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BOREDOM and MELANCHOLY & (DYS)TOPIAS

Each utopia, by its definition, is a projection of some ideal and desirable, according to its author, order. Melancholy and boredom ruin this order, so as Wolf Lepienies in his *Melancholy and society* claims utopia bans melancholy. Melancholy is perceived as a state of reflexivity resulting in vanitative and pessimistic thoughts, and members of the projected community are no longer in a position to allow themselves to be sad – to openly display their emotions, which could reveal the failure of the whole endeavor. Ultimately, utopia is an idea of how makes people felicitous. Prohibited are any actions that can cause a melancholic mood, for instance, poetry in Plato's *State*.

Boredom, which is perceived as a close relative of melancholy, threatens the ideal order as well. This emotion is commonly connected to idleness and situations in which individuals have nothing to do in particular or have no interest in doing what they should do at the moment. In the utopian atmosphere of smoothly functioning institutions, of the general duty to work, and regimented leisure as a palliative against the boredom, expressing boredom gives utopia's creators sleepless nights. Boredom is also antithesis for engagement, which is so essential for utopia, and is related to the sense of meaninglessness.

Utopia was, in many ways, the humanists' replacement for paradise, a Christian utopia of eternal life. As Arthur Schopenhauer points out, when human moved all the suffering and torment to hell, for heaven there is nothing left but boredom. Additionally, utopia is projected as something unchangeable – because it is ideal, there is no need to change anything. Thus, it is an adequate place for boredom to escalate, as far as predictability, routine, and repetitiveness are its common causes.

Boredom states an issue in dystopias as well. This emotion is prohibited because of its revolutionary potential. Many scholars emphasize that boredom, opposite to apathy with which is often confused, is its own cure and a strong motivator to act or change one's situation. In this manner, boredom can be not only an individual disposition but a severe threat to any macro-social system. It can be caused by the feeling of constraint, making

individuals cogs in the social machine without convincing them to construct a sense of meaning.

The presentation aims to show the relationship between boredom/melancholy and utopia/dystopia based on the literature on boredom and melancholy and literary examples of utopias (Platon, Morus, Bellamy, Fourier) and dystopias (Huxley, Orwell, Golding, Vonnegut). Due to this, we can reach a greater understanding of both phenomena in question.