**Why Utopianism is a Universal Human Phenomenon**

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In his article "The Three Faces of Utopianism Revisited", Lyman Tower Sargent defines utopianism as "social dreaming" - "the dreams and nightmares that concern the ways in which groups of people arrange their lives and which usually envision a radically different society than the one in which the dreamers live" (Sargent, 1994). But not all of these dreams have to be radical, given that sometimes people dream of basically familiar things (Sargent, 1994). In his article, Sargent argued that utopianism is a universal human phenomenon (Sargent, 1994). He based this on the fact that all humans at some time feel discontent and imagine how things can be improved (Sargent, 1994). He then went on to cite examples of utopianism around the world (Sargent, 1994). So, utopianism is a universal human phenomenon because all people are at some time dissatisfied and consider how their lives can be improved and because utopianism can be found all over the world.

Because everyone is at one time or another likely to become disgruntled with their situation and contemplate upon how their life can be enhanced, utopianism is indeed a universal human phenomenon. When people are dissatisfied and engage in consideration of how their lives can be improved, this is a form of "social dreaming"; thus, it is a form of utopianism. According to Lyman Tower Sargent, the overwhelming majority of - or, very likely, all - people are at some time dissatisfied and consider how their lives can be improved (Sargent, 1994). For instance, if we experience hunger, we dream of being full (Sargent, 1994). Or if we are "sexually frustrated", we dream of sexual satisfaction (Sargent, 1994). Likewise, if there is something

within our society that frustrates us, we dream of it being corrected (Sargent, 1994). Even if we are fed and sexually satisfied, we still dream (Sargent, 1994). This is at least in part because we realize that others are not and feel that others should also be fulfilled (Sargent, 1994). So, no matter how privileged a life someone leads, at some point, they are inevitably bound to be dissatisfied with something. And when they become dissatisfied with something, they begin to consider how their lives can be improved. When they consider how their lives can be improved, that is a form of "social dreaming". In other words, that is a form of utopianism. So, because all humans experience, all humans experience "social dreaming" or utopianism. Thus, utopianism is a universal human phenomenon. And so, in that way, utopianism is a universal human phenomenon because all people are at some point dissatisfied and consider how their lives can be improved.

Utopianism is also a universal human phenomenon because it can be found all over the world. Although utopianism is commonly associated with the Christian West, it is not confined to the West; it can be found all over the world. Those who say that utopias are Western, and specifically Christian, are demonstrably wrong (Sargent, 1994). After all, body utopias have been produced in every culture (Sargent, 1994). They have existed in China, India, and Southeast Asia well before Thomas More (Sargent, 1994). They have also existed in Japan and Islamic tradition (Sargent, 1994). Furthermore, they have also existed in Hinduism, Buddhism, Confucianism, and so forth (Sargent, 1994). Outside of the Christian West, there are city utopias and independent utopian traditions (Sargent, 1994). For instance, in India and China, there were city utopias before Thomas More (Sargent, 1994). All over the world, Thomas More's literary

form of utopianism has been adopted (Sargent, 1994). So, although utopianism is widely considered to have originated from and to be exclusive to the Christian West, that is clearly not the case. Instead, utopianism can be found all over the world. Because it can be found worldwide, utopianism is a universal human phenomenon. Furthermore, utopianism is also a universal human phenomenon because one of its expressions, communitarianism, is also found around the world. Communitarianism, which is a form of utopianism, is found all over the world; thus, utopianism is found all over the world. According to Lyman Tower Sargent, communitarianism is one of the forms that utopianism is expressed in (Sargent, 1994). In the West, communitarianism goes back to the Middle Ages and monasticism; in fact, we could perhaps go even earlier than that to the withdrawn Jewish communities of the pre-Christian era (Sargent, 1994). A less well-known example of communitarianism is the Buddhist monasteries that have been established in the West (Sargent, 1994). Another example of communitarianism which isn't confined to the West is the International Society for Krishna Consciousness, which has communities all over the world (Sargent, 1994). Thus, because communitarianism, a form of utopianism, is found all over the world, that means that utopianism is found all over the world. Hence, in such a manner, utopianism is a universal human phenomenon because it is found all over the world.

Thus, utopianism is a universal human phenomenon because all people are at some time dissatisfied and consider how their lives can be improved and because utopianism can be found all over the world. Utopianism is essential to creating a better world. After all, in a society devoid of utopianism, we could not conceive of a better society that we wish to realize.

So, without utopianism, change would be impossible. With utopianism, humans refuse to be limited to their current reality and instead concentrate on a world that is conducive to the flourishing of our species. So, it is encouraging that utopianism is a universal human phenomenon because that means we are all capable of envisioning growth and inspiring change. Although we never realize it, a utopia catalyzes growth, so we must continue to encourage utopianism in our society.

**References**

Sargent, L.T. (1994). "The Three Faces of Utopianism Revisited," Utopian Studies, 5(1), 1-37.