Utopia: A plagiarized Genesis

"To philosophize is always to rehabilitate the essential importance of the human dimension, and hence the dignity of man."[i]

In these times of grave uncertainty and unrest, in which humanity is plagued by threats visible and invisible on a global scale, many ask for the "meaning" of it all and clarity in the direction it is all supposed to be going. Not a few put their hope into the future and await the establishment of a "new normal" in which peace and an improved condition of life will finally settled in.

Offers for this new "utopia" are plenty, and as oftentimes is the case, much of what is being offered as the "better society" is already well underway or already implemented.

Posed in starkest contrast are two integral propositions for global transformation both of which take into account the upheaval of a broken world as an opportunity for the establishment of a perfected society. The one is Christianity, which proposes a transcendental paradise; the other is by modern man's secular design. Yet, as with all things created by a master less than the Creator Himself, modern man's utopia too derives its foundations, in degraded plagiarization, from the premises of its very opposite.

Thus no source may be better suited to look for the underlying *logic* of the conglomeration of contemporary ideologies than Sacred Scripture. We should hone in on two particular passages one from the Old and one from the New Testament.

First, let's consider Genesis 3:16-19:

> "To the woman he said, 'I will greatly increase your pangs in childbearing; in pain you shall bring forth children, yet your desire shall be for your husband, and he shall rule over you.' And to the man he said, 'Because you have listened to the voice of your wife, and have eaten of the tree about which I commanded you, 'You shall not eat of it,' cursed is the ground because of you; in toil you shall eat of it all the days of your life; thorns and thistles it shall bring forth for you; and you shall eat the plants of the field. By the sweat of your face you shall eat bread until you return to the ground, for out of it you were taken; you are dust, and to dust you shall return."

Second, we read in St. Paul's Letter to the Colossians (3:9-11):

> "Stop lying to one another, since you have taken off the old self with its practices and have put on the new self, which is being renewed, for knowledge, in the image of its creator. Here there is not Greek and Jew, circumcision and uncircumcision, barbarian, Scythian, slave, free; but Christ is all and in all."

This idea is echoed in his letter to the Galatians (3:26-28):

> "For through faith you are all children of God in Christ Jesus. For all of you who were baptized into Christ have clothed yourselves with Christ. There is neither Jew nor Greek, there is neither slave nor free person, there is not male and female; for you are all one in Christ Jesus."

These passages reveal some key factors about human nature and his psychological make-up that aid us in understanding the ideologically and politically motivated aspirations of modern man.

Genesis provides an explanation of two concrete *consequences* of sin; furthermore it gives specific reference to how they link to the two sexes: women will *suffer increased pain in childbirth* and men will *experience toil and fatigue* in their *labors*.

Striking in today's political and social landscape is that mankind seems to be set out to eradicate specifically these *effects of sin*. And how could it be different? If Sacred Scripture is right about the human condition, than these effects *are indeed effecting* each and every human being and – being consequences of sin – should be the target of man's will to be overcome.

What makes the modern *ideology* precisely what it is, is *how* these two effects are to be overcome. The sought-after ideal for the woman is a state in which she is freed from the "pain in childbirth". Many misdirected attempts to reach this end are evident, contraception and abortion at the top. What all misdirected attempts have in common in this specific regard is that they separate *sex* from *procreation* and thereby "defang" it, reducing it to a mere hedonistic action.

These ill-advised attempts are further exploited by the abortion industry which has successfully banned all conversation about the existing negative effects of abortion on the woman, (post-abortion trauma, suicide, and a plethora of physical dangers) — much less on the unborn child — while parading "rights" and "reproductive freedoms" which thrive on the aforementioned attempt to overcome the effect of sin (specifically for the woman).

How does modern society (or the utopian seekers within it) set out to eradicate *toil of human labor*? Labor and work are deemed conquerable – for the elect few? – by the digitalization and technologization of man and the work process. The illusion prevails in the seeming overcoming of the toilsome process of manual labor by mechanized chains of production. It is the dream of the leisure society while machines "do the work". The basis of this thinking is ultimately Marx, who posits, as Thomas Molnar points out: "The ideal is therefore the total man, who no longer *works*, but only *creates* to satisfy his needs."[ii]

The toll for mechanized society is high: As Heidegger points out in his criticism of technology, man will increasingly take on technology as a reference point, developing a relation to things and finally to other human beings in which they are in "standing reserve". Everything at man's disposal will seem to him a *resource of a technical application*. Man himself will become a resource of that sort and will be used, ordered, and disposed of according to the needs at hand. The final step will be that man will not just treat his fellow men as resources but ultimately his relation to technology will fall back on himself: he will understand himself merely as a machine and the line between man and machine will be blurred beyond recognition.

A fitting example of this which is already in place is the amalgamation of globalization, economic theory, and transhumanism currently circulated by the *World Economic Forum* with its "Fourth Industrial Revolution" and the advocated "Great Reset". It is striking that this "reset" is pushed by those whom this way of thinking poses as "ideal", namely, those who do not exert themselves in (manual) labor, i.e. millionaires, rather than the hardworking man and his dignified labor.

This is not all. Overcoming the *effects of sin* is not sufficient for the modern utopist. All "inequalities" and "differences" must be overcome to reach the new human "paradise".

St. Paul's aforementioned letter sheds light on another aspect of sin that will allow us to complete the picture of the modern strive to "perfection": *unity in Christ*.[iii] In his letter Paul gives us an image of the perfect society – the society of the kingdom of God. He calls for the *unity* of all mankind in light of which all differences between people will fade away. The source of unity is Christ himself. Christ is the one for "all" and who will grant unity "in all." This unity we see mimicked in other aspect of the utopian dream of modern man; it is a unity of mankind, the aspiration for universal brotherhood and world peace.

St. Thomas Aquinas in his commentary on the passage sheds further light on this: [*Emphasis added*]

> "Here then we have five ways in which people are different. The **first way is by sex**, which Paul excludes when he says, here there cannot be [male and female], because men and women do not differ in mind, but in their physical sex. Secondly, people are made **different by their native lands**, and Paul excludes this when he says, Greek and Jew. For although the Jews were believers and the Greeks unbelievers, yet both have rational minds: 'Or is God the God of Jews only? Is he not the God of Gentiles also?' (Rom 3:29). The third distinction is **based on rite** [as the rite of circumcision], for some had the law, while others did not; yet 'The same Lord is Lord of all and bestows his riches upon all who call upon Him,' as Romans (10:12) says. A fourth **difference is in language**: barbarian, Scythian. Scythia is toward the North. What is barbarous is what is foreign or alien. Thus barbarians are foreigners, and one is absolutely a barbarian who is alien to human nature as such, that is, insofar as it is rational. And so barbarians are those people who are not ruled by reason and laws; they are slaves by nature. But there is no difference in Christ, because although they do not have the civil law, they still have the law of Christ. The final difference is **based on state**: for some are slave, and others free; but in Christ they are all alike: 'The small and the great are there, and the slave is free from his master' (Job 3:19). Therefore, none of these differences exist in Christ, but Christ is all, and in all."

All of these *differences* today are marked as be ignoble and resolvable. The modern strive towards utopia calls for an eradication of all of these differences and calls for a new kind of *unity*, a unity based on a false homogeneity.

With regards to the *difference of sex*, we ought to believe that there *is not difference*. Biological sex is replaced by the concept of "gender" and this in turn is supposed to be a "construct", and thereby object subjectivist change; it is something dominated by the human will.

Further the *difference of national identity*. This difference is to be overcome by globalism, the idea that the whole world could be conceived of as one unified group of people. Globalism is already prevalent in politics, social discourse, and public opinion. Countless examples of unbound mass immigration in Western countries, and the unceasing call for "universal solidarity" by supra-national entities give evidence to this fact.

The *distinction of rite* is supposed to be overcome by religious plurality and religious relativism. Relativism and the statement that "all religions are fundamentally the same" have become solid parts of modern mentality and indeed reinstitute a heathen conviction that reaches back centuries in the history of philosophy. Pope em. Benedict XVI phrased it best, putting his finger directly on the wound: "The evangelization of culture is all the more important in our times, when a 'dictatorship of relativism' threatens to obscure the unchanging truth about man's nature, his destiny and his ultimate good."[iv]

The *difference of language* can be understood in the broader context of "barbarian and Greek," that is "primitive culture" and advanced or "enlightened" society – and their respective concepts. This has wide reaching and diverse consequences. One of them is the rewriting of history. Achievements of civilized societies (which we are told ought not to be called thus) are downplayed while primitive cultures are lauded despite inhuman practices and violations against human dignity. Cultural achievements are relativized in general and true inculturation is dismissed as "cultural appropriation". The list is endless but even a cursory glance at so-called "pop culture" persuades one of the equivocation and homogenization of culture happening every day. "Higher forms of culture" are no longer tolerated, be they in art, painting, architecture, music, or poetry.

Alas the final differentiation that "must" be overcome is the distinction of *master and slave*. This Gospel image resonates in modern philosophy predominantly in Karl Marx, who bases his thought in G. W. F. Hegel. Marx proposed the overcoming of the class struggle by revolution in order to reach a classless, stateless, communist society.

Today's leveling of all classes presupposes a divestment of personal interest in favor of the "good" of society. The "Great Reset", to stick to this example, wants to transform society into a large entity modeled after a business. Klaus Schwab calls this "stakeholder capitalism," which signifies that society – now understood as a gargantuan corporation – seemingly "works to meet all the needs of its stakeholders: customers, employees, partners". Under the guise of altruism, social justice, and compassion, entrepreneurs are thus enabled to pass money privately into each other's pockets while giving the public the impression that *their* needs are indeed being served. Hegel, then, remains on point, when he writes: "Humankind has not liberated itself *from* servitude but *by means of* servitude" ("Es ist die Menschheit nicht sowohl *aus* der Knechtschaft befreit worden, als vielmehr *durch* die Knechtschaft").[v]

Dawning – after the eradication of all differences – is the "new world" the "new order" of things: No more tension, acrimony, or bitterness between the sexes, nations, religious creeds, educational standings, ranks, or statuses. Only one society, whole, universal, benefactorial, all in all, and all for all, made in the image of its creator: man.

Unfolding in the crucible that is the basin for the future of society emerges thus this "new order". It is a society aping the unity of Christ, the antithesis to it, the mimicry of God's true plan for mankind. Striking hereby is the *overcoming* of differences. No more are differences a welcome opportunity to grow and enrich one another (like man and woman in marriage or the relation between teacher and student), but rather become an obstacle to the newly posed "unity". Man – with all his differences, freed from sin – is no more "transfigured" in Christ, but rather his differences are call cancelled in an all-encompassing "homogenization".

Christianity teaches that man will be assumed into God, according to the image of the *one* Christ, united in one purpose: to know, love, and serve God. Yet in the post-Christian society, another kind of unity is on the rise: a unity of all mankind – differences dissolved – into one alleged peaceful whole, with one purpose: to serve itself and those that have constructed it.

The difference is blatant: one of these intents for mankind *is possible* and indeed can be achieved by the help of grace; the other is an illusion and doomed to fail. It is endorsed by the one who once told mankind: "your eyes will be opened and you will be like gods, who know good and evil."

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[i] MOLNAR, Thomas: *The Decline of the Intellectual* (1961), ch. 11 "The Intellectual as Philosopher"

[ii] MOLNAR, Thomas: *Satre Ideologue of our time*, 130.

[iii] Mirrored in Ephesians 4:1-6: "I, then, a prisoner for the Lord, urge you to live in a manner worthy of the call you have received, with all humility and gentleness, with patience, bearing with one another through love, striving to preserve the unity of the spirit through the bond of peace: one body and one Spirit, as you were also called to the one hope of your call; one Lord, one faith, one baptism; one God and Father of all, who is over all and through all and in all."

[iv] BENEDICT XVI.: *Homily at Bellahouston Park*, Glasgow, Thursday, 16 September 2010.

[v] G. W.F. HEGEL: *Philosophie der Weltgeschiche* (1837), p. 875.