

## ANGER IN OLD ENGLISH

### 1. INTRODUCTION<sup>1</sup>

This paper is the second part of a broader research project which intends to study the metaphorical mappings for the most basic EMOTION CONCEPTS (FRIENDSHIP, LOVE, ANGER, JOY, FEAR and SORROW) in Medieval Germanic languages<sup>2</sup>. The paper presents a study of the *scope of metaphor* which forms the abstract concept of ANGER in Old English; that is, it analyses the range of application of particular source domains to the target domain of ANGER to see how this abstract concept was conceptualised in this period of the language. The aim of this paper is, thus, twofold: first it intends to contribute to the reconstruction of the conceptual system of the time and second, it intends to find out how much of the conceptual structure of this well-studied contemporary category is physiological and, thus, universal and how much culture specific of this period of the language.

As far as the theoretical framework is concerned, the study follows the recent trend in linguistic theory which considers synchrony and diachrony to be two complementary processes of language rather than two opposing

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<sup>1</sup> Abbreviations: ÆAdmon ... *Admonitio* — ÆHex ... *Hexameron* — ÆHom ... Ælfric, *Homilies* — ÆCHom ... Ælfric, *Catholic Homilies* — ÆLS ... Ælfric, *Lives of Saints* — Ælet ... Ælfric, *Letters* — BenRGL ... *Benedictine Rule* — Beo ... *Beowulf* — Conf ... *Confessionale pseudo-Egberti* — CP ... Gregory the Great, *Pastoral Care* — Dan ... *Daniel* — El ... *Elene* — GDPref ... Gregory the Great, *Dialogues* — GenA, B ... *Genesis* — GuthA, B ... *Guthlac* — Hom ... *Homilies* — JDay ... *The Judgement Day* — Jn ... *John* — Jud ... *Judith* — Jul ... *Juliana* — Law ... *Laws of England* — LibSc ... *Defensor, Liber scintillarum* — LSMald ... *The Battle of Maldon* — Mem ... Benedict of Aniane, *Memoriale* — Met ... *The Meters of Boethius* — MonCa ... *Monastic Canticles* — MSol ... *Solomon and Saturn* — Nic ... *Gospel of Nicodemus* — PPs ... *The Paris Psalter* — Prec ... *Precepts* — Prov ... *Proverbs* — Ps ... *Psalms* — Wan ... *Wanderer* — WHom ... *Wulstan, Homilies*.

<sup>2</sup> Until the moment the scope of metaphor for FRIENDSHIP in Old English and Old Norse has been studied in around 95 terms and 1200 contexts. See Romano (forthcoming).

dichotomies (Geeraerts 1983, 1997; Traugott 1989, Traugott and Heine 1991; Sweetser 1990; Bybee et al 1994). It intends, therefore, to show how synchronic theory can help to explain diachronic issues, in the case under study, the reconstruction of the human conceptual system of a Medieval Germanic culture and, vice versa, how the analysis of older stages of languages can help to explain and corroborate synchrony, in this case metaphor theory. Metaphor theory has been widely applied to emotion terms in contemporary languages in the work of Lakoff & Johnson 1980, Johnson 1987, Lakoff & Kövecses 1987, Lakoff & Turner 1989 and Kövecses 1990, but systematic studies of the mappings and submappings of emotion terms in older periods of languages seem to lack until the moment.

Also, dictionary definitions of emotion terms tend to show more vagueness and circularity than other more concrete words<sup>1</sup>. Thus, trying to define emotion terms, as we know, is anything but a simple task in a contemporary language. With no informants to describe what they feel when they are angry and with the restrictions imposed by written data this task seems almost impossible. Nevertheless, with the help of Linguistic Theory and the tools of Linguistic Corpora of older periods of languages much more than initially thought can be achieved. The starting point of this research was, thus, the fact that this vagueness and circularity present in contemporary dictionaries also exists in the Anglo-Saxon ones (Bosworth & Toller 1991; Clark 1984).

The linguistic material used in this study comes mainly from the *Toronto Microfiche Concordance to Old English* (Healey and Venezkey 1980). The corpus comprises around 40 terms meaning 'anger', 'rage', 'wrath', 'to become angry', 'to rage', 'furious', etc. On the whole, around 900 contexts belonging to the *Anglo-Saxon Records* (IX to XII centuries approximately) have been studied. All word classes have been analysed, but it is nouns and verbs together with their prepositional, verbal and adjectival collocations which have given us the most interesting information.

Examples of the most prototypical members of the category ANGER in Old English are:

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<sup>1</sup> It is not the purpose of this study to try to delimit the polysemy shown by most of the members of this category. The vagueness and circularity of emotion terms seems even more patent in Anglo-Saxon, where a term such as *anda*, for instance, can mean 'grudge', 'enmity', 'envy', 'vexation', 'fear' and 'horror' in addition to 'anger'. In most cases, nevertheless, contextual clues have helped to decide.

NOUNS: æbylgp, anda, eornes, gebelg, gewed, gram, ierre, teona, torn, wielm, wrap

VERBS: æbylgan, awendan, gebelgan, gramian, iersian, rabbian, styrman, wrapan

ADJECTIVES/ADVERBS: ellenwod, grame, ierrenge, ierremod, tornmod, wede, wrape, wrapmod

## 2. ANALYSIS AND DISCUSSION

That abstract concepts such as ANGER are metaphorically understood in terms of concrete concepts is a well-known fact in the literature (Black 1962, Reddy 1979, Lakoff & Johnson 1980, Johnson 1987, Lakoff & Kövecses 1987, Lakoff & Turner 1989, Kövecses 1990, etc.). We also know, because of the great number of lexical terms belonging to this category in Old English as well as to the work done in many contemporary languages that ANGER is a highly productive, embodied and universal category.

Six large metaphorical systems have been identified by Lakoff and Kövecses (1987) as source domains for ANGER in Contemporary American English: 'heat', 'active enemy', 'dangerous animal', 'natural force', 'living organism' and 'entity/presence' metaphors; in addition to the physiological metonymy: 'increase in body temperature stands for anger'.

In this work we concentrate mainly on the physiological effects of ANGER and on the HEAT, DANGEROUS ANIMAL metaphor systems, which are the most productive in the data analysed.

### 2.1. PHYSIOLOGICAL EFFECTS OF ANGER IN OE

As in Contemporary American English, the folk theory of the physiological effects of emotions is reflected by a great number of linguistic expressions found in the OE corpus:

#### 2.1.1. ANGER IS PHYSICALLY VISIBLE

? ANGER is *ansienne* ‘visible’ (PsGLJ 101.11)

? ANGER is *acyped* ‘shown, revealed’; *atiwad* ‘manifested’ (PPs 88.40; PPs 137.7; CP 21.165.9)

#### 2.1.2. ANGER PROVOKES INTERFERENCE WITH ACCURATE PERCEPTION

? ANGER *ablent... mod/heortan* ‘blinds the mind/heart/person’ (ÆHom.I, 39 606.1; LibSc 15.6; GDPref 3(C) 15.206.25)

? One becomes *hygeblind* ‘mentally blind’ (Jul 58)

? One becomes *anræd, geangsumod* ‘single minded’ (Jul 89; Mald 42)

#### 2.1.3. ANGER PRODUCES GENERAL PHYSICAL AGITATION

? One/one’s mind/body is *gebysgod/onstyred/gedrefed/acweht* ‘agitated, disturbed, excited, moved...’ with ANGER. (ÆHom. I, 39 584.18; CP 21.159.6; BenRG1 65.3; Mem 120.25; CP 40.293.9)

? ANGER... *welwiap on weden heortnesse* ‘makes you roll in madness’ (CP 40.289.4)

#### 2.1.4. ANGER INCREASES BODY TEMPERATURE

? ANGER is *hate on hrepre* ‘heat in the breast’ (Jud 92)

? *Smic, fyr, forbærnde gleda vek cola astah fram ansyne* ‘smoke, fire, burning flames like fire rise from the face’ (PsGLF 17.9)

#### 2.1.5. TO BE ANGRY IS TO BE IN AN UPRIGHT/AGGRESSIVE POSITION

? One *on yrre uppriht astynt* ‘stands upright in anger’ (Beo 2089)

#### 2.1.6. OTHER PHYSIOLOGICAL EFFECTS

? ANGER is shown by *cohhetan* ‘coughing’, *cirman hlude* ‘crying out loud’, *gristbitian* ‘gnashing the teeth’, *styrman* ‘roaring’ and *grin* ‘snare’ (Jud 269, Beo 2550, Jud 220, PPs 57.5)

## 2.2. ANGER IS HEAT

As in Contemporary American English, one of the most productive source domains from which ANGER in Old English as a target domain inherits its mappings is the ‘heat conceptual system’. In the Old English corpus we find that the two main metaphorical subsystems of this source domain: ANGER IS FIRE and ANGER IS THE HEAT OF A FLUID IN A CONTAINER are equally important and developed.

### 2.2.1. ANGER IS FIRE

- ? ANGER can *onælan*, *swindan*, *biernan*, *gledan*, *onbærnan*, *ontendan*, *forniman*: ‘burn’, ‘consume’, ‘kindle’, ‘ignite’, ‘devastate’ like fire (PsGLF 78.5; PsGLF 118.139; LibSc 15.9; CP 21.151; CP 49.381.22; PPs 77.23; PPs 87.7; PPs 78.7; ÆLS 54; MonCa 1 15.8)
- ? ANGER should be *adwæscan* ‘put out’, ‘extinguished’ (CP 56.435.8)
- ? ANGER is *ofen fyres* ‘an oven of fire’ (PsGLF 20.10)
- ? ANGER *forwisnian* ‘withers’, ‘dries up the earth’ (PPs 128.4)
- ? ANGER is *on fyre* ‘on fire’ (MonCa 15.8)

### 2.2.2. ANGER IS THE HEAT OF A FLUID IN A CONTAINER

In Old English, as in Contemporary American English, two metaphors are combined within this metaphorical subsystem: the HEAT OF A FLUID metaphor and THE BODY IS A CONTAINER FOR THE EMOTIONS metaphor.

#### 2.2.2.1. ANGER IS A HOT FLUID

- ? ANGER *gewealdan*, *pindan*, ‘wells’, ‘seethes’, ‘swells’ (Prec 83; PPs 111.9)
- ? One shouldn’t let ANGER *prowigean* ‘explode’; *forlætan* ‘let go’ (GenA,B 2421; HomS 38 23.v)
- ? ANGER is *wielm*, *hygewælm* ‘a hot boiling liquid’, ‘that which wells in the heart’ (CP 40.289.19; GenA,B 980)

? As ANGER decreases it can *acoligan* ‘grow cold’ (CP 20.149.24)

#### 2.2.2.2. ANGER RISES ‘FROM A CONTAINER’

? ANGER can *upahebban*, *awegan*, *astandan*, *astigan* ‘rise’, ‘be lifted up’, ‘ascend’ (CP 34.235.5; Nic(A) 536; GenA,B 980; PsCaj 6.7; PsCa I 6.7)

#### 2.2.2.3 THE BODY IS A CONTAINER FOR THE EMOTIONS

? One is *afyllede* ‘filled’ with ANGER (ÆCHom I, 37 572.23; ÆLS 183; ÆCHom II, 31-32 246.141; ÆHom 11 103; ÆHom 12 33; ÆLet 6 39; GuthA, B 205)

? ANGER is *on heortan* ‘in the heart’ (WHom 10c 97; HomS 13 111; Conf 3.1.1 2.27; ÆAdmon 1 5.22; GenA,B 979)

? ANGER is *on mode* ‘in the mind’ (CP 49.381.22; GenA,B 60) GenA,B 337; GenA,B 405; GenA,B 745; GenA,B 2261)

? ANGER is *on breostum* ‘in the breast’ (GenA,B 980); it is let *of breostum* ‘out of the breast’ (Beo 2550)

? ANGER comes *of eagum* ‘out of the eyes’ (Beo 724)

? ANGER is *on gaste* ‘in the soul’ (PPs 105.25)

#### 2.3. ANGER IS A WILD/DANGEROUS ANIMAL

A second major source domain from which OE ANGER is created is the ‘wild/dangerous animal system’.

? ANGER can *etan* ‘eat’, ‘devour’ (Jn(WSCp) 2.17); *ehtan* ‘attack’, ‘harass’ (ÆHom I, 27 390.4); *atrian* ‘poison’ (BenRApp 1.84); *for-swelgan* ‘swallow up’ (PPs 57.8; PsGLK 123.3; PsCaF 5.7); *for-gripan*, *gelæccan* ‘seize’, ‘assail’ (PPs 58.12; PPs 68.24; ÆLS 531); *ondrædan*, *bregan* ‘provoke fear, terror’ (JDay II 15; WHom 2 46); *gegripan* ‘snatch’ (PsGLD 68.25; PsGLI 77.38); *onsigan* ‘assail’ (ÆCHom I, 18 246.16); *preagan* ‘threat’ (PsGLF 7.7); *torendan*,

*toslitan* ‘tear in pieces’ (PPs 123.7; CP 40.289.4); *feallan* ‘fall on’, ‘attack’ (HomU 16 11)

? ANGER is *repe, frecne and ferpgrim* ‘fierce, violent and savage’ (Jul 140)

## 2.4. OTHER MINOR SOURCE DOMAINS

### 2.4.1. ANGER IS A PERSON/ENEMY

? ANGER can *benæman* ‘take away’, ‘rob happiness...’ (ÆHom I, 39 606.1); *ascyrian* ‘separate’, ‘cut off from God, good...’ (BenR 72.1); *beswican* ‘deceive’, ‘seduce’ (ÆHex 449)

? One should *nerian* ‘protect’, ‘defend oneself from’ ANGER (ÆHom II, 9 76.115)

### 2.4.2. ANGER IS A PLACE/LOCATION

? One is *on andan/yrre/graman...* ‘in anger’ (Dan 339; Dan 712; El 967; Beo 705; WHom 6 37)

? ANGER is a place *oncyrran/acyrran fram* ‘to turn away from’ (PsFr 84.4; PPs 105.19; PsGLF 84.4); *awendan* ‘turn from’ (PsGLI 88.47)

### 2.4.3. ANGER IS A LIVING ORGANISM/PLANT

? ANGER can *awecan* ‘be born’, ‘spring forth’ (BenR 65.15); *weorpan* ‘grow’ (Dan 549; MSol 490); *weaxan* ‘grow’, ‘flourish’ (LawIVEg 1.2)

### 2.4.4. ANGER IS A (CUTTING) INSTRUMENT

? ANGER is to *totwæman, breccan* ‘break with’, ‘scatter’ (ÆHom I, 17 240.24; ÆHom II 19 175.27); *swingan* ‘beat, strike with’ (Conf 3.1.1 2.4); *towearpan... towendan mid graman* ‘destroy with anger’ (Gen 19.25); *fortredan* ‘to tread down with’ (MonCa 13.3)

? ANGER can *purhfaran* ‘traverse, penetrate the body’ (PsGLF 87.17)

? ANGER is *scearp* ‘sharp’ (PPs 58.7)

#### 2.4.5. ANGER IS A LIQUID

? ANGER is a liquid which one can *ageotan* ‘pour’, ‘shed on somebody’ (PPs 68.24; PPs 78.6; PsGLD 68.25); *toslupan* ‘dissolve’, ‘melt’ (Met 29.84)

? ANGER IS WINE: it can *oferdruncan* mod ‘overdrink the mind’ (CP 40.295.3; LibSc 28.13)

#### 2.4.6. ANGER IS AN ENTITY/FORCE

? ANGER can *astyran*, *lædan* ‘guide’, ‘control’ (LS 8 114; CP 35.237.21); *onstýran* ‘move’, ‘disturb’ (CP 21.159.6); *gebysgian* ‘oppress’, ‘overcome’ (ÆHom I, 38 584.18); *towyrpan* ‘destroy’ (CP 35.245.18); *swencan* ‘torment’, ‘oppress’ (CP 40.295.23); *ofer-swipan* ‘overcome’ (CP 43.313.17); *wemman* ‘injure’, ‘destroy’ (CP 43.313.22); *apenan*, *astreccan* ‘expand’, ‘extend’, ‘stretch out’ (PsGLC 84.6; PsGLI 84.6); *swican* ‘give way’, ‘go away’ (Æhom 22.255); *wunian* ‘dwell’, ‘exist’ (HomU 51 11); *besmittan* ‘pollute’ (PPs 106.16)

#### 2.4.7. ANGER IS AN OBJECT

? One can *niman* ‘carry’, ‘take away’ (ÆHom I, 1 26.21; CP 33.222.7); *healdan* ‘hold’ (WHom 10c 97; Conf 1.4.72); *aworpan* ‘throw away/out’ (HomS 13 111); *asendan* ‘send away’ (MonCa 1 15.8); *onwealdan*, *habban* ‘have’, ‘possess’ (CP 26.185.10; GenA,B 694); *gewyrcean* ‘make’, ‘construct’ (CP 10.63.11; El 511); *beran* ‘bear’, ‘carry’ (Beo 710); *fordon* ‘destroy’ (ÆHom I, 4.16); *gemetan* ‘find’, ‘encounter’ (ÆLS 183); *tostencan* ‘scatter’ (Met 29.84)



#### 2.4.8. ANGER IS A DISEASE

- ? One can *gepafian*, *prowian* ‘endure’, ‘suffer’ (LibSc 4.50; GenA,B 2421; HomS 49 180) ANGER.

#### 2.5. ONTOLOGY OF ANGER IN OLD ENGLISH

The ‘prototypical scenario’ or ontology of ANGER in Old English is similar to Lakoff & Kövecses’ (1987) findings in Contemporary American English in that we find a contradiction between the fact that from a socially accepted point of view ANGER should be controlled and, at the same time, revenged and rewarded. Nevertheless, the great majority of contexts which appear in the Old English corpus show that the first attitude must have been socially more accepted than the second. Some examples are:

- ? One should *astyran* ‘guide’, ‘control’ (LS 8 114); *gemetgian* ‘moderate’, ‘measure’ (CP 40 291.23); *pingian* ‘conciliate’, ‘settle’ (CP 10.63.11); *stillan* ‘clam’, ‘appease’ (CP 46.353.17; PsGLB 84.4); *beorgan* ‘avoid’, ‘beware of’ (Prec 32); *oferswipan mid gepylde* ‘overcome with patience’ (ÆLS 341); *metgian* ‘weigh in mind’ (Prov 1 1.22); *dyrnan* ‘hide’, ‘repress’ (PPs 76.8); *gecirran to manpwærnyssse* ‘convert to gentleness’ (ÆCHom I 25 362.29); *næfre... acypan* ‘never reveal’ (Wan 112); *lipigian* ‘appease’ (ÆCHom II, 41 306.60); *settan* ‘settle’ (PsGLF 20.10); *toslupan* ‘mitigate’ (Met 29.84) ANGER
- ? A woman should be *polemod ond steapig... nan mon ne seah hire wrap* ‘patience and steady... no one should see her wrath’ (LS 18.1 363) versus
- ? One should *gepreagan* ‘punish’ (Mem 120.25); *wrecan* ‘revenge’ (GenA,B 54; GenA,B 2033) ANGER

### 3. CONCLUSIONS

As pointed out at the beginning, this work intends to show how the abstract concept of ANGER was conceptualised in a Medieval Germanic culture: Old English. Further research on other medieval cultures, both Germanic and non-Germanic, is needed in order to corroborate my preliminary conclusions:

- ? ANGER in OE is a *gestaltic* category which has a very rich conceptual structure constructed on the basis of the interaction of a great number of different source domains of which the ‘heat’, ‘dangerous animal’ and ‘enemy’ metaphor systems are the most important.
- ? The conceptual metonymies and metaphors which help to understand ANGER in Old English are, in general, very similar to those of a Contemporary language like Contemporary American English. This proves that the contemporary folk theory of ANGER has been working for at least the last ten centuries, which indicates that it is motivated, embodied and even universal.
- ? ANGER in Old English also presents specific metaphorical systems – such as ANGER IS A LIQUID or ANGER IS A CUTTING INSTRUMENT- which show differences in the conceptualisation of the emotion from contemporary cultures.

Finally, with the identification and analysis of metaphorical systems of older periods of languages –such as the project under research- I wish to help not only in the reconstruction of the conceptual structure of these periods, but also in the explanation and corroboration of synchronic linguistic theory, in this case metaphor theory.

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