

NEARLY POETIC WORDS

The entirely poetic words discussed in the three preceding chapters have special importance because, whether from his poetic word-hoard or his general vocabulary, they are the poet's own contributions to *MBo*, not to be found anywhere in the *PrBo* which served as his source. A number of words in the entirely poetic category are related to words in the prose, but these words never occur in *PrBo* in their *MBo* forms; the poet has at least added or subtracted a prefix or suffix, or changed a noun to a verb, or added another element to form a compound, or made some other equally major change in a prose word.

There are quite a few additional words which, although not entirely poetic, are generally reserved for poetry. In this chapter and the next two such words will be discussed, divided into two groups: *nearly poetic words*, those which occur only in *PrBo* passages not corresponding to any of the *MBo*, while they also appear one or more times in *MBo*; and *partly poetic words*, which appear at least once in a *PrBo* passage corresponding to one of the *MBo*, but more often in *MBo* than in the corresponding *PrBo*.

A full study of how the *MBo* poet made use of words from his prose source would be welcome, but it is beyond the scope of this volume. This chapter and the next will deal only with selected examples of *MBo* words found also in the prose, focusing on those which are most nearly like the words that are the poet's own additions. Among the nearly poetic words are several which occur much more often in *MBo* than any of the entirely poetic words. Three particularly prominent examples will be treated first: *mære*, *gehwa*, and *gehwelc*.

mære. *MBo* 1,14(1370); 4,13(1479); 9,39(1679); 10,34(1480*); 11,73(1379); 17,11(1470); 20,18(1480*),281(1470); 21,6(1679); 24,43(1380*); 29,9(1470),96(1480*); 30,4(1579).