

## Brave New World

The dystopian novel "Brave New World" which was written by Aldous Huxley in 1931 is set in the 26<sup>th</sup> century and describes the opposite of an ideal society. In his satiric novel Huxley extrapolated the state of things in his society and wanted to warn his contemporaries of the consequences that their actions would have in the later future. His result was a hierarchically ordered society ruled by one World State which controls everything. The motto of this state is *Community, Identity, Stability*. The population is divided into 5 castes: Alphas, Betas, Gammas, Deltas and Epsilons. The Alphas are on top of the hierarchy and the most intellectual and best-looking citizens of the state. On the bottom there are the Epsilons who are slave-like unskilled people and supposed to do stupid work. Everybody is born into a class and it is not possible to move between classes because the genes and the conditioning of someone are aligned with the appropriate class.

Sex only has the role of pure entertainment while natural reproduction and the monogamic life in a family are outlawed and regarded as pornographic, immoral and unnatural as human-beings are produced in mass by in-vitro-fertilization. In the so called "Bokanovsky's process" the intellect of the inhabitants is defined. By putting a certain amount of alcohol into the brains of the embryos, the humans are less intelligent so that they won't revolt or doubt the system they live in. After the birth the babies are conditioned in a way which also guarantees the desired behaviour of human-beings. This is put into action for example by hypnopedia, where children listen to certain audios while they sleep so that their content is unconsciously engraved to their minds.

Religion is replaced by the admiration of Henry Ford ("Fordism") who invented the assembly line. Because of him the calculation of time also begins with this invention. This stresses the importance of technology and capitalism in the World State of Huxley's novel. The misuse of science and technology is a significant aspect of Huxley's "vision": As human-beings are produced industrially and human brains are damaged deliberately, the advances in technology obviously seem to have turned out into the wrong direction. Keeping in mind that the ideal values of our recent and even more in Huxley's society are defined by humanity and the goal to have a partner and a family are completely abolished in Huxley's setting, the reader is shocked.

In addition to that every inhabitant of the world state is dependent on the drug "soma" which keeps the people happy and distracts them from thinking about the society they live in. They are entertained by stupid sex films and other public events.

These facts show that the protagonists live in a dystopia which is characterized by hierarchy, patriarchy (the 10 heads of state are all male) political and economic control, restriction of thoughts and actions (conditioning, hypnopedia, Bokanovsky's process, soma, sanctions against dissenters) and lack of moral and religious values. The way of ruling is legitimated by claiming that there is no other way that can avoid a corrupt, unhealthy and dangerous society.

Actually, there are some elements that could be seen as utopian, for example that everyone is happy (soma, no loss of relatives because there are no, no heartsickness) or that there are no diseases but the question is if it is desirable to abdicate love and freedom in return. Furthermore happiness cannot be appreciated if it is a permanent state. So in the whole, Huxley's future society is a prime example for a dystopia because even the elements that seem positive at first sight are not really desirable.

Plot:

The protagonists of the novel, Bernhard Marx (Alpha) and Lenina Crowne (Beta) work in the London Hatchery, which is a reproduction center for human-beings. Marx is greatly attracted to Lenina and receives permission to a reservation in New Mexico with her. Although Lenina finds Bernhard odd, because he does always behave like a perfectly conditioned inhabitant of the World State, she goes with him, as only very few people get the chance to visit a reservation. The inhabitants of the World State, she goes with him, as only very few people get the chance to visit a reservation. The inhabitants of the reservation are Native Americans and half-breeds who were all naturally born and live in families. They have preserved their traditional costumes, religion and language, they suffer from diseases and show signs of old age, smell and live in primitive conditions. Bernhard and Lenina are shocked by the living conditions on the reservation, which contrasts strongly with the sterile conditions of their own world. Bernhard and Lenina meet John and his mother Linda, who is from "the other place" (the World State). They realize she was accidentally left behind some twenty years ago by the director of the Hatchery where they work, who is John's father. Bernhard and Lenina take John back to London with them. Consequently the director is humiliated, and Bernhard gains fame and popularity, as everybody is interested in the "Savage". John's encounter with the "Brave New World" is a continuous cultural clash, leading to his complete disillusionment. Some examples are that he learns that people are discouraged from reading or that he is shocked by people's soma addiction and tries to liberate them and sees Lenina as a whore. After conversations with the leading figures of the state John decides he does not want

to live without god, poetry, freedom, goodness and sin and claims the right to be unhappy, to feel pain to become ill and to get old. He decides to live in an abandoned light house where he becomes a sensational attraction and finally commit suicide. Bernard -as well all Helmholtz, who has been close to the savage- is exiled for having caused irritation in society.