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The Utopian Myth

Unleashing violence in the name of Peace

—
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All the rest, including here the idea of the research, the structure and the style of writing, all of the existing or the non-existing grammar misspellings present in the text, all of these of course, belong solely to the author of this dissertation.

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Abstract

The following paper will try to capture and to understand one of the most haunting and one of the most obsessive human endeavors undertaken by mankind: the pursuit for happiness! The goal of this study is that of trying to understand the ever recurring dream of *Utopias!* The only dream that made, and continues to make history.

My goal is to investigate the phenomena of utopias, and to analyze all the inner mechanisms that are involved at work in this wild goose chase after the presumably Lost and Found Paradises. I argue that more often than not, utopia comes with a price tag attached to it.

Throughout my research, I argue that primarily understood as part of the literary genre, when utopias are surrounded by ideology, they have the tendency to generate and to unleash a form of violence that stretches upon three distinctive yet closely related levels. Such a violence however, is done for the greater good of mankind! That is so to say, there's no violence at all in the end! I argue that in a world dominated by a self-denied utopianism, all acts of violence are dogmatically justified because all of them are done in the name, and for the sole purpose of attaining the Ever Lasting Peace on earth. Or at least, utopia's version of what peace ought to look like.

The present study describes this paradoxical and quite ambiguous scenario, where the utopian discourse with the help of ideology demonizes the *Other*, in order to justify its own violent means of attaining the perfect human society.

But utopia can also lead to a totally different version of the world, other than the one initially envisioned in the sacred blueprints of the forefathers. As we shall find out, things never go as they were initially planned in the utopian laboratory. While utopia can envision the purest of all heavens, in theory of course, the same utopian impulse can lead humanity to a nightmarish state of existence. Is there a clear line between utopias and dystopias? Can a society clearly differentiate between Heaven and Hell?

In this thesis, I will try to see how utopia evolved throughout Western political mythology. I will try to see the connection between utopianism and the first "great debate" in International Relations, and the utopian consequences that are still visible today, in the 21st century.

Keywords: utopia, utopianism, ideology, political myth, democratic peace, violence, wilsonianism

The Methodological and the Structural Aspects of the Thesis

The study at hand is based upon a multidisciplinary investigation that tries to provide the closest understanding of utopia, as fitting and as relevant as possible for the purpose of the present research. I was forced to navigate through and beyond, the borders of several disciplines in social sciences such as literature, art, politics, history, economics, psychoanalysis, psychology and philosophy. I consider this step to be a necessary measure in my attempt to define the concept in its proper understanding. I argue that, the need to define the concept through the lenses of several disciplines is just a normal consequence that comes from the conceptual evasiveness of the topic at hand. Utopia is considered one of the most evasive concepts in all social sciences¹ and to focus my investigation only upon one understanding of the term, would be regarded as insufficient and irresponsible. I argued throughout my paper that utopia as a stand-alone concept, cannot suffice the current investigation because it leaves out the most striking aspect of it: *violence*.

The thesis is comprised of three main chapters. In the first chapter of the thesis, I have tried to analyze and to define utopia in two ways, each of them with its own particularities. In the first instance, I have tried to understand utopia simply as a type of creative/fictional writing, without any form of political implications what so ever. This understanding of utopia, limits the concept to a subgenre of literature, and nothing more. The second way of defining utopia was by comparing the term with ideology. In order to understand utopia in connection with ideology, I have compiled in a single theoretical framework, the similarities and the differences between both concepts. I collected the data from Paul Ricoeur's lectures² and from Karl Mannheim's³ innovative work. Both authors were considered among to first scholars to understand utopia through its ideological nature and vice versa.⁴ As shown in the chapter, the results were surprising.

¹ Renate Meyer, Kerstin Sahlin, Marc J. Ventresca, Ideology and Institutions: Introduction, in "Research in the Sociology of Organizations", Volume 27 : Institutions and Ideology, Elsevier, 2009

² Paul Ricoeur, Lectures on Ideology and Utopia, Ed. George H. Taylor, Columbia University Press, New York, 1986

³ Karl Mannheim, Ideology and Utopia, An Introduction to the Sociology of Knowledge, Routledge & Kegan Paul Ltd., London

⁴ Lyman Tower Sargent (2008) Ideology and utopia: Karl Mannheim and Paul Ricoeur, Journal of Political Ideologies, 13:3, 263-273

The second chapter of the thesis, will be an attempt of deconstructing the concept to all its binding parts. I tried to see what are, and from where do the myths that fuel the utopian impulse really come from. In this chapter, I followed the development of utopia throughout European history. I argued that utopia as it is understood today, is primarily a European invention. My attempt was that of trying to see what other myths utopia might have gathered along the way. I collected most of the data, from the works of Frank E. Manuel and Fritzie P. Manuel⁵ and others. I have decided to use Fritzie and Frank Manuel's study, *Utopian Thought in the Western World*, because it is considered to be the basic textbook for any student in the field of Utopian Studies.⁶

In the third chapter of the thesis, I have tried to see how the establishment of a New World Order was followed by a utopian discourse. I focused my research on Woodrow Wilson and his doctrine, referred to nowadays as wilsonianism, and the chapter as a whole should be considered as the study case of this thesis. Throughout the chapter, I have tried to see if there were any traces of utopianism present in the way Woodrow Wilson envisioned the New Liberal World Order. I began my inquiry by describing and analyzing the old European world order, based upon the rigid and the rather tense system of the balance of power. The chapter follows the movement promoted by Wilson in the aftermath of First World War. I asked myself if Wilson's attempt to create a new world order based upon ethical guidelines can be regarded as utopian. In the final section of the chapter, I have tried to see to what degree the Bush administration backed its diplomacy upon the philosophical foundations of wilsonianism. I have also tried to present the duality between liberal institutionalism and liberal imperialism, a paradoxical dilemma that had followed US's foreign policy ever since Wilson's grand entrance into the field of International Relations.

⁵ Frank E. Manuel, Fritzie P. Manuel, *Utopian Thought in the Western World*, Basil Blackwell, Oxford, 1979

⁶ Gregory Claeys, Lyman T. Sargent, *The Utopia Reader*, New York University Press, New York, 1999

Chapter 1. The Utopian Thought

*“A map of the world that does not include Utopia is not worth even glancing at,
for it leaves out the one country at which Humanity is always landing.
And when Humanity lands there, it looks out, and, seeing a better country, sets sail.
Progress is the realization of Utopias”⁷*

It all started with a few paintings. The first painting I saw is entitled the “The Garden of Earthly Delights” and was painted by the Dutch painter Hieronymus Bosch in between 1490-1510. This priceless relic of the Renaissance is currently housed in Museo del Prado in Madrid, since 1939.⁸ The second painting, even though it was completed three centuries after the first one is entitled “The Arcadian or the Pastoral State”, and was painted by Thomas Cole in 1836. Thomas Cole is considered to be the founder of the Hudson River School, which was an American art movement from the middle of the 19th century, which was profoundly influenced by romantic motifs. Cole’s painting is the second drawing from a collection of five paintings entitled “The Course of an Empire” which were completed in between 1833-1836. These paintings are currently held by the New York Historical Society.⁹ The third and final composition relevant to the current research is entitled “The Creation and the Expulsion from the Paradise”, which was painted by Giovanni di Paolo in 1445. The painting is currently held by the Metropolitan Museum of Art from New York.¹⁰

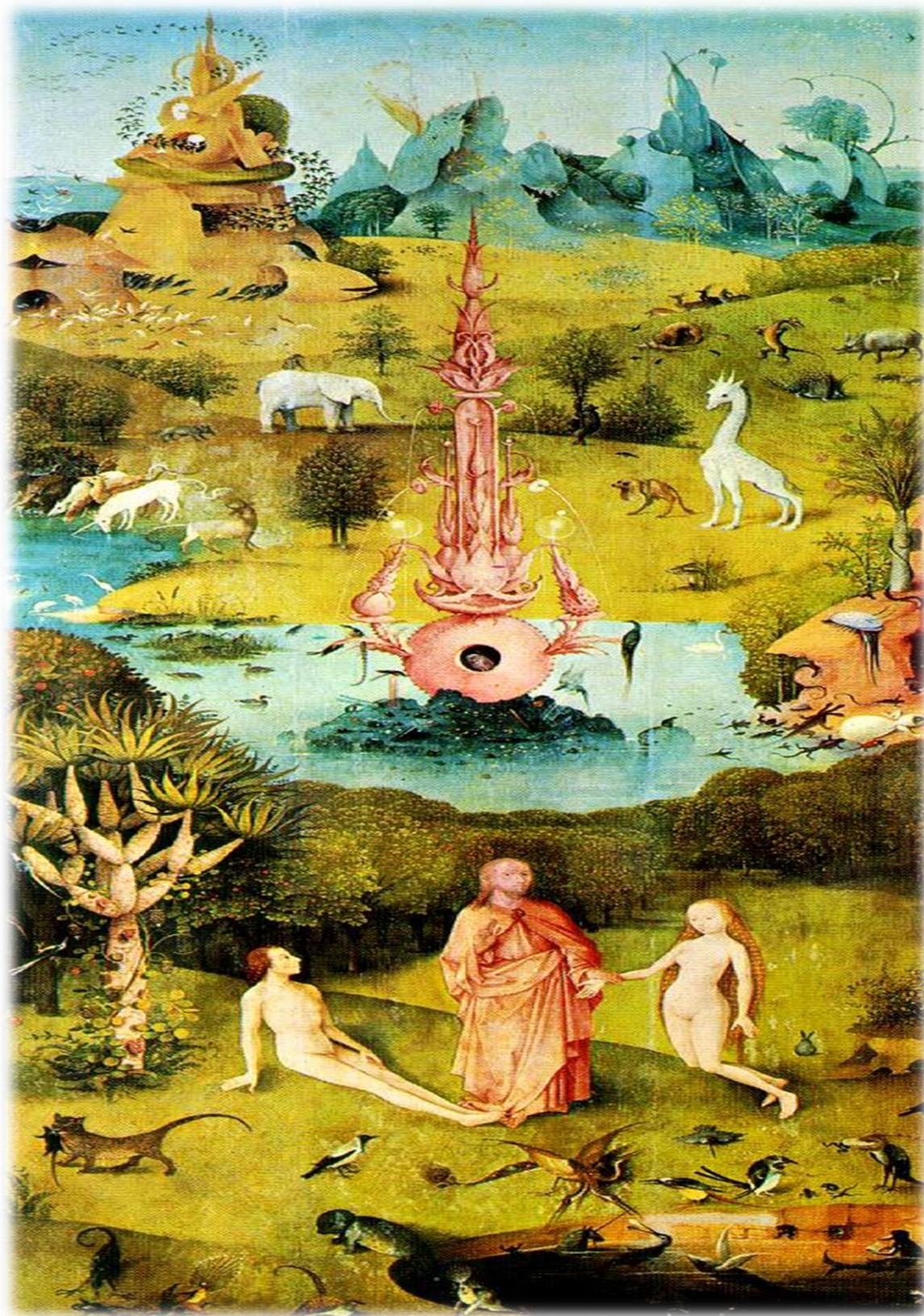
Even though the artistic language is quite different, a form of Christian symbolism in Bosch’s and Paolo’s imagery, with God and some of the Angels present in the scenery, and a kind of romantic historicism in Cole’s collection, with idyllic landscapes and attractive colors depicting the natural environment, I argue that all of them are trying to tell the same story: everything has a beginning and everything has an ending. They also raise the same warning, that is to say, everything that exists has a primary origin and an inevitable ending. As general as it may sound in this very moment, this is precisely what we’re looking for: how the human society taken at large, constructs its own origins and what it does in order to prevent the cycle that announces its prophesized ending. In other words, I’m investigating the *Answer* that is self-proclaiming itself to be the salvation of all mankind: *Utopia*.

⁷ Oscar Wilde, *The Soul of Man under Socialism*, The Floating Press, 2009, p.27

⁸ <http://www.esotericbosch.com/Garden.htm>, retrieved online on 02.3.2016

⁹ <http://www.explorethomascole.org/tour/items/69/series/>, retrieved online on 02.3.2016

¹⁰ <http://www.metmuseum.org/art/collection/search/458971>, retrieved online on 02.3.2016



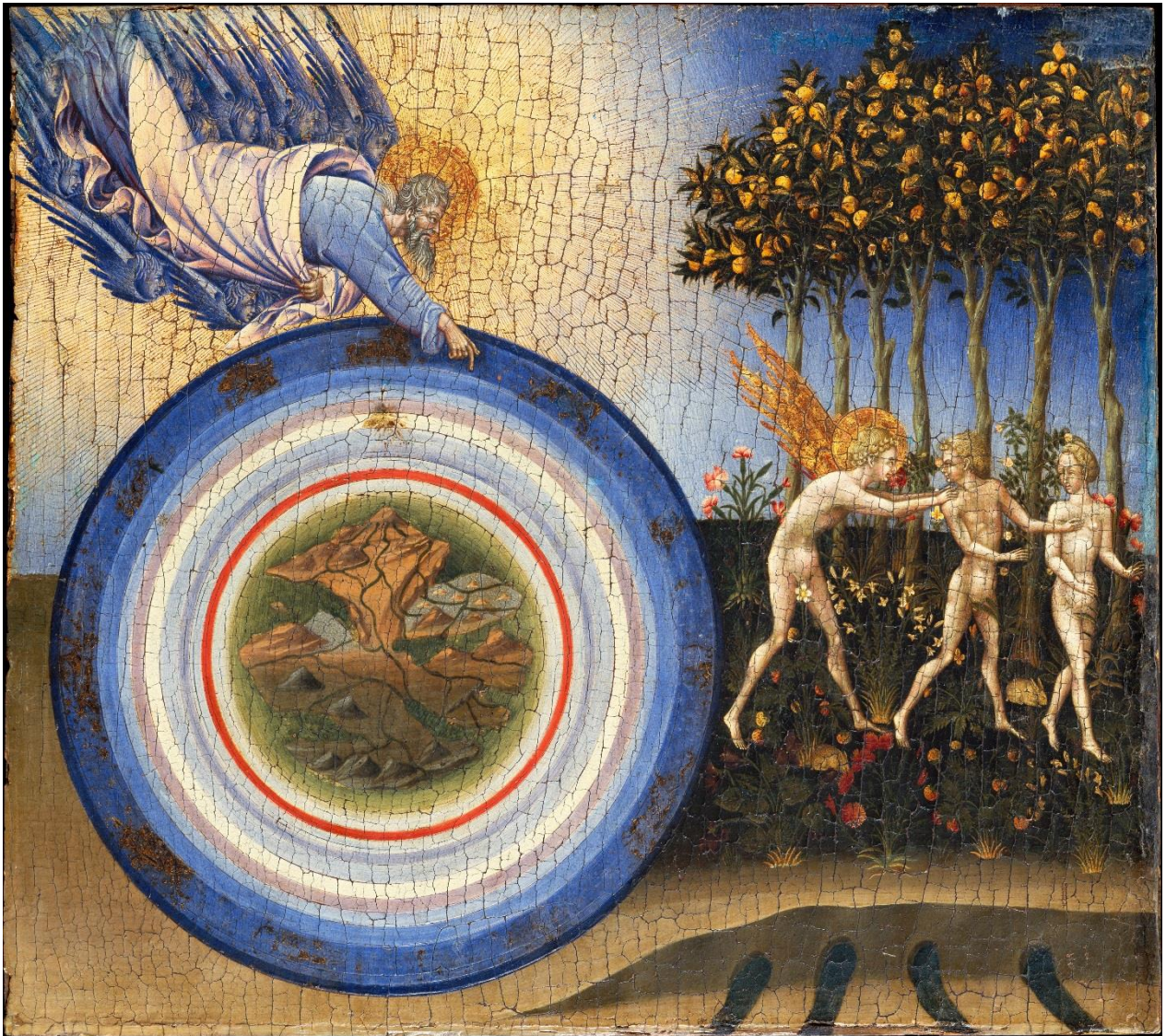
1. Left hand panel depicting *Heaven* from “The Garden of Earthly Delights”



2. Center panel depicting *Heaven and Birth* from “The Garden of Earthly Delights”



3. Right hand panel depicting Hell from “The Garden of Earthly Delights”



4. Giovanni di Paolo “The Creation and the Expulsion from the Paradise”

The current research is primarily focused on the study of *Utopias*. In this chapter I will try to analyze and discuss the concept of *Utopia*. I will try to synthesize a working definition of the term in order to avoid the notional abundance of the concept. Such a working definition of utopia will help me to pinpoint the theoretical limitation and the conceptual framework of the present study. I am not interested in defining *Utopia* as a self-sufficient and self-explanatory concept. As we shall see further on, *utopia* as it is, is just another work of fiction. It remains powerless, merely an imaginary exercise. The goal is that of trying to capture *utopia* by contrasting the term with *ideology*. When ideology is brought into equation, things are starting to move. *Utopia* then, is starting to rebuild the *Lost Paradise* in the present day society, by generating political myths and utilitarian projects, all for the sake of achieving the *Never Ending Peace*. The current research follows a certain paradox. The main idea of this study is that of trying to understand *utopias* not only as projects that envision social progress, but also as affairs

that institutionalize a reign of *violence* and *totalitarianism*. Within its discourse, *utopia* labels what is accepted and not to be accepted by the new members of the founded community. The reign of *violence* begins here.

I argue that *Utopia* institutionalizes *violence* on three distinctive yet closely related levels. But before we classify them we need to understand violence in the context of the present study. In a very simple definition *violence* can be understood as defining a quick tempered and brutal person. The term itself comes from the Latin “vis”, which means force or vigor. It describes a power relationship that is aimed at constraining another individual. In legal terms the concept refers to those crimes that are committed against other individuals, including here homicides, assaults and rapes.¹¹

This definition of violence depicts the most visible form of aggression. It is often referred to as *subjective* violence, due to the fact that it requires a clearly identifiable agent. The catch is that the *subjective* form of violence can be experienced only when the “normal” state of affairs are being perturbed. That is to say that *subjective* violence is clearly visible when somebody does something to disturb the “normality” of things. But there are also other forms of violence that are less visible and are often referred to as *objective* types of aggression. *Objective* violence is precisely the violence embodied in what is perceived as being “normality”.¹² In other words, what is normal for some is violent for others.

As mentioned above, the first form of violence and the most visible one amongst them is the one that is found at the bottom level (1) subjective/direct form of violence. War, famine, destruction and death, often described as the four horsemen of the Apocalypse is an accurate example of *subjective* violence. From this point upwards violence continues with (2) structural/symbolic form of violence. This can be understood as the form of aggression that is embodied in the language and its forms. And the third type (3) and the least visible form of aggression is that of cultural/systemic form of violence. It can be understood as the mother of all crimes due to the fact that it justifies all the previous acts of aggression. Zizek defines systemic violence as the often catastrophic consequences of the smooth functioning of our current economic and political systems.¹³

Zizek brings these three types of aggression in what he calls the “triumvirate of violence”.¹⁴ In other words, *triumvirate* refers to a triangle in which *subjective* and *objective*

¹¹ Rober Muchembled, *A history of Violence*, Polity Press, 2012, pp.7-8

¹² Slavoj Zizek, *Violence, Six sideways reflections*, Profile Books, 2009, pp.1-2

¹³ *Ibid.*, p.2

¹⁴ *Ibid.*, p.1

forms of violence reign over a certain social system. A similar model is proposed by Johan Galtung in the following table:

Table 1. The three types of violence¹⁵

Violence	Direct Violence	Structural Violence	Cultural Violence
Manifestations	Intended, harming hurting	Unintended, exploiting	Intended to justify violence

I decided to include here only the three forms of violence that were formulated in the original table of contents, and leave the concepts of *negative* and *positive* peace aside for the moment. Right now, I am more interested in clearly identifying the three types of violence described above. Present in Galtung's original sketch but missing here, there are also the two types of peace generally attributed to him, the *negative* and *positive* forms of peace. I will deal with these concepts in the final chapter of this thesis when I try to find traces of *Utopianism* in what Galtung calls the *positive* peace project.

The effort of the present research is that of trying to deconstruct *Utopias*, by testing the concept within the framework of the above written model. That is to say, the working premise of our research can be summarized as follows: in the name of *Utopia*, which is as we shall see further on, just another synonym for *Never Ending Peace*, *violence* and *aggression* are *collectively* justified and *morally* accepted by the enthusiastic members of the *New World*. Crime becomes meaningless when it's directed against the *Outsider*, against the *Otherness of the Other*. It is no longer labelled as a crime, that particular deed which is committed in the name of *Peace*. When the goal of a certain community is that of reaching the *Land of no Evil*, the saboteurs of the project are no longer regarded as individuals. They become obstacles that need to be removed from the way. But then again, how can a crime count as a crime when it's carried out against the *Other*, against the *Outsider* or the *Unbeliever*?¹⁶

¹⁵ Johan Galtung, *A theory of Peace: building direct, structural, cultural peace*, Transcend University Press, 2010, "Table 6. The three types of violence and the two types of peace", p.52

¹⁶ Fatima Vieira, *The concept of Utopia*, *The Cambridge Companion to Utopian Literature*, Ed. By Gregory Claeys, Cambridge University Press, 2010, pp.3-4

1.1 The alley of dreams

In this part of the study we will try to understand the meaning of *utopia*, *ideology* and *utopianism*. As mentioned before, the conceptual intersection between *utopia* and *ideology* will mark the focus and also the theoretical limitation of the present thesis. The three forms of violence cannot be institutionalized by *utopia* alone. Utopia as a self-generating promoter of violence requires *ideology* to consolidate and validate its aggressive discourse that is directed toward the *Other*. Without comparing and analyzing the two concepts together as an odd pair, utopia remains mostly just a work of fiction.¹⁷ In other words without ideology, utopia remains *motionless* in the political environment. It needs ideology to get the engine working. When ideology comes along, utopia finds itself *in motion*.

In a very simple definition *utopia* tells the story of the *life* a man would live if he was able to decide upon his own destiny. If you will, utopia can be regarded to be as a rescue mission: it takes the individual away from the struggles of everyday life, and transports him into an imaginary land of idyllic beauty and happiness. It's primarily an imaginary exercise that provides a way of escaping the surrounding, and often insecure reality. Such a world however, exists only in the imaginary state, either above or beyond this one.¹⁸

The dream to construct an ideal commonwealth is shared by all the cultures in the world. Such an imaginary exercise had a strong influence on the foundation of all origin myths. An origin myth is the tale that describes in detail the birthplace and the creation of all mankind. In the paintings of Paolo and Bosch, we find the birthplace of mankind in the *Garden of Eden*.¹⁹ As it happened, men fell down from such a Paradise or in other words, men was banished by God from the *Isle of Grace* due to a certain flaw in its human nature. Was it greed or disobedience, it matters not. However, the main idea remains: such lost paradises are currently restricted for all the living. Due to the variety and the density of such origin myths, researches began to speculate about a fundamental utopian impulse in every human being.²⁰ All of us dream for a better world. As we shall see further on, the trouble begins when the dream pursued is tested in the real world.

¹⁷ Paul Ricœur, *Lectures on Ideology and Utopia*, Ed. George H. Taylor, Columbia University Press, New York, 1986, p.1

¹⁸ Ruth Levitas, *The concept of Utopia*, Syracuse University Press, 1990, p.1

¹⁹ See Anex 1-2

²⁰ Ruth Levitas, *The concept of Utopia*, Syracuse University Press, 1990, p.1



5. Thomas Cole *The Arcadian or Pastoral State* from “The course of an Empire”

Based upon the diversity of utopian writings, be them religious, political, secular or literary utopias, one can see two major utopian traditions: utopias of sensual gratification and utopias of human contrivance.²¹ In the first category we find all the necessary clues and details that build the narrative of a *Lost Paradise*. The reader or by case, the listener is greeted by his sacred ancestors and by wise and dutiful men in this land of happiness. As we walk through such an *Island of the Blest*, we are then saluted by fearsome heroes and by virtuous and noble dead. We find no sign of evil in such a blessed place. Everything is perfectly balanced. Such places were

²¹ Gregory Claeys, Lyman T. Sargent, *The Utopia Reader*, New York University Press, New York, 1999, p.2

given to men by God, or by the ruling gods. They are a gift of love. Such paradises were originally created without the knowledge of men. They were conceived by the will of the supreme deity. The paradise was a gift earned without any effort of labor. But as it usually happens in the real world, everything good must end at some moment in time. It came a moment when such *Arcadias* became forbidden places. The original designer decided to close the doors and seal the entrance. Usually the sign with the “Access forbidden” on it, came around after an act of civil disobedience. In the Judeo-Christian tradition men was banished from *Eden* due to a technical malfunction in its nature. The second tradition began to flourish during the Enlightenment period. It promotes the idea that mankind is capable to socially engineer a society that is similar to a lost *Paradise*.²² The idea was strongly influenced by the new technological and geographical discoveries.

The word *utopia* was introduced for the very first time in 1516, by Thomas More. The term itself became a neologism in the English dictionary, but the idea behind it wasn't entirely unknown. The concept was a product of the Renaissance, where the moral and political achievements of the ancients were highly praised and deeply esteemed. It was during this period of time that the idea of *utopia* became blended with the logic of the day: a society shouldn't live within the limits of its own fate, but ought to use reason and science to readjust its future.²³

An important factor in the development of utopia was the discovery of new geographical places and continents. Poliziano, Columbus and Vespucci through their expeditions and discoveries, helped shaping up a totally new social dimension: the idea of the *Other*.²⁴ The idea that there were other people inhabiting the earth, with new and often strange cultural patterns and habits, made *utopia* an attractive political and literary subject. Utopian writings as well as the philosophical imagination began to flourish. It's at this very moment that the *Old World* began to get acquainted with the *Others* of the *New World*.

The utopian project or treatise is usually the work of a single man. He might be either a politician, a reformer, a revolutionary or perhaps even a self-declared prophet. The social position of the utopian man is rather interesting. He finds himself misunderstood in this complex and evil reality from which he must find a way to escape. He cannot fit into this strange and awkward world. There's this constant need of withdrawing to a place of complete solitude, perhaps into the desert, in order to fantasize about a far simpler form of existence. Such an

²² *Ibid.*, p.2

²³ Fatima Vieira, *The concept of Utopia*, *The Cambridge Companion to Utopian Literature*, Ed. By Gregory Claeys, Cambridge University Press, 2010, pp.3-4

²⁴ *Ibid.*, p.4

attitude often describes a childlike quality of the fantasizer.²⁵ When the utopian man comes back from his pilgrimage he gets obsessed by the ideal fantasy. The utopian writers often present an over evaluated idea that explains at once all the evil in the present day society. They promote a universal diagnosis and remedy that will surely cure humanity's miserable condition.²⁶

Paradoxically, all the great utopian writers have been great realists. They were able to identify startling aspects of their time and place. They were able to see truths that other men only vaguely sensed, or refused to recognize. The utopian day dreamer had, paradoxically, a deeper understanding of the surrounding reality.²⁷

But utopia is in itself a product of western modern thought, very ambiguous and strangely diverse. It often gets new meanings and dimensions. And because of its flexibility, utopia is always on the verge of losing its own identity. Contemporary scholars find it difficult to agree upon a consensual definition of the term due to its ambiguous nature.²⁸ Utopia is nowhere and yet somewhere good. The essence of utopia relies in the desire to be in a better world but cannot get there.²⁹

Gregory Claeys argues that contemporary interpretations of utopia promote four instances or approaches, in which the concept is highly misrepresented. Firstly, utopia shouldn't be regarded primarily as part of the literary genre, even though there are thousands of books that imitate and emphasize the fictional substance of More's *Utopia*. In the second instance, utopia is not exclusively a part of theology. Peacefulness, salvation, freedom, unity and social cohesion are not exclusively religious motifs. In the third place, utopia isn't just a state of mind, a form of psychological day dreaming. Utopia isn't just a state of mind expressed so bravely by a drunken day dreamer. Finally, utopia should not be considered just another synonym for visionary progress.³⁰ Claeys's suggestion is that of trying to define the concept as what doesn't count as utopia in order to see the hidden meaning of the phenomenon.³¹

The question still remains: how can I define *Utopia* in the context of this study? As mentioned before, there isn't yet any definition of utopia that is holistically accepted by contemporary scholars. For the current research, the working definition of utopia is not even a

²⁵ Frank E. Manuel, Fritzie P. Manuel, *Utopian Thought in the Western World*, Basil Blackwell, Oxford, 1979, p.27

²⁶ *Ibid.*, p.28

²⁷ *Ibid.*, p.28

²⁸ Fatima Vieira, *Idem.*, pp.3-4

²⁹ Krishan Kumar, *Utopianism*, Open University Press, Milton Keynes, 1991, p.1

³⁰ Claeys, G. (2013), News from Somewhere: Enhanced Sociability and the Composite Definition of Utopia and Dystopia. *History*, 98: 145-173

³¹ *Ibid.*

definition at all. It's merely a focus on a particular aspect of all the existing definitions of the term. Contemporary scholars agree upon three different aspects of the existing definitions of utopia. In the first place, we have the *content* of the definition. The *content* of every utopia promotes and talks about the same old painting: the good and idyllic life. Secondly, there is the *descriptive* aspect of every utopia, which can be translated into a language of forms and shapes. In other words geometry. And finally we find utopia in terms of its *functionality*. And this very aspect of the definition is the most relevant for our research. It argues that in each and every single definition of concept, there is to be found a *hidden* message, an *ultimate goal*. In other words, utopia serves a purpose.

I argue that in order to capture the concept's functional features, utopia cannot walk alone. If we blend utopia with ideology the symbolic representation of what a society perceives as "normal" is redefined. As we shall see further on, both concepts serve the same purpose: both transcend reality.³²

1.2 A unified theoretical approach: *ideology and utopia*

In this part of the research I will try to analyze both concepts in a single theoretical framework. I will follow the work and the effort of Karl Mannheim in *Ideology and Utopia*.³³ Mannheim is considered to be the first scholar who discussed the similarities found between both concepts. The author's initial motivation was that of trying to find out how thinking appears in public life and in politics as a tool of collective action.³⁴ My inquiry will begin at the theoretical intersection of ideology and utopia.

Ideology can be regarded as a concept that is build out of a *pseudo-unity*. In order to understand the term, one must differentiate between its two distinctive parts. The *particular* understanding of the term refers to a certain form of *skepticism*. In other words, one doesn't believe or doesn't want to believe the ideas that are being advanced by another individual. The *particular* aspect of ideology starts by building up a symbolic identity of what we are, as opposed to what the *Others* are. We can include and later on reject all the ideas that are not similar to our own intrinsic values. The *total* understanding of the term refers to the totality of

³² Vincent Geoghegan (2004) *Ideology and utopia*, Journal of Political Ideologies, 9:2, 123-138

³³ Karl Mannheim, *Ideology and Utopia*, An Introduction to the Sociology of Knowledge, Routledge & Kegan Paul Ltd., London

³⁴ *Ibid.*, p.1

ideas that describe a certain historical age or movement.³⁵ It refers to all the cultural values that are circulating in a given historical age.

Relevant to the current research is the condition in which one becomes ideological. Following Mannheim's scholarship, a person becomes ideological when the wrong doer is no longer responsible for the crime he had previously committed. That is to say, the actual criminal is no longer blamed for what he had done before. From an ideological point of view, it's not the man who is to be held responsible for its own crime but the surrounding environment. The source of every form of violence and aggression transcends the person and moves a level up, into the cultural framework of a given society. The wrong doer is no longer the man, but the system in itself.³⁶ In other words, a man is less important than the surrounding social and political framework.

Ideologies are often associated with the use of "-isms". These are added suffixes that compound words like *liberalism, feminism, Marxism, fascism, utopianism* and so on, all in order to create symbolic identities that ascribe certain values to a particular social or political movement.³⁷

Ideology and utopia share a similar fate. Invented by Count Antoine Louis Claude Destutt de Tracy in 1796, ideology's primary goal was that of trying to establish a new model of scientific research that was to become the ultimate criterion of men. In other words, the idea behind de Tracy's design was that of trying to establish a new scientific method that was to become ultimate and absolute. Every invention, idea, discipline or tool had to have and to serve the same purpose: that of improving human society and governance as a whole. As it happened in the case of utopia, ideology also lost its original meaning. It became a useful tool in trying to marginalize and reject an opponent's set of acquired or inherited values.³⁸ It became one of the most elusive, colorful, contested and one of the most loathed concepts in all social sciences. Ideology was used and continues to be used as a tool of discrediting a given adversary. Everything that is being told by the counterpart, his values and beliefs, are nothing more than a set of complicated lies.³⁹ In other words, the truth is always on the speaker's side.

³⁵ *Ibid.*, pp.49-50

³⁶ *Ibid.*, p.50

³⁷ Harro Hopfl, *Isms and Ideology*, in "The structure of Modern Ideology", ed. By Noel O'Sullivan, Edward Elgar Publishing Limited, Aldershot, 1989, p.3

³⁸ Iain MacKenzie, Sinisa Malesevic, Introduction: de Tracy's Legacy, in "Ideology after Poststructuralism : Experiences of Identity in a Globalising World", ed. by Iain MacKenzie, Sinisa Malesevic, Pluto Press, London, 2002, p.1

³⁹ Renate Meyer, Kerstin Sahlin, Marc J. Ventresca, *Ideology and Institutions: Introduction*, in "Research in the Sociology of Organizations", Volume 27 : Institutions and Ideology, Elsevier, 2009, p.1

Teun A. van Dijk argues, that all classical debates about ideologies share four major assumptions: 1. ideology is a *false belief*; 2. ideology *conceals* reality; such a concealment is done by means of deceiving those who are willing to oppose one's initiative; 3. ideology is a belief that is promoted only by the *Others*; a type of *self-denied ideology*; 4. ideology is a criterion for assessing if something is either *true* or *false*.⁴⁰ Within this epistemological framework, ideologies are unaware of the *distortional* reality which they continuously emphasize and promote. In the same epistemological manner, ideologies are *dogmatic* as they have the tendency to see their own position as *absolute* and *universal*. Another epistemological characteristic of ideologies is that of being *non-falsifiable*. The arguments that are being advanced against its own discourse are often regarded and labelled as *heresies*. The final characteristic of ideologies is that any deviant view from the mainstream discourse is not accepted and/or tolerated.⁴¹

As we have seen so far, both concepts are reality transcending phenomena. But what is, and how can we define *reality*? Mannheim describes reality as that existence which is concretely effective in a certain social system. Reality in this sense, is to be understood as something that materializes its own set of values in the society. Everything else is to be labeled as "situationally transcendent" or "unreal".⁴² In other words, if something happens because of something that had already been formulated or structured, it's *real*. In this respect, ideology and utopia share similar characteristics but are not entirely *alike*. Ideologies can still remain functional within the limits of what it is adequate, unlike utopias which are continuously seeking alien values that are far away from everyday circumstances. Ideologies can temporarily work within the existing status quo while utopias have the tendency to break the chains of the existing social order. Mannheim concludes that by taking away all the reality transcending values from the social realm, the world as we know it would become just a matter of being (factness). In such a world the concept of human will would eventually evaporate. With the death of utopia man himself will be reduced to no more than a thing.⁴³

Defining ideology and utopia from a psychoanalytical point of view, can be seen as an attempt to understand the conscious and the unconscious mechanisms that are either idealizing or demonizing any social phenomenon. Longhini argues that such an attempt might be a bit problematic due to the "polemical text" embodied in the ideology's discourse. Ideology never

⁴⁰ Teun A. van Dijk, *Ideology, a multidisciplinary approach*, Sage Publications, London, 1998, p. 3.

⁴¹ Luigi Longhini (2012), *Twelve Ideology and utopia negative qualities of the mind*, *Contemporary Psychoanalytic Studies*, *The quality of the mind*, 13, 285-305

⁴² Karl Mannheim, *idem.*, pp.87-88

⁴³ *Ibid.*, p.178

expresses its own position but always pinpoints the errors of the *Other*. Utopias are easier to deal with, because they are recognized and accepted by their own engineers as belonging to them and solely to them.⁴⁴

Ideologies satisfy the need for certainty in their attempt to give meaning to a man's life. The discourse is based on emotional and affective qualities which make one "feel welcomed and accepted, thus dispelling the anxiety of abandonment and rejection".⁴⁵ The author assigns the notion of *resistance* as the model for ideology. The process of *idolization* of one's own beliefs backfires a process in which the *Others* are being *demonized*. That is to say, we're the good guys, folk! Such a process unleashes acts of violence and terror that are directed toward the *Others*. By redefining the notions of *Good* and *Evil*, violence towards the *Other* becomes *right* and *just*.⁴⁶

Utopia emphasizes the human craving of finding the perfect *home*, which actually doesn't exist in the real world. Longhin concludes his psychoanalytical analysis of utopia and ideology by stressing on the idea that men, throughout history, were driven by utopian ideals and ended up institutionalizing rigid and dogmatic ideologies that often used aggressive and destructive political strategies.⁴⁷

Ideology and utopia are to be understood as preconditions for one another. As we've seen so far, we can find an ideological function in utopias and an utopian impulse in ideologies.⁴⁸ We can conclude that all political beliefs within a society are to be seen as a competition between ideologies and utopias.

1.3 The way back home: *utopianism*

Utopianism results from the marriage of both ideology and utopia. In a very simple definition, utopianism describes a movement of *hope*.⁴⁹ By neglecting the dominant understanding of what is possible, utopianism opens up new conceptual pathways in the philosophy of imagination. Utopianism is defined by the "how-to" methods of reaching the idealized society. In other words, utopianism refers to the pathway that leads a community to the Ever Lasting Age of Innocence. However, utopianism shouldn't be considered the

⁴⁴ Luigi Longhin (2012), *Idem*.

⁴⁵ *Ibid.*

⁴⁶ *Ibid.*

⁴⁷ *Ibid.*

⁴⁸ Tie Warwick, In the place of Utopia, Affective and Transformative Ideas, Peter Lang AG., Bern, 2014

⁴⁹ Valérie Fournier (2014), Utopianism and the cultivation of possibilities: grassroots movements of hope, *The Sociological Review*, 50: 189–216

“blueprint” for such an ideal society. It’s merely the way to reach it. As shown so far, it’s the work of utopia to shape the futuristic commonwealth. Ideology then comes along and tries to institutionalize a dogmatic social and cultural framework of “normality”. Utopianism refers to the processes and the journeys rather than the destinations.⁵⁰

Utopianism is nothing more than social day dreaming. It’s a tale of hope, of endangered hope that is continually deferred and continually renewed. It’s the impulse that moved and inspired society throughout its own history.⁵¹ An important characteristic of utopianism is *estrangement*, due to its inability to conform to the established norms of everyday life.⁵²

Utopianism promotes a revolutionary transformation of everyday life. It’s imperative that such a transformation must begin now, in the very moment. Hope starts now! The blueprints for the future are being created in the utopian laboratory. Ideology has the role to institutionalize and protect the social and cultural values of the futuristic community. Utopianism is merely the way back home.⁵³

⁵⁰ *Ibid.*

⁵¹ Lyman Tower Sargent (1994), *The Three Faces of Utopianism Revisited*, *Utopian Studies*, Vol. 5, No. 1, pp. 1-37

⁵² Lucy Sargisson (2007), *Estrangement, Utopianism, and Intentional Communities*, *Utopian Studies*, Vol. 18, No. 3, pp.393-424

⁵³ Carissa Honeywell (2007), *Utopianism and Anarchism*, *Journal of Political Ideologies*, 12:3, 239-254

Chapter 2. Western Utopia

Introduction

In this chapter, I will try to follow the progress of utopia in the Western World. I will try to see to which degree the utopian impulse changed the social, political and cultural landscape of the *Old World*. In order to do all that, I will follow the scholarship of Frank E. Manuel and Fritzie P. Manuel in their work entitled *Utopian Thought in the Western World*.⁵⁴ There are however, a couple of preliminary mentions that I have to point out beforehand. In the first instance, I will not be able to discuss, as the authors of the above written work did, all of the historical figures that were representative for a certain utopian movement. Even more so, I won't be able to compare by emphasizing the different intrinsic values of each isolated utopian movement. I wouldn't dare to embark on such a colossal attempt to identify, in the early student years of Karl Marx, for example, which of his personal encounters or which of his individual experiences, made him write a self-denied utopian project that changed the cultural and political climate of 19th century Europe. In the second place and closely related to the first one, even at the expense of academic naivety, I will only briefly discuss the inner values and the motivating idea behind a certain utopian movement or project. In other words, the purpose of this chapter is that of trying to see the *general ideas* that were considered, as belonging to the realm of utopian thought.

I argue that by looking backwards, utopia is part of large scale process in which progress plays a crucial role. The idea of progress, however, when one talks about utopias, is subconsciously emphasized. But as I will point out along the way, the idea of progress comes a bit later in the development of utopias. It's rather a direct consequence of technological and geographical discoveries. Throughout this chapter, I am interested to see the curious cycle in which an archaic form of utopia is being replaced by a newer prototype. In other words, I am interested to capture the shifts of cultural and political values from one age to another. Let's just say that I want to see how a theory about the world is being replaced by a newer system of thought. And it's exactly this process of continuous change, which makes utopias so powerful.

As in the title of the present thesis, such a shift toward a better version of the world, or in other words, the creation of a new imagined world order, is always accompanied by a violent

⁵⁴ Frank E. Manuel, Fritzie P. Manuel, *Utopian Thought in the Western World*, Basil Blackwell, Oxford, 1979

discourse and by violent consequences. Even if the original utopian project denied and disputed violent means of action.

In this chapter, my primary goal is that of trying to deconstruct the concept of utopia, to its very foundation. I will try to strip utopia of all its mythological parts in order to see what role each part has to play in the utopian dialectic. I will follow the growth of utopian thought, throughout western collective memory, in order to see utopia's influence in the process of shaping up the landscape of European political mythology. The most significant historical period is the 19th century, and I will pay a special attention to this particular time period, often referred to as the utopian century. But until I get there, I must discuss the very beginnings of utopia. Let's strip the term from all its mythical bindings.

2.1 Philosophy and Paradise: ancient and medieval

At the heart of *utopia* there are two elements which are blended together to create the under thought of western utopia, the Judeo-Christian and the Hellenic foundation. In other words, utopia has two geographically distinctive parents: Greece and Judea. The idea of *Paradise* has to be regarded as the deepest archeological foundation of Western utopia. Even before the birth of utopia, the myth of the paradise was a concept that was present in the western culture and in the European consciousness. Take for example the paintings from the 1st Chapter. Except for Cole's *The Course of an Empire*, both paintings of Bosch and di Paolo, were created before the birth of utopia in the 16th Century. The idea of a millennium or of the Age of the Messiah were themes that were present even before the emergence of utopianism. The idea of paradise and that of a millennium are to be regarded as pre-historic myths, which made the western man an architect of great designs and enterprises. The inner forces that drove the Western man to go and conquer Jerusalem, to start Crusades against Islam in the quest for the Holy Grail, to start millenarian revolts and later on, to set sails for overseas expeditions cannot be fully explained by political or economic reasons alone. Such large scale movements were fueled by the innermost desire to find the earthly paradise.⁵⁵

As mentioned before, the myth of the paradise came first. It was a legacy inherited from the Judeo-Christian tradition. God made heaven for Adam and Eve! From the other parent, the Greeks, which were particularly obsessive in fantasizing about the ideal urban community, utopia inherited the myth of the ideal society. The Greek philosophy and political theory were

⁵⁵ *Ibid.*, pp.34-35

deeply interested in imagining the ideal urban society with the highest level of civilization. The modern western utopia is therefore situated between the religious fantasies of a lost paradise and the rationalistic encrypting of an ideal city. Utopia is therefore situated in between two extremes: faith and reason.

In almost every study about utopias we find reference to Plato's *Republic*. The work is often cited by scholars to be the true inspiration behind More's *Utopia*. Thomas More was part of the second generation of English aristocrats who took an interest in Greek linguistics and philosophy. In the 16th century Europe, Plato's work, rediscovered and translated by the previous generation, was considered to be representative in describing the Greek psyche. I will skip the descriptive nature of Plato's *Republic*, because it follows the same old utopian logic described in the previous chapter: a chaste based society ruled by philosophers and guarded by strict moral values and a noble lie. However, the most important influence that the work of Plato had on the modern utopian thought, was that of making the ideal society in some ways, a feasible project. And this very idea makes a crucial difference between the two founding myths of modern utopia. If the religious paradise is being brought to existence by the will of an omnipotent God, by his will and his will only, utopia as we know it is a man-made paradise on earth. It's in some ways an act of defiance and hope.⁵⁶ Until the discovery of Plato's *Republic*, a man's destiny was unfulfilled. More's *Utopia* opened the doors of imagination and possibility.

Even though utopia inherits Classical (Greek) and Judeo-Christian elements it's still a distinctive novelty, a unique literary genre and a distinctive social philosophy. Krishan Kumar points out that utopia isn't a universal phenomenon and shouldn't be regarded as one. Even though primitive myths exist in almost every culture of the world, utopia as it is, exists only in those societies that have Greek and Christian traditions. That is to say, utopia exists only in the West.⁵⁷

But we need to remember, that More's *Utopia* was not the only form of utopia that was born in 16th century Europe. According to Frank and Fritzie Manuel, utopia was born in Europe in three different places with three radically different orientations. There's also the Italian concept of *mondo nuovo*, which was predominant among the philosophical architects of Italy. The Italian utopia was born independently from the English version of More's concept, and it manifested itself in the aesthetic movements of the Renaissance. Shapes, fountains and gardens with an ideal geometrical form. On the other hand, we have the German utopia, which slipped from its literary bounds and identified itself with the religious popular movements that shared

⁵⁶ *Ibid.*, pp.112-113

⁵⁷ Krishan Kumar, *Utopia and Anti-Utopia in Modern Times*, Basil Blackwell, Oxford, 1987, p.19

a belief in the millennium. To summarize in a simple sentence what was written above, the utopias in England were scholarly and academic, in Italy these were aristocratic and aesthetic, while in Germany they were populist and violent.⁵⁸

The idea of a self-fulfilled, self-sufficient and prosperous society became with time an inspiration to all of More's predecessors. Men of action drew their sustenance and guidance from More's utopianism. Society as it was, had to be rebuilt in some way or another. The idea of impossibility was losing its ground. Due to More, what was impossible before, became possible for the future. The quest for an idyllic utopian happiness, became a powerful force in the modern European consciousness. It all started with how More's predecessors interpreted the original work of Utopia. More's original intention was that of providing a moral example of human behavior. It was to be just this: an example. However, More's predecessors had other plans in mind. They regarded his work as a stimuli for political and social action. The idea of a radical change became acknowledged from this point onward.⁵⁹

At the end of the Middle Ages paradise was no longer a dream. It ceased to be one and started to become a generator and a catalyst for courageous deeds on earth. Why wait for the next heavenly kingdom, when things could be moved in the present moment. It started initially with the religious enthusiasm. Religious radicalism demanded the immediate establishment of the heavenly paradise. An early example of such a religious movement is the one initiated by Thomas Muntzer in 16th century Germany. Just like Thomas More, Muntzer was the creator of a utopia. Unlike More, however, Muntzer's project was not limited to a work of fiction, but became part of the reality. He is considered to be the leader of a group of men, who destroyed monasteries and castles in 16th century south of Germany, in order to bring the Kingdom of God on earth. His vision was that of destroying some of the existing socio-political values in order to institutionalize the reign of Christ. While More's Utopia was created to serve as a model for the optimum human society, Muntzer raised his sword and fought against those who stood against his millenarian project.

So far, utopia is entrapped in its religious limitations. Its purpose is that of creating a new spiritual order based on Christian values. The kingdom of God is associated with a community of worshipers that share the same religious values. Until the middle of 17th century, utopian thought was dominated by its Christian legacy. Things are starting to appear more interesting when this Christian utopia is put aside. When Christian utopia ceases to exist, the idea of progress comes along. The expression "In the name of God" is slowly shifting toward

⁵⁸ Frank E. Manuel, Fritzie P. Manuel, *Idem.*, p.114

⁵⁹ *Ibid.*, p.148

the “In the name of Science”! Science moves one step ahead with some fascinating implications.

2.2 God, Science and the Paradise: 17th – 18th century Europe

The 17th century utopian writers became obsessed with the field of knowledge. Knowledge had to be the main premise for the future and it had to be reorganized. This time however, it was the knowledge of God that was so attractive. Such a knowledge had to be attained. God, wasn't just yet, completely removed from the equation. The idea of progress was to idea responsible for removing God completely from the scenery.

Worth mentioning here, is the philosophical movement generally called *Pansophia*, which was a utopian fantasy based on a calm and disciplined science, as a way to reach God. It was an attempt to establish a unified European culture free from any sectarian legacy. It was a way of shaping up a new European culture based on science and reason. Science had to be extended to all the natural aspects of the world, as a way of understanding and loving God. A unified framework of knowledge.

Such an attempt meant a complete readjustment of the European society, which at that moment in time, was struggling with internal religious disputes. Politics, economics and education had to be subordinate to the organization of knowledge. Rules concerning human governance had to reflect the body of knowledge. In the Pansophist hierarchy, the knowledge of God came first. The movement provided new meanings to the concept of knowledge of the divine and new ways of attaining it. God can only be known by understanding the physical world, the historical and theological traditions, by analyzing the books of revelation, by understanding consciousness and conscience. Anything that came at an individual level, such as mystical revelation, was dismissed as an insufficient evidence. It was a search for proving God's existence. It was a quest for proof while bringing faith along. In other words, it was a search for proper ontological limitations in order to find the Absolute. But these 17th century philosophers, such as Campanella, Francis Bacon, John Wilkins and Gottfried Wilhelm Leibniz shouldn't be regarded as secularists. The idea behind their philosophical movement was not that of dividing knowledge in different corners. It was not their plan to create labels and to set up ontological boxes. Their new science couldn't be separated from religion. It was a part of it,

as a whole.⁶⁰ As I mentioned before, Pansophia started out to be a way of knowing God by using the physical senses.

And the very idea of progress started from here but it materialized only in the early 18th century. Until then, science was to help human society in attaining God's knowledge, in order to perfect the present day reality. It was all for the greater good of mankind. New born ideas, technological or geographical discoveries, were to be subordinate to the greater and general good of society. These were to serve the attainment of God's knowledge. In other words, Pansophia tried to create a bond between the new science and the Christian tradition.

However, things are starting to change in the early 18th century, when religion is pushed aside from the main body of knowledge. The idea of science aiding religion was starting to lose its ground. There had to be a clear division and a proper limitation between both aspects of the human existence. It must've been a complete disappointment to all of those late *pansophists*, to see God and science in the opposite corners of the ring. Both were boxing for the *Answer*, to what reality is, or should be.

In 18th century France, the utopian journey was harshly anticlerical and profoundly anti-Christian. The Enlightenment was by definition naturalistic and scientific. In this historical period, nature was perceived as sensuous and pleasure seeking, while science was used as a pretext to oppose all of the existing religious institutions and religious moral values. Ultimately, the consequence of Enlightenment led to the secularization of the European culture.

The most powerful and the most intriguing ideas that were circulating in this new age were, the idea of *human perfectibility* and the myth of the *noble savage*.⁶¹ Around these two conceptions, utopian writings began to flourish and to reshape the European psyche. The first idea refers to the abolition of all the existing social, political or religious abuses, in order to create a long standing, almost perfect society. And it is precisely this very idea that led to the notion of progress. For the sake of future and progress, intellectuals began to readjust the cultural climate of the Old World. In other words, when progress takes a part in the general consciousness, there can be only one way for a given society or civilization: forward! That is to say, progress can justify the actions of today.

The second idea, that of a *noble savage*, refers to the natives found in the *New World*, with the discovery of Americas earlier before. The image of this primitive man, incapable of abstract reasoning and with a disgust toward luxury, provoked a certain degree of fascination

⁶⁰ *Ibid.*, pp.201-220

⁶¹ *Ibid.*, p.414

among the philosophers of the Enlightenment. The *noble savage* was pure and natural in its instinctive behavior. The myth will play a crucial role in the 19th century utopia.

2.3 The Prophets of future and the political myth

Robert Owen, Charles Fourier and Saint-Simon were the architects of 19th century utopian thought. As all utopian writers in history, the three intellectuals mentioned above, were also intoxicated with the future and were desperately trying to control it, by convincing their contemporaries to adopt their own philosophical and social systems. There was no need for bloodshed because their projects were situated at a lower scale. That is to say, they envisioned isolated communities of individuals, which were supposed to function within the existing political status-quo. They envisioned a harmless and isolated cultural revolution. With the course of time however, these new communities would eventually alternate the old socio-political framework. During their age and with their own contribution, a new vocabulary of social thought began to be shaped. Words like crisis, moral, system, revolution, progress, movement and education, began to acquire new emotional and quite radical forms of understanding.⁶² The systems envisioned by Owen, Fourier and Saint-Simon, even though different in shape and content, shared and promoted the same idea: that of individual self-realization in a state of community, able to satisfy all of the individual needs of existence.

Owen, Fourier and Saint-Simon were the source of inspiration, admiration and often times a source of direct confrontation, for two of the most iconic figures of 19th utopian socialism, Marx and Engels. As soon as these two prophets of the future came along, what was until then regarded as innocent utopian daydreaming, became a label associated with profound nativity. Utopians were subjected to a continuous theoretical mockery by early Marxists. After all, Marx and Engels envisioned a system of scientific socialism that transcended the very idea of utopianism. That is to say, there are no traces of utopianism in Marxism due to the fact of its scientific historic inquiry. Their doctrine was based upon a historical determinant that explained factually how history really occurred. Revolutions had changed history, and the proletarian revolution was the way to go hereafter. Utopia became a way of labelling another scholar as either absurd or unrealistic.

⁶² *Ibid.*, p.582

Marxism distinguished itself from other utopian movements, in the sense that, while utopians were constructing schemes and blueprints for future ideal societies, the Marxists believed that they have already unveiled the “law of motion” in history. There was no need for a future plan, since they had already understood the way history was, and how history will occur in the future. It was their belief that the final stage of human society, as shown by their own and unique experimental method, was more or less, ending up in a form of universal socialism. After investigating the motion of historical accounts, Marxists concluded that history was nothing more than a history of classes and class struggles. History will eventually culminate in a proletarian revolution that will end all classes and all oppression. In other words, the final stage of human progress will culminate in a communist revolution that will end the “prehistory of human society”.⁶³



The painting above refers to Robert Owen’s original sketch of a utopian community, *New Harmony*, painted by F.Bate⁶⁴

The 19th century Europe was dominated by the progressive philosophies enunciated by Hegel and Marx, and by the evolutionary theories and discoveries of Darwin.⁶⁵ Paradoxically referred to as the most utopian century in history by contemporary scholars, for Marx and his

⁶³ Krishan Kumar, *idem.*, pp.53-56

⁶⁴ <http://digging-history.com/2013/11/10/religious-history-sunday-short-lived-utopian-experiments/>, retrieved on 25.03.2016

⁶⁵ Theodore Ziolkowski, *Modes of Faith, Secular surrogates for Lost Religious Belief*, University of Chicago Press, 2007, p.176

successors, the ideas that they envisioned, were at least utopian as they could possibly be. As mentioned before, their theory was revealed by a scientific method of understanding history's general direction. Surprisingly enough, until the final quarter of the century, there are almost no accounts of written literary utopias. The utopian thought of the 19th century was predominantly a century of socio-political obsessions. It was the era of the blooming political mythology.

In this period of time, we find the utopian thought dealing within the field of what is currently referred to as, the field of political mythology. A myth has a narrative dimension, which connects the past, present and future in a prophetic language. Due to this particular prophetic dimension of the myth, the future can be foreseen and catastrophes can be avoided by taking the right decision in the present moment. The most important aspect of any political myth, is the symbolic significance that the myth creates for the members of a given community or social group. In other words, the political myth creates group cohesion that promotes a unique, sacred and often times, a revealed universal value. Utopia blended extremely well in this new political dimension. It's as if they spoke the same language. And indeed, they do so. When one tries to extend the three ideological characteristics of political myths, to that of utopias, the similarities are not at all surprising. Political myths are (1) systems of beliefs or ideas, which unfold a universal truth, and as a consequence are totalizing; the second characteristic is that of (2) being able to mobilize passions; and they are (3) utopian due to their inability to understand the complexities of surrounding reality.⁶⁶

Chiara Bottici argues, that there are a couple of ways in which utopias and political myths can be united. It is not only the narrative that has similar features. Both of them address the problem of existence and invoke a social and political reorganization. Ultimately, political myths and utopias share the same regulative function, that of responding to the present circumstances and working within them. Both concepts, can also be the playground for radical imagination. However, political myths have the tendency to lean more toward ideologies, rather than utopias. Political myths, unlike utopias, try to find only a partial remedy for a society's misery, while utopias on the other hand, are more concerned with finding the ultimate cure.⁶⁷

⁶⁶ Chiara Bottici, *A philosophy of Political Myth*, Cambridge University Press, 2007, p.177-186

⁶⁷ *Ibid.*, pp.198-200

2.4 The perfect line – in the realm of dystopias

“In the dark times, will there also be singing?

Yes, there will be singing

About the dark times.”⁶⁸

- Bertolt Brecht, “Motto”

In the end of this chapter I will discuss the story behind dystopias. Dystopia is a work of fiction and should only be regarded as such. By definition, dystopia describes a nightmarish future where the concept of *hope*, so eagerly and vividly shouted throughout the utopian discourse, is nowhere to be found. That is to say, either there is no more hope left for a given society or, even the notion of hope is completely inexistent. In other words, there is no need for hope! The very idea of hope appears to be totally absurd and quite mad. Since humanity reached the highest peak of universal progress, what need there is for more hope? In dystopias, the idea of hope is dissolved. Hope vanishes completely from the scenery. The answer to everything has already been found.

Now imagine a future where everything is perfect. As it has been stressed out throughout the previous chapter, this imaginary exercise brings about the very definition of utopias, is it not? But there is a small catch! As with utopias, the perfect human society follows the perfect universal equation. Nothing more than the calculations found in the forefathers’ blueprint! The role of such an equation is that of explaining everything there is, in a very detailed and oddly simplified manner. The dystopian truth, often revealed after a scientific breakthrough, dictates every single aspect of the individual and its relationship with the society. The dystopian equation creates a standard of life for the society as a whole. If utopia follows a similar case, that of simplifying reality by transcending its inherent complexities, dystopia is nothing more than utopia coming true. And this is precisely the definition of dystopia: utopia becoming *reality!*

In a very simple definition, dystopia describes the dark side of Utopia. As seen in the previous chapters, the utopian reader is witnessing a head on collision between the morality of the existing status quo, and the revolutionary values of the New World. The utopian values of this new world are subconsciously being emphasized throughout the reading. In this manner, the utopian reader is able to contrast the newly created values of utopianism, with all the

⁶⁸ Erica Funkhouser (2005), “Singing in Dark Times”. Harvard Review 29, 108–126

miseries and with all the struggles present in his own everyday life. In this sense, the utopian reader discovers by himself the failures embedded in the present day society. It is a way of stressing upon the injustices of today, while taking a short journey through history. A scientifically crafted tutorial. Dystopia on the other hand, brings the reader in the middle of the action. Everything is as it should be: *perfect!* No wonder it is fiction after all! In the dystopian discourse, the reader is already witnessing the blossoming spring: “It was a bright cold day in April, and the clocks were striking thirteen”.⁶⁹ The dystopian fiction begins directly in the nightmare. But the nightmare isn’t regarded as such from the very beginning of the text. Perhaps the protagonists themselves, don’t even realize that they are living in a nightmarish society. In dystopias there’s no need for more heroes. The dystopian reader gradually learns that the society described in the text is a world without freedom, where men are forced to obey the ruler, where the idea of individuality disappears, where the past is deformed, and where science and technology are directed toward maintaining the state’s control over its slave citizens.⁷⁰

Dystopias can be regarded as the warning signs present at the beginning of every grandiose utopian project. It is a way of saying that too much of utopia can ruin a society completely. The dystopian writings began to be popular with the writings of Aldous Huxley, George Orwell, and Yevgeny Zamyatin etc. Such anti-utopian writings have the tendency to warn any given society of the dangers of utopianism. In other words, they describe how blurry the line between utopias and dystopias really is! Dystopian novels narrate how difficult it is in crucial moments to choose between Heaven and Hell.⁷¹

⁶⁹ George Orwell, *1984*, Penguin Books, London, 1989, p.3

⁷⁰ Mark R. Hillegas, *The future as Nightmare*, Oxford University Press, New York, 1967

⁷¹ *Ibid.*

Chapter 3. Utopia and the Liberal Peace Project

Introduction

In the first chapter of the thesis, my attempt was that of trying to conceptualize and define utopia as it is. Our investigation ended up in concluding that utopia, as a self-sufficient and self-explanatory concept is nothing more than a work of fiction. Understanding the concept as it is, will lead one think about utopias in terms of fictional or creative writing. If defined from a historical perspective, utopia seems to be nothing more than literary fiction. The terms' origins began with the fictional writings of the ancients Greeks and was later on rediscovered in 16th century Europe. The utopian genre became quite a popular lecture in the 17th century Europe, due to Thomas More's work. As emphasized in the same chapter, if one tries to understand utopias in correlation with ideologies, utopia's fictional side begins to vanish. In other words, utopia becomes a stimulant for implementing a feasible dream. The fiction disappears, so to say! The fantasy becomes reality, when a utopian program is backed up by a particular ideology. Ideology brings out the practical side of the utopian psyche by completely erasing any traces of utopianism. In this sense, ideology promotes a self-denied utopianism.

The attempt to understand utopias in the context of ideologies, became quite a popular trend among intellectuals after the end of the Second World War. There was a dire need to explain and to understand the success of the dictatorships that had been previously established by charismatic leaders such as Hitler or Stalin. It was at that moment in time, that the concept of utopia became to be understood not only as a part of the literary fiction, but also as a tool used in shaping up political myths and programs. This ground breaking attempt had been undertaken for the very first time by Karl Mannheim in *Ideology and Utopia*.⁷²

In the second chapter of the current research, I tried to dissect utopia by stripping it out from all its bounding parts. Such an attempt led the investigation to conclude that utopia is made up from several myths that fuel and strive to answer the human need for certainty. Such primordial myths, as the myth of the paradise and the myth of a civilized human society, have origins that go back to the Greek and Judeo-Christian traditions. With the passing of time, utopia became a rolling moss that gathered all sorts of other elements into its composition. If one regards the myth of the paradise and myth of the millennium as sacred or religious components of utopias, the scientific revolution brought a novelty into the scheme of things:

⁷² Karl Mannheim, *Ideology and Utopia*, An Introduction to the Sociology of Knowledge, Routledge & Kegan Paul Ltd., London

the idea of progress. History began to be understood as having a one way direction: progress. For the greater good of humanity.

In the second chapter I tried to see to what degree the utopian impulse shaped the cultural and political landscape of old Europe. Utopia as mentioned in the second chapter, should be considered primarily as a European invention, even though there are recollections of lost paradises and Arcadias that are being shared by almost every culture in the world. Revolutions, scientific inquiries and overseas explorations were events undertaken by men who were living in an era of grand enterprises. As discussed in the second chapter, the utopian impulse fueled cultural revolutions that were to change the fate of history.

In this third chapter of the present research, I will try to see to what degree the utopian impulse influenced the Liberal Peace Project. Throughout the following pages, I will try to understand the Liberal Peace Project through the lenses of utopian mythology. In other words, I will try to determine if there are any visible traces of utopianism in the way of how the Western World imagined and shaped up the New Liberal World Order. To make the analysis as comprehensible as possible, I have decided to focus my investigation upon the World Order that was promoted in the aftermath of the First World War. As mentioned earlier, traces of utopianism are more easily spotted either before or after a major cultural or political shift. It is because at such times, utopianism is masked by the practicality of ideology. Therefore, I will start my investigation when an older version of the world is being replaced by a newer one. As simple as this premise might sound, something new starts when something old dies. History tells us that a New World Order is always being established at the end of a major international conflict or war. In the context of the present research, I will discuss the World Order institutionalized after the First World War.

3.1 The Balance of Power

Before we greet our man, Woodrow Wilson, and what is often referred to as his own “utopian” school of thought, I need to clarify the concept of *world order*. The concept of world order originates from the 17th century Europe, when the royal houses of modern Europe gathered together at a Peace Conference in the German region of Westphalia, for the sole purpose of ending a thirty year old devastating religious and political war. The war had been able to cripple the early European civilization to a devastating degree. The agreement that came as a result from what is generally known as the Treaty of Westphalia, which ended the Thirty Years’ War (1618-1648), was conducted without the participation or the knowledge of other

civilizations or nations. It was a regional war, after all. The war itself was a mixture of religious and political disputes that culminated in a total war that left one quarter of the population of central Europe dying from starvation, disease or dying as mere combat casualties.⁷³

The peace conveyed at Westphalia, was a world order that mirrored a practical settlement of international regulations. It was an attempt to draw a line based upon a mutually consented status-quo. In a very simplistic manner, this is precisely the meaning of a world order: when something ends, usually a war of crucial importance, and the aftermath of it brings a mutually accepted replacement.⁷⁴ In other words, a brand new status-quo!

In the case of old Europe, the war ended in 1648 with the Treaty of Westphalia. It was conveyed at that moment in time that all nations where from here after, refrained from interfering in each other's domestic policy. Other nations' internal affairs were no longer a concern for a neighboring state. However, if there were any nations that proved to be too ambitious for the regional security as a whole, an alliance should be formed in order to protect the existing settlement. Such a measure would be undertaken, by regulating the regional influence of an ambitious state through a system based on a pragmatically constructed balance of power. In other words, each state had its own right to manage its own domestic territory, according to its native set of cultural and religious values. A state was also obliged to acknowledge and respect the structures of a neighboring nation-state, while refraining to interfere with the existing internal status-quo of any nation.⁷⁵

The system that was envisioned in 17th century Europe was based upon two major political foundations. The first part was comprised of a set of universally acknowledged values and rules, which define the limits and the acceptable actions of every nation state. The second component was defined by the balance of power, which enforces punitive actions toward any attempts related to hegemony. That is to say, regional power in the hands of one nation state was inadmissible and therefore punitively sanctioned.⁷⁶

Henry Kissinger argues, that the system of the balance of power didn't come alone in the new world order created after the Westphalian Treatise. There was also the concept of *raison d'état*, which played quite a significant role in the maintenance and in the institutionalization of the new European order. The concept of *raison d'état*, promoted the idea that the well-being of a particular state or if you will, the national interest of any given nation-state, should always

⁷³ Henry A. Kissinger, *World Order*, Penguin Press, New York, 2014, p.3

⁷⁴ *Ibid.*, p.5

⁷⁵ *Ibid.*, p.7

⁷⁶ *Ibid.*, pp.3-10

come first in the context of external affairs. That is to say, when a statesman has in mind the wealth and the welfare of his own nation, whatever the means a state might use, everything is perfectly justified. *Raison d'état* was able to provide a comprehensive guide toward the behavior of particular states.⁷⁷ Paradoxically, the balance of power and *raison d'état* coexisted and influenced the European way of making politics for a more than three centuries.

According to Kissinger, the balance of power had to be restored after Napoleon's defeat. The world order created after the Napoleonic Wars, in what is often referred to as the Congress of Vienna from 1814, established the longest period of peace that Europe has ever known.⁷⁸ It lasted exactly 100 years! The agreement that resulted after the Congress of Vienna, reinforced the previously created system of balance of power, not by using power alone to overthrow a hegemonic ambitious state, but rather by enforcing the power equilibrium through the idea of a shared European culture. What made the balance of power stronger than it was before was the idea that, the courts of Europe shared the same level of legitimacy in maintaining a regional state of peace. In other words, it was a matter of survival. Due to the civic upheaval from 1789 in France, the major concern was now being directed towards the protection of the aristocracy of old Europe. Paradoxically, the same system also permitted the existence of a "behind the scenes" or secret diplomacy between European courts, which influenced European nations to form alliances in order to secure their regional autonomy.⁷⁹ It was a mixture of intertwined regional and European (international at that time) accords and alliances. In other words, a very complex and quite a vulnerable political framework.

The First World War, also known as the "Great War", started out after the assassination of the Austro-Hungarian heir to the throne, Franz Ferdinand and his wife, Sophie, on 28th of June 1914.⁸⁰ It is considered a cruel and a rather absurd irony of fate, the story which describes the events occurring on that particular day. It is believed that the crown prince survived unharmed after the first assassination attempt undertaken by Princip Gavrilo, in the early hours of June 28th. The assassin managed to wound only the royal driver in his first try. Leaving the crime scene to a nearby café in order to drown his sorrows in liquor, the assassin "providentially" met the royal couple after the newly appointed chauffeur took a wrong turn at an intersection, while driving the couple to the hospital where the first victim was being hospitalized. The assassin did not fail this time.⁸¹

⁷⁷ Henry Kissinger, *Diplomacy*, Simon & Schuster, New York, 1994, pp.75-77

⁷⁸ *Ibid.*, p.79

⁷⁹ *Ibid.*, p.137

⁸⁰ Ian J. Gawood, David McKinnon-Bell, *The First World War*, Routledge, 2002, p.2

⁸¹ Henry Kissinger, *Diplomacy*, *op.cit.*, p.209

In July 1914, the Austro-Hungarian monarchy declared war and delivered their ultimatum to Serbia, while being assured by their German allies for backup in case of any potential Russian repercussions. Precise calculations for and against the war, were made on both sides of Europe. The monarchies were prepared to go to war.⁸² Excitement followed in the form of popular support and mass military enrolment. The shared opinion in Germany and Austria was that the war would be a very quick one. By the time winter arrives, the war would be over with.⁸³

Relevant to the present research, is not how the war manifested itself in the battle of the trenches. As any other armed regional conflict from history, people die and national economies collapse. The war crippled yet again the old European continent, whose nation-states seemed to know no other way than by waging war against one another, in order to deal with international dilemmas. Waging a justified war against a hegemonic state, that threatened the European status-quo was a legacy inherited from the old system of the balance of power. This time however, the war was as destructive and as total as never before. For the very first time in history, industry and technology were being employed in order to further the national military effort.⁸⁴ Mass destruction followed. In the context of the present study, the way that the war was conducted is of no significant importance. I am more interested to see the peace debate that followed the ending of the war. That is to say, the new world order that followed in the aftermath.

3.2 Idealism, utopianism and Woodrow Wilson

Nothing about the First World War went as it was previously planned in the tobacco thickened chambers of royal Europe. Initially, the idea of waging war seemed to be a very attractive one. According to Kissinger, because nothing went as planned from the beginning of the war, nothing would go as planned in the peace agreement that would follow at the end of it.⁸⁵ The First World War claimed the lives of more than twenty-five million people and destroyed the old European order agreed upon at the Vienna Congress from 1814. The old balance of power system had to be replaced by a new world order. This time however, a world

⁸² Michael Howard, *The First World War: a very short Introduction*, Oxford University Press, 2007, p.15

⁸³ Ian J. Gawwood, David McKinnom Bell, *idem.*, p.3

⁸⁴ *Ibid.*, p.5

⁸⁵ Henry Kissinger, *Diplomacy, op.cit.*, p.218

order that was dictated by the Liberals of the New World.⁸⁶ And this is precisely where we want to see utopianism at work.

The central figure in the making of the New World Order that came after the Treaty of Versailles from 1919, is considered to be the 28th president of the United States, Woodrow Wilson. Wilson changed the course of history. Few historians disagree on the idea that, Wilson was a deeply religious person. Often times his line of thought was associated with that of a Christian minister, in the sense of having a world view that was profoundly influenced by his Presbyterian belief and his discourse was filled with moral Christian values. In this respect, Wilson wasn't always able to distinguish between the secular and the sacred aspects of the world.⁸⁷ The way he envisioned the Peace Treaty at Versailles, would sparkle the first major debate in the field of International Relations. The political movement initiated by Wilson is known as *wilsonianism*, and it envisioned a peace project that was quite an ambitious program for that particular moment in history. Wilson led the peace discussion at Versailles toward ethics, interdependence and transnationalism. He did it in an age of imperial collapse. It is no wonder that the believers of the old school of pragmatic politics, the *realists*, often labelled the liberals as *utopian* or *idealist* scholars.⁸⁸ It must have been quite a novelty to hear about notions that promoted autonomy, interdependence, self-determination and transparency. Overall, it must have been quite a shock to bring ethics into the realm of politics. It undermined the idea of *raison d'état* which had survived in the Old World for three centuries already.

The movement initiated by Wilson at the end of World War One, opposed realism and its system based on the balance of power. In Wilson's opinion, the primary cause for the occurrence of the war was exactly this rigid form of precise diplomatic and political calculations that dominated European politics for more than three centuries. It was the failure to understand the human nature which was intrinsically good, claimed Wilson and his followers, one of the root causes of WWI. The utopian school of thought that revolved around Wilson's ideals, called for universal disarmament, the banishment of war wagging politics and for the institutionalization of an international framework that would encourage cooperation between nation-states. In other words, it called for a re-evaluation of the true nature of men, who are believed to have a noble and gentle heart. Wilson was accused of being incapable of understanding the historical reality. The accusations that were made against Wilson's doctrine,

⁸⁶ Henry Kissinger, *World Order, op.cit.*, p.83

⁸⁷ Malcolm Magee (2011) Woodrow Wilson, Wilsonianism, and the idealism of faith, *The Review of Faith & International Affairs*, 9:4, 29-38

⁸⁸ Oliver Richmond, *Peace in International Relations*, Routledge, 2008, p.21

were focused around the idea that *idealists* were unable to comprehend the concept of power, as it manifested itself throughout historical experience.⁸⁹

In a speech given to the Senate, in January 1918, Wilson listed his famous fourteen points, in which he stressed upon the reasons for which United States was fighting the war in the first place. United States entered the war in 1917, and the shared general belief of the population, was that the north-American nation is fighting a war that doesn't actually concern the well-being of the state. In other words, it was not their war they were fighting for in the first place. It made no difference for the general population what happens over the Atlantic Ocean. The most striking aspect of Wilson's Peace Program, is that none of the fourteen points ever mentions the idea of democracy. In the final section of this chapter, I will discuss how and when the idea of democracy became blended in the movement. What Wilson stresses upon in his program is the idea of self-determination, the right of peoples to independent development, autonomous and territorial integrity. The authors argue, that Wilson sought not for democracy but for self-determination. The idea of self-determination came in an era that followed the collapse of multi-ethnic empires. Wilson felt responsible for the rights of minorities within such multi-ethnic conglomerates, and he fought for their right to decide their own fate and form of government. The program required backup from other nations worldwide in order to be implemented. The idea formulated by Wilson was that of protecting the newly established World Order with its beliefs, in the form of an association of states. League of Nations would be born under this very pretext.⁹⁰

Wilson imagined how the post-war peace ought to look like. He didn't want Germany to be punished for its imperialistic aspirations. He wanted most of all, a non-punitive settlement and a new world order based upon international cooperation.⁹¹ It was his personal belief that by blaming Germany for the outburst of the war, will lead only to more trouble in the near future. He wasn't far away from the historical truth. Wilson invited Germany to cooperate with United States and other peace-loving nations in a League of Nations designed primarily to enforce the abolishment of war and violence. As mentioned before, democracy wasn't initially mentioned in this process and in his doctrine.⁹² Democracy would come a bit later.

According to Kissinger, the Treaty of Versailles failed in its objectives because the document was too punitive for reconciliation. The peace agreement was too lenient to maintain

⁸⁹ *Ibid.*, p.21

⁹⁰ John G. Ikenberry, Thomas J. Knock, Anne-Marie Slaughter, Tony Smith, *The Crisis of American Foreign Policy*, Princeton University Press, p.92

⁹¹*Ibid.*, p.94

⁹² *Ibid.*, pp.93-97

Germany's recovery. It promoted an obsessive attitude that made democracies keep a watchful eye over any attempt of vengeance that might come from Germany's side. In the end, the new world order envisioned by Wilson in his fourteen point's doctrine, was not resembling at all the post-war status-quo. The new world order failed to achieve legitimacy or equilibrium.⁹³

According to some authors, Wilson can be seen as a prophet or as the herald of a new world order.⁹⁴ On the 11th of November 1918, the war ended and the armistice was signed on the premises of Wilson's fourteen points. Wilson, loved by millions of people worldwide, became the dominant figure on the international arena. Wilson was about to change the course of history. Wilson replaced the old system of balance of power, with a political framework built upon international institutions of collective cooperation. Such institutions were to be enforced by the principles of equality and cooperation. The belief was that such international institutions, would survive the passing of time and would get their legitimacy from the consent of governments worldwide. Governments that ought to be supported by the national will, not by force alone.⁹⁵

One of the problems found in Woodrow Wilson's utopian program, was exactly the question of legitimacy. The moral assumptions announced in his Fourteen Points, didn't have the backup and the support of the ideological propaganda. In this respect wilsonianism, as a utopian movement was unable to find its practicality in the ideological spectrum. It was just too lenient. The fourteen points of Wilson's doctrine were formulated in an imprecise manner, by using an almost evangelical tone that unrealistically encouraged popular expectations and produced confusion among the peacemakers of Versailles. Wilson understood the urgent need to construct a new world order but, according to his fellow colleagues at the Conference of Versailles, he was inclined to shape the future by neglecting the past experiences in accordance with the current realities.⁹⁶ Three centuries of European politics imbedded in pragmatism and suspicion could not be so easily swept away.

Wilson was trying to change the social and cultural landscape of old Europe, with the moral values of early Christian settlers that found a refuge in United States. Often labeled as the prophet of a new world order, Wilson realized the complexity of his task after his arrival in Europe and after the meetings he had had with the European ministers. Worth mentioning here, is the popular gossip or joke if you will, that describes the meeting of a Princeton graduate

⁹³ Henry Kissinger, *World Order, op.cit.*, pp.82-86

⁹⁴ Erez Manela, *Wilsonian Moment*, Oxford University Press, 2007, p.16

⁹⁵ *Ibid.*, pp.16-30

⁹⁶ Arthur Walworth, *Wilson and his Peacemakers*, W. W. Norton & Company, New York, 1986, pp.3-5

student who met Wilson in Paris, and asked the US president: “Well, what are you doing over here, Mr. Wilson?” The utopian peacemaker, tired and bewildered by the unshakable values of the Old World replied: “I’m really not sure that I know anymore”.⁹⁷

The idealist movement that was shaped by Wilson at the end of the war, promoted the idea of internationalism and interdependence, a form of peace without the need of war, universal disarmament, the concept of self-determination and the need of a cooperative federation of states.⁹⁸ The era of American internationalism had begun.

In the field of International Relations, the concept of utopianism became connected with the events occurring in the aftermath of the First World War. Wilson’s utopianism, as shown above, referred to an extensive search of feasible solutions to prevent any future conflict from happening thereafter. The text that described the first “great debate” of Liberal Peace is considered to be E. H. Carr’s *The Twenty Years’ Crisis*.⁹⁹ Carr was able to identify traces of utopianism in the liberal assumptions promoted by Wilson and his followers. For E. H. Carr, the idea of harmonized interests among nations, the idea of progress, the notion of self-determination and the idea of international law guarded by the principles of collective security, were primarily linked to a utopian way of making politics.¹⁰⁰

There are six main ideas that make up the doctrine promoted by Woodrow Wilson, in the first two decades of the 20th century. The first idea, talks about the foundation of a peaceful world order that had to be built on a community of democratic nations. Democracies are to be trusted, because they had been chosen by the general public in order to represent their political will. The second idea, referred to the civilizing and to the modernizing consequences brought about by free trade and socioeconomic partnerships. It was Wilson’s belief that trade would strengthen cooperation among international actors. In the third place, international law and international institutions have the same civilizing role of strengthening the political framework, and ruling out the possibility of warring war. The fourth assumption brings innovative notions, such as collective security, which promotes a system of peace that regulates arms control, disarmament, self-determination and the freedom of international seas. This fourth idea gave birth to what was to be called, the League of Nations. The fifth key assumption, talked about the possibility of institutionalizing the previously suggested points, such as democracy, free trade, associative security, because the new world order was moving in a progressive direction.

⁹⁷ *Ibid.*, p.63

⁹⁸ Oliver Richmond, *Idem.*, pp.23-39

⁹⁹ Milan Babik, *Statecraft and Salvation, Wilsonian Liberal Internationalism as secularized eschatology*, Baylor University Press, 2013, p.4

¹⁰⁰ *Ibid.*, p.5

It was Wilson's belief that the forces of history, were already moving toward a modernizing direction that fit perfectly with his own line of thought. The final key statement and the most striking one, talks about the role and the responsibilities of the USA in this new world order of things to come. United States have the responsibility to lead, protect and inspire the world in the future. United States of America was God's chosen carrier of progressive change.¹⁰¹

The idea promoted by Wilson, that the United States of America was the voice for progressive and modernizing change in the world, would bring paradoxical and rather questionable problems for the future diplomacy of the nation. Such problems persist even today, and are found in the United States' diplomatic rhetoric: the awkward duality between what might be liberal internationalism or liberal imperialism.¹⁰²

3.3 Utopia and Pax Democratica

The world order was in dire need of change in the aftermath of the First World War. Wilson understood the failure of the old European way of doing politics with its backward system of balance of power. He later on assumed the role of a prophet in the making of the New World Order. Peace had to be institutionalized and mutually guarded by international laws and by an association of states. Wilson promoted the idea of a world order based on Liberal principles yet as mentioned above, in his Fourteen Points program he didn't make any visible references toward the importance of democracy. The main idea of his utopian doctrine was the notion of self-determination that began to flourish in the ruins and with the collapse of old imperial empires. The idea of self-determination didn't stress upon the importance of liberal democracy as the only possible form of governance. Self-determination referred primarily to the right of people to choose and consent to their own form of government.¹⁰³

One of the most significant aspects of the first great debate in International Relations, was that of approaching international problems by using interventionism as a method to deal with regional or international crisis. I argue, that Woodrow Wilson failed as a prophet of the new world order because his utopian doctrine lacked the ideological support. Wilsonianism remained a legacy that was later on readopted and readjusted to fit with the rhetoric of democratic peace theory.

¹⁰¹ John G. Ikenberry, *Woodrow Wilson, the Bush Administration, and the Future of Liberal Internationalism*, in "The Crisis of American Foreign Policy", Princeton University Press, 2008, pp.11-13

¹⁰² *Ibid.*, p.13

¹⁰³ Anne-Marie Slaughter, *Wilsonianism in the Twenty first century*, in "The Crisis of American Foreign Policy", Princeton University Press, 2008, pp.93-97

In this short sub chapter, I argue that utopia was redefined in terms of what accounts as democratic peace. The secular myths promoted by medieval utopias, such as progress and human perfectibility, were reshaped in order to fit the discourse and with the rhetoric of *pax democratica*. In other words, the search for utopia began with the idea that the world would be a better place if all the countries in the world would adopt democracy as the only form of government.

The primordial idea surrounding the democratic peace theory is that democracies do not go to war with one another. In other words, democracies don't wage war against other fellow democracies. According to this theory, democracies are less violent and more peaceful than authoritarian or dictatorial forms of government. This idea was quite popular in the 1960's, among North American and Scandinavian scholars.¹⁰⁴ Barth argues, that it is extremely difficult to test the practicality of this theory due to its inaccurate definitions of what counts as democracies and what connection there is between them and the notion of peace. Barth concludes that the plausibility of democratic peace theory depends mostly on how we define democracy and peace.¹⁰⁵

Some other scholars argue, that democracy does exactly what the Christian missionaries once did in the colonial times. It makes democracy a sort of a secular gospel, through which the unfaithful might receive political redemption.¹⁰⁶

But is the concept of democratic peace, part of a self-denied utopian way of making politics? Or in other words, can the Liberal Peace Project taken at large, be a part of a Liberal Utopia? In its radical form, liberalism considers the establishment of a universal truth that dictates the values of society, as the crime of all crimes. In other words, there is no greater evil than the universal truth that claims itself to be self-explanatory. For Slavoj Žižek, this is the ultimate paradox of the liberal utopia: the democratic peace theory with its universal assumption that capitalist democracies are the only way to do it.¹⁰⁷

The author concludes, that the price payed for the liberal peace utopia, while it paradoxically promotes its anti-utopian character, can be found in the violence that accompanies the victories of liberal capitalism.¹⁰⁸

¹⁰⁴ Boris Barth, *The Democratic Peace Controversy, A critical Survey*, Norwegian Institute for Defence Studies, Oslo, 2008, p.8

¹⁰⁵ *Ibid.*, p.12

¹⁰⁶ Mathurin C. Hounknikpo (2003), *Pax Democratica: The Gospel according to St. Democracy*, Australian Journal of Politics and History, Vol. 49, No. 2, pp.187-210

¹⁰⁷ Slavoj Žižek, (2008) The Violence of the Liberal Utopia, *Distinktion: Journal of Social Theory*, 9:2, 9-25

¹⁰⁸ *Ibid.*

3.4 Revisiting wilsonianism, democracy and violence in the 21st Century

Some scholars argue that until the late 1990's, American scholarship neglected completely to study in a comparative manner, one of the most ambitious goals of American foreign policy: that of promoting democracy worldwide.¹⁰⁹ As seen before, the road to liberal internationalism was opened by Wilson at the Peace Conference from Paris, in 1919. Since then, the pathway opened by Wilson has been reevaluated and revisited in times of need. The duality between "liberal internationalism" and "liberal imperialism" had always followed the US's foreign policy in the 20th century. As we shall see further on, the duality is present even today. Wilson's doctrine has been reshaped and reevaluated in different manners, so that the idea of democratic interventionism would fit with the democratic peace rhetoric. One might even say that, Wilsonianism became a market brand created in order to promote and justify the export of democracy worldwide. Such a trend will be discussed in the following pages. I will try not to place the contemporary understanding of wilsonianism and the political consequences that are being brought with it, neither in the "liberal internationalism" sphere nor in the "liberal imperialism" one. I am primarily interested to see how the rhetoric shifts and changes according to a given circumstance.

If for some scholars mentioned above, democracy wasn't explicitly mentioned in Wilson's *Fourteen Points* as something to fight for and to promote on a global scale¹¹⁰, for the author mentioned above, democracy was precisely the reason for which United States declared war against Germany in the first place: "to make the world safe for democracy".¹¹¹ The author concludes that Wilsonianism, can be regarded as the most important contribution to the international history of the 20th century.¹¹²

In this final section of my thesis, I will be focusing my attention on the contemporary understanding of Wilson's international legacy, as it was redefined and reformulated by the United States immediately after the end of the Cold War. More accurately, I will investigate George W. Bush's public rhetoric, to see if it fits with Wilsonianism's line of thought. I am interested to see the political consequences of contemporary wilsonianism. I argue that United States' "grandiose purpose"¹¹³ to promote democracy on a global scale, while maintaining its

¹⁰⁹ Tony Smith, *America's Mission: The United States and the Worldwide struggle for democracy*, Princeton University Press, 2012, p.5

¹¹⁰ The author referred to here is Anne-Marie Slaughter, *Wilsonianism in the Twenty first century*, in "The Crisis of American Foreign Policy", Princeton University Press, 2008.

¹¹¹ Tony Smith, *Idem.*, p.5

¹¹² *Ibid.*, p.6

¹¹³ Robert W. Tucker, (1993) *The triumph of Wilsonianism*, World Policy Journal, 10:4, p.83

own role as a leader in this endeavor, is precisely a part of a Wilsonian way of thinking. Moreover, I argue that with such visible traces of wilsonianism in this equation, the political actions undertaken by the state, also promote a certain type of violence that adopts a public rhetoric focused primarily on morality and international ethics. In other words, I argue that the contemporary understanding of international wilsonianism, opens the door for a philosophical interpretation and inquiry, which describes the export of democratic values worldwide as a justifier for certain acts of violence.¹¹⁴

After the fall of the Soviet Union, collectively regarded as the moment which ended the Cold War, Wilson's legacy reemerged. However, the contemporary understanding of wilsonianism differed completely from its original form. This time, Wilson was dressed in a totally different mantle, while still serving the same purposes. However, the methods of conducting diplomacy changed.¹¹⁵ Some authors even argued, that the fall of the Soviet Bloc showed how efficient democracy really was in the previously fought ideological warfare.¹¹⁶ After all, and in the end, democracy won! Such a premise led the same author to conclude that the democratic post-industrial civilization, is the final step in mankind's cultural and political evolution. That is to say, there's nothing more left in the future, other than democracy of course. This is it! History as process ends here, with democracy.¹¹⁷

In the following pages, I am interested to see the foreign policy conducted by George W. Bush's administration, in the years following the terrorist attacks from September 11, 2001. The diplomacy conducted under Bush's administration, is regarded to be one of the most controversial in the history of the United States. It promoted a new doctrine of national security based on very ambitious ideas about the dominant role that ought to be played by the US in the field of International Relations. The doctrine also stressed upon the preventive uses of force, alliances of the willing and, the most intriguing idea in my opinion, the struggle between good¹¹⁸ and evil.¹¹⁹

Ikenberry argues that the same doctrine promoted by Bush, also provided the intellectual support for the invasion of Iraq, in 2003. The moral reasons for such a devastating war, could be traced back to Wilson and his own idealist program. The Bush administration invoked some

¹¹⁴ Slavoj Žizek, (2008) *The Violence of the Liberal Utopia*, *op.cit.*

¹¹⁵ Robert W. Tucker, *op.cit.*

¹¹⁶ Francis Fukuyama, *The End of History and the Last Man*, Perennial, 2002.

¹¹⁷ *Ibid.*

¹¹⁸ I am using the term "good" in the text, while referring to the political understanding of the concept, which can be similar to liberty or freedom

¹¹⁹ John G. Ikenberry, *Woodrow Wilson, the Bush Administration, and the Future of Liberal Internationalism*, in "The Crisis of American Foreign Policy", Princeton University Press, 2008.

of Wilson's ideas, such as the need to export democratic institutions worldwide, in order to safeguard the international peace and to justify some of its actions, like the invasion mentioned above.¹²⁰ The author tries to see to what degree the Bush administration followed Wilson's ideological program. In other words, how true and righteous Bush's administration really was in regards to Wilson's international institutionalism. In order to find an answer for this inquiry, Ikenberry suggests five key questions, two of which are of crucial importance to our research.¹²¹

The first key question raised by Ikenberry, is that of trying to assess if the invasion of Iraq was really undertaken in the name of democracy, even if that meant the use of military strategy and force, or was it done for the sake of some neo-imperial agenda, where democracy was used as nothing more than a figure of speech? The second question raised by Ikenberry, talks about the very idea of Wilsonianism, and its logic. The author tries to see, how much of the spread of democracy can be found in the original sketches, or in Wilson's initial approach toward International Relations. Was the spread of democracy there in the first place? Is democracy the main idea of Wilsonianism, or is it rather the notion of international law and associative security? This question is quite controversial, because it somehow presents the idea of democracy as something that was added a bit later in the process, or in other words, the export of democracy can be seen as a fabricated symbol, primarily masked as belonging to the program of international institutionalism. Either way, there is no doubt that the very idea of democracy justified and legitimized the use of military force in Iraq.¹²²

The complete statement of Bush's strategic policy came after the September 11 terrorist attacks, in what is now called the 2002 National Security Strategy.¹²³ The program envisions the USA as a "unipolar state positioned above and beyond the rules and institutions of the global system, providing security and enforcing the international order"¹²⁴. Ikenberry argues, that the doctrine portrayed by the 2002 National Security Strategy, makes the United States of America the leader and the sole provider of the ultimate global public good: peace, order and democracy. The Bush doctrine promoted the idea of having the right to use force anywhere around the globe against terrorists with global aspirations. It would do so without the support of conventional alliances, but simply with a coalition of the willing nations. United States would use anticipatory action if the circumstance required it, in order to fight terrorism or overthrow authoritarian regimes. The action by itself would be morally acceptable and self-legitimizing.

¹²⁰ *Ibid.*, p.1

¹²¹ *Ibid.*, pp.2-5

¹²² *Ibid.*, pp.2-5

¹²³ <http://www.state.gov/documents/organization/63562.pdf>, retrieved on 12th of March, 2016

¹²⁴ John G. Ikenberry, *op.cit.*, p.7

Countries around the world would be a part of this fight against terrorism and the forces of evil. The equation was drawn in a very simplistic manner: countries were “either with us or against us”.¹²⁵

The idea that the world would be made safer place for democracy, with the help and with the protection of the US’s government, was the “backdrop” that supported the invasion of Iraq and the promulgation of a “global war on terror”. However, argues Ikenberry, the rhetoric changed along the way: the war against terrorism became less a fight against the forces of evil and more an attempt to overthrow dictatorships.¹²⁶ That is to say, the Bush administration changed the discourse from fighting against the dark forces of evil from around the world, into a fight against the socioeconomic circumstances that encourage the spread of terrorism. To some extent, Bush was going beyond Wilson’s beliefs. He thought that democracy alone couldn’t overcome tyranny without the involvement of US in the scheme of things. A safe transition toward democracy would be impossible without the help and involvement of the US.¹²⁷

¹²⁵ *Ibid.*, pp.7-8

¹²⁶ *Ibid.*, pp.8-9

¹²⁷ *Ibid.*, p.9

Conclusions

My investigation started out to set sails into the realm of *Utopias!* I tried to analyze utopia from a historical, philosophical, literary and psychological point of view, all in order to find out if the concept has the ability to establish and promote any form of visible violence. In other words, I asked myself if there would be any crimes that were committed in Paradise! My investigation set out to define the concept of utopia as it is. While exploring the existing definitions of the concept, I found out that utopia is primarily understood and defined, as a form of literary or creative writing. The theoretical body of utopias is found after all, in fictional literature. Utopia refers to the land of Eternal Peace, the Lost Paradise, the Blessed Isle of the World, and the Land with No Evil. The idea of the Paradise, or utopia as the modern understanding of it, is to be found and is shared by every culture of the world. It is a way of evading the present day reality, while constructing an imaginary island, where peace is eternal and people are living a well-balanced and harmonious life. It is the world, or the land behind the present one.

However, my inquiry was that of finding out if utopias were prone to violence. Can a man, unconsciously of course, climb down from the Paradise and reach Hell instead? I found out that utopias unleash violence only when ideology comes along. The formula changes when the political spectrum is involved. The triumvirate of violence that I was looking for, with its levels of direct/symbolic/systemic forms of violence, can be found only when ideology enforces a given utopian project. When such an agreement between ideology and utopia occurs, violence is constantly being generated and promoted by the general propaganda. That is to say, utopia is violent only when ideology is there to back up the program. My investigation resulted in finding out that when such a moment arrives, utopia is no longer considered utopia. In other words, the utopian daydreaming transforms itself into a project with feasible social and political consequences. I followed this theoretical paradox throughout my research. I found out that, by juxtaposing utopia and ideology in a theoretical analysis, there is only a blurry conceptual line separating one concept from the other. In such a case, there is always a difficulty in assessing if a program is utopian or not. When ideology comes along, because of its dogmatic quality, the pattern of the political discourse promotes a self-denied and an anti-utopian approach towards politics.

When the political goal is that of reaching a self-denied utopian stage of development, ideology masks violence into a form of legitimate political strategy. That is to say, violence is no longer considered a crime. When the ultimate goal of a given society is that of reaching the

Never Ending Peace, everything is justified and considered to be legitimate. In order to approach such a violent political strategy, ideology justifies its aggressiveness as a necessary tool of dealing with the *Otherness of the Other*. Ideology builds up the myth of the *Other*, as the symbolic obstacle that has to be removed in order to reach the ultimate state of progress. There are some crimes in Paradise, after all! Even though they are self-denied.

I focused my investigation upon the impact that utopia had upon the social, political and cultural landscape of Europe. By dissecting the concept to its bare roots, I found out that the utopian myth is build up from other several myths, which are grounded in the Judeo-Christian tradition. Utopia is a concept that was invented in 16th century Europe by Thomas More. Because the concept is primarily considered a European invention, I set out to see to what degree the utopian way of thinking, influenced the political and cultural landscape of the continent. The paintings from the first chapter of my research, were created before the concept of utopia was even coined. The most striking message from these paintings of Bosch and di Paolo, is the myth of the Lost Paradise. It is undoubtedly, this myth of the paradise, the inner force behind the modern utopia. As seen throughout the second chapter of my research, utopia gathered other myths into its composition. The secular understanding of utopia, which emerged during the Enlightenment, labels utopia as progress. It is progress towards what a society is heading for. By looking backwards, history is driving the human society towards progress.

The utopian impulse is usually present when an older version of the world, or as I have mentioned in the third chapter of the thesis, when the old world order is being replaced by a newer version. The process of reshaping a world order brings along a campaign of utopian inspired programs. I tried to analyze the movement that was initiated by Woodrow Wilson, in the aftermath of the First World War. I asked myself if there were any traces of utopianism present in his program of shaping up a new Liberal World Order. I argue that early 20th century wilsonianism, is to a large extent influenced by utopianism, due to its inability to get the required ideological support.

Contemporary interpretation of wilsonianism, as seen in the final section of the research, is more ideologically fit than its predecessor. Wilsonianism is to be understood as a way of intervening in international affairs, while having an ethically oriented mission or goal. The events from 11th of September 2001, triggered an ideologically supported political strategy, which readapts some of Wilson's ideas into its main theoretical core. Yet again, I ask myself as Zizek points out, is the modern wilsonianism a self-denied utopian doctrine followed by a

violent political strategy?¹²⁸ As argued before, there is no clear line between the concepts at hand. However, the modern understanding of wilsonianism is readjusting and reformulating its political rhetoric and discourse as the international circumstances require it.

There was a certain, and a rather ambiguous theoretical paradox that followed the current investigation. While utopias might envision the purest of all heavens, in its blueprints of course, the same utopian impulse fueled by ideology, might lead humanity to a slavish state of existence. Is there a visible difference between utopias and dystopias? Is it possible for a society to distinguish between Heaven and Hell? Yes, it can. But only when it is too late! Ending with Oscar Wilde, when Humanity lands there, either in Heaven or Hell, it looks out, or, seeing a better country, sets sail again.¹²⁹

¹²⁸ Slavoj Žižek, (2008) The Violence of the Liberal Utopia, *Distinktion: Journal of Social Theory*, 9:2, 9-25

¹²⁹ Oscar Wilde, *op.cit.*, p.27

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