

The British Consciousness: Ambiguity in Sir Thomas More

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ABSTRACT

This thesis is to make analysis of the stream of British consciousness by examining *Utopia* by Sir Thomas More.

Key words : British Consciousness, Ambiguity, Religion, Freedom

I. The Age of Sir Thomas More

Sir Thomas More and his *Utopia* is one of the major issues to discuss the stream of British consciousness. In the 16th century, the Catholic Church was not under control and in disorder. Sir Thomas More's supreme mission was to calm down the public in England and establish the peaceful Christendom. Thomas More was one of the European thinkers whose main theme was a political issue under the Roman and Greek foundations: what was the best political order, what was meant by genuine graciousness, dignity, and self-esteem. The European thinkers' distinctive missions were to institute the eminence of Christianity and theological wisdom in the growing world, where the Skepticism was growing its influence, and they did not have the answer to the then Skepticism. Thomas More and his small self-reliant, self-righteous circle of the European thinkers supported the Catholic Church, but there is no doubt that they were skeptical, or even suspicious, to put it bluntly, about the ecclesiastical infidelity of the Catholic Church. They, including Desiderius Erasmus, tried to reform the Catholic Church without disturbance. Desiderius Erasmus was the then theological thinker, and Thomas More was his true comrade, although their association was not taken seriously in the circle of the European thinkers because, apparently, of the religious prejudice by Erasmus. Thomas More and Desiderius Erasmus agreed with each other on most of the political and theological issues that led to the Reformation, and this is proved by contingent indications. For example, Erasmus put pen to *Utopia* for notes and announced *Utopia* widely to the world; *Praise of Folly*, which was addressed to More, by Erasmus, was one of his most mordant criticism against the clergy and principles of the Catholic Church in those days. The Christian theology is full of inconsistencies and uncertainties, and the Scholasticism was called for to find the answer to the theological problems. The Scholasticism is a methodology and logic that the theologians and philosophers since the 11th century developed and established. The

Christian theology in the mediaeval age did not take the lead for deliverance and was urged to take on dialectical scheme.

Sir Thomas More (1478~1535) is known to be a humanist and the lord of Chancellor during the English Renaissance. A humanist, Sir Thomas More supported a secular and material view of time. He supported his and his own circle's validation and substantiation of Christianity. He also supported humanism which led into an innovative view of Christianity and performed another break-through of the mediaeval culture. More wrote *Utopia* in 1515 and satirized the then politics and society in his *Utopia*. By presenting Utopia as an ideal society, More made ironical remarks on the existing Europe. More expressed his humanist standpoint, his goodwill toward a shared society against autocracy, and his intention to reform the then Christendom in Europe. *Utopia* is in a short and yet multipart formation and is principally appropriate for the critical arguments. This short text has some ambiguous and inconsistent points and has generated unpredictably contradictory interpretations. More presented his analysis of religious freedom and tried to endorse and advance the religious reform to Europe. In this paper, I make a systematic approach to the analysis of ambiguities in Thomas More's *Utopia*. I make a methodical examination on the causes of the ambiguous interpretations and on confrontational formations of the interpretations. In this direction, this paper intends to be a first measure. I present a comprehensive analysis of Utopian religious freedom and try to articulate Sir Thomas More's views in terms of the 16th century society and consciousness in England.

II. Deductive Issues on Ambiguity

The period of the Mediaeval Age in Europe takes a place from the 5th century through the 15th century. Meantime, the Renaissance began and spread to the rest of Europe in the 16th and 17th centuries. The term, 'renaissance' means 'rebirth', the birth of modern humanity after a long period of vice and decay of the Mediaeval Age. The Renaissance set the foundations for the thinkers and scientists, and it was a time of intellectual upheaval. The works at the time of the Renaissance turned out to be the everlasting description of European culture. Through the Renaissance, the society, that was in a feudal system, emerged to be controlled by political institutions. The political institutions dominated the society with communal and mercantile economy and supported the education, the arts, and the music. The society was distinctly different from the society with traditional and rural bindings of mediaeval Europe.

At the Renaissance, the tradition met the break-through with the view of the mediaeval Christianity, in regard to a secular and material view of time and a suspicion toward the groundwork and the way of thinking. It was this time that the dialogues of Greek philosophy were, for the first time, critically rewritten. Humanism liberated and educated ordinary people with the study of literature and philosophy. Not only the classical studies and arts but also the astronomy, mathematics, and anatomy were sought after for further critical understandings and findings. The new interpretation and approach to theology

and the church was applied in humanism, which turned out to be an influential force to the Roman Catholic. Humanism meant to go a long way towards the citizens rather than the ministers and clerics, with the ideas of harmony and balance.

In Humanism, the paintings of the artists, the theoretical writings of the scholars, and the works of architecture are synthetic both with Renaissance and antiquated customs, and are not necessarily analytic. The works in Humanism are not concrete or arithmetical, but abstract which *Utopia* by Sir Thomas More represents.

The invention of printing was another radically essential event to distribute knowledge. Another issue of this time is that the introduction of gunpowder transformed inevitably the political and governmental task from autonomy and righteousness to security and peace.

More's *Utopia* is construed as follows, depending on its interpretation: *Utopia* is a mere outline for transformation; *Utopia* is a figurative principle; *Utopia* is a simply cerebral task; *Utopia* is a sarcastic dystopia; and *Utopia* is an initial prototype for British regal regime. It is not that the different quality of *Utopia* is taken into account, but that the same quality of *Utopia* is evaluated *differently*, depending on the interpreter's sense of values. In the work of *Utopia*, we see a multiple interpretations and analyses which are persuasive and yet diverse. This is quite natural in the literary works and is, by and large, conventional. The perception of a literary work is much more challenging than an ordinary indication. The greater the work is, the more convoluted interpretations and analyses it has. In this age of free society, interpretations and analyses of *Utopia* are irredeemably ambiguous. To argue with these interpretations, *Utopia* is called for allegorical understandings, in regard to an image of an ideal society and a proposal for a political reform. It is supported that *Utopia* should be read allegorically for an image of an ideal society as well as for a political reform, which amounts to a persuasively satirical piece of work that portrays an objectionable state of society.

Each interpretation may be approved of in the limited and restricted account and this holds back the ambiguity as much as possible, although this is a matter of degree. An interpretation may be accepted in a certain framework, a certain structure, which justifies only certain account, not in a whole, entire measure. It is only in a certain framework, and not in a complete, inclusive framework, and above all, not at the same occurrence. Needless to mention, this level of discussion is not persuasive. Besides, as for *Utopia*, the element itself of *Utopia* is so significant that no one could simply take no notice of. To put it in equivalence, *Utopia* is not a contrivance to be understood from different angles. *Utopia* is a dilemma and predicament. The same quality of *Utopia* can be put together into the same framework and can bring forth multiple interpretations. The interpretation of *Utopia* are rooted on an unrestrictedly numerous frameworks.

If the versions are clearly and decisively at odds with each other, then it would be easier to accept or reject an interpretation of the version under debate. Nonetheless, then,

a fatal issue is brought up: is it convincing to allow only the interpretations of the version which fits his/her interpretation, and is it unqualified to dispense with all what is left? The interpretations in favour of communism and the ones in favour of Utopian theory support entirely atypical issues: pro-communist interpretations encourage free learning, the dogma of broadmindedness, etc., whereas are Catholicism, morality, and the private property supported in pro-Utopian interpretations. More himself had several bearings on the setting up of collectivism and Utopian demand.

How on earth does such a short text, *Utopia*, have extensive variances? It may be because of the nature of current prevailing analysis, or the approaching methods applying on *Utopia* itself, on the readers, on the author, or on the background of *Utopia*. It seems, however, to be inadequate just to presume these approaching methods themselves, for an approaching method must not be kept a tight rein on, nor is an approaching method meant to have the same bearing. In fact, a critical reading applying the comparable line of attack often calls a fundamental counterattack of interpretation. For instance, communalist critics approve of More's sympathy for the poor and his criticism against the sumptuousness and material wealth. On the other hand, entrepreneurial capitalist critics would take More as a person who is not serious and take *Utopia* as a joke. The following quotation would prove More's view for entrepreneurial capitalist critics.

“There are some others, in fact no small number of them, who err in the opposite direction, in supposing that animals too have immortal souls, though not comparable to ours in excellence, nor destined to equal felicity. These men are not thought to be evil, their opinion is not thought to be wholly unreasonable, and so they are not interfered with.”¹⁾

Utopia is divided into two parts: Book One and Book Two. Book One is the introduction and notes of Book Two. In Book Two, the Utopian society was described and was the philosophy of Erasmus introduced. The main character of *Utopia* is Raphael Hythloday and he is a fictional character, a philosopher who describes people in the ideal, orderly society of the island, Utopia. The name, ‘Hythloday’ means ‘gibberish’, which implicitly gives an account of a fictional society. Two perspectives are presented in *Utopia*, which are Raphael Hythloday's perspective in favour of Utopia and the narrator More's perspective. In other words, this amounts to that Thomas More was estranged between integrity and enticement of the then politically authoritative power. The narrative viewpoint presented by Raphael Hythloday is a radical and Utopian viewpoint, whereas More-figure presented a self-disciplined, self-righteous viewpoint with full of uncertainty. Raphael Hythloday meets Thomas More and Peter Giles while they are traveling to Antwerp. They are so impressed with Hythloday's discernment on the societies in England that they urge Hythloday to become Henry VIII's counselor. Hythloday criticizes that Henry VIII's counselors are mere, obedient servants; they are not there to change the public rules and regulations for the better; their policies are absurd that Hythloday cannot possibly

support.

“They do this so that a man will not blurt out the first thought that occurs to him, and then devote all his energies to defending those foolish impulses, instead of considering impartially the public good. They know that some men would rather jeopardize the welfare of the state than admit to having been heedless and shortsighted—so perverse and preposterous is their sense of pride.”²⁾

The society in Utopia is a reason-based society with no deficiency, very few crimes, no tendency to war, and above all, no particular class divisions.

“The Utopians are not only troubled but ashamed when their forces gain a bloody victory, thinking it folly to pay too high a price even for good goods....”³⁾

On the other hand, we may point out that slaves are made use of in the Utopian world; the method of warfare is not fair but double-dealing, and the mentally handicapped are ignored. In short, *Utopia* is the original scheme of British imperialism.

“A third class of slaves consists of hardworking penniless drudges from other nations who voluntarily choose to become slaves in Utopia. Such people are treated well, almost as well as citizens, except that they are given a little extra work, on the score that they’re used to it.”⁴⁾

“... If they find any of the inhabitants who recommended surrender, they give them a share in the property of the condemned, and present their auxiliaries with the rest, for the Utopians themselves never take any booty.

After a war is ended, they collect the cost of it, not from the allies for whose sake they undertook it, but from the conquered. They take as indemnity not only money which they set aside to finance future wars, but also landed estates from which they may enjoy forever a generous annual income.”⁵⁾

The other main characters are Peter Giles, More, Cardinal John Morton, General Utopus, and a lawyer. Fictional Peter Giles is a friend of More’s and is comparable to the nonfictional person. Cardinal John Morton is a fictional character and is the Lord Chancellor of England. General Utopus is the founder of Utopia, and Hythloday finds the island Utopia preposterously fascinating. The lawyer does not admit nor acknowledge any problem and this means that he is self-protective for the society in England. I should point out that these characters, including fictional Peter Giles, do not, at times, agree with each other nor share the views with the author, More, in regard to the societal problems of England.

More is apprehensive about Hythloday’s ideas regarding public possessions and the war strategies and conflicts, although he praises some features of society which Hythloday describes. More does not think Hythloday’s ideas are realistic. In terms of the

relation between the church and the state, More's strategy was to bring a tolerate guidelines.

"When Raphael had finished his story, it seemed to me that not a few of the customs and laws he had described as existing among the Utopians were quite absurd. Their methods of waging war, their religious ceremonies, and their social customs were some of these, but my chief objection was to the basis of their whole system, that is, their communal living and their moneyless economy. This one thing alone takes away all the nobility, magnificence, splendor, and majesty which (in the popular view) are considered the true ornaments of any nation..."⁶⁾

The roots of modern religious freedom are understood, among us, to be in Protestant theology. On the other hand, the roots of religious freedom in *Utopia* are in Catholic holiness and are originated in Catholic theology which More did not receive the support for the virtues of religious freedom, from his indigenous opponents. More did not take cognizance of the right that the government drove conscience and patronized a particular sect.

Nonetheless, More enjoyed that the government disallowed politically treacherous forms of religion and coerced the religiously virtuous doctrines. In the end, More achieved the unity of society which was free from the moral aggression. The religious freedom More elucidated in *Utopia* is the suggestion to Western political thought and culture. The religious freedom in *Utopia* was intended to be a spiritually principled model for Europe. *Utopia*, for More, took a form of a device for reformation of Europe, and this led to the guidelines to the relation between the church and the state, later on. The roots of modern religious freedom are in Protestant theology, that has gone through chaos and has shaped the 16th century Christendom in the Reformation.

Let us scrutinize the religious freedom in *Utopia*, which amounts to the examination of the Western thought and culture of the 16th century of England. I would like to take the underlying principle for Utopian religious freedom, into consideration in detail, and its effects on the then religion and politics. Then, the discussion will advance further towards More's tactics and strategy to endorse sacred transformation within Christendom.

I would like to provide the chronological framework for More's analysis by introducing his polemical argument. I cast doubt on the following two issues: one is what are the reasons for the multiple interpretations; what are the roots of the multiple interpretations. The other issue is whether it is justifiable to accept the multiple interpretations. If it were justifiable, then what are the definitions of this justification? The philosophy in *Utopia* has various interpretations, and these various interpretations are in discord with each other, owing to its scheme and logic. The reasons why the various interpretations in *Utopia* conflict with each other may fall under the equivocal qualities of the expressions. Or, it may be because the conflicts in the interpretations are notoriously known and are just expected in modern literary hypotheses. The term 'ambiguity' presumes an

unconvinced perspective which does not have any certainty in any conflicting premises. The term 'ambiguity' suggests us to envelop all the conflicting interpretations and incorporate them with each other. Is it possible that the ambiguities themselves are accepted just as defensibly sound alternatives? These difficulties are argued in terms of the significant debates on *Utopia*. The significant debates cannot present sufficient patterns, unless the debates present the unconventional approaches. The debates are so excessive and essential that a simple and plain account of interpretations will not meet for the task.

Arguments conceive extensively conflicting observations with many diverse interpretations, which lead, of course, diverse assumptions. Is the ambiguity of *Utopia* regarded as the final grounds? The words and terms in *Utopia* are not difficult to understand. The difficulty is that the comprehensive level of the interpretative proposals by obviously true facts are interleaved. It would not lead the way out just by objecting that the diverse understanding comes from modern perceptions and ideas and it is even anachronistic or not. Some are in favour of communism and disapprove of the private property, while the others, humanists apply the alternative. And these indistinct and multifaceted remarks are referred to a paradoxical and/or figurative analysis. Having such multiple analyses, it is obvious that both humanists and pro-communists suffer from the ambiguities of *Utopia*: how the world of Utopia is structured. The only undisputed issue is that the structure of the Utopian world is all-inclusive and paradoxical.

The alternative is, then, the chronological examination, instead of the textual study, if it were impossible to install the implications of *Utopia*. It does not, however, bear that the approach by chronological examination gives a full answer to the involvedness. For this reason, any of us holds an individual analysis on *Utopia* and finds a bearing of the chronological circumstances which authorize his/her analysis, i.e. we support that the factual interpretation draws attention to the communal injustice in the 16th century England as well as the communal configuration of the social order; some of us, in contrast, may not really want to accept More's communalism; some, conversely, point out that More disapproves of the factual interpretations of *Utopia*, although we must not dismiss that More followed a firmly conventional line as a politician, later in his life.

An additional argument sets another hurdle about the chronological perspective. That is, it is quite likely that we may locate other perspectives for counterbalancing or cancelling the lines of reasoning of our opponents. The alternatives are *Utopia* to be interpreted paradoxically, imperceptibly, factually, or allegorically. There is, however, no clear line of these interpretations as for what is purported or what is connoted or even denoted. If *Utopia* is, in particular, interpreted allegorically, there left a question how seriously More is supportive for commonwealth; what is More's position. Can we just simply conclude that More is now and then thought-provoking and at other times he is a person of little consequence, then can we specify when he is stimulating and when he is dull? Can we point out with which passages we can determine what More's main concerns are? Are the passages evidently clear? What is Hythloday's position, and what More

intends to present through Hythloday? It is almost impossible to decide which passages mean More's intensity about the Utopian communism, through Hythloday's position. Hythloday is an embodiment of More and is portrayed ironically sometimes and at other times he is presented rhetorically. More admits there already exist some commonwealth qualities in the then society, and he is not absolutely desperate about the then situation. He admits that the glory, dignity, principles, and aristocracy do exist already in the then Christendom, and yet he presents *Utopia* for the purpose of the reform of the then Christendom. This amounts to the denial of the virtues of the then Christendom: the glory, dignity, principles, and aristocracy, and this is what I mean by More's reservation. This is the reason why More and his *Utopia* performs one of the major issues to discuss British consciousness. No matter how the passages seem to be important, it is impossible to regulate, as a consequence, the ambiguity of the diverse perceptions of *Utopia*, by an analysis of the passages.

The arguments are so far deadlocked and seem to find no way out. The analysis should take a step to go forward for the methods which quality should invalidate other qualities and/or should be made light of. An analysis of the methods may unnecessarily make much of assumptions, e.g. More's politically opinionated understanding brought the unrealistic and impractical quality of *Utopia*; the worldly features are supplemented conveniently in which way the religious transformation is applied in *Utopia*.

Another analysis of the methods is whether *Utopia* should be taken as a testimonial or allegorical reference. Which is more operational line of analysis is a different issue, for this is a matter of degree. In order to discuss the ambiguity of *Utopia*, the issue whether *Utopia* should be taken as a testimonial or allegorical reference may be the right approach. Either the concrete or theoretical expression in *Utopia* has no correspondence to a testimonial or allegorical reference of *Utopia*, with the following reasons. If *Utopia* is interpreted quite paradoxically, then a testimonial or allegorical reference of *Utopia* is taken to the contrary. If *Utopia* is interpreted quite factually, then the Utopian society and the intentions of social transform must be taken in a meticulously referential logic. If *Utopia* is to be taken as an allegorical reference, the intentions of the social transform are only referential. No need to mention, but, of course, if *Utopia* is taken to be a pastime reading, then there is no time left for any discussion! These reasons do not answer the full scale of discord and dilemma in the arguments which each quality of *Utopia* is understood quite in one's own individual way. Besides, no one just supports one single reason; he/she brings together all possible reasons. The dissension is that no one would agree that *Utopia* is to be read critically *at the same time* to be discharged as an extension of the imagination, but *Utopia* is to be given an explanation for in line with the interpreters' alternatives.

Along these lines, if we interpret *Utopia* as referential and in support of communalism, then, we would dispute that in simple terms, More was obliged to be paradoxical with the domineeringly political circumstance of the 16th century England, in some respects. We would also dispute that the occurrences of the Reformation, which were political

improvements of the later time, do not prove that More was conventional. On the other hand, if we interpret *Utopia* not as referential but as allegorical, not in support of communalism but in opposition of communalism, then, we would dispute that More has never wished *Utopia* to be published in England, and More knew his life would be at stake if it were published in England.

Thomas More did not leave behind all-embracing, conventional structure of mediaeval Catholicism. More presented all-inclusive arguments of sacred sovereignty, whereas other early Renaissance thinkers failed to associate with a feasible political rules and regulations. More tries to justify both political and religious analysis, in *Utopia*. More's view on religious freedom is shown metaphorically in *Utopia*, and it is not easy to enjoy the implication of his view, that is, in his illusory republican authority. Raphael Hythloday, the main character of *Utopia*, diverges the virtues and vices in Europe, in terms of the property of those days. He does not approve of private property and depicts Utopian collectivism.

"Thus I am wholly convinced that unless private property is entirely done away with, there can be no fair or just distribution of goods, nor can mankind be happily governed. As long as private property remains, by far the largest and the best part of mankind will be oppressed by a heavy and inescapable burden of cares and anxieties. This load, I admit, may be lightened a little bit under the present system, but I maintain it cannot be entirely removed. Laws might be made that no one should own more than a certain amount of land or receive more than a certain income. Or laws might be passed to prevent the prince from becoming too powerful and the populace too unruly. It might be made unlawful for public offices to be solicited, or put up for sale, or made burdensome for the officeholder by great expense. Otherwise, officeholders are tempted to get their money back by fraud or extortion, and only rich men can afford to seek positions which ought to be held by wise men. Laws of this sort, I agree, may have as much effect as good and careful nursing has on men who are chronically or even incurably sick. The social evils I mentioned may be alleviated and their effects mitigated for a while, but so long as private property remains, there is no hope at all of effecting a cure and restoring society to good health. While you try to cure one part, you aggravate the disease in other parts. Suppressing one symptom causes another to break out, since you cannot give something to one man without taking it away from someone else."⁷⁾

Raphael Hythloday does not actively pay tribute to religious freedom nor emphasizes its implication to Europe. This shows Thomas More's ambiguity and vagueness, through Raphael Hythloday. Religious freedom and Utopian collectivism do not seem to harmonize each other in *Utopia*, which implicitly connote Thomas More's uncertainty. According to More, the private property violates Europe's welfare, just like religious extreme zeal is harmful and menace to Europe. More converts, in *Utopia*, this religious extreme zeal, including Catholics, to the liberal, established support towards the government. It is, however, not evident whether Thomas More had a belief that the religious freedom de-

scribed in *Utopia* is sought-after, or not, for Europe. He himself must not have had his conviction.

Thomas More developed contemptuous arguments against Martin Luther and persecuted the pagans, which More regretfully does not seem to be proud of; and needless to say, the Catholic Church canonized More for his arguments for the papal authority. It is ambiguous whether Thomas More himself could have toleration, or not. A hundred years later, the Act of Toleration was promulgated in 1689. In the Act of Toleration, the freedom of religion was consented to the Nonconformists, and in concrete, the Protestants such as Baptists and Quakers, not to Catholics, were granted the freedom of religion. The promulgation itself of the Act proves that the then Lord Chancellor, Sir Thomas More did not have the conviction. More's opposition and criticism is categorical, and not general or across the board.

One assumption, which is a categorical statement, to accept the concept of ambiguity in interpretation, should be induced from these various perspectives. In effect, about *Utopia* many of us would not deny that we are in agreement on the assumption that *Utopia* is so intricate and each interpretation is authentic. Nonetheless, we have very different perceptions of ambiguity in our way of thinking. The ambiguity in our applied disputes does not sufficiently have the same meaning. Many of us could substantiate the ambiguity of the applied disputes from a convenient root, if we could admit the views in opposition and come down to an unattached justifiable analysis. The way how to reveal the predicament and dilemma is to accept the views in opposition and practice the compromise proposals, finding the middle ground. The compromise proposals are not necessarily lost in thought. The proposals can be the proposals to accept the whole. This is so-called an indisputable ambiguity. Not long ago, such indisputable ambiguity has become further more in style and dominant, although it is still in a small minority among the vast majority of multiple interpretations. Such indisputable ambiguity should be seen in the structure of *Utopia* and the structure of *Utopia* should be the right concern. If we can successfully provide the reasons why *Utopia* has various interpretations, then, the hypothesis of interpretative ambiguity can be logically defended and the ambiguity is not just a modern derogatory slogan. Ambiguity and paradox are significantly pertinent attributes of *Utopia*. These attributes perform well to a great degree in analytical harmony. In other words, the name *Utopia* does not reflect what we conceive of the then religion, politics, and society, so that we can hold any concept in due course.

More pointed out that it would cause faults if they try to reform the society radically, and their intentions would become mere idealistic propositions. On the contrary, however, More tried to shelter, in haste, the Catholic order which was the then reigning political power. Some of the features in *Utopia* are unappealing and are improbable to bring theoretical or divine qualities together. Unappealing features embody explicitly their ethically imperceptive diplomatic strategy, their unwarranted avariciousness towards

material wealth, their strictly controlled lives, for example.

“After a war is ended, they collect the cost of it, not from the allies for whose sake they undertook it, but from the conquered. They take as indemnity not only money which they set aside to finance future wars, but also landed estates from which they may enjoy forever a generous annual income. They now have property of this sort in many different countries,,,”⁸⁾

These unappealing features in *Utopia* imply that Sir Thomas More had uncertainties and reservations towards the then governmental administration which was under Utopian religious freedom. Or, does More mean that a wholly rational politics is acceptable in Utopia where it has only one and true faith and the religious freedom is appropriate, *ironically*, for the societies of the pagans? In fact, the societies of the pagans welcomed Catholicism, and More could defend the religious freedom under these states of affairs, *paradoxically*. More's intentions to write *Utopia* are not to describe a Utopian society but just to appeal and promote the religious freedom to the Christian world.

The whole setting of *Utopia* itself is unfathomable and illusory, which suggests that More's stance in *Utopia* is 'uncertain' and 'reserved'. More argues about religious freedom through Raphael Hythloday as well as through each character's accounts and interpretations. Raphael Hythloday's stance is to approve of political competence of the characters of *Utopia*, whereas is More's stance to disapprove of. Raphael Hythloday is exceedingly political and passes judgment on collectivism. For Hythloday, Utopian religion is preposterous. Does Hythloday eliminate religious freedom from Utopian religion? No answer nor are indications from More, who is the author of *Utopia*, that we are up in the air. More supported the tolerant religion for public harmony, and he maneuvered the principle of religious freedom for Christians for political favour and advantages. In concrete, he settled the government's exertion for convention, the sectarian arguments, fanaticism, excessive conversion, etc. He also did not forget to consider for the Utopian Catholics. More's ambiguous and halfway measures, nevertheless, antagonized the Catholic Church and ended up to be called for his bearing to faith. More devoted himself for lifelong to the Church, whereas Raphael Hythloday, the main truth-seeking character in *Utopia*, is critical to the Church and certainly does not appear that he commits himself to the Church. Did More *really* intend to transform and improve Catholicism? Did More *really* pursue and seek after religious endorsement and grounds for reformation? Or, can we conclude that More's main concern was worldly and material? Was his, so-called, belief confirmed or skeptic? We cannot comprehend More's outlandish psyche, and it is practically not possible to answer these questions. Consequently various perspectives called for attention pro- and con. The question of the individual application of all the diverse comprehensions, however, has never been dealt with as it should be, for it cannot be given a full explanation for in any way.

III . Summary of the Arguments

More's fundamental bearing and understanding toward religious freedom is ambiguous. I am not sure whether More intended *Utopia* to discern its religious political views without difficulty. It is difficult to elucidate the philosophy and theory of *Utopia*.

Nonetheless, Thomas More made a point in *Utopia* that the best commonwealth in the Christendom can be achieved with a strategy to deal with the correspondence between religion and government, theology and politics. This strategy is posed with faith and belief, morality and conscience, sensibility and logic, literature and science. With religious freedom, the government could not emphasize a conventional law nor violate the valid civil liberties of principles. With religious freedom, on the other hand, the government could impose some religious values and exclude religious performances which are politically hazardous. In *Utopia*, More set forth that religious freedom accepts and encourages all convictions and *at the same time*, eliminates divinities that promote dangerously strong, powerful, religious self-importance. With this view, some antagonistic sects could come down to agreement with each other, and the public was harmonized and the systems were substantiated, which led the economic wealth. More promoted these qualities prior to the Reformation. For More, the religious dissention and pride are the one and the same, and he took advantage of this view for the purpose of establishing material, worldly dominance and separating church and government. In the end, Christianity appeared to be, so-called, equitable. More's utmost conviction, that a religion should not be a suffering for any human being, is a universal acknowledgement for any society. More's conviction is still, in the 21st century of religious and political conflicts, the active alternative for benevolent religious and political objectives.

I have presented embracing criticism of the argument about *Utopia*. The issue of ambiguity for interpretation, in recent analyses, is fervent but still it may be just mere double standards. In a Utopian analytical scheme, however, a substantial foundation for the concept of ambiguity is to be continued to develop. A substantial foundation for the concept of ambiguity could become unambiguous by seeing the grounds, foundations and authenticity of the various views, as well as the individual debates on ambiguity. The objective is to confirm that the debates on *Utopia* can be sectioned into some directions and be structured in some categories, as the debates are confusing, and the objective is to draw the consequence coherently from factual and metaphorical methods of conception.

Some analytical arguments may involve an ambiguity, which is a sign of a communalist, autonomist, or even a technology and machinery centred Western social order, in the political and ideological systems. The arguments also involve the ambiguity of particularized words or methods in *Utopia*. Other arguments challenge a more analytical way of thinking toward elucidatory approach and methods; and other arguments move forward to a further perception of the circumstances under which it is quite justifiable and feasible for the arguments to be at variance with each other. We may, in the end, bring up the issue if this appeal for an analysis of elucidatory ambiguity has no unacceptable,

disagreeable features. If we make an attempt to establish the concept of ambiguity perversely, and/or to understand the concept on a principled starting point, then we would fail to convince the ones who have persuasive disagreement and whose concept of ambiguity is just a different form of fanaticism and intransigence.

Correspondingly, it may be seen as a challenge to limit analytical autonomy, ingenuity, and improvement that the current proposition does focus on analytical arguments and place each argument into its category, in the concept of ambiguity. Needless to say, it would cause some reservations to dismiss wholly such unambiguous conditions.

In the vein of a Utopian scheme, the statement, in attendance, for a sincerely ambiguous line of attack to analysis is interesting in many respects, although it is not earnestly appealing. In short, in the vein of a Utopian scheme, it is a valid struggle to sweep away intense objections.

Utopia has been and will be always hard to get hold of and is intangible, although this is the fate of any work of art. Being a work of art which has so many of the multiple interpretations, we have bestowed countless points of views on the work, which, as one might expect, failed to be state-of-the-art in due course. What we have done so far is that we satisfy ourselves, in the end, for not being able to give the definition to the meaning of *Utopia*. We end up indulging ourselves to clarify and enlighten our own awareness by setting up a limit to the implications and scheme of *Utopia*. If we set up factually a limit to the implications and scheme of *Utopia*, then any critical accounts on *Utopia* would carry on with no epistemological significance.

Notes:

- 1) *Utopia* Sir Thomas More Translated and edited by Robert M. Adams W. W. Norton & Company 1992 p.75
- 2) Ibid. p.36
- 3) Ibid. p.67
- 4) Ibid. p.59
- 5) Ibid. p.72
- 6) Ibid. p.84
- 7) Ibid. pp.28~29
- 8) Ibid. p.72

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