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„*Sic placet an melius quis habet suadere?*

An Examination of the Golden Age, Arcadia and the Cosmopolis as Stoic and Epicurean Proto-Utopian Paradigms in Roman Literature."

verfasst von / submitted by

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Willst du ins Unendliche schreiten,
gehe nur im Endlichen nach allen Seiten.

(Johann Wolfgang von Goethe)

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Introduction and Acknowledgements

Utopian tendencies have been a ubiquitous phenomenon as far as human thought dates back. Be it in biblical paradise visions, in post-apocalyptic narratives of transcendental bliss or in the plenteous (socialist) dreams of equality, we automatically stumble upon utopian projection screens when we glimpse at the earliest literary incarnations. Contemporary outlets encompass, among others, the longing for physical perfectibility, the elevation of life to a spiritually infused ontological state or the institution of global peace. The feasibility of such high-aiming projects, however, is not only profoundly questionable, but diametrically opposed to current proceedings on the world stage. A glance at the daily newspapers, which do not tire of solemnly heralding the advent of a post-factual age, suffices to witness a vast array of pernicious socio-political inclinations that include, but are not limited to sebastomania, jingoism, terrorism, corruption, cronyism, debaucheries or truth-distorting rhetoric practices. In other words, even though the present is suffused with a plethora of utopian desires, it must appear as a dystopian nightmare that has come true to time travelers from the past. The omnipresent stare into the abyss of nihilism is nowadays permanently forced upon enlightened and rationally endowed human agents who are not willing to bury their heads in the sand. This curious juxtaposition of destabilizing practices of meaning dissolution as well as the abominable sanctioning of human rights violations, which we encounter on a daily basis, and the incessant future-oriented desire to effectuate both individual and societal betterment has sparked my initial interest in the topic.

With this motivational foundation, I took a ride back on the temporal axis of utopian thought patterns and landed, as so often in my life, in the safe haven of Greek and Roman literature. In light of the fact that utopia proper starts not in antiquity, but in the early modern period with Thomas Morus' eponymous work (and broad scholarly consensus reigns supreme on this issue!), I was deflected from my original intention to compare and contrast ancient utopian models that generate societal blueprints, as this would be a highly contestable and anachronistic endeavor. Instead, I came to the conclusion that I could do greater justice to the extant literature by singling out three conceptual templates, the Golden Age, Arcadia and the Cosmopolis, and shed light on them with the torch of Stoic and Epicurean philosophy. The primary aim of this thesis is to examine whether these three literary paradigms can be classified as *proto-utopian* due to their critical negotiation between historically grounded realities and processes of fictitious representation, more precisely the drafting of alternative visions.

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In order to approximate and then define the term *proto-utopian*, I decided to elevate the rhetorical question *Sic placet an melius quis habet suadere?* to the catchphrase of the present thesis. Taken from one of the soon-to-be-discussed texts, Horace's *Epode* 16 (V. 23), this admittedly decontextualized proposition conveys a tone that ranges from jovial-inquisitive to skeptical-subversive. Due to its semantic fluidity, it provides a fertile soil to foreshadow and triangulate three aspects that are pivotal for the examination of *proto-utopia*: the first part of the slightly ironic question *sic placet?* implies (1) a critical scrutiny of contemporary deficiencies and (2) a concomitant awareness-raising of prevailing flaws. Step (3) is encapsulated by the remainder of the question *an melius quis habet suadere?* The comparative adjective *melius* suggests the existence of an alternative that preferably leads to a betterment, if not to say an idealization, of the present conditions – on a personal or a societal level, or both.

Taking these three parameters, i.e. critique, consciousness-raising and compensation, as a springboard for our subsequent investigations, we shall soon discover how the selected Roman authors, including Cicero, Lucretius, Vergil, Horace, Seneca, Epictetus and Marcus Aurelius, tackle issues pertinent to tensions between individualism/collectivism, a teleological, cyclical or post-apocalyptic vision of humanity's development, (gender) equality, ideas on the origins of justice and early forms of communism, the equitable distribution of resources, the capacity for self-actualization and the right of political co-determination in their writings. Ancillary, yet non-negligible areas encompass the following: How does the (in)determinacy of time and place affect the communication of political messages? Can literature itself be a *proto-utopian locus*, i.e. an idealized space of retreat? How are philosophical bipolarities between mind-body-dichotomies, notions of stability and dynamicity, freedom, happiness and normativity, abundance and restraint, nature and nurture or perpetually renewable desire and frugality resolved? If the *proto-utopian* vision is predicated on a narrative of progress, is intellectual, spiritual and historical stagnancy to be equalized with death? Instead of offering tailor-made answers to these critical questions, I will capitalize both on the polyvalent nature of myth and on the interpretative openness of philosophical treatises to demonstrate that the selected bodies of thought convey a potential for social empowerment and democratic agency, despite warrantable objections that pinpoint the frequent entanglement of (proto-)utopian deliberations and the exploitative practices of ideology.

In the hopes that these preliminary remarks will make my thesis palatable to potential future readers, who should not be complete novices to the field of Classical Philology, I shall close the content-related outlook for now by briefly elaborating on my choice of the introductory quote to this section. Despite the fact that his *Epistles* have a metaliterary rather

than a *proto-utopian* focus, Horace tangentially adumbrates four key features that are of utmost interest for our purposes. First, the Augustan poet mentions *verum*, i.e. seeking for explorations of the truth; second, he intersperses *decens*, which alludes to appropriate behaviors or, more generally, the realm of practical ethics. The third tenet of his compositional style relates to mindfulness-exercises which are encapsulated in the hendiadys *curo et rogo*. Finally, when Horace couples *condo et conpono*, he refers to the function of literature as a site of imaginative escapism, of progressive visioning and of drafting alternative cognitions or even a parallel universe. These four pillars can, par for par, be apportioned to the concept of *proto-utopia* too, as shall be demonstrated shortly.

Formulating these ideas while delving into the ever so enticing cosmos of Roman and Greek literature would have been a sheer impossibility for me without the affection and support of the ones closest to me. To begin with, I owe tremendous words of thanks to my family. My acknowledgements go, on the one hand, to my siblings Sebastian, Severin, Benedikt and Anastasia. In their distinctive ways, they managed to restore my emotional equilibrium – be it with lightweight distraction or with painstakingly accurate satiric remarks –, when I felt overtaxed with the continuously growing pile of required readings. On the other hand, my parents merit my highest esteem. Their inspirational *curricula vitae* have always been models worthy of emulation for me and their endless patience with me when I curled up in my 'writing bubble' provided me with the necessary *otium* to venture out on this daunting journey.

Speaking of my academic path, I shall not forget to mention my admirable high school teacher Mag. Alexander Menner whose passion for the Latin language has not only sparked my initial interest, but indeed fanned a fire in me. Presumably, my intention to focus on Classics would not have been so crystal-clear from the beginning of my studies, had he not revealed the plethora of precious gems to me which can be found in the compendium of Latin literature.[1]

In neat succession, I was drawn to the sharp wits of my supervisor Univ.-Prof. i. R. Dr. Kurt Smolak who has not only been a constant in the years of my studies, but has inspired me in every conceivable way. Being a *fautor linguae Latinae* to the very core, he has been ever so keen on cultivating Latin as a spoken language, an approach which I find hugely appealing. His

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[1] Among many other brilliantly crafted episodes, I owe the familiarity with one particular passage to him that provided me with an exhilarating analogy during the writing process. Being a self-professed *vir vere Vergilianus* – and justifiably so! –, Alexander once referenced the Augustan poet's biographer C. Suetonius Tranquillus who recorded the following detail in his *Vita Vergili* (§ 22): *Cum Georgica scriberet, traditur cottidie meditatos mane plurimos versus dictare solitus ac per totum diem retractando ad paucissimos redigere, non absurde carmen se ursae more parere dicens et lambendo demum effingere.* Even though I do by no means intend to place myself on the same level with the Vergilian poetic genius, I frequently found it helpful to think of myself as a bearess giving shape to her cubs, while I added some makeshift polish to my ramshackle writing.

1. Finding the *Utopos* – Conceptual Clarifications and Generic Limitations

> 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.
>
> (Oscar Wilde, *The Soul of Man under Socialism*)

The term *utopia* (and the literary genre derived from it) has a long history and has not ceased to exert fascination on its recipients as Oscar Wilde's *bon mot* illustrates, even though it defies any attempt to arrive at a clear-cut, straightforward or concise definition. Not only the ubiquitous use of *utopia* in contemporary academic, economic and socio-political discourses, but also its remarkable history and its multifarious literary treatments illustrate that vestiges of utopia can be detected almost everywhere. In order to avoid the potential pitfall of taking too much latitude in defining and thus diluting the concept, the introductory chapters of this thesis will be dedicated to the endeavor of delineating the utopian boundaries. Rather than chiselling an unalterable genre definition in stone, I intend to establish a theoretical framework and point out discursive modes, which are conducive to the subsequent analysis of selected ancient texts[2].

After an etymological, content-related and functional approximation to the term *utopia*, which shall put its diachronic development into perspective, I will stake out the borders to two neighboring concepts, *ideology* and *myth*, and briefly examine their interrelationships in order to avoid potential confusions that might arise when applying these terms to the selected ancient texts. Thereafter, some reservations against the utopian project will be pointed out and relativized. These preliminary remarks shall provide the theoretical scaffold upon which I will then posit and define a self-coined term, *proto-utopia*. Its generic ramifications as well as its conjunction with crucial philosophical doctrines of Epicureanism and Stoicism will provide the focalizing lens through which the investigation of the three conceptual paradigms, the Golden Age, Arcadia and the Cosmopolis, will then be chanelled. This chapter will be concluded by an overview of the major hermeneutic and methodological techniques I intend to draw upon, as well as an elaboration on and justification of the overall structure of this thesis.

1.1 Utopia – An Etymological, Content-Related and Functional Approximation

Before plunging into the thicket of definitional sophistries, it is inevitable to at least scratch the surface by looking at the etymological background of the term *utopia*. Thomas Morus' eponymous work shall serve as a vantage point for us, given that the author's ingenious

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[2] I am inclined to refer interested readers to Frank E. and Fritzie P. Manuel's comprehensive work who explore, at great length, throughout the history of Western thought what they call the "utopian propensity" (1979: 5), while deliberately evading a tailor-made defintion and wisely shrouding the boundaries of the utopian genre in secrecy.

neologism *u-topos* was taken as a cause to head into two conceptual directions, as Frank E. and Fritzie P. Manuel (1979: 1), Kytzler (1971: 45), Birkholz (2006: 590) and Levitas (2011: 2) observed: when reading the pun as a bricolage of the Greek prefix οὐ (a particle of negation) and the noun τόπος, then the compound would mean *no place*. However, if we assume that the Greek term consists of the components εὖ and τόπος, then the combination would translate to the *good place*[3]. While the first scenario suggests that *utopia* is an imagined *locus* situated in temporal remoteness and/or spatial distance from the here and now, the second interpretative option hints at the possibility of *utopia* being intertwined with the empirical world and an ameliorated version of the *status quo*. It is therefore obvious that the etymological exegesis of the term has a certain influence on the feasibility of the utopian vision and whether or not its practical implementation was on the author's agenda.

When glimpsing at the prolific tradition which Morus' literary landmark has triggered, a number of features seem to resurface relatively frequently, which might be regarded as constitutive of the genre. High-scoring topics in utopian literature include a discussion of the benefits of collectivism, the abolishment of both monetary currency and private property, ideas on prevailing justice, the absence of a penal system, the equitable distribution of resources, the democratizing power of comprehensive education, the dissolution of the nuclear family, human reproduction by means of eugenics, gender equality, a capacity for the individual's self-actualization and the right of political co-determination[4]. However, Jameson (2005: 12) cautions against seeing utopias merely as blueprints of a flawless state of affairs, for this narrow approach would not meet the scope of the concept. He identifies "subjective" and "objective" strands that pull the term in different directions, the first concentrating on "conceptual and linguistic speculation and excitement alongside a vision of subjective purification and action on the self" (Jameson 2005: 29); the second treading on a more classical path, entailing "global

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[3] It is questionable, however, whether this ambiguity was intended by Thomas Morus or whether the pun was read into the term by the later academic tradition. Two reasons can be proffered that bolster the interpretation of *utopia* as the *non-existent place* as the more valid one. First, the acoustic equation of the prefixes εὖ and οὐ only works in English pronunciation – a philologically adept man like Thomas Morus, who was familiar with a vast array of Latin and Greek literature, would presumably abstain from deliberately obscuring the ancient Greek roots. A second convincing point is made by Parrish (1997: 493) who points to an eye-opening epistolary conversation between Thomas Morus and his erudite friend Erasmus of Rotterdam. In a letter, dated on September 3rd 1516, the former talks about the sending of his manuscript and describes the title of his *Utopia* as follows: *Nusquamam nostram nusquam bene scriptam ad te mitto.* ("I am sending you my Nowhere that is nowhere well written.") With considerable scholarly modesty, Morus clarifies that his fictitious island state does not necessarily have to be synonymous with a good place. Rather, his intention seems to have been to advance a radically different constitutional model to undercut the existent state of affairs. Therefore, we should embark on the interpretation to read the full title of Morus' work *De Optimo Rei Publicae Statu Sive De Nova Insula Utopia* as saturated with a slightly ironic nudge as well as a particular brand of self-reflexivity typical of Renaissance humanism.

[4] For an extensive list of prominent themes in utopian literature, see: Glaser (1996: 13f.), Müller (1989: 17f.), Seibt (1982: 267f.), Gustafsson (1982: 284) and Voßkamp (1982: 189).

and local institutions, an economic structure and a self-contained machine for organizing and living the everyday" (ibid.). A profoundly similar juxtaposition is forwarded by Kytzler (1971: 52-54) who distinguishes between descriptive and constructive strands. He indicates that the latter form of utopian longing ought to be regarded as a precursor or a model for political novels whose major concern is large scale social engineering, while the former manifestation concentrates on a couple of details that can be freely chosen from the huge arsenal of desires, thus adding an illusionary or evasive dimension to the picture.

These definitional bifurcations hint at the fact that utopian texts ought not necessarily to be approached as a blissful polaroid picture that displays a static society in an ahistorical, as Trousson (1979: 10) suggested: "L'utopie est, dans un présent définitif qui ignore le passé et même l'avenir, puisque, étant parfaite, elle ne changera plus." Instead of eclipsing the past and future dimension from utopia, it is recommendable to acknowledge the paradox inherent in the utopian mode: it pretends to be ahistorical despite being historically conditioned. This characteristic adumbrates the genre's double function, as trenchantly pinpointed by Ní Dhúill (2010: 7), who states that the utopian text not only radically deviates from, but is also highly indebted to the historical circumstances in which it is produced. Dubois (2006: 13) goes one step further by underlining that utopias have flourished in times of political upheaval to cast doubt on the legitimacy of the prevalent system or the ruling class(es). By offering viable alternatives, utopias could thus accomplish to destabilize deeply engrained power mechanisms.

This leads to the assumption that the projection of a perfectly structured social fabric does not have to gain content-related preponderance for its own sake, but might serve as a *Sittenspiegel* for contemporary readers. By means of omission of negative features (e.g. illness, war, poverty) that are predominant in the empirical reality of a given historical epoch, the utopian vision is thus turned into a positive inflection thereof (Ní Dhúill 2010: 5). This absence or assuagement of human suffering in the utopia is typically flagged up in core passages of the text that are infused with a longing for the betterment of society, which brings us to the important entanglement of *desire* and *utopia*, emerging from utopia's foundation in negation[5]:

> Die Negation der bekannten Realität hinterläßt eine Leerstelle, die
> institutionell und psychologisch aufgefüllt werden muß, wenn anders
> der Leser nicht das Interesse verlieren soll. (Müller 1989: 10)

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[5] Gustafsson (1982: 280-287) rightly observes that negation as a principal logical operative tool contributes to the elusiveness of the text as the reader can easily get caught in a hermeneutic vicious circle. Therefore, an accurate reconstruction of the relevant historical context is vital to fill genre-conditioned information gaps. While reality seems to be completely eliminated from the utopian world at first glance, it manages to enter the text via detours and loopholes: certain traits or qualities of the utopian set of characters can be presented as overgeneralized human propensities, thus forging a bridge to reality by drawing a distorted image of the contemporary *conditio humana*.

These institutional and psychological *lacunae*, which are characteristic of the utopian space, are typically filled by a yet to be specified *desire*, which can manifest itself in numerous forms, as Passerini (2002: 13-15) observed: for instance, as a person's striving for self-actualization by means of vindicating his or her right to individuality, or as a longing for collective unison and harmony. Key to this desire is its contingent status, for it is predicated on a tentative footing and not completely fulfilled. Rather, the attaining of the *telos* expressed by this desire is displaced to an indeterminate point in the future and the wish for a better alternative enters a dialectic relationship with antagonistic notions such as despair and chaos. This is why utopian desire in its very essence gives an approximate direction and is not only precedent-setting, but also consciousness-raising and relativizing the integrity of the *status quo* in order to effectuate change (Levitas 2011: 8; Schmitt 1994: 16). Moreover, this desire is not tied to a certain time period, but infused with "transhistorical freshness", to use Jameson's (2005: 40) witty coinage. The outlined functional and content-related parameters will now allow us to glimpse at the diachronic development of *utopia* as an epistemological concept.

1.2 The Developmental Advancements and Temporal *Desiderata* of Utopia

As adumbrated in the previous chapter, *utopia* might best be classified as a *jeu d'esprit* (Raţiu 2012: 84) or a *lusus ingenii* (Müller 1989: 21), i.e. an imaginative play that digresses from reality and can, but need not be predicated on complex hypothesis-formation as to the ideal state of a society and/or an individual. Utopia can additionally be defined more broadly as a hermeneutic tool or as an epistemological paradigm. In this respect, Seibt (1982: 254-266) offers a viable methodological approach by characterizing utopia as a 'function of occidental thought' (*Funktion des abendländischen Denkens*), which operates on a highly abstract level to address both the constructibility of the world and the perfectibility of humankind. A well-conceived utopian text ought to self-reflexively hint at its own constructedness.

Furthermore, it might include emancipatory and/or anticipatory elements, with both being typically developed in reference to the contemporary reality of the text. Levitas (2007: 290) provides a brilliant synopsis as to how Ernst Bloch pioneered the notion of 'anticipatory consciousness' (*antizipatorisches Bewusstsein*) as an inherent function of a multitude of utopias. According to the renowned German philosopher, hopes and dreams of a better version of reality permeate our human existence. In general, individuals are driven by a complicated interplay of yearning and deprivation, with the latter being able to manifest itself only by means of the former, or as Levitas (2007: 290) put it: "lack can not be articulated other than through imagining its fulfilment." This leads Bloch to the central assumption that

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history is a repository of possibilities that are living options for future action. […] [Our] three-dimensional temporality [consisting of past, present and future] must be grasped and activated by an *anticipatory consciousness* that at once perceives the unrealized emancipatory potential in the past, the latencies and tendencies of the present, and the realizable hopes of the future. (Kellner 1997: 81)

We could evidently read this elaboration of utopia's anticipatory dimension as intertwined not only with the text's contemporary reality, but also with the genre's emancipatory potential. This triangular relationship can be visualized as follows:

① **Wishful dream of a better world** (*utopia*)
    a.) Possible and implementable in reality
    b.) Impossible and unattainable

② **Reality** (historical life praxis)   ③ **Emancipatory ideal** (i.e. how the world should/must be with regard to a concrete socio-historical situation)
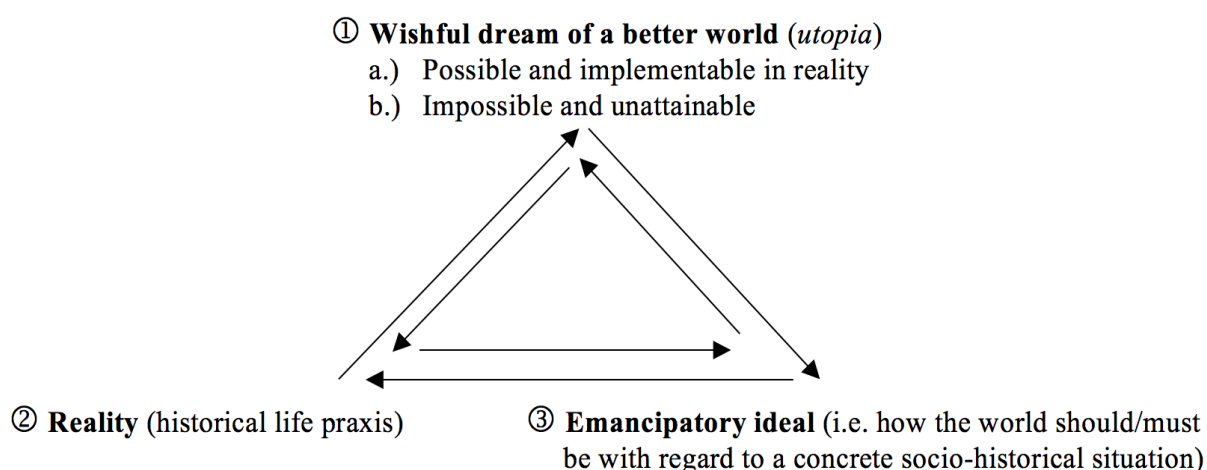
This model, established by Kalivoda (1982: 318), depicts the reciprocal interaction between utopia and emancipatory ideals, which can either take place directly or via a 'detour', i.e. with reality assuming a mediating role. However, one must not succumb to the temptation of viewing certain emancipatory desires that are adumbrated by a utopian vision as binding or necessarily implementable in a real-life context, in particular, because this genre defies closure. Instead it contents itself with furnishing a densely packed, polyvalent message that grants readers sizable autonomy in selecting and synthesizing the conveyed ideas (Kalivoda 1982: 309).

      A further illuminating categorization that can be tied in with this tripartite model was established by Karl Mannheim, who – as Levitas (2011: 82-86) trenchantly summarized – identified four conceptual dimensions of the term *utopia* and correlated them with different levels of temporality, as the following table shows:

Type of utopia	Chiliasm	Liberal-humanitarian	Conservatism	Socialist-communist
Perception of time	Καιρός: moment of (apocalyptic) rupture	orientation and movement towards a future goal	reenactment of the past through the present	time is a selection of moments in history, goal is the complete transformation of reality

Whereas chiliastic utopias rely on conceiving the experience of bliss and pure perfection as Καιρός, which simultaneously constitutes an irrevocable – if not to say apocalyptic[6] – rupture with the present and an unprecedented (transcendent) change within the human self[7], liberal-humanitarian models highlight the importance of free will and the notion of movement towards a predefined future goal. A response to this utopian narrative of progress can be detected in conservatism, Mannheim's third category, where the emphasis is on a reenactment of the past through the present and a perception of time as duration[8]. The fourth and final category relates to socialist-communist modes of thinking in which time is viewed as a number of strategically protruding landmarks in history. Here, the eventuation of utopia is seen as perfectly feasible by means of its convergence with and ultimate transformation of reality to its likeness[9]. Although all four discussed types are legitimate, especially the adumbrated liberal-humanitarian and conservative utopia will be relevant for our *proto-utopian* considerations (see chapter 1.5.2).

As might be gathered from the above-mentioned outlines of Mannheim's cognitive constructs, the temporal and definitional fluidity of *utopia* might provide critical examiners with easy targets to confuse it with similar concepts, i.e. *myth* and *ideology*, which are broadly accomodated in the subsequent ancient texts under scrutiny. Since the last-mentioned two terms require and deserve further disentanglement, we shall now turn to their distinctive features and then proceed to a short comparative and contrastive analysis of utopias, myths and ideologies.

1.3 Exploring the Triad: Ideology, Myth and their Interrelations with Utopia

While utopias, myths and ideologies might share some connecting points or have been conflated at critical moments in the past, they are ultimately different forms of thought. Be it the burgeoning Soviet Union, Fascist phantasies or nascent Nazism – to enumerate a few relatively recent examples –, history has shown that utopian visions and versatilely construable myths

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[6] Mannheim's interpretation of 'apocalyptic' – as I understand it – is not a sure sign that points to the advent of the last judgment day, but should be semantically related to its Greek origins, ἀποκάλυψις, which might best be translated as 'revelation'. Therefore, the Καιρός can be regarded as a moment of disclosure that installs a different *raison d'être* which does not necessarily have to culminate in an inescapable day of reckoning.

[7] Chiliasm is excluded from the 'utopian family' by Liessmann (2009: 5) who underlines that the anticipatory dimension of the concept is firmly rooted in the realm of speculation, while fashioning a strong bond to worldly grievances, and thus does not leave room for theological justifications or transcendent, immanent deliberations.

[8] To classify conservative sentiments as utopian has caused some arguable uproar and Mannheim himself was not oblivious to the paradox that a conservative mindset could produce any kind of utopian sentiments, as Levitas (2011: 85) observes: the preservative forces in this utopian model can be countered by a careful scrutiny of the mechanisms of oppression that might be produced by them, which in further consequence (ideally!) leads to a critical insight into certain societal configurations and their naturalized, tacitly accepted operations of dominance.

[9] Though secondary to our philologically-focused considerations, it should not be pretermitted that Mannheim came under fire, especially from the sociological camp. His views were criticized for displaying a "lack of logical and epistemological consistency" (von Schelting 1936: 664), since they were predicated on the belief that an objective truth is inherent in our social reality, which is regarded inadequate in present-day academia (ibid., 667).

have exerted considerable fascination not only on political visionaries, but also on totalitarian extremists[10]. Indeed, mythic and utopian text types lend themselves extraordinarily well for ideological exploitation due to their polyvalent, malleable nature (Jørgensen 1984: 296). Yet, if analyzed from a purely literary theoretical standpoint, their shared features are quite limited. Notwithstanding the fact that catch-all terms such as myth, utopia and ideology can and should not be verbally straight-jacketed, but envisaged as fuzzy – which makes any attempt of definition an aporetic, if not to say futile endeavor! –, it is essential to look at *ideology* and *myth* in isolation, before proceeding to an analysis of their interdependences with *utopia*.

Ideology might best be approached as a thought structure or a cognitive device that shapes the beliefs and values of an individual that is embedded in a social group[11], or as Stuart Hall (1996: 26) eloquently put it:

> By ideology I mean the mental frameworks – the languages, the concepts, categories, imagery of thought, and the systems of representation – which different classes and social groups deploy in order to make sense of, figure out and render intelligible the way society works.

This structural foundation can be expanded by the fact that ideologies have to contain a certain degree of stability and freedom from concrete situational contexts to allow for flexible strategic adaption by individual 'users' (van Dijk 1998: 55). Being aware that ideology is nevertheless not rooted in the abstract or metaphysical, but rather in the concrete realm of everyday practices, the German philosopher Karl Mannheim was among the first to subdivide the concept further by calling to attention two types of ideology, the 'particular' and the 'total' (*partikulärer und totaler Ideologiebegriff*), as Moser (1958: 432) observed. The former relates to a critical scrutiny of an opponent's ideas and the suspicion that they operate on an intentionally escapist level in order to conceal factual truths; the latter, by contrast, assumes that the whole set of beliefs or world views of a social group are dissonant, erroneous and abounding with mendacities. These vage notions can be supplemented by the fact that ideology, at least in a 'traditional' sense[12], recommends or even demands prescribed patterns of behavior and instills political and/or economic agency in its adherents in order to attain a tacit consensus among

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[10] According to Gustafsson (1982: 291), a further *fascinans et tremendum* of utopian bodies of thought might be related to their inherent paradoxes, which not only tempt political luminaries, but also assiduous philosophers, who often end up being challenged and frustrated to an equal extent when trying to boil a utopian vision down to a two-dimensional, straightforward treatise.

[11] We inevitably need to be selective here even though the definitional *crux* can not be fully avoided; for a more comprehensive overview of approaches to the concept of ideology, see Eagleton (1991).

[12] Van Dijk (1998: 3-5, 11) rightly argues in his highly recommendable study on the interdisciplinary uses of the term in question that a distinction between Marxist and non-Marxist viewpoints is essential for starting a solid analysis of ideology, a concept which not only explores the subtle workings of power that are deeply rooted in human routines to cloak social inequalities, but has also been elevated above the tides of common sense (politics).

different societal strata as to their hierarchical arrangement, a phenomenon that Antonio Gramsci subsumed under the term *hegemony* (Morton 2007: 113). Ideology thus seems to be to a decisive extent embedded in and legitimized through institutional regulations and human routines, which allow for its discursive and socio-political reproduction. In this respect, van Dijk (1998: 30-37) observes that ideologies, though partisan in most cases, are frequently so deeply socially engrained that they need not be elaborated, but can be presupposed as "epistemic common ground" (ibid., 48), which illuminates the danger of them becoming culturally assimilated into general knowledge.

In contrast to power mechanisms themselves, however, Eagleton (1991: 11-20) asserts that ideologies are confined to the level of signification and thus primarily preoccupied with moulding public sentiments either by propagating easily digestible doctrines or by presenting themselves as commonsensical knowledge to new adherents, who are invited to establish their identities in relation to them. Potential contradictions or inconsistencies within these ideologies ought to be generously condoned for them to generate viable social impact. This phenomenon was famously labelled as the production of *false consciousness* by Karl Marx[13] and positively inflected by Louis Althusser who tried to set ideology free from its (tainted) historical baggage by both expanding and psychologizing its definition to "the Imaginery relationship of the subject to its Real conditions of existence" (1971: 162). Whether or not these two extreme positions can be reconciled shall be left to the reader's own devices. Instead of sifting through even more diverging definitions of the term *ideology*, we ought to content ourselves, at this point, with asserting that there can never be only one all-encompassing ideology, but that there are always hidden and prevalent strands which are in constant flux and alternate permanently. Van Dijk (1998: 50) therefore legitimately highlights the importance of collating seemingly commonsensical ideologies with possible alternatives (e.g. other social practices) that challenge their basic evaluative premises in order for them to become visible instead of silently seeping into the cultural ground water.

Let us now glimpse at the second multi-layered literary and cognitive phenomenon called *myth*: 'polyvalent', 'ahistorical' or 'located in a fictional realm' are just a few buzzwords that might come to mind when pondering about this term. Are these associations misleading though, or can they be harnessed as a fruitful point of departure? To begin with, we ought to backtrack its conceptual origins. From an etymological point of view, the Greek μῦθος spans a vast semantic scope ranging from meanings such as *word*, *sound* or *speech* to *legend*, *story* or

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[13] Kinna (2011: 282) wittily describes Marx as an adherent of "anti-utopian utopianism", for he was enthused about the transformation of society that was supposed to occur after the revolution, yet he was reluctant to spell out his ideal future vision in detail.

fiction, as Jolles (1956: 75) observed. In contrast to its frequently cited sparring partner λόγος, *myth* operates on a highly symbolic, if not to say proto-philosophical level, mostly connecting the human and the divine sphere, while drafting an imaginative space that does not necessarily have to function according to rationalized principles (Armstrong 2005: 5-7; Geyer 1996: 7-10). This distinction between the logic and the mythic mode and the slight preference for the former in occidental cultures, which was pioneered by Nestle (1940) and has existed for a long time, is no longer undisputed in present-day academia. Rath (1992: 16-25), for instance, makes a compelling case for the up-to-date role of myth when it comes to the mediation of reality; in light of the fact that the mythic mode has been largely usurped by the *logos*-discourse in occidental thought, he calls for a rehabilitation of the former. Whereas logic and scientific functions select reality-bound parameters with argumentative devices, thus presenting an objective 'truth' as the basis for assessing human experience, myths filter the world in a way that not only increases an entity's rapport to the present, but also fosters individual, cultural and spiritual identity-establishment.

In a similar vein, Blumenberg (1979: 40; 56-59; 72) and Most (1999: 29-31) stress that the antithesis between 'reason' and 'myth' is a poor explanatory attempt that wrongly made its way into (post-)modern academic discourses. Rather than slavishly adhering to this outdated dichotomy, we should see the mythic mode as a surrogate narrative for that which has not been elucidated by a validatable theory[14]. Additionally, he asserts that the numinous exegesis of myths is only one interpretative option that can be supplemented by a rational and psycho-analytic approach[15]. Thus, when tracing the footsteps of *myth* further throughout history, we can see that it has advanced to a culture-transcending mode of narration that thematizes omnipresent, universally applicable anthropological constants with only superficial volatility.

Like with utopias, we can detect plenty of facets in the mythic genre. Assmann (2010: 6-10) provides a relatively comprehensive list and enumerates, among others, the myth of origin, of political consciousness-formation, of liberation, of election, of martyrdom, of the Heroic or the Golden Age. Furthermore, he highlights their importance for collective and individual identity formation, since they frequently serve as *lieux de mémoire* (ibid., 5) that are nourished and perpetuated by ritualistic performances. Thus, rather than deflating myths as

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[14] Myths themselves frequently contribute a fair share to explaining worldly phenomena around us, for instance, when they are conceived as aetiological tales (Jørgensen 1984: 291). In addition, Armstrong (2005: 4) cautions against pretermitting one of the foundational functions of myth, i.e. its manifestation as "perennial philosophy" that supported a society's organization of rituals and guided the development of moral codes.

[15] According to Blumenberg (1979: 66), the accessing of myths from a psychoanalytic standpoint was pioneered by Sigmund Freud who saw them not only as ontogenetic projections, but also as repositories of prehistoric human experiences, an aspect that was later termed *endogenous mythologem*.

irrational tales (that might even bring human existence into disrepute), we should embrace them as effective, imaginative mental games and as means of transforming reality by revealing new possibilities through hypothesis formation and *what-if* questions.

In light of the abundance of definitions (a phenomenon that ostensibly turns into the trade mark of this thesis), we can only adumbrate a number of features that seem to be typical of *myth* and thus relevant for the subsequent close-reading and analysis of selected ancient texts. Even though myths present themselves as largely resistent to temporal or epochal impacts, they are inextricably bound to their original contexts of production (Gumbrecht 2004: 15). This paradoxical generic condition provides a fertile soil for their polyvalent exegesis, their solid ontological foundation in materiality rather than in metaphysics[16] and, in further consequence, their aptitude for politico-ideological exploitation. Therefore, Blumenberg (1979: 53) rightly stresses the obvious, i.e. that their history of reception and their functions are far more important than the tracing of their dubious origins:

> Theorien über den Ursprung von Mythen sind müßig. Hier gilt: *Ignorabimus*. Ist das schlimm? Nein. […] Es ist die «Intentionalität» der Verarbeitungsgeschichte des Mythos, die allein uns erlaubt, indem wir sie als konstant über die Zeit verlaufend denken, auch über die jeweils rückwärtigen Phasen dieser Geschichte Vermutungen zu haben.

Due to their temporal persistence, recursiveness seems to be a decisive feature inscribed in myths as a literary genre. Cyclical in nature, this narrative mode is capable of visualizing history's reiterative dimension by channelling it through an event-based core. Characters' fates are crystallized as paradigms that allow to gain new insights into that which has been and that which is yet to come. This shows that myths not only enhance recipients' capacity for empathy and morality, but also contribute to generating knowledge and desires by combining regressive and prophetic elements (Jolles 1956: 81-97).

Although many non-negligible layers could still be unfurled about the three concepts in question, i.e. *utopia*, *ideology* and *myth*, their necessary corner pillars have been propounded above, which now allows us to turn to their parallels, differences and interdependencies. As it proves to be quite unsatisfactory and insufficient to approach them merely from a formal and/or content-related standpoint, their functions will be central in the following elaborations. It is relatively safe to say that myths, ideologies and utopias are exegetic models aiming at an explanation of the *hic et nunc* and include a motivation to inspire action or critical scrutiny of

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[16] Moser (1958: 425) and Rath (1992: 65) argue in a similar manner with regard to the situating of myths, putting a strong emphasis on their function of materializing intellectual contents, of animating natural surroundings and of presenting a holistic picture of humanity.

the current state of affairs (or both) in their recipients. However, their relationship to reality differs significantly: ideology seems to be intensely implicated in secularity, utopia occupies a medial position, while myth tends to be temporally most remote, if not to say perennial:

> mythology is an art form that points beyond history to what is timeless
> in human existence, helping us to get beyond the chaotic flux of events,
> and glimpse the core of reality (Armstrong 2005: 7).

Not only do myths lay claims to universality, they also show little interest in chronological ordering and contain pseudo-precise numeric indications to signify long or short duration, as Finley (1975: 13-15) observed. Moreover, he demonstrates that myths use the *fata* of individual characters, who are often depicted with intentional omission of background-related details to function as templates for various anthropological types, as driving forces for their narratives. While the same could be said for certain utopian visions, characters in the latter scenarios appear not as fully fleshed out as mythic ones and not as prone to damage their respective ideal(ized) realms due to their own (moral) failures.

Let us now turn to a more thorough comparison of ideologies and utopias. Gustafsson (1982: 288) rightly indicates that traces of the former can often be detected in the latter (and vice versa). Does this mean that we should put utopia on a pedestal while demonizing ideology altogether? In other words: is it expedient to conceive ideology as a means of oppression of established by the reactionary voices in society to legitimize the elitist claims of power and supremacy of a specific race or class? I would not say so. Instead of drawing a black-and-white picture by viewing ideology as utopia's wicked stepmother, we should acknowledge that

> ideology is "Janus-faced": it contains errors, mystifications, and
> techniques of manipulation and domination, but it also contains a
> utopian residue or surplus that can be used for social critique and to
> advance progressive politics. (Kellner 1997: 82)

Utopia and ideology thus seem to share a problem/solution-structure, which can either be acted out 'peacefully', for instance by abstractly drafting an alternative society, or generate conflicts that, as van Dijk (1998: 67-69) illustrates, lead to a polarizing of diametrically opposed groups on the basis of positive self-portrayal and negative 'othering'-strategies.

This also leads to the assumption that ideologies are more firmly cognitively entrenched in their recipients' "episodic memory" (ibid., 81) than myths and utopias, given that many people have witnessed the concrete workings of ideology in their everyday lives. Blumenberg (1979: 61) remarks that utopias and myths are, by contrast, not primarily nourished by the powers of recollection of personally affected individuals, but often furnished by a culture-transcending nostalgia that harkens back and seeks to reestablish atavistic and archetypal

conditions of human existence. Still, a word of caution ought to be inserted here in order to avoid a conceptual intermingling: utopia works with the logical operation of negation and strives to retain commensurability when holding up the veridical mirror of reality, whereas the primary strategy of myth is an illustration via pictoriality (Jørgensen 1984: 299).

To sum up, despite differing strategies of discursive reproduction that are in place when glimpsing at ideology, myth and utopia, they can all be classified as psychologizing modes that strongly operate with generating and enshrining desires in their recipients. This substratum adds a future-oriented dimension to the three concepts in question and points to their subtle workings with regard to the formation of human will, consciousness, individual and collective identity as well as social conformity, as a close reading of selected ancient texts shall soon demonstrate. Finally, we should not fail to mention that Jørgensen (1984: 294) and Voßkamp (1982: 183) rightly defend myths and utopias against the reproach of being simplistic, anti-intellectual forms by emphasizing their value as testimonies of emergent social changes, articulations of problem-solving strategies and remarkable historical nodes for synthesizing human wants and needs. Nevertheless, utopias have frequently been in the spotlight of harsh critique due to their underlying premises that were perceived to be hostile towards a progressive, teleological conceptualization of human development, as shall be demonstrated in the next section.

1.4   Reservations against and Arguments for the Utopian Idea

> We are getting to the end of visioning
> the impossible within the universe,
> such as that better whiles may follow worse,
> and that our race may mend by reasoning.
>
> (Thomas Hardy, *Winter Words*)

Distance from ethical imperatives, disdain for philosophical maxims and disillusionment in light of the multiplicity of visionary bodies of thought seem to pervade significant stretches of present-day (Western) societies. Faith in the value of any utopia has solemnly been sacrificed at the altar of pragmatism, efficiency and functionality. In the political arena, the term and the concept it denotes has turned into an expletive to shoot down the irrational arguments of an opponent that are made up out of thin air. However, this perception is neither an utter novelty nor an 'accomplishment' of postmodernity in the twenty-first century. Rather, this attitude of cultural pessimism seems to resurface in circular intervals at incisive historical moments as a disappointed reaction to cataclysmic events that tore the tissues of the social fabric to shreds. Our capacity of envisioning alternatives has languished, as Assmann (2009: 21) pinpoints:

> Die Heilslehren haben ausgedient, die Zukunft ist knapp geworden. Der Fortschritt führt in den Untergang. Jetzt kommt es vielmehr auf Rückbau an. Nicht das Himmelreich auf Erden dürfen wir mehr anstreben, sondern die Erde als solche müssen wir uns erhalten.

Utopia – when conceived as a meticulously planned, authoritative, relentlessly controlling organizational apparatus – easily arrives at the brink of tipping into its opposite, a dystopia that is an epitome of a society that has miserably failed (Kinna 2011: 281). The basic conflict between individual freedom and conformity to as well as compliance with the system has not only been thematized in a number of classics that nowadays belong to the canon of world literature[17], but is also indicative of the fundamentally jeopardizing forces of utopia.

Karl Popper (1963: 355-363), for instance, whose philosophy of critical rationalism was considerably influenced by the devastating and derailed manifestations of totalitarian regimes in the twentieth century, did not mince matters when addressing potential violent outlets that might be generated and fortified by utopian alternative visions. He declared that they would call for a seemingly well-meaning betterment of the present on a surface level, while actually effectuating an entanglement of society in a self-perpetuating downward spiral[18]. In further consequence, utopias would not even recoil from sacrificing whole generations to attain their preliminarily defined, ultimate goal, as they are predicated on a refusal of moral course correction (in case of unforeseen interferences). *In nuce*, Popper (1963: 362) thus concludes that large scale visionary blueprints of society are not only impractical, but also impossible to draft due to our limited human perspective, for we can neither anticipate whether such a groundplan will lead to an actual improvement nor which means and measures will be required for its implementation. Instead of attempting to soar on hubristic wings by playing God, he recommends a gradual remodeling of the societal order based on pragmatic considerations, i.e. a situative and sensitive analysis of prevailing ills; this transformative commitment to society was expanded and wittily labelled "Nowtopian" by Kinna (2011: 292), who – like Popper – cautions against the stifling and disruptive mechanisms of (misinterpreted) utopias[19].

In light of the above-mentioned points of critique, can we rebut the sentiment that "utopias are the product of social disharmony, indeed social pathology" (Levitas 2011: 16) and proffer

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[17] Yevgeny Zamyatin's *We* (1920), Aldous Huxley's *Brave New World* (1932), George Orwell's *1984* (1949) and Ray Bradbury's *Fahrenheit 451* (1953) shall be entrusted to interested readers at this point, as they propound visions of surveilled, manipulated and artificially conditioned characters so visceral and convincing that they should be counted among the timelessly inspiring literary masterpieces.

[18] Botz (2009: 39) adds another nuance to the picture, highlighting that repudiation of violence permeated post-war society which, despite being driven by a skepsis towards utopia, created a new societal utopia called pacifism.

[19] We should not fail to mention that Kinna (2011: 291), in reference to the nineteenth century social thinker William Morris, also stresses the utopian potential for enhancing harmonious co-existence if all the individuals concerned are willing to cooperate, by autonomously translating the utopian architectural plans into action.

arguments to vindicate the necessity and present-day relevance of utopia? Yes, we can. First, we need to backtrack our steps in order to appreciate the primary, underlying intention of all utopias – when distilled and devoid of political and/or ideological dilution – as something essentially positive. They are acts of alternative imagination every human being is capable of, which support awareness-raising and, according to Assmann (2009: 18-20), possess a deeply connecting quality on an interpersonal level, for they allow us to glimpse at the symbolic and communicative constitution as well as socio-political and economic conventions of our world. This ties in with utopia's second benefit, since it enables us to remain both mentally agile and pragmatically flexible. Botz (2009: 42) accentuates the importance of picturing a number of parallel worlds for our critical human faculties, for they can support us in not being led astray. A third counter-argument that could be advanced in defense of utopia is its mirror-function. The visions propounded are not meant for realization, but supposed to turn the spotlight on societal mischiefs. A gradual convergence of reality and utopia would cause both to collapse:

> Verwirklichte Utopien zerstören nicht nur die Utopie, sondern auch die
> Wirklichkeit. Ihr kritisches Potential entfalten die Utopien immer nur
> im Konjunktiv, nie im Indikativ. Utopien sind […] letztlich Indikatoren
> der Befindlichkeiten einer Zeit und keine Anweisungen für die
> Herstellung einer besseren Welt (Liessmann 2009: 6).

Although this stance has not always been taken at face value, it highlights that a critical mindset is indispensable for bringing about a change of present conditions, by being aware of imagined alternatives and the feasible options that lie within the realms of possibility. In other words, our century is paradoxical in the sense that we are challenged to think in utopian terms again despite blowbacks in the past and the silently agreed 'ban' on utopia (Fliedl 2009: 76). That said, we shall now cast a glance back and explore inhowfar the concept of *proto-utopia* might be a valid analytical category for ancient texts that are saturated with Stoic and Epicurean doctrines.

1.5 *Proto-Utopia* in Antiquity: Contradiction in Terms or Productive Symbiosis?

> Innerhalb der Grenzen aber haben wir den Blick gerichtet auf das Vollkommene,
> das Unmögliche, Unerreichbare, sei es der Liebe, der Freiheit oder jeder reinen Größe.
> Im Widerspiel des Unmöglichen mit dem Möglichen erweitern wir unsere Möglichkeiten.
>
> (Ingeborg Bachmann, *Die Wahrheit ist dem Menschen zumutbar*)

Instead of coercively attempting to marry the two terms *utopia* and *antiquity* by drawing on an essentialist approach, I recommend a postmodern, constructivist take on the complex issue of genre definitions, which are typically established *ex post facto* by an acknowledged source of authority and, in further consequence, propagated in a number of (non-)academic discourses. However, a genre definition is intellectual 'raw material' and thus not unalterable, but needs

constant tuning and refining to accommodate newly emerging literature. But who determined that we should proceed in one chronological direction only when reflecting about genre? This premise is no prerequisite for literary theoretical considerations, in particular, with regard to a genre like *utopia* whose boundaries are so fluid that they challenge us to think outside the box.

A thorough examination of yet-to-be specified ancient texts will illustrate that a retrospective gaze is recommendable in this case to allow a conceptualization of the term in question not only as a literary genre, but also as a trigger of socio-political change or even a philosophical attitude towards life[20]. Taking into account this developmental perspective could also lead to a shift from stasis/closure to openness/dynamicity within utopian bodies of thought, thus adding a self-reflexive component to the literary genre, or, as Müller (1989: 11) pointedly put it: "Die Gattung überdenkt ihre eigenen Prämissen."

This open acknowledgement or even espousal of anachronism shall thus serve as our point of departure. The primary objective thereof is not to drop the judgmental hammer on what can (not) be classified as *utopian* in the narrow sense of the word (i.e. utopia as a flawless societal blueprint), but rather to concede that foundational epistemological scaffolds of the future can be detected in narratives of the past[21]. In this respect, Evans (2008: 2) makes a compelling case, stepping into the breach for the multilayeredness of ancient texts by emphasizing their saturation with utopian energies: to view Greek and Roman narratives merely as relics that express primitivist and nostalgic longing for a long-forgotten past or an idealized alternative (future) society would neither match their intricate interplay with the historical reality in which they were conceived nor pay attention to their interaction with ideologies.

As we can not trace – except maybe for Plato's *Politeia*[22] – any perfectly spelled-out

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[20] Although it has already been mentioned, it can not be emphasized often enough that the meticulously planned polity is only one strand of *utopia*; opinions vary as to how much this concept should be expanded. While Kytzler (1971: 52) is inclined to exclude elusive forms of dreamish longing that are mediated through travelogues or myths, Frank. E. and Fritzie P. Manuel (1979: 4), for instance, argue that even certain sublime states of consciousness can feature under this label, an aspect that was later picked up by Abraham Maslow who coined the term *eupsychia*.

[21] This standpoint *per se* is not conflicted. However, the question whether there is something such as a utopian genre in antiquity has led to significant uproar and diametrically opposed positions in contemporary academic discourses. Krishan Kumar (1987: 3), for instance, a luminary in the field of utopian studies, justifiably argues that the proper start of the genre has its footing in modernism and is characterized by a "distinctive social philosophy", whereas there is only a "classical and Christian background to the idea of utopia" (ibid.). In a similar vein, Birkholz (2006: 591) illustrates that the Greeks and Romans – despite their sometimes daunting thought experiments – ultimately did not relinquish the socially pervasive and widely spread belief in theocracy, which is why their scrutiny of the universe could only remain on a small scale instead of attaining truly utopian dimensions.

[22] Even when subjecting this work to close scrutiny, it remains unclear how to classify it. The Platonic state is not an unblemished utopia. Some might even go so far as to call it dystopian in light of the fact that the Greek philosopher attempted to establish a polis state in Sicily according to his theoretical model, an endeavor that failed miserably. Kytzler (1971: 47), for instance, observed that Platon's utopian real-life experiment was retrospectively labelled a fiasco by Marcus Aurelius, who cautioned his readers against aiming for such a state (μὴ τὴν Πλάτωνος πολιτείαν ἔλπιζε, *Meditations* 9, § 29, 5). Nevertheless, we can not be completely sure about the satirical dimension of the *Politeia* and whether it outweights its utopian component. In this respect, the Platonic utopia bears striking

utopian models of society in the strictest sense (i.e. when taking Thomas Morus' *De Optimo Rei Publicae Statu Sive De Nova Insula Utopia* as a generic template) in classical antiquity, I suggest applying the term *proto-utopia* in this context to account for the socio-political and cultural synergies that can be harnessed when looking at Greek and Roman worlds of thought. This ought to be seen as a compromise to appease fervent defenders of the exclusively Post-Morean tradition of utopia, both as a literary genre and a political philosophy.

That said, we should now agree on some central tenets that constitute the term *proto-utopia* to arrive at an applicable working definition. Instead of offering a flat-footed or one-dimensional answer, I wish to first approach this theoretical center piece of the present thesis by throwing up some questions. Should we aim for abstract political treatises that sketch out a consummate blueprint of society as a *conditio sine qua non*? Is a satirical dimension necessary for a piece of writing to classify as *proto-utopia*? Or is the dialogic structure with a didactic undercurrent the one constitutive genre feature[23]? Do we need a less advanced person who is informed about the proceedings of the *proto-utopian* world by an insider? Or does a *proto-utopia* conversely entail an intruding figure whose explorations of unchartered territories lead to an unexpected confrontation with a radically different world?

Although these questions generate thought-provoking points of reference, none of them yields an ultimately satisfactory response to accommodate the subsequent chosen texts under the umbrella term *proto-utopia* in my opinion. Likewise, a synoptic collation of Thomas Morus' and Plato's utopian models and an extrication of their crucial features can only furnish a limited theoretical basis for our purposes. Therefore, I will refer to these two groundbreaking works only as ancillary investigative lenses when intertextual parallels to the Latin and Greek sources under scrutiny are apparent[24]. Instead of committing to a single facet of *proto-utopia*, I shall attempt to do justice to this novel concept (which at this point is still in its infancy and is going to mature in the course of this thesis) by approaching it from a (1) generic, (2) functional and (3) content-related vantage point. In the following three subchapters, I will briefly review the (scarcely!) existing literature on this under-investigated idea, connect it to the introductory remarks on *utopia* and supplement them with my own theoretical elaborations.

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similarities to Morus' work, in which the protagonist Raphael Hythloday (whose speaking name might best be translated as "sophisticated in nonsensical phrases") both criticizes the *status quo* and sets out to explore the insular alternative. However, the degree of seriousness of his elaborations ought to be questioned, as the picture is painted with satirical undertones, as Arnswald (2010: 9) stresses. For a thorough investigation of Plato's utopianism and its historical context, see Schofield (2006: 194-234).

[23] In Thomas Morus' utopia and the Platonic predecessor, dialogue contributes significantly to structuring the work. According to Voßkamp (1982: 192), this stylistic device is responsible for polyperspectivism in *Utopia* and supports the merging of the travel report, the satirical and the self-ironizing fantasy narrative.

[24] A more thorough investigation of Morean-Platonic synergies and their interactions with ancient philosophies could pave the way for future research *desiderata* and provide rich insights into potential points of convergence.

1.5.1 The *Proto-Utopian* Genre: Elusiveness at its Best

Limiting *proto-utopia* to a single generic outlet would mean the adoption of a narrow-minded or short-sighted perspective. Likewise, the exclusive focussing on one stylistic mode that is constitutive of a *proto-utopia* would be equivalent to a deliberate neglect of alternatives. Therefore, I intend to align my elaborations with Jameson's (2005: 37) generic considerations:

> the Utopian form (genre or not) comes into being to complement […] **various imperfect genres** and to **fulfill** or to **forestall** each of **them in unexpected ways**. [*emphasis added*]

Although it might be dissatisfying from a prescriptive, essentialist standpoint to linger on this tentative explication, the above-quoted definition gives us enough scholarly freedom to examine ancient *proto-utopias* as conglomerates of several generic forms. We shall soon see that individual acts of idealization or the drafting of alternative visions can manifest themselves either in highly embellished literary incarnations, such as didactic poems, epodes, eclogues, and satires (see chapters 2/3), or in philosophical treatises that lean towards political manifestos and moral(izing) precepts (see chapter 4). This indeterminacy of the generic shape warrants enough flexibility to the chosen authors, i.e. Cicero, Lucretius, Vergil, Horace, Seneca, Epictetus and Marcus Aurelius, to articulate their proto-utopian ideas by drawing on a plethora of stylistic devices, including but not limited to *mythic digressions*, *ironic nudges* or *diatribes*, *suasive metaphors, metaliterary symbolism, counterfactual conditionals* and *adynata*. The choice of a genre-specific rhetoric not only interacts with the content-related propositions advanced, but also operates on a functional level, as shall be demonstrated in the next section.

1.5.2 The *Proto-Utopian* Function: *À la recherche de l'essence voilée*

In light of the fact that the temporal and the spatial axis are equally important for the conception of alternatives (see chapter 1.1), it is safe to say that *proto-utopia* is never ahistorical – on the contrary. A *proto-utopia* not only seeks to come up with fictitious and/or philosophical venues that are detached from contemporary reality, but it is also aware of the momentousness of past, present, and future circumstances. This three-dimensional temporality affords our *proto-utopia* with an expedient substrate to enter into a critical negotiation with the *status quo*. The rhetoric of negation, which Davies (1987: 265-284) and Gustafsson (1982: 280-292) identify as the most important logical operation in any utopian setting (see chapter 1.1), also comes to the fore in our *proto-utopias* to articulate socio-political critique, and to stake out claims for improving current conditions. Moreover, *proto-utopias* are not devoid of compensatory strategies; rather, they generate invented settings that are retrogressive or progressive and charged with a 'liberal-humanitarian' or a 'conservative' impetus, to apply Mannheim's typology (see chapter 1.2).

In nuce, the two quintessential functions of *proto-utopia* are (1) to take inventory of the present flawed state of affairs and (2) to enshrine 'desire' for improvement that is nostalgically colored or future-oriented and consequently tantamount to a philosophical and anthropological constant. Inhowfar these two aspects play out on a content-level will be specified below.

1.5.3 The *Proto-Utopian* Content Scope: Literary Pipe-Dream or Philosophical Vehicle?

As already adumbrated, the term *proto-utopia* is a new coinage which I attempt to approach in an inductive way, i.e. by examining selected texts of the extant Roman literature while collating significant overlaps as well as parallel features. Due to the limited scope of this thesis, I decided to concentrate on three conceptual paradigms: the Golden Age, Arcadia and the Cosmopolis. The choice of them is not arbitrary, but inspired by Kumar's (1987: 3-9) valid observation that three major types of quasi-utopian renderings have been bequeathed to us from antiquity. He subsumes them as (1) the *Land of Cokaygne*, frequently also referred to as *Cloudcuckooland*, a hedonistically designed paradise, (2) *Arcadia* as an epitome of moderation and restraint and (3) the *Ideal City*, a manifestation of what humanity's rational capacities can accomplish.

While Kumar (ibid.) stresses that these three precursors gave rise to modernist utopias, Mumford (1966: 15) introduces an additional facet that is conducive to our delineation of the *proto-utopian* boundaries. He establishes so-called "utopias of escape" that offer "an immediate release from the difficulties or frustrations of our [human] lot" (ibid.). In addition to lacking institutional specifications on the societal level, this subtype of utopia pursues the primary aim of affording its recipients with the possibility of an inner retreat in times of upheaval. In its most radical formulation, Ingeborg Bachmann famously proposed that literature itself can be categorized as a utopian residue due to its suggestive impact and its encapsulation of desires:

> [Literatur] ist ein Wunschbild, das man sich zurechtkorrigiert, in dem man Fakten stehenläßt und andere ausmerzt. [...] So ist die Literatur, obwohl und sogar weil sie immer ein Sammelsurium von Vergangenem und Vorgefundenem ist, immer das Erhoffte, das Erwünschte, das wir ausstatten aus dem Vorrat nach unserem Verlangen – so ist sie ein nach vorn geöffnetes Reich von unbekannten Grenzen (1980: 81-82).

Even though it is compelling to view any act of fictitious or literary representation as saturated with utopian energies, we must not lose sight of the fact that a too copious definition leads to a semantic dilution or bleaching of the concept in question. This is the reason why the escapist and metaliterary dimension of *proto-utopia* will not enable us to neatly pigeon-hole the chosen texts. It will thus only constitute an ancillary investigative parameter which I shall point out *ad locum* (as a possible alternative interpretative option), without allowing it to push my central philosophically-oriented research question pertaining to the conjunction of *proto-utopia* with

epistemes of Stoicism and Epicureanism to the background. In order to approximate this key issue, let us take a look at Finley's (1975: 185) research which contributes another corner piece to our *proto-utopian* jigsaw. He suggests a quadrinomial framework, entailing two main oppositions, to inspect ancient predecessors of utopian models:

> The first antithesis is between a **static** and a **dynamic** Utopia, or, phrased differently, between an **ascetic** and a **want-satisfying** Utopia. The second antithesis is between an **egalitarian** and a **hierarchical** Utopia. [*emphasis added*]

We shall soon see that these four terminological pillars are fruitful templates to accommodate the bulk of the selected ancient *proto-utopias:* their central topics circle around the articulation and fulfillment of desire as well as philosophical dichotomies pertinent to abundance/restraint, stasis/dynamicity and societal uniformity/diversity (gradeability). In addition, Finley's (ibid.) remarks provide me with a springboard to demarcate the borders between the two most vital strands of *proto-utopia* that I seek to examine more closely, i.e. (1) the individual and (2) the society-encompassing. In this respect, I wish to recur to and elaborate on Jameson's (2005: 29) distinction between 'subjective' and 'objective' utopias as valuable analytical categories: as outlined in chapter 1.1, the former term centers on the perfectioning of the self, the latter on the flawlessness of the entire civic body. This binary division is not only illuminating in its own right, but also a central node to weave in major doctrines of Epicureanism and Stoicism that float concrete suggestions with regard to personal and societal betterment.

While leaning towards one of the respective philosophical schools, Cicero, Lucretius, Vergil, Horace, Seneca, Epictetus and Marcus Aurelius employ, as I propose, the conceptual paradigms of the Golden Age, Arcadia and the Cosmopolis as *proto-utopian* spaces that are simultaneously vehicles to convey Stoic and Epicurean attitudes. They thematize both the idea of individual perfectibility and the best state of the society by advancing a particular set of values, as we will discover soon. The association of the enumerated authors with Epicureanism and/or Stoicism justifies my subsequent choice of texts as well as the concomitant (necessary) exclusion of other Roman authors who discussed the Golden Age, Arcadia and the Cosmopolis in their writings, but did not spice these conceptual templates with an Epicurean or Stoic flavor.

1.6 Methodological Considerations and Structural Remarks

If we should aim for an ample inquiry of the *proto-utopian* thought pattern in Roman literature, we must not lose sight of one perplexing factor. To put it bluntly: *proto-utopia* does not equal *proto-utopia*. As skeletonized above, any attempted definition of the term is so fluctuating, multifarious and complicated by its generic hybridity that it can bring any scholar who is

interested in this field to the verge of despair. What we can achieve in light of this dead end, however, is to list several methodological parameters that will operate as our focalizing lenses.

First of all, we need to concede that the extant literary sources from antiquity can and will not provide us with a fully-fleshed panorama that cuts through the mentalities and living conditions of all societal strata; rather, as Finley (1975: 180) rightly emphasizes, they are a depiction of the sentiments of the educated elites to which the authors typically belonged. Thus, we ought to take their subjectively colored elaborations with a pinch of salt and refer, whenever necessary, to the historical conditions in which they were conceived to obtain a broader picture.

Second, the limited scope of this thesis inevitably compels us to be selective in our choice of texts. As the subtitle "An Examination of the Golden Age, Arcadia and the Cosmopolis as Stoic and Epicurean Proto-Utopian Paradigms in Roman Literature" already indicates, the three listed conceptual paradigms and their idiosyncratic adaptations by the selected authors, i.e. Vergil, Horace, Lucretius, Cicero, Seneca, Marcus Aurelius and Epictetus, will not only occupy a central position in this thesis, but provide the macro-structure for the subsequent chapters, which can either be read as self-contained and episodic or as accumulative. Even though it might appear redundant at first glance, I chose to supplement the following three sections by a brief introduction and synopsis to increase the readability and to crystallize the most salient features in the end. Since it would be a serious *faux pas* to wholly forego Greek predecessors, they shall be mentioned whenever they constitute a crucial foundation for our primary sources. For the sake of consistency, I decided to stick to the English orthography in the cited Latin source texts; therefore, the spelling might partially deviate from the primary editions I used (especially when it comes to the capitalization of letters at the beginning of a new sentence). Unless otherwise indicated, the translations of the selected original texts are my own. Text-critical problems will only be touched upon briefly, since the main focus of this thesis relates to a deductive investigation why the selected sources can (not) be classified as *proto-utopias*.

Third, the paramount investigative methods include close reading strategies, a comparative and contrastive analysis of the selected texts as well as an examination of cross-referencing allusions, intertextualities and dialectic relationships[25]. My selection of comparative passages will inevitably be sparing and does not make any claims to unimpeachable comprehensiveness. Since the thought never crossed my mind to refer to a *locus comparationis* just for accumulative purposes, I narrowed my choice to extracts that would supplement the overall ductus of my argumentative superstructure in a principled and sustained manner.

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[25] For a thorough, example-driven definitorial and methodological unravelling of overlapping investigative practices such as allusivity, intertextuality, and the employment of topoi, see Hinds (1998).

Fourth, the hermeneutic technique of suspicion, despite being a valid and illuminating interpretative method in the humanities up to the present day, will be bypassed in favor of a (neo-)phenomenological approach, pioneered by Rita Felski (2009: 28-34), who calls for accessing texts in a descriptive way by paying attention to the use of aesthetic features. Rather than applying deeply-rooted skepticism by suspecting that the texts engage in a wilful deception of their recipients, I will attempt to suggest a reflective stance that enables us to juxtapose the sources' multi-faceted intentions with historical, socio-political, (meta-)literary and reader-centered contingencies. A supplementary micro-philologic examination of key passages adds an extra-layer to my two-tiered analyses, and prevents succumbing to the temptation to adhere to ossified, naturalized and one-dimensional practices of meaning production. In other words:

> Oscillating persistently between languages, cultures and discursive histories, philology tarries upon the liminal zones, at the very thresholds of translation, inquiring into the conditions of translatability itself. [...] [C]omparative philology respects the material reserve of words and staves off their dissolution into the conceptual rigidity of unequivocal sense. It strives to excavate the hidden, pre-conceptual substrate of thought by attending to the process of meaning formation before meaning is definitely accomplished (Hamilton 2013: 20-22).

This methodological tool kit will hopefully enable us to shed light on the selected texts from numerous perspectives and respect their literary, philosophical and historical multi-layeredness without embarking on sweeping generalizations or (over-)simplifying grand narratives.

2. Abundance, Morality, Nostalgia and Future Prophecy in the Golden Age

> For during *Saturnes* ancient raigne it's sayd,
> that all the world with goodnesse did abound:
> All loved vertue, no man was affrayd
> Of force, no fraud in wight was to be found:
> No warre was knowne, no dreadfull trompets sound,
> peace universall rayn'd mongst men and beasts,
> and all things freely grew out of the ground:
> Iustice sate high ador'd with solemne feasts,
> and to all people did divide her dred beheasts.
>
> (Edmund Spenser, *The Faerie Queene*)

This chapter is dedicated to a delineation of the Golden Age topos, starting with a brief glance at the Hesiodic precursor and transitioning to its (more or less) Epicurean-tinted adaptations in Lucretius' *De Rerum Natura* 5, Horace's *Epode* 16, Vergil's *Eclogue* 4 and books 1-2 of the *Georgics*. As we shall see, the selected texts incorporate the idea of the self-providing earth (γῆ αὐτομάτη) to navigate between nostalgic longing for a lost paradise and genuine hope for (moderate) future betterment. In addition, the above-mentioned authors cast the spotlight on societal mischiefs by either pilloring or omitting despicable features of their contemporary reality (such as hubristic overreaching or the detrimental corollaries of imperial expansion) and by creating a poetic blank space that is then filled with 'subjective' and 'objective' *proto-utopian* remarks (see chapters 1.1, 1.5.3). This ties in with discussions pertinent to the Epicurean origins of justice and the views of this philosophical school on the moral integrity of *virtus*, the intrinsic worth of *ratio* and *securitas* and the value of *labor*, all of which are proposed as liberating forces or even as remedies for the currently flawed state of affairs.

2.1 *Ad fontes*: Hesiod's Golden Age as Template in the *Proto-Utopian* Mirror

The topos of the Golden Age has exerted considerable fascination on numerous dominant agents of literary production in antiquity and in subsequent epochs, which might be partly owed to the fact that the myth does not really tell a story with an unalterable set of parameters. Rather, it encapsulates a philosophical attitude which can be projected into a number of contexts due to its "protean aptitude for adjustment" (Levin 1969: xviii). Regardless of this characteristic of the topos, we are supposed to settle on a repertoire of common denominators before venturing out to explore the application of the Golden Age myth in Roman narratives. Its most salient feature is presumably the longing for a restoration of a state of pure bliss in which the bounteous nature is not only munificent, but also benevolent towards human endeavors. This idea has resonated with prevalent philosophical approaches in antiquity, particularly with Epicurean thinkers such as Lucretius, Horace or Vergil. They incorporate the Golden Age myth, which has its roots in

the Hesiodic Ἔργα καὶ ἡμέραι, in several inflections both to benefit from its stabilized semantic foundation and to place their own interpretations on top of the accreted meanings by infusing the myth with different narratological intentions (Campbell 2003: 11).

Conspicuously, the Morean *Utopia* lacks any explicit references to the Golden Age topos, probably owing to the fact that this literary device in its original function aimed at encapsulating a desire to revert to a long-forgotten archaic, paradisiacal state in which humankind was relieved from chaos, destruction or mutual laceration, as Ackermann (1979: 203) points out. It is thus questionable if the Golden Age myth had any social function in its original conception or if it was only intended to feature as an aesthetic pipe dream that would provide educated readers with a temporary escape from present grievances. Ferguson (1969: 31-42) betrays his inclination for the latter approach by asserting that the earliest visions were exempt from "any physical, emotional, spiritual or psychological want" (ibid., 37) and did not require legislative regulations of certain behaviors or emotional conditions, for humans would adhere to their genetically laid-out intuitions to live in harmony. By implication, this early state of pure innocence did not entail a necessity to seek for intellectual pursuits, which is a view that is diametrically opposed to humanist aspirations. This accounts for the deliberate pretermission of the Golden Age myth in *Utopia* where the author displays a "strong and ineradicable streak of pessimism [because] he realized the roots of evil lay too deep to be altered or removed by only a rearranging of the socio-economic organization of society" (Surtz and Hexter 1965: 72). Thomas Morus' utopian model foregoes any nostalgic longing and substitutes this empty content slot with future visions how a feasible betterment of society can be attained[26].

Notwithstanding the adumbrated palpable differences, one feature allows us to establish a link between the humanist work and the ancient Golden Age topos: communal property. The abolishment of private possessions and its beneficial influences on the social fabric occurs as early as in Hesiodus who includes the ὅμοιον-motif in his myth of ages, as Gatz (1967: 39) remarks: the earliest earth dwellers are depicted as living in times of peace and prosperity, placing the collective good above individual profit. Likewise, the Morean Utopians have a pool

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[26] We should not fail to mention that Morus – even though he eclipses any references to the metaphorically charged Golden Age topos – mentions gold as concrete physical material in his *opus*: The Utopians' attitude towards precious metals is praised when Hythloday remarks that they treat these deceptive goods as nothing more than they are. While earthenware is the prevalent material for handicraft products, only menial articles of daily use, such as chamberpots, are made out of gold (and silver): *Nam quum in fictilibus e terra vitroque elegantissimis quidem illis sed vilibus tamen edant bibantque, ex auro atque argento non communibus aulis modo sed in privatis etiam domibus matellas passim ac sordidissima quaeque vasa conficiunt.* (*Utopia*, book 2, p. 148) The Utopians' palpable scorn for gold relates to what Friedrich Nietzsche called the 'transvaluation of all values' (*Umwerthung aller Werthe*): a new moral code that is not tied to tangible riches emerges as the logical corollary, which simultaneously leads to the reader's revaluation of the empirical *status quo*; for a more thorough theoretical analysis of the Nietzschean concept, see Ebbighausen (2010: 385-396).

of common goods from which they scoop their resources selectively and judiciously, not seizing more than they require[27].

In contrast to Morus' static framework of societal perfection, however, Hesiodus makes sure to include the notion of dynamicity in his Ἔργα καὶ ἡμέραι. He sets the ball rolling by referring to the myth of Pandora whose jar gets broken by Epimetheus, thus liberating all sorts of evils that wander freely among, while only hope remains inside, clinging to the rim of the vessel[28] (V. 95-100). This detrimental event serves as a point of departure for the Greek poet to resort to a narration of the gradual deterioration of human beings. He begins with their blissful condition in the Golden Age where they dwelled among the gods, feasted lavishly – benefitting from natural abundance – and departed from the realm of the living by peacefully dozing off into eternal sleep (V. 110-125). Both their noble pursuits and their pure spirits succumbed to continuous corruption. Hesiodus inserts a generation of heroes after the description of the bellicose Bronze Age (V. 145-159) which has a retarding effect: in fact, he distinguishes between two types of demi-gods, one class that sank into oblivion after their death and another one that managed to reach the Islands of the Blessed, a bounteous abode where vestiges of the glorious Golden Age state prevail (V. 160-173). In addition to the fact that this paradise can not be accessed by average human efforts (Brown 1998: 390), the process of mankind's degradation inevitably culminates in the Iron Age: Hesiodus sees himself as a representative of this time of toil in which human beings see the light of the day with greying temples. This epoch of doom is not only characterized by the departure of the goddess Δίκη[29], the embodiment of justice, but

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[27] These early communistic thoughts resurface in Raphael Hythloday's panoramic exposure of the proceedings on the island Utopia, when he remarks that *aequabilitas*, i.e. the equitable distribution of resources, can be provided under the condition that all members of society contribute their fair share to the consummate labor division: *[O]mnium praesentes oculi necessitatem aut consueti laboris aut otii non inhonesti faciunt. Quem populi morem necesse est omnium rerum copiam sequi. Atque ea quum aequabiliter ad omnes perveniat fit nimirum ut inops esse nemo aut mendicus possit* (*Utopia*, book 2, p. 144). It is very likely that Morus was also influenced by the *Acts of the Apostles* 2, § 44 (*omnes etiam qui credebant erant pariter et habebant omnia communia possessiones*) and 4, § 32 (*multitudinis autem credentium erat cor et anima una nec quisquam eorum quae possidebant aliquid suum esse dicebat sed erant illis omnia communia*). I am grateful to my supervisor Prof. Smolak for pointing out these biblical backgrounds to me.

[28] The inclusion of this myth necessitates the following viewpoint: Hesiodus acknowledged the spikes of evil that inevitably pierced holes into the human body politic by displaying a "constant potential both for individual ruin and disastrous anarchy in society at large" (Brown 1998: 387). The concomitant injunction to maintain reasonable hopes for the future entertains the thought that this state of mind as well as a denial of all sorts of deceit were viable means to attain mental tranquillity and evade moral corruption.

[29] Johnston and Papaioannou (2013: 134) observe that Aratus also recurs to the Myth of Ages in his Φαινόμενα, but limits himself to the Golden, Silver and Bronze Race: in his description of celestial appearances, he arrives at one particular sign of the zodiac, Virgo (Δίκη), and relates the background of her elevation to the heavens. While she used to dwell among and mingle freely with humans in golden times, she withdrew to the mountains in the later epoch and finally departed from earth when the bronze people committed the contemptible deed of devouring her oxen which she had instituted for them to satisfy all their bodily needs. Cicero picks up on this topic twice: on the one hand, in *De Natura Deorum* 2, § 159 where he characterizes the nefarious crime of slaughtering the divine gift as a sure sign of human perversion and impending decay; on the other hand, in book 5 of his *Tusculanae Disputationes* in his hymn to philosophy that starts with the famous onset *vitae philosophia dux* (§ 5). A later

also by an utter lack of Αἰδώς, moral self-regulation, and Νέμεσις, reasonable and retributive righteousness (V. 174-201).

Despite this bleak conclusion, Hesiodus should not be branded as an outright pessimist. Rather, he presents himself as a social visionary[30] who holds out the felicity of the Golden Race as an ideal worthy of emulation, which bears traces of Mannheim's idea of a conservative utopia (see chapters 1.2, 1.5.2). Moreover, Hesiodus clings to a hope to improve the civic conditions:

> Man muß bei Hesiod unterscheiden zwischen dem Gedanken einer zyklischen Wiederkunft der Zeitalter und der allgemeinen Hoffnung, daß einmal wieder bessere Zeiten heraufkommen werden. Nur das letzte ist dem Text mit Sicherheit zu entnehmen. Wie diese Wiederkehr stattfindet, in zyklischer Weise, in rückläufiger Bewegung oder in einem unbestimmten, wellenartigen Vorgang, das muß tatsächlich offen bleiben (Gatz 1967: 25).

It will be clearly recognizable in the subsequent close reading of selected Roman Golden Age accounts that the Hesiodic progression from idealized to critique-laden mythic elaborations served as a flexible generic template for later inflections. Rather than embarking on Wallace-Hadrill's (1982: 20) assumption that Roman authors' primary purpose of including Golden Age references was to enhance the panegyric dimension of their literary productions, I will attempt to demonstrate that the *proto-utopian* Golden Age narratives in question[31], which might be read as supportive of the dominant regime ideologies on a surface level, display significant fissures that allow poets to sneak in critical remarks that put the contemporary societal and moral decline in the pillory. This discursive dimension is enhanced by a purposive and systematic elaboration of alternatives that aims at divorcing readers from their inherited, outdated and presumably

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reception of Aratus' Δίκη-myth can be found in Rufius Festus Avienus' *Phaenomena* (V. 273-366). The poet of late antiquity continues the depiction of the Golden Age by drawing on the rhetoric of negation, as Weber (1982: 180-183) compellingly demonstrates. In addition, Avienus adorns the personified goddess *Iustitia* with the epithet *aurea* (V. 316), thus coalescing the idea of prevailing justice with the Golden Age topos in a condensed version.

[30] Brown (1998: 391) points to a possible intention behind the Hesiodic pairing of metallic ages, which is by no means arbitrary, but could aim at mirroring certain societal conceptions. Following this interpretation, the golden and silver period represent good and bad facets of monarchy, whereas the bronze and iron epoch depict the justifiable and derailed sides of warfare as well as the back-breaking hardships of farming.

[31] The Ovidian narration of the Myth of Ages in *Metamorphoses* 1, 89-112 as well as Juvenal's treatment of the Golden Age topos in *Satire* 6, V. 1-20 will be deliberately pretermitted in the subsequent close reading, as these two authors do not display any Epicurean tendency (which is a crucial focal lens in this thesis). Rather, Ovid concentrates on the retelling of the myth in a Hesiodic manner and spices his elaborations with sassy and subtly anti-imperialistic remarks. Juvenal, by contrast, chooses a satirical bouleversement of the well-known motivic template to highlight that idyllic primitivism and the concomitant image of the 'noble savage' are outdated and have been supplanted by a wide range of qualities that were not present in the animalistic stages of human existence. Juvenal does not mince matters when criticizing the lack of experience of the earliest earth dwellers with regard to handling varying degrees of crime. Their clueless naivity is revealed in the following cynic climax: the poet relates that primordial humans deemed a trivial fauxpas, such as young children not standing up to old men out of respect, as a deed worthy of ultimate punishment. For an extensive treatment of these passages, I would like to refer interested readers to Singleton (1972: 151-165), Gatz (1967: 114-143) and Galinski (1983: 193-205).

unreflected values, most notably the *mos maiorum*, in order to make them adopt new ideals that oppose the fossilization of erroneous conceptions.

2.2 Lucretius' Prehistoric Triangulation: Hope, Nostalgia and Future Prophecy

In *De Rerum Natura*, Lucretius does not explicitly expose a comprehensive political philosophy nor does he disguise his deliberations under the cloak of fiction. Indeed, he gives priority to the religious dimension, especially in the context of elaborating his culture-history by adapting the Myth of Ages in book five. Lucretius' rejection of conventional religion, which is deeply rooted in Democritan atomistic principles, serves as the basis for his socio-political comments. His admiration of Epicureanism complements the residues of cultural pessimism that resurface as frequent echoes in his didactic poem[32]. Yet, rather than calling Lucretius a prophet of doom and gloom, we ought to acknowledge that the dialectics between various contrasting principles – positive and negative! –, such as life and death, peace and war, calm and agitation, creation and destruction or Epicurean equilibrium and superstitious anxiety, are a signature feature of his work (Segal 1990: 196), which has an influence on the compositional framework[33] of *De Rerum Natura* and the author's interweaving of *proto-utopian* remarks.

2.2.1 Frugality, Autochthony and the Ambivalence of Technical Progress

Lucretius does not romantically halo the primordial time of his Golden Age dwellers. On the contrary, he emphasizes that their physical prowess and their autochthonous, vagabond, self-sufficient way of life were necessary preconditions for their survival (5, V. 925-938):

> Et genus humanum multo fuit illud in arvis
> durius, ut decuit, tellus quod dura creasset,
> et maioribus et solidis magis ossibus intus
> fundatum, validis aptum per viscera nervis,
> nec facile ex aestu nec frigore quod caperetur
> nec novitate cibi nec labi corporis ulla.
> Multaque per caelum solis volventia lustra
> volgivago vitam tractabant more ferarum.

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[32] Marković (2008: 29-31) observes that Lucretius' choice of this format intends to echo the protreptic style in Epicurean writings and to establish a teacher-student-relationship to his readers. Indeed, the Roman poet equates his audience with children whose dimmed world views shall be illuminated by his explications. In his well-known apology in 1, V. 936-941 he compares his readership with young boys who naively drink poetry as if it was honey and who shall soon be cured by the Epicurean medicine. Even though Lucretius is strongly indebted to his Greek predecessor, his approach is novel inasmuch as he inverts the common association of poetry and puerility by deliberately drawing on this rather unusual form for his simultaneously instructive and intellectually challenging philosophical reflections.

[33] Costa (1984: xv) is right in asserting that, throughout the whole of *De Rerum Natura*, Lucretius carefully balances technical passages of scientific reasoning with highly emotionally charged poetic outpourings to intermingle potentially arid arguments with stylistically delightful similes and metaphors that give the text structural buoyancy.

Nec robustus erat curvi moderator aratri
quisquam, nec scibat ferro molirier arva
nec nova defodere in terram virgulta neque altis
arboribus veteres decidere falcibus ramos.
Quod sol atque imbres dederant, quod terra crearat
sponte sua, satis id placabat pectora donum.

> As it is right and proper, this version of humankind, which the rough soil had created, was much more enduring in tasks of husbandry, it was endowed inside with larger and more solid bones, well-equipped with thick sinews running through their flesh and it was of sorts that could not easily be harmed by heat, frostiness, nutritional novelties or any bodily weakness. While many quinquennia of the sun went by over the sky, they spent their lives nomadically in the manner of wild animals. Nobody was then a stalwart master of the curved plough, nor did anybody know how to properly treat the clods with iron or how to insert new loppings into the soil or how to remove old branches from tall trees with sickles. The gifts which the sun and the showers of rain provided and which the earth brought forth by itself comforted the hearts sufficiently.

Lucretius here advances the idea of the γῆ αὐτομάτη, i.e. the abundant earth that provides the human race with cornucopian plenty *sponte sua*. This topos has entered ancient thinking with the Hesiodic description of the Golden Age and has also found a widely known mythic outlet in Homer's *Odyssey* (4, V. 563-568) in the description of the Elysian fields[34] (Reitzenstein-Ronning 2013: 17). If we follow Lucretius, the bounteous mother earth was so generous in former times that the invention of agriculture was not necessary. This implication is circumscribed in the vivid image of the ploughman doing harm to the soil or the trees. Lucretius accumulates a number of tools, such as iron (*ferro*, V. 934) or sickles (*falcibus*, V. 936), to describe the undefiled state of the environment and its demolition by sheer human force[35]. The concrete physicality of the *proto-utopian* space is thus one where people are capable of moderating their desires and where nature is untouched.

This vision of the *locus amoenus*, an originally Hellenistic concept, is elaborated in *De Rerum Natura* 5, V. 945-952 in the description of natural springs and mountain streams that were permanently at humans' disposal in this prehistoric time. The temporal framework is envisioned as deliberately indeterminate, given that readers only learn about the approximate duration of this Golden Age bliss (*multa volventia lustra*, V. 931). This aspect, i.e. the passage of time and its highly subjective perception, is connected to the metaphor of the aging of the

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[34] The Homeric description of this myth-enshrouded place relates that immortal beings stayed there and that nature made life easy for humankind (τῇ περ ῥηίστη βιοτὴ πέλει ἀνθρώποισιν, V. 565). The Greek poet focusses on mentioning the absence of vexing natural phenomena, such as snow storms or unpleasant winds (οὐ νιφετός, οὔτ᾽ ἄρ χειμὼν πολὺς οὔτε ποτ᾽ ὄμβρος, V. 566), while remaining intentionally laconic about the social structure of the Elysian fields. Davies (1987: 266) underlines that the Homeric rhetoric of negation has significantly impacted his successors in their stylistic fashioning of *proto-utopian* visions.

[35] Lucretius employs a frequently used strategy in his delineation of the Golden Age by repeating the particle *nec* four times. Davies (1987: 265-284) observes that the description of blissful states by omission of negative features was a commonplace, if not to say a historical thought pattern, in Classical Antiquity.

earth, as Ackermann (1979: 205) observes: whereas the *terra mater* was rough and vigorous in her youth, thus demanding equal toughness from her inhabitants, her virtues have slackened with increasing age. This circumstance has naturally impacted human life style, which tailed off concomitantly. As a consequence, we could read a first precursor of an ecotopian approach into this Lucretian passage, which Ní Dhúill (2010: 37) trenchantly defined as "a loss of faith in the growth- and affluence based economic model" and the conjoined "dream of reconciliation with nature, of (re-)attaining a harmonious coexistence with the environment". The Roman poet seems to recommend a reversal to a more primitive and simplistic state in order to slow down the unreflected exploitation of natural resources as well the moral downward slide[36].

Yet, it would not be Lucretius with his admittedly enigmatic style if there was not another side of the coin. Indeed, his evaluation of technical progress is ambivalent. The invention of fire (5, V. 953) has not only facilitated the fulfilment of daily chores and made life generally more comfortable, but has also lead to a mollification or even a perversion of the human race[37]. Gone is the drudgery, gone too the moral purity of the primordial idyllic innocence. Minyard (1985: 65) interprets the Lucretian stance as deeply diffident towards the constant addition of civic institutions and other organizational ramifications as they would only intervene with humans' natural ways and thus contribute to a concealment of truth and morality.

2.2.2 The Moral Code of Communal Property and the Epicurean Origins of Justice

Morality is a decisive point with regard to the Golden Age topos in *De Rerum Natura*. Even though starvation or lack of basic requirements might sometimes have triggered suffering in former times, abundance and relentless cravings for luxuries are the major source of societal ills, according to Lucretius. He hammers home this opposition by addressing the benefits of communal property and the importance of a generally accepted moral code in 5, V. 958-962:

> Nec commune bonum poterant spectare neque ullis
> moribus inter se scibant nec legibus uti.
> Quod cuique obtulerat praedae fortuna, ferebat
> sponte sua sibi quisque valere et vivere doctus.

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[36] Campbell (2003: 192) seems to be in line with this interpretation by claiming that "[l]ife speeds up as technology progresses, just as the seasons, once static in the eternal spring, increase their pace and force." In addition, he advances the idea of the 'noble savage' in this context and proposes that the physical prowess of Lucretius' early humans could even conjure up associations with tribes such as the Scythians or the Ethiopians for contemporary readers (ibid., 189). A later reception of this complex of themes can be found in the *Descriptio Orbis Terrae* (V. 1285-1304) by Rufius Festus Avienus. I am grateful to my supervisor Prof. Smolak for this hint.

[37] The ambiguity of this process is encapsulated in 5, V. 1014: *tum genus humanum primum mollescere coepit.* Manuwald (1980: 56) indicates that the infinitive *mollescere* conveys an overall positive notion of triggering open-mindedness and emotional warmth in humankind, which facilitates the fashioning of interpersonal bonds in further consequence. However, we might also read a slightly pejorative subcurrent into it, for it could additionally signify the slackening of morals and the general deterioration of work ethos, discipline and virtuousness.

> Et Venus in silvis iungebat corpora amantum;
> conciliabat enim vel mutua quamque cupido
> vel violenta viri vis atque impensa libido
> vel pretium, glandes atque arbita vel pira lecta.

> They could not focus on communal property nor did they know how to use morals or
> laws amongst themselves. Everybody seized the benefits for himself which fortune
> had offered as prey, everybody was autonomously instructed to live well and to soar
> only for himself. And Venus conjoined the bodies of lovers in the woods; for either
> mutual desire made them amalgamate or the man's violent urge or overflowing lust
> or little treats, such as acorns or fruits from the arbutus or selected pears.

Three features are noteworthy in this rough sketch of a moral landscape in the Golden Age.

First, the goddess Venus appears as a governing principle in this scene. She is supportive in conjoining future lovers, who ideally convene by mutual attraction (*mutua cupido*, V. 963):

> Venus allows the early humans to make the conceptual leap from seeing
> selfish behaviour as the only survival strategy, to the idea of the
> effectiveness of mutual altruism and the rightness of pitying the weak,
> including women and children (Campbell 2003: 226).

However, this scene of amatory bliss is not unblemished[38]. Brutish force and untamed appetite creep in when Lucretius mentions *violenta viri vis* and *impensa libido* (V. 964) by means of which a man can snatch a female object of desire. Another option of wooing would be to win over a woman with plain pledges of love, such as acorns or arbute berries[39]. These driving factors for sexual relations can be seen as an allusion to an unimpeachable gender hierarchy and the fact that patriarchy is absolutely intact in this idealized setting.

A glimpse at the role of the goddess Venus in the larger context of *De Rerum Natura* is worthwhile to interpret her appearance in this scene on a more abstract level. According to Segal (1990: 188), Lucretius identifies Venus with creative energy, mental tranquillity and Epicurean pleasure, whereas her male counterpart Mars stands for the irrational and deleterious facets of humanity. The poet channels his thoughts through this catalyzing mythic filter to include a "symbolical psychohistory of mankind" (Segal 1990: 191). Furthermore, he indicates that Epicurean principles, such as the seeking of moderate pleasures, can be reversed into the opposite and, therefore, derail fatally if misunderstood by their human agents.

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[38] These early amatory outlets are in line with the Epicurean ideal of sexual contacts insofar as they are not based on conjugal promises or contractual relations, but allow human beings to intermingle freely without necessarily getting emotionally attached to each other. To put it in Schiesaro's (1990: 129) words: "l'uomo primitivo, come gli animali, viveva spontaneamente la sua dimensione erotica che 'oggi' è fortemente inibita dal ruolo innaturalmente acquisito della passione amorosa."

[39] The frequent distribution of love gifts is normally a topos in pastoral and elegaic poetry. Gale (1994: 171) highlights the subtle social critique that Lucretius includes in this passage, for he contrasts the undemanding character disposition of Golden Age women with the degenerated decadence of his female contemporaries who, in their roles as *puellae*, would crave to be spoiled by extravagant presents and courtesies.

Second, the above-cited quote betrays that the first earth dwellers were not wholly lost in rapture. Indeed, they were subject to the principle of randomness, which is a constant in the Lucretian worldview. The phrase *sponte sua* (V. 961) is indicative of this prevalent contingency and establishes an elegant verbatim link to an earlier passage that discussed the benefits of the autogenetic earth (V. 938). This image is topped off with a mention of *fortuna* (V. 960): destiny is depicted in a typically Epicurean manner, i.e. as deliberately non-providential, but as moody, fluctuating and incalculable, thus coercing human beings to grasp unique opportunities by the forelock once they come their way.

This ties in with the third observation regarding Golden Age morality: Lucretius outlines the primordial ways of human behavior as steeped in unawareness and ignorance of the law: *moribus inter se scibant nec legibus uti* (V. 959). Part of the prehistoric idyll and accompanying integrity of manners is owed to the lack of morally depraved alternatives. Blickman (1989: 166) views these verses as a euphemistic circumscription, indeed a "deliberate whitewash of the earliest violence" and Mitsis (1988: 83) agrees that the absence of any explicit juridical system in this account is not so much indicative of a prevalence of anti-social courses of conduct, but rather complies adequately with the prehistoric notions of solipsism and self-sufficiency (*sibi quisque valere et vivere doctus*, V. 961).

The first earth dwellers seem to be as innocent and undebauched as a newborn child who is dropped into a cruel world without any foreboding of what lies ahead. In 5, V. 222-227 Lucretius compares this suckling to a seafarer who has been cast ashore, barely escaping death by drowning, and mentions the child's heart-wrenching cry as an expression of helplessness and an intuitious reaction to his dreadful surroundings. Ackermann (1979: 207) observes that the poet forges an elegant bridge from this memorable image of a naked baby to the emotional bareness of individuals who, aware of their vulnerability owing to their solitude, form societies to evade their exposure to the threats of an indifferent nature (5, V. 1019-1029):

> Tunc et amicitiem coeperunt iungere aventes
> finitimi inter se nec laedere nec violari,
> et pueros commendarunt muliebreque saeclum,
> vocibus et gestu cum balbe significarent
> imbecillorum esse aequum misererier omnis.
> Nec tamen omnimodis poterat concordia gigni.
> Sed bona magnaque pars servabat foedera caste:
> Aut genus humanum iam tum foret omne peremptum,
> nec potuisset adhuc perducere saecla propago.
> At varios linguae sonitus natura subegit
> mittere et utilitas expressit nomina rerum.

Back then, neighbors started to fashion friendships avidly and amongst themselves refused to hurt each other or to be hurt, and entrusted their children and their female kin to each other, while stammering and indicating with voices and gestures that it would be just to be sympathetic with the poor. Even though concord could not be created by all means, the well-spirited majority virtuously adhered to the contracts. Otherwise, the whole of humankind would have been annihilated already back then and could not have perambulated the centuries up to the present by procreation. But nature compelled them to send out various sounds of the tongue and utility formulated the terms and labels for all matters.

When pushed to the brink of annihilation, Lucretius insinuates, an individual seeks the company of others. In order for these loose associations to be beneficial, *concordia* (V. 1024) comes to the fore as the prevalent *proto-utopian* value, indeed a *conditio sine qua non*[40]. Speaking of terms and conditions, the earliest ties between living entities are characterized by contracts (*foedera*, V. 1025) to which human beings submit impulsively in order to attain *securitas*, freedom from troubles and sorrows. The motto 'neither to harm nor to be harmed' (*nec laedere nec violari*, V. 1020) encapsulates the essence of these silent agreements and reverberates with the Epicurean *dictum* μὴ βλάπτειν μηδὲ βλάπτεσθαι (*Rarae Sententiae* 33), as Costa (1984: 118) and Holmes (2013: 174) highlight. Interestingly, the earliest earth dwellers in Lucretius gain this insight all by themselves, not needing divine intervention, which, according to Gale (2013: 34), underlines the basic Epicurean assumption that the gods sojourn in *intermundia* and do not meddle in the affairs of mortals. Rather, it is left to humans' own devices to shape their world in line with their desires while simultaneously accepting the profound randomness that governs life. The principle of contingency resurfaces in the above-cited passage when Lucretius, in a side remark, elaborates on the origins of language. He claims that prehistoric people did not use voices and gestures in a rationally substantiated manner from day one onwards, but stumbled upon their communicative benefits accidentally, seeing them as a *utilitas* (V. 1029), a means to an end. The poet discloses a very reasonable evolutionary perspective in this passage, whose basic premises are still up-to-date in contemporary debates[41].

The fashioning of interpersonal bonds (*amicitiem coeperunt iungere aventes*, V. 1019) proved to be equally expedient for primordial human beings. Lucretius recurs to the Epicurean φιλία, a frequently included value in idealized settings, as the basis for human life in proximity

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[40] The concept of *concordia* bears traces of the Greek terms φιλαλληλία and ὁμόνοια. Interestingly, it resurfaces more frequently in Stoic than in Epicurean accounts in Roman literature, which gives rise to the assumption that Lucretius interpreted the philosophical musings on justice set out by his Greek role model in a way that would go beyond an individual's narrow focus on personal benefit, as Campbell (2003: 281) indicates.

[41] In addition, Lucretius presents himself as an adherent of the Epicurean φύσις theory, which suggests a natural proximity between words and the objects they denote. By implication, the Roman poet rejects another idea as ludicrous which enjoyed great popularity at that time: the θέσις doctrine which, much in the vein of the famous Swiss structuralist Ferdinand de Saussure, suggested that the relationship between a linguistic label and its signified item is completely arbitrary. A more thorough analysis of Lucretius' stance on the original foundation of language on *utilitas* can be found in Costa (1984: 119-121) and Manuwald (1980: 42).

to one another. Holmes (2013: 172) raises the justified question whether this foundational pillar for any society ought to be regarded as purely utilitarian or not. In other words, does Lucretius suggest that *amicitia* is a lucrative and mutually beneficial yarn out of which the social fabric is spun, and that tying such reciprocally profitable interpersonal knots is as good as it can get? Or is his nostalgically transfigured vision influenced by a belief in altruism and unconditional attachment to the other as well as a desire for a general betterment of humanity? We might well hypothesize that Lucretius has a propensity for the latter stance in light of the speaker's sanctioning, if not to say endorsement, of having compassion for the members of society that are not so well off (*imbecilliorum esse aequum misererier omnis*, V. 1023). However, the poetic *persona* conjectures almost in the same breath that there are limitations to this attitude of universal charity, benevolence and harmony (*concordia*), as not all individuals comply with these unwritten laws of their own accord; in fact, the major part does so: *bona magnaque pars servabat foedera caste* (V. 1025).

With regard to these slightly paradoxical textual currents, a plausible position on this complex issue is advanced by Algra (1997: 142) who parallels Lucretius' concept of *amicitia* with the Stoic idea οἰκείωσις. The latter term refers to acts of familiarization by means of which all living beings develop strong feelings for their fellows and thus have a natural inclination to seek harmony rather than strife, emotional tranquillity rather than turmoil on an interpersonal level (see chapter 4.3.1). If we are supposed to assume that the Lucretian *amicitia* has similar connotations or ramifications, this means – with regard to the above-cited passage – that the formation of friendships as well as human ties in general is no barren or mechanic utilitarian process. On the contrary, it is predicated on purely altruistic motives rather than on meticulously calculated deliberations of usefulness. This is indeed a best-case scenario and necessarily has to be treated with caution, as Holmes (2013: 173) rightly remarks: not only should we be careful to lay this admittedly speculative interpretation at Lucretius' door, we also ought not to forget that οἰκείωσις denotes an innate human disposition to take care of others, whereas no such indication can be found in the Epicurean concept of φιλία, which is empirically generated: it arises in the course of an individual's life, and is thus bound to be more evanescent.

As a next step, we might want to ask ourselves to which extent the seemingly voluntary adherence to legal codes and other contractual arrangements of the major part of humanity, as Lucretius adumbrates, correlates with questions of justice and their eminence in this idealized setting. The respective ethical stance in *De Rerum Natura* runs along the following lines:

> justice arises informally and naturally, and is a 'bottom up' rather than a
> 'top down' process, unlike legislation. Legislation for the Epicureans
> may or may not be just, according to circumstances: justice is entirely

> relative to each situation, and may only be judged on the outcome of each
> action […] there is no pre-existing transcendent notion of justice, but it
> is a human construct, for [human] benefit (Campbell 2003: 253-254).

Consequently, a violent, crime-ridden, injust life style does not pay off because the moral transgression and the ensuing pricks of conscience constitute a severe punishment that is more torturing for the perpetrator than any physical penalty could be. In addition, an undetected malefaction confounds misdemeanants' emotional equilibrium, for they are bound to linger in fear that their criminal offense might be disclosed at an indeterminate point in the future. This circumstance allows Lucretius to elaborate on his practically feasible moral standpoint, which Gale (2013: 35) analyzed trenchantly: philosophical disciples, who have properly internalized Epicurean doctrines, are guided by their internal monitors that impel them to adhere to the laws, not because they are stimulated by fear for divine sanction or lofty ideals of justice, but because they view compliance with (unwritten) legislations as an adequate and mutually beneficial way of proceeding to warrant mental integrity.

2.2.3 An Epicurean Recipe of Personal and Civic *Proto-Utopia* vis-à-vis Societal Ills

As adumbrated in the previous section, Lucretius is not starry-eyed in disclosing his perspective on laws and uncodified social contracts. Rather, he is determined in his conviction that justice as the sole civic virtue no longer suffices as a vehicle to attain either emotional or intellectual wholeness (or both) because "knowledge of the various versions of *iustitia* may [only] help the understanding of how human society has developed" (Minyard 1985: 71). This position compels the poet to dig up a trench between reality and his political as well as philosophical visions to allow two tender *proto-utopian* buds to blossom. The first seed has its roots in society-encompassing deliberations, the second is planted on the fertile soil of a more individualistic approach (see chapter 1.5.3).

When taking a closer look at the former, we could argue that *De Rerum Natura* bears features of an anticipatory and socially selective *proto-utopia*. Ackermann (1979: 207) remarks that Lucretius carefully balances primitivist and progressive ideas in his theory of cultural ascent, for he mixes a nostalgic longing for a long-forgotten prehistoric idyll with a belief in societal advancement[42]. Holmes (2013: 155) highlights that the poet propounds these dialectic thought plays in a time when "anthropocentric teleology was flourishing, no doubt thanks in large part to the Stoics' enthusiasm for teleology." As already adumbrated, Lucretius mentions

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[42] A less diplomatic assessment is proffered by Campbell (2003: 181) who regards the progressivist-/primitivist-debate with regard to Lucretius as "fundamentally flawed, since these are modern anthropological terms that we retroject anachronistically […] and no ancient writer fits neatly into either category."

the well-disposed large shares of humankind (*bona magnaque pars*, 5, V. 1025) who bear the seeds of reason and justice in them and are therefore potentially responsible for the general improvement of society. This utterly positive evaluation of evolution is contrasted with a deeply entrenched human emotion that poses a tremendous obstacle to the unblemished vision of linear historical progress: *metus deorum*, the fear of the gods[43].

Lucretius ventures out to acrimoniously assault the bitter banality and unsubstantiated simplicity that governs wrongheaded religious rituals. In 5, V. 1194-1235 he accumulates a number of rhetorical questions to illustrate the absurdity and short-sightedness of *superstitio*[44]. His major points of critique include the hypocritical piety of ritualistic attires, such as veiled heads, the futility of προσκύνησις in front of a deity's altar, the unnecessary bloodthirstiness of animal sacrifices or the unfounded inner agitation in times of natural catastrophes. According to Minyard (1985: 39), Lucretius attributes a conspirational quality to his Roman fellow citizens who would either willfully or unconsciously base their lives on lies and thus propel an ethic course that steers towards self-destruction and a perpetuating spiral of doom. The Roman poet boils down these misguided fear-induced actions to a lack of reason: *temptat enim dubiam mentem rationis egestas* (5, V. 1211). A closely related passage in book two strikes a similarly bleak chord (V. 37-39, 44-46):

> Quapropter quoniam nihil nostro in corpore gazae
> proficiunt neque nobilitas nec gloria regni,
> quod superest, animo quoque nihil prodesse putandum;
> his tibi tum rebus timefactae religiones
> effugiunt animo pavidae, mortisque timores
> tum vacuum pectus lincunt curaque solutum.

> Since neither treasures nor nobleness nor the glory of rule give our body a cutting edge, it should consequently be believed that they do not bring the mind advantages either. In consideration of these vanities, terrified religious beliefs shall flee your spirit and the fears of timid death then leave your empty heart which has been absolved from troubles.

Wealth, worldly success, fame, prestige or the expectation of death, abstract qualities that have been personified in the above-cited passage, are quintessentially evanescent and not worthwhile to spend too much energy on, even though they are inclined to make their devotees think

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[43] This despicable yet socially prevalent phenomenon is indeed at the bottom line of a causal chain of evils, as Campbell (2003: 18) puts forth: misunderstood religious piety leads to a fear of death, which is then responsible for generating sentiments of instability and uncertainty that impel human beings to invest hopes in accumulating riches or seeking worldly fame. Naturally, the end-products of these cause-effect-mechanisms are deleterious competition and anti-social behavior among individuals.

[44] Lucretius' critique is not plucked out of thin air, on the contrary: the first century B.C. was characterized by a tremendous dissatisfaction with patronizingly instituted religious practices. This led to a boom in astrology which was very attractive for the uneducated masses, as Müller and Günther (1987: 138-140) point out.

differently[45]. Likewise, the sophisticated war machinery and the contemporary multifaceted arsenal of weapons have generated *discordia*. Kenney (1972: 19) remarks that this Lucretian *terminus technicus* in a nutshell denotes the obnoxious political competition of his day and eviscerating individualism as two societal inclinations that are not only bordering on megalomania, but are also diametrically opposed to former collective efforts to propel cultural ascent. The ensuing injunction follows hard on the heels: what matters is a complete eradication of these destructive forces from one's soul to escape unsettling and vacuous troubles. The implication is that our *pectus* (V. 46) is the only *locus* where a positively inflected *proto-utopia* can unfold. This premise and the recommendation to seek an inner retreat in times of political commotion also comes to the fore in the following passage of *De Rerum Natura* (5, V. 43-51):

> At nisi purgatumst pectus, quae proelia nobis
> atque pericula tumst ingratis insinuandum!
> Quantae tum scindunt hominem cuppedinis acres
> sollicitum curae, quantique perinde timores!
> Quidve superbia spurcitia ac petulantia? Quantas
> efficiunt clades! Quid luxus desidiaeque?
> Haec igitur qui cuncta subegerit ex animoque
> expulerit dictis, non armis, nonne decebit
> hunc hominem numero divom dignarier esse?

> If our heart, however, is not purified, which battles and which dangers do we then have to suffer through against our wills! Which bitter sorrows of desire do then dissect an agitated person and, moreover, which giant fears? Arrogance, the rummaging in filth and impertinance, what about them? What kind of damage they effectuate! What remains to be said about hedonistic luxuries and sluggishness? Consequently, there came a man who subjected all of these evils and expelled them from the mind with words, not with arms – will it not be appropriate to count this highly merited human being among the gods?

Lucretius expands the list of book two by addressing a number of personified evils (V. 47-48) – pride (*superbia*), filthiness (*spurcitia*), cockiness (*petulantia*), debauchery (*luxus*) and tediousness (*desidiae*), to be precise – that wage ferocious wars in order to tear the human soul apart. He sees these derailed and morally corrupting cravings for materialistic riches, boundless leisure, reputation or licentious gratification not only as symptomatic of the prevailing societal ills of his contemporaries, but also as a grave impediment on an individual's path to realize the *proto-utopian* longing for perfection. A suitable remedy, formulated as a cleansing metaphor, comes hard on the heels of these critical remarks: a person who is capable of combating rogue sentiments such as haughtiness or ennui with words or proverbial aide-mémoires, not with brutish force (*dictis, non armis*, V. 50) to gain steadfast control over one's own emotional waves

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[45] Minyard (1985: 37) adds that Lucretius posits a relatively outrageous claim, measured by the prevalent sets of values of his contemporaries, for he severs the tie between *religio* and its natural corollary *pietas* that were typically regarded as "opposite sides of the same coin and independent elements of a coherent intellectual structure" (ibid.).

is truly dignified and merits a quasi-divine status. This message is underlined linguistically by the deliberately archaic phrasing[46] (*purgatumst, tumst, cuppedinis, divom, dignarier*) whose two major intentions are to add gravity to the injunction and to imply that these societal ills have plagued humanity over a considerable period of time[47].

As we can register from the elaborations above, one Lucretian strand of *proto-utopia* is removed from the telescopic observation of societal patterns, but zooms in on the individual. In this context, the poet brings in his Greek precedessor and highly adored role model Epicurus, whom he hails as an almost eschatological figure, a messianic hero at the dawn of a new civilization. The proems of book one, three, five and six are unambiguous testimonies of the Roman poet's homages to his Greek predecessor[48]. Ackermann (1979: 163) observes that the *invocatio* of the Epicurean *genius* is forwarded in an epic style, suggesting his transformation into a mythically removed and deified benefactor (Εὐεργέτης) in a Euhemeristic sense. What renders the Greek philosopher unique in Lucretius' eyes is his venerable *vera ratio* and the fact that he dared to cast off the constricting shackles of superstitious godliness (5, V. 8-12):

> Dicendum est, deus ille fuit, deus, inclyte Memmi,
> qui princeps vitae rationem invenit eam quae
> nunc appellatur sapientia, quique per artem
> fluctibus e tantis vitam tantisque tenebris
> in tam tranquillo et tam clara luce locavit.

> It has to be said, he was a god, a god indeed, o famous Memmius, who first discovered the theory of life, which is now called wisdom, and who shifted life away from the high tides and from the vast darkness to such tranquillity and to such clear light by means of his skilful thoughts.

Epicurus is not only elated to a divine figure (*deus ille fuit*, 5, V. 8), but also praised as the inventor of *sapientia*. The Roman poet resorts to a presumably widely known nautical metaphor to depict the Greek philosopher as a *gubernator* who masterfully accomplishes to hold the storms in check. His doctrines are to be regarded as guidelines in times of turmoil and upheaval, for they enable mental tranquillity and a life based on a reasonably equipoised substratum even though the majority of Roman civilians and Lucretius' contemporaries is ignorant to them:

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[46] For a thorough examination of Lucretius' archaisms and their reminiscence of Ennius as well as other metrical techniques and stylistic particularities, see Gale (2009: 12-13).

[47] Costa (1984: 53) and Marković (2008: 3) refer to a similarly panegyric passage in book six. Verbatim parallels in the lines *veridicis igitur purgavit pectora dictis / et finem statuit cuppedinis atque timoris* (V. 24-25) not only suggest that the two eulogies of Epicurus ought to be read in conjunction, but they also intend to extol the Greek philosopher to a leitmotif in *De Rerum Natura*.

[48] Especially the passage in *De Rerum Natura* 1 (V. 62-79) where the Epicurean ἀριστεία in the philosopher's battle with the oppressive forces of religious superstition is described in great detail, has received significant attention in recent scholarship. For a detailed discussion, see: West (1969: 57-63), Schrijvers (1970: 254), Kenney (1974: 18-24), Gale (1994: 42-45; 118-119) and Marković (2008: 1-5).

> If everyone adopted Epicurus' creed the outlook would be wholly bright
> and salvation assured: as most people have not done so the implication
> is that their philosophical and moral progress has not kept pace with
> their physical and technical advances (Costa 1984: xx).

The soteriological perspective of the Greek philosopher's *sententiae* is colorfully embellished with an imagery of light and darkness. The appearance of Epicurus bears features of an epiphanic manifestation, for he has brought light into the gloominess of his own age and those to come, thus providing humanity with intellectual enlightenment. He enkindles a beacon of hope to illuminate his disciples' souls (6, V. 39-41):

> Hunc igitur terrorem animi tenebrasque necessest
> non radii solis nec lucida tela diei
> discutiant, sed naturae species ratioque.

> It is therefore necessary that neither sun rays nor the beaming javelins of the day dispel
> this terror of the mind and this darkness, but that our principled, rationally-conducted
> apprehension of nature does so.

The Lucretian credo of what is pivotal in life is boiled down to its essence in these three lines: any horror that besets the soul can be extinguished with an principled intellectual examination of nature[49] (*naturae species*) and an employment of reason (*ratio*). By implication, the Roman poet attributes a significant amount of agency to his audience, for "we all have the ammunition we need to *defend ourselves* against the ills that plague society" (Gale 2013: 41).

Lucretius adds an extra-layer to this stance by referring to the myth of Pandora. In book 6 (V. 17-25) he compares the typical human soul to a fissured jar wrought by *vitium*. Any commodity that tries to enter this vessel inevitably has to undergo corruption just like Epimetheus' opening of Pandora's box has freed all evils, with only hope remaining inside[50]. Epicurean thinkers, however, are not compelled to idly bear witness to the gradual deterioration of their surroundings in light of this misfortune, but have the necessary intellectual equipment at their disposal to cope with this situation, as Gale (2013: 41) trenchantly analyzed. Ideally, a prospective philosophical *sapiens* is able to sojourn aloof, glimpsing at the fluctuating tides of daily struggles or military conflicts from an elevated viewpoint (2, V. 325-332):

> Fulgor ubi ad caelum se tollit, totaque circum
> aere renidescit tellus, supterque virum vi
> excitur pedibus sonitus, clamoreque montes

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[49] Lucretius' strict adherence to the importance of sense perceptions makes Minyard (1985: 42) believe that *De Rerum Natura* intends to subject social experience to the workings of nature by supplanting the well-established paradigm of the *mos maiorum* with a determined reliance on physicality. Although there is sufficient evidence to support the claim that the Roman poet redefines linguistic categories to accommodate them to his belief in natural science, the moral dimension of the Lucretian *vera ratio* should not be completely swept under the carpet.

[50] According to Minyard (1985: 44), Lucretius introduces 'hope' as a new value to his didactic poem to provide his readers with a source to find a purpose in the war-torn contemporary reality.

icti reiectant voces ad sidera mundi,
et circumvolitant equites mediosque repente
tramittunt valido quatientes impete campos:
et tamen est quidam locus altis montibus, unde
stare videntur et in campis consistere fulgor.

When the blaze rises to the sky and the soil shimmers from the plenitude of bronze everywhere and when from below the sound of footsteps ascends through virile power and when the mountains cast their voices, which were tossed with clamor, back to the heavenly stars and when the equestrians fly about and suddenly cross the fields in the middle while caught in a mighty storm, then there ist still one very special place high up in the mountains from where they seem to stand still and from where the blaze appears to have come to to a halt.

Nowhere in *De Rerum Natura* is the opposition between individual and society clearer than in this image, which is framed by the prominent positioning of the noun *fulgor* in the initial and the concluding line. Lucretius employs a martial image to illustrate that the major part of a civilization is entangled in trivial quarrels on several figurative battlefields, investing energies in futile endeavors, such as the striving for evanescent success, whereas the Epicurean sage has found a satisfying retreat in the mountainous solitude from where he keeps a watching brief over the scrambles at his feet from a safe distance[51]. The *proto-utopian* message is conveyed on a concrete spatial and an abstract metaphysical level: topographically speaking, Lucretius seems to recommend a withdrawal to the unspoiled nature as a permanently applicable remedy to cure the wounds inflicted by the contaminating forces of society. This goes hand in hand with a cognitive detachment and a reliance on solipsism[52]. A true adherent of Epicureanism is able to activate the internal moral auto-pilot at any point in time[53], which interposes itself between precipitous, retrospectively regrettable actions and a veritably reasonable way of proceeding that functions as a trailblazer for εὐδαιμονία and ἀταραξία.

2.2.4 Lucretius' Conception of History: *virtus* and *ratio* as Guarantors of Progress

Although much could still be added before closing the book on Lucretius, we might content ourselves with recapitulating the two major *proto-utopian* strands, the subjective and the

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[51] Gale (2013: 28) reads this bellicose passage in conjunction with the former description of jovially frolicking cattle (2, V. 317-320) and concludes that Lucretius advocates rural life and its vital importance for making large-scale nutritional provisions for a nation by contrasting it with the pointless martial undertakings that dominated the imperialistically-oriented ideological aspirations of his Roman contemporaries.

[52] At the beginning of *De Rerum Natura* 2, the idea of the Epicurean sage who lives well by adhering to the right precepts is advanced for the first time: Lucretius mentions exalted temples edified and bolstered by the philosophical doctrines of wise men: *edita doctrina sapientum templa serena* (V. 7). These imaginary sacral buildings are to be deemed as alternatives to the fragile constructs that unquestioned commonplace *religio* would erect. This is the reason why the aforementioned *templa serena* are ideal dwelling places for Epicurean devotees.

[53] Kenney (1972: 13) links this ethical stance to the introductory "Heracles-bashing" of book five (V. 22-38), where the deeds of the mythic hero, who featured prominently as a paradigm in many Stoic accounts, are debased: "the culture-hero must be discredited so that man can be shown to be the architect of his own destiny."

objective, in *De Rerum Natura* and concludingly examine their reformatory potential and their prophetic impact on the constitution of society. Segal (1990: 221-224) has a point in asserting that the poet's subtly addressed future prognoses are characterized by a belief in moderate progress that is reminiscent of Mannheim's liberal-humanitarian utopian ideal (see chapter 1.2). Lucretius combines a linear and a circular view of history to emphasize that certain negative constants in human behavior such as envy, ignorance or violence are, realistically speaking, never going to be completely eliminable. This diachronic conception of history might best be visualized as follows[54]:
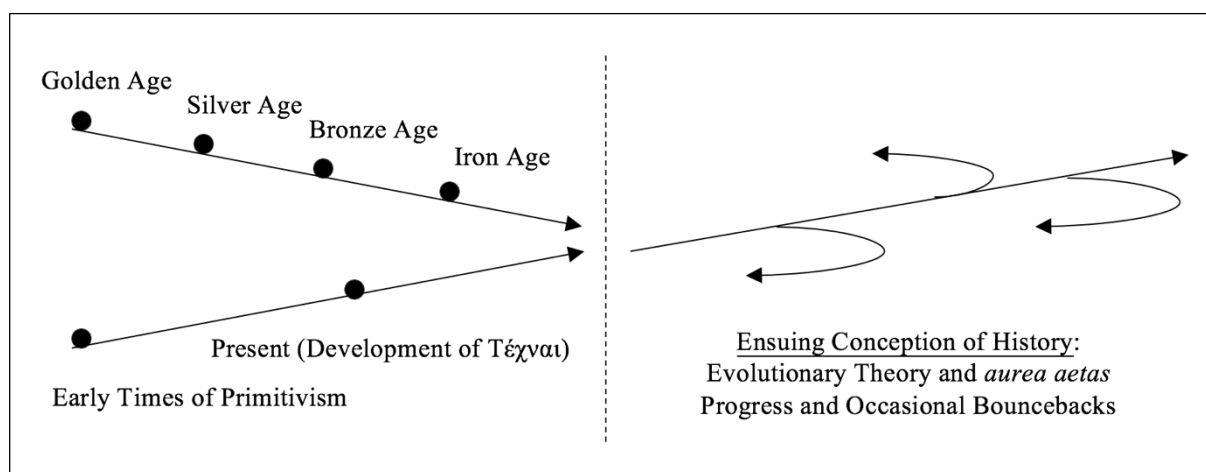
Even though human (r)evolutions have a strong propensity to move in a forward direction, occasional bouncebacks are inevitable. The necessary precondition for the relapses outlined in the graph above is tied to the bipartite Epicurean model of cultural development: Lucretius recurs to the elaborations of his Greek predecessor, as Manuwald (1980: 57) demonstrates, insofar as he hints at a slight rupture in the process of societal development. Once the topos of the autogenetic earth has sunk into oblivion, humans have to rely on λογισμός, i.e. their rational faculties, which on the one hand elevate their existence to a higher level by generating a space for self-determined and autonomous conduct, but on the other hand they facilitate abnormalities by opening paths to all sorts of ethical misdemeanors. This facet is underlined by Lucretius' ambivalent depiction of his Golden Age dwellers inasmuch as he contrasts their intuitive sense of justice and their moral integrity with their anti-idyllic, if not to say savage state of existence, for they were in permanent competition with threatening beasts (Kenney 1972: 14).

In light of the Epicurean premise that "pleasures can be varied but not increased" (Segal 1990: 221), Lucretius might be branded as a gloomster who would not see any difference

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[54] The model is on the one hand based on the elaborations of Ackermann (1979: 206) and Roser (1970: 75), on the other hand supplemented with my own conclusions, especially regarding Lucretius' conception of history.

between this prehistoric state and the condition of his contemporary fellows. However, this one-dimensional analysis does not fully capture the complexity of *De Rerum Natura*. Campbell (2003: 9; 262) offers a more differentiated approach, which does greater justice to the textual complexity of the didactic poem: he asserts that the description of mankind's prelapsarian condition in book five has an aetiological function, while simultaneously operating as a mirror for contemporary readers. By implication, Lucretius' address of human prehistory generates a *proto-utopian* space that is suffused with a notion of critique and aims at inciting readers to reflect on "self-induced fissures in the civic system of ideas" (Minyard 1985: 39) as well as on their prevailing and potentially misguided moral codes of conduct.

In relation to this aspect, Ackermann (1979: 206) is right in believing that the poet's ending of his culture ascent theory in book five with the words *ad summum donec venere cacumen* (V. 1457) is no coincidence. It seems as if his generally pessimistic attitude provides him with the necessary epistemological foundation to mediate his anticipatory deliberations of options for societal betterment and his Epicurean preachings of restraint[55] (5, V. 1452-1457):

> Usus et impigrae simul experientia mentis
> paulatim docuit pedetemptim progredientis.
> Sic unum quicquid paulatim protrahit aetas
> in medium ratioque in luminis erigit oras:
> namque aliud ex alio clarescere corde videbant,
> artibus ad summum donec venere cacumen.

> The necessity of life praxis and, likewise, the inventiveness of a restless mind have gradually taught humans who carefully made progress. Thus age, step by step, draws anything forth into the spotlight and reason lifts it up to the realms of light. For they saw one after the other lightening up in the heart until they reached the highest summit through arts.

The pinnacle of perfection (*cacumen*) is attainable as long as one is not merely driven by an affective and tainted mourning after bygone times, but firmly espouses a sense of progress. The breaking of one's unreflected and deeply entrenched routines is necessary for a fully fleshed "psychological make-up" (Campbell 2003: 272) and for the arisal of λογισμός (*ratio*) and δίκη (*iustitia*), whose vicissitudes can be opportunely accommodated in the Epicurean framework of moral relativism. Manuwald (1980: 27) hints at the significance of the phrase *experientia mentis*

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[55] Costa (1984: 151) hints at the fact that the tripartite model of Epicurean pleasures and the concomitant exhortation for calculated containment becomes manifest towards the end of book 5. In V. 1430-1433 Lucretius finds fault with the misguided longings that plague the majority of his contemporaries who would permanently overstate their cases (*non cognovit quae sit habendi finis*) instead of comprehending the meaning of true pleasure (*vera voluptas*). The poet's Greek role model declared that there are three types of desires, the first being natural and necessary (e.g. clothes, nourishment), the second natural but unnecessary (e.g. fulfillment of sexual drives), the third both unnatural and unnecessary (e.g. cravings for luxuries). According to Epicurus, the latter should be abandoned altogether since the limits of pleasure can be attained when striving for satisfaction of the first and moderate fulfillment of the second type, which complies with the stance Lucretius advances in *De Rerum Natura*.

(V. 1452), which might not only be equated with 'experience', but also with 'inventiveness'. The latter semantic facet gives rise to the assumption that, in order for a society to make substantial advances, the capacity of its members to think outside the box and see the bigger picture is essential. This is definitely a *proto-utopian* standpoint, provided that innovative and creative forces are a *conditio sine qua non* both in the envisioning and the implementation of any project that aims at the amelioration of a human community. Despite this thoroughly positive remark, Lucretius applies caution in contrasting the linearity of technical progress with moral transgressions, delusions and relapses to a more archaic state of affairs, which can only be remedied by an individual's proper replenishment with Epicurean *ratio* (V. 1455) instead of an unsubstantiated faith in Roman deities and other numinous appearances. In this context, Campbell (2003: 184) branded the label "honeyed cup/sugared pill vaccination" for the poet's rhetorical style[56]: he ascertains that Lucretius rationalizes and thus unmasks mythology as mendacious and deceptive, while simultaneously benefitting from the wide dissemination of certain mythic *topoi* and *loci communes*. The Roman author draws on their potential for recontextualization and reappropriation by transforming them into carriers of novel meanings that comply with his own philosophical and socio-political purposes[57].

According to Kenney (1972: 23), Lucretius is prophetic in his historical imagination insofar as he does not accord credibility to exaggerated and utterly unfeasible social engineering projects, but infers some positive potential for the days to come partially from a disparagement of contemporary deficiencies, partially from a modest delineation of philosophical guidelines that allow readers to extrapolate viable courses of action for the future. We could therefore regard Lucretius as an avant-gardist who accurately pinpoints that change is a dynamic historical constant we should set our stakes on. In addition, Lucretius presupposes that the only individually achievable, ontologically rewarding *proto-utopia* is subjective and entelechial.

Minyard (1985: 41) is in line with this argumentation by asserting that the Roman poet removes *virtus* from *religio* and thus "lays the foundation for the new socially deracinated conception of *pietas*" (ibid.). In other words: given that the new configuration of *virtus* occupies a purely intellectual sphere and is indifferent to the notion of divinity, the human desire to

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[56] Gale (2009: 8) complements this remark by asserting that Lucretius' resorting to the hexameter has a concrete didactic dimension: poetry is seductive and easily memorable, thus providing the Roman author with the perfect vehicle to convince his readers of swallowing his philosophical doctrines which are properly packaged in digestible doses. Lucretius elaborates on this technique in book 1, V. 936-950 where he equates his position as a mediator of Epicureanism with that of a doctor who attempts to trick a gullible child into taking bitter medicine by deceitfully lubricating the rim of the cup with honey.

[57] The eschewal of a primordial νομοθέτης or any other form of divine contribution to the evolutionary benefits of humankind is probably the most outrageous claim made in *De Rerum Natura* and a bitter pill that Lucretius gives his contemporary readers to swallow (Campbell 2003: 276).

acquire Epicurean *sapientia* that wholly permeates the agent's consciousness can function as a transcendental corrective to combat all sorts of evils that lie in ambush and scratch the surface of a theoretically unblemished society. If humans' intuitive ideas about the workings of nature and, by implication, a functioning social order are not diluted by superimposed institutional constraints, adequate thought patterns that propel *concordia* can emerge and break the mold of reactionary die-hard frameworks.

2.3 Horace and the Island of the Blessed

Horace's brief *proto-utopian* episode in *Epode 16* is an intellectual response to the inevitable deficiencies of human existence and to the concrete grievances engendered by two generations of *bella intestina*. The Republican foundations of Rome were not only eroded due to the conflicts between Pompey and Caesar to which Horace was an eye-witness, but also trampled in the earlier generation, i.e. during the conflicts between Marius and Sulla (Mankin 1995: 246).

2.3.1 The Horatian "Barking Cure" – An Embittered Stocktaking of the *Status Quo*

Horace emphasizes that no external enemy, be it the Marsi, Etruscans, Allobroges, Germanic tribes or Rome's archenemy Hannibal[58], contributed more to the ethical and political corrosion of the *res publica* than opposing parties of the Roman elites themselves. Their mutual visceral laceration has induced an utterly rotten state of affairs, which is visualized in a memorable scene: Horace predicts the advent of the savage who will victoriously rise in the midst of the ashes in the city and scatter the sacrosanct remains of Rome's founding father Quirinus everywhere: *barbarus heu cineres insistet victor [...] ossa Quirini – nefas videre – dissipabit insolens* (V. 11-14). The emotionally charged parenthesis highlights both the poet's indignation and the fact that this event would be antithetical to divine law, as *nefas* is typically used in a religious context and signifies an unforgivable human transgression. The desecration of the grave and the dispersion of Quirinus' bones that have thus far "functioned as a kind of talismanic ἀποτρόπαιον" (Watson 2003: 479), would be indicative of an absolute disaster. The poet's pessimistic diagnosis of the current ills culminates in drawing an analogy to the Phocaean tribe who migrated to Corsica in 534 B.C. to evade the looming threat of Persian supremacy[59],

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[58] Horace is very selective in his choice of external enemies. He does not proceed in a chronological order, but starts with the neighboring tribes (Marsi, Etruscans), moves on to slave revolts (epitomized in the figure of Spartacus) and eventually proceeds to the most terrifying adversaries of Rome, the Gauls, the Germans and, climactically, Hannibal. Mankin (1995: 246) trenchantly remarks that Horace's selection excludes any threats from the West, which can be seen as an anticipation of his ensuing injunction that this direction should be pursued in order to attain salvation.

[59] Mankin (1995: 254) points out that this story was relatively well known and must have transitioned to a proverbial usage by the time Horace was writing. However, an interesting difference between the Phocaean

an act that was accompanied by a bitter aftertaste. The land, the *Lares* and the sanctuaries (*agros atque lares patrios habitandaque fana*, V. 19) – this tricolon must have had a special ring in the ears of the contemporary Roman reader as it enshrines the corner stones of the time-honored *res publica* – had to be abandoned[60].

Horace's ensuing cynicism, through which the sixteenth poem of the collection lives up to its generic expectations as an *Epode*, does not seem out of place. The Roman poet positions himself in succession to Archilochos or Solon who addressed their contemporaries in an equally fortright or even caustic way. Nelson Hawkins (2014: 74) labels this feature the Horatian "barking cure": his acrimonious verses provide him with a therapeutic outlet to vent his anger and channel his frustrations[61]. A similar pattern can be detected in *Epode* 7 in which the Roman poet not only fiercely vituperates the moral depravation of his contemporaries, but also underpins it with a justification from the city's foundational myth (V. 1-2, 15-20):

> Quo, quo scelesti ruitis? Aut cur dexteris
> aptantur enses conditi? [...]
> Tacent et albus ora pallor inficit
> mentesque perculsae stupent.
> Sic est: acerba fata Romanos agunt
> scelusque fraternae necis,
> ut inmerentis fluxit in terram Remi
> sacer nepotibus cruor.

> Where to, wicked folks, do you plunge, where to? Or why do the pocketed swords fit
> your right hands so suitably? [...] They are silent and sallow pallor befalls their faces.
> Their hearts falter – deeply percussed. So it is: a bitter fate propels the Romans, as
> fratricidal felony has propelled them since the blood of Remus, undeservingly,
> streamed over the earth, ominous for the grandchildren.

Horace seems to suggest that the prevailing *scelus*[62] – a term that does not denote conventional minor crimes, but grave offenses that stir divine wrath, thus demanding bitter retaliation, as Wallace-Hadrill (1982: 24) observes – has its roots in the prehistorical fratricide: Romulus committed a barbarous homicide by slaughtering his own brother, whose innocent blood spilled over the space designated for the later capital of the empire. By implication, this means

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precedent and the poet's present in the *Epode* is that the former are fleeing from an external enemy, while the latter ought to escape threatening forces within their own community.

[60] Bond (2010: 35) highlights the irony in Horace's comment that the Phocaeans left their city to wild boars and wolves (*apris reliquit et rapacibus lupis*, V. 20) in light of Rome's founding myth and the crucial role of the *lupa*.

[61] The Roman poet elaborates on this phenomenon through the application of a number of canine images. Nelson Hawkins (2014: 61-80) discusses in detail the various facets of *rabies* occurring in the *Epodes* that might be indicative of rabid dogs, but can likewise function as a symbol for the madness that has driven the triumvirs during the *bella intestina* as well as for an embittered poet. In this respect, Horace could pick up on the tradition of sassy social critique that was shaped by Diogenes, the Cynic, who was frequently depicted with an emblematic dog. I am grateful to my supervisor Prof. Smolak for this hint.

[62] As we will see, the vocabulary *scelus* also features prominently in Vergil's *Eclogue* 4 which – despite its intention to offer consolation and its genuinely optimistic message – does not pretermit *sceleris vestigia* (V. 13).

perdition for the following generations who are doomed to reiterate this ancestral paradigm and might eventually cause their fellow citizens to wither away by internal bloodshed.

2.3.2 Setting Sails for Better Days to Come: Horace's Version of *Après moi, le déluge*

Instead of lingering on the detrimental events of the *status quo* any longer in the remaining two thirds of *Epode* 16 (V. 23-66), Horace bounces back with a bipartite rhetorical question that boils down the soon-to-be-addressed and ameliorated alternative to its essence: *sic placet an melius quis habet suadere*? (V. 23). While superficially asking his readers if they like it this way or if they have a better option to suggest, Horace instantly 'autoresponds' to this inquiry. He links it to the subsequent exhoration that the smarter members of his audience should cut the cord to the *impia aetas* (V. 9) and set sail to a remote island of pure bliss, where the Golden Age has materialized as the fertility of nature is immeasurable (V. 41-54): the parthenogenic earth is incredibly bountiful, providing nourishment without requiring human toil, natural predators are non-existent and this secluded island is not contaminated by any external threats. Watson (2003: 483) underlines an interesting detail in this description, namely that it abounds in negations, which is typical of the *proto-utopian* form (see chapter 1.5.2): the Island of the Blessed is characterized by what it is not or what is lacking[63] (e.g. no bear threatens the sheep when the crepuscle sets in, V. 51; no snakes, sweeping storms or torrid soil are to be found, V. 52-55, no intemperate climatic conditions befall the land, V. 61-62).

Not only the insularity-motif, which subtly links Horace's vision to Morus' prototype, but also the limited circle of predestined emigrants (*vos quibus est virtus*, V. 39) is significant, for it underlines Finley's (1975: 188) observation that ancient *proto-utopias* are structured in a hierarchical rather than egalitarian way (see chapter 1.5.3). Horace does not envision salvation for every arbitrary member of the Roman society[64], on the contrary: he emphasizes that a certain amount of agency and bravery is a necessary precondition to undertake this daunting journey and to earn the awe-inspiring sight of this bountiful landscape (*felices mirabimur*, V. 53). Thus, he implies that it is left to his readers' devices whether they wish to belong to the mollycoddled

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[63] The close relationship between *Epode* 16 and Vergil's *Eclogue* 4 has been pointed out a number of times; yet, as far as the dating of their conception is concerned, there is no consensus as to which poem is the earlier one and which constitutes the response (Clausen 1994: 145-150; Mankin 1995: 244; Watson 2003: 487).

[64] Kytzler (1971: 59) and Nelson Hawkins (2014: 74) observe that the Stoic Crates of Thebes argues in a similar vein in one of his *paignia* (recorded in Diogenes Laertios 6, 85) where he briefly sketches the salient features of the island *Pera* which does not put value to war glory, arms, gold or posthumous reputation and is only accessible to the wise. Interestingly, *pera* itself is a speaking name and describes the knapsack in which itinerant philosophers carried all their belongings. This implies that Crates wanted to make his version of the blessed island only accessible to the wise and saw in it a sequestered refuge for those willing to engage in a philophical therapy. Günther and Müller (1987: 72) add that an author like Horace, who was influenced by the Cynic tradition (most significantly Bion of Borysthenes), did not intend to trigger a social revolution or draft a hedonistic paradise in his writings, but cultivated a vision of escapism.

and desperate flock (*mollis et exspes*, V. 37), which stubbornly perpetuates its well-entrenched routines, or to the enlightened group (*pars indocili melior grege*, V. 37) that dares to venture to realms that no human being, not even heroic figures and seafarers such as the Argonauts, Medea or Ulysses, have explored before (V. 59-62), realms that Jupiter preserved for those whom he deemed worthy (*Iuppiter illa piae secrevit litora genti*, V. 63).

Romm (1992: 163) raises the justified question how or if the poet realistically envisioned a journey to the Island of the Blessed as he does not give any clear instructions. Mankin (1995: 267) points to another paradox that comes to the fore when aligning Horace's elaborations with Ovid's description of the *aurea aetas* (*Metamorphoses* 1, V. 89-112), where nautical endeavors are condemned as megalomaniac and a first step of perverting *curiositas* to *hubris*. In the *Epode*, by contrast, the exploration of the sea is inevitable in order to reach the highly acclaimed land.

That said, how are we supposed to pigeonhole *Epode* 16 in reference to our *proto-utopian* framework? In other words: can Horace's suggestion be taken seriously? We shall find an answer to this question by examining two intertextual parallels between *Epode* 16 and Cicero's as well as Plutarch's treatment of the topos of the Island of the Blessed in the next section.

2.3.3 Horace's Allochronic and (Meta-)Literary *Proto-Utopia*

As already illuminated, Horace was presumably driven by a genuine pessimism at the time of the conception of *Epode* 16. According to Watson (2003: 479), his idea to surrender Rome to its inevitable doom speaks volumes and can be taken as a sign of universal despair in light of the age's moral decline. The intentional vagueness and ineffectiveness of his proposition to emigrate to a far-away place of pure bliss reflects his incapacity to initiate change[65].

Horace's inflection of the Island of the Blessed slightly echoes Cicero, who – though in a less rancorous way – included the topos of moral decline and the subsequent recommendation to migrate to the *insulae fortunatae* in his fragmentarily preserved dialogue *Hortensius*, as we can gather from a quote in Augustine (*De Trinitate* 14, § 12):

> 'Si nobis', inquit, 'cum ex hac vita migraverimus, in beatorum insulis immortale aevum, ut fabulae ferunt, degere liceret, quid opus esset eloquentia, cum iudicia nulla fierent: aut ipsis etiam virtutibus? Nec enim fortitudine egeremus, nullo proposito aut labore aut periculo, nec iustitia, cum esset nihil quod appeteretur alieni; nec temperantia, quae regeret eas quae nullae essent libidines; nec prudentia quidem egeremus, nullo delectu proposito bonorum et malorum una igitur essemus beati cognitione naturae et scientia, qua sola etiam deorum est

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[65] Horace's embitterment due to his political paralysis can be contrasted with his later panegyric in the *Carmen Saeculare* and the fourth book of *Odes*. Bond (2010: 42) remarks that especially *Carmina* 4, 2 and 4, 5 abound in quasi-Vergilian messianic praise of Augustus through whose contribution a new millennium seems to have arrived.

vita laudanda. Ex quo intellegi potest, cetera necessitatis esse, unum hoc voluntatis.

> If we were allowed, said he, to pass immortalizing eternity – as the myths relate – on the Islands of the Blessed, once we have emigrated from this life, would rhetorical skills still be needed, when no more legal decisions ought to be made? Or virtues themselves? Indeed, we would not require fortitude, in no undertaking nor in any effort or danger; justice would be irrelevant if there was no foreign property that could be sought out. So, too, would be moderation that normally controls the sinful appetites which are non-existent there. We would not even need prudence, given that no wilful intent to do good or bad is up for election. Thus, we would altogether be felicitous in light of the insight into and study of nature, which is also the only life praiseworthy of the gods. From this it can be reckoned that the remaining aspects belong to the field of necessity, whereas only this one features in the realm of free will.

Cicero recommends a contemplative life style in this protreptic for philosophy recorded in his *Hortensius*, as Stroh (1993: 318) highlights. Life on the fortunate islands is characterized by *cognitio et scientia naturae* (θεωρία) as the *summum bonum*. Private property does not seem to exist. Other intellectual joys, such as *eloquentia*, *virtus*, *fortitudo*, *iustitia*, *temperantia* or *prudentia*, are boiled down to necessities and auxiliaries that facilitate human interaction in this world, but are expendable in the afterlife, the access to which is restricted to the wise and pious.

Both the poet and the philosopher associate the Island of the Blessed with a liberation from *curae*, i.e. political turmoil and psychological irritations. However, whereas Cicero firmly locates this *proto-utopian locus* in the afterlife, Horace's advice to emigrate to the bounteous insular state is intertwined with conditions under which a return might be possible (V. 25-34):

> Sed iuremus in haec: 'Simul imis saxa renarint
>   vadis levata, ne redire sit nefas;
> neu conversa domum pigeat dare lintea, quando
>   Padus Matina laverit cacumina,
> in mare seu celsus procurrerit Appenninus
>   novaque monstra iunxerit libidine
> mirus amor, iuvet ut tigris subsidere cervis,
>   adulteretur et columba milvo,
> credula nec ravos timeant armenta leones
>   ametque salsa levis hircus aequora.'

> So let us swear the following: 'As soon as the rocks, absolved from the depths of the sea, float back to the surface, we shall not be chagrined to return. Likewise, it should be neither laborious to set the sails homewards, when the river Po washes the Matinus' summits, nor when the soaring Apennine mountains push forward into the sea, nor when an astonishing impulse endows the creation of monsters through an unparalleled lust, so that it pleases tigers to mate with hinds, so that the dove touts for the kite, so that guileless cattle no longer fear fallow lions or a sleek ram loves the salty waves.'

Mankin's (1995: 256) observation that these stipulations are articulated in three *adynata* (V. 27-34) is relatively vague. I suggest a fourfold subdivision which spans three groups of themes, i.e. (1) catastrophes on the sea, (2) geophysics and (3) the animal world, that can further be subdivided into (a) sexual and (b) psychological ramifications. The above-cited *adynata* are

climactically arranged inasmuch as the number of verses dedicated to each rises continuously: one and a half lines (V. 25-26) discuss the unearthly repeal of gravity in the case of rocks floating back to the sea surface, the three following verses (V. 27-29) address the ruination of the Italian soil through natural catastrophes; the last five lines exemplify (a) the bizarre mating (V. 30-32) of tigers and hinds as well as a dove and a kite that would lead to the creation of hybrid monsters (*nova monstra*) and (b) universal animal peace (V. 33-34) concomitant with a bouleversement of nature's course. This situation would materialize if lions and cattle interacted peacefully, or if a goat, having replaced its shaggy fur for the smooth skin of a marine creature, strived to live in the sea.

All these unconventional proceedings underline Horace's message that, once the sails have been set, a return is undesirable and impossible. These *adynata* also reflect the pains and hardships of the poet's contemporaries, as Bond (2010: 34) analyzes with great accuracy:

> the peaceful coexistence of antipathetical and disparate animal species
> in *Epode* 16 is in stark contrast to the internecine strife between the
> factions of a supposedly homogeneous Roman aristocracy.

In light of these acrimonious assaults on the lack of sanity in the Roman republic, Horace's injunction is not completely plucked out of the air, but can be bolstered by similar contemporary aspirations, as Kytzler (1971: 51) and Bond (2010: 34) detected. They refer us to a passage in Plutarch's βίοι παράλληλοι (*Life of Sertorius* 8, 2), where the decorated Roman general and statesman Quintus Sertorius (123-72 BC), a precursor to Horace's generation, who fought under Marius to oppose Sulla, hears rumors from sailors about a blessed island located in the Atlantic:

> ὀνομάζονται Μακάρων. ὄμβροις δὲ χρώμεναι μετρίοις σπανίως, τὰ δὲ
> πλεῖστα πνεύμασι μαλακοῖς καὶ δροσοβόλοις, οὐ μόνον ἀροῦν καὶ
> φυτεύειν παρέχουσιν ἀγαθὴν καὶ πίονα χώραν, ἀλλὰ καὶ καρπὸν
> αὐτοφυῆ φέρουσιν, ἀποχρῶντα πλήθει καὶ γλυκύτητι βόσκειν ἄνευ
> πόνων καὶ πραγματείας σχολάζοντα δῆμον. ἀὴρ δ' ἄλυπος ὡρῶν τε
> κράσει καὶ μεταβολῆς μετριότητι κατέχει τὰς νήσους. οἱ μὲν γὰρ
> ἐνθένδε τῆς γῆς ἀποπνέοντες ἔξω βορέαι καὶ ἀπηλιῶται διὰ μῆκος
> ἐκπεσόντες εἰς τόπον ἀχανῆ διασπείρονται καὶ προαπολείπουσι,
> πελάγιοι δὲ περιρρέοντες ἀργέσται καὶ ζέφυροι, βληχροὺς μὲν ὑετοὺς
> καὶ σποράδας ἐκ θαλάττης ἐπάγοντες, τὰ δὲ πολλὰ νοτεραῖς αἰθρίαις
> ἐπιψύχοντες, ἡσυχῇ τρέφουσιν· ὥστε μέχρι τῶν βαρβάρων διῖχθαι
> πίστιν ἰσχυράν, αὐτόθι τὸ Ἠλύσιον εἶναι πεδίον καὶ τὴν τῶν
> εὐδαιμόνων οἴκησιν, ἣν Ὅμηρος ὕμνησε.

> [They] are called the Islands of the Blest. They enjoy moderate rains at long intervals, and winds which for the most part are soft and precipitate dews, so that the islands not only have a rich soil which is excellent for plowing and planting, but also produce a natural fruit that is plentiful and wholesome enough to feed, without toil or trouble, a leisured folk. Moreover, an air that is salubrious, owing to the climate and the moderate changes in the seasons, prevails on the islands. For the north and east winds blow out from our part of the world plunge into fathomless space, and, owing to the

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distance, dissipate themselves and lose their power before they reach the islands; while the south and west winds that envelope the islands from the sea sometimes bring in their train soft and intermittent showers, but for the most part cool them with moist breezes and gently nourish the soil. Therefore a firm belief has made its way, even to the Barbarians, that here is the Elysian Field and the abode of the blessed, of which Homer sang. [*translation by Bernadotte Perrin*]

When informed about the benefits of this blissful place, Sertorius is captured by a desire to venture out into the ocean from the Spanish shore and relinquish his social environment that is cracked by several fissures due to the past civil war, but never manages to conduct the mission[66].

A number of key tenets mentioned in the cited passage, such as the incessant irrigation, the pristine unploughed soil, the benign climate and the absence of drudgery also resurface in *Epode 16,* which is a reason to believe that both authors are referring to the γῆ αὐτομάτη, which we already encountered in Lucretius (for a more thorough discussion, see chapter 2.2.1).

Horace does not dwell on this *locus communis* of the self-providing, bounteous earth for too long; rather he brings his readers back down to earth in the last line and causes the carefully constructed house of cards to collapse with a gentle blow. The poetic *persona* highlights the constructedness of the imaginary voyage to the Island of the Blessed that does not only entail a change of the spatial, but also of the temporal structure. Indeed, the nostalgic component outweighs the anticipatory or prophetic dimension in this passage (V. 63-66):

> Iuppiter illa piae secrevit litora genti,
> ut inquinavit aere tempus aureum,
> aere, dehinc ferro duravit saecula, quorum
> piis secunda vate me datur fuga.

Jupiter has secluded these realms for pious people when he alloyed the golden times with bronze – with monetary possessions made from bronze, and afterwards he hardened the ages with iron wars from which a serendipitous flight will now be provided for the pious by me, the prophet-poet.

The speaker's call for a return to a pristine, idealized rural past is so dominant that it shrouds any attempts to explicate the governmental or social organization of the island in secrecy:

> Vorgestellt wird ein Exodus aus Zeit und Raum in eine glückliche Enklave des Goldenen Zeitalters. Dies wird daher auch nicht als ein zukünftiger Zustand präsentiert, sondern als Residuum einer früheren – der frühesten – Phase der Menschheitsgeschichte. Diese radikale Allochronie der Gefilde der Seligen reicht im Grunde bis zur Aufhebung der Zeit selbst (Reitzenstein-Ronning 2013: 25).

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[66] While originally confined to metaphysics and eschatology in its earliest accounts, the topos of the Island of the Blessed seems to have obtained concrete geographical proportions by the time Horace was writing. According to Watson (2003: 484), attempts to locate this mysterious place went so far as to identify it with the Canary islands, more precisely the Madeira group, even though broad scholarly consensus reigns supreme on the rejection of this geographical localization (ibid.).

In addition, the poem's last line *piis secunda vate me datur fuga* (V. 66) includes a metapoetic comment, in which the speaker stresses his own role in enabling the flight to the legendary realms: being a *vates*, he is able to presage and mediate the hidden treasures of the *divites insulae* (V. 42) to his audience[67]. Simultaneously, the final verse adumbrates that this thought experiment ought to remain confined to the vivid phantasies of his audience. He seems to insinuate that his readers are capable of escaping the excruciating political situation of his day, if only for a short span of time, by relishing his ingeniously crafted poetry, or as Schmidt (1977: 420) trenchantly verbalized it: "[Die] Wirklichkeit [wird] durch Dichtung überwunden."

This elevates art/literature itself to a want-satisfying, *proto-utopian locus* (see chapter 1.5.3) that allows not only for distraction, but also for reassembling fractured identities by retreating from the tumultuous and morally corrupting state affairs to the sanctity of the ego (Barwick 1944: 63). Horace gathered this aspect from the Epicureans (Stroh 1993: 318) and elaborates it further in the four books of *Odes*, where he serendipitously casts the Sabine farm as his own agrarian idyll. This marvellous, pastoral, idealized space allows for inner emigration as a gesture to retain freedom in a period of lacerating political competition. *Epode* 16 thus sets a precedent and adds color to the later category of "utopias of escape" (Mumford 1966: 15) in which a refuge to our imagination is recommended in order to maintain balance and intensify desires or interests that are impossible to fulfill in the external world.

2.4 Vergil and the Coming of a Messiah

In one of his most discussed and world-renowned poems, Vergil connects the birth, advent and maturation of a prodigious infant to the salvation of the *populus Romanus*. That *Eclogue* 4 was intended to be read in conjunction with *Epode* 16 might already be evident when looking at the fourth line *Ultima Cumaei venit iam carminis aetas* which stands in dialogue with Horace's incipient verse *Altera iam teritur bellis civilibus aetas* not only by the syntactic parallelism, but also by the prominent analogy of the word *aetas* in the position of the catalectic dactyl. Rather

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[67] Especially in the Augustan era, the profession of the *vates* takes on a number of meanings, as Stroh (1993: 296) intriguingly demonstrates. Whereas Cicero used this vocabulary in a primarily derogatory sense for charlatans and nondescript astrologers (*De Divinatione* 2, 12), its semantic scope is positively expanded by Vergil who first denotes his shepards as *vates* (*Eclogues* 7, 25-28; 9, 32-34) and later applies this word to himself (*Aeneid* 7, 41). However, Mankin (1995: 272) and O'Hara (1990: 177) speculate that there is an ambiguity inherent in the Horatian use of *vates* in *Epode* 16: on the one hand, it aligns the lyrical I with gifted seers from the mythological space, such as Tiresias, Calchas or Proteus; on the other hand, divination and deceit are frequently intertwined, which leads them to the assumption that vatic prophecies might not only be fictitious, but also misleading and harmful. This semantic interpretation is reason for them to assume that the *Epode* entails a subversive dimension and that the recommended journey is little more than a farce. This approach, however, is not tenable – neither in consideration of the poem's overall message nor in respect to the partially cited mirror *Epode* 7, where Horace too articulates serious concern about the (future) state of the Roman republic. Further evidence can be adduced by inspecting *Ode* 4, 6 that solemnly closes with the words *vatis Horati* (V. 44) as positively connoted self-reference.

than jumping on board the chicken-and-egg debate about the chronology of the poems[68], I will limit myself to highlighting intertextual references when they provide a vital interpretative scaffold. Before engaging in an examination of the dialogic structure of *Eclogue* 4 and *Epode* 16, however, let us glance at some of the major propositions Vergil makes and their allusive qualities in light of pertinent historical circumstances.

2.4.1 Announcing the Advent of an Infant Prodigy and the Return of the Golden Age

Much in the vein of a chiliastic or messianic expectation, the Vergilian *persona* heralds the seasonable arrival not only of a savior, but also of a whole new *gens aurea* in his succession, which is led by morally upright values and a profound sense of justice, thus re-instantiating the notion of a Golden Age, circumscribed as *Saturnia regna*, and even inciting *Astraea*, the patron goddess of justice, to dwell on earth again (V. 5-7). Especially the latter aspect is remarkable in light of her absence in Vergil's two later works, which is indicative of the author's increasingly hesitant, if not to say critical stance towards contemporary circumstances and the nascent Augustan ideology. Vergil omits a mention of the Virgin's return in *Georgics* 2, 474 (*Iustitia excedens terris*) and, likewise, Ovid concludes his myth of the ages with the goddess departing from terrestrial realms in *Metamorphoses* 1, 150 (*ultima caelestum terras Astraea reliquit*). Coleman (1977: 130-132) demonstrates that Vergil's genuine optimism displayed in the prophetic *Eclogue* might be related to recent contemporary events, notably the pact of Brundisium inured in 41 B.C. in order to effectuate a rapprochement between the two antagonists at that time, Mark Antony and Octavian. This ties in with the fact that Asinius Pollio, the designated consul for the year 40 B.C. who played a major role in getting the ball rolling to set up this mutually beneficial stipulation, is the addressee in *Eclogue* 4. He is elevated in a eulogy that connects his personal merits to the anticipation of a stark temporal rupture which is reminiscent of Mannheim's chiliastic utopian model (see chapter 1.2) in V. 6-12:

> Iam redit et virgo, redeunt Saturnia regna,
> iam nova progenies caelo demittitur alto.
> Tu modo nascenti puero, quo ferrea primum
> desinet ac toto surget gens aurea mundo,
> caste fave Lucina: tuus iam regnat Apollo.
> Teque adeo decus hoc aevi, te consule, inibit,
> Pollio, et incipient magni procedere menses.

> Now the Virgin also returns, the Saturnian rule comes back, now a new begetting is sent down from heavenly heights. You, chaste Lucina, be favorably inclined towards the boy who will coming aborning; because of him the iron race will be put to bed at last and a golden one will rise up over the whole world: your Apollo rules now. And,

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[68] For that matter, I would like to refer interested readers to Snell (1938: 237-242), Barwick (1944: 28-67), Clausen (1994: 148-150), Watson (2003: 486) and Bond (2010: 34).

> Pollio, this magnificence will enter the tides of time with you being consul, and great
> months will begin to march.

Even though this announcement is imbued with a positive keynote, Vergil's enthusiasm is not unbridled. Clausen (1994: 131) remarks that in spite of the urgency in his tone, emphasized by the triply repeated *iam* (V. 6, 7, 10), the speaker dislocates the state of pure bliss to a point in time yet to come, both on a grammatical level by using the future tense, *inibit* (V. 11), *incipient* (V. 12) , *solvent* (V. 14) or *reget* (V. 17), and in terms of content as he emphasizes the essential part of the semi-divine savior figure and his connection to celestial realms (V. 15-17):

> Ille deum vitam accipiet divisque videbit
> permixtos heroas et ipse videbitur illis,
> pacatumque reget patriis virtutibus orbem.

> He will obtain the life of a god, he will see divinities intermingled with heroes and
> himself will be seen by them. He will govern the pacified globe with fatherly virtues.

Vergil emphasizes that the apotheosis of the prodigious child does not come undeserved; rather, the adolescent has to prove worthy of his impending divinization by his virtuous deeds and his potent rulership, an aspect that hints at the deeply meritocratic imprint on the Roman society, as Stégen (1955: 69) remarks. In any case, the required predicates and aptitudes have been provided for the *puer* from the cradle. The poetic *persona* solemnly announces this fact by conjuring up a number of apocalyptic images to introduce the advent of the miraculous child in the first lines, which he partly draws from Nigidius Figulus' account of the Orphic division of the *saecula* according to Coleman (1977: 134). However, Vergil does not envision an *adhoc-*transformation of the existing world order. Rather, these swiftly changing prophetic allusions function on a symbolic level to epitomize the speaker's jovial exultation in light of the currently unfolding events. The actual transition to the *aurea aetas*, by contrast, is portrayed as a gradual process, not least due to the use of the inchoative verb *flavescet* (V. 28), which conjures up the color of the golden haze, covering the wheat fields, in the mind's eyes of the readers.

It is essential to register at this point that the Vergilian *persona* omits the incorporation of institutional clarifications and adumbrates the (soon) incipient future *proto-utopia* as society-encompassing while being contingent on the existence of a soteriological figure, thus meandering between the 'subjective' and 'objective' strand, to recur to Jameson's (2005: 29) terminological itemization (see chapters 1.1 and 1.5.3). Now that we have acquired a first taste of Vergil's adaptation of the Golden Age myth, let us examine how he adds flesh and sinews to this *proto-utopian* sceleton in order to contrapose it with societal problems of his age.

2.4.2 Paradise Lost and Found

Vergil swiftly leaps from the burgeoning Golden Age image outlined in the previous chapter, i.e. the incessant supply of corn (*flavescet campus arista*, V. 28), to an embellishment of his paradise vision. Like Horace (*Epode* 16, V. 43-62), he does not fail to mention a specific set of parameters, which seemed to be the lowest common denominators of cornucopian settings, i.e. dewy honey dipping from the bark, she-goats willingly showcasing their udders, cattle peacefully coexisting with predators such as lions, or the absence of snakes and poisonous herbs (V. 21-24). Whereas Horace cast these visions as unfeasible with a non-negligible acrimonious subtone, Vergil wallows in his Golden Age bliss a little longer and goes the extra mile by adding that rams and sheep will learn how to dye fleece on their own in the brightest and most luxurious colors (V. 42-45), making the textile industry superfluous, as Barwick (1944: 34) underlines. However, it remains debatable how we should evaluate this obvious sign of luxury in the otherwise deliberately frugal setting[69].

Before supplementing the slightly exaggerated information of cattle's self-inking wool, Vergil avails himself of the opportunity to address reasonable doubts that might seep in when approaching this paradisiacal description from a purely rational standpoint. The poet mentions traces of long-known deceit that will still be lingering, once the bell for the new aeon has been sounded: *pauca tamen suberunt priscae vestigia fraudis* (V. 31). To be precise, he enumerates three societal ills that can not be eradicated over night: urbanization, seafaring and agriculture.

In an attempt to recommend a return to the pristine archaic times and the concomitant convenient frugality of life, Vergil demonstrates that the contemporary Roman civilization has been wooed by fad. This particular brand of hubristic overreaching manifests itself in relentless desires to fortify cities (*cingere muris oppida*, V. 32-33) in order to be forearmed for bellicose endeavors of neighboring nations. Vergil seems to suggest that such aspirations are delusive and that the accompanying belief to reach a higher level of existence by means of imperial expansion is perverted and delirious.

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[69] One relatively plausible option has been suggested by Stégen (1955: 44) who assumes a subtle evocation of Dionysos/Bacchus that is conveyed through color coding: saffron (*croceo luto*, V. 44), purple extracted from the shell of a precious conch (*murex*, V. 44) and scarlet red (*sandyx*, V. 45) were the three colors that featured prominently in the great Dionysian celebrations. By implication, Vergil could thus refer to Mark Antony who did not tire of stressing his close rapport to this deity and who was rumored to have cultivated a pompous life style. Yet, Stégen (ibid., 46) cautions against seeing *Eclogue* 4 as blatant propaganda for Mark Antony since Octavian's patron god Apollo is also mentioned twice, so we can only come to an aporetic conclusion: "Comme on le voit, ces identifications autorisent toutes les hypothèses." (ibid.) The calibrated and deliberately vague tone complies perfectly with the overall elusiveness of the *Eclogue*, which substantiates the speculation that Vergil probably wanted to leave multiple doors open and waited who came out victoriously after this exhausting and crime-ridden period of civil strife to which the Roman population had to bear witness (*sceleris vestigia nostri*, V. 13).

In a similar vein, sea travel is depicted as a sign of moral decline: to transcend the natural order by exploring unchartered territory out of commercial greed is a seriously misguided action, in particular because the *terra mater* caters sufficiently for the satisfaction of our basic human needs: *omnis feret omnia tellus* (V. 39). The same argument is advanced by Lucretius in his description of the time-honored past: *improba navigii ratio tum caeca iacebat* (*De Rerum Natura* 5, V. 1006), Tibullus (*Elegy* 1, 3, V. 35-40) and Ovid in his account of the Golden Age (*Metamorphoses* 1, 94-96), as Davies (1987: 273) witnessed[70]. Crucially, the latter two poets choose *pinus* as a synecdoche to talk about the first launching of ships, thus creating a verbatim reference to the discussed *Eclogue* (V. 38), which indicates the widespread use of the topos[71].

Likewise, the third remnant of the present corruption addressed by Vergil, namely agriculture out of a pure lust for profit, resonates with earlier and later writings[72]. Accumulating material goods by brutally violating the parthenogenic earth, for instance by hoeing up clods or making ruds, is cast as a sacrilege (V. 40-41) that might only be equated with the infringement of an innocent body. In the jubilantly prophecied future, however, none of these grievances will be an issue anymore, for the *Parcae*, the goddesses of fate, have not only given their blessing to this destiny, but also impelled the centuries to rush to accelerate its actualization (V. 46-47):

> 'Talia saecla' suis dixerunt 'currite' fusis
> concordes stabili fatorum numine Parcae.
> Adgredere o magnos – aderit iam tempus – honores,
> care deum suboles, magnum Iovis incrementum!

> 'Such centuries, hasten forth,' said the Parcae to their spindles, in unison with the steadfast wink of fate. O enter – for the time will soon be ripe – great honors, beloved scion of the gods, magnificent accretion to Jupiter!

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[70] One of the most prominent references to *pinus* in a seafaring context dates back to Catullus who in his well-known epithalamic *Carmen* 64 sets the scenery for the ensuing appearance of Thetis and her entourage of nymphs.

[71] Lefèvre (2000: 69) observes that Vergil, being an acute witness to contemporary political tensions, might even include a reference to the nascent controversy between the Roman triumvirs and Sextus Pompey, who proved to be an incalculable hazard to the *res publica*, in these lines. Despite the negotiation of a settlement between the opposing parties in the treaty of Misenum (39 B.C.), the truce was only a temporary. Vergil's farsightedness is visible in his prediction of *altera bella* (V. 35) carried out at sea, in which the Romans will have to face a mighty enemy. It is dubious, though, who is meant by *magnus Achilles* (V. 36), the unparalleled hero who heaped great honors in the Trojan war: the mythical figure could either be an allusion to Sextus Pompey or to a Roman politician (either Octavian or Mark Antony) as his victorious defeater.

[72] Wolf (1987: 65-74) provides a comprehensive overview of the treatment of agriculture in Roman literature. The manuals of Marcus Porcius Cato (*De Agri Cultura*, published around 150 B.C.) and Marcus Terentius Varro (*Res Rusticae*, accessible at 50 B.C.) can be counted among the earliest documents that give recommendations as to maximizing efficiency and profit on the farm without being oblivious to the well-entrenched Roman frugality. Adherence to traditional virtues is depicted as preferable to pure lust for commercial gain. Vergil picks up this thread in his writings – particularly the *Georgics*, as will be demonstrated in the discussion of the *laudes Italiae* (see chapter 2.5) – and accepts the hardships of life (*labor*) as well as the adversities of nature without envisioning a naïve rural idyll. Lucius Iunius Moderatus Columella composes his work *De Re Rustica* (edited around 65 A.D.) in close succession to his precursors and casts agriculture as the primordial art that can hardly be taught or learned. He chastises his Roman fellows for their slothful life style and their lack of energy in tilling the fields and recommends an experimenting approach to agriculture in order to discard the luxury-incited *inertia* of his age.

Vergil carefully integrates selected elements of Roman and Greek mythology, such as an allusion to the Sibylline Oracles[73] (*Cumaei carminis*, V. 4) or the above mentioned spinning sisters, the personifications of the *fatum* that also occur in Catullus' *Carmen* 64[74]. Parallels between this *Eclogue* and passages from the Old Testament, most notably the *Book of Isaiah* (7, 14-25), have been pointed out exhaustively[75]. Indeed, there are some striking parallels in the prevalent imagery, for instance the land of milk and honey, the bounty of nature or the absence of toxic animals, that resurface both in Vergil and in the biblical text. Wallace-Hadrill (1982: 33) adds that the Roman poet seems to recommend a voluntarily submissive and faithful stance towards the prophecied Messiah, which bears strong semblances to religiously dominant doctrines. Yet, it is highly questionable if Vergil was familiar with the early Judean writings, as Stroh (1993: 300) underlines.

2.4.3 The Person behind the Mask – Exploring the Elusiveness of the *puer*-Identity

Another puzzling factor, which has received a great amount of scholarly attention, is the debate about the identity of the miraculous child. Who is meant by Vergil's *puer*? Coleman (1977: 150-153), Stégen (1955: 40-44) and Bourne (1916: 390-400) provide a summary of the most common interpretations that encompass more or less valid speculations about Pollio's son Asinius Gallus, a child of Mark Antony either with Cleopatra or Octavia, an expected heir of Octavian and Scribonia, Marcellus, the later emperor Augustus himself[76], the Persian god

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[73] The extent to which Vergil might have been influenced by the fragmentarily preserved Sibylline Oracles is disputed among scholars. Gruen (1998: 31) is convinced that this collection of prophetic texts is saturated with anti-Roman positions and can therefore not have functioned as a serious content-wise foundation for the poet. Whittaker's (2007: 67-71) assumes that Vergil might have been influenced by the Eleusinian Mysteries and the connected venerative events for Demeter (that were celebrated in order to solicit the Greek goddess for agricultural fertility), but not explicit Vergilian remarks in *Eclogue* 4 would also bolster this interpretation; Whittaker's interpretation of the Virgo (V. 6) as an allusion to Persephone, Demeter's daughter whose annual return from the underworld after her abduction by Hades was lavishly celebrated, is thus clearly unsubstantiated.

[74] Rose (1942: 201-203) is convinced that the intertextual reference is deliberate, which is very plausible in light of the semantic proximity. In Catullus, the relevant line reads *currite ducentes subtegmina, currite fusi* (V. 327), yet the context is different. The earlier *Carmen* celebrates the wedding of Peleus and Thetis and their future descendent Achilles, in the course of which the *Parcae* are supposed to hasten their spindels to accelerate the son's birth. A parallel between Vergil and Catullus can be detected in their inclusion of the mythic figure Achilles and his connection to the beginning of the Heroic Age.

[75] Wallace-Hadrill (1982: 21) and Stroh (1993: 298) deal with parallels between *Eclogue* 4 and *Isaiah* 7 and 9. Barwick (1944: 55) and Whittaker (2007: 66) caution against seeing the biblical text as a template for Vergil. Like many other prophecies in the Old Testament, the ethnic origin of the coming Messiah is pronounced to be Jewish and it is highly dubious whether the Roman poet would have intended to predict the advent of a savior from a folk other than his own.

[76] The twofold allusion to Apollo (V. 10 and V. 57) whom the later Augustus elevated to his patron god would bolster this interpretation. Lefèvre (2000: 65) refers us to a passage in Suetonius (*Vita Divi Augusti* 70) where the later *princeps* is even said to have entered the *cena* δωδεκάθεος, which took place in the winter of the year 41 B.C., being dressed up as Apollo to reinforce his connection to the deity. However, the analogy *puer*-Octavian is not unambiguous, but based on a loose footing insofar as he had not consolidated his power in 40 B.C. – on the contrary: his ruthless way of proceeding in the battle of Perugia had earned him great spite and for a brief time span the odds seemed to tip in Mark Antony's favor (Nisbet 2008: 167).

Mithras, or, as has famously been argued, Jesus Christ. Lefèvre (2000: 64) forwards a number of arguments why Vergil must have meant a descendent of the later *princeps*. This interpretation can be underpinned by a reading of *Eclogue* 4 in conjunction with the opening poem of the collection where – according to prevailing scholarly consensus[77] – Octavian is hailed as divinity in Tityrus' well-known profession to have recouped liberty to pursue his vocation (V. 6-10):

> O Meliboee, deus nobis haec otia fecit.
> Namque erit ille mihi semper deus, illius aram
> saepe tener nostris ab ovilibus imbuet agnus.
> Ille meas errare boves, ut cernis, et ipsum
> ludere quae vellem calamo permisit agresti.

> O Meliboeus, a god has provided us with this leisure. For he will always be divine to me, and a delicate lamb from our sheepfold will frequently bedew his altar. As you can see, he has allowed my cattle to roam about and has allowed me personally to play on my pastoral reed whatever tunes I wish.

Undeniably, Octavian has played a significant role in the repartition of land and Vergil, who seems to lend his voice to the shepard Tityrus in *Eclogue* 1, is rumored to have been one of the great benefactors of the later emperor's largesse. Yet, a few words of caution ought to be inserted at this point. According to Günther and Müller (1987: 103), historical testimonies of this terrestrial reapportioning to Vergil and his family are lacking, which is why we have to enter the slippery slope of speculation here. Indeed, we find conflicting evidence when glimpsing at *Eclogue* 9 where the speaker Moeris regrets the undecided future of the Vergilian homeland: *superet modo Mantua nobis* (V. 27). In addition, we ought to acknowledge the *Eclogues* constitute an aesthetic cosmos of their own rather than parroting the dominant ideology of the day. Obviously, even though we can not attribute "political escapism" (Kania 2016: 40) to Vergil's pastoral poems, one-to-one equations with real-life circumstances are to be taken with a grain of salt. Kettemann (1977: 14), furthermore, demonstrates that the speaker Tityrus, who has often been seen as a mask for Vergil himself, cleverly avoids an identification of the *deus* (V. 6) with a clear-cut political figure, thus commending the poem to the fictional realm by retaining a significant amount of ambiguity[78].

Intriguing as this *locus comparationis* may be, Clausen (1994: 127) favors an analogy between the prodigious son in *Eclogue* 4 and the expected, yet never born male descendant of Octavia and Mark Antony, whose marriage was solemnly celebrated to conclude the pact of

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[77] For a more detailed discussion of the historical allusions in *Eclogue* 1, see Coleman (1977: 14-21).

[78] A thorough examination of the fictitious elements in the *Eclogues* as well as the discursive techniques applied by Vergil can be found in Kania (2016: 42-52).

Brundisium in 40 B.C.[79] Bourne (1916: 391), by contrast, highlights why emperor Constantine and other Christian apologists (Lactantius, St. Augustine, St. Jerome, Pope Innocent III.) found the elusiveness of this *Eclogue* peculiarly attractive. Buzzwords and catch-phrases such as *Virgo* (V. 6), *nova progenies* (V. 7), *munuscula* (V. 18), *metuent armenta leones* (V. 22) or *occidet et serpens* (V. 24) could easily be instrumentalized to establish a connection to the Virgin Mary, the early Christian congregations that would no longer be afraid of pagan persecutors (epitomized by the predatory lions), the generous gifts handed to Jesus at the cradle by the three Magi (gold, frankincense and myrrh) or the biblical serpent, the primordial incarnation of the devil that seduced Eve and Adam[80].

2.4.4 Vergil's Metaliteracy between Panegyric and Self-Assured Programmatic Formula

No matter how enticing the interpretations of the *puer* – outlined in the previous chapter – might sound, I will refrain from committing myself to one definite exegesis as none proves to be absolutely satisfactory in my eyes. Instead, I intend to illustrate in the last part of this section how the messianic savior figure serves as a productive foil for Vergil both to forge a bridge to his own poetic merits: just as in *Epode 16*, the blissful space in *Eclogue 4* is characterized by negation of contemporary deficiencies (farming toil and drudgery, nautic expansion, internal strife) and *adynata*, such as the polychromous sheep or grapes and corn fields maturing without need of cultivation. However, we do not find a linear and unstoppable story of decline in Vergil as, for instance, in Hesiod, since this would have meant a political and narratological disavowal of his contemporaries who were simultaneously contestants on the political stage.

Instead of steering a risky course by allocating a position in the Iron Age to Octavian, Mark Antony, Asinius Pollio or other prominent figures and thus discrediting them in a roundabout way, Vergil creatively adapts the Golden Age topos[81] and links it to the expected

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[79] An allusion to this politically influential marital bond is definitely within the realm of the possible and subtly underlined by Vergil's reference to the *Parcae*: by mentioning their spindles which ought to be "in accordance with the firm nod of destiny" (*concordes stabili fatorum numine*, V. 47), he conjures up the image of Catullus' *Carmen 64*, where the sisters of fate play an important role in sealing the marriage between Thetis and Peleus, as Whittaker (2007: 66), Du Quensay (1976: 322-328) and Harrison (2007: 39) have shown in great detail.

[80] Nisbet (2008: 155-188) provides an intriguing examination of Western an Eastern elements that are tightly knit together in this *Eclogue*. He stresses the fact that prophetic ambiguity runs like a red thread through the poem. Rather than believing that Vergil was influenced by the nascent Christianity, I consider it both plausible to assume that the renderings of *Eclogue 4* as well as similarly formulated biblical testimonies discussing the advent of the Messiah go back to a no longer existent oriental source.

[81] Clausen (1994: 125) observes that Vergil omits Silver, Bronze and Iron Age in his account; instead, he includes the Age of Heroes and alludes to its actualization that accompanies the maturing process of the miraculous child. The Roman poet seems to pick and choose freely from the Hesiodic material in Ἔργα καὶ ἡμέραι, leaving out elements of deterioration in favor of a flourishing future prospect of pure felicity. In addition, Vergil synthesizes the linearity of Hesiod's theory of descent with the elements of a cyclic world view (*magnus annus*) propounded by the Stoics. Rose (1942: 174) and Nisbet (2008: 160) observe that he omits two vital elements, the κατακλυσμός (*inundation*) and the ensuing ἐκπύρωσις (*conflagration*), but evidently retains the Stoic ἀποκατάστασις, i.e. the repetition of history and the positive reassembling of the world between the firestorm and the deluge.

ascent and perfectibility of his own œvre, thus providing an intellectually entertaining imaginary subterfuge for his readers. Like the Horatian *persona* in *Epode* 16, though marginally more attenuated, the speaker in the *Eclogue* draws inspiration from the anticipation of a new age and enthusiastically foreshadows his departure from the pastoral[82] as well as his flight to more demanding and sophisticated literary realms (V. 55-59):

> Non me carminibus vincet nec Thraecius Orpheus
> nec Linus, huic mater quamvis atque huic pater adsit,
> Orphei Calliopea, Lino formosus Apollo.
> Pan etiam, Arcadia mecum si iudice certet,
> Pan etiam Arcadia dicat se iudice victum.

> Neither the Thracian Orpheus nor Linus will surpass me with their songs, even though one is supported by his mother, the other by his father, Orpheus has Calliopea and Linus has the handsome Apollo. If Pan too challenges me, with Arcadia being the judge, Pan will probably have to admit his defeat, with Arcadia being the judge.

"On sait que les poètes sont rarement modestes," says Stégen (1955: 55) in his trenchant analysis of the above-cited passage. Indeed, Vergil does not humblebrag here, but he professes his aptitude to soar poetically, by means of which he will even be capable of outperforming mythical singers, such as Orpheus, Linus or Pan (V. 56-59). The positioning of Pan at the end of this tricolon is no ‚metrical accident', but rather a bucolic climax: the Arcadian shepard god is the only one worthy to take it up with the Vergilian *persona*.

Hence, the Roman poet does not tarry to put his abilities to the test by masterfully blending in elements of a pastoral act of idealization in *Eclogue* 4, which function as a vital link between these two conceptual paradigms, i.e. Arcadia and the Golden Age.[83] The poetic speaker of *Eclogue* 4, furthermore, asserts that he can contribute significantly to the elevation of the coming Messiah, for he is willing to dedicate the rest of his life to emperor-panegyric if we are supposed to take the following celebratory promise at face value (V. 52-54):

> Aspice, venturo laetentur ut omnia saeclo!
> O mihi tum longae maneat pars ultima vitae,
> spiritus et quantum sat erit tua dicere facta!

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[82] That the landscape in this poem is heavily politicized and abounding in symbolic remarks can also be seen in Vergil's mention of the *humiles myricae* (V. 2), i.e. the low and densely foliated tamarisks, which – according to Coleman (1977: 129) and Clausen (1994: 130) – are an indispensible feature of the pastoral landscape that is already present in the Greek predecessor Theocritus (Εἰδύλλια 6, V. 10, 8, V. 54 and 10, V. 13). Thus, the Roman poet, by implication, already indicates in the poem's first lines that he will soon soar artistically and venture out to explore new genres, a promise which materialized itself in his two later epics, the *Georgics* and the *Aeneid*. *Eclogue* 4, which stands in stark contrast to the preceding poem of the collection and does – strictly speaking – no longer center exclusively on bucolic topics, paves the way for subsequent endeavors by tackling lofty themes.

[83] In anticipation of the subsequent chapter of this thesis which is largely dedicated to the Vergilian *Eclogues*, a word of caution is not out of place here: the poet-shepards in the remainder of the bucolic collection are not synonymous with the multi-layered lyrical voice here, which unites features of encomiastic, prophetic, hymnic and Golden Age rhetoric, as Papaioannou (2013: 147) and Breed (2006: 136-148) rightly remark.

> Look up and see how they all rejoice in the coming age! If only for me there could
> remain the last part of a long life and ever so much spirit that is sufficient to praise
> your deeds!

Clearly, it would be a fatal misapprehension to regard the whole of Vergil's poetry or this *Eclogue* in particular as blatant bootlicking or Augustus-adulation – not least due to the fact that the identity of the *puer* remains shrouded in secrecy. Moreover, the poetic *persona* does not indulge in more boastful and self-aggrandizing remarks, but shifts the focus once again in the final lines (V. 60-63), which direct a puzzling exhortation to smile[84] at the child:

> Incipe, parve puer, risu cognoscere matrem;
> matri longa decem tulerunt fastidia menses.
> Incipe, parve puer: qui[85] non risere parenti,
> nec deus hunc mensa dea nec dignata cubili est.

> Begin, little boy, to acknowledge your mother with a smile, for ten months have
> brought her grave discomfort. Begin, little boy! Those who have not smiled upon their
> parent are neither worthy of the god's table nor the bed of the goddess.

How are we supposed to read this final, obviously anticlimactic remark? First of all, the injunction itself is disconcerting[86]. The newly-born Messiah seems to be immensely resourceful due to his ability to smile, which, according to Coleman (1977: 149), posits him in the supernatural realm. His radiant and unearthly personality will suffuse Vergil's literary œvre and contribute to his immortality. From a metapoetic perspective, the speaker's exhortation directed at the miraculous child to smile could thus signify the poet's transient dwelling upon the pastoral genre which is as prankish and multifaceted as this facial gesture.

This detail, i.e. the notion of mysteriousness, once again exemplifies a key observation that is symptomatic for the whole *Eclogue*: a number of prosperous, yet ambivalent portents, prophecies and anticipations of a bounteous savior are touched upon and delayed to a point in the near future, i.e. Pollio's consulship in 40 B.C. The prediction of convergence between

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[84] Although it is not vital for the interpretation of this final bucolic passage, we should not fail to mention Vergil's deliberate allusion to Catullus' *Carmen* 61 in which the juvenile descendent of Torquatus receives a similar exhortation (V. 216-220) despite its disparity in focus: Coleman (1977: 149) hints at the earlier poem's absence of apocalyptic imagery and the subsequent increased anthropomorphism of the addressee.

[85] The plural form of the relative pronoun *qui* (V. 62) and the ensuing inconcinnity with the singular demonstrative *hunc* (V. 63) has led to a number of textcritical suggestions. Clausen (1994: 144) records that Servius and other MSS recommend an emendation from *qui* to *cui* – leading to an untenable inversion of semantic roles –, whereas Quintillian was in favor of retaining the original form, but conjectured *parentes* for *parenti*. This leads to another problem: *rideo* in combination with the accusative case typically means 'to laugh at' or 'ridicule'. When it takes the dative, by contrast, it denotes the action of a benevolent smile for a recipient. In my translation, I decided to maintain both *qui* and *parenti*, based on the assumption of Maas (1960: 23) who sees in Latin poets' transition from plural to singular an analogy to a logical operation that frequently occurs in Ancient Greek syntax.

[86] Rose's (1942: 254) call for a willing suspension of disbelief, however, is strangely beside the point. He argues that this scene should be interpreted from an evolutionary-biological perspective and highlights that babies normally do not start to forge the hint of a smile before they are at least fourty days old, an interpretative approach which does not do justice to the Vergilian poetic genius.

eschatology and reality is not a desperate plea for societal betterment, but interconnected with a metapoetic passage that conveys astonishing self-confidence on the speaker's part (V. 53-59) and allows the Vergilian *persona* to benefit from the *proto-utopian* vision by shaping and amplifying it in his own literary articulations through attributing a status of divinity to his *puer*. Much like the Horatian core message in *Epode* 16, the pivotal point in *Eclogue* 4 is connected to the role of the poet who is capable of exploring the potentialities for the future and thus plays a central role in this "utopia of escape", to recur to Mumford's (1966: 15) tailor-made term.

2.5 Vergil's *laudes Italiae – Proto-Utopia* Here and Now?

Vergil elaborates the topos of the γῆ αὐτομάτη, prefigured in *Eclogue* 4, in his *Georgics*, most notably in the so-called passage of the *laudes Italiae* (2, V. 136-176). On a surface level, the agrarian idyll is strictly speaking no longer out of reach, but seems to have come true in the blessed land: Italy. In contrast to the exaggerated wealth and cravings for luxuries that dominate the morally perverted East, the Vergilian *patria* abounds both in astonishing natural treasures and in man-made attractions. The Roman poet confesses that his eulogy to the *Saturnia tellus* (V. 173) owes certain features to the Hesiodic predecessor whose literary shadow is adumbrated in the phrase *Ascraeum carmen*. The praise of the Italian soil culminates in an enumeration of meritorious historical figures such as Camillus or the Scipiones (V. 169-170), in the course of which Octavian is hailed as *maxime Caesar* (V. 170). Vergil's accolade to this political leader is vaguely reminiscent of *Eclogue* 4 in spite of the conflicted identity of the prodigious *puer*. Although the *Georgics* do not present an unabated emperor panegyric, the passage of the *laudes Italiae* strikes the reader as particularly exultant[87] – maybe even too exultant and thus traversed by ironic subtones, as shall be demonstrated shortly.

2.5.1 The Jovian Fall from Grace and the Ambivalence of Technological Progress

Let us begin with an examination of the overtly *proto-utopian* features. Interestingly, Vergil merges two strands that pull the text in different directions. Smolenaars (1987: 404) trenchantly points to vestiges of the poet's romantic and escapist desire to revert to a long-forgotten paradise as well as his palpable fascination with the technical progress the Roman society accomplished. The speaker displays equal admiration for the autogenetic earth and the magnificent buildings

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[87] Williams (1979: 164) refers us to a *locus comparationis* in the *Aeneid*, where Vergil elaborates on this pageant of outstanding Roman personalities. When Aeneas undertakes a journey to the underworld in the sixth book, he encounters his recently deceased father Anchises who exhibits heroes 'in the making' to his son (V. 788-823). This passage is *proto-utopian* in the sense that the underworld is a purely fictitious space, a safe literary realm for the poet to explore options that could influence the future course of Roman history. According to Günther and Müller (1987: 104), Vergil is most exultant and completely pro-Augustan in this catalogue of heroes: "[D]ie messianisch-eschatologische Verehrung des Augustus durch Vergil [hat] ihren Höhepunkt erreicht."

that have spread across the country. He marvels at the temperate climate, the fertility of the land and the absence of predators that would posit a harmful counterpoint to this bliss (V. 149-154):

> Hic ver adsiduum atque alienis mensibus aestas:
> bis gravidae pecudes, bis pomis utilis arbos.
> At rabidae tigres absunt et saeva leonum
> semina, nec miseros fallunt aconita legentes,
> nec rapit immensos orbes per humum neque tanto
> squameus in spiram tractu se colligit anguis.

> Here, the springtide is eternal and summer reigns in unusual months: the cattle is pregnant twice, twice does the serviceable tree bring forth fruits. Ravenous tigers, however, and the rampaging offspring of lions are absent, and the monkshood does not deceive the deplorable gatherers, nor does the scaly snake convulse over the soil in giant leaps or coil circularly in a mighty move.

Unsurprisingly, commonplaces such as the removal of threatening lions, tigers or snakes, with which we are already familiar from *Epode* 16 or *Eclogue* 4, are not lacking in this idealized portrait. Close, almost verbatim parallels between these hexameters and the bucolic predecessor are indicative of Vergil's intention to stimulate his readers to recall the earlier poem and suggest the actualization of the messianic prophecy[88]. In other words, the poetic *persona* has climbed through the proto-utopian window which had been opened in *Eclogue* 4 by proposing the bounteous instantiation of the Golden Age in Italy. The mild spring breeze, for instance, that can be felt all over the Italian soil is encapsulated in the phrase *ver adsiduum* (V. 149), which resonates with the Ovidian account of the Golden Age that reads *ver erat aeternum* (*Metamorphoses* 1, V. 107). However, while the later poet then proceeds to the description of a land 'where milk and honey flow', Vergil's paradise vision in the *Georgics* is more moderate, putting emphasis on the human achievements and technological advances.

Inventions such as the discovery of fire, viticulture, shipbuilding and navigation, or apiculture receive great attention throughout the didactic poem. They are first mentioned to have arisen during Jupiter's reign. Though symbolic of the fall from grace, they are evaluated as chiefly positive, for they are an epitome of human artisanship in *Georgics* 1, V. 125-135:

> Ante Iovem nulli subigebant arva coloni:
> ne signare quidem aut partiri limite campum
> fas erat; in medium quaerebant, ipsaque tellus
> omnia liberius nullo poscente ferebat.
> Ille malum virus serpentibus addidit atris
> praedarique lupos iussit pontumque moveri,
> mellaque decussit foliis ignemque removit

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[88] Smolenaars (1987: 403) provides a meticulous analysis of verbatim parallels as well as other intertextually relevant semantic echoes of *Eclogue* 4 in the *laudes Italiae* passage, which range from concrete prophecies, such as the various gifts that the productive soil will bring forth voluntarily (ruby grapes or goats with udders brimful of milk), to a more general notion of prevailing justice that seems to have become a reality in the *Georgics*.

> et passim rivis currentia vina repressit,
> ut varias usus meditando extunderet artis
> paulatim, et sulcis frumenti quaereret herbam,
> ut silicis venis abstrusum excuderet ignem.

> Before Jupiter no farmers subjugated the acres. It was indeed considered an iniquity
> to designate a field or partition it with a demarcation line. Everything was communal
> property. The earth herself provided everything freely because nobody forced her to
> do so. He imparted noxious venom to the pitch-dark snakes, he ordered wolves to
> watch out for prey, he made the seas storm, he shook honey off the leaves, he hid
> away the fire, and let the wine, which was all around flowing in the rivers, peter out,
> so that need would bring forth various skills by means of pondering, so that it would
> gradually look out for cereal in the grooves and educe concealed fire from the veins
> of pebble stones.

In contrast to the Lucretian version of this passage (see chapter 2.1), the achievements of the Iron Age are here gauged as profitable for humankind, as Smolenaars (1987: 403) observed[89]. Even though contemporary peasants no longer reap the benefits of communal property, they have attained *labor* in all its facets as an element of life that is more fulfilling than unmeditated leisure. The exchange of pure idleness for the satisfaction gained through toil is depicted as enriching, since it raises human existence to a higher level and is inextricably intertwined with a general enhancement of morality and purposefulness of the *vita humana*:

> Labour is a necessity; more than that, it has positive qualities: there is
> legitimate pride in skill and craftsmanship, there is the moral discipline
> it induces, there is even a sense in which one may speak of a vocation
> of labour (Finley 1975: 188).

In spite of the fact that Jupiter violently demolished the paradise[90] in the above-cited passage by shaking down honey from trees, suppressing the stream of natural goods or replenishing humans' surroundings with perilous animals, he has enabled the earth-dwellers to adapt to these changing circumstances. In fact, this abrupt revulsion has instilled a more thoughtful stance

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[89] Despite the undeniably positive evaluation of this rendering, Putnam (1979: 69) casts a comprehensive look at the corpus of the *Georgics* to demonstrate that the Vergilian stance towards the Iron Age is ambivalent. On the one hand, the heightened demands that trigger productivity in humanity are cherishable; on the other hand, the frequently resurfacing martial impulses are abominable. In an allusion to the assassination of Julius Caesar in book one, the poet attributes responsibility for this deed to the swarthy iron rust (*obscura ferrugine*, V. 467) and portrays the subsequent bleakness as a dystopian nightmare: *impiaque aeternam timuerunt saecula noctem* (V. 468).

[90] Jupiter might be equated with Octavian in this passage, who can be considered "a true symbol of a Jovian dispensation" (Putnam 1979: 15). The god and the emperor both appear as bellicose and gruesome statesmen. The analogy is underlined by a closely related scene in which the later Augustus, though a mention of his name is carefully avoided, is depicted as thundering over Euphrates (*Georgics* 1, V. 509). His primary intention, it seems, is to wage war in remote territories rather than establishing peace on the Italian soil. Vergil's stance towards the *princeps* is not one of unabated admiration, but one of deeply engrained ambivalence: on the one hand, the poetic *persona* elevates Octavian to a semi-divine figure, for instance by imploring the gods to pave the way for his pacifying mission (*everso iuvenem succurrere saeclo ne prohibite*, *Georgics* 1, V. 500-501) or by promising him to preserve his outstanding existence in an everlasting poetic temple (*Georgics* 3, V. 16). On the other hand, Vergil subtly inserts cautionary remarks directed at the *princeps* to hint at *regnandi dira cupido* (*Georgics* 1, V. 37), the pernicious craving for absolute power to which a political leader might easily fall prey (Putnam 1979: 15, 24, 78).

towards life in human beings: from that moment onwards, they have been compelled to engage in *meditando* (V. 133) to autonomously solve conflicts and riddles that come their way. Vergil is very appreciative of this heightened mental flexibility, which is not only regarded as the prerequisite for creativity and the development of human *artes*, as Putnam (1979: 40) remarks, but also gains momentum insofar as it initiates a shift in the ontological condition: lack and the ensuing demand to fall back upon one's rational faculties triggers a leap from an attitude of passivity to one of agency and self-reliance, thus acceding to a radically different version of humanity that rests on the cornerstones of purposeful work, ethical behavior and, by extension, mutual recognition of other humans' achievements[91].

2.5.2 The Frugality-Ideal: *Proto-Utopian* Catalyst and Challenge to the *Status Quo*

The elaborations of the previous subchapter tie in with the significance of morality advanced in the *laudes Italiae*: instead of gluttony or exorbitance, moderate yet pleasurable restraint is recommended by implication[92]. Due to the fact that the parthenogenic earth does not fall short of making provisions for its human offspring, indulgence is not necessary – on the contrary: an agreeable life consists in contentment with the unembellished low-key abode and in steering the course towards the golden means. Indeed, the poetic *persona* is very determined about the unique status of the Roman mentality in contrast to which the exuberance of Eastern regions and folks is second-rate, at best (V. 136-139):

> Sed neque Medorum silvae, ditissima terra,
> nec pulcher Ganges atque auro turbidus Hermus
> laudibus Italiae certent, non Bactra neque Indi
> totaque turiferis Panchaia pinguis harenis.

> But neither the woodlands of the Medes, an extremely plentiful place, nor the beautiful Ganges or the river Hermus, turbid from the gold, can compete with the praise of Italy – and neither can Bactra nor the Indians nor the whole island Panchaia abundant with frankincense producing sandy deserts.

Even though the rejection of oriental luxuries is not advanced in an unequivocal manner[93], the

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[91] The latter aspect might be a bit of a stretch, when taking the cited passage as an interpretative basis, but can certainly be read into Vergil's œuvre. Putnam (1979: 27), for instance, asserts that in the *Georgics* "[l]abor and art combine in the act of mediation", which is grounded on a symbiosis between the worker and his tools or fellows. However, throughout the didactic poem we see the poet's human agents vacillating between their barbaric drives and their rational faculties (ibid., 80). Man's attempt to tame nature – a constant in the course of history – is a symbol of gaining control over the inner combats that govern the self and of striving for a harmonious ego-utopia.

[92] The hyperfertility of the Italian soil, which Vergil describes in colorful terms in this encomiastic passage, is connected to a particular moral stance, as Evans (2008: 18-20) observes: paradisiacal landscapes in Augustan narratives tend to be exaggerated to indicate the corrupting forces of idleness that ensue from nature's overproduction. The intellectual elites at that time evaluated abundance (and its enclosure of moral decay) ambivalently and the phrase *fecunda culpae saecula* in Horace's *Ode* 3, 6, V. 17 is a testimony for this position.

[93] The Roman poet marvels at the extravagant plenties of the East by using embellishing modifiers such as *terra ditissima* (V. 136), the richly copious land, or *auro turbidus* (V. 137), swirling with gold. Klingner (1963: 83-85)

Italian superiority comes to the fore syntactically via a chain of negative particles: *neque-nec-non-neque*[94]. Thomas (1988: 181) remarks that this ethnographic excursus carries us off to the borders of the world as it must have been known to Vergil, circumscribed by the Medes, the Lydian river Pactolus (Hermus) or the Indian current Ganges. Conspicuously, this enumeration climaxes in the mention of the mythical Arabian island Panchaia which has often been located in proximity to India and featured prominently in the travelogue Ἱερὰ Ἀναγραφή by Euhemerus.

Reitzenstein-Ronning (2013: 30-34) elaborates on some key features of this fragmentarily transmitted text, which has served as a model for later idealized visions and must have been widely known among Roman authors, as we encounter references in Ennius, Cicero or Pliny the Elder[95]. The inhabitants of Panchaia are divided into three classes: priests, farmers and warriors, all of whom perform essential functions in the society. Private property is unavowed, the distribution of victuals is incumbent upon the priestly caste, which is in charge of administrative affairs. Precious goods, for instance gold or silver, are manufactured into votive offerings for the gods. The hierarchically arranged islanders hold autarky and isolation from potential external threats, such as buccaneers, near and dear. Despite Panchaia's obvious foundation on democratic principles and its endeavored seclusion from outside depravities, there are some logical fissures in Euhemerus' account. First, the description of the priestly aristocrats, who receives twice as many subsistence supplies as other Panchaians, seems to be in conflict with the egalitarian aspirations that permeate the overall social organization. One could even detect a subversive current of monarchic elements behind the uniformist façade here. Second, the insularity-motif is undermined by Panchaia's commercial interconnectedness with neighboring nations and the importance of economic exports[96]. Third, it is disputable whether the inhabitants' lives are truly predicated on peace if their warriors permanently have

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reckons that concrete political allusions are included in the ambivalent evaluation of these luxuries, as they could refer to Mark Antony and his luscious life style that was frowned upon by the old-established Roman elites who were staunch defenders of the frugality-ideal.

[94] Negation has been characterized as one of the primary logical operations in *proto-utopian* settings in the introduction of this thesis (see chapter 1.5.2). Davies (1987: 266) observes that we can already detect this stylistic device in some of the earliest accounts of alternative visions, for instance in the Homeric description of the Elysian fields (*Odyssey* 4, 565-568), which contents itself with mentioning the absence of natural catastrophes (no storms, no exuberant irrigation) instead of highlighting the blissful conditions.

[95] Reitzenstein-Ronning (2013: 434) refers us to two passages in Pliny the Elder and Cicero: in *De Natura Deorum* 1, 119, the Roman orator and philosopher takes a detour via Ennius' translation entitled *Euhemerus*, which gives us an essential clue as to his conception of the divine: *ab Euhemero autem et mortes et sepulturae demonstrantur deorum.* Pliny the Elder is significant insofar as he locates the nest of the phoenix on Panchaia in his *Naturalis Historia* 10, 3-5. This bird Evans (2008: 9-11) can be interpreted as a symbolic of both renewal and stability, two paradoxical – if not to say diametrically opposed – notions that were shrewdly manipulated in the Augustan propaganda and in subsequent principates to feature in regime-supporting narratives.

[96] Günther and Müller (1987: 83) also hint at Euhemerus' compelling attempt to combine the idea of communal property with meritocratic principles: in contrast to many other *proto-utopian* elaborations that either concentrate on emphasizing the limited productivity of nature or the necessity of moderation in human life, Euhemerus suggests a stimulation of the Panchaians' work ethos to boost the island's economic weight.

to be alert and gear up for marine pirate assaults. In light of these inconsistencies in the Greek predecessor, the above-cited passage from the *Georgics* gets an additional dimension: Vergil might signal that a large scale social engineering project as advanced in Euhemerus' travelogue is unfeasible, illusionary and condemned to the fictitious realm[97]. Instead, he implies that politically shrewd leaders should aim for more moderate and realistic implementations if they wish to inititate veritable changes that can lead to an amelioration of the societal *status quo*.

Idealistic as this thought may be, one way of setting such an improvement in motion by means of literature is to both trust in and appeal to human ethics. Although he is neither starry-eyed nor politically naïve, Vergil seems to adhere to the belief that a heart of gold beats beneath the rough exterior of the war-torn Roman society. In this respect, Thomas (1988: 180) rightly cautions against taking the descriptions of the actualization of the Golden Age in *Georgics* 2, V. 149-154 at face value, especially since the contemporary circumstances presented a radically different picture of a nation that was still suffering from the aftermath of the civil wars. Therefore, we should not forego the concealed ideological and metaliterary implications of the Vergil's encomium to the *Saturnia tellus*, which shall be sketched out in the next section.

2.5.3 The Praise of the *Saturnia tellus* as Metaliterary Lynchpin for *labor* and *securitas*

As already adumbrated, we need to acknowledge that eulogizing the native land is a value-laden rhetorical topos that can frequently be encountered in Latin literature. An informed reader ought to be sensitive to the underlying ideological traces, which are also detectable in Vergil's account. The poet ventures out to propound his own vision of morality in the *laudes Italiae* that is not dependent on a divine or supernatural apparition, but can be renewed via constant collaborative human efforts, as long as the Roman population would not rather exchange unlimited, unmerited leisure for the fulfillment and satisfaction attainable through upright toil. The pivotal role of this Vergilian moral-philosophical stance vis-à-vis the frequently uttered reproach of emperor-panegyric[98] can be bolstered by two observations.

First, the passage of the *laudes Italiae* – despite teleologically striving towards mentioning Octavian in the apostrophe *maxime Caesar* (V. 170) and addressing some of his most prominent

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[97] As these logical discrepancies are relatively palpable in the Ἱερὰ Ἀναγραφή, Reitzenstein-Ronning (2013: 31) steps into the breach for Euhemerus and defends his central thesis: the anthropomorphic origin of the gods. The Greek author draws on a homodiegetic narrator who explores the island via autopsy to enhance the credibility of his account. In the course of his scouting expeditions, he comes across an inscription on a golden stele that documents the outstanding deeds of deceased heroes who have attained a divine status due to constant worship.

[98] Wallace-Hadrill (1982: 25) argues that the Golden Age topos in the Augustan period is nothing but a literary device to exalt the emperor. He regards the myth of man's fall from grace as suffused with ideological vestiges that support the dominant propaganda and facilitate the subjection of the Roman population to the *princeps*. Although this might be partly true for certain literary productions of this epoch – Horace's officially commissioned *Carmen Saeculare*, for instance –, I would recommend a more differentiated approach to the Augustan poetry.

deeds, such as the ensurance of border security in the *Imperium Romanum* (V. 171-172) – ends with a μακαρισμός of the *Saturnia tellus* and a shift to the lyrical *persona* (V. 173-176):

> Salve, magna parens frugum, Saturnia tellus,
> magna virum: tibi res antiquae laudis et artem
> ingredior sanctos ausus recludere fontes,
> Ascraeumque cano Romana per oppida carmen.

> Greeted art thou, great parent of crops and of men, Saturnian earth: in thy honor I venture out to present works of ancient value and art, I dare to disclose the holy fountains, and I chant an Ascrean song through Roman cities.

According to Klingner (1963: 85), Vergil gives birth to Italy as an idea in this rhapsody and casts his paternal land as both, the goal of a linear narrative of ascent and as an epistemological foundation upon which the values of chastity, moderation and justice are posited[99]. Though more subdued than in *Eclogue* 4, the speaker here too emphasizes that he is in charge of rendering new sources of literary imagination, holy fountains (*sanctos fontes*, V. 175), accessible and of spreading them across various Roman cities due to his non-negligible reputation. The use of the first person present tense *ingredior* (V. 175), which is prominently positioned at the beginning of the line, highlights that this action is not dislocated to an indeterminate point in the future, but happening *hic et nunc*.

A second argument can be propounded in favor of Vergil's metapoetic intentions and the concomitant independence from simplistic Augustus-adulation when glimpsing at an analogous praise of rural life in *Georgics* 2, V. 458-542. Here, the μακαρισμός of the *Saturnia tellus* that surfaced in the *laudes Italiae* passage is extended to the whole of the peasantry and contrasted with the rotten, crime-ridden Roman elites whose extravagant cravings for luxuries have torn apart the pristine tissues of society. The poetic *persona* asserts that a life far away from civil strife (*procul discordibus armis*, V. 459) as well as faith in the benignity and equity of the earth (*iustissima tellus*, V. 460) is sufficient for a *vita beata*. The speaker advertises the corollary in blunt terms: *secura quies* (V. 467), i.e. freedom from psychological baggages[100], merely entails an exchange of hypocritical materialistic debaucheries for a leisured retreat to spaces that are

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[99] Thomas (1988: 183-189) rightly scrutinizes the proposition of teleological linearity in the *laudes Italiae* by pointing out fissures in the account of pure bliss. The Italian soil is still tainted by the bloody stains of war, adumbrated in the mention of *bellator equus* (V. 145) or in the description of the rivers that not only carry gold, but also silver and bronze (V. 165), two metals that were strongly associated with warfare. In addition, the list of heroes at the end comprises only meretricious military figures and their characterization as *duros bello* (V. 170) is evaluated as positive.

[100] Not only is the phrase *secura quies* a buzzword both in Stoic and Epicurean philosophy that reverberates with the Greek term ἀταραξία, it is also etymologically related to the noun *cura*. In fact, the prefix *se-* signals a sharp semantic detachment from the ensuing part of the compound. In the present context, Vergil's use of the adjective *secura* might thus be counted as ambiguous in its political message, given that Jupiter – whose proximity to the later emperor Augustus has already been pointed out – entered the stage in book one of the *Georgics* (V. 123) as the deliverer of various *curae* that brought hardships upon humankind.

in unison with nature. Vergil picks up a Hellenistic concept when he mentions remote grottos, cool lakes or a pleasurable tree shadow (V. 467-471) that provide everything the heart could wish for. This Epicurean withdrawal from the realm of power-hungry politics to the *loci amoeni* goes hand in hand with casting off the corrupting shackles of the seemingly omnipresent megalomania (that has a dystopian ring), epitomized in the pillars of imperial expansionism, voracity for self-display, public approval and riches (V. 503-515).

> Sollicitant alii remis freta caeca ruuntque
> in ferrum, penetrant aulas et limina regum;
> hic petit excidiis urbem miserosque penates,
> ut gemma bibat et Sarrano dormiat ostro;
> condit opes alius defossoque incubat auro.
> Hic stupet attonitus rostris, hunc plausus hiantem
> per cuneos geminatus enim plebisque patrumque
> corripuit; gaudent perfusi sanguine fratrum,
> exilioque domos et dulcia limina mutant
> atque alio patriam quaerunt sub sole iacentem.
> Agricola incurvo terram dimovit aratro:
> hic anni labor, hinc patriam parvosque nepotes
> sustinet, hinc armenta boum meritosque iuvencos.

Others stir up obscure oceans with their oars and plunge into the iron, they thrust themselves forward to the regal courts and thresholds. One person aims to destroy a city and the pitiful Penates, so that he can drink from a gemstone-glass and sleep on Tyrian purple; another one hides away his riches and broods on his buried gold. Yet another person marvels at the hustings as if enchanted. The avarice for applause carries off such a person and this avarice is twofold, namely of the common people and the senators, and duplicated along the rows of the theater. Some people rejoice when sprinkled with the blood of their brothers, they exchange their houses and beloved thresholds for the foreign land and seek out a new home that lies underneath an unknown sun. The farmer, by contrast, grooved the earth with the gnarled plough; herefrom arises his annual toil, herefrom does he sustain his homeland and the small house, herefrom also the cattle herds and the plough-oxen, his well-merited helpers.

This bleak portrait comprises an evergrowing lust for filthy lucre, a deep-seated discontent with one's own possessions[101], an urgent yearning for applause as well as an unwillingness to recoil from homicide or, more precisely, fratricide. The latter aspect echoes Horace's already discussed excerpt from *Epode* 7 (see chapter 2.3.1) and strikes a similarly pessimistic chord.

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[101] This briefly addressed critique of expansionism might be read in conjunction with another Greek Golden Age narrative, as Reitzenstein-Ronning (2013: 27-30) and Klingner (1963: 85-87) suggest. In his dialogues *Timaios* and *Kritias*, Plato depicts two radically different models of societal organization that come into conflict: primeval Athens on the one hand, the myth-enshrouded island Atlantis on the other hand. Whereas the latter is described as a paradise of natural abundance whose inhabitants of divine origin, being descendants of Poseidon and a mortal woman, have set up a system of incredible economic efficiency, the author's sympathies seem to rest on the side of the Athenian civilians who, unlike the presumptuous islanders, did not strive for sovereignty over the whole world, based on the belief that their hegemonial system could not be surpassed, but were content with their small-scale ideal polis state. Tellingly, the tale of Atlantis ends with its defeat that is engendered by primeval Athens, which has concrete political implications for Plato. His intention was to criticize the contemporary Athenian thalassocracy and the maniac policy of expansion. This aspect also features prominently in Vergil who, like his Greek predecessor, characterizes the Romans' (nautical) conquests of new territories as bordering on insanity.

Vergil makes his readers reflect on their own heritage and Romulus' ancestral felony that was suffused with a negative meaning up to the present day, or, as Putnam (1979: 9) phrased it:

> The focal moment in Roman history was when Remus and his brother
> still practiced together a non-Jovian life of virtues absorbed through a
> landsman's ethics.

Vergil's subsequent intensely positive characterization of the routines of a typical *agricola* does not only reflect his sympathies for the simplicity of and contentment with the rural life, but has a *proto-utopian* dimension due to its critical tone: the *vita rustica* constitutes an idealized counterpoise which elides the supposedly disastrous degeneration of the poet's contemporary society. Vergil recommends an agriculturally oriented lifestyle in accordance with nature instead of indulging in the accumulation of superfluous wealth, and the Goddess of Justice seems to agree: Vergil carefully integrates this mythic reference, which is inextricably bound to the Golden Age topos, and states that upon Dike's departure from the earth, she left her last traces among the peasants (*extrema per illos [agricolas] Iustitia excedens terris vestigia fecit*, V. 473-474), thus implying that their moral stance towards life is the most approvable.

In this context, we can assume that Vergil deliberately conflates the Epicurean and the Stoic standpoint to signal their congruence. Williams (1979: 176) remarks that the poet's critique of the two diametrically opposed urban life forms, massive wealth or extreme poverty (V. 499), is almost elegaic, for he conjoins it with an exhortation to seek out the peaceful pastoral realms. Kettemann (1977: 20) underlines that the deliberate omission of compulsive acquisitiveness and relentless profit seeking in the rural ideal, which is outlined the above-cited passage, speaks volumes when analyzed from an ethical standpoint: Vergil adds a *proto-utopian* level by accepting the daunting challenge to constitute a morally upright counterpoise to his own shattered and dysfunctional present that not only offers consolation to his readers, but also aligns the integrity of his poetry with its desired longevity (*Georgics* 2, V. 475-478):

> Me vero primum dulces ante omnia Musae,
> quarum sacra fero ingenti percussus amore,
> accipiant caelique vias et sidera monstrent,
> defectus solis varios lunaeque labores.

> It is my innermost wish that the most lovely muses may accept me. Being steeped in
> enormous love, I carry their enshrined and holy rites, and they shall teach me about
> the heaven's starry paths as well as the numerous eclipses of the sun and the changing
> phases of the moon.

The Vergilian *persona* here implores the Muses to endow him with inspiration to adequately discuss the workings of the universe in his writings. Thomas (1988: 250-253) and Williams (1979: 175) highlight that this passage and the subsequent line *felix qui potuit rerum cognoscere*

causas (V. 490) display a strong indebtedness to Lucretius who, among the Roman authors, was the first to explore the thematic fields of natural science. However, in the present context the last of the quoted lines is more important than the evident allusions to Vergil's predecessor, for it allows us to examine parallels between the philosophical realms of τὰ φυσικά and τὰ ἠθικά. The speaker mentions *defectus solis* and *lunae labores* (V. 478), solar eclipses and changing lunar phases, that denote climactic events in the proceedings of the solar system.

Used in another semantic facet, the term *labor*, a constant in the *Georgics*, is equally essential to designate a human quality that serves as the functional basis for society. In hardly any other passage does Vergil push his credo of moral philosophy to the fore more prominently than in book two of the *Georgics*, where he advances the concise slogan *omnibus est labor impendendus*[102] (V. 61). This constitutive part of the *vita humana* is not only a prerequisite for the actualization of any ideal vision, but also a catalyst for desires, as Scodel (1996: 191) posits. Moderate toil warrants supreme pleasure. *Labor* instills a sense of merit and purpose in the agent and gives rise to a feeling of gratification, which can be intensified through delay and voluntary restraint. In this respect, manual and cognitive work might give rise to a 'subjective' *proto-utopia* (see chapter 1.5.3), facilitating a person's self-profiling and enhancing the moral capacities of the performer.

Labor thus has a structuring function, not only on an internal, but also on an external level: having first-hand experiences, Vergil is acutely aware of the seasonally changing tasks that peasants ought to fulfill in order to 'keep the ball rolling'. In *Georgics* 2, V. 401-402 he addresses this circumstance: *redit agricolis labor actus in orbem, atque in se sua per vestigia volvitur annus.* The poet puts emphasis on a cyclical vision of temporality here and illustrates that the wheel of the year revolves around *labor* and man's constant struggles to tame nature, which can not be disentangled from the constricting forces of time and space. In this respect, *labor* does not only have positive associations, but is connected to *vis*, as Vergil elaborates in a drastic simile. In *Georgics* 1, V. 197-203 he draws on the image of a diligent peasant whose invested efforts to sort out the seeds are eventually in vain. His situation is paralleled with that of an oarsman who, having been caught in the vertiginous swirl of fate, is trapped in a rapacious struggle and barely capable of breasting the waves:

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[102] This *sententia* might be paralleled with the famous aphorism *labor omnia vicit improbus et duris urgens in rebus egestas* (V. 145-146) in book one of the *Georgics*, as Putnam (1979: 33) remarks. Interestingly, this relatively gloomy evaluation of *labor* follows Vergil's description of Jupiter's arrival and his shattering of nature's blissful and spontaneous abundance. The poet seems to insinuate here that toilsome work frequently entails *egestas* (need), thus inducing a sense of suffering rather than voluntary undertaking in the affected person.

> Vidi lecta diu et multo spectata labore
> degenerare tamen, ni vis humana quotannis
> maxima quaeque manu legeret: sic omnia fatis
> in peius ruere ac retro sublapsa referri,
> non aliter quam qui adverso vix flumine lembum
> remigiis subigit, si bracchia forte remisit,
> atque illum in praeceps prono rapit alveus amni.

> I saw [seeds], which had laboriously and for a long time been sorted out, perish anyhow, unless human workforce annually sifted through every single one of them with hugely careful hands: likewise, everything plunges into the worse due to our fates and, once it has slipped away, returns, not different to a rower who can only with great distress propel his barge against the stream, and whom – if only he accidentally lets his arms sink – the steep current of the river tears down rapaciously.

According to Putnam (1979: 40, 77), this simile can be interpreted as a foil for a constantly deteriorating world and the diurnal trials every human being is exposed to. A deeply rooted sense of precariousness not only pervades our natural surroundings, but can also be transposed to the realm of politics that generates unsteadiness and eclipses solutions to contemporary problems, thus compelling the topsyturvily struggling masses to 'face the music' on their own.

This brings us back to the political implications that dominate the contrast-laden description of the autogenetically providing Saturnian Age and the *labor*-inducing Jovian times, which is hammered home in the final verses of book two (V. 532-540):

> Hanc olim veteres vitam coluere Sabini,
> hanc Remus et frater; sic fortis Etruria crevit
> scilicet et rerum facta est pulcherrima Roma,
> septemque una sibi muro circumdedit arces.
> Ante etiam sceptrum Dictaei regis et ante
> impia quam caesis gens est epulata iuvencis,
> aureus hanc vitam in terris Saturnus agebat;
> necdum etiam audierant inflari classica, necdum
> impositos duris crepitare incudibus ensis.

> Once upon a time, the old Sabines cultivated this lifestyle, as did Remus and his brother; the valiant Etruria certainly grew in size this way and Rome turned into the most beautiful crown of the world and encompassed seven fortresses with a wall on its own. Before the reign of the king from Mount Dicte and before the depraved populace frivolously feasted on slaughtered bulls and heifers, the golden Saturn spent this life in these territories. People also had not yet heard the blaring of the clarions nor the clashing of swords that had been positioned onto the hard anvil.

The opposition between these two rulers and the ages they herald is representative of one of Vergil's core messages in the *Georgics*. In present-day Italy the all-encompassing abundance of the earth has been substituted with a disruption of the bounteous natural order by an *impia gens* (V. 537). The temporal dislocation of the long-gone reign of Saturn is indicated by the adverbial *olim*. Human amorality has then soon barged in, once Jupiter – or his mortal counterpart Octavian – began to hold the land under his firm sway. With war and civil strife

scattered over every corner of the empire, the Vergilian speaker implies that a recollection of the *mos maiorum*, visualized in the Saturnian Age and Rome's pristine founders, is the best possibility that avails itself to the average civilian to counter the malignity of the *status quo*. Williams (1979: 177) observes that this desire to let go of the pernicious warmongering is also reflected metrically, for the last of the cited lines (V. 540) is a *versus aureus*, a golden line – *impositos duris crepitare incudibus ensis*: the verb occupies a central position; the remaining nouns and their adjectival attributes are symetrically arranged around it. Evidently, Vergil synthesizes form and content in the concluding section of book two of his *Georgics* to harken back to a nostalgically idealized epoch of magnificence and harmony[103].

2.6 Synopsis: The Core Features of the *aurea aetas* – A Plurally Minted Coin

To sum up, the discussed passages from Lucretius', Horace's and Vergil's Golden Age accounts seem to be pulled in different directions and stitched together with many *proto-utopian* threads. First of all, the selected authors incorporate the topos of the γῆ αὐτομάτη as an idealized setting that stands in marked antithesis to societal flaws of the contemporary reality, i.e. superstitions generated by delusional *religio*, megalomaniac cravings for worldly success or unprecedented accumulations of power, the detriments caused by imperial expansion or the prevailing *discordia* and the self-laceration of the Roman society brought about by two generations of civil wars. In light of these shortcomings, a number of remedies are mediated via the Golden Age topos. They either excel in what I would like to label their nostalgic and therapeutic 'keepsake'-function or in their consolatory belief in future progress (or both):

Lucretius' *De Rerum Natura* (book 5), the most overt Epicurean testimony of the discussed passages, begins with a recollection of a more atavistic human condition characterized by a relatively unblemished morality. Quintessentially, the Roman poet does not connect this primoridal ideal state of being to a forlorn hope for the future, but emphasizes that it might be constructed anew: Lucretius' *proto-utopia* is a two-edged sword: (1) on a societal level, it is

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[103] Contrary to Smolenaars (1987: 400), who opposes this interpretation by arguing that "the idle existence of mankind during the ante Iovem age is praised nowhere in the Georgics", I believe that Vergil here takes an unequivocal stand on the preference of the Saturnian over the Jovian reign and, by extension, casts doubt on the legitimacy of the young Octavian's political way of proceeding, especially his inclination towards warmongering. However, a remarkable shift in focus with regard to the poet's perception is detectable in book eight of the Aeneid. Through the layer of myth, the poetic persona uses Evander, who shows Aeneas around the future site of Rome, as a mouthpiece to articulate a clear position on Saturn's reign (V. 319-327): Saturn is described as fugitive who – while escaping his son's, i.e. Jupiter's, armed assaults – landed in Latium where he found an undisciplined, obstinate and unmannered folk (genus indocile ac dispersum, V. 321), on which he imposed laws to achieve an acceptable societal organization. If we concede the speculation that the mythical ruler Saturn serves as a foil for the princeps, Vergil's emphasis on the ordering impetus of legislative power in this prehistorical period seems to be in line with the law-dominated Augustan ideology. Smolenaars (1987: 401) adds that Saturn can be seen as the bringer of civilization in this version of the myth and that Vergil clearly prefers a Golden Age that is "dependent upon the efforts and morality of mankind" to "the lost paradise [that] can only be dreamed about" (ibid.).

based on meritocratic principles and thus not only selective, but also interwoven with an injunction to adhere to the right values; (2) on an individual level, it advances the model figure of the Epicurean sage who is an epitome of perfection and a person who has wholly internalized the intrinsic goodness of *ratio* and *virtus*, thus standing in line with the savior figure of Epicurus.

This soteriological perspective resurfaces in Vergil's *Eclogue* 4 in which the predicted return of the *gens aurea* is inextricably intertwined with the advent of a mysterious *puer*. In contrast to Lucretius, Vergil enriches his vision with a metaliterary comment and transposes the Epicurean ideal of leisured retreat to the (self-)rewarding qualities of his own poetic œvre.

Not only the Golden Age motif of cornucopian plenty, but also this novel escapist element figure prominently in Horace's *Epode* 16 too, which might be explained in light of the parallel time of conception of the two poems. In distinction from Vergil, Horace's *proto-utopian* space, the Island of the Blessed (where the bounteous nature reigns supreme), recurs more strongly to Lucretius inasmuch as it is socially selective: Horace clearly sets forth *virtus* as a necessary precondition for his readers to undertake the daunting journey to territories hithero uncharted by the Roman populace. In consideration of the fact that Horace masterfully shrouds the temporal and geographical contingencies of the praised island in secrecy, there is reason to assume that his injunction to emigrate was only semi-serious, at best. The elusiveness of his *proto-utopian* space affords the Roman author with the poetic liberty to leap to a central Epicurean doctrine tied to the philosophy of inner retreat: like Vergil, Horace recommends a withdrawal to his literary *corpus* as a therapeutic remedy to dispel the many *curae* of his age.

Se-curitas, in conjunction with metapoetic self-references, recurs as a key value in the selected passages of the *Georgics* (books 1/2), more precisely in the μακαρισμός of the *Saturnia tellus*. In his *laudes Italiae*, Vergil, furthermore, carefully balances components of an Epicurean agrarian idyll and a concomitant return to a more archaic, less advanced form of civilization, with a structurally conservative vision predicated on sophisticated institutional mechanisms as well as the sovereignty of the Roman elites. The latter strand could even be interpreted as an early leaning towards Augustan ideology. Reitzenstein-Ronning (2013: 38) remarks that, within the outlined framework, Vergil links his *aureum saeculum* on the one hand to moderate emperor panegyric, on the other hand to parenesis. His *proto-utopian* draft cautions against the threat of a languishing morality that could be generated by an indulgence in luxuries and abundance. A rational and reflective attitude towards life's seeming obstacles as well as the philosophy of deliberate restraint and frugality are recommended as crucial countervailing measures. In this context, *labor* comes out as an ambivalent category: introduced after man's fall from grace in the Jovian dispensation, *labor* is cast as inflicting pain, but also as adding purpose to human

life and, consequently, worth striving for.

In conclusion, what can we bottle up as the essence distilled from our travels through the Golden Age narratives and inhowfar are they *proto-utopian*? To my mind, this conceptual paradigm is comparable to an unembossed coin that has been minted by Lucretius, Horace and Vergil in individual ways. It provided the enumerated poets with a laboratory of options to explore societal alternative conceptions in which justice (Δίκη, *iustitia*) and reason (λογισμός, *ratio*) reign supreme. Simultaneously, the selected Golden Age renderings drew attention to present deficiencies by negating them in the invented realms. Ensuing institutional and/or psychological-philosophical blankspaces were then filled with desirable values, such as *virtus*, or pleas for a stronger adherence to the well-worn *mos maiorum* that could serve as antidotes to the doomed Roman republic that was about to exhale its last breath. Significantly, the gap between the imagination and the actualization of the *aurea aetas* was vital in all the discussed testimonies. This observation confines the poets' hypothetical thought experiments to the fictitious domain. Rather than giving concrete instructions for any implementation that could lead to the materialization of the Golden Age, Lucretius, Horace and Vergil did not relinquish the speculative domain of *what-if* and *what-could-have-been* and thus created an ample imaginative space for their Epicurean-colored *proto-utopian* visions to flourish.

3. 'Arcadia': Distorting Mirror, Present Travesty and Future Prophecy

> I am travelling in disguise towards the place where Hades
> is averted, turned away, transformed into something else:
> a hint of paradise lurking in this great universal wound of living.
>
> (Ben Okri, *In Arcadia*)

In this chapter we will examine the differences between 'Arcadia' and 'Utopia' to explain and justify to what extent the former can be classified as *proto-utopian*. We will then proceed to our original sources and explore, via a selective close reading, to what extent Vergil's *Eclogues* and Horace's *Satires* can be accomodated within this theoretical framework. Notwithstanding the fact that these two literary *corpora* seem to have little in common at first glance (apart from their parallel time of conception), we will investigate how they can be juxtaposed as *proto-utopian* visions not only with respect to their *Sittenspiegel*-function, but also in light of the Epicurean doctrines they convey and the values which they entrust to their war- and storm-tossed Roman audience. To stress both the centrality and rich reception history of the philosophical motifs advanced by Horace and Vergil, parallels to Morus' *Utopia* shall be pointed out *ad locum*.

3.1 Arcadia and Utopia: A Definitional Approximation

In this subchapter, I will approach Arcadian visions of the early modern period from a bird's eye view and then retrogress on the temporal axis by juxtaposing their most salient features with comparable ancient concepts to highlight to which extent they merit the label 'Arcadia'[104].

Before examining the function of 'Arcadia' as a literary topos or a site of proto-utopian longing, a brief glance at its etymology is worthwhile, especially since there are two mythological facets of the term, as Johnston and Papaioannou (2013: 135) emphasize: on the one hand, Arcadia signifies a Greek province on the Peloponnesian peninsula that owes its name to the mythological character Arcas, the son of Callisto and Jupiter, who was born out of wedlock[105]. On the other hand, this geographical region was often associated with the musical

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[104] *Nota bene*: The quotation marks seek to point to the fact that the apportioning of this literary construct onto ancient bucolics should be treated with caution, as Roman poets sparsely accommodate Arcadia *verbatim* in their pastorals – and if so, the term merely refers to a geographical region. Williams (1979: 90) and Lee (1989: 32) emphasize that Vergil – whose bucolic poems will be put under the microscope in this chapter – merges various, not clearly locatable landscapes in the *Eclogues* which more frequently remind readers of Sicily in reverent allusion to Theocritus than of the Peloponnesian region Arcadia. The latter term appears *expressis verbis* in *Eclogues* 4, 7 and 10. Therefore, the variation of the setting contributes to the creation of an evasive space in which *otium* prevails. Later *Eclogues* by Calpurnius Siculus or by Nemesianus continue this tradition.

[105] Ovid tells us the story of Arcas' tragic fate in *Metamorphoses* 2, 401-530: having been seduced by the lecherous Jupiter in the cunning guise of Diana, Callisto incurred Juno's wrath and was transformed into a bear. In an attempt to prevent his wife's jealousy from being directed at the baby, the father of the gods hid Arcas, the child of his illegitimate union with Callisto, in an area of Greece that would later receive the name *Arcadia* in the boy's honor.

god Pan, the creator of the pipe-instrument, who soared in this area. It became synonymous with a cultural refuge not least due to its mountainous character and the signature features of its inhabitants who cherished not only the remoteness from the debauched proceedings of civilization, but also the needlessness of alloting private properties[106].

Like the Golden Age topos, the literary Arcadia is an idealized space that blanks out crime, violence, drudgery, pernicious competition, hubristic motivations or hedonistic indulgence and replaces these societal grievances with an idyllic pastoral landscape that transcends the actualities of its contemporary reality. Garber (1982: 37-42) indicates that Arcadian visions can never be fully classified as utopian in light of Morus' generic template which does not include any domain that divests itself of rational planning. On the contrary, nature is subsumed under utilitarian maxims in *Utopia*, whereas bucolic poetry categorically renounces a concrete delineation of political, socio-economic or institutional practices, legal norms or cultural intercourses and focusses on aesthetic embellishments instead. The Arcadian space is codified symbolically because nature is elevated to the sphere of human self-fulfillment. In addition, the pastoral genre aims at revitalizing readers' beliefs in crucial values:

> By recalling an archetypally normative order, the pastoral encourages
> the realignment of value systems in accord with those portrayed as basic
> to human harmony (Wooden 1979: 32).

Normative regulations of interpersonal interactions or meticulous descriptions of social mechanisms are absent presences in Arcadia. Acts of fictitious representation concentrate on exemplary pastoral figures who extol the perfection of their surroundings in their songs and thus function as paradigms for the intended unity that should penetrate all facets of a community. Garber (1982: 50-66), furthermore, comments that Arcadian inhabitants are devoid of social hierarchies and class distinctions based on material wealth, which are illegitimate if nature is the only judge that can be held accountable. The logical corollary is moral autarky and its attainability by means of a conscious negation of hegemonic aspirations. We can thus reasonably deduce that the pastoral genre both establishes a framework that allows the embedding of ethic role models and constitutes a sympathetic refugium, which entails the

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Having matured, Arcas became the king of the Greek region and since he inherited his mother's venery spirit, he was passionate about hunting. During one of his chases, he encountered Callisto who sought to embrace her son. Arcas, however, did not recognize his mother in the shape of the bear and, assuming that the ferocious beast would make a deadly assault on him, he killed her with an arrow. Eventually, Jupiter showed himself compassionate and turned both of them into celestial constellations, *Ursa Maior* and *Minor*, so that they could spend the remainder of their supramundance lives together.

[106] For more thorough ethnographic portraits, Johnston and Papaioannou (2013: 136) refer us to Pausanias' Ἑλλάδος Περιήγησις (4, 11, 3 and 8, 1, 5), Polybius' Ἱστορίαι (4, 21, 2) or Strabo's Γεωγραφικά (8, 1, 2), where the Arcadian tribes are described as prone to hunting, inclined to use goat or sheep skins as their only vestments and dependent on acorn as their staple diet.

deliberate withdrawal of poet and reader to literature as an intellectually rewarding safe zone, especially in times of political turmoil.

Even though Arcadia and the later works of the post-Morean tradition might have little in common at first glance, they overlap in their creation of a contrastive space that specifies and critiques despicable societal parameters by two techniques: omission or positive inflection. The colorfully postulated idylls (e.g. Jacopo Sannazaro's or Philip Sidney's *Arcadia*) do not merely operate under the motto *l'art pour l'art*. In addition to constituting a carefully crafted aesthetic end in themselves, Arcadian landscapes, as Garber (1982: 67) underlines, frequently excel in their strategic provision of literary scaffolds in which certain value sets or ethically desirable codes of conduct come to the fore prominently, especially when they have been swept under the carpet in the author's contemporary reality. Likewise, Morus' *Utopia* seeks to put an alternative social conception to the test – despite exercising restraint on a verbal level in order not to step on the toes of politically influential figures in the author's immediate entourage – by propagating a model that is predicated on a radically different set of values than the prevalent counter-image in sixteenth century Renaissance England. Wooden (1979: 34) asserts that *virtus*, *gravitas* and *pietas* constitute the magical triad that dominates the proceedings on Morus' island *Utopia* which – regardless of its pretense of feasibility – is crafted in analogy to the pastoral moral landscape. The primary functions of both concepts are thus instruction and entertainment (much in the vein of the Horatian aphorism *prodesse et delectare*):

> Neither seeks to create a detailed sociological or institutional ideal nor is either escapist; but as interludes, as imaginative oases, in the humdrum or hectic course of everyday human existence, both afford an educative, revivifying experience of paramount importance to the life of the mind (Wooden 1979: 35).

It should be added that both utopian and Arcadian alternative conceptions are not always free from ideological traces. An informed reading of these purportedly innocent literary documents requires sensibility as to their possibly concealed political impetuses.

In terms of narrative structure, Grimm's (1982: 88) observation can not be contested that Arcadian visions with their narratological scarcity sharply mark themselves off from the typical, oftentimes sprawling novella-style of early modern (and later) utopian models. While they share a point of intersection on a purely formal level in terms of their dialogic structure, their way of confronting reality slightly differs: the literary pastoral does not offer a state of pure bliss that guarantees immediate intellectual or sensual gratification. Rather, Grimm (1982: 87-92) rightly points out that the Arcadian *locus amoenus* is flexibly conceived and malleable, thus providing its audience and its text-immanent agents with the opportunity to explore healing

outlets for their historically-conditioned mind-numbing affects. Large-scale social engineering projects, by contrast, that tend to occur in later utopian visions offer coping strategies for contemporary ills on a global, society-encompassing level (notwithstanding deliberate fictitious exaggerations), which inevitably entails the qualities of stasis and depersonalization[107], whereas pastoral idylls are suffused with notions of dynamicity, subjectivity and mutability.

The major content-related differences between Arcadia and early modern utopia can be visualized as follows, based on Davis' (1981: 24) juxtapositions of salient generic disparities:

Subject matter/idea	Arcadia	(Early Modern) Utopia
interaction man/nature	peaceful interaction and silent acclimatization	domination and economic utilization of nature
incorporation of desires	simplification: emphasis on satisfaction and moderation	bidirectional focus on restraint or abundance
significance of institutions	reduction or omission	conceptualization of institutional alternatives

In addition to these diverging features, the bucolic genre occupies a mediating position as far as its interaction with reality is concerned. Campbell (2003: 201) makes a justifiable point in labelling Arcadia an "intertemporal Golden Age". Instead of reconstructing a nostalgically idealized primordial time or incorporating a future-oriented focus, two features that have emerged in our travels through the Golden Age (see chapter 2.6), Arcadia is cotemporaneous: it functions as a framework that enables authors to articulate and reflect on contemporary problems without drafting a fully-fleshed alternative vision for the present[108]. Arcadia postulates an intermediate state and remains a fictitious experiment which, as Grimm (1982: 92) remarks, distances itself from reality, while self-consciously referring to its own constructedness, its conceptual fluidity and its ensuing detachment from perfectibility or practical implementability:

> The calculated artifice serves to emphasize the conditional nature of the pastoral mode and to remind the reader that the shepard society does not present him with a practicable alternative to contemporary civilization. The pastoral life itself is a metaphor for those spiritual values which should form the basis of the good life and the good society. The social paradigm is therefore drastically simplified to illustrate these values (Wooden 1979: 33).

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[107] Wooden (1979: 35) even goes so far as to describe Morus' Utopians as "denatured, disinfected, and clinical" in light of their satirically exaggerated characteristics as compared to the average Renaissance human being.

[108] We shall soon witness that both Vergil and Horace do not completely eclipse the past and future from their 'Arcadian'-Epicurean renderings even though they cleave primarily to present conditions and their critique.

This frequent metapoetic configuration of the pastoral landscape allows for a marriage of Arcadian and Epicurean phantasies. The literary dimension of bucolic idylls lends itself for an association with the κῆπος: this philosophically configured garden was not only a concrete material space to seek retreat from political turmoil, but also the sphere where the Epicurean motto Λάθε βιώσας was put into practice. Harich-Schwarzbauer and Hindermann (2010: 60-63) go to the lengths of designating the κῆπος as a spatial chiffre for Epicurean philosophy. The literary garden was transformed into an epistemic device that entered socio-political discourses and obtained a mediating function between deliberations of utility and aesthetic aspirations. Faber (2010: 17) argues in a similar vein, highlighting the therapeutic dimension of the garden, where the unspoiled nature not only ensures the elementary conditions of physical as well as mental sanity, but also provides a scope for human self-realization beyond utilitarian considerations. This allows for a functional parallelization of the κῆπος and Arcadia:

> [F]ür eine allzu planende und verheizende Sozialutopie, die wirklich
> zum Bau gekommen ist, erfüllt ein utopisches Arkadien die Funktion
> eines Korrektivs (Faber 2010: 18).

We will see that the symbolic cooption of the ancient garden/nature is a valuable tool for Roman authors to express both philosophical maxims as well as cultural, social and political beliefs.

3.2 *Proto-Utopian* 'Arcadian'-Epicurean Articulations in Roman Literature

The *proto-utopian* characteristics of the early modern Arcadia, which we have begun to explore in the previous section, can be boiled down to the following in reference to our introductory framework (see chapter 1.5): (1) the articulation of socio-political critique, (2) the dynamic conception of an invented space that enables generic fluidity (i.e. bucolic, satiric), and (3) the negation or omission of contemporary deficiencies via a replacement with philosophically desirable alternatives.

In the Roman realm, 'Arcadia'[109] as a literary device with an Epicurean substratum starts to blossom with Vergil's corpus of *Eclogues* and finds a flip-sided, satiric inflection in Horace's *Sermones*. Vergil enhances the sophisticated aesthetic dimension of his Greek predecessor, Theocritus' Εἰδύλλια, by adding a *proto-utopian* layer that unfolds in anticipatory as well as socio-critical remarks, as Garber (1982: 38) observes. Part of the psychological complexity in the Vergilian pastoral œvre is owed to the dialectic dichotomies that skip back and forth

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[109] Again it should be noted that I retroject this term as an ideational concept and an investigative lens onto ancient bucolics (whether anachronistically or not should be left to the reader's devices) and thus I will put it under quotation marks in the following sections, since it only advanced as an umbrella term to classify the outlined literary subgenre in the early modern period.

between two ontological conditions, which Garber (1982: 39) sees embodied in the fates of the shepards: the war-torn present and the prophetically foreshadowed epoch of peace and civic concord. The protagonists of the *Eclogues* shun civilization and escape the pressure of urbanity. They seek retreat in nature's delights whose conditions geographically mirror either the Sicilian landscape, which is prominently referenced in the phrases *Sicilides Musae* (*Eclogue* 4, V. 1) or *Syracosio versu* (*Eclogue* 6, V. 1), or the Peloponnesian region Arcadia. Papaioannou (2013: 148) underlines the intentionality behind the latter poetic choice (see also: footnote 106):

> Vergil's literary investment in the particular territory has not been made at random, but rather draws on a long tradition that referred to the Arcadians as the first autochthonous people, thus interfusing cultural backwardness with authenticity rather than primitiveness.

In addition, the Vergilian space is configured as an Epicurean *locus amoenus*. The bucolic poet bolsters his programmatic political formulas with philosophical subcurrents to foreground not only the desirability, but also the elusiveness and fragility of his pastoral fiction that is, to an equal degree, dependent on the imaginative capacities of his recipients and on future political developments in the *Imperium Romanum*. Moreover, Papaioannou (2013: 169) rightly stresses the fact that this pastoral corpus has triggered a literary evolution in the Augustan era as subsequent poets left their personal seals on the malleable bucolic landscape. Horace, Tibullus, Propertius and Ovid bent the paradigm in various generic directions that led to fruitful cross-fertilizations[110]. The quaint conceptual 'Arcadia'-template of Vergil was not only enriched with elegiac flavors, exercises in escapist speculation as well as emperor-sympathizing ideological transplants, but is also deeply imbued with expressive Epicurean sentiments, which shall now be demonstrated by a close reading of Vergil's *Eclogues* and Horace's *Satires*.

3.3 The Vergilian *Eclogues* – Bucolic Microcosmos and *Proto-Utopian* Template

As already adumbrated above, Vergil displays considerable originality in adapting 'Arcadia' in his *Eclogues*. Bauzá (1993: 199) observes that he includes and naturalizes not only crucial

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[110] Papaioannou (2013: 145-170) provides a compelling overview how Tibullus, Propertius and Ovid reworked the 'Arcadia'-paradigm in their poetry. In default of the centrality of Epicurean themes in the mentioned Augustan poets, they are only marginally relevant for the research focus of this thesis. Nevertheless, we should not fail to mention that the Arcadian template provided by Vergil was coopted and adapted as a background scenery for coquettish love plays, both erotic and pastoral (cf. Propertius, *Elegy* 1, 1, V. 9-15) or as a geographical site for envisioning an idealized Proto-Rome located on Palatine hill that ows its origins to the Arcadian heros Evander and Pan (cf. Tibullus, *Elegy* 2, 5, V. 23-38). Ovid conflates the idea of 'Arcadia' as a *locus amoenus* and *locus periculosus* in *Metamorphoses* 2, V. 401-408 where Jupiter appears as the main divine actor on the pastoral scene and ventures out to seduce Callisto. The transportation of the originally Hellenistic template to Roman literature had one crucial effect: "Arcadia disentangles itself from an association specifically with the Alexandrian tradition [sc. of Callimachus] and the pastoral, and gradually develops into a symbol for innovation and originality in experimenting with poetics and genres" (ibid., 170).

figures of his contemporary reality (such as the elegiac poet Gallus or Asinius Pollio, a politically influential patron of the arts), but also divinities and mythical figures, such as Pan, Apollo, Silvanus or Orpheus, as well as fictitious pastoral characters whose names partly lean towards Theocritan bucolic figures. In allusion to his Hellenistic and neoteric models of emulation, the Roman poet has three primary intentions to draw on the Arcadia-topos according to Schmidt (1975: 56-57): first, to integrate a metapoetic genre reflexion into his work. Second, to elevate the principles of *ludus* and *labor* above subtly present vestiges of retrogressive melancholia and dreamish longing for a nostalgically transfigured past. Third, to translate the neoteric λεπταλέη μοῦσα (i.e. ideas on lyrical delicacy and refinement pioneered by Callimachus) as well as the concomitant emphasis on lyrical subjectivity to the Roman realm. Rather than focussing on individual poems in solitary analyses, the following sections will concentrate on three thematic threads and substantiate the claims with pertinent passages from Vergil's corpus of *Eclogues*.

3.3.1 'Arcadia' as a Mirror of Contemporary Ills

Even though the setting of the *Eclogues* is not absolutely congruent in all the poems (see chapter 3.1, footnote 104), Vergil deliberately renounces any notion of urbanity. This detachment from Roman city life and its morally reprehensible implications serves as the necessary precondition for the shepard-speakers to voice their regime critique and their discontent with contemporary circumstances in the empire, thus holding up a mirror not only to the Roman elites, but also to the average consumer of literary productions of the day.

The first encounter of Tityrus and Meliboeus in *Eclogue* 1 is precedent-setting for this *proto-utopian* strand. Whereas the former shepard wallows in blissful leisure, resting in the pleasant shadow of a beech-wooden tree (*recubans sub tegmine fagi*, V. 1) while cherishing his regained *libertas* (V. 27), the latter is directly affected by land confiscations in the aftermath of the battle of Philippi in 42 BC (see chapter 2.4.3). Williams (1979: 89) provides an accurate historical commentary on the precise terms under which the victors, Octavian and Mark Antony, redistributed North Italian soil to war veterans after dispossessing local residents of their properties[111]. Presumably, Vergil and his friends, who were based in the confiscated Mantuan territory, suffered from the consequences of these drastic political measures too. The Roman poet addresses the recently enacted dispossessions instead of other outrageous realities encompassing murder, politically motivated proscriptions or cruel battle scenes not at random,

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[111] The expulsion of thousands of peasants is a central motif in Morus' *Utopia* too. The English humanist addresses the dissolution of numerous small farms for the purpose of creating huge sheep breeding estates and the consequent vagabondage of the impoverished masses that was punished with imprisonment by urban elites (Claeys 2011: 60).

but selects this socio-political event because it is relevant for the pastoral protagonists and can thus be neatly integrated into their cosmos (Schmidt 1987: 129). The deplorable circumstances brought about by the land confiscations are verbosely articulated by Meliboeus who functions as a fictitious foil for the numerous affected exempted farmers. Making no pretence of his indignation, he augments the mourning of his tragic fate by contrasting it with Tityrus' fortunate condition (V. 46-55):

> Fortunate senex, ergo tua rura manebunt
> et tibi magna satis, quamvis lapis omnia nudus
> limosoque palus obducat pascua iunco.
> Non insueta gravis temptabunt pabula fetas
> nec mala vicini pecoris contagia laedent.
> Fortunate senex, hic inter flumina nota
> et fontis sacros frigus captabis opacum;
> hinc tibi, quae semper, vicino ab limite saepes
> Hyblaeis apibus florem depasta salicti
> saepe levi somnum suadebit inire susurro.

> Blessed old man, the climes will then remain yours, and largely enough for you, even though the bare rock and the swamp cloak all the pastures with muddy rush. No unversed fodder will challenge your pregnant ewes and no malicious diseases from a neighbor's flock will harm them. Blessed old man, you will catch shady refreshment among familiar rivers and solemn springs. The hedge, along the neighbor's boundary, whose willow flowers provide nourishment for Hybla's bees (as ever), will herefrom often persuade you with lightweight whisper to doze off into sleep.

While his pastoral fellow is blessed to reap the natural benefits of his pleasant homeland, including rich grazing grounds for his livestock, shady sylvan spots or the gifts of melliferous bees, Meliboeus' condition is bound to be abeyant. Having packed the whole kit and caboodle, he sings an "ekphrastic ode to the country" (Kania 2016: 119) and waves a last good-bye to Tityrus who has just returned from the city of Rome[112].

Despite the fact that the travelling dimension comes to the fore prominently in Morus' *Utopia* too when the protagonist sets sails to unchartered territories, the focus is different: Raphael Hythloday is replenished with justified hope to burst upon an improved societal organization, whereas Meliboeus fearfully awaits his exile in the near future, a change not for the better, but for the worse[113]. He voices his concerns and his insecurities thus (V. 67-72):

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[112] Tityrus is full to the brim with novel impressions of the urban proceedings. In his enthusiasm, he voices some disregard for the rustic world, which – as Segal (1965: 241) observes – simultaneously functions as a platform for unconscious praise of the pastoral, especially because Meliboeus picks up on this thread. He criticizes urban tendencies to treat simple rural pleasures with disdain, e.g. by condescendingly looking down upon fresh dairy products or other natural victuals: *pinguis et ingratae premeretur caseus urbi* (V. 34).

[113] Bordering on that thought, Segal (1965: 243) assumes that Vergil achieves an elaborate fusion of different levels of temporality in *Eclogue* 1: Meliboeus' impending emigration from his property dynamically unites the present with an uncertain future. Tityrus' fate, by contrast, conveys a static notion of "pastoral non-action in action" (ibid.) and connects the present to the past. This reaffirmation of the well-established order comes to the fore in the permission that is granted to Tityrus: *pascite ut ante boves, pueri, summittite tauros* (V. 45) as well as in the

En umquam patrios longo post tempore finis
pauperis et tuguri congestum caespite culmen,
post aliquot, mea regna, videns mirabor aristas?
Impius haec tam culta novalia miles habebit,
barbarus has segetes. En quo discordia civis
produxit miseros; his nos consevimus agros!

Look, will I ever, after a long time, marvel at my homeland and the roof of my humble
cot piled with turf, and thereafter behold my kingdom – a few corn-ears – in awe?
Some impious war veteran will own this fallow land, a barbarian will possess these
cornfields. Look whereto internal strife has driven the pitiable citizens: we have sown
the fields for these!

The bucolic realm, even though it generally aims at a positive portrayal of human interactions, is neither an emotional clean slate nor wholly free from negative sentiments, such as bitterness or malevolence, as Meliboeus' grudge against his successors on the farm illustrates: the Vergilian shepard sourly condemns the anonymous uncultivated war veteran (*impius miles*, V. 70) or the savage foreigner (*barbarus*, V. 71) who shall soon take his place, because both are inferior human replacements for himself. This straightforwardly offensive phrase constitutes a verbatim echo of *Epode* 16 and allows readers to recall the Horatian speaker who conjoined his severe assault of the rotten state in the Roman citizenry (*impia aetas*, V. 9) with an injunction to leave for good by departing to the Islands of the Blessed. Interestingly, *Epode* 16 mentions the preponderance of the *barbarus victor* (V. 11), i.e. the external threat that will tear the empire to shreds, whereas Vergil, in a surprising twist, stresses that the primary danger, which is at the heart of present ills, comes from within the civic body: *discordia civis produxit miseros*[114] (V. 71-72). Responsibility for any corrosive or savage sentiment ought to be attributed to the governmental system which has conditioned Roman soldiers to instinctively yield to their patronizingly indoctrinated blood thirst. *Discordia* also induced average citizens to shrewdly take advantage of their fellows' misfortunes rather than seeking concord[115].

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final picture of the poem. The readers are sent off with peaceful thoughts of smoking chimneys (*villarum culmina fumant*, V. 82) and shadows gradually accruing over the valleys (*cadunt altis de montibus umbrae*, V. 83). Segal highlights the use of the present tense (*fumant, cadunt*) in these images which, as he speculates, corroborates their strong relation to reality on a grammatical level and signals the poet's ephemeral return to the pastoral genre as demarcated by convention. To my mind, this interpretation is a bit of a stretch as is questionable which other tense Vergil should have used, given that these concluding thoughts are rendered in direct speech.

[114] In light of the fact that the noun *civis* is cleverly positioned at the catalectic cadence of the hexameter, Vergil leaves the quantity of the last syllable *–is* open. Thus, he avoids to specify metrically whether the form ought to be read as a *brevis* (singular genetive), modifying *discordia*, or a *longa* (plural accusative), referring to *miseros*. The ensuing creation of two points of reference accentuates the content-related importance of *civis*.

[115] *Discordia* as a political catchphrase resurfaces in Cicero who, according to Clausen (1994: 58), identified internal strife as one of the most striking roots of evil in his *Philippics* 7, 25. The Roman orator thus casts *discordia* as a factor that is detrimental to the realization of any vision of societal betterment because it leads to civil wars: *omnia [...] plena odiorum, plena discordiarum, ex quibus oriuntur bella civilia.*

A change in the living condition of Meliboeus is palpable in *Eclogue* 7, which underlines the introductory remarks that 'Arcadia' as a *proto-utopian* space is conceived dynamically rather than statically (see chapters 1.5 and 3.2). Vis-à-vis his initial bitterness, Meliboeus now betrays more than a shimmer of hope when reflecting upon his status quo (V. 9-13):

> Huc ades, o Meliboee; caper tibi salvus et haedi,
> et, si quid cessare potes, requiesce sub umbra.
> Huc ipsi potum venient per prata iuvenci;
> hic viridis tenera praetexit harundine ripas
> Mincius, eque sacra resonant examina quercu.

> Here you are, Meliboeus: the goat and the kids are safe for you, and, if you can put down some work, rest under the shadow. The bulls themselves will come here across the meadows to drink. Here Mincius has hemmed the green river banks with a slim reed, and swarms of bees hum echoing out of the sacred oak.

Meliboeus counts his blessings in this impressive enumeration which harkens back to all the desirable features of pastoral idyll he described as having lost in *Eclogue* 1. At this point in the narrative, his grazing cattle, the refreshing tree shadow and the tranquil refuge close to a riverbank have been restored for him; nothing seems to be lacking. This blissful scenery is rounded off by a reference to the diligent swarms of bees (*examina*, V. 13) which echo the mention of Hybla's bees in *Eclogue* 1, V. 54. Yet, Vergil does not unambiguously let his bucolic corpus trail off in this propitiatory remark. Rather, he pans the camera once again to other fates of not so fortunate dispossessed shepards in *Eclogue* 9. In an alternating threnodial song with Lycidas, Moeris addresses the land confiscations and implies a plea for restoration[116] (V. 2-6):

> O Lycida, vivi pervenimus, advena nostri
> (quod nunquam veriti sumus) ut possessor agelli
> diceret: 'Haec mea sunt; veteres migrate coloni.'
> Nunc victi, tristes, quoniam fors omnia versat,
> hos illi (quod nec vertat bene!) mittimus haedos.

> O Lycidas, we have reached this point in our life – something we have never feared – that a stranger should say as the new possessor of our small farm: 'These fields are mine. Begone, old settlers!' Overpowered and sad, as fortune turns everything upside down, we send these goat kids to him, which shall not redound to his advantage!

Fear proves to be a mighty opponent to hope, the paradigmatic sentiment in settings that aim for idealization: Moeris, the speaker in this scene, does not suppress his despair as regards the bleak prospect that is disclosed in front of his eyes. On the contrary: he asserts that he could have never dreamed of such a miserable state into which he has been thrust (*Heu, cadit in*

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[116] Based on the assumption that the bucolic poet-shepherds are masks for Vergil himself, Williams (1979: 89, 126) and Clausen (1994: 266) speculate that *Eclogue* 9 might have been conceived earlier than *Eclogue* 1, for the ninth poem in the compendium displays the strongest and most pressing dissatisfaction in light of the land confiscations, whereas the first poem of the collection presents a mitigated version via the contrast between Tityrus' salvation and Meliboeus' impending doom.

quemquam tantum scelus?[117], V. 17) and nostalgically mourns the loss of his adolescent age as well as the concomitant mental carefreeness (V. 51-54):

> Omnia fert aetas, animum quoque; saepe ego longos
> cantando puerum memini me condere soles:
> nunc oblita mihi tot carmina, vox quoque Moerim
> iam fugit ipsa: lupi Moerim videre priores.

> Age takes everything away, also one's wits. I remember that as a young lad I have
> often spent long days by singing: now I have forgotten so many songs, even his voice
> has already failed Moeris: the wolves saw Moeris at first.

The shepherd, a Vergilian mask, hints at the impending abandonment of his poetic voice that could be imposed according to orders from above: Moeris speculates that he might end up as fodder for ferocious wolves (*lupi*, V. 54). While alluding to the relentless passage of time and the deterioration of the human shell with increasing age, the thought of evanescence as well as the injunction to seize the καιρός silently appear on the scene as crucial Epicurean subcurrents.

Similarly philosophical sentiments are articulated by Gallus in *Eclogue* 10 who appears as a hopeless soldier, musing about his impending death at the borders of the empire (*procul a patria*, V. 46). Vergil not only fictionalizes one of his contemporaries, an identically named elegiac poet, in this character[118], he also presents him as tormented twofoldly by deadly fear and lovelornness in light of the infidelity of his beloved Lycoris (*insanus amor duri Martis*, V. 44). Coleman (1977: 295) highlights that 'Arcadia' presents an escapist fantasy for Gallus whose summoning of this idealized landscape (V. 42f.) gets evermore urgent as the *Eclogue* progresses; simultaneously, the poetic speaker does not lose his sense of reality in his dramatic monologue, but displays an acute awareness that 'Arcadia' will, to a certain extent, always remain an unattainable dream that sharpens and improves its image in light of present troubles:

> Arcadia se transforma en símbolo de un ámbito ideal de perfecta felicidad, de sueño convertido en realidad pero en el que anida un dejo melancólico sugerido, quizá, por lo irrecuperable del tiempo transcurrido, por la presencia de la Muerte o bien por la impotencia del hombre ante el Amor destructor (Bauzá 1993: 204).

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[117] Note that *scelus* as a moralizing buzzword to label the immensity of the contemporary political chaos has already been present in *Epode* 7 (V. 1, 18) and *Eclogue* 4 (V. 13) as a contrastive term to the envisioned Golden Age bliss. Segal (1965: 259) remarks that it resurfaces as an abstract analytical notion in *Eclogue* 9 (V. 17) to elevate the concrete threats brought about by the *impius miles* (V. 70) of *Eclogue* 1 to a more general level.

[118] Kania (2016: 144) and Conte (1986: 100-129) *in extenso* discuss various reasons for the appearance of the elegaic poet Gallus in *Eclogue* 10. First, it undeniably adds to the generic heterogeneity of the Vergilian bucolics because of the integration of elegiac motives (e.g. Gallus' heart-wrenching lovesickness, his pining for a reunion with his beloved Lycoris or his wish to find relief in the untouched wilderness), by means of which the Roman poet seeks to explore both formal and content-related similarities and differences between the two genres in order to hint at their blurry boundaries. Second, the choice of Gallus as a pastural figure insinuates an assimilation of the elegiast and the paradigmatic Theocritan shepherd-character Daphnis who, while having been tricked into becoming unfaithful to his lover, a Naiad, has been punished by an untimely death.

Given that abstract concepts pertaining to troubled love relationships, death, exile or political unrest are not excluded from the 'Arcadian' world, but come into the limelight via frequent (digressive) reflections, we are quite safe to say that Vergil aims at more than presenting an autobiographical documentary in fictitious disguise:

> The essence of the poem[s] is the assault upon the idyllic pastoral by outside influences; the peace and gentle song of the shepherds are shattered by the intrusion of arrogant strangers, possessed of the power to destroy the very essence of their existence (Williams 1979: 126).

Vergil does not tire of stressing the integrity and, simultaneously, the fragility of his pastoral space. In addition, he infuses it with notions of *gravitas* and *dignitas* while keeping steadfast control over the amount of Romanness that intrudes into his pastoral world, as Segal (1965: 257) highlights[119]. Arguably, the critique of socio-political missteps in the *Eclogues* thus transcends historical reality inasmuch as Vergil intermingles this aspect with various layers of myth and an adumbration of potential future courses. This poetic technique enables readers to come to grips with present conditions instead of making them enter a dreamish cloud-castle in which contemporary proceedings are ignored[120].

3.3.2 Octavian's presence in the network of eschatology and ideology

The bucolic cosmos in the *Eclogues* does not renounce the numinous; on the contrary: the pastoral landscape is presented as a space where divine figures such as Apollo, Silvanus or Pan 'rub elbows' with the singing shepherds. By naturalizing social intercourses between human and supramundane characters in this inspirited setting, Vergil skillfully accomplishes to establish an artistic framework in which he embeds his almost eschatological visions. *Eclogue* 4, which has already been discussed *in extenso* (see chapter 2.4), ought to be taken as the most convincing testimony of this *proto-utopian* strand. Yet, the Roman poet's yearning for peace after a period of unrest and its feasibility by means of adhering to the right political leader emanates more frequently through his pastoral mouthpieces.

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[119] El-Nowieemy's (2006: 110) reading of the *Eclogues* as "supranational" is, in my opinion, an interpretative stretch contrary to Vergil's intentions. Her equalization of 'Arcadia' with a *locus* of "interculturalism that traverses territories and achieve[s] some sort of universality against provinciality" (ibid.) disregards the thorough anchorage of the outlined bucolic poems in the Roman tradition and attached culture-specific values.

[120] Snell (1944: 37) argues that Vergil's Arcadia mediates between myth and reality, while foregrounding spontaneous sentimentalism as primary source of inspiration: "[Vergils] Arkadien ist nicht nur ein Zwischenland zwischen Mythos und Wirklichkeit, sondern auch ein Zwischenland zwischen den Zeiten, ein jenseitiges Diesseits, das Land der Seele, die sich nach ihrer fernen Heimat zurücksehnt." This analysis, though valid in its key tenets, does not do justice to the full scope of topics in the Vergilian bucolic corpus as it eclipses the anticipatory dimension. Segal (1965: 254) locates the Roman poet's intentions on the other end of the spectrum and assumes that the hopes he generates are little more than "shelter and rest offered for a single night" (*Eclogue* 1, V. 79-80). This overly pessimistic analysis fails to pay attention to the potentialities which 'Arcadia' offers as a literary device, i.e. its function as a hermeneutic and literary-theoretical tool.

In *Eclogue* 1, for instance, Tityrus builds his hopes on an anonymous *deus* whose epiphany in Rome has left an indelible mark on the shepherd's memory (V. 59-63):

> Ante leves ergo pascentur in aethere cervi
> et freta destituent nudos in litore pisces,
> ante pererratis amborum finibus exsul
> aut Ararim Parthus bibet aut Germania Tigrim,
> quam nostro illius labatur pectore vultus.

> Sooner will light-footed deer pasture in the sky and the tides of the sea leave fish exposed on the shore, sooner will an exiled Parthian drink the Arar or Germany the Tigris, both wandering through each other's land, than from our innermost will his face ever sink into oblivion.

Even though Vergil shrewdly avoids to drop a name, probably owing to the prevalent political instability at the time of the poem's conception, there is reason to assume that the divine figure can be equated with Octavian: Bauzá (1993: 198) is convinced that a soteriological current can be detected in the *Eclogues,* for example when Tityrus vividly recalls the appearance of his *deus* and connects it to a promise never to forget about his luminous presence in a list of *adynata*: as the above-cited passage illuminates, Tityrus would rather witness a complete bouleversement of the natural order or an implosion of the Roman empire than let this delightful sight escape his memory. The not further specified *deus* has facilitated recuperation for Tityrus by restoring his *otium*, the core of his existence and the necessary precondition for his artistic pursuits (Schmidt 1987: 131). This fact serves as a springboard for the shepherd to turn the *deus* into a symbol of salvation, a messenger of peace and the guarantor of a renewed *aurea aetas*.

The implicit mention of a divine savior, which blossoms in *Eclogue* 4 in a beautifully embellished version, already appears at the surface of the third poem in the collection[121] via strategically positioned catchphrases. The shepherds Damoetas and Menalcas engage in a singing contest and take turns in praising Jupiter and Apollo as divine inspirers (V. 60-63):

> Damoetas:
> Ab Iove principium Musae, Iovis omnia plena;
> ille colit terras, illi mea carmina curae.

> Menalcas:
> Et me Phoebus amat; Phoebo sua semper apud me
> munera sunt, lauri et suave rubens hyacinthus.

> Damoetas: The beginning of the Muse comes from Jupiter. Everything is replenished with Jupiter; he tends the earth, my songs are objects of his care.

> Menalcas: And Phoebus loves me; I always have gifts with me for Phoebus, laurels and sweet reddish hyacinth.

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[121] For a thorough examination of parallels and contrasts between *Eclogues* 3 and 4, see Segal (1977: 158-163).

Conceding the assumption that mythic and pastoral figures are – to a certain extent – masks for the poet himself as well as for contemporaries in the poetic and political arena, as suggested in the commentary by Servius and later by Lee (1989: 34), then Jupiter and Phoebus in this passage could be interpreted as fictitious foils. By extolling these two divinities, Vergil might have intented to make a first step towards emperor-panegyric and keep on the right side of the later *princeps* Augustus to whom especially Apollo was near and dear[122]. Another pro-Octavian allusion might be read into *Eclogue* 5, in which an epitaph is erected for the deceased shepherd Daphnis, who was one of a kind. His unique life path and character serve as a basis for his fellow herdsmen to refer to his apotheosis (V. 76-78), which, according to Coleman (1977: 173), is intentionally conceived as an homage to the by that time already assassinated Julius Caesar, Octavian's adoptive father:

> Dum iuga montis aper, fluvios dum piscis amabit,
> dumque thymo pascentur apes, dum rore cicadae,
> semper honos nomenque tuum laudesque manebunt.

> As long as the boar loves mountainous heights, as long as the fish loves rivers, as long
> as bees feed on thyme or cicadas on dew, so long will your honor, your name and your
> praise remain, always.

The promise of eternal fame in the afterlife for Daphnis (and Caesar) is connected to a stretch of the temporal dimension to eternity, a remarkable stylistic move. Vergil might have sought to confer his best wishes to Caesar's soon-to-be illustrious successor Octavian, the bringer of salvation, whose political ambitions must have crystallized when *Eclogue* 5 was conceived.

Such subtle interspersals in the corpus of *Eclogues* contribute to the impression that Vergil, especially in a later stage of his life and work after Octavian's consolidation of power, significantly supported the shaping of Augustan ideology in a positive way. If we keep track of the *deus*-Octavian-analogy in the later *Eclogues*, however, we come across a marginal note that articulates outrage as regards the *modus operandi* of any *deus*, or – metaphorically speaking – any self-professedly 'supernatural' political leader. In *Eclogue* 8 the shepherd Damon is indignant about the lack of empathy that such a *deus* displays for average human beings – a stance that is suffused with an Epicurean subtone: *nec curare deum credis mortalia quemquam* (V. 35). A more mitigated version resurfaces in *Eclogue* 10, when Gallus in his function as Roman soldier, who has been sent off to war against his will, includes a hidden plea for mercy and clemency in his lamenting song: *deus ille malis hominum mitescere discat* (V. 61).

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[122] Zanker (2014: 49-53) explores at great length how Apollo was coopted as a patron deity into the policies of Octavian once he had consolidated his power. Not only did the later *princeps* Augustus restore the temple for Apollo on Palatine hill, he was also keen on fashioning his *public persona* in the likeness of this god who represented order, discipline, poetic finesse, peace and propitiation.

These text-immanent ambiguities leave readers behind with mixed feelings as regards Vergil's stance towards the later *princeps*. A sense of evasiveness and precariousness pervades the different 'Arcadian' and/or bucolic versions presented in the *Eclogues*. The Roman poet's personal inflection of this literary concept, though partly suffused with ideological subtones, is elusive inasmuch as Vergil dodges a clear political positioning in favor of creating a space that interweaves a strong desire for solidity with critical remarks that mourn the loss of prevalent moral integrity, political uprightness and paradisiacal completeness.

3.3.3 The *locus amoenus* as a Site of Metaliterary Symbolism and the Epicurean κῆπος

Even though the *Eclogues* display an acute awareness of contemporary political limitations and detriments, occasional moments of levity and jauntiness jump out from behind this contrastive background. A look at various portrayals of the *locus amoenus* reveals its conceptualization both as a concrete topographical as well as an abstract metapoetic and/or philosophical space.

Wherever we turn our gaze, the Vergilian poet-shepherds agree on the fundamental constituents that nature needs to provide in order for a place to be suited as leisured retreat. They long for a leafy bower close to a refreshing stream far off the hustle and bustle of the city. The reduction of the scenery to a few key features is the necessary precondition for the beholder to appreciate the full scope of nature's beauty, as Moeris pinpoints in *Eclogue* 9 (V. 40-42):

> Hic ver purpureum, varios hic flumina circum
> fundit humus flores; hic candida populus antro
> imminet et lentae texunt umbracula vites.

> Here we have lustrous springtime, here the soil pours out colorful flowers along the
> riverside; here a white poplar bows over a cave and delicate vines weave shady bowers.

This prototypical conception of the *locus amoenus* goes hand in hand with a conscious eschewal of technical advances, morally corrupting urbanity or the pernicious effects of an abundance of resources[123]. Instead of bumptious, artificially inflated spectacles offered in various pompous Roman establishments, Vergil's bucolic dwellers prefer communal music-making and occasional singing contests as their primary sources of entertainment. These prevailing leisure time activities complement their conscious decision to live in close touch with nature.

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[123] Giesecke (1999: 1-15) examines the Lucretian influence on Vergil's corpus of *Eclogues* more thoroughly, both on a semantic and a syntactic level. She attributes specific attention to *De Rerum Natura* 2, V. 20-33 as a model version of the Epicurean-flavored *locus amoenus* that resurfaces in the above-cited bucolic equating of *otium* with ἀταραξία. This leads Giesecke (ibid., 11) to the plausible conclusion that "Virgil found in Lucretius not just a fellow Epicurean but also a truly kindred spirit, a man who was a master poet, a keen and passionate observer of humankind and of his natural environment, a man able to combine political assertiveness with political quietism, and a man who found a way of combining affection for the past with a sense of progress."

Idealized as the pastoral *locus amoenus* might sectionally be in the *Eclogues*, it is not a munificent earthly paradise that unconditionally bestows perfection on its residents[124]. Vergil's bucolic inhabitants are capable of attaining felicity without craving for exaggerated and thus superfluous achievements of civilization. They abandon pure *ratio* in favor of an emphasis on various sense perceptions (Veit 1983: 13-20). Moreover, moderate physical *labor* is cherished as part of a moral stance which is presented as an efficient remedy to the counterintuitive option of boundless leisure: the shepherds' inescapable duty to attentively watch over their goats or sheep is mentioned a number of times, e.g. in *Eclogue* 6, V. 4-5: *pastorem, Tityre, pinguis pascere oportet ovis.* Likewise, the Morean society on the island *Utopia* is predicated on a rigid work ethos that elevates *labor* to a key principle:

> [Utopienses] cum in horas vigintiquattuor aequales diem connumerata nocte dividant, sex dumtaxat operi deputant, tres ante meridiem a quibus prandium ineunt, atque e prandio duas pomeridianas horas quum interquieverint, tres deinde rursus labori datas cena claudunt. Quum primam horam ab meridie numerent, sub octavam cubitum eunt. Horas octo somnus vindicat. (*Utopia*, book 2, p. 126)

> As the Utopians divide a day and its well-measured night in twenty-four equal hours, they dedicate only six hours to work, three before noon when they go to lunch, and after they have rested for two hours after lunch, and after three further hours devoted to work they close the day with supper. As they count the first hour after noon as one, they got to bed at eight o'clock. Sleep demands eight hours.

As a *proto-utopian* value, *labor* is thus intrinsically motivated and psychologically rewarding, not only because it structures the daily routine, but complies with the effort-reward-principle: deliberate restraint and the successful mastery of a day's challenges lead, as Segal (1977: 161) suggests, to the eradication of a sore conscience and unmerited ease that might lull an individual into a false sense of security. Moreover, *labor* contributes to a heightened appreciation of the positive results of one's discipline, which in turn facilitates the attainment of ἀταραξία and ἀπονία. This freedom from pain and other mental disturbances is cast as a katastematic ἡδονή in Vergil's bucolic world, i.e. as a durable pleasure felt in a particular ontological state (Bauzá 1993: 198), which is opposed to kinetic (sensory) pleasures. The latter, as Gosling and Taylor (1982: 366) demonstrate, might be multifaceted and varied within the Epicurean framework, but can ultimately not contribute to the augmentation of overall pleasure and satisfaction. This line of argumentation corresponds closely to the Epicurean maxims that Cicero delivers to

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[124] Davis (2010: xi) even goes so far as to deny any notion of "utopian fantasy and escapist bliss" in the *Eclogues*, emphasizing that their primary focus is the depiction of human calamities, anxieties or attempts to cope with severe blows of fate. It shall be demonstrated shortly that a *proto-utopian* substratum can be detected in Vergil's bucolic cosmos, provided that one exchanges the narrow and admittedly blurry definition of *utopia* as 'retrospective nostalgia' for a more differentiated approach towards this concept, which entails an anticipation of future options.

posterity in *De Finibus Bonorum et Malorum* 1 (§ 37-38) via his speaker Torquatus who meticulously elaborates on *voluptas* as the *summum bonum* of this philosophical school:

> Maximam voluptatem illam habemus, quae percipitur omni dolore detracto. Nam quoniam, cum privamur dolore, ipsa liberatione et vacuitate omnis molestiae gaudemus, omne autem id, quo gaudemus, voluptas est, ut omne, quo offendimur, dolor, doloris omnis privatio recte nominata est voluptas. [...] Omnis autem privatione doloris putat Epicurus terminari summam voluptatem, ut postea variari voluptas distinguique possit, augeri amplificarique non possit.

> We consider that as the highest pleasure which can be perceived when all pain has been removed, for when we are relieved from pain, we rejoice in the freedom itself and the riddance of all uneasiness, but all that, from which we derive gratification, is pleasure, just as everything by which we are annoyed causes pain. Therefore, the elimination of all pain has rightly been called pleasure. [...] Epicurus, however, thinks that the removal of all pain delimits the borders of the highest pleasure, so that pleasure may vary or differ beyond this point, but can not be augmented or amplified.

The subtraction of personal miseries – notwithstanding the deleterious impact of external (political) proceedings which are beyond the control of an individual – can first and foremost be obtained through an active renunciation of pain. Implicated in this passage is a hardcore Epicurean approach which propounds that steering a middle course between pain and pleasure is impossible. Rather, our cognitive predispositions furnish every individual with the capacity to perceive katastematic ἡδονή as τέλος that is worth striving for (Bauzá 1993: 169). In further consequence, human agents who have set foot on the desirable and emotionally fulfilling philosophical path only need to consciously submit to this act of realization to permit the entrance of long-term *voluptas* into their lives.

This fully fleshed Epicurean vista on pleasure and felicity tenderly burgeons in a marginal note in *Eclogue* 2 when Corydon shares a worldly wisdom gained from his personal love wooing experience for the adolescent Alexis: *trahit sua quemque voluptas* (V. 65). Even though the action of 'pulling' conveyed in the verb *trahit* suggests a certain amount of passivity, the idea of 'man as the architect of his own destiny' resonates strongly in this Epicurean maxim[125]. Clausen (1994: 83) refers to a related passage in Lucretius (*De Rerum Natura* 2, V. 257-262), that Vergil must have been familiar with, where he muses on the origins of free will (*voluntas*):

> Unde est haec, inquam, fatis avolsa voluntas,
> per quam progredimur quo ducit quemque voluptas,
> declinamus item motus nec tempore certo

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[125] It did not slip my attention that this *sententia* has been decontextualized for the philosophically oriented analysis provided above. Over large stretches, *Eclogue* 2 is dominated by elegaic rather than Epicurean keynotes, because the protagonist Corydon presents himself as pursuer of his *puer delicatus* Alexis. It is nevertheless evident that Vergil incorporates a *dictum* from the Epicurean anthology without suddenly switching to another literary genre; instead, he interfuses different strands and thus achieves the "complete transposition of the elegaic situation into the pastoral mode" (Kenney 1999: 73).

nec regione loci certa, sed ubi ipsa tulit mens?
Nam dubio procul his rebus sua cuique voluntas
principium dat et hinc motus per membra rigantur.

From where, I ask you, does this free will – snatched away from fate – come from, by
means of which we move forward, where pleasure guides everyone of us, and by
which we divert our motions likewise neither at a certain time nor in a certain spatial
direction, but where just our mind has led us? For without doubt free will gives to
everyone a start in these matters and thence the motions are directed through the limbs.

By all indications, Vergil wanted to make his readers recall the Lucretian substratum: not only the verbatim echo *quo ducit quemque voluptas* (V. 258), but also the marked emphasis on the power of free will as the initial cause of any action (*voluntas principium dat*, V. 261-262) suggest that the author of the *Eclogues* deliberately posited this passage in the background of his pastoral cosmos to enhance one central message, namely that "the formative act of will and mind" can be used as a protective shield against "the fortuitous succession of events that are meaningless in themselves and dissolve the meaning and coherence that still remain" (Segal 1965: 255). In other words, even when external circumstances seem cataclysmic and absolutely disastrous, one should not lose sight of the ultimate relativity of fortune's favors and the fact that serendipity is to a certain extent a matter of opinion.

This cognitive scaffold allows for the elevation of *voluntas* and *voluptas* to two philosophical values which function as a therapeutic means to acquire courage, confidence and emotional equilibrium. Free will and pleasure are therefore backbones of the *proto-utopian* Arcadia in the sense that they contribute to the perfectibility of the pastoral space, once they have been implemented. Simultaneously, *voluntas* and *voluptas* do not eclipse the inherently (proto-)utopia-constitutive dimension of unattainability, since no individual is able to adhere to these two psychological remedies at every given moment in time due to emotionally conditioned constraints or socio-political limitations.

Our voyage through Vergil's *proto-utopian* pastoral world not only reveals his "impulse to translate into the poetic symbolism of Arcadia the philosophical ideal of the κῆπος" (Traina 1999: 88), it also presents another road to a blissful imaginative refuge: the Roman poet recommends the purposive embarking on and immersion in literature both as an intellectual entertainment and a therapy for desires that can not be satisfied otherwise. Traina (1999: 86), despite acknowledging an "Epicurean substratum which flourishes throughout [the *Eclogues*]", even goes so far as to assume that Vergil "substitutes for the cathartic value of philosophy the cathartic value of poetry". While I would argue for a more mitigated view and a thorough consideration of the silently interspersed Epicurean maxims, Vergil's prioritizing of the metapoetic vis-à-vis the philosophical dimension in his bucolic cosmos is incontestable.

Moreover, the Roman poet intentionally creates a "gap between sophisticated poetry and humble content" (Kania 2016: 113), opposing the seemingly transparent pastoral world with the multilayered messages that are placed on top, or as van Sickle (1978: 192) phrased it: "expropriation and expulsion free material for new construction." In *Eclogue* 3, for instance, the Vergilian speaker cautions against the dangers that the natural surroundings hold in check for human beings by recommending a flight to more bounteous realms. In the mask of the shepherd Damoetas, he exhorts his interlocutors not to recklessly frolic around in the alluring and luscious meadows, which are a threatening minefield: *frigidus, o pueri (fugite hinc!), latet anguis in herba* (V. 93). The cold-blooded snake appears both as a concrete peril, hidden in the grass, and as a metonymic reduction of the abstract concept of 'evil'. The latter interpretation is supported by a closely related passage in *Eclogue* 8, in which Alphesiboeus exultantly declares that this pernicious beast can be extinguished by means of spellbinding songs: *frigidus in pratis cantando rumpitur anguis* (V. 71). The verbatim echo *frigidus anguis* does not seem to be a coincidence; rather, its reappearance in this metapoetic context suggests that the two verses ought to be read in conjunction[126]. Where does this leave us as readers? Vergil presumably intends to underline the therapeutic function of literature:

> Verbal art itself escapes the destruction that is inherent in the material order through the continual recall and reperformance of bucolic poetry […] The function of recollection via poetic performance, however, is not to indulge in nostalgia for a utopian fantasy, but rather to preserve art as an antidote to the vagaries of fortune (Davis 2010: xiv).

The Roman poet undeniably casts poetry as a powerful imaginative remedy for the vicissitudes of life. My interpretation of the Vergilian stance deviates from Davis inasmuch as I would additionally attribute a *proto-utopian* quality to his metapoetic articulations, which pioneer the creation of an anticipatory artistic space whose entrance not only provides entertainment and distraction, but indeed constructs a parallel literary universe situated in the cognitive nowhere[127] which consoles readers in light of present ills and simultaneously infuses them with hope for a

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[126] Another instance of metatextual recall can be detected in the dialogic structure of *Eclogue* 1 and *Eclogue* 9. In the latter poem, which was presumably conceived anterior to the opening piece of the collection (Clausen 1994: 266), the character Tityrus is introduced as an absent presence: the poet-shepherd Lycidas cunningly drops his name during his interaction with Moeris (V. 23-25), thus reminding readers of the conversation between Tityrus and Meliboeus in *Eclogue* 1. Another instance where Tityrus' name is sneaked in can be discovered in *Eclogue* 3 (V. 96) in the singing contest between Damoetas and Menalcas. Via these intratextual recitals, Vergil acts out what he aims to accomplish with his poetry, namely its constant reperformance that eventually leads to a thorough entrenchment in his recipients' memories.

[127] Kania (2016: 129) agrees that Vergil constructs a "wondrous world that never was and never can fully be"; in addition, he points to the co-constructive role of the reader who plays a significant part in the process of textual representation. In this respect, bucolic poetry aims at formally testing the boundaries of what can be articulated in the written mode and what is inevitably left to the reader's imagination.

future betterment. Thus. Vergil's bucolic œuvre is forward-thinking on more than one level. In fact, it adumbrates traces of Ingeborg Bachmann's idea (see chapter 1.5.3) that literature itself is *proto-utopian* because it can go beyond the boundaries of reality and excogitate precedent-setting solutions via hypothetical counter-narratives that operate as antipoles to dominant ideologies and officially sanctioned discourses. The Roman poet does not obfuscate his awareness that literature is both a beneficial aide-mémoire and a domain contingent upon the poet's imagination. In *Eclogue* 9, for instance, Vergil lets his singer-shepherd ponder the consequences of the forced evictions (V. 19-20):

> Quis caneret Nymphas? Quis humum florentibus herbis
> spargeret aut viridi fontis induceret umbra?

Who would extol the nymphs in song? Who would cover the ground all over with flowering herbs or who would put a green shadow over the springs?

On a surface level, we encounter Lycidas, who does not shut his eyes to the harsh facts of reality. We are invited to be sympathetic towards his impending fate, i.e. the confiscation of his property. On an abstract level, this counterfactual excursus discusses the role of the poet as a quasi-mythic demiurge who is responsible for the construction of a *proto-utopian* 'Arcadia' as an imaginative literary space with an inherently paradoxical impulse: on the one hand, it should be labelled 'escapist' because it provides an invented subterfuge in times of political upheaval, on the other hand, it is deeply 'indebted to reality' from where it draws its inspiration, for instance by presenting certain parts of nature not only as objects of aesthetic delight, but also as elements with a tendency towards "pathetic fallacy", as Schmidt (1987: 116-121) trenchantly demonstrates: Vergil humanizes nature which reacts to and mirrors the speakers' emotions, thus effectuating an atmospheric congruence between the interlocutors' frames of mind and the pastoral landscape. The psychologization of nature also facilitates the generic transition from the purely bucolic *Eclogues* to the last poem in the collection which is suffused with elegiac subtones. This border-crossing move becomes evident in the melancholic meditations of the lovelorn protagonist Gallus (V. 31-36, 41-43) which constitutes a climactic conclusion to the Vergilian corpus of *Eclogues*:

> Tristis at ille: 'Tamen cantabitis, Arcades', inquit,
> 'montibus haec vestris, soli cantare periti
> Arcades. O mihi tum quam molliter ossa quiescant,
> vestra meos olim si fistula dicat amores!
> Atque utinam ex vobis unus vestrisque fuissem
> aut custos gregis aut maturae vinitor uvae! [...]
> Serta mihi Phyllis legeret, cantaret Amyntas.
> Hic gelidi fontes, hic mollia prata, Lycori;
> hic nemus; hic ipso tecum consumerer aevo.'

> But sadly he replied, 'Arcadians, you will sing nevertheless, of these matters to your hills; you alone are supreme in singing, Arcadians. How softly then my bones could rest if only your reed pipe once in a while spoke of my loves! If only I would have been one of you, either as the guard of a flock or as the vinter of ripe grapes! [...] Phyllis would collect garlands for me, Amyntas would sing for me. Here are cool springs, here are soft meadows, Lycoris, here is a grove, here I would let myself be lavishly consumed even by eternity with you.

The dreamish quality of the Arcadian vision and the concomitant desirable simplification of life is expressed on a purely linguistic level by the consistent use of the conjunctive mood (*quiescant*, *dicat*, *fuissem*, *legeret*, *cantaret*, *consumerer*). Selected elements of nature, such as refreshing fountains (*gelidi fontes*, V. 42), soft meadows (*mollia prata*, V. 42) or a shady grove (*nemus*, V. 43) reflect Gallus' longing for a blissful retreat to this topographically idealized *locus amoenus* where poetic fulfillment is possible[128]. Additionally, the mentioned parameters are indicative of a certain philosophical state of mind which is in line with Epicurean teachings, as Traina (1999: 86) shows: both curing ἡδονή and destructive ἔρως are possible in this reverie.

3.4 Epicurean-'Arcadian' Traces in the *Sermones* – A Topsy-Turvy *Proto-Utopia*?

In his two books of *Sermones*, which are part of a protean genre[129], Horace deploys wit and irony to expose shortcomings, vicious proceedings and follies in his contemporary society. He seems to craft a gloomy antithesis to Vergil's relatively positive bucolic cosmos by consciously and contrapunctually pitting a largely negative and dysfunctional – if not to say dystopian – future prospect against his fellow poet's moderate optimism: human misdemeanors such as gluttony, sexual licentiousness, thievery, legacy hunting, adulterousness, hypocrisy, envy, acquisitiveness, political pushiness or recklessness are not spared or left blank – on the contrary: they are profusely accommodated in the satiric œuvre[130].

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[128] Van Sickle (1978: 193) reads the description of the Arcadians as the only ones capable of astonishing musical and lyrical performance (*soli cantare periti*, V. 31) as ironic and typical of the Vergilian dialectic technique: Gallus, a representative of the elegaic genre, exaggerates in his praise of the mountainous folks. While not being genuine in his eulogistic tone, he reevaluates the chances and limitations of the bucolic genre on a metalevel.

[129] Ancient satire is a versatile generic tessellation, encompassing – among other features – character-sketches, parodies, derisive caricatures and fables. Quintilian's famous winged word *satura quidem tota nostra est* depicts this genre as a wholly Roman invention, but ought to be treated with caution as it is only true for verse satires. The so-called Menippean satire, by contrast, owes its origins to Menippus of Gardara, a Palestinian Greek, and found a prominent Roman representative in Marcus Terentius Varro who is said to have written 150 books of Menippean satires. In addition to these influences, Horace draws on the prose διατριβή, a morally instructive and critically animadverting medium that was promoted by itinerant Hellenistic philosophers, most frequently the Cynics, from the 3rd century BC onwards (Brown 1993: 4-11).

[130] The plethora of the enumerated behavioral extremes already enters the stage in the first three poems of book one in programmatic succession. *Satire* 1, 1 targets gluttonous people who refuse to acknowledge that there is a natural limit to their basic needs. The underlying assumption is that true satisfaction can be attained via deliberate restraint. *Satire* 1, 2 elaborates on the topic of moderation with regard to adultery and other sexually digressive behaviors. Fair conduct in the critique of human flaws and special leniency in friendships are advocated in *Satire* 1, 3. Without going into further details of this rough sketch, it should be perspicable that Horace does not overshoot the mark by attempting to pack too many socio-critical remarks into one satire, but he systematically dismantles contemporary ills piecemeal, which gives his readers the chance to digest them thoroughly and selectively.

Even though the *Eclogues* and the *Sermones* – written at approximately the same time[131], in the aftermath of Caesar's assassination and during a cataclysmic period of civil wars between Octavian and Mark Antony – seem to be diametrically opposed to each other at first glance, they constitute two sides of the same coin in terms of their *proto-utopian* potential, provided that readers are willing to shift their perspective, because "utopianism is an expression of great optimism, or of profound pessimism" (Davis 1981: 17). Vergil's bucolic idylls share two crucial functions with Horace's *Satires*: critique and compensation. In other words, they pillory societal ills and suggest alternatives, most significantly by forwarding memorable Epicurean doctrines.

Both poetic *corpora* – despite employing different strategies – seek to detect the corrosiveness of established political hierarchies and the deleterious silencing function of certain normalized social practices. While Vergil depicts this aspect via a psychological fine-tuning of his shepard-characters and by brief intrusions of the socio-political reality into the purportedly irreproachable bucolic cosmos, Horace turns tables on these intermezzos[132]. He seizes common misconducts of his age by the neck and undercoats his comprehensive society portrayals with them, while interweaving abstracted bucolic vestiges (and the concomitant Epicurean doctrines that promise the instantiation of a *vita beata*) only as delicate echoes. Moreover, in contrast to Vergil's narrative linearity and his inclusion of fabulous creatures, the *Sermones* abandon the shrouding veil of myth for the major part. Nevertheless, Horace does not present each satire as a hermetically sealed vessel, but rather picks out certain vices as a connective red thread in order to attack various facets of *discordia*, i.e. phenomena that permeate the civic body after the inversion and abandonment of a virtuous lifestyle: *nos virtutes ipsas invertimus* (*Satire* 1, 3, V. 55). Moreover, Horace emphasizes the exemplarity of certain key figures who, possessing satirically inflated signature traits, are broadly distributed over different societal strata, thus embodying a representative cross-cut[133].

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[131] Significant speculations about the exact dating of the two books of *Sermones* (in interaction with the *Epodes*) are advanced by Fraenkel (1957: 76) and Lefèvre (1993: 61).

[132] A precedent-setting article by van Rooy (1973: 69-88) closely examines the intertextual plays between the *Eclogues* and Horace's first book of *Sermones*. Instead of parroting the conclusions in detail, I would like to refer to one illustrative example: *Satire* 1, 1 mentions the pervasive lack of contentment of individuals with their lot and the jaundiced look that the average Roman citizen would cast upon his neighbor's possessions*: aliena capella gerat distentius uber* (V. 110). We are invited to recall Vergil's fourth *Eclogue* where this particular brand of jealousy of another person's livestock and possessions is futile in light of the advent of the messianic child and the concomitant natural abundance: *ipsae lacte domum referent distenta capellae ubera* (V. 21-22). Freudenburg (2001: 41) reads an additional autobiographical dimension into Horace's articulations of *Satire* 1 and speculates that the poetic *persona* casts a green-eyed glance in the direction of Vergil whose "bucolic *ubertas*" (ibid.) had already found plenteous favor with the broader public, whereas Horace was only a small fish in the pond when writing his first book of *Sermones*.

[133] One remarkable and easily memorable figure is the blabbermouth who obtrusively sticks to the heels of the Horatian *persona* in *Satire* 1, 9 when he is absentmindedly ambling through the streets of Rome (*Ibam forte via sacra, sicut meus est mos, nescio quid meditans nugarum, totus in illis*, V. 1-2). Likewise, unworldly Stoic

3.4.1 Effortless Epicurean Justice: A Mutually Beneficial Social Contract

As already adumbrated, the articulation of socio-political critique is a central constituent of the *proto-utopian* dimension in the *Sermones*, which allows us to draw a parallel to Morus' *Utopia.* The first book is dedicated to enumerating contemporary problems, most significantly minor crimes such as theft out of sheer despair or existential fear, and their penologic evaluation:

> Nam haec punitio furum et supra iustum est et non ex usu publico. Est enim ad vindicanda furta nimis atrox, nec tamen ad refrenanda sufficiens. Quippe neque furtum simplex tam ingens facinus est ut capite debeat plecti, neque ulla poena est tanta ut ab latrociniis cohibeat eos qui nullam aliam artem quaerendi victus habent. […] Decernuntur enim furanti gravia atque horrenda supplicia, cum potius multo fuerit providendum uti aliquis esset proventus vitae, ne cuiquam tam dira sit furandi primum dehinc pereundi necessitas. (*Utopia*, book 1, p. 56)

> For this punishment of thieves is beyond the just measure and does not do any public good. It is certainly too harsh in punishing larcenies, but it is still not sufficient to make them refrain from it. Simple theft is not so massive a crime that it should be vindicated with capital punishment, nor is any penalty so great that it could keep those away from robberies who have no other means to make a living. […] Severe and horrifying punishments are indeed enacted on a thief, even though it would be much better to provide every human being with an option to earn a living, so that dreadful necessity ought to drive nobody to stealing in the first place and then to death.

Much in the vein of Raphael Hythloday who argues the case for a remission of punishment and a more mitigated treatment of such desparate deeds, the Horatian speaker finds fault with the law-ridden presence and the injustices that ensue from rashly commissioned legislations in *Satire* 1, 3: *quam temere in nosmet legem sancimus iniquam* (V. 67). He takes this regrettable circumstance as a springboard to elaborate on his view of the origins of human civilization and the necessity of justice – with a subtle sideswipe to the Stoics (V. 96-106, 111-118):

> Quis paria esse fere placuit peccata, laborant,
> cum ventum ad verum est: sensus moresque repugnant
> atque ipsa utilitas, iusti prope mater et aequi.
> Cum prorepserunt primis animalia terris,
> mutum et turpe pecus, glandem atque cubilia propter
> unguibus et pugnis, dein fustibus atque ita porro
> pugnabant armis, quae post fabricaverat usus,
> donec verba, quibus voces sensusque notarent,
> nominaque invenere; dehinc absistere bello,
> oppida coeperunt munire et ponere leges,
> ne quis fur esset neu latro neu quis adulter. [...]

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philosophers who disseminate their lofty ideals that must have arisen in their ivory tower of imagination are often Horace's butt of censure, for instance in *Satires* 1, 3 or 2, 3. Freudenburg (1992: 4) draws our attention to a typical argumentative technique employed by the Roman poet that is strongly reminiscent of Aristotle's *Rhetoric* (2, 1395a2-5): he combines narrative (μυθολογεῖν) with philosophical maxims (γνωμολογεῖν) and makes the mask of his own character emerge as an epitome of ἦθος vis-à-vis his morally reprehensible interlocutors.

> Iura inventa metu iniusti fateare necesse est,
> tempora si fastosque velis evolvere mundi.
> Nec natura potest iusto secernere iniquum,
> dividit ut bona diversis, fugienda petendis,
> nec vincet ratio hoc, tantundem ut peccet idemque,
> qui teneros caules alieni fregerit horti
> et qui nocturnus sacra divum legerit. Adsit
> regula, peccatis quae poenas inroget aequas.

[The Stoics] who decided that all misdemeanors have roughly the same ponderance, struggle when it comes to reality: experience and traditional values become mutinous as does expedience itself, the real mother of justice and equality: when living creatures – a mute and deformed bunch – crawled on the soil for the first time, they fought for their acorns and shelter with claws and fists, afterwards with wooden clubs and so on – weapons which practical use had fashioned thereafter, until they found words and names with which they expressed their opinions and their sensual experiences. Then they began to abstain from war, to fortify cities and to set up laws so that nobody would turn into a thief, a robber, or an adulterer. [...] If you want to unfold the past ages and the record of the world, it is necessary to admit that the laws were invented out of a fear of injustice. Nature can not separate right from wrong, as she does between good and adverse, repulsive and attractive; and right reason can never evince that somebody who plucks tender cabbage from a foreign garden transgresses the law to the same extent as does someone who steals a divinity's valuable objects by night. There ought to be a legal measure which claims fair punishments for all crimes.

Not only are these Horatian exercises in speculation strongly indebted to Lucretius' version of the development of human civilization and its Epicurean underpinnings in *De Rerum Natura* 5, V. 925-1027 (see chapter 2.2), they are also *proto-utopian* in the sense that they delineate thought patterns which – when implemented in a broader context – could contribute to the betterment of society even though they remain firmly confined to the fictitious realm: we need to keep in mind that Horace was not on a proselytizing mission, but integrates these thought plays primarily to draw attention to the currently flawed state of affairs in the Roman republic.

The Horatian stance advanced in these philosophical musings discloses that a pure reliance on *natura* (V. 113) and human *ratio* (V. 115) is not sufficient to ensure a frictionless operating of the societal motors. Indeed, the institution of *leges* (V. 105) and a guideline for proper moral conduct (*regula*, V. 118), which are propelled by a deeply human fear of injustice (*metu iniusti*, V. 111), are necessary to temper the burgeoning chaos and other deleterious contingencies that might ensue from individuals' reckless or injudicious behaviors. When it comes to imposing penalties on delinquents, different gradations should be considered. In this respect, the passage obtains a distinctly Epicurean flavor and, simultaneously, pounces at the staunch defence of moral absolutes, as for instance advanced by the Stoics who would not acknowledge varying shades of misdemeanors but who would draw a sharp line between good and evil, consequently measuring every fault by the same yardstick, as Brown (1993: 123) elaborates. The Epicureans, by contrast, made a plea for viewing justice as a mutually beneficial

social contract: *utilitas* (V. 98) is elevated to a key principle in their world view. Horace is on board with this doctrine and recommends a reliance on conventionalized methods that have acquitted themselves well in practice. This standpoint is in harmony with the appeal to charity and tolerance as well as the abjuration of self-interest which should join the end of the queue.

A close-reading of this passage demonstrates that a reflection on the *optimus status societatis* is implicitly conveyed in the Horatian *Sermones*[134]. While musing on the primordial condition of *bellum omnium contra omnes* and the ensuing motivations for human coalitions, the poet *en passant* brushes Epicurean theories of cultural development.

In contrast to Vergil's intermittent, nostalgically transfigured longings for an 'Arcadian' paradise of peace and tranquillity or Lucretius' consistent dialectics of ambivalence, the Horatian *persona* settles for a relatively stable narrative of progress. His fellow Roman countrymen, after abandoning their primitive ways, their lack of political acumen and their unsubstantiated war mongering, now have the required capacities at their disposal to aim for a more sophisticated, if not to say unblemished, existence as well as for the eradication of prevalent ills which are concisely boiled down to theft, pilferage and adultery in the above-cited passage (*ne quis fur esset neu latro neu quis adulter*, V. 106). While these elaborations remain a satirical *jeu d'esprit* on the surface level, Horace attributes a significant co-constructive role to his readers when it comes to engaging in the speculative exercise of envisioning a better place. In contrast to Vergil who colorizes his 'Arcadian'-bucolic world with bright and energetic strokes, Horace creates his οὐ-τόπος, a non-existent place, in the *Sermones* by drawing on the stylistic device of negation as the primary *proto-utopian* function (see chapter 1.5.2). He refuses to admit the integrity of the current state of affairs without explicitly suggesting an alternative other than by advancing recommendable Epicurean doctrines, thus effectuating an abstract and cognitively demanding fictitious framework that does not lend itself well as an ideological underpinning for the later principate:

> Diese Lehren epikureischer Sozialphilosophie mit ihrem zutiefst antimetaphysischen, entmystifizierenden, das Band zwischen Recht und kosmischen, transzendenten, religiösen Verankerungen radikal lösenden Gehalt waren für die ideologische Begründung und Festigung der neuen Herrschaft denkbar ungeeignet. […] Wichtig scheint aber der Gedanke, daß die Funktion, die der Dichtung zugesprochen ist, in

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[134] Freudenburg (2001: 16), by contrast, hypothesizes that this "archeology of justice" is "mock-Lucretian" and refrains from making serious suggestions for social betterment. Horace's putative passion or moralizing fervor which he displays in this passage would then boil down to a pseudo-encomiastic Epicurean allusion. Rather than jumping on board with this assumption, I am in line with Condren (2012: 382; 388) who argues that satire can combine comic and serious elements, thus fusing humor with ethical scolding, which gives the genre a "persuasive" and a "punitive" dimension and contributes to the moral edification of the audience.

> Horaz' Gedankenwelt zusammenfließt mit der Rolle der Philosophie
> als Ratgeber der Herrscher (Müller 1985: 162-163).

Despite Horace's more reserved stance towards the burgeoning Augustan regime, we can detect a strategic parallel between him and Vergil as far as their foregrounding of philosophical values is concerned, as shall be outlined in the next section.

3.4.2 The Magical Triad of *voluptas-otium-rus*: Horace's *Proto-Utopian* Toolkit

Like Vergil, Horace seems to suggest that boundless gratification is not only unfeasible, but also not worth striving for. Instead he advances the idea that a frugal lifestyle, the moderation of one's cravings, and an awareness of one's real needs show the way to enduring fulfillment:

> Arcadians tend to assume that, if the problems of material scarcity are resolved in a world of men of moderation, problems of sociological scarcity will also cease to exist (Davis 1981: 22).

The Horatian *persona* capitalizes on this idea in *Satire* 2, 2 by emphasizing that virtue can be attained via contentment with the bare necessities (*Quae virtus et quanta, boni, sit vivere parvo*, V. 1) and by highlighting the entelechial dimension of pleasure: *Non in caro nidore voluptas summa, sed in te ipso est* (V. 19-20). It is tempting to expand this thought play, i.e. that introspection and consequent conscious deliberation of one's *desiderata* can be equalled with satisfaction, to a society-encompassing level and Morus' Utopians acquired a taste for this linear calculation too, for they are guided by the *voluptas*-rationale:

> De virtute disserunt ac voluptate, sed omnium prima est ac princeps controversia quanam in re, una pluribusve, sitam hominis felicitatem putent. At hac in re propensiores aequo videntur in factionem voluptatis assertricem ut qua vel totam vel potissimam felicitatis humanae partem definiant. (*Utopia*, book 2, p. 126)

> They lead discussions about virtue and pleasure, but the first and foremost controversy of all pertains to the matter in which they think that human happiness is posited and whether it is constituted of one or more elements. In this issue, however, they seem to be leaning more readily towards the faction of pleasure-advocators, and they define it as the most essential or even the whole part of human happiness in its defense.

Moreover, while the meticulously regimented society on the island *Utopia* shows a preference for urban vis-à-vis rural forms of organization (Claeys 2011: 63), the Horatian speaker in the *Sermones* displays some insecurities as to where the perfect psychological equilibrium can be attained. This stance is concisely articulated in an antithesis in *Satire* 2, 7 (*Romae rus optas, absentem rusticus urbem tollis ad astra levis*, V. 28-29) to cast doubt on the widely spread misconception that mental hygiene is contingent upon any concrete topographical space.

In spite of performing the philosophical act of decoupling parameter x (emotional contentment) from y (location), the Horatian *persona* can not completely cut himself off the idea that *otium*, provided by a tranquil rural retreat, is conducive to a purposeful, fulfilling lifestyle. In fact, this premise resurfaces in the parodic reprocessing of Aesopus' fable of the *urbanus* and the *rusticus mus* in *Satire* 2, 6, which is dedicated to the question whether a life in accordance with *voluptas* can be achieved more easily in the town or on the countryside. West (1974: 70-78) alludes to the moral(izing) dialectic constructed by Horace who – in "a calculated illusion of simplicity" (ibid., 70) and with a wit "based upon anthropomorphic fallacy" (ibid., 71) – projects facets of his *persona* into both mouse-characters, thus including some personal details without creating a straightforward autobiographical narrative. Horace skeletonizes his *mus urbanus* as pseudo-Epicurean, who deliberately draws on a philosophical jargon and exhorts his rural fellow to be merry, to wallow in the multi-faceted pleasures offered by the city and occasionally drift away into *dolce far niente* (V. 93-97):

> Carpe viam, mihi crede, comes, terrestria quando
> mortalis animas vivunt sortita neque ulla est
> aut magno aut parvo leti fuga: Quo, bone, circa,
> dum licet, in rebus iucundis vive beatus,
> vive memor, quam sis aevi brevis.

Hit the road, fellow, believe me, for all terrestrial creatures live with mortal souls and there is no fated escape from death for great or for small: therefore, good friend, live happily in pleasurable surroundings, while you may, and live mindful with regard to the brevity of your existence.

While chivvying anxiety about the future, more precisely any unsubstantiated preoccupation with death, the urbane rodent mounts a philosophical attack centering around waywardness, the brevity of life and the concomitant injunction to make the most of the present moment. The *incipit* of line 93 (*carpe viam*) can be read as an anticipation of Horace's famous and metrically parallel aphorism *carpe diem* in *Ode* 1, 11, V. 8. In the process of flogging to death Epicurean commonplaces (which could be conveniently inserted at a symposium and are thus suitable to the convivial gathering of *Satire* 2, 6), the city mouse confidently thematizes the impartiality of death: even though this moralizing passage abounds in stylistic devices to add gravity to the injunction (the tmesis of *quocirca*, or the epanalepsis of *vive*) and in archaisms (*letum*, V. 95), which are reminiscent of Ennius and Lucretius, there is a comic – if not to say outlandish – ring to this situation because such a lofty *dictum* appears curiously incongruous when articulated by a mouse (Muecke 1993: 209; West 1974: 75). Unarguably, no consistent "anti-urbs rhetoric", to use Evans' (2008: 109) witty coinage, is advanced, but the final twist of the fable, i.e. the unexpected appearance of Molossian hounds that disrupt the lavish banquet and the country

mouse's consequent fierce rejection of perilous luxuries, advocates values such as frugality, freedom and security far off the agitating hustle and bustle of the city[135].

Furthermore, the collision of these two diametrically opposed identities embodied in the mouse-personalities is symptomatic of a larger societal phenomenon in Horace's time. It highlights the floating attempts to conceptualize identity in an era that was characterized by the redefinition or gradual dissolution of traditional categories such as the *mos maiorum* and the subsequent emergence of competing intellectual scaffolds to grasp reality (Minyard 1985: 62). The plethora of linguistic structures and registers which Horace resorts to is indicative of these meandering attempts to find purchase on the pervasive instability of the republic which was poised to soon exhale its dying breath. In this era of troubling and troublesome politics, literary luminaries could discover fertile grounds to explore alternative paths in their works.

Horace employs the protective filter of acrimonious wit – his *persona* self-referentially advances the credo of *ridentem dicere verum*[136] in the introductory poem of the first book (V. 24) – while suggesting two options that might be congenial to the attainment of an integer state of mind: first, the frequently protreptic *Sermones* recommend clinging to philosophy, finding like-minded spirits and setting up small and readily comprehensible societal formations to counterbalance the menacing amalgam of populaces encompassed in the rampant empire. This idea comes to the fore in *Satire* 2, 6 when the speaker conjoins a hymnic invocation of the rural estate (*rus*) with a reference to the Pythagorean communities (V. 60-64):

> O rus, quando ego te adspiciam quandoque licebit
> nunc veterum libris, nunc somno et inertibus horis
> ducere sollicitae iucunda oblivia vitae?
> O quando faba Pythagorae cognata simulque
> uncta satis pingui ponentur holuscula lardo?

> O country, when will I behold you and when will I be able to timely consume pleasant
> forgetfulness of an agitated life with books of the venerable elderly, with slumber and
> idle hours. O when will the bean, Pythagoras' kin, and likewise some little cabbages
> with sufficiently oily bacon-grease be served to me?

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[135] Muecke (1993: 195) hints at the disjunction between the poet's real Sabine estate and its conversion into a symbol of both his poetic and his philosophical reflections, which subtly resonate in the *Sermones* and are in full bloom in his later works, i.e. the *Epistles* and the *Odes*. In *Satire* 2, 6 the Epicurean contentment with a modest retreat and a deliberate dodging of insatiable cravings is advanced as a center-piece of the poet's philosophical mindset. Simultaneously, the interspersed fable and the distinctly defined mouse-personalities could be a partly realistic, partly comic reflection of Horace's affectionate relationship to Maecenas whose elitist literary circle could not be imagined without the Roman poet's presence, as West (1974: 78) highlights.

[136] This *dictum*, which is almost a literal translation of the Greek term σπουδαιογέλοιον, corresponds closely to an often applied technique of the διατριβή that was directed at the average man-in-the-street. In these semi-serious yet joking philosophical sermons, the Greek calumniators, who configured themselves as popular wandering philosophers, attacked the follies of their mostly anonymous interlocutors. They made them swallow their ethical doctrines by renouncing highly stylized compositions in favor of a comic rhetoric that would stimulate the audience's self-reflexivity via humor and ridicule (Brown 1993: 5).

The embellishment of desirable facets of *rus*, most remarkably the obliviousness to current troubles and the sweet slumber which can be afforded by a cozily secluded spot, is reminiscent of Vergil's Arcadian *locus amoenus*[137]. Moreover, the Horatian speaker recommends a frugal diet, which consists of bacon-flavored vegetables. He emphasizes the bean and labels it "related to Pythagoras by blood" (*faba Pythagorae cognata*, V. 63), thus poking fun at a tendency in ancient Pythagoreanism to avoid eating beans because they were considered as final resting places for dead souls and thus potentially related by 'blood' with Pythagoras, the founder of this movement. Horace reveals his scepticism as regards purification by means of dietary regulations and, by implication, other doctrines advanced by the Greek philosopher, such as metempsychosis (Muecke 1993: 168; 205). Instead of jumping on board with the bulk of Pythagorean doctrines[138], many of which have sunk into oblivion nowadays due to the lacunary transmission, the speaker of *Satire* 2, 6 suggests intellectual gatherings of like-minded spirits in a rural lodge, where true *otium* can best blossom (V. 71-76):

> Sermo oritur, non de villis domibusve alienis,
> nec male necne Lepos saltet; sed, quod magis ad nos
> pertinet et nescire malum est, agitamus, utrumne
> divitiis homines an sint virtute beati,
> quidve ad amicitias, usus rectumne, trahat nos
> et quae sit natura boni summumque quid eius.

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[137] These signature traits of the *locus amoenus* re-emerge several times in the Horatian compendium of *Odes*, where the Roman poet connects Epicurean exhortations to seize the moment, descriptions of bounteous natural surroundings, philosophical reflections on death and the all-pervasive transitoriness of life in a programmatic way. These musings constitute two sides of the same coin which is summed up in the motto fusion *carpe diem* and a kind of *memento mori* (which does not entail any thoughts regarding the afterlife in contrast to the Christian inflection) can, for instance, be detected in *Carmina* 1, 4 (*vitae summa brevis spem nos vetat incohare longam*, V. 15), 1, 11 (*spatio brevi spem longam reseces*, V. 6-7) or 2, 3 (*Aequam memento rebus in arduis servare mentem, non secus in bonis*, V. 1-2). A compelling analysis of the various facets of the Horatian *locus amoenus* is provided by Schönbeck (1962: 8-60) who juxtaposes idyllic-bucolic presentations (e.g. the hymn to the invigorating *fons Bandusiae* in *Carmen* 3, 13) with references to untamed Dionysic settings that are symbolic of the superhuman and infused with references to poetic inspiration (e.g. the divine address of the enthused lyrical speaker *Carmen* 3, 25: *Quo me, Bacche, rapis tui plenum?*, V. 1-2). In light of the subordinate role of 'Arcadia' (both in its literal and symbolic use) in the *Odes* and owing to the relatively consistent and perspicable pattern of logical argumentation/stylistic composition which Horace applies, descriptions of the *locus amoenus* in the four books of *Carmina* are not considered at length in this thesis. Nevertheless, if readers strive for *cum dignitate otium* (Cicero, *Pro Sestio*, § 98), I explicitly recommend to deal *in extenso* with Horace's *Odes* and to savor their timeless beauty.

[138] Despite Horace's gently ridiculing remarks, it is uncontestable that Pythagoreanism exerted some influence on the inhabitants of the Italian soil (especially in the regions of *Magna Graecia*). Pythagorean doctrines contributed to the constitution of a microcosmos, if not to say a parallel society that expedited 'harmony' in every aspect of life as a central motto. Some widely transmitted mystic-religious ramifications of this philosophical school illuminate their adherents' conviction that not only nature, but also human relationships could be rationally analyzed by attention to numerical proportions, thus bearing the seeds of concord and perfectibility in them (Rawson 1985: 291-294). Cicero, in his *Tusculan Disputations* (4, 2, § 4), affirms that Pythagoreanism had been held in high esteem for a considerable time, even though interest in its concrete doctrines faded in the heyday of the Republic: *Vestigia autem Pythagoreorum quamquam multa colligi possunt, paucis tamen utemur, quoniam non id agitur hoc tempore.*

> A conversation begins, not about rural estates or foreign town houses, or – what is even more trivial – whether Lepos dances badly or not; we discuss something which matters more to us and which is good to know, namely whether human beings are happy because of riches or of virtue, whether expediency or an upright character draws us to friendships and what the nature of the good is, and what its highest form.

In addition to highlighting the incalculable value of equilibrated friendships among congenial souls, this passage conjures up the notion of the Epicurean κῆπος as an appropriate situational frame for the discussion of ethical questions[139]. Readers are invited to think of the rural retreat (and the potentially attached garden) not so much as a concrete topographical space, but rather as a metatextual metaphor or an epistemological device that allows the tackling of serious issues[140]. Trivial conversations that entail casting aspersions on material possessions or distinctive quirks of other persons are wiped off the table. Instead, the Horatian speaker aims at getting straight down to the nitty-gritty by putting several philosphical problems in the rear of the scenery. What is the meaning of evil and the nature of the good? Is satisfaction for humankind attainable via wealth or virtue? Are friendships without a hidden agenda illusionary? It must not escape our notice that the answers to these and similar questions, which might lead directly to the emergence of a perfect society, are deliberately omitted.

How are we supposed to read the eclipsing of the solution then? One option is to assume a strategic move behind this rhetoric. Horace addresses friendship, the dichotomy of utility and justice, the origins of good and evil as well as the search for the *summum bonum* – in short, thematic fields that were near and dear to an Epicurean soul like his own[141]. The absence of a

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[139] This idea is heralded in *Sermo* 1, 5 where Horace marries notions of friendship and aesthetics in his description of the *Iter Brundisium*. Welch (2008: 47-74) provides a compelling examination of this satire in the broader context of the Roman poet's œuvre. In addition to discussing the role of expedient friendships as well as various levels of political activism and civic participation in the crumbling days of the Republic, she detects differences in Vergil's and Horace's stance towards the countryside: Welch (2008: 70) claims that Vergil regards *rus* as an innocent space corrupted by the intrusion of the depraved upper classes, whereas Horace's approach is more bottom-up, for he argues that combatting moral decay is universal, not tied to a particularly criticizable urban or rural setting. Another fruitful synthesis, which shall be omitted due to the limited scope of this thesis, might be gained from a comparison of this passage with Cicero's *Tusculan Disputations* which excel not only the parallel setting on a remote country estate, but also the general atmosphere of philosophical debates on the *status quo* of the *res publica*.

[140] The pressing urgency of these questions as well as the timelessness of their content and scope are highlighted linguistically by the consistent use of the present tense (both in indicative and subjunctive mode), thus alluding to the potential to create a hyperreality, i.e. a realm of *uchronia*.

[141] Horace does not conceal his Epicurean sympathies throughout the *Sermones* and enshrines certain key values of (t)his philosophical school, for instance via remarks on moderation in dining (*Satire* 1, 1, V. 74) and sexual matters (*Satire* 1, 2, V. 115-119), on the value and expediency of friendships (*Satire* 1, 5, V. 44) and on the detrimental effects of political ambition (*Satire* 1, 6, V. 128-131). Furthermore, the Roman poet clearly demarcates the boundaries between true and misunderstood Epicurean pleasures, the latter of which manifest themselves in exorbitant hedonistic desires. With a grain of salt, Horace discusses such enormously gluttonous self-indulgences in *Satire* 2, 4 and recommends a return to the fountains, i.e. dealing with the original Epicurean precepts instead of half-truths (*at mihi cura non mediocris inest, fontes ut adire remotos atque haurire queam vitae praecepta beatae*, V. 93-95). Despite some serious reservations against the wide dissemination and the blind adoption of Epicurean factoids, Horace never seriously bats his eyelashes at Stoic alternatives – his profound mistrust of their ironclad sternness in moral matters comes to the fore as early as in *Satire* 1, 1, as Freudenburg (2001: 40) observes. As a point of departure, Horace takes the smart cryptogram *Crispini* (V. 120) for *Chrysippus*, who was one of the

default reply generates curiosity and sparks interest to delve deeper into the question. Rather than handing over a ready-made, five-star meal on the silver platter, Horace shows his audiences the way(s) to acquire the tools of the trade and to become chefs all by themselves. The implication is that an active involvement in and a thorough absorption into the hermeneutic circle of interpretation will ideally lead to a profound entrenchment of philosophical core values in the minds of his readers, who are Epicurean disciples *in spe*.

3.4.3 Satiric Reflections on *libertas*: Trigger for a 'Subjective' *Proto-Utopia*?

The praise of *voluptas*, *rus* and *otium* (as outlined in the previous chapter) ties in with the conceptualization of philosophy as therapeutic remedy that enables its 'consumers' to withdraw to the bounteous realms of imagination and meditation. According to the Horatian speaker, this approach should already be inculcated into an individual's thought patterns at an early age. In a way that is programmatic for the whole compendium, *Satire* 1, 1 draws a parallel between seductive techniques of poet-philosophers and teachers who offer cakes as incentives to their juvenile pupils to swallow bitter doctrines: *pueris olim dant crustula blandi doctores, elementa velint ut discere prima* (V. 25-26). Brown (1993: 92) observes that this rhetoric is strongly evocative of Lucretius, who famously compared the intake of his philosophical pills to the drinking of an elixir out of a cup that has honey smeared around its edge in order to be more alluring (*De Rerum Natura* 1, V. 936-950).

Horace advances a similar standpoint: setting one's wits to a serious inquiry into one's (potentially misguided) behaviors requires a willing confrontation with and the conquest of one's weaker self, thus paving the way for a 'subjective' *proto-utopia* (see chapter 1.5.3). This procedure might even unfold with a snowball-effect, inviting readers to engage in a constant self-examination in order to attain more thorough insights into their own psyche (Brown 1993: 90). Consequently, puzzling one's head over agonizingly aporetic problems which ultimately refer back to the meaning of life and the best condition of society might induce the mitigation of one's own personal burdens. Horace concisely articulates this desirable introspective stance in *Satire* 1, 2 (V. 111-113) by means of rhetorical questioning:

> Nonne cupidinibus statuat natura modum quem,
> quid latura sibi, quid sit dolitura negatum,
> quaerere plus prodest et inane abscinere soldo?

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founding fathers of this philosophical school; the Roman poet then launches a fully fleshed attack on the Stoics' unworldliness and their hollow building of pipe-dreams in *Satire* 1, 3 by employing the metaphor of shoe-making. The Horatian *persona* claims that only an unmeritedly confident Stoic *sapiens*, deeply entangled in self-deception, would dare to call himself the best shoemaker (*sutor*, V. 128) without ever having touched the sole of a shoe (*sapiens crepidas sibi numquam nec soleas fecit*, V. 127-128).

> Would it not be more rewarding to examine what boundaries nature sets to desires, what deprivations she will be able to endure and what hardships will pain her, and so to separate the solid from the empty?

Horace, wearing his Epicurean convictions on his sleeve, does not tire of firing philosophically charged 'brain twisters' at his readers, which can be interpreted as self-contained, but also as engaging in a frisky dialogue with the Lucretian buzzword *inane* or the Epicurean equivalent κενός, as Brown (1993: 112) remarks. Van Rooy (1973: 73) also points to a Ciceronian *locus comparationis* that discusses the difference between necessary and unnecessary desires, which faintly resurfaces in the Horatian passage (*De Finibus Bonorum et Malorum* 1, § 45-46):

> Quae est enim aut utilior aut ad bene vivendum aptior partitio quam illa, qua est usus Epicurus? Qui unum genus posuit earum cupiditatum, quae essent et naturales et necessariae, alterum, quae naturales essent nec tamen necessariae, tertium, quae nec naturales nec necessariae. Quarum ea ratio est, ut necessariae nec opera multa nec impensa expleantur; ne naturales quidem multa desiderant, propterea quod ipsa natura divitias, quibus contenta sit, et parabilis et terminatas habet; inanium autem cupiditatum nec modus ullus nec finis inveniri potest. Quodsi vitam omnem perturbari videmus errore et inscientia, sapientiamque esse solam, quae nos a libidinum impetu et a formidinum terrore vindicet et ipsius fortunae modice ferre doceat iniurias et omnis monstret vias, quae ad quietem et ad tranquillitatem ferant, quid est cur dubitemus dicere et sapientiam propter voluptates expetendam et insipientiam propter molestias esse fugiendam?

> What could indeed be a more useful or a more appropriate classification to live well than the one which Epicurus has used? He posited one category of desires that are natural and necessary, a second of those that are natural but not necessary, and a third of those that are neither natural nor necessary. The principle classification method is that the necessary desires can be fulfilled without much effort or expense; the natural desires, furthermore, do not require much because nature herself has easily accessible and finite riches with which she is sufficiently content; but for the void desires no limit or boundary can be found. If we see that our whole life is confused by error and ignorance and that wisdom is the only means which can protect us from the assault of cravings or the imminence of fears and which may teach us to tolerate the injustices of fortune moderately and which can show us all the paths that lead to calmness and tranquillity, why should we hesitate to ascertain that wisdom is to be sought for because of the ensuing pleasures and that besottedness should be fled because of the troublesome corollaries?

On the one hand, this Ciceronian passage highlights the centrality of the concern, i.e. the socially pervasive, abominable, and futile immoderateness of desires by which the Roman citizenry was tormented in the transition phase of republic to monarchy; on the other hand, this densely allusive network in the background of Horace's satiric œuvre substantiates both its intellectual grounding and its social merit. Even though the *Sermones* passim coquet with their

demonstratively 'anti-intellectual' and entertaining guise[142], they allow for a penetration to a deeper layer that critically focusses on

> the exploration of the limits imposed by Roman society on intellectual and moral outspokenness [and transforms them] into an indictment of the self-protective celebration of the status quo (Yu 2003: 6).

We can thus establish with relative safety that Horace as a satirist is too (self-)reflexive to be a mere ventriloquist for (later) Augustan propaganda[143]. We should attest an emancipatory force to the *Sermones* because the poetic *persona* frequently and delicately steps on a razor's edge while elaborating on the meaning of *libertas*, as for instance in *Satire* 2, 7 (V. 83-88):

> Quisnam igitur liber? Sapiens sibi qui imperiosus,
> quem neque pauperies neque mors neque vincula terrent,
> responsare cupidinibus, contemnere honores
> fortis, et in se ipso totus, teres atque rotundus,
> externi nequid valeat per leve morari,
> in quem manca ruit semper Fortuna.

> Who is therefore free? The wise man who is the commander of himself, whom neither poverty nor death nor shackles can deter, who is brave in responding to his passions and condemning honors, who is complete in himself, polished and well-rounded, so that nothing external manages to remain on his smooth surface, whom Fortune always assaults with frailty.

It is a curious fact to observe that Horace, despite his strong anti-Stoic bias, incorporates a central wisdom of this philosophical school here, which is refracted through the character Davus who defines himself as a slave, entering into a dialogue with the poetic *persona*. The peculiarity of this passage is enhanced due to the external circumstances in which the conversation takes place, i.e. during the *Saturnalia*, a festival in December in the course of which hierarchical distinctions between slaves and their masters were elided for a limited time span[144]. This gives Davus the chance to unburden his heart and vent his opinion with an almost

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[142] Especially book 2 of the *Satires*, which is characterized by a seemingly lowbrow thematic obsession with food and feasting, meets this classification. At second glance, however, Gowers (1993: 159) has a justified point in arguing that Horace uses "culinary instructions [as] a negative moral framework" in order to showcase his reprehensive interventions vis-à-vis the foil of this *bête noire*.

[143] We should not lose sight of the fact that Horace was writing from a very privileged position, being part of the Maecenas-circle under Augustus' tutelage. Nevertheless, Yu (2003: 6) rightly points out that the Roman poet is no blindfolded defender of the principate, but aware of the precarious situation of members of the intellectual elites (including himself) and their seclusion in the ivory tower of arts and sciences vis-à-vis the uneducated masses.

[144] The *Saturnalia*, originally an agricultural festivity, aimed at celebrating the end of winter seedtime and at commemorating the golden times of Saturnus' reign during which social status was irrelevant to human beings. The transposition of this idea to the Roman citizenry not only entailed a temporary suspension of top-down violence towards slaves, but also to a general atmosphere of benevolence. During the *Saturnalia*, the Romans would not enter competitive overreaching matches but generously bestow presents on their fellows. Seneca tells us that the festivities were accompanied by a spirit of serenity, merriment or even anarchy that induced masters to change attire with their slaves, to let them join the dinner table and to digest their pranks with sympathetic consideration: *[Maiores] instituerunt diem festum, non quo solo cum servis domini vescerentur, sed quo utique;*

'evangelical' fervor. He has the guts to call his master a wooden puppet (*mobile lignum*, V. 82) as he frequently gets carried away by temptations such as overeating or sexual licentiousness.

Consequently, Davus abstracts this situation of personal derailings and attributes a status of subservience or even foolishness to any individual – no matter how gifted, wealthy or cunning – who is in thrall to his passions. The diametrically opposed description of the Stoic sage is set forth as a vignette of human perfectibility, which corresponds to the strand of our 'subjective' *proto-utopia* (see chapter 1.5.3): a true *sapiens* always holds his emotions under firm sway and is mentally resistant in the face of unfavorable external circumstances (Muecke 1993: 212-223). On the surface level, Horace leans towards Stoicism in this hot tempered sermon, even though it loses part of its credibility because it is articulated through the mouthpiece Davus, not the poetic *persona*, thus casting doubt on its feasibility.

Despite justifiable reservations towards the peculiarities and paradoxes of Stoicism that might resonate in the above-cited passage when squared with Horace's relatively consistent Epicureanism, the poet seems to insinuate, as a final and quintessential aphorism, that freedom from hardships is attainable via literary aesthetics and philosophically inspired reflective self-examination. The revival of pleasant memories and an awareness of future hopes (which are implementable!) are as important as an eschewal of agitated melancholia that might ensue from the permanently pressing needs of time. In this respect, Epicurean notions and the Stoic ideal of the *sapiens* (see chapter 4.3.3) might overlap to a certain extent:

> Das epikureische Utopia ist weder in einer unerreichbaren, nebelhaften Vergangenheit verborgen, noch ist seine Wiederkehr abhängig von der Vorstellung eines unerbittlichen und unentrinnbaren Musters zyklischer Zeitalter, die sich jenseits menschlicher Kontrolle befinden, sondern es ist zu jeder Zeit unmittelbar erreichbar als ein unveräußerlicher Lebensmodus für das Individuum, das einfach die epikureische *sapientia* in die Praxis umsetzt (Frischer 1975: 251).

Instead of being content with the laurels of Frischer's insight, I wish – in order to close the book on Horace's *Satires* – to propose a final conundrum that is raised with respect to *libertas* as refracted through the magnifying glass of Epicureanism and its integration into Roman 'identity' (if such a concept existed). In terms of semantics, Freudenburg (2001: 49) highlights a crucial bifurcation of *libertas*, which can denote "free speech" – thus echoing the Greek term

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honores illis in domo gerere, ius dicere permiserunt et domum pusillam rem publicam esse iudicaverunt (*Epistula Moralis ad Lucilium* 47, § 14). This jovial framework was tailor-made for Roman littérateurs to allow their (slave) characters to vent socio-political critique. Earliest testimonies of this practice can be found in Plautus' *Bacchides* or in Terence's *Andria* and Horace reverts to this tradition, while displaying a significant amount of self-irony, when he introduces the figure of Davus who fixes his wagon on the writer's *poetic persona* (Kytzler 1973: 51, Lefèvre 1988: 35-38).

παρρησία[145] –, but also "personal freedom". These two intersecting fields of meaning have wider implications: the integrity of an individual's *libertas* can not be conceptualized as a material possession, but as an enactment of certain routines and practices which are, on the one hand, responsible for the maintenance of one's societal status, on the other hand indicative of the fact that democracy had not been wholly carried to the grave, but was still present in subtle vestiges. When attempting to connect the ideal of παρρησία to philosophically recommended σωφροσύνη, however, we run into a *caveat* that should not be elided from Horace's satiric remarks, but should be subjected to scrutinizing questions, such as:

> how does *ataraxia* fit into the arduous system of Roman values? Is it a comfortable symbiont of political involvement, even an acceptable pretext for dependence rather than action, or is it the best we can do when those values fail? (Welch 2008: 60)

I plead the case for Horace as a tightrope walker who does not crave for having a cushy number; he candidly points his finger at a pervasive dilemma that might best be encapsulated in a binary opposition: political activism or leisured reclusiveness – which one should we aim for? If we opt for the first, we might even attest an anti-utopian impulse to Epicureanism as it suggests submissive compliance with a corrosive political system. On the other side of the coin, however, an escape from the spinning wheel of shattered realities does have a subversive potential, for it enables the fashioning of an alternative microcosmos, i.e. a society-encompassing 'objective' *proto-utopia* that is contingent on the will of its individual members to aim for the best behavior possible (see chapter 1.5.3). An imagined (Epicurean) community could then present a positive inflection of the civic *status quo* and emphasize the perfectibility of the individual instead of embarking on futile moral crusades directed at struggling, underprivileged and unteachable masses. Yet again, we might wish to ask ourselves: can this stance still be located on the margins of *(proto-)utopian* thinking? Or is it already bordering on an utterly bleak prospect that casts liberalizing ideals as well as egalitarian aspirations to the wind? We are sent off with gnawing questions and cracking smiles, invited to further ponder these enigmas, which makes Horace's *Satires* both fascinatingly aporetic and fundamentally *proto-utopian*.

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[145] Originally a concept of Menippean satire, παρρησία (which might best be translated as 'unvarnished honesty') can pride itself with a long literary reception history. By implication, it is also perspicable in the Morean character Raphael Hythloday who draws on deliberate digressions or subtle logical incoherences in his travel account to pinpoint the intellectual failings of his age, as Condren (2012: 383) observes.

3.5 Synopsis: Vergil's and Horace's 'Arcadian'-Epicurean-Microcosmos *in nuce*

To conclude, let us make a pit stop by recurring to the most salient bucolic-'Arcadian' and/or Epicurean strands that emerged in our close readings of the *Eclogues* and the *Sermones*. This collation shall serve as our basis to forge a bridge to the *proto-utopian* form whose boundaries were demarcated in the introduction (see chapter 1.5).

Vergil's bucolic cosmos evidently owes much of its incessant appeal to its meandering between an "idyllic setting and the ever-threatening impingement of harsh reality" (Johnston and Papaioannou 2013: 143). In other words: the poetic *personae* in the Vergilian *Eclogues* display an acute awareness of contemporary civil misdemeanors and their potency to corrode the impeccable functioning of the body politic as well as their ability to paralyze artistic reflections. The Vergilian generic template of the bucolics posits an antithesis to the author's morally reprehensible present and can be subsumed as a multifaceted emotionalized space of consolation, primarily confined to the realm of imagination, which entails a socio-political and a metapoetic dimension. The Roman poet does not prioritize a distinct version of the Arcadia-myth, as van Sickle (1978: 194) demonstrates, but renounces geographical fine-tuning. This deliberate vagueness bestows a certain degree of liberty upon the reader to inhale this pastoral world as a unifying experience in which the ideal of upright *labor*, the mental carefreeness (ἀταραξία) afforded by a leisured retreat and the ultimate inaccessibility of human desire emerge as key constituents. In addition to enhancing the mythically transmitted 'Arcadia'-topos for the sake of embedding it into the larger public consciousness of his age, Vergil intermittently rekindles tenderly skeletonized Epicurean doctrines, especially the dialectics of *voluptas* and *voluntas*. These philosophical interspersals, which are highly indebted to Lucretius, seek to confront readers with their innermost selves and make them reflect, as Conte (1986: 127) phrased it, on the long-standing question of the best way of life: τίς ἄριστος βίος. By alluding to various paths an individual can tread upon, the *proto-utopian* 'Arcadia' defies any notion of stasis and exerts critique not so much through "a *gnoseological* mirroring of sociological reality [but rather] as a dialectical, dynamic representation of social *behavior*" (Conte 1986: 128) in the course of which the poet emerges as a crucial participant in both dominant and residual contemporary ideological discourses.

Horace employs similar techniques in his *Satires*, even though the balance tips towards the *Sittenspiegel*-function rather than the fully-fleshed portrait of a fictitious alternative, i.e. when taking our *proto-utopian* framework (see chapter 1.5) as a yardstick. Horace refers to the Vergilian *locus amoenus*, saturated with Epicurean precepts, as externalized space of εὐδαιμονία and conjoins it with his own preachings of restraint. Like Vergil, he seems to

suggest on a metaliterary level that his œuvre can assume the role of an intellectual refuge that affords seclusion for its entrants. The *Sermones* thus have a *proto-utopian* dimension inasmuch as contemporary shortcomings and social injustices are isolated or relativized[146], while central tenets of Epicuranism are set forth as counter-balancing coping mechanisms. A proper digestion of philosophical doctrines, which are neatly wrapped up in the alluring attire of verse, facilitates awareness-raising of the unbridgeable "scarcity gap"[147] and therefore benefits the "education of desire" (Levitas 2011: 208). In other words: deliberate temperateness and a reflection upon one's true, natural needs are portrayed as profoundly 'Arcadian' (!) psychic sanitizing strategies in the face of adversities in the *Eclogues* and the *Sermones*.

Both poetic *corpora* comply with the ascetic strand of *proto-utopia* (see chapter 1.5.3) that does not envision the perfectibility of society via a specification of alternative institutional practices, but rather by a deliberate simplification (or even partial omission) of well-established community amenities. Instead of representing and depicting static phenomena, the *proto-utopian* qualities of the two discussed poetic collections could consequently be imagined as dynamic, but ultimately unattainable processes. This is the reason why Vergil's and Horace's Epicurean-tinted precepts comply not so much with an 'objective' *proto-utopia* that manifests itself as implementable via 'top-down' regulations, but with the 'subjective' thread (see chapter 1.5.3), which is contingent on individual ethical agents, their adherence to Epicureanism and their reiterating and circular attempts to attain sagedom.

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[146] Simultaneously, satire is also a suitable genre to discuss the Roman narrative of decline even though its authors were required to demonstrate tact and instinctive feeling how far they could go in their personal invectives, given that the targets of their verbal assaults became increasingly more difficult to attack (Evans 2008: 144).

[147] Nowhere else in the *Sermones* is this 'scarcity gap' addressed more concisely than in the opening lines of the first collection where Horace speaks of the Romans' general lack of contentment with their lot: *Nemo quam sibi sortem seu ratio dederit seu fors obiecerit, illa contentus vivat*, *Satire* 1, 1, V. 1-3). The prominent positioning of this critique illustrates the heightened importance of this thematic focal point for the ensuing poems.

4. A Cosmopolitan Vision: Towards a (Comm)unity of Moral Perfectibility

> Some claim that the world is gradually becoming united,
> that it will grow into a brotherly community as distances
> shrink and ideas are transmitted through the air. Alas,
> you must not believe that men can be united in this way.

> (Fyodor Dostoyevsky, *The Brothers Karamazov*)

In this chapter we shall explore the etymological anchorage of the term *cosmo(u)polis* and its earliest formulations in Cynic testimonies and Early Stoic tradition represented by Zeno and Chrysippus. A brief elaboration on the (post)modern ramifications as well as the Greek heritage of the concept will provide us with a springboard to examine how Roman authors, i.e. Cicero, Seneca, Marcus Aurelius and Epictetus, incorporate the cosmopolitan paradigm in their philosophical oeuvres, using it as a vantage point to propagate and elaborate on a specific set of values (*concordia*, *salus*, *communitas, iustitia*) and recommendable character dispositions (*virtus*, *ratio*, *prudentia*, *fortitudo*, *temperantia*) that are inextricably intertwined and thus occupy a central position in the Stoic world of thought. We shall soon see that the above-mentioned authors employ various strategies of awareness-raising to define what constitutes an (un)necessary desire on an individual and societal level. These philosophical discrimination exercises and speculative thought plays not only influenced Morus' *Utopia*, as occasional references to intertextual parallels will illuminate, but were also intended to befit the Roman audience's moral maturation. I shall therefore argue that the selected Roman source materials can be labelled *proto-utopian* in three ways: (1) in their impetus to suggest options for personal and/or societal improvement, (2) in their re-evaluation (or even dissolution) of dichotomies of stasis/dynamicity or uniformity/collectivity (pertinent to the fashioning of identities) and (3) in their hypothetical and critical negotiation of past, present and future conditions.

4.1 Defining Cosmopolitanism: *The Nature of the Beast*

In contemporary discourses, cosmopolitanism is a frequently used buzzword that might mean little more to average recipients than "globalized metropolitan consumer capitalism" (Ingram 2016: 70) or, even more polemically, "the class-consciousness of frequent travelers" (Calhoun 2002: 869). Indeed, the link between cosmopolitanism and luxury-craving elitism seems stronger nowadays than its associations with ethic universalism, let alone compatriotism. The crucial foundational idea of cosmopolitanism, namely the stripping away of artificially created national borders for the sake of establishing a globe-encompassing community on the grounds of shared moral values, appears to have faded to the background. Moreover, the long and diverse reception history of cosmopolitanism not only as a political agenda, but also as the

philosophical notion has yielded ramifications in multiple (non-)academic discourses, the elaboration on which would clearly exceed the scope and aim of this thesis[148]. Instead, we shall content ourselves with glimpsing at the rich ancient tradition of Stoic cosmopolitanism and explore its *proto-utopian* potentialities.

Before committing ourselves to the trajectory *ad fontes* by delving into the colorful pool of Greek and Latin sources, an etymological and notional approximation to the term 'cosmopolitanism' appears beneficial (though necessarily also selective and thus incomplete). The fusion of the two component parts of the term, κόσμος (i.e. universe, order, constitutional make-up) and πόλις (i.e. city state), is anything but semantically unambiguous, and therefore gives rise to a plethora of speculations. Does the newly emerging concept refer to a condition of a well-ordered and meticulously structured city-state, i.e. the primary political unit that pre-Hellenistic Greek philosophers would draw on as a cognitive category, or does the 'cosmopolis' rather denote a border-transcending entity? Is the ideational concept then, as Richter (2011: 18) suggests, coterminous with the belief that humankind is one biologically undifferentiated conglomerate and that national boundaries are haphazard, artificial and wholly dependent on varying and ethnically distinct cultural practices? A consideration of Plato's utopian *Politeia*, which was geared towards a detailed social engineering project centering on a specific space[149], as well as prior urban strategizing intentions would provide a plausible testimony for the first assumption: Hippodamos of Milet, for instance, a Greek architect and political philosopher of the fifth century BC, crafted an orthogonal system that would divide the urban space in evenly distributed parcels like on a chessboard. This model had an immensely democratizing potential; it complied with the idea that citizens who were embedded in a symetrically arranged territory would automatically harmoniously integrate themselves into the larger cosmos, too[150].

Although the Hippodamean bottom-up approach, which is firmly grounded in practical considerations, furnishes a thought-provoking point of departure, a more significant indication

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[148] The philosophical roots of cosmopolitanism in Stoicism have considerably influenced crucial early Christian testimonies (cf. *Matthew* 22:21, *John* 19:11), Augustine's *Civitas Dei* as well as Enlightenment thinkers such as Adam Ferguson or Immanuel Kant, especially in the latter's treatises on human will power and the moral imperative (Vaugham-Williams 2007: 110; Hadot 1992: 329). Furthermore, communist-socialist visions in the 19th century benefitted from the Stoic framework when formulating their claims to abolish private property and diminish the capital of power-craving institutions on a national level (Kiessling de Courcy 2016: 70).

[149] For a thorough investigation of Plato's utopianism and its historical context, see Schofield (2006: 194-234).

[150] Aristotle mentions Hippodamus in his Πολιτικά (book II, 1267b23) as the inventor of the rectangular and rectilinear segmentation of urban and rural areas (Ἱππόδαμος [...] τὴν τῶν πόλεων διαίρεσιν εὗρε). The Greek architect, without being directly involved in political affairs, linked his city planning to a discussion of the best form of the constitution (ἐνεχείρησέ τι περὶ πολιτείας εἰπεῖν τῆς ἀρίστης): he divided the territory into a sacred sphere dedicated to the gods, a public one to provide the warriors with victuals and a private one reserved for agriculture, while endorsing the institution of a supreme court of justice as an organ of surveillance. For a more thorough treatment of the architectural and political subtleties of Hippodamus' system, see Burns (1976: 414-428) and Triebel-Schubert and Muss (1983: 37-60).

as to which direction we should choose in interpreting the linguistic roots of the 'cosmopolis' is rendered by descriptions of two Greek philosophers, the Cynic Diogenes and Socrates. The former, as Diogenes Laertius records in book six of his Βίοι καὶ γνῶμαι τῶν ἐν φιλοσοφίᾳ εὐδοκιμησάντων, was supposedly once asked about his national origin and famously replied that he was "citiless, homeless, lacking a fatherland" (ἄπολις, ἄοικος, πατρίδος ἐστερημένος, § 38), indeed a "citizen of the world" (κοσμοπολίτης, § 63). This self-confident refusal to declare his belonging to any peculiar nationality allows us to hypothesize that Diogenes derived his philosophical authority not from any state-affiliation, but stood in marked disobedience with and rejection of key figures who held the reigns of power (Sellars 2007: 3, Brown 2006: 17).

Diogenes' personal brand of world citizenship did not foreground the "endorsement of internationalism", but rather a symbolic and literal "way-out exhibitionism"[151] as well as the "icon[icity] of counter-culturalism" (Long 2008: 54). This antithetical stance towards the frequently patronizing tutelage of the artificial 'polis-bubble' not only had a significant influence on the earliest Stoic formulations of cosmopolitan concepts, as we shall see shortly, but also connects Diogenes the Cynic to Socrates. The latter allegedly claimed an affiliation to the cosmos in a similar vein: Vlasak (2014: 38) highlights a Ciceronian reference in the *Tusculanae Disputationes* (5, § 108) where Socrates is cast in an analogical inquiry-response-situation and refers to himself as *mundanum*, a literal translation of the Greek κοσμοπολίτης, for he reckened himself as a world citizen (*totius enim mundi se incolam et civem arbitrabatur*). Instead of pledging allegiance to the Athenian regime, Socrates' unapologetic defense of his philosophical ideals and his "cultivation of the political will to moralize politics" (Vlasak 2014: 43) had a lethal outcome for him, yet he merited posthumous heroization in Peripatetic and especially Stoic discourses. Socrates was not only haloed due to his unflinching mastery of his passions and his desire to bequeath his maieutic technique to posterity in order to effectuate a betterment of society, but also for his mental fortitude and his equanimity in the face of his unjustly impending death. These features rendered him a paradigm of virtue and fellow-feeling, a quasi-messianic figure. Still, a word of caution ought to be inserted here, since no written testimonies of Socrates himself have survived the ravages of time, so we have to rely on the character portrait delivered by his recipients Plato, Xenophon and Aristophanes.

The example of Socrates was frequently traded as the closest historic approximation to a theoretically unblemished, but practically unattainabe Stoic ideal of the *sapiens*. According

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[151] Long (2008: 54) points to Diogenes' presumable "refugee and hippy"-lifestyle. Tradition has it that this Cynic philosopher not only masturbated in public squares, but also lived temporarily in a wooden barrel or adhered to a partly omophagous diet to translate his philosophical doctrines into according actions (which entailed the creation of public mischief, too).

to Long (2002: 67-70), Cicero and Seneca aligned the Socratic model of emulation with indigenous Roman paragons such as Attilius Regulus and Cato the Elder. The late Stoic philosopher Epictetus even went so far as to adopt certain dialectic features, i.e. προτρεπτικός and ἔλεγχος, that were regarded as typically Socratic (if we are to believe the information transmitted by Plato and Xenophon on the philosopher's character and style of conversation).

What seems like an unforseen and arbitrary digression (in a Socratic manner) was indeed a deliberate excursus to add flesh to the linguistic skeleton of our embosomed 'cosmopolis'. Introducing Socrates as an epitome of virtue occasions us to examine the vindicability of the Stoic assumption that every individual possesses a capacity for moral perfectibility and its connection to the *proto-utopian* thought that an ideal community has universal momentousness. Marcus Aurelius gives us a first glimpse at this particular feature of the Stoic world view and connects it to the all-pervasive force of reason (λόγος) in his *Meditations* (4, 4):

> Εἰ τὸ νοερὸν ἡμῖν κοινόν, καὶ ὁ λόγος, καθ᾽ ὃν λογικοί ἐσμεν, κοινός: εἰ τοῦτο, καὶ ὁ προστακτικὸς τῶν ποιητέων ἢ μὴ λόγος κοινός: εἰ τοῦτο, καὶ ὁ νόμος κοινός: εἰ τοῦτο, πολῖταί ἐσμεν: εἰ τοῦτο, πολιτεύματός τινος μετέχομεν: εἰ τοῦτο, ὁ κόσμος ὡσανεὶ πόλις ἐστί: τίνος γὰρ ἄλλου φήσει τις τὸ τῶν ἀνθρώπων πᾶν γένος κοινοῦ πολιτεύματος μετέχειν; ἐκεῖθεν δέ, ἐκ τῆς κοινῆς ταύτης πόλεως, καὶ αὐτὸ τὸ νοερὸν καὶ λογικὸν καὶ νομικὸν ἡμῖν ἢ πόθεν;

> If intelligence is common to us all, then so is the reason that makes us rational beings; and if that be so, then so is the reason that prescribes what we should do or not do. If that be so, there is a common law also; if that be so, we are fellow citizens; and if that be so, the world is a kind of state. For in what other common constitution can we claim that the whole human race participates? And it is from there, from this constitution, that our intelligence and sense of law derive; or else, where could they come from? [*translation by Robin Hard*]

As this passage emphasizes, Stoic cosmopolitanism arguably forwarded a deeply entrenched interconnectedness and a feeling of relatedness to other human beings as well as an awareness of a nation-exceeding bond that could be fortified by communality of ethic stance. As the leader of the Roman empire (161-180 CE), Marcus Aurelius was certainly in the position to exert influence by claiming that political institutions should comply with or be informed by moral precepts that advocated mitigation and clemency (Stanton 1968: 184). Nevertheless, we should not be oblivious to the fact that his meditative tractatus Τὰ εἰς ἑαυτόν emerged towards the end of a long-standing tradition of Stoic thought. In order not to put the cart before the horse, we need to cross several epoch-spanning perimeters before we can do justice to the multi-faceted allusions that resonate with the cosmopolitan elaborations of Marcus Aurelius[152].

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[152] Devine (1970: 323-336) elucidates some of the key differences between these three manifestations of Stoicism and rightly emphasizes that the ideal of the mixed constitution for which the Roman *res publica* has often been credited as precedent-setting only gained shape in Cicero's eclectic philosophical writings, but was not consistently

In other words, tarring representatives of the Early, Middle and Late Stoa with the same brush would be a serious *faux pas*. We shall thus begin with an exploration of the first traces of cosmopolitan ideas in Zeno and Chrysippus and their embeddedness within the entire Stoic belief system. Only then can we turn to the Roman realm and single out soon-to-be-specified doctrinal elements. This exercise of disentanglement will provide us with a springboard to examine the selected texts with regard to their *proto-utopian* potential and their complicity – whether unconscious or purposive should remain undecided – in perpetuating prevailing power mechanisms. This chronological way of proceeding will also enable us to validate the three main functions which Brunkhorst (2012: 181) established as constitutive of the ancient 'cosmopolis': (1) the practical-philosophical, (2) the logical-ontological and (3) the ideological.

The first dimension aims at diminishing individuals' *weltschmerz* by positioning their life in perspective. This "decentralization of egocentrism" (Brunkhorst 2012: 191) entails a psychological purview, provided that it springs from a negative experience of iniquitousness and consequently leads to an insight into the theoretical foundations of justice and equality. The leap from this empirically triggered cognition to the entrenchment of a logical-ontological state is a minimal one, because the individual only needs to abstract and generalize the concrete confrontation with injustice. What follows, in theory, is a consciousness of membership in and adherence to a rational world order, i.e. the cosmos, as well as the mental integration of closely linked ethic concepts such as human dignity, respect, virtue, self-determination and the collective right to autonomy (Brunkhorst 2012: 192). The frictionless implementation of these behavioral patterns would not only burst the limits of our *proto-utopian* form (which is firmly grounded in the hypothetical realm), but is further complicated by the severe constraints to social mobility in antiquity. Naturally, the question arises if any Stoic forwarded concrete suggestions how to overcome the heavily stratified hierarchical society. Searching for an affirmative response in this momentous matter is of no avail, unfortunately. Why is this the case? Or, put differently, why did the Stoics not manage the precarious balancing act between generating valuable theoretical guidelines to self-determination as well as harmonious collaborative interaction and their structural anchorage in politics?

Let us take one step back. Arguably, any classical cosmopolitan model, if it seeks to be more than a lofty pipe dream, is required to set its wits not only to the desire to fashion a transcendental community that is united under these universally acknowledged supramundane laws, but also to the procedural details and the constitutionalization of legal parameters. Ingram

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treated as the best form of government in Stoicism. The early representatives of this school favored non-political commitments and adherents of the Late Stoa, most notably Epictetus, were on board with the monarchy.

(2016: 71-73), Jarratt (2011: 70) and Dawson (1992: 231) address one non-negligible *caveat* that arises in this context (even though it tends to be eclipsed by the modern reader): the majority of Stoic philosophers, belonging to the social elites – Kleanthes being a noteworthy exception –, subscribed to the established hegemonial mechanisms of class dominion, while cloaking their pseudo-egalitarian aspirations under the term of 'universal brotherhood'. The corollary of this lack of socio-political agency encompassed a parallel development: on the one hand, they preached idealistic, philanthropic and universalist values, on the other hand, they perpetuated the legitimization or even ideological transfiguration of the respective emperor who capitalized on cosmopolitan doctrines and sold them as regime-supportive in order to rationalize injustices in the civic body, war atrocities or similar misdemeanors. Up to the present day, this deeply rooted ambivalence has not been wholly eradicated. On the contrary, it was preserved, propelled and gave buoyancy to

> the dynamic and explosive mix of imperialism, cosmopolitan ideology, national democracy and a universal framework of legal norms of comprehensive self-determination [that] transforms and maintains the co-evolution of universal and particular ('national') statehood (Brunkhorst 2012: 187).

Instead of flimsily cherishing progressivism or indulging in an unsubstantiated triumphalist mood, it is recommendable to pay close attention to what Michel Foucault famously termed the "microphysics of power"[153] and to fix our retrospective gaze on the multi-layered testimonies of Stoic cosmopolitanism in order to glean insights into their rejection of parochialism, partisan-ship or factionalism as well as their unanimous meandering between the ideals of moral absolutism and the harsh practical realities of ethical relativism[154].

4.2 Back to the Roots: The Founding Fathers of the Stoic *Proto-Utopia*

The dream of a globe-encompassing bond that unites the minds of wise humans lies at the heart of the earliest formulations of cosmopolitan ideas. As already adumbrated, the coinage of the

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[153] Governmentalization in the Foucauldian sense provides a viable hermeneutic tool for our purposes inasmuch as it highlights the bidirectional formation of power discourses: institutions do not only generate constraining – if not to say suffocating – legislative bodies, but provide individuals with options for agency, thus fostering self-preservation technologies, which are coupled to government targets in a roundabout way; consequently, they trick the individual ethical agent into an illusion of freedom, autonomy and self-determination. For a more thorough investigation of the Foucauldian "microphysics of power", especially in light of their relevance in contemporary social welfare states, see Götz (2008: 84-90).

[154] Ingram (2016: 67-76) – in addition to highlighting the cultural, moral and political ramifications that are detectable in the "ancient pedigree" (ibid., 68) of the 'cosmopolis' – sees a chance for diminishing its aloofness as an outlandish daydream in a conceptual reconfiguration: rather than performing an authoritative inculcation of a normative set of universally acknowledged values, reasonable cosmopolitical practices in the 21st century should entail a bottom-up approach by means of contestation, giving a voice to suppressed, marginalized or excluded social groups that have thus far been silenced by dominant historical agents.

term κοσμοπολίτης was attributed to Diogenes the Cynic, who cultivated αὐτάρκεια, self-sufficiency, that afforded him with the liberty to maintain his mental equilibrium in light of the adversities of fate. His ensuing indifference to national belonging could not be reconciled with the normative demands of the Greek city state, as Sellars (2007: 6-8) indicates, and even though Diogenes did not reject the concept of urbanity as such, he did refuse to participate in the customs and conventions of citizenship, including divine worship. Instead, he preferred to configure himself as an autonomous and determined adherent of frugality who was indifferent to external culturally conditioned paraphernalia, for they would constitute obstacles on his path to εὐδαιμονία. Sellars (2007: 8) encapsulates this standpoint *in nuce* as the coalescence of a

> negative attitude towards dependence upon existing political communities with a positive attitude of affirming the cosmos as the only true home for those who live in accordance with nature.

The conceptual framework of Diogenes the Cynic exerted influence on the early Stoics not only on a linguistic, but also on a content level. Like his predecessor, Zeno projected an anarchist vision that should not be taken at face value, but ought to be regarded as an attempt to indicate the corrosiveness of the conceptual underpinnings of the (Athenian) polis and to re-negotiate predominant value systems laid out by Aristotle and Plato in their political theories (Sellars 2007: 10, Richter 2011: 5). In his *Republic*, Zeno did not abide by ephemeral, conventionalized socio-political institutions; instead he demanded the abolishment of private property, gymnasia, law courts, magistrates, or temples for the sake of an establishment of a community of sages (Weiss 2016: 217, Devine 1970: 325). Zeno's convictions can be gathered from a record in Plutarch (*Moralia* IV, *De Alexandri Magni Fortuna aut Virtute* 329A-B):

> Καὶ μὴν ἡ πολὺ θαυμαζομένη Πολιτεία τοῦ τὴν Στωικῶν αἵρεσιν καταβαλομένου Ζήνωνος εἰς ἓν τοῦτο συντείνει κεφάλαιον, ἵνα μὴ κατὰ πόλεις μηδὲ κατὰ δήμους οἰκῶμεν ἰδίοις ἕκαστοι διωρισμένοι δικαίοις, ἀλλὰ πάντας ἀνθρώπους ἡγώμεθα δημότας καὶ πολίτας, εἷς δὲ βίος καὶ κόσμος, ὥσπερ ἀγέλης συννόμου νόμῳ κοινῷ συντρεφομένης. τοῦτο Ζήνων μὲν ἔγραψεν ὥσπερ ὄναρ ἢ εἴδωλον εὐνομίας φιλοσόφου καὶ πολιτείας ἀνατυπωσάμενος, Ἀλέξανδρος δὲ τῷ λόγῳ τὸ ἔργον παρέσχεν.

> Moreover, the much-admired *Republic* of Zeno, the founder of the Stoic sect, may be summed up in this one main principle: that all the inhabitants of this world of ours should not live differentiated by their respective rules of justice into separate cities and communities, but that we should consider all men to be of one community and polity, and that we should have a common life and an order common to us all, even as a herd that feeds together and shares the pasturage of a common field. This Zeno wrote, giving shape to a dream or, as it were, shadowy picture of a well-ordered and philosophic commonwealth; but it was Alexander who gave effect to the idea.
> [*translation by Frank Cole Babbitt*]

Provided that Zeno does not give concrete instructions as to how this unblemished sagacious confraternity could gain a firm foothold, he probably did not have a minute architectural plan in mind, but was rather toying around with a 'sophistopolis' – to use Russell's (1983: 22) witty coinage –, i.e. a "city of the imagination, from which there is less to be learned about the realities of ancient life than about its characteristic fantasies" (ibid.). The cloud-castle-quality of Zeno's tractatus is highlighted by Plutarch's final shift to Alexander the Great, a man of action rather than words, whose unprecedented conquests rearranged the ancient world order[155]. The Stoic model, by contrast, contented itself with omitting relations of property, status and authority and by propagating the intrinsically rewarding dimension of ἀρετή. This compositional move can justifiably be interpreted as a reaction to the contemporary instabilities and vicissitudes, for it adumbrates criticizable aspects of the polis. While eclipsing a divine apparatus for the major part (as far as we can gather from the transmitted fragments), Zeno makes one admission that could have been inspired by the cultural circles in which he was presumably roaming about. This exception is related to the divine powers of Ἔρως, as the following extract from Athenaeus' *Deipnosophistae* (13, 561c-d) illuminates:

> Ποντιανὸς δὲ Ζήνωνα ἔφη τὸν Κιτιέα ὑπολαμβάνειν τὸν Ἔρωτα θεὸν εἶναι φιλίας καὶ ὁμονοίας, ἔτι δὲ καὶ ἐλευθερίας παρασκευαστικόν, ἄλλου δὲ οὐδενός. διὸ καὶ ἐν τῇ Πολιτείᾳ ἔφη τὸν Ἔρωτα θεὸν εἶναι συνεργὸν ὑπάρχοντα πρὸς τὴν τῆς πόλεως σωτηρίαν.

> Pontianus [*one of the dramatis personae*] observed that Zeno of Citium understood Eros to be a god who prepares us for friendship and freedom, as well as for consensus, but for nothing else. This is why he said in his *Republic* that Eros is a god who helps keep the city safe. [*translation by Douglas Olson*]

While both the reliance on external institutions or a slavish subservience to the passions are condemned as extirpable, the Stoic sage should take up the cause of erotic love because it not only tightens the virtual bonds between citizens – regardless of geographical proximity or distance –, but also furthers concord and propels moral schooling, as Brown (2006: 11) and Dawson (1992: 172) emphasize. It might strike contemporary readers as noteworthy, if not to say bizarre, that Ἔρως influences especially the sphere of education, as Athenaeus elucidates in *Deipnosophistae* 13, 563. It is also at issue that Zeno might allude to pederast practices that advocated bonds between an adult wooer (ἐραστής) and a juvenile beloved (ἐρώμενος) and

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[155] In terms of imperialist ideology, Alexander inaugurated a model that bridged the gap between Aristotle's polis-centered deliberations and Zeno's burgeoning universalist thought plays. However, the incipient hybridization of cultural and ethnic practices under Alexander was relatively short-lived. The posthumous fragmentation of his vast empire among his successors, the Διάδοχοι, constituted a significant rupture in fusing East and West, or, put differently, broke with the 'cosmopolitanizing' of the (trans-)Mediterranean regions (Richter 2011: 10-12).

were culturally acknowledged in ancient Greece[156]; on the other hand, we need to be conscious of the broader semantic scope of the term Ἔρως, which was not only connected to sexual relationships, but also encompassed intellectual endeavors and other amorous aspects that might be sweepingly subsumed under the banner of 'Platonic love': Schofield (1991: 29-32) convincingly demonstrates that the (early) Stoics were not inclined to equate Ἔρως with πάθος, i.e. an agitated state of the soul that casts the affected human being into emotional turmoil. Rather, they thought of it as a desirable impulse complying with the rational order of the universe that could be projected on fellow human beings provided that they displayed a capacity for virtue and a potentially irreprovable character (εἶδος).

On the basis of these sparse clues, how can we best describe Zeno's imagined ideal state? Was he a political visionary or, to put it polemically, a starry-eyed dreamer? In light of the fact that the lacunary transmission of his thoughts renders any final verdict audacious, we can at least credit him with some profound insights into the human condition. While meandering between an "antinomian" position and "communist" aspirations, as Schofield (1991: 22) put it, Zeno did not articulate his intention to establish a world state in explicit terms; rather, his elevation of Ἔρως to a political principle gives rise to the speculation that he saw virtue, affection and obligation towards other human beings as regulatory devices that could trigger a categorical paradigm shift in thinking about the communal foundations of citizenship.

One non-negligible *caveat* is addressed by Sellars (2007: 11-13) and Baldry (1959: 7), which prevents us from laying excessively egalitarian tendencies at Zeno's door: the society in his Πολιτεία attributed the status of citizenship only to the wise (σοφοί) and might thus be labelled even more elitist than Plato's analogous societal blueprint, which struggled with questions of class conflict[157]. If we are supposed to take Zeno's account at face value and embed it in our *proto-utopian* framework, a barely mendable logical fissure pertaining to the stasis-dynamicity-dichotomy inevitably arises: how can the community-model of sages, which is cast as isolated, perfected and carved in stone, be reconciled with the mobile force of Ἔρως that the wise ought to project onto the non-wise, thus forwarding their transformation into the wise?

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[156] Even though there is a broad scholarly consent that an elderly ἐραστής would usually attempt to win over the favors of the ἐρώμενος by alluring him with gifts, these relationships did not merely have a physical dimension. Instead, they were geared towards an unspoken mutual contract that also entailed educational benefits for the *puer delicatus* whose moral and intellectual maturation was spurred by the sophisticated guidance and the living paragon of the adult lover (Schofield 1999: 33).

[157] Despite this content-related chasm, the Platonic and the Zenonian models in their respective same-titled Πολιτείαι show compatibilities in other significant parameters, such as the renouncement of currency or the abolition of monogamy. The indiscriminate intercourse of men and women (κοινωνία γυναικῶν) is advocated. Moreover, homosexuality is no taboo in these ideal communities, on the contrary: it is widely accepted or even expedited by policies of uniform clothing that minimalized visual gender differences. These regulations presumably aimed at eliminating social institutions such as the nuclear family or quasi-hermaphroditic monogamous relationships that were regarded as main sources of strive and jealousy (Baldry 1965: 155).

Baldry (1965: 162) advances a thought-provoking proposition in this seemingly aporetic scenario, namely that the jussive dimension of Zeno's account deserves special attention. Even though the Stoic philosopher believed in a shared rationality of humankind, he was first and foremost keen on illuminating "the contrast between the ideal of wisdom and the prevailing folly" (ibid., 163) by recommending desirable courses of action that still left the individual ethical agents room for maneuver. Hard on the heels of this observation follows the conclusion that Zeno retained the subjunctive mood to a great extent throughout his tractatus in order to cautiously relegate the ubiquitous instantiation of virtue to an indeterminate point in the future. The intertwining of such society-improving deliberations with a certain mental attitude is a feature that we encounter in Chrysippus, too. In light of the fact that only a few incoherent snippets of his works have been delivered to posterity (Baldry 1965: 165), we ought to turn to a Ciceronian record in *De Finibus Bonorum et Malorum* 3, § 67 to speculate about his ideas:

> praeclare enim Chrysippus, cetera nata esse hominum causa et deorum, eos autem communitatis et societatis suae, ut bestiis homines uti ad utilitatem suam possint sine iniuria. Quoniamque ea natura esset hominis, ut ei cum genere humano quasi civile ius intercederet, qui id conservaret, eum iustum, qui migraret, iniustum fore. sed quem ad modum, theatrum cum commune sit, recte tamen dici potest eius esse eum locum, quem quisque occuparit, sic in urbe mundove communi non adversatur ius, quo minus suum quidque cuiusque sit.

> For Chrysippus famously said that the remaining entities were born for the sake of humans and gods, but that these existed for their own community and companionship, so that humans could draw on wild creatures for their own use without committing an injustice. Since a civil law subsisted, so to speak, between one person and the human race, Chrysippus also assumed that human nature was such that he who would uphold this code was just and that he who would transcend it, was unjust. But just as, even though the theatre it is a communal place, it is still right to say that a certain place belongs to each person who has taken it, so likewise a law in the city or in the universe – communal to all – is not to be opposed that everybody has his own possessions.

Notwithstanding that this account is filtered through a Roman perspective and thus possibly distorted, we could argue that Chrysippus particularly emphasized the vitality of the natural law that manifested itself in uncodified social contracts which acquired significance solely through performance in day-to-day human interactions. In addition, the Ciceronian rendering suggests that Chrysippus dug up a trench between the wise, who intuitively complied with the laws of reason, and the non-wise, whose blatant ignorance of their divinely instituted rational faculties furnished them with a second class status in society, as Baldry (1965: 166) assumes.

Chrysippus is, furthermore, credited with an adherence to private property (*suum quidque*) and the introduction of οἰκονομία – literally the management of the household (οἶκος) – as a principle that simultaneously governed domestic affairs, the city state and the cosmopolis.

A Stoic σοφός would therefore pay equal attention to all three spheres of existence, being aware that they were connected by the rational order of nature (Leshem 2013: 34). Not only the requirement to act prudently with a final objective (τέλος) in mind, but also the responsibility to participate in politics logically arises from this proposition, because in Stoicism the virtuous individual is regarded as a ratiocinative ζῷον κοινωνικόν, i.e. a communal animal, keen on interacting with others on the basis of their shared goodness. This ideal, however, remains detached from reality inasmuch as mankind's natural endowment with sociability is flawed; as already adumbrated, human conglomerates inevitably fall into two categories in Stoic ethics: the wise, who are globally dispersed (yet mentally united by their natural propensity for virtue), and the non-wise, who erroneously deem external goods as more precious or desirable than abstract values such as justice, affectionate moral conduct or human fellowship (Devine 1970: 324). The corollary of this societal bipolarity is an intertwining of wisdom and veritable freedom (ἐλευθερία). Chrysippus' perspective on this issue is illuminated by Diogenes Laertius in his Βίοι καὶ γνῶμαι τῶν ἐν φιλοσοφίᾳ εὐδοκιμησάντων (7, 189):

> καίτοι τίνος χάριν ποριστέον αὐτῷ; εἰ μὲν γὰρ τοῦ ζῆν ἕνεκεν, ἀδιάφορον τὸ ζῆν: εἰ δὲ ἡδονῆς, καὶ αὕτη ἀδιάφορος: εἰ δὲ τῆς ἀρετῆς, αὐτάρκης αὕτη πρὸς εὐδαιμονίαν.
>
> And yet what reason is there that he [i.e. the sage] should provide a living? For if it be to support life, life itself is after all a thing indifferent. If it be for pleasure, pleasure too is a thing indifferent. While if it be for virtue, virtue in itself is sufficient to constitute happiness. [*translation by Robert D. Hicks*]

Without raising questions of attainability or practical implementability – thus retaining a *proto-utopian* dimension – Chrysippus condemns yielding to the seductive powers of pleasure (ἡδονή) and instead proffers a minimalistic, monolithic ingredient-list for the εὐδαιμονία-recipe: virtue (ἀρετή) makes the perfect dish; it is the guiding star towards self-sufficiency, independence and equilibrium. This ties in with a radically indifferent (ἀδιάφορον) stance towards calamities. Many scholarly hairs have been split over the ensuing enigma whether the Stoic conception of (free) will is synonymous with a passive yielding to the blows of fate or with a conscious and active choice to display sangfroid composure while surfing on the tumultous tides of τύχη[158].

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[158] Frede (2011: 31-48; 66-72) provides a concise synopsis that documents the emergence of 'free will' as a Stoic concept. The passive component relates to the impression, a so-called φαντασία καταληπτική, to which the human mind is constantly exposed. Unless individuals actively give their assent (which should ideally be guided by reason), the impression disintegrates into thin air. The human rational faculties adopt a teleological dimension insofar as they help us to distinguish between an alarming and a trivial φαντασία. A Stoic sage (or a *proficiens*) is therefore not wholly emotionless, but capable of gauging the assaults of a προπάθεια, i.e. a burgeoning passion, while putting a stop to πάθη, a fully fleshed or even pathological mental disease. In any given situation, choice (προαίρεσις) between preferred (προηγμένα) and dispreferred (ἀποπροηγμένα) indifferents is given, even though no option might necessarily be intrinsically good. This theorem illuminates that desires and beliefs are ultimately

Instead of participating in any bickering or bean counting that is inconducive to my line of argumentation[159], I intend to align my thoughts with Hill (2000: 69) and Gill (1988: 175) who trenchantly connect the Stoic ideal of virtue to the originally Zenonian concept of καθήκοντα, i.e. appropriate behavioral patterns in line with the God-given λόγος that might be considered feasible supplements for an unworldly ἀρετή. They befit average moral agents to execute their duties correctly without precipitously rushing into morally dubious compromises – an approach which made massive waves in the Romans' reception of these bodies of thought, as shall be demonstrated shortly.

4.3 The Cosmopolis in the Roman Realm: A Tale of Two Cities

The Roman Stoics, most significantly Seneca, Marcus Aurelius, Epictetus and to some extent also Cicero, refashioned and augmented Zeno's and Chrysippus' ideas on the (perfect) human community to accommodate them to the expansionist tendencies of the Roman empire. We are in the fortunate position to find a copious transmission of original sources, which enables us to draw relatively secure conclusions about their cosmopolitan ideas when compared to their Greek predecessors. The founding fathers' legacy resurfaces in the Roman Stoics' ideational articulations inasmuch as they display a similar awareness that the hypothetical and highly praised world community stands in stark opposition to the structural conditions of any *civitas*, or as Seneca phrased it:

> Duas res publicas animo complectamur, alteram magnam et vere publicam qua di atque homines continentur, in qua non ad hunc angulum respicimus aut ad illum sed terminos civitatis nostrae cum sole metimur, alteram cui nos adscripsit condicio nascendi (*De Otio* 4, §1).

> Let us imagine two states, one huge and truly governmental in which gods and humans are entailed, in which we do not glimpse at this corner or that one, but in which we measure the boundaries of our city as coterminous with the sun; the other state is that one which the lot of our birth attributed to us.

This passage provides a beneficial point of departure for us, as it advances the thought that our birthplace is merely an accident. By implication, the ensuing socio-political context(s) and the cultural practices, which we are thrust into, are nothing more than an existential contingency[160].

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subject to assent within the Stoic framework and thus furnish philosophical disciples with autonomy of action (ἐξουσία). Still, we find ourselves on the horns of a dilemma when reflecting on instances of silent acquiescence to an impression: should they be interpreted as cases of assent or rather dissent?

[159] For a discussion of remaining controversies on the seeming contradiction in terms related to the existence of a free will in the determinist causal nexus of the Stoic world view, see White (1985: 116-125).

[160] Seneca displays an acute awareness of this utmost relativity of concrete spatial surroundings and verbalizes it trenchantly in another key passage of *De Otio* 8, § 3: *Quodsi non invenitur illa res publica quam nobis fingimus, incipit omnibus esse otium necessarium, quia quod unum praeferri poterat otio nusquam est*. Seneca's locating of the imagined state in the nowhere (*nusquam*) is strongly reminiscent of Morus' wording of his *opus* in his letter to

Ferocious adherence to "nationalism or ethnocentric particularism" (Nussbaum 2010: 156) thus constitutes a neglect or violation of our second nature, our belonging to a global community[161]. The Stoic sage is aware of the fact that "allegiances are not mutually exclusive" (Richter 2011: 85). Yet, it is questionable inhowfar this oscillation between the two polarities of *civitas* and *mundus* is practically feasible in light of conflicting loyalties. Should or can we, consequently, deduce that the proto-utopian *locus* manifests itself as a non-existent place or an unattainable state of mind precisely in this unbridgeable gap to find an equilibrated golden means?

Instead of providing a makeshift answer to this probably aporetic question, let us – for the time being – dwell on Brown's (2006: 6) valid assertion that the "Stoic world-citizenship is just a metaphor for Stoic agreement with nature." Taking this statement as a springboard, I will attempt to illuminate to which extent the Roman Stoics employ the concept of cosmopolitanism as a peg on which they hang their aims to propel and democratize certain proto-utopian values. Rather than jumping on the bandwagon of the fluctuating day-to-day politics, the Roman Stoics join the ranks of what later came to be known as

> the perfect moral commonwealth [where] the collective problem was solved, not by increasing the range or quantity of satisfactions available, but by a personal limitation of appetite to what existed for every group and individual. The emphasis was upon duty, loyalty, charity and virtue practised by each individual as a precondition of society's regeneration. Only the new man can produce the new society; or rather, the old society made good (Davis 1981: 31).

The Stoics indeed contributed their fair share to mentally equipping readers, whose social stratification was arguably limited and concentrated on the upper classes, with ideas about social duties, sympathetic concern for others or loyal conduct[162]. This ties in with Stoic

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his friend Erasmus of Rotterdam (see chapter 1.1). Parrish (1997: 493-498) lists some thought-provoking observations how Seneca's marginal note on the fictitious state (*res publica quam nobis fingimus*) as well as his comments on the dichotomy between *otium* and *negotium*, i.e. an active versus a contemplative lifestyle, could have provided a source of inspiration for Morus. In his analysis of the fictitious island, Hythloday observes that exaggerated idleness or an addiction to *otium* are considered as transpassing of the common sense agreements among the Utopian islanders. Likewise, the other extrem, namely exhaustive overworking, ought to be shunned: *[Est prospiciendum] ne quisquam desideat otiosus, sed uti suae quisque arti sedulo incumbat, nec ab summo mane tamen ad multam usque noctem perpetuo labore velut iumenta fatigatus.* (*Utopia*, book 2, p. 126)

[161] In comparison to Zeno's and Chrysippus' utterly fictitious thought plays, the Senecan two-cities-model implies the actual existence of a cosmopolis: nation states are incomplete realizations of the transnational ideal and can reach a closer approximation to the perfected version by acting out "egalitarian, humanitarian, and anti-militaristic" (Logan 1983: 91) policies.

[162] Tsolis (2000: 337) proposes a similar tripartite source situation for Stoic cosmopolitanism with ramifications in "panhuman affinity", "natural equality of humans" and "natural sociability of humans" all of which are linked to concrete ethical precepts relating to friendships, general philanthropic sentiments and legal codifications. While I agree with Tsolis' basic premise, I would not subscribe to his generalizing remark that "[t]he Stoic cosmopolis does not under any circumstances constitute an imaginary utopian concept" (2000: 340). Likewise, Obbink's (1999: 195) conclusion that the cosmic city "yield[s] both an ideal world state and a present world state" would need further elaboration. I shall demonstrate that the Stoic exercises in socio-political hypothesis formation retain

doctrines on the natural law and the moderation of desires, which – if exercised conscientiously – could effectuate a rejuvenation of the supposed morally decayed civic body. The parenthetical if-conditional is key to this argument, for the Stoics' thoughts on the perfect (world) community dwindled into little more than lofty ideals when taking the course of history as a yardstick:

> [D]ie Utopie der Stoa ist nicht auf das Sprengende, sondern auf das Vollendete gerichtet, auf immer besseren Einklang mit der vorhandenen Gottnatur Welt. Prätendierte Wertvollkommenheit verhindert derart die intendierte Wertveränderung ebenso, wie sie sie leiten will; das macht die Stoa auch als Utopie merkwürdig reformistisch und konformistisch zugleich (Bloch 1973: 575).

Even though the Stoic cosmopolitan state has not materialized up to the present day, their intellectual achievements should not be underestimated[163]. Absolving their epistemological paradigms from the temporal peculiarities provides us, if nothing else, with thought-provoking syllogistic paradoxes on which we can harness our rational faculties. Stoic cosmopolitan thought, as Weiss (2016: 224) remarks, is therefore valuable for political philosophy, because it allows us to examine the obstacles that prevent the creation of such an idealized society nowadays and might additionally reveal potential paths of eliminating them. The proto-utopian qualities of the Roman Stoics' cosmopolitan concept carefully navigate between articulating critique and presenting philosophical compensation strategies. This shall now be demonstrated by elaborating on their ideas on οἰκείωσις, the foundations of justice, social contracts and natural laws, the texture of the sage, the connection of this human ideal to performative acts of friendship and beneficence, and the link between (a)temporality and *securitas* − all of which must have fed into the prevalent picture that the average Roman citizen must have had of the Stoic cosmopolis as a perfected world community.

4.3.1 οἰκείωσις and the Foundations of Justice

Cosmopolitan tendencies in Roman literature display a strong connection to the concept of οἰκείωσις, which could roughly be translated as 'appropriation (of something) to oneself'.

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a *proto-utopian* dimension inasmuch as they critically adumbrate flaws in the contemporary society and antithetically portray an unattainable ideal.

[163] Dawson (1992: 231-237) draws a sharp line between the Roman Stoics and their Greek predecessors, wittily encapsulated in the following juxtaposition: "Stoics were Romanized more thoroughly than Romans were ever Stoicized." (ibid., 237). Consequently, he passes an unjustifiably harsh verdict on the Roman Stoics, claiming that they infused the cosmopolitan concepts of the Early Stoa with shallow surface meanings and used them primarily as rhetorical exercises. Instead of accepting that Cicero, Seneca, Epictetus or Marcus Aurelius had "nothing more than the shared interests of like-minded friends" (ibid., 231) in mind while flippantly subscribing to the ongoing power mechanisms of the ruling classes, I would suggest that their concern for the Roman populace was genuine. Even though they display a certain compliance with the well-worn Roman system of the *mos maiorum*, their writings should thus be regarded as something more intricate than mere projection screens that would parrot the regime-sympathetic ideology of the day.

Central to this admittedly intricate philosophical notion is the idea that we have an innate fellow feeling towards other human beings. Pembroke (1971: 114-118) tackles the term, first and foremost, from a linguistic perspective, which yields beneficial results: in light of the fact that οἶκος (*house*) constitutes the root of οἰκείωσις, the concept might have originally referred to household members who shared a sentiment of belonging and mutual understanding towards each other (in an idealized setting)[164]. The adjectival derivative οἰκεῖον could also be transferred to the ethical realm and signify 'the proper' or 'the decent' in contrast to ἀλλότριον, i.e. 'the alien' or 'the disconcerting'. When going into depths regarding this dichotomy and examining both its moral and ideological implications, we inevitably land at various layers of οἰκείωσις which have evolved on a diachronic axis and therefore need disentanglement. Our troubles begin with a critical scrutiny of the vague translation 'appropriation'. Does it relate to an act of usurping possession or rather an endearing and charitable commitment to the person standing next in line? Does οἰκείωσις merit being deemed *proto-utopian* in a negative sense because it is presumptuously outlandish? Or does it entail a future-oriented dimension and a potential for social implementation? If so, do the philosophers concerned float concrete suggestions how οἰκείωσις could come to grips with the harsh realities of the Roman empire?

Despite the wide dissemination of the conceptual paradigm in the ancient world, we should not be oblivious to subtle meaning nuances of οἰκείωσις and to the fact that it was not monopolized by Stoicism, but triggered a number of reactions from other Hellenistic (and later) philosophers[165]. One of the most precedent-setting formulations for our purposes stems from the Stoic Hierocles, who lived in the second century AD; Richter (2011: 79) thoroughly analyzes his thoughts, which are recorded in Stobaeus (4, 671,7-673,11). Instead of a full-length quote, I shall illustrate Hierocles' model in an emblematic graph that is comparable to pebbles which, when they are thrown into a pond, create expanding circles on the water surface (Hill 2000: 66).

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[164] We should not jump on board with the romanticizing idea that the Greek οἶκος – and, by analogy, also the Roman *villa rustica* with its inhabitants – was synonymous with a microscopic social unit where pure harmony and bliss prevailed. Rather, these human coalitions encompassed slaves, attendants and other affiliated persons who collaborated on a basis of mutual convenience, i.e. with the goal of securing economic prosperity for the οἶκος and, by extension, also the social status of the family (Cox 1998: 190). The concrete economic dimension of οἰκείωσις might have influenced Thomas Morus' *opus*. When Hythloday describes the commercial performance on the island, he elaborates on the inhabitants' efficient rationale in handling the imports and exports of goods. He concludes that the whole island is like a family because its members pay attention to surpluses or shortages and exchange their abundant material possessions freely without putting every grain on the scales or operating under a strict *do-ut-des* logic: *[A]lterius inopiam alterius protinus ubertas explet, atque id gratuito faciunt, nihil vicissim ab his recipientes quibus donant. Sed quae de suis rebus unicuipiam urbi dederint nihil ab ea repetentes, ab alia cui nihil impenderunt quibus egent accipiunt. Ita tota insula velut una familia est.* (*Utopia*, book 2, p. 146)

[165] Thus, it should not come as a great surprise to us that Arius Didymus, the originally Alexandrian teacher of the later emperor Augustus who summarized Hellenistic doctrines, attests a Peripatetic rather than a Stoic origin to οἰκείωσις, as can be gleaned from a record in Stobaeus, which is analyzed in detail by Richter (2011: 75).
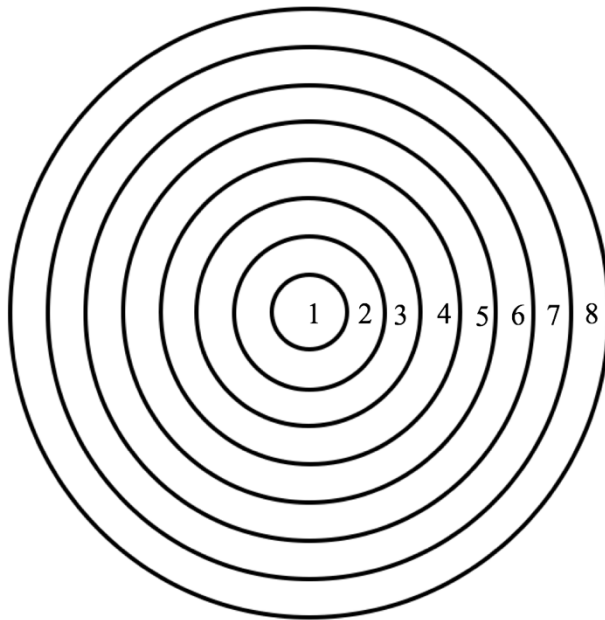
1: διάνοια (*consciousness*), σῶμα (*body*)
2: γονεῖς (*parents*), ἀδελφοί (*brothers*),
   γυνή (*wife*), παῖδες (*children*)
3: θεῖοι (*uncles*), τηθίδες (*aunts*) πάπποι
   καὶ τῆθαι (*grandparents*), ἀδελφῶν παῖδες
   (*children of siblings*) ἀνεψιοί (*cousins*)
4: ὁ κύκλος τοὺς ἄλλους περιέχων συγγενεῖς
   (*circle subsuming all other kin relations*)
5: ὁ κύκλος τῶν δημοτῶν καὶ ὁ τῶν φυλετῶν
   (*circle of demesmen and fellow tribesmen*)
6: ὁ κύκλος πολιτῶν (*circle of fellow citizens*)
7: ὁ κύκλος ἀστυγειτόνων καὶ ὁμοεθνῶν
   (*circle of people from neighboring towns
   and people from the same ethnicity*)
8: ὁ κύκλος τοῦ παντὸς ἀνθρώπων γένους
   (*circle for the entirety of humankind*)

In addition to giving anticipatory hints at certain configurations of Roman cosmopolitanism, Hierocles' model of concentrically expanding circles operates on several psychological levels, as Pembroke (1971: 126-128, 140-141) and Fortenbaugh (1983: 196) trenchantly remarked: First, the Stoic philosopher mentions εὐνοιητική, humans' genetically conditioned drive for and will to self-preservation. This benign behavior towards oneself expands to both familial and kinship relations, i.e. συγγενική or στερκτική, in the second circle and eventually broadens to the whole of humankind, notwithstanding the *caveat* that affections on the last level are a matter of choice, αἱρετική. A globally-encompassing οἰκείωσις is therefore not an automatic and automatized phenomenon, but dependent on human consciousness, benign generosity and an insight into these concentric circles as socially formative processes, or, as Richter (2011: 75) phrased it:

> oikeiôsis is not an appropriative *act* but rather an affective disposition
> – the understanding of one's participation in a relational matrix that
> transcends traditional notions of social allegiances.

Despite the Stoics' intention to spark a feeling of universal kinship and to erase or at least diminish artificially created dichotomies between ξένος (*stranger*) and πολίτης (*citizen*) – or analogously between *barbarus* and *civis Romanus* –, a slightly paradoxical notion might arise in the Hieroclean model: a bird's-eye perspective would suggest that every human entity is neatly embedded in a holistic and homogeneous network of social relations; yet, on closer inspection, we find various facets of individuality curiously juxtaposed – if not to say pitted against each other –, thus betraying a sentiment of irreconcilable identity fragmentation, as Richter (2011: 80) rightly emphasizes. Nussbaum (2010: 157) proffers a valid argument in

asserting that committed Stoics sought to attain self-knowledge and concomitant inner harmony by seeing themselves in reflection of other reasonable people and by assuming that the morally endowed community, perfect in its abstracted form, could function as a source of inspiration for personal conduct, thus interlocking the 'subjective' and 'objective' *proto-utopian* strand (see chapter 1.5.3). In the long run, the most radical manifestations of cosmopolitanism would consequently entail a complete rejection of local affiliations, political partisanship or familial bonds as well as a replacement of the nation as a "morally arbitrary boundary" (ibid., 161). Still, it is questionable whether this cognitive scaffold had the capacity of functioning as an ethical *leitmotiv* for the average Roman citizen[166].

Instead of offering a panacea for the syllogistic enigma of the 'cosmopolitan fragmentation of identity', we should not fail to mention the performative dimension of the οἰκείωσις-concept and its validity for abstract considerations of justice as well as its philosophical origins. The Stoics hold that it is both natural and desirable for ensouled beings to bestow *humanitas* on their fellows and to protect their kin. Such acts of kindness are never static, but dynamic: they require constant effort if they are supposed to contribute to the betterment of society.

In this respect, the human propensity for justice, concord and socially appropriate conduct does not deviate significantly from the genetically programmed behavior of animals, which participate in the divine λόγος too and display intuitive tendencies towards harmonious collaboration rather than mutually detrimental strife. Seneca discusses these parallels at length in his *Epistula Moralis ad Lucilium* 121 and refers, among other aspects, to the perfectionism of bees when they fashion their hives while consenting to the just division of labor in silent unison (*dividui laboris obeundi undique concordia*, § 22). The collectivist tendencies in the bee state provide an illustrative model for Seneca to elaborate on similar human traits, i.e. the intersection of οἰκείωσις, self-preservation, *ratio* and a basic charitable stance towards fellows:

> Omne animal primum constitutioni suae conciliari, hominis autem constitutionem rationalem esse et ideo conciliari hominem sibi non tamquam animali sed tamquam rationali; ea enim parte sibi carus est homo qua homo est. [...] Et tardum est et varium quod usus docet: quidquid natura tradit et aequale omnibus est et statim (§ 14; 20).

> [It is said that] every animal first of all is attached to its own constitution, but that a human's constitution is rational and that a human being, consequently, gets attached to himself not because of animalistic but because of rational motifs; for a human being is dear to himself in consideration of that part which makes him human. [...] What expediency teaches is tedious and fickle: whatever nature bestows is equal to all and immediately accessible.

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[166] The admittedly radical ethics of Panaetius, the 'founding father' of Stoicism in the Roman realm and a member of the so-called Scipionic circle, are a dissenting force in this respect: contrary to later representatives of the Stoic school, Panaetius advocated the maintenance of slavery on Aristotle's and Plato's justificatory basis that some 'races' are naturally subordinate to others and thus unable to ordain their own lives (Logan 1983: 91).

Seneca here translates the technical term οἰκείωσις by using the verb *conciliari*, a practice which he adopted from Cicero who was precedent-setting in this respect (Pembroke 1971: 120). Moreover, he links it to the Stoic *scala naturae*-theory, according to which every material entity took part in the divine λόγος or πνεῦμα (*reason*) that pervaded the universe: whereas soulless objects such as rocks and sticks could be found on one end of the scale, being merely endowed with a simple ἕξις (*state of being*), animals and plants were arranged along the middling positions. The *scala naturae* culminated in humans whose insight into this shared rationality attributed a special position to them in this abstract narrative of ascent (Wildberger 2006: 218).

Justice and equality – two spin-offs generated by *natura* and *ratio* – are not utilitarian. A thorough internalization of this doctrine can lead to an extirpation of unnecessary desires and fears that are mentioned as reiterating psychological burdens in the onset of *Epistula* 121 (§ 4):

> 'Ego,' inquis, 'volo discere quomodo minus cupiam, minus timeam. Superstitionem mihi excute; doce leve esse vanumque hoc quod felicitas dicitur.'
>
> You plead [my Lucilius]: "I want to learn how I can desire less, how I can fear less. Expel superstition from me; teach me that this one thing which is called felicity is irrelevant and inane."

This plea concisely encapsulates a bunch of societal ills (*cupido*, *timor*, *superstitio*) that not only must have plagued Lucilius, but many members of the Roman society, who are represented by the addressee. The elephant in the room is not left unattended for too long, as Seneca suggests considering the origins of *ratio* and human justice in οἰκείωσις as one feasible option to eradicate the enumerated, mentally tormenting problems; still, these philosophical thought plays remain *proto-utopian* in two respects: on the one hand, they have a mirror-function for moral agents who have been led astray; on the other hand, they suggest *ratio* as an antidote to improve (personally). In other words, the Stoic philosopher's therapeutic arguments require individuals to consciously negate their psychological *status quo* as a precondition for change, thus handing to them the reigns of power to effectively initiate action, personal or political.

As demonstrated above, Seneca advances *ratio* as the best tool at Lucilius' (and, by extension, every Roman reader's) disposal not only to attain individual betterment, but also to weave the social cloth out of reasonable filaments, which is possible under the assumption that humankind's natural propensities for goodness – irrespective of (minor) ethnic, cultural or political discrepancies – are generally in chime. Seneca links his appeal to the collective use of reason to the intrinsic value of *cura* for one's own well-being, which is in line with nature:

> Voluptatem peto. Cui? mihi; ergo mei curam ago. Dolorem refugio. Pro quo? pro me; ergo mei curam ago. Si omnia propter curam mei facio, ante omnia est mei cura. Haec animalibus inest cunctis, nec inseritur,

sed innascitur. Producit fetos suos natura, non abicit; et quia tutela certissima ex proximo est, sibi quisque commissus est. (§ 17-18)

> I strive for pleasure. For whom? For myself. Therefore, I care for myself. I escape pain. For whom? For myself. Therefore, I care for myself. If I do everything out of care for myself, care for myself is posited above everything. This sentiment is rooted in all animals, and it is not injected, but innate. Nature brings forth her descendants, she does not cast them away; and since the safest custody is achieved in the nearest surroundings, everybody is entrusted to one's own self.

To my mind, Seneca's approach in this passage of *Epistula* 121 pioneers what Ernst Bloch later termed 'anticipatory consciousness' (see chapter 1.2). *Cura* for oneself and for others is primarily directed towards a hypothetical future. An instinctive pursuit of what is favorable and an avoidance of what is uncertain or even detrimental not only combats lack, but can also effectuate the fulfillment of worthwhile desires, either on a personal or on a societal level[167].

While Seneca clearly concentrates on the perceptive dimension of "other-concern and impartiality" (Annas 1993: 262), we see a shift in emphasis towards (dutiful) performance in Cicero's treatment of οἰκείωσις. Even though he frequently sympathized with Platonic ideas and thus should not be classified as an undiluted Stoic philosopher, Cicero mediates numerous thoughts of the latter school in his philosophical treatises. *De Finibus Bonorum et Malorum* does not constitute an exception to this practice, on the contrary: here, Cicero expands the bulk of Stoic ethics in the third book through the character of Marcus Cato the Younger, who was not only a contemporary and friend for him, but also a staunch proponent of Stoicism. The section dedicated to οἰκείωσις and its interconnectedness with cosmopolitanism reads thus:

> Pertinere autem ad rem arbitrantur intellegi natura fieri ut liberi a parentibus amentur. A quo initio profectam communem humani generis societatem persequimur. [...] Ex hoc nascitur ut etiam communis hominum inter homines naturalis sit commendatio, ut oporteat hominem ab homine ob id ipsum, quod homo sit, non alienum videri. [...] Itemque formicae, apes, ciconiae aliorum etiam causa quaedam faciunt. multo haec coniunctius homines. Itaque natura sumus apti ad coetus, concilia, civitates. Mundum autem censent regi numine deorum, eumque esse quasi communem urbem et civitatem hominum et deorum, et unum quemque nostrum eius mundi esse partem; ex quo illud natura consequi, ut communem utilitatem nostrae anteponamus. Ut enim leges omnium salutem singulorum saluti anteponunt, sic vir bonus et sapiens et legibus parens et civilis officii non ignarus utilitati omnium plus quam unius alicuius aut suae consulit. Nec magis est vituperandus

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[167] Long (1971: 190) adds that the ill-advised building of future hopes on present uncertainties and an adherence to the seductive triggers of passions were considered the chief source of unhappiness by the Stoics. Hamilton (2013: 120) rightly adds a word of caution: being steeped into *cura* is not an exclusively positive state of being. Instead, the term *anceps cura* is recommendable because it draws attention to the fact that this psychological condition is a double-edged sword, as is its counterpart: *securitas*. A constant vacillation between these two poles as well as a shrewd gauging of the objects of *cura* are the two necessary corollaries for any human agent who seeks to consistently take morally approvable actions.

proditor patriae quam communis utilitatis aut salutis desertor propter suam utilitatem aut salutem. Ex quo fit, ut laudandus is sit, qui mortem oppetat pro re publica, quod deceat cariorem nobis esse patriam quam nosmet ipsos. [...] Quodque nemo in summa solitudine vitam agere velit ne cum infinita quidem voluptatum abundantia, facile intellegitur nos ad coniunctionem congregationemque hominum et ad naturalem communitatem esse natos. Inpellimur autem natura, ut prodesse velimus quam plurimis in primisque docendo rationibusque prudentiae tradendis. [...] quod ni ita se haberet, nec iustitiae ullus esset nec bonitati locus. (*De Finibus Bonorum et Malorum* 3, § 62-66)

[The Stoics] believe that it is relevant to the present matter to understand that nature effectuates parents' love for their children. In this starting point we trace the original communal association of the human race. [...] From this springs the impulse that there is a natural and mutual sense of attraction among humans; it also necessitates the view that a human being does not assume himself to be alienated from another precisely because of the fact that he is human. [...] Likewise, ants, bees and storks perform certain actions for the sake of others. This intention is even more conjoined to humans. Therefore, we are equipped by nature to form gatherings, assemblies and states. [The Stoics], moreover, assume that the universe is governed by the divine rule, and that it is, so to speak, a communal city or state of humans and gods, and that each and everyone of us participates in this universe; what follows from this proposition is that we naturally prefer the advantage for the common good to our own. For just as the laws put safety for all above the safety of individuals, thus a good, wise and law-abiding man, who is aware of his civil duty, attends to the benefit for all more than to the avail of a single individual or himself. A traitor to his fatherland ought not to be vituperated more than a person who departs from the common benefit or safety for the sake of his own. Consequently, a person merits praise who seeks death for the common benefit or safety, because it is decent to hold our country dearer than ourselves. [...] Since nobody wants to live his life in utmost solitude, not even with the provision of an infinite amount of pleasures, it is easy to understand that we are born for association and social intercourse with humans, and for the natural fellowship. Furthermore, nature incites our wish to benefit as many people as possible, especially by teaching and transmitting rational precepts of practical wisdom. [...] If that were not the case, there would be no room for justice or goodness.

This densely packed passage conjoins three arguments with ameliorating impetuses of socio-political relevance. First, the theory of humans' natural gregariousness and their inclination to work towards a common goal, i.e. *salus*, runs like a red thread through this tractatus[168]. It is substantiated both by a rejection of solipsism (*nemo in summa solitudine vitam agere velit*) and an analogy from the animal world that echoes Seneca's discussion of the *scala naturae*-theory. According to Cicero, ants (*formicae*), bees (*apes*) and storks (*ciconiae*) form state-like

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[168] According to Hamilton (2013: 59), Cicero articulates this premise in its most concise form in *De Legibus* 3, 3, § 8: *Salus populi suprema lex esto.* On terminological grounds, *salus* is a top-down phenomenon, granted to the populace by the appointed Roman leaders. In contrast to *securitas*, which is a psychological category that denotes mental tranquillity or steadfastness in the face of adversity like its Greek counterpart ἀταραξία, *salus* subsumes the physical well-being and the governmental provision of protective measures for individuals. Whereas Cicero consistently maintained this mind-body-dichotomy pertinent to *securitas* and *salus*, Seneca began to conflate the categories: in his *Epistula ad Lucilium* 73, for instance, he speaks of *securitas publica* (§2) and in *De Clementia*, 19, §8 he enumerates certain values dependent on the emperor's rule, namely *iustitia*, *pax* and *pudicitia*, and integrates *securitas* in this list too. Seneca thus adds an ideologically colored layer to the term, given that the philosophical treatise advocated clemency and moderation, two character qualities that could serve as propitiation strategies for any too rashly proceeding (Roman) leader, in particular Nero, Seneca's disciple and protégé.

coalitions that successfully operate under altruistic motifs. Likewise, humankind is equipped not only with a propensity towards self-preservation, but also with the seeds of justice that trigger socially appropriate behaviors (καθήκοντα) and a sense of selflessness[169].

Second, an awareness of our rational maturity enables us to act coherently and prudently upon our enmeshment in civic duties. This entails a subordination of personal requirements or wants for the common good (*communem utilitatem nostrae anteponamus*) or, in extreme cases, the sacrifice of one's life for the sake of the republic in its semantic facet as a 'matter of common interest' (as opposed to *res persona*, a legal term for matters of personal interest). Instead of performing a metaphorical προσκύνησις at the adulated altar of an abstract cosmopolis, Cato's line of argumentation does not abandon the local affiliations of compatriotism, as Richter (2011: 82) remarks. This might be indicative of Cicero's own political agenda that shimmers through his Stoic speaker[170].

The third argument in the above-cited passage underpins this assumption. By advancing the model-character of the *vir bonus*, who is wise (*sapiens*), complies with the natural laws (*legibus parens*) and has an inherent desire to benefit others (*non ignarus utilitati omnium*), Cicero shrewdly turns tables on the socially-pervasive, yet artificially generated plenitude of unnatural longings (*infinita voluptatum abundantia*) that soaks the victim into a vertiginous vicious circle of restlessness. Instead of preaching restraint, Cicero's Cato advances another relatively simple and straightforward remedy to attain intellectual-emotional fulfillment: teaching (*docendo*) and transmitting prudent precepts to posterity (*rationibusque prudentiae tradendis*) is the only viable path to make the educational component of sagedom fruitful for society.

4.3.2 Natural Laws, Social Contracts, the Virtue-Endowment and Self-Care

The Roman Stoics were – contrary to their Epicurean contemporaries – convinced that an involvement in politics was preferable to a passive stance and beneficial in two ways: first, to

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[169] Even though it is not central to our line of argumentation, a delightful detail of the philosphical rhetoric should not be pretermitted at this point: Cicero hyperbolically inflates the cosmopolitan argument that every human entity is cut from the same cloth by employing a *polyptoton*. In other words, he lets his ultra-Stoic speaker Cato hammer home this message via the fivefold repetition of the word *homo* in its declined forms (*hominum, homines, hominem, homine, homo*), thus alleviating and poking fun at the sternness which was often associated with radical Stoicism.

[170] Ferguson (1975: 163) agrees with this argumentation and asserts that "Cicero transmitted [Stoic commonplaces] to Rome, and in doing so helped the mental revolution which transmuted the city into the world and the world into the city." A word of caution is not out of place here, since the leap from world-city-parallelization to political-ideological exploitation of the cosmopolis-ideal is only a minor one. While Cicero's primary aim was to strengthen republican institutions and the concomitant constitution, some of the values which he advanced were abusively reconfigured in later stages of the principate. Not only his elaborations on the *rector rei publicae*, but also his highly cherished *prudentia*, which he considered as intrinsically desirable within a republican framework, was coopted in the political program of Tiberius and intermeshed with the statesman-quality of *providentia* (ibid., 162).

act as a role model for the average citizen; second, to influence laws that shaped the behavioral patterns of the masses (Brown 2006: 10). In addition, they endorsed the idea of universally applicable governing principles of nature that were generated by the cosmic reason and would, if worst comes to worst, even oust a nation's small-scale legal codifications (Clark 1987: 74, Hill 2000: 70). Cicero even equates *ratio* with *lex* in *De Legibus* I, § 23, thus insinuating that a profound insight into our cosmopolitan nature (instead of an unreflected compliance with man-made laws) could potentially elevate the *conditio humana* to a higher, (semi-)divine level:

> Recta ratio communis est: quae cum sit lex, lege quoque consociati homines cum dis putandi sumus. Inter quos porro est communio legis, inter eos communio iuris est. Quibus autem haec sunt communia, et civitatis eiusdem habendi sunt. Si vero isdem imperiis et potestatibus parent, multo iam magis. Parent autem huic caelesti discriptioni mentique divinae et praepotenti deo, ut iam universus hic mundus una civitas communis deorum atque hominum sit existimanda.

> Correct reason is communal: since that is the law, we should consider humans as united with the gods by law. Moreover, there is a shared law among those who have a shared sense of what is right. People who have these sentiments in common, are to be considered members of the same city. If they obey indeed to the same commands and power institutions, even more so. However, they obey to this heavenly order, to the divine mind, and to a powerful god, so that now this universal world should be regarded as one city that is communal to gods and men.

Even though Cicero frequently and appreciatively accomodated such speculative thought plays in his philosophical œuvre, he also attributed a high value to practical precepts[171], as can be deduced from a key statement of his late work *De Officiis* 1, §157: *vincat cognitionis studium consociatio hominum atque communitas.* Futile and potentially tautological theorizing, says Cicero, is outweighed by humans' natural sociability and superseded by our innate capacity to benefit others: *com-munitas* is a buzzword here, for it etymologically refers to the sharing of compulsory duties that generate a sense of belonging and cohesion in the civic body. Yet, a serious threat emerges in this rosy picture: if people completely surrendered to their societal *munera,* this would mean their fusion into an undifferentiated whole, and a psychologically unhealthy neglect of identity-creating boundaries. Therefore, acts of 'im-munization' by means

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[171] In this respect, Cicero can be seen as a liminal figure. He was an eye witness to a period in the Roman empire that faced the gradual collapse of the patrimonial republican institutions and the concomitant concentration of authority on a few power-hungry individuals (e.g. Pompey or Julius Caesar) who were keen on preempting each other in terms of their megalomania. Well-worn ancestral socio-political structures served only as a hypocritical façade for their plotting, scheming and outmaneuvering. Even though the overwhelming civic reaction (that found a respective reflection in literature) was a return to dealing with personal and subjective concerns such as inner freedom or withdrawal from the public sphere, Cicero – at no point in his life that was full of highs and lows – utterly renounced subtle allusions to the common good and its potential restoration. Both his rhetorical and his political-philosophical writings are saturated with socio-critical remarks and show that Cicero had an axe to grind with the rise of monarchism that would (and did) bring the impending demise of the Roman republic to a close (Kiessling de Courcy 2016: 74).

of legal codes are indispensable, as Hamilton (2013: 39) emphasizes.

Cicero, a fervent defender of self-governed and autonomous action for the republican cause, is on board with this argument. Not least due to his psychogram as a *homo novus* and his unabated trust in the Roman constitution, Cicero would have never seriously considered the abolishment of legal institutions for the sake of instituting a cosmopolitan model that operated under a vaguely defined 'natural law'. Instead of adhering to a black-and-white morality or allocating unalterable character dispositions to his fellow citizens, he espoused a stance of ethical relativism, as for instance in this extract (*De Officiis* 1, § 53), and acknowledged varying degrees of sociability that could conjoin or sever the ties between individuals, respectively[172]:

> Gradus autem plures sunt societatis hominum. Ut enim ab illa infinita discedatur, proprior est eiusdem gentis, nationis, linguae, qua maxime homines coniunguntur. Interius etiam est eiusdem esse civitatis; multa enim sunt civibus inter se communia, forum, fana, porticus, viae, leges, iura, iudicia, suffragia, consuetudines praeterea et familiaritates multisque cum multis res rationesque contractae.

> There are multiple degrees of sociability among humans. For in order to move away from this undifferentiated entity [i.e. the cosmic unity], it is more appropriate to inspect those of belonging to the same populace, nation, and linguistic community, by means of which human beings are connected in the first place. It is even more intimate to belong to the same state; for fellow citizens have many shared communalities among themselves: the forum, temples, porticoes, streets, legislations, trials, law courts, rights of suffrage, and apart from these also friendly and accustomed social affiliations, as well as mutual business-related contractual relations with many people.

This institutional unravelling not only meets a positive response in Morus' utopian model[173], it also necessitates the question what the implications for the individual ethical agent are. In other words, is the provision of top-down legal codifications the most efficient and appropriate means to guarantee security and freedom for society at large? The answer to this question is negative, if we follow the Stoics.

In fact, *virtus* is the highest good and the most reliable source for adequate conduct, yet it does not come free of charge, but reposes on an person's permanent endeavors to instantiate it in particular situations. In book five of *De Finibus Bonorum et Malorum*, Cicero distinguishes

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[172] Long (2008: 56) and Dyck (1996: 39-48) rightly point to a logical disparity in *De Officiis*, in which Cicero presents himself as a proponent of Stoicism while forwarding moral precepts to his 'prodigal son' Marcus – and, by implication, any member of the Roman youth that has veered off course in the wrangling period of civil wars: on the one hand, Cicero argues that the *ius gentium* (international law) should be congruent with the *ius civile* (civil law); on the other hand, he remonstrates that no comprehensive abstract ideal of justice exists which could then be transposed to civil and international legal relations: *Sed nos veri iuris germanaeque iustitiae solidam et expressam effigiem nullam tenemus, umbra et imaginibus utimur* (*De Officiis* 3, § 69).

[173] Morus does not spare the details when he elaborates on the multifaceted magistrates that are dispersed all over the island, on the contrary. In addition to introducing novel official titles such as *Phylarchus*, *Syphrogans* or *Traniborus*, Raphael Hythloday remarks that the Utopians' form of government includes democratic, monarchic and aristocratic elements, an idea that strongly resonates with the model of the mixed constitution, advanced by Cicero in *De Re Publica* 1, § 42-71 and 2, § 1-52.

between humankind's natural capacity for virtue and related moral qualities that spring from it (§ 36): wisdom (*prudentia*), justice (*iustitia*), fortitude (*fortitudo*), moderation (*temperantia*). An adherence to these four cardinal virtues can not be enforced by constitutionally-anchored laws, but is up to every individual's discretion and utterly dependent on free will (*virtutes in voluntate positae*, § 36). The four enumerated qualities, Cicero seems to suggest, are the lowest common denominator for personal perfectibility, i.e. a 'subjective' *proto-utopia* (see chapter 1.5.3), and can contribute significantly to a solid rearmament against assaults of irritating passions, which are envisioned as a four-headed beast in the *Tusculan Disputations* 3, § 24-25: Cicero mentions *voluptas gestiens* (pleasure beyond measure), *libido* (wantonness), *metus* (anxiety) and *aegritudo* (melancholy).

The combat against these four mental commotions was trenchantly classified as an "ontology of security" by Hamilton (2013: 120), who, furthermore, argues that self-care within the Stoic doctrinal framework is coextensive with an utter impossibility in terms of constant performance, thus obtaining an aporetic overtone. It is exactly this unattainable quality of *cura sui* in terms of constant reperformance (see chapter 4.3.1 for Seneca's treatment of *cura* in *Epistula* 121) that allows us to interlock it with *labor*, i.e. repeated effort that motivates ethical agents not only to absorb philosophical precepts, but also to adopt a self-reflexive stance towards their daily exercises and to monitor their educational progress (Hamilton 2013: 72-73).

In addition to this semantically multifaceted emotive-therapeutic dimension, self-care can function as an important antidote to processes of delegating control to external institutions of power. It might have looked tempting for the average Roman citizen to float with the current and to choose the well-worn path to *securitas* by relinquishing the solution of personal *curae* to an uncontested sovereignty, for instance a Roman emperor who would fill the ensuing power vacuum with officially sanctioned and constitutionalized laws[174]. Yet, the Stoics did not recommend a lapse into a state of unquestioned intellectual passivity, for it would cast a person into a precarious situation of submissiveness that entailed the abandonment of autonomy. Likewise, a withdrawal from politics for the sake of a hermit's life would not do the trick.

Empowerment and liberty, two evergreen topics in any idealized setting according to Manuel (1965: 295), were near and dear to the Stoics' cause: effectuating them in a sustained manner could only go smoothly if two necessary preconditions, self-government and self-

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[174] It does not take a mastermind to see the potentially tiny leap from the Stoics' universalist aspirations to the abusive cooption of these philosophical ideals into imperial ideologies; not only did Roman emperors commission laws for their personal benefit, they also employed colonialist concepts – partly inspired by the Stoics' noble cosmopolitan framework to extend benignity and a generally applicable moral code to all people – to legitimize their expansionist policies: the intrusions in and conquests of neighboring territories were presented as *bella iusta* against external aggressors whose primitive state of being required cultivated Roman *finesse* (Pagden 2000: 6).

sufficiency, were warranted. Without further ado, we can bring the circle to a full close by inspecting Seneca's take on virtue as self-rewarding value in *De Vita Beata* 9, § 4 and 11, § 2:

> Interrogas quid petam ex virtute? Ipsam. Nihil enim habet melius, ipsa pretium sui. An hoc parum magnum est? Cum tibi dicam 'summum bonum est infragilis animi rigor et providentia et sublimitas et sanitas et libertas et concordia et decor,' aliquid etiam nunc exigis maius ad quod ista referantur? Quid mihi voluptatem nominas? […] Egregium autem habet virtus apud vos officium, voluptates praegustare!

> You ask what I seek from virtue? [I seek virtue] itself. It does not possess anything better, virtue itself is its own prize. Or is this not magnificent enough? If I told you 'the highest good is an unruinable solidity of the soul, prudent foresight, dignity, salubriousness, freedom, harmony and decency,' do you demand something more now to which these values refer? Why do you mention pleasure to me? […] Virtue has an outstanding duty for you, namely to sample and degust pleasures!

Seneca sheds a different light on this argumentation pertinent to the interplay between *virtus* and *voluptas* in *De Tranquillitate Animi* 4, § 4 by connecting it to cosmopolitan aspirations:

> Ideo magno animo nos non unius urbis moenibus clusimus, sed in totius orbis commercium emisimus patriamque nobis mundum professi sumus, ut liceret latiorem virtuti campum dare.

> Thanks to the greatness of our mind, we have thus not shut ourselves off within the walls of a single city, but we ventured out to have commerce with the whole globe and we have arrogated to ourselves the whole world as a homeland, so that it would be possible to yield a broader field of application to virtue.

Virtus, according to Seneca, is a useful device in opposing its antagonistic sparring partner, *voluptas*, and in generating affiliated praiseworthy qualities (*infragilis animi rigor*, *providentia*, *sublimitas*, *sanitas*, *libertas*, *concordia*, *decor*). Consequently, virtue is the most conducive (Stoic) means to personal fulfillment as well as human perfectibility and should thus be coopted (as far as possible) as a disposition to broaden one's mind and look beyond narrow horizons[175].

Moreover, the thought of cosmopolitan belonging enters into a reciprocal correlation with (acts of) virtue – they are mutually dependent on each other. Universal citizenship in its full scope is hence not a static or omnipresent possession, but a fragile, elusive and volatile condition that is incongruous with smug complacency or with mindless wallowing in evanescent pleasures. Although this rationale might present itself as a viable itinerary for the prototypical, philosophically inclined Roman consumers, it remains a flight of fancy inasmuch

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[175] Morus opts for a different accentuation of the *virtus-voluptas*-dichotomy in his *Utopia* (book 2, p. 162-166). Although his island inhabitants do not seek (sensual) pleasure regardless of right or wrong, they elevate Epicurean-style *voluptas* to the guiding principle of their actions (*censent omnes actiones nostras voluptatem tandem velut finem felicitatemque respicere*). This view is supplemented by an adherence to *virtus* which they assume to be an innate quality that enables a life according to nature (*virtutem definiunt secundam naturam vivere*), a thought that is in line with the Stoics. In the ethical framework of the Utopians, *virtus* and *voluptas* are no longer mutually exclusive, but they complement each other and thus facilitate the pursuit of the *vita beata*.

as the temporal dimension puts a spoke in this lofty Stoic wheel. Exercising virtue consistently at any given moment in time amounts to a counterfactual impossibility for the Stoic *proficiens* because daily contingencies and trivialities come in unhandy. Should cosmopolitan aspirations, therefore, be abandoned altogether, now that the cat has been let out of the bag? In other words, is the cultivation of an "ersatz type of virtue", as Hill (2000: 69) put it, worth one's while if the ideal is frustratingly inaccessible and nothing more than a hypothetical thought experiment? A committed Stoic would answer in the affirmative, as shall be clarified shortly.

4.3.3 Friendship, Beneficence and the Texture of the Sage

Virtue, as already demonstrated, is not only a by-product of the cosmic/cosmopolitan *ratio*, but carries a bunch of other positive attributes in its wake. Their maintenance over time requires self- and other-care that manifests itself most visibly in friendships between virtuous people as Cicero emphasizes in *De Amicitia*, § 20 and § 83:

> Est enim amicitia nihil aliud nisi omnium divinarum humanarumque rerum cum benevolentia et caritate consensio; qua quidem haud scio an excepta sapientia nihil melius homini sit a dis immortalibus datum. Divitias alii praeponunt, bonam alii valetudinem, alii potentiam, alii honores, multi etiam voluptates. [...] Qui autem in virtute summum bonum ponunt, praeclare illi quidem, sed haec ipsa virtus amicitiam et gignit et continet nec sine virtute amicitia esse ullo pacto potest. [...] Itaque in iis perniciosus est error qui existimant libidinum peccatorumque omnium patere in amicitia licentiam; virtutum amicitia adiutrix a natura data est, non vitiorum comes.

> For friendship is nothing but consent in all matters, divine and human, conjoined with goodwill and affection; I am consequently inclined to believe that – with the exception of wisdom – nothing better has been given to a human being from the immortal gods. Some prefer wealth, others good health, others power, some again honors, many also pleasures. [...] But those who put the highest good in virtue certainly do so in a praiseworthy manner; this virtue itself creates and maintains a friendship and without virtue a friendship can exist by no means. [...] Therefore, a detrimental error has befallen those who believe that in a friendship a permission for every uncontrollability and wantonness is granted; friendship was given to us by nature as an assistant for virtue, not as a companion for debauchments.

Virtue is a divinely bestowed gift in line with our cosmic nature and the necessary precondition for friendship, as Cicero clarifies in *De Amicitia*, while other ostentatious goods such as cravings for riches (*divitiae*), physical vigor (*valetudo*), power (*potentia*), honorific decorations (*honores*) or bodily pleasures (*voluptates*) induce fallible human agents to stray from the right path. A commitment to a more abstract understanding of life's essence, daunting as it may be, is the only viable remedy to disassociate oneself from succumbing to unreflected debaucheries. In addition, the providential universe has prenatally written the life script for all human agents who, consequently, only need to consent to their divinely assigned social duties (Weiss 2016:

214). Contrary to the Epicureans who proceed from a negative logical operation – i.e. a no-harm-theory how to avoid injustice that is concisely encapsulated in their motto μὴ βλάπτειν μηδὲ βλάπτεσθαι (see chapter 2.2.2) –, the Stoics nurture a positively inflected idea that conjoins justice, sociability, benevolence and self-sufficiency (*De Amicitia* § 49, 51, 80):

> Nihil est enim remuneratione benevolentiae, nihil vicissitudine studiorum officiorumque iucundius. [...] Non igitur utilitatem amicitia, sed utilitas amicitiam secuta est. [...] Ipse enim se quisque diligit, non ut aliquam a se ipse mercedem exigat caritatis suae, sed quod per se sibi quisque carus est. Quod nisi idem in amicitiam transferetur, verus amicus numquam reperietur; est enim is qui est tamquam alter idem.

> Nothing is more pleasurable than the return of goodwill, nothing more delightful than the vicissitudinous exchange of studious pursuits and services. [...] Consequently, friendship does not follow expediency, but expediency follows friendship. [...] For everybody loves himself not as to gain for himself some profit of self-love, but because everybody is dear to himself on his own account. Unless this same feeling is transferred to friendship, a true friend will never be found; for a true friend is, as it were, another self.

When friendship arises out of lack, a detrimentally imbalanced relationship is the sole logical corollary. Likewise, considerations of utility or a *do-ut-des*-logic can not function as fertile soil for the growth of a lasting amity. In fact, a truly harmonious friendship can only exist between two persons who are on an equal footing as far as their moral stance is concerned and who have internalized the precept that the bestowal of philanthropic gifts is self-rewarding. Even though no objection can be raised against conceiving an honest affection for another person – especially if this person is a mirror image for one's own soul (*alter idem*) –, a virtuous Stoic would not relinquish his capacity for self-care and self-sufficiency, as this is the number-one-strategy both to ensure the integrity of identity boundaries and to avoid too strong emotional dependencies.

This does not mean, however, that an advanced level Stoicism ought to be equalized with egocentrism, on the contrary: a virtuous person would never shy away from benefitting others unconditionally and voluntarily, as Seneca remarks in *De Beneficiis* 1, § 5:

> Non potest beneficium manu tangi: res animo geritur. Multum interest inter materiam beneficii et beneficium; itaque nec aurum nec argentum nec quicquam eorum, quae pro maximis accipiuntur, beneficium est, sed ipsa tribuentis voluntas.

> An act of kindness cannot be touched with the bare hand: it is a matter of intention. Much lies between the material substance of a gift and an act of kindness; therefore, neither gold nor silver nor anyone of those elements which are considered to have the highest value is a kindness, but the willingness of the giver itself.

What truly matters is the desiderative faculty (*voluntas*) and the mental disposition of the giver that leads towards beneficence, which can – as Weiss (2016: 203) remarks – be counted among

the ποιητικὰ ἀγαθά, the 'productive goods' that involve a performative dimension, in contrast to τέλεια ἀγαθά, consummate or 'perfected goods' such as *virtus*. Even if a *beneficium* is nothing more than a token gesture, it is intrinsically valuable as a manifestation of kindness[176].

Acts of munificence and intellectual bounteousness are not alien to Morus' Utopians either. On the contrary, they are cherished as intrinsically desirable and as leading to supreme pleasure:

> Nam et beneficiorum vicissitudine pensatur et ipsa benefacti conscientia ac recordatio charitatis eorum et benevolentiae quibus benefeceris plus voluptatis adfert animo quam fuisset illa corporis qua abstinuisti. (*Utopia*, book 2, p. 164-166)

> On the one hand, reward is indeed achieved by an alternating exchange of well-meaning deeds, on the other hand the awareness itself of having performed an act of kindness and the memory of the affection and endearment of those whom you have supported is more pleasurable to your mind than any bodily sentiment could have been, in case you had abstained from it.

This passage illuminates that the foundational premises of the Utopian gift exchange economy can be traced back to the Stoic framework, according to which these *beneficia* culminate in the model figure of the *sapiens* whose embodiment in a person of flesh and blood is far from a dime a thousand[177]. Seneca paints a picture of this epitome of human perfectibility, an incarnation of the 'subjective' strand of *proto-utopia* (see chapter 1.5.3) in *Epistula* 9 (§ 8, 17, 19) and embeds the description of the individualized model character into larger-scale reflections on human aptitude for friendships and natural sociability:

> Sapiens etiam si contentus est se, tamen habere amicum vult, si nihil aliud, ut exerceat amicitiam, ne tam magna virtus iaceat. [...] Ad amicitiam fert illum nulla utilitas sua, sed naturalis irritatio; nam ut aliarum nobis rerum innata dulcedo est, sic amicitiae. Quomodo solitudinis odium est et appetitio societatis, quomodo hominem homini natura conciliat, sic inest huic quoque rei stimulus qui nos amicitiarum appetentes faciat. 'Omnia mea mecum sunt': iustitia, virtus, prudentia, hoc ipsum, nihil bonum putare quod eripi possit.

> Even if a sage is content with himself, he still wants to have a friend in order to exercise his friendship, if nothing else, so that such great virtue does not lie dormant. [...] No consideration of personal advantage incites him to friendship, but a natural impulse does. For just as a charming craving for other matters is innate in us, so it is

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[176] Weiss (2016: 205) rightly hints at a limitation which the Stoics would not eclipse from the picture: both parties need to be suited for the act of giving and receiving. Seneca trenchantly illustrates this mode of interaction by drawing on a ball-game-simile in *De Beneficiis* 2, 17, § 3-7: the thrower needs to pay attention to the distance that the catcher is able to cover before throwing the ball – otherwise, the ball will inevitably fall to the ground and terminate the game untimely. Quintessentially, Seneca recommends gentleness and thoughtfulness instead of recklessness when bestowing gifts. The task of a virtuous person in this context is to win over novices in the field by exerting repeated and unrelenting kindness (even if the initial attempts fail to come to fruition).

[177] Seneca displays an acute awareness of this circumstance in his *Epistula Moralis ad Lucilium* 42, § 1 where he discusses the nature and rarity of a *vir bonus* whose exemplary way of life goes beyond mainstream morality. In fact, Seneca parallels a nascent Stoic *sapiens* with the legendary creature of the phoenix that would appear only once in 500 years, as myth held it: *[vir bonus] alter fortasse tamquam phoenix semel anno quingentesimo nascitur.*

for friendship. Just as there is a contempt of solitude or a longing for alliance, just as nature makes a human being attached to another, thus there exists a stimulus also in this matter that makes us seek for friendships. [A wise person might say:] 'All my belongings are with me': justice, virtue, wisdom, and this crucial insight that nothing ought to be regarded as good which can be wrested from somebody.

The intricate conjunction of *virtus*, *sapientia* and *natura* resurfaces in *Epistula ad Lucilium* 90 where Seneca, while brushing the topos of the Golden Age and the benefits of communal property (§ 36-38), romanticizes the past of the Roman republic[178] and contrasts it with *ars* or, to put it polemically, the oversophisticated ways of the contemporary elites. However, *ars* is not wholly negative, but Ianus-faced as it is able to befit Stoic disciples to exercise their virtue: *Non enim dat natura virtutem, ars est bonum fieri* (§ 44).

A final synoptic glance at the above-quoted Ciceronian and Senecan passages evinces that they interweave several central parameters that allow us to leap to the core function of friendship within the Stoics' ideal-society-system. Brunkhorst (2005: 18) summerized it thus:

Friendship and justice coincide in the cognitive-epistemic ideal of an intrinsically valuable, self-sufficient practice. As a perfection of justice, friendship is synonymous with the harmony of the classes in the aristocratic republic and the cardinal virtues in the soul of man. Friendship constitutes a legal relationship, because legal relationships presuppose equality. True friendship is the original image of law and justice, since 'friendship', along with 'right' and 'justice,' are relational concepts that represent a relation of equality.

It might strike modern readers as odd that the Stoics "depoliticize the social aspect of justice" (Annas 1993: 293) insofar as they consider this quality as residing within the individual and his/her character dispositions, rather than in legal/contractual relations. The ideal cosmopolitan community is thus one of friendly relations, united by congruity of their morality in accordance with reason, which is – in turn – a reflection of the natural law. *Ratio* can not be extrapolated from *virtus* (or vice versa); only a non-prioritizing adherence to both values in conjunction with magnanimity can lead to a harmonious whole, as Cicero emphasizes in *De Officiis* 1, § 56:

Et quamquam omnis virtus nos ad se allicit facitque, ut eos diligamus, in quibus ipsa inesse videatur, tamen iustitia et liberalitas id maxime efficit. Nihil autem est amabilius nec copulatius, quam morum

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[178] Like Lucretius (see chapter 2.2.2), Seneca does not mince matters in illuminating the moral integrity of the Golden Age dwellers in his *Epistula ad Lucilium* 90. He emphasizes the carefreeness, both mental and physical, of former generations by referring to their contentment with unadorned abodes. In addition, the Stoic philosopher pits this deeply-rooted satisfaction, generated by deliberate restraint, against the prevailing present debaucheries in a concise *sententia*: *Sub his tectis habitavere securi: culmus liberos texit, sub marmore atque auro servitus habitat* (§ 10). Even though *se-curitas* resurfaces here as a Stoic buzzword that echoes the (Epicurean) ideal state of ἀταραξία, Seneca does not admit the status of the *sapiens* to his inhabitants of the Golden Age since such an epitome of human perfectibility must prove his moral incorruptibility in daunting situations, which were lacking in primordial times: *Sed quamvis egregia illis vita fuerit et carens fraude, non fuere sapientes, quando hoc iam in opere maximo nomen est* (§ 44). I am grateful to Thomas Lemmens for this hint.

similitudo bonorum; in quibus enim eadem studia sunt, eaedem voluntates, in iis fit, ut aeque quisque altero delectetur ac se ipso, efficiturque [...] ut unus fiat ex pluribus. Magna etiam illa communitas est, quae conficitur ex beneficiis ultro et citro datis acceptis, quae et mutua et grata dum sunt, inter quos ea sunt firma devinciuntur societate.

> And even though every virtue draws us closer to it and effectuates that we appreciate those who seem to possess it, justice and courtesy still chiefly accomplish this. Furthermore, nothing is more amiable or connected more closely than the similitude of character in good people; for when they have the same zealous goals, the same purposeful ideals, it logically follows that each is delighted by the other one just as by himself, [...] and that one whole is created out of many as a result. Huge is also the partnership which is conceived after the back-and-forth-exchange of acts of kindness, which – as long as they are mutual and well-meaning – fasten a bond of solid partnership among those between whom they take place.

Despite the developmental, progressivist perspective advanced in these passages – which ideally leads to unanimity of mindsets or shared systematic beliefs, i.e. ὁμόνοια or ὁμοδοξία (Weiss 2016: 207) –, the Roman Stoics are astonishingly taciturn when it comes to forwarding concrete suggestions as to how these ideals could manifest themselves in middle-tiered political institutions (Annas 1993: 311). When searching for an applied philosophy that instructs the eudaimonistic conduct of life, we are thus compelled to return to the discrete human subject.

4.3.4 Temporal Disillusionment and the Alterity-Encounter of the Self in the Social Body

A final glance at two representatives of the late Stoa, Epictetus and Marcus Aurelius, and their treatment of the cosmopolitan idea will enable us to round off the diachronic examination of this conceptual paradigm and its accomodation within our *proto-utopian* framework.

Epictetus, a released slave in the post-republican period (50-138 CE), envisions the globe-encompassing city as a body governed by divine reason in which αἵρεσις (*choice*) is bound to the mind's mainspring or driving force for an individual's actions (ἡγεμονικόν): humans' primary duty is to consent to their naturally given sense of loyalty, affection for others and moderation of personal desires – qualities that operate like a hand, a foot or another limb within the whole physical and cosmopolitan body (*Discourses* 2, 10, § 3-6):

> πολίτης εἶ τοῦ κόσμου καὶ μέρος αὐτοῦ, οὐχ ἓν τῶν ὑπηρετικῶν, ἀλλὰ τῶν προηγουμένων: παρακολουθητικὸς γὰρ εἶ τῇ θείᾳ διοικήσει καὶ τοῦ ἑξῆς ἐπιλογιστικός. τίς οὖν ἐπαγγελία πολίτου; μηδὲν ἔχειν ἰδίᾳ συμφέρον, περὶ μηδενὸς βουλεύεσθαι ὡς ἀπόλυτον, ἀλλ᾽ ὥσπερ ἄν, εἰ ἡ χεὶρ ἢ ὁ ποὺς λογισμὸν εἶχον καὶ παρηκολούθουν τῇ φυσικῇ κατασκευῇ, οὐδέποτ᾽ ἂν ἄλλως ὥρμησαν ἢ ὠρέχθησαν ἢ ἐπανενεγκόντες ἐπὶ τὸ ὅλον. διὰ τοῦτο καλῶς λέγουσιν οἱ φιλόσοφοι ὅτι εἰ προῄδει ὁ καλὸς καὶ ἀγαθὸς τὰ ἐσόμενα, συνήργει ἂν καὶ τῷ νοσεῖν καὶ τῷ ἀποθνήσκειν καὶ τῷ πηροῦσθαι, αἰσθανόμενός γε, ὅτι ἀπὸ τῆς τῶν ὅλων διατάξεως τοῦτο ἀπονέμεται, κυριώτερον δὲ τὸ ὅλον τοῦ μέρους καὶ ἡ πόλις τοῦ πολίτου. νῦν δ᾽ ὅτι οὐ προγιγνώσκομεν,

καθήκει τῶν πρὸς ἐκλογὴν εὐφυεστέρων ἔχεσθαι, ὅτι καὶ πρὸς τοῦτο γεγόναμεν.

> You are a citizen of the world and a part of it, and moreover no subordinate part, but one of the leading parts in so far as you are capable of understanding the divine governing order of the world, and of reflecting about all that follows from it. Now what is the calling of a citizen? Never to approach anything with a view to personal advantage, never to deliberate about anything as though detached from the whole, but to act as one's hand or foot would act if it had the power of reason and could understand the order of nature, and so would never exercise any desire or motive other than by reference to the whole. The philosophers are thus right to say that if a wise and good person could foresee the future, he would cooperate with nature even if it came to illness, death, or mutilation, because he would recognize that these are allotted as a contribution to the ordering of the whole, and that the whole is more important than the part, and the city than the citizen. But since we can not in fact foretell what will come about, it is our duty to hold to what is naturally more fit to be chosen, since that is what we were born for. [*translation by Robin Hard*]

In his idiosyncratic, sassy and jussive tone, Epictetus' showcases a cynically-inspired version of cosmopolitanism that puts alethic inquiries on an equal footing with philantropic benefaction (Long 2008: 56). His moral diatribes elevate the motto of παρρησία, i.e. freedom of speech with all its unflattering implications, to a formal principle. Dawson (1992: 243) remarks that this stylistic technique not only constitutes a return back to Cynicism, to which the connection was severed in the Middle Stoa, but also enables Epictetus to articulate valid criticism despite his personal background and his lack of belonging to the high society.

Epictetus draws on the cosmopolitan mindset to demonstrate that a shameful action (αἰσχύνη) never pertains to losing external (material) goods, but is tantamount to humans' ignorance to properly interpret impressions by refusing to adhere to the right reason that provides them with the moral template for the performance of their social duties[179]. In other words, every individual is equipped with cognitive armaments that – if applied appropriately and consistently – function like lubrication-oil in a smoothly running and well-maintained societal machinery. Dawson (1992: 234) suggests that this rationale is a slimmed-down and partially blended version of the Stoic πρόσωπον-theory set up by Panaetius, according to which every individual needs to take on social masks, for instance as a father, a husband, a son, a

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[179] In the ideal case this rationale makes the individual equanimous in any given situation, even in the face of death. In some cases, it is even permissible to actively terminate one's life. Morus' views on a person's deliberate choice of death strike a similar chord: Hythloday remarks that, even though the Utopians care for their diseased with great affection, they recommend suicide in hopeless cases, i.e. when the sickened can no longer fulfill their social duties. The priests and magistrates then feed the ailing people concerned with hopes for betterment in the afterlife, an approach that is fuelled by Christian doctrines: *Ceterum si non immedicabilis modo morbus sit, verumetiam perpetuo vexet atque discruciet, tum sacerdotes ac magistratus hortantur hominem, quandoquidem omnibus vitae muniis impar, aliis molestus ac sibi gravis, morti iam suae supervivat, ne secum statuat pestem diutius ac luem alere, neve quum tormentum ei vita sit, mori dubitet: quin bona spe fretus, acerba illa vita velut carcere atque aculeo vel ipse semet eximat vel ab aliis eripi se sua voluntate patiatur* (*Utopia*, book 2, p. 186).

citizen or a slave master, that trigger morally normative codes of conduct[180].

Epictetus' cosmopolitan ideas are *proto-utopian* in their critique- and compensation-function because they mirror and react to the post-republican ideology, as Kiessling de Courcy (2016: 76) observes: the Stoic philosopher not only recommends obedience to a universe-pervading law, but also preaches a reconfiguration of the freedom-concept. Liberty and self-sufficiency are absolved from the Ciceronian-Senecan deliberations on the cosmopolis insofar as they are no longer infiltrated with subtle injunctions that could lead to concrete political commitments and sovereign-propitiation (Hamilton 2013: 55). Epictetus constructs these abstract ideals as irrespective of the political sphere and thoroughly dependent on an examination of one's inner world, in particular one's conscience[181]. Lacking this introspective, *ratio*-seeking dimension would, moreover, turn a human being into a socially parasitic, functionless entity and a contributor to a pathological condition in the civic body.

The body-metaphor as a mediating foil also resurfaces in Marcus Aurelius' articulations of the cosmopolitan concept. In his *Meditations* 4, § 29, for instance, he compares a person who refuses participation in cosmic reason to an abscess on the universal body of humankind (ἀπόστημα κόσμου ὁ ἀφιστάμενος καὶ χωρίζων ἑαυτὸν τοῦ τῆς κοινῆς φύσεως λόγου). Even though his position as a Roman emperor was diametrically opposed to Epictetus' societal vantage point as an ex-slave, their Stoic ideals overlap as they both highlight Roman citizens' duties to execute their local roles, i.e. to "think cosmically and act locally" (Richter 2011: 85).

In addition, Marcus Aurelius' philosophical thoughts are characterized by an inherent bipolarity, if not to say a logical schism. Asmis (1989: 2228) stresses that he had to meander between two opposite poles, i.e. his life as a Roman emperor and his passion for Stoicism, which must have confronted him with hardly bridgeable gaps. In other words, he constantly oscillated between "the world of pure being and the dross of the sublunar world in which [he was] compelled to live" (Richter 2011: 85). This could also be the reason why his *Meditations*

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[180] Gill (1988: 173-177) further investigates how Cicero accomodates the largely lost Panaetian body of thought in his *De Officiis*, which allows us to reconstruct its corner stones. Interweaving his Stoic predecessor's practical precepts enables Cicero to forge a bridge to the eponymous *officia*, i.e. appropriate actions in specific situations that befit moral agents to attain consistency (*aequabilitas*) and propriety (*decorum*) both in their professional metier and in their behavioral conduct. In addition, Seneca yields an unambiguous testimony in *Epistula ad Lucilium* 94, § 1 that Panaetius' πρόσωπον-theory also resonated with later generations and strongly influenced the Stoics' practical ethics: *Eam partem philosophiae quae dat propria cuique personae praecepta nec in universum componit hominem sed marito suadet quomodo se gerat adversus uxorem, patri quomodo educet liberos, domino quomodo servos regat, quidam solam receperunt, ceteras quasi extra utilitatem nostram vagantis reliquerunt, tamquam quis posset de parte suadere nisi qui summam prius totius vitae conplexus esset.*

[181] Stanton (1968: 185-187) investigates Epictetus' strategies of interlinking cosmopolitan bodies of thought with practical principles of conduct more thoroughly.

sometimes have a slightly nihilistic ring to them[182]. In his attempts to resolve ensuing ego-threatening tensions, Marcus Aurelius advances the idea of retreat into the sacrosanct boroughs of one's own soul, fortified by the walls of logical reasoning, that equally sever and strenghten one's bonds with the cosmopolitan λόγος, as can be deduced from *Meditations* 3, 11, § 2-3:

> οὐδὲν γὰρ οὕτως μεγαλοφροσύνης ποιητικόν, ὡς τὸ ἐλέγχειν ὁδῷ καὶ ἀληθείᾳ ἕκαστον τῶν τῷ βίῳ ὑποπιπτόντων δύνασθαι καὶ τὸ ἀεὶ οὕτως εἰς αὐτὰ ὁρᾶν, ὥστε συνεπιβάλλειν ὁποίῳ τινὶ τῷ κόσμῳ ὁποίαν τινὰ τοῦτο χρείαν παρεχόμενον τίνα μὲν ἔχει ἀξίαν ὡς πρὸς τὸ ὅλον, τίνα δὲ ὡς πρὸς τὸν ἄνθρωπον, πολίτην ὄντα πόλεως τῆς ἀνωτάτης, ἧς αἱ λοιπαὶ πόλεις ὥσπερ οἰκίαι εἰσίν· τί ἐστὶ καὶ ἐκ τίνων συγκέκριται καὶ πόσον χρόνον πέφυκε παραμένειν τοῦτο τὸ τὴν φαντασίαν μοι νῦν ποιοῦν καὶ τίνος ἀρετῆς πρὸς αὐτὸ χρεία, οἶον ἡμερότητος, ἀνδρείας, πίστεως, ἀφελείας, αὐταρκείας.

> For nothing is as effective in creating greatness of mind as being able to examine methodically and truthfully everything that presents itself in life, and always viewing things in such a way as to consider what kind of use each thing serves in what kind of universe, and what value it has to human beings as citizens of that highest of cities of which all other cities are, as it were, mere households, and what this object is that presently makes an impression on me, and what it is composed of, and how long it will naturally persist, and what virtue is needed in the face of it, such as gentleness, courage, truthfulness, good faith, simplicity [or] self-sufficiency. [*translation by Robin Hard*]

Putting things into a cosmopolitan perspective while pondering on the right use of virtue(s) is conducive to mental sanity, says Marcus Aurelius. Inner retreat is the necessary precondition to restore one's emotional equilibrium and to properly (re)arrange the figments of imagination. The idea to deliberately disassociate oneself from the tumultous hustle and bustle of the crowd has famously been termed *la citadelle intérieure* by Pierre Hadot (1992: 310), who additionally points to the constant intellectual struggles to which the Roman emperor was exposed (ibid.):

> [Marc Aurèle a aperçu] le devoir de l'amour pour les hommes avec qui nous ne formons qu'un seul corps, qu'un seul arbre, qu'une seule cité, mais aussi le devoir de ne pas se laisser entraîner à adopter leurs fausses valeurs et leurs maximes de vie. C'est le drame de la vie de Marc Aurèle. Il aime les hommes et veut les aimer, mais il déteste ce qu'ils aiment. Une seule chose compte pour lui, la recherche de la vertu, de la pureté de l'intention morale.

Marcus Aurelius' search for truth and moral perfection – nowhere embodied more concisely than in the Platonic coinage καλὸν καί ἀγαθόν – was certainly an endeavor worthy of a (Stoic) philosopher. Ferguson (1975: 176) agrees that "Marcus would not have so written to himself if

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[182] Richter (2011: 83) draws our attention to a very illustrative example in his *Meditations* 5, § 1 (which is timeless and thus also relatable for contemporary readers): Marcus Aurelius complains about the difficulties of getting out of bed in the morning, knowing about all the daily chores that lie ahead of him. His motivational strategy involves a personal reminder that the fulfilment of these partially bothersome social duties is part of his human nature too.

he had not had a hankering after Utopia". The Stoic philosopher additionally tried to resolve a practically-oriented enigma in his *Meditations*, which admittedly entails a realistic rather than a speculative scope, namely the clash between collectivism and individualism, as Oldenquist (1982: 192) underlines: on the one hand, Marcus Aurelius insinuates that solipsism or hermitage is no permanent or consolatory antidote. On the other hand, he highlights that human beings "possess meaningful noninstrumental values" (ibid.) that can only blossom in a social and institutional framework. What quintessentially matters in this regard is a careful individuation of social conglomerates that ensures the integrity of identity boundaries. In other words, allowing a process of alienation in the self is a serviceable means to combat a paralyzing absorption into naturalized institutions of power that are suitable to govern the masses, or as Hamilton (2013: 19) phrased it:

> The remedy for our debilitating will to security, which keeps us locked into patterns of questionable legitimization and complacency, is achieved by encountering alterity. Rather than remaining safely ensconced within identity, we must open up to difference, including above all self-difference. Instead of retreating before fear, we should anxiously accept and joyfully celebrate whatever may come. In brief, instead of security, we should appreciate the value of insecurity, even the insecurity that renders problematic the word 'we'.

It is precisely this "value of insecurity" that emerges as the key quality conducive to a 'subjective' *proto-utopia* (see chapter 1.5.3) in Marcus Aurelius, especially in his espousal of ephemerality. He forwards the idea that temporality is an illusion or at least a cognitive category that is inconducive to eudaimonistic aspirations. This ties in with the premise that (cosmic) life is not static, but in permanent flux and only a matter of personal opinion: ὁ κόσμος ἀλλοίωσις, ὁ βίος ὑπόληψις (*Meditations* 4, 3). Consequently, even though interim sorrows are legitimate, ensuing exigencies and constraints of temporality are ultimately rendered futile within the predetermined causal nexus and the providential universe, which are, according to Long (1971: 194), two key components in Stoic physics.

In light of this pervasive determinacy, dynamicity and relativity of all matters, it is comforting to know that the universal λόγος and its manifestion in human reason are, so to speak, the last resorts for the ethical agent in any situation and, simultaneously, the adhesive sealing material that glues members of the civic body together. Marcus Aurelius brings forth this proposition in his *Meditations* 4, § 29 by inverting the argument and by highlighting the condemnable, exiled position of people who escape their rational faculties:

Εἰ ξένος κόσμου ὁ μὴ γνωρίζων τὰ ἐν αὐτῷ ὄντα, οὐχ ἧττον ξένος καὶ ὁ μὴ γνωρίζων τὰ γινόμενα. φυγὰς ὁ φεύγων τὸν πολιτικὸν λόγον· τυφλὸς ὁ καταμύων τῷ νοερῷ ὄμματι· πτωχὸς ὁ ἐνδεὴς ἑτέρου καὶ μὴ πάντα ἔχων παρ᾽ ἑαυτοῦ τὰ εἰς τὸν βίον χρήσιμα.

> If he is a stranger in the universe, a person who has no knowledge of what it contains, he is no less a stranger who has no knowledge of what comes about in it. He is a fugitive, he who flees from the reason that governs our social life; a blind man, he who closes the eyes of his mind; a beggar, he who depends on another and does not possess within himself all that is necessary for life. [*translation by Robin Hard*]

Freedom of opinion, independence of others and a capacity for individual self-realization are, as Tsolis (2000: 342) highlights, not only linked to reason, but in fact the parameters that could trigger social change if they are expanded to wider social circles or humanity at-large, thus "put[ing] into practice the vision of the wise state in the best possible way" (ibid.).

4.4 Synopsis: No Place like the Cosmopolis

To conclude, we have seen that Cicero, Seneca, Epictetus and Marcus Aurelius integrated the cosmopolitan concept and related doctrines with a number of intentions. While recurring to certain features of the Zenonian and Chrysippan precursor-models, i.e. the lack of institutional specifications in the cosmopolitan community and the indifferent (ἀδιάφορον) stance of the Stoic *sapiens* towards all values other than virtue (ἀρετή), they harnessed on and bent this conceptual paradigm in different shapes. Not only do they all display an awareness of the fact that the cosmopolis is tantamount to an οὐ-τόπος, i.e. a non-existent place, the enumerated philosophers also refuse to let it float around in an intellectual vacuum. Rather, they conjoin this epistemological template with other Stoic precepts, e.g. the origins of justice in οἰκείωσις and their interrelation with friendships based on *virtus*, the importance of *cura (sui)* and the ambivalence of *se-curitas*, the opposition between positive *com-munitas*, based on a dutiful enactment of one's societal roles (καθήκοντα), and the threat of identity fragmentation or even the dissolution of the ego. These enlisted parameters are comparable to a jigsaw or a house of cards: taking out one element would make the whole construction fall apart. Moreover, Stoic standpoints on justice, security or friendships shaped and impacted the frictionless proceedings in the city-state and the Roman empire at large. Therefore, the basic Stoic premises of the *polis* and the *cosmopolis* are not wholly different; on the contrary, they both recur to *natura* and *ratio* as vague semantic footings: this interpretative openness explains the suitability of cosmopolitan bodies of thought for ideological exploitation and propagandistic reconfiguration.

Quintessentially, 'subjective' and 'objective' strands of *proto-utopia* (see chapter 1.5.3) interlock in the advanced concepts: the initial trigger for societal betterment lies within the individual human agent, and is thus equivalent to a bottom-up approach. In other words, the

seeds of justice are sowed in every human being – whether or not they come to fruition is contingent on a person's αἵρεσις (*choice*) and his/her deliberate moderation of desires, which makes the cosmopolitan model and kin doctrines comply with Finley's 'ascetic' strand of *proto-utopia* (see chapter 1.5.3). Finally, the examined cosmopolitan thought experiments are conscious of a tripartite temporality in which humankind is embedded: any Stoic *proficiens*, if he is committed to personal improvement, should engage in (1) mindfulness-exercises to re-evaluate past misconducts, (2) a critical scrutiny of the present *status quo* and an affirmative admission of an alterity encounter within the self and (3) a future-oriented *cura sui* that manages to prevent moral lapses via their anticipation. The dynamicity of the outlined three-step-process makes it recursive. In this respect, it is an approximable substitute type for a static, unattainable ideal presented in the perfected globe-encompassing society of *sapientes,* the cosmopolis.

Conclusion and Prospectus

> Ihr wollt alle nur die Liebe zur Möglichkeit haben.
> Ich habe nur die Liebe zur Unmöglichkeit.
>
> (Christian Morgenstern, *Stufen. Eine Entwicklung*
> *in Aphorismen und Tagebuch-Notizen.*)

The end of our journey, which might have partially resembled a *tour de force* through a plethora of literary genres, gives us the opportunity to cast a glance back at the distance covered. The acts of idealization under scrutiny displayed a temporal, (meta-)literary and moral-ideological dimension. It might be seductive to correlate the first feature exclusively with Golden Age narratives, the second with Arcadian renderings and the third with Cosmopolitan deliberations. Yet, the mentioned categories of analysis, i.e. temporality, metaliteracy and moral-philosophical ideology, are not neatly separable, but have fluid boundaries and can thus not be mapped onto the three investigated conceptual paradigms without admitting joint congruities and syntheses. In addition, the dichotomy between *utopia* as (1) the *perfected* and (2) the *non-existent place* continues to swing like the sword of Damocles above the heads of beholders who inspect ancient *proto-utopian* narratives. Can we, consequently, pull the divergent strings together? Or should we rather embark on Christian Morgenstern's *bon mot* and embrace the viewpoint that the texts under examination are so saturated with deeply entrenched paradoxes and counterfactual impossibilities that they are at least as irresolvable as the Gordian knot?

Presumably, steering a middle course is the best solution. Let us begin by recapitulating the major propositions. One aim of this thesis was to isolate three conceptual paradigms, the Golden Age, Arcadia and the Cosmopolis, under the triangulation points of Stoicism and Epicureanism. After peeling off the various layers of myth and political ideology while paying attention to intertextual allusions, we have seen that Lucretius, Horace and Vergil incorporated the Golden Age topos to stress their nostalgic yearning for a long-forgotten past, to anticipate the reinstantiation of a quasi-paradisiacal state under the emperor to come or to highlight their general (moderate) belief in a Roman narrative of progress. The Island of the Blessed, an offspring of the Golden Age, was incorporated by Horace as a site of mental escape and inner retreat to provide his readers with a literary remedy vis-à-vis debilitating historical events, i.e. the consequences of social revolts and civil wars. This metaliterary technique partially resurfaced in the Vergilian Golden Age renderings (particularly in the *Georgics*) and thus allowed us to move from this paradigm to Vergil's 'Arcadian' cosmos. In his *Eclogues*, the Augustan poet holds out the ideal of an *en gros* unblemished pastoral paradise that is utterly contingent on his poetic imagination. Even though his blissful bucolic renderings are
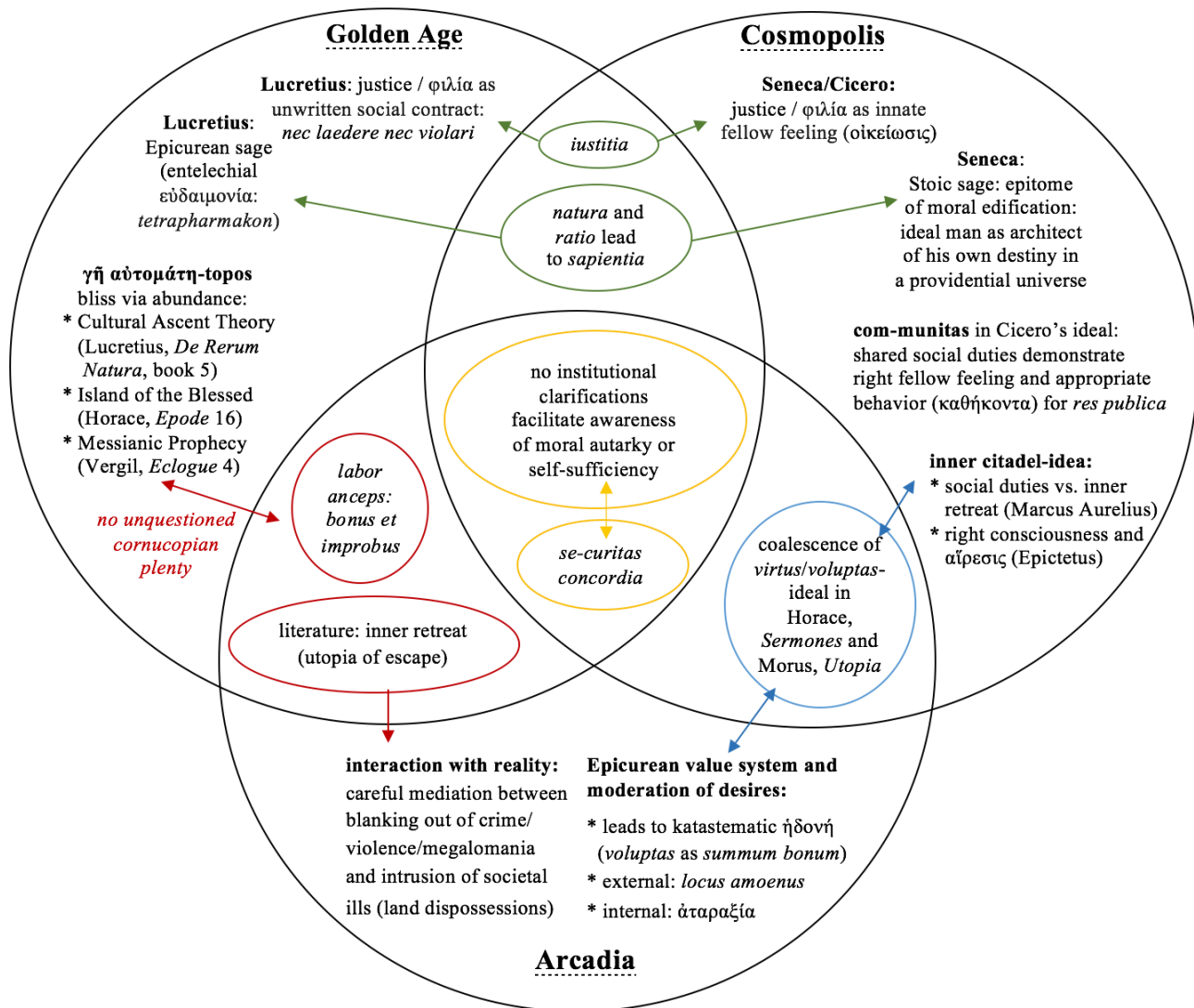
occasionally disrupted by forceful intrusions of contemporary reality (most significantly the land dispossessions by which Vergil was personally affected), they transport both the idea of an externalized *locus amoenus* that can be found in a rural retreat, and an internalized state of ἀταραξία attainable via the moderation of one's desires. In his *Sermones*, Horace picks up these (Epicurean-'Arcadian') narrative threads, but reroutes them as well as attached semi-serious tongue-in-cheek suggestions for societal betterment through a kaleidoscope of satirically inflected critique. Likewise, the Cosmopolis functions as a means to address socio-political deficiencies by advancing the unattainable ideal of universal citizenship of individuals who have reached moral perfection. This concept can be regarded as a translucid foil which Roman Stoic philosophers – without abandoning their local affiliations or compatriot sentiments – incorporated in their writings to reap a rich harvest of linked ethical precepts encompassing, but not limited to the ramifications of virtue, the intrinsic value of non-utilitarian friendship, the relation of laws and justice, the delusional implications of (a false conception of) security, and the relativity of time.

Arguing over the amount to which Thomas Morus and his successors were influenced by the texts under scrutiny is certainly a highly-rewarding academic endeavor of comparative philology (which I rudimentarily touched upon in my sparse references to the eponymous *Utopia*), but it can only yield limited insights into the narratological density of the selected sources. Likewise, a straightforward labeling of Arcadia, the Cosmopolis and the Golden Age either as (1) the *perfected* or as (2) the *non-existent* place, two dimensions that continue to resonate with the term 'utopia', leads to nowhere. Instead of frantically trying to accommodate the selected ancient texts within the framework of this literary genre (whose central constituents continue to be a subject of academic discussion), I demonstrated that we should not wear blinkers or think in binary oppositions. In fact, the literary-aesthetic, socio-political and philosophical complexity of the examined texts unfolds holistically under the assumption that they are imbricated with rhizomatic networks that defy any unilateral interpretation. This concession afforded us with an expedient epistemological basis to translate the concept of *proto-utopia* onto the selected sources.

This line of reasoning prompts the crucial question: what is *proto-utopia*? First, I approached this novel coinage by inspecting the current state of research on *utopia* in disassociation of two related concepts, *myth* and *ideology*; second, I singled out pertinent parameters of these theoretical constructs by means of a comparative and contrastive analysis to arrive at a working definition of *proto-utopia* that encompasses a (1) generic, (2) functional and (3) content-related dimension.

In a third step, I translated the adumbrated theoretical deliberations onto three conceptual paradigms, the Golden Age, Arcadia, and the Cosmopolis. Quintessentially, we have seen that they span a number of literary genres (didactic poems, epodes, eclogues, satires, philosophical treatises), all of which have a (more or less obvious) moralizing-educational impetus. When illuminating the texts under scrutiny from a functional vantage point, they can also be labeled thematizations of *proto-utopian* potentialities, because they all used 'negation' of the *status quo* as the primary logical operation to create a blankspace that was then filled with a recurrent set of philosophical values that play a major role in Stoicism and/or Epicureanism (e.g. *concordia*, *virtus*, *labor*, *iustitia*, *voluptas*, *voluntas*, *securitas*). The discussed authors might have pursued several purposes by integrating this checklist: first, to hold up the mirror to and declare moral bankruptcy on a version of reality that is diametrically opposed to these values; second, to highlight their own role on the current political stage by insinuating that they would not bend to detrimental ideologies or top-down legislations with muzzled voices; third, to advert to the consolatory and therapeutic role of both, literature and philosophy. The latter aspect comes to the fore more or less prominently, depending on the respective generic inflection of the (implicit or explicit) protreptic.

Consequently, neither the Stoic nor the Epicurean inflection of *proto-utopia* can be boiled down to a single parameter in terms of content. Rather, the selected ancient testimonies balance many narrative strands and carefully counteract the notion of stasis, which is so often attributed to the utopian genre, by a dynamic and multi-faceted temporality that adopts (and partly conflates) the four temporal utopian categories advanced by Karl Mannheim (see chapter 1.2). Cicero, Lucretius, Vergil, Horace, Seneca, Epictetus and Marcus Aurelius take into consideration socio-political as well as historical circumstances of their past, present and future, charge them either with nostalgic yearning or with hope for future betterment and thus aim to effectuate, in the broadest sense, their recipients' "education of desire" (Levitas 2011: 208) by means of awareness-raising. In other words, the articulation of critique and the provision of (philosophical) compensation strategies go hand in hand. Ultimately, this line of reasoning justifies the collapse of the οὐ/εὐ-dichotomy since the Golden Age, Arcadia and the Cosmopolis resort to the elusive qualities of the non-existent or unattainable space (οὐ-τόπος) while drawing their readers' attention to options for subjective and society-encompassing perfectibility that will ideally lead to εὐ-δαιμονία as well as the creation of an entelechial εὐ-τόπος. This chain of thought once again highlights the increment value which the selected source texts attribute to Epicureanism and Stoicism, when chanelled through the prism of *proto-utopia*. In conclusion, I now wish to present a synoptic model:

Golden Age | **Cosmopolis**

Lucretius: justice / φιλία as unwritten social contract: *nec laedere nec violari*

Seneca/Cicero: justice / φιλία as innate fellow feeling (οἰκείωσις)

Lucretius: Epicurean sage (entelechial εὐδαιμονία: *tetrapharmakon*)

iustitia

natura and *ratio* lead to *sapientia*

Seneca: Stoic sage: epitome of moral edification: ideal man as architect of his own destiny in a providential universe

γῆ αὐτομάτη-topos bliss via abundance:
* Cultural Ascent Theory (Lucretius, *De Rerum Natura*, book 5)
* Island of the Blessed (Horace, *Epode* 16)
* Messianic Prophecy (Vergil, *Eclogue* 4)

com-munitas in Cicero's ideal: shared social duties demonstrate right fellow feeling and appropriate behavior (καθήκοντα) for *res publica*

no institutional clarifications facilitate awareness of moral autarky or self-sufficiency

labor anceps: bonus et improbus

inner citadel-idea:
* social duties vs. inner retreat (Marcus Aurelius)
* right consciousness and αἵρεσις (Epictetus)

no unquestioned cornucopian plenty

se-curitas concordia

coalescence of *virtus/voluptas*-ideal in Horace, *Sermones* and Morus, *Utopia*

literature: inner retreat (utopia of escape)

interaction with reality: careful mediation between blanking out of crime/violence/megalomania and intrusion of societal ills (land dispossessions)

Epicurean value system and moderation of desires:
* leads to katastematic ἡδονή (*voluptas* as *summum bonum*)
* external: *locus amoenus*
* internal: ἀταραξία

Arcadia

On the one hand, this graph visualizes some of the most salient topics which have emerged in our examination of the Golden Age, Arcadia, and the Cosmopolis; on the other hand, it seeks to draw attention to thematic points of convergence that could adumbrate further research desiderata, including but not limited to the following questions: How do the earliest configurations of *iustitia* within the Stoic and Epicurean framework overlap? To what extent are Lucretius' and Seneca's notions of the sage as an 'epitome of human perfectibility' two sides of the same coin? How is the fusion of *virtus* and *voluptas* accomplished in Morus' *Utopia* (especially on the basis of Horace's *Sermones*)? Can we discover further ramifications of *concordia* and *securitas* as cornerstones of Roman political philosophies? These speculations illuminate that *proto-utopia* as an investigative lens has not only yielded beneficial cross-fertilizations with regard to the examined Stoic and Epicurean testimonies, but also provides a promising theoretical framework to continue the discussion of Roman literature under this angle of vision. *Quod dixi, dixi. Nunc et alii continuent.*

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Appendix

English Abstract

The aim of this thesis is to demonstrate that the concept *proto-utopia* provides an innovative theoretical framework to investigate three abstract paradigms, i.e. the Golden Age, Arcadia and the Cosmopolis, in their Epicurean or Stoic inflections in Roman literature. The term *proto-utopia* is a novel coinage which is defined on the basis of current research on *utopia* and in disassociation of two related concepts, *myth* and *ideology*. In addition to reevaluating the persistent etymological dichotomy of *utopia* as the 'non-existent' or the 'good' place (οὐ-/εὐ-τόπος), the theoretical part of this thesis pays special attention to the generic, functional and content-related dimension of *proto-utopia* and how it plays out when inspecting the writings of selected ancient authors, i.e. Cicero, Lucretius, Vergil, Horace, Seneca, Epictetus and Marcus Aurelius. The methodological tool kit for the main part encompasses close reading strategies, a comparative and contrastive analysis as well as an adumbration of intertextualities and dialectic relationships of the Latin and Greek treatments of the Golden Age, Arcadia and the Cosmopolis. These three literary paradigms are saturated with *proto-utopian* potentialities as they produce idealized fictitious settings by omitting undesirable features of the contemporary reality. This structural move has two intentions: on the one hand, it serves as a *Sittenspiegel* and draws readers' attention to socio-political deficiencies by omitting them in the alternative realm. On the other hand, the logical operation of negation creates a blankspace that is filled with a recurrent set of philosophical values (*concordia*, *virtus*, *labor*, *iustitia*, *voluptas*, *voluntas*, *securitas*), which have a crucial function in Stoicism and/or Epicureanism. Finally, without being ignorant towards the three levels of temporality (the past, the present and the future), Cicero, Lucretius, Vergil, Horace, Seneca, Epictetus and Marcus Aurelius not only avert to the consolatory and therapeutic role of both, literature and philosophy, but they also forward concrete strategies how to attain subjective εὐδαιμονία and/or society-encompassing perfectibility, especially in times of political commotion.

Keywords: proto-utopia, Golden Age, Arcadia, Cosmopolis, Epicureanism, Stoicism

German Abstract

Die vorliegende Arbeit setzt sich zum Ziel, das Konzept der *Proto-Utopie* als innovativen theoretischen Rahmen zu entwickeln, um damit drei abstrakte Paradigmata, das Goldene Zeitalter, Arkadien und die Kosmopolis, in ihren epikureischen und stoischen Ausprägungen in der römischen Literatur zu untersuchen. Da der Begriff *Proto-Utopie* eine Wortneuschöpfung ist, soll er zunächst in zweifacher Hinsicht umrissen werden: auf Basis der bestehenden Forschungsliteratur zur *Utopie* sowie in Abgrenzung zu verwandten Konzepten, dem *Mythos* und der *Ideologie*. Der theoretische Teil dieser Arbeit nimmt eine Reevaluierung der bestehenden etymologischen Dichotomie im Hinblick auf den Terminus *Utopie* vor: Es soll erläutert werden, ob es sich um einen ‚nicht-existenten' oder einen ‚guten' Ort (οὐ-/εὐ-τόπος) oder beides handelt. Daran knüpft ein Abriss der genrebezogenen, funktionalen und inhaltlichen Dimension der *Proto-Utopie* und inwiefern diese drei Parameter in ausgewählten Schriften von Cicero, Lukrez, Vergil, Horaz, Seneca, Mark Aurel und Epiktet zur Geltung kommen. Die Methodologie, die im Hauptteil Anwendung findet, umfasst *Close-Reading*-Strategien, vergleichende bzw. kontrastierende Analysen sowie Verweise auf Intertextualitäten in den ausgewählten lateinischen und griechischen Quelltexten, welche sich mit dem Goldenen Zeitalter, Arkadien und der Kosmopolis befassen. Ihr *proto-utopisches* Potenzial entfalten diese drei Paradigmata dadurch, dass sie fiktive sowie idealisierte Räume erschaffen, indem sie Probleme der zeitgenössischen Gegenwart aussparen. Diese strukturelle Vorgehensweise verfolgt zwei Intentionen: Einerseits dient sie als Sittenspiegel und lenkt die Aufmerksamkeit der Leser auf aktuelle sozio-politische Krisenherde durch deren Auslassung in der alternativen Welt; andererseits wird die logische Operation der Negation verwendet, um eine Leerstelle zu schaffen, die dann mit wiederkehrenden philosophischen Werten (*concordia*, *virtus*, *labor*, *iustitia*, *voluptas*, *voluntas*, *securitas*) gefüllt wird, welche eine zentrale Rolle im Epikureismus und in der Stoa spielen. Ohne die drei zeitlichen Dimensionen der Vergangenheit, Gegenwart und Zukunft außer Acht zu lassen, gelingt es den ausgewählten Autoren mittels dieser drei Paradigmata nicht nur auf die trostspendende und therapeutische Rolle der Literatur und der Philosophie hinzuweisen, sondern auch ihren Rezipienten konkrete Ratschläge zu geben, wie sie besonders in Zeiten des politischen Aufruhrs subjektive εὐδαιμονία erreichen und/oder Maßnahmen ergreifen können, die zur gesellschaftlichen Perfektionierung beitragen.

Schlagwörter: Proto-Utopie, Goldenes Zeitalter, Arkadien, Kosmopolis, Epikureismus, Stoa