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1
Placing Utopia: Some Classical Images

Peter Beilharz and Christine Ellem

Except for a small band of enthusiasts, utopia has typically got bad press later into the twentieth century. This is a paradoxical situation, for utopia at the same time is a kind of ontological indicator of modernity. Moderns dream, like their predecessors, but they also know that such dreams can be materialized, and go awfully wrong, turning into twentieth-century nightmares. Utopia, in short, is ubiquitous, even when it is formally unpopular. We cannot stop dreaming, or anticipating.

By definition, utopia is both the good place and no place, nowhere. In this chapter we respond to both themes with reference to some classics in the genre, from More's *Utopia* to Bellamy's *Looking Backward*, Huxley's *Brave New World* and *Island* and Orwell's *1984*. Across this axis, of course, disillusion replaces illusion, and utopia morphs into dystopia, though any broader consideration of the field in any case begins from the sense that utopia and dystopia are analytically or historically inseparable. Our especial interest, however, is in the idea of locating or placing these utopias, reading them afresh with a curiosity about their geographical, insular and urban settings and global connections. For all these utopias, these non-places, are also placed; and their specific placement coincides with a global location, a place in the world-system, of which they are at first exceptional, or then, increasingly, exemplary. These classics of utopian thinking are also therefore both geographically located and connected to global developments which they deny or, later, confirm. As utopia becomes more modern it becomes not only more concrete, in both senses, but also more fully indicative of global rather than provincial trends. Utopia becomes globalized, well before globalization talk pervades the academy and polity. It becomes mainstreamed into popular

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culture, normalized into our everyday lives even as it stands out, starkly, as the representative of the impossible.

More's place

Has utopia always been no place as well as the good place? Even as far back as its particular genesis in 1516 at the hands of Thomas More, utopia had recognizable geographical characteristics. They were, famously, insular. More, or rather Raphael, his bearer, is explicit. Utopia is broadest in the middle, where it is about 200 miles across. The ends of the island taper, making it appear like a crescent, with a massive interior harbour (More, 1965, p. 69). There are watery dangers, but the Utopians know where the safe channels are. More's Utopia has been engineered, like the world of Faust the developer or Soviet history, reshaped and formed from peninsula to island. It is not 'natural'; this is not Robinson Crusoe's island, given by nature for all time (More, 1965, p. 70).

There are 54 'splendid big towns' on the island, which all look alike, planned but decentralized among and across themselves. The centre – anticipating Canberra, Wellington, Washington DC – is Aircastle. Agriculture is widespread and worked alternatively by town dwellers. Each town consists of 6000 households; surplus population is transferred to new sites, though the general image is of a steady-state economy, not a growth machine (More, 1965, p. 79). One-seventh of total exports to any country go as a free gift to their poor. Foreign trade pays for essential imports, like iron, and returns a surplus (More, 1965, p. 83) – so there is a bad or other world out there, and war, and avarice, not least in the form of external love of gold, itself plainly no more than a socially ascribed value (More, 1965, p. 89).

This much is well known and frequently visited; it becomes the model for a great deal of other utopian travelling. More's *Utopia* remains a classic, not least for its sense of reversal or inversion, where all that is solid is made to look elusive, and anything becomes conceptually possible, at least within the frame of revolution-repetition. The images echo through, for example, to Fourier's horticultural fantasies and Marx's lampooning thereof in *The German Ideology* (Beilharz, 1992, Chapter 1).

Bellamy's Boston

By the time of the great early modern utopia, *Looking Backward*, almost four centuries later, the world has become more concrete, and its location is so much so as to make it real, not an imaginary map on the wall

or in the head, but the harbour city of Boston, itself also reclaimed, rebuilt, physically transformed through the pursuit of the politics of rational mastery. Presumably the choice of place is a feasibility trick, just as More's is. For More, Utopia might just as well be anywhere, nowhere in particular. For Bellamy, it has to be someplace in order to achieve now a realist sense of credibility. Why Boston? Why not New York? We know from Arthur Morgan, Bellamy's can-do imitator and first biographer, that Bellamy had himself first placed *Looking Backward* in Asheville, North Carolina, the extraordinary place where Cornelius Vanderbilt built his real utopia. The Biltmore House was just that – a house that looked like a chateau, with 250 rooms for Vanderbilt to stretch out in, a Gilded Age fantasyland utopia nestled in the Blue Ridge Mountains of West North Carolina. Biltmore was even more fantastic than Bellamy's personal utopia in *Looking Backward* (Morgan, 1940, p. 10; Beilharz, 2004). Morgan, for his own part, picked up on the Faustian component of Bellamy's utopian vision in becoming a major developmental force in the Tennessee Valley Association (see Talbert, 1987). Having settled on Boston, imaginably for propagandist reasons, Bellamy name-checks particular place references like a nostalgic rock-and-roll lyricist. The book opens in Shawmut College, Boston. It travels via the cemetery, in Mt. Auburn, and along the Sinuous Charles River, but it especially works the image of old and new to claim its contrast and to emphasize the novelty of the new city against the old Boston of the nineteenth century.

> At my feet lay a great city. Miles of broadstreets, shaded by trees and lined with fine buildings, for the most part not in continuous blocks but set in larger or smaller enclosures, stretched in every direction. Every quarter contained large open squares filled with trees; along which statues glistened and fountains flashed in the late afternoon sun. Public buildings of a colossal size and architectural grandeur unparalleled in my days raised their stately piles on every side. Surely I had never seen this city nor are comparable to it before . . . .
>
> (Bellamy, 1986, p. 55)

This is Olmsted's Boston, Boston Common and the State House, stretching to the emerald necklace of its new constructed waterways. All made, all manufactured, as utopia might indeed be.

Bellamy's new world was indeed marketed by him as nationalist, more than socialist; socialist looked too dangerous, too distant and European, though this nevertheless was the content of the plea. Yet its markers

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continue local – Charles Street intervenes, as the claim is made that nationalism is indeed global, for all the societies of the old World have also thus remodelled, from Europe to Australia, Mexico and parts of South America (Bellamy, 1986, p. 115). The new order is also global, for it has dispensed with national, state, country and municipal debts, military and naval expenditure, no criminal class and few police (Bellamy, 1986, p. 167).

Bellamy's fictive device of a throwback to the original condition of sin, in nineteenth-century Boston, name-checks its way again. As West walks between his home and Washington Street in anti-reverie, he is back in squalor and stench, sales and advertising. As he reaches Washington Street, the location of the famous Filene's, all he can see is the folly of the old consumerist decadence. Shops, within a stone's throw of one another, devoted incredibly to selling the same sorts of goods. 'Stores! Stores! Stores! Miles of stores! Ten thousand stores to distribute the goods needed by this one city, which in my dream had been supplied with all things from a single warehouse ... ' (Bellamy, 1986, p. 219).

Julian West drifts over South Boston, where he finds 4000 small manufacturing units, the same illogic made manifest in production as in distribution. It is the same story, finally, told of his own location, not in Boston but in nearby Chicopee, where the falls become the source of industrial production in his own time and of postindustrial ruins in our own. From here to the tenements of Back Bay, all Bellamy's narrator can detect is the pulse of an abscess taken for the beating of a heart (Bellamy, 1986, p. 223). From Tremont Street to South Cove, Bellamy's story is placed at the very same time as it indicates global reach.

The sense of reality and concreteness suggested by Bellamy's so explicitly located utopia became a familiar and central theme of modern utopian writing. But the explosion of formal literary utopias that had occurred alongside and frequently in response to Bellamy during the late nineteenth and early twentieth century began to subside after several decades. After the unparalleled disasters of the Great War, writers, social critics and political commentators became less inclined to imagine and argue for possible forms of the good society. The twin icons of modernity, America and Russia, drew increased attention and discussion, and previous enthusiasms for these as eutopias, realizations of the good society, turned to misgiving. Writing around the turn of the century and well into the next, H. G. Wells, ostensibly the ultimate embodiment of the spirit of his time, tossed fitfully between utopia and dystopia in his fictional writing. Ultimately he remained a passionate utopian in his politics and public commentary, if frequently one in despair. His work was profoundly influential on those to follow, and yet by the 1940s his

utopian idealism looked ridiculous, untenable. Zamyatin's *We*, with its mathematically flavoured 'Onestate', emerged from within Russia in the early 1920s, a response to both the new Soviet State and H. G. Wells. Its vision was one of social engineering as heaven turned hell, utopia as grotesque. On the tail of Zamyatin came the work of Aldous Huxley and later George Orwell and the paradigm shifted, but it was still clearly placed, indeed, increasingly so. Orwell's Oedipal and very public denunciation of Wells in 1941 was emblematic of the change in mood. Orwell was firm, baldly stating that Wells' optimistic attitude towards science and social progress even in the face of Nazism and the Second World War was out of step with the realities and sensibilities of the time:

> He was, and still is, quite incapable of understanding that nationalism, religious bigotry and feudal loyalty are far more powerful forces than what he himself would describe as sanity....
>
> Much of what Wells has imagined and worked for is physically there in Nazi Germany. The order, the planning, the State encouragement of science, the steel, the concrete, the aeroplanes, are all there, but all in the service of ideas appropriate to the Stone Age... [b]ut obviously it is impossible for Wells to accept this....
>
> The people who have shown the best understanding of Fascism are either those who have suffered under it or those who have a Fascist streak in themselves.... Wells is too sane to understand the modern world.
>
> (Orwell, 1968, pp. 143–145)

With the publication of *Brave New World* and *1984*, the chief concern about utopia was no longer how to foster its realization, but a fear that efforts to bring it about may succeed in bringing a nightmare instead. Central to these fears was the realization that the logics of such modern projects were expansive, potentially global. The visions differed on the precise shape and colour of the nightmare, but agreed on its reach. The narratives were still located in specific and deliberate ways, but their terror was amplified with the image of a global, total, social order. Globalized utopia was now looked on with horror.

Huxley's World State

Huxley's vision of utopia gone sour mixes Fordism, modern consumerism and hedonism with equal parts of genetic engineering and behavioural conditioning, to produce the Brave New World of A.F. 632

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(Huxley, 1973, p. 16). Overseen by ten regionally based World Controllers, the World State delivers 'Community, Identity, Stability'. Science has been brought to bear on the problem of maintaining social order, and developed more efficient methods than brute force. Social order is now a matter of managing '"the problem of happiness" – in other words, the problem of making people love their servitude' (Huxley, 1973, pp. 12–13). Citizens are tailored to meet society's exact requirements. The result is a stable and smoothly functioning world order. Operating on the basis of a genetic caste system that predestines social function, all the various needs of the social body are fulfilled, from the most basic and routine tasks of a semi-moronic Epsilon-minus through to the more complex intellectual work of the Alpha Plus caste. Created and grown in glass bottles on a Fordist production line, raised in communal nurseries, the World State's citizens are genetically, environmentally, behaviourally and hypnopaedically conditioned to love their productive function and social position. Science, Fordism and orgiastic Solidarity Services have superseded politics and religion. Everyone works for everyone else, and everyone belongs to everyone else. Maintained in an infantile state of instant and continuous gratification with endless consumption, sensory stimulation, sex and soma, a maximum of happiness for all is assured.

London is still a world centre, presided over by the Resident Controller for Western Europe. But the city's notable landmarks have a new Fordist gloss: Charing-T Tower, The Fordson Community Singery and its clock, Big Henry. Fleet Street is home to a single towering building accommodating the assorted Bureaux of Propaganda and the College of Emotional Engineering. Westminster Abbey is a cabaret. The central preoccupation with consumption and leisure is also built into the landscape. Seen from the air in private aircraft, London's surrounds are dominated by the complex apparatus of leisure sports:

> They were flying over the six kilometre zone of parkland that separated Central London from its first ring of satellite suburbs. The green was maggoty with foreshortened life. Forests of Centrifugal Bumble-puppy towers gleamed between the trees. Near Shepard's Bush two thousand Beta-Minus mixed doubles were playing Riemann-surface tennis. A double row of Escalator-Fives Courts lined the main road from Notting Hill to Willesden. In the Ealing stadium a Delta gymnastic display and community sing was in progress.... Ten minutes

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> later they were at Stoke Poges and had started their first round of Obstacle Golf.
>
> (Huxley, 1973, pp. 58–59)

The World is fully globally integrated, with vast distances rapidly traversed in rocket and helicopter technology. Travel offers access to a global array of leisure activities and is enthusiastically consumed. People may spend the afternoon watching sport in Amsterdam, the evening in London for dinner, the weekend in New York, or holiday at the North Pole. This anticipates brilliantly the yuppie tourist utopia of our own times; shit in the nest, and move on! Certain undesirable regions of the world serve as isolation zones for the rare troublesome individual. The prospect of removal to Iceland is often enough to produce more orthodox behaviour. Otherwise, those too intelligent or individualist to fit into the World State are relocated to distant islands where their intellectual pursuits are benevolently permitted to proceed once they pose no threat to the established social order.

The only area in the world untouched by 'civilization' is the Savage Reservation in New Mexico. Here 'primitivism' remains preserved for visitors to witness as an exotic and freakish throwback to humanity's distasteful past. The Savages live with domesticity, mothers, babies, family, love, marriage, dirt, dogs, gods, punishment, ostracism, loneliness, pain, sickness, hatred, violence and alcohol: all antithetical to the civilization of the World State. But this is not a romanticized primitivism. It is another extreme, not an alternative. There is no more space for a sane and fully realized humanity among the Savages than there is among the civilized society of the Brave New World. Huxley's imagined future order offers no real way out. It is global, total.

Huxley positions Fordism as the spiritual core of his dystopia, considering it the defining ideology of the twentieth century, and indicts America 'as the parent and most systematic practitioner of Fordism... [and] furthest along the road to damnation' (Kumar, 1987, p. 244). Certainly the consumerist, hedonistic ethic of Brave New World is Huxley's critique of America writ large. So why set his utopia-as-hell in London? Why not America? Precisely because, for Huxley, it was not America itself but what it had set in motion that was significant:

> America is not unique; she merely leads the way along the road which the people of every nation and continent are taking. Studying the good and evil features in American life, we are studying, in a generally more definite and highly developed form, the good and evil features

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> of the whole world's present and immediately coming civilization. Speculating on the American future, we are speculating on the future of civilized man.
>
> (Huxley in Kumar, 1987, pp. 246–247)

He rejected the argument that the disturbing aspects of American society were simply a result of its youth, bound to settle as it matured into simply another version of Europe (Adorno in Kumar, 1987, p. 246). For Huxley, the principles of Fordism and mass consumerism were a new and fundamentally modern development, principles bound to become a generalized and global phenomenon. Huxley's World State and his grotesque London of the year 632 AF is this future, fully realized.

In the introduction to later editions of *Brave New World*, Huxley revised the cynical opposition between the 'utopian and primitive horns' of the Savage's dilemma and emphasized the third option of exile. This community of intellectuals and artists could be the real utopia. Huxley later pursued this idea in one of his final books, *Island*. Both *Brave New World* and *Island* are ultimately part of the same impulse, although Huxley's ideas matured and his outlook shifted in the later work. He wanted to offer the future a genuine alternative to 'insanity on the one hand and lunacy on the other' (Huxley, 1973, p. 7). Imbued with a post-war sense of humanity as troubled and tainted, perfection was off the cards, but Huxley still felt a more utopian or 'sane' order remained possible, if elusive.

Huxley locates this vision on Pala, an island isolated from the polluting influences of the modern world's psychopathology and superficial consumerism. Its visionaries successfully combined the best of Eastern philosophy, Buddhism and mysticism with the best of Western rational science, medicine and psychology to produce a sane, balanced society of physically robust, psychologically healthy and spiritually satisfied people.

Pala is relatively isolated, a 'forbidden' island amidst other islands. Its precise location is elusive, lying somewhere undisclosed amidst the Indonesian archipelago. This is a tropical setting, but Huxley is clear that this is no tale of primitive innocence and natural luxury against an evil, rationalizing modernity. The Palanese are not simple islanders whose lives are good because of the happy accident of tropical abundance and comfort. Nor is this a utopia that has developed only in isolation from the modern world. In fact, the history which Huxley crafts for his utopia has its beginnings with the fortuitous intrusion of

a Western doctor, whose last desperate bid to cure the ailing Raja of Pala with hypnotism was unorthodox but successful. A deep friendship was established between the two and what emerged was a commitment to developing a mutual understanding with an eye to social reform. Pala became a consciously crafted effort at a better society through the fusion of Western and Eastern ideas. Not Pala's isolation, but its openness to the modern world produced its utopian character. The Palanese are modern to the extent that they are pragmatic, rational. Modern science and technology unquestionably improves their physical existence. But they lack an enthusiasm for modernity itself as a way of life, as a philosophy. For this, they look to various Eastern philosophies and practices which speak to a human spirit anchored in the material world, and produce a sense of everyday happiness and serenity against which the consumerist promises of the modern world look hollow and tacky.

The features of its physical locale echo its philosophy: East meets West for a better society. The layout of the central village encourages a relaxed pace of life, designed for walking only. Cars and other vehicles are used all over the island but not within the village. Highways and main roads lead out to various research stations, which are kept separate from the island's living spaces. As foreign import is limited to essentials, factories and some limited production is vital but also decentred, taking place well away from the village. Huxley enthuses about technology adapted to human purposes. Factory work and all forms of agricultural production are participated in by all, primarily for their health and well-being, rather than efficient production. Each person changes specialities frequently so that all Palanese receive a general education in, and appreciation of, the nature of others' work.

The role of money is not explained, but evidently modest consumption exists. A marketplace for artisan and producers occupies the central village 'square', as well as a temple and a theatre. This tropical paradise is not cultivated, not a 'garden' for humanity. Here nature and people coexist. Lizards wander in and out of houses; dogs and babies bond; a steady cacophony of bird and insect noises saturates the air; local mynahs are trained to call out to the human occupants to remind them of philosophical axioms of compassion and attention to the 'here and now'; trees are integrated with functionality of social spaces, like the massive banyan tree in the middle of the marketplace used for displaying wares. The Palanese have achieved an ideal balance between the advantages of modern life and the influences of the wider world, and the locally cultivated pleasures of a more relaxed and spiritually attuned way of life.

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But geographically and philosophically, Pala sits in unresolved tension with the rest of the world. It is shadowed by its closest neighbour's ambitions to annex its land and oil to a developing project of militarized industrialism. The book closes with a military coup on the island. Huxley here is acutely aware that under modernity the idea of the good society must face the expansionist logic and globalizing imperatives generated by a capitalist world system. It cannot exist in isolation. As with Bellamy, the ideal and the concrete will meet, although here the result is no longer a happy one by any means. Huxley's final word both in *Island* and in the 1946 Foreword to *Brave New World* is a warning that the outcome is perhaps predictable, but not determined: 'You pays your money and you takes your choice' (Huxley, 1973, p. 14).

Orwell's Oceania

Oceania, Ingsoc, War is Peace. Orwell's *1984* is a vision of restless global conflict. The world's three equally matched but indefatigable superstates – Oceania, Eurasia and Eastasia – are perpetually at war. Each is essentially a geopolitical bloc with ambitions for total global control. Oceania incorporates the Americas, the Atlantic islands including the British Isles, Australasia and Southern Africa. Eurasia includes all of the Northern European and the 'Asiatic land-mass', Portugal to Bering Strait. Eastasia consists of China and all lying south of it, the Japanese islands and large but varying parts of 'Manchuria, Mongolia and Tibet' (Orwell, 2000b, p. 193). The war fronts are distant rather than domestic. Battles are fought over disputed territories including equatorial Africa, the Middle East, southern India and the Indonesian archipelago. The natural resources and 'bottomless reserve' of exploitable labour there are considered the key to crushing the otherwise equivalent forces of their enemies (Orwell, 2000b, p. 195).

Each state's social system and ideology are more or less identical in essence if not name: Ingsoc, Neo-Bolshevism, Death Worship. Each is totalitarian, and the crucial function of the war is in fact the maintenance of social order. Continuous conflict legitimates the ruling party's tight control and ceaseless surveillance of its members. Bombs fall on the central cities just often enough to sustain a wartime mentality amongst its residents, underlined by meagre rations, supply shortages and frenzied ceremonies of hatred and patriotic fervour. Isolation reigns: except for the Party's official reports from the battlefronts there is no news of other parts of the world. Foreigners are rarely seen in person, and

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are known only as prisoners and enemy combatants. The Party has an undisturbed capacity to dictate reality as it sees fit.

Orwell's specific setting is a ruined London. The history written into its urban landscape has been deliberately and systematically emptied out. Now the principal city of Airstrip One (formerly Britain) of Oceania, the only vestiges of the old London are crumbling. All its place names have been dropped or altered: the ruling party's interests dictate an eternal present. Big Brother now stands on Nelson's Column in Trafalgar Square, now Victory Square. The church at St-Martins-in-the-Fields is now a museum for military propaganda. History and the past are excised from memory. Former religious and judicial buildings barely register as existent. Only their ruins and the most ridiculous of traces remain: half remembered, barely decipherable hints about old churches in a children's nursery rhyme. Instead, the landscape is dominated by the imposing, 300 metre tall, glittering, white, concrete pyramids of the Party's four spuriously named ministries: Truth, Love, Peace and Plenty. Surrounding these is a wasteland of grimy desolation; colourless, mired in dust, dirt and paper scraps. Ageing buildings moulder in disrepair and roil with the stench of boiled cabbage, all under the watch of omnipresent telescreens.

There is no real communication between parts of Oceania (Orwell, 2000b, p. 89). Citizen's lives are lived out in their immediate locale, with the city divided up along social lines. The residences of inner party members occupy their own quarter of town. These are relatively plush and luxurious, spacious, carpeted, clean, attended by servants, rich with the smell of good food, and equipped with telescreens which can be briefly turned off when desired. The neighbourhoods of outer party member's are comprised of grimy houses and apartment blocks in severe disrepair, presenting

> vistas of rotting nineteenth-century houses, their sides shored up with baulks of timber, their windows patched with cardboard and their roofs with corrugated iron, their crazy garden walls sagging in all directions . . . [and] sordid colonies of wooden dwellings like chicken-houses.
>
> (Orwell, 2000b, p. 5)

Blocked sinks, broken lifts, bad food, meagre rations and oily gin are typical daily irritations borne with carefully composed faces under the constant watch of droning telescreens and spying neighbours. The prole districts are even more filthy, but largely unmonitored. Apparently

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imbecilic, politically irrelevant animals, they have some measure of freedom from surveillance: police patrols roam the areas but telescreens are few. Venturing beyond one's own neighbourhood is risky. The police patrols arrest anyone deemed out of place.

Orwell's portrait conjures up images of nineteenth-century industrial urban squalor, or the devastation of the Second World War London. It is a deadened cityscape with few touches of humanity. The Community Centres in which party members spend their spare time are utilitarian and unfriendly spaces, stages for the anxious performance of political orthodoxy, breeding grounds for contempt and suspicion. A forced and empty sociality prevails, sociality as mutual surveillance.

The only hint of beauty is far beyond the city, out in the woods, which are somehow like Winston's imagined sublime 'Golden Country'. This is an image of beauty as nature, uncontrolled, uninstrumental, somehow linked to a sense of humanity now vanished. But it is vague and intangible. It is more a place in the past or in Winston's mind than an actual location. The real woods are still shadowed by the Party, monitored with microphones hidden amongst the greenery. Nature cannot mount a challenge to this modern totalitarianism (see Wilding, 1980, pp. 225–227).

Orwell's setting is crucial, if frequently misread. Conservative political critics famously took up *1984* as an eloquent and terrible indictment of Soviet Socialism and hence socialism generally, both ultimately comparable to Nazism. Orwell himself always remained a socialist and attempted to redress the misappropriation of his work, refusing the reductive equation of socialism with Stalinism. Orwell's involvement in the Spanish Civil War fighting with the revolutionary POUM militia saw him not only wounded but deeply disillusioned with Stalinist Socialism, having seen something of its totalitarianism and its ruthlessness towards its supposed 'comrades' in Spain (Williams, 1991, pp. 54–60). But he was frustrated and disappointed at the difficulty he had having this message heard amongst the progressive British intelligentsia, who preferred to continue as Stalinist fellow-travellers, or else felt 'as did many people on the Left, that everything should be sacrificed in order to preserve a common front against the rise of Fascism' (Davidson, 2000, p. xiv). After having the manuscript rejected by his regular publisher Victor Gollancz on this basis, Orwell finally published *Homage to Catalonia* in 1938. Reflecting on Koestler's *Darkness at Noon*, he lamented that England lacked

> what one might call concentration-camp literature. The special world created by secret police forces, censorship of opinion, torture, and

> frame-up trials is, of course, known about and to some extent disapproved of, but it has made very little emotional impact. One result of this is that there exists in England almost no literature of disillusionment about the Soviet Union.
>
> (Orwell in Wilding, 1980, p. 237)

Orwell's *1984* attempted that, and went further. Orwell was explicit: 'This is the age of the totalitarian state.... I think one must face the risk that this phenomenon is going to be world-wide' (Orwell in Kumar, 1987, p. 305). Also *1984* presents this image of totalitarianism as a global phenomenon, a general characteristic of modern life unconfined to any particular nationality or ideological outlook. The nightmare is of London, of English Socialism, of a repressive 'Western' political bloc, precisely because Orwell wanted to drive home the point that totalitarianism was a problem for all modern societies, not only the Soviets or Nazis. England was no exception. The wartime imagery in his portrait of London had a particularly acute sting of reality for those who had lived through the Second World War. The setting is once again a feasibility trick, now horrible rather than hopeful. The very locatedness of Orwell's nightmare vision was not prophecy but a warning of modernity's possibilities and universal implications for humanity.

Like *Looking Backward* and *Brave New World*, this is a vision of a world system. As with these too, its focus is narrowed to a specific place, and yet this is a place within a system. The logics of its social order are reliant on a global system which is all-encompassing. While Bellamy mentions some elements of interaction between the countries of the world, and for Huxley global integration is a matter of leisure and consumption and the swallowing up of space for alternatives, for Orwell the global system is more total and diabolical. The antagonistic interaction between the world's three superpowers is in fact the fundamental basis of social order. The superstates are mutually constitutive, with elements of the Other and the Outside an integral element in the legitimation of totalitarian control and the maintenance of social order. Global means not only total, but totalitarian.

Conclusions

What stands out from these considerations is a sense that the wider world, the 'global', has always been a problem as well as a presence for utopia. There is significant tension between the themes of place and global connection in utopian writing. Even as the global context becomes more central, it becomes more problematic. For More, the

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wider world had to be excluded for utopia to exist. Its non-placed-ness in the world and its insularity were its preconditions. For Bellamy, the world had to be included, even if not embraced. It was the particular sense of place, the locatedness of his utopia that fired his imagination most, and made it seem closer, more tangible, concrete. But his utopia had a rational, compelling logic, which would naturally expand and spread: no sane, thinking person or government could fail to grasp its goodness and seek to institute it themselves. Bellamy's Boston was not only a specific utopia, but also stood as a beacon whose influence could not fail to be global.

For Huxley, it was impossible to think of the future without modernity, modernity as hyper-rationalized, ambitious, global and totalizing. Only in pockets might something different or contradictory exist, and in this prospect he did see some hope for the notion of a good society. Huxley then takes us back to More: the wider world, the modernizing world, must be (selectively) kept out for utopia to function, although he also knew that this was no longer More's world. At some critical point, confrontation between the two was inevitable, and potentially tragic for the good society.

For his part, Orwell feared the implications of a totalitarian social order that could become global, even as it deliberately chained people to their locale. The global connections in *1984* lead back to internal social control, rather than out to a genuinely connected world. Orwell's integrated world system sits quite easily alongside the most painfully located, limited existence, alongside mutual ignorance and strictly regional horizons. Global interdependence facilitates a totalitarian social order which does nothing but fix people more firmly where they are, tainting all places. It was this notion of global connection as potentially dystopic, of globalization as a problem, which resonated through the later part of the twentieth century. Published in 1962, the cautious post-war hopefulness of Huxley's *Island* bombed. The earlier visions of Huxley and Orwell remained the touchstone. No one was listening to utopia anymore, despite its centrality to the modern imaginary. Nonetheless, the sense of globalization as a key dynamic of the modern world had been part of the modern utopian genre from its inception, just as its imaginings became more placed, realistic and solid. Visions of utopia and dystopia, the latter more insistently, were grappling with the implications and tensions of globalization long before discussion of it as an identifiable and significant phenomenon became common.

Utopia was transformed by the twentieth century by what Zygmunt Bauman called the century of camps (Beilharz, 2001). Like the figure of

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utopia, those camps became both exceptional and exemplary, symbolic and concrete (Alexander, 2006a). They become universal stories about all of us, as well as particular stories about victims, bystanders and perpetrators. The classic texts of utopia were not, then, merely bedding their dreams or fears in by name-checking them to particular places, locales, institutions or buildings. Within the limits of their own cultural frames of reference, these writers were establishing their critical horizons through the capacity to evoke place, time, smell, taste and to call up similarity as well as difference, the known as well as the unknown. They gestured towards points and places of comfort to evoke discomfort. As the cultural horizons of the audience shift, and become more concrete themselves, so do the writing strategies adopted by our authors come more closely to ground. It may well be, for all this, that utopia thus is submerged into the present, into the dirt and dust of Boston and London, Auckland and Sydney. 'Utopia', like eternity, becomes a word chalked onto the pavement, washed away and yet recurrent, perennial, always there and yet elusive, as utopia ought properly be. Its place may be contingent, but it is nevertheless placed, even as we walk right over it, living it out.

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