

THE OLD ENGLISH *PHYSIOLOGUS* AND THE HOMILETIC TRADITION

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In a recent article¹ I outlined in some detail the intimate relationship between the poet and the homilist in late Anglo-Saxon England. In that article I suggested that the Anglo-Saxon Christian poet and homilist shared common attitudes towards form and image, an imaginative convergence which is entirely natural since the Anglo-Saxon homilist was well aware of the instructive potential of poetry and since many well-known homilists in Anglo-Saxon England also composed poetry. Moreover, the clerical and popular audiences of the Anglo-Saxon homily were also inspired by vernacular Christian poetry. In common with the Anglo-Saxon homilists and their exemplars, the poet who shaped the old English *Physiologus* makes formal use of the pericope format, homiletic exegesis, and a host of moral images which would have been as meaningful to the preachers' congregations as to the poet's audience. As a result, a didactic poem like the Old English *Physiologus* can be more meaningful to the modern reader when viewed in conjunction with the homiletic tradition.

The only extant Anglo-Saxon *Physiologus* appears in the Exeter Book, folios 95b-98a, and consists of three fits:² *Panther*, *Whale*, and *Partridge*.³ In the presentation of these three animals the poet has composed a trilogy initiated by an eight and one-half verse prologue designed to introduce his audience to the tri-levelled universe which is

the setting for the allegorical activity. The primary concern of *Panther* is this earth; of *Whale*, hell; of *Partridge*, heaven. Hence, the zoological selection provides a representative for each of land, sea, and air: it embraces all of middle-earth and reflects the totality of the Anglo-Saxon Christian's cosmological view.

This tri-level approach to Christian instruction has formal and exegetical as well as cosmological significance. The first fit, the panther episode, is primarily typological. Its focus of attention is on Christ's love for man in the act of redemption. The second fit, the whale allegory, provides a poetic and conceptual contrast to the first. The stress is tropological; it is concerned with the satanic deceptions by which the devil ensnares unwary Christians thereby depriving them of the fruit of the redemptive act. The balance so far is perfect; the technique is exegetic and homiletic. The anticipated anagogic third part is implied, at least, in "bi sumum fugle" ("about a certain bird," *Ptg* 1b) and in the spatial imagery which so clearly contrasts with that of *Whale*. In addition, because the partridge legend provides for the victory of the loving Christ over the plundering demon, the partridge neatly synthesizes the spiritual lessons of *Panther* and *Whale*; and the anagogic conclusion is an apt climax to the near-syllogistic argument of the trilogy. The pelican ("wanfota," a metrical possibility) would have provided a similarly appropriate third member since in the pelican legend Christ the Saviour redeems the sinner who turns repentantly from worldly attractions. Whatever the identity of the "fugel" actually was, there can be little doubt as to the poet's design for his concluding fit. The epithet "wuldres ealdor" ("prince of glory," 4b) is denotatively anagogic. In addition, the Prince's admonition to abandon hellish crimes ("hellfirena," 6b) and his promise to turn with fraternal love ("mid siblufan," 8a) to the repentant is a clear echo of the *Whale* allegory and its concluding exhortation that we might "a sibbe to him . . . hælu secan" ("ever seek salvation with him as a kinsman," *Whl* 85b-6b). Similarly, his promise to turn to the convert "þurh milde mod" ("through his mild heart," *Ptg* 9a) -- a common homiletic attribute of the loving Healer⁴ -- brings the argument full cycle by recalling the panther-Saviour typology wherein the poet says of the panther:

He hafað sundorgecynd,
 milde, gemettæst. (*Pnt* 30b-31a)
 [He has a distinguishing quality, being
 mild and moderate by nature.]

The trilogy is circular and syllogistic. Its complex use of the homilist's exegetic technique is comparatively rare in Anglo-Saxon England, and especially in the vernacular. (Aelfric's conclusion to his second Paschal homily is a notable exception.) Even the pericope homily, to which the structure of individual fits bears concrete resemblance, tended to avoid the three-fold exegesis in individual homilies by stressing the tropological and interweaving the typological. Such an explicit use of the three-fold exegesis as an organizing device, therefore, suggests a poet conversant with Latin authors and Latin exegesis. It is also of significance that the only other specific development of the *Physiologus*, *Phoenix*, employs this same three-fold method.⁵ The interpretative segment of *Phoenix* is divisible into three sections, the main emphasis of each being one of the exegetical modes. Verses 381-469 are essentially tropological. They discuss the sin of Adam and Eve, and interpret the Phoenix' fashioning of its nest with herbs as a warning to Christians to accumulate good deeds in this life in preparation for their death-journey. Anagogic overtones appear in the concluding part of the tropological section and culminate in ll. 470-588 in which the poet promises:

Beoð him of þam wyrtum wic gestapelad
 in wuldres byrig weorca to leane. (474-5)
 [from those herbs a dwelling will be
 prepared for them in the City of Glory
 as a reward for their works.]

Verses 589-637a both summarize the tropological and anagogical interpretations and preface the brief typological segment (ll. 638b-654b). Such scant typological treatment implies the popularity of the phoenix-Christ identification; but, more important, it magnifies the poet's homiletic intention. The emphasis, as in *Physiologus*, is on moral

rectitude and virtue rewarded. The resurrected Christ, the "mild[e] god[]" (*Phx* 657a), will salve the repentant sinner; Eden can be regained. The appended macaronic verses, therefore, add a learned summary of the poem's message and a restatement of the moral lesson.

In addition to its exegetical format, *Physiologus* has many formal characteristics which, if they were not in fact influenced by the homily, were all the more meaningful because of their likeness to familiar homiletic modes of expression. Each of the three fits has a formal resemblance to the pericope homily, a form popular with Aelfric, the Blickling homilists, and the Latin forebears. In place of the homilist's scriptural narrative, the poet has supplied detailed natural description which forms the husk from which the kernel is to be extracted. As I have shown in my above-mentioned article, the homilist was able, and even anxious at times, to foreshadow homiletic interpretation by a judicious selection of words in translating the pericope. The poetic possibilities inherent in the pericope form were utilized fully by the Old English poet who no doubt saw in the basic significance of the panther, whale, partridge, and phoenix a symbolism as familiar to his audience as the exegesis of a well-known parable. But more of this in the following discussion of imagery; for the moment it is sufficient to note that Old English Christian audiences were thoroughly conditioned to respond intelligently to the form of *Physiologus* and *Phoenix*.

The first two fits, and apparently the third, end with an appropriate summation, which, in the latter two cases, is followed by the traditional homiletic "uton" exhortation. In its summation (ll. 69-74), *Panther* emphasizes the Saviour's benevolence towards the virtuous; *Whale* admonishes the Christian to turn from the world and the devil by performing good deeds; *Partridge* recalls Christ's promise of salvation to the repentant (ll. 3b-11b), and urges the audience to live virtuously (ll. 12-16) that they may merit that eternal home. There is no need for an explicit homiletic exhortation at the conclusion of *Panther* since that fit is a paean in tribute of the Saviour and since the implicit exhortation of St. Paul's admonition is expanded in the second fit. With the moral conflict *Whale* introduces, an explicit exhortation to virtue becomes necessary; it is also required at the close of *Partridge*

since that fit resolves the conflict and since the poet's aim, like the homilist's, is to move his audience to virtuous behaviour.

Besides the formal similarities between *Physiologus* and the homiletic tradition just discussed there are mutually used and well established patterns of imagery the recognition of which makes the *Physiologus* more intelligible and more esthetically satisfying to the modern reader.

If we are to appreciate the poet's intention and the audience's reaction, we must approach *Physiologus* with two points clearly in mind. First, the tale was probably already known to most of the poet's audience. *Panther* begins,

We bi sumum hyrdon
 wraetlice gecynd wildra secgan
 firum freamerne (*Pnt* 8b-10a).
 [We have heard discussions concerning the
 wondrous nature of one of the wild animals,
 very well known among men]

Secondly, most members of an English audience were undoubtedly no more familiar with an actual panther than with a real-life Siren; yet, they could enjoy the description of each and profit from the lesson provided by each. That is to say, *Physiologus* is structured more on literary tradition than it is rooted in natural observation. With this in mind we should not measure *Panther* with a modern yardstick and call the description "naive" or suggest with Kennedy that "As in his original, the poet makes haste to unriddle the allegory for his readers lest they go astray."⁶ The friendliness of the panther would hardly have surprised even an educated Anglo-Saxon; this friendliness, after all, is the emphasis of the Greek and Latin versions. Aelfric's *Colloquy* testifies to the Anglo-Saxon's natural fear of the whale,⁷ a response the poet could reasonably anticipate from all members of his audience, though MS illustrations clearly indicate that an awareness of accurate physical description was neither necessary nor to be assumed.⁸ The *Physiologus* poet apparently aimed primarily at an intellectual-emotional response. Because the fable was time-honoured, the poet's poetic skill

lay in the meaningful fusion given to the reweaving of description and interpretation; poetic enjoyment lay largely in the recognizing of ambiguous words and phrases which adumbrate Christian truths. Homiletic explication of parables functions in somewhat the same manner, depending upon the skill of the homilist.

A simple line count shows that in *Physiologus* the Old English poet's interest is primarily descriptive whereas the interest of his Latin counterpart is primarily interpretative. The poet is vitally concerned about careful description and the inherent significance of that description. This significance is often rooted in patterns of images shared by the poet and the homilist, though such images are of no greater importance in themselves than the poet's interlacing of ideas and his play on words, these latter being compositional techniques also much admired by the homilists.

Let us turn to each fit individually. *Panther* divides naturally into description (8b-54b) and interpretation (55a-74b), but by using capital letters and points (pause indicators)⁹ the scribe has suggested several subdivisions. Verses 8b-18b introduce the panther and stress his friendliness to all but the dragon; 19a-37b compare the magnificence of Joseph's coat to the hue of the panther, re-stress his mild nature, and mention his feast and rest. Verses 38a-49b describe the resurrection, the sweet odour, and its magnetic power. Within this division, MS points accent the two verses:

Ðær se þeodwiga þreonihta fæc
 swifeð on swefote, slæpe gebiesgad. (38a-39b)¹⁰
 [There (in that cave) the warrior of the people
 gives himself over to sleep for the space of
 three days and spends the time in slumber.]

In order to underline the self-evident allegory, the scribe asks the poet or the reader to pause; this, after all, is the heart of the Christian message and the core of *Physiologus*. The panther is hardly present in the two verses; he has become the Warrior of the people ("þeodwiga") doing battle with his old enemy for the benefit of mankind, a perfect prelude to the lesson of *Whale*.¹¹ The description is so

familiar that its allegorical meaning springs automatically to mind. Can the panther's three-day sleep in subterranean caves, in the home of his enemy the dragon, coming as it does in the midst of a Christian allegory, represent anything but the harrowing of hell? Further, by massing both men and animals from the far-flung corners of the earth (49a-54b), the poet subtly begins the transition from typological description to the following interpretation. He is clearly anxious to establish the impression of multiplicity. Compare

Ðonne of ceastrum ond cynestolum
 ond of burgsalum beornþreat monig
 farað foldwegum folca þryþum (49a-51b)
 [Then great troops of men go from the cities
 and royal seats and protective halls over the
 landpaths with troops of folk.]

with its interpretation as the scribe punctuated it:

Sipþan to þam swicce soðfaeste men
 on healfa gehwone heapum þrunon.
 geond ealne ymbhwyrft eorþan sceata. (66a-68b)
 [then the truthful men thronged in troops
 to that odor from every direction. from
 every circuit of the earth's surface.]

Scribal punctuation leaves l. 67 echoing in the audience's ears, and isolates l. 68,¹² thereby stressing the idea of immensity and simultaneously magnifying the goodness of the Risen Saviour. And so the fit closes by calling upon the authority of St. Paul as a final proof that the crucified Christ is

. . . se anga hyht ealra gesceafta,
 uppe ge niþer.¹³
 [the only hope for all of creation, both
 on earth and in hell.]

Much of the natural description is intentionally ambiguous so as to provide an insight into the allegory: "freamerne" (10a), for example, may designate the panther as an animal well-known to men, but it may also introduce the panther as the famous Prince ("frea," that is, "God") dwelling in that "feor lond" ("distant land," 10b) which is very commonly descriptive of heaven or hell.¹⁴ The panther, as we have seen, is also appropriately personified as "þeodwiga" ("warrior of the people," 38a) when allegorically he harrows hell; similarly, the use of "stefne" ("voice," 44a, 54a), a word usually applied to men, identifies the panther with the risen Christ to whom the multitudes are swarming. And so the animal is the "deor pandher" (12b); that is, he is one of the "deora" ("wild animals," 5a), and he is also the "beloved panther", Christ.¹⁵ "æghwam freond" ("friend to everyone," 15b) and "ealda feond" ("ancient fiend," 58b) are simple verbal echoes; each is syntactically associated with the phrase "butan dracan anum" ("except for the dragon alone," 16b, 57b; cf. 33b, 58a) which limits the "æghwam freond" and identifies the "ealda feond". The dragon-"ealda feond" relationship was a homiletic commonplace and must have been self-evident to the average churchgoer;¹⁶ even in the interpretation the poet does not rush to explain the identity.

Although "anstapan" ("lone-stepper," 15a) has no descriptive parallel in either of Latin B or Y, it perfectly applies to the animal and his mountain retreat; however, it also adds an element of the human and heroic. His solitary retreat is much like Guthlac's, and his lone wanderings recall the Wanderer ("anhaga," *Wan* la, 40a) or even that other symbol of Christ the Saviour, the Phoenix, who is twice called "anhaga."¹⁷

One major image the comprehension of which clearly relies on the homiletic tradition is the reference to Joseph's coat. The image seems to be too organic, too essential to the description and the allegory, to have been borrowed unwittingly from a text such as Latin Y in which it also appears and on which it has been supposed to have been patterned. In the accompanying moral imagery, the panther is clearly associated with virtue;¹⁸ the poet turns to stock hagiographic description and uses words like "scyne" ("shine," 19b), "beorhtra" ("more bright," 23b, 26b),

"scynra" ("more shining," 26b), "lixedð" ("shines," 27a), "bliceð" ("shines," 29b). Appropriately, Joseph's coat shines more fairly than earthly treasures (29b), just as the panther's breath is more noble than any worldly possession (48b). This theme of divine transcendence over the mere earthly is a recurrent Anglo-Saxon homiletic and poetic motif, the importance of which is indicated by scribal pointing. Within the structure of the *Physiologus* trilogy, *Panther* establishes the proper Christian relationship between the temporal and the eternal; *Whale* demonstrates how the unwary can be led astray in their pursuit of worldly goods.

Though the traditional descriptive vocabulary does hit at the kernel of the tunic image, the absolute aptness is obvious only to an audience familiar with homiletic symbolism. By associating the panther with Joseph, the poet has further identified that animal with Christ. It would indeed be unusual for a biblical image (Joseph's coat) to receive a non-biblical interpretation in the midst of a Christian allegory, and the Joseph-Christ identification is commonplace among Anglo-Saxon exegetes and their exemplars. In his influential Ascension homily, for example, Gregory introduces the Joseph-Christ association as an explanatory description of the nature of typology. He comments that just as Joseph's being sold by his brothers is a figure of the selling of our Redeemer, so Enoch's being transported and Elias' elevation to the atmospheric heaven denote the Ascension of the Lord.¹⁹ This typological identification of Joseph and Christ is also a commonplace for Bede who states flatly "Joseph, id est, Christus" ("Joseph, that is, Christ," PL 91.269, 270) and then repeats the idea time and again (e.g., PL 91.268, 272f, 285, 287).²⁰ Furthermore, the association of Joseph with Christ, arising as it does as a foreshadowing of the passion of the Redeemer by being sold by his brothers and having his cloak divided, blends perfectly with the redemptive theme of *Panther* and aptly precludes the symbolic description of the harrowing of hell which follows immediately upon the tunic image.

The image of Joseph's coat is not as evidently popular as the Joseph-Christ typology, but Bede does make reference to it on at least two occasions.²¹ Each time, he equates the coat with virtue. Hence

the image is consonant with the traditional moral images of light and virtue. The image, therefore, reinforces the audience's association of the panther with virtue, divinity, and the gentle Saviour who offers his grace to the virtuous and who conquers the dragon of Satan and Sin.

Consequently, the image of Joseph's coat fuses too well into the structure of the *Panther* fit to have been used unconsciously. If the image seems too difficult to have been generally understood, the reader should recall the popularity of Gregory and Bede for whom it was stock-in-trade; the reader should also recall Aelfric's comment at the close of the second volume of his *Catholic Homilies*. Many of his discourses are pericope homilies; so, when Aelfric says that the learned need not concern themselves with them, for their knowledge of those matters is sufficient (CH2 p. 594), one must assume that the educated were thoroughly familiar with typological patterns and that the Joseph-Christ allegory must have been self-evident at least to them, if not to congregations in general.

What remains of the allegorical description is central to Christianity and must have been readily apparent. However, the poet introduces the allegorical harrowing of hell with a play on the word "diegol." So, for his three-day rest the panther seeks out a "dygle stowe" (37a) which may be a "secret place" or it may be a "deep place", hell. That the latter meaning is at least to be implied is suggested by the interpretation: Christ shackled the dragon

ond þy þridan dæge / of *digle* aras (61b-2a; italics mine).
[and on the third day rose from the depth.]

The fact that the same words are used to describe the pleasant odour emitted by both the panther and the whale (*Pnt* 43a, 45b-6a; *Whl* 54b, 57b, 65b) should present no interpretative problem, even though the identity of sweet odour with sanctity is thoroughly established. Iconographically, the panther clearly is to be equated with good, the whale with evil; furthermore, it is the nature of the devil as "mille-forma" ("thousand forms") to disguise evil as good, so that the sweet odour of earthly and sensual objects is merely one more illusion encountered by the lax Christian who has symbolically confused the temporal

and the eternal, the evil and the good. It is also noteworthy that the spring-like scene with its odours of blossoms and trees which accompanies the resurrection of the panther (44a-8b) is very similar verbally and conceptually to the scene in which Guthlac is about to begin his heavenly journey (*Glc* 1271b-8a) and the one in which the Phoenix is about to imitate allegorically the death and resurrection of Christ (*Phx* 192b-9a). In fact, vernal details are a traditional iconographic means of associating the paradisaical and the divine, and as such reinforce the overriding impression of the description that the panther is an allegory of Christ, and his resurrection a symbol of the Resurrection.

There are, then, sufficient signals in the description itself automatically to identify the panther with Christ, the benevolent Saviour of the virtuous and the conqueror of Satan. Consequently, the interpretation which follows is not a poetic necessity; it is a pedagogic requirement. No audience is a homogeneous gathering of even average intelligences. Moreover, the interpretation does more than unravel the description. It also preaches (ll. 70-4).

The first fit is brief and comparatively simply structured, relying for its intelligibility on only a few images which it shares with the homily: Joseph's coat, the dragon, spatial imagery, images of light and beauty. *Whale* is more complex. An appreciation of the second fit depends much more than the first on a knowledge of the Old English homiletic tradition; it also depends on a knowledge of *Panther* to which it is an effective descriptive and allegorical contrast.

Whale is alive with traditional homiletic images and a meaningful play on words. The ominous comment that the fierce whale is met only unwillingly by seafarers ("fareðlacendum," 5b) sets the tone of the poem. "fareðlacendum" is varied immediately by the explanatory phrase "nibba gehwylcum" ("by each of men," 6a) and thereby explicitly becomes the traditional symbol of the Christian journeying over the sea-paths of this life. From the outset, therefore, the second fit is to be viewed as an allegory of spiritual survival. The poet makes much of this traditional homiletic image. As part of the over-all irony, for example, the scribe directs the reader to pause in the reciting of "faroðlacende" (20a): the compound is pointed "faroð. lacende"

(literally, "journey. sailing"). By means of the resulting pause, the poet underlines the grim irony of words like "gewiciað" ("they set up camp"), "werigferðe" ("weary at heart"), "ealonde" (literally, "water-land"), "eglonð" (literally "water-land"), "unlonð" ("non-land");²² both "faroð" and "lacende" indicate movement, the natural state of the Christian seafarer journeying through the perils of middle-earth. But these seafarers are neither "faroð" nor "lacende;" they have set anchor in a land that is no land ("únlonde," 14a) and have established a dwelling ("wic") when they should, by nature, be journeying. The interlacing of other compounds also rises to an ironic (and meaningful) climax here. Confronted with the "ferðgrim" ("dangerous to the soul," 5a) deceiver, the "collenferðe" ("brave souls," 17a) grow carelessly "werigferðe" ("soul-weary," 19b) to the peril of their souls. There is also an irony in the poet's selection of his words for ship. "sæmearas" ("sea-steeds," 15a), "heahstefn scipu" ("high-prowed ships," 13b), and "yðmearas" ("steeds of the waves," 49a) not only provide the land-sea identification convenient to the allegory, but are words traditionally²³ and logically connoting swiftness. There is a fine irony in such ships being anchored by the land-lubbing "seafarers;" it is an irony enhanced by the poet's choice of "ceolas" ("keels," 17b) in the ominous scene where the "keels" stand "securely" by the shore bound about by the moving waters:

ceolas stondað
 bi staþe fæste, streame biwunden. (17b-8b)
 [the keels stand fast by the shore
 encompassed by the seastreams.]

This is a poet who delights in grim ironies. Note the sardonic contradiction inherent in his description of travellers who are not travellers at all:

. . . him þa ferend on fæste wuniap,
 wic weardiað wedres on luste. (25-26)
 [. . . then the travellers remain fast to
 him; they watch over their dwelling, languishing

in the fine weather.]

There is here a complete abrogation of Christian responsibility as the Anglo-Saxon saw it. The Psalmist's statement that in this life he is a wanderer ("advena ego sum apud te, et peregrinus," Ps. 38:13) and St. Paul's instruction that we have here no lasting city ("Non enim habemus hic manentem ciuitatem, sed futuram inquirimus," Heb. 13:14) give rise to repeated poetic and prose reminders that this is not our native land, but our place of exile ("Nis þeos woruld na ure eðel ac is ure ~~wæ~~csidð," (CH1 p. 162), we have here no dwelling place ("ure wunung nis na her," CH3 vol. 1, p. 360). When Gregory argues in his Ascension homily that man must place the anchor of his hope in the eternal fatherland ("spei vestrae anchoram in aeternam patriam figite," PL 76.1219), therefore, the imagistic pattern and the argument are identical to those of the *Physiologus* poet; Gregory, however, writes without the ironic precision of the poet.²⁴

The image of fine weather ("wic weardiað wedres on luste," "they dwell in their encampment, rejoicing in the weather," 26) is also familiar to audiences of the Old English homily and poetry. For example, Aelfric admonishes popular congregations:

Mine gebroðra, behealdað ~~ðas~~ woruld swa swa ~~se~~. We sceolon beon on ðissere worulde hreohnyssum strange on geleafan, and eft on hire smyltnysse swiðe ~~wæ~~re. Seo hreohnys is open costnung, and seo smyltnys is stulor and digele swica.²⁵

(CH2 p. 392)

[my brothers, note that this world is just like the sea. We must be strong in faith during the rough weather of this life; and, similarly, we must be cautious during those placid moments. The roughness is open temptation, and the smoothness is stealthy and hidden deceit.]

Such a homiletic warning applies perfectly to *Wale*. The poem is about the deception of Satan, the trials of the Christian life, and the folly of failing to keep watch. These seafarers have fallen in love with the "amoenitates itineris" ("amenities of the journey," *De doctrina* I, iv),

and no alert Christian could have failed to read the message in the poetic description.

Uton we hycgan hwær we ham agen,
 ond þonne geþencan hu we þider cumen,
 ond we þonne eac tilien, þæt we to moten
 in þa ecan eadignesse (*Sfr* 117-120).
 [Let us take thought as to where we should possess
 our home, and then reflect on how we came here,
 and then we should also steer our efforts so that
 we might dwell in eternal blessedness.]

The "ðonne semninga" ("then, suddenly," 27a), therefore, comes as no surprise.

Just as the beauty of the panther is a moral image typifying its virtuous character, so the ugliness of the whale points immediately to its essential evilness. The poet identifies the perilous "fisca cynn" ("species of fish") and adds "Is þæs hiw gelic hreofum stane" ("this hue is like a rough stone," 8); the description seems to contrast specifically with the panther's appearance:

swa þæs deores hiw,
 blæc brigda gehwæs, beorhtra ond scynra
 wundrum lixeð. . . . (25b-7a)
 [so the hue of that animal, luxurious in
 each of its colours, radiates wondrously
 in its brilliance and lustre . . .]

The word "hreofum," moreover, carries a two-edged significance both of which attest to the animal's demonic identity. The idea of roughness implies imperfection and deformity, "unfæger" and "unhal." The alternative meaning of "hreof" as "leper" reaffirms the whale's essential evilness.²⁶ The moral significance of disease and especially the identification of leprosy and sin are well-attested to in the homilies and could only have verified the suspicions aroused by the revelation that the whale was fierce and dangerous to the soul, to those seafarers who

unwillingly met the seabeast (4-5). Furthermore, whereas the panther is garbed in Joseph's cloak-like splendour, the whale is grotesquely strewn with sea-weed and surrounded by colourless sandbars. (There is no foundation here to withstand the storms of this life.) We are presented with more than a contrast between good and evil; it is the depiction of life and death, of the "feorhneru" ("protector of life," cf. *Pnt.* 72a) and the "feorgbona" ("the slayer of life," *Whl* 41b), of the vitality of a vernal scene (*Pnt* 44-8) and the sterility proper to the "stane" ("stone," *Whl* 8b). There is a conscious effort at contrast here, an effort which is certainly not to be found in the known "sources" and which could hardly have been overlooked by an audience immersed in the Old English homiletic tradition.

Having etched a realistic scene of weary and unwary sailors, the poet suddenly and skilfully interrupts as the seafarers and their ships are swept into the nether world:

Ðonne semninga on sealtne wæg
 mid þa noþe niþer gewiteþ
 garsecgas gæst. Grund geseceð
 ond þonne in deaðsele drenc biƿæsteð
 scipu mid scealcum. (27a-31a)

[Then, suddenly, the spirit of the hostile deep
 went down with his plunder. He sought the
 seafloor, and then held the ships and their
 crews fast in the hall of death.]

The word "niþer" ("down") referring to hell is a standard spatial image,²⁷ and "deaðsele" ("hall of death") apparently derives from the Teutonic Valhalla ("hall of the dead") and appears only as hell²⁸ so that no Anglo-Saxon is in doubt as to what is happening even though the poet is merely providing natural description to this point and has used no explicitly Christian text. The audience reads in the images what is happening and looks only for the reason. It is present in the ironic detail this poet delights in providing. Man has put his trust in the demon and the pleasures of the earthly city; as a result, the "feorgbona" ("the slayer of life," 41b) has claimed the soul of the

unwary Christian as his booty ("noþe," 28a), just as his jaws later close on the plunder ("ymbe þa herehuþe," 61a) which symbolizes those who put their hope in this temporal world. Ironically, man seeks the goods of this world and the devil takes the spoils. *Panther* has anticipated the allegorical pattern. It can hardly have been accidental, or gratuitous, that the Saviour shines with spiritual ornaments ("frætsum bliceð," 29b), or that the Risen Redeemer's breath is more sweet than the treasures of this earth ("eorþan frætsum," 48b). Similarly, the panther is liberal ("estig," 16a) with his spiritual benefits, and the Almighty (as the protector of the Christian's soul) grants his goods without reserve ("ungnyðe," 71a). The poet has drawn a clear homiletic distinction between the cities of God and of this fleeting world.

Because the proud whale (50a) has already been actually identified with Satan, the second allegorical description will pose little problem for the audience. Phrases like "in helle ceaf1" ("in hell mouth," *And* 1703b) show the early existence of the hell-mouth tradition, and one can conclude that the "wida ceaf1" ("wide jaws," 59b) would likely have been taken as a reference to "helle hlinduru" ("hell's latticed doors," 78a); but the poet's love for neat parallels makes the image clear: "muð ontyneð" ("the mouth opens," 53b), "helle ontyneð" ("hell opens," 68b). Moved by this same love for parallel structures, the poet concludes the second interpretation by noting that those who are trapped in hell's prison will not escape "by swimming" ("faraðlacende," 80b); surely the word associates unwary fish and unwary seafarer by recalling the universal "fareðlacende" (5a, 20a) with which *Whale* began and thereby supplies a conclusion which typically recalls the beginning of the poetic patterns, thus suggesting a circularity of form.

The poet, like the homilist, takes delight in the play on words. By doing so he not only heightens the allegory and reinforces the imagery, but he also interlaces description and interpretation in an imaginative union which frees the interpretative segments from what might easily have been poetic sterility. As *Whale* opens, the poet remarks that seafarers meet the whale only "unwillum" ("unwillingly," 4a). This is the message of the second fit. Those who perform Satan's "willan her" ("will here," 43b) on earth are destined for the "deaðsele"

("hall of death"). Such is precisely the the case when the unwary sailors look with desire ("on willan," 35a) for consolation from the fiend, or when the fish follow the pleasant odour with false desire ("leasne willan," 66a). Around the idea of misplaced desire, the poet has patterned several ironic images. The unsuspecting seafarers encamp on the whale ("gewiciað," 19a) and inhabit the place ("wic," 26a), rejoicing in the weather; however, merely worldly delights are the deception of Satan, and those who place their trust in him have already chosen their final home ("wic geceosað," 37b). Similarly, the word "fæste" ("secure") is threaded throughout *Whale* to bring home this same homiletic argument. The ships are secured fast by the shore ("bi stape fæste," 18a); and the travellers, having set up camp, remain in security ("on fæste wuniap," 25a-b). They are, in fact, "fæste" (36b) set in demonic snares, fixed fast on the whale's back ("fæste gefeged," 41a), until finally, and appropriately, he imprisons them through drowning ("drence bifæsted," 30b). The ironic pattern in the use of the word is completed in the second episode when the whale clashes his jaws "fæste togædre" ("fast together," 77b), the earthbound are swept into hell's prison ("in þam fæstenne," 71b), and "helle hlinduru" ("hell's latticed doors," 78a) close eternally behind them.

The careful, graded progression of *Whale*, its verbal echoes, and its interlaced homiletic images are poetic means to a pedagogic end. If the audience has been attentive, the "Forþan" ("therefore") and homiletic "Uton" ("Let us") passages merely express what everyone has concluded for himself.

Partridge is too brief a fragment to permit the type of examination given here to *Panther* and *Whale*. The best one can hope to accomplish with *Partridge* is to demonstrate the role it performs within the homiletic theme of the trilogy.

The final sixteen verses serve not only to conclude the poem we call *Partridge*, but are also a kind of epilogue to the whole of the Anglo-Saxon *Physiologus*. *Panther* demonstrates the love of Christ for men (his death, harrowing of hell, and resurrection) and argues that only through the Father's love will man find salvation. *Whale* shows that if out of self-love man turns his allegiance to Satan and this

world, hell is his reward. The Father is the protector of life, "se feorhneru" (cf. *Pnt* 72a); Satan is the slayer of life, "se feorgbona" (cf. *Whl* 41b). Having thus examined the horror of hell and the deceptions of this earth, it is fitting that the *Physiologus* should conclude with an address from the Prince of Heaven, "wuldres ealdor" (4b). He promises that those who abandon the dark deeds, hellish sins, will immediately receive his fraternal love, the mildness of his heart. Such penitents, he adds, will be regarded as sons, will be glorious, and will be counted among the numbered. The speech is similar in content to St. Paul's counsel with which *Panther* concludes, and almost identical in spirit to the "Uton" passage which points the moral of *Whale*. Moreover, the Prince of heaven refers to his "milde mod" ("mild heart," 9a) thereby recalling the "milde" (*Pnt* 31a) Christ emphasized in *Panther*. With the conclusion of *Partridge* the allegory has been worked out in detail, and the mild Lord of Heaven invites all those who will pay heed to his message to be counted and numbered ("talade ond rimde," 10b) as his sons. Just as the poet was able to tell the natures of some of the innumerable animals referred to in the prologue, he has explained allegorically how the numbered ("rimde") will find an eternal place of rest. Theirs will be the "eardwica cyst" ("best of dwellings," 15b), not the illusory "wic" of the wayward seafarers. The stress on the beauty of heaven -- "in wuldres wlite" ("in heaven's beauty," 16a), "scine" ("shine," 14b) -- recalls similar images of light related to the panther, and the "beorhtan bosm" ("bright bosom," *Pnt* 7a) of the prologue. Through the proper use of the goods of this earth and through the salutary sacrifice of Christ, the Christian seafarer can attain that radiant and eternal dwelling.

Physiologus is, of course, a didactic poem, not a homily. Yet, the techniques it shares with the homily no doubt made the poetry all the more meaningful, and enjoyable, to its Anglo-Saxon Christian audiences. Both the pericope form and the three-fold exegesis are things with which even popular congregations certainly had a working, if not technical, familiarity; moreover, the structural balance, contrast, and interlace threaded into the very fabric of the exegesis are principles of organization which were much cherished by the Anglo-Saxon homilist. Sharing Aelfric's respect for the wisdom of the past, Anglo-Saxon audiences would

have recognized the unnamed authorities on which *Physiologus* is patterned as of lesser significance than Augustine or Gregory, but as authorities nonetheless. They would also have responded to the exhortative "uton" in the same way they were moved by its customary use in homiletic conclusions.

The homilist's view of the universe seems also to have been shared by his congregations; comets, storms, and unusual celestial lights were enough to prod an examination of conscience. Basic images of the storm and of seafaring were stock-in-trade even when addressing a homily *ad populum*, as were basic descriptive patterns involving light and darkness, beauty and ugliness, and pleasant and foul odours. Though Joseph's coat may itself have been a less familiar image, certainly the Joseph-Christ allegory was a near automatic association. Modern readers of Old English poetry would do well to become equally immersed in such homiletic common-places that they might respond to the Anglo-Saxon's poetry with as much insight and enjoyment as he.

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NOTES

¹ See "The Poetic Content of the Revival Homily," in *The Old English Homily and Its Backgrounds*, Paul E. Szarmach and Bernard F. Huppé, eds. (Albany 1978) 139-56.

² So I take "fitte," *Whl* 1a.

³ Halldór Hermannsson, *The Icelandic Physiologus, Islandica*, 27 (1938; rpt. New York 1966), twice speculates on the probability of an Old English influence on the Icelandic *Physiologus*. He suggests that the appearance of "gat" instead of the usual Icelandic "geit" ("goat") may "indicate that the Latin text which formed the basis for the

Icelandic rendering was of English origin and gave the native word for the animal which the Icelandic translator borrowed (p. 12)." Hermannsson (p. 15) also points to the possibility of English models for the MS illustrations. He might have added that items 7, 8, 9 of his fragment B are panther, whale, partridge, respectively. Though their content seems not to approach its detail in any significant way, the order of these three animals reflects the order of the Old English *Physiologus*.

⁴ The words "milde" and "mildheort" are quite recurrent in homiletic contexts, especially insofar as they describe the nature of Christ and most often the nature of the redemptive Christ (as is the case in *Physiologus*). The inspiration for the assignation is likely biblical and recalls such statements as Matthew's "Leorniaþ æt me forðan ic eom mildheort and eapmod" ("Learn from me because I am meek and humble of heart," Matt. 11: 29) or Luke's "Beoþ mildheort swa eower fæder is mildheort" ("Be merciful as your father is merciful," Luke 6: 36); but references to the "milde Crist" are readily found in Aelfric and in homiliaries like the Blickling and Vercelli. Aelfric's homily on the Exaltation of the Holy Cross encapsulates the idea since much of what appears between lines 154 and 205 develops the image and contrasts the Healer with the "wælhreow" ("deadly vicious"), the crucifiers of Christ who extend through the stock use of the word to the satanic and to the adder under the rock in *Physiologus*.

⁵ There is no need to document the Anglo-Saxon homilist's familiarity with his homiletic ancestors writing in Latin. It is sufficient to recall Cynewulf's dependence on Gregory's homily 29 in the composing of his Ascension poem and to mention Aelfric's explicit indebtedness to Augustine of Hippo, Jerome, Bede, Gregory, Smaragdus and Haymo (CH1 p. 1).

J.E. Cross, "The Conception of the Old English Phoenix" in *Old English Poetry: Fifteen Essays*, Robert P. Creed, ed. (Providence, Rhode Island 1967) 145, argues that "this poem is an effective homily on the Phoenix, in which Lactantius' *De Ave Phoenixe*, the fullest description of the bird, was adopted as a Christian historical explanation, and ideas taken from patristic exegesis and polemic, as well as the *Physiologus* literature, were elaborated to provide distinguishable tropological, anagogical, and typological explanations, so to present a fourfold

interpretation of a real and spiritual bird." He is insistent in his point of view and attacks Blake's edition for arguing a case similar to mine with respect to *Phoenix*, *JEGP*, 64 (1965) 153-59. I would argue, however, that audiences were accustomed to the pericope form and that the Lactantian indebtedness is no more historical than the pericope itself. The sense level exists only to adumbrate the allegorical. For contrary points of view, see Stanley B. Greenfield, *The Interpretation of Old English Poems* (Boston 1972) 145; and Daniel G. Calder, "The Vision of Paradise: a Symbolic Reading of the Old English *Phoenix*," *Anglo-Saxon England*, 1 (1972) 167-81.

⁶ *Early English Christian Poetry* (1952; rpt. New York 1963) 218.

⁷ G.N. Garmonsway, ed., *Aelfric's Colloquy* (1939; rpt. London 1965) 11. 105-23.

⁸ For several examples see the sketches reproduced by Florence McCulloch, *Mediaeval Latin and French Bestiaries* (Chapel Hill, N.C. 1960). It seems clear from the illustrations of *Aspidochelone* that the depiction is more imaginative than realistic. This is also true of the photocopies of the Icelandic MS reproduced by Hermannsson.

⁹ Pointing in the Exeter Book is not metrical as it apparently is in the Junius MS and Vercelli Book; as a result, breath pauses may well be of some significance in determining meaning. For various comments on the significance of MS punctuation see Dorothy Bethurum, *The Homilies of Wulfstan* (Oxford 1957) 92-3, where she argues that the best guide to Wulfstan's intentions is the punctuation of the manuscript; George Philip Krapp, *The Junius Manuscript* (1931; rpt. New York 1964) xx, where he says that capital letters are used for reasons of emphasis and accent marks "for rhetorical purposes;" *Aelfric's First Series of Catholic Homilies*, vol. 13 *Early English Manuscripts in Facsimile* (Copenhagen 1966) 24-5, where Norman Eliason and Peter Clemoes suggest that the punctuation is based on liturgical MSS in which the recitation of musical cadence was aided by MS markings; and L.C. Hector, *The Handwriting of English Documents* (London 1958) 44, where he notes that "Alcuin enjoins the proper pointing of sacred texts so 'that the reader will not read them incorrectly or perhaps fall abruptly silent in front of his devout.'" Hector has in mind Alcuin's *Carmen* LXVII, PL 101.745,

Ad musoeum libros scribentium ("to the library of those who write books"), where he also refers to the need for *quisque legit dicta sacra-rata Patrum* ("whoever reads the sacred sayings of the Fathers") to read them clearly.

¹⁰ Verse references to *Physiologus* are based upon the facsimile edition of *The Exeter Book of Old English Poetry*, R.W. Chambers, Max Forster, and Robin Flower, eds. (London 1933) rather than George Philip Krapp and Elliott Van Kirk Dobbie's *Exeter Book* in order to make use of MS pointing.

"þeod-" is an emendation of the MS "þeoð-." Since the accidental crossing of the "d" is a reasonable scribal error, and since I can find no meaningful interpretation of "þeoð-," I have accepted the usual emendation. I have also altered "gebiesgað" to "gebiesgad" where the scribe seems accidentally to have crossed the "d."

¹¹ N. Blake, "Some problems of Interpretation and Translation in the Old English *Phoenix*," *Anglia*, 80 (1962) 54-6, notes how heroic description in *Phoenix* anticipates the allegory by identifying the bird with man. He also points to the ambiguity of certain phrases (e.g., "on greote" 267b as "grave" or "dust," p. 51) and suggests that they contain allegorical implications. It is an interpretative approach he also adopts in his edition (Edinburgh 1964) of *Phoenix*, an approach I find to be similar to the one I have taken in my analysis of *Physiologus*.

The personification and the harrowing of hell are perfect pre-ludes to *Whale* since in *Whale* the devil drags his errant victims into the nether world, a world which the panther-warrior has already conquered. Since the mildness of the panther extends to all creatures except the demon dragon, he can and will redeem the repentant.

¹² Scribal pointing also calls for l. 54 to stand alone. By ignoring the MS, editors consistently lose the effect the scribe has produced of all creation, men and animals, banding in troops to follow the sweet odour.

¹³ As a spatial image, "niþer" ("down") is used to locate hell in *Whale* (28b); and is very often found in the expression "niþer under naessas" ("down under the headlands") to designate hell or the demonic (e.g., *Glc* 562b-3b; *Xst* 30b-1b, 90, 133b-4a, *Jud* 113; cf. *Jul* 684,

Ele 831). See also *The Blickling Homilies*, Richard Morris, ed. (1874-80; rpt. Oxford 1967) 209. "Middangeard" (*Pnt* 70b), therefore, conveys the sense of the opening verse by embracing hell, earth, and heaven; "uppe ge niþer" ("up or below," 74a), as a result, summarizes the salvation motif as it is expressly presented in the crucifixion and in the harrowing of hell.

¹⁴ This function of "feor lond" ("distant land") is too common to require extensive documentation. Two examples, one from *Phoenix* and the other from *Fates of the Apostles*, are sufficient to indicate the established connotation:

Hæbbe ic gefrugnen þætte is feor heonan
eastdælum on æpelast londa,
firum gefræge. (*Phx* 1a-3a)
[I have heard that far hence, in the east,
there is the most noble of lands, famous
among men.]

Ic sceall feor heonan,
an elles forð, eardes neosan,
sið asettan, nat ic sylfa hwaer,
of þisse worulde. (*FAP* 109b-112a)
[I shall travel far hence entirely alone,
visit a land, set out on a journey I myself
know not where, out from this world.]

For analogous examples see *Gen* 68b, 498a, 554a, 690a.

¹⁵ Contrast the "frecne and ferðgrim" whale ("fierce and dangerous to the soul," *Whl* 5a). The pun is reinforced by the stock description of the panther as "milde" ("mild"), "gemetfæst" ("meek") (*Pnt* 31a).

¹⁶ T.M. Gang, "Approaches to *Beowulf*," *RES*, 3(1952) 1-12, attempts a refutation of Tolkien's "The Monsters and the Critics" by arguing that the dragon is merely a guardian of treasure according to Germanic tradition. However, the dragon's Christian significance is consistent and well-attested. See, for example, Apocalypse 12, 6-9; 20, 1-13; Hans Hecht, ed., *Dialoge Gregors des Grossen* (1900; rpt. Darmstadt 1965) 156, 324, 327; Bruno Assmann, ed., *Angelsächsische Homilien und*

Heiligenleben (1889; rpt. Darmstadt 1964) 175, 196 ff.; Max Förster, ed., *Die Verceilli-Homilien* (1921; rpt. Darmstadt 1968) 77; John C. Pope, *Homilies of Aelfric*, EETS 259, p. 423; Walter W. Skeat, *Aelfric's Lives of Saints*, EETS, O.S. 76, 82, vol. 1, p. 120; Arthur Napier, ed., *Wulfstan. Sammlung der ihm zugeschriebenen Homilien nebst Untersuchungen über ihre Echtheit* (Berlin 1883) 141.

¹⁷ LL. 87a, 346b. Andrew, having been told that he must endure a Christ-like torment (*And* 953-954), is also called "anhaga" ("lone wanderer," 1351a) at the height of his allegorical sufferings.

¹⁸ Contrast *Whale* where the animal has a "hiw gelic hreofum stane" ("hue like rough stone," 8); the "deores hiw" ("hue of the wild animal," 25b) begs for comparison.

¹⁹ Sicut autem Joseph a fratribus venditus venditionem Redemptoris nostri figuravit, sic Enoch translatus, atque ad coelum aereum Elias sublevatus, Ascensionem dominicam designavit. (PL 76.1217)
[So Joseph who has been sold by his brothers has figured the selling of our Redeemer, as the transported Enoch and Elias elevated to the airy heaven typified the ascension of the Lord.]

²⁰ Cf. Bruno's *Joseph autem Christus est* ("Joseph however is Christ," PL 164.234, and see also cols. 218-20). Similarly, Haymo's Ascension homily is based in part on Gregory's and repeats his use of Joseph as an example of the allegorical method (PL 118.547, homily XCVI). For the popularity of the identification, see PL 219.46.

²¹ PL 91.268; and Gussie Hecht Tanenhaus, "Bede's *De Schematibus et Tropis* -- A Translation," *Quarterly Journal of Speech*, 48 (1962) 251.

²² This irony will be developed in the following pages. Note how the alliterative pattern poetically contrasts "ealond, eglond" ("island," with a pun on "ea-" "water"?) with "unlond," literally "a negation of land". To stress this demonic deceit, the scribe accents the "un-" prefix of "ūnlond," whereas later the "ræd" of "unræd" ("absence of deliberation," 70b) receives the accent. A. Campbell, *An Old English Grammar* (Oxford 1959) 31-2 par. 75, suggests that the "un-" prefix is almost always accented. The scribe, however, seems to be following more than custom here.

²³ For other poetic uses of these compounds and their connotation

of swiftness see *And* 264-276, 496b-513b; *Ele* 225-255.

²⁴ A homilist of the later Middle Ages was able meaningfully to develop the imagery for popular audiences and in so doing to encapsulate the tradition so well that it is worth quoting here. The stated theme of the homily is *ambulate*, "let us travel on":

3e see well þat pilgrymmes and weyfferynge men be not comonly stondynge, but euermore spedynge hem in here weyes. And þerfore as þe gospell of Seynt Poule seyþ ". . . we be called pilgrymmes, and comen of an-oþur cuntre." Wherefore euery men sey of hym-selfe as Dauid seyþ in þe Sawtur Boke, "Aduena ego sum, et peregrinus -- I am a pilgrymme and comon of an-oþur contrey." Wherefore all suche men muste spede hem in hure weyes, not lettynge, ne longe stondynge, for þe holy Seynt Poule seyþ, "Non habemus hic manentem ciuitatem, sed futuram inquirimus -- we haue here no dwellynge stede, but we sechen all-weye anoþur."

[You see clearly that pilgrims and wayfaring men are not commonly standing, but are always speeding on their way. And therefore, as the gospel of Saint Paul says, ". . . we are called pilgrims, and come from another country." For this reason, every man may say of himself as David says in the Psalter, "Advena sum, et peregrinus. I am a pilgrim and come from another country." So, all such men must make haste on their way, not hesitating, nor standing long, for the holy apostle Saint Paul says, "Non habemus hic manentem ciuitatem, sed futuram inquirimus -- we have here no lasting dwelling, but we always seek another."]

W.O. Ross, ed., *Middle English Sermons* (1940; rpt. Oxford 1960) 74.

The homilist continues, comparing man's life to the moving sea and warning that as the sea is always in motion so must the Christian always be active in performing good deeds.

²⁵ For similar statements elsewhere in Aelfric see Benjamin Thorpe, *The Homilies of the Anglo-Saxon Church*, vol. 2 (1846; rpt. New York 1971) 288 f. (abbreviated herein to CH1 and CH2 for volumes 1 and 2

respectively):

Seo sæ getacnað þas andwerdan woruld, and þæt strand getacnode ða ecan staðolfæstnysse þæs towerdan lifes. Hie swuncon on ðære sæ, forðan ðe hi wæron ða-gyt on geswincfullum yðum þises deadlican lifes. Se Hælend stod on ðam strande, forðan ðe he hæfde ðurh his ærist ealle deaðlicnyssa aworpen, swilce he mid weorcum hi gespræce, "Nelle ic on sæ eow æteowian, forðan ðe ic ne eom mid eow on geswincfullum yðum andwerdre deaðlicnysse."

[The sea signifies this present world, and the land signified the eternal stability of the future life. They laboured on the sea since they were still in the toilsome waves of this temporal existence. The Saviour stood on the land since he had overcome all transitoriness through his resurrection, as if he said to them through his actions, "I do not wish to appear to you on the sea, because I am not with you on the toilsome waves of the present temporal state."]

Cf. CH2 p. 388; John C. Pope, ed. *Homilies of Aelfric*, vol. 2 (Oxford 1968) 518, 569. See also:

Mine gebroþru oft ge gehyrdon þæt seo sæ getacnað þas andweardan woruld þe mid mislicum gelimpum þære sæ swangettunge geefenlæcð.

(*Aelfric's First Series of Catholic Homilies*, op. cit., 203r)

[My brothers, you have often heard that the sea symbolises this present world which with its various misfortunes is like the beating of sea.]

For similar reference in Gregory see, for example, PL 76.1184-5:

Quid enim mare nisi præsens sæculum signat, quod se casuum tumultibus et undis vitae corruptibilis illidit?

[For what does the sea signify except the present age which dashes itself against the tumults of misfortune and the waves of this corruptible existence?]

²⁶ Concerning the Anglo-Saxon's awareness of the "hreoƿ-"

roughness-leprosy associations one need only note such a comment as Aelfric's testimony concerning "se Hælend" that he gave "hreoƿflum smeðnysse" ("smoothness to the leprous," CH1 p. 26), to see that the point is not without basis. For leprosy-sin references in prose sources, see, for example, Augustine *Lib. 2 quaest. Evan. cap. 40*; CH1 pp. 122, 124; John Small, ed. *English Metrical Homilies* (Edinburgh 1862) 129 f.; R. Morris, ed., *An Old English Miscellany* (EETS, O.S. 49) 31. See also Alanus de Insulis, PL 210.172: "poenitens curatus a spirituali lepra per contritionem" ["the penitent cured from spiritual leprosy through contrition"]

²⁷ See n. 18 above. Accordingly, the word "besencan" ("drowned") is often used of the hell-journey; e.g., CH3 vol. 1, p. 362; Bethurum p. 141. For the association of hell with a lake see Jerome PL 24.221; Alanus PL 210.211: "infernū mergit," ("sunk in hell"); Gram p. 72, "'Styx'. hellemere," ("Styx, hell's mere").

²⁸ To illustrate the demonic deception, the poet says that Satan has hidden under a "heolophelme" ("helmet which makes its wearer invisible," 45a), just as he had when tempting Eve (*Gen B 444a*). For the use of this helmet in Teutonic mythology and its relevance in *Genesis*, see C.W. Kennedy, *The Caedmon Poems* (New York 1916) xxix-xxx.