

# Lady Bertilak's Pearls: *Instrumenta Dei* and the Stone Imagery that Unites the Cotton Nero A.x. (art. 3) Poems

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In an effort to understand the conceptual unity of the Cotton Nero A.x. (art. 3) poems, I argue that a survey of the kinds of stones in the texts and their biblical meanings can provide a heuristic for understanding the intertextual connections between prominent figures such as the Pearl-Maiden and Bertilak's wife. (SJS)

It is evident from lapidaries and the Vulgate that precious stones carried both material and religious significance in the medieval period. Stones had the power to make one attractive, to help one sleep, and even to heal the mad. This agency attributed to stones in lapidaries stems in part from their descriptions in the Apocalypse book of the Vulgate and their symbolic values are asserted as motifs in many Middle English literary texts from the *Book of John Mandeville* to the Stanzaic *Morte Arthur*. But what role do these stones play in the poems of London, British Library MS Cotton Nero A.x. (art. 3)?<sup>1</sup> They reoccur in all but one poem, *Patience*, which features a paraphrase of the biblical story of Jonah's resistance to God's will that eventually leads to his three-day stay in the belly of a whale. The *Pearl*-poet makes extended use of stones and precious gems elsewhere, so their absence in *Patience* is conspicuous. This anomaly has largely gone unnoticed in previous decades of *Pearl*-poet scholarship because critics have often read and analyzed the poems in isolation rather than studying them as units of a fuller text. This reading practice has changed with greater accessibility to the manuscript itself, and scholars such as Edward Condren and Murray McGillivray argue that the poems should be evaluated together in their codicological contexts. If we study all four poems together certain patterns emerge. For instance, the only two women in the entire manuscript who wear pearls are the Pearl-Maiden in *Pearl* and Bertilak's wife in *Sir Gawain and the Green Knight*.<sup>2</sup> Moving beyond just the pearls, it becomes evident that named stones signify efforts on behalf of the protagonists to intercede with God. This pattern explains the absence of stones in *Patience* since Jonah, the protagonist, is the one who is supposed to intervene in Nineveh. His correspondence is directly with God rather than a mostly-human figure on behalf of God. Similarly, Noah, Abraham, and Lot all converse directly with God and thus do not need stone

imagery to denote impending intervention. The ways in which stones signify intercession in the earlier poems renders a readable pattern in *Sir Gawain*, which is supposed to be a romance. This signification plays with such genre conventions and ultimately lends credence to the theory that the four poems should be read together as one overarching text. The reader of the Cotton Nero MS is trained over the course of the first three poems to understand that stone imagery foreshadows necessary intervention for the protagonist, which then prepares the audience to see beyond the surface-level guise of a romance in *Sir Gawain*.

This argument builds on a long history of scholarly assumptions about a single author for the four poems of the Cotton Nero MS. However, many have challenged this notion on a variety of bases including syntax, meter, and frequency of certain words and article forms.<sup>3</sup> Despite these challenges, many scholars seem content to accept a single author for these poems. This could have some basis in our anachronistic desire for author-identification, which is satisfied by the moniker ‘*Pearl*-poet,’ but recent research on the illustrations also offers some resolution for readers and scholars alike. Murray McGillivray and Christina Duffy’s 2017 study of the manuscript provides further support for W.W. Greg’s argument that the illustrations were added after the quires were sewn together or perhaps even after the manuscript was bound.<sup>4</sup> These illustrations, of course, do not provide evidence for a single author, but rather for a reader’s conceptual unity of the four poems. One might note, for example, the figure of the Dreamer who seems to appear in all the illustrations in the manuscript. Indeed, the Dreamer bears a remarkable likeness to Gawain in the later illustrations. We can overcome the problem of authorship (or authorial intent, which is impossible to ascertain) by turning the focus to reader reception: the illustrations unquestionably signify unity of the four poems for a reader. Paul F. Reichardt notes that early catalogue descriptions of the manuscript in multiple cases cite the four poems as one English poem. For example, the 1696 catalogue of the Cotton collection, compiled by the Reverend Thomas Smith describes the Cotton Nero MS in this way:

3. Poema in lingua veteri Anglicana, in quo sub insomnii figmento, ad religionem, pietatem, & vitam probam hortatur Auctor: intersperses quibusdam historicis, & picturis, majoris illustrationis gratia, subinde additis.

[3. A poem in the old English language, in which the Author is encouraged by fictional dreams about religion, piety, and good living; interspersed with some historical people and pictures, agreeable large illustrations added immediately after {the poems}.]<sup>5</sup>

As late as the seventeenth century, these four poems were understood as a single poem despite their obvious metrical differences. Further, Maidie

Hilmo's recent analysis of the miniatures suggests that the underdrawings were done in the same iron-gall ink as the scribe's text.<sup>6</sup> This new research, a product of the same pigment analysis report used by McGillivray and Duffy, strongly supports the possibility that the scribe drew the miniatures.<sup>7</sup> So while authorship proves to be a continuing problem for scholars, reader reception is an open field for envisioning the unity of these poems.

While the stone imagery at play in the entirety of the Cotton Nero MS has not previously been addressed by scholars, there have been attempts to analyze the symbolism of the stones and their colors in *Pearl*. The most prominent debate that has arisen out of such discussions is whether describing the Dreamer as a jeweler indicates that the Dreamer was a man who made jewelry or whether it suggests he was a man who wore jewels. There is a distinctive class difference here, which Felicity Riddy mines for its commentary on the sumptuous use of jewels by royal and aristocratic classes in the contemporary culture.<sup>8</sup> Riddy connects the Dreamer to the merchant in the parable of the 'pearl of great price' and suggests the reason he loses his pearl is because jewelers operate in an 'international aristocratic luxury system' in which they shape jewels and craft jewelry that is then sold away to their patrons and other aristocrats.<sup>9</sup> Riddy points out that Edward III's sumptuary laws—which governed who could commission and own jewels—were a means of 'regulat[ing] spending on jewels and clothing in order to clarify social difference,' suggesting that the Dreamer is not part of such a class.<sup>10</sup> Tony Davenport contradicts Riddy's argument by noting that the 'narrator speaks as owner' at the beginning of *Pearl* rather than as a father/creator figure.<sup>11</sup> Davenport suggests that the later concatenation of *jueler* (*jeweler*) punctuates the 'degree of grace in his acceptance of loss' and the use of *gentyl* (*gentle*) as an adjective suggests his 'aristocratic connoisseurship.'<sup>12</sup> Davenport argues that *jueler* (*jeweler*) is meant to signify 'jewel-owner' or 'jewel-fancier' which 'is used to identify a concept through which the maiden ironically exposes the falsity of his claims to noble sensibility.'<sup>13</sup> It is because the Dreamer is not a craftsman that he cannot fully assess the value of a jewel. While his article predates this argument, Robert Blanch's discussion of the color symbolism in *Pearl* fits with Davenport's argument that the Dreamer is unable to fully understand the values of the jewels he sees. Blanch argues that the twelve Apocalyptic jewels at New Jerusalem represent 'the dreamer's need for various virtues in order to attain spiritual enlightenment and consolation.'<sup>14</sup> If he is unable to interpret the symbolic values of the jewels' colors, then he must be ignorant of his own deficiencies. Blanch relies on lapidaries and commentaries on the Apocalypse text to generate readings of the color symbolism of the stones in *Pearl*, ultimately connecting them to the spiritual virtues the Dreamer is lacking.

The Apocalypse book of the Vulgate clearly governs the meaning of much of the vision in *Pearl*, but it would seem to affect the other poems in the Cotton Nero MS too. Riddy and Davenport both have noted the connections of jewels to luxurious consumption in the medieval period, but Riddy also remarks that the Book of Revelation enjoyed particular popularity with wealthy patrons in the fourteenth century: 'Anglo-Norman Apocalypses were luxury objects commissioned by aristocratic clerical and lay patrons, female and male.'<sup>15</sup> She notes not only the sheer number of these fourteenth-century manuscripts that survive, but also the sumptuous quality of them with 'complex cycles of illumination.'<sup>16</sup> Other texts that were especially popular with such classes included bestiaries and lapidaries. The Aberdeen Bestiary,<sup>17</sup> for example, was likely owned by Geoffrey Plantagenet.<sup>18</sup> While lapidaries were also paired in more practical texts with medical tracts and encyclopedic material, they also featured prominently in the lavishly produced bestiaries of the thirteenth and fourteenth centuries. As evidenced by the *Pearl*-poet's use of hunting language and animal descriptions in both *Pearl* and the other poems of the Cotton Nero MS—which greatly resemble those found in bestiaries—it would seem that he was well-versed in these various luxury reading materials. As such, the symbolic significance attributed by lapidaries to these various jewels can be brought to bear on the other poems in the manuscript.

In order to evaluate the use of these stones in the manuscript, it is important to first determine what they are and how they are described in Apocalyptic language. The Apocalypse book of the Vulgate depicts St John's vision of New Jerusalem. This vision is clearly deployed in modified form in *Pearl*. St John witnesses the city 'descendentem de caelo a Deo paratam sicut sponsam ornatam viro suo' [coming down out of heaven from God, prepared as a bride adorned for her husband].<sup>19</sup> Like a bride adorned, the city's wall and twelve gates are dressed in precious stones that emphasize its heavenly status. There is one stone for each foundation: jasper, sapphire, chalcedony, emerald, sardonyx, sardius, chrysolite, beryl, topaz, chrysoprasus, jacinth, and amethyst.<sup>20</sup> Finally, each gate is a pearl and the streets are pure gold, which the text describes as appearing like 'vitrum perlucidum' [transparent glass].<sup>21</sup> Anticipating the New Jerusalem stones' appearance at Belshazzar's feast in *Cleanness*, they are first listed in the Vulgate's order in *Pearl*. The poet elaborates slightly on his Vulgate source of St John's description. For example, the emerald is described as 'so grene of scale' [so green of skin] (l. 1005).<sup>22</sup> The beryl is 'cler and quy' [clear and white] and the amethyst is 'purpre with ynde blent' [purple with indigo blended in] (ll. 1011 & 1016). Perhaps not surprisingly, their order is precisely the same in the lapidaries of both the Aberdeen Bestiary and Henry of Huntingdon's recently rediscovered *Anglicanus Ortus*. As the names of these two texts suggest, lapidaries were often paired with bestiaries, medical texts, and herbals. These varied pairings

further suggest the various ways stones might be described. In the Aberdeen Bestiary, for example, the pearl is described as:

'rore matutino concipitur, candidior est, et melior quam qui de rore vespertino ... certum est quod duodecim margarite secundum sensum morale sunt duodecim virtutes, per duodecim lapides designate'

[conceived from the morning dew {and} is whiter and of better quality than that from the evening dew. ... it is certain that the twelve 'pearls,' interpreted in the moral sense, are the twelve virtues].<sup>23</sup>

However, Henry's lapidary in the *Anglicanus Ortus* takes a more practical approach, noting that the pearl comes only from Britain and India and can be used by physicians to remedy the 'inepta' ['unsuitable' or 'inept'].<sup>24</sup> The practical use suggested by the Aberdeen Bestiary is the pearl as a cure for sleep.<sup>25</sup>

Like romances, lapidaries have their own genre conventions, including their meticulous following of the Apocalypse text's order of stones. The Aberdeen Bestiary and the *Anglicanus Ortus* are both Anglo-Latin texts that pair their lapidaries with a variety of other instructional texts. The Aberdeen Bestiary is a twelfth-century manuscript that relies heavily on biblical paraphrase and frames its descriptions of animals, man, and stones in terms of virtues. It would not have been read as encyclopedic knowledge of the world, but rather the language and symbolism coupled with the extensive illumination suggest use for personal edification and entertainment. The *Anglicanus Ortus* is made up of eight books, each containing a series of poems. Winston Black has not so much rediscovered<sup>26</sup> it as reassembled the eight books from a series of manuscripts—some of which are more complete than others—based on a variety of evidence left behind by Henry of Huntingdon.<sup>27</sup> Black suggests that Henry left clues to the intended order in one of the manuscripts; the eight books are organized around a theme of a 'garden with a central theatre, both of which will serve as stages for his poems.'<sup>28</sup> Black illustrates this spatial theme with a visual reconstruction of this assembly. The lapidary book in *Anglicanus Ortus*, the *De gemmis preciosis*, is preserved as part of a fourteenth-century medical collection in Oxford, Bodleian Library, Digby MS 69, fols. 192v–195r and is largely based on Marbod of Rennes' *De lapidibus*.<sup>29</sup> While neither of these particular manuscripts would likely have been available to the *Pearl*-poet, their patterning demonstrates the ways in which lapidaries took their cues from the Apocalyptic descriptions and order of stones. The Aberdeen Bestiary is luxuriously illuminated and contains Latin prose; the *De gemmis preciosis* contains no such illustrations and is composed in Latin verse. These two texts are separated by a hundred years and are presented in two different forms, yet they follow the same schema. Other lapidaries, such as that of King Philip, seem to follow the exact same order.<sup>30</sup> So, the *Pearl*-poet's same organizational pattern in *Pearl* as well as the symbolic function

of the stones throughout the Cotton Nero MS suggests familiarity with not just the Apocalypse text, but also with lapidaries.

The *Pearl*-poet seems to be fully aware of the genre conventions that dictate use of lapidary symbolism, but also of those that predicate use of courtly romance and Apocalyptic paraphrase. The poems in the manuscript demonstrate a meta-awareness of the conventions that guide them, suggesting that something else is happening beyond the surface. Rosalind Field points out that the *Pearl*-poet is highly selective in his use of Apocalyptic imagery in *Pearl*.<sup>31</sup> As noted above, the Apocalypse text, like romances, was very popular with aristocratic audiences. Field suggests that due to this genre awareness on the part of the *Pearl*-poet's audience, he could 'expect an informed response to any variation he might make to familiar material.'<sup>32</sup> A similar response could likely be expected for deviations and modifications of Apocalypse material. The Dreamer's long approach to New Jerusalem, involving fantastic descriptions of the landscape around him, is decidedly different from St John's vision of the same heavenly city. However, as Field points out, the description of New Jerusalem is so close to that of the Apocalypse book that it has aroused 'considerable criticism as being no more than a lifeless paraphrase.'<sup>33</sup> Field spends substantial time reviewing Apocalypse imagery in illuminated manuscripts to point out the ways in which the *Pearl*-poet's depiction of New Jerusalem is highly innovative and not the stagnant paraphrase other scholars have suggested. This level of modification is evident in the paraphrases in both *Cleanness* and *Patience* too, perhaps leading the audience to expect such crafting by the time they reach *Sir Gawain*. In other words, it would seem that the poet is preparing his audience to read between the lines of *Sir Gawain*. The inclusion of a romance seems an odd addition in a manuscript otherwise full of homiletic poems, which is reason enough to question it. However, the *Pearl*-poet also provides clues throughout for the attentive reader, such as noting that the Green Knight is 'ful clene' [full clean] (l. 146). The use of stone imagery can help the attentive reader identify important foreshadowing of the protagonist's need for intercession. Sir Gawain's arrival at Hautdesert, a castle that shines like jewels, in this case will signify a site for intercession.

Each poem has its own protagonist and in the case of *Cleanness* more than one such protagonist in need of remediation. As noted earlier, *Patience* takes an intercessory figure as its protagonist and thus approaches the same issues without the inclusion of stone imagery. This is not to say that Jonah does not need intervention, but rather that his intervention comes directly from God. In other cases, this intervention comes from other human figures on behalf of God. But how is one to decide whether this intervening figure is really working for the redemption of his soul? Or, rather, how is the audience to know what role this figure is going to play in addressing the sins of the protagonist? The appearance of precious stones seems to be the key to demarcating this role

when the figure in question is not either God himself or angels deployed on his behalf, as in the case of Lot in *Cleanness*. There are three protagonists who receive intervention from an intercessory figure: the Dreamer, Belshazzar, and Gawain. Belshazzar's encounter is slightly anomalous to the other two since his story is also a biblical paraphrase and his intervention comes from David, a figure known to the *Pearl*-poet's audiences.

In the case of Belshazzar and David, the stones deployed are an elaboration on the Apocalyptic description in *Pearl*. Further, this paraphrase serves as a thread connecting *Pearl* to *Sir Gawain* through the vessels that not only resemble the New Jerusalem in *Pearl*, but also Bertilak's castle Hautdesert in *Sir Gawain*, ultimately amplifying the gem-qualities of Hautdesert as Gawain first approaches it. That amplification signals the space as a site of intercession. Before the poet shifts into the paraphrase of Belshazzar's feast, he sermonizes on the importance of purity and the ways in which the pearl represents perfect cleanliness:

Perle prayes in prys þer perré is schewed,  
 Þaȝ hyt not derrest be demed to dele for penies.  
 Quat may þe cause be called bot for hir clene hews,  
 Þat wynnes worschyp abof alle whyte stones?  
 For ho schynes so schyr þat is of schap rounde,  
 Wythouten faut oþer fylþe ȝif ho fyn were,  
 And wax euer in þe worlde in weryn so olde,  
 ȝet þe perle payres not whyle ho in pryse lasttes;  
 And if hit cheue þe chaunce vncheryst ho worþe,  
 Þat ho blyndes of ble in bour þer ho lygges,  
 Nobot wasch hir wyth wourchyp in wyn as ho askes,  
 Ho by kynde schal becom clerer þen are.  
 So if folk be defowled by vnfre chaunce,  
 Þat he be sulped in sawle, seche to schryfte,  
 And he may polyce hym at þe prest, by penaunce taken,  
 Wel bryȝter þen þe beryl oþer browden perles.

[The pearl is praised in price where it is shown,  
 That it be deemed too dear to be given for pennies.  
 What may the cause be called but for her pure hues,  
 That it wins worship above all white stones?  
 For she shines so sure that is of a round shape,  
 Without fault or filth if she was so fine,  
 And wax ever in the world in use so old,  
 Yet the pearl pairs not while she lasts in price;  
 And if it achieves the chance uncherished in her worth,  
 So that she blinds of luster in bower where she lays,  
 You have only to wash her with worship in joy as she asks,

She by kind shall become clearer than before.  
 Likewise if folk are defiled by some distasteful chance,  
 That he is polluted in soul, let him seek out shrift,  
 And he may polish himself at the priest, by the penance taken,  
 Well brighter than the beryl or interlinked pearls.] (ll. 1117–1133)

The poet emphasizes here not just the perfection of the pearl, which clearly recalls for the reader the Pearl-Maiden's form, but he also notes the importance of polishing one's own soul through confession with a priest and whatever penance that must be undertaken. This should be the first clue for the reader that there will be another intervention like that which takes place in *Pearl*. Just as the poet uses the pearl as an image of perfection, he demonstrates the wonder of the treasure collected by Nebuchadnezzar in preparation for their misuse during Belshazzar's feast:

Bot þe joy of þe juelrye so gentyle and ryche,  
 When hit watz schewed hym so schene, scharp watz his wonder;  
 Of such vessel auayed, þat vayled so huge,  
 Neuer ȝet nas Nabugodenezar er þenne.

[But the joy of the jewelry so gentle and rich,  
 When it was shown to him so shone, sharp was his wonder;  
 Of such a vessel instructed, that was of such huge value,  
 Never yet was Nebuchadnezzar before then.] (ll. 1309–1312)

Despite the violent way Nebuchadnezzar came to possess such vessels, the poet tells us that he 'sesed hem with solemneté, þe Souerayn he praysed / þat watz apel ouer alle, Israel Dryȝtyn' [seized them with solemnity, the Sovereign he praised / that was lord over all, the Lord of Israel] (ll. 1314–1315). He treats the vessels with great reverence and is careful to stow them away in a safe place, as if preserving the honor of God along with them. His son, Belshazzar, obviously gives the same vessels the opposite treatment. The audience is told of his 'bost' and 'pryde' ['boast' and 'pride'] before the poet provides a detailed description of the vessels from Jerusalem that should give an attentive reader pause:

Þe juelles out of Jerusalem with gemmes ful bryȝt ...  
 For þer wer bassynes ful bryȝt of brende golde clere,  
 Enaumaylde with azer, and eweres of sute,  
 Couered cowpes foul clene, as casteles arrayed,  
 Enbaned vnder batelment with bantelles quoynt,  
 And fyled out of fygures of ferlylé schappes.  
 Þe copperounes of þe couacles þat on þe cuppe reses  
 Wer fetysely formed out in fylyoles longe;  
 Pinacles pyȝt þer apert þat profert bitwene,  
 And al bolled abof with braunches and leues,

Pyes and papejays purtrayed withinne,  
 As þay prudly hade piked of pomgarnades;  
 For alle þe blomes of þe boʒes wer blyknande perles,  
 And safyres, and sardiners, and seemly topace,  
 Alabaundaynes, and amaraunz, and amaffised stones,  
 Casydoynes and crysolytes, and clere rubies,  
 Penitotes, and pynkardines, ay perles bitwene;

[The jewels out of Jerusalem with gems full bright ...  
 For there were basins full bright of clear, pure gold,  
 Enameled with azure, and matching ewers,  
 Covered cups full clean, arrayed as castles,  
 Parapeted under battlements with fashioned parapets,  
 And filled out of figures of marvelous shapes.  
 The tops of the lids that on the cups rise up  
 Were skillfully formed out in long spires;  
 Pinnacles decorated there skillful that projected up between,  
 And all embossed above with branches and leaves,  
 Magpies and popinjays portrayed within,  
 As they proudly had pecked at pomegranates;  
 For all the blooms of the boughs were shining pearls,  
 And sapphires, and sardonyxes and seemly topazes,  
 Red gems, and emeralds, and amethyst stones,  
 Chalsidonies and chrysolites, and clear rubies,  
 Peridots, and carnelians, with pearls all between;] (ll. 1450, 1441,  
 1456–1472)

Not only does this description include a variety of gems, many of which are part of the New Jerusalem matrix of stones, but it also details the ways in which the treasure resembles a castle, again suggestive of the Apocalyptic imagery. Further, the castle imagery is then echoed in the description of Hautdesert in *Sir Gawain*, which similarly 'schemered and schon' [shimmered and shone] (l. 772). Hautdesert was 'Of harde hewen ston vp to þe tablez, / Embaned vnder þe abataylment in þe best lawe' [Of hard hewn stone up to the cornices, / Parapeted under the battlement in the best manner] and 'looked ful clene' [looked full clean] (ll. 789–790, 792). It too has 'coroun coprounes' [crowning tops] and 'mony pynakle' [many pinnacles] (ll. 797, 800). Much of the language is echoed, including that it is clean. The treasure, which is meant to evoke New Jerusalem from *Pearl* directly links here to *Sir Gawain* too, demarcating spaces in which intercessions must occur.

In the case of Belshazzar, it is Daniel who must intercede on behalf of God. Just as Arthur demands a marvel at his Christmas feast, so too does a 'ferly bifel' [marvel befall] at Belshazzar's feast (l. 1529). The poet uses 'ferly' rather than 'mervayle' apparently in order to maintain the alliterative scheme

of the line, but the meaning is much the same here. Rather than a Green Knight, a disembodied hand writes on the wall. Daniel is brought in to read the words<sup>34</sup> and then serves a role similar to that of the Pearl-Maiden. He expounds on the levels of filth and pride in Belshazzar's actions, interpreting the three words *Mene*, *Tekel*, and *Peres* to foretell Belshazzar's doom. Unlike the Dreamer and Gawain, Belshazzar possesses too many wicked qualities and has upset too many enemies with his actions to be redeemable. The poet sums up the weight of Belshazzar's sins after his death when he says, 'Pat watz so doȝty þat day and drank of þe vessayl / Now is a dogge also dere þat in a dych lygges.' [That was so effective that day he drank of the vessel / Now is a dog just as dear that in a ditch lays.] (ll. 1791–1792) Basically, Belshazzar's body is as valuable as that of a dead dog. Belshazzar is so 'coursed for his vnclannes' [cursed for his uncleanness] that he cannot be saved (l. 1800). However, his tale serves the same paradigm that is found with the Dreamer and Gawain. All three are tempted by sin and need some kind of intervention. Their human intercessors are foreshadowed by the New Jerusalem gems. As noted above, the Jerusalem treasure's castle appearance also serves as a bridge between poems, connecting *Pearl* to *Sir Gawain*.

These bookend poems demonstrate intercessions that fare better than the one in *Cleanness*. They are led by the Pearl-Maiden and Lady Bertilak, two women who happen to wear pearls at key moments in the poems. Read through their stone imagery, *Pearl* and *Sir Gawain* seem to parallel each other in how these women intervene for the Dreamer and Gawain. As noted earlier, pearls are capable of curing both the inept and sleeplessness. These remedies play roles in *Pearl* and *Sir Gawain*, further connecting the two poems. While the Dreamer is sleeping, the Pearl-Maiden engages him in a dialogue to cure him of his ineptitude, forcing him to *wake up* from his preoccupation with grief. Similarly, Lady Bertilak, cloaked in pearls, engages Gawain in lengthy dialogues, challenging the chivalric ideals of Arthur's earthly court. According to the Aberdeen Bestiary, there is an additional potentially healing or purifying quality associated with the pearl. The pearl arises from another stone called the *mermeccoleon*, which directly symbolizes Mary, 'Sicut enim de mari ascendit ille lapis, sic sancta Maria ascendit de domo patris sui ad templum dei, / et ibi accepit rorem celestem.' [For just as the stone rises from the sea, so Saint Mary went up from the house of her father to the temple of God and there received the dew from heaven].<sup>35</sup> So the pearl arises from the *mermeccoleon* just as Christ is born of Mary, thus linking the pearl to both the ultimate intercessory figure and the salvific hero. Tison Pugh argues that the Bertilaks ensnare Gawain in a 'godgame,' a form of conceptual game in which the pawn-figure 'generally "wins" the game by experiencing the game-maker's labyrinthine but ultimately instructional game.'<sup>36</sup> However, as Pugh contends, 'Christianity trumps Bertilak's godgame by turning the threat of

his magical godgame into a pedagogical lesson' by recasting 'magical actions to Christian ends.'<sup>37</sup> Through examination of the precious stones, we can build on this argument to incorporate *Pearl*.

*Cleanness* doesn't quite fit the godgame motif since Belshazzar's lesson comes too late and does not incorporate any kind of labyrinthine gaming dynamic. He errs repeatedly in his pride, lechery, and gluttony. David does serve as an interceding figure by literally reading the writing on the wall for Belshazzar, but in doing so, David also spells out Belshazzar's doom (ll. 1642–1740). Unlike the Dreamer and Gawain, Belshazzar is not a redeemable figure and cannot earn a hopeful end through engaging in a gaming dialogue with David. Additionally, since this section of *Cleanness*, like the others that precede it, is a biblical paraphrase, it would not make sense for Belshazzar to have an outcome different from that in the Vulgate. However, the intricate gaming dialogue is evident in both *Pearl* and *Sir Gawain*.

The Pearl-Maiden's role is similar to that of Lady Bertilak as a companion to the game-master. The Pearl-Maiden is an intercessionary agent of God, appearing to the Dreamer as a bride of Christ in New Jerusalem. Cloaked in pearls, Lady Bertilak continues the role of questioning earthly values. Both *Pearl* and *Sir Gawain* describe three planes of existence: the earthly, the liminal, and the Otherworldly. For *Pearl*, these are the burial mound upon which the Dreamer falls asleep, the dreamscape of his vision, and New Jerusalem. For *Sir Gawain*, these three planes are King Arthur's court, Bertilak's court, and the Green Chapel. In both cases, Otherworldly figures intervene in the lives of the misguided at sites of jeweled imagery.

The earthly realms in *Pearl* and *Sir Gawain* are largely devoid of named precious stones. The Dreamer, of course, laments the loss of his pearl, but there are no other stones mentioned before he enters the dreamscape. But when his 'goste is gon in Godez grace,' [spirit has gone to God's grace,] the poet tells us in romance language that 'In auenture þer meruaylez meuen' [In adventure there marvels occur] (ll. 63–64). The Dreamer's spirit goes on a quest where marvels occur. He encounters a dreamscape with 'crystal klyffez so cler of kynde,' [crystal cliffs so clear in nature,] gravel made of pearls, and finally a river with a bed of 'emerad, saffer, oþer gemme gente' [emerald, sapphire, and other gleaming gems] (ll. 74, 81–82, 118). This dreamscape is littered with gems, many of which are identified by name. Similarly, King Arthur's court at the beginning of *Sir Gawain* contains precious stones, but the *Pearl*-poet chooses not to identify them. Guenevere sits under a canopy of tapestries embroidered with 'þe best gemmes' [the best gems] and she is described, like the Pearl-Maiden, as 'of prys' [of value] and the 'comlokest to discrye / Per glent with yȝen gray' [most comely to see / There with gleaming gray eyes] (ll. 78–79, 82–83). Andrew and Waldron suggest in their footnote to this passage that Guenevere is meant to be a 'jewel beyond price.'<sup>38</sup> However,

that jewel is never identified by name. This would suggest that she has earthly value and is perhaps the most beautiful woman on earth. If that is the case, then Gawain's comparison of Lady Bertilak to Guenevere becomes a clue to Lady Bertilak's otherworldly status. When he first encounters Bertilak's wife, Gawain thinks to himself 'And wener þen Wenore, as þe wyʒe þoʒt' [And more lovely than Guenevere, so the man thought] (l. 945). Romance genre conventions dictate that Guenevere must be the most beautiful woman on earth and, perhaps, she is here in *Sir Gawain*.<sup>39</sup> If she is the most beautiful on earth, then an attentive audience must pick up on the curious nature of Lady Bertilak.

Before feasting can commence, Arthur demands an 'aenturus þyng, an vncoupe tale / Of sum mayn meruayle' [adventurous thing, a novel tale / Of some noteworthy marvel], echoing the progression of the Dreamer's spirit going on a quest (ll. 93–94). Here there is also a connection back to Belshazzar's feast in *Cleanness*, though it is perhaps noteworthy that Belshazzar does not demand a marvel. Instead, it happens rather against his will. Like this surprising marvel in Belshazzar's feasting hall with its descriptions of gluttonous attendees, Arthur's Christmas feast demonstrates a great deal of gluttonous consumption before it is interrupted. It is not until the marvelous Green Knight appears that there is any description of a precious stone. His attire 'glemered and glent al of grene stones' [glimmered and shone all of green stones] (l. 172). However, there are still no specifically identified stones.

It is on the road a year later to Bertilak's castle that the *Pearl*-poet first mentions a precious stone by name. Gawain wears a circlet 'Of diamantez a deuz / Pat boþe were bryʒt and broun' [A device of diamonds / That both were bright and shining] (ll. 617–618). The Aberdeen Bestiary states that the diamond is 'lapis est inter omnes lapides durissimus domans, omnes lapides preciosos et vult poni in caliber et dari non desideratus nec permittit descindere bona illius qui eum habet' [amongst all stones the hardest, cutting all other precious stones; it likes to be set in steel; it does not wish to be given away; and it will not allow the goods of him who possesses it to be divided].<sup>40</sup> As noted earlier in the discussion of the Apocalypse imagery, the diamond is not one of the twelve stones of New Jerusalem. In *Sir Gawain*, it is one of only two precious stones specifically identified over the course of the entire poem. If we imagine its significance as the lapidary does, Gawain is the hardest, or perhaps heartiest, of Arthur's knights. We might read the diamond as signifying Gawain's ties to the earthly realm and his readiness for the pedagogical lesson ahead. Indeed, during his journey, Gawain is described as one of the best knights on earth and 'To fynde hys fere vpon folde, in faith, is not eþe' [To find his equal upon earth, in faith, is not easy] (l. 676). His journey, unlike that of the Dreamer, is through a quagmire of Welsh bogland and rugged landscape devoid of any gem imagery. In his despair,

Gawain prays to Mary, God, and the Cross of Christ (ll. 737, 753, 762). Two lines later, he stumbles across Bertilak's castle. This does not seem to be a coincidence, at least not to Gawain. He thanks Jesus and Saint Julian as he approaches the castle that 'schemered and schon' [shimmered and shone] like a jewel (l. 772). The description of Hautdesert again echoes not only the Jerusalem treasure at Belshazzar's feast, but also the description of New Jerusalem in *Pearl*. The castle Hautdesert is a gigantic jeweled setting for the revelatory games Gawain is about to encounter.

The Dreamer and Gawain each encounter their respective pearl-ladies in the liminal space. The Pearl-Maiden wears a 'cortel of self sute schene, / With precios perlez al vmbepyʒte' [kirtle of matching shine, / With precious pearls all around] (ll. 203–204). Similarly, Lady Bertilak wears 'Kerchofes' with 'mony cler perlez' ['Kerchiefs' with 'many clear pearls'] (l. 954). It is important to note here that the Pearl-Maiden *is* a pearl, while Lady Bertilak is merely clothed in pearls. The Pearl-Maiden is a resident of New Jerusalem and Lady Bertilak adopts the guise to perform a similar role for Gawain. Both women serve their male counterparts, who impart the final lessons in each poem. These two pearl-ladies serve didactic purposes in their respective narratives, though of course there is a critical difference between them. The Pearl-Maiden engages in a dialogue with the Dreamer to prevent him from doing the forbidden, whereas Lady Bertilak appears to do the reverse and encourages Gawain to break his rules of chivalry through seduction. Both attempt the remedies of pearls—curing sleeplessness and ineptitude, though they ultimately act as intercessors to lead the protagonists to their final confrontations. The Dreamer wishes to cross the river full of New Jerusalem gems, and it is Gawain who is steadfast in preventing a border-crossing. However, they are both led to reexamine their earthly values.

If we probe the substance of these dialogues, we find that both the Dreamer and Gawain are led into sin by human emotions. This is perhaps a critical difference from Belshazzar's sins. His are manifold and are not instigated by the grip of overwhelming emotions. Rather than losing his way, Belshazzar seems to have always been unclean. The Dreamer, on the other hand, is consumed by his grief and questions the Pearl-Maiden's role in heaven as a Queen. Gawain is consumed by his fear of death and his chivalric values are interrogated by Lady Bertilak. This problematizing of Gawain's virtues is made overt by the contrast with the Green Knight exemplifying the virtues through righteous action as a willing martyr, as noted by David Beauregard.<sup>41</sup> Gawain's fear of death prevents him from enacting the virtues symbolized in the pentangle on his shield. So, both the Dreamer and Gawain are plagued by their human emotions to the detriment of the values they must espouse to reach New Jerusalem after death; the Pearl-Maiden and Lady Bertilak must intercede for the sake of their souls.

The Dreamer argues that the Pearl-Maiden:

neuer God nauþer plese ne pray,  
 Ne neuer nawþer Pater ne Crede—  
 And quen mad on þe first day!  
 I may not traw, so God me spede,  
 Pat God wolde wryþe so wrange away.

[never God neither please nor pray,  
 Nor never neither Pater nor Creed—  
 And queen made on the first day!  
 I may not believe, so God help me,  
 That God would turn so astray.] (ll. 485–489)

He is shocked that one so young as to not even know her prayers could be made a Queen of heaven and the Dreamer falls into the trap of questioning God's wisdom on the matter. His grief is so all-consuming for his young daughter that the Dreamer has abandoned the teachings of the church. So, the Pearl-Maiden must lead him to understanding. Gawain's situation is decidedly different, though he arrives at a similar reckoning in the end. Like the Dreamer, he too is in a sleep-position when Lady Bertilak arrives. However, the dialogue with Lady Bertilak concerns his earthly values and, as such, he must wake up to engage in this bedroom conversation. She tells Gawain that she knows him by reputation because 'alle þe worlde worchipez' [all the world worships] him (l. 1227). Lady Bertilak tells him 'Your honour, your hendelayk is hendely prayed / With lordez, wyth ladyes, with alle þat lyf bere' [Your honor, your courtesy is courteously praised / With lords, with ladies, with all that bears life] (ll. 1228–1229). She flatters his chivalric honor, but when he refuses to be seduced, Lady Bertilak questions whether he is indeed Sir Gawain. This questioning of his values leads him to give the requested kiss, fully ensnaring him in the godgame. Each new day leads Gawain closer to his death as well as closer to losing the game. If the game with the Bertilaks is part of the larger game of the narrative and is subsumed by a Christian lesson, then this probing of Gawain's earthly values gains new meaning in light of the pedagogical dialogue in *Pearl*. Both the Dreamer and Gawain are steadfastly entrenched in the earthly realm and thus are sinful in their own ways. Considering the kerchiefs of pearls, Lady Bertilak adopts the guise of virtue to impart an experiential lesson just as her husband costumes himself in the terrorizing image of a Green Knight.

As noted previously, both the Pearl-Maiden and Lady Bertilak are participants in the lesson ultimately imparted by their male counterparts. Through stone imagery, we can connect the Green Knight to Christ, just as we connect Lady Bertilak to the Pearl-Maiden by her kerchiefs of many pearls. The Green Knight's attire is also heavily encrusted in gems, though they are

not identified by name. Instead, we are told that they are green and therefore contribute to the overarching Otherworldly greenness of him. Following the Apocalypse stone imagery, the Green Knight is likely decked out in emeralds, which the Aberdeen Bestiary describes in this way:

smaragadus qui omnes herbas et arborum fronds viriditate superat et gerentes eam, reddit intuentibus gratiosos, aerem vicinum virescere facit [. . .] quia virginitatem servare, magis est angelicum quam humanum, Graciosa autem est angli[e]lis et deo et hominibus et in se portat ymaginem Christi quia sequitur agnum quocumque ierit

[the smaragadus {emerald} outdoes in its greenness every kind of grass and the boughs of trees; it makes those who wear it appear attractive; it makes the air around grow green [. . .] Because it preserves virginity it is more angelic than human; moreover, it is pleasing to angels and God and man and carries within itself the image of Christ because it follows the lamb wherever it goes].<sup>42</sup>

Further, Henry of Huntingdon's lapidary suggests that the emerald 'lapis est his, qui prescire futura temptantes responsa sibi diuina requirunt' [is the proper stone for those, who seek to foreknow the future / to test the responses of the divine to seek God for themselves].<sup>43</sup> The Green Knight does indeed outdo 'greenness' of every kind and seems to make the air in Arthur's court 'grow green.' If we define the Green Knight by the emeralds he seems to wear, then his connection to Christ in *Pearl* becomes clearer. The Aberdeen Bestiary also states that the emerald 'speculum reddit, et significat virginitatem, que virorem carnis integer servat' [yields an image just as a mirror does; it signifies virginity, which wholly preserves the freshness of the flesh].<sup>44</sup> This suggests the Green Knight will function as a salvific balm for Gawain in particular, and Arthur's court more generally by producing a mirror of good virtues to aspire to and, in Gawain's case, encourage physical preservation. Further, the Green Knight is described in language that suggests he is the most beautiful man on earth. The *Pearl*-poet writes that 'his wombe and his wast were worthily smale, / And all his fetures folwande, in forme that he hade, Ful clene' [his stomach and his waist were worthily small, / And all his features following, in form that he had, Full clean] (ll. 144–146). In the manuscript, the bob 'Ful clene' immediately follows 'smale,' suggesting that his slender body is pure.<sup>45</sup> In this initial description, the Green Knight is described not only as handsome, but the adjective 'clene' is used four times.<sup>46</sup> Iterations of 'stones' occur three times and 'golde' appears five times.<sup>47</sup> Blanch notes in his analysis of *Pearl* that gold is 'symbolic of the divine kingdom.'<sup>48</sup> The poet is clearly hinting at the Green Knight's relevance to the godgame at hand. After all, it is the Green Knight who imparts the final lesson to Gawain, just as Christ is the one to ultimately prevent the Dreamer from crossing the river into New Jerusalem. As noted above, the *Pearl*-poet litters the poems of the

Cotton Nero MS with hints that he is breaking the genre conventions of both Apocalypse imagery and romance. The elaborate description of the Green Knight is one such occurrence of the poet's play with attentive audiences. The apparent dissonance between the Green Knight's early actions and his gem-covered beauty disrupts romance conventions and invites the audience to play along with the game.

Gawain loses the game when he accepts the green girdle from Lady Bertilak. The greenness should be a clue for the *Pearl*-poet's audience. Again following the stone imagery, the girdle appears to do precisely what the lapidary says the diamond can do. Lady Bertilak tells Gawain that while he wears it, 'Per is no habel vnder heuen tohewe hym þat myȝt, / For he myȝt not be slayn for slyȝt vpon erþe' [There is no man under heaven that might kill him, / For he might not be killed with any stratagem upon earth] (ll. 1853–1854). None *under heaven* can cut him down and no one *on earth* can kill him. The girdle's powers are restricted to the earthly realm and those powers operate as a false promise of preservation, which only the Green Knight can bestow. The diamond, which encrusts Gawain's circlet, is the toughest of the precious stones and similarly cannot be cut by other stones. Could this be a clue that Gawain is not in danger in the way he initially supposes? In terms of the terrestrial world, it would seem that Gawain is going to be fine. However, like the Dreamer, it is his emotions that lead him into sin and he is rebuked for it by the Green Knight. It is perhaps significant that Gawain's final lesson occurs in an Otherworldly Green Chapel, which Gawain describes as a 'chapel of meschaunce' [chapel of mishap] and the 'corsedest kyrk' [most cursed church] that he has ever encountered (ll. 2195–2196). The Dreamer's final lesson is imparted after a vision of New Jerusalem, another Otherworldly edifice. Both Otherworldly realms are separated by rivers, which are potent symbols of liminality, thus serving as the tenuous barriers between the liminal spaces where the pearl-ladies attempted to intercede and the Otherworldly spaces where these two protagonists discover the ends of the godgames.

Gawain and the Dreamer ultimately resist their final lessons in frenzied, bodily ways. As the Green Knight is about to deliver the stroke of his axe, Gawain flinches and is rebuked for his inability to stay still per their agreement. Unlike the Green Knight, Gawain fails to live up to the faith of martyrdom. The Dreamer's 'manez mynde to maddyng malte' [mortal mind with reckless folly melted] (l. 1154) when he decides to cross the river and join the Pearl-Maiden. But he is restricted by some unseen force because 'Hit watz not at my Pryncez paye' [It was not at my Prince's pleasure] and he is thrown straight out of his dream vision (l. 1164). Gawain steels himself to the task more willingly 'style as þe ston' [still as a stone] (l. 2293). The Green Knight incites Gawain's anger with a statement of his courage, but the stroke finally

lands on his neck, which Gawain learns is for his lack of faith. He has been ensnared by the lure of the green girdle, which he does not need.

It is then that the Green Knight says something peculiar: 'As perle bi þe quite pese is of prys more, / So is Gawayn, in god faith, bi oþer gay knyȝtez' [As a pearl is prized best among white peas, / So is Gawain, in good faith, by other gay knights] (ll. 2364–2365). As a pearl is of greater price than the peas around it, so Gawain is the most prized among all the other knights. Recalling the possible curative powers of the pearl (relief for the sleepless and the inept), comparing Gawain to a pearl among peas suggests that he is suitable candidate for Lady Bertilak's medical care, but the Green Knight must intervene in the end. Just as the emerald can operate as a mirror of virtues, so the Green Knight holds up the mirror to Gawain and he is found spiritually imperfect. There continues to be an overlap between the Green Knight's actions and the symbolic valence of the emerald. For example, there is a connection in the Green Knight's assessment of Gawain to the significance of *Pearl*, though it is only a brief comparison. Gawain is not a pearl or, more importantly, a man without sin. However, on earth, he is the most valuable of knights. The pearl is used to call back the idea of one without stain, but Gawain is simply the most virtuous of the knights on earth. Gawain recognizes the problem of this metaphor too and complains angrily: 'Corsed worth cowarddyse and couetyse boþe! / In yow is vylany and vyse, þat virtue distryez' [Cursed be cowardice and covetous both! / In you is villainy and vice, that virtue destroys] (ll. 2374–2375). His virtue has been tested and found lacking in the face of such a trial. Just as the Dreamer is led to sin by his all-consuming grief, so too has Gawain been led to sin by his cowardice. The one desperate for his own death so he may be reunited with his daughter; and the other fearing the possibility of the fate the former longs for.

The Green Knight describes Gawain's suffering as a penance. He suggests that he is the one who has 'pured as clene' [purged as clean] Gawain's soul (l. 2393). So, who is the Green Knight to purge Gawain's soul clean? If we follow the logic of Pugh's godgames argument as well as the lapidary's description of the emerald, the Green Knight appears to be an agent of Christ. The magical games are subsumed by a Christian pedagogical game. Like the Dreamer, Gawain had an encounter with an Otherworldly edifice that proves an antidote to his sins. The Green Knight in his emerald-encrusted attire serves as a stand-in for Christ, just as Lady Bertilak adorned in pearls takes Gawain through a lesson like the Pearl-Maiden. They together perform for Gawain an experience of penance through gaming that parallels the Dreamer's consolation by the Pearl-Maiden. These two poems, linked by the explicit imagery of the stones in *Cleanness*, demonstrate a specific progression in the Cotton Nero MS. The *Pearl*-poet gives his audience a didactic dialogue with actual figures from heaven in *Pearl*. Then *Cleanness* elaborates on the descriptions of New

Jerusalem through its depiction of the Jerusalem treasure confiscated by Nebuchadnezzar. This imagery is sharply contrasted by Belshazzar's inability to redeem himself despite the intervention from David. These two narratives prepare the *Pearl*-poet's audience to read through the gaming structure of *Sir Gawain* and learn a lesson about sin and penance from Gawain's struggle with his moral failings. The artifice constructed by stone imagery carefully links Gawain's adventure with that of the Dreamer from the earthly realm, to the liminal space where the didactic dialogue occurs, and finally to the Otherworldly realm where the heroes are cleansed. Gawain keeps the green girdle not for its value, but for its reminder of his failings as a man. Just as the Dreamer realizes his own failings at the end of *Pearl*, Gawain acknowledges that he is not without spot like the pearl and laments 'How tender hit is to entyse teches of fylþe' [How easy it is to attract blemishes of filth] (l. 2436). It is then that Gawain asks who the Green Knight is and he reveals himself as Lord Bertilak, an instrument of Morgan le Fay's machinations. Whether this might point to Morgan as the god-figure controlling the entirety of the Christian pedagogical game is up for debate, though it is worth noting that she is indeed referred to as 'Morgne þe goddess' [Morgan the goddess] (l. 2452).

On the surface, *Sir Gawain* seems like a romance. In some sense it is, though it routinely defies the conventions of the genre. Additionally, the *Pearl*-poet alludes throughout the course of the poem to the final revelation of Morgan as the game-master and the illusory nature of the various games. If the audience pays close attention to the patterns cultivated in the earlier poems, they should be predisposed to identify the use of stone imagery in *Sir Gawain* as signifying Gawain's imperiled virtue and his need for an intervention. When Lady Bertilak appears in pearls, this audience should recognize that she is going to perform for Gawain a function similar to that of the Pearl-Maiden. However, these clues only become evident if the audience has been exposed to *Pearl*, *Cleanness*, and *Patience*. This is perhaps why earlier scholars have not noticed the connections between these poems evoked by the use of stones and the impact they would have on the expectations of the late medieval reader. The *Pearl*-poet trains his audience to take notice of such stones, particularly when they appear to be connected to the Apocalypse imagery and evoke certain qualities in the figures and spaces that contribute to the homiletic lesson imparted.

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## NOTES

- 1 Hereafter identified as 'Cotton Nero MS.'
- 2 Hereafter referred to as *Sir Gawain*.
- 3 See Robert J. Menner, *Purity: A Middle English Poem* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1920); John W. Clark, 'Observations on Certain Differences in Vocabulary between *Cleanness* and *Sir Gawain and the Green Knight*,' *The Philosophical Quarterly* 28 (1949): 261–273; John Dale Ebbs, 'Stylistic Mannerisms of the *Gawain-Poet*,' *Journal of English and Germanic Philology* 57 (1958): 522–5; M.W. Bloomfield, '*Sir Gawain and the Green Knight*: An Appraisal,' *PMLA* 76.1 (1961): 7–19; Matsuji Tajima, 'Additional Syntactical Evidence against Common Authorship of MS. Cotton Nero A.X.,' *English Studies* 59 (1978): 193–198; Göran Kjellmer, *Did the 'Pearl Poet' write Pearl?* (Gothenburg: Acta Universitatis Gothoburgensis, 1975); Susanna Greer Fein, 'Twelve-Line Stanza Forms in Middle English and the Date of *Pearl*,' *Speculum* 72.2 (1997): 367–398.
- 4 Murray McGillivray and Christina Duffy, 'New Light on the *Sir Gawain and the Green Knight* Manuscript: Multispectral Imaging and the Cotton Nero A.x. Illustrations,' *Speculum* 92.S1 (2017): S110–S144. See also W.W. Greg, review of the Gollancz facsimile, *Modern Language Review* 19 (1924): 227 (cited in McGillivray and Duffy).
- 5 Quoted in Paul F. Reichardt, 'A Seventeenth-Century Acknowledgment of "Sir Gawain and the Green Knight" in an Early Catalogue of the Cottonian Library,' *Studies in Bibliography* 49 (1996): 129 [129–133]. Unless otherwise stated, translations are my own.
- 6 Maidie Hilmo, 'Did the Scribe Draw the Miniatures in British Library, MS Cotton Nero A.x (The *Pearl-Gawain* Manuscript)?' *Journal of the Early Book Society* 20 (2016): 111–136. Hilmo also suggests that the plainness of the paintings could be due to the contemporary iconoclasm of religious reformers.
- 7 Part of this report, written by Dr. Paul Garside, the Conservation Scientist at the British Library, is included as an appendix to Hilmo's article, 'Did the Scribe Draw the Miniatures,' 127–131.
- 8 Felicity Riddy, 'Jewels in *Pearl*,' in *A Companion to the Gawain-Poet*, ed. Derek Brewer and Jonathan Gibson (Woodbridge, England: Brewer, 1997), pp. 143–44 [143–155].
- 9 Riddy, 'Jewels in *Pearl*,' p. 149.
- 10 Riddy, 'Jewels in *Pearl*,' p. 144.
- 11 Tony Davenport, 'Jewels and Jewelers in *Pearl*,' *Review of English Studies* 59 (2008): 513 [508–20].
- 12 Davenport, 'Jewels and Jewelers in *Pearl*,' 513.
- 13 Davenport, 'Jewels and Jewelers in *Pearl*,' 514.
- 14 Robert J. Blanch, 'Color Symbolism and Mystical Contemplation in *Pearl*,' *Nottingham Medieval Studies* 17 (1973): 77 [58–77].
- 15 Riddy, 'Jewels in *Pearl*,' p. 146.
- 16 Riddy, 'Jewels in *Pearl*,' p. 146.

- 17 Aberdeen, Aberdeen University Library MS 24. Commonly known as the 'Aberdeen Bestiary' and identified as such in the digital facsimile and edition: Michael Arnott (web author) and Iain Beavan, *The Aberdeen Bestiary*, trans. Morton Gauld and Colin McLaren. Aberdeen Special Collections Library, University of Aberdeen. <https://www.abdn.ac.uk/bestiary/>; last accessed May 12, 2016.
- 18 Arnott and Beavan, "The History of the Manuscript, Press Marks and Binding," *The Aberdeen Bestiary*, trans. Gauld and McLaren. <https://www.abdn.ac.uk/bestiary/history.php>; last accessed October 20, 2018.
- 19 Apocalypse 21.2.
- 20 Apocalypse 21.18–20.
- 21 Apocalypse 21.21.
- 22 All citations from the Cotton Nero MS poems are taken from Malcolm Andrew and Ronald Waldron, eds. *The Poems of the Pearl Manuscript: Pearl, Cleanness, Patience, Sir Gawain and the Green Knight* (Liverpool: Liverpool University Press, 2014). All translations are my own.
- 23 Aberdeen, AUL MS 24, fol. 100v. Arnott and Beavan, *The Aberdeen Bestiary*, trans. Gauld and McLaren. <https://www.abdn.ac.uk/bestiary/ms24/f100v>; last accessed October 20, 2018.
- 24 All translations are my own. Winston Black provides an edition of the Latin text, but no translation. Winston Black, 'Henry of Huntingdon's Lapidary Rediscovered and His *Anglicanus Ortus* Reassembled,' *Mediaeval Studies* 68 (2006): 77 [43–88].
- 25 Aberdeen, AUL MS 24, fol. 100v.
- 26 Black notes that *De herbis* by a certain 'Henricus' was discovered by Bernd Ruppel and A.G. Rigg. Black's article makes great strides in reassembling and restoring the *Anglicanus Ortus* to its full form. See Bernd Ruppel, 'Ein verschollenes Gedicht des 12. Jahrhunderts: Heinrich von Huntingdon "De herbis,"' *Frühmittelalterliche Studien* 31 (1997): 197–213; and A.G. Rigg, 'Henry of Huntingdon's Herbal,' *Mediaeval Studies* 65 (2003): 213–292.
- 27 Black, 'Henry of Huntingdon's Lapidary Rediscovered,' 48.
- 28 Black, 'Henry of Huntingdon's Lapidary Rediscovered,' 51.
- 29 Black, 'Henry of Huntingdon's Lapidary Rediscovered,' 44 and 46–7. Marbod's work was one of the most popular lapidaries of the Middle Ages.
- 30 Blanch, 'Color Symbolism and Mystical Contemplation in *Pearl*,' 63.
- 31 Rosalind Field, 'The Heavenly Jerusalem in *Pearl*,' *Modern Language Review* 81.1 (1986): 7–8 [7–17].
- 32 Field, 'The Heavenly Jerusalem in *Pearl*,' 7.
- 33 Field, 'The Heavenly Jerusalem in *Pearl*,' 8.
- 34 Interestingly, he is brought in on the counsel of Belshazzar's queen. This is a surprising moment of agency for a woman in this particular poem.
- 35 Aberdeen, AUL MS 24, fol. 96r. Arnott and Beavan, *The Aberdeen Bestiary*, trans. Gauld and McLaren. <https://www.abdn.ac.uk/bestiary/ms24/f96r>; last accessed October 20, 2018.

- 36 Tison Pugh, 'Gawain and the Godgames,' *Christianity & Literature* 51.4 (2002): 527 [525–551].
- 37 Pugh, 'Gawain and the Godgames,' 534.
- 38 Andrew and Waldron, *The Poems of the Pearl Manuscript*, p. 210 fn. 81.
- 39 Guinevere's status as the most beautiful woman is challenged in several romances, often producing conflict as in Marie de France's *Lai de Lanval*. In the case of Sir Gawain, no direct conflict arises from this challenge. Instead there is an absence of such conflict, reinforcing the idea that her status on earth will go unchallenged.
- 40 Aberdeen, AUL MS 24, fol. 100r. Arnott and Beavan, *The Aberdeen Bestiary*, trans. Gauld and McLaren. <https://www.abdn.ac.uk/bestiary/ms24/f100r>
- 41 David N. Beauregard, 'Moral Theology in *Sir Gawain and the Green Knight*: The Pentangle, the Green Knight, and the Perfection of Virtue,' *Renascence: Essays on Values in Literature* 65.3 (2013): 152 [146–164].
- 42 Aberdeen, AUL MS 24, fols. 97v–98r. Arnott and Beavan, *The Aberdeen Bestiary*, trans. Gauld and McLaren. <https://www.abdn.ac.uk/bestiary/ms24/f97v> and <https://www.abdn.ac.uk/bestiary/ms24/f98r>; last accessed October 20, 2018.
- 43 Black, 'Henry of Huntingdon's Lapidary Rediscovered,' 72.
- 44 Aberdeen, AUL MS 24, fol. 97v. Arnott and Beavan, *The Aberdeen Bestiary*, trans. Gauld and McLaren. <https://www.abdn.ac.uk/bestiary/ms24/f97v>; last accessed October 20, 2018.
- 45 Aberdeen, AUL MS 24, fol. 93r. Arnott and Beavan, *The Aberdeen Bestiary*, trans. Gauld and McLaren. <https://www.abdn.ac.uk/bestiary/ms24/f93r>; last accessed October 20, 2018.
- 46 At lines: 146, 154, 158, 161.
- 47 Stones at lines: 162, 172, 193. Gold at lines: 159, 167, 190, 195, 211.
- 48 Blanch, 'Color Symbolism and Mystical Contemplation in *Pearl*,' 63.