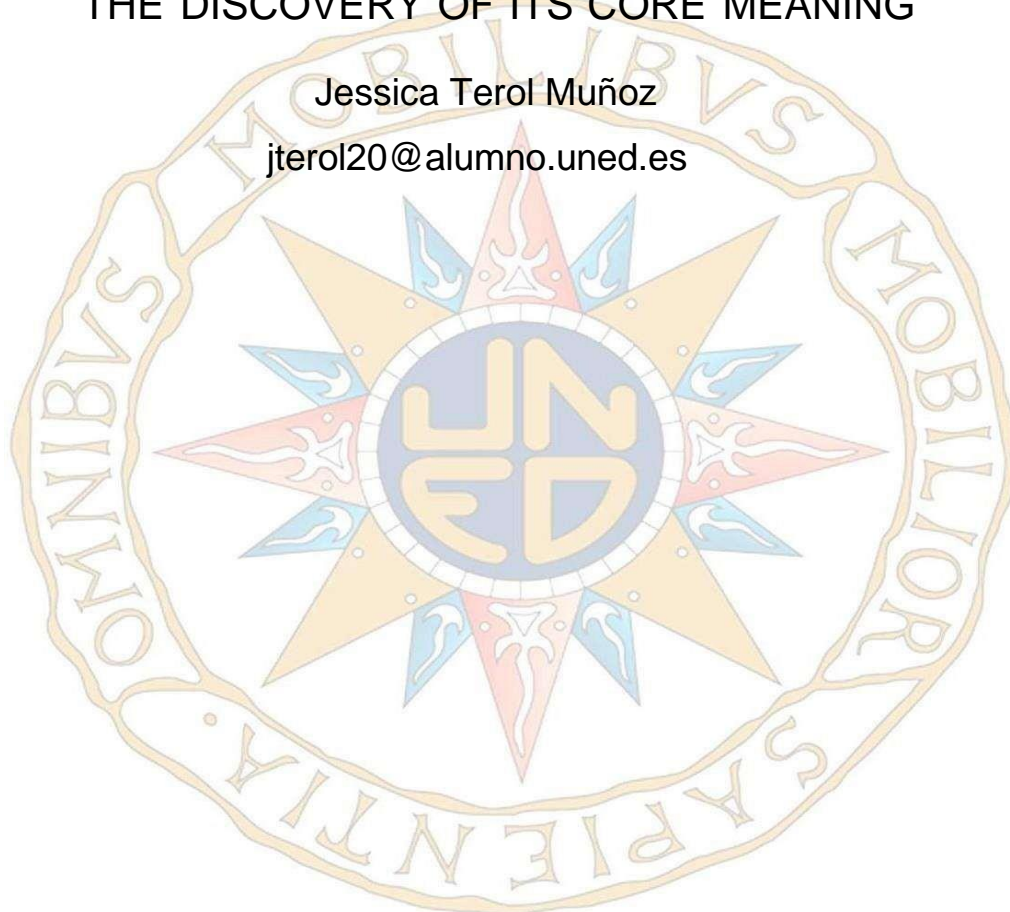**TRABAJO FIN DE GRADO**

GRADO EN ESTUDIOS INGLESES: LENGUA, LITERATURA Y CULTURA

"THE WIFE'S LAMENT". A COGNITIVE JOURNEY INTO THE DISCOVERY OF ITS CORE MEANING

Jessica Terol Muñoz

jterol20@alumno.uned.es

Acknowledgments

Abstract

The study of Old English texts gives essential information in multiple fields such as linguistics, history and psychology. However, understanding complex textual entities as is the case of "The Wife's Lament" poem is certainly problematic as the multiple interpretations evidence. This paper aims to return the poem to its core meaning by analysing its relationship with the historical context and by applying a cognitive linguistics approach. It proposes a theory based on the prototypicality concept and the connection between language and historical context, 'The Conceptual Foundations Theory', in the hope that this could be useful to study other texts. Moreover, the analysis of Idealized Conceptual Models: metaphors, metonymies and image schemas, fundamental in cognitivism, will also attempt to shed light on the interpretation of this poem. This could also be of some assistance in future research.

Keywords: "The Wife's Lament"*,* Old English, Cognitive Linguistics, Prototypes and Idealized Conceptual Models.

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1. Introduction

R. M. Liuzza questioned in *Old English Literature: Critical Essays*, 2002 page xi, "Can we make these texts speak? And if we do, will we understand what they say?" Studying 'dead languages' such as Old English is not an easy task since we just count on "randomly parts of a whole" (Liuzza, 2002) to construct the language of a world that no longer exists. The 'dead language' concept means that there are no living speakers to study how they would use it in a wide variety of contexts. However, this does not discourage the scholars who try to build the history and language of a past society that is on the grounds of Present-day English, hereafter PDE. This reminds me of the archaeologist simile (Guarddon, 2011, p. 386). Historical linguists like archaeologists only have some remaining written pieces, which have not been carefully selected but preserved almost by chance and they can be just fragments or mere inscriptions. Their constant study helps in the shape of that "vanished world" (Liuzza, 2002). Among the preserved texts, "The Wife's Lament", hereafter "Wife", a poem copied in *The Exeter book* approximately at the end of the tenth century, stands out as one of the best examples of Old English poetry with an extraordinary usage of the Old English resourcefulness. This certainly contradicts the old belief that OE was a primitive and limited stage of the language as Cable and Baugh explain in *A History of the English Language* (Cable & Baugh, 2013).

The first time I approached "Wife" was in the subject English Literature I in my first year of the English Studies degree at UNED. Although I read a PDE version, I was surprised by its intense feelings and mighty imagery. In fact, many scholars have claimed their fascination with "the powers of the emotions voiced in the poem" (Aström, 2002) that I have experienced myself. "Wife" has been examined from different perspectives; especially, literary and linguistic.

Reached this point, I wondered, *why is it so difficult to understand its meaning?* Helmus Gneuss (2013) indicates that to appreciate the poem we should read it in OE. This was what motivated me to attempt a translation of the text to analyse its original language structures and enjoy what Tolkien

considered "beautifully coordinated and patterned" (*Letters* 214) when describing OE. It was Mark Atherton (2014) who quoted this when speaking about Tolkien's fascination for the grammar forms, sounds, syllables, words and phrases in OE (Atherton, 2014 p. 217). However, when we move to the original version, the overall structure as well as the syntax and grammar may seem rather chaotic. As Guarddon highlights, we should not forget that "poets always use the language more freely" (Guarddon, 2011). The lexicon also looks different since it lacks those French and Latin related words we are used to. It is remarkable how a language once wrongly considered primitive turns out to be far more complex. And this is probably why it has been called a riddle as happens with other OE poems such as "Wulf and Eadwacer" (González, 2021).

The cognitive journey to disentangle the meaning is not going to be easy. Following Tolkien's fascination, we may be now asking, *why are OE and this poem still captivating us?* The cognitive analysis of its mighty imagery may reveal shared human experiences linked to cultural elements that explain how we can understand and enjoy the text regardless of our distance in time and space.

From cognitivism, we study mental processes and schemas underlying the language we use daily, and how it serves to reflect the structure of reality since it is produced by the human mind (Saeed, 2016). In Cognitive Linguistics, the cultural element is, therefore, essential since this affects conceptual structure. In Carnie's *Syntax*, published in 2021, we see how languages structure information differently. We should bear in mind that we are constantly using traditionally considered literary devices whenever we speak. The use of metaphors, metonyms and image schemas is much more pervasive than we may notice as Turner explains in *The Literary mind*, 1996. This perspective enables us to study how the world and feelings were conceptualised through the texts in a dead language such as Old English, which is vital to understand the text. Metaphors and imagery give us valuable information beyond the aesthetic purpose they surely have in a poem (Gibbs, 2017). We can also analyse the diachronic evolution by comparing OE image schemas with the ones we have in PDE and other related cultures. We will see that there are

some common features that make this poem highly readable in our present Western society. The syntax may appear different, but we can get surprised to find the same metaphors arranged in another way at the syntactic level. This brings us to Chomsky's distinction between the deep structure, what we want to express, and its manifestation through the surface structure, what we utter (Carnie, 2021). Later in this paper, it will be analysed the potential of cognitivism applied to "The Wife's Lament" poem. And, perhaps, as Gibbs claims, we could share his fascination with the study of the interaction between language and thought combined with how we can understand history, culture and mental procedures through the analysis of metaphors (Gibbs, 2017).

Needless to say, it is vital to locate "Wife" in its historical context. In this sense, I would like to reflect on the authorship question. The current concept of the author does not apply in the tenth century when poems were recited and sometimes copied onto a manuscript. This leads to an interesting insight Professor Guarddon explained to me connected with amanuenses' possible creativity, another exciting field to study. I wondered what role they played in the creation of the preserved text. Although the person who copied it was not necessarily the author, this hand could have selected and altered the content under their own judgement, perhaps inspired by other stories or by adding new features, characters, etc. that they considered appropriate. Those scribes could have heard part of the story and wanted to enrich it, or they knew it in detail but decided to integrate new aspects, maybe due to changing values in society over time or they just desired to explore different endings. Scribes did not feel the present authors' pressure to please the audience in that context where the mass media and mass readers did not exert the power they have today. There could be more versions of the poem that did not leave any traces. As Ángeles de la Concha and Marta Cerezo (2017) assert, if the author were a man, it would be incredible how he sympathised with a woman's situation and if it were a woman, it would be remarkable for her cultural access in a strongly patriarchal society (De la Concha & Cerezo, 2017). Although it is certainly exciting to explore the myriad of possibilities, it is hard to assume that there are some questions for which we do not have definite answers yet, however, coming back

to the archaeologist simile, we never know if it will appear future evidence that cast some light on this issue.

Given the facts, I am going to analyse a poem for which we do not know the author and the lyrical voice is also under dispute. The more translations we read, the more confused we may become. Therefore, we should look for an objective theory to return to the essentials, as I suggest in the 'Conceptual Foundations Theory' section. There are who question if the speaker is a man, or a woman and whether this person is alive or a sort of ghost speaking from the underworld (Aström, 2002). This ambiguity is a common feature in many OE texts because it is not simple to translate a dead language when we just rely on preserved texts. I suppose this is the reason why anyone interested in OE ends up attempting their own translations. This reminds me of the previous question of Liuzza in the introduction to *Old English Literature*, "can we make these texts speak?" (2002, p.xi), in other words, is it *actually* possible to find out the real message? It may appear a challenge and surely it is for both experts and undergraduates. The extensive bibliography on this topic reveals how far from discouraging scholars, these difficulties increase their desire for knowledge. Personally, I believe that it takes a great deal of courage to study Old English. Therefore, I want to try to get to the core meaning by following 'The Conceptual Foundations Theory' for later scrutinising the poem's imagery by using 'The Conceptual Metaphor Theory' and the Idealized Cognitive Model established by Lakoff and Johnson in the 1980s. I will develop this further in the Theoretical Framework section.

1.1. Topic Justification

To begin with, any investigation normally has a personal component. As stated above, I was impressed when I read a translation of this poem. "Wife" is an elegy that masterfully conveys feelings, sympathising with the person who suffers them. The lyrical voice, usually identified as a woman, as well as its meaning seem a mystery that needs to be solved. We must consider that the titles of OE poems were given arbitrarily by the editors, and they affect how we

understand them (Aström, 2002). If we changed the name or read it without this title, would our interpretation vary? Almost certainly, yes.

In my research, I found a high number of interpretations that made me think of the necessity to propose a theory to reach its underlying meaning as I will explain in the Theoretical Framework. In this regard, I have seen the cognitivism potential in subjects such as Human Language, Linguistic Theory, Grammar, Syntax and Semantics. So, why not apply it to OE texts? We could examine Anglo-Saxon lifestyle based on how they expressed themselves linguistically. Language is a component of our identity, so that when we study how we express ourselves, we are also dealing with our culture, language, mental processes, our connection with the world, etc. Therefore, we can approach this poem by looking at how this language is arranged and the images it uses to get to its core meaning.

The study of OE texts like "Wife" also enriches our knowledge of the Anglo-Saxon world. In this sense, the text is a witness of its time as I will show in the Historical Context section when I explain the connection between language and history. Although this is a linguistic approach, we should not forget about the remarkable female lyrical voice in a patriarchal period. The role of women has long been neglected, as I have studied in Gender and Literature subject. The linguistic richness and value of "Wife" permits different analyses.

1.2.   Research Objectives

Once the topic is selected, it is essential to establish the objectives which will indicate the trajectory of this investigation. The main purpose is to reach the core meaning of the OE poem, "The Wife's Lament" by analysing it from a Cognitive perspective. This will show the cognitivism potential in the study of remote cultures already highlighted by Antonina Harbus in *Cognitive Approaches to Old English Poetry* published in 2012.

To organise this paper, I am going to start with the historical context, the Anglo-Saxon society, and its connection with the poem. In the next section, I will deal with Old English literature with special emphasis on *The Exeter Book* since it contains "The Wife's Lament". At this point, I will speak about the question of

the authorship and the lyrical voice. Then, I will explain the basis of the Conceptual Foundations Theory that I will use to get to its primary meaning. I will identify the set of characteristics that will help to analyse the text and the different readings and translations. Afterwards, I will focus on the Idealized Cognitive Model proposed by Johnson and Lakoff (2003) to examine the use of metaphors, metonymies and image schemas in connection with its cultural implications. Finally, I will explain the conclusions I have reached after this study.

1.3. Methodology and Resources

It is important to do research and understand previous studies in our field. In this case, I found diverse analyses of the poem from different perspectives, gender, linguistics, etc. which were vital to decide my approach. I must highlight the guidelines of professor Guarddon, who gave me the main idea and some books to start with; *The Literary Mind* and *Metaphor Wars* as well as the cognitive approach to *Beowulf* by Konstyantyn Gulyy. For the sake of this project, I have also read studies about OE and Cognitive Linguistics to get a general background. To narrow the scope, I have looked for works devoted to OE poetry and Cognitive analysis of OE poetry. Thanks to the new technologies, I have widely used the Internet to locate physical books in libraries and other books and academic articles available online that have eased my research. It is worth mentioning the e-space where we can find final degree projects (TFG) that can enrich our approach. I would like to underline the cognitive study on "Wulf and Eadwacer", another elegy in *The Exeter Book*, carried out by Marta González (2021) and the one about the representation of the *comitatus* in *Beowulf* by Maria Gallego (2020). Both show the potential of Cognitive Linguistics in OE texts.

As for the online research, I have used RefWorks to organise the materials, which I know thanks to the optional subject ICT. This subject also taught me scientific sites, such as Google Scholar, some of them are free and others are subscribed to by UNED. It is mandatory to know the UNED library resources, which I have used for different subjects along the degree. The

teaching team of the TFG subject created a library course that refreshed the guidelines to do online research and showed me more scientific sites, for example, Scopus.

Once I had the main bibliography, it was necessary to read it carefully to extract the main aspects I needed. I wanted to approach "Wife" in its original version, so I tried to translate it by following the guidelines established in the subject Diachrony and Typology of English, and designed by professor Guarddon in her book, *Diachrony and Typology of English through the Texts*, published in 2011. I used online Anglo-Saxon dictionaries to decompose the text at the lexical level (Annexe I) and I grouped the phrases to ease my translation into PDE (Annexe II). I did it literally as my goal is to analyse the language rather than compose a modern version of the poem. My purpose is to dig into the originally intended meaning; therefore, I want to get as close as possible to the zero version of this poem by scrutinising the original words, which contain the real intention. Although it is tempting to give birth to a beautiful poem, my act resembles more an archaeologist who carefully removes the dusty social and cultural layers that have been accumulated through years of investigation to find out the authentic historical piece (or essential meaning). In this task, Professor Guarddon has examined and helped me with the translation. Then, I did my first structure for the paper which has been altered through my study since the bibliography readings and conversations with professor Guarddon opened interesting new fields I wanted to explore.

1.4. State of the Art

"The Wife's Lament" has raised the curiosity of many scholars and has been the subject of many interpretations. As Williamson and Shippey (2013) state, it has been considered a riddle, a retainer's lament, a church allegory, a cry from the grave, etc. However, the main topic is love and lament and the generally accepted interpretation is that it is a woman who laments the loss of her beloved who is seen as her lord. (Williamson and Shippey, 2013). There have been many studies from a literary perspective, however, I have also found others devoted to linguistics. For instance, the article of Isabel Verdaguer and

Emilia Castaño published in 2001: "The Metaphorical Conceptualization of Sadness in the Anglo-Saxon Elegies" follows 'The Conceptual Metaphor Theory' of Lakoff and Johnson in *Metaphors We Live By* first published in 1980 to examine the representation of sadness in "The Wanderer", "The Seafarer" and "The Wife's Lament". In this line, I should mention the previous Final Degree Project by González (2021) in which she analyses the metaphors, metonymies and image schemas in the elegy, "Wulf and Eadwacer". The analysis of Kennings formation in *Beowulf* by Gallego (2020) as well as the TFG in diachronic translation by Tinedo (2020) are also significant since they show the potential of linguistic analyses applied to literature, the latter discusses the translation problem which is vital in dead languages. These recent studies confirm the potentiality of studying these texts from a linguistic perspective following the ideas of Mark Turner (1996) in *The Literary Mind*, and the more recent study of Gibbs (2017) in *Metaphor Wars*. They examine how the use of metaphors is so pervasive in any type of speech that it serves to understand how we express ourselves, since every time we use language, we are translating our thoughts into words, and we are using metaphors to represent those mental ideas. The study of those mental schemas helps to comprehend the language and society of the individual and the culture he or she belongs to. Therefore, they have an enormous potential in diachrony to study the diachronic variations in languages and cultures as well as their possible connections through intertextuality.

Antoninina Harbus exposes in *Cognitive Approaches to Old English Poetry* in 2012 the diverse studies that can be applied to OE poetry by using more scientific and objective tools. For example, in the second chapter, she explores the scope of metaphors and the recurrent metaphors of mind as a container and mind as a wandering entity in OE poems. In the seventh chapter, she analyses the concept of the self and the construction through memories in elegies such as "Wife". In those practical examples, she puts forward how those tools shed light on the reading of OE texts, and they provide us with a better understanding of their culture and language since both are inextricably intertwined. She also shows the connection between those ways to structure

and deliver information with our current manners, following the path opened by Lakoff and Johnson. It is also useful to read their later revisions such as *Metaphors We Live By with a New Afterword* (2003). Another good example is the more recent analysis of Susan Deskis (2020) in which she investigates the connection of "Wife" with related cultures that influenced and were influenced by the Anglo-Saxons. The historical background is a significant aspect to interpret this poem that has been read in diverse ways, as an elegy, a riddle, a Christian allegory, etc. This shows how the reading is also determined by the scholar loaded with their intellectual and cultural background. In this line, we find the studies of Juri Lotman in *Culture and Explosion* (1992) published and translated into English in 2009. Lotman exposed how we perceive, read and understand culture depending on our intellectual and cultural backgrounds that influence our views as well as the language we use to read those texts. These three aspects, language, culture and habitus (understood as the person with the background) are decisive to understanding the multiple versions of this poem. Enrique Bernárdez in *Teoría y Epistemología del Texto* (1995) also investigated the texts and language as cognitive and social phenomena. The seventh chapter is about the 'Language and the Catastrophe Theory', which matches with Lotman's *explosion* concept. A *catastrophe* is defined as a discontinuous transition when a system can have more than a stable entity or when it follows more than one stable change course. This gives us a different approach to the text if we consider the translations and readings as different trajectories from the main attractor, the original source. We can analyse how some characteristics are recurrent in the different versions of the text and this will help us to identify the principal tenets of a complex poem like "Wife".

In conclusion, the poem has been the subject of continuous interpretations that have led to controversy among scholars. This is one of the reasons why my wish is to come back to the essentials of the text by using scientific tools to perform an objective approach. The precedence of authors like Harbus and Deskis shows how this is not only possible but also desirable to shed light on those complex entities whose translatability has been questioned. Moreover, the fact that they can still be moving and enjoyed by the current

audience demonstrates that there are similarities we can use in our benefit to gain a better understanding of the text. Now, the question is, *can we make this text speak?*

1.5. Theoretical Framework

In the view of disparity and continuous discussion, I found it necessary to develop a theory to scrutinize the meaning of complex entities as is the case of "Wife". I think that there are three elements we should consider when analysing any text: culture, language and habitus (understood as the author and their background) in line with Lotman's ideas (1992) revisited in 2009. This will be further developed in The Conceptual Foundations' Theory section. When we alter these three elements, the resulting reading is necessarily different. However, we can look for some essential components. I have built an analysis based on the Prototypes' theory developed by Rosch and her colleagues in the seventies, in which there were some crucial components when defining a word such as *chair*, as I will later explain in detail in the mentioned section. If we apply this to complex textual entities, we can notice how there are some features that are usually present, and they may vary depending on the language used to approach the text, the culture, and the scholar with their expertise and ideals. The presence of those elements might determine the degree of acceptability and the proximity to the attractor —understood as the poem— in the resulting interpretation, as I analyse in the section, Prototypicality and Analysis Variables. Interestingly, most of these elements coincide with the main metaphors, metonyms and image schemas. Their study will improve our understanding of mental processes in different cultures, including the remote Anglo-Saxon, and the reading of "Wife". I will examine them by using the main tenets of Lakoff and Johnson in *Metaphors We Live By* revisited in 2003 and the further application proposals by Antonina Harbus (2012) in *Cognitive Approaches to Old English Poetry*. Therefore, once the main components are identified, we can analyse them by following this cognitive approach started by Lakoff and Johnson. By so doing, we will see how many of these images remain the same in PDE regardless of the language variation, so this explains why the PDE reader can understand what they evoke. Some of the constructions of the

poem are at the core of PDE expressions such as "to feel under the weather" or "to be down in the damps". This also broadens our knowledge of PDE. To go further, many of the images are also present in other cultures; however, there is not enough space in this paper to do a cross-linguistic study. Sometimes those similarities are due to their cultural relatedness, others, there could be a universal human factor based on our relationship with the environment, which will be interesting for future research.

2. Historical Context

The relationship between history and language seems undeniable nowadays. María Victoria Escandell defines the study of a language as a very human science. In her book, *Claves del Lenguaje Humano* (2019), it is stated how external factors must be applied when studying a language. However, this was not always the case as María del Carmen Guarddon (2006) explains in her article, "Los fenómenos históricos como catalizadores del cambio lingüístico. El inglés medieval". The study of languages has moved from the arbitrariness claimed by the generativist school to the structuralism that started to include other factors such as the relationship with other languages. Afterwards, the cognitivism school rejected this arbitrariness, and it appeared studies that considered the human factor as well as their perception of the world through language. This was also important in the semantic field, for example, in English we have a word for *fingers* and another for *toes*, but in Spanish, there is just one (Escandell et al., 2019 p. 205). Saeed (2016) in *Semantics* also explores the interesting differences in the lexicalisation of colours among different languages that reflect their cultures and distinct perception of the world. Therefore, language is inextricably intertwined with culture, and we find in each one a different way to structure and perceive the reality that can be analysed through language. (Escandell et al., 2019). Following Guarddon's article (2006), it is crucial to highlight that in a dead language such as OE, context is indispensable to complete the fragmentary picture that we have through the preserved texts. The socio-cultural field gives us a more realistic approach to linguistic facts and changes. I could not agree more with the fact that a language cannot be studied without the historical background, which also

includes, as Guarddon says, contact with other languages and cultures. In this line, Algeo (2010) also insists on the importance of studying the history of English, "If we are psychologists who want to understand a person's behaviour, we must know something about that person's origins and development. The same is true of a language". (Algeo, 2010 p.17). Therefore, the language and context are essential to understand the poem.

2.1. Historical Background

In *The Secret Life of Words* (2009 p. 36), Henry Hitchings recalls the words of the American poet, Ralph Waldo Emerson, "mixture is a secret of the English island". Indeed, when Oakland summarises the period from the early settlement to the Norman Conquest in *British Civilisation* (2020), he explores the number of migrations from the very beginning of prehistoric times, as archaeology findings evidence. We do not know a great deal about the first settlers apart from their continental origins. Celtic tribes possibly arrived around 600 BC. They were not a unified group with frequent fights among them. When the Romans came, they apparently did not mix well, but the Romans left their imprint in place names, cultural practices, etc. before their withdrawal. As Guarddon (2006) states, in parallel to the Roman Empire, the Germanic tribes were also expanding throughout the continent. In the fifth century AD, three Germanic tribes reached the island: the Jutes, the Anglos and the Saxons who possibly came from nowadays Denmark. They pushed the Celtic tribes and occupied their territory. Although the Celtics were also a warrior society, Baugh and Cable (2013) claim that they could have become too dependent on Rome abandoning their warrior tradition. The Celtic dialects moved to the north, and we can see part of their features in the Gaelic branch. The Germanic tribes' establishment and their military and political supremacy were consolidated by the prevalence of their language (Guarddon, 2006). As professor Guarddon remarks, the link between structures of power and language is a common feature in history. However, it is true that we do not know if all the tribes spoke the same language, but evidence seems to show that they understood each other. This mixture of different populations with their customs and dialects is part of the history of English. The coexistence of diverse practices and social

rites is found in texts like *Beowulf.* Personally, I would add that this is reflected in the etymology of different words, and it could explain the convergence of image schemas that we find in other related cultures. Cross-linguistic studies in this field are interesting to comprehend how contact with other cultures influenced the development of the English language and had an impact on their literature as Deskis (2020) analyses in the case of "Wife".

2.2. Anglo-Saxon society

Most of our knowledge about Anglo-Saxon society is thanks to later accounts among which we find *The Anglo-Saxon Chronicles*, a unique text that is the only one directly written in OE (Guarddon, 2006). First, it should be clarified that *Anglo-Saxon* is commonly used for both the language and the speakers, (Algeo, 2010). According to archaeological evidence, different pagan burial types depict a warrior society since there are jewels and weapons that mark the social status. Godden and Lapidge (2013) follow Bede's account to explain how those warrior leaders and followers probably arrived by ships. They mentioned the references to victories, and the foundation of English Kingdoms and dynasties in the preserved texts. Bede tells us how Anglo-Saxons were later Christianised around the seventh century (Godden & Lapidge, 2013). This explains the presence of Christian elements in literature, in fact, some have interpreted "Wife" as a Christian allegory.

Cornelius Tacitus, a Roman historian, helps to reconstruct the Anglo-Saxon society in *Germania* written in the first century. They were organised in tribes with a leader who controlled a group of blood-related families that were part of the clans. The clans communicated with others that shared common features such as the language, and traditions among other aspects that made them identifiable as part of the same group. They were a warrior society, although there could also be traders, artisans, etc. Those people followed the *comitatus* principle, in other words, a special loyalty to the leader who was selected based on his warrior capacities as well as administration and justice skills. (De la Concha & Cerezo, 2017 pp.16-20). The division into kingdoms also shows the power of the king who had a council and a tribal assembly, the latter

one was key in major decisions like the declaration of war. This king was the military and religious authority, although the clans also had their chief (Guarddon, 2011). This information is fundamental for "Wife" where we have an alienated person from the tribe who laments the departure of her beloved one, who is referred to as her lord. She could have belonged to another clan, in fact, the poem tells us about a plot against her marriage, so there could be a reason behind this opposition in tune with the relationships among clans I have just mentioned. The poem seems to suggest a common union despite all obstacles in which both miss each other. She is in exile waiting for him, his lord. These are the same tenets of the *comitatus* but applied to marriage (De la Concha & Cerezo, 2017 pp.31-36). However, the poem has been the subject of multiple interpretations because of the possible metaphors and allegories that convert it into a riddle for many scholars, who end up adding more probabilities to its reading. This obscurity in meaning also makes it interesting for the linguistic analysis I want to carry out.

To understand the situation of the woman in the poem, it is useful to analyse the role of women in these Germanic tribes that came to the British Isles. Kimberlee (2006) explores this widely in her thesis, *Germanic Women: Mundium and Property 400-1000*. It seems that the status of women changed with the Germanic tribes' contact with the Romans. They were apparently better considered in early Germanic society. This could be because of women's roles in the village. Kimberlee follows Wemple's studies (1981) that investigated an initial division between "the men functioning as hunters and warriors and the women producing vegetable foods and tending to domestic details" (Wemple, 1981, p.14). However, when women participated in battles, they depended on the physical strength of men. They were husbands' helpmates. This fact can be remarkable in the relationship of the lyrical voice of the poem with her lord and husband. Kimberlee (2006) and Wemple (1981) claim that as Germans mixed with Romans, the women were not expected in strength tasks and started to be regarded as weaker. We already find women subjection to men in the 'Germanic Codes'. The first compilation of the Germanic Laws was known as "Leges Barbarorum". They also give us information about social and political

organisation (Guarddon, 2011). The position of the widows was different. Wemple (1981), analyses how Germanic widows could acquire the rights and the powers of their husbands, only if they did not remarry. If we consider the lyrical voice as a woman who is suffering from the loss of her beloved, she could be feeling alienated in that clan when she says that she is in exile and has no friends there (l.5-15). Her strong feelings are comprehensible in her subjection to the man, and she could also be seen as his helpmate. She constantly refers to him as a leader, a lord (*min hlaford* l.6) comprehensible within a warrior society. If he died, her status would change, but we see how she is loyal in line with the concept of *comitatus.* Gender studies in this poem and others such as "Wulf and Eadwacer", are valuable for a better understanding of the role of women at that time as Marta González (2021) explains in *A female voice in old English poetry: study of conceptual metaphors, metonymies and image schemas in Wulf and Eadwacer.*

3. Old English Literary Tradition

3.1 Introduction to Old English Literature

The study of OE literature is a challenge since very few works are preserved, and most were written between the eighth and eleventh centuries (Luebering, 2011). To begin with, literature is traditionally understood as written language; however, this does not mean that there was not a previous oral tradition. Those mentioned Germanic tribes also brought their culture and traditions (Greenblatt, 2018). They used to sing before the battle, and those songs they possibly tuned when arriving on the British Isles shores could be the first poems in that pre-Old English state that would become Old English (Alexander, 2013). The problem is that we have just some inscriptions on small artifacts and sporadic writing of the first moments (Greenblatt, 2018). We start to find written texts after the Christian missionaries and the introduction of the Latin alphabet around 600. Therefore, Old English relates to Christianism in that sense as the texts we find are Christian-related (Alexander, 2013). This explains the presence of Christian elements in early texts. The first English Christian King Ethelbert promulgated a code of laws that is considered the first extended written text in OE. In the Middle Ages, access to literacy was mainly in

monasteries and religious institutions. They tended to use Latin sources (Greenblatt, 2018), so many extant texts are translations from Latin originals. In Romanticism, the poet, William Blake considered the possible legendary origins of his country in the poem, "Jerusalem": *was the holy Lamb of God on England's pleasant pastures seen?* (Alexander, 2013). "The Wife's Lament" has been interpreted as a religious metaphor in which the speaker as the Church community laments the departure of Christ as if the marriage were between Christ and the Church. The community would be wandering longing for Jerusalem (Murgia, 2013). These variables of the original text will be dealt with in the next section. We should remember that Christian references are commonly found mixed with pagan rites that show how those kinship Germanic values were still present (De la Concha & Cerezo, 2017). Processes like religious conversion did not happen overnight, so the coexistence of different traditions was normal.

Luebering (2011) differentiates between poetry and prose. We know very few names such as Caedmon and Cynewulf for poetry and Bede and Aelferic for prose. The dates are debatable, so we cannot approach these texts by looking at biographies and exact contexts. We must consider that a text written roughly in the eleventh century from an unknown region provides limited information for several centuries and different tribes (Ästrom, 2002). Therefore, it is difficult to make a general overview of the literature state, traditionally, experts classify OE texts according to their theme, for example, religious texts, elegies in the sense that the lyrical voice lament the loss of something or somebody such as "The Wanderer", epic poems like the famous, *Beowulf*, riddles in which we have sometimes to guess the object, etc. We find this in Greenblatt (2018), Luebering (2011), and many other authors. However, others like Ästrom (2002) show the difficulties in classifying the poems "The Wife's Lament" and "Wulf and Eadwacer" as elegies, since they also share features with riddles, for example, in "Wife"*,* we do not know whom this "Ic" (first person *I*) stands for. The case of "Wulf" is analysed in depth in González (2021). Epic poems such as *Beowulf*, also have instances of elegies, or there are also elegies with elements of the epic (Greenblatt, 2018).

When we examine heroic and elegiac poems, we find vocabulary connected with this warrior society, "lord", "protector" or "king". In elegies and epic poems, there are many literary devices such as synecdoches, metonymies and kennings. This figurative language is also found in poetic riddles (Greenblatt, 2018). Another common resource mentioned in Greenblatt (2018) is the use of appositions. For example, in Cædmon's *Hymn*, God is referred to by different names in apposition giving a sense of musicality and contributing to the structure of the poem. It was also useful to identify the subject with different qualities when reciting the poem and helped to locate it in the correct episode. This was also widely used by the Greeks. Apposition was likewise employed to coordinate sentences. Mary Blockley (1989 p.115) explains how in PDE a phrase such as "his banker, his wife, and the mother of his children" can be considered appositional variation or "conjoined items with different referents". In contrast, the difference between variation and apposition is more evident in OE poetry because of the half-line unit in punctuation. This may hinder interpretation due to the lack of punctuation and the different possibilities to divide the sentence, leading to ambiguities. Blockley claims that PDE readers may struggle between the series that enumerate things and those that contain appositives. While I cannot extend more here due to the constraints of this paper, it is necessary to remark that how translators group the different elements in a text that does not follow the standard PDE punctuation will affect on the meaning of the resulting text. Blockley uses the epic *Beowulf* as an example, but in "Wife", we also find variation in the way the speaker refers to her beloved, although this is not always done by apposition: *hlaford* (l.6), *leodfruma* (l.8), *wineleas wræcca* (l.10), *mines felaleofan* (l.25), *frean* (l. 32), *min wine* (l.49). This shows the resourcefulness of OE, the different ways to refer to an entity, each with a particular connotation that adds extra meaning and emotion to what the speaker says and helps to create a mental image of the character when reading or listening to it. We know that there are no perfect synonyms, so that the analysis of the connotations of each word helps to understand the intended meaning of the author when choosing them. Their relation to a lord as a husband, as a mate in the battle or as God is still

debatable. I would like to examine some of these cases in the analysis of the lyrical voice, and in pursuit of the core elements of the poem. It is important to understand the context of the source as well as the context of the interpretation.

To finish this approach, we must remember that the formal use of OE in poetry was different from the common speech. Although metaphors are present in all levels of language, as I will later analyse, and this is key to understanding how the analysis of these texts contributes to the study of OE. Another aspect is who could write at that moment. The church and people in higher social classes could have access to literacy. Unfortunately, it seems that there was not a literate group preoccupied with preserving OE literature and most should have been oral. *The Exeter Book* is seen as an attempt to preserve the texts it contains, although the reason for such selection remains a mystery. With the arrival of the Normans, the English language was displaced (Greenblatt, 2018). Many OE texts are later copies. According to Luebering (2011), the four manuscripts that contain most of OE poetry date around the late tenth century and the beginning of the eleventh. They are *The Beowulf Manuscript*, *The Exeter Book* —where "The Wife's Lament" is—, *The Junius Manuscript* and *The Vercelli Book*. They are difficult to date, and the authors of many texts are unknown. Several are Latin translations, as for poetry and riddles, they could have an oral origin and different variations. Considering those difficulties, I am going to focus on *The Exeter Book* which contains the poem, "The Wife's Lament".

3.2. The Exeter Book

The Exeter Book is another enigmatic compilation of texts whose origin has been largely debated, in fact, it is the largest collection of OE poetry according to Luebering (2011). It has one-sixth of the surviving corpus of OE verse (Gameson, 1996). Richard Gameson accounts for part of this discussion as early as in the nineties, and it is hard to assume that we could never discover where the book came from. The palaeographical analyses show the presence of different scribes. There is no common agreement on the centre and maybe there could be texts from diverse centres, as Gameson's article seems to

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conclude. The only aspect that seems clear is that it was not made by a unique school at a sole time, as we find different writings and styles. Bishop Leofric donated the book to the Exeter Cathedral in 1072, and it contains religious long poems and short verses as well as the famous lyrics known as elegies among which we have, "The Wife's Lament", riddles, "The Rhyming poem", "Widsith" — heroic narrative—, and the poems "Deor" and "Wulf and Eadwacer". The poems do not seem to follow any order, and this could be copied from a previous collection (Luebering, 2011). This leads to questioning the purpose of the collection since it is not sure when or why those scribes decided to preserve those texts. The poems are found with religious texts, which makes some researchers associate them with religious themes (Ästrom, 2002). As Gameson says, there could also be an intention of preserving those texts; actually, some scholars have considered Leofric a bibliophile, but this is another debate. Gameson recalls the description from Leofric's inventory: "large English book about various things written in verse". Therefore, the fact that those texts are kept together does not necessarily imply that all of them are religious, we can think about museum collections with diverse pieces that are preserved in the same space.

This situation explains the difficulties to classify those poems and interpreting their meaning. Ästrom (2002) describes the desire of scholars to find the right meaning and I think this is part of our curious nature, we want to discover those mysteries. We look at them as puzzles with a unique solution. Lakoff and Johnson (2003) do not only mention this puzzle analogy, but they also examine an interesting metaphor in which problems, which in this case are these poems, understood as mysteries, would be chemicals. We can dissolve them in solution; however, we cannot control what goes into that solution, so new and old problems or mysteries can precipitate while present ones are dissolved. This means that we cannot expect to solve them once and for all as in the puzzle comparison, but we can employ catalysts (scientific tools) to solve the most pressing problems without precipitating worse ones. If future research makes a problem re-appear, we have just to look for another good catalyst to solve it, following Lakoff and Johnson analogy.

The scholar usually has a preconceived idea when approaching the poem anew without considering previous studies, and as Ästrom (2002) states, we end up with myriads of interpretations that obscure rather than clarify the poem's meaning. Therefore, it is important to use scientific tools and think about the present state of the art. I agree with the fact that pursuing a unique interpretation as an absolute truth is doomed to fail from the start. However, this does not mean that we cannot linguistically analyse the text and contribute to the science field with our findings by trying to get to the essentials of the text or to the most pressing problems.

3.2.1. "The Wife's Lament"

"The Wife's Lament", written in Old English, was found on fol. 115a-115b in the *Exeter Book* (Ästrom, 2002). It appeared along with other poems without an apparent logical order, as already mentioned. Some experts used to read it in conjunction with "The Husband's message", which would be a response to the lover, but this line of investigation has decreased in recent years (Ästrom, 2002). The main problem to read this text starts from the first word *Ic* (l.1) since we do not know who is speaking as Ästrom explains. It is usually connected with a woman (Horner, 2002), in fact, we find *geomorre* (l.1) *minre sylfe* (l.2) inflected in feminine, although some proposed a scribe error, this is highly debatable (Ästrom, 2002). I will analyse the lyrical voice in more detail in the next point, although I follow the female speaker in this paper on the basis of this feminine inflection.

As far as the message is concerned, it is widely accepted that the poem is about a woman in exile who laments the loss of her beloved. Her identity and the reason for her situation are unclear (Horner, 2002). De la Concha and Cerezo (2017) propose the following reading, which can be considered the most conventional one. The first verses could serve as an introduction where the speaker tells us her intention of narrating her experience. It is classified as an elegy because of the emphasis on the sorrows she has undergone. The first tragedy is the loss of her husband who is also her lord, and we can understand this within the loyalty and *comitatus* of the Anglo-Saxon society applied to

marriage. She feels alienated, and this could be because she was from another clan. The poem moves to the plot against the couple perpetrated by the husband's relatives and how she is suffering now in her exile in the forest. The lyrical voice contrasts her happy moments before her husband's departure with her harsh present. It is very interesting how those conditions and the images of nature intertwine with her feelings creating outstanding metaphors and images that have long captivated many scholars from different fields. De la Concha and Cerezo explore how the painful dwelling resembles her own mental state. The speaker's dependency on the lord and the use of epic language seems to reflect the society's warrior structure. However, authors like Murgia (2013) see a Christian allegory, others think that the husband killed the wife, and she speaks from the afterlife as Ästrom (2002) explains. There is a multiplicity of interpretations due to the ambiguities and omissions we have in the text, there are no names, no locations or precise references, and many metaphorical devices that obscure the meaning. Therefore, some associate it with a riddle, a mystery, or a type of allegory. I agree with Ästrom, it is impossible to grasp the intention of an unknown author and the imprecise context, not to mention the lack of punctuation and the invented title. However, we can analyse what is written in the text, the lexicon, the metaphors, images, etc. and we should also connect it within its culture to get to the core meaning.

3.2.2 Authorship and Lyrical Voice

As Horner says, most questions about this poem do not have definite answers, therefore, it could be more interesting to focus on how it produces meaning rather than what it means (Horner, 2002). Two of these impossible questions are who created the poem and when. There could have been an earlier version in a lost manuscript or even it could have been known as a popular poem in the oral tradition perhaps brought by the continent with the arrival of the Germanic tribes. The other issue that confuses the reader is who the speaker is. The feminine forms seem to support the idea of a woman as experts like Ästrom (2002) defend. Horner explains the ambiguity of OE texts and how the reader constructs the identity of the voice based on the acts that the poetic I performs, following the performance theory of Butler. Horner

explains the cultural relationship between enclosure and femininity if we consider the powerful image of the poetic I in the cave. She compares "Wulf" and "Wife" as female elegies to "The Seafarer" and "The Wanderer" with male narrators. In the first, the women are enclosed in this container schema whereas in the male ones they are moving in the voyager imagery. For example, "The Wanderer" recalls the lord's voyage in "Wife". He is not enclosed in a space. The wife's journey looks more like an internal one, she can "sing", and speak, but she cannot escape her fate. Horner compares the voice in these elegies with nun missionaries' texts such as Egburg that use similar imagery "in the depths", if we compare it to the cave under the earth, we also have this appearance of depth. They also share physical and spatial isolation.

The use of heroic language is also emphasised by many authors like De la Concha and Cerezo (2017). Horner links this unusual feature with the monastic code where nuns were sometimes called the soldiers of God. There is also the possible Christian allegory further developed by authors like Murgia (2013). Kristin Brandser (1997), explains the usual difficulties to establish the gender of the voice and the genre of the poem. She follows the tradition of considering it as a riddle along with the other riddles found in *The Exeter Book*. She quotes Walker-Pelkey who thinks the speaker is an inanimate object, a sword. However, for Brandser the woman is "the riddle of her own" in a personal quest to find herself. For example, there is an instance of *ic* (I) to mark that this person is who tells her story. The poem could be an allegory of the act of creating poetry that would show the patriarchal constraints in the powerful image of the cave and the plot would be the society that rejects her. Brandser analyses "leodfruma" as a kenning or a "little riddle" in which "leod" stands for people, whereas "fruma", apart from "prince", can have the meaning of "beginning", "inventor", or "creator". And this, according to Brandser could be what the lyrical voice would be seeking in the lack of female poetic tradition. The woman "wants to make sense of the riddle she has become", so Brandser also links the picture of the cave with Mother Earth.

Susan Deskis (2020) makes an interesting analysis of the question of the lyrical voice in "Lyric Voice and Metaphors in *The Wife's Lament*". She follows Culler's studies (2015) in which there is a distinction between the poem as a narrative monologue and the poem as lyric poetry. As already stated, authors such as De la Concha and Cerezo (2017), have tried to sequence the poem as a story by drawing a sequence of events. However, Culler explains that lyric poetry has narrative elements and, also, ritualistic, or formal ones "that provide meaning and structure and serve as instructions for performance" (Culler, 2015). The latter have been usually neglected. In this sense, Deskis explores two of them mentioned by Culler, intertextuality and metaphor. There are multiple elements that can lead to a dead speaker: *eorðscræfe*[1] (l. 27) and *eorðsele*[2] (l. 28) can relate to either caves or graves. Deskis uses Sarah Semples' analysis of Anglo-Saxon barrows employed for burials. She shows an interesting pairing in "Wife": "under", "oak" and "earth" which appears in Old Frisian texts referring to graves. They are not only cognate languages, but there are also Frisian elements in OE texts like *Beowulf*. This could be explained due to the coexistence of both languages and frequent communication between them. Although a female dead speaker would be something unique in OE poetry and a potential field of study, Deskis analyses the presence of living dead in cultural traditions connected with early medieval England: Celtic, Germanic and the Bible. The main difference is that in the Bible, for example, it is textually indicated as in Samuel's case. There were fairies sometimes identified as dead women in Irish folktales, the witch of Endor in the Bible raises the ghost of the already mentioned Samuel. Samuel foresees the destruction of Saul before dying, inspired by the Lord. Could we interpret the last lines of "Wife" as if the woman also foresees the fate of her beloved? (l.44-52). If this is the case, is this just a supposition or is she also inspired by an external force? This could lead to another interesting line raised by this comparison.

As for the Old Norse sagas, we find dead characters in the Elder Edda; for example, Brynhild, once dead, goes to Hel and tells her story to a giantess,

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[1] *eorð* (earth) and *scræf* (cave), usually translated into "cave".
[2] *eorð* (earth) and *sele* (great hall), can be translated into "earth cave".

this resembles a death song, "as in *The Wife's Lament*, the poem itself only hints at her death". In those death songs, the speaker is usually nearly dead, but still alive (Deskis, 2020). Brynhild hopes to be united with Sigurd in the afterlife, what some interpret as an indicator of her dead condition. This loyalty, eternal love, the account of her sorrows and their separation because of a plot look very similar to "Wife". Honestly, I do not consider those elements enough to assert that the wife's character or Brynhild are dead, but they could be starting points for further research on this issue. In *Völuspá*, the völva/sybil also sits alone like the Wife, "Þær ic sittan mot[3]" (l. 36). It is interesting how some experts altered the grammar and the pronoun gender to make the sybil masculine. Ästrom (2002) also explained how some considered the feminine gender a typo and tried to make the Wife masculine, too. Deskis (2020) considers this "disregard for the feminine voice […] a relic of the misguided past". Brandser (1997) also supports this female voice theory and highlights the powerful speaker who is not "a typical passive woman who merely sits and weeps" (Brandser, 1997). This shows how prejudices can interfere in the analysis of a text.

Following Deskis, the metaphors of "women as retainer" and "dead prophetic women" seem to have links with Old Norse literary tradition, which makes perfect sense if we consider the connections between English and Scandinavians. It is true that there are many interpretative problems with the voice and her intentions, for instance, whether the Wife resents her husband, and the last part is a curse. Ästrom explores different interpretations, in one of them, the Wife is killed and buried, according to Elinor Lench (1970) because of adultery. However, the voice could be a dead seeress and the end would be a prophecy, as Deskis exposes. The difference between a curse and a prophecy relies on the ability of the speaker to cause those events, or just predict them like in the Norse poems. Deskis explains how the contrast between "geomormod[4]" (l.41) and "bliþe gebæro[5]" (l.43) recalls a medieval proverb in which a cheerful face may hide "more negative thoughts". In the eddic poem,

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[3] *There I must sit.*
[4] Sorrowful.
[5] Happy behaviour.

Hávamál, we find the same contraposition, so both could have used the same proverbs: "a young man should be thoughtful" and "every man should show cheerfulness despite his worries". The speaker of the "Wife" shares elements of wisdom speakers like Odin and eddic females.

Deskis concludes that the metaphor is more dominant in the poem and once we analyse this phenomenon, we can better understand the juxtaposition of contradictory elements such as longing and spite, or the presence of different speech acts like curse and prophecy. I agree with the fact that by studying the lyric features understood as metaphors, intertextuality and semantic ambiguity, the poem makes more sense. In fact, the expression of emotions, as Deskis claims, "lies at the poem's lyric core".

4. The Conceptual Foundations of "The Wife's Lament"
4.1. Introduction to the Conceptual Foundations Theory

"The Wife's Lament" resembles a riddle or a type of mystery that anyone who is fond of OE language and specifically, poetry, wants to solve. The more we dig into it, the more obscure it seems as if we were falling into the *eorðscrafu*[6]. To understand why this happens we must consider how a text is born. Any type of text either oral or written is a communicative act. Following Jakobson's functions of language, in 1960, there is a sender, the entity that creates the text; a message, the text; and the receiver, who receives the message and decodes it. As professor Guarddon told me, a text is a complex conceptual unit that emerges because of the context, the language, the habitus of the author, or the sender following Jakobson (1960), which shapes their communicative intentions, and the community development. The concept of *habitus* used by Bordieu is interesting in our analyses since it "refers to individual differences in practical linguistic competence" (Alba-Juez, 2009). The speakers act as strategic players and modify their speeches according to their successes and failures. According to Alba-Juez (2009), *habitus* "is a social construct" inextricably linked with community practices. She quotes Bordieu (1997), "An individual's accumulated experience of social actions is what we call

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[6] An OE term that appears in "The Wife's Lament" and is usually translated into PDE as cave.

the habitus". In this sense, we must consider the experience and background of the person and community that produces a text. In fact, when we read a text, we produce an idea in our minds based on our experience and cultural background. This reading could be seen as another occurrence of this text.

The habitus has been broadly studied and I would like to highlight the work of Diane Reay in 2004, "It's All Becoming a Habitus" for the sake of my analysis. She explores how *habitus*, according to Bordieu, can create "a wide repertoire of possible actions simultaneously". This is interesting because the individual can see these different courses of action, but it is unpredictable which one will be chosen. This goes in line with Juri Lotman's studies (1992), and the latter revisits by Wilma Clark, Edna Andrews and Peeter Torop in 2004 and in 2009 in *Culture and Explosion*. Lotman described culture as part of a "semiotic continuum" "in a multi-levelled, multi-dimensional semiotic space". In this study based on a series of conferences, culture is perceived as dynamic and depends on other systems: "another person, another language, another culture". This shows how the different systems create tensions and moments of explosion or change that are unpredictable. The concept of *explosion* refers to "a creative phenomenon", in this sense, the act of creating this poem can be understood as a moment of explosion. The difficulty to translate a poem to music mentioned by Lotman can be compared to that of translating a poem written in a dead language to other languages. Lotman distinguishes between code and language, the first one is artificial, suppressing the history element, whereas the other "is a code plus its history". Therefore, the "extra-lingual reality" relates to the explosion moment. In this extra-lingual reality, it is necessary to mention the culture and the habitus. The act of creation is linked with the gradual development of the community, so it goes along with the expectations of the society that interprets the text. This text was intended to appeal to the Anglo-Saxon culture and the speaker's behaviour and words respond to that society; therefore, it should be studied as part of that continuum. The text was part of a social dialogue between the person or people who created it and those who read it or listened to it.

The OE version of the poem has an attractor value because it is the first evidence we have of this unity. It emerges from a context in the early Middle Ages, a language, Old English, and an unknown habitus, understood as the author, that is framed in the Anglo-Saxon community. Therefore, the intertextualities analysed by Deskis (2020) are important due to the influences that this community received from the already mentioned cultural traditions, Celts, Old Norse and the Bible.

The translations and readings that have been created work as different versions of this primary unit, as they have another language such as PDE or any language to which the poem has been translated, another habitus understood as the authors of those translations and readings in which I include myself, the context in which they emerge and the community that also reads and interprets according to these new versions and their own circumstances and views. As Guarddon suggests, we could represent this in the following formula for other occurrences of CCWL understood as interpretations and translations: X_n Text$_n$, $L_n + C_n + H_n$. The elements of the equation are:

- **Unit**: "The Wife's Lament" (WL)
- Complex Conceptual Unit "The Wife's Lament": (CCWL)
- **L:** Language
- **C:** Context
- **H:** Habitus (author -background, intentions, etc.-)

Attractor: Primary Occurrence of CCWL

Therefore, the primary occurrence of CCWL could be represented in, X_1 Text$_1$, $L_1 + C_1 + H_1$. This is helpful to analyse how the founding elements survive while others undergo variations that reflect the language, the context, and the habitus. For example, in De la Concha and Cerezo (2017), the poem is translated aesthetically, and the translator adds a double negation to respect the alliterative pattern. This version is in a coursebook for a literature subject in which the student must analyse Old English formal and thematic devices, but it is in the first course of the English Studies degree, so it is not possible to do it in the original version. Therefore, the chosen version tries to imitate OE patterns

using PDE. In the resulting text, the three variables are different from the ones in the primary occurrence.

My own interpretation and translation of the poem constitutes another occurrence of the text. In this case, I am in a meta-creator position as I perform both tasks, one as the creator and another as the analyser. This means that I am conscious of the process underlying my creation that I have carried out myself. The language will coincide with the translation in De la Concha and Cerezo (2017), since I have also used PDE. However, the context is different, because this translation was not only created some years before mine, but I am still influenced by it because I have studied this subject and this translation along with Liuzza's (2014) translation. The habitus is not the same, as the one in the coursebook is a scholar with a wider knowledge of OE and PDE and the purpose is aesthetic. In my case, I am a student, and my purpose is to analyse it linguistically. Therefore, I have tried to do it as *literally* as possible to maintain the original meaning, as my intention is to decipher and shed light upon CCWL. For this purpose, the concept of *literally*, marked in italics, is slightly different of what we typically, or prototypically may understand by this term since I am going to apply a new vehicle that is much more complex. As I have been explaining throughout the paper, there are many difficulties in the interpretation that make it impossible to ensure a definite meaning, and this is the reason why I would like to use those new resources and perspectives to approach it. In this sense, Liuzza's translation has more in common with the one in De la Concha and Cerezo because both are aesthetic and written by professional scholars. There is another interesting interpretation by Kathryn Maude and Hussein Medlej (2019), who also try to translate the poem literally by sticking to the original text as much as possible. Although our goals are similar and we share the same language, PDE, their expertise is much wider. Their intention goes more in line with the literally concept, whereas my endeavour is more demanding as I attempt to go beyond the act of translating by using a broader perspective. The habitus is, therefore, different, as well as the context since Professor Kathryn Maude works at the University of Beirut and I live in Spain and I am a student, not a professor, in UNED.

Following Guarddon's equation simile, the complex conceptual unit understood as the primary occurrence of the text has different values in the variables: language, context, and habitus. When we change the variable values, the resulting gradients are different, as we see in the multiplicity of translations and interpretations. Although the high number of readings may hinder our task, we are going to try to reach the core meaning as well as the communicative intention of the attractor.

4.2. The Text as a Prototype. Common Conceptual Foundations

This text is part of a continuum. In diachronic studies, it is necessary to understand that history is continuously changing and how we, as humans, perceive it also varies according to time, culture, etc. However, this poem can be understood as a frozen witness of its time beyond any possible interpretation. It can be analysed as a prototype. Enrique Bernárdez (1995) in *Teoría y epistemología del texto* defined the concept of *prototype* as a structural stable state, which also characterizes the CCWL. The attractors define that structural state; therefore, the reinterpretations of the semantic prototypes must lead to those attractors. He followed Wildgen (1985) and Romano (1994), as he quoted them on page 108. I think that we can use the semantic prototypical theory, usually applied to concepts, for this poem. In other words, the poem could be considered the attractor and all the readings would be reinterpretations of this prototype using the terminology of Bernárdez (1995). In this regard, the language constitutes a continuum where the linguistic performance varies every time we use a word, following Bernárdez, the linguist introduces some order in the apparent chaos of variation through "invariants". The variability is not only found in semantics but also in texts, as it is impossible to repeat the same text in the same way. According to Bernárdez, SN_1-V-SN_2, understood as: nominal phrase, verb and nominal phrase, is a structure that does not vary in many occurrences in Spanish. Therefore, the linguist can identify, describe an explain some "natural invariants". I would add that these structures will differ depending on the language we are studying. In the case of "Wife", it would be interesting to examine the presence of common OE patterns that could be an equivalent to

those "natural invariants" that Bernárdez refers to when dealing with Spanish language. Coming back to the notion of the attractors, if a translation fails to recognise these "natural invariants", the experts' acceptability will certainly decrease. We can see how the original source, which can be just a word, a phrase, or in this case, a whole poem has a semantic power of attraction. For instance, the OE "min hlaford" (l.6) is usually translated into PDE as "my lord" due to the similar semantic implications. If we choose another concept that shares fewer features, we are distancing our interpretation from the intended meaning that was present when the person who wrote it decided to choose that term. Of course, this is one of the main problems when translating, as Bernárdez claims, it is not possible to reproduce the same text with the same meaning. This is why I want to rescue those essential elements that could be linked to the "natural invariants". I am perfectly aware of the fact that any translation leads us to debate, including my contemporary attempt. Therefore, I am not interested in reproducing another text because my purpose is to scrutinise the original OE source. What happens if I fell in the trap of giving birth to a new text? I would separate my version from the attractor, and I would add another personal approach to the thousands that already exist. Do not get me wrong, I appreciate those translations, which I have enjoyed myself. They fulfil other purposes such as making OE literature more accessible among many other positive things. However, this is not the aim of this paper.

The notion of prototypes was used by Eleanor Rosch and her co-workers in the seventies. To understand this concept, we should think of central and peripheral members of a category. There are some features that are more characteristic than others. This explains that when somebody utters "furniture", the receiver will usually think about chairs or sofas instead of a lamp, which would be a peripheral member of the category "furniture" (Saeed, 2016). When approaching "The Wife's Lament" there are potential trajectories or interpretations, in fact, I have noticed how all of them share common features that could be understood as the common foundations of the text. Then, there are more accepted elements that are more central and others that are more debatable or peripheral. Identifying the core elements of the text can help in any

attempt to reach meaning when it comes to analysing a complex entity. I have detected the following set of characteristics:

- There is an addresser in the shape of a first-person narrator, the speaker who is identified by the use of "*Ic*" translated into PDE as *I*.
  - The dialogue is established between a first-person narrator and the receiver who listens to the story.
  - The message is carried orally "giedd" can be translated into "song", "speech", "tale".
  - The overall tone is sorrowful due to the vocabulary related to this field, for example, "ful geomorre" that could be translated into "very sadly".
  - The story is personal since the speaker refers constantly to herself and her misery.
  - There is a journey from one place to another, the current dwellings of the speaker.
  - There is a separation between the speaker and another person identified by different forms such as "min hlaford" that is generally translated into "my lord".
  - There is a plot or conspiracy against the speaker that have divided her from the other person "todælden unc" (divided us).
  - The image of the container, the speaker is inside a place that is literally said to be located under the earth. This one would be dealt in more detail in section five.

This set of characteristics are more stable or objective to analyse the text, then there are other features that are more interpretative or subjective. Therefore, it is more predictable than the more stable or objective characteristics appear in a study of this poem. How we analyse or give meaning to those images can respond to other questions related to culture, habitus and language. It is interesting that those images coincide with the metaphors,

metonymies and image schemas I am going to analyse in <u>the fifth section</u> such as the container or the journey image.

4.3. Prototypicality and Analysis Variables

As previously stated, there are more predictable features that are probably closer to the centre. For instance, the speaker is widely accepted to be female because she uses female endings (<u>Picture 1</u>). The OE gender distinctions help us in this task. It is true that this has been argued by other scholars who consider it a typo or a personification of an object in a riddle, what could be considered more peripheral. At this point, one may wonder what makes some variables more acceptable. There are internal linguistic factors such as the use of feminine forms or verbal actions related to the human field that makes the implication: "the speaker is a person" more plausible. For example, a person can sing, tell a story and undergo miseries in their life.

On the other hand, there are external factors, our own persona or habitus, our culture and the language we use to approach the text. The identification of the speaker as a wife and the other character as her husband is more peripheral than the fact that she is a woman. OE poems have no names, they were given *a posteriori*, but we are so used to them that when we read those poems we are influenced by the title since this acts as a powerful schema creator, especially in short creations as this poem, since it can fade away in longer ones. The first time I read the poem I supposed that she was a woman and a wife from the beginning. Then, following the set of characteristics for the category of "wife" or "lament", I implied that she had a husband and something bad happened to her.

The main problem when we start going from the core foundations to the most peripheral ones is that "the extent that variations of one object are transformed into a collection of *different* objects". They can even result in "contrasting types", (Lotman, 2009). Lotman uses this when dealing with the concept of *explosion* as a collision of two languages. However, I think that the high number of readings is also connected with an explosion moment. All those

readings come from a common point or root, following Lotman's terminology, but their trajectory can go as far as creating contrasting versions of this text.

Answering the obvious question of whether there are more acceptable variables than others, I would say, yes. Does this acceptability vary in time and space? Undoubtedly, yes. A clear example could be the acceptance of the speaker as a man when the poem was known as "The Exile's Complaint" as highlighted by Ästrom (2002). Another nowadays case is the set of characteristics we can expect from a feminist approach. Therefore, we can represent this theory in two different ways. On the one hand, the text is the prototype with central core foundations and there are occurrences that are more central or peripheral depending on the characteristics they have. This would make them more or less acceptable to society. Their position could vary due to external factors among which I include culture, habitus and language (Picture 1). On the other hand, the text could be as a fixed point and the rest of variables would be placed at an equal distance. A variable could have other sub-variables as in the case of feminist studies or those who defend that the speaker is an object or perceive the whole story as a religious allegory (Picture 2).

Personally, I believe that the first model can help us to understand how and why some features are more central depending on the system. From a linguistic point of view, this shows that the way we perceive reality is mediated through language but the language we use is "loaded with meaning inherent in the conceptual patterns of the speaker's culture" (Hutcheon, 1988), and we could add by our own experience, a key point in this analysis. If we are able to identify common foundations in a complex text, we could get closer to disentangling that meaning. This is the reason why I suggest following this first model. In fact, in the next section, I want to analyse how these common images can be interpreted by cognitivism in a humble attempt to clarify the essence of the text.
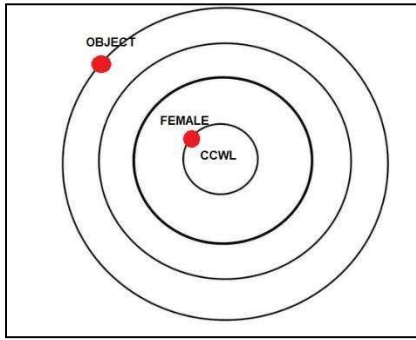
Picture 1.
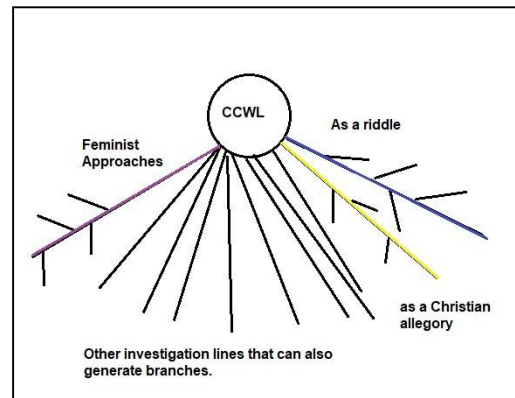
Picture 2.

4.4. Personal Translation Analysis

Once established the main principles of this theory, I would like to analyse the occurrence I have produced myself as an example (Annexe II). I have used the main set of characteristics mentioned that constitutes the essence of the attractor. Regarding the speaker's gender, I have followed the gender distinction made in the text, already stated in this paper. Therefore, I consider the speaker a woman since she uses feminine forms.

The relationship between the speaker and the person who is away and referred to as "min hlaford[7]" is possibly based on the *comitatus* explained in the historical context. If we understand the relationships in the Germanic tribes based on loyalty as we see in other texts of the same period such as *Beowulf*. It is interesting that marriage is perceived as an act in which both are committed to being loyal to each other and can be read in parallel with the comitatus between a warrior and his lord or leader. Adultery was punished by the Anglo-Saxons and this cultural practise has been used to explain the reason for the exile (Ästrom, 2002). I am not going that far to assume this is what the poem describes, but this sanction is interesting to analyse in its cultural background because it shows the presumable loyalty between the husband and the wife that can be applied to this text. Kimberlee (2006) followed the studies of Wemple in 1981 to explore women in Anglo-Saxon society based on the legal codes and other documents in which we see that the woman was a helpmate for her husband in the war. This interpretation matches the warrior elements of the texts and the position of the wife as dependent on her husband. Kimberlee and

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[7] My lord.

Wemple analysed how women were also involved in warrior processes when it comes to the Germanic tribes.

When this text is linked to the historical context in which we can establish some references, the position of women in society, and the hierarchy of the tribal society already exposed in the section devoted to the historical context, we see how it starts to make more sense. Therefore, I have used the historical context to shed light on the situations we see in the poem. In fact, when we consult the most acceptable variables of the text, they usually follow this line since a text is a product of a society within its culture. My intention when literally translating the text was to get to the core meaning to analyse it linguistically. However, it is mandatory to locate it first in its historical time and culture. Language also plays a vital role, as some linguistic choices are responsible for this ambiguity as well as the absence of names, places, and so forth that help to create a sense of mystery. The way we construct language is associated with our culture, for example, the presence of battle elements tells us about a warrior society. The metaphors are understandable depending on the culture they are created, for instance, the association of the cave to a possible burial is made due to the form in which the Anglo-Saxon society used to bury the dead.

In the next section, I would like to scrutinise how we can extract meaning by digging into these fascinating linguistic choices. The OE resourcefulness has often been neglected and some scholars considered it a primitive stage, however, this poem shows the potential of this language, and the beautiful patterns that Tolkien described when working in OE texts. I do not see it necessary to analyse my translation in detail since it was done as a first approach to investigating the core foundations of the text and how reality was shaped. The way we perceive and describe reality through language helps us to broaden our knowledge about language and history since both fields are inextricably intertwined. We will see how our mind is more literary than we think and how the use of metaphors, metonymies and image schemas aids us to disentangle some obscure meanings of a complex entity.

5. Analysis of Metaphors, Metonymies and Image Schemas in "The Wife's Lament"

The use of literary devices such as metaphors is pervasive in our language; in fact, most of them are part of the word creation. Mark Turner (1996) uses the term "literary mind" in his book, *The Literary Mind,* to refer to "the fundamental mind". He explores how we construct our experiences through stories. This could be helpful in the linguistic analysis I want to carry out since the study of those devices can make us understand the images and overall meaning of the poem as well as enlighten how Anglo-Saxons shaped reality. The way people express themselves, for instance, in a poem is also determined by their cultural background and level of literacy. When we write we are representing our mental schemas and something similar happens when we read and build those scenarios in our brain trying to make sense of the whole. Antonina Harbus (2012) highlighted the potential of those studies applied to OE poetry in her book, *Cognitive Approaches to Old English Poetry*. For example, the fact that we can engage with remote cultures such as OE poems like "Wife" is partly because of a shared human experience, although it has a cultural element that may vary in different parts of the world. We can associate images of "Wife" with other Western texts and traditions. It would be fascinating to contrast the following results with other contemporary texts in related cultures, and even with PDE texts to look for similarities and differences in the use of those images to convey the message. Antonina Harbus (2012) emphasises the use of basic emotions that are universal in human experiences like fear, anger, sadness, joy, etc. along with topics that are present in our society: separation, loss, being part of a group, etc. that, we find in OE elegies like "Wulf and Eadwacer", "The Wife's Lament", "The Wanderer", etc. This makes these poems highly intelligible regardless of their remote origin, so we can empathise with the characters and understand their emotional pain. This explains why they are still appealing to us regardless of time and space distance.

"I explore the possibility that language is not the source of parable but instead its complex product" (Turner, 1995, preface). This affirmation is

interesting and goes in line with my idea that when we use language, we are also translating our thoughts from our mental schemas that are indebted to our culture. Language and the way we express ourselves are inextricable elements of our culture. We can also be defined by our speech, so the language is part of our identity. The choice of the lexicon along with the images we use to translate our feelings into words depends on our culture, experience and literacy. If we are used to a recurrent metaphor like "weather is my feeling", we use it to express ourselves and we understand it perfectly regardless of the remoteness of the text such as "Wife". So, we use the image of rain for sadness and sunny for a happy mood due to our experience with the world, but we have also heard it, read it in books, and listened to it in songs. And sometimes to say "I am sad" does not convey the agony we may feel, and it seems easier to use a picture connected with the weather like the water falling on the hall that we see in the last part of the poem. Antonina Harbus (2012) remarks that this archaeology of emotions has been "little explored" and, as she shows, it has a great potential to understand both the workings of the mind but also language. In this case, the conceptual metaphor is essential to understand how abstract ideas are represented in our mind and later translated into words.

The difficulty of this text is that the habitus (author or authors) is unknown, however, we can still work on what is written. The focus, as in other elegies, is on the feelings and emotions that could distort what really happened. When we visit our memories, we reshape those moments because of our feelings. Harbus studied the few details of the events in these elegies in contrast with the wide exploration of the human emotions in which agony and sadness clearly stand out. The landscape is transformed into a projection of her mental state. However, we, as readers, want to make sense and we are engaged in a continuous rereading to understand why she tells her story, what happens, who the main participants are, etc. whereas the speaker seems more interested in telling us how she feels.

Due to the space constraints of this paper and the amount of material in this outstanding poem, I am going to focus on metaphors, metonymies and image schemas, which are three of the four Idealized Cognitive Models

(hereafter ICMs) mentioned by Lakoff (1987) in *Women, Fire, and Dangerous Things. What Categories Reveal about the Mind*. According to Lakoff, ICMs are the structures we use to organise our knowledge to represent reality from a given perspective. Lakoff gave the example of *weekend* that "requires a notion of a work week of five days followed by a break of two". In this sense, *week* and *weekend* are idealized concepts because "they do not exist objectively in nature". Another interesting aspect outlined by Evans and Green (2006) in *Cognitive Linguistics,* is the degree to which "knowledge is shared by a linguistic community". Therefore, the frequency of certain metaphors serves to understand better how those people perceived the world and can assist to find meaning in complex texts with similar features that belong to the same community.

5.1. Metaphors, Metonymies and Image Schemas

Ricardo Mairal Usón et al. (2019) in *Teorías Lingüísticas* analyse the ICMs and mention the studies of Ungerer and Schmid (2006) in which they explain how the ICMs are not universal but cultural. They distinguished between cognitive models centered on the psychology aspect and cultural models that focus on the community as the cultural factor. A clear example could be "le petit dejeuner" in France which is light food and the food abundance in the English breakfast. Both respond to different ways of understanding the first meal (Usón et al., 2019). As Usón says, the cultural models not only change depending on the culture but also diachronically. For instance, we can compare images present in OE to PDE or any other stage of the language as Deskis (2020) did when exploring the possible intertextuality of "Wife" with other texts belonging to cultures that influenced Anglo-Saxon society, finding interesting intertextualities that help to understand the text. This connects with the understanding of the text as a Complex Conceptual Unit; in this regard, the emergence of Units in different cultural and temporal contexts account for the strength of some of the traits that characterize the attractor. These traits can be found in other Complex Conceptual Units that have come into light in contemporary literary works. Therefore, we could apply this theory in comparative literature studies.

The study of metaphors has been carried out in different disciplines such as psychology and literature with fruitful results as Lakoff and Johnson explain in *Metaphors We Live By* first published in 1980. It has been revisited several times, and I am going to use their 2003 version, *Metaphors We Live By: With a New Afterword*. An important modification is their original division between ontological, structural and orientational, since all metaphors can be understood as structural, "they map structures to structures" and ontological, "they create target domain entities". In most cases, they are also orientational, "they map orientational image-schemas". Before going further, there are some concepts that need clarification to understand what we mean by "metaphor". The target domain is the described object, whereas the source domain is the analogy (Saeed, 2016). For example, In "Wife", the speaker described herself as being full of nostalgia or longing: *eal ic eom oflongad* (I.28)[8] and in the following lines the landscape is described with the same mournful tone:

> [...] *sindon dena dimme, duna uphea, bitre burgtunas, brerum beweaxne, wic wynna leas.* [9]

The state of the speaker is the target domain while the landscape is the source domain. She is equated to nature that reflects her own feelings in a powerful image that De la Concha and Cerezo (2017) analysed as her refuge. However, this structural coupling between the mental state of the wife and how this is reflected on the natural surroundings is dynamic and changes as the conceptualizer's own mood is mapped onto the environment. Her mood is "sorrowful", so we read the lines (I.28-35) as an upsetting atmosphere for her troubling feelings. But in I.36-40, after she went "through this earth cave" (I.35) the "summer-long day" does not have a calming effect, she "cannot ever give rest". This means that dark or light —if we associate summer with sunny days— landscapes might be felt as romantic and calm or aggressive. Too much sun can be harmful. Therefore, she establishes a connection between weather and the depiction of landscape with her own feelings that may vary in other texts,

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[8] I am entirely seized with longing.
[9] The valleys are dark, the hills steep, painful dwellings covered with wild bushes, dwelling places without joy.

since she is telling her specific story, as she claims in the beginning of the poem, rather than a general situation.

This metaphor has been largely studied, for example, by Alaric Hall in the article "The Images and Structures of The Wife's Lament" for the Leeds Studies in English in 2002. He dealt with Lapidge's (1997) idea of the woman describing "a mental landscape". The cave could stand for her mind trapped in her body that tries to get out of the cave, her imprisonment. Hall compared it with the gloomy description of the Green Chapel in *Sir Gawain and The Green Knight*. Although he noticed that the landscape images were not usually described as such in OE poetry, there are other cases, *The Phoenix or Beowulf.* In the latter one, the concept "wynleas wic" (joyless home") is used to describe Grendel's home, one of the main villains with hellish associations. In the *Bible*, "wynleasram wic" refers to the place Adam goes after falling from Paradise (Hall, 2002). Those correlations explain that the audience would understand these metaphors since they were present and continued in later texts.

The correlation between feelings and landscapes is nowadays very common and has long been used in literature, for instance, in Romanticism. What is interesting is that this association already appeared in OE texts, so it was part of the literary tradition. This makes sense since the tribal societies were usually linked with their surroundings, for example, if we think about the pagan divinities associated with natural elements. In fact, humans live and modify their habitat, therefore, it is understandable to relate to our environment to mirror our feelings as we also do with the weather, as I explained before. This makes me think of a possible universal factor present in unrelated societies due to human experience and relation with the physical world and weather; however, it would be necessary an exhaustive comparative study to reach a more plausible conclusion.

Throughout these examples, we have seen that we need two domains in a metaphor. Lakoff and Johnson (2003) define it in contrast to metonymy:

> In *a metaphor,* there are two domains: the target domain, which is
> constituted by the immediate subject matter, and the source domain, in

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which important metaphorical reasoning takes place and that provides the source concepts used in that reasoning. Metaphorical language has literal meaning in the source domain. In addition, a metaphoric mapping is multiple, that *is,* two or more elements are mapped to two or more other elements. Image-schema structure is preserved in the mapping—interiors of containers map to interiors, exteriors map to exteriors; sources of motion to sources, goals to goals, and so on. (Lakoff and Johnson, 2003).

Metonymy is another interesting concept, sometimes confused with metaphor, that we can understand in this manner:

In a metonymy, there is only one domain: the immediate subject matter. There is only one mapping; typically the metonymic source maps to the metonymic target (the referent) so that one item in the domain can stand for the other. (Lakoff & Johnson, 2003).

For example, if in a hairdressing salon a hairdresser says to her colleague: "the red t-shirt wants a haircut". The colleague knows that "red t-shirt" stands for the person who is wearing that garment. Let's analyse "wic wynna leas[10]" again from another perspective. If we follow the line that the landscape is a mirror of how she feels when she says that those places have no joy, those places could stand for her own state in a metonymy manner: Places are feelings, and those feelings are part of herself, as the previous red t-shirt was part of the clothing of the person. "I have no joy" could be the translation.

When dealing with metaphors and metonymies another notion has appeared in the definition for metaphors, *image schemas*. They are very connected with metaphors and usually analysed in connection as in the revisit of *Metaphors We Live By. A New Afterword* in 2003. Usón et al. (2019) define them as abstract conceptual representations produced by our world interaction. According to Sandra Peña (2003) in *Topology and Cognition. What Image-schemas Reveal about the Metaphorical Language,* image schemas have a "recurring pattern of experience that is abstract and topological in nature". They are preconceptual, which means that they are acquired before speaking, for instance, if we consider the container image, a small baby experiences this

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[10] Dwelling places without joy.

when playing to put toys in a bucket. Usón et al. (2019) also explain how they are embodied following Peña (2003), for example, when we walk from one place to another, we have a clear structure: an origin, a path, possible obstacles, a destination, etc. All our sensorial and motor interactions with the world contribute to schemas like path images. The above studies follow the path initiated by the ideas of Lakoff (1987) in *Women, Fire and Dangerous Things.* Those schemas have structural elements as we see in the path image, and this conforms to an inner logic. Lakoff and Johnson (2003) related those features to how we construct abstract thought. Furthermore, they enable us to make sense of our experiences (Usón et al., 2019).

Lakoff and Johnson (2003) deal with "more is better" in line with "good is up". Let's imagine a small child piling blocks and thinking about how the more blocks, the taller the tower will be, and the better the result, if the child follows this "more is better" principle. In "Wife", we see how the cumulative concepts related to sorrow and sadness create the sensation of "the more quantity of sadness, the sadder it will be". If the purpose is to display lament and sadness, this certainly follow the more is better principle. This image has also cultural tenets, as Lakoff and Johnson point out, in some traditions "the less is better" if we consider some monastic order like the Franciscans.

Isabel Verdaguer and Emilia Castaño (2001) have done an excellent analysis of the sadness expression in different elegies using The Cognitive Theory of Metaphor by Lakoff and Johnson. In the article "The Metaphorical Conceptualization of Sadness in the Anglo-Saxon Elegies" they explore different metaphors of sadness with the image they create. OE elegies including "Wife" used darkness, cold and physical discomfort as source domains just as we do in PDE and Western cultures, which shows a long tradition that is in part due to similar human experiences. Lakoff and Johnson have shown how this use of metaphor is pervasive in common speech, for instance, if I say, "I am under the weather" or "I am down in the damps", everybody understands that I do not feel happy. "Sadness is down" because when we feel this way, we usually bow our body, we want to sit down or lie on a bed. Our body responds to this sensation, and the opposite happens if we are happy. Verdaguer and

Castaño examine how the Wife sits in the poem when she is sad. It is also interesting the use of being "under" in "under actreo[11]" (l.35) when she departs alone "on uhtan" (l.34). *On uhtan* is "the last part of night before dawn" (Verdaguer & Castaño, 2001). Darkness and absence of light are important to emphasise sadness. The image of an underground cave also reinforces this darkness. If we link it to human experience, children are usually afraid of darkness, and it has also been demonstrated how fire was used to bring light and protection in prehistoric times and it is also associated with warmth and home. The image of darkness as something bad or related to ignorance was also used by Plato in the cavern myth. This reinforces the idea that there are images based on human experiences usually backed up by cultural traditions that allow us to understand this poem thanks to this shared background that, in some instances, varies according to cultures and traditions.

When we are ill, we suffer and sadness is seen as an illness, "hwæt ic yrmþa gebad" (l.3). Verdaguer and Castaño explain how "bad emotion is discomfort or pain". In the poem, this is emphasised by contrasting this misery to joyful times when both were together and happy, "Bliþe gebæro ful oft wit beotedan" (l.21). Verdaguer and Castaño connect their physical separation with coldness, "affection is warmth" and "relationship is proximity". Therefore, if the wife is alone and separated from her lover, she feels this coldness in the absence of their warmth which is usually linked with the bliss she misses. Towards the end, we read, "þæt min freond siteð under stanhliþe storme behrimed" (l. 46-47) that can be translated into "that my friend sits under a rocky stone cliff frosted over in the storm". Here we have the three elements, "sadness is low" in the body posture of sitting down, reinforced by the location "under", and then the coldness of "frosted over" that perfectly matches "in the storm", since this natural phenomenon is linked with discomfort. Bad weather including storms is associated with bad feelings due to our interaction with the world and how we try to protect ourselves from bad weather just as we want to do so from bad feelings. The third element, illness comes in lines 49 and 50,

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[11] Under the oak tree.

"Dreogeð se min wine micle modceare", which can be understood as "my lord suffered from great sadness".

The above conclusions may seem common knowledge since they make perfect sense and are empirically demonstrated. However, let's return to the "more is better" principle. When people feel sad, we are usually inclined to tell, or just write, our sorrowful experiences to overcome this sadness and reach the ultimate liberation of those feelings by using them. This can appear paradoxical; can we reach happiness (destination) through sadness (path)? Let's replace this destination name for *sublime*, defined by the Cambridge dictionary as 'extremely good, beautiful, or enjoyable, and therefore, satisfying' (Cambridge University Press, n.d). If we saw the wife as a person on a path toward the sublime, this would imply a radical change of perspective in the multiple interpretations that see this poem as a demonstration of complete despair. In this regard, Fabian Allegro (2017) published the article, "Kant y la tristeza insípida, el dolor como experiencia de lo sublime". Can we reach a sublime state, understood as the pinnacle of happiness, through negative or sad experiences? To answer this question, it is necessary to read the philosopher Immanuel Kant's words in *The Critique of Judgement* published in 1790. He distinguished between "insipid sadness" and "interesting sadness":

> The brilliant and thorough Saussure in his account of his Alpine travels, says of one of the Savoy mountains, called Bonhomme, "There reigns there a certain **insipid sadness**." He therefore recognised **an interesting sadness**, that the sight of a solitude might inspire, to which men might wish to transport themselves that they might neither hear nor experience any more of the world; which, however, would not be quite so inhospitable that it would offer only an extremely painful retreat.— I make this remark solely with the design of indicating again that even depression (not dejected sadness) may be counted among the sturdy affections, if it has its ground in moral Ideas. But if it is grounded on sympathy and, as such, is amiable, it belongs merely to the languid affections. [I make this remark] to call attention to the state of mind which is sublime only in the first case. (Bernard, J.H. (trans.), 2017).

This means that the wife could be following a path to reach the sublime. Fabian Allegro (2017) analyses this sublime concept that can be a confusing pleasure in what he calls "the dark delight of the sublime" whose virtue is on the subject. The sublime is supposed to be on the grounds of reason, but it emerges in the discordance between reason and sensitivity. The subject has their implication in the sublime. Allegro explains that Kant in *Anthropology from a Pragmatic Point of View* in 1798 considers melancholy as a sensitive quality for the sublime. The hypochondriac, according to Allegro, could be interpreted as a dreamer. In this sense, the wife may find peace of mind and beauty in life when she departs through the cave under the tree maybe understood as a mental journey of liberation. The hostile landscape that covers and surrounds her can be that positive pain that promotes a reaction described by Kant (1798). He differentiates between a positive pain that make people act and a negative one which leads to boredom and emptiness. Allegro (2017) quotes Kant (1798) "nature has put pain on men as activity sting"; therefore, Allegro interprets that this causes an infinite sought for perfection until death. However, full satisfaction is impossible; in fact, this could lead to a motionless state, almost inert or lifeless. The human necessity for stimulus usually implies pain and it is through effort, experiencing pain, that we often get to that sublime state. I am simplifying things due to the limited time and space I have in this paper, but I would like to reflect on this mental process the wife undergoes in her journey and the complexity of her feelings expressed through different images. Perhaps this connection between nature and mood is also used as a tool, not only to reflect, but also to react and overcome her own state. This fascinating link could be one of the strengths of the attractor because we, as humans, may feel identified. This might make this piece moving for us regardless of the temporal and spatial distance. We can compare this practice with other daily routines, for example, when we are sad, and we feel reassured by a cloudy sky or the sight of a gloomy landscape as if we could share our pain with nature and this made it lighter to carry —pain understood as something heavy we carry—. We should not forget that the wife is also physically moving through this landscape, walking under the trees, so she is creating her own path, although she sits to reflect on

her own state "I can weep" (l.36-40). The last lines, "There should always be an enemy sorrowful with hard heart thoughts" (l.41), can be analysed as a constant stimulus that promotes action, and, to a certain extent, the feeling that she is alive and not in a motionless or lifeless state as it happens when she is quiet, sitting and crying.

Following these reflections, Antonina Harbus (2012) highlights how cognitivism enables us to approach OE texts with new perspectives. In "Wife", she focuses on the representation of the self and the function of memory. In the next section, I would like to use Harbus (2012), Lakoff and Johnson (2003) ideas to give a more personal approach to the poem.

5.2. Metaphors, Metonymies and Image Schemas in "The Wife's Lament"

In OE poetry, especially in elegies, we find a recurring first-speaker narrator that uses their memory to tell their life as if they were the scop[12] and the hero at the same time. "Life is a story" could be the image following Lakoff and Johnson terminology (2003). This persona is the sender and the main character of the story, the life is the message or plot, and the reader or hearer is the receiver or the audience in this story metaphor. However, as Harbus (2012) points out, the focus is not on a detailed account of the events but on the emotions and feelings. The plot starts to become more complex since we do not have names for the participants or a traditional chronological chain of events. In this account, the narrator imagines her lover suffering, although she cannot have direct access to her lover's mind. Harbus associates this with mind-reading, "how we assume, from observed behaviour, the mental states that have produced that behaviour" (Harbus, 2012).

We must situate the wife in the middle of our schema since we read or hear everything from her perspective. She shifts from the present to the past and to the possible scenario where her husband is and his possible journey, so there are different layers to analyse. In the first lines (l.1-5), we find the metaphor "life is a journey" that can be understood in the path schema. The wife is metaphorically converted into a time traveller in life, so she can move to other

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[12] OE bard or poet.

times "young" in the past, or even "old" in the future, but the worst time is the present "now". In this path schema, she is in the present, but she moves back to the past to recount her life understood as a "journey". Her mind can be interpreted as a wandering traveller since she moves through her memories in an interior journey, but it is also a container because it contains her memories.

In line 5, bad emotions are perceived as illness "wonn minra wræcsiþa[13]". She suffers physically and this provokes "wounds", physical pain that mirrors her emotional state. According to Verdaguer and Castaño (2001) Separation is coldness, therefore, the fact of being exiled implies that she has no warmth and is in discomfort. This is reinforced in the next lines as we can observe in this table:

Bad emotions (mental effect)	Physical effect
I always suffer from (sadness) l.5	Wounds of my exile l.5
Separation (mental effect) l.6 -l.14	**Physical effect l.6 -l.14**
I had worried for my grievous need causing me longing for you	my lord departed wandering without any friend live unpleasantly apart
Together is good (warmth) l.5	**Apart is bad (cold) l.5-14**
If being apart causes her suffering, together they are happy. Good relationships are associated with cosiness and warmth.	The exile makes her suffer, alone she is sad. She lives "unpleasantly apart". Being alone is linked to loneliness and coldness.

Lines 6-14. The sea journey is highly recurrent as Harbus (2012) explains, and this makes the separation between the wife and her lover more real and intense. Her lover's journey has obstacles, "trembling waves". And we see a journey within a journey, since she is travelling physically "Ða ic me feran gewat[14]" (l.9), but also mentally through her thoughts to other places and also imagines the journey of her lover. There is another interesting image, "being part of a group is good". The fact that she is in exile and the kinsmen servants have conspired to separate them show the consequences of not following the group rules that underlies the conception that following the rules allows "being

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[13] Wounds of my exile.
[14] Then I travelled myself.

part of the group" and the opposite is also true, not following the rules causes being alone and not being part of the group. If she is not part of the group, she cannot be with him. The group can be seen as a container, so the individual can be in or out of it. This schema is present in other cultures, since humans are sociable and tend to live or belong to communities.

Lines 15-27. As Lakoff and Johnson (2003) say, forests and landscapes can be understood as containers, here she is kept in a grove. From her perspective, she is "inside" those lands where she feels alone with few friends. The state of mind is perceived as an object, something that can be concealed, so others cannot have access, we see that minds are also containers for ideas and thoughts that one can hide in contraposition to the mind as a wandering entity that can travel through memories as she is doing to tell what has happened, or how she feels because of it. The abstract idea of happiness appears as something physical that can be located between them. It is interesting because when they go apart, happiness stays there, so they are also separating from that joy that used to be in between as if they were going in separate ways, she is in exile, and he has gone on a sea journey.

The naming of death could separate them as an invocation with magical powers. This image is worth analysing because it is used in a common speech in PDE and some Western cultures. If we mention something bad, this could imply invoking this thing to happen. In Spanish, people say "no llames a la mala suerte" that could be translate it as "don't jinx". For instance, "I was sure we could win but I didn't want to say so because I was afraid to jinx it". We still have this image that if you name something, this could happen or this person could appear unexpectedly, therefore we perfectly understand the problem of "naming the death". In fact, this is known as "speaking things into existence", which could be an interesting study line for cross-linguistic research. We could investigate how different societies gave, and still give, power to words.

If up is good, down is bad. She is in the woods, under a tree and in an earth cave. All these images together convey the idea of isolation and depth that reinforces the overall sadness of the poem, the downer we are, the sadder

we feel. The cave is also a container that is at the same time contained under the tree that is part of the forest that also contains her. This complex imagery gives us the idea that she is far and completely alone in total despair. In fact, this image has been associated with burials and her possible death. This death can be a social one since she is not part of the group and is completely alone. Friendship is warmth (Verdaguer & Castaño, 2001); therefore, here we understand that enemies are the opposite, hostility and suffering. Wife's position and enclosure could be represented in this schema:
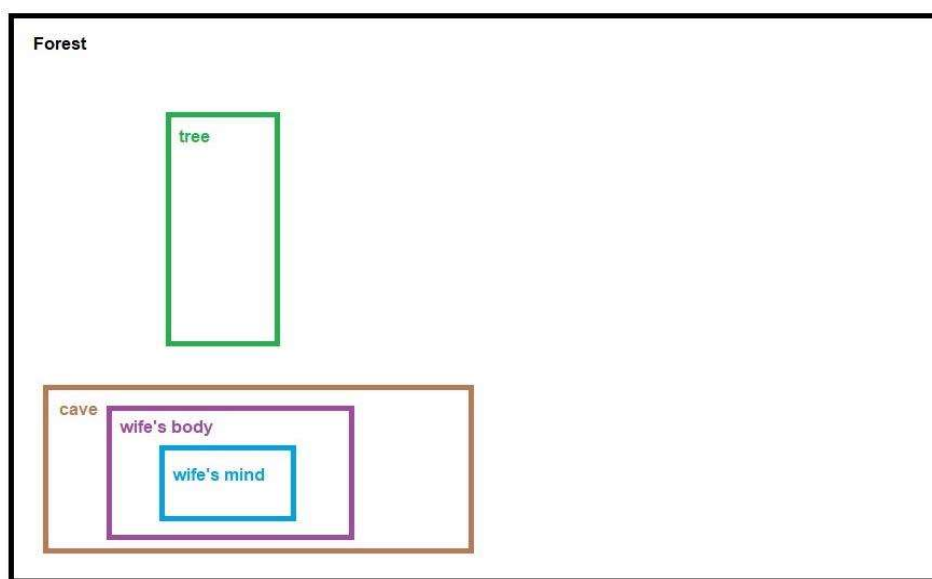
Picture 3. A graphic representation of the location of the wife in the poem.

The poem also relies on constant binary opposition, happiness versus death, friendship against enemies, together and apart, etc. In these two circles, I would like to present the contrast between the few positive words which are employed to speak about those who live happy on earth while she is under the ground, or the happy times when they were together. In the green circle, I have added the most representative positive words, translated to facilitate the comprehension, the original ones are in the Annexe I. Whereas in the red circle, we find the negative words that certainly dominate the poem giving us this sense of sadness:
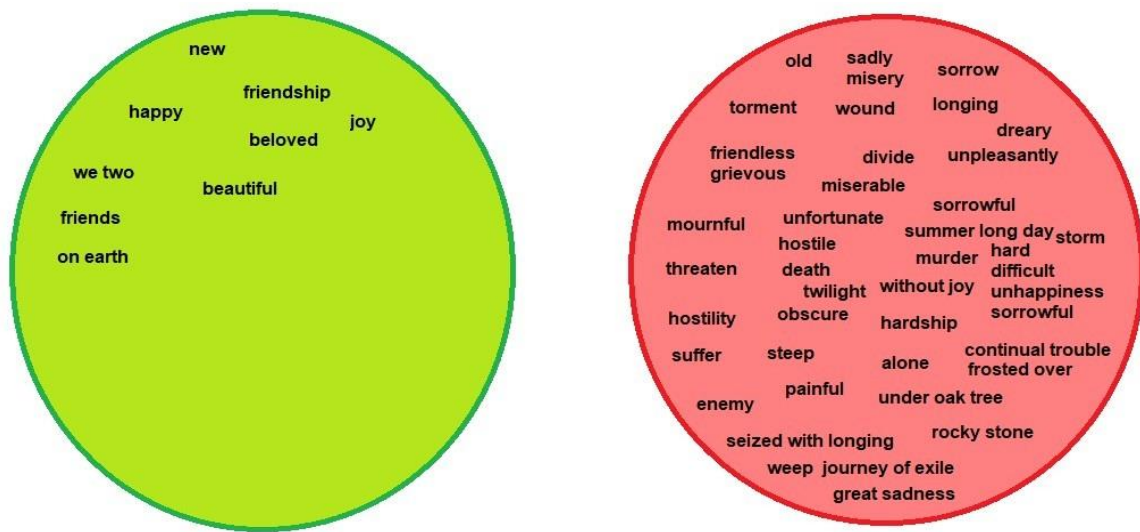
Picture 4. A representation of the positive and negative words in the text.

In line 26 the word "mon" can be translated into "man" or "enemy" this singular noun could stand as a referent for all her enemies in a metonymy in which "the enemy" is a part to refer to the whole who are against her. "Mon" also works as an indefinite pronoun that can be the equivalent to the PDE "someone". The speaker may use a generic concept not to mention her enemies, according to the "speaking things into existence" idea. If she mentions them, she could be invoking her presence.

Lines 28-35. Three main metaphors conflate in this part: journey, container and building. As Lakoff and Johnson (2003) have studied, metaphors can work together to create meaning, each of them sheds light on some aspects while hiding others, this is why they can result ambiguous since we do not always have access to what is being hidden. These three metaphors have common aspects to work together, as already remarked by Lakoff and Johnson.

JOURNEY	CONTAINER	BUILDING
content	content	content
progress	progress	progress
directness	Depth*	Depth*
obviousness	Darkness*	Darkness*
clarity		

I have added the marked words for my analysis. The wife is making a physical and mental journey with her own shifts in time and place as she progresses in her story. The direction is not always linear due to those turns, but it leads to her current despair which is made obvious in different moments. Her story can also be understood as a mental journey to understand her emotions, and the use of metaphors can help her to express her feelings, as we do in common speech when we do not have words that precisely mark what we exactly feel. She is not always in control of those shifts as "she is taken by the hardship" (l.31), those memories that cause her pain. Her mind is also the container of those memories through which she travels. She is in a cave that can be understood as a building construction and a container of her body. The landscape or cave surrounding is also a container of both the building and herself. She uses this landscape to mirror her emotions, the dwelling is painful and covered with bushes because she is the one who is full of pain. Even the bushes are covering and enclosing the landscape and herself. It is like opening a matryoshka[15], we have to go through different containers until we get where the wife is, and afterwards, her memories are inside herself to emphasise how depth we have to dig into to discover what she is concealing, as we can see in [Picture 3](). It is as if the speaker were also struggling with her emotions to make meaning of what has happened, of those memories distorted by her emotions. And we, as readers, would also like to know it. Those containers and buildings lack light. Let's imagine the inside of a cave, the dark valleys or the thick leaves of an oak tree. They also project a claustrophobic obscure image that leads to her deep pain.

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[15] A Russian doll that consists of a big wooden figure that contains a set of smaller ones, each is opened in the middle to discover another smaller figure until you get to the smallest doll.

She contrasts her situation to those who are happy "on earth", up is happy, whereas she is "under", down is sad. She goes alone, following the trajectory of her feelings in the darkness "twilight" and she has to go through that cave, the building inside the other container that is the landscape, and it is located "under the oak tree" highlighting once more her position (Picture 3). In this regard, the confluence of "gonge" (departure) and "under" in l.34-35 is remarkable. This could be the starting point or the destination. The later one would imply that she departs toward the tree through the cave. However, she could already be under that tree (starting point) when she sets off her journey.

Lines 36-40. The body disposition indicates her state as I have previously said, down is sad, and she sits down. Summer is usually associated with warmth and good times, but this is contradicted by "long", this length shows how the duration, or the quantity of summer can be excessive to bear. She feels contained in a place "there", but this one seems safer since she can weep. However, here the quantity also seems negative "all these longings" and here the more is not the better, since more suffering cannot be piled to have something good. In fact, if the child I have used in the example piles too many blocks, the tower can fall. The more is not always the better, even when we refer to positive things. When we speak about negative aspects like suffering or problems, we know that the more is the worse, so we cannot bear that amount.

Lines 41-52. There is an interesting image, "hard heart thought". We understand something hard as heavy, if it is heavy, it sinks and gets down. Therefore, hard thoughts are sad ones since sadness is down. This is contrasted with the use of the word *happy*. The more negative things, the worse. The contraposition also works with "his world's joy" and "hostility in a faraway nation". The parallelism between similar or contrary images helps to make the message clearer. In this case, there is a beautiful parallelism when she imagines him sitting just as she has done previously in another hostile landscape to weep. The image of water falling on the hall may recall tears falling over a face. The dreary hall could be the place, the container, where the lord is sitting and this container will suffer along with the contained, the lord. This dreary container goes against "a more beautiful dwelling", that we can

imagine is where they were happy together. Being apart is sadness, as previously stated. The adjective of "dreary" and the water falling can indicate an association of the hall the container with the contained, the lord, which can be understood as a metonymy. Finally, "Woe" as 'great sorrow' is personalised in the shape of a warrior in a metaphor in which the beloved has to fight his sadness, therefore, sadness is an enemy. In fact, this makes sense if we understand that low is associated with negative aspects, sadness is a bad feeling, therefore, sadness is an enemy we can fight.

Throughout this analysis, I have tried to apply new tools to revisit this complex poem. My translation, as happens with the others, is highly debatable, but the analyses of the ICMs allow us to investigate the core elements of the poem. The similar human experiences make them partly accessible regardless of the remote time. We cannot forget about their cultural component that goes in line with other Western texts. Although many parts are ambiguous, we can agree with the emotional power and intensity that OE poems like "Wife" have and how the study of their ICMs certainly contributes to a better understanding not only of the poems but also of the workings of OE as well as the correlation between related cultures. Indeed, when we analyse them, we are also investigating the diachronic variation regarding the changes in how we structure and deliver information or how we translate feelings into words.

6. Research Conclusions

"The Wife's Lament". A Cognitive Journey into the Discovery of its Core Meaning is the title that summarises my linguistic adventure. I set off some months ago when I decided to travel through the layers of dust and time that covered this magnificent poem in a daring attempt to get to its essence. This voyage has been similar to that famous Verne's novel, *Journey to the Centre of the Earth*, in which the main character, Otto, follows an old manuscript to discover a new world underneath the Earth. Likewise, I have been after this OE text to learn about its primary message. No wonder, I have come across many obstacles such as the translation of the source. I have spent several weeks looking at those words, first individually, and later trying to make sense of the whole. In this task, I hesitated among different probabilities, I checked online Anglo-Saxon dictionaries and Old English books. My lack of expertise was a barrier that I overcame with my desire to discover the core meaning, that *new world* that the poem could reveal if I applied the appropriate tools. The readings of previous studies have been of great assistance as they provided me with different perspectives and broaden my Old English knowledge as well as the valuable guidance and assistance of Professor María del Carmen Guarddon.

Another important stage in my research has been my personal conviction that history and language are well-related. In this particular case, we have a problem with the scarce evidence in terms of both textual resources and archaeological data. Following this line, the study of the context has proved valuable to understand the poem and establish connections with other related cultures. Through those parallelisms, for example, between Old Frisian and Old Norse texts, it is easier to comprehend certain images that appear in those cultures, as Deskis (2020) demonstrates. I believe that those analyses also mitigate the lack of data and sources.

From the beginning of this journey, I did not want to do another translation of the poem to continue adding more versions to the huge pile that already exists. This link between the historical context and language seemed to be of the utmost importance in my research, and it has undoubtedly contributed

to my contemporary reading. Therefore, we need to be aware of the context in which something is created to get rid of our present prejudices and look at it from the past perspective. However, this task becomes more complex when we do not have all the information as happens when we study Anglo-Saxon times. Of course, this does not impede that we continue doing research; in fact, these investigations definitely enrich our knowledge of those periods.

In this relationship between language and history, Henry Hitchings (2009 p.6) wrote that "Studying language enables an archaeology of human experience: words contain the fossils of past dreams and traumas" in his book, *The Secret Life of Words. How English Became English*. The exhaustive analysis of language was the necessary next step in my research. For this purpose, I explored the semantic implications of the words meticulously. From my point of view, they are the key to the real meaning of the text because they represent real *fossils*. They are the words originally chosen for the poem, scholars can discuss about the different probabilities in the translation to PDE, but the OE terms contain the real message. How could I approach them? To avoid getting lost in the myriad of worlds that these translations created, I decided to develop the "Conceptual Foundation Theory", which has been highly useful. This theory has allowed me to focus on the key parts of the poem. After this research, I think that it could be applied to the study of other texts.

Up to this point, I had not reached the ultimate goal: the core meaning. I knew I needed to keep exploring those *fossils*. There were more questions to be solved, *why did the author or authors choose those words? Why is this text still appealing despite our distance in time and space?* The words we utter are not as arbitrary as we may think. When we study why somebody has decided to use one expression rather than another, we are also getting into the semantic implications. It is believed that there are no perfect synonyms. To go slightly further, there are no perfect translations since every community seems to shape the world into words in a different manner. Even when we speak about OE and PDE the temporal context and the society are not the same, so the language varies as I have studied in this paper. However, we can still appreciate OE texts because there are many similarities, perhaps more than the ones we perceive.

Cross-linguistic research confirms parallelisms between related cultures like OE and PDE that help us to understand complex texts such as this one. And, surprisingly, there appear to be common human experiences that are reflected in our language. For instance, as Lakoff (1987) studies the path trajectory starts in our brain when we are born as we move from one place to another constantly. It is normal that we use those schemas to structure and translate our thoughts into words. This explains why we find this metaphor in unrelated cultures. This has certainly been useful to comprehend this poem because metaphors explain human thought patterns and contain aspects of the culture that uses them. There are cultural elements such as the warrior society and its structure that enable us to understand parts of the text and possible metaphors. In this cognitive part of my journey, the tenets of Lakoff and Johnson (2003) have been fundamental. As I read Lakoff's (1987) prior theories and the later revisions and studies as the one with Johnson in 2003, my brain was constantly making links with the images of "Wife". In this aspect, the cognitive analysis of Harbus (2012) in OE poetry was very inspiring. After applying those ideas, I personally consider that I have a better understanding of the poem. Any scholar knows that it is not possible to decipher the absolute meaning, even in contemporary literature that is closer to us, but this goes beyond my paper. Once more, this does not impede that we try to get as close as possible to the core meaning.

All in all, my overall experience has been positive. Despite all the obstacles I have found in this incredible journey, I feel I am closer to the core meaning of the text. In fact, I have encountered many other interesting study lines, which I hope could be of some assistance for future work. I wish this paper could motivate other scholars, as I was inspired by authors like Lakoff, Johnson and Harbus, to mention a few. This has also been an attempt to claim the importance of Old English and the beauty of these language patterns that have fascinated famous figures such as John Ronald Reuel Tolkien.

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8. Annexe
8.1. Annexe I: Glossed Text

"The Wife's Lament"

1 Ic þis giedd wrece   bi me ful geomorre,
[I] [this] [song] [wretched] [of] [me] [very] [sadly]

2 minre sylfre sið. Ic þæt secgan mæg,
[my] [self] [journey]. [I] [that] [tell] [might]

3 hwæt ic yrmþa gebad, siþþan ic up aweox,
[what] [I] [misery] [dwelt], [since] [I] [grow up]

4 niwes oþþe ealdes, no ma þonne nu.
[new] [or] [old], [no] [more] [than] [now].

5 A ic wite wonn   minra wræcsiþa.
[always] [I] [torment] [wound]   [my] [exile]

6 Ærest min hlaford gewat   heonan of leodum
[at first] [my] [lord] [departed] [far from here] [people]

7 ofer yþa gelac;   hæfde ic uhtceare
[over] [waves] [tumultuous]; [have] [I] [Care that comes in the early morning]

8 hwær min leodfruma londes wære.
[where] [my] [patriarch] [lands] [were].

9 Ða ic me feran gewat   folgað secan,
[Then] [I] [me] [travel] [departed] [follow] [seek],

10 wineleas wræcca, for minre weaþearfe.
[friendless] [wanderer], [for] [my] [grievous need].

11 Ongunnon þæt þæs monnes magas hycgan
[apart, by one self] [these] [servant] [kinsmen] [think]

12 þurh dyrne geþoht,   þæt hy todælden unc,
[though] [secret] [thought], [then] [he] [divide] [us] *dual

13 þæt wit gewidost in woruldrice
[then] [we (dual)] [in] [kingdom]

14 lifdon laðlicost,   ond mec longade.

[live] [unpleasantly], [and] [me, myself] [to cause longing].

15 Het mec hlaford min   herheard niman,
[He] [me] [lord] [mine] [a grove-dwelling] [seize, capture],

16 ahte ic leofra lyt on þissum londstede,
[had] [I] [loved] [little] [on] [these] [lands]
17 holdra freonda.   Forþon is min hyge geomor.
[friendly] [friend]. [Because] [is] [my] [mood] [sad/mournful]

18 Ða ic me ful gemæcne monnan funde,
[Then] [I] [me] [very] [suited] [man] [find* subj],

19 heardsæligne, hygegeomorne,
[unfortunate], [sorrowful]

20 mod miþendne, morþor hycgendne.
[state of mind] [conceal], [murder] [think].

21 Bliþe gebæro   ful oft wit beotedan
[happy] [bring/behaviour] [very] [often] [we two] [threaten, beaten*]

22 þæt unc ne gedælde   nemne deað ana
[that] [you two] [share] [invoke, mention] [death] [one]

23 owiht elles;   eft is þæt onhworfen,
[anything] [else]; [afterwards] [is] [that] [change/reverse]

24 is nu swa hit næfre wære
[is] [now] [as] [it] [never] [were]
freondscipe uncer. Sceal ic feor ge neah
[friendship] [our]. [should] [I] [far] [or] [near]

25 mines felaleofan   fæhðu dreogan.
[my] [beloved] [hostility] [suffer]

26 Heht mec mon wunian   on wuda bearwe,
[command] [me] [man/enemy] [to live somewhere] [wood] [grove wood]

27 under actreo in þam eorðscræfe.
[under] [oak-tree] [into] [cave]

28 Eald is þes eorðsele,   eal ic eom oflongad,
[ancient] [is] [this] [earth cave], [all] [I] [am] [seized with longing]

29 sindon dena dimme, duna uphea,
[to be] [valleys] [obscure], [hills] [steep]

30 bitre burgtunas, brerum beweaxne,
[painful] [city-dwellings], [wild bush *briers] [overgrown, covered],

31 wic wynna leas. Ful oft mec her wraþe begeat
[dwelling-place] [joy] [without]. [very] [often] [my] [here] [hardship] [to get]
32 fromsiþ frean. Frynd sind on eorþan,
[journey away] [lord]. [friends] [are] [on] [earth]

33 leofe lifgende, leger weardiað,
[beloved] [live], [resting/lying n. nom/acc] [guard vb pl],

34 þonne ic on uhtan ana gonge
[then] [I] [on] [twilight] [alone] [departure]

35 under actreo geond þas eorðscrafu.
[under] [oak-tree] [through] [this] [earth cave]

36 Þær ic sittan mot sumorlangne dæg,
[there] [I] [sit] [must] [summer-long] [day]

37 þær ic wepan mæg mine wræcsiþas,
[There] [I] [weep] [can] [my] [journey of exile pl.]

38 earfoþa fela; forþon ic æfre ne mæg
[hard, difficult pl] [very]; [therefore] [I] [ever] [not] [can]

39 þære modceare minre gerestan,
[there] [sorrow, grief] [small sg] [to give rest to lodge]

40 ne ealles þæs longaþes þe mec on þissum life begeat.
[ne] [all] [this] [longings, unhappiness] [that] [me] [on] [this] [life] [get]

41 A scyle geong mon wesan geomormod,
[always] [should subj sg] [new, recent] [enemy, man] [was] [sorrowful],

42 heard heortan geþoht, swylce habban sceal
[hard] [heart] [thought], [likewise] [have subj pl] [should, owe]

43 bliþe gebæro, eac þon breostceare,
[joy] [behaviour], [also] [the] [sorrow]

44 sinsorgna gedreag.   Sy æt him sylfum gelong
[continual trouble sg] [multitude]. [is] [at] [him] [self] [belonging, present]

45 eal his worulde wyn,   sy ful wide fah
[all] [his] [world's] [joy], [is] [very] [wide] [hostile]

46 feorres folclondes, þæt min freond siteð
[far] [nation's gen.], [that] [my] [friend] [sat]

47 under stanhliþe   storme behrimed,
[under] [rocky stone slope, cliff] [storm] [frosted over],

48 wine werigmod,   wætre beflowen
[lord] [miserable], [water, river] [flow about past p.]

49 on dreorsele.   Dreogeð se min wine
[on] [dreary-hall dat. Sg]. [suffer pres.] [the] [my] [lord]

50 micle modceare;   he gemon to oft
[great] [sadness]; [he] [remember pres.] [*too] [often]

51 wynlicran wic.   Wa bið þam þe sceal
[beautiful comparat. Acc] [dwelling]. [Woe] [is] [those] [the] [warrior]

52 of langoþe   leofes abidan.
[of] [longing] [beloved gen sg] [await].

The Old English version is from: "Wife's Lament" from the Exeter Book (Exeter Cathedral Library MS 3501), from the edition by Bernard Muir, *The Exeter Anthology of Old English Poetry*, Volume I, Exeter: University of Exeter Press, 2000: 328-330.

I have glossed it using the following online dictionaries:

- https://bosworthtoller.com/
- https://www.wordsense.eu/
- http://lexicon.ff.cuni.cz/texts/oe_bosworthtoller_about.html
- https://www.lexilogos.com/english/english_old.htm
- https://archive.org/details/anglosaxondictio00tolluoft/page/192/mode/2up ?view=theater
- https://www.oldenglishtranslator.co.uk/
- http://glossary.oldenglishaerobics.net/

8.2. Annexe II: Text Translation with the revision and help of Professor M.C. Guarddon Anelo:

"The Wife's Lament"

1. I, very sad, sing this song about me, about my own journey. Then, I might tell what misery I have suffered since I grew up, young or old, never worse than now.

5. I always suffer from the torment wounds of my exile. First, my lord departed over trembling waves far from here and his people, I had worried about where the leader of these lands was early in the morning. Then, I travelled myself to seek him wandering without any friend for my grievous need. When I was alone these kinsmen servants secretly thought that they would divide us so we would live unpleasantly apart in this kingdom and causing me longing for you.

15. My lord kept me in a grove dwelling where I had little loved ones or devoted friends in these lands. Therefore, my mood is mournful. Then I found my very suitable man unfortunate, sorrowful, concealing his state of mind, thinking about murder. Happiness was so often between us that only the naming of death would separate what both shared, nothing else, afterward, all has changed, and our friendship is now as if it had never been. I should suffer the hostility of my beloved far or near. The enemy ordered me to live somewhere in the grove wood, under an oak tree in an earth cave.

28. This earth cave is ancient, I am entirely seized with longing, the valleys are dark, the hills steep, painful dwellings covered with wild bushes, dwelling places without joy. Here I am very often taken by the hardship of the faraway journey of my lord. Beloved friends are living on earth, protecting the rest, then I depart alone in twilight under an oak tree through this earth cave.

36. There I must sit on a summer-long day, there I can weep because of my very difficult journeys of exile. Therefore, I cannot ever give rest to lodge there a small grief, not all these longings that I got on this life.

41. There should always be an enemy sorrowful with hard heart thoughts, likewise I should have happy behaviour, regardless of the sorrow, a continual multitude of trouble. All his world's joy is a present to himself, there is a very

wide hostility in a faraway nation, that my friend sits under a rocky stone cliff frosted over in the storm, miserable lord, water flew about on a dreary hall. My lord suffers from great sadness, he remembers a more beautiful dwelling too often. Woe is the warrior of longing that awaits my beloved.