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## From utopia to dystopia – a vision of human nature in Renaissance political utopias and classical science-fiction dystopias

### Summary

The reason to write this article is to set Renaissance utopias by More or Campanella against classical science-fiction dystopias by Zamyatin, Huxley, Orwell or Lem from a perspective of a vision of human nature within them and the destruction that threatens it. The text has been inspired by a thesis by Chad Walsch who claims that there has been a surprising “psychological shift” in human political thinking which means turning utopian thinking into dystopia one. The article is an attempt to trace the context of this shift and to present social and philosophical conditions which influence the fact that a notion of human nature, a vision of happiness and ideal society as well as a model of individual existence have become perceived in a completely different way. The phenomenon has eventually resulted in a gradual relinquishment of utopian way of thinking in favour of dystopia texts that suggest the danger of creating such systems.

**Keywords:** utopia, dystopia, human nature, More, Campanella, Huxley, Orwell, Zamyatin, Nietzsche

### Introduction

What inspired me to write this text was a thesis proposed by Chad Walsh in 1962 who claimed that nowadays we have to deal with one of the most spectacular and vital psychological shifts experienced in entire culture. As we read in *From utopia to Nightmare* the phenomena is evident in “the shift from

utopian to dystopian fiction”<sup>1</sup>. With these words the author sums up a long process of reevaluating key social ideas that are reflected in literature, philosophy and other forms of expression of human consciousness. The 20<sup>th</sup> century is the time of review in ideas domain, characterized firstly by a total change of attitude towards utopia of any type: from literary utopias by More or Campanella, through Enlightenment texts by Morelly or de Malby to the 19<sup>th</sup> century utopian political systems that were tried out and put into practice. Popularity of these works has been replaced by that of dystopias, texts by authors such as Zamyatin, Huxley or Orwell. However, one should bear in mind, the changes noticeable within literature are just expression of an enormous shift in human self-understanding.

The purpose of the present article is to trace a certain aspect of this process. Referring to an analysis and a comparison of classical utopian texts and of those classified as dysutopian ones, I will try to show how much a vision of a human being changed, the vision that was reflected in literary texts characteristic for their periods. Similarly to Welsh, I assume that the texts were not created in a void but are expression of the spirit of the times. Therefore, one can find parallels within them, for example those to philosophical trends dominating at the historical moment they were being created. I am going to juxtapose texts that remain very distant in time: Renaissance, classical utopias by More and Campanella with the most important 20<sup>th</sup> century dystopias by Zamyatin, Huxley, Orwell or Lem. An attempt to present similarities and differences assumed by anthropological visions of these texts, which is the subject of the first section of the article, leads to its second part, in which I am going to show their philosophical source.

Nevertheless, juxtaposition of texts that come from such distant periods should be justified. The texts do differ as they were created in completely different cultural and historical contexts and the issue itself has already been analyzed by thinkers such as for example F.E. Manuel, F.P. Manuel<sup>2</sup>, or K. Kumar<sup>3</sup>. However, they are united by a similar structure and intention. As it was pointed out by Ch. Walsh and R. Babae, creating dystopia has the same origin as utopia<sup>4</sup>. They are: strong criticism of a dominant social system and a crave for a better, human-friendly world. Both, utopias and dystopias are crisis works that were created at a moment that is named by I. Pańkow as a historical

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<sup>1</sup> Ch. Walsh, *From Utopia to Nightmare*, New York and Evanston 1962, p. 117.

<sup>2</sup> F.E. Manuel, F.P. Manuel, *Utopian Thought in the World*, Oxford 1979.

<sup>3</sup> K. Kumar, *Utopia and Anti-utopia in Modern Times*, Oxford 1987.

<sup>4</sup> Ch. Walsh, op. cit., R. Babae, *Critical Review on the Idea od Dystopia*, “Review of European Studies” 2015, vol 7, no. 11.

fault<sup>5</sup>. Other examples of such faults include such processes as disintegration of medieval structures watched carefully by More or European-American crisis after the World War I witnessed by Huxley. Contemporary reading of utopias and dystopias shows what visions of human nature are likely to create crisis situations which are similar in structure despite being distant when it comes to the time they were created. Finally, the comparison between utopias and dystopias is justified by the fact that they do refer to each other. Dystopias resemble utopias as they deliberately copy their anthropological assumptions and social implementations. On the other hand, they subject them to harsh criticism as a result of different evaluation. It is possible thanks to a procedure that reveals final consequences of the assumptions of utopian systems. An act of abolition of private property, proclaimed by Plato and approved by More or Campanella, in Zamyatin's *We* turns each single human being into an anonymous number deprived even of their right to sexuality. Orwell shows that the rule of abolition of private property must be accompanied by political cynicism and terror. An attempt suggested by More, the one of breeding a pacifist, incapable of aggression human individual in Lem's *Return from the Stars* becomes a cruel betrayal depriving a man not only of aggression and risk-taking but also of an ability to experience emotions intensively. Dystopias are in relation to utopias. This relation can be classified as a parodic one unless one notices deep seriousness and bitterness of the texts. Even though their authors sometimes use parodic procedures, we do indeed deal with philosophical commentaries to all forms of utopian ways of thinking in a literary shape.

### **Human nature in utopias and dystopias – similarities and differences**

The main point that combines political systems presented in utopias and dystopias is a peculiar anthropological vision. Specific solutions developed by these systems are its consequence. A concept of human nature which is discussed here can be summarized in a form of three assumptions:

1. Human nature is imperfect, thus it requires perfecting as well as control.
2. Human nature is malleable and it is to be modified on a base of settlements that have been established in advance
3. An aim of human being's life is happiness, comprehended as a blissful state of pleasure and satisfaction because of finding one's place in a public system.

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<sup>5</sup> I. Pańków, *Filozofia utopii*, Warszawa 1990, p. 42.

The first assumption may seem controversial. Renaissance utopias are of an idyllic character and a society within them functions peacefully. However, lack of trust in reference to human nature is proved by numerous fragments found in works by both More and Campanella. These texts mention a necessity of control, watching over and shaping a human being. It can be noticed especially clearly in *The City of the Sun* in which Campanella lists numerous mean tricks in which a human being is to participate if only appropriate social conditions appear: poverty will make them a mean, deceitful thief whereas great wealth a faithless, haughty ignoramus swindler<sup>6</sup>. More does not use such emphatic designations although he has no doubts that a human being that has been left by themselves will not become “a noble savage” that has their origins in Rousseau’s texts. On the contrary, to achieve internal nobility and goodness a human being is bound to undergo a variety of restrictions, education and control. This assumption corresponds with another one which states that “improvement of human nature” is reasonable, hence the fact that majority of space within utopian texts is devoted to questions such as education and a process of appropriate bringing up.

A very similar situation takes place in dystopia works – a strict control, surveillance and well thought out training are necessary for a man to behave decently. Huxley and Lem are aware of the fact that any step further means surgical or pharmacological intervention in a human organism in order to remove whatever is not needed any more. The procedure mentioned before, the one of periodical bringing along of utopian assumptions can be found in descriptions of “betryzacja”, soma activity or Bokanowski’s process.

There is one more fact worth considering. The analyzed dystopias are of two kinds. In *We* by Zamyatin and in *Nineteen Eighty-Four* by Orwell the most important problem is a question of freedom. These novels draw our attention to a fact that the assumptions mentioned before inevitably associate with a totalitarian character of all utopias. On the other hand, *Brave New World* by Huxley and *Return from the Stars* by Lem bring up a problem of human happiness. Nevertheless, all these novels suggest that as a result of activities undertaken by systems mentioned and justified by points 2 and 3, something as subtle as human nature can be easily destroyed.

It is obvious for Orwell and Zamyatin that our nature can be destroyed by terror and inhuman limitation of our freedom in which finally our trials of improving human nature are converted. The characters of both novels are eventually broken as a result of applying strength solutions. At the same time Orwell and Zamyatin are brilliant exposers of that how some systems referring to

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<sup>6</sup> T. Campanella, *Państwo Słońca*, Warszawa 1951, p. 81.

assumptions which are not different from those apparently praiseworthy and introduced for example by More, give in to a destruction resulting from cynicism of a ruling authority. The world presented in *We* and *Nineteen Eighty-Four* is a dark one in every aspect: it is filled with surveillance, violence, control, poverty, restrictions in reference to sexuality. However, once we have a closer look, we notice it does not differ that much from systems created by More or Campanella, which under color of being idyllic also do display its totalitarian character. One of the common ideas presented in Renaissance utopias and texts by Zamyatin and Orwell is abolition of private property. It originates from an idea of creating a community of equal and similar individuals who are to have the same, free access to any goods. Certainly, its introduction is closely connected with anthropological assumptions: human nature is not basically good and strong so it ought to be protected from depraving influence of poverty or wealth; people also cannot differ from each other significantly as it would trigger undesirable affects and emotions.

The first important text in the western culture which suggests abolition of private property is certainly Plato's *The Republic*. It is the one More refers to in *Utopia* sketching out a picture of agrarian society, within which everybody wears the same, has an identical house, does not retain fruit of their own work for themselves but brings it to a market at which everyone can equip oneself with whatever they need. Constant availability of goods does not protect an individual from pernicious desire to possess things and gather as many of them as possible for themselves only. A life scenario of all individuals is fundamentally similar, nearly everyone is occupied with physical work and lives according to the same scheme deriving pleasure from a well-ordered lifestyle. It is interesting that a key category that most often appears in More's *Utopia* is "usefulness" and the lifestyle that has been imposed on inhabitants of Utopia island is continuously considered from this perspective. Utopia residents deal with "useful" things, during both work and leisure time. In Campanella's work it looks similar – key categories are words such as "service" and "community". Even the disabled and the elderly can be given a kind of activity to perform and serve for general public. The "community" rule is executed more strictly by Campanella than by More; for the author of *The City of the Sun* it is not enough that his inhabitants would just possess the same houses and as far as he is concerned a frequent rotation is necessary. Campanella also loosens family bonds which were very important for More. In the opinion of an Italian philosopher community and family exclude each other and that is why he liquidates any forms of the last one. However, it should be emphasized that also in More's work a natural family bond is not the most fundamental element, which can be proved by an example that on Utopia there is an occasionally

applied rule of depriving families with many children of their offspring and transferring kids to those families that have less children.

In their works Zamyatin and Orwell draw far-reaching conclusions out of introducing the rule of abolition of private property. In Zamyatin's work even names have been liquidated and each individual has only got a number. Also, in a system described by him a "Lex Sexualis" is introduced, which is a law giving each number a right to perceive any other number as a sexual product. In practice, on the one hand it means a necessity to achieve a top-down permit for a one hour sexual contact with a chosen number. On the other hand, there is no chance of a possible refusal. In his work Zamyatin shows inhumanity of both the law itself and its practical realization. This shocking law is in fact very similar to rules that regulate sexual life in Campanella's work. In *The City of the Sun* we also deal with delegalization of free and spontaneous sexual contacts. Their place is taken by strictly controlled and arranged procreation contacts. Women who are unable to conceive are passed to so called "common use", of which one can make use after obtaining a formal permit. The strict control of sexual life and sexual drive sphere is a common feature of all Renaissance utopias and the two mentioned dystopias.

Orwell is the one who soberly claims that abolition of private property must always result in its accumulation in hands of a sparse, cynical group that rules. After all, equality and community never concern all citizens. It is especially clear and pronounced in Orwell and Zamyatin's works but the rule applies to citizens of Renaissance utopias as well. First of all, slavery is allowed within them (as punishment for being godless); secondly, there is a clearly distinguished priest status; thirdly, a political system that dominates is a strictly patriarchal one and it subordinates women to men. The ideal system by Campanella is a real hell for women.

The question of sexual life control that accompanies the abolition of private property is closely connected with a wider issue of freedom liquidation which is certainly a main problem brought up in *We* and *Nineteen Eighty-Four*. In Renaissance utopias we find very strong elements of control not only in sexual sphere but actually in almost all domains. For example in *The City of the Sun* citizens' participation in obligatory field works is watched over by armed patrols. In *Utopia* constant supervision forces everybody to be occupied all the time: to be engaged either in work or in decent, useful entertainment. One is not even allowed to leave their town without permission and in case the ban is broken, a culprit is punished with a sentence of life in captivity. It does not seem surprising if we remember how insignificant is the trust of the authors of these works in human nature.

A problem of destruction of human nature is becoming even more intriguing if we have a look at it from a point of view of these dystopias in which a political,

caring system offers happiness to an individual. Characters of *Return from the Stars* and *Brave New World* are, similarly to those of *Utopia* by More and *City of the Sun* by Campanella, apparently pleased. As opposed to characters of *We* and *Nineteen Eighty-Four* they can meet their needs effortlessly. Nevertheless, texts by Lem and Huxley bring about numerous questions. Happiness of characters of *Brave New World* is dubious. Do individuals that are described here and who satisfy their desires immediately and simultaneously addled with soma and well trained still remain human beings? Do safe, surrounded by luxury but devoid of opportunity to take a risk Lem's characters still live authentically? Don't we have to do with stories about coined by Nietzsche last people?

There are significant disparities between solutions permissible in Huxley and Lem's world and those presented in Renaissance utopias. In More and Campanella's works one quite frequently comes across a positively characterized term "nature". Theoretically ideal societies are to function in harmony with it in every respect, not trying to interfere in it. Lifestyle (in both cases agrarian one) and a sphere of customs are supposed to base on it. In fact, we deal with a quite instrumental treating of a term "nature" here juggling with it. In Campanella's work eugenics or exile of neighbors of the territory that has been occupied by them are allowable and compatible with nature. What is forbidden, it is the cosmetic interference in nature, even if it is as "innocent" as make up or high heels (the author of *The City of the Sun* suggests a capital punishment as an appropriate one for that). There certainly will not be any place for "betryzacja", soma or a wide range of life facilities which are found in novels by Lem or Huxley. Even so, the term of happiness is worth watching as it is comprehended similarly in all texts mentioned above.

Here and there happiness is a kind of a state of bliss and pleasure, permanent and not leaving a human being even for a while. It results from awareness of well-ordered life, fulfilled duties and taking up a specific place in society. Being happy – as we read in More's work – means being useful, spending leisure time usefully, never being lazy, not wasting, avoiding conflicts and aggression (which is to be left for slaves) and deriving blissful pleasure out of it<sup>7</sup>. Happiness is also a negation of urges, a state of a kind of asceticism, spiritual purity. The fact whether we provide ourselves with this happiness or not, in More's work is guarded by Syphogrant whose one and only duty "is to take care that no man may live idle, but that every one may follow his trade diligently"<sup>8</sup>. This aspect of utopia is harshly criticized by E.Cioran. According to him the man defined by More or Campanella is only a "slaving

<sup>7</sup> T. More, *Utopia*, ed. G.H. Logan, R.H. Adams, Cambridge 2003, p. 93.

<sup>8</sup> *Ibidem*, p. 75.

unconsciously” machine or a symbol and the blissful happiness of such a man is just a hellish fulfillment<sup>9</sup>. Lem and Huxley’s novels seem so ambiguous at the time that they suggest a kind of a shortcut: “betryzacja”, soma and Bokanowski’s process are trials of ousting of bad urges and providing universal blissful happiness for all individuals. It is just a step further in reference to Renaissance utopias – thanks to physical and pharmacological modifications there is no violence, aggression, a human being is no longer pulled by urges. Bokanowski’s process and training of small children that have been described in Huxley’s book provide individuals with a blissful feeling of “being useful” and “at an appropriate place”. Simultaneously readers feel that something is wrong here. It is also sensed by some characters who do not want to be happy “in that one and only way”. A savage from *New wonderful world* says: “Well, I’d rather be unhappy than have the sort of false, lying happiness you were having here”<sup>10</sup>. The character of *Return from the Stars* declares: “We liquidated the hell of passion and then it turned out that at one go the heaven disappeared, either. Everything is lukewarm now, Breg”<sup>11</sup>. Maybe the problem is not a range of assets to achieve happiness but “blissful happiness” itself?

These characters of Huxley and Lem’s novels who oppose the systems described within them have no doubts – happiness is not a state they crave for most. The assets guaranteeing good mood and alleviating suffering are contrasted with full life enjoyment. The thesis refers to its full scope: imagination, risk taking, experiencing passions, even those which can cause pain and suffering when unfulfilled. Beside affirmation of life there is another key affirmation of existential truth – characters of dystopia want to live not only “firmly” but also authentically. Confrontation of “deceitful happiness” and painful authenticity is perfectly presented in a scene, in which Savage visits his dying mother. This is when without a moment of hesitation he takes sides with scary reality of the present. Blissful happiness is also something that makes an act of transgression impossible, the act thanks to which any more meaningful creativity is likely to take place. In *Return from the Stars* only people who have not been exposed to “betryzacja” are capable of taking risk to fly into space. Huxley’s Mustafa in conversation with rebelling Savage concedes directly that there is no possibility to create anything comparable with Otello in a situation that is in reference to common happiness and social stability. Nowadays, he says “people are happy; they get what they want, and they never want what they can’t get”<sup>12</sup>.

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<sup>9</sup> E. Cioran, *Historia i utopia*, Warszawa 2008, p. 129.

<sup>10</sup> A. Huxley, *Brave New World*, London 2007.

<sup>11</sup> S. Lem, *Powrót z gwiazd*, Kraków–Wrocław 1961, p. 80

<sup>12</sup> Op. cit., p. 162.

It is worth drawing attention to a fact how intensely the conversation between Savage and Mustafa resembles a monologue by Great Inquisitor of Dostoyevsky *Karamazov Brothers*. Russian writer perfectly deciphered the essence of utopia. Great Inquisitor enslaves people thanks to proverbial loaves of bread: providing superficial happiness, devoid of suffering and responsibility. A man – according to the subject of the monologue – does not need anything else and in the name of it they will sacrifice everything that is great and important, not paying attention to the fact they deprive themselves of authenticity, truth and beauty. Dostoyevsky's entire philosophy is like an argument with such a concept of human being. His own anthropology registers in a specific vision of Christianity, in which apotheosis of suffering enters into equation. Madness is better than "loaves of bread". "Suffering because of everybody" is even better, which – if we pass over a religious integument – means taking the responsibility on one's shoulders, responsibility for oneself, others and authentic experience. Dostoyevsky, similarly to the authors of dystopia is devoted to life in all its dynamics and its good and cruel shadows. That attracted to him Friedrich Nietzsche, the greatest critic of "last human being" who chooses "loaves of bread" instead of transgression. In Huxley's novel the equivalent of "loaves" is soma, defined by Mustafa as "Christianity without tears": "Now, you swallow two or three half gramme tablets, and there you are. Anybody can be virtuous now. You can carry at least half your morality about in a bottle"<sup>13</sup>. It is also, as Dostoyevsky pointed out in his *The Legend of the Grand Inquisitor*, Christianity without God. Mustafa claims directly that God cannot harmonized with common happiness: "You can only be independent of God while you've got youth and prosperity; independence won't take you safely to the end. Well, we've now got youth and prosperity right up to the end. What follows? Evidently, that we can be independent of God"<sup>14</sup>.

Although it is the clearest in Huxley and Lem's texts, also the authors of other presented here distopias associate being a full individual with an act of life affirmation, authenticity and transgression. That is what constitutes a term of "soul" which is born at one moment in the main character of *We* by Zamyatin. Similarly to examples presented above a birth of a soul accompanies a rejection of happiness that is obligatory for everyone. The character of the novel experiences that as an act of resignation from salvation – "I saw it clearly: everyone was saved, but there was no salvation for me. I did not want salvation..."<sup>15</sup>. Imposing happiness on all members of society, the same one

<sup>13</sup> Op. cit., p. 162.

<sup>14</sup> Op. cit., p. 158.

<sup>15</sup> Y. Zamyatin, *We*, tr. Mirra Ginsburg, New York 1987, p. 186.

for everybody, is perceived in religious categories, also by The Benefactor comparing happiness of individuals submitted to the system to the Christian paradise where desires, mercy or love are absent. His words are situated close to Grand Inquisitor's discourse. Affirmation of life and authenticity are also particularly important in Orwell's work. In his description of a political system characteristic for dystopia he often uses words which are contradictory to a category of authenticity: functioning in a society and in the first place using newspeak is for example associated with "unthinking" or "double-thinking" and orthodoxness is "ignorance". "Survival", contrasting with a category of life affirmation is directly set against humanity which Orwell as well as the other presented here authors associate with experiencing life totally, being open to emotions, love and sympathy. In a political construction of his system the notion of happiness does not matter a lot, which is an outstanding feature. It is not the factor that snuffs out humanity. In fact, fear and experience of cruelty do. Writing about "the last man", the murder of culture vitality and the power of human spirit as the only one who can restrain processes of culture depravity, Orwell simultaneously, and together with Huxley, belongs to the authors that directly refer to Nietzsche's categories.

### **From "usefulness" to transgression – philosophical contexts of anthropological concepts in utopias and dystopias**

Szacki writes that the fact whether an utopia will turn out to be an utopia or a dystopia depends entirely on our own point of view. However, the comparison of classical utopias with dystopias from the 20<sup>th</sup> century proves how intensely such a point of view is connected with the spirit of the times. Assumptions that are accepted by utopias appear to be impossible to be adopted from the point of view of somebody believing in a vision of human nature in our culture that has been present since the 19<sup>th</sup> century. The issue is a gentle one. Various philosophical, theological, anthropological or even natural trends have been arguing about the subject of human nature. My aim is to suggest a few tracks which appear in literary domain corresponding with chosen philosophical trends, on the one hand, those which were exposed in Renaissance in works by More and Campanella; on the other hand, those which decide about the composition of Zamyatin, Huxley, Orwell and Lem's dystopia works in the 20<sup>th</sup> century.

It seems that utopian texts written in Renaissance still remain in Christian paradigm of broken nature. Human being, in order not to get lost and to live decently and find a right way to happiness must be guided, controlled and perfected.

Individual freedom does not exist here as an argument. Certainly, one must remember about the fact that Christian philosophy assigns much more importance to freedom of an individual than it was done in Greek thought, which is easily seen in works by Saint Augustine. However, the category of freedom is recalled mainly in a context of individual salvation, not a political one. In fact, visions of nation created by Christian thinkers are much closer to an ancient paradigm than to an Enlightenment one. Both Plato and Augustine or Thomas, while writing about political systems always perceive a human being in a wider perspective, political entirety to which they are subordinated. In this respect Renaissance does not make a significant contribution. For both utopians and political realists represented by Machiavelli, a harmony of national unit is more important than freedom of an individual. Moreover, in utopists' works interference of a country consists in forcing everybody to share a common, unified, peaceful happiness. Authors of science-fiction dystopia notice a danger of such a depiction of a human being as they create in a different philosophical paradigm. A shift in attitude towards human nature emerges together with French Enlightenment thinkers and French Revolution and as far as Germany is concerned, together with Schelling, Fichte, Hegel and Nietzsche. All of them share a common view that autonomy and freedom of an individual (also political autonomy and freedom) are of a superior value, at the same time perceiving a human being much more optimistically than in previous periods. Individual freedom is something that a human being is entitled to and it is a core of their essence. A human being is also able to make use of it.

However, together with philosophers of life and corresponding with such convictions one can notice that an ethos of self-fulfillment, transgression and authenticity comes into view, the one which allows an individual to be a human being in the full sense of the word. Although we do not find a term "authenticity" in Nietzsche's works, the one that has been so popularized by existentialism, his intuition seems clear. He writes about being true towards oneself, about a brave confrontation with truth about one's existential situation and responsibility for one's being which is connected with it. This ability is the one that defines a measure of our humanity. Nietzsche is also the first one who warns us against losing it. Humanity is for him something that can be graduated. And so, at the one end we find a creative, affirmatively deriving from life, establishing their own values superhuman being that is being projected. A superhuman being that is situated on the other end, a nihilistic, disinterested, incapable of self-creation one is a human being to a lower degree.

Nietzsche calls into questions an assumed by utopists conception of blissful happiness that is supposed to be an individual's goal. Let's recall a fragment from *Thus Spake Zarathustra*: "They have their little pleasures for the

day and their little pleasure for the night: but they revere their health. ‘We have discovered the happiness’ the last man say and blink”<sup>16</sup>. Last people are pleased, happy but incapable of transgression, similarly to citizens of societies described in *Brave New World* and *Return from the Stars*. People who “never desire anything they cannot receive” are people within whom a metaphysical desire has been snuffed out and as a result they cannot transgress themselves. After all, depiction of transgression as an essence of a human being is not the one invented by Nietzsche. In *The Symposium* Plato had already mentioned Eros constructing our nature, “a son of Poverty and Wealth”: movements of Eros are triggered by a kind of lack and a promise of fulfillment which we are experienced by us. The lack, so different from blissful happiness is unusually essential in this process. The difference between Nietzsche and Plato is that in contrast to the author of *The Republic*, for Nietzsche the transgression does not have an eschatological ending. It implies that for German philosopher being a human means a kind of chronical incompleteness, projecting oneself, the process which is never finished. Stopping is a death of a human self.

Dystopias of the 20<sup>th</sup> century both consciously and unconsciously duplicate statements of philosophy of life in relation to human nature. Some of their authors openly apply Nietzsche’s terminology (Huxley, Orwell), others refer to it indirectly. However, undoubtedly all the texts are a product of a completely different thinking about a human being than utopian texts. In a literary way they explore ideas of some trends of contemporary philosophy, showing their practical sense. Thereby, they make us aware of threats relating a human being which reside in each utopian system and they are a kind of warning which is put forward towards our culture. Vitality of the problem is proved by the latest philosophical commentaries on dysutopia works. One of examples of such feedback is a conception created by Francis Fukuyama. In an introduction to a book *Our Posthuman Future. Consequences of the Biotechnology Revolution* he refers to *Nineteen Eighty-Four* and *Brave New World*. Even though in his opinion the forecast included in Orwell’s book has not proved correct, we are still in danger of reality described by Huxley. The rest of Fukuyama’s book is a justification of this thesis. On the one hand Fukuyama brings up a problem of genetic and embryonic modifications which as a matter of fact are not conducted on a grand scale but science does develop and application of a more democratic equivalent of Bokanowski process can be just a matter of time. On the other hand, he writes about occurring nowadays neuro-pharmacological applications which are conducted in order to improve mood cosmetically or to control the boisterous. He means unjustified enough use of antidepressant

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<sup>16</sup> F. Nietzsche, *Thus Spake Zarathustra. A Book For All And None*, tr. G. Parkes, Oxford 2005.

medicine and remedies such as Ritalin which are to help to soothe children suffering from ADHD. Fukuyama is a great opponent of driving for artificial, obligatory happiness, he associates all neuro-pharmaceuticals with soma and he is quite skeptical about diagnostics of depression and ADHD which he actually does not treat as illnesses. His commentary is a very interesting completion to reflection on hazard relating human nature, suggested by dystopia authors. According to Fukuyama, destruction of human nature is a serious problem which puts a human being in danger as long as they follow the way presented by residents of *Brave New World*. Any modifications of this nature are dangerous, no matter either genetic, embryonic or pharmacological. To ascertain such modifications we need to have a notion of what this nature is. At this point Fukuyama exceeds philosophical agreements of German idealists, Nietzsche or existentialists, although he willingly quotes the author of *Thus Spake Zarathustra* in mottos of his chapters. He remains close to them when he discusses different aspects of human nature, such as experiencing emotions deeply or a drive towards self-realization. At the same time he proposes a thesis that in fact all of us intuitively feel that a human being cannot be reduced as we know that there is something more within them. That “something” is called by him “an X factor”. The factor which differentiates us from all the other living creatures is very gentle and we can crash it easily with our careless activities. Among these activities there are for example such modifications of our human nature that make us less aggressive, more agreeable (cosmetic taking of Ritalin) or less prone to depression (for example cosmetic taking of Prozac). Fukuyama is convinced that a state of ‘blissful happiness’ is not a natural or desired one. He says directly: “A person who has not confronted suffering or death has no depth”<sup>17</sup>. He announces: let’s not reduce our urges, emotional reflexes, let’s not influence artificially our mood as we do not know what long-term consequences of such behaviour will be. There is a possibility we will be able to raise a society consisting of creatures that are not human beings any more. He sums it up with a statement: “No one can make a brief in favor of pain and suffering, but the fact of the matter is that what we consider to be the highest and the most admirable human qualities, both in ourselves and in others, are often related to the way that we react to, confront, overcome, and frequently succumb to pain, suffering, and death. In the absence of these human evils, there would be no sympathy, compassion, courage, heroism, solidarity or strenght of character”<sup>18</sup>.

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<sup>17</sup> F. Fukuyama, *Our Posthuman Future. Consequences Of The Biotechnology Revolution*, Farrar, Strauss and Giroux, New York 2002, p. 185.

<sup>18</sup> Ibidem.

The commentary by Fukuyama is an interesting voice proving that the problems discussed in presented texts are really vivid. American philosopher has no doubt they concern our culture here and now. Utopian solutions are incredibly tempting, however, their consequences that were revealed by contemporary dystopias, in fact are unpredictable. Despite introducing the “X factor” in a concept of human nature Fukuyama is very close to other critical theories relating to an anthropological issue. Both contemporary philosophy and literature draw attention to the importance of an authentic attitude towards oneself and living life within all its spectrum. However, not everything has been said about human nature yet. It is an open question whether an X factor does exist and if so, what it is. Finally, is any form of utopia actually a threat to it.

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## **Od utopii do dystopii – wizja ludzkiej natury w renesansowych utopiach politycznych i klasycznych dystopiach *science-fiction***

### **Streszczenie**

Podstawą artykułu jest zestawienie ze sobą utopii renesansowych More'a i Campanelli oraz klasycznych dystopii *science-fiction* autorstwa Zamiatina, Huxleya, Orwella i Lema pod kątem występującej w nich wizji natury ludzkiej oraz grożącej jej destrukcji. Inspiracją dla stworzenia tekstu jest teza Chada Walscha głosząca, że w którymś momencie w politycznym myśleniu ludzkości dokonał się zaskakujący „psychologiczny dryft” – przesunięcie myślenia utopijnego w myślenie dystopijne. Artykuł jest próbą prześledzenia kontekstu tego przesunięcia – ukazania warunków społecznych oraz filozoficznych decydujących o fakcie, że pojęcie natury ludzkiej, wizja szczęścia i idealnego społeczeństwa, a także ideał indywidualnej egzystencji zaczęły być postrzegane zupełnie inaczej, co zadecydowało także o stopniowym porzucaniu myślenia utopijnego na rzecz wskazujących na niebezpieczeństwa tworzenia takich systemów, tekstów dystopijnych.

**Słowa kluczowe:** utopia, dystopia, ludzka natura, More, Campanella, Huxley, Orwell, Zamiatin, Nietzsche