

NOTES

1. "Wybór zełanka osobowego stanowi decyzję określającą wiele następnych wyborów." Michał Gzowski, "O powieści w pierwszej osobie in Try powieściowe, Warszawa, 1973/.
2. Robert Graves, Wife to Mr Milton. The Story of Marie Powell, Harmondsworth, 1968/, p. 93.
3. Ibid., p. 23.
4. Ibid., p. 369.
5. Ibid., p. 121.
6. Ibid., p. 266.
7. Ibid., p. 58. /also pp. 113, 141, 203/.
8. Ibid., p. 41.
9. Ibid., p. 95.
10. Ibid., p. 177.
11. Ibid., p. 38.
12. Ibid., p. 182. /also pp. 189, 363, 378/.
13. Ibid., p. 222.
14. Robert Graves, Count Belisarius, New York, 1938/, p. 3.
15. Ibid., p. 159.
16. M. Gzowski, op.cit., pp. 60, 61.
17. Robert Graves, Belisarius, p. 25.
18. Ibid., p. 275.
19. Ibid., p. 60. /also pp. 119, 221, 401/.
20. Ibid., p. 28. /also p. 417 "If am right in interpreting his thoughts, a great disappointment was in store for him."/.
21. M. Gzowski, op.cit., p. 62.

LUBELSKIE MATERIAŁY NEOFILOLOGICZNE—1975

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Approaches to Utopia

The problem of whether Thomas More's Utopia was a serious sociopolitical treatise or a mere jeu d'esprit did not appear to be particularly vexing to its Renaissance readers. They accepted the formulation that More himself introduced in the full title of the work, which seems to be totally disregarded by some of today's scholars. This "Truly Golden Handbook" was meant to be "No Less Beneficial than Entertaining"¹ and was received as such by More's contemporaries. Erasmus recommended the book to Ulrich von Hutten, a German humanist knight, because it pointed out where and from what causes the European commonwealths, and particularly the English one, were at fault.² In a letter to Thomas Lupset, William Bude thanked him for having sent a copy of Utopia and drawing his attention to what is very pleasant reading as well as reading likely to be profitable.³

The understanding of the aim of Utopia weighs heavily on its interpretation. The majority of twentieth century critics ignore the Renaissance understanding of the work and its function. This failure is directly connected with the reasons behind the revival of interest in Thomas More and his writings in the second half of the nineteenth century, a revival which was twofold. On the one hand, the development of utopian and scientific socialism gave rise to a search for the forerunners of socialist ideas in order to furnish the newly formulated doctrines with a respectable heritage. This tendency is best represented by Karl Kautsky who christened More "the father of modern socialism"⁴. On the other hand, More was recognized as a martyr for the Catholic faith against the protestant oppression, and became a very popular figure during the Catholic revival in Britain.

institution of private property for making men evil. According to Donner, More could have met this statement "easily and emphatically" (he did so in Apology twenty years later) but for the sake of argument he lets Hythlodæus score his point and confines his objections to the utility of communism.¹⁶ Donner argues that the objections that there would be no respect for authority if all were made equal is particularly significant "for More's battle in life was always in defence of authority against anarchy that was threatening, a defence to which he struck even on the scaffold."¹⁷ In reply to 'More's' objections, Hythlodæus describes Utopia, but even his vivid presentation of the best commonwealth leaves 'More's' unconvincing and sceptical. This leads Donner to conclude that:

We accept communism as a potential reality because More tricks us to accept it. Evincing a consummate skill in the manipulation of the dialogue he makes us first accept reason, and not human ability as the standard by which to judge whether something may be realized or not. Secondly he deliberately deceives us into blaming institutions, instead of human nature, as the cause of abuses and injustice. In this way he persuades us that society can be cured of all the evils besetting it, if only the institutions were reasonable. ... This is the manner in which More brings about his brilliant jeu d'esprit. Without this deception there would have been no Utopia, or if there had it must have been taken to be More's own ideal.¹⁸

What the critic cannot see is that he did not demonstrate any reason why Utopia is not More's ideal. Instead his reasoning dangerously close to being circular: Utopia is not More's ideal therefore he deceives us into thinking that it is thus bringing about his jeu d'esprit - therefore Utopia is not More's ideal. Incidentally, it is by no means obvious that Utopia was indeed More's real ideal. One might argue for this reason that the central fact to which any significant analysis of Utopia must address itself is the relationship between More's personal life and the ideas appearing in his works. This clearly seems to be the view of the great majority of scholars who work on Utopia. However, such an ambitious undertaking requires a valid interpretation of the work based on something more than a simple repetition of what one is supposed to prove.

Donner claims that Utopia's communism reflects medieval monastic ideas and that consequently Utopia is a defence of the monasteries, and so it is a truly medieval work.¹⁹ The medievalism of Utopia is also emphasized by P. Albert Dubamel, who tries to

cover "the implicit heuristic method" employed in Utopia.²⁰ This method determines the explicit content of Utopia which is concerned with contemporary economic and political problems. Dubamel believes that More employed a scholastic method in the construction of Utopia in order to make his criticism of the world created by an abuse of that method all the more ironical. More accepts the medieval distinction as the Scholastics had, keeping the conclusions of reason separate from those of revelation. Therefore, "the hypothetical Christian state, which would have involved revealed truth in its definition is only implied, and the explicit content of Utopia is to be understood as the result of demonstration conducted by unaided human reason."²¹ Consequently, Utopia is thoroughly Scholastic in its method of construction and largely medieval in its content and style. The seeming paradoxes which have worried scholars as they tried to reconcile this or that practice in Utopia with More's personal life disappear when it is realized that Utopia was only a small part of More's beliefs.²²

The first attempt to introduce a systematic religious interpretation of Utopia was made by Edward Surtz, one of the two editors of the Yale edition of Utopia. In order to discover More's real intent he studies "each problem by itself in the light of all his letters and writings and against the background of antecedent and contemporary literature and philosophy."²³ His conclusions often resemble those of other religious critics but Surtz manages to avoid most of their inconsistencies. Surtz believes that More's real attitude finds its expression both in the words of "Thomas More" and those of Hythlodæus. Thus a true ideal appears to be a communal life based on the principles of Christianity. However, this ideal can only be realized among citizens who are perfect Christians and therefore More doubts whether it will be implemented in any foreseeable future. Moreover, Hythlodæus does not really answer the Aristotelian arguments against communism since his reply consists of a description of the imaginary island of Utopia. Thus, although a serious purpose is far from being absent in Utopia, it is directed much more to the denunciation of contemporary abuses and to the depiction of a reasonable and just commonwealth than to the aggressive propagation of communism as a practical solution and plan. Utopia is not the ultimate ideal; if it had been, the very purpose of the book would have been blurred since ideal perfection would have defeated "More's plea for a spirit of emulation on the part of Ex-

ropesams"²⁴

Jack Hexter, the other editor of the Yale edition of Utopia, holds that the ultimate ideal can indeed be found in the work itself.²⁵ Abolition of private property constitutes one of the essential parts of this ideal but not the only one. Communism is a partial part of the Utopian political system which aims at the final eradication of human sins, particularly pride. Consequently, Utopian arrangements do not satisfy all possible human needs but only those which result in a true pleasure. True pleasures lead to a virtuous life and make sin impossible. More considers sin to be the source of all evil: it is sin that makes the adoption of communism, the best system of commonwealth, impossible. On the other hand, the only way to eradicate sin is the adoption of communism. The existence of pride perpetuates and nourishes the present evil nature of the state; private property exists because of pride. Consequently, human condition cannot be improved by moderate reforms and a radical solution cannot be applied, as this would require a spiritual revival which cannot take place within the system based on private property.²⁶ Therefore at the end of the book More exclaims that "there are very many features in the Utopian commonwealth which it is easier for me to wish for in our countries than to have any hope of seeing realized."²⁷ Hexter believes that this statement of 'Thomas More' contains the main idea of the whole work.

Hexter's monograph on Utopia is certainly the finest achievement of the conservative tradition in utopian studies; all his conclusions are based on a careful and subtle analysis of the text and external information is introduced only when it is justified by the text. A considerable part of his study is devoted to a criticism of the many absurdities that appear in the works of other scholars, particularly those who followed Kautsky's interpretation of Utopia. For Kautsky, Utopia is a socialist vision far in advance of its time. In his Thomas More and sein Utopie he states that More's communism did not result from any outside influence such as Plato's Republic or contemporary accounts of the pagan societies in the newly discovered lands, but was founded on the criticism of the existing social and economic situation.²⁸ He considers More a genius who, well ahead of his time, discovered the essential principle of modern socialism - that man is a product of the material conditions of his age and a class of people may change its place in the social hierarchy by a change in the mode of production. Kautsky believes that More had to be a utopian socialist because the capitalism of

his times was not sufficiently developed; had More lived in the 19th century he would probably have become a scientific communist. Consequently, the communism of Utopia is modern in most of its tendencies but reactionary in most of its expedients. These reactionary expedients are the attachment of men to specific handicrafts, the institution of slavery, and the restriction of needs. Thus Kautsky also presents an evaluation of Utopia based on a comparison between the communism of Utopia and scientific communism.

Russel Ames, writing some fifty years after the publication of Kautsky's dissertation, whilst adhering to the Marxist method of analysis, comes to different conclusions.²⁹ He sees in Utopia a document of the desires of the middle class, expressing the democratic spirit of the guilds and a protest against the monopoly of a small group of the feudal aristocracy in foreign trade. Therefore a special position is given to the craftsmen and merchants in Utopia, and the democratic institutions of the island anticipate the ideas of bourgeois revolutions. Here Ames seems to be quoting from "a utopia of his own": the merchants play only a very minor role in Utopian economy and their number is negligible.

Perhaps these inconsistencies made Ames' study unpopular among the socialist scholars who generally accept Kautsky's interpretation developing its main points and introducing minor contributions of their own. Thus, for instance, Aleksandrov states that More not only presented the terrifying facts of early capitalism but also tried to discover the general causes of the observed injustice.³⁰ More saw private property as the root of all evil and made an insightful analysis of the nature of the state showing its exploitative and oppressive character. His communism is a communism of production as well as of consumption. In this way he transcends the ancient and medieval models. He is the first thinker to give a systematic model of a communist organization of production.

This seems to be the line of reasoning followed by V.P. Volgin, who claims that More did not treat Utopia as a plaything because some statements typical of utopian socialism find their first expression in the book.³¹ Volgin attempts to demonstrate a historical connection between the origin of Utopian socialism and the process of primary accumulation of capital with its form of exploitation typical of early capitalism. The solution of the problem of private property is the main achievement of Utopia. Unlike the radical peasant movements of the Middle Ages advocating the ideal of common

ownership by appealing to the law of God, More was the first to give it a rational basis. These are the strong points of Utopia. The weak points include slavery, forced limitation of the needs of the citizens and the absence of the idea of technological progress. Volgin explains these shortcomings by the low level of England's economic development in the 16th century.

This recalls the view set forth by Frackowiak in his study of the economic doctrines of Thomas More.³² Frackowiak blames More for not having discovered that the development of a market economy leads to greater productivity: "More could not see that this system leads to greater productivity: 'More could not see that this system capitalism was making it possible for things to be on an economic basis and for rational business principles to be applied. He did not realize that this system provides very effective incentives which induce people to improve their skills and to work harder.'³³ The best comment on the above statement comes from Ward Allen who wrote that Frackowiak's thesis "requires a serious rereading of the text."³⁴ Frackowiak's approach is typical of many contemporary socialist analysts of Utopia. The major fault of this type of analysis lies in the attempt to evaluate Utopia from the point of view of the 20th century developments in social sciences.

Although the existence of such an approach confirms the continuing vitality of More's work it cannot be accepted as the basis of any serious research on Utopia. It entails a gross misunderstanding of the status of the book which belongs to so-called applied literature. Consequently, what is required in the preliminary stages of research is the discovery of the structure of the work, and then its idea. Only then can one reasonably discuss the relationships between the ideas of Utopia and those contained in More's other, non-fictional, writings, bearing in mind that the ideas of Utopia, because they exist in a literary work of art, do not have the same status as the ideas put forward in philosophical treatises. In order to meet these requirements detailed literary studies of Utopia should precede ideological criticism.

C.S. Lewis was one of the first scholars to consider Utopia primarily as a piece of literature.³⁵ Unlike traditional scholars, Lewis does his best to prove that Utopia was simply a good joke and nothing else. In order to make his point he refers to the reactions of More's contemporaries to the work. Thus according to Lewis "Thomas More's contemporaries to the work. Thus according to Lewis 'Thomas More speaks of it as if it were primarily a comic book, Tyndale despises it as 'poetry'; for Harpsfield it is a jolly invention pleasantly set forth; More himself in later life classes it and The Praise of Folly

as books rather than burned than translated in an age prone to misconstruction."³⁶ The validity of the arguments offered by Lewis is questionable. Erasmus' attitude is at best uncertain, and if we are to believe his letters he considered Utopia in the same way as most of its Renaissance readers and the author himself. Tyndale, as More's religious opponent naturally despises the book for its fictional character, and exhibits a typically Puritan attitude towards fiction. This attitude was shared by several of More's other Protestant critics with whom he was engaged in a long debate concerning the nature of authority in the Church and the nature of the Eucharist.³⁷ As the Puritans identified fiction with lies they immediately seized the opportunity to accuse More of being a poet and a "jester" who habitually dealt with fictions, i.e., lies. It is strange, however, that a twentieth century historian of literature adopts a similar position. In addition Lewis argues that Utopia "becomes intelligible and delightful as soon as we take it for what it really is - a holiday work, a spontaneous overflow of intellectual high spirits, a revel of debate, paradox, comedy and (above all) of invention, which starts many bars and kills none."³⁸ Unfortunately Lewis' Wordsworthian rhetoric combined with an overflow of very high spirits conceals a complete lack of any valid arguments in support of his thesis that Utopia should be treated as a "holiday work", whatever meaning he may wish to apply to this highly ambiguous term.

The interest in literary studies of Utopia was recently revived in America: Robert C. Elliott wrote a series of articles (later published in a book form) in which he called for a radical revision of existing interpretations.³⁹ Surveying some recent critical work he sharply criticizes Edward Surtz's position. Surtz's way of dealing with the religious issues in Utopia seems like not only counting Lady Macbeth's children but spanking them as well.⁴⁰ This serious methodological error could have been avoided if Surtz had not treated the characters of Utopia, particularly Hythlodæus, as real people. The search for any concealed meanings behind Hythlodæus' words is futile because "Hythlodæus is only the words that the words of Thomas More say he speaks."⁴¹ Consequently, although Surtz's arguments against communism may be valid from the doctrinal point of view they have little to do with a literary work in which the ideas on communism exist.⁴² Therefore, ideological interpretations of the work should be replaced by a literary one. In order to arrive at the correct interpretation it is necessary to discover the literary conventions which give the work its shape and meaning. Elliott claims

that although Utopia seemingly established its own conventions, most of its constitutive elements were taken over from the tradition of Roman satire. Like Roman satire, Utopia has a negative-positive composition: the negative part presents the evils of contemporary state whilst the positive part proposes a normative model of the good state.⁴³ Beside this fairly simple structural outline Utopia is full of many complexities which require a very sensitive reading of the text and special attention to the shifts of tone which usually carry moral implications. Moreover, the voices of the speakers should be tested against the norms of the work. According to Elliott "the meaning of the work as a whole is a function of the way those voices work with and against each other: a function of the pattern they form".⁴⁴ The fact that More gave one of the characters his own name does not make this character the worthpiece of his ideas. More simply makes use of a satirical convention in which the character modelled on the author often proves to be a fool. Indeed, Morus, the Latin form of the author's name, denotes a fool. It is astonishing how many critics who discuss Erythrodeus's views on communism because his name means "homemade distributor" have overlooked this point. Thus it is Erythrodeus who wins the argument about communism with "Thomas More"; he wins the argument about communism because he was given all the best lines, not because his opinions are necessarily superior to those advanced by other characters.⁴⁵

Since the publication of Elliott's book there have been numerous attempts at taking up the study of Utopia using new terminology and methodology, a full account of which would go well beyond the limits of the present survey which is primarily concerned with traditional ideological interpretations of More's work. However, it seems worthwhile to mention at least some of the recent publications in this field. An Anglo-French periodical Morgana publishes articles on various aspects of Utopia: one of its double issues was entirely devoted to utopian studies, many of which dealt with the literary problems; literary studies of Utopia have been undertaken in France and Germany, and although a systematic literary interpretation of Utopia is yet to appear the number of critical works which make such an interpretation possible is constantly growing.⁴⁶

References

1. Similar sentiments are expressed in two poems prefixed to Utopia. Cf. The Yale Edition of the Complete Works of St. Thomas More, vol. 4: Utopia, ed. Edward Surtz & J.H. Hexter (New Haven 1965), p. 31.
2. Cf. Gerard Dudo, Sir Thomas More and His Utopia (Amsterdam 1924) p. 26.
3. Utopia, p. 5.
4. Cf. Karl Kautsky, Tomasz More i jego Utopia, trans. Kazimierz Bieszycki (Warszawa 1948).
5. Cf. R.W. Chambers, Sir Thomas More (London 1935); R.S. Johnson, More's Utopia: Ideal and Illusion (New Haven 1969); B. Russell, History of Western Philosophy (London 1961).
6. Cf. Gerard Dudo, op. cit.; Chad Walsh, From Utopia to Nightmare (New York 1962); R. O'Sullivan, "The Social Life and Theories of Thomas More", Dublin Review, 199 (1956), pp. 46-62.
7. Cf. R.W. Chambers, op. cit.; W. Campbell, More's Utopia and His Social Teaching (London 1930).
8. Cf. R.W. Chambers, op. cit., pp. 126-128.
9. Ibid., p. 132.
10. Cf. Richard O'Sullivan, op. cit., p. 47.
11. Ibid., p. 50.
12. Ibid., p. 54.
13. Ibid., p. 56.
14. Cf. H.W. Donner, An Introduction to Utopia (London 1945).
15. Ibid., p. 66.
16. Cf. Ibid., p. 69.
17. Ibid., p. 70.
18. Ibid., pp. 70-71.
19. Cf. Ibid., p. 83.
20. Cf. P. Albert Duhamel, "Medievalism of More's Utopia", Studies in Philology, 52 (1955), pp. 99-126.
21. Ibid., p. 120.
22. Cf. Ibidem.
23. Edward Surtz, The Praise of Pleasure (Cambridge, Mass. 1957), p. 194.
24. Ibid., p. 4.
25. Cf. J.H. Hexter, Utopia: the Biography of an Idea (Princeton 1952).
26. Cf. Ibid., pp. 89-91.
27. Utopia, p. 247.
28. Cf. Russel Ames, Citizen Thomas More and His Utopia (Princeton 1949).

29. Cf. Karl Kautsky, *op. cit.*, p. 267.
30. Cf. G.F. Aleksandrow, *Historia filozofii*, vol. 2 (Warszawa 1962).
31. Cf. V. Volgin, *Francuzki utopicski komunizm* (Moscow 1960), quoted by Igor M. Osinovsky, "Thomas More's Utopia in Russia", *Moreana* 22 (1969), p. 36.
32. Cf. W. Frackowiak, *Poglady ekonomiczne Tomaza More* (Poznan 1967).
33. *Ibid.*, p. 112.
34. Ward Allen, "Hythloday and the Root of All Evil", *Moreana* 43/44 (1974), p. 60.
35. Cf. G.S. Lewis, *English Literature in the Sixteenth Century* (Oxford 1954), pp. 167-169.
36. *Ibid.*, p. 167.
37. Very instructive in this respect is an article by Rainer Pines, "George Joye's Controversy with Thomas More", *Moreana* 38 (1973), pp. 27-36, particularly the part devoted to Utopia, pp. 31-32.
38. G.S. Lewis, *op. cit.*, p. 169.
39. Cf. Robert C. Elliott, *The Shape of Utopia* (Chicago 1970).
40. Cf. *Ibid.*, p. 27.
41. *Ibid.*, p. 28.
42. *Ibidem.*
43. Cf. *Ibid.*, p. 30.
44. *Ibid.*, p. 31.
45. *Ibid.*, p. 48.
46. Cf. A. Ciornescu, *L'avenir du passe: Utopie et litterature* (Paris 1972); H.U. Seeber, *Wandlungen der Form in der literarischen Utopia* (Göppingen 1970); I.W. Stevens, "Aesthetic Distance in Utopia", *Moreana* 43/44 (1974); A. Zgorzeleci, "Wzrost i rozwój literackiej koncepcji utopii angielskiej", *Studia Anglistyczne i Slavistyczne Odrodka Naukowego* (Warszawa 1975), pp. 85-105.

LUBELSKIE MATERIALY NEOFILOLOGICZNE—1975

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Der deutsche Kriegerroman nach 1918

Die Geschichte des deutschen Kriegerromans fängt nicht, wie man-
che Literaturhistoriker zu beweisen suchen, erst im 20. Jahrhundert
an, wenn man auch annehmen darf, daß erst in unserer Epoche diese
Romanart zu einer selbständigen, vielgelesenen und politisch bedeu-
tenden Literatur wurde. Es ist auffallend/und historisch begründet/,
daß die Geschichte des deutschen Romans überhaupt gerade mit einem
Kriegsbuch beginnt, und zwar mit dem bekannten Werk Grimmschau-
sens "Simplizius Simplicissimus"/1669/, in dem der Krieg nicht nur
dargestellt, sondern auch sittlich beurteilt wird. Der 30-jährige
Krieg war nämlich jenes Ereignis, das das ganze Land und die gan-
ze Bevölkerung betroffen, beeinflusst, ja zerstört hatte. In die-
ser Hinsicht war er also der erste totale Krieg auf deutschem Bo-
den, wie ihn die Politologen der zweiten Hälfte unseres Jahrhun-
derts bezeichnen. So ist er auch im Werk Grimmschausens: total,
wild, allumfassend. Wenn ein solches Werk 250 Jahre später erschie-
nen wäre, wären wir bereits berechtigt, von einer pazifistischen
Tendenz zu sprechen. Es ist aber in erster Linie barock-religiös
und von der zu dieser Zeit vorherrschenden Grundidee der Ver-
gänglichkeit und Minderwertigkeit des menschlichen Daseins ge-
genüber dem Jenseits getragen; es enthält jedoch auch Züge plebe-
jischer Utopien, wie seine Sicht plebejisch ist.

Zwischen dem "Simplizissimus" und den nächsten Kriegerromanen
liegen tatsächlich über zwei Jahrhunderte. Es blühen in dieser