



# UTOPIA FOR 500 YEARS

A CONFERENCE ON THOMAS MORE'S UTOPIA TO BE HELD AT  
ST. THOMAS MORE COLLEGE, UNIVERSITY OF SASKATCHEWAN  
IN CELEBRATION OF THE 500TH  
ANNIVERSARY OF THE WORK'S PUBLICATION

In the five hundred years since Thomas More published his *Utopia*, the work has had a profound influence on political and philosophical thought. But it has likewise held an important place in modern aesthetic and cultural developments—in literature, in art, in architecture and design—and has inspired political change, social experiments, and radical counter-cultural movements.

This conference seeks to address the varieties of utopia and utopianism that More's work and those influenced by it have dared imagine. Does the utopian impulse mark a practical response to political, ecological or social crisis? Does utopia reflect a nostalgia for some lost golden age or optimism for a better—if perhaps impossible—future? Do utopian fictions allow us to explore previously unseen possibilities or confine us to the realm of mere imagination? What about dystopias? How are imagined dystopias informed by the tradition begun by More? Are they a straightforward antithesis of the utopian impulse, or could it be that dystopia is somehow a product of utopianism? Finally, what is the place of *Utopia* and utopias in historical change? Can we identify historical or modern social, economic or ecological experiments that display some utopian vision? In short, how has utopia been used as a tool to think with and how have people translated that thought into action.

We will feature presentations on a range of topics that address More's *Utopia*, its context, reception and influence, but also those that more broadly address the idea of utopias and utopianism in other political, philosophical, literary, social and historical contexts. This conference will bring together a range of scholars working on *Utopia* and utopias from diverse disciplinary perspectives. Dr. Anne Prescott, Emerita Helen Goodhart Altschul Professor of English at Barnard College, will deliver a keynote address.

St. Thomas More College is a Catholic liberal arts college that is federated with the University of Saskatchewan. The College's Shannon Library holds one of six extant copies of the 1518 second edition of More's *Utopia*.

## Utopia for 500 Years Thanks our Sponsors:

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