



Making All Things New: Past, Progress, and the Promise of Utopia

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The New is not a fashion, it is a value.

—Roland Barthes

Whatever [a] new understanding of the past holds to be irrelevant—shards created by the selection of materials, remainders left aside by an explication—comes back, despite everything, on the edges of discourse or in its rifts and crannies: “resistances,” “survivals,” or delays discreetly perturb the petty order of a line of “progress” or a system of interpretation.

—Michel de Certeau

See, I make all things new!

—Revelation 21:4

Utopia tracks a paradoxical course. As a neologism coined by Thomas More—the doubling of “no place” with “good place”—the word signals both the “new” knowledge of and interest in Latin and Greek language and culture current in Europe in the very early sixteenth century, and a “return” to survivals of a classical past. As a text inaugurating a literary form, More’s *Utopia* has recently been understood to incline toward both the secular and the religious, just as the new availability of classical words and forms prompted a return “ad fontes,” back to the sources, motivating both humanist interest in classical secular models and Protestant interest in the early Christian church. Yet, of course, the early modern humanist who inaugurated the genre, Thomas More, was himself so devoutly Roman Catholic that he would eventually be canonized a saint by that church, a fact

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that renders the links between *Utopia*, humanism, and “what will only later be called” Protestantism both utterly fascinating and impossibly fraught.¹ Never has “newness” been so manifestly perturbed by survival.

Histories of utopia have not tended to emphasize the earlier survivals in More’s work; and medieval exemplars have not generally been regarded as centrally pertinent to utopianism itself. To be sure scholars of early modern utopia do not exclude the medieval period entirely: they typically cite such concepts as the Golden Age, the New Jerusalem, or monasticism (widely acknowledged as important to More) as forerunners of utopian thinking, and such texts as John Mandeville’s *Travels* or *The Letter of Prester John* as early precursors to the literary genre. The effect of such citations, however, is more to render medieval utopian formations ancillary than vital to More’s work.

While medievalists themselves have, by and large, assumed utopia to be a crucially “early modern” formation, the utopian strains of some medieval texts have come under some important, if limited, scrutiny. Sheila Delany proposes heresy and alchemy as “sites of medieval utopian thought”; Michael Uebel reads utopian modes in the cognitive disruptions legible in *The Letter of Prester John*; Sylvia Federico argues that Chaucer’s *Troilus and Criseyde* encodes a kind of impossible utopian hope; Paul Strohm invokes Ernst Bloch’s notion of “utopian surplus” to discuss Chaucer’s *Friar*; Aranye Fradenburg reads medieval romance for its utopian ability to surface “revolution as well as reaction”; I have argued that we might take seriously the utopian elements of medieval Arthurian romance, particularly its links to Welsh resistance to English cultural and political sovereignty. Early modernist Margaret Ferguson has considered the utopian elements of Christine de Pisan’s *Book of the City of Ladies*.² These studies suggest some important ways of engaging medieval culture with the project of utopia, though none has as yet taken on the problematics of the project as quite literally *avant la lettre*.

This special issue of *The Journal of Medieval and Early Modern Studies*, “Utopias, Medieval and Early Modern,” harbors such ambition, gathering essays that consider utopian dreams dreamt before or beside More’s work. Religious attitudes, habits, and longings emerge as crucial to many of the essays here, all of which trouble the status of the utopian as primarily understood as a secular genre or literary form. The resulting broad conversation highlights the stresses and fault lines of periodization, the relations between the secular and religious, and the problematics of Christendom’s relation to its others (representations of Islam during the period of Cru-

sade and fantasies of Japan are each featured). Our special issue thus joins the chorus of scholars currently rethinking the links and survivals between old religious traditions and their apparently more secular descendents. We have sought to ask how utopia can be thought not only in medieval reflections on the ideal polity, or early modern accounts that do not follow More's model, but in the complex variety of ways that utopian texts work, including their often discordant temporalities, their contradictions, and their libidinal structures. While all of the essays gathered here treat utopia as a discourse and material structure, the registers they address are varied: cartographic, colonial, architectural, epistemological, fantasmatic, scientific, religious, and aesthetic. Contributors have found ingenious ways to recast generic form as matter of textual and material import: what Karma Lochrie terms, following Ernst Bloch, the "utopian function"; what Constance M. Furey explores as the process of "desiring utopia"; what Mary Baine Campbell, writing on bees, considers as a "utopian mental world" in miniature; or what Ricardo Padrón identifies as the "whiffs of utopia" that startle from unexpected sites, linguistic, religious, or geographic. And a number of the authors specifically address the question of why their particular engagements with utopia seem, at first, something of an impossible project.

Of course, impossibility is very much at home in utopia. Fredric Jameson reminds us that, as heir to the travel narrative, utopia is "irredeemably other and thus formally, or virtually by definition, impossible of realization."³ Such a claim might seem to make a home for utopia in the Middle Ages, a period itself often imagined as irredeemably other. But this too has seemed impossible: More's *Utopia* is, apparently, too new, too innovative to be defined by the survivals from its immediate past. To be sure, linguistic novelty sparkles through More's elegant Latin, from his clever neologisms to his brilliant puns. *Utopia* the term and *Utopia* the text are each shot through with the sheen of the new; the medieval, on the other hand, rarely associated with innovation or an active *avant garde*, seems thus unused, if not unable, to conjure the utopian. Yet in the midst of this novelty, More's well-documented indebtedness to monasticism, his renewal of Latinate textuality, his devout Catholicism constitute those survivals that, as Michel de Certeau puts it, "perturb the petty order of a line of 'progress.'"⁴ Rather than assail the historical narrative that claims More's *Utopia* as radically new, we are interested in understanding why, despite repeated testimony to those "medieval" inspirations that survive in his text, the narrative of More's revolutionary newness seems still so unassailable. What does it mean, in other words, that More's *Utopia* seems indeed to make all things new, even

those things that it doesn't. I wish to suggest in the next few pages that this virtue is an effect of utopianism itself, a part of the utopian impulse toward material innovation, the very important longing for a way to make all things new. From that vantage, utopian thinking might reemerge as surprisingly medieval after all.

Impossibly new

At the beginning of his reading of the contradictions embedded in *Utopia*, Fredric Jameson announces his hope to “invent a way of reading More” that can “recover some of the elegant new Latin for the first European readers.”⁵ Throughout Jameson helps his readers appreciate the astonishment of More's newness, staking the revivals of classicism and early Christianity as “an ideological revolution whose innovation constitutively includes passion and excitement,” a renewal that, following Norbert Elias, he links analogously to “the rediscovery of Marxism and the great dialectic texts and traditions in the 1960s.”⁶ Building upon the work of Louis Marin (the essay is dedicated to his memory), Jameson shows how More's text, and the utopian form generally, engage the past as “a registering apparatus for detecting the feeblest positive signals from [it] and for bricolating and combining them and thereby producing what looks like a representational picture.”⁷ One such contradiction is precisely the tension between survival and innovation that I isolate here: survivals, however feeble, are constitutive of the new form.

My interest here is less in genre than in bricolage. I wish to mine what Certeau would term “the crannies” of Jameson's historical mode. The essay's brilliance lies in the deft way it produces an effect of newness while testifying to More's interest in earlier habits of mind. And yet the relationship posited between medieval survivals and early modern innovation is worth pressing upon. Not surprisingly, medieval monasticism functions as one of four “ideologemes” that constitute “feeble signals from the past,” specifically here the quotidian organization of monasticism, a face-to-face, egalitarian version of collective life. This means that medieval survivals are figured in repetitive structures of the day to day, and not in the innovative intellectual force of More's new Latinate text.

Paradoxically, humanism and “what will only later be called” Protestantism become the source of More's more elegant Latin, the cause of passionate enthusiasm and astonishing newness. Despite the fact that the monastery constituted throughout the Middle Ages a primary site of textual production and even textual innovation; despite, too, the authority of

late medieval Latinity as pertinent to More's interest in the language; the medieval figures not as a site for textual production, linguistic ambition, or a desire to return to things classical but as an idealized, feudal, repetitive mode. Figured in this way, monasticism constitutes a "feeble" mode of past survival (monasticism just as the monasteries are being dissolved) that, while crucial to More's representational aims, does not share in the apparently robust innovations of *Utopia* as textual form. Insofar as Jameson locates the innovation of More's work as a textual and intellectual feature, *Utopia* implicitly constitutes the secularized (if never entirely secular) fulfillment of a medieval communitarianism associated with the monastery.⁸

Jameson's analysis seems almost to anticipate the objection I have just raised; he refers delicately to the revolution of humanism and Protestantism in the future continuous tense: More's *Utopia* encodes "what will only later be called" Protestantism. The verb form does some heavy lifting here. As future continuous tense, it indicates the (eventually former) state (medieval Catholicism) as continuing not only through but in and beyond the moment of More's writing. At some future point, the verb tense implies, the name of Catholicism will be interrupted by a new name: Protestantism. Yet this interruption, this revolutionary change is a coming-into-being; it is yet to occur. Thus and despite Jameson's praise for More's innovation, that newness is revealed to be constituted by its very location *avant la lettre*. This special issue joins him there.

Despite this nuance, Jameson's historicism remains implicitly progressive, emphasizing the break of the new as an advance upon the old. Most forcefully (and most debilitating for a reconsideration of the medieval and utopian) this occurs in his treatment of More's supposed secularism. It is telling that Jameson's ideogeme for humanism is "Greece," here distinguished from its (medieval and Catholic) classical partner, "Rome," as a sign that humanism signifies a secular advance upon religion. Despite the fact that, as Certeau reminds us, humanism could just as easily be seen as "an extension of patristic thought" or one among several "series of renaissances of antiquity throughout the Middle Ages";⁹ despite again the religiosity of all the humanists, the turn to the classics apparently marks the early modern as secular in a way the medieval, for all its interest in antiquity, can never be. This opposition has long served to evacuate utopian possibilities for the Middle Ages which never seems capable of its own kind of secularism. But casting the medieval as religious and the early modern as secular conveniently ignores (or erases) More's indebtedness to the religious idea of utopia as simultaneously an ideal city that is nowhere, a doubleness that, as Daniel

Birkholz argues here, survives from the antique apocalyptic image of the New Jerusalem as well as from the medieval cartographic fascination with Eden.

Julia Reinhard Lupton and Kathleen Biddick have each argued that such moves mark historical time, at least in part, with typological meaning, constituting a secular brand of supersessionism.¹⁰ Biddick argues that “supersessionary thinking and notions of modernity are closely bound.” That is, in Lupton’s words, typological thinking is “one of the foundational principles of modern periodization per se and thus must be dialectically engaged rather than simply rejected or replaced.”¹¹ From this vantage, Protestantism and humanism are *new* with regard to their medieval Catholic forebears in precisely the way that early Christianity was *new* with regard to its Jewish ones. Such historical *newness* is, of course, redolent with and anxious about any whiffs of dependency upon the past. (This is an aspect of the new to which I will return.)

There is, however, an element to Jameson’s use of the *new* that escapes the progressivist habit. There are two discourses of newness here, two aspects of the bricolage. In a revision and extension of Marin’s link between utopia and play, Jameson also links utopianism with the cultural practice of amateur invention as “active bricolage”:

I think we need to grasp the Utopian operation in terms of home mechanics, inventions, and hobbies, returning it to that dimension of puttering and active bricolage. . . . For it is precisely this dimension of a hobby-like activity, which anyone can do, in their own spare time, at home, in their garage or workshop, that organizes readership of the Utopia text, a better mousetrap which you also can emulate, thinking of new twists on existing laws and customs and coming up with ingenious models of your own.¹²

Though this is not strictly speaking a question of genre (and Jameson insists that he would “not want this to serve as a sketch for some more immediate definition of utopia as a genre”), this reference to the hobbyist, the experimental thinker or crackpot, emphasizes the material effects of the desire to make things new. I turn now to suggest its power for rethinking the medieval into the utopian.

Building a better mousetrap

Making things new, Jameson thus reminds us, converges upon the making of new things. As such the utopian fascination with newness encodes a desire to be astonished, and a hope in technique/technology as a means to revivify the world and our desires for it. To invent, to create, to make up is very much a part of material production, of making things real. This may be one reason why every new technological advance seems to some to be filled with utopian promise. This is not, as we know thanks to a long history of materialist critiques of the machine, necessarily the case (a fact that resonates with Louis Marin's insistence that utopian play is a neutral activity).¹³

Invention, play, and wonder as a function of medieval textuality has been compellingly explored by L. O. Aranye Fradenburg, who reconsiders the romance genre as surfacing an "interest in the *jouissance* of the encounter with the new."¹⁴ (It is the *jouissance* of the new to which Roland Barthes refers when, in *The Pleasure of the Text*, he implies that we need to do better than dismiss desire for the "new" as mere whim: "the New is not a fashion, it is a value.")¹⁵ Fradenburg's essay suggests a place even for the whimsical in the ambitious betterment of culture. She concludes in a utopian mode:

romance discourse can best be understood . . . by recourse to study of the cultural and economic function of the crafts fairs, frivolous objects, crackpot inventions, pretty little nothings, clever contrivances, and the like, that were produced by, and circulated through, all ranks of medieval society.¹⁶

A study of the medieval utopian impulse may thus require that we redouble our efforts to reexamine, insofar as we are able, the innovations of everyday life and the texts that represent them.

During the Middle Ages, invention and ingenuity were ambitiously linked to both the artifact and to acts of fabrication. The Middle English word *maken* (to make) suggests something of this doubleness: it traces production as both acts of imagination and acts of material craft. According to the *Middle English Dictionary*, the range of meanings for *maken* includes: "To construct or produce (a thing)"; "To found (a city, church, monastery, religious order, etc.) . . . or seat of authority"; "to compose or write, make poems . . . to fabricate . . . to draw up and/or write (a legal or commercial document)"; "To choose (a king, emperor, pope, etc.), appoint (officers, an attorney, etc.)"; "To promulgate (a law); give (a commandment); make a rule, (the body of rules governing a religious order)."¹⁷ Making stories is not

entirely unlike making political order; cities, laws, rulers, like poems and contracts, must be crafted, forged from fragments, newly imagined.

Richard Kieckhefer's *Magic in the Middle Ages* suggests that an interest in technological innovation and a love of gadgets may have been one of the major attractions of medieval wonder, a category that engages various genres including travel narrative (see Birkholz's essay in this volume), dream vision (see Lochrie), romance and history (see Burgwinkle).¹⁸ In the later period, wonder would produce the charm of miniaturization and the curiosities of natural history that Campbell examines in her account of the premodern discourse of bees. And the medieval West's attraction to Arabic sophistication and learning produced both utopian models of scholarly *convivencio* (the School of Toledo) and universalist impulses for Christian empire, impulses that have links to the Hispanic universalism that Ricardo Padrón reads in his fascinating contribution to this issue.¹⁹

While that last example hints at some of the problematics of making, the most contentious medieval example of "active bricolage" involves the case of Geoffrey of Monmouth, historian and romancer. The long controversies (still raging, as Burgwinkle's essay makes clear) over Geoffrey—resourceful inventor, half-baked historian, or worse—may have more than a little to do with the speculative nature of that text, its bricolage of genealogy with pagan magic, right down to his inclusion of the magician Merlin and his prophecies. If Geoffrey's *ingenium* can be viewed as an experiment with language, narrative, and form, it is perhaps unsurprising that so many other writers would emulate him, or perhaps more precisely, depart from him, inventing ever new Arthurian characters, poems, histories, and romances. In this context, it seems somehow right that mousetraps, Jameson's emblematic example of the utopian impulse as "active bricolage," make their first appearance in the historical record in a text of Arthurian romance from the twelfth century. Chrétien de Troyes would use the rat trap as an example to help his readers see the hero in *Yvain's* predicament as he tries to enter the castle of the wounded Esclados:

Now that door was high and broad,
But the entry was exceedingly narrow,
.
For it was built exactly like a trap
Set for a rat when he comes
Hunting what was never his.
And a sharp blade hung

Up above, which shot viciously
Down on its tracks when anything
Touched its trigger, or even
Came close, no matter how gently.
And just below the door
Were two hidden springs, connected
To a sliding iron grate
That could cut like a knife. If anyone
Stepped onto this device
The grate came sliding down
And whoever was caught beneath it
Was crushed, was cut to pieces.²⁰

The century that produced the romance as a form, and this specific description of a gadget, was among the most inventive periods in the Middle Ages. During it the mechanized horizontal loom, the artesian well, percussion drilling (first used in 1126 by the Carthusian monks), tidal mills, glass mirrors, and windmills were all introduced either for the first time or for the first time in Europe. (The post design for the windmill was an innovation brought to Europe by members of the Third Crusade.)²¹

A variety of genres provide opportunities to think more about the utopian links between signification and technology. Karma Lochrie ends her essay by gesturing toward the links between the dream vision and “the explanatory power of medieval astronomy and science.” Mary Campbell points to the metaphorical power of bees for projects both utopian and dystopian. William Burgwinkle, reading romance as utopian, points to the forms of “healing as aggression” that the “new forms of literary composition” encoded, forms produced, he argues, by the historical experience of the crusaders. Daniel Birkholz’s attention to medieval *mappaemundi* emphasizes the innovative multiplicity of the map as “house of mirrors.”

Making new, like utopia generally, can work for good or ill; and we should also recall that the new may, as form and surface, constitute (in disguise) the glamour of something very old. Campbell’s essay suggests as much when she insists we remember the ways the *new* science of bees in the sixteenth century are busy with very old (even archaic) gender assumptions and arrangements. Fradenburg forcefully raises this aspect of newness when, alluding to the paradoxical attraction of the repetition compulsion, she reminds us that “the Real’s return always generates the effect of the stunningly new.” The repetition compulsion catches us off guard precisely

because, while the refrain seems familiar, it comes to us in a new key. Even that which seems “stunningly new” can return us to the past inescapably; as the Real it can, in fact, present the past as inescapable, just as it was for More and is for Jameson. But what turns out, in any of these contexts, to be a repetition certainly didn’t start out by looking like one.²²

Utopian newness is, from this vantage, always perturbed by survival. Its attraction, in fact, rests on its ability to refigure the familiar, to make us want it again if in a new way. At this point, it makes a good deal of sense that monasticism figures in More’s work and in Jameson’s analysis as the force of day-to-day and face-to-face communitarian practice: it constitutes the return of the Real at the moment of the dissolution of the monasteries in England as a day-to-day way of life.

And the combination of newness and survival is particularly apt for considering the fantasy of the Christian utopia in the legend of Prester John, king of Christian Empire in India and the East. The return of the Real is one way to understand this medieval “discovery” of Christianity in a new and unexpected place. The surprise of finding an ideal Christian city ruled by a wise Christian king in another place than Europe functions in part to re-present Christianity to itself, rediscovering Christianity as new. That is, fantasies of the perfect Christian polity ruled by a perfect Christian king *elsewhere* offer one way of making Christianity seem new-found, young again in a setting strange and marvelous. William Burgwinkle highlights the aggressivity embedded in the “bald connection” made in texts such as these “between the Earthly Paradise and the East.” Michael Uebel’s reading of the Prester John tradition has emphasized the other side of things: he reads the “cognitively abrupt transitions,” in terms of the theories of Russian filmmaker Sergei Eisenstein, as a “medieval montage mechanism” with “utopian dimensions.”²³ They may both be right; here, too, the shock of the new has both disruptive and recursive tendencies.

Indeed newness offers so much power in this story that in one redaction of it, the author known as “Mandeville” falls silent rather than risk depleting his source entirely. Following his descriptions of the lands of Prester John, and his inability to describe the Earthly Paradise, “Mandeville” brings his travel narrative of marvels to a precipitous end:

I do not want to say any more about marvels that there are there, so that other men who go there can find new things to speak of which I have not heard mentioned. For many men have great delight and desire in the hearing of new things; and so I shall

cease telling of the different things I saw in those countries, so that those who desire to visit those countries may find enough new things to speak of for the solace and recreation of those whom it pleases to hear them.²⁴

Delight in and desire for the new provides “recreation,” but also “solace”; the unknown beckons as an undiscovered country, a new locus for desire. “Mandeville” wishes to preserve newness for future (re)discovery; he thus wishes that a perpetual state of newness be available for old Christian Europe. This is a way of keeping desire, passion, and enthusiasm alive, available for renewal.

In this, “Mandeville” displays something of the passion and enthusiasm for renewal that Jameson finds in More’s work. Strange as it may seem, discovering Christianity anew in sources from distant lands may not be, from the point of view of desire, entirely different from discovering Christianity anew in the sources from a distant past. Prester John constitutes Europe’s return to its (new) self, preserved geographically elsewhere; Reformation constitutes Europe’s (new) return to itself, preserved temporally elsewhere, in newly discovered ancient texts. (This may explain why Reformation histories are so interested in emphasizing the otherness of medieval times. The medieval serves a distancing function, providing the necessary elsewhere across which new Christian survivals can beckon.) Both projects harbor utopian ambitions for keeping desire alive. Producing widely differential effects, both projects harbor ambitions for seeing Christian faith anew, fresh, alive, and worthy again of desire.

(Never) finding neverland

It must, however, finally be admitted that imagining all things new has some stunningly apocalyptic implications. The poignancy of the image of rescue in chapter 21 of the Apocalypse of St. John rests in part on the picture of the New Jerusalem, ideal city nowhere on earth, location of a satisfaction as yet unrealized, a time when every tear shall be wiped away: “and death shall be no more, neither shall there be mourning nor crying nor pain any more, for the former things have passed away” (Rev. 21:4). “See,” the voice from the throne announces, “I make all things new!” Blending the particular with the universal, the longed-for future is imagined as both a moment of intimate consolation and a cosmological era of renewal. An instant and an age,

the image promises release from a worn and weary world of pain and death and loss.

This scene of utopian consolation is also the scene of apocalyptic judgment. In salvation history, paradise converges on the end times. And biblical paradise remains divinely given, not humanly built. This is surely one difference between apocalypse and utopia: in the Apocalypse, God makes new; all “active bricolage” is his. Creativity, making, innovation occur outside human temporality.²⁵ This is, of course, one reason why utopia as form is claimed to be so very unmedieval. It is not coincidental that the *Apocalypse* will be renamed *Revelation* in Protestant bibles. To be sure, as our contemporary historical moment shows us and as any reader of science fiction knows, apocalyptic thinking is hardly the exclusive property of medieval Christianity.

Theorists anxiously defend against the whiffs of dependency that link utopian thinking to any sedimented version of the Apocalypse. Yet, as Birkholz, Furey, and Burgwinkle each show here, the apocalyptic points to a problem at the heart of utopian desire: the problem of satisfaction as culmination and end. Birkholz notes the frequency with which the utopian ends in a reemergence of the dystopian; Furey reminds us that, as a form, utopias “typically obscure their own ambivalence about desire.” The ambivalence to which these contributors refer is legible in the apocalyptic combination of judgment and consolation, specifically in its citation of the simultaneity of telos with *novum*.²⁶ Even at the ends of the earth, the utopian mode seeks to insist, there are new things to discover, to desire, to build, to see. This is surely something for which both “Mandeville” and More earnestly hoped.

The essays gathered here show the utopian impulse of the new to play out in various political directions, in registers spatial, scientific, architectural, colonial, epistemological, libidinal, and historic. Together they argue that the utopian extends beyond and before the very generic perimeters of what would only later be called *utopia*. On the one hand this means that this special issue does not limit the material force of utopian play to a question of generic form as a mode of production. On the other, this issue suggests that utopian bricolage is a good deal more experimental, haphazard, ragged, unpredictable, and multiple than the elegance of its form might lead one to expect.

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Notes

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- 1 I borrow this phrase from Fredric Jameson, "Morus: The Generic Window," *New Literary History* 34 (2003): 431–51, at 433. My interest in this phrase and Jameson's essay will be clearer below.
- 2 Sheila Delany, "Run Silent, Run Deep: Heresy and Alchemy as Medieval Versions of Utopia," in her *Medieval Literary Politics: Shapes of Ideology* (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 1990), 6. Michael Uebel has offered the most sustained exploration of the utopian dimensions of medieval literature. See especially Uebel, "Imperial Fetishism" in *The Postcolonial Middle Ages*, ed. Jeffrey Jerome Cohen (New York: Palgrave, 2000), 267; Sylvia Federico, *New Troy: Fantasies of Empire in the Late Middle Ages* (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 2003); Patricia Clare Ingham, *Sovereign Fantasies: Arthurian Romance and the Making of Britain* (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 2001); and Paul Strohm, "Fictions of Time and Origin: Friar Huberd and the Lepers," in his *Theory and the Premodern Text* (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 2000), 65–79. See also Ingham, "Pastoral Histories: Conquest, Utopia, and the *Wife of Bath's Tale*," *Texas Studies in Language and Literature* 44 (2002): 34–46; Louise O. Fradenburg, "The Wife of Bath's Passing Fancy," *Studies in the Age of Chaucer* 8 (1986): 31–58; Margaret Ferguson, *Dido's Daughters: Literacy, Gender, and Empire in Early Modern England and France* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2003), 179–224.
- 3 Jameson, "Morus," 432.
- 4 Michel de Certeau, *The Writing of History*, trans. Tom Conley (New York: Columbia University Press, 1988), 4 (where the complete text of the epigraph may be found).
- 5 Jameson, "Morus," 431.
- 6 *Ibid.*, 435. The inspiration for Jameson's title is clarified in his reference to this comparison originally made by Norbert Elias, "Thomas Morus' Staatskritik," *Utopieforschung: interdisziplinäre Studien zur neuzeitlichen Utopie*, ed. Wilhelm Vosskamp, 3 vols. ([Frankfurt am Main]: Suhrkamp, 1985), 3:434.
- 7 Jameson, "Morus," 437. The form does not, however, offer a "vision or a full representation, but rather a semiotic operation, a process of interaction between contradictions and contraries which generates the illusion of a model of society" (450–51 n. 16).
- 8 *Ibid.*, 438–40.
- 9 Certeau, *Writing of History*, 31.
- 10 "Christian typology," Biddick writes, "posits the theological supersession of the Christian Church over Israel," such that the New Law of Christ superseded the Old Law of the prophets, the New Testament superseding the Old. Kathleen Biddick, *The Typological Imaginary: Circumcision, Technology, History* (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 2003), 4–8.

- 11 Julia Reinhard Lupton, *Afterlives of the Saints: Hagiography, Typology, and Renaissance Literature* (Stanford, Calif.: Stanford University Press, 1996), 23.
- 12 Jameson, "Morus," 442–43.
- 13 Louis Marin, *Utopics: The Semiological Play of Textual Spaces*, trans. Robert A. Vollrath (Atlantic Highlands, N.J.: Humanities Press International, 1984; repr. 1990).
- 14 L. O. Aranye Fradenburg, "Simply Marvelous," *Studies in the Age of Chaucer* 26 (2004): 1–26, at 8. My thinking on the new as "active bricolage" is indebted to Fradenburg's work.
- 15 Roland Barthes, *The Pleasure of the Text*, trans. Richard Miller (New York: Hill and Wang, 1975), 40.
- 16 Fradenburg, "Simply Marvelous," 26.
- 17 *Middle English Dictionary* at <http://ets.umdl.umich.edu/cgi/m/mec/med-idx?type=id&id=MED26584> (accessed May 9, 2006), s.v. *maken*, 2(a), 3(a), 5(c), (d), (e), 6(a), 10(d).
- 18 Richard Kieckhefer, *Magic in the Middle Ages* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1989).
- 19 On the School of Toledo and the racism of romance, a good place to start is Sheila Delaney's *The Naked Text: Chaucer's "Legend of Good Women"* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1994), 185–86.
- 20 *Yvain: The Knight of the Lion*, trans. Burton Raffel (New Haven, Conn.: Yale University Press, 1987), lines 907–8, 913–28.
- 21 See (in order) the following: Frances and Joseph Gies, *Cathedral, Forge, and Waterwheel: Technology and Invention in the Middle Ages* (New York: HarperPerennial, 1995); Jean Gimpel, *The Medieval Machine: The Industrial Revolution of the Middle Ages* (London: Penguin, 1976); Elizabeth M. Hallam, *Chronicles of the Age of Chivalry* (New York: Crescent Books, 1995); Joel Mokyr, *The Lever of Riches: Technological Creativity and Economic Progress* (London: Oxford University Press, 1990). See also, Lynn Townsend White, *Medieval Technology and Social Change* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1962).
- 22 Fradenburg, "Simply Marvelous," 16.
- 23 Uebel, "Imperial Fetishism," 267.
- 24 Historical and textual problems surround both "John Mandeville" and the book of his travels. I offer this statement, gesturing to Mandeville as "author function," more for its provocative link of newness and storytelling. I take this quotation from *The Travels of Sir John Mandeville*, ed. and trans. C. W. R. D. Moseley (London: Penguin, 1983), 188. Moseley's edition is based on London, British Library MS Egerton 1982.
- 25 This is why Northrop Frye, "Varieties of Literary Utopia," *Utopias and Utopian Thought*, ed. Frank Manuel (Boston: Houghton Mifflin, 1966), 25–49, calls the New Jerusalem an "undisplaced form . . . of the telos" (34), insisting that "a Christian utopia, in the sense of an ideal state to be attained in human life, is impossible: if it were possible it would be the kingdom of heaven" (36).
- 26 We might well remember that from the point of view of the afflicted, ending is not necessarily only a bad thing: biblical crisis literature—particularly but not only the apocalyptic texts of the Hebrew Scriptures—has long been read, so to speak, to "comfort the afflicted and afflict the comfortable." See Walter Brueggemann, *The Prophetic Imagination*, 2nd ed. (Minneapolis: Augsburg Fortress Press, 2001).