

Grundtvig's *Land of the Living* and Anglo-Saxon scholarship in the Royal Library of Copenhagen

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The following reflections upon the text of *De Levendes Land* [The Land of the Living] once again raise the topic of the influence upon Grundtvig of his encounter with the literature and culture of the Anglo-Saxons.¹

Evidence of the extent and nature of this influence varies from the familiar to the hitherto insufficiently explored. Familiar is Grundtvig's impressive engagement with *Beowulf* in 1815, which led him to learn the Anglo-Saxon language, to embark upon a detailed and acrimonious public debate with the poem's first editor, G. J. Thorkelin, to attempt in articles in his periodical publication *Danne-Virke* (1816-1819) the first comprehensive interpretation of the poem's profounder meaning, to make a poetic version of the poem in Danish (*Bjovulfs Drape*, 1820) partly in the hope of its becoming standard reading for the education of Danish children, and eventually to publish his own edition of the text (*Beowulfes Beorh*, 1861). When Grundtvig scholars think about his involvement with Anglo-Saxon literature, it is typically the heroic, legendary-historical stuff of *Beowulf* that they have in mind.

Similarly well-known, not least through his own rueful retellings of them, are the anecdotes of Grundtvig outflanked (1831) by the double-dealing scholarly-antiquarian establishment in London over publication of the Anglo-Saxon materials in English libraries. Hence also springs the consoling biographical orthodoxy – perhaps overdue for some reconsideration – that Grundtvig went to England looking for one thing (Anglo-Saxon manuscripts) and came back with something quite different and far more consequential (such as English-inspired ideas about civil and religious liberties).

Much less known – hardly as yet absorbed into the consciousness of Grundtvig scholars, other than as the source of an idea for a hymn in his *Sang-Værk til den danske Kirke* (1836-1837), of Ludvig Christian Müller's Grundtvig-inspired edition (1835)² of an excerpt from *Christ I* (*The Advent Lyrics*) and a couple of Riddles, and of Grundtvig's edition of *Phenix-Fuglen* (1840) – is his reception of the Exeter Book. In 1830-1831 Grundtvig, with the idea in mind of publishing the *editio princeps*, made a priority of locating this primary Anglo-Saxon codex

(which turned out to be still in Exeter and not in London), and transcribed its complete poetic contents.³ Transcription of a manuscript, especially where, as in ancient manuscripts, the palaeography is difficult is perhaps the most thorough way possible of establishing an intimate relationship with words and their usages and meanings. Grundtvig got to know the Exeter Book well.

Finally, also still too little explored and evaluated in the received account of Grundtvig's intellectual and spiritual growth between 1815 and 1832 is his preoccupation with the figure and the (putative) poetic works of Cædmon, the first Christian poet of the English language who, as Bede records in his *Ecclesiastical History of the English People* (completed in 731), flourished in the seventh century. Apart from another hymn in his *Sang-Værk til den danske Kirke*, the bulk of the evidence in this case is in largely unpublished materials in the Grundtvig Arkiv.⁴ These materials comprise transcriptions of the poems of Oxford Bodleian Junius MS 11 (once attributed to Cædmon), in a fascicle of papers as bulky as the one containing the transcriptions of the Exeter Book. Huge tracts of time and many hours of alert attention have been devoted by Grundtvig to the making and editing of these transcriptions; and again this sustained engagement with the poetically-articulated historical and theological ideas of the Anglo-Saxons can hardly have proceeded without some kind of creative interaction with the ferment of ideas already at work in Grundtvig's mind over these years.

Of the four codices of Anglo-Saxon poetry, one – the Vercelli Book – was not generally known to the scholarly world until 1836, but Grundtvig fairly certainly had a good idea of the character and contents of the other three – the *Beowulf* codex (Cotton Vitellius A xv in the British Museum), the Junius codex (Junius 11 in the Bodleian Library, Oxford) and the Exeter Book (Exeter Cathedral MS 3501) – from the earliest years of his interest in Anglo-Saxon onwards.

Danish interest in Anglo-Saxon language and literature long predated Grundtvig's personal discovery of it, and ensured that when Grundtvig set about learning Anglo-Saxon in 1815 there were books to be found – key works of seventeenth, eighteenth and nineteenth-century Anglo-Saxon scholarship – in the Royal Library and the University Library in Copenhagen. His *Prospectus* of 1830⁵ demonstrates what a comprehensive overview he had by then, of virtually all the known surviving Anglo-Saxon writings – including not only the poetry but the very large quantity of prose writings such as sermons and homilies for

Sundays and saints' days throughout the whole liturgical year, historical writings, and Anglo-Saxon translations and paraphrases of patristic and classical authors.

In the years between 1815 and 1821 Grundtvig was much preoccupied with study and scholarly work, particularly upon some of the primary resources of the historical culture of the Christian North – among them, writings of Saxo Grammaticus and Snorri Sturluson, and *Beowulf*, all of which he translated in this period. Among the other fruits of these years, his biographers have found that by 1825 – when his engagement in the battle over the identity, history and authority of the Church began with *Kirkens Gienmæle* – he was manifesting an interest in the church-life of England, an interest which began to transcend hostility felt towards England as Denmark's adversary in the recent Napoleonic Wars.

The immediate focus of his interest was of course the contemporary condition of the churches in England; but it was as good as impossible for Grundtvig ever to exclude the historical perspective from his assessment of the present moment and the future, and it has been well noted that by 1828 when he spoke to the King about visiting England to study Anglo-Saxon manuscripts he »ahead of anyone else had had his eyes opened to the importance of the church-history of the Anglo-Saxons.«⁶ This fact postulates a study-programme in English sources ranging well beyond *Beowulf*.

His reading in Bede's *Ecclesiastical History of the English People* alone would have sufficiently opened Grundtvig's eyes to the significance of this remarkable providential-historical narrative for the ecclesiastical history of the whole of the North. But from the editions and surveys of Anglo-Saxon writings to be found in Copenhagen libraries by 1815 (whose contemporary lending protocols occasionally give specific evidence of Grundtvig's reading in these works), and from the *Prospectus* of 1830, one important fact is absolutely plain: that Grundtvig knew from an early stage of his excursions into Anglo-Saxon that *Beowulf* represented only a fraction – and in some respects a significantly *untypical* fraction – of the Anglo-Saxon writings that survived. In September 1815, for example – next in the lending queue to Thorkelin who had borrowed it in the preceding February – he borrowed (presumably in Christopher Rawlinson's edition, Oxford 1698) King Alfred's late-ninth-century English translation of Boethius's

Consolation of Philosophy, one of the greatest seminal works of the early Christian Middle Ages. Another significant borrowing, in January 1817, was John Spelman's *Psalterium Davidis Latino-Saxonicum vetus* (London, 1640), an edition of the Psalms in Latin and Anglo-Saxon.

The overwhelming bulk of Anglo-Saxon writings, in verse and in prose, was in fact explicitly Christian religious literature; and it comprised a great monument to the *oldkirkelige*, patristic-based culture of the Anglo-Saxon Church between the seventh and the eleventh centuries.

Of course, *Beowulf* was in many respects an extremely important and consequential encounter for Grundtvig. »It is a factual remark« (as Andreas Haarder observed) »when [Grundtvig] says: 'Beowulf... had to come to light before we could discover the coherence of the Old Norse life and with insight endeavour to continue it and illuminate it.' In other words, he had to know precisely that text before he could write his mythology.«⁷ It is also true that Grundtvig came to regard the Icelandic Eddic poetry as deriving from more ancient (though largely lost) Anglo-Saxon sources; and it is notable that he introduces into a prominent position in *Nordens Mythologi* (1832) the figure of the Anglo-Saxon legendary poet Widsith.⁸

Between 1815 and 1820, in the *Danne-Virke* essays on *Beowulf*, and in the *Indledning og Fortale* to *Bjovulfs Drape*, Grundtvig is already manifestly beginning to incorporate the resources of Anglo-Saxon into his assemblage of the resources of the greater nordic world, to incorporate *Beowulf's* Anglo-Saxon poetic archetypes into that storehouse of archetypes which he was already in process of assembling from Scripture and world history, and from the history and legend and the mythology of the North. Many of these archetypes Grundtvig was restocking with new semiotic content, answering to his own, and to his nation's, times and circumstances – relicensing them, as it were, renewing their currency, for a latter-day generation's enlightenment and use. Thus he finds that *Beowulf* himself is »with a deeply poetic eye perceived and vividly projected as humankind's northern hero who, finally at the cost of his own life, disarms the power of darkness and saves by his strength the dying life of the people.«⁹ The Grendel-kin and the Dragon are agencies of »the power of darkness« and *Beowulf's* legendary battles against them »symbolise the two great departments of the human battle against the Power of Darkness which manifests itself partly in its violent attack [through the Grendel-kin] upon the heroic life,

partly in its jealous brooding [in form of the Dragon] over the weapons and treasures which pertain to the heroic life's continuation, or in other words: partly in history and partly in nature. Already this gives the poem a certain degree of poetic truth which in my eyes amounts to a true and splendid historical overview ...«¹⁰ The symbolic account of Beowulf's heroic and self-sacrificing strife against Grendel and the Dragon »could therefore well command a stronger title than the nordic myth about Ragnarok.«¹¹ Consciously here, Grundtvig is reconstruing some of the powerful symbols of Anglo-Saxon culture in a way that serves an already established, contemporary polemic of his own (*Folket, Kæmpe-Livet, Historien, Natur*) – ideas pitched between the material and the philosophical, the secular and the religious.

Once these augmented resources are established within the public forum, they can be used in that way so quintessentially typical of poetry – in the poetic device of allusion (poetic, but also fundamental to music and to painting), whereby the literal discourse of the text is – within the reader's reception of it – augmented by associations which the poet calculatedly invokes by strategic use of a pre-established symbolic language and imagery. Already in 1817, in his poem *Ragna-Roke. Et dansk Æmter* (published in *Danne-Virke* III), Grundtvig is drawing upon these new resources, when his character Nornegjæst refers to Rome, routed by Luther, as a Grendel fleeing armless from its victor: *the augmentation* of this verbally economical reference by association with the whole symbolic strife of Beowulf, humankind's northern hero, against the Power of Darkness, is tellingly appropriate and enormously rich in its complexity.¹²

To a degree, as this example demonstrates, Grundtvig is also creating scope to be *self-referential*. As the corpus of his interpretative essays, translations and original poetic compositions grows, he is in a position to make allusion not only the primary sources, but to make allusion also to the symbolic applications he himself has previously assigned to the ancient myth and legend. He can use images and idiom to import into his discourse pre-established significations and values which he himself has (often) been responsible for attaching to them and which therefore function, within that systematic structure of reference which Grundtvig spends so much of his earlier literary years building up, as the optimum allusive, cross-referential symbolic language for his purposes.

In considering the potential assimilation of Anglo-Saxon literature into Grundtvig's northern resources, then, we should not be looking for

‘translation’ in any strict sense. Grundtvig’s ‘translations’, particularly in shorter lyric poems, are rather an autonomous act of creativity inspired by informing ideas, by particular images, particular phrases deriving from the original source addressed, and shaped according to the requirements of his contemporary polemical purposes. The Danish word *genstøbning* is a fitting term here, for it has overtones of, say, an anciently worn and cracked bell being melted down, fused together perhaps with fragments collected from elsewhere, and recast, to ring out a pure and new note for another age and another generation. This can be the case even when Grundtvig makes explicit attribution to a source.

Thus, his jubilant narrative hymn for Eastertide, *I Kvæld blev der banket paa Helvedes Port* [Yestereve came a knock at the portals of hell] (1837) is not in any conventionally accepted sense a *translation* of any section of the Anglo-Saxon poem *Christ & Satan*. Rather, it is the outcome of a deep, reflective re-experiencing of Christian legend, intellectual as well as emotional, above all interactive, affective, rather than passive.

Grundtvig the poet has responded with the exhilaration of Christian poets down through the ages to this moment of untarnished triumph and overwhelming divine justice, the Harrowing of Hell – in Christian narrative second only perhaps to the moment of the discovery of Christ’s resurrection itself. Any poet voicing the jubilation of this story declares thereby an ancestry reaching back to the Psalmist (*Psalms* 24:7); but in choosing here to associate his own voice with the voice of ‘Cædmon’ Grundtvig is also in effect annexing the vivid testimonies of Anglo-Saxon Christendom to the legend stock, and the imagery and idiom of Northern Christendom, as well as to his assertion (through the *Sang-Værk*) of the universality of the Church in place and time.

Grundtvig the poet here carries over from his source much of the situational drama of the original, even down to the curious detail of the prisoners of Hell raising themselves on their elbows which vividly recalls the original text (*Christ & Satan*, lines 424-434). But it is Grundtvig the *theologian*-poet who makes allusion, not sourced in the original, to the fire-spitting dragon. Here, surely, he is self-referentially invoking the dragon from *Beowulf*, his symbol of »hin Mørkets Magt,« the wrongful appropriator and hoarder of a treasury of human souls. No longer, in the imminent presence of the victor over sin and death, do the prisoners in hell feel powerless dread for the fire and venom of this Power of Darkness at work »within nature.«¹³

In all this, then, we see Grundtvig the poet who is also, and co-extensively, the *kirkelærer*, drawing upon the work of poets who would similarly first and foremost justify their poetic art in terms of the service that poetry can render (as the legend of Cædmon so powerfully demonstrates) to the enlightenment and the conversion of those who do not know Christ.

It is indeed proper to remember in this context (as Jens Holger Schjørring has written¹⁴) »how important it is to pay regard to the reciprocal relationship between poetry and religious instruction.« Schjørring's discussion (predicated in Jakob Balling's evaluations of two great theologian-poets, Dante and Milton¹⁵) relates in part to Grundtvig's symbolic use of the Phoenix-motif in his poem *Danne-Virke* (1816), published in the first volume of his periodical *Danne-Virke*; and in part to the highly polemical edition of the Anglo-Saxon text of *The Phoenix* which Grundtvig published in 1840. »From out of Grundtvig's use of the Phoenix-motif, both as poet and as a teacher of the Church,« Schjørring demonstrates, »we can form for ourselves an impression of the way in which he realises his chief endeavour, namely that of unfolding the connection between the poetical language of metaphor and the underpinning truths of the creed.«¹⁶

Undoubtedly, then, his entry into Anglo-Saxondom in 1815 gave Grundtvig grounds to reconstruct his conceptualisation of The North. But the fact also remains that the heroic legendary-historical *Beowulf* alone is not nearly enough to guide us to Grundtvig's perception of the Anglo-Saxon place within that vision of an historical Nordic-Christian culture, of which *Nordens Mythologi* is only a partial expression. Just as his encounter with the direct patristics of Irenaeus was crucial to the shaping of Grundtvig's idea of the historic universal Church, so is his encounter with the indirect patristics and the *oldkirkelige*, catholic spirituality of the literature of the Anglo-Saxon Church likewise important.

There was – beyond *Beowulf* and the secular-heroic – an abundance of material in the editions and surveys of Anglo-Saxon literature available to Grundtvig in Copenhagen to lead him in that course described in a homely image by Henry Larsen: »Have you, my reader, never tried to take the river or brook where it flows out into the sea and so to follow its course against the stream further and further inland until

finally you come to rest by that hillside where the spring gushes forth? In Grundtvig's *Sangværk* there stands, as a note to the poem on Christ's descent into hell: 'After the Anglo-Saxon of Cædmon.' In Cædmon there could easily have stood: 'After the Gospel of Nicodemus (or the Acts of Pilate)' – and the Acts of Pilate are in turn an ancient prose composition associated with those articles of our faith: 'under Pontius Pilate was crucified, dead and buried' and 'descended into hell.' So therefore I invite the reader to accompany me. First we shall linger at the river's estuary in our own familiar waters and see how *I Kvæld blev der banket* has flowed out into the Nordic congregation. Then we shall set course towards the west as anciently did the Angles and Saxons and Jutes, to hear what the Northumbrian Cædmon sang. And finally we journey across the Mediterranean lands to the Eastern congregation, to come at last to rest hard by the hill of Golgotha where the spring gushed forth.«¹⁷

The route of exploration Larsen describes is, in other words, from *sangværk* to source-poetry, thence to the faith and the imagery of the *oldkirkelige* congregations of Anglo-Saxon England, whence to patristic theology and thus to the truths of God's revelation in creation and in history. This a route which Grundtvig not only follows for his own benefit but also mediates for his own congregation and readership. The Anglo-Saxon poets, who were themselves conscious of standing at a stage along this route, are important contributors to Grundtvig's growth as poet and *kirkelærer* over these years.

»All in all« wrote J. P. Bang, »it is illuminating that when, with his discovery of the common belief of the Church, Grundtvig had achieved a vision of the Church which extended his view beyond narrow confessional boundaries and required him to seek and find Christendom even outside the regions of Lutherdom, then it was impossible for him any longer to disregard England.«¹⁸ But the greater likelihood is that, far from first turning to England *after* he had achieved this vision of the Church, Grundtvig had turned to England – to Hicke's and Wanley's rich and illustrated account of the manuscript legacy of the Anglo-Saxon Church, to Wheloc's *Bede*, Alfred's *Boethius*, Junius's *Cædmon*, Spelman's *Anglo-Saxon Psalter* and others – virtually as soon as he turned to *Beowulf*, and that the deep and diverse testimony of the 'old Church' that he found there made its contribution to the decisive insights into the historic and universal Church which he achieved and articulated from 1825 onwards.

In the postscript of a letter dated 7 March 1827, written by Christian Molbech (of the Royal Library) to Grundtvig, Molbech reports that »the long awaited Conybeare has not yet arrived; but it can be expected with the first opportune ship from Kiel.«¹⁹ John Conybeare's *Illustrations of Anglo-Saxon Poetry* (Oxford, 1826) contained various transcriptions of Anglo-Saxon poetry, including extracts from *Beowulf* and from The Exeter Book.²⁰ In it, Conybear stated the case for the urgent publication (by subscription) of the Exeter Book and the rest of the Great treasury of Anglo-Saxon manuscripts. The Royal Library accessions protocol reports its acquisition on 1 April 1827. Grundtvig is recorded as having taken out the book on loan on 18 May 1827. He borrowed it again on 14 January 1828 and in the same year, in an audience with the King who asked him what he was now doing with himself, Grundtvig responded: »Nothing, your Majesty, and indeed I do not know what it should be, unless your Majesty will send me to England to investigate the Anglo-Saxon manuscripts which can also be of importance to Denmark.«

What Grundtvig had found in the works of other scholars, over the years leading up to 1828 and the critical audience with the King, was enough to provide him with a cause to journey to England and to travel from library to library and university to university over three successive summers (1829-1831). It prompted him to seek out a circle of scholarly antiquarians, and to publish a Prospectus proposing that for the sake of all the peoples of the northern world this precious and incomparable legacy should be carefully put into print. Anyone who retraces in any detail Grundtvig's journey through this ancient Nordic Christian and *oldkirkelige* landscape will surely feel that too much has been tidied away out of the picture conventionally painted of the Grundtvig who returned from the English trips having almost forgotten the excuse of the manuscripts in the new enthusiasm which had now taken him over, his zeal for the freedoms of the Englishman which ought to be recovered for the Dane.

In January 1816, Grundtvig is recorded as borrowing from the Royal Library George Hickes's *Grammatica Anglo-Saxonica*; but it is hardly to be imagined that this was the first time he had looked at Hickes's Anglo-Saxon scholarship, for among the rest Hickes (a Fellow of Lincoln College Oxford and Dean of Worcester) had also published in

1705 a work (usually referred to in brief as Hicckes's *Thesaurus*) containing an account of the Anglo-Saxon codex from which Thorkelin had transcribed and edited *Beowulf*, plus a transcription of the opening section of the poem. As the lending protocols show, Thorkelin himself was intermittently borrowing Hicckes's huge work over this same period. It comprised two books, the first of which, by Hicckes himself, is majestically entitled *Linguarum Vett. Septentrionalium Thesaurus Grammatico-Criticus et Archæologus* [A Grammatical-Critical and Archaeological Thesaurus of the ancient Northern Languages], and the second, compiled by Humphrey Wanley, Bodley's Librarian in the University of Oxford, is *Librorum Veterum Septentrionalium, qui in Angliæ Bibliothecis extant ... Catalogus Historico-Criticus...* [A Historical-Critical Catalogue of Ancient Northern Books which survive in the Libraries of England].

Here in these two volumes lay open to Grundtvig the diverse monuments of a sophisticated early medieval Christian culture, a major thesaurus of the *oldkirkelige*, precisely located within Northern history, written in Latin and in Anglo-Saxon, now catalogued, summarised and illustrated by excerpts. Here, for example, were listed the historical writing of Bede (with its striking anecdote of the birth of English religious poetry, first uttered through the Holy Spirit's inspiration by Cædmon at Whitby some time before 688); liturgical books such as missals and sacramentaries; collections of sermons (including The Sermon of Wulfstan Archbishop of York to the English nation »when the Danes were most greatly persecuting them which was in the year 1014 from the Incarnation of Our Lord Jesus Christ«; and the two great sets of *Catholic Homilies* by Ælfric); collections of hymns; translations from the Fathers (such as Augustine) and philosophers of antiquity (such as Boethius); chronicles, laws, charters, and letters; and a singularly rich store of ancient poetry. Copious quotations (in Anglo-Saxon, Latin, or Early Middle English) are provided from the texts listed – usually the *incipit* and *explicit* of the text but, in cases of special interest, a lengthy extract or even the complete text. There were also carefully engraved facsimiles of pages from the Exeter Book – showing, for example, the Epilogue of Cynewulf's poem *Christ II (The Ascension)* and some Riddles, illustrative of the poetic use of Anglo-Saxon runes. Aided by such facsimiles and by Hicckes's lengthy discourse upon the alphabet and writing systems of the Anglo-Saxons, Grundtvig no doubt learnt his own palaeographical skills over this period – which he is already having

to apply in the skirmish with Thorkelin over *Beowulf* in *Nyeste Skilderie af Kiøbenhavn* (1815).

Hickes also incorporated in his first volume a grammar of the Anglo-Saxon language, modelled upon Latin grammar, and the *Rudiments of Icelandic Grammar* (originally published by Runolphus Ionas, Hafniae, 1651) incorporating a lengthy extract from Ole Worm's *Literatura Runica*. There was also a supplement on Anglo-Saxon and Anglo-Danish coins. Together, the two volumes offered Grundtvig, from his first Anglo-Saxon explorations in 1815 onwards, a comprehensive and quite detailed survey of the surviving documents of a literate, sophisticated Christian culture, located in its historical and linguistic context as a culture of the North. Here was the promise of abundant material for Grundtvig the priest and preacher, Grundtvig the tried historian, Grundtvig the emergent poet, and Grundtvig the incipient *kirkelærer*.

In pp. 279-282 of Wanley's *Catalogus Historico-Criticus* (Hickes's *Thesaurus*, vol. II) are listed the 'Codices MSS. Anglo-Saxonici Ecclesiæ Exoniensis' [The Anglo-Saxon manuscript codices of the Church of Exeter]. On p. 280 occurs the descriptive heading referring to the codex of poetry known as The Exeter Book: »Deinde sequitur laudatum opus Poeticum Saxonice Elegantiore characteribus ante septingentos annos exaratum.« [Hereafter follows the cited poetical work in Anglo-Saxon written in rather elegant characters seven hundred years ago]; and within this section (on p. 281) appears the following entry:

Fol. 55,b. *Liber VI. septem constans Capitulis, Descriptionem tractat felicissimæ cujusdam Regionis Orientalis, & de Phœnice quæ ibi invenitur. sic autem*

Incipit liber. Hæbbe ic gefrugen þætte is feor heonan East-dælum on æpelast londa.

Explicit liber his verbis. Hafað us alysed. lucis auctor. þæt we motun her. merueri. god dædum begietan. gaudia in cêlo. þær we motum. maxima regna secan and gesittan. sedibus altis. lifgan in lisse. lucis et pacis. agan eardinga alma letitiæ. brucan blæd daga. blandem et

mittem. geseon sigora frean. sine fine. and him lof singan. laude perenne. eadge mid Englum. Alleluia.

[Folio 55b, *Book VI*. *Comprising seven sections, it deals with the description of a certain most happy eastern land, and of the Phoenix which is found there. Thus, then:*

The book begins: I have heard that there is, far hence in the regions of the east, a most glorious land.

The book ends with these words: He has redeemed us, the creator of light, so that we may here deserve by good works and gain joys in heaven, where we may find a great kingdom and sit on high thrones and live in delight, in light and in peace, and own a gracious dwelling-place of joy and enjoy days of prosperity, and look upon the Lord of victories, gentle and mild, without end, and sing him praise in perpetual laud, blessed among the angels. Alleluia.]

These are the opening lines, and the macaronic (Anglo-Saxon/Latin) closing lines of *The Phoenix* – the poem later published in an edition of the Anglo-Saxon text by Grundtvig (1840).²¹

The poem opens with a rhetorical device highly characteristic of the Anglo-Saxon poets. The I-voice of the *scop* (the poet, the *skjald*) – authoritative in his store of history, legend and myth, and visionary in his insight into the truths embodied in this store – proclaims a special knowledge: I know of a land ...

The poet then launches into a characterisation of the Earthly Paradise, in a free reworking of the *Carmen de Ave Phoenix* by Lactantius (4th century) – the legend, well-known to Grundtvig of old, of the Phoenix which flies to the matchless beauty of the Earthly Paradise and immolates itself there and is then reborn into renewed and eternally renewable life. The Anglo-Saxon poet uses the myth to deliver a Christian allegory upon the divine grace which allows every righteous soul to be a phoenix. Those souls which are steadfast in the truth (*soðfæste*) in this world become, in advance, citizens of the Heavenly homeland – which is foreshadowed in the Earth's most beautiful and uncorrupted place, the Earthly Paradise, situated on a plateau which is higher by twelve fathoms than earth's highest mountains, so that when the torrents and rough waves of Noah's Flood covered the whole world, the Earthly Paradise stood secured above it, and remained unmarred.

Grundtvig's own replication – in *De Levendes Land* – of the myth-and-legend-laden I-voice of the authoritative poet (»Jeg kender et Land ...«) occurs as the first line of the first strophe in what appears to be the earlier drafting of the poem in the Grundtvig Arkiv Fasc. 388, nrs. 91, 92 (*Registrant* XIX, 2). Subsequently, the line has been struck out and replaced by what was originally the first line of the second strophe (»O deilige Land!«).²² In its earlier draft, the first strophe read: Jeg kender et Land/Hvor Solen ei brænder og Blomsten ei dør,/Hvor Høsten omfavner den blomstrende Vaar,/Hvor Aften og Morgen gaar altid i Dands / Med Middagens Glands! [I know of a land where sun does not scorch and bloom does not die, where Autumn embraces the blossoming Spring, where evening and morning tread ever in dance with the noon's radiance]. The rhetorical formulation dominating both first and second strophes (a formulation which paradoxically sets symbols of temporality and mortality against an assertion of eternity and eternal life) is an ancient one – one which the Anglo-Saxon poet of *The Phoenix* has also adopted:

It is serene, that transcendent plateau. The grove of the sun shimmers, a delightsome wood; the foliage, the luminous leaves, do not fall, but the trees stand ever green as God commanded them. Winter and summer alike, the wood is festooned with leaves; never a leaf will wither under the sky ... There in that land is no loathsome foe, not weeping nor anguish, no sign of woe, not senility nor disease nor painful death nor losing of life ... not wintry squalls nor the flurry of tempests and stormy weather beneath the heavens, nor does harsh frost oppress anyone with its freezing icicles. Neither hail nor rime is there, falling to the earth, nor wind-blown cloud, nor does the water there, agitated by the breeze, fall downwards, but there wonderfully ornamental streams and wells spout forth in lovely springs. Delightful waters from out of the midst of the wood irrigate the earth, which every month gush cold as the sea from the turf of the ground and at these seasons percolate the whole grove in spate. It is the Prince's bidding that twelve times the delightfulness of fluent streams should ripple throughout that glorious land. The groves are festooned with leaves, with beautiful fruits. There the wood's adornments, sanctified though below the heavens, never fade, nor do the blossoms, the beauty of the trees, fall brown to the ground, but there on those trees, perpetually, like a work of art, the

laden branches continue green on the grassy plain, and the fruit fresh through all time, and that most dazzling of groves pleasantly bedecked by the powers of holy God. Never does the wood come to be marred in its appearance; the sanctified perfume there lingers throughout that land of delight. Never to the fullness of time will this be changed before the wise God who shaped it in the first place brings to an end his ancient work.²³

The Phoenix presents an account of the Earthly Paradise perceived as ancient legendary prefiguration of the kingdom of heaven. In another poem in the Exeter Book, *Christ III (The Last Judgment)*, occurs a characterisation of Heaven itself in similar rhetorical terms:

There will be angels' singing and the bliss of the blessed; there will be the precious face of the Lord, lighter to all those happy beings than the sun. There will be the love of dear ones, life without the finality of death, a merry human multitude, youth without age, the majesty of the heavenly hosts, health without sickness, for the workers of righteousness rest without toil, the day of those deemed blessed without darkness, radiance replete with splendour, bliss without sorrows, peace without rivalries thenceforth between friends happy in heaven, and love without hostility, among the holy. There will be neither hunger nor thirst, nor sleep nor sluggish sickbed, nor sun's scorching nor cold nor care; but there the fellowship of the blessed, of multitudes the most dazzling in beauty, will enjoy for ever the King's gift: glory with the Lord.²⁴

Neither of these passages is quoted in Hickes-Wanley. However, in a sermon contained in a manuscript listed by Wanley as Corpus Christi College Cambridge S.5, *Item alia doctrina populi* [Another(= of the same topic), Instruction of the people], the formulation occurs again in the concluding peroration of the sermon, this time quoted at length by Wanley. The homilist urges his congregation to consider what awaits the blessed *on heofona rices dreame* [in the joy of the kingdom of heaven]:

... ðær is þæt singale and þæt ece lif. þær is ealra Cyninga Cyning. and ealra wealdenda wealdend. and scippend ealra gesceafta. þær is sib buton sare. and þær is leoht buton þeostum. and dream buton

ende. and þær is þære ecan eadignysse fruma. and ealra haligra wlite
and wynfulnys. and geogoð buton ylde ...²⁵

[There is everlasting and eternal life. There is the King of all kings and the Ruler of all rulers and the Creator of all things created. There is peace without pain; and there is light without darkness and joy without an end; and there is the Lord of eternal blessedness and the beauty and joyfulness of all the saints, and youth without age ...]

This poetic-rhetorical characterisation of heaven in terms of polarised positives and negatives may have its origin in the vernacular homilies of the Anglo-Saxon Church (for the relationship between vernacular sermons and vernacular religious poetry is close and extensive in Anglo-Saxon liturgical culture). Grundtvig himself was later to say in his *Prospectus*: »Anglo-Saxon preachers were the great instructors of the new Christian world.« Thus again, in a Corpus Christi College Cambridge Sermon, Feria II in Letania Maiore (*Thesaurus*, vol. II, p. 119), the homilist says, concerning Heaven:

... ðær is ece med. and þær is life buton deape. and iuguð butan ylde.
and leoht butan þystrum. and gefea boton unrotnæsse. and sibb
buton unþwærnyss. and orsorhnyss butan deaðes ege to libbanne.
and ðær is ece gesælignes mid fæder and mid ðam suna. and mid
þam haligan gaste a buton ende. amen.

[There is everlasting reward and there is life without death and youth without age and light without darkness and joy without sadness and peace without discord and security to live without fear of death; and there is eternal blessedness with the Father and with the Son and with the Holy Spirit ever without end. Amen].

From Hickeys's quoted specimens of early English poetry it can be seen that this distinctive rhetorical convention survives the Norman Conquest and appears in a form of English which Hickeys labels »Semi-Saxon« or »corrupted« Anglo-Saxon and which we now call Early Middle English (*Thesaurus*, vol. I, part 1, pp. 221 - 223). The verses are extracted from a poem now known as *A moral ode*, beginning: »Ic am elder ðanne ic wes a wintre and a lore« [I am older than I was in winters and in learning]; and they characterise the prospect and hope of heaven:

Ne mai no mergþe bi swo muchel *No joy may ever be so great*
 Swo is godes sihðe. *as is the sight of God.*
 Hi is soþ sune and briht, *He is the true sun and the bright,*
 And dai bute nihte. *and day without a night.*

Ðer is blisce buten twege, *There is bliss without a flaw*
 And lif buten deaðe. *and life without death.*
 Ðet eure sullen wunie ðer, *They that ever shall dwell there,*
 Bliðe hi bieþ and eaðe. *happy shall be and easeful.*

Ðer is geugeþe buten elde *There is youth without age*
 And elde buten unhelpe. *and age without sickness.*
 Nis ðer sorge ne sor non, *There is no sorrow nor any pain.*
 Ne non unselpe. *nor any misfortune.*

Crist geve us lede swich lif, *Christ grant that we lead such a life*
 And habbe swichne ende. *and that we have such ending;*
 Ðet we moten ðider cumen, *that we might come thitherwards*
 Ðanne we hennes wende. *when we must hencewards wend.*

Thus the description of heaven and of heaven-on-earth by use of this distinctive rhetorical formulation is widespread in Anglo-Saxon and later literature, is illustrated by excerpts in Hickeys's *Thesaurus* which was available to Grundtvig from 1815 onwards, and it characterises the opening strophes of Grundtvig's *De Levendes Land*.

The title *De Levendes Land* is given by Grundtvig himself: it is written above a single draft strophe on a separate page of the manuscript in the Grundtvig Arkiv Fasc. 388. It has very reasonably been assumed that he took the phrase from one of the various Scriptural texts in which it occurs, such as: *Job* 28:13, *Psalms* 27:13, *Psalms* 52:5, *Psalms* 116:9, *Psalms* 142:5, *Isaiah* 38:11, *Isaiah* 53:8, *Jeremiah* 11:19, *Ezekiel* 26:20, *Ezekiel* 32:23 (and vv. 24, 25, 26, 27, 32).

In all these Biblical texts it seems that by 'the land of the living' is meant, literally, this world, this mortal existence – as it is in the example of *Psalms* 52, verse 5: »God shall likewise destroy thee for ever, he shall take thee away, and pluck thee out of thy dwelling-place, and root thee

out of the land of the living«²⁶ (Vulgate Latin: Propterea Deus destruet te in finem, evellet te, et emigrabit te de tabernaculo tuo: et radicem tuam de terra viventium).

The same equation of ‘the land of the living’ with this material world, this mortal existence, also appears in *Psalms* 27:13 (sometimes taken as Grundtvig’s specific source), though the passage has a history of divergent treatment of its textual syntax. *The Holy Scriptures according to the Masoretic Text; A new Translation* (Philadelphia and Cambridge, 1917) treats the verse (13) as an exclamation: »If I had not believed to look upon the goodness of the Lord in the land of the living!« The Vulgate treats it as a positive statement: »Credo videre bona Domini in terra viventium.« The English Authorized Version restores the conditional expression and consolidates it with supplied words: »I had fainted, unless I had believed to see the goodness of the Lord in the land of the living.« The Danish Bible of Christian VII has: »Vee mig! dersom jeg ikke troede at see HERRENS gode i de levendes land.«

The bold claim and comforting doctrine of Grundtvig’s poem, however, is that the true land of the living is Heaven, and categorically not this worldly condition of mortality – but that even within this mortal existence, in the material world of God’s creation, it is possible to glimpse and, as it were (to use Augustinian idiom), to claim citizenship of, this *levendes land*: »My land« declares Life »is both here and above: wherever dwells Love!« The »goodness of the Lord« (to echo *Psalms* 27:13) which Grundtvig sees in this material world, this mortal existence, takes the form of a God-given awareness of the presence of the *true* land of the living, that is, the kingdom of heaven, which lies about us even within this material world, this mortal existence.

The phrase is matched in Anglo-Saxon writings in a large number of examples, several of which are excerpted in Hickeys’s *Thesaurus*.

The majority of these examples are, naturally enough, in the Anglo-Saxon translations from the Bible. Regularly, the Anglo-Saxon translators (or glossators) render the Latin phrase *terra viventium* and its minor variants with the Anglo-Saxon phrase *lifgendra land* (= ‘the land of the living’)²⁷ and, of course, with the meaning of the original text, namely that ‘the land of the living’ is this material and worldly existence.

In several notable Anglo-Saxon poetic contexts, however, the phrase refers *not* to this mortal existence here on earth *but* to the eternal

existence in heaven – which may nevertheless be both contemplated and encountered within this world²⁸ – exactly as in Grundtvig’s poem.

The first of these contexts is in a metrical-alliterative prayer which ends an Anglo-Saxon poetic version of Psalm 50 in London British Library Cotton MS Vespasian D.VI. Grundtvig knew of the Anglo-Saxon renderings of the Psalms through John Spelman’s *Psalterium Davidis Latino-Saxonicum vetus* (London, 1640), an edition of the Psalms in Latin and Anglo-Saxon, which he is recorded in the Royal Library protocol as having borrowed in January 1817. But the prayer is also excerpted in Hickeys-Wanley (*Thesaurus*, vol. II, p. 243):

V. Narratio Poetica de Davide, & de ejus Poenitentia propter adulterium cum Bathsheba, in qua etiam occurrit Psalmus cujus initium Miserere mei Deus, Latine & Saxonice.

Incip. Dæuid wæs haten diormod hæleð Israela brega æðælæ and rice
Cyninga cynost Criste liofost.

Expl. forgef us God mæhtig. þæt we synna hord simle ofer-winnan.
and us gearnian æce dreamas an lifigendra landes wenne amen.

[V. A poetic narrative concerning David and concerning his penitence on account of the adultery with Bathsheba, within which also occurs the Psalm whose beginning is ‘Miserere mei Deus’ in Latin and in Anglo-Saxon.

Begins: David he was called, brave-hearted hero, lord of the Israelites, noble and powerful, keenest of kings, most dear to Christ.

Ends: Grant us, mighty God, that we may ever overcome the accumulation of our sins and earn ourselves eternal delights in the joy of the land of the living.]

In a couple of other Anglo-Saxon poetic contexts the phrase ‘the land of the living’ similarly signifies the heavenly life of eternity *which nonetheless may be glimpsed within this mortal existence as a vision, or experienced within it as a transcendent reality which confirms and strengthens human hope and faith and love*. Both are in the Exeter Book.

The first, *Advent Lyric 12 (Christ I)*, is not excerpted in Hickeys-Wanley, but I include it here partly to confirm the conventional status

of the phrase *lifgendra land* in Anglo-Saxon religious poetry, and partly because Grundtvig later shows such particular interest in these *Advent Lyrics* when he later came to transcribe the Exeter Book.²⁹

The poem celebrates the wondrous change that came about in human destiny, through the incarnation of God as man by Mary's immaculate womb. The Lord of the heavens, says the poet, afforded help to all humankind then, and even now continues daily to dispense his saving grace to people in this world. Wise is the man who heartily and eagerly worships God.

He him þære lisse lean forgildeð,
 se gehalgoda hælend sylfa,
 efne in þam eðle þær he ær ne cwom,
in lifgendra londes wynne,
 þær he gesælig siþþan eardað,
 ealne widan feorh wunað butan ende. Amen.

[He, the hallowed Saviour Himself, will give him reward for this love, even in that homeland where he had not come before, *in the bliss of the land of the living*, where he will afterwards lived blessed, and remain to all eternity without end. Amen.]

The second such poetic text, however, *is* excerpted in Hicces-Wanley, and, because of its position within the Exeter Book, appears on the same page in Hicces-Wanley as the excerpt from *The Phoenix* discussed above. This is the poem *Guthlac A* – the first of two poems treating of the life and death of the seventh-century English saint Guthlac. Wanley's description reads:

Fol. 32, b. *Liber IV. octo constant Capitibus, agit de Gaudiis quæ paravit Deus pro iis qui amaverunt eum et mandate ejus impleverunt; cum narratione Poeticâ eorum quæ in spiritu viderit in cælos raptus Guthlacus. (Vid. visiones Guthlaci Anachoretæ.)*

Incip. Liber sic. Se bið gefeana fægrest þonne hy frymðe gemetað engel [ond seo eadge sawl].³⁰

Explicit Liber. Wuldor-fæst ealdne widan ferh on lifgendra. londes wynne.

[Fol. 32b. Book IV comprises eight sections and treats of the joys which God has prepared for those who have loved him and fulfilled his bidding; with a poetic narrative of these, which Guthlac saw in the spirit when he was carried up into the skies (namely, the visions of Guthlac the anchorite).

The book begins thus: That is the fairest of joys when the angel and the blessed soul first meet.

The book ends: glorious throughout all eternity in the bliss of the land of the living.]

Thus on the same page in Hickea-Wanley it was possible for Grundtvig to find a reference to *lifgendra land*, the land of the living, meaning not this material world but the heavenly, followed immediately by a poem on the Phoenix beginning with the formula »I have heard of a land...« and referring to the Earthly Paradise as a prefiguration of the heavenly; and in close proximity it was possible for Grundtvig to read a rhetorical characterisation of heaven as that everlasting perfection which is mirrored in the Earthly Paradise, where shall be found youth without age, summer without winter, peace without pain, and so on.

Are we here looking at an instance of Grundtvig the incipient poet-*kirkelærer* gathering in from the poetic culture of Cædmon and his successors ideas, archetypes, imagery and idiom, to meld them with the abundance already stored from all his reading elsewhere, and to make of them an original teaching for his own times and to his own ends?

It would have been gratifying to have been able to demonstrate that Grundtvig could have read just a few more lines of the ending of *Guthlac* than are quoted in Hickea-Wanley – lines immediately preceding the cited *explicit*: for strikingly these lines contain another topos found in Grundtvig's *De Levendes Land*, namely the triple topos of Faith, Hope and Love.

After his final struggle with the devil, Guthlac's soul is brought into heaven in the arms of angels and he is granted eternal life in the heaven-kingdom. The poet now generalises about the heavenly reward which will be granted to *all* righteous souls – the souls of those who have stood steadfast in truth (*soðfæstra sawle*) and kept true to the ideals of

faith, hope and love – namely, the reward of being admitted into »the peace and the prospect« of the heavenly Jerusalem (‘Jerusalem’ was conventionally interpreted to mean *visio pacis*, the vision of peace) which will abide for ever *in the land of the living*.

Thus shall the souls of those steadfast in truth ascend to an abode eternal in the kingdom of the skies – those who here carry out in words and in works the abiding precepts of the King of Glory, and in their lifetime earn upon earth eternal life and a home in the heights. These are men of the eucharist, chosen warriors dear to Christ. In their breasts they bear shining *faith* and divine *hope*: pure in heart, they worship the Ruler; they have a wise and impetuous sense of purpose towards the way ahead to the Father’s paternal homeland; they equip the house of the soul and with diligence outfight the fiend and abstain from wicked desires in their breasts. Brotherly *love* they eagerly profess; they put themselves to trouble in the will of God; they beautify their souls with holy thoughts and fulfil in earth the Heavenly King’s commands. They delight in fasting, avoid wickedness and turn to prayer; they struggle against sins and uphold truth and right. They do not regret it after their departure hence when they pass over into the holy city and journey straight to Jerusalem – where they may for ever rapturously and eagerly gaze upon the face of God and upon the peace and the prospect, there where she will surely abide beautiful and glorious for all eternity in the bliss of the land of the living.³¹

It would indeed have been gratifying to have been able to demonstrate that Grundtvig could have read not only the Hickes-Wanley *explicit* with its reference to the bliss of the land of the living, but also this whole ending of *Guthlac* with its reference to faith, hope and love. But to the best of my knowledge he could not have read it until he himself wrote it down directly from the Exeter Book when he visited Exeter in 1830, since it had never been published.

This then becomes a paradigm of caution to the would-be source-seeker. It warns that any two Christian poets working within the same stock of Scriptural-based subject-matter, idiom and imagery – even if they are separated by hundreds of years and a language frontier – are fairly certain at some point to sound strikingly like each other, without there being any question at all of direct interdependence between them.

Due recognition of this fact must serve to inhibit arguments concerning direct influence of one Christian poet upon another.

My own conviction is that here in the case of *De Levendes Land* as in the cases overtly declared by Grundtvig himself and in the *Sidste Digt* (*Gammel nok nu er jeg blevet*)³² there is indeed some direct influence – not only of words and formulas but of the religious ideas embodied in the metaphorical language of the respective poems – from Anglo-Saxon. But more important and less equivocal than points of specific textual indebtedness is the fact that in these literary monuments of Anglo-Saxon Christendom, extensively available to Grundtvig, in summary and citation, from 1815 onwards in books owned by the Royal Library, Grundtvig – *kirkelærer* in both poetry and prose – found a culture peculiarly familiar and congenial to him, whose antiquity and authority were bound to make a significant impact upon that Grundtvigian perception of Northern Christendom and the identity, creed and authority of the universal Church which was to underpin so much of his life's work and comprise the substance of so much of his scholarly and polemical writing and his poetic composition.

Notes

1. There is some recent basic orientation on Grundtvig and Anglo-Saxondom in S. A. J. Bradley, 'The recovery of England's »skrinlagt Fortid« – a progress report' in *Grundtvig Studier* 1999, pp. 138-161. It is a pleasure to record my thanks to colleagues in the Center for Grundtvig-Studier in the University of Aarhus who have continued to benefit me with their interest in my pursuit of Grundtvig the Anglo-Saxonist, and to Birgit Winther-Hansen for exemplary secretarial assistance. For generous hospitality during a related research visit to the Grundtvig Bibliotek in Vartov in Spring 2002 I have yet again to thank Kirkeligt Samfund, Hans and Kirsten Grishauge, Liselotte Larsen and the admirable Vartov team. I am also grateful for the invaluable voluntary assistance of Kurt Johannes Dokkedahl in researching material for this paper on my behalf in Det kongelige Bibliotek, Copenhagen.
2. L. C. Müller, *Collectanea Anglo-Saxonica* (Copenhagen, 1835).
3. Now Grundtvig Arkiv, Royal Library Copenhagen, Fasc. 316.
4. Grundtvig Arkiv, Fasc. 320, items 1-3; described in the *Registrant over N. F. S. Grundtvigs Papirer*, vol. XV.
5. N. F. S. Grundtvig, *Bibliotheca Anglo-Saxonica. Prospectus, and Proposals of a Subscription, for the Publication of the most valuable Anglo-*

Saxon Manuscripts, illustrative of the early Poetry and Literature of our Language. Most of which have never yet been printed. (London, 1830).

6. J. P. Bang, *Grundtvig og England. Studier over Grundtvig* (Copenhagen, 1932), p. 41: »han ... før nogen anden havde faaet Øjet op for Angelsaksernes kirkehistoriske Betydning.« All English translations in this article are my own unless otherwise ascribed.
7. Grundtvig, *Nordens Mythologi* (1832), p. 193, quoted by Andreas Haarder in 'Grundtvig and the Old Norse Cultural Heritage' in Christian Thodberg and Anders Pontoppidan Thyssen (eds), Edward Broadbridge (tr), *N. F. S. Grundtvig. Tradition and Renewal. Grundtvig's Vision of Man and People, Education and the Church, in Relation to World Issues Today* (Copenhagen, 1983), p. 83.
8. Some preliminary discussion of Grundtvig's projection of the Anglo-Saxon poet-figures Widsith and Cædmon is in S. A. J. Bradley, 'The recovery of England's »skrinlagt Fortid« – a progress report' in *Grundtvig Studier* 1999, pp. 138-161.
9. *Bjovulfs Drape, Indledning og Fortale*, p. L: »med et dybt poetisk Blik betragtet og levende fremstilt som Menneske-Slægtens Nordiske Helt, der, tilsidst paa sit eget Livs Bekostning, afvæbner Mørkets Magt og redder med Kraft det døende Folke-Liv.«
10. *Bjovulfs Drape, Indledning og Fortale*, pp. L - LI: »betegner de to store Afdelinger af Menneske-Kampen mod hin Mørkets Magt, som deels ytrer sig i voldsomt Anfald paa Kæmpe-Livet, deels i Rugen over de Vaaben og Skatte som høre til dets Fortsættelse, eller med andre Ord: deels i Historien og deels i Naturen. Allerede Dette giver Digtet en vis Grad af poetisk Sandhed, som i mine Øjne hæver sig til en sand og herlig historisk Beskuelse ... «
11. *Danne-Virke* II (1817): »derfor kunde vel anføres stærkere Hjemmel end den nordiske Mythe om Ragna-Roke.«
12. Nearly fifty years on, in *Budstikke i Højnorden* (»Særtryk 1864« – ed. Georg Christensen, *N. F. S. Grundtvigs Poetiske Skrifter efter Forarbejder af Svend Grundtvig*, Niende Dæl, Copenhagen 1930, pp. 95-110), Grundtvig is still making good use of the symbolic dimensions of the *Beowulf* legend. Here the Anglo-Saxon archetypes serve to articulate the great issues Grundtvig identifies in the 1864 war with Prussia: Modersmaalet, Tyskhed, survival of national identity.
13. How important his controversial interpretation of Christ's descent into hell appeared to Grundtvig's followers is evident not least in the persistent interest that poets, translators and commentators in the Grundtvigian tradition have shown over the years towards the Anglo-Saxon poem *Christ & Satan*. A striking example is Provst Henry Larsen, in his *Krist og Satan. Nogle Blade af gammel kristelig Digtning særlig hos Angelsakserne*

- (*Cædmon*) (Copenhagen, 1903).
14. J. H. Schjørring, 'Om Fønix-motivet. Til belysning af forholdet mellem poesi og kirkelære' in Carsten Bach-Nielsen *et al.* (eds), *Ordet, kirken og kulturen. Afhandlinger om kristendomshistorie tilegnet Jakob Balling* (Aarhus, 1993), pp. 379 ff, p. 379: »hvor vigtigt det er at tage hensyn til det gensidige forhold mellem poesi og kirkelære.« I am much indebted to this discussion of the process and outcome of Grundtvig's absorption of the Phoenix-motif, as an example of the dynamic relationship between poetry and theology.
 15. Jakob Balling, *Poeterne som kirkelærere* (Copenhagen, 1983).
 16. Schjørring, *op. cit.* note 14, p. 384: »Ud fra Grundtvigs benyttelse af Fønix-motivet, både som poet og som kirkelærer, kan vi ... danne os et indtryk af, hvordan han virkelig gør sin hovedbestræbelse, nemlig den at udfolde forbindelsen mellem det poetiske billedsprog og trosbekendelsens grundsandheder.« In a recent study of the Phoenix-myths as illustrative of an 'inculturation problem' in early Christendom, Anders Klostergaard Petersen writes: »It is characteristic of the early Christian cultures that they adopt and reuse the Phoenix-myth. As Michael Fishbane has pointed out, mythopoetic discourses serve in a series of rabbinic texts as creative expositions, developments and expression of ancient Israel's understanding of itself and perception of the world. Rather than being a remnant from a vanished age, the mythic motifs grant a voice to some of the most important and most central theological preoccupations for the rabbinic theologians. My point is that the adoption and use of the Phoenix in early Christendom illustrates a newly-creative mythopoiesis, which expound and express a series of fundamental ideas within the Christian system of significations.« [»Det er karakteristisk for de tidlige kristendomme, at de indoptager og genbruger Fønix-myten. Som Michael Fishbane har påpeget, tjener mytopoetiske diskurser i en række rabbinske tekster som kreative udfoldelser, udvidelser af og udtryk for det gamle Israels selvforståelse og verdensopfattelse. Snarere end at være levn fra en svunden tid giver de mytiske motiver stemme til nogle af de væsentligste og mest centrale teologiske anliggender for de rabbinske teologer. Min pointe er, at indoptagelsen og brugen af Fønix i tidlig kristendom illustrerer en nyskabende mytopoiesis, der udfolder og udtrykker en række grundlæggende tanker i det kristne betydningssystem.«] ('Fønix mellem tradition og nybrud. Inculturationsproblemet i den tidlige kristendom' in *Dansk Teologisk Tidsskrift* 3/2001, p. 193). These observations place the uptake of the Phoenix-myth both by the early-Christian poetic culture of the Anglo-Saxons and the latter-day poet-mythologiser Grundtvig in an interesting light.

17. Henry Larsen, *Krist og Satan*, p. 32: »Har du aldrig, min Læser, prøvet at tage Aaen eller Bækken, hvor den løber ud i Havet, og saa følge dens Løb opad mod Strømmen længere og længere ind i Landet, til du endelig standser ved det Bakkehæld, hvor Kilden springer ud? I Grundtvigs Sangværk staa der som Note ved Digtet om Kristi Nedfart: »Efter Angel-Sakseren hos Cædmon«. Hos Cædmon kunde der gerne staa: »Efter Nikodemus-Evangeliet (eller Pilatus-Akterne)« – og Pilatus-Akterne er atter gammel Digtning i Prosa knyttet til de Led i vor Tro: »Under Pontius Pilatus korsfæstet, død og begravet«, og »nedfaren til Dødsriget.« – Saa indbyder jeg da Læseren til at gøre mig Følge. Vi vil først dvæle ved Aaens Udløb i hjemlige Vande, se, hvordan »I Kvæld blev der banket« har mundet ud i den nordiske Menighed. Saa sætter vi Kursen mod Vest, som fordem Angler og Sakser og Jyder, for at høre, hvad Northumbreeren Cædmon sang. Og endelig drager vi over Middelhavslandene til Østerlands Menighed for til sidst at standse i Golgata-Højens Nærhed, hvor Kilden sprang ud.« Larsen is of course describing the journey followed within his own book.
18. Bang, *op. cit.* note 6, p. 20: »I det hele er det jo indlysende, at da Grundtvig ved sin Opdagelse af den kirkelige Fællestro havde faaet et Kirkesyn, der udvidede hans Blik udover de snævre konfessionelle Grænser og nødte ham til at søge og finde Kristendom ogsaa udenfor Lutherdommens Omraader, saa kunde han umulig mere overse England.«
19. L. Schrøder (ed), *Christian Molbech og Nikolai Frederik Severin Grundtvig. En Brevveksling, samlet af Chr. K. F. Molbech, og udgivet af L. Schrøder* (Copenhagen, 1888); Letter 51.
20. Substantial passages copied by Grundtvig from this book (including Conybeare's introduction concerning various Anglo-Saxon poems, the text of *Widsith*, and Conybeare's critical assessment of Thorkelin's edition of *Beowulf*) are in the Grundtvig Arkiv, Fascicle 308, 3 (*Registrant XV*). The *Registrant* however fails to note the acquisition of a copy in 1827 (1 April, according to the accessions protocol); the copy acquired in 1829 is a second copy, presented to the Royal Library by Conybeare's widow through the mediacy of Dr Bowring. But it is now as good as certain in my mind that Grundtvig read Conybeare's pioneering work on the Anglo-Saxon manuscripts much earlier than this, for Conybeare had published much of his material through a series of communications to the Society of antiquaries printed in the journal *Archaeologia* in 1814. If, as appears likely, the Royal Library received this issue of the journal upon publication, then it was available for Grundtvig to read from 1815 (when he started reading Anglo-Saxon) onwards. I owe the locating of this journal in the Royal Library, on my behalf, to Kurt Johannes Dokkedal.

21. *Phenix-Fuglen, et Angelsachsisk Kvad, første Gang udgivet med Indledning, Fordanskning og Efterklang* (Copenhagen, 1840). It seems likely that Grundtvig first read a more substantial excerpt (lines 1-27) of *The Phoenix* when the Royal Library acquired its first copy of Conybeare's *Illustrations of Anglo-Saxon Poetry* in April 1827. If, as Grundtvig scholars seem satisfied is the case, *De Levendes Land* is to be dated to 1824 or 1825, Conybeare's book is too late to be considered an influence. The book, however, incorporated a series of six papers on the contents (including *Phoenix*) of unpublished Anglo-Saxon manuscripts, presented by Conybeare to the Society of Antiquaries and published in the Antiquaries' journal *Archaeologia* (1814). I hope shortly to present a more thorough study of the sources of Anglo-Saxon scholarship available to Grundtvig up to the time of his visits to England.
22. Why Grundtvig subsequently dropped this opening formula which, rhetorically speaking, works as finely in the nineteenth-century Danish poetic context as in the Anglo-Saxon, in favour of an opening which some readers might feel is less arresting, less portentous, can only be a matter for speculation. Perhaps he saw that the I-voice of the visionary poet is inappropriate to the purposes of a congregational hymn, particularly a hymn whose essential point is that an awareness of the Land of the Living is not reserved for prophets and poets but is embedded in the childlike soul, and that the Land of the Living is not a bastioned enclave somewhere beyond, but is all around, where Love is found.
23. *The Phoenix*, lines 33-84, translated S. A. J. Bradley, *Anglo-Saxon Poetry: An Anthology of Old English Poems in Prose Translation* (London, 1982 and subsequent reprints), pp. 286-287. Anglo-Saxon poetic texts may be found in G. P. Krapp and E. V. K. Dobbie (eds), *The Anglo-Saxon Poetic Records. A Collective Edition*, 6 vols., New York, 1931-1942. Electronic texts (poetry and prose) and relevant links are available on the *Labyrinth* site: <http://labyrinth.georgetown.edu>.
24. *Christ III (The Judgment)*, lines 1649-1664, translated S. A. J. Bradley, *Anglo-Saxon Poetry: An Anthology of Old English Poems in Prose Translation* (London, 1982 and subsequent reprints), pp. 228-248
25. Hickes, *Thesaurus*, vol. II, p. 117. Here and elsewhere, in quoting sermon prose from Hickes's edition, where Hickes, following Anglo-Saxon scribal conventions, uses the symbol 7 and the character *wynn*, I have substituted 'and' and 'w' respectively. But I have deliberately retained the punctuation of the Anglo-Saxon scribe, as transcribed by Hickes, in order to demonstrate another rhetorical feature of the Anglo-Saxon literary language which was there in the *Thesaurus* for Grundtvig to observe. This is the punctuation of the sermon-text for the purposes of oral delivery, which marks out the discourse into more or less regular syntactic and

- (roughly) metrical units. Fairly clearly, the rhetorical formulation of these units was a basic technique in the art of vernacular sermon composition, and at times it was advanced to quite sophisticated levels (as in homilies by Ælfric and Wulfstan) with more rigorous observance of the conventional metres of poetry and with the addition of alliteration.
26. English translations of Biblical quotations are taken, unless otherwise specified, from The Authorized Version (1611). Vulgate texts are taken from the *Biblia Sacra Latina ex Biblia Sacra Vulgatae Editionis Sixti V. et Clementis VIII* (London, 1977).
 27. Corresponding precisely to the syntax of the Latin and of Grundtvig's phrase, *lifendra* is the genitive plural form of the verbal noun, related to the present participle of the verb *lifian* or *libban*, 'to 'live.'
 28. In a Corpus Christi College homily, entitled *Ewangelium de virginibus*, quoted in the *Thesaurus* (vol. II, p. 135) Grundtvig could have read of the blessed ability of the innocent to look upon the kingdom of heaven while they are still in this world: they are those who »drive away from themselves the evil thoughts which the accursed spirit brings upon them, and who then open the eyes of their hearts to see the kingdom of God in which he lives and reigns for ever and ever in eternity« [drifaþ fram heom þa yfelan þohtas þe se awergode gast on heom gebrincþ. and þa þa openiað heora heorta eagene to geseonne Godes rice. on þan he leofaþ and rixiaþ a a on ecednesse«].
 29. This interest is indicated by the unusual number of copies of the transcriptions of these lyrics among Grundtvig's transcriptions of the Exeter Book, and by L. C. Müller's publication, under Grundtvig's guidance, of a portion of the text in his *Collectanea Anglo-Saxonica*, 1835.
 30. To make the grammar and the sense fully clear, I have given the remainder of the sentence (namely, the other half of the dual subject of the plural verb 'gemetað') which Wanley cuts off at 'engel'.
 31. *Guthlac* A, lines 790 - 818, translated S. A. J. Bradley, *op. cit.* note 23, p. 268.
 32. See S. A. J. Bradley, 'The First New-European Literature' in A. M. Allchin, D. Jasper, J. H. Schjørring and K. Stevenson (eds), *Heritage and Prophecy. Grundtvig and the English-Speaking World* (Aarhus, 1994), pp. 65-70; Merete Bøye, 'Hallen og havet som eskatologiske modsætninger – i den angelsaksiske poesi og hos Grundtvig' in *Grundtvig Studier* 1998; and the extensive and trenchant response to both items by Flemming Lundgreen Nielsen, 'Grundtvig, angelsakserne og Sidste Digt' in *Grundtvig Studier* 1999, pp. 208-225.