

**“Thomas More’s *Utopia*:  
Amaurotum and the vision of a public life”**

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## Thomas More's *Utopia*: Amaurotum and the vision of a public life

### Introduction

500 years to the day, Sir Thomas More, the later Lord Chancellor under King Henry XIII of England, was member of a diplomatic mission, sent to the continent in order to re-negotiate trade relationships with Flanders.<sup>i</sup> During the lengthy negotiations More drafted large parts of his most famous work: "Utopia – on the best state of a commonwealth and on the new island of Utopia".<sup>ii</sup>

In 1515 the state novel about a fictional island in the New World was originally published in Latin but uses Greek names: "Utopia" is an equivocation between the Greek for ou- topos "no place" or eu - topos "the good / happy place".<sup>iii</sup> Utopia has thus the double meaning of - "place of perfection" and "place of non-existence", which gives an indication of More's playfulness and the sense of freedom he claims for his thought experiment.

The book is divided in two parts: The first comprises a discussion of the social problems evident in early sixteenth-century England<sup>iv</sup>, while the detailed description of the imaginary island of Utopia, of its overall composition and customs is found in the second part of the novel. Here the utopian island state is described as a self-sufficient society<sup>v</sup>, where social cohesion and equality are the precondition for wellbeing and happiness. Based on the renunciation of private property and on religious freedom, the lives of the Utopians are framed in a clearly structured daily routine. More sets the lamentable English conditions against the "first communist constitution" (as which his book was labelled later), probably not as a one to one desired reality, but as a possibility.<sup>vi</sup>

The book has not only had an important impact on Renaissance scholars. Given that More "created in space not only a city, but a whole state"<sup>vii</sup> with all its complexity,

Utopia has, until today, been the object of study for scholars from the field of literature, history, political science, philosophy and geography.<sup>viii</sup>

### In Utopia form and society merge

Utopia also inspired architects and city planners to question how to build an environment, which would not only reflect an ideal society but help to shape it in the first place.<sup>ix</sup> The book was thus important for the thinking of 17th and 18th Century "ideal cities", but also for more recent urban visions and built experiments from Etienne Cabet's *Icaria* (1840) to Ebenezer Howard's *Garden City*.<sup>x</sup> What makes Utopia relevant for us as architects and urban planners today is that Thomas More addresses concrete questions of design. The descriptions of the island Utopia, its cities, blocks and houses are surprisingly precise and modern and provide us with the opportunity to look at current challenges in urban planning from a different perspective.

This paper will discuss the spatial qualities of Utopia and particularly of its communal spaces. We will visit the utopian capital Amaurot<sup>xi</sup> through a sequence of plans, models and drawings which reflect my architectural interpretation of More's text.<sup>xixiii</sup>

The attempt to illustrate, to map Utopia, the "non-place" is certainly not without paradoxical value, but it should help to better understand and value More's extraordinary vision for a community.<sup>xiv</sup>

### **Space and time, Utopia and England**

Thomas More was very vague about the actual location, and situated his fictional island state Utopia somewhere in the "New World"<sup>xv</sup>, which, from a European perspective constituted an inspiring stage for a fantastic narrative.<sup>xvi</sup>

The accounts of Amerigo Vespucci's travels had only been published in 1507 and the Americas turned into a projection space for European fantasies and ideals. More took the opportunity to project an antique myth onto a (from the European perspective) immaculate site in order to develop a daring vision, create a counter part to the spoilt Old World.

The following decades of European expansion not only produced further thought experiments but very concrete, often most ruthless, attempts at realizing ideal settlements on recently conquered grounds.<sup>xvii</sup> But Thomas More was certainly not to blame for such aggressive colonialization. He was much concerned with a reform of his own homeland and used the “nowhere” of the New World location rather as a filter, a tabula rasa which allowed him to draw a vision in its purest form.

Utopia’s dimensions were modelled on the geography of the British Isles. Also parallels between London and the utopian capital, Amaurot can be easily drawn. The utopian city for example echoes the population figure of London which, in 1515, had already over 80 thousand inhabitants.<sup>xviii</sup> (Amaurot: 70.000 – 100.000)

After a page long and most detailed description of the crescent shaped island of Utopia and its geographical characteristics, More moves to the location of the 54 similar cities:

“There are fifty-four cities on the island, all spacious and magnificent, entirely identical in language, customs, institutions and laws. So far as the location permits, all of them are built on the same plan and have the same appearance. The nearest are twenty-four miles apart, and the farthest are not so remote that a person cannot travel on foot from one to another in a day.”<sup>xix</sup>

More uses in the original Latin description the word “civitas”, the equivalent of the Greek polis, “city-state”. George M. Logan explains that “each of the fifty-four Utopian civitates is, like the Greek polis, constituted of a central city and its surrounding countryside. Though federated, they also resemble the Greek city-states in functioning as largely independent political units.”<sup>xx</sup> The utopian cities’ layout, however, is based on a rectangular block pattern and thus reminiscent of Roman urban planning.

Although London had been originally planned on a Roman grid, by the 16<sup>th</sup> century little was left of this ordered attempt. More had been familiar with a London where hardly any sunshine got into the narrow streets and houses and a lack of hygiene aided disease and epidemics. In contrast to his hometown, light and a generous amount of space were at the heart of the utopian city. To get an impression of the cities and the great detail of their design, we will listen to More’s descriptions of the capital Amaurot, “the most worthy of all”<sup>xxi</sup>:

"The town is almost square in shape. From a little below the crest of the hill, its shorter side runs down two miles to the river Anyder<sup>xxii</sup>. (...) The town is surrounded by a thick, high wall, with many towers and battlements."<sup>xxiii</sup>

"Every city is divided into four equal districts, and in the middle of each district is a market for all kinds of commodities."

"The streets are conveniently laid out both for use by vehicles and for protection from the wind. Their buildings are by no means shabby. (...) their houses are all three storeys high and handsomely constructed; the outer sections of the walls are made of fieldstone, quarried rock or brick, and the space between is filled with gravel or cement. The roofs are flat and are covered with a kind of plaster that is cheap but formulated so as to be fireproof, and more weather-resistant even than lead. Glass (of which they have a good supply) is used in windows to keep out the weather."<sup>xxiv</sup>

While the regular utopian grid was an answer to London's chaotic street pattern, the suggestion to use stone and flat roofs was More's answer to the threat fires posed constantly to the medieval wooden structures of London with their steep thatched roofs.<sup>xxv</sup> The use of stone and expensive glass (in More's time widely reserved for privileged people or public buildings) for all buildings can be furthermore read as a symbol for the egalitarian society.

"Long unbroken rows of houses face each other down the whole block. The housefronts along each block are separated by a street twenty feet wide. Behind the houses, a large garden – as long on each side as the block itself – is hemmed in on all sides by the backs of the houses."<sup>xxvi</sup>

"Every square block has its own spacious halls, equally distant from one another, and each is known by a special name. (...) Thirty families are assigned to each hall (...) to take their meals in common. (...) while it is not forbidden to eat at home, no one does it willingly, because it is not thought proper."<sup>xxvii</sup>

### Public / private

Besides the large dining halls (one for 30 families) the city offers a number of spaces for social gatherings: the gardens (one for each block which contains at least 60 families), the free churches (13 per city) and the market places (4 per city). While there is certainly no lack of public space, private space, indeed any private sphere, is a rarity in Utopia.

More explains: "Every house has a front door to the street and a backdoor to the garden. The double doors, which open easily with a push of the hand and close again automatically, let anyone come in – so there is nothing private anywhere."<sup>xxviii</sup>

In Utopia each family shares a house. That More does not grant this family any privacy, however, can be seen as a concession to Plato who regarded the private

family as a threat to a harmonious community. According to Mumford's interpretation of Plato's idea of an ideal community "each home (...) tends to be a miniature utopia. (And) the little utopia of the family is the enemy – indeed the principal enemy – of the beloved community." Therefore, for those "who as guardians were to apply the science of government to public affairs, a private life, private duties, private interests, were all to be left behind."<sup>xxix</sup> More takes inspiration from Plato's concept of community. Yet, he still insists on the family to be the foundation of his state, while Plato wanted to completely remove the family structure for special population groups.

With Utopia More suggests an extreme position where what we today consider the interplay between public and private space is concerned. Private space simply does not exist in Utopia. Doors are always open, everything takes place under the public eye and a more or less constant participation in and confrontation with public life is not an option but an imperative. So, whatever "public space" exactly means in the context of Utopia - in Amaurot it is certainly far from being dead.

### **Plato's influence on Utopia: from controlled balance to stasis**

More's conversations with his friend Erasmus of Rotterdam played an important role for the novel, as did St. Augustine's *De Civitate Dei* and Aristotle's *Politics*. The strongest influence, however, was Plato. More even said that Utopia realised all the ideas that Plato had formulated in his state theory *The Republic*, almost 2000 years previously. We have mentioned the abolition of private property and the idea of community. More valued furthermore Plato's demand for a controlled balance to guarantee stability. For Utopia, a controlled balancing out of the population was thus demanded so that the country has no more than 54 cities<sup>xxx</sup>, that each of these cities has no more than 6000 families and a family consists of no less than 10 and no more than 16 adults.

More becomes slightly obsessive (or again ironic?) about the right number of citizens. Should the number of household members have come to exceed or fall below a certain threshold, this problem was to be resolved through adoption. Accordingly, should the overall number of inhabitants of one of the cities or the island altogether have

exceeded or fallen below a certain number, this problem was to be solved by exchange or colonialization.

"To keep the cities from becoming too sparse or too crowded, they take care that each household (there are six thousand of them in each city) (...) should have no fewer than ten nor more than sixteen adults. (...) The number of adults is easily observed by transferring individuals from a household with too many into a household with too few. But if a city has too many people, the extra persons serve to make up the shortage of population in other cities. And if the population throughout the entire island exceeds the quota, they enrol citizens out of every city and plant a colony under their own laws on the mainland near them (...) If for any reason the population of one city shrinks so sharply that it cannot be made up without reducing others below their quota, the numbers are restored by bringing people back from the colonies. (...) They would rather let their colonies disappear than allow any of the cities on their island to get too small."<sup>xxxii</sup>

This formal standardisation of the island not only reflects the concept of equality, but also finds its origins in Plato's thoughts about the adherence to the right state size for adherence to inner unity.<sup>xxxii</sup> According to Plato the city "may increase to *any* size which is consistent with its unity; that is the limit."

Lewis Mumford summarizes this aspect in making the simple but crucial point that "when you increase the number of people in a community you decrease the number of things that they can share in common."<sup>xxxiii</sup>

In the end Plato limited his community to the concrete number of 5040 citizens. As Mumford explains this number was not arbitrary but would be "the number that can be conveniently addressed by a single orator". Limiting the size of a city (state) to a certain number of citizens can thus be considered a crucial condition for an "active polity of citizens"<sup>xxxiv</sup>, to enable for political life.

### The spatial quality of public life

For this active political engagement we have to consider, however, not only the number of people but also the quality of the space in which they are supposed to gather. Here it is interesting to listen to Hannah Arendt, who was concerned with the spatial quality of public life.<sup>xxxv</sup> To Arendt politics is a public activity, and direct participation becomes only possible through one's actual presence in a public space. The ability to meet in a public space is therefore crucial to enable for political debate.<sup>xxxvi</sup>

Maurizio Passerin d'Entreves summarizes Arendt's argument about the spatial quality of public life: "political activities are located in a public space where citizens are able to meet one another, exchange their opinions and debate their differences, and search for some collective solution to their problems. (...) individuals must be able to see and talk to one another in public, to meet in a public-political space, so that their differences as well as their commonalities can emerge and become the subject of democratic debate."<sup>xxxvii</sup>

### Unity through sharing public space

"Political opinions, [Arendt] claimed, can never be formed in private; rather, they are formed, tested, and enlarged only within a public context of argumentation and debate."<sup>xxxviii</sup>

When Arendt questions how "a collection of distinct individuals can be united to form a political community", she stresses the unifying value of the shared public space and the shared institution. For Arendt "the unity that may be achieved in a political community is [thus] neither the result of religious or ethnic affinity, nor the expression of some common value system. Rather, the unity in question can be attained by sharing a public space and a set of political institutions, and engaging in the practices and activities which are characteristic of that space and those institutions."<sup>xxxix</sup>

Already Plato considered the participation in communal life as fundamental for the creation of a stable community. Since a good community "could not be simply a collection of individuals, each one of whom insists upon some private and particular happiness without respect to welfare and interests of his fellows."<sup>xl</sup> Expanding on Plato's argument, Lewis Mumford explains that people are not "the members of a community because they live under the same system of political government or dwell in the same country. They become genuine citizens to the extent that they share certain institutions and ways of life (...)"<sup>xli</sup>

### Public space in Utopia

A place specifically dedicated for political gatherings, comparable to the Agora in the Greek polis does not exist in Utopia. Yet, in More's "Happy Republic" the citizens regularly elect deputies for the utopian assembly and also the prince is elected, a process which demands continuous political debate. So although the author is not



vocal about the use of the communal gardens, dining halls, open churches and market places for political gatherings, I would like to suggest their potential in these regards.

### Stasis / the city wall

More's strict determination of the number of citizens went hand in hand with the absolute rigidity of the utopian space.

The capital Amaurot "is surrounded by a thick, high wall, with many towers and battlements. On three sides it is also surrounded by a dry ditch, broad and deep and filled with thorn hedges; on its fourth side the river itself serves as a moat."<sup>xlii</sup>

The wall surrounding not only the capital but each of the 54 cities of the island of Utopia had only a subservient function for military defence. Given the impregnable geographical position of the island itself, it is also a second, a symbolic function of the wall which we should consider:

Ancient descriptions of the city of Babylon already point out a double meaning/ function of the city wall: According to an anonymous narrative the first two of the three Babylonian walls built under Nebukadnezar were called IMGUR – ENLIL ("Enlil shows goodwill") and NIMIT – ENLIL ("Bulwark of Enlil").<sup>xliii</sup> While the part of the wall directed to the inside symbolised "goodwill" and security, the second wall had to act as a deterrent against potential enemies. Thus there is a clear differentiation between the outer wall as protective wall and the city wall radiating "goodwill" and a sense of security to the encircled who thus were at the same time enclosed and protected.

Furthermore, in Europe the medieval city wall clasps a space of shelter. Those that found themselves on the inside were often freed of the outside's persecutions, dangers and obligations<sup>xliiv</sup>, whereas the unwanted, potentially dangerous elements were kept out.

In the utopian isolation through man-made or natural borderlines and especially in the city wall, we can recognize both a protective and a defensive function. The city wall furthermore symbolically manifests the idea of stasis, the maintenance of one particular (ideal) moment and the denial of future change.

Given that the dining halls, the churches, the market places, housing blocks and streets were to frame the lives of More's perfected society, the city did not have to "cope with the complexity and unpredictability of everyday life."<sup>xiv</sup> Transforming or (re-)making the city was therefore as unnecessary as it was impossible.

Plato's idea about the adherence to the right state size for adherence to inner unity was in *Utopia* pushed to the limit. The (urban?) space described in *Utopia* neither allows for shrinking or growth, but idealizes an unchanging equilibrium. The resistance to growth, the denial of any change, however, leads the concept of the city itself ad absurdum.<sup>xvi</sup> As the river Anyder is the "river without water", we can therefore ask whether the capital Amautot is not rather the "non-city".

Possibly More confronts us here with yet another paradox, yet another reason for *Utopia* being not only unbuilt but unbuildable.

## **Conclusion**

Both historically and spatially sufficiently detached – the island of *Utopia* inspired both the author's and the reader's fantasy. At the same time the location, together with the narrative's often ironic and playful tone, granted the author a certain freedom and allowed for a rather brusque critique on the social and political conditions of Thomas More's homeland to go unpunished.<sup>xvii</sup>

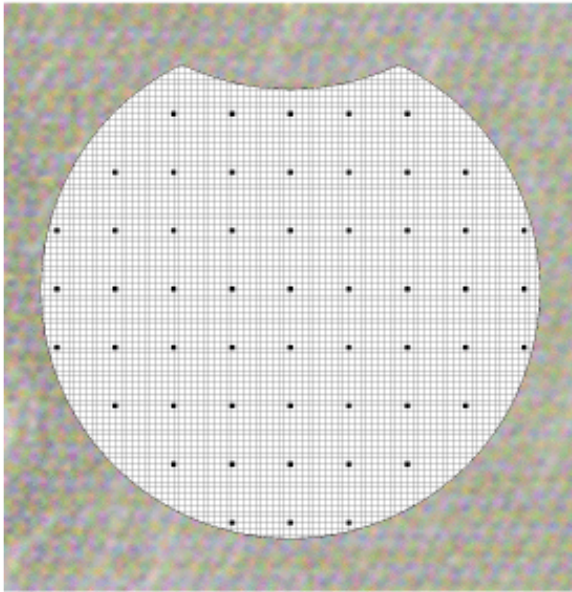
The island turned into a clear slate for Thomas More's mind's laboratory, *Utopia* into an elaborate thought experiment.

The poststructuralist philosopher Louis Marin offers a useful way to think about *Utopia*: In his reading or rather his deconstruction of the *Utopia* text, Marin refers to the theory of "the neutral / neuter" (French: "le neutre"). Marin argues that the utopian text "opens up a space of neutrality in which the contradictions are allowed to play against one another."<sup>xviii</sup>

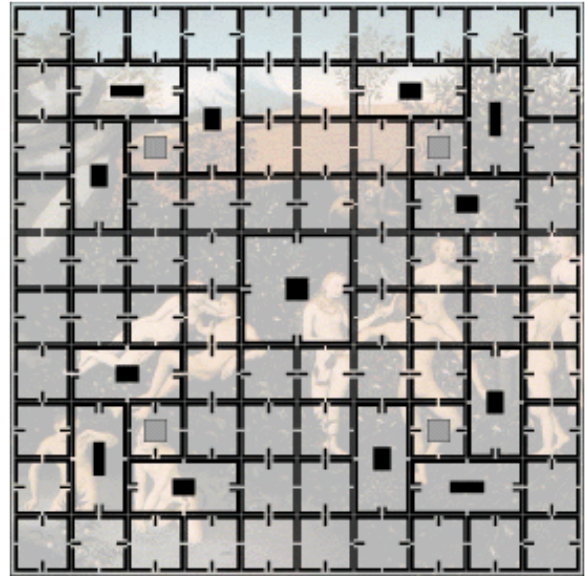
In his text More constructs a field of tension. A tension between the serious and the playful, the protective and defensive, between reasonable limitation and absolute stagnation, the not yet there and never to be, the good place and the nowhere, between fiction and reality. This tension stretches Utopia to all sides and creates a vacuum, an in-between, for the thought experiment to dwell and live on.

There is certainly a problem in the interaction between Utopia and reality and this paper does not aim to resolve or even reduce this complexity.

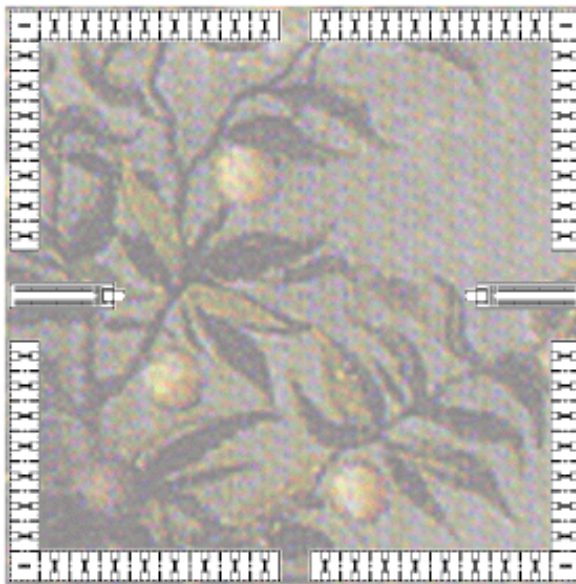
In "Of other spaces" Michel Foucault defines Utopias as "sites with no real place (...) fundamentally unreal spaces"<sup>xlix</sup>. Since the name Utopia, however, designates not only "no place" or "nowhere", but also the "good place", the paper proposed that the very first Utopia holds a potential, which exerts Foucault's narrow definition. The city of Amaurot should be regarded as the "other, another real space, as perfect, as meticulous, as well arranged as ours is messy, ill constructed, and jumbled", and therefore serve as a "heterotopia of compensation"<sup>l</sup>, an operational platform.



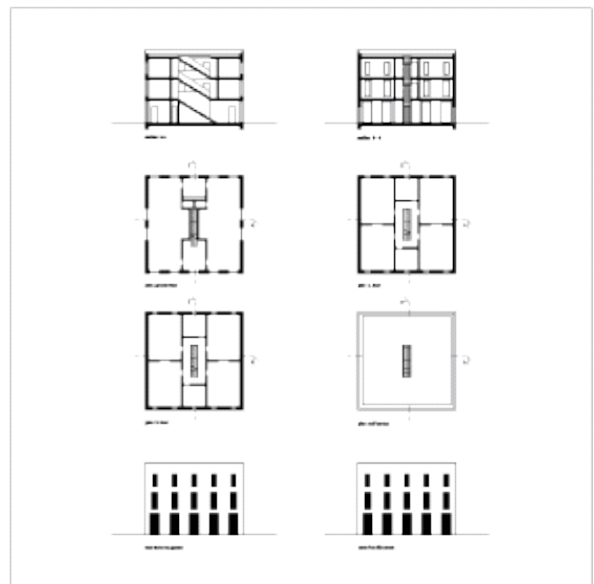
the island Utopia  
scale 1: 650 000



the capital Amaurotum  
scale 1: 5000



the block  
scale 1: 500



the house  
scale 1: 100

In *The Man without Qualities* Robert Musil wrote:

“One will object to this being a utopia! Certainly it is one. Utopias stand for about as much as possibilities; in that a possibility is not a reality is expressed that the circumstances with which it is currently interwoven prevent it from being one, otherwise it would only be an impossibility; if you now take it away from that with which it is interwoven and grant its development, then utopia is created.”

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<sup>i</sup> More was in Flanders for several months, from May until October 1515. For a more accurate vision of More's stay in Flanders see a current biennale project:  
<http://www.flanderstoday.eu/living/500-years-utopia-how-different-story-about-europe-started-flanders>  
(accessed 29.6.2015)

<sup>ii</sup> Utopia was first published in Latin, 1516 in Louvain, 1517 in Paris and 1518 in Basel. The subtitle, *De optimo rei publicae deque nova insula Utopia* literally translates as "Of a republic's best state and of the new / extraordinary island Utopia"

<sup>iii</sup> Similarly the utopian river Anyder (from the Greek anydros) is "waterless" and Raphael Hythloday, the sensible narrator an "expert in nonsense". (Compare: More, Thomas: *Utopia*, George M. Logan and Robert M. Adams (Eds.), Cambridge University Press, Cambridge, New York, 1989, p.5)

It is difficult for us today to clearly read More's intentions, to understand where he is playful, where he overdraws or is ironic (for example in his description of war and slavery). The humorous tone and the created ambiguity helped a benevolent reception of the text which could have been read as a very blunt critique on the English authorities at that time.

<sup>iv</sup> Compare: Goodey, Brian R.: "Mapping 'Utopia': A Comment on the Geography of Sir Thomas More", *Geographical Review*. Vol.60, No. 1 (Jan., 1970), p. 16.

<sup>v</sup> That slavery is not abolished in Utopia is a point which has puzzled for example also Lewis Mumford. This point is indeed curious and might fall under the aspect of the author's playfulness or sense of irony, given the generally very humane ideals of the utopian island and given that slavery had not been practiced in England (and wide parts of Central Europe) since the Middle Ages and certainly not in More's time.

<sup>vi</sup> Although we can assume that More would have liked to see some of the utopian customs, the improved housing conditions, the absence of poverty and hunger or the low crime rates transferred to his home land, we have to be careful not to read Utopia as a one to one model for England. Henry Morley, however, states in the foreword to the 1901 Cassell & Company Edition of Utopia that "under the veil of a playful fiction, the talk is intensely earnest, and abounds in practical suggestion."

<sup>vii</sup> Goodey, p.28

<sup>viii</sup> See for example Louis Marin's remarkable philosophical study *Utopics: Spatial Play*, (1973) or Brian R. Goodey's "Mapping Utopia: A Comment on the Geography of Sir Thomas More" (1970).

<sup>ix</sup> Bryan Goodey explains, that „*Utopia* was not written as a geography. The locale of More's society (being) almost incidental to the social structure that it describes." (Goodey, p. 18) Helen Rosenau speaks of More's design as "regulating live in a rational pattern". (Rosenau, Helen: *The Ideal City*, Harper & Row, New York, Evanston, San Francisco and London, 1972).

<sup>x</sup> *Voyage to Icaria* was published in 1840. The vision turned into a veritable project, when Cabet, inspired by Robert Owen, "purchased land on the Red River in Texas, drew up a plan for a colony based on community of property, and set out sixty-nine of his disciples to found utopia there in 1848." (Glenn Negley and J. Max Patrick (eds): *The Quest for Utopia: An Anthology of Imaginary Societies*, Doubleday Anchor Books, Garden City, NY, 1962, pp. 543-44.

*To-morrow: a Peaceful Path to Real Reform* was published in 1898. Ebenezer Howard's ideas were realized with the garden cities Letchworth (1904) and Welwyn (1919).

<sup>xi</sup> From the Greek amauroton, "made dark or dim". (Compare More, p.43)

<sup>xii</sup> The diploma project "Thomas More's Utopia – an interpretation" from 2002 (Mentor: Prof. Wouter Suselbeek) has since been developed further and exhibited in Hamburg (Galerie Renate Kammer: *Stadt - Haus - Wohnung*, 2006) and presented as a solo exhibition for "The Unbuilt" at the Byzantine and Christian Museum in Athens in 2008. Given the extraordinary architectural detail with which the island Utopia has been described on every scale - from the structuring of the cities, down to the organisation of the single household, More's written ideas could be translated into plans and models.

<sup>xiii</sup> Since 2004 a joint research project of the Technical University Munich and the Architecture Museum in Munich focussed on the translation of utopias and literary descriptions of urban visions to plans and models. Also More's Utopia has been the renewed object of study in this context. Compare: Ingrid Krau and Jochen Witthinrich (Eds): *Imagination der Stadt*, Edition Minerva, Wolfratshausen, 2006 and Jochen Witthinrich: *Utopie und Urbanität*, Edition Architektur, München, 2009.

<sup>xiv</sup> Regarding the early woodcut from Ambrosius Holbein which was prepared for the 1518 Basel edition of Utopia, Goodey contemplates that "with so many discrepancies between text and contemporary map, we may well ask why the artist did not attempt a closer reproduction of the design set by More". He concludes that "More presents us with a Utopia, a 'Nowhere', that cannot be mapped." (Goodey, p.21) Despite this insight, both Goodey (in 1970) and I, oblivious of his project, about 30 years later attempted to do just that.

<sup>xv</sup> In the letter to Peter Giles, the preface to the book, More laments that "it didn't occur to us to ask, nor to him (Raphael Hythloday) to say, in what part of the New World Utopia is to be found. I would give a sizeable sum of money to remedy this oversight, for I'm rather ashamed not to know the ocean where this island lies about which I've written so much." (More, p.5)

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- <sup>xvi</sup> Amerigo Vespucci's letters described the indigenous peoples of the Americas as "living according to nature". (Compare Bloch, Ernst: *Das Prinzip Hoffnung*, Suhrkamp, Frankfurt a. M., 1985, p. 599.) Both Christopher Columbus's discoveries and Vespucci's account of his travels of the Americas had therefore stirred the European imagination.
- <sup>xvii</sup> The Jesuit "Reductions" in Paraguay around 1530 were an early example which should be followed by further experimental and ideologically / religiously driven settlements also in North America.
- <sup>xviii</sup> In 1500 England had 2 million inhabitants which corresponds to a density of only 13 people per square kilometre. Whereas More achieved through his purely (with the exception of the agricultural businesses) city-based settlement format a density of 59 inhabitants per square kilometre. In comparison today in Great Britain there are 230 inhabitants per square kilometre.
- <sup>xix</sup> More, p.43
- <sup>xx</sup> George M. Logan in More, p.43
- <sup>xxi</sup> More, p.45
- <sup>xxii</sup> The river Anyder (from the Greek anydros) is "waterless".
- <sup>xxiii</sup> More, p. 45
- <sup>xxiv</sup> Ibid, p.46
- <sup>xxv</sup> In 1666, 150 years after More's suggestions, the Great Fire of London destroyed wide parts of the Medieval city structures and led to a radical building reform.
- <sup>xxvi</sup> More, p.46
- <sup>xxvii</sup> More, p.56
- <sup>xxviii</sup> Ibid, p.46
- <sup>xxix</sup> Mumford, Lewis: *The story of Utopias*, New York, 1922, p.38
- <sup>xxx</sup> Brian Goodey states that the 54 utopian States were probably derived from "the administrative units into which England was divided in More's time." (Goodey, p.22)
- <sup>xxxi</sup> More, p.54, p.55
- <sup>xxxii</sup> Also Alberti (1404-72) has stressed in his *De Re Aedificatoria* the need for moderation both in size and decoration: "the town should be neither too empty nor too small and so avoid excess in either respect." (Rosenau, p.50)
- <sup>xxxiii</sup> Mumford, p.30
- <sup>xxxiv</sup> Ibid.
- <sup>xxxv</sup> In *The Human condition* (1958) Arendt examines the aspect of public and private in the Greek polis and stresses the importance of the public political space for the "active life".
- <sup>xxxvi</sup> Compare: Arendt, Hannah: *Vita activa oder vom tätigen Leben*, Piper, München, Zürich, 1981 (1958)
- <sup>xxxvii</sup> d'Entreves, Maurizio Passerin, "Hannah Arendt", The Stanford Encyclopedia of Philosophy (2014)
- <sup>xxxviii</sup> Ibid.
- <sup>xxxix</sup> Ibid.
- <sup>xl</sup> Mumford, p.31
- <sup>xli</sup> Ibid, p.30
- <sup>xlii</sup> More, p.45, p.46
- <sup>xliii</sup> Compare: Brodersen: *Die sieben Weltwunder*, pp.35, 36.
- <sup>xliv</sup> A well known German slogan illustrates the fundamental difference between breathing the air in - or outside the medieval city wall: "Stadtluft macht frei !" (Town-air liberates!) alludes to the numerous advantages the city provided for the Medieval man in terms of military service, soccage, and feudal services.
- <sup>xlv</sup> Compare RC21, The Ideal City: between myth and reality, Conference theme.
- <sup>xlvi</sup> Today probably most city planners and architects would agree with Alvaro Siza: "I think that what interests me most in the construction of a city is its capacity for transformation, something resembling the development of human beings who from birth have certain characteristics and sufficient autonomy, a basic structure, allowing them to accept or to resist changes in life." (Architecture d'Aujourd' hui, Paris, December 1991.)
- <sup>xlvii</sup> Utopia is not reported to have caused grave disturbance between the King, Henry VIII and his counsellor and later Lord Chancellor (1529-1532). More's refusal to support the act of supremacy, which declared Henry the supreme head of the Church of England and thus the final split from the established Catholic Church, however, would cost his life. More was executed on the King's orders in the Tower of London in 1535.
- <sup>xlviii</sup> Hill, Eugene: "The Place of the Future: Louis Marin and his 'Utopiques'", Science Fiction Studies, Vol. 9, No. 2, Utopia and Anti-Utopia (Jul., 1982), p. 172.
- <sup>xlix</sup> Foucault, Michel: "Of Other Spaces", in: *Documenta X*. Ostfildern: Cantz-Verlag, 1997, p.265.
- <sup>l</sup> Ibid, p.271.

The historical Thomas More, the author of Utopia, was an extraordinarily complicated man who tied up all the threads of his life in his heroic death. Remember the subtitle "On the best state of a Republic and of the new island Utopia, a book truly golden, not less salutary than festive." Set over against the misery of peasants depicted in the vision of Piers the Plowman or against the child labor of early industrial America or the sweatshops of modern Asia, the Utopian limitation on labor is a way of saying that life is an end in itself and not merely an instrument to be used for someone else. In the city of Air castle or Amaurotum, as the Latin has it, every law relating to the public good has to be debated at least three days.