

THE METAPHORICAL PRISON AS AN EXEGETICAL IMAGE OF MAN

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1. Prison as reality and metaphor: the *Consolatio* of Boethius as a point of departure

In the year 524 a Roman *magister officiorum* named Patricius Severinus Boethius was imprisoned for alleged treason by the imperial guards of Theoderich in Pavia. While in prison, he wrote the wondrous book of the *Consolatio Philosophiae*, the last major work in the Greco-Roman spirit, which was to become a handbook and spiritual guide throughout the Middle Ages.¹

The book centres upon the visit of the personified *Philosophia* to Boethius in prison. This concept forms the setting of the dialogue, and the image of the prison remains a kind of pivotal point for the whole work which deals with the meaning of fortune and misfortune in human life. The teaching of *Philosophia* culminates in the proof that earthly goods and good fortune are meaningless. Man is admonished to rise above the material world and to strive for the highest good - the origin of all Good. The rejection of all that is purely material is part of the Platonic heritage of Boethius. For Plato, the highest task of human reason is recognition of the eternal, the search for the realm of ideas beyond the merely material. Man is hampered in this undertaking by the desire of the senses for earthly and hence transient things. This is the congenital weakness of the human body which is nothing more than the prison of the soul.

The concept of the relation between body and soul had already become a commonplace in late antiquity. Boethius makes particular use of it in Prose 2 of Book V. Here the soul makes itself a prisoner by relinquishing reason

and yielding to vice. But already Book I of the *Consolatio* transforms the ever-present genuine prison in Pavia into a metaphorical one, in keeping with the Platonic concept. Philosophy not only visits Boethius in his prison literally; she identifies herself with the prisoner, and draws him into her argumentation by using the plural "we".² The prisoner at first assumes that Philosophy has descended from the upper regions to the loneliness of his exile, only to be imprisoned herself and victimized by false accusations. Philosophy, however, makes it clear that there is no prison for the man who knows no fear, and who has no vain expectations. Only those bound by earthly values drop their shield and surrender to the enemy, and in so doing, they submit of their own free will to the shackles of slavery, in other words to imprisonment.³

From the very first lines of the *Consolatio*, imprisonment means a kind of spiritual confusion (Metre 2, pp. 11-12). The eyes of the prisoner turn away from the spheres, the stars of the heaven, nature and the beauties of the world; instead the gaze is bent downwards toward "dead earth", the neck is bowed in slavery.⁴ Imprisonment thus becomes a metaphor for a sickness of the human soul erring from its destiny.⁵ At no point in the book does Philosophy deny that Boethius is in reality a prisoner; she proves, however, that his concrete prison is irrelevant for all significant aspects of human existence. The only important thing is the prison of the soul, in which man voluntarily locks himself through a false relationship to reality. Thus each man bears within himself the key to freedom.

2. The levels of meaning and the interpretation of medieval texts

Using the model of Boethius' *Consolatio* with all its rich tradition of influence throughout the Middle Ages as point of departure, I should like to analyze the various interpretations which have been associated with the metaphor of imprisonment.⁶ I am well aware of how dangerous it is to contradict C. S. Lewis⁷, and yet one of my first premises will be that exegetical models of thought have to be taken into consideration.⁸

Anyone who wants to understand the mentality of medieval authors and their followers must be acquainted with their patterns of thought and the corresponding structures. The theory of *allegoria*, of the levels of meaning, is part and parcel of that heritage. It provided an explanation of the significance of history. The texts I shall deal with all indicate that their authors were acquainted with the various levels of meaning - although not necessarily with the pertinent scholastic exegetical terminology. Fourfold

text analysis had become so commonplace that by the Late Middle Ages (and even in the Early Modern period) it was automatically part of the poet's way of thought. Not only was it used for exegetical purposes, that is for the interpretation of existing texts, but it also formed a kind of underlying substratum for the creativity of the poetic imagination.

The genuine prison (*sensus historicus*) as a building in which the prisoner is enclosed symbolizes in Boethius, as in other authors, the nether world above which mankind must rise; it stands for the prison of the body, of the world, or of love (*sensus allegoricus*). This new level of meaning contains the nucleus of all further planes of interpretation, "quia sunt signati per spiritum litterae, et non per litteram."⁹ The allegorical level already embodies the moral task which ensues from spiritual enlightenment, namely the challenge to throw off the bands of sin (*sensus tropologicus*). Mankind can break imprisonment by striving for the Highest Good, which is identical with God; in this way man partakes of the Divine. Should he fail, however, he is doomed to the prison of hell (*sensus anagogicus*).

The different levels of reality are interrelated and refer to each other. Literature is not only a reflection of historical facts but a means to understand them and to make them accessible. I will limit myself to examples in which the levels of reality and metaphor are almost necessarily related to each other by choosing poems on prison and imprisonment written in prison or during imprisonment. It can be assumed that poets in such extremes were forced to write in agonizing consciousness of their restrictions. We can further assume that their actual situation will be reflected in their work.

The following questions seem to be relevant in this regard:

1. How are the physical conditions of imprisonment represented in the poet's work?
 2. In which way and with what intention are the literal and the allegorical level made mutually dependent and thus interchangeable?
 3. How does the allegorical sense become a moral lesson?
 4. What does the prison metaphor tell us about the poet's conception of human destiny?
 5. What is the relationship between literature and reality - is it really mimetic or homologic?
3. The literal level of "Prison" (*sensus litteralis* or *sensus historicus*)
The outer reality of prison is hardly ever described in detail in

medieval poetry. Usually the authors are content with vague comments on the location of the prison or dungeon, which was generally situated in the great tower or keep of a castle. Royal and noble prisoners, however, often occupied luxury suites rather than deep dark vaults. In the Middle Ages, to be a prisoner often meant something like being under house arrest.¹⁰ Thus, for example, English kings were often prisoners in their own castles.¹¹ There are parallels enough in literature. The knights of the Round Table sent their defeated opponents to Arthur's Court after a joust, to the King himself, or to Queen Guinevere. Such knights were also prisoners, but on parole, i.e. released from detention. Imprisonment in the Middle Ages had many faces. We know of prisoners who practically rotted in dark dungeons, and of others who barely changed their royal style of life at all.

Charles d'Orléans's (1391-1465) stay as a prisoner in the White Tower has been preserved in a kind of picture story (MS British Museum Royal 16 F II, f. 73).¹² It can be read from right to left. On the far right side, Charles is sitting at a writing-table under an arch, clothed in ermine-furred robes and guarded by soldiers wearing the Cross of Saint George. In the middle of the picture Charles is looking out of a window, and in each hand he holds what may well be a writing roll or parchment. Halfway to the left Charles is greeting a knight with a red surcoat, while giving him a roll. The knight's horse with its red caparison is being held by a page dressed in green. On the left side of the picture the knight is riding away from the palace court, together with his page and a large company. The subject of the picture story is apparently a certain message the prisoner is sending to his friends.

An additional part of the historical meaning and therewith the literal level of the text are the poet's comments on details of his life in prison, the reason for his imprisonment, complaints about his opponents, pleas for ransom and threats of revenge. All these motifs occur in highly complicated allegorical poems, for example in the ballads of Charles d'Orléans. Quite often they comprise the major portion or the essential content of the poem. Two poems written by English kings, Richard I and Edward II, can serve as examples.

Richard the Lionhearted (1157-1199)¹³ was taken captive by Leopold IV of Austria during his return from the Third Crusade, and kept prisoner in Dürnstein Castle, and, later, on the Trifels (1192-1194). In 1193, during his captivity, he wrote a poem in French in which he complained of his fate and addressed bitter accusations toward his vassals. He regarded it as a disgrace

that he had to spend two winters in prison simply for lack of ransom, whereas he himself would free the poorest comrade from such duress if it were merely a matter of gold. All the statements of the poem are sober, objective, and directly connected with the situation, and the individual peoples and nations from which he had hoped for help are named explicitly. Only in one passage does Richard wax poetic: when he addresses his poem as though it were a person. It is to tell his comrade warriors that they have proved unreliable: "qu'ils ne sont pas certains".¹⁴

In a similar manner Edward II (1307-1327) used his enforced idleness in Kenilworth and later in Berkeley to compose several poems on his imprisonment (preserved in a manuscript of before 1350).¹⁵ One Anglo-Norman poem in the style of Provençal lyric poetry has been preserved in the original. The first portion consists of a complaint against fortune and his enemies, who still persist in tormenting him even in prison ("En fort prison me font pener", V. 16; "Pener me funt cruelement"; V. 17).¹⁶ The larger, second portion of the poem consists of a prayer for the forgiveness of sins and for intercession in behalf of the young Edward, who had just been crowned king in his place.¹⁷ May God destroy all the enemies of the King - this is his inmost wish. Like Richard I, Edward then proceeds to address his own poem. It is to visit a woman in Kenire (?) and give her a somewhat cryptic message: when the raging stag turns back from flight and attacks the dogs, she will need no physician since she is so wise. (??)¹⁸ Edward's poem closes with a request for the grace of God.

4. From the literal level to the allegorical one - and vice versa

Far more often than genuine prisons, we find metaphorical ones treated in literature, for instance the Prison of Love.¹⁹ In pictorial art courtly love is often symbolized by the figure of the prisoner locked²⁰ or wasting away in a tower.²¹ Lyric poetry is full of prisoners of love, but we also find them in narrative works. This is evidently due to the fact that the analogy between the lover and the prisoner was a felicitous one; the relationship between tenor and vehicle of the metaphor must have seemed perfectly natural.

Often the relationship between the real and the metaphorical is stated very explicitly. Thus, in *Kyng Alisaunder*, Candace makes it clear to the great Alexander that she has taken him captive through her wiles, and that he is now her prisoner:

O, Alisaunder, of grete renoun!
 pou art ytake in my prisoun!

Al þi strengþe ne gayneþ þe nauzth,
 For a womman þee haþ ycauzth,
 A womman þee haþ in her láas!²²

But Candace has not only locked Alexander in a genuine prison; he is also metaphorically in her bonds. Alexander himself realizes with a sigh that he has been conquered and made captive by the wiles of a woman. Candace agrees, but consoles him with the fact that Adam, Samson, David and Salomon suffered similar fates. And besides, his lot was not to be misfortune, but rather "solas". In order to leave no doubts as to the kind of consolation she has in mind, the poem clearly states that it is to be administered in bed under the covers. With great candour, Dame Candace encourages Alexander: "To my baundoun, leue sire!", (V. 269)²³

In the example of *Kyng Alisaunder*, there is a clear metaphorical transfer from the genuine to the symbolic; the concept of prison is retained and used intentionally to invoke certain associations. In love poetry this initial step is often missing. Frequently capture and condemnation to prison and death are taken up at the metaphorical level:

to deþe þou hauest me dight²⁴
 Heo me wol to deþe bryng long er my day.²⁵

But generally authors speak of the Prison of Love without deeper reflection. The lover is bound by chains, refers to himself as a captive or slave, longs for the loved one as a prisoner does for freedom, suffers like someone with a deadly disease, can hardly move his limbs, and continually agonizes and sighs for his loved one: "Ore su en prisun"²⁶ - at present I am in prison.

The direction taken in the abstract process of metaphorisation is evident in examples, which, like the *Consolatio*, take the situation of genuine imprisonment as their point of departure. A French poem with English translation called "A Prisoner's Prayer" is a good example.²⁷ The poem consists of the monologue of a man who, although innocent (V. 12-14), has been thrown into prison. In the French text he states: "Tout pour autrui mesprisun", 'because of the faults of others'. The description of the situation seems realistic. Further companions have also been imprisoned with the speaker: "Io e mi autre compaignun, Ich and mine feren sume" (V. 11). The prisoner prays to God for deliverance ("deliverrez"). But while the French original speaks more abstractly of release from "ceste peine", the English version retains the initial situation and speaks of deliverance from "this woning" (= this 'habitation').

The request of the poet that God forgive those who have brought about

such evil for him and his friends is remarkable, but evidently a topos. This also marks the transition to the religious conclusion of the poem. The stanza before last states that he is a fool, who places his trust in this transient life. In the French version Fortuna is mentioned by name as the mistress of destiny, whereas the English poem speaks only of rise and fall: "Heghe thegh he stighe, Ded him felled to grunde" (V. 29-30). Use of the first person plural in place of the previous singular as well as the extension of the prison setting to general terms of human fate, draw the audience into the realm of the poem. The situation of the prisoner is thus given the status of a metaphor for human life.

No less significant than the transcendence of the historical level by the allegorical is the opposite view point, which is taken in many works written in prison. In this case the authors have already achieved the level of the *sensus allegoricus* and look back from this vantage point upon the individual, subjective situation in order to evaluate and interpret. Here it is the literary, metaphorical prison that becomes the instrument or vehicle for describing a historical situation, such as imprisonment. The motivation for this complex procedure can hardly be reduced to a common denominator. To be sure, this was often an apt disguise for politically dangerous complaints which would have been repressed, had they been presented openly and directly. At the same time, however, it is evident that this is not the only reason for such poems as *The Kingis Quair* or the ballads of Charles d'Orléans. Such authors are far more interested in the essence behind the material world, and therewith in the meaning of what they see as random events, including those in their personal lives. Thus allegory, above all, provides a key to the interpretation of life and the world; it represents the objective aspect of the mystery.

The meaning of *The Kingis Quair*²⁸ written by James I. in the early 15th century is, up to the present, not completely clear; various interpretations vie with one another,²⁹ above all because the tension between the naiveness of narrative comment and the complexity of its implications have not been adequately taken into consideration. Today the majority of opinion sees the *Kingis Quair* as a presentation of personal experience in a metaphorical manner. The *Consolatio* of Boethius provides a kind of matrix for the entire poem. One reason for this is, of course, the shared basic experience of both authors: their works were written in prison and contain reflections on the problems arising from this situation.³⁰

Naturally James did not waste away in prison on a diet of bread and

water. On the contrary, he continued to enjoy his royal privileges. But he was a prisoner, and this is a historical fact which must be taken into consideration, though he does not describe his fate and his life directly. Instead, he takes the allegorical-metaphorical level as his point of departure. Exile and the dream vision are drawn from the *Consolatio*, and the details of his confinement are taken from Chaucer's *Knight's Tale*. Most of the other motifs, themes, topoi, and allusions are of literary nature, as well. For instance, James' Fortuna is a *mixtum compositum* taken from a good dozen literary antecedents. He regards his situation as a repetition or an analogue of archetypal events which had been portrayed by famous poets long before him. His love, which at the beginning is earthly in character, is sublimated to love of virtue, and, on a higher level, to love of God, according to the usual well-known patristic-exegetical scheme.³¹

Charles d'Orléans, a member of the royal house of France, was in a similar situation. Taken prisoner by the English in Agincourt in 1415, he spent 25 years in English prisons, such as the White Tower. Here he wrote a number of poems in French and English which dealt with his situation in an allegorical or metaphorical manner.

In several passages, Charles remarks that his poems have been written while in prison: "Car prisonnier les fis, je le confesse" ('For I made them as a prisoner, I confess').³² Frequently in the English poems he calls himself a *caitiff*, which at that time meant something like "prisoner", but also "wretch", as Robert Steel, the editor of the English poems, has noted.³³ Complaints of this type are addressed to Fortuna or to the beloved, and nearly always refer to love, its disappointments, and its deprivation.³⁴ It is in the French poems, however, that references to imprisonment are most explicit. The English poems use prison as a metaphor throughout, and the same is true of the related word fields: "bond", "hostage", "recovery", "quittance", "deliverance", etc.

One example of this is found in "Ballade 78". Love, as a personified figure, has summoned a parliament at the behest of the prisoner. Before the convocation of nobles, Charles pleads for *delyuerment* for his heart, which he has removed from his bosom and yielded up *in hostage* - an outward sign that he will always remain a true follower of Love. Parliament agrees, calling loudly: "Ye, ye, ye!" Love takes the heart up, wraps it in a black cloth, and presents it to the prisoner through his messenger Comfort. Charles is happy to receive his heart back and replaces it where it belongs. Love has shown "guytaunce", and "made my bond be rent".³⁵

One would have to be most unfeeling not to recognize what Charles means, when he speaks of the "prison of grievous displeasance".³⁶ His point of reference is always love: "Martir am y for loue and prisonere";³⁷ but the allegory involved is often only a vehicle meant to convey a certain basic tenor. Biographical fact is expressed through the theme of love, and, of course, through a number of related themes: loneliness, exile, disappointment, grief, the figure of the hermit, autumnal images, and the colors black and grey.³⁸ At any rate, the allegorical framework is far more than a mere chiffre or coded statement of political complaint; it is rather a spiritual truth shining through the bare bones of the literal level.³⁹

Courtly Love and the Prison of Love are thus a medium or instrument of expression for biographical facts. But the metaphor of the prison is at the same time a distinctive mark of the human condition, of the body, or of congenital sin. Since the sources for this type of imagery derive from the Bible and from classical and medieval authors, it would be difficult to trace a line of influence from author to author. For lyric poetry, one would look for antecedents in the poetry of Provence - and easily find them. But such parallels do not necessarily prove a direct connection. Concepts of Courtly Love were as commonplace in medieval Europe as clichés of Marxism are among today's university students - who have only rarely read a line of the original texts. The metaphor of the *prison of love* became a kind of stereotype in literature. It was visualized in manuscript illustrations and paintings,⁴⁰ and was often transferred into reality at pageants or tournaments, by knights and ladies wearing golden chains and sometimes even a prisoner's iron.⁴¹

The same interchange of levels of reality can be seen in literature. One good example of this is a poem by Oswald von Wolkenstein (1375/8-1445), called "Ain anefangk."⁴² The situation portrayed is basically that of the Prison of Love. Once the arms of his beloved held him; now he is bound by iron fetters. The transition derives from the concept of *contrapasso*: man is punished by the counterpart of that wherein or wherewith he has sinned. He who sins through love must suffer the Prison of Love as punishment.⁴³

The metaphorical shackles are retransformed, however, into iron fetters and instruments of torture with which the prisoner is tormented in his dungeon. He is chained with five iron bars, two on each leg and one on his left arm. In addition he is made to bear a thumbscrew and an iron ring with sharp points about his neck. In this manner, complains Oswald, my Lady caressed me with many a strong embrace of her white arms - and with that we have returned to the level of the Prison of Love. In this manner, each level

is made to stand for the other, in a kind of reciprocal and double movement. The last strophe comprises a topical address to Christ, who is asked to stand by him in his hour of need.⁴⁴

The Cage of Love is a specific type of the Prison of Love found in numerous works of the Late Middle Ages. The source may be an anapestic Metre of the *Consolatio*, which views striving for the highest good, and therewith the return to the ultimate source, as a universally valid law of creation (Metre 2, Book III):

The Bird shut up in an unpleasing cage,
Which on the lofty trees did lately sing,
Though men, her want of freedom to assuage,
Should unto her with careful labour bring
The sweetest meats which they can best devise
Yet when within her prison fluttering
The pleasing shadows of the groves she spies,
Her hated food she scatters with her feet,
In yearning spirit to the woods she flies,
The woods' delights do tune her accents sweet.⁴⁵

The essential meaning is that every being strives to return to its beginnings, to a unity of origin and ending: "In my beginning is my end."⁴⁶ This, then, is the "Law of Kynd" so widely cited in Chaucer and other authors.

Chaucer's humouristic and ironic inversion in the *Squire's Tale*⁴⁷ is, perhaps, even better known than the corresponding passage in Boethius. In Boethius the bird longing to return to the wood follows the "Law of Kynd", and therefore God's plan. In the Chaucerian tale, the Squire sees the bird's escape as blatant ingratitude and fickleness. As in *Troilus and Criseyde*, the irony of Chaucer's use of passages from Boethius arises from their estrangement from their original context. Boethius leaves no doubt that the essence of love is the longing to return to the Father of Life:

No worldly thing
Can a continuance have
Unless love back again it bring
Unto the cause which first the essence gave.⁴⁸

Chaucer's falcon, however, is convinced that the only law of men is their newfangledness and their love of novelty, similar to the birds that men feed in cages:

Yet on the instant when the door is up,
They ... to the wood will fly and worms will eat
So are they all newfangled of their meat ...⁴⁹

There are many more poems along the same lines in late-medieval and Renaissance poetry. In German literature Martin Opitz may be mentioned,⁵⁰ in English Henry Surrey and Walter Raleigh. Both of them wrote prison poems while serving a sentence of imprisonment or waiting for capital punishment.

5. From the allegorical level to the tropological or moral one

Allegory usually contains an apt application to human life. The moral correlatives contained in the Bible and in literature were generally subsumed under the term *tropological level* or *moralis expositio*. The main concern was not the *facta mystica*, but rather the *facienda*.⁵¹ The moral interpretation is applicable to each and every human being, since all historical fact is reflected in the mirror-like reality of the individual. Thus the entire focus is *ad interiorem hominem*.⁵² Man learns to understand his own nature and to relate it to the Divine Order.

Nearly all the texts mentioned demonstrate that it is hardly possible to distinguish between secular and religious allegory as postulated by C. S. Lewis in his *Allegory of Love*.⁵³ Even when Dante draws upon classic authors and even if there is a kind of allegorical *nisus* among pagan authors, this by no means diminishes the importance of the Christian exegetical tradition. Of course, allegorical exegesis had its beginnings in the interpretation of classical, i.e. pagan, literature to make it suitable for a Christian audience. Thus exegesis is by no means restricted to explication of the Bible. On the contrary, it is part of a widespread model of thought, and thus, at the same time, an expression of the kind of taste described by Lewis.

This may not apply to all allegorical poetry, but as far as the topos of the Prison of Love is concerned, such models of thought are an integral part of the metaphorical concept. The image of the Prison inevitably leads to the question of guilt and punishment, and, in a large number of cases, to the concept of Theodicy. Many prisoners feel that they are innocent, and that they have been unjustly condemned. Thus it is natural for them, like Boethius, to lament their fates, and even to complain of God's treatment of them. It is human nature to blame others first. And yet, astoundingly lucid, if sometimes trivial, admissions of personal failings and mistakes are often found in prison literature. One anonymous poet (Shirley MS)⁵⁴ complains bitterly against the hard fate that has cast him into prison. But he is answered by Fortuna:

You may be innocent of the particular crime you have been accused of.
And yet you have been rightfully imprisoned - because of your many other
sins.⁵⁵

This is an argument very difficult to contradict, as Howard Patch says. The prayer for forgiveness of those enemies responsible for the prisoner's internment appears to be a topos. It is the behavior expected of a good Christian and worthy of a saint. Sir Thomas More, for instance, composed a

prayer between the trial at which he was sentenced to death and his execution, in which he interceded for both his accusers and his enemies in general: May God save them, together with himself, so that they might be reconciled in life after death.⁵⁶

Another frequent topos is the so-called *contemptus mundi*: disdain of life and this world is often expressed through the *ubi sunt* formula. Often, thoughts of this kind are presented as an admonishment, as a moral challenge to be fulfilled, not only by the narrator, but also by the audience which has been drawn into the poem. Sometimes the topos is only an implicit *moralisatio*, as, when the world is represented as a prison in which the inmates are foolish enough to feel happy. While in the Tower, Sir Thomas More composed a Latin epigram describing the world as a prison:

We are all shut up in the prison of this world under sentence of death. In this prison none escapes death. The land within the prison is divided into many sections, and men build their dwellings in different sections. As if the prison were a kingdom, the inmates struggle for position. The avaricious man hoards up wealth within the dark prison. One man wanders freely in the prison, another lies shackled in his cave. This man serves, that one rules; this one sings, that one groans. And then, while we are still in love with the prison as if it were no prison, we are escorted out of it, one way or another, by death.⁵⁷

This prison epigram was one of the best known works of More during the sixteenth century, and is the only work of that author found in a manuscript of the Bibliotheca Ricardiana in Florence.⁵⁸ Of course, the concept behind it is far from original. A major model, or source of inspiration, was probably Seneca's *Ad Marciam de Consolatione*,⁵⁹ where death is seen as the liberator of the prisoner from his chains and from his prison.⁶⁰ The difference between the two works, however, rests in More's use of the term *carcer* in a metaphorical sense.⁶¹ Thus More is far more interested in the allegorical-anagogical level of the concept than in the literal, historical one. If he did compose this poem in prison, we can conclude that he had already transcended his earthly confinement in spirit, and was looking forward to the new realm of freedom open to man once he had overcome the *carcer vitae*, the prison of this life.

In a similar manner, the idea of Courtly Love, and the Prison of Love often leads to thoughts of Divine Love. Contrafactures such as "The Way of Christ's Love" in MS Harley 2253 prove how difficult it is to determine which version, the sacred or the secular, was the original. The controversy of whether the *Song of Songs* is sacred or secular in nature has not yet been settled. A number of "enlightened" modern Jewish scholars regard it as purely secular erotic lyric. Medieval authors, of course, had no problems whatsoever

in this direction. For them worldly and secular love were closely related, and they moved effortlessly in thought from one to the other. As in the example of Oswald von Wolkenstein, one often stood for the other, although Divine Love was always given precedence. This hierarchical concept already forms the foundation for the *Consolatio* of Boethius. It has remained a traditional component of prison poetry up to the present. For the person of faith in the sense of Boethius, imprisonment has no meaning as far as the salvation of one's soul is concerned. Indeed, it might even be regarded as an aid to that end, for imprisonment curtails further sin, is an effective punishment for transgression, and leads to pious reflection and meditation. Once, when Sir Thomas More received his daughter Margaret for a visit during his imprisonment in the Tower he said: "If it were not for you, my wife, and my children, for whom it is my first duty to provide, I should long have sought the quiet of such a cell, one even smaller."⁶² This statement has always been taken as a sign of More's secret desire to live the life of a monk. If this is true, then More equates his prison cell with that of the ascetic. Isolation from the outside world and a life of the spirit oriented toward a higher plane of existence are common to both.

6. The metaphor of prison and human destiny: the anagogical level

The highest level of allegory is called anagogy or "ascent". The idea of ascent corresponds to Neoplatonic thought. The anagogical way of interpretation leads from earthly things to contemplation of the final goal of mankind, "sensum ad superiora ducentem",⁶³ "quod pertinet ad statum vitae futurae".⁶⁴ All temporal and historical things will be superseded outside the realms of time and space, but not because they are inferior and man must escape them by "flight and timelessness".⁶⁵ On the contrary, the fate of each individual in the realm to come depends upon his conduct in this temporal world. Thus he must never lose sight of the eternal, beside which all earthly things are irrelevant. Concepts such as the "Heavenly Jerusalem", "eternal life" and "Paradise" are expressions of the true (eschatological) reality, and thus more than merely ideas in the Platonic sense of the word.

The concept of a heavenly home of the blessed is found throughout medieval poetry. The idea that human life means death, and death, in turn, life, practically becomes a cliché in the stock imagery of the Metaphysicals.⁶⁶ Admonitions on man's final goal and the necessity to act accordingly are no less frequent. Hell is often termed a prison, and indeed is a kind of archetype of the image, which retains its effectiveness in the

present day. In the anagogical view, Babylon is seen as the antithesis of Jerusalem, the heavenly city of the blessed and final home after death.⁶⁷ Because of the Apocalypse, Babylon was seen as both city and realm of Satan, as the seat of the enemies of faith. It was automatically connected with the concept of the Babylonian captivity and was, in this sense, the prison of the faithful. Pagan and hence anti-Christian Rome was also seen as Babylon. Charlemagne, for instance, both used and admired the analogy.⁶⁸ In a kind of counter-movement, in the so-called saga of the last emperor, the traditional image was inverted and Jerusalem seen as the seat of the Anti-Christ, i.e. Satan; but similar accusations were levelled against Rome, for example at the Synod of Reims, where Pope John XV was called an Anti-Christ.

In the mystery plays, hell is often termed a dungeon in which Lucifer and his followers have been cast. In one of the York plays, Lucifer himself says:

Owte, owte! Harrow! Helpless, slyke hate at es here
 This es a dungeon of dole that I am to dyghte
 ...
 Now am I laytheste, allas! That are was loghte.⁶⁹

The image of the exile in prison is particularly frequent in lyric poetry. In a manuscript dated 1493 from the Benedictine monastery in Niederalteich, we find the image of the exile combined with a description of the arms of Christ, who is portrayed here as a knight:

Haec sunt arma quibus miles
 Christus solvit nos exiles
 Ab inferni faucibus.⁷⁰

Hell is described again and again in lyric poetry as a carcer in which sinners are held prisoner - together with demons - until the Final Judgement:

Sic clauduntur tenebroso
 Peccatores carcere
 Et ardebunt ut damnati
 cum stridore dentium ...⁷¹

The same imagery is used for the realms related to hell, to limbo and to purgatory. One concept very widespread in German tradition is that of the *Seelenkerker* or "Prison of Souls" in which sinners suffer purification by fire.⁷²

And, finally, the imagery of prison and imprisonment has remained almost constant in Latin hymnology throughout the centuries.⁷³ Thus the groans and gnashing of teeth mentioned in *Matthew* 25:31-46 are often a sign of separation from God through sin or satanic rebellion; and the word *tartara* as a description for the place of the damned remains the same. The location in time is, of course, the Holy Week and its culmination in Easter, a celebration

particularly rich in liturgical hymns and sequences. Jesus breaks the bands of death, and frees the dead from their chains:

Cum rex ille fortissimus
Mortis concontractis viribus
Pede conculcans tartara
Solvit catena miseros.⁷⁴

But hell is not man's first prison; he is already a prisoner upon this earth:

Inter nos bellum geritur
Quod vix aut nunquam vincitur
Dum caro vires exserit
Si mens in quid, quod suggerit
Consenterit
Statim captiva trahitur.⁷⁵

7. Fact and fiction: the relationship between reality and literature

Ultimately, the problem of the metaphorical prison is one of fact and fiction, of the reciprocal relationship between external reality and the literature which is its counterpart. In what way can the truth behind the material world be expressed? Matthew Arnold once said of Wordsworth that truth was to be sought in his poetical works, rather than his philosophical musings, which were no more than illusion. For most medieval poets there was no sharp distinction between "image" and "reality". On the contrary, they saw literature as a possibility to represent, by means of literary models, truths often closed to cold, rational analysis. Medieval patterns of thought and language were shaped by religious tradition; man lived with the ideas, concepts and images of his predecessors to a far greater extent than he was actually aware of. Most saw themselves, and wrote accordingly of mankind, as a small part of an immense and ordered universe, which escaped total comprehension by the human mind.

Herein lies the explanation for the traditional, and yet original, character of medieval literature - a feature that is so difficult to reconcile with modern mentality. It also explains the tendency of medieval authors to express certain essential truths in terms of stock poetic images. As C. Day Lewis has expressed it, words only become images when they are related to an abstract truth.⁷⁶ And yet, such truths are not contained in the material objects of reference themselves. If that were so, they could simply be reproduced mimetically.

Recent research has often claimed that literature takes priority over reality, and that political reality often imitates literature. This reversal of the ordinary relationship between fact and fiction may be far from typical. But in general it can be said that the written word gives us a certain access

to the real world not possible in any other manner. Poetry is not an imitation of reality, but rather a key to the understanding and interpretation of an object which would otherwise remain speechless. The word becomes an instrument which manifests the relationships between body and spirit, man and the world, and man and his God.

Thus the metaphor of prison can be used in an exemplary way to provide the key to the medieval view of the world. It opens doors for literary scholars who have been locked in the prison of literalism for far too long. It provides clues for a deeper understanding of the significance of texts and contexts. Sir Thomas Malory - whether he be from Newbold Revel, Papworth St. Agnes or even elsewhere - calls himself a "knight prisoner" at the end of Book IV and prays for "good deliverance" at the end of his work.⁷⁷ I am not going to contend with the generally accepted hypothesis that Malory was imprisoned, and that he wrote part or all of his work in prison. This may very well be true. But in view of his mastery in symbolic stories which he demonstrates in the Grail-part of *Le Morte Darthure* and in view of the late-medieval associations almost compulsorily connected with terms like "prison" and "deliverance", I think it extremely likely that Malory saw himself behind the bars of a metaphorical prison, the prison of sin or of this world - very similar to the one in which Lancelot was held by the white knights after his defeat in the "tokenynge" tournament.⁷⁸ He is told that he is held in prison because of his "vayneglory" and his "pryde". Even the "prison of souls" was well known to Malory; it is surprisingly represented by the Castell of Maidens.⁷⁹

In conclusion I should like to say that literature was and is even today a key to a better understanding of reality. It opens up vistas which the eye of the body cannot see. That is why poets are convinced that life does and should imitate art.

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NOTES

The paper presented here in honour of Edelgard DuBruck is a revised English version of an essay published in German in a collection entitled *Motive und Themen in englischsprachiger Literatur als Indikatoren literaturgeschichtlicher Prozesse*, Hans-Joachim Müllenbrock and Alfons Klein (eds.), (Tübingen, 1990). This contribution is intended as a token of gratitude for many years of friendship and rewarding work in the field of medieval literature.

¹ Ancius Manlius Severinus Boethius, *Philosophiae Consolatio*, ed. Ludwig Bieler, Corpus Christianorum, Series Latina, 94: Ancii Manlii Severini Boethii Opera I (Turnholt, 1957); for the English translation, see Boethius, *The Theological Tractates*, with an English Translation by H. F. Stewart and E. K. Rand and *The Consolation of Philosophy* with the English Translation of "I. T." (1609), revised by H. F. Stewart, the Loeb Classical Library, 74 (o.p., 1918; rpt. London, 1968).

² ... wherefore thou hast no cause to marvel, if in the sea of this life we be tossed with boisterous storms, whose chiefest purpose is to displease the wicked; of which though there be an huge army, yet it is to be despised... And if at any time they assail us with great force, our captain retireth her band into a castle,... safe from all their furious assault... (Boethius, I, Prose 3).

³ Cf. *ibid.*, I, Metre 4.

⁴ "Stolidam terram"; "nunc iacet effeto lumine mentis/ et pressus grauibus colla catenis/ decliuemque gerens pondere uultum/ cogitur, heu, stolidam cernere terram" (Boethius, I, Metre 2).

⁵ Cf. Boethius, I Prose 2.

⁶ On the Boethian tradition, see Howard Rollin Patch, *The Tradition of Boethius* (New York, 1935), esp. pp. 105-113. The fact that prison literature often features the concept of theodicy is emphasized by Edward Kennard Rand in his *Founders of the Middle Ages* (New York, 1957), pp. 159-160.

⁷ C. S. Lewis, *The Allegory of Love* (Oxford, 1953), p. 48.

⁸ A mnemonic couplet popular during the Middle Ages can act as our guideline:

Littera gesta docet: quid credas, allegoria

Moralis quid ames; quid speres, anagogia.

Source: "Additions from MS Arundel 507," in *Yorkshire Writers: Richard Rolle of Hampole: An English Father of the Church and his Followers*, ed. Carl Horstmann, Library of Early English Writers, (London, 1895), I, 435. On the wide-spread dissemination of the couplet, see Hans Walther, ed. *Carmina Medii Aevi Posterioris Latina*, II.2; *Proverbia Sententiaeque Latinitatis Medii Aevi: Lateinische Sprichwörter und Sentenzen des Mittelalters in alphabetischer Anordnung* (Göttingen, 1964), p. 749, Nr. 13 899.

For the medieval art of interpretation the *sensus litteralis* was only a kind of shell which concealed the nourishing core, and therewith the essence; thus it had to be cracked (Titus Marcius Lautus, *Curculio*, in *Comoediae, Volumen I*, ed. Wallace Martin Lindsay, *Scriptuum Classicorum Bibliotheca Oxoniensis*, (Oxford, 1903), I, 155: "qui/ e nuce nuculeum esse uolt, frangit nucem"). The old reality of the letter (*Romans* 7, 6) was meant to be overcome on a higher level, for "the letter kills, but in the spirit is life" (II *Corinthians* 3,6). The term "letter" referred to *historia* and the historical meaning i.e. the literal level. This was regarded as the foundation of the spiritual structure of a text; but the crowning spire was the allegorical level. Thus the most important thing was to grasp the mystical (allegorical) meaning of the reality represented. Cf. Hrabanus Maurus, *Commentariorum in Exodum libri quatuor*: "Neque enim solummodo sufficit lectoribus diuinorum librorum sensus historicus, sed etiam diligenter eis est considerandum quid per allegoriam eis propheticus sermo innuere velit" ('The historical sense is, namely, not sufficient for the readers of Holy Writ, for they must furthermore give careful consideration to what the prophetic accounts convey through allegory'.) Latin taken from Ute Hettling, *Die beiden altenglischen St. Guthlac-Gedichte im Lichte patristischer und mittelalterlicher Theologie* (Diss: Univ. Regensburg, 1982), p. 32.

Very early, however, a counter-movement began to rise against the type of theology which disdained the letter, or even ignored it, and whose convolutions often had only tenuous connections with the texts in question. Cf. Bonaventura, *Breviloquium*: "... qui litteram sacrae Scripturae spernit ad spirituales eius intelligentias numquam assurget... In Scriptura nihil contemnendum tanquam inutile, nihil respuendum tanquam falsum, nihil repudiandum tanquam iniquum, pro eo, quod Spiritus Sanctus, eius auctor perfectissimus, nihil potuit dicere falsum, nihil superfluum, nihil diminutum..." ('He who disregards the letter of the Holy Bible never comes to a spiritual understanding of its meaning. In the Bible nothing can be disregarded as useless, nothing discarded as false, nothing rejected as unsuitable. The reason is that the Holy Spirit, its originator, is perfect and could not have said anything that was false, or superfluous, or less than perfect.') (Latin from Hettling, p. 58).

This rejection of the system of levels of meaning is particularly evident in the works of Nicholas of Lyra. Again and again he stresses the primacy of the *sensus litteralis* and complains of the garrulousness, abstruseness, and above all proliferation of such mystical and mystifying exegetics. Cf. Nikolaus von Lyra, *Postilla litteralis*: "Haec igitur et similia vitare proponens cum Dei adiutorio intendo circa litteralem sensum insistere: et pauca valde, et breues expositiones mysticas aliquando interponere, licet raro..." ('I therefore resolve to avoid this and similar things, and with God's help I intend to remain close to the *sensus litteralis*: only occasionally to insert a rare and brief mystical interpretation, and that but seldom...') (Latin from Hettling, p. 64.) Instead, Nicholas advocates sober and objective concentration on the

literal meaning of the Bible, and thus represents a link to modern interpretation. A later proverb says of him: "Si Lyra non lyrasset, Lutherus non saltasset." ('If Lyra had not sung, Luther had not danced') (Cf. Hettling, p. 64.)

⁹ A. Tostat, *Commentaria in quartam partem Matthaei* (Venice, 1615), p. 84.

¹⁰ Cf. Richard R. Griffith, "The Authorship Question Reconsidered," in Toshiyuki Takamiya and Derek Brewer, eds. *Aspects of Malory* (Cambridge, 1981), p. 169.

¹¹ For example, Kings Henry VI and Edward IV.

¹² There is an excellent reproduction in Olwen Hedley, *Prisoners in the Tower* (London, 1973), front cover.

¹³ Cf. John Gillingham, *Richard the Lionhearted* (London, 1978); German trans. Düsseldorf, 1981. A German translation of Richard's French song is found on pp. 259-60.

¹⁴ Sally Purcell (ed.) *Monarchs and the Muse: Poems by Monarchs and Princes of England, Scotland and Wales* (Oxford, 1972), p. 11.

¹⁵ Paul Studer, "An Anglo-Norman Poem by Edward II King of England," *MLR*, 16 (1921), 34-6.

¹⁶ *Ibid.*, p. 40.

¹⁷ In Stanza XI, Edward complains that his enemies have selected three kings, and that the youngest of them has just been crowned. Edward was murdered in mid-September of 1327 at the instigation of Mortimer. The coronation of the fourteen-year-old Lord Edward took place on February 1, 1327. Edward's reference to two other rulers probably implies Mortimer and Queen Isabella.

¹⁸ The person to whom the poem is addressed is still unknown. The stag was the favourite badge of Richard II, who derived it from the white doe of his mother. Thus it is probably far older. The badge of Edward II was a tower. The present badge of Ireland, a tower with a white stag, is said to be a remembrance of Richard's Irish expedition. The Derby coat of arms also contains a white stag. Cf. Wilfrid Scott-Giles, *The Romance of Heraldry* (London, 1957), pp. 121-22. Badges, unlike coats of arms, were not the exclusive property of the wearer. They were worn by the members of a lord's retinue as a sign of their allegiance. Edward's reference to a badge probably refers to his designated successor.

19 Cf. Elizabeth Lawn, "Gefangenschaft": *Aspekt und Symbol sozialer Bindung im Mittelalter, dargestellt an chronikalischen und poetischen Quellen*, Europäische Hochschulschriften, Reihe 1: Deutsche Literatur und Germanistik, 214, (Frankfurt, 1977); cf. also Diego de San Pedro, *Cárcel de amor, 1492, The Castle of Love*, trans. John Burchier, Lord Berners (Reprod.: Gainesville, Fla., 1950).

20 Cf. Illustration, scriptorium of King Wenzel IV of Bohemia, *Holy Bible*, or *Willehalm*.

21 Cf. Illustration from the Manesse Manuscript. Benno of Hornberg (?), p. lxxv.

22 *Kyng Alisaunder*, ed. G. V. Smithers, EETS OS 227 (London, 1952 for 1947; rpt. 1961), II, 419, ll. 7688-7692 (MS. Laud Misc. 622).

23 *Ibid.*, II, 419, l. 7714.

24 *The Harley Lyrics: The Middle English Lyrics of MS, Harley 2253*, ed. G. L. Brook, Old and Middle English Texts (Manchester, 4th, ed. 1968), p. 341, l. 25.

25 *Ibid.*, p. 44, ll. 21-22.

26 *Ibid.*, p. 67.

27 Published in Rolf Kaiser (ed.), *Medieval English* (Berlin, 1961), Nr. 99, p. 216.

28 Edition cited: James I of Scotland, *The Kingis Quair*, ed. John Norton-Smith (Leiden, 1981).

29 A good overview of modern research is found in Ulricke Hirschberg, *The Kingis Quair als Humoristisch-Ironische Traumvision* (Diss: Universität Regensburg, 1970), esp. pp. 1-18.

30 The imprisonment of James I (1394-1437):

- 1406 James is taken prisoner on the Danzig ship "Maryknight."
- Imprisonment in Tower, later in Nottingham.
- 1407 James is declared king of Scotland. Albany is made governor.
- 1409-13 James is educated at the English Court.
- 1413-16 Imprisonment in the Tower (with interruptions due to the plague).
- 1421 James is dubbed knight in Windsor.
- 1424 James is wed to Joan Beaufort.

- 1424 James is set free and departs for Scotland.
 1437 James is murdered in Joan's presence.

31 The Minerva episode and the Dream of Fortune are poorly integrated into the poem, but the poet's humorous understanding for the foibles of human existence helps smooth the gap between theory and practice. Indeed, the structural flaws may be no more than a reflex of the medieval difficulty of integrating the concept of Fortuna into the theological system. At any rate, the *Kingis Quair*, just like Chaucer's book, had every reason [to] "kis the steppes, where as thow seest pace Virgile, Ovide, Omer, Lucan and Stace" (*Troilus and Criseyde*, Book V, ll. 1791-92 in: *The Complete Poetry and Prose of Geoffrey Chaucer*, ed. J.H. Fisher [New York, 1977], p. 538.).

32 Sally Purcell (ed.), *The Poems of Charles de Orléans, Selection* (Cheadle, 1973), pp. 94-95. Purcell's translation of the passage reads: "For I made them while in prison," p. 95.

33 Robert Steele (ed.), *The English Poems of Charles of Orléans*, EETS OS 215 (London, 1941). Cf. Jacques Charpier, *Charles D'Orléans* (Paris, 1958), for a critical study of the man and selected poems; cf. also Jean Tardieu, *Charles D'Orléans* (Paris, 1947), for a selection of the poems.

34 Nadia Margolis, "The Human Prison: The Metamorphosis of Misery in the Poetry of Christine de Pizan, Charles d'Orléans and François Villon," *Fifteenth-Century Studies*, 1 (1978), pp. 185-92.

35 *Ibid.*, Ballad 78, p. 97.

36 *Ibid.*, l. 1012, p. 34.

37 *Ibid.*, l. 1442, p. 49.

38 All this may be connected with a kind of mental attitude which has been designated as "spiritual evasiveness" (cf. Purcell, *Poems*, p. 10). But the poems of Charles d'Orléans seem far from "evasive" to my way of thinking. Most of the allegorical figures are descriptions of the state of his own soul; perhaps it would have been too risky to entrust his true feelings to paper while in prison. Steele in his treatment of date and authorship suggests that the Earl of Suffolk, who wrote poetry of his own while in prison and has often been viewed as the author or at least translator of D'Orléan's poems, may have advised Charles to make similar use of his time of imprisonment (Cf. pp. xxi-xxii).

39 "Ita teneatur rei gestae veritas, ut non evacuetur rei gerendae prophetia" (Gregor, *In expositionem berati Job moralia, seu moralium libri XXXV, PL, LXXV*, col. 509-LXXVI, p. 782; here *PL, LXXVI*, cols. 779-80).

⁴⁰ Cf. the two illustrations taken from Reiner Dieckhoff, "antigui moderni. Zeitbewußtsein und Naturerfahrung im 14. Jahrhundert," *Die Parler und der schöne Stil: Europäische Kunst unter den Luxemburgern*. Ein Handbuch zur Ausstellung des Schnütgen-Museums in der Kunsthalle Köln, ed. Anton Legner (Köln, 1978), III, 67-93.

⁴¹ Maurice Kean, *Chivalry* (New Haven, 1984), p. 212.

⁴² From "Ain Anefangk," *Die Lieder Oswalds von Wolkenstein*, Altdeutsche Textbibliothek, 55 (Tübingen, 1962), pp. 1-6. The poem opens with a self-accusation of the lyrical first person, who designates himself a sinner moved by the fear of death to repent and amend his ways. The instrument of his penance is the instrument of his sin - an enigmatic statement unless one knows that the poem is based upon the poet's experience as a prisoner in Burg Forst in October, 1421. Oswald had reason to believe that the woman he once loved, the Lady of the Castle, had helped initiate a feud against him and was in league with his main enemy, Duke Friedrich. For literature on the relation between the poem "Ain anefangk" and the poet's biography, see Dieter Kühn, *Ich Wolkenstein* (Frankfurt, 1977), pp. 322-327; Anton Schwob, *Historische Realität und literarische Umsetzung: Beobachtungen zur Stilisierung der Gefangenschaft in den Liedern Oswalds von Wolkenstein*, Innsbrucker Beiträge zur Kulturwissenschaft, Germanische Reihe, 9 (Innsbruck, 1979), pp. 66-140; Sieglinde Hartmann, *Altersdichtung und Selbstdarstellung bei Oswald von Wolkenstein: Die Lieder Kl 1 bis 7 im spätmittelalterlichen Kontext*, Göppinger Arbeiten zur Germanistik, Nr. 288 (Göppingen, 1980), pp. 45-85). But these facts cannot be concluded from the poem alone. Cf. Schwob, pp. 112-14, who states that the biographical period of the first half of October, 1421 is far from sufficient to conclude the date of the poem Kl 1. He suggests that the poem probably originated in a rough oral version in Burg Forst, and was only completed after Oswald was released through Duke Friedrich in March 1422 and had accomplished the subsequent necessary legal procedures. The spring and summer of 1422, that is the months before Oswald was forced to flee the Duke to avoid having to surrender himself in Tyrol (on August 4th), would have been a possible time for religious conversations and reflection, as well as for poetic endeavours.

⁴³ Wolkenstein finds consolation in the certainty that God knows the ways of the sinful. Like Love, he devises wiles to take man captive and to bind him to Himself. Thus the only correct reaction is to yield to the inevitable, and to love one's captor with all one's heart. Only earthly love bars the way: "O weltlich lieb, wie swër sind deine pünt ['fetters']"

⁴⁴ The poet prays that all who conspire against his life may be given the grace to do penance upon this earth. The poem closes with a prayer for the Beloved. (I am indebted to Privatdozentin Dr. Hedda Ragotzky for calling my attention to Oswald von Wolkenstein and his poem "Ain Anefangk." She was also kind enough to send me illustrations of the Prison of Love.)

⁴⁵ *Consolatio*, p. 63.

- 46 "East Coker," the second of the *Four Quartets*, (1940), 1.1; cited here from *The Complete Poems and Plays of T. S. Eliot* (London, 1969), p. 177.
- 47 *The Canterbury Tales by Geoffrey Chaucer*, ed. from the Hengwrt MS by N. F. Blake (London, 1980), pp. 289-309.
- 48 Boethius, trans. Stewart, p. 357.
- 49 Geoffrey Chaucer, *Canterbury Tales*, rendered into Modern English by J.U. Nicholson (Garden City, New York, 1934), p. 459.
- 50 "Ist's wohl der Rede wert, gefangen müssen leben? Ein Vogel wünschet sich in freier Luft zu sein, Und sperret man ihn gleich in Gold und Silber ein." From: "Freiheit der Liebe," *Lyrik des Abendlandes*, ed. Georg Britting, et al. (München, 1963), p. 259.
- 51 Hugo von S. Victor, *De sacramentis fidei christianae*, prologus, VI, PL, CLXXVI, col. 185 D.
- 52 Gregor, *Homiliae XL in Ezechielem*, PL, LXXVI, col. 1029 C.
- 53 (Oxford Univ. Press, 1953), p. 48.
- 54 Cited from Patch, *Tradition*, p. 110, "Complaint against Fortune."
- 55 *Ibid.*, p. 111.
- 56 Hubertus Schulte Herbrüggen, *Thomas Morus: Gebete und Meditationen* (München, 1980), p. 96.
- 57 Clarence H. Miller, Leicester Bradner, Charles A. Lynch and Revilo P. Oliver (eds.), *The Complete Works of St. Thomas More* (New Haven, 1984), Vol. III, Part 2, pp. 166-69.
- 58 *Ibid.*, p. 59.
- 59 For the reference to Seneca, I am indebted to Uwe Baumann, *Die Antike in den Epigrammen und Briefen Sir Thomas Mores*, Beiträge zur Englischen und Amerikanischen Literatur, 1 (Paderborn, 1984), p. 58.

⁶⁰ Cf. Christine de Pisan, *L'Epistre de la prison de vie humaine et d'avoir reconfort de mort d'amis et pacience en adversite* (1416-1418); cited in: Edith Yennal, *Christine de Pisan, A Bibliography of Writings by Her and about Her* (London, 1982): "A consolatory letter inspired by the men who fought and died in the Battle of Agincourt (1415). The title for this philosophico-religious work comes from a text of St. Bernard, who likened human existence to a prison from which mortals escaped only through death."

⁶¹ Baumann, *Antike*, p. 58, fn. 6.

⁶² Schulte Herbrüggen, *Thomas Morus*, p. 44.

⁶³ Beda, *Hexameron*, PL, XCI, col. iv.

⁶⁴ A. Tostat, *Commentaria*, p. 185.

⁶⁵ Hettling, *Guthlac*, p. 40.

⁶⁶ Cf. Richard Crashaw, "A Song," in: D.H.S. Nicholson and A.H.E. Lee, *The Oxford Book of English Mystical Verse* (Oxford, 1962), p. 49.

⁶⁷ Robert Konrad, "Das himmlische und das irdische Jerusalem im mittelalterlichen Denken," *Speculum Historiale: Geschichte im Spiegel von Geschichtsschreibung und Geschichtsdeutung*, ed. Clemens Bauer, Laetitia Boehm, Max Müller (München, 1965), pp. 523-40; here, p. 524.

⁶⁸ *Ibid.*, p. 527.

⁶⁹ Alfred W. Pollard, *English Miracle Plays, Moralities and Interludes* (Oxford, 1895), p. 49.

⁷⁰ Guido Maria Dreves (ed.), rev. Clemens Blume, *Ein Jahrtausend lateinischer Hymnendichtung* (Leipzig, 1909), II, p. 98.

⁷¹ *Ibid.*, II 440.

⁷² Cf. W. Hartinger, ... *denen Gott genad: Totenbrauchtum und Arme-Seelen-Glaube in der Oberpfalz* (Regensburg, 1979), p. 162: Prison of Lost Souls in Günching near Velburg.

⁷³ *The BBC Hymn Book*, No. 490, based on Lucas 4: 18-19, a wonderful hymn, apparently still very popular today.

74 Dreves/Blume, II, 98; cf. 97 and 100.

75 Ibid., II 426.

76 C. Day Lewis, *The Poetic Image* (London, 1947), p. 139.

77 Richard R. Griffith, "The Authorship Question Reconsidered," in: Takamiya/Brewer, *Malory*, pp. 158-77; in regard to the meaning of 'recover', it may be worthy of note that Malory inserts a passage in Book IX, p. 333, on "the grettyst payne a presoner may have," namely when a prisoner falls ill. Malory may possibly have been speaking from his own experience.

78 Sir Thomas Malory, *Works*, ed. Eugene Vinaver (Oxford, 1962), Book XV, "Sir Launcelot," p. 556.

79 Ibid., Book XIII, "The Miracles," p. 535.