VIA
PANORAMICA
Revista de Estudos Anglo-Americanos
A Journal of Anglo-American Studies

TOWARDS THE MAELSTROM

THE DIGITAL HUMANITIES IN ACTION

THEMATIC SECTION

Visions of Utopia:
Gauging the State of Utopian Thought through Data Analysis

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ABSTRACT: The *Great Utopians* project consists of a collection of historical figures deemed so because their revolutionary actions have helped advance our world and improve millions of lives. It is managed by CETAPS (Centre for English, Translation, and Anglo-Portuguese Studies) and is open to all contributions. This is a data set that, after careful analysis, may give us some interesting insights into the field of utopian thought. This paper analyzes the 77 entries of the Great Utopians collection along the lines of gender, birthplace, historical period, and field of excellence, to derive conclusions on gender imbalances, underrepresentation of utopianism both in time and in space, and the pronouncement of specific fields in what contributors of the project consider to be utopian work. We start the analysis with some preconceived notions about the

RESUMO: O projeto "Great Utopians" consiste numa coleção de figuras históricas assim consideradas porque as suas ações revolucionárias contribuíram para o progresso do nosso mundo e para a melhoria de milhões de vidas. É gerido pelo CETAPS (Centre for English, Translation, and Anglo-Portuguese Studies) e está aberto a todos os contributos. Trata-se de um universo de dados que, após uma análise cuidada, nos pode dar algumas indicações interessantes sobre o campo do pensamento utópico. Este artigo analisa as 77 entradas da coleção "Great Utopians" segundo o género, o local de nascimento, o período histórico e o campo de excelência, para retirar conclusões sobre os desequilíbrios de género, a sub-representação do utopismo no tempo e no espaço e a afirmação de certos campos específicos naquilo que os colaboradores do projeto consideram ser trabalho utópico.

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underrepresentation of women and non-Europeans in the database. With this in mind, we review relevant literature on women's historical disenfranchisement, Eurocentrism's historical origins, and the complex definition of utopia. Afterwards, we describe the method of constructing the database and creating visual outputs for further data analysis. Then, we meticulously describe our findings when analyzing proportions of gender, birthplace, historical period, and field. Finally, we discuss these findings critically, considering our initial notions and detailing data that presented us with new and unexpected conclusions.

KEYWORDS: Utopianism, gender, Eurocentrism, database, data analysis

Começamos esta análise com algumas noções preconcebidas de uma sub-representação específica de mulheres e não-europeus na base de dados. Com isto em mente, revemos a literatura relevante sobre a privação histórica de direitos das mulheres, as origens históricas do eurocentrismo e a complexa definição de utopia. Em seguida, descrevemos o método de construção da base de dados e a criação de outputs visuais para análise de dados posterior. Depois, descrevemos meticulosamente as nossas conclusões ao analisar as proporções de género, local de nascimento, período histórico e campo. Finalmente, discutimos estes resultados de forma crítica, considerando as nossas noções iniciais e detalhando os dados que nos apresentaram conclusões novas e inesperadas.

Palavras-Chave: Utopismo, género, eurocentrismo, base de dados, análise de dados

1. INTRODUCTION

Before diving into the dataset *Great Utopians* presents us with, we had to consider what we thought this collection of historical figures would look like based on our preconceived notions of the inherent biases of history and the controversy of defining utopia and utopianism.

For many, when thinking of the minds that have made extraordinary contributions to the world, the image conjured is most likely male: scientists like Albert Einstein, revered social activists like Martin Luther King, and polymaths like Da Vinci, whose names have almost become synonymous with progress and innovation. This unfortunate tendency to see men as the primary, if not sole, instigators of change is symptomatic of systemic gender inequalities, which have persisted for centuries. As Miles argues, "men dominate history because they write it" (2001, 4). This is a reminder that history is anything but an objective record, but better a narrative shaped by those in positions of power and by social and cultural norms that have constituted untraversable barriers that have limited and denied women of their pursuits and place in the world. Literature on the disenfranchisement of women highlights precisely this: the damnatory combination of gender bias and societal expectations has obscured women's history. And while new evidence might reveal the presence of women in the past, with books, journals, and conferences solely dedicated to feminist studies, it often fails to alter pre-conceived notions of the significance - or lack thereof - of women's contributions to society. In fact, treating women separately frequently reinforces a marginal status in contrast to male figures, already recognized as central and universal (Scott 1988, 208).

However, despite these challenges, perhaps even because of them, women have been carving out places for themselves within spaces they have mostly been excluded from, making significant contributions in a plethora of fields. Unsurprisingly, most stories of women in history are tales of resilience and ingenuity because they *must* be. Whatever accomplishments were achieved, they were so in constant defiance of systemic prejudice and gender bias. These marginal figures in the database have redefined the boundaries of the roles that were deemed appropriate for women, and it's precisely against this backdrop that the Great Utopians database provides a refreshing perspective: re-defining

preconceived notions of women's accomplishments and of who a Utopian *was*, *is*, and *can be*.

Dealing with a project based in a European research center and open to collaboration from any willing to participate in its construction – contributing with figures from any corner of the globe at any point in history – we immediately imagine that Europeans will likely be dominant in the collection. This forces those analyzing said collection to consider the phenomenon of Eurocentrism. Argentine-Mexican historian Enrique Dussel argues that a Eurocentric worldview is especially apparent in how the concept of Modernity is constructed. Dussel argues that modernity is defined today by a set of main historical phenomena: the Renaissance, the Reformation, the Enlightenment, and the French Revolution. This means that Modernity is defined exclusively by intra-European phenomena (2000, 27). As such – and as Modernity can be generally understood as emancipation from darkness impelled by reason and critical thinking – Europe assumes the central role in the construction of world history in such a way that it could be said "world history" only springs up in 1492, as Columbus lands in the Americas and European worldviews begin expanding globally (*idem,* 28). Modernity then comes to signify the assumption of centrality on the part of Europe and the conception of external cultures as "peripheral cultures". "Modern civilization" comes to be quasi-synonymous with "European civilization", and the expansion of Modernity is then analogous to the expansion of European thought, culture, and power structures (*idem,* 29).

And, since this is a database called Great Utopians, we cannot ignore the essential conceptions of utopianism and the debate surrounding the task of conceptualizing it. Utopianism has been essentially defined as "social dreaming" – the envisioning of a radically different society as compared to the one the "dreamers" actually live in and divided into what has been called its "three faces": literary utopias, communitarianism, and utopian social theory (Sargent 1994, 3-4). While generally accepting this definition, subsequent works in utopian studies have brought attention to how defining utopia is a more complex task than one may think when first engaging with it (Claeys 2013, 9). Gregory Claeys proposed – rather than redefining the concept of utopianism – five different "languages of utopia" – that is, approaches one adopts when engaging with utopianism: literature, religion, progress, psychology, and history (*idem,* 10). Although there seem to be broadly accepted borders to what utopia is and is not, concrete definitions

are controversial. It then stands to reason that utopia, as a concept, would not only be multifaceted but would transform and reshape itself in time and space – depending on who is considering it, from where, and at what point in history. Utopian studies are thus a sort of intellectual dispersive prism: a beam of light (preconceived notions of utopia) is pointed at the prism and subsequently disperses the beam's different wavelengths (the many forms utopia takes).

2. CONTEXT: UTOPIA 500 AND *GREAT UTOPIANS*

Utopia 500 is a project run by the Centre for English, Translation and Anglo-Portuguese Studies (CETAPS) at FLUP (Faculty of Arts and Humanities of the University of Porto), founded in 2015 as a commemoration of the 500th anniversary of the publication of Thomas More's *Utopia*. Today, its goal is "to play an active role in implementing and disseminating the notion of utopia as a driver of social change and as a source of inspiration for innovation in science and technology".

Among its various subprojects is *Great Utopians*, envisioned as a collection of figures deemed so because their revolutionary actions have helped advance our world and improve millions of lives. The collection is subject to constant growth, as it is always open to contributions.

This collection consists of 77 historical figures spanning almost 3000 years, having left their mark on various fields, such as politics, philosophy, science, technology, and humanitarian work. On the Utopia 500 website, the subproject presents a map where the figures are displayed on an interactive world map and a collection of short biographies. It should be noted that not all 77 figures are displayed on the interactive map – only 61 are.

Great Utopians is an open project; the growth of the collection is dependent on the contributions of any who wishes to see one or several particularly famous personalities in the collection, considering that their work classifies them as Great Utopians. Contributors are meant to indicate their name and country of origin and write a sectioned biography in which the background of the person and changes their work may have caused in the world are explored to justify their classification as a utopian.

3. METHODS

Our first research task was to gather these utopians and form a curated database. The names from the collection were transposed into a spreadsheet, and further data was subsequently collected so that a fuller, more complex picture of the nature of this sample could be painted. For each of the 77 entries, data was collected relating to the following variables:

- Name
- Gender
- Polity of birth and corresponding modern country
- Place of birth and respective coordinates
- Continent of birth
- Birth date
- Death date
- Century of birth
- Historical period in which the bulk of their work was done
- Field of utopian excellence

The last two variables mentioned above necessitate some further explanation.

The historical periods in which entries are divided are the following:

1. Antiquity
2. Middle Ages
3. Early Modern Period
4. 18th century
5. 19th century
6. 20th century
7. 21st century

Distinguishing between the century of birth and the relevant historical period seemed appropriate for two reasons.

Firstly, the distinction seemed adequate for those historical figures who, born at the tail-end of one century, would only leave their mark upon the world in the following. Observing the database, one can see that though there is a significant number of personalities who were born in the 19th century, the core of the work and legacy of many of them only took shape in the next one, in such a way that they are generally considered to be emblematic people of the 20th century. Personalities in the database which can exemplify this are, for example, Albert Einstein and Franz Kafka, both born at the tail-end of the 19th century, yet leaving their mark upon the world during the 20th century.

Secondly, the division of periods follows the traditional historiographical approach up to the Early Modern Period – afterwards dividing the chronology by century – for the simple reason that the overwhelming majority of entries date from the 18th century onward. Dividing entries by relevant *century* instead of *historical period* would present later data analysis based on chronology with enormous time gaps, which would unnecessarily clutter some data visualizations. The large number of entries whose work dates from between the 18th and 21st centuries made it apparent that there was a need to divide what historiographically has been considered the Modern or Contemporary Age into its respective centuries, as simply categorizing these entries as being from the Modern Age would deprive research of a finer portrayal of the later centuries of the chronology.

The fields into which entries were assigned are the following:

- Arts
- Charity
- Environmentalism
- Exploration
- Humanities
- Politics
- Polymathy
- Social justice
- STEM (Science, Technology, Engineering and Mathematics)

- Utopianism
- Women's rights

Such a division of fields of utopian excellence was made based on the biographies that contributors had written for the project. While assigning a single category to an entry is challenging, their assignment came from what contributors wrote was the main reason for the person being added to the collection. Thus, an entry such as prominent Portuguese feminist Adelaide Cabete goes into the category "Women's rights" and not "STEM", even though she was a gynaecologist and obstetrician; the central *utopian* aspect of her life's work comes from her advocacy for women's right to vote and for women's health, and not from her academic contributions to her field – at least in the view of the contributor who added her name to the collection. On that same line of thought, dividing "Politics" and "Social justice" may seem strange, and further dividing "Social justice" and "Women's rights" may seem stranger still. This comes from the researchers' consideration that a significant number of people dealing with social justice within the field of politics makes it a category specifically tied to that field, offering a more complete view of the database. Similarly, a significant number of entries related to utopians who dedicated their work specifically to women within the field of social justice demonstrates the need for a category specifically dedicated to women's rights.

Thus, for clarification, each category could be described in the following fashion:

- **Arts**: entry advanced their art form through their revolutionary artistic work;
- **Charity**: entry was dedicated to humanitarian work against all adversity;
- **Environmentalism**: entry worked on environmental protection through activism, lobbying, and/or education;
- **Exploration**: entry dedicated themselves to exploring unknown corners of the globe, pushing the boundaries of world travel and/or connecting distant civilizations;
- **Humanities**: entry contributed to pushing the boundaries of the various fields of the humanities;

- **Politics**: entry was dedicated to a political cause – be it the improvement of socio-economic conditions, national liberation, fighting dictatorship or statecraft – by being an activist, public intellectual, or public official;
- **Polymathy**: entry contributed to several seemingly unconnected fields by their sheer genius, in such a significant way that categorizing their work becomes virtually impossible;
- **Social justice**: entry was dedicated to the defence and advancement of marginalized sections of society;
- **STEM**: entry's work greatly advanced their field in STEM (Science, Technology, Engineering and Mathematics);
- **Utopianism**: entry dedicated their work to the field of utopianism, whether by studying utopian thought or creating intentional communities;
- **Women's rights**: entry was especially dedicated to advancing women's rights.

Once the database was completed, the second research phase began, which was dedicated to data processing. We wished to produce data visualizations to comprehend the nature of the database better and subsequently problematize its function as a representation of the nature and collective visions of utopianism and utopian thought.

To do this, we first retrieved and imported the database into an R environment – Rstudio, which was chosen based on previous work our team had done with interactive map making at the CETAPS Digital Lab – and an interactive map was produced, whereupon pointers indicated the place of birth of the entries based on the coordinates provided. For this task, we applied a selection of different libraries and packages, such as *leaflet*, *htmlwidgets*, and *leafpop*.

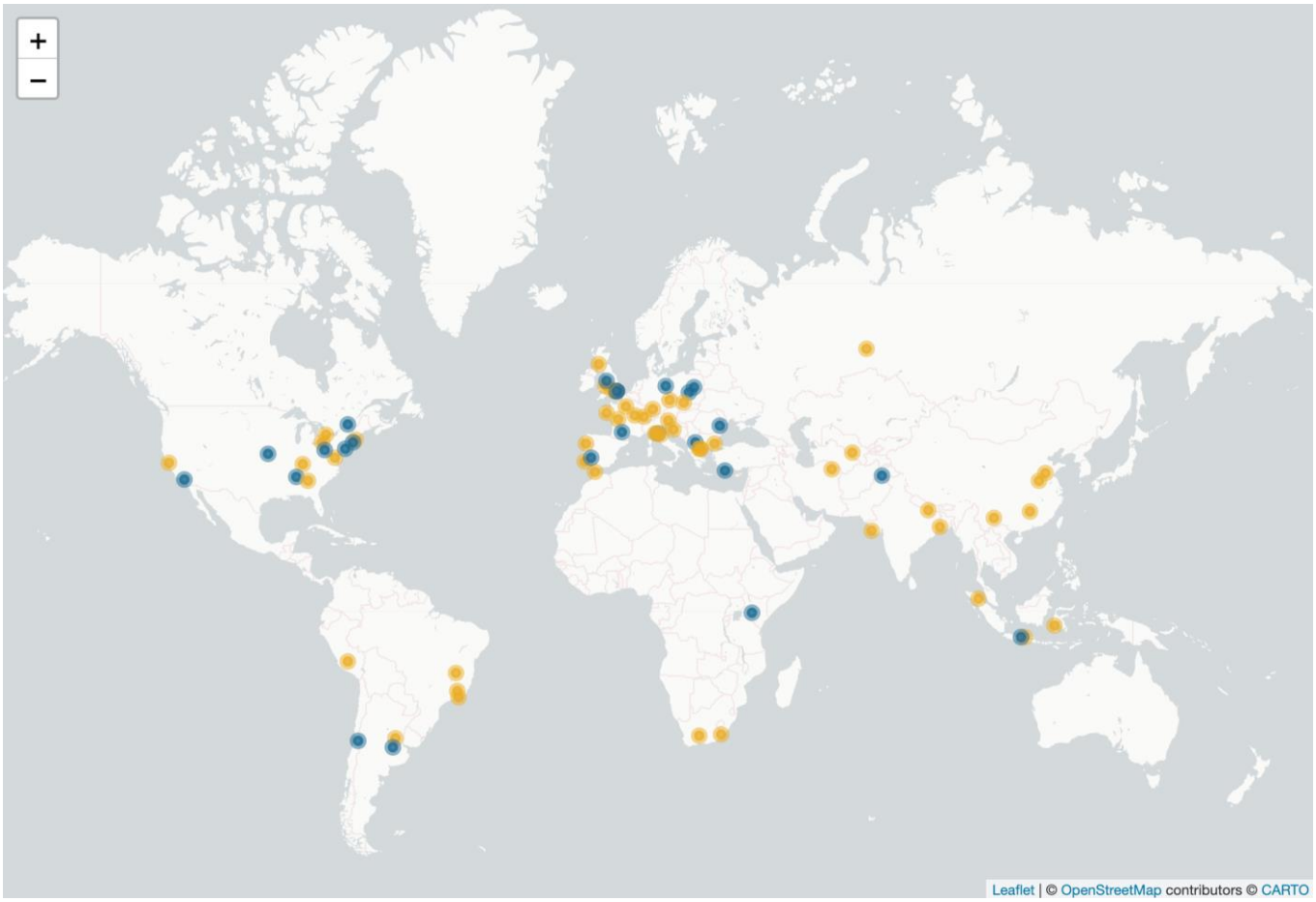
Afterwards, various data visualizations were created using Flourish – an online graphic design platform that offers a wide selection of data visualizations – to analyze the dynamics of the sample based on gender, chronology, and the fields to which each entry had been assigned. These visualizations included pie charts, grouped column charts, proportional column charts, and alluvial diagrams.

4. RESULTS

After importing the database into RStudio and running the map script, we were left with a world map **[Fig. 1]** in which yellow markers indicate male entries and blue markers indicate female entries.

The first thing to become readily apparent when observing the map is Europe and North America's dominance in the number of entries. Yet, more than revealing where entries are, this map shows where they are not. The evident absence of entries from North Africa, West Africa, Central Africa, the Middle East, Central America, and the entirety of Oceania becomes obvious at an initial glance. We take note of these regions especially because they are not sparsely populated (as observing the lack of entries from Russian Siberia or Northern Canada is not surprising, since population numbers are minute in these areas).

Fig. 1 World map of entries

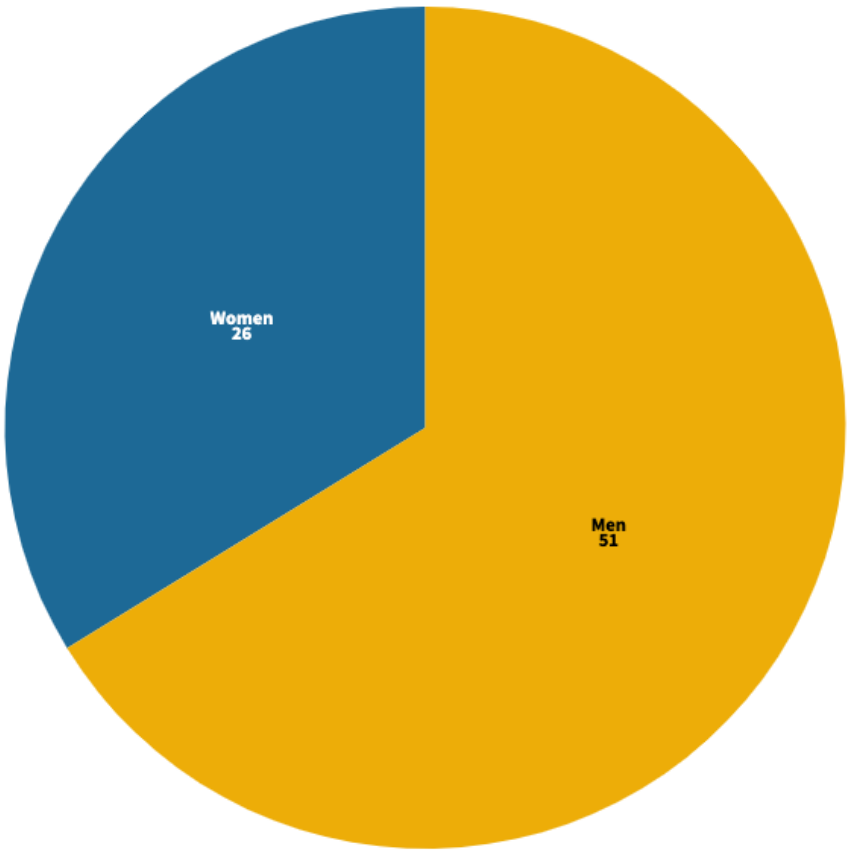


Hence, the Global North seems to have a clear dominance in the database. Such dominance becomes even more apparent once we focus on the gender variable. There is a near-absence of utopian women in the Global South compared to their male counterparts.

Observing the map made it clear that it was necessary to visualize the statistics the database could offer us.

When employing Flourish, we started by ascertaining the number of entries based on gender **[see Figure 2]**. The overwhelming majority of entries are male, 51, about 66.2% of the database, while women, 26, make up about 33.8%.

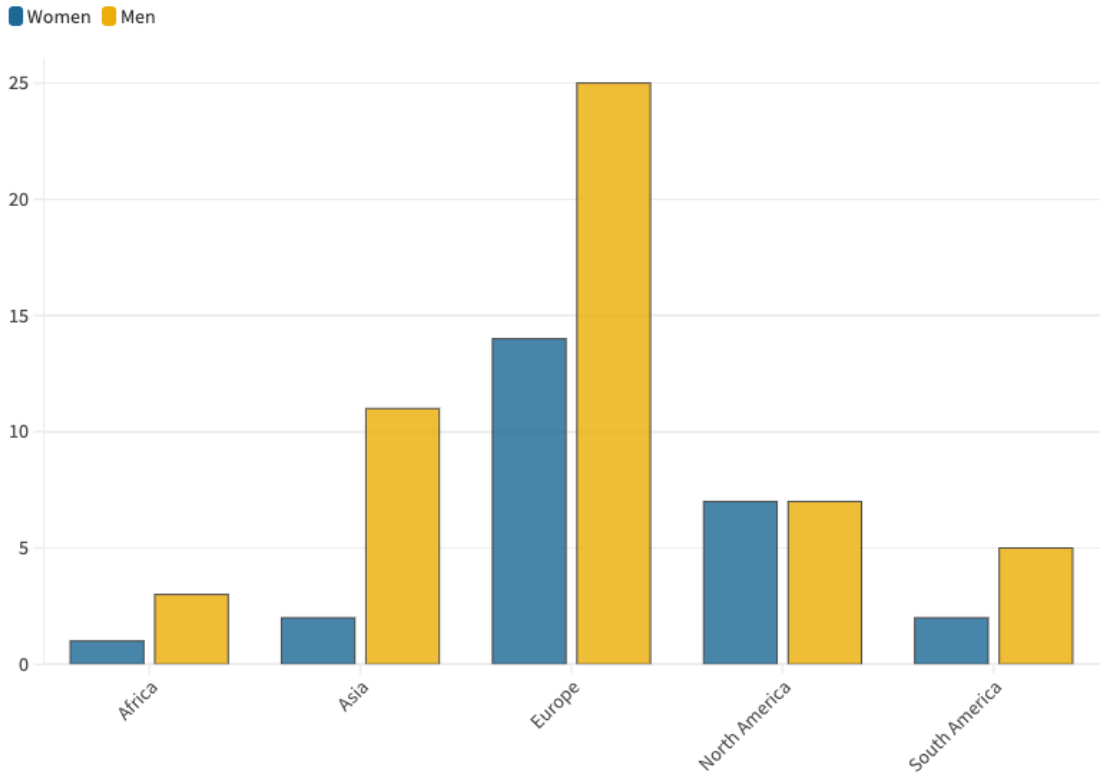
Fig. 2 Total number of entries by gender



We then followed up with the distribution of entries by continent of birth **[see Figure 3]** between women and men. In the overwhelming majority of cases, male entries outnumber female entries. Such is the case in Europe, which has the highest overall

representation, with men (25) outnumbering women (14); in Africa, where, even though it has the lowest overall representation for both genders, men (3) slightly outnumber women (1); in South America, which also represents a small number of entries, men (5) overtake women (2); and in Asia, where men (11) significantly outnumber women (2). The only continent where we find an even distribution is North America, with 7 entries for each gender.

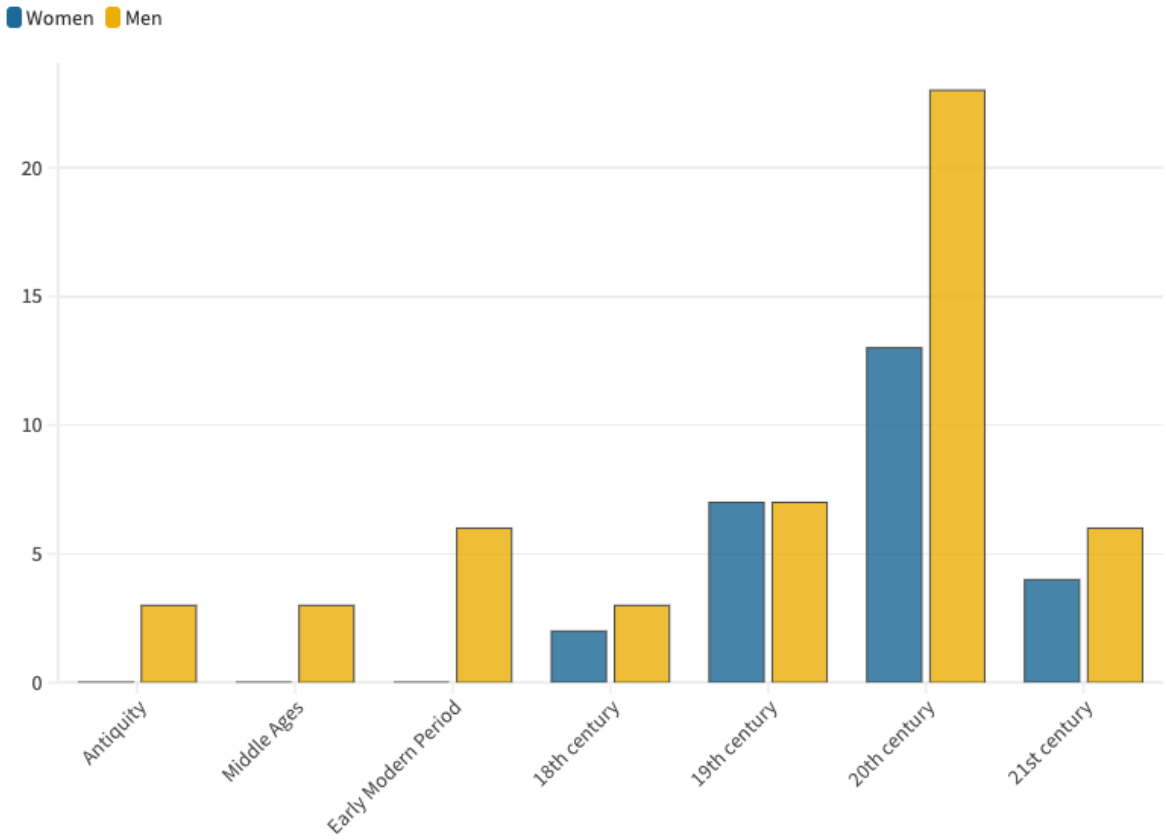
Fig. 3 Entry distribution by continent of birth



Considering this geographical distribution of entries, we also thought creating a graph representing entry distribution in time would be convenient. Thus, we made a graph dividing entries by the historical period in which relevant work was done **[see Figure 4]**, illustrating all contributions across historical periods. The male entries dominate the earlier periods, with entries exclusively for men in Antiquity (1), the Middle Ages (3), and the Early Modern Period (6). Only in the 18th century did we see the first entries for women (2), although men still take the lead (3). The 19th century showcases a balanced

distribution of entries for both men and women, with 7 entries each. However, a significant gap is observed when we move onto the 20th century, marked by a substantial increase in male entries (23) and 13 female entries. Interestingly, there is a dip in the 21st century, with only 6 entries for men and 4 for women.

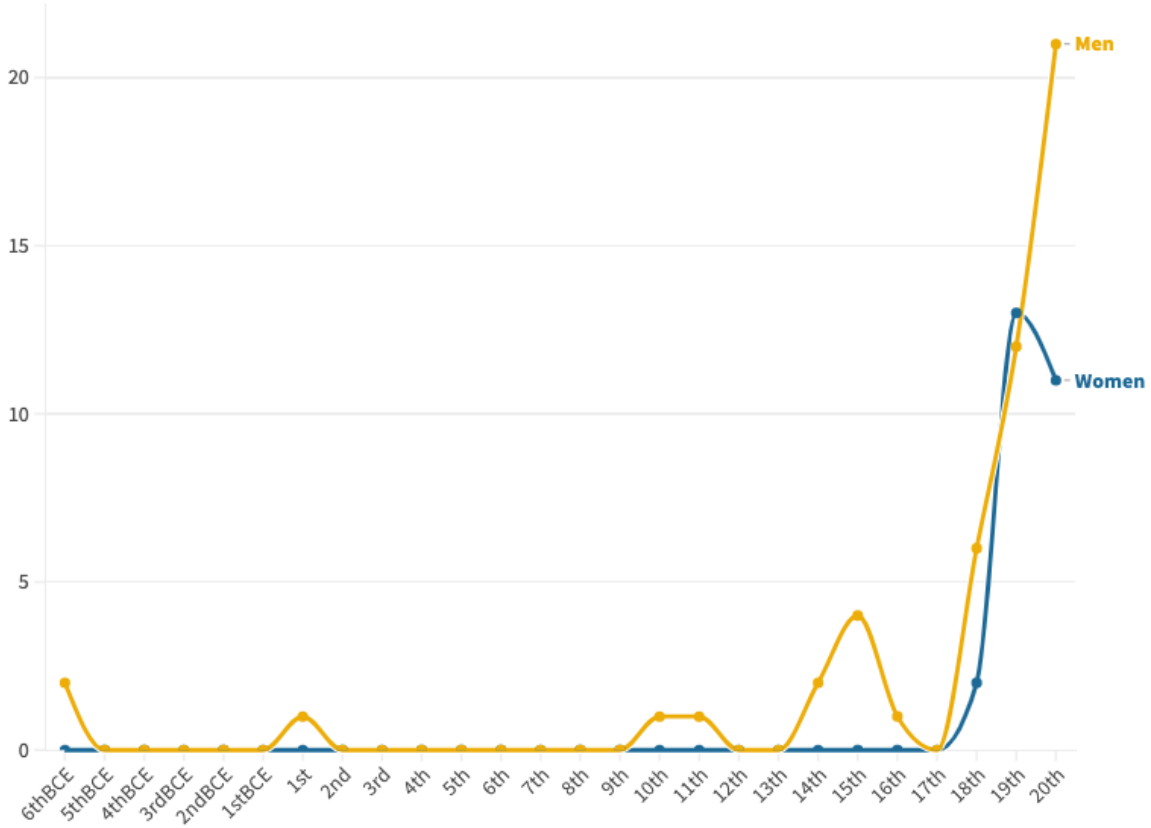
Fig. 4 Entry distribution by historical period in which relevant work was done



Entry distribution by the century of birth can be seen in **Figure 5**, up to the 20th century. As we have seen before, entries in earlier periods are almost non-existent. There are a few recorded entries for men in the 6th century BCE (2), 1st century CE (1), 10th and 11th centuries (1), 14th century (2), 15th century (4), and 16th century (1), while the graph remains flat mainly for women, recording no entries until the 18th century (2). There was then a rise in both men's and women's entries in the 18th century, with 6 and 2 entries, respectively. Curiously, there are more women in the database born in the 19th century than men, with 13 and 12 entries, respectively. However, the 20th century denotes a

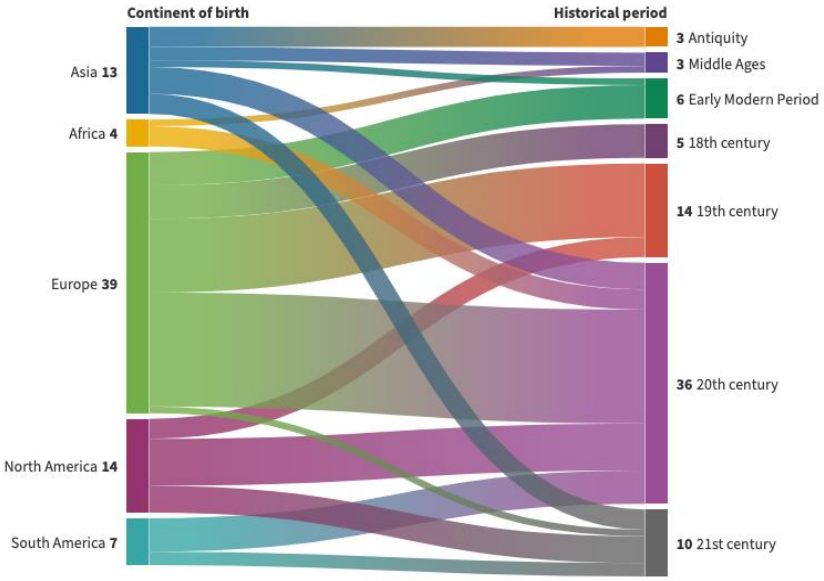
significant chasm between the genders, when most of the people born were male (22) and women dropped to 11.

Fig. 5 Chronology of entries by century of birth



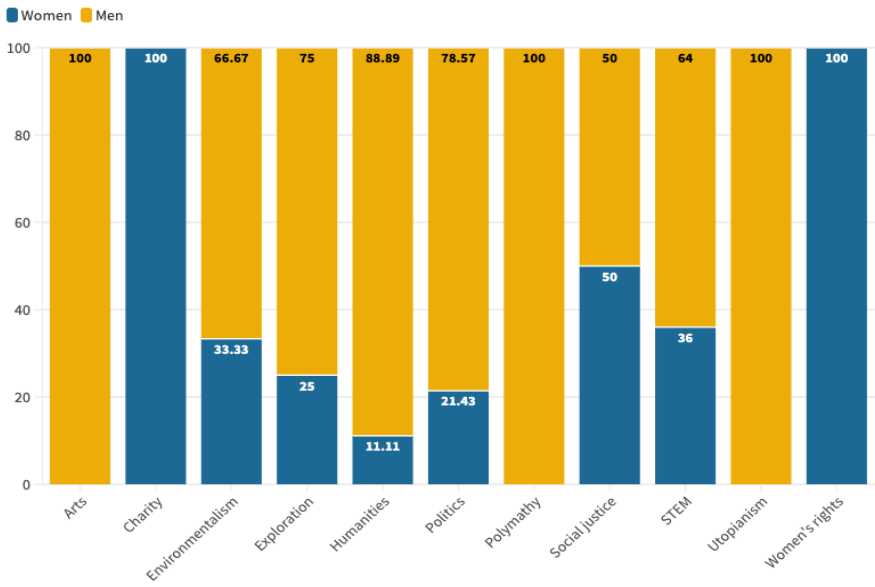
It was then decided that analysing the dynamics of geography and chronology within the database would be relevant. For this, we created an alluvial chart depicting the region of entries and the respective century in which the utopians produced their work **[Fig. 6]**. It became clear that Europeans had a dominant position from the Early Modern Period to the 20th century. Yet, such dominance becomes less pronounced over time. Every entry from the 18th century corresponds to a European utopian, and out of 14 entries from the 19th century, 11 are European. The 20th century is the first period since Early Modernity when Europeans are not the majority of entries (17 out of 36), yet are still the more numerous group. The 21st century marks a clear change along the lines of waning European dominance; out of 10 entries relating to utopians who have done the bulk of their work in the 21st century, only 1 is from Europe.

Fig. 6 Connection of entries between continent of birth and historical period



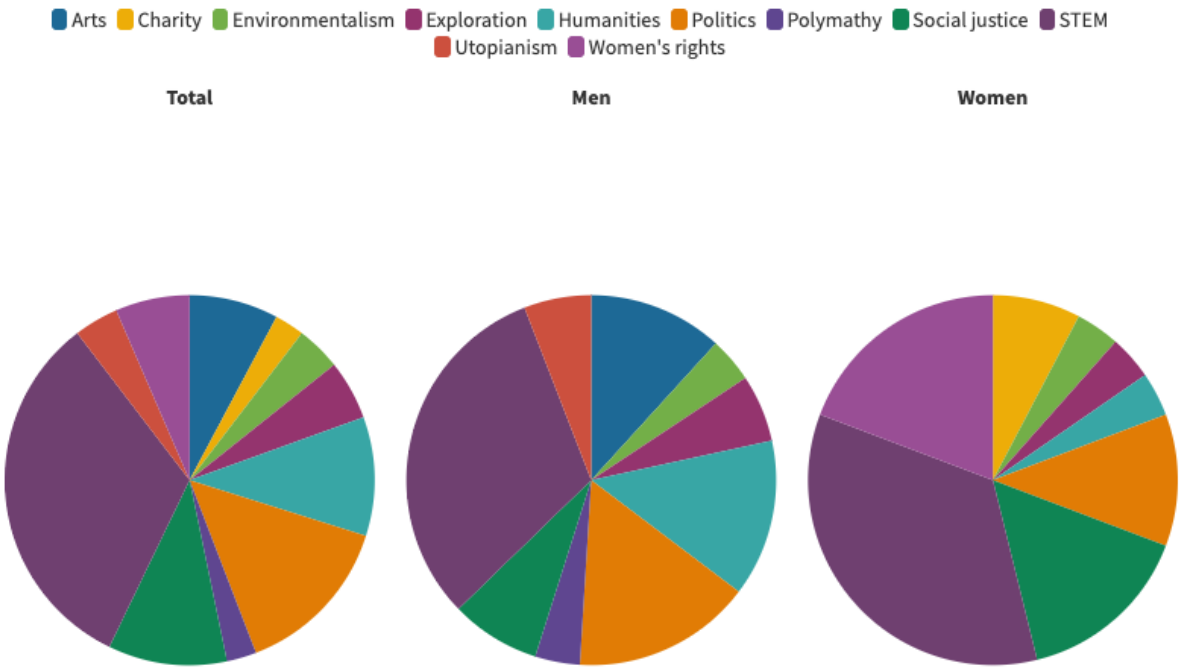
We also conducted an analysis of gender distribution by field [Fig. 7], which revealed men account for the overwhelming majority in almost every single field. Notably, fields such as Arts, Polymathy, and Utopianism are entirely male-dominated, with no female representation. Besides fields such as Charity and Women's Rights, which have no male representation, and Social Justice, where both men and women are equal, men account for the majority in all other fields.

Fig. 7 Gender distribution by field



Subsequently, in **Figure 8**, we can now see the field distribution by gender. Although these two graphic representations might seem similar at first, through **Figure 10**, we can ascertain the dominant fields in each of the entry sets based on gender. Observing these charts, it becomes clear that STEM fields are ubiquitous in their dominance, representing about a third of all entries for each of the 3 sets we produced (32.5% in general, 31.4% for male entries, and 34.6% for female entries).

Fig. 8 Field distribution by gender

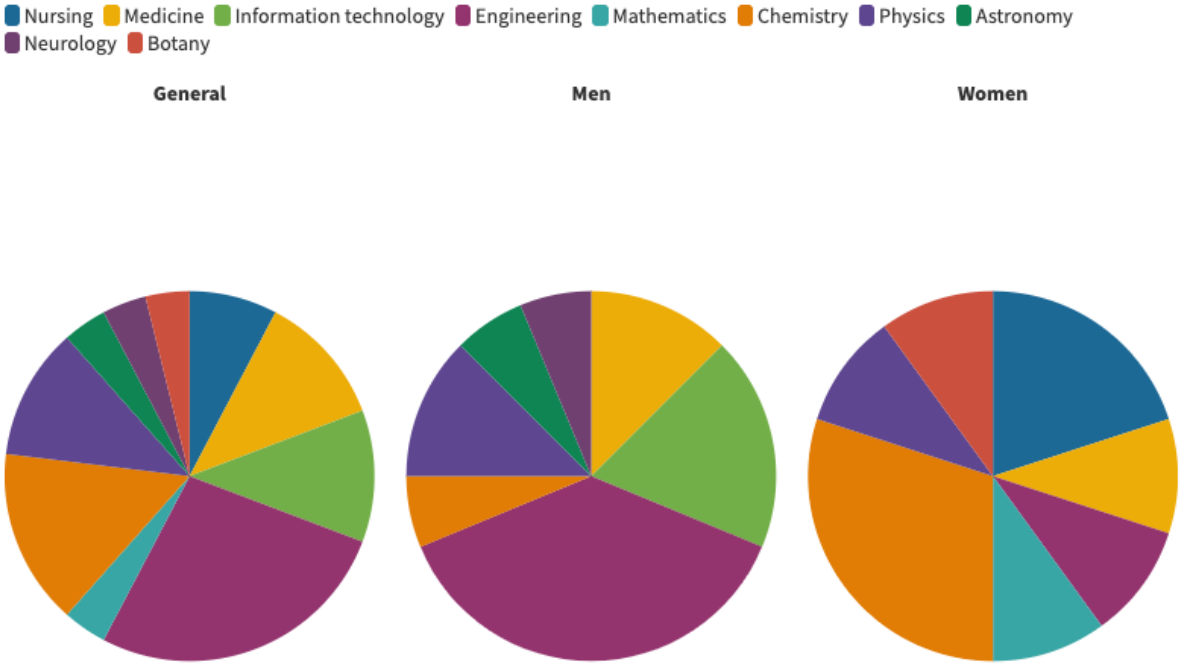


Since the STEM field is ubiquitously dominant in both male and female entries, we created another graph specifying the STEM field for the general, male, and female entries **[see Figure 9]**. In the general sample, Engineering is the dominating field with 26.9% of all entries, followed by Chemistry (15.4%), Medicine, Physics, and Information Technology (all with 11.5%).

Looking at the sample of male entries, it is easy to note that Engineering is still largely dominant, accounting for over a third of the entries (37.5%), with Information Technology coming in second (18.8%). Also notable is that the fields of Nursing, Botany,

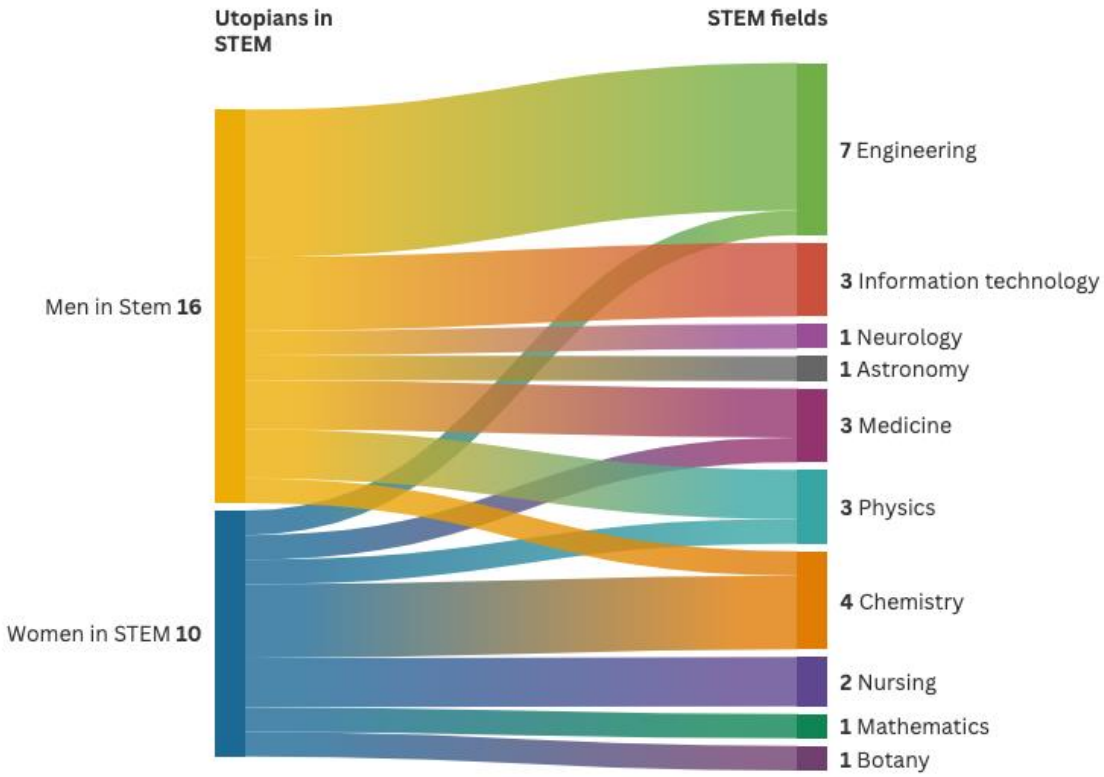
and Mathematics are entirely absent from the male subset. Within the female sample, the fields of Chemistry (30%) and Nursing (20%) comprise the majority of the represented fields. Information Technology, Astronomy, and Neurology are absent from this sample.

Fig. 9 STEM field distribution by gender



Lastly, in **Figure 10,** we can see that out of 10 specific fields in STEM, 7 have female contributions, yet only 4 have contributions from both genders. Of those, 3 are dominated by male figures – with the case of Engineering being especially illustrative of this, with only 1 female entry out of 7. Only Chemistry seems to escape the general rule, with 3 female entries out of 4. Despite this, both genders represent an equal number of fields within STEM, with each gender having representation contributing to 7 different fields of study.

Fig. 10 Connection between entries in STEM by gender and STEM field



5. DISCUSSION

The data we have gathered and processed has partially solidified preconceived notions we had when looking at the database alone. Yet, intersections of gender, chronology, geography, and field within the database have highlighted rather curious and unexpected trends and exceptions.

For the most part, these representations illustrate, first and foremost, a clear gender imbalance in the dataset. This, of course, goes hand in hand with patterns of exclusion when it comes to women, whose representation rises only in more recent historical periods.

Moreover, geographical distribution not only reinforces this existing gap but reveals apparent regional disparities, reflecting socio-economic, cultural, and political landscapes.

Chronology seems to be a source of inequality in the database as well as an overwhelming majority of them come in the last three centuries, in a timeline that spans almost three millennia.

Finally, one of the surprising trends of the dataset is the significant number of entries categorized as "STEM", which may indicate an evolution of the role of STEM fields in utopian thinking.

5.1. Women in STEM

There is a tendency for women to be alienated by the sciences. So, how do the women in our database defy that?

When analysing the dataset, one of the results that surprised us most was how the overarching field with the most significant representation of women was STEM. Today, there is still a considerable gender gap in STEM fields that has persisted throughout history. However, this imbalance does not reflect the lack of major contributions made by women but, better yet, the lack of recognition given to their work and contributions. (Garbuz 2023, 272).

It is from the 18th and 19th centuries - the period when female entries appear in the dataset – that women began to make their mark in STEM a recognizable one. However, society's perception of women as wives, mothers, and daughters alone made it difficult for women to fit the role of a scientist. Many female scientists were able to move away from the reclusive sphere of the home but had their work constantly overshadowed by their male peers.

Long-held stereotypes and prejudices have held women to different standards than men for centuries (Miles 2001, 4). When it comes to STEM, women are typically expected to veer off into biological and social sciences, whereas men are expected to take on physical sciences, such as technology and engineering (Smyth and Nosek 2015, 2). There is, however, a defiance of that tendency in the database. In the short sample that we have, not only is there a great diversity in the STEM fields where we find the female entries, but there are "shoes" they alone fill, such as Mathematics, Botany, and Nursing, of which there are no male entries.

Women then do not seem to be represented in any way that completely limits them to previously established stereotypes about their role as scientists. This small yet varied

sample of STEM fields that women occupy is, if anything, indicative of the database's future representative growth.

5.2. Geography, Chronology, and Underrepresentation

Both the map and the chronology built from our database present us with what can be considered puzzling gaps.

The geography of entries is clearly biased toward Europe, with nearly half of all entries being from the Old Continent. Vast areas of the world that, historically, have given humanity some of its greatest thinkers and leaders, are immensely underrepresented: such is the case for the Middle East, North Africa, India, and China, which could potentially be as dotted by entry markers as Europe – if not more.

Similarly, the chronology is profoundly imbalanced as well. The vast majority of entries show up in the 18th century, with a clear peak in the 20th century, while the entire database universe points to a chronology that starts about 2800 years ago. To have a majority of entries come in the last 300 years seems to show there is a bias toward Modernity.

These imbalances in both time and space are possibly connected, and data indicates that: the fact is, since the beginning of the period marked by the dataset, it takes two millennia for the first European entry to show up. Up until then, Asian and African utopians are in clear dominance.

This may point to the idea of the construction of Modernity being defined by the sort of ideology Europe constructed in its period of expansion. The bias toward Modernity is natural – after all, contributions are made by people born in the Modern Age – yet the tendence toward thinking of utopia in its Modern conception may bring with it the tendency to also think of it in its *European* conception. A conception of history as a naturally phased construction of Modernity guided by European principles makes it so it is thought that the validity of utopian thinking is based on a *Modern* and, subsequently, *European* matrix (Dussel 2000, 27-29). Working toward a mindful critique of these naturally occurring biases may contribute to future submissions which will make the database richer, filling the great chasms in both its world map and its timeline.

5.3. STEM and Utopia

One thing that may be surprising when analyzing this data is the predominance of STEM entries in a database that has utopianism as its thematic matrix.

At its inception, utopia was defined by its function as a response to social ills. More's *Utopia* and Campanella's *City of the Sun* function as radical critiques and subsequent reactions to what – as they saw it – were the issues affecting 15th and 16th-century Europe, respectively. These utopians built imagined reformulations of their contemporary society.

We do see this will to radically address the social ills of the world in our database when we see the prominence of fields such as Politics, Social justice, and Women's rights. Yet, STEM takes center stage, as a third of the entries have been designated as utopians in their advancement of Science, Technology, Engineering, and Mathematics. While those who fight to address injustices and the issues of human beings living together are still considered to be doing utopian work, those who work in bettering our health, pushing the boundaries of human material achievement, and expanding our library of knowledge on the natural world are seen as also being key contributors in the construction of utopia, for believing that humans are always capable of living, doing and knowing more. This is evidence of one of Gregory Claeys' "Five Languages of Utopia": the language of progress (2013, 10). It may be that this reflects a change in how we see STEM fields that, what once seemed to be a collection of abstractions meant for academics, has now taken a nuclear role in the construction of the future.

6. CONCLUSION

The Great Utopians database shows there are at least tendencies to what is considered "utopian". A project such as this is particularly valuable in ascertaining collective visions of utopianism because it is "open access", meaning the entries reflect the thought process of contributors on what constitutes utopian work.

As such, it becomes challenging to attempt to balance the collection on the basis of gender, geography, and chronology through concrete means. The only way this imbalance can be overcome is through achieving a more comprehensive understanding of

history and its inherent biases, and such a task goes far beyond this project's scope. What can, indeed, be done is make it clear to future contributors that these biases exist, giving them the mission of not only contributing to the expansion of the collection but of bringing the largely forgotten voices of history to the project as well.

Analyzing the database confirms the idea that utopia is a multifaceted concept with no clear-cut demarcations on what is and is not utopian. What the contributors of our database see as utopian action ranges from scientific advancement to artistic excellence, from realist political activity to utopian community building, from charity and humanitarian work to exploration and military action. What unites all of the men and women represented in this collection is that, at one point, their goals would have been considered unrealistic, near impossible even, which lends validity to Lyman Tower Sargent's definition of utopia as "social dreaming". A utopian seems to be currently construed as one who dares to think that the world may be radically different, and acts with that vision in mind, changing the face of humanity in the process.

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HOW TO CITE

Faustino, Joel Ramos & Joana Pinela (2024). "Visions of Utopia: Gauging the State of Utopian Thought through Data Analysis". *VIA PANORAMICA: Revista de Estudos Anglo-Americanos*, vol. 13, n.º 2, 2024, pp. 39-61. Web: http://ojs.letras.up.pt/. DOI: 10.21747/2182-9934/via13_2a2