

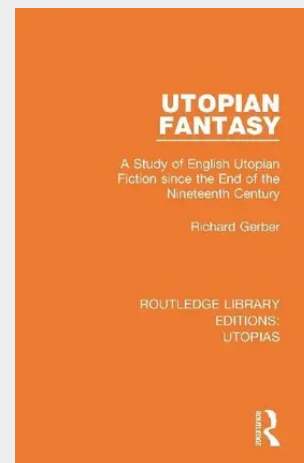
Gerber

Utopian Fantasy

A Study of English Utopian Fiction since the End of the Nineteenth Century

This book, originally published in 1955 and reissued in 1973, is a study of the flourishing of an ancient literary form which had only recently been recognized and systematically studied as a proper genre – utopian fiction. Beginning with the imaginary journeys of writers like H. G. Wells at the end of the nineteenth century, Professor Gerber traces the evolving themes and forms of the genre through their culmination in the sophisticated nightmares of Aldous Huxley and George Orwell. It is a two-fold transformation: On the one hand, the optimism of social reformers whose visions of the future were nurtured by the theories of Darwin and the triumph of science and industry gradually gives way to the pessimism of moral philosophers alarmed at the power science and technology have put at the disposal of totalitarian rulers. On the other hand, the earlier writers' dependence on framing and distancing devices for their stories and heavy emphasis on technical details give way to the subtlety of complex psychological novels whose artistry makes the reader a citizen of the tragic worlds depicted.

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