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ALAPSZAKOS SZAKDOLGOZAT

Márton Dorottya

Anglisztika alapszak

Amerikanisztika szakirány

2017

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ALAPSZAKOS SZAKDOLGOZAT

*A 19. Század utópiájának keresése: Bellamy és Morris
összehasonlító elemzése*

*In Search of a 19th Century Utopia: Comparing Bellamy and
Morris*

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Introduction

Utopian movements and organizations, utopian political and “social theory”, as well as literary utopias saw an unprecedented upsurge within Western culture during the 19th century (Sargent 1-32). The distinction between utopian wishful thinking and reality became blurred, as novels of utopian fiction often served as the basis for political parties, social reform, and international political debates. Two utopian novels of the era are Edward Bellamy’s *Looking Backward* (1888), and a rival literary reaction to it, *News from Nowhere* (1890) by William Morris. Both widely read, distributed, and reflected on within their contemporary era, the novels represent late 19th century preoccupations brought on by the changes of industrial capitalism.

The current discussion aims to conduct a comparative analysis of both novels. Firstly, by examining the structural and thematic preoccupations common to both, as well as to the genre of late 19th century literary utopias. Secondly, the simultaneous ideological opposition of both works will be demonstrated by examining their stance on the evolution and progress of industrial capitalism, and its elements of production, consumption and incentive. The theme of ideological opposition will further be examined in relation to characterization and vantage point, the representation of technological advancement and work, and gender relations, these aspects forming part of a larger debate on what future forms 19th century industrial societies should take.

1. Etymology and Definition

In order to evaluate 19th century utopianism and two of its key representatives in detail, the notion of utopia must be contextualized by discussing its etymology, definition, and brief historical background.

The idea of utopia can be argued to have deep cultural roots within Western thought, from the idea of paradise in the Judeo-Christian tradition, to the ideal city-state set forth by Plato, enticing the utopian imagination of further Greek philosophers, such as Aristoteles, the Stoics, Cynics and the Epicureans (Manuel and Manuel 64). However, the actual appearance of utopia as a neologism can be set at a much later date. Published in 1516, Thomas More coined the term, incorporating the Latin negative prefix *u*, and the Greek *topos* meaning location, creating the title and subject matter of his book: *Utopia*, or “non-place” (Vieira 4). To further complicate the inevitable tension arising from the word, More created the neologism, *eutopia* in a later prefatory poem to his work, *eu* denoting the Greek notion of “a broad spectrum of positive attributes from good to ideal, prosperous, and perfect” (Manuel and Manuel 1). Thus, More simultaneously created the concept of “the place where things are well” (Davis 28), which inherently referred within its name to its own non-existence.

Successive 16th century reproductions followed More’s *Utopia*, the Gutenberg invented printing press adding to the dissemination of utopian literature within Western Europe (Manuel and Manuel 1). However, by the mid-17th century a shift could be seen in the restriction of utopia to exclusively fictional realms. Utopias often became ground for the elaboration on plans to change contemporary society, in essence becoming “political and social theory” (Manuel and Manuel 3), and by definition *eutopia*. Furthermore, due to the 18th century Enlightenment ideas of human advancement, political and historical progressivism, and the belief in the potentials of science,

utopia further became politicized (Vieira 9-10). Utopian thought experiments increasingly became tools for the criticism of contemporary social and political structures both within fictional and non-fictional realms (Vieira 9). The manifestations of utopian thought distinguished by Sargent; utopian political and “social theory”, utopian communities, (such as “communes” and “experimental communities”), and “utopian literature” can all be seen as becoming increasingly relevant with the progression of the 19th century (Sargent 1-32). Thus, the possibilities of human agency to change the future can be seen as becoming a very real preoccupation within the realms of artists, political theorists, as well as self-proclaimed social reformers.

Making no distinction between the terms utopia and *eutopia*, the current discussion will apply Sargent’s definition of “eutopia”, or “positive utopia” in relation to the novels of *Looking Backward* and *News from Nowhere*, categorizing these novels under the generic term of utopia, defining it as; “a non-existent society described in considerable detail and normally located in time and space that the author intended a contemporaneous reader to view as considerably better than the society in which that reader lives” (Sargent 9).

2. Industry and Utopia

As Roemer speculates, the 19th century can possibly be coined as “*the Golden Age of utopianism*” (79). Grounds for this term can be seen the fact that “the nineteenth [century] quintupled” the number of utopian texts produced in the 17th and 18th centuries (Manuel and Manuel 6). The reason behind the upsurge of the genre can partly be attributed to the changes brought on by the industrial revolution within Western Europe, and the resulting shift from agricultural to industrial capitalist economies. The shift from agricultural to industrial modes of production brought with it accelerated changes in the relation to the possibilities of social evolution

and progress, technology, work, as well as gender relations, spurring utopian speculation on what future shape and form the newly evolving societies of industrial capitalism should take.

In terms of political and historical progressivism, the industrial revolution can be understood as having contrasting effects (Roemer 82). On the one hand, industrial capitalism held within itself basic utopian potentials, as “Finally [...] the basic goals of traditional utopias could be met: science, technology, mass production and improved distribution systems ensured that all humanity could be fed, clothed and sheltered” (Roemer 82). As Michael Winstanley similarly discusses in *Agriculture and Rural Society*, the 19th century constituted a “critical period of structural change”, in terms of “regional specialization, commercialization and productivity gains in agriculture which enabled a much larger urban population to be fed” (209). Ownership was increasingly concentrated in the hands of large “manufacturing firms”, effectively coordinating mass production and distribution (Sicilia 139). A newly emerging “urban”, society could be seen replacing “localistic, rural, agricultural” societies (Sicilia 139), while increased production enabled the wide distribution of consumer products (Winstanley 211). By the second half of the century, “all the major cities saw the creation [of] zones of pleasure to go alongside the institutions of civility [...] comprising variously gentlemen’s clubs, music halls and shopping arcades.” (Gunn 245) Furthermore, the status of women became an increasingly evolving question, as larger numbers of women joined the industrial workforce. Representative of this trend is the 1891 census of the industrial cities of Blackburn and Burnley, reporting “95 percent and 96 percent of women aged 15-19” as “occupied” (Jordan 274). Thus, questions of women’s duties and political rights increasingly lead to the creation of female advocacy groups, as women suffragettes “laid claim to recognition within urban society by occupying the main streets and civic places in marches and processions”, fighting both for equal political suffrage and social status (Gunn 246). Suffrage

movements could be seen as having achieved women's suffrage a few decades later, in 1918 and 1920 within Britain and the United States respectively.

In contrast to the progressive elements of the industrial revolution, the newly forming system of industrial capitalism simultaneously caused a great divide in the distribution of income, inevitably creating its systematic winners and losers. Increasing urban poverty could be seen within the growing industrial landscape. Contemporary fiction as well as non-fictional literature vividly depicted "the suffering especially of the urban poor", from "Charles Dickens's early nineteenth-century novels to Karl Marx and Friedrich Engels's *The Manifesto of the Communist Party* (1848) to Henry George's *Progress and Poverty* (1879)" (Roemer 82). Moreover, the aforementioned technological changes permanently altered attitudes to machinery, work and ownership. Given that ownership was increasingly concentrated in the hands of large monopolies and trusts, the industrial worker became dependent on wage-labor, while the "displacement of [human] labor" by machinery might have seemed an imminent threat, spurring protests against machinery, such as the Luddite movement in Britain (Ashworth 230). These negative sentiments could be seen as having "undermined belief in the inevitability of progress", and consequently utopian thinking itself. However, instead of coming to a halt, utopian thought further flourished in relation to the negative effects of the industrial revolution, as the question became "What is and what could/should be done", utopia increasingly placing its aims in the feasible future, as a tool to alleviate present discrepancies (Roemer 82).

The prevalence of utopian thought can be seen as having been fully realized with the ideas and social experiments of 19th century utopist socialists, such as Saint-Simon, Fourier and Owen, the latter going as far as setting up an experimental commune in Scotland, as well as the United States (Vieira 12). Utopian social and political theory simultaneously flourished, in terms of

“diverse” socialist “reform” movements, defined by Lloyd Cox in *The Blackwell Encyclopedia of Sociology* as: “doctrines and practices sharing a pattern of family resemblances centered on collective property, social equality, cooperation, and communal forms of economic and political association”, aiming to “transform” the contemporary scene of urban poverty (4557). Similarly, this is the era when Marx and Engels began developing their ideas. Although Marx and Engels denounced the term utopian, as Vieira points out, their program was utopian, in as much as it gave promise of an allegedly feasible future, where all sources of human suffering was to be alleviated, letting man return to a supposed natural state of freedom and equality (13). The notion of the “inevitability of progress” (Roemer 82) was represented in Marxism by the theory of “historical materialism”, the idea of human incentive encapsulated in the theory of “dialectical materialism”, and a supposedly feasible utopia reached through the stages of the “dictatorship of the proletariat” and finally, a classless society (Vieira 13). With Marxism, utopia irrecoverably left the realms of fantasy, as Marxist influenced 19th century socialism legitimized utopian thinking in its claims of relying on scientific fact, thus making utopia a seemingly achievable goal (Vieira 13).

3. The Great Utopian Debate

The above detailed utopian preoccupations were transferred into fiction by the second half of the 19th century, giving birth to immensely popular, widely distributed, and politically influential novels, such as the American *Looking Backward*, and a British literary reaction to it, *News From Nowhere*.

First published in the United States in 1888, *Looking Backward* quickly became an American bestseller, its sales only challenged within the American market by Harriet Beecher Stowe’s *Uncle Tom’s Cabin* (1852) and Lew Wallace’s *Ben Hur* (1880) within the same century (Roemer 93). A year after its American publication, “seventeen printings had appeared” within the

British market, while translated into various languages, appearing “throughout Europe [...] Russia, Australia, New Zealand, and even Japan” (Guarneri 147). Demonstrating the political influence of contemporary literary utopias, *Looking Backward* further inspired social and political movements. According to Roemer, “at least 165 Nationalist or Bellamy Clubs appeared in America”, fostering the birth of the Nationalist Party, while “translations of *Looking Backward* inspired reform movements around the world” (93).

Bellamy proposed a utopian society, where centralized socialism displaced industrial capitalism and its ills. In *Looking Backward*, the core of society is an industrial army, all aspects of everyday life is regulated by it, while state granted universal income is guaranteed to all its citizens. Work is thought of as a necessary must, from which one can retire at the young age of 45 to pursue personal passions and interests. This, only if one complies with the strictly set social norms of society. Otherwise one would face social ostracism, and even solitary confinement. Waking up after a century of sleep in future Boston, the novel’s hero, Julian West is introduced to this society, along with the reader, through his interactions with the character of Dr. Leete and his family. Falling in love with Dr. Leete’s daughter, Julian eventually finds his place within Bellamy’s utopia, realizing the contrasting ills of 19th century Boston, which he permanently leaves behind.

The immense popularity of the novel triggered international literary reactions, often in the form of novels, the most well-known being a critical reaction, Morris’s *News from Nowhere*. As Roemer discusses, “cultural leaders” advocated that the best works of fiction revolutionized the reader’s “lives for the better” (Roemer 95). Consequently, “literary utopias could claim to offer the ultimate transformative reading experience” (Roemer 95). Perhaps recognizing the transformative potential of *Looking Backward*, William Morris harshly criticized the novel within a year of its publication: “I suppose you have seen or read, or at least tried to read, *Looking Backward*. I *had* to

on Saturday, having promised to lecture on it. Thank you, I wouldn't care to live in such cockney paradise as he imagines" (qtd. in MacDonald 77). A socialist, and an active member of the Social Democratic Federation, Morris believed that *Looking Backward* created an overly centralized society, redundantly materialistic and "mechanistic" with a total lack of creativity (MacDonald 78). Moreover, Morris feared that the heightened influence of *Looking Backward* would turn people away from actual socialist theory, as its "middle-class preferences expose[d] its author as interested only in half change" (Guarneri 163), the book a "a corruption of the aims of socialism" (Roemer 95). Thus, Morris started writing *News from Nowhere* as a counter utopia to *Looking Backward*. Morris's work was initially published in installments in *The Commonwealth*, from "January to October of 1890", and published as a book in 1891 (MacDonald 78).

In his novel, Morris proposed a brand of rural anarchism, employing pastoral literary conventions. In his utopian society, work is thought of as an activity done purely for the principle of pleasure, the concept of income unknown to its inhabitants, the embodiments of the pastoral ideal. Similarly to Julian, the protagonist of the novel, William Guest finds himself in future London about a century later. An active member of the socialist league within his own, 19th century society, Guest is introduced to the rural anarchist utopia by old Hammond, and his relative Dick, and Clara, who take him on travel episodes that demonstrate a pastoral, rural England. Guest similarly comes to appreciate the utopian society of England. However, unlike Julian West, Guest has to wake up to find himself back in 19th century England, realizing that the entirety of his adventures was a "vision" (Morris 114).

4. A Structural Approach

Although the two novels are in radical ideological opposition, it must be noted that both function within the same genre. While Manuel and Manuel classify both under the exclusive term “Utopia Victoriana” (Manuel and Manuel 760), understanding these novels solely in terms of their similarities might seem like an oversimplification. Nevertheless, it is important to note their common attributes in order to shed light on the fact that both works can be seen as part of a common discourse, treated for the purpose of the current discussion under the term: *late 19th century utopian fiction*, given that they employ the same structural patterns, and themes in expressing their opposition.

In terms of structure, both *Looking Backward* and *News from Nowhere* can be brought to a common denominator, based on Northrop Frye’s distinction in *The Varieties of Literary Utopias*. According to Frye, literary utopias can be seen as having a “first-person narrator” who is initially introduced to utopia by a guide, after which a “Socratic dialogue” ensues between them. Within these dialogues, the “narrator asks questions about the structure of utopia, or thinks of objections and the guide answers them [...] as a rule the guide is completely identified with his society and seldom admits to any discrepancy between the reality and the appearance of what he is describing” (Frye 25). These elements are common both to *Looking Backward*, and *News from Nowhere*, given the first person narration of both Julian West and William Guest, while the role of utopian guides and educators can be seen in the paternalistic characters of Dr. Leete and old Hammond, respectively. Furthermore, as Roemer discusses in relation to 19th century literary utopian narratives, most can be seen as “lightened by touches of romance and travel-adventure episodes” (Roemer 80). This element can clearly be seen manifested in both novels. Bellamy draws on romantic episodes between Julian and Edith, while Morris on travel adventure episodes, as Guest

is taken on travel adventures by Dick and Clara. The contemporary literary conventions of romance and travel adventure can be seen as catering to the entertainment of an increasingly literate audience, reading becoming a relevant mode of leisure, with “shorter working days providing more leisure time”, and a wider range of social classes accompanying the “ranks of the new reading public”. Furthermore, the “the mass production of cheap popular fiction” made these novels a readily available consumer product (Lyons 314).

The two works can further be brought to common terms when looking at their broad thematic preoccupations. As Frye’s taxonomy further elaborates, the utopian writer can be seen as taking “for his purposes, significant elements” from his own society, and “show[ing] what society would be like if those elements were fully developed” (Frye 26). These elements are described “ritually”, a ritual being “a significant social act” (Frye 26). The utopia author in turn, is concerned only with the typical actions which are significant of those social elements he is stressing” (Frye 26). Applying this taxonomy to both works, the two novels can be seen as taking elements from contemporary socialist and utopian social and political theory and describing them in a ritualistic manner.

In terms of representing significant elements of their own society, both novels can be understood as concerning themselves with contemporary utopian social and political theory. Firstly, both novels represent “Marx’s labor theory of value in a vulgarized form” (Manuel and Manuel 761). Neither works explicitly cite Marx, however, at the very essence of both societies, the underlying notion holds that “each man [has] a right to the full fruits of his labor”, the differences surfacing in relation to the question of how to measure this value (Manuel and Manuel 761). In *Looking Backward*, work is rewarded in terms of a credits system, which grants universal income to all its citizens participating within the industrial army. In *News from Nowhere*, work is

done purely for the principle of pleasure, as well as for the sake of creating beauty. Secondly, both works can be seen as taking elements from contemporary socialist notions. In both utopias, “monopoly capital” is recognized as the “the prime evil” (Manuel and Manuel 761). The system of industrial capitalism is superseded by a revolution, which takes “less than a generation to be affected” (Manuel and Manuel 761). Both novels omit the phase of the dictatorship of the proletariat from their narrative, and both result in some form of socialism after the revolution: Bellamy proposing state socialism, while Morris taking an anarchist path. In terms of Bellamy, the revolution is completely bloodless, perhaps alluding to the seeming unpopularity of socialism within the United States, and consequentially, the writer’s aim to present socialist notions in a less threatening light. Demonstrating the contemporary unpopularity of socialist notions, Bellamy himself wrote that socialism “smells to the average American of petroleum, suggests the red flag, with all manner of sexual novelties, and an abusive tone about God and religion” (qtd. in Guarneri 167).

Socratic, ideological discussions on the above elements of socialist and utopian social and political theory are followed or preceded by their practical manifestations, or ritual descriptions, always on the level of the love interest or travel adventure story. In terms of Bellamy, labor theory is represented by the successful functioning of the universal credits system, demonstrated within the scope of Julian and Edith’s excursions. Accompanied by Julian, Edith can be seen happily purchasing consumer products, the shop assistant “punch[ing] the value of her purchase out of [her] credit card” (Bellamy 74). The efficiency of centralized state socialism is further detailed within these excursions, as the couple reflect on the perfected system of state production and distribution, and the freedom of consumption. As Edith remarks to Julian: “everybody can find something to suit” their taste, and spend his or her universal income on, whether that be “horses, pretty clothes”,

or an “elaborate table” (Bellamy 77). Examples of ritual descriptions can be found in *News from Nowhere*, where Dick and Clara introduces William to various inhabitants of a society who can be seen doing “pleasant work” (Morris 21), the value of their labor manifested in the pleasure of work itself, or the satisfaction of producing beauty. In terms of anarchist socialism, Dick further introduces William to the barter based markets of future London, where an agricultural anarchist society can be seen as a wholly functioning economic model, later explained in ideological terms by old Hammond.

The above detailed structural and thematic similarities reflect that both novels can be brought to a common denominator. This can be seen in terms of narration, the application of Socratic dialogue, mixed with the increasingly popular literary conventions of romance and travel adventure literature. Thematic ideological discussions such as Marxist philosophy, and socialism are further represented ritually within the sphere of travel and romance episodes. Thus, one can easily categorize both novels under the genre of late 19th century literary utopias. The genre can be seen further represented cross linguistically, in other industrial societies of the era, such as German Theodor Hertzka's *Freiland* (1890) (Manuel and Manuel 760), next to the countless literary reactions, imitations and sequels that the works of Bellamy and Morris themselves inspired.

5. The Evolution and Progress of Industrial Capitalism

While functioning within the same genre, both novels use their structural similarities to express radically different ideologies in relation to the evolution and progress of industrial capitalism, and its elements of production, consumption and incentive. Bellamy poses a progressive outlook in relation to these elements, while Morris can be seen as doing the opposite. These differences shed light on how differently the two authors saw the potentials of the organization of

their contemporary society, as well as represent contemporary debate on the acceptance of the system of industrial capitalism.

An essential element in the creation of Bellamy's future Boston is the wholly peaceful transition from industrial capitalism, to a centralized socialist system. As Dr. Leete explains to Julian West; the causes of social unrest and inequality in late 19th century America were realized to be great independent corporations, their destructive effects seen in their unregulated competition. Simultaneously, the productive efficiency of these monopolies were universally "recognized", thus the final process of merging syndicates into one great corporation was a "logical evolution to open a golden future to humanity" (Bellamy 40). A single, "Great Trust" was created, governing every aspect of production and distribution, in the form of an "industrial army", further "administered by ten national departments" (Bellamy 40). This peaceful transition points to the acceptance of the 19th century order of industrial capitalism, implying that some of its essential features have progressive values, and with rational thought, could be perfected to form the basis of a functional utopian society. The efficiency of the organized mass production of monopolies is clearly seen as a positive, progressive element, and is further evolved, given that monopolistic governance is at the heart of Boston's industrial army.

Consumerism, and essential feature of the system of industrial capitalism is similarly transplanted into the future society of Boston, in a perfected form: a credit card is issued to every citizen, each member of the industrial army getting their "share of the annual product of the nation", which they can freely use "at the public storehouses" (Bellamy 62). These storehouses in turn provide goods and products based on public demand which is estimated by the state. Predicting levels of consumption and the need for products is perfected, given that as statistics on consumption are wholly centralized. As Dr. Leete explains to Julian: "Now that every pin which is given out

from a national warehouse is recorded, of course the figures of consumption for any week, month, or year [...] are precise” (Bellamy 135). The element of incentive arising from monetary competition within a capitalist system is transplanted into a system where one has to work less, given dangerous or unpleasant jobs, while social status arising from higher income is replaced by the awards system; where any worker is rewarded for exceptional work within his or her field, gaining him or her distinction. Demonstrating the importance of social distinction, Dr. Leete can be seen as elaborating on the fact that some women of utopian Boston prefer men “who have risen above their fellows by the solidity or brilliance of their services to humanity”, as seen through their accomplishments in the industrial army, and their consequential recognition within the rewards system (Bellamy 191). He further elaborates on the importance of social distinction in relation to his wife, implying that her attraction to him was initiated by his own success within the army; “[...] she would never have had me if I had not assured her that I was bound to get the red ribbon or at least the blue” (Bellamy 118).

As Carl J. Guarneri evaluates in *An American Utopia and Its Global Audiences*: “Bellamy’s consumerist vision made his utopia less an alternative to capitalist practice than an alternative version of it” (165). Rather than being abandoned, elements of 19th century industrial capitalism are transplanted into Bellamy’s utopian society, with the negation of adverse side effects, such as inequality. This is done through the fusion of basic socialist notions, such as universal income, and planned production.

In contrast to the peaceful transition from industrial capitalism to centralized socialism in *Looking Backward*, Morris’s future society comes about through social unrest and violence. The description of the revolution is detailed in a prolonged chapter on “How the change came” (Morris 59). Antagonism between the owners of great trusts and workers is prolonged and bloody, leading

to the death of multiple actors. The revolution initially results in the eradication of great trusts, leading to state socialism, which further evolves into a decentralized, rural anarchy. The emphasis on a bloody revolution indicates the essential renunciation of the system of industrial capitalism, and its elements. The final, wholly decentralized anarchist system functions based on “Units of management called communes, wards, or parishes [which] operate by majority rule; but the minority are excused from participating in an action of which they disapprove” (Manuel and Manuel 781), in complete opposition to the centralized “Great Trust” analogy of Bellamy (Bellamy 41). Consumerism is eradicated, as production is based on localized guilds and artisan work, while the monetary system is completely abolished, as trade is based on barter and the mutual provision of services. The notion of incentive is entirely taken out of the context of capitalism, and work is rethought as an act that is done purely for the principle of pleasure. Artisan work is seen as an act creating beauty, as “a yearning for beauty was naturally awakened in men's minds once they had stopped producing for production's sake and had the opportunity to make each thing an excellent specimen of its kind” (Manuel and Manuel 770). A clear yearning for the past can be seen within Morris's utopian world in the denunciation of the elements of industrial capitalism, and the idealization of pre-industrial modes of living and production. As Roemer evaluates, “Progress, the ideological god of the industrial revolution, is dethroned” in Morris's utopia (92), as elements of industrial capitalism inevitably lead to devolution, after which a bloody revolution was needed to purge society of its elements, none of them holding progressive potentials, thus having no place in utopia.

The above discussed theme of ideological opposition can be seen on deeper levels within the novels. The respective acceptance or rejection of the elements of industrial capitalism are reflected throughout the two novels mode of characterization and vantage point. While Bellamy

introduces a character functioning within the elements of industrial capitalism, Morris's mode of characterization, as well as use of vantage point reflect the theme of system critical reflection.

Characterization and Vantage Point

Characterization and vantage point further reflect the two novelist's relation to industrial capitalism, given the characters integration or systematic opposition to it. Bellamy's Julian West can be seen as successfully functioning within the elements of industrial capitalism both in the 19th century, and utopian Boston. In contrast, William Guest is wholly outside of the system of industrial capitalism within both temporal spheres. In terms of Bellamy, narrative vantage point is restricted to the immediate sphere of the ideological guide of Dr. Leete and his family, further serving the ritual demonstration of the ideology of Bellamy's utopia. The vantage point of *News from Nowhere* can be seen as more versatile.

The hero of *Looking Backward*, Julian West is introduced as a beneficiary of the capitalist system prior to his utopian adventure. Julian being an upper class property owner, workers movements and strikes seem to be merely a nuisance to him. While reformed by his utopian visit in the sense that he comes to see the ills of 19th century industrial capitalism, he nevertheless remains firmly embedded within that system. Through Julian's utopian encounter, the only other characters he comes into contact with are Dr. Leete and his family, excluding brief encounters with a shop assistant, and restaurant staff, scenes eerily similar to that of Bellamy's own 19th century society. Dr. Leete and his family are not distinguished by accumulated wealth, given the scheme of universally granted income, however, Dr. Leete can be seen paralleling Julian's former 19th century status. Dr. Leete's social status arises from the fact that he is seemingly highly ranked within the utopian awards system, as he is a respected scientist. Furthermore, Dr. Leete is the main mouthpiece within the novel, in educating Julian about the social and political functioning of

utopian Boston, while Edith introduces him to its ritual practicalities. Thus, it is only the guide, Dr. Leete and his daughter that Julian has relevant interactions with. However, both are wholly indoctrinated into the system utopian Boston's centralized socialism and its capitalist elements.

By the end of the novel, Julian West remains within Boston's utopian society, and becomes integrated into it, becoming an active, established member of the industrial army, signaling the acceptance of the (perfected) elements of industrial capitalism. Similarly to Dr. Leete, Julian finds his use in utopian Boston performing intellectual tasks, as a "the master of all [...] historians on questions relating to the social condition of the latter part of the nineteenth century" (Bellamy 127), while becoming a couple with Edith by the end of the story.

In contrast to Julian, Morris's character of William Guest has entirely different origins within 19th century England. William is a socialist, returning home in a stuffy underground railway from a Socialist League meeting before his temporal transition. Fantasizing about a revolution and working for social change, he is already against the system of contemporary industrial capitalism. Upon entering utopia, as opposed to Julian, William encounters multiple characters through his travel adventures. Most can be seen as similarly indoctrinated within their respective utopian social systems, representing anti-capitalist modes of living. However, the theme of system critical reflection is represented on a deeper, more complex level within *News from Nowhere*. An opposing voice is heard in the character of an old "grumbler", representing an older generation of utopian inhabitants, still affected by industrial capitalism within their lifetimes (Morris 82). The old man can be seen as a caricature, in his excessively negative grumblings and evident narrowmindedness, while other characters, including his immediate family ridicule him. However, conversation does ensue between William and the old man, where the old man freely poses system critical comments, leading to the implication that critical reflection is a value within itself within Morris's utopia.

Concerning narrative vantage point, as Roemer discusses, “Julian’s visual confirmation of the new world is limited to the Leete’s home, where he listens to long explanations on utopian Boston offered by Dr. Leete, and to the Reverend Barton’s electronically transmitted sermon. Hence, Julian’s experience of the ‘outside’ utopian world is almost exclusively a verbal-construct experience.” (Roemer 92). Complementing these scenes is a brief visit to a warehouse and a purchasing center where Julian accompanies Edith shopping, a street walk, and a visit to a dining hall. These short scenes serve for the exclusive purpose of ritually demonstrating the progressive elements industrial capitalism. In terms of vantage point, *News from Nowhere* can be seen as more versatile and inclusive. The elements of travel adventure episodes enable the narrator to gain multiple perspectives on utopia, outside the immediate sphere of the ideological guidance of old Hammond. Thus, Morris’s use of vantage point further represents the novel’s theme of system critical reflection.

While characterization and vantage point delineate the ideological differences of both novels, the themes of technological advancement, work, as well as gender relations are similarly important in understanding the novels. These themes can be seen as becoming increasingly important in light of the accelerated changes brought on by the process of industrialization, and the shift from rural, agricultural to industrial urban modes of living.

6. Technological Advancement and Relationships to Work

As Ashworth discusses in *Industry and Transport*, “the machinery question” was “a dominant theme for the whole of the nineteenth century” (Ashworth 299-230). The increased mechanization of work processes reshaped ideas about “the ownership of skills and control over work”, while technological advancements increasingly became a part of everyday life (Ashworth 299-230). Fitting in with the novel’s progressive stance on the elements of industrial capitalism,

Bellamy can be seen as further developing the theme of technological advancement, as technology becomes an essential part of utopian Boston, both in terms of work and everyday consumption. In contrast, Morris proposes the devaluation of contemporary technological advancement, returning to a pre-industrial aesthetic, while completely rethinking human relationships to work and production.

Advanced machinery and technology constitute an integral part of Bellamy's utopian Boston. Progressive production systems and the resulting abundance of technologically advanced consumer products serve the increasing comforts of everyday life, the enjoyments of product use and consumption at the very basis of utopian Boston's society. Julian West can be seen admiringly reflecting on the invention of the street level corridors, which shelter the inhabitants of utopia from adverse weather conditions on their way shopping or to the public dining hall. Furthermore, Julian reflects on various other consumer products, such as the radio, or Edith's credit card. Within Bellamy's utopia, the notion of work can further be understood as an act necessary to keep up the industrial capitalist element of consumerism, given that individual work is a must serving the production of consumer goods. Consumer products are provided and made readily available for everyone, via further technological advancements, such as elaborate distribution systems, which are detailed upon Julian's visit to a public warehouse. The idea of work as an unpleasant necessity is starkly represented in the dialogue between Dr. Leete and Julian, where the narrator inquires about the case of someone not complying with his work duties within the industrial army. Dr. Leete's answer is brief and ominous: "A man able to do duty, and persistently refusing, is sentenced to solitary imprisonment on bread and water till he consents" (Bellamy 90). As Manuel and Manuel evaluate in relation to this dialogue: Bellamy "does not share confidence in human nature", even

representing vague “Calvinist [...] undertones”, implying the inherent depravity of man, as “cruel sanctions” are needed to incentivize the upkeep of Bellamy’s industrial army (774).

As Roemer discusses, Morris believed that Bellamy “emphasized a middle-class mentality that wasted human energy on unnecessary and unattractive material objects” (82). Denouncing the elements of industrial capitalism, Morris proposes an entirely different relation to technology in his future utopian society. While not denouncing technology entirely, Morris’s utopia marginalizes the importance of it. As old Hammond evaluates in Socratic dialogue with William Guest, future Londoners discarded factory machinery that only increased unnecessary work, which produced goods that people did not want or need:

What's that you are saying? the labour-saving machines? Yes, they were made to 'save labour' [...] on one piece of work in order that it might be expended—I will say wasted-- on another, probably useless, piece of work. Friend, all their devices for cheapening labour simply resulted in increasing the burden of labour. (Morris 55)

Industrial machinery is kept not to produce further consumer products, rather to merely eliminate tasks that create unpleasant work and monotony. Machinery that is present within Morris’s utopia is not elaborated on, almost taken for granted, as seen in the scene where Julian and his companions encounter self-propelling cargo ships, which none of the characters seem to be surprised by, and neither does the narrator bother to dwell on it:

I understood pretty well that these “force vehicles” had taken the place of our old steam-power carrying; but I took good care not to ask any questions about them, as I knew well enough both that I should never be able to understand how they were worked, and that in

attempting to do so I should betray myself, or get into some complication impossible to explain; so I merely said, “Yes, of course, I understand.”

With the apparent elimination of mass-production, the utopian citizens of London become free to pursue the implied intrinsic human incentive to create beauty, and to strive for pleasure within their work. As opposed to Bellamy, the process of work is carefully detailed through the novel, as seen in the idyllic pastoral description of “haymakers” working on a field (Morris 84). Similarly, artisan production and the creation of aesthetics is carefully detailed, such as the prolonged introduction of a hand sculpted tobacco pipe, or the long discussions on the relevance of architectural aesthetics.

The theme of technological advancement and work at the forefront of 19th century social and political discussion, both novels can be seen as having the topic at the heart of their narrative. Bellamy proposes a progressive outlook, where technology serves the production of consumer products, while work is merely a necessary must to upkeep the system of consumption. Morris can be seen revisiting pre-industrial aesthetics, marginalizing the importance of technology, and thinking of work as a human activity done for the principle of pleasure. The theme of technological advancement and work relations can further be understood in terms of gender relations. Contemporary technological advancements, and the resulting changes in work relations lead to women irrecoverably stepping out of the exclusive realms of the domestic sphere. Both novelists can be seen reflecting on the contemporary gender issue, albeit in wholly different manners.

7. Gender Relations and Utopia

The issue of gender relations is a theme directly relating to the changes of industrial capitalism, as women increasingly joined the industrial workforce, functioning outside the exclusive realms of the home economy. Furthermore, women’s rights movements granted the

beginnings of political and social equality by the end of the century. The differences in the way Bellamy and Morris processed the question can be analyzed in relation to the larger theme of their relationship to the progress of industrial capitalism. While emphasizing middle class family structures, Bellamy supports notions of women's enfranchisement, in line with his progressive attitude towards the changes of late 19th century industrial capitalism. In contrast, Morris can be seen as radical in the sense of his devaluation of common family structures, while emphasizing pre-industrial modes of living in stressing women's domestic roles.

In future Boston, the institution of marriage is upheld, with the contemporary "nuclear family" unit at the basis of society (Roemer 96). Furthermore, Bellamy creates a separate section for women within the industrial army; in which physical work is excluded, and one can only become a highly ranked general within the awards system, if one has already become a mother. However, women are granted equality within the system of the industrial army. Females can be seen as receiving an equal share of the universally granted income, with absolute freedom to spend it on the consumer product of their liking, similarly to men. Worth is given to motherhood within this system, as women are provided full pay when they temporarily leave the industrial army to raise their children. As Dr. Leete explains to Julian, machinery has a liberating role, as women no longer need to do unsatisfying housework, due to advanced household products reliving them of such burdens, enfranchising them to work and consume along with utopia's male inhabitants:

"A woman does not, then, necessarily leave the industrial service on marriage?" I queried.

"No more than a man," replied the doctor. "Why on earth should she? Married women have no housekeeping responsibilities now, you know, and a husband is not a baby that he should be cared for." (Bellamy 184)

In a seemingly radical move, fitting into his system critical, decentralized aesthetic, Morris breaks the traditional family unit of the 19th century. Marriage is seen as a backwards institution, a system creating “dull despair” and drudgery (Morris 38). Extramarital childbearing is encouraged, and passionate love affairs are even seen as a value; “a child born from the natural and healthy love between a man and a woman, even if that be transient, is likely to turn out better in all ways” (Morris 38). Underlying this seemingly liberating scene however, female social roles are nevertheless seen in a radically traditionalist manner. As old Hammond proposes, “The women do what they can do best, and what they like best” (Morris 36), and what they like best in Morris’s utopia is apparently managing household tasks. The “Emancipation of Women movement of the nineteenth century” is long forgotten, as old Hammond jokingly announces that he doubts that besides a historical scholar like himself, “any other man now alive” understands or remembers the movement (Morris 36).

Similarly to the above discussed issues on technology, Bellamy takes a progressive stance, albeit women’s equality is strictly discussed and given value within the system of centralized socialism. While seemingly radical in abolishing the supposedly outdated institution of marriage, Morris is nevertheless unable to step out of traditional gender structures, representing them as deterministic, fitting into his theme of denouncing the progress of the elements of industrial capitalism.

Conclusion

Late 19th century literary utopias might seem dry, and overly didactic to the modern reader, making the contemporary popularity of the genre potentially unfathomable to one outside the realms of literary scholarship. However, one needs to study these novels within their own context. The newly forming system of industrial capitalism increased popular speculation of what future forms its elements should take, causing the upsurge of utopian political and social theory, utopian experimental communes as well as utopian literature by the end of the 19th century. Representative of the genre of late 19th century utopias, and widely distributed within their own era are the novels *Looking Backward* and *New from Nowhere*. In terms of structure, both adhere to the convention of 19th century literary utopias, while employing basic utopian social and political theory within their narratives. However, both propose radically different ideologies relating to the evolution and progress industrial capitalism. These differences are developed in terms of characterization and vantage point, as well as in the themes of the representation of technology and its effects on work, and gender relations. While Bellamy can be seen as proposing a progressive outlook, incorporating, and further developing elements of industrial capitalism into his narrative, Morris can be seen doing the opposite. Radical in the sense of rejecting contemporary industrial capitalism, Morris can also be understood as a traditionalist in terms of revisiting of pre-industrial modes of living. Thus, Morris can paradoxically be understood as proposing the possibility of a utopian ideal in terms of looking backwards. In contrast *Looking Backward* predicted such specifics as the radio, invented a decade later, or the credit card, and essential tool of the 21st century. At the turn of the 21st century, one could argue that Bellamy's utopia prevailed, as forms of capitalist economies have prevailed within Western societies.

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