A TRANSLATION OF THE MIDDLE ENGLISH POEM PATIENCE

by

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A Thesis Submitted to the Faculty of the
DEPARTMENT OF ENGLISH
In Partial Fulfillment of the Requirements
For the Degree of
MASTER OF ARTS
In the Graduate College
THE UNIVERSITY OF ARIZONA

1964
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ABSTRACT

In the introduction to my translation of Patience, I chose to investigate the two topics most relevant to the subject matter of the poem and its author: the sources for the story proper, e.g., the Jonah legend and the identity of the Pearl-Poet.

In the translation from the Middle English I endeavored to keep the alliteration of the original text, especially since the Pearl-Poet's work is an important example of the poetry of the Alliterative Revival. At the same time I attempted not to drift far afield from the sense in search of alliterative words. At best, sense and sound worked together, but there was never a struggle when sound had to be sacrificed.

The majority of the notes to the poem are taken directly from the Bateson edition I used for the translation. Mr. Bateson's notes are quite inclusive and are included only to elucidate passages that might confuse the reader because of questions of language or allusion.
CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

Identity of the Pearl-Poet

Henry Lyttleton Savage thus summarizes the position of one who pursues the Pearl-Poet: "With an anonymous group of poems written in handwriting that has been slowly fading into illegibility, and in a manuscript that is perhaps a third or fourth copy of the original, discovery of the author, or even of the time and place at which he writes, seems about as likely as success in catching and shoeing the wind." One quickly agrees with such an imposing statement. But these deterrents to a fuller knowledge of the Pearl-Poet and his mental and physical surroundings have not discouraged any number of writers, including Dr. Savage, from venturing into the Northwest Midland counties of England with every intention of catching and shoeing this particular wind.

Although this portion of the introduction is especially concerned with what is known about the Pearl-Poet as man and poet, some pertinent remarks are in order concerning the probable date and geographic setting of Pearl-Poetry.

Sir Isreal Gollancz, in his second edition of The Pearl, dates that poem at about 1370, and he adds that **Patience** and **Cleanliness** must

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belong to about the same time.² Savage is less precise and dates the poems between 1365 and 1386.³ These dates seem to be representative in that I have yet to find Patience dated before 1360 or after 1400.

Just as there is general agreement on the approximate date, so is there little dissension in assigning Patience to the North-West Midlands:

So R. Morris, F. Knigge, K. Luick, R. Jordan, R. J. Menner, and others. J. R. Hulbert considers there is insufficient evidence. C. O. Chapman assigns the poem to Yorkshire. Within the North-West Midland area, south Lancashire is the usual choice, with Cheshire as a possibility. But H. C. Wyld and M. S. Serjeantson ⁴ considered north Derbyshire a more likely locality.

True dissension concerning Pearl-Poetry occurs when writers attempt to assign a name—and usually a profession—to the poet. E. Guest, the historian of English Rhythms, suggested Huchown of the Awle Ryale as his candidate for the Pearl-Poet.⁵ Dr. Guest bases claims for Huchown on two main points: (1) Andrew of Wyntown, in his Chronicle of Scotland, mentions a poet, Huchown of the Awle Ryale, who—in his Gest Hystoriale, made "... the Awntyre of Gawane," (2) In the blank space at the beginning of Gawain and the Green Knight, a fifteenth century hand has written, "Hugo de ...." ⁶ Disregarding the dialect for the moment, one must make two major assumptions in order to embrace this

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³ Savage, p. 8.
⁶ Gollancz, pp. xxxvii-xxxviii.
theory. The fact that neither has any foundation in fact is enough reason for the general disinclination to accept it. First one must assume that the "Awntyre of Gawane" is Gawain and the Green Knight, and then one must make a second assumption that allows the blank space following "Hugo de . . ." to be filled with something like "aula regali." This theory has been generally rejected on grounds of both dialect and content.

Another popular, though now also generally discredited, theory centers around Ralph Strode. This theory is based on one entry in an old Merton College Catalogue and a great deal of conjecture. The entry is this: "Radulphus Strode; nobilis poeta fuit et versificavit librum elegiacum vocatum Phantasma Radulphi." One of the evident weaknesses of the theory is that one must simply assume that this Phantasma is a work by the Pearl-Poet, and probably Pearl itself. Gollancz attempts to identify Chaucer's "philosophical Strode" with the man mentioned in the Merton College entry by saying, "This Ralph Strode, poet, is clearly to be identified with the famous philosopher of that name whose philosophical works hold an important place in the history of medieval logic." He fails to answer anywhere the logical question, "Why must the poet be identified with the philosopher?" Further, Gollancz introduces a third Ralph Strode, a Common Serjeant of the City of London, whom he wants to identify with Chaucer's "philosophical Strode." In all fairness to

9. Ibid., p. xlix.
Gollancz, I feel it should be mentioned that commentators on his 
explanation of the Strode theory imply that it is a working theory which 
he believes in and defends as the answer to the question of identity. 
However, Gollancz clearly states, "But so far as the identity of Strode 
with the author of Pearl is concerned, all is mere conjecture; no 
definite piece of evidence tending to confirm it is adducible."  

Coolidge Otis Chapman advances the name of John de Erghome, an 
Augustinian Friar of York, as the author of Pearl-Poetry. 

There are two major deterrents to this theory. Initially, he bases his argument 
on rather flimsy literary analogies, e.g., "A comparison of this poem 
Sir Gawain and the Green Knight/ with Prophecy of John of Bridlington 
Erghome's work reveals the same moral earnestness and abhorrence of 
licentiousness."  

I would venture to say that one-half of Middle 
English Literature is morally earnest and abhorrent of licentiousness, 
and neither the Pearl-Poet nor John de Erghome can be credited with that 
large a body of work. And of more importance, the champion of Erghome 
argues that the language of Pearl-Poetry is that of Yorkshire rather 
than that of the Northwest, because of the large number of Norse words 
in Gawain and the fact that Scandinavian influence was highest in Eastern 
Yorkshire, the home of the Erghomes. 

Although it is true that scholars 
are hesitant about assigning one district as the home of the Pearl-Poet, 


11. Coolidge Otis Chapman, "The Authorship of the Pearl," PMLA, 
XLVII (March, 1932), 349. 

12. Ibid. 

13. Ibid., p. 352.
dialectical evidence should be based on more than loan words, and scholars in general are in favor of the North-West midland area, with south Lancashire usually as the particular choice.14

Oscar Cargill and Margaret Schlauch claim that Pearl is an elegy written on the death of Margaret, granddaughter of Edward III, by someone not her father but closely connected with her father, the court and the girl.15 As do all the theorizers who attempt to be specific about the Pearl-Poet's identity, Cargill and Schlauch shift from the known to the conjectural with that peculiarly scholarly movement that reduces the credibility of the claim in direct proportion to the movement away from the inarguable. For instance, it is known that Edward the III gave his daughter Margaret 2,000 pearls on the occasion of her marriage to John Hastings, Earl of Pembroke; consequently, the writers associate the pearls covering the maiden in Pearl with those given by Edward to his daughter!

Further, the identification of one particular person by Cargill and Schlauch as the Pearl-Poet is one of almost pure conjecture. It is known, for example, that in 1369 Hastings favored five clerks.16 Of the five, conjecture assigns one John Donne as perhaps Margaret's guardian.17 Further conjecture solidifies their case when the authors advance the theory that the clerk-poet might have picked up the machinery of Gawain

14. See page 2, footnote 4, of this introduction.
16. Ibid., p. 118.
17. Ibid.
and the Green Knight (the Chastity Test and the beheading game) through diplomatic channels. But a flaw appears in the choice of Donne when it is revealed that he was steward of the Earl's kitchen. Unwilling to attribute Pearl-Poetry to a steward, plus the fact that GGK has been understood to be associated with the Feast of the Garter, John Prat, minstrel, is given as an alternate. Evidently the writers feel a minstrel, undoubtedly associated with feasts and holidays, would therefore be a more likely poet than a steward. There is, however, no more reason to assign Pearl-Poetry to him than to John Donne or to any of the other clerks for that matter. Absolutely all that is definite about this theory is that Edward the III was passionately fond of pearls, his grandchild, named Margaret, died quite young, and his son-in-law somehow favored five clerks in 1369.

Leaving the realm of person-to-person identification, a generic identification concerning a profession, for instance, is still difficult. Patience alone certainly suggests someone acquainted with the Scriptures; Cleanness, too, with its object lessons of The Flood, the destruction of Sodom and Gomorrah, and others, is almost entirely Biblical. Pearl contains nearly 100 Biblical allusions and quotations. But then there is Gawain and the Green Knight, full of courtly splendor and myth, and the machinery of the dream vision in Pearl and, perhaps, reminiscences of Boccaccio and the Romance of the Rose. How to arrive at the best suggestion for a profession from these two possible worlds is a difficult task.

18. Cargill and Schlauch, p. 121.
19. Ibid., p. 123.
The author—if indeed one poet composed all four poems—has been tentatively identified as a clerk, but no less than an aristocratic clerk:

His skill in argument, and his occasional use of a term such as pretermynable and property indicate the clerk. Along with this is the frequent reflection of the courtly life, and of familiarity with the best manners both of men and women, all of which suggests wide experience in the world, not only at the University, but in the noble households. In the best sense our poet was an aristocrat.20

Savage, more particularly, feels that a safe surmise is that the Pearl-Poet was a retainer of John of Gaunt or his brother-in-law, Enguerrand de Coucy, the French Earl of Bedford.21 He advances this theory in answer to the following question, which expresses the general wonder associated with the Pearl-Poet’s broad background: "How came he to be so familiar with aristocratic life and yet at the same time to remain still a man of the shires?"22 As a retainer of one of these noblemen, Savage says that the Pearl-Poet would have served in some administrative or clerical capacity.23

Relevant here is Oakden’s belief that the Pearl-Poet was a retainer of John of Gaunt in particular and that he may have been in residence at the ducal castle of Clitheroe; evidence for this claim rests partly on Oakden’s belief that the setting for Gawain’s adventures

21. Savage, p. 11.
22. Ibid., p. 10.
23. Ibid., p. 11.
at the Green Chapel is the land near the castle of Clitheroe and the adjoining village of Downham. 24

Although Savage's theory discounts the possibility of the poet's entrance into orders during his early youth, he says: "It is possible that in his later years he may have become a monk, if certain hypotheses which a learned nun, Sister Mary Madeleva, believes to be true, really are true." 25 It is with her theory, then, that we must concern ourselves.

Utterly disregarding the well-known father-daughter theory associated with Pearl, Sister Madeleva sees the Pearl- Poet as a member of a monastery, the lost pearl as the happiness of his spiritual youth, and the maiden who appears to him as his own soul in its potential state of perfection. 26 This interpretation does clear up some difficulties encountered in reading the poem as if the dreamer were a father talking to his daughter:

If the dreamer were a father, whether layman or ecclesiastic, and the Pearl the soul of his virgin daughter, nothing could be more inappropriate than her exhortation to him to seek that pearl which is the special badge of virginity—the condition which he was precluded from attaining by his very relationship to her. If, on the other hand, he is a discouraged young religious and she is his "own soul, as it might be in a state of perfection at this particular time of his life," the plea contained in stanza 62 becomes both intelligible and poignant. 27

And since *The Pearl* as an elegy upon a little girl would be unique in English literature before the sixteenth century, her argument that it is an allegory of a spiritual condition, and therefore part of a long mystical tradition which flowered in fourteenth century England is sensible and appealing.  

There are but two more views of note to be discussed, those of Carleton F. Brown and W. H. Schofield. Brown restates the 14th century controversy of predestination vs. free will and grace vs. merit as orthodox background for his claim that the poet is more an evangelical than an ecclesiastic since he is going against traditional doctrine in arguing for equality of heavenly rewards for all; too, Brown says that the poet fails to mention Holy Church, points out no hierarchical dignitaries but rather a democratic equality among the elect, and fails entirely to cite patristic authorities and tradition. The charge of heresy implicit in the poet's principle of equality for all has been dropped due to recent scholarship, however, and the only parts of Brown's article that have not been successfully refuted are (1) the statement that the poet was trained in theology and (2) the suggestion that he was influenced by current controversy on free will and foreordination. Brown regards, nevertheless, the sum of his findings as an indication of common sentiment among the most intelligent and truly religious people of the time, and he sees the Pearl-Poet's direct


acceptance of the lesson of the Parable of the Vineyard (all other writers on this parable grind their particular theological axe to the point that the parable means finally what they choose to make it mean, e.g., usually anything but the lesson of equal rewards for all) as a common reaction against scholasticism. 30

Brown's arguments though are less meaningful when applied to the author of *Gawain and the Green Knight*. What is an ecclesiastic doing writing about courtly love and sorceresses? To limit an argument to but one portion of a writer's body of work strikes me as slightly devious. In the same manner, an article about the author of *The Monk's Tale* considered in the light of his theological opinions would label that writer as long-winded and moral. And that would be generally correct, but only for *The Monk's Tale*. A similar discussion of *The Miller's Tale* might label the writer as simply bawdy. Correct again, but only in the limited sense! Of course Chaucer scholars are quick to point out other tales which alter singular and limited conceptions and a true picture of Chaucer's theological opinions, for instance, cannot be sketched out until one examines the body of his work. Since the body of the Pearl-Poet's work can be examined in a relatively short time, it is of paramount importance for the writer and critic to keep all of the poems in mind. The very points that buttress Brown's argument for the author of *The Pearl* as an evangelical are so rigid they cannot give enough to absorb *Gawain and the Green Knight*. For instance, the philosophical background of the

poet—according to the Brown article—strikes me as too limited to include the glitter and color of Gawain. The next step, of course, is to write an article on the author of Gawain considered in the light of his theological opinions.

Writers, and poets in particular, are more than the sum of all their parts, but even these parts—separate and diverse as they may well appear to be—deserve an interpretation that does in fact allow the poet to function as an entity and that does not dissect and compartmentalize him for the sake of scholarship at the expense of good, functional art.

Schofield was the earliest advocate of the non-elegaic interpretation of The Pearl.

Had she been a real child, a father lamenting her loss could not have failed to recall her in actuality, to have indicated some feature of her personal appearance, to have noted some incident in connection with her birth or death, to have given some hint of the circumstances of their association.

Further, he demonstrates the wide popularity of the mediaeval lapidary, and in particular the vogue of the pearl. Arguing for an allegorical treatment of The Pearl he says that the literary use of the pearl for symbolical or allegorical purposes, especially its association with virginity, had become so common that the mere choice of such a subject for a poem almost amounted to apprising the reader that he was to expect an allegorical treatment. "She /Pearl/ is a symbol," Schofield


32. Chase, pp. xl-xli.
says, "of pure maidenhood."\textsuperscript{33} Thus, instead of regarding him as a clerk or an ecclesiastic or anything of the sort, Schofield sees him as simply a poet.

Finally, then, one is left with more choices than he could ever have come up with on his own, since the unschooled but perceptive reader would confine himself to broad surmises concerning the Pearl-Poet's profession and identity: a clerk, one might say in general. The uninitiated reader could hardly be expected to guess that he might have been Hasting's favorite clerk in particular, or a retainer of Enguerrand de Coucy, French Earl of Bedford.

Throughout the perusal of these different theories, the thought has come to me that it is almost a detriment to the poetry of the man in question that he be identified, not because a positive identification would do any more or less for his body of work as such, but because—and this is going on even now in the area of surmise—people tend to alter a man's work to fit their particular scheme of acceptance. Thus one might say that it is odd for a clerk, for example, to believe in equal heavenly rewards for all, instead of recognizing that what they regard as odd for a clerk might well be a direct indication that their favorite theory is inappropriate or faulty: they cannot, in other words, see the poetry for the poet. People in general, I fear, will—instead of accepting the Pearl-Poet as an artist—strain him through the old alembic of their prejudice and need for literary stratification-via-labels

\textsuperscript{33} Schofield, p. 169.
(thus Gower is moral, Chaucer learned and Rolle mystical) in an effort to reduce him to a page or so of literary history.

The very cause of much of the dissension—the divergence between the apocalyptic, theological Pearl plus the homiletic Patience and Cleanness and the romantic Gawain and the Green Knight—should be for the modern reader a cause for acceptance and pleasure. The very fact that the Pearl-Poet cannot be labeled and filed away as easily as some other writers allows him to bridge the gap of the ages with more ease. Homily may well be out of place for the modern reader burdened with arguments concerning existentialism in the abstract and hot and cold wars in very concrete countries, but realistic and sensitive is the picture of the truculent prophet Jonah speaking in familiar, man-to-man idiom with the Old Testament God, and it is not a matter of unusual sensitivity to appreciate the particular brand of respect for his God that the Pearl-Poet possesses that allows him to portray Him on a level with his short-sighted and selfish children but still in possession of the cosmic attributes of enduring understanding and patience.

The Jonah Legend in Middle English Literature

The obvious source for Patience is, of course, the thirtieth book of the Old Testament, Jonah. But there were in the writings of the Fathers of the Church symbolic interpretations of the legend, poems composed about it, and general reference to it as a proof of various and often argued theological points. One favorite theme of theologians, about which there could be no argument, was that Christ's resurrection after three days was foretold in the Old Testament. Another theme, this
time less tenable, centered around Biblical evidence that the body and not just the soul would be resurrected on Judgement Day.

To begin with an example of general reference to the legend, the First Epistle of Clement to the Corinthians, one section being titled "An Exhortation of Repentance," simply points out that the Ninevites who listened to Jonah were, in fact, saved. Biblical evidence is cited as Matthew xii, 41.

The men of Nineveh shall rise in judgement with this generation, and shall condemn it: because they repented at the preaching of Jonas; and, behold, a greater than Jonas is here.  

A more frequent reference is to Matthew for proof that Christ's resurrection was foretold in the Old Testament. Referring to Christ's own words, the Epistle of Ignatius to the Trallians quotes Matthew xii, 40.  

For as Jonah was three days and three nights in the whale's belly; so shall the Son of man be three days and three nights in the heart of the earth.

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35. *Viri Ninivitae surgent in iudicio cum generatione ista et condemnabunt eam, quia paenitentiam ergerunt in praedicatione Iona; et ecce plus quam Ionas hic.*  


37. *Sicut enim fuit Ionas in ventre ceti tribus diebus et tribus noctibus, sic erit Filius hominis in corde terrae tribus diebus et tribus noctibus.*
Further in Volume I of the *Ante-Nicene Fathers*, in the writings of Justin Martyr, there is another reference to the same passage in Matthew in order to make the same point concerning the history of Christ that Clement made, e.g., Christ's resurrection is foretold in the history of Jonah.\(^38\)

The Jonah legend was also employed by the Church Fathers to prove that the bodies of the saved will also be raised again. This point of total resurrection is made to counter the arguments of heretics that only the soul was immortal and that the body was inherently worthless.\(^39\)

In chapter lviii of the same volume, the case of Jonah spending three days and nights in the fish's belly and then being vomited up with his flesh intact is again introduced as an example of "our own future integrity and perfect resurrection."\(^40\) And in the writings of Irenaeus is the statement that the preservation of Jonah is a clear demonstration that God can raise up bodies to life eternal.\(^41\)

Thus the Jonah story is employed by different writers as means to their particular end. So far the story has been used to urge repentance, as proof that the resurrection of Christ was forecast in the Old Testament, and as a Biblical proof against the heretics who claimed that the flesh would not be raised at the resurrection.

But all the Church Fathers do not treat the story in bits and pieces and in passing as the previous entries seem to indicate. There

is a Latin fragment from Book II of the Book on the Resurrection which contains two of the three uses of the story just mentioned, and a great deal more. It is short enough to quote in its entirety:

I. The history of Jonah contains a great mystery. For it seems that the whale signifies Time, which never stands still, but is always going on, and consumes the things which are made by long and shorter intervals. But Jonah, who fled from the presence of God, is himself the first man who, having transgressed the law, fled from being seen naked of immortality, having lost through sin his confidence in the Diety. And the ship in which he embarked, and which was tempest-tossed, is this brief and hard life in the present time; just as though we had turned and removed from that blessed and secure life, to that which was most tempestuous and unstable, as from solid land to a ship. For what a ship is to land, that our present life is to that which is immortal. And the storm and the tempests which beat against us are the temptations of this life, which in the world, as in a temptestuous sea, do not permit us to have a fair voyage free from pain, in a calm sea, and one which is free from evils. And the casting of Jonah from the ship into the sea, signifies the fall of the first man from life to death, who received that sentence because, through having sinned, he fell from righteousness: "Dust thou art, and unto dust shalt thou return." And his being swallowed by the whale signifies our inevitable removal by time. For the belly in which Jonah, when he was swallowed, was concealed, is the all-receiving earth, which receives all things which are consumed by time.

II. As, then, Jonah spent three days and as many nights in the whale's belly, and was delivered up sound again, so shall we all, who have passed through the three stages of our present life on earth— I mean the beginning, the middle, and the end, of which all this present time consists—rise again. For there are altogether three intervals of time, the past, the future, and the present. And for this reason the Lord spent so many days in the earth symbolically, thereby teaching clearly that when the forementioned intervals of time have been fulfilled, then shall come our resurrection, which is the beginning of the future age, and the end of this. For in that age there is neither past nor future, but only the present. Moreover, Jonah having spent three days and three nights in the belly of the whale, was not destroyed by his flesh being dissolved, as is the case with that natural decomposition which takes place in the belly, in the case of those meats which enter into it, on account of the greater heat in the liquids, that it might be shown that these bodies of ours may remain undestroyed. For consider that God had images of Himself made as of gold, that is of a purer spiritual substance, as the angels; and others of clay or
brass, as ourselves. He united the soul which was made in the image of God to that which was earthy. As, then, we must here honour all the images of a king, on account of the form which is in them, so also it is incredible that we who are the images of God should be altogether destroyed as being without honour. Whence also the Word descended into our world, and was incarnate of our body, in order that, having fashioned it to a more divine image, He might raise it incorrupt, although it had been dissolved by time. And, indeed, when we trace out the dispensation which was figuratively set forth by the prophet, we shall find the whole discourse visibly extending to this.\footnote{Ante-Nicene Fathers, VI, p. 378.}

The main points from this selection are, as before in the less lengthy allusions, the three days of Jonah as symbolic of Christ's three days in the earth prior to his resurrection, and the bodily safety of Jonah as a sign that the body as well as the soul will be brought forth on the last day.

So pervasive is the theme of Christ's resurrection foretold by Jonah's three days and nights and subsequent "resurrection" that it occurs again in the final lines of a poem, De Jona et Ninive. Though this poem has been ascribed to Tertullian, a commentator says that it is no more Tertullian's than it is Virgil's or Homer's.\footnote{Ante-Nicene Fathers, IV, p. 166.} Referring to Jonah, the lines are:

\begin{quote}

\begin{verbatim}
in life
Learning the process of his death; but still—
To be a sign hereafter of the Lord—  (11. 148-50)
\end{verbatim}
\end{quote}

Of particular interest in relation to Patience are these points in the poem which are not found in the Book of Jonah: Patience is mentioned in the first section of the poem; there is a rather elaborate description of the storm that threatens Jonah's ship, in passages

\footnote{Ante-Nicene Fathers, VI, p. 378.}
\footnote{Ante-Nicene Fathers, IV, p. 166.}
replete with the names of the ship's parts and sailing gear and nautical terms in general; there is a point made of Jonah's snoring; and finally the stench and total repulsiveness is introduced.

Before too much is made of these similarities however, it should be noted that De Jona is but 150 lines long and Patience is extended to 532 lines; De Jona treats only the portion of the Biblical tale up to the point where the great fish has devoured Jonah; Patience encompasses the entire Bible story. Also both Emerson and Bateson respectively have noted parallels in the two works and scholarship tends to discredit Emerson's theory that there is a definite connection between the works. Even in the face of this, I feel the similarities are worth a closer inspection because some of the portions of Patience that are lauded as the best poetry (the storm scene, the ship-handling sections) or the most vivid and striking (the description of the conditions inside the whale) or bold strokes of characterization (the snoring of the prophet) are the ones that parallel those in De Jonah et Ninive.

Most of the activity on the ship follows and is part of the storm section, thus the entire passage is quoted:

For suddenly
A little cloud had stained the lower air
With fleecy wrack sulphureous, itself
By the wind's seed excited: by degrees,
Bearing a brood globose, it with the sun
Cohered, and with a train caliginous
Shut in the cheated day. The main becomes
The mirror of the sky; the waves are dyed
With black encirclement; the upper air
Down rushes into darkness, and the sea
Uprises; nought of middle space is left;
While the clouds touch the waves, and the waves all
Are mingled by the bluster of the winds
In whirling eddy. 'Gainst the renegade,
'Gainst Noah's diverse frenzy joined to rave,
While one sole barque did all the struggle breed
'Twixt sky and surge. From this side and from that
Pounded she reels; 'neath each wave-breaking blow
The forest of her tackling trembles all;
As, underneath, her spinal length of keel,
Staggered by shock on shock, all palpitates;
And, from on high, her labouring mass of yard
Creaks shuddering; and the tree-like mast itself
Bends to the gale, misdoubting to be riven.
Meantime the rising clamour of the crew
Tries every chance for barque's and dear life's sake:
To pass from hand to hand the tardy coils
To tighten the girth's noose: straitly to bind
The tiller's struggles; or, with breast opposes,
T' impel reluctant curves. Part, turn by turn,
With foremost haste outbale the reeking well
Of inward sea.

The reader is urged to compare ll. 132-162 in Patience.

Jonah's snoring is mentioned twice in the Strain:

the guilty one

'nearth the poop's hollow arch was making sleep
Re-echo stertorous with nostrils wide
Inflated: (ll. 81-84)

And when the pilot comes for him, he asks Jonah:

"Why sing'rt, with vocal nostril,
dreams,
In such a crisis?" (ll. 88-9)

The Pearl-Poet says that Jonah

Reclining near the hurrok, from heaven's wrath
Slipped into a deep sleep, and slumbering he snores.

(ll. 185-6)
The first part of *Patience* is a statement of the theme which gives the poem its name. Although in *De Jona* the theme of patience does not play so great a role in the construction of the piece, the patience of God is mentioned:

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Still,
Kindly and patient of our waywardness,
And slow to punish, the Almighty Lord
Will launch no shaft of wrath, unless He first
Admonish and knock oft at hardened hearts,
Rousing with mind august presaging seers.  (Ll. 15-20)
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Though without the detail of *Patience*, *De Jona* does include passages of description concerning the inside of the whale:

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Inspired with breath ferine; himself, shut in
By waters, yet untouched; in the sea's heart,
And yet beyond its reach; 'mid wrecks of fleets
Half-eaten, and men's carcasses dissolved
In putrid disintegrity:  (Ll. 144-47)
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*Patience* describes a similar scene in this manner:

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He glides in by the gills through filth and slime,
Reeling in by an intestine, that he thought was a road,
Ever head over heel, hurtling about,
Till he staggered into an enclosure as broad as a hall;
And there he fastens the feet and fumbles about,
And stood up in his stomach, that stank as the devil.
There in fat and filth that savoured as hell.  (Ll. 269-275)
```

In the examples up to this point, then, it is clear that the first ones cited have little to do with the Pearl-Poet's rendition of the legend, but as the discussion continued, the possibility of a close acquaintance with some of the Church Fathers as applicable to his particular purpose became more likely. It is on this note of ever-increasing dependence on sources that Tertullian's *De Patientia* must be introduced.
De Patientia is a short prose work on the value of and need for the virtue of patience. That patience was a virtue of paramount importance to an advocate of the teachings of the Church Fathers is an important point, since from a modern point of view it is not improbable that a reader might well ask himself why a poet would devote over 500 lines to extolling a virtue whose most familiar touchstone today is the secular "all things come to those who wait."

That patience was a great deal more than the subject of one of a medieval housewife's stock of aphorisms is illustrated by the partial summary of Tertullian's essay which follows:

After pleading unfit to write about the virtue, Tertullian cites God himself as an example of patience as He bears with all possible vices. Christ, too, is an example of patience, and in His work on earth one to be imitated. As it is the servant's duty to imitate his master, so should men imitate their Master and exercise their patience since God is the author of patience, and the devil the father of impatience. Tertullian says that impatience is the precursor to all sin. And that patience is both antecedent and subsequent to faith. He advises practicing patience under personal violence and malediction, under bereavement, and when tempted to plot revenge.

In the single section dealing with all sin as the result of a lack of patience one can easily see the importance of this virtue!

There are two other sections of the work worth quoting in more detail. The first connects the Beatitudes with patience, just as the Pearl-Poet connects the two in the first section of Patience. Also this first selection contains a clue to a spiritual explanation of the

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poverty the Pearl-Poet mentions in the beginning of the poem and a clue, 
too, to the poet's reason for repeating all of the Beatitudes!

Tertullian makes patience the basis for each of the rewards 
mentioned in the Beatitudes:

On every side, therefore, we are bound to the duty of 
exercising patience, from whatever quarter, either by our own 
errors or else by the snares of the Evil one, we incure the 
Lord's reproofs. Of that duty great is the reward—namely, 
happiness. For whom but the patient has the Lord called happy, 
in saying, "Blessed are the poor in spirit, for theirs is the 
kingdom of the heavens?" No one, assuredly, is "poor in 
spirit," except he be humble. Well, who is humble, except he 
be patient? For no one can abase himself without patience, in 
the first instance, to bear the act of abasement. "Blessed," 
saith He, "are the weepers and the mourners." Who, without 
patience, is tolerant of such unhappiness?

His rhetorical method of introducing patience as the foundation of every 
blessing is evident after an example or two, and it is enough to say 
that he exhausts the Beatitudes, stressing patience's connection with 
them in every case.

Included in the preceding passage is what I consider to be a 
significant clue to a right reading of the poem. When the Pearl-Poet 
mentions Poverty as being linked with Patience, most commentators 
attempt to make inference about the poet and his life by assuming that 
he is referring to a physical or monastic state of poverty. Thus one 
encounters theories on the ecclesiasticity of the poet that are 
partially girded up by reference to the section of Patience which 
mentions poverty and to the subsequent supposition that he is referring 
to monastic vows of poverty, perhaps.

I feel it is just as likely that the poet is referring to a state of spiritual poverty (the life of the "poor in spirit"); this view is even more than likely since it is easier to imagine a homiletic poem on a spiritual theme than one on a lack of funds.

In addition, regarding the writer's poverty as spiritual gives the Beatitudes a greater reason for being a part of the poem, since the rewards mentioned in connection with the Beatitudes are inextricably bound up with the possession of the virtue that gives the poem its name.

Thus the poverty of the poem is not a negative state at all, but a positive one as revealed by the promised rewards of the Beatitudes. And this positive state is more in keeping with the high-spirited tone of the work than would be an introduction which struck a sour note and then—inexplicably—showed the zest and fire of a poet untroubled by temporal problems of wealth and gain.

The final section of Tertullian's De Patience is worthy of note since it, as a general summary of the virtues and effects of patience, reveals—if only by dint of bulk alone—the importance of it:

She fortifies faith; is the pilot of peace; assists charity; establishes humility; waits long for repentance; sets her seal on confession; rules the flesh; preserves the spirit; bridles the tongue; restrains the hand; tramples temptations under foot; drives away scandals; gives their crowning grace to martyrdoms; consoles the poor; teaches the rich moderation; overstrains not the weak; exhausts not the strong; is the delight of the servant to his Lord; and his lord to God; adorns the woman; makes the man approved; is loved in childhood, praised in youth, looked up to in age; is beauteous in either sex, in every time of life.46

It is evident then that the Pearl-Poet was familiar with the writings of the Fathers or was, at least, associated with the school of thought that centered around these writings. But what I feel is most important in the entire discussion of sources and of direct and indirect borrowing, is that the Pearl-Poet, like most memorable writers, is a selective artist. Augustine, for example, sees the whole history of Jonah as analogous to that of Christ's three days in the earth; Eusebius held this view as did Emissenus and others. This was a popular interpretation and for that reason a likely one for the Pearl-Poet to be acquainted with. But for the purpose of Patience, the Jonah-Christ analogy was wholly inappropriate since Jonah was a prime example of impatience; thus it remains outside the context of the poem. The Pearl-Poet is careful in the selection of his evocative scenes and incidents.

Although this may strike one as a rather simple point to make, medieval writers did rely heavily on tales, incidents and writings of the past, and a careless artisan might well borrow indiscriminately, choosing incidents for near applicability instead of exact, delaying the movement of plot for rhetoric that glitters but is not gold and moralizing out of habit instead of allowing the lesson to grow out of context.

From the previous discussion it is evident that hundreds of years and pages of interpretation (recall the Latin writer who

interpreted the whale as Time) surrounded the Jonah legend. Knowing what to leave out of his tale was of as much importance to the poet as deciding what to include. The artistic significance of his omissions, in my estimation, ranks alongside the importance of the portions and interpretations he chose to include.
CHAPTER II

PATIENCE IN TRANSLATION

Patience is a noble point, though it displeases often.
When heavy hearts are hurt by scorn or otherwise,
Sufferance may assuage them and temper the flame;
4. For she quells each evil and quenches malice.
For him who could suffer sorrow, good fortune would follow;
And he who for resistance may not endure, the more often is he grieved;
Then it is better to bide the blows betimes
8. Than to smart from my pang forever, though it seem ill to me.
I heard on a holiday at a high mass
How Matthew said that his Master taught his followers.
Eight fortunes he promised them, and each one a reward,
12. Severally, for its merit, in a diverse way:
Happy are they that have poverty in heart,
For theirs is the kingdom of heaven to hold forever;
They are also happy that practice meekness,
16. For they shall rule this world and have all their will;
Happy also are they that weep for their sins,
For they shall obtain comfort in many regions;
They are happy also that hunger after right,
20. For they shall freely be fully refreshed by all goodness;
They are happy also that have pity in heart,
For all manner of mercy shall become their reward;
They are happy also that are clean of heart,
24. For with their eyes they shall see their Savior enthroned.
They are happy also that hold their peace,
For goodly they shall be called sons of the gracious God;
They are happy also that can steer their hearts,
28. For theirs is the kingdom of heaven, as I said before.
These are all the eight fortunes that were promised to us,
If we would praise these ladies in a likening of virtues:
Dame Poverty, Dame Pity, Dame Penance, the third,
32. Dame Meekness, Dame Mercy and Pleasant Cleanness,
And then put Dame Peace and Patience in there-after.
He would be fortunate who had one—all would be better;
But since I am brought to a condition that is called Poverty,
36. I shall provide myself with Patience, and play with both;
For these two are placed in the text as a team;
They are fixed in one formula, the first and the last,
And by searching of their wisdom they receive one reward,
40. And also, in my opinion, they are of one kind;
For where Poverty presents herself she will not be put out,
But lives wherever she pleases, like it or not;
And wherever Poverty oppresses, though it seem painful to man,
Much, in spite of his mouth, he must needs suffer.
Thus Poverty and Patience are necessarily play-fellows.
Since I am settled with them both, it behooves me to suffer;
Then am I sooner to like it and to praise their behavior,

Than to rebel and be wroth and have the worst.
If I am designated to have a due destiny,
What avails it for me to show disdain or annoyance?
If while I live it please my liege Lord to bid me,

Either to ride or to run, to roam on his mission,
What avails me the growling but to seek more wrath?
If he did not compel me, in spite of myself,
And then I would have to endure trouble and displeasure for a reward,

Who should have bowed to his bidding, in accordance with my hiring.
Did not Jonah in Judea do such a foolish trick formerly?
To set himself in safety, he fetches his misfortune.
Will you tarry a little time, and attend to me a while?

I shall show you there-with, as Holy Writ tells.

It happened one time in the boundaries of Judea,
Jonah was enjoined therein as Gentile prophet;
God's word to him glided—it made him no gladder—

With a rough cry roared in his ear:
"Rise readily," He says, "And go forth immediately:
Take the way to Nineveh, without other speech,
And in that city sow my sayings all about

Which, in that place at the moment, I put in your heart.
For indeed, they are so wicked that live in that city,
And their malice is so much, I may not delay,
But avenge me on their villainy and venom in haste;

Now swing-thither swiftly and say me this message."
When that command was ceased, which troubled his mind,
Greatly was he wroth in his wit, and wildly he thought:
"If I bow to His bidding and bring them this tale,

And I am taken in Nineveh, my trouble begins:
He tells me those traitors are drunken shrews;
I come with those tidings, they take me quickly,
Pen me in a prison, put me in stocks,

Wind me in a warlock, wrest out my eyes.
This is a marvelous message for a man to preach,
Among so many enemies and cursed fiends;
But if my gracious God willed such grief to me,

For recompense of some guilt that I should be slain,
At all perils," said the prophet, "I approach it no nearer; I will seek some other way that he may not search after; I shall go into Tarsus and tarry there awhile,

88. And, perchance, when I am lost He will leave me alone."
 Then he rises up readily and goes away quickly, Jonah toward Port Jaffa, ever grumbling for vexation, That he would not for anything endure any of those pains,

92. Though the Father that formed him was comrade of his hiding. "Our Sire sits," he says, "On a seat so high In His glowing glory, and scowls very little, Though I am taken to Nineveh and robbed naked,

96. Ruthlessly rent on a cross, by many ruffians. Thus he passes to that port to seek his passage; Finds himself a fair ship ready for the journey, Makes friends with the mariners, pays their price,

100. To take him into Tarsus, as fast as they could. Then he goes on board and they set up their mast, Catch up the cross sail; they fasten the cables, Quickly at the winds weigh their anchors,

104. Spread swiftly to the bowsprit: the spare bow line, Tug at the guide ropes,—the great cloth falls; They placed themselves to larboard and strive for the luff, The blithe breeze at their back finds the belly of the sail;

108. He swings the sweet ship swiftly from the haven. There was never so joyful a Jew as Jonah was then, Who the power of the Lord so audaciously escaped; He really supposed that that Person who all the world founded,

112. Had no power in the sea to grieve any man. Lo! The witless wretch! because he would not suffer, Now has he put himself in a plight of far more peril; It was an ignorant hope that revolved in his mind,

116. Truly, He saw far and wide, as behooved Him, for sure! Who often made known to him /Jonah/ the discourse that the king said,

Worthy David on a dais, who uttered this speech,

120. In a Psalm that he set within the Psalter: "Oh fools among folk, perceive some time, And understand betimes, though you be far-gone in folly; Do you think that He hears not who made all ears?"

124. It may not be that He is blind who built each eye." But he dreads no blow who dodders from age, For he was far on the flood hastening to Tarsus; But I believe that he was quickly overtaken,

128. So that shamefully too short he shot of his mark. For the Wielder of wit who knows all things, Who ever wakes and watches, at /His/ will He has ways. He called on that same power that He created with His hands;

132. They awakened all the angrier, for angrily He called: "Eurus and Aquilon, who sit in the East, Both blow at my bidding upon the wan waters."
There was no time then between His speech and their deed,
136. So prompt were both of the pair to work His will.
At once out of the northeast the noise begins,
When both breaths begin to blow upon the wan waters.
Rough storm clouds arose there, with redness there-under;
140. The sea soughed all sorely, so strange to hear;
The winds on the wan water so wrestle together
That the waves all madly rolled on high
And often battered to the abyss, so that terrified fishes
144. Dared nowhere, for rough weather, to remain at the bottom.
When the wind and the water and the boat came together,
It was a joyless craft that Jonah was in,
For it reeled around upon rocky waves,
148. The blast bore upon it aft, so that it broke all her gear,
Then hurled in a heap the helm and the stern;
First it burst many a rope and the mast after.
The sail swayed on the sea, the small boat was obliged
152. To sup of the cold water, and then the cry rises.
Yet they cut the cords and cast all there-out.
Many a lad there leaped forth to scoop and cast out:
They lave out the noxious water, who would gladly escape,
156. For be man's path ever so bad, life is always sweet.
They were busy to cast bales overboard,—
Their bags, their featherbeds, and their bright garments,
Their chests, their cofferers, and all their casks—
160. And all to lighten that vessel, the sooner to lessen their plight.
But ever equally loud was the sound of the winds,
And ever more wroth the water and wilder the current.
Then those weary, belabored ones knew no help,
164. But each one cried to his god that availed him best:
Some to Vernagu there vouched solemn vows,
Some devout ones to Diana, and bold Neptune,
To Mahomet and to Margot, the Moon and the Sun,
168. And each man, as he had loved and had laid his heart.
Then spoke the readiest, almost in despair:
"I believe some traitor is here, some lawless wretch,
Who has grieved his god and goes here among us!
172. Lo! All sink in his sin, and for his guilt perish.
I propose that we lay out lots on each man,
And whosoever the loss falls on, fling him overboard;
And when the guilty one is gone, what may man believe,
176. But that he who rules the storm may rue on those others?"
This was settled by assent, and they were assembled,
Harried out of each corner to take what befalls.
A pilot quickly leapt under the hatches,
180. To seek more men and to hand out the lots
Among men that might be found, he failed of none,
Save Jonah the Jew who slept in secret.
He had fled, for fear of the wave's roaring,
Into the bottom of the boat, and lay on a board
Reclining near the hurrook, from heaven's wrath,
Slipped into a deep sleep, and slumbering he snores.
The man kicked him with his foot and bade him get up

(There may Ragunel in his chains rouse him from his dreams!)
By the clasp of his clothing he seized him then,
And brought him up by the breast and set him on deck,
Questioned him roughly what reason he had,
In such strokes of sorrow, to sleep so heavily.
Soon they have their lots placed and severally divided,
And always, at last, the lot fell on Jonah.
Then they called him quickly and asked him loudly:

"What the devil have you done, foolish wretch?
What seek you on the sea, sinful shrew,
With your crimes so deadly to doom us all?
Have you no governor, man, no god to call on,

That you thus slide into sleep when you are to be slain?
By what land were you lent? What seek you here?
What in the world do you want, and what is your business?
Lo, your doom is at hand, for your evil deeds!

Give glory to your god, before you glide hence."
"I am a Hebrew," he said, "Born of Israel;
That One I worship, truly, who wrought all things,
All the world with the sky, the wind and the stars,

And all, at a word, that dwells there-in.
All this mischief is made for me at this time;
For I have grieved my god and am found guilty.
So bear me to the plank and plunge me overboard,

Else you get no good fortune, I truly believe."
He showed them by signs that they understood
That he was fleeing from the face of the noble Lord.
Then such a fear fell upon them, and flayed them within,

That they rushed to row themselves and leave the man alone.
Noble men hurried in haste with very long oars,
Since their sail had slipped from them, to row on the sides;
Heaved and hauled in hope of helping themselves,

But all was useless occupation: that would not avail.
Their oars broke in the blubbering waves of the flood;
Then had they nothing at hand to help them at all:
Then was there no comfort to hold to, nor any other counsel,

Except to judge Jonah unto his doom without delay.
First they pray to the Prince that prophets serve,
That He give them the grace to grieve Him never,
Because they mingle their hands in blameless blood,

Though that man were His that they here killed.
Tied at the top and toe they took him then,
Into that loathsome water they pitched him soon.
He was no quicker thrown out, than the tempest ceased;

The sea settled there-with, as soon as she could.
Then though the tackle was torn, which tottered on the waves,
Streams narrow and strong harassed them awhile,
And drove them down violently to serve the deep,
Until one sweeter swayed them quickly to shore.
There was praising on high, when they gained the land,
To our merciful God, in the manner of Moses.
With sacrifices set up, and solemn vows
They granted Him to be the one God and truly no other.
Though they be jubilant for joy, Jonah yet fears;
Though he would not suffer disaster, his happiness is in danger;
For what became of that person, after he dipped into water,
It would be a wonder to think on, if it were not Holy Writ.

II

Now is Jonah the Jew judged to drown;
From that shattered ship men shoved him soon.
A wild, wallowing whale, as Fate then decreed,
That was beaten from the abyss, floated by that boat,
And was aware of that person who sought the water,
And quickly darted to sweep him in,
The men yet holding his feet, the fish seized him quickly.
Without the touch of any tooth he tumbled into the throat.
Then the monster moved swiftly and swayed to sea-bottom,
By many rough rocks and oozing shores,
With the man in his maw bewildered by dread.
(As little wonder it was, if he endured woe);
For had not the high heaven-king, through His hand-might,
Guarded his wretch of a man in Warlow's guts,
What man might live by law of any kind.
That any life might be lent so long within him?
But he was succored by that Sire who sits so high,
Though helpless of weal in the womb of that fish,
And also driven through the deep and rolled in the dark.
Lord! Cold was his comfort and huge his care,
For he knew each circumstance and charge that befell him:
How he from the boat into the blubber was taken by a beast,
And thrown into the throat without more ado,
As a mote in a minster door, so great were his jaws!
He glides in by the gills through filth and slime,
Reeling in by an intestine, that he thought was a road,
Ever head over heel, hurtling about,
'Til he staggered into a space as broad as a hall;
And there he fastens his feet and fumbles about,
And stood up in Warlow's stomach, that stank as the devil.
There in fat and filth that savoured of hell,
There his bower was built, that would suffer no evil;
And then he lurks and looks where the best might be,
In each nook of his interior, but nowhere he finds
Either rest or help, but rubbish and mire.
In which gut ever he got; but ever God is sweet!
And there he dwelled at last, and to the Lord called:
"Now Prince, have pity on your prophet!
Though I be foul and fickle, and false of my heart,
Take away now your vengeance, through virtue of pity;
Though I be guilty of guile, the shame of prophets,
Thou art God, and all goods are truly your own;
Have now mercy of your man and his misdeeds,
And easily prove you are Lord, on land and in water."
With that he turned to a corner and kept himself therein,
Where no defilement of any filth was fastened about him;
There he sat as sound, save for darkness only,
As in the body of the boat where he slept before.
So in the bowel of that beast he remains alive,
Three days and three nights, ever thinking on the Lord,
His might and his mercy, his moderation then;
Now he knows himself in care who could not in happiness.
And ever wallows this whale by the deep wilderness,
Through many a rough region, through boldness of his will;
For that mote in his maw made him, I believe,
Though it was little within him, to be sick at his heart.
And as the man sailed, ever surely he heard
The big stream on his back and beating on his sides.
Then a prompt prayer the prophet made there,
In this manner, as I ween, his words were many:

"Lord, to thee have I called, in cares quite strong;
Out of the hole you heard me, from hell's womb;
I called, and you knew my unclear voice;
You dipped me into the deep sea, into the dark heart;
The great flight of the flood folded around me;
All the pourings of thy gulfs, and bottomless pools,
And thy striving currents of so many streams,
In one dashing drives me over the dam;
And yet I said as I sat on the sea bottom,
'Troubled am I, cast out from your clear eyes
And severed from thy sight; yet surely I hope
Afterwards to tread in thy temple and attend thyself.'
I am wrapped in water, to my misfortune;
The Abyss binds the body that I abide in;
The fiercely bubbling whirlpool plays on my head;
To the bottom of each mountain, Man, am I fallen;
The barriers of each bank hold me firmly,
That I may take to no land, and you rule my life;
Thou shalt relieve me, Man, while thy justice sleeps,
Through might of thy mercy that is great to trust.
For when the attack of anguish was hid in my soul,
Then I remembered directly my royal Lord,
Praying him to hear his prophet for pity,
That into his holy house my prayer might enter.
I have spoken with thy masters many long days,
But now I know surely, that those unwise men,
Who trust themselves in vanity and vain things,
For things that amount to naught, forsake their mercy;
But I devoutly avow, what will truly be held to be fulfilled,
Soberly to make thee a sacrifice when I shall be safe,
And offer thee for my safety a truly whole gift,
And count it good, what thou commandest me; have here my troth!
Then our Father to the fish fiercely issues an order,
That he spit him up speedily upon a dry waste;
The whale turns at His will and finds a shore,
And there he vomits up the man, as our Lord bade him.
Then Jonah drifted to the shore in muddy clothes—
It may well be that he needed to wash his mantle;
The banks that he beheld and remained beside
Were of the very regions that he had renounced.
Then a wind of God's word again upbraided the prophet:
"Will you never go to Nineveh by ways of any sort?"
"Yes, Lord," quoth the man, "Lend me thy favor
To go at thy pleasure; no other avails me."
"Rise, approach then to preach. See, the place here.
Lo, my lore is locked in you, utter it therein."
Then the man readily rose as he could;
And came near to Nineveh straightway that night.
It was a very wide city and wondrously broad,
For one to pass through there was three days' deed.
On the first day's journey entire Jonah went,
Ever he uttered any word to persons that he met;
And then he cried so clear that all might know;
The true tenor of his theme he told in this manner:
"Yet shall forty days fully go to an end,
And then shall Nineveh be taken and come to naught;
Truly this same town shall tumble to the ground;
Upside down shall you plunge to the deep abyss,
To be swallowed swiftly by the swart earth,
And all that live here-in shall lose the sweet life."
This speech sprang in that place and spread all about,
To the burgess and to bachelors who lived in the town;
Such a fear seized them and such a fierce dread,
That all changed their countenance and chilled at the heart.
The man ceased not yet, but said ever the same,
"The very vengeance of God shall void this place."
Then the people in silence mourned pitiously,
And for dread of the Lord lamented in heart;
Rough hair shirts they seized that bit fiercely,
And those they bound to their backs and bare sides,
Dropped dust on their heads and dimly besought
That that penance might please Him who complained of their evil.
And ever he cries in that kingdom 'til the king heard;
And he rapidly uprose and ran from his throne;
His rich robe he tore off his naked back,
And moved into the midst of a heap of ashes;
He eagerly asks for a hair shirt and fastened it around him,
Sewed sackcloth above and sighed cheerlessly.
There he sat dazed in the dust, with dropping tears,
Weeping wonderfully all his wrong deeds.
Then he said to his servants, "Assemble yourselves quickly,
Have a decree sent out, ordained by me,
That all creatures alive in the city,
Both men and beasts, women and children,
Each prince, each priest and prelates every one,
All fast freely for their false works;
Seize children from their suck, however much it smart them,
Let no beast graze on heath, or on grassy plain,
Nor pass to any pasture, nor pick any herbs,
Now any ox to hay, nor any horse to water;
All shall cry starving, with all our manifest strength;
The sound shall rise to Him who is said to have pity—
Who knows?—anything may happen, if the Person likes,
Who is gracious in the height of his nobility.
I know His might is so much, though He is displeased,
That in His mild moderation He may find mercy;
And if we leave the practice of our loathsome sins,
And still step in the way He himself ordains,
He will turn from His anger and leave His wrath.
And forgive us this guilt, if we trust Him as God."
Then all trusted in his law, and left their sins,
Performed all the penance that the prince counseled;
And God through his goodness forgave as He said:
Though he otherwise promised, withheld his vengeance.

IV

Much sorrow then settled upon the man Jonah;
He waxed as wroth as the wind toward our Lord,
So has anger struck his heart, he calls out
A prayer to the High Prince, for pain, in this manner:
"I beseech thee, Sire, now judge Thyself;
Was not this my very word, what has now happened,
That I uttered in my country when thy order arrived,
That I should go to this town and preach thy purpose?
Well did I know thy courtesy, thy wise sufferance,
The excellence of thy mercy and thy pleasing grace,
Thy long abiding with loss, thy late vengeance.
And always thy mercy is meet, be the offense never so huge.
I knew well, when I had worded whatever I could
To menace all these proud men that live in this city,
With a prayer and a penance they might again their peace get;
And therefore I would have fled far into Tarsus.
Now, Lord, take away my life; it lasts too long;  
Offer me at once my death agony, and bring me to an end;  
For it would be sweeter to die soon, as I think,  

Than to preach thy lore longer, that thus makes me a liar."  
The voice of our Sovereign then sounded in his ear,  
Upbraiding this man in a very stern manner:  
"Hark, man, is this right to be so proud in your wrath,  
For any deed that I have done, or decreed for you yet?"  
Jonah all joyless and grumbling rises up,  
And goes out to the east side of the high place,  
And pleasantly on a field he fits himself to remain,  

To observe what should happen in that dwelling thereafter.  
There he built himself a bower, the best that he could,  
Of hay and common polypody and a few herbs,  
For it was too bare in that place, for swaying thickets  

To shield from the glare, or cast any shade.  
He bowed under his little abode, his back to the sun,  
And there he swooned and slept soundly all night,  
While God of His Grace caused to grow of that soil  

The fairest bindweed above him that ever man knew.  
When the Lord did send the dawning day,  
Then awakened the man under bind-weed,  
Locked aloft on the green leaf that quivered;  

A man never had such a valuable shelter,  
For it was broad at the bottom, vaulted on top,  
Covered on each half, a house as it were,  
A notch on the north side, and nowhere else,  

But all shut in a shaded, very cool grove.  
The man glanced on the gracious, green leaves,  
That ever wafted a wind so gentle and so cool;  
The bright sun shone around it, though no shaft  

As small as the least mote, could shine upon that man;  
Then the man was so glad of his gay lodge,  
He lies lolling therein looking to town;  
So blithe of his bindweed he tumbles about there-under,  

He cared for no diet that day /save/ the devil's morsel!  
And ever he laughed as he looked all about the lodge,  
And wished it were in his land, where he should dwell,  
On high upon Ephraim or Hermon's hills:—  

"Truly, I never cared to possess a worthier dwelling."  
And when night approached it was time for him to nap.  
He slips into a deep slumber under leaves  
While God sent a worm that grubbed up the root,  

And the bindweed was withered when the man awakened;  
And then He warns the West to waken softly,  
And says unto Zephyrus that he blow warm,  
That there should come forth no could before the bright sun,  

And she must bound up broadly and burn as a candle.  
Then the man awakened from his wild dreams,  
And beheld his bindweed that was badly marred,  
The worthy leaves all wan and wasted;
The bright sun had destroyed them, before the man ever knew,
And then heat raised up and burned hotly;
The warm wind from the West, roots he scorched.
The man fretted on the earth that could not hide him;
His bindweed was away, he wept for sorrow;
With hot and fierce anger he calls ferociously:
"Al! Thou maker of man, what seems the advantage to thee
Thus to destroy thy man before all others?
With all mischief that you may, you never spare me:
I carved me a comfort that is now cast from me,
My bindweed so beautiful that protected my head;
But now I see thou art set to rob my solace.
Why do you not prepare me to die? I endure too long."
Yet our Lord uttered a speech to the man:
"Is this righteous, you man, all your proud noise,
So wroth for a bindweed to wax so soon?
Why are you so sad, man, for so little?"
"It is not little," said the man, "But a matter of justice.
I would I were wrapped in the earth of this world."
"Then consider, man, if you repent sadly,
If I would help my handiwork, have you no wonder;
You are grown so angry because of the bindweed,
And laboured never to tend it the time of an hour,
But at a stroke it grows here and at another away;
And yet it pleases you so badly, your life you would lose;
Then blame not me for the work, that I would protect it,
And rue on those heedless that cry for sin;
First I made them myself of my own matters,
And I guarded them long and looked to their guidance;
And now if I should lose my labor after so long a time,
And overthrow yonder town when it has turned,
It behooves my heart to sink for sorrow of such a sweet place,
So many a malicious man as mourns there-in;
And of that number, such fools as being mad, yet are some:
Such as little babes on the breast that never did wrong,
And foolish women, that could not choose
One hand from the other, for all this high world;
That cannot discern between the handrail and the stair;...
What secret suggestion runs between the right hand
And his left, though his life should be lost therefore;
And also there are many dumb beasts in the town,
That cannot sigh in sorrow to grieve themselves over sin;
Why should I be angry with them, since people will turn
And come and know me for king and believe my word?
Were I as hasty as you here, harm would befall;
Could I not endure except as you do, very few would prosper there;
I may not be so malicious and be called mild,
For it is not to maintain malice without mercy within."
Be not so angry, Good man, but go forth your ways:
Be steadfast and patient in pain and joy,
For he that is too ready to rend his clothes,
Must often sit in more ragged ones to sew them together.
Therefore, when poverty oppresses me and pains enough,
It behooves me to become appeased very softly with sufferance;
To prove in the face of penance and pain
That patience is a noble point, though it displeases often.
CHAPTER III

EXPLANATORY NOTES

1. Bateson takes the meaning of "point" in line 1 to be the same as in line 531, where it translates as "matter" or "item." Accepting this, he finds it reasonable to assume a particularizing epithet like "noble"; in GOLK it is once glossed as "quality." Gollancz reading "a poynt" translates "is an essential thing." No such meaning of the word is recorded, and this interpretation is found only by abusing the idiomatic "the point." Emerson proposes the retention of MS. "apoynt," and translates "enjoined, prescribed." Bateson refrained from adopting this since he feels it involves an awkward coincidence between the first and last line. He adds that reading it as "a poynt" one might regard the phrase as O.F. and translate it as "to the point, fit, becoming."48

11-12. According to Leo the Great, the rewards of the Beatitudes were graded according to the nature of the virtue.49

35. Pouerte. "The poet has adopted St. Luke's "beati pauperes" and not the interpretation as in the Persones Tale, that this blissful reign men may purchase by poverty spiritual. Mediaeval commentators interpreted Matt. v. 3 as referring to voluntary poverty; an interpretation acceptable to the religious orders, e.g., in the vows (1) to forsake one's own will and live under obedience, (2) to live in wilful poverty, and (3) to live in chastity. These vows recall the main themes of the poet's works, except that there is nothing to indicate that the poet refers to wilful poverty."50

47. Bateson translates this line as "Then it is easier to like it (i.e., what befalls) and praise the portions (allotted by them)." He adds—with an example from Tertullian—that lot may mean "countenance."51

54-56. ἤ is "who." Gollance retains the MS ἤ as a relative pronoun, but Bateson points out that ἤ is entirely unknown in this dialect at the time of the poem.52


49. Ibid.

50. Ibid., p. 20.

51. Ibid.

52. Ibid.
54-57. I have adopted Bateson's suggestion, but there are other ways to approach the passage. Day regards me as a scribal error and feels much is a corruption of muke. And she translates in this way: "What would grumbling do for me (except that I should incur more wrath) if He humiliated me in the face of my resistance? In that case I should have to suffer compulsion, with no thanks for my reward, who ought to have bowed to his bidding in accordance with the terms of my hiring."53

77. typpede. Bateson glosses the word as "drunken," though he notes it is usually explained as "extreme" or "consummate." He also mentions Edwall's suggestion that the word originally signified "provided with a tip."54

77. This reference may explain Miss Williams' translation of the word as "tip-top."55

92. Bateson provides the following alternatives for fale of his hole. Either (1) "friend of his well-being", or as Gollancz renders, "made cheap of his welfare." Or (3) as "comrade of his hiding:" e.g., Jonah seeks to hid from God, though the Father that formed him would be present even in his hiding-place.56

101. tramme. There are two possibilities here. (1) tramme as "mast." Tramme as a sort of centre-board which would be set up for the action described in the following lines. Bateson discounts Edwall's suggestion that the word means "ship" since the context seems to demand a more specific word.57

102. Bateson gives Edwall's translation ("They hoise the yard and sail") of the line, then renders 101ff. "They set up the mast, hoist up the mainyard, fasten the cables, weigh anchor, fasten the bowline (sparely used, and only in keeping the weather-edge of the sail taut), tug at the guide ropes and main-sail shakes down."58

105. gederen. The use of "geter" in GSK always has something of the meaning of "performing a task with great effort." Thus, "tug at".59

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57. Ibid., p. 22.

58. Ibid., p. 23.

59. Ibid.
106. *lofe wynnes*. Bateson gives two possibilities. (1) the luff as the part of the ship toward the wind. (2) translate *lofe wynnes* as "to change one's course".60

122. *stape foie*. Bateson approves Gollancz's emendation of 'stape foie'; *stape* is thus a pp. translated as "stepped, advanced."61

143. *breed*. There are three interpretations to this word: (1) Gollancz reads it as Bateson, making it a pp. attributive to *fysches*; thus "affrighted, disturbed." (2) Wulcker suggests 'breed' to be translated as "Brood." (3) Morris has a full stop at the end of 1.143, and translates "the abyss that bred fishes" (so N.E.D.).62

143. *busched*. Bateson translates "rushed" in the notes and "dashed" in the glossary, but nowhere as "busked" as do Morris, Kluge.63

154. *to laue and to kest*. Probably nautical terms referring to bailing and throwing the water out.64

160. *lome*. A rare word in the sense of "vessel". Usually it implies an implement.65

185. *hurrock*. Either (1) some part of the hold of a ship or (2) the cargo. Tyrwhitt notes a passage in *Our Ladyes Mirroure* that mentions a "thorrocke" as a place in the bottom of a ship where all the filth is gathered. This is certainly the hold, or a part of it. Emerson suggests that the word means "cargo," from 'hurrock,' a "heap of stones."66

189. The line seems to read emendation, although 'haspede' may be read as a compound word with a dropped 'h.' In that case, the reference would probably be to the head of a boat-hook. Bateson chooses to adopt Ekwall's suggestion: "We have adopted Ekwall's proposal, 'hater' because Jonah is brought up by the breast, that is, clutched by some part of his dress; though it could mean, "by his buckled (or clasped) garment," referring to the close-fitting garment buttoned down the front and worn at the time."67

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60. Bateson, p. 23.
61. Ibid., p. 24.
62. Ibid.
63. Ibid.
64. Ibid., p. 25.
65. Ibid.
67. Ibid., p. 27.
231. *ne. Emerson makes quite a bit of this redundant negative in a subordinate clause, but Bateson provides examples to show it is not wholly unknown.68

250. *swenged hym to swepe. Either "turned to make a sweep" or "rose to gulp him."69

254. Morris and Gollancz gloss *rydelande as "oozing, sifting," from the O.E. *hriddel, 'a sieve. N.E.D. suggests O.F. *rideler, "meaning "fall.""70

269. Bateson accepts Emerson's emendation of *glaym ande for 'glaymande', a present participle as written in the manuscript.71

279. *ramel ande. Another emendation Bateson accepts from Emerson. 'Ramelande' would have to be regarded as a form of "rambling," which is difficult to fit into context. 'Ramel' means "refuse."72

285. *gaule. From Cleanness, 'gaule' seems to mean "wretch."73

301. *as sayled. MS reads "assayled," and again Bateson accepts Emerson's emendation, though previously suggested by Gollancz.74

310. *gotej, translate as "whirlpools," 'Goit' in present Lancashire dialect means "a mill stream" dammed, causing a rush of water.75

325. *f'acces. Bateson has here accepted Skeat's proposal which translates as "outburst, paroxysm." Morris has *f'acces,' (faccian, to stroke), which Bateson won't accept due to the need for alliteration.76

350. *lance. Bateson cites a similar use of 'lance' as "utter" as found in N.E.D. Gollancz amends 'lauce,' although Bateson points out that there is no reason why this should not be a completely different word.77

68. Bateson, p. 28.
69. Ibid., p. 29.
70. Ibid.
71. Ibid.
72. Ibid., p. 30.
73. Ibid.
74. Ibid.
75. Ibid., p. 31.
76. Ibid.
77. Ibid.
What wrote? Bateson, though unsatisfied, punctuated it as if it were a colloquial idiom meaning, "What knows (anyone)?" This in preference to "What (man) knows?"78

Translated freely: "It was unobstructed in that place, as regards waving bushes to shield from the glitter (of the sun) or to cast any shade."79

Rejecting Gollancz's suggestion to read the O.N. 'os,' in which case an 'n' must have attached itself from the indefinite article, Bateson reads it as a term of architecture meaning "a projected opening."80

Fat of no dieite Fat day, Be-duel-haf! he rojt. Bateson accepts Macaulay's suggested reading, but is unsatisfied due to the lack of supporting parallel passages. Gollancz's reading of 'hate' as "morsel" (from the Scotch 'Deil hae¹t,') aids Bateson in justifying the interpretation.81

Sotte for madde. Greg argues that the illustration facing the beginning of Patience has a figure which may be one of the fools referred to in this line. Gollancz argues that the garment of the 'madman' is the same as that of the dreamer in Pearl, as portrayed in the illustration of that poem.82

Bateson translates: "For the power to avenge wrongs, without mercy within, is not to be asserted." He does note that 'nojt' may be adjectival, "evil, wrong."83

78. Bateson, p. 32.
79. Ibid.
80. Ibid., p. 33.
81. Ibid.
83. Bateson, p. 34.
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