

Utopian Dreaming

I – Open Your Eyes

Awakening

I had dreamt a lot, not all of the dreams had been beautiful. Some had been situated in the past, before and long before I was born, some in the present and some, it seemed to me, in the future. An uncountable number of images, pictures, sights. A not to disentangle netting of tones, sounds and melodies - rhythms. Movie scenes, or real scenes?, in an endless stream. Scents, feelings an impalpable number of impressions flooded my mind. But now I wakened, now the reality broke through, I opened my eyes – or did I started now, to dream? Was all prior to this the reality, and all what happened now, nothing more then a dream? I opened my eyes.....

Awakening

I opened my eyes and stared at the white ceiling - machines, hoses, wires, the sound of the machines.....

"How do you feel?"

A soft voice and a soft face above me.....

"It's okay, take your time."

I closed my eyes.....

Awakening

"Mr. Maurer, would you open your eyes?"

Again this soft voice - I opened my eyes.....

"You not have to talk, it was a very long journey for you - take your time....."

Again this soft face above me, still the white ceiling - machines, hoses, wires, the sound of the machines.....

"We have awaken you again, we will do this from time to time now. It will need some time that you will be able to realize all this. But no worry, everything is god now, no reason to be afraid....."

Her voice was so hypnotic, no real voice, no real human being - a cyborg?

"You will fall asleep again now, till next time....."

I closed my eyes.....

Awakening

I opened my eyes.....

"Much better this time, much faster. You will see, soon it will be very easy to awake."

Her voice was so mellifluous, so beautiful.....

"Do you remember anything - you not have to answer. Maybe you will have no memory of what was, but that's no problem, the past is the past - the future waits for you....."

I moved my head a little bit and looked in her eyes - she smiled at me, in the way a mother smiles at his child, in the way Kathryn smiled at James.....

"That's good, you start to interact directly. Soon we will have our first conversation, but now....."

I closed my eyes.....

Awakening

I opened my eyes.....

"What do you think, should we start to talk with each other today?"

I looked at her, her beautiful smile - I tried to speak.....

"It's okay, you not have to talk. You know where you are? You can nod with your head."

I nodded with my head.....she smiled in a benevolent way.....

"Do you think this is a hospital?"

I nodded again.....

"Well, in a way this is a hospital, but at the end not at all - you not know why your are, or?"

I shook my head - or should have I to nod? She saw my confusion and touched my hand.....

"I understand you, no worry. You make such a wonderful progress, soon we will talk....."

I closed my eyes.....

Awakening

I opened my eyes.....

"You look good today. The sun is shining, do you hear the birds?"

I nodded with my head.....

"Do you feel comfort?"

I nodded with my head.....

"It's springtime, it will be a very beautiful summer this year - what do you think?"

"Yes....."

"Thank you- have a nice sleep....."

I closed my eyes.....

Awakened

I sat in a chair and looked out of the window. Everything bloomed, everything flourished in the warming sun.....

"Why you always look out of the window only. Let's have a walk, or at least, why not open the window?"

"Maybe this isn't true....."

"You mean what you see?"

"Yes...."

"It's true, you only have to open the window, then you can see that it's true – or we have a walk?"

"I scare that....."

"No problem, take your time, we have all the time....."

"How long I'm here"

"Since we wakened you for the first time?"

"Yeah...."

"Six months."

"And before?"

"Maybe we should talk later about the circumstances why your here and how long?"

"Yes. I have another question...."

"Yes."

"You're real? I mean, no robot, cyborg or something like this?"

"Wow, why do you think that I'm not real?"

"Your voice, your smile – sometimes I think you cannot be from this world, not natural...."

"I'm trained, I modulate my voice somewhat, this should spend you comfort, as my smiling."

"You're a nurse?"

"I not would say "a nurse", at least not in a classic meaning. But for the moment, yes."

"I'm the only.....well, patient here?"

"Yes."

"Is this a place specially for me?"

"No, this place existed already before you came. But we changed some rooms somewhat, for your needs. The room you were before? Everything there looked, as you would expect it for an ICU. Today such a room looks very different."

"Today....?"

"You assumed it already – or?"

"Yes."

"Also this room is furnished in a way, that you can feel as comfortable as possible."

"How long have I to stay here?"

"Well, as long we not leave this room for a walk, we not even open the window? A very academic question – or?"

"Yeah, you got me!"

The World Outside Through An Open Window

"Shall I open the window?"

"Yes....."

"Voilà, the world outside through an open window - better, or?"

"Yes, much better, much, much better.....the real world - is it real?"

"Sure, should it be a dream?"

"It feels like one."

"Dream or reality - who should decide it?"

"Yeah, Cole?"

"Cole maybe, but as far as I can know it, this is the reality....."

"You mean that I'm still alive?"

"Yes, your not dead and this isn't the paradise - no, not the paradise....."

"So, this is the earth? The beautiful trees, the tender clouds, the bird's singing, the light breeze - it feels like a transcendental world.....why you think that I would wake in paradise, after my death? Why paradise?"

"You not believe in paradise?"

"Why not awaken in hell?"

"Maybe that's the paradise, but definitively not the hell! You think that, if there is another world that waits for you, it would be hell?"

"What else? If there would be a paradise it would be empty! Maybe with a lot of babies - a nice thought, when I think about it....."

"Yes, a paradise crowded with babies - would be a beautiful place.....maybe you will like this place also....."

"I had a dream, a nightmare, a world full of pain and suffering - I dreamt about hell, and this here?"

"I'm not sure, whether you dreamt during your sleep or not, but this world you describe....."

"But this is the earth - you said it! My nightmare.....it was earth that tortured me! If this would had been no nightmare, this nightmare about earth, and this is earth.....this world out there, this nice trees, this beautiful melodies, then this is nothing than an illusion, a fake - you fool me!"

"There's a solution for this seeming contradiction - you know the solution, we talked about it, you remember?"

"This is not my world, my earth, my nightmare, although this is earth, but not my earth.....how long and why?"

"The first question is easy to answer, the second is a bit more difficult....."

"The first?"

"One hundred and thirty thousand six hundred and sixty-five years....."

"The second?"

"Would you allow me to give you this answer later?"

"Yes, of course....."

The World Outside Through An Open Door

"Now you've done it! How does it feel, the world outside?"

"Wonderful! Simply wonderful. The air, this wonderful breeze, I'm getting dizzy....!"

"Maybe it was too fast? Should we go inside again?"

"No, no! Not at all! It's wonderful, it's a wonderful feeling! I feel like I'm reborn, just in this moment! It's a feeling like this world would flow through your body now, a feeling as I and the world would become one!"

"Let us sit down, there's a bench."

"I would like to lay me down in the grass – yes?"

"Sure, we can sit in the grass when you like it. What do you think?"

"I look at the building. It's much smaller than I thought. It looks functional, but very warm, the red and the brown color, a lot of glass.....you said that it's a kind of hospital? I'm mean in this future, still illnesses? In such a future still illnesses?"

"Well, in fact we have no illnesses any more, no illnesses in the way you know them. This is an emergency facility."

"Not sounds that calming. I fear a bit to ask for what you need it."

"You think that there will be something in the background waiting to appear?"

"Yes, maybe all appears too nice at the moment?"

"Then it's time for some reality – you fear it?"

"Absolutely....."

"Assumed, we would have defeated all illnesses, what's not true in that sense, we would still have all the risks of life. Look at this wonderful mountain, would you like to climb it?"

"And maybe I would have an accident while doing this.....I would need a facility like this one....."

"Yes, even today life can change from one moment till the other. It can be over from one moment till the other. We have a lot of possibilities nowadays, but also today there are limits. I've said that an ICU looks very different today, but that also means that we still need ICUs. And this means that we not always win the battle, and this also means that winning the battle can be a very disappointing moment. You see, even when you will see a lot of things that have changed a lot, some things will not have changed, never will they change....."

"Some basic truth of life, when you wanna name it such. Yes, to be born, to have to die – how long live people today?"

"Not much longer than at your time. There is a limit for human live, it was not possible to change this in a fundamental way. But topics like Alzheimer are no longer. Old people are much more active today than at your time. At your time old people were often seen as a burden, that has changed a lot!"

"Society has changed a lot?"

"Yes, and to say it very clear, in a very good way."

"Will you tell me something about it?"

"Later. I think it would be better we would start with some other things. Nature, the world as such, the universe – think about the mere time?"

"Yes, over one hundred and thirty thousand years! Continental drift, the continents have changed, the Pacific Ocean is smaller now, the Atlantic Ocean larger! One hundred and thirty thousand years – there have been catastrophes? I mean extreme earthquakes, super volcanoes and suchlike?"

"Yes, during this time there were some major natural catastrophes. Every time it would had been

possible that it would have been the end of the human race.”

“Climate changes and war?”

“Both, not only once.”

“And the world today?”

“No wars anymore, I hope that helps you. But also today we aren’t able to control nature totally. The universe is way over our possibilities.”

“You mean things like a super or hyper nova, a gamma ray burst, things like this?”

“Yes, two thousand years ago a magnetar star underwent a major outburst, no two thousand light years away. But we were lucky, the jet not hit us. But another planetary system, very similar to our was hit directly. One of the planets was totally similar to ours. If there was life, then it’s no longer, without any chance to avoid the extinction. This can happen to us also, every second it can happen – and not only this.....”

“What happened here, what happened with the humans, no wars anymore? Sounds too good!”

“Soon I will start therewith to show you this world, that’s your world now. I will start with some basics, the world as such, the universe, with science. Later I will travel with you, I will show you this world, the people of today. Should I give you a short overview?”

“Yes, that would be helpful.”

“During this period, the last one hundred and thirty thousand years, earth changed a lot. We will start with science I said. The map of the world today is not totally different to the one you know, but has changed significantly. The continents and oceans look differently nowadays. Even star constellations have changed! Not totally, but nearby stars have moved significantly. The polar star is no longer Alpha Ursae Minoris, and so on. There were nature catastrophes. Sixty thousand years ago the super volcano, known to you as the Yellowstone super volcano, erupted. During the next ten thousand years human life was nearly wiped out. Not only because of the eruption, but also because of the wars that break out after it, even nuclear weapons were used. Then a lot of epidemics and famines, at that time earth definitely was a hell. And this was not the last large crisis. Today? Twenty thousand years ago a movement came up, not longer go this way, not longer do the same mistakes again and again. The world of today found its beginning.”

“One hundred and ten thousand years after my time! One hundred and ten thousand wasted years! And today, no longer the same mistakes?”

“I will tell you everything and we will travel a lot. But for now, today we no longer waste our resources and possibilities for such stupid things like war. This is no paradise I said you, but it’s definitely no hell. Yes, the humans have learned. It took a very long time, but at the end they have learned it.....”

The World As Such - I

“Let’s start with a geographic map. As you can see there are changes compared to the map you’re used to. In one way a hundred thousand years are only a blink of the eye for geography, on the other way, it’s enough time for some grave changes. The continents have drifted only a bit, but maybe your surprised about some other differences. The Rhine Plain became active again, the former European continent is divided in two parts now.....”

“.....North America?”

“Yes, North America. The Yellow Stone super volcano changed everything. The whole continent, the whole world was affected. In the follow of the outbreak there were extreme earthquakes.....”

“...the coastal lines? The polar caps are much smaller – the sea level is higher today?”

“Yes, somewhat more than three feet compared with your time. That changes the coastal lines very much.....”

“.....this formation? Sorry, that I interrupt you all the time.”

“That’s okay, you’re curious, that’s very positive. Thirty thousand years ago a comet hit earth at the region you know as South Africa. Again a major catastrophe that nearly had exterminated human

life. But in the next thousands of years humans changed their attitude, the world of today was founded – thereto later more.”

“They had not found a way to destroy the comet?”

“Don’t forget that we had major catastrophes before. The story of the humans over the last one hundred and thirty thousand years is no story without breaks. On the contrary, it is a story with a lot of breaks, some were smaller, some were extreme. At this time the world was divided in different political parties, war was the normality. The comet came from behind of the sun, they had no chance! But I think I should show you another map, the world politically.”

“No national states anymore?”

“Yes, after the last major catastrophe, after humans found a way to survive it became obvious to them, that humans have to work together. Some information about science?”

“Yes, would be interesting!”

“After we had decided no longer waste our efforts to fight against each other, after we had decided to work together, we created an era of progress. All scientific disciplines developed in a way, never seen before. Not that we would know everything today, but we gained knowledge in a never seen way. Maybe I should answer you some questions – this is no school lesson.”

“Well, let’s see? We’re no longer alone in the universe?”

“The tough one right at the beginning. We know identical twins of our earth today, and everything leads thereto that at least on some of them there should exist life, but it’s still the problem with the distances. Even today we cannot answer this question in a distinct way.”

“Mars? The moons of Jupiter? No other life in our solar system?”

“What we know is, that at the beginning of our solar system there were several places where life was possible and even started in a certain way. But in the end only on earth life as such developed. But even this shows, that life is a very common thing in the universe. But the question of intelligent life, how to get in contact with them, is still unanswered today.”

“Self-consciousness?”

“You waste no time! Yes, we have found an answer. We can explain it today on the basis of the evolution of our brains. It’s the same as with life, it’s obvious now that self-consciousness is simply a consequence of this universe. I give you this device now. With it you have access to all knowledge that exists in this world today. It’s a bit like the Internet of your time, apart from the fact that with this you’re able to get in contact with every other person on this world, everyone has such a device.”

“It’s a bit disappointing? I mean in our time we would think that the humans today would have implants, chips, that would enable them to do such things?”

“Well, there was a time.....but you not have to do the same mistakes all the time again and again. We have decided to stay as humans, because we are humans, we’re no tools or devices. It’s no problem at all to have this device with you – or?”

“You can forget it?”

“Yes you can! You can go out of the house, and die for a bunch of reasons. Again, this is no paradise, this is no place where nothing can happen, where everything is safe and sound. Last week one of our best astronomers had an car accident, he died. Maybe I should tell you that car accidents are normally not possible today, but for some reasons it happened – the first car accident since over two hundred years and he died.”

“So, you not tried to create a world where everything is perfect?”

“There is an impossibility in it! This universe is not perfect, and nothing in it can be perfect. But this not can mean, that this can be the basis for our living together today as in your time.”

“You also mentioned evolution?”

“We are the result of an evolution, but we have the possibilities to reflect about everything, we have the abilities to act apart from evolution. We’re capable to act in a rational way, we have the intellect to decide what we do.”

“And you have decided to stop with stupid things like war, to work together – how many humans live on this world today?”

“Around one and a half billion.”

“More than I thought.”

“You thought only a few are left?”

“Yes, a few that live in a kind of artificial world. You live all around the world? One nation? Who decides, your government.....”

“.....later. Give you a bit of time. Look, this world has changed. But the development was no straight one, and it’s not established for all time. The last twenty thousand years were a flourishing time, we created a world worth living in. And today we’re again over a billion individuals and we live in peace. Science and art are more important today than wars and empires. Today history is written by our progresses, progress in gaining new understanding, progress in creating things, not in destroying things, by our capability that every human can live a fulfilled life, a life worth living for.”

“But different humans will have different ideas about “a life who’s worth living”?”

“And where’s the problem?”

The World As Such - II

“Let’s begin with one of the most important, with the basis of our living together today – language. I have given you a device with which you’re connected with everybody else on this planet, a device which connects all humans on this planet. But this would make no sense when they wouldn’t be capable of talking with each other. Therefore we all speak the same language. But this not means that only one language exists today – on the contrary! The world is full of different languages and dialects. But we all learn one basic language that enables us to speak with everyone else, we can share everything with everybody.”

“But then there are still different languages. I have a poem in mind, written in a certain language. It will be even today not that simple to translate it into the basic language – not everybody will have the same impression when reading this poem?”

“Yes, but think about a poem written in your time? We have to translate this poem also.”

“You still know literature written in my time?”

“Yes! Well, obviously a lot is lost. But we still know literature from the beginning of the written word. Homer for instance, his works have survived.”

“That’s fine, it will be interesting to see what literature, music, movies, what art has survived over the time – and much the more? To see, what art was created in the meantime. But I think I have to learn the basic language first?”

“The device is also a translator. A very good one, but every translation will have its limits. Yes, you should learn the basic language because it’s fundamental for our living together. Think about that wherever you are, you’re able to talk with everyone? Isn’t it a fascinating thought?”

“In fact, this is very fascinating. And in different parts of the world they still have diverse languages, but no national states anymore?”

“It’s a bit more complicated for you. Yes, we haven’t national states anymore, but more important, you not have to live at a certain place, you can live wherever you want.”

“But wouldn’t that mean that at some places live many people, at others none?”

“Humans are very diverse! By saying that you not have to live at certain place, I also meant that you can change your living place whenever you want.”

“But then people will move all the time?”

“Why? Maybe you will find your place, the place where you feel that this is the place for you to live. Why you should leave this place again, at least forever and not for a certain time. In fact some people live their whole life at one place, some are on the move all the time – it’s on you to decide.”

“But I see a problem how this should function in reality? I cannot see how it should be possible to organize such a world?”

“You will see. I’ve decided to travel a lot with you, soon we will start with our first voyage.”

“This leads me to the question where we are, and who you are?”

“In your time this place belonged to France, the mountains you see you know as Pyrenees – the ocean is not far away. The climate is hotter as in your time.”

“I was never in this region. Nice to be here now – and you?”

“I have to tell you something before. After the comet had hit earth, after this catastrophe, humans started to fight! Yes, they started to fight about resources, about places to live and more. The comet killed nearly every life on earth, but life survived, survived till the humans doomed life for a last time. At a certain moment not more than one hundred thousand humans were alive on an earth with nearly no life at all anymore – but then it happened! We call them the ninety-nine thousand – whereas this is no exact number. The humans still alive started to think about what they did. It happened at different places at nearly the same time. They started to communicate with each other, to talk about whether it would not more clever to work together, then against each other. Some tried to undermine this, but the majority came to the point that it was time to start something new. Twenty-four thousand and six hundred and fifty-four years ago they came together, all living humans on earth apart from some that were not able to follow them, some who still stick with the “old” and “normal” human behavior. They met at a place that was at your time in Central Africa – the place where all humans came from. This place is the capitol of our world today.”

“You still have a capitol.....?”

“Yes, but it’s no capitol in the way you’re used to. The ninety-nine thousand decided to start with one city again, this city. For some while all humans lived in this one city. And like millions of years ago, the humans started to spread out again – and today we’re again one and a half billion humans who live all over the world.”

“Only the world?”

“Also on the moon, but not in real cities. We have a couple of moon bases, but they are more for research. But it’s also possible to travel thereto, but it’s not that easy. I mean, that it’s still a stress factor for your physique. On the other hand, it’s very easy today to travel into space, and even to spend some time on one of our space stations.....”

“You not tell me that I will.....”

“You’ve tears in your eyes, that’s nice. Yes, your physique is good enough for at least a shorter stay at one of the space stations – we will!”

“What does “shorter” means – the moon?”

“Shorter means some weeks maybe – the moon would be possible when we see that you’re capable to stay on the space station. You can compare it with a sea cruise at your time. Not everyone was interested in, and some became sea sick. But it’s the normality today that every human travels at least one time into space. It’s another basis of our living together. It’s one of the things we think that every child should experience, to see this planet from space, to feel what it means, to live on this planet, to be a part of this planet.”

“But not on Mars - you travel not in space?”

“No, this step is an extreme one. It’s a question of efficiency – and think about! Also twenty thousand years, flourishing years, are a limited time. Today we manage it, to live on earth together in a meaningful way. We have space stations and some bases on the moon. We have send space probes at every place of our solar system and beyond. To travel around in the galaxy? Still science fiction, maybe when we will manage it, to keep this meaningful way of life we live together, for another twenty thousand years – maybe you’re a bit to early.....”

“When I think about the time in between? Maybe it’s exactly the right time – why is it now?”

“Later, give us some time.”

“And you?”

“I’m born on one of the space stations, one of my experiences in childhood was to travel to earth. Since this time I’m torn between Earth and Space – I cannot decide where I should live.”

“And your profession?”

“Profession. This is also a bit different as at your time. Everybody can do what he or she wants. That maybe sounds a bit strange, but believe me, it functions! It functions extremely good, it’s one

of the basics, why the last twenty thousand years were such a flourishing time. Humans are very diverse, they have a lot of different interests and skills.”

“And when you feel that you should do something different?”

“Then do it! Many of us do different things at the same time. You should know that we not work to earn money, we do what we do to live together.....”

“.....but say, at one of the space stations – sorry, that I interrupt you!”

“No, no. Do it all the time when you wanna do it! It’s important that you ask! The space stations? Back into the past. In our first city, our today’s capitol, this was not possible in that way, as we can do this today. Now that we’re many again it functions very well. At the beginning it was not possible in that way, but from the beginning it was the question what’s the interest of every single person. We have this situation on the space stations and the moon bases today again. But we begin more and more therewith to change this. We have two space stations now, who were build only therefore, that people can live on them. Also we build our first city on the moon at the moment. I think I will live there later.”

“And now? You’re my nurse, my teacher?”

“I decided, apart from other interests, to gain knowledge about the problematic for humans, to live in space. In your time you would name me a doctor, a specialized doctor.”

“Oh, sorry that I thought, you’re a nurse.”

“It would be nothing negative, to be a “nurse” - or?”

“Yeah, I think I have a wrong thinking here. I’m from the old time.....”

“And don’t forget, I have also other interests. Maybe the “nurse” would be also a wonderful poetess? Or maybe she would be also interested in astronomy or in ancient history? Don’t forget, we not “work” to earn money, we “work” to live a fulfilled life.”

“But your needs like food, a place to live – no money anymore?”

“I will show you later – not too much at a certain time.”

“Do you allow me a question, it’s a bit difficult for me to phrase it.”

“You cannot make a mistake – your question?”

“Your skin is dark. I thought about.....no hundred thousand humans anymore? In my time nationality and even race were important topics – today?”

“Today? We have no nations any longer, therefor nationality no longer exists. Do we all look alike? No, humans are very diverse, also what their physiognomy considers, still today. But this is of no importance anymore. I think we will have some very interesting travels!”

“But you not live all the same lives? Culture?”

“Even religion, for instance?”

“You mean, there are still religious people today?”

“Why not? We also have still various cultures, we create new cultures at this moment! The space stations only for to live there, the first city on the moon.....all this creates culture.”

“What’s the secret of this world? I mean, different cultures, even religions, let me say “races”. How you manage it, to live together, to feel as one?”

“The ninety-nine thousand – the human race looked into the abyss. It was very healing!”

“And this functions still today, again over a billion people?”

“Yes, assume that you would grow up in this community?”

“But is there, at least from time to time, not someone who thinks he has to be a leader, that others have to do what he wants – do you still have politicians, how does your economy functions? Is there still crime – ah, too many questions!”

“At least too many to answer them in one sentence. But you will get all your answers, promised.”

“A last question for today?”

“Okay.”

“Why you’re here, why not someone else? Who had decided, that you’re the one, who makes me familiar with this, for me such new, world.”

“It’s connected with.....why you’re here, what has happened. Can we postpone this question for some time?”

“Okay, maybe this will be the final question.....”

II – Open Your Mind

Starting Your Travel

“You’re ready to start with our travel into this world?”

“Yes. I’m excited about it, but in the same moment I’m very puzzled. You know, the device you’ve given me?”

“Sure, I hope you’ve not forgotten it!”

“No, of course not. But all this information. On the one hand it helps, but on the other hand many things are very puzzling.”

“I’ve given you the device that you get some first impressions, and furthermore that you can use it now as a tool for reworking. You not have to understand everything at the moment. We will do it step by step now. We will travel into a town at first. The town has only around fifteen thousand inhabitants. You can get some impressions there, about the general life today. How some basic things are organized, but furthermore how it is as such to live today. We will meet some people with whom you can talk about their experiences.”

“Yes, I think the direct experience will help. Only to read about some things – it’s like you would read a fairy tale.”

“I can understand, that some of today's way of live sounds strange to you, but you will see that it really functions. And don’t forget an very important point, the experiences of the ninety-nine thousand! This shaped our world till today. And, also very important, all is a development. This means,. that there’s no direct line from the past till today, not only one way was and is thinkable. The past is fixed because it’s not possible to change the past anymore when it has become the past. But the future is always open, now and forever.”

“But that would also mean that it would be possible to forget the ninety-nine thousand and their experiences again.”

“Yes.”

“Do you think this will happen one day?”

“Ask me in one hundred thousand years again, maybe then I would be able to give you an answer. But how? Maybe the ninety-nine thousand will be not forgotten, what would tell this about the next one hundred thousand years? The future is wide open.....”

“What mean of transport we will use? You said that the town is not that far away.”

“Our basic mean of transport for shorter and medium distances, for travels apart from rail based means of transportation.”

“An autonomously driving car powered by electricity produced by green energy.”

“You see, you learned a lot so far.”

“Yes, and it’s interesting how it functions. The cars are public property, no individual owns them. They are used to drive in areas where you have no public transport or when you need an individual mean of transportation. If none is available at the place you are at the moment, you simply call for one. The nearest available car will drive to you and you can use it then. You tell your aim and the car drives you. That’s an elegant solution.”

“Yes, it’s much more practical then at your time. Today we have many different possibilities to come from one place to another. But all this means have in common that they are no

individual property, very different than at your time.”

“And they all are for free. You simply decide what mean of transport is the best for you at the moment, for your need and aim and then you use it – clever and easy!”

“Above all it’s easy. But also today you can not use everything at every place, that would make no sense at all.”

“No, you need no supersonic airplane to travel from here to the next city.”

“It is one of this developments. We decide what makes sense at what place and then we create it.”

“The way of decision – that’s a real puzzling point.....”

“Later, let’s start with this travel and our first aim.”

We stored in the car what we needed for the travel, not that you have to say that different types of cars existed according to your needs, and told the car our aim. Then we leaned back and enjoyed the ride.

“How long we will need?”

“Ask the car.”

“Well.....”

“Every car has a number, you can use it. Or you can start your question with something like: Car, can you tell me....., or you simply look towards the windscreen and ask.”

“Then I will use the last possibility: How long we will need till we will arrive?”

“One hour and thirty-seven minutes if the conditions not change. Shall I inform you when the conditions change?”

“No, thank you – changing conditions?”

“Maybe it starts to rain somewhere on our route for instance?”

“Do you control the weather?”

“No, not in that way at least, like you maybe imagine it. We have possibilities, but to control the global weather is beyond every possibility. Think about that this would mean, as one important factor for the global climate, that we would have to control the global oceanic circulation. No, that’s beyond every possibility.”

“Yes, I’ve seen that still deserts exist.”

“You’re surprised?”

“In a way yes.”

“But why we should change this?”

“To use this places.”

“We use them. We use them as deserts, because they are deserts. Don’t forget, there are no nations any longer, no borders. Maybe it’s surprising for you, but some people live at the deserts, they have decided to live there. Some like it to travel for some time though an desert. Also deserts are interesting places. Why we should destroy this places?”

“Diversity.....?”

“It’s more, that we not try today anymore to change everything, that everything should be the same. We see the diverse places as a chance for diverse developments. Think about the space stations and the moon. A desert can stay as a desert, but it’s not excluded that we work with artificial watering.”

“The town we travel to, can I eat a piece of fruit from the other side of the world there?”

“Would you like to eat a fruit from the other side of the world there?”

“I’m not sure. Maybe it would be more intelligent to eat a fruit that grows there, but when I would like to eat a fruit from the other side of the world?”

“Why not travel to the other side of the world then?”

“I think I understand. I would have the possibilities to travel, to choose my place where I wanna live my life. I think this presents you a total different impression of the world. I look forward to our first aim!”

We reached the top of a pass and could see the town below. In first sight the town looked very familiar to me. A distinct center with some larger and higher houses, surrounded by many smaller houses, the houses obviously the people live in. I thought about to ask about the function of the buildings in the center, but I decided to wait till we would stay in the town. I would be there then. I looked for factories, an industrial area, but could not see one. We reached the city limit, and shortly after we stopped in front of a small house.

“This is the place we will stay.”

“This is no hotel or suchlike? A vacation apartment?”

“No, it’s simply a house. Nobody owns it in that sense as you know it from your time. This is a house where nobody lives at the moment, we will use it.”

“The people who live here, their houses? They don’t own them but live in them? What when I wanna live in a house somebody else lives?”

“You cannot decide to live in a house somebody else lives – and why you should? You can choose a house that’s uninhabited.”

“Who cares for the house when nobody lives in it, who prepared it for us? Who mows the lawn?”

“Give us a moment. We will move into house first - we have to eat something!”

“Yeah, I’m hungry.”

We took our things out of the car and brought them into the house. The car would drove to a place where it could park till it would needed again while refreshing its batteries. Inside the house we decided about the rooms, two bedrooms for two people.

“You decided for this house?”

“I asked which possibilities we have and thought this would be the best choice for us.”

“You asked whom?”

“I asked the city.”

“The city council?”

“Tomorrow, today let us relax a bit. Let’s see what’s in the fridge?”

“I better not ask who filled it – or?”

“Tomorrow.....”

A Town

I stood up, got dressed and we met downstairs.

“Would you like to have breakfast?”

“I’m not that much the breakfast type, a cup of coffee would be enough for me.”

“Than let’s have a walk.”

We stepped outside and I looked around. Obviously it was a housing complex, with smaller houses surrounded by trees and flowers, it looked like a typical suburban.

“What do you think?”

“Who lives here? I mean, what does the people do who live here? It looks a bit unreal to me.”

“You wanna meet some of the people who live here?”

“I’m not sure, I feel a bit unsafe.”

“Then let’s walk a bit.”

We walked down the street, on the beautiful sidewalk with flowers and bushes alongside, till the appearance changed. Suddenly some the houses weren’t houses for only to live in, but offered places like restaurants, cafes or bars, places to eat or drink something, places to have a rest, places to meet somebody. I looked at her.

“Would you like to have a coffee now?”

“Yeah, would be nice.”

“Which you would prefer? Would you like to sit outside?”

“Yes, this one looks nice. Already some people there, the trees are very nice, the shade.”

“Then let’s have a seat.”

A younger woman came to us and we ordered two coffees. After a short time she came back with them.

“And now I think you have a lot of questions?”

“Absolutely, I have read, that there’s no private property anymore, that you not have to work to make your living and suchlike. Why this place here exists, who’s the woman, why she is here, does she works here? I’m very confused.”

“I think that we should talk about property. Yes, in fact, there’s no private property anymore in a sense you’re used to. But look at my clothes. I wear them and in this moment you can say that they are my property now. Nobody can take them away from me now. The house we live in? We not own it, nobody owns it in that sense. But we use it now, therefore it’s “our” house now. We used a car before, therefore it was “our” car during this time. Does we need the car now? No, why we should own it then? When we continue with our travel, we no longer will stay in the house, we need them no longer, why we should own it? My clothes I still need, therefore I still “own” it. Does this makes sense so far.”

“So far yes, but I think about the problems with such a system?”

“What kind of problems?”

“Maybe I would like to have a larger house then ours. Maybe I wanna have more clothes. Maybe I wanna have five cars all the time – suchlike.”

“We could have a larger house, but do we need one? I have all the clothes I need. You only can use one car at the same time – or? I know, at your time all this were status symbols. But imagine, when this would be no longer so? Imagine, it would be possible for you to get that what you need at and for that time you need it. Wouldn’t that make many things much easier?”

“Yes, but I still not see how this should be organized.”

“Later. For the first step, try to get a feeling therefor that you can get all you need when you need it.”

“Still I have a problem. This maybe functions with houses and cars, but say, I wanna have a unique diamond. Unfortunately someone else wanna have it also? Or a unique artwork, or maybe I wanna have a very special car, not one like the one we used?”

“Well, that’s the thinking of a time that’s very long ago. You will need time to understand that we have other priorities today. Never forget, that there was a moment, were it was not clear, whether the humans will survive or not. Do you think for the ninety-nine thousand it was important to own a unique gem? Or a larger house then your neighbor? Or more and more cars you not use?”

“No, not in this moment.”

“And I said it before, we still keep this in mind.”

“But still unique or very rare things exist. How you handle this?”

“Think about the following. I lay a unique diamond on this table. Then an artificial stone that looks exactly alike. Which one is more valuable?”

“The real diamond.”

“Why?”

“Because this stone is unique. You would be able to produce many of the artificial stones, they

haven't the same value."

"But value would mean that someone gives you much more for the natural stone than for the artificial stone. But what should this person give you? You have everything what you need, you need nothing, to get it. We have no money, we have no property as such."

"But still this unique gem exists?"

"We will visit museums when you like it. Think about an artwork from your time, say a famous painting that still exists today. Why should it be the private property of someone? Everybody should be able to see it. Such things we make available to everyone in museums. What when you wanna have this painting at home? You would have different possibilities. An interesting one?"

"Yes?"

"You not have to work for making your living. But humans have to do something, but you can decide. Maybe you wanna do, what you like to do, maybe you discover, that you have a special skill. Why not asking somebody who paints pictures in this old techniques, whether he would paint you a copy of this picture you want? You would be surprised how many opportunities you would have therefore!"

"Okay, so far. But no money anymore – we will not pay for our coffees?"

"No, why we should?"

"And the woman who brought us the coffees, why she is here, she not gets payed for it."

"Why she should need money? She gets all she needs without money."

"Why she 'works' here?"

"Theoretically she could also stay at home the whole day, but that would be a bit boring I guess."

"But she works as a waitress?"

"Yeah, the old time? Sorry, this was irony. But it's very interesting to see this, in reality so to say, not as history. It's not important what she's doing. She's a human being."

"And she decided to do this?"

"Sure! Nobody is allowed, to decide on you! Everybody is free in it's decisions! That's a very important thing, you have to keep this in mind all the time."

"Are there people who just do nothing?"

"Depends a bit on what you mean with 'nothing'?"

"I've the hippy culture in mind for instance."

"They had a culture?"

"Yes."

"Then they did something, you cannot have a culture from nothing. What's difficult for you at the moment is, to understand the development from the time of the ninety-nine thousand till today. We do this step by step. Here you get some first impressions about the world today. But be aware, that this is one town at one region of the world, not more. Life can be very different at different places. Think about the climate. I said that some people decided to live in desert regions, they lives differ from the life here. Think about places around the poles, where it's much colder? People are very diverse, also today."

"That's also one of this questions I have. When there was a time when only ninety-nine thousand humans survived and they decided to live all together in one city? Sure, nationality becomes meaningless then, but what about different cultures, what about, well, different 'races'?"

"My skin is very dark, the woman's skin was white – you mean this?"

"For instance."

"Because all humans who living today share the same small gen-pool, something like 'race' became finally obsolete. On the other hand we're again over a billion humans on the planet again and we begin therewith to live in space and on the moon. 'Race' has no meaning anymore. But during a period of twenty thousand years many different cultures developed and still develop. I have mentioned the space stations for instance."

"But does this not creates conflicts?"

"Not after such nonsense that nearly doomed human life on this planet. Yes, at the end we learned something, after it was nearly to late....."

We sat for a while, not speaking, till we had emptied our coffees.

“And now I can simply stand up and leave – I have not to pay.”

“It would be a bit impolite, not to thank for the coffee and the hospitality. But in fact, you could do so.”

“Why somebody runs a place like this? Why not doing something else?”

“Ask her.”

“Wouldn’t that be.....?”

“Why it should? Forget this thinking, she’s not only a waitress. Go inside and meet the people who operate this place, do it!”

I walked inside, the first time I was alone and I felt alone. I looked around, such a place looked not very different to such a place in former times. A counter and a man and a woman behind, the woman who had brought us the coffees, in front of it. They looked at me. I thought about asking about the restroom, to avoid the question. But then I decided that it has to be.

“Can I ask you something?”

“Sure.”

“I’m not sure how I should say it, I’m not from here.”

They smiled at me.

“We know who you are, everybody knows who you are. Feel free to ask anything you like.”

In the first moment I was shocked, but then this new knowledge gave me a feeling of calmness. I had not asked the device about me, not thought about it. So they had knowledge of me, why I should not ask them something, to gain knowledge of them.

“You know, many things are very puzzling for me. But on the other side many things are so familiar to me. This place here, I mean this not looks like the far future to me. But then, everything functions in a very different way.”

“Different places on earth look very different. As far as we know, you’re here because this area looks very much, as the world looked at your time. I think you will see places later, that look more like science fiction to you, as this place here.”

“And you decided for this place? Why not another place?”

“Because we like this living here. Wouldn’t we like it, we would live at another place in a different style.”

“You operate this cafe. Why, you earn no money with it?”

“You will discover later, that there are no “shops” anymore. You not buy something today, you get it. Apart from that, that you can go to places to talk about clothes for instance. What maybe fits to you or something like that. But this are no shops like you know it.”

“But this places here, this restaurants, cafes, bars.....why somebody operates such a place?”

“Culture, it’s part of our culture. At such places we meet our friends, spend time with them or also make new friends.”

“I not wanna be impolite. But when you can do, whatever you like to do? I mean, doing this the whole time.....you’re laughing?”

“We do this not to make our livings, don’t forget this. And we not only do this. Next door is a art gallery. Some of the paintings there, I’ve painted. Maybe I decide to concentrate more on painting in the future, then I will be here less. But at the moment it’s good so. You decide, that’s very important.”

“Would I be interested in one of your paintings, could I take it? I cannot buy it obviously!”

“You could ask me? Seriously, the pictures at such a gallery like next door are free, you can take one if you like. The artist would like it!”

“Assumed many people would like your paintings, more people would be interested in your paintings, than your would be able to paint, what then?”

“Assumed that you decide to come here to drink something and no seat is available?”

“Okay, I could look for another cafe.....”

“.....you would have to look for another cafe. And, maybe someone is motivated then to operate an additional cafe like this, if more people are interested in to come to a cafe like this?”

“And your paintings?”

“It would be possible to provide you reproductions you cannot distinguish from the original painting without a special examination, but that’s not the point. They say, that at your time it was the normality that always something or someone was declared as the best, as the one and only. Something or someone that everybody has to have, has to listen to, has to read or watch. Today we live the diversity. What do you think, around fifteen thousand people live in this town. What do you think how many of them paint paintings, write stories or poem, make music or movies, who act in movies or at theaters, who are active in an artistic sense?”

“I have the feeling I should say, around fifteen thousand?”

“Well, no bad guess. But the point is, that I could also ask about, how many have scientific interests, interest therein to do something in this field?”

“I have the feeling that the last answer would be no bad one?”

“Yes, again no bad answer. Think about it, we have the freedom to decide. That not means that everybody will compose a symphony, but why not making music? Not everyone will develop a new scientific theory, but why not do some basic scientific work? We not have to work in you sense, but why not operating such a places to create culture?”

“Sounds too good.....”

I walked back and she told me that it would be the time now for the next step, the center of the town.

We used a bus, powered by electricity, to reach the center of the city. Buses were the most common mean for public transportation in a town of that size. Therefore the city was well covered with bus stations and traversed by bus lines. In lager cities you would have more alternatives, especially for the larger distances. But for a city like this one it was a very effective system. Apart from that it was very common to use various types of bikes, roller blades, scooters.....or you simply used your feet to reach an aim.

The city center was a large plaza surrounded by various large buildings. Between them smaller buildings and again various restaurants and cafes. She let me some time to get some impressions.

“This one looks like a concert hall.”

“Why do think this?”

“It looks very special, or maybe a museum?”

“In fact it’s a place for music. Inside are different kinds of halls and places to perform music.”

“You mean different in size and acoustic?”

“Yes.”

“Why different size?”

“I’m not sure how I should interpret your question?”

“I still have my problems with this kind of thinking. Aren’t there musicians, singers, orchestras to whom more people wanna listen to? Aren’t there no “stars” anymore nowadays?”

“First, this place is not only for orchestral music. You can hear all kinds of music here. And then, yes. In this city lives a women whose music touches people around the world. She travels a lot and performs all around the world. Her concerts get broadcast all the time, but a star? This are categories who are no longer. The people honor and admire her for her music, but she has no privileges because of that, because nobody has privileges anymore.”

“But would somebody ask you, whether you would like it more to spend an evening with her than with somebody else. What would you answer – you know what I intend with this question.”

“Sure, but wouldn’t it be a first step to ask what she would like? You see, I like her music very much, and now I’m for the first time in the city she lives. And much more, she stays in the city at the moment. Would I like to meet her? Yes I would, and maybe I will. Maybe she drinks a coffee

here in one of the cafes at the moment. But maybe she wants to have a moment of calmness, what would be more important? I will see her tomorrow. I have reserved two seats for her concert tomorrow. You can join me if you like.”

“But if more people like to see her than seats are available? The acoustic, some seats offer a better acoustic than others? Who decides who gets which seat?”

“You have to place an reservation. Then there are rules – yes, we have rules! For example people who not saw her so far will be preferred. Then, all the halls are not that large. Don’t forget, money is no longer, this place is no commercial place. All seats offer a very good acoustic and are not that far away from her.”

“But then all her concerts will be very fast.....let me say “sold out”?”

“In fact, it’s not that easy to see her performing live. But remember what I said at the beginning – this is no paradise. Also in this world it’s not possible that every wish comes true. But think about, that at various places in this city, every day music of different kind will be performed?”

“I will not join you. I think for someone else it will be something special to see her playing live. I can watch the broadcast. Would it be possible to give my seat to someone else?”

“Sure, maybe you start to understand our today’s world.”

“At least I’m more and more interested in. Even when I have to confess that most of it still puzzles me very much. Are there other buildings which are related to art and culture?”

“Many. This two are museums. The first shows visual arts from the last twenty thousand years, created in this area. You will find such museums in every town. Today we wanna be aware about our history. The second is specialized in architecture and the life of the people. You can name it a historico-cultural museum. Then the building far left to us. It’s a public library.”

“You still have books?”

“It’s not only a place to store books. And yes, we still have books. You have your device, you can read with it every book that exists in this world. But there’s also a culture of the book as such. Book art, sometimes it’s very nice to have a book in your hand, sometimes it’s very unpractical. For instance, when you need a lot of special publications at a space station. Scientific publications you will find no longer as books or magazines. But the book as art still exists. But what I meant at the beginning was that you can read and also borrow books at this place. But you also can join courses, you can learn everything about books, even how to make a book, even in old fashion like at your time.”

“Who works at such places.”

“Who wants to work there. Is it really that different as at to your time? See the concert hall. You need people who have the knowledge to operate such a place, the same at your time. The difference is that they get no money for it because they need no money anymore.”

“But when I wanna work there, but they need none at the moment, what when I wanna be the executive director there, but there’s still one?”

“When you wish to work there you can work there. Don’t forget, you not work for money, you not have to work for a distinct amount of hours there. Why not working for some time there, and when you wish to work more, why not working in a cafe?”

“And when I wish to work in a certain position?”

“You should start to work there, as a first step. Then we’re not used to that one person decides something. But there are people who work there for a longer time and gained a lot of knowledge about the place. They decide in a certain way about this place. You can become one of them.”

“In a certain way?”

“The device. Say.....the program for next year. You can become a part of the process of decision about it. The device can link you with everything.”

“The program of the concert hall in the capitol?”

“Yes, you could become a part of this process of decision – but would this make sense for you?”

“Not really, a place that’s some thousand of miles away. It would make more sense to become a part of the process of decision in my own town. I think I understand. But when a question is important for everyone, say for the whole world, than the whole world can become part of the process of

decision concerning this question? ”

“Yes.”

"Then some of the buildings should be for the city administration. This could be the town hall?"

"Yes, you hit it again. You see, not that different as at your time. Apart from that that it's differently organized. People who like to do it, work in the organization to run the town. But again, decisions will not made by single persons and everything is transparent."

"And you not earn money therewith."

"Exactly. Everything is done in a way, you would call honorary."

"But also this not means that no conflicts can arise. Different people have different ideas, say about how something should be organized."

"There will be a referendum about it."

"And when I lose, but I not accept the result. Not in a negative sense, but maybe the result is not acceptable for me at all."

"If this place is no longer a place for you to live there? You can look for another place."

"This would imply that there are very different places on earth today. And I mean not because of the climate, but because of the way the people live."

"Yes, but we are all connected. We all have a common aim and principles. We will visit a place later where we will talk about this."

"The capitol, the city of the ninety-nine thousand?"

"Yes, this will be the place to talk about such topics. But I give you an example. Apart from that that meat is no important food today no longer, there are still people who eat meat. You can decide, to live together with people who eat meat or not. Say that you live in a town where people eat meat and you not, this will be no problem. Say you live in a town where people eat no meat and you eat meat. This will be no problem as such, but maybe you prefer to live with people who share your life-style. It will be no problem to move to such a city."

"I have to see this also as a metaphor?"

"Yes. In the way, that it's valid for everything."

"I've more and more the feeling that this world offers for everyone a place where he will find his freedom."

"Please don't forget, we have still rules and we have still regulations."

"But they are of fundamental nature? Not in the way that they govern everything in every detail?"

"This also depends a bit in which frame we're moving. Global transport should have global rules, otherwise it will not function. But that not means that everything has to be the same everywhere."

"And you can decide where you wanna live - this really gives you a lot of freedom. What when I would decide to live in a very special way, but not violating the rules. Maybe I will not be alone and we decide to found a new city. Would this be possible?"

"Why it shouldn't?"

"But who would build this city for instance?"

"Wait a moment, we will visit some other places in this city. For the moment. It would be possible. We believe that everyone should have the right to find it's own way....."

".....as long he not violates the rules."

"Yes, and as you have found out, the basic rules are couched in a very fundamental way. One of the basic ones is to respect other people."

"Can I ask you a question, we not talked about families so far."

"But we will, and we have to."

"What, when I love a woman but she not me. Love still exists today - or?"

"Yes, and we're again at the point that this world is no paradise. You would have to accept it, and it is also not easy today to do so. Also still today it's a major topic of art to have a broken heart, unrequited love - I said it before, not every wish will come true, also not today."

"So it's more a question how someone behaves in such a situation?"

"Yes."

"And when he acts in an inadequate manner."

"You ask about courts, jails and such things?"

"For instance."

"We have found other solutions. We try to help somebody in such an situation. It's no crime to have a broken heart."

"But it would be a crime to act in an inadequate manner. At least if the person acts very aggressive."

"We have no jails anymore, but in the way you need a hospital after an accident, we have also places to help people who have problems therewith to control themselves."

"Psychiatric hospitals?"

"I not would call them so. And today we live in different way. I give you another example. What when someone becomes mentally ill. We can treat a lot today, but there are still limits. Maybe this person becomes aggressive - should we punish this person? We try to help this person as much as possible."

"But there are limits - no paradise."

"No, unfortunately not."

"But crime as such?"

"Why, to steal money?"

"Crime of passion - murder?"

"It's a long time ago that that happened. We have changed, have learned that we have a responsibility for our deeds and for other people. But again this is no perfect world. Maybe someone dies because you acted negligently - no paradise! But should we send you to jail then?"

"But no consequences?"

"I not said that it will have no consequences. But jail?"

"What kind of consequences?"

"First, this person has to live with the knowledge that someone died because of him. Then we talk about it, but not to pillory this person, but to learn from it, to try to do it better in the future."

"This society of today? Twenty thousand years since the ninety-nine thousand. How long it needed till this society reached this status?"

"You can answer this question yourself."

"Twenty thousand years - obviously....."

"Yes, and the development still continues."

"The space stations, the moon.....everything changes all the time."

"Yes, and that's good so. Otherwise the development that led to this world wouldn't had been possible."

"But you never know the future."

"Never you will."

"Looks like a shopping mall. There people get their goods for the daily live?"

"Yes. And again it's not that different as at your time."

"But you need no money. You go in and take what you want?"

"Say, you can take what you need."

"Okay. It would make no sense to go in and grab a lot of food that I cannot eat. But who decides what goods are offered, for instance clothes?"

"Look at the clothes the people wear?"

"Various styles, but who designed them?"

"Culture? Some people like it to create clothes. But there're also traditions. We have no dress code anymore, clothes not define a social status anymore. You can wear whatever you wanna."

"But someone has to produce them, on what basis – supply and demand?"

“We will see this when we visit a larger city. At a town like this we have no places of production for a larger area. All over the town you will find places where someone produces something because he like it to do so. When he produces more than he needs for his own it’s for everyone. Some make their own clothes, and sometimes also for others.”

“And when many like his clothes? Who gets something and who not?”

“When more people wanna them than this person can produce, it would be possible to produce it in factories. Fashion is a good example. Someone starts with something and it becomes popular. Today we have different possibilities to produce things. It will be no problem at all.”

“And food? This is not that easy. Say, that everyone wants to eat a special fruit, what then?”

“Food is different because it’s also connected with climate, seasons and more. We will see later in which ways we produce food today. But what we not do is that everything has to be available all the time at every place on earth. In a way this would be possible nowadays, but it would cost a lot of resources and it’s still a valid truth. Food tastes best when it’s grown in a natural way. But this limits the availability.”

“Do a place like this provides “exotic” food? Say from the other side of the world?”

“Sometimes and as far as it makes sense. Some food can transported easily. But this are more or less exceptions. But also today we use preservation methods. Not all food can be eaten immediately. And think about places with an extremer climate.”

“So there are places where everything will be produced, connected to larger cities. They can produce everything that’s needed. But apart from that also people produce things because they like to do it. Maybe I like it to have my own garden because I like gardening, to have own tomatoes and salad. But maybe I have more then I can eat, then I can give them to others. Maybe I like to make hats. But then I have made enough for me, then I can begin therewith to make more and give them to others. Apart from that, if I like to have a hat I can get one at a place like this. Is this correct so far?”

“That’s the basic structure. But realize that this is a grown structure, it works with feedback. Maybe you see a hat today, you like it but not take it. Maybe in two months you think you wanna have it now. It can happen that this hat is no longer available because there was no longer a demand for it. But you would have opportunities. First you can order it. It will take a bit of time, but then you can get it. And then you can ask somebody in the town or in another town whether he would make you one. As I said, it’s a grown structure. Grown over thousands of years and it changes all the time. As we built the first space station for living on it. And now we build the first small city on the moon. Totally new structures are needed now. And on a space station you think in a different way about “exotic” fruits and hats.”

“You need an enormous and complex economic system to handle this!”

“It started twenty thousand years ago with one city. Then it grew over the time. Thousands of years it spread out more and more. With every new city the system grew. But see, twenty thousand years are a very long time. We have learned that you should take your time. We go step by step, and it functions very well.”

“But can you say, that there are people who are more progressive then others, more “productive” then others?”

“You should not mix both. The second. What does “productive” means? We still have sport events. One will be the fastest, but means that, that the runner up is a loser? I know in your time the answer was: Yes! But today we celebrate the event as such. We look at the personal effort. Maybe the runner up becomes runner up with his personal record – he’s a winner then, or? And even when he was the last runner at the finish line with no personal best? He was part of the event, he did something, he tried to do his best, therefore he did the same like the winner with a new world record.”

“But whom the people will remember? The winning runner or the runner who’s the last one?”

“Take your device!”

“You mean, it will give me the information, who was the last in a sports event last year in this town?”

“Why not? That’s something that’s no problem for us today. Every town or city has a data center. All what happens in the town or city will be stored there. Because you can link yourself to it with your device, you can get such information.”

“And artistic work?”

“Everybody can present his work there. When you make hats you can present them there. When you have too much tomatoes you can offer them there. When you write poems you can present them there. But you also can store your work there for all the time.”

“So it would be possible to find poems written thousands of years ago by someone in this city?”

“Written by someone at every place on earth.”

“Isn’t there a risk in that?”

“You mean that data can get lost?”

“Yes.”

“This problem you have all the time, whatever way you choose to store data. But we have back-ups, we store data not only in one way, we store data at very protected areas. We lost that much data over long parts of human history. Today we do everything to keep as much data as possible.”

“You know much about my time?”

“It’s interesting that we know relatively much about the first thousands of years of human culture, including your time. But for instance the times after the global nature catastrophes, the times of the great wars, not to talk about the last war. There are periods of thousands of years about them we know nearly nothing. But also at that time there were people who created art, people who thought about themselves, about what happened at their time. But all this is lost and that’s a pity.”

“Brings me back to the question of the progressive people.”

“Again it’s the question what you mean with “progressive”. You need both, the change but also to retain things. It’s not always easy to keep the balance and as you maybe can imagine now you will find places at earth where people live who wanna keep things more and places where people live who are more interested in change.”

“A place like this is more interested to retain things, people on space stations and on the moon are more interested in change – at least as a simple rule?”

“As a simple rule – yes. The next city we will visit will be very different to this city. I started with this city because you’re used to many things like they are here. If you like it to express it in that way, this is a relative conservative town.”

“I would like it, to live here. But I’m also very interested to go on, the capitol, not to speak about a space station or maybe even the moon.”

“And isn’t it a calming moment that, after you have seen this places, after you have experienced them, that you can decide then where you wanna live?”

“On the moon?”

“Okay, you got me! At the moment only two hundred people live there, and most of them are there to build the first city. This city will be for around five hundred people. Apart from other things you have to be physically fit to live there. The circumstances will be very extreme there.”

“You’ve said that you will live there in the future maybe, if I remember it correctly?”

“Yes. People who lived for a longer time on a space station or even where born on a space station, like I, get preferred when it comes to the decision who will live on the moon in the first city. We will see how good it will function. A whole new infrastructure will be necessary to provide so many people with all what they need. The space stations are one thing, but the moon is thing for it own. When it will function we will expand the city or will build new cities. Then it will become more easy to live on the moon. As I said, we have learned to take our time.”

“And that not all wishes can come true.”

“That’s right. And don’t forget that not everyone wants to live at the moon! To spend some time there maybe, but to live there constantly? It’s like with the space stations. Many people like it to stay there for some time, but to live on a space station constantly is no easy thing.”

“Would I have to wait a long time to get the opportunity to stay on a space station for some time?”

“It depends a bit how long you wanna stay. When it would be your first time, you not would have to

wait long. But don't forget, that to stay on a space station is no easy thing for an untrained person, even not for a limited time. And it's not everybody's wish to stay on a space station."

"And then you've said that's part of education, that every youth person should stay on a space station at least one time. To see earth from there, to see this blue sphere."

"Yes, that's something very important. Many come back and will tell you that that travel has changed everything for them."

"That brings me to the topic of education. How is this organized today?"

"There are different components. First, there are basics that are the same for everybody on earth."

"The basic language and basic rules and regulations?"

"For instance. Then knowledge in mathematics, biology, history and such subjects. But not in the way that you have to learn things. The idea is to understand things, to learn how you can achieve knowledge."

"The device."

"How to use the device is very important. But there are also other means you can use to gain knowledge. You not should simply learn certain things, you should discover what you're good in, what interests you most. The same with art. Young people can try things and gain basic knowledge about the subjects. Music as example. You can test different instruments to find the one you're most interested in. Maybe you will become a master on this instrument, maybe it will become a hobby. That's not important."

"So, this part is meant to get the basics, that you can try to find out what's interesting for you."

"Yes. That not excludes that you're interested in many things. You not have to specialize yourself. For instance, you can be interested in very different things at the same time like playing piano, agriculture and exploring the origin of the universe, all at the same time. It's on you. But because you not have to earn money with your education we can see this in a different way. Education, knowledge, is for you."

"How long a young person has to stay at school – are there still schools?"

"Yes, in this town there are several schools. But there is no special time plan. You can stay the time you need and wish. As said, there's a basis everybody learns, a basis that's worldwide the same. And this is no subject of discussion today. That not excludes that a young person stops school to do something and continues with school later again. But as a rule he has to get the basic knowledge. And then there's a second part of the basic knowledge. The knowledge that's important for the town, the region you live. This can be a very different knowledge. You live at a desert, at a polar region, on a space station – you need very different knowledge at different places."

"And then you can specialize if you wish?"

"Yes. For the basic knowledge we have still schools. Also for more advanced knowledge. If you wish to specialize further more you normally learn in very small groups or even from a personal teacher. It depends for instance whether talking about science or art."

"But the schools – you still have teachers?"

"Robots? You once asked about why we have no chips implanted. We wanna stay humans nowadays, we believe that humans are good for humans. Many people enjoy it, to share their knowledge with the next generation. We have no problem to have enough real teachers! But that not means that we not use technique. Think about the device. But this are tools to work with."

"So you don't do everything that would be possible, also in this area."

"No, our young people should be raised by humans not by automates. They have to learn the living together, that's a matter of humanity."

"And families today? Man and woman, children and a house?"

"If you like to live this way?"

"Why I'm not surprised about your answer?"

"Maybe you understand our culture more and more?"

"So there are many possibilities to live together. Okay, that was also possible, more or less, at my time."

"The difference is for example that you not have to earn money. A single mother with two children

at your time?”

“She will have a lot of problems to make her living. So this problem is no longer. Yes, that changes a lot of things. Marriage today? I know, when you like to live in that way.”

“Exactly! The point is, that you have a lot of possibilities today. And today society no longer discuss such things because there’s no reason for it. Homosexuality for instance. At your time this was still a large topic. Homosexuals even had to fear about their lives at your time. We not discuss this today anymore, because it’s of no importance anymore.”

“Sorry for that question, but a man with more than one woman, an old man with a very young woman?”

“A woman with more than one man? Let me begin with the other. We believe that young people have all rights to develop. That means that they have to have the freedom to do this. Adults should not interfere to this, and not only in the area of sexuality. But without any doubt is sexuality a special topic. Young people should find their way together with other young people. Does this excludes that an older man lives together with a much younger woman, or the other way round? No, but this is very seldom today. Don’t forget, that also a single person not have to work, she not have to earn money. When two people decide to live together today, than because they feel attracted by each other, economic reasons are obsolete.”

“But what I meant is whether there are rules about age, age to live together.”

“We have no distinct rules as such. Apart from that people can give themselves rules when they accept this rules as a group. But we have the basic rule that young people should have the freedom to find there own way. Apart from that that not every person develops in the same way, we conceive somebody as a young person, at least till his twentieth birthday. We also conceive somebody as a very young person, at least till his fourteenth birthday.”

“When I understand you right, you have different steps in becoming an adult person. And the adult persons not should interfere too much when this young people try to find their ways. To say it straight away, would it be allowed that an adult would have a sexual relationship with a fourteen year old boy or girl?”

“Oh, no! It’s a rule that they develop their sexuality with partners that are around their age.”

“And when a group would decide that this should be okay?”

“That would not be allowed. Now I understand you. For us it’s important that young people have every freedom to develop. Was child marriage at your time a question of love? I don’t think so. In one way we separate the worlds of the young people and the adults, in another way we mix both worlds. We give children all time they need to be children, and maybe we stay all the time more or less children. To keep the childish curiosity for instance. But we give young people all the time the possibility to interact with the adult world when they wish to do it. But when we talk about sexuality, then we have the rules that this worlds are separated. We have learned that this makes it easier for the young people to develop their sexuality. And as said, we know that the subject of loving a young or very young person was not that much a question of loving another person, than much more a question about to dominate another person.”

“Would this exclude that it would be possible that an adult person falls in love with a person that’s one year too young?”

“What hinders the adult person to give the young person another year? I not said that it wouldn’t be okay that they meet or spend time together. Sexuality is a very difficult topic, but we have found our rules and we think today that it’s a very positive way that we found. And the most important thing is what the young people think. From my side I can tell you, that it’s very liberating when you’re allowed to find your own sexuality together with other young people who are around your age.”

“Unwanted pregnancy?”

“Contraceptives – for men and women.”

“And if it happens anyway?”

“This happens very seldom today. But there are at least no economic reasons anymore that would be a problem. Normally the woman will carry the child to full term then. There are different possibilities then. For examples there are couples who can’t have children. It’s very seldom today

that a woman has an abortion. Most of the time it's because of medical reasons. But as a rule has a woman the right to the last decision."

"What's in my mind now is, what when a young person not wants to live in the way the parents live. Not at the same place, not in the same way. Can this young person live for it's own? There is no need to earn money."

"As a rough rule a young person lives till around his sixteenth to nineteenth birthday with his parents. But there are no distinct rules. At a certain point a young person will decide what he wants to do. This can be earlier or later, and this decision is not finally of course."

"What happens when your getting old?"

"Well, it depends....."

"Okay, sure, it depends on whether you stay fit or not. But what I meant was whether old people are still part of the society. And furthermore, what when you're no longer able to care for yourself?"

"Old people are a substantial part of society. They have a lot of knowledge, important knowledge. Again, never forget, that you not work for money. There is no retirement. You can work as long as you want. You will be well-respected as an old person, when you wish to share your knowledge and hand it to the next generations."

"And when you're no longer able to care for yourself?"

"Then there will be persons who will help you, support you, will help you to continue to live a live in dignity. Old people are honored by our society today, they are no burden for society."

"And when someone wishes to live no longer, maybe because of an illness?"

"Also this is very seldom today, also because of illness. But it happens, like someone can become unwanted pregnant. And as there, the rule is: In the end the person decides upon himself. That not means that we won't talk with this person about the decision. But the final decision is on him. That is one of our basic rules."

"No paradise."

"No, no paradise."

"I hope I could give you some first impressions about the world today while staying in this town."

"Yes, even when I have to admit that a lot stays unclear to me. But I look forward to our next aim."

"But our next aim will be no other town or city. Our next aim will be a scientific center. I will show you something about today's science."

"I have read some articles. But I have to say that I understand not that much. A problem is that you use a very different formalism today."

"It's not that much about scientific results. It's more about how scientific research is organized today. You also will gain more knowledge about today's education, about the youth and about older people."

"Will it be a longer travel?"

"The distance will be longer this time. Not that there wouldn't be a scientific center not that far away, but I think it will be interesting for you to use different means of transportation."

"Very interested. What will we use?"

"First we will use a normal train to the next larger city. There we will change to an underground fast train. This train will bring us to our aim."

"Where is our aim? Still in the former Europe? Underground fast train?"

"In the region of the former country of Bulgaria. And yes, the underground fast train, the UFT, is a very special train."

"How long we will need for the travel?"

"Let yourself be surprised!"

A Science Center

We used a bus from our house to the train station. As everything in the city, where all looked in a certain way very familiar to me, also the train station. It was a nice building with a small, but very beautiful hall. Some tables and chairs for them who wanna sit down, you could get some beverage, some small dishes and books and newspapers – all much like I was used to.

“Have we to wait till the train arrives?”

“Only around ten minutes. You wanna have something to drink?”

“Can we have something to drink or eat on the train?”

“Of course. But we will need only twenty-five minutes till our first aim, the next larger city, where we will change to the UFT.”

“Then let us go to the track.”

We left the hall and at the track I saw my first surprise.

“Well, the rail looks a bit different then at my time, but I’ve the feeling that I saw something like this before.”

“That’s possible. It’s a further development of a technique you know as magnetic levitation technology.”

“Yes, it was used but not that much.”

“This is our favorite technique when we travel medium distances.”

“And the train we will use after this is for larger distances.”

“Yes, especially when you not leave the continent you are.”

“Planes?”

“Very useful when you travel to another continent.”

“Is it still important today to travel fast? In my time it was always the question.”

“Sometimes it can be important, but normally you have more time today. But maybe you also underestimate the speed of the trains. But for instance you can use ships to travel from one side of the world to the other. It depends all the time on, why you travel.”

“So it would be also possible for us to use a plane for our travel?”

“Yes, but we will use planes later.”

“You want to show me different possibilities of today’s transport, that’s good. And maybe we will use spaceships later?”

“I think so. At least I will show you the place I’m born and raised up.”

“But step by step.”

“Yes – our train arrives.”

The train was an astonishing sight. The best comparison I could find were the Japanese fast trains of my time. It looked impressive and elegant, painted in a sparkling red color.

“Is there still a train driver?”

“No, all means of transportation use a system based on satellites. Control centers operate everything.”

“Also planes?”

“Yes.”

“Does accidents happen?”

“The biggest accident that normally happens is that a train has to stop or cannot drive with maximum speed. A plane cannot land at the planned time, things like these.”

“You said that a scientist died in a car accident.”

“Yes, but he was not in the car. The car drove down a street and he walked down the street. He overlooked the car, but that was not the problem. The cars can react very fast and stop very fast, but he was startled and fell. His head hit the ground very unlucky and he died within minutes. Such things can also happen today.”

We had boarded the train, our baggage was stored in an extra compartment. The seats were very comfortable and with a lot of space. The train was almost full and I had the feeling that some of the passengers looked at us.

"At the cafe they said that they know me. Does everybody knows me?"

"You're no secret. Everybody can know you."

"Should I talk with them?"

"Only if you like to do so."

"To be honest, at the moment.....how fast we drive now?"

"Over 400 miles per hour. You can use this little screen if you're interested in to get information about such things."

"We had trains in our time the were nearly as fast."

"The next train will be a bit faster. The important point is that this is no single route. We have networks of routes linked to each other who offer you a lot of possibilities to travel from one place to another."

"And the next stop is our aim?"

"Yes."

I looked out of the window. The soft green hills, a small forest, no signs of farming. Then the city appeared at the horizon and became very fast larger and larger.

"We will not see much of that city?"

"No, we will only change the trains."

"I will see the train station."

"Only a part of it."

"Um....."

"This city is not that different to the city we where. Larger, but here life is not that different. We will see this later."

We crossed housing areas who looked like the one where we stayed for some time. Then suddenly we were there. This railway station had obviously more tracks, but in fact everything looked not that different. We left the train and got our baggage that we stored on a kind of baggage cart. We walked to the next elevator.

"The UFT, we will have stopovers?"

"Yes, two. We will drive to a city nearby the scientific center first. From there to the center we will use something you will like."

"It's a long distance and only two stopovers. This city has to be an important one."

"In this city are the important control centers for this region."

Then the door of the elevator opened and a very different world awaited me.

A huge hall opened up, bathed in artificial light that appeared absolutely like normal sunlight. And in fact was the first I did to look up, but there where no windows. The ceiling, as the walls, was covered with wonderful images.

"This are mosaics?"

"Yes, every station has it's style. You like it?"

"Yes, very much. They all refer to the city?"

"That's right. Some show important buildings or important moments from the city's history. Also some persons are depicted. They are connected with the city in the one ore other way. This are Emilie and Francois Simon. They were the first who lived at this place that should become this city."

"How long ago is this?"

"Nearly ten thousand years."

"Wow, that's a very large period - at least for someone like me. It's strange, we looked back at four or five thousand years of modern culture. I see no tracks?"

"This here is the hall for the travelers, to change trains or means of transport, to wait. We will use a train now that was already tested in your time."

"A vacuum train?"

"Yes, we have to use a double door system that's connected with the train."

"But it's build as an underground train. If I'm not wrong, than it was planned in my days that the train should drive overground."

"For shorter distances yes, but for the longer distances we use this system, it's easier to build it underground."

"Earthquakes?"

"We have a very good warning system today and the UFT is build earthquake-proof. But we're again at that point: No paradise. It's a long time ago now that something severe has happened, that people become injured. But this not means that not every day something severe can happen."

"How fast is this train?"

"Top speed is over one thousand miles per hour. But in the normal usage the train not travels with this speed. Also it depends on the distance to the next station and other things. And now we should enter our train. Unfortunately you will not see that much of the train as such, from the outside. As I said, will we use a double door system, that's all you will see till we're inside."

The double door system was not that interesting, functional, that was all. But that changed inside the train. Four rows of comfortable looking seats, divided by a broad central aisle. Comfort was no question.

"You have a lot of space as a traveler today."

"It's no longer a question of achieving money."

We took our seats and I waited till the train would begin to drive, but nothing happened.

"Don't worry, our travel has already begun. The train accelerates very slow for the first moment. But then more and more, you nearly feel nothing about it. You have again an information center, there you can get all the information you want."

"No windows, what can you do?"

"You have also an entertainment center. You can use your device. We can have a conversation, you can talk with other travelers. But I would suggest that we eat and drink something?"

"That's a good idea, I'm hungry and thirsty. Is there a dining car?"

"Yes, we can eat and drink something here or there."

"Then I would prefer the dining car."

We walked to the dining car and sat down at a nice table. A man came to us and we ordered something to drink and something to eat.

"I still have my problem therewith that this man serves us. And someone has to make our meals. Why do they do this, when they not have to do it? Why do they do this work? What, when they decide to do something else - then no meals and service anymore? Who hires them?"

"First, we're a community. And I mean with this that all people on this world feel as one community. No one forces you to do something, especially not something specific. But we all know, that this world needs our work to function. Who hires them is a good question. The city where we were. There's an office that lists all the positions that should be staffed. This not means to operate a cafe, that's a private thing. But for instance, all the positions that have to be staffed to manage the train station. You can go there and sign up for a position."

"But when nobody signs up for a specific position, what then?"

"What happened at your time, if a position was not staffed?"

"Okay, but.....it's all on a voluntary basis? Why do this functions?"

"Because we work together? Because this man is not lower then me, because he brings me my meal and I sit here and will eat it? What do you think? On the space station, what do you think I did there?"

"You said that your a specialized doctor."

"I mean the time when I studied, in my youth."

"Well.....I don't know."

"There's a lot of work to do on a space station, and this work has to be done. For some time I worked also for the maintenance. It's not a must, but it's recommended. It's recommendable that you should have some knowledge about how a space station functions, when you live on one. But I

also worked at a restaurant for some years. You would say in part time."

"But that's a good example. One day you decided to work there no longer. Also not for the maintenance. But when nobody would follow you, what then? No one will bring you your meal?"

"Apart from that I've worked in the kitchen, when you think about that you want to end a certain work, then you notify this."

"But to whom?"

"I have mentioned an office that lists all positions that should be staffed. Such an office, if it's no private initiative like a cafe or a restaurant. Then you talk with your colleagues."

"But is this not very risky? I've the impression that this system is very unstable."

"We're a community, we've learned to work together. But then there's another point. We work not to earn money, we have not to achieve a profit, and other points you have to consider. For example you have not to work for a certain amount of hours every week to make your living. A hypothetical position that was staffed with one person at your time is staffed at our time normally with three till five persons. It's not that difficult then, when you decide to do something else."

"That means that the man who brought us our meals, not works for five days a week and forty hours at this train - that's the point?"

"Yes, maybe he works one or two days here, but maybe also more. This depends on him."

"And the other days it would be possible that he does totally different things?"

"Yes, normally every person does various things."

"And this includes also something like art as a normal element of you life?"

"Yes, more or less every person expresses himself in the one or the other way via art. This is very common."

"And you?"

"I write."

"Can I find your writing with the device?"

"Sure, maybe you will like it."

We were back at our seats and I got somewhat tired. A sad thing was that we couldn't see something of the other station halls during our stopovers. The train was connected with the halls in the same way as there, where we had entered the train, via the double door system. Therefore you couldn't see the halls directly, only via the information center. I begun to doze, all this new information and impressions every day.....

"Sorry that I interrupt you, but we will arrive at our destination soon."

"Oh, I was fallen in sleep somewhat."

A few minutes later the train arrived and we left it. This hall was even larger then the one we entered the train. Again a lot of images, but this time obviously paintings. Some referred to science, astronomy for example, others showed persons.

"I guess this are famous scientists?"

"Yes, this paintings are a forerunner for the place that is our aim."

"The scientific center."

"Yes. But now we should pick up our baggage first."

We walked to a baggage claim and waited for a short moment till we got our baggage. Then we stood for a moment in the hall to look at the pictures.

"This woman we will meet. She will show us the scientific center."

"So, she's an important scientist?"

"Yes, she works on the field of biochemistry."

"In our time we normally honored only deceased persons in such a way."

"You honored scientists in your time with the Nobel price. Maybe you can compare this two things."

"But this leads me again to this question. A "normal" person will be not depicted here, so there are

still differences between the people."

"I never said, that all persons are the same in that way that, for example, they will be all groundbreaking scientists or musicians. But the difference to your time is, that nothing follows out of it. This means they have no privileges, they are not more or less than any other person."

"But they are depicted here."

"Yes, because this station is dedicated to the science center. Don't forget that we collect as much as possible. That we store as much as possible. You've forgotten?"

"No, you mean the example of the sports event."

"Yes. Okay, this is a special place, a prominent place. In that sense you're right. This depicted people are emphasized people. But this not means that they have privileges or that they will be treated like somebody special."

"If you allow me than I would disagree."

"You have any right to disagree!"

"Well, the musician you like that much. The concert, you would had liked it to meet her. Isn't she someone special to you?"

"Oh yes! She's someone very special for me! But this not means that she's someone very special as such, as a person. She would have not more right to get something, to do something, than I have it."

"Say, at a cafe there would be no free seats anymore and she would like to drink a coffee. Would you offer her your seat?"

"She would not accept this."

"Are you sure?"

"As I said, we learned something....."

We used a passageway and a moving sidewalk to reach a smaller hall. There we checked in our baggage again and entered an elevator.

"I think you will like it."

"What is it?"

"Wait and see."

We left the elevator and stood in a hall again. But this time we were overground and the hall, not that large, was built by glass nearly only. On one side you could see an airfield. But no airplanes stood there, the aircraft were much smaller, but of different size.

"Air taxis?"

"Yes, also a possibility today. This city is much larger than the last one. We also could use a train or a car to the scientific center, but this is also a possibility we have."

"When you use which mean of transport?"

"This depends on many circumstances. Also today some are afraid of flying, maybe a train would be better then. Or maybe a car when your aim would be a house in the city."

We had to wait for a shorter time, then we were called. We walked to our gate and a small car brought us to our air taxi. It was for a maximum of four people and had no pilot.

"No pilot?"

"No pilot. Still a bit strange for you?"

"Yes, will we fly alone?"

"It seems so."

"Is this not uneconomic? There are smaller air taxis."

"Yes, but maybe at the scientific center they need air taxis of this size. This could be a reason that we use an air taxi of this size."

"And we have to do nothing, only to lean back?"

"We've checked in, our baggage is stored, they know our aim, that's all we have to do. Therefore, yes. Lean back and enjoy the flight."

The flight was not very long and after no fifty minutes I saw the area of the scientific center. A large

building surrounded by several other buildings of different sizes.

"The large building is where the teachings, lectures or meetings are taken place. Also the administration is there as well as places like the dining halls. Most of the other buildings host various faculties with their institutes and research establishments. But this not means that everything is here. Think about astronomy. Their instruments you can find at particularly suitable places around the world, at the space stations, some orbiting the earth or are located on the moon. They can be controlled from here, or from other scientific institutes around the world."

"Where will we stay?"

"In the wood to our left are several smaller buildings and houses where all the people from the institute live. We will stay there also, it's like a small town."

"So there are not only scientists there?"

"No, of course not. But you will see that some things are different to your time. We will start with this tomorrow. Today we will take up our quarters and then.....how about a walk in the wood before we cook our dinner?"

"Sounds not that bad. And I think the fridge will be filled?"

"Yes, there are staff members that arranged this for us. But this also lets the possibility that the person who filled our fridge is our neighbor. It's announced that we will come, and maybe our neighbor will undertake the task to fill our fridge. Say, that he planned to fill his, so why not ours also."

We had a light breakfast to start our first day at the science center.

"Behind the building is a parking lot. We will use one of the vehicles there to drive around here."

The vehicles reminded me of golf cars. Obviously they were electrically driven, but again there was no steering wheel or something like that.

"You miss something?"

"A bit. You tell the vehicle where you want to drive to?"

"Yes, an area like this has an own automatized driving system for such vehicles. That means, that you can not use them to drive to the city as an example."

"And when you're not sure about your aim?"

"It's enough when you enter something like: To the astronomical institute, or, to the administration. The vehicle will bring you to your aim."

"That's cool. I simply tell the vehicle our aim?"

"In the moment we sit down, the vehicle notices that someone is in and awaits your wish for your aim. You can tell your aim or type it, whatever you want."

It was a short ride and after some enjoyable minutes we reached the large building.

"You know where we have to go?"

"We have an appointment with our host in the lobby at 10am."

"The woman from the station hall."

"Yes, she will guide us and she will give you some insights of today's scientific research."

We entered the large lobby and we were awaited. We decided to sit down in a nice small seating area first, from which there were many in the whole lobby.

"So, you're interested in today's science?"

"Well, I did some research with the device. I have to confess that I have some problems to understand many things. I was also no scientist in my time and you use a very different formalism today."

"That's no surprise. You will need some time to get a feeling for it."

"Can I ask you a basic question?"

"Of course."

"All people are treated equally today, but I think not all will understand what you scientists do here. No conflicts due to this?"

"My area of studies is biochemistry. Don't ask me whether I understand everything what the physics publish. I also understand not everything what artists do, but why this should cause conflicts?"

"A scientific center like this costs a lot of money. Okay, today you have no money any longer, but then I can say that this institute "costs" a lot of effort. Only to think about it, to run such a facility."

"Only a short interruption before you answer him the question. Our next aim will give you more insights to such questions how we organize our economy today."

"Scientific research today has no other aim at first, than to gain knowledge. We try to collect and to retain everything. You never know what will be important in the future maybe. And this leads to the next point. Sure, it's interesting when a research result is usable, when it causes progress, but that's no inevitable necessity for scientific research."

"But who decided that you can carry out your research here, or at another scientific center, and not someone else?"

"Everybody who wishes to research can research."

"And when I would like to research on the same field like you, say here at this scientific center? Okay, on the premise that I would have the necessary knowledge."

"Then I would welcome you."

"There is no economic pressure today anymore, that's the reason for it?"

"Yes, that's the basis for many changes that will, have to, puzzle you in the world today."

"And there's no rivalry today anymore? You're depicted at the train station, not someone else?"

"No, look at my situation today. I was for some years, without any doubt, the leading scientist in my field. I published some groundbreaking papers about biochemistry. But now a new generation accrued. My function now is teaching this generation and to support them. The next groundbreaking papers will not be published by me, but maybe by someone I taught."

"And when you see that your research was wrong, that someone else found the clue, that....."

".....sorry when I interrupt you. We're no emotionless persons today, but this not means that we're driven by our emotions. The failure is as important in science as the success. Sometimes it's very important to see that something is at least not as thought, as you thought. You like the failure as person? No, I researched two years on a phenomena connected to a special kind of brain cells. Another scientist showed that my idea was wrong. Was I happy about it? Not in the sense that my idea was wrong, but in the sense that science took another step. But it's very economic what science does. You have a problem and different possibilities for the solution. What to do? You not know, obviously, at the beginning what way will be the best, maybe even none of the ways will offer the solution. The best strategy? To walk on all possible ways at the same time and look whereto they will lead. But that means that some have to fail, but maybe one way will lead you to the aim. In the end this is very economic in that sense, that it make it possible to science to create a fast progress. Not to stick to one opinion, not to think that only one way is possible, the pluralism of thinking, the openness of the result, this and more is the basis of the scientific success."

"In my time we had the problem that the world changed to fast for many people. Especially in connection with technique."

"We change not everything immediately today. It's also a matter of economic. Also we see that some developments are in a stage that we need not every possible change anymore. Think to public transport. It would be possible to increase the fastness of trains, the UTR and more. But for what? This not means that we will not establish a new mean of transportation in the future maybe, but there's no reason to hurry."

"And you also decided that you wish to stay as humans, that the human component is important for the human living together."

"Absolutely! I think you will see at your next aim how wide-reaching the degree of technologization is today?"

"Yes, we will visit then some places of fabrication for example. We have talk about that we're not interested in implants for example, that our teachers are no robots, and such things."

"Then I can skip this. But yes, we are humans and we wish to stay as humans and we like it to be

among humans. Robots are useful in special areas. But in our daily live we don't need them. You can see our cars as robots if you like it, we use robots here for executing dangerous experiments, but we need no robots to prepare a cup of coffee."

"AI?"

"No. There was a time in the human development when they thought that this would be a solution, but also mixed with diffuse fears. We have decided to use our own brains, we use computers that are far beyond your ken, how powerful they are, but intelligent? Sure, it depends somewhat on your definition of intelligence. They can learn, learn from mistakes for example, but intelligence seems to be a bit more then to calculate two plus two as fast as possible. Our brains are more then calculators."

"But when I understand you right? This society could create more, than the society does it at the end."

"Yes and no. We have send probes at many places of our solar system. They are equipped with very advanced computers. In some ways you can say they are intelligent, but not like you and I."

"But would you capable to create something that was thought in my time as principally possible, a real AI?"

"There was a time, as this was the human dream, but it was no useful dream. It was a time, when it was still a common thinking that war has to be a part of the human world. The development pointed more and more towards a disaster, then a catastrophe happened."

"I've told you that earth underwent some major nature catastrophes. It was the time before the large asteroid hit earth. In history it's a point of discussion what would have happened when this development would had continued. As always in such cases, there's no final answer. But this was one of the points where the ninety-nine thousands have decided to do it in a different way. And the last twenty thousand years gave no reason to change this. Yes, we not do everything we could do, but this seems not to be a stupid decision."

"I've heard that you're interested in astronomy?"

"Yes, that's true."

"Then we should visit the astronomical institute?"

"But I'm also interested in biochemistry."

"We can visit both institutes and even more when you like it. Let's start with astronomy."

We arrived at the astronomical institute and a man greeted us. He led us into the institute.

"I hope you're not disappointed, but we have no instruments here. From this institute we only control them."

"That was also very common in my time. Nevertheless would it be interesting to see a modern telescope."

"The problem with this is that optical telescope are no longer ground-based. You can find them in the orbit, at space stations or on the moon. On earth we run only some radio telescopes today."

"Instruments for neutrinos or gravitation waves?"

"Also only a few of them you will find on earth today. We use more and more the moon to run such instruments as well."

"How you became an astronomer?"

"I was interested in the stars since I was a little boy. During my time in school I started to concentrate on astronomy more and more. So I became an astronomer, at least most of the time."

"You also do other things? Art?"

"Yes, also art, but not that much at the moment. One of the pictures in the UFT station hall is by me."

"Oh, you only made the draft or you painted it as well?"

"I painted it as well. But at the moment I like to cook for example. I'm also very interested in the historic time after the outbreak of the North American super volcano. How live recovered after it. I

am no specialist, but I have published a few papers about this subject."

"This is a very interesting element of today's life for me. That everybody has various interests."

"More or less. Sometimes you concentrate on one subject only, some of us are extremely specialized. But the point is, talking about science, that you normally have some very creative years. During this years you often concentrate on your special subject. But there's a time before that and especially a time after that."

"Is the time after it a time, to concentrate more on teaching then?"

"If you like to do so. Some decide to do totally different things after their creative time as a scientist. Some will stay their whole time here. When you get more insights about a place like this you will discover that people of very different age are at this place. Some are very young, but highly knowing for their age, some are very old, but we're very interested to have their wisdom of age still here."

"But to step back, that's also not easy today - or?"

"I think that depends on your personality. I think for me it will be hard in one way. No longer controlling this instruments, no longer to be an active part of this institute. But then I think about, that I have no real time for painting at the moment - I'm not sure how it will feel in this moment."

"You have found definitive signs of life on other planets, but you still have problems with the question about intelligent life."

"Yes, the first part is easy to answer. The universe is filled with life. But the step to what we call intelligent life is a problem. Not in that sense that it's not possible at other places, but look at the history of earth. So often history could develop in another way. Life as such seems to be an automatism in the universe, but that something like intelligent life develops is obviously more difficult. And even when it develops, it's also obviously that it can pass away very easily thereafter. Caused by own faults or by reasons caused by nature."

"That would then mean that it's very likely that a planet with life as such is in the neighborhood of earth, but it's not that likely that a planet with intelligent life is in the neighborhood of earth?"

"Yes. And that raises immediately the problem with distances. Already our own galaxy is such huge, but the universe? We think that our galaxy hosts several planets with intelligent life, whatever this life would be in detail. But this also would mean, that the distance between them would be very huge, too huge. Also time is a problem. Even when an intelligent life-form will develop, how long it will stay? Time is counted in trillions of years in the universe - and no, unfortunately also today nothing like superluminal traveling."

"But with more or less the speed of light?"

"Yes, we can do this today in some ways, but it's very difficult. We have launched some space probes to reach the next stars. But it was a long and difficult process, the navigation is very difficult."

"But no sign of life? Alpha Centauri?"

"This system we have explored the best - well, it's the nearest. But no, no sign of life. As before, it is the problem with distances. The next planet from we're sure about that it hosts some kind of life is forty-five light years away."

"But is a space probe on its way to this star?"

"No, we had two times a problem with other interstellar space probes. They no reached their orbits, they crashed into their aims. But even when such a space probe reaches its orbit, the orbit will not be stable for all time. But what would this mean for a planet that hosts life? We have stopped this program till we will develop better possibilities."

"What's your fear about that?"

"It begins therewith, that you can never be absolutely sure about that, that the space probe is not contaminated in one or the other way. This could have consequences no one is able to anticipate. This is not acceptable."

"But for some while you had such a program?"

"Yes, also in this world we still learn. The idea as such is not wrong, the idea as such is simply consequent. But we came to the point, to decide that it's simply to early, that we need more time to

prepare for this step."

"And traveling within the solar system? I think you can travel very fast to the moon today, why not to the other planets?"

"Well, there's this problem with mass and acceleration. We can accelerate space probes very good today. But better I should say, smaller space probes. But from that towards a manned spacecraft is a very large step."

"But you will see that it's at least a bit faster today, to travel to the moon."

"If we travel to the moon."

"I think we will....."

We were shown the different control rooms of the institute. It was impressive to see, even if not directly, the different instruments. Later we sat together in the cafeteria to have a drink and something to eat.

"If I understand it correctly now, you've still problems to explain the beginning of the universe, the end of the universe, to explain some very fundamental issues?"

"That's true in the sense that it's not possible to give a distinct answer, a final answer. In your time you had the problem that you still have not found some of the important pieces of the puzzle, or, that you had no deeper understanding of them. Gravitation as an example. We understand many things better today, but it's very difficult, to push forward to the very fundamental basics."

"Can you give me an example?"

"Black holes, they were a limit for you. They were singularities for you, not because you not understood that singularities are not real, that they are only an expression therefore that you have reached a limitation. Today black holes are no longer singularities for us, but that not mean that we understand everything. It's maybe comparable to your understanding of neutron stars. You had some, in some ways very much, knowledge about them, but no comprehensive knowledge."

"So you pushed the limits further on, you can explain things we not understood, you even know things today, of we even had no idea that they exist. But you're still have not the ability to answer the very fundamental questions."

"Yes. A reason therefore is also that every step forward is harder to achieve then the step before. And also, don't forget that the time between your time and our time was no straight line. There where major breaks, the human civilization nearly eliminated itself. And for a longer time science was not the most important issue for the humans. We achieved a lot during the last twenty thousand years, but there're still a lot of open questions."

"Do you think today, that there will be a time that all questions will be answered?"

"Apart from that, that you can frame questions in a way that they are principally impossible to answer - no, I think it will be never be possible to find all the answers, even to all the questions that could be answered principally. And then there's a question of time. This world can end tomorrow, and without any doubt, it will end one time. This will limit the possibility to find answers. But how much? Would this period continue for a of billion years, who would be able to imagine, what all could be reached then? But the whole history of the humans tell us that this will be very unlikely. Maybe we have learned to respect us for ever, but still nature and the universe will be a restricting factor."

"Isn't it a sad thought, that the human society now has found a basis on which a stable progress for a very long time is thinkable, but that nature or maybe the universe will end this development tomorrow?"

"If this would be the final downfall of the humans - yes. But when some will continue the human history, then we hope, that we can bestow them a better restart, than we had. We try to store all our knowledge, all our creative output in a way, that it all has a chance to remain as long as possible. In a way, that it should has the chance to survive even the worst circumstances."

"The space stations, the moon?"

"For instance. Memory space is no problem today anymore. We have several independent centers where we store everything we know or do."

"A memory forever, at least till the end of our solar system?"

"From time to time we launch a space probe that carries all our knowledge. Maybe it's naive, but maybe they will stay, stay till the end of everything."

The next days we spent in different institutes. It was interesting, but also puzzling, to see the modern research facilities and the progress in science, even when it was difficult for me to understand many things. This evening, the last evening at this place, we had a dinner with some of the people I had met the last days.

"Can I ask a question to everybody around?"

"Sure."

"When you see me as a representative of my time, what do you think about my time and the people of my time?"

"It was a very difficult time, a time of radical changes."

"You did some mistakes, but it was also a time of major progress."

"Well, you have not to be diplomatic. How does somebody like me appears to you? Isn't my time something like the stone age to you? - You can answer this question frankly."

"Maybe I should say something to you. I thought this conversation will come later, but maybe this is an interesting framework for it. Please allow me still to omit the question how you came into this time. But you did and now you're here. Not everybody is happy with this.....you used the word "representative". Well, not everybody is happy, that some topics are again in this world now, in this world with your presence. That not means that later generations did everything well, as you know. So, this unhappiness is not especially connected to your time, it's connected to the former time, the time we had overcome."

"But when we talk about this we should be honest to our guest. His time did not everything wrong and for instance science had some important breakthrough moments, but.....on the other hand. For the environment, to name only this example, was his time a disaster. Especially because they did knew it better!"

"People starved to death at this time, when everybody would have had enough to eat. Demagogues had an easy job, the people were always afraid about everything and they not saw what fantastic possibilities they would have had at this time. Did you not used your device to do some historic research?"

"No, not so far. There's so much information at the moment. But especially the last days I had the feeling.....I cannot explain it exactly. In the city in which we were before, I realized that all of you know me. All of you talk with me, explain me everything I ask for. Maybe it's arrogant and.....I feel a strange distance. It's like when somebody gives you a smiles, but you have the feeling that this smile is only at the surface. When I'm wrong, please forgive me my words, but I think I should be honest about my feelings."

"This are surprising words, and brave words."

"That's true."

"Maybe I should tell him something about it. You named me one time, at the beginning, a nurse. Well, maybe I'm a spy. We do this travel, and we're still at the beginning of it, to get the feeling, whether it will be able that you can become a part of our society or not. There are concerns that you will bring with you, all this negative things for what your time stands for. You asked one time whether there're still people who try to dominate others. What when you wish to own the largest diamond that exists, something that's unique? Some fear that you will maybe behave in such a way."

"I'm only one person, not familiar with this world."

"One person can spoil everything."

"And when I fail the test?"

"That's not decided."

"And so far? Do I talk too much about this topics you're concerned about?"

"Absolutely not, on the contrary. It's good to see that you're pondering about such topics."

"You said that it would be possible for me later to decide where I wanna live, what I will do. But only when I will be acceptable for this society?"

"The point is, that we have to ensure that you're not interested in to destroy our society. Not that we think, you would be able to, at least not in an easy way, but you would be at least able to harm our society."

"But will this mean that I have to become an integrated part of today's society?"

"That's absolutely this traditional thinking of your time. Pluralism is a key element of our time. You not have to do something specific, you not have to act in a specific way. But you have to respect the decisions of other people."

"I still have the problem to see, how this all functions."

"There we have to be fair. He has still no chance to understand our society. He's still lacking too much information, to understand our society. Therefore it's impossible for him even to have an idea about, where he maybe will find it's place in our society."

"And to say it openly, so far it's very impressing to see, how you handle your situation."

"And when I will find no place for me?"

"You will, I'm sure about. It's only.....at your time, the people where very much orientated thereto to gain more and more, to be something special. That produced very strange effects, and a lot of pain and suffering. Your time destroyed the environment sustainable. And the final answer was war, a global war. The thinking of your time was horrible, and the sad thing is that you would had been able to do it better. But as if it would had been the only way - your time drowned into destruction. The people of you time in its entirety were not able to act in a consequent way. In a consequent way regarding trust. Your time was unable to build up trust, and this was its downfall. We trust each other, we respect each other, because we can do so. But now we have a problem, can we trust you? You have not to answer this question, our voyage will answer this question. And as I said it, this is only the beginning of it."

A City

"Where will we go now?"

"We will have only a very short travel this time."

"We will stay in this area? The town we arrived with the UFT?"

"Yes. This town is the center of various industries for this region. I can show you different production infrastructures. We have also a lot of agriculture around here. Look at this map."

"This is obviously the city as such, the quarters where the people live."

"Yes, that's correct. More or less the same as in the city we were before, but larger. In the city center you have a large plaza and different public buildings. But then you have also various smaller plazas and of course also parks, various sub-centers."

"Obviously no more quarters as in my time will exist today, with poor and rich people, with people of different origin and so on. Does still quarters exist as such?"

"No, not in that sense anymore. But consider, that in a part of a city live more or less the same people for a longer time together, maybe even for generations. A kind of grown community will develop. Also, as a natural development, people with same interests tend to live together. Therefore you will find parts in the city where many people live who share the same interests. But because everybody can live everywhere, there's also a large influx and outflux of people all the time. On one hand such a city is a stable community, on the other hand such a city is a very dynamic body."

"But the city as such will be not our aim?"

"No, not at first. I will show you what industrial production means today. We will visit some places of production. You see this areas on the map who surround the city? You can name them industrial areas. But we will also see what craftsmanship means today. Agriculture will be a topic, you see

farmland especially in this areas. And not at last, energy production and topics like the distribution of the produced goods and much more. We will have a larger program the next days."

"Will we move into a house in the city?"

"Yes, the next days we will use a car. I've called for one that will bring us to our new accommodation. We will use it also to drive to our aims."

"This is a map of the industrial complex we're now."

"This is a very large complex. What do they make there?"

"In this complex they produce self-driven cars like the one we use one at the moment. But our point of interest is not the manufacturing as such, its the way how we produce such objects of utility today. What do you think, how many persons are needed to operate this facility?"

"Not that much I think, I guess. On the other hand this facility is very huge. This is more then only the final assembly?"

"Yes. Many, but not all, parts are produced here also. We have not that much transport routs then."

"What materials do you use?"

"Mostly synthetic materials, but also different kinds of metals. All our products have very high recycling rates, often over ninety-nine percent. Therefore it's maybe no surprise now, that a part of this complex is a recycling facility for cars."

"Staff for this whole complex? I've no idea - sorry."

"It's okay that you hesitate. Maybe the question is a bit unfair because in theory this whole complex could work totally autarchically."

"You mean that you would need no human to operate this whole complex?"

"Yes."

"But, so far I had the impression that this society is not that interested in that machines, robot and suchlike do everything. We wanna stay humans, our teachers are humans and more were your words."

"Yes, but self-driven cars, trains without an engineer, planes without a pilot. This is what I want to show you here. In some aspects our society is a high-tech culture. This facility has even autarchical robots for the maintenance and control. But I stress the word "robots", we not talk about AI."

"So, in the end, the human has the possibility to interfere at any time, even to stop everything when they think that it's necessary."

"Yes, and therefore some humans work at this complex in control centers."

"But who built such facilities?"

"Twenty thousand years, a development that lasted twenty thousand years. You have to keep this in mind all the time. In the area of technique and industry, we will see some differences in the field of agriculture, the degree of technologization is very high in our society. But we will see also, that craftsmanship still exists today. But why we have this high degree of liberty today? Our daily needs we produce in a high-tech manner. This includes things like clothes and airplanes, shoes and infrastructure or furniture and space shuttles."

"Furniture and clothes seems to be an interesting point to me. Means this that everybody has the same table and chairs, the same trousers and shoes?"

"We stayed in two cities now, in two accommodations. The furniture?"

"Were very different."

"Also in your time you had 3D printer, today we have very advanced possibilities in this field. You can design your own furniture if you like, also your own clothes. Such things are no problem today."

"But say, I would like to have a desk made from wood. And I not mean, something that is not distinguishable from wood, from real wood."

"First of all, you have to think about that not everybody is interested in to design the own furniture or clothes. All what ever was produced you can find in a data base. You can choose and order. But

say, a dress made from real silk, or a desk made from real wood - that was your question. A unique diamond, can we postpone this till we talk about craftsmanship?"

"Sure. This here shows me the common way of production, that's what I can see here?"

"Yes."

"And that means, because you not need many people for doing this, it gives the people a high degree of liberty."

"Yes."

"At my time the thought would be more that it would means poverty for many people - and an extreme richness for a few."

"That's the problem with money. But even in your time you needed people who bought all the produced things - or? This old fashioned economic system needed growth, but every growth, even the economic growth, can't be limitless. The result of this you saw perfectly clear in your time. We have no money anymore, we need no economic growth. I said to you, that we have time for new things, that we not need every year faster cars or trains. Also this will contradict itself in the end."

"But you saying this, being on a very high level."

"This was one of the ideas of the ninety-nine thousand. Twenty thousand years, it was not their effort to have fast trains and planes as fast as possible. It was their effort to do it differently this time. We will talk about this when we will be in the capitol - would this be okay for you?"

"Absolutely. I think there's enough to see and to talk about at this place."

"Yes, and you see, we have decided to produce all we need for a daily live in a high-tech manner. We not need many people for it. Even the scheduling and building of such an industrial complex needs not many people. It's a basic idea of our society that the people should have the opportunity to realize its full potential. But how should you do this, when you have to struggle to make your daily live. When you have fear about loosing your job, the money, the future? I think we have found a good way of living."

"But still.....you mentioned the space stations. You cannot do everything you wanna do there - obviously not! Sorry, but I still search for the hitch. Where's the crux of the matter? I not say this because I do not trust you, but....."

"Well, that was the crux of your time. Trust, I said it before, trust is the key element. The ninety-nine thousand established a society were everybody could trust anybody. And a society, where working together is a basic element. In your time, distrust was the normality. But I not say that this was misplaced, at least not all the time. You had also the problem that the problems that you had were not solved by working together. And then, you had a major problem. The problem, that some people of your time always thought, that everyone has to live in their way, that they know everything and others nothing, that they are chosen to dominate others, all this nonsense. It was very difficult in your time to trust someone."

"Yes, I understand the problem for you. This system only functions when everyone agrees with it. It only functions when everyone works actively on it. It would be easy to harm this system. But why someone should do it? Obviously it's a very good system and it functions. It gave this world something that was hardly to imagine in my time - twenty thousand years of peace. Twenty thousand years time to develop something without destruction and the need for a new start. I guess it's no problem to find people who run this facility?"

"No, not at all."

"And even when they have to be specialists."

"No, not at all."

"And I think, that they all work only some days a week here, but have also many other interests and things they do."

"Sure."

"If I would live at a certain place, it would be not very important to me what furniture I would have. I would chose some, functional and simple. Also clothes wouldn't be not that important for me. But I would like it, having many paintings at the wall, or photos. I would like it, having time for me, doing the things I like to do. But why not looking what I can do for the community, the community

that gives me this opportunity? Why not for two or three days working for the administration, why not for two or three days helping in a hospital, why not for two or three days working in a cafe or restaurant? You would be able to find your own place."

"Yes, and our way in producing many things in such a high-tech manner is one of the key elements who gave us this freedom. As long as you have earned money to buy you things this development is a disaster. But for us it's the basis of our society."

"So, the ninety-nine thousand and many generations after built the basis for this development. But they couldn't be sure that it will function, but they had an idea, a vision. This was a brave step to do this."

"Looking in the abyss changes many things."

"But I'm fascinated about that this lasts now for twenty thousand years!"

"Because we made the experience that it gives us so much. We simply see no alternative today."

"Do you fear, that I could bring up the - stupid - idea that there would be an alternative?"

"Apart from that, that it would be possible to organize things in a different way, it's the problem with trust. You have to trust us, but we have to trust you. So far we have the experience that this, our world, is a world of trust. It would be difficult to experience that this is no longer so."

"This is a difficult situation for me, because I'm not sure how it would be possible for me to show you that you can trust me."

"I said it before, this travel will show it. And still, a long way in front of us."

"Yeah, I see. This was a long day....."

"That's true. You have seen now, how we produce consumer goods. Tomorrow you will see that we have some other ideas what food concerns."

"We see a fundamental difference between consumer goods and food. Apart, that we still have to see what craftsmanship means today, food is something different for us. Food on one hand is a necessity, but it's also something that enriches your life. The goal in producing food is to produce something that's healthy, but also very tasty."

"And I guess that the definition of tasty varies very much in different parts of the world."

"Yes, absolutely. But also climate is very important, not everything can be planted at every part of the world. And in twenty thousand years a large number of different kitchens have developed. Think about a region at the sea and another region in a mountain area. Food is a very good indicator how diverse the world today has become again. And of course, when I talk about food, are beverages included."

"The idea of producing consumer goods was to do it with only a few people, but with a lot of high-tech. Agriculture?"

"You have seen an industrial area with different industrial facilities. It was a huge area, with only a very few people to control it. On one hand also in agriculture we use a lot of technique, but on the other hand it's important to produce in a way you maybe would call, a natural way of producing food. One consequent of this is, that you can not get everything at every time, and not everything at all places on earth. Theoretically we could produce the whole year strawberries and we would be able to distribute them to every place on earth. But we think that food has, at least very often, a season, a time and a place where it tastes best. And that's the point, food is taste. A strawberry tastes like a strawberry, a strawberry tastes like a strawberry when the fruit has grown under natural circumstances. This not excludes that you can use techniques of preservation. Strawberries you can freeze very good. Nevertheless, nothing tastes better than a strawberry fresh from the field when it's strawberry season."

"The space stations come me to mind."

"Well, that's a different world. But you have to distinguish the space stations until now, from the two we build now. The new space stations will have agricultural modules. Not everything can be produced from the beginning on, but it's an aim to add more and more modules therefore that the

space stations become more and more independent. But this will need some time. We have a similar situation on the moon – and now we have reached our aim for today. This is a typical larger farm. This farm produces a large variation of food, especially grain and fruits.”

“What about meat and milk?”

“Milk is very important for us. Maybe more important then at your time. Meat, that’s very different. Many people are vegetarians today, but that differs very much on, where they live. In coastal areas a lot of fish is still eaten. In a total, the per capita consumption of meat and fish is very much less than at your time, but it’s also nothing extraordinary that somebody eats meat or fish. But we look very carefully on, how we raise animals or how we fish fish.”

“Do you still eat whales for example – if whales are still live?”

“Yes, on earth still whales are living. No, we not eat them anymore as a rule. People who still eat meat or fish, restrict themselves to a few kinds of animals. But also that differs thereto, where they live. To answer your question in that way. People who live in the polar region hunt the animals who live there. We have today a cold climate, it’s not possible to conduct agriculture there. And yes, theoretically we could supply them with everything they would need. But they live there, they have chosen this place, they wanna live in their way and it’s accepted. But they only kill animals for their need, they live their as a part of the environment.”

“Some in our time thought that the people of the future, people who would have developed further, would become necessarily vegetarians. Why not?”

“Because people are diverse and this diversity is the key element of human life. As I said, many people today are vegetarians, but that not means that everybody has to be a vegetarian. The sea offers you fish, but that not means that you have to prey the sea as it was done at your time. Diversity is the key element.”

“And this farm?”

“Let’s have a closer look.”

“As you can see the fields are large, but still smaller than often in your time. We use only in a very limited way chemical fertilizer, normally only natural fertilizer. We not try to get a maximum yield, as I said, the taste is very important for us. We use machines in a wide range, but we not have to create every year something new for a food market. Crop rotation is also very important as well as a seasonal cultivation.”

“But that would imply that you cannot offer all the time the same quality. I’m mean, that in my time one apple had to look as perfect than every other apple. But in nature not everything is perfect. Not all apples have the same size, the same look, and so on. Sometimes cucumbers are curved, in my time they were second or third choice.”

“Taste, sometimes a small apple with some “faults” tastes fantastic. Very important is, that there’s no market anymore. We not sell apples anymore. We have no cost pressure, no need to produce as cheap as possible, to offer our food as cheap as possible. Taste, but taste is nothing who’s uniform. Some like it when an apple is sweet, some like it more when an apple is more tart. When a cucumber is straight, but don’t tastes, it’s a no good cucumber. A cucumber that’s curved but tastes fantastic is a good cucumber. That not excludes a straight cucumber that tastes good.”

“You have no food market as such anymore. But you have places where I can get things, also for food. See I this right, that the complete harvest will be offered there? Straight cucumbers as well as curved cucumbers? Why I should take the curved ones?”

“Maybe because for your purpose it’s not important whether the cucumber is curved or not, as long as the cucumber tastes well?”

“What should be the motto? Be more relaxed? Concentrate on the real important things?”

“Maybe you should think about, if it’s important for your cucumber salad whether the cucumber it curved or not?”

“It’s more easy to make the salad when the cucumber is straight.”

“Really? You maybe need a bit more time, maybe the slices will not look that accurate, but more easy?”

“You wanna tell me, that you should be maybe more interested in, to spend some more time in preparing the salad, rather than to be interested in, that everything is as easy as possible?”

“The problem at your time was, that the fastness and easiness in cooking was more important than the taste. And then everything had to be as cheap as possible, but that not functions. Today we produce food in a very natural way. When this means that a cucumber maybe is curved, than this is no problem for us. As you can see here, we till and cultivate the fields with machines. Many of them are self-driven for example. Therefore, also high-tech in agriculture. But high-tech only as far as we talk about the means of production. It’s very important for us, that our food, the result of this production, is very natural.”

“Cooking - no food industry nowadays? No convenience food anymore? Does everybody cooks for themselves?”

“As I said, we use techniques of preservation still today. You cannot eat all strawberries during the season, or you like it also to eat them during the winter. But it’s the rule, that you cook with unprocessed food. It simply tastes better, or?”

“But not everybody is a cook – time to do it should no longer be a problem today?”

“No, time is not the problem. We not have to work in a way you had to do it in your time. But you are right, not everybody is a good cook or likes to cook. You can eat in a restaurant if you like. People today like it to eat together, with friend or colleagues. Don’t forget the scientific center. The places where you can eat something. They give the scientists the opportunity to concentrate on their research during the day – or night in some cases. But many of them enjoy it very much to cook for themselves when they not work. Cooking and eating has a very different status today. It’s a very important factor for our living together. Whenever it’s possible we cook together and eat together.”

“That sounds very good. Can we talk for a moment about meat?”

“Of course.”

“At my time there was a saying: As long as there are slaughterhouses, there will be battlefields. Still slaughterhouses today, but no battlefields – was this thinking wrong?”

“No, absolutely not. Maybe this sounds a bit irrational, but as I said it, not that much meat and fish is been eaten today. And it becomes less and lesser. But still some people eat fish and meat and it’s accepted. This development will continue, but we think that it will not lead thereto that one day all people are vegetarians. It’s more likely, that at every time at least some people will eat fish and meat. And then there’s a point, about which we not talked so far.”

“Children?”

“Yes. Especially infants and young children have to be very careful. It’s better for their development to eat also animal source foods. So, therefore, slaughterhouses still exist.”

“But no battlefields?”

“Yes, but maybe we have different pictures in mind, when we talk about slaughterhouses. Consider that meat is only eaten in a limited amount today. We have not that much farms who raise cattle or sheep for example. Also they are not very large. The animals become killed at the farms, not the way it was done at your time. The same takes effect when we talk about fishing”

“So, you wanna say with this, that there’s no longer a food industry.”

“No food industry and no cost pressure anymore. That changes the things very much.”

“And the animals not have to be their whole life in a stable, or such things - I guess?”

“Oh no! They life in a very free manner. Also when you eat meat, taste is an important point for you.”

“Do you think that everything is perfect today?”

“No, to be honest?”

“Yes.”

“I cannot understand that one can eat animals. Yes, children, but later? But I respect that some people think in another way. But deep in my heart I think, we all should stop eating meat and fish.”

“How do you deal with this tension?”

“The life is full of them. Our old topic, this world is no paradise.”

“I often thought about to stop eating meat and fish, but I never did it completely. I ate less and less, but from time to time I enjoyed it very much to eat meat or fish.”

“This is no problem. Not for me, not for today’s society. The fact that we eat less meat and fish as a society enables us thereto, that we need no longer a meat industry, no longer a fishing industry, and that’s a major step.”

“It’s interesting for me to see that there are still “conflicts”, different ideas about living in today’s world.”

“There are different ideas, but the point is that we not let them become “conflicts”. And even when you will see them as “conflicts”, we have other ways to deal with them today, as at your time.”

“What we will do next?”

“We will visit a place where we can talk about resources. This will expand our today’s visit, but we will stick also with agriculture.”

“I thought about this. Steel, coal....not to talk about oil – energy!”

“We will see all this during the visits here, during the next days.”

(N.B.: I did not differentiate between vegetarian and vegan. I also did not consider their varieties. That would be too complex for the moment, especially connected to children.)

“What kind of industrial complex is this?”

“We saw such a complex before, it’s a recycling facility. Recycling is a key element for our society. But also to produce goods that are build to last long and who can repaired easily. Sustainability is very important for us. We not produce for a “market” today, not for shareholders or stock markets. Today we produce for the people and our needs. And the needs define what we produce and not a “market” and advertising define what we need.”

“What about resources like coal or oil? They are no longer in use today, or?”

“No, no oil or coal today anymore. At your time you could hear very often the idea that in the future mining on the moon or on asteroids will provide the humans with the resources they need. In fact it would be possible in some ways for us to do this, but the costs are much to high and also the practicability is not given. Our way was to invent alternatives and to establish a nearly perfect system of reuse. But this is related to consumer goods. Our clothes are very natural for instance. Cotton for instance, is very important for us today.”

“Really?”

“Yes, we have a lot of cotton fields and also flocks of sheep. Food, clothes but also things like carpets and more. We like it natural in this areas, it’s important for us. But when we talk about materials to build cars or trains, space stations or a city on the moon, we see this different. Then it’s important for us today, that we do it in a way, that not needs natural resources, or we use resources that we can recycle in a high efficient way.”

“So you left behind, what we called a throwaway society in my time.”

“Yes. But think about that we have a very advanced technology today that you know in its beginnings as 3D printer. Obviously we could produce many things in a huge amount, but why we should do so? We produce what we need. Again, there’s no “market” anymore. A machine for producing something has not to run as long as possible to make as much money as possible. Machines run not to make money, they run to produce the things the people need and want.”

“Who own the machines – everybody?”

“Everybody not hits it clearly. I think nobody would be better. Think about the house in the first city we stayed. Who owns it? Nobody. Who is in possession of it? Whoever stays in it. We will talk soon about, how this city is organized, this city as an example for cities as such. I will give you then some more insights.”

“That’s okay for me. Another question for me is: Energy? If I see it correctly, then this world needs a very huge amount of energy.”

"That's true! An average person today consumes more energy than an average person at your time. Our producing industry needs an enormous amount of energy. The public transport, normal trains, trains like the TGV? The interesting facet about it?"

"Well....."

"We produce energy in an, for you, unbelievable amount. Look around you, there's energy all around you, you only have to use it."

"Can I ask something before, it's more a thought."

"Yes."

"Also no energy market, also no need to make profit there, it's public interest."

"Yes, and therefore we were able to develop and establish other solutions."

"Solar arrays in the orbit?"

"Why in the orbit? Is there not enough sun around you? No "market", no profit interests!"

"Solar arrays around the cities?"

"You have seen a lot of houses now."

"But no solar panels, I've missed them already."

"First, our technology is far ahead of yours. Our solar panels work much more efficient. And then, every roof is a solar array."

"Every roof?"

"Yes, every roof is a solar array. Every house is producing energy, mostly more than it needs."

"But.....well, they not look like, how I would expect it, that a solar array has to look."

"Yes, but they are solar panels. But we have also solar farms. At places who are qualified for it, we also use water energy, wind energy, geothermal energy and more. In the end we could produce more energy now, than we need today."

"So, energy and resources are no subjects today anymore, who could lead to conflicts. You have found solutions that provide you everything, even more, than you need. This would be the end of every idea of a "market".

"That's why we need no "market". The only thing what have to be done, is to distribute everything. But therefore you need no "market". Therefore you only need people who do it."

"But what about things like water, clear water."

"There's so much water in this world. Sure, there are parts like the desert areas, but not that much people have decided to live there and than it's only a question of providing the water."

"And again, no commercial interests."

"Yes, when you live at a stream in a mountain area, you simply have to drink the water. When you live in a desert, it's not that easy. But we live together, and everyone has the right to drink clear and fresh water."

"Is this maybe the paradise, we've not found so far?"

"No, also this is no paradise. Now we reached a certain point."

"That all the people have to work together to achieve this?"

"Yes, that's the point. We work together, we care for each other. Not everybody has the same, because not everybody has the same needs and wishes. But nobody has something because someone else has less. Sometimes we have to limit us – think about a space station. If you decide to live there, many things will be not possible for you, that are a normality for the people who live here. But you need the people who live here, they have to support you on a space station, without them it would be not possible for you to live there. We live together and care for each other. We need no "markets" anymore, we not have to earn money because we need no money to get what we need and want. It's an agreement, all people who live on this world today agreed in this."

"And when someone wishes to live apart from this society?"

"You can become an eremite if you want. But we will help you, when you need help."

"What when I decide, to take the things I wanna have, but are not interested in doing something for the society?"

"You could do this. But I think you would discover, that it's a much better living to live together with other people. That it's much better to do something. And don't forget that "something" can

mean to write a poem or sing a song. It can mean to ask me what I wanna drink, it can mean to help me when I'm getting old. Everything is something, we live together....."

"You enjoy it to be here?"

"Absolutely, it's a very nice quarter. The small houses, the small alleys, the small streams – so much green everywhere."

"As in your time, a city is not uniform also in our time. In this quarter you can find every kind of craftsmanship you can think of – okay, that's maybe said a bit too much. But you will find a lot of various small studios and ateliers. But it's no artists community as such. This we will see as next. Even when we not differentiate nowadays anymore between art and artistic craftwork, in this quarter you can get mainly things for the daily use. For example furniture, clothes, jewelry or decorative objects."

"So, here live people who like it to create such things. Because they have not to earn money with it, they have not to sell the things they make. But still I have a problems with supply and demand. Why I not should simply go from house to house and fetch as much as I can."

"Yeah, that's the problem we have. It's.....yeah....."

".....my old thinking."

"Yes, that's old thinking. You could take everything here, but what you wanna do with it? How many cupboards you need? How many clothes and shoes? And don't forget that you can get new things simply by taking them. You not have to work therefore, no money is needed, you can get it when you want it. How many shoes you need at home?"

"I have another thought in mind at the moment. Say, I have a pair of shoes at home and I don't like them anymore. I take a new pair, but what can I do with the old shoes?"

"It depends a bit on the condition of the shoes. If they are still in a good condition you can bring them to a place for second hand. Maybe someone else will be interested in them. Otherwise we will recycle them."

"Yeah, sure, you recycle everything. And the things here.....I had a conversation about that in the first city we were. I think it's a kind of to be relaxed. You know that you can get new shoes every time you want some. You can choose, there are no limitations, at least not in the way as in my time. I think that's very relaxing. There's no need to hurry, there's no need to be disappointed not to have the ability to afford such shoes, you can get them. And I have the feeling that then it's no longer a motivation to say that you need a pair of shoes littered with diamond, which are as expensive as possible."

"And we can offer you such shoes if you need them. Okay, maybe the diamonds will be artificial, but of such a quality that you will need special instruments to determine this. It's a bit like with food. The taste is the most important aspect. Here, the impression is the most important aspect."

"But real diamonds, the fire?"

"Unfortunately I've no artificial diamond with me. What do you think? A real diamond, even in your time it was not that easy to decide between a good artificial stone and a real stone – or?"

"That's true."

"How much the dream of a real diamond was real and how much it was the artificial product of an industry? Yes, diamonds are very beautiful stones, but apart from that that many gems are much rarer than diamonds, it's also a lot of artificial mystic in them."

"I always liked colored stones much more than diamonds. And if diamonds then colored diamonds. I liked black and red diamonds very much and that's the point. A long time they very rare, but not that expensive, because a diamond had to be a sparkling clear stone. Color was defined as fault. But then such stones became more and more popular and because some celebrities wore them and some collectors bought them, the prices for them exploded. Yes, there was no rationality in it."

"Today it's a bit more easy and I think, "relaxed" was a good description.

"Relaxed, maybe we should stroll around here a bit and maybe we see something we like."

“And then reality bursts in. Say you find a vase that you like very much. Well, to take it with you on a space station will be difficult, but the moon?”

“Yeah, I’ve the feeling I understand it more and more. So maybe I will see something small, something as a memento?”

“That should be possible. Now you maybe get the feel for, why this functions. Say you live in this city, you walk around here and see something that’s very beautiful for you. Maybe you take it, maybe not. Maybe you have a conversation with the craftsman, maybe he will make something specially for you. Relaxed, to be relaxed, no need to hurry.”

“Does this functions also in the way of a barter deal? Sorry for that old thinking. But my idea is that I take something this person made. Maybe I will have the impulse to give him also something.”

“First, he will like it when you like the things he makes. Then, have a nice conversation together for example. Then I think he will have no problem with an invitation for a coffee – especially not at your home, with some friends and why not with a self backed cake or cookies?”

“You said that I can order nearly everything. Say, I would see something that I like very much, but unfortunately it’s destined for someone else. Also say, that the craftsman would not like it to make this object again – for what ever reason. It would be possible for me to order this object as a copy – or?”

“Yes and no. The craftsman, and every artist, would have the right to say that this certain object should not be copied. For us this is taken for granted. But I cannot think of that this has happened at any time.”

“But then the “original” and one or more copies will exist. I think, seen form the point of view of the creator, that I would like to know, which is the one I made with my own hands.”

“Oh, of course. The “copies” will be marked in such a case. Obviously this can be made in different ways. But it will be possible in any case to decide which is the object the creator has made.”

“And would it mean something special more for me, to posses the one who was made by the creator?”

“Say that you know the creator, emotions? This is no emotionless world. But that not means that you posses something of less value, when you posses a “copy”. Possession and value, we see this a bit different today.”

“This brings me to another point. When I die, the things I.....”possessed”? Do I bequeath things nowadays?”

“When someone dies the descendants - or someone else - will handle this. Everything they want to keep, they can keep – why not? The things they not wanna keep?”

“Second hand when they can be still used, otherwise recycling.”

“Yes, and something like a house in which this person lived in can be used then by someone else. The difference between property and ownership. We own the things by using them while we live, dies the person, the ownership expires.”

“Yes, we had this already before. As long as I own something, nobody else is allowed to request for it. And I understand now that – apart from some special examples – it would make no sense to request something that I possess, because this other person could get it also.”

“Yes, a problematic example would be a house with a very special view on a monument or something like this. No paradise.”

“How you handle this?”

“Rationality on one hand. See the space stations. In fact more people are interested to live at space than it’s possible at the moment. At the moment we build two new space stations as living places. But even more people are interested to live at space stations. It’s a development, and it will lead us into the future. Whatever this future will be, the future will be only possible when we find solutions for this. For the space stations we need people who can operate it. Therefore a part of the people will be chosen by qualification. But there’s also a percentage chosen by lot. This not means that people are not disappointed when they will be not chosen. A “consolation” is that there will modules for travelers. And of course this people will have a right to travel preferred to the space stations. Then we will expand this new space stations step by step and the next two are already in

planning. It's a development and also when you're not chosen at first you can be a valid part of this development."

"I think that was also a problem, not to say a fault, of my time. We lost our dreams and visions. All became narcissistic - only I and now. That had to lead into....."

"Shall we walk around a little bit?"

"Would like it. I think it would be nice to live here. To choose a place to live in. I'm a single, I think a house would be too large for me, but a nice condo. Then it would be very cool to furnish it. I think at least most of the furniture I would simply order. But it would be also a lot of fun to walk around at such a place to find things for the condo. And then I could think about, how I would like to spend my life, what I wanna do with my life. This is a nice object!"

"Yeah, it's very nice - shall we go in?"

"Would like to, but it feels a bit strange to think about to go in and take it, without paying for it."

"As I said it, your interest and the fact that you like it, is also a form of "payment". Maybe in a more valid way than at your time, where it was a must to give money for it, because the creator had to make a living from it. And we can stay for some time if you like it, have a conversation, see how it was done - would you like it?"

"It would be wonderful for me, absolutely wonderful....."

"In a way it looks like the central place in the first city we were. Everything is larger here, but this is also a larger city."

"Cities in the former region of Europe tend thereto to have a central place in their centers. This is not all the time the case, but very often. In other parts of the world you can find cities which look very different. Also the style of the houses follows often a basic idea. But this is something very normal, even when there's no rule as such, that you have to follow this."

"And the buildings around the plaza have public functions."

"Yes, very similar to the first city we were. For us interesting are the buildings with importance for the organization of the city."

"A town hall and buildings like that?"

"Yes, your device would enable you to follow everything, to be connected to everything that happens in the city. It would enable you to join every discussion and to participate in every election. And it's often used for this. But it's a different feeling to discuss things face to face. Therefore every city has places where the citizens can discuss all topics connected with their city."

"But is there a mayor, an administration? Are they elected?"

"Every city has a council. Everybody can join it. This council has the task to organize everything important for the city. But the council has to inform the citizens all the time. More, at all their discussions you can participate with your device, or if you want it, also personally. Everything is transparent."

"But you have no parties anymore, no campaigns anymore?"

"No, not in that sense. But every person has it's own mind. Maybe it's the fulfilling of the thought that a member of the parliament should follow his or her own beliefs. But for instance, it can be that some members of the council work together because they have similar ideas about something."

"And who decides in the end?"

"The people who are affected by the decision. This means that all the citizens of this city decide about the things that affect their city."

"Would I be a citizen of this city, then it would not be allowed for me to decide something in the city we were before?"

"I not would say that it's not allowed, but why you should do so? You live in this city, not in the other city."

"And something that affects everybody?"

"Then everybody can decide about it."

“Who decides about, who’s allowed to decide about what?”

“Your mind? As I said, in theory your device would enable you to elect in every election held up in every city in this world – but why you should do so? I mean, aren’t there better things you could do? I mean, it’s not my thing, to tell people in another city how they have to organize their city.”

“So, I see this correctly. The council discusses topics, everybody can join, via the device or directly – and then, an election?”

“The discussion will lead, at least in most of the cases, to two or more alternatives. This alternatives will be the subject of the election then.”

“No rallies?”

“The alternatives will be published, you can get the information about the alternatives via your device for instance. Then there will be meetings where the alternatives will become presented. You can participate in them directly, or via your device. After this process there will be an election. It depends on the subject how intense this process will be. It would not make sense for every matter to held up many meetings. But every citizen has all the time the right to ask questions. Transparency is very important for us.”

“But in my time the discussion was very often about “the facts”. Everybody knew that he was the only one with the “true facts”. And more worse? There came a time were even it was not important to talk about the facts, they simply created their own “facts”. Who decides about it today, what the “facts” are, not to talk about their interpretation.”

“The interpretation is easy – the interpretation is the result of the process till the election. That also means, that in the future a different interpretation can be possible. Everything has a status quo, nothing is fixed for ever. Nothing can be fixed for ever, this is simply impossible – the facts?”

“Yes!”

“Say, I would say that the fact is “X”. You would disagree?”

“Yes, I disagree and say that the fact is “X-1”.”

“Than you have to prove it. In the first step I have to show in a transparent way how I come to the result that the fact is “X”. Everything has to be documented, everything can be checked by you.”

“With the device?”

“For instance, but you can ask me also in different ways. In the moment I present a “fact” I have the obligation to document the way I found it and have the obligation to answer questions about it. You disagree with me and think the fact is “X-1”? Then the ball lays on your side now.”

“When I think about this, it sounds to me that this will cause a lot of efforts. I think no normal citizen will be able to follow all this – and then we only talk about the topics related with a city. But there’s still a world? Who should be able to participate in all of this?”

“Why you should participate in all of this? It’s not the question that you participate in all of this, the point is that you have the possibility to participate in all of this. You can select for yourself in what you’re interested in to participate. Say, you’re interested in to decide about things that affect your quarter, but you’re not that interested in the questions connected with another quarter. But you’re also interested in questions that affect the whole city, but you’re not that interested in them when the topic is public transport because you have the feeling that this functions very good. Again, the point is not that you have to follow all of this, but you have the possibility to do so.”

“This would mean that you have to have citizens that are interested in what you can call politics.”

“Why you should not be interested in? This will affect your live. Not everything necessarily in a severe way, but nevertheless it will affect your live. And it’s for you. When your interested in astronomy than you should be interested in, that your city has a public observatory and a planetarium. You can open up a discussion about it, it’s in your interest. But this is only an example. Maybe there’s a discussion about whether your city needs more public transport and what kind of. You would see the need for it, but you not join the discussion. Then maybe the result of the discussion will be, that there’s no need for it – that would make no sense! Or maybe the result of the discussion would be, that the council sets an election. The council thinks that the city needs more public transport. But that not means that every citizen agrees with this, some will vote with “no”. But you think that it’s important for the city, that the city would have more public transport. But you

participate not in the election and the result of the election will be a rejection of the subject? This would be a stupid behavior – or?”

“And when you participate in the election, but the result will be a rejection?”

“I’ve hoped and waited for this question. First, you have to accept the result. That’s democracy. Then you would have the opportunity to bring up the subject again. But maybe you have to rethink everything. Maybe the problem you see is only in your quarter? Everything is a process, it never will come to an end.”

“And something that I could not accept at all, something that I regard as a disaster?”

“To stick with the city, not to talk about the world as such for the moment, you could look for a place that fits better to your believes. You have not to fear that you risk something by doing it. You have not to look for a new job for instance, to fear that you will find no place to live in, that you cannot afford living in another city.”

“Maybe you have friends in this city and things like this?”

“But in such a case, that you cannot accept a decision at all? Your friends? What will they think about the decision that has taken place. When they agree with you, they will go with you. If not, maybe you should reflect about your decision.”

“So, today every citizen, every citizen of a city, every citizen of this world, is that, what we called a political person.”

“Every person is all the time a “political person”. But that has not to mean, that you have to join every discussion. But it means, that you should be interested in what happens around you.”

“And you said that everybody can join the council?”

“Yes, most people are at least for some time member of a council. There’re for instance councils in quarters, and there are councils for regions and so on. You can join a council whenever you want, and you can leave a council whenever you want.”

“That sounds to me in a way, that you still have nowadays that, what we called a career politician - in a negative sense.”

“I understand this in the way, that you ask whether there’re people who start therewith to be a member in a local council and become, after some stages in between, a member of a worldwide council?”

“Yes.”

“How much sense it would make for you now, to join a worldwide council?”

“Not that much. I think my input would be not that much valuable.”

“How much sense would it make, to join a local council?”

“Much more, and maybe this would prepared myself for other councils.”

“But that not means, that you’re not allowed to follow the discussions of a worldwide council. And especially that would not mean, that you should not participate in the discussions. The only think what we would ask for is, that you should only participate in an election, after you have the information that you need, to do it in a meaningful way.”

“Would I be allowed, I mean right now, to elect?”

“You have your device. It enables you thereto.”

“But.....”

“Every device is the personal property of a person. Yes, we also have personal property today, but only in some very special cases. This is one of this cases. This is your device, only you’re allowed to elect via it.”

“I could look for an election and could participate in it – that’s strange.”

“Well, you had to know how it’s done. But if you would like it, I can show you. But apart from that, you could go to a polling station.”

“How I identify myself?”

“With the device for example.”

“So, there are some secrets which I not yet know?”

“We not talked about it so far. But yes, this device is something very important. As I said it, every person has one, that’s something that connects us, connects everyone with everybody. If you wish

it, I show you how it functions.”

“No, I think that’s too early. There’re so many things I still have to see. But it’s puzzling that you give me the opportunity as such. Something like.....to be praised prematurely?”

“We have no reason to distrust you.”

“Not till now?”

“Not till now - on the contrary.”

The Arts

“Where will we go now?”

“We have visited a place of science, now we will visit a place of art. We will use a plane to travel to a region you know as Scandinavia, more precisely Sweden.”

“Is it a town or more something I would call an artists colony?”

“I would call it a town. It’s not necessary to be an artist to live there. It’s only a place where many artists live. It’s also not important what kind of art you create, and uppermost it’s not important that you’re a “great” artist. It’s that tendency humans have, to come together, to be together with others who share your interests.”

“Is it a small town or a somewhat larger one?”

“It’s a smaller town. It’s a town not that much different to a typical Swedish town in your time. They still love it to live in this typical smaller wooden houses. Somewhat over fifteen thousand people live there – not all are artists, of course.”

“I guess, there we will see no industrial complexes like here?”

“No, and also agriculture is very different there. I said it before, that the world climate is somewhat hotter than at your time. But we will travel far north and there the winters are still very cold and long. In this regions still more people eat meat and fish. But keep in mind that we have also there, for instance, a underground train system.”

“I have another question. We use various means of transportation. How do you plan such a travel like the one we will do now? I think we will use various transport systems. How you will do this?”

“You can use your device for example. You give in your starting point and your aim. When you plan to leave and when you want to arrive. The device will show you your possibilities. Often there will be more then one possibilities. You can choose the possibility of which you think that it will be the best for you. In the moment you will do this, your seats are reserved.”

“Would it be possible that my wish to travel will not be possible? Say, that all seats at an airplane are reserved?”

“Sure, this can happen. When you decide very spontaneously, something has happened very suddenly, then this can happen. If it’s important for you to reach an aim at a certain time, you can ask the other passengers if someone will offer you his seat. There will be a very good chance that this will happen. If we not talk about a supersonic flight to another continent, not to talk about a flight to a space station or the moon, there will be all the time also solutions via individual transport. Think about the public transport in cities. All the time you have the alternative to call for a car. Normally you will use a bus, but sometimes an individual car is simply better for you. In this way you have very often individual possibilities. But also keep in mind that we live together. Say you really need this special intercontinental flight and no seat is free. Ask! Someone who’s not that in a hurry, will offer you his seat.”

“Via the device?”

“Yes, your need will be automatically send to all the other passengers. Say, somebody wants to see somebody for a last time, somebody who’s dying? Wouldn’t it be disgraceful when we would not offer our seats? Would it be a problem for us to wait for the next possibility?”

“No, not at all.”

“Apart from that, that our systems of transportation are very flexible, there’s not need for them to be “economic”, to gain money. Normally there’re vehicles in reserve who can be used if needed. The

system adapts itself also very fast to changes. Say, for whatever reasons, a certain connection will become used more often now, than before. It's no problem then, to bring more buses, trains or planes in action. Therefore it will happen not very often that you will get no seat, nevertheless it can happen. Intercontinental flights should be reserved as soon as possible. And of course flights to the space stations and to the moon are something very different. We will see this later."

"And this travel?"

"From here we will use a car to the train station. With the train we will drive to the airport. A flight will bring us to the next larger city near our aim. There we will use a metro to a smaller city. Then I thought it will be funny, to use a kind of snow mobile for the remaining distance?"

"That sounds a bit constructed? I mean it would be possible for instance to drive with the car to the airport – or?"

"Yes, of course. We could also use a bus to the airport. I thought we use many different means of transportation - hoped you like it?"

"Definitively! The snow mobiles? Self-driven?"

"In fact this would be possible, but I thought it would be more interesting for us to travel as passengers on snow mobiles drove by human drivers. Our luggage will be transported separately. We will have a kind of sightseeing trip to the town. We will be three days out there in nature, till we will reach the town....."

"Wow, once I was in Sweden, but in summer and very much to the south. Sounds very interesting – thanks for all your efforts."

"We all live together. I enjoy it to show you our world today....."

"It was a wonderful trip, especially the last days. A bit cold, but wonderful. It's beautiful to see that so much nature still exists today."

"But that's a bit an illusion. In fact many animals you know from your time still exist, also plants. But on the other hand it's devastating how many have disappeared. The problem is, that the last twenty thousand years were not enough, that the world was able to recover from what humans have done with her. This world has a much lower biological diversity today, than at your time. Yes, some large animals have survived, but many are no longer. The animals in the sea had a better chance to survive, but even there many are no longer. Yes, whales still today, but only a few kinds. No ice bears anymore, especially the large predators had problems to survive. Many large birds you will find no longer. But also life in it's small and smallest forms disappeared in a wide range. It's devastating how many kinds of insects died out. For a longer time the worldwide ecosystem was collapsed. It will need some more thousands of years till it will recover so far, that it will reach a real solid basis again."

"I not realized this in that gravity so far. All looks so peaceful today. This forest looks so pretty, the trees, you hear birds, we have seen many animals the last days. Twenty thousand years weren't enough?"

"No, it's very easy to harm and destroy an ecosystem. But it needs a long time, a very long time so that it can recover. You wondered, that the world today is not that different compared to the world in your time, much lesser as you thought. One of the reasons is, that the time in between, way over one hundred thousand years, was a time full of setbacks. Setbacks for the humans, the flora and fauna. Some were caused by nature catastrophes, but the humans, their behavior, were the main reason for that. The outbreak of the super volcano and the impact of the asteroid, the two major natural catastrophes, were devastating. But compared to what the humans did with themselves and the earth, they were only small events. This natural catastrophes happened, their impacts lasted for some years, but then nature had over many thousand of years time to recover. But the human impact was constantly, the negative and devastating human impact. Nature had no time to recover. The constant burden led to the collapse."

"Then this, in first sight so wonderful looking nature, is very fragile today, still fragile today, if I

understand you right?"

"Yes. But the last twenty thousand years, since we have decided to live with nature, not to prey nature, helped the global ecosystem to recover at least somewhat - this will be our place of residence for the next days."

"A red painted wooden house – looks like a souvenir card image."

"To live with the nature not means, that you're not allowed to use natural resources. But in a way that not destroys nature. And you will see that insight it's a very modern house."

"Than let's move in. I would enjoy it now very much to take off all this clothes, to take a very hot shower and to have a hot coffee or a hot tea later."

"That's a good idea!"

"A hot tea and an open fire – well, I've not expected that this will be the future of the humans."

"And space stations in the orbit, not to talk about the people on the moon."

"Should this be a key to a better future, that both is possible, has to be possible?"

"Diversity. Not to demand for, that everyone has to live the same life. To live can mean so much, it would be stupid to set strict regulations. It's important that you have some basic rules mandatory for everyone. But humans need free space to unfold their individuality."

"It's arousing and confusing to think about, to be borne in this world. To grow up in this world. As a young person literally the whole world would open up in front of you. You could decide and more, you not had to make decisions who affect the rest of your live. All the time you could decide for another way. It's confusing."

"Well, in a way that's correct, but in another way that's a bit too optimistic. You not simply can say I wanna be a scientist, you have to have the knowledge therefore. Maybe your dream is to live on the moon. Maybe, most likely, this dream will not come true. But you're right in that sense, that you can develop as a human in a very different manner nowadays, as in your time. Especially you have not decide for the one or other. You have much more possibilities today, everything is more flexible."

"What will we do here?"

"We will meet some people. We will talk with them, you can talk with them. You're interested in art, this is a nice place for it."

"You've said that you write."

"Yes, but only from time to time. I'm no writer who writes very much."

"But here live artist who create different kinds of art?"

"Yes. Mainly writers, musicians and visual artists. But also of the area of movies for instance."

"Then I look forward to tomorrow, after the wonderful hot tea and the warming fire....."

We started our day, after we had breakfast, by visiting a complex with several ateliers. Visual arts one could find there, but also a music studio and various practice rooms. Frequently artists like writers came also, they all came together, to create art. It was interesting to see what their topics were – not that much different then in my time. Some referred to the past, some to the present, while others thought about the future. The human existence, their living together, the knowing about that the world today was no necessity, it could be different, as it was different in previous time. About the future, the step into the universe, still a very small step, but in which way would this development change the humans as such. To be born in the universe and to die in the universe – the beginning of a new branch of human history?

The variation in styles, some were very common to me, some were totally new to me. It was like a arousing rush for me to walk through the halls, to see all this wonderful works the people had created here. Not that this should mean that all touched me, that all attracted me, that I could

understand all. But that was not important, this would be a stupid thought, that everything created here, had to be something that would be “mine”. If you take diversity seriously, than this will imply directly, that there had to be art, that will not be “yours”. It would be not mine to live at the polar region, much too cold for me. It would be not mine to live alone on the top of a mountain, I loved it when people were around me. Art is a universe that offers a nearly not to oversee, a not to oversee, amount of diverse creations, and that is why art is such powerful. In my time you had a very good indicator about how open and free a society was. Apart from indicators like a free and independent press, art was a very good indicator. Suppression against artists revealed very clearly that this society was no free society. An open society supported art in all it’s variations, respected art as such. And this society today. Everyone could be an artist. Without the economic needs, the need, to make your living by earning money, without all the separating factors like origin, gender, wealth and more, the people of today could live out their artistic creativity.

“I thought about, that every child like it, for every child it’s a need to do creative things, like to draw a picture for instance.”

“Yes, of course. But not only for children?”

“In my time it was the normality.....there was this sentence: Now the serious side of life begins. This was very often the end of all creativity. Apart from the many lives that even not had the slightest chance to think about such questions because they had to struggle with their lives, had to fight therefore, to see the next day. Even in the so called Western world, the rich countries, it was not the aim to show the children, to educate the children in a way, to support their creativity, that they could develop their skills as far as possible to become creators. It was important, that they became a valuable part of society, that they function, that they do their jobs. For art we had the artists.”

“We see this a bit different today. One of the major goals of education today is to support children in all ways, so they can develop their creative skills. But this makes sense as such. Think about science, think about an administration, think about everything. To be a creative being is a natural characteristic of all humans. If you suppress this characteristic, you suppress the human nature. I think this was one of the stupidities of your time, to do so.”

“But not every person of today becomes an artist as such – or? This people here, they are artists – or?”

“Art is a word I use for you. Don’t forget, that you can develop in you own way today. Nearly everybody today creates something you could call art. But let us think about the word “art” for a second. Even at your time it was not distinct what this word should mean. It’s a bit like with “race”. Yes, my skin is darker then yours, but what does this means? We’re both humans, “race” means nothing today. Today this became a word we only need when we talk about the old times, when this was a topic. The same with art. We no longer talk about whether something is art or not, about craftsmanship or something like naive art. “Art” is one, and not the only one, way to express yourself.”

“But this place. I would call them artists, because they create art, I would call this a place of art. This people come together to create art.”

“We have met people who come together to do scientific research. It’s sometimes simply easier to do something together with others who do the same, sometimes it simply makes more fun to do so. And have you realized something?”

“That the people here are of very different age?”

“Yes.”

“They have very different biographies, I think?”

“Yes. Some of the people here have spent their whole lives in being creative in this way. Others worked in administrations or at industrial facilities before. Very often they were also at this time creative in some way, but have decided now, to concentrate on it. You can meet a lot of young people here. They have not decided so far whether they will concentrate on to be creative in this way or not. Then you have to see that this is a town. That means, that the people have to organize

this town. The people here not live apart the town, they are the town, what means also that they are involved in running it.”

“But can you say, that this people here, are in a certain way especially creative in their subjects, in a way, as you can say that the scientists we have met before are especially creative regarding their subjects?”

“Science and art. I will not start with a deeper look at the question about the nature of science now. But, if you wish to know what brightness a certain star has, you simply can measure it. You can talk about tolerances now, but you will get a verifiable result. Art? Why you’re deeply moved by a certain poem? You can’t measure this, you can’t say that someone else has to feel in the way you feel. The brightness of the star is fixed. If someone says the star is brighter, then you can bring this to a decision. What’s created here, reaches the people in a different way than a scientific theory. The view of the night sky, the milky way, can move you in a very special way. You not have to know therefor, that the blue stars are hotter than the red stars. But a scientist will ask the question, why stars have different colors. The artist maybe will write a poem about the beauty of the colored stars, knowing why they have different colors or not. Both are creative, both are important, both do something in a creative way that should be appreciated, both is the same in it’s difference. It’s different, but the same, both satisfies a basic human need, both represent a facet of the human existence.”

We continued with our visit. Again it was a wonderful feeling to drown in all this impressive creations. I felt to be at home, at the place I would want to be my whole remaining live. I had tears in my eyes all the time and the world started spinning around me. I felt drunken and slain, all this around me. I felt like a little boy, discovering, that there was so much more in this world, as he thought so far.

“Should we have a rest? It’s lunch time. I thought it will be interesting for you to talk with the people here during having lunch?”

“Yes, that would be nice. At the moment I’ve a problem therewith to have a clear thought. My mind is overflowed with images and thoughts, everything mixes up – I need a break. Sitting down, something to drink and eat will be good for me.”

“Then we will walk to a restaurant nearby. By the way, it’s run by the same people who are creative here. I think you will like it.”

“It’s very wonderful to be here with all of you. I dreamt my whole life therefrom to create something in the area of art. But apart from a lot of plans and some stupid tries there was no outcome. This world today is very different, art is a vital part of it, art is a constantly present normality today. From you earliest childhood days till the old age, art is a part of the peoples life.”

“It can become also a part of your life. Just do it.”

“I dreamt my whole life to be a musician, but I have problems therewith, to keep even the most simplest rhythms. I think it’s simply too late now.”

“Maybe it’s too late to learn an instrument in that sense that you have the chance to become a master of this instrument. But this should not prevent you from starting to learn an instrument. It will spend you pleasure, even when you not will become a master.”

“I dreamt of to express my feelings by singing, but I have no voice.”

“Well, some with not that perfect and fantastic voices became very impressive singers. Technique is not all the time the most important element. But apart from that, there’re many possibilities to express yourself in an artistic way.”

“Today it’s very different. You could decide, I mean without economic concerns, to spend some time therewith to see whether this would be a way for you. And much the more, you could search thereafter, what would be your special way. But, a place like this? Would I be accepted here, not

knowing what I would be able to create, not even knowing what maybe my way would be. I would have to try, to look, to search, not knowing, what would be the result?"

"You would not only be accepted, you would be welcomed in a deeply manner. Such a place like this one, is especially for them, who are unsure about the what and how. You could be here, looking, searching, trying. You would be welcomed everywhere and we would like it, sharing our and your thoughts and feelings."

"But if I understand it right.....all this appears very professional to me. I fear I would not be able to be more like a dilettante."

"What does this mean – a dilettante? I'm a pianist, you can give me any notes you like. If anyone will be able to play them, I will be the one. Last year I had a young student. She was very unsatisfied therewith, that she was not anywhere near to be able to play the melodies I'm able to play. I said her that she should start therewith to compose, not trying to play technical difficulties as self purpose. Simply doing it, not thinking about it. She composed a cycle of melodies, nothing that was really difficult to play. Today her music is known around the world. Who is the "greater" artist. I, the one who can play everything, or she, the one who's known around the world. This is a pointless question, this question has no meaning."

"But in museums, the masterpieces, the music, remembered after decades, the stage plays, remembered after centuries?"

"Who told you, that there weren't "more important" works, who are forgotten now? Yes, there're works which affect more people than others, but does this means that they are more important? And if you would answer this question with "yes", then, important for whom? Imagine that there would be a work that affects everybody in the world, except you? Would this work has an importance for you?"

"No, not really. But would it be a question, do I do something wrong?"

"You not feel this way – or?"

"In this example – no."

"Your feelings are your feelings."

"In my time we had the charts and number one hits, books you should had to read, movies you should had to see and more. And today?"

"We have no economic interests anymore. The vanity of the artist? Well, apart that we're still humans with feelings? Yes, we love it when our creations get attention. But I'm for example very happy that I could show someone a way, to find her way of expression. Then there's a very huge difference regarding your time."

"What?"

"We're no longer interested in to create stars and superstars. We have no longer an entertainment industry, a music industry, a literary industry and so on. We need no stars and superstars anymore. All our creations will be shared with everyone. Everyone shares everything with everybody."

"Via the device for example."

"For example. Sure, different ways of artistic expression function differently, but yes. Maybe it's not that easy to see a painting as original, but you have many possibilities today."

"To order it as a fantastic reproduction for example. So, when I understand you right, also today there're works that reach more people than others – everything else would be beyond believe anyway. But because everything is reachable for me, it's very common to expand your field of interest, to look forward to what else there can be found in the world of art?"

"Yes, if we not forget problems like when you decide to write poems in a language like ancient Greek. At least the original poem will be not for everyone, and translations have their distinct problems. But yes, it can be very fascinating to see what people around the world have created."

"I would like to stay here, I would like to try whether I would be able to create something, try to find my way of expressing myself – I would like to stay."

"You're still on your travel, and many things are waiting for you. Our capitol, the capitol of our world today, the city of the ninety-nine thousand. And then you will leave our world, the space stations waiting for you. You will see the world wandering through the universe, this will change

you, believe me. And then you will see something, I had not the delight to see it. Our world seen from our moon. When you have done this, when you then want to come back, to stay with us, to try to find your way regarding the artistic expression, then it will be a pleasure for all of us to welcome you back again. But now you have to leave, now you have to continue with your travel."

"It's hard for me to leave, It's a feeling I had as a young boy, in a museum or a library. It was always very hard for me to leave such places again. I would had liked it, to stay, stay forever, to become a part of the place. I would like it, to become a part of this place, a part of the artistic expression."

"But this is not a matter of a certain place. If there's a will, a need, the artistic expression will find its way. Don't try, someone said, let it happen, don't think about it, do it!"

"But isn't there this fear?"

"This fear is always, but this is a part of it. You offer yourself, you reveal yourself. This makes you vulnerable, but that's a part of it."

"I look forward to what will come. I'm excited about what will come. But in the same way I fear what will come. I will look at the earth and I fear that I will loose myself, that I will loose myself in an ocean of endlessness....."

The Capitol

"I'm excited about what will come now. The capital of this world, the city of the ninety-nine thousand - but the city of the ninety-nine thousand? This city will be no longer - or?"

"It's a bit like at your time. Some parts of the city are older then others. And then, there's the old city center, today it's a monument for the whole world. Some of the structures you can see there are in fact very old. But of course, the ninety-nine thousand had other concerns than to preserve something for upcoming generations. The uppermost concern of them was to ensure a future for upcoming generations as such. But of course, you can visit museums with reconstructions, that tell the story of the new beginning, how difficult it was and how full of deprivation. But the story is also a story about how successful they were, after the had decided to work together, after they had decided that respect would be a better guideline, than narcissism."

"What will be our mean of transportation?"

"It's time for you to get some experiences about traveling in space. We will use a stratocruiser. It's a version for shorter distances and our flight will be relatively short. But it will be a good opportunity for you, to get some impressions of the step, which will follow this one."

"The space stations."

"Yes. Before we can start with that travel, you have to do some training first. This will be a good first impression."

"So, the aircraft works like a rocket?"

"Yes. You know the concept as a principle. Two parts, the booster and the part for the passengers, powered by an engine that uses hydrogen and oxygen as fuel. It's a very comfortable way to travel, and for a short time we will be at the boarder to space."

"That sounds exciting - at least for me. You're born on a space station. Space and the earth down below are very common for you. But for me, for me it will be a total new experience. The space stations, the moon....."

"Then let us begin therewith....."

It was a wonderful and exciting feeling, the fastness of the acceleration, to feel the power of the engines, to left earth behind – well, at least a bit. I looked outside the window and could see the bending of the horizon, the blue and so vulnerable place that was our world. But no longer, the humans had begun to spread out, to.....yes, not to conquer space, that was old thinking. Advisedly

they had begun to shift the borders forward. And even if I was still a part of this grain of sand in the universe's beach, I felt a bit like a discoverer, and I discovered something new for me. How will it be, to leave this blue ball really, to be on a space station, not to talk about the moon? I had the feeling like something would call for me, saying I should come, that my place would not be down there but way above, above in that black endlessness.....

"You're smiling?"

"I not say that I know your thoughts exactly, but nobody stays untouched by this."

"And this is only a little jump compared with a real space flight. Nevertheless.....as he said: It will change you. Even this small jump has.....but you're born on a space station, maybe this sounds a bit stupid for you."

"Can you imagine how it was for me, my first flight to earth? The first time that my feet touched solid ground? The first time the experience that I could walk now, simply walking as long as I would like to do it? No walls anymore, an atmosphere all around you – it was incredible! My first breath standing on earth? Never I will forget this feeling!"

Yes, it was not important where you're from. It was important that you discover the unknown, whatever the unknown was for you. To experience and feel the unknown, the new, that was the importance. When you was used to live at the sea, you should experience the mountains. When you was used to the mountains, you should experience the sea. I felt privileged that I could experience this, and I trembled thinking about this endless space that surrounded me. How small earth was, nothing in comparison with this universe, but even then a place of endless possibilities. The sky was the limit, unfortunately the human mind is the limit, this sad limitation, boundless in one way, so awful restricted in another way. Tears run down my cheeks while thinking about all this wasted lives at my time. How many symphonies weren't written, how many discoveries weren't made, how many smiles weren't smiled? It was a disaster thinking about it, while the aircraft touched the ground again.....

"Where will we stay, what will we do?"

"First I will show you the old city of the ninety-nine thousand. We will see some places which are just as they were at this time. Still a few are from this time, most of them were reconstructed. As said, at their time they had other problems than to think about to preserve buildings for later generations. But just in the middle of all is, till today, the building they built the first – the Althing. It's inspired by the Icelandic / Scandinavian / Germanic.....tradition of the "thing", the place they met to discuss all important topics. The Icelandic Althing was the oldest parliament in former times. Our Althing is said to stand in this tradition. I think it will be very interesting for you. Then we will visit a first historical museum. The topic of this museum is the time from the beginning of the homo sapiens till the time of the beginning of our today's world. In fact it's more a complex of various buildings. I think for you will be of special interest, how your time is represented there and also the time from your time to the beginning of our time today. We will meet some people there. They are very interested to meet you, the first time they will have the chance to talk with somebody who really lived at this time. They look forward to, how you will assess the accuracy of their work."

"Would this be interesting for them, that I would work together with them as a contemporary witness?"

"Absolutely! We all hope that you will share all your knowledge about your time with us. You know, we try to preserve as much information as possible."

"But I'm no independent witness."

"As long as you're aware of this, this will be no problem. But in the end, what other possibility one has? An independent witness – a kind of oxymoron, or?"

"And the other historical museum? The development of this society I guess."

"Yes, we will see what all has happened the previous twenty thousand years. This should be the basis for the next step."

"The space station?"

"Oh no, this would be too early. We will meet some members of the organization council of the Althing. In your time you would have called them politicians. We will see how the Althing functions, and what's their function. They are, like the historians, very interested in to meet you and to talk with you."

"But what I should tell them? Maybe it would be better they would tell me something, not to say, a lot. Obviously your time makes it much better, than my time. I can tell them nothing meaningful, only about what you better not should do, how you better not should act – or is it that, what's interesting about my person?"

"You should not see it in a negative way. You see, the last twenty thousand years were a flowering time for the humans. It's strange for us today, to think about it, that it could be different. But obvious it could! It's that we nearly have forgotten that it could be different. And to be honest, we fear that to forget this, would be the most dangerous threat for our society one can imagine. When we walk through a museum, when we see footage from the previous times, it's difficult for us to understand then, to accept then, that this was the reality in former times. Then we fear that this maybe could be the future again. It's hard to believe for us, that this would can happen again, but it has happened in the past, therefore there's no guaranty, that it will not happen again in the future. Maybe you can answer us a question, for we're not able to find an answer. We tried hard, but we're not able to find the answer."

"And you really think I can answer such a question?"

"It's a chance."

"I fear I know your question, and I fear I will be not able to give you an answer."

"Maybe not now, maybe not so far. But maybe at the end of our travel."

"I fear that you're too optimistic. At least, if you expect something based on logic and rationalism. Is this what we will do here?"

"This is the center of our earthly society. In some ways this is metaphorical, in some ways this is in fact so. But we started therewith to spread out. If this will continue, then in a few thousand years many humans will live on space stations, on the moon, on the other planets and moons. We will start to explore the worlds beyond our solar system. Well, you know how enormous large our galaxy is, not to talk about this mere endlessness of the universe, but it would be a total new step for the humans. Maybe we will fail, maybe the difficulties will be to enormous, but we would have tried it. But how sad it would be, would we spoil this opportunity, by reverting to this behavior of former times. Today we live in a world which offers us comfort and warmth. But there's a fear, a fear that is deep in us. Why we did all this awful things in the past? And much more: Would we stupid enough to do it again?"

"You not asked the question: Would we be enabled to do it again?"

"No....."

"It's a pleasure for me to welcome you both here in this museum."

"The pleasure is on our side. With what you would like to begin. Your time, or the period between your time and our time?"

"I think it would be more interesting for me, to see the period between my time and this time first. Will we walk around here?"

"Not that much. A place as this has two functions. First, it's again a huge data base. All this information you can use in various ways, of course via your advice, as an example. The people who work here manage and organize everything. As you know, it's one thing to get an information, but the work is, to put a new information in correlation to the known information. And very important, a new information can change the known information, it's a constant process, and a very complex one."

"And secondly?"

"The aspect of the museum as a place where you can view exhibits. Most interesting when they are originals. We will do this not that much, but at least we can, apart from the talking, spend two or three days by viewing them."

"So, the talks should be the most important aspect of our being here in this city and this place?"

"Yes. At the end of our travel, you will have the freedom to decide what you will do now. You will have the freedom then, to return to all the places we have been, or to any other place you wanna be."

"Yeah, this is no sightseeing, no vacation trip. I understand, and this is okay."

"At first, the time in between. But not as a school lesson, not as a history lesson. You know already, major natural catastrophes have happened, awful wars, pointless developments. This is not the time for details, and the strict chronology is not important. The overall aspects will be interesting for us....."

"The natural catastrophes - they happen. You can try to do your best to prevent them, or at least to soften the effects as much as possible. But at the end you have to accept, that "nature" has a potential, way above everything humans can do. I've stressed "nature", because at the end there's not "nature" on one side and we humans on the other side. We humans are part of nature, there's only one thing, not two. And in the end it's not important, about what kind of natural catastrophe we are talking about. Still today, and for ever, there will be threats which have the potential to extinguish all humans, all life on this planet, even to destroy the whole planet. And if we look into the very far future, then this planet will become destroyed. As said, this shows us that the human existence is no matter of course."

"So far I can nod with my head only. We knew this also at my time. We only drew no consequences out of this knowledge. Everyday in this universe this can be the last one of earth. Maybe the annihilation is on it's way already, since billions of years, and tomorrow will be the day. We knew this, but we ignored it - and today?"

"The space stations, the moon, the other planets and moons, the space beyond our solar system. We try it, maybe in vain, but we try it. As I said it, we're a part of nature, nature is not our enemy and we should not be an enemy for nature, we should not try to fight with nature - a very stupid thought at the end. But that not means that you should sentimentalize this, also this is of no sense. But for the moment the important point is, that this reality, the every day's possibility of an everything destroying natural catastrophe, shows, that it then would be an unbelievable stupidity, wouldn't we work together, wouldn't we draw consequences out of this reality, wouldn't we stand together, to try our best."

"Yes. But according to my information so far, this was not the point why the humans have drawn the consequences that led to today's society."

"Yes, that's true. Quite the contrary! After the two major nature catastrophes that have happened in the time in between, the human answer was not to come together, the answer at each time was, to start with a global war. Till the last time, when only a hand full of individuals had left. It's scary and daunting to see what had to happen first. And even then it was no matter of course."

"But to stick with the natural catastrophes. The awareness that every day can be the last, the last day for the humans as such, is this your major reason to spread out into space?"

"It's a mix of reasons. But this is, without any doubts, a very important one. But then, the story of the mountain and the man who stands in front of it? Why he thinks about it, to climb the mountain?"

"Because the mountain is there."

"Yes! Wouldn't it be strange, to see this universe laying in front of you, and you would not think about it, to discover it?"

"Like the person who stands at the beach looking at the ocean. There're some topics I'm very interested in?"

"Name them."

"The wars, wars about resources, wars cause of the thirst of power and wealth. You've decided, to stay human, no AI, no linked-up humans and such topics. I know, that's a lot to talk about....."

"No problem, we've time. Let's begin with the wars."

"War, war as such is an unbelievable terrible thing. Fight as an expression of a natural existence, as naturally given? Even if this would be true, the human existence not more that the existence of a jellyfish in the ocean? All this cultural developments, only to act then, like a being driven only by desires and instincts? War was the expression therefor, that the humans stuck deeply in their ancestors fetters. And the history of the time in between tells you that it was - nearly - impossible for them to overcome this."

"Nearly?"

"Well, we will talk about our time later. But it was absolutely no save thing at the beginning that the humans will survive. In fact, the population decreased at the beginning, but we will talk about this later. No, a world which knows war, is a meaningless and useless world."

"But the wars? Even at my time, we had the possibility to make the whole planet uninhabitable. Why this not happened as an effect of this wars?"

"Who says this? Twenty thousand years and even now it's easy to see the wounds this times caused. There're places on this world you better not visit. You think, that in this wars they not used everything they had - they did! Before the last war, nine and a half billion people lived on earth, thereafter not a hundred thousand! Yes, many died because of the last major natural catastrophe, but compared to what happened thereafter.....the natural catastrophe was awful, for the war thereafter I find no words. The whole ecosystem was destroyed. Twenty thousand years thereafter, still this world suffers a lot."

"But.....all this progress, this world looks so....."

"Isn't it an irony? Twenty thousand years - can you imagine where the humans could stand, would they had been not that destructive over all this years before. Twenty thousand years from the near annihilation to this, it's harrowing to think about, what all has been wasted during the time before."

"And the wounds?"

"Everywhere you can see them. We not showed you them so far, but they are there. You can see them in the landscape, the flora and fauna, in the people. So many generations later."

"This question about AI and such?"

"There was a time we had the linked-up human, the linked-up soldier and so on. And also this was a mere disaster. We humans need our identity, we're individuals. We're no insects, living for our queen."

"AI?"

"To create a real AI is not that easy, but not impossible. Also this period humans have undergone. But it was a bit different than you thought. The problem was, that the AI made humans redundant in a way, that they no longer acted as humans. More and more they acted as vicarious agents for the AI. Not that the AI forced them to do so, the humans did it because it was cozy. More and more the AI decided for them. Again, not the AI forced them to do so. The humans became more and more immature. But there were also other important developments. It was also the time when resources became very tight. Not that much after your time. And the climate change - it was an awful mix. The really sad point about it is, that you held all possibilities in your hands. So many would had been possible, even at your time. But all the time the same reaction and solution - war!"

"If I understand you in a correct way, than not the natural catastrophes, even when they can be final, not even something like an AI, or the declining resources, were human's worst threat. The human itself - it would be not that disappointing, would this not a thought, thousands of years old. So, if I see this rightly, the humans were not capable to learn anything during all this years. They acted all the time the same. It's not important to talk about natural catastrophes, it's not important to talk about AI or the shrinking resources. All this is unimportant, because even at my time all this would

had been possible to solve. Yes, an unavoidable natural catastrophe, but why fighting wars thereafter? We had all in our hands, at my time and thereafter. But the humans failed, time and again! That's really disappointing! But what happened then? Why this has changed?"

"Yes, we should talk about this now....."

"I hope you expect now simple answer to this question."

"To be honest? I've problems therewith to expect any kind of answer to this question."

"Why?"

"Well, the last natural catastrophe and the war thereafter. No one hundred thousand humans have survived this? No one hundred thousand of former enemies, what about the warlords, the ideologies they fought for? Suddenly they decided to live together in one city? Obviously, this story can't be that simple?"

"No, in fact this story is very complicated and sad. The last natural catastrophe caused severe damage, but it would had been possible for the humans to work together. But it's always the same story. Some regions of earth were more effected, others less. The regions which were lesser effected feared, that the people from the more effected regions, would endanger what they still had. The people from the more effected regions simply tried to survive. A brutal and awful global war started, nothing had been left out. Every measure, every humanity was forgotten. The worst of all was the usage of nuclear, chemical and biological weapons. This war went out of control totally. At the end, the war came to a standstill, not because the people decided so, but because there were less and lesser people remaining, who were capable to fight. But even long after the end of every national troupes, all over the world, militias and small groups still fought against each other. They fought, because after many wasted generations, they knew nothing else anymore, than to fight. But the nuclear, the chemical and biological weapons did their job even after generations. More and more diseases spread out, the number of the humans declined more and more. At the end, the remaining people had to struggle that much, simply to survive, that they no longer had time to fight against each other. And now? Do you think the started to work together now?"

"I fear not - or?"

"No, not at all! "Leaders" of all kinds appeared, and for some while it seemed that all would start again, in the same way as ever. But then, some individuals of all this groups, scattered over the world, started to come in contact with each other. It lasted long, a period over hundreds of years, nobody knows it exactly. But it became obvious, that a group was all the more more successful then other groups, the more this group worked together with other groups. And "more successful" not meant that the had more "power" or "wealth" or something like that. It simply meant, that they were able to survive in a better way."

"And with this it started? Why a period over several hundred years?"

"Well, also always the same story. Some think that they are the leaders, that others have to do what they say. But this people, who started to communicate with each other, had different ideas. Or better, their idea was, that there should be a better solution of living together, different to what has been so far."

"I fear that this development will lead into a conflict....."

"Yes, yes.....sadly yes. But it was a bit different this time. The people were tired of fighting, at least the overwhelming majority of them. They organized a census. And the result was, that not one hundred thousand humans were left. That was a shock, the first healing shock. Another shock was that many of the humans were sick in the one or other way. That led to the insight, that it was absolutely not save, that the human race as such will survive. Therefore, the movement for a new try became larger and larger. Not without conflicts, sadly. But twenty thousand years ago the humans, nearly all humans, decided to live together at one place, at this place, as the only possibility that they saw, that the human race would have a chance to survive."

"But I think that this beginning was not easy. To organize such an amount of people, to create

structures to live together. It sounds very chaotic to me."

"I would not say chaotic, but very difficult. At the beginning, the very beginning, a group of around two hundred people were formed. They started therewith to establish some basic structures. Very important was, that they organized the first political meetings and polls. Only two things were important at this moment. To survive and to find a basis for a meaningful living together. Only if it would be possible to find a solution for both, this idea would have a future. "

"But the ones who not joined them?"

"No surprise, or? Yes, at the beginning there were attempts to undermine this project. But something happened - they were successful! Very fast they were able to establish a first health care system, and to ensure that everybody had enough to eat. More and more the people saw, that it was a win-win situation. You had to give something, but you got back much the more! The first hundreds of years were very hard for them. But more because it became more and more obvious, how much the global environment was damaged. Till today we see this. Over the next two thousand years they established everything, our today's world is based on. After five thousand years the development sped up more and more and led to that, what you see today."

"So, one can say, that this was no development, which one could take for granted. Not the development, to establish the first movement, and also not the development, that leads to the society of today."

"Definitively not! But I think this is one of the elements that gives us stability today. At this time, everything was very fragile, and we're very aware about this today. We know, that our status quo is no normality in human history. On the contrary, that our status quo is a unique, never before, status. And we know, that it was no inevitability, that this development happened in this way. In fact? It seems more to be wonder, that the humans reached this status. And we know, that it's a gift to live in such a society, and that our task is, to preserve this society for the following generations."

"But you fear?"

"Fear? No, no fear. But the understanding that you have to give something, that you have to do something, to get something like this. How awful was the path that leads to our today's world, how awful it would be to.....no, no fear, but....."

"That's the grand meeting hall of the Althing."

"This is a very impressive place. Should I guess how many people can attend the meetings here?"

"I'm not sure if you would hit the exact number, because it's a symbolic number."

"How many?"

"Exactly ninety-nine thousand nine hundred and ninety-nine people can find a place here."

"Why this number?"

"First, at the beginning, there was a seat for every living person - notwithstanding whether a very old or a toddler. But then there was a second idea. You know that the population decreased at the beginning. There was a time, when the number dropped under ninety thousand individuals. The second idea was, should the human race have a chance to survive, then the day have to come, when the first is born, for whom no longer a seat is free. And as the day came, it was a celebrating day, till today it's a day we celebrate."

"I understand the symbolic dimension. But at the beginning, there were two hundred who organized everything. But also later, not everyone had time to join every discussion? The device? The symbolic meaning?"

"Yes, and yes. The Althing was the first huge common building project, six hundred years after they had decided to live together at this place. Yes, at the beginning everything was very difficult and every step forward lasted very long. They were able to stabilize the society in some aspects, but all the diseases. At this time the amount of humans fluctuated around ninety thousand individuals. The construction of the Althing was a common effort, the expression of the will to survive."

"When was the day of celebration, the celebration of the one hundred thousandth human?"

"Around three hundred years later."

"That's harrowing!"

"Yes, at the beginning they had to struggle for many hundred of years, and even then it was not easy for them. But they stand firm to their aim, to do it better this time."

"How does the opinion forming functions at this time?"

"As one of the first things, they established a communication system based on the precursor of the device. It enabled everybody to communicate with anybody. But right from the beginning on, it was also a mean to participate in the opinion forming process. The two hundred informed the people about their ideas, discussions were possible in an easy way, elections and polls. Very soon a very flexible and fast basic democratic system formed itself."

"But the people, had they time for something like politics, while struggling to survive?"

"We talked about this before. It was one of the most important momentums, that it was very early possible to stabilize the society in the way, that nobody had to starve longer, that the feeling of security spread. The same law for everybody, the same rights for everybody. But at the beginning many people were ill and exhausted, trust was difficult in this time. But even in this time it was possible, step by step, to integrate everybody in political processes."

"Why this place, I mean the region I know as Central Africa?"

"Well, to be honest, one of the first reasons was, that this area was relatively less affected by everything that had happened before. There're even today regions, which are still today no good places to live there, because of the aftermaths of the last war. But another reason to decide for this place in the end was, that this was the origin of the first humans. If the human race would have a future, then at this place. And then I should add something. A major momentum was to establish a basic language, not to wipe out every other language, but to enable a general communication. This created a feeling in a way, that all felt as a part of one community."

"So, very fast they established a basic health care system, a social system, the participation in political processes, a basic language, uniform laws, the feeling of being a part of the community. On the other hand the suffering caused by the times before, hundreds of years were needed to overcome this burdensome legacy. I only can try to imagine how much they suffered, but even with this incomplete view, it's difficult for me to understand that they succeed. In my time....."

"This was the abyss, all humans lived at one place. And this place not grew, year after year the city became smaller. And even after some hundreds of years, in a period of stabilizing, the number not grew, stagnation was the maximum that could be achieved."

"What caused the change?"

"In the period of the stagnation, no one suffered in a way as before anymore, but they still stuck with some traditional ideas of the living together. A broad discussion started about a future civilization, the future of the human race. Some basic decisions were made. For instance, that money, the traditional way of economy, should be no aspect for a future society any longer. Ownership and property should get other meanings. A time of experiments began, and more and more the people got the feeling, that it would be good to find new ways of living together. The success of their efforts accelerated the process more and more. The city started to grow, new cities were founded, new continents were settled again."

"But if I understand you correctly, then this was no predetermined development."

"Definitively not, as nothing is predetermined today. Some members of the Althing are here to answer your questions if you like."

"It would be an honor for me. Will they also ask me questions?"

"If it would be okay for you."

"I'm not sure what I should tell them. That I'm from a time when....."

"We're very delighted that you spare some of your time for us."

"No, you honor me therewith that you're interested in my person."

"You should not see us as people who are special. Yes, we're meeting-members of the Althing, but this gives us no special status."

"In your time politicians often said that their task was to serve the people - thereto, to act in a very different way in the end. Our task is to organize things, not to decide about things."

"You have not the power to decide things, or at least to influence things?"

"No, everything is a constant process. The Althing is the place where topics of global importance will be discussed and organized. But the discussions are open for everyone. One of our tasks is to organize polls and elections. And then we have to implement the decisions, which were made."

"So, I would call you more civil servants than politicians - from the perspective of my time."

"Maybe you can say that today we're all politicians. And in a way, we're all civil servants. We, the members of the Althing, are focused on the organization of global topics, that's all."

"Are you elected?"

"First, your time at the Althing is limited for five years. You can become a member of the Althing after ten years again. Yes, we're elected. If you're interested to become a member of the Althing you can announce your interest. Every two and a half year, one half of the Althing becomes newly elected."

"I wonder, whether there are much more people who are interested in to become a member of the Althing, than there are seats?"

"I think we should think about something. In your time, prestige and income were very important. Today you have no income anymore, and prestige is old thinking. The Althing makes demands, you have to have special knowledge. This not means that you're someone special, but I would not get the idea to work at an opera house. I have not the needed knowledge to do this. But to answer your question, normally there are around twice the candidates than seats."

"And the persons who aren't elected? Aren't they disappointed?"

"Sure, in a way. But don't forget, that you have a lot of possibilities today to participate actively in our society. The Althing is one, very fascinating, possibility, but not the only one."

"Maybe we should say, that the Althing changes all the time. We have councils for the space stations and the moon now - we not know in which way this all will develop."

"Somebody born on a space station would be a good candidate for the Althing then?"

"Yes, I'm a member of the Althing. Since two years now."

"And now you have the.....yeah.....task, to.....me?"

"I got chosen to show you our world. And it's a honor for me to do so....."

"I'm still puzzled about, how all this different political bodies work together. From the local areas and a question like the local public transport, till the global world and a question like space stations. All this political parts have to work together, okay. But for me? It's very confusing....."

"Please keep in mind, that you can plan your life according to your interests. You have not to work eight hours for five days a week to make your living, or even more. Everything is extremely flexible."

"But to be fair, we have to say also, that when you have chosen a task, you should fulfill it then also. Remember the industrial facility we had visited at the beginning. When you have confirmed to control the facility for say Monday till Wednesday for a certain amount of hours, then you should do it! I want to say with this, that you can decide what you can and wanna do for the society, but that you assume an obligation with this. Not an obligation for ever, you can change your decision all the time. But....."

".....sorry when I interrupt you, but that's my problem! This looks like a system to me, that functions of it's own accord."

"And what would be the problem therewith?"

"That the people who be a part of this system have to be very.....I don't know.....they would have to be very "reliable" and "committed" - I find no better words....."

"I still see no general problem as such?"

"There would have to exist a common fundamental conviction - I mean for everybody....."

"You not see it?"

"I see it, but I can't believe it!"

"Twenty thousand years no war, that should be enough - or?"

"In my time we had also places, where people thought, together would be better. And they succeeded, no war for a, relatively for this time, long time. Generations grew up without the experience of war, but then destructive forces appeared again. They were not capable to grasp, what a wonderful gift history had presented them. They threw it away....."

"Why?"

"Because they not trusted each other, because narcissism was the sacred cow. But you know, today, now, today I maybe would understand it. But for many thousands of years you ancestors followed a dream, it's hard for me to understand, that they were capable to find the strength for doing this."

"Their failure would had been the failure of the human race. It's different to know, that only in your city humans are living. To see hundreds of years that the city becomes smaller and smaller. That all what you were able to achieve thereafter, again for hundreds of years, was to stop this process. It took a long time that the number of the humans increases again. But for a very long time, one severe epidemic, one severe natural catastrophe, would had been enough to annihilate the humans finally."

"So, maybe you would have to say, that it was not a "sound human understanding", it was simply the pure will to survive, that was the basis for all?"

"That's a very profound philosophical question. You will find a wide literature about this question - we discuss this since a long time, but we haven't found a final answer."

"Is this your problem? Would it be rational, based on the mind, one could imagine that it will last forever. But would it be emotional, based on feelings and instincts, one could imagine that it would be reversible."

"Yes. And even when there are no signs that it could be, that we can fall back behind what we have achieved, there's this uncertainty."

"And I feel sorry, but my experiences....."

"I have read, that in your time politicians often talked about the common people, the common worker."

"Yes, that's true. It was to create dividing lines. And in a way, they weren't wrong in doing this, in talking in that way."

"Because people weren't equal."

"No, on the paper yes. But in reality nothing was equal, and not everyone was saw as equal."

"What was the basis for this?"

"Income and the social status of your work. That's one of my questions I have in mind. Okay, no income anymore. But you as a politician, do you feel more important than a "common worker", someone who does something that many could do?"

"Also my work could be done by someone else. I'm not irreplaceable, we have more candidates as seats. I have the feeling, that your time, stuck very much in this thinking about social status, especially connected with income, assets and properties. Today we have no income anymore, but much the more, we have no problem anymore to get the things we need. A place to live, clothes and much more is available for everyone. Consumer goods aren't of importance anymore, they are disposable for everyone. We are interested in the people....."

".....I have to interrupt you - sorry. But someone who creates something wonderful, invents something very important - you know what I mean. This person will get more attention - also today!"

"Yes, absolutely. But that not means that this person has therefore a higher status."

"I see that this is a problem for you. Not for the first time that we talk about this."

"Yes, but to say it frankly. I never will be able to be an important scientist, I never will be an important artist, some people can "achieve, perform" more, others less. Some will have a larger "contribution" for the society, others a lesser. All have the same status?"

"Yes, because otherwise it would not function. It would not function would we stick with this separation lines. We cannot act in that way! You have to see every person as equal to every other person. If you start with separations, than you cannot build up a society."

"That would mean, that we were no society in my time. And I mean not the whole world. Even a nation would had not been a society according to this definition."

"Yes....."

"Well.....I have to agree. I think about this theory of the USA as melting pot. Later it was replaced by another theory - the USA as a patchwork quilt. And not only the nation, every city. Rich and poor, white and black, Asian and Latino - everyone had its patch. And even the Koreans, the Chinese, the Japanese and so on. But most important was, that there were no interchange between the patches. At least no real one. In that sense every nation had, not to talk about the world as such, many "societies" - all existed side by side."

"Yes, and we changed this."

"But that's another mystery for me. You handle it, that you feel as one society, but in the same moment people live out their diversity. That's amazing!"

"In this world much more languages are existing, than in the world at your time. But that's no problem, because we all share the basic language. We all can speak with each other - one of the differences of today."

"And the device connects everyone with everybody."

"And we're interested in the thoughts, the ideas, the feelings of others - we're interested in the others."

"Not only for yourself - but.....that's stupid."

"What?"

"Well, you cannot be interested in everybody, obviously! But you imply, that everyone is interested in "some" others, what creates a....."structure".....a "network" in which everyone is involved. That's a wonderful thought....."

"We're connected with each other, we're interested in each other, and we tolerate each other. Yes, you will not be able to participate in everything, you will not be able to gain knowledge about everything, but you can decide. The possibility to decide in a free manner about yourself, maybe a seemingly contradiction, is a very important basis for the solidarity and cohesion in our society. The possibility to develop yourself in a free manner, to find your own way, is a glue for our society."

"But when I think about it, would this not end also in a patchwork quilt?"

"Permeability - religion as an example?"

"That's an interesting example."

"If some people decide to live in a group for their own, this will be accepted. Rules? Yes!"

"You cannot do everything....."

"Obviously not, no anarchy. It would not be acceptable, would I force you to do something you not wanna do. In that sense, every religious group has to ascertain that children gain knowledge about other religions, that you can live a life without religion, that the children can choose about, which way should be their way. Permeability and the possibility to decide for your own, you need this for an open and free society."

"And you need a fundamental conviction, obligatory for everyone. Yes, that was it, that was missing in my time....."

A man came and joined company with us. He introduced himself as the "Head of the Althing".

"You're a kind of president or chancellor?"

"No, at least not in the sense you're used to. I have not more political power than everyone else. I have a vote as everyone else, that's all."

"So, you're no political leader. You have not the power to decide something - any kind of policy-making power?"

"No, the Althing functions differently. We're no parliament in the old sense. You know that we have councils on many different levels. Some discuss about very local topics, some about broader ones. The Althing is the place to discuss topics, concerning the whole world and the future of all humans."

"Can you give me some examples?"

"Sure. A topic like the global transportation system, as an example. We not discuss public transport, but about the future development of the UFT system, or the hyper-sonic airplanes, whether we need new developments or we still can stick to the given systems."

"And everybody can join the discussion."

"Yes."

"And one of the responsibilities of the Althing is, to organize the elections then - you do this?"

"You can imagine that behind this place a huge administration stands. We have the responsibility, we have to insure, that everything functions."

"Who decides that a discussion comes to an end and that the election should take place?"

"The discussants. Who else should?"

"But I know it from my time, discussions can be endless. Apart from that, that sometimes new aspects can appear."

"The discussants - normally - will come to a point where they agree in that all is said now. Then it's time to present the results. If different valuations are there, what normally is the case, the results will express them. Then it's the time for everyone who's interested in this topic, but not joined the discussion, to inform themselves. The Althing will organize the election during this time, and the election will take place. It's the same process as in every council. Some details? Should it happen in fact that the discussants find no end, then I've the power to end the discussion. But I have to account for this action. And the people can demand, with a referendum, that the discussion has to continue. Also this is the same in all councils."

"What when new information comes up after the discussion, maybe after the election?"

"Obviously this can happen all the time. But why it should be a problem? Everything is a constant process. Nothing is for the eternity, nothing is absolutely."

"Can you give me another example - the space stations, the moon?"

"This are very good examples. We have decided to go a next step with the space stations. The next space stations are also a research laboratory therefor, whether we are able to build totally independent space stations. Not that they will be, but we have decided, after a longer discussion, that we will try to see whether we would be able, in reality, to build totally independent space ships."

"You mean, to explore the universe?"

"Yes, we think this would be only a consequently development."

"But the discussion was long."

"The discussion was not so much about whether we should, it was more the question whether we would be able thereto."

"But you discussed also whether you should do it?"

"Sure."

"I would call this a philosophical question. I've the feeling that many discussions in the Althing one could name philosophical, or connected to visions?"

"You can see this so. But don't forget, that we still discuss also about topics like global transport. But you have to think about what the future shall be. You have to think about visions, without visions there will be no meaningful future. But visions have to become reality, it makes no sense to create visions who are not grounded in reality. The new space stations - we're not sure whether we will be able to make them independent. I mean, on the paper.....but in reality. But we decided that it

will be worth the effort to try it."

"You decided to try, to spread out into the universe?"

"Yes."

"And the moon - other planets and moons? You've decided to step out, to become....."

"Don't try to suppress your tears. It's okay."

"It's only.....we had so much possibilities in my time, and we wasted them all....."

"I've the feeling now, that I begin to understand, at least that I begin to develop a feeling to understand this world. Yes, in the first moment it appears strange, no one has to work anymore, to earn the money he needs for his living, to be able to buy the things he needs. It looks like that this would mean that all the people would become lazy. But in fact, they are much more motivated to do something for the society."

"You have the freedom to decide. But you have to realize that this system functions only if the people do something for the society. You get a lot back, but without your input it not functions. Think of the new space stations. Can you imagine, how many have to work therefor to build them? Proverbially everybody has to work therefor, in the one way or other. It's a cross-generational project. We think, that we will need at least the next two hundred years to build a real independent space ship - if possible at all."

"A very different question comes me to mind. You're elected for five years. Isn't this a very short time, compared with such topics?"

"I worked, apart other activities, in the administration of the Althing before. Next year my term will end. I will go back to the institute, where I've worked before I transferred to the administration of the Althing. But I will stay in touch with the administration. But to answer your question distinctively. Five years are a very long time. The last four years I worked in a very dedicated way at the Althing. It's time now for someone new, others will bring along new input, new ideas, new creative thoughts. And don't forget, it will be possible for me all the time to join every discussion."

"And you can run for the Althing later again."

"Theoretically yes, but as I said, I worked for the administration before. It's time for me to do something new, or return to the roots."

"What kind of institute was it, for which you've worked before?"

"A historical institute. I'm very interested in the history of the humans. Especially the time from the beginning of the modern societies till the beginning of our society."

"Oh, then I would be your man....."

"Yes, it would be very interesting for me, to get as much information from you than possible."

"As in the historical museum we where."

"I was one of the curators there."

"And what you think about my time?"

"It was a wasted time. Not, that that time not created also wonderful things, but so much the more would had been possible."

"And today, two hundred years - a difficult to grasp time. I've the feeling that you think more about future generations, than about this generation."

"This is the Althing, if we would not think about following generations, if we would not have plans spanning generations, who should have them? You need institutions who think in such a way. Without a future there's no present, because one day the future will be the present. And then it dosen't matters, if you think about two hundred or two thousand years. One day every future will be the present."

"And what my time bequeathed the upcoming generations was shameful. We had not the strength to think into the future, not the strength to come together to develop ideas for a better future. Or better, we had ideas, but no common convictions to give them a chance."

"What should I take from here, I feel so unsure."

"It's very much for you. Take your time. Stay here some time, before you continue your travel."

"I have to train for the space flight. I've the okay for the space flight in principal, but nevertheless I have to train for it. I've the feeling, that my travel just has begun. On the other hand, I'm nearly unable thereto, to bring everything so far in order. Why all this functions?"

"In the end it's very easy I think. Trust and a common aim. Thousands of years the experience that it functions. Respect and the knowledge that nothing is forever and final. That no knowledge - and obviously no believe - can be irrevocable. Absolute truth is a contradiction, dogmas are not acceptable. Everything is every time in progress.....the basis is so easy. The implementation is difficult, because the implementation needs the above mentioned premises."

"Yes, and this was the reason why it not functioned in my time. But in the end, it's very disappointing, that it needed all that what has happened in between, the almost complete annihilation of the humans, before a rethinking began."

"Yes, that's in fact very disappointing and the starting point for a long philosophical discussion. We know that we're privileged people today, but the basis for this privileged? No reason to be proud of....."

"But you can be proud of what happened the last twenty thousand years. And maybe this time the humans have learned something out of their history. At least it seems so."

"It seems so, but there's still a question to be answered."

"The human nature."

"Yes. And sorry, I can't give you an answer."

The Space Station

"To stand here, looking at the earth - I find no words. If this sight not moves you.....yes, this changes you. Already the flight to the space station was breathtaking. Already the flight to the capital was something special. I always loved flying, to leave the ground. As we traveled to the capital one could see the curved horizon and the endless space behind it. We nearly entered space, but this time? This time we left earth, we not returned after a relatively short time."

"Yes, and we will stay for some time here."

"On one hand it's nearly a bit.....awkward?"

"Why?"

"Well, we not really left earth. We're a few hundred miles above earth - that's not really "in space"."

"In that sense you're right. But nevertheless, now you can see earth under you. You orbit earth now, every day several times. If you wish to see it so, now you're in between. You left earth, but you not entered space finally."

"But the space, even our galaxy. The distance to the moon is no two hundred and fifty thousand miles. The diameter of our sun, and our sun is no very large sun, is around eight hundred and fifty thousand miles! Some solar flares are larger than the distance between earth and moon! It's thrilling that the new space stations should help to clarify the question, whether it will be possible to build totally independent space ships or not. But even then, this universe is such tremendously huge!"

"But isn't it therefore, to have this knowledge, to know that even to reach the moon is nearly nothing compared with the extent of our galaxy, not to speak about the universe, surprising, how much this sight touches you?"

"Yes, it's like to step out, with the knowledge that this will be the first step of a very long voyage. Why we weren't able to feel this in my time? I mean, already in my time, we had space stations, even men on the moon. We had pictures and footage about the earth, seen from space, seen from the moon. I think we did a big mistake therein, not to inspire all the young people with this sight. Not to show them the fascination of the universe and all in it."

"That's one of the reasons why we decided that it should be possible for every young person to have this experience. With the new space stations this will be very easy."

"You know - well, sure you know! But this feeling. To take off, with the knowledge not to come back. This reminds me to a song I loved very much - it's good to get high, and never come down. Maybe one day the humans will fulfill this dream."

"Well, maybe one day, but this day will be long away."

"Much the more it's fascinating, that you're able today, to develop visions and aims, so far away. So petty-minded my time appears to me, so petty-minded my time was."

"Yes, it was a very long travel till this point....."

"You like it, to look at the earth."

"Yes, especially like now, when we fly over the nightly half of the earth."

"About what do you think then?"

"This view reveals you very distinctively, and in a way in a very brutal way, that this is not the earth I'm from."

"Many things have change....."

"Yes, apart from the fact that you illuminate your cities in a different way today, then we did it. Some regions, overflowed by light at my time, are dark now. In fact, I would have problems to say, seeing this lights, that this is earth. Especially this urban centers are no longer. Everything is more spread, everything looks more balanced. Sure, you see coastal lines, lakes and rivers, river deltas, but.....it's very different today. And then,....."

"Yes."

"Some of the brightest spots in my time are the darkest places of your time."

"As you know, there're still places on earth, where living is not possible till today. Some of them were the largest metropolises of your time."

"And yet, I've the feeling that this illumination is much more humanly. This whole world is a more humanly world."

"On board of a space station."

"Yes, "world" becomes to a new dimension today. Maybe the universe is our world, we only should step out....."

"Do you think that it will happen that the humans will explore the universe with independent spaceships one day."

"If it will be technically possible for us, yes."

"A human race that would live on various places in the solar system, but also spreads out into space. An interesting idea."

"But still today this is science fiction. The universe is such incredibly huge."

"Yes, but you developed an idea and you work on it. You work together on it. Should it be possible in any way ever, than you will reach the aim one day. Then it's only a matter of time."

"And time is still a problem. Tomorrow it can happen that an event, that happens in the universe, will destroy this planet. But even a major volcanic eruption would be enough, to limit or to end our programs concerning the exploration of our solar system or the universe."

"That's true, and it would be awful. But it would be something outside your possibility of intervention. It's like dying, one day it will happen. But at least you give everything a chance today. In my time, we not even gave something such a chance, we squandered everything."

"Is it difficult for you that you will not get the answer, whether the humans will explore the universe one day or not?"

"In a way yes, but then also no. Sure, I would like to know how earth would look like, say in ten

thousand years. But then, it would be a different death to know, whatever will happen in the future, that the humans have done their best. That they will not have squander their possibilities, with wars and the inability to work together."

"The human's "destiny"?"

"I don't think so."

"No, I also think that this is only an excuse. At my time, all what happened, only the people living at this time are to blame for it. In the same way that all what happens today, an attainment of the today living people is, together with the people who lived in the last twenty thousand years. The people on earth? Some maybe will explore the universe, some will stay - what are the visions for them?"

"There's still a lot to explore on earth. Many questions are still to be answered. Physics, biology and chemistry - the human brain? So much to examine! Then art and philosophy. There's still place for new ideas of living together, a lot of possibilities are waiting for us."

"The future is wide open, today much the more then ever. You know, I'm interested to read some contemporary science fiction novels."

"Why?"

"In my time they were very often stories about fighting and war. Especially TV series. Nobody was able to develop something that coped without conflicts, battles and wars. A peaceful exploration of the universe seemed to be impossible. Sure, such stories were only a reflection of the situation on earth, and the situation was as it was."

"Well, today's science fiction is different. We believe today, that only a peaceful intelligent lifeform will be able to explore the universe. The efforts to do this are such enormous, that you cannot waste your resources with wars and such things."

"That's an interesting idea. But you could argue, that there're maybe technologies, you have still today no idea of. They would enable extraterrestrial lifeforms to travel through space with much less effort. This would contradict your approach."

"So far we not see this technologies and we have no signs of this extraterrestrial lifeforms."

"One could say that this is starry-eyed."

"One could say that we're an extreme high-tech culture - and what weapons concerns.....we've a history....."

"I've forgotten, you archive everything! Isn't that a threat?"

"Why? Should we start again to fight each other, would it be important with which weapons? If we start with this again, than it will be for the last time - all the same with which weapons."

"I think I will need still a long time to understand this time....."

"This would be no good idea."

"Why, because even when there's no sign of it so far, every day, at least theoretically, an aggressive extraterrestrial lifeform could appear?"

"For this we need no extraterrestrial lifeforms. You walk through nature and a wild animal threatens you?"

"Okay, but....."

"This is no theoretical example. This situation can become reality on earth. There is nature and there are wild animals. But also at a space station. At any time, a dangerous situation can happen. Instincts, aggressivity, fear, all this and more is not per se negative. It can rescue your life and the lives of others."

"Yes, so far I could agree with you. But what does this mean? That you simply control this "affects", is it as simple as that? And what does "to control them" means? To suppress them?"

"Would you agree with me that everything can be negative or positive?"

"Okay, I follow you so far."

"Isn't the question then, whether we humans are able to use our "emotional features" in a positive way or not. Obviously with the premise that there would be an agreement about what "positive" means."

"Already the second part was a disaster at my time. But in this time the people got together and found a way to handle this. Still the problem about the "usage" of the "emotional features". But also this functions in your time. This time is such a relaxed time, a time of liberty, a time of balance.....the question about the nature of this status still stays. A cultural development or a real change in the human mind? Well, maybe a crisis would give an answer?"

"Maybe. Maybe something that reminds us in a special way that it could be different....."

"In a way it's strange - or?"

"Yes, but it's never easy with this humans."

"You achieved everything in what my time only could dream about. And yet, it's not outspoken, whether this time marks an essential change in human history or not. A change that will be irreversible."

"The question about the human nature, only the future will give an answer."

"The future, this open and unwritten future....."

The Moon

"Well, it's also the first time for me."

"You were never on the moon before!"

"No."

"I never asked! I thought that it would be a matter of course that you were on the moon already. I mean, you're born on a space station, you're a member of the Althing? That's strange and surprising!"

"So far I had no reason for a travel to the moon. I thought it will come the right moment - and there we have it! You said before, that this will be a very special moment for you, our first moon walk."

"Yes, there's an image. I've the feeling that this image is a part of me since birth."

"Do you want to tell me something about this image?"

"I see me, standing on the surface of the moon, in one of this huge space suits. A crater in front of me. But I look up, and nothing than silence surrounds me. Yes, the earth, viewed from the space station. But this is a very intimidating sight, this sight of pure beauty. It's fucking to cry in a space suit - is there an instruction what to do in such a case?"

"I don't know, but would be good to know."

"Even that there's a large moon base behind us, even when a small city is under construction, even when you stand next to me, I never felt that alone in my life, as in this moment."

"Yes, you feel it, that this universe is intangible huge, but only a few places in it, where you could live. Yes, we stand here in our space suits, but....."

"Now that I stand here, I feel that my place will be on earth. It's fascinating to be here. The earth.....I cannot put it into words. The space station.....but this is my home."

"So, you will return to earth, and you're not interested in to live on the moon or on a space station?"

"I'm old, it was a very exhausting travel. Even when it's much easier and faster today. To live here on the moon, or on a space station, is demanding. You're born on a space station, this is your time. But I have to return. I've seen more now than I ever dreamt of."

"What are your plans?"

"I'm not totally sure about. To find a place, from which I feel that this is my home. I always loved

to observe the stars, the star clusters, galaxies and nebulae. I dreamt all my life about to create art, maybe I will find my way. I always dreamt about to live at the ocean, maybe not all alone. I think I should become involved in a community. I should look at the office what work has to be done. I think.....this will be no wasted life."

"And your last question?"

"What do you mean?"

"Why?"

"Why I'm here?"

"Yes."

"This question has no meaning for me anymore."

"Really?"

"Yes. Only the fact that I'm here is important. I will do my best, to utilize this gift in the most meaningful way I'm capable to."

"Then you should pick up a stone now."

"Why?"

"It's a tradition of moon travelers to bring back a stone. I take this one."

"Then I should look for mine also....."

III – Open Your Heart

It's The Beginning Of The World

At first I had only the beginning, I started to write the very first pages. Then the idea developed to give the story three main parts. But as so often, the story developed then a bit different as thought. My focus shifted more and more and it became obvious that I would have to write hundreds of pages would I go into detail. On the other hand, would this be necessary?

During writing the chapter "The Space Station" and then "The Moon", I lost the interest in the "last question" more and more and finally. The third part, the question about what's real or not - would this be of any importance? So, what to do with this third part? Delete? Why not writing some additional words.....

Does it would be really that simple? To trust each other and then to work with each other? At least no bad idea - maybe a naive one, but no silly one. And in the end: The human nature.....

Sure, I can give no answer, who would be stupid enough to say that this question can be answered. But at least I see not that the human future has to lead into a disaster - although I see this as the more likely future. It's this thought: We would have all the possibilities, we only not use them. Maybe in ancient time this was not so, but today we would have all possibilities. But I fear we will waste them.

It was very easy to write a dystopia - it was very exhausting to write this story. Even in this short form it's the longest story I've written so far. And in some way, I would love it now, to continue to work on this story. But it's time to move on. I thought that I could write some short stories next year, dealing with aspects from this story. Would be interesting.....

A tip about the development during the next years? The plan to limit the climate change will fail. If the current POTUS will have a second term then I see very difficult times for the US and the world. I think the US will fall apart then (finally). Should Europe, the European idea fail, the same in Europe. The richer will become richer.....and so on, and so on.....

I know why I placed the story frame into a very far future, after the nearly total annihilation of all humans. This gave me the possibility that I had not to refer to the past or our time today. I created a zero point, the surviving humans could start all over again. Unfortunately we have no such zero point in our present, we carry all our burdens from the past, and we're not able to shake them off. A vicious circle?

I fear: Yes! And I think that this will cost us all of it. The inability to trust, based on our collective experiences. Was there a time, when young French and German people shook hands, after they had been archenemies for such a long time, after they had fought against each other in a bloody war, after Germans had committed awful war crimes also in France? Was there a time when Jews returned to Germany, after all what the Germans had done? Hard to believe today.....

Nationalism and hate culture, a bit it seems to me that we had peace in Europe and the US for a too long time. Do we really need a zero point? Well, one problem would be, that the legend of the Phoenix is nice, but no necessity. A lot of ashes the humans generated in their history - but the Phoenix?

Yes, it was very interesting to write an utopia, in a way much more interesting than to write a

dystopia. But in the end I'm still (very) pessimistic, while looking into the future. I see much too much endangerment and far too little positive aspects. But I will never stand on the moon, looking at this wonderful earth.....