Chapter 5
The Origins of Happiness in Renaissance and Reformation

While the late medieval period (from the 14th to the 16th centuries)—the topic of this chapter—was still largely characterized by the Christian problematization of salvation and intensive struggles around it, this turbulent period is nevertheless very important for the origin of happiness because it started opening up certain new problematizations that will be later connected to the (birth of the) modern experience of happiness.

Truth About Salvation in the Late Middle Ages

As a result of various interconnected catalysts, an 'astonishing doctrinal diversity' on the axis of truth about sin and salvation began to take shape from the 14th century onwards (McGrath 2004, p. 15). One such catalyst was the crisis of authority within the Church that intensified after the Great Schism of 1378–1417 between rival papal claimants, which resulted in a somewhat less repressive regime of truth. Weakened from within, the Church and its ecclesiastical authorities failed to maintain 'the normal methods of validation of theological opinions' and—as a consequence—were unable to 'take decisive action against heterodox views as and when they arose (McGrath 2004, p. 16). Such opening up of the regime of truth was even more dynamic given that at the same time new educational movements and rising professional groups in the cities throughout Europe were in rapid development 'steadily eroding the advantage the clergy once enjoyed over the laity (McGrath 2004, p. 12). 'An additional threat to the authority of the church understood at both the political and theological levels,' McGrath explains (2004, p. 12), 'arose from the rapid expansion of printing,' which 'permitted the transmission of ideas from one locality to another with unprecedented ease, and posed a formidable challenge to those wishing to ensure conformity to existing ecclesiastical beliefs and practices'.

In addition to the crises of the Church authority, 'the doctrinal diversity so characteristic of the later medieval period' was also related to several other developments' (McGrath 2004, p. 18). Namely, McGrath writes (2004, p. 18), 'It is clear that a number of quite distinct theological schools emerged during the thirteenth and

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early fourteenth centuries, with differing philosophical presuppositions and methods. These schools tended to be based upon, or associated with, specific religious orders'. The Dominicans, for example, 'followed the teachings of Thomas Aquinas, the Franciscans those of Bonaventure, and the Augustinians those of Giles of Rome or Gregory of Rimini'. In addition, McGrath argues (2004, p. 19), 'local universities' were also influential 'in molding distinctive intellectual identities'.

Following from all this, 'There was considerable disagreement on the nature of the sources of Christian theology, and their relative priority' (McGrath 2004, p. 18), which included 'the absence of general agreement concerning the status and method of interpretation of both Scripture and the writings of Augustine of Hippo'. On top of this, a 'considerable confusion' reigned 'concerning the specifics of the official teaching of the church, with the result that doctrinal diversity arose through uncertainty over whether a given opinion corresponded to the teaching of the church or not' (McGrath 2004, p. 18).

Out of such a rich and diverse theological and social context, two important currents emerged, which can be seen as representing important steps towards the modern experience of happiness: humanism and renaissance and the Reformation movement. In the following, we shall argue that these developments began to problematize (good) feeling on earth and the affirmation of everyday life that will later (in the 17th and 18th centuries) constitute the modern experience of happiness.

The rich development of scholarship in the growing mediaeval cities and universities and the increasing number of lay scholars in the 15th and 16th centuries produced a social and intellectual movement called the Renaissance. Given that the Renaissance is characterized by its revival of the interest in what the Romans called the 'studia humanities'—grammar, rhetoric, poetry, ethics and history—that intensified the interest in 'man,' it has long been perceived as in stark contrast to what was believed to be the dark Middle Ages[1]. According to recent studies of the medieval period, there are sound reasons to believe that the change occurred 'in subtle modulations and tones' (McMahon 2006, p. 142). It is, hence, not surprising that the Renaissance hadn't produced any radically new ideal visions of human existence. That is, Renaissance philosophers were mostly consonant with the established Christian doctrine that perfect bliss is not attainable in this life, but only in the life to come, when man's immortal soul would enjoy the 'perpetual vision, contemplation and fruition of God' (Kraye 2007, p. 317). Even when drawing heavily on 'ancient philosophical sources in order 'to establish a system of ethics, which was appropriate for laymen living in the secular world of the present life,' they 'never forgot that these laymen were Christians, whose immortal souls were destined for a far higher goal in the next life' (Kraye 2007, p. 319). In this sense, Renaissance philosophers openly accepted and further elaborated the two-fold Thomist formula of perfect and imperfect beatitude. Emphasizing the dignity of man (like Pico dela Mirandola in his famous *De Dignitate Hominis* (1496)), they reinforced the role of human agency in the process of salvation and the consequent mitigation of the tragic effects of

[1] This view has been promoted by the influential 19th century scholar of the Renaissance Jacob Burckhardt (see Burckhardt 1945).

original sin underway since the 9th century (see, for example, (Desiderius) Erasmus of Rotterdam and his *Praise of Folly* (2008) and *On Free Will* (1969)).

Even though the Renaissance didn't produce any radically new visions of salvation, it certainly increased and intensified the interest in man. As Trinkhaus (1965, p. 42) observes, Renaissance philosophers produced 'an extraordinary large number of treatises' on themes such as human beatitude, misery and the greatest good. For our analysis, the most important consequence of such intensification of the interest in man was the beginning of the problematization of the realm of feeling—which will later constitute a vital component of the modern experience of happiness.

Already in 1431, Lorenzo Valla was quite surprisingly associating purely sensual pleasure with heavenly bliss:

> With the others, individual parts of the body are given pleasure as the palate by food, the nostrils by the rose and the violet; but with this kind, the whole body is partner to the pleasure. In this kind of joy, also, that is felt by not one but many senses; let it be touched upon only most briefly here because it relates to formerly mentioned matters, like your banquets, dances, and games … In the state of eternal felicity that kind of pleasure will be much richer and more plentiful (Valla 1977).

It is important to emphasize that these new conceptions of heaven did not imply that human life in this world can become more heavenly like Aquinas's idea of double beatitude but vice versa: the visions of heaven were becoming modeled more and more according to positive feeling experienced on earth, which testifies to the start of a problematization of (positive) feeling during the Renaissance period.

An intensification of the problematization of positive feeling in the present life can also be observed in Renaissance painting. Although smiles already existed in Western painting and sculpture 'since the advent of Christianity,' McMahon explains (2006, p. 156), 'they were used only sparingly to brighten the faces of those known to enjoy certain beatitude: the blessed Virgin, Adam and Eve before the Fall, the angels, and the saints'. In the 15th and 16th centuries, however, Renaissance artists began do extend depictions of smiles and positive feeling to secular subjects. Leonardo da Vinci's famous Mona Lisa is just one example amongst many.

Valla's (1977) image of heaven (later accompanied also by other similar Renaissance descriptions and depictions of the afterlife[2]) was, therefore, at least 'in part a reflection of the greater acceptance of pleasure in the here and now' (McMahon 2006, p. 163). These, however, were only marginal developments limited to certain individuals or groups of people. The nascent problematization of positive feeling was still almost completely overshadowed by the dominant problematization of salvation and the experience of sin. When, for example, 'the aesthetic and libertine tendencies stimulated by the Renaissance' erupted in England 'in the aesthetic court of Charles I and the bawdy court of Charles II,' they 'were fiercely denounced by moralists and preachers as ungodly examples of aristocratic debauchery' (Porter 1996, p. 3).

The beginning of problematization of human feeling was not only becoming evident through a certain affirmation of good feeling and pleasure, but also

[2] See also Celso Maffei's Pleasing Explanation of the Sensuous Pleasures of Paradise (1504).

through their antipode: melancholy. Melancholy derives from the Greek melan (black) + chole (bile) and was first described by Hippocrates in the 5th century BCE and later elaborated by Galen in the 2nd century. 'According to late Medieval and Renaissance commentators who continued to regard Hippocrates and Galen as authorities on such matters,' McMahon explains (2006, p. 159), 'melancholy was one of the four principal humors that governed human physiology and mood'. In the famous *Anatomy of Melancholy* (1621), Burton collected and synthesized virtually all accessible knowledge from ancient times to his own, resulting in the following definition:

> Melancholy, the subject of our present discourse, is either in disposition or in habit. In disposition, is that transitory Melancholy which goes and comes upon every small occasion of sorrow, need, sickness, trouble, fear, grief, passion, or perturbation of the mind, any manner of care, discontent, or thought, which causes anguish, dullness, heaviness and vexation of spirit, any ways opposite to pleasure, mirth, joy, delight, causing forwardness in us, or a dislike. In which equivocal and improper sense, we call him melancholy, that is dull, sad, sour, lumpish, ill-disposed, solitary, any way moved, or displeased. And from these melancholy dispositions no man living is free, no Stoick, none so wise, none so happy, none so patient, so generous, so godly, so divine, that can vindicate himself; so well-composed, but more or less, sometime or other, he feels the smart of it. Melancholy in this sense is the character of Mortality…. This Melancholy of which we are to treat, is a habit, a serious ailment, a settled humour, as Aurelianus and others call it, not errant, but fixed: and as it was long increasing, so, now being (pleasant or painful) grown to a habit, it will hardly be removed (Burton 1621).

Central to our argument is the fact that by extensively reanimating classical sources, Renaissance humanists started perceiving melancholy not only as a natural and inescapable consequence of (original) sin, but also as a condition that can be cured or at least amended by human intervention. Moreover, many authors (including Burton) saw melancholy as a widespread social problem[3]. While it is impossible to assess to what extent their diagnosis was correct, it is clear that 'the diagnostic significance of the disease expanded in the sixteenth century, not in terms of its intrinsic medical-theoretical content, but in the extent to which it was deemed useful in a range of intellectual and cultural contexts' (Gowland 2006, p. 16). In this sense, the problematization of melancholy as a disease and the problematization of 'widespread melancholy in the population at large' can be seen as reflecting 'a growth of interest in psychology, especially in the passions of the soul' and, consequently, also the intensification of problematization of the domain of human feeling (Gowland 2006, p. 17). It is certainly worth noting that this new problematization was mostly not directly linked to the soteriological issues of salvation and the afterlife, but more with the betterment of the present life in the mundane realm.

As we shall see, these developments were 'further shaped by the Protestant and Catholic reform movements, which ensured that this increased attentiveness to psychological health became confessionalised, politicised, and visible in the public domain' (Gowland 2006, p. 17).

[3] It is interesting that this Renaissance diagnosis of widespread melancholy resemble the diagnosis of widespread depression in contemporary western societies.

The Reformation Movement

While since Augustine and the Council of Carthage, which formally interdicted the Pelagian doctrine, Christian doctrine clearly refused the possibility of true salvation on earth, certain themes from the Pelagian polemic endured. In particular, we have already seen that the issue of free will and the question of the role of human agency in the process of salvation drove many central medieval theological discussions about salvation. Insofar as after the Pelagian polemic the issue of Christian (im)-perfection had mostly been resolved, the main polemic around the issue of human (and church) agency in the process of salvation was centered around the issue of justification. Namely, while all theologians agreed that with the coming of Christ, the door to 'salvation shut in the Garden of Eden, was potentially open once more,' Marshall explains (2009, p. 42), 'contention raged' over the questions about 'how individual Christians might actually proceed through that door, the role of the Church in preparing them to do so, and whether the door was open for all or just for a few'.

The whole situation was further complicated by the fact that the doctrinal diversity and uncertainty in relation to the official teaching of the Church in the late Middle Ages was 'particularly evident in relation to the doctrine of justification' (McGrath 2004, p. 27):

> Such was the confusion concerning what constituted the official teaching of the magisterium and what was merely theological opinion that an astonishing diversity of views on the justification of humanity before God were in circulation at the opening of the sixteenth century. Those within the via moderna espoused a theology of justification that approached, although cannot actually be said to constitute, Pelagianism, while their counterparts within the schola Augustiniana moderna developed strongly—occasionally ferociously—anti-Pelagian theologies of justification (mcgarth 2004, p. 27).

In sum, 'an astonishingly broad spectrum of theologies of justification existed in the later medieval period, encompassing practically every option that had not been specifically condemned as heretical by the Council of Carthage' (McGarth 2004, p. 27). And it was precisely the doctrinal issue of justification and 'the rules and mechanisms of salvation' related to it (Marshall 2009, p. 42) over which the Lutheran Reformation began in the early 16th century.

Above, we have seen that since the 9th century and even more so after Aquinas, the ecclesiastical authorities were clearly endorsing the idea and practice that Christians can contribute (at least to a certain extent) to their salvation by performing good works and sacral rituals and by living virtuous lives. We have also seen that closely associated with such a vision of justification was the hierarchy of the sacred[4] and the belief that earthly suffering has a privileged position in the gradual ascent up the ladder to salvation in heaven. As a consequence, the centuries after Aquinas (especially 15th and 16th) were characterized by 'intense piety' (Greyerz 2008, p. 27) or even—as one theory suggests—by 'widespread and morbid "salvation

[4] This encompassed both places (certain places were holier than others), objects, and people (and their vocations).

anxiety[5]" … manifested in an intense, hyperactive, performance of piety' (Marshall 2009, p. 43). In this context, many people were keenly preoccupied with salvation and Martin Luther, an Augustinian monk and a professor of theology at Wittenberg, was one of them.

'The central term, to which Luther's deep spiritual trials can be pinned down,' Wriedt explains (2003, p. 89), 'is the "justice of God" that Luther understood as an active pursuit: the just God pursues the lawbreaker with wrath and punishment. The tested monk becomes more and more tangled in a vicious circle of exaggerated fear of sin and of works of repentance, which become perceived of as futile'. Although –by his own account—Luther was 'blameless, performing tremendous ascetic feats of fasting, self-flagellation, prayer and penance, he could never set his mind at rest'; for 'how could we be certain, he wondered, that we had performed enough good works to merit salvation' (McMahon 2006, p. 167). From a young age, Luther had suffered 'what he called tristia (melancholy or excessive despair)' (McMahon 2006, p. 165). Full of personal despair, he was questioning himself whether 'salvation was at all possible' and if he 'had not already been forgotten by God's grace, being condemned for all eternity' (Wriedt 2003, p. 89). Finally, while ardently contemplating book 1, verse 17, of Paul's Letter to the Romans, Luther experienced a personal revelation very akin to that of Augustine:

> Meditating day and night on those words, I at last, by the mercy of God, paid attention to their context: "In it, the justice of God is revealed, as it is written: The just person lives by faith". I began to understand that in this verse the justice of God is that by which the just person lives by a gift of God, namely by faith. And this is the meaning: the justice of God is revealed by the Gospel, but it is a passive justice, i.e. That by which the merciful God justifies us by faith, as it is written: "The just person lives by faith." Suddenly I felt that I was born again and had entered into paradise itself through open gates (Luther 1545 in Mcmahon 2006, p. 168).

In his illumination (significantly inspired also by his fatherly friend and vicar general of the order, Johannes von Staupitz), Luther realized that the possibility of contributing to one's own salvation by ardent penitential practices and self-torture was a source of suffering rather than the prospect of improving human condition. 'In view of God's free and necessarily given gift of grace,' Wriedt observes (2003, p. 90), 'Luther's striving for perfection, for pure love to God, for justification and holiness, proves to be absolutely wrong, even blasphemous. It appeared that he had rejected the caring love of the merciful God in favor of overconfidence in his own power to find happiness, that is, to acquire eternal salvation'. It, thus, becomes quite clear why 'in retrospect Luther accused his monastic teachers and ecclesiastical theologians of the way they spoke of Christ exclusively as the judge to whom account had to be given and good works had to be shown. Christ was not shown to his advantage as a comforter, savior, and redeemer but as a tyrant' (Wriedt 2003, p. 89).

Like Augustine centuries before him, Luther was unable to find peace by his own efforts. It is hardly surprising, then, that he was also in agreement with Augustine on account of the tragic consequences of original sin. Humans, for Luther (and also

[5] We could perhaps link this anxiety to the widespread melancholy diagnosed by Burton.

other reformers), are inherently sinful creatures unable to liberate themselves by their own efforts, and true salvation can only be bestowed by God's mercy in the life to come. In his view of justification, he, thus, returned to Augustine's logic and refused any possibility that human beings could be justified before God through their own merits. According to Luther, Greyerz explains (2008, p. 27), 'The only thing that justified the believer was faith in the exclusive efficacy of divine grace' and 'the sole means to that end was the understanding of faith on the basis of the Bible'. In the center of Luther's theology, we, therefore,

> Have the absolute sovereignty and freedom of God—expressed in such terms as grace, mercy, and righteousness—and across from him humans who are caught in their sin, completely incapable of taking any saving action. Sin hereby takes the expression of humans' perpetual attempt to place themselves in God's position and the desire to create and fulfill their lives out of their own power and responsibility (Wriedt 2003, p. 92).

According to Luther, 'This human overconfidence becomes most manifest in relationships with authorities from outside the Bible such as Aristotle and a Scripture interpretation led astray by church traditions lacking true theological back-up' (Wriedt 2003, p. 92). Following from this, Luther argued, 'The entire church of his day had fallen into Pelagianism[6], and thus required doctrinal reformation as a matter of urgency' (McGrath 2004, p. 25), hence the famous Protestant return to scripture.

On the basis of his doctrinal reformation guided by the idea of justification by faith that was posed directly against the idea of treasury of merit[7] endorsed by the official Church[8], Luther, and later the whole Reformation movement, opposed the majority of existent devotional practices and any form of indulgence issued by the Church (which included obligatory confessional practices). Following Augustine, Luther also adopted the notion of predestination, which was later even further radicalized by Jean Calvin, the second central authority of the Reformation movement.

Another important consequence of the doctrine of justification by faith was, Beutel explains (2003, p. 11), that insofar as faith would 'set humans free from the compulsion for self-justification,' it would also 'render them free to serve their neighbors'. While before good works have served personal sanctification, now they should serve the common good, as this was the only right way to serve and glorify God. Everyone, Luther preached, 'must benefit and serve every other by means of his own work or office so that in this way many kinds of work may be done for the bodily and spiritual welfare of the community…' (Luther in Lindberg 2003, p. 170). This aspect was even more pronounced in the Calvinist idea of the calling according to which 'in addition to the general calling to be a believing Christian, everyone

[6] Here, it is worth mentioning that given the vast doctrinal diversity and the confusion, according to McGarth (2004, p. 25), 'It could be argued that Luther's comprehensive theological protest against the church of his day was the consequence of an improper identification of the theological opinions of the via concerning the justification of humanity before God (opinions which he came to regard as Pelagian) with the official teaching of the church'.

[7] The idea of treasury of merits was already described above in 9.2.1.

[8] We shall analyze the effects of this development for the constellation of power relations bellow in the section about power.

had a particular calling, the specific form of labour to which God summoned him or her' (Taylor 2001, p. 223). Compared to the Catholic concept of vocation that was mostly related to priesthood and monastic life and implied the "hierarchy of the sacred," the idea of the calling maintained that 'all callings were equal, whatever their place in the social hierarchy, as long as they were of benefit to fellow humans (Taylor 2001, p. 223).

Initially, the church reform triggered by Luther 'took hold in the urban areas—at first among humanists as the representatives of the comparatively small urban educated class' (von Greyerz 2008, p. 28). But, 'what made the reform of the church into a true Reformation, into a socioreligious mass movement,' von Greyerz explains (2008, p. 28), 'was the fact that clerics, as preachers, began to adopt the Wittenberg reformer's ideas, in some cases perhaps merely his call for resistance to the existing conditions within the church'[9]. Spreading with the help of print-like fire throughout Europe, the Reformation movement soon diversified into regional variations 'carried by local reformist currents that had deep roots in the urban artisanal class, and in which the zeal for religious reform not infrequently merged with anticlericalism and political resentment of the governing class of councilors' (von Greyerz 2008, p. 28).

According to Greyerz (2008, p. 30), after 1525, we already have to 'distinguish between the radical Reformation, which would become a catch-basin for Anabaptists, Spiritualists, and Antitrinitarians, and the "established" Reformation, with the latter divided once again into a Lutheran and a Zwinglian movement. The main two currents were joined in the 1540s by Calvinism, 'which radiated outward from Geneva, and which, needless to say, had much in common with Zwinglianism' (Greyerz 2008, p. 30). Given the diversity of reformed churches and doctrines, we shall not go into the details of each of them. Rather, we shall mostly focus on Lutheranism and Calvinism, which represent the two main reformed churches and examine their contribution towards the birth of the modern experience of happiness.

Trying to counter Pelagianism, which they attributed to the official Catholic Church and to neutralize salvation anxiety catalyzed by the Church through the idea of earning of merit, the Reformation theologians have—resembling Augustine's vigor in fighting the Pelagian doctrine—also swayed far to the other extreme. They emphasized the tragic consequences of the original sin due to which humanity has lost free will and has become totally dependent on the merciful attention of God:

> For if we believe it to be true, that God fore-knows and fore-ordains all things; that He can be neither deceived nor hindered in His Prescience and Predestination; and that nothing can take place but according to His Will, (which reason herself is compelled to confess;) then, even according to the testimony of reason herself, there can be no "Free-will"—in man,—in angel,—or in any creature (Luther 1969, sect. CLXVII).

In this sense, reformation was aimed directly against the prevailing current of gradual reinforcement of free will and human agency in the process of salvation under way since the 9th century, intensified by Aquinas and culminating in the

[9] As we shall see in the chapter about power, according to Foucault (2007), these existing conditions mostly correspond to the existing modality of pastoral power institutionalized in the Church.

Renaissance movement[10]. Insofar as this current can be seen as a slow erosion of the tragic consequences of original sin and consequently as a certain rehabilitation of the standing of life in this world (like Aquinas's double beatitude or renaissance problematization of positive feeling), reformation could hence be regarded as a regression in the possibilities to improve the human condition in the present life. A closer inspection, however, reveals that this was not the case. First, the radical position on free will only pertains to man's relation to the divine and salvation in the afterlife, but not to his dealings with worldly things. Second, rather than connecting it to fatalism, the Reformers saw the lack of free will more like a neutralization of the existent salvation anxiety or like a certain catharsis in knowing that salvation does not depend on free will:

> I frankly confess that, for myself, even if it could be, I should not want free-will to be given to me, nor anything to be left in my own hands to enable me to endeavor after salvation; not merely because in the face of so many dangers, and adversities, and assaults of devils, I could not stand my ground and hold fast my free-will (for one devil is stronger than all men, and on these terms no man could be saved); but because, even were there no dangers, adversities, or devils, I should still be forced to labor with no guarantee of success, and to beat my fists at the air. If I lived and worked to all eternity, my conscience would never reach comfortable certainty as to how much it must do to satisfy God. Whatever work I had done, there would still be a nagging doubt as to whether it pleases God, or whether He required something more. The experience of all who seek righteousness by works proves that; and I learned it well enough myself over a period of many years, to my own great hurt. But now that God has taken my salvation out of the control of my own will, and put it under the control of His, and promised to save me, not according to my working or running, but according to His own grace and mercy, I have the comfortable certainty that He is faithful and will not lie to me, and that He is also great and powerful, so that no devils or opposition can break Him or pluck me from Him (Luther 1969, sect. XVIII).

Following from this, the Protestant radical refusal of free will along with the doctrine of justification by faith has resulted in the Protestant affirmation of everyday life, which, in our view, represents the second major current (besides the current of reinforcement of free will) that has eventually resulted in the birth of the modern experience of happiness.

The Affirmation of Mundane Life

Above, we have seen that already in the 9th century, the Church elites feared that the complete refusal of human agency in the process of salvation would erode the role of the Church as the exclusive mediator between God and the people, thus fundamentally transforming the established outlook of pastoral power. The Protestant return to Augustine and their rejection of free will has proved that their fears indeed had been justified.

[10] The best example of this is a written polemic on free will between Erasmus of Rotterdam (probably one of the most famous Renaissance thinkers) and Luther (see Luther and Erasmus 1969).

Maintaining the notion of free will in relation to the idea of treasury of merits, medieval Catholicism managed to firmly establish the idea that 'the church is the locus and vehicle of the sacred' and that 'we are brought closer to God by the very fact of belonging and participating in its sacramental life' (Taylor 2001, p. 216). Grace can only 'come to us mediately through the church, and we can mediate grace to each other, as the lives of the saints enrich the common life on which we all draw' (Taylor 2001, p. 216).

Insofar as the Reformers claimed that grace cannot be earned, but is freely given by the merciful God, they have rejected such mediation and the sacramental life connected with it. In their view, 'each person stands alone in relation to God: his or her fate—salvation or damnation—is separately decided' (Taylor 2001, p. 216). Along with the sacramental life, then, 'went the whole notion of the sacred in mediaeval Catholicism, the notion that there are special places or times or actions where the power of God is more intensely present and can be approached by humans' (Taylor 2001, p. 216). Following from this, 'Protestant (particularly Calvinist) churches swept away pilgrimages, veneration of relics, visits to holy places, and a vast panorama of traditional Catholic rituals and pieties,' that in their view 'impeded direct confrontation with the divine' (McMahon 2006, p. 170). 'And along with the sacred,' Taylor argues (2001, p. 216), also 'went the mediaeval Catholic understanding of the church as the locus and vehicle of the sacred'.

This transformation was closely connected to the Protestant refusal of special ecclesial vocations, which had represented an important part of mediaeval Catholicism. The celibate life in particular had been seen 'as part of the economy of the sacred' (Taylor 2001, p. 217). Namely, 'the medieval Catholic church viewed the celibate life as a meritorious work for salvation, and perpetuated patristic suspicions of sexuality as the font of original sin' (Lindberg, 2003 p. 168). Taylor (2001, p. 217) believes 'this was partly because of the connection between priesthood and celibacy, and partly because of the role of religion in an economy of mutual mediation: monks and nuns prayed for everyone, just as the laity worked, fought, and governed for the whole'. It was, hence, commonly accepted that the ecclesial vocations 'supposed a hierarchy of nearness to the sacred, with the religious life being higher/closer than the secular,' the result of which 'was a lesser spiritual status for lay life, particularly that of productive labor and the family' (Taylor 2001, p. 217). On the basis of hierarchy of the sacred, Foucault argues (2007, p. 268), medieval Catholicism was characterized by the existence of 'two clearly distinguished categories of individuals, clergy and laity, who do not have the same civil rights, obligations, or privileges, of course, but who do not even have the same spiritual privileges'. [11]

By rejecting the sacred and the idea of ecclesial mediation, the Reformers also rejected this hierarchy; spiritual privileges of the clergy and mandatory clerical celibacy, which, understood in this sense, 'was not just a matter of breaking church

[11] Here, we should add that, according to Foucault (2007, p. 268), the hierarchy of the sacred and the consequent hierarchical distinction between the laity and the clerics was actually a result of the institutionalization of pastoral power. As such, it should also be seen as one of the central points and outcomes of pastoral struggles in the context of the Reformation movement.

law,' but also encompassed the new evangelical understanding of the relationship to God and the world' (Lindberg 2003, p. 168). As Taylor (2001, p. 221) explains, 'The crucial potentiality here was that of conceiving the hallowing of life not as something which takes place only at the limits, as it were, but as a change which can penetrate the full extent of mundane life'. In other words, 'The rejection of the sacred and of mediation together led to an enhanced status for (what had formerly been described as) profane life' (Taylor 2001, p. 216). And once this potentiality for the affirmation of everyday life was realized, Taylor observes (2001, p. 221),

> It took on a life of its own. Its influence, in other words, was felt beyond the boundaries of protestant europe and not necessarily most strongly within these boundaries. It was felt in catholic countries, and then later also in secularized variants. Its impact was the greater in that it dovetailed nicely with the anti-hierarchical side of the gospel message. The integral sanctification of ordinary life couldn't consist with the notion of hierarchy, at first of vocation and later even of social caste. The gospel notion that the orders of this world, the spiritual as much as the temporal, are reversed in the kingdom of god, that the foolishness of the children of god is stronger that the wisdom of the wise, had its effect in discrediting earlier notions of superiority and accrediting the new spiritual status of the everyday.

The Protestant affirmation of ordinary life and their emphasis on the service for the common good also went hand in hand with the emerging scientific revolution pioneered by Francis Bacon. The reasons for such an alliance were mostly related to the fact that both movements 'saw themselves as rebelling against a traditional authority which was merely feeding on its own errors and as returning to the neglected sources: the Scriptures on one hand, experimental reality on the other' (Taylor 2001, p. 230). As a consequence, they 'both appealed to what they saw as living experience against dead received doctrine—the experience of personal conversion and commitment, or that of direct observation of nature's workings' (Taylor 2001, p. 230). As Lowe (2002, p. 18) explains, 'Bacon, in his *Novum organum* (1620), had recommended that we discover Nature's secrets by interrogating her systematically—essentially, by applying an inductive method of discovery through controlled experiment and observation'.

Within the framework of (Puritan) Protestant movement, Baconian science and its 'instrumental stance towards the world' gains a pious purpose not only in the obvious way—that it contributes to the right service in our use of God's creation (that is, to the general welfare of mankind), but also 'to his greater glory, as we come to understand his purposes and can render him knowledgeable and fitting praise for the marvels of his design' (Taylor 2001, p. 232). Making such an instrumental stance towards the world central, Taylor explains, 'could not but transform the understanding of the cosmos from an order of signs or Forms, whose unity lies in their relation to a meaningful whole, into an order of things producing reciprocal effects in each other, whose unity in God's plan must be that of interlocking purposes'.

According to Taylor (2001, p. 14), 'this affirmation of ordinary life, although not uncontested and frequently appearing in secularized form, has become one of the most powerful ideas in modern civilization' and as such a constitutive part of what was later established as the modern experience of happiness. This connection becomes even more evident when we consider that the affirmation of everyday life is

also closely associated with the Protestant problematization and affirmation of the mundane good feeling, with which we shall deal in the next chapter concerned with the late medieval relationship to the self. Based on somewhat different foundations than the Renaissance,[12] reformation, thus, also contributed to the reinforcement of the general trend towards the intensification of the problematization of feeling in the present life. Let us now turn to the analysis on the axis of ethics and examine the affirmation of everyday life and the problematization of good feeling in the context of the late medieval relationship to the self.

The Attack on the Privileged Position of Suffering

Based on the affirmation of everyday life, the Reformation didn't have much difficulty in joining the trend of the problematization of (good) feeling in the present life already initiated by the Renaissance. Realizing that striving for eternal salvation through one's own efforts is a source of suffering rather that a path to eternal bliss, Luther entirely surrenders to God's mercy. Following from this, he believes, is not only a theological illumination, but also an opening up of the possibility of a good feeling in the present life:

> Faith is a work of God in us which changes and brings us to birth anew from God [cf. John 1]. It kills the old Adam, makes us completely different people in heart, mind senses, and all our powers, and brings the holy spirit with it. What a living, creative, active, powerful thing is faith! … [It] is a living, unshakeable confidence in God's grace; it is so certain, that someone would die a thousand times for it. This kind of trust in and knowledge of God's grace makes a person joyful [frohlich], confident, and gay [lustig] with regard to God and all creatures. This is what the Holy Spirit does by faith (Luther 1545).

Arguing that salvation is received rather than achieved, Luther and other reformers, thus, also radically questioned the privileged position of suffering in the Christian tradition. While the reformers did not deny earthly suffering (after all, they believed in the tragic consequences of original sin), they didn't see it as a path to salvation either[13]. Insofar as salvation is God's free gift, and not something earned by human effort, suffering was no longer perceived as a path to salvation. As a consequence, 'Luther and Protestants more generally dismissed with contempt the heroic ascetic

[12] Of course, there are also certain connections between renaissance and reformation (see McGrath 2004).

[13] Following from this the reformed tradition appreciated the created order and did not directly condemn the realm of sensual pleasures: 'on the one hand, through cross-bearing we are crucified to the world and the world to us. On the other hand, devout Christians enjoy this present life, albeit with due restraint and moderation, for they are taught to use things in this world for the purpose that God intended them' (Beeke 2004, p. 143). The reformers therefore opted for the middle way and advised their followers to avoid two opposite extremes: 'they must spurn the monkish error of renouncing the things of this world' (Taylor 2001, p. 222) and at the same time be careful not to become too absorbed in things of this world.

embrace: no more hair shirts, no more fasting, no more ecstasies of pain' (Mcmahon 2006, p. 172).

In the world full of suffering, we poor sinners, rather, have to cherish all the joy we can find. While we cannot strive for our ultimate salvation in heaven, we indeed—in spite of our sinful nature—can to a certain extent hope for moments of personal joy in our earthly existence. In other words, it is precisely the abandoning of the pretentious effort to reach salvation that opens up the possibility to experience something that has hitherto been deemed a sin and an obstacle to salvation: joy and good feeling in the present life coming from our deep faith in the mercy of God. While before earthly suffering was understood as a means towards perfect bliss on earth, now the unconditional faith in God's mercy and the hope of the life to come gives purpose to and a certain degree of enjoyment in our present life. This aspect of the Protestant transformative message is most evident in Luther's letter to the young Prince Joachim von Anhalt suffering from melancholy and despair at a young age like he did:

> Serene Prince, gracious Lord! [A mutual friend] has told me that your Grace has been a little unwell, but are now, thank God, again in good condition. It often occurs to me that, as your Grace leads a quiet life, melancholy and sad thoughts may be the cause of such indisposition; wherefore I advise your Grace, as a young man, to be merry [frolich], to ride, hunt, and keep good company, who can cheer your Grace in a godly and honorable way. For loneliness and sadness are simple poison and death, especially in a young man … No one knows how it hurts a young man to avoid joy [Freude] and cultivate solitude and melancholy … Joy and good humor, in honor and seemliness, is the best medicine for a young man, yea for all man. I, who have hitherto spent my life in mourning and sadness, now seek and accept joy whenever I can find it. We now know, thank God, that we can be merry with a good conscience, and can use God's gifts with thankfulness, inasmuch as he has made them for us and is pleased to have us enjoy them. If I have not hit the cause of your Grace's indisposition and have thereby done you a wrong, your grace will kindly forgive my mistake. For truly I thought your Grace might be so foolish as to think it is a sin to be merry, as I have often done and still do at times … Your Grace should be joyful [frohlich] in all things, inwardly in Christ and outwardly in God's gifts; for he gives them to us that we may have pleasure in them and thank him for them (Luther 1534 in Mcmahon 2006, p. 165).

It is certainly true that for Luther (and also other reformers), perfect salvation is not achievable by our human efforts. However, we can see from his letter to the young prince that this does not hold for the earthly experience of joy and happiness (gluck), which according to Luther can or even should be pursued (by our own efforts) in this world. Calvin (2002, p. 503) preached in a very similar way to Luther: 'if the praise of the Lord and thanksgiving can emanate only from a cheerful and gladdened breasts and there is nothing which ought to interrupt these feelings in us, it is clear how necessary it is to temper the bitterness of the cross with spiritual joy'.

Compared to Aquinas's imperfect beatitude, the Protestant joy is, therefore, much more profane/mundane than the Catholic imperfect beatitude. In the Thomist gradualist perspective towards salvation, imperfect beatitude refers to the partial ascent up the ladder of being and in this sense—as the name suggests—to a kind of partial/imperfect salvation on earth directly connected to the perfect bliss in heaven. For Aquinas, achieving a certain level of heavenly purity and virtue already in earthly life makes the present life more heavenly and gradually brings us closer to

heaven. 'In contrast to all pieties of achievement, then and now,' the reformers, on the other hand, 'affirmed God's descent in Jesus to us rather than our striving to ascend to God' (Lindberg 2003, p. 165). As a consequence, 'the fullness of Christian existence was to be found within the activities of this life, in one's calling and in marriage and the family' (Taylor 2001, p. 18). This also meant that the reformed tradition appreciated the created order and did not directly condemn the realm of sensual pleasures. As Beeke (2004, p. 143) explains, 'On the one hand, through cross-bearing, we are crucified to the world and the world to us. On the other hand, devout Christians enjoy this present life, albeit with due restraint and moderation, for they are taught to use things in this world for the purpose that God intended them'. The reformers, therefore, opted for the middle way and advised their followers to avoid two opposite extremes: 'they must spurn the monkish error of renouncing the things of this world' (Taylor 2001, p. 222) and, at the same time, be careful not to become too absorbed in things of this world[14].

In this sense, when referring to joy and happiness coming from our faith in God, the reformed tradition (Luther in particular) is mostly not using these terms in a direct connection to salvation in the afterlife, but is positioning them in the registry of mundane earthly experience. While true salvation and bliss are still seen as pertaining to the afterlife, personal relief from the anxiety of salvation opens up and affirms a positive mode of earthly experience, which comes from 'living unshakable confidence in God's grace' (Luther 1545).

Like the Renaissance, but along a completely different path, the Reformation movement, therefore, also contributed to the problematization of (good) human feeling in the present life. While in the case of the Renaissance, this development was mostly driven by an increased interest in man, the reengagement of ancient philosophers and the further affirmation of rationality and free will, the Reformation reinforced the problematization of human feeling mostly in relation to the doctrine of justification by faith and the consequent affirmation of mundane life.

While indeed the Reformation, in general, stopped regarding good feeling on earth as a sin (and refused the privileged status of suffering inherent in the Catholic tradition), we have to emphasize that good feeling on earth was still far from being attributed a major role in the ideal of human existence. In other words, even though reformation and its affirmation of everyday life (like the renaissance before it) to a certain extent began to affirm good human feeling in the present life, salvation

[14] In relation to sensual pleasures, it is possible to observe an interesting, somewhat paradoxical difference between the Catholic and the Protestant tradition. In the Catholic tradition (in theory at least), the desire for the sensual has to be completely neutralized. Given that this imperative is obviously impossible to put into practice, there is always a certain leeway for occasional (either individual or collective) transgression (like medieval carnivals). While the idea of Vice and various penitential practices in this sense serve as an absolution for such transgressions, in turn, the possibility of an absolution also opens up a wider space for occasional sensual transgressions. On the other hand, the Protestant tradition in theory does not entirely condemn the sensual, provided that life is enjoyed with due restraint and moderation. In practice, however, this leads to a kind of tyranny of moderation in the context of which a good Protestant (in theory) indeed can enjoy life, but is (in practice) never moderate enough.

in the afterlife firmly remained its primary ideal of human existence. In this sense, happiness and joy coming from faith in God were mainly seen more as a joy of returning back to the right path to salvation and (hence) as an improvement over the salvation anxiety caused by the "deluded" Catholic idea of earning of merit. Even though these were certainly important initial leaps towards what will eventually become the modern experience of happiness, the Reformation (and counter-Reformation as its response), therefore, didn't bring fundamental transformations to the basic Christian formula of the relationship to the self.

Indeed, Foucault argues (1978, p. 116), the Reformation and counter-Reformation 'mark an important mutation and a schism in what might he called the traditional technology of the flesh[15]'. However, 'this did not rule out a certain parallelism in the Catholic and Protestant methods of examination of conscience and pastoral direction: procedures for analyzing "concupiscence" and transforming it into discourse'. The 'main features of both' the Protestant and Catholic churches, Foucault further explains (2000a, p. 243), are still 'an ensemble of truth obligations dealing with faith, books, dogma, and one dealing with truth, heart, and soul,' where 'access to truth cannot be conceived of without purity of the soul'.

Insofar as in the Protestant churches the refusal of the self and Christian self-deciphering in their essence remained, one form of anxiety was just replaced by another. Trying to amend the Catholic salvation anxiety through the doctrines of justification by faith and predestination, 'many Protestants' were now 'cast into deep despair at the thought that they were damned' (Thomas 2009, p. 232). An example of what could be called predestination anxiety[16] is the astrological doctor Richard Napier, who practiced in the early 17th century in England and who 'had over ninety patients who came to him because they doubted their prospects of salvation' (Thomas 2009, p. 232).

Next, we shall turn to the axis of power and analyze this turbulent period of Western history in light of power relations and struggles.

The Culmination of Struggles Around the Pastoral Power

As Von Greyerz (2008, p. 28) observes, 'the Reformation was an exclusively religious event in the beginning, but not so as it unfolded'. By looking 'at the carriers of the reformist movements in the 1520s,' he explains, 'it is not possible, in retrospect, to distinguish clearly between motives that were genuinely religious and those that were socioeconomic and political; that is true for both the cities and the countryside' (Von Greyerz 2008, p. 28). Or—informed by the more in-depth Foucauldian analysis of power relations in the medieval period—we should rather say that the Reformation movement was no doubt a struggle initiated by a doctrinal dispute,

[15] Which includes the refusal of (obligatory) confession by majority of the protestant churches.

[16] For more on Protestant 'religious despair,' see Stachniewski (1991).

which, however, had rapidly grown to a series of struggles over the pastoral power that were

> fundamentally struggles over who would actually have the right to govern men, and to govern them in their daily life and in the details and materiality of their existence; they were struggles over who has this power, from whom it derives, how it is exercised, the margin of autonomy for each, the qualification of those who exercise it, the limits of their jurisdiction, what recourse is possible against them, and what control is exercised over each other (Foucault 2007, p. 200).

Indeed, the period between the 13th and the 16th centuries in which we are focusing in this chapter was characterized by a particularly large intensity of struggles around the pastorate culminating in the spread of the Reformation movement and the Wars of Religion. The Reformation was, therefore, 'undoubtedly much more a great pastoral battle than a great doctrinal battle' (Foucault 2007, p. 200). In this sense, the main transformations of experience of sin induced by the Reformation movement described above (such as the return to scripture and to Augustine's refusal of free will; refusal of indulgences and obligatory confession and the refusal of hierarchy of the sacred) should be largely seen as the outcomes of pastoral struggles.

The culmination of pastoral struggles and the consequent transformations of the pastorate during the Reformation and counter-Reformation, however, did not bring the pastoral modality of power to an end because

> threatened by all these movements of counter-conduct, the Church tries to take them up and adapt them for its own ends, until the great separation takes place, the great division between the Protestant churches, which basically opt for a certain mode of re-implantation of these counter-conducts, and the Catholic Church, which tries to re-utilize them and re-insert them in its own system through the Counter Reformation (Foucault 2007, p. 282).

It, hence, follows 'that the two worlds or series of worlds that issue from the Reformation, that is to say, a Protestant world, or a world of Protestant churches and the counter-Reformation, were not worlds without a pastorate'. On the contrary, Foucault explains (2007, p. 200), 'What resulted from the Reformation was a formidable reinforcement of the pastorate in two different types'. On the one side, there was the 'Protestant type, or the type developed by different Protestant sects, with a meticulous pastorate, but one that was all the more meticulous as it was hierarchically supple,' and, on the other side, there was the 'counter-Reformation with a pastorate entirely brought back under control, a hierarchized pyramid, within a strongly centralized Catholic church'.

The First Steps Towards the Birth of Happiness

Above, we have seen that the Christian problematization of salvation, which lasted from the 5th to the 16th century, was fundamentally marked by original sin, which did not allow humans to find true bliss on earth. In our view, this experience of sin cannot be simply equated with the experience of happiness, which only emerged in the 17th and 18th centuries, when the ideal of human existence increasingly started

to be pursued in the present life. In other words, we do not believe that the birth of happiness can be simply seen as a process of happiness descending down from heaven to earth because it was never up there in the first place. As we have seen in the discussion above, throughout the medieval period, heaven was associated with the concept of bliss [*beatitudo*] and not with the concept of happiness. Happiness was born in this world and primarily pertains to this world.

In the next chapter, we shall try to show that the birth of experience of happiness is largely connected with the intensification of the problematization of (good) feeling on earth, and the affirmation of everyday life, which emerged in the 14th and 15th centuries, for some time existed parallel to the problematization of salvation and eventually (since the beginning of the 17th century) started to slowly overshadow it. Let us explain this more thoroughly starting with semantics.

In the original Christian canon (and later also in medieval theological and scholastic writing), the word designating the ultimate ideal of human existence was the Latin expression *beati/beatitude*, which is a Vulgate translation of the Greek term *makarios*, which at least in the Christian tradition carried an exalted religious connotation. In virtually all of the European languages (except Welsh) the words happy and happiness on the other hand, have their origins in expressions with purely mundane connotations. They either came from the Indo-European root *fe*, whose original meaning is the contentment of a baby suckling at the breast (neo-latin languages—Italian, Spanish, Portuguese), or either from the word for luck, which was always a more mundane expression (the majority of other European languages). Following from such etymology, the word happy initially designated some type of (good) fortune, chance or fertility in the earthly realm. It was only around the 16th and 17th centuries that in the major European languages the word happiness also started to signify a pleasant and contented mental state (see Harper 2011).

Even though since the 18th century beati(tudo) started to be increasingly translated as happy(iness) in the official Christian canon[17], we agree with Kreeft (1992), who is extremely critical towards such translations, arguing that the two expressions are both etymologically and theologically different. And, in fact, in the late Middle Ages, still characterized by the experience of sin and the problematization of salvation, neither the word happy nor happiness were originally intended to directly replace the Latin expressions for beati or beatitudo. Rather, the word happiness emerged as a part of a new kind of problematization—the problematization of (good) feeling on earth. This can be most clearly seen in Luther (1545), who, when referring to joy and happiness (Glück) coming from our faith in God, is not using these terms in a direct connection to salvation in the afterlife, but is positioning them in the registry of mundane earthly experience. While for Luther true salvation (beatitudo) is still seen as pertaining to the afterlife, personal relief from the anxiety of salvation coming from deep faith in God opens up and affirms a certain degree of positive feeling on earth, which is not explicitly sacralized.

[17] In Chap. 6 we shall see that this way of translating beatitude is related to Christianity operating in the new context of the modern experience of happiness.

In this chapter, we have argued that not only the Reformation movement, but also the Renaissance before it, each in their own specific ways contributed to the start of the problematization of (good) human feeling in the present life. While in the case of the Renaissance, this development was mostly driven by an increased interest in man, the reengagement of ancient philosophers and further affirmation of rationality and free will, the Reformation reinforced the problematization of feeling mostly in connection with the rejection of the sacred and the affirmation of mundane life.

The emergence and increased use of the expressions happy and happiness can be certainly linked to this two new problematizations. However, in our view, neither the emergence of problematization of (good) feeling nor the verbal designations for happiness connected to it simply coincided with the birth of experience of happiness. Rather, the problematization of (good) feeling on earth for some time only coexisted with the preceding and still dominating problematization of salvation, until in the 17th century the former started to slowly but surely dominate over the latter. We believe that it is precisely this transformation (in which good feeling on earth in connection with the affirmation of mundane life starts becoming the primary ideal of human existence) that represents the first major development, which marks the birth of the modern experience of happiness. The second such major development, besides the ideal of human existence becoming increasingly positioned in this life, is that the ideal of human existence also becomes perceived as entirely achievable with human efforts.

These two major developments not only mark the birth of happiness, but also represent the two major characteristics or parameters of the modern experience of happiness, which at the same time also fundamentally distinguish it from the preceding experience of sin. In order for this decisive transformation to occur on a larger scale, however, first the idea of (original) sin had to be refused. Namely, being the constitutive part of the medieval Christian experience, the idea of (original) sin represented the main inhibition precluding the ideal of human existence to be positioned in this life. Furthermore, in spite of the gradual trend of reinforcement of free will underway since the 9th century, due to the idea of original sin it was still held that the ideal of human existence was not entirely achievable by human efforts alone.

The next chapter shall attempt to trace this decisive transformation of experience.