

“þe 3atez stoken watz neuer 3et”: London, the New Jerusalem, and the Materiality of “Entre”
in *Pearl* and *The Pilgrimage of the Lyfe of the Manhode*

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When the dreamer is blessed with a vision of the New Jerusalem in *Pearl*, he remarks that “þe 3atez stoken watz neuer 3et, / Bot euermore vpen at vche a lone.”¹ With gates that are never shut, open at every lane and byway, this is a city that is decidedly and provocatively open. Furthermore, it is a city that advertises that openness in its material form: “þur3 wo3e and won my loking 3ede; / For sotyle cler no3t lette no sy3t” (1049-50). The dreamer’s gaze passes through wall and dwelling unobstructed. The New Jerusalem is a transparent city, both materially and symbolically; the dreamer can see through it and its ideal nature is clearly visible. More than this, following Jonathan Hsy’s suggestion that the city is a “mode of thought,” the *Pearl*-poet can think through the city.² In the Middle Ages, the New Jerusalem from the Book of Revelation was both a template for the ideal city and, as Keith Lilley has shown, “a model on which to fix images of other cities,” in particular, real, earthly cities.³ In *Pearl*, the New Jerusalem is a model for thinking about the late medieval English city of London, although as we shall see, the ideal cityscape that the poet imagines could also extend to other cities such as York, a location which Joel Fredell has recently proposed as an alternative origin for the Cotton Nero manuscript.⁴ Walled, gated, and far from open at every

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¹ “Pearl,” in *The Poems of the Pearl Manuscript: Pearl, Cleanness, Patience, Sir Gawain and the Green Knight*, ed. Malcolm Andrew and Ronald Waldron (Exeter: University of Exeter Press, 2007), 53–110, lines 1065-66. All subsequent quotations refer to this edition by line number.

² Jonathan Hsy, “City,” in *A Handbook of Middle English Studies*, ed. Marion Turner (Chichester: Wiley-Blackwell, 2013), 315-29, 327.

³ Keith Lilley, *City and Cosmos: The Medieval World in Urban Form* (London: Reaktion, 2009), 15.

⁴ Joel Fredell, “The *Pearl*-Poet Manuscript in York,” *Studies in the Age of Chaucer*, 36 (2014): 1-39. There is not sufficient space here to fully rehearse the potential identification of the city with York— although especially resonant connections will be drawn below. This article makes use of the London identification as a test-case for exploring the connection between the heavenly city and its earthly counterparts in line with the focus on London

turn, the lived experience of the medieval city as reimagined by the *Pearl*-poet is both familiar and strange, recognisable and reconstituted.

The connection between London and the New Jerusalem in *Pearl* has been argued by John Bowers in *The Politics of Pearl* and will be briefly rehearsed here, as this article builds on and develops his discussion. A lynchpin of Bowers' argument is the poet's description of the city's size as "twelue furlonge space" (1030), which is "almost exactly the breadth of London-Westminster in the 1390s," rather than twelve thousand furlongs in Revelation.⁵ Bowers further substantiates his reading of the poem as London-based through thematic, aesthetic, and contextual echoes.⁶ *Pearl's* concerns with city governance "reflect royal interest in the status of London as the capital of the nation," he argues,⁷ and the poem's depiction of the New Jerusalem gestures to Richard II's quarrel with the city of London in 1392 and the elaborate pageant staged for the king's re-entry into the city, described by Richard Maidstone in his *Concordia*.⁸ The *Pearl*-poet's interest in visual and symbolic display bespeaks the Ricardian court, a culture "so saturated with artworks of every variety that eventually the regime made the fatal mistake of itself becoming more artifice than reality."⁹

In this essay I argue that materiality is crucial to the relationship that is established between the New Jerusalem and the late medieval city, a relationship particularly evoked through the city gates. Though Bowers argues that the interplay between material culture and "literary artefact" situates the manuscript in late fourteenth-century Ricardian London, he stops short of fully examining the city's material form. When Bowers discusses the gates, he

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⁵ John Bowers, *The Politics of Pearl: Court Poetry in the Age of Richard II* (Cambridge: D. S. Brewer, 2001), 120.

⁶ Bowers, *Politics of Pearl*, 6-7, 18-21.

⁷ Bowers, *Politics of Pearl*, 14.

⁸ Bowers, *Politics of Pearl*, 30-34.

⁹ Bowers, *Politics of Pearl*, 24.

focuses on their symbolic role in exploring “the ideal relations between an urban population and its royal lord.”¹⁰ These relations are evident in the poet’s selective recounting of the Book of Revelation, whose apocalyptic imagery is omitted in favour of the description of the New Jerusalem as the “perfect city constructed from the most costly materials, surrounded by massive walls and richly inscribed gates, washed clean by a river of pure water, and most importantly populated by a harmonious and trustworthy citizenry worshipping their divine lord in the image of the Lamb.”¹¹ The inscription of the twelve sons of Israel on the gates similarly foregrounds “the practice of royal self-promotion,” because the sons are “carefully arranged in chronological order according to their birth-dates” (c.f. lines 1037-42).¹²

This reading attends to the symbolic meaning of the gates’ visual decoration but not to their curious and explicit openness in the narrative. Indeed, surprisingly little critical attention has been paid to the ever-open gates of *Pearl*, either in Bowers’ identification of London as the city’s medieval template or in other studies. In this article I will contrast the open city of the *Pearl*-poet with the fiercely guarded and fortified New Jerusalem of the *Pilgrimage of the Lyfe of the Manhode* (1400-25), the Middle English prose translation of the first recension of Guillaume de Deguileville’s *Pèlerinage de la vie humaine* (1330–1331). In both texts, material architecture and material objects are important sites and symbols of power. The major identifying features of the city– the walls and gates– and the hardware of city entry and urban regulation are crucial not only to establishing the identity of the city but also to negotiating the relationship between the dreamer and the city. Gateways, doors, swords, keys, locks, ladders, and cords all play an important role in facilitating or preventing access to the city, and control of these items is a tangible token of power and influence.

In both *Pearl* and the *Pilgrimage*, the Middle English word “entre” encapsulates what is at stake here. In *Pearl*, none may “entrez” the New Jerusalem who “beres any spot anvnder

¹⁰ Bowers, *Politics of Pearl*, 33.

¹¹ Bowers, *Politics of Pearl*, 33.

¹² Bowers, *Politics of Pearl*, 130.

mone" (1067), and in the *Pilgrimage* the "entre" into the city is "right strongliche kept" by a cherubim with a sword.¹³ In Middle English, the noun "entre" refers to the act of physical entrance into a place; the material entrance to a building; and the opportunity, right, or power to enter.¹⁴ The identity of the city and its potential citizens are concentrated at the point of entry: if a wall is breached, the city is vulnerable to attack; if an individual pays a toll for a passage through a gate, he or she not only gains access to physical space but becomes a temporary member of the city community. City "entre" is never neutral in the Middle Ages; it is negotiated in the interplay between body and material architecture, and symbolised by the attainment of, or power to wield, material objects. While Bowers is right to stress the spiritual qualities of the New Jerusalem in *Pearl*, I argue that a grounded recognition of its materiality is fundamental for understanding the relationship that is established between the heavenly city and the real late medieval city, whether that is London or the other potential candidate for the *Pearl*-poet's attention, York.

The relationship between the heavenly and earthly representations of the city can be productively theorised with reference to Michel Foucault's concept of the heterotopia. In his essay "Of Other Spaces," Foucault contrasts the utopia, "society itself in a perfected form," with the heterotopia, "a counter-site, a kind of effectively enacted utopia in which the real sites, all the other real sites that can be found within the culture, are simultaneously represented, contested, and inverted."¹⁵ By drawing on the features of real medieval cities, the textual city becomes a heterotopia, a space in which the urban reality and materiality of city life is "represented, contested, and inverted." This can be most acutely observed with regard to "entre," which fulfils the fifth principle of Foucault's heterotopia:

¹³ *The Pilgrimage of the Lyfe of the Manhode*, ed. Avril Henry, Early English Text Society 288 (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1985), 1, line 32. All subsequent quotations refer to this edition by line number.

¹⁴ MED s.v. "entre" (n.) 1, 6, and 4.

¹⁵ Michel Foucault, "Of Other Spaces," *Diacritics* 16, no. 1 (1986): 22-27 (24).

Heterotopias always presuppose a system of opening and closing that both isolates them and makes them penetrable. In general, the heterotopic site is not freely accessible like a public place. Either the entry is compulsory, as in the case of entering a barracks or prison, or else the individual has to submit to rites and purifications. To get in one must have certain permission and make certain gestures.¹⁶

The rituals for entry into the New Jerusalem are most striking in the *Pilgrimage*, as we shall see, and both texts privilege spiritual purity as a prerequisite for entry. But what Foucault's definition overlooks is the powerful desire that the city can generate to circumvent or overcome the restrictions of entry. For the dreamer in *Pearl*, the sight of the Pearl Maiden inside the city is so overwhelming that he forgets the prohibitions to entry and blunders across the river, causing him to be violently ejected from the visionary landscape. In the *Pilgrimage*, on the other hand, the dreamer is inspired to equip himself with the material signs of pilgrimage— the staff and satchel— and to begin a journey to become worth of entry into the heavenly city.

In the *Pilgrimage*, the importance of self-reflection is highlighted in the appearance of the city in a mirror, an image that is also important for Foucault's heterotopia. "Me thowte as I slepte," says the *Pilgrimage*-dreamer, "þat I was a pilgrim and þat I was stired to go to þe cite of Jerusalem in a mirour" (19-20). Although *Pearl* does not contain a literal mirror, the poem's landscape, as Josephine Bloomfield has argued, is "deeply saturated with mirror-like reflection," and the "dream itself is a type of mirror" that "requires both reflection in the contemplative sense and self-reflection to yield up meaning."¹⁷ This is a mirror in the sense of the medieval *speculum* tradition in which exempla are used to teach the reader to reflect upon his or her own identity. This ability for self-perception and transformation is foregrounded in Foucault's use of the mirror as a middle ground between the utopia and the

¹⁶ Foucault, "Of Other Spaces," 26.

¹⁷ Josephine Bloomfield, "Aristotelian Luminescence, Thomastic Charity: Vision, Reflection, and Self-Love in *Pearl*," *Studies in Philology* 108, no. 2 (2001): 165-88 (165).

heterotopia. Foucault argues that the mirror is a utopia because it is a “placeless place”: “in the mirror I see myself there where I am not, in an unreal, virtual space that opens up behind the surface.”¹⁸ This is the virtual space of the *Pilgrimage*-dreamer’s city in the mirror. But

Foucault’s mirror is also a heterotopia in that the mirror

does exist in reality, where it exerts a sort of counteraction on the position that I occupy. From the standpoint of the mirror I discover my absence from the place where I am since I see myself over there. Starting from this gaze that is, as it were, directed toward me, from the ground of this virtual place that is on the other side of the glass, I come back toward myself; I begin again to direct my eyes toward myself and to reconstitute myself there where I am.¹⁹

Looking into the mirror enables the subject to reconstitute him or herself. The mirrored image of the New Jerusalem in *Pearl*, in particular, facilitates not only the reconstitution of the dreamer, but the reconstitution of the medieval city. The New Jerusalem represents a purified, clarified version of the fourteenth-century city that enables readers to identify and reflect upon the characteristics and values that make up the ideal city and towards which they, in the manner of the *Pilgrimage*-dreamer, should strive.

Before I turn to the ways in which the medieval city was “reconstituted,” to use Foucault’s term, in the New Jerusalems of the *Pearl*-poet and the *Pilgrimage*, it is important to summarise the attributes of the city upon which both poems draw. I will continue to focus on medieval London as a test-case and as the most prominent city in medieval England but with the caveat that the materiality of the city, the regulations upon which it depended for social order and cleanliness, and the benefits of the identification with the New Jerusalem, can also operate generically as well as specifically. My reading does not, therefore, preclude

¹⁸ Foucault, “Of Other Spaces,” 24.

¹⁹ Foucault, “Of Other Spaces,” 24.

the New Jerusalems of *Pearl* and the *Pilgrimage* from acting as a template for the ideal city and being used as a “model,” to return to Lilley’s term, for other alternative earthly cities.

Medieval London was defined by its walls, enclosing the city on three sides; the Thames, which ran along the south side of the city; and the six gates, two of which contained prisons (Newgate and Ludgate).²⁰ The walls and gates were crucial for defence and the preservation of social order, and their maintenance was taken very seriously. In the late fourteenth-century, murage taxes were levied to pay for the repair of the walls and further, more creative means were employed to ensure their good standing, such as the provision of a labourer from each household one day a week in every five weeks.²¹ Entry into the city was strictly regulated both for individuals and goods. Tolls and taxes had to be paid for passage through the gates. Curfews were strictly enforced at night with regular patrols in order to maintain the peace.²² Crossing the Thames by boat at night was also prohibited and, as Britt Rothauser has argued, a larger and more active patrol of men was required to patrol the river than to guard the city gates.²³ Such measures were especially important in late fourteenth-century London because, as Caroline Barron has shown, the city saw almost continuous rioting and disorder.²⁴ However, despite this unrest, attitudes towards city governance were characterised, as Barron puts it, by “the restless pursuit of high communal standards of public health and safety.”²⁵

²⁰ For this discussion, I am indebted to Caroline M. Barron, *London in the Later Middle Ages: Government and People 1200-1500* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2004), 237-66.

²¹ Barron, *London in the Later Middle Ages*, 243. Murage taxes were also levied to pay for the maintenance and repair of the city walls of York in the fourteenth century; see D. M. Palliser, *Medieval York: 600-1540* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2014), 185.

²² Barbara Hanawalt, *Growing Up in Medieval London* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1993), 30. Hanawalt explains that the bells for curfew were rung between 9-10 pm, at which time ‘all city gates closed, and taverns were also to close. People wandering on the streets were challenged by ward patrols’, *Growing Up in Medieval London*, 30.

²³ Britt C. L. Rothauser, “‘A reuer... brighter þen boþe the sunne and mone’: The Use of Water in the Medieval Consideration of Urban Space,” in *Urban Space in the Middle Ages and the Early Modern Age*, ed. Albrecht Classen (Berlin: De Gruyter, 2009), 245-72, 261.

²⁴ Caroline Barron, “Richard II and London,” in *Richard II: The Art of Kingship*, ed. Anthony Goodman and James Gillespie (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1999), 129-54, 149.

²⁵ Barron, *London in the Later Middle Ages*, 266.

This can be seen in attempts to improve the cleanliness of the city and to ensure fairness and transparency in the marketplace. In 1385 Richard II appointed the first sanitation officer for the city.²⁶ Dirty and noisy trades that produced significant waste, such as tanning, blacksmithing, and butchery, had to take place outside the city walls.²⁷ There were regulations for the control of animals, such as pigs, and individuals perceived to be unclean, such as prostitutes, were excluded from the city limits.²⁸ Moral purity and equity also extended to the sale of goods; prices were set to ensure fairness, and deception, such as the selling of rotten meat, was penalized.²⁹ Punishment for infractions often took place publically so that the community could bear witness to the ritual cleansing—public humiliation on the pillory, for example.³⁰ Physical, social, and moral purity went hand in hand, not just for the sake of the city itself but also for its symbolic reputation as an exemplar for national life. As Letter-Book H makes clear, London was “the capital city and the watch-tower of the whole realm” and “from the government thereof other cities and places do take example.”³¹ London was both an individual city and a representative city, a template to be emulated. The state of the city, its inhabitants, and the material goods it traded, mattered.

The city as template is reflected in the depiction of the New Jerusalem in *Pearl*, where purity and strictly regulated access to the city are of paramount importance. When the dreamer is granted the vision of the New Jerusalem, the Pearl Maiden makes his specific and spatially-regulated access to the city abundantly clear:

²⁶ Barron, *London in the Later Middle Ages*, 262.

²⁷ Barron, *London in the Later Middle Ages*, 263-65.

²⁸ Attempts were also made in York to regulate pigs and prostitutes, both of which represented a threat to moral order, as P. J. P. Goldberg has shown. In both London and Bristol, regulations stated that prostitutes should wear striped hoods to identify themselves. See P. J. P. Goldberg, ‘Pigs and Prostitutes: Street Walking in Comparative Perspective’, in *Young Medieval Women*, ed. by Katherine J. Lewis, Noël James Menuge, and Kim M. Phillips (Stroud: Sutton, 1999), 172-93, 174.

²⁹ C. David Benson, “London,” in *Chaucer: An Oxford Guide*, ed. Steve Ellis (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2005), 66-80, 69.

³⁰ On the public humiliation of bawds and prostitutes, see Barbara Hanawalt, *Of Good and Ill Repute: Gender and Social Control in Medieval England* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1998), 24-28.

³¹ Letter-Book H, f.ccx (1387) in Henry Thomas Riley, *Memorials of London and London Life, in the XIIIth, XIVth, and XVth Centuries: Being a Series of Extracts, Local, Social, and Political, from the Early Archives of the City of London, AD 1276-1419* (London: Longmans, Green, and Co, 1868), 492.

Vtwyth to se þat clene cloystor
 Pou may, bot inwyth not fote;
 To strech in þe strete þou hatz no vygour,
 Bot þou wer clene, withouten mote. (970-73)

The dreamer has permission to see the city from outside, “vywyth,” but he cannot step “inwyth” a “fote,” both a foot of space and a footstep. His physical exclusion is further highlighted by the use of “strech” and “vigour,” both of which have bodily meanings.³² The dreamer’s rights of “entre” are therefore strictly delimited to the visual. But when the city appears, it is more open and accessible than we might expect. And this openness, as I suggested at the beginning of this article, is concentrated in the depiction of the city gates and walls.

Unlike the London gates, securely locked at curfew, the gates of the New Jerusalem are never “stoken” (fastened or locked).³³ Rather, they are “euermore vpen at vche a lone.” The word “lone” encompasses a range of thoroughfares from lanes and roadways to the narrow passages between walls and houses in a town.³⁴ The city is openly accessible around the clock. And even though the city is made up of walls and buildings, those structures do not prohibit the dreamer’s visual access. He explains that his gaze passes through both wall and building: “for sotyle cler noȝt lette no syȝt” (1050). Malcolm Andrew and Ronald Waldron gloss “sotyle” as fine or transparent in their edition of *Pearl*, and this range of meaning is attested in the *Middle English Dictionary* where “sotil” is used of substances to mean light rather than dense, consisting of small particles, powdered or finely ground; and of air and spirit, to mean clear, pure, ethereal.³⁵ The word “sotil” here depicts the walls as both material

³² “Strech”: to extend in space, to reach from one place to another, and to stretch out a part of the body.

“Vygour”: power or capacity and physical strength. MED s.v. “strechen” (v.) 3a) and 1a) and s.v. “vigour” (n.) d) and a).

³³ MED s.v. “steken” (v.) 7.

³⁴ MED s.v. “lane” (n.).

³⁵ *Poems of the Pearl Manuscript*, 1050; MED s.v. “sotil” 1, 3a), and 3c).

and immaterial, penetrable by the dreamer's gaze yet substantial enough to retain their physical identity as walls, which is crucial to the definition of the city.

The purity of the walls is reflected in the river that flows through every street in the New Jerusalem:

Sunne ne mone schon neuer to swete

As þat foyssoun flode out of þat flet;

Swyþe hit swange þurȝ vch a strete

Withouten fylfþe oþer galle oþer glet. (1057-60)

The river is an idealised reconstitution of the Thames and watercourses of medieval London; it is without filth, impurity, or slime. The cleanliness that was prized in the fourteenth-century city is also the preeminent virtue for entry into the New Jerusalem. The dreamer declares that “þer entrez non to take reset / Þat berez any spot anvnder mone” (1067-68). There is no refuge (“reset”) in this city for those who bear a “spot” or blemish. The *Pearl*-poet's recurrent use of the word “spot” foregrounds the relationship between place and imperfection that is central to the poem. The dreamer is both with and “withouten” spot when he is blessed with the vision of New Jerusalem. He can take visual refuge in the city's purity and transparency, but he does not have the right to enter it physically, and this is reinforced when his attempt to cross the stream results in his violent ejection from the dream vision landscape. Transgressing the rules for “entre” laid out by the Pearl Maiden is strictly forbidden.

On the one hand, then, the city in *Pearl* is invitingly and dangerously open. Although reassuring in theological terms— the city is always open to those “withouten mote”— it might strike the inhabitants of a walled and gated city such as London or York as vulnerable, exposed, and perilously unpoliced. But on the other hand, the city maintains its integrity and boundaries when the dreamer disobeys his instructions and is immediately cast out of the visionary landscape. The New Jerusalem is a powerful city because it does not need the

security of earthly walls and defence mechanisms to protect itself from assault. The dreamer's "spot" is enough to keep him outside the city. The real medieval city, with its curfews, locked gates, and patrols, is contested, inverted, and reconstituted in *Pearl* as an ideal city that is identified by, but not reliant upon, the material embodiment of those regulations, the walls and gates.

In the *Pilgrimage of the Lyfe of the Manhode*, a similar reconstitution of city identity takes place, but rather than the city displaying a transgressive but nonetheless powerful openness, in the *Pilgrimage* the zealously guarded and regulated city has its defences playfully, even subversively, undermined by its own inhabitants. Deguileville's *Pèlerinage* allegories were extremely popular in the Middle Ages and Marco Nievergelt has suggested that *Sir Gawain and the Green Knight* may have been influenced by Deguileville.³⁶ *Pearl* can certainly be read as a pilgrimage to the New Jerusalem, as Sarah Stanbury has argued, and the openness of the city is, I would suggest, all the more striking in comparison with Deguileville's representation of the heavenly city.³⁷

In the *Pilgrimage* there are two entrances into the city, one "strongliche" guarded by the sword-wielding cherubim (32, c.f. Genesis 3:24) and the other "a dore litel and streyt," the keys to which are kept by St Peter (84, c.f. Matthew 16:19). The sword and the key are important symbols of power within the city. During Richard II's reconciliation with London in 1392, the governing elite presented him with the sword and key to the city as an act of submission, possession of these objects symbolising both possession of the rights of "entre" and the ability to control the "entre" of others.³⁸ In the *Pilgrimage*, the power of the sword is held by the cherubim, and none can pass through the gate into the city unless they pay a toll ("payage" 40) for their passage in blood. The Prince of the City, Christ, has paid this price,

³⁶ Marco Nievergelt, "Paradigm, Intertext, or Residual Allegory: Guillaume de Deguileville and the *Gawain*-poet," *Medium Aevum* 80, no. 1 (2011): 18-40.

³⁷ Sarah Stanbury, "Pearl and the Idea of Jerusalem," *Medievalia et Humanistica* n. s. 16 (1988): 117-31 (118).

³⁸ Richard Maidstone, *Concordia: The Reconciliation of Richard II with London*, ed. A. G. Rigg and David R. Carlson (Kalamazoo: Western Michigan University, 2004), lines 132-41.

along with his knights and champions, the saints (40-43), and their sacrifice is materialised in the “penselles [pennons] hanginge steyned red with blood” from the “kernelles [battlements] ouer þe yate” (43-45). Here the city is a fortified stronghold, home to princes and knights, whose sacrifice proves them worthy of citizenship. Entry through St Peter’s “litel” door, however, rather than stressing military sacrifice, requires ritual humiliation. Only the poor may enter, and they must publicly demonstrate their poverty by stripping naked (88-92). In this city, such public displays are not used to punish and shame individuals for urban infractions, as was the case in medieval London; instead they are demonstrations of virtue. The dreamer approves of this method of entry, commenting that “miche likede me þis passage for þe commune avauntage þat alle folk hadden þere if þei becomen verrey poore” (94-96). Entry is still conditional but it is a “commune avauntage,” available to all.

The New Jerusalem of the *Pilgrimage* operates as a heterotopia here: those who wish to enter the city must “submit to rites and purifications” to gain entry.³⁹ But despite these strict regulations, the city’s boundaries are shown to be remarkably porous. Saints Augustine, Benedict, and Francis, and “oþere folk of auctoritee” work tirelessly to enable their friends and acquaintances, and “alle manere of folks, lewed and seculere,” to scale the walls and get into the city (50-78), thus avoiding the ritual sacrifice demanded at the official entrances. Augustine’s teaching transforms a range of people (members of the Augustinian orders but also lay people and beggars) into birds so that they can fly into the city, while others collect feathers and construct Icarus-like wings (52-58). Avril Henry notes that birds often represent contemplatives, and the methods used by Benedict and Francis are similarly symbolic.⁴⁰ Both saints make use of material objects to facilitate entry: St Benedict drops down a ladder that consists of the “twelve degrees [rungs] of humblisse” (70) and his friends climb into the city, and St Francis lets down a knotted cord, imitating the waist-cords of the Franciscan habit, the

³⁹ Foucault, “Of Other Spaces,” 26.

⁴⁰ *The Pilgrimage of the Lyfe of the Manhode*, ed. Avril Henry, Early English Text Society 292, volume II (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1988), 362.

knots of which represent poverty, chastity, and obedience (74-76). These methods enable individuals to enter the city “bi sleightes” (68), which Henry glosses as “special methods” in her edition but which, in the *Middle English Dictionary*, includes meanings ranging from skill and ingenuity to craftiness and guile.⁴¹ This break and enter, aided and abetted by the saints, takes the dreamer by surprise: he describes the sight as “a gret wunder [...] wherof I was gretliche abashed” (51). In his essay “Do Places have Edges?” Edward S. Casey comments that edges can be defined by their “capacity to harbour surprise,” and the dreamer is “abashed” at what he sees taking place at the edges of the New Jerusalem.⁴² But rather than attempting to join in this surprisingly covert attempt at city entry, the dreamer—unlike his counterpart in *Pearl*—recognises that he is not worthy, nor indeed equipped, for membership of the heavenly city. Eschewing sword and key, ladder, cord and metamorphic wings, the dreamer understands that to enter the city is to embrace a new identity as a pilgrim and, equipping himself with “scrippe and bourdoun” (111), he begins his quest.

A final trait of Foucault’s heterotopia is the creation of a space that is “other, another real space, as perfect, as meticulous, as well arranged as ours is messy, ill constructed, and jumbled.”⁴³ In *Pearl* the messy reality of medieval London is reconstituted in the New Jerusalem. The conditions to which fourteenth-century London aspired—transparency, purity, and precisely regulated “entre”—are perfectly and meticulously realised in the depiction of the New Jerusalem. And crucially, this “other,” ideal space is rooted in materiality: in walls, gates, and doors. In the *Pilgrimage*, this space is also constituted by objects that facilitate or deny “entre,” such as the sword, key, and ladder. The ever-open gates and the translucent walls of *Pearl* are the site at which the real city and the heavenly city meet. By attending to materiality, as this essay has shown, we are able to see how the *Pearl*-poet uses the New

⁴¹ *Pilgrimage of the Lyfe of the Manhode*, 68; MED s.v. “sleight” (n.).

⁴² Edward S. Casey, “Do Places have Edges?” in *Envisioning Landscapes, Making Worlds: Geography and the Humanities*, ed. Stephen Daniels et al (London: Routledge, 2011), 65-73 (70).

⁴³ Foucault, “Of Other Spaces”, 27.

Jerusalem to reflect upon the state of medieval London or indeed other walled and gated cities such as York. In comparison with the *Pilgrimage*, the *Pearl*-poet's manoeuvres become clear as his city is distinctive in its material openness and visual accessibility. But in the response of the dreamers, the *Pilgrimage* reminds us that the ideal citizen is inspired by the sight of the city to reflect upon and reconstitute his or her own identity in order to enter. Both poets use the materiality of the New Jerusalem to think through the characteristics of the ideal city and to challenge the dreamer, and reader, to be truly worthy of "entre."