 92).

[84] For Karl Kautsky, "his uncommonly finely drawn discussions upon war, of which we have only given the commencement, are mostly nothing more than scorching satire upon the war spirit of his time', *Thomas More and His Utopia* (New York, N.Y.: Russell & Russell, 1959), p. 231; Peter C. Herman argues that by "having the Utopians mimic European practices in the New World […] [More] criticizes rather than endorses the European assertion of dominion"; in 'Who's That in the Mirror? Thomas More's Utopia and the Problematic of the New World', in *Opening the Borders: Inclusivity in Early Modern Studies*, ed. by James V. Mirollo and Peter C. Herman (London: Delaware UP, 1999), pp. 109-132 (p. 120); a similar argument is expressed much earlier by Christopher Hollis in 'Saint Thomas More'.

commonwealths are not utopian, it is hard to see how to [sic] secure it is without indulging in some practices that are expedient but certainly not moral".[85] Here, we come to another problem: More differentiated between Utopians and non-Utopians based on their level of morality. Edward Surtz's attempted to justify Utopian warfare in these terms, saying: "An ideal commonwealth should include some flaws so as not to be too discouraging […] the flaws make Utopia credible".[86] It is also possible that it was not intentional, with Michael Freund writing:

> much derives from forces beyond More's own personal will and control, and much which was originally far from his intention is still active in historical actuality. We confront here the perpetual secret of how historical forces are working even within the texture of the most lofty and pure spirits.[87]

This might be true if we confirmed the possibility that More adopted the position of St. Augustine, who thought that only a second best city is possible on earth. Nevertheless, this is also not established. The other criticism is related to the manner in which King Utopus conquers the land and names it after himself, which is thought to mimic the actual process of the discovery of the New World. The postcolonial criticism, then, considers Utopia as a place to be colonised and as an ideal model of colonisation and imperialism.

To conceive another reading of More, in what follows I attempt to classify the criticisms into three main groups and reflect that this mainly postcolonial position has failed to relate to the actual content of the text.

Invitation to Colonise the New World

As mentioned above, the Utopian practice of colonisation has been interpreted as an expression of More's wish for England (or possibly other European countries) to colonise the New World. Further, *Utopia* is thought to be the first utopia to raise the issue of

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[85] Gerhard Ritter, 'Utopia and Power Politics', in *Twentieth Century Interpretations* of *Utopia*, pp. 40-52 (p. 50); on the contrary, Avineri explains the discrepancies in the Utopian ideals and their warfare, as More considered Utopia and the Utopians to be the only pure and perfect nation, and so the rest were "by definition and nature, base and wicked". Hence, the Utopians were not obliged to observe any "moral restraints" when it came to fighting them. Avineri, 'War', p. 289; for Logan, "but when the implementation of this ideal conflicts with securing the welfare of Utopians, it must be sacrificed". *The Meaning*, p. 236.

[86] Cited in Logan, *The Meaning*, p. 233.

[87] Cited in Avineri, 'War', p. 275; Edward L. Surtz, agrees that "the conduct of the Utopians is in accord with the law of war in the sixteenth century", *The Praise*, p. 306; also in their edition of *Utopia*, Logan and Adams offer such an interpretation, p. xxvii.

colonies,[88] and England's first theoretical text on colonisation[89] Before commenting on this, two extra textual evidences that are referenced in support of this argument should be presented.

It is claimed that certain biographical research proves that More was interested in colonial expeditions, to the extent that he supported his brother in law's project for settlement in the New World. John Rastell, brother-in-law of More, attempted to convince King Henry VIII to divert his attention to the New World instead of the continent. Indeed Rastell sent an expedition in 1517 (just months after the publication of *Utopia*) with the approval of the King and partly financed by More's father. However, a mutiny on board resulted in failure,[90] but although the project was not carried out it is still used to explain More's interest in colonialism, whether in Ireland or the New World.[91] Rastell's petition to the King is thought to be the earliest statement of the right to colonise the New World and was drafted under More's influence.[92]

It is not clear whether More was influenced by Rastell or vice versa, but we can assume that their general interests in the New World were shared by most Europeans of the time and that they simply took different approaches to express this. However, we can better understand Rastell's intention through his four reasons to advocate his proposed venture: commercial, missionary, anthropology, and expansion. In his interlude to the *Four Elements* (1518), he expressed that England's interest in the New World should be motivated by and essentially focused on "a commercial venture, the extension of the King's dominions, curiosity about the natives, and their conversion to Christianity".[93] As will be shown below, this clearly contradicts the fictional motives of the Utopians, and amidst the European search for silver and gold in the New World, More's Utopians abandoned and despised it:

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[88] Sargent's 'Colonial', p. 204; according to D. B. Quinn, More "appears to be the first Englishman to use the word colonia in a Roman meaning", *Explorers and Colonies*, p. 99.

[89] Timothy Sweet, 'American Georgics', p. 15; also Andrew Hadfield, *Literature, Travel, and Colonial Writing in the English Renaissance, 1545-1625* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1998), p.11.

[90] Donner, *Introduction*, p. 61; and Ritter, 'Utopia', p. 45.

[91] Ritter, 'Utopia', p. 45; and Chambers, 'Rational', p. 31.

[92] Alfred A. Cave, 'Canaanites in a Promised Land: The American Indian and the Providential Theory of Empire', *American Indian Quarterly*, 12: 4 (1988), pp. 277-297 (p. 277).

[93] Cited in David Armitage, 'Literature and Empire', in *Oxford History of the British Empire, Volume I: Origins of Empire*, ed. by Nicholas Canny (Oxford: Oxford UP, 2001), pp. 99-123 (p. 108).

> So in the meanwhile they take care that no one shall overvalue gold and silver, of which money is made, beyond what the metals themselves deserve. Anyone can see. For example, that iron is far superior to either; men could not live without iron, by heaven, any more than without fire or water. But to gold and silver have, by nature, no function that we cannot easily dispense. Human folly has made them precious because they are rare.[94]

Further support for an early attempt to put More's work into practice is the project of the Spanish official Vasco de Quiroga. In 1535, the year More was beheaded, Quiroga established and organised a number of Amerindian communities that were similar in some ways to the Utopians. Quiroga used his own resources to establish two self-ruled "hospital pueblos" in Mexico,[95] which have been directly linked to *Utopia* by a number of critics and described by the Mexican historian Silvio Arturo Zavala:

> Quiroga expounded more extensively his humanistic programme, based upon More's Utopia, which in his judgment, should serve as the Magna Carta of European civilization in the New World, Utopia, for Quiroga, had a realistic meaning, it was something that could be applied, not an idle dream.[96]

The two communities survived well into the seventeenth century. It is true that More mentioned a bishop who was interested in visiting *Utopia*. In a letter he wrote to Peter Giles, he states:

> There are various people here, and one in particular, a devout man and a professor of theology, who very much wants to go to Utopia. His motive is not by any means idle curiosity, but rather a desire to foster and further the growth of our religion, which has made a happy start there.[97]

However, there is no record that this bishop was Quiroga, who was a judge and not a bishop.[98] Also, this judge in New Spain would not have needed More's approval to go there or get information about Utopia's whereabouts.[99] More's bishop had a sole missionary purpose and did not mention or imagine a full application of any utopian project. More, it is clear, had no relationship with him. A writer's fictional work would always have the risk of

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[94] *Utopia*, p. 46; "They might indeed put the gold and silver into plate-ware and such handiwork". *Utopia*, p. 46; "While they eat from pottery dishes and drink from glass cups, well made but inexpensive, their chamber pots and stools - all their humblest vessels, for use in the common halls and even private homes, are made of gold and silver", *Utopia*, p. 47.

[95] Holstun, *A Rational*, pp. 6-7.

[96] Silvio Arturo Zavala, 'Sir Thomas More in New Spain', in *Essential Articles for the Study of Thomas More*, pp. 302-11 (p. 307). The difference is thought to be that "the vision of an ideal social order came back to the New World from the Old". John C. Olin, 'The Idea of Utopia', p. 91.

[97] Letter from Thomas More to Peter Giles, *Utopia*, p. 110.

[98] Zavala documents that "some ill-informed writers believed that Quiroga was a missionary"; 'Sir Thomas More', p. 306.

[99] In his capacity as a 'judge of the royal audience' in Mexico in 1535, Vasco de Quiroga wrote an extensive report about "the various aspects of the Spanish colonization of America"; cited in Zavala, 'Sir Thomas More', p. 303.

being imitated and implemented if possible. Nonetheless, it is worth mentioning that Quiroga is now praised for his stand against slavery and his struggle on the side of the Native Americans.[100]

Back to the text itself, and the attempt to link this practical solution of More to the colonisation of the New World, a number of arguments might be extrapolated. To begin with, Raphael details the economic situation of England at the time and comments on its cause. In Book II he chooses the difficult task of convincing More, the author, of communism as a solution, without mentioning this rather easy initiation of colonising the New World. This would have been even closer to the more practical project of the *Laws* than the communism of the *Republic*, of which More must have been aware. There is no mention of the ubiquitous colonisation that existed in antiquity. Later, Raphael explains that his main interest is to show this experience and not to encourage or lure people of the Old World to the riches of the New: "if it had not been to make the new world known to others" he would not have come back.[101] His refusal to enter the service of kings and princes particularly because they "are generally more set on acquiring new kingdoms",[102] also proves that the best way to colonise is to advise kings, and to convince them, as Columbus managed, to provide political and material support. Again, what is important to More and Raphael is the knowledge brought back to Europe.

Concerning the utopian practice of colonisation, the Utopians evidently devised this practice of establishing colonies for a sole purpose to contain overpopulation. This practice seems to have been established long after the foundation of the original state and was not part of the original plan. Colonies are not the first solution, which is instead the redistribution of adults to cities with fewer numbers. Additional evidence to support that the Utopians do not have this plan in their agenda is that they would have chosen a much easier means to obtain land for reasons other than overpopulation. For example, Raphael states that "their soil is not very fertile, nor their climate of the best, but they protect themselves against weather by temperate living, and improve their soil by industry".[103] Thus the Utopians prefer hard work instead of acquiring more fertile lands near their island.

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[100] Holstun, *A Rational*, p. 7.
[101] *Utopia*, p. 29.
[102] Ibid, p. 8.
[103] Ibid, p. 57.

This is despite the preference of lands that required few hands at the time in England and Europe in general. Utopians hard work has always made them exporters to their neighbours.

On the other hand, the Utopians consider colonies external to the island as temporary and not an original part of their land. In case "one of their cities shrinks so sharply in population that it cannot be made up from other cities without bringing them too under proper strength, then the population is restored by bringing people back from the colonies". These cases are not common, but did happen twice as "they would rather that their colonies dwindled away than that any of the cities on their island should get too small".[104] Finally, More did not list or envision any type of colonisation that was devised and implemented later as emphasised earlier. David B. Quinn presents types of colonisation that developed apart from the Roman tradition to satisfy certain needs of the time: "The complementary economy, the supplementary economy and the emigration thesis".[105] The first and second are to provide for and supplement England's needs as well as generate extra for export purposes. Sargent presents two more typologies of colonies by Europeans that are more historically wide-ranging:

> One was designed primarily to exploit the labour of the inhabitants and the natural resources of the country, with the Congo and India prime examples. The second, while still exploiting the natural resources of the country and sometimes the labour of the inhabitants, was primarily for settlement; most of the North and South American colonies, New Zealand and South Africa are examples.[106]

Neither typologies correspond to Utopian practice and do little justice to More by associating his *Utopia* with the actual colonisation that started two centuries later.[107]

Civilising the Backward Natives

The foundation of Utopia and its relationship to the natives have also been topics of strong interest to critics. Such criticism, as mentioned earlier, usually attempts to establish an analogy of King Utopus (and his soldiers) with Columbus who landed with his soldiers in

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[104] Ibid, p. 41.
[105] Ibid, pp. 106-7.
[106] 'Colonial', p. 200.
[107] After the death of Queen Elizabeth and during her reign, England "was not in occupation of one acre of soil outside the British Isles"; A. D. Innes, *The Maritime and Colonial Expansion of England under the Stuarts (1603-1714)* (London: Sampson Low, 1931), p. 3.

the New World. Later, the analogy has been extended to the concept of the Western civilising missions among ostensibly backward nations.[108] Raphael narrates a myth of the origin of the state of Utopia, which is usually alluded to by post-colonial critics:

> They say (and the appearance of the place confirms this) that their land was not always an island. But Utopus, who conquered the country and gave it his name (it had previously been called Abraxa), brought its rude and uncouth inhabitants to such a high level of culture and humanity that they now excel in that regard almost every other people.[109]

This has been read "as a kind of birth fantasy".[110] More's vision of bringing the natives to a higher cultural level is also seen to:

> Justify the violent means of bringing about such a desirable result; the casual elision of the violence attending this process in the course of a reported conversation once again helps to make of the utopian agenda an unquestioned matter of course for the conquering and reshaping entity.[111]

King Utopus' creation of the island[112] is compared with the creation of "an experimental site" on land that had belonged to the conquered barbarians.[113] A number of critics have further argued that the Utopians' benevolence towards other nations leads these people towards dependency, alongside being more direct victims of their colonisation practices.[114]

In trying to link the expedition of John Rastell with More, Russell Ames states that "one aspect of More's interest in exploring and colonising has been, it seems, overlooked. Utopia itself is in some ways a backward country to which [Raphael] Hythloday brings the

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[108] Holstun writes that this utopian 'civility', which derives from the law of nature, is the same as "European ethnocentrism", and More's narrator displays the "cultivation of Utopian civility among waste peoples in a wasteland". *A Rational*, p. 57.

[109] *Utopia*, pp. 31-32.

[110] Louis Marin, 'Utopiques: Jeux d'espaces', cited in *Three Early Modern Utopias: Utopia New Atlantis and The Isle of Pines*, ed. by Susan Bruce (Oxford: Oxford UP, 2008), p. 9. Marin probably echoes the text as Utopians' history recording begins with the "conquest of the island", *Utopia*, p. 33.

[111] Nina Chordas, *Forms*, p. 25.

[112] "After subduing them at his first landing, he cut a channel fifteen miles wide where their land joined the continent, and caused the sea to flow around the country. He put not only the natives to work at this task, but all his own soldiers too, so that the vanquished would not think the labor a disgrace. With the work divided among so many hands, the project was finished quickly, and the neighboring peoples, who at first had laughed at his folly, were struck with wonder and terror at his success". *Utopia*, p. 31.

[113] Holstun, *A Rational,* p. 55; What aided them is, perhaps, being confident of their "moral superiority" to their neighbours, adds Ritter, 'Utopia', p. 47; Another reading views *Utopia* as: "Projecting itself as a community of the elect, Utopia perceives itself as having acquired the right to shape the moral and material destiny of other nations. The unequal transaction between Utopia and non-Utopian countries can be contextualised within a colonialist ideology", Sarbani Chaudhury, 'Literature and Beyond: Contextualising More's Utopia', *Sosyoloji Dergisi*, 18 (2009), pp. 43-68 (p. 59).

[114] Holstun, *A Rational*, p. 55; Ritter, 'Utopia', p. 46; Avineri, 'War', p. 261; Susan Bruce thinks that "gift economies can act to keep your inferiors in their places". 'More's Utopia Colonialists, Refugees and the Nature of Sufficiency', in *Utopian Moments: Reading Utopian Texts*, ed. by J. C. Davis and Miguel Avilés (London: Bloomsbury, 2012), pp. 8-14 (p. 14).

best of European science and culture".[115] He attempts to prove this by the fact that Rastell took along with him Thomas Bercula, a printer. However, this statement fails to appreciate the fact that knowledge is being transferred both ways. Raphael believes that their economic, social, political, and judiciary systems are superior to the Old World. In short, *Utopia* is firstly criticised for modelling the natives of the New World according to western imagination of the time, secondly that the Utopians themselves act towards other natives in a similar fashion to the European's treatment of less advanced nations of the time, and thirdly that their policies leave other nations dependent on them. Again, however, the validity of these claims, when assessed against the text, appear to be less affirmed and supported as explained below.

Firstly, who are the natives to which these critics refer? Raphael's narration, although disturbing on the first reading, fails to give full details of the foundation story. For example, it is not clear whether these natives were inhabitants of this same land that was separated as an island from the main land by King Utopus or natives who voluntarily gathered to work and later became citizens. Further, it becomes clear that this King was not from a totally distant part of this world and he possessed first-hand knowledge of their situation. Raphael explains that "even before he came to the island, King Utopus had heard that the inhabitants were continually quarrelling over religious matters".[116] More importantly, this argument has not considered the description of the peoples and neighbouring nations of *Utopia*, both near and far, and has only picked up on Raphael's use of the word 'native'. The demarcation of Utopians from their 'native' neighbours is not conventional, since they are only separated by a thin man-made canal. The Utopians are the original inhabitants of the land prior to the foundation of Utopia and were most probably kin to these new neighbours, separated only by the Utopian way of governance. Hence, the Utopians originally shared the same territories with their neighbours, and it was King Utopus who made the man-made border. The point here is that it is difficult to establish the analogy for Europeans and natives to which critics hint. For the idea of the similarity between King Utopus and Columbus, there might be a more plausible basis for this story,

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[115] Ames, *Citizen,* p. 165; under More's influence, Rastell thought that "the peoples of the New World were so backward that European occupation and rule in America was not only justifiable, but absolutely essential to Indian well-being". Alfred A. Cave, 'Canaanites', p. 278.
[116] *Utopia*, p. 74.

which was extended by More. Perhaps he was struck by Plato's account of the philosopher king, or perhaps More shared Erasmus's admiration for the great kings of the past and sought to rebuke contemporary European monarchs as he does on other occasions in the text. Erasmus praised these pagan monarchs in contrast to the contemporary Christians ones, who are strikingly similar to King Utopus:

> In contrast to the Christian princes, they took pleasure in increasing the prosperity of the provinces they had subjugated in war; where rustic peoples were without education or law and living like wild beasts, they brought refinement and the arts of civilization; they populated uncultivated regions by building towns; they fortified unsafe places, and made men's lives easier by building bridges, wharves, embankments, and a thousand other such amenities, so that it turned out beneficial to be conquered.[117]

On the other hand, More's imagined description of the origin and practices of the people of the New World contrasts with the description of the natives by travellers of the time. The Utopians are much more advanced, at least economically and politically, than peoples of the Old World. Vespucci's account of the natives of the New World (whom Raphael has supposedly accompanied) depicted them as culturally lower than the Utopians, at least according to him, and on the contrary More rejects such a polarity:

> For so much as we learned of their manner of life and customs, it was that they go entirely naked, as well the men as the women […] warfare is used amongst them, which they carry on against people not of their own language, very cruelly, without granting life to any one, except (to reserve him) for greater suffering […] and they eat upon the ground without a table-cloth or any other cover, […] amongst those people we did not learn that they had any law.[118]

Secondly, the opinion that the Utopians claim superiority of their culture over the natives or other cultures is not true to the belief and practices of the Utopians. This claim aims to establish that the Utopians justify and acquire new lands because the natives are less advanced industrially, culturally, and politically. The only reason for being better than their neighbours, perhaps we are meant to believe, is their utopian organisation. The Utopians themselves "do not criticise the way other people live, nor do they boast of their own doings".[119] Moreover, and in contrast to the argument of the inferiority of other nations, Raphael describes people who live near Utopia to be civilised. It is indeed difficult

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[117] Excerpt cited from Hanan Yoran, *Between Utopia and Dystopia Erasmus, Thomas More, and the Humanist Republic of Letters* (Lanham, Md.: Lexington Books, 2010), p. 119.

[118] *The Harvard Classics*, Volume 43, ed. by Charles William Eliot (New York, N.Y.: P.F. Collier & Son, 1910), pp. 30-35.

[119] *Utopia*, p. 77.

to locate these backward natives, to whom critics refer, among all the civilised and highly esteemed nations. Raphael himself, for example, admires the laws of the Macarians, "who also live not far from Utopia",[120] and he describes the complexity of the "nearby nations" and other ones who are "farther off" from Utopia, who used to exchange ambassadors with Utopia and have trade relations. These peoples (e.g. the Anemolians) are believed to outshine the Utopians with their fine clothes and expensive jewellery.[121] On the other hand, and perhaps in contrast to the wish of Raphael and More (i.e., that some of their customs be adopted by Europeans), none of the Utopian neighbouring nations adopt their commonwealth practices. The Utopians have been living near the peoples and nations of the land for hundreds of years and yet have not attempted to export their ideals in any way. In fact, the Utopians rarely visit foreign nations.[122] Commenting on this restriction of travel, Logan believes that More reflects the belief of Greek theorists who restricted the interaction with other nations to limit "the possibility of contamination by inferior practices".[123] If this restriction means a rejection of everything that could arrive from outside then it also means nothing goes outside, but this was not the case either. This is not accurate, as it does not appreciate the fact that Utopians establish trade relations, exchange ambassadors, and have many allies among their neighbours. They show much respect to the ambassadors who come with different customs. There is one account of a group of Anemolian ambassadors "who lived farther off and had had fewer dealings with the Utopians". When visiting Utopia they are laughed at by children for the gold and jewellery in their dresses but the mothers "hush" them to show respect.[124] Clearly, the Utopians have abandoned any sense of superiority, and indeed their institutions and culture are designed to discourage such feelings.

Thirdly, the argument that their policies leave other nations dependent on them is not only overstated but also odd. This Utopian benevolence comes in two forms, commodities/money and direct military assistance. The question is what the Utopians have

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[120] Ibid, p. 25.

[121] Ibid, p. 47.

[122] Ibid, p. 48; Francis Bacon's *New Atlantis* follows *Utopia* (which in turn follows Plato) but in a stricter way, where the King had forbidden all his people from navigating missions to obtain new knowledge from other nations.

[123] *The Meaning*, p. 204; for Avineri this is because that which is outside of utopia is considered evil, 'War', p. 288.

[124] *Utopia*, p. 47.

gained from the other nations in return for such assistance and whether it is a sort of compensation offered by the Utopians. The Utopians maintain an equal relationship with their neighbours and other nations with whom they trade, calling them "friends". Friends, then, are the people with whom the Utopians trade and usually do not call back their credit from. As they produce much more than their needs, they export the surplus to other nations. However, one seventh of what they produce is donated to the poor of the importing country, with the rest sold for a moderate sum. In exchange, they receive needed goods like iron as well as luxury items such as enormous amounts of gold and silver.[125] However, most of the money that is due stays in credit with the importing nation and is rarely claimed. They claim the money in only two situations: when another nation is in more need and when Utopia is at war. The Utopians never use their trade balance or loans to exert influence over the less advantaged nations, and thus the intention of the former is clearly not to drag other nations into their dependency. Initially, this practice of overproduction is not only geared for export, since although it is the habit of the Utopians to produce more than they need, they primarily share it with the next city of the Utopian island and then export whatever remains. Finally, and most importantly, Utopia is also dependent on other nations for its iron supply. More did not imagine a complete autarky and left his utopia lacking this necessary commodity, thus guaranteeing its dependence on its neighbours for its supply.

British Empire and Expansionism

Critics of *Utopia*, including some of its defenders, assert More's role in encouraging a British imperialism that was realised much later, on the basis that More and Rastell had schemes to extend "the King's dominions" through expansion in the New World,[126] an Empire that would enhance the wellbeing of the nation. Likewise, More was seen to be "one of the first Englishmen to express himself on the justice of expansion".[127] This was not only "less obnoxious" than "the continental kind of conquest, but as truly commendable

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[125] Ibid, p. 45.

[126] Donner, *Introduction*, p. 62.

[127] This was expressed by others as mentioned above, here: Wilcomb E. Washburn, 'The Moral and Legal Justifications for Dispossessing the Indians', in *Seventeenth-Century America: Essays in Colonial History*, ed. by James Morton Smith (Chapel Hill, N.C.: North Carolina UP, 1959), pp. 15-32 (p. 22).

and in accordance with the laws of nature", according to him.[128] Avineri rejects most of the criticism against More, but also argues that there is a core validity in these claims.[129] Logan somehow approvingly cites a commemorator who believed that More's "planned state was a danger to world-peace".[130] Holstun adds that its rationality contains "a program of domination and imperial expansion",[131] and for Ritter, Utopian views and practices, express More's attempt to contain the national pride of modern nation states and their striving for power, and in doing this he "opened the gate wide for imperialistic aims".[132] These critics usually support their conclusion with evidence of the Utopian practices towards neighbours. Logan believes that Utopian foreign policy "seems hard to distinguish from imperialism",[133] and for Ritter its policy, which he also does not distinguish from "mere modern imperialism", is painted with missionary zeal.[134] Utopia, Avineri similarly asserts, enjoys an absolute power in the New World, and this power grew "based on a preconceived, premeditated plan of securing for Utopia absolute security and eventual hegemony".[135]

Conversely, the fact remains that British imperialism emerged at a much later stage, after the reign of Elizabeth I.[136] England made little, if any, attempts to expand in the continent in the first place. Here More is faithful to the city state ideal of Plato that contrasts the Roman Empire model. Concerning this kind of 'world empire', and as Starnes rightly shows: "Where Rome sought an abstract union of all peoples and was, as a matter of principle, indifferent to their concrete interests, More has not the slightest interest in a world state unifying, in some sort, all the nations".[137] More's Utopians, inspired by classical Greece, also contrast the recommendations given in Machiavelli's *The Prince*: "sole motive was the subjection of a conquered people, and the best means to achieve it was to found colonies in a few places to serve as keys to the new dominion".[138] More

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[128] Ritter, 'Utopia', p. 46.
[129] 'War', p. 223.
[130] Cited in Logan, *The Meaning*; Logan believes these comments to be plausible, p. 224.
[131] *A Rational*, p. 32.
[132] 'Utopia', p. 48.
[133] *The Meaning*, p. 223.
[134] 'Utopia', p. 46.
[135] 'War', p. 262.
[136] *The Maritime*, p. 5.
[137] Colin Starnes, *The New*, pp. 61-62.
[138] Cited in Donner, *Introduction*, p. 41.

clearly critiqued such ideas, which were later embodied by Machiavelli and were against the practices of the Utopians.

Thus, the similarity of some Utopian practices with later imperialism does not lead to the conclusion that Utopia is its blueprint. Even in matters of contemporary politics and attempts to build empires in the Old World and Europe, the text is very clear. Further, and prior to the introduction of *Utopia*, Raphael condemns imperialist plans of France in Europe:[139]

> Imagine, if you will, that I am at the court of the king of France. Suppose I were sitting in his royal council, meeting in secret session, with the king himself presiding, and all the cleverest counsellors were hard at work devising a set of crafty machinations by which the king might keep hold of Milan, recover Naples, which has proved so slippery; then to overthrow the Venetians and subdue all Italy; Next add Flanders, Barbant, and the whole of Burgundy to his realm, besides some other nations he had in mind to invade.[140]

The above description and commentary of Raphael has been largely ignored by critics and defenders of *Utopia*. In fact, his refusal to enter the service of kings and princes is for this exact reason: distaste for warfare and the conquering of others. If Raphael had any intention to solve the problem of Europe through the New World or to guide the British expansion, his services and knowledge are vital for this purpose. More would have easily proposed this as he does for other matters. Raphael rebukes princes who "apply themselves to the arts of war", and are "more set on acquiring new kingdoms by hook or by crook than on governing well those that they already have".[141] He compliments nations and kings, of whom he is aware, that are content with what they have and direct their efforts towards good governance. The Utopians are no exception among these peoples and nations in their distaste for expansion. Raphael complements the Polylerites who are "a sizable nation" and are "contented with the products of their own land, which is by no means unfruitful, [and who] have little to do with any other nation, nor are they much visited. According to their ancient customs, they do not enlarge their boundaries".[142] Raphael praises them as they decided not to live for the glory and ambitions of this nature. Later, Raphael also refers to other nations with similar experiences that contrast the conquering and expansionism of the Old World, with France given as an example. The Achorians offered their king to rule over

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[139] More could have in mind either Charles VIII (died in 1498), Louis XII (died in 1515), or Francis I (reigning from 1515). Adams, *Utopia*, p. 20.
[140] *Utopia*, p. 20.
[141] Ibid, p. 8.
[142] Ibid, pp. 15-16.

their kingdom or the one he conquered "because he couldn't rule them both",[143] and thus they demonstrate an understanding that the price of conquering and ruling is at the expense of the people's interests. Raphael also approves of the Macarians, who put in place measures to ensure their ruler would not embark "into aggressive adventures".[144] These examples then clearly indicate Raphael's and the Utopian's view of expansion and conquering.

Once these claims are investigated in the light of Utopian practices, it would be clear how confusing they are. The practice of expansion is, after all, evidently against the wish and intention of the founding Utopian king, as making Utopia an island makes it difficult to expand much beyond its territories in the first place.[145] The individual 54 cities of the island abstain from expanding: "No city wants to enlarge its boundaries, for the inhabitants consider themselves good tenants rather than landlords".[146] Even if a city is built outside the borders, it would almost be attached to the island: "The nearest are at least twenty-four miles apart, and the farthest are not so remote that a man cannot go on foot from one to the other in a day".[147] The Utopians themselves, despite their knowledge and awareness of "their envious neighbours who have often attempted their ruin",[148] are never provoked or use this as a pretext for invasion or war against their neighbours. A final example would further clarify the Utopians' disregard for imperial ambitions. Those nations whom the Utopians assist to free from invasion or internal strife ask them "to rule over them". Instead, the Utopians only commission an individual to serve there more like a judge than administrator and to return to Utopia once the term has ended. These nations request this service for two reasons, as Raphael outlines. The first is that the Utopian person is not "tempted by money" and does not collect any when there is no use for it, and secondly these officers "can have no partisan or factional feelings, since they are strangers to the affairs of the city over which they rule".[149]

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[143] Ibid, p. 22.
[144] Ibid, p. 25.
[145] Although a country like Britain, an island itself, created the greatest empire, here the island is manmade and intentionally designed to be so from the start.
[146] *Utopia*, p. 32; the relationship between *Utopia* and the letter of Vespucci is further established, as this is similar to the native Americans: "and the cause of their wars is not for lust of dominion, nor of extending their frontiers, nor for inordinate covetousness", *The Harvard Classics, Volume 43*, p. 33.
[147] *Utopia*, p. 32.
[148] Ibid, p. 84.
[149] Ibid, p. 64.

Utopia **and the Law of Nature**

The fact remains, though, that Utopia does send out colonies whenever overpopulation occurs, and if it is not desired in itself or designed to encourage European colonisation, as argued here, then what is More's position? The matter has been further complicated as More invokes the 'law of nature' and the 'natives'.[150] The proposition here is that it is indeed tied to the concept of natural law and overpopulation that More understood, proposed and accordingly justified. This overpopulation, however, is viewed as a restrictive and disruptive force to Utopia and not a source of empowerment and domination.

We are drawn to agree with the reading, which emphasises the contradiction of this practice with other benevolent actions of the Utopians. This apparent contradiction (that the Utopians do not consider this practice as an invasion) should not have escaped More, unless under certain justifications and serious considerations. The fact that he takes much time to justify it indicates that he is aware of the contradiction.

Above all, we might stress some details that critics have missed or ignored. The Utopians neither claim nor seize land that is already cultivated by the natives. They claim the land that is not only waste but also "uncultivated" and not only because it is not needed but because it is "too barren and paltry",[151] and if it also fails to support the natives themselves in the first place. Further, and from More's description, it is similar to the 'no man's land' between two nations. More seems to be closer to the Greek practice of establishing an adjacent colony than any other form of colonisation. This was also a normal practice among most of the nations until borders were drawn. Most importantly, this is not among the good reasons that the Utopians require in order to wage war when necessary. It is mentioned under 'Social and Business Relations' and not under 'Warfare', and thus is not on their list of moral and necessary wars. The list of their wars is like positive law that they can change and amend under different contexts and circumstances, but this particular one is a natural law and thus beyond their control. We also notice that this overpopulation

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[150] For Avineri, "the quest for empire and colonisation is thus elevated into a law of nature, and fighting against the Utopians becomes tantamount to fighting against nature itself". 'War', p. 264. The concept of natural law is essential not only to More but the whole age as R. S. White explains: "The concept dominated Renaissance thought and, through its literary equivalent, later to be called poetic justice, it influenced all English writers of the period in fundamental ways". *Natural Law*, p. xi.

[151] *Utopia*, p. 41.

is regarded as a problem that needs to be tackled. It is a natural limiting force that More compares to plagues,[152] with both occurring in the same manner. They are juxtaposed and presented as uncontrollable and undesirable, and both are the causes of population mobilisation, with the first leading to the abandonment of colonies and the latter to the creation of them.

More's justification and invocation of the law of nature might appear simple and ill-intentioned, but when set against a number of other Utopian practices it becomes clear that it is honest, consistent, and justifiable to an extent. For More, this aspect of land possession is necessary to secure and guarantee survival, and in its extended sense is related to other principles inspired by nature and not for foreseeable economic benefits or 'victor's perspective'. As will be shown below, More does not abuse the term to justify colonial impulses or to arrive at this conclusion without reason or perceivable justice, equity and conscience. More's conscience guides him to the reason that this law of nature is authorised by another law of nature which is procreation that makes this practice a lawful right. The adding of the element of conscience to natural law is typical to writers with religious affiliation. R. S. White writes "while earlier traditions of Natural Law relied solely on reason, Christianity, largely through Aquinas and in England St German, added conscience".[153] His conscience becomes a practical judgment justified by natural moral code. For Utopians, their neighbours are not in the right reason and depriving the Utopians from land is under false conscience driven by greed. Here, he echoes St. Aquinas:

> The process of moral reasoning results in an act of conscience, a particular judgement to act or refrain from acting. Good judgements are based on proper understanding and lead to reasonable decisions. Reason is competent to control, and proper control is exercised in light of reason shaped by the right purposes.[154]

His juxtaposition of conscience and natural law is not accidental or exclusive to this work. This was also reflected in his last stand and decision, More wrote: "for mine own self follow mine own conscience, for which myself must make answer unto God, and . . . leave

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[152] I expand on Richard G. Stevens' argument that "to More those plagues signify the limits of rational control of the political" and apply and relate it to overpopulation. 'On the Practicality of More's Utopia', *Social Research*, 33:1 (1966), pp. 30-46 (p. 36).

[153] R. S. White, *Natural Law in English Renaissance Literature* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1996), p. 2.

[154] Cited from *The Oxford Handbook of Theological Ethics*, ed. by Gilbert Meilaender and William Werpehowski (Oxford: Oxford University Press 2007), p. 151.

every other man to his own conscience".[155] In the context of *Utopia*, firstly, this law of nature is not only for non-Utopians and invoked in certain cases, but for everyone in all situations.[156] The Utopians do not retrieve the money other nations owe them because they think that it is not "right to take what they don't need away from people who do need it".[157] Based on the same principle of need, they retrieve money from one nation and give it to a needier one during war.[158] Secondly, this law of nature establishes a fellowship that cannot be severed by boundaries that artificially separate people from each other. This is the same reason why the Utopians refuse to make treaties: "If a man scorns nature herself, is there any reason to think he will care about mere words?"

> The treaty implies that men who are separated by some natural obstacle as slight as a hill or a brook are joined by no bond of nature; it assumes that they are born rivals and enemies, and are right in aiming to destroy one another except insofar as the treaty restrains them.[159]

Thirdly, there is an easier alternative to war with one's neighbours if the Utopians sought merely to acquire land. The Utopians hold lands in different locations that were seized from warlords who had declared war on Utopia. The Utopians commission a citizen to run these estates and might claim them as their domain, but these colonies are not held as an integral part of Utopia. The Utopians refuse forced and false domains, and a similar nature of relationship to the land is found also for the land of Utopia itself: "The inhabitants consider themselves good tenants rather than landlords".[160] The reason that guides this is if you abandoned it, we have the right to take it, and the same applies to the Utopians. Once their island is less populated these colonies are abandoned, and so they are not designed to support the mother island but rather are for the sole purpose of dealing with overpopulation. Alternative means, available for the sixteenth century audience, would be infanticide or the building of a vast empire where a nation would never run out of land. More was left between two Platonic traditions, a small sized state and population control, and while he

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[155] Cited from *The Last Letters of Thomas More*, ed. by Alvaro De Silva (Michigan: Wm. B. Eerdmans Publishing, 2000), p. 94.

[156] For the Utopians, "when a man obeys the dictates of reason in choosing one thing and avoiding another, he is following nature", *Utopia*, p. 51. Eugene R. Hammond concludes that "these features are precisely those found in the philosophical writings of the Stoics, who at the same time regarded nature and reason as terms correlative with justice". 'Nature-Reason-Justice', p. 451.

[157] *Utopia*, p. 46.

[158] Ibid, p. 46.

[159] Ibid, p. 65.

[160] Ibid, p. 32.

was faithful to the first he could not adhere to the latter. More considered the evil of a small colony in the neighbouring land to be a lesser evil than building an empire (waging decisive war and annexing a large territory enough to support many generations instead of dealing with it each time overpopulation occurs) and practising infanticide, especially as his Utopia is designed to last forever in contrast to that of Plato.[161]

On the other hand, More was caught with another a dilemma, as "their duty to nature requires work, so their duty to their country draws them to beget children".[162] His response was that you own what you can toil and cultivate, which he considered to be in perfect harmony with nature. This was practised firstly by King Utopus, who only enclosed what his soldiers and the natives could manage.

Other options for the Utopians include buying land as they have more than enough resources to do so. The conclusion is that it is their natural right that has been acquired only through their labour and hard work. Surprisingly, the thinkers who formed the early modern concept of the law of nature also endorsed this. John Donne, similar to More, writes:

> Again, if the land be peopled, and cultivated by that people, and that land produce in abundance such things, for want whereof their neighbors or others (being not enemies) perish, the law of nations may justify some force in seeking by permutation of other commodities which they need, to come to some of theirs.[163]

A similar supposition is drawn by Locke, who said that "Any one has liberty to make use of the waste", which he defines as "more than the people, who dwell on it, do, or can make use of, and so still lie in common". For Locke, "nobody has originally a private dominion exclusive of the rest of mankind". Yet by 'the labour of his body and the work of his hands […] whatsoever then he removes out of the state that nature has provided […] he has mixed his labour with, and joined to it something that is his own, and thereby makes it is property".[164] Other intellectuals expressed a similar opinion.[165] Such an extension of More's

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[161] They build a city, a colony, and not an entire new Utopia. This is as a city in Utopia is only about "twelve miles of farm land […] available in every direction" that could sustain its people. *Utopia*, p. 32.

[162] *Utopia*, p. 77.

[163] Henry Alford, *The Works of John Donne Vol. VI* (London: John W. Parker, 1839), p. 234.

[164] John Locke, *Two Treatises of Government and a Letter Concerning Toleration*, ed. by Ian Shapiro (New Haven, Conn.: Yale UP, 2003), pp. 183, 119, 111, 112.

[165] Hugo Grotius (Dutch jurist, 1583-1645), extending on natural law, stated that "if usable things were left unused, there was no property in them, and hence people could appropriate land left unused by others". Cited in Ellen Meiksins Wood, *Liberty and Property: A Social History of Western Political Thought from Renaissance to Enlightenment* (London: Verso, 2012), p. 126.

concept might support the association of *Utopia* with later European colonialism and the misreading of this text.

Finally, we can suggest that the message of property gained through labour was proposed as a hint to solving the issue of land enclosure in England, as More had in mind the poor of his country. Land should be cultivated to feed the hungry, and those who deny this should be criticised. Book I focuses upon this and Book II answers it. This correlates with the main motive and concern of Raphael (Book I), who justified the Utopian's right according to the natural jurisprudential basis that needy people had the right to unused land even if others who leave it uncultivated claimed it. The moral issue here is labour versus idleness, and not creating a paradise for the people of Utopia (although the New World was depicted as a paradise and would not have needed all this hard work).[166] The lands of the New World were also depicted as fertile and scarcely populated, which would have saved the Utopians from justifying the colonisation of other tracts of land. This further undermines the belief that More wished to exploit the New World and the relation of his work to it. The Utopians have an abundance of products but they reject any right obtained not from their labour. The point here is employment and toil, and this explains the focus on agrarian activities rather than industry or trade, towards which More's world was heading.[167] This brings back the issue of enclosure (mentioned at the opening of the chapter) as a core motive. It would be useful for increasing export output and the enrichment of a minority of people, including people of his circle,[168] but would turn the majority of the population into an army of idlers and beggars: "For they leave no land free for the plow: they enclose every acre for pasture; they destroy houses and abolish towns".[169] Raphael takes every opportunity to remind us of this: "Let fewer people be brought up in idleness. Let agriculture be restored". As a result he believes that "there will be useful work

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[166] This contrasts with the description of the New World, as Vespucci writes: "If the terrestrial paradise is in some part of this land, it cannot be very far from the coast we visited". *Letters of Amerigo Vespucci*, p. 48.

[167] This is also apparently confirmed by historical evidence. Barbara Arneil states "Agrarian activities were thus greatly encouraged, but dating back to the time of More, those who wished to settle many people favored crop growing over grazing animals as an agrarian activity". 'Trade, Plantations, and Property: John Locke and the Economic Defense of Colonialism', *Journal of the History of Ideas*, 55:4 (1994), pp. 591-609 (p. 600).

[168] For example, his closest friend, Antonio Bonvisi, accumulated a fortune from the wool trade. Richard Marius, *Thomas More*, p. 156.

[169] *Utopia*, p. 12.

for the whole crowd of those now idle",[170] which is in contrast to reality where all these workers are in useless trades, or are idlers and servants. He even includes the clergy and scholars in this argument. Here, it is apparent that More does not prioritise the survival of his Utopia and its order, but rather its individuals and their dignity and rights.

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[170] Ibid, p. 14.

Chapter Three: *Looking Backward: Utopian World Federation*

This chapter addresses Edward Bellamy's *Looking Backward*: *2000–1887*[1] and the accusation that it is expansionist and a project of Americanisation. This criticism emerged because Bellamy's utopia is one of gradual growth, both nationally and internationally, in contrast to its predecessors which were designed as utopian enclaves established as havens in a troubled world. In Bellamy's work, by the year 2000 the United States has become the first utopia and was an advocate of the subsequent world federation, which many countries, especially the advanced ones, have joined, with the rest anticipated to do so. His vision is thus regarded as a "narrative of expansion", and often interpreted as "imperialistic" and a blueprint of "Americanisation", which emphasises American superiority over the rest of the word.[2] Also, in his anticipation of the world in the year 2000, he fails to envision all peoples on an equal footing.[3] In addition to these conclusions, the dominant thrust of recent critics is that the work embodies the ideologies of developmentalism, social Darwinism, and globalising tendencies.[4] Occasionally reference is also made to a number of actual utopian communities that were thought to have been directly influenced by *Looking Backward*, such as that of William Lane, an Australian who established a cooperative colony in Paraguay, and that of Philip Winser, a farmer from Kent, who set up the Kaweah Cooperative Commonwealth.[5]

By exploring the text, this chapter argues that such a proposed scheme to include the world into a utopian federation aims to avoid war and conflict and to bring about equality to all nations. This conclusion can be reached because Bellamy highlights and recognises the suffering of the world in general, the process that this new organisation is brought by (a project of nationalisation which supports sovereignty of the individual nations over their resources), the trade council established to manage the international affairs which is based on the equality of all its members (and the role of the writer's nation in the future world), and the measures in place to ensure peace (the first country to disarm is the United States). Further, the nations of Bellamy's millennial world are all progressing under an economic law of evolution that Bellamy modified for his global utopia. His vision is more a development of the utopian genre and vision, and less a representative of American literature, which progresses and expands into a utopian world.

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[1] First published in 1888. Occasional reference extends to his other works, which are less preeminent sources for the Bellamyite vision of the future.

[2] Further, he is claimed to have had "dreams of rebuilding the world on the model of an American general store", as a French critic commented. Quoted in George Levin, 'Changing French Attitudes', in *Edward Bellamy Abroad: An American Prophet's Influence*, ed. by Sylvia E. Bowman (New York, N.Y.: Twayne, 1962), pp. 276-304 (p. 297). He is also viewed to have considered the US as a moral exemplar to the world by Susan M. Matarese, in 'Foreign Policy and the American Self Image: Looking Back at *Looking Backward*', *American Transcendental Quarterly New Series*, 3:1 (1989), pp. 45-54. Phillip Wegner remarks that his works include "an apologia for imperialism that finds its roots back in More's *Utopia*", *Imaginary*, p. 73.

[3] William Nichols and Charles P. Henry, 'Imagining a Future in America: A Racial Perspective', *Alternative Futures* 1:1 (1978), pp. 39-50.

[4] Thomas Peyser, *Utopia and Cosmopolis: Globalization in the Era of American Literary Realism* (Durham, North Carolina: Duke UP, 1998), p. 29; Robin Balthrope, 'Bellamy's Looking Backward, 2000–1887, Globalism, and Race', *Contemporary Justice Review*, 9:3 (2006), pp. 303–315; Ahmad, *Landscapes*, pp. 19-20; Pfaelzer, 'Dreaming', p. 324.

[5] This is despite the fact that Bellamy rejected these experiments and colonies.

Looking at *Looking Backward*

More dominated the form of literary utopias in Europe throughout the early seventeenth century which produced significant works including the *City of the Sun* by the Italian friar Tommaso Campanella (1602), German theologian Johannes Valentinus Andreae's *Christianopolis* (1619), and Francis Bacon's *New Atlantis* (1627). The century also introduced a diversity of utopias written by women, most importantly Margaret Cavendish's *The Blazing-World* (1666). These works tended to present a Christian worldview. Immediately following More, there were attempts to social and religious reformation. Among them was Thomas Müntzer' uprising which lead to his death in 1525. The Enlightenment shifted the intellectual environment to utopian social theory form integrating and promoting utopian principles in the writings of the period. An example would be Jean-Jacques Rousseau's *Social Contract*. Besides, the eighteenth century witnessed the development of anti-utopia initiated by Jonathan Swift *Gulliver's Travels* (1726), and another strand of 'individualistic' or 'Robinsonades' utopias, depicting the society's transition to individualistic ways. Utopia was also transformed from the realm of fiction to manifesto with the French Revolution. Marx and Engels continued to prophesize revolution for a communist order on a global scale. This as the declaration of immediate principles and political action were more attractive than literary 'blueprints'. On the other hand, utopias flourished in the guise of communitarian throughout the nineteenth century. Famous figures of communitarian socialists were Henri de Saint-Simon, Charles Fourier and Robert Owen who inspired a range of short-lived utopian communities. The rebirth of literary utopia came with Bellamy's *Looking Backward* that responded to the international trade and commerce and progress in technology and the dependence of nations on each other. With his work, the geographical boundaries of an ideal utopia enlarged to encompass the industrialised nations of the time.

The narrative is developed through two romances that take place at two different times: 1887 and 2000. Introduced by an unnamed narrator in the preface, Bellamy's protagonist is Julian West, who takes control of the narrative and speaks "for himself"

rather than continue to be spoken about by the initial speaker.[6] West was born in Boston during the afternoon on 26th December, and it is understandable if readers are initially perplexed if the character's name and date of birth underpin certain impulses in the novel or it might only represent any contemporary western character.[7] However, although there are many religious and cultural influences in the novel, neither the name nor the date of birth (with Christian and Westerns connotations) are extrapolated upon. Born into an aristocratic Boston family, West is later engaged to Edith Bartlett and their marriage is delayed due to the frequent strikes by the construction workers who are building their marital home.

West suffers from insomnia,[8] and so retires to a specially constructed and secret chamber in the basement of his house in order to be hypnotised into sleep and later revived by his African-American servant, "a faithful colored man by the name of Sawyer", who lives with West and takes care of his needs. Although his status is not clarified, it seems as if Sawyer is indeed a servant and not a slave, in part because slavery had been abolished at the time of writing. Having been successfully induced into sleep, West remains in this state for 113 years, kept safe in his locked basement in Boston. His house catches fire and his servant, the only one knows his secret chamber, perishes in the fire. He is revived by the family of Dr. Leete in the year 2000, and finds himself unaged and in a utopian world. This transition scenario[9] introduced a temporal relocation to the genre in contrast to the traditional spatial relocation.[10] Instead of relocating his utopia to a distant and/or unknown land in the present, Bellamy has West remain in the same space but in the distant future, however a utopian future for all mankind and not only Boston as we will come to know.

Prior to the transition, West describes himself as "rich and also educated", perhaps to rule out feelings that his experience is driven from a personal bitterness towards the

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[6] Edward Bellamy, *Looking Backward 2000–1887*, ed. by Matthew Beaumont (Oxford: Oxford UP, 2007), p. 4. All other quotations are from this edition. The protagonist's opening statements draw on the same argument of the author's preface, which makes it difficult to recognise the switching of narrators.

[7] It is thought to evocate the principle of Manifest Destiny (that the United States is destined to expand from coast to coast) and to contain imperialist associations. Matthew Beaumont, editor of the work's edition, p. 198

[8] This, as Tom Towers suggests, "aptly symbolizes the hero's nineteenth century agony". 'The Insomnia of Julian West', *American Literature*, 47:1 (1975), pp. 52-63 (p. 63).

[9] Claeys and Sargent show that his method is not original but has been widely imitated after him. *Utopia Reader*, p. 240.

[10] One precedent is Washington Irving's *Rip Van Winkle* (1819), in which the protagonist makes a similar temporal relocation – he falls asleep only to wake many years later to find that the War of Independence has happened. Thus he has arrived in an arguably better world, with America no longer a British colony but a new nation.

society and its economic system.[11] The 'rich and educated' model for all citizens runs throughout the two worlds of *Looking Backward*, since "a rich man living among the poor, an educated man among the uneducated, was like one living in isolation among a jealous and alien race".[12] These words, however harsh, help the readers to distance themselves from their world through a sense of shock, and thus expect a better world that does not favour the elite few at the expense of the rest. Through this, the audience will experience what Darko Suvin defines as 'cognitive estrangement', where the present is viewed as unfamiliar and even hostile.[13] Instead of dealing with the issue of the present, Bellamy strives to present a future that is plausible and familiar. This utopian estrangement also permits, as Sargisson argues, "utopias to function critically".[14] In further describing the situation, West introduces an analogy that has become a classic in describing economic inequality: he compares his society with a coach, which "the masses of humanity were harnessed to and dragged toilsomely along a very hilly and sandy road" by a driver who was the personification of hunger, with the comfortable seats reserved only for the rich.[15] In the analogy, both West and his fiancée are amongst the privileged few and thus ride on the top of the coach. However, despite this apparent understanding of social inequality, whilst still in the nineteenth century West displays strong class intolerance. He decides to abandon his old family mansion because the quarter has been invaded by "tenement houses and manufactories" and is therefore no longer suitable for his aristocratic bride. Although he is ignorant and careless about the causes of these strikes, he blames the labourers for the delay in constructing his new house. Therefore, the earlier insight and empathy with the poor somewhat contradict with his character. On one hand, he does not sympathise or empathise with the working class and their cause, and nor does he inquire about the cause of their disturbances and consequent strikes, yet on the other hand he provides such a deep analysis

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[11] Although some scholars, such as Wilfred McClay, highlight that it is "a highly personal document, registering the discontents of its author". 'Edward Bellamy and the Politics of Meaning', *American Scholar*, 64:2 (1995), pp. 264-271 (p. 265).

[12] In the world of 2000, West is told that "we should not consider life worth living if we had to be surrounded by a population of ignorant, boorish, coarse, wholly uncultivated men and women, as was the plight of the few educated in your day". *Looking Backward*, p. 134.

[13] The science fiction device of cognitive estrangement, according to Suvin, is "the ability of successful science fiction and utopian novels to render the present unfamiliar, opening up a distance between readers and their world". *Metamorphoses*, p. 4.

[14] Author, 'Strange Places: Estrangement, Utopianism, and Intentional Communities', *Utopian Studies* 18:3 (2007), pp. 393-424 (p. 394).

[15] *Looking Backward*, pp. 6-7.

of the inequality between the rich and the poor through this extended metaphor of the riders and pullers of the carriage.

Once he wakes up, Dr. Leete tells him "your manner indicates that you are a man of culture, which I am aware was by no means the matter of course in your day it now is". Although readers might expect to find a radically different setting in order to highlight the temporal transition West experiences, this comment makes it clear that some of the culture and values of the nineteenth century have been inherited by the new society.[16] Bellamy, generally, did not advocate a drastic cultural transformation and *Looking Backward* builds on both the existing economy and culture of the nineteenth century. In this regard, he wanted to be more realistic and thus depended on existing organisations rather than erasing them in favour of something new and unknown. Despite this assurance, the idea of physical transportation becomes less extraordinary to West in comparison to what he discovers of the social and economic changes. In the chapters that follow this awakening, the narrative focuses on comparing the old and new worlds, which is common in the utopian tradition.

West's first question to his interlocutor is on the issue of labour, which had been the most pressing concern of his time. Dr. Leete says that it has been solved and "the solution came as the result of a process of industrial evolution which could not have terminated otherwise". West then inquires about another system, which is "universal military service". He is informed that it is a somehow similar organisation that solved the problem, when the "nation became the employer of labor". The nation has united as a business partnership, with all its citizens as equal partners. This business is run by an industrial army,[17] which includes all able-bodied citizens between the ages of 21 and 45, regardless of gender. Bellamy has remodelled the function of the army to make the system practical and functional, considering its non-profit and bureaucratic hierarchy and inclusive of all classes and parties.[18] Although it comes as an answer to the disorder and disruption caused by

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[16] Bellamy is seen, not falsely, to have wished to retain this culture, specifically his middle class culture.

[17] The industrial army is the most unique element of the work. However, it is believed to have been borrowed from other contemporary writers and thus is not original to him.

[18] However, he is believed to have "exaggerated the efficiencies of bigness and apparently had no conception of the realities of bureaucratic maladministration". Daniel Aaron, *Men of Good Hope: A Story of American Progressives* (New York, N.Y.: Oxford UP, 1951), p. 124. For Arthur Morgan, his "preoccupation with military affairs was an interest without an object". *Edward Bellamy* (New York, N.Y.: Columbia UP, 1944), p. 318.

labour distresses, it is still seen to be authoritarian.[19] Bellamy himself was passionate about military life and organisation. Another function, to associate it with other utopias, is the role of this Plato-like military organisation to protect the system as Bellamy did not entrust it solely to the better citizens he envisioned. He did not wish any disturbances, such as the ones of the nineteenth century he describes, to undermine his new system. Bellamy also draws on the public's admiration of the military institution of the time and in his opening sentences refers to the national holiday known as 'Decoration Day'.[20]

Now firmly ensconced in the year 2000, West falls in love with Edith Leete, who acts as a romantic relief to the discussions between him and her father about the transition and the new system. Later, he also considers her to be a "consolation"[21] for his loss of the first Edith. This duplication of the Ediths is interpreted by some critics as a "comforting sense of natural continuity".[22] Nonetheless, it is also regarded to be Bellamy's inability to clearly consider new contexts and events of his new world setting, which can be supported by other nineteenth century familiar contexts that Bellamy retains or slightly modifies.[23] The love story helps him to integrate emotionally into the new world, although the duplication of this character adds a number of contradictions, similar to the character of West himself. For example, despite the future Edith's praises of the new system, we learn that love is in crisis in her world. Edith, we are told, wishes to have a man like West after reading his letters to Edith I, saying "that she would never marry till she found a lover like Julian West, and there were none such nowadays". It seems that as with other issues, love has been standardised in the new world, and thus West is a rarity among the men of her generation. Additionally, this utopian generation seems to possess little knowledge of the

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[19] Although the majority of commentators have classified it to be democratic, many others tend to see it otherwise. Mumford writes, "he has invented a high-powered engine of repression, and he does not fool us when he conceals the safety-valve". *The Story*, p. 167; also Arthur Lipow, in his *Authoritarian Socialism in America: Edward Bellamy and the Nationalist Movement* (Berkeley, California: California UP, 1982), strongly opposes classifying him as democratic. John C. Thomas portrays him along Americanist radicals such as Henry George and Henry Demarest Lloyd, *Alternative America: Henry George, Edward Bellamy, Henry Demarest Lloyd and the Adversary Tradition* (Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard UP, 1983).

[20] This is especially to consider the importance of the Civil War and the modern military organisation to the nation, also the number of US presidents of the time who had a military background.

[21] *Looking Backward*, p. 177.

[22] Jonathan Auerbach, 'The Nation Organized: Utopian Impotence in Edward Bellamy's *Looking Backward*', *American Literary History*, 6:1 (1994), pp. 24-47 (p. 37).

[23] Ernst Bloch, for example, wonders if any means of life is radically changed into something better. *The Principle of Hope*, p. 612.

nineteenth century, despite the implication that the people of the year 2000 are well educated. Edith also thwarts such a reading, as she seems at the very least to be uneducated in historical matters. She also shows awkward unfamiliarity with words and concepts, such as "menial" jobs. Yet she constantly engages in the general comparison and contrasts with the older world, and claims that "I know that the world now is heaven compared with what it was in your day".[24] West and Edith also discuss other aspects of the new society like shopping, domestic help, and music, which overlap with the older world. The commonwealth, Edith explains, strives to ensure that all its citizens are happy, not only through their economic wellbeing but in all other areas. Women, for example, are relieved from domestic duties and are given economic independence.[25]

Before the close of the novel, West finds himself back in the nineteenth century again. He tries to preach the vision of the millennial society, but his arguments and explanations are strongly rejected by his contemporaries, to the extent that Edith I's father orders that he be thrown out of the house. West has thus been considered to be "an inadequate spokesman for industrial capitalism",[26] but here he seems an inadequate spokesman for the new system too. This also challenges the logic of Bellamy's scheme. If West, who has fully experienced the details of the new society and its practicality, could not convince his circle, is there any hope for change? It also shows the impossibility of change in the near future. Fortunately, however, he wakes up again in the year 2000 with the knowledge that the previous shift in time was only a dream. The multiple dreams further extend the utopian and dystopian times invading his space.[27] Bellamy rewards West

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[24] *Looking Backward*, p. 51.
[25] Although it is argued that one reason of the work's high volume of sales is the percentage of female buyers, Kenneth M. Roemer, *Utopian Audiences: How Readers Locate Nowhere* (Boston, Mass.: University of Massachusetts Press, 2003), p. 83, he is seen to have come short of feminists expectations and reproduced the patriarchal society of his time. Sylvia Strauss, '*Gender, Class, and Race in Utopia*', in *Looking Backward, 1988-1888,* ed. by Daphne Patai (Amherst, Mass.: University of Massachusetts Press, 1988), pp. 68–90. However, one remark from Bellamy might explain his position as he noted that he had to omit his views about women as the context was not ready for it yet. Cited from Morgan, *Edward Bellamy*, p. 144.
[26] Pfaelzer, *The Utopian Novel in America, 1886-1896: The Politics of Form* (Pittsburgh, Pa.: University of Pittsburgh Press, 1984), p. 30.
[27] There is a strong correlation between utopia and dreaming, for Lyman Sargent, as the general phenomenon of utopianism is social dreaming. 'The Three Faces of Utopia Revisited'. Another useful manifestation of the relation between the two is Bloch's concepts of the daydream and night dream. West wakes up in the morning in the new world and believes he is daydreaming but it becomes his reality. He returns back to his old world whilst asleep at night and later discovers he was only night dreaming. His

with a kinder and more open-minded father-in-law and grants him a job as a history teacher.

Looking Backward attracted an enormous readership beyond his or his publisher's imagination, and it revived the utopian tradition at the end of the nineteenth century.[28] Its influence on the social thought of the time is matched by only a few other literary works, and it also had an impact on contemporary politics.[29] Negley and Patrick, in their survey of utopias, conclude that "it is doubtful that any single utopia, including the classics, has had so great an impact on the thoughts and actions of men as can be claimed for *Looking Backward*".[30] Indeed, through Bellamy the concept of utopia became of public interest and thus it was no longer simply an intellectual exercise. He also reintroduced socialism (although he distanced himself from the term) to the American audience under what he called nationalism.[31]

A number of explanations have been forwarded for the work's popularity. Bellamy justified it through its romantic shape, although it is possible that its popularity has little to do with the story's frame, as it is less praised as an artistic work and rather seen as a 'crude', 'unpictorial', 'flat', and 'stylistically suspect' novel with flat characters.[32] Regarding the latter, Bellamy admits in his notebook that "the impersonal life which all have in common is the only important part of men or women".[33] However, Bellamy's artistic quality cannot be totally dismissed as he had produced previous stories that were relatively successful. In addition, he was keen to model his romance mode to suit his

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utopia is strongly rejected in this night gathering of the night dream. For Bloch only a daydream can harbour a utopia:

> The night-dream lives in regression, it is indiscriminately drawn into its images, the daydream projects its images into the future, by no means indiscriminately, but controllable even given the most impetuous imagination and mediatable with the objectively possible. *The content of the night-dream is concealed and disguised, the content of the day-fantasy is open, fabulously inventive, anticipating, and its latency lies ahead.* [Emphasis added]. *The Principle of Hope*, p. 99.

[28] Between 1888 and 1900 approximately 190 utopian works appeared. Kenneth M. Roemer, '*Contexts and Texts*: *The Influence of Looking Backward'*, *The Centennial Review*, 27:3 (1983), pp. 204-223 (p. 207). There were utopias triggered by his work like the one by William Morris, but also dystopian works.

[29] It was considered to be second only to Karl Marx's *Das Kapital*.

[30] *The Quest*, p. 76.

[31] Prior to his work, socialism was seen as a conspiracy against individualism and capitalism.

[32]'Edward Bellamy and the Politics of Meaning', p. 267; Carl Guarneri, 'Edward Bellamy's *Looking Backward*: The International Impact of an American Socialist Utopia, 1888-1945', in *Visualizing Utopia*, ed. by Mary G. Kemperink and Willemien H. S. Roenhorst (Paris: Peeters, 2007), pp. 1-30; Matthew Beaumont, (ed. of *Looking Backward*), p. xxv; Roemer, '*Contexts and Texts*, p. 204.

[33] Sylvia E. Bowman, *Edward Bellamy* (Boston, Mass.: Twanee, 1986), p. 17.

utopian one despite his efforts to keep the balance. It can also be suggested that as a painter he did not desire to distract his audience from the painting itself by placing it in an impressive frame, so its aesthetic quality conceals the ideas.

Other readings of the text are more related to its content; the blueprint of the work is certainly indebted to Fourierism and Owenism in addition to Henry George's *Progress and Poverty* (1879), which left its marks on its contemporary intellectuals. There are also specific works that are occasionally referred to in relation to the romance and its instructive content.[34] *Looking Backward* manifested a dystopian present, future progress and nostalgia for the past. This utopian past, can be drawn from the reading of the work as nostalgia. R. Jackson Wilson writes, "in some of its most important features, Boston in the year 2000 resembled nothing so much as Bellamy's own home town of Chicopee Falls, Massachusetts, before the Irish and the mills had invaded it in the 1860s and 1870s". Thus, the utopian future presented in the novel is shaped by the author's nostalgia, an interpretation that assumes Bellamy's utopia "was conceived not in hope or in expectation but in nostalgia".[35] This argument, we can add, is supported by his dislike of the industrial city and its factories in both worlds. West displays a frustration of the troubles associated with industrial capitalism and seeks refuge in a quieter life, and on many occasions he idealises his family and country life and longs for a less crowded city. The absence of these facilities and workers in the year 2000 is recognisable too. Each quarter of his millennial Boston contained "large open squares filled with trees, along which statues glistened and fountains flashed in the late afternoon sun". However, the world of 2000 can only be brought up by the technologies and lifestyle modelled accordingly. Hence, the work is caught between a utopian past, a dystopian present (that is more emphasised), and an alternative future. Bellamy seems to invoke what has been lost both in reality and in memory, and attempts to reconstruct a present (or future) from the projections of indispensable, inevitable, and irreversible modern technology.[36]

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[34] For example John Macnie's *Diothas* (1880).

[35] 'Experience and Utopia: The Making of Edward Bellamy's "Looking Backward"', *Journal of American Studies*, 11:1 (1977), pp. 45-60 (p. 45); in a related theme but with a critical mode, Pfaelzer writes that the narrative depicts or projects "onto the future the recovery of an idealized white past". 'Dreaming', p. 323.

[36] Again I borrow and adopt what Bloch associates with the daydream (in another occasion) that it "is concerned with an as far as possible unrestricted journey forward, so that instead of reconstituting that which is no longer conscious, the images of that which is not yet can be phantasied into life and into the world". *A Philosophy of the Future* (New York, N.Y.: Herder and Herder, 1970), pp. 86-7. The emphasis

To attempt to explain the reason for this popularity through the work's entertaining values or instructive quality is not enough,[37] and other influences outside the text can also be suggested. Firstly, and despite what is argued[38] and hoped for by Bellamy,[39] is the work's attempt to explain the present more than the future, and the urgent questions of his readers. Nine years after *Looking Backward*, Bellamy wrote its sequel *Equality*, which was more geared towards explaining and detailing the new system. He declared that it was the best piece he wrote, but it was not particularly successful despite the fame and popularity that *Looking Backward* had already bestowed on him. Although we cannot rule out people's longing for change and alternatives, it can be suggested that the explanations of the present situation, which were absent in the sequel, were deemed more attractive. This was also to a certain extent recognised by Bellamy, who urged his publisher to speed up the publication as time was ripe for a "publication touching on social and industrial questions".[40] Indeed, the book succeeded only after another publisher proposed a reprint. This attests to Bellamy's confidence in the relevance of his ideas to the time of writing, and that his depiction was well developed enough to pass as a utopia. His audience were generally similar to West, in that they were mainly from the middle class, were ignorant of the causes of the labour-related disturbances yet looking for explanations, and perhaps moved by their ethical responsibility and the urgency of the issue. The readers of *Looking Backward*, and indeed other utopias, seem to be less concerned with the future plan and more interested in the description of the present and its crisis.[41] This is also the case despite

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on technology, as Howard Segal argues, is what made it an appealing vision. 'Edward Bellamy's "Looking Backward" and the American Ideology of Progress through Technology', *OAH Magazine of History*, 4:2 (1989), pp. 20-24.

[37] It may be true, as Kenneth Roemer writes, that "we will never know exactly why *Looking Backward* became so influential". 'Text and Context', p. 206.

[38] Tom Towers concludes, citing a number of commentators, that, "Bellamy's contemporaries and most later critics have regarded the book as a blueprint for reform, extracting usable ideas and casually dismissing the narrative, characters, setting, and language as irrelevant decoration". 'The Insomnia', p. 52.

[39] For example, in his postscript to the publisher, Bellamy writes: "Looking Backward, although in form a fanciful romance, is intended, in all seriousness, as a forecast", p. 195.

[40] Quoted from Sylvia E. Bowman, *The Year 2000: A Critical Biography of Edward Bellamy* (New York, N.Y.: Bookman Associates, 1958), p. 115.

[41] Although Roemer rejects what he calls the "inaccurate pseudohistorical theories that link the production of literary utopias exclusively to times of despair", we constantly see utopian writers attempt to describe their historical moment as such. "Contexts and Texts', p. 212. Elizabeth Sadler, however, argues otherwise in 'One Book's Influence: Edward Bellamy's "Looking Backward"', *The New England Quarterly*, 17:4 (1944), pp. 530-555.

the utopian writer's attempt to highlight his or her future alternative. The focus and the expectations of the audience are apparently only on the criticism of the present and are less concerned with radical alternatives. Here, *Looking Backward* is a method to understand the present rather than the future, as in other utopias.[42] Secondly, and in contradiction to former utopias, we might also suggest Bellamy's commitment to his project. His later dedication to the cause is better known than his initial motive. Although he is reported to have been a timid individual who shied away from public gatherings, he was nevertheless involved in the activities towards achieving the goals expressed in his work,[43] and was certainly more trustful and hopeful in the applicability of his plan than his utopian predecessors. His statements that he had little of the work's ideas in mind beforehand (he remarks that previous stories attempted "to trace the logical consequences of certain assumed conditions"[44]) are not convincing. For example, he wrote

> I sat down to my desk with the definite purpose of trying to reason out a method of economic organization by which the republic might guarantee the livelihood and material welfare of its citizens on a basis of equality corresponding to and supplementing their political equality".[45]

Further, he shows concerns about these issues in earlier works.[46] The work's success then, is because of its focus on the contemporary hurdles and his active role in the Nationalist Clubs across the United States.[47]

The World of 1887: The U.S. and the Rest

As Bellamy's utopia emerged in the United States and then extended to the rest of the world, it is important to explore why the people of the rest of the world are included in this new system. Some critics, as referenced earlier, contend that Bellamy's intention is nothing

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[42] Ruth Levitas proposes that utopia is best understood as a method to conceive an alternative future. She identifies this function as "the possibility of thinking in terms of the kind of society we want to achieve, rather than what seems immediately probable". 'Against Work: A Utopian Incursion into Social Policy', *Critical Social Policy*, 21 (2001), pp. 449-65 (p. 449).

[43] For example, issuing of 'The New Nation' in 1891 and supporting the Bellamy clubs. By 1890, there were 162 clubs in the United States with thousands of members. *Men of Good Hope*, p. 104.

[44] 'How I wrote looking Backward', in *Edward Bellamy Speaks Again* (Kansas City, Mo.: Peerage Press, 1937), p. 224; similar remarks are repeated by an old acquaintance. Morgan, *Edward Bellamy*, p. 223.

[45] *Bellamy Speaks*, pp. 223-224.

[46] For example in his *The Duke of Stockbridge*, which first appeared in 1879.

[47] By 1891, there were 165 of them. Kumar, *Utopia and Anti-Utopia*; Elizabeth Sadler notes that these clubs grew more strongly in states where Populism previously arose. 'One Book's Influence', p. 537.

but an extension of the deep rooted tendency to regard the United States as the saviour of the world, and that Bellamy's rendering of the situation was particular to this nation.[48] However, Bellamy felt connected to and sympathised with humanity at large, observing that the same conditions that determine and preserve inequality do exist, even more deeply rooted, in the rest of the world.[49]

In 1887, capitalism was rapidly becoming a global phenomenon, along with discontents around the world. In the United States, industrialisation and the Civil War intensified and even worsened the labour situation, attracted immigrants from many countries,[50] changed the class order, and accelerated urbanisation. Farmers found better jobs in factories, and abandoned their farms 'by the thousands'.[51] The era of manifest destiny and western expansion, in which people had before them the hope of an open frontier in the west, had come to an end. These unprecedented changes made people's reaction to the situation unpredictable. The labourers, now organised via unions, held frequent and sometimes violent strikes. The time came to be known as 'the great upheaval',[52] and Bellamy writes:

> Strikes had become so common at that period that people had ceased to inquire into their particular grounds. In one department of industry or another, they had been nearly incessant ever since the great business crisis of 1873. In fact it had come to be the exceptional thing to see any class of laborers pursue their avocation steadily for more than a few months at a time.[53]

This situation witnessed a rebellion against the old order of the social hierarchy, and this might have been what particularly troubled the middle class. Arthur Morgan describes the unpreparedness of society as 'social immaturity',[54] but if the society were immature in their reaction then they were mature enough to inquire about the causes and the dangers of the

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[48] A French commentator argued that "industrialization had not yet brought to European countries the extremes" that Bellamy describes. 'Changing French Attitudes', p. 280.

[49] In fact the United States was even better that Europe, since hundreds of thousands of immigrants were pouring into the country from Europe.

[50] Europe had population pressure, and from 1780 to 1880 the population of the continent increased from 110,000,000 to 315,000,000; such an increase was seldom seen in the world. Morgan *Edward Bellamy*, p. 204.

[51] *Edward Bellamy*, p. 210; in 1860 it is reported that 'about one-sixth of the population lived in cities of eight thousand people or more; by 1900, the proportion had risen to one-third - an exact doubling'. Walter Fuller Taylor, *The Economic Novel in America* (Chapel Hill, N.C.: The University of North Carolina Press, 1942), p. 29.

[52] Morgan, *Edward Bellamy*, p. 208

[53] *Looking Backward*, p. 9.

[54] Morgan, *Edward Bellamy*, p. 205.

predicament. In the letter addressed to his publisher, Bellamy contends that time is ripe for his ideas to be heard, urging him to speed up the publication, which might suggest that Bellamy tailored his work towards people looking for an explanation of the situation.

This portrayal of the strikes and people's reaction to it is relevant not only to the United States but also to most of the industrialised nations of the time. Bellamy is keen to establish the interrelation early in the novel. At the opening of *Looking Backward*, West narrates a gathering at his father-in-law's house (1887), during which labour conduct is condemned and anxiety and discontent are expressed. Humanity, the relatives and friends argue, has "climbed to the top round of the ladder of civilization" and is vulnerable to collapse because of the strikes, demands, and troubles of the angry labouring class:

> It was agreed that affairs were going from bad to worse very fast, and that there was no telling what we should come to soon. "The worst of it," I remember Mrs. Bartlett's saying, "is that the working classes all over the world seem to be going crazy at once. In Europe it is far worse even than here. I'm sure I should not dare to live there at all. I asked Mr. Bartlett the other day where we should emigrate to if all the terrible things took place which those socialists threaten. He said he did not know any place now where society could be called stable except Greenland, Patagonia, and the Chinese Empire".[55] "Those Chinamen knew what they were about," somebody added, "when they refused to let in our western civilization. They knew what it would lead to better than we did. They saw it was nothing but dynamite in disguise".[56]

In his dream of the previous world, Julian West reads the foreign affairs headline in the newspaper, which includes unemployment and poverty in London, and strikes in Belgium.[57]

Bellamy also rejects two internationally influential groups, which he classifies as extreme opposites that have attempted to present themselves as alternatives. These were the 'anarchists' who attempted to change the existing social system through violence, and Marxists, or "the followers of the red flag", who despite having nothing to do with the coming of the new system nevertheless managed to hinder it:

> The nervous tension of the public mind could not have been more strikingly illustrated than it was by the alarm resulting from the talk of a small band of men who called themselves anarchists, and proposed to terrify the American people into adopting their ideas by threats of violence, as if a mighty nation which had but just put down a rebellion of half its own numbers, in order to maintain its political system, were likely to adopt a new social system out of fear.[58]

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[55] The strange combination of two relatively uninhabited places with a highly populated country like China, besides other notable differences, seems polemical. However, it shows Bartlett's ignorance of the world.

[56] *Looking Backward*, p. 13.

[57] Ibid, p. 181.

[58] Ibid, p. 11.

Criticism of the anarchists and Marxists is repeated a number of times in the millennial world of *Looking Backward*. Bellamy dismisses any positive feature of anarchism and associates it with contemporary violence,[59] thus ignoring that the outlook of anarchism or 'classical anarchism', at least, includes a set of opposing views on matters like violence and the role of labour unions and "probably disagreed more on balance than they agreed".[60] The authoritarian and evolutionary nature of the world in 2000 and its people that he forms might explain his negative position towards anarchism. Firstly, anarchism is believed to be committed to the rejection of coercive authority, and secondly it has traditionally associated itself with the ethical discourse of revolutionary practices.[61] Bellamy's new world is evolutionary and built on the existing structure and rejects revolutions, and he draws on the military structure and its hierarchic and authoritarian nature to govern his utopian world.

Bellamy's global perspective was based on personal experience as he travelled to Europe and had first-hand knowledge of the situation there. In fact, as Bellamy explains, his social concerns and ideas about equality developed in Europe and not in the United States:

> At that time I visited Europe and spent a year there in travel and study. It was in the great cities of England, Europe, and among the hovels of peasantry that my eyes were first fully opened to the extent and consequences of man's inhumanity to man.[62]

What also proves Bellamy's claim that the influences which shaped his utopia are not exclusive to the United States, is the positive reaction of the international audience to *Looking Backward*. For example, it had sold about 100,000 copies in Britain by early 1890,[63] with similar figures reported from other European countries like Germany.[64] In Russia, Leo Tolstoy and Maxim Gorky strongly endorsed the work and the former sought

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[59] The relationship between utopianism and anarchism, however, is not to be totally dismissed. For example, George Kateb identifies "pure utopian aspiration" with anarchism. *Utopia*, p. 72.

[60] Nathan Jun, 'Anarchist Philosophy and Working Class Struggle: A Brief History and Commentary', *The Journal of Labor and Society*, 12 (2009), pp. 505–519 (p. 506).

[61] 'Anarchist Philosophy and Working Class Struggle', p. 507; David Graeber, *Fragments of an Anarchist Anthropology* (Chicago, Ill.: Prickly Paradigm, 2004), p. 6.

[62] 'How I wrote *Looking Backward*', in *Bellamy Speaks*, p. 217. This is also observed from the letters he sent to his brother from Europe. Cited from *The Year 2000,* p. 22.

[63] Peter Marshall, 'A British Sensation', in *Edward Bellamy Abroad*, pp. 86–118 (p. 88). William Morris, Oscar Wilde, and George Bernard Shaw also showed strong interest in the work.

[64] Franz Riederer, 'The German Acceptance and Reaction', in *Edward Bellamy Abroad*, pp. 151- 205. Contributors of Sylvia E. Bowman's *Edward Bellamy Abroad* detail his influence in Russia, Canada, Australia, Holland, Germany, Scandinavia, France, Italy, Indonesia (and other countries of South Asia), South Africa, and New Zealand.

to find a translator and publisher for the text.[65] Bellamy Clubs also established in many other countries.[66] This global popularity indicates that readers did not view the work as a project of Americanisation but rather as a forecast of the future of industrialised nations.

Bellamy's proclaimed intention and his justification for this utopian federation is universal fraternity. This is still thought to be a pretext of globalisation, and sometimes even by Bellamy's distinguished scholars.[67] This recognition of the universal bond of brotherhood, the impulse to regard humanity as brothers, is constantly and consistently noted in the text and elsewhere in his writings. Bellamy's prophetic sense, however, stems from his sense of duty to the world rather than any missionary notions of a particular civilisation. It is, as he says in the *Declaration of Principles* (1889), that "the principle of the brotherhood of humanity is one of the eternal truths that govern the world's progress on lines which distinguish human nature from brute nature".[68]

His views can also be tested against the text. The work presents two opposite reactions for similar situations in two different worlds. In the world of 1887, West is totally uncaring about not only the rest of the world, but also his own society and neighbours. As an affluent individual, he is willing to abandon a place surrounded by the poor and less educated population in favour of a more appropriate location. Conversely, the reaction is described differently in the world of 2000. Dr. Leete explains that "Boston put up three hundred thousand umbrellas over as many heads, and in the twentieth century they put up one umbrella over all the heads", which indicates the difference between "the old way when everybody lived for himself and his family" and the new way.[69] In short, Bellamy's older world was designed to create or escape to utopias among the dystopias, but the second world strives to create a utopia for everyone and everywhere. In the real world, Bellamy also discouraged establishing utopian colonies and considered them escapist and

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[65] Alexander Nikoljukin, 'A Little-Known Story: Bellamy in Russia', in *Edward Bellamy Abroad*, pp. 67-85.

[66] *Edward Bellamy Abroad*, p. 226.

[67] For example, Kenneth M. Roemer writes "Again and again there is a general call for cooperation and brotherhood for all humanity. But when the utopias get down to details, this universal appeal usually translates into Americanized brotherhood. Thus, Bellamy's revisions of *Looking Backward* are both typical and revealing. When he transformed his utopia from a vague social fantasy into a detailed blueprint, he moved from an 'ideal World' to an ideal America". 'Utopia and Victorian Culture: 1888-99', in *America as Utopia*, ed. by Kenneth Roemer (New York, N.Y.: Franklin, 1981), pp. 305-332 (p. 313).

[68] *Bellamy Speaks*, p. 31.

[69] *Looking Backward*, p. 89.

instead encouraged diverting the attention to nation-wide transformation.[70] A further bibliographical account might illustrate this difference more profoundly. Prior to writing *Looking Backward*, Bellamy practised law. However, he abandoned this profession after his first successful work resulted in the eviction of a widowed tenant. This is in contrast to his active involvement in the National Clubs after the popularity of his work. Hence, he is motivated solely on the grounds of justice and particularly solving the inequality between the rich and poor. This is the essence of utopian building and is itself a humanitarian project that Bellamy has only magnified onto a global scale.

The Utopian World of the Millennium

The argument against Bellamy's utopian world is that it attempts to place the United States at the helm, suggesting that it emerges through a process influenced by Social Darwinism and the law of progress, which draws a linear model of history and development plan to the world. The implication is that utopia firstly grows in the west and then passes to the less culturally developed nations, which are assisted by the former to make their start.[71] Further, there is also the accusation that Bellamy's social evolution corresponds to a biological one.[72] Occasionally such excessive generalisations are also made by Bellamy scholars unintentionally, which serves to establish this view falsely as his and justifying it as a representative of his time. Bellamy's view, similar to those of his peers was, as Arthur Morgan writes, that "most American communities of European descent are rich in genetic

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[70] Robert V. Hine, *California's Utopian Colonies* (Berkeley, Calif.: The University of California Press, 1983); Robin Collan, 'The Australian Impact', in *Edward Bellamy Abroad*, pp. 119-135; *Authoritarian Socialism in America*; Negley and Patrick, *The Quest*. Although he considered nationalism to have its roots from mid-1800s experiments like the Brook Farm. *Bellamy Speaks*, p. 132.

[71] *Landscapes*, p. 20; Pfaelzer also writes that, "Bellamy promises that political deliverance will arrive at the hands of an expansive white Masculinity". 'Dreaming', pp. 326-7. Harold V. Rhodes writes that in the case of Bellamy, the application of the ideas of Darwin to the development of a conception of a perfect society is made explicit. *Utopia in American Political Thought* (Tucson, Ariz.: University of Arizona Press, 1967), p. 87. For Susan Matarese, "Bellamy's most patronizing and ethnocentric comments, however, are reserved for the non-industrial, non-white nations of his day". 'Foreign Policy and the American Self Image', p. 47. For Kumar, "the idea of America's special destiny, was a central part of the national ideology". *Utopia and Anti-Utopia*, p. 81.

[72] Matthew Hartman, 'Utopian Evolution: The Sentimental Critique of Social Darwinism in Bellamy and Peirce', *Utopian Studies*, 10:1 (1999), pp. 26-41 (p. 31).

potentialities".[73] However the process of evolution, as argued here, is spontaneous and nothing is needed to encourage or force other nations to adopt it, which is in contrast to the straightforwardly imperial and expansionist interpretations that have been made. The United States is shown to have no leading role in the utopian world of 2000, and Bellamy's utopia brings about a world federation of equal members and ensures peace, as will be detailed below.

I.   The Process of Evolution

Describing the movement towards the system, Bellamy writes that as business competition increased, the small businesses could not compete and were subsumed into corporations that gradually grew larger. Over time, these corporations also consolidated into a single business corporation, and were absorbed into larger capitals. Certain large services like the railroads also formed enormous syndicates or trusts in order to survive competition. Despite opposition and resentment, people realised the efficiency of these large corporations and syndicates, and thought that "since the new system had taken the place of the old the wealth of the world had increased at a rate before undreamed of". Hence, "early in the last century the evolution was completed by the consolidation of the entire capital of the nation" instead of private, irresponsible corporations and syndicates. This process of nationalisation was supported by the public and businesses alike, and "It became the one capitalist in the place of all other capitalists" and "the epoch of trusts had ended in The Great Trust".[74]

In *Looking Backward*, Julian West enquires about Europe or "the societies of the old world", asking if they have been remodelled, to which Dr. Leete replies:

> The great nations of Europe as well as Australia, Mexico, and parts of South America, are now organized industrially like the United States, which was the pioneer of the evolution. The peaceful relations of these nations are assured by a loose form of federal union of world-wide extent. An international council regulates the mutual intercourse and commerce of the members of the union and their joint policy toward the more backward races, which are gradually being educated up to civilized institutions.[75]

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[73] As concluded by Morgan, *Edward Bellamy*, p. 10. Sylvia Bowman also concludes that this new order is brought by theories of Darwin and Thomas Huxley's 'fittest'. *Edward Bellamy*, p. 30.
[74] *Looking Backward*, pp. 31-4.
[75] Ibid, p. 85; Bellamy seems to have mapped a random selection of nations or potential nations.

To start with, there is clearly a mapping of the world, although this future utopia is temporal and does not create a geographic boundary as it includes various parts of the world and is expected to expand. Europe, in particular, has already gone through the process of industrialisation and is logically to be included sooner than other locations. However, the mere exclamation surpasses any presupposition that these societies must have been remodelled. The main question, still, is the process of educating the so-called more backward races. So, is the text preoccupied with the spreading of American culture as often argued?[76] In particular, Bellamy is criticised for not being equal in his projection and that in his "world of 2000, peoples in Africa and Asia have made no more progress in joining the ranks of 'the civilized' as they had in 1887 when imperialism was decimating Third World nations for the benefit of Europeans".[77] However, such accusations do little justice to his understanding of development and evolution. Reading his *How I Wrote Looking Backward*, we can deduce that his sole criterion is the application of technology; once a nation embraces technological advancement, it will go through the same process. Bellamy has mapped his new world accordingly. Otherwise, he would have imposed the utopian system on the whole world, but instead it requires a spontaneous evolution. For Bellamy's the United States this happened between 1888 and 2000, whilst other nations such as Mexico or those in Europe could go through in between these two dates, and for the rest it is predicted to happen after 2000. This process started once the United States realised that it was time for this natural transformation:

> There was absolutely no violence. The change had been long foreseen. Public opinion had become fully ripe for it, and the whole mass of the people was behind it. There was no more possibility of opposing it by force than by argument.[78]

In his other writings, Bellamy recognises, and not mistakenly, the parity between nations and the emphasis is solely on industrial and technological advancement:

> It would be preposterous to assume parity of progress between America and Turkey. The more advanced nations, ours surely first of all, will reach the summit earliest and, reaching strong brotherly hands downward, help up the laggards.[79]

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[76] Carl J. Guarneri, 'An American Utopia and Its Global Audiences: Transnational Perspectives on Edward Bellamy's Looking Backward', *Utopian Studies*, 19:2 (2008), pp. 147-187 (p. 151); or that "the United States in the year 2000 possesses the culture to end all cultures, because its principle is to absorb and even commodify all otherness". 'Utopia and Cosmopolis', p. 54.

[77] Balthrope, 'Bellamy's Looking Backward', p. 309.

[78] *Looking Backward*, p. 33.

[79] *Bellamy Speaks*, p. 203.

To have expected otherwise would be departing from the reality of the time and the technological parity among nations. Bellamy certainly presupposes a theory of historical change, suggesting that the world is heading towards his system through determinate industrial development. The application of technology, along with his nationalisation, will result in the advancement of society. For him, social advancement is the result of economic advancement. In addition to this, however, Bellamy never set any other standards to measure other civilisations or cultures. It is a superiority of a system of equality and commonwealth over others. Dr. Leete explains that any other system of buying and selling, or the "self-seeking at the expense of others", can never lead its citizens to "rise above a very low grade of civilization".[80] He expresses that there is a desire for the eventual unification of the world:

> That, no doubt, will be the ultimate form of society, and will realize certain economic advantages over the present federal system of autonomous nations. Meanwhile, however, the present system works so nearly perfectly that we are quite content to leave to posterity the completion of the scheme. There are, indeed, some who hold that it never will be completed, on the ground that the federal plan is not merely a provisional solution of the problem of human society, but the best ultimate solution.[81]

And as he explains, this is voluntary, and the existence of presupposed cultural superiority would have prevented Dr. Leete from having and expressing this wish. To him, the utopian world is designed for all nations irrespective of their backgrounds, as we later read of "the idea of the vital unity of the family of mankind, the reality of human brotherhood".[82] Hence, it can be concluded that the same condition is required for nations: the industrialisation and nationalisation of the means of production for the service of the nation.

Bellamy's view of evolution and progress, on the other hand, has not been thoroughly interpreted. It is undeniable that Bellamy introduces a concept of development influenced by Darwin and Spencer, and his nationalisation through evolution is similar to Darwin's social evolution. For Bellamy it is a story and history of development, and this fusion of social and biological evolution was also common at the time.[83] In his postscript to *Looking Backward*, Bellamy writes that "although in form [it is] a fanciful romance, [it] is

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[80] *Looking Backward*, p. 52.
[81] Ibid, pp. 86-87.
[82] Ibid, p. 165.
[83] *Engels,* at Marx's funeral, said "Just as Darwin discovered the law of development of organic nature, so Marx discovered the law of development of human history".

intended, in all seriousness, as a forecast, in accordance with the principles of evolution, of the next stage in the industrial and social development of humanity".[84] Theories of political and economic progress influenced Darwin in the first place. Similarly, Bellamy retained a number of Spencer's traits, including the lack of emphasis on politics, his opposition of trade unions, and the transitions from egotism to altruism, and from militarism to industrialism.[85] However, Bellamy modified Spencer's theories to suit his own economic evolution. In this regard, it can be suggested that this development is not only a modified version on the individual and social level, but also that his law of progress and development governs all nations equally and emerges from within, and thus it is not imposed on any nation.

Firstly, this process of evolution is unique to Bellamy and adapted to the utopian view and greatly modified for this purpose. This is because Bellamy's project evolves from capitalism and its existing organisation in every nation. On the level of society, the most recognisable digression with Darwinists is that human society has not changed, only the set of conditions around.[86] Bellamy's vision is to bring about an environment to which people would react nobly. He learned from Plato's demands that humans strove for perfection and failed, and from More's assertion that they stop themselves from being tempted (and sceptical if they could), but instead Bellamy proposed that temptations should be removed. That is, there is no need to change a person's nature as the swerving conditions do not exist.[87] The aforementioned nostalgic reading of *Looking Backward* by Wilson is also useful here, as Bellamy explains the corruption of humanity as a result of changing conditions brought by industrialism, so it could be reversed once conditions change or are modified. Later in the novel, Dr Leete details a description of human evolution of this moral and material evolution, and the reaction of people:

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[84] *Looking Backward*, p. 195.
[85] Robert M. Young, 'Herbert Spencer and 'Inevitable' Progress', in *Victorian Values: Personalities and Perspectives in Nineteenth Century Society, ed. by Gordon Marsden* (New York, N.Y.: Longman, 1990), pp. 179-189 (p. 179).
[86] Although Bellamy emphasises this in *Equality* too, yet this might seem to pose a problem to the transition he proposes. That is if people came to realise that it is necessary to change the system, then their nature must have had a sort of evolution. However, this can reiterate his emphasis on developing the existing infrastructure that people found in place.
[87] Here Bellamy also rejects Plato's work on the nature of his citizens and More's safe haven of the utopians among the non-utopians.

their minds were affected in all their faculties with a stimulus, of which the outburst of the medieval renaissance offers a suggestion but faint indeed. There ensued an era of mechanical invention, scientific discovery, art, musical and literary productiveness to which no previous age of the world offers anything comparable.[88]

In addition, it is perceived that this spiritual development has triggered some higher faculties of human nature that were unknown previously. Bellamy rejects the Spenserian principle of the survival, as "the principle of competition is simply the application of the brutal law of the survival of the strongest and most cunning".[89] Bellamy introduces the concept of natural selection (which is interpreted by some as supporting forms of eugenics[90]) but has substituted the law of necessity with the law of love:

> The necessities of poverty, the need of having a home, no longer tempt women to accept as the fathers of their children men whom they neither can love nor respect. Wealth and rank no longer divert attention from personal qualities".[91]

Furthermore, people tend to live longer when they enjoy better conditions of existence.[92] The argument here is that Bellamy's concept is substantially different from the one implied by Spencer.[93] Bellamy does not endorse any notion of an individual's civility being related to genetics, and progress and development have only occurred due to the advancement in welfare. Further, and despite the change of conditions, not all individuals are totally expected to develop. In the millennial world of the novel there would be some exceptions and some people who are less perfect, for example those who evade work and need to be disciplined through imprisonment.

Secondly, Bellamy's law of progress and development, which is purely economic, governs all nations irrespective of their cultural background and has a clear start point. Most importantly, it develops in individual nations from within and is not imposed on them. In addition, his approach is not to imagine that all people or cultures are the same, or that there are universal values and a set human nature. West presents two views of history, cyclical and linear, but he does not endorse either worldview. At the family gathering of his father-in-law, the guests argue that "human history, like all great movements, was cyclical,

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[88] *Looking Backward*, pp. 94-5.
[89] *Declaration of Principles* in *Bellamy Speaks*, p. 31.
[90] *Landscapes*, p. 54.
[91] *Looking Backward*, p. 156.
[92] Ibid, p. 116.
[93] Spencer, in the *Law of Evolution*, writes: "which is stronger in Man than in any other creature is stronger in the European than in the savage". Herbert Spencer, *First Principles*, reprint of the 1862 edition (Cambridge: Cambridge UP, 2009), p. 156.

and returned to the point of beginning", and that the "idea of indefinite progress in a right line was a chimera of the imagination, with no analogue in nature".[94] It can thus be suggested that for Bellamy it is a law of historical industrialism. History starts from the point when a nation is industrialised, then the stage of corporation and consolidation of corporations leads to nationalisation.[95]

Despite this, and in principle, setting a nation as a model is not necessarily connotative of imperial and colonial trends and outlooks. For example, Andrew Carnegie's *Triumphant Democracy; or, Fifty Years' March of the Republic* (1886), is dedicated to proving that America is leading the civilised world and is not only the world's foremost utopia but also its model for such a concept. Yet Carnegie was a strong opponent of colonialism and imperialism and an active member of the American Anti-Imperialist League (1898-1920).

II. The Equality of Member States

The voluntary inclusion of other nations into the utopian world federation is an entry into a system and not the boundaries or dominance of the United States. Bellamy advocated a nationalism (also known as nationalisation) that was almost identical to patriotism,[96] which for him was essentially loyalty to the world and humanity. His utopia is designed and realised based on the membership of nations with equal privileges in the international council. Every nation is organised as an industrial unit, controls its resources, and acts as a sovereign nation, and "every nation [is] organized as a close industrial partnership, monopolizing all means of production in the country".[97] The international council includes nations as large as the United States and parts of South America (their status are not

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[94] *Looking Backward*, p. 11.

[95] For Bellamy, Marxist historical materialism is specified into historical industrialism. His theory of history is industrial. History starts once industry and corporations function together in a nation. Unlike Marx, however, for Bellamy materials disappear in the final stage. Bellamy hides labour and machine and their effects from sight after the transformation. Yet, this sole belief in technology and industry becomes part of the nation's culture and pride and its source of integration and class elimination.

[96] For example, Morgan attributes a number of "essential characteristics" to Bellamy's nationalism, including patriotism; in *Edward Bellamy*, p. 255.

[97] *Looking Backward*, p. 85.

identified in the text), but all have equal votes. Most importantly, each nation has "complete autonomy within its own limits".[98]

Dr. Leete explains that the international commerce system supervises and regulates transaction and the provision of supplies among all the nations.[99] The purpose of this council is thus mainly to regulate international trade and ensure fair transactions, and so it has no right to interfere in other matters. The term 'all nations' refers only to the ones that are a part of the new system whilst assuming the gradual joining of the rest. West asks what would happen if a nation that has "a monopoly of some natural product" refuses to share it with one or more of the others, to which Dr. Leete replies that an embargo against such nations would be imposed. Hence, the total equality of a nation rich with resources or otherwise is insured, irrespective of its size, location, and population: [100]

> The law requires that each nation shall deal with the others, in all respects, on exactly the same footing. Such a course as you suggest would cut off the nation adopting it from the remainder of the earth for all purposes whatever. The contingency is one that need not give us much anxiety.[101]

Such ideas of an international congress or a binding body envisioned by Bellamy were wished for by a number of contemporary philosophers and politicians and not completely novel. Ulysses S. Grant, for example, said:

> I believe at some future day, the nations of the earth will agree on some sort of congress which will take cognizance of international questions of difficulty and whose decisions will be as binding as the decisions of the Supreme Court are upon us.[102]

West cites excerpts from Lord Tennyson's poem *Locksley Hall* to illustrate his concept further, which includes visions like "the Parliament of man", and "the federation of the world". Long before *Looking Backward*, Bellamy had developed ideas about a form of world government that transcends linguistic and cultural barriers, which he later abandoned for a world federation. Bellamy once wrote:

> Assuredly, no idea has been more common to all men and all ages than the belief that the world has before it an era of perfection, when every obstacle of physical nature, and the far more stubborn obstacles of human ignorance, having been removed.[103]

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[98] Ibid, p. 85; Bellamy seems to have mapped a random selection of nations or prospective nations.

[99] Ibid, pp. 85-86.

[100] One of the driving forces, and a characteristic of Bellamy's nationalism, is 'unselfishness' as Morgan identifies in *Edward Bellamy*, p. 253. As individuals of each nation are unselfish, nations are also expected to demonstrate this quality with each other.

[101] *Looking Backward*, p. 83.

[102] Nicholas Hagger, *The World Government: A Blueprint for a Universal World State* (Hampshire: O-Books, 2010), p. 28.

Initially he intended to design and thus focus on a utopian world, with the United States only an administrative unit or province of the world, which had its capital in Switzerland.[104] We can assume that his emphasis on plans of nationalisation and the sovereignty of nations on their borders transformed his utopia into its later form, as he does not undermine the geographical borders of other nations of the federation. The only issues discussed are concerned with these members' commerce with other nations and their citizens' voluntary mobility into other nations. However, there is an open migration policy that encourages a sense of unity, although such migration might not have been welcomed by the readers of the time.[105] This free immigration policy is arranged on "simple international arrangement of indemnities".[106] The structure of the system is somehow comparable to Robert Nozick's 'meta-utopia' described in his *Anarchy, State, and Utopia*.[107] For him, this meta-utopia can provide a space for smaller utopias to be established and organised in associations:

> Utopia will consist of utopias, of many different and divergent communities in which people lead different kinds of lives under different institutions. Some kinds of communities will be more attractive to most than others; communities will wax and wane. People will leave some for others or spend their whole lives in one. Utopia is a framework for utopias, a place where people are at liberty to join together voluntarily to pursue and attempt to realize their own vision of the good life in the ideal community but where no one can impose his own utopian vision upon others.[108]

Their differences are supposed to exist and be respected. The fact that attests to this is the system itself, which is based on individual membership, and also that there is a law against those nations who would deny resources to others in the system for any reason. In addition, there is no money but only "a simple system of book accounts". This further eliminates any purchasing power parity among these nations.[109]

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[103] Cited in Morgan, *Edward Bellamy*, p. viii.

[104] 'Why I Wrote Looking Backward' in *Bellamy Speaks*, pp. 200-3.

[105] At the time of writing there was a public fear of the number of immigrants and their effect on employment. Further, a number of violent acts also occurred in some states. This led Congress, for example, to pass an act to stop Chinese immigration in 1882.

[106] *Looking Backward*, p. 84.

[107] Meta-utopia, as Nozick describes, is: "The environment in which utopian experiments may be tried out; the environment in which people are free to do their own thing; the environment which must, to a great extent, be realized first if more particular utopian visions are to be realized stably". *Anarchy, State, and Utopia*, p. 312.

[108] *Anarchy,* p. 312.

[109] Bellamy had, in his other writings, expressed his discontent with the private corporations' export of goods which only profits the few. Cited from Sylvia Bowman, *Edward Bellamy*, p. 73. Here, the nation carries out the process in the sole interest of all its citizens.

Furthermore, equality of the system on the level of cultural diversity has also come under much criticism and observation. It is argued that his utopia permits no racial diversity.[110] It is suggested that Bellamy predicted "real-world white prejudice toward Blacks would continue in the Utopia", or that the text represents the limitation of his view in this regards.[111] Robin Balthrope, perhaps alluding to Bellamy's reluctance to express his views on women as stated earlier, believes that he did not wish to express his thoughts about this controversial theme considering the context of his time.[112] On the other hand, it can be commented that Bellamy came from Boston, which was the centre of abolitionism before the Civil War. In addition, West only encounters a few individuals (a waiter and a store clerk) beside Dr. Leete's family in the new world, which is described as "a community where all are social equals". As proof, a young and educated white man is waiting on the table of Dr. Leete's family in contrast to the African-American waiter of the old world. There is no better explanation on this matter than the one forwarded by Bellamy and ignored by these critics. A letter was addressed to him through *The New Nation* in this regard, to which he replied:

> But neither, probably, is the white man. For anything to the contrary that appears in the book, the people referred to in its pages, so far as we remember, might have been black, brown or yellow as well as white.[113]

He also adds, "all men are brothers and owe one another the duties, and have, upon one another, the claims, of brothers. As to the colors of men, they have nothing to do with the matter".[114] Most importantly, Bellamy does not focus only on the industrialised nations, recognising the negative effect of industrial capitalism on non-industrialised countries. The foreign markets, he believed, only benefited a few capitalists, "for the unloading of surplus products" as their goods "had to be foisted upon Africans and Asians".[115] This further highlights the humanitarian spirit of his work.

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[110] 'Imagining a Future in America'; 'Foreign Policy and the American Self Image', and others.

[111] Jesse A. Rhines, 'Agency, Race and Utopia', in *Socialism and Democracy*, 17:2 (2003), pp. 91-101 (p. 95).

[112] Balthrope, 'Bellamy's *Looking Backward*'.

[113] Cited from, Franklin Rosemont 'Bellamy's Radicalism Reclaimed', in *Looking Backward, 1988-1888*, pp. 147-209 (p. 173).

[114] Ibid, p. 173.

[115] Cited from Sylvia Bowman, *Edward Bellamy*, pp. 72-3.

III.   War and Conflict

Besides achieving equality among the member states, the world federation brings about peace and stability not only among its members but to the entire world. For Bellamy, his utopia can neither live in isolation nor in a troubled world. His attempt to include the world gradually into his scheme is intended to achieve harmonisation and peace and this is reflected in the structure and framework of its trade council and international relations. His project of nationalisation or remodelled socialism and the international federation achieves the transformation without conflict and strife, in contrast to the Civil War that Bellamy refers to at the opening of the novel. The first step towards this goal is to eliminate any potential threat, particularly from the United States, to others.

What further rules out the intention of colonialism, imperialism, and hegemony as the means to achieve this objective, is that the United States is the first nation to disarm: "We have no army or navy, and no military organization".[116] The richness and power of this new nation, should it have retained its military power, would have not only granted it hegemony over the world but also enabled it to overcome any obstacle in the attempts to modify it. Specifically, neither the United States (nor the other nations included in the system) or the international council have military resources with which to impose their orders. It is important to highlight Dr. Leete's statement in relation to the governments' abandonment of this power, particularly in reference to the US government. It must have been hard to persuade readers of *Looking Backward* to imagine this during a time of conflicting interests and ideologies, yet Bellamy nevertheless emphasises it. The military power is withdrawn from governments: "Not even for the best ends would men now allow their governments such powers as were then used for the most maleficent".[117] Unlike the traditional states, Dr. Leete considers that the main threats to nations are the unrelenting dangers of hunger, nakedness, and cold:

> "And, in heaven's name, who are the public enemies?" exclaimed Dr. Leete. "Are they France, England, Germany, or hunger, cold, and nakedness? In your day governments were accustomed, on the slightest international misunderstanding, to seize upon the bodies of citizens and deliver them over by hundreds of thousands to death and mutilation, wasting

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[116] *Looking Backward*, p. 123.
[117] Ibid, p. 36.

their treasures the while like water; and all this oftenest for no imaginable profit to the victims.[118]

Bellamy here also rejects the notion articulated by Spencer who claimed that war is beneficial, enabling humans to exterminate "inferior races and inferior individuals" in the early stages of progress.[119] Internationally, this is achieved through an international council and its member states. For the countries that do not participate in the system, and as the council does not have a military power, the utopian federation does not pose any threat on them. On the other hand, Bellamy does not remark on their potential threat on the utopian federation. However, his critics expressed a different reaction to his proposal, and US disarmament did not pass smoothly or unnoticed. Instead, it was the source of a number of dystopias written in direct response to Bellamy, which imagined the invasion of an enfeebled United States by other nations. For example, the works of Arthur Vinton's *Looking Further Backward* (1890) and Conrad Wilbrandt's *Mr. East's Experiences in Mr. Bellamy's World: Records of the Years 2001 and 2002* (1891) imagine the invasion by China and Central Asia due to the United States' lack of military power. Similar themes recurred in a number of works around this time,[120] all of which highlighted their patriotism, supposedly against such perspectives. For Bellamy, patriotism and nationalism were intricately linked with human solidarity and not ethnic tensions. In contrast to this situation, in his dream where he goes back to the older world, West reads the headline of the newspaper's foreign affairs section:

> The impending war between France and Germany. The French Chambers asked for new military credits to meet Germany's increase of her army. Probability that all Europe will be involved in case of war.[121]

Bellamy's vision of a peaceful world was moral in the first place, but was also based on expediency and practical grounds. If less advanced parts of the world failed to join the proposed plan, this would retain and deepen the inequality of the world. The utopian countries have eliminated hunger and need, rampant in other nations, but the utopia cannot exist in an armed and hostile world. Thus the United States, the first country to give up arms, risks itself to achieve this utopian telos.

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[118] Ibid, p. 35.

[119] *The Study of Sociology* (London: Henry S. King & Company, 1873), p. 199.

[120] Justin Nordstrom, '*Looking Backward's* Utopian Sequels: "Fictional Dialogues" in Gilded-Age America', *Utopian Studies*, 18:2 (2007), pp. 193-221; Carl J. Guarneri, 'An American Utopia and Its Global Audiences'.

[121] *Looking Backward*, p. 181.

Chapter Four: *A Modern Utopia for a World State*

H. G. Wells's *A Modern Utopia* (1905) is distinguished by its capacity to evaluate earlier utopias whilst simultaneously presenting a modern alternative. Yet the significance of the work, besides its novel contribution to the genre, is its attempt to construct a global utopia. Unlike his precursors, with the exception of Bellamy and his modest attempt at gradual expansion, Wells's utopian frontier is designed to include the whole world in an attempt to neutralise and resolve contemporary conflicts and bring about a unified utopian civilisation that accommodates various cultural identities. This mapping requires the expanse and development of the traditional utopian narrative techniques and elements usually designed to create a utopian enclave. Wells achieves this by modifying the model of empire and the utopian genre to accommodate a world state. This combination of utopia and empire under one title resulted in occasional criticism of his vision as imperialistic and ethnocentric. This is significant as his work was written in a period of intensive national and ethnic upheaval before the First World War in Europe and the world as a result of colonialist and imperialist pursuits.

This chapter attempts to investigate the validity of these claims, and review the degree to which imperialism, ethnocentrism, and utopianism influence *A Modern Utopia* and Wells's position. It argues that Wells was prescient about the future of the world and its emergence into a postcolonial stage and fought fervently against the prejudices of his day in *A Modern Utopia* and elsewhere. Evidently, Wells raises an early and important voice against imperialism and colonialism in contrast to the majority of people in his day. In this sense, *A Modern Utopia* is not only modern in its critique of previous utopias, but in its critical position of empire, racial superiority, and colonialism that constitute the core of post colonialism. Most importantly it was through the utopian genre, and not the other literary genre of science fiction for which he was more famous, that Wells thought it best not only to criticise but to forward an alternative to the system of imperialism.[1] Therefore, this chapter explores Wells's unique employment of the genre in what can arguably be considered the last proper utopia.

Thus, *A Modern Utopia* can be considered both anti-colonialist/imperialist and an antecedent of postcolonial criticism,[2] presenting an alternative vision. It is a well-intended proposal of a world state that can accommodate all peoples equally and neutrally and not an imperialist call and plan to conquer the world. This argument is developed in three sections: the first discusses Wells's version of empire in comparison with the existing ones, the second looks at his proposed utopia, and the final section considers his approach to race in contrast to the contemporary ethnocentric outlook. Finally, the chapter highlights how the genre has developed its vision of a world utopia through its last proper work.

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[1] He criticises imperialism and colonialism in earlier works like *The War of the Worlds* (1898) but only forwards an alternative in *A Modern Utopia*.

[2] Anti-colonialist writers like Frantz Fanon present alternatives and better worlds, in contrast to postcolonial criticism which is more concerned with the discourse of colonialism.

A Modern Utopia

Looking Backward had initiated a number of direct responses in the latter part of the nineteenth century that subjected it to critique. William Morris's *News from Nowhere* (1890) thought that Bellamy overemphasized work. William Dean Howells's *A Traveller from Altruria* (1892) projected a more rural utopia. It also inspired Theodor Hertzka's *Freiland* (1890). A number of writers thought Bellamy's planetary perspective jeopardises the US sovereignty and power being concerned with their nation's position in the world. Utopian literature preserved the traditional utopian narrative and continued to discuss themes of the earlier period like reason, religion, science, eugenics and technology, in addition to borrowing evolution vocabulary. *A modern Utopia* is preceded by other utopias of Wells like *The Island of Doctor Moreau* (1896), *The First Men in the Moon* (1901) and the sociological works of *Anticipations* (1901) and *Mankind in the Making* (1903). Apart from the positive works of Wells, the century generally presents a more dystopic view of the future. Texts of Yevgeny Zamiatin's *We* (1924), Aldous Huxley's *Brave New World* (1932), and George Orwell's *Nineteen Eighty-Four* (1949) depicted totalitarian states contrary to the utopian dream that previous writers had envisioned or intended. A number of these works were particularly directed against Wells. Among the utopian writers of the period, Bellamy and Wells were more concerned with order and peace in the modern world. Their view represents the change of the logic of the modern utopias from meeting basic needs, becoming less relevant due to the increase in production and technology, to a full-fledged universal utopian system.

 A Modern Utopia opens with two unnamed English travellers, the 'Voice' and a botanist. In a paratextual note to the reader prior to the start of the narrative, Wells provides an introduction to his narrator, the 'Voice'. Essentially, Wells figures his characters through what he terms "a momentary moving picture of Utopian conditions". This, for Wells, represented "an accelerating trend away from traditionally textual culture to a more visual one".[3] His experiments with films echo this, and particularly the use of "film narrative as a principal metaphor for his own imaginative method" in *A Modern Utopia* and elsewhere.[4]

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[3] Kevin Williams, *H.G. Wells, Modernity and the Movies* (Liverpool: Liverpool University Press, 2007), p.7.
[4] Ibid, pp.1-2.

He attempts to distance himself from the Voice so as not to be considered his mouthpiece, something which he achieves almost automatically through the creation of such a complex narrative structure. In addition to the Voice, we also encounter two other narrators: the narrator of the tale and the author of the note to the reader. The result of this is a constant back-and-forth shift of the Voice's role from his position as an authoritative narrator to that of a mere character in the story. This interruption is indispensable, though, as the utopia itself is intended to provide an angle from which to judge and compare Wells's fictional society with the real world and provide a commentary on the former's improvement.

As they near Switzerland, both travellers suddenly find themselves in a world located on a star beyond Sirius. Whilst they take a while to recognise this new planet, as it is noticeably similar to their own, they gradually come to observe the differences, most specifically in its administration and laws. However, Wells attempts to make this world as familiar as possible so that anyone in his time would be immediately and comfortably able to live there without much lifestyle adjustment.

With time, it becomes apparent that it is a socialist and decentralised system. The Voice's immediate decoding and comprehending of the new system without the existence of a gatekeeper or a companion, as was the case with previous utopias, is remarkable. It is as if the Voice, who is there for the first time, was not only ready to accept this new experience but to describe it with complete familiarity.[5] The absence of a traditional utopian guide also gives readers a chance to think and construct the world with the Voice almost at the same time. This social and economic system came into place after "conclusive wars that established new and more permanent relations, that swept aside obstructions, and abolished centres of decay".[6] Citizens of this utopia are divided into four 'classes of mind' and are (from highest to lowest): the Poietic (the Samurai), the Kinetic, the Dull, and the Base. This utopian world is guided by this Order of the Samurai, named after the Japanese warrior class, and is a meritocracy and not a hereditary caste, so it is open to all citizens who can meet its requirements and credentials. Wells illustrates that those people who fail to join the class do not complain as they are either unable or unwilling to follow the strict

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[5] To reverse Ian Watt's term "delayed decoding". He uses the term to characterise the narrative technique of Joseph Conrad' *Heart of Darkness*; in *Conrad in the Nineteenth Century* (Berkeley, Calif.: University of California Press, 1979), p. 175.

[6] *A Modern Utopia*, p. 261, all quotations from *A Modern Utopia* are from the 1905 edition, introduction by Mark R. Hillegas (Lincoln, Neb.: University of Nebraska Press, 1967).

rules of the Samurai. The members enjoy a number of privileges, most importantly the exclusive right to vote. Wells details the qualifications of the Samurai and what they may and may not do, and these conditions are designed to attract the capable and exclude the less desirable individuals. The Samurai enjoy family life but hold limited private property, and usually they are seen to be dictating the leadership of this utopian society. As in Plato, the capacity of people to elect their proper leaders and the efficiency of democracy are suspected. Despite the general agreement of their authority and monopoly of power,[7] few critics have recognised the democratic nature of the Samurai.[8] The latter view is not untrue as there are some occasions that indicate certain oppositions to the laws of the Samurai. For example, one of the Samurai notes that "there is much dissatisfaction with our isolation of criminals upon islands".[9] Surprisingly, a few writers and activists have shown interest in this order and its vision, despite Wells's caution that his "samurai are but figures of suggestion and by no means copies to follow".[10] They have hoped to organise a political order that replaces the parliament with a technocracy.[11]

The utopian planet's population is identical to that of Earth, to the extent that every Earthling has a double there, albeit a modified version, altered not only socially but also biologically. However, in *A Modern Utopia* there is no radical improvement to human nature since a slight evolution still exists, unlike Wells's later utopias such as *Men Like Gods* (1923), where more radical change occur. For example, the Voice's double is a member of the Samurai, and is depicted as superior: "He is a little taller than I, younger looking and sounder looking", and "his training has been subtly finer than mine; he has made himself a better face than mine". Yet, there is little sustained focus on this theme, and the discussion turns to the utopian system for the remainder of the narrative.

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[7] Frederik Polak writes, "he has been reproached with some justice for preparing the way for fascistic discipline and dictatorship". *The Image*, p. 149.

[8] For example William J. Hyde, 'The Socialism of H. G. Wells in the Early Twentieth Century', *Journal of the History of Ideas*, 17:2 (1956), pp. 217–34 (p. 232).

[9] *A Modern Utopia*, p. 278.

[10] Cited from Claire Hirshfield, 'The Legendary Samurai: H. G. Wells and *A Modern Utopia*', in *Flashes of the Fantastic: Selected Essays from The War of the Worlds*, ed. by David Ketterer (Westport, Conn.: Praeger, 2004), pp. 55-64 (p. 58).

[11] W. Warren Wagar, 'H.G. Wells and the Scientific Imagination', in *H. G. Wells: Bloom's Modern Critical Views*, ed. by Harold Bloom (Philadelphia, Pa.: Chelsea House, 2005), pp. 1-10 (p. 6); John R. Hammond also notes that a group of students from the University of Cambridge formed the 'Utopians' along the lines of Wells's Samurai, in addition to a few other individuals. *H. G. Wells and the Modern Novel* (London: Macmillan, 1988), p. 165.

The Voice's companion, the botanist, shows little or no interest in this new world, but is instead preoccupied with his own love story. He is uninterested despite all the modifications that Wells has introduced to suit the modern world. These modifications assist his modern readers to identify more easily with his utopia. Despite this he attempts to emphasise the limitations of this utopia through the botanist, who is thus depicted as an antagonist to the utopian system and of a single-minded romantic obsession; but still his narrative function is not clearly recognised.[12] Besides the botanist, the Voice encounters another critic of the utopia amongst the citizens of the new planet, which is the first time that a character who is a critic of the utopia is introduced (besides the botanist), and the existence of the two and their criticism has been interpreted to indicate Wells's doubt about his own project.[13] Yet this character represents a substantial number of Wells's readers who are careless about utopian speculations and dreams of a similar nature. Here he evokes the old utopian tradition that assumes that people are by nature hostile to utopian ideals and a limitation to the realisation of these ideals: "People of this sort do not even feel the need of alternatives, [they do not feel that there is a future] beyond the scope of a few personal projects" as Wells describes.[14] Van Brooks' characterisation and the distinction between the Voice and the botanist is useful in this regards, and he writes that Wells:

> Has flatly distinguished between two sorts of human nature, the constructive, experimental sort which lives essentially for the race, and the acquiescent, ineffectual sort which lives essentially for itself or the established fact.[15]

Further, Wells establishes a utopia with a critical function, so both of the characters become essential. As Tom Moylan describes, critical utopias "focus on the continuing presence of difference and imperfection within utopian society itself and thus render more recognisable and dynamic alternatives".[16]

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[12] Mark Hillegas considers him to be insignificant, *The Future*, p. x; he is, on the contrary, seen to represent Wells himself, David Hughes, 'The Mood of a Modern Utopia', in *Critical Essays on H.G. Wells*, ed. by John Huntington (Boston, Mass.: Hall, 1991), pp. 67-76 (p. 73).

[13] Steven McLean states that "the manner in which the fictional dimension of *A Modern Utopia* consistently overturns the narrator's hopes and ideals can indeed be considered as a blatant piece of self-irony on the part of Wells. It is almost as though he is aware from the beginning that his ideals are not attainable with the limited capacity of humanity in 1905". *The Early Fiction of H.G. Wells: Fantasies of Science* (Basingstoke: Palgrave Macmillan, 2009), p. 154.

[14] *A Modern Utopia*, p. 344.

[15] *The World of H.G. Wells* (New York, N.Y.: M. Kennedy, 1915), p. 33.

[16] *Demand the Impossible*, p. 258.

While traveling to the utopian London, the Voice and the botanist suddenly find themselves back in their old world, filled with noise and poverty that sharply contrasts with the fictional utopia. Clearly Wells could not avoid using London, the heart of the greatest empire of the time, and if it was not the entry point it must have been the exit point of his utopia.[17] However, he strips from it any sense of grandeur or magnificence, which provides a more realistic picture of the city.[18]

The Voice is aware that their journey is "an act of the imagination and that is just one of those metaphysical operations that are so difficult to make credible".[19] He admits with a little regret that their exit from the utopian world is final: "but I am back in the world for all that, and my Utopia is done".[20] Unexpectedly, he confesses that it is only a "good discipline for the Utopist to visit this world occasionally".[21] This is perceived by many readers to be an unsatisfactory conclusion, and this "eventual failure of the narrator to bring his narrative to a successful conclusion symbolizes the ultimate impossibility of utopia to be invested with sufficient credibility and authority".[22] Conversely, it can be seen as his desire not to abolish the existing system and to work within it instead. Wells seems to have anticipated many modern thinkers who became wary of utopian thought, fearing these visions would encourage change by force. Moreover, with this ending Wells comes closer to the genre of science fiction rather than utopia in that he does not present a full vision of the future. This is a quality or technique of science fiction, according to Fredric Jameson, which does not attempt to imagine seriously the real future of our social system, but rather to present "multiple mock futures [to] serve the quite different function of transforming our

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[17] Despite the concern about its population outburst and class division, it was still the heart of an empire. For example, the narrator of *Heart of Darkness* (1898) describes it as "the biggest, and the greatest, town on earth"; Diana C. Archibald adds that "It should come as no surprise that many Victorian novelists shared the assumption that England, regardless of its problems, was, and somehow should be, the center of the world". *Domesticity, Imperialism and Emigration in the Victorian Novel* (Columbia, Mo.: University of Missouri Press, 2002), p. 183.

[18] At the time, London was seen "as a symbol of the modern city and its decline due to its population growth, slums and the parity of living situation". Linda Dryden, *The Modern Gothic and Literary Doubles: Stevenson, Wilde and Wells* (Basingstoke: Palgrave Macmillan, 2003), p. 56.

[19] *A Modern Utopia*, p. 133.

[20] Ibid, p. 366.

[21] Ibid, p. 366.

[22] Károly Pintér, *The Anatomy of Utopia: Narration, Estrangement and Ambiguity in More, Wells, Huxley and Clarke* (Jefferson, N..C: McFarland, 2010), p. 119.

own present into the determinate past of something yet to come".[23] This, we can assume, is presented by Wells imagining our present to be the past of his utopia, evident from the historical stages that the planet of his utopia has gone through in order to have eventually progressed to its current system. However, he still does not anticipate his work as a plan, an anticipation, or a prediction for the future. For him, utopian fiction is different from anticipatory tales: "some Futuristic stories are indeed Utopian, but usually they have nothing in common with the Utopian spirit".[24] Instead, he is concerned with the present, and the critical function of utopia.

Another contribution to the genre is his comparison and referencing of previous works, which at times risked his novel becoming more of a history of utopian thought rather than a utopia in itself.[25] Wells recognises this, as he remarks that his work is "a mere story of personal adventures among Utopian philosophies".[26] However, for others it has indeed updated the genre.[27] Again we are tempted to question his originality here, if we agree with Fredric Jameson that what he calls 'intertextuality' is and has always been a unique characteristic of the genre itself.[28] Wells's objective, by this reckoning at least, was to secure his place in the genre's long history. He considered that his work has more in common with these classical works than otherwise, and the title might be misleading and imply that his intention was to depart from this tradition. Indeed, much of his specific planning becomes meaningful only when seen as part of other utopian works. Through this referencing he also carries out a critique of the genre itself. As Hillegas puts it, Wells shows a 'dual move' of social criticism along with the critique of utopian thought itself.[29] Wells had a strong faith in this utopian capacity, believing "the creation of Utopias and

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[23] 'Progress versus Utopia; Or, Can We Imagine the Future?' *Science Fiction Studies*, 9:2 (1982), pp. 147-158 (p. 152).

[24] Wells, 'Utopias', *Science Fiction Studies*, 9:2 (1982), pp. 117-121 (p. 117).

[25] Patrick Parrinder claims that Wells "never produced a major utopian book". *Shadows of the Future. H.G. Wells, Science Fiction, and Prophecy* (Syracuse, N.Y.: Syracuse UP, 1995), p. 66. A similar view is expressed by George Kateb that "Wells's modern utopia is not really a utopia, in the fullest sense". *Utopia*, p. 220.

[26] *A Modern Utopia*, p. 372.

[27] For I. F. Clarke, Wells had produced the most up-to-date utopia in the history of the genre. *The Pattern of Expectation: 1644-2001* (London: Jonathan Cape, 1979), p. 209.

[28] Jameson asks: "Who can read Morris without Bellamy? or indeed Bellamy without Morris? So it is that the individual text carries with it a whole tradition". *Archaeologies*, p. 2.

[29] *The Future*, p. 82.

their exhaustive criticism is the proper and distinctive method of sociology",[30] which has been extensively investigated in the studies of utopianism. Further, his referencing of previous utopias serves as a boundary for his and our expectations, showing how these visions have developed to contain the modern world, whilst also gathering the fragments of the previous expectations into projecting a new utopian society.

A Modern Utopia is presented in a "peculiar method" as Wells explains that it is a hybrid between fiction and drama,[31] two modes that he wrote in throughout his career. *Anticipations*, for example, which came a few years earlier, took the form of an argumentative essay.[32] This hybridity itself was one of the reasons that Wells and others considered *A Modern Utopia* to be original, and was a source of its popularity.[33] Károly Pintér contends that it is a "conscious employment of cognitive and narrative estrangement, which allows him to shift freely between the discourse of fiction and essay".[34] This mode was utilised by Wells's predecessors, including Edward Bellamy and William Morris, and can be related to his views of the function of the novel. Besides its hybridity, *A Modern Utopia* has been critically well received both on fictional and political grounds. As both are significant, it is important to highlight how they are viewed in the context of his work.

To start, *A Modern Utopia*'s narrative was not always praised, with John R. Hammond for example perceiving it to lack a story.[35] Such criticism usually emerges based on the hypothesis that utopias are literary works and should be judged as such. Utopian visions, it is argued, "are in a fundamental sense literary in character; they have most commonly arisen within the realm of literature, and they are informed (like literature) by fictionalised visions that empower alternative modes of thought".[36] Again, this problem of narrative is shared across the genre. When compared with novels, most utopias fall far short in terms of narrative, characterisation, and other novel genre qualities. Utopian writers

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[30] Wells, *An Englishman Looks at the World* (London: Cassell and Company, 1914), p. 204.

[31] *A Modern Utopia*, p. xxxi.

[32] *A Modern Utopia*, as Jack Williamson has noted, is "transitional in form as well as in thought, showing Wells midway between the literary artist and the propagandist". *H. G. Wells: Critic of Progress* (Baltimore, Md.: Mirage Press, 1973), p. 123.

[33] For example Kumar, echoing Wells himself, believes that "attractiveness and originality of the form" were reasons for its popularity. *Utopia and Anti-Utopia*, p. 190.

[34] *The Anatomy*, p. 118.

[35] *H. G. Wells and the Modern Novel*, p. 165.

[36] M. Keith Booker, *The Dystopian Impulse in Modern Literature: Fiction as Social Criticism* (Westport, Conn.: Greenwood Press, 1994), p. 14.

themselves recognise this shortfall and instead focus on representing ideas, with the narrative being a mere vehicle for their articulation. The fact that a few utopias excelled as literary works proves the didactic purpose of the genre.[37]

On the one hand, Wells had always expressed his view that the function of a novel is its utility and not merely its artistic merits, a point on which he famously 'quarrelled' with Henry James.[38] Wells, writing in 1915, stated:

> There is, of course, a real and very fundamental difference in our innate and developed attitudes towards life and literature. To you literature like a painting is an end, to me literature like architecture is a means, it has a use.[39]

This is noting that Wells's career coincided with the aesthetic movement, which emphasised aesthetic values at the expense of socio-political ones. Wells's scientific background in contrast to history or philosophy, although both are in contrast to fiction, might be a significant element to consider in this regard. He does acknowledge the influence of his studies in biology on the formation of his ideas, and he uses utopia as a means to promote socialist ideas, a capacity of the genre that is deeply rooted in its tradition.[40] In a preface that he wrote in 1934 to a collection of his works, he states that "in all this type of story the living interest lies in their non-fantastic elements and not in the invention itself", and that "the thing that makes such imaginations interesting is their transition into commonplace terms and a rigid exclusion of other marvels from the story".[41] Wells understands that his utopian ideas need to go beyond the interest of a few intellectuals and energise and attract a large number of people. The focus on ethical and political ideas has also been the objective of utopian writers since Plato.[42] In Wells's note to the reader at the beginning of *A Modern Utopia*, he implies that the form should follow the goal. Those who view it from this stand describe it as "a beautiful Utopia beautifully seen and beautifully thought".[43] On the other hand, Robert C. Elliot considers the

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[37] Kumar, *Utopia and Anti-Utopia*, p. 25.

[38] David Trotter, *The English Novel in History, 1895–1920* (London: Routledge, 1993), p. 23.

[39] Cited from Tony Burns, *Political Theory, Science Fiction, and Utopian Literature: Ursula K. Le Guin and The Dispossessed* (Lanham, Md.: Lexington Books, 2008), p. 23

[40] Simon J. James writes that the "point of view in the genre of literary utopia is formally divided between expression and creation, between description and advocacy". *Maps of Utopia: H. G. Wells, Modernity and the End of Culture* (Oxford: Oxford UP, 2012), p. 128.

[41] Cited from Patrick Parrinder, *Science Fiction: Its Criticism and Teaching* (London: Routledge, 2003), pp. 11-12.

[42] Kumar, *Utopia and Anti-Utopia*, p. 25.

[43] Van Wyck Brooks, p. 73.

dominance of what he calls the subjunctive mood to be a weakness of the narration, "as though he were not willing to commit himself completely to the fictional reality of Utopia - as though Utopia were a hypothesis rather than a place".[44] Yet again, we should highlight the fact the utopian work had always shown an ambivalent and more complex relationship to contemporary reality than other artistic works. Kumar writes that the primary utopian characteristic is the "high tension between the ideal and the real", also noting in particular that Wells powerfully exploited this element in *A Modern Utopia*.[45] Hammond agrees with Kumar that "a recurring theme in Wells's fiction is the thin dividing line between illusion and reality, between time in the mental world, the world of dreams, and in actuality".[46] We can add that this is mainly due to its attempt to not only depict the reality but to alter it. Although Wells is aware that his work is a utopia and not a futuristic speculation as mentioned earlier, he stresses that the past should not be an obstacle to a constructed future either. That the outlook to the future should direct the course of the present.[47]

The other side of the hybridity equation is the political content that he emphasises, which is also viewed critically. Wells highlights this important component of the work which addresses "interested and open-minded [people] with regard to social and political questions", and a continuation of *Anticipations* (1901) which he wrote to answer "innumerable social and political questions" in his mind.[48] Indeed, and although the work has often been interpreted as "a politico-philosophical treatise in the first place",[49] it is also accused of having failed in resolving these political and social issues that it raises.[50] This is perhaps what is directly related to this project, because Wells departs from his predecessors

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[44] *The Shape*, p. 115.

[45] Kumar, *Utopianism*, pp. 96–7.

[46] *H. G. Wells and the Modern Novel*, p. 62.

[47] In his *Experiment in Autobiography*, Wells writes that, "we are waking up to the fact that a planned world-state governing the complex of human activities for the common good, however difficult to attain, has become imperative, and that until it is achieved, the history of the race must be now inevitably a record of catastrophic convulsions shot with mere glimpses and phases of temporary good luck. We are, as a species, caught in an irreversible process". (Philadelphia, Pa.: J. B. Lippincott, 1967), p. 197.

[48] *A Modern Utopia*, p. xxix.

[49] Jon Hegglund, ''No Less Than a Planet': Scale-Bending in Modernist Fiction', in *Utopian Spaces of Modernism Literature and Culture, 1885-1945*, ed. by Rosalyn Gregory and Benjamin Kohlmann (Basingstoke: Palgrave Macmillan, 2012), pp. 177-193 (p. 177).

[50] *H. G. Wells and the Modern Novel*, p. 165.

by not prioritising his society's immediate political and social concerns.[51] However, he was aware of these existing concerns, which motivated and shaped his socialist orientation in the first place,[52] but his priority in *A Modern Utopia* is to present a proposal for the global society and to look at the shared priorities of human beings. He mostly prioritises and emphasises issues of race and cultural superiority that touch the whole world. It is through this that he attempted to attract an international audience and encourage his European peers to broaden and even change their perspectives. He once wrote, "we have an empire as big as the world and an imagination as small as a parish".[53] Here he departs again from his predecessors in that his organisation is to bring about a better world and not only a better community.[54]

Not unrelated to the political content of the work, his particular utopian vision is believed to have triggered the creation of a number of dystopian narratives, including those of Yevgeny Zamyatin, Aldous Huxley, and George Orwell, which are often viewed as critical responses to Wells's utopia. Beside these, much of the modern anti-utopian traditions and trends, it is claimed, were shaped by his works, including his scientific romances.[55] Zamyatin, in discussing where Wells stands in the history of the genre and his contribution to its tradition, suggests that he had altered the mood of utopia towards that of the dystopia, a radical transformation both in content and form.[56] Huxley said that his *Brave New World* was a response to Wells: "I am writing a novel about the future – on the horror of the Wellsian Utopia and a revolt against it".[57] From another point of view, he is

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[51] The utopian writer, as Northrop Frye explains, "looks at his own society first and tries to see what, for his purposes, its significant elements are. The utopia itself shows what society would be like if those elements were fully developed". 'Varieties', p. 26.

[52] Kumar writes that at the turn of the century "problems of poverty and class distinctions persisted in all their complexity. More than a quarter of the population lived in squalor and struggled to feed and clothe their families". *Utopia and Anti-Utopia*, pp. 170-71.

[53] *The Works of H. G. Wells*, 28 vols. (New York, N.Y.: Scribner's, 1924), p. 303.

[54] Utopia is usually defined as "a verbal construction of a particular quasi-human community where sociopolitical institutions, norms, and individual relationships are organized according to a more perfect principle than in *the author's community*", Darko Suvin, *Defined*, p. 30 [emphasis added].

[55] That "the modern anti-utopian tradition was shaped by an earlier and somewhat different world, that of the period from the 1890's to World War". Mark R. Hillegas, *The Future*, p. 4; For John Batchelor, Zamyatin's projection of a future world state "in which freedom is by definition a crime, was written as a direct result of reading and translating Wells". *H. G. Wells* (Cambridge: Cambridge UP, 1985), p. 8.

[56] Yevgeny Zamyatin, 'H. G. Wells', in *A Soviet Heretic: Essays by Yevgeny Zamyatin,* ed. by Mirra Ginsburg (Chicago, Ill.: University of Chicago Press, 1991), pp. 259–90.

[57] Cited from Aislinn Goodman, *Brave New World* (Philadelphia, Pa.: World Chelsea House 2004), pp. 81-2.

considered to be an example of the tendency in the history of utopian thought to express both utopian and dystopian modes. It is believed that this is related to the technological developments that exerted "force in two opposing directions", which affect the writings and mood of the same author at different points in his or her life.[58] Accordingly, Kumar concludes that Wells made "the passage from anti-utopia to utopia" during the 1900s,[59] and this shift is most visible at the turn of the century, particularly in *A Modern Utopia* where he "seems almost a different man".[60] However, it is not doing justice to place the responsibility on Wells alone for the predominant dystopian mode of the age. The twentieth century itself is generally known as dystopian with only a few utopian writers. For Judith Shklar, Wells's work was the last of a dying genre,[61] whereas others view *A Modern Utopia* as the inspiration for later attempts to revive the genre.[62] For the purpose of this chapter, Wells's work can be considered as one of the most significant turning points. Since the creation of the tradition, it is the first utopia to have attempted to transform its vision into one that is completely global in scale, inclusive of all its peoples and as they are. Here, Wells is arguing against deep rooted conceptions that impede the realisation of this utopian objective.

Wells's originality and this unprecedented utopian global organisation emerged from his recognition of the changes and forces that reshaped the world in which he lived. His imagined utopia is an outcome of the theory of evolution and changing conceptions of time and space, capitalism-socialism, the ascendance of nationalism, and modern technology. Wells particularly recognises the "novel development of material forces, and especially of means of communication" that the world has witnessed "in the last hundred years".[63] The work builds on the fin de siècle spirit and feeling which Bernard Bergonzi describes as looking forward beyond the nineteenth century, which "sensitive souls were growing weary of",[64] and a projection of these forces. Wells could not but think of the

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[58] Manuel and Manuel, *Utopian Thought*, p. 776; Northrop Frye adds, "Wells is one of the few writers who have constructed both serious and satirical utopias". 'Varieties', p. 28.

[59] Kumar, *Utopia and Anti-Utopia*, p. 129.

[60] Jack Williamson, *H. G. Wells: Critic of Progress*, p. 135.

[61] *Political Theory of Utopia*, p. 110.

[62] For example Marge Piercy's *Women on the Edge of Time* (1976) and Ursula K. Le Guin's *The Dispossessed* (1974).

[63] *A Modern Utopia*, p. 326.

[64] *The Early H.G. Wells: A Study of the Scientific Romances* (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1961), p. 3

whole world and this global outlook has mistakenly been interpreted as imperialist and ethnocentric. He is thus accused of not escaping the ethnocentrism of his age,[65] and this kind of attitude is perceived as representative of the contemporary 'English mentality'.[66] His works, *A Modern Utopia* included, were received as imperialistic in a number of countries,[67] and failing to show a "true cultural diversity".[68]

Despite these negative criticisms, Wells's international advocacy and efforts for a world state have been recognised and praised. For example, the first H. G. Wells society, established during his life, was called Cosmopolis (1934) in recognition of his role. In particular, *A Modern Utopia* should be investigated as it attempts to provide a shared space for a diverse world and criticises the historical development, baseless subject-object relations, and scientifically empty race-related justification of colonialism and imperialism. Wells is, however, not much recognised in the field of postcolonial literature, with *A Modern Utopia* particularly absent. This mixed reception, as will be discussed in the remainder of the chapter, might be attributed to a number of reasons.

Firstly, it could be because the work is caught between and is thus obscured by the genres of science fiction and imperial narratives which Wells was famous for, having created many of their techniques. The imperial narratives were popular in his day, and usually depicted a journey to imperial domains where curious British explorers encountered other civilisations or savages and customs deemed strange to Europeans.[69] Notable writers include H. Rider Haggard, Thomas Janvier, Robert E. Howard, and John Buchan. These narratives also included works that criticised the imperialist outlook, like those of Edgar Wallace. Wells had been influenced by these imperialist romances, and used their themes in

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[65] William T. Ross, *H.G. Wells's World Reborn: The Outline of History and Its Companions* (Selinsgrove, Pa.: Susquehanna UP, 2002), p. 76.

[66] Cited in Richard Nate, 'Ignorance, Opportunism, Propaganda and Dissent: The Reception of H. G. Wells in Nazi Germany' in *The Reception of H.G. Wells in Europe* ed. by Patrick Parrinder and John S. Partington (London: Continuum, 2005), pp. 105-125 (p. 118).

[67] For example this was the case for the reception of his views about Ireland, Lucian M. Ashworth. 'Clashing Utopias: H. G. Wells and Catholic Ireland', in *The Reception*, pp. 267-279 (p. 278); and Germany, Richard Nate, 'Ignorance, Opportunism, Propaganda, and Dissent: The Reception of H. G. Wells in Nazi Germany', in *The Reception*, pp. 105-25.

[68] W. Warren Wagar, *H. G. Wells: Traversing Time* (Middletown, Conn.: Wesleyan UP, 2004), p. 107.

[69] Patrick Brantlinger defines it as fiction that "combines the seemingly scientific, progressive, often Darwinian ideology of imperialism with an antithetical interest in the occult". *Rule of Darkness: British Literature and Imperialism, 1830-1914* (London: Cornell UP, 1988), p. 227.

a number of his works. One example is his use of technology.[70] The emergence and development of science fiction itself, for which Wells is well-known, is usually linked to colonialism and imperialism.[71] John Rieder clarifies that "no informed reader can doubt that allusions to colonial history and situations are ubiquitous features of early science fiction motifs and plots".[72] Likewise, he was associated with the Fabian society, which "beyond its cultural Eurocentrism, racialist and eugenicist" ideologies reinforced "social imperialism".[73] Wells's proposal of a world empire in *A Modern Utopia* and elsewhere might also lead to the negative speculation that it intended to deal with matters related to race. This is as "racism has been the powerful ideology of imperialistic policies since the turn of our century".[74] However, despite this it should be noted that Wells introduced a number of works such as *The War of the Worlds*, which clearly criticise imperialism.

Finally, his utopian vision and stand on imperialism led to the question of whether he was a pessimist or an optimist about the future of the world state that he proposes. Critics mainly fall into two categories on this question, with the first believing that the dualism of pessimism/optimism is a characteristic of Wells, with both co-existing throughout his works and intricately linked to his personal life, both physically and emotionally.[75] Wells later became more optimistic about the long-term future of humanity, moving from anti-utopian to utopian imagination,[76] possibly because his own personal

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[70] Northrop Frye states: "Most utopia-writers follow either More (and Plato) in stressing the legal structure of their societies, or Bacon in stressing its techno logical power. The former type of utopia is closer to actual social and political theory; the latter overlaps with what is now called science fiction". 'Varieties', pp. 27-28.

[71] Patricia Kerslake shows that the themes, attributes, and purposes of empire and science fiction are completely blended. *Science Fiction and Empire* (Liverpool: Liverpool UP, 2007), p. 191; Patrick Parrinder extends this relationship to Ursula Le Guin's work of 1969. *Shadows*, p. 65; also Istvan Csicsery-Ronay, 'Science Fiction and Empire', *Science Fiction Studies*, 30:2 (2003), pp. 231-45, and others.

[72] He adds that scholars largely agree that science fiction expanded in "the period of the most fervid imperialist expansion in the late nineteenth century". *Colonialism and the Emergence of Science Fiction* (Middletown, Conn.: Wesleyan UP, 2008), pp. 2-3.

[73] Gregory Claeys, *Imperial Sceptics: British Critics of Empire, 1850–1920* (Cambridge: Cambridge UP, 2010), p. 186.

[74] Hannah Arendt, *The Origins of Totalitarianism* (New York, N.Y.: Harcourt Brace Jovanovich, 1973), p. 158.

[75] Batchelor, *H. G. Wells*, p. 155; Kumar, *Utopia and Anti-Utopia*, p. 178; the same views are expressed by Chad Walsh, *From Utopia to Nightmare*, p. 53.

[76] John Huntington, 'Utopian and Anti-Utopian Logic: H.G. Wells and His Successors', *Science Fiction Studies*, 9:2 (1982), pp. 122-146 (p. 124).

fortunes improved.[77] However, it can be noted that he reverted back to pessimism towards the end of his life, becoming profoundly negative about future developments.[78] Anthony West considers that Wells did not have confidence in the capacity of humanity to bring about their ideals,[79] and his biographer David C. Smith writes that "he did not think that negative ends had to come but there was little evidence that they would not".[80]

The two World Wars that Wells lived through left their mark on him, and he also became disillusioned with the Fabian Society, which he had hoped would become an instrument for change. Gradually his optimism faded away, and in a preface he wrote in 1933 to a collection of his works he wrote: "Now and then, though I rarely admit it, the universe projects itself towards me in a hideous grimace. It grimaced that time, and I did my best to express my vision of the aimless torture in creation".[81] Conversely, rather than the distinction between pessimism and optimism, we can instead suggest that it was the impulse of progression or regression of the world that never disappeared from his mind. In other words, the progression towards his proposal of the world state was a constant preoccupation. In 1934 he admitted that his early works *The Time Machine* (1895), *The Island of Dr. Moreau* (1896), and *The War of the Worlds* (1898) were "consciously grim, under the influence of Swift's tradition", but that he is "neither a pessimist nor an optimist at bottom".[82] In 1945 he wrote his last work, *Mind at the End of Its Tether*, which clearly lacked a sense of optimism about the future.

The answer to whether Wells was pessimistic or optimistic might be concluded from a differentiation that he made between anticipatory tales and utopia. For him the utopian story (and spirit) "imagines a better and a happier world and makes no presence to reality",[83] which perhaps explains the strangely optimistic global society of this utopian work that suddenly appears after his early gloomy works. He is utopian when dreaming of a

[77] Peter Edgerly Firchow, *Modern Utopian Fictions from H.G. Wells to Iris Murdoch* (Washington, D.C.: Catholic University of America Press, 2007), p. 27.
[78] Gregory Claeys, 'The Origins of Dystopia: Wells, Huxley and Orwell', in *The Cambridge Companion to Utopian Literature*, pp. 107-132 (p. 114).
[79] Anthony West, *H. G. Wells*: *Aspects of a Life* (New York, N.Y.: Random House, 1984), p. 56.
[80] David C. Smith, *H.G. Wells: Desperately Mortal: A Biography* (New Haven, Conn.: Yale University. Press, 1986), p. 477.
[81] John R. Hammond, *A Preface to H. G. Wells* (Harlow, England: Pearson Education, 2001), p. 108.
[82] Cited in George Zebrowski, 'The Fear of the Worlds', in *The War of the Worlds: Fresh Perspectives on the H.G. Wells Classic*, ed. by Glenn Yeffeth (Dallas, Texas: Benbella, 2005), pp. 235-50 (pp. 235-6).
[83] Wells, 'Utopias', p. 117.

world state, and dystopian when showing the fragility of disunity like in *The War of the Worlds* (1898). This is indicated in the utopianism of the works that came after *A Modern Utopia*, which included *New Worlds for Old* (1908), *The World Set Free* (1914), *Men Like Gods* (1923), and *The Shape of Things to Come* (1933). Clearly there is a great deal of overlap between dystopian and utopian fiction, and Wells shows that it is possible for one single text to contain both elements. However, he utilised his early dystopian works to criticise the contemporary situation of the world and utopian vision to discuss possible alternatives.[84] Wells attempts to envision the future of humanity destined to live and accept each other, and he was worried that the consequences of failing to do so would be war and regression. However, he usually failed to imagine such futures and instead sank into pessimism. Some of these titles and themes are occasionally alluded to even today, when similar fears are expressed.[85]

Empire and a World State

The central question of this chapter is why Wells, despite his supposed disapproval of imperialism, thought to wed utopia and empire. On the one hand, Wells criticises the experience of contemporary empires, yet he proposes a utopian world. He has been ambivalent about his position, and his fictions, including *A Modern Utopia*, and the opinions he expressed in his other nonfiction writings and commentaries contribute to this confusion. His intention, as will be discussed below, was that the concept and practice of empire should support a utopian world state, and empire should be modified and adapted to this aim. He establishes his argument on both pragmatic and philosophical principles. His impulse is to criticise the world in the light of one world state, which is similar to previous utopias that questioned their societies in light of other moral or ethical ideals.

This ambivalent view towards the matter is traced through various stages of his career. To start with, he confessed in *The Open Conspiracy* (1928) that when he had written *Anticipations* in 1901 he had been an imperialist, and that his pro-imperialism was for the

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[84] Although Andrew Ross explains that "if utopianism draws its appeal from perceived deficiencies of the present, then the power of dystopian thinking lies in its perceptions about deficiencies of the future", *Strange Weather: Culture, Science and Technology in the Age of Limits* (London: Verso, 1991), p. 143; but this is not the case with Wells, at least.

[85] For example, Niall Ferguson's acknowledged borrowing of the title *The War of the World* (2006).

pragmatic purpose of advancing the idea of a world government, although he later abandoned this.[86] However, he demonstrates anti-imperialist and anti-colonialist attitudes prior to and after *Anticipations*. For example in *The War of the Worlds* (1898), Wells's Martians mimic British colonial practices against Britain, whereas in *The Outline* (1920) Wells shies away from and ignores the effects of colonisation on other peoples around the world.[87] This confusion has led to a number of attempts to explain the particular works and his views in general.[88]

Craig Renfroe, attempts a reading of *The War of the Worlds* using Mary Louise Pratt's theory in the context of travel narratives. Pratt states that "in writing these narratives, these scientists, humanitarians, or capitalists all seek to prove their 'innocence' in the problems of empire, even criticizing some of its excesses, but at the same time they support the imperialist power structure". Renfroe concludes that *The War of the Worlds* "exhibits Pratt's idea of anti-conquest by evading any responsibility for the problems of empire and yet facilitating the imperialist project". The novel, then, "paradoxically criticizes imperialism while simultaneously supporting the need for empire".[89] Wells's anti-imperialist attitude in *The War of the Worlds* and *The Time Machine* is seen as a reflection of the fear and warning of a national decline.[90] In these works, Wells switches the position of his narrator from coloniser to colonised.[91] This was seen to be influenced by Edward Gibbon's *The Decline and Fall of the Roman Empire* (1776), which was one of Wells's favourite books.[92] Such a conclusion is in line with that of British historian Arnold Toynbee

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[86] H. G. Wells, *The Open Conspiracy: What Are We to Do with Our Lives?* (San Diego, Calif.: The Book Tree, 2006), p. 140.

[87] William T. Ross rightly concludes that Wells "shows no interest in the plight of the colonized, as is the silence on the subject in the many reviews of the original editions of the *Outline*". *H.G. Wells's World Reborn*, p. 73.

[88] For example, John Batchelor comments that *The War of the Worlds* "begins as a parody of British imperialism but ends as a celebration", *H. G. Wells*, p. 27.

[89] Craig Renfroe, 'The War of the Worlds: Wells's Anti-Imperialist Support of Empire', *Postscript* 15 (1998), pp. 43–51 (pp. 49-50).

[90] Judith Wilt, 'Imperial Mouth: Imperialism, the Gothic and Science Fiction', *Journal of Popular Culture* 14:4 (1981), pp. 618-628 (p. 619).

[91] In his works he pictures a reverse colonialism that provides a space and picture of the experience of the colonised, which was unprecedented. However, John Rieder recognises Wells's reversal of the 'colonial gaze' in his *The War of the Worlds*, where it is the West under the Martian's gaze, but he concludes that Wells is still within the framework of colonial gaze but only changing positions. *Colonialism and the Emergence of Science Fiction* (Middletown, Conn.: Wesleyan UP, 2008), p. 10.

[92] Paul Cantor and Peter Hufnagel, 'The Empire of the Future: Imperialism and Modernism in H. G. Wells', *Studies in the Novel*, 38:1 (2006), pp. 36–56 (p. 44).

in his twelve-volume study of world civilisations (1934). Toynbee concludes that utopia comes in periods of crisis (social and political changes) when members of a society "have lost the expectation of further progress" and become dreamers instead of actors.[93] This fear and sense of decline is believed to have influenced late Victorian fiction,[94] and such a geopolitical fear might have also been intensified by the rivalry to the British hegemony by Germany and the United States, and the rise of nationalism in colonised countries. In the Edwardian era, both pro- and anti-imperialists believed that the expansion of their empire is something of the past,[95] and it was this outward expansion that prevented the decline at the core.[96] This decline deepened the fear of invasion and vulnerability. It has also been argued that Wells "makes a unique contribution to the proliferation of *fin de Siècle* fictions expressing a fear of invasion".[97] Also related to decline is the idea of degeneration, and this discourse grew out of the idea that evolution "would not necessarily result in humanity's changing for the better".[98] In a more radical sense, humans and societies are doomed to regress to an earlier stage of evolution, a theme that is thought to be essential to Wells's *The Time Machine*.[99]

On the other hand, it is also believed that "these texts [including the ones by Wells], which appear to accept imperialism, are, rather, anti imperial propaganda but worded so cleverly that it is only through irony and satire that the narrative's intent becomes visible":[100] to reflect cultural guilt so the imperial practices are mirrored back home. The moral of imperialism was questioned by a number of intellectuals and writers, although only a minority. For example, in 1809 American author Washington Irving showed the

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[93] Arnold J. Toynbee, *A Study of History: Abridgement of Volumes 1-6* (Oxford: Oxford UP, 1987), p. 183.

[94] "Late-Victorian fiction in particular is saturated with the sense that the entire nation - as a race of people, as a political and imperial force, as a social and cultural power – was in irretrievable decline'. Stephen Arata, 'The Occidental Tourist: *Dracula* and the Anxiety of Reverse Colonisation', *Victorian Studies*, 33.4 (1990), pp. 621-645 (p. 622).

[95] Michael Howard and Wm. Roger Louis, *The Oxford History of the British Empire: Volume IV, the Twentieth Century* (Oxford: Oxford UP, 1999), p. 4.

[96] David Ketterer, 'Flashes of the Fantastic: Selected Essays from the War of the Worlds Centennial', Nineteenth International Conference on the Fantastic in the Arts (Westport, Conn.: Praeger Publishers, 2004), p. 47

[97] Steven McLean, *H. G. Wells: Interdisciplinary Essays* (Cambridge: Cambridge Scholars, 2008), p. 2.

[98] Emily Alder, 'Buildings of the New Age: Dwellings and the natural environment in the futuristic fiction of H. G. Wells and William Hope Hodgson', in *H. G. Wells: Interdisciplinary Essays*, pp. 114-29 (p. 115).

[99] John Glendening, *The Evolutionary Imagination in Late-Victorian Novels: An Entangled Bank* (Aldershot: Ashgate, 2007), p. 48

[100] Patricia Kerslake's *Science Fiction and Imperialism* (Liverpool: Liverpool UP, 2007), p. 26.

same motif and compared European invasion of America to invaders from the moon. Fredric Jameson claims that the Martian invasion of Britain presented in *The War of the Worlds* "is patently a guilt fantasy on the part of a Victorian man who wonders whether the brutality with which he has used the colonial peoples may not be visited on him by some more advanced race".[101] But it is also indicated that these writers participated in the general debate about the ethical responsibility of imperialism and colonialism but they did not aim to dissolve the Empire, "at least not immediately", but their objective was to "reform it and to make it more accountable".[102] Postcolonial theorists, working from a different angle, have mapped out the element of 'imperial nostalgia' expressed in the culture, art, and practices of people to "memorialise the period of imperial might".[103] That is, the glorifying of empires is only nostalgia for the past might of empires.

While some of these interpretations sound plausible, others seem less so and fail to interpret Wells's intentions. Truly, Wells's notion of the world state, developed later in *A Modern Utopia*, first occurred in *Anticipations*, and this supports his claim that he endorses imperialism to advance the cause of a world state. He continued to advocate this cause for the rest of his life,[104] and in *The Outline* he shied away from the plight of the colonised nations. Other attempted interpretations, however, seem less convincing. To start with, Wells shows no fear of geopolitical decline. *The War of the Worlds* (1897) came when imperialism was still strong (both ideologically and in practice), and not at a time of crisis for the British Empire.[105] Wells also does not show any such warning there or in *A Modern*

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[101] 'Generic Discontinuities in SF: Brian Aldiss' Starship', *Science Fiction Studies,* 1:2 (1973), pp. 57-68 (p. 59); a similar point is also reiterated by Stephen D. Arata in 'The Occidental Tourist', p. 622.

[102] *The Oxford History of the British Empire: Volume IV,* p. 20; Nicholas Owen expresses that "distaste for certain features of the Edwardian Empire should not, therefore, be equated with anti-imperialism". 'Critics of Empire in Britain', in *The Oxford History of the British Empire: Volume IV*, pp. 188-211 (p. 192).

[103] Jane M. Jacobs, *Edge of Empire: Postcolonialism and the City* (London: Routledge, 1996), p. 40.

[104] In *Experiment in Autobiography*, Wells states, "the particular brain whose ups and downs and beatings about in the world you have been following in this autobiography, has arrived at the establishment of the socialist world-state as its directive purpose and has made that its religion and end". P. 644.

[105] This is agreed by the majority of historians and writers on the British Empire. Patrick Brantlinger writes that "imperialism as an ideology seems to have been strongest in the 1880s and 90s". *Victorian Literature and Postcolonial Studies* (Edinburgh: Edinburgh UP, 2010), p. 4. For Wm. Roger Louis, 'the nineteenth century Empire comes to a close only with the outbreak of war in 1914, and the twentieth-century Empire comes clattering down in the 1960s. To use a symbolic date, the death of Churchill in 1965 signifies the beginning of post-colonial Britain or the dividing-line between Imperial and contemporary Britain". *The Oxford History of Twentieth Century: Volume IV*, p. 1. For Eric Hobsbawm, the age of empire spans from 1875 to 1914. *The Age of Empire, 1875–1914* (New York, N.Y.: Vintage, 1989).

Utopia either.[106] He is clear in his condemnation of imperialism, and thus his works should not be grouped together with other writers of an ambivalence stance, as is occasionally done.[107] *The War of the Worlds*, as Wells explained later, came after a discussion with his brother about the plight of the Tasmanians after their island was discovered by Europeans.[108] The argument that imperialism can extend, benefit, and civilise the undeveloped parts of the world does not exist at all in his works. Wells also does not advocate strengthening British imperialism at the expense of other newly emerging ones. For example, by the end of the First World War, he had advised that the League of Nations should equally restrain British, French, and German imperialism.[109]

Renfroe's reading, too, might not be applied to the context of *A Modern Utopia*, as will be shown below, in which Wells expands upon the issue and takes a clear stand on the matter of imperialism, also presenting a utopian alternative to it. In his own version of reverse colonisation, and instead of expressing a warning to his nation's empire, the only benefit that humanity got from this reverse imperialism is that "it has done much to promote the conception of the commonweal of mankind".[110]

Regarding the element of 'imperial nostalgia', whilst Wells demonstrates yearning for the past his nostalgia is for the Roman Empire and not for the earlier days of the British Empire. Further, this nostalgia is not for its power and imperial might, but for its ability to include and contain various peoples of different cultures in peaceful coexistence. Wells, in his *The Outline*, rebukes contemporary empires as they "did not even pretend to be a continuation of the world empire of Rome".[111] In *A Modern Utopia*, Wells describes the

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[106] Although he might have expressed similar feelings later. For example, in *Tono-Bungay* (1909) he writes "England and the Kingdom, Britain and the Empire, the old prides and the old devotions, glide abeam, astern, sink down upon the horizon, pass--pass. The river passes--London passes, England passes". *The H. G. Wells Reader: A Complete Anthology from Science Fiction to Social Satire*, ed. by John Huntington (City, Md.: Taylor Trade Publishing, 2003), p. 335.

[107] Stephen Arata lists Wells with late nineteenth century novelists, including Stoker, Haggard, Doyle, and Kipling who situate the question of degeneration 'within the context of fin de siècle imperial politics'. *Fictions of Loss in the Victorian Fin de Siècle* (Cambridge: Cambridge UP, 1996), p. 80.

[108] Cited by Linda Dryden in *The Modern Gothic and Literary Doubles: Stevenson, Wilde and Wells* (2003), p. 178

[109] *In The Fourth Year; Anticipations of a World Peace* (New York, N.Y.: The Macmillan Company, 1918), p. 39.

[110] *The War of the Worlds* (New York, N.Y.: Signet Classic, 1986), p. 203.

[111] *The Outline of History* (Garden City, N.Y.: Garden City Books, 1920), p. 443.

Roman Empire as "liberal and progressive", which "spread from the Arctic Ocean to the Bight of Benin, and was to know no Decline and Fall".[112]

What we can still emphasise is Wells's concern surrounding the reaction of his readers in this regard, since he was careful to address an audience sympathetic towards imperialism. This, indeed, might have had a strong influence on Wells, especially as he recognises this in *A Modern Utopia* too, that the modern imperialist school is "a very audible and influential school".[113] What further highlights his preoccupation with a larger readership is that he complained that *A Modern Utopia* was not as "widely read" as he expected or wished.[114] One example might illustrate the impact of such an audience. In his fourth edition of *The Outline* he included the Amritsar massacre of 1919 in India by the British, and his account was not biased even by the standards of his day. However, this nevertheless made one of his principle collaborators, Ernest Barker, to request his name to be withdrawn from the coming editions.[115] This caution is recurrent in his works. In *A Modern Utopia*, while rebuking the civilising missionary culture of his countrymen, he is careful to ensure the recognition of some noble intention and not to offend his readers.

Wells's objective then is not geopolitical fear, nostalgia, or to warn of decline. It is important to note that support of imperialism can be meaningful only looking at his fiction and nonfiction works. His position is best described by himself, as he writes "I am now an anti-imperialist; but my case is that it is imperialism which has changed, and not I", although this failed to work as a framework for a world state.[116] Here, we can forward three reasons to explain his position. Firstly, Empires have, in the past, successfully accommodated various cultures and ethnicities, which is a priority to Wells and the objective of his world state. Secondly, empires (and particularly the British Empire) were already in place and might be transformed more easily than another system into a world state. Thirdly, no utopia can survive amid a fighting and hostile non-utopian world.

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[112] *A Modern Utopia*, p. 260.
[113] Ibid, p. 345; research also confirms that the ideology of empire was well established and defused in this period. For example, John Mackenzie, 'Empire and Metropolitan Cultures', in *The Oxford History of the British Empire: Volume III: The Nineteenth Century*, ed. by Andrew Porter and Wm Roger Louis (Oxford: Oxford UP, 1999), pp. 270-293 (p. 270).
[114] Cited from Nathan Waddell, *Modernist Nowheres. Politics and Utopia in Early Modernist Writing, 1900-1920* (Basingstoke: Palgrave Macmillan, 2012), p. 40.
[115] *H.G. Wells's World Reborn*, pp. 72-3.
[116] *Imperialism and the Open Conspiracy* (London: Faber & Faber, 1929), p. 7.

Returning to the first reason, Wells rebukes contemporary empires for their inability to contain peoples of different backgrounds peacefully. In *A Modern Utopia*, he condemns the modern imperialism school as it leads to "aggressive Imperialism" and the mastery of one race over others.[117] A much recurrent criticism that Wells points to in *A Modern Utopia* is their lack of progress. Wells believes that the current mode of imperialism does not "promise any reality of permanent progress for the world of men".[118] The meaning of progress is best understood in the binary classification that Lewis S. Feuer makes in his *Imperialism and the Anti-imperialist Mind*,[119] between 'progressive' and 'regressive' imperialism, with his examples of the latter being the Spanish and Mongol Empires. Wells wonders about other alternatives to his project: "If you are not prepared to regard a world-wide synthesis of all cultures and polities and races into one World State as the desirable end upon which all civilising efforts converge, what do you regard as the desirable end?"[120] He builds on two approaches in defence of his proposal's importance and considers what would happen if it is not considered. Wells believes that there would only be two alternatives beside this 'synthesis' of *A Modern Utopia*. These two alternatives can only promise the superiority of one race over others, or the risk or instability and wars:

> The first is to assume there is a best race, to define […] that best race, and to regard all other races as material for extermination; 2) Next comes the rather incoherent alternative that one associates in England with official Liberalism […] such a state of affairs is hopelessly unstable, that it involves the maximum risk of war with the minimum of permanent benefit.[121]

For him, this model was the only alternative to unite a world of diversity and hence he expressed his admiration for a number of modern examples beside the example of the Roman Empire, in particular the Swiss and American models. Wells states that where "one deals with a region of mixed nationality, there is need of a subtler system of adjustments". That is, to "have the community not in countries but cantons, each with its own religion, its culture and self-government, and all at peace under a polyglot and impartial common government".[122]

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[117] *A Modern Utopia*, p. 349.
[118] Ibid, p. 349.
[119] (Buffalo, N.Y.: Prometheus Books, 1986).
[120] *A Modern Utopia*, p. 344.
[121] Ibid, pp. 344-5.
[122] *What is Coming? A European Forecast* (New York, N.Y.: The Macmillan Company, 1916), p. 193, 194

Secondly, his opinion of the model of an empire was also different from that of contemporary and earlier historians who were suspicious of empire building. Wells, despite being influenced by these historians, departed from them when it came to this particular issue. His view here, to summarise, is that an empire is not necessarily evil and does not necessarily cause the downfall of a civilisation as has been argued by a number of historians of empire.[123] In *A Modern Utopia*, it is the existence of an empire that drives or brings about a utopia. Wells, like Edward Bellamy, is practical about the economic and political structure of his day, and both endorsed socialism and criticised capitalism and imperialism, although unlike the Marxists they did not totally reject them. Business corporations brought nationalism and utopia for Bellamy, and here imperialism. For Wells, an empire was the best system in which to create and maintain a utopia. Contemporary empires are part of the solution or the proposed world-state project:

> It would be so easy to bring about a world peace within a few decades, was there but the will for it among men! The great empires that exist need but a little speech and frankness one with another.[124]

Unlike in Bellamy's work, however, the transition in *A Modern Utopia* is not gradual but rather simultaneously inclusive of the whole world, although Wells had proposed a gradual inclusion in previous plans.[125] For Wells, empire is the order that will give birth to a world state, and thus he was criticising British imperialism and not the concept of empire itself. This understanding makes his position less ambivalent. The contrast between the two, and in light of his world-wide perspective, can be identified with the theory of Michael Hardt and Antonio Negri in their treatment of empire in the context of globalisation and the world market. For them, such an empire is expanding beyond and eliminating any national boundaries and sovereignty, which is noticeably similar to Wells's global perspective of empire. Through this new order, Hardt and Negri argue that an 'Empire' arises with "a

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[123] Wells here disagrees with his contemporary social scientist J. A. Hobson, who believed that imperialism was 'the direct cause of Rome's decay". *Imperialism: A Study*, 3rd ed. (London: G. Allen and Unwin, 1938), pp. 366-7; For example, Wells differed from Oswald Spengler who in *The Decline of the West* (1918) believed that the building of empires marks the demise of a civilisation; and from Edward Gibbon who earlier argued in *The History of the Decline and Fall of the Roman Empire* that the fall of the Roman Empire was the natural and inevitable effect of immoderate greatness and overextension.

[124] *A Modern Utopia*, p. 350.

[125] In *Anticipations*, Wells hoped for "a great federation of white English-speaking peoples", with America at its centre (Mineola, N.Y.: Dover Publications, 1999), p. 146.

series of national and supranational organisms united under a single logic of rule",[126] with no clear international hierarchy. This empire has no centre and periphery, in contrast to imperialism which "was really an extension of the sovereignty of the European nation-states beyond their own boundaries".[127] This Empire, they argue, is the new world order, brought by the world market and "postcolonial and postimperialist" in nature.[128] Wells's Empire comes into being and is shaped through stages similar to this. For the sake of his utopian world state, he has modified the concept of 'empire' to suit his utopia and not vice versa. He has approved and disapproved a number of practices of modern and traditional imperialism as he deems appropriate to his modern utopia. Since the notion of empire for him is not tied to one nation expanding its political power beyond its territories, he aimed for one empire to avoid the growth of a specific nation as the core of an empire, with other periphery nations. Traditional empires had a number of characteristics: they were centralised; contained core, periphery, and semi-periphery polities; had a flow of raw materials and wealth from the periphery to the core; and usually ethnicity played a role in the division of labour. These characteristics are the opposite to those proposed in *A Modern Utopia*, where local authorities held power and responsibility, and where the "universal landowner" is in control of "all natural sources of force, and indeed all strictly natural products, coal, water power, and the like", as well as being responsible for services like "the supply of electrical energy".[129] Wells bestows certain powers to the central coordinators or "the World-State authority", which includes the controlling of "the high roads, the great railways, the inns and other apparatus of world communication".[130] There are no territories under special mandate or governance.[131] The utopia is also classless, with the exception of the Samurai, although they do not constitute a class in the traditional sense. Wells supported such a form of administration not only as a fiction writer but also as a political activist, and he was loyal to this belief from 1901 to the end of his life. For example, in the case of Albania (in 1914 post-war settlement), Wells states that "the

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[126] Michael Hardt and Antonio Negri, *Empire* (Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard UP, 2001), p. xii.

[127] Ibid, p. xii.

[128] Ibid, p. 9.

[129] *A Modern Utopia*, p. 77.

[130] Ibid, p. 77.

[131] Edward Said notes, "Both [imperialism and colonialism] are supported and perhaps even impelled by impressive ideological formations that include notions that certain territories and people require and beseech domination". *Culture and Imperialism* (New York, N.Y.: Vintage Books, 1994), p. 8.

suggestion that has been made for its settlement, as a confederation of small tribal cantons is the only one I have ever heard that seemed to contain a ray of hope for that distracted patch of earth".[132]

On the other hand, Wells retained a number of traditional elements from the practice of empire that would serve his modern utopia, including an official language and an advanced bureaucracy. As in previous empires, an official or common language is needed, although such initiations are usually received suspiciously, which is understandable if we consider that the spread of English helped the expansion of the British Empire.[133] Wells mentions in some of his works that English had a strong potential for this role. However, in *A Modern Utopia* he emphasises that this common language is more used to ease restrictions of communication and does not propose any particular language for this purpose. There is no mention of any language deficiency among any nation in contrast to the belief of the time that some languages were more advanced than others.[134] On the contrary, he reproves this through the use of the botanist's inclinations: "Now you as a botanist would, I suppose, incline to something as they say, 'scientific'".[135] Wells introduces a complicated and efficient bureaucracy, like traditional and contemporary empires, for the registry and identification of the citizens: "the universal registration of thumb-marks". This, Wells believes, does not contradict the freedom of people and their movements.

Thirdly, Wells believed that no utopia or empire (especially one in this proposed nature) can survive when surrounded or neighboured by outsiders or non-utopias. The time has passed to imagine a utopia that could be an entirely closed society:

> When a mountain valley or an island seemed to promise sufficient isolation for a polity to maintain itself intact from outward force; the *Republic* of Plato stood armed ready for defensive war, and the *New Atlantis* and the *Utopia* of More in theory, like China and Japan through many centuries of effectual practice, held themselves isolated from intruders.[136]

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[132] H. G. Wells, *The War That Will End War* [1914] (London: Forgotten Books, 2013), p. 56.

[133] Andrew Porter, *The Oxford History of the British Empire*, p. 27.

[134] Ideas that native languages were primitive and incapable of describing sophisticated concepts and thoughts were cliché in imperialist romance. Carlo Pagetti, 'Change in the City: The Time Traveller's London and the 'Baseless Fabric' of His Vision', in *H. G. Wells's Perennial Time Machine*, edited by George Edgar Slusser, Patrick Parrinder, and Daniele Chatelain (Athens, Ga.: University of Georgia Press: 2001), p. 125.

[135] *A Modern Utopia*, p. 18.

[136] Ibid, p. 11.

The idea develops from Wells's political and pragmatic philosophy, or the rule of expediency. Wells appears to comment on the earlier historian Edward Gibbon and his *The Decline and Fall of the Roman Empire*, which concluded that modern technology will grant immunity to Europe.[137] Conversely, in *A Modern Utopia*, Wells thinks that no empire will survive unless it includes all the peoples of the world as its citizens:

> But the whole trend of modern thought is against the permanence of any such enclosures. We are acutely aware nowadays that, however subtly contrived a State may be, outside your boundary lines the epidemic, the breeding barbarian or the economic power, will gather its strength to overcome you.[138]

In *The Outline*, Wells says that with the arrival of the Industrial Revolution, the "new barbarism" was to be found not on the borders of Europe but "within an easy walk perhaps of the comfortable homes of Gibbon's refined and educated readers".[139] Experience shows, however, that Gibbon is right and the technology of Europe, at least in the modern world, granted it not only immunity but hegemony. Wells too could have envisioned a future European utopian empire, especially with the powerful advanced technology imagined in his works, which could easily prevent any possible invasion and rule out the danger of invaders. Instead, *A Modern Utopia* shows a different outlook, as he believes that if there is such a powerful super-state that can thrive in isolation then it should care for all peoples and unite them under its protection:

> A state powerful enough to keep isolated under modern conditions would be powerful enough to rule the world, would be, indeed, if not actively ruling, yet passively acquiescent in all other human organisations, and so responsible for them altogether. World-state, therefore, it must be.[140]

Wells does not attempt to prolong the life of the British Empire, but rather to take advantage of its already established structure and reality. His essential objective is to bring about a peaceful world in which harmony "will be established for ever",[141] describing himself elsewhere as an "extreme Pacifist".[142] He comes in contrast to other voices of the time that thought otherwise and even objected to his approach, such as George Orwell, who thought that Wells, "like Dickens, belongs to the non-military middle class. The thunder of

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[137] Cited in Parrinder, *Shadows*, p. 69.

[138] *A Modern Utopia*, p. 12.

[139] Cited in Parrinder, *Shadows*, p. 69.

[140] *A Modern Utopia*, p. 12.

[141] Ibid, p. 44.

[142] *War and the Future: Italy, France and Britain at War* (London: Forgotten Books, 2013), p. 11.

guns, the jingle of spurs, the catch in the throat when the old flag goes by, leave him manifestly cold".[143] This is the prevailing mode of his works with only occasional exceptions, such as when war is waged in order to bring peace, evident in his 1914 collection of articles *The War That Will End War.*

Modern Utopia and a World State

Whilst the image of a better world does not differ much from one stage of history to another, its political perspective and proposal do. Wells's modern utopia or his utopian model is designed to advance and contain a world state. The structure of this state is totally different from the nation state, and in it the national sovereignty has an altered manifestation. To illustrate this best, we can refer to two failed attempts of empire building and Wells's view of them and the relation between the empire and state. In his *The Outline*, Wells describes the attempts of both Alexander the Great and Napoleon Bonaparte to build great empires. Bonaparte's attempt is described as 'egoist' and its failed ending as a "natural and proper" end, while for Alexander it was only fate that ended his noble career and dream to unify the Persian Empire and the Western world into "one world state of all known peoples".[144] This explains Wells's recognition of diversity and vision of containing his utopia in a world state.

Regarding examples from utopian visions, the closest utopia to Wells's depiction was that of his immediate predecessor, Bellamy's federation. However, this utopian federation still falls far short of the idea of a 'world state' or a true global community imagined by Wells. It is possible that the utopian vision that does not consider the contemporary political context cannot be a vehicle for his ideas. Here Wells blends utopia and empire to construct a global organisation. The utopian genre provided Wells with a platform to express his wish for a better future for every individual in the world. If the

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[143] George Orwell, *Critical Essays*, ed. by George Packer (London: Harvill Secker, 2009), p. 151; A similar attitude was expressed by other contemporary thinkers, like the American philosopher William James and earlier by Hegel.

[144] *The Outline*, p. 419 [emphasis added].

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novel "functions as the symbolic form of the nation-state", as suggested,[145] then utopia functions for Wells as the form or vehicle to visualise a world-state. He writes:

> Until at last from dreams Utopias will have come to be working drawings, and the whole world will be shaping the final World State, the fair and great and fruitful World State, that will only not be a Utopia because it will be this world.[146]

As his utopia is a global project, Wells has to deal with the consequence of including all cultural backgrounds of the world, again unlike the older utopias. Furthermore, this is not only a space but an equal space for all, and thus individuals do not need to abandon their original cultures and identities to be part of this utopia. In *A Modern Utopia* Wells imagines a novel utopian space that went through a different historical development than the real world. Such a utopian space is best termed by Herbert Marcuse's 'free space', which is perceived beyond the repressive and constraining historical forces. The imagination of such a free space "necessitates an historical break with the past and present",[147] which is the course of Wells's utopia as he separated it spatially by removing it to another planet with a different historical route. The ability to do so is offered by the logic of modernity,[148] which Wells exhibited earlier.

Out of the traditional utopian techniques, Wells retains and develops what enables his utopia to accommodate the whole world. These techniques include the utopian system of economic and social equality, and the utopian criticism of the contemporary world,[149] as well as the narrator and his companion wandering through the utopia. Further, these techniques include population control and eugenics[150] (which will be discussed later), and the point of objection and argument between the narrator and the botanist and utopian

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[145] Franco Moretti, *The Atlas of the European Novel 1800–1900* (London: Verso, 1998), p. 20.

[146] *A Modern Utopia*, p. 370.

[147] *Essay on Liberation* (Boston, Mass.: Beacon Press, 1969), p. viii.

[148] Perhaps this is because by "radically breaking with the authority and legitimacy of the past, modernity offers a totalizing vision of progress toward an illimitable future". Adam Barrows, *The Cosmic Time of Empire: Modern Britain and World Literature* (Berkeley, Calif.: University of California Press, 2011), p. 1.

[149] He expanded the utopian criticism beyond its traditional criticism of the utopian writer's society. *A Modern Utopia* criticises a broader human society for not coming together and for their prejudices against each other.

[150] Besides Plato, Wells cites and sides with Malthus in this regards: "a State whose population continues to increase in obedience to unchecked instinct, can progress only from bad to worse". *A Modern Utopia*, p. 180.

citizen.[151] Finally, they include the ruling caste, who at last are expected to "assimilate almost the whole population of the earth".[152]

Overall, Wells does not spend much time arguing in favour of the organisation and structure of his utopia, unlike his predecessors who had long dialogues with their interlocutors about their proposals and their justifications. As such, those who look for paradise in Wells's utopia are to be disappointed. Sometimes this simplicity is thought to be indicative of Wells's uncertainty about whether "utopia will inevitably come to be".[153] In fact, this seems to have been noticed early on, for example by Orwell:

> What is the use of saying that we need federal world control of the air? The whole question is how we are to get it. What is the use of pointing out that a World State is desirable? What matters is that not one of the five great military powers would think of submitting to such a thing.[154]

However, this thesis argues that it is rather to do with Wells's focus on the values and ideas that he presents, and as mentioned earlier of his distinction between future tales and utopia. Further, here he is in agreement with the utopian narrative change after 1850, which Miguel Abensour has identified as having shifted from a "systematic building of alternative organizational models to a more open and heuristic discourse of alternative values".[155] This is indeed best exemplified by *A Modern Utopia* and its attempt to consider cultural diversity and local governments. In addition, and as stated above, Wells consciously developed and advanced the utopian function of criticism, or what was later coined as 'critical utopia'. As Tom Moylan has precisely described, its central concern "is the awareness of the limitations of the utopian tradition, so that these texts reject utopia as blueprint while preserving it as dream".[156] Wells does not mention much about his vision of its realisation either, although on one occasion he gives a quick note that this plan can be carried out only by the great empires that have abstained to act accordingly so far: What is

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[151] Wells also adds another sceptic voice, this time from a utopian citizen, who believed that "no world could be more out of order", p. 131. The narrator (or Voice) concludes that "It is not to be a unanimous world any more, it is to have all and more of the mental contrariety we find in the world of the real", Ibid, p. 123.

[152] Ibid, p. 299.

[153] As stated by Elizabeth Hansot in her *Perfection and Progress*, p. 147.

[154] *Critical Essays*, p. 149.

[155] Quoted in Raymond Williams, *Culture and Materialism: Selected Essays* (London: Verso Books, 1980), p. 202.

[156] Tom Moylan, *Demand the Impossible*, p. 10.

there to prevent a parallel movement of all the civilised Powers in the world towards a common ideal and assimilation?"[157] The answer is, as he says, nationalism.

However, later in *The Outline*, where he advocates for the world state, he does provide some specific directions towards the unification under such a global state. For example, he discusses issues such as: How a Federal World Government May Come About; Some Fundamental Characteristics of a Modern World State; and What This World Might Be Were It under One Law and Justice. Wells was always an antagonist of nationalism and thought it to be a hindrance towards achieving the objective of a world state. He does not recognise artificial boundaries that split people, since he sees the world state as capable of replacing any other organisation between the individual and the globe. For him a nation state is imagined, and the world state is realisable. In *The Outline* he states: "A world of independent sovereign nations means, therefore, a world of perpetual injuries, a world of states constantly preparing for or waging war".[158] Utopia has given him a medium to bridge between the individual and the world state. His utopia aims at what we might identify with Ruth Levitas's suggestion of utopias aiming to overcome the "antagonism between humanity and the world".[159] For Wells, it is a priority to broaden the relationship beyond the immediate ties unlike the case where a man "refers himself to the tribe; he is loyal to the tribe, and quite inseparably he fears or dislikes those others outside the tribe. The tribe is always at least defensively hostile and usually actively hostile to humanity beyond the aggregation".[160] Wells has attempted to neutralise the threats to his utopia. The nation states pose an external limitation to the realisation of utopia and human nature poses the internal limitation. Wells's utopia, on the other hand, departs from its predecessors in a number of ways. Firstly, it is kinetic, and thus "not as a permanent state but as a hopeful stage, leading to a long ascent of stages", and secondly it protects privacy. It is also against uniformity, does not only insist but also encourages freedom of movement, and is a money based-economy. Finally, and most importantly, it supports the individual over the collective.[161]

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[157] *A Modern Utopia*, p. 351.

[158] Wells, *The Outline*, p. 442.

[159] *The Concept*, p. 115.

[160] *A Modern Utopia*, p. 321.

[161] Kumar observes that Wells's utopia "realizes that to refuse the claims of the individual is to condemn society to stagnation and a potentially lethal rigidity". *Utopia and Anti-Utopia*, p. 192.

However, it is to be noted that Wells was not always successful in his development of these traditional utopian motifs. For example, he emphasises on a number of occasions that "there is no perfection, there is no enduring treasure",[162] but still is not quite free of this impasse. In *A Modern Utopia* the people on the utopian planet are "rejoicing in an equality of happiness safe and assured to them and their children *for ever*".[163] However, this could be interpreted as implying maintaining happiness as an unchanging ideal, nonetheless the methods for realising those principles and ideals may change. But Wells still shows a perfection that comes after a gradual development, which at a point ceases to change. The book of Samurai is perfected after a long process of revision.[164]

Darko Suvin rightly suggests that "though historically most of the older utopias tried to imagine a certain perfection", after Bacon and later after Saint-Simon and Morris this aspect cannot be seen as "inherent in the genre".[165] So Wells appears to have ignored this change that occurred long before his work and attempted to cling to the older tradition despite his claims to the contrary.

Ethnocentrism, Race, and the 'Other'

Wells places emphasis on the issue of race, both as a scientific and cultural construct, as it was a key factor in colonialism and imperialism, resulting in the supremacy of whites over non-whites. He asserts inclusive values, rejects exclusive and binary oppositions, does not forward absolute universal values, and proposes an organisation in between the central and the local. His views about the world state and his scientific background made it inevitable that he would address the issue of the human condition on a global scale and view individuals as inseparable from each other. This is because from the evolutionary theory perspective, no place (or geographical boundary) is exempt from natural selection and evolution. His detailed discussion of the issue and its underlying factors comes at a time when these issues were only incidentally tackled although an important force forming the society and its culture. This was still looked upon suspiciously at the time, and we can

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[162] *A Modern Utopia*, p. 233.
[163] Ibid, p. 5. [emphasis added]
[164] Ibid, p. 283.
[165] Darko Suvin, *Metamorphoses*, p. 45.

suggest comparing it to a related example of his views about nationalism as he describes it to be "too revolting".[166] For example, Orwell comments on the threat to English nationalism by Wells's world state in the following manner:

> What has kept England on its feet during the past year? In part, no doubt, some vague idea about a better future, but chiefly the atavistic emotion of patriotism, the ingrained feeling of the English-speaking peoples that they are superior to foreigners. For the last twenty years the main object of English left-wing intellectuals has been to break this feeling down.[167]

George Bernard Shaw emphasised similar feelings, saying that "patriotism is your conviction that this country is superior to all other countries because you were born in it". Similarly, Wells's criticism of the British Empire also faced strong opponents. For example, Winston Churchill, a long-time critic of Wells, supported the belief that British imperialism was of mutual benefit to peoples of the imperial domains, and its aim was to:

> give peace to warring tribes, to administer justice where all was violence, to strike the chains off the slave, to draw the richness from the soil, to place the earliest seeds of commerce and learning, to increase in whole peoples their capacities for pleasure and diminish their chances of pain.[168]

As a political activist, Wells also shows the same global perspective. In 1939 he advocated the 'Rights of Man', which was developed later into the UN Universal Declaration of Human Rights in 1948. He worked on its draft with intellectuals from various parts of the world and disseminated it to forty-eight countries.[169] After their feedback, he translated it into major languages of the world.[170] Wells continued his struggle to the League of Nations and its aim to promote global peace.

In spite of this, Wells has been considered ambivalent in his views about race, in relation to both *A Modern Utopia* and a number of other works. Wells himself regrettably confesses that he is not totally free from the mood of his time. Occasionally, while he rejects some racist comments, he is seen to make "his own racist point".[171] From the discussion above, it can be suggested that these limited failings are not common to Wells's

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[166] *A Modern Utopia*, p. 324.

[167] *Critical Essays*, p. 150.

[168] Cited in Algis Valiunas, *Churchill's Military Histories: A Rhetorical Study* (Lanham, Md.: Rowman & Littlefield, 2002), p. 15.

[169] John S. Partington, *Building Cosmopolis: The Political Thought of HG Wells* (Aldershot: Ashgate, 2003), p. 129.

[170] These languages included Czech, Welsh, French, Danish, Spanish, German, Icelandic, Russian, Italian, Polish, Gujarati, Hausa, Swahili, Arabic, Urdu, Hindi, Bengali, Ganda, Yoruba, Zulu, and Greek. Cited in Partington, *Building Cosmopolis*, pp. 129-146.

[171] William T. Ross, *H.G. Wells's World Reborn*, p. 86.

thinking, particularly as articulated in *A Modern Utopia.* His proposed world state does not have a centre from which to judge others, and is made of local authorities. Wells is not only far removed from ethnocentrisms and racism, but he advocates the elimination of these prejudices and biases not only in his imagined utopia but the world. In giving a full space for 'the other' or the ones outside the traditional utopian spaces, he is as much a critic of his age as any postcolonial writer. While discussing these issues, his authority is founded on scientific principles, dialectical and common good. This is concluded from the two main recurrent motifs in *A Modern Utopia*: firstly, there is no utopian and non-utopian grouping as everyone is included in the transformation, and secondly there are no group attributions or generalisations, or the superiority of any group over others in either the contemporary world or the imagined one.

Returning to the first motif, this proposed world state includes everyone and from all existing backgrounds, and is not developed for any special race and does not produce any master race. *A Modern Utopia* "is a Utopia as wide as Christian charity, and white and black, brown, red and yellow, all tints of skin, all types of body and character, will be there".[172] His world state of *A Modern Utopia* can only be produced by a combined effort from "many minds and in many tongues".[173] When he proposes a tracking system for the individuals in a possible world state, he proposes the indexing of all the world individuals, "1,500,000,000" as he estimates.[174] Wells and although praising the spirit of the 19th century philosopher Auguste Comte, yet he finds a shortfall of his project being limited to the West only instead of humanity at large.[175] For him, although supporting similar plans of Auguste Comte on certain occasions, a modern utopia can only come into being on a global scale.

Apart from *A Modern Utopia*, Wells attempted to pool together peoples through the creation of an interrelated history for humanity in his other works, most notably *The Outline of History* (1920). This text was the first of its kind to present a history of the world, and although race was the key to history for many Victorian intellectuals, as has

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[172] *A Modern Utopia*, p. 24.
[173] Ibid, p. 370.
[174] Ibid, p. 163.
[175] Ibid, p. 320.

been suggested,[176] Wells attempted it to be a story of humanity irrespective of nationality and ethnicity. At the conclusion of the work, he also reiterates his proposal for a world state, as if the whole purpose is the evolution and progression of history towards this objective. It gives its western readers a global view of their history and links them with the rest of the world. In its introduction he writes that there can be no peace but a common peace and "no common peace and prosperity without common historical ideas".[177] To achieve this, Wells effectively undermines any self-congratulatory interpretation of the 'survival of the fittest', a term coined by Herbert Spencer in his famous paraphrase of Darwin. For Wells, backed by his biological knowledge, the presence of different racial backgrounds would not make individuals' "association upon terms of equality in a World State impossible".[178] In *A Modern Utopia* this is said to the Botanist, who is opposed to such ideas. This comes amid an age where such positons were rare among the literary works of the time where the 'Other' was silent or silenced. Usually, the source of people's pride in their Imperial Britain was only in relation to certain domains, and at the expense of others based on the racial backgrounds of these regions.[179] Wells's rejection of this came from a number of sources, the most important of which was biological theory, which helped him to dispense counterarguments to the dominant views of his time. He writes: "'Science' is supposed to lend its sanction to race mania, but it is only 'science' as it is understood by very illiterate people that does anything of the sort".[180]

Unlike his predecessors, Wells not only encourages free movement of utopian individuals in the world but makes it an essential characteristic of his utopia. He wants to extend this freedom of movement to every part of the world in order to be "accessible and as safe for the wayfarer as France or England is to-day".[181] Thus the utopian population is a migratory one. This modern spirit is best described by the often quoted poet Gertrude Stein, who said that "America is my country and Paris is my hometown".[182] This spirit is the same

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[176] Patrick Brantlinger, *Victorian Literature*, p. 36.
[177] *The Outline*, p. vi.
[178] *A Modern Utopia*, p. 332.
[179] J. A. Hobson writes: "A curious blindness seems to beset the mind of the average educated Briton when he is asked to picture himself our colonial Empire. Almost instinctively he visualizes Canada, Australia, and South Africa – the rest he virtually ignores". *Imperialism*, p. 125.
[180] *A Modern Utopia*, p. 365.
[181] Ibid, p. 44.
[182] Cited in M. Lynn Weiss, *Gertrude Stein and Richard Wright: The Poetics and Politics of Modernism* (Jackson, Miss.: Mississippi UP, 1998), p. 22.

for people everywhere and thus does not attempt to maintain western supremacy over the world or to work only to the advantage of the status quo.[183] When Wells proposes a migratory utopian population, he includes people from every corner of the globe and visualises these people moving around this world, making it impossible to have a centre and periphery.

Secondly, Wells refuses any group attributions or generalisations. To start with, ethnocentrism is defined as:

> The attitude of a group which consists of attributing to itself a central position compared to other groups, valuing positively its achievements and particular characteristics, adopting a projective type of behavior toward out-groups and interpreting the out-group through the in-group's mode of thinking.[184]

Applying this definition to *A Modern Utopia*, it is clear that the work is far from being ethnocentric. Wells criticises the trend of his time and people by saying that "no generalisations about race are too extravagant" for them.[185] He rejects defining others by the standard or their difference from the West.[186] For him, these oppositions are "a bias for false and excessive contrast". The botanist's mind is a victim of this: "The Anti-idea, it would seem, is inseparable from the aggregatory idea; it is a necessity of the human mind. When we think of the class A as desirable, we think of Not-A as undesirable".[187] He lists a number of such oppositions, including "biologists, as against physicists", "educated men as against the working man", and "Englishmen […] superior to all other sorts of European". He also rejects all generalisations:

> It is part of the training of the philosopher to regard all such generalisations with suspicion; it is part of the training of the Utopist and statesman, and all good statesmen are Utopists, to mingle something very like animosity with that suspicion. For crude classifications and false generalisations are the curse of all organised human life.[188]

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[183] Chinua Achebe uses this quotation, however, to contrast the different travelling experiences of the world's peoples, since for him only the western people are privileged in this regards, roaming the world "with the confidence of the authority of their homeland behind them". *Home and Exile* (New York, N.Y.: Oxford UP, 2000), pp. 92-93.

[184] Roy Preiswerk and Dominique Perrot, *Ethnocentrism and History: Africa, Asia, and Indian America in Western Textbooks* (New York, N.Y.: Nok Publishers International, 1978), p. 14.

[185] *A Modern Utopia*, p. 329.

[186] Edward Said writes: "The whole question of imperialism, as it was debated in the late nineteenth century by pro-imperialists and anti-imperialists alike, carried forward the binary typology of advanced and backward (or subject) races, cultures, and societies". *Orientalism* (New York, N.Y.: Vintage 1979), p. 206.

[187] *A Modern Utopia*, p. 321.

[188] Ibid, p. 323.

In remarkable detail, Wells presents examples of contemporary "stupid generalisations", about Irish, Hindus, French, and others. If older utopias are criticised for their treatment of non-utopians, *A Modern Utopia* does not permit such classification, as every individual and every space is utopian. In this regard Wells seems to have escaped the geographic binaries of North and South.[189]

He further writes that these generalisations are only politically motivated and favours the more powerful group, or "the politically ascendant peoples of the present phase".[190] Such expressions, which he has pioneered, were developed later by postcolonial theorists influenced by post-structuralism. However, he occasionally confesses not to be fully detached from these 'delusions' and is indeed unfortunate that such a great mind occasionally falls in this trap himself, as he admits. This leads to the important and closely related question of his stand on eugenics. His views on the matter are complex and developed throughout his career, from approval to scepticism. It is thought that Wells was influenced by the popular idea of revitalising the nation and bringing up good citizens, which attracted interest during the interwar years in Britain.[191] This is an important motif as natural selection or social Darwinism played a key role in imperialism, not only as an impulse but also justification. Wells's association with the Fabians encouraged him to advocate eugenics,[192] although it should be stressed that his views did change, albeit gradually. Whilst he was somewhat supportive of eugenics in *Anticipations* (1901), we see that he eventually shied away from this position, which was mainly drawn from Francis Galton's theories of eugenics compiled in his *Natural Inheritance* (1889). Wells's gradual withdrawal from these views is unexplained,[193] but could potentially be the result of the criticism he received for his extreme views.[194] In the sequel to *Anticipations*, entitled *Mankind in the Making* (1903), he confessed his previous positon and his departure from it:

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[189] Anne McClintock warns that although post-colonial theory challenges the binaries of "self-other, metropolis colony, center-periphery, etc." it is risking the creating of a new binary of colonial/postcolonial. 'The Angel of Progress: Pitfalls of the Term "Post-Colonialism"', *Social Text*, 31:32 (1992), pp. 84-98 (p. 85).

[190] *A Modern Utopia*, p. 329.

[191] Maxim Shadurski, 'H. G. Wells's Interwar Utopias: Eugenics, Individuality and the Crowd', *Sydney Studies in English* 40 (2014), pp. 21-42 (p. 21).

[192] Patrick Brantlinger, *Dark Vanishings: Discourse on the Extinction of Primitive Races, 1800-1930* (Ithaca, N.Y.: Cornell UP, 2003), p. 196.

[193] W. Warren Wagar, *H. G. Wells: Traversing Time*, p. 107.

[194] Partington, *Building Cosmopolis*, p. 54.

"It seemed to me then that to prevent the multiplication of people below a certain standard, and to encourage the multiplication of exceptionally superior people, was the only real and permanent way of mending the ills of the world".[195] Still, *A Modern Utopia* is seen to continue his views in favour of eugenics in that it "supplies the contemporary Englishman with an evolved, and therefore superhuman, double".[196] Nevertheless, there is much exaggeration in this as the narrator's utopian double is only slightly advanced. This is not to deny the existence of eugenics in the work, since Wells admits that population control is to some extent necessary, as "without the determination and ability to limit that increase as well as to stimulate it whenever it is necessary, no Utopia is possible".[197]

Wells rejects the elimination of the unfit, saying that "Utopia has sound sanitary laws, sound social laws, sound economic laws; what harm are these people going to do?"[198] This is in direct contrast to Darwin, who Wells was greatly influenced by, who wrote that civilised individuals "check the process of elimination" as they "build asylums for the imbecile, the maimed, and the sick; we institute poor-laws; and our medical men exert their utmost skill to save the life of every one to the last moment".[199] Wells rejects the "dreadfulness of all such proposals" that resort to "a kind of social surgery",[200] although other methods are introduced. He rejects "compulsory pairing" but approves "maintenance of general limiting conditions". For him, the State is justified in intervening in the procreation by individuals who lack a "minimum personal efficiency".[201] Seclusion is resorted to only after "disciplinary schools and colleges" fail to prevent criminals from multiplying, and the purpose of their seclusion is primarily because the state will "secure itself against any children from these people".[202] Another use of eugenics is to handle "all deformed and monstrous and evilly diseased births".[203] Wells was seemingly ahead of his time in this issue of eugenics when compared with a number of his contemporary

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[195] (London: Chapman and Hall, 1904), p. 39.
[196] Shadurski, 'H. G. Wells's Interwar Utopias', p. 22.
[197] *A Modern Utopia*, p. 152.
[198] Ibid, p. 339.
[199] Charles Darwin, *The Descent of Man, and Selection in Relation to Sex* (Princeton, N.J.: Princeton UP, 1981), p. 168.
[200] *A Modern Utopia*, p. 142.
[201] Ibid, p. 184.
[202] Ibid, p. 144.
[203] Ibid, p. 143.

intellectuals, but still fails to free himself completely in this regard, unlike his more progressive stance and opinions on matters of race.

Cultural Commonality

Discarding contemporary prejudices, Wells plans a world state and proposes what we can term 'cultural commonality', which is a mixture of all existing cultures. That is, if he had proposed a world culture that emerges from one single civilisation or standard, then certain 'uncivilised' ones would necessarily exist. Far from being classified as ethnocentric, Wells does not specify any cultures and clearly rejects any attribution or preference and accepts the containment of these customs. In order to have joined an earlier utopia, an individual or a community must have abandoned their own culture and adopted that of the utopia, but there is not any particular utopian culture in Wells's writing. For him the emphasis is on this cultural commonality, "a world-wide synthesis of all cultures and polities and races into one World State":

> The modern Utopia is to be, before all things, synthetic. Politically and socially, as linguistically, we must suppose it a synthesis; politically it will be a synthesis of once widely different forms of government; socially and morally, a synthesis of a great variety of domestic traditions and ethical habits.[204]

Here, he directly rejects the work of Darwin, who wrote: "At the present day civilised nations are everywhere supplanting barbarous nations, excepting where the climate opposes a deadly barrier".[205]

Wells was caught between two opposing ideas: nationalists (from imperialist countries) who considered imperialism to be a source of pride, and nationalists (from imperial domains) who considered imperialism to be a source of insult to their pride. He realised the power of nationalism but also had to reconcile between these antagonistic feelings without abandoning his empire or imposing a culture over others. Politically, his local administration leaves much power in the hands of each region, which Wells seems to have achieved by proposing one civilisation that accommodates various cultures. This is implicit through relating his dialogues in *A Modern Utopia* and elsewhere together. He understood that culture is deeply related to local places and minds and cannot be

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[204] Ibid, p. 212.
[205] *The Descent of Man*, p. 160.

transported and transplanted. A civilisation with minimum shared values can still be proposed. Therefore, culture works like domestic identity and sometimes habits.[206] In the *Open Conspiracy*, he urges "let us get together with other people of our sort and make over the world into a great world-civilization that will enable us to realize the promises and avoid the dangers of this new time".[207] This global civilisation is utopia, which can be extended everywhere.

Nevertheless, although Wells is not a universalist he is also not a complete relativist either. Although he shows no tolerance for the criticism of any race and under any particular guise, he seems to agree with some notions of his day in matters related to the criticism of certain habits or cultures. He admits to the parity of cultures that might impede the development of what we can label an evolution of a world or a utopian culture of tolerance, and he recognises the overriding difficulty of "how we are to adjust their differences".[208] He recognises that these limitations emerge from unequal opportunities and environment, and this situation has developed certain cultural norms that he has no alternative but to reject in this proposed world state. He does this rarely and without hubris, and not from a point of superiority. Wells classifies these as undesirable manners, among certain races or cultures, but he rarely specifies them. Among these few is the notable example of the inequality of men to women,[209] and also the practice of female infanticide in China. Wells uses notions like "barbaric and disorderly" to refer to countries, as well as terms such as "less civilized societies" and "costume of the common civilised fashion", when it comes to these manners. In this regard Wells depicts two worlds, an ideal (imagined) utopia, and a more practical proposal for a world state considering the contemporary situation of the world. The ideal or utopian world society of *A Modern Utopia* has been developed without the prejudices and limitations of the contemporary world as explained earlier. So Wells freely proposes values of this ideal world accordingly. The other one is to be developed based on the realities of our world.

The question, then, is how some of these habits are expected to die in this proposed world state. Certainly, the answer is not through a civilising mission that was embedded in

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[206] The Voice argues that the botanist has confused race and culture. He says there can be unequal cultures but not races and he gives examples of habits of stealing and drunkenness. *A Modern Utopia*, p. 341.

[207] *The Open Conspiracy*, p. 11.

[208] *A Modern Utopia*, p. 24.

[209] He also rebukes Plato for "his insistence upon the natural inferiority of slaves'. Ibid, p. 201.

the imperial context. For example, Rudyard Kipling encouraged his readers to take up "the White Man's burden" in a poem in 1899 not long before *A Modern Utopia* was published. He urged individuals to "civilize new-caught sullen peoples, half-devil and half-child". For Wells, Kipling's "want of intellectual deliberation is only equalled by his poietic power".[210] Wells also rejects the civilising project carried out by contemporary colonial powers, perceiving it to result in atrocities such as "the depopulation of the Congo Free State by the Belgians, [and] the horrible massacres of Chinese by European soldiery during the Pekin expedition", refuting the logic and justification that these acts were a "painful but necessary part of the civilising process of the world".[211] In this synthesis he accepts or standardises what is universally accepted, in other words by the majority of humanity. For him these manners will be "almost universally tolerable"[212] and "universally diffused". This is further clarified in the example of marriage customs that he approves:

> It must be reiterated that our reasoning still leaves Utopian marriage an institution with wide possibilities of variation. We have tried to give effect to the ideal of a virtual equality, an equality of spirit between men and women, and in doing so we have overridden the accepted opinion of the great majority of mankind.[213]

For Wells, the bias in favour of any culture is left to the spirit of the modern age, and he believes that the change will occur naturally. These undesirable manners, Wells reflects, would not survive once every race is given full opportunities. In other words, while he refuses 'the Survival of the Fittest' in race matters, he accepts it in cultural matters. This is in stark comparison to Huxley's ethical evolution. This process, however, is done by people individually and voluntarily in the utopian civilisation.

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[210] *A Modern Utopia*, p. 328; Later, the civilising mission was also given another economic persuasive claim, that the moral and material progress of African peoples were not conflicting but supported by the trading interests of the British Empire. 'Critics of Empire in Britain', p. 193.

[211] *A Modern Utopia*, p. 330.

[212] Ibid, p. 40.

[213] Ibid, p. 207.

Thesis Conclusion

Utopian literature from Plato's *Republic*, Thomas More's *Utopia*, and Edward Bellamy's *Looking Backward* to H. G. Wells' *A Modern Utopia* show the same motif of the reorganisation of society and call into question everything in the existing order. Their story from antiquity down to the modern age, in a chronological order, is not only a story of the development of utopian tradition but the persistence of the egalitarian impulse. Their discourse about the future and although is constructed beyond the conventional social and political thought, strives to remain within the realm of the possible. Their tone is argumentative with its standard being the principles of reason and passionate to the degree it confuses where their seriousness leaves off and the fiction starts. The principal themes and features of the community of goods are recurrent including the relation between the sexes, education, upbringing, needs, desires, and religion, etc., that give the genre a thematic coherence. Each writer attempted to resituate and refashion these themes to make their ideal visions more convincing and desirable. The gradual development from an enclave to a worldwide utopia represents a structural continuity. They also share a number of flaws such as imposing a good deal of prescribed social conventions and customs and presenting little details and concern of how to construct these utopias. It is difficult to decide if the revived interest in utopianism, which accompanied each work, was because of their distinction of writing or because of the particular moment of history they lived. Despite this, their utopian alternatives are no less questioned than the social reality they criticised and mainly remained in the realm of fiction and scholarly communications.

Critical alternatives to utopia emerged concurrently with writings on utopia itself, and often by the same authors in the same works. Although the utopian anticipation about the future is not entirely pessimistic, its desire for a better world when combined with what is possible and realistic has always imposed limitations upon utopian writers. These utopias are caught between hope for the future and despair of their ever being achieved, their own distinction between 'is' and 'ought' determined by the historical and cultural perspectives that are unique to each of them. This is despite the fact that most of these utopian writers have not sought explicitly to transform their utopian desires into a certain and prophetic plan for the future, let alone seek to implement them practically, limiting them in effect to

exploring imaginatively possible scenarios or projections at best. Earlier criticism of the utopian genre looked at it primarily as being in the order of impractical works of imagination. This was the opinion of writers and intellectuals like Robert Burton, John Milton, David Hume, and Thomas Babington Macaulay. Later, Marxist anti-utopian thinkers reiterated that utopias were incapable of realisation, dismissing them for not including concrete proposals for political and revolutionary action. A small but influential group of theorists like Karl Manheim, Ernst Bloch, and Herbert Marcuse attempted nonetheless to highlight utopia's positive contribution to social change. Despite this, however, increasingly through the twentieth century and up to the present there has been a radical transformation from the utopian genre into the dystopian one, both in literary works and in criticism. This extreme sceptical view towards utopian visions reflected the fears of contemporary society and especially the emergence of the infamous twentieth-century totalitarian regimes.

This group of thinkers, who in effect exposed the dystopia contained within utopia, saw such ideologies as committed attempts to achieve wholesale societal change by imposing the vision of the few on the will of the majority through violence, censorship, and other oppressions. Prominent critics included Karl Popper, Isaiah Berlin, Friedrich Hayek, and Leszek Kołakowski, as well as novelists such as Yevgeny Zamyatin, Arthur Koestler, George Orwell, and Aldous Huxley. These anti-utopias looked at the internal structure, organisation, and presumed intentions of utopian works, blending them with real political events such as the personality-cults, ideologies, and oppressions of the nascent totalitarian regimes of the time in order to read one as a prefiguration and even perhaps cause of the other. Thus, utopia was associated simply and directly with fascism and totalitarianism. Postcolonial criticism is the latest arrival in the critical discourse but perhaps the most serious and well-argued one. This is not to say that postcolonial criticism caused the total demise of the utopian genre but it certainly damaged its reputation even further. Crucially, however, and unlike the earlier critiques, the postcolonial approach focuses not on utopia's 'totalitarian' inner structures and organisation but on its external relations with the other non-utopian states and tribes – the natives neighbouring these utopias – as well as deconstructing the prejudices inherent to utopian writers' Western outlook on the rest of the world. These critics' views, although not all coming from the mainstream postcolonial

criticism, have mostly been highly critical of utopian writers and their texts in respect to this particular understanding.

The postcolonial critique of utopia seeks to explore the relationship between utopias and the discovery and colonisation of the New World. It is argued, by scholars such as Nicole Pohl and Peter C. Herman, that utopian writers have attempted to project their ideals and values onto these new found lands. For writers like Nina Chordas, these values were based on explicitly western problems and experiences but were universalised and sent outwards as part of as assumed global psycho-social condition. The comparison drawn between the Old and New World in these utopias showed the superiority and necessary supervision of the West over the inhabitants of these lands, who were often described and derided as 'savages', as Pohl has demonstrated. According to Dohra Ahmad, the ultimate aim was to replace native cultures with western 'universal' standards through a natural progression towards civilisation, regardless of whether the natives cared for it or not, as James Holstun adds. This progress towards civilisation was used as a justification for violent means, as Anthony Pagden concludes, along with the excuse that colonising these lands should be considered as a benevolent act that benefits the natives even though they are never 'advanced' enough to realise it. This project is justified further by the fact that these areas are shown to be wastelands, uncultivated and unoccupied. More's text in particular is usually presented as the primary example of this discourse. It is thought also to be the first utopian attempt to bring the New World to England's attention, as Jeffrey Knapp and others argue. This postcolonial critique has represented one of the dominant trends in utopian studies in recent years, and for good reason. There are many well-justified arguments to back it up, tied not only to the historical-contextual circumstances surrounding the writing of the various books, but also to the often haughty, prejudicial utterances and sledgehammer proposals of the writers and protagonists themselves. However, this critique is sometimes used in a generalising way that does not give the full and accurate picture in all cases of the detailed workings of specific literary utopias. It either ignores or disregards the possibility of any noble intention and impulse on the part of these writers, and the purpose of this thesis has been to try to demonstrate that the critique is not applicable in all cases; indeed, not even in the famous, canonical case-studies selected. I hope to have demonstrated that these texts, both in their complexity and also in

their stated intent, often resist the post-colonial readings that are applied to them – at least to a large extent.

This thesis was dedicated to investigating whether the utopian genre is colonialist and imperialist at its core – as often alleged, particularly recently – and if it has been so since its inception. To answer this question and determine the validity of these claims, a number of texts were revisited to investigate how utopia – expanding from nowhere to everywhere – regarded non-utopians in relation to its own ostensibly universalist world view. Utopia, in this study, was examined as a particular literary genre and not in the broader sense of utopianism, which includes other facets of communitarian and social theory. Four canonical texts were selected ranging from the earliest surviving work in the genre to the one that is often considered to be the last 'proper' utopia by many scholars of the field. The questions that were put to these texts included the following: how did they regard and characterise their neighbours and other non-utopians in general; what, if any were their expansion and domination policies; what, more specifically, was Thomas More's reaction and relation to the discovery of the New World; and how plausible was their stated objective to advance peace and prosperity across the world? These questions represent some of the main concerns of postcolonial anti-utopian criticism raised against these particular and key texts.

This approach gave rise to a number of readings. Firstly, the assumed superiority of Western culture over others appears not to be corroborated by the way these utopias are deployed conceptually. The narrators in these books often describe coming back from their fictional utopian societies, which are frequently exceedingly exotic, and perceived as better than the Western cities and societies that they left behind. Although not perfect and ideal, it is suggested and often stated outright that imitating them will solve the social ills of the real society. This necessarily entails pointing out the shortfalls of the utopian writer's real society and a pre-emptive denial of their supposed superiority. Another point emerged in response to the assumed superiority of the imagined utopia – interpreted in this case as an analogue or cipher for Western society and values – over the imagined non-utopias neighbouring them. Again, the texts examined often showed otherwise. The utopias of Plato and More, for example, clearly maintained balanced and equal relations and partnerships with their immediate neighbours. Indeed, often the policy seemed to point

towards strict and principled non-interference. The utopians also respected their social, ethnic, and spiritual differences. There is not a shift in the moral tone when the other is shown and treated and there is seldom insistence on the fulfilling and exporting of their utopian ideals regardless of others' interests and values. Similarly, and although utopias are written ostensibly to reflect the expectations of certain cultures, they have often been imagined well *outside* the immediate borders of their author's states. Indeed, Plato insisted that his ideal society was not unique and universal, but on the contrary that many types of ideal arrangements can take root to reflect different regions and value-systems. These authors did not think that a utopia can only emerge out of certain cultures or nations. If it emerged out of a culture, it was expected to be tied to them. Plato's utopia was built on the basis of Greek culture and tied especially to them, of course, but he also discussed the appropriateness of Spartan civilisation to the Spartan people; while for Bellamy and Wells, nationality appears almost completely irrelevant.

Secondly, the thesis attempted to show that the postcolonial critique slightly over-states the relationship between utopia and the New World and its colonisation. This connection, as the chapter on More explained, appears to be rather loose. More brings his narrators back to the world as they have a story to tell and not a place to escape to, or to conquer and colonise. Utopia was not a place to invade, over-run, and subjugate, but rather a set of life-lessons – some seen as admirable, some clearly not – to be brought home and discussed. The New World, More thought, opened the mind of contemporary readers to imagine a utopian space and a fictional experimentation but not necessarily located in the New World. Most importantly, close readings suggest that all four of the texts interrogated were firmly non-expansionist and anti-imperialist, often in very pointed contrast to the worldwide conflict and subjugation of other nations that was being perpetrated by their own states at the time of writing.

Thirdly, the agency for founding utopia and the organisation of its defence and protection developed and changed throughout these works. For Plato and More the philosopher king's view and vision was sufficient to construct utopia. For Bellamy and Wells, utopias are not built by a gifted outsider or visionary social-engineer introducing a model of a better society, but instead responsibility has to be taken by all members of society to bring about the alternative. For Bellamy and Wells, the temporal literary device

of an evolutionary historical leap led to utopia, and these later utopias underlined the belief that utopia can only be perceived as emerging from existing cultures and institutions rather than ones far removed from reality. Both Bellamy and Wells recognised the power of the identity of nationality and recognised the need to balance between a global utopian culture and local cultures. This made utopia appear more practical and realistic, retaining also a sense of their own time. Not only culture but also existing institutions and organisations were kept in place and expanded upon. The earlier works disregarded these, with Plato completely rejecting all the existing political systems and More the existing commonwealths, while Bellamy and Wells were flexible enough to refer to world federations and empires. This is perhaps because the later utopias attempted to bring about a multicultural utopia with certain shared values. These later utopias also recognised and emphasised the right of each part of the world to bring about its own utopia and voluntarily join the larger world-utopian federation. This change of view in the modern utopia was applied to its defence and survival. Utopia was shown as needing to be cautious about maintaining a power relation with surrounding entities as it needed to survive. Any entity with a hope of survival must reckon with demise and invasion in order to preserve itself, which justifies its armament. Plato and More include war protocols, although their criteria were still much more progressive and humanitarian than their times. Plato, for example, prohibits mass punishment, the ravishing of lands, and the destruction of houses, and More's Utopians detest war and see it as "an activity fit only for beasts", considering it as a last resort. For Bellamy and Wells, this option has been abandoned altogether. Most importantly, these utopias never attempt to aggregate political and military power to themselves and to the detriment of their neighbours, even though demonstrably they are seen easily as having the power to do so. Moreover, the natural course of these utopias, correlating to their global message, is said to advance towards total disarmament. This proposal, we might remember, was forwarded by Bellamy even though the rest of the world in his text had not done so, and despite threats to the survival of his utopia amid other powerful non-utopian nation-states.

Fourthly, their global perspectives grew – from Plato's isolationism onwards – as a response to their perception of the increasing interrelation and connectivity in the world. Utopias tend to start from a single space and are particularly concerned with the

experiences of their immediate surroundings, and once they have expanded they secede and replace their culture for the sake of containing the world in their utopias. The conclusion here is if utopia is seen as a common dream of humanity, then it frees itself from any national or cultural restrictions so as not to be the dream of a particular person or culture. Utopia responded to changes in the world and the impossibility of isolated utopian enclaves, but it did not seek out this situation, as Wells clearly expressed.

The four authors' ideas of progress were based on and guided by their vision of a better future for humanity. Their understanding that humanity is equal and develops equally under similar conditions into a utopian future does not necessarily entail having a certain model of progress in mind. Their texts were not based on cultural or geographical comparison, except comparing their present societies with the imagined ones. If a utopia originates from a particular place, it is because of the authors' awareness of the existing parity in the real world that their imagined constructions attempt to eliminate. This is because utopias have always utilised and established a reciprocal conditioning between the existing and the expected social and political changes. Bellamy's utopia, for example, is organised on the evolution of the industrialised economy and could only be imagined in a place where its economy is organised as such. The question that should be raised is whether utopian writers could imagine a utopian nation without imagining a utopian world. Their changing worldview was gradual and developed only because they realised that their dream should extend to all humanity. Once utopia expands, there is no majority and minority division, or utopian and non-utopian as we recognise in the utopia of Wells. This is explained in concrete examples in the chapters, including Bellamy's trade council established to manage the international affairs based on the equality of all its members, and Wells's local authorities incorporated in a world government. These findings provide a unified view of these proposed utopian schemes and two conclusions could be drawn from the idea of utopias expanding from somewhere to everywhere. It represents their belief in the shared destiny of all humanity and their recognition of the suffering of the world in general. The other reason is their understanding that no utopia survives among hostile neighbours or an unstable and striving world – this is a dystopian world. Utopias attempted to avoid war and conflict, emphasising order in the universe so as to bring about equality for all nations. In Bellamy's *Looking Backward*, a global consciousness fully emerges in

that we share the world and cannot continue dividing it into belligerent national parcels, divisions that Wells subsumes under a utopian world empire. Wells insisted that people relate to each other based on sharing the world rather than any other nation-based, socio-economic, or racial identity. Of course, all this assumes the reader's faith in the good intentions of the writer, as what one person might consider the peaceful spread of universal values is often considered belligerent ideological imposition by the recipient. This critique is important and integral to the postcolonialist position, and is applied frequently and widely against world-federations like the United Nations and UNESCO. Yet it seems to remain the case that, on close readings, the utopian texts advocated directly and committedly against imperial and colonialist subjugation from a position of assumed superiority.

In order to explore these interpretative possibilities, this thesis has dealt with an extensive time span between the utopias studied. Although they usually retain aspects of the same essential message across different social and political contexts, still this timeframe represented a keen challenge to the researcher to relate these works to their historical and biographical contexts. The study had to focus primarily on the selected utopian texts and only occasionally referred to biographies and other works of the author. The scope of the research, which attempted to broadly look at the genre, would not permit the study of one single text with the full background of the author and his time or the inclusion of more works. This is with the exception of Wells, whose dedication to his utopian idea continued to develop until just before his death, and who also attempted to advocate his theory by educating his public and the world in general of the importance of a utopian world, which required extra attention.

It is recommended, therefore, that further research into this topic could be conducted on works such as Francis Bacon's *New Atlantis* (1627), Francis Godwin's *The Man in the Moone* (1638), and Margaret Cavendish's *The Blazing World* (1666), which were composed during the colonisation of the New World and thus involve voyages, discoveries, and technological advancement as well as including themes and concerns raised by postcolonial criticism. Additionally, and although the novel has been utopia's primary vehicle since Thomas More, the various historical utopian communities like Brook Farm, the Oneida Community, and New Australia that are assumed to be influenced by

utopian literary works might be relevant to inquires of such nature. The study of the emergence and the usual demise of these constructed utopias across the two shores of the Atlantic would be useful in order to determine their ideological and also their practical relations with their neighbours and the world.

Finally, it must be conceded that it is a natural tendency for colonialist and imperialist inclinations to exist in any genre at any given time. Utopias like other genres were the inventions of their days and therefore contained arguments for and against emerging and existing social and world issues, including of course colonialism and imperialism. The presumption, however, that such trends and impulses – always in favour of the forcible expansion of Western world-views and systems – are deeply rooted in and consistent across the genre, is questionable. Indeed, it is not borne out in an in-depth study of the canonical texts – ostensibly the worst 'offenders' – covered in this thesis. The conclusion of this study, however, is not a denial of such tendencies in all texts of the genre. The study has highlighted the utopian noble ideal to imagine a better future for humanity, which can be revived as a vehicle, if not the sole but an important one, for hope of the future. Though plans of these utopias were not always taken seriously, their message was powerful enough to attract thinkers and cause utopias to be regarded as aspirations and imaginations that have affected ways and possibilities of social and political change.

Postcolonial criticism calls into question the utopian ideal ignoring its potential capacity of the simultaneous development of human beings. The utopias researched here show how utopian thought has yielded good in ample measure with their writers' intention to disseminate and extend the good society as widely as possible. Certain ideologically and politically persuaded criticism, with the focus on periods of colonisation and historic conflicts where in some societies the destructive effects have largely vanished, resulted in the failure or inability to consider the positive functions embedded in the logic of utopias (e.g., its critical function, transformation of the present and the ability to initiate social change). Postcolonial utopian writers outrun postcolonial critics and have already used the utopian form to imagine alternative worlds. After all, these rhetoric in utopian thought once nourished ideas of the abolition of slavery and principles of human rights, and any alternative vision of the future should be a continuation of this intellectual history that aimed for the betterment of human life. Hence, the genre is urgently needed to carry out its

mission as a vehicle to express emotional, ethical, and material concerns of the age. This study hopes to offer a new way of appreciating these much misunderstood texts. Most scholars of the field agree that utopia, if not dead, has been very much on the defensive since World War II. Modest efforts have been made towards its revival, but continuing to dismiss the entire genre as an inherently colonialist and imperialist tool would further jeopardise its capacity to be a dream for humanity. Instead, and alternatively, perhaps dystopia would be the future vision. Because hope is almost lost to find a better place or belief in the future, it is utopia that leaves a space for hope, for a collectively inhabited world that lies in the duty of care of all people, and not twisted to limited interests and happiness of a small segment of humanity. This genre has a real role and duty, even though it may only be imaginary, particularly in the face of the international conflicts of today. This is because the utopist remains optimistic that a better phase lies before us, regardless of how dystopian our past and present may be. The latter examples of Bellamy and Wells were exemplary in this regard, as despite the world privileging their Western civilisation and culture, they chose to consider other identities and cultures and attempted to bridge those gaps in ways that were visionary for the time. Most of these ideas were only developed and forwarded later after decolonisation and postmodern movements. The current time has grouped people around the world against common threats, political, religious, and increasingly environmental, and perhaps at no other time throughout history has the future of the world's people been so intimately tied together. If there was ever a time were utopia was close to become a social reality, the world of today is very far from such a dream. No corner of the globe is immune or can enclose itself from distant and foreign fanatic ideologies or regimes. If utopia has disappeared for a while or taken new forms, it is definitely invited back, as our lack of alternatives has opened up a space for utopia again. To conclude with a personal note, my interest in utopia stems from both my personal and academic experiences. Working for the United Nations in Iraq and Kurdistan led me to consider the potential for a better and brighter future, and my academic fusion of international development and English literature drew me to the subject utopia. It is understandable that the concepts of development and progress are problematic, as is the establishment of goals for nations to follow and the resistance that may be faced. However, it is more problematic to doubt developmental projects altogether and to reduce them to

being inherently Western and imperialistic. Global goals, objectives, and visions exist, and these can be set and worked towards with a shared understanding and cultural differences. Despite being a fictional construct, utopia is the vehicle with which to show that such a global vision is possible. The Postcolonial critique risks the pretensions to become an academic exercise that does not appreciate the changing needs of different historical stages. While exposing the legacy of colonialism and what remains from it, the academic literature may have gone too far in a particular direction leading inevitably to an impasse of cultural and political biases. It tends to neglect or undervalue a range of accomplishments in the human rights standards and principles, equalisation paradigms and antidiscrimination policies that were developed enthusiastically in Western societies and could extend to all people. These biases impede cross-cultural dialogue, collective social dreaming and possibilities of a new future through collective security and certain unity among diversity that utopian writers like H.G. Wells strived to establish. Postcolonial utopias have, as a number of recent studies conclude, opened up a space of hope by mediating between utopia and postcolonial theory. These narratives might provide a transition from the postcolonial phase to the realm of an alternative global culture without extremes and binaries.

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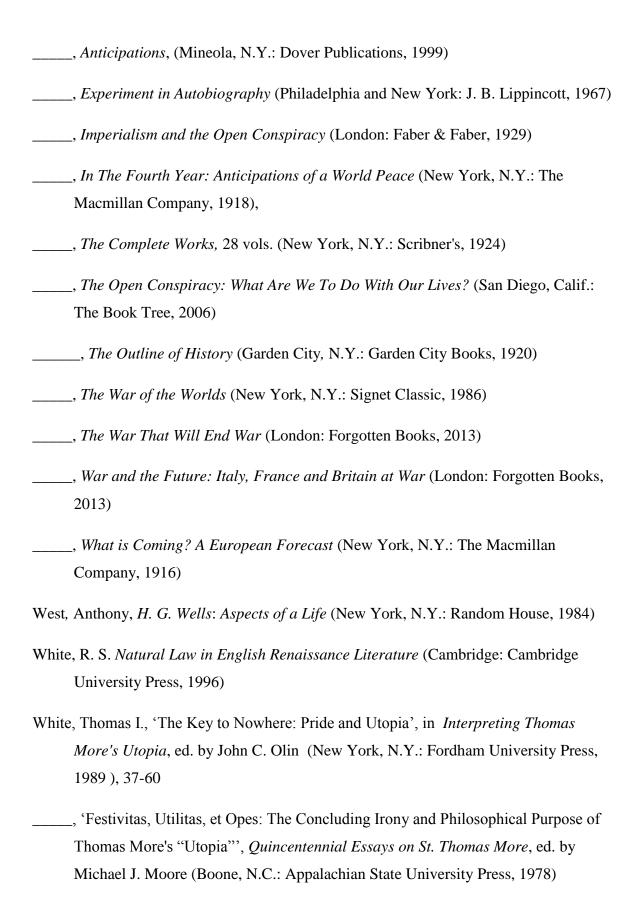
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