BOOKS IN REVIEW

A Utopia from the Semi-Periphery: Spain, Modernization, and the Enlightenment

Stelio Cro, ed. *Description de la Sinapia, Peninsula en la Tierra Austral: A Classical Utopia of Spain*, [Hamilton, Ont.:] McMaster University, 1975. LVII + 146 [+ 72] pp. $7.50. This edition of a hitherto unpublished Spanish manuscript makes an original contribution to utopian scholarship. The manuscript, together with another — a treatise on education almost certainly by the same anonymous author — was found by Professor Cro in the archive of an eighteenth century lawyer and political bureaucrat, the Count of Campomanes (1723-1802); Professor Cro has published the second ms. as an appendix to the edition. Both manuscripts are undated. There is no doubt however, as Professor Cro argues in his lucid and well researched introduction, that *Sinapia* is an eighteenth-century utopia of the Spanish Enlightenment.[1] It had long been believed that Spain produced no systematic literary utopia.[1b] We share Professor Cro's excitement at his find.

There is an additional factor: *Sinapia* may well constitute, up to this point, the only literary utopia written from the perspective of what has been described as the semi-peripheral areas of the modern world system. It therefore raises some useful questions as to the relationship between utopias and what a contemporary scholar has called "the tidal wave of modernization."[2]

Professor Cro relates the writing of More's *Utopia* to the widespread transformation of European life, concepts, and attitudes subsequent to the Spanish discovery and conquest of the New World, to the change and disruption that initiated the modern era. Central to this transformation was the development of the first global economic system. This world system, as described by Emmanuel Wallerstein,[3] incorporated three areas, each defined by a different dominant mode of labor control — the core by free wage labor, the semiperiphery by serf labor, the plantation system of the periphery by forced slave labor. The world market which linked these areas produced through the mechanism of trade — equal exchange between unequally valued labor — the relatively unequal levels of development of the three areas. The mechanism of trade served as a conduit for the accumulation by the core areas of a disproportionate share of the social wealth that was now produced globally. This access of social wealth was one of the factors that enabled a "spontaneous" dynamism of growth which transformed the core areas into today's developed First World. The other areas had instead to find ways and means of grappling with the correlative cycle of underdevelopment.

This may explain the perceptive observation by Professor Cro that, although *Sinapia* is heavily influenced by other previous utopias, the manuscript reveals ". . . a line of political thought original to its creator . . . the perfect state is a Christian state based on science and technology" (p. XIII). If as Professor Cro conjectures, the author of *Sinapia* was a *feijoista*, this would further suggest that a contributing cause of the political originality of the manuscript is to be found in the nature of Spain's semi-peripheral relation to European countries such as France, Holland, England.

Feijóo (1676-1764) was both a priest and an academic, one of the elite minority group, who like Campomanes — in whose archive both manuscripts were found — represented the Enlightenment in Spain. Professor Cro quotes

the excellent Spanish historian, Vicens Vives, who argues that with the inauguration of the Bourbon monarchy in 1700, a European conception of life came to modify and substitute the Spanish mentality moulded by the Counter Reformation. But as with all semi-peripheral areas — Russia with its Slavophile and Narodnik movements is a case in point — there is always a strong ambivalence towards the wave of modernization emanating from the core.

Both Feijóo and the author of *Sinapia* express an ambivalent attitude to the European conception. On the one hand, both, like all the elites of underdeveloped areas, share the dream of "catching up with the core"; and both aspired — as did the other *ilustrados* (i.e., members of the "enlightened" elite) of the time — to a "utopian city from which the remnant of medieval barbarism would disappear, fused in the crucible of a superior culture moulded by progress and tolerance."[4]

At the same time, however, Feijóo belonged to the Church-cum-academic bureaucracy, partaking of the scholastic tradition which had fused intellectual and religious orthodoxy with national orthodoxy. Most probably this is also true for the author of *Sinapia*, who, as Professor Cro speculates, might well have been a priest. Like Feijóo, he was clearly receptive to the new intellectual stimuli that came from abroad, but he also shared in this group's identification of the national with the Christian-Catholic that had marked Spain's brief, if dazzling, imperial hegemony.

In the sixteenth century Spain had been the first core country of the emerging world system. Her domination of Europe under Charles V, her conquest and expropriation of the New World, seemed to provide empirical evidence for the national belief that she was a country destined by God for providential mission, i.e., to realize a Christian utopia on Earth. Professor Cro refers to the "remarkable utopian flavour" that marks the sixteenth century chronicles and reports of travellers to the Indies. More "fiction than history," the narrative impulse of these chronicles was "the search for happy land, the quest for a perfect society in America" (p. XI).

For with the discovery of the New World a transposition was made by the European imagination. The former ideal world remote in time, related to a "lost Christian paradise" and/or "the Golden age of the ancients," was transposed to a "world remote in space."[5] The New World reality was incorporated into the topos of an *adynaton* — which serves both as the censure of the times and the denunciation of the times — the world upside down."[6] In Peter Martyr's *Decades*, e.g., the factual lineaments of the New World are drawn into the stock literary representations of the pastoral *locus amoenus*, and of the innocent neo-Horation *aldea* (village, countryside) as contrasted to the corrupt court/city/civilization. Through these devices the New World is portrayed as a fusion of the Garden of Eden and the Golden Age, a figuration that was central to the religious enthusiasm, to the reason-as-nature paradigm of Christian humanism. The mechanism of world reduction[7] common to utopias works through a series of exclusions or eliminations. Thus Martyr's Christian-humanist portrait of the New World utopia — the "goulden worlde of which oulde wryters speake so much" — ritually excludes "pestiferous money" and the legal state apparatus: "where men lyved simply and innocently with inforcement of lawes, contente only to satisfy nature . . . ."[8]

The paradox was to be that, although there was an early attempt to model two cities in New Spain on the model of More's *Utopia* (pp. V-VI), the actual Spanish New World societies were in fact organized by the Church and State bureaucratic apparatus whose minutely regulated laws — the famous laws of the Indies — negated the humanist dream of a stateless paradise. And in Spain itself, this same apparatus, by representing the Christian humanism of Erasmian

thought as religious heresy, censored out this revitalizing current of thought. The movement of Christian rationalization – a secularization of theology and a theologization of the secular – that had been central to the ongoing cultural transformation in the core countries of Europe was therby postponed. Indeed, through its imposition of religious orthodoxy as national orthodoxy – heresy came to constitute Un-Spanish Activities – the Church/State apparatus stifled the rise of the incipient Spanish commercial and industrial bourgeoisie. Since Spanish capitalism was thus thwarted the wealth transferred from the Indies to Spain was siphoned off, through the mechanism of unequal exchange, in trade to the new core countries: Holland, France, England. During the seventeenth century Spain was displaced to the semi-periphery. In the eighteenth century she would have to cope with the fall from grandeur, the retreat from "manifest destiny" – with the new phenomenon of underdevelopment.

The underdeveloped semi-periphery is always out-of-date. If the eighteenth-century European Enlightenment was marked by a wave of dechristianization which followed on the earlier stage of Christian rationalization, *Sinapia* may be called the utopian manifesto of the eighteenth-century Spanish attempt at a form of Christian rationalization. This mode of rationalization might be called – and the paradox is instructive – the Spanish Christian Enlightenment.

The utopian imagination in the semi-periphery must confront the empirical existence of superior models of social transformation in the core countries, models which constrain its projections, preventing it from postulating an autonomous and wholly other system. Because of this the referential sub-text of the utopian discourse of *Sinapia* – i.e., the social reality from which it takes its departure and which it constitutes through negation/inversion[9] – relates at the same time to eighteenth-century Spain, to the core countries, and to the *relation* between them. The utopian "development" plan of *Sinapia* projects a model which can set the terms of a new relation, and which – as with the Russian's Narodniki and the Spanish *ilustrados* – can incorporate selected aspects of the core model by and through traditional institutions. Feijòo and the author of *Sinapia*, members of the Church bureaucracy and of the intellectual scholastic tradition, would seek to use institutions of the Church in order to create a national form of the European "universal" Enlightenment.

The theoretical problems which Feijóo deals with in his essays, as well as the possible solutions, are both posed and resolved by the narrative machinery of *Sinapia*. The ideological contradiction facing the Spanish *ilustrados* determines both the structure of the text and the structure of the proposed social order.

Feijóo had posed the central problem in the context of addressing what is today a widespread Third World dilemma – the problem of the literary and other "backwardness of our nation." In pushing for educational reform, he argued that Spain should not be held back by fear of religious heresy from taking advantage of the scientific knowledge offered them in foreign books. Feijóo's argument was that theology and philosophy each had their own sphere, that the former as revealed knowledge was superior to the latter which was the result of mere human knowledge. Spain was well supplied with trained theologians who could discern what was opposed to Christian Faith and what was not. The Holy Tribunal of the Inquisition was always on guard to defend religious doctrine by removing, in Feijóo's words, any "poison" that might accompany the "liquor" of the new learning.[10] The new climate of thought was to be filtered through the selective framework of bureaucratized Christian orthodoxy.

Sinapia, in giving narrative representability to this solution, both resembles and differs from the utopian structures of the French Enlightenment. This relationship of parallelism and divergence can most usefully be envisaged in

terms of Mannheim's and Deleuze/Guattari's analyses of utopia. Mannheim's distinction between ideology as the legitimation of the ruling group and utopia as the manifesto of a social group aspiring to hegemony is reinforced by Deleuze and Guattari's analysis of the role played by utopias in the legitimation and de-legitimation of desire. They argue that utopias function not "as ideal models but as group fantasies, as agents of the real productivity of desire, making it possible to disinvest the current social field, to de-institutionalize it . . . ."[11]

Like its contemporary French utopias, *Sinapia* disinvests the social field of the aristocracy, delegitimates its accompanying climate of thought. Professor Cro points to the difference between Plato's *Republic* and *Sinapia* (pp. XVII-XVIII). The former legitimates the rule of a military aristocracy, the latter de-legitimates the representational categories of the still powerful landed aristocracy. By limiting war and preferring peace, even if gained through bribery and stratagem, *Sinapia* displaces the military code with the work-ethic. It replaces the aristocratic code of honor with the bourgeois utilitarian ethic; the prodigality and conspicuous luxury cunsumption of the aristocracy with the sober moderation of the middle class. The speculative imagination here acts as "a general solvent"[12] of the system of representation of the aristocracy.

In this, *Sinapia* is at one with the European Enlightenment, sharing in its "social equalitarianism and rationalism" (p. XXVIII). This is borne out by the internal evidence of the utopian stock figures in the text. The figures of the Persian prince Sinap and the prelate Codabend, and in particular that of Siang, the Chinese philosopher, are all borrowed from the French Enlightenment. And it is the wave of dechristianization in Europe, Baudet suggests, that may have been responsible for the enthusiasm "for China and other lands that swept across Europe in the eighteenth century." The real historical figure of Confucius — the philosopher who was not a religious founder — was central to the European representation of the Chinese "who honour everything, their parents and the ancestors." This mixture of reverence for tradition allied to a secular morality coming out of a higher culture provides the ideological legitimation for the figures of one of the founders of *Sinapia*, the Chinese Siang. The other two founders, the Persian prince and prelate also come out of the eighteenth-century literary stock in which — together with the Noble Savages — "Turks, Persians and other Non-Westerners were installed alongside the Chinese."[13]

However, if *Sinapia* borrows figures from the European Enlightenment, it uses them in a specific manner. The narration in which the Chinese philosopher Siang is converted by the Persian Christians signifies a reconciliation between Christian orthodoxy (the Persians) and the natural sciences (Siang). In addition, by re-transposing the imagined ideal world back in time — the Persian Christians represent an earlier mode of Christianity, that of the third and fourth centuries — and combining this with the European Enlightenment's use of cultures of a higher order, *Sinapia* turns its back on both the prelepsarian Golden-Age-type utopia of the Christian Humanists and on the Rousseauist perfect state of nature with its emphasis on the *individual*.

In the European conception, the theme of economic freedom "defined as social equality based on the division of labour and private property"[14] was linked to the representation of man's individual origin in a state of nature. The concept of the originally free and unbound individual with his natural right to private property was to be the mythological charter of the commercial and industrial bourgeoisie on their rise to hegemony. The feudal rights of the nobility to their large landed estates was delegitimated along with the concept of rights based on birth. In the state of Nature there is a reversal of all ranks. Merit is what now counts in the competitive free-for-all.

Sinapia also joins in this delegitimation of the property rights of the nobility. But it postulates as its ideal imagined world the earlier Church structure

with its emphasis on the Christian *community*, where all property is held as col-
lective state property. Thus in *Sinapia*, with its ritual exclusion of private pro-
perty, money, and markets, capitalism is put off limits. If the "natural state"
conception led in France to the idea of remaking the world anew on the model
of its imaginary origins, the remaking of the social order in *Sinapia* means a
conservative return to earlier political structures, which are paradoxically able to
incorporate the natural sciences represented as the pagan tradition of thought of
"higher cultures." The state of Nature is in it implicitly delegitimated; thus, the
"noble savage" American Indian and Black can play no ideal role in *Sinapia*.
Rather they are subjected to the "civilizing" influences of the superior Chris-
tian and Chinese cultures. The ideal Incas, the model for Campanella's *City of
the Sun*, become in *Sinapia* Peruvian Chinchas whose "rusticity" has to be
civilized, just as the Malay's "ferocity" has to be "domesticated" (p. 6).

It is the Black, however, who is most displaced from the natural state
ideal of "noble savage," to the lowest rank in the pecking order of races and
cultures. Blacks are represented as simple and docile, as *negrillos* called Zam-
bales. They were cleared out of the geographical space by the Malays who
drove them into the adjoining country of the Galos. Later, in the context of
Christian universality, the Blacks are represented as one of the races involved in
the mixture which has produced the Sinapian. Here their "race" is designated
by the literary term of Ethiopian. They are assimilated by the use of this term
to a legendary medieval utopian figure — the priest-king of Ethiopia, Prester
John.

When Europeans were themselves semiperipheral to the then hegemonic
Mohammedan power, Prester John had played a powerful role in the European
imagination as the black image of Christian power who would one day deliver
them from the Moors.[15] His imagined kingdom — a magical utopia with a pool
which rejuvenated men, and a magic table which cured drunkenness — was also
the ideal model of a Christian state in which a Priest King combined religious
and temporal power. This original model of a priest king becomes, in the utopia
of *Sinapia*, the model of the ideal state patterned on a church hierarchy. The
magical model of Prester John is transformed into the rationalized model, in
which the Christian community is converted into a paternal social machine.
Geographically *Sinapia* is divided into units-family dwellings; several such units
constitute a *barrio*, several of which constitute a *villa* (town), several of which
constitute a city, several of which constitute a metropolis, several of which cons-
titute a province, nine of which constitute *Sinapia*. Socially and politically, each
unit is ruled by a Father, each Father with prescribed degrees of power to pun-
ish their family members and the two slaves allotted to them. Slaves, private and
public, are made slaves as a punishment for their crimes, but the power to decide
on limited or perpetual slavery is confined to the top Fathers and to the Prince
who functions as chief magistrate. Thus the fathers of the family are punishable
by the fathers of the *barrio*, who in turn, are punishable by the fathers of the
villa, and so forth. The prince, with the Senate's approval, alone has the right to
punish by death, life-slavery, or exile. *Sinapia* thus exemplifies the carceral com-
plex, designed to identify deviance and the social norm of orthodoxy.[16]

Exile is retained as the punishment for heresy. Heretics are given a chance
to recant; if they do not, they must be totally excluded from the Kingdom. For
Sinapia is, above all a social and ideological autarchy, that mode of utopia cen-
tral to all forms of the bourgeois — i.e., both non-aristocratic and non-popular —
imagination. As Roland Barthes points out, the sites of utopia are always rigidly
enclosed so that they can constitute a social autarchy. The inhabitants of these
bourgeois modes of utopia are always shut in so as to "form a total society, en-
dowed with an economy, a morality, a language and a time articulated into sch-
edules, labours, and celebrations. Here as elsewhere the enclosure permits the

system, i.e., the imagination . . . ."[17]

Sinapia is represented as completely enclosed from the rest of the world; it is well protected by armed forces against any outside intrusion. Trade is strictly regulated and only carried out by a few selected bureaucrats; exit and entrance visas are strictly supervised. And if *Sinapia* rigidly excludes Christian religious enthusiasm, a new kind of rational enthusiasm for totalitarian supervision and control pervades the text. The real stroke of imaginative brilliance in the work is to be found in the meticulous arrangements for a form of censorship which will enable the incorporation of the novelties of the natural sciences without any danger of deviationist heresy.

Merchants of Enlightenment — *mercaderes de luz*, much as in Bacon's *New Atlantis* — are dispatched to purchase, with no expense spared, the "new technology": books and models for "the advancement of the sciences and the arts" (p. 58). When brought back, all material must first be decontaminated, distilled by a highly ingenious form of censorship. A group of censors — gatherers, miners, distillers, improvers — select out the material that can be utilized, and even improve upon the models and scientific paradigms. Whatever is considered ideologically dangerous to the Christian-bureaucratic mode of organization, to its static perfection — for *Sinapia* is a classical utopia — is filtered out, the "poison" removed (to repeat Feijóo's metaphor) as the "liquor" is distilled.

Sinapians are therefore locked within a totalitarian representation of reality. *Equal* material distribution is used as the legitimation for *unequal* access to the means of information and communication. The desire disinvested from the social field of the landed aristocracy is reinvested not into the pivate proprty bourgeoisie but into the social field of the technocratic/bureaucratic bourgeoisie whose representational categories legitimate an intellectual and imaginative autarchy. In fact, the utopian mode of *Sinapia* seems to prefigure the dystopian realization in our time of the representational autarchy — with its managed reality and managed fantasy — imposed by the bureaucratic/corporate elite of the First, Second, and Third World through the mass-media.

Indeed, correlative to this *Sinapia* can also teach us something about modern SF. Our century has seen the beginning of the end of the Eurocentric cultural autarchy with the historical emergence of former utopian fictional Others — the Chinese, the Persians, the Blacks, the Mohammedans — from exoticism. In the context of this historical movement another transposition has been made from terrestrial to extra-terrestrial time/space, and fictional Others. If we see SF as the updated pseudo-utopian mode of the global (and increasingly dominant) technocratic bourgeoisie, as the expression of its group fantasy, then one of SF's more troubling aspects — a neo-fascist elitism that reminds one of *Sinapia's*, based as it is on the projection of "higher cultures" — becomes theoretically explicable. From Clarke's *2001: A Space Odyssey* to *Star Wars*, SF — like *Sinapia* — ritually excludes or marginalizes the "Lesser breeds without the law," outside of technological rationality — what Ursula Le Guin has called the social, sexual, and racial aliens.[18] Such SF excludes, in fact, the popular forces who today embody the millenarian heresy of utopian longing,[19] and who are on our world scene the only alternative to the new, non-propertied technocratic bureaucracy.

NOTES

1. The ms. dating has led to an ongoing critical dispute between Professor Cro and Professor Miguel Avilés Fernández, who has also published an edition of *Sinapia: Una Utopia Española del siglo de las luces* (Madrid: Ed. Nacional, 1976). Cro in his later work *A Forerunner of the Enlightenment in Spain* (Hamilton, Ont.: McMaster Univ., 1976) argues on the basis of a newly discovered reference for a 1682 date, which would imply

that the author is a forerunner rather than contemporary or follower of the *feijoista* current. Against this, Avilés Fernández argues from internal evidence that *Sinapia* is a product of the Enlightenment and was most probably written by the Count of Campomanes in the last third of the 18th century. I agree that this work belongs to an 18th-century discourse, even though I would place it in the earlier part of that century, so that I am reluctant to attribute it to Campomanes. For a balanced discussion of the opposing viewpoints see F. Lopez Estrada, "Más noticias sobre la Sinapia o utopia española," *Moreana* No. 55-56 (1977): 23-33.

1b. Monroe Z. Hafter, in "Towards a History of Spanish Imaginary Voyages," *Eighteenth Century Studies* 8 (Spring 1975): 265-82 discusses a "full-length Spanish imaginary voyage written in the Enlightenment" which pretends to be the true account of a philosopher who voyages in an unknown civilization, *Selenópolis* (Madrid, 1804). Hafter argues that although no study of imaginary voyages lists so much as a single original Spanish text, nevertheless this account, while it "stands out for its developed portrait of the ideal lunar society of Selenopolis . . . forms part of a trajectory to which interest is astronomy, distant travel, and social satire contributed over a period of many years" (p. 266). The parallels between *Sinapia* and *Selenópolis* are clear – the problem of incorporating the natural sciences and the need to rationalize society. But the basic difference is that Selenópolis is an open society (encouraging trade, internal and external) which marginalizes religion, while Sinapia ia a closed theocratic society. The narrative device of the *voyage* to a land which is projected as existing – Selenópolis – leads to somewhat different conclusions than does the projection of a utopia – a no-where – whose existence is figuratively located in the geography of the narrative itself. But *Sinapia* does belong to a wave of speculative thought, typical of underdeveloped countries, ceaselessly seeking to correct a "backwardness" whose causes are as much external – in the system of relations – as they are internal; a history of thought therefore marked by a Sisyphean futility. Hafter discusses the history and extension of this wave, expressed both in book form and in journalistic literature.

2. Ernest Gellner, *Thought and Change* (Chicago, 1965), p. 166.

3. Immanuel Wallerstein, *The Modern World-System: Capitalist Agriculture and the Origin of the European World-Economy in the Sixteenth Century* (New York, 1974), pp. 86-87.

4. Jaime Vicens Vives, *Manual de historia económica de España* (Barcelona, 1969), p. 431; my translation of the original Spanish quoted by Professor Cro (p. XIX).

5. Henri Baudet, *Paradise on Earth: Some Thoughts On European Images of Non-European Man* (New Haven, 1965), p. 32; and J.H. Elliott, *The Old World and the New, 1492-1650* (Cambridge, 1970), p. 25.

6. Ernst Curtius, *European Literature and the Latin Middle Ages* (New York, 1952), p. 96.

7. Fredric Jameson. "World Reduction in Le Guin: The Emergence of Utopian Narrative," *SFS 2* (Nov. 1975).

8. Peter Martyr, *Decades*, trans. R. Eden (1555), in *The First Three English Books on America*, ed. E. Arber (Birmingham, 1885), p. 71; quoted by J.H. Elliot, p. 26.

9. See Fredric Jameson, "Of Islands and Trenches: Neutralization and the Production of Utopian Discourse," *Diacritics* (June 1977): 9.

10. Padre Feijóo, *Cartas eruditas y curiosas, etc. 1742-1760*; see the letter, "Causas del atraso que se padece en España en orden a las ciencas naturales," in the anthology *Spanish Literature 1700-1900*, B.P. Patt and M. Nozick eds. (New York, 1965), pp. 7-16.

11. Karl Mannheim. *Ideology and Utopia* (New York, 1940), p. 38; and G. Deleuze and F. Guattari, *Anti-Oedipus: Capitalism and Schizophrenia* (New York, 1977), pp. 30-31.

12. Jakob Burckhardt, *Reflections on History* (London, 1943), p. 110; quoted by Baudet, p. 72.

13. Baudet, p. 43 and p. 45.

14. Ibid., p. 59.

15. See Ibid., pp. 15-20; also Robert Silverberg, *The Realm of Prester John* (New York, 1972).

16. See Michael Foucault, *Discipline and Punish: The Birth of the Prison* (New York, 1977), p. 30.

17. Roland Barthes, *Sade/Fourier/Loyola* (New York, 1976). p. 17.

18. Ursula Le Guin, "American SF and the Other," *SFS*, 2(Nov. 1975).

19. The emergence, in the periphery areas of the world system, of political/religious

cults like Jamaican Rastafarianism – the Reggae singer Bob Marley expresses in his hit song *Exodus* the inversion/negation of the social order through its delegitimation as Babylon compared to the projected true home of Zion – are the contemporary expressions of popular movements of insubordination. The parallels with the Gnostics who delegitimated the classical *kosmos* at the end of antiquity, thus ushering in the new figurative space which Christianity was to inhabit, are clear.

–Sylvia Wynter

Locus: The Newspaper of the Science Fiction Field, 2 vols.: Nos. 1-103 (1968-1971), Nos. 104-207 (1972-1977). Boston: Gregg Press, 1978. Non-paginated (?! – must be near 3,000 pp.). $95.00. Sociologists, ideology students, and microhistorians of SF 1968-77, as well as specialized research libraries, will wish to have these two very fat volumes for the wealth of gossipy biographic, publishing, etc. data on people and events from the SF microculture scattered among its pages. For all others, the one-dimensionality of such items as "Ray Nelson is looking for pen-pals who remember past lives" (No. 12); "[Lem's *Solaris*] is turgid and boring, perhaps because of the infinite detail" (Charles Brown, No. 71); "Throughout ["The New Atlantis"] Le Guin unloads all the clichés that she has avoided . . . for 13 years" (Dan Miller, No. 177) makes it obvious that it would have been enough to have reprinted a rather slim and careful selection of some statistics and book reviews from *Locus* – notably those by David Hartwell and Richard Lupoff, but also (despite *Locus's* frequent fulminations against academics) by professors Peter Fitting, David Samuelson, and Susan Wood. Such a selection would hopefully be reset rather than reproduced, as here, by photographic reprint with whatever horrible eyestrain may result.

–DS

An Unnecessary Reprint

Hans Girsberger. *Der utopische Sozialismus des 18. Jahrhunderts in Frankreich.* Wiesbaden: Focus-Verlag, 1973. XXVII+271p.26 DM. This photo-offset edition of the original 1924 book on utopian thought in 18th-Century France, occasioned by the growing post-1968 interest in the history of utopianism and SF, confirms Dale Mullen's complaints (in *SFS* 15:192) about unnecessary reprinting; indeed it extends them, since he was speaking about post-1945 fiction, and this is an example of pre-1945 secondary literature. The first 107 pp. of Girsberger's book are an introduction discussing the philosophical, ideological, and material "bases" of 18th-century utopianism, with a brief review of the utopian tradition from Plato to the Renaissance and of the "socialist" extra-literary models for that tradition in Antiquity, the Jesuit state in Paraguay, and the French rural cooperative as remnants of the early "agrarian communism." Self-confessedly a second-hand digest, based mostly on the French and German secondary literature of the 50 years preceding Girsberger's book, this first part is today completely superseded by intervening studies on utopianism (for the general ones of Beer, Berneri, Biesterfeld, Bloch, Cioranescu, Gove, Negley-Patrick, Schwonke, and Seeber see *SFS* 10:245-46; also Atkinson, Baczko, Chérel, Coe, Coste, Courbin, Krauss, Le Flamanc, Manuel, Mühll, Patrick, Pons, Poster, Trousson, Tuzet, Venturi, Volgin, and Wijngaarden, to mention only the main studies dealing with 18th-century authors). However, the investigation of the texts of "utopian socialism" proper which follows on pp. 108-235 is not much more useful either. First, it is based on what I have elsewhere (see chapter 3 of my book *Metamorphoses of Science Fiction*, US 1979) called the "antediluvian" approach in utopian studies, i.e. the isolation of a fully perfect and ideal "essence" of utopia which is by definition identical in "poetically intuitive" and "philosophically dialectical" (in other words, fict-