History of Philosophical Thought and Aesthetics

Nature, Ecology, and the Environment in Early Modernity

Part A

Part 2: Utopia – A Renaissance (ecological) concept

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Selected Publications

Carolyn Merchant is the author of The Death of Nature: Women, Ecology, and the Scientific Revolution (1980; 2nd ed. 1990; 3rd ed. 2020); Ecological Revolutions: Nature, Gender, and Science in New England (1989; 2nd ed., 2010); Radical Ecology: The Search for a Livable World (1992; 2nd ed., 2005); Earthcare: Women and the Environment (1996); The Columbia Guide to American Environmental History (2002; 2nd ed. 2007); Reinventing Eden: The Fate of Nature in Western Culture (2003; 2nd ed. 2013); Autonomous Nature: Problems of Prediction and Control from Ancient Times to the Scientific Revolution (2016); Spare the Birds: George Bird Grinnell and the First Audubon Society (2016); Science and Nature: Past, Present, and Future (2018); The Anthropocene and the Humanities: From Climate Change to a New Age of Sustainability (2020), as well as numerous articles on the history of science, environmental history, and women and the environment. She is the editor of Major Problems in American Environmental History (1993; 2nd ed., 2005; 3rd ed., 2011); Key Concepts in Critical Theory: Ecology (1994; 2nd ed. 2008); Green Versus Gold: Sources in California's Environmental History (1998); and co-editor, with Shepard Krech, III and John McNeill, of The Encyclopedia of World Environmental History, 3 vols. (2004).

The Death of Nature 1980 Forty Years Later 2020.pdf

From Ecology to Utopia

Carolyn Merchant, *Reinventing Eden*

Two grand historical narratives explain how the human species arrived at the present moment in history. Both are Recovery narratives, but the two stories have different plots, one upward, the other downward. The first story is the traditional biblical narrative of the Fall from the Garden of Eden from which humanity can be redeemed through Christianity. But the Garden itself can also be recovered. By the time of the Scientific Revolution of the seventeenth century, the Christian narrative had merged with advances in science, technology, and capitalism to form the mainstream Recovery Narrative. The story begins with a precipitous Fall from Eden followed by a long, slow, upward attempt to recreate the Garden of Eden on Earth. The outcome is a better world for all people. This first story—the mainstream Recovery Narrative—is a story of upward progress in which humanity gains the power to manage and control the earth.

The second story, also a Recovery Narrative, instead depicts a long, slow decline from a prehistoric past in which the world was ecologically more pristine and society was more equitable for all people and for both genders. The decline continues to the present, but the possibility and, indeed, the absolute necessity of a precipitous, rapid Recovery exists today and could be achieved through a sustainable ecology and an equitable society. This second story is one told by many environmentalists and feminists.

Both stories are enormously compelling and both reflect the beliefs and hopes of many people for achieving a better world. They differ fundamentally, however, on who and what wins out. In the mainstream story, humanity regains its life of ease at the expense of the earth; in the environmental story, the earth is both the victim of exploitation and the beneficiary of restoration. Women play pivotal roles in the two stories, as cause and/or victim of decline and, along with men, as restorers of a reclaimed planet. But, I argue that a third story, one of partnership between humanity and the earth and between women and men, that draws on many of the positive aspects of the two stories is also emerging. Here I develop, compare, and critically assess the roots and broad outlines of these stories.

From Ecology to Utopia

A second, secular version of Recovery became paramount during the Scientific Revolution of the seventeenth century, one in which the earth itself becomes a new Eden. This is the mainstream narrative of modern Western culture, one which continues to this day—it is *our* story, one so compelling we cannot escape its tentacles. In the 1600s, Europeans and New World colonists began a massive effort to reinvent the whole earth in the image of the Garden of Eden. Aided by the Christian doctrine of redemption and the inventions of science, technology, and capitalism, the long-term goal of the Recovery project has been to turn the entire earth into a vast cultivated garden. The seventeenth-century concept of recovery came to mean more than recovery from the Fall. It also entailed restoration of health, reclamation of land, and recovery of property. The strong interventionist version in Genesis 1 validates Recovery through domination, while the softer Genesis 2 version advocates dressing and keeping the garden through human management (stewardship). Human labor would redeem the souls of men and women, while the earthly wilderness would be redeemed through cultivation and domestication.[16]

The Garden of Eden origin story depicts a comic or happy state of human existence, while the Fall exemplifies a tragic state. Stories and descriptions about nature and human nature told by explorers, colonists, settlers, and developers present images of and movement between comic (positive) or tragic (negative) states. Northrop Frye describes the elements of these two states. In comic stories, the human world is a community and the animal world comprises domesticated flocks and birds of peace. The vegetable world is a garden or park with trees, while the mineral world is a city or temple with precious stones and starlit domes. And the unformed world is depicted by a river. In tragic stories, the human world is an anarchy of individuals and the animal world is filled with birds and beasts of prey (such as wolves, vultures, and serpents). The vegetable world is a wilderness, desert, or sinister forest, the mineral world is filled with rocks and ruins, and the unformed world is a sea or flood. All of these elements are present in the two versions of the Recovery Narrative.[17]

The plot of the tragedy moves from a better or comic state to a worse or tragic state (from the Garden of Eden to a desert wilderness). The comedy, on the other hand, moves from an initial tragic state to a comic outcome (from a desert to a recovered garden). *The primary narrative of Western culture has been a precipitous, tragic Fall from the Garden of Eden, followed by a long, slow, upward Recovery to convert the fallen world of deserts and wilderness into a new earthly Eden.* Tragedy is turned into comedy through human labor in the earth and the Christian faith in redemption. During the Scientific Revolution of the seventeenth century, the Christian and modern stories merged to become the mainstream Recovery Narrative of Western culture.

From Ecology to Utopia

- Why is early modernity central in one of these narratives?
- What would be the role of utopias in these narratives?
- In what sense can a utopian narrative be ecological?

ENVIRONMENTALIST NARRATIVES

An alternative to the mainstream story of the Fall and Recovery is told by many environmentalists and feminists. This second narrative begins in a Stone Age Garden of Eden and depicts a gradual, rather than precipitous, loss of a pristine condition. It uses archeological, anthropological, and ecological data, along with myth and art, to re-create a story of decline. Both environmental and feminist accounts idealize an Edenic prehistory in which both sexes lived in harmony with each other and nature, but they are nevertheless compelling in their critique of environmental disruption and the subjugation of both women and nature. When viewed critically, both can contribute to a new narrative of sustainable partnership between humanity and nature.

The environmentalist narrative of decline initiated by the transition to agriculture continues to the present. Tools and technologies allow people to spread over the entire globe and to subdue the earth. The colonizers denude the earth for ores and build cities and highways across the land. Despite this destruction, however, environmentalists hope for a Recovery that reverses the decline by means of planetary restoration. The Recovery begins with the conservation and preservation movements of the nineteenth century and continues with the environmental movement of the late twentieth century.

This story of decline from a past dominated by female cultural symbols and powerful female deities into one of female subordination is presented by many feminist writers. The plot is a downward trajectory throughout prehistory and written history in which female power is lost or obscured. Recovery, however, can occur with emancipation, social and economic equality, and the return of powerful cultural icons that validate women's power and promise. Merlin Stone conveys the argument when she writes that in the Neolithic era (ca. 7000 BCE) people worshipped a female creator, a Great Goddess who was overthrown with the advent of newer religions. The loss of paradise, she holds, is the loss of a female deity. The beginnings of this narrative occur in the ancient Near East with the overthrow of goddess worshipping horticulturalists by horse-mounted warriors.[31]

Talking About Utopia today

https://www.youtube.com/watch?si=nVD922Z_NxSyE_o3&v=Zto299cA8nM&feature=youtu.be

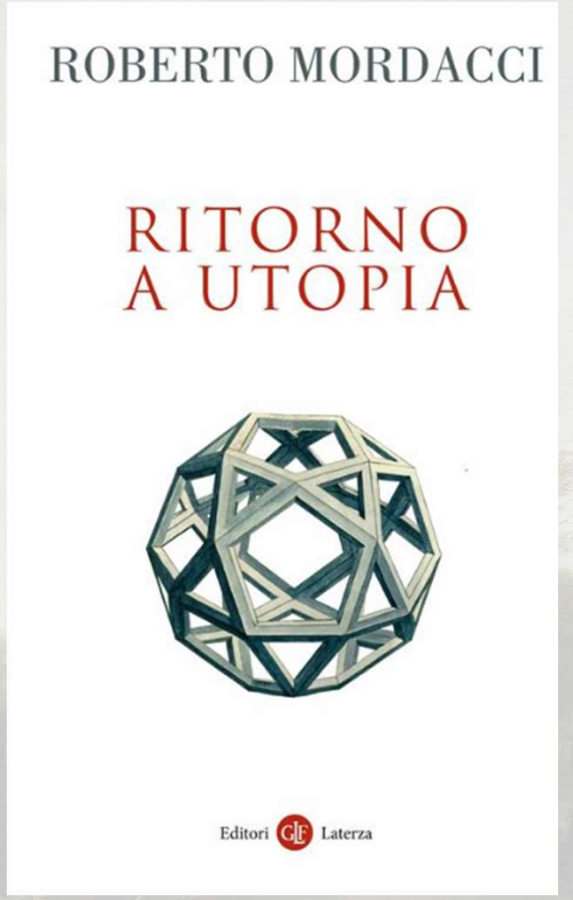
Miriam Eliav-Feldon, *Realistic Utopias (1982): utopias are «an invitation to perceive the distance between things as they are and things as they* should be».

Ou-topia/Eu-topia

(**Dystopia**: an alternative scenario in which everything is negative, distorted, worse than the present condition. Probably first used by John Stuart Mill (1806-1873) in a speech in the British House of Commons)

Nostalgia for Utopia

«L’utopia ha inizio da un nome. Originariamente, infatti, Utopia non è un concetto. È solo una parola evocativa, frutto di una brillante quanto semplice invenzione linguistica: è un luogo (*-topia*) chiamato non-luogo (*ou-topia*), che è, a un tempo, un buon-luogo (*eu-topia*). La parola originaria dà il nome all’isola dove Sir Thomas More, nel 1516, immagina la sua repubblica ideale, contro-specchio critico della sua Inghilterra e proiezione del sogno umanistico di una società giusta e armonica. Si sa che un luogo simile non esiste, ma è proprio per questo che esso è un’insuperabile obiezione contro l’ingiustizia, il sopruso, l’inimicizia e l’odio. Nessuno immagina la società ideale come una comunità in perenne conflitto, ostile, iniqua e infelice. Quest’ultima è piuttosto la triste realtà che ci si presenta ogni giorno nell’esperienza, mentre l’altra immagine, quella di armonia e felicità, è viva solo nella fantasia».



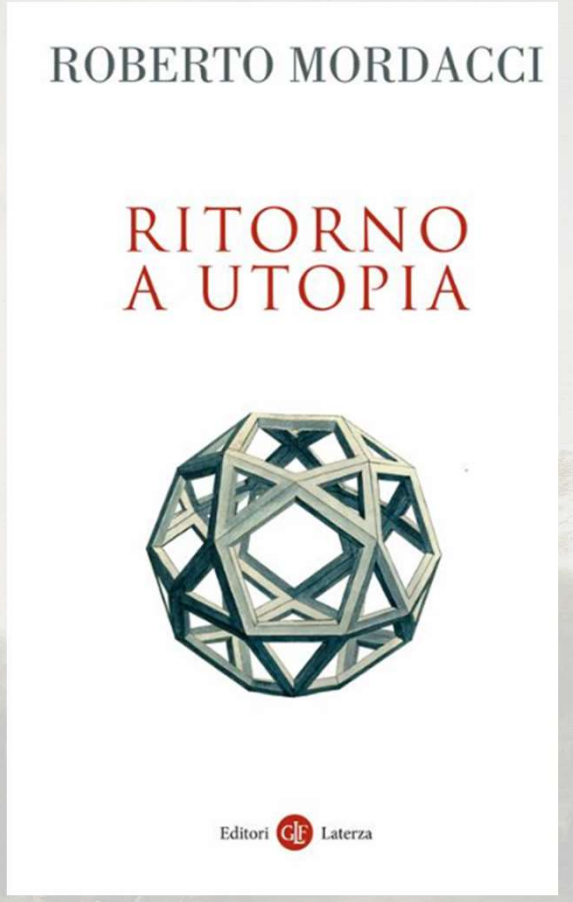
Nostalgia for Utopia

Points for discussion:

- ‘Utopia’ seems to mean imaginary, fictitious, dream-like

- Is Mordacci really talking about Renaissance utopias, or about a present-day nostalgia for an ideal society that differs substantially from the one in which we live?

- Mordacci does not refer to key aspects of Renaissance utopias: irony, the presence of violence and less than desirable traits in these ‘ideal’ societies, the idea of change and development in these utopias (they are not static)



Thomas More, *Utopia* (Louvain 1516)

VTOPIAE INSVLAE FIGVRA

VTOPIENSIVM ALPHABETVM.

a b c d e f g h i k l m n o p q r s t v x y

Tetraſtichon vernacula Vtopienſium lingua.

Vtopos ha Boccas peu la

chama polta chamaan

Bargol he magloni baccan

ſoma gymno ſophaon

Agrama gymnoſophon labarembacha

bodamilomin

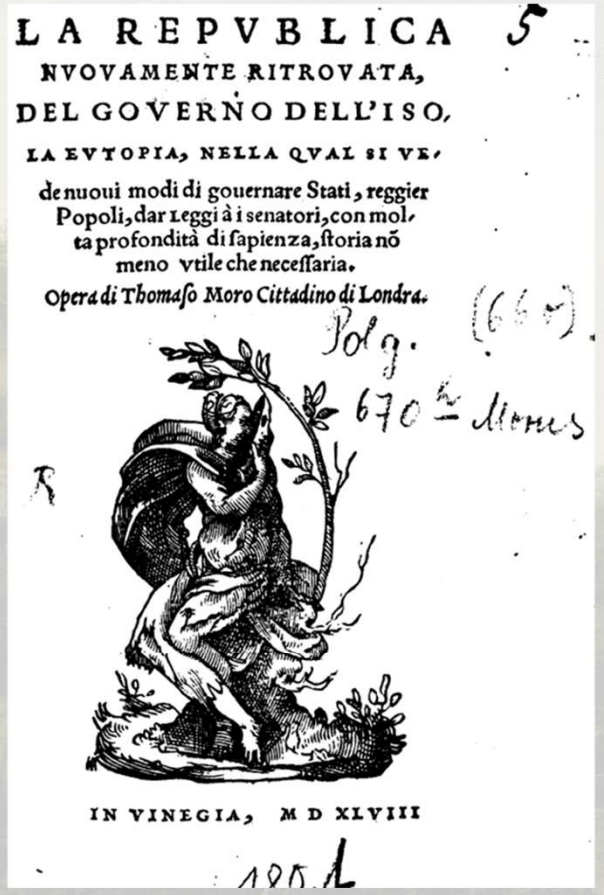
Voluala barchin heman la

lauoluola dramme pagloni.

Horum verſuum ad verbum hæc eſt ſententia.

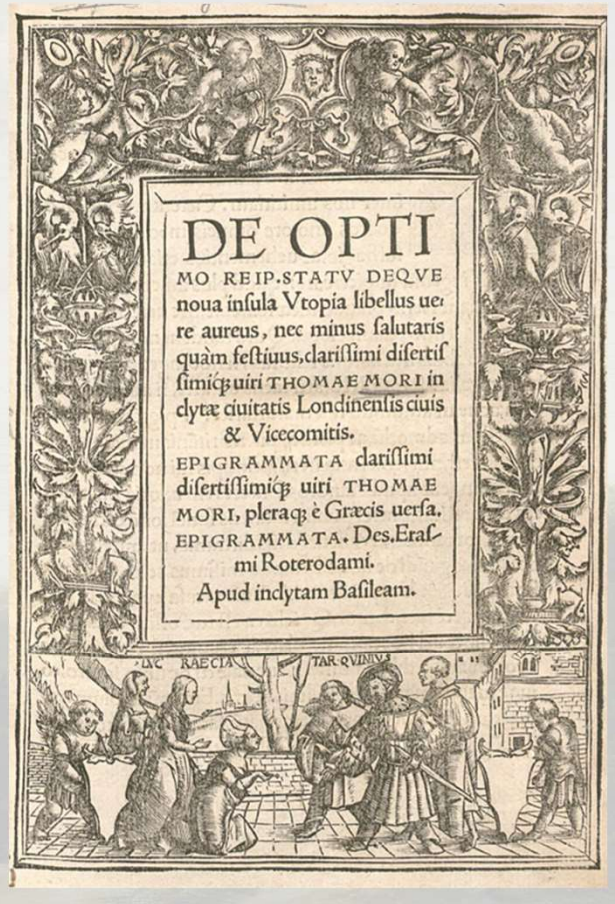
Vtopus me dux ex non inſula fecit inſulam
Vna ego terrarum omnium abſq; philoſophia
Ciuitatem philoſophicam expreſſi mortalibus
Libēter impartio mea, nō grauatim accipio meliora.

Utopia, Nusquama, Eutopia



LA REPVBLICA
NVOVAMENTE RITROVATA,
DEL GOVERNO DELL'ISO,
LA EVTOPIA, NELLA QVAL SI VE-
de nuoui modi di gouernare Stati, reggier
Popoli, dar Leggi à i senatori, con mol-
ta profondità di sapienza, storia nõ
meno vtile che necessaria.
Opera di Thomaso Moro Cittadino di Londra.

IN VINEGIA, M D XLVIII



DE OPTI
MO REIP. STATV DEQVE
noua insula Vtopia libellus ue-
re aureus, nec minus salutaris
quàm festiuus, clarissimi disertis
simiq; uiri THOMAE MORI in
clytæ ciuitatis Londinensis ciuis
& Vicecomitis.
EPIGRAMMATA clarissimi
disertissimiq; uiri THOMAE
MORI, pleraq; è Græcis uersa.
EPIGRAMMATA. Des. Eras-
mi Roterodami.
Apud indytam Basileam.

Utopia, an idea between architecture, literature, philosophy

Bartolomeo Del Bene (born 1514), *Civitas Veri*

An allegory based on Aristotle's Nicomachean Ethics, about the progressive elevation of the philosopher to virtue. The aim is reaching philosophical wisdom (subdivision in 30 days or allegorical panels)

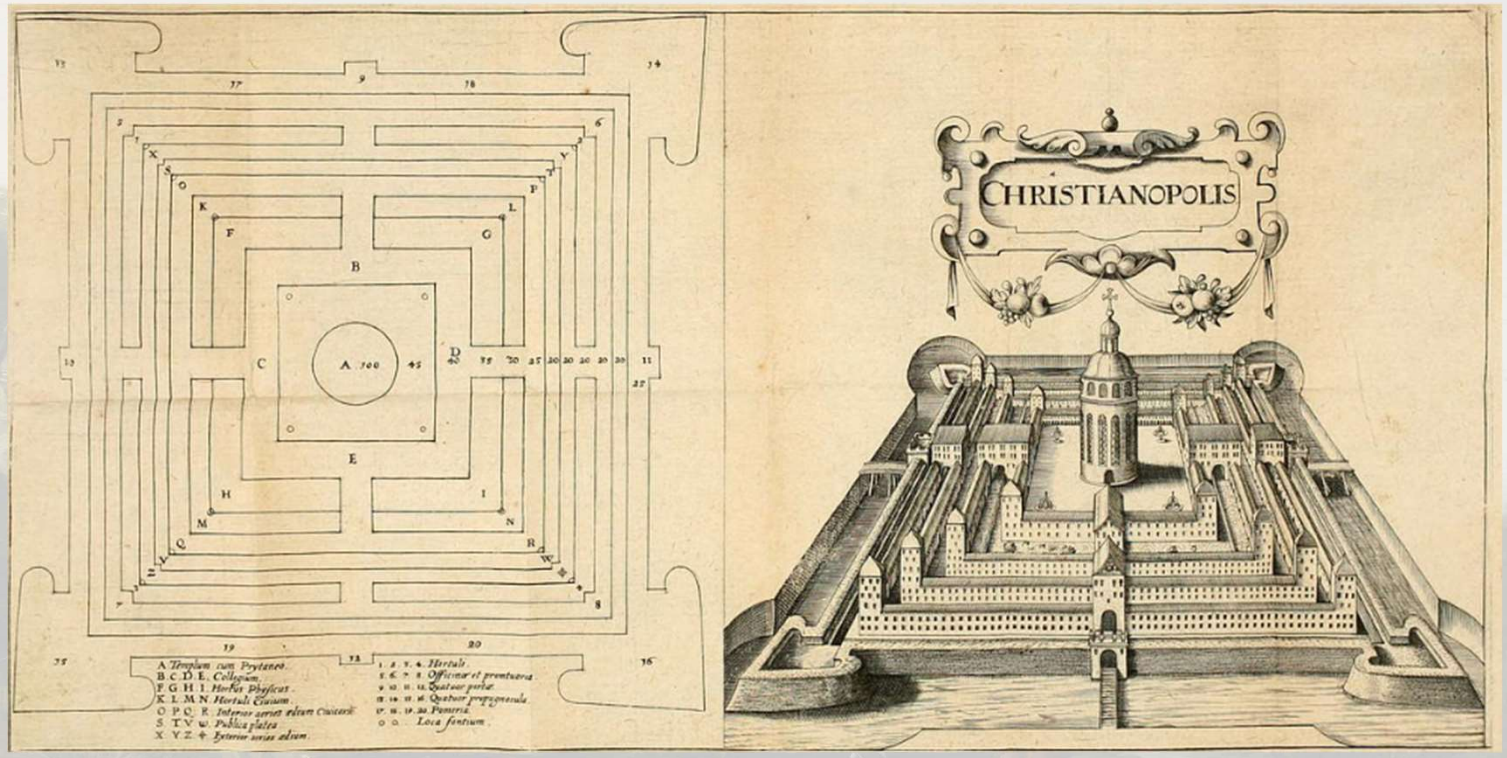
Utopia, an idea between architecture, literature, philosophy

La città ideale, Galleria nazionale delle Marche, Urbino (end of the 15th century)

Palmanova (end of the 16th century)

Utopia, an idea between architecture, literature, philosophy

Johann Valentin Andreae,
Christianopolis (1619)



Thomas More (1478-1535)

1517: civil servant to Henry VIII (secretary, diplomat)

1535: executed for refusing to accept the annulation of Henry's marriage to Catherine of Aragon and severing from Rome

1534: Act of supremacy (Henry VIII head of the Church of England)

Historical context for *Utopia*

Reformation still to happen (1517/18)
First french edition 1550; English edition 1551
Of the early Latin editions (*De optimo rei publicae statu deque nova insula Utopia*) none were published in England
1548: Italian edition (*La republica nuovamente ritrovata*)
1550: French edition (*Description de l'Isle d'Utopie*)
Gargantua & Pantagruel (use of the term *Utopia*): 1534

Utopia: sources of inspiration

- **Lucian**, *True History* (2 century). First 'science fiction'. Parody of travel writing. The heroes travel beyond the Pillars of Hercules. Satire on what is true and what is fiction. Lucian is an author loved by Erasmus and Thomas More (they translate Lucian in 1505, publication in 1506). The aim is to entertain and to provide interesting material (same for *Utopia*?). The protagonist of True History arrives on the island of the Blessed where he encounters many great figures from the past, apart from Plato, who is allegedly living in his imaginary, ideal city.

- **Vespucci**'s travels (basis for the imaginary journey are real journeys): *Mundus novus*, 1504 (in the form of a letter to Pierfrancesco de' Medici)
1492: first voyage
1493 Bull by Pope Alexander VI dividing in two hemispheres: time of negotiations between maritime powers

- **Bible**
- **Plato**

The ideal state as thought experiment:

Plato, *Republic* 369-373 (tr. B. Jowett)

That, he said, is an excellent proposal.

And suppose we imagine the State as in a process of creation, and then we shall see the justice and injustice of the State in process of creation also.

Very likely.

When the State is completed there may be a hope that the object of our search will be more easily discovered.

Yes, more easily.

And shall we make the attempt? I said; although I cannot promise you as an inducement that the task will be a light one. Reflect therefore.

I have reflected, said Adeimantus, and am anxious that you should proceed.

A State, I said, arises, as I conceive, out of the needs of mankind; no one is self-sufficing, but all of us have many wants. Can any other origin of a State be imagined?

None, he replied.

Then, as we have many wants, and many persons are needed to supply them, one takes a helper for one purpose and another for another; and when these helpers and partners are gathered together in one habitation, the body of inhabitants is termed a State.

True, he said.

And they exchange with one another, and one gives, and another receives, under the idea that the exchange will be for their good.

Very true.

Then, I said, let us begin and create a State; and yet the true creator is necessity, who is the mother of our invention.

True, he replied.

Now the first and greatest of necessities is food, which is the condition of life and existence.

Certainly.

The second is a dwelling, and the third clothing and that sort of thing.

True.

And now let us see how our city will be able to supply this great demand. We may suppose that one man is a husbandman, another a builder, some one else a weaver: shall we add to them a shoemaker, or perhaps some other purveyor to our bodily wants?

Quite right.

The barest notion of a State must include four or five men.

Clearly.

And how then will they proceed? Will each give the result of his labors to all? — the husbandman, for example, producing, for four, and laboring in the production of food for himself and others four times as long and as much as he needs to labor; or shall he leave others and not be at the trouble of producing for them, but produce a fourth for himself in a fourth of the time, and in the remaining three fourths of his time be employed in making a house or a coat or a pair of shoes? 370

Adeimantus thought that the former would be the better way.

I dare say that you are right, I replied, for I am reminded as you speak that we are not all alike; there are diversities of natures among us which are adapted to different occupations.

Very true.

And will you have a work better done when the workman has many occupations, or when he has only one?

When he has only one.

Further, there can be no doubt that a work is spoilt when not done at the right time?

No doubt of that.

The ideal state as thought experiment:

Plato, *Republic* 369-373

I dare say that you are right in that suggestion, I said; still, we had better consider the matter further, and not shrink from the task.

First, then, let us consider what will be their way of life, now that we have thus established them. Will they not produce corn, and wine, and clothes, and shoes, and build houses for themselves? And when they are housed, they will work in summer commonly stripped and barefoot, but in winter substantially clothed and shod. They will feed on barley and wheat, baking the wheat and kneading the flour, making noble puddings and loaves; these they will serve up on a mat of reeds or clean leaves, themselves reclining the while upon beds of yew or myrtle boughs. And they and their children will feast, drinking of the wine which they have made, wearing garlands on their heads, and having the praises of the gods on their lips, living in sweet society, and having a care that their families do not exceed their means; for they will have an eye to poverty or war.

But, said Glaucon, interposing, you have not given them a relish to their meal.

True, I replied, I had forgotten that; of course they will have a relish, — salt, and olives, and cheese, and onions, and cabbages or other country herbs which are fit for boiling; and we shall give them a dessert of figs, and pulse, and beans, and myrtle-berries, and beech-nuts, which they will roast at the fire, drinking in moderation. And with such a diet they may be expected to live in peace to a good old age, and bequeath a similar life to their children after them.

I suppose that many will be dissatisfied with the simpler way of life. They will be for adding sofas, and tables, and other furniture; also dainties, and perfumes, and incense, and courtesans, and cakes, not of one sort only, but in profusion and variety; our imagination must not be limited to the necessaries of which I was at first speaking, such as houses, and clothes, and shoes; but the art of the painter and embroiderer will have to be set in motion, and gold and ivory and other materials of art will be required. 373

True, he said.

Then we must enlarge our borders; for the original healthy State is too small. Now will the city have to fill and swell with a multitude of callings which go beyond what is required by any natural want; such as the whole tribe of hunters and actors, of which one large class have to do with figures and colors, another are musicians; there will be poets and their attendant train of rhapsodists, players, dancers, contractors; also makers of divers kinds of utensils, not forgetting women's ornaments. And we shall want more servants. Will not tutors be also in request, and nurses wet and dry, tirewomen and barbers, as well as confectioners and cooks; and swineherds, too, who were not needed and therefore not included in the former edition of our State, but needed in this? They must not be forgotten: and there will be hosts of animals, if people are to eat them.

Certainly.

And living in this way we shall have much greater need of physicians than before?

Much greater.

And the country which was enough to support the original inhabitants will be too small now, and not enough?

Quite true.

Then a slice of our neighbor's land will be wanted by us for pasture and tillage, and they will want a slice of ours, if, like ourselves, they exceed the limit of necessity, and give themselves up to the unlimited accumulation of wealth?

That, Socrates, will be unavoidable.

And then we shall go to war, Glaucon, — that will be the next thing.

So we shall, he replied.

Then, without determining as yet whether war does good or harm, thus much we may affirm, that now we have discovered war to be derived from causes which are also the causes of almost all the evils in States, private as well as public.

Plato, the myth of Atlantis

Timaeus, 24-25

Many great and wonderful deeds are recorded of your state in our histories. But one of them exceeds all the rest in greatness and valour. For these histories tell of a mighty power which unprovoked made an expedition against the whole of Europe and Asia, and to which your city put an end. This power came forth out of the Atlantic Ocean, for in those days the Atlantic was navigable; and there was an island situated in front of the straits which are by you called the pillars of Heracles; the island was larger than Libya and Asia put together, and was the way to other islands, and from these you might pass to the whole of the opposite continent which surrounded the true ocean; for this sea which is within the Straits of Heracles is only a harbour, having a narrow entrance, but that other is a real sea, and the surrounding land may be most truly called a boundless continent.

Now in this island of Atlantis there was a great and wonderful empire which had rule over the whole island and several others, and over parts of the continent, and, furthermore, the men of Atlantis had subjected the parts of Libya within the columns of Heracles as far as Egypt, and of Europe as far as Tyrrhenia. This vast power, gathered into one, endeavoured to subdue at a blow our country and yours and the whole of the region within the straits; and then, Solon, your country shone forth, in the excellence of her virtue and strength, among all mankind. She was pre-eminent in courage and military skill, and was the leader of the Hellenes. And when the rest fell off from her, being compelled to stand alone, after having undergone the very extremity of danger, she defeated and triumphed over the invaders, and preserved from slavery those who were not yet subjugated, and generously liberated all the rest of us who dwell within the pillars. But afterwards there occurred violent earthquakes and floods; and in a single day and night of misfortune all your warlike men in a body sank into the earth, and the island of Atlantis in like manner disappeared in the depths of the sea. For which reason the sea in those parts is impassable and impenetrable, because there is a shoal of mud in the way; and this was caused by the subsidence of the island.

More's *Utopia*: the setting

Peter Giles, real person

Raphael Hythlodaeus (Rafael, 'divine' guide; Hythlodaeus: dispenser of nonsense)

Thomas More

"as my business required, I made my way to Antwerp. [...] One day, after I had heard mass at the church of St. Mary, which is remarkable for its beautiful architecture and its large congregation, when the service was over and I was getting ready to return to my lodgings, I happened to see Giles conversing with a stranger who was getting up in years. His face was sunburned, his beard untrimmed, his cloak hanging carelessly from his shoulder; from his face and bearing I thought he looked like a sea captain."

More to Raphael: «Then too, since your friend Plato thinks that commonwealths will be happy only when philosophers become kings or kings become philosophers, how far will be from happiness if philosophers will not even deign to impart their advice to kings. […] But undoubtedly Plato clearly foresaw that unless kings became philosophers, they would never give the advice of philosophers, because since childhood they have been thoroughly imbued and infected with misguided notions».

→ How would philosophers design a city?
→ How would philosophers manage resources?
→ How would philosophers handle nature?

Managing the Land

The land is so well distributed that no city has less than twelve miles of ground on all sides, though it may have much more in some directions, namely where the cities are furthest apart from one another. None of them is driven by any desire to extend its boundaries.[133] Indeed, whatever land they have, they consider themselves its tenant-farmers, not its landlords. In the countryside, throughout the fields, they have conveniently located houses, each provided with farming tools. They are inhabited by the citizens, who take turns going out to live there. No country household has fewer than forty men and women, besides the two slaves bound to the land; it is presided over by a master and mistress who are sober and mature. Every thirty households are ruled by one phylarch.[134] Every year twenty from each household return to the city, having fulfilled their two-year stint in the country. They are replaced by twenty substitutes from the city, who are to be trained by those who have already been there a year and hence are more skilled in farmwork; the substitutes themselves will train another group the following year, for if everyone were new and equally ignorant of farming, the crops would suffer from lack of skill. Although this system of exchanging farmers is customary, to keep anyone from being forced to live this hard life for a long time, nevertheless many who have a natural bent for agricultural pursuits apply for and are allowed additional years.

They farm the land, raise cattle, cut wood, and convey it to the cities by the most convenient route, whether by sea or by land. They raise a huge number of chickens, and they have a marvelous method of doing it. The hens do not sit on the eggs. For the Utopians themselves tend a great number of eggs, keeping them alive and hatching them them in constant warmth.[135] As soon as the chicks emerge from the shell, they recognize and follow human beings around as if they were their mothers.

They raise very few horses and none but high-spirited ones, which serve no other purpose than the training of young people in horsemanship. For ploughing and hauling they use oxen; they grant that they are inferior to horses in short sprints, but they consider them superior over the long haul and less subject to diseases; moreover, they require less effort and expense to maintain, and when they have served out their term, they can be used for food.

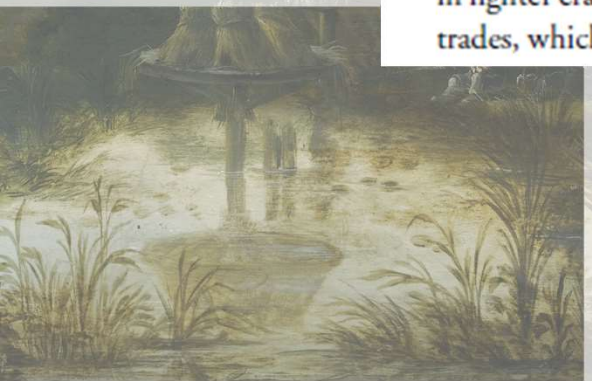
Grain they use only for bread.[136] For they drink either wine made from grapes or cider made from apples or pears or else plain water, which they often boil with honey or licorice, of which they have plenty. Although they know (and they know it very well) how much produce is needed by a city and its surrounding population, they plant far more grain and raise far more cattle than they need for their own use, giving the surplus to their neighbors. All the supplies that are necessary but not available in the country they get from the city, giving nothing in exchange; the city magistrates provide them the goods with no bargaining. For every month many of them gather there on the feast day. On the day of harvesting, the phylarchs of the farmers inform the city magistrates how many citizens should be sent out; since they arrive at precisely the right time, such a large crowd of workers gets the harvest almost completely done in one day if they have good weather.[137]

Farming and butchering

Farming is the one occupation in which all of them are skilled, men and women alike.[156] They are all trained in it from childhood on, partly by instruction in the classroom, partly by being taken out to play at it,[157] as it were, in the fields near the city, not merely looking on but doing the work themselves for bodily exercise.

Besides farming (which, as I said, is common to all of them) everyone is taught some trade of his own. The ordinary ones are working with wool or linen or laboring as a stone mason, blacksmith, or carpenter. No other trade there employs any number worth mentioning.[158] As for their clothing—which is uniform throughout the island for all age groups and varies only to indicate sex or marital status, and which is not unappealing to the eye, allows freedom of movement, and is adapted to either heat or cold—as for their clothing, I say, each household makes its own.

Everybody learns one or the other of these trades, including women as well as men. But women, as the weaker sex, engage in lighter crafts, mostly working with wool or linen. The other trades, which require more strength, are relegated to the men.



ferocious beast, a harmless creature from a cruel hound. And so the Utopians have assigned the whole business of hunting to the butchers, whose trade (as I said before) is conducted entirely by slaves, considering it beneath the dignity of free men.[211] They consider it the lowest function of the trade. The other activities of butchers are more useful and honorable, since they contribute much more and destroy animals only out of necessity, whereas the hunter seeks nothing but pleasure from the slaughter and butchering of some poor little creature. Even in beasts themselves,[212] according to the Utopians, such an eagerness to view carnage springs from a cruel disposition, or else the continual indulgence in such brutal pleasure finally degenerates into cruelty.

The philosophy of the Utopians: following Nature

In that area of philosophy which deals with ethics, they discuss the same issues as we do. They inquire about the goods of the mind and body and external goods, and whether the designation "good" applies to all of these or only to the gifts of the mind.[200] They discuss virtue and pleasure, but the primary and principal controversy is about what they think human happiness consists in, whether one thing or many. On this point they seem over-inclined to the position which claims that all or the most important part of human happiness consists of pleasure.[201] And what is even more surprising, they claim support for this self-indulgent view even from religion, which is sober and strict and, indeed, almost gloomy and stern. For they never analyze happiness unless they combine some religious principles with the rational analysis of philosophy, since they think that without such principles reason by itself is too weak and deficient to investigate true happiness.[202]

These principles are of this sort:[203] that the soul is immortal, and by the beneficence of God is born for happiness; that our virtues and good deeds will be rewarded after this life, and our crimes have punishments prepared for them.[204] Though these are religious principles, the Utopians still think that reason leads them to believe and grant them; if they are eliminated, the Utopians have no hesitation in affirming that no one could be so stupid as not to feel that he ought to pursue his own pleasure by hook or crook. He would only be concerned not to sacrifice a greater pleasure for a lesser one and not to pursue one that would be requited by pain. For they think it would be truly insane to pursue virtue, which is harsh and difficult, and not only to banish the pleasures of life but even to seek out pain of your own accord, and to expect to get nothing out of it (for how can you get anything out of it if you

And then they define virtue as living according to nature; to that end, they say, we were created by God.[206] We follow the guidance of nature when we obey reason in choosing and avoiding things. Furthermore, reason above all inspires mortals to love and revere the majesty of God, to whom we owe our very existence and our capacity to be happy. Secondly, reason admonishes and encourages us to lead lives with as little anxiety and as much joy as possible and, beyond that, to exert ourselves in helping all others achieve the same end because of our natural fellowship. For not even the gloomiest and sternest advocate of virtue, who despises pleasure so much that he would impose toil, vigils, and mortifications on you, would refrain from enjoining you to do as much as you can to alleviate the poverty and distress of others, and he would think it praiseworthy and humane for one human being to rescue and comfort another, since the very essence of humanity (and no virtue is more proper to human beings) is to relieve the distress of others, eliminate sadness from their lives, and restore them to a joyful life, that is, to pleasure. Why should nature not impel us to do the same for ourselves? For either a joyful life,

turn around and be cruel and merciless to yourself. Nature herself, they say, prescribes as the aim of all our actions a joyful life, that is, pleasure, and they define virtue as following the prescriptions of nature.[207] But when nature invites mortals to help each other to lead cheerful lives (and she is certainly right to do so, since no one is so far above the rank of human beings that nature should care for him alone, whereas in fact she is equally concerned about all those whom she groups together as belonging to the same species), she also, of course, forbids you time after time to seek your own advantages in ways that create disadvantages for others.

Tommaso Campanella 1568-1639

1592: manuscripts confiscated by the Inquisition

1594: arrested on suspicion of heresy

1598: involved in an attempted coup

1626: leaves the prison of Castel Nuovo for Naples

1634: exile in France

The City of the Sun

Genovese. Sorge nell'ampia campagna un colle, sopra il quale sta la maggior parte della città; ma arrivano i suoi giri molto spazio fuor delle radici del monte, il quale è tanto, che la città fa due miglia di diametro e più, e viene ad essere sette miglia di circolo; ma, per la levatura, più abitazioni ha, che si fosse in piano. È la città distinta in sette gironi grandissimi, nominati dalli sette pianeti, e s'entra dall'uno all'altro per quattro strade e per quattro porte, alli quattro angoli del mondo spettanti; ma sta in modo che, se fosse espugnato il primo girone, bisogna più travaglio al secondo e poi più; talché sette fiate bisogna espugnarla per vincerla.

La città del Sole, ed. L. Firpo, Laterza 1997 (reprinted 2008)

The City of the Sun: written in 1602, published for the first time in 1623 in Germany (appendix to the *Politics*)

Characters:

Ospitalario: knight of the order of San Giovanni in Jerusalem (Order of Malta)
Genovese: sailor with Columbus

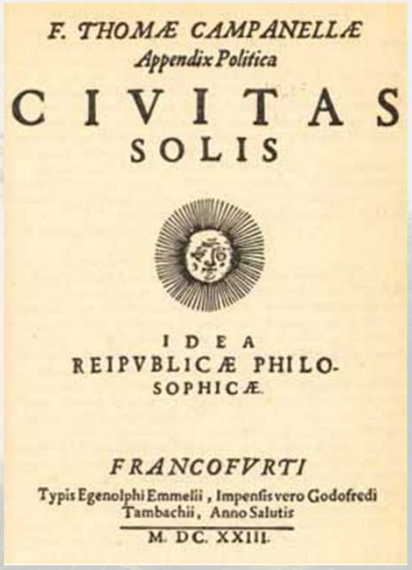
The Genoese tells the story of his encounter with the Solarians, having reached their island just below the Equinox

The natural environment

Capt. The greater part of the city is built upon a high hill, which rises from an extensive plain, but several of its circles extend for some distance beyond the base of the hill, which is of such a size that the diameter of the city is upward of two miles, so that its circumference becomes about seven. On account of the humped shape of the mountain, however, the diameter of the city is really more than if it were built on a plain.

It is divided into seven rings or huge circles named from the seven planets, and the way from one to the other of these is by four streets and through four gates, that look toward the four points of the compass. Furthermore, it is so built that if the first circle were stormed, it would of necessity entail a double amount of energy to storm the second; still more to storm the third; and in each succeeding case the strength and

A Dynamic Community


F. THOMÆ CAMPANELLÆ
Appendix Politica
CIVITAS
SOLIS
IDEA
REIPVBLICÆ PHILO-
SOPHICÆ.
FRANCOFVRTI
Typis Egenolphi Emmelii, Impensis vero Godofredi Tambachii, Anno Salutis
M. DC. XXIII.

Genovese. Il tempio è tondo perfettamente, e non ha muraglia che lo circonda; ma sta situato sopra colonne grosse e belle assai. La cupola grande ha in mezzo una cupoletta con uno spiraglio, che pende sopra l'altare, ch'è un solo e sta nel mezzo del tempio. Girano le colonne trecento passi e più, e fuor delle colonne della cupola vi sono per otto passi li chiostri con mura poco elevate sopra le sedie, che stan d'intorno al concavo dell'esterior muro, benché in tutte le colonne interiori, che senza muro fraposto tengono il tempio insieme, non manchino sedili portatili assai. Sopra l'altare non vi è altro ch'un mappamondo assai grande, dove tutto il cielo è dipinto, e un altro dove è la terra. Poi sul cielo della cupola vi stanno tutte le stelle maggiori del cielo, notate coi nomi loro e virtù, c'hanno sopra le cose terrene [...].

Ospitalario: Quella [cosa] delle donne communi pare dura e ardua" – s'intende da un punto di vista cristiano. Genovese: "si difendono con Socrate, Catone, Platone e altri. Potria stare che lasciassero quest'uso un giorno, perché nelle città soggette a loro non accomunano se non le robbe, e le donne quanto all'ossequio e all'arti, ma non al letto; e questo l'ascrivono all'imperfezione di quelli che non han filosofato. Però vanno spiando di tutte nazioni l'usanze, e sempre migliorano; e quando sapranno le ragioni vive del Cristianesmo, provate con miracoli, consentiranno, perché son dolcissimi. Ma fin mo trattano naturalmente senza fede rivelata; né ponno a più sormontare."

Diet in the Ideal City

Ospitalario: Che e come mangiano? e quanto è lunga la vita loro?
Genovese. Essi dicono che prima bisogna mirar la vita del tutto e poi delle parti

Genovese: Or essi mangiano carne, butiri, mèle, cascio, dattili, erbe diverse, e prima non volean uccidere gli animali, parendo crudeltà; ma poi, vedendo che era pur crudeltà ammazzar l'erbe, che han senso, onde bisognava morire, considerâro che le cose ignobili son fatte per le nobili, e magnano ogni cosa.

Eating by Rotation

Nature Feels

Del senso delle cose e della magia (1604)

De sensu rerum et magia (1620)

Book I.1: “Or se gli animali, per consenso universale, hanno sentimento, e da niente il senso non nasce, è forza dire che sentano gli elementi, lor cause, e tutte, perché quel che ha l’uno all’altro convenire si mostrarà. Sente dunque il cielo e la terra e il mondo, e stan gli animali dentro a loro come i vermi dentro il ventre umano, che ignorano il senso dell’uomo, perché è sproporzionato alla loro conoscenza picciola”. (*Del senso delle cose e della magia*, ed. G. Ernst, Laterza 2007)

Cornelis Snellinck (1605-1669)

Landscape with figures passing by a cottage and a pond