Arts and crafts-bevegelsen

(_estetikk) Ideologi og estetikk som oppstod i England mot slutten av 1800-tallet. Prosjektet var å gjenreise gammelt kunsthåndverk, inklusiv boktrykking, bokinnbinding, bokdekorasjoner m.m. Bevegelsen var en protest mot masseproduksjonen etter den industrielle revolusjon, f.eks. av bøker, tapeter og møbler. Brukskunsten skulle ha moralsk og politisk forankring. Bøker skulle være vakre og solide.

Arts and crafts-bevegelsen innebar en blanding av radikalisme og konservatisme. Idealene for tilvirkingen av bruksgjenstander lå i fortiden (f.eks. middelalder-manuskripter og Gutenbergs bibler), mens de ledende mennene i bevegelsen lengtet etter et framtidssamfunn med mer rettferdig behandling av arbeiderne. De ville realisere en form for sosialisme i arbeidslivet, forankret i en idealisert fortid (middelalderen).

Kunstnerne og håndverkerne i arts and crafts-bevegelsen brukte i langt mindre grad maskiner i produksjonsprosessen enn samtidens andre designere og produsenter gjorde. Produktene fra arts and crafts-bevegelsen ble imidlertid mye dyrere å lage og kjøpe enn masseproduserte varer. Dermed ble deres møbler, bøker osv. eksklusive, tilgjengelig kun for rike kjøpere, i ideologisk motsetning til de utopiske idealene som lå bak bevegelsen.

En av pionérene for bevegelsen var engelskmannen William Morris. Morris "may be said to have initiated the decorative revival with the establishment of his firm, Morris, Marshall, Faulkner, and Co., in 1861, in order to produce the kind of well-designed household objects which he wanted for his own Red House [...]. While the important figures in the arts-and-crafts movement, such as Arthur Mackmurdo, Walter Crane and William Morris, were active socialists, the movement as a whole was not politically committed to socialism. However, as Peter Stansky demonstrates in *Redesigning the World: William Morris, the 1880s, and the Arts and Crafts*, 'The Arts and Crafts might well be viewed as the cultural parallel, if not the actual organ, of the socialist movement' (1985, p. 37). Arts-and-crafts practitioners shared with socialists a concern for the worker's alienation from the product, a commitment to eliminating class distinctions (between the designer and

the craftsperson/labourer, for example) and a penchant for developing cooperative, non-competitive forms of organization" (Kooistra 1995 s. 29-30).

Morris' fikk sin energi både fra "the idea of the crusade against current aesthetic values" og "the excitement at the rediscovery of lost craft techniques" (MacCarthy 1994 s. 593). Fiona MacCarthy skriver også at Morris' prosjekt var "feeding the present with the past" (MacCarthy 1994 s. 607).

"It was against this factory production of objects for the home, which cluttered Victorian drawing-rooms with tasteless knick-knacks, that Morris and his associates revolted. What was new about Morris & Co. was their insistence that artists should involve themselves in the actual processes of production, and not leave this to factory-labourers. They wanted to revive the medieval ideal of the artist craftsman who designed and executed his own work, with the result that, from original conception to finished product, it never passed out of his hands. In fact, of course, this ideal was not always realized. The firm used outside craftsmen for making furniture and for printing the wallpapers and textiles designed by its members. It even used machines for some printing and weaving work, when it was satisfied that this did not produce inferior results. But the ideal of medieval craftsmanship remained an important guiding principle, particularly for Morris himself, who insisted that he master the techniques of producing a particular art-form before he started designing for it." (Bradley 1978 s. 30)

Morris mente at "the cause of Art is the cause of the people. ... One day we shall win back Art, that is to say the pleasure of life; win back Art again to our daily labour." (sitert fra Williams 1968 s. 158) Morris ville gjøre arbeideren til kunstner (Bohrer 1983 s. 49).

Morris mente at der er umulig å skille mellom kunst, moral, politikk og religion, og måten han forbandt det estetiske og det sosiale på har blitt kalt "panestetisering" (Bohrer 1983 s. 50).

Moderniteten ble opplevd som en krise. "Ruskin and Morris imagine a sociological solution for that crisis: apocalyptically re-starting civilization in its medieval garden (the arts and crafts movement) with the hope of once again synchronizing personal, technological, and historical development." (Fletcher 1980 s. 37) For Morris skyldtes hans samtids intellektuelle og sjelelige svakheter at estetikken ble forsømt og at verden hadde blitt "styggere" på grunn av industrialiseringen (Bohrer 1983 s. 50).

"The artefacts of the Middle Ages were beautiful because they were made by independent craftsmen having control of their own means of production and working in trade guilds and associations. The Renaissance and the rise of capitalism destroyed this system of co-operation and substituted one of competition, based on the profit motive and the wage relationship. The quest for

luxury and ostentation by rich capitalists replaced the medieval world's respect for plainness and simplicity. The Industrial Revolution further reduced the independence of workers, turning them into slaves to factory masters and machines. Modern works of art should be rejected not so much for themselves as for the sick society which could create them. […] It was his [Morris'] conviction that good art could not come out of a society dedicated to profit where workers were exploited and alienated from the pleasures of their labour that first turned Morris towards socialism. He himself attributed his initial espousal of socialism to his awareness 'that art cannot have a real life and growth under the present system of commercialism and profit-mongering'." (Bradley 1978 s. 75)

"The problem is to decide whether Morris, the Bauhaus and Habitat are really challenging the existing social order or just reproducing the dominant ideas, beliefs and practices. It might also be claimed that they are really trying to be neutral regarding the social order, trying not to privilege or further the interests of any social group. Convincing cases can be made for all these positions. However, in the second half of the nineteenth century Morris, along with his partners in the English Arts and Crafts Movement and the firm Morris, Marshall, Faulkner & Co., was instrumental in providing a critique of the prevailing ideology. Morris referred to himself as a socialist and saw his work as helping to improve the lot of the working classes. Following people like John Ruskin, Morris thought that the Industrial Revolution had led to the spiritual and material impoverishment of society. In particular, he thought that the industrialisation of life had reduced the 'workman' to a 'skinny and pitiful existence' (quoted in Williams 1958: 155) and that it was the place of art to 'set the true ideal of a full and reasonable life before him' (ibid.)." (Barnard 1988 s. 176)

Morris brukte arkitekten og designeren Owen Jones' bok *The Grammar of Ornament* (1856) som en inspirasjonskilde. Grensene mellom de ulike kunstartene og design av bruksgjenstander, bøker, bygninger m.m. ble til en viss grad utvisket, og formet etter et enhetlig stilprinsipp (Pfister og Schulte-Middelich 1983 s. 29).

"The products of Morris & Co. had by now become highly fashionable. In 1877 the firm opened showrooms in Oxford Street, in the heart of the West End of London. Morris wallpapers and fabrics attained the status of a cult among the wealthy upper classes. Moncure Conway noted in his travels through west London in 1882 that in the fashionable new Bedford Park estate 'the majority of the residents have used the wallpapers and designs of Morris'. The firm attracted an increasingly grand clientèle. In 1881 it was asked to carry out the redecoration of the throne room and reception rooms at St James's Palace, and in 1887 Morris produced a special wallpaper for Balmoral, Queen Victoria's new house in Scotland." (Bradley 1978 s. 67)

"Morris himself was very worried by this trend. There had always been a conflict between his ideal of reviving the simplicity and functionalism of medieval

craftsmanship to produce beautiful and useful works of art for the people and the reality of the firm's fashionable image and wealthy clientèle. The original prospectus of Morris & Co. had promised that 'good decoration, involving rather the luxury of taste than the luxury of costliness, will be found to be much less expensive than is generally supposed'. But by the very nature of the elaborate processes that went into their manufacture, the firm's products were very expensive, and their customers only the well off. Morris found his role of pandering to the tastes of the haute-bourgeoisie increasingly distasteful. In 1876 Sir Lowthian Bell, a wealthy iron-master whose home the firm was decorating, asked Morris why he was pacing up and down the room muttering to himself. 'It's only that I spend my life in ministering to the swinish luxury of the rich,' was the curt reply. Morris's growing unease about the disparity between his ideals and his actual work led him seriously to reconsider his attitudes to art and society during the late 1870s. He finally rejected the philosophy of art for art's sake and the lofty detachment from all contemporary concerns that he had, at least in part, imbibed from Rossetti. Instead he returned to the awareness of the social and economic forces that shape art which he had begun to perceive as an undergraduate as a result of his reading of Ruskin and Carlyle. This was eventually to lead him to the conclusion that it was impossible to have good art in the debased social and economic conditions of Late Victorian England. Initially, though, Morris's new contemporary awareness revealed itself in a complete change of attitude towards the restoration and 'medievalization' of old buildings." (Bradley 1978 s. 69)

"The aim of art (is) to destroy the curse of labour by making work the pleasurable satisfaction of our impulse towards energy, and giving to that energy hope of producing something worth the exercise." (Morris sitert fra Williams 1968 s. 158)

"It was through visual culture (furniture, graphic and wallpaper design) that Morris sought to set the ideal of a full and reasonable life before the working classes. The ordinary people, he thought, should not have to put up with the mass-produced, industrialised designs of the time. Traditional methods of producing furniture were to be preferred. Similarly, the garish synthetic dyes and pigments produced by using chemicals were also to be avoided and the natural colours of materials to be encouraged. Like Ruskin, Morris was concerned with the furtherance of social justice and saw to it that the workers at Morris & Co. had decent wages and working conditions. All these aspects of Morris's production may be seen as attempts to challenge the existing social order. They may also be seen as attempts to be neutral regarding the social order. It is not immediately clear, that is, whether wanting everyone to benefit from beautiful, authentic design is to be neutral regarding all social classes or whether it is to privilege one class above another. The idea does seem to be that class and status should not be reflected in the designs produced in so far as all designs should be equally available to all social classes. What is abundantly clear, however, is that Morris's project was not successful. His designs, in natural materials, handmade and using natural and time-consuming dyes, were expensive. They were too expensive for the working classes to be able

to afford. Then, as now, they appealed to and were only available to the affluent middle classes; Morris himself said that he was 'ministering to the swinish luxury of the rich' (see McDermott 1992: 150). In that the designs were too expensive for all classes to afford, not all classes could possess them and economic class and social status is inevitably reflected in them. They have become one of the ways in which the wealthy middle class constructs itself as a class. Morris's designs therefore contributed and continue to contribute to the reproduction of the social order and not, as he hoped, to its transformation." (Barnard 1988 s. 176-177)

William Peterson er blant mange som har påpekt at Morris etter hvert "found himself producing expensive objects for the wealthy" (gjengitt fra Kooistra 1995 s. 183), spesielt produkter for samlere som verdsatte brukskunst-håndverket, men som ikke nødvendigvis kjente til eller aksepterte Morris' politiske budskap. Men andre delte Morris' idealer og forsvarte dem med stor idealisme: "In 1888, the socialist Emery Walker set the fine-printing revival in motion with his lecture to the Arts and Crafts Exhibition Society. Insisting on the integrity of the printed page and on the unity of picture, type and spacing for the beauty of the whole, Walker maintained that 'printed books might once again illustrate to the full the position of our Society that a work of utility might be also a work of art, if we cared to make it so' (*Arts and Crafts Essays*, 1899, p. 133)." (Kooistra 1995 s. 30)

På 1880-tallet ble det dannet en skole som skulle bidra til å realisere Morris' idealer: "In 1888 the group was founded that acted out most literally Morris's scenario for the small community regenerated through the crafts. This was C. R. Ashbee's Guild and School of Handicraft, originally set up in the East End of London, later moving to Chipping Campden in the Cotswolds in the most poignant and fascinating episode in the history of English Arts and Crafts." (MacCarthy 1994 s. 593-594)

"In 1891 Morris embarked on his last artistic project, the printing and binding of fine books. Once again the medieval influence was strong. He had long admired the illuminated manuscripts of the Middle Ages, and the work of Caxton and other early printers. The book appealed to him as an art-form – it was a necessary everyday article which yet 'had a tendency to be a beautiful object'. For some time he had wanted to produce books of a finer quality than those produced by contemporary publishers and printers, with their dull, pinched type and poor-quality bindings. In 1888 he was stimulated into action by a lecture on book design by Emery Walker, and by examples of new typography in the Arts and Crafts Exhibition." (Bradley 1978 s. 100)

"Among the many crafts in which Morris interested himself was the art of the book. Fine calligraphy, which earlier than most crafts had been defeated by its machine-made equivalent, [and] the printing-press, was regarded by Morris as a legitimate branch of the fine arts, and by his influence the calligrapher gradually recovered for himself a more respected role – as an artist who "paints" with the shapes of letters,

and makes them with a quill as well as a brush. Morris had no respect for the machine-made Gothic of the ornamental penmen, or for printed letters in imitation of calligraphy. If it was to be valid at all, calligraphy must speak for its own times and in its own right, just as did the chairs and silver, tapestries, stained glass and textiles which he made in his workshop in Red Lion Square." (Jackson 1981 s. 156)

Morris har skrevet dette om begynnelsen på sin forlegger- og trykkevirksomhet: "I began printing books with the hope of producing some which would have a definite aim of beauty, while at the same time they should be easy to read and should not dazzle the eye, or trouble the intellect of the reader by eccentricity of form in the letters. I have always been a great admirer of the calligraphy of the Middle Ages, and of the earlier printing which took its place. As to the fifteenth century books, I have noticed that they were always beautiful by force of the mere typography, even without the added ornament, with which many of them are lavishly supplied. And it was the essence of my understanding to produce books which it would be a pleasure to look upon as pieces of printing and arrangement of type." (sitert fra MacCarthy 1994 s. 609)

"In the summer of 1890 Morris decided to set up his own printing and publishing firm to produce fine editions of classic works. He set to work designing a new typeface, installed three Albion presses in a cottage a few doors away from his house in Hammersmith, and took on a retired master printer and two assistants to work them. On 12 January 1891 the Kelmscott Press was ready for business. Fifty-three titles were produced by the Kelmscott Press during its seven years of operation. Morris designed nearly all of them himself. He tried to make his books look as much as possible like medieval manuscripts or early printed works, and made considerable use of ornamental initials and borders. He designed two typefaces, the 'Golden', a heavy Roman style based on the work of fifteenth-century Venetian printers which he first used for printing his own prose romance, *The Story of the Glittering Plain*, in the summer of 1890, and the 'Troy', a bold clear Gothic style which was first used for the Kelmscott edition of Caxton's *Recuyell of the Histories of Troy* in October 1892. A smaller version of the 'Troy' type was used for the Kelmscott edition of the works of Chaucer, which took over three years to produce and was the most ambitious project undertaken by the Press. All the Kelmscott books were printed in limited editions on hand-made paper, and were bound in half-holland or white pigskin. [...] The Kelmscott Chaucer. Morris designed the binding and the typeface, Burne-Jones the 87 woodcut illustrations. It was completed only a few months before Morris's death." (Bradley 1978 s. 100-101)

Morris "founded the Kelmscott Press in 1890 with the intention of reviving the Venetian roman typefaces of Nicholas Jenson in the fifteenth century. In 1897, Charles R. Ashbee [...] founded the Essex House Press, using many of Morris's staff and equipment from the Kelmscott Press after Morris died." (Barnard 1988 s. 116)

"The Kelmscott Press, den britiske bogkunstner William Morris' privattrykkeri, virksomt 1891-98. William Morris ønskede med sine bogudgivelser at genoplive den fordring til kvalitetspræget håndværk, som efter de industrielle metoders indpas i bogproduktionen i midten af 1800-tallet var gledet ud af offentlighedens bevidsthed. Han fik fremstillet eget, håndgjort papir, sine egne særligt designede bogskrifter, trykte sammen med en svend selv bøgerne, indbandt dem og satte dem til salg fra sit hjem. Hans heroiske indsats for det gode boghåndværk satte sig spor over hele den vestlige verden, hvor hans bøger blev "rollemodeller" for utallige privatpressers tilsvarende udgivelser. I Danmark for bl.a. Simon Bernsteen. Kelmscott Press nåede at udgive 53 titler, hovedsageligt genudgivelser af berømte middelalder- og renaissanceværker; berømtest Morris' store folioudgave af *The Works of Geoffrey Chaucer* (1896). Hans udgaver er dog hovedsageligt berømte for deres kunstneriske udstyr, hvortil flere af tidens Arts and Crafts-kunstnere – bl.a. Sir Edward Burne-Jones og Walter Crane – bidrog med illustrationer, og han selv med træskårne randornamenter. Stilen er "gotisk" og afspejlede Morris' personlige smag for 1400-tallets inkunabler. Det århundrede var også forbilledet for de to særlige bogskrifter, han lod fremstille. En nytegning af den venetianske bogtrykker Nicolas Jensons antikva, som han kaldte Golden Type, og en stilkopi af en gotisk skrift i to skriftgrader, som han navngav hhv. Troy og Chaucer. Den gotiske skrift havde kun en kort succes, men førstnævnte Golden Type blev snart efter sin fremkomst i 1891 imiteret af skriftstøberier i hele den vestlige verden og stilkopierne indgik (under andre navne) nærmest som standardskrifter hos de talrige privatpresser, som blomstrede op frem til d. 1. verdenskrig." (http://denstoredanske. dk/Kunst_og_kultur/Bog_og_biblioteksvæsen/Boghistorie_og_bogtryk/The_Kelms cott_Press; lesedato 15.05.18)

"Like early printed books, Kelmscott works were printed on hand presses with wood-engraved illustrations which simulated medieval woodcuts, because Morris believed that only in this way could harmony between the typeface and decorative elements be achieved" (Kooistra 1995 s. 30-31).

Kelmscotts Chaucer-utgave "is a labour of love and is a beautiful folio printed in fine black and red ink, with 115 pages of the text in elaborate wood-engraved borders in 14 different designs by Morris. There are also 26 large initial words and numerous initials of different sizes throughout the text. The engraving was done by W. H. Hooper, C. E. Keates and W. Spielmeyer. Burne-Jones's designs answer Chaucer's text at moments of interest to him. Romantic or mythological moments are preferred, to the extent that some short tales are lavishly illustrated, while some longer ones, even several in a row, have no plates at all. [...] Unlike Chaucer's text, Burne-Jones's images lack irony, wit and humour: the representations are all very serious and static, with none of Chaucer's delight or self-parody." (Kooistra 1995 s. 257)

"The majority of Kelmscott Press books [...] were not illustrated with pictures but rather simply ornamented with borders and initials. [...] *The Story of the Glittering Plain* is the only title to be issued twice at the Kelmscott Press, first in an unillustrated version and then in a lavishly illustrated edition embellished with Crane's plates and decorated with Morris' borders." (Kooistra 1995 s. 47).

Morris' egen fantasyroman *The Story of the Glittering Plain* (1891) – et pionérverk innen fantasysjangeren – ble i en del eksemplarer trykt på vellum, dvs. svært fin pergament (Kooistra 1995 s. 25-26). Hele Morris' forlags- og kunst-virksomhet kan oppfattes som et fantasiprosjekt, der gode håndverkertradisjoner skulle stoppe eller i hvert fall være et alternativ til victoriatidens og den vestlige kapitalismens masseproduksjon og materialisme.

"The backward-looking aspects of the arts-and-crafts movement – its historicism and idealization of medieval life – are reflected in the literary genres of its illustrated books." (Kooistra 1995 s. 171)

Morris reiste til Island i 1871 og 1873. Han ville lære seg islandsk, som han begynte med allerede i 1868. "Morris's interest in Iceland dated from the autumn of 1868 when Warrington Taylor had introduced him to Eirikr Magnusson, an Icelandic scholar who had come to England in 1862 to supervise publication of a Norse New Testament and start work on a Norse dictionary. [...] Binding for the 1870 edition of *The Story of the Volsungs and Niblungs*, translated from the Icelandic by Morris and Magnusson. The green cloth binding with stamped gold pattern was designed by Morris and Philip Webb. [...] The two men worked systematically through the sagas, with Magnusson producing a first literal translation and Morris rewriting it for publication. Their first translation, *The Saga of Gunnlaug Worm Tongue*, appeared in the *Fortnightly Review* of January 1869. The next, *The Grettis Saga*, was published later that year and *The Volsung Saga* appeared in 1870. On the whole, Morris stuck faithfully to the original themes of the sagas and wrote in close imitation of Norse vocabulary and syntax." (Bradley 1978 s. 54-55)

Bøkene produsert av Kelmscott Press "were very expensive, but their popularity led other publishers to copy their style. In 1893 Dent brought out a pseudo-Kelmscott edition of the *Morte d'Arthur* with illustrations in the style of Morris by Aubrey Beardsley." (Bradley 1978 s. 104) "In the field of typography and book design Morris's influence was considerable. The success of the Kelmscott Press led to a revival in private printing-press on both sides of the Atlantic. In the 1900 Emery Walker and Cobden-Sanderson founded the Doves Press at Hammersmith, and in 1913 Daniel Updike opened the Merrymount Press in Boston, Massachusetts. Morris's protest against the poor standard of production of most Victorian books prompted commercial printers and publishers to take much more care over design and binding. Wider margins and clearer typefaces were introduced. Although Morris's own designs were too medieval and ornate to have

much impact on ordinary book production, they found their way into some publishers' work. The volumes in the Everyman's Library, started by J. M. Dent in 1905, had decorated title pages and end papers which derived directly from Morris's designs." (Bradley 1978 s. 111-112)

"Morris's writings and lectures on art and design had a profound influence on those who followed him. His call for the revival of the medieval tradition of craftsmanship was one of the main influences behind the foundation of the Arts and Crafts Movement in Britain at the end of the nineteenth century. This movement developed in a way which Morris would almost certainly have profoundly regretted. His disciples attacked machine-production with a blind ferocity that he had never displayed, and cultivated the romantic medievalism which he had given up as a young man." (Bradley 1978 s. 112)

I 1882 ga Morris ut boka *Hopes and Fears of Art*, som er en samling taler han holdt på 1870-tallet, før han ble medlem av The Socialist Democratic Federation. To av kapitlene i boka har titlene "The Art of the People" og "The Beauty of Life". I 1883 inviterte han mange intellektuelle til Kelmscott House for å diskutere sosialisme. I 1884 publiserte han talen "Art and Socialism" og sammen med Henry Mayers Hyndman *A Summary of the Principles of Socialism*. "In 1883 Morris joined the Democratic Federation (soon to be renamed the Social Democratic Federation (S.D.F.)). In December 1884, with the support of Engels, Morris and 8 out of the 10 members of the Executive of the S.D.F. resigned and set up the Socialist League. The Socialist League was split with Parliamentarians on one side and anarchists on the other, Morris, though no anarchist, sided with them against the Parliament-arians. Morris left the Socialist League at the end of 1890 and continued to work in the Hammersmith Socialist Society, which was formed around the Hammersmith branch of the Socialist League." (https://www.marxists.org/archive/morris/bio/index.htm; lesedato 23.05.18)

John Ruskin og Morris "urged workers to assess the quality of their work in terms of shared experiment, collective trial and error. Good craftsmanship implies socialism. The workings of a modern Japanese auto plant or a Linux chat room might have expanded their sympathy for collaboration of other sorts, but still, [they] disputed the pursuit of quality simply as a means to profit. […] The connection between work and citizenship may imply socialism, but not necessarily democracy; as appeared in the medieval guild, whose workshops served Ruskin, Morris, and [John] Dewey as models, hierarchy at work could morph seamlessly as hierarchy in the state. But there are craft reasons to credit pragmatism's faith in democracy; these lie in the capacities on which human beings draw to develop skills: the universality of play, the basic capabilities to specify, question, and open up. These are widely diffused among human beings rather than restricted to an elite." (Richard Sennett i http://lcst3789.files.wordpress.com/2012/01/sennett-the-craftsman.pdf; lesedato 12.10.12)

"Combining the aesthetic-critical erudition of a John Ruskin with the practical craft knowledge of a William Morris, [den østerrikske arkitekten og byplanleggeren Camillo] Sitte not only organized instruction in a multitude of crafts from ceramics to woodcarving, but conducted a massive public campaign on behalf of the arts and crafts in the press and on the lecture platform." (Schorske 1987 s. 68)

Den amerikanske sosiologen Richard Sennetts bok *The Craftsman* (2008) handler om gleden ved å lage ting med hendene. "*The Craftsman* names a basic human impulse: the desire to do a job well for its own sake. Although the word may suggest a way of life that waned with the advent of industrial society, Sennett argues that the craftsman's realm is far broader than skilled manual labor; the computer programmer, the doctor, the parent, and the citizen need to learn the values of good craftsmanship today." (http://www.richardsennett.com/; lesedato 12.10.12)

Litteraturliste (for hele leksikonet): https://www.litteraturogmedieleksikon.no/gallery/litteraturliste.pdf

Alle artiklene i leksikonet er tilgjengelig på https://www.litteraturogmedieleksikon.no