

THE INTERTEXTUAL READING OF THOMAS MORE'S *UTOPIA* AND JONATHAN SWIFT'S *GULLIVER'S TRAVELS*: FROM UTOPIA TO DYSTOPIA

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ABSTRACT

More and more criticism is interested in the utopian travel mode of writing because of the popularity it is gaining. This art is rediscovered in new modern forms such as: science fiction dystopias, anti utopian space odysseys and apocalyptic dystopias, these neological genres of utopia are flourishing in arts. Thomas More's *Utopia* (1535) is considered as the founding text of the utopian travel literature and it is often read as a pretext deeply inspiring dystopian texts written after. Jonathan Swift's *Gulliver's Travels* (1726) is regarded as the first significant dystopian travel narrative directly inspired by Thomas More's *Utopia*. This inspiration and influence was openly recognized by Jonathon Swift himself and widely investigated by critics. This article analyses this relationship between Thomas More's *Utopia* and Jonathan Swift's *Gulliver*. The many studies done on this issue have generally examined this relationship through thematic comparative studies conducted in terms of similarities and differences between the two texts. However, the study below has attempted to go beyond mere thematic comparison and traces the genetic link between the two narratives. In other terms, the extent to which *Gulliver* owes to *Utopia* has been examined in relation to the generic link between the utopian and the dystopian modes of writing. This has been done through an intertextual reading of the two texts, where similarities and differences are reconsidered from the assumption that *Utopia* and *Gulliver* belong genetically to the same literary genre. Tracing the intertextual link between the two utopian travel texts from this perspective reveals that *Gulliver* relies on the dynamics of the utopian literary genre as established by More in *Utopia*, and make it undergo reformulations, readaptations and reshaping contributing by that in the cloning of dystopia as a new literary genre genetically deriving from utopia.

Keywords: *Gulliver's Travels*, *Utopia*, Utopia, Dystopia, Intertextuality.