

# Elements of Egalitarianism in Hellenistic Utopias Theopompus, Iambulus and Euhemerus: from Greek Classics to the Stoic Idea of "ΚΟΙΝΟΣ ΒΙΟΣ"

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## **Abstract**

*This article examines the social models of Hellenistic utopias from the point of view of specific values of the means of the simulated societies. The analysis of utopian writings by Theopompus, Iambulus, Euhemerus, united in the "Historical library" by Diodorus Siculus, allows to highlight their common paradigm which is the justification of the priority of "common life", which is based on egalitarianism concerning ownership, distribution, family, lifestyle. The sense of the egalitarian elements that determine the specificity of the utopian field of the investigated projects is restored in the context of classical ancient concepts of the origin of human society and social institutions, as well as in the context of Hellenistic stoic ideas about the "common life".*

**Keywords:** *ancient social utopia, myth, Hellenistic utopian narrative, values-means of utopian models, Theopompus, Euhemerus, Iambulus, Diodorus Siculus, Posidonius.*

## **I. Introduction**

The analysis of social models of Hellenistic utopias from the point of view of values of means of simulated societies is important both for studying the genesis of ancient utopian thought in general, and in order to clarify the fate of the discursive utopia of subsequent ages.

Aiming to highlight the cultural code that is the basement for the Hellenistic utopias by Theopompus, Euhemerus, Iambulus, the texts of which are preserved in the interpretation of Diodorus Siculus, researchers have come to very different interpretations, often based on the same assumptions. The abundant nature, the lack of social differentiation and ownership and the need for hard work, according to E. Rohde, R. Bichler, K. Mosse indicated to the return to the primitive world of savages, where everything is leveled to the "natural nature". In comparison with

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the rationalist utopias of Plato and Aristotle, these degrading utopias of "escape" (according to the classification by L. Mumford), dating back to the archetypes of the Golden age, Arcadia and Eden. R. Pellman assessed utopia of Euhemerus and Iambulus as examples of "socialist organization of production and distribution" and searched them for the correspondence to the "ideal of advanced socialism". G. Braunert saw the development of "early Hellenistic political theory" in the project of Euhemerus.

## II. Literature Review

The utopian field of Hellenistic utopias, in our opinion, represents a more complex structure than the proposed evaluations and makes the methodology for the analysis of the utopias proposed by the Italian scientist A. Giannini actual. Based on the ideas of Rohde and Mumford, he strived to present the evolution of the "utopia of escape" or "sentimental idyll" from myth to reality by offering to allocate utopian ideas – the mythical, the fantastic and historical elements. At the same time, he considers the narratives of "Golden age" and "Islands of the blessed" by Giannini as vies about the paradise, facing the past and the future, and the transition to the historical traditions that idealize primitive peoples, as a result of the gradual rationalization of utopian thought.

The proposed approach allows us to see the genetic relationship of myth and utopia and at the same time to designate the specific features and the process of "divergence" of the mythological and utopian fields.

The meaning of the egalitarian elements (relations of common property, distribution, family, and overall lifestyle) in utopias by Iambulus, Theopompus, Euhemerus and the views of Diodorus Siculus can be fully restored only in the context of the dialogue of utopian ratio and mythological consciousness, as well as in the context of the traditions of classical and Hellenistic philosophy and history of political thought.

In this regard, it should be noted that throughout all antique period there were two ancient concepts of the origin of human society and social institutions. The first one cultivated the idea of "Golden kind" and "the Golden age", after which the life of humanity seemed a degradation. The elements of this theory are demonstrated already by Homer, but it was fully embodied in the works of Hesiod.

The opposite doctrine declared the progress of human society from the miserable life of primitive people to the more advanced forms of existence. Dating back to Ionian rationalism, this idea reaches full flowering in the V – IV centuries in connection with the development of "philosophical speculations".

Transferring the "Golden age" from the mythological time to real, historical, it started to mean such a condition of a man, which, as believed, was the original one. The idea that the "Golden age" was not familiar with ownership, gradually turned into a belief that stayed in legal consciousness. That was where the ancient thinkers found the main historical and natural-law justification of the superiority of the ideal of community. It is not accidental that the historiography of antiquity, which sought to give plausible explanation to the legends of antiquity, found in the legends about the "king Saturn" and the first inhabitants of Italy, which he ruled, a certain ideal:

*"During his ruling no one was enslaved and no one had any property, but everything was common and indivisible – as if everybody had the same genetic heritage".*

### III. Main material

For Hellenistic and later centuries, the "law of nature" did not lose its quality of higher authority, understood as the absolute, ideal norm in public relations, law, morality, which is contrasted to the artificial, "invented" law, as well as "existing" – order established by people.

In addition, justification of the superiority of the ideal of community and real social movements (the reforms of Agis IV and Kleomenis III) is often associated with this norm. However, the trends of collectivity in a Greek polis opposed the tradition of oligarchic and tyrannical regimes.

If one appeals directly to Hellenistic social utopias, first and foremost, it is worth to note the general paradigm, the basis of the creativity of the majority of utopians and that kind of implements the above-mentioned pattern. The authors of the projects of an ideal society strive to welfare of all members of society, not individuals. Radical mainstreaming of the "natural law", "law of nature" combined for some of the utopians with the "law of nations", opposed to the dominant political structures that do not meet justice, and, as a rule, are connected with a substantiation of necessity of public ownership. That is because the official ideology and political realities – the destruction of the policy and policy relations – kind of defend the natural congruity of private ownership principle.

We find the idea of equality and community of people in the "original state", the establishment of property as a result of the human fall in the works of Theopompus. Unfortunately, most of the books of his 58-volume "Φιλίππικά" and the 12-volume "Ελληνικά" are known only by name or small fragments.

This fact and the fact that Theopompus' stories resemble the "addiction to moralizing tone" and "external effects", "the universal desire to extract the embellished tales and the moral from everywhere", they give a reason to some researchers to note a minimum interest of Theopompus to the "social reforms" and the development of utopian stories right after Plato and Aristotle.

However, there are two circumstances which indicate the interest of Theopompus to the ideal of social order and give us opportunity to judge about the orientation of his utopian aspirations. In the eighth book of "Φιλίππικά" he notices that in the story about Meropa he tried to present this image of the state, which would be different from the actual in a better way from economic and social organization points.

In addition, Theopompus, considering the "legislations" of different peoples, openly expresses his likes or dislikes, and formulates the concept of successive empires. The establishment of the hegemony of some countries over others leads to the growth of the wealth and power of the winners, turning the complete powerlessness of those who were won over. For Theopompus all this does not have a "fair basis," nature of the "natural setting", inherent to a more "natural life", which led the peoples to the formation of the Hellenistic empires.

However, the preaching of the "Golden age", apparently, is not connected for Theopompus with the desire for direct return to the pre-state as Meropians assign an extremely positive role to the activities of legislators. Apparently, these views reflected the idea of natural equality of different peoples, widespread in the period of late Hellenism.

Theopompus also gave descriptions of the social life of the Etruscans. In Etruria of Theopompus, as well as in Plato's and Senon's "States" there was the community of women, sexual relations were not regulated neither by personal relations, nor by blood, resembling the relations in the "State" by Zenon:

*"...τὸν ἐντυχόντα ὅσπερ ἑντυχοῦσιν ἡγεῖσθαι".*

In relationships between men and women equality prevailed: both of them freely participated in the "bodily exercises" appearing together completely naked. In this situation children might not know their parents and were brought up together.

Attention to gender equality does not make Plato nor Theopompus "advocates of women's rights." In "Laws" Plato explains the reasons that stimulate the legislator to deal with "women's issue". Their essence is the desire to make everyone in the state happy, but not any particular part of the population.

The opinion about justice is associated with Theopompus with "natural relationship", which "immerse" the human race in the natural surroundings, creating a harmonious community, and the theme of the commonality of ownership is inbuilt within the idea of the natural universality and self-sufficiency. But we think that the idea of equality, of community of wives and children, of sharing meals – these are the thoughts which Theopompus treated with interest in the description of Etruria, would not look so outrageous and contrary to the basic idea of "meropian" common living, where the image of the "Golden age" is filled with symbolic meaning of heavenly bliss. A deviation from justice, dictated to all men by natural law, and as a result, a perversion of the natural order of things, perceived by the author is extremely negative. The desire to fight, to dominate over other peoples, greedy passion to accumulate wealth – all of them are unnatural and detrimental for society in general and individuals in particular.

The most controversial assessment in the historiography was received by Iambulus utopian story about "Sunny island". Without going into details of the discussion on what political and philosophical movements of the Hellenistic times has had a greater impact on the formation of ideas Iambulus<sup>19</sup>, let us consider the very nature "of utopian egalitarianism" of his project.

In the beginning of the story about "newly discovered" island Iambulus reports that its inhabitants:

*"...were very different from people in our part of the world as to their bodily properties, and behavior. All of them had similar body shape..."*

Based on this observation, John. Ferguson concluded on the full physical likeness of natives as another proof full of utopian egalitarianism of the idea of Iambulus. We should note, however, that in the text there is no mention about the perfect external similarity gelineau. Most likely, we are talking about the physical advantages that distinguish locals from strangers. "The islanders are right in proportions and extremely beautiful", their bones are flexible and elastic, the is body completely without of hair, ears have innate characteristics, much different from "ours", says Iambulus, for they "act as valves, closing of holes of the ears". The tongue is also special: it is divided into two halves, it allows gelineau to keep up a conversation with two people at the same time.

Gradually it becomes clear from Iambulus's narrative that gelineau possess physical benefits equally, because this is determined by the most fertile nature of the island, mild climate which allows them to get food that grows spontaneously, in an amount more than it is necessary. Unusually abundant water sources provide an opportunity for local residents to improve their health and form their particular physique. It is impossible to meet the sick and infirm people, both physical and mental qualities are tested still in early childhood, and the very "nature" gives life only to worthy - the children are seated on a special giant bird, which is owned by each related group, and those who survived in the flight are brought up, weak and filled with fear die as those unworthy of life.

The nature for Iambulus is not chaotic plexus of the blind, unbalanced forces, dominated by wild passion, it is the reasonable basis of the universe, the beginning having in mind the good purpose, the way everything is

designed. To follow the "guidance of nature", according to Iambulus, means to know a sensible measure that that should be pursued and know what to avoid. One can hardly agree with the point of view of E. Rohde and R. Bichler, seeing gelineau as "the amount of wild barbarians", the image of the undeveloped, "primitive people", "dissolved" and "offset" in natural being, or to support the position of Cl. Mosse, who compares Iambulus utopia with the state ideal of Faley Chalcedonica and marking, that on the Islands of the Sun we have the image of the "primitive world."

The nature according to Iambulus is not a force, which anonymizes and equalize people in an undeveloped and wild state. The text emphasizes the admiration of not only physical qualities of gelineau, but also their spiritual and mental abilities. Iambulus emphasizes that natives mind shares a concern, for they pay great attention to every type of education and especially to astronomy.

Apparently, Iambulus, following Plato, believed that wise and enlightened peoples deserve to live in accordance with the laws of nature, dictating all the people community and justice.

This idea is actively developed by the Stoics too. Posidonius connected the "state of a primordial community" with the "reign of wisdom", in which people had extensive leisure time indulging in speculation.

The land of the Sun and everything created on it is public domain, giving food to all living things. However, the community of gelineau, similar to close ancient types, meant not only the material conditions of life, but other aspects of human existence. It is significant that Iambulus has never used the expression "common property" or possessions, of ownership, although it was used and was often found in the works by Plato and Aristotle.

The whole text is pervaded with "πάντη", "κοινός", similar to the steady expression "πάντα κοινά," which traditionally characterized in ancient literature the relations of perfect friendship fitting as the element in the stoic tenet "κοινὸς βίος". Such a position is understandable, bearing in mind the desire of Iambulus to oppose the evils and injustices of the contemporary world to the positive abolition of ownership in the form of community of property, but a common life, where property is almost non-existent. The basis of ideal social relations was formed by the principles of camaraderie and kinship dictated, as he imagined, by nature.

No wonder the whole islands like a family that holds a full agreement. There is no place for ambition and disunity, since all the children "are brought up as common children and they are loved equally", and wives are possessed also commonly.

*"So, since there is no competition between them, they do not know what the strife is, they live just caring about the consent".*

In the same way we should consider the "principle of rotation", which underlies the description of economic activity of gelineau that it is inappropriate to interpret, as R. Bellmana did as "socialist organization of production and distribution, or M. Simon did – as a protest against the monotony of broad specialization of labor.

The concept of unity, nurtured by a common way of life and implying the correlation with the natural law as a fundamental principle was further developed by the Stoics and through them it influenced the concept of the Diodorus.

Analyzing utopias of Iambulus and Euhemerus in their relationship with the Introduction to "Historical library" M. K. Trofimov comes to the conclusion that they are combined in a single text not mechanically, they are connected by their common interest with Diodorus to the stoic concept of "common law," "divine Providence", which unites private history of individual Nations in the universal one.

Sharing the view of the Stoics about the appropriateness and perfection of man as a product of nature, which:

*"...has as assistants for all occasions his hands, language and insight of the mind".*

Diodorus, apparently, believed that the harmony of human relations was not established itself at the dawn of civilization, but was suffered for in the process of experience and change of different forms of life. Adhering to the concept of progressive development of human society, he describes the modus vivendi of primitive people as primitive and savage one, noting that:

*"they leading the messy and animal-like life, single-handedly went out on pasture and consumed suitable vegetation and fruits of wild trees".*

In this way the primitive life of mankind was characterized by a wide range postpollination authors.

The concept of "κοινὸς βίος" corresponding to the nature, Diodorus, as well as Iambulus includes to material and spiritual conditions of life, carefully collecting in "Historical library" specific examples, that one way or another, illustrate the theme of community. Speaking at the beginning of the fifth book on the Aeolian Islands, Diodorus is interested primarily in the fact that one part of their residents:

*"...was engaged in farming on the Islands, which became common, and the other part fought with the robbers; for some time, they lived a common life, setting the common property and having common meals. Later, they shared Lipara, with the city located on it, and land on other islands was processed together...".*

Diodorus is very interested in examples, evidence, descriptions of community and how it is demonstrated.

The theme of "common life", "concinnity", is applicable to the being of nature, people and gods in their totality, create and attitude of "Diodorus - Euhemerus". The reason that made Diodorus include the "Sacred chronicle" by Euhemerus to the text of the "Historical library", is explained by the Byzantine chronicler John of Malala, who preserved the fragments of the book VI. He writes that Diodorus endorses the theology of Euhemerus. Next, Malala retells a passage in which Diodorus reports the opinion about the gods and immortal and others who are mortal. The latter "due to the blessing towards the men won immortal honors and fame". In this regard Diodorus named one of the "historians Euhemerus" as the author of the "Sacred writings" that wrote about the "earthly gods".

Let us now address a fragment of Euhemerus, which is also "accordant" to Diodorus. The central part of the "Sacred writings" is devoted to the description of the sanctuary of Zeus Triflisco, situated on the plain of the sacred island – Panaji. Further, we find out that around the sanctuary the whole "secular" life was organized, since the priests of the temple predominated in all public affairs and disputes, possessing the highest authority over concerns of the community".

R. Pelman considered that Diodorus received the information about Lipara from AntiochusSyracusanvia Timaeus, the former described Sicily and Lipara in his vast work, that proves their authenticity.

Most ancient authors considered Euhemerusto be a creator of original theory of origin of belief in God, according to which the Olympus gods and their ancestors (Uranus, for example) originally were the prominent people – warriors and rulers, legislators and military commanders who were merited with a status of gods for their good deeds, or organized their own cult.

Located at the highest peaks the sanctuary was created by Zeus

*"...when he ruled over the whole ecumene, being among people".*

In the temple there was a stele with inscriptions about the deeds of Uranus, Cronus, Zeus. These inscriptions, which the priests, according to the remark of Euhemerus, used to show, were performed by the same Zeus

*"at a time when he was among the people who erected the sanctuary".*

In addition, the priests were brought to Panciu by Zeus

*"...in a time when being among the people, he reigned over the whole ecumene".*

The constant refrain of the phrase "being among men" (κατ' ἀνθρώπους) suggests that not only the activities of Zeus aimed at creating of his own cult were important for Euhemerus, but his good deeds towards people, for which he was awarded with honors and was named immortal.

No wonder that the word "Trifilian" was added to the name of Zeus which means belonging to three tribes because peoples living on Panchie descended from the three tribes, and their way of life was probably determined by the laws established by Zeus. Here is one specific example of his actions. Of the three tribes – panhuizen, oceanico and doi only the first two stayed to live on the island, because doi (I. Baunach translates their name as "feral people", "animals") were expelled by Ammon, probably as a wild tribe devoid of justice.

It is clear that the remaining tribes obeyed to Zeus, who established the social order for them, associated, apparently, with Ephemer's understanding of justice and with the way of life close to nature. In any case, it is obvious that the unity of the "oecumene", which replaces Ephemera the concept of "κοινὸς βίος" provided not just the universal kinship of people, which was defined by the natural setting, but also the creative activity of the most decent people, aimed at universal welfare.

The theory of contract not only explained the origin of inequality, but focused on the statement of mutual responsibilities and managed ones and managers against each other. And if according to Aristotle the more reasonable ones just have the right to "rule and reign", then according to the stoic Posidonii they should take constant care of those who voluntarily obeyed them. Understandings of the law and law in human society was popular in the political thought of the Hellenistic times and probably made an influence on Ephemer and Diodorus.

The "Sacred record" is framed with a story about the way of life of those people who voluntarily obeyed to Zeus, "noble tribes". Here the concept of "ecumene" as a harmonious common life retains its guidance. A mixed population of the island, as if in miniature echoing the ethnic diversity of the world, is surrounded by extremely fertile nature:

*"...here there are all sorts of gardens and meadows with different fruits and flowers, so that the whole landscape is filled with greatness, and that makes it worthy of the gods of the whole world".*

Mighty palm trees and many nut trees bring residents abundant food, and vineyards bear fruit and don't need any treatment.

It directly correlates with introduction to «Historical library».

The ideal of economic self-sufficiency is quite typical for social thought in Greece - right after Plato the preference to it is given by Aristotle – and it is obvious in Euhemerus's works.

#### IV. Conclusion

The unity of a utopian state of Euhemerus, "where nothing is private" was not built on the full assimilation of the being of all residents, they mixing in indistinguishable whole, leaving no room for originality and features. This unity was based on the harmony that rejects individuality, but that finds a way to reconcile individuality with others and integrate it into community life, existing in accordance with natural laws.

So, in the giving reasons for the ideal of community the majority of the authors of the Hellenistic utopian project found bases either on the absolute authority of natural law or on the "ancient" and the inviolability "wise" civil establishment. The elements of egalitarianism, which pervade almost all the utopian projects and relate to various moments of the social order: property, labour, family relationships, etc., are not perceived neither as subversive nor as innovative by the authors themselves since the ideas of equality, first, have been developed in the classical ancient utopia, and secondly, denying cash terms, they did not mean something unprecedented, or groundbreaking; rather, the idea of equality included in support of the priority "of common life", relied on the past, resulting in evidence of its truth rich pedigree, abundant with numerous historical examples.

The social ideal "κοινὸς βίος" constructed by the authors of the Hellenistic utopias, has to highlight the "eternal truth" of its perfection, confirmed with the compliance with the natural law, or sanctified by the "Golden" time of the ancestors.

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