

*PEARL*, FITT II

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*Abstract:* In Fitt II, the *Pearl*-narrator's account of his dream begins. He finds himself in Eden; he describes each of its features, which he says cause him to forget the grief of losing the pearl. Most of these features are more artificial versions of features of the *erber* described in Fitt I, but less abstractly geometrical versions of features of the heavenly city he sees later. Recurring key words underscore parallels among these three landscapes (and among the three subdivisions of each landscape) representing the stages of the resurrection in Christian Platonism.

**Introduction**

The landscape in which the narrator first finds himself after falling asleep is probably Eden.<sup>1</sup> Fitt II begins describing this first dreamscape and its effect on the dreamer. The stream described in the last stanza of the fitt separates Eden from a *Paradyse* (136) topped by *crystal klyffez* (74; cf. 158-59).

Like most medieval literary dream visions, *Pearl* has a triadic structure: the narrator falls asleep in a first landscape and has a vision of a dreamscape that culminates in a vision-within-a-vision of a second dreamscape. Since the visions of both dreamscapes occur in the mind of the dreamer in the landscape in which he falls asleep, the three landscapes nest within each other like Russian dolls. These three main settings mirror each other: the features of the first setting are transformed into increasingly abstract and artificial features in the second and third settings; the Platonist<sup>2</sup> notion of the material

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<sup>1</sup> In *Pearl: An Edition with Verse Translation* (Notre Dame: University of Notre Dame Press, 1995), William Vantuono inserts this heading for Fitts II-IV: "The Vision—Part One: The Terrestrial Paradise and the Pearl-Maiden."

<sup>2</sup> My commentaries on Fitts II and VIII use "Platonist" as an adjective to refer to the long stream of tradition whereby Plato's ideas were developed

world as a mirror of the realm of form or ideas<sup>3</sup> underlies this standard dream vision structure. The first setting in *Pearl* is the *erber*, described in Fitt I, and the third is the New Jerusalem. Many features of Eden, the second setting, are a more artificial version of features of the *erber* and anticipate even more abstractly geometrical features of the heavenly city as adapted from the description in the Apocalypse. The Eden Fitt II describes is a supernatural, ideal landscape, as is the earthly paradise described in the Anglo-Saxon *Phoenix* and Dante's *Divine Comedy*.

The fact that features of the Edenic landscape mostly described in Fitt II, the second setting in the poem, are the more abstract counterparts of features of the first setting and the less abstract counterparts of features of the third setting is consistent with the textual structure of nested, increasing abstraction in the major works of the dream vision tradition. The structure of three settings nested in order of increasing abstraction in *Pearl* mirrors the structure of the *Comedy* and of Chaucer's dream visions; it derives ultimately from the structure of the nested, increasingly abstract settings of the following ancient dream visions, which both indirectly and directly influenced medieval dream visions: Plato's *Dream of Er* influenced Cicero's *Dream of Scipio*, which was in turn widely available to medieval Europe as quoted in Macrobius's *Commentary on the Dream of Scipio*; Boethius's dream vision *Consolation of Philosophy* was also extremely influential. The textual structure of nested, increasingly abstracted figuration in these ancient and medieval dream visions models the increasingly dematerialized abstraction that characterizes the Platonist transit of the soul at death (*regressus animae*). In Christian Platonism the stages of the ascent of the soul at death and of the resurrection of the body at Judgment correspond with the stages of Platonist regression.<sup>4</sup> The increasingly abstract

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and ultimately transmitted to late medieval Europe; that tradition includes texts scholars refer to as Neo-Pythagorean and Neo-Platonic.

<sup>3</sup> Herbert Grabes, *The Mutable Glass: Mirror-imagery in titles and texts of the Middle Ages and English Renaissance*, trans. Gordon Collier (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1982), 75-76.

<sup>4</sup> These correspondences are not generally acknowledged in scholarship. Christian Schäfer discusses Christian Platonism in "The 'Churching' of Platonism as a Philosophical Challenge," in *Philosophy of Dionysius the Areopagite: An Introduction to the Structure and the Content of the Treatise On the Divine Names* (Leiden: Brill, 2006), 3-9. This essay uses "regression" to translate *regressus*, a term sometimes translated as "return" that describes a

settings in medieval dream visions therefore correspond with the stages of the ascent of the soul at death and of the resurrection of the body. (The body the soul inhabits after the final stage of the resurrection is an abstracted, spiritual form that retains the identity of the mortal body whose material, corporeal features have been shed; this conception of the resurrected body reconciles Platonist belief in a disembodied afterlife with Christian belief in an embodied existence after Judgment.) The stages of Platonist regression reverse those of procession (emanation), whereby the soul acquires an

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process also often referred to as “reversion.” Augustine supports the notion of regression he finds in Porphyry’s *De regressu animae* (not extant) in *City of God*, bk. 10, ch. 30; unlike many other Platonists, who believe in an eternal cycle whereby the soul repeatedly descends to earth to take on a body again after repeatedly becoming incorporeal in its ascent to the heavens at death, Porphyry believes that the soul remains with God after death. Macrobius likewise affirms Porphyry’s conception of regression in his *Commentary on the Dream of Scipio*, trans. William Harris Stahl (New York: Columbia University Press, 1952), 31-32; cf. 124-25. In lines 28-63 of *Paradiso* 4 Beatrice corrects the belief based on Plato’s *Timaeus* that at death virtuous souls return to the celestial bodies from which they descended when they acquired a natural form at birth. She states that the fact that the souls appear to Dante within celestial bodies seems to confirm that belief, but that what he sees is a misleading condescension to his limited mortal capacity for perception, and that the words of the *Timaeus* may misrepresent Plato’s own views. Thus Augustine and Dante transmit Platonist teaching about regression in the course of correcting or questioning it. The incremental decrease in corporeality Dante and his guides appear to experience as they rise through purgatory and paradise may also be a condescension to mortal perception based on the Platonist belief Beatrice discredits. The incremental increase in the gifts of the glorified body Manuele Gragnolati discerns in the course of the same ascent also appears to be based on the same Platonist belief; *Experiencing the Afterlife: Soul and Body in Dante and Medieval Culture* (Notre Dame: University of Notre Dame Press, 2005), especially 168, 174. Paul Rorem’s foreword to Schäfer’s *Philosophy of Dionysius* discusses “procession and return” as adapted by Ps.-Dionysius, Eriugena, Hugh of St. Victor, and Aquinas, xiii-xiv; Schäfer discusses “regression” and related terms on 36, 48, and 120, concluding on 151 that Ps.-Dionysius is a Christian Platonist. Jean A. Potter writes in her introduction to Eriugena’s *Periphyseon: On the Division of Nature*, trans. Myra L. Uhlfelder (Indianapolis: Bobbs-Merrill, 1976), xxxviii: “Since all things were created in man and fell into their effects with his fall, so they are redeemed in him and will rise in his resurrection to reunite with their causes. The multiplicity of individuals returns to the unity whence it derived. Eriugena marks the stages . . . .”

increasingly corporeal form as it descends from the celestial bodies to earth; the procession of the soul corresponds with the procession of the numbers from the monad (One), which contains all numbers.<sup>5</sup>

In *Pearl*, as in the *Comedy*, there are three substages of ascent/resurrection (or the opposite in *Inferno*) within each of the three main settings, so the overall structure is a triad of triads typical of Platonist hierarchy.<sup>6</sup> Like the nesting upper, middle, and lower subdivisions of Dante's hell as well as of his purgatory and paradise, three nesting subdivisions comprise each of the three main settings of *Pearl*. The *Pearl* dreamer's visions of Eden, then the pearl maiden, and then her breast pearl in the first dreamscape parallel in that order his visions of the exterior of the heavenly city, then the procession of maidens within it, and then his own maiden within the procession in the second dreamscape.<sup>7</sup> Likewise his vision of the pearl enclosed in *golde* (2), then *gresse* (10), then *grounde* (10) in the *erber* parallels the sequence of three subdivisions within the first and second dreamscapes. Repeating key words and phrases mark off the boundaries of the three subdivisions of the first and second dreamscapes. References to the mind melting ("mynde moȝt malte," 224; "mynde to maddyng malte," 1154) create a parallel between the description of the breast pearl and the appearance of the maiden

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<sup>5</sup> Macrobius, *Commentary on the Dream of Scipio*, 103-4, 126, 130, 133-37. Martianus Capella, *The Marriage of Philology and Mercury*, trans. William Harris Stahl and Richard Johnson, in *Martianus Capella and the Seven Liberal Arts* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1977), 2:264, 274-75. Vincent Foster Hopper, *Medieval Number Symbolism: Its Sources, Meanings, and Influence on Thought and Expression* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1938), 51-52, 96-98, 100. Jean A. Potter, introduction to Eriugena's *Periphyseon*, xxxiv.

<sup>6</sup> Hopper, *Medieval Number Symbolism*, 108-9. In the *Comedy* Dante's passage through the lower, middle, and upper sections of purgatory and paradise mark off three substages of ascent/resurrection, while his passage through upper, middle, and lower hell mark off three substages of a kind of reversal of that ascent/resurrection. Schäfer discusses examples of triadic structures in the works of Proclus and Ps.-Dionysius in *Philosophy of Dionysius*, 24-31, 43, 80-87; in 85-87 he applies the terms "scaling" and "Russian-doll-principle" to such triadic structures. Schäfer writes: "As in all Platonic writings, in Dionysius the Platonic Triad is present in every feature of the subjacent philosophical structure" (80). John E. Murdoch refers to "Platonic triplets" in *Album of Science: Antiquity and the Middle Ages* (New York: Scribner's, 1984), 333, 351.

<sup>7</sup> Here the Middle English *prosessyoun* (1096), applied to the group of maidens in the heavenly city, borrows from Platonist terminology.

in the procession, which respectively mark off the end of the third subdivisions of the second and third dreamscapes. Bird similes describing the dreamer (184, 1085) create a parallel between the first description of the maiden across the stream and the first description of the procession, which respectively mark off the beginning of the second subdivisions of the second and third dreamscapes. Fitt II mostly describes the first subdivision of the first dreamscape (up to the stream but before the vision of the maiden across it), and its features mirror features of the maiden and her breast pearl, the other two subdivisions of the same dreamscape, in addition to mirroring features of the *erber* and heavenly city. Like the *Comedy*, *Pearl* describes visions of a triadic Platonist hierarchy of stages each of which mirrors the other stages much as Ps.-Dionysius's triadic ecclesiastical hierarchy mirrors his triadic celestial hierarchy. That is, each of the three appearances of the pearl in the *erber* (in gold, grass, and ground) mirrors each of the three subdivisions of the first dreamscape (Eden, the maiden, her breast pearl), all of which in turn mirror the three subdivisions of the second dreamscape (the exterior of the city, the procession, the maiden within the procession). As in the *Comedy* in the hierarchy described in *Pearl* each level mirrors every other level as well as the macrocosm. As part of this larger pattern of nine nesting landscape subdivisions is a pattern of repeating words less structurally important than those cited above that mark off boundaries of subdivisions (224, 1154); repeating words that do not mark off boundaries instead draw attention to other parallel features among subdivisions. Since Fitt II mostly describes the first subdivision of the first dreamscape, words in Fitt II that recur in fitts describing one or more of the other eight subdivisions draw attention to many specific parallels among those subdivisions. In *Pearl* as in *Purgatorio* and *Paradiso* movement to a new setting or through a new subdivision of a setting is associated with an increase in the gifts of the glorified body: clarity, agility, impassibility, and subtlety (penetrability).<sup>8</sup> Earlier scholarship on the

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<sup>8</sup> Manuele Gagnolati, *Experiencing the Afterlife*, especially 168, 174. Studies of the gifts of the glorified body include the following: Caroline Walker Bynum, *The Resurrection of the Body in Western Christianity, 200-1336* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1995), 131-32, 335-37; Nikolaus Wicki, *Die Lehre von der himmlischen Seligkeit in der mittelalterlichen Scholastik von Petrus Lombardus bis Thomas von Aquin* (Freiburg: Universitätsverlag, 1954), 202-37; Joseph Goering, "The *De dotibus* of Robert Grosseteste," *Mediaeval*

influence of scholastic teaching about these gifts in *Pearl* does not trace the stages of increase in the gifts evident in the course of the poem.<sup>9</sup> Words and phrases in Fitt II that recur in other subdivisions often highlight this overall pattern of increasing glorification.

The recurring key words and phrases that draw attention to parallels between the subdivisions of Eden described in Fitt II and other subdivisions contribute to a larger pattern of bracketing structures on different scales throughout *Pearl*. Key words that recur in the first and last lines of the whole poem and of most stanzas define both the fitt and the stanza as the main divisions and subdivisions respectively of the text of the poem. The way that recurring key words create brackets around the whole poem, individual fitts, and individual stanzas is of a piece with the bracketing structure of the alliterative scheme, two half-lines separated by a caesura. It is also consistent with the pairing of words and phrases in the same part of speech on the scale of the half-line, line, and pair of lines, all of which occur in Fitt II and throughout *Pearl*. And all of these bracketing structures mirror the nested bracketing effect created by a textual structure featuring gardens enclosing other gardens: the poem begins and ends in the *erber*, and right after that beginning and before that ending respectively is a description of Eden (Fitts II-IV) and the New Jerusalem (Fitts XVII-XIX), with the landscape of the vineyard parable (Fitts IX-X) at the center of the dialogue (Fitts V-XVI) located between the descriptions of Eden and the New Jerusalem.

The parallel features of the three nested main settings and their subdivisions gives them a structure similar to *rotae*, medieval diagrams of concentric wheel shapes widely used as memory aids.<sup>10</sup>

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*Studies* 44 (1982): 83-101. The Latin term for these gifts, *dotes*, means “dowries” or “bridal gifts.”

<sup>9</sup> Kevin Marti, “Traditional Characteristics of the Resurrected Body in *Pearl*,” *Viator* 24 (1993): 311-35.

<sup>10</sup> For example, *rotae* were used to facilitate memory of the names and relationships among the elements, months, seasons, and planets, as noted by Murdoch: “Rotae and Circular Diagrams,” in *Album of Science*, 52-61. As Murdoch observes on 52, the most influential collection of *rotae* is Isidore of Seville’s *De natura rerum*; these circular diagrams were taken to be so central to the work that many of its early manuscripts bear the title *Liber rotarum*, and the diagrams made their way into manuscripts of the writings of Macrobius and William of Conches which, like those of Isidore, apply

The recurring words and phrases linking those settings and their subdivisions therefore serve a mnemotechnical purpose, as do the other bracketing structures over a range of scales throughout *Pearl*. The sequence of subdivisions of settings is a sequence of nested microcopies of the whole system which like many Platonist systems resembles a strange (fractal) attractor.<sup>11</sup>

### Commentary

Fro spot my spyryt þer sprang in space;  
My body on balke þer bod in sweuen.  
My goste is gon in Godeʒ grace  
In auenture þer meruayleʒ meuen.  
(61-64)<sup>12</sup>

The first line of Fitt II, like the first line of all of the fitts, contains the link word which is the most distinctive structural feature of the preceding fitt, here *spot*, which appears in the first and last lines of

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medieval mnemotechnical diagrams to an understanding of Platonist tradition.

<sup>11</sup> Benoit B. Mandelbrot, "Fractal Attractors and Fractal ('Chaotic') Evolutions," in *The Fractal Geometry of Nature* (New York: Freeman, 1983), 193-99. Nested copies of larger structures within Platonist texts are common: A reworking of Nicomachus of Gerasa's *Introduction to Arithmetic* in chapter four of Iamblichus' *On Pythagoreanism* offers the principles underlying the next three chapters. The "mirroring at successive levels of identical structures" receives its first systematic application by Iamblichus, according to E. R. Dodds's introduction to Proclus's *Elements of Theology*, 2<sup>nd</sup> ed. (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1963), xix-xx. Chapters one through three of Ps.-Dionysius' *On the Divine Names* serve as a "short prolepsis of the whole treatise," while chapters four ("copied almost completely from Proclus") and five contain successively shorter outlines of the entire work, according to Schäfer, *Philosophy of Dionysius*, 38, 116, 124, 133; Schäfer also notes on 173 that the *Divine Names* creates a foundation for the entire body of Ps.-Dionysius's work. Not only do individual Platonist texts contain nested epitomes of themselves, those epitomes are sometimes in turn reworkings of earlier Platonist texts, such that the same "mirroring at successive levels of identical structures" that characterizes individual texts (and many non-textual Platonist hierarchies) to some extent characterizes the larger body of texts that together comprise Platonist tradition generally.

<sup>12</sup> All quotations from *Pearl*, including the entirety of Fitt II, are from the edition by E. V. Gordon, *Pearl* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1953).

each stanza of the previous fitt, except for the first line of the first stanza. Variants on a link word connect the first and last lines of all but the first stanza of each fitt and link the first line of each fitt with the previous fitt, a structure called *concatenatio*. The sequence of twenty link words, together with the words recurring in the first and last lines of the entire poem, is of a piece with the alliterative and rhyme schemes throughout, such that link words often epitomize both schemes. In the first line of all stanzas but the first in Fitt I and in the first line of Fitt II *spot* is the first of the alliterating words. In the last line of all stanzas in Fitt I *spot* is the last rhyming word. The link word *adubbenment* in Fitt II like *spot* in Fitt I interlinks rhyme and alliterative schemes by serving as the final rhyme word and then as the first alliterating word respectively in the last and first lines of successive stanzas. In *Pearl* link words often draw attention to the thematic gists of fitts. In the last lines of Fitt I *spot* means “blemish,” whereas in its first lines *spot* means “location.” The pearl is said to be *wythouten spot* in the last lines because it is located in what the first lines refer to as *þat spot(e)*, a grave; the intersection between the sense of location and the sense of blemish here suggests that mortality is a kind of blemish removed only at death. Because the link word from the previous fitt appears at the beginning of the next fitt, it interweaves the alliterative/rhyme schemes and thematic gists of adjacent fitts. Thus in Fitt II *adubbenment* and its variants recall *wythouten spot* from Fitt I; like the lost pearl the dreamscape is without blemish. *Adubbenment* in Fitt II refers to features of a landscape as if they are fine jewels, the landscape a jeweler’s setting. The pearl maiden’s presence in that richly ornamented landscape, first mentioned in line 161 of Fitt III, confirms her purity.

The occurrence of *spot* in the first line of Fitt II also links the portions of the narrative featured in the first two fitts. The *spot* where the dreamer loses the pearl and where his spirit *sprang* is the same *spot* onto which the dreamer falls asleep, “On þat precious perle” (60). So the dreamscapes described in Fitt II and those that follow may be said to be somehow contained within the dreamer lying over the spot where the pearl disappeared.

The occurrence of *sprang* here mirrors its occurrence in line 13 of Fitt I, where it describes the movement of the pearl *þurȝ gresse to ground(e)* (10), on this *spot*, at the moment of its loss. So the movement of the dreamer’s spirit out of his body mirrors the loss of the pearl that *doun drof* (30), that *trendeled doun* (41) in the *erber*; both movements figure as the separation of the spirit from the body at

death. Both occurrences of *sprang* also parallel the *spryngande spyceȝ* (35) from the earth over the spot where the pearl disappeared as well as the reference to “my Lady of quom Jesu con spryng” (453) in the heavenly city. The movement of Jesus out of Mary at birth mirrors the movements of the falling pearl, of growing plants, and of the ascending spirit of dreamer.

The absence of any article between *Fro* and *spot* conflates both meanings of *spot*: the dreamer’s spirit ascends from the spot where his body sleeps over the pearl and his spirit separates itself from any spot in the sense of “impurity” or “defect.”

The reference to the dreamer’s *slepyng-slaȝte* (“sleeping-slaughter,” 59) contextualizes the separation of spirit from body that follows as a dream of what the soul experiences during its ascent to heaven after death. And line 62 leaves no doubt that what follows is a dream. In medieval English dream visions a description of the narrator falling asleep sometimes separates the waking vision from the first dreamed vision, the first two of the three main settings; in line 275 of Chaucer’s *Book of the Duchess*, “Y fil aslepe” is another reference to the narrator falling asleep between the waking vision and first dreamed vision.<sup>13</sup> Unlike Dante in the *Comedy*, the *Pearl* dreamer does not visit the otherworld bodily. The apostle Paul establishes the distinction between corporeal and incorporeal visits to paradise when regarding his own visit he writes that he does not know if it was in the body or out of the body (2 Corinthians 12). This narrator’s body spends the entire dream *on balke*, on the *huyle* in the *erber* where he lost the pearl. Like the Green Chapel in *Sir Gawain and the Green Knight* this *huyle* from which the narrator visits the otherworld resembles a fairy mound because it grants access to *meruayleȝ*. The Green Chapel is associated with the Green Knight who appears as Arthur calls for *sum mayn meruayle* (94)<sup>14</sup> and who is an otherworldly transformation of Bertilak by Morgne la Faye (2446-55).

Of the *meruayleȝ* we first learn that they *meuen*. The nature of the movement the dreamer observes and experiences creates a pattern of increasing agility, culminating in the maiden’s sudden

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<sup>13</sup> Citation from Larry Benson et al., eds., *The Riverside Chaucer*, 3<sup>rd</sup> ed. (Boston: Houghton Mifflin, 1987).

<sup>14</sup> Citation from Malcolm Andrew and Ronald Waldron, eds., *The Poems of the Pearl Manuscript: Pearl, Cleanness, Patience, Sir Gawain and the Green Knight*, 5<sup>th</sup> ed. (Exeter: University of Exeter Press, 2007).

movement from the other side of the stream to the midst of the heavenly procession (1145-48) and in his own subsequent attempt to cross the stream (1153-1164).

I ne wyste in þis worlde quere þat hit wace,  
 Bot I knew me keste þer klyfeȝ cleuen;  
 Towarde a foreste I bere þe face,  
 Where rych rokkeȝ wer to dyscreuen.  
 (65-68)

Medieval world maps frequently indicate the location of Eden, which is “connected to the rest of the world but set off from it,” inaccessible to mortals.<sup>15</sup> As in the *Comedy* this dreamer enters Eden before attempting to enter heavenly paradise. The description of his vision of the maiden across the stream closely resembles the description of Dante’s vision of Matelda across a stream in *Purgatorio* 28, evidence that the *Comedy* influenced *Pearl*. The fragrance (6), fluttering boughs (10) and leaves (17-18), and birds’ song (14-15) described in the opening of that canto resemble their counterparts in the portrayal of Eden in Fitt II in *Pearl*.

The first of the described features of the dreamscape in which the narrator finds himself are the *klyfeȝ* that *cleuen*, called *rych rokkeȝ* and *crystal klyfffeȝ* (74). The cliffs and pearl maiden are located across the stream described in the last stanza in Fitt II, and therefore in what the narrator takes to be *Paradyse* (137). What the cliffs cleave is unstated: A. C. Cawley suggests they cleave the sky;<sup>16</sup> Vantuono instead glosses *cleuen* as “were cleft.” In any case *cleuen* anticipates *schere* (165) and *schorne* (213), which refer respectively to the brightness of the maiden as first glimpsed and then specifically to the brightness of her hair. The cliffs at the top of the dreamscape initiate a sequence of images of bright light sometimes related to cutting and/or gold associated with features at the top of a hierarchy.

The phrases “I bere þe face” and “wer to dyscreuen” emphasize the dreamer’s sensory perception of the first dreamscape, which soon improves his mood and agility. As in the *erber*, whose fragrance puts him to sleep (57-60), perception of successive dreamscape features produces emotional and mental transformations in the

<sup>15</sup> Carolyn Dinshaw, “All Kinds of Time,” *Studies in the Age of Chaucer* 35 (2013): 12.

<sup>16</sup> *Pearl; Sir Gawain and the Green Knight* (London: Dent, 1962).

dreamer. His first glimpse of the maiden leaves him “Wyth y3en open and mouth ful clos” (183).

Pe lyzt of hem myzt no mon leuen,  
Pe glemande glory þat of hem glent;  
For wern neuer webbez þat wy3e3 weuen  
Of half so dere adubbenente.  
(69-72)

The rhyme scheme of the final quatrain of each stanza reverses that of the first two quatrains much as the rhyme scheme and line lengths set off the final five lines (“bob and wheel”) from the rest of each stanza of *Sir Gawain*. As in that poem this concluding arrangement is often an independent clause that draws attention to something especially important. This quatrain describes the otherworldly quality of the light emanating from the cliffs. The nature of the light from these cliffs recalls the blooms that “schyne3 ful schyr again þe sunne” in the *erber* (28) and anticipates the nature of the light emanating from the *Lombe-lyzt* in the New Jerusalem, which is brighter than the sun or moon. The phrase *myzt no mon leuen* anticipates the maiden’s rebuke following the dreamer’s second speech; alluding to the doubting Thomas story in the Gospel of John, she criticizes him for believing only what he can see (295-312). The last two lines of the stanza suggest that the landscape whose description follows is finer than the finest manmade tapestry; as the link word *adubbenent* recurs in connection with the sequence of landscape features, it encourages the reader to visualize them as adornments, including jewels set on cloth. Charles G. Osgood cites other Middle English texts in which woven goods and landscapes are compared.<sup>17</sup> In this sense Eden anticipates the maiden’s jewel-studded clothing in Fitt IV and that of the other maidens in the heavenly city (1099-104). *Of half* is one of a sequence of references to units of measure in statements of human inadequacy. Thus later the dreamer states that the human heart is incapable of feeling a tenth part of the joy the Edenic landscape inspires in him (135-36), that no one outside the procession can sing a single *poynt* of the maidens’ song (891) and that no one who is not *wythouten mote* can enter a single *foot* into the heavenly city (970-72).

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<sup>17</sup> *The Pearl: A Middle English Poem* (Boston: Heath, 1906).

The *glory* that *glent* from the crystal cliffs anticipates the jewels in the streambed that *glente þurʒ glas* (114), the jasper that *glente* (1001) in the lowest foundation of the New Jerusalem, that city's wall of jasper that *glent* (1026) near the streets of gold compared to glass (1025), the city's gates that *glent as glasse* (1106), and the *glenteʒ* (1144) of the Lamb in that city.

Each final quatrain of each stanza of Fitt II focuses on a landscape feature that is somehow especially important because of its brightness: the cliffs in stanza one, the pearl gravel in stanza two, the otherworldly song of the birds with *flaumbande hweʒ* (90) in stanza three, the *bonkes* like *fyldor fyn* (106) in stanza four, and the jewel-studded streambed that makes the water gleam in stanza five. Likewise the final stanza of each of the first four fitts focuses on a landscape feature that is especially important because of its brightness: the *floury flazt* (57) in which the dreamer rests on the pearl in Fitt I, the stream in Fitt II, the maiden's face and figure in Fitt III, and the maiden's removal of her crown in Fitt IV. In this sense the structure of each stanza of Fitt II resembles the structure of each of the first four fitts.

Dubbed wern alle þo downeʒ sydeʒ  
 Wyth crystal klyffeʒ so cler of kynde,  
 (73-74)

The *downeʒ sydeʒ* recall the *small . . . smope . . . sydeʒ* (6) of the lost pearl described in Fitt I and anticipate *smope* and *smal* as descriptive of the maiden (190) and the *quyte syde* of the Lamb in the heavenly city (1137); such recurring words reinforce the way images morph into other images as the dreamer moves from setting to setting. Just as the sides of the pearl are all *smal* and *smothe*, *reken in vche araye*, *alle* the sides of the hills have crystal cliffs. The little pearl lost on the *huyle* of the *erber* is transformed into crystal cliffs on hills, the first of several transformations. The *erber* within which are nested the two dreamscapes exhibits smaller-scale versions of features of those dreamscapes. The special nature of the cliffs, a property of crystal, is the fact that they are *so cler of kynde*, which explains the “glemande glory þat of hem glent” (70). Scholastic theology associates crystal with the clarity of the glorified body.<sup>18</sup> In *Pearl* these cliffs recall medieval use of crystal as windowed settings for

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<sup>18</sup> Marti, “Traditional Characteristics,” 320-25.

relics; in reliquaries the transparency of crystal draws attention to its association with the resurrected body. The crystal cliffs anticipate the *cler quyt perle* on the maiden's crown (207); the *cler* breast pearl she wears (227); the new song the procession of maidens sings *ful cler* (882); the *cler and quyt* beryl foundation of the heavenly city (1011); the walls and dwellings of the New Jerusalem, the main adornment of the hill in the second dreamscape, which are *sotyl cler* (1050); and the *red golde cler* of the Lamb's horns (1111). The heavenly city resembling crystal dominates its bright foundations and the hill under them much as the crystal cliffs here dominate the hills and bright forest. Fitt II features the beginning of a sequence of increasing increments of gifts of the glorified body associated with what the dreamer sees and with the dreamer himself. The gift featured first here (*so cler of kynde*; cf. *gold so clere*, 2) is clarity, the gift from which the other three gifts proceed in scholastic teaching.<sup>19</sup> So *cler* is one of the most important words linking the three main settings and their subdivisions. The phrase *sotyl cler* is one of many references in the poem to two or more gifts in relation to each other, in this instance subtlety and clarity.

Holtewodeȝ bryȝt aboute hem bydeȝ  
 Of bolleȝ as blwe as ble of Ynde;  
 As bornyst syluer þe lef on slydeȝ,  
 Pat þike con trylle on vch a tynde.  
 Quen glem of glodeȝ agaynȝ hem glydeȝ,  
 Wyth schymeryng schene ful schrylle þay schynde.  
 (75-80)

Osgood cites many parallels between the features of these trees and those in Middle English adaptations from the paradisiacal landscapes in the literature of the Orient, including extreme brightness, unnatural colors, and silver leaves. The phrase *of Ynde* recalls *Out of oryent* (3) and anticipates *perleȝ of oryent* (82) and *coroun of perle orient* (255). The *blwe as ble of Ynde* of the trees recalls the *blwe* blooms (27) in the *erber* and anticipates the indigo blue (*ynde*) blended with purple in the twelfth foundation of the New Jerusalem, identified as *gentyleste in vch a plyt* (1015-16). The *Holtewodeȝ bryȝt* in Eden also anticipate the *tres ful schym* (1077) of the heavenly city. The

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<sup>19</sup> Alexander of Hales, *Summa theologica*, 3a, q. 21, m. 7 (Quaracchi: Collegii S. Bonaventurae, 1924-1948); Marti, "Traditional Characteristics," 324.

fact that bright trees enclose crystal cliffs (*aboute hem bydez*) recalls the enclosure of the pearl in *gold so clere* (2) before its loss in the *erber* and anticipates the enclosure of the pearl maiden in clothing that is *Blysnande whyt* (163).

The trees are bright because their leaves reflect light. The simile comparing their leaves to *bornyst syluer* again recalls the *gold so clere* enclosing the pearl lost in the *erber* and anticipates the “brende golde bryzt / As glemande glas burnist broun” (989-90) in the description of the heavenly city that “schyrrer þen sunne with schafte3 schon” (982). So the silver-leaved trees are a bright setting for the hills comparable to the nested gold settings throughout *Pearl*. The simile *as bornyst syluer* is one in a long sequence of similes in the description of the first dreamscape which also includes *as blwe as ble of Ynde* (76), *As fode* (88), *As fyldor fyn* (106), *As glente þur3 glas* (114), and *As stremande sternez* (115).

The phrase *on slydez* (one word in MS.) which Malcolm Andrew and Ronald Waldron, Gordon, and Sarah Stanbury<sup>20</sup> read as two separate words meaning “slide over each other,” contributes to the general parallel between dreamscape features and gifts of the glorified body, in this instance agility, an association reinforced by *con trylle*, which Gordon glosses as “quiver,” and *glydez*. In any case, *on slydez* recalls *slode* (59) in the description of the narrator falling asleep after he *felle* in the *erber*. And the verb pair *glydez* and *glodez* anticipates *glod* (1105), the verb describing the movement of the procession of maidens on the bright, golden streets of the heavenly city; it is a mode of locomotion more like gliding than walking and therefore a supernatural agility like that whereby the whole procession appears *sodanly* (1095, 1098) and whereby the pearl maiden who had just been near the dreamer appears suddenly within the procession (1147-52; Beatrice’s sudden movement from Dante’s side to the celestial rose in *Paradiso* 31 is a striking parallel). Just as the maidens’ agility results from the clarity of the heavenly city, the reflected light from the leaves results from the agility of the leaves. Agility is also a function of clarity (and impassibility, the bliss resulting from an absence of noxious passions or other suffering<sup>21</sup>)

<sup>20</sup> *Pearl* (Kalamazoo, MI: Medieval Institute, 2001).

<sup>21</sup> Aquinas, *Summa theologiae*, 3ae *Suppl.*, q. 82, a. 2, and *In epistolam I ad Corinthios commentaria*, ch. 15, lectiones 6 and 7; Bonaventure, *Breviloquium*, pt. 4, ch. 10, par. 1; Marti, “Traditional Characteristics,” 327-29. An association between impassibility and bliss is suggested by Augustine, who

when the dreamer absorbs the maiden's brightness: "Suche gladande glory con to me glace" (171). *Quen* may suggest that the light these leaves reflect shimmers in part because of an intermittent light source. The brightness of the leaves is a reflection of the *glem of glodez*. Israel Gollancz glosses *glodez* as "bright shining clouds" based on Scandinavian cognates.<sup>22</sup> Reflected light from intermittent patches of brightness in a cloudy sky would impart a *schymeryng schene*.

Pe grauayl þat on grounde con grynde  
 Wern precious perlez of oryente:  
 Pe sunnebemez bot blo and blynde  
 In respecte of þat adubbenment.  
 (81-84)

In this passage about the pearl gravel, like several similar passages, a landscape feature superior to sunbeams recalls the bright blooms against the sun in the *erber* and anticipates the superiority of the heavenly city to the sun and moon. References to the sun, moon, and stars in the poem are consistent with the comparison of the clarity of the glorified body to that of the sun, moon, and stars in 1 Corinthians 15 and in scholastic theology.<sup>23</sup> The specific features of this first dreamscape referred to as its *adubbenment* are the sequence of bright features described near the end of each stanza listed above. The link word in Fitt II thus draws attention to the shared brightness of a sequence of different features in the same dreamscape. Then in the first two lines of Fitt III *dubbenment* is linked to another listing of features first described in Fitt II: *down, dalez, wod, water, and playnez*. In these ways the link word epitomizes the content of the fitt as it connects that content to the next fitt. The only pearls in Eden are *on grounde*, recalling the *grounde* (10) the pearl enters in the *erber* and anticipating the spear *grimly grounde* (654) that has caused Christ's side to bleed in the heavenly city. The phrase *con grynde* may hint that the disembodied spirit of the dreamer has weight as he treads

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links *felicitas* with the physical weaknesses the resurrected body lacks in *Enchiridion* 91.

<sup>22</sup> *Pearl* (New York: Cooper Square, 1966). First published 1891 by David Nutt; citation is from Cooper Square edition.

<sup>23</sup> Aquinas, *Summa theologiae* 3ae *Suppl.*, q. 85, a. 2; Marti, "Traditional Characteristics," 321-23.

on the pearls, much as Dante's body moves the stones he treads on in lines 28-30 of *Inferno* 12. It is appropriate that the pearl gravel receives attention in the last quatrain as the most important feature in the stanza because pearls are spheres, along with circles the geometrical figures associated with God by way of the Platonist monad.<sup>24</sup>

The adubbenente of þo downe3 dere  
 Garten my goste al greffe for3ete.  
 So frech flauore3 of fryte3 were,  
 As fode hit con me fayre refete.  
 (85-88)

Like the link word in the first line of Fitt III, the link word in the first lines of the third and fourth stanzas of Fitt II refers somewhat more generally to the collective features of the first dreamscape, though features mentioned in nearby lines are the context. "The adubbenente of þo downe3 dere" clearly includes the entire first dreamscape, but the smell of fruit and the sight and sound of birds described in this stanza are the most obvious reason the dreamer forgets his grief, much as the smell of the flowers he sees and falls on at the end of Fitt I puts him to sleep. The phrase *frech flauore3* describes the smell of the fruit in a way consistent with the simile comparing their effect on him to that of consuming food, reinforcing the parallel with the transformative effect of the smell of flowers in

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<sup>24</sup> Kevin Marti, *Body, Heart, and Text in the Pearl-Poet* (Lewiston, NY: Mellen, 1991), 11, 17. Hopper, *Medieval Number Symbolism*, 73-74, 82-83, 96, 108, 138, 146, 149-50. God is represented in terms of circles in *Paradiso* 33, lines 115-41. Plato associates God with the sphere and circle in the *Timaeus*, trans. Benjamin Jowett, in *The Collected Dialogues of Plato Including the Letters*, ed. Edith Hamilton and Huntington Cairns (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1961), 1164-65, 1169. Macrobius finds a correspondence between circles and spheres in bk. 1, ch. 17 and 21; in ch. 17 he discusses, with reservations, Cicero's equation of the outermost sphere of the cosmos with God; *Commentary on the Dream of Scipio*, trans. Stahl, 155, 157, 175-76. Nicomachus of Gerasa, who influenced many important medieval authorities on arithmetic (listed by Hopper, 98), compares the monad with God; *Introduction to Arithmetic*, trans. Martin Luther D'Ooge (New York: Macmillan, 1926), 95-96. Dietrich Mahnke calls the monad a "Verkörperung Gottes" in *Eine neue monadologie* (Berlin: Reuther, 1917); see especially 9, 16-18, 58-59.

Fitt I and anticipating the eucharistic reference in Fitt XX (1208-10). This synaesthetic experience, smell experienced as taste, resembles Dante's perception of the marble frieze of purgatory's first terrace in the form of sound and smell (*Purgatorio* 10, lines 58-63).

The smell of *fryteȝ* here (cf. *spyse* and *perȝ*, 104) recalls the *fryte* (29) in the *erber* and anticipates the maidens brought as *newe fryt* (894) to God and the *twelue fryteȝ of lyf* (1078) in the heavenly city.

In *Pearl* the ability to acquire impassibility is a function of the ability to gradually see and hear (and sometimes smell) more and more abstract mirror images of the same things within a recursive system. Forgetting his grief is a function of the dreamer's gradual realization that the pearl under *grounde* (10) in the *erber* is also the crystal cliffs, the gravel *on grounde* (81) in Eden, the *faunt* that is *at the fote* (161) of the crystal cliff, and the pearls over the gates of the New Jerusalem. The pearl is not lost, but is rather set in an elaborately nested sequence of settings on different scales. So achieving emotional tranquility is a matter of learning to perceive the recursive stages of the ascent of the soul at death and of the resurrection of the body. In Fitt III the dreamer states that the same features of Eden described in Fitt II "Bylde in me blys, abated my baleȝ, / Fordidden my stresse, dystryed my payneȝ" (123-24), and that his joy increases the further he follows the stream:

Doun after a strem þat dryȝly haleȝ  
I bowed in blys, bredful my brayneȝ;  
Þe fyrre I folȝed þose floty valeȝ,  
Þe more strengþe of ioye myn herte strayneȝ.  
(125-28)

He then discovers "more of wele . . . in that wyse" (133) than he can describe, since a mortal heart could not experience a tenth part of that *gladneȝ glade* (135-36), and he concludes that *Paradyse* is across the stream, which is a "deuyse / Bytwene myrþeȝ" (139-40), a division between degrees of joy. As the dreamer follows the stream in Fitt III, his desire to cross it increases as he observes a landscape even more *fayr* than Eden, which had already become fairer (*feier*) the further he traversed it (103): "For if hit watȝ fayr þere I con fare, / Wel loueloker watȝ þe fyrre londe" (147-48). So an increase in the dreamer's joy as he follows the stream and looks across results from the increased brightness across the stream; the stream separates degrees of both joy and brightness. The *fyrre londe* across the stream

recalls his statement about Eden that “Þe fyrre in þe fryth, the feier con ryse” (103) and anticipates 152-54: “Þe fyrre I stalked by þe stronde. / . . . For wo þer wele3 so wynne wore.” Movement alongside the stream in Fitt III is associated with an increase in the gifts of the glorified body much like movement towards the stream in Fitt II. The connection between joy and *fare* in 147 anticipates the movement of the maidens in the heavenly city: “So fare we alle wyth luf and lyste” (467). His joy increases again after he sees the maiden across the stream: “Suche gladande glory con to me glace / As lyttel byfore þerto wat3 wonte” (171-72); “No gladder gome heþen into Grece / Þen I” (231-32). He experiences the greatest degree of joy (impassibility) upon witnessing the maidens’ own *mirþe* (1149) and the *Lombe delyt* (1141), Christ’s joy despite his wounds in the heavenly city (1141-44), such that “Delyt me drof in y3e and ere” (1153) and he attempts to cross the stream. The sight of the heavenly city *gart* him to consider crossing the stream (1151), much as the features of Eden *Garten* him to forget his grief (86). He then is dismayed to find himself back in the *erber* (1174-78) but later “yerned no more þen wat3 me gyuen” (1190). The stages of increased impassibility (and therefore joy) resulting from increasingly bright settings in *Pearl* are comparable with the incremental increases in the brightness of Beatrice’s smile that signal increases in joy in successive heavens in *Paradiso*.<sup>25</sup>

A feature of the *concatenatio* of Fitt II draws attention to the value and splendor of the *adubbenente* that increases the dreamer’s joy. In Fitt II and the first line of Fitt III *downe3* (73), *downe3 dere* (85), *doun* (121), *dere* (72, 97, 108, 120, and 121), and *derworth* (109) recur in the same line as the link word *adubbenente* and its variants. These accompanying words help the link words integrate the main themes of Fitt II with the alliterative and rhyme schemes in each of its stanzas. Together with the link words they therefore contribute to the mnemotechnical scheme of the poem much as do recurring words linking its three main settings. The correspondence between features of the settings and the dreamer’s apparently increasing possession of gifts of the glorified body, as in the *Comedy*, serves a similar mnemotechnical function.

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<sup>25</sup> M. Barbi writes that “her smile, becoming ever more joyous, is the sign of their continual ascent from the lower heavens to the divine presence. . . .” Quoted by John D. Sinclair, *The Divine Comedy of Dante Alighieri: Paradiso* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1939), 29.

Fowleȝ þer flowen in fryth in fere,  
Of flaumbande hweȝ, boþe smale and grete;  
Bot sytyle-stryng and gyternere  
Her reken myrþe moȝt not retere;  
For quen þose bryddeȝ her wynges bete,  
Þay songen wyth a swete asent.  
So gracios gle couþe no mon gete  
As here and se her adubbenent.  
(89-96)

The movement of the flock of birds through the forest contributes to a pattern of agility in Fitt II mostly consistent with the hierarchy of nature established in the first chapter of Genesis. The flying of the birds in stanza three continues a pattern that begins with the emanation of light from the cliffs in stanza one and the *glem* that *glydeȝ* through the *glodeȝ* (79) in stanza two. The latter movement of light, together with the apparent movement of the wind, contributes to the *schymeryng schene* (80) of the quivering leaves. The movement of light, wind, shimmering tree leaves, bright pearl gravel, and birds of flaming hues is followed by the walking of the human narrator in stanza four. The sequence of associations between clarity and agility in this fitt culminates in the flowing of the gleaming stream in stanza five. The *flaumbande hweȝ* of the birds recall the *rede* blooms (27) in the *erber* and anticipate the blood flowing from the Lamb in the heavenly city (1135-37). The birds that move *in fere* anticipate the “fryth þer fortwne forth me fereȝ” (98), the phoenix to which Mary is compared that *freles fleȝe* (431), the maidens who *glod in fere* in the heavenly city (1105), and the appearance of the dreamer’s maiden *Among her fereȝ* (1150).

The last quatrain of stanza three makes it clear that the birds’ appearance and song cause an emotion that cannot be felt by a human. The last two lines of the stanza elaborate on the statement in the second line that the narrator’s ghost forgot its grief: the birds’ appearance and song overcomes the grief by creating a *gle* that is *so gracios* that it is beyond human emotional capacity. The *swete asent* of the birds’ song recalls the dreamer’s statement that “þoȝt me neuer so swete a sange” as *the stulle stounde* in the *erber* (19-20) and anticipates the song of the maidens in the heavenly city (877-92). Hearing and seeing the birds makes the narrator’s ghost impassible, incapable of suffering, the first in the sequence of incremental

improvements in his mood. The *myrþe* of the birds' song that human instruments cannot reproduce anticipates the stream *Bytwene myrþez* (140) as well as the maidens in the heavenly city who make *much of mirþe* (1149).

The third stanza includes several pairings of words in the same part of speech: *in fryth in fere, smale and grete, sytole-stryng and gyternere*, and *here and se*. Except for *sytole-stryng and gyternere*, which occupy the two halves of one line, these pairings are contained within half-lines.

So al wat3 dubbet on dere asyse  
 Þat fryth þer fortwne forþ me fere3.  
 Þe derþe þerof for to deuyse  
 Nis no wy3 worthé þat tonge bere3.  
 (97-100)

Lines 99-100 invoke the ineffability topos, anticipating its invocation in response to the maiden's breast pearl (225-26).<sup>26</sup> What the human tongue cannot describe is the *derþe* of the *fryth*, including the many features of the forest called *der* already mentioned. Line 97 is summative: *al* of the features of the dreamscape are *dubbet on dere asyse*. The human inability to describe the *derþe* is a function of the human inability to experience the *gle* the appearance and song of the birds produce in the narrator's spirit. The pairing of *derþe* and MS. *worthe* bears on any decision to emend by adding a diacritical mark to the latter, as Andrew and Waldron, Gordon, and Stanbury do. The emphasis on the superiority of what the dreamer's spirit sees, hears, and feels to human perception and emotion anticipates the maiden's explanation of superhuman emotional relations within the heavenly court in Fitt VIII. It also recalls the statement about the pearl's superiority to all other precious stones that precedes the description of the *erber* where it was lost.

The narrator credits *fortwne* for conveying his spirit to the forest. The statement "þer fortune forþ me fere3" recalls an earlier assertion: "My goste is gon in Gode3 grace / In auenture" (63-64). The narrator's journey is credited to destiny, *auenture* as mediated from God by fortune in a scheme consistent with the beginning of Book Five of *Consolation of Philosophy*. *Gode3 grace* is the counterpart

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<sup>26</sup> Theodore Bogdanos, *Pearl, Image of the Ineffable: A Study in Medieval Poetic Symbolism* (University Park: Pennsylvania State University Press, 1983).

in *Pearl* to the divine intervention through Mary, Lucy, and Beatrice that initiates Dante's vision (*Inferno* 2, lines 43-104).

I welke ay forth in wely wyse;  
 No bonk so byg þat did me dere3.  
 Þe fyrre in þe fryth, þe feier con ryse  
 Þe playn, þe plontte3, þe spyse, þe pere3;  
 And rawe3 and rande3 and rych reuere3,  
 As fyldor fyn her bonkes brent.  
 I wan to a water by schore þat schere3–  
 Lorde, dere wat3 hit adubement!  
 (101-8)

The dreamer walks *in wely wyse*, the superhuman counterpart for movement of the superhuman vision, hearing, and emotion he experiences; his agility and impassibility result from his perception of the dreamscape. He moves *ay forth*; no bank, no matter how big, hinders his motion. His unhindered movement in Eden contrasts with his and the pearl's movement that comes to a stop in the *erber*: *I felle* (57); *I slode* (59); *Pur3 gresse to grounde hit fro me yot* (10); *hit down drof* (30); *hit trendeled down* (41). These references to movement anticipate the movement of the procession of maidens (*sodanly*, 1095, 1098; *glod*, 1105), the sudden movement of his maiden into the city (1147-48), and the dreamer's movement after viewing the heavenly city: *Debyt me drof* (1153), *I so flonc* (1165), *I sparred vnto þe bonc* (1169). The word *dere3*, which here means "hinders," connects the dreamer's agility here with the *derþe* of a *fryth* (98-99) which contains nothing that is not *der*. The superior clarity of the landscape, whose features shine like precious jewelry, facilitates the narrator's superhuman movement. Mary Vincent Hillmann emends *feier* to *feirer*<sup>27</sup> and Gordon retains *feier* as a possible form of *feirre*, the comparative of *feier*; both editors imply that the brightness of the landscape increases the further the narrator walks. The pairing of words in the same part of speech elsewhere is evidence for taking *feier*, like *fyrre*, to be an adverb. In this sense *feier con ryse*, so close to "No bonk so byg þat did me dere3," connects increasing clarity with increasing agility. The word *ryse* and other references to upward motion like *vp* (35, 177) and *spryngande* (35) are associated with agility in *Pearl*, much

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<sup>27</sup> *The Pearl: Mediaeval Text with a Literal Translation and Interpretation* (Notre Dame: University of Notre Dame Press, 1961).

as the succession of settings encountered as Dante ascends is associated with agility and other gifts of the glorified body in *Purgatorio* and *Paradiso*.<sup>28</sup>

The catalog of landscape features ends with the stream whose *dere . . . adubement* is the linking phrase at the end of stanza four and to whose description stanza five is dedicated. Gordon notes that the *reuerēz* may be streams or “meadows along the bank of a stream.” In 104-7 appears a sequence of increasingly bright and geometrical landscape boundaries that culminate in the even brighter *water* between Eden and paradise. The *rych reuerēz* and golden *bonkes* of Eden and the gleaming stream dividing it from paradise anticipate the *reuer* “bryzter þen boþe þe sunne and mone” (1055-56) that flows from under the throne of God in the heavenly city (cf. Apocalypse 22:1-2). Andrew and Waldron, like Gordon, compare the stream to that *reuer*, which also recalls the river of light Dante sees with jewel-like flowers representing humans on its banks (*Paradiso* 30, lines 61-69). The comparison of the *bonkes* to *fjldor* sustains the comparison of the landscape to tapestry; *fjldor* is gold thread often used in medieval embroidery (Osgood). The word *brent* in reference to the *bonkes* anticipates the phrase *brende golde bryzt* (989) in the description of the heavenly city.

References to gold in *Pearl* are an important subset of the larger pattern of references to increasingly bright features, a sequence that connects features described in the *erber* with those in the dreamscapes by way of showing the dreamer that the pearl he thought lost is enclosed in a nested sequence of beautiful settings. The setting of *gold so clere* (2) mentioned before the description of the *erber* morphs into the gold *bonkes* of Eden (*as fjldor fyn*, 106), the maiden that shines “As glysnande golde þat man con schere” (165), her hair “As schorne golde schyr” (213), the heavenly city “al of brende golde bryzt / As glemande glas burnist broun” (989-90), the

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<sup>28</sup> Virgil explains in lines 88-93 of *Purgatorio* 4 that the ascent of Mount Purgatory becomes easier the higher one climbs. The relative speed and brightness of the angelic circles that invert the structure of paradise in lines 13-78 of *Paradiso* 28 makes it clear that the celestial spheres move more quickly and shine more brightly the higher they are located above the earth. The incremental increases in joy resulting from the increasing brightness of Beatrice’s smile during the ascent of paradise, mentioned earlier, similarly associate successive settings with increases in clarity and impassibility.

city's "streteȝ of golde as glasse al bare" (1025), its *golden gateȝ* (1106), and the Lamb with "horneȝ seuen of red golde cler" (1111).

*Lorde* recurs at the beginning of two other lines, each set in one of the other two main settings: one describes the mirth made by the maidens in the heavenly city (1149) and in the other the narrator expresses the futility of resisting God's will after awakening in the *erber* (1199).

The dubbement of þo derworth depe  
 Wern bonkeȝ bene of beryl bryȝt.  
 Swangeande swete þe water con swepe,  
 Wyth a rownande rourde raykande aryȝt.  
 In þe founce þer stonden stoneȝ stepe,  
 As glente þurȝ glas that glowed and glyȝt,  
 As stremande sterneȝ, quen stroþe-men slepe,  
 Staren in welkyn in wynter nyȝt;  
 For vche a pobbel in pole þer pyȝt  
 Watȝ emerad, saffer, oþer gemme gente,  
 Pat alle þe loȝe lemed of lyȝt,  
 So dere watȝ hit adubbement.

(109-20)

The entire last stanza of Fitt II describes the stream which is the boundary between Eden and paradise, the most important landscape feature in the fitt. It mirrors larger structures on a small scale by way of mirroring cosmic structures (here stars in the sky, by way of a simile). The stream epitomizes the features of Eden described earlier in the fitt. The bright, precious stones of different colors which are its *adubbement* represent in the form of gems the different-colored, bright cliffs, trees, birds and banks of Eden. The light from the gems that in *alle þe loȝe lemed* recalls the *glemande glory* that *glent* from the crystal cliffs on *alle þo downeȝ sydeȝ* (70-74). The water that is *Swangeande swete* and that *con swepe* with a *rounande rour* such that the gems under it resemble *stremande sterneȝ* recalls the birds who sing *with a swete asent* and that *flowen* with *flaumbande hweȝ* (89-94); the motion of the light from the cliffs (70); the *glen of glodeȝ* that *glydeȝ* (79); the *grauayl* that *con grynde* which is brighter than the sun (81-84); the dreamer who *welke ay forth in wely wyse* (101); and the landscape features that *con ryse* (103-5). By recalling the different-colored, bright, moving features of nature in the preceding description of Eden, the stream flowing over precious gems

underscores the parallel between Eden and the *erber*. The *erber* contains bright, multicolored blooms that *schynez ful schyr agayn þe sunne* (27-28) and its description is preceded by a statement about *gemmez gaye* (7). The movement of the bright features of Eden parallels that of the plants in the *erber* (“spryngande spyce3 vp ne sponne,” 35). It also anticipates the maidens that *con ryse* (1093), *glod* (1105) and *dro3 . . . forth* (1116) in the bejeweled heavenly city that *keued* (981), whose gates *glent as glasse* (1106) and whose *lombe-lyzt*, like the river flowing from his throne, shines more brightly than the sun or moon (1045-48, 1054-56).

Each pebble in the stream is *pyzt*, a term for setting or adorning with a jewel that reappears in 192, 205, 217, 229, and 241 (Stanbury). The gem-studded streambed anticipates the gem-studded clothing and crown of the maiden described in Fitt III. The reference to the streambed as “founce þer stonden stone3 stepe” anticipates the *fundementez* (993; cf. *fundament*, 1010) of the heavenly city, each created from a different precious stone. Gordon and Stanbury note that *stepe* can be used regarding eyes in the sense “staring, glaring” or regarding jewels in the sense “brilliant,” and Gordon observes that *staren* “is not exactly equivalent to ‘shine,’ but seems bound up with its application to stars”; both words hint at a connection between clarity and vision, anticipating the way vision of the breast pearl and of his maiden in the procession overwhelms the dreamer (223-28; 1147-55). Osgood cites parallels to this description of the streambed in paradisiacal landscapes elsewhere in medieval literature. The dreamer’s ability to see stones so clearly through the stream anticipates his ability to see through gem-studded *sotyl cler* dwellings in the heavenly city: “The wone3 wythinne enurned ware / Wyth all kynnez perrē þat mo3t repayre” (1027-28). This similarity is reinforced by the parallel between the *bonkes* in Eden he compares to *fyldor fyn* (106) and the *stretes of golde* (1025) he mentions right before he describes the bejeweled dwellings of the city (1027-28).

The phrase *strobe-men* is consistent with associations elsewhere in the poem between living humans and the earth. Gordon glosses *strobe* as “earth, growth-covered earth.” The statements “I am bot mokke and mul among” (905) and “Py corse in clot mot calder keue” (320) contribute to the pattern. The phrase “quen strobe-men slepe” invites comparison of the landscape the dreamer sees while asleep with the sky unseen by sleeping humans. It is also a verbal link at the end of the fitt describing Eden to the *slepyng-sla3te* that ends the fitt describing the *erber*.

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