Res, Artes et Religio

ESSAYS IN HONOUR OF RUDOLF SIMEK

EDITED BY
Sabine Heidi Walther, Regina Jucknies,
Judith Meurer-Bongardt, Jens Eike Schnall

IN COLLABORATION WITH
Brigitta Jaroschek, Sarah Onkels

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Literature and Culture, 1

Published in 2021 by Kısmet Press

Kismet Press LLP
15 Queen Square, Leeds, LS2 8AJ, UK
kismet.press
kismet@kismet.press

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Downloadable .epub edition also available

Printed and bound by IngramSpark with acid-free paper, using a print-on-demand model with printers in the US, EU, and Australia

A catalogue record for this book is available from the British Library

ISBN 978-1-912801-09-1 (hbk)
ISBN 978-1-912801-10-7 (ebk)

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HEAT SEETHING IN THE SORROWFUL HEART:
CONTEXTUALISING THE OLD ENGLISH COLLOCATIONAL CHAIN CENTRED ON *HAT + HEORTE + WEALLAN/WYLM*

Maria Elena Ruggerini
Dipartimento di Lettere, Lingue e Beni culturali, Università di Cagliari

Nam et lacrimae sanguis cordis est.
For also tears are the heart's blood.
St Augustine, *Sermo* 77/B, 6

WYLM (/WEALL-) + HEORTE IN *BEOWULF*

Beowulf's variegated word-hoard contains only 4 occurrences of the word *heorte* "heart" referring to the seat and manifestations of feelings, thoughts, emotions, and life spirit. In fact, there are more occurrences (18x) of its homophone *Heor(o)t*[1] "the Hart," the name of the hall built by Hrothgar, King of the Danes. Nonetheless, as far as collocational patterns are concerned,[2] the use of the common noun *heorte* appears to be marked by the regularity with which it combines with the noun *wylm* "surge; outburst" and with the related present participle *weallende* "boiling, seething, rising" (3x), even though they are not connected by alliteration. As a matter of fact, in its first three occurrences in the poem, *heorte* figures in contexts where the death of a character is attributed either to the onset of painful spurts (of blood) within the heart or to the traumatic disruption of

1 The variant *Heorute* occurs at line 766.

2 On the concept of collocations in Germanic poetry, see the introductory remarks in: Ruggerini, "Alliterative Lexical Collocations in Eddic Poetry," 310–14 and Ruggerini, "*Word ... soðe gebunden*," 142–47.

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these spurts (i. e. the rupture of blood vessels) in the heart:

> deaðes ***wylm*** + hran æt ***heortan*** (*Beowulf* 2269b–270a)[3]
>
> the deadly spurt assailed his heart
> = DEATH of the last survivor (of his people)
>
> Herebealde + ***heortan*** sorge + ***weallende*** wæg (*Beowulf* 2463–464a)
>
> for [the death of] Herebeald, his father felt a surging pain in his heart
> = Hrethel's DEATH (of a broken heart) because of his son's tragic fate
>
> hildegrap + ***heortan wylmas*** (*Beowulf* 2507)
>
> a hostile grip interrupted the spurts of his heart[4]
> = DEATH of Dæghrefn, flag-bearer of the Hugas, killed by Beowulf in hand-to-hand combat.

In the final section of the poem, *heorte* is once again deployed in the phrase *heorte gefysed* (lit. "driven by the heart," *Beowulf* 2561b), referring to the impatient dragon, depicted almost as if a mechanical force were driving it to fight.[5] This recalls the opening lines in which the vessel on which Beowulf and his companions are sailing is said to be *winde gefysed* "driven by the wind."

These examples show how the poet associates the death of such characters (the last survivor, Hrethel, and Dæghrefn) with a disruption in or cessation of the blood flow: in the first two cases (in order of appearance), an intense pain causes a deadly increase in the blood flow to the heart; in the third instance, an external agent (the pressure of the protagonist hero's deadly grip on Dæghrefn's chest) causes both a traumatic and lethal interruption in blood flow and the crushing of his rib cage ("hildegrap [...] | banhus gebræc," *Beowulf* 2507a and 2508a).

By constantly combining *heorte* + *weall-/wylm* (sometimes in inverted order) the poet carefully distinguishes and categorises—as he does so often—a number of experiences whose physiological and psychic mechanisms are investigated with that peculiar mix of concrete details and metaphorical images

3 Quotations from Old English poetry follow *The Anglo-Saxon Poetic Records*, ed. Krapp and Dobbie, 1931–1953; translations are my own. The lexical data have been gathered with the aid of *The Dictionary of Old English Web Corpus*, ed. diPaolo Healey et al.

4 Potter's reading of this passage is somewhat contrived: "The power of the heart's throes breaks over the body with the irresistable force of the tide," since it shifts the attention from Beowulf's physical strength (which permits him to defeat his enemy) to "mysterious [natural] forces" (cf. Potter, "'*Wylm*' and '*weallan*,'" 196).

5 The phrase *fyre gefysed* "eager for fires [i. e., eager to start fires]" also refers to the dragon in *Beowulf* 2309a. The expression is analogous to *guþe gefysed* "eager for battle," which describes Beowulf anxiously waiting for his duel with Grendel to begin (630b). *The Dictionary of Old English* (*s.v. fȳsan* 1.b) reads the expression as "made ready / provided with fire," positing a different connotation, for this specific occurrence of the the past participle *gefysed*, from its usual meaning "eager [to do something]." In my view, the latter fits well in the context under discussion, and can be retained.

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that sets the Beowulfian poetical practice apart.[6]

HAT + HEORTE AND ITS REDETERMINATIONS IN CONTEXT

The coherence of the *Beowulf* poet's choices as regards the word *heorte* becomes all the more obvious if we compare the other occurrences with the collocational praxis followed in the rest of the poetic corpus. For example, there is the noticeable absence in the heroic poem of the (elsewhere common) combination ***hat*** + ***heorte***, which usually refers to the heat radiating from inside the breast due to the insurgence of strong passions and emotions.[7] In *Andreas*, the thoughts (that is, the emotions) of the converted Mermedonians become increasingly 'fervent' inside their hearts ("***hat*** æt ***heortan hyge weallende***," *Andreas* 1709) because of the great sadness that overwhelms them (*mod**geomre***, *Andreas* 1708a) when Andreas—by now their beloved teacher—is about to leave their land and set sail for home.

And Judas, on realising that he would have to reveal the burial place of the true Cross to the Empress Helena, becomes downcast and miserable and experiences a burning anguish rising up inside his heart ("him wæs ***geomor sefa***, | ***hat*** æt ***heorta***," *Elene* 627b–28a). The same words are used in the Cynewulfian poem *ChristB* to express the Apostles' pain when the time comes for Christ to abandon them and ascend to His heavenly Kingdom; here, the description of their seemingly never-ending suffering receives a further connotation: "Him wæs ***geomor sefa*** | ***hat*** æt ***heortan***, ***hyge*** murnende" ("Their spirit was dejected, burning inside their breasts, their souls greatly saddened," *ChristB* 499b–500).

Shortly after, we find another description of the disciples' sufferings written in the same intense lexical mode, albeit spread over a greater number of lines and with several significant redeterminations. Most striking here is the use of many members of the collocational chain pertaining to the domain of pain and centred on the image of the burning heat in the region of the heart (***hyge*** + ***geomor*** + ***hat*** + ***heortan*** + ***weoll***- + ***sefa***), a set of words which—as we have just seen—was also exploited in *Andreas* and *Elene*. In the extended passage of *ChristB*, a new member, the noun *hreþer* "breast," is added to the collocational set:

> Hæleð ***hyge***rofe, [...] | ***geomor***mode, [...] + ***hat*** æt ***heortan***, ***hreðer*** innan ***weoll***, beorn breost***sefa*** (*ChristB* 534–35a + 539–40a)
>
> The bold warriors [left the place of the Ascension], sad at heart [...] + [steadfast love was] hot around their hearts, their breasts were seething within, their souls were on fire.

6 On the subject of metaphorical language in Old English poetry and, in particular, on the verb *weallan* and the noun *wylm*, see Stanley's encompassing analysis, "Old English Poetic Diction and the Interpretation of *The Wanderer*," 413–66 (in particular at 429–31).

7 Izdebeska provides a diachronic analysis of *hātheort* in Chapter 8 of her dissertation, "The Semantic Field of ANGER in Old English," 189–216.

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In *GuthlacB* (a product of the Cynewulfian circle), the intense inner heat that originates around the heart ("***hat***, ***heortan*** neah") is not connected to a mental state of anguish, but derives from the progression of the disease that afflicts the hermit. This is effectively rendered through the image of a rain of arrows hitting Guthlac's breast, inflicting burning internal wounds "[...] him in gesonc, | ***hat***, ***heortan*** neah, hildescurum | flacor flanþracu" ("a shower of arrows rained down upon him and into his chest, burning near his heart, a vibrating storm of shots," *GuthlacB* 1142b–144a). The image of the inner 'combustion' resulting from physical or mental suffering resurfaces again in the poem, first to describe the turmoil afflicting Guthlac's disciple, especially at night, when he knows that his Master is about to die:

> Oft mec ***geomor sefa*** gehþa gemanode, | ***hat*** æt ***heortan***, ***hyge*** gnornende (*GuthlacB* 1208–209)
>
> Often my sad spirit, burning inside the heart, reminded me of my sorrows, my discomforted mind

and then again (using the same keywords) to reaffirm the pain caused by Guthlac's death, a torment that is rewakened at the moment when the disciple has to give the news to the holy man's sister. The description of his suffering is conveyed by two passages separated by the aside "this he felt at the thought of leaving behind his dear Master, bereft of life":[8]

> Gnornsorge wæg | ***hate*** æt ***heortan***, ***hyge geomurne***, | meðne mod***sefan*** + [...] Teagor yðum ***weoll***, | ***hate*** hleordropan, and on ***hreþre*** wæg | micle modceare (*GuthlacB* 1335b–337a + 1340–342a)
>
> He felt great grief burning inside his heart, his spirit was afflicted, his soul dejected + [...] Tears gushed out like waves, burning drops on his cheeks, and inside his breast his soul was grievously oppressed.

The Phoenix, another poem from the same school, gives a positive connotation to the collocational chain pivoting on ***hat*** + ***heorte***. At line 477, it is deployed to describe those who will receive a reward in the City of glory because they had fervently treasured the divine precepts in their hearts ("***hate*** æt ***heortan***") and loved their Lord with an ardent mind ("***hige weallende***").

We also find the ***hat*** + ***heorte*** combination in *GenesisB* 353b–54, but, rather curiously, the two collocates are in inverted order and belong to two separate utterances: in this context, it is Lucifer's thought which is described as swelling all around the heart ("***Weoll*** him on innan | ***hyge*** ymb his ***heortan***"), while the heat refers to the infernal flames which torture the fallen angel ("***hat*** wæs him utan"). The joint use of the root *weall-*/*welm* (already pointed out for its use in *Beowulf*, in combination with *heorte*) and the noun/adjective *hat* is striking in both this passage and the previous line 324a ("***hatne*** heaðo***welm***" "hot and hostile surging flames

8 *GuthlacB* 1337b–339a.

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[of Hell]").[9] The same collocation operates in *Christ and Satan* 317b–18a ("Flor attre ***weol***, | ***hat*** under hæftum" "[Hell's] ground seethed with poison, hot beneath the captive [devils]"); in *Andreas* 1240b–241a ("Blod yðum ***weoll*** | ***hatan*** heolfre" "Blood seethed in waves, hot and gory"), at 1503b–505 ("[...] ***weallan***, | ea inflede, nu ðe ælmihtig | ***hateð***, heofona cyning, þæt ðu ***hræd***lice" "[Let waters] surge up, a turgid river, now that the Almighty, the King of Heaven, commands that you at once [let water flow onto this sinful people]"), and at 1542a ("***hatan*** heaðo***wælme***" "hot, fierce waves").[10]

Although *Beowulf* contains a series of even more radical variations of the original collocation ***hat*** + ***heorte***, they are all clearly modelled on this combination, which attests to the extreme flexibility and adaptability that characterises collocations as compared with formulas.[11] The first example occurs at line 991, where the three original components (***hat*** "hot/heath" + ***heorte*** "heart" + ***hreþer*** "breast") are replaced by a tight sequence that links their homophones ***haten*** (past participle, "ordered") + ***Heort*** (Heorot Hall, "The Hart") + ***hreþe*** (adverb, "at once, quickly"):

> Ða wæs ***haten hreþe Heort*** innanweard |
> [...] gefrætwod (*Beowulf* 991–92a)
> Then it was ordered quickly to embellish
> [...] the inside of Heorot.

In line 3148a, the couple ***hat*** "hot" + ***hreþre*** "breast," which in the poetic corpus usually describes a painful state of mind, refers to the destructive flames that engulf Beowulf's body ("***hat*** on ***hreðre***" "hot on his chest," 3148a), but once again the general context depicts the sad scene of the warriors riding around the pyre lamenting the death of their king. Previously, after Beowulf's parting speech, a rapid succession of lines already evokes not only the hot, hostile surging flames of the pyre ("***hate*** heaðo***wylmas***," 2819a),[12] eagerly lapping at the king's body, but also his soul's departure from his breast to attend the Judgement of the righteous ("him of ***hreðre*** gewat | sawol," 2819b–820a).[13] Lastly, the collocational set ***hyrte*** "he took heart" +

9 The radical ***heoþu-*** "battle" (only attested as first element of compounds) is also found in combination with ***heorte*** in *Exodus* 148: "Wæron ***heaðowylmas heortan*** getenge" ("The hateful surges [i. e., feelings] were filling their hearts").

10 In this second occurrence, the "billows" do not refer to the waves in the sea, but to the tongues of the fire sent by an angel, which enveloped the city of the Mermedonians.

11 See Ruggerini, "Alliterative Lexical Collocations in Eddic Poetry," 312: "the components of a collocation do not necessarily combine in a tight syntactic and metrical unit as formulas do; the co-occurring words may even belong to different phrases, and yet remain recognisable as a meaningful and evocative conjunction."

12 See also "***haton*** heolfre [...] ***weol***" ("[the water] gushed up with hot blood," 849); [...] ***weol*** [...] | ***hatan*** heolfre (1422a and 1423a).

13 At the beginning of *Beowulf*, the construction of the hall Heorot is mentioned, together with its future destruction by fire; in this passage, the keywords are ***sele*** "hall" and *heaþo****wylma*** "hostile surges (of the flames)," 81b and 82b, respectively. Later on in the narration, the poet, evoking the destruction of Beowulf's court by the fiery dragon, makes use of the combination ***selest*** "the best [of dwellings]" + *bryne****wylmum*** "burning surges" + *on* ***hreðre*** "in his breast," 2326 and 2328a.

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hreþer "breast" + ***weoll*** "swelled up" is also remarkable, because of the evident substitution of the noun ***heorte*** with the co-radical verbal form (in the past tense) in a passage describing the dragon which, after regaining breath and courage, is about to mount its final attack against Beowulf:[14]

> ***Hyrte*** hyne hordweard, ***hreðer*** æðme ***weoll***
> (*Beowulf* 2593)
> The warden of the treasure took heart, its breast swelled up with breath.

A few lines later, the poet reproposes the verbal form ***weoll***, now used to describe how Wiglaf, one of Beowulf's companions, feels anguish mounting inside his breast as he watches the unequal duel between the grey-haired king and the fire-spitting beast: "[...] ***weoll*** | ***sefa*** wið sorgum" ("his mind seethed with regrets," 2599b–600a).[15]

It may be useful, at this point, to offer a schematic representation of the longest possible form that can be assumed by the collocational chain originating from the couple ***hat*** + ***heorte*** (+ ***weallan/wylm***). Such a string of words derives from the image of the heat rising and seething inside one's chest due either to a strong and/or painful feeling or to a physical event. The form is attested in *GenesisB*,[16] in the poems by Cynewulf (*Elene*, *ChristB*,) and in those of his circle (*Andreas*, *GuthlacB*, *The Phoenix*), as well as in *Beowulf*. In the string below, square brackets enclose the possible paronomastic additions which, despite being a rather common device in poetry, in this particular case are only exploited by the *Beowulf* poet:

> *hat* "hot/heat" [+ *haten* "ordered"] + *heorte* "heart" [+ *hyrte* "to take heart" + *Heort* "Heorot Hall"] + *weall-/weol(l)/wylm* "to swell; seething, surge" + *hyge* "thought" + *hreþer* "breast" [+ *hreþe/hræd-* "quickly, at once; quick-"] + *sawol* "soul" [+ *sele* "hall" + *selest* "excellent, best"] + *sefa* "mind" + *geomor* "sad."[17]

In *Judith*, the heroine prays to God asking Him to fortify her soul and endow her with the faith and courage she needs to enter the enemy's camp and kill Holofernes. Her prayer opens and closes with the admission of her deep inner turmoil and of the sadness weighing on her heart, expressed through

14 In *Beowulf*, the combination ***hreþer*** + ***wylm/weoll*** is also attested at 1877a–878a (with the addition of *hyge-*), and at 2113b.

15 Elsewhere in the poem, the *Beowulf* poet collocates ***hat-*** + ***weall-/weol(l)/wylm*** in 'non-emotional contexts,' where the combination refers to natural elements: surging water mixed with hot blood (after a battle) or the hot intensity of fire (847–49; 1422–423a; 2689–691; 2819). In a passage of *The Ruin* (38b–41a, discussed below), ***hat*** + ***wylme*** + ***weal*** is deployed with reference to the gushing out of hot water in a place surrounded by a wall (ruins of the Roman baths).

16 In *GenesisA* 2586, the welling heat is physical, and refers to a punishing fire sent by God (***wylmhatne*** *lig*), while in *Christ and Satan* 317b–18a, it is hell's ground that boils up with hot venom, tormenting the captive devils ("Flor attre ***weol***, ***hat*** under hæftum").

17 In the Old English corpus, other words describing a painful experience are attested, side by side, or substituting, members of the collocation ***hat*** + ***heorte***, such as: *mod* "mind," *sorg* "sorrow," *murnian* and *gnornian/gnorn* "to lament; sad," *breost* "breast," *caru* "care, affliction"; they may also create collocations of their own (such as *murnian* + *mod*, 8x).

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the image of an oppressive internal combustion that generates suffering:

> þearle ys me nu ða | heorte ***onhæted*** ond ***hige geomor***, | [...] ys þus torne on mode, | ***hate*** on ***hreðre*** minum (*Judith* 86b–87 and 93b–94a)
>
> now my heart is fiercely inflamed and my soul saddened; [...] in my mind I experience anguish that weighs hard on my chest.

HAT + HEORTE VERSUS *CEOL-/CEAL- + CEAR-* IN *THE SEAFARER*

If we now move on to consider the so-called 'Elegies,'[18] with their frequent references to the inner sufferings of their protagonists, it is worth pointing out that the formula *hat æt/ymb heortan* only occurs once in *The Seafarer*, where it does not combine with any of the other members of the collocational set centred on the binomial ***hat*** + ***heorte***. Instead of finding the expected verb *weallan* "to swell up, to burn," referring to the sorrows tormenting the soul, the poet uses the verb *seofian* "to lament, to sigh," governed by the noun *ceare* "cares." This peculiar association has been noted by Cucina, who draws attention to the unusual fact that in this passage the verbal act—usually performed by an animate subject—is associated with an inanimate subject. More generally, she also points out how the poet manages to bend the lexicon to his own goals, also by creating a contrast between common words and an alienated context,[19] as in the passage under discussion:

> [...] ceare ***seofedun | hat ymb heortan***; hungor innan slat[20] | merewerges mod (*The Seafarer* 10b–12a)
>
> [...] hot troubles sighed around my heart; hunger from inside tore my exhausted soul, tired after the days of sailing.

We might also add that the verb *seofedun* functions as a paronomastic variation of the noun *sefa* "spirit" (also part of the collocational chain under examination) and that the insertion of the noun *cearu* in this context further elaborates the 'aural-narrative' strategy developed throughout the initial section of the poem (lines 1–19b) so as to emphasise the hardships of sailing in winter suffered by the narrating voice: in these fifteen lines of *The Seafarer*, the poet insistently uses the root *ceol-/ceal-* "cold," together with its paronomastic variation *ceol* "ship" and the root *-cear-* "care," thereby creating a thematic unit that dwells on both physical and mental coldness:

18 See Ruggerini, "Aspetti lessicali combinatori nelle 'elegie' anglosassoni," 57–60.

19 Cucina, *Il "Seafarer,"* 338 and 331, respectively.

20 The same combination *hunger* + the verb *slitan* occurs in *GenesisB*, in one of the few passages in common with the Old Saxon *Genesis*: "Nu slit me hunger and þurst | bitre on breostum" (802b–803a), as compared to "Ni thuingit mi giu hungar endi thrust | bitter bealouuerek" (Old Saxon *Genesis* 12b–13a; *"Heliand" und "Genesis,"* ed. Behaghel, 241).

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*breost**ceare*** "cares inside the breast" (4a)
ceole + ***cear**selda* "ship" + "place of cares" (hapax; 5)
calde "cold" (9b)
caldum + ***ceare*** "cold" + "anxieties" (10)
*earm**cearig*** + *is**cealdne*** "miserable" + "icy-cold" (14)
*hrimgi**celum*** "icicles" (17a)
*is**caldne*** "icy-cold" (19a).

The semantic and metaphoric congruity between the two roots (*ceol-/ceal-* and *cear-*) is confirmed by their use in the couple *cyle* + *cearo* found in the final section of *ChristC*, where the blessed life enjoyed in Heaven is described as the absence of all the hardship and suffering men experience during their earthly life, in accordance with a common homiletic topos:[21]

> Nis þær hungor ne þurst | slæp ne swar leger, ne sunnan bryne, | ne ***cyle*** ne ***cearo*** (*ChristC* 1660b–1662a)
>
> In that place, there is neither hunger nor thirst; neither sleep nor painful illness, neither scorching sunshine, nor frost or afflictions.

The alliterative link between *hat*, *heortan*, and *hungor* in *The Seafarer* 11, despite the lack of semantic congruity, seems nonetheless to have a 'need' of its own, since it is also used in other poetic contexts where two-member combinations are generated (*hungor* + *hata*; *heortan* + *hunger*): in *The Phoenix* 613, the canonical list of negative experiences which do not occur in Heaven includes "***hungor*** se ***hata***, [...] ne se hearda þurst" ("extreme hunger [nor] painful thirst"); in *Riddle 43*, on the other hand, a similar list serves the purpose of stressing what cannot harm "the precious guest of human dwellings [i. e., the soul]": here it is thirst, rather than hunger, that is defined as "burning hot" ("***hungor*** [...] ne se ***hata*** þurst," line 3). Finally, the syntactically unconventional collocation *heorte* + *hungor* characterises the elegiac passage in which Agar, Sara's slave-woman, laments her condition of exile in the desert, doomed to wait for the time when "[...] of ***heortan hunger*** oððe wulf | sawle and sorge somed abregde" ("hunger or a wolf will tear apart both soul and pain together from my heart," *GenesisA* 2278–279).

THE VARIANT *HAT* (*HEORT[NESS]*) + *HRÆD-/HRAÐRE/HREÐRE* (+ *HEARD*) IN THE ELEGIAC DISCOURSE

In *The Wanderer*, the narrator's voice seamlessly mingles with that of the protagonist, in a discourse where time planes are blurred, and the protagonist's outpouring of sadness for his present misery alternates with memories of the good times under the patronage of a generous lord. The roles of the speakers also tend to overlap in a similar way: first- and third-person pronouns alternate, and the narration becomes, in turn, either direct and emotional or impersonal and detached, interspersed with asides. In the mid-section of the poem, after a passage reflecting on

21 A detailed list of negative features that are absent from Heaven is provided in *Judgment Day II* (256–67), beginning with the couple *sorh* + *sar* "pain" + "sorrow."

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the fleetingness and progressive decay of the world, where only those who have already lived their "share of winters" (*wintra dæl*, *The Wanderer* 65a) can be defined as wise, the poet inserts a list of advice (introduced by the gnomic verb *sceal* "one must") indicating the proper behaviour to be adopted in different circumstances. One has to avoid any extremes and follow the golden mean ("*ne to* [. . .] *ne to* [...]" "neither too much [...] nor too much [...]"); in particular, a prudent man should be patient, hence "ne [...] to ***hatheort*** ne to ***hræd***wyrde" ("neither too hot-tempered, nor too hasty in speaking," *The Wanderer* 66).[22] The second compound is a hapax, but its meaning is clear since its members are words of common use ("fast" + "discourse"). In this passage, the usual coupling ***hat*** + ***heorte*** gives way to the adjective ***hatheort***, frequently found in prose,[23] but with only a single further occurrence as a noun (***hatheortness***) in the poem *Metre 25*, where once again we are warned against extreme behaviour, and where particular emphasis is given to the negative outcomes of anger on both body and mind:

> him wyrð on ***breostum*** inne | beswungen ***sefa*** on ***hraðre*** mid ðæm swiðan ***welme*** | ***hatheortnesse***, and ***hreðe*** siððan | unrotnesse eac geræped, | hearde gehæfted (*Metre 25* 45b–49a)
>
> [When men] become irascible in their hearts, their spirit is assailed by a violent and increasing fury and immediately after, it is imprisoned and enveloped by sadness.

It is particularly interesting to note that in both metrical contexts (*The Wanderer* and *Metre 25*) the alliterative pattern is congruous with the above-described collocational set:

> ***hatheort*** + ***hræd***- (*The Wanderer* 66)[24]
> ***breostum*** + ***sefa*** + ***hraðre*** + ***welme*** + ***hatheortnesse***[25] + ***hreðe*** (*Metre 25* 45–49a).

This is also what happens in the passage below which comes from another elegy, *The Ruin*, although here, rather than referring to an emotional experience, the collocation is used to describe a real landscape—that is, the ruins of the Roman baths—by replacing *weol* (past tense of *weallan* "to seethe") with *weal* "wall":

22 The same blameworthy combination of "irascibility" and "heedlessness" is attested in two different passages of the Alfredian translation of *Cura Pastoralis*: "sio ***hatheortness*** & sio ***hræd***wilnes" (Chapter 33); "ðone wielm & ðone onræs his ***hatheortnesse***" (Chapter 40) ("the seething and onrush of his hot-heartedness"); *King Alfred's West-Saxon Version of Gregory's Pastoral Care*, ed. Sweet, 215 and 297.

23 See Izdebeska, *The Semantic Field of ANGER*, 200–01 and Lockett, *Anglo-Saxon Psychologies*, 95–97.

24 See also Daniel 618b–19: "siððan him nið godes, | ***hreð*** of heofonum, ***hete*** gesceode" ("after God's enmity, flashing from Heaven, struck [Nebuchadnezzar] with hostility").

25 A similar combinatory pattern also occurs in *Heliand*, 5004-6a: ***uueop*** + ***uuallan*** + ***hertcara*** + ***hête*** + ***breostun*** (all quotations from *Heliand* are from *"Heliand" und "Genesis,"* ed. Behaghel). The sequence ***welm*** + ***hatheortness*** is attested in the West Saxon version of Bede's *Historia ecclesiastica* (Chapter 16; *The Old English Version of Bede's Ecclesiastical History*, ed. Miller, 68).

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> stream ***hat***e wearp | widan ***wylme***; ***weal*** eall befeng | beorhtan bosme, þær þa baþu wæron, | ***hat*** on ***hreþre*** (*The Ruin* 38b–41a)
>
> hot water gushed out with a mighty flow; a wall encircled all with its bright bosom, where the baths were, hot at its heart.

Finally, in a controversial passage of *The Wife's Lament*, the sufferings that oppress man's spirit are described by combining the words ***geomor****mod* "sad at heart" + ***heard*** "painful" + ***heorte*** "heart" + ***breostcearu*** "care in the breast," and -***sorgna*** "sorrows":

> A scyle geong mon wesan ***geomor***mod, | ***heard heortan*** geþoht, swylce habban sceal | bliþe gebæro, eac þon ***breostceare***, | sin***sorgna*** gedreag (*The Wife's Lament* 42–45a)
>
> The young man should maintain a melancholic disposition, with grievous thoughts in his heart; at the same time, he should be outwardly cheerful, although in his breast he suffers pain and a multitude of constant sorrows.[26]

In this context, the noun ***heortan*** (Gen. sg.) is combined with the alliterating adjective ***heard*** which (like ***hræd***- in *The Wanderer* 66b) should probably be considered a variation of the more frequent member of the collocation ***hreþer*** "breast." It is likely that the connection was triggered by the memory of the phrase *duritiam cordis* which in *Matth* 19:8 and *Mk* 10:5 applies to the Hebrews of Moses's times, rendered in the Rushworth glosses as "[to] heardnisse heortan (/heorta)."[27]

A SURVEY OF 'WORDS OF GRIEF-COMBINATIONS' IN OLD SAXON AND OLD NORSE VERSE

The diffusion of a single alliterative combination or a collocational chain is a question that our analysis cannot fail to address. Our field of research must thus necessarily extend beyond the borders of any single corpus of the Germanic poetry from which our inquiry started. In so doing, we may be able to ascertain whether the collocation in question (in our case, ***hat*** + ***heort*** and combining words) is part of a shared set, either due to borrowing or as a common descendant of traditional stock.

In terms of cultural contiguity, Old Saxon verse—mainly the close to six-thousand-line long Christian epic *Heliand*[28]—is large

26 It is not easy to ascertain whether the statement is directed at a generic young man (hence, the advice is to be read as a warning on the importance of adopting a thoughtful frame of mind) or whether the discourse (in the least convincing hypothesis read as a magical utterance) addresses a specific person who caused the banishment of the protagonist's husband, or the husband himself; for a detailed discussion of the passage, see *The Old English Elegies*, ed. Klinck, 185–86.

27 *The Holy Gospels in Anglo-Saxon, Northumbrian, and Old Mercian Versions*, ed. Skeat, Chapter 19.8.

28 In the Old Saxon *Genesis*, sorrowful conditions are depicted by means of traditional grief-words, although the adjective "hot" and the verb "to well" are missing: "[…] thîn ***hugi hriuuuig***" ("your sorrowful mind," 44a); "Thes uuarđ Adamas ***hugi*** innan ***breostun*** | suîđo an ***sorogun***, […] | […] Thuo siu bluodag uuuosk | ***hrêugiuuâdi***, thuo warđ iro ***hugi sêrag***. | Bêđo uuas im thô an ***sorogun***" ("Therefore Adam's spirit became very sorrowful in his breast […] As she [Eve] was washing the clothes stained in blood, she grew distressed in her mind. Both were

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enough and indeed the nearest corpus which can profitably be investigated alongside Old English poetry. In addition to this, the many episodes of suffering scattered throughout the narration of the Saviour's life are suitable for testing the occurrence of collocational patterns involving the vocabulary of pain.

As regards the Old English alliterative pair ***hat*** + ***heorte***, we can safely say that it does not play the same pivotal role in *Heliand*, although both its corresponding members, ***hêt*** "hot" and ***herta*** "heart," are exploited in a disjointed fashion: only in one passage are they collocated within the same line, but in this context, it is not the heart which undergoes an increase in temperature, but tears, defined as 'hot': here the phrase "hot tears" conveys the more basic and still current meaning of a particularly distressing outburst of tears. The poet enhances this by adding, as a climax, the image of those drops turning into blood, possibly inspired by the Augustinian image of tears conceived as drops springing directly from the heart, cited in epigraph. The apostle Peter is depicted as he falls prey to despair on realising that he has just denied his Master for the third time, his pain and remorse causing him to burst into tears:

> Thes thram imu an innan ***môd*** | ***bittro*** an is ***breostun***, endi geng imu thô gibolgan thanen | […] an ***môdkaru***, | suîðo an ***sorgun***, endi is selƀes uuord, | [uuam] scefti ***uueop***, | antat imu ***uuallan*** quâmun | thurh thea ***hertcara hête trahni*** | blôdage fan is ***breostun*** (*Heliand* 5000b–6)[29]
>
> For this reason, [Peter's] mind swelled up inside, bitterly in his breast, so that, thus seething, he went away from there, and there gushed out, from the sufferings in his [the disciple Peter's] heart, gory, hot tears, from his breast.

On the other hand, one feature shared by both poetic corpuses is the use of the basic couple Old English *heorte* + *hug-/hyg-/hycg-* (66x) and Old Saxon *herta* + *hugi/hugg-* (22x) ("heart" + "spirit; to think"), as well as the connection between suffering and a feeling of physical constriction inside one's chest, which initiates a progressive "cardiocentric turmoil," culminating in the release of the painful oppression through an outpouring of tears.[30] Such inner swelling is expressed by means of the Old Saxon verb *uuallan* (corresponding to Old English *weallan*), deployed in the above-cited passage of *Heliand* and again at lines 3687b–690, where the subject manifesting such distress is Christ Himself described as He prays in the Garden of Gethsemane before His Passion, and thus exposing His human nature to the audience of the poem:[31]

in pain," 84–99a); and "***sêr*** umbi ***herta***" ("sad in their hearts," 96).

29 This *Heliand* passage conveys the most articulated description of the 'physiology of tears'; cf. Lockett, *Anglo-Saxon Psychologies*, 140.

30 Lockett, *Anglo-Saxon Psychologies*, 140.

31 Cf. also *Heliand* 4071–73a: "griat gornundi, antat themu godes barne | ***hugi*** uuarð gihrôrid: ***hête trahni*** | uuôpu ***auuellun***" ("She [Lazarus's sister] lamented and wept until the mind of God's Son was moved: hot tears welled up, as He cried").

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Thô ***uuel*** imu an innen | ***hugi*** uuið is ***herte***: thô ni mahte that hêlage barn | ***uuôpu*** auuîsien, sprak thô uuordo filu | ***hriuuiglîco***—uuas imu is ***hugi sêreg***—(*Heliand* 3687b–690)

Then inside Him His spirit welled up against His heart: though He could not avoid the shedding of tears, He spoke many words, with sadness—His mind was grieving—.

This concentration of 'grief-words' (*uuôpu* "cried"; *hriuuiglîco* "dejectedly"; *hugi sêreg* "sorrowful mind") recalls passages in the Old English corpus that are equally 'loaded' with words referring to pain and to various inner seats of feelings and thoughts (heart, mind, soul, breast, chest).

The stylistic device of variation amplifies the description of a deeply-felt grief, as shown by two more examples from each corpus (the two Old English ones, drawn from a single poem, have been deliberately chosen from outside the elegiac genre, to show the pervasiveness of this poetic treatment of the topic). It may not be coincidental that once again the *Heliand* passages involve Christ the Master and Peter the disciple, who is about to become the first leader of the Church:[32]

Old English: 'min ***hige*** dreoseð [...] | hwilum me bryne stigeð | ***hige heortan*** neah ***hædre wealleð'*** (*Solomon and Saturn* 60b–62)

'my heart sinks, [...] a burning mounts in me, my spirit seething anxiously near my heart'

Old English: hafað wilde mod, ***werige heortan***, | ***sefan sorgfullne***, sliðe geneahhe | ***werig***, wilna leas, wuldres bedæled, | hwilum ***higegeomor*** [...] (*Solomon and Saturn* 379–82a)

[a mother] has a troubled mind, a weary heart, a sorrowful spirit; often she slides into weariness, deprived of desire and glory; sometimes she [is] miserable in her mind [...].

Old Saxon: [...] gornuuordun sprac | ***hriuuiglîco***: uuas imu is ***hugi*** drôƀi, | bi theru menniski môd gihrôrid, | is flêsk uuas an forhtun: fellun imo ***trahni***, | drôp is diurlîc suêt, al sô drôr kumid | ***uuallan*** fan uundun (*Heliand* 4747–752a)

He [Christ at Gethsemane] pronounced words of lamentation, sorrowfully: His mind was saddened, His spirit was upset in His humanness, His flesh was shaking with fear: His tears fell, His precious sweat fell in drops, as blood comes falling out of wounds

Old Saxon: Thô uuarð imu an innan sân, | Sîmon Petruse ***sêr*** an is ***môde***, | harm an is ***hertan*** endi is ***hugi*** drôƀi, | suîðo uuarð imu an ***sorgun***[33] (*Heliand* 4993b–996a)

32 High concentrations of grief-words occur in the following passages in *Heliand* (in brackets, the subject of the suffering): 606–8 (Herod); 803–4 (Mary); 3178–179, 4588–590, 4670b–673a (Christ's disciples); 5686b–689a (the women lamenting Christ's death); 5922b–923 (Mary Magdalene).

33 A few lines earlier, Peter is described as both enraged and in pain: "Thô gibolgan uuarð | [...] Sîmon Petrus, | ***uuell*** imu innan ***hugi***, that he ni mahte ênig uuord sprekan: | sô harm uuarð imu an is ***hertan***" (*Heliand*, 4865b–868a) ("Then Simon Peter seethed inside, his mind was swollen, so that he could not utter a single word: his heart was filled with pain").

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> Then Simon Peter immediately became sad
> in his mind, afflicted in his heart, his spirit
> in turmoil; he felt oppressed by sorrows.

As far as Old Saxon verse is concerned, then, a series of words pertaining to the domain of 'grief' are deployed within a string (in order of frequency, they are: *hugi*, *herta*, and *sorg-/sêr*, followed at a distance by *uuôp-/uueop*, *uuall-/uuell*, *hriuuig*, *trahn*, *harm*, *breost*, and *sebo*), whereas the combination ***hêt*** + ***herta*** does not appear to enjoy special recognition. Both Old English and Old Saxon verse offer us some original images linked to this set of grief words, such as the heat invading the inner cavities surrounding the heart before tears are released (Old English), and the bold picture of tears turning into blood, as if they sprang directly from the heart (Old Saxon).[34]

It is not my purpose here to evaluate the presence, extent, frequency, and peculiar traits of the potential grief-collocations in Old Norse verse (both eddic and skaldic); rather, I shall limit myself to formulating a few remarks concerning grief-words which are of interest for our present research, in particular, the collocational behaviour of the word "heart" in the context of severe emotional distress.

Old Norse poetry is obviously concerned with pain, but it seldom indulges in the lexical representation of its psychological and physical mechanisms: it neither piles up words of sorrow through variation, nor does it combine them in collocational strings, although versifiers were certainly aware of the processes connected with the human mind and heart, and of their transformations under the pressure of pain.

With respect to the ***heart***-collocation under analysis, one noticeable feature of eddic verse (where the image of the 'heated heart' is absent) is the frequent occurrence of the doublet ***hjarta*** "heart" + ***hugr/hyggja*** "mind; to think," which parallels its use in Old English and Old Saxon, except for the fact that only rarely does it attract other words belonging to the grief-domain.[35] The largest achieved combination is a three-member string (***hjarta*** "heart"+ ***hugr/Huginn*** "mind"/"name of Odin's raven" + ***sorg/sár*** "pain/painful") that only occurs three times (twice, not surprisingly, in the elegiac/dramatic word-texture of *Guðrúnarkviða II*, one of the poems recounting Guðrún's bereavement after Sigurðr's tragic death):

> ***sorg*** etr ***hjarta***, ef þú segja né náir | einhverjom allan ***hug*** (*Hávamál* 121.8–10)
> pain eats the heart, if you cannot speak to another all your thoughts

> síz Sigurðar ***sárla*** drukko | hrægífr, ***Huginn hjart***blóð saman (*Guðrúnarkviða II* 29.5–8)

34 In *ChristC* 1174–176a, trees suffering for Christ's Passion exude a red and thick sap, resembling bloody teardrops.

35 See, for instance: "***Hugr*** einn þat veit, er býr ***hjarta*** nær, | einn er hann sér um ***sefa***" ("Only the mind knows what lies near the heart; he is alone with his spirit," *Hávamál* 95.1–3); "'aptarla ***hjarta hygg*** ek at þitt, Atli, sé'" ("'I think your heart, Atli, is in your back,'" *Helgakviða Hjǫrvarðzsonar* 20.4–6). Quotations from eddic poems are normalised from the fifth edition of Neckel and Kuhn (1983).

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after the corpse-eater [the wolf] and Huginn [the raven] sorely drank Sigurðr's blood together[36]

hjorto hugða ek þeira við hunang tuggin, | ***sorgmóðs sefa***, sollin blóði (*Guðrúnarkviða II* 41.5–8)

I [Atli, in a dream] thought I chewed their [my sons'] hearts with honey, troubled in mind, swollen with blood.

It is worth noting that in the second passage above, the proper name ***Huginn*** replaces the common noun *hugr* (also varied, a few lines later, by the verb ***hugða***) by way of paronomastic association, and that the same device is at work in other eddic passages where the name ***Hǫgni*** (echoing, like Huginn, its near homophone *hugr*) combines with the noun ***hjarta*** (and the verb ***hyggja*** "to think"). In this latter case, the alliterating attraction between *Hǫgni* and *hjarta* reflects a strong narrative link: in fact, the story tells how Hǫgni's *heart* was cut out of his chest in the well-known episode in which the Gjúkung brothers, Gunnarr and Hǫgni, are both killed after their refusal to reveal where their treasure lay well hidden:

Hjarta skal mér ***Hǫgna*** í hendi liggja, | blóðukt, ór ***brjósti*** skorið baldriða (*Atlakviða* 21.1–4)[37]

Hǫgni's heart must lie in my hand, bloody, cut from the breast of that bold riding-warrior

Hló þá ***Hǫgni***, er til ***hjarta*** skáro | kvikkvan kumblasmið, kløkkva hann sízt ***hugði*** (*Atlakviða* 24.1–4)

Then Hǫgni laughed, as they cut out his heart, while the smith of scars was still living; he never even thought of crying out

Takit ér ***Hǫgna*** ok hyldit með knífi, | skerið ór ***hjarta***, skoloð þess gorvir (*Atlamál* 59.1–4)

Take Hǫgni and slaughter him with a knife, cut out his heart; be ready to do this

þeir ór ***Hǫgna hjarta*** skáro, | enn í ormgarð annan lǫgðo (*Oddrúnargratr* 28.5–8)[38]

they cut out Hǫgni's heart, and placed the other [brother, i. e., Gunnarr] in the snake-pit.

The vast corpus and the distinctive, peculiar stylistic rules that govern skaldic verse[39] only allow us to state that there are few occurrences of stable grief-word chains parallel to those deployed in the above-mentioned Old English and Old Saxon passages to describe

36 The couple of nouns *hjarta* + *hugr* undergoes a readaptation in the following examples: "Loki át af ***hjarta*** lindi brendo, | fann hann hálfsviðinn ***hugstein*** kono" ("Loki ate from the heart roasted on a wood-fire, a woman's brain-stone [HEART], that he found half-singed," *Hyndluljóð* 41.1–4); and in the next two, where *hjarta* and *hugr* are substituted by words with a similar sound: "'Hverfðu til ***hjarðar***, ef þú ***hug*** trúir'" ("'Go to the herd, if you have courage enough,'" *Hymiskviða* 17.5–6) and "***hjartar*** horn, þat er ór ***haugi*** bar" ("the hart's horn, which was brought out of the mound," *Sólarljóð* 78.4–5).

37 See also: "'Hér hefi ek ***hjarta*** Hjalla ins blauða, | ólíkt ***hjarta Hǫgna*** ins frœkna'" ("'Here I [Gunnarr] have Hjalli's cowardly heart, unlike Hǫgni's brave heart,'" *Atlakviða* 23.3–6); and, a few stanzas below: "'Hér hefi ek ***hjarta Hǫgna*** ins frœkna, | ólíkt ***hjarta*** Hjalla ins blauða,'" *Atlakviða* 25.3–6.

38 Cf. also Guðrúnarkviða II 31.7–8: "ok ór Hǫgna hjarta slíta" ("and tear out the heart from Hǫgni").

39 Kennings aim at substituting common nouns with poetic circumlocutions, a process which reduces the relevance of traditional word combinations: in *Pétrsdrápa* 45, for example, the nouns 'tears' and 'breast' are hidden—so to speak—within a complex metaphor.

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the various stages and effects on the body of intense, painful experiences. One exception is the unmarked, neutral couple ***hugr*** "mind" + ***hjarta*** "heart" (also exploited by eddic verse, as we have just seen, but redetermined here by means of the root *sorg/sár-* "pain, painful") which becomes a collocation, and can be varied by way of paronomasia.[40]

Only in late religious skaldic poetry do we find an interest in the mechanisms of pain and in its manifestations, which on a few occasions leads to the adoption of stock descriptions, as in the examples cited below; this however does not prevent poets from introducing new lexical elements, like the original compound *hjart*(*a*)*rótum* "the heart's roots" (here in the Dat. pl.), signifying its innermost and most vital part:[41]

> Reiðigall með ***sárum*** sullum | sviðrar mier um blásin iðrin; | ***hrygðin*** slítr af ***hjarta-rótum*** | harðan styrk í ***sútam***yrkri (*Lilja* 77.5–8)
>
> The gall of wrath burns me with painful ulcers in my swollen bowels; sorrow rips the hard strength from the roots of my heart in the darkness of despair.[42]
>
> ***Sár***feinginn ***hug særir*** | ***sótt hjarð***reka dróttins; | *eldi í gegn fyr gildan | gleði ***tár***kveiktan steðja. | Ástkennis fyr innan | angr ***hjartrót*um*** stangaz, | meistara síns að misti | mætr kinnroða gætir (*Pétrsdrápa* 43).
>
> Anguish afflicts the pain-stricken heart of the shepherd of the Lord [APOSTLE]; it has kindled through and through for the excellent [man] his anvil of joy [which has been] moved to tears [HEART]. Grief pierces the heart-roots of the teacher of love [APOSTLE] inwardly, because the worthy possessor of shame [HOLY MAN] has lost his master.[43]

It is certainly no mere coincidence that both the author of the cited passage from *Pétrsdrápa* and the *Heliand* poet offer us an accurate description of the disciple's bitter remorse after his threefold denial of Christ; even though the words used are different, the same model-image of a pain which provokes a physical, burning surge inside one's chest is exploited in the later skaldic narration, where the past participle/adjective hapax *allþrútinn* "swollen (with grief)," at line 45.6, conveys the same sense as the Old English and OS verb *weallan/wallan* "to well, to seethe":

40 Cf. ***hug****blauðum* + ***hjarta*** (*Krákumál* 22.9–10); ***hjarta*** + ***hug*** (*Hugsvinnsmál* 17.4 and 6); ***hart*** "fiercely" + ***hjǫrtu*** + ***hug****full* (Sigvatr Þórðarson, *Bersǫglisvísur* 4.5–6); ***hug****prútt* ***hjarta*** (Stúfr inn blindi Þórðarson kattar, *Stúfsdrápa* 6.3); ***hjarta*** | *ok* ***hug****prúðara* (Hrókr inn svarti, *Hrókskviða* 5.7–8); ***hug****fult* ***hjarta*** (*Ketill hœngr*, Lausavísur 17.4); ***hugr*** *ok* ***hjarta*** + ***brjósti*** "breast" (Bjǫrn Ragnarsson, *Lausavísur* 2.1–2). See also the list of *heiti* in the thula *Hugar heiti ok hjarta*: "Móðr, ***hjarta***, hnegg, munr, ***hugr***, sefi, | geð, heil, sjafni, gollorr ok eljun" ("Spirit, heart, core, pleasure, thought, mind, mood, brain, love, pericardium and energy," *Hugar heiti ok hjarta*, ed. Gade, 964).

41 In *Pétrsdrápa*, the compound *hjartarótum* occurs at st. 43.6, anticipated in the previous stanza (in the same metrical position, as line 6) by the phrase *hjarta rótum*: "the [soldier's] spear strikes His [Christ's] heart at the roots"; Cf. *Pétrsdrápa*, ed. McDougall, 834.

42 The poet is speaking here. Cf. *Lilja*, ed. Chase, 649.

43 See *Pétrsdrápa*, ed. McDougall, 834.

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> Metr líkn guðs og ljótan | löst* sinn vánar trausti | smurðr af greina garði | gegn brásteina regni. | Enn frá öðrum mönnum | allþrútinn fór úti | angrs; var einn í gaungu | ótt til grafar dróttins (*Pétrsdrápa* 45).

> The upright man, anointed with rain of eyelash-stones [EYES > TEARS] from the enclosure of wits [BREAST], considers God's mercy and his own ugly sin with the support of hope. Still swollen with grief, he was walking outside, way from other men; alone he made his way quickly to the Lord's grave.[44]

Such emphasis on Peter's grief when he realises the extent and implications of his betrayal—at a time when his Master needed his thanes' support against His enemies—creates a powerful connection for the audience between a dishonourable act taking place in the past and in a far away, 'exotic' country, and the condemnable and disruptive behaviour still threatening the cohesion of a society whose survival and expansion traditionally relied on the bond of loyalty between a lord and his retainers. At the same time, such a display of seemingly uncontrollable and infinite sorrow prepares the anti-climax to the irruption in the story (of Peter as well as of humankind) of Christ's prompt forgiveness and consolation, pointing ahead to the revolutionary experience of sufferance willingly undertaken:

> The king of the clouds [= God (= CHRIST)] dries [the eyes of] his follower and encourages him for a long time; joyful with love He greets him and then kisses his mouth wet [with tears]: 'Mercy has long since been obtained; cease from weeping, my son! You shall yet follow in most of my footsteps all the way to martyrdom.'[45]

CONCLUSIONS

This comparative survey was aimed at showing how and to what extent the language of ancient Germanic verse makes use of collocational markers to describe the subjective experience of grief. Attention was drawn, in particular, to the alliterative couple "heat" + "heart" (OE ***hat*** + ***heorte***), which often attracts words stemming from the root *weall-, such as the verb "to surge; to be agitated" (OE ***weallan***) and the noun "swelling; ardour" (OE ***wielm/wylm***) in its orbit. Whether referring to an intense pain seething inside the chest like boiling water, or to a subdued pain that has lost its bite and now abides in the form of a pervasive and psychologically invalidating sadness, versifiers expressed such negative feelings by resorting to a repertoire of collocational strings arranged around the different synonyms for the seat of emotions and thoughts: *heorte*, *breost*, *hyge*, *sefa*, *mod, sawol*, *hreþer*.

This combinatory vocabulary is particularly expanded in the Old English poetic corpus, where its use is not limited to 'complaint verse' proper (the so-called Elegies), but surfaces in single episodes within works

44 See *Pétrsdrápa*, ed. McDougall, 836.

45 "Þurkar þegn og styrkir | þeingill skýja leingi, | kveðr og kyssir síðan | kátr elsku munn vátan: | 'Feingin er líkn fyr laungu; | lát af, sonr, að gráta! | En*n* skalt fótspor finna | flest mín alt í pínu'" (See *Pétrsdrápa*, ed. McDougall, 838).

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belonging to different genres when attention is drawn to a character's suffering. In these cases, the poet dwells on such manifestations of pain with a sensitivity which may have been encouraged by the attention which Christian doctrine and thought devote to introspection and the movements of the heart, also with a view to inspiring believers to transform their grief into nourishment for the soul, to consider it a reminder of the frailty of earthly joys and a propellent of repentance.

The possible occurrence in a single poem, or in a homogeneous group, of privileged combinatory schemes within the larger set of the grief word-collocation chain (*hat* "hot/heat" + *heorte* "heart" + *weall-/weol(l)/wylm* "to swell; seething, surge" + *hyge* "thought" + *hreþer* "breast" + *sawol* "soul"+ *sefa* "mind" + *geomor* "sad") was also taken into account and analysed, because a distinctive usage may hint at and help in sorting out the contours of a poetic personality, even though extreme caution is called for when drawing general conclusions from material gathered during the investigation of a single collocative string (as is the case of the present survey). It would thus be desirable to carry out more and more studies of single collocational sets, thereby increasing the likelihood of obtaining reliable results and safe conclusions.

Experience gained through research in the field suggests that such analyses should take into due consideration the inbuilt flexibility of any collocational chain, that is its potential adaptability to different contexts mainly through paronomastic procedures: any collocate of a given string may be substituted (or sided) by words with which it only has an outer, phonetic resemblance, and whose semantic content may be radically different, no longer referring to the original lexical sphere (the 'movements of the sorrowful heart'). Thus,—to return to where my discussion began—the *Beowulf* poet relies on the traditional coupling of ***heorte*** "heart"+ ***wylm*** "swelling" but uses it with a fair amount of originality: on the one hand, he turns it into the medical explanation for heart failure which is the cause of a person's death (on three different occasions)[46]; on the other, he substitutes the word *heart* with two almost homophonous words (*Heor(o)t*, King Hrothgar's Hall, and the verb *hyrte* "took heart"), collocating them with one of *heart*'s traditional partners, which is in turn modified through paronomasia (*haten* "ordered" vs. *hat* "hot"). This modus operandi falls within the larger attitude displayed by the *Beowulf* poet, whose mastery of the Old English word hoard is easily seen in his ability to draw from and, at the same time, reinvigorate tradition through creative innovations.

The concluding part of the survey, whose focus is on a few Old Saxon and Old Norse parallels to the Old English grief-collocation string, besides attesting to the existence of a common poetic combinatory tradition when it comes to describing suffering, has brought to light new information on the versification

46 The three occurrences in *Beowulf* are discussed in the opening of this study.

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technique; what emerges in the foreground is how the unavoidable alliterative constraints imposed on the poets far from resulting in a dreary repetition of combining words challenged both their inventiveness and their audience's response.

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