



Tadeusz Miczka

Virtual Reality as Utopia

It is assumed, following Łukasz Zweiffel's idea, that the development of the latest utopias, at least now, is inseparably connected with the ideas of openness and infinity. Former conceptions of closed utopias are replaced by conceptions of open utopias which are based on the belief in the meaning of human freedom and the variety of ways in which future societies may be shaped. The origin of this way of utopian thinking can be found in the theory and creative practice of futurism, artistic avant-garde which since 1909 has strongly influenced not only art but also people's everyday life. In 1905 F. T. Marinetti wrote about futuristic obsession of freedom ("words-in-freedom") that cannot concretize fully because "it possesses flexible extension of constantly growing desires." It becomes common in the epoch of technopoly, especially in its last phase which is marked by an expansion of high technology. The article focuses on multimedia which are the culmination of development of futuristic thought and art and take the shape of new communication behaviour such as navigation, interactivity and virtualisation. The characteristics of virtual reality (image inclusion and rules binding in *Second Life* game), which offers multimedia users various forms of experiencing plurality, multidirectional character and especially infofreedom, allows us to consider basic theoretical and practical issues of contemporary studies concerning utopia. According to the author, virtual reality encourages a development of utopian projects but limits a development of eutopian thinking – alternative for the reality, still realistic but yet better than the reality itself.

Keywords: utopianism, virtual reality, infoactivity

Grażyna Osika

The Unbearable Utopianism of Utopism

The article critically examines the category of utopianism. It is an attempt to expose its both irremovable and disappointing features that make utopianism an ineffective tool to change the world for better. The rational instruments, unfortunately, are not sufficient to design a eutopia – a place of supreme happiness – because of the fragmentation of points of view taken on utopianism and its persuasive character necessary to disseminate every utopian vision. The article proposes to replace the utopian methodology for building a better world with so-called piecemeal social engineering and thinking in terms of ecotopia, that is gradual, adaptive changes in the environment of our life. The analysis includes M. C. Nussbaum's ideas for improving educational systems.

Keywords: utopia, utopianism, ecotopia, piecemeal social engineering

Mariusz Wojewoda

Ethics as Social Utopia

Analysis in the Perspective of the Philosophy of Values

The article is devoted to the issue of the presence of the utopian motif in ethics, particularly in ethics based on the philosophy of value. The general point of reference here is the work

of the German philosopher Nicolai Hartmann. Normative ethics is intrinsically oriented towards the change of human moral behaviours to an important value (good), especially social good. We are never sure that ethical recommendations will be implemented, therefore, in a way, ethics displays utopian character. However, it does not inhibit formulating ethical programs promoting the change of attitude and behaviour. In the article I distinguish the ethical utopism from utopism. I associate the last one with the classical theories of ideologists of the social life and contemporary specialists in managing organizations. The ethical utopism manifests itself in a certain way of understanding ethical codes as something that institutionally forces attitudes and moral behaviour within a company.

Keywords: philosophy, ethics, applied ethics

Monika Mańek-Orłowska

A Formula for Good Life Utopian Concepts in Radical Human Enhancement

The author interprets the concept of human enhancement (HE) as a contemporary utopia. The distinction between radical and moderate approach to enhancement creates the ground for further analysis. The author identifies radical approaches to HE as a utopian pursuit for perfect society and analyzes key utopian postulates assumed especially in transhumanist thought. The comparison of a moderate approach to the radical one indicates that practical value for such fields as technology assessment and decision making at the socio-political level can be ascribed only to the moderate approach to human enhancement.

Keywords: human enhancement, transhumanism, utopia, evaluation of technology

Jacek Kempa

Salvation towards History An Attempt at a Theological Rehabilitation of the Term Utopia

Christian theology teaches that eternal salvation cannot be defined in terms familiar to us. Therefore, it can be described as utopia – in accordance with the etymological meaning of the word. That is how the tension between this and another world, which is present in the Christian teaching, becomes more apparent. Does it cause the depreciation of history, as critics of religion in the 19th century wanted? The article presents some nodal points in the Christian philosophy which are important for the development of the doctrine. They reveal the problem of the relation between earthly life and eternity and highlight the significance of history. In the Church reception, a reflection which avoided both extremes always prevailed: it did not separate eternal salvation from its connection with history and it did not equate eternal salvation with a stage of history. The article emphasizes the theological justification of this perspective: it is Christology captured in the frame of the doctrine of the Church and the teaching about the relation between God's freedom and freedom of a human being.

Keywords: theology, utopia, salvation, Christology, anthropology

Beata Wojewoda

Man in a Phantomatic World

(*Summa Technologiae* by Stanisław Lem)

Among other motifs recurring in Stanisław Lem's futurological essays written in the 1960s and later collected in his *Summa Technologiae*, the motif of a future man immersed in an artificially created reality, in which a number of otherwise impossible experiences become his share, looms particularly large. Lem explores ways to introduce the human to the space of cybernetic illusions and reflects upon the possibilities of a wide scale multiplication or reduplication of impressions, experiences and information to eventually point to the gravity of potential consequences of the above. The author of the article analyses the futuristic visions of the writer, which, collectively, turn out to be the building blocks of the latter's technological dystopia. The process of perfecting the machine is unstoppable, and thus – next to the positive prospects of the future related to the evolution of knowledge, communications, entertainment – what emerges from Lem's observations is a warning which stresses the need to warrant the preservation of human freedom by safeguarding it in the world of new technologies.

Keywords: philosophical anthropology, 20th century Polish literature, futurology

Marcin Mazurek

(Im)perfect Cities. Utopia and Dystopia

in Selected Representations of Modern Urban Space

The article's departure point is an assumption of a close relationship between the construction of urban space and the projected identity of its inhabitants. Within the context of late-modern architecture this relationship opens up a discursive space for ideologically-motivated and often utopian visions inspired by the modernist desire to produce a new subject liberated from the socio-historical bias and hierarchical entanglements. Yet upon closer analysis utopian architectural projects – including those represented by literature and the arts – reveal their totalizing aspirations thus blurring the boundary between utopia and dystopia.

In the article, the latter is illustrated through a historical analysis of selected literary texts and by particular postulates of modernist architecture included in the Athens Charter and in practical terms represented by large-scale urban housing projects, such as Katowice's Millennial Housing Estate whose critical evaluation takes place against the background of broader cultural operations reflected in the concept of cognitive capitalism. The last part of the paper is devoted to the phenomenon of virtualization of urban space and its translocation to the virtual sphere, which – following both post-modern critics and virtual culture theorists – becomes a new model of individualized urban existence.

Keywords: architecture, apartment block, utopia, dystopia, ideal city, literature, industrial revolution, Victorian era, spectacle, simulacrum, cognitive capitalism, virtual city, identity

Izabela Kaczmarzyk

Utopia of a Working-class Arcadia?

(based on Hermann Reuffurth's

Giszowiec. A New Upper-Silesian Coal-Mining Village)

The article is an attempt to understand the category of utopia with reference to the accomplished architectural project of Giszowiec (Gieschewald) – a patronal company town situated in Upper Silesia. The starting point of the reflections on the character of Giszowiec is the concept of happiness by W. Tatarkiewicz who in his work *Analysis of Happiness (O szczęściu)* claimed that it could be achieved only if everything was well-planned and rational in life. These two rules – of rationality and precision in the arrangement of every detail of the estate, so that all its inhabitants (the workers of Bergwerksgesellschaft Georg von Giesches Erben industrial concern) could lead happy and peaceful everyday lives – were the basis of Zillmans' architectural project. The project itself involved a housing estate of small cottage-like houses situated in a woody area and it resulted from pragmatism. It was a means of developing the sites which were rich in coal deposits. Nevertheless, it created an interesting architectural concept referring to the idea of a garden city, which made it possible to approach in an innovative way the issue of workmen's housing provided by one of the biggest industrial concerns at the beginning of the 20th century.

Keywords: Upper Silesia, industrial heritage, regional studies

Daniel Pietrek

Upper Silesia as a Myth and Utopia in the Works of Horst Bienek

Horst Bienek was a very well known and influential personality in the literary circles in Germany. His works are also important for the history of Silesian literature because of his role in the intra-German and German-Polish discourse about the homeland, history and identity. In the article, the author presents poetical strategies and methodology which Bienek used while creating his mythic representations of Silesia and (at the same time) of himself.

Keywords: literary history, German literature, Silesian literature, Horst Bienek, utopia

Maria Banaś

Homo Hierarchicus in Modern Utopia

(on the Basis of *The Year of the Flood* by Margaret Atwood

and *The Cloud Atlas* by David Mitchell)

The paper explores the hierarchical model of society as shown in the dystopian novel *The Year of the Flood* by Margaret Atwood and in one of the narratives of *Cloud Atlas – Orison of Sonmi 451* by David Mitchell. The chief aim of the paper is to identify both similarities and differences manifested in the construction of the social world. A special emphasis has been placed on the role of a hierarchical order present in these narratives which has a direct impact on the structure of communities operating within the social world. In the analysis the author refers to the theory of a French sociologist and anthropologist Louis Dumont,

who sees hierarchy as a fundamental principle organizing social life typical of traditional societies and perceived as an anomaly and deviation in Western culture, and to the model of social structure as shown by Jacek Szmata, who sees it as an indispensable tool in grasping and understanding processes taking place within the community.

Keywords: sociology of literature, utopia, social stratification

Bartłomiej Knosala

Buckminster Fuller and His Work
From Technological Utopia to Sacred Technology

The article presents the work of American visionary Buckminster Fuller in the context of his project of technological utopia. Analyzing the assumptions underlying this project (the so-called Comprehensive Anticipatory Design Science), we note that Fuller's thought is a form of reference to the ancient category of logos. In his approach, the reconciliation of individual logos with common logos takes the form of humanity's adaptation to the "nature operating system," with technology being the tool for this adaptation. At the same time, referring to the interpretation of Fuller's ideas proposed by Scott Eastham, the author shows that Fuller's understanding of technology is related to the so-called sacred geometry. When approached from this perspective, technology and spirituality can be seen as merging into a coherent whole.

Keywords: Buckminster Fuller, utopia, technological utopia, sacred geometry, Scott Eastham

Piotr Bogalecki

With the Left Hand. Polish Theoreticians of Concrete Poetry
as Concrete Poets (Józef Bujnowski, Tadeusz Sławek, Piotr Rypson)

The present article, inscribing itself into the field of literary anthropology (as projected by Danuta Ulicka) and attempting at a neo-avant-garde re-interpretation of Polish post-war poetry (inspired chiefly by H. Foster's propositions), is dedicated to the oeuvre of three notable scholars of concrete poetry in Poland. Even though the theoretical propositions put forth by Józef Bujnowski (especially those presented in 1970s), Tadeusz Sławek (1980s) and Piotr Rypson (1990s) would determine the directions of the reception of concrete poetry over three subsequent decades, their intermedial, visual and auditory poetic experiments either remain unknown or have been forgotten. Bringing them back to the forefront of the academic attention and subjecting them to an analysis, the author of this article argues that taking such text into account in the diachronic study of the Polish literary culture does not only enrich the existing narratives oscillating around Polish concrete poetry and allow their reinterpretation, but also makes visible a number of research problems, of which the most important are related to the role played by authors who simultaneously are involved in literary scholarship and in writing, especially in the context of the neo-avant-garde shift of the borders between institutionalized scholarship and art.

Keywords: concrete poetry, essayist literary scholarship, limits of art, limits of scholarship

