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Utopi

Fra gresk “ou”: “ikke” og “topos”: “sted”; dvs. “stedet/landet som ikke finnes”. Ordet ble skapt av Thomas More i 1516 (Borchmeyer og Žmegač 1994 s. 446). Et godt, mer eller mindre paradisisk samfunn eller en tilsvarende tilstand beskrevet i litteratur eller en annen kunstart. Et ideal- og ønskesamfunn som er tenkbart, men som av ulike grunner ikke er realiserbart.

“Utopian thought attempts to envision a society in which the various social, political, and economic ills of the real world have been solved, leaving an ideal realm of justice and tranquillity.” (Herman, Jahn og Ryan 2005 s. 624) “Without Utopia, we are left in the hands of chance, whim, nature, and pure power.” (Davis 1977 s. 141) “Utopias seek to emancipate by envisioning a world based on new, neglected, or spurned ideas” (Russel Jacoby sitert fra Schroer 2007 s. 329). I det perfekte samfunn har historien opphørt fordi forbedring og forandring ikke lenger er mulig, og tiden har blitt til en evig samtid (Rieger 2002 s. 114).

Sjangeren baserer seg på en tro på at både mennesket og samfunnet kan skapes, konstrueres, omdannes, perfektioneres (Borchmeyer og Žmegač 1994 s. 448). Beskrivelser av utopier er vanlige i science fiction-litteratur, og beskriver en tilstand i framtiden. Det utopiske fungerer ofte som en kritikk av forfatterens egen samtid. “[U]topiene er aldri helt situasjonsløse utkast. Jo fjernere landet Utopia ligger, desto mer åpent forteller det om de tilstander og den samtid opphavsmannen har erklært kamp.” (Trond Berg Eriksen i *Samtiden* nr. 5 i 1979 s. 4) Det framstilte peker indirekte mot samtiden, slik at “no-where” blir til “now-here” (Bessières 2011 s. 18). Gjennom tidene har det blitt skapt utopier som et middel til å unngå sensur. Når en forfatter ikke kan kritisere maktene direkte, kan det fungere som strategi å beskrive et framtidssamfunn. Fortellingen kan handle om en fiktiv reise og en imaginær oppdagelse av et bedre samfunn.

Det som i sin samtid var ment som en utopi, kan av både samtidens og ettertidens lesere bli oppfattet som en dystopi. Dette gjelder også to av de første tekstene innen sjangeren, Platons *Staten* og Thomas Mores *Utopia*. På 1700-tallet kunne det være

glidende overgang mellom reiseberetninger og utopiske fortellinger (Couty 2000 s. 399).

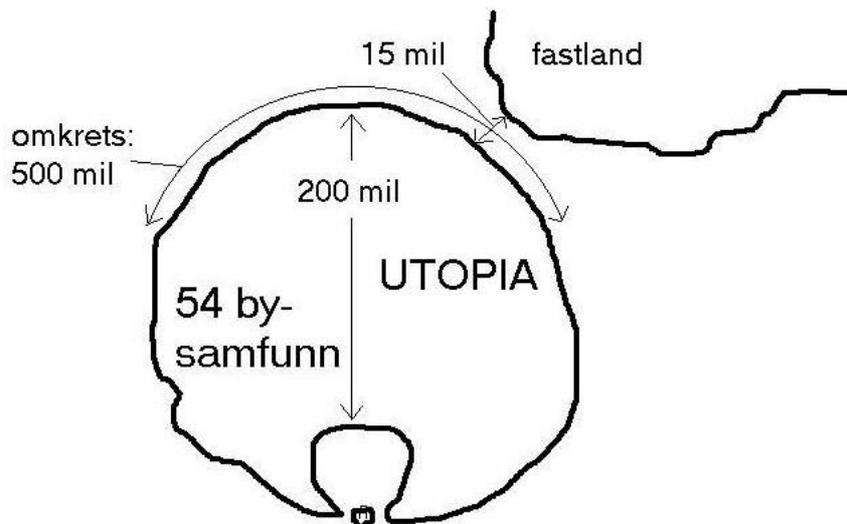
Den kanadiske forfatteren Margaret Atwood har skapt ordet “*ustopi*, en kombinasjon av utopi og dystopi, fordi den ene alltid skjuler seg i den andre.” (Klassekampens bokmagasin 23. mai 2015 s. 4)

Forestillingen om det gode framtidssamfunn varierer enormt. For noen er det er samfunn uten moderne teknologi, for andre har det langt mer avansert teknologi enn i dag, osv. Et bedre liv for menneskene kan skyldes hendelser som har inntruffet naturlig uavhengig av menneskene, eller være forårsaket av utvikling av ny teknologi og annen villet endring (eller en kombinasjon av begge faktorene). En inspirasjon for at sjangeren oppstod har antakelig vært den greske filosofen Platons lange dialog *Staten* (Borchmeyer og Žmegač 1994 s. 446). Platon ønsker at staten skal fungere i analogi med menneskets sjel, dvs. med fornuft, vilje og drifter. Idealstaten skal ha tre samfunnsklasser: De kloke som styrer med hodet/intellektet, de militære som forsvarer med vilje og mot, og de næringsdrivende som produserer og selger med drifter holdt i tøyle av måtehold. Den ideelle stat er for Platon ledet av filosofer, mens diktere og andre som kan hause opp folks emosjoner, er utestengt.

Hos noen pionerer for utopier, f.eks. Jonathan Swift på 1700-tallet, ligger den gode verdenen et ukjent sted (f.eks. langt ute i havet), men i samtiden, ikke i framtiden slik som de fleste science fiction-utopier.

Den lærde italienske middelalderkvinnen Christine de Pizan skrev en utopisk fortelling om en kvinnestat: *Boka om kvinnenens bystat* (1405). I denne staten blir kvinner verdsatt langt høyere enn i det samfunnet Pizan reelt tilhørte.

Den engelske humanisten Thomas More skrev ga ut boka *Utopia* på latin i 1516. Mores *Utopia* handler om en gjennomgående kristen, men også delvis kommunistisk idealstat. Den oppdiktete og utopiske øya rommer 54 bysamfunn.



Bysamfunnene inngår i en sosialistisk (eller kommunistisk) stat preget av en blanding av stor frihet og statlig tvang og overvåkning. Fellesskapet teller langt mer enn individet. I boka forteller sjømannen Raphael Hythloday til forfatteren More om øya, som Hythloday er en begeistret beundrer av. More er mer skeptisk til beskrivelsene – slik at leseren ikke får en entydig holdning til at alt ved drømmeøya er av det gode. Leseren skal selv reflektere og ta stilling.

Utopia er et patriarkalsk samfunn der mennene hersker, ikke minst over kvinnene. Samfunnet er basert på slavehold, og både menn og kvinner kan være slaver. Det er kvinnene som lager mat, mens slavene gjør det enda mindre attraktive arbeidet. Det er et samfunn preget av stor toleranse overfor ulike livssyn og religioner. Fordi alle har nesten de samme økonomiske midlene til disposisjon, er det knapt noen kriminalitet på øya. De som likevel begår lovbrudd, kan bli gjort til slaver. Slaveri er den høyeste straffen som kan gis (blant annet for ekteskapsbrudd, som blir ansett som svært alvorlig). Noen slaver kommer fra fastlandet, enten som krigsfanger eller kjøpt av utopierne. Noen vil dessuten gjerne være slaver i Utopia fordi de har det bedre der enn i sitt hjemland.

I hver by er det 6000 familier. Husene fordeles ved loddtrekning hvert tiende år. Arbeidsdagen er bare seks timer. Alle må forsvare seg selv, for det finnes ikke jurister på øya. Det er ingen dødsstraff. Det er ærefullt for en alvorlig syk person å begå selvmord. Barmhjertighetsdrap er også akseptabelt i Utopia. Selvmordere som ikke var syke, blir derimot foraktet av utopierne, og de blir ikke engang gravlagt, men kastet i en myr. Alt i alt er samfunnet hierarkisk, med klar rangorden mellom kjønn og sosiale grupper.

“Sir Thomas More’s *Utopia* lays out several important ideas that help us understand the political thought of both now and the Renaissance as well as providing us with a look into the conditions of sixteenth century Europe. The book primarily acts as a vehicle for More to explore several issues, ranging from the

advising of Kings to the role of private property in society. More, who acts as a character of himself in the book, is told of the New World island of Utopia by Raphael Hythloday, the last name meaning “expert in nonsense,” which acts as a land of contrast and similarity to the Tudor England More had grown up in. More concludes rather contrarily at the end of the book, that while “quite a few of the laws and customs [Hythloday] had described as existing among the Utopians were really absurd,” (110) he “freely confess[ed] that in the Utopian commonwealth there are many features that in our own societies [he] would like rather than expect to see.” (111)” (Alexander Marriott i <http://capitalismmagazine.com/2004/01/a-slave-state-society-in-sir-thomas-mores-utopia/>; lesedato 31.05.16)

“More is making several arguments not only about contemporary political policy, but about the nature of government and the earlier attempts of Plato and Aristotle at crafting ideal states. *Utopia* is broken into two books; the first is a dialogue between Thomas More, Hythloday, and Peter Giles, who acts as the liaison between More and Hythloday. The second book is primarily Hythloday’s narrative description of the laws, customs, and people of Utopia. The first book is important though as an overt commentary on contemporary Europe and England specifically. The main debate More and Hythloday have first revolves around the question of why Hythloday doesn’t advise Kings, a question More was dealing with at the time he wrote the book, as he had been invited to advise King Henry VIII. [...] The other question which emerges in this first dialogue concerns the punishment of thievery in England during More’s time, which was usually a trip to the gallows. Hythloday contends that the punishment is far too harsh and that it doesn’t deter anyone because the cause, poverty, is left unaddressed. His solution is to abolish private property and then make the punishment severe, but not death. Giles and More disagree with him insofar as they don’t think abolishing private property is appropriate, and this question is also not decided within the confines of the book, though More does take up the argument that abolishing private property would cause the collapse of civilized society.” (Alexander Marriott i <http://capitalismmagazine.com/2004/01/a-slave-state-society-in-sir-thomas-mores-utopia/>; lesedato 31.05.16)

“Yet another regulated facet of Utopian life is marriage, beyond the mere realm of contract enforcement. Women must be eighteen and men must be twenty-two before they can be married and “Clandestine premarital intercourse, if discovered and proved, brings severe punishment on both man and woman; and the guilty parties are forbidden to marry for their whole lives, unless the prince by his pardon mitigates the sentence.” (81) What happens for overt premarital intercourse? This sounds funny, but the punishment here is incredibly tyrannical, especially for such a highly enlightened people, as Hythloday claims them to be. But it doesn’t end here, “They punish [second offense] adulterers with the strictest form of slavery.” (83) Enslavement? Adultery is certainly a bad thing, constituting a breach of the marriage contract at the least, but can it warrant enslavement? This is especially amusing given Hythloday’s earlier excuses for thievery in contemporary England.

Granted, thievery doesn't warrant death, but his vaunted Utopians enslave adulterers, plus more broadly, have slavery! The slavery of Utopia is for those who break the law and prisoners taken in war, but it seems rather ironic that in a place without property people are held as such by the state." (Alexander Marriott i <http://capitalismmagazine.com/2004/01/a-slave-state-society-in-sir-thomas-mores-utopia/>; lesedato 31.05.16)

"The utopians are perhaps at their most untraditional in their reliance on printed books and in underpinning their democratic institutions with widespread literacy. Recall that in Plato's commonwealth superior knowledge is monopolized by the guardians, and in Augustine's polity the interpretation of scripture is the prerogative of the educated clergy. By contrast, the utopians, like some European reforming religious groups between the Lollards and the Lutherans, earnestly pursue their education and entertainment by means of the written word. They have a working week of some thirty-five hours (six hours a day), and, as this labor is equally divided among all citizens (except slaves), there is plenty of time for the cultivation of the mind. They enjoy themselves rather austere by going to lectures before daybreak, possibly in imitation of monastic rituals. Through the combination of religious and secular education, More thus incorporates into his design both the Catholic principle of moral instruction by means of an established priesthood and the reformist view that believers should be instructed in the rudiments of literacy in order to educate themselves." (Stock 2001 s. 96)

"Compared with this bold criticism [dvs. Mores samfunnsskildring i boka], which attacks society at its roots, how limited does not the much belauded action of Luther appear, who commenced a year after the appearance of *Utopia* to preach against, not indulgences themselves, but the abuse of indulgences, and was impelled to take further steps not by a logical process going on in his mind, but by the logic of facts! And yet while the whole might of Rome was eventually summoned against the man who attacked the abuse of indulgences, without purposing to make any change in the ecclesiastical organisation, no molestation was offered to the man whose doctrines tended to sap the very foundations of society; and the advocate of a Church who was as uncatholic, and in many respects even unchristian, as any one of the reformed churches, became a martyr of the Catholic religion [More ble henrettet i 1535]. Strange as this difference in treatment appears, there was good reason for it. Luther addressed himself to the masses; he expressed the interests of powerful classes and parties. More, with his aspirations, stood alone; he addressed only a small circle of scholars, the people did not understand him and he did not desire to be understood by the people. He therefore wrote his *Utopia* in Latin, and concealed his thoughts in the garment of satire, which to be sure permitted him greater freedom in the expression of his opinions." (Karl Kautsky i <http://www.marxists.org/archive/kautsky/1888/more/ch13.htm>; lesedato 06.03.13)

“And *Utopia* even pursued the special object of influencing the government and constitution of England. This is not only shown very distinctly in the first book, but Erasmus, who ought to have known it, relates this fact in his well-known letter to Hutten: “He published his *Utopia* for the purpose of showing, what are the things that occasion mischief in commonwealths; having the English Constitution especially in view.” The island of Utopia is, in fact, England. More designed to show how England would look, and what shape her relations with abroad would assume, if she were communistically organised. The analogy may be traced with exactitude: The island is separated from the Continent only by a channel 21 miles wide. The description of the capital, Amaurot, is a true description of London. Stow, in his Survey of London, vol.ii., p.458, finds a perfect correspondence between the two towns. Historians and economists who are perplexed by Utopia perceive in this name a subtle hint by More that he himself regarded his communism as an impracticable dream.” (Karl Kautsky i <http://www.marxists.org/archive/kautsky/1888/more/ch13.htm>; lesedato 06.03.13)

“In all the discussions about the Utopians there is only one element of a fantastic nature, and that is not the goal that was aimed at, but the ways and means of achieving it. More saw only one force which could carry communism into effect, and this he mistrusted. He has shown us in his Utopia in what manner he conceived that communism would be enforced. A prince named Utopus conquered the country, and impressed on it the stamp of his mind; all institutions in Utopia are to be traced to him. He thought out the general plan of the commonwealth and then put it into execution. In this way More conceived the realisation of his ideals: he was the father of Utopian Socialism, which was rightly named after his Utopia. The latter is Utopian less on account of the impracticability of its aims than on account of the inadequacy of the means at its disposal for their achievement. We know that More could not help being an Utopist. As yet there was no party, no class to champion Socialism; the decisive political power, on which the State seemed to depend, were the princes, then a young, and in a sense a revolutionary element, without defined traditions: why should not one of them be converted to Communism? If such a prince desired, he could enforce Communism. If no prince so desired, the poverty of the people was unalterable. So thought More, and from this standpoint he was impelled to make an attempt to convert a prince. But he was by no means deceived as to the hopelessness of his task. He knew the princes of his time too well. He concludes *Utopia* with the following words, after inserting a saving clause that he did not agree with all that Hythloday had related: “However, there are many things in the commonwealth of Utopia that I rather wish, than hope, to see followed in our governments.” In this conclusion lies the whole tragedy of More’s fate, the whole tragedy of a genius who divines the problems of his age before the material conditions exist for their solution; the whole tragedy of a character who feels obliged to grapple with the solution of the problems which the age has presented, to champion the rights of the oppressed against the arrogance of the ruling classes, even when he stands alone and his efforts have no prospect of

success.” (Karl Kautsky i <http://www.marxists.org/archive/kautsky/1888/more/ch13.htm>; lesedato 06.03.13)

William Morris skrev i et forord til Mores *Utopia* i 1893: “Doubtless the *Utopia* is a necessary part of a Socialist’s library; yet it seems to me that its value as a book for the study of sociology is rather historic than prophetic, and that we Socialists should look upon it as a link between the surviving Communism of the Middle Ages (become hopeless in More’s time, and doomed to be soon wholly effaced by the advancing wave of Commercial Bureaucracy), and the hopeful and practical progressive movement of to-day. In fact I think More must be looked upon rather as the last of the old than the first of the new.” (<http://www.marxists.org/archive/morris/works/1893/utopia.htm>; lesedato 03.12.12)

Andre eksempler:

Johann Valentin Andreae: *Christianopolis* (1619)

Tommaso Campanella: *Solbyen* (1623)

Francis Bacon: *Det nye Atlantis* (1627)

Louis-Sébastien Mercier: *Året 2440* (1771)

Samuel Butler: *Erewhon* (1872) – en roman som også har tydelige dystopiske innslag

William Morris: *News from Nowhere, or, an Epoch of Rest, being some chapters from a Utopian Romance* (1891) – en sosialistisk utopi

Werner Illing: *Utopolis: Roman* (1930)

Konrad Giesecke: *KPD regjerer: En realpolitisk utopi* (1932) – en roman om hvordan det tyske kommunistpartiet begår statskupp og omdanner Tyskland til en idealstat; teksten er utformet som en serie (fiktive) lederartikler i aviser

Josef Freiherr von Löwenthal: *Den udødelige byen: En utopisk fortelling fra året 2000* (1936)

Peter Norelli: *Utop Anno 2000 – verdi-omvurdering: Rapport fra det første dagsmøtet i utopistenes internasjonale intersekulære verdensforbund (10.-17. juni 2000)* (1936) – en roman der utopister som Platon, Thomas More og andre møtes; boka tipper etter hvert over i en dystopi

Austin Tappan Wright: *Islandia* (1942)

Franz Werfel: *De ufødtes stjerne: En reiseroman* (1946) – om en svært fjern framtid, med dystopiske innslag fordi menneskene ikke klarer å realisere virkelig framskritt

Burrhus Frederic Skinner: *Walden Two* (1948)

Garrett Jones: *Ourtopia* (2004)

“[M]odern utopian visions culminated in the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries, when a spate of utopian fictions, often inspired by socialist ideals, appeared. These centrally included Edward Bellamy’s *Looking Backward* (1888), William Morris’s *News From Nowhere* (1890), and H. G. Wells’s *A Modern Utopia* (1905).” (Herman, Jahn og Ryan 2005 s. 624-625)

Den engelske forfatteren Butlers *Erewhon* er ifølge Esther M. Stewart en av de mange utopiske science fiction-romanene som “is more a comment on its own time which goes on to reflect prophetically on events of the future, than a genuinely futuristic text.” (Stewart i Boxall 2006 s. 174) Butler “used his satirical tale, *Erewhon*, to promote of his alternative interpretation of the evolution of species, which accorded cells a will and a capacity to shape their environment and to pass acquired habits on to its progeny. Butler satirises the injustices of Victorian England by means of a utopian society in which all the social mores and laws were the exact opposite of what they were in England, just as its ideas about evolution were different.” (<http://www.marxists.org/reference/archive/butler-samuel/1872/erewhon/index.htm>; lesedato 06.12.12)

I britten Morris’ roman *News from Nowhere* er inspirasjonen til skildringen delvis en tenkt fortidig epoke og delvis en tenkt framtidig periode. Selve handlingen er lagt til framtiden: “As prophecy, William Morris’ dream of a utopian future, in which there is no private property, no government, no legal system, no penal system, and no formal education, can seem comically unlikely. Morris imagines a future London which has been reforested, and in which the clothes, the crockery, the buildings, and the bridges have all been designed by William Morris.” (Boxall 2006 s. 212)

“Utopian fictions continued to appear throughout the twentieth century, though these more modern fictions were often informed by a complexity and scepticism that tended to make the line between utopia and dystopia rather unclear, though the thin line between utopia and dystopia had already been emphasised in earlier works such as Book IV of Jonathan Swift’s *Gulliver’s Travels* (1726). Thus, a crucial modern ‘utopian’ fiction such as B. F. Skinner’s *Walden Two* (1948), clearly intended as a serious exploration of the possibilities of behavioural psychology to produce citizens suited for life in an idealised society, strikes many as a nightmare vision of brainwashing and social control. Some modern works, such as Marge Piercy’s *Woman on the Edge of Time* (1976), include both utopian and dystopian

visions of the future, though others, such as Ernest Callenbach's *Ecotopia* and Ursula K. Le Guin's *The Dispossessed* (1974), have attempted more legitimately utopian visions, often inspired by the ideals of the oppositional political movements of the 1960s. In addition, twentieth-century thinkers such as Ernst Bloch continued to explore the potential of utopian thought and to emphasise the utopian potential of fiction and other cultural products." (Herman, Jahn og Ryan 2005 s. 625)

"Ernest Callenbach, the author of the 1975 novel "Ecotopia," the tale of an awakening paradise in the Pacific Northwest that developed a cult following as a harbinger of the environmental movement, died on April 16 at his home in Berkeley, Calif. [...] Written in the throes of the Vietnam War, "Ecotopia" tells of a secessionist nation – carved from what was once Oregon, Washington and Northern California – that by 1999 has evolved toward a "stable state" of bioregionalism, in which each territory cultivates its distinct ecological character. [...] Its readership has included hippies and New Agers, environmental activists and college and high school science students, as well as evangelical Christians increasingly concerned about the global environment. It was reprinted by Bantam Books in 1977, two years after Bantam rejected it, asserting, Mr. Callenbach recalled, that "the ecological fad is over." The novel is told through the accounts of a newspaper reporter who is sent to Ecotopia two decades after it seceded from an economically collapsing United States. Ecotopians realized just in time, the reporter writes, that "financial panic could be turned to advantage if the new nation could be organized to devote its real resources of energy, knowledge, skills and materials to the basic necessities of survival." " (<http://www.nytimes.com/2012/04/27/books/ernest-callenbach-author-of-ecotopia-dies-at-83.html>; lesedato 19.12.13)

Ecotopia "describes a society in which recycling is a way of life, gas-powered cars are replaced by electric cars (although most people walk or commute on high-speed magnetic-levitation trains) and bicycles are placed in public spaces to be borrowed at will. In Ecotopia, solar energy is commonplace, organic food is locally grown and, instead of petrochemical fertilizers, processed sewage is used to cultivate crops. Mr. Callenbach mixed his communal change-or-perish message with the free-love attitudes of the 1960s and '70s. Ecotopian couples are "generally monogamous," the reporter writes, "except for four holidays each year, at the solstices and equinoxes, when sexual promiscuity is widespread." Marijuana is legal. While long considered a cult novel, "Ecotopia" gained recognition for addressing issues that have since come to the fore as the environmental movement has grown. [...] The book, Mr. Callenbach told The San Diego Union-Tribune in 1989, "does seem to offer at least some people a sense of hope that we can work through the messes we have gotten our society into and actually arrive at some kind of decent way to inhabit our precious little planet." [...] He began focusing on ecological concerns in the early 1970s. In addition to "Ecotopia," he wrote several books on protecting the environment, including "Living Cheaply With Style" (1977). [...] On a visit to La Jolla High School in San Diego in 1989, students told him that they wanted to live in a society like the one he had imagined, The Union-

Tribune reported. They could, he replied, if they and others of their generation were committed to it. “If you don’t save us, nobody will,” he said.” (<http://www.nytimes.com/2012/04/27/books/ernest-callenbach-author-of-ecotopia-dies-at-83.html>; lesedato 19.12.13)

“Charlotte Perkins Gilman legger grunnen for mye av den feministiske utopiens tema [...] I hennes tre bøker *Moving the Mountain* (1911), *Herland* (1915) og *With Her in Ourland* (1916), arbeider hun med å synliggjøre kvinner som aktive subjekter, og bryte ned tradisjonelle kjønnsmonstre. Hun eksperimenterer med iscenesettelser av fiktive verdener bygget opp av både enkjønnede og tokjønnede biologiske modeller (Ljungquist 2001: 58-62).” (Johan Magnus Staxrud i <https://www.duo.uio.no/bitstream/handle/10852/26429/dystopiogsamfunnskritikk.pdf?sequence=1>; lesedato 25.01.19)

Den amerikanske forfatteren Marge Piercys roman *Woman on the Edge of Time* (1976) er en feministisk utopi. “What is this future like? In Mouth-of-Mattapoissett, Luciente’s place of habitation, people live very simply in what we would consider a sustainable manner. Every element of their lifestyle is crafted with care. From the moment a child is brought into being to the moment of death, all is covered by community practices and ritual and yet, there is also a great deal of room for independence and the exercise of free spirit. Nothing is predetermined. Initially, we are led to believe that Mattapoissett is a typical type of community of the future. It is about the size of a village, Connie is told that big cities were deemed unworkable. It is bucolic, vegetables are grown and cows graze. Our first view even provides clothes drying in the sun. In many ways it reminds Connie of the Mexican villages of her childhood. For the most part, the use of fossil fuels is a thing of the past. Solar energy is primarily used. Each community tries to be “ownfed,” i.e., self-sustaining. Each adult has a space of per own. The pronouns his and her are no longer used – per, for person, is the correct term.” (Miriam Rosenthal i <http://www.futures.hawaii.edu/publications/half-fried-ideas/J2/rosenthal.pdf>; lesedato 04.01.15)

I verdenen beskrevet i *Woman on the Edge of Time* “the human species is carefully controlled and a child is born only when someone in the community dies. People are not encouraged to live expanded numbers of years and most don’t. While Connie is around, we experience the death of two people, one old respected woman who has reached the end of her days, and one young beloved man who is killed in defense of his community. The survivors mourn their loved ones and cherish their memories, but are also joyful to welcome new members into the community. There is a diverse mix of racial types, rather than a blending into uniformity. There are still blacks and whites, not merely light brown people. The parenting arrangement is not of our convention. Three mothers are chosen from men and women who have volunteered to mother. There is no mention of fathers. All mothers breastfeed and bond very closely with the child. Reproduction and parenting, as we know it, is obsolete. Since mothering is a matter of choice, all mothers are eager and joyful in

their task. [...] Men and women couple without great regard for the gender of their partner. They refer to each other as “sweetfriend.” And most have multiple sweetfriends, although they have a “core.” We are treated to evidences of jealousies that exist when one sweet partner may have a special relationship with another to the exclusion, or perceived exclusion, of a third. What we learn from this is that even though human social practices may change, there are basic human emotions that still exist. In the future, they are not swept under the rug, rituals are developed to resolved problems that may emerge. [...] The story does not end on a hopeful note. Connie cannot be saved by the future and she also cannot seem to save her friends in the future. War is waged all out on all fronts: present and future. One of the messages we might take form the book is that the seeds of the future are in the present, but when you start to modify the biosystem (or any system), as Luciente and her mems say, “In biosystems, all factors are not knowable.” One never knows what the outcome will be from one small change. [...] Our utopian future of Mattapoissett is a purposeful creation designed to repair the physical and social environment wrecked by our time.” (Miriam Rosenthal i <http://www.futures.hawaii.edu/publications/half-fried-ideas/J2/rosenthal.pdf>; lesedato 04.01.15)

“Stig Larssæther, samfunnsforsker ved Institutt for byggekunst, prosjektering og forvaltning, NTNU [...] - Jeg tror mange ikke helt har skjønt kva som ligger i FN's togradersmål, altså målet om at den globale gjennomsnittstemperaturen ikke skal stige mer enn to grader i forhold til før-industriell tid (1850). For å nå det målet konkluderer FN's miljøprogram UNEP med at klimagassutslippene fra rike land som Norge må ned med mellom 25 til 40 prosent i 2020 i forhold til utslippene i 1990. - Min uærbødige påstand er at det er veldig få som har noen som helst følelse med hva det målet innebærer i praksis. Det samfunnet som ligger implisitt i å skulle nå den målsettingen, er så fjernt fra dagens samfunn at det er mulig å beskrive det som en utopi eller som science fiction, alt etter hva du velger, sier Larssæther. Han har vært tilknyttet et stort forskningsprosjekt som har bidratt til planleggingen av en klimanøytral bydel på Brøset i Trondheim. Området er per i dag ikke bygget ut, men visjonen har vært å skape en ny bydel for rundt 4000 innbyggere hvor den enkelte skal kunne leve et “lav-utslippliv” takket være teknologiske og sosiale nyvinninger. Antologien som oppsummerer forskningsprosjektet, har da også fått tittelen *Utopia Revisited*. - Ideen til prosjektet kom fra NTNU og ble solgt inn til politikerne som en positiv mulighet til å fylle klimapolitikken med konkret innhold. I og med at politikerne i alle fall på et retorisk nivå støtter målet om klimanøytralitet, framstår forskningsprosjektet som politisk attraktivt. [...] For Larssæther er det å gjøre bruk av utopier en måte å se nye løsninger på. Men det fordrer en annen måte å tenke scenarier på enn hva som er rådende i dag, mener han. - Det gjeldende innenfor dagens planlegging er såkalt “forecasting”, der du tar utgangspunkt i gjeldende trender og framskriver dem. Det er det som er modus operandi for mye av det som gjøres av samfunnsplanlegging i dag, for eksempel når man bygger en ny flyplass. Basert på erfaringene man har gjort så langt, spør man seg hvordan flyveksten kommer til å utvikle seg, og så beregner man ut fra det. Veien blir altså til mens man går. Men det finnes en annen tilnærming, sier

Larssæther. - Det kalles “backcasting”. Det er noe av det vi gjorde i Brøset-prosjektet, der vi tok utgangspunkt i en ønsket framtidig tilstand, FNs tograders-samfunn, og så spolte vi tilbake til dagens samfunn og spurte oss: Hva må vi gjøre for å komme dit, for å oppnå den utopien? [...] en utopi vil kunne fungere som en kontrastvæske som hjelper oss å stille andre spørsmål til hva vi må gjøre i dagens situasjon.” (*Forskerforum* nr. 8 i 2015 s. 20)

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