

# SLEEP AND AFFECT IN OLD ENGLISH POETRY

Nicole W Songstad

Dr. Johanna Kramer, Thesis Supervisor

## ABSTRACT

A long-standing topic of discussion in Anglo-Saxon Studies has been the definition and conceptualization of the mind and mental activities in Anglo-Saxon literature and culture. Most recently, the discussion has circulated around what Antonina Harbus terms "the life of the mind," what Britt Mize calls the "poetics of mentality," and what Leslie Lockett designates as "the hydraulic model of the mind." In tandem with these cognitive approaches to Old English poetry are considerations of the connections between the mind and affect, and the mind and dreams. What is overlooked, though, and what is the primary topic of this research, is the concept and function of sleep in Old English poetry. In particular, I am interested in how the Anglo-Saxons conceptualized the process of sleep and what connection there is between sleep and affect. Moreover, I contend that sleep is an active and productive process whereby the influence of affect produces dreams.