

terms, from the standpoint of man's own abilities, was bound to produce a radical desire of transformation. Thomas More's *Utopia*, with its subliminal version of the myth of paradise, perfectly joined together the viewpoint of history and the viewpoint of metaphor, the allegory and the satire, the irrational outopia of perfection on this earth and the eutopia that must guide human behavior in this world.

## "MORE'S *UTOPIA*" OR "UTOPIA'S *UTOPIA*?": HOW TO HANDLE TEXTUAL AND GENERIC DOUBLING

Joaquín Martínez Lorente  
Universidad de Murcia

This is about differences between interpretations of a book and interpretations of the same book when read from the perspective of the genre it "belongs" to. Of course this is not unusual: texts belong to different genres, and genres themselves are explained in many different, even contradictory, ways. However, some ingredients make More's *Utopia* a special case:

- First, there should be a stronger connection between text and kind: not only because More wrote the foundational work, "the real thing" in utopias, but also because the literary kind has inherited the name of the text.
- Second, *the name of the genre* seems to give some extra information about the contents of its members, and emphasize some of its dimensions.
- Third, *the place of this class of books in literature* (or as literature) is special. These texts have been typically placed far from the centre of literature, as 'boundary works' (Morson; 1981;75), as exotic as the countries they portray.

Some major theoretical problems are involved here, such as the articulation of 'extraliterary' and 'literary' knowledge, and also the articulation of critical and generic information. It is precisely by addressing these very big issues that I will deal with the interpretive doubling of More's *Utopia*, in the conviction that explicit examination of the particular interpreting and classifying interests of critics (and thus of the limits of their observations) has been insufficient<sup>1</sup>.

Let us start with the interpretive history of More's *Utopia*. George Logan made the point economically when he described *Utopia* as "designedly enigmatic" (1983,3). He went on by specifying the quality of the difficulty of the book, and by distinguishing two causes of uncertainty:

<sup>1</sup> See Dan Ben-Amos, "Analytical Categories and Ethnic Genres" (1969). Morson follows him when he insists that "genre does not belong to texts alone, but to the interaction between texts and a classifier" (1981, viii).

*Utopia* has proved to be too sophisticated for its readers, both in substance and in literary method.

It is difficult to disagree with this. When confronted with the sophistication of *Utopia*, a typical reaction for many years has been to look again through the text, to examine it even more carefully than before, in order to secure a meaning for it. In other words, to draw a map of the text in which new key regions are 'discovered' from time to time. So we have now at least nine major (and by no means simple) sections to consider<sup>2</sup>:

PARERGA	BOOK 1	BOOK 2
-----/-----/-----		
Parerga/Giles/Intro/Morton/counsel/commun/Utopia/Pride/More		
---- / ---- / ---- / ---- / ---- / ---- / ---- / ---- / ----		

In all these cases a typical pattern has been followed: the political or moral message is serious; comic factors are associated with the literariness of the work. A simple revision of the critical history of *Utopia* has to look like a mockery of Hegel's triad, with two famous traditions in the roles of thesis and antithesis, and the best tradition in the position of synthesis: they are the 'Catholic', the 'satiric', and the 'polyphonic' (Blaim, 1982) stances.

I will concentrate on the roles assigned to political analysis and narrative frame:

A - In the Catholic tradition the Utopian way of life is justified: it is true that not always every detail, but the rationale of this society is good<sup>3</sup>. Thomas More is sometimes critical (against England, or Europe, particularly in Book I), and there is much room for irony (eg. Greek names suggest non-existence); however, we can tell the point More is making, and the formal structure of *Utopia* should be interpreted as a protective device, or 'machinery of disguise' (Ames, 1949:84).

<sup>2</sup> Consider this sequence of titles of contributions; they make a short script of the recent interpretative history of *Utopia*:

"Missing the Point in More's *Utopia*?", Merrit Abrash, *Extrapolation* 19 (1977): 27-38.

"More's Raphael Hythloday: Missing the Point in *Utopia* Once More?", Wolfgang Rudat, *Moreana* 18 (1981): 41-64.

"Irresolution as Solution. Rhetoric and the Unresolved: Debate in Book I of More's *Utopia*"; John M. Perlette, *Texas Studies in Language and Literature* 29 (1987): 28-53.

<sup>3</sup> For our purposes traditional socialist-communist readings are included here, the main difference with the catholic ones being that in general the former are more literal, and the later more interested in the problem of Revelation. Furthermore, the communist emphasise the analysis of European economy of Book I.

B - Discussion has been pushed in the direction of *satire*, humour or irony, by means of two basic operations: i) by *reversing* traditional designations of what is good and bad, serious and comic, and 'here' and 'there'. Heiserman (1963) started this tradition by showing that the society of Utopia was a clumsy project, made of famously ridiculous solutions; ii) by giving a more specific, 'literary', function to the narrative frame of Book I. The persona Morus is not conventional and indifferent, but as wise as Cardinal Morton, by following the principle 'RESPONDE STULTUM SECUNDUM STULTITIAM EIUS' ('answer a fool according to his folly'. Kinney; 1986)<sup>4</sup>.

C - For the third stage the key concept is *polyphony*: in the light of historical probability it is assumed that More did not want to relinquish any of the two political perspectives. To this interpretive decision follows a different articulation of the political and literary discourses: *textual sophistication communicates the complexity of social issues*; the ambiguity of his 'method' is a faithful reflection of his personal stance<sup>5</sup>.

How is this achieved? The text communicates the political dimension of utopianism by reproducing at the level of verisimilar fiction the debate that should take place outside, a debate that has already taken place in the mind of the utopist. Three movements are involved in this third phase: from the fantastic to the realistic, from the political to the narrative and from the collective to the individual. These movements make supplementary interpretive demands on the reader: to put it in a single formula, political ideas are shown in a context, and individuals are involved in these ideas.

This operation I have sketched has important critical consequences: in many of the most stimulating studies *the island of Utopia has moved to the periphery*

<sup>4</sup> C.S. Lewis (1954) had attacked the model, but it was on the grounds of its totalitarianism. H.W. Donner (1945) had also shown the satiric element of the book, but not so much through the weaknesses of Utopian institutions. The novelty of Heiserman's approach is that the drawbacks of More's design are seen as part of More's joke.

So utopia is 'impossible', or 'false', or bad, in at least four different ways: people will not agree to establish it, it is undesirable, it will not work, and it does not exist.

This tradition was improved and proposed by Robert C. Elliott (1970).

<sup>5</sup> A. Blaim (1982, 1983), R. Helgerson (1982), Frederic Jameson (1981), E. McCutcheon (1971), and others using *Utopia* for the description of their versions of utopian writing, express this 'dialectical' taste, sometimes emphasising the painful element. M. Lasky (1976) and P. Ruppert (1986) are radical in this interest for the logic of contradictions. Some contributions (Logan; 1983, Skinner; 1987) have correctly directed attention to the fact that when these critical writings go too far, they may do not do justice to the sense of personal *commitment* the book of *Utopia* still communicates.

of the text of *Utopia*. The urge to scrutinise utopian customs in search for references to their European counterparts is replaced by new centres. I will mention four approaches:

a) First, there is a real *blend of fantasy and realism* in *Utopia*, not a mechanical juxtaposition: the realistic fictional world of Antwerp is important, and it contains other imaginary places (utopian or not), and other (utopian) historical places<sup>6</sup>.

b) Second, Hythloday's final invective against Pride and selfishness can make a very convincing justification of the book (both political and literary), making the rest its context<sup>7</sup>.

c) Third, the figure of the traveller, his 'foolish wisdom' can be a useful pattern: instead of being a function of realism, utopia becomes a function of his imaginary personal experience<sup>8</sup>.

d) Of course, this figure is a metaphor of the anguish of the utopian writer himself, who has 'seen' utopia mentally, but cannot get it implemented. Expanding this idea S. Greenblatt's (1980) analysis of the social institutions of *Utopia* is almost a function in the analysis of More's political career.

In order to justify my preference for this model I do not have to claim in a naive way that there is no personal political or moral taste involved; I can say more cynically that this model is aesthetically satisfactory because it combines static harmony, and dynamic tension, balance and conflict, naivety and cynicism, intensity and detachment, etc.

How can we describe this last stage in generic terms? I would say these critics have found a new source of aesthetic interest in *Utopia* by describing it in a 'novelistic' fashion. Even a superficial acquaintance with utopias suffices to acknowledge that 'realistic frame' and 'individuals' are not elements we expect in the formula of Utopian literature, and that a 'fictional frame' is conceded mainly in an ontological sense<sup>9</sup>.

6 See P. Kuon (1985; 79ff) for a chart of the worlds of *Utopia* and the contexts in which they appear.

7 J. Mezciems (1982, 1983) makes this point central in her commentaries. For Mezciems it clearly links More's text and Swift's *Gulliver's Travels*. Note that Swift makes his book end with a similar diatribe by Gulliver against pride.

8 See J. Traugott (1961): the deep connection between More's *Utopia* and *Gulliver's Travels* is also established. Baker-Smith (1987) also focuses on the experience of the voyager.

9 See the chapter entitled 'The Aesthetics of Utopia', in R. Elliott's *The Shape of Utopia* (1970), and also Vita Fortunati's approach to the narrative structure of utopias (1979).

Differences are obvious, and the range of reasons is wide:

A. The first kind of reasons is typical of the functions we assign to genres: loss of information in the passage from text to genre is expected because many times in any literary kind what matters is what makes its members similar, what makes the class different from other classes: as the difference 'is' the 'creation' or depiction of that particular community, *the aspect to preserve in the texts is the community*<sup>10</sup>. Some classic virtues of critical description (analysis of tone, subtleties of meaning and interaction between different layers) have no place.

B. But we would be too indulgent if we conceded that there must be a breach between textual and generic studies. To explain how utopias function as literature has also proved a difficult task. We should be able to distinguish between different academic uses of utopianism, where 'utopian ideology' (Morson, 1981:69) is only one of them. The narrative and fictional dimension of utopias has been neglected in many studies (mainly in the fields of Political Philosophy and History of Ideas) because doing so has been considered a trait of 'scientific precision' (Morson, 1985:72)<sup>11</sup>.

C. Even as forms of didactic literature, utopias have been affected by their association with other forms: in the 1970s and 1980s utopias were used as relatively 'respectable' forerunners of fashionable forms, such as Science-Fiction, Dystopia and Fantasy, but more often than not it was implied that these new forms were respectable, not that a vindication of the aesthetic values of classical utopias was advanced. Here, what Morson calls 'progressive theory of generic evolution' (1981:73) seems to apply and work against utopias—the last works are the best ones, both in social attitudes and literary form. We only have to compare the fame of dystopias (*1984 or Brave New World*) with utopias (naively optimistic, totalitarian)<sup>12</sup>.

10 D. Suvin (1979) makes a long analysis of criteria involved in definitions of utopias. Other discussions of the same problem are available in L.T. Sargent (1979) and P. Sawada (1971).

11 J.C. Davis (1981; 17), K. Kumar (1987; ix) and Paul Ricoeur (1986; 269) show explicitly their disinterest in any literary factor for their analyses: for the first 'fiction... is an emotive concept'; the third declares that literary considerations are an obstacle for a political approach; the second, Kumar, that 'not much is going to be gained' by treating dystopias as literary, and also: More... invented, more or less single handedly, a new literary genre. But the literary form of utopia is not an important concern in this study; nor perhaps should it be in any serious treatment of utopia (1987; 25);

Gary Morson's revision of generic contributions shows that this approach is not so far from the practices of many 'literary scholars; not far from these consequences, though for different causes, are the approaches of Raymond Williams (1979) or F. Jameson (1981).

12 Mark Hillegas (1967) illustrates the birth, or rebirth of dystopianism as a reaction against H.G. Wells, who is made to represent the latest utopianism.

D. The same situation works against More's *Utopia* even within classical utopianism: both in literary design and in ideological stance *New Atlantis* has been taken to represent an improvement on *Utopia*: Bacon represents a modern, scientific approach, while More's model recalls primitive monastic communities<sup>13</sup>; concerning the literary method, *New Atlantis* has been described as a consequential step towards 'formal realism', and the novel (Powers; 1978: Albanese; 1990); while More's 'tractarian' approach seems less attractive.

So utopia's *Utopia* has come to be a dogmatic, 'unliterary' work in a dogmatic 'unliterary' genre, while More's *Utopia* was polyphonic and literary (where, as always, 'literary' is taken as a synonym of artistic).

There is a historical explanation for this doubling (i.e., not only an abstract, theoretical textual-generic gap); however, how we deal with the multiplicity of meanings may have new theoretical effects. In these two respects Gary Morson (1981) and James Holstun (1985) have done something. However, while the historical account they produce is satisfactory and precise, the handling of generic distinctions tends to reproduce the same old problems at a different level:

1) As Morson (1981:75) describes *Utopia* as 'designed to be read in a tradition of deeply ambiguous works... intended to offer only a qualified endorsement to Hythloday's views', and as Morson thinks that many of the weaknesses of former attempts to characterise utopian literature are due to incapacity to handle the political and literary components of these 'boundary works', we are invited to think that a genre that is more like the original design of More's *Utopia* is to be proposed.

However, more important than More's design is a generically responsible characterization of utopias: the social-historical dimension of genre, its 'ethnic' existence, prevails over critical interests: his definition matches established views on this class of texts<sup>14</sup>, and so do the interpretive rules Morson generates: there is an authoritative voice –the 'delineator'– whose ideas cannot be taken as those of any character of any piece of fiction: 'novelistic' phenomena, such as 'a plausible sequence of events', 'personality', and 'irony of origins' (1981:77) are ruled out.

13 This view is held by many: Hansot (1974), Manuel-Manuel (1979), B. de Jouvenel (1966), Willey (1934), Weinberger (1985), Martin Pares (1967) and Nell Eurich (1967). However, their readings seem to have been more superficial than that of J. Bierman (1963), who shows how ineffectual that institution is.

14 This is the definition Morson proposes:

A work is a literary utopia if and only if it satisfies each of the following criteria: (1) it was written (or presumed to have been written) in the tradition of previous utopian literary works; (2) it depicts (or is taken to depict) an ideal society; and (3) regarded as a whole, it advocates (or is taken to advocate) the realization of that society (74).

Morson has been able to see that this case is similar to that described by Claudio Guillen in *Literature as System* (1971:142) on how the picaresque came to be acknowledged in society only when the second work was published, how it inherited the mood of the second work, and how the first work was reinterpreted. In Morson's words, 'the original text is, in effect, re-created by its own progeny'<sup>15</sup>. *Utopia*, in a strange chronological twist, 'imitates' those texts that imitated it– the more assertive, dogmatic Campanella's *The City of the Sun*, Andreae's *Christianopolis* and Bacon's *New Atlantis*<sup>16</sup>.

James Holstun's (1987) subject and solution are different, but the elements are the same: 17th-century Puritans were literal and pragmatic, and did not see how literary form changes meaning:

So far as they read More (which is unfrequently), the Puritan utopists seem to misread him, ignoring the literary textures that put More's political programs into context (1987:4).

Accordingly, Holstun's reading of *Utopia* and utopian writing follows the logic of Puritans, overlooking all the literary subtleties he acknowledged at the beginning.

2) Later operations show, however, that these two scholars are not completely happy with the historical frame they have used to fix one meaning, one interpretation, for utopias:

Gary Morson still wants to rescue *Utopia* from its descendants, and in the last chapter of his book (107ff) he incorporates a Bakhtinian 'theory of parody', which reproduces at the level of genre the triad I proposed to describe the history of the text: anti-utopias are members of an anti-genre, in a parodic relationship to utopias, and there is also *meta-utopia*, a *meta-genre*, a *meta-parody* –'In texts of this type, each voice may be taken to be parodic of the other' (1981:142)– to which *Utopia* is said to belong, on the basis of, precisely, the *irony of origins* we can detect.

15 The works are *Lazarillo de Tormes* and *Guzman de Alfarache*. Moreover, the genre retained some ideological and functional qualities of the second ('didactic and dogmatic'), rather than of the first ('compassionate and pluralistic'). Morson's full commentary reads as follows:

History makes the exemplar; and tradition, insofar as it directs readers to take the exemplar as a member of the genre that it fathers, changes its semiotic nature: the original text is, in effect, re-created by its own progeny (...) In a important sense, it is really the *second* works of a genre that creates the genre by defining conventions and *topoi* for the class.

16 It does not mean that the genre's interpretative rules cannot be very easily applied to More's text: Hythloday is the delineator, the island represents More's dream, Hythloday is dogmatic, showing the commitment of revealed truth...

James Holstun adds to his literal social analysis an explicit and paradoxical vindication of an articulated description of the spheres of 'form' and 'politics', and ends up by describing the 'literariness' of all utopias on the basis of an indeterminate 'central utopian imperative' (1985:10, 13), which is at the same time a metaphor of fictionality, a metaphor of the act of mentally representing the State, an eternal human impulse and a cultural fantasy<sup>17</sup>.

I will start the conclusion with a short evaluation of these two procedures:

A) To define utopian literature on the shaky basis of More's *Utopia* is a danger Morson wants to avoid; so he makes one version of this text help him in his characterization of this *socio-historical institution*. But later he *doubles* the genre by moving to a *home-made critical-theoretical category*. My impression is that Morson has simplified one thing to complicate it later, because the social evidence available for the genre of meta-utopias is poor, and the critical evidence for some antiutopias is arguable<sup>18</sup>.

B) Holstun's procedure (apart from playing fast and loose with the concept of the literary status of *Utopia*) is to avoid many problems by selecting a very particular *historical genre* (i.e. with less urgently needed decisions on voices, individual involvement, and frames of reference), and then claim a *trans-historical concept of genre* in which the real essence is psychological or perhaps anthropological.

Both Morson and Holstun seem to suggest an apparently homogeneous generic ground as a retreat from textual diversity, only to let different generic categories collide. This makes me think that solutions cannot be looked for in a unified genre theory, which is unrealistic, but in other parts:

First, in a more productive combination of ideological and 'formal' information, based on how not to make any element a residue in the analysis:

17 Holstun claims that the source of his selection of material is historical, not theoretical: he is not 'making' any concept. However, the qualities he identifies to develop the utopian imperative are a 'rational ordering' (p. 13), and an 'imaginative ability to envision a population as an utopian blank page' (p. 10). For utopia as a human impulse or vocation, see Manuel-Manuel (1979); for the cultural fantasy explanation, D. Bleich (1984).

18 For instance, some of his 'dogmatic' anti-utopias (such as *Brave New World* and Zamyatin's *We*) can be shown to be as polyphonic as his meta-utopian *Utopia*. There is another problem involved here: his decision to put *Utopia* in the group of meta-utopias is grounded on one of the most superficial factors of this book – the textological history and how the parerga modifies the interpretation.

Utopian writing cannot be subsumed under political theory. The decision to operate through a fiction may suggest the inadequacy of the political concepts available, and a consequent desire to extend and refine those concepts by means of an imaginative exploration. (Baker-Smith, 1987:8)

Second, if we have to keep the social institution of utopian literature in literary history let us complement it with a distinct *generic criticism*, one looking for the aesthetic assessment of generic texts.

Third, it would be perhaps desirable to have less respect for the institution of utopian literature: some of the best analyses of More's *Utopia* are those in which critics have moved more freely within the text, and from text to text, without having to rely too much on the interpretive rules generic descriptions invoke. These readings do not have to make a novel out of More's *Utopia* but at least a more coherent piece of narrative.

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## CONY-CATCHERS AND CAZADORES DE GATOS: AN EXAMINATION OF THE LEXIS RELATED TO THIEVES AND SWINDLERS IN ENGLAND AND SPAIN IN THE 16th AND 17th CENTURIES

Margarita Mele Marrero  
Universidad de La Laguna

Vagabonds "working" as *cony-catchers*, *pilfereres*, *cazadores de gatos*, *rateros*, etc., have always been with us; but the fact that in England and Spain in the 16th and 17th centuries many writers made them the object of their work, testifies to their importance during that period. The English Rogue Pamphlets and the Spanish picaresque writings are examples of such sources.

This paper examines the vocabulary related to thieves and swindlers in English and Spanish in the 16th and 17th centuries, using primary and secondary sources from the two languages. The lexis of and about these marginal groups, will be compared to determine later on if Lakoff and Johnson's (1980) concept of structural metaphor does operate in the creation of the analysed terms. It will thus be shown that these two underworlds do not lie so far apart as linguistic links can be established between them.

Crime and vagrancy are social phenomena usually considered to be closely tied to poverty. As the number of people lacking adequate means of living increases, the groups of thieves, swindlers, beggars and prostitutes also swell, and when they get organized in hierarchical bands, they are perceived as a social threat. Extant records show that crime and vagrancy became a serious worry in Elizabethan England. Paul Slack, analysing the English Poor Law, states that: "The legislation of 1598 and 1601 was passed at a time when the problem of poverty was unusually severe" (11). Previous years had not been any better and the number of criminals and vagrants was not a low one. In his book *Los Pícaros en la Literatura*, A. Parker tells us that the social and economic situation in the rest of Europe was somewhat similar, and Spain was no exception to this (46-48). But here we are not concerned with the reasons that drew people to a life of crime; our interest is mainly the vocabulary they produced as a result of their way of life, narrowing our scope further to that related to thieves and swindlers.

In English as well as in Spanish during the 16th and 17th centuries we find vocabularies "used" by marginal groups of people who were vagrants, beggars,