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FROM EDEN TO UTOPIA
A MORPHOLOGY OF THE UTOPIAN GENRE

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Abstract: We start from the idea that Utopia is a Renaissance alternative to the Medieval Garden of Eden and, consequently, that dystopia, as a failed utopia, continues the theme of Paradise Lost. Inheriting such a rich tradition, the word “utopia” designates a semantic hybrid that encompasses several fields and disciplines. In this paper, we propose a reorganisation of the species of the utopian genre by reusing, with a minimum of violence, the already existing, albeit rather lax terms of (o)utopia, eutopia, dystopia and antiutopia (or counterutopia). The main criteria for distinguishing these species are the moral value, the degree of verisimilitude, the constructing procedures (“electrolysis” of the positive and negative elements, utopian extrapolation, proof by contradiction, etc.)

Key Words: Terrestrial Paradise, Literary Genres, Utopia, Eutopia, Dystopia, Antiutopia, Mundus.

From Paradise to Utopia

Jean-Jacques Wunenburger has demonstrated that Paradise and Utopia are alternative facets of the same psychological configuration (the same “*figure archétypique de l’imaginaire*”), more precisely of the topic of the “ideal place.”¹ The ideal place is a *topos* with deep roots in human culture, as demonstrated by its huge recurrence throughout the millennia. The abode of the supreme reality, a typical sacred space in Mircea Eliade’s demonstration, a psychoanalytical figuration of the maternal uterus according to Otto Rank (which means that the myth of Paradise lost is an acting out of the birth trauma), a “mytheme” belonging to the mystical regime of the imaginary, in Gilbert Durand’s terms, a “central containing space, intimately closed,” as Marie-Cécile Guhl sees it, the pattern of the perfect habitat emerges in an extensive series of images: the garden, the underworld, caverns, inaccessible mountains or islands, the house and the palace, the fortified city and utopia.² These fantastic images have obsessed story-tellers, writers and artists from ancient mythology to contemporary science-fiction novels.

However, in Europe, starting from the Renaissance, the *topos* of the “supreme point” (as Michel Butor puts it) has undergone, in Jean-Jacques Wunenburger’s demonstration, a “pole reversal”, or an “emotional antinomy”. This turn in its imagistic representations was marked by the replacement of the topic of the Garden of Eden with the topic of Utopia. The myth of paradise and the utopian narrative depend on two opposite modes of thinking. “Myth belongs to the ability of imagination to deploy cinematic vision, while utopia is closer to a pictorial vision of space.”³ The cause of this metamorphosis of the “ideal place” lies in the evolution of European culture, during the Early Modern period, from symbolic imagination, or *mythos*, to abstract rationality, or *logos*. From this point of view, utopia appears as a “sedimentation and a closing up of the mythological imagination,” as the symptom of a crisis of the collective imaginaries, as a sterilisation of paradisiacal fantasy by the logical schemes of triumphant reason.

Starting from the fundamental dichotomy *mythos* / *logos*, the *topoi* of the Terrestrial Paradise and Utopia can be contrasted by a series of paradigmatic oppositions: collectivism / individualism; narrative fiction / space description; the authority of tradition / a critical, revolutionary attitude; nature / culture; a precultural, vitalist, animist worldview / technical and mechanical logics; divine creation / human artefact; the sacred / the profane; the idealization of the past / evolution, etc. One of the richest oppositions is the one which separates Paradise from Utopia on the extremities of the time axis. The myth of paradise is situated in the past, at the origins of cosmic history; searching for paradise means a travel back in time and a re-jection of the present. Conversely, utopian projects are

directed towards the future, they are a pro-jection, whether they are situated in an alternative space or an alternative future. The reorientation of the time vector from the origin to the end of history occurred in the Hebrew religion, which replaced the Paradise Lost by Adam with the Land Promised to Moses, and in the Christian religion, which compensated for the Garden of Eden that was lost in the *Genesis* with the Millennium and the Celestial Jerusalem of the *Apocalypse*. The Millennial Kingdom appears, from this point of view, as a relay between the nostalgia for the Lost Paradise (which is a retro-jection) and the utopian hope (which is a projection).⁴

David Bleich's psychological and psychoanalytical approach comes as a supplement to Wunenburger's philosophical and mythocritical analysis of the *topos* of the ideal place.⁵ Bleich considers that myths are the result of the interaction between "rudimentary fantasies," which go back to the emotional constellations of childhood, and the personal and collective "defenses" of the creator/writer and of his/her public. The various paradisiacal fantasies could be arranged under the typology of the three (psychoanalytical) ages of the individual. Thus, the Golden Age, the Garden of Eden and Paradise are to be linked to the infantile phantasm of communion with the mother, nature and universe. The Millennium has all the specific characteristics of the violent and rebellious psychology of teenagers; the chiliastic movements and sects are reminiscent of some anarchic "gangs" contesting the paternal authority of the Church. Finally, Utopia rejoins the adult psychology; however, it still retains an ambivalent position between dreaming (literary fantasy) and reality (social reform). Because of this double status between childish fantasy and mature intellectuality, utopian thinking is conducive to a certain "neurotic paralysis" and "action incapacity" or impotence. A similar idea has been proposed by Joseph Gabel in his article "Nuance schizophrénique du rêve utopiste" from the *Encyclopédie Universelle*; the author considers that utopia expresses a schizophrenic symptom ("un prétexte à s'évader hors de l'histoire"), while counter-utopia is a lucid denunciation of this social psychopathology.⁶

Although it seems excessive to regard utopian thinking as the result of a schizophrenic drive, it is still possible to search for its psychoanalytical roots. In our opinion, utopia can be seen as the "acting out" ("*agieren*", "*passage à l'acte*") of an infantile phantasm, the complex of the "grandiose ego" ("*moi grandiose*"). It is the same as in games with puppets and lead soldiers, in doll houses and miniature towns or landscapes, which allow children to build up their worldview. Utopia is a magical mental construction which enables the utopist to play God. To give just an example, the anonymous author of the first French utopia, *Le Royaume d'Antangil* (1616), confesses "que l'on peut juger par ceste simple description, combien Dieu et la Nature se sont délectez en ceste excellente disposition."⁷ In all likelihood, it is not God who took delight in the

creation of the utopian kingdom, but the author himself, who played out his phantasm of allmightiness in a fictional world that was completely dependant on his will and imagination.

While puppet games may allow children to reconstruct the image of the external reality in a ludic way (*paideuma*), with adult writers the utopian game seems to depend on the compulsive drive to keep a threatening social situation under control. Utopian fiction is a mental strategy for avoiding or coping with the anxiety of a world which overwhelms the emotional and cognitive capacities of utopists and their readers. Utopias seem to be the product of wishful thinking (*pensée désirante*). They are simplified models of a much too complex society. In the “test tubes” of their ideal cities, utopists are submitting an unpredictable and irrational reality to the reassuring laws of logic and reason.

The Utopian Genre

As such, utopia is an amalgamating, boundary genre that has beset theorists with a series of quandaries. The word “utopia” designates a semantic hybrid that encompasses several fields and disciplines. Invoking a syntagm that was proposed by Rosalie Colie, Marina Leslie defines utopia as a *generum mixtum*, one of the conglobing genres of the Renaissance, characterised by “inclusionism.”⁸ Indeed, in his inaugural text, Thomas More “included” several literary *topoi*: the imaginary journey, the travel account, *speculum principis*, the commonwealth, the ideal place, the Socratic dialogue, satire, the mock panegyric, etc. More’s followers merely confirmed and exploited the alluvial openness and syncretic potentialities of utopia.

Jean-Jacques Wunenburger emphasises the inextricable difficulties faced by the theorists of this genre: “If we open up the concept of utopia too much, we risk diluting it into a formless imaginary activity, into a sort of closet for dreamed-of possibilities; if we narrow down the concept too much, if we confine it to the political-literary stage of the bourgeoisie’s ascent in classical Europe, we render incomprehensible the nature of the symbolic materials that are comprised in its texture and that also underlie its social fascination effects.”⁹ Alain Pessin is convinced that the problem of defining utopia is insurmountable, resting on an inherent impossibility: the lists of works advanced for illustrating the genre are so extensive, contradictory and mutually exclusive that the term “utopia” ends up by no longer having “a classificatory value: utopia does not exist.”¹⁰ Because of this, Alain Pessin argues that instead of attempting to define the abstract category of utopia, we should speak about utopias in the plural, as individual and singular experiences.

In the specialised literature, there are a variety of related terms denoting various avatars of the utopian genre, which are often used as synonyms. Thus, references are made to utopia¹¹ and antiutopia or

counterutopia, eutopia and dystopia¹² or cacotopia¹³, semi-utopia, pseudo-utopia and dys-utopia¹⁴, utopian satire and satirical utopia¹⁵, parodic utopia, inverted utopia, pseudo-utopia and semi-utopia, heterotopia and polytopia, entopia¹⁶ (“en” signifying in, at the scene of the place, i.e. practicable, that which may exist), negative utopia and “de-utopianised” utopia, critical utopia and critical antiutopia, etc. In this study, I intend to resume and discuss these terms with a view to reorganising them in a taxonomy or classification of my own. Outopia (“non-place”), eutopia (“good place”), dystopia (“bad place”) and antiutopia (“anti-place”) will be seen as four different varieties of the utopian genre.

Utopian inversion

The mechanism by which utopian sub-genres are generated is inversion, with all its philosophical and rhetorical variations: opposition, contrast, paradox, antinomy, antithesis, antiphrasis, oxymoron, etc. It should be emphasised that the mechanism of inversion underlies utopia itself, because all utopian universes adopt a polemical stance towards the universe of reference (the fact that this can be real or imaginary is of lesser import). Utopia is constructed by comparison with something: it is a positive or negative variation, the “lateral possibility” of what might be called a “central actuality.” At the very time when the genre emerged, the foundational text of Thomas More (1516) highlighted the dualism of utopian structures, distributing, along two parallel volleys, the images of England and of Utopia, of Our World and of Their World, of here and of elsewhere.¹⁷ Even when the “central” term is not explicitly presented and the “lateral” term appears alone in a utopian narrative, this “elsewhere” is always in an implicit relationship with a “here.” The quality of a reflected image, of a specular double affects each and every aspect of the alternative utopian universe.

So what is the relationship between utopia and dystopian satire, between “serious” utopia and parodic/critical antiutopia?

First of all, it should be noted that utopia and satire are two complementary imaginary operations. In the terms of Darko Suvin, “the explicit utopian construction is the logical obverse of any satire.”¹⁸ As we may remember, Thomas More wrote *Utopia* following a challenge levelled against him by Erasmus, who had published *The Praise of Folly*. Whereas the “sage” had brought homage to madness, the “fool” (this is the meaning of the Latin adjective *morus*) was invited to imagine a tribute to human wisdom, to reverse the reversal operated by Erasmus. The result of a twofold inversion operation, utopia encompasses satire in its very genome, just like satire, in turn, assumes a utopia in the *arrière-plan*, highlighting against its background the objectionable aspects of the satirised world.

Regarding antiutopia as a variety of the age-old genre of satire,

Krishan Kumar believes that in the beginning, throughout the three centuries that succeeded Morus, antiutopia was often included and concealed in utopia. Specifically, antiutopia is seen as the author's contemporary society, in relation to which utopia represents a solution and an alternative.¹⁹ Likewise, Louis Marin notes that utopia represents a blueprint serving as a point of reference for a critique of the real society: "the representation of the ideal city, of its mores, institutions, and laws – precisely because it is picture and representation – conjures up, as a negative referent, real society; it thus encourages a critical consciousness of this society."²⁰

The utopian narrative, seen as a complex unity predicated on the synthesis of two contrary and complementary images, occupies a "neutral" position, a "zero degree" entailed by balancing the utopian and the critical vision. It can be compared to a solar system with two celestial bodies, consisting of a bright star and a black hole that revolve around one another. The utopian or antiutopian atmosphere of the narrative is due to the position adopted by the author, to the pole in which he positions himself, which can be either above the "neutral" value represented by the whole ensemble, within the horizon of positivity (in the case of utopias) or below it, within the horizon of negativity (in the case of antiutopias). Utopia and antiutopia are therefore placed in a reversible rapport: when utopia is located in an elsethewhen or elsethere, then our world, located here and now, becomes an antiutopia. When the author imagines this elsethewhen or elsethere as an antiutopia, then our world become "not so bad," better, desirable.

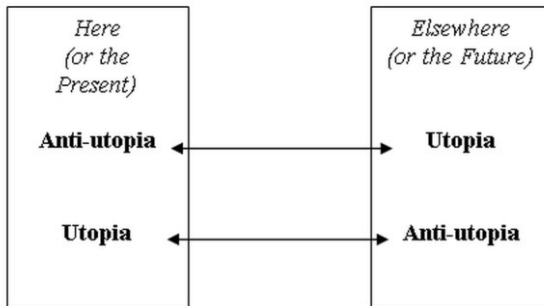


Figure 1

The cosmographical model with two celestial bodies explains why utopia can shift so easily from the positive to the negative, from eu-topia to dys-topia. All utopian discourses are potentially reversible. The texts written by Morus and Campanella (1637),²¹ for instance, could represent models of ideal cities in the Renaissance, whereas modernity tends to discover a totalitarian and dehumanising attitude in them. As noted by M. Keith Booker, one man's utopia is another man's antiutopia, for where one reader deciphers the vision of an ideal society another reader is likely to

see the critique of the current society.²² From this perspective, as Christian Marouby states, antiutopia is not “the opposite of classical utopia, but the same social project, seen, however, in a negative light.”²³

However, I believe that the difference between utopia and antiutopia is more complex than the model of the two celestial bodies (the ideal city and the infernal city) that revolve around one another. In this sense, Marina Leslie highlights the idea that utopian satire is not a simple inversion and deconstruction of utopia because utopia itself is already the result of an inversion and a deconstruction.²⁴ As for me, I consider that both utopia and antiutopia are the result of two successive inversion processes, which operate in a complementary and symmetrically opposed manner.

Consequently, we should take into account the assumption that utopia and antiutopia make up not a double, but a quadruple system. In other words, each of them represents a double system, consisting of a luminous celestial body (the perfect city) and a tenebrous celestial body (the damned city). Instead of conceiving utopia as an ideal city and antiutopia as an infernal city, we should see utopia as a combination between a vision of good (a positive *topos*) and a vision of evil (a negative *topos*), while antiutopia should be envisaged as a symmetrically reverse combination between a vision of evil (a negative *topos*) and a vision of good (a positive *topos*).

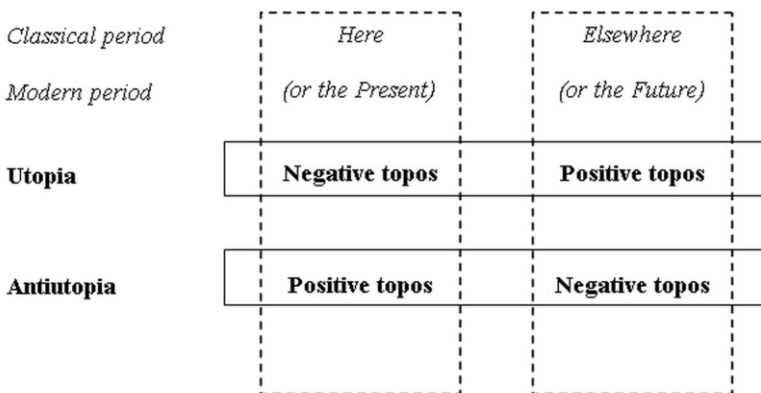


Figure 2

In light of this assumption, what distinguishes utopia from antiutopia is the distribution between the two poles of good and of evil. Structurally, utopia can be conceived as a dual system in which the positive pole is situated in an elsewhere or elsewhen, while the negative pole lies in the “here” or the “now.” This is the rapport to which Thomas More assigns the realms of Utopia and England in the two parts of his text. To take the example of a utopia built in time, we could refer to L. S. Mercier’s *The Year*

2440, in which the Paris of the year 2440 is demonstratively superior to the Paris of the year 1770.²⁵

Symmetrically, antiutopia can be defined as a reverse dual system, in which the negative pole belongs to a nightmarish elsewhere or elsethen, the “here” and the “now” appearing, by contrast, as a positive, albeit imperfect pole, which is, in any case, preferable to the other pole. We could invoke here the example of *Mundus alter et idem*, Joseph Hall’s antiutopia (1605), in which an unidentified Austral continent encompasses a series of infernal kingdoms, making Europe seem acceptable by contrast,²⁶ or Ray Bradbury’s *Fahrenheit 451*,²⁷ in which the United States of the year 1953 is contrasted with a Nazified America in the twenty-first century.

Mundus or Imago mundi

Still, there is a crucial question that remains unanswered: To what is the inversion process that is characteristic of all utopias applied? A spontaneous, unpremeditated reply could be: to the real society contemporary with the author. Defining himself as a “reader in a strange land,” Peter Ruppert explains the feeling of estrangement experienced while reading certain utopian texts through the “non-coincidence between social reality and utopian possibility, the incongruity between ‘what is’ and ‘what might be’.”²⁸ Reading literary utopias involves a dialectical confrontation between history and utopia and generates contrary impulses, a desire of evasion, on the one hand, and a desire to change the social order, on the other. Thus, there exists a genuine originary tension between the real world and utopian fiction.

Hélène Greven-Borde has developed a rigorous system of analysis for the rapports between the “real historical world,” i.e. the author’s contemporary society, and the “alien world” that he imagines into existence in his work. The former is usually seen as representing evil; by comparison with it, the latter can represent either good (in positive utopias or the so-called eutopias) or “greater evil” (in negative utopias or dystopias). This utopian or antiutopian elsewhere is usually separated from actual society by spatial or temporal barriers. Taking the author’s contemporary “historical reality” as the axis of reference, Hélène Greven-Borde represents the trajectories of the characters from various utopian novels through diagrams in which the protagonist’s adventure either ascends to the domain of positive values in utopian societies or descends into the negative domain of antiutopias.²⁹

Notwithstanding all this, taking into account the distinction between practical (socio-political) utopias and fictional (literary and artistic) utopias, the answer to our question seems to be somewhat more complicated. A politician, a legislator, a reformer, a revolutionary or an anarchist may claim to be endeavouring to change the existing society, contending that their projects address social life (even though these

projects are shaped by ideologies and theoretical systems). A utopist, however, as the author of “verbal constructions” (in the sense legitimised by Darko Suvin), of a literary or visual artwork, of a cultural product, will only indirectly relate to the real universe. While the legislator’s or the reformer’s interlocutor is, indeed, a socially active individual, willing or not to implement the reforms suggested, the interlocutor of the writer of utopias is the reader of utopias. In the latter case, the utopian text does not cause direct interventions on the external world, but on the reader’s *image* of the world. If this new vision motivates him to become a socially active individual, he can really attempt to put the utopian model into practice. Nonetheless, in the first instance, he remains a reader for whom utopia is not, in the terms of Darko Suvin, an ontological entity, but an epistemological entity. The object that fictional utopias correct and improve is not the real historical world, but the mental representation of this world.

In the case of literary utopias, there is no “real society” as such. Both the Utopia and the England of Thomas More are artificial and polished representations, one in a positive sense, underlining the commendable features of a desired society, the other in a negative sense, highlighting the undesirable traits of the criticised society. I shall call this cognitive entity – the utopist’s virtual image of his own world – *imago mundi* or, simply, *mundus*. Utopian fiction, therefore, does not relate to the real world (even if this is represented in the work in a very realistic, mimetic manner), but to the *imago* of this world in the consciousness of the utopian writer and his readers.

The *imago mundi* and utopia (or antiutopia) are in an inverse symmetry rapport with the *mundus* and the *mundus inversus* (in medieval caricatures). The utopian inversion (positive or negative) discussed above applies to the “fictional” components of the world’s image, and not to the “practical” components of the external objective world. In principle, we might consider the world-in-itself, the real historical world, as an axiologically neutral entity. Making a comparison with the physics of electricity, we could say that the world-in-itself has the greatest axiological potential, which is neutral, just like the Earth is regarded as having the highest electric potential, whose value is zero. Hence, if the “real historical world” is neutral, it means that only the *mundus* can acquire value. Positive or negative valorisation, in religious, philosophical, moral, emotional or aesthetic terms, appears only at the level of representations of the world-in-itself, of the *imago mundi*. The real historical world is not good or bad, right or wrong, beautiful or ugly: man is one who perceives it in one way or another, according to a system of criteria that reflect the complexity of human personality and of the society.

In fact, the world-in-itself is too “dense” to be represented as such without simplifications and reductions being operated on it. Philosophi-

cally speaking, the world and its image are separated by the abyss between what Jean-Paul Sartre calls being-in-itself ("être-en-soi") and being-for-itself ("être-pour-soi"). The former stands for the compact mass of that which exists, while the latter is "speculation," specular reflection. To remain, however, in the domain of the theory of genres and literary utopia, what I want to emphasize is that utopias are constructed by reference not to the world-in-itself, but to the "theoretical" selection represented by the *mundus* to the world-in-itself. At the limit, we could hope that the *imago mundi* would be able to replicate the density of its ontological referent through various procedures of intrication, exhaustion, prismatic overlap, totalisation, etc. Still, in practice, it can only be selective, rarefied, "decompressed," which leads to discourses predicated upon it, such as utopias and satires, being the result of an initial *parti pris*, of a judgment that has already been made by the time the world-in-itself is translated into an image of the world.

However, for the sake of the demonstration, I will take as a working hypothesis the ideal case of a neutral *imago mundi*, which renders the complexity of the real world (even though this does not happen in practice and is perhaps even impossible in principle). Darko Suvin refers to this ideal case as the "zero world," in the sense of a "central reference point in a coordinate system, or of the control group in an experiment)."³⁰ In relation to this reference point, utopian fiction appears as a process of deconstruction, selection and recombination applied to its conceptual and imaginary elements, like in a puzzle game. As we shall see, utopian fiction operates a kind of "electrolysis" of the *mundus*, isolating a series of its components and exporting them to the construct of the imaginary city. Blueprints built with positive elements extracted from the *mundus* will be "positive *topias*." Blueprints assembled from negative elements will be "negative *topias*." Obviously, what remains in the *mundus* after electrolysis are complementary elements to those removed from it, which explains why the so-called real world from utopian thinking (i.e. the *imago mundi*) is never "neutral," but always inversely polarised from the positive or the negative *topia* that has been extracted from it.

If we built a coordinate axis having, in the point of origin, the (presumably) neutral image of the world (i.e. the *mundus*), to the right (the beneficent direction in most religions) or towards plus infinity (in a mathematical sense) there would line up increasingly perfected blueprints, approximating the ideal, while to the left, towards minus infinity, there would be featured increasingly nightmarish visions. As we moved to the right or left, the blueprints of societies would gradually and excessively become better or worse, ending up by becoming impossible, unthinkable, absurd. We can understand now eu-topias eventually become ou-topias. Using the same mathematical terminology, we could call this process "proof by contradiction."

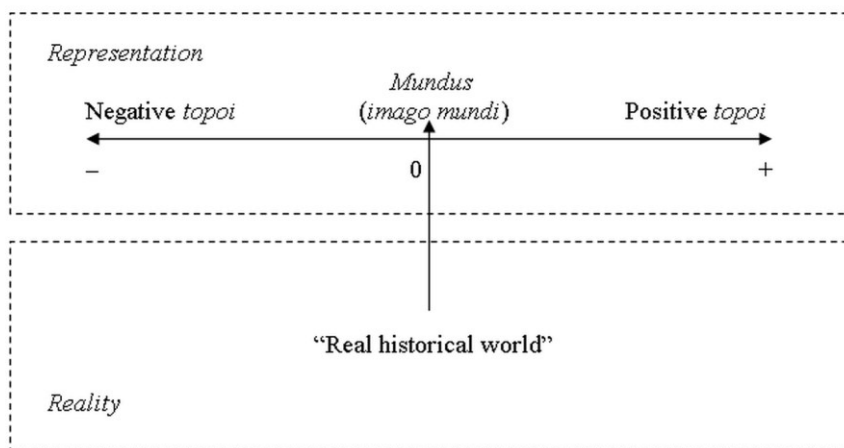


Figure 3

Utopian extrapolation

To better understand the differences that distinguish the species of the utopian genre, we must turn now to analysing the process by which they are generated. In *L'utopie: Éternelle hérésie*, Thomas Molnar shows that utopian thinking rests on an artificial separation between good and evil. Within the great complex represented by “neutral” reality, utopianism isolates and denounces negative components, without realising that this reductive treatment does not actually “cure” the social body; on the contrary, it also instils a violent behaviour.³¹

A utopist behaves, in Gilles Lapouge's terms, like a “bricoleur”: he breaks the real world into its component pieces, which he then recomposes according to his own intellectual project. “His intention is to modify creation, to ruin nature or to correct history by simply permutating the beams and stones with which he erects his home: from the irrationality that haunts the universe, he distils reason. He subjects the anomalies of norms to a plan. He organises the unpredictable into monotony, disorder into rule, hazard into logic.” Associating the utopist with an excess of rationality, Gilles Lapouge proposes a typology of creators comprising three kinds: the utopist, who is a logician, the anti-utopist – a “vitalist” and a fantasizer who refuses any plan and order, who is an anarchist and an Epicurean, to some extent – and, between them, the “man of history,” the dialectician, who is interested not so much in structures as in interactions, dynamics and evolution.³²

Jean-Jacques Wunenburger discusses the “utopian method” by making recourse to a visual metaphor: “A utopist is, above all, someone who projects a gaze of dazzling intensity to enlighten humanity, spontaneously dissolving, at the speed of light, all evil things and intentions. A utopist converts, therefore, the sun into the eye and the eye into a magical power

capable of changing man and society.”³³ The utopian universe is the result of a technique for modifying the gaze and the manner of seeing the world. The utopist’s optical exercise resides in dispelling shadows and exposing the hidden recesses, that is, the evil aspects, in clarifying and cleansing the image of the city, which thus acquires purely rational transparency and clarity.

If we were to extend this photographic metaphor, we should note that the positive film obtained through the utopist’s “flash” entails the preliminary creation of a negative film. As shown above, *The Praise of Wisdom* made by Thomas More was conceived as a reverse projection of *The Praise of Folly* written by Erasmus, as the Utopia of the sages was the counterpart of our world of fools. More’s description of Utopia in Book II needs the preparatory negative image of England in Book I. Thus, we may consider that antiutopia is the negative of the utopian film, the result of a complementary operation of the “utopian method,” an operation that uses a black sun and a dark gaze as the visual source, which selects only the shadows and obscures the lights.

By selecting and extrapolating the positive features of a society, utopia automatically also releases a set of symmetric negative traits, which it distributes to the *mundus*. Thus, there takes place an “electrolysis” process which isolates, around the “anode” and the “cathode,” the opposite images of a positive *topia* and of a negative *topia*. In keeping with the quadruple system proposed above, we can say that in utopias, the “positive” pole, i.e. the anode, is located in an elsewhere or elsethen, while the “negative” pole or the cathode is located in a “here” and “now.” Symmetrically, we can consider the contrary selection process. When the author exhibits a favourable rather than a critical attitude towards his world, then he can select and extrapolate the negative traits in space or a time that is different from ours. In this case, our world is placed at the positive pole of the imaginary electrolysis apparatus, while the exotic world regroups around the negative pole. In other words, in antiutopias the “anode” remains in the “here” and “now,” while the “cathode” is projected into an elsewhere or elsethen.

In his book *Utopie et violence*, Julien Freund defines this modality of separating good from evil as a “process of utopian extrapolation.” Utopia and antiutopia are the symmetrically inverse results of this extrapolation process, depending on the direction in which it is oriented. Utopia starts from the “idea that by accumulating elements that are positive or considered thus and by excluding those regarded as negative, the picture it will build will be the most enjoyable.” “In other words, by combining in an ideal picture only the elements of society that seem virtuous and meritorious, he [the utopist] hopes that the social system thus obtained will make people happy, because he has by default removed everything that he finds to be wretched and deplorable.”³⁴

As defined by Julien Freund, antiutopia is the result of the reverse procedure, which consists in “extrapolating from the given reality the features that appear to be bleak or suspicious and combining them in a utopia that presents a rather horrendous future world.” The switch from utopias to antiutopias is allegedly due to the emergence of the historicist conception and the idea of progress. Under the influence of Morelly and Babeuf in France, of William Godwin in England and of Weitling in Germany, the concepts of revolution and necessary violence became subordinated to utopia, which caused the counter-reaction, scepticism and irony of an entire series of antiutopian thinkers. Counter-utopia appeared as the result of “the utopists’ propensity to challenge the utopian genre and to criticize what had hitherto been the content of utopias: the ideal city or a better society.” The goal of antiutopia is to expose the “exterminationist voracity of Utopia and its terrorist nature.”³⁵

The scheme of the combinatorial game underlying utopia is found in the very general definition that H. Schulte-Herbrüggen gives to the genre. According to this theorist, all utopias are generated by a triple operation: insulation (in time and in space), selection (of the best features in the real world, which serves as a reference point) and perfection (of the imaginary society).³⁶ Hélène Greven-Borde, who adopts this scheme, considers that the third term should be nuanced. Indeed, in contemporary texts, above all, the idea of perfection is often called into question, the utopist expressing “doubts concerning the value of the formula he proposes.” Thus, the perfection of the imaginary society can be equally accepted or contested, which evidently allows for the formation of divergent eutopian or dystopian outlooks.³⁷

The cross oppositions between utopia and antiutopia or between eutopia and dystopia may be doubled by internal oppositions within both fields (of the positive or negative *topias*). More specifically, we should also take into consideration the oppositions between utopia and eutopia, on the one hand, and antiutopia and dystopia, on the other. Hélène Greven-Borde, for example, treats the term eutopia as a more nuanced synonym of utopia (which has become too lax), designating the “description of the Land-where-you-feel-good.” In negative *topias*, presenting the “Land of evil,” dystopia appears to have a weaker intensity than antiutopia. Unlike antiutopias, even though they also imagine condemnable societies, dystopias leave open the possibility of recovery or of an evolution towards the better through the protagonists’ revolt movements. The ethical intensity of evil would therefore influence the ontological status of negative *topias*.³⁸

A very elaborate classification, which lays the grounds for the suggestion I wish to make in what follows, belongs to Marina Leslie. Her approach begins by denouncing the confusion between prescriptive and descriptive definitions. Former condemnations of utopian thinking were falsified by imposing ethical and ideological criteria onto purely theoretical projects. Using such criteria, utopias were qualified as “false”

or “true.” False utopias are those that represent a) an impossible fantasy, b) an unfortunately highly plausible social and political nightmare; real utopias are those that represent c) an unreachable ideal to which we should aspire, d) an attainable model of a better society. These four different varieties are situated, from an empirical perspective, between historical impossibility (a and c) and imminence (b and d).³⁹ We could additionally comment that, although flawed, such classifications have been used in the history of the utopian genre and that we may also use them, in our turn, when we wish to define the species of this genre. As we shall presently see, they partly coincide with the meanings I will propose for the species of outopia (points c and, partially, a), eutopia (point c), dystopia (point b) and antiutopia (partially point a). On the other hand, outopia and antiutopia will be assigned to the category of historical impossibility, while eutopia and dystopia will be assigned to the category of historical plausibility (or even imminence).

The most comprehensive synoptic overview of the genre's varieties was created by Lyman Tower Sargent in several texts, the latest being *The Three Faces of Utopianism Revisited*.⁴⁰ The common element of all the utopian species the theorist surveys lies in the fact that they all represent “a non-existent society described in considerable detail and normally located in time and space.” This nuclear definition applies indiscriminately to the term of utopia, whereas all the other terms entail specific differences. Thus, eutopia or positive utopia adds to the common base (“a non-existent society...”) the author's intention to present this society as a considerably improved alternative to the society his readers live in, while dystopia or negative utopia rely on the symmetrical intention of regarding it as a considerably worse alternative. Utopian satire aims to be perceived by readers as a critique levelled against contemporary society, while antiutopia is intended as a critique of utopianism or of a particular utopia. Finally, critical utopia (close to the terms of semiutopia, pseudoutopia and dysutopia advanced by Fred Polak⁴¹) proposes a society that is better than the existing one, but is faced with complicated problems, without an obvious solution, providing also a criticism of the utopian genre.

A taxonomy of the utopian genre: outopia, eutopia, dystopia, antiutopia

The plausibility degree of utopian constructions, placed either to the left or to the right of the neutral point of reference, has raised many debates concerning the practical enforcement of utopia. In this study, my interest does not lie in the feasibility and empirical existence of utopias, so I will transfer the discussion from the level of ontological reality to that of fictional reality. Applying the criterion of verisimilitude, we can distinguish between “realistic” utopias and “fantastic” utopias, both on the positive, “eudemonic” or paradisiacal side of the axis and on the negative,

“demoniacal” or nightmarish side. Using the categories virtual, probable and possible defined by Gilles-Gaston Granger,⁴² I will say that utopias are virtualities (or “lateral possibilities,” in the words of Raymond Ruyer) that have either a positive or a negative axiological charge. These virtualities can be seen, in turn, as probable (historically) and possible (logically) and, respectively, as improbable and impossible. Possible virtualities materialize as verisimilar, “realistic” utopias (from a literary point of view), while impossible virtualities are found in fantastic, incredible or absurd utopias.

In order to assign names to these categories, let us resume and reuse, with a minimum of violence, the already existing, albeit rather lax terms of (o)utopia, eutopia, dystopia and antiutopia (or counterutopia). I hope that the meanings I will assign to these terms will not collide irreconcilably with their current meanings and that, on the contrary, they will be able to organize their definitions, generally unconcerted and often synonymous.

As shown above, I will assign to the point of origin (the “zero world”), in relation to which those utopian inversions and extrapolations occur, i.e. to the *mundus* or *imago mundi*, the value of a “neutral world.” Obviously, this “neutral world” has no ontological existence. Its existence is solely epistemological because the *mundus* is nothing but the image of the world-in-itself. In relation to this zero point of reference, outopia, eutopia, dystopia and antiutopia are virtualities, “lateral possibilities.” Outopia and eutopia are positive virtualities, situated on the semi-axis that goes to plus infinity, while dystopia and antiutopia are negative virtualities, placed on the semi-axis that runs towards minus infinity.

Thus, there are two groups with two members each, placed in the positive and, respectively, in the negative domains of the axis, more specifically to the right and to the left of the *mundus*. To distinguish between the members of each of the two binary groups, I propose that we should use the criterion of historical probability/improbability (for “practical” utopias) and that of logical possibility/impossibility (for literary utopias, those that concern us here). This distinction takes into account the categorisation of literary genres made by Darko Suvin based on the “contract of verisimilitude” established with the reader: mimetic or realistic genres and “distanced,” non-mimetic or metaphysical genres.⁴³

Hence, we should regard eutopia as a “possible positive virtuality,” i.e. a “realistic,” mimetic utopian fiction, which produces a sense of verisimilitude and plausibility, while outopia should be seen as an “impossible positive virtuality,” a “fantastic,” metaphysical construction, which leaps into the realm of the extraordinary, of the incredible. The prefix dyad “eu” (good, happy) and “ou” (non-, un-) suggests exactly the difference between possible and impossible, between verisimilar and improbable, or between two different reading pacts. In a symmetrical manner, I propose that we should redefine *dystopia* as a “negative possible

virtuality,” as a negative city or society, which is nonetheless possible within the frameworks of credibility, while antiutopia should be conceived of as a “negative impossible virtuality,” as a fiction that leaves an infernal and absurd impression, without ceasing to function as an alarm signal thereby.

A similar dichotomy has been proposed by Peter Alexander, who assigns two meanings to the category of the “possible,” namely “achievable” and “conceivable.” The problem of utopia’s practical possibility, of its achievability, pertains to the realm of politics, while that of its theoretical possibility, of its logical congruence and consistency, is a matter of philosophical import.⁴⁴ Playing with the nuances of the terms, Lyman Tower Sargent also argues that all utopian communities represent “attempts to move from utopia to eutopia, from nowhere to the good place.”⁴⁵ Along similar lines, Krishan Kumar believes that “utopia cannot become eutopia, not, at least, without the great amount of reinterpretation and reassembly necessary to the passage from theoretical ideal to practice.”⁴⁶ This manner of addressing the problem overlaps, however, the categories of the probable and the possible, mixing social reality with literary fiction, the utopian mode with the utopian genre. The distinction I have proposed is meant to remain within the category of the possible and, therefore, of literary genres, in which two species of the utopian genre are to be distinguished.

Jean-Michel Racault suggests that we should assign the name of eutopias to programmatic utopias and that of utopias to fictional utopias. What prevails in eutopia is a mechanism for projecting desires, for representing an improved world, of social experimentation. In utopia, the focus falls on the idea of fiction, on denying the constraints of reality, on evasion from the historical world, on purely spiritual play. From this perspective, eutopia takes the form of didactic utopias, of political projects or legislative models, while utopia is found most often in narrative utopias that assume the form of a novel.⁴⁷ Highly suggestive, this typology differs, however, from the one I have proposed in that it considers the distinction between eutopia and (o)utopia to lie at the generic level, in between two different genres, scientific and literary, didactic and novelistic, theoretical and imaginary, non-fictional and fictional, while I place it within one and the same utopian genre, in between two degrees of plausibility or between two “pacts of reading.”

Closer to my proposal is the dichotomy highlighted by Glenn Negley and J. Max Patrick between “practical” utopias and “ideal” utopias. The terms *practical* and *ideal* might mislead us, as they do not resume the important distinction made by Frank and Fritzie Manuel between practical and theoretical utopias (concerning social practice and, respectively, intellectual activity).⁴⁸ Negley and Patrick explains these terms using, by way of exemplification, two Renaissance texts by Lodovico Zuccolo, *La città felice* and *La repubblica di Evandria*; the former offers the very real Republic

of San Marino as a model, while the latter invents an ideal city, Evandria.⁴⁹ The former example, characterised by the two theorists as a “practical utopia” that starts from an existing historical society and improves it, corresponds to their definition of eutopia; the latter, characterised by critics as an “ideal utopia” because it imagines a city that does not exist, veers towards what we have defined as outopia. I say “veers towards” because the distinction I make between eutopia and utopia do not hinge on the categories existent/inexistent, but on those of possible (plausible)/impossible (implausible); thus, according to my systematisation, Zuccolo’s *Evandria*, a meliorist mimetic rather than fantastic fiction, also remains, together with San Marino, a eutopia and does not belong to the species of outopias.

Finally, another theoretical position that may be invoked in this context is that of Lewis Mumford. The theorist considers that the ambiguity that Thomas More deliberately allowed to linger between the terms utopia and eutopia applies perfectly to the difference between the political views of Plato and Aristotle. Plato’s Republic really has its actual seat on the firmament of ideas, it is a “city of birds,” in the sense of Aristophanes, devoid of any truthfulness and practical applicability; by contrast, Book VII of Aristotle’s *Politics* offers the example of a true social structure, which remains anchored to the ground.⁵⁰ Still, although reflecting the interval between impossible and possible, the dichotomy operated by Lewis Mumford is closer to that established by Jean-Michel Racault between two genres – literary (philosophical, in Plato’s case) and scientific (socio-political) than my opposition between two species of the utopian genre, between realistic, plausible eutopias and fantastic, implausible outopias.

Returning to the taxonomy proposed here, compared to the distinction between eutopia and outopia, that between dystopia and antiutopia raises an additional specific problem. There is a class of negative and critical *topias* to which the criterion of verisimilitude does not apply in a simple and straightforward manner. It is the case of satirical allegories. For instance, *Le supplément du Catholicon ou Nouvelles des régions de la lune* (1595),⁵¹ an anonymous text, begins as an extraordinary voyage to the moon, but the flight proves to be a mere pretext so that the narrator can criticize – from a “distanced,” privileged position – the reigns of the European princes. Another text, *L’isle des Hermaphrodites* by Thomas Artus (1605),⁵² begins as the account of the geographical discovery of an unknown island populated by bisexed beings; however, the description quickly turns out to be an allegorical satire of the reign of Henry III and his clique of “mignons.” In such cases, the *mise-en-scène* or the fantastic plot can by no means pass as true or plausible, for it represents only the “package” for a critique aimed at very real societies. The allegorical reading convention presents a (fantastic, hence impossible) antiutopia as a metaphor for a dystopian historical society. In other words, the issue is

whether satirical utopias ought to be categorised as dystopias or antiutopias in our classification.

First of all, we should take into account the fact that the pact of reading in such texts differs from both the realistic or mimetic pact of reading and the fantastic or absurd one. The premises and the settings of satirical utopias are implausible, but neither the author of such a work, nor his readers assume this lack of veracity in order to counterpose a fantasy world to our physical world; instead, they engage in a second-degree type of reading, a reading in transparency, which detects the features of our world underneath those of the fantasy world. The extraordinary world is not invested with fictional density or configured as an autonomous chronotope, but remains a mere mirror through which, using a “key” of reading, one can glimpse at the *mundus*. Obviously, all positive or negative *topias* entail, by their very principle of construction, which is inversion, a reference to the *mundus*. They are bearers of a metaphorical charge, which, in any case, does not confound the distinction between plausible worlds and implausible worlds. The problem arises when the metaphorical reading code interferes with either the realistic or the fantastic reading code.

In order to find a taxonomic solution for satirical utopias, let us begin by framing them between two extremes: actual satire and antiutopia. We may consider two contrasting examples: a satire, *The Anatomy of Abuses* by Philip Stubbes (1583)⁵³ vs. an antiutopia, *Mundus alter et idem* by Joseph Hall.⁵⁴ In the former, “the verie famous Islande called Ailgna,” full of many “notable vices and imperfections,” is quite transparently England, as the satirist sees it. Aside from the changed name (with a “key” that is easy to decode), the description does not require the invention of an exotic, remote world. Instead, *Mundus alter et idem* is placed explicitly on an unknown Austral continent and has its own fictional reality, even though it is parabolically reminiscent of the British Isles, too.

The second contrastive example: *L’isle des Hermaphrodites* by Thomas Artus (1605) vs. *La Terre australe connue* by Gabriel de Foigny (1676).⁵⁵ Both texts describe an uncharted island inhabited by hermaphrodites, improbable beings, from the perspective of a realistic reading pact. What distinguishes them, however, is their imaginary “density,” their ontological condition inside fiction: while the former text quickly becomes “transparent” and allows glimpses of the image of France, the latter continues to develop the chronotope of the Austral world, gaining such fictional autonomy that the description is allegorically irreducible to a European kingdom. Thus, simple satires target European society (*the mundus*) directly, while antiutopias invent a parallel world for critical purposes, a world to which the negative traits of the *mundus* are extrapolated. In the case of satires, the parallel world has no fictional density, while in antiutopias it enjoys own fictional ontology.

In order to find out the place of satirical utopias within the utopian

genre, I will attempt to draw out the possible distinctions between allegory and parable. Without making any theoretical innovation claims, I see allegory as a series of “entwined” metaphors (“filées,” in the sense of M. Riffaterre) in which each utopian image serves as the immediate deixis for an image pertaining to the *mundus*. This makes the process of reading the description of an allegorical society unfold like that of reading a lottery ticket: by rubbing out, erasing the opaque screen above, one can read the number underneath. With every new “apparent” element of the utopian setting, the reader is invited to make a hermeneutic effort to find the “latent” element in the “real historical world” (*mundus*). By parable, however, I understand a narrative that, while continuing to refer, through its global significance, to the *mundus*, it develops its own fictional consistency, building an autonomous imaginary society. Given these different consistencies of the fictional world, I will equate allegorical utopian satire – in which emphasis is laid on the *mundus*, suggesting that the author wishes to criticize and improve the “real” world – with dystopia, while parabolic utopian satire – in which emphasis is laid on the invented world, a world that becomes fantastic and incredible – will be equated with antiutopia.

Finally, as regards the criterion for distinguishing between eutopia and outopia, on the one hand, and dystopia and antiutopia, on the other, we can cite yet another couple of terms from the bibliography of the field. Counterposing antiutopias to utopias, Robert C. Elliott and, in his footsteps, M. Keith Booker note that in the case of the former, the question that arises is not necessarily that of “possibility,” but of “desirability.”⁵⁶ This means that if advancement in a positive direction on the “axis” of the utopian genre is measured in terms of ontological possibility (at stake is the ontology of the imaginary universe, of course), advancement in the opposite, negative direction is measured in the axiological terms of opportunity and ethical desirability. The shift from dystopia to antiutopia involves a proportional increase in the repulsion and terror unleashed by these visions. It should be added, however, that moral valuation should not be restricted to the negative half of the axis representing the utopian genre, for it reverberates (even by symmetry alone) onto the positive half as well. The possibility of existence for positive (possible/impossible) *topias* is also doubled by their emotional and moral overtones, connoting the degree of desirability associated with these (opportune/chimeric) ideal blueprints. Thus, the progression from eutopias to outopias marks both an increase in the degree of perfection and the fear or frustration that this blueprint might become, by its very perfection, increasingly unachievable and impractical, that is, that it might turn into a “nowhere.”

Outopia, eutopia, the *mundus*, dystopia and antiutopia can thus be arranged on a coordinate axis that advances progressively, starting from the central zero point to the right and to the left, towards the positive and

the negative, from possibility and (fictional) veracity to impossibility and absurdity.

Proof by contradiction

To this classification and hierarchy, based on the criteria of moral sense (positive/negative) and ontological degree (possible/impossible), I would now add a third criterion. It addresses the components of the *mundus* that the mechanism of utopian inversion targets.

We can distinguish two types of inversion depending on the two types of elements, good or bad, that are isolated from the *mundus* through the process of utopian extrapolation. As we have seen, a perfectly neutral *imago mundi* does not exist, it is only a working hypothesis, a “dialectical neutral” (Louis Marin) between the image of “the other world” proposed by the utopist or the antiutopist and the “residual” image of our world, between Thomas More’s Utopia and England, for example.

Thus, the utopist (positive or negative) can proceed in two ways: either by selecting the approved (or contested) elements of the *mundus* and isolating them in an image composed exclusively of good (and, respectively, bad) elements or by selecting the contested (or approved) elements and invert them in a world that is opposed to the *mundus* through all its positive (and negative) aspects. The former method is a utopian selection and then extrapolation, while the latter may be referred to as proof by contradiction. Let us take them one by one.

I will define eutopias and dystopias as imaginary cities built by selecting the positive and, respectively, the negative components of the image of the “real historical society” and reassembling them in a vision that is either superior or inferior to the standard of reference. We may further identify these two modes of utopian extrapolation as positive extrapolation (or, why not?, anodic electrolysis) and negative extrapolation (cathodic electrolysis). Given the Greek prefixes that are added to the word “topos,” “eu”-“topias” are good places that gather together the happy, functional features of the *mundus*, while “dys”-“topias” are bad places composed of the deplorable and blameable features of the *mundus*. Because the elements of the imaginary city, be it good or bad, are lent to the “real” world (i.e. to the *imago mundi*), the overall verisimilar effect of the text remains within the limits of the possible.

I suggest, therefore, that we should define as eutopias those utopian projects that have a certain degree of plausibility and a dose of realism, as is, for instance, “la città felice” of the Italian utopists of the sixteenth and the seventeenth centuries (who idealised real republics, such as Venice or San Marino), all the “commonwealths” imagined by seventeenth-century English authors, the reformist and revolutionary states of the eighteenth-century thinkers, the egalitarian and technological societies proposed by the utopian and Marxist socialists of the nineteenth century, etc. In his

Introduction to the anthology of Italian sixteenth-century utopists, Carlo Curcio could already feel the need to distinguish the happy cities of the Italian reformers, who envisaged the readjustment and improvement of the existing structures, from the abstract, fictional utopias located “nowhere,” in the line of Thomas More,⁵⁷ without, however, coming up with distinct terms and species for these two varieties. Miriam Eliav-Feldon suggests that for the “ideal imaginary societies” of the Renaissance we should use the syntagm “realistic utopias,” signifying possible meliorist alternatives to the contemporary social reality.⁵⁸ In his turn, Raymond Trousson takes over this formula (although he considers it somewhat contradictory), using it to define the programmatic utopias of seventeenth-century English thinkers: “In these the aim is not to establish a different order from the real one, but to correct this very reality; the hypothetical-deductive method is replaced by immediately applicable plans: the goal is not to evoke a lateral possibility, but to influence history.”⁵⁹ As I define it here, the term *eutopia* overlaps that of “realistic utopia.”

Similarly, I propose that the term *dystopia* should be applied to critiques and satires targeted at the contemporary society (*mundus*) of the authors in question, who isolate and ridicule the negative traits of this society in a manner that implies the possible, appropriate correction of its customs, practices and institutions. The distinction I make between dystopia and antiutopia corresponds to the difference that theorists like Chad Walsh and Alexandru Cioranescu establish between several types of “utopists of negation” and coincides with the definitions that Lyman Tower Sargent gives these terms. Dystopia tallies with the critique or satire that is levelled against a “real society” (that is, the *mundus*) and selects its *negative features* thereof, while antiutopia is a critique or satire of the ideal society proposed by a utopia, which *reverses the positive features* assembled in this utopia. This means that both eutopias and dystopias, as I define them here, distance themselves from the “real world” (*mundus*) only in order to observe and critique it better, staying sufficiently close to it to be offered as better alternatives or as plausible and effective critiques of the current state of affairs (i.e. the *imago mundi* conceived by the author).

In complementary manner, I will call outopias and antiutopias the constructions that come into being by reversing the corresponding opposed elements in the *mundus*. In addition to eutopias, which select only the positive elements of the *mundus*, utopias also take over its negative elements and invert them into their opposites. To give just one example, Lesage’s *Le monde renversé* (1718) portrays a world with faithful husbands and wives, incorruptible judges and magistrates, honest merchants, etc.⁶⁰ This moral utopia is built by inverting the practices and institutions considered negative in the “real world” (*mundus*). Since it is easier to accept an ideal place in which there are pooled together the good features

of our world than one in which its evil traits have been reversed, outopias seem much more improbable and implausible than eutopias. They are, indeed, “ou”-“topias,” places that do not exist, or that we cannot imagine as achievable, fictions that are identified, from the very outset, by their authors and readers as empirical absurdities, even though this does not mean that they lack a pedagogical and instructive function.

Compared to outopias, antiutopias use a complementary inversion process. In addition to dystopias, which select the negative elements of the *mundus*, antiutopias also take over positive traits thereof in order to overturn them into their opposites and create a terrifying counter-model. The series of positive components that antiutopist turns upside down may belong either to the *mundus* or to another utopia.

In the first case, antiutopia suggests that the world we live is fairly well structured and that attempts to overthrow it give rise to a “world of fools.” This was the classical figure of the *mundus inversus* in medieval carnivals, where the good order of our world was turned upside down for a week.⁶¹ Cyrano de Bergerac also uses it in *Voyage dans la lune* (1649), where he presents a lunar society in which children guide their parents, suicides are admired and honoured with feasts and orgies, criminals are “punished” to be mourned after death in lavish processions, those who commit impieties are “blamed” with triumphant ceremonies, the genitals are displayed as insignia of nobility, nudity is viewed as a mark of humanity, while animals are forced to wear garments, people walk on all fours and standing erect is considered a beastly posture, etc.⁶²

In the second case, antiutopias process the meliorist precepts proposed by another utopia, which may be “theoretical” or even “practical.” The anti-totalitarian counter-utopias of the twentieth century denounce the claims made by atheist messianic societies whereby they can establish a “new world” and create a “new man.” The authors of antiutopias expose as negative certain premises that are regarded as positive by the authors of utopian projects. Starting from these premises, they build, in their turn, an imaginary society, which will prove not to be eudemonic and meliorist at all, but inhuman and nightmarish. Using another mathematical term, I refer to this process of inversion as a demonstration predicated on “proof by contradiction”: to unmask utopias, antiutopists set their guiding principles into motion and lead them to irrational and abominable results.

Both outopias and eutopias, on the one hand, and antiutopias and dystopias, on the other, apply two symmetrical treatments seeking the correction of the “real” world (i.e. the *imago mundi*), generally considered to be fallen into decay or simply deficient, but improvable. Borrowing two terms that, in studies on ancient religion, define the manner in which two opposite types of music (Apollonian and Dionysian) act upon the soul, we could say that positive *topias* apply an allopathic treatment, while negative *topias* administer a homeopathic treatment. Apollonian music, which is

pleasant, harmonious, ethereal, intended to connect agitated, violent souls to the calmness of the cosmic spheres, healing spiritual chaos through its opposite, harmony. Dionysian music, played by Maenads or Corybants, strident and unsettling, supposedly healed the souls of lunatics, of those who had lost themselves in madness, by an excess of frenzy and controlled dementia (hieromania!), treating the ailment with a self-same cure. Similarly, the “utopian treatment” aims to heal an “ailing” society by using an allopathic remedy, whose nature is contrary to evil, namely through the model of a happy city, while the “antiutopian treatment” aims to cure evil with evil, imagining, by way of a homeopathic counter-model offered to our world, a terrifying city.

Instead of conclusions, a small “disclaimer.” I am aware that, as with all systematising attempts and with all typologies, this reorganisation of the terms *outopia*, *eutopia*, *dystopia* and *antiutopia* – which, I hope, has not bent too much the current terminologies – is bound to remain rigid in relation to the complex matter it aims to restructure. As it is customary, specific cases are difficult to slot into pre-determined pigeonholes and tend to constantly place themselves in intermediate positions between abstract categories. There are many situations of osmosis between utopias and eutopias and between dystopias and antiutopias. Moreover, the various figures of ambiguity can often short-circuit the two directions on the axis of the utopian genre, combining outopia with antiutopia, positive with negative infinity, as it happens in Swift’s work. In addition, many texts, such as the novels of the Enlightenment, for instance, are not limited to presenting a single utopian society, but send out their protagonists to explore several imaginary societies of diverse and contradictory profiles, these politopias covering several species of the utopian genre and heralding the contemporary fictional multiverses.

Notes:

¹ J.-J. Wunenburger, *L’utopie ou la crise de l’imaginaire*, (Paris: Jean-Pierre Delarge, 1979), 17 sqq.

² M.-C. Guhl, «Le Paradis ou la configuration mythique et archétypale du refuge», in J. Bourgos (éd.), *Le Refuge*, (Paris : Circé, 1972), 89-90.

³ J.-J. Wunenburger, 23.

⁴ See my book Corin Braga, *Du paradis perdu à l’antiutopie aux XVI^e-XVIII^e siècles*, (Paris: Classique Garnier, 2010), 21-56.

⁵ D. Bleich, *Utopia. The psychology of a Cultural Fantasy*, (Ann Arbor, Michigan: UMI Research Press, 1984), 7-36.

⁶ *Encyclopedia Universalis*, Volume 23, (Paris, 1989), s.v. «Utopie», p. 268.

⁷ [An.], *Histoire du grand et admirable Royaume d’Antangil*, (Leiden, 1916), 30.

⁸ Marina Leslie, *Renaissance Utopias and the Problem of History*, (Ithaca, New York & London: Cornell University Press, 1998), 2.

⁹ Jean-Jacques Wunenburger, 17.

¹⁰ Alain Pessin, *L'imaginaire utopique aujourd'hui*, (Paris: Presses Universitaires de France, 2001), 25.

¹¹ Vernon Louis Parrington, *American dreams: a study of American utopias*, (Brown University, 1947).

¹² Glenn Negley and Max J. Patrick, *The Quest for Utopia. An Anthology of Imaginary Societies*, (New York: Henry Schuman, 1952).

¹³ The term has been used by Patrick Geddes, *Cities in Evolution*, (London: Williams & Norgate, 1915); and Lewis Mumford, *The Story of Utopias* (New York: Boni & Liveright, 1922).

¹⁴ Fred L. Polak, *The Image of the Future*, Translated by Elsie Boulding, (Leyden: A. W. Sythoff, 1961).

¹⁵ Lyman Tower Sargent, "The Three Faces of Utopianism Revisited," in *Utopian Studies*, 1994.

¹⁶ Constantinos Apostolou Doxiadis, *Ekistics: An Introduction to the Science of Human Settlements*, (New York: Oxford University Press, 1968).

¹⁷ André Prévost, *L'utopie de Thomas More*, Présentation, texte original, appareil critique, exégèse, traduction et notes, Préface de Maurice Schumann, (Paris: Mame, 1978); Thomas More, *L'Utopie*, Traduit de l'anglais par Victor Stouvenel, Préface de Claude Mazauric, Reçu et annoté par Marcelle Bottigelli, (Paris: Librio, 1997).

¹⁸ Darko Suvin, *La Science-Fiction entre l'utopie et l'antiutopie*, (Montréal: Les Presses Universitaires du Québec, 1977), 62.

¹⁹ Krishan Kumar, *Utopia and Anti-Utopia in Modern Times*, (Oxford & Cambridge, Massachusetts: Basil Blackwell, 1987), 104-105.

²⁰ Louis Marin, *Utopiques: Jeux d'espaces*, (Paris: Les Editions du Minuit, 1973), 110, 9.

²¹ Tommaso Campanella, *La città del Sole*, A cura di Adriano Seroni, (Milano: Feltrinelli, 1988); *La Cité du Soleil*, Introduction, édition et notes par Luigi Firpo, Traduction française par Armand Triper, (Genève: Librairie Droz, 1972).

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²³ Christian Marouby, *Utopie et primitivisme, Essai sur l'imaginaire anthropologique à l'âge classique*, (Paris: Seuil, 1990), 73-74.

²⁴ Marina Leslie, 3-4.

²⁵ Louis Sébastien Mercier, *L'an deux mille quatre cent quarante. Rêve s'il en fût jamais*, À Londres, MDCCLXXII [1772].

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²⁷ Ray Bradbury, *Fahrenheit 45*, Illustrated by Joe Mugnaini, (New York: Ballantine Books, 1953).

²⁸ Peter Ruppert, *Reader in a Strange Land. The Activity of Reading Literary Utopias*, (Athens, Georgia & London: The University of Georgia Press, 1986), X-XI.

²⁹ Hélène Greven-Borde, *Formes du roman utopique en Grande-Bretagne (1918-1970). Dialogue du rationnel et de l'irrationnel*, (Paris: Presses Universitaires de France, 1984), chap. V and VII.

³⁰ Darko Suvin, 18.

³¹ Thomas Molnar, *L'utopie. Éternelle hérésie*, traduit de l'anglais par Olivier Launay, (Paris: Editions Beauchesne, 1973), 14.

³² Gilles Lapouge, *Utopie et civilisations*, (Paris: Albin Michel, 1990), 25-26.

³³ Jean-Jacques Wunenburger, 124, 120-121.

³⁴ Julien Freund, *Utopie et violence*, (Paris: Editions Marcel Rivière, 1978), 91, 37.

³⁵ Julien Freund, 91, 85, 95.

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³⁷ Hélène Greven-Borde, 67.

³⁸ Hélène Greven-Borde, 9.

³⁹ Marina Leslie, 5.

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⁴² Gilles-Gaston Granger, 13-14 sqq.

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⁴⁷ Jean-Michel Racault, *De l'Utopie à l'Anti-utopie*. Le procès de l'attitude utopique dans quelques utopies narratives françaises et anglaises à l'aube des Lumières (La Terre Australe Connue de Foigny ; Les Voyages de Gulliver de Swift ; Cleveland de Prévost), Thèse de doctorat, Université de Paris IV-Sorbonne, Institut de Littérature Comparée, 1981, 15.

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